

Indian radio stations have source of help

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) – American Indian radio stations have a new partner helping them broadcast an eclectic mix of community programming to reservations across the country.

The Center for Native American Radio offers 33 radio stations that serve Indians, helping with programming, accounting, engineering and fundraising, which is a big challenge for most of the noncommercial operations.

A \$1.5 million grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting established the center, which is overseen by the National Federation of Community Broadcasters in Oakland, Calif.

America's 4.2 million Indians often live on reservations located far from each other, increasing the sense of isolation for some of the nation's poorest, most vulnerable groups.

Radio stations that cater to Native Americans' interests could help boost morale, provide networking opportunities and give them a sense that they aren't alone, proponents say.

"We're now this unified group. Before, the stations were sort of on their own and a lot of them felt isolated," said Peggy Berryhill, director of services and planning for the center.

"So now they're beginning to see their collective strengths and share their assets and issues and begin moving forward."

The center doesn't provide funding, but it connects stations with people and groups who know how to find money that's available, she said.

Idaho doesn't have any Indian radio stations; the nearest are in Oregon, which has two FM stations, in Warm Springs

and in Pendleton. There's also an AM station in Toppenish, Wash., run by the Yakama Nation Tribe.

In South Dakota, KILI-FM on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation has been off the air since an April 15 lightning strike. CNAPR referred the station to a consultant who knows how to write grant proposals, said Tom Casey, business manager and development director.

The station requested a \$201,000 emergency grant from the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program at the Department of Commerce in Washington, which could help KILI replace the antenna, transmission line and transmitter, and install a grounding system.

The station has six months to raise \$40,000 to \$50,000 in matching money and is halfway to its goal, Casey said.

He hopes to hear back on the grant within weeks.

CNAPR's help with the grant was priceless, he said.

The center also tipped him off about another funding program to help the station go digital, Casey said.

"We're going to come back stronger than ever with new transmitting equipment and new studio equipment and we'll be in good shape," he said.

Berryhill said strengthening Indian radio stations helps Indian communities maintain their traditions and sovereignty.

"The mission of most of these stations is about cultural preservation," she said.

"It's about economic development for the reservation. It's about having a voice for their communities, an independent media."

Opponents of casino weighing ways to block vote

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) – Opponents of a proposed casino in West Warwick are considering legal options to stop a vote that would allow state residents to plan.

Both the House and the Senate recently approved a constitutional amendment that would pave the way for the Narragansett Indian Tribe and its business partner, Harrah's Entertainment, to open the casino.

Rhode Island law requires all lotteries, which include casinos, to be state-run. The amendment passed by the General Assembly would exempt the tribe and Harrah's from that constitutional provision, which the state Supreme Court has cited in twice advising against the casino proposal.

The amendment must be approved in a ballot question in November.

Gov. Don Carcieri and Johnston Mayor William Macera – whose town had a competing casino proposal with Donald Trump and his business partners – are mulling legal challenges.

Johnston town officials say the casino should be put out to bid to get the best deal possible. They might seek an injunction that would block the November vote.

"We're thinking about that to prevent (the vote) from going forward until we have a fair hearing," Macera told The Providence Journal. "What happened there wasn't fair at all."

Carcieri, a vocal casino opponent, has hired a lawyer, Joseph Larisa Jr., who has previously kept the casino question off the ballot.

"The governor's legal team has identified some areas of concern," Carcieri spokesman Jeff Neal said. "I think it would be imprudent now to go into specifics."

Attorney General Patrick Lynch is also deciding whether to get involved. He wants to ensure that any amendment being presented to voters is constitutional, said spokesman Michael Healey.

Proponents say a casino would provide the state with millions of dollars in gaming taxes and thousands of jobs. Harrah's officials have said they will invest up to \$1 billion under their latest proposal and pay a \$100 million licensing fee to the state.

Critics are concerned that existing entertainment venues and restaurants could suffer a big financial loss if a casino opens.

