

*Initial I/Vs at Scene by Det. Parkison #C34

On Thursday October 8, 2009 I was asked to respond to the Angel Valley Retreat Center off of 89A and Deer Pass road outside of Sedona. I arrived at approximately 1945 hours. I made contact with Lt. Parkison and Sgt. Barbaro. At this time Fire/Medical were on scene. I was given an overview of what had been done. I was told most of the sweat lodge participants were standing by in the dining hall.

I drove up to the dining hall where a large amount of people were. I introduced myself and told everyone that we would need to get a statement from the individuals that had participated in the sweat lodge. I handed a couple of pieces of paper around and asked everyone to write down their names, telephone numbers and addresses and whether or not they had been in the lodge this date. I explained that it may take awhile and thanked them for their patience. I then set up a table and began to interview people individually. These interviews were recorded on my digital recorder and later downloaded onto a CD and placed into evidence. The interviews began at approximately 2000 hours and ended at approximately 0200 hours on Friday October 9, 2009. The people were told that this would be a preliminary interview due to the late hour, many needing to catch flights early the next day and the stress level that they were encountering. The following is a list of the people I interviewed in order and a summary of what they said.

(participant-was in sweat lodge)

Shawna Bowen-non participant but there when people began emerging.

Sara Mercer-daughter to Ted Mercer. Non participant-assisted Ted.

Michael Olesen-participant-

Beverly Bunn-participant-

Danieta Olesen-participant-

Michael Barber-vendor/participant-

Laura Souter-participant-

Brian Essad-participant-

Christine Mattern-participant-

Jeanne Armstrong-participant-

Brent Mekosh-participant-

Laura Prieve-participant-

Dawn Gordon-participant-

Christie Hsiao-participant-

John Ebert-particiapnt-

Mark Rock-volunteer/dream team-participant-

Richard Wright Jr.-participant-

Sylvia De la Paz-participant-

Nell Wagoner-participant-

Laurie Gennari-participant-

Shawna Bowen and Sara Mercer

The first two people to come up and talk to me were Shawna Bowen and Sara Mercer. Sara is 17 years old and lives on the Angel Valley property with her parents. Sara said her father is a volunteer here and helped out with the fire for James Ray. Neither was in the sweat lodge. Sara said she was there the whole time helping people by giving them water and spraying them down. Sara said she helped people out once it was over. She said she was there the whole time.

I asked what the first indicator was that something wasn't right. Sara said one of the guys wasn't breathing and he had blue lips. She said the lodge was completely dark, the only light was produced from the rocks in the pit. Shawna said a couple of people had passed out in the sweat lodge. Sara said there was quite a "bit" of people that were not doing well. Shawna said once they lifted the flap then you could see inside. Shawna said some of the people kind of fell coming out and others didn't come out. Sara said some of the people were unconscious in there (sweat lodge) so they had to tear out the back and get them out. I asked how many people she thought were in the sweat lodge and she thinks there were 56. She thinks one of the volunteers told her that's how many were inside.

Sara thinks it was around 5:20 or 5:30 when people began coming out. Sara thinks people started going in a little bit before 3:00 and it was all at once. She thinks they were in there 2 or 3 hours. Sara said certain people came in and out and others stayed in the whole time. I asked Shawna when she became involved. She said she got there about 5:20. She was originally just going to help out with the fire. She has been to other James Ray events and she has done sweat lodges before so when the Mercer's asked her if she wanted to come she thought it would be great. Shawna said when she came down, Sara's mother said "Shawna get down there and help". She said she got down to the sweat lodge and saw about 6 or 7 people on the ground that seemed like they were in serious danger. Others were just cold, thirsty and in shock but seemed to be able to tend to each other. There were a couple of people that looked like people were giving compressions to. Shawna said there was a nurse there trying to help people. Sara said she (nurse) did not go in, she was just on standby to help. They did not know her name.

I asked if anyone had concerns about that many people being in the sweat lodge. Sara said no, that they have done it before and this is a yearly event. She said this year just got out of hand she guesses.

Michael E. Olesen

Michael said his wife Danieta stayed in the lodge the whole time but he didn't. He said at the point they opened the flap and brought in more rocks (6th round) he couldn't do it anymore and went outside and got hosed down. On #7 he went back in because he was concerned about his wife being in there. He said none of the air got to the back of the lodge and it was hot. He had been at the back wall and that is where Danieta was when he went back in.

He said on the last round he (unknown who) wanted everyone to lay down, he said he couldn't get down. He said one lady was out of it and he said he felt she should have been taken out and he (unknown) said leave her. When he went back in he was trying to get this lady to lie down but she wasn't coherent. He was told to leave her leaning against the wall. I asked him who told him that and he said "James Ray" he just said leave her there, leave her sitting. I asked if anyone went in and checked on anyone and he said no. He said that is what he did. He laid down because it was pretty warm. Michael said at the end, the lady they couldn't get to lie down, he had to help drag her out of there. He said they couldn't get her to crawl out, they had to actually drag her out.

I asked who was in the sweat lodge with them and he said James Ray and a couple of his staff members. He said they were over by where the flap is.

Michael said each round it got hotter and more rocks were brought in. He said there was no ventilation once the flap is closed. He doesn't know how many people were in there but it was full. He said there was one complete ring and then a half ring of people. No one had water in with them. He said he felt bad for the people on the back wall.

I asked when he noticed that something had gone wrong. He said at the end of the 7th round when everyone started to leave he helped drag two people out the door. He said the one guy they flipped the back up and got him out because he wasn't moving. He said the guys in the back were pretty big boys and they were being drug out the back. He said there was a lot of chaos. Michael said he wasn't that bad because he had stepped out once. He said his wife did okay but some people were "delirious". Michael said this is his first sweat lodge and likely his last.

Beverly Bunn

Beverly states she stayed in the sweat lodge through all of the rounds. She doesn't know how long they were inside. She said everyone filed in and went around to the other side until it was filled and then started to fill on the inside. She said her position was on the inside of the West side of the lodge. She said they put the rocks in there, then the water and did chants. She said she moved from the West side to the East side so she would have room to lie down.

She said she had never been in a sweat lodge before. She said they would start with 12 rocks then add more and she thinks they did 8 rounds. She said there was no ventilation. I asked if there was enough air circulating when the flap was open and she said no. I asked how she knew that. She said the people that were sitting on the North side never got to feel any air. She said you have to crawl in the lodge because it isn't very tall. She said she believes it was the North side that had the most heat. She said she had to crawl out clockwise. She said it was a little bit "intense" because the lady in front of her had to be dragged out; she said they were asking her to push her. She said she could hear Kirby breathing as they were going out and she thought she was snoring. Beverly said there was a lot going on as they were leaving. She heard someone say a couple of times "somebody's passed out somebody's passed out" and they said, "well we already started

let's put the flap down (inaudible) and then we'll take them out at the next round". She doesn't know who said that. I asked when that was. She thinks it started around the 4th round and it just got more intense. She thinks the 6th round was worse. Every round brought more rocks and water got poured on. She said it was a mind altering kind of thing that you were supposed to survive this, that you are stronger than your body. She said they started taking those people out on the 6th round.

She said they started calling out names, asking if "so and so" is here, some people would answer and some people wouldn't and that is how they knew people were passing out. She said when the flap came up that is when they started taking people out. She said when you were inside the lodge it was dark and you could not see, however she knew Greg and Jean were near her. She had moved from where Robert and another lady had been. I asked if there was a safety plan or a buddy system and she said no. She said there was no safety plan. She said in round 5 a guy said he couldn't take it and he lifted up the back of the tent and went out the back then they had to fix the tent. He said it was "unsacrireglious" and that he should have waited until they were finished with the round. She thinks there were 48 participants in the tent along with helpers.

