

## Readers' Forum

### Reader calls for two days of prayer and fasting for LRDA Board of Directors

Dear Mrs. Connie,

I've read alot and heard alot of what is going on with the Lumbee lately. But it's hard to believe the latest, then again I'm not totally surprised, after all it only point's to the hands of time. The Good Book tells us what to expect at the end of time. Brother will turn against Brother, man shall become lovers of the flesh (Homosexuals). For more signs turn to Matthew 24: 3-51. It seems history goes in cycles. As soon as a people have a high it is followed by lows and the Lumbee really haven't had too many reasons lately to feel good about themselves.

But even with the Michael Jordan thing and the drug problems, the Lumbee people were beginning to take pride in themselves again, like they did when they saved Old Main and broke Double Voting. Now the rug has been jerked from under them by their own leaders, I'm not surprised they fired Ruth B. Locklear, but the rest of their actions I just don't understand. To take Mr. Adolph Dial off the Federal Recognition Committee, I don't comprehend such action. No this doesn't mean I've changed my mind about the Lumbee theory. I know that my ancestors came from Roanoke in Virginia, not the island. I still don't believe that the Lumbee came from the Lost Colony, but that is neither here nor there. It's not my place to tell you what to believe, but it is my place to tell you what the

Almighty said, "Believe on him and thou shalt be saved."

My point is Mr. Adolph has paid his dues to sit on that committee. I may not respect Mr. Dial's theory of who he says we are but I do respect him as an Elder. It was Mr. Dial who taught me in college to get out and find out who my people were, to come up with facts not theories. He also taught me to stand up for what I believe, no matter what the cost, as long as my cause was for the people. Believe me, we bumped heads in class more than a few times, but the bottom line was he had my respect and I now have come to see him respect me.

My question is who did the LRDA Board of Directors seek advice from to take such action. Did they call upon our Religious Leaders? I don't think so. Did they announce it to the people to get their input? I don't remember anyone commenting to that fact. They did it behind closed doors. Well I'm not going to say much about that. I'll leave that up to you.

I'm grateful that I can understand the ways of the Almighty. Listen to what He says in Proverbs 18:2-3 "A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself. When the wicked cometh, then cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach". I wonder if the LRDA Board of Directors realizes they have given Jesse Helms and Ed Taylor ammunition to fight the Lumbee Bill.

I realize the people on the LRDA Board are just human and they, like

myself and anyone else, can and will make mistakes. I encourage all the Christian people to pray and fast for two days that the Almighty will share his wisdom with the LRDA Board.

Our Church the Triad Native American United Methodist Church in Greensboro has pledged to do so, even though we are not all Lumbee nor all of our members Native American. My question is what about the Churches around Robeson, Scotland, Hoke and Cumberland Counties, do you accept the challenge? As Christians prayer is one of the most powerful weapons we have against the world today, but are we really using it? Read what it says in Acts 4:31 "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the word of God with boldness." We are only asking for two days, let's show others what the power of prayer can do when we all work together.

Let's tell the LRDA Board members that we are praying for them and that we wish them only the Blessings of the Almighty. I plead with you to show them what Christian Love is all about, that I can care for you even if I don't approve of your actions. Christians remember you are not perfect, you are only forgiven. Let's share that with these and all people.

If we can't do it for ourselves, please do it for the Children.  
In the True Way,  
Derek Lowry.

### Reader Offended by LRDA's Board Chairman's Comments on Constitution

As a Lumbee Indian, I was very offended by the LRDA Board Chairman's comment in the Fayetteville Times. Obviously, Mr. Bobby Dean Locklear has no idea what a tribal constitution is or who has authority to adopt a tribal constitution. This may be understandable since he has not attended any meeting of the Constitutional Assembly since it was first convened, over eight months ago. I have attended, and can tell you from first hand experience that the delegates writing the constitution are as impressive group ever assembled by the Lumbee people. They are assisted by one of the foremost authorities in federal Indian law, Dr. Arlinda Locklear, and they were selected by Indian Churches in a manner of each Church's choosing. They were not appointed by LRDA, as Mr. Locklear commented to the Fayetteville Times. It is obvious that LRDA has problems with a lot of things. First, it wanted community education stopped.

