



History of the Ghost Dance

Great Basin Indian Archive

GBIA 012



**Oral History Presentation by
Harold Miller & Raymond Hofer
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Interviewee: History of the Ghost Dance (Harold Miller and Raymond Hofer)

Interviewer: Norm Cavanaugh

Date: November 12, 2007

M: My name is Harold Miller. I'm from, originally from Yerington, which is what I'm going to talk about a little while. I was born over there in brushes over there by Nordyke, they call it. Nordyke, Nevada. That's a little alfalfa mill along the railroad track. Before the railroad track was well-used through that country, used to be wagon train going through there. They grind up the hay. And they had a big mill there. They pump water out of the river and run steam machines to grind up the alfalfa, and they load it up in wagons and take it down to Mason. And load it into box cars, and they ship it off all over the country. You know, that's where I was born. Lot of Indians lived there, in that place I'm talking about. It's a Nordyke. And now, right today, big lifestyle rancher's got a house there. He got big cattle ranch there. And every once in a while, they'd be building something, digging up a fencepost, or building a yard for the cows to eat out of or drink out of. They dig up some of our artifacts. And they dig it up, and they take it up here to one guy, **Claude Chisholm name**. Call white guy, contractor, and he's got a lot of rocks. The rocks go all the way around his house. He got about two, three thousand rocks of all different kind. All kinds of grinding rocks, and flat rocks, and *tusu*, and all of that. Anyway, I was raised next to this old guy. But I used to hear him do a lot of things. And one day, I became sick. And this guy, my mother went over and got him. And he said, "Well, so we've got to have a doctoring." So they doctor me up. And I was about three years old, little fella. And one of the other Indian doctors, they didn't like it. And he wanted to get rid of me, because I was kind of half-breed guy. And he wanted to put me away. So this guy, *Wovokatten* [2:46], his Indian name, Indian doctor, Jack Wilson his white man name. And he told my mother "Well, I'll go see him, see what I can do." And

I was telling Raymond about this stuff where he gave me a white *aippin*, that white-looking milk, it's—white people nowadays use it for pepto bismol. They put a lot flavor in it, the same kind of dirt. But anyway, he put lot of that stuff in me, because I was bleeding at both ends, and he wanted to do me in. So anyway, I grew up next to him like that, and then—he teach us lots. Lots of old ways of life. I can't reveal—one thing, I can't tell you a lot of things he did in his Indian doctoring. I have to keep it to myself, otherwise the spirits will punish me. And I believe in the spirits quite a bit. And that's why when I make prayers in my language, we always say, "Grandfathers." There's a lot of grandfathers. We got buffalo, we got rabbits, we got eagles. All those is our sacred animals. Sometime, we get hungry, we kill our sacred animal to eat. They keep alive. And that's how we use the eagle feathers for—sometime, we go around to the nesting place, and we get the feathers, and make bonnets and medicine quirts out of them little feathers we get. Lot of things that he teach us, and we can't bother it. We're not supposed to bother them, just get the food, what I use for that day. Don't go and get hoggy about it. Take everything down and leave nothing. Always leave some kind of tobacco there, when you get the medicine, or get something when you kill it. Leave a tobacco there for the spirits to smudge everybody with, when they eat the meat, or when you kill. Lot of things he tell us like that. The food, everything. He teach us lot of things about songs, how the songs go, what kind of songs they are, what they used for. Lot of religious songs he teach us. Once in a while, I'd be driving down the road in my car—in modern days, nowadays, everybody's modern—and he, a lot of his songs come to my ear, and I start singing along with it. But I'm not supposed to sing any of the songs, in our way—his songs. But I know what he sung when he was singing with us guys. I helped sing with

