

# Along The Robeson Trail

By Dr. Stan Knich, Director PSU Native American Resource Center

Andy Rooney, famous for his brief humor at the close of the TV program *60 Minutes*, wrote last year in his syndicated newspaper column that "while the American Indians have a grand past, the impact of their culture on the world has been slight...There are no great Indian novels..."

At the time I pointed out that Pulitzer-prize-winning novelist Scott Momaday (who is a Kiowa Indian) would probably take exception to Mr. Rooney's statement. Of course there are a number of other fine Native American writers whose works also demonstrate that perhaps Mr. Rooney needs to read a bit more widely before making up his mind.

Since then, another especially wondrous example of Native American writing has been published which Mr. Rooney and a lot of other people ought to read. It is the new novel by Gerald Vizenor, called *Dead Voices*. Professor Vizenor is a Minnesota Chippewa (Anishinabe) who also happens to be on the faculty of the Ethnic Studies Department at the University of California. He also happens to be General Editor of the prestigious University of Oklahoma Press's American Indian Literature and Critical Studies Series. He has written a number of other books, including *The People Named the Chippewa and Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles*, and a great deal of poetry.

But the new book, *Dead Voices*,

stands out as an especially "Indian" novel. By that I mean that Vizenor uses the traditional Indian art of storytelling to its maximum effect. The stories *become* the novel.

On the surface the book is a series of stories about people who turn into animals (or is it the other way round?) In each story we magically see the world through the feelings and perspective of the animals (bears, squirrels, crows and so forth). The stories in the series are tightly woven together by images and little

repetitions that make reading the 144-page book flow by like a friendly brook hurrying down to join the river. But just beneath the surface of the book Vizenor shows us the world as it is divided between Indian and European points of view. He calls the Europeans "Wordies" (surely an appropriate name), and illustrates one of the major differences between modern American culture and traditional tribal culture—the difference between written culture and oral culture.

"She was a bear and teased me in mirrors as she did the children, and at the same time she said that tribal stories must be told not recorded, told to listeners but not readers, and she insisted that stories be heard through the ear not the eye. She was very determined about the ear in spite of the obvious inconsistencies. The tribal world was remembered in the ear...She even encouraged me to tell my own stories, but my stories were

lectures, or dead voices, so she told me to imagine in my own way the stories she had told me.

"I imitated her voice at first, practiced her hesitant manner, and repeated the sounds of her animal characters. The secret, she told me, was not to pretend, but to see and hear the real stories behind the words, the voices of the animals in me, not the definitions of the words alone...She said there were tricksters in our voices and natural sounds, tricksters who remembered the scenes, the wild visions in the shadows of our words. She warned me that even the most honored lectures were dead voices, that shadows were dead in recitations. She said written words were the burial grounds of shadows. The tricksters in the word are seen in the ear not the eye."

Vizenor proves what a masterful writer he is in the telling of these stories—"in spite of the obvious inconsistencies" of writing about telling.

*Dead Voices* is a delightfully humorous and sometimes gripping journey into tribal world view, brought to life through tales of survival in a modern city. The book is available from University of Oklahoma Press, and could be requested at any good book store or local library. Oh, and Mr. Rooney, this one's for you!

For more information, visit the Native American Resource Center in Old Main Building, on the campus of Pembroke State University.

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# Us

The call came at 4 o'clock in the morning. My aunt had died. The only question was when I was going home, not if. I made the necessary arrangements and departed the next day.

Upon arriving in Pembroke, I was immediately struck by the feeling of comfort and familiarity that came over me. I was home!

My father, older brother, and I waited for my younger brother to arrive. He arrived, we got dressed and went to the funeral home where the service was to be held.

My aunt had died in Michigan and had been flown home to rest beside her mother. I could not help but think of the special place that Pembroke must be for someone who lived 87 years to be drawn back to, to rest forever.

