

# New tribal chairman is a familiar face

By Marlo Fulmore  
Around the Town Editor

The sovereign voice of the estimated 55,000 plus members of the Lumbee Tribe resounds. Historically, leaders are often chosen by people who want their voices to be heard. The Lumbee Tribe recently elected 1957 UNCP alumnus, Purnell Swett, as the Lumbee Tribal Chairman, and he is no stranger to leadership rooted in education.

Swett, 75, a retired educator for many years, served as Superintendent of the Public Schools of Robeson County, where his work is still reflected in the educational system in this county today.

Swett replaces Jimmy Goins, who served as Lumbee Tribal Chairman for the past six years. He proved himself victorious in a three way race between Hoke County Commissioner, Tony Hunt, and District 7 representative of the Lumbee Tribal council, Terry

Campbell. During the course of the campaign those vying for Lumbee Tribal Chairman participated in a public debate, which was held in the University Annex and was coordinated by the Center for Leadership and Service on the campus of UNCP.

On Jan. 14, 2010, at his inauguration ceremony held at the Southeastern North Carolina Agriculture Center located in Lumberton, N.C., in the opening of his address he said, "I thank God for the opportunity to be here tonight. For with him all things are possible. I want to thank him for the opportunity to serve this great tribe as chairman. Being elected Lumbee Tribal Chairman is such an amazing honor. Growing up meager, the son of a local Baptist minister, I never imagined God would one day allow me the honor to lead my people in such a prominent position. I am truly humble."

As the Lumbee Tribe continues to progress under the leadership of Swett, goals that he plans to implement are not subject to just covering one specified geographic region.

According to Public Relations Director for the Lumbee Tribe, Alex Baker, Robeson County does not stand alone in being the only geographical region that the tribe offers Lumbee Tribe members its services to.

It's not just Robeson County, it's also Scotland, Hoke, Robeson and Cumberland counties, Baker said.

Swett has already begun working on projects that he plans to complete during his tenure as chairman of the tribe.

"I'm hoping to continue to expand our opportunities in health services, housing, and education. We are currently developing a new Boys and Girls club that will allow opportunities for 300 children in the afternoons and during the summer. We have

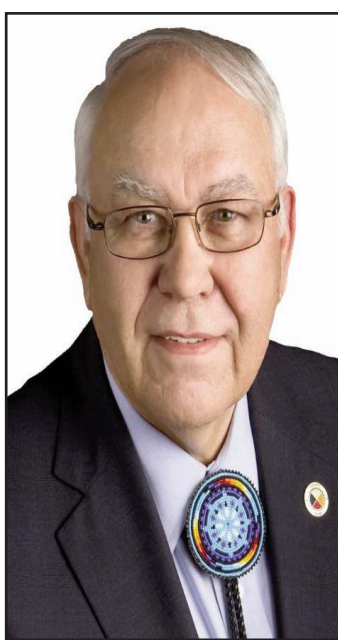


Photo Courtesy of Lumbee Tribe  
Lumbee Tribal Chairman Purnell Swett was elected into office Nov. 17.

started to expand and build new communities in the Saddletree area, and are in the process of building housing for the elderly in Scotland County. Fifty new houses will be built behind on the property located behind the Lumbee Housing complex," said Swett.

## Tribe and UNCP

Prior to UNCP becoming the university it is today, it began as a school

for Native Americans. It goes without saying that over the years a unique relationship has developed between the University and the Lumbee Tribe.

"My background allows me to start a dialogue with the University. I see the university and the tribe building very strong ties, working in education and the community, Swett said.

## Federal recognition

The Lumbee Tribe still is waiting for the federal government to decide whether or not they will be federally recognized as a Native American tribe. According to Swett, the bill propositioned by the tribe has passed the first phase and it has moved forward.

"[The] Senate works at a different pace than the House. We are very encouraged, but we shouldn't get too excited until business is over," Swett said.

Several ideas of what will happen if the Lumbee

Tribe is awarded federal recognition may be on the minds of community members. Some residents of Robeson County and the surrounding counties might view the Lumbee Bill many different ways.

"From an economic standpoint, when the bill passes, tourism dollars could reach 300 to 500 million dollars annually. This means jobs for community members and scholarships for students. There are many potential opportunities for it," Swett said.

The public relations sector of the Lumbee Tribe estimates that with the introduction to direct services, not including overall economic development, expected revenue could reach a half billion dollars annually.

