

Adjustment to UNC difficult for Indians

by Laura Toier
Features Writer

Lumbees Nita Chavis and Jackie Kearns are two of 25 Indians now enrolled in UNC summer school, and of some 50 Indians who are regular UNC students. Both students found adjustment to UNC quite difficult, and described life in "the Lumbee land" as a sharp contrast from life at Carolina.

"All we knew was tobacco and hard work," Nita said of her years at home. She was floored by Carolina's more academic and beer-drinking climate.

Nita and Jackie come from Robeson County, N.C., an area predominantly populated by the Lumbee Indians. These people, also called Croatan, are of mixed racial stock. They are believed to be descended from Indians, Portuguese colonists, runaway Negroes, Confederate and Union deserters and possibly whites of the Lost Colony. When the colony's Governor White returned to the New World and found his citizens missing, he spotted the word "Croatan" carved on a tree, perhaps meaning that the colonists had gone to Croatan Sound to join friendly Indians.

Nita explained that in Lumbee culture the family group and respect for one's parents are extremely important. "Our parents made all our decisions for us," she said. Consequently, the independence of college life was quite a shock.

"A lot of us suffer more homesickness than anyone else here," Jackie said. The girls said they regret the lack of a special Indian orientation program which would have introduced them immediately to other Indians on campus.

However, Nita and Jackie have made enough friends to call Carolina home. "We didn't know what partying was till we came to the big University," Jackie grinned. "Now we can't tell everything we do here when we go home. They just wouldn't understand."

Perhaps the transition undergone by new Indian students will be better understood by those now taking the second session anthropology course "Contemporary American Indians." In an interview, Charlotte Williams, teacher of the special course, said the class will cover the cultures of different tribes, recent Indian history and movements for better government treatment of Indians.

Such a course might indeed benefit North Carolinians. "Believe it or not,

North Carolina has the fifth largest Indian population of all states in the country," Williams said. Cherokees in the southwest, Lumbees in the southeast, and a few other groups make up almost 44,000 of North Carolina's approximately 5,000,000 inhabitants.

Williams has just returned from a year of field work for her dissertation at the federally directed Cherokee reservation. "Cherokee is technically a corporation in the state of North Carolina," she said. "All members of the corporation are shareholders owning land. The only difference from regular land ownership is that the land cannot be sold to a non-Cherokee."

This rule, she explained, is designed to foil the none-too-seldom attempts to wrest land from the Indians. She added that, contrary to myth, most reservation Indians, Cherokees included, pay the same taxes paid by ordinary citizens. As residents of a federal reservation, Cherokees are entitled to all national government programs to aid Indians. The Lumbees do not receive such benefits.

Nita acknowledged that although some Lumbees have become teachers and lawyers, the quality of schools in the area does not lend to Indian advancement.

Jackie said that many Indians coming to the University from these schools go on work-study programs that help pay their tuition. "After working all day, the kids are too tired to study," she said. "Some of them flunk out."

College preparation of non-reservation Indians may be improved by a North Carolina state bureau recently set up to take care of Indians not aided by Washington, D.C. This agency, Williams said, "will help North Carolina Indians with school, grants and any problems with discrimination."

Williams added that the federal government has recently improved its aid to non-reservation Indians in certain areas. "It's a sporadic sort of thing," she said. "Some of the larger cities have facilities, but those without a large Indian population do not. People ask why the Indians don't move off the reservations. It's because that's the only place they can get decent services."

Why do Indians deserve services? Statistics show their average annual income to be \$1,500, their unemployment rate nearly 40 per cent. Fifty thousand Indian families live in substandard houses.

Individuals from such environments

may indeed find the classes of a university difficult; a liberal, predominantly white society may leave them suddenly left out and lonely.

But Nita and Jackie are happily settled at UNC, saying they have as many white friends as red ones. Jackie said although she was lonely at first, "I found you had to go out and seek people. Now it seems like home."

A better contest

It may or may not have been a better idea to approve Gerald Ford as vice-president, but if you can come up with a good Gerald Ford joke, you can win a large pizza at Peppi's Pizza Den from *The Tar Heel* staff and a special Gerry Ford braille crossword puzzle.

The objective criterion for choosing the winner of this contest is, admittedly, hard to decide. But if you can come up with some goody, we'll be able to spot it.

Entries should be in the Tar Heel office by no later than 6 p.m. Sunday. All entries should have your name, address and phone number. You may enter as many times as you like.

No members of Gerald Ford's family, *The Tar Heel* staff, advertisers, affiliates, clones or second cousins should enter.

Jokes previously used in *The National*



Steelman triumphs in Banana contest

As the deadline for last week's contest drew to a close, the pace became frantic with entries piling up. In what was described by no one as a chilling experience, winner Ben Steelman, 118 Graham, was chosen over a mechanically induced reproduction of a number line.

Unfortunately, space does not permit us to print all of Steelman's entries. The winning list contained 100 suggestions for proper uses of bananas and is on view in the Tar Heel office. Some of the highlights include:

62. Slightly bent, as links in a nonviolent chain.

63. Unbent, as links in a Zen chain.

64. As an eight-month old Perfect Master.

Ben's list contained several things that were variations on a theme or reversals of uses, such as:

78. As the roller for a weird typewriter.

79. As typing paper for a weird typewriter.

7. As a substitute for a telescope. (This requires carefully polishing both ends to lenslike consistency.)

36. As a microscope (see instructions #7 and reverse).

And many things in his list credited the banana as a pacifist for nonviolent situations (as in #62 above).

27. As bullets in a 20-mm nonviolent gun.

49. Using potato chips as fins, as darts for a nonviolent dart board.

52. As the stuffing for a nonviolent football.

56. As the critical mass of a nonviolent atomic bomb.

Well, you can see the rest of them on the bulletin board in the Tar Heel office. We are

very pleased with the response given the contest and wish to thank everyone who entered. We even created some special awards for which no prizes were given.

The Promptness Award to Judy Sacks for being the first one to turn in her list. Her entry was 46-long. It was short but good. Such as:

11. Play "nin the tail on the Banana."

14. Slice thinly and use as spare change.

21. Soak in vinegar to make a banana-pickle.

40. Attach it to another banana by a long string and use as a walkie-talkie. And,

46. Use as a modern sofa in a doll house.

A dishonorable mention goes to the Random Normal Deviates for their computer listing suggesting that a banana may be cut into 1, 2, 3, etc. pieces. These witty young programmers deserve a bunch of black bananas for demonstrating all the imaginativeness of a digital blowfish.

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