

Editorial and Opinion Page



Along the Robeson Trail

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

At Thanksgiving, Christmas and other occasions when large groups of people gather to eat, a roasted turkey is a common sight. They are large birds, so they feed a lot of people, and they are relatively easy to cook. Twenty minutes per pound at 350 degrees, in a covered pan with some salt and pepper, will yield a delicious and healthy food that is distinctly American.

Of course turkeys are nothing new to Native Americans. One of the most common types of bones found in the fire pits and trash pits of ancient Indian archaeological sites is turkey. Turkeys had been present in the Americas for so long prior to the coming of Europeans that the birds had spread themselves out and diversified into three separate wild species. The oldest of these was *Meleagris crassipes*, which was common as far back as the last Ice Age (the Pleistocene). This medium-sized turkey species seems to have disappeared by about 3,000 years ago.

In the Yucatan Peninsula, in southern Mexico and Belize, there was (and still is) the Oscillated Turkey (*Meleagris ocellata*). This version of the turkey has orange-red bumps on its unfeathered blue head. It was eaten extensively by ancient Maya Indians (the Mayan word *yucatan* means "land of the deer and turkey").

But the common wild turkey which inhabited a much larger portion of North America is *Meleagris gallopavo*. These birds, which are

further subdivided into six geographical "varieties," filled the woodlands from the Great Lakes to Central Mexico. The Eastern Wild Turkey, familiar here along the Robeson Trail, has long been a favorite food for Indian people. It is similar to the white-feathered domestic turkey, but it has a more slender body and rusty-tipped (never white) tail feathers. The feathers of the wild turkey are (and have been) used in making traditional dance and ceremonial regalia.

These Eastern Wild Turkeys, whose favorite foods in the forest are acorns, fruit and seeds, do not tend to be tamed easily. That is, even if you hatch their eggs in incubators and raise the birds in pens, they will seldom stay around human beings for more than a year before they decide to fly away and never come back (unless you clip their wings or in some other way prevent them from flying). Wild turkeys also don't like to breed in captivity, although some people have crossed them with domestic turkeys in order to have a "wild-colored" turkey around the barnyard.

However, some early accounts of European travelers among Native people in the Eastern Woodlands describe wild turkeys kept in or near Indian villages. Young turkeys, captured in the wild, were sometimes used by Indians as decoys to attract the free-ranging birds of their species. But perhaps because there were so many wild turkeys in the woods, Indian people apparently never actually had

to domesticate the birds in order to have enough of them to eat. One authority says that ten million turkeys lived in what is now the U.S. before European contact (*The Wild Turkey: Its History and Domestication*, by A.W. Schorger; 1966).

Among the Pueblo Indians of the American Southwest, and some Indian people farther south, turkeys were (and are) also important, and some of these Southwestern Wild Turkeys were intentionally bred by Indian people. Winter clothes, such as robes, were made from woven turkey feathers. Turkey bones were used for making whistles, flutes, beads and awls. In 1540, the Spanish conquistador Coronado was given to believe that the Zuni Indians did not even eat the meat of the turkey, but used them only for their feathers. Several Spanish explorers remarked about large flocks of turkeys with various colors — red, white, brown and black, some with purple, blue and red on their necks. One of the most famous Aztec rulers, Netzahualcoyotl of Texcoco, required his subjects to bring tribute of one hundred turkeys per day. The great Moctezuma demanded tribute of one turkey per villager every twenty days.

So the next time you have turkey and dressing for dinner, consider the long and varied history of this majestic Native American bird. For more information, visit the Native American Resource Center in Old Main Building, on the campus of Pembroke State University.

Speaker of the House critical of local candidate

Dear Editor
I recently read an article in your publication where a Democrat candidate for the North Carolina House of Representatives has been quoted as saying, "Things have been quite hectic under Republican leadership due to their lack of experience in handling leadership roles and activities."

We are used to, in campaign years, what I would term irresponsible political rhetoric, but this is beyond belief. This is a perfect example of a member of the former majority party in the House who now finds himself with little influence and no power. His comments have all the elements of a whining child.

I would agree that changes were made in the operations of the House due to observations and experiences that the current Republican leadership has absorbed over the years. As opposed to the lackadaisical drift that characterized previous sessions of the

House, in the 1995 session we appointed committees days two of the session (instead of socializing for two or three weeks after getting started), major legislation was introduced and passed the House the first week of session (see above), no sessions went beyond 10:00 p.m. (previous sessions saw legislation drafted on the floor at 2:00 and 3:00 a.m. in the morning when tempers were short and minds numbed by lack of sleep).