him lot of times. Even when we was little kids; kids got real squeaky voice, and high-pitched voice. That's what he like to have, kind of girls and women sing with him. Boys. And he had lot of fun with them. He told many times, "Don't let these songs get out of your mouth. Just keep it to yourself. Don't teach the white man that language," he said. Just anything else that he teach you, don't go reveal it too much. So that's what I'm going to tell you now, that I can't reveal it too much of it, but I grew up with him, next to him. That guy, he was pretty smart old man. He went back east, where the Sioux Indians had a big battle. White man was killing them. He went back there and talked to them white men over there about our ways of life here, and he stopped that manslaughter to the Indians over there. All up and down the valley back that way, back east. And lot of Indians didn't want to surrender, they got killed. But lot of people talk about him, the people back there talk about that old man in their language. Some of those language, they almost sound like our Paiute language when they talk. When we talk our language here. I heard some talking up here one day, up here, in the place up there where the top part of this auditorium. And those Indians from Oklahoma, they talked just like we do. And the Shoshones, too. They must be brother and sister language. But anyway, that old man, he taught us lots. Lot of things, can't reveal it. Can't reveal all in one day. I can tell a little bit here and there, but not all of it. And Raymond here got some pictures of old guys here that—his relation, and his uncles, and them guys, how they paint each other with that kind of white *aippin*, they called it. Paint, white paint. And they signify themselves as ghosts, and they sing by that at night. Make fire all night long, and they use all kinds of medicine to go with it. And that's about pretty close to about all I can reveal to you guys. And thank you for listening to me that far.

H: Okay. My name's Raymond Hofer. I'm the culture coordinator for Walker Paiute Tribe. And I just want to give you a little history of the Ghost Dance, just to get everybody up to speed. "The Ghost Dance" is not what it's called. That's a misnomer. That was what the white man, and the Indian agents, and other people called it to scare people away. And it worked very well. To this day, it still works. There's a lot of people that won't come to ceremony because of that, and what, the teachings of the BIA bureau schools, and that. Stripped everybody down: language, religion, everything. So we had to put the pieces back together. And the way it started out was, you know, the language class in our school. And as we went along in the language class, the kids start asking more and more questions about, you know, "What kind of ceremonies did we have?" "Did we have, you know, certain ceremonies that we should know about, or"—you know—"we don't know anything about?" They didn't even know who Wovoka was. And so, we had to start from scratch. And as we went along, the culture committee says, "Well, we're talking about having a powwow." And then, Inez Jim, who's the great-great granddaughter of Wovoka, says, "Well, if we're going to do that, why don't we have a Ghost Dance? Because the kids want it. We have to teach them what we know, still. If we don't, it's going to be lost forever." And so, with that—and they gave us the instruction to put together a Ghost Dance. And that wasn't an easy task. We went to Fort Hall, and danced with the Bannocks. And they had probably the last viable Ghost Dance in the Great Basin that we knew about. And so, they taught us some of the songs and stuff. And what we found out, was that the songs that they were singing, a lot of them were exactly the same that we had in the Pinenut Dance. And we'd always heard that the Ghost Dance was hidden *within* the Pinenut Dance, because the government outlawed all Indian ceremonies. And so, they

either had to do it in secret, or, you know, within the Pinenut Dance. So after we found that out, we knew that we had songs of our own that we could use. And Wesley Jim had a big part in that, because he remembered a lot of Wovoka songs. The one about crossing over the Milky Way, and other sacred songs like that. And the majority of them are all about nature. They're not about calling in, you know, ghosts, and all this and that. It's all about nature. It's about pinenuts, and about water, and it's about, you know, the crops that are coming in. Animals. And all these different things that have nothing to do with war or battles or anything, because that particular dance, you've got to understand, was for the people—to *protect* the people. And so, Wovoka, he spread that word, you know, that was protection for the people if they did that dance. And so, as it spread, it spread all over the West. And it's documented that there were up to 20,000 people who migrated to Walker River to hear him speak. That's a lot of people. It was like almost half a football field stadium. And then, after that, we had Sitting Bull. He was also at Ghost Dance one year. Sent a pipe to Walker River, along with some in-studies. And their job was to trade that pipe for some Ghost Dance medicines. And so, they took that back with them. And they said, as they were riding their horses back, he was flying above them, teaching them the songs. And that's what they took back with them, and that's what they reported to their chiefs. So, as they went along, people were being rounded up, people were put on the reservations, starving, no food and no clothes, no protection from the wind or weather. They were suffering. And so the dance was to help them survive. Help them survive up to now, because, you know, we're all sitting here right now. And so, we thought, and we prayed, and we've been—I talked a lot with the elders that, you know, if this dance does take place, then we're going to pray for ensuring the safety of our Indian

