

Every Commissioner Refused to Take the Pledge!!! Refused to publicly support leaving the monuments on the Court Square where they are!!! And have been for years!!! –Eye Witness Report by Robert A. Williams

The “buzz” around Cleveland County before the August 4, 2020 Commissioner’s Meeting at the LeGrand Center was that the Cleveland County Commissioners were going to vote that night to remove the Confederate Monument from the Old Courthouse Square just like the Gaston County Commissioners had voted to do the very day before. Many people were disappointed in the Gaston County Commissioners for selling them out of their history and legacy of Patriots who were willing to sacrifice their all when their Country sent out the call. Many people, like me, have a family history of forefathers fighting for their Country during the American Revolution at Kings Mountain, the War between the States at Gettysburg, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Petersburg and on down the line.

I remember well finding an incomplete DVD set at Goodwill about World War II. When the documentary showed the Third Armored Division, the “Spearhead “of the 1st US Army liberating the Concentration Camp at Nordhausen, where the Jewish slave labor fabricated parts for the German V-2 rocket.

I immediately backed up to the start of that section looking for my father. I went back and forth a number of times before giving up on that. The Infantry component of the Third Armored Division were the ones liberating the POWs. My dad was a tank driver who, I am sure, could drive his Sherman tank going forward much faster than the Nazis could drive their tanks in reverse. And was in the process of doing just that. I never heard my dad, during his life, ever speak a word about his wartime experiences. But he was there. And when other veterans who were there would get together and talk, when I was a child, they would talk and my dad would listen and just nod. From what I saw on the DVD about the liberation of Nordhausen, I could understand that some things deserve action and not just talking about it. At the Battle of the Bulge, The First Army went North around the "Bulge" and the Third Armored Division, and my dad, then swung South to meet up with General Patton's Third Army coming North to finally put a halt to the German Offensive. Then the Third Armored Division headed toward the heart of Germany where they were reported to have been the first Americans to actually fire an artillery shell into Germany.

Some trivia. Singer and Movie Star Elvis Pressley was drafted into the Army and served in the Third Armored Division in Germany. This was the basis of a Hollywood Movie released in 1960, "GI Blues." I have no information that Elvis ever drove a tank or fired a shot. Even in practice.

Back to the August 4, 2020 Commissioner's Meeting.

The first item on the agenda was a Special Presentation about the Pinnacle Classical Academy presented by PCA's Board Chairman Debbie Clary. PCA has become very well known for its

growth and academic excellence. Debbie's report indicated that PCA was also an excellent steward of its funding. Greatly highlighting the waste that comes from Cleveland County Schools. From all the hundreds of Commissioner's Meeting I have attended, PCA has provided the very best example of how things can be done right, in the best interest of our children and the best fiscal best interest of taxpayers. I told the Commissioners that later in the meeting, but they didn't pay much attention.

After the PCA Presentation, the next item on the agenda was Citizen's Participation. The folks demanding action on keeping the Confederate Monument where it is issue were loaded for bear. Including me. And so were those few who want it removed or relocated.

There were eight people who signed up to speak. I was number six.

The five who spoke before me were all demanding that the Confederate Statue on the Court Square in Shelby be left alone where it is. This is our history and heritage they all said eloquently in one way or another. Sam Lail made the point that the Confederate Statue was the "Headstone" of many of our forefathers who did not return from the conflict that some call the "Civil War." Although there was little of anything "civil" about that war. Or any war for that matter. Ned Cash made the point that the Old Shelby Courthouse was awarded a place on the National Registry in 2000-mostly because of the Confederate statue. Almost every one of these five were cut off at exactly three minutes. Although most kept on talking for a bit.

When it was my turn to speak, I was mindful of the strict time limit the Commissioners put on the public. Totally in disregard to the intent of the law that requires governmental meetings such as the Commissioner's meeting to allow a portion of an official meeting to include citizens participation. Actually, the way the Commissioners, the Cleveland County School Board, the City of Shelby and Cleveland Community College do it, it is a grave insult to the citizens and every incumbent should be removed at the next election. But that is a fight for another day.

When I reached the podium, I simply said that I totally agreed with every word that the previous speakers had said. And that I could surely not describe my family heritage to anybody within three short minutes. Therefore I challenged each of the Cleveland County Commissioners to "Publicly Pledge" to the citizens that they would leave ALL of the monuments on the Court Square exactly where they were and dedicate their time for any future discussion to be directed to the creation of jobs, law enforcement and protection and economic development for the benefit for ALL of the citizens of Cleveland County: NOT ONE COMMISSIONER, even those up for re-election, would make that pledge. That indicated to me that they would remove the Confederate Monument if they damn well pleased and at any time they pleased although they have privately said that they would not move the Confederate monument. Kinda like what the Gaston County Commissioners told their voters, only to sell them out the very night before this meeting.

I had a few seconds left, so I reminded the Commissioners that the PCA presentation showed that things could be done right and proper (and implied that can happen only when the

corruption is left out) and should be encouraged in all county departments.

The next two speakers (a white man and a white woman) were for removing the Confederate Monument. Saying basically that the statue "offends" them because it stood for oppression, slavery and "white supremacy." Yet, I have not heard one person who is offended by a statue come forward and speak out against the very real oppression and maintenance of "white supremacy" in the way the City of Shelby and their officials have refused to obey state and federal laws in their treatment of Mr. Willie Green in both his attempts to build a sports complex and professional housing in Shelby.

As I listened to what those last two speakers and to what they had to say, my thought was how can I turn this revisionist history approach to an issue into a passion to correct the same bad things that are happening today, right under their noses. So far Plantation Politics and the Mafioso MO have paralyzed and thwarted that idea regarding the so-called established leadership of the Black Community.

Anyway, I will continue doing what I do. And if others want to join in, so much the better.

One last thing. There was a closed session at the end of the August 4th Commissioner's meeting that is suspicious. The Motion to go into Closed Session contained three state law sections that COULD range from an old or new lawsuit against the County Commissioner stemming from some bad and possible illegal acts to the Commissioners becoming involved with the

Lawsuit by the Cherokee Indians against the Catawba Indians regarding the secret wheeling and dealings about the proposed Casino to be built in Kings Mountain. Or anything in between. I smell a rat here and will be keeping my eyes open for clues about this. More later.