With an optimistic view on the future, the Lumbee tribe, under the direction of a new leader and support from the community, will for now have to wait for the outcome.

# Census road tour stops in Pembroke

By Janna Blue  
Staff Writer

Regional and local census workers braved the cold in the Max Way parking lot Feb. 3 to spread the word about the 2010 census.

"It's a long time, but you can follow our blog and we are on Facebook and Twitter. Our friends and family follow as well," said Kary Regallis, with the census bureau regional events.

Regallis is from St. Augustine, Fla. and her event teammate was from Milwaukee, Wis. The two regional team members arrived and unloaded the travel van and trailer with a tent displaying a large flat panel, laptop and promotional signs all displaying census information.

"We are doing anything we can to get the word out," Marie Locklear said.



The 2010 Census road tour is a learning tool to educate people about the importance of the census.

The regional team members were there to meet them with sample census forms, t-shirts, pens and educational materials.

The 2010 Census Portrait of America Road

Tour consists of 13 vehicles visiting towns across the nation through April 2010. Each vehicle has a name designed to help participants learn more about the history and importance of the census.

Pembroke was visited by the "Founders" vehicle. The importance of this vehicle's name is to honor James Madison, who advocated for accurate data so the legislature could more effectively

govern the country and Thomas Jefferson, who managed the first census as Secretary of State for President George Washington.

The "Founders" has two more North Carolina stops in Wilmington and Jacksonville before heading on to Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky.

The census is a count of everyone residing in the United States, both citizens and non-citizens. There are also instructions for college students to be counted. The Constitution requires a national census every 10 years to count the population and determine the number of seats each state will have in the House of Representatives.

Households will receive questionnaires in March 2010 by mail or hand delivery. They should complete and return them by mail. Census takers do not take

a count in person.

Census Representative William Brewington said, "The census has only 10 questions and should only take about 10 minutes to complete."

- Feb-March: Census questionnaires are mailed or delivered to households.

- March-April: Be Counted program begins. Census questionnaires are available at select public sites for individuals who did not receive one.

- April 1: Census Day
- May-July: Census takers visit households that did not return questionnaire by mail.

- Dec. 31: By law, the census bureau delivers population counts to the president.

- March 2011: By law, the census bureau completes delivery of redistricting data to states.

# Turtle building design gets national attention

By Marlo Fulmore  
Around the Town Editor

A giant turtle, with a scarlet toned shell, in slow motion has migrated to Pembroke, N.C., and it's not your average tortoise. Its bones are made of steel and embody the relationship of the Lumbee Tribe and nature.

The estimated \$4 million investment rests on NC Highway 711 and currently is the new home that fills a void for the affairs of the Lumbee Tribe by replacing the need to house their offices in several different locations.

According to Public Relations director for the Lumbee Tribe, Alex Baker, prior to the current location of the Lumbee Tribe Housing Complex, the tribe rented offices in four different locations.

The new building centralizes programs for tribal members.

UNCP architect and President of Native American Design Services, Mike Clark, was instrumental in bringing the building to life.

The idea of erecting a building that resembled a turtle came years ago, from the idea of a prominent member of the Lumbee Tribe who wanted to see a building in the town of Pembroke that was designed to look like a turtle.

Approximately 250 independent contractors worked on this project. Many are local businesses from surrounding areas in Robeson County and across the state.

"We are the ones who designed the building. We are the architects who designed it. The building in plan is built to resemble a turtle. It is a landmark building for the tribe. We decided to make it look more literal," said Che Clark, from Native American Design



The new Lumbee Tribe Housing Complex, located on NC Highway 11, centralizes programs for tribal members. The groundbreaking for the turtle-shaped building was held April 17, 2009 and has received a lot of media and public attention. The Tribal Council of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina held their first meeting in the new building Jan. 31.

Services. Other key players that made this project a success include Branch Banking & Trust Vice President, Bruce Mullis and Metcon Construction Inc.

The groundbreaking

ceremony for the new Lumbee Tribe Housing Complex was held on April 17, 2009. Since the building has been in operation, it has received and is still receiving a lot of media and public attention.

"It is a neat project and it's getting a lot of attention nationally. It is basically themed after a turtle. It was constructed on low-bearing masonry and structural steel bars and is standing seamed rooted. It slopes in the front and

consists of two concentric circles and a big circle makes up the body of the turtle," said Aaron Thomas, president of Metcon Construction Inc.