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Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation Denied State Recognition

Raleigh--In a 9 to 1 majority vote, the N.C. Commission of Indian Affairs voted Dec. 19 to deny official recognition to the Alamance County group known as the "Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation."

The group initially petitioned the state for recognition as an Indian tribe in 1990 and was denied recognition in 1995. The 1995 denial was based on the group's failure to meet 5 out of 8 recognition criteria and their inability to trace back to the tribes indigenous to North Carolina for at least the last 200 years.

Following the 1995 denial by the commission, the group appealed to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH). During court proceedings, Judge Dolores O. Smith ordered the case to mediation and allowed both sides to reach an agreement on the process to be adhered to throughout the mediated settlement.

"We have reviewed material and information from this group for seven years, and the commission affirmed for the second time in two years that this group does not satisfy the established procedures to be recognized as an Indian tribe," said Paul Brooks, chairman of the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs.

The Occaneechis submitted a revised and streamlined petition to the commission on September 10. The commission agreed to review the additional material and make a decision based on its findings by the December 1997 quarterly meeting.

The mediator is now required to submit a final report to the administrative law judge regarding the case. State officials say the Occaneechis have the option of continuing their appeal through OAH or initiating a new petition for recognition through the commission.



Sutton Files For Re-Election To The House Of Representatives

Ron Sutton is seeking re-election to the House of Representatives. In making his announcement he released the following statement:

"My purpose in filing for a fourth term in the North Carolina House of Representatives is to continue my service to the constituents of District 85. As I begin this final year of my third term, I wish to thank all the citizens of House District 85 for allowing me to represent them in Raleigh. While many good things have come to this region from Raleigh, we still have many pressing needs.

Our current legislative delegation is working as a team for the betterment of Robeson, Hoke and Scotland Counties and all their respective districts. Now is not the time to disrupt the process.

As the senior member of the delegation, currently serving as delegation chairman, I have an outstanding element of rapport with each member. We work closely together yet we don't always vote alike but we brief each other on prospective issues ahead of time.

This region is now receiving a larger share of highway construction and road maintenance money. Look around and you will see the work on I-95 and I-73 (US 74), bridge repairs and intersections upgrading; this area is on the move.

In a fourth term my seniority in the House will be a tremendous asset to District 85 and the region. Of course, my impact will be even more when the

Democrats take back the leadership of the House. However, one of my most important assets is the ability to coordinate and negotiate with the members and leaders of both chambers to achieve my objectives. My training and experiences as an attorney have aided in that endeavor.

I appreciate the support and confidence my family and friends have shown me in the past. Although it means long days and many nights away from my family, my wife Genny and other family members have understood and accepted it. I could not serve without their support.

I thank the voters of District 85 for their past confidence in me and pledge to you I will continue to represent all of you to the best of my ability, regardless of the sacrifice. My legislative door in Raleigh is always open as is that of my District Office located at my law office on Union Chapel Road in Pembroke. Call or visit me anytime you have a concern. I'll help in any way I can.

My promise to you is I will continue to represent you and vote on all issues in the manner that I believe the District 85 House Member should vote. I solicit your support and prayers as I move forward towards a fourth term."

Rep. Ronnie Sutton
District 85
NC House Of Representatives
(910) 521-4797 / Pembroke Office
(919) 733-5782 / Raleigh Office

Richardson Appointed To U.S. Census Advisory Committee

U.S. Secretary of Commerce William M. Daley has appointed Greg Richardson, executive director of the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, to the U.S. Census Advisory Committee on the American Indian and Alaska Native Populations.

The advisory committee will provide advice and recommendations during the design, planning and implementation phases of the year 2000 census. During the research and development phase, the committee will provide advice on topics such as social methods for counting the populations and the race and ethnicity questions, which will be on the census forms. The committee will draw on the experience of the 1990 census committee, current procedures, results of evaluations, research studies, and the expertise and insight of its new members to provide and recommendations in preparation for the year 2000 census.