people for another hundred years. And so, it was the kids that started this. And it was the kids that built the arbor, and they helped us all throughout the Sundance.¹ And it was funny, because you didn't see anybody 40-plus there. None of their parents, or, none of their grandparents showed up. And I guess it was obvious that it was their fear of that word "ghost," or, you know, that type of thing. And then, after that, Wounded Knee took place, and Wovoka went basically underground after that. Because he didn't want that to happen to the other tribes who also believed in the Ghost Dance. Anything to add to that? I know I probably missed something. Oh, yeah. Let's talk about that a little bit. Woziwob, in 1870, started the Ghost Dance. But it wasn't—it just a *Numane na'anakkah* [14:15], which goes back, you know, way back. Who knows, I don't know how long. Probably thousands of years. And he started that, and then we had another medicine man who also was using the Ghost Dance medicine. His name was Fish Lake Joe. And then, Wovoka came along 20 years later, 1890, picked up that Ghost Dance also, and started using it. And that's who made it famous, was Wovoka.

U1: Is it about the society, that you have to go into—or, when you say it went underground?

H: Oh, I don't know how it—you know, that was a hundred years ago. I don't know exactly what happened. It just says he went underground and didn't practice it no more because he was scared of what was going to happen to him. You know, probably would have killed him, if he had continued to advocate Ghost Dance. After the government outlawed Indian ceremonies, was when Wounded Knee happened. And that's been a controversial issue, because, you know, there are some Lakotas that say that Wovoka caused the death of 300 of the people. But, we didn't pull the triggers. We didn't have our hand on no triggers, you know? It was what they took, and they were surrounded by 7th Cavalry, that

¹ Presumably, RH misspoke and meant "Ghost Dance."

before had been wiped out by the Lakotas. So there was a **pendious** thing going there also. So all these things added up to, you know, that. But, you know, what we still have to remember—we got to remember, the basics of that ceremony is for the good. Was survival of the people. So, we come right to present day, 2006. And that same year, I went, and I was around Arapaho Ghost Dance. I wanted to make some offerings, and you've got to see and talk to the three old men in there before you can go in. And I sat there and talked to them for a while, and one of them says, "Oh, yeah. We know Wovoka, we remember Wovoka. He came here and helped us with our medicine." They dance at night. That's the only Sundance I've been to where they dance at night. And the Ghost Dance is done at night. And I don't really know if that's some of the influence that took place or not. That was coincidental to me. And, we started in 2006. There's a person in Walker River who still has Sitting Bull's pipe. And they brought it out in 2006, during the sweat lodge ceremony. And they could feel the people dancing inside the lodge. It was a very powerful pipe. And we also brought it out into the dance altar that night. We use a lot of smoke. We use a lot of cedar, and we use a lot of sage while the ceremony's going on. And from a distance, people were observing, and they said they could see people—smoke was rising, and they could see people in the smoke as it was going up. And also during that time, we had security. We're not too far from the old Ghost Dance grounds, where we used to have it. And they could here the old ladies crying down there. And so... there was some very sacred things happening during that time. We had help from Wind River. And the Shoshone people helped us out a lot, all the way from Fort Hall to Wind River. You know, they still have songs, and they still Ghost Dance, also. And they sang for us. Come out to sing. And they also doctored the people. All of the

