

Tribal faction seizes control of reservation

KENT, Conn. (AP) — A tribal faction has seized control of the Schaghticoke Indian reservation to develop property along the Housatonic River. Members of the faction say they have plans for houses and unspecified "economic development."

Schaghticoke Indian Tribe members on Friday took over the tribe's office and picnic pavilion, forcing out the rival Schaghticoke Tribal Nation. The two groups, who each claim to represent the tribe that has lived in Kent since the 1700s,

have feuded since the 1970s. "The reservation belongs to all Schaghticoke," Alan Russell, the Schaghticoke Indian Tribe faction's chairman, said Saturday. "We want to start our economic development program here."

Russell's group, which is seeking federal recognition, says it is the true Schaghticoke tribe. Like the rival Schaghticoke Tribal Nation, the Schaghticoke Indian Tribe also is interested in developing a casino or bingo hall. The reservation, which was

once more than 1,000 acres but has been reduced during hundreds of years of land sales, has been at the center of contention over tribal recognition.

The federal Bureau of Indian Affairs in October denied formal federal recognition of the Schaghticoke Tribal Nation. State politicians and Kent officials strongly opposed recognition, fearing the tribe would try to open a casino.

Schaghticoke Tribal Nation members said Saturday that they were pulling back because

they had no interest in clashing with Russell's group. They said they are focused on a court appeal of the BIA's recognition decision.

"We've got bigger battles to fight," said Michael Pane, vice chairman of the Schaghticoke Tribal Nation. "I'm just shrugging my shoulders."

Schaghticoke Tribal Nation Chief Richard Velky said Russell's takeover was "ridiculous at this stage of the game."

"We are looking for federal recognition," he said.

Federal government to end support for Indian museums

BROWNING, Mont. (AP) — The Museum of the Plains Indian stands to lose its federal funding and close in less than two years, unless other support is found.

The Indian Arts and Crafts Board of the U.S. Department of the Interior plans to eliminate funding for the Browning museum, and for American Indian museums in Rapid City, S.D., and Anadarko, Okla., the Great Falls Tribune reported in Sunday's editions.

Absent other support, the Interior Department expects to lock the doors of the Browning museum on Oct. 1, 2007. Collections of war shirts, necklaces and tools historically used in daily life on the Northern Plains would be shipped to the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. Established in 1941, the Museum of the Plains Indian has tribal arts and artifacts of the Blackfeet, Crow, Northern Cheyenne, Sioux, Assiniboine, Arapaho, Shoshone, Nez Perce, Flathead, Chippewa and Cree. The museum houses historical clothing, horse gear, weapons, household implements, baby carriers and toys.

The Indian Arts and Crafts Board acquired the three museums in the 1950s from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, as the bureau faced budget reductions.

The board has an annual budget of about \$1 million and allocates some \$450,000 of that to the three museums. The Browning museum's annual budget is roughly \$138,000.

The focus of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board is shifting from museums to the prevention of Indian craft counterfeiting, and prosecution of counterfeiters.

Group prepares lawsuit to stop Buffalo casino

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Assemblyman Sam Hoyt, preservationists and anti-gambling groups will go to court this week to try to halt construction of a Seneca Indian Nation casino in the city.

The group last Friday announced plans to file a lawsuit

in U.S. District Court that claims federal agencies, including the Department of the Interior, ignored laws governing the approval process for gambling on Indian land.

They'll ask a judge to declare the casino illegal.

The announcement came as

the Senecas celebrated the partial opening of a 26-story luxury hotel adjacent to their existing casino in Niagara Falls. The Senecas Friday opened the first 10 floors of the hotel, which towers over the Niagara Falls, N.Y., skyline, with plans to open the full hotel in March.

The Senecas' broke ground on the Buffalo casino Dec. 8 on nine acres of land currently occupied by an early 1900's grain elevator complex which preservationists say is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

British Columbia seeks apology for 1884 lynching by US vigilantes

VICTORIA, British Columbia (AP) — British Columbia's lieutenant governor is asking her counterpart in Washington state to arrange an apology for the 1884 lynching of a 14-year-old Sto:lo Indian boy by an American mob.

