

LUMBEE TRIBE OF NORTH CAROLINA
STATE OF THE TRIBE ADDRESS

JULY 7, 2015

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF PEMBROKE
120 YOUTH DRIVE
PEMBROKE, NORTH CAROLINA 28372

CHAIRMAN PAUL BROOKS

TONY HUNT	TRIBAL ADMINISTRATOR
GARY STRICKLAND	PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR
LESAUNDRI HUNT	TRIBAL COUNCIL SPEAKER

*The following State of the Tribe Address was held as
mandated by the Lumbee Tribal Constitution before
tribal council members and the public.*

1 MR. GARY STRICKLAND: Good evening, folks.
2 We want to welcome everybody to the 2015 State
3 of the Tribe Address that will be given and
4 delivered by the Honorable Paul Brooks. Give
5 Mr. Brooks a big round of applause. It seems
6 like it's only -- it's been such a short time
7 since we were in this same spot last year, but
8 a year's gone by -- 365 days, and a lot has
9 been accomplished. A lot has been done, a lot
10 of houses has been fixed, a lot of services
11 been rendered, and the Chairman will be giving
12 his address and highlighting some of those
13 things, and he will be talking about our future
14 at the same time. Our future is forged
15 completely and fully each and every year by
16 partnerships that we've formed throughout.

17 At this time, I want to address our
18 leaders -- everybody is important, everybody is
19 special. But we have some individuals in this
20 room that go above and beyond in helping us
21 accomplish our goals. We've already introduced
22 our Chairman. At this time, I'd like to give a
23 round of applause for our Speaker, Mr.
24 Lesaudri Hunt. At this time, I'd like all the
25 tribal council members to stand and be

1 recognized -- and for the hard work they do
2 also. I also notice in the audience we have
3 the chairman of the county commissioners for
4 Robeson County, Mr. Noah Woods and one of his
5 fellow board members, Mr. Roger Oxendine. We
6 were able to get a county commissioner from
7 Hoke County here, Mr. Tony Hunt, and we have
8 the new town manager for the Town of Pembroke,
9 Mr. Tyler Thomas. And we have a couple of
10 special individuals also that sit here with us.
11 We have our new Senior Ms. Lumbee, Ms.
12 Angelita. Let's give her a round of applause.
13 And she'll be performing for us in a few
14 minutes also. Also, we have our new Ms.
15 Lumbee, Ms. Alexis. We may not have much in
16 the looks on our men, but we definitely have
17 some in the looks on our ladies -- I can tell
18 you right now.

19 But it has been a year, and the Chairman
20 will deliver great news about our progress,
21 services, and future of our tribe. But if we
22 want to be successful in our future, we must
23 definitely give all the glory to God. We have
24 to look to him for guidance, and at this time,
25 I'd like for the Speaker, Mr. Lesaundri Hunt,

1 to come and give us our invocation.

2 MR. LESAUNDRI HUNT: Found in the book of
3 Numbers 6:23, there's a passage of scripture
4 that's really known as the priestly
5 benediction, but I'm going to use it as this
6 invocation tonight. And it says,

7 Speak unto Aaron and unto his
8 sons, saying, On this wise ye
9 shall bless the children of
10 Israel, saying unto them, the
11 Lord bless thee, and keep thee:
12 The Lord make his face to shine
13 upon thee, and be gracious unto
14 thee: The Lord lift up his
15 countenance unto thee, and give
16 thee peace.

17 MR. LESAUNDRI HUNT: Amen. And that is my
18 prayer to all the Lumbee people. May the Lord
19 bless and keep us. If he doesn't, then
20 certainly, we cannot do it ourselves. The
21 Bible says in him we live and move and have our
22 bid. Let us always realize it's because of him
23 that we can face tomorrow as someone hymned
24 that song many years ago. Because of him, I
25 can get up in the morning and start another day

1 because I know I'm nothing -- except I've been
2 touched by the master's strong hand. Amen.
3 Thank you for being here tonight for this.
4 Would you stand with me as we go to the Lord in
5 prayer?

6 (A prayer was rendered by Mr.
7 Lesaudri Hunt.)