sudden, the people were just lined up in the arbor, and then, just, he was smoking down one person and fanning on him. Next thing you know, all these people just start gathering around, and standing in line, because they wanted that doctoring. And it was good. It was good—it was something we hadn't planned on, you know? Something that just took place. And it was good. As he continued to doctor, I was—I was so tired, just laid down, and he goes, I heard my name being called. And he called me over there, and he said, "Look at the moon." And then, so we looked at it, and I looked out there, and the moon had started getting these rings of different colors around it. And he says, "That's the medicine. This is how strong this dance is. It can move the planets. It can change the course of the planets as they are in the sky." One of the security people as they were—you know, it's pretty late at night, probably 3 o'clock in the morning—they just seen a star come down, and it just split right on the lake, Walker Lake, in just all directions, scattered all over the place. There was a lot of sacred things happening that night. The second year, 2007, this year, we had two young men come in, and they said, "We were sent here by our elders, and we were sent here to help you." And we said, "Where are you from, and who are you?" And he said, "We're from"—what do they call that? The Clear Lake area, and they were Pomos. And they were sent there by the elders. They were singers for the Bighead Dance there. So they helped us sing, and it was really nice that they came over. So they sang their Ghost Dance songs, and they were very powerful. Lot of people in the second year saw Wovoka at different places in our altar. Altar is something like this, and then about a circle—let's see, there are two poles, and four directions... And then, willows in here. Willows all the way around. And people that were dancing, there's only one pole in the center. With one eagle feather on top. And

what people saw was, Wovoka standing in these gates at different times. Sometimes, they would see him in the fire. So everyone seen, he was around there during that time. And like [__inaudible at 22:37__] said here, lot of this is really sacred stuff that I'm giving out to you, but I feel it's relevant, because, at this time, and this period, this time on earth, we've got serious problems. We've got—and they were all predicted by Wovoka. The floods, the earthquakes. The catastrophes that happened. Katrina. We've got the hole in the sky that's getting ready to burn people up. And these things can only be cured if we can have a balance on Mother Earth. And this dance is one of the ways that we can put balance back to what it was. So we're working on that end, trying to help out as best we can. Try to, you know, somehow, get that cold force before everything burns up. You can go to Walker River right now, and you go down any road, and there's not one green field. They're all dry. It looks terrible. The leaves are dying. I know it's a heartbreaker to me, because I'm used to having a lot of animals around, and lot of green leaves. You know, it was nice, beautiful place. But now, there's no small animals. No raccoons, no beavers, no porcupines, no animals, no—there's nothing anymore. Birds are gone. You know, it's a prediction of what I feel is the end of the world at some point. A major catastrophe that somehow, we have to pray in our Indian way in order to survive. And there's answers to that. If you pray like that, you *will* get answers. You have to be sincere. And even alone, if you're just alone, you can do that. Let's see, now. You got any questions?

U2: I have relatives in the Schurz area, and I remember, like you said, when we were kids, we used to go—I'm from Bishop, we used to go over and visit them for days, and swim in the river, and just have a gold old time there. And I remember it *was* green, and lots of plant life and whatnot. What caused that, that event? Was the water not—the water's not

there anymore, or...? I mean, what—because I'm from the Owens Valley, and our dryness and everything disappearing is due to Los Angeles taking our water. Just kind of wondering what—is there a cause, that caused the river to go down? Because I understand the river's mud.

H: Yeah, it's just barely a trickle, and Walker Lake is dying. They only give it a couple years before all life is dead in Walker Lake. And that's a major byway, too, for birds. A lot of it's upstream. Yerington, Lyon County just has major fields. And they have a wildlife area right above the reservation, and they have like 60-acre farms where they just **drain** the water right into it. And so, we had the water negotiations, to try to get things going, but our tribe chose to pull out. And I think that was a major mistake. Because that's—when they pulled out is when Lyon County was getting really dry. And now we have no water. And so, they asked—to save Walker Lake, they asked tribal members to not irrigate their fields for two years. And so, within those two years is when everything is going to die. And it's not going to be good trying to get those crops back up. And I don't know if we'll ever get our water back. I kind of don't think so. I don't know. You got something to say about that? **Then, okay.**

U3: Well, I was going to assign in your—you said you were doing your research, or you needed to make offerings to the three elders, that was a direct link to—you weren't relying on books that were written by white people. It was directly given to you from your elders.

