

# Along the Robeson Trail

By Dr. Stan Knick, Director-UNCP Native American Resource Center

Following the recent appearance of the Trickster in Pembroke, we have been looking further into the history and nature of this delightful, instructive and mischievous character. One of the Trickster's lessons which comes up repeatedly in various cultures is that everything has its own place, its own way.

We are taught by the Trickster's tales that each animal, and by extension, each human being, has particular talents and abilities which set it/him/her apart from all the others. This is an important lesson for all of us, because it helps us accept the natural world for what it is. The following version of a Jicarilla Apache legend about Coyote and Mountain Lion illustrates the point.

One day Coyote was walking along and he saw a big rock rolling down a hill. It rolled and rolled and came down near where some deer were standing, and they were surprised by it so much that they jumped straight up. Coyote wondered about the rock, and about who was up on top of the hill rolling rocks down.

Just then another rock came rolling by Coyote, and went on down the hill to where the deer were standing. But this time the deer only jumped a little. Soon a third rock rolled past Coyote and down to the deer, but the deer barely noticed it this time because they realized that it was just another rolling rock.

Right after that, another rock came rolling by Coyote, but this time it rolled very quietly, as though it were a soft rock. Coyote thought how

strange this was — a rock that rolled silently down a hill. Then he realized that it was Mountain Lion, curled up into a ball, pretending to be just another rock rolling down the hill.

Mountain Lion rolled directly in among the deer, but they paid no attention because they thought it was just another rock. Mountain Lion jumped up, grabbed a big deer and carried it off in his mouth to a place where he could eat it in peace. Of course the rest of the deer ran off in the other direction.

Coyote thought to himself: "I could do that! That would be a good way to catch a deer for supper."

So he found a hill where some deer were standing around on the slope, and he went up to the top to find some rocks. He rolled one down, and the deer jumped. He rolled another one down and the deer didn't jump as much. After he rolled another rock down, and the deer barely noticed it, Coyote thought it was time for him to imitate Mountain Lion.

So he rolled himself into a ball like Mountain Lion had done, and rolled himself down the hill. He rolled and rolled and bumped and thumped down the hill, which suddenly seemed a much bigger hill than before. When he got down to where the deer were standing, he jumped up to try and catch a deer, but he was so dizzy from rolling down the hill that he immediately fell over. He couldn't catch any supper that way, and the deer escaped.

In this Apache legend, the Trickster (in this example, he was

posing as Coyote) learned that he could not do the same things a mountain lion can do. He learned that he would have to find his own way to get supper.

As the Trickster learns his lesson, he teaches it to us. And it is a lesson as old as the earth, this Turtle Island on which we walk: each creature has its own way, just as each flower finds its own way to the sun.

And even though the Trickster's lessons are usually humorous and entertaining, they are vital lessons. They are lessons which served well the members of the Native American cultures which bore them. This particular lesson is valuable because it teaches us to appreciate every living being for what it is, on its own terms.

But it is also valuable because through it we can see that every being, every part of the universe, this Creation, has something important to teach us. In fact, in most Native American origin myths, the animals and plants were here first, and thus they are teachers and guiding spirits for the human beings.

The Trickster, clown that he is, is also a teacher. And he is still here, in many forms, in this and all Native American communities.

For more information about the Trickster and his tribal and international adventures, visit the Native American Resource Center in historic Old Main Building, on the campus of The University of North Carolina at Pembroke (our Internet address is [www.uncp.edu/nativemuseum](http://www.uncp.edu/nativemuseum)).

