

Editorial And Opinion Page



AS I SEE IT

Bruce Barton

Lordy, Lordy, Preacher Isaiah is gone

A friend of mine lamented loudly, "Lordy, Lordy, Preacher Isaiah is gone." And it was a sad moment here on earth as our dearly-beloved friend and mentor, Rev. Isaiah Locklear, died Sunday (See obituary elsewhere). We were all counting down to his 102nd birthday, but it was not to be. Preacher Isaiah has gone on to heaven, we are sure. And the hosts of angels are shouting for joy there in that celestial place.

Preacher Isaiah lived long enough to preach the funerals of both my grandfathers, Noice Locklear in 1939 and Harker R. Barton in 1954. In between, he preached many, many sermons and prayed many, many prayers. God only knows how many weddings and funerals he performed for those who trusted him at the most propitious times in their lives.

He was an original and he is gone, never to grace this fair land again. Of course, those of us who know Christ in the pardon and forgiveness of sin will see Preacher Isaiah again. That is our consolation now as we lament and shed these heartfelt tears.

Heart & Soul of Fuller's BBQ dies

Fuller's BBQ in Lumberton is home away from home to many of us. We have eaten many delicious meals there, and have often participated in special occasions when we have gathered to plan anew how to achieve parity for the Indian people, or to celebrate a particular benchmark.

It always seems appropriate to gather at Fullers to celebrate or lament how well, or poorly, we are doing at the moment, and Mrs. Delora Jane Locklear was always the perfect and gracious hostess. I never told Mr. Fuller this before but this seems as good a time as any to tell it: I always considered Ms. Delora the heart and soul of Fuller's BBQ. She was always there to see that our needs were met, and we lament her passing (See obituaries elsewhere) and offer sincere condolences to her family and great circle of friends.

I'll tell you more about Strike at the Wind! next week, the Lord willing. In the meantime, I continue honing my artistic skills as Henry Berry Lowrie's daddy, Allen Lowrie, as the cast prepares for our big opening on July 7 at the Adolph L. Dial Amphitheater on the grounds of the N.C. Indian Cultural Center in the Red Banks Community. Hope to see you there!

Lumbee Tribal Council passes resolution against Drugs and Crime in Robeson County

The Lumbee Tribal Council of the Lumbee Nation met April 21, 2001 and passed the following resolution. They decided to share it with the key decision making people in the county.

Tribal Chairman Milton Hunt stated in a letter: "Our Lumbee Tribal Council wants a better community, county, state, nation and world for all people. Our Tribal Council is concerned about the conditions of justice and crime in our County.

"Please read the enclosed resolution and do all you can within your role as a leader of our community to bring safety, security and a sense of justice for all of our citizens in Robeson County."

The Resolution states:

Lumbee Tribal Council Resolution Against Drugs and Crime in Robeson County

WHEREAS, our Lumbee Tribal Council met on Saturday, April 21, 2001, and discussed ways to cut down on the crime and drug trafficking in Robeson County. In our small group of twenty-three members, three of the Tribal Council Members had been victimized by crime very recently. The daughter of one tribal member had been robbed and assaulted while she was in her home. Two Tribal Member's homes had been burglarized. Our members also discussed the five brutal murders that had occurred during this month.

WHEREAS, it appears that drugs play a large role in the many acts of violence and crime that are being committed in our communities. We want actions taken immediately that will bring law, order and safety back to our communities for the sake of all the residents of Robeson- Black, white, Indians and others.

WHEREAS, drugs and crime in Robeson County has grown in our County to the point that it appears to be not only profitable but also respectable by many people. However, many law-abiding citizens who believe in common decency and morality are fed up with drugs and crime in our County.

WHEREAS, the judges, the court system, our High Sheriff, and all other persons involved in law enforcement of our great County, state and federal government were put into their honorable positions to bring and keep law and order in our County.

WHEREAS, there are more than 2000 people involved with the judicial system and law enforcement in our great County. There are more than enough policemen and related law enforcement officials to solve the drug and crime problems in Robeson County. Some of the law enforcement officials include: all the deputies with the Robeson County Sheriff's Department, the Police Departments of Lumberton, Pembroke, Rowland, Fairmont, St. Pauls, Red Springs, and Maxton, the Robeson County Jail System, the North Carolina Prison System, the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, Robeson Community College, the North Carolina Highway Patrol and the NC Weigh Station Officers (Interstate Commerce Officers). We should also add to this list of law enforcement the list of judges, district attorneys, probation officers, prosecuting attorneys, clerks

Available for Seniors

The "Seniors in Motion" program of North and South Carolina is making motorized and manual wheelchairs, three & four wheel scooters and other medical items available to Senior Citizens (65+) and physically handicapped individuals. This equipment is available usually at no cost to those who qualify.