H: Well, it was a combination. You know, we did a lot of research in books also—you've got to pick and choose what's correct and what's not. And you can do that, because you

can tell how a white man writes. And you can tell where he's getting it, and if you know what to copy—

U3: Well, one time, my father said something like, you know—well, he kind of—he didn't tell them everything, because he says they don't need to know everything.

H: Right.

U3: So a lot of that information that anthropologists has—like you said, it depends on your own research from your own elders, is where you're going to believe that. Because sometimes they told them something out in left field, just because they know they're going to believe anything they say. So that's why I was saying, I thought your information from the elders, going about it in a proper way.

H: Well, a lot of it was guidance of the pipe, also. You know, we followed the pipe and where it led us, and that's where it led us. And I went up on our sacred mountain, Mount Grant. I stayed up there three days and four nights. And during that time, I prayed about that. And it was just, basically, I was given kind of the information to use the different paints, for each direction. The black, the yellow, the red, and the *aippin*—the white. And so, we used those, those different paints, on each consecutive night, for four nights. And so, we enter through those gates in the four directions. And then we go out there and dance. And then we have fire in pits here, and our singers are here.

U4: What would be a good idea, to transplant wild game into those areas that's disappearing, like your cottontails and so forth. Is there a way they could rebuild that with Fish and Game, and maybe it'll **reach out to the lake**?

H: You know, we could probably do it. But we need *water*. That's the thing.

U4: Well, another solution would be, have a rain dance with our tribal members. We do that in our northern country. When things are drying off, we have rain and snow dance at these powwows. That time, we got Mother Earth to rain down some moisture that—

H: Mmhm. We did that here about two or three weeks ago. And we got a nice little thundershower. And I guess we weren't doing it enough! And it just came and dumped a bunch of water and left. And that was—but it was good, you know? It was blessings. It was good. And we could get—I'm sure we could get our animals back up, if we had water. But that's the thing, you know?

M: Yeah, our animals slowly diminishing. White people got license now, going out, and can't even go hunt your own rabbits anymore. They have game warden out there, he says, "You got rabbits hunting license?" We used to hunt rabbits for, you know, our purpose. Blanket, meat. Supply our winter food. Nowadays, there big signs all over, "No Hunting Rabbit!" **Hard to defend** our rabbit country! White man took it over! They're hunting rabbits too, I guess. It's something like that. Hear a while back, white man's hunting rabbits. Well, things like that is happening. So I **could never stand**, really, about things like that, one **game**. And then, I thought about it myself, what that old man taught me, teaching me. I'm going to try on his power, what he left in my body, but I'm supposed to die from another Indian doctor who tell me to die. But this guy Wovoka, he come by, and he saved my life. But he put lot of that medicine, his medicine, in my system. And I took that thing, when I went into service, I took that medicine with me. I did get shot at, but I didn't die. Almost died, but I went through some tough battles in the Marine Corps. So anyway, I'm still here, and I believe in his power, what he told me, what he give me in my body. I tried to go to white man church, and they told me—the people that know that,