In closing, I think the voters of House District 85 should be aware that they are going to be bombarded with half truths, hot air and misconstrued impressions of the current Republican leadership. I hope this letter will clear some of that up and alert the voters to what is really going on in Raleigh.

Sincerely,
Harold J. Brubaker
Speaker of the House
Raleigh, NC

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CHOOSE TRADITION NOT ADDICTION

Know the consequences of alcohol and drug abuse

A message from UNIV and the National Institute on Drug Abuse

Buffet Dinner and Entertainment



FEATURING CARNELL LOCKLEAR (L) OF PEMBROKE, NC AND BILLY JO BURNETT (R) OF NASHVILLE, TN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1996
6:00 P.M.

AT THE CUMBERLAND COUNTY ASSOCIATION FOR INDIAN PEOPLE
FAYETTEVILLE, N.C.

TICKETS ARE \$20.00 PER PERSON.
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT MAXINE JONES AT (910) 425-8876 OR CARNELL LOCKLEAR AT (910) 521-0495.

PLEASE AVOID "ELECTIONS FRAUD" TEN (10) GUIDELINES FOR "HONEST ELECTIONS"

"REGISTERED", "QUALIFIED" VOTERS OF ROBESON, HOKE, AND SCOTLAND COUNTIES--DISTRICT 87

THE HONORABLE FRANCES M. CUMMINGS IS YOUR WISE AND SUCCESSFUL STATE REPRESENTATIVE SINCE 1992. ELECTED BY DEMOCRATS, REPUBLICANS, INDEPENDENTS, DENOMINATIONAL CHURCH MEMBERS, AND "MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST."

1. PLEASE "VOTE WISELY" AND "PROVE YOUR WISDOM."
2. BE WILLING TO EXERCISE YOUR "MORAL PRIVILEGE" AND "LEGAL RIGHT" AS A "WISE, COURAGEOUS" VOTER.
3. BE SURE YOU KNOW "HOW TO VOTE FOR THE NAME OF A CANDIDATE". (SHADE THE "OVAL" OR "PULL THE LEVER" NEXT TO THE NAME OF THE DESIRED CANDIDATE'S NAME.)
4. CAST YOUR VOTE "YOURSELF" FOR A CANDIDATE'S NAME AND EXPERIENCE THE "JOY" OF BEING A "QUALIFIED" VOTER. (MAN TO MAN IS SO UNJUST. YOU KNOW NOT WHO TO EASILY TRUST. AN "HONEST VOTE" IS A CONTRIBUTION FOR "PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS YEARS.")

TEN (10) GUIDELINES FOR "HONEST ELECTIONS"

5. PROVIDE YOUR "OWN TRANSPORTATION" TO THE VOTING PRECINCT OR "TRAVEL IN A CAR" OF A KIND RELATIVE, FRIEND, OR A CANDIDATE'S SUPPORTER WITHOUT HAVING TO EXCHANGE YOUR VOTE FOR A "CAR RIDE AND FAIR PROMISES" WHICH BECOME "SCATTERED DREAMS".
6. BE HEALTHY ENOUGH TO WALK, READ, AND WRITE.
7. SHOULD YOU BE SICK AND CANNOT WALK, READ, OR WRITE TO "CAST YOUR VOTE YOURSELF", CONSIDER STAYING AT HOME AND, THUS, "AVOID ELECTIONS FRAUD".
8. "VOTE AND ELECT" A "WISE CANDIDATE'S" NAME; NOT A "POLITICAL PARTY'S" NAME.
9. BEING A MEMBER OF THE DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL PARTY OR THE REPUBLICAN PARTY "CANNOT" GIVE YOU "WISDOM" TO REVISE AND WRITE STATE LAWS FAVORABLE FOR ALL PEOPLE.
10. "VOTE AND ELECT" A CANDIDATE'S NAME NOT AS A MEMBER OF THE DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL PARTY OR THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

"TO VOTE AND ELECT" YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE
FRANCES M. CUMMINGS FOR NC HOUSE
ROBESON AND HOKE COUNTIES-DISTRICT 87: "SHADE THE OVAL"
SCOTLAND COUNTY--DISTRICT 87: "PULL THE LEVER" NEXT TO
FRANCES M. CUMMINGS' NAME. AMEN
PEACE BE UNTO YOU.

Written by Yvonne Maria Leow

Paid for by Cummings for NC House Committee