After a brief service, we went to our cars for the trip to the grave site. During this trip I noticed a phenomenon that I have not observed anywhere else in the world. As the funeral procession passed, each and every automobile approaching it pulled off the road, stopped, and waited for the procession to pass. The men removed their hats and talking in the vehicles ceased. A motorcyclist stopped and removed his helmet. This honor for the departed soul is deeply rooted in our ancestry. It is something instilled in us from birth. We honor our elders and the ones, young or old, who leave this physical world.

I was touched beyond words and will always remember and treasure that moment. My aunt was honored by persons who did not know her personally, but because she was one of US, she was given the respect we as a people hold so dearly.

Red Turtle

# Genealogical Glimpse

by Elisha Locklear

Rhoda by now has Aaron away from the fire and has begun to make him as comfortable as possible. She begins to survey their predicament. By now they have put several miles between themselves and the soldiers. The air is blustery, cold, and icy, and they are surrounded by hungry wolves. To compound hurt with misery, the leader of this party is even now lying, for all she knows, partially blinded by the fire. Sabra Ann is mending the fire while Rhoda keeps vigil over her son. She peers into to the rim of darkness but is unable to make out the forms of any wolves.

With questioning eyes, Sabra Ann touches Rhoda's arm and motions out into the night. She understands. For a long while now she has not heard the cry of a wolf and now she is unable to see one either. For the first time in what seemed like ages Sabra Ann notices what looks like a smile playing at the corners of the old lady's mouth. Rhoda knows that the wolves are gone, but why? Leaving without taking a prey, without being fed. She had never heard of such.

An eerie sound in the trees, the wind seems to cut to the very bones. The fire helps, but it was beginning to get low. Sabra Ann does not dare let it burn out for fear that the wolves will return with a vengeance. "If only we could make a small wind-break, we could save some of our wood and prevent our fire from being seen by anyone in the west", the old lady mutters to herself as she pilfers through the small packages she has carried with her. Ideas begin to take shape in her mind as she shakes out a few pieces of rawhide and cloth. Sabra Ann watches as she breaks some slender green limbs, pressing one end of them into the

cold, wet hillside until only a few feet of them are protruding, begins at one side, lacing the material to the sticks. When finished she has a half-moon enclosure around the fire, nearly ten feet high. The heat is exacting, but now and the wood warms through the night.

Aaron has begun to stir, a wife and Rhoda are hovering over him like two mother hens. Sabra Ann is afraid of what she will see. She is afraid to look at all. The cry of an owl is heard in the trees, and then a horrible roar begins. It's as if a whole forest were screaming and flying in circles over the small party sitting there. Is this an omen? To man, she people the owl is a bad omen, to others a good one.

Rhoda marvels at the strange penings that they have encountered on this dreadful trip. If in Great Spirit would remember this party tonight and bring good to their little side of the mountain Rhoda sits down beside her husband to muse over the event, for the past few hours. So filled with tension, so much danger, Rhoda wonders, should she have led her family to the west? What is a BAD OMEN? Why turns to look at Aaron's face and notices that the air has turned cold and it has begun to snow.

A look of peace has crossed Aaron's face. Rhoda and Sabra Ann senses this and sits down to rest. It will take the rest of the night to warm up and to dry out their things as possible. For tonight Sabra Ann is aware that children have been whipped some time. The wind can cry shrilly as the snow starts to

# Reflections by Alta Nye Oxendine

This time I got behind on *Thanksgiving and Christmas* thoughts and now it's past New Year's!

Gordon and Jeff. But I'd like to talk a little about my "baby", Gordon. Each year I find it harder to realize how old he would be, if he was still here with us. Well, believe it or not Gordon would have turned 28 on December 28th. I had planned to write more about my third child. But I want to go back to Christmas time and pick up where I left off last time.

In the meantime, a belated "Happy Birthday" to my son-in-law, Jeff, who was born on that very same date.

"Thanks-giving" at Christmas. Since most of us are so busy rushing around before Christmas, perhaps this after-Christmas season is a good time to stop and reflect about some of the things we tend to overlook in the story of the first Christmas. Because I began at Thanksgiving time, looking for "Songs of Praise" in the Book of Psalms, I've been amazed at how many expressions of praise are to be found in both the Old and New Testaments.

