



Tonya Thompson/Spilyay

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs recently hosted the 33rd Annual Northwest Indian Youth Conference, which included a powwow near the end of the week-long conference.

Minnesota tribe buys land to restore prairie

PRIOR LAKE, Minn. (AP)—A 30-acre field where corn and soybeans were once grown is now covered with Canada wild rye, big bluestem, Golden Alexander and compass plant—the same grasses and flowers the pioneers saw as they pushed westward across the American prairie in the 1800s.

This small patch of prairie next to a condominium complex in suburban Minneapolis did not suddenly appear on its own. Instead, it was painstakingly restored at great cost by the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux tribe.

Flush with cash from its nearby casino, the tribe has bought up about 125 acres of farmland and wetlands just outside the big city over the past

few years and has returned them to the way they looked before the white man herded the Indians onto reservations.

By the end of the year, the Shakopee Mdewakanton hope to begin restoring 450 more acres near the Twin Cities. Most of it is land that has been farmed since at least the 1880s.

"We hold the land in high regard, and we think it's important to return some of these areas to the way they were—the way it was years ago," Shakopee Mdewakanton vice chairman Glynn Crooks said.

The tribe will not disclose how much it is paying for these chunks of valuable land in this fast-growing part of the state, and it refuses to discuss its finances. But

while many Indian tribes live in crushing poverty, the Mdewakanton are prospering.

Their Mystic Lake casino, which opened in 1992 about 30 miles from downtown Minneapolis and is the biggest gambling hall in Minnesota, has generated millions for the tribe and made its estimated 300 members rich. Many live in suburban McMansions.

Other tribes also want to use the land the way their ancestors did. South Dakota's Rosebud Sioux are raising a bison herd. Members of Nebraska's Winnebago tribe are encouraged to harvest wild plums and choke cherries to improve their diets, and milkweed for a traditional soup.

Pueblo man runs for Congress in New Mexico

TESUQUE PUEBLO, N.M. (AP)—Benny Shendo Jr.'s bid for Congress isn't just a political race. He's literally running for office — touring northern New Mexico on foot and by bike as he seeks votes in a six-way Democratic primary.

The idea came naturally to the former college runner and marathoner, who is campaigning in a district with a greater concentration of American Indian voters than any other.

"Back in the old days, that's how messages were carried—on foot," said Shendo, a member of the Jemez Pueblo tribe.

His message: We're all in this together.

"This race is really about representing all of us—whether we're Navajos,

whether we're Apaches, whether we're pueblos, whether we're Hispanic, Anglo ... Asians, African-Americans," Shendo told students at the Santa Fe Indian School.

The 3rd District covers roughly the northern half of New Mexico, with Indians accounting for about 16 percent of the voting-age population. The district has voters from 16 tribes—14 pueblos and parts of the Jicarilla Apache reservation and the huge Navajo Nation.

Shendo, former secretary of Indian affairs for Gov. Bill Richardson, is running for the seat left open by Rep. Tom Udall, who is running for the Senate. If elected, Shendo would be the first Indian to hold the office.

There's only one Indian in Congress now: Oklahoma Republican Tom Cole, a member

of the Chickasaw Nation.

Some Indians have been heavily involved in tribal governments, but the population historically has not participated much in state and federal elections, said Kalyn Free of Tulsa, Okla., who leads the Indigenous Democratic Network, which recruits and trains Indian candidates for public office.

American Indians received U.S. citizenship in 1924, but some states refused to let them vote for decades. Indians could not cast ballots in New Mexico or Arizona until 1948 and until 1957 in Utah.

"This is a political system not of our own making," said Free, a member of the Choctaw Nation who ran for Congress in 2004 from an eastern Oklahoma district.

But, she said, if Indians are "not at the table ... our voices

are not going to be represented." Her organization has helped more than 20 Indian Democrats get elected, most of them to state legislatures.

At least two other Native Americans are running in Democratic congressional primaries this year: Diane Benson in Alaska and Mary Kim Titla in Arizona.

With better-known and better-funded candidates in Shendo's race, he "would have to do some really impressive turnout on the reservations in order to have a shot, which has been ... hard in Democratic primaries," said Albuquerque pollster Brian Sanderoff.

The candidate bills himself as the "real, true progressive" in a field of candidates who offer similar Democratic themes: ending the Iraq war, combating glo-

bal warming, providing access to affordable health care.

Shendo says his Indian heritage gives him a singular perspective. For instance, his campaign literature points out that he's no newcomer to being "green." His people have been practicing sustainability for centuries.

A NAFTA question at a labor forum makes him chuckle, as he points out that his ancestors were trading with Mexico and Central America centuries ago.

"I was raised with the values and traditions that come from my people," he explained to the labor audience: respect for land, water, animals, elders, families, neighbors, communities.

"This is who I am," he said.

Shendo managed Native American programs for the University of New Mexico, and was assistant dean of students

and director of the American Indian and Alaskan Native program at Stanford University. He was a fellow of the W.K. Kellogg National Leadership Program.

Shendo was in the Stanford job when he learned that the little Catholic school in the Jemez Pueblo community west of Santa Fe would be closing after nearly 100 years of operation. He resigned to go home and organize the first public charter school on an Indian reservation in New Mexico.

He recalls with a laugh his conversation with a Stanford official.

"You got a better offer? ... We can match it," the official said. "No," replied Shendo. "You'll never be able to match it."

