

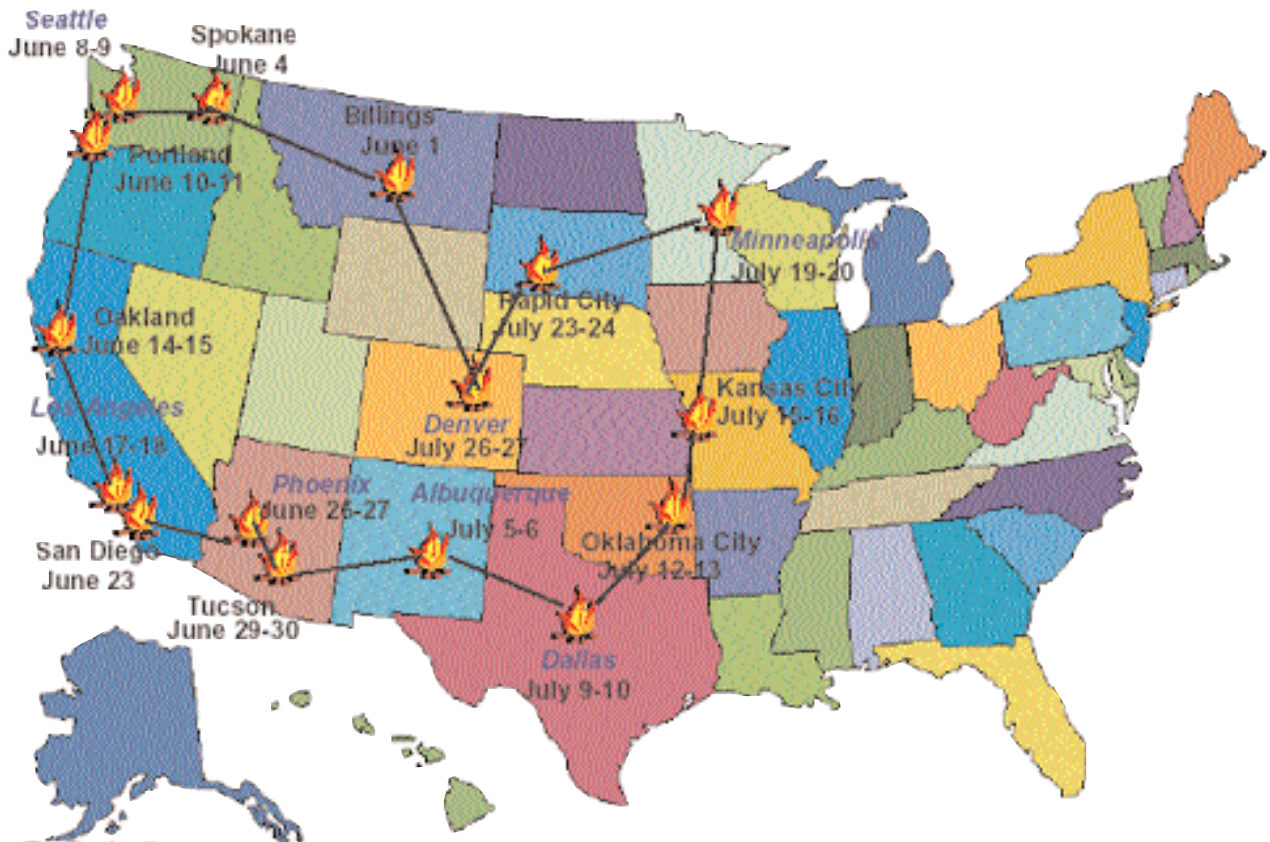


# Wellbriety!

*White Bison's Online Magazine*

Special Edition: Issue #17

## Minneapolis Minnesota— Traditional Women's Roles and Responsibilities



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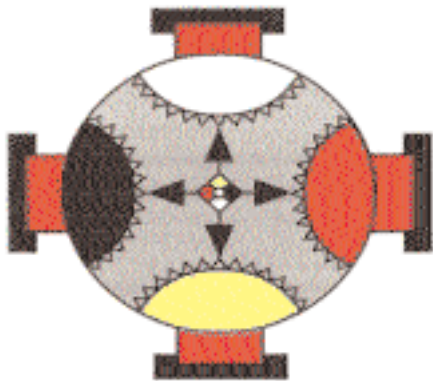


