

# The Carolina Indian Voice

Pembroke, NC

Robeson County

"Building communicative bridges in a tri-racial setting"

VOLUME 19 NUMBER 52

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1991

25 CENTS PER COPY

## REP. DIAL WILL NOT SEEK A SEAT IN 1992



Rep. Adolph L. Dial announced that he will not be a candidate for the North Carolina House of Representatives in '92. He made the announcement at a Recognition Dinner held in his honor Friday, December 13. The dinner was sponsored by the Committee to Elect Adolph L. Dial, Wendell Lowery, Chairman. Rep. Dial called his announcement the "best kept secret in Robeson County." He stated that a person always had to know, as the song said "When to fold them." After the dinner, Rep. Dial cited declining health as a major factor. He has bone cancer, which he says is "under control." But his biggest problem, he said, is his vision. He is legally blind due to diabetes. More than 350 people attended the dinner held at Fumell Swett High School Cafeteria.

## Raleigh Housing Authority Names Employee of Year

Physically challenged by the disease multiple sclerosis, Jeannie Jo Bell reports to work each day to the Raleigh Housing Authority (RHA). Using a cane to steady her gait, she assumes the many duties in her job as Personnel Specialist for RHA including screening applications for job vacancies and administering the employee benefits program.

Recently, Jeannie was named RHA's Employee of the Year. The announcement was made by H.L. Brantley, Deputy Executive Director at the 1991 Employees' Christmas Luncheon held December 13.

Presently Jeannie is a member and Membership Chairperson of Triangle Native American Society, Raleigh. She also serves on the Raleigh Mayor's Committee on Services to Persons with Disabilities. Jeannie is a member of Trinity Baptist Church, Raleigh.

Jeannie is the daughter of the late Hary H. "Red" Bell and Mary Martin Bell of Pembroke. She married Michael Eugene Nichols of Pembroke on December 25th.

## Indian Hospital Honors "Doctor of the Year"

Dr. Joseph E. Roberts, M.D., Family Practitioner at the Choctaw Nation Indian Hospital, Talihina, has been named Doctor of the Year for 1991, according to an announcement by Donald N. Crain, Administrator. "This honor is an indication of the deep respect provided by both staff and patients at the Choctaw Nation Indian Hospital. Your knowledge, medical competence, and cooperative attitude have contributed substantially to the ongoing health programs at the Indian Hospital. You are an outstanding member of the primary health care team and we thank you for your efforts."

Dr. Roberts, a Lumbee Indian from Pembroke, NC, received his BS degree in pre-medicine from Davidson College and his M.D. was earned at the University of North Carolina. His specialty is Family Medicine. He served his residency at Moses Cone Memorial Hospital, Greensboro. Dr. Roberts and his wife, Ramona, have two children, Samantha and Alison.

Dr. Roberts is the son of Mary poorboy of the Pembroke and the late Joseph E. Roberts.



## Jones Named NCAI Area VP

A. Bruce Jones, executive director of the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, was elected to the Executive Committee of the National Congress of American Indians. The election was held at the 48th Annual Convention in San Francisco, California on December 2-6, 1991. Jones was elected Southeast Area Vice President for the NCAI.

## EARNs SEMINARY DEGREE

Ernest Ray Brooks of Pembroke, NC received the Master of Divinity Degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary during Commencement Exercises December 14, 1991.

Brooks is the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Peter Brooks of Pembroke. He is a graduate of Pembroke High School and Pembroke State University. He is married to the former Sue Ellen Chavis of Pembroke.

Brooks is a member of West Robeson United Methodist Church in the Rockingham District of the North Carolina Conference.

## Prosperous New Year! From The Staff Of The Carolina Indian Voice Pembroke Kiwanis Report

By Ken Johnson

Program chairman Ed Teets presented Rev. Bruce Swett, pastor serving the Berea Baptist Church. The weekly meeting was held at the Town and Country Restaurant.

"Sharing the Christmas Special based on the 2nd chapter of Luke was Rev. Swett's message. The coming of the Lord was shared by shepherds, the Wisemen, the three kings. A coming together of the heavenly hosts and the peoples of the earth. Here two thousand years ago this baby born in a stable impressed the world as great news. Christ, the Savior, was born and brings hope to the world. Born in poverty, not rejecting mankind. The whole hosts

of angels are rejoicing and singing peace on earth and good will to mankind. God brought the true peace of joy of sharing his peace--the real meaning glorifying God's will. So let us share the good news of the Lord's coming into our lives.

Mrs. Mary Alvie Teets accompanied the singing of Christmas carols led by the trio including Clay Maynor, Ed Teets and Rev. Swett. Members' wives joined in the Christmas program.

Presiding-Clay Maynor. Invocation- Reggie Strickland. Song leader and program- Ed Teets. Reporter- Ken Johnson.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Due to jumbled lay out of the following article in last week's edition of The Carolina Indian Voice, we are re-running this article in its entirety. We apologize to Dr. Cummings and to Barbara Braveboy-Locklear. The error was because of the layout and was not a reflection of Ms. Braveboy-Locklear writing.

## Dr. Cummings travels long road to fulfill dream of becoming doctor

By Barbara Braveboy-Locklear

As a youth plowing farm rows in Robeson County Samuel Mack Cummings dreamt of one day being able to lay down mule reins for a stethoscope. He'd been told by his beloved paternal grandmother that he was a special child. And his father told him at an early age that he would be a physician. Yet, the distance from a tobacco field in rural Pembroke seemed a world's distance to medical school.

Dr. Cummings took the long way around to realizing his dream of becoming a physician.