some of those Indians know that power was in me—they told me, says, “Why don’t you get rid of that Indian medicine out of you, out of your body, during our Christian church?” I says, “I can’t.” I says, “That medicine stays with me.” But the medicine been here way before white man come. That’s our religion, it’s our church. That’s why we pray for grandfathers. Lot of grandfathers we have out there. They help us along as we go ahead day to day. The eagles, the birds, buffalos, rabbits. All of those are our grandfathers. We look toward them for us, for survival. That’s why we call them “grandfathers.” We didn’t have no *taibo* Jesus; white man brought that from overseas. But we go to *their* church nowadays, and we pray with them guys, too. We mix our religion up. That’s why a lot of our religion’s going haywire. The people over there in Iraq and Gaza Strip, they’re killing each other. Because they want to be power over each other’s religion. Yeah, they doing that. They been there doing that for years and years, since Jesus died. They hung him on the cross. Ever since then, they’ve been fighting over who’s going to be the big boss of each other’s lives. That’s what they doing now, you can’t stop them. So our religion, we just better stay with our religion, what we got. But we can go to white man church, too, if you want. But, all it is is believing in the one God. One guy up there. That’s who we’re going to go see one day. He’s our creator—we call him “Creator.” He’s the big boss. We’re here today and gone tomorrow. You hear lot of people say that. See that, they died young. “Well, it was his time to go.” That person died young! See, that guy live long time, when he going to die? All things like that, they say. Make fun of each other’s life. Just leave it alone. Like that old man told us when we was kids, “These people, they ain’t going to bother you for what he looks like, how fat he is, or how skinny—leave him alone! He’s a human being! He breathe the same air we got.

He got red blood in his body. Leave him alone! Just go on your own business. Don't bother nobody. Don't say anything about them." That's the word he spoke to us, when we was kids. Lot of them—only two of us left here, now. **Leah** McCloud over here in **Reno-Fallon**, and she remembers a lot of his words. Because I grew up next to her, too. Been long time—I'm 82 years old now, and that's quite a long time! And she's little older than I am. But she talks good Paiute language. She seen him do a lot of his ceremonies. And I did, too. I used to help him sing. I know lot of his songs. But I don't reveal them, because it's a sacred thing between him, and me, and my religion. I can't go over there and tell him how to run his life. He's telling me how to run *my* life. He's up there someplace, walking around. Watching over me. All of them guys that went before us, they all watch over us. And it's religion things that—like, for example, never bury an eagle feather or any kind of Indian artifacts with a dead body in a coffin. Put them under the ground. You buried somebody that takes care of you. That body, it'll go to the Hunting Ground, or it'll go to the place where it's supposed to go. If he stay just right in the area, can't go nowhere, just holler and scream, he'd be there for eternity. Never bury anything like that with a body. That was another teaching I can't tell you. Eagle feather especially. Because an eagle feather's supposed to be a sacred bird. That feather's sacred. Never bury the eagle feather on the body when you bury somebody. It's another thing, you make—homemade one, maybe it can burn with them, but never put any artifacts in there with them. Arrows, or feathers, or anything like that that we use here, our Native ways. That's a teaching. Lot of people never know that. Of course, I heard about that. I know about it. I see it. I know some old people just bawl people out. We'll go to ceremonies, they use eagle feathers, and buried with it. That's no-no. You see them do that, you take the eagle

feather, and give it to the youngest person in that family. A baby or somebody. He'll grow up, and they'll tell him what it's for. That's our religion, move it along. Not the teaching. But now, as we go on, we speak English. We're getting away from our Native Indian ways. Everything, we're losing! We're losing everything. Because we not going by the rules and regulation of our tradition. We losing—we losing our language. Everything, we losing. We marry some other tribes, we can't speak these tribes' language. They move here and marry into our tribe, we can't speak their tribe, they can't speak our language. **And through that conditions he's** talked about it. Little [__inaudible at 37:44__] go to the ceremony to do what they supposed to be doing. We losing it. Everything, we losing it. Ton of things that we do. We can't help it. This one lady used to say, a woman that has moon every month, not supposed to use drum. When that woman use drum, she splashing poison all over, killing trees, pinenuts, grass out there. Seeds that we eat. We live by it. Animals are dying from disease. That woman doing that, doing ceremony with that drum. She's supposed to stand behind a man and sing, not use a drum and sing. She's contaminating everything, killing everything. That's our religion, that's what they talk about, the old people. Nobody tell you that. You got to learn that. That's why lot of our Indian food, everything is going down the drain. We fight amongst each other, and killing each other! Don't do that. That's what that old man Wovoka said. Incidentally, that Wovoka, he was called upon lot of—lot of people would ask for him, because he had lot of power for that kind of reasons. He went all over, all over the West coast, went from reservation to state to state, and different places to talk, without people getting killed. He spoke about things like that. He talk about it. That's what he said in the Paiute language when he came home. He talked about lot of people, it

