



## **Bill and Wanda Morrison**

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Bill and his wife, Wanda.

I met Bill in Santa Fe, New Mexico, through the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at the Santa Fe Community College. He provided a seminar on Website Development. He also provides pro bono website design, development and maintenance to several non-profit organizations in New Mexico. He is an active volunteer with AARP New Mexico State Office.

I had gone to the SBDC to take a class on Taxation applicable to small businesses in New Mexico. The class instructor said I didn't need to take the class as it did not apply to Indian-owned

businesses. He also said then Governor Richardson was letting Indians in New Mexico get away without paying taxes due anyway. I wasn't interested in setting up a small business. I was just interested in learning about taxation in New Mexico.

This interaction led me to develop and offer for free a series of small business seminars under the law of the State of New Mexico for Native American entrepreneurs within and outside of Indian country. Bill and Wanda attended classes. I also offered these classes at The Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) through the forward thinking of Jennifer Coots who directed the business program at IAIA. She is a born entrepreneur and I admire her business acumen tremendously.

I also developed the business seminars under the law of the State of North Dakota. My children are Mandan-Hidatsa and this gave me a particular interest in the Native American business possibilities on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation given the oil development in the Bakken Formation.

After I moved to Colorado, I developed the business seminars under Colorado law and offered them pro bono to the Rocky Mountain Indian Chamber of Commerce.

My dream was that Native American Indian law students could study these business seminars and offer them in their communities for free. How many people attend these classes or whether participants start businesses is irrelevant to me. I wanted to spread the idea of Native American small business ownership as a possibility. Entrepreneurs taking the classes would be nurturing their own visions or businesses and would share this with their children so this would have an impact on the future as well as the present.

I decided to put these business seminars and other seminars online and Bill volunteered to help. Without his help, my dream could not come true.

Bill and Wanda also supported my desire to pass Navajo stories on to my grand-children. I made dolls to play the many different characters in the various stories so my grand-children could hear and see the action. Bill asked if I would do a story telling at his Joseph Campbell Roundtable and I did. It takes hard work to set up and I needed help and Bill and Wanda were right there. The photograph here was taken by Bill's wonderful wife, Wanda.

Bill also helped Elena Higgins and me video tape three of the Navajo stories which is on this site under the Education section. Elena is a Maori musician and she and Tash Terry (Navajo) perform together as Indigie Femme. When I heard Elena sing a song she wrote titled "Beautiful Spirit" I cried. Elena and Tash are also very caring and giving human beings and the world is richer because of them.

Elena and Bill also helped me on a short video of the Navajo-American War (on this site under the Education section) and a video on Peabody Coal.

The Navajo-American War video about the war from 1860-1868 documents the courage of Navajos who held out against the U.S. Cavalry until 1866. On September 1, 1866, Manuelito, a respected war leader of the Dine, who had held out for six years, surrendered with twenty-three warriors. They were all in rags, their bodies emaciated. They still wore leather bands on their wrists for protection from the slaps of the bowstrings but they had no bows or arrows. One of Manuelito's arms hung useless at his side from a wound. His fighting, along with the other war leaders of the Navajo, resulted in the U.S. – Navajo Treaty

of 1868 which established the Navajo Reservation in the homeland of the Navajos in the Four Corners Region, rather than having the Navajos forcibly removed to Oklahoma.

The Peabody Coal video is about the federal Indian trust responsibility as defined in the U.S. v. Navajo Nation coal leasing cases. In March 1984, the Navajo Nation requested that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) adjust the royalty rate of Peabody's Kayenta Coal Lease as negotiations regarding a royalty rate adjustment between the Navajo Nation and Peabody had not been successful. The Peabody Coal Lease Amendment approved December 14, 1987, set the royalty rate at 12.5%; not the BIA's Area Director's recommendation of 20.0% which resulted in alleged damages of Six Hundred Million Dollars to the Navajo Nation.

It is an honor to work with Bill and Wanda. Rob Amason, Judy Bell and Don Wetzel, Jr. also helped in designing this site. They each manifest the respect and dignity for all peoples that are the foundation of The Native American Holocaust Museum.