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Efforts to Continue the Fight for Federal Recognition

Lumbee Recognition Bill Introduced in the U.S. Congress

The Lumbee Regional Development Association, Inc. Board of Directors has announced that the Lumbee Recognition Act (H.R. 3810) has been introduced by Congressman Charlie Rose in the United States Congress.

The legislation has some similarities to the House Bill 334, introduced in the last Congress which passed the House of Representatives but failed in the Senate. The major change in the newly introduced bill is that it provides for LRDA to serve as the "Interim Government."

The Bill states: "Sec. 5. (a) Until the tribe has adopted a constitution pursuant to the terms of this Act, the Board of Directors of the LRDA is recognized as the sole provisional and transitional governing body of the tribe. Until an election of tribal officers under the constitution, the LRDA shall among other things, (A) have full authority to enter into contracts, grant agreements, and other arrangements with any Federal department or agency; and

(B) have full authority to administer or operate any program under such contracts or agreements.

(b) Until the initial election of tribal officers under a new constitution and bylaws, the LRDA shall (1) oversee and implement the drafting and proposal to the tribe of a new constitution and conduct such meetings or hearings as it deems necessary."

The adoption of a constitution will also be overseen by the LRDA.

James Hardin, executive director of LRDA, stated that "This is an ongoing effort by LRDA to keep the recognition bill before the U.S. Congress. LRDA had the bill introduced in

the last three sessions of Congress."

According to Mr. Hardin, the LRDA board continues to spearhead the Tribe's recognition efforts for the enrolled members of the tribe.

He stated that over the past 25 years LRDA has spend over a million dollars researching and documenting the tribe's history establishing tribal membership criteria, maintaining a tribal roll with over 45,000 tribal members recorded, preparing a petition for Federal Recognition and supporting federal recognition legislation.

Hardin stated, "H.R. 3810 also addresses an issue that has caused great confusion in the Lumbee communities over the past two years. That issue is, which entity would be the provisional or interim tribal governing body, if the tribe is federally recognized, to transition tribal government to a written Constitution based system.

In H.R. 3810 LRDA would be the entity to spearhead transition of the tribal government to a constitution based system of which at least 30% of adult enrolled members would be required to approve.

Hardin and the Board of Directors feel that this is appropriate because the board members are elected by districts through the democratic process and a special Tribal referendum in 1984 directed LRDA to "act for the Lumbee tribe on federal recognition until a tribal council is formed and elected Lumbee tribal enrollment members."

The LRDA board, however, in previous action, has suspended elections to its own board of directors, but has stated that they will hold elections in the near future for that body.

Hardin continued, "Over the past 25 years LRDA has brought the Lumbee Recognition effort from no Congressional support to being within one vote of federal recognition and will continue to lead the effort until justice is done for the Lumbee tribe."

Hardin and the LRDA board expressed their sincere appreciation to Congressman Charlie Rose who, since his election to Congress in 1973, has been a loyal friend to the Lumbee Tribe. "He has been critical to our success in building support for federal recognition."

Adolph Blue, Chairman of the LRDA Board stated that "We hope that everyone in the Lumbee Community will support this legislation. We all must work together, if the Lumbee recognition effort is to be successful."

The Bill itself would make the Lumbee Tribe eligible for the same benefits that apply to other federally recognized tribes. This has been one of the failings with the 1956 Act which in essence recognized the Lumbee but prevented any entitled to services that other tribes were eligible for.

The Bill does state that "The Lumbee Tribe and its members shall be eligible for all services and benefits provided to Indians because of their status as federally recognized Indians, except that the members of the tribe shall not be entitled to such services until the appropriation of funds for these purposes."

According to Hardin, even though the Bill may not be acted on in this session, LRDA plans to be active in trying to move the bill in both the House and Senate in 1987.



Shown above are members and supporters of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church during the ground breaking for their new sanctuary. The pastor, Rev. Coolidge Cummings, and the congregation, extend a cordial invitation to the public to worship with them.

Shown left to right: Mrs. Margie Chavis, Mrs. Sarah Locklear, Mrs. Aliene Jones, Rev. Mike Cummings, Director of Missions, the Burnt Swamp Baptist Association, Mrs. Cassandra Jones, Mr. Bill R. Locklear, Mr. Harold Hunt, Mrs. Vanice Cummings, Rev. Coolidge Cummings (the Pastor), Mrs. Barbara Deese, Mr. Archie Oxendine, Mr. Howard Jones, Chaplain Dale Chavis, Mr. Eric Chavis, Mr. Van Betheu, Mrs. Vietta Chavis, Mrs. Bonnie Sue Chavis and her three grandchildren. (Photo by Connie Brayboy)

Friendship Missionary Baptist Church begins construction of new Sanctuary

Friendship Missionary Baptist Church held their ground breaking ceremony for the construction of their new sanctuary on Tuesday, July 23, 1996 at 8:30 a.m. The pastor, Rev. C.M. Cummings, his wife, Mrs. Vanice Cummings, and members of the congregation rejoiced in song and prayer as they began construction. The church motto is found in Proverbs 17:17: "They have paid for the educational facility that has served as a sanctuary for the past ten years and expect to be in their new sanctuary by Christmas time. Joining the members of Friendship in the service was Rev. Mike Cummings, the director of Missions for the Burnt Swamp Baptist Association.

