

# Montour: Six Nations community needs to force meeting on gaming

By Lynda Powless  
Editor

Six Nations Elected Chief Bill Montour says council has a legal firm looking into the constitutional right of First Nations to launch and own its own gaming venues.

But Ontario may be the biggest stumbling block.

"Ontario is now making noise that they will not entertain anything like this, electronic gaming, by First Nations," said Elected Chief Montour.

"They want electronic gaming for themselves and First Nations can only do chairtable gaming," he said.

He said he wants to challenge that.

"In 1989 they said we could only have so many cigarettes and put us on quotas. We are the only segment of society that has quotas enforced on it and here it is again, this time its gaming," he said.

In 1985 Canada transferred gaming to the provinces in a revenue sharing deal that left out First Nations.

"We weren't invited to the discussions. We weren't even a thought," said Elected Chief Montour.

In the U.S. he said states were told to work with tribes. "If we look at the American experiences, where the State can gain, American

Indian communities can gain. It's a compact they have created for the benefit of both."

Montour said he is not going to be deterred by band council reversing its decision to give him authority to explore gaming ventures for Six Nations.

"No, I am going ahead. I have gotten positive responses from the community. Everyone is telling to go for it."

The Elected Chief's plan to launch a virtual casino pilot using electronic gaming at the bingo hall was featured in Turtle Island News. The pilot, if successful, would eventually see a network ex-

panded to include satellite outlets in private businesses in the community.

But the pilot was halted when band council learned the pilot was going ahead without any information coming to council and that the chief's wife had been hired by the company supplying the gaming machines. Pam Montour was to act as liaison to First Nation communities but has since resigned her position, said Elected Chief Bill Montour.

Elected Chief Montour said he has had nothing but positive response to the idea of a gaming venue at Six Nations after he appealed to the community in Turtle Island

News.

"People said they read it and told me 'go for it.'"

"I've got positive responses. They said go for it. They realize everybody gains here. In most households someone is playing online on poker.com or some other game. That's their right if they want to do it. All I want to do is make sure the community get some of the benefits."

He said "one woman gave me a long response about it and what she said we should do."

He said he wants to see a community meeting held to explain the whole concept.

"People don't understand the concept of wide area net-

work but young people do. Ask them about it and playing on their laptops and Ipods and they become really interested."

He said the idea is to set the hub up at the bingo hall and have local restaurants or shops hook up to the system through a bluetooth system, paying a share to the community.

"I am moving ahead on this. We can't stop," he said. "I want to see a community meeting but the community has to come forward and tell council they want to see it," he said. "The people are the boss, not the council. So we need to hear from the people on this to get a meeting."