



Wellbriety!

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Ohio First Lady Hope Taft



Visits Wellbriety Day in Dayton

Dayton, Ohio, May 12, 2003



First Lady of the State of Ohio, Hope Taft, is honored for her work and efforts in alcohol and other drug use treatment and prevention at the Wellbriety Day festivities in Dayton, Ohio



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White Bison Speaks

The Diversity of Wellbriety in Dayton

We arrived in Dayton, Ohio on May 11, just as the last session of a three-day Firestarter Training facilitated by Blaine “Woody” Wood was ending. The Hoop Crew was greeted by Lori Bakara of the Medicine Wheel Healing House. Lori is the Coordinator for this Wellbriety event in Dayton, held on May 12th at the University of Dayton.

Lori was accompanied by Woody and several other people from the Firestarter Training. Among the group that welcomed us were some old friends and supporters of Wellbriety—like Ron Bryant and Vickie Whitewolf. Back in Cleveland we heard several people tell us that the first time they opened up and became aware of White Bison was when they attended a Dayton Pow-Wow and met Ron Bryant at the booth he set up to share the White Bison resources and to tell about the Journeys and Conferences. There were also many new friends. Some we had just met on Hoop Journey IV at previous sites—North Carolina and Cleveland. It’s wonderful to see you again!!!



Blaine 'Woody' Wood (front/center) is surrounded by many of the people who attended the Firestarter Training in Dayton. This 3-day Training ended on the day we arrived and the Wellbriety Gathering took place the following day.

We formed a caravan on the edge of the city and were escorted to the guest house on the campus of the University where we would be staying. When we arrived at the guest house we were greeted by Mary Ann Angel with the Circle of Light Initiative at the Dayton University. Mary Ann is the Co-Coordinator for the Wellbriety Gathering. She and several volunteers were setting up our accommodations as well as the adjoining Guest House where the feast would be held following the Wellbriety Event.

Manny and Melody Two Feathers and their nephew were guests of the Coordinators as well and were staying in the adjoining house. It felt good there. Woody joined us in the guest house, and some of the White Bison people who work "remotely"—i.e., away from the main White Bison office in Colorado Springs—had an opportunity to spend time together and learn how our hard work and efforts are interconnected to achieve the goals and mission of the White Bison organization. Much goes on that is not readily apparent during a Wellbriety Event. The work of dedicated volunteers and coordinators throughout the years the Sacred Hoop has been on these Journeys goes on behind the scenes. All of us are interconnected because we believe in the Gifts of the Hoop—Healing, Hope, Unity, and Forgiving the Unforgivable.

Wellbriety Day in Dayton

The Entrance of the Sacred Hoop into the Kennedy Union Ballroom of the University of Dayton was accompanied by the beat of a hand-drum as Raymond A. Roach offered an honoring song. The Hoop was carried by a man and three children, representing well the Healing of Native Men and Children, focus of this year’s Journey. Following the Hoop’s entry we were blessed with a prayer delivered by Manny Two Feathers. We remained standing as Don Coyhis, Founder of White Bison, asked that we take the time to honor "Lori Pi." Raymond A. Roach sang a beautiful memorial song as we stood to honor Pi and our other veterans.

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U.S. Army Pfc. Lori Piestewa, Hopi, is the first Native American woman to be killed in combat as a member of the American forces in US history. She was also the first woman in the US military to die since World War II. She was a single

mother and leaves behind a four year-old boy and a three year-old girl. Lori Pi, 23, a lifelong Tuba City, Arizona resident, (Navajo Nation) was a member of the 507th Maintenance Company based in Fort Bliss, Texas, and was killed in an ambush near Nasiriyah, Iraq in late March.

Raymond Maxx, her Navajo Nation Council Delegate from Tuba City, spoke these honoring words. *"She defended the nation and paid the ultimate price,"* he said. *"She brought everybody together, from Canada, east, west, south and north. She belongs to the nation and all tribes now."*

A Memorial Fund has been created for the Piestewa children. Those wishing to contribute to the fund, which will be used to raise the children and for their future educational needs, can enquire at any Wells Fargo bank. Addresses for Wells Fargo can be found at

<http://www.wellsfargo.com>. Click on the "Locations" link at

http://www.wellsfargo.com/help/find_us.jhtml

Following the opening ceremony, Don Coyhis was introduced and shared the Story of the Sacred Hoop and the Journeys and Conferences that have been a part of the sharing of the Gifts of the Hoop since 1995.



The Entrance of the Sacred Hoop at the University of Dayton Kennedy Union Ballroom.

Lori Bakara then asked Hope Taft, wife of Governor Bob Taft of Ohio, to come to the stage. While presenting her with a miniature of the Sacred Hoop of 100 Eagle Feathers, Lori said to Mrs. Taft, *"We honor you on behalf of the Wellbriety Movement and the Indian Nations, because we know the work that you do in treatment and prevention and how strongly you support recovery. Thank you for joining us today."*

As Hope Taft accepted the token of appreciation, there was a great deal of applause from the Dayton community and the attendees at the event. After the applause died down a bit, Mrs. Taft spoke in a quiet voice. *"This is a symbol of what people can do when they come together. And they not only do*

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something that helps the individual, but helps the whole community. I encourage these movements and these circles because they can help us to move forward as a community and a nation, to a better place. Thank you."



