

Sacred Run 2006 (www.sacredrun.org)

Weekly Update -- March 13 - 19

Vol 28, Week #5

WEEK FIVE:

We've covered over 2,000 miles so far, half our targeted distance for this sacred journey. On Tuesday we packed up and ventured forth after an outstanding three-night stay at the Creek Indian Community Center in Tulsa. Our cross-country trek this week took us out of "Native America" (Oklahoma) and into "The Natural State" (Arkansas).

PROFILING: Just before crossing into Arkansas, one of our support van drivers, Dennis "Running Hawk" Shirley, was stopped in Dewar, Oklahoma, as he searched for one of our runners who had made a wrong turn. Running Hawk is a Lakota/Oglala from Missouri with several American Indian Movement (AIM) and "Free Leonard Peltier" stickers prominently displayed on his vehicle. The officer showed no interest in helping us locate our missing runner or hearing about the Sacred Run. Instead, he presented Running Hawk with a ticket for \$188 with a handwritten notation on the bottom, "AIM member." There obviously remains important work to do on this journey for peace (and justice).

3/14-16 -- Clarksville, Arkansas -- Thanks to pastors Steve Wingo and Phil Sturdy and everyone at the First United Methodist Church for their gracious hospitality for three nights. Thanks also to Tammy Jo Teltow for her help and friendship; Kyle, manager of the College Avenue Coffee House, who took several runners exploring and rock-climbing; and Ron Hook Sr and Ron Hook Jr for their generous cash contribution from the heart.

3/17-19 -- White Hall, Arkansas -- Thanks to pastor David Baker and the wonderful people at White Hall United Methodist Church for making us feel so welcome. Their fellowship hall was very comfortable (especially when the rain poured down most of Saturday night). The facility also included an excellent kitchen as well as showers, both wonderful "quality of life" bonuses we've grown to really appreciate on this sacred road across America.

"Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors" On the Sacred Run's first night Feb. 11th, First United Methodist Church of Merced, California, hosted us with food and best wishes and a wonderful place to spend the night. Over these first five weeks on the road we've been warmly welcomed by many United Methodist churches in cities and towns across the country. This spiritual community really does live up to its motto, "Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors."

At a special reception in our honor Wednesday night at the church, Dennis shared his appreciation for Rev. John Adams of the United Methodist Church. In 1973 Rev. Adams traveled to Wounded Knee, South Dakota, to personally help negotiate a peaceful ending to the 71-day siege at Wounded Knee by AIM members against federal agents. Dennis also acknowledged the United Methodist church for agreeing to post the \$250,000 bond he needed to get out of jail prior to the resulting national trial of AIM leaders (his long-time friend and Native American activist, actor Marlon Brando, later stepped in and posted the bail with his own money).

FIRST MARATHON: Octavia Subia, age 17, from San Jose, first met K.A. and Marcus, two of our runners from Australia, on a run in 2005 that traveled from San Francisco to the Trinity nuclear test site in New Mexico, site of the world's first atomic explosion in 1945. She really enjoyed the exhilaration of running (usually about 5 to 12 miles at a time) as well as the travel and meeting diverse, international people working together for an important cause. She joined Sacred Run 2006 at the very beginning on Alcatraz Island and has chalked up strong personal runs of usually 10 to 15 miles daily in these first five weeks. A big breakthrough occurred very late Friday evening when she appeared out of the darkness coming down Main Street in Clarksville

accompanied by several fellow runners after successfully running the final 26 miles of the day. Congratulations to Octavia on her very first official marathon!

On Saturday, nine Sacred Run members traveled to Mable Vale, just southwest of Little Rock, to participate in a sweat lodge ceremony hosted by “Goochi,” an old friend of Dennis. Many community members were there to welcome us and help with the cooking. Everyone had a wonderful experience. “Cookie” also informed us of some local Arkansas area wannabes claiming to be “bear lodge” people, a phony society.

MEDICINE: During circle on Sunday morning, our final day in White Hall, Dennis presented medicine bags to eight members of our group who are going all the way to Washington, DC, but were not with us February 11th on Alcatraz Island. He explained the significance of the medicine bags and their powerful, sacred contents including prayers, sage and small stones from our visit at Bosque Redondo in southern New Mexico, final destination of the government’s forced march in the winter of 1863-64 when several thousand Navajo men, women and children died in a “military campaign” led by U.S. Army Col. Christopher “Kit” Carson.

Dennis explained the importance and care of the medicine bag, why it’s an honor to wear it and why it’s spiritually significant. He mentioned his visit to Cuba some years ago and personal meeting with Fidel Castro who asked about the medicine bag Dennis was wearing around his neck. After listening intently to the explanation, the Cuban dictator then reached into his own pocket and pulled out his medicine bag, a gift from his mother that he said he carried with him every day of his life.

CAPTAIN LINDA: Even with the gracious help of United Methodist churches along the way, the logistics of locating and securing accommodations and food for 40-plus people (and getting most of it donated at no charge) each day while traveling across the country is no easy task. Our on-the-road arrangements coordinator, Linda Rose, is a Sundancer on the Rosebud reservation in South Dakota as well as an experienced marketing director in the medical field. “In 1978, we often ended up sleeping on the ground on the side of the road,” Dennis explained. “Of course, that was partly due to the fact that we didn’t have Linda with us making arrangements for us ahead of time.” For her contributions, Dennis presented her with a special “Captain Linda” pendant and a warm round of applause and appreciation from everyone.

It’s been a wonderful (and interesting) fifth week – racial profiling, Octavia’s first marathon, historical insights about Rev. John Adams and Wounded Knee and Marlon Brando, the spiritual significance of medicine bags and Bosque Redondo and Fidel Castro, and the continued logistical solutions and on-the-road contributions of Captain Linda -- as we boldly continue our eastward trek on this sacred path.

We’re continuing to spread our sacred message of peace, land and life as we move steadily toward Louisiana and the New Orleans area. We thank 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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