

Editorial And Opinion Page



AS I SEE IT

Bruce Barton

I call on Lumbee SDC to change location of swearing in of tribal council & chairman to a more historic & symbolic place

It would be like if a proselyte went to Hell to receive salvation, or the NAACP announced intentions to hold the next annual meeting in Pembroke, or the Highlander Scots cried out that their next gathering would be on the campus of R.B. Dean School in Maxton. It could also be comparable to the Klan holding a membership rally on the steps of Old Main on the UNC-Pembroke campus. It just blows my historic sense of things away. Come on, Lumbee Self-Determination Commission, give Indian people a break, change the location of the swearing in of the tribal council and chair to a more historic and symbolic place.

There are many places I can think of that might be more historically relevant such as the banks of the Lumbee River anywhere in Robeson County, or the open plains of the North Carolina Indian Cultural Center, especially the Adolph L. Dial Amphitheatre where the Strike at the Wind! Outdoor Drama is performed every summer. Old Main, the Indian Education Resource Center (formerly the Pembroke "Indian" High School building) or countless other places that have a nice and melodic "Indian" ring to it, would be appropriate. We must always keep our symbols aligned properly with the heavens. If not, it will cause many of us (Indians) to smirk and deflate our historic bosoms.

Another possibility is the Family Life Center at Harper's Ferry Baptist Church if some of my Indian brothers and sisters are suffering from the occasional anti-Pembroke sentiment that affects some of us unduly from time to time. This building will hold in excess of 500 people, the anticipated audience at the swearing in ceremony.

One member of the LSDC told me they chose to have the swearing in at the Southeastern Regional Agricultural Center/Farmer's Market out on Highway 74 (on the other side of Lumberton) because they were expecting a big crowd, and they needed to be able to have logistical room to serve hors d'oeuvres (That's French for "fancy food.")

For me personally, I'll forgo the hors d'oeuvres if the organizers will move this historic event to a more appropriate historic setting. I'd rather have collards and fatback anyway. And that would be more historic and appropriate too. Amen!

Anyway, according to what I read in the local newspapers, the swearing in of the tribal council and chairman will be held at the Southeastern Regional Agricultural Center/Farmer's Market on January 13, unless we come to our historic senses. The only thing I can think of that is symbolic or historic, in relation to this proposed location, is the possibility that there might be corn or cucumbers as part of the hors d'oeuvres while the historic event is taking place.

Again, I call upon the executive committee of the Lumbee Self-Determination Commission to come to their historic senses, and move the swearing in ceremonies to a more appropriate and historic place. Please!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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Public Hearing planned on bridge replacement

Raleigh-- The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) will hold a public hearing for the proposed bridge replacement over Lumbee River on McNeil Bridge Road in Robeson County.

The meeting will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2001, at 7 p.m. in the O.P. Owens Agriculture Center Auditorium, 455 Caton Road, Lumberton.

Representatives from NCDOT will be available to answer questions and receive comments from the public about the proposed replacement.

For more information, contact Len Hendricks at (919) 250-4092 or write: CITIZENS PARTICIPATION UNIT

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—Donald R. Florea, farmer



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Season's Greetings

This is a season greeting going out to my nice Kenneth Ray Locklear. Happy New Year and wishing you the best I can. I miss you like crazy! Until I see you again Loving and Missing You.

Love You,
Kandra Locklear & Family

People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want and if they can't find them, make them.

—George Bernard Shaw

Dear Ms. Connee:
The arrival of a new year brings with it a cornucopia of emotions with regard to the deterioration of the electoral process. Never before have I been so engrossed by such disregard for the system that we so casually call democracy. To say the least the presidential election set precedent for an era of decadence, but I wonder if this so called tribal election didn't set the tone.

Since March 1999, our supposed Lumbee leadership has sought the assistance of the courts of the state to help in resolving the conflict between LRDA and the Lumbee Tribal Council. It would seem that given the fact that we are a sovereign people, we do not possess the inherent thinking ability to keep Indian business, in Indian circles. Only the "great white hope" can give advice that our so-called leadership will adhere to. We, like our black counterparts, are sold out by the same mentalities of the Uncle Toms during the slavery era: "yaz um massa". In the matter of the decision and order of the Honorable Judge Howard Manning, he felt it in OUR best interest to establish an unbiased group of Lumbee people that could seek answers to what had been the proverbial mystery to every tribal member, is it LRDA or Tribal Council. Needless to say this illustrious group concurs with the same "delusionaries" that still believe that Columbus discovered America.