She said that she was disoriented when she came out of the lodge. She said you can't really walk when you come out. She said she was concerned about some people before they went in. She said they were told to hydrate but that they had just come off of 36 hours without food or water. She said they ate breakfast this morning but they did not have lunch. She said they didn't have lunch because James Ray said they would throw up. She said a lot of people threw up in the lodge. She said they were told that they are purging their body of toxins. I asked if they (participants) had to eat or drink (during Vision Quest) would they have been allowed to. She said "that means you quit". She said you made your circle and you stayed in the circle for 36 hours. I asked if anyone came and checked on her and she said no. I asked what if something would have happened to her and she said she wondered the same thing. Beverly said she did not know about the Vision Quest prior to happening. It was not in the brochure or pamphlet as they want to surprise you. She said two ladies left and did not participate in that.

Danita Lynn Olesen

She said she had never been in a sweat lodge prior to today. She only knew about the program because of other people talking about it. She participated in the Vision Quest where they were to journal and contemplate. There was no food and water. I told her I had noticed that a lot of the women in the room had short hair (clipped close to the scalp). She said that was their choice, she also cut hers. She said the purpose was to let go of attachment. If you aren't able to let go of your hair, something that will grow back, then you aren't prepared to let go of other things in your life. I asked if someone checked up on her during her time in the medicine wheel. She said she heard some noises so assumed someone did. She said they were about 100 yards from each other. She said she was

hydrated when she went in to it. This morning (Thursday) she drank a lot, maybe 3 liters and had a good breakfast.

She said everyone went in to the sweat lodge together. I asked where she was in the sweat lodge. She said in the worst spot and drew a dot on my lodge diagram that looks to be at the far end across from the flap. She said her husband was beside her. She said the first four rounds she got her face down to get some of the cool air when the flap was open but then it got so intense after awhile that it dissipated. She said when it finally did dissipate she laid down and buried her face in the dirt where it was cooler. She said she could have left any time. She said anyone could have left at any time.

She said it was dark in the lodge but when the flap was open you could see who was where. She thinks they were in there two hours. I asked at what point did she realize something wasn't right. She said she never felt that way. She didn't know until she got outside and then it was 20 or 30 minutes before she realized that something had gone horribly wrong. People in the biggest jeopardy were on the other side of the tent being worked on by staff and part of his team and emergency services. She said they got hosed off and given water. She said she expected to walk out and not have her equilibrium after being in that extreme heat. She said he (James Ray) didn't want them to eat lunch because he didn't want you to have that food in your system. She said she just had to wonder why those people that went to the hospital didn't just get out of the tent (implying before they got sick).

I asked if she heard anyone say anything about being distressed. She said a couple of times and that people reacted differently. Some cry and moan and some putting in on for show. She said anytime anyone was in distress they were taken out. I asked how she knew that. She said "so and so doesn't seem to be responding" and they were taken out. She said as far as she knows those people are all here (in the dining hall) tonight. I asked if there was any plan as to what to do if anyone got ill or had problems. She said no. She said it was kind of known that you would know who the strongest people were on either side of you that would get you moved out. She said that is only as good as you have that strength. She said Mike (husband) left and came back in.

Danita said when she came out she was a little "woozy" on her feet but she noticed a couple of girls not doing so well so she went over and took water to them. She said she walked around the tent and saw someone giving CPR and wondered what was going on.

Danita said she has been through a lot of James Ray programs. She said safety was at the utmost importance. She said he is a very loving person. She said that is why they are here is to be challenged. She doesn't see him putting anyone in jeopardy. She said if you don't want to do it you don't have to do it. She said there was no ridicule if you didn't. She said he would say, you're not testing yourself. She said James Ray is not the kind of person that would hold it against you he would just say, are you really challenging yourself. She said you pay some "serious coin" to be here and it is a huge commitment.

Michael Barber

Michael explained that he is a vendor for this event. He said he provided lights/sound and video. I asked if he needed any medical attention and he said he did not. He said he did the sweat lodge today and he did the same one last year at this location. He said as a vendor James Ray lets him participate sometimes. He has been doing James Ray events for about 2.5 years. He did not participate in the Vision Quest this year. I asked if there was anything different with this sweat lodge as compared to last years and he said no.

He said everyone went into the lodge the same time. He explained that as you go in you line the outside of the circle (with people) and then as that fills up the people left go into the inner circle. He said his position originally was on the outside circle (closer to the flap). Towards the end he moved to the inside. I asked how come he moved inside and he said to get some space to lay down. I asked how many people were in the lodge besides staff which he believed there were 4 of them. He said there was less than last year but knows there were 50 participants but not all did the sweat lodge.

He said you could not stand up and that is the same way it was last year. He said the lodge itself was made up of blankets that were then covered with a white plastic. Barber said he did not have any involvement with the making of the sweat lodge that the facility here (Angel Valley) does. I asked if James Ray makes it (lodge) and he said no. I asked if James Ray looks at it before people go in and if he approves it to make sure it does what it is supposed to do. He said yes, Ray met with them.

I asked if there was any meeting prior to going into the lodge about having a contingency plan or what to do if anyone got ill? He said they did talk about not having lunch because it might be vomited. He said there is staff and volunteers outside the sweat lodge to help people that come out. He said every time they open it up (flap) people could go out if they wanted. He said James Ray did have a formal sit down talk with them about how it would go. Barber said Ray told them there would be 7 or so times that they would bring in more rocks and at that time if you wanted to go out it would be the time. Barber said it was a whole team of people working with each other and watching each other. I asked how you could watch your neighbor due to the darkness. He said when they opened the flap you could see. He said you would look and see if everyone was okay. I asked if watching your neighbor was instructed or if they just knew to do that and he said they knew to do that. Barber said there were a few people they took out. He said some guys were dragging people out. He said that was because the lodge was low and the people might have been too tired to crawl out.

I told him I had heard that someone claimed to be in distressed and were told to wait until the flap opened and he said yes. He said there were times where you may want to get out but you wait for the flap to open. He said there was one person that went out before the flap was opened. I asked if anyone got denied and he said no. I said did anyone get denied the ability to leave while the flap was closed? He said it was said at times to hold on and wait until we open the flap, that you can make it. He said that was staff. He said

the flap was open when more rocks were brought in, he thinks it was 8 times. He said the two times he has done the sweat lodge with Ray, Ray judges the amount of rocks on how he (Ray) is doing and how the group is doing. Barber said he could not tell any difference between this lodge and last years. He said it appeared to be the same material as last year.

I asked when he first noticed that people were not doing well. He said last year he went three rounds and went out because he wasn't feeling well. He said that is about when people began going out this time and they would get hosed off and get water to drink. I asked if there was a medical person around for this. He said not that he knows of. He knows there was a doctor that was a participant and a nurse that was a volunteer. He said they were made aware of them. I asked how they were made aware. He said James Ray told them that Lisa was a nurse and the other gal was a doctor. He said Lisa was a dream team member.

I asked if there was anything else he remembered or thought was important for us to know and he said no. He said Ray's position was near the flap, when it was time for more rocks he would yell to the person outside. He said Ray would pour water on the rocks that were located in the center.

Barber said he last ate that morning (October 8) and that Ray told everyone to be sure and hydrate. I asked if part of the sweat lodge experience was to have visions. He said people can, Ray does tell them they could have visions. Barber said he has not experienced it. I asked what the purpose was.

Laura Souter

Laura states she had participated in the Vision Quest and did not have food or water after dinner Tuesday night. She did eat breakfast and drink water this morning. She drank water and had been ingesting salt as instructed by James Ray. She said this is the first time she has done anything like this. She had been to a James Ray event about two years ago and signed up for this at that time. Laura didn't know what to expect when she first got here but then feels it was all explained when she got here. She said there was information that the week would be physically taxing. She said James went through step by step the Vision Quest.

Then today they went through the sweat lodge logistics. She said they were told it would be "really really hot, really really hot" and that if you needed to leave do so when the door was open. They were also instructed to lay down close to the ground which is what she did. She said the flap opened fairly regularly and for a long time. She said there was air circulating when it opened. Laura drew a dot on the lodge diagram as to what her position was. It looked as though she was on the West side closer to the flap. She maintained that position until she left. She said she stayed the whole time. Laura believes the flap would be open from 10-15 minutes and that it took time to get the rocks in and for people to leave if they wanted to. She said if you left you had to go around (clockwise) to the flap. She said that is because it is "sacred space" "protocol".