Rev. Cummings has served the Burnt Swamp Association for many years. Her served in Kentucky for eleven years and was licensed in 1941 and ordained as a pastor in 1947. In addition to serving as pastor at Friendship, Rev. Cummings has served as pastor at the following Associational churches: Burnt Swamp, Bethel Hill (Saddlecreek area), Cape Fear in Fayetteville, Ten Mile Center, New Bethel in Clinton, Pembroke First Baptist, and for seventeen years as pastor of Island Grove, prior to beginning a new work at Friendship.

The following history of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church was provided by the Church:

History of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church
On December 6, 1985, 33 Christian individuals united in Christ to charter a church. At this first meeting of the newly formed church, Bro. Coolidge Cummings read scripture from III John. Rev. Cummings was chosen as the pastor of the congregation with Bro. Wolfheally Bullard as assistant pastor. The name Friendship Missionary Baptist Church was chosen as the name for this congregation of Christian believers.

The Lord has blessed Friendship Missionary Baptist Church both spiritually and physically. A number of souls have been saved and added to the church. The present membership is 58

members. Friendship has been blessed to have had the leadership of Pastor Cummings as he has been led by the Holy Spirit for the past ten years. We have also been blessed with the following assistant pastors: Bro. Wolfheally Bullard, Bro. James L. Locklear and Bro. Timmie Chavis. We are thankful that Bro. Harold Hunt and Bro. Winfred Locklear are with us and that Bro. Gary Thompson is teaching our Bible study class on Wednesday nights.

The following men have answered the call to God's ministry and have been ordained by Friendship Church: Bro. Dale Chavis who is now Chaplain at Southeastern Regional Medical Center in Lumberton; Bro. Kent Chavis, former pastor of Reedy Branch Baptist Church, Fairmont; Bro. Timmie Chavis, Pastor of Mt. Bethel Baptist Church, Hollister, NC; and Bro. James L. Locklear, pastor of New Beginning Baptist Church in Hoke County.

Bro. Howard Jones and Bro. Gene M. Deese have been ordained as Deacons at Friendship.

Our congregation first met in a building located at the home place of Bro. Joe and Sis. Alice Chavis. This building was used by the Chavis' for family gatherings. We are thankful that Bro. Joe and Sis. Alice allowed Friendship to share their special gathering place.

After organizing the church, Friendship then moved to a store on Highway 710 which was owned by Bro. Roscoe and Sis. Elma Lee Locklear. The store was converted somewhat to meet the needs of the church. We were able to rent this building until the Lord blessed us with our present location.

On April 19, 1986 we had our first meeting at the new church site. On June 29, 1986 ground breaking ceremony was held for our new church site. On August 7, 1986 the foundation was poured for our new building. On Thanksgiving, November 27, 1986 we met at the new building to give thanks

to God for his many blessings. Although we were either seated on lumber or standing, we were thankful for the privilege of being able to give thanks on this special day in our building under construction.

The Church established the following scripture as its motto on March 19, 1987: "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." Proverbs 17:17.

On April 25, 1987 the Church selected Sis. Eudell Lloyd as the Spiritual Mother of the Church. Sis. Lloyd was the first member to go to be with the Lord and her funeral was held at Friendship on April 29, 1987.

On April 13, 1989 Friendship voted to join the Burnt Swamp Baptist Association.

On August 10, 1991 Pastor Coolidge Cummings celebrated 30 years in God's ministry. We are thankful for the leadership that God has allowed Pastor Cummings and Sis. Vanice to serve Friendship Church.

In April 1986 Friendship Church purchased an acre of land from Dr. and Mrs. Frank Worrix for the construction of the present church building. In August 1988 an additional 71 acre tract of land was purchased from Dr. and Mrs. Frank Worrix. In November of 1990 Friendship purchased approximately one acre from Mr. and Mrs. Alex Locklear Jr. to be used as a future cemetery site.

The members of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church wish to thank everyone who has shared a part of our history. We cannot mention every name, but we are thankful to all. Among the many who gave their time and skills in the construction of our building, we wish to acknowledge Mr. Herman Maynor, general superintendent of construction, and Bro. Willie Scott, foreman of the construction.

