

ALONG the ROBESON TRAIL

by Dr. Stan Knick, Director,
PSU Native American Resource Center

Over the past few weeks folks in Robeson County, especially public school students, have had the opportunity to be inspired by one of America's foremost Native American writers. Simon Ortiz is a member of the Acoma Pueblo community of New Mexico, and holds a master's degree in writing from the University of Iowa. He has taught Native American creative writing and literature at the University of New Mexico and elsewhere. He has been honored at the White House, and has written many books, poems and other works.

He was brought here in main part by the efforts of Barbara Braveboy-Locklear and Gaye Simmons-Cushing, two North Carolina Native American women who are active in the world of literature and arts. His purpose here is to encourage folks to write about their own experiences, history and culture, and from all indications he is doing an excellent job of it. This is due in part, no doubt, to his warm personable manner.

I first heard of Simon Ortiz back in 1974 when one of his stories appeared in what was to become one of my favorite books, *The Portable North American Indian Reader* (edited by Frederick Turner). The Ortiz story is called "Kaiser and the War" (originally printed in *New Mexico Quarterly* in 1969), and it is one of the best examples of the short story form anywhere. In it Ortiz tells us about Kaiser, a Native American who didn't want to go in the army and who some people thought of as crazy. The story shows government men coming to the reservation to get Kaiser, not being

able to find him, and then resorting to employing other Indian men as guides to look for Kaiser. Here in the deadly serious business of looking for an apparent draft-evader, Ortiz gives us some good laughs.

"The officials for the Indian Affairs didn't give up though. They sent back some more men. The county sheriff had decided it wasn't worth it, besides he had a whole county to take care of. And the Indians were deputized again. More of them volunteered this time, some had to be turned away. They had figured out how to work it: they wouldn't have to tell, if they knew, where Kaiser was. All they would have to do was walk and say from time to time, 'Maybe he's over there by that canyon. Used to be there was some good hiding places back when the Apache and Navaho were raising h---.' And some would go over there and some in the other direction, investigating good hiding places. But after camping around Black Mesa for a week this time, the Indian Affairs gave up. They went by Faustin's house the day they left for Albuquerque and left a message: the government would wait and when Kaiser least expected it, they would get him and he would have to go to jail."

"Kaiser decided to volunteer for the army..."

Of course Kaiser ends up being put in prison anyway, for evading the government men. Some folks from the reservation went to the prison to visit him: "And when someone asked Kaiser if he was okay, he said he was fine and he guessed he would be

American pretty soon being that he was around them so much." The war finally ends and the story goes on:

"My father and a couple of other guys went down to the Indian Affairs office to see what they could find out about Kaiser. They were told that Kaiser was going to have to stay in the pen longer now because he had tried to kill somebody. Well, he just went crazy one day, and he made a mistake so he'll just have to stay in for a couple more years or so, the Indian Affairs said. That was the first anybody heard of Kaiser trying to kill somebody, and some people said why the h--- didn't they put him in the army for that like they wanted to in the first place..."

But Kaiser eventually comes home wearing the gray suit he was issued when released from prison, and Ortiz shows us how he has been changed by his experience: "When they reached home, his sister and nephew were very happy to see him. They cried and laughed at the same time..."

To find out what happened to Kaiser, and more about Simon Ortiz's other writings, see next week's segment of *Along The Robeson Trail*. Or, if you can't wait (or if you want to read the whole wonderful story yourself) check your local library or bookstore for *The Portable North American Indian Reader*. If they don't have it, ask them to order it for you.

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

REFLECTIONS

by Alta Nye Oxendine

Trusting

The way it looks, I'm going to have to use part of each column just to correct mistakes. This time it's spelling. Unlike math, spelling was always easy for me when I was growing up. In fact, one day in fifth grade I cried when I got my paper back without the usual "100." It turned out that I'd heard the word wrong. Instead of "parade," I wrote down "hurray." Actually, I've spent most of my life as a "perfectionist." Not a person who does things PERFECTLY, but a person who (like most of my family) seemed to be born with a need for perfection and who also grew up believing that she was SUPPOSED to do everything perfectly! I've had a PASS-FAIL mentality. Anything less than perfect was NO GOOD. I thought Thinking like this can really SLOW YOU DOWN. And when you're slow already, you NEVER get caught up.