The committee, whose function is solely advisory, consists of nine Native American and Alaska Native members, who are appointed by the secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce for two-year terms.

"I am very honored to have been selected to serve on this national committee," Richardson said. He indicated that he will be focusing his interest and energy as a committee member in the following directions:

- An accurate census count for all American Indians whether they live on reservations, in rural or urban communities off the reservation

- The inclusion of Indian communities as enumeration districts throughout the United States, whether on or off the reservations.

- The appointment of American Indians to policy-making boards and committees with the U.S. Census Bureau.

Richardson has served as executive director of the Commission of Indian Affairs in the North Carolina Department of Administration since February 1995. He previously served as a special assistant to the assistant secretary for public and Indian housing at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in Washington, D.C., and earlier served as executive director of the North Carolina Indian Housing Authority.



Purnell Swett High School Drama students participated in the dinner theatre production, "Home for the Holidays" Dec. 11. The Arts department organizers for the event included: Steve Tynor, Delora Cummings, Carla DiGregorio, Karen Paape, Ellen Jackson, Jamie Palo, and George Mills.



Students of Purnell Swett High participated in Career Week as they dressed as Professional of their interest. 30-35 guests spoke to students involving their jobs during the week. Felicia Hunt organized the event.



The NASA Club held a special Pow-Wow at Purnell Swett High School with traditional dancers, a grand entry, and various activities and crafts. Robert Brayboy is director of NASA.

Lumbee River EMC Scholarships And Youth Tour Opportunities Now Available

Red Springs--Lumbee River Electric Membership Corporation's (Lumbee River EMC) youth program is now underway, and is open to high school students whose parents are member-consumers of the cooperative.

Each year Lumbee River EMC awards scholarships to local students. One four-year scholarship is given in the name of the late Lucy Smith who was a long time member of the original board of directors from nearby Hoke County; another four-year scholarship honors the memory of John S. O'Briant, a staff member for 22 years prior to his untimely death in 1985.

Both the John S. O'Briant and Lucy Smith Scholarships are for seniors planning to attend a four-year college or university, and are in the amount of \$2,000 each payable over a four year period.

Seniors, who plan to attend a two-year college or technical school, may be eligible for the J. McN. Gillis Scholarships. Lumbee River EMC offers two J. McN. Gillis Scholarships in the amount of \$1,200 each. Mr. Gillis, one of Lumbee River EMC's original board of directors, now 85, lives in Cumberland County and is involved in farming and merchandising.

Junior Youth Tour
Juniors may also apply to Lumbee River EMC for a trip on the National Rural Electric Youth Tour of Washington, D.C. in June of 1998. Up to two winners may be selected for this week-long, all expenses paid trip. Applicants will be asked to write a brief essay on selected cooperative topics or issues.

Guidance counselors at area schools will have applications available beginning Monday, January 5, 1998. Applications are also available to Lumbee River EMC's main office in Red Springs, or at any of the district offices in Laurinburg, Lake Rim, Raeford, Lumberton or Fairmont.

For further information, contact Linda B. Locklear, Lumbee River EMC's Youth Program coordinator, at (910) 843-4131, extension 251. Fairmont area members may call 628-0056, and those in the Laurinburg area are asked to call 276-8802.

Lumbee River Electric Membership Corporation (Lumbee River EMC) is a member owned, not-for-profit, electric cooperative, overseen by a board of directors elected by the membership, serving approximately 39,000 customers in Robeson, Cumberland, Hoke and Scotland counties.

Area Resident Selected As Finalist In Statewide Coloring Contest

Six-year-old Red Springs resident Heather Locklear was chosen as a finalist in Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina's third annual statewide coloring contest.

Close to 300 children from across North Carolina competed in the annual contest in two age categories, 8-10 and seven and below. Eleven finalists were chosen in each category with a grand prize winner selected from them.