On June 12, 1995 the loan with First Union National Bank was paid in full.

The pastor and congregation solicit your prayers that they will continue to follow the leadership of He the Holy Spirit.



Rev. Isaiah Locklear, 96, will deliver message at Island Grove August 4

Rev. Isaiah Locklear, the oldest pastor still preaching in the Burnt Swamp Baptist Association, will deliver the message at Island Grove Baptist Church on Sunday, August 4. The church will be celebrating their Founder's Day. Rev. Locklear was the founding pastor there. He was born August 6, 1899. He will celebrate his 97th birthday on August 6, 1996.

Rev. Locklear was licensed to preach in 1928 and served with the Lumber River Holiness Methodist Conference for several years.

He became an ordained minister with the Burnt Swamp Baptist Church in 1953. Among those churches he pastored in the Association were Leitch Creek, Pleasant View, Galilee, New Hope in Bladen County, St. James in Bladen County, South Hoke in Hoke County, and Island Grove.

Island Grove was established in 1954 and Rev. Locklear served as pastor until 1961. He and his wife, the late Bethnia Locklear, were two of the original 41 charter members. The church began with 41 charter mem-

bers, three deacons, and 8 Sunday School teachers.

Rev. Jim Hammonds led the congregation after the retirement of Locklear. Rev. C.M. Cummings followed Hammonds as the spiritual leader and served there until 1984. Rev. Larry Chavis, the present pastor, began there in 1986 and continues to serve as full time pastor. Presently Island Grove has approximately 300 members and has seven deacons and six junior deacons.

The first song in Island Grove as "Blest Be The Tie That Binds," and was sung by the late Rev. Elias Locklear, father of Rev. Isaiah Locklear. The church was named by Mrs. Lillie Bullard, and the land for the construction of Island Grove was donated by Briscoe and Carrie Locklear.

Rev. Larry Locklear and the congregation extend a cordial invitation to the public to attend their Founder's Day celebration on Sunday, August 4, 1996. They encourage the public to join them in worship, lunch and fellowship.



Prospect Student Finishes There With Several Academic Honors

Carmen Deese, daughter of Robert and Carolyn Deese of the Prospect Community, completed the 8th grade at Prospect School. She has had the highest GPA (grade-point-average) in her grade level since 5th grade. She has been on the Superintendent's Honor Roll since 6th grade. Carmen has made the highest on the California Achievement Test and the N.C. End-of-Grade Tests since the 1st grade. She has won 2 first place ribbons, 1 second place ribbon, 1 third place ribbon, and 1 honorable mention in the school science fairs.

She has participated in the Robeson County All-County-Band since 6th grade as 3rd chair for two years and 1st chair this past year and as 3rd chair in the All-District Concert Band.

She was also on the Prospect School cheerleading Championship. She has participated in many other activities in the past year such as having one of the main roles in the school play "Laughin' School."

Carmen enjoys reading, ballet, singing in the youth choir at Prospect United Methodist Church, and having fun. She is looking forward to being a freshman at Purnell Sweet High School next year.

Blue Reunion

Blue Reunion August 24, at 3:00 p.m. Descendants of Evander and Eupharis Blue. At the home of Etta B. Jones of Pembroke. For more information contact 521-4708, 844-3763, 521-4271, 369-2512. Come and enjoy yourself. \$3.00 per person. *Register at 2:00 p.m.

Cape Fear Valley Nurse Among Great 100 of North Carolina

A Cape Fear Valley Medical Center nurse has been named one of the 100 outstanding nurses in North Carolina.

Virginia A. Lucas, Clinical Nurse Instructor for 7 South, was selected by The Great 100, Inc., in Raleigh this spring.

The excellence award is given annually to 100 nurses who have been nominated by their peers. Nurses are rated on their excellence in nursing, compassion, leadership abilities, and community and professional commitment. Between 300 and 400 nominations are received each year.

Winners of this year's awards will be honored at a formal gala on Sept. 28 in Research Triangle Park.



John Bunyan Locklear of the Union Chapel Community, and his grandson, Jeffrey Locklear, are shown with the huge watermelon and cantaloupe grown in Jeffrey's garden. Jeffrey said he used the seeds that his grandfather had from years past. The watermelon weighed 55 lbs and the cantaloupe weighed in at 20 and 1/4 lbs. Both the Locklears enjoy working in the garden and have really enjoyed a personal closeness, Jeffrey said, "since I got saved two years ago!" Jeffrey also lives in the Union Chapel Community. His grandfather is approaching his 75th birthday and Jeffrey said he was trying to learn from the elder and had an appreciation for his wisdom and knowledge. (Photo by Connie Brayboy)