I asked if there was a plan if someone wasn't feeling well. She said there were support people that helped get people out that weren't feeling well. I asked if there was a safety talk before going in. She said "stay away from the pit", if you feel like you need to leave, leave. He told them it would be cooler closer to the ground and told them they could lie down or put their heads between their knees. She said once it began getting hot she lay down on her back and stayed there the rest of the time. She said there was room for people to lay down.

I asked if she heard anyone in distress, asking to get out or say they weren't doing well. She said the girl next to her sat up about the 5th round and said she didn't want to be there and wanted to go and did. She said the person is still there (was not transported). She thinks the flap was open when that lady left. She said there were a lot of people in there and it was noisy. She said you say your own thing and chant.

I asked when she first noticed things weren't right. She said it was after everyone was out. Laura said they were all out and they were hosing people down. She got up fairly quickly and started to look around. She saw some people not doing well. She said Tess was dehydrated and foaming at the mouth. She said people were working with Tess and in fact everyone that was in distress had people helping them. I asked if everyone got out. She said yes but it took some longer. Laura explained that when it was time to get out she was ready and crawled past a few people. She said they were instructed at that time for everyone to start moving, everyone to get out.

I asked how she knew Tess was dehydrated. She said Jeanne is a doctor and said she was. Laura said Tess wasn't coherent at first but then they got her to sit up and she was coherent then.

I asked if there was anything else about the incident she felt was important for us to know. She said the point of this week was to get rid of fears and things that are in your way. She thinks there were some people that were more committed to making it through than to honoring what was happening to them (physically). She thinks the people that were having trouble were the people that expressed that kind of determination that week. She said one of them is Sidney, Tess and Lisa, except Lisa's husband is sick. Laura said she didn't need medical attention just that she is tired.

Brian Essad

He had participated in the Vision Quest prior to the sweat lodge. He had dinner Tuesday night and no food or water again until this morning. He had been drinking a lot of water and ingesting salt (a teaspoon of sea salt every day). He said he has never done anything like this before but he has been to other James Ray events. I asked if he knew what to expect. He said not specifically but he knew what to prepare for. I asked where he was positioned in the lodge. He drew a dot near the flap. He thinks there were about 56 people in the lodge to start but as the rounds progressed people would leave when the flap

opened if they felt they needed to. He said James told them prior to the lodge that they should expect the best but plan for the worst.

I asked if there was any talk or instructions about safety or what to do if anyone got sick or there was an emergency. He said he doesn't recall. He said there were quite a few people that were having trouble "and it was like all right let's get them out of here". He said the gate was open and people said "such and such passed out okay let's get them out of here". He said they were moved out while being careful to keep them away from the pit. I asked how the people got out if they were passed out. He said a guy would have the head and a guy would have their feet and they would pull them out of the circle to the door. He guesses about 6-8 people passed out. He said people around him (fellow participants) would check on him to make sure he was okay. I asked if it was staff that picked up the passed out people. He said it was the participants, whoever was closest and in the position to do it. I asked if they were allowed to just pick them up and take them out of the flap. He said no, you had to go around the circle clockwise.

I asked if it was alarming to him to see the people passed out. He said no and he didn't think anyone around him was alarmed. I asked if James Ray or any staff talked about what would happen if someone passed out. They said there was a nurse outside. Brian said he was one of the last out as he was helping others out. He said he saw James and Kirby still on the far side. He said they took them out through the back not through the flap. I asked how he knew they weren't doing well. He said he conducted CPR on them. He did that outside the tent.

I asked if he ever heard anyone say they weren't doing well and wanted out. He said yes, they were encouraged to stay. I asked how they were encouraged. He said by "you're more than this, you're bigger than this, you can do this". He doesn't think anyone was shamed into staying. I asked if he heard anyone say they wanted out but had to wait for the flap to open. He said James (Ray) had said from the get go that the flap will come open and that is your time to leave. He said that James said it was a "sacred space" and it was a sacrilege to break that. He said on the far side someone was lifting the tent up a little bit. He thought at the time someone had a flashlight.

Brian doesn't know how long he was in because he was "out there". He said the first round was long and the others seemed shorter. I asked if there was anything that would help us figure out what happened. He said at first he thought the problem was due to the people being in altered states but now he sees people are still having issues he thinks it might be physiological. He said he was by the gate (flap) and was lying down so he was getting the fresh air. He doesn't think there was any air circulating. He states he did not need any medical attention.

Christine Mattern

Christine participated in the Vision Quest. She ate dinner Tuesday night and then breakfast Thursday morning with nothing in between. She said she has never done

anything like this before. She said James Ray teaches people to look at what is holding them back; helps create break throughs so they can grow and expand. I asked if she knew what to expect. She said not until she signed the release form. She said she knew of the sweat lodge but not of the Vision Quest, she guessed about that.

She stayed in the sweat lodge the whole time and she drew a dot on the diagram indicating she was closer to the flap on the West side. She said a friend saw a light under the tarp from the other side. Christine didn't see it because she had her eyes closed. She said she was able to feel air circulating. She is unsure if that was just when the flap was open or all the time because she kept her face down to the ground. She said she felt more comfortable there.

I asked if there was any talk about safety before they went inside the lodge. She said just that if you needed to leave to leave. I asked if that was any time. She said she doesn't remember, but she said people left whenever they needed to. I asked if they just walked out through the flap and she said yes. I said could they go any way they wanted to and she said no you had to go clockwise. I asked why that was. She said because it is a sacred space.

I asked if she ever heard anybody say they wanted to leave. She said she did and they left. I asked if anyone tried to talk them out of it or encouraged them to stay. She said she thinks he (Ray) encouraged people to stay but if they really needed to go they left. She said he was kind about it. She said no one yelled at anyone and no one was humiliated.

I asked what the first indication was that something wasn't right. She said when they were done. She said she was dealing with herself first trying to get cooled off and then she started getting cold. She said she was trying to help Tess by rubbing her feet and putting ice on her belly. I asked why she did that and she said to cool her down faster. I asked if she was having problems. She said someone was trying to get Tess to "come to". She said Tess wasn't responding and was foaming at the mouth. She said Tess was her roommate during the week. I asked if she talked to Tess at all during the sweat lodge. She said no and that she didn't know where Tess was positioned in the lodge. She said it was when everyone was out of the lodge she noticed problems. Christine said she wasn't walking around afterwards so she believes Tess is the only one she helped.

I asked her if she had any problems while in the sweat lodge and she said no. She said in the beginning she kind of did but then she put her face to the ground and she felt good. She has not sought any medical attention. Christine said she felt safe in the lodge and that she really trusts James and knows he has done them before. She said he does a lot of research.

I asked if there was anything else she remembers that she thinks would assist in the investigation. She said sandalwood was used in the ceremony but it was not overwhelming.

Jeanne Armstrong

Jeanne has done some James Ray events in the past however this is the first time for a Vision Quest and sweat lodge. Jeanne states she is a doctor and works for an immediate care clinic in [REDACTED]. She had dinner Tuesday night and didn't eat food or drink water until Thursday morning. James Ray told them to drink a lot of water.

I asked how many people she thought were in the lodge, she guessed about 50. I drew a diagram of the lodge and she drew an x to the West of the flap. She said she was close enough to the flap she could feel air when it was open. She said she was to the left of Christine Mattern. I asked if she experienced any problems breathing or any other difficulties. She said it was hot, like a sauna. She did not consider it a major discomfort. Jeanne stayed in the lodge the whole time.

I asked her if prior to going in to the lodge if anyone discussed what to do if anyone panicked or got sick. She said she doesn't recall. She said people in there spoke out. I asked her about that. She said when the door was open they left. I asked if anyone instructed them to stay. She said before the lodge they were told to let someone know (if assistance was needed) but you don't usually remove people before the flap opens because of hot rocks (when the flap was closed it was too dark to see).

