

# Reviews of On the Edge of the Wind: Storytellers & the Land Exhibit

- **Senator Tim Mathern**

- The exhibit has a spiritual aura. The information about Indigenous people and the sacred places gives a new appreciation not only of Indigenous people but of North Dakota. I want to see it many times and share it with my family and friends.

- **Kimberley Gaugler**

- I spent nearly 4 hours at the exhibit last week Thursday and it wasn't nearly enough time. Several more visits will be required to take in all the incredible content. It was a very emotional and moving experience for me.
- Each display seemed to heighten my senses, drawing me in for a deeper connection. Listening to the soothing voices of the native elders sharing their stories stirred my soul and moved me to tears on several occasions. Many more visits to the exhibit are in my future.
- As I reflect on my experience at "On the Edge of the Wind", a deepened sense of peace and connection was recognized. I also detected a longing to return and immerse myself once again with the native storytellers.

- **Keith Bear**

- Family n friends who have seen the exhibit over the past weeks are already calling n texting me about it. They All had positive Happy response to it.
- To be a part of the exhibit is Wild in my imagination. I have known some of these storytellers all my life. Others and I have, over the past 40 years or so, crossed paths many times. NDAC with Mr. Troyd Giest have done a Great service by learning and showing the traits of Humility, Prayerfulness, Pitt, Generosity, Teasing with Honor and Respect for All beings of North Dakota-Animal and Human.
- As an Artist I'm humbled and honored to be a part of this exhibit on behalf of my Family and People's. my most humble Thanks to those who shared with me and especially those no longer on this Earth.
- All my life as I grew up across North Dakota I've heard stories from many cultures, white, black, and Native, and I saw many similarities in how the animals and humans interacted with one another. The shapeshifters. Even the lessons were familiar but... in Native stories humans and animals are relatives! And That makes it easier to relate to the stories when you can imagine someone you may know in our community or even our families!
- In our stories it wasn't about accumulating wealth or Things but the good feeling that comes with Sharing with others. Weather wealth n prosperity or hard times, even death or a little twisted humor in dark times. Thus, we can all relate and help one another to find Peace and Happiness.
- These Storytellers share just a Bit of Our cultures Freely with all and hopefully our future leaders, the Children, the protectors, and providers of tomorrow will not see Others as different but as New Friends.
- These stories WILL take you to another time and place.
- I strongly encourage everyone to stop in and enjoy some of North Dakota's oldest history.

- **Alex DeCoteau**

- I am an Ojibwe elder from Turtle Mountain. I was asked to share some indigenous knowledge about Buffalo Lodge which is a sacred site to my tribe. I met with Troyd a few times to visit, share, and record indigenous teachings about Buffalo Lodge. He took some pictures of the site and myself on the site communicating in a spiritual way. I was also recorded sharing a legend about how the site got its name Buffalo Lodge. This recording was done in Bismarck.
- My feelings and thoughts about the exhibit are that it's wonderful, exciting, and compelling! It is done with the highest standards of care, authenticity, respect, and love. It exemplifies the coming of the Seven Fires Prophecy where non-indigenous learn from indigenous to go forth in a loving way to heal mother earth and humanity for future generations.
- Many thousands of indigenous and non-indigenous children will see the exhibit and it will have a profound effect on them. That effect will heal their image of one another and nature. They then will share this with their children who will carry it on even in further, deeper, and in broader ways.

- **Alex DeCoteau (continued)**
  - Gichi miigwech gidininim isa kina gegoo gaa gii toodameg ji waaseyaasitoong niigaan! - Thank you all so very much for what you all did to make the future bright!
  - Gechitwaabandang (Dreams Holy)
  - Alex DeCoteau, Turtle Mountain Chippewa
  
- **Deborah “Debbie” Gourneau (phone interview)**
  - Exhibit shows how Native Americans use spirituality in their daily life, not just on Sundays or during ceremonies.
  - Exhibit is an “answer to prayers.” Native Americans have been “silent for over 500 years.” The exhibit gives the Native populations of ND an opportunity to share their stories without being afraid. Debbie said she learned her families’ traditions by watching how her grandparents lived. She said she was not allowed to ask questions because her grandparents were afraid to go to jail. Debbie referenced the law that made it illegal to practice Native American ceremonies in the open until 1978.
  - Debbie called it a “wonderful exhibit” and hoped it would inspire “all nations to work together to save Mother Earth.”
  
- **Lenore White Lightning (phone interview)**
  - Described the exhibit as “heartwarming, exciting, touching and great for the community”
  - She attended with her mother who normally needs to sit down and take breaks but that did not happen. Her mother even said it was worth the long drive to see it.
  - Lenore’s grandmother, Alvina Alberts (1912-1997) is featured in the exhibit. She can be seen and heard telling the *Stone Boy* and *Creation Stories*. It meant a lot to Lenore to be able to hear those stories told by her Grandmother, with her mother by her side.
  