8 MR. GARY STRICKLAND: As I had stated
9 earlier, we have just recently crowned a brand
10 new Senior Ms. Lumbee, and we would like to
11 invite her to the podium to give us special
12 entertainment. Let's give her a round of
13 applause.

14 (Ms. Angelita Hunt rendered a
15 song.)

16 MR. GARY STRICKLAND: Thank you, Ms.
17 Angelita. We have in our program that the
18 Robeson Rockers will be performing next, but
19 they do not have all of their members here at
20 this time, so we're going to push them to after
21 the Chairman makes his State of the Tribe
22 Address. At this time, I'd like to welcome to
23 the podium our tribal administrator, Mr. Tony
24 Hunt.

25 MR. TONY HUNT: They're not all here are

1 they, darling? All right. We're just so
2 delighted to have all of you here as Gary's
3 already said and to come and take part in this
4 event tonight that is a mandate by our
5 constitution -- that the Chairman will give a
6 State of the Tribe Address the first week of
7 July. And we're glad that all of you have
8 decided to come and spend this afternoon with
9 us and hear what our Chairman has to say.

10 I was just sitting there at the table
11 thinking about what to say, and I kind of
12 thought of a conversation me and him had --
13 probably about six or eight months ago. We
14 were sitting in the office, and we were having
15 some challenges -- we have challenges here at
16 the tribe as every organization does. We were
17 talking, and I asked him -- I looked at him and
18 I said what in the world are you doing here
19 anyway -- running for this office and getting
20 elected and putting up with the things you have
21 to put up with. I said I know why I'm here,
22 I'm trying to make a living. Ain't no secret I
23 said, but why are you here? And he just paused
24 for a moment, and he looked at me, and he told
25 me something that reminded me of one of the

1 stories in the Bible -- when Joshua got ready
2 to go over into Canaan, and he had told the
3 children of Israel that they would drink from
4 wells that they did not dig, they would eat
5 from trees that they did not plant, and live in
6 houses that they did not build. He says my
7 parents afforded to me the opportunities that
8 I've had and my forefathers and those before
9 me. And he explained that that's all he wanted
10 to do -- leave behind for somebody something
11 else that he had worked hard to help accomplish
12 that our people could have better opportunities
13 and education, better opportunities in health
14 care, and better living conditions in their
15 homes -- to be able to afford a home when they
16 could not in the past. And he said that's what
17 gets me up every morning and causes me to come
18 here to this place and deal with all the
19 challenges that I deal with -- because of the
20 love I have for my people of the tribe. I have
21 served them just about all my life -- of trying
22 to better our community and better our tribe.
23 I have learned a lot from this man, I've
24 learned a lot about him over the past two and a
25 half years and, Mr. Paul, I want to say that

1 I'm so proud to stand here tonight and
2 introduce you as our tribal chairman -- a man
3 with courage and strength -- and when problems
4 comes, he hits them head on and he deals with
5 it. Mr. Chairman, we welcome you tonight to
6 the State of the Tribe.

7 CHAIRMAN PAUL BROOKS: I don't remember
8 saying all that. Good afternoon, Lumbee tribal
9 members, tribal council, tribal administration.
10 I am your tribal chairman, Paul Brooks. I want
11 to thank you for your attendance today for the
12 State of the Tribe Address.

13 I'd like to begin today by addressing --
14 by reassuring you all that I stand strong -- I
15 stand strong in my fight for elders, veterans,
16 and youth. Our elders and our veterans have
17 proven to be the pillar of our foundation.
18 Without them, our tribe would not be where it
19 is today. Our tribal youth are fortunate to
20 have these mentors who can provide sound advice
21 for our future leaders.

22 An internal audit by an independent
23 auditing agency selected by tribal council
24 members was recently completed. This audit
25 produced no findings. The Lumbee Tribe of

1 North Carolina will appeal the findings of the
2 final monitoring report. The tribal council
3 has proven to be innovative decision makers who
4 remain focused on the effectiveness of our
5 tribal government as it pertains to our tribal
6 membership, the working relationship between
7 the tribal council and the tribal
8 administration and will continue to put forth
9 the effort needed for the advancement of the
10 Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina.

