



SANDHILLS SANKOFA NEWS

The Official Newsletter of Sandhills Family Heritage Association

A LEGACY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND RACIAL EQUALITY

by Priscilla Burton

Social Justice can mean so many different things to so many people, depending on their personal circumstances and view of the world around them. It can mean being able to be free of food insecurity. It can mean not being abused or scorned because of who you are, where you were born, how you talk, what you believe or how you look. There can be dozens of reasons people may be treated unfairly. None of these reasons can be accepted as valid when the result is that one person is treated less than, or greater than, another person.

Social Justice means equality. It means fair housing, fair job opportunities, fair access to education, and fair rights to all the abundance that comes with being a citizen of this country. Above all, justice means acceptance of others as brothers and sisters. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr and dozens of others of the Civil Rights Movement are some of the icons that come to mind when we think of social justice. But social justice is more than only civil rights—it is Human Rights. Basic human rights demands that we treat each other with agape love, which includes Social Justice. Having life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness necessitates social justice at its core to truly benefit all.

“I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture of their minds, and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits.” Martin Luther King, Jr.



SANKOFA YOUTH MEMBER HELPS DURING A FOOD DISTRIBUTION



TEENAGERS PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY LEARNING PROJECTS AND EARN EDUCATIONAL CREDITS.



A Historic Site of Civil Rights Activities

In 2007, the Town of Spring Lake proclaimed this building a “Building of Historical Significance” to the Town and Cumberland County. In 2002, Mr. Ambrose Lucas, the last surviving Trustee of Spring Lake Civic Association, gifted the land and the building to Sandhills Family Heritage Association.

The Historic Spring Lake Civic Center is a perfect example of the community's ability to work together to meet its needs and strengthen the potential for families to succeed. The Civic Center began as an entertainment and youth recreation venue. However, the community soon saw its value as a hub for social change: desegregation of public spaces, school desegregation, NAACP meetings, and voter registration drives.

Duke Energy Foundation 2021 Social Justice and Racial Equity Grants

Duke Energy provided \$1 million to organizations working for social justice and racial equity throughout North Carolina. \$25,000 grants were distributed to 40 organizations from the Duke Energy Foundation. Sandhills Family Heritage Association (SFHA) is one of 40 organizations to receive a \$25,000 grant to help reduce inequality in the Sandhills. SFHA is grateful for financial support from Duke Energy Foundation. The grant will enable the organization to resume program activities that focus on social justice and racial equality for rural African Americans in the Sandhills. By creating strategic partnerships, SFHA is able to improve the quality of life, save and protect our natural resources, livelihoods, health, and cultural heritage.

“Mr. Ambrose Lucas, a founding member of the Spring Lake Civic Association, was instrumental in choosing SFHA to serve as stewards for this valued community asset.

As the Civic Association members wished, he gifted the land and the building to Sandhills Family Heritage Association with full trust that they, and the community, would work to reopen the building and return it to community use.” N.C. Representative Marvin W. Lucas, District 42 - Cumberland



A Civil Rights Pioneer

**SIPPIO BURTON | 1915-1989 | Barber
Local President NAACP**

Sippio Burton was born July 10, 1915 in Cumberland County, North Carolina to the late Sippio Burton, Sr. and the late Sally Hodges Burton.

His early childhood was in Southern Pines, North Carolina. He also lived in South Carolina with his foster Father Reverend P. W. Tony, where he graduated from high school and attended Brainard Junior College in Chester, South Carolina.

He married Sadie McLean, a Harnett County school teacher, in January 1942, and a month later he joined the Army. After military service he and Sadie lived in the Manchester area. Sippio worked at Fort Bragg at the Army hospital for a while and cut hair at his barber shop in Spring Lake on the weekends. In 1950 he moved with his family to Fayetteville and established Burton Barber shop.

Sippio was a faithful member of the Spout Springs Presbyterian Church for many years. He also served as President of the United Barbers Association.

After 40 years in the Fayetteville business community, he retired but never hesitated to answer the call to help others. His door was always open. He served as president of the local NAACP from 1959 to 1966. During these turbulent times he made himself accessible by opening up his barber shop and home to the cause.

Burton's Barber Shop was described in The Fayetteville Observer Newspaper as the brainstorming center of the civil rights movement. The shop was endlessly crowded in those days, says Burton, and the phone was always ringing.

According to the article on Burton's life, "during the 1960's civil rights movement, Burton's Barber Shop was the place where a lot of ideas were formulated to keep the tension down." "I call it our political hall of fame, it's an arena," says Burton.

Any politician worth his bumper sticker knows that he's got to eat barbecue, kiss babies and visit Burton's shop during election year. To miss the shop would be to forfeit support from the black community. His Fayetteville barbershop remained a hotbed for politics until his death in 1989 at age 74.

Source: Fayetteville Observer Newspaper

Thank you to our Supporters!



JANUARY FOOD DISTRIBUTION STATISTICS

98 

HOUSEHOLDS SERVED

 **244**

INDIVIDUALS SERVED

Get Involved **IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

Become a member of SFHA
for an annual fee of only
\$20

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Send Payment To:
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SANDHILLS FAMILY HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

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