

First Negro Teacher at B. I. High

VILLAGE
HOME
EDITION

THE ROBBINS' EAGLE

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SCHOOL ELECTION APRIL 9

Mr. Wright was first elected by the residents of District 143½ in 1943, and has given untiringly of his time and talent since then. He has helped steer the district from an unsteady, poorly organized one to the well organized, smooth functioning one we have today. The results of this hard work have been very gratifying. Our district has a very low assessed valuation and our climb has often been beset by financial troubles.

Here, briefly is how Robbins' unprecedented growth has affected the district school system:

Robbins, because of its proximity to industrial Chicago and the Calumet area, received quite an influx of war workers and their families. The school population skyrocketed. District 143½ had 3 school buildings. Two were in Posen with a total of 6 rooms, 5 teachers, 2 custodians and about 100 students. Robbins' Lincoln Memorial School had 9 rooms (with 2 improvised rooms in the auditorium making eleven.) 1 principal, 11 teachers, 1 custodian and about 550 students. The teachers' classroom loads were extremely heavy and made teaching very difficult. Additional children soon had us on double sessions. We found it hard to pay our way although our budget was less than \$50,000.

By 1945 we had qualified to get government aid under the Lanham Act (a wartime act to help communities with its war worker school problems.) We were given an eight classroom addition, clinic and furnishings valued at \$140,000; for which we later paid \$16,000. Double sessions were over.

By 1947 we were back on double sessions, broke, and the Lanham Act dead. In the post-war years the school population steadily increased until all but grades 7 and 8 were on double sessions. By 1952, we had paid off some of our indebtedness and



GEORGE WRIGHT
For Re-election to School Board

were ready to start building again. We floated bonds to the amount of \$330,000.00 to build the Thomas J. Kellar School.

Last year our school system was practically all on double sessions. We needed more teachers, but there was nowhere to put them. In Posen we had a superintendent, and a clerk at our district headquarters. At the school in Posen we had 2 principals, 10 teachers, 2 custodians and 305 students. At Lincoln Memorial we had 1 principal, 35 teachers, 2 custodians, 1 truant officer and 1290 children in a school designed for 500 students.

We completed the 14 rooms at the Kellar School, but were unable to escape double sessions this time. We hired a new principal and 11 new teachers. We made curriculum changes that were beneficial. We are currently completing a four-room addition to the Harding School to relieve overcrowding there.

We have used all of our present bonding power.



ERNEST LEMON
For Re-election to School Board

We have hired a staff of competent administrators, especially trained in elementary education, who, with a faculty of very good teachers, are giving us a superb school system.

Today, our annual budget is over \$400,000.00, and we are still growing.

Here is what we have in Robbins:

Lincoln Memorial School: 17 rooms, 1 principal, 1 assistant principal, 1 clerk, 1 truant officer, 2 custodians, 28 teachers, and 751 students.

Thomas J. Kellar School has 14 rooms, 1 principal, 1 clerk, 2 custodians, 18 teachers and 546 students.

Both schools are in good repair and open for your inspection. Look over these, your schools and attend the splendid functions they give. This is an account of my stewardship.

Your vote on April 9th, 1955 will help keep your schools in good hands by re-electing George Wright.

Polls open 12 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Even though it is only a practice stint, Mr. Robert Johnson, of 9233 South Michigan avenue, Chicago, became the first Negro teacher to serve in Blue Island High School. He has been teaching American History there for the past two weeks and will continue until he has taught for 6 weeks. He then returns



ROBERT JOHNSON
to the University of Illinois to complete four weeks work before graduating. Mr. Johnson is 23 years old, and attended Gillispie Elementary School and Fenger High before enrolling at the University of Illinois.

"I like Blue Island High very much and I am grateful for the opportunity to teach here," said Mr. Johnson.

MR. LEMON
Mr. Ernest Lemon, who is presently a member of the School Board, District 143½, is again seeking reelection. He has proven within the last 3 years his qualifications as a board member by his dynamic, yet unassuming personality.

Working in cooperation with
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