

Editorial and Opinion Page

Fifth Annual Spiritual and Traditional Gathering

FATHER'S DAY WEEK END
June 13, 14, 15, 1997

Sponsored by the Lumbee Council of Elders
North Carolina Indian Cultural Center

There will be dancing, drumming, singing, storytelling and demonstrations occurring day and night. No schedule of events. All time is "Indian time."

*NO VENDORS (SELLERS)
Traders (Bartering Only)

*No Admission
*No Prizes
*No Competition

Anyone can barter for any item displayed. Anyone wishing to trade Native made crafts etc. bring Blanket and set up FREE.

CAMPING IS FREE.

Lodges of any style have preference at the site.
Primitive camping preferred.
NO HOOK UPS
Separate area for trailers, motorhomes



One item of non-perishable food will entitle one meal ticket.

ALL food and clothes gathered will be donated to The Robeson County Church and Community Center.

Sponsored in part by Title V, IEA Program, Lumbee Council of Elders, the Carolina Indian Voice and Lumbee Regional Development Association, Inc., and the North Carolina Indian Cultural Center.



Drums, dancers, singers, storytellers, craftpeople, artists, elders, middleage and the young people are more welcome and much needed.

Grand entry Friday morning. Closing Sunday evening.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Call Spoiled Turtle (910) 521-4178 or Wild Turkey, c/o The Carolina Indian Voice (910) 521-2826. Or write P.O. Box 1075, Pembroke, NC 28372

ALONG the ROBESON TRAIL

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

(Author's Note: With this segment we return to the series on storytelling.)

We have taken Abenaki storyteller Joseph Bruchac's first two steps on the road to good storytelling: listening and observing (from his book *Tell Me A Tale: A Book About Storytelling*). This week we move on to his third step — remembering.

Memory may be the most important, and yet the most taken-for-granted, function of the brain. If the ancient human beings had not had memory, they would not have been able to develop diverse and adaptive cultures, systems of social organization, and kinship, ways of looking at things, beliefs and values and most of the rest of what makes us distinctly "human." Very little would be possible without memory. As Bruchac says: "Without memory, there would be no history."

But most of the time we don't even think about memory. Memory is like culture, in the sense that most of the time we don't think about it, we just live it. Both memory and culture are so "built-in" to our everyday lives that we don't need to think about them on a conscious level. As long as they are there in our heads and working properly, everything goes along in an ordinary fashion. They are usually only conspicuous in their absence. If something is missing from our culture or from our memory, we may be upset or we may not know what to do. Bruchac says: "The only time we seem to remember memory is when we actually do forget."

But memory is not just about the past. It is also tied to the present and the future. Bruchac writes:

"Knowing the past can protect the future. And story is one of the best ways to make those memories of the past come alive. Memorizing names

and dates can be boring and difficult. Remembering the stories associated with those names and dates, however, can be exciting and interesting. If names and dates are the bones of the past, stories are the flesh and breath that make those dry bones come alive again."

Bruchac and others have argued that human memory works best when it is the form of a story. The brain is capable of storing so much information that it is like a very powerful computer. Often when we can't remember something, it is not because that thing is no longer in our heads but rather that we are not using the right pathway or access code to get at it.

"As with a computer, we just need to know how to access the right file. Storytelling is like a powerful password.... Information in our mind that we shape into the form of a story is much easier to remember.... One memory device is to think of the story like a joke. After all, most jokes are just very short stories that are intended to make people laugh! So... look at the structure of the joke. A joke can be divided into three parts: the setup, the development, and the punch line.... If you have ever known anyone who can't tell a joke, it is probably because he or she either forgets one of the three elements... or tells them in the wrong order."

Here is Bruchac's example of a good three-part joke:

The Setup: "A man was driving his brand-new car down the road. No one else was on the highway, and so he decided to see how fast the car could go. He pushed the accelerator all the way to the floor, and before he knew it that car was doing over 120 miles an hour. All of a sudden, something passed his car as if it were standing

still. It was a chicken with three legs!"

The Development: "The man had never seen anything like that before. He followed the chicken as best he could, even though it was getting farther and farther ahead. Suddenly it turned off onto a dirt road that led up to a farm. The man followed. When he reached the farmyard and stopped his car, he got another surprise. That farmyard was full of chickens and everyone of them had three legs. He saw a farmer sitting up on the porch and decided to go up and ask him about those chickens. But before he could say a word to the farmer, the farmer said to him, 'I bet you want to know about those three-legged chickens.' 'That's right,' said the man. 'Well,' said the farmer, 'my wife and my son and me, we love to eat chickens. The problem is that all three of us love drumsticks. Now most chickens have only two legs, so we bred these chickens to have three. That way, whenever we have chicken, we can each have a drumstick.'"

The Punchline: "'Well,' said the man to the farmer, 'that is really something. But tell me, how do those three-legged chicken taste?' The farmer shook his head. 'I don't rightly know. We've never been able to catch one.'"

