

CAROLINA INDIAN VOICE

"Building Communicative Bridges In A Tri-Racial Setting"

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An Open Letter to the Tribal Membership from Cynthia L. Hunt

In the early to mid 1990s a movement among tribal members began to take charge of the way tribal affairs were managed, decisions for the tribe were made, and how monies received for tribal members were being expended. It seemed the tribal membership had become disoriented with the path Lumbee Regional Development Association, Inc. (LRDA), a private nonprofit corporation with no members, was taking the Lumbee tribe. As a result, tribal members worked diligently to organize a formal tribal government by adopting a tribal constitution for the first time in the tribe's history. The Constitution of the Lumbee Tribe of Cheraw Indians was adopted, and the first formal Tribal Council was established in accordance to that document. The Council encountered a hard battle trying to take their proper place as the tribal government as the members of the Lumbee tribe had wished. LRDA fought hard and strong to retain, what they felt was their proper place as the tribal government. In the end the fight would end up in court allowing a white man, Judge Howard E. Manning, Jr., to decide the fate of who was the legitimate government of the Lumbee tribe.

Manning's decision was that neither LRDA nor the Lumbee Tribal Council was the governing body of the Lumbee tribe. He would further rule that LRDA could continue to administer all monies of the tribe including federal Indian housing monies through the NAHASDA act. In addition, he ruled that LRDA would retain all assets. Please be reminded that monies and assets acquired by LRDA were acquired on behalf of tribal members. While LRDA administered housing monies in a most questionable manner, tribal members would again attempt to organize a formal tribal government. In the midst of this effort, Judge Manning would one more time get involved in tribal affairs and rule the manner in which tribal members were conducting their effort was inappropriate. Manning then issued a ruling establishing what he called the Lumbee Self-Determination Commission, a group comprising tribal members, who Manning identified as "not having a dog in the fight." However, it is clear when one looks at those who served, one would be hard pressed to actually be able to identify anyone on that Commission who did not directly or indirectly have "a dog in the fight." Persons like Leroy Freeman, Ralph Hunt, Jim Lowery, Rev. Jimmy Hunt, current Tribal Chairman Jimmy Goins served on the Commission. There are many other names that could be listed which would raise questions whether or not they had "a dog in the fight." The Commission, incorporated as a private nonprofit corporation, conducted research on the issue of tribal government, and would in the end determine to hold an election to elect a Tribal Chairman and a Tribal Council. Many persons serving on the Commission would run

for seats on the newly established Council. Members Jimmy Goins, Jimmy Hunt, and Rod Locklear sought to secure seats on the body. There were even rumors that Leroy Freeman would enter the race for Tribal Chairman. At the same time tribal members were asked what form of government, if any, they wished to be governed by. Tribal members voiced their desire to be governed by a Tribal Constitution, and further voted that the document should be presented to the tribe within one year.

While one may feel the court provided a solution for the tribe in the creation of this body, they are sadly mistaken. The only good thing arising from this court case was that the NC Court of Appeals issued an unpublished decision acknowledging the tribe's sovereignty. I say this because when it came time for the government to present a constitution to be voted upon, they were most hesitant in fulfilling their obligation to do so. Again tribal members came to the call to force elected tribal officials to be accountable and do what they were instructed to do by the ones they claimed to represent, the tribal membership. Tribal members had to fight "tooth and nail" to have the Council present a document to be voted on. In the end the tribal members voted to adopt a document that would allow all tribal members a voice in tribal affairs. The tribal membership was excited that we had finally escaped the restraints of a private nonprofit corporation. No longer would tribal affairs be governed by state laws that govern nonprofit corporations, but we could now exercise our tribal sovereignty.

While the tribal membership was confident that the newly adopted Tribal Council was operating in an accountable manner in accordance to our governing document, it soon became clear that things were less than perfect with our government. Monies received on behalf of the tribe and assets were once again placed in the name of a private nonprofit corporation to be governed by the laws of the State of NC. Tribal programs were being mismanaged and criticism from the tribal membership began to be heard loud and clear. Changes in tribal leadership in addition to changes in tribal staff would seemingly not prove to solve many of the increasing problems our tribal government was and continues to face. Tribal Chairman Goins in what was thought to be an attempt to save tribal federal housing monies and put Lumbee on the right track appointed current Administrator Leon Jacobs. Jacobs was a person who not only the Chairman, but many others felt would be able to rescue the tribe's housing program and clear our marred image in the county, state, and Indian country. However, to date we are seemingly in the same position we were over ten

years ago when the tribal membership was fighting to escape the tyranny of LRDA.