I asked if she heard anyone get denied a request to leave. She said no. I asked if when the flap was closed if anyone got denied. She said she was "in my own world". She said she heard people say they wanted to leave and she heard people encouraging them to stay strong. She said the whole group did that and that was what this was about. She said no one got yelled at or humiliated for leaving. She said it was group encouragement. Jeanne said she felt she could leave if she wanted to.

She said it was really hot and she was sweating. But the ground was cooler. She said the flap was open each time for a long time and towards the last round she believes it was open at least 7 minutes. She said people would be leaving and people would be coming back in.

I asked when she first recognized a problem. She said it wasn't until they were out of the lodge. She said she was laying there getting wet and she heard someone say they needed medical attention and someone was getting CPR. She said she worked on (CPR) both James Shore and Kirby Brown. She said they were behind the sweat lodge and she doesn't know how they got there.

I asked if anyone knew she was a medical doctor prior going into the sweat lodge. She said some people did because at some point you share what you do. I asked if anyone asked her to be available if there were problems. She said no, she is attending (participant).

I asked how she was directed to where Kirby and James were. She said she thinks someone said they needed help and asked where the nurse was. She told them she was a

doctor and asked what they needed. I asked what the condition of James and Kirby were when she saw them. She said they appeared to be in full cardiac arrest with no pulse and CPR was being performed already. She said she took over for one person as they were getting tired. She said at some point she switched with the person who was doing CPR on Kirby. She said neither James nor Kirby ever responded. I asked if she could tell what their issues were. She said she doesn't know, when she saw them they were full arrest. She said both were a little cyanotic, their faces were a little dusky and she attributed that to having no pulse, not breathing and having CPR being performed. She said when she took over for the person doing CPR on Kirby she heard someone say they could feel a pulse (on Kirby) and that her color was better. Jeanne said she stopped to check and realized the only reason there was color was because she (Jeanne) was doing effective CPR.

She could not say how long Kirby and James had been in that condition. I asked if she saw dilated pupils and she said she did not check that. She said at that point the job is to do CPR until the paramedics arrived. She said those two were the only ones in that condition. I asked if she rendered aid to anyone else and she said yes. She said she assisted with Sidney (Spencer). They asked her to come look at Sidney because she had some frothy sputum. Jeanne said she did a sternal rub to see if she would respond to pain. She said she was doing that when she heard the call for help over by Kirby and James. She said she triaged and because Sidney had a pulse and was breathing on her own she went over to where Kirby and James were. She said there were still people assisting Sidney. She said Sidney was incoherent. I asked what the frothy sputum was indicative of and she said it could be pulmonary edema. She said initially it looked more like spit.

Jeanne said after they took the full arrest victims she checked on the people that were still sitting on the ground making sure they had blankets and stayed warm in case they had heat exhaustion. Once the paramedics got there she stayed out of their way other than holding up I.V bags.

I asked if there was anything she thought could help with this investigation. She said she doesn't know but obviously something out of the ordinary. Jeanne said she really didn't look forward to doing the sweat lodge and that getting hot is not something she likes to do however it was her choice to do it. She said it was just the luck of the draw in her position in the sweat lodge and that she controlled her breathing and laid on the ground. She said this sweat lodge for her was more comfortable than some of the saunas she has been in.

Brent Mekosh

Brent participated in the Vision Quest, he had dinner Tuesday night and did not eat food or drink water again until Thursday morning. He has read a James Ray book and has attended a lecture. He did participate in a sweat lodge a few years ago in Utah. I asked if there was anything different with the sweat lodge he did a few years ago compared to this one. He said the one in Utah was smaller with limited stones. I asked where he was positioned in this (Sedona) sweat lodge. He said in the best possible spot which was next

to the flap. He said from what he was hearing the people in the back said it was a lot hotter whereas every time the flap opened he got a huge breath of fresh air. He said he sat up the first two or three rounds then the rest of the time he was laying down. He said he stayed through all of the rounds.

I asked if prior to going into the lodge there was any discussion as to what to do if there was a problem or an emergency. He said he doesn't recall. He said there was talk in terms of how to enter. I asked what the preparation to go in was. Ray had told them to hydrate which he did.

I asked while in the lodge if he ever heard anyone say they wanted out. He said people were coming and going and after the first round he thinks a couple of people left. I asked if he ever heard anyone say they were having problems or didn't want to be there. He said no, by the fifth round he was just counting down to get out of there himself. He said it was really hot. He did not experience any physical problems while inside, he said he does sauna's frequently but never for that duration. He guesses that the flap would stay open around 4-5 minutes. He does not know how long they were in the lodge.

I asked when he first realized there was a problem. He said when he came out he got some water on him. He said they were pulling people away from the front flap. He looked over at Sidney who was lying on her side outside the lodge. He said she had labored breathing and there was fluid coming out of her and it "wasn't good". He started yelling for someone to help. He said he stayed with her until the paramedics came. He said her vitals were fine but she wasn't responding to anything. He said at one time he asked her to squeeze his hand to check for responsiveness and she did. Once she got fluids in her she started to have some eye movement. He saw a helicopter coming in and realized things were wrong. He said a guess on his part would be that some people were dehydrated. He said he figured they were going to do a sweat lodge that night because he saw it on the waiver form. He said this was a very intense experience and that his was good. He did not seek medical attention.

Lara Prieve

She participated in the Vision Quest. She said she did not eat Tuesday evening. She said she was actually ill all day Tuesday with vomiting and diarrhea. She said when you are doing really intense spiritual work and you are going to make a leap it is very common to throw up. She did eat breakfast this morning (Thursday). She said James Ray emphasized hydration. She said she is okay now just tired. She stayed through all of the rounds in the sweat lodge. She made an x on the lodge diagram indicating she was near the flap on the West side and after the first round she laid down in that same spot. She thinks lying on the ground was key. She did that because her back was hurting and she was testing and found that the earth was cooler. She said her breathing was a little more labored but she was not nauseous. She said it wasn't anything she hadn't experienced before. She said she

has been training for this event all summer. She said she had been warned prior to this by James Ray that it would be intense.

I asked if she heard anyone in the sweat lodge say they wanted out. She said yes. I asked what happened. She said they let them out. I asked if she heard anyone say they had to wait for the flap to open and she said yes. She said "you'll interrupt the ceremony and the ritual" She said if someone started screaming they had to get out they would let them out. I asked if that happened and she said no.

I asked if she ever felt like she had to stay inside. She said no, that she is kind of defiant by nature. She said she listens to her body and if it had said to get out she would have.

I asked what she first heard or saw that indicated something was wrong. She said when she looked at Liz Neuman when the flap was open and she looked like a ghost. She said and people were breathing funny. I asked how and she imitated what it sounded like (sounded like gasping for air). Lara said that she said "somebody's got to tend to that, who is doing that". She said they were just out of it. She said it seems to her that a lot of people weren't paying attention to their body because your body will give you real warnings. She said there is time you need to push yourself and there is time you listen to the warning signs. She said what she described was inside the lodge and she was able to see them when the flap was open.

I reiterated that it was during the sweat lodge when the flap was open that she could see people were breathing poorly. I asked her what she did about that. She said they were told that the men needed to carry people out not the women. She said she would make a comment that she would never go and try to drag somebody out. She said "there were clearly people who should have been out earlier". I asked what stopped them from going out and she said she didn't know. I asked if she brought it to anyone's attention that these people were not doing well. She said she would just make comments. I asked who she made them to and she said "in general". I asked if she knew whether or not someone heard her and she said she doesn't know.

I asked if anyone she pointed out as not doing well if they got carried out. She said a lot of people did get carried out, a lot. She noticed Christina, Liz, James, Shawn and Lou as not doing well. I asked if those people stayed in the whole time. She said no. I asked if they were gone when she got out. She said Christina was not gone when she got out. Lara said "I repeated over and over again you've got to get her out of here". She said the same thing about Liz and Liz nodded she was fine. Lara said that was ridiculous she was not fine. I asked how she knew Liz was not fine. She said she could sense she was not fine.

