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Snow Blankets the West after Gratitude Prayers at LA Show, organized by Native Voices Foundation

Congresswoman Diane Watson sends a proclamation saluting 'California's First Caretakers' and Medicine Wheel Ceremony

LOS ANGELES, Calif. - Dec. 9, 2004 /Send2Press Newswire/ -- Snow Triggers Shopping Frenzy at LA Ski Dazzle! "This is the most early snow in Southern California in 35 years," say weather experts. The result was record-breaking, youthful crowds in a "pulsating frenzy" at LA's Ski Dazzle Show, buying everything to go skiing and snowboarding in California and other Western resorts this magical season. "This was our best show ever," said the euphoric producers, Judy Gray and Jim Foster, who gifted "California's First Caretakers" and the team of Red, White, Black and Yellow participants - the Black Elk Prophecy - in the Big Bear Medicine Wheel ceremony with free tickets, a booth and snow sports equipment.

*(Photo: <http://www.Send2Press.com/photoSP/cfcaretakers.jpg>)

/Photo Caption: California's First Caretakers Saluted by skiers at LA Ski Dazzle Show.

L-R Akima Castaneda (Chumash), Silent Thunder (Tsalagi/Grosventre), Blackwind (Cherokee). /

"I especially honor the women of the White nation who were the majority of the participants in the ceremony, for leading this reconnection with Mother Earth at this 11th hour. Women have more love for Mother Earth and the children, and heard Her call," said Bennie LaBeau (Eastern Shoshone). The Elder led the ceremony at the invitation of residents of the Big Bear community, led by Gina Weiss, to help with the drought following their devastating fires.

Congresswoman Diane Watson, author of the Dental Mercury Law, sent a proclamation saluting "California's First Caretakers" at the show that ended with a gathering of the honorees praying for celebrity saluters who were unable to attend because of health emergencies. Then, at the suggestion of Olympic skier Suzy Chaffee, the organizer, they did a gratitude prayer to Creator for bringing snow to each of the ski show regions that saluted "America's First Caretakers" - Denver, Seattle, Sacramento, LA, plus independently the Southwest.

Traditional Elders led snow ceremonies at the 4 ski shows in appreciation to the 100 ski areas across America welcoming their tribes back to their ancestral lands to dance down mountains and share their sustainable wisdom. The following morning, Sunday, the Weather Channel revealed a snow cloud was blanketing the entire West from Colorado to the West Coast, which has continued! And the saluters are making blessed recoveries.

"In the tribal traditions, the best way to inspire even more snow or rain, is to express gratitude to Creator and Mother Earth," explained Akima Castaneda (Coastal Band of the Chumash), a father of Earth Day, renowned actor, and West coast tribal unity leader of Native Voices Foundation (NVF), the event organizer.

"Another way we found over the last eight years, is to simply share the skiing and boarding opportunities with the children of those who lead the ceremonies, the more in the region the better," said Chaffee, NVF co-chair.

"We do this because we are a giving people, that's who we are," said Akima.

15 of the 200 medicine wheel participants who prayed from dawn to 3pm on November 15th, at nine sacred sites encircling the San Bernadinos, and 12

magnificent California tribal dancers, singers and drummers - many participants - were heartily honored by the crowds of skiers at two special "Thank You" events at the show. Ski areas like Mountain High, a national leader in minority skiing, in turn, are excited about sharing the skiing/boarding with local tribes.

LaBeau shared that the primary reason for the medicine wheel ceremony was to give the trees, animals and humans a big drink of water, after the trees said they were in danger of dying because of the low water table. He explained how their medicine circle is helping restore the Earth's electromagnetic energy grid, called ley lines, just as our bodies have acupuncture meridians. The lines have been broken by drilling, mining, and bombing, including in Iraq that is also heating up this side of the planet, which has disrupted the weather patterns. He has been guided through visions and dreams how to reconnect these lines on the earth, and help restore natural balance to Mother Earth.

Chaffee said there is hope for Californians, since the tribes and communities like Big Bear, Mammoth and Heavenly Valley are creating dialogues to solved ecological challenges. Gary Peterson, eco advisor to Governor Schwarzenegger and his Hydrogen Highway (aunt Navajo) also wants to create a partnership between tribes and government.

Lakota Kim Landbecker was thanked for bringing together LaBeau, the Bushman of the Kalahari and the Big Bear community at her "Journey to the Heart Gathering" there in September. The Bushmen, having the oldest DNA on the planet (therefore our ancestors), despite their challenges, still are the best models of pure love and healing (including of the AIDS epidemic) on the planet, and yet the Botswana ones have just been removed from their ancestral lands by three diamond mining companies, like De Beers. According to the International AIDS Trust, our administration has only given \$200 million of the \$15 billion announced to fight AIDS in Africa. Therefore, the survival of the Botswana Bushmen is critical!

A hero to the tribes, Congresswoman Watson shared her appreciation to a team effort with California Tribes and Olympians (through NVF) for helping get her Mercury Bill enforced this year for the first time in 12 years, which now requires all dental offices to give patients a "fact sheet" warning that "silver" fillings are 50% mercury and may cause fetal brain damage. Mercury affects the health of everyone but particularly those with tribal blood, and is related to diabetes, obesity, suicide, and violence.

Mayan-Yuki dentist Dr Roberto Villafana, who removed the mercury from Watson and Chaffee, using the highest safety protocols, said that, "There are healthy alternatives to using mercury amalgams, and everyone should tell their dentists to use mercury separators so that the water supply, oceans and fish can one day again be mercury free - required in San Francisco and three states."

NVF's Salute is made possible by the Paiute Tribe (near Mammoth), NUTIVA (nutritional hemp alternative to fish) and SweetLeaf Stevia (discovered by Brazilian tribes, keeping much of world lean and diabetes free).

For more information: <http://www.nativevoices.org>

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/Note to editors: high resolution images, interviews, and background information available./

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