

## Letters to the Editor

# Christianity is very much a part of our Native culture

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
I was reading the Carolina Indian Voice a few months back and someone wrote in and talked about the fact that such emphasis was placed on Christianity in our newspaper and among our people. He asserted that Christianity was not part of our native culture. I want to address this letter.

A few years back, I was a college student in the mountains and had a two week break from work and school so I hopped in my little red pickup and headed west. I found myself one Sunday morning in front of the First Crow Indian Baptist Church in Lodgepole, Montana. I've always enjoyed the company of fellow believers so I stopped in. The first thing is they had Crow history depicted in picture on the stain glass windows of the church. And elderly Crow gentlemen shared his hymn book with me, and I about swallowed my peppermint candy when I saw that the hymns were written in Crow. After we sang those great hymn of Zion (phonetically in Crow) and the pastor delivered God's word to the people. We closed with a parting song holding hands in a circle. I thought in the back of my mind, this reminds me so strongly of the Native churches I was privileged to attend back home in Robeson County. After the service it dawned on me you can hear echoes of our ancient

chants and Native songs in the hymns sung in our native churches. When you go to church next Sunday close your eyes and listen. Isn't that sound beautiful? Another thing I had recently really opened my eyes to how closely tied Lumbbee Culture and Christianity are. Various historical books and documents state that our Siouan ancestors believe there are two Great Spirits—one good and the other evil. Furthermore, the believe that those who accept the Good Spirit and live good lives will be rewarded by the Warowe (Great Spirit/means "Never Died") with all the joys that could possibly be in the next world, but those people to reject God would live out their eternal afterlife in torment. According to John Lawson, in the early 1700's although the White Men asked over and over again for an explanation of their thoughts on religion, their Siouan traveling companions never would reply to their questions. One Sunday that silence was broken. While Lawson and his companions were sitting around a campfire one night they asked Ned Bearskin, a Siouan chief, on the significance of Warowe (God). Bearskins explained their religion was practiced by all the Piedmont tribes which spoke a mutually intelligible Siouan language.

Chief Bearskin told these men that his people believed that there

was One Supreme God they called War'we or "Never Die" and that the sun, the moon, and the stars their business in the beginning which they had faithfully performed ever since. Also, after life was over, there were only two places to go and a big flash of lightning separated the good from the bad. The "saved" or good people were directed into a charming, warm country, where spring was everlasting and everyone was always in their youth. In particular, the women were bright as stars and never scolded. In this place there were animals without hunting, flowers, fruits, and vegetables without planting, and the people were never sick and never died.

Chief Bearskin went on to say that the other place where the dead so was a dark and barren country where it was always winter, with sun the year round, and nothing to be seen on the trees but icicles. All the people were old and had not teeth. Everyone was hungry and did not have anything to eat except a bitter kind of potato which made everyone sick. In his place, sitting on a huge toadstool, there was a dreadful old woman whose head was covered with rattle snakes instead of hair.

After I read this, I thought it's no wonder why our people became Christians so quickly. They basically believed in many of the same religious ideologies before the

white man ever set foot on these shoes. Haven't you heard something stranger than this in he church on Sunday morning?

Folks, I guess many of you wonder why I take time to write these letters. I write so you and I will be reminded who we are. Who will be here to tell the story if we don't tell it? No one! Barely 250 years ago our forefathers went through and ordeal that would make Kosovo slaughter look lame. Over 80 thousand of our people were murdered or poisoned to death by disease, barely now, a century ago, many of our great grandfathers etc. were forced into slavery and possible death to dig a ditch for the Confederacy in a malaria manifested area called Fort Fisher. We could get angry thinking of all the wrongs perpetrated on us, but the love of Jesus gives us peace. God saw us through "we can forgive, but we cannot forget."

I was talking to a friend recently, and we discussed how our Lumbbee leaders of the past would not speak publicly until they were sure what God wanted them to say and do. Our present leaders need to following their holly footsteps asking not "what can my people so for me? But How can I work with my brothers and sisters to do for my people". I genuinely believe our leaders are beginning to see the truth. A man/woman is never so tall as then he/she humbly prays to god on his/her knees. Let's remember what a great Native American Christian heritage we have been left, and pray for our leaders as they meet and seek God's will for our people.

