

## About the Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota Community

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We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to *preserve, protect, and promote the Dakota culture for future generations.*

### Long-Range Goals:

- Promote and support the preservation of the Dakota culture, including protecting sites of cultural significance to the Dakota people.
- Preserve and teach the Dakota language.
- Promote a better understanding between the Native American community and the general public.
- Design and open a Dakota Language Immersion Charter School K-6
- Obtain federal recognition.

### Accomplishment highlights:

- 300% increase our annual Pow-Wow attendance since 1999.
- Approximately 100 people have participated in the weekly Dakota language table since they began in 1998.
- Instrumental in protecting the spring at Camp Coldwater. The spring, considered the historic birthplace of Minnesota, is part of the Dakota creation story.
- Initiated the establishment of a charter school, Wakanyezapi (Sacred Little Ones), that will focus on the Dakota culture and language as part of its overall curriculum.
- Hosted the Oceti Sakowin (Seven Council Fires) meetings. The first of such traditional council meetings to be held in over 100 years. These meetings are held to discuss issues pertinent to all Dakota people.

## Make a Difference - Support Our Mission

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Your tax-deductible contributions support our mission to *preserve, protect, and promote the Dakota culture for future generations.* You can donate by:

- **CHECK:** Send a check to MMDC, 1324 Sibley Memorial Hwy, PO Box 50835, Mendota, MN 55150
- **ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER:** Support us with recurring donations debited from your checking or savings account. Simply download our [Automatic Payment Form](#) and mail it in to MMDC, 1324 Sibley Memorial Hwy, PO Box 50835, Mendota, MN 55150.
- Please contact Renée Johnson at 651-452-4141 or [mmdc-finance@comcast.net](mailto:mmdc-finance@comcast.net) for more information.

We are a small tribal community that operates on volunteer labor and donations. We are not affiliated with (nor do we receive financial assistance from) the other Mdewakanton Dakota communities (Shakopee, Prairie Island, etc.) in Minnesota.

Consistent with our mission, our programs and activities include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting weekly Dakota language classes open to any interested individuals. Approximately 100 people have participated in our Dakota language table since it began in 1998.
- Hosting the annual MMDC Welcome Home Traditional Pow-Wow (2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in August)
- Hosting annual World Peace and Prayer Day and Winter Solstice ceremonies at Camp Coldwater
- Initiating and hosting the annual remembrance ceremony to honor the Dakota ancestors who were interred in the Fort Snelling concentration camp after the 1862 Dakota Conflict
- Hosting Oceti Sakowin (Seven Council Fires) meetings. The first of such traditional council meetings to be held in over 100 years. These meetings are held to discuss issues pertinent to all Dakota people.
- Participation in the National Trust of Historic Preservation Twin Cities Local Advisory Committee
- Working with the Preserve Camp Coldwater Coalition to protect a site that is sacred to Dakota people and of cultural significance to the people of Minnesota
- Exercising Treaty rights, such as pass and re-pass rights at Camp Coldwater and fishing rights under the 1805 Treaty
- Partnering with the Pilot Knob Preservation Association to protect an historical site from being developed into a commercial office-building complex.<sup>1</sup>
- Collaborating with the University of Minnesota on several Native-American related projects
- Educational Outreach to local schools to share the Dakota culture, crafts, regalia, and artifacts
- Establishing a charter school, Wakanyezapi (Sacred Little Ones), that will focus on the Dakota culture and language as part of its overall curriculum.

Each year we share our culture with neighboring Twin Cities communities by holding a traditional pow-wow. Last year, pow-wow attendance exceeded 1,500 participants. This represents a 300% increase since our first pow-wow in 1999. We are expecting even more people to attend in 2008.

Our 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Traditional Welcome Home Pow-Wow will be held on August 8-9-10, 2008, on the St. Peter's Church grounds in Mendota, Minnesota. [Click here for an interactive map.](#) **Our events are open to the public.**

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<sup>1</sup> Pilot Knob is where a treaty was signed that ceded 35 million acres of Dakota land to Minnesota's new pioneers and the U.S. government. This is where generations of Dakota people were lovingly sent on their final journey, with an unspoken promise that their burial sites would remain undisturbed. This site was nominated, approved, and determined eligible to be entered into the National Register of Historic Places.