He was born and raised the oldest child of six born to the Reverend Coolidge M. Cummings and Vanice Lowry Cummings, natives of Robeson County. When Dr. Cummings was still a toddler his parents moved to Louisville, Kentucky where his father entered seminary school. Several years later the family moved back to Robeson County for a brief stay before returning to Kentucky where Rev. Cummings took a pastorate.

Still dreaming of becoming a physician, Dr. Cummings graduated from a Ky. high school in 1966. Afterwards, on a three-sport athletic scholarship, he enrolled at Lambuth College in Jackson, Tenn. where he studied pre-medicine before dropping out after a three semester study.

"I quit because I wasn't sure whether I really wanted to be a physician," he explains.

The Lumbee Indian says he enlisted in the military because he thought serving would give him time to decide what he really wanted to do. "And I thought it would lead me an opportunity to see a little bit of the world." As an Air Force survival instructor he did just that when he traveled to the Philippines, Guam and three times to Vietnam during the six and one half years he served.

"The school bug bit me, and I got out," he says of his decision to leave military service. Dr. Cummings enrolled in Eastern Washington State University where he completed his undergraduate studies with a double major in physics and education.

The degree, coupled with a strong family bond, influenced him to return to his native county where he took a teaching position at Fairgrove High School. He taught physics and mathematics for two years at the school. And though happy teaching, his dreams never wavered from becoming a physician.

"I'd seen old friends who had gone to medical and law schools...they were on a straight track. There had been no school counselors to tell me I could enter medical school at an older age," he comments.

With mind made up, Dr. Cummings says that during his second year of teaching at the public school, he applied to dental school at UNC/Chapel Hill and was accepted. He turned the offer down because what he really wanted to study was medicine.

He lay down the eraser at Fairgrove School and entered Pembroke State University as a full-time pre-med student in order to complete intense chemistry courses. During this period he worked nights as an orderly at Scotland County Memorial Hospital in order to pay his tuition and living expenses.

His dream of studying medicine began to develop when he enrolled at UNC/Chapel Hill School of Medicine. He had attended the school's summer MED program and says he was impressed with his professors' philosophy that an admissions process should be used in determining whether one should become a physician. "They expected everyone who entered medical school to graduate," he says.

He lived on campus and his study was financed by scholarships and grants from a Native American association... "And money and food from relatives," he interjects.

His dream of earning his medical degree came true when he graduated from UNC in 1985. His medical specialty - Obstetrics and Gynecology. He was completing his medical residency at New Hanover Hospital in Wilmington, NC when "Uncle Sam" contacted him to come serve again in the military.

"I'd never been to Europe and told them I'd go back into the Air Force if I could be assigned to a station there," he laughs. His request was granted. He serves in the medical corps at the Royal Air Force Base in Lakenheath, England.

Dr. Cummings is assistant chairman of the department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. His clinic provides outpatient care for 150-200 ob/gyn patients per month. As assistant chairman he is a member of the department's medical records utilization review committee and supervises a certified midwife.

He also presents continuing medical education for nursing staff, as well as training with the immediate team which supports the wounded ground forces in desert storm. He provides lectures to nursing staff and emergency medical technician students on various obstetrical topics and issues.

Dr. Cummings says he likes his duty station because it offers diversity in patient population and lends professional and academic stimulation.

The forty-some-year-old Air Force major has delivered twelve sets of twins since being assigned to the Royal Air Force Base and sang "Happy Birthday" to each as he has done to the other more than 1,200 newborns he has delivered.

"It's a spontaneous act," he smiles of his singing to the newborns.

An eagle feather of sorts was given Dr. Cummings when he was made a medical consultant to the U.S. Embassy in London. He counts the prestigious assignment among his most-proud of while serving in the military.

The soft-spoken, modest physician plays down the fact he is the first Native American to serve as medical consultant to the U.S. Embassy there.

And when the doctor, father of five grown daughters, gets home...sick for his native Robeson County he picks up the telephone and calls home to his parents' home usually

two Sundays a month. He says this allows him an opportunity to find out what "Mama" has cooked for dinner; also a chance to talk with his siblings who usually gather at the Cummings homeplace for a traditional Sunday afternoon visit.

Staying in close touch with family is high on Dr. Cummings' priority list. His family reciprocates. Last July a maternal uncle made a surprise visit to England to see Dr. Cummings. In a pinning ceremony Burlin Lowry gave his beloved nephew the personal "Major leaves" he'd earned decades earlier while serving as an Air Force pilot. It seemed only fitting that this uncle would appear because he had earlier given Dr. Cummings his Captain bars...his first toy medical kit and his first golf club.

Come two more years Samuel M. Cummings must make a decision whether or not he will remain in military service. He does not ponder the thought now.

He admits to having a curious mind. "I've always wanted to see what's beyond the hill. Working for the military is like working for a major corporation. It has little shops all over the world."

For now he says he is content in singing "Happy Birthday" to newborn babies he delivers; attending theatre performances with his wife, Nancy; and keeping in touch with relatives in Robeson County who still live across the road from the fields he plowed as a young boy who dreamed of becoming a physician.

Air Force ROTC cadets from PSU and Santa Claus (who resembles Warren Love, director of PSU's Media Center) made their second annual Christmas visit recently to Bryan Memorial Learning Center in Lambert. Santa helped the cadets and their friends sing Christmas carols and distribute gifts, which consisted of fruit and candy. Those in the photograph are (left right) front row-

William Helms, Hope Mills; Buffy Revels, Pembroke; Santa; Mary Robertson, Fayetteville; Tom Helms, Pembroke; Joe Locklear, Pembroke; back row- Kevin Jacobs, Hope Mills; Ray Burd, Ruffin; Antonio Wilk, Fayetteville; Reece Stephenson, Wilmington; Michael Gragoritch, Pittsburgh; La Tim Kinzer, Fayetteville; Ken Dean, Pembroke; and Joshua Malcolm, Pembroke.