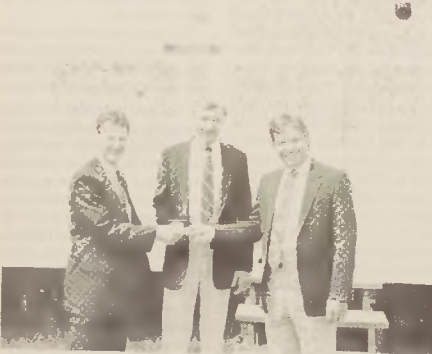
This year I've become more aware than ever of this powerful "Song of Praise" proclaimed by the angels as they announced the birth of Jesus (See Luke 2). And I've become even more impressed with the "Song of Praise" by the young maiden chosen by God to be the mother of his earthly divine-human, Son, Jesus Christ. Wouldn't this be a good time for all of us to read Mary's song in the first chapter of the Gospel of "Good News" written by Luke, a doctor and follower of Jesus?

More Songs of Praise and "Thanks-giving". How about joining me in the adventure of looking throughout the Bible for songs of praise and Thanks-giving?

One of my resolutions for 1993 is to learn to praise the Lord at the beginning of the day, the end of the day, and in between, even when things around me are not all that cheerful.

I hope this season of Thanksgiving and Christmas will have taught me about Thanks-Living as well as Thanks-giving!

# Say you read it in the Carolina Indian Voice



Pictured left to right: David O'Neil General Manager Maxton & Sanford Plants, Harry Reed Owner of Harry Reed Homes, Billy Woolard Sales Manager of Maxton & Sanford Plants, Pictured with keys to the 1000th Redman Home Manufactured from the Maxton Plant sold in Robeson County to the Randy Hunt Family in Fairmont, NC. Harry Reed of Harry Reed Homes has been designated by Redman Homes as an Outstanding dealer achieving

over one million dollars in wholesale purchases from the Redman plant in Maxton, N.C. and Sanford plant.

Mr. Reed has been in mobile home retail sales for 26 years. Mr. Reed has earned numerous sales and service awards and is a highly recognized volume Redman retailer. Redman Homes recently awarded Mr. Reed and his wife Lynda A. Vacation to Puerto Rico for outstanding sales and service.

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Kenda Bird, Junior Miss Lumbee is shown beside Rep. Adolph Dial. She was among the special guests attending the 70th birthday celebration of Rep. Dial. Mrs. Harriet Dial is shown left. Kenda is the daughter of Glenda R. Bird and the late Kenneth Bird. She is the second Junior Miss Lumbee.

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# YOUR BIBLE AND YOU

by Daniel Davis

Public-opinion polls have revealed that the average person's knowledge of the Bible is extremely limited. Few of those questioned could name a dozen of its leading characters. Fewer still could list its sixty-six books in the "Bible-belt" things may be a little better, yet there is a problem.

There must be millions of Bibles lying around in Christian homes unopened and unread, save possibly on special occasions such as weddings and funerals. Some people, especially this time of year, start out in 1987 to read the Bible, only to give up after glancing at the first few chapters. It is to music videos, video games, movies and our fast-paced life style that seem little in the Bible to compete.

Unable to find anything of gripping interest, or bored by some white phraseology, many set the Bible aside as if it were completely beyond understanding. God's word is rich in its power to change lives. It is written word to a fallen creation. The Bible was meant for you, the common folk. Not for the few who can study Greek and Hebrew. The letter was inspired by the Holy Spirit for all of God's children on earth.

How is it with you and your Bible? Do you read it? Do you enjoy it? Do you not start the new year right...in prayer with your Bible and you.

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# Types of incontinence

Defined as "the involuntary loss of urine of a severe as to have social and/or hygienic consequences," urinary incontinence affects at least 10 million adults in the United States.

Those with some conditions may need only to sneeze, cough, or laugh to lose urine. Though some cases are serious, for the majority of those affected the treatment is often as simple as exercise.

To learn more, get a FREE BROCHURE at our Pembroke Counter describing several types of incontinence and don't hesitate to ask your doctor about this condition—the cure for you may be quite simple.

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