Hope Taft

First Lady Hope Taft is a strong supporter of children growing up drug and alcohol free and promoting positive youth development in Ohio communities. She is a nationally recognized figure in the fight against drug and alcohol abuse and currently serves as:

- * Advisory Commission member for the Drug-Free Communities Support Program
- * Center for Substance Abuse Treatment's National Advisory Council member
- * Co-chair of Leadership to Keep Children Alcohol Free, and
- * Governor's Spouses' Great Start Program to reduce smoking during pregnancy.

First Lady Hope Taft serves as the co chair of the advisory board for the President's Commission for

Drug Free Communities, along with Henry Lozano, who also serves on the White bison Board of Directors and is President of Californians for a Drug Free Youth.

More about Hope Taft's work can be found on the internet at www.hopetaft.org



Hope Taft, wife of Governor Bob Taft of Ohio, is presented with a miniature of the Sacred Hoop by Don Coyhis of White Bison and the Coordinators of today's Wellbriety Event.

Left to Right - Don Coyhis, Hope Taft, Mary Ann Angel and Lori K. Bakara.

Following the presentation to Hope Taft, Don returned to the stage and said, *"There was a time when there wasn't any funding for Indian Alcohol Problems. People like Bill Iron Moccasin and Ozzie Williamson would use their own money and go around in their cars on their own time and own money trying to help our people. Bill would get on a bus to Washington D.C., taking his own food in his suitcase, sleeping in a bus depot, and he would have an appointment with a Senator or some other official there and sometimes they would see him and sometimes they wouldn't even be there like they said they would to meet with him. He'd get*

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*back on the bus and ride
it all the way back to
South Dakota."*

*"Those
are the
Warriors
that we
have to
not for-*

*get, those
of us who are doing this
work today. They really sacrificed a lot of their time
and their dreams. There wasn't a lot of support or
awareness back then. I have to say that because
I'm just a little dot in the universe like everyone
else. Just trying to keep my Rez Car going—got a
supply of duct tape and hoping our van makes it
back. But there is an army of people that is making
this movement work. We estimate it takes nearly
700 volunteers to make this Journey possible—and
some of them you don't ever see, they work behind
the scenes. This movement would not be possible
without them."*

Many, Many Thanks

Then Don continued with his presentation of the White Bison organization and the teachings he has received from the Elders. Following the presentation, Mr. Coyhis played part of the documentary video Healing Native Women and Children, which was followed by an open mic sharing. Our appreciation to all of those who stood to share with those of us gathered in this circle:

Julius 'Dutch' Mader
Pam Ferguson
Ron Bryant
Alisa R. Bonecutter
Dennis Stewart, P.H.D.
Larry S. Beckner
Judy Beckner

Leon Briggs
Raymond A. Roach
Mary Ann Angel
Lawrence Anthony
Joey Hall

During our lunch break we were honored to have Douglas Blue Feather, a Native American Music Award Winner provide us with beautiful music. Douglas has tremendous talent and quite a following, not just in his hometown of Dayton, Ohio but across the country as the latest awards attest. His way with the Native American Flute is a gift. We enjoyed our time with you and appreciate your taking the time to come and be with us today.

The afternoon was filled with wonderful insight and lessons beginning with Dr. Robin Herman of the Miami Valley Juvenile Rehabilitation Center, and the "associates" who came with him to share his presentation, "Creating a Sense of Belonging."



Dr. Robin Herman (left) of the Miami Valley Juvenile Rehabilitation Center, accompanied by several of his "associates" who shared teachings with us during the afternoon session. Powerful lessons.

Thank you to "The Doctors." We learned a great deal.

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Also sharing during the afternoon were:

Rev. Shianne Eagleheart of the Red Bird Center –
The Wounded Bear

Rudy Casias MALAC, Wilton C. 'Cork' Bomberry
spoke on behalf of the Medicine Wheel Healing
House – Youth and Addictions.

Vickie White Wolf – University of Cincinnati
Professor of Native Studies
"Men and Abuse – Healing the Circle"

Donna Conley – Ohio Citizen Advocacy

Mary Ann Angel – Professor at the University of
Dayton – Circle of Light Initiative.

another escort to see us safely back on the interstate
to our next destination—from that first contact to the
last parting wave we saw in our rear view mirrors—
we were welcomed as 'family' to the Dayton
Community.

Mvto – megwetch – wado – pila miya – woliwon- a-
ho – many thanks.

The coordinators, volunteers, attendees and White
Bison would like to extend our appreciation to:

University of Dayton
Alumni Chair in the Humanities
The Committee for Diversity in Community
Office of Diverse Student Populations
Honors and Scholars Program
Office of Printing and Design
The Program for Christian Leadership
Office of the Provost
The Women's Center
Miami Valley Council for Native Americans
Moon over Water Catering ☀

*Vette Middleton
Richard Simonelli*



*The closing circle on this site of the Wellbriety Movement.
The sharing of the role of men as protectors of their families and com-
munity was followed by prayers.*

From the time we were greeted and welcomed at
the edge of Dayton, throughout the Wellbriety Event
on the 12th and even the day after the event, when
White Bison and the Two Feathers Family were treat-
ed to a meal by the Coordinators and were given

