

Paiutes celebrate restoration

By Mark Havnes
The Salt Lake Tribune

CEDAR CITY, UT. — A steady drum beat, chanting and jangling bells of dancers rose from Cedar City on Saturday afternoon during the annual Restoration Gathering and Powwow put on by the Paiute Tribe of Utah.

The event is held Friday and Saturday during the second week of June to commemorate the restoration of the tribe's relationship with the federal government.

Tribal Chairwoman Lora Tom said the tribe is made up of five bands of Paiutes in southern Utah whose relationship with the federal government - along with other tribes in the country - was terminated in 1954.

Tom said the move was a failed attempt at forcing tribes to be more self-reliant, but without federal assistance, the Paiutes suffered under the policy economically and socially and saw 15,000 acres of reservation land sold off.

It was not until 1980 that ties with the government were restored and the Paiutes started holding the annual June powwow at the tribe's headquarters in Cedar City.

"It was hard on us," said Tom of the tribal termination. "To be restored took a lot of testimony before Congress and a lot of help from Sen. [Orrin] Hatch."

Some federal land has been restored to the tribe, Tom said, but in a checkerboard fashion that does not lend itself easily to economic development. She said some of the bands generate income by leasing land along Interstate 15 to billboard companies and there soon may be a tribe-owned convenience store off the freeway south of Cedar City.

On Saturday, the powwow began with a parade down Main Street with the main events held at an outdoor arena at tribal headquarters. Members of tribes from around the country came to Cedar City to help the Paiutes celebrate, including Lynn Burson, a Northern Ute from Fort Duchesne.

Dressed in regalia made of golden eagle feathers, Burson said he came to dance at the powwow to show his solidarity for the Paiutes.

"The elderly people like to see the older, traditional dances," said Burson after the parade.

He also took part in ceremonies at the Paiute arena ground, where more than 50 dancers gathered in colorful traditional dress.

Gary Bear, a member of the Goshute Tribe in Skull Valley who helped coordinate the powwow, said the dancers re-enact stories and events in tribal traditions, from a hunter studying game tracks on the ground to approaching an enemy.

The women's dances reflect graceful, female qualities while dancing with a shawl, and represents a young woman's emergence from a cocoon as a butterfly.

"They always keep in step with the drum beats," said Bear, who also coordinates the Powwow in the Park event held every July 24 in Salt Lake City's Liberty Park as part of the Days of '47 celebration.

In addition to dancing, there were games, a feast and booths selling American Indian artifacts and food at Saturday's powwow.

"Everyone seems to be having a great time," Tom said. "I see people of all colors here to celebrate with us, and they are all welcome."

No desire to shoot; cop testifies at inquest

By Tom Brodbeck
Winnipeg Sun

WINNIPEG — Matthew Dumas was warned that he'd be shot if he continued to go after a police officer with a screwdriver, seconds before the young aboriginal man took two bullets to the mid-section, an inquest heard yesterday.

Const. Dennis Gburek, the officer who shot Dumas in 2005, took the stand at the inquest yesterday and described in emotional testimony the "30 to 40-second" series of events leading to the shooting.

"I'm going to shoot you," Gburek said he told Dumas, seconds before the 18-year-old came to within two to three feet of him. "I yell that out -- he never even blinked his eyes."

Gburek testified he was spot-checking a possible robbery suspect when he noticed another police officer fighting with a male in a back lane.

That officer turned out to be Det. John Mateychuk, who seconds later began chasing Dumas along Dufferin Avenue.

Gburek said he gave chase down Dufferin in the opposite direction, running towards Dumas. At first, he thought Dumas was holding a butcher knife.

"I'm yelling 'Winnipeg police, drop the knife, drop the knife,'" said Gburek.

But as he got closer, he realized it was a screwdriver.

And that's when Dumas started coming at him.

"He's coming fast, he's doubling my speed," said Gburek. "I'm looking at him, I'm looking at his eyes -- his eyes are big, they're lit up."

Gburek drew his gun and pointed it at Dumas as the suspect kept coming towards him.

him.

"I knew I had to start backing up," said Gburek. "You can see the anger -- he's showing his teeth."

The officer said he kept yelling at Dumas -- who was now 10 to 15 feet away -- to drop the screwdriver but he refused to comply.

Gburek, with only seconds between him and Dumas, said he realized he may have to shoot.

"I'm not going to run away and get stabbed in the back," he remembers thinking to himself. "My concern was getting stabbed in the back."

Gburek said he braced himself against a snowbank and when Dumas was within two to three feet, he shot him.

"I didn't want to shoot him," said Gburek, his voice breaking at times. "I didn't want to pull the trigger."

Cross-examination

Donald Worme, lawyer for the Dumas family, asked Gburek why he shot Dumas instead of jumping over a nearby snowbank or retreating down an adjacent path, although he did not suggest Gburek could have used a different weapon, such as a collapsible baton.

Worme spent most of his time cross-examining Dumas by asking him questions about police radio transcripts, his training and how much detailed knowledge he had about the equipment cops keep on their belts, including specifications about the bullets Winnipeg police use.