I discuss these issues today in an attempt to remind ourselves what we were fighting for and to examine our current situation as tribal members with the tribal government. It has been highly rumored that the lack of positive change and government accountability is an attempt by many, including elected tribal officials, to sabotage our tribal government. There are those who feel the Tribal Constitution provides too much authority to the tribal membership. Tribal officials, as well as many of those tribal leaders who lurk in the background of tribal politics, wish to go back in time. They wish to once again have the tribe governed by a private nonprofit corporation that does not allow tribal members any voice. Yes, it is true that if organized as a nonprofit, tribal members may be able to elect representatives, however, let us not forget that they could take the right to vote away from the membership, just as LRDA did at one time. And, maybe it is true that if the tribe's assets are not placed in the name of a nonprofit, that we may have to pay taxes on those assets, however, will we jeopardize our tribal sovereignty to get out of paying those funds. I contend that we should function as a sovereign nation and exercise that sovereignty. It is further rumored that if the current government and tribal staff continue to perform inadequately, the tribe faces the possibility of not being allowed to administer certain funds including NAHASDA monies. It is a fact that if a tribe is not properly administering funds and in complete compliance with federal regulations, HUD can come in and name another agency to administer the housing funds. Rumors are abounding that this is our path of destruction. There are countless rumors in the tribe that HUD monies may once again be given to LRDA, or possibly to another entity.

This would be a sad day to all of those tribal members who have worked so hard to ensure that all tribal members have a voice and those who cannot protect themselves are protected from self-serving individuals. Take a look at each branch of the Lumbee Tribal Government. Look at the Executive Branch, the Legislative Branch, and the Judicial Branch, and ask yourself the question, do these persons have my best interest at heart, or are they working with background tribal politicians to take us back to the days of a nonprofit corporation. Do you trust them? If not, are you prepared to join many of us who do not trust them and map out a plan that may force the removal every tribal elected official that is eligible for the recall process?

Three incumbents and four newcomers elected to Lumbee Tribal Council

In the Lumbee Tribal elections held Tuesday, Nov. 7, three incumbents were returned to the Tribal Council. Jerl Locklear, representing District 8, had no opposition. David Carter, Speaker of the Council, was re-elected by a narrow margin. The unofficial tally showed Carter overcoming three challengers. Carter won 158 votes and challenger Pam Spaulding received 136 votes. Earl Scott received 21 votes and Earl Oxendine received 71. Carter represents District 3.

Alton Locklear the representative for District 13 overcame a challenge by Rev. Ricky Burnette. Locklear received 167 votes to Burnette's 152.

Incumbent Montford Dial, Jr. was defeated by Danita Locklear in District 12. Dial received 215 votes and Locklear received 216. Locklear is a former council member.

In the District 6 race, UNCP employee Lawrence Locklear handily defeated Pembroke Town Manager McDuffie Cummings and Associate Supt. of Public Schools Rose Marie Lowry-Townsend. Locklear received 496 votes. Lowry-Townsend received 301 and Cummings received 244. The District 6 representative is Larry Townsend, husband of Lowry-Townsend. The Lumbee Constitution prohibited his seeking a third term on the council.

Delton Oxendine was also prohibited from seeking a third term on the council to represent District 7. In that race former Inspector for the Town of Pembroke James Harold Locklear defeated 3 other newcomers. Locklear received 551 votes. Sherman Brooks received 59 votes. Haynes Deese received 166 votes and James Scott received 141 votes.

Council woman Louise Mitchell was also prohibited from running for a third term by the Lumbee Constitution. Vying for the District 2 seat were Gerald Goolsby and Terry McNeill. Goolsby received 365 votes and McNeill received 211.

These votes are unofficial but are not expected to change substantially when provisional ballots are counted today, November 4. The Tribal Board of Elections will count the provisional ballots and certify the election on that day barring any unforeseen circumstances.

The newly elected council members will be sworn in in January.

Red Springs Arts Council to sponsor contra dance

Red Springs - The Red Springs Arts Council will sponsor a contra dance on Saturday night, November 20th. The dance will be held in the old gym at the Flora Macdonald Academy in Red Springs and will feature live "old time" and contra dance music with Linda Hunt on keyboard and Buz Lloyd on fiddle. Linda Thomas will be the caller for this dance and she is equally talented with beginners and long-term dancers.

