

WEEK THREE:

The start of our third week of Sacred Run 2006 was both interesting and sobering as part of the group had the opportunity to stop at Fort Sumner, New Mexico, for a special pipe ceremony to remember and commemorate the many Navajo and Apache native people who suffered and died at this location. In 1862 the federal government decided to expel these tribes from their homelands with a forced relocation. Col. Christopher "Kit" Carson led a military campaign that first attacked the Mescalero Apaches in southern New Mexico, forced about 450 people to surrender and then marched them to the Bosque Redondo Indian Reservation.



HWEELDI: "the place of suffering" Carson then led the Army into Navajoland and attacked relentlessly: destroying homes, burning crops, and killing livestock. Thousands of men, women and children were starved into submission and forced to march to the Bosque Redondo during the winter of 1863-64, a distance of over 450 miles. As many as 3,000 Navajos, perhaps one-fifth of the population, died during the "Long Walk" period. Their name for the place is *hweeldi*, which translates roughly as "the place of suffering."

We all felt a certain sadness and heaviness during our visit at the Fort Sumner State Monument. But, perhaps more significantly, we were also reminded of the importance for all people to honor and recognize the sacredness of Mother Earth and everyone who lives here.

2/26 - Clovis, NM -- We traveled from Vaughn, New Mexico to Clovis and stayed at the New Mexico National Guard Armory, special thanks to Sgt. Terry Stevens for his graciousness and hospitality. Thanks also to John Snowberger of McDonald's on E. Mabry Drive in Clovis who donated dinner for the group.

2/27 - Hereford, TX - Crossed the border into Texas and stayed at the First United Methodist Church in Hereford. Special thanks Michelle and Sharon. It was especially nice as the church graciously provided us kitchen privileges. Our own Tuffy Isham treated everyone to his outstanding homemade fry bread and Holly Sroufe organized an excellent buffet.

2/28 - Pampa, TX - Outside of Pampa our runners and walkers were very surprised to find numerous dead owls on the side of the road. Our route for the day was very close to the huge graineries outside town and the dead owls were possibly the victims of pesticides that are left out to control the mice. Arriving in Pampa, we were fortunate to stay at the First United Methodist Church, special thanks to Virginia and Tom at the church, also thanks to Marilyn Powers of the Pampa News who spent the evening visiting with us and learning more about our mission. Dennis provided a treat for everyone with huge servings of wild rice harvested on his reservation in Minnesota and

Wounded Knee DeOcampo provided vegetables for an excellent, healthy meal for everyone.

3/01 – Hammon, OK – New month, new state, crossed into Oklahoma, “Native America” as it says on their license plates. We were special guests at Hammon’s brand new Native American Community Center. As a special treat, members of the undefeated Hammon High School Lady Warriors basketball team visited us after their final team practice Wednesday night. Their first game of the state playoffs starts Thursday in Midwest City. We wished them good luck and gave them our Sacred Run staff to bring to the game and hold the energy.

3/02-05 – Canton, OK – After Hammon we continued east and stopped for four nights in Canton, OK, home of Don & Viola Hatch, longtime supporters of AIM and Dennis. Viola served for many years as chairperson of the Arapaho tribe for the state of Oklahoma and is very influential in native issues. She arranged for part of our group to camp at her home and the others to set up in Canton’s Indian Community Center. We were joined by Joni Tucker-Nesbeth, sons Sean and Kyle and Willie, 93, and her son, Doyle. We also were once again privileged to enjoy a Native American Sweat Lodge Ceremony at Don & Viola’s home both Wednesday and Thursday nights. A big treat for everyone was held Saturday night at the Canton community center as native people from throughout Oklahoma joined us for a special pow-wow to offer prayers and support for Viola’s daughter, Sue, who’s scheduled for a liver transplant soon.

State Champion Lady Warriors – It was during the pow-wow late Saturday evening that we learned Hammon won its third straight game in the high school basketball playoffs. Congratulations to the Hammon Lady Warriors, new Oklahoma State Class B Basketball Champions, on their perfect 30-0 undefeated season!

It’s been an excellent first three weeks. Thanks to everyone for your prayers and support and healing energy. Together we are making a difference.

For the latest information and photos of the Sacred Run as we move across the country, please visit www.sacredrun.org

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