- **Courtney Yellowfat**
  - Hopefully this exhibit shows that the indigenous people, the original residents of this land aren’t just relics of the past. Although we have had a tragic history, our way of life our stories are still very vibrant and beautiful and have always had a place in this land. When we respect each other and listen to the stories, listen to the songs, hear the words spoken, we can use our past as a foundation to launch ourselves as one race, the human race into the future and continue to grow with each other.
  
- **Dakota Wind Goodhouse (phone interview)**
  - Impressed by the photography and the big aluminum prints. “Vibrant, colorful, outstanding”. His college thesis was a reconstruction of indigenous landscapes so the “stories meant a lot.”
  - Dakota was “pleased to see the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa were represented well.”
  - He was “gratified” to see that the exhibit “included a watercolor to commemorate the place of the Killdeer Mountains.”
  - Dakota has been encouraging many people to visit. He has already brought a few groups to the exhibit.
  - He said, “people walk away with a newfound quiet respect of North Dakota.”
  
- **David Swenson (phone interview)**
  - David was “very impressed with layout and immersive content of the exhibit.” He went on to say, “lost in the credits were the major contributions that Troyd made with photography.” He said the photos were, “excellent” and were a “major contribution to the exhibit.”
  - David said the “exhibit, which will effect so many people in so many different ways, exceeded expectations.”

- **Mike Glatt** (*phone interview*)
  - Mike also said the “photography was incredibly impressive.” He said he recognized places, such as Bear Butte and western North Dakota, right away, thanks to the large, high-quality prints.
  - He really enjoyed hearing the music of Keith Bear and the stories told by Mary Louise Defender Wilson, both legends in their time. Mike said, “the music in the exhibit was an appropriate, calming enhancement to the corresponding scenery.”
  - Mike also said, “it was not that long ago when these incredible stories couldn’t have been shared like this”
  
- **Cher Hersrud**
  - I was totally blown away by the exhibit.
  - Troyd Geist is conscientious and a perfectionist when it relates to folk and traditional arts. This exhibit is an example of this passion and commitment. The depth of the Native traditions, the cultural affinity with the land and the beauty of storytelling and music are all very appropriately presented.
  - We visited the exhibit as a staff (Strengthen ND) the first day of the public opening. It was inspiring, beautiful beyond words, and educational. Truly reflecting Native culture through the presentation of storytellers telling their stories within video, and the beauty of the traditional music and photographs, the exhibit is a wonder of a beautiful culture. I watched children laying on the floor, listening to through headphones to stories and music, I saw amazement from people looking at the photographs, and I was thrilled by the Keith Bear music throughout the exhibit. It was inspiringly beautiful.
  - Placing small offerings at each station completes the respectful manner of this remarkable exhibition
  
- **David Newell**
  - I am the exhibitions manager for the State Historical Society of North Dakota. I worked very closely with Troyd Geist for the better part of three years. My main task was taking his vision and documentary materials and morphing them into a gallery presentation. I designed the gallery installation and worked with Troyd and our editorial staff to craft the written narratives within the exhibition. I also consulted with our New Media staff as they designed the graphic components for the installation. In the end, I installed all the photographs. I was the communications lead here at the Heritage Center sharing content, explanations, updates, and needs with the 28 staff members working on the project.
  - On the Edge of the Wind has been a very meaningful and educational experience for me. It was a rare opportunity to see ever-so-briefly into a very private and protected world and to be introduced to its complexities. I am new to the region and working on this exhibition served as an intimate introduction to the tribal nations of North Dakota and their traditions. A key element of my job is acting as storyteller, so I enjoyed experiencing the narratives of other storytellers, especially within the realm of oral traditions. Following Troyd’s lead, I made every effort to be as respectful to those traditions as possible and translating those same needs to our staff.
  
- **D. Joyce Kitson** (*text from Troyd*)
  - ... is a Hunkpapa/Hidatsa traditional hide tanner, bead- and quillworker enrolled at Standing Rock. She has a baby buffalo robe hide with a pictographic image she painted using earth pigments featured in the exhibit in association with Bear Butte. She stated, “What an amazing time I had reflecting on my dream when I saw the painted buffalo calf hide and Bear Butte at the same time. What an honor you have shared with me. Your excellence in this work and gathering the talents of the storytellers is a great legacy and tribute to all the families [of those featured in the exhibit]. Honoring one another is a gift given to us. We must honor in every way we can. You did a great honor ceremony and the choosing of the people, Troyd.”
  
- **Natasha Gourd**
  - I really enjoyed the exhibit and how the stories were told from the tribal elders. A lot of times history is told by the, "winners" and this was a breath of fresh air to see. I also appreciate how you honored the stories with offerings at each of the exhibits. The stories we tell as Native people bring our community together through these living stories told by our ancestors.