

Gaming decision will affect all of Wyoming

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) - A federal court's ruling that tribes do not have to negotiate with the state on the types of gambling they offer will affect all of Wyoming, Gov. Dave Freudenthal says.

With the 3-0 ruling by the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver, the Northern Arapaho tribe is moving ahead with the Wind River Casino, which is to be built about two miles south of Riverton on Wyoming 789.

"It may change the dynamic of the travel and tourism industry," Freudenthal said in a recent interview.

State law doesn't support

gambling except for "social gaming" and charitable bingo. But enforcement has been uneven, Freudenthal said, depending upon the attitudes in different communities.

Voters 10 years ago rejected a ballot proposal to allow local-option gambling. Freudenthal said that confirmed existing policy.

He said he is not personally a gambling advocate, but intends to follow the appeals court decision if a state petition for the entire appeals court to rehear the case is denied.

State lawmakers say they know of only two gambling bills so far that will go before the

Legislature this winter. One bill sponsored by the Joint Travel, Recreation and Wildlife Committee would ban electronic bingo. Another, sponsored by Rep. Dave Edwards, R-Douglas, would allow Wyoming to join the multistate Powerball lottery.

Both Lynn Birleffi, executive director of the Wyoming Lodging and Restaurant Association, and Mike Moser, director of the Wyoming Liquor Dealers Association, said they have not heard of any push in the Legislature to expand legal gaming so Wyoming businesses can compete with the reservation casino offerings.

"I think it's a little early,"

Birleffi said. "I don't know where everyone would come down now on some proposal to expand gambling in Wyoming in general."

The issue can be divisive, she said, because most people in the hospitality industry cannot take advantage of gambling unless they are set up for it.

"The challenge is if casinos are allowed to have full-scale gambling, I think there will be a push out of just fairness. In some states, when you have Native American gambling, it can start affecting other businesses that don't have it," she said.

Wounded Army private gets hero's welcome from reservation

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) - An Army private wounded in Iraq returned here Thursday to a hero's welcome, complete with presentation of an eagle-feather bonnet and a traditional Indian smoke cleansing.

"He left as a young boy," said his uncle Leland Spotted Bird. "He has come back as a warrior, a wounded warrior."

"He defended his country. He defended his homeland. We honor our warriors when they come home."

Pfc. Joseph Yellow Hammer, a 20-year-old Sioux Indian, hobbled into the baggage claim area, his feet covered in medi-

cal dressing.

The former high school basketball star on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation supported his lanky 6-foot-7 frame on a pair of crutches, still not adept at using them.

His parents were there, along with five of his sisters.

His grandmother dabbed at the tears in her eyes and his.

She presented him with a red, white and blue star quilt with an eagle in the middle and made special for him by master quilter Loretta Bearcub.

"I wanted to have something to give him," she said.

Group hopes to gain tribe recognition

LITTLE ROCK (AP) - With hopes of securing land and legitimization, a group of people have opened an office in the Ozark Mountains, calling themselves the Lost Cherokee tribe.

They claim to be descendants of those who refused to leave their homeland in the 1800s and move farther west. Based in northern Arkansas, the Lost Cherokee of Arkansas and Missouri organized in April 1999, with an office in Clinton in the Ozark Mountains, where their ancestors once lived.

The group has conducted a census to identify descendants of those who remained in the region instead of heading west on the "Trail of Tears." Curtis Smith of Texarkana, the group's president-elect and a founder, says the census was part of the application process in seeking federal recognition as a tribe.

Buffalo moving from California island to South Dakota prairie

SANTA CATALINA ISLAND, Calif. (AP) - After a life spent on a balmy Pacific island, 98 buffalo are being sent back to an authentic - and frigid - home on the range.

The buffalo began their journey Wednesday from Santa Catalina Island, off the coast of Southern California, to South Dakota, where they will live on traditional rangelands of the

Rosebud Lakota reservation.