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# Healing Native American Women and Children

Hoop Journey 2002, also called Hoop Journey III, travels to Native American centers in 16 cities west of the Mississippi in June and July of 2002 with the goal of **Healing Native American Women and Children**. The 100 Eagle Feather Hoop of Nations will carry its gifts of Healing, Hope, Unity and Forgiveness on this 7000 mile Journey that also aims to put a new face on recovery. Come on out to one of the Wellbriety Days on the Journey. For dates of the Wellbriety Days in each community look at the map on the front cover of this special edition of Wellbriety! Magazine. For a listing of local coordinators see Issue # 1 of Wellbriety! Special Edition, or visit the White Bison website. **Hoop Journey 2002 is gratefully dedicated to Ingrid Washinawatok El—Issa, Flying Eagle Woman.**

Visit White Bison, Inc. Online at <http://www.whitebison.org>



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# HOOP JOURNEY 2002

## Minneapolis Minnesota—Traditional Women's Roles and Responsibilities

**T**he Minneapolis American Indian Center has an active Youth Group led by caring adults and supported by members of the local community. This Youth Program is named *Ginew Golden Eagle*, and the young people were there both days of the Wellbriety Conference, helping out and listening to the words of their Elders.

The mission of the Youth program is **To help American Indian Youth strengthen and develop life skills which will give them the knowledge to make healthy choices.** White Bison would like to commend the program directors, parents, community, sponsors and the youth in this program. Keep doing what you're doing! It's working!

This was a perfect location for the **Daughters of Tradition Program** and other teaching tools such as the Children of Alcoholics Video Series. And many people said, *"When are you going to come out with a program for Sons of Tradition?"* We could only advise people to keep watching the website for the latest information, or

Mercedes' dance was a gift to the Hoop and an inspiration to all of us as we watched our future honor the Ancestors.

call the White Bison office. *"Soon we hope,"* is our reply. People stopped by the White Bison product



Natives Inc. Drum Group sings Flag Song and Honor Song as the Veteran, Charlie Johnson and the Hoop Carriers circle the gymnasium with the Sacred Hoop.

table, even before we got it set up on the first day, to ask about the **Medicine Wheel and 12 Steps** and the **Red Road to Wellbriety Book** that will be coming out soon. The first 5,000 copies of this book will be given away and the sign-up sheets for the book were filling quickly as **80 people** filed past the table and into the gymnasium of the Center for the evening's activities.



### A Gift to the Hoop

Our evening in Minneapolis began as The Drum, **Natives Inc**, began an Honor Song. Veteran Charlie

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Johnson carried the Flag into the Gathering, followed by the people carrying the Sacred Hoop. Colin Novach, Travis Decosi, and Jesse Big Bear sat at the Drum as Joe Rainey, Kristina Graves, Mercedes Morris, and Kandy Pamonicutt

brought in the Hoop. Everyone stood to honor the Flag and the Sacred Hoop of 100 Eagle Feathers as the procession circled the entire room before placing the Hoop on the Stand. The beat of the Drum echoed throughout the gymnasium.

Mercedes Morris is the young girl in the yellow jingle dress that you see in the picture, barely able to reach high enough to 'carry the hoop.' But after the Hoop was set on the stand she began to dance as the Drum continued to sing. Mercedes' dance was a "gift to the Hoop" and an inspiration to all of us as we



Hoop Carriers on the evening of July 19 include Joe Rainey, Kristina Graves, Mercedes Morris, and Kandy Pamonicutt, as well as Mercedes Morris in her Jingle Dress, at eye level with the Hoop, encircled by the adults.

watched our future honor the Ancestors.

Hope Flanagan was the Emcee for this Wellbriety

Conference and she introduced Don Coyhis and the White Bison Staff. Following the introduction, Don shared with all of those gathered about the Story of

Unknown to us at the time was the fact that one of Ingrid's cousins and another woman who was a childhood friend of Ingrid's were in the audience. They came up to us afterward to tell us how much the words and the song meant to them.

the Sacred Hoop and the purpose of White Bison. He also told the story of Ingrid Washinawatok El-Issa and the Drum followed his story with an Honor Song for this fallen warrior. Unknown to us at the time was the fact that one of Ingrid's cousins and another woman who was a childhood friend of Ingrid's were in the audience. They came up to us afterward to tell us how much the words and the song meant to them. Not just that we would honor Ingrid, but that we would honor a woman as a warrior—a peacemaker—an agent of change. Ingrid's husband shared with us that he once asked his wife, *"Ingrid, what will happen to your work if something happens to you?"* And that Ingrid had quickly replied, *"Oh, my Spirit will continue after my body is gone."* Ingrid was right. Her spirit continues to touch lives.

