

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
1987 SESSION
RATIFIED BILL

RESOLUTION 4
SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 61

A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF L.A. "SPEED"
RIGGS.

Whereas, L.A. "Speed" Riggs was born in the Onslow County Community of Silverdale on February 18, 1907. He moved to Goldsboro in 1924, and became interested in tobacco auctioneering when he visited the tobacco markets in and around Goldsboro with his father, Mark Riggs, and began auctioning produce and tobacco in the Faison area at a very early age.

In December of 1937, George W. Hill, who was President of American Tobacco Company and recognized as an advertising genius, heard about auctioneer L.A. "Speed" Riggs and travelled by train to Liberty Warehouse in Durham to hear him sell from the warehouse floor and immediately upon hearing him sell, Mr. Hill signed L.A. "Speed" Riggs to be "The Voice of Lucky Strike". "Speed" Riggs first appeared on the Lucky Strike Hit Parade in late December of 1937 and served as "The Voice of Lucky Strike" on the Hit Parade until the show was moved to California in 1948.

L.A. "Speed" Riggs continued to serve as "The Voice of Lucky Strike" in California until cigarette advertising was banned from electronic media in 1969.

During his days as "The Voice of Lucky Strike", he became involved with charitable efforts to help handicapped and underprivileged Americans learn a trade.

L.A. "Speed" Riggs auctioned over seventeen million dollars (\$17,000,000) in war bonds during World War II; and after cigarette advertising was banned from the airwaves, he decided to remain in California and organized "Your Community Fund", a nonprofit organization that helps the disabled and handicapped learn trades.

He moved to Rocky Mount in January 1986, and to Goldsboro in October of the same year.

L.A. "Speed" Riggs, who would have been 80 years old on February 18, 1987, died on February 1, 1987. He created and maintained a positive image for tobacco over his years of service and was not just "The Voice of Lucky Strike" but the "Voice of Tobacco".

Until "Speed" Riggs was heard on national radio in 1937, Americans west of the Mississippi had never heard the chant of a tobacco auctioneer.

L.A. "Speed" Riggs will be remembered by all who knew him as a warm and giving man devoted to his family, his community, his profession, and to public service. He conducted himself at all times with dignity, responsibility, and integrity.

Whereas, the General Assembly wishes to honor the memory of L.A. "Speed" Riggs and to express its sympathy to his family and friends;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

Section 1. The General Assembly of North Carolina honors the life and memory of L.A. "Speed" Riggs and expresses the deep gratitude and appreciation of this State and its citizens for his life and service.

Sec. 2. The General Assembly expresses its deep sorrow to the family and friends of L.A. "Speed" Riggs for the loss of a beloved family man and a true friend.

Sec. 3. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the family of L.A. "Speed" Riggs.

Sec. 4. This resolution is effective upon ratification.
In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 9th day of
March, 1987.

Robert B. Jordan III
President of the Senate

Liston B. Ramsey
Speaker of the House of Representatives