Meanwhile, Judge Curtis had to caution Worme to keep his questions relevant after he asked Gburek if he read "Tom Brokaw" newspaper columns, pointing to this columnist in the courtroom.

"Do you read Mr. Brokaw's stories?" asked Worme.

Gburek said he did and quite liked Tom Brodbeck columns.

Tom Brokaw, of course, works for NBC news.

Worme said he knows that some members of the media like to be part of stories.

"So I was trying to help them out," he told Curtis.

Worme also asked Gburek if he knew that most people living in Tuxedo were wealthy. He asked Gburek what kinds of houses people lived in there. He also asked him if the Dumas situation had happened in Tuxedo, whether police would have handled the situation any differently.

Gburek said it wouldn't have mattered where the call was coming from.

The inquest continues Monday.

Preservationist chief



Associated Press

A turtle ring is seen on the finger of Sewell "Winterhawk" Fitzhugh, leader of the Nause-Waiwash remnant of the Nanticoke tribe, in on April 11. The turtle represents his clan name. Fitzhugh continues the tradition of his ancestors from the Nause-Waiwash Band of Indians as his grandmother taught him. It's precisely that culture and tradition he hopes others don't forget. Fitzhugh presides over birth, marriage and death ceremonies for Native Americans, even those from other tribes.

Tribal citizens hitch a ride as way to save gas

By Clifton Adcock
Tulsa World

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Disheartening gasoline prices are forcing many commuters to look for alternate ways to get around, and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation's transit service may be just the ticket for tribal citizens.

With 15 small passenger buses, three vans, a four-wheel-drive sport utility vehicle and one 58-passenger coach bus, the tribe's transit system has seen ridership increase along with

fuel prices, said Ben H. Chaney, the tribe's transportation manager.

Each week, an estimated 3,000 passengers ride the buses, which travel along morning, daily and evening routes and shuttle some tribal employees from Tulsa to Okmulgee every workday.

"We're at a point right now where you have to call and make reservations 24 hours in advance," Chaney said. "It's getting real popular."

Ridership has increased about 60 percent since the

transit department first began operating in 2004 through funding by the Indian Reservation Roads program, Chaney said.

The transit system was one of the first of its kind among tribes, and it is being looked at as a model by other tribes that are considering their own transit systems, he said.

The buses are handicapped-accessible and open to all tribal citizens in the tribe's jurisdictional boundaries. It costs between 50 cents and \$5 per trip, depending on the length of

the trip.

The transit system not only gives passengers the advantage of saving money but also helps those who live in rural areas and are unable to drive to nearby towns, Chaney said. About 66 percent of the tribe's population lives in rural areas, he said.

Kizzie Green, a Creek citizen in Wetumka, rides the bus every morning to her job in the social services division at the tribal complex in Okmulgee.

A single mother, Green has no vehicle to get back

and forth to work to support her family. She called the transit system a life-saver for her.

"If it weren't for these guys, I'd be in a lot of trouble," she said. "I wouldn't even have a way to get to work. For me to ride the bus for \$3 a day, it helps me a lot. I couldn't do it without it."

Chaney said he hoped the transit service will expand, hiring more drivers and possibly extending routes, although rising fuel costs are eating up more money than in previous years.

Repeated vandalism leaves Walthill town frustrated

KPTH

WALTHILL, Neb. — The town of Walthill, Nebraska, is busy picking up the pieces after several downtown businesses were vandalized over the weekend. Reporter Samantha Suttle shows us how the town is dealing with the mess.

Shattered glass and smashed in windows line Walthill's downtown strip.

"It's a small community, small farming community. Looks like north Omaha.

It's sad," says Thurston County Sheriff Chris Kleinberg.

But this isn't the first time vandalism like this has happened. After being broken into twice in one weekend, the Walthill Senior Center has turned to steel mesh window covers. Because as a nonprofit, they just can't afford to keep replacing windows.

"I apologized because I hated, well, it looks like a ghetto and I hated to do that for here because we're open for anyone who wants to

come in," says Charmaine Lahmann, the manager at the Walthill Senior Center.

According to the Thurston County sheriff, tmost recent suspect is a juvenile Omaha tribal member. The juvenile was was picked up by a Thurston County deputy, but because the U.S. attorney's office is the only one allowed to prosecute felony crime between tribal and non-tribal members, Thurston County couldn't do anything.

"My deputy had that

young man in custody and had to turn that young man over to the tribal police. After that, it's up to them," says Sheriff Kleinberg.

The sheriff's biggest frustration: the U.S. attorney's office. He says cases like this one continue to go unprosecuted.

"So to blame it on the the tribe isn't correct. It isn't accurate whatsoever to blame it on the tribal council, or the tribal anything, isn't correct. It's our U.S. attorney. That's where I place most of the blame,"

says Sheriff Kleinberg.

The Omaha Tribal Police had no comment and business owners declined to go on camera.

So for now, businesses will continue to clean up while waiting for the federal government to take action.

We did try to contact the U.S. attorney's office in Nebraska. However, we have not gotten a response at this point. If they do issue a statement, we'll have continuing coverage of this story.