Several American Indians seeking office

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) – Interest by American Indians in state legislative seats is high this year, and an Indian lawmaker of 16 years who is not seeking re-election said Friday he's encouraged by the number of Indian candidates.

At least 13 legislative candidates are Indians; 11 are Democrats and two are Republicans.

Rep. Paul Valandra, D-Mission, said many Indians have purposely avoided state politics for years out of distrust of government and a belief that little would be done anyway for Indian families struggling with meager finances, a housing shortage and other pressing issues.

"We were in an isolation policy with the state of South Dakota for many years. It was a cold war of sorts," Valandra said.

"Philosophically, it's a stretch that we seem to have gotten beyond with all these candidates

running this year."

Valandra is hopeful that many of the Indian candidates will be successful. In recent years, fewer than a handful of the 105 legislators were Indians.

Jason Schulte, executive director of the state Democratic Party, said it is no surprise that most of the Indian candidates are running as Democrats. The party has long had close ties to the Indian community, he said.

"I attribute the large number of Democratic Native American candidates to two things," Schulte said. "One, everyone is fed up with the lack of leadership and the abusive one-party rule in Pierre. And two, Native Americans recognize that the Democratic Party is inclusive and committed to solving the challenges they face on a daily basis."

Max Wetz, executive director of the South Dakota Republican Party, said the GOP is an open party and welcomes all

who wish to join or run for office under the party banner. The party has worked to recruit Indians among its candidates, he said.

"The Republican Party fields candidates that are good leaders and active in their communities," Wetz said. "When that happens to be Native Americans, we happily embrace those people."

One of the candidates in a legislative district that was split into two House districts in south central and southwestern South Dakota as a result of an American Civil Liberties Union lawsuit over voting rights is an Indian. District 26A was created to give Indian candidates a better chance of succeeding.

Paul A. Joseph of Wood, a Democratic candidate for Legislative in that special district, is an Indian. He shares the ticket with former House member Larry Lucas of Mission. On the Republican side of the ledger in

that district is Rep. Barry Jensen of White River; Calvin Jones Jr. of Rosebud is running as an independent in 26A.

Only one of the Democrats will advance after Tuesday's primary election, facing both Jensen and Jones in the general election for the legislative seat.

In the state's only other split House districts, located in the northwest, two brothers who are tribal members are running.

Rep. Tom Van Norman, D-Eagle Butte, is seeking re-election in District 28A; he will face Republican Everett Hunt of Eagle Butte in November. Van Norman's brother, Steve Emery of McLaughlin, is one of two Democratic candidates seeking to advance in the District 28 Senate primary; his opponent is Ryan Maher of Isabel.

Emery is the attorney who filed the complaint that led to the district being split eight years ago.

Forgotten petroglyphs to be studied, displayed

BALTIMORE (AP) – They're well traveled for prehistoric stone carvings, having been moved from the flood-threatened lower Susquehanna Valley in the 1920s, then to various sites in Baltimore, ending up on concrete platforms in eastern Druid Hill Park, all but forgotten in what is now an overgrown space.

And they'll be traveling again to a Calvert County laboratory.

Eventually the more than two dozen Native American carvings, which may be thousands of years old, will be put on display.

The carvings are called the Bald Friar Petroglyphs. They are older than those of the Aztecs

and include concentric circles, fishlike designs and shapes that appear to depict the sun and humans, The (Baltimore) Sun reported.

They were rediscovered in the fall by officials at the Maryland Historical Trust.

On Thursday, state archaeologists used chisels and crowbars to dislodge the carvings.

"They are an attempt by prehistoric folks who lived in Maryland to communicate with each other, and they're still communicating to us today," said Charles L. Hall, Maryland's terrestrial archaeologist. "These are expressions of an inner life, a symbolic life."

