

Remember Wounded Knee

By Jodi Rave
The Missoulian

MISSOULA, Mont. — Rowan McQuarrie took a day off work Monday to hold a sign on a busy Missoula street, reminding passers-by of the Dec. 29, 1890, Wounded Knee Massacre, commonly known as the last of the Indian Wars.

McQuarrie stood on the Higgins Avenue Bridge for five hours hoisting a Wounded Knee sign into the air, staying in position until his parking meter expired at 1 p.m. Some people honked as they drove by. Others stopped to visit with McQuarrie and wife Nancy.

"People respond differently," he said, snow falling upon him. "If they are over 40, they say, 'That's awful nice of you to remind us.' If they're under 30, they say, 'Is that around here?'"

The Wounded Knee Massacre took place 118 years ago on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. The tragedy unfolded after Chief Sitting Bull was killed by adversaries who were revolted by the Lakota involvement in the Ghost Dance, a religious ceremony sweeping the Dakotas. Sitting Bull's death prompted Chief Big Foot of the Mineconjou Lakota to seek refuge at the Pine Ridge Agency.

It was a bitter journey for Chief Big Foot, who crossed the Badlands with more than 300 band members, mostly from the Cheyenne River Reservation. After traveling for hundreds of miles across the frozen South Dakota prairie, the peaceful group was gunned down by the 7th Cavalry after surrendering by Wounded Knee Creek near the Pine Ridge Agency.

McQuarrie, a Missoula dentist, has been paying tribute to the Lakota massacre as a way to remind people about American Indians, a group with a unique political status that he said has been "covertly and overtly" marginalized by the federal government.

He started to commemorate the Wounded Knee tragedy by wearing a black armband to work. Then he decided it wasn't a good idea to do so when working on patients' teeth.

"Some people look the other way when a dentist is wearing a black armband," he said. McQuarrie marked out a spot on the Higgins Avenue Bridge last year on Dec. 29. And this year, he stood in the same spot, with the same sign.

"Long live the memory of Wounded Knee," said Kristina Matthes, a woman who walked by the McQuarries on her way to lunch. She was familiar with the story of the massacre. She remembers driving across the country in a station wagon while her mom and dad read aloud passages from Dee Brown's "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee."

Matthes said the McQuarries inspired her to go the Missoula Public Library to check out a copy of Brown's book for her own children, ages 14 and 11.

As the McQuarries stood on the bridge, a trio of twenty-somethings stopped to visit.

Taylor Tath-Joseph knew a little bit about the Wounded Knee massacre, although he didn't know the state in which it occurred.

"It took place by Yellowstone," he said. "It was the forced removal of Indians. ... That's what I remember. They don't teach us things like that in school."

Even though his knowledge was sketchy, he and his friends said they appreciated the reminder. Dustin Harrison said it was "pretty awesome" that McQuarrie made the choice to take the message to the street.

Others agreed. "I didn't realize today was the anniversary," said Bridgett Moriarty. "It's good to see them raising awareness for something not necessarily in our everyday consciousness."

Reach reporter Jodi Rave at 1-800-366-7186

Camping retreat gets kids to rise above

NIYLP offers students an opportunity to test themselves

SAN MATEO MOUNTAINS, (AP) — High in the ponderosa pines, Samuel Jackson had walked one tightrope, then another, and climbed hand-over-hand across rope nettings. Now he was in the middle of a string of tires strung up in the trees, tangled, tired and trying to swing from one to the next.

Jackson, a member of the Wampanoag Tribe and a ninth-grader at the Native American Charter Academy, shouted to his friend, Nick Felipe, who was following him. "This is harder than it looks!"

Jackson slipped and fell, was caught by his safety harness and dangled for a while, catching his breath. He recovered and made it to the end of the tire portion of the ropes course, then turned to find Felipe, a member of Acoma Pueblo, stuck on the third tire, unable to propel himself forward.

Friends

Friends help friends, so Jackson shouted support. "You can do it, Nick. I know you can. You've done more difficult things than this, man."

Ten minutes later, the tables were turned. Jackson was near the end of the course, ever higher in the trees,

and waiting to fly through the air on a zip line. He was frozen.

Friends help friends, so Felipe shouted into the trees. "C'mon, Sam. Just jump."

Jackson and Felipe and their classmates were midway through a three-day camping retreat on hundreds of acres high in the San Mateo Mountains in Cibola County, a property lent by the Presbytery of Santa Fe to the National Indian Youth Leadership Project.

NIYLP's Project Venture offers students in fifth through ninth grades an opportunity to test themselves and, by passing or failing those tests, to understand themselves better.

Morning start

Days begin at dawn with a run through the forest and are filled with hikes, turns on the ropes course, mountain biking and archery, all followed by discussion groups.

Studies of adolescents have found that Native American youths use drugs and alcohol at earlier ages and

more frequently than teens in general. The National Indian Youth Leadership Project's goal is to reduce those numbers, but the project's programs don't advertise that. In fact, no one in the organization ever mentions drugs or alcohol, and they never use the word "don't."