The program features in-home assessments by trained local rehab specialists, and a hardship policy is in place to help those without a full funding source. This program allows you to remain in your home and out of a nursing facility.

Today, physical impairments do not have to equal loss of independence. There is help.

For more information or to see if you qualify, call toll free 800-594-1225.

Upcoming Events at Adolph L. Dial Amphitheater

JUNE 30-Free Gospel Sing at 2:30 P.M. at the Adolph L. Dial Amphitheater at the North Carolina Indian Cultural Center. Free Admission and parking. Refreshments will be sold. Raffle will be held for Ceramic Angel and other prizes. All proceeds will be distributed to the families of terminally ill children in the area. Groups can register for singing by calling 910-462-4855 or email strikeatthewind@yahoo.com.

JULY 7-AUGUST 21-OUTDOOR DRAMA Randolph Umberger's "Strike at the Wind" will be performed at the Adolph L. Dial Amphitheater at the North Carolina Indian Cultural Center on Friday and Saturday nights. Gates open at 7:30 P.M.. For ticket information and reservations call 910-521-6111.

Upcoming Committee Meetings for the Tribal Council of the Lumbee Nation

JUNE 23 - Ethics Committee will meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Tribal Office. Health and Human Services Committee at 9:30 a.m. at the Tribal Office.

PHA Youth fun

On a warm Thursday afternoon fourteen youth and the Youth Center staff attended the Robeson Re-stitution String Carnival in Lumberton. The youth and staff (all but Ms Suzette) had a ball riding the Scrambler, Tilt-A-Whirl, Hobby Horses, Helicopters, sliding down a gigantic slide, climbing up and sliding down the Titanic, and many more rides. Everyone enjoyed treats of cotton candy, sodas and funnel cakes. As night drew near and there was a chill in the air everyone was getting tired and weary and ready to head home.

Saturday, May 12, 2001, was a very warm afternoon as Cheyenne Cutsail, April Hargrove, Cecil Locklear, Amanda Hunt, Eliza Locklear, Ms Rhonda, Ms Suzette and Ms April attended the "Talent Explosion" at the Southeastern Agricultural Center & Farmers Market in Lumberton. The theme for the Talent Explosion was "Rockin' & Rollin' Against Teen Pregnancy." There was a Talent Show, Essay Contest, and Art Contest. Anyone who missed this show missed an enjoyable afternoon. This show reminded us all of how talented the Young People of Robeson County are. Youth were stepping and singing their hearts out, while the crowd came alive. We would like to say Congratulations to all that participated in the show. It takes a lot of courage to get up in front of a crowd and perform. The youth should be commended for their efforts.

Friday, May 25, 2001 was a hazy overcast afternoon as sixteen youth, six parents, and Youth Center Staff took part in the End of School Water Balloon and Water Gun Fight. Ms. Rhonda started the fight off with her double-tanked ZX-2000 Hydro Blaster. If you had the darts to walk out of the building, you needed to be prepared to get blasted. Also enjoying the fight were parents Dora Evans and Cherece Strickland.

The Grand Finale was Ms. Rhonda being drenched with a trashcan of water.

Along The Robeson Trail

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

In the past two weeks, we have been discussing the Lumbee in context. We stopped last time with the question: "What is evidence, really?"

The word "evidence" comes into the English language from the Latin word *evidens*, meaning "clear." This definition stems from the Latin prefix *e-*, meaning "from," and the verb *videre*, meaning "to see." Thus evidence is a thing *from* which we see something else more clearly, a thing which indicates something else. In legal terms, evidence is something which "bears on or establishes the point in question."

Study of the history and culture of a people depends on evidence. Without evidence, there is only speculation. Evidence can take many forms, from a simple record of what someone said or did, to a more complex compilation of observations from widely differing sources. A newspaper article can be taken as evidence, as can the oral testimony of an informant in the community. A statement based on the synthesis of diverse but concordant information can also be used as evidence.