11 The fiscal budget for 2016, once again,
12 focuses on the quality of life of tribal
13 members. The projected fiscal budget for 2016
14 is \$17 million. The administration continues
15 to provide quality rehab services to those that
16 are need of repair. These rehab services are
17 necessary in upholding the goals set by the
18 administration in an effort to provide
19 efficient services to our tribal members. The
20 administration will continue to construct new
21 homes for families living in the service area.
22 These new homes will provide safe, affordable
23 housing for our tribal members and will also
24 add additional assets to the Lumbee Tribe of
25 North Carolina. Since taking office in 2011,

1 assets has increased during my tenure by \$15
2 million. The upcoming year for the Lumbee
3 Tribe of North Carolina is indeed promising.
4 Currently, we are working with the SBIRT to
5 secure contracts for Lumbee Tribal Enterprises.
6 I'm the first chairman to provide tax credits
7 for senior housing in a community that will
8 allow elders to have fellowship together in
9 their golden age, in their golden years. And I
10 feel that Pembroke Senior Village is the key to
11 preserving our tribal foundation. This \$8
12 million tax credit project will provide our
13 elders a sense of security and belonging in a
14 community in which they can continue to
15 flourish. Now, we have our veterans -- will
16 also be a strong focal point for the upcoming
17 year. We are currently in the process of
18 discussing housing options that are available
19 for veterans. By providing housing to our
20 veterans, we will be able to give back to those
21 who have gave of themselves so that we can
22 enjoy our freedom.

23 I will continue to advise my
24 administration to seek funding focusing on
25 health care as well as education. I feel that

1 these areas are critical to the future of the
2 Lumbee tribe because without proper educational
3 opportunities, we cannot continue to flourish.

4 The Changing Lifestyles Living Longer
5 Program, over the next year, will continue to
6 educate our tribal members on ways to prevent
7 chronic diseases such as cancer, obesity, and
8 diabetes. This program is essential in
9 improving the health disparities faced by our
10 tribal members. The Lumbee tribe will also
11 continue to encourage our youth within the Boys
12 and Girls Club to establish an interest in
13 science, technology, engineering, and
14 mathematics. Science and math are
15 traditionally low-scoring test areas for our
16 Lumbee youth, so by implementing programs that
17 will provide supplemental instruction in these
18 subject areas, we can overcome these
19 statistics.

20 The upcoming year will be a year of
21 progression, a year in which open communication
22 and transparency will continue. As your tribal
23 chairman, I will make every effort to instruct
24 my staff to provide efficient, effective
25 service for all tribal members.

1 As our vision statement suggests -- and
2 this is the vision statement that's in our
3 constitution -- the sovereign nation of the
4 Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina will preserve
5 and enhance for all time the Lumbee way of life
6 and community pursuant to the constitution of
7 the Lumbee people. It is my goal for the
8 Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina administration,
9 council, as well as tribal members to embody
10 this statement in an effort to fulfill the
11 dream that our forefathers has left us here.
12 And the final statement, the final statement --
13 we together are making a difference. Thank
14 you, and God bless each one of you.

15 MR. GARY STRICKLAND: Thank you, Chairman,
16 for your leadership and your determination,
17 your drive and your vigor -- and to see the
18 Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina continue to move
19 forward through all the adversities that we
20 deal with.

21 We are ready for our Robeson Rockers to be
22 able to perform, and then after that, that will
23 be the end of this event, and we'll be starting
24 our homeownership appreciation evening for our
25 tribal members. So let's welcome -- and

1 they'll be performing in the back, so you don't
2 have to look at me any further, and you'll have
3 a much better time -- I'll promise you that.
4 So let's welcome -- give a round of applause
5 for the Robeson Rockers.

6 (The Robeson Rockers performed.)

7 (End of the State of the Tribe
8 Address.)

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CERTIFICATE

I, Megan Newsom, hereby attest that the proceedings taken down before me on Tuesday, July 7th, 2015, at 120 Youth Drive, Pembroke, North Carolina 28372, are a true and accurate representation of the proceedings this 30th day of July, 2015.

Megan Newsom
Reporter

