

# CAROLINA INDIAN VOICE

Robeson County

"Building communicative bridges in a tri-racial setting"

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## The Honorable.....

### Mayor Milton Ray Hunt, town of Pembroke

Pembroke-The town of Pembroke and Mayor Milton Ray Hunt are synonymous. They go together like peaches and cream, like a cold Pepsi and square nab at the end of a tobacco row, or maybe a river-cooled watermelon and a hot, sultry summer afternoon. They fit. It's hard to imagine one without the other.

Mayor Hunt, now 48, was born "behind Pates Supply Company" in downtown Pembroke...in a company house "no longer standing." Things have changed a lot since then, for both Mayor Hunt and the town of Pembroke: both have grown up considerably since that February 15 day in 1944.

Hunt says little about his biological parents, noting that he was raised from birth by his grandmother, "the only real mother I ever had. She mostly raised me, and was living with me when she died in 1973. I remember well that I was 29 years old at the time. She was 69." She was Mrs. Josephine Sampson Hunt, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Everitt Sampson of the Deep Branch Community. She was married to Harley Hunt, who died in 1953 at the relatively young age of 53.

Later on, after leaving the house behind Pates Supply Company, the Hunts, with grandson, Milton Ray, in tow, moved to Breece Street in Pembroke where the Mayor still resides in a renovated version of the original home he grew up in. He is married to the former Polly Deese, now an elementary school teacher at Union elementary School. They are the proud parents of two children: Anthony, 24; and Kimberly, 21. Both children have their own families now, and have presented their parents with four grandchildren to "love and spoil" as the mayor freely admits.

Mayor Hunt remembers growing up and playing in the streets of Pembroke as a youngster. A product of the Pembroke schools, Mayor Hunt is remembered for playing a "mean" game of pool. Contrary to the protestations of Vice-President Dan Quayle, Mayor Hunt seems not have been unnecessarily scarred by growing up mostly in a one grandparent home, although he does admit to growing up "in a hurry." He notes that "I've been mostly on my own since I was about twelve."

Mayor Hunt has long made his living from the sheetrock business. Mayor Hunt remembers being introduced to the dry wall business by the late Dock Smith, Dean Sampson and others. He began as a hanger and finisher and for the last eighteen years has "been on his own" as a contractor. He generally works from 10-20 men, depending on the business. For instance, Mayor Hunt laments that "right now our business is down some because we're in a recession."

Mayor Hunt frankly enjoys what he does for a living, and has developed quite a clientele. He does mostly "bidded work," and concentrates on multi-housing (apartments, condominiums etc.) and residential structures. Hunt proudly notes that many of his men have been with him for a number of years, and that he probably has worked as many as 500 men (and women too) over the years. He affirms that he doesn't know anyone who might be mad with him about a business dealing. He likes to pay top wages, and believes, truly, that a man's word is his bond. He likes to satisfy his clients, and will do whatever it takes to complete a job satisfactorily.

In spite of his entrepreneurial leanings, Mayor Hunt might love politics more. He especially enjoys being involved in a political race that pits his candidate against another. Right now, Mayor Hunt is intimately involved in former Governor Jim Hunt's spirited bid for another term as governor of North Carolina. Mayor Hunt serves as one of Governor Hunt's tri-county chairmen in Robeson County. He shares the helm with Lumberton Mayor Ray Pennington and David Green, a Parkton businessman and member of the Public Schools of Robeson County Board of Education. Although not related, Mayor Hunt is a great fan of former Governor Jim Hunt. He previously participated in his successful 1976 and 1980 campaigns for governor, & in his losing against Senator Jesse Helms in 1984. He believes that Governor Hunt is "People orientated, and would be a welcome relief after eight years of Republican Governor Jim Martin." Jim Hunt is vying with Jim Gardner, presently serving as Lt. Governor to replace the outgoing Martin.