I asked if she feels they were neglectful not taking people out. She said she doesn't think there is a way to know unless you were sitting by them to know how bad they were. She said some people are generally whiney so it is hard to know when someone is whiney and when someone is in a crisis. She said no one was refused to leave if they wanted out.

I asked if they didn't refuse her because she said these people needed attention. She said "eventually somebody attended to Christina, nobody attended to Liz because Liz nodded her head she was fine".

She said James told them he used Frankincense and Sandalwood. She said otherwise she would not have known.

I asked if there was anything she could think of that would help in the investigation. She said there were a lot of people that got impacted and that there might have been some kind of toxicity. She thinks a lot of people weren't paying attention to their bodies. Lara said they were in the Crystal Hall prior to going into the sweat lodge. They had no preparation.

It was at this point Sgt. Winslow gave an update of the condition of James Shore and Kirby Brown (deceased). The group asked if they could make a circle and I stated that would be okay. During this time the group formed a circle and each handled the information their own way. When the group was finished I resumed interviews.

Dawn Gordon

Dawn participated in the Vision Quest. She had dinner Tuesday night and did not eat again until breakfast Thursday morning. She said James Ray constantly talked to them about drinking water. I asked what her position was in the sweat lodge. She put an x about the middle of the lodge on the North side. To her left she showed James Shore, Sidney Spencer and Kirby Brown. She said at one point she helped them take Sidney out and then it was just James and Kirby to her left. Initially Dawn said she was sitting then she laid down the rest of the time. She thinks it was around the 2nd round of rocks she laid down. She knew she would be able to get oxygen and to be able to focus on her breathing and she knew that heat rises. I asked if she ever felt air circulating and she said no. I asked when the flap opened if she felt any air than and she said no.

I asked if she ever thought about moving and she said no. She said she had thought about leaving but had made up her mind to do it. She said it wasn't so bad she was looking for ways to escape it. She has been in a sauna before and I asked how it was different. She said the length of time and significantly hotter (sweat lodge). She stayed through all of the rounds.

Dawn said she has never done a sweat lodge before and did not know what to expect. I asked if she experienced any symptoms while in the lodge and she said no. I asked if there were any odd smells and she said just the sandalwood and frankincense that was put on at the beginning and the end. She knows what that was because James Ray said it was.

I asked at what point she noticed people having trouble. She said she noticed Sidney that she "was passed out". She said James (Shore) and someone else (she doesn't know who because it was dark) was pulling her out. She said Sidney was sitting up with her head

(demonstrated down). Dawn said she was trying to hold Sidney's head so it wouldn't fall to the ground but she (Dawn) didn't want to sit up because she didn't want to be too exposed. She said this was as she was being pulled out. I asked how she knew Sidney was passed out if it was dark. She said by looking at her, when the flap was open light came in. Dawn said she heard someone say that Sidney was not being responsive. Dawn said she wasn't being responsive because she touched her. Dawn is guessing this may have occurred around the 6th round. I asked her if Sidney had complained at all prior to that and she said no.

I asked Dawn what happened after she recognized that Sidney had passed out. She said James (Shore) and someone else were trying to wake her up. She said Sidney was not responding. Then they started to pull her and she held her head so it wouldn't drop. She said there was no time where she (Dawn) said she was passed out it was from someone else. She said Sidney had no voluntary movement. I asked Dawn if she was alarmed. She said yes, but she didn't know if this was normal or not. Dawn said she did not have her glasses on but Sidney was close enough to her to know that is who it was.

After Sidney was taken out, James (Shore) came back in and took that spot so now it is James and Kirby to her left. They went another round and someone said something about Kirby, she believes it was James (Shore). Dawn said they decided to roll her over because she was on her back and gurgling. She said it was awful like there was fluid in her breathing, like a snotty nose and gurgling and she said it was alarming. She would not respond to roll over and James went to the other side of her trying to turn her. Dawn said she took her feet while still trying to stay flat to get her up so she was no longer on her back. James was pulling on her arms and talking to her all the while she continued to gurgle. Dawn said she and James were face down trying to get this done. She said the next time she saw Kirby she was now laying on her side and James was facing towards her up on his arm coaching her along and talking to her. She said at one time James opened the back so there was light, trying to get air. She said it was requested that he close it. She said he asked that Kirby needed to come out. Dawn said at that point James (Ray) said nobody else can leave at this time.

She said now they are at the end of the ceremony and she is trying to get out and taking care of herself. She said there are these little necklace things that they made hanging from the ceiling and that James Ray said to get them out. She said she tried several times to get hers but couldn't because she was stressed.

I asked if the sweat lodge was still going on when she noticed Kirby was having problems and she said yes. I asked if she knew which round this happened and she believes it was the second to last round. That is when she heard the gurgling and she and James Shore tried to get Kirby off her back. I asked if she told anybody that there was a problem and she said no. I asked if there was a reason they (she and James) didn't tell anyone Kirby wasn't doing well. Dawn said "because I only speak for myself I do not know what's expected, I don't know". She said at that point she didn't know it was serious. She said when she saw Sidney passed out she had heard if you passed out its okay, she said she didn't hear it in those words she just heard it can happen. She said

when Kirby was breathing that way she thought at least she was still breathing although gurgling. She thought to herself that at least she is not passed out like Sidney. She thought Sidney looked like she needs more attention. Dawn said she talked to Kirby but Kirby didn't talk back to her. She said she told Kirby to keep breathing. Dawn remembers thinking James (Shore) was so incredible helping Kirby. She said James Shore did ask to have Kirby moved. She said James (Shore) just put it out there (the statement that Kirby needed assistance) in a matter of fact tone. She said it was late in the process and they were pretty weak. She thinks James Shore said, we need help over here. She believes James Ray said the ceremony was going to continue, that no one else can leave at this point we have to close the gate. She said the gate was open when she (Kirby) was having this problem. I asked if everyone else could see Kirby and she said she didn't know because Kirby was a person away from her. Dawn said it was her feet that were propping her up. I asked if James Ray ever came and checked her and Dawn said not that she is aware of.

I asked what happened after the flap closed. She said around the last round when the frankincense was used and more water on the rocks to create steam. I asked what she heard from James Ray. He continued talking about the intentions that had set for the 7 pouches they had made and that they were on the 7th pouch. I asked about James Shore. She said he was coaching Kirby and telling her to breathe. She said this was after the 7th round and that James' attention was 100% on Kirby. Dawn said she tried to keep her (Dawn) energy close. I asked when she noticed James Shore not doing well. She said she never noticed that. She said James said some thing like Oh boy or geez, like it was hot, that he was struggling a little bit. She thinks when he went from laying beside her and moving to the other side of Kirby and leaning up and being up and focusing on her that is when she thinks it tipped for him. She said he went from being flat to being up and his attention not within but on someone else. Dawn said she knows her heart was beating extremely fast and she focused on slowing down her breathing.

I asked if she had enough air and she said she doesn't think so. She said Mark (Rock) was next to her and the guy next to him went to the hospital. She said Mark was opening the tent a little bit to let air in so she would put her head to the side towards James and felt a little air. She thinks James had that air as well and was probably okay until he got up and went to the other side of Kirby and propped himself up to take care of her. She said Mark was sticking his fingers under the tent to get some air.

She said she heard a noise and she had heard that someone had fallen back into the stones. She heard it was Lou but then she saw bodies sitting up so she wasn't sure.

I asked once the flap was up and everyone was out if she knew where James (Shore) and Kirby were. She said once she got herself put back together and got her glasses she walked over to the other side of the tent and saw James and Kirby receiving CPR.

Christie Hsiao

She participated in the Vision Quest, eating dinner Tuesday night and nothing again until Thursday morning at breakfast. After the Vision Quest she was told by James Ray and the Dream Team to hydrate. I asked where she was in the sweat lodge. She said she was close to the fire (inner circle) on the West side.