The petroglyphs arrived in Baltimore in 1926 after preservationists removed them from the lower Susquehanna Valley to avoid their being inundated by Conowingo Dam. The stones were found in the Bald Friar area of Pennsylvania.

Because the rocks were too large to carry, they were blasted into smaller pieces with dynamite. Some were reassembled like puzzles into concrete that was ordered from France.

Many of the carvings were collected by the Maryland Academy of Sciences on North Charles Street. When the academy moved in the 1940s, the rocks, too large to fit into the

academy's new space, ended up in Druid Hill Park.

When The Sun reported the rediscovery of the rocks last fall, Hall and others feared they might be vandalized or stolen. Since then, archaeologists have removed about 26 of the carvings, and only a handful of large rocks remain.

On Thursday, archaeologists chiseled the rocks free from the concrete foundations, then pounded wooden wedges under the approximately 300-pound rocks to lift them up slightly. Officials passed ropes under the carvings and used an electric lift to transfer them onto a flatbed truck.

Eastern Shawnee tribe presses land claims in Ohio

TOLEDO, Ohio (AP) – Oklahoma's Eastern Shawnee tribe has asked a federal judge to allow its lawsuit to go forward with its demand for 146 square miles of land in western Ohio as compensation for past injustices.

The tribe filed a response Wednesday in U.S. District Court to state requests that the lawsuit before Judge James Carr be dismissed.

The tribe sued Ohio, Gov. Bob Taft and 60 other government entities and individuals last year after state officials objected to a tribe-owned casino.

The tribe, forced from Ohio in the 1830s, argues that faulty treaties and land deals legitimize its land claims for the city of Wapakoneta, part of Lima and a rural area near Bellefontaine and hunting and fishing rights across one third of Ohio.

The tribe is negotiating casino-resort agreements with a number of Ohio cities but the deals are contingent on overcoming state and federal objections.

Ohio Attorney General Jim Petro has accused the Eastern Shawnee of trying to bully its way into a casino.

Dig planned along lake

NEW TOWN, N.D. (AP) – A site along Lake Sakakawea where American Indians camped and hunted ancient bison is to be excavated this summer by an archaeological team.

The Beacon Island site, estimated to be about 12,000 years old, was exposed when the lake began shrinking due to recent dry years, said Fern Swenson, the state historical preservation director. Experts consider it one of the rarest sites in North America, she said.

Some preliminary tests have been done at the site, said Fred Sellet, the field director for the excavation, who is now at the University of South Florida.

"It's very rare and it's very exciting," Sellet said, of the site. "These were paleo-Indians and represent some of the earliest archaeological remains in that part of the world."

Arapaho in danger of losing their language

RIVERTON, Wyo. (AP) – The director of bilingual education at Wind River Tribal College says the Northern Arapaho Tribe should consider putting all of its young people into language immersion programs to keep the Arapaho language from dying out.

A recent survey found only 3 percent of the tribe's 8,000 members, or about 240 people, could speak the Arapaho language, according to Eugene Ridgely Jr., who directs the

college's bilingual programs. Most of those Arapaho speakers are at least 45 years old, he said.

The Arapaho and the Eastern Shoshone share the Wind River Indian Reservation, and reservation schools teach both tribal languages. But Ridgely said such instruction is limited in its effectiveness because students have few chances to practice the language outside the classroom.

"One of the biggest drawbacks for those who are learn-

ing the language is that they still cannot talk to anyone except their fellow classmates and elders," he said.

That's why he's recommending an immersion program, in which instruction would be given only in Arapaho – no English allowed. Ridgely said immersion programs are the most effective way to teach a language, and that students could be paired with tribal elders so they could continue to practice.

A recent pilot program in-

volving just two students showed some success, Ridgely said. One of the students "was successful in acquiring semi-fluency," he said. Results with the other student weren't as clear.

Ridgely said maintaining the Arapaho language was essential to preserving the tribe's culture.

"Loss of language means loss of identity, culture and tradition," he said. "It should be avoided at all costs."