It is easy to see why Bruchac believes that memory is an essential element in storytelling. Not only would there be no history without memory, there would be no funny stories either. Next week we will look at the fourth and final step on Bruchac's path to good storytelling. For more information, visit the Native American Resource Center in historic Old Main Building, on the campus of The University of North Carolina at Pembroke.



Say You Read it in the Carolina Indian Voice. To subscribe call 521-2826

In Loving Memory of Birtir Oxendine

April 19, 1930-May 3, 1995

In memory of Birtir Oxendine. We miss your presence, but in our hearts you will never be forgotten.

Happy Father's Day

Wife, family and friends, also your customers at OXENDINE TIRE

(Oxendine Tire is being operated by Jeff Oxendine, son of Birtir Oxendine, in the same location.)

SPOTLIGHT ON Oxendine's Tire Center

LOCAL BUSINESS PERSONS

by Barbara Brayboy-Locklear
Poetical to THE CAROLINA INDIAN VOICE

The Birtir Oxendine family has taken its share of life's hardknocks. But with determination, the members always sprang back.

In 1968, Oxendine laid down his farm equipment. Mother Nature had caused one too many crop failures for the tenant farmer, his wife and five children. His wife took a job in a textile plant, and he rented a service station in Pembroke. Things went rather well in the business until the gasoline shortage came in the early '70's. Independent gas station operators suffered most when it came time to receive fuel from suppliers. The hope of hanging on to his business began to fade during that time for Oxendine.

Oxendine's school-age sons helped at the station, and when things got real tight, he'd allow them to take sock items such as cigarettes, gum, crackers and soft drinks to sell outside the business. This enabled the businessman to move the items while giving his sons an opportunity to earn money.

One son, Billy Ray "Dollar Bill" drew on the opportunity and earned enough money to help support his high school education. He even paid for his senior class ring. "I'd take the items to school and hide them in my locker," says Dollar Bill. "Then during break, I'd sell them to my classmates."

The eleventh-grader fully understood he was breaking school rules, but he needed money. "I did it to take a financial burden off my parents who were trying to hold on to a failing business," he adds.

The smart enterprising practices and involvement in school activities caused his classmates to start calling the popular twelfth-grader "Dollar Bill." The name stuck.

Meanwhile, the father figured since he couldn't get enough gas to draw customers, he'd try selling something else customers needed — tires. Demand for them was strong. A keen business sense convinced him to re-invest his profits.

In 1975, the retired farmer gambled and planted an acre of cucumbers. Hoping for a good crop, he set sights on establishing a business in his own building on property he owned outside Pembroke. It was a bumper crop. From it was born Oxendine's Tire Center. Over the past decade, the family-owned and operated business has flourished. The building, as was the business, was built from the ground

up by family members. "My daddy is a jack-of-all-trades," says Dollar Bill. The facility boasts six work bays and can accommodate 12 automobiles.

During the first couple of years the business offered only recapped tires and limited service. Today with four full-time employees, it offers a full line of tires, new, used and recapped. The operators can fit tires on industrial, passenger, truck and farm vehicles.

The business specializes in front end alignment and brake service. It also offers computer balancing and 24-hour road service. "We decided to offer those services because they go hand-in-hand with tires," says Dollar Bill who is office manager for the business.

He says his father, who founded the business, is the "top boss" and makes sure things are run right. And that customers' satisfaction is never to be compromised. "Industry surveys prove that consumers want quality and service at a competitive price and in that order," he comments. "They want to buy from an informed source they can trust."

Serving customers and other people comes easily for Dollar Bill. He loves people and they respond to him. The Lumbee Indian was born with deformed legs. Nine surgical operations and years of encouragement from his parents have enabled him to walk right alongside other people with a high self-esteem.

After eight hours on the job at Southeastern General Hospital as housekeeping supervisor, he returns to the family business to help out until closing time. He doesn't leave after everyone else does. Instead, he busies himself doing the bookkeeping in an adjoining office. Once that's finished, the bachelor usually has dinner at a local restaurant and returns to sleep overnight on a bed in the business office.

He is devoted to his beloved Mt. Airy Baptist Church and would be interested in marriage if the right Christian woman came along. Until she comes along, the 31-year-old will continue to take his meals away from home and donate his time to church, civic organizations, helping to cheer sick people, and to running the family business.

Oxendine's Tire Center is located in the Whispering Pines Subdivision off State Road 1616 in Pembroke. Business hours are Mon-Fri. 8 - 6 p.m. Saturday 8 - 3 p.m. Telephone: 521-3346 or 521-4590.



Dollar Bill Oxendine, son of the late Birtir Oxendine, is shown pumping gas when he was a teen ager.



Employees of Oxendine's Tire Center left to right: Jeffery Oxendine, Dollar Bill Oxendine, Birtir Oxendine and Jimmy Ray Oxendine.