She states she has never done anything like this but has attended past James Ray events. She said she did not know what to expect, that nobody does. Christie said she left the third round and did not go back in. She left because she couldn't breathe that it was just too hot. She said where she was sitting every time water was poured steam would hit her and it was too intense. She said she knows her body and that if she would have stayed she would have passed out. I asked if she said anything to anyone about needing to leave. She said no, she just left when the flap opened. I asked where she went after she left the lodge. She said she was drinking and hydrating. She went to the bathroom and then came back (not in the lodge). She said when she came back she saw people outside the lodge and some people getting pulled out of the lodge. She said they were pouring water on people. I asked how everyone was acting and she said "unconscious". She said it took a couple of minutes for some people to come back.

I asked what she did. She said she was there giving people water. She said everyone seemed overwhelmed. She didn't render any aid but saw people performing CPR. I asked while she was in the lodge if anyone complained. She said you couldn't talk inside but there was some type of singing. She said no one caused her problems for leaving. She was told that she could come back in if she wanted to but she did not want to. I asked if she had any thoughts on what happened. She said she just thought it was too intense and high heat. She said the day before they were not eating and drinking and already dehydrated. Christie said she was sitting in the lodge; she could not lay down because there wasn't enough room. She said the closer you are the hotter it is and that the people inside the ring blocked some of the heat for the people in the back. She said she was one of the last ones in the lodge and that is why she was inside the circle.

John Patrick Ebert

John participated in the Vision Quest. He had dinner Tuesday night and then no food or water until Thursday morning. This was his first vision quest/sweat lodge. He had been hydrating and taking sea salt as James Ray had told them. I asked if he knew what to expect. He said they send out pre event stuff but he really didn't read it because he likes to "take it as it comes". He learned of James Ray through the book The Secret. He said James Ray seemed to "be the one". He attended Harmonic Wealth.

John said he left the lodge on round 4 and got hosed off, got his "wits" about him and went back in for round 7. I asked what happened after he left in round 4. He said he got hydrated. He said the Dream Team was out there giving them water and making sure everyone was okay. He said he could have gone back in earlier but he didn't feel up to it.

I asked how he was feeling when he got out. He said a little disoriented but it was to be expected due to the state of consciousness. He said right now he is feeling fine. I asked if he had any problems while in the lodge and he said he just sweated a lot.

I asked why he left at round 4. He said from what he understands it opens up your pores and detoxifies you. I asked again what caused him to leave. He said it was too hot in there for him. I asked how he was breathing inside. He said he was fine once they hosed him down. I asked if he was having any breathing difficulties. He said it's a sweat box so it's humid in there and it is more than what he is accustomed to. I asked him where he was in the lodge. He said he was on the East side. I asked while he was in the lodge if he heard anyone saying they weren't doing well or if someone wanted out. He said after every round the flap opens and anyone who wants to go out can. I asked if they wanted to go out prior to the flap opening if they could. He said he didn't know he didn't think anyone tried. I asked if anyone was denied the ability to go out and he said no. He said they were encouraged to stay in because that is what you are there for. I asked how they are encouraged and he said by the members. He said they all pull together and say things like "hang in there, keep going, you can do it".

I asked when he first noticed there was trouble. He said it was after everyone got out of there. He said he helped carry Tess out. He said you are supposed to go into a certain set of consciousness and sometimes that can be overwhelming so you don't really know that something is wrong. He said you might think the mind shut down as a protection mechanism. He said once everyone gets outside you would notice things.

He said he carried Tess out after the end of the ceremony. He said when the flap came open her eyes looked a little funny to him so he got someone to help him carry her out. I asked what was funny about her eyes. He said he didn't see any whites in her eyes. I asked if she was responsive. He said she was breathing okay, a little heavy. He said you don't know if she is in that altered state or something is actually wrong. I asked if he talked to her. He said he didn't know it was her at first because it is dark in there. He said once they got her out he called over the Dream Team members and they took over and he got out of their way. He said he started helping other people. He said the Dream Team members are trained for this. He doesn't know what happened to her after that.

John did notice Barb was pumping on somebody's heart but he doesn't know who and that was around the time the ambulance was coming. He said Barb is a Dream Team member.

I asked if there was anything different about the water that was poured on the rocks. He said the water at Angel Valley has been checked out by a doctor that it has healing properties. He said it is just water that they shower with and drink while there. I asked if there was anything else he felt was important and he said no.

Mark Rock

Mark said he did not do the Vision Quest. He was a volunteer that was there to support the participants. He is part of the Dream Team. He did not fast but ate lightly. He was taking salt and drinking water everyday. He did participate in the sweat lodge. He participated in this event last year (Sedona). I asked if there was anything different about last years sweat lodge compared to this one. He said no, heat level felt the same and enclosed the same way. I asked if there was the same amount of rounds with the rocks. He said he doesn't know because towards the end he was "in and out of it" and you lose track of how many times. He was told there were 8 this year and he knows there was 7 last year. He doesn't know how that equates in time. He doesn't know why another round was added.

I asked where he was located in the lodge. He showed himself to be on the North side. He said next to him was Shawn (right of him) and to the left was Dawn Gordon, then James Shore, Kirby Brown and then Sidney. He said to start out they all came in there was a row in the back and he was in the back and Shawn was in front of him for the first two rounds. He said James Shore was in front of Dawn for the first two rounds. After that he laid on his side and Shawn came up next to him and James stayed out in front. When the third round was over he asked James if he wanted to come back and he said no that he was fine where he was. Mark said he stayed through the whole ceremony.

I asked if he had any trouble while inside. He said it was hard to breathe and that is why he laid down. He said they weren't getting any air in the back even when they opened the flap to bring in more rocks. He stuck his hand underneath the sweat lodge canvas and lifted it up. He started doing that shortly after he lay down in the third round. He would breathe in the cool air when he lifted it up. He thinks because Shawn was in front of him in the first two rounds he blocked a lot of heat and that helped him. He said when he really needed air he would lift it up. I asked if anyone knew he did that. He said no, no one said anything to him. I asked if he was allowed to do that and he said no. I asked how he knew he wasn't supposed to do that. He said because James Ray said it was an abomination of the ceremony. I asked if he explained why that would be an abomination and he said no. He said when you enter the lodge you go to the left and all the way around.

He said he would lift it up when the flap was open. I asked why he did it then. He said he doesn't know it was a time to breathe. He said in between there was chanting going on and different things you would respond to but after awhile he would hardly respond to those. I asked why. He said because of his condition. His focus was to breathe when he needed to breath and to focus on staying alive. He said that is too strong, focusing on staying in there.

I asked when he noticed people having problems. He said he didn't notice, he was focused on what he was doing and focused on his breathing and taking care of himself. He thought by lifting that flap up Dawn and Shawn might get some air. He said they were both on their backs and he was on his stomach with his face in the dirt. He said when he

lifted the lodge wall he would get air. I asked if he was worried about getting caught and he said no and that nothing would have happened if he did. He said he felt like he could have left any time he wanted but he chose not to.

He said Shawn was lucid and talking. He said Kirby was responding but he thought they were doing that all the way to the end but Dawn said they were not. He remembers hearing Kirby talking and thinks it had to be after the 4th or 5th round because that is what Dawn told him. He thought she (Kirby) was talking to the end. He said when he left the sweat lodge he thought they were fine. He remembers hearing Kirby talking. I asked if he noticed any problems with James Shore. He said after the 3rd round he tried to talk James into going in the back and that was the last time he talked to him. He said James was in front of Dawn. I asked if James Shore was getting any of the air from him lifting the lodge wall. He didn't think so he thought James was too far away. Mark said where he was positioned he could feel some of the water splash on his feet when it was poured on the rocks. He thought maybe the heat from the steam would come their way first. He doesn't know if his area was hotter because he was lifting up the wall, close to the ground and wasn't in any other place in the lodge.

