

Lakota gets \$330,284 for program curriculum

Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. — Catholic Social Services , a nonprofit group serving people of all faiths in western South Dakota, will adminster the grant for the new Lakota Circles of Hope prevention curriculum. The matching portion of the grant will be provided by The Bush Foundation.

“Our committee’s goal in the curriculum was to help our Lakota children understand that their traditions and culture are just as relevant and important today as they have been in the past,” said Lydia Whirlwind Soldier, a member of the committee.

The curriculum for students in grades 2 to 5 emphasizes Lakota traditions and values including respect, generosity, fortitude, wisdom and bravery while offering students knowledge and resources as they learn to make safe choices and to resist peer pressure, alcohol and other drugs, and interpersonal violence.

CSS Executive Director, Jim Kinyon said, from its inception, the Lakota Circles of Hope curriculum was developed as a collaborative project drawing on local leadership of Lakota elders, educational professionals and experienced CSS staff. The curriculum development committee was selected because of their knowledge and experience in Lakota culture, curriculum development and program evaluation.

“From the onset, our vision has been guided by these communities for answers about the best way to serve Lakota youth,” he said. “Most prevention curriculums target middle and high school-age audiences, but research has shown that many youth in this older age group have already more experimented with or adopted high-risk behaviors. The Lakota Circles of Hope program sets a precedent by focusing on elementary students.”

Kinyon said the goal of the program is to teach children values and healthy decision-making skills before they engage in risky behavior and to connect them with a healthy support system.

Shawnie Rechtenbaugh, South Dakota State Prevention Coordinator, said research shows that, if a person is educated and grounded in his or her culture, those cultural beliefs are important in the prevention of substance-abuse issues. The Lakota Circles curriculum emphasizes Lakota traditions and values while offering students the knowledge and resources to avoid substance abuse, violence, suicide and promiscuity.

John Usera, CEO of the Institute for Educational Leadership and Evaluation, will continually evaluate the program.

“We look forward to measuring the effectiveness of the Lakota Circles of Hope project in helping children make healthy choices using Lakota values,” he said.

The Lakota Circles of Hope coordinators will establish local advisory committees and have already partnered with many schools and community organizations from the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations.

CSS Prevention Coordinator Marcie Pudwill said the school administration and local groups have been receptive to the new program, and the kids have been very responsive in the classroom.

Freedmen descendants march in parade

By S.E. Ruckman
Native American Times

TAHLEQUAH, Okla. — The Cherokee Nation Holiday parade featured a long line of more than 90 entries on Saturday morning, among them the Cherokee Freedmen descendants.

Muskogee Freedmen descendant Rodslen Brown said the decision to be in the annual tribal parade through Tahlequah was made after a successful float in the nearby Muskogee Azalea Festival parade earlier this year.

“We are freedmen and we wanted to show that if involved, we can make a difference,” she said. “It was a surprise to a lot of people.”

The decision to register for the parade comes on the heels of a recent dismissal of a federal court case in the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. In that case, judges determined that the tribe’s sov-

ereign immunity prohibited it from certain litigation but did not discount the possibility of bringing suit against tribal officials in their capacities. But Brown said the parade reception was welcoming and they (freedmen) received many inquiries from people who asked for literature on the freedmen.

Other freedmen supporters, including Marilyn Vann, freedmen descendants’ president, said that the decision to march was pro-active.

“This is the time to stand up and let people know about us, you know, educate folks,” she said.

Brown said about 30 freedmen descendants showed up to be in the parade and their participation was conducive to good relationships with the tribe in which they are petitioning to belong.

Moreover, Brown said her decision to organize for parade participation was spurred in part by recent backing given to them by the Cherokee Nation. Brown said that her non-profit group, Pro-

ject A in Muskogee was set to receive over \$20,000 in tribal funds to help the group complete construction on a new facility.

Brown said she considered the freedmen descendants’ parade run and booth at the three-day festivities a success.