The animals, some standing 5 feet at the shoulder and weighing several thousand pounds, are the descendants of an original herd of 14 brought from the prairie to appear in the 1920s silent movie "The Vanishing American." Once the film was completed, the buffalo were simply left behind on the island.

Rawhide Western Town relocating to Gila River Indian Reservation

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP) - The Gila River Indian Community and its development authority will assume ownership and operation of the Rawhide Western Town on Feb. 16.

The theme park, located in Scottsdale for 33 years, will close on Sept. 9 and open on the reservation in south Phoenix around Nov. 1, tribal officials said. The deal calls for the transfer of the Rawhide name and most of its famous clapboard facades.

A new 2,100-foot train ride will be added as well as an American Indian Village adjacent to the town.

Portions of the existing facility - including antiques, the 4,000-capacity pavilion and the rodeo area - will be reconstructed at the new location.

Don Antone Sr., former Gila River community governor and chairman of the development authority, said Rawhide should create as many as 300 new jobs for tribal members.

Commodities: program serves a large area

(Continued from page 1)

"We have almost as many inactive files as we have active files," Brown said.

"You never have a situation where you have the same people," Finch said.

The Commodities program's shift toward Crook County came about because of a significant number of Warm Springs tribal members in the county, but also because of logistics. Aside from its program-based giveaways at the Soroptimists Senior Center in Prineville on the first Friday of each month, participants must come to Warm Springs pick up food through the program.

"We're serving about 40 families where there's at least one Native," Brown said, adding that along with economic, need-based, guidelines, participants must have at least one member of a recognized American Native tribe originating from anywhere in the U.S.

"We did a census this year and got some feedback, and we found that there were 120 Native individuals total (in Crook County)," he said. "We're getting the word out (on the programs visits to Prineville)."

For participants who travel to Warm Springs (even Native Americans living in Breitenbush and Idanha, west of the Warm Springs Reservation, are eligible due to the program's 15-mile radius around the reservation), many tie their visits to the Commodities storehouse with planned trips to Indian Health Services, Brown said.

In addition, the Commodi-

ties program has conducted nutrition education and cooking classes in the past. Brown said he plans to have nutrition education once again but will need one more working sink to go with the two it has, along with a larger hot water tank.

The department also distributes two cookbooks, including dishes that call for many of the ingredients available through the Commodities Department.

Nutrition education is especially appreciable, Finch said, because of the increasing dependence on packaged and processed foods like pizza and burritos and a general loss of even simple cooking skills.

Brown, who has worked for the Commodities department since 1992 and has held his current position since 1995, approaches his work with a heart to help tribal members.

"I enjoy this line of work," he said, "helping the people, helping the community."

Brown seems a natural for his position. Working toward an associates degree in a business-related field, he said his goal is to open his own business, not only for the sake of being his own boss, but to put tribal members to work.

"I would like to open my own business and then offer employment to tribal members seeking work for the first time," he said.

"There are a lot of individuals who have had a hard time finding employment these days."

Brown is a member of the Umatilla Confederated Tribes and moved to Warm Springs since 1990 after attending school and living in Portland.

One catch of the USDA tribal commodities program is if one participates in that program, he or she can't participate

in the USDA's food stamp program or participate in Oregon's state-run program.

"A household can receive one or the other within a month's period," Brown said. "For example, if a household applies December 1, of course, we have to do our verification, and determine that they're not participating in the food stamps."

"There's a lot of uncertainty with a lot of the community. I think they tend to believe or want to believe that they can get both benefits."

Young Achievers Devontre Thomas and Rabe Clements Sponsored by Les Schwab

Devontre Thomas, 7, and Rabe Clements, 12, are active youths, and they both enjoy sports.

Second-grader Devontre likes basketball. Seventh-grader Rabe likes wrestling.

Devontre, who attends Warm Springs Elementary School, also likes going to the Boys and Girls Club. Rabe attends Jefferson County Middle School.



Rabe Clements and Devontre Thomas

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