

*I/V Duhaime, David 10/29/09

Interviewed by Detective Ross Diskin:

On 10/29/09 I interviewed David Duhaime. David was a participant at Spiritual Warrior 2005 (David thought it was 2006 or 2007 at first but later confirmed he attended in 2005). David witnessed the sweat lodge event when Daniel Pfankuch left the sweat lodge in medical distress and was transported to the hospital.

David said when he came out of the sweat lodge in 2005 the scene was "much like" the incident in 2009. David was not present in 2009 but has watched the news and the way the scene was described is similar to what he remembers in 2005. David said people were wondering around and were delirious. David said there was a guy who was on the ground that was unconscious (believed to be Daniel Pfankuch). David went and got a hose and was dousing his head with water to cool down his brain. David said Daniel was transported to the hospital after the ambulance arrived. David said there were other participants that were not in as bad a shape as Daniel.

David said when he saw Daniel was unconscious he told a couple of the staff members that they needed to call 911. David said that Daniel had a "very very faint" pulse. David said he remembers all the details. David said the two James Ray staff members that he talked to had not been in the sweat lodge. David said the two staff members were not "jumping in" (to help). David said the scene was horrible and it was a "triage kind of event". David said, "And I told them (staff members) 'you need to call 911' and they said 'we don't want to call 911 without talking to James'." David asked where James was and they told him that James went to take a shower. David said, "That's bullshit, you guys call 911, this guy is unconscious." David said, "And they said, 'No, we are not going to call 911 without James Ray's permission'." David said he didn't know if James Ray previously instructed them not to call 911 without his permission or if it was their own decision. David said, "I couldn't get them to call 911 until I finally said, 'Look god damn it, this guy is unconscious, he's going to freakin die, I don't care what James Ray says'." David said he was infuriated with them and he told them, "Give me your damn phone." David didn't have a phone because he was a participant. David believed one of these staff members eventually called 911. David did not know if these two women were paid staff or volunteers. David said, "They were just two people that were outside when we came out, to me I remember them as staff people, you know, people who helped out with various things to set up and this and that." One of those two finally did call 911.

David said the sweat lodge in 2005 was at night when it was dark, unlike the 2009 sweat lodge. David said people were walking around like zombies after the 2005 sweat lodge. David said there weren't people there, (staff) who were capable of responding to an emergency like that. David said, "People who were outside, who you would think would've jumped in didn't, you know the staff members that didn't go through the sweat lodge."

David's wife also participated in the sweat lodge. David said his wife has a heart condition and she was going in and out of the lodge.

David talked about leaving the sweat lodge during the ceremony. David said participants could leave between rounds (when the flap was open). He said you probably wouldn't leave during a round. David said he feels he would have left during the middle of a round if he believed he was in danger of passing out. David believed the instructions were set up in such a way that you wouldn't want to leave in the middle of a round because you wouldn't want to disrupt other participants.

David explained the psychological reasons why participants would push themselves to stay in the sweat lodge.

David believed the 2005 sweat lodge was "extraordinarily dangerous." David said he didn't know, going into it, how life threatening it really was. David knew when it was over that what they had just done was very life threatening.

David said, "But when it was over and I saw that scene, I mean that scene was horrible, the scene you are investigating, where three people died, is the exact same scene that we had and in my opinion, the only reason one guy didn't die was because I ran cold water on his head soon enough that it (his brain) didn't get bigger than his skull."

David said James Ray ran into the shower immediately after the sweat lodge.

After the event, everyone showered and then went into the dining hall. James Ray was there and David confronted him. David told James that this event was "extraordinarily dangerous, this guy who went to the hospital, if he doesn't die or have brain damage is really lucky, he almost died". David told James Ray, "You can't ever freakin do anything like this again, you've got to have all kinds of precautions taken in doing something like this that weren't taken." David said, "You've got all these people walking around in a delirium, who can't even help themselves much less anybody else." David continued, "And the people who were supposed to be there, you know the staff people who didn't participate, who you would think would have their complete wits about them, for whatever reason, were frozen, they didn't do anything." David said, "I had to get very animated to even get them to call 911". David said James Ray's response to this was "extremely dismissive, I don't remember any specific responses to any of that." David described it as, "It was kind of a reaction of overlooking me." David said, "I had him (James Ray) one on one to have that conversation, because I was really pissed that something so irresponsible had occurred, and we had trusted that there was a greater degree of care being taken for our wellbeing than what I saw when there was really trouble."

I asked David if he told James Ray that he needed to have medical professionals present in the future. David said, "absolutely" but David couldn't remember his exact words to James Ray.

David said his wife and sister-in-law were at Spiritual Warrior in 2005 and can corroborate what he is telling me.

David told me, "I am not out to get James Ray by any stretch of the imagination, nor am I out to defend him." David continued, "But I will say what really bothers me is having had that circumstance occur, what really bothers me is the exact same scene where three people died already occurred before, the lessons were freaking obvious that this is a life threatening exercise and if you don't do something to change the way it's done and take precautions to protect the people who are participating in it, then someone is eventually going to die."

David said he remembered saying to James Ray that, "This guy could have died and you didn't have the proper people out there to administer help and the people who were supposed to administer help who had their wits about them were frozen, they didn't do anything, I couldn't even get them to call 911 without all but grabbing the phone and doing it myself, and I had been in the sweat lodge for two hours."

David said, "There really needed to be a degree of responsible supervision and precaution that wasn't taken."

David said, "What really upsets me is the scene where three people died occurred before, and when I watch on the news and it looks like, God, it's the same scene." David said, "I don't even know why no one died when I was there."

Please refer to the audio recording of this interview for further.

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