“It’s time we come together, the Cherokee Nation and the freedmen, instead of being at odds,” she said. “There will be a time of acceptance.”

Freedmen descendants have sued in other venues for the right to be in the 250,000-member tribe. Meanwhile, a bill proposing to remove the Cherokee Nation’s federal funding is being backed by the Congressional Black Caucus in Washington, D.C. Reinstating permanent freedmen citizenship will remove the federal funding threat. The tribe operates on 80 percent federal funding for its \$330 million budget.

Federal court decisions are still pending.

Prosecuter: UA student’s death was premeditated



Associated Press

Public defender Dawn Priestman, left, and her client Galareka Harrison, right, listen to the testimony of University of Arizona police officer David Caballero during Harrison’s trial at Pima County Superior Court, Thursday in Tucson, Ariz. Harrison, 19, is charged with first-degree murder in the slaying of fellow Navajo Nation member Mia Henderson, who authorities said was stabbed as she slept in the women’s dorm room last year.

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — Evidence will prove “beyond all doubt” that a University of Arizona student accused of fatally stabbing her roommate numerous times did so with premeditation, a prosecutor told jurors Thursday.

Galareka Harrison, 19, is charged with first-degree murder in the slaying of fellow Navajo Nation member Mia Henderson, who authorities said was stabbed as she slept in the women’s dorm room last year.

Authorities said Harrison was upset that she had been accused of stealing by Henderson, 18.

They said Henderson was found on the morning of Sept. 5, 2007, with 23 stab wounds, 14 of which were to her back.

“It is not an issue who killed Mia Henderson. The issue will be whether it is first-degree, premeditated murder,” Deputy Pima County Attorney Kellie Johnson said in her opening statement.

Assistant Public Defender John O’Brien suggested that his closing argument will tie the pieces of his theory together — that Harrison killed Henderson in self-defense.

Police detectives found a note in the room, supposedly written by a distraught Henderson agonizing over falsely accusing Harrison of stealing from her. Harrison later acknowledged that she wrote the note.

O’Brien asked jurors to question whether Harrison gave those statements voluntarily or whether police violated her Miranda right to remain silent.

“When you have heard all the evidence about the nature of the attack, the suicide note and the knife,” Johnson said, “there will be no doubt whatsoever what the defendant’s intention was when she walked into that room.”

Harrison also is charged with forgery — for cashing one of Henderson’s checks for \$500 — and stealing another student’s ID to cash the check.

Tribe proposes casino at new Oklahoma site

By Denise Wilson
Middletown Journal

MONROE, Okla. — Monroe city officials plan to resume negotiations before year’s end with the Eastern Shawnee tribe on a revenue sharing agreement for a proposed \$300 million to \$350 million casino complex.

City Manager William Brock said the community is planning to discuss an agreement with the Eastern Shawnee tribe of West Seneca, Okla., because it is proposing to build a casino on a 123-acre site in Monroe and Turtle-creek Twp. in

Warren County.

The American Indian tribe previously was considering a site for a casino at Monroe’s Corridor 75 Park, a site south-east of Interstate 75 and Ohio 63, but the Eastern Shawnee and property owners park did not renew the option for the purchase of the land at the site, city officials said.

“The previous revenue sharing agreement was only for the previous site. It stipulated in the revenue sharing agreement that it was for that site only,” he said.

“We want to do a new revenue sharing agreement. We want to make sure that sharing and revenue coming off

this use, if it occurs, is sufficient enough to plan and bond those costs, as well as pay for annual costs of our services.”

Brock recently submitted a 12-page revised casino impact analysis for the new site to City Council for its review before submitting it to the tribe.

He said the most significant cost to the city would be infrastructure improvements.

The tribe approached the city in 2004 to develop a revenue sharing agreement in an attempt to offset the impacts that a casino development would have to infrastructure and services of the city and surrounding jurisdictions on a

site at the Corridor 75 Park.

Last year, City Council rejected the tribe’s request to transfer the old agreement at the Corridor 75 Park to the new proposed site.