was terrible, the way he expressed himself. Yeah, he teaches lots, that old guy. Nobody tell you guys that right out in front of you like this, like I'm telling you. I *know* that. I know that for true fact! Because I know everything about what he said. I *remember*, even though I was little goofy little guy, but I remember. I stuck that in my skull, way back in **Tepetat [39:26]**. Yeah. Lot of things they teach you. Even them old ladies, his wives. He had two wives. They'd tell the grandkids that. Don't know how to cook, you got to learn how to cook, take care of your husband when you get big and old. You can have children, too. You watch out for them, tell them the facts of life, what the—what kind of food you going to eat, and how you going to prepare it. Like, lot of kids nowadays, they take the knife, stir the food. We don't take knife and stir the food! You take the fork, or some other kind of flat object to stir the food when you cook it. You don't take knife and stir it. You take knife and stir it, you killing the spirits that's taking care of your food. You're killing them, you're stabbing them in the back. That's why our food's going away. Everything's running out. Things like that. I see it now—I believe it, what them old people talk about. Never use knife to cook with. You can *cut* with it, on the table, but don't stir your food with it in the frying pan. Or your boiling meat, or whatever you boiling. That's a no-no. Against our religion. Increase. I hear that in Montana. Or some place where I played handgame, they talking about the Coyote. The Coyote got stories all over. All different reservations, there's stories about that Coyote. How he originated handgame. Different kind of stories they tell. Powerful stories. He tells lots. How woman became a woman, and when she had lot of teeth down there. Of what he did to it. All of them things. Yeah. They tell you lot of crazy things. You laugh about it, but I tell you, it's true fact! A man's supposed to have sex with a woman only just one time, like a

black widow. The black widow kill its mate and eat it. That's how man's life used to be. The Coyote come along and save the man's life. Yeah, that's a true fact. I hear that. You see it. That's how we call the Coyote our uncle. Our *aatsi* [41:44], we call him. You see him cross the highway in front of you, or way off in the brushes someplace, doing something, you pray to him. "Uncle, get away from here. You get killed! Some white man come along kill you, take fur!" Talk like that to him. Pray for him. And he'll look back at you and hop along, going backwards. Pray for that guy. He's your uncle. That's what we call him. Your bears—you don't fool with those bears! You can use his fur and cook his meat, but you've got to survive by what he furnished you to make your blood run pure and strong in your body. It's medicine that you pray when you eating. You don't go out there, say, "Watch! Yeah, I killed this, the meanest bear you got over here! I made a big trophy out of him!" You don't say that! You save your life with that animal, whatever you eat and kill. You got to eat certain part of his body raw, to offer to the spirits. Pray when you eat it. When you cook something. That's my religion. That's what I was growed up, with them old people. They talk and talk, nighttime they tell about stars, what's going on up there in the sky. I used to know a lot of stars' names in Paiute. I outgrew it now, I forgot. But I used to lay in bed and look at them in the sky. Our fathers and mothers up there, doing something. We see that star up there. Like Raymond said, we see all kinds of things up there. That's the spirits' way. Yeah. And instead of that name, Wovoka—I heard one guy say that "Wovoka' means that he cut wood." That's not the word! He was tied up with rope and chains and everything. All the way around his body, was all handcuffed. Next morning, just piles of rope laying around, all broken up in little pieces. That's what it meant. *Wovokkate* [43:32]. Wovoka was gone. He laid in bed,

bust it all to pieces. He walked away and he went fishing. People tied him up so he won't do nothing. But next morning, when they got up, people look over there, and where he was laying tied up, just little pieces of chains and rope laying around where he broke up everything. That's the name he got by that, "Wovoka." It's not chopping wood. I heard some guy say that. That's not true.

[End of recording]