

"From the newspaper Patriots Herald"

Drumming in Eureka



John TwoHawks in World Drum Ceremony. (See story in
Local News)

Jean Merritt 25.OCT.07



EUREKA SPRINGS—Sunday's World Drum celebration in Basin Park brought together people of many cultures and walks of life as part of a worldwide effort to bring awareness to the need to preserve and respect our planet. The event drew large crowds throughout the afternoon, especially for the climactic Four Winds Ceremony led by John Two-Hawks at the end of the day.

Morten Storeide of Norway, together with Whitecougar who had the vision and Birger Mikkelsen who built The World Drum, began the international journey of the World Drum about one year ago in Oslo, Norway. From there the drum has traveled to Sweden, back to Norway, New Zealand, Hawaii, and now to Eureka Springs, thanks to Bill Watson who sent Storeide a ticket and invited him to come. Storeide said he spent a wonderful weekend with Peggy Hill and John Two-Hawks, and it has felt like coming home.

When accepting the keys to the city from City Clerk M.J. Sell, Storeide told the crowd in Basin Park the drum is both a wake-up call to the destruction of Mother Earth and a symbol of peace. The drum was created by Norway's Birger Mikkelsen, a medicine man who painted the drum with his own blood mixed with the paint.

Many who gathered in the park brought their own hand drums and participated in the ceremony, led by John Two-Hawks performing on the world drum. Two-Hawks said

people representing all walks of life had been invited to place their hands on the drum in the dramatic presentation of the Lakota Indian Four Winds Ceremony. He prayed for wisdom to help us “walk on Mother Earth more respectfully,” and that we would “carry the memory of this moment with us.”

Joseph Chamberlain, who created the artwork for the World Drum celebration, had his work on display at the park and said it is also available at EureKan Art and at the Blue Spring Heritage Center. Also participating in the afternoon was the Everyone Can Sing choir from Fayetteville.

The words from John Two-Hawks:

The heartbeat of the World Drum....

Just a few weeks ago, the World Drum was here in these ancient mountains with us during our weekend one Mending Medicine Retreat. It was the one year anniversary of its worldwide travels, its purpose being to bring peace and healing to our mother planet and all who live here upon her. For this one year anniversary, I was honored to have been asked to lead a public ceremony for the World Drum. It was an amazing weekend, and I must say that, as beautiful as the World Drum is, the cofounder of The World Drum Project is equally remarkable. His name is Morten Storeide and he is from Norway. One of our Circle of Nations members (an Osage brother - love ya Bill!) generously flew Morten here and he attended the Mending Medicine Retreat that weekend. When he arrived, he was a friendly new face. When he left, he was family - a brother in the truest sense.



As we gathered that weekend, the World Drum sat in a place of honor during our retreat, and was the center of attention at the public gathering and ceremony in the heart of our small, but powerful village here in these Ozark Mountains. As this World Drum spent the weekend with us, I thought a lot about the message it carries with it.

It is both a sad and hopeful message. It is a stern, yet loving message. It is the message Indigenous people have whispered for centuries.... Whatever we do to the

earth, to the web of life, we do to ourselves. So love, honor and respect Mother Earth, and all who dwell within and upon her will return that love, honor and respect to you. It is the law of nature, the law of our creator. It is the sacred circle of all life. As I thought more and more about this message, it became more and more clear to me what the real message of the World Drum is. The real message is that we are all the World Drum. The sacred heartbeat which sounds on the skin of this humble, powerful drum, exists in the center of every being on the planet. It is in you, and it is in me. It is in every tree, every rock, every bird and every fish. The sacred heartbeat of the World Drum beats in us all, and it is up to each of us to stop long enough to quiet our minds so we can hear that still small voice of the Spirit which calls us back to the place of balance, respect, humility, honor, courage and wisdom. All who have touched the wood and skin of the World Drum and played and prayed with it are connected as relatives. In Lakota, there is a term we use quite often. It is mitakuye oyasin. What it means is this - all are my relatives. And when we say all, we mean all beings which exist in our world. We have always understood and respected the power and truth of that connection with all that is. With or without a World Drum, the reality of our interconnection and interdependence has always been. We have always known this, as indigenous people. And yet, here comes this humble skin drum from Norway, drawing people from all cultures around the world together in unity and connection. And I see that this humble drum is mitakuye oyasin in action. It is a vehicle by which we can see that, yes indeed, we really are all relatives. And so I honor this humble drum that is the World Drum, and I thank you Morten for having the courage and wisdom to listen to Whitecougars vision and send this drum and its very important message out into a very hurting world. It was truly an honor to have it here, to play and pray with it. And having you here was a very, very special blessing to me and to all. And so, as the World Drum continues its global journey, may we all come to understand that the heartbeat of this humble drum beats inside all of us. The World Drum really is you and I. Let us all listen to that heartbeat of connection, peace and mending. After all, Mother Earth, all her children, and the seventh generation are hanging in the balance....

- John Two-Hawks