

**Interview with Phil Pikyavit, Kanosh Band
Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah
June 2008 (at Restoration Gathering)**

Yeah well, the tradition we got is we tan deer hides. We're hunters too. And we, you know we, My wife and I and my brother, my mother used to tan but they are all gone and uh, my wife and I we try to do that but its getting too hard as were getting older its harder to do. You have to scrape it. Scrape it you know, I got some grandkids, that they help us. You know, they scrape it and we'll do the rest of it. Brain tanning, what you call brain tanning. And that works out okay with the younger guys scraping it. But if I couldn't do it...I don't know, the Ute's have the Pow Wow, same as we do. I'm more on the Paiute side now. We just follow whatever you know whatever the Paiute's want to do you know we help them help them with that. Starting back over again.

Well its, we celebrate the restoration is uh, we were got restored in the federal government. Back in the 50s I think they terminated us and uh, when they terminated they divvied the land back to each person. And a lot of the old people didn't understand they had to pay taxes on it and we lost a lot of our land. And some of it, the white farmers in town came and told you we'll give you a dollar an acre for that land you know, and they seen all the money and they got it, you know. Now you try to go back and buy that for a dollar acre now it's more like 500 dollars. We lost it like that. Well yeah the Pow Wow. We do this we play the game here. And we all did it all, we used to go, my family traveled from all of this, Idaho, Nevada, Colorado. Eastern Utah on the ? Mesa. We play this game. As we're getting older we are trying to do away with the, trying to get them young kids to do it, you know. They'll do it; they'll play the game. And some of those that are in there, they beat they got three of them in there now. My grandkids and they won, we lost one so, they might still be in there when they grow up.

I don't know how, we have only one God. How can there be two Gods? I don't know. When we pray we pray to a creator the creator is the same thing. The God the creator. Only we used to say it in Native tongue. Pray to it that way. And some of these people that can speak English, they do it like that.

Well the Paiute tribe is small, when we first started its probably about 500 now we are getting up there to probably about 8 a little more than 800. We had long time, its kind of like a struggle for a long time, you know when we'd been terminated. And that was the worst part of it. We couldn't get any funding for education or health. And uh, they went to the state for what they call the welfare. And uh, maybe that had something to do with the kids being sent off too. It could be...But uh, they survived its hard, just like the early settlers you know

they had to be kept? careful? to survive and a lot of them early Indians did that you know they had to figure out how to survive up here. And a lot of them did it. When they terminated us, like Kanosh they...I don't know what the idea was of that, they could have terminated us so we can all...we would not exist anymore but uh we're there. We're still there. We'll always be there. We'll be there when they leave.

Well the alcohol is a problem. It never used to be when I was going to school but the alcohol and the drugs. The drug, you know they try the drugs and they get hooked to it. And its pretty hard for them to, and if they can't get the drug then the go to the alcohol. And uh, I guess that would be the worst, worst one that affects them. And effects them in all different ways. Just like I got through telling you, that boy used to dance and he won't do it anymore. He won't dance with his eagle feathers unless he gets that out of his system and he can go over here and dance today but he says "No I don't want to do that until I get out of it." And I don't know the Paiute tribe has a, has a program in the mental health, drug rehab that they have set up for the younger kids and the older ones too. More focused on the Younger ones.

Well its pretty hard you know. Well we just get after them. When they get that big you know. We try to talk to him and uh, and tell them what the eagle feather stands for and what you got to have to be able to hold those. Well, they have just been handed down for many years. Years ago we didn't have that really, like it is now, alcohol and drugs. And uh, I don't know. They have to respect it that's why when they are young they earn their feathers to dance with the eagle feather. And they get that and they respect that and they start dancing with eagle feathers. Then as you are going along you get in drugs and they pull out of it. By yourselves, they don't want to do it anymore. Yeah he wants to but he said he's not going to until he gets it, straightened up. But the problem with the tribe, the Native Americans, is that they have too many friends around it. You know you can quit but you have a friend over here telling you, peers you know. Then they are starting back over again.

Well uh, well if the alcohol affects them to where they won't study, they won't do good in school, they do that. They drop out and the younger one, mine did. A lot of these kids are smart enough you know they can do it, but just that other thing, keeping them from doing it. Who brought that over? Who brought the firewater? Alcohol, bad stuff.