Louie Sam was being held by provincial authorities in February 1884 when more than 100 Americans came across the border on horseback, abducted the boy and hanged him.

He was suspected in the killing of a shopkeeper in Nooksack, in what is now Washington state's Whatcom County. Washington did not become a state for another five years, in 1889.

The lynching has not been forgotten by the Sto:lo or historians, who believe the boy died for a killing he didn't commit.

B.C. Lt. Gov. Iona Campagnolo raised the issue in September, during a visit by Washington Lt. Gov. Brad Owen.

"We're still trying to work things out," Owen spokesman Brian Hatfield said earlier this

month. "But there will be a statement ... an apology."

"The lieutenant governor describes it as a healing," Hatfield told the Toronto Globe and Mail.

A resolution will be submitted to the Legislature during the session that begins Jan. 9, he said.

"It's always been one of those issues of injustice that's never been made right, and it's good that this is happening," said Grand Chief Doug Kelley of the Sto:lo Tribal Council. "It certainly means a lot to me and I think to all Sto:lo."

Keith Carlson, a professor of history at the University of Saskatchewan, became interested in the case a few years ago while working as a consultant for the Sto:lo. He found records in the B.C. Archives that not only detailed the vigilante raid into Canada, but described an undercover operation by two provincial police officers, who went into the Washington territory to investigate the death of storekeeper James Bell.

"The B.C. police were quite

convinced he was framed for the murder. They had people telling them who really did it," Carlson told the Toronto newspaper.

Louie Sam lived just north of the U.S.-Canadian border in a small Sto:lo community near what is now Sumas, Wash. He had been offered a job south of the border, but when he got there he found there wasn't any work, Carlson said.

The night Sam headed back home, Bell was killed and his store set afire. Louie was accused by two local men.

Sto:lo leaders turned the boy over to provincial police, believing he would be treated fairly. But vigilantes seized Sam at the homestead where he was being held by a deputized B.C. constable. His body was found later, hanging from a tree just north of the border.

According to Carlson, outraged leaders of the 21 Sto:lo tribes in the Fraser Valley saw two options: "Ride south and kill the first white man they saw, or ride south and kill 120 whites — one for each member of the

lynch party."

"It was on the verge of becoming a race war," he said.

To keep the peace, the B.C. government sent the undercover officers south, posing as laborers. They returned with statements from witnesses that implicated two Washington men, including the man who recruited Louie Sam for the non-existent job and later took over Bell's business. The other man married Bell's widow.

"I don't think there's any doubt but that Louie Sam was innocent. He was framed," Carlson said.

In December 2004, Washington state exonerated Nisqually Chief Leschi after evidence was heard by an unofficial "Historical Court of Justice."

Leschi was hanged by the territorial government in 1858, accused in the death of a white militia soldier, Col. A. Benton

Moses.

The court — formed and headed by state Supreme Court Justice Gerry Alexander — did not address the question of whether Leschi shot Moses — after so long, it's impossible to know for sure what happened. But the judges determined Leschi should never have been charged because he would have been acting as a lawful combatant during the region's 1855 Indian War.




Avoid replacing your windshield
Chip Repairs \$59.95
\$10 for each additional one

Madras Paint & Glass
1076 SW Hwy 97 in Madras, ph. 475-2166

Open 7:30-5:30 M-F; 9-4 Sat

EXPRESS

Tax Refund



Why Wait 6 to 8 Weeks For Your Refund?

Refunds Available In 24 to 72 Hours*

Bring In Your Completed Tax Return And Let Us E-File It Today!!!

Refund Checks Cashed
Open Saturday
475-1508

CHECK EXPRESS

MONEY ORDERS - TRANSFERS - CASH
MCM - OSCAR BUILDING • 378 SW 5th St.