Mayor Hunt can't remember when he hasn't been involved in a political race, either his own or someone else's. He remembers some of the campaigns he has been involved in over the years. He served as county chairman for John Ingram in his losing bid against Helms in '78, and was involved in the Eddie Knox campaign in '84. He also served as co-chairman locally for Senator Terry Sanford in 1986, and in Bob Jordan's campaign for governor in '88.

And he takes a great deal of pride in having been intimately involved in Glenn Maynor's bid for Sheriff in 1990. He counts Maynor as one of his best friends. They both share a love of politics, especially Robeson County-style politics.

Mayor Hunt sees a lot of good things in politics. He firmly believes that one can make a difference in politics, citing his own experiences in the town of Pembroke. He has run seven successful campaigns in Pembroke, and was first elected to the town council in 1975. He has never admitted getting tired of politics. Mayor Hunt says that "everyone should get involved in politics. The problem is too many people sit on the sidelines and let others run the political animal, whether it's a town council, the governor's office, or the presidency. It takes people getting involved in a personal way to make a real difference in every day life."

Having never lost an election, Mayor Hunt won his present position in 1983. He is especially proud that he ran without opposition in 1987. The 1987 race is the only time there has not been opposition in mayoral races in Pembroke. Having won another four year term in 1991, Mayor Hunt will have completed twelve years as mayor when the term expires in 1995.

Hunt follows an illustrious list of Pembroke mayors since the town won the right to vote and choose their own mayor in 1947. Until then, the governor chose the predominately-Indian town's mayor. Until 1947, the governor always chose a non-Indian as mayor. The late and beloved Rev. C.E. Locklear broke the logger jam when he won the first election in 1948 in which the Indian electorate was allowed to vote. Locklear was followed by the late J.C. Oxendine, then Samuel Locklear, Earlie Maynor, Juddie Revels, Jr., Reggle Strickland, Pete Jacobs, and the incumbent, Mayor Milton Ray Hunt. Hunt began serving on the council during Reggle Strickland's term as mayor. He also served during Pete Jacobs' term as mayor. Hunt extols both men, calling them first rate mayors. "Pembroke is fortunate to have men like Strickland and Jacobs...and those who preceded them too." Strickland was recently named by Mayor Hunt to head Pembroke's housing authority, and Jacobs is the county tax administrator.

Hunt also speaks well of McDuffie Cummings, the town manager for Pembroke since 1976. "We're fortunate to have someone of Mr. Cummings' ability to lead our town for the last fifteen and one-half years. Going to a manager-council form of government was a progressive and good step for Pembroke."

Pembroke has received some \$4 million dollars in Community Development and other grants over the last few years. As many as 300 homes have been refurbished since Hunt went on Pembroke's Town Council in 1975. "I don't believe there are any dilapidated houses left in Pembroke. I am real proud of our work in this area." Mayor Hunt has served with many councilmen and speaks well of most of them. As an example, he speaks glowingly of Larry T.

Brooks who has served in the council for fourteen years.

Hunt has served on a number of boards and organizations since throwing his hat into the political arena. For instance, he served eight years on the board of trustees for Robeson Community College, the last two as vice-chairman. He has also served on the board of directors of the Southeastern Economic Development Commission, and was one of the founding members of the Cardinal Health Agency. He presently serves on the Lumber River Council of Governments. Never one to sit on the sidelines, Mayor Hunt recently served as chairman of the re-building of the Pembroke Jaycees Clubhouse after a recent fire where he identifies himself these days as "an exalted rooster."

Hunt also expresses pride in helping found the Big Buck Hunting Club. The club leases 3,000 acres in Pender County, and maintains a lodge there for the member's benefit. Hunt has served as president of the club for eighteen years.

Hunt believes everything is "political," and is proud to call himself a politician who tries to make the world around him a better place. A good family man, Hunt is proud of the kinds of businesses which have located in Pembroke in recent years like Colony Plaza, Pemberton Place, the expansion of Fleetwood, Progressive Savings and Loan, Linda's Restaurant, Daniel's Bakery, and a new Food Lion Store that is ticketed to open in the western end of town soon. "Politics is a way of helping people, and I am proud of the recent accomplishments in Pembroke. I hope I have played a little part in our general progress. I am also proud of the improving relations with Pembroke State University and Lumbee Regional Development Association, Inc. in recent years. I feel good about that..."