## Happy First Birthday



Cierra Daneal Taylor, daughter of Pam Clark and Ronald Taylor September 30, 2001

Love  
Grandmother Mattie Bullard  
and Great-Aunt Lucille Rogers

## Native American Church Benefit Gospel Sing Scheduled in Raleigh

Triangle Native American United Methodist Church will hold its second gospel singing on Sunday, September 30. "Our first gospel singing held in July was a tremendous success and we look forward with great anticipation to God blessing this singing even more. We are so excited about our gospel sing. Through these functions we are bringing our community together as one family, raise community awareness about American Indians, and it is a great way for us to raise money for our building fund," says Pastor Sylvia Collins. "We are also truly blessed and appreciative of the support from fellow friends and families and excited about all of our special singing groups. Returning again in our Lumbee royalty, Miss Lumbee, Jammi Lowery and Jr. Miss Lumbee Johnna Edmonson, to participate and support this event". Featured groups include Community Men from Prospect, Friends in Christ, Pleasant Grove UMC Choir, Prospect Choir, and the Raleigh Church of God Choir.

The gospel sing will begin at 3:30 p.m. and will be held at the Administrative Building of the Methodist Home for Children, located at 1041 Washington Street in Raleigh. Hot dogs and drinks will also be provided as part of the fund-raising event.

Triangle Native American United Methodist Church formally began Church service July 1, 2001. Sunday School begins at 10:00 a.m. and worship service immediately follows at 11:00 a.m. The public is cordially invited to attend church service and gospel sing.

For more information, call Pastor Sylvia Collins at 919-467-9957, Doris Hunt at 919-553-4365, or Darlene Jacobs, 919-779-5044.

## Alicia C. Oxendine Graduates Basics as Air Force Airman



Air Force Airman Alicia C. Oxendine has graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

During the six weeks of training, the airman studied the Air Force mission, organization, and customs and received special training in human relations.

In addition, airmen who complete basic training earn credits toward an associate degree through the Community College of the Air Force.

She is the daughter of Jeffery Oxendine of Pembroke, N.C., and Monica Gleason of Rancho Cordova, Calif.

Oxendine is a 2001 graduate of Purnell Swett High School, Pembroke.

## Army Offers Bonuses for Near-term Enlistments

RALEIGH, N.C. - Young men and women interested in enlisting in the Army and leaving for basic training in the next three months could be collecting cash bonuses for doing so.

The Army is offering enlistment bonuses form \$2,000 to \$10,000 for qualified people. Bonuses are available for specific job specialties ranging from infantry to signal intelligence, and who agree to leave for basic training in October or November. Some of the bonuses can be increased based on a person's education level and options such as airborne training they qualify for and select.

In general, the bonuses are available for those who are high school graduates or have some college credit, who score in the top half of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (the written test for all military branches), and who qualify for and choose to enlist in specific specialties for three years or more. They can also qualify for promotion to higher grade and enlistment options such as the Army's Loan Repayment Program (up to \$65,000 to repay student loans) based on their education level.

For more information, contact your local Army recruiter or go to [goarmy.com](http://goarmy.com).

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\*\* National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1993.

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## Preachers incur expenses with funeral services

Recently while assisting on a funeral, the family was gracious enough to donate a love offering for my services. It was unusual for this area. Most times, we assume that a pastor is supported by his congregation and that compensation should include conducting funerals. This is as it should be, but for those who are not full-time pastors, there is some expense involved in assisting with a funeral service. I was touched by the remembrance by this particular family and thought it might be nice to remind others that preachers should be appreciated and compensated for their time, expenses and efforts. There is the expense of gas, wear and tear on the vehicle, cleaning bills, not to mention the time involved, when a preacher is called upon in a time of bereavement.

Sincerely yours,  
Rev. James D. Clark  
Pembroke, NC

## Saddletree Church of God to present Gospel Music Explosion

The Young at Heart of the Saddletree Church of God are planning a Gospel Music Explosion on Friday, October 5, 2001 at 7:30 P.M. The featured singers will include the Saddletree Church of God Mass Choir; the Sycamore Singers; the Locklear Brothers and windy; the Tylers; and Rev. and Mrs. Terry Oxendine.

The pastor, the Rev. Dr. Millard Maynard and the congregation extend a cordial invitation to the public to attend.

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