But how do we know which evidence is reliable and which is suspect? Often the reliability of evidence can be judged by how well one piece of evidence fits with all the other bits of evidence on that subject. If something fits the known pattern, it is frequently accepted as reliable.

But there is a caution. What happens if several bits of otherwise unreliable evidence, things that are actually untrue, are introduced into the study in such a way that they tend to

support each other? As a group, and because they support each other, they might then be taken to be reliable. What was actually untrue might be taken as being the truth.

In this same manner, most of the existing evidence at one time in history proved to the satisfaction of a great many people that the world was flat! That was the conventional wisdom of the day. When new bits of evidence began to arise which suggested that the world might really be round, they were for a long time rejected because they did not fit with the existing "evidence." These new bits of information were not accepted as evidence until much later, when the weight of evidence became so overwhelming that even the most conservative Flatworlder was compelled to concede that the world was really round.

Serious scholars must always keep an open mind. They must always be willing to consider new evidence, even if it does not agree with the conventional wisdom of the day. However, this is not the way most humans operate ordinarily. Instead we tend to get certain things in our minds, learned from our parents or teachers or our own experiences, and thereafter to hold fast to those ideas as though they were the one true reality. This has been an adaptable way to live within human cultures. We are conditioned to believe certain things depending on the local culture in which we were raised, and we declare those "truths" to be self-evident.

Not everyone in a culture agrees on what the truth of a particular bit of evidence really is. Court cases such as those of Rodney King and O. J. Simpson have clearly demonstrated this in American culture. This is partially due to the fact that all evidence exists within, and comes from, a continuous flow of historical and cultural things — and this flow influences how individuals see the evidence. Not all evidence is found. Not all evidence is considered to have the same weight. Not all evidence takes the same form. Not all people were brought up with the same beliefs, values and experiences relating to the evidence.

This constant flow of things which

influences how we see evidence leaves us with a matrix of difficult questions: What form would the evidence take for certain things? Would the evidence be in a form that we might reasonably hope to find it, and if we did find it, would our various backgrounds allow us to recognize it for what it is? Would everyone read the same meanings in the evidence? Faced with such questions we are forced to accept two apparently inescapable realities.

First, evidence is often transitional. Even evidence which seems incontrovertible should probably be considered capable of being refuted — if not now, maybe later when more evidence becomes available.

Second, interpretations are often provisional. Given the transitional nature of evidence, every interpretation based on that evidence should probably be considered as preliminary. The search for absolutes in the interpretation of evidence can be frustrating. We may move from evidence to interpretation, but we must do so with the humble understanding that even the most widely accepted scientific law, the Law of Gravity, has been found to apply only in certain defined circumstances.

Study of the history and culture of a people, especially one as complex as that of the Lumbee, requires that we try to look at and interpret as much of the evidence as we possibly can. It also requires that we learn to reconcile, or at least make some sense of, bits of evidence which may seem to contradict each other. When we find something which does not seem to fit with the other evidence, we must resist the temptation to toss the first thing completely out of the equation. We must search for ways to connect all the existing evidence into discernible and meaningful patterns.

In the next segment, we will continue discussion of the Lumbee in context. 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 (our Internet address is www.uncp.edu/nativemuseum).

LRDA's Seond Annual Ambassador Charity Golf Tournament scheduled

Pembroke, NC - On June 30, 2001, the Lumbee Regional Development Association's Second Annual Ambassador Charity Golf Tournament will be held at the Riverside Golf Course in Pembroke.

The tournament is being held to raise money for the reign of the 2001-2002 Little, Junior, Teen and Miss Lumbee. The Little Miss and Junior Miss Lumbee Pageant will be held July 4, 2001. The Teen Miss and Miss Lumbee Pageant will be held July 6, 2001. Both pageants will be held at the Givens

Performing Arts Center on the UNC-Pembroke Campus.

Scheduled events include a shotgun start at 9 am, a 2 pm Awards Reception with prizes for first, second, and third place teams. Refreshments will be served. Registration begins at 7:45 am and the entry fee is \$50.00 per individual.

All funds received will go toward the support of the 2001-2002 Lumbee Princesses.

For more information about this event, please contact James Hardin at (910) 522-1101 or visit the Lumbee website at www.lumbee.org.

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