In spite of his business interests, and political campaigns, Hunt stays busy as Mayor, averaging 100-150 appearances a year. In spite of what some may think, my primary interest is in helping my hometown grow. I am proud to be a citizen of the town of Pembroke. "If towns could talk, the town of Pembroke would express its pride in its native son too. The citizens, as noted, have expressed its pride seven times in electing him to represent them."

Bruce Barton is now a history teacher in the Public Schools of Robeson County. He served as the founder of the Carolina Indian Voice, and served as its editor for a number of years before changing forums.

**A CORRECTION...OF SORTS**  
Recently this writer wrote an article about Jim Lowry, one of the many entrepreneurs in the Indian camp. The article was well received, but one smart aleck pointed out that the editor might not know how to spell "entrepreneur" since the sub-head in the Lowry article read, "the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in the Lumbee Indian camp." That might be so, but the sub-headline should have read: "The entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in the Lumbee Indian camp." It is, and Ms. Brayboy, the editor, blames it all on a recalcitrant computer. Ummmm.

by Bruce Barton

## Local student conducts nutritional research for Bowman Gray School of Medicine

Ronny A. Bell, a Lumbee Indian who's studying for a Ph.D. degree in nutrition at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, has learned that people over eat for different reasons. Sometimes it stems from stress at work or an emotional problem. Or they may over eat because their friends or family encourage them to. And many times, the reasons overlap.

"There are social, psychological, and biological reasons that make people eat the way they do," said Bell in an interview. "For me, nutrition is a field that touches so many other disciplines."

Bell's latest nutrition research has taken him to the Bowman Gray School of Medicine of Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem. There he's assisting the staff of the North American Cervical Cancer Prevention Project, a cancer-research team that is working to inform Lumbee women about the risk of cervical cancer and the value of obtaining regular Pap smears.

The project is funded by a five-year grant from the National Cancer Institute.

"I read a notice in the Greensboro paper about this project at Bowman Gray," said Bell. "The word 'Lumbee' caught my eye. And then my department chair (at UNC-Greensboro) contacted Bowman Gray and asked about the possibility of me assisting them as part of my Ph.D. studies."

"I had always wanted to do my Ph.D. work with the Lumbee people," Bell continued. "For some reason, there's never been any research done on the typical diet of the Lumbees. You might assume that it's typically Southern: high fat and high sodium. But no scientific study has ever been done on the



Pembroke Mayor Milton R. Hunt

## Indian Housing Board meets Monday night

The Board of Commissioners of the N.C. State Indian Housing Authority will meet Monday, July 27, 1992 at the Administrative Office of the Housing Authority, located at 2200 Indian Creek Road, Fayetteville, North Carolina at 7 p.m. The meeting is open to the public.

Anyone desiring to be placed on the agenda must make a written request by July 24, 1992.

Send request to: Gregory A. Richardson, Executive Director, P.O. Box 2343, Fayetteville, NC 28302, or call (919)483-5073 for additional information.

## Kelli Wallace crowned Southern Sweetheart



Kellie Wallace of Lumberton recently won the Southern Sweetheart National Pageant. She is the eleven year old daughter of Earl & Yvonne Wallace of Lumberton.

At the pageant directed by Ms. Janet Hamm, Kelli competed in all areas of competition. Kelli won all areas of competition where she won fourteen trophies, six crowns including a bucket crown and \$1,000 savings bond, and a \$100 dollar savings bond for talent. Kelli will represent the beauty title as Young Miss Southern Sweetheart National Queen.

Kelli's sponsors for the pageant were Revels Funeral Home of Pembroke, Mr. and Mrs. Juddie Revels; John L. Locklear's Nationwide Insurance Co. of Lumberton, Mr. & Mrs. John L. Locklear, Jr. and Strickland's Paint & Wallpaper of Lumberton, Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Strickland.