We should all be asking ourselves why an organization like LRDA would want to keep Lumbee people ignorant of their right to organize under a constitution. Next, it cut off funds to the delegates writing the constitution. Why? Mr. Bobby Dean Locklear says LRDA did this in order to study the draft constitution. Why haven't they been studying over the past eight months? Or, is this just an excuse to disguise the real intent, which is to stop the Lumbee people from debating on the issues they must address in writing a tribal constitution? Is it possible that LRDA, which has no members, and is a private corporation, wants to make those decisions for the people without either their knowledge or participation? Then, it suspends Ms. Ruth Locklear, a longtime advocate for Lumbee people, and one of the advisors to the delegates writing the constitution. Why? Is it possible that this is yet another tactic of LRDA to keep people from organizing under

a democratic form of tribal government?

We, as Lumbee people, must examine these questions carefully. We must take a long hard look at LRDA as it is rather than what it proclaims itself to be. The facts are: LRDA is a private corporation with no members. It has no authority over people to be usurping their right to make decisions that only they can make. The Lumbee people may support LRDA in its antipoverty program, but to permit LRDA to deter the Lumbee people from the pursuit of tribal government that is based upon democratic principles is a price that no reasonable thinking person is willing to pay.

I say to these delegates, go forward with your meetings and thank you for the work you are doing for Lumbee people.

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### How can media better highlight and honor American Indian heritage

by A. Clay Brewington (Limping Elk)

How can media (film, TV, music, news) better highlight and honor American Indian culture and heritage?

How? By getting to know American Indians better. By learning about his psyche (how he thinks), his persona, what he expects, what he needs, what he wants, where he is going. Figuratively, "walk a mile in his moccasins."

Several ways come to mind that would help the media to do this and that would contribute to honoring the American Indian through the various media: a research team could tour Indian reservations and non-reservation Indians interviewing and cataloging their experiences and lives (especially, older Indians). Media entities should seek and use Indian talent both celebrity and non-celebrity, those naturally and academically skilled to assist with and to give input on American Indian media projects. Make entertainment that highlights positive aspects of our humanness: our way of life, families, childhood, customs, shelter, food and clothing, etc. Depict in media events real life situations such as our happiness, our struggles, our triumphs, our sorrows, our successes, our disappointments.

on hopes and dreams.

Early American Indian influence is all around us today. The names of states (Missouri), and cities (Manteo, North Carolina) are two examples. News, stories, feature films, and documentaries can enhance and expand the horizons of the native experience for educational as well as entertainment purposes.

Television shows about American Indians in the past and present other than stereotype westerns. Two settings come to mind for Native American television production. One is a modern American Indian comedy (sitcom) with a reservation background. The other is a human interest show. Moreover, the production of movies similar to "Wind Walker" and "Dances With Wolves" entertain and give an overview of American Indian life before his subjugation. Produce more films like these. Also, the television show "Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman" shows promise in positive portrayals of Native Americans.

Another avenue for presenting positive views of Indians and highlighting their culture would be through a well produced American

Indian Broadway type musical! What an impact this could have on the theater going public's consciousness! A musical about American Indians has the potential of becoming a cultural showcase: a major media event!

Finally, fresh, lively, realistic documentaries about the many interesting yet little known facts that abound about American Indians should be produced. By way of illustration, when the first European explorers came to our saculent, almost virgin soil, our forefathers gave to them new food sources among other human use things previously unknown outside the Indian's world. Corn, beans, squash, pumpkins, peanuts, and potatoes are among the best known American Indian foods used through out the world today. Even "Much of what is called "Southern cooking" is really just Indian cooking modified by the use of products from domesticated animals as well as the cultivated plants (including cabbage, carrots, and sugar cane) that were brought to America by European settlers" (source: North Carolina State Museum of Natural Sciences).

Your question is good. We do not wish to be "Gone With The Buffalo!"



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