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## **Cherokee's Beloved Man: Jerry Wolfe**

Cherokee, NC – Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians tribal elder Jerry Wolfe has served the people of the EBCI every day of his life. A fluent speaker and traditionalist, he is always willing to share his knowledge of the Cherokee culture.

Due to his self-sacrifice and willingness to serve, Wolfe has been given the title of Beloved Man of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, a designation that hasn't been given to a man since the early 1800s.

"I think our old ways are so important," said Big Cove Rep. Bo Taylor, who originally submitted the resolution for the designation. "We talk about some really important issues. We talk about gaming. We talk about buying other land, but one thing that we need to remember is that the reason we sit here is because we are Indian people. We haven't had this in a long time. It's been many, many years since we've honored our elders in this way."

Rep. Taylor said he has known Wolfe all of his adult life. "He has been nothing but a good person and served this community. I know it's never been done before in the modern era, but I hope that we would take the time to remember who we are, as Indian people, and this is what we do."

### Brief history of Beloved Man

Throughout the 1700s, whether the Cherokees were in treaty negotiations or at the colonial capitals of Charleston and Williamsburg, they spoke about the Beloved Men and the Beloved Women. These tribal members were warriors who were too old to go to war anymore, but who were valued for their service to the tribe.

In addition to living a life of service, they were also respected for their integrity and good character. The last recorded instance of a Beloved Man was Little Turkey, who died in 1801.

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*The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is a sovereign nation with more than 15,000 enrolled members and is the only federally recognized Native American tribe in North Carolina. The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians makes its home on the 56,600-acre Qualla Boundary in five Western North Carolina counties about an hour west of Asheville and at the entrance to Great Smoky Mountains National Park.*