

## Readers' Forum

### Being Indian is a Definite Way of Life

Dear Old Wiz,  
I am writing in response to your article in last week's edition of the Carolina Indian Voice. I would just like to say Ol' Wiz (with no disrespect to your "wisdom") that being an Indian is much more than Feathers, Buckskins, and Tepees. It's most definitely a way of life. I live in an urban area and I have had to fight for all my life for my Indian identity. I am faced with stereotypes about feathers and tepees on a daily basis. I try to teach those I come into contact with, true statements about my culture and heritage so to rid them of these negative stereotypes about my people. It was 1 until I was 17 years old on my first day at PSU did I look around and see other Indian students in class with me. I never had this advantage before. Indians that live in and around Robeson County take these things for granted.

You know you are right about one thing, we were not born with feathers, we were ALL born naked. Even Adam and Eve were created naked, but with the shame of the first sin came fig leaves. I firmly believe God never intended for us to wear clothing but all races and colors do.

Being Indian is what's in your heart, whether you are in a three piece suit or in full traditional regalia. Wearing feathers and living out west doesn't make the Navahos any more Indian than I. I can make the transition

from the white man's world to an Indian world with one easy step. No matter if I am in a group of Indians or whites, I stand proud to say I am a member of the Lumbee-Cheraw Indian Tribe.

To all the candidates running for Tribal Council let me say to You: Be able to make that transition, be able to step from that suit into a ribbon shirt and thank the creator, for life, through dance at a POW WOW and Vice-Versa. Yes, it is true we live in a White dominated society, but one thing they can't take from us is Indian pride, what's in our hearts and our minds.

Let's continue to unite and educate our children in the white man's world so that they may prosper in that society, but let's not forget to also unite and educate them in their rich heritage for that is not only the adhesive that bonds us as a people, but is worth more than all the white man's gold. Whether we are Lumbee-Cheraw, Sioux, Haliwa Saponi, Navaho, Coharie, Mohawk, Waccamaw, Siouan, Seminole, Meherrin, Catawba, or Cherokee, we are all creatures of the same creator from which all things come, and the same spirituality, heritage and pride makes us Indians in every sense of the word.

Sincerely,  
Sharon Locklear, Lumbee/  
Cheraw  
Charlotte, NC

## Traditionally Speaking

Loca' E Essi'kiv

(Painted Turtle)



### IT IS TIME TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE SAY.

I read with interest the article by Ol' Wiz last week and feel it necessary to ask her to stop pretending to be someone she is not. First, I think that it is important for the readership of the Carolina Indian Voice to understand that the writer of Ol' Wiz is not an elderly man who is constantly getting a reading from the real people in Lumbee-Cheraw land with respect to pertinent issues. The writer is a lady who on the surface seems to have her own personal agenda. I was taught that when one works with an elections committee, one should maintain a position of neutrality publicly. The latest article by Ol' Wiz reflects the position that was taken by some of the candidates for Tribal Chairperson, therefore, I guess that one of those candidates is her choice. If she truly feels this way about Native American Regalia, then I feel sorry for her and wonder who and what she supports. Her article reminds me of one of the questions and the answers generated at the forum at Purnell Swett, recently. Excuse my paraphrasing but the question was basically WOULD YOU AS TRIBAL CHAIRPERSON SUPPORT ACTIVITIES SUCH AS POW WOWS, CRAFT ACTIVITIES AND OTHER STRICTLY NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES? Most of the answers by the candidates dealt with whether they would or would not wear feathers as Tribal Chairperson. I have never heard anyone who supports Native American Cultural activities state that to be Native American one must wear feathers or Regalia, however, they do feel that one should show respect for the eagles and hawks and their feathers. We as Native Americans should respect all living things including all the birds, animals, fish and all of mankind. Those of us who support cultural activities and recognize the need to retain these activities call ourselves "Traditionalists". Unlike the lady who writes Ol' Wiz, we know that it is important that all aspects of our Native American heritage be maintained for ourselves as well as for our children and their children. I have heard others say that we Lumbee-Cheraw Native Americans have never danced or worn feathers or made baskets, however this statement could not be further from the truth. One need only visit the Museum in Old Main to study and experience our ancestors' artifacts some of which are very similar to other Native American Tribes including the western tribes. One need only to ask some of our elders about the "Redman's Society" to come to an understanding that our people have been participating in uniquely Native American activities. We as individuals, tribal leaders, and tribal members need to know our past, present and future.

So, I say to Ol' Wiz instead of trying to attack those who are concerned about preserving our cultural heritage support them and their efforts. We will get Federal Recognition because we can and do

demonstrate that we have a uniquely Native American Heritage and past not because we are like any other typical southern group and community.

So, Sister Wiz if you are going to try and influence people in the public forum, at least tell them who you are.

By the way, I told the people in one of my early articles, who I am. I am Ray Littleturtle's baby brother. I can be seen with my name on my hat also. I prefer to write under my Native American name.

Loca' E Essi'kiv (Painted Turtle)

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### ATTENTION LADIES!!!

Single Lumbee Indian male, 31, Small business owner, handsome, fun loving, looking for single Lumbee Indian Female 18-35 years old for friendship. Interested? Write to: K. Woods, P.O. Box 605, Garysburg, NC 27831.



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## Vote Jimmy Strickland

August 27, 1994  
6:30 A.M.-7:30 P.M.

"A Man Called By God, With A Vision of Hope For the Future"



I strongly believe that we as Lumbee people must set a precedent with our first tribal council. We must, for the sake of our children and our future generations, elect representatives who are spiritually mature, morally sound, full of integrity and honesty, and those who have no personal agenda.

If elected Tribal Chairman, I affirm to you that I will seek the face of God before making decisions. I will also seek the counsel of others, especially our elders. I will make all decisions with this thought in mind: All wisdom comes from God. I will not become a typical politician, but will by the Grace of God, remember that the Lumbee people are a proud people who believe that a man's word is his bond. I will strive to uphold the principles of the Lumbee people—truthfulness when we speak, honesty in our business dealings, responsibility for our young and elderly, a strong commitment to education, and better employment opportunities.

I believe that if we work together and continue to live by The Christian Principles which have made us a strong, proud, and determined people, we can reach these goals.

I offer as my qualifications for this office: a two year diploma in Ministry Training and Church Leadership from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kentucky, with continuing studies in Religion as a senior at Campbell University; 23 years experience in Pastoral Leadership in Counseling and Finance Budgeting; Service to the Burnt Swamp Baptist Association as Moderator of the Association for four years, and Moderator for the Preachers and Deacons for four years; Also served on the Nomination Committee, Advisory Board, Association Planning Committee, Ordination Committee, and Missions Committee; and a member of the Lumbee Indian Constitution Committee.

## 20TH ANNUAL BALTIMORE POW-WOW

AUGUST 26 - 28, 1994

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