

Photography:

Medicine Wheel Ride organizers at Crazy Horse Memorial on Aug. 9, 2020.

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Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation Hosts 2nd Annual Medicine Wheel Riders, Showcases MMIW Display

CRAZY HORSE, S.D. (Aug. 28, 2020) — Earlier this month, at the request of organizers, the Crazy Horse Memorial welcomed the 2nd annual Medicine Wheel Ride to its cultural and educational complex in the Black Hills. On that Sunday, Aug. 9, indigenous riders and their friends, including Sturgis Mayor Mark Carstensen, gathered at sacred Bear Butte for a short ceremony and bike blessing and then rode together to Crazy Horse Memorial for lunch, guest speakers, and a group photo.

The Medicine Wheel Ride is an extraordinary event, one that is witnessed each year by hundreds of thousands of people across North America as riders come together from the four directions and meet in the center of the medicine wheel. Through this ride, organizers Lorna Cuny (Oglala Lakota), Lynette Roberts (Oglala Lakota), Shelly Denny (Leech Lake Ojibwe), Lavinia Yonnie (Navajo), and Lisa Rivera (Yaqui) are dedicated to raising awareness for “Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.”

Native American women face rates of violence, murder, and human trafficking at four to 10 times the national rate. According to the U.S. National Crime Information Center, more than 5,700 indigenous women have gone missing or been killed in the last four decades.

That’s one native woman every three days. Increased awareness is critical, because native women actually “disappear” three times: physically, without any social or mainstream media awareness, and in state and federal statistical data or informational resources.

“It was an honor to join this year’s Medicine Wheel Ride as a sponsor, and to host the riders and their guests,” said Amanda Allcock, director of sales and tourism for Crazy Horse Memorial. “MMIW is an ongoing crisis in Indian Country. We must remember the murdered native women who still have not been found, and the countless women who remain missing. We wholeheartedly support this critical effort to build the awareness, partnerships and resources necessary to bring these horrific numbers down.”

In addition to serving lunch to approximately 100 riders and guests and providing conference space for the speakers, Crazy Horse Memorial also showcased the traveling MMIW exhibition in its complex. Designed to mirror the shape of the medicine wheel and incorporate the four directions, the display incorporated photos and stories from MMIW work throughout the United States and Canada in the past year.

Together with sponsors like Crazy Horse Memorial, the 2nd annual Medicine Wheel Ride raised money for two indigenous women’s charities based in Rapid City, South Dakota: the Red Ribbon Skirt Society MMIW Healing Center, and the Where All Women Are Honored Women’s Shelter.