We cannot fail if we put God first and let him lead. In the name of Lumbbee/Cheraw tongue, Wo'na'ire, Thank you (for listening, Epta Newasin (Creator, I love you) I hope you do too.

Avis Boughman

## Carolina Indian Voice

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## Revival Underway at Mt. Calvary

Brother Dufrene Cummings and Bro. Everette Woods are in the revival of the century right now at Mt. Calvary Church in the Union Chapel community. We are praying that the revival will be held over and the first message that was preached was on the sin of covetousness. A covetous Christian is one who has their priorities mixed up. They are doing for the things and pleasures of the world than they are for the Lord. Jesus is to be first in a Christian's life.

and everything else is supposed to follow.

The second commandment is to love thy neighbor as thyself. The first commandment is to love the Lord thy God with all thy strength, soul and might. Why is the BOC, the Body of Christ gotten things so turned upside down?

My brothers and sisters, could we need to stop a minute and ask God to examine our hearts and bring us back a report? Could we study that report carefully and prayerfully asking God if he is the tip top tip on our priority list and are we wanting him to remain here? Is Jesus Christ truly first in the life of the body of Christ? Or are our hearts full of covetousness?

Joe Red Buffalo



## Words of Comfort during times of tragedy

Dear Editor,  
This letter is in response to the letter which appeared in the August 26, 1999 issue of the Carolina Indian Voice:

So many tragedies have occurred recently such as: the shooting in Colorado, Alabama, Atlanta and even here in North Carolina. Sometimes I find it very hard to read the newspaper or even watch the news on television. It is so depressing. I don't know just how you feel but I think I know you are going through. My brother Rev. Earl Oxendine had a son to be killed by a hit and run driver. I know the feeling of that because he was so dear to me. Also my husband was allegedly accidentally killed in 1986, leaving me with two children to raise by myself. I know the feeling there also. To the family of MR. Ricky Lane Jacobs -- if you know Christ, believe in His word. He said that He would put no more on us than we are able to bear and that He would never forsake us or leave us. So all I can say to you is Trust in God. He will see you through. I am praying for you all. If you don't know Him as your personal savior, please don't wait too late. He's coming and He is so real. I am so glad that I know Him as my Lord. A ticket. A ticket DRUGS will cause you a basket.

May God Richly Bless You All!!!!  
Sarah O. Lockler

Say you read it in the Carolina Indian Voice.

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## "It's Not Too Late To Be Heart Healthy"

September is National Cholesterol Awareness Month

Do you know your cholesterol level?  
Schedule an appointment to have your blood tested for:

- total cholesterol
- HDL
- LDL
- triglycerides
- glucose
- coronary risk factor

The cost is \$10. Results will be available on September 29, at Community Health Night Out.

All blood draws will be done on Scotty, Scotland Memorial Hospital's mobile unit, between 7:30 and 10:00 am.

- Aug. 31 Harris Teeter parking lot, Laurinburg
- Sept 1 Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church, Laurinburg
- Sept 3 Wal-Mart Shopping Center, Laurinburg
- Sept 7 Church in the Pines, Laurel Hill
- Sept 8 McColl Church of God, McColl, SC
- Sept 14 Springhill Baptist Church, Wagram
- Sept 15 Scotland Memorial Hospital

Call 910-291-7551. Appointment required.

## Community Health Night Out

Wednesday, September 29, A.B. Gibson Community Center

6 pm-7pm

- Cholesterol results & interpretation
- Exhibits on nutrition, recipes, exercise & cardiac care
- Learn more about cardiac catheterization from Dr. Michael Sketch and the Duke Mobile Catheterization Team
- Refreshments

7:00-8:30 pm Special Guest speakers

Jeffrey D. Seaman, MD  
Laurinburg Cardiovascular Medicine, P.A.  
Cardiologist, Scotland Memorial Hospital

Michael O'Quinn, BS  
Director, Cardiac Rehabilitation  
Scotland Memorial Hospital

Terry Clapsaddle, R.D., L.D.N  
Registered Dietitian, Cardiac Rehabilitation  
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