Years ago, I began to realize that trying for perfection in every little thing is neither realistic nor necessary. But that idea reinforced in childhood, back when I thought (MISTAKENLY) that I had to EARN my parents' love, has kept ON tripping me up. By now, at 66, with my weekly column mistakes, along with plenty of other kinds each day, I MAY be getting OVER it at last!

THANKFULLY, you and I do not have to EARN the love of our HEAVENLY parent, our Creator savior/Lord.

Spelling Names Correctly
I still believe there are areas where accuracy is important. Like using names correctly, in speaking and in writing. In fact, I often ask a person if he/she would prefer to be called by the name given at birth or by a nickname. When our Donny was a baby I decided to call him by THAT name for awhile, since Donald Ray sounded so formal.

To my surprise, it stuck. Only in class and ROTC did he want to be called anything but Donny. And (unlike my mother) I've learned to call my brothers (Russell and Stanley) just Russ and Stan.

Last time I was late delivering my column because I was trying to find the correct spelling for a couple of the Olympic athlete's names (Hading, for Tonya, was a typo. Guess we all know she grew up as a HARDING). However, later the same, I discovered that I should have written Duncan (not Doug) Kennedy and Monica SELES (not Sellars). I don't think I'll forget those names again.

Disappointments and Tragedies
Since Dan Jansen DID finally win HIS LONG AWAITED gold medal, maybe I could substitute Scott Davis (a fellow Montanan from Great Falls and the current U.S. men's champion figure skater) as one of many DISAPPOINTED athletes who need our support and our prayers. Scott Hamilton said he had never seen Davis fall AS BADLY as he did in his second attempt for a medal. Then he added that David will be back. Lately I've been taking a special interest in athletes from both my native state (MT) and my adopted state (NC). Let's also remember each Olympic athlete family where there has been SERIOUS injury or SEVERE tragedy. And of course WORLD situations like the fragile "cease-fire" in Sarajevo, site of the 1984 Winter Olympics. And the selling of our nation's secrets to the notorious KGB, an extremely well-organized international agency that, for decades, has been regularly using diplomats stationed in this country as spies. Also let's pray for all involved in tragedies like the recent one at Laurel Hill.

Update
Mother seems to be doing okay after another fall and a new cold.

THANKS to all who remember her in prayer from time to time. She was surprised to be given a crown to wear all day as "queen" by the nursing home on Valentine's Day. (I really wasn't. Fortunately, even at 97 she is more friendly, active and alert than most of the other residents there.)

This and That
Sometimes I really miss having a car. Like last week, when I did not get my column in.

Guess what! After eight and a half years, I finally got my LAST two braces off. They were left there to hold those two teeth in place until I got my lower bridge. In the meantime, money got spent for other things, including a used word processor. A temporary bridge is in place, waiting for the permanent one to be built and "installed." Glad I got my teeth straightened first even if I WAS in my late fifties before learning it could help my TMJ (jaw) problems. What a relief to be getting this matter cared for, after YEARS of thinking about it.

Lent--A Good Time To Take Inventory

As a Protestant I've never paid a lot of attention to Lent. After all, I was not interested in things like the Mardi Gras or "Fat Tuesday." To me one time of the year was about the same as another. But when I taught a children's Sunday School class at First UMC, I began to see the importance of thinking about Jesus' life and teachings between Christmas and Easter. Then last year I read a devotional booklet put out by a Catholic group. The booklet covered the period of LENT.

The writing for each day focused on preparing ourselves personally for the observance of "Holy Week," particularly Good Friday and Easter. What better time of the year to do this, than during those weeks leading up to Easter, that we call "Lent."

The Sunday School Lesson

by John R. Brayboy, Salem Missionary Baptist Church

Saved by Faith

- I. Paul's Introduction and Christ's Lordship
- II. Thanksgiving
- III. Longing to visit Rome
- IV. Readiness to Preach
- V. The Power of the Gospel

Verse to Remember: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." Romans 1:16

In the first verse, Paul declared himself a servant of Jesus Christ and separated unto the Gospel of God. The Apostle Paul had committed his life to the cause of Christ and the furtherance of the gospel at any cost.

