

# MILA YATAN PIKA PTE OYATE OKOLAKICIYE

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(KNIFE CHIEF BUFFALO NATION ORGANIZATION)

## Project Report February 2013

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This report covers the end of November 2012 through January 30, 2013. Mila Yatan Pika Pte Oyate Okolakiciye (Knife Chief Buffalo Nation Organization) continues to provide a pasture/home for members of the Pte Oyate (Buffalo Nation) and the community continues to reap the benefits in terms of spiritual and physical nourishment from them. Here's a summary of our activities for this period.

### **Koskalaka Wicayuwita Pi (Young Men's Gathering) Cultural Camp November 2012**

Mila Yatan Pika Pte Oyate Okolakiciye (Knife Chief Buffalo Nation Organization) partnered with the Tasunke Wakan Okolakiciye on a cultural camp for boys and young men on November 23-25, 2013.. Knife Chief Buffalo Nation Organization board member Richard Two Dogs led the planning and implementation of this effort, with the help of male relatives volunteers, the event was a huge success! The age group was age 10 – 17 and there were 12 boys that participated.



**Figure 1 Raising Tipis Young Men's Camp Nov 2012 Porcupine SD**

The camp started off with the raising of the Ti ikciye (Lakota term for Tipi or dwelling) which the boys and the male relatives sponsors stayed in for the duration of the camp. This included teachings on the sacredness of the Tipi and the significance of the Lakota star knowledge and Seven Spiritual Laws to the Tipi. The boys were also taught how to build a fire safely in the Tipi and the emphasis was on the sacredness of the fire. Because it was the beginning of the winter season, the fire was really appreciated by the boys and the men who supervised them at night. The boys and young men reported on the evaluation at the end of the camp that sleeping in a tipi was definitely a highlight of the camp despite the cold.

The focus on the camp was on the Lakota traditional teachings on becoming a man. The importance of Lakota kinship, protecting the people and providing for the people were major themes. Here's a quote from one of the participants:

*"The most important thing was being a part of the camp and listening and learning on how becoming a man."*



Figure 2 Boys and Young Men's Camp, Porcupine, SD Nov 23-25 2013

The boys and young men were also taught how to hunt in a safe and respectful manner emphasizing that the deer and buffalo that were hunted also have a spirit and that an offering be made when taking their lives. The boys and young men also had talking circles during the three days and were given an opportunity to share their hopes, dream and fears. Horseback riding was also enjoyed by the participants and according to the evaluation; learning about the healing power of the horse was an important teaching:



Figure 3 Young Men's Cultural Camp Nov 23-25 2013

*"The teaching I thought was important to me was to be respectful and patient."*

When asked what the important learning from the camp experience was, one youth responded with *"That the role of the male goes deeper on a spiritual level."* We thank Hmuya Mani and all the volunteers, the participants and most importantly, the sacred spiritual entities that provided guidance and protection. The camp activities were written up by one of the volunteers, Bam Brewer, and it was published in a local newspaper. Attached is a brochure for more detailed information on the agenda.

### **Waniyetu Wicayuwitapi (Winter Gathering) December 21, 2012**

Mila Yatan Pika Pte Oyate co-sponsored a winter gathering in observance of the Winter Solstice on December 21, 2013 in Rapid City, SD in the sacred Black Hills and on the grounds of the Native Healing Center. A tipi was erected and the babies and small children gathered inside while Hmuya Mani, Richard Two Dogs, Wakan Iyeska (Interpreter of the Sacred) and Board member of Knife Chief Buffalo Nation Organization explained the significance of this year's gathering in that there is a re-energizing of the universe when the sun reaches the highest point

on its ecliptic path and that when we make the offerings at this point, we will receive a blessing. Those that could not fit inside the tipi gathered in a circle around the Tipi while the sacred pipe was filled and passed around for everyone to smoke; the children and young people were touched on the head to receive a blessing. There are no photographs depicting this due to the sacredness of the event.

## **Other News**

In December 2012, Mila Yatan Pika Pte Oyate (Knife Chief Buffalo Nation Organization – KNBO) an agreement with Western Buffalo Services (WBS) and came to an agreement on sharing resources. WBS will provide financial capital to assist with the land lease costs and fencing supplies and KCBN will provide pasture and buffalo for future harvesting in exchange for their investment.

## **Future Events and Plans**

We plan on sponsoring a buffalo hunt where the sacredness of the buffalo is emphasized, there will be a four day spiritual preparation before the Wanasa Pi (buffalo hunt) and one of the hunts will be for a rite of passage to manhood for one young man.

We also plan to sponsor a Welcoming for all babies born during this year, the Elders will bestow a blessing and the community will be involved in making a loving prediction for the babies that will start them on their spiritual path in this life.

We are also planning to make a journey to the sacred mountain, Hinhan Kaga Paha (Imitates Owl Mountain), located in the sacred Black Hills and called Harney Peak on the map. This journey is in observance of the spiritual calendar when offerings are made during the Spring Equinox (March 20-21) to welcome back the Thunder beings and in preparation of the Spring and Summer ceremonies. All of the spiritual offerings made at different times throughout the year according to the spiritual calendar were taught to us as Lakota people by the Pte Oyate (buffalo nation) and to whom we continue to honor and care for.

Our fencing project will begin again in the spring, as of this writing, the weather has made the roads impassable at times.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

For more information, contact us at:

Email: [knifechiefbuffalonation@gmail.com](mailto:knifechiefbuffalonation@gmail.com)

Telephone: 605-441-2914

Website: [www.knifechiefbuffalonation.org](http://www.knifechiefbuffalonation.org)

## Closing/Question

We extend a heartfelt appreciation to the people who have supported our efforts whether financially, physically or spiritually. Your support is truly appreciated and we especially appreciate the Tunkasila (spiritual entities) for their continued support and guidance. We also acknowledge the Pte Oyate (Buffalo Nation) for what they inspire in us and their teachings – protection of the young, conservation of the land and the strength and fortitude to endure whatever comes. Lila Wopila Tanka!! (We thank you all very much). We ask you the general public, our friends and relatives, what you think we should do to expand our work so that others can learn from the teachings of the buffalo nation? We are very interested in hearing from you!