



Christine Doyle and her partner, Edward, steward 51 acres of sacred lands on Vision Mountain in northeastern Washington State. Historically, these lands belonged to the local Spokane Indians. More recently, they were the home of Sun Bear, a Native American of Ojibwa heritage, who shared Native earth-based teachings, traditions and ceremony with non-native peoples before his passing in 1992. Christine is a massage therapist who uses Reiki and vocal toning in her healing sessions with clients.

## **Circle Tale, January 2008**

### **The Yurt Blessing**

In September this year, our new neighbors, Candace and Mike, extended an invitation to the community on Vision Mountain to help them raise their yurt. Having purchased their 20 acres adjacent to the Bear Tribe lands over a year ago, they had worked all summer to erect the foundation. About fourteen people showed up that day, bringing hammers, saws, screwdrivers . . . and dishes for the potluck we would share later in the day.

The yurt went up, outer lattice wall first, then the central wooden circle held aloft by two men on tall ladders. As we attached the ribs of the beams to the outer circle and the inner hub of the ceiling, I had a strong sense that I was seeing, in material form, the essence of a PeerSpirit council circle. It moved me deeply.

Later I talked with Mike about the possibility of having a gathering of folks in the community who had helped that day . . . and those who'd been unable to be there. I told him how touched I was by the sense of community I had felt, and suggested that others might welcome the opportunity to share how the experience had impacted them. We would bless the yurt, celebrate their joining the community, and experience as a group the PeerSpirit model of council. He and Candace jumped at the idea.

In November, eighteen of us met in Candace and Mike's yurt. This time, in addition to a contribution for the potluck, each person brought something for the center of the circle. I hosted the gathering, introducing the PeerSpirit council model and suggesting we check in by going around the circle, placing the item we brought in the center, and speaking anything we wished to share. Our guardian helped keep the pace and intention of the circle.

After the first round, folks wanted an opportunity to speak again. Following a short stretch and "nature calls" break, we continued with a talking stick round. The sharing was profound, delightful and revelatory. Laughter, tears and glue: we became a cohesive group using this exquisite form of sitting in council.

As a community, we feel we have laid a foundation for future councils. As work progresses on the renovation of the former Bear Tribe's Longhouse, the intention is to make it a community center. We look forward to using the PeerSpirit Circle form as we feel our way toward a new experience of community on Vision Mountain.

*If you have a tale to tell, contact the PeerSpirit office and we'll help you share it.*

*For more information on many applications of circle, visit our web site at [www.peerspirit.com](http://www.peerspirit.com) and subscribe to our monthly Circle Tale newsletter using the subscription mechanism at the top right of the page. Your e-mail address will **not** be shared or used by anyone other than PeerSpirit, and you can unsubscribe yourself at any time.*