



Welcome to Teya Peya
Production's first
newsletter of 2012

CONTACT INFORMATION

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We're on the Web!

www.shannonthunderbird.com

January, 2012



Sweet Thunder Medicine Wheel at an
Ontario High school.



On Stage in Indiana

If you know anyone who wishes
to be added to the mailing list (or
removed), send us an email.

Teya Peya Talk

*Newsletter About First Nations People, Arts/Education,
Medicine Wheel Teachings & Entertainment*

THUNDERBIRD THOUGHTS

2012 is **NOT** about,

- the planet blowing itself into nothingness leaving a large hole in the universe.
- turning off the light forever in a darkening, fractured world.

2012 **IS** about,

- **POWER** - Glorious personal, reflective, inner strength, good conscience-driven power.
- understanding and making changes by standing in the truth of who you are.
- living fearlessly, speaking uplifting, mindful words that penetrate the far reaches of the globe. Have First Nations Medicine Wheel teachings not been saying this all along?
- uniting the body, spirit, emotions and mind in a seamless rhythm that raises you up to embrace the universe; to reach down and embrace the origins of the four great winds in the lower world; to cover Mother Earth with enough light that she will start, once again working with us to create a calmer, healthier and more vibrant world. Have First Nations people not been saying this all along?
- good people finally stepping forward and engaging, rather than standing by doing nothing as the world fractures at the hands of power mongers and greed. Is the global 99% movement not an example?
- the fact that there is much for you to do, places to go, intelligent and gentle people with open minds and hearts to visit, teaching, sharing knowledge, laughing, all with the goal of enriching the human heart. The future of our Nations depends on this. Our Ancestors need to stop weeping.
- **Finally, my gentle friends**, hang on to your nerves, hold onto your breaking hearts, the power of the matriarchy is on the rise leading the hopeful charge for a world with one heart beating.

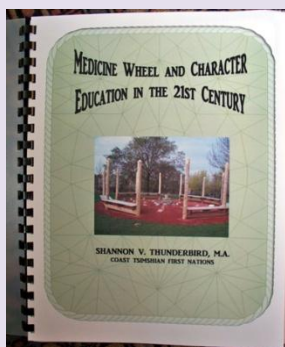
Time for a Chuckle

The Blackfeet asked their Chief if the winter was going to be cold. He called the National Weather Service to ask, "Is this winter going to be cold?" The answer confirmed it was going to be cold. The Chief ordered his people to collect wood. A week later he called the weather service again, "Is it going to be a cold winter?"

"Yes," the man replied, "it's going to be a very cold winter." Again the Chief told his people to gather as much wood as they could find. Two weeks later, just to be sure he called again, "Are you absolutely sure it will be a cold the winter?"

"Absolutely," the man replied, "the Blackfeet are collecting wood like crazy!"

So, dream your dreams and make your plans. Here is some of our continuing plans in 2012.



Thunderbird Native Theatre



Bala Community School



Big Horn, Wyoming



Southern Alberta

- **Medicine Wheel and Character Education in the 21st Century** by Shannon Thunderbird, published in 2010. It is about *Hanta Ho* (clearing the way), and a story of hope, sharing, understanding, and, the triumph of the human spirit.
- **Dynamic Duo: Sandy Horne/Shannon Thunderbird and their 2011 CD release "Wind Centre"** is their first collaboration. It is a compilation of contemporary and traditional Indigenous music.
- **Dynamic S & S Duo Continues** Here is an example of their touring schedule in 2011. They spent a month in Indiana debuting, "*Eagle Thunder: Story of Hope*" to almost 15,000 students. This did not include three weekend festivals in which hundreds of people were in attendance. Don't try this at home, we are professionals and we had a great time!
- **Speakers' Bureau and Inspirit Workshops** "*Sweet Thunder Medicine Wheel*" was busy in 2011, offering hope, recognition of individual value, big drums, and an overall sense of unity and well-being. Thunderbird also spoke on cultural, historical and contemporary Indigenous issues at a number of post-secondary institutions.
- **Thunderbird Native Theatre (TNT)** ramped up quite a bit in 2011. The theatre company's show, "*Rolling Thunder*" was performed in a variety of venues, including educational institutions, festivals and conferences. The company is normally available evenings and weekends.
- **S & S and Prologue to the Performing Arts.** Shannon and Sandy completed ten years with Prologue, bringing the following shows to schools everywhere. "*Daughter of the Copper Shield*", and "*Spirit Thunder: Show and Tell*". They will rock on with Prologue in 2012.
- **S & S, Arts for Children and Youth (AFCY) and the Aboriginal Education Centre (TDSB).** Shannon and Sandy were involved in 2-5 day project-based events in a couple of under-served schools in Toronto. *Sweet Thunder Medicine Wheel* formed the basis of anti-bullying projects that included creating student choirs; big drums; building indoor medicine wheels; concert for family and friends; learning that caring for each other and the environment is very cool.

Now, to answer the burning question: "What is a Medicine Wheel?"

"We're still here, and we live on this land. We don't live in your libraries in the pages of your books. Our world is not for digging up our pottery, or our bones....We have a long surviving and sacred tradition and an experiential wisdom that's been passed on for more centuries than you can imagine. This is your chance to benefit from that. All you have to do is be quiet and listen; quit worrying about proving and start believing."

(Wallace Mad Bear Anderson, Tuscarora Holy Man and Activist)

A Medicine Wheel is a real entity, over sixty of them have been found, with over forty in southern Alberta. Average age estimate 2000-3000 years. Medicine Wheels are attributed to the Plains Native people, and their big summer solstice ceremony, the Sun/Thirst Dance. Unhampered by the rapid growth of technology in the twenty-first century, Native leaders understood the importance of developing physical, spiritual, emotional and mental strength in their communities. Medicine Wheel teachings were a means of providing everyone with a strong sense of character-building purpose.