According to Arts Council President, John Bowman, "Contra dancing is a form of traditional folk dancing that is similar to square dancing, but sets of couples dance in facing lines. It is an easy form of dance to learn, the music is lively and the dancing can be vigorous. No experience is necessary as each dance is taught by the caller, and with Linda Thomas, we will have one of the best callers around. She will have you cutting the rug, if you have never dance before. And you don't have to dance if you don't want to; the music is a treat in and of itself!" The dance will begin at 8:00 p.m., but there will be free contra dance instruction before the dance at 7:30 taught by experienced dancers. Both couples and singles are welcomed. Tickets for the Saturday night dance are \$5 and will be available at the door.

This event is supported by a Grassroots grant from the North Carolina Arts Council, a state agency. For more information, call (910) 843-2228 or 843-3559.

First United Methodist Church Pembroke

Annual Christmas Bazaar
Church next to town park Hwy 711
Plants, Crafts and baked goods will be sold
Friday, November 19, 2004 from 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
And
Saturday, November 20, 2004 from 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Sponsored by: First United Methodist Women

American Indian Mothers to sponsor Harvest Celebration

Janice Oxendine, President of American Indian Mothers, has announced the following plans for the 2004 Annual Harvest Celebration.

Art Exposition
November 12-19 will kick off with an Art Exposition at the Indian Education Resource Center in Pembroke. The theme of the exhibit will be "Living in Harmony with Mother Earth." School students, non-professionals and professionals are encouraged to exhibit during this event. There will be no entry fee, however, exhibitors will be asked to donate at least one item to the organization as a fund-raising activity.

Culture-Based Presentations for School Groups
November 17-19 at the Amphitheater of the North Carolina Indian Cultural Center, school groups in grades 4-6 will be hosted by American Indian Mothers and guest speakers and performing groups will focus on culture-based speeches and demonstrations from 9:30 A.M. until 3:00 P.M. daily.

Star and Talent Show
Teen and Adult performers will be invited to perform in individual talent on November 18 at Lumbee Regional Development Association. A panel of judges will be present and awards will be given to outstanding performers. This display of talent will be invited to participate in sharing their talent at the November 20 Harvest Day at the NC Indian Cultural Center. Admission to this event will be \$.

Millennium Warriors Awards Dinner
Health professionals and health related providers will be honored at an Awards Dinner at 7:00 PM at Porter Plaza in Pembroke. Millennium Warriors Awards will be presented to Dr. Martin L. Brooks of Pembroke and Dr. Kathleen Revels of Henderson, North Carolina and posthumously to Zelma Lowry Maynor, a Lumbee nurse, Dr. Johnny Lowry, Lumbee Orthopedic surgeon, and Viola Lowry, Lumbee nurse. The Dr. Governor Locklear Award will be presented to the Robeson Family Practice Clinic of Dr. Kenneth Locklear and Dr. Herman Chavis of Red Springs and the Cherokee Diabetes Center in Cherokee, NC. Lumbee health professionals will be inducted into the Order of the Medicine Wheel.

New phone numbers for Carolina Indian Voice

Please make a note of the new phone numbers for the Carolina Indian Voice.
910-521-0796
910-521-0992
910-521-9154
And the new fax number:
910-521-7670

Mr. & Mrs. Roscoe Jones observe Golden Anniversary



Roscoe and Annie Lee Jones celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 23, 2004 with family and friends at Mt. Airy Baptist Church Fellowship Hall. The event was hosted by their four children, nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Mrs. Jones is the former Annie Lee Bullard, daughter of Stafford and Gennia Locklear Bullard. The couple were married in Dillon, South Carolina on October 24, 1954.

Special music for the event was by the Mt. Airy Brotherhood who sang "I'm Glory Bound," and Mr. Jones, himself a talented vocalist, sang "I Know A Man Who Can."

The food was catered by Locklear's Catering Service, owned by Larry and Kay Locklear.

Mr. Jones reports it was a wonderful event. Friends and loved ones and the honored couple had a wonderful time, he said.

Cultural Day in the Park planned at NCICC

November 20 will begin opening of the gates at the North Carolina Indian Cultural Center at 7:00 A.M. The day will begin with a Pork and Wild Game Cook-Off. Judging of cakes, pies, pastries, jam and jellies, pickles and preserves will be held at the Longhouse at the Cultural Center. At 10 AM, a Parade will begin and will be followed by activities in the park - speeches by state and local officials, cultural demonstrations, performance by Star Search and Talent Show Winners and other performing groups throughout the day.

Admission will be \$1.00 for adults, \$1.00 for school students, and children 54 and under and Senior Citizens will be admitted free of charge.

Vendor Exhibits
Vendors are invited to exhibit in the park area. For fees and set up instructions, contact 910-843-9911.