Don told the story of Hoop Journey I and let the video conclude with the Story of Hoop Journey II—The Wiping of the Tears. After the video, all those who chose moved the chairs around to create a circle and began to

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share with one another in this Sacred Talking Circle until late into the evening. The smell of sage filled the gymnasium as this Medicine cleansed the Circle.



### The Clan Mothers Speak

The following morning—July 20th—there were about one hundred People at the Center for the Entrance of the Sacred Hoop and the events planned for this day. Kandy Pamonicutt, Lillian Stand, Arnold Stand, and Kristina Graves carried the Sacred Hoop into the circle. Don Coyhis spoke this day about some of the Teachings of the Elders and Prophecy.

A highlight of the Hoop's Visit to Minneapolis was a panel consisting of Doreen Day, Dorothy Sam, Agnes Wakefield, Delores Wakefield, and Juanita Walker,



*Emcee Hope Flanagan (right) introduces the Women's Panel who spoke so well on the Roles and Responsibilities of Women in their Respective Traditions.*



*Don tells the story of Ingrid Washinawatok El-Issa. The Drum Group, Natives Inc., sang an honor song for her. The spirit of the warrior continues to live when she is remembered in a good way.*

which took its place at the front of the room. These local Women spoke to us on **Clan Mothers**. They began by pointing out that in their respective Tribes

there was not the exact title "Clan Mother," but there certainly were the roles and responsibility of a Clan Mother. We heard a clear message from these women: To be an Elder, to be a "Clan Mother," is to be a role model. To be a woman who is responsible. To be a nurturer to the family and the community.

The women spoke until time for the lunch break. But it was more than just a lunch break. Feast would be a better word to describe the buffet set before us.

Thank you to the Clan Mothers. You honored us and you honored yourselves with the Teachings and Traditions you shared with us on this day.

And many of us could not help but notice that the women on the Panel who were speaking that day were "taken care of." Their food and drink was pre-



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Don Coyhis gives tokens of appreciation from White Bison to the Minneapolis American Indian Center Coordinator, Rob Stately.



pared and brought to them. To do this is a sign of respect for the women and for tradition.

When the panel reconvened after lunch, respect was one of the teachings they stressed. **Respect for self, respect for Elders, and respect for Traditions.** They spoke

about personal responsibility as well.

Several stressed that responsibility is not being taught in our families and schools as it should be—that we are failing in our roles as parents and family when we are not teaching responsibility. There was a question and answer session following the last of the contribu-

tions from the panel. And I must say, some of the questions were difficult to answer. Yet not one of these women avoided the issues or the questions. Thank you to the "Clan Mothers." You honored us and you honored yourselves with the Teachings and Traditions you shared with us on this day.

Don Coyhis gifted Rob Stately, the Minneapolis American Indian Center Coordinator for this Wellbriety Conference, with a bundle of Medicine, a dreamcatcher, and a copy of the video series **Children of Alcoholics**. The instruction Don gave to Rob for the video tapes was, *"If someone comes to the Center and wants a copy, make them a copy and give it to them."* Rob nodded enthusiastically. The Center would surely do that. Rob also made sure that all of the people who had

assisted him with the preparations for the Conference were acknowledged. From the red, yellow, black and white balloons—gathered in ribbons and decorating the entire Center—to the delicious meals we enjoyed both days of the gathering. This is a community on the path to Wellbriety. Baby-Youth-Adult-Elder, the entire cycle of life, they were all there at the Minneapolis American Indian Center—together—offering tobacco and other Medicines into the Sacred Hoop, and adding their prayers for the Healing of the Nation to continue as the Journey continues.

Thank you to the entire Community! Thank you for the prayers, the food and the inspiration. And to all of you who told us about your plans to attend the **National Wellbriety Conference, September 26th - 29th in Billings, Montana**—Travel safe! We look forward to seeing you again in Billings. ✚