I asked what he thought happened. He said he doesn't know. Prior to the lodge every body was fine. He wonders if there was some type of toxin but he doesn't know how that would happen. I asked if he rendered aid to anyone. He said no, once it was done his thought process was that Shawn and Kirby were okay. His focus was to get out of there and get himself resuscitated to the point he could help other people. He said from his past experience you would get hosed off and get to where you could walk around and be fine. He said he had no idea people around him were that bad.

Richard Wright Jr.

Richard participated in the Vision Quest. He had dinner Tuesday night and no food or water until Thursday morning. This was his first time at a vision quest/sweat lodge. He has been to other James Ray events. I asked where he was in the sweat lodge. He said when he first went in he was sitting next to Dawn and Mark for the first two rounds. He left and went back in and then he was sitting next to the flap for the remaining five rounds.

After the end of the second round he left and came back on the fourth. He left because he couldn't take it. He said it wasn't so much the heat but not being able to breathe. He said the air was very thick. The first two rounds he was sitting leaning against the wall (North). When he came back he sat up a round then laid down the remaining rounds. He thinks he laid down on the fifth round.

I asked if he felt any air circulating during the first two rounds (North side). He said not during. I asked when the flap was open and he said very little. I asked when he came back. He said there was a lot of air and that is how he probably made it through. He said he took advantage of the flap being open. He said he didn't want to sit up too much because he would get light headed so he would lean into the door and get good oxygen.

I asked while he was in the lodge if he experienced any problems. He said he was sweating profusely and his nose was running. He kept his eyes closed the whole time. He said the only thing he smelled was the stuff, incense on the rocks. He knows the very last round was Frankincense. Incense was only on the first and last round and it was not overpowering.

I asked if he heard anyone complaining about wanting to get out, not being able to take it anymore or anything like that. He said towards the end of the rounds people wanted to go but there was only a few seconds until the round was over. He said they were leaving and by the time they got to the flap it was over. I asked if anyone was denied the ability to leave. He said he wouldn't say they were denied they were told to wait because it was almost over; it was just a few seconds until it was over. I asked how many wanted to leave and he said a few. I asked if that was at the last round and he said he meant towards the end of each round. I confirmed that he meant that they were told to stay because that particular round was almost over and he said yes. I asked who said that and he said James Ray. I asked if they wanted to leave why they just couldn't go. He said just that the round was almost over and they could have stuck it out a few more seconds.

He said when the flap opened is when they all kind of did a check on everyone. He said there were people that had passed out and people that were having difficulties so then people came in and took them out and they got air. I asked how he knew they were passed out. He said people would say, we would check each other as we were sitting next to them. They would say so and so is passed out. I asked if he heard anyone say anything about James and Kirby being passed out. He said he doesn't remember that he was kind of out of it towards the end.

I asked if he heard anyone say someone was passed out and then told to wait until the flap was open. He said no because you wouldn't know, it was so dark and the ceremony was going on.

I asked if there were any repercussions for the ones that chose to leave and he said no. He said "they thanked him for going".

I asked what he thinks happened. He said he doesn't know. He said different peoples bodies react differently. He thinks it was more of a body reactionary thing. He thinks the vast majority of the group went in but there was attrition through each round but then someone would come back in although that was rare.

Richard said he didn't even know that anything had happened until the ambulances got there. He said he was kind of out of it so he was there trying to get himself back together. By then he was well enough to leave and shower.

Sylvia de la Paz

Sylvia participated in the Vision Quest. She had dinner Tuesday night then no food or water until Thursday morning. She said James Ray talked to them about taking sea salt and drinking water. She said she never felt hungry during the quest.

I asked about the sweat lodge. She said she is very claustrophobic and had no desire to do the sweat lodge. Her fiance Richard Wright told her that it would help alleviate her fears. She had it in her mind she would only do one round. She went to the back where the people that got injured were (North). She sat next to this girl who actually lifted up the tent. She said she was on the ground and her face to the ground. She could see a little bit of light and could breathe out the hole. She said that girl was Melissa Phillips. She said that is how she survived that. She almost considered doing a second round but he (James Ray) said once a round starts you can't get out so she wasn't going to try to start a second round, get half way through and feel like she is going to die and not being able to get out. She said in her mind it was "see ya God bless you, I'm out of here".

She said it was highly uncomfortable but she didn't have any symptoms. I asked what was difficult. She said being claustrophobic and so dark inside and the chanting. She said it just wasn't for her. She said she did resolve a back ache issue during the week prior to the lodge.

Once she got out she went to this tarp where she was hosed down. I asked if she was aware of any problems at any point. She said she saw people unconscious and that was unnerving. I asked if that was throughout or the end. She said it is hard to say the memory is not so great. She said maybe the 5th round on. She said they had to be picked up by their feet and hands and drug out. She said she hated it and it seemed like there were more people that needed help than there were people that could hose them down or help them. She said she was trying to help people by at least putting her hand on their back and telling them it was okay but the Dream Team told her to let them have their experience. She said maybe they were right she doesn't know.

She remembers Carl saying I think there are some people that want to get out of this but they can't get out. She said they lifted up the flaps in the back. She said he was waving his hands but she didn't see anyone go over. She said they lifted the flap and his wife said I think someone's head is here. They lifted the flap and it was just a rock. One of James Ray's people came over and she said, Oh thank God it's just a rock, she said Oh I'm sorry I made a mistake. She said there was so much chaos.

I asked how she was able to see Carl wave his hands. She said she was just at the right place (she was outside the lodge looking in). She said she was screaming they are waving they are waving. She said this was towards the end. She said one of James Ray people came over and it felt like an eternity. She said there were so many people coming out that needed care.

Nell Wagoner

Nell participated in the Vision Quest. She had dinner Tuesday night and no food or water until Thursday morning. This was her first vision quest/sweat lodge and she stayed through all 8 rounds. She has been to other James Ray events. According to where she placed the x on the lodge diagram she was on the Southwest side close to the flap. She said she was next to the guy that was putting on the coals. She said she got a lot of air and it was much cooler than farther back in the tent. She did not experience any problems while in the lodge. She said it was hot and she was laying down part of the time which was cooler. When she first went in she was sitting then around the 3rd round she laid down because it was getting hotter sitting up.

I asked if she heard anyone ask for help or complain about getting help. She said yes. She heard at least one person say I want to get out but they had already closed the flap and James Ray said no. She heard people screaming and crying. She said she heard a lot of people vomiting. In between sessions people were being carried out. I asked which round she heard someone say they wanted out. I asked why James Ray told them they couldn't leave and she said because they had already closed the flap. She said they would open the flap to bring the coals in but once it went back down you were supposed to stay until they opened it again. She doesn't think the rounds were that long but someone told her they were in the lodge a couple of hours. She doesn't know who the person was that said they wanted out.

She knows there was a period of time when there was light in the tent and James Ray thought someone had a flashlight. He started yelling how this was sacred and you shouldn't be doing that and he was very upset. She said apparently someone was getting out of the tent from the back. She said she talked to the people that pulled them out. She said the guy that was going out the back didn't have any recollection of it. Nell said she was pretty close in proximity to James Ray. She said he had a big booming voice and he was clear that this was sacrilegious and at one point asked the flashlight to be passed to him. She said he was told there was no flashlight. I asked how he reacted to that and she said she didn't know.

I asked about people vomiting. She said there was one man that was trying to get out and fell into the pit and burned his arms. She said he went out and she told James Ray that the guy needed to get his arm in ice immediately (she said because she is a physician). She said James Ray said "it's taken care of". She said that guy came back in to help haul people out.

I asked as a medical professional if she had concerns about this type of thing. She said she does now. She said she is a gynecologist so she doesn't deal with ER kind of things. She said she didn't know until later that it was hotter in the back. She said as she was leaving the tent there were all of these bodies. She tried to help one man haul one woman out. She tried to go back for somebody else and she was to overcome by the heat. She said this was after the ceremony was done.

She said it took a long time to get people out; James Ray wanted them to go in a certain formation so that you made a clockwise. She said you just couldn't walk out of the tent. She said because of where she was located she had to walk all the way around (clockwise) to leave. She said this was afterwards. She said as she was walking out she came across bodies that were unconscious. She said one guy helped her with a smaller woman but there were some pretty big people in there. She said when she got out she wasn't able to stand up any longer and fell over.