Verse 2 tells of the promise spoken of to the forefathers of prophets concerning Christ's redemption for man aforesaid. Paul was reminding the Romans that he was a servant to tell of to reveal this promise.

Verses 3-7 Paul we remember from Acts no doubt was addressing a mixed congregation of Jews and Gentiles. In these verses Paul points out concerning Jesus that He was the Son of God but was also man and through the lineage or seed of David and the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. We are righteous or holy not by our works or deeds but by the newness of life through the finished work at Calvary. We have life in us because of the resurrection.

Another thing we see in Verse 5 is the grace of God that we have received from Christ, given freely to all who believe. Along with that Grace comes obedience to the faith. Grace gives us a desire to serve God and to be pleasing to God. We cannot do anything for God apart from the grace of God.

In Verses 6 and 7 Paul makes those in Rome aware that because of that grace we are not only called of Jesus Christ, but also saints. Paul ends this introduction with glory to God and Jesus Christ from which our grace comes.

Verse 5, Paul gives thanks to God through Jesus Christ for their faith. No doubt the faith of the church at Rome reached far beyond the boundaries of Rome. It was talked about throughout the whole world. Our faith and our example of Christian living ought to be exemplified in this manner.

Verses 9-13 The apostle Paul said he made mention of them in his

was his witness to that. Too many times someone asks us to pray for them and we say that we will but we do not. Paul had a bond and a desire for the saints at Rome and wanted to see them continue to mature in the work of the Lord. We ought to always pray for others and try to be an encouragement to them. Paul had a desire to visit the Romans and to share in their joy. He wanted to share some spiritual gift. We ought to always be ready and willing to share our talents or gifts with others.

Paul wanted to fellowship with the saints at Rome. Through fellowship he could be comforted and they could be also. The fellowship of God's people is important in our Christian life because we can share our mutual faith and be encouraged to go on.

In verse 13 Paul stated that he was hindered from coming to them even though he had purposed to. HE desired fruit of them as among other Gentiles. Paul's greatest desire was to see souls saved for Christ's sake. Today I am afraid we as God's people have lost that burning desire to see souls saved.

Verses 14-17 In verse 14 Paul in essence said "I have an obligation to the Gentiles, wise and unwise." That obligation being to preach the gospel (birth, death, burial, resurrection) of Jesus Christ. Verse 15, Paul states that he's ready to preach the gospel at Rome also. Paul had a burning desire to witness for Christ at every opportunity, whether at Rome or Macedonia or wherever. By the same token we need to follow Paul's example of telling others about the grace of God. In verse 16 Paul states his boldness about the gospel. He is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. There is power in the gospel of Christ and with that power we can have boldness to tell others the wonderful news of Jesus.

In Verse 16 the apostle Paul gives a revelation that through the gospel we can see the righteousness of God. In the latter phrase of this verse Paul states what God instituted from the beginning of creation. "The just shall live by faith." Hebrews 13:1 says: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." All through the ages man has walked by faith with God and God still expects the just to walk by faith.

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The Coach's Corner

by Dr. Ken Johnson

Required P.E.
What has happened to this requirement? Who is responsible for dropping it from the last three years of high school? This apparently stems from the state department of public instruction on down. I'm sure if the state department of public instruction had been manned by non-scholarship men this would never have happened. They just don't see the coach caring enough to want to do gym classes and coach too, especially in college sports. The "total sports program concept" just doesn't exist anymore. The college coach must recruit to get winners and he doesn't have time to teach P.E.

Classes. So the administrators sympathize with him and cut down his teaching hours from 15 hours to 12 hours and less.

In the mean time too many kids are turning to drugs just because they don't know how to play seasonal sports. Idle hands get into trouble. The "knowledge objective" as shown by the media's scat scores has shown the "physical objective" is of no interest to the sports pages. Not once in 25 years has the chairman P.E. at PSU's name ever been in the paper. Why? Because they just don't care about the No. 1 objective of Health & activity. It has to be taught, not "got"