NIYLP's founder, Cherokee McClellan Hall, said the approach of involving kids in positive activities such as problem-solving games and wilderness treks does more to build confident leaders (leaders who don't use drugs and alcohol) than pounding home anti-drug messages.

Research backs that up. A long-term study by the federal Center for Substance Abuse Prevention found kids who had graduated from Project Venture were less likely to use drugs or alcohol immediately after the program and also as long as 18 months later.

Project Venture was the fourth most effective of all the programs studied and the most effective program for Native American kids. The study showed the Project Venture

kids were half as likely to be drinking as their peers.

Project Venture has served more than 4,000 kids, mostly Native Americans, in New Mexico since 1990 and it is now being used in more than 50 communities throughout the United States.

Goals

Mateo Sanchez, the dean of students at Native American Charter Academy, summed up the goals of the school's participation in Project Venture as a search for answers to these questions: "Who are we as men? How do we conduct ourselves as men? How do we bring honor to ourselves and to our families?"

"C'mon, Sam. Just jump." In the end, Jackson didn't jump. But he leaned forward enough to tip off the platform and shoot through the trees on the zip line, hooting all the way. Felipe did, too.

On the ground, they were all smiles.

"I was kind of scared up there, to be honest, but I got over it. You lose all fear because you're safe by these," Jackson said, tugging on his harness straps. "My goal was to beat it all, and I did."

New Year's Eve Pow wow



Cable Hoover/Independent

Maximus Sheka, 8, takes a nap while his uncle, Lester Redshirt, waits for his turn to dance in the New Year's powwow late Wednesday night at Miyamura High School. The gym was packed with spectators and performers who came to enjoy the dances and spend their New Year's Eve alcohol-free.

Wampanoag tribe didn't need to cheat

By Paula Peters

I have been quiet for a long time.

In an atmosphere overwhelmed by lies, hostility and corruption and dominated by a tribal administration that used fear and intimidation to quiet the uncooperative, I am not sure anything I might have said in the past four years would have mattered. The truth needed to be acknowledged in a way that is irrefutable.

That day has come. While for many members of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, Monday was a day of vindication, there are still those who believe Glenn Marshall was some kind of a hero. They believe he achieved something through bullying, arrogance, manipulation and illegal activity, including stealing money, that was much needed for tribal programs and services, something we could not have achieved otherwise.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

We did not need anyone to lie to Congress about military service.

We did not need anyone to create secret entities to hide \$4 million.

We did not need anyone to make illegal campaign contributions.

We did not need anyone to manipulate our tribal constitution to control elections and due process.

And we certainly did not need to shun any tribal members for seeking

transparency.

Everything, and I mean everything, that Glenn Marshall achieved in terms of advancing our petition for federal recognition could have been done legally and aboveboard.

The 30,000-page petition for tribal recognition, which was largely assembled before Glenn even came into office, met every criterion developed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs to determine tribal status. According to BIA officials, it was one of the strongest applications ever reviewed by the Office of Federal Acknowledgment.

We are without question the sovereign nation of the Mashpee Wampanoag.

So, yes, we certainly could have had both: recognition and dignity.

Instead, there were the lies and secrets, and the constant intimidation of anyone who asked too many questions or, heaven forbid, sought accountability.

There were the secret payouts to select families who needed to stave off utility shut-offs, foreclosures or car repossessions. Their gratitude would surely be reflected in loyalty and votes come election day. Many of them are

still looking the other way today.

Forgiving Glenn is one thing. But elevating a convicted rapist and an admitted liar and thief to hero status out of a belief that the ends justified the means is absurd and is shameful to those who came before us, who worked so hard to bring recognition to our tribe while instilling a culture of honor and self-respect.

Just imagine if that money had been committed to our housing, health or education programs — distributed fairly among tribal members based on need, not politics — everyone could

have been assisted equally and our tribe's integrity would not have been called into question.

Just last week, as a member of Mashpee's Community Preservation Committee, I was asked to approve funding in the amount of \$250,000 for the restoration of the Old Indian Meetinghouse.

The meetinghouse is a community treasure, and the money will be well-spent, but it is disgraceful that the town has had to step up to save this tribal historic landmark after Glenn embezzled tribal money to pay his own mortgage.

There is no question that the U.S. government is entitled to some of the

blame for creating an atmosphere in Native America that is ripe for corruption. They created a recognition process that is by far the most cumbersome, bureaucratic and expensive legal litmus test known to man. They created the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act in 1988, producing an environment where fledgling Indian tribes on the brink of recognition became ripe for the picking for greedy investors. They developed the congressional ballroom where lobbyists like Jack Abramoff penned in every vulnerable pending tribe on his dance card for fleecing and corrupting.

While I am sure there is more to come in terms of allegations and revelations about the depth and breadth of this scandal, the damage is done and it is time for us to move forward. The only way for the Mashpee Wampanoag to redeem our integrity in the eyes of our neighbors — and, more important, in the hearts of our members — is with a wholesale change in leadership.

Come Feb. 8, 2009, the Mashpee Wampanoag will have an opportunity to band together and elect a leadership of integrity, accountability and transparency, one that has the ability to truly restore unity to our people.

Paula Peters of Mashpee is a member of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and a former Cape Cod Times reporter and columnist.

Editorial