Recently discovered in Colorado



Eagle Thunder



Wedding Ceremony



Moonstone Women's Big Drum

A Medicine Wheel was traditionally constructed by the laying of stones, each representing a character trait, (e.g. self-esteem), that was first discussed with the Elders and then laid in a circle in a specific pattern. As more teachings were introduced the medicine wheel grew larger and larger. Big Horn in Wyoming is the largest, measuring seventy metres across.

Tribal members learned the value of counteracting racism with teamwork, jealousy with self-respect, gender bias and gender choices with acceptance, fear with courage, hate with love. Everyone had something valuable to offer to tribal life; each person was valued for exactly who they were, and the tribes hummed for sixty thousand years.

In modern times, the medicine wheel has been universally adopted by many Native communities as a symbol of *inspirit* health and wellness; it also adapts very well to contemporary times, and is a wonderfully uplifting way of developing strength of character for personal and professional pro-active change. Medicine Wheel teachings re-infuse the earth with healthy attitudes and actions. It is only through intelligent commitment to ourselves, each other and our world, with all that lies below, upon and above, can we truly appreciate our hopeful destiny.

HERE'S WHAT'S NEW IN TEYA PEYA'S WORLD FOR 2012
You can find more details on www.shannonthunderbird.com

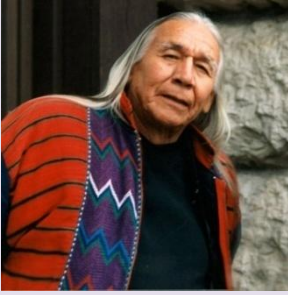
EAGLE THUNDER: STORY OF HOPE is a time sensitive version of Sweet Thunder Medicine Wheel suitable for larger audiences. Contemporary Medicine Wheel teachings explore the value of good character, including: anti-bullying, cyber-bullying, anti-racism, self-respect, leadership, consensus-building, hope, and more. It is a vibrant, interactive presentation that involves participants in improvisational theatre, vocals, hand drums and powwow big drums.

AFFIRMATION CEREMONIES Over the years Shannon Thunderbird, and more recently with her sister, Kate Dickson, has conducted First Nations-themed ceremonies: Marriage (including Rainbow Pride), White Veil (Death), Birth, Anniversaries, Heart Moves On, Passage of Time and Individual requests. The ceremonies are personal, meaningful, inclusive, and uplifting. We value cultural and human diversity. We care for each other, and believe that all people have the basic human right to find their balance, contentment, and to celebrate it in their own way. We bring the warmth of First Nations ceremonial teachings, poetry, even music and drums. We are also open to suggestions to make the event your own and the stuff of wonderful memories!

MOONSTONE WOMEN'S BIG DRUM GROUP is more and more being invited to participate in a variety of events, ranging from powwows, correctional institutions, special events, opening and closing ceremonies, festivals and conferences. It has been great to see the welcoming acceptance of women on the big drum. We perform primarily in the Pacific Northwest Coast style of singing, which is Shannon Thunderbird's heritage. It has often been remarked that our vocals add a nice counterpoint to the normal Plains form of singing at events such as powwows. We are also just a fun group to have at your occasion.

TEACHINGS FROM THE ELDERS

1.



1. "Time evolves, there is first a purification time and then a renewal time. We are getting very close to this time now...because we forgot the instruction on how to live on earth. When the earth is corrupted, it creates a chain reaction, storms and floods increase. It is not negative to know there will be great changes, it is evolution. When you look at it this way, it is simply time, because nothing stays the same. Treat all things as spirit, we are one family. It is never the end, it is life, there is no end to life." (Floyd Red Crow Westerman, *Dakota*, 1936-2007)

2.



2. "Whenever the white man treats the Indian as they treat each other then we shall have no more wars. We shall be all alike -- brothers of one father and mother, with one sky above us and one country around us and one government for all. Then the Great Spirit Chief who rules above will smile upon this land and send rain to wash out the bloody spots made by brothers' hands upon the face of the earth. For this time the Indian race is waiting and praying. I hope no more groans of wounded men and women will ever go to the ear of the Great Spirit Chief above, and that all people may be one people." (Chief Joseph, (1840-1904, *Nimipuu* (Nez Percé))

3.



3. "I stand for the children of tomorrow. I believe in the constructive aspect of humanity. We need each other. We need to come together in the circle of life, and not leave anyone behind. We need to reach out to each other and accept each other unconditionally. More than ever, it is necessary for people to face the light and walk in balance. In every darkened valley there us a light source; walk toward it. Stand in your own truth. No one is like you. You have your own particular gift, and your own contribution to make." (Sarah Smith, *Mohawk*, Six Nations of the Grand)

4.



4. "The voice of my people beats strongly; the fire in our souls burns brightly, after all, our passion for our Native cultures is written in the stars. We are once again standing forward in the truth of who we are as proud, spiritual Indigenous people." (Shannon Thunderbird, *Royal House of Niis'gumiik*, Coast Tsimshian)

Finally, in 2012, Teya Peya Productions hopes for all of you the magic of hearing your heart beat in tune with that of Mother Earth as represented by the drum. It takes you into inner worlds of dreams, experience, and learning. Mental, Spiritual. Emotional and Physical integrity flow together and you are in rhythm with all creation. Come to our programmes and let's experience this connection together. *Wilwilaaysk*, All My Relations.



All One People

Teya Peya Productions -- First Nations *K'ool Gyet (One People)*, *Power of Purpose Inspirit* Programmes -- North America's original social media & business network of positive interaction.

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SPECIAL PRICE: Eagle Thunder or Sweet Thunder Medicine Wheel presentations for dates performed in February, 2012 in the GTA.