North Dakota, tribe reach accord on reservation oil taxes

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP)—Oil industry officials predict a new tax and regulatory accord between North Dakota and the Three Affiliated Tribes will spur exploration of oil-producing rock beneath the tribe's reservation.

The agreement limits oil tax rates on reservation land, and spells out how the state and tribal governments will share oil revenues. It specifies that North Dakota's Department of Mineral Resources will regulate reservation production.

Besides its share of oil taxes,

the Three Affiliated Tribes will receive \$100,000 in fees for every new oil well drilled on reservation trust land.

The agreement, which was authorized by the North Dakota Legislature last year, takes effect July 1 and may last up to two years. It may be extended for any period by agreement of the governor and the tribe's business council.

"I think this will help stimulate more oil production on the reservation," Gov. John Hoeven said. "These are major invest-

ments they're making, and this will help (oil companies) go on the reservation and make those investments."

Oil industry spokesmen said the agreement gives companies a set of tax rates and regulatory assumptions they may rely on in deciding whether to drill.

Ron Ness, president of the North Dakota Petroleum Council, said uncertainty about taxes and complex tribal rules have discouraged new drilling on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation for more than 20 years.

"Oil companies want regulatory certainty, and they're very sensitive to taxation," Ness said. "At least under this situation, they know what the ground rules are. Previously, there was little or no activity there because of the uncertainty."

The Three Affiliated Tribes' business council endorsed the agreement Thursday. Hoeven said a signing ceremony will be held at the tribe's headquarters in New Town on June 10.

The tribe's chairman, Marcus Wells Jr., said the tribe plans to

use its oil revenues to finance improvements to its health care system, law enforcement and road network.

"Through this present agreement, both the tribe and state are able to work together to provide more stability in the taxation of oil and gas in western North Dakota," Wells said in a statement. He could not be reached immediately for comment.

The Fort Berthold reservation in western North Dakota lies atop part of the Bakken shale rock formation, parts of which have

demonstrated great promise recently for oil production.

The U.S. Geological Survey recently estimated that up to 4.3 billion barrels of oil are recoverable from the Bakken shale beneath North Dakota and eastern Montana, using current drilling technology.

North Dakota has a top state tax rate of 11.5 percent on oil production, although newly drilled and low-producing wells often pay less. The agreement sets an 11.5 percent tax on oil pumped from tribal trust land.

New trial granted in tribal smoke shop raid

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP)—A federal judge ordered a new trial in a lawsuit brought by a member of the Narragansett Indian tribe who sued state police for a violent 2003 raid on a tribal smoke shop.

Adam Jennings' ankle was broken in the July 14, 2003, raid at the shop on tribal land in Charlestown. A jury in 2005 found that trooper Kenneth Jones used excessive force

when he was trying to subdue Jennings, and awarded Jennings just over \$300,000.

U.S. District Judge Ernest Torres on Tuesday granted Jones' request for a new trial. He said testimony from state police was more credible than that of Jennings and two other plaintiffs' witnesses.

Torres cast doubt on whether a shop worker and a customer who testified during a five-day trial

could have seen Jennings' struggle with state troopers. He also questioned Jennings' recollections.

Torres had earlier overturned the jury award and ruled state troopers used reasonable force, but the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals found Jones did violate Jennings' constitutional rights and reinstated the award.

The attorney general's office said it was pleased with the decision. But Jennings' mother,

Paulla Dove Jennings, said she was upset.

"There is no justice for any Narragansett in the state," she told The Providence Journal.

Jennings was one of seven tribe members who faced misdemeanor criminal charges after the raid on the smoke shop, which was selling cigarettes without collecting state taxes.

The Museum At Warm Springs Traditional & Memorial Horse Parade



Photograph courtesy of the Gladys Thompson Family. Pictured: Akasi Irene Thompson Torres and sister Narzia Nithom.

Thursday, June 26, 2008
The Museum Grounds

Please join The Museum At Warm Springs as we provide the opportunity to Warm Springs Tribal Members to show their horse Regalia and to pay respect to their Loved Ones that are now gone and free their bereavement. Walkers are welcome! Time starting at 10 am with "Spirit of the Horse" reception and exhibit opening to follow. The Changing Exhibits Gallery and Gift Shop will be open until 6 pm.

With permission, photographs will be taken of Horse regalia for individual records and one copy towards the Museum's Archives during this event.

For additional information and horse trailer parking, please contact Rosalind Sampson, Beulah Taupit or Natalie Moody at 541 563 3331/3338 Fax. Adult Volunteers are requested.

Banished Snoqualmie file civil-rights lawsuit

SEATTLE (AP)—A federal lawsuit has been filed by nine banished members of the Snoqualmie tribe in the latest round of an ongoing fight for control of the tribe.

The tribe is poised to open one of the state's most lucrative gambling casinos this fall.

The banished members were tossed out in April. They include the tribal chairman, several council members and a minister of the Indian Shaker Church. They filed their suit on Thursday in U.S. District Court in Seattle, claiming violation of their civil rights.

Named in the suit are the Snoqualmie council members who banished them, stripping them of their tribal identity, barring them from tribal lands, and cutting them off from any tribal benefits, including health-care services.

The Snoqualmie are a small

tribe with fewer than 700 members. It was federally recognized in 1999 and obtained a reservation in 2006. It intends to open what promises to be one of the most profitable casinos, located just off Interstate 90, an enterprise the banished were also accused of not supporting.