All I read is that we have just experienced our FIRST tribal election. I can almost guarantee that many, if not all, of these people speaking about FIRST, voted in what was our first election in July 1994, but because the Honorable Manning ruled it moot, then with his ruling came

cases of subservient amnesia. The judge threw it out, and they threw it in the lake of forgetfulness. I was a member of the FIRST constitutional assembly, and the only reason we have no constitution now is because our FIRST elected leaders chose to put it before the honorable judge's chopping block where he could give it that FIRST & FATAL blow. Tribal Council, thanks for nothing!

I was involved in both the constitutional and governmental elections. To say the least, this LAST election left a lot to be desired. There were so many procedural discrepancies that to try to name them all would take up too much of our time and too much Ms. Connee's paper: candidates seated at polling areas, ballots lying out for anyone, etc. By far, this was no immaculate election as some would have you believe. Another question, what did we do? Are we to believe that we have elected a tribal government, when as I see it, my ballot asked did we want tribal government, and if constitutional, then how long would we allow our elected body to draft it? As I see we have succeeded in electing our SECOND constitutional assembly. Nowhere on the ballot did it refer to this body as government.

But, we now have before us a group of people elected by little more than 9,000 people, when in 1994, we did the same with over 8,400 rendered moot by the courts. It's hard to understand how we as "sovereign" people place the futures of our generations in the hands of non-Indians.

In Judge Manning's MEMORANDUM OF DECISION AND ORDER, PG. 16 article 10: "any outside interference with the activities of the LSDC shall not be tolerated. To this end, this Court for the purposes of enforcing and protecting the Lumbee Peoples right to self determination in self-government..." So now we understand why every act of authority by the LSDC was preceded by those infamous words "the judge said". Those words when spoken by LSDC tell the listeners that what's coming out of their mouths is gospel, cause the judge says so. Where then is sovereignty? Where is SELF? Has there been any SELF-ANYTHING without your

Letter to the Editor Tribal Election Raises Many Questions Prior to Installation

honor's permission? Has the Honorable Judge Manning certified an election, that had no written protocol, and if so why was it not available at each polling site? This election that was ordered by the Court of North Carolina should have been held within the dictates of the electoral procedures of the State of North Carolina, because as your Honorable Judge Manning so stated, the court retained jurisdiction over this matter, and as a duly sworn servant of the court, his position is to uphold the law, not amend it. In his certification of this election, he ignores the electoral procedures established by the court system of which he is bound to pro-

tect, bound, but not that bound. Nonetheless, wemoveon because the judge says so. After everything I hope this matter will be over, but just as sure as grits are grocery, it won't be.

Be that as it may we are now to attend the swearing in ceremony of the FIRST tribal government, and where would you suppose it would be. Not in what is symbolically known as Indian country, no we are going back to Lumberton, for yet another performance. To see what is suppose to be our formal leadership standing on cold concrete that houses agricultural products, before an audience sends shivers down my spine of how people were sold into slavery. WE are now bound by court orders rather than shackles. God help us everyone.

Wendy Moore
Prospect

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INTRODUCING OUR LATEST MEDICAL ACHIEVEMENT

Paul J. Grimm, M.D., is the latest family practitioner to join the medical staff of Southeastern Regional Medical Center. He will be based at the Dr. Arthur J. Robinson Medical Clinic at 800 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Lumberton, and will divide his practice time between the center's clinics in Rowland and Red Springs.

Dr. Grimm earned his medical degree from the University of South Carolina in 1992, and completed residency training there in 1994. He will be specializing in family practice, with special interests in treating sports injuries and obesity.

Dr. Grimm says he hopes to provide compassionate, accessible health care to this community. He and his wife Ellen, along with their son Joshua, live in Dillon.

We can all feel good about his decision to join our community.

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