This year's grand prize winners were Rachel Holt, of Matthews, in the age 8-10 category and Nicole Osburn, of Clayton, in the age seven and below category. Each won a new mountain

bike, along with a specially designed BCH t-shirt and certificate.

As a finalist Heather, daughter of Freddie and Angelia Locklear, received a specially designed BCH t-shirt and certificate. Heather learned of the contest while attending Galilee Baptist Church, Red Springs.

Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina was founded in 1885. Last year, BCH served 1,560 children at 12 facilities statewide which include four residential campuses, six emergency care cottages, two homes for behaviorally troubled girls, a maternity home, a home for teenage mothers and their babies, therapeutic camping and model day care.



The Pembroke City Fire Department held their annual raffle December 24th and the proud winner of the New Mossberg 12 Gauge Shotgun was William Cummings and his son. The Fire Department would like to thank all persons who supported their fund raiser.



From left are new SRMC Foundation Board members: Claude Fulghum, Randall Jones, Raymond Johnson, Faye Caton and Hal Sharpe. Not pictured is Anne McQueen.

Five Elected To SRMC Foundation Board

J. Luckey Welsh, Jr., president of Southeastern Regional Medical Center, and Dr. Bob Andrews, chairman of the Southeastern Regional Medical Center Foundation Board of Trustees, have announced the election of five new members to that Board.

They are Anne McQueen of Red Springs, Claude Fulghum of St. Pauls, Hal Sharpe of Maxton, Faye Caton of Lumberton, Randall Jones of Pembroke, and Raymond Johnson of Fairmont.

Dr. Andrews said that the SRMC Foundation is actively engaged in planning programs that will reach out and benefit the entire community. "We

are pleased to have such highly qualified new board members," he said. "And we are also pleased that these new members come from all areas of the county."

In addition to Dr. Andrews, other officers elected were Evelyn Williamson who will serve as vice chairman and Horace Stacy, Jr., secretary. Other members of the SRMC Foundation Board are Thomas G. Long, James R. Rust, William L. Lennon, Joseph R. Thompson, Doris C. McCormick, George D. Regan, Albert M. Sharpe, and Dr. Charles T. Johnson, Jr.

Nominees Sought For Lumbee Homecoming

Pembroke-The Indian Honor Association of Robeson County, Inc. is seeking nominees to be honored during the July 4th edition of the Carolina Indian Voice. The categories of nominees are as follows: Retired Educators; Retired Military; Retired Pastors; Lawyers; Doctors of Medicine; and our Elders.

If you or anyone you know might qualify for one of these categories, we invite you to call and submit a nomi-

nation to one of the following persons: Garth Locklear (521-2614), Lemark Harris (521-0501); Pauline B. Locklear (521-4277); Lee A. Maynor (521-0174); Rev. Welton Lowry (521-4354); or Jeannie D. Thompson (521-1114).

This is the second annual honoring of our Indian retirees and professional people. Please feel free to help us identify all those eligible to be honored.

UNCP Homecoming February 6-7

UNC Pembroke and the UNCP Alumni Association invite alumni and friends to Homecoming Weekend February 6-7, 1998. Homecoming '98 begins with an alumni reception in the lobby of Lumbee Hall from 7:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M. followed by the alumni dance at 9:00 P.M. in the university center cafeteria.

We will hold Soccer, Basketball and Greek alumni reunions at the track and field complex on Saturday, February 7, from 11:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.

'88 will be having class reunions. The African-American Alumni Club and the RN to BSN Alumni Club will also have reunions. These reunions will be held Saturday, February 7 at 3:00 P.M. in the Chavis University Center.

The awards dinner will be held on Saturday, February 7, 1998 at 4:30 P.M. in the cafeteria. The UNCP vs. USC - Aiken Women's Basketball game will be held in the gym at 6:00 PM and the Men's Basketball Game at 8:00 PM. Reserve tickets today by calling the Office of Alumni Relations at (910) 521-6213.