The tribe has requested that the federal government place the new site located in Monroe and Turtlecreek Twp. into a trust for a casino.

Indian plaintiffs appeal judge’s trust case ruling

WASHINGTON (AP) — A half-million American Indian plaintiffs are appealing a federal judge’s recent decision to award them much less than they wanted in a long-running trust case.

U.S. District Judge James Robertson said in an Aug. 7 decision that the plaintiffs are entitled to \$455 million, a fraction of the \$47 billion that they had sought. Robertson’s number was closer to government estimates in the 12-year suit, which claims the Indians were swindled out of billions of dollars in oil, gas, grazing, timber and other royalties overseen by the Interior Department since 1887.

“If this opinion was fair, I’d like to be out of court, but we certainly can’t let a decision like this stand,” said Elouise Cobell, the lead plaintiff in the case.

At issue was how much of the royalty money was withheld from the Indian plaintiffs over the years, and whether it was held in the U.S. treasury at a benefit to the government. Robertson said in his opinion that plaintiffs did not successfully argue that it was.

Because many of the records have been lost or destroyed, it has been up to the court to decide how to best estimate how much the individual Indians — many of whom are nearing the end of their lives — should be paid.

In their appeal scheduled to be filed Monday, the plaintiffs say that Robertson is too narrowly defining the obligations of the government in managing the Indian trust. The government trust should be treated the same as a private trust, which would have been held to stricter standards, the plaintiffs say.

Robertson issued an order last week allowing the plaintiffs to appeal. He had originally intended to begin a new phase of the trial that would determine how and to whom the government should award the money. But he said at an Aug. 28 status hearing that he would allow the plaintiffs to appeal now so the process would not be delayed any further.

In a January decision, Robertson said the Interior Department had “unreasonably delayed” its accounting of the money owed to landholders and that the task was ultimately impossible. He called the June trial to consider whether money was owed, and, if so, how much was owed.

The class-action suit deals with individual Indians’ lands and covers about 500,000 Indians and their heirs. Several tribes have sued separately, claiming mismanagement of their lands.

Pascua Yaqui sue over Tucson poker room

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — Attorneys for the Pascua Yaqui Tribe have filed suit against the owners of Club Royale, a new poker room operating in Tucson.

The lawsuit seeks the club’s closure alleging it engages in illegal gambling.

The suit also names as defendants Harold S. Lee, founder of the Tombstone-based International Card and Game Players Association, with which Club Royale and a couple of non-tribal poker rooms in the Phoenix area are affiliated, and Club Royale owners Donna and Johnny Ray Rogers.

“Basically, we want to shut them down based on the fact that it’s illegal gambling in the state of Arizona,” said Luis Ochoa, an attorney at Quarles & Brady representing the tribe.

Ochoa said he hopes to

have a court hearing within 48 hours but it could take as long as 10 days.

“The state gave the tribes the exclusive right to open this kind of operation,” Ochoa said.

“A lot is at stake. So far, the state is saying, I don’t know. The state attorney general has completely ignored the responsibility to do anything about it,” Ochoa said.

The tribe seeks a temporary restraining order against Club Royale and its owners.

“We’re hoping this is the start of other tribes saying, We ought to do something,” Ochoa said.

Lee believes Club Royale is legally protected as social gambling described in Arizona Revised Statutes.

“Poker is a 300-year-old profession. It’s an avocation. It’s not gambling. Eight peo-

ple play and there’s a prize pool,” Lee said.

The card rooms associated with Lee do not take a rake from the gambling pots like casinos do when they remove chips from a pot for casino profit.

Instead, Club Royale has a button charge, where the player with the dealer button, a disk that moves to another player after each hand, pays a \$1 to \$3 button charge, which goes to Club Royale, Lee said.

The button charge is not part of the poker game itself because it is paid before cards are dealt, Lee said.

The Arizona Department of Gaming declined to comment on the Yaqui lawsuit and the Attorney General’s Office did not respond to calls seeking comment.