I told her it was disturbing that she had to continue that pattern (clockwise) when you have bodies laying there. She said at this point she was trying to help get bodies out. I said no, that he would maintain that (clockwise rule). She said the bodies were kind of in the back so there wasn't a fast way out of the tent. She thinks there were 3 or 4 bodies. I asked how long she thought those people were like that. She said she didn't it was dark inside so you really didn't know. She said there were three men around the location she was and they were all talking. She said it wasn't apparent that people in the back were distressed.

She said there wasn't any education prior to this about keeping your eye on your neighbor. She said there was no plan. They were just told not to eat lunch because they would probably vomit. She said when you heard people vomiting maybe they ate lunch or something.

I asked if she rendered aid to anyone. She said no, she collapsed when she got out. She didn't pass out she just couldn't walk any further. She got hosed down with cold water and felt exhausted and stunned for a few minutes. Then she looked around to see who needed help. She saw Liz who wasn't responding. She was on her side breathing and she had a pulse. Nell said she tried rubbing her arms and legs to see if that would help. She tried talking to her but she did not respond to her. She saw people giving CPR in the back. She looked to find the owners (of the property) to see if anyone called 911 but she didn't find them. She did see James Ray and asked him if anyone called 911 and he told her that it was being covered. She went back to Liz and stayed with her most of the time. She never responded to her. She did not notice her pupils. She said her breathing became "threadier" meaning more erratic and fainter.

I asked if she felt she could leave at any time and she said yes. I asked even if the flap was closed. She paused and said she never felt her health was threatened. She said she would probably have tried to "gut it out" if the flap had been closed. Had it of been open it would have been easier. She said it was dark and there were bodies and a pit of fire in the middle so it wasn't easy to find the flap. She said she couldn't see coals that the pit was too deep.

I asked her what she thinks happened. She said if it is heat exhaustion her concern was that people in were not hydrated enough, although they were told to hydrate earlier in the day but not told why. She said they had just come back that morning from eating and then this started at 2 (p.m.) so they only had a few hours to hydrate. She said they didn't serve

lunch but they didn't tell them at breakfast that they weren't going to serve lunch. She thinks maybe some people went into it not very well hydrated.

I asked if they were cut off from water. She said no he (James Ray) is really intense in his lectures and there are a lot of bathroom breaks and so you have to keep getting up to leave. She said sometimes he asked people not to leave even if they needed to get up and go to the bathroom. She said there was always that tension of do I hydrate or do I go to the bathroom or do I stay present. I asked what would happen if they did get up to go to the bathroom. She said if it was the beginning of the meditation he would say you can't get back in until the meditation was over. She said there was a game where some people were dead and couldn't move a muscle and for some people that went on for hours. She said they were allowed to have water in the lecture; there was a big pot of water there. They were encouraged to take salt.

She said it was a lot hotter in the back than in the front. She knows because when she went around trying to get the people out who were in the back it was much hotter. She said this was several minutes after the flap was open and people had left.

Laurie Gennari

Laurie participated in the Vision Quest. She had dinner Tuesday night and no food or water until Thursday morning. She has never done a sweat lodge or vision quest prior to this one. She has been to other James Ray events. She stayed in the sweat lodge through all of the rounds. I had her show me where she was in the lodge. She drew an x on the West side nearer the flap.

She said she did okay through most of the lodge. The first round she was thinking "wow this is the first time I've been warm all week". The first round she was sitting. She heard someone say during the second round that you could sit however you wanted. She thought that was great so she went flat down on her face with her head towards the edge of the tent and that is how she stayed. I asked if she felt any air circulating and she said no. She did feel a little when the flap was open. She said she was smashed up against somebody but she doesn't know who she was.

She said she didn't experience in symptoms different than she does in a sauna. She said she was really concentrating on breathing slowly and keeping her face to the ground. She said she was checking in with herself asking in her mind if she was okay and realizing she was. She said if the answer had been no she would have been out of there in a "heart beat".

I asked if she heard anyone say that they wanted to leave. She said yeah, but then she did. She said the woman next to her was very uncomfortable and not doing well early on. She said the woman got up and crawled out as far as she knows. She said she was face down in the dirt. I asked if people could leave when the flap was down. She said it wasn't encouraged. She said it was kind of like the rule that you leave when the flap opens. She said it wasn't like they would tackle you if you left. She doesn't know if that woman next

to her said she wanted out or was just complaining about it. She said that woman was talking a lot about how miserable she was.

I asked if prior to going into the lodge if anyone talked about how to recognize if someone wasn't doing okay, what to do or a buddy system. She said no but they were all doing that. She said every now and then someone would poke you and ask how you were doing it. She said there was a lot of awareness between them.

I asked how she first learned there was a problem. She said people were going out and they were dragging some people out and they said that wasn't a big deal. I asked who said that it wasn't a big deal. She said at one point James Ray said if you pass out don't worry we will get you out. She said that was while they were inside. She said everyone knew who was around them and everyone was checking up on their neighbors.

I asked her if it was alarming to think she might pass out. She said yes. She said she has passed out once in her life and it wasn't pleasant. She knew people got drug out because she could hear people saying "pull pull pull". I asked how many people got carried out that way. She said "4?" I asked if there was anything about the people going out that caused her any concerns or problems. She said yeah, she thought "wow" they are dragging someone out. She said she would check in with herself and realize she was doing okay. She said there could be any reason why someone would go out. She thinks there might have been 49 people.

I asked when she first realized something was wrong. She said the rounds were done and the flap was open. She crawled over and stopped because they had someone they wanted to help out first. She said she told them she was doing okay. She crawled out and got sprayed by the hose and was doing fine. She had dirt in her eyes but when she was able to see she saw a group by the tent. She was sitting next to Lara who asked her if she knew CPR to which she replied she did not. Laurie said she got up and got her water bottle and attempted to help out anyway she could. She said she had to sit right back down.

She said she started getting cold as she had been sprayed by cold water and the wind was picking up. She sat with Lara with a towel around her. Lara pointed out a guy sitting next to her saying he didn't look so good and told her to go hold his hand. She rolled over and lay in the dirt next to him holding his hand. She said someone else was on the other side of him trying to get him to squeeze their hand and his eyes were rolling all over the place and she thought that it wasn't good. She said his name is Steven and he went to the hospital already. She said he was not responsive to her at all and he couldn't squeeze her hand. She said he was breathing and his nose was running.

I asked her if she knew what happened. She said she doesn't know that it is "insane". She thinks it was just water put on the rocks but knows at the very beginning he dropped some sandalwood in the rocks. She said it wasn't overpowering and you could barely smell it. She said later there was some Frankincense but she never smelled it.

I asked if she heard or saw anyone in need of help that did not get any. She said no. That this group is different than a lot of groups she has been in. If someone needed something everyone came running.

She said Liz was leaning on her and Lara's legs and she actually had to turn over on her back to help hold Liz up(while inside the lodge). She said they asked Liz "Liz Liz do you need to get out?" She said Liz said "no no no". Laurie said she could see Liz breathing funny and she was sitting up. Laurie said it was too much for her to being rolled on her back and she said it was too much and she had to go. She said she began crawling around the tent to the other side. She had almost gotten around to the other side when she heard, okay we're starting round 8 shut the gate. She said she was planning on leaving. She said touching people was too much that they had their legs stacked. She then put an x on the diagram where she ended up when the flap was closed and that was on the East side. She said she just did the same thing and went down on her face. I asked if there was a difference in the temperature. She said not temperature wise but there were fewer people and she had more space. She said by then she was ready for it to be over.

She said people started out and she saw a blank spot and crawled over to it and went down on her face. She saw them pull a couple of people out. Someone started to grab her arm and she said to not take her others needed the help. I asked how many people she think got drug out afterwards. She said she only saw the two. She did not go back into the lodge after she got out.

This concluded the interviews of the participants this night.

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