

## 1994 Tekakwitha Conference Aug. 4-8 in Bemidji, Minn.

What a nicer and more appropriate place to hold the Conference than at Bemidji, Minn., by Lake Bemidji, close to the giant statue of Paul Bunyan, on the 75th anniversary of the

were again performed, as the Peace Piper Ceremony on the opening night, by Deacon Don Goodwin, Objibwa.

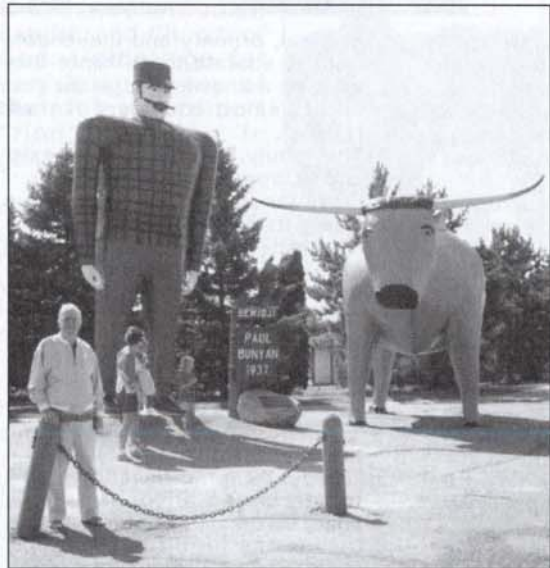
Nothing is as colorful as the grand entry if not the closing pow-wow. Around 75 banners representing the 87 adult Kateri Circles of the U.S. paraded in the auditorium followed by delegates from so many reservations, all in their native garbs.

All the groups were introduced and applauded while they walked around the Memorial Hall. You could feel the warming up of hearts...

They all passed in front of the special altar put up to Kateri by Mrs Mary Boni, which reminds us that this is the Tekakwitha

Conference, under the auspices of Blessed Kateri.

Some of the addresses and workshops drew many listeners, like that of Joe Potter, Objibwa, on "Welness and Spirituality." He quoted from his own experience, when he was close and away from God. he said how spirituality should permeate our whole being and not only be a varnish on oneself. Faith should make one with your customs and traditions. Religion is more than a treatise of concepts. It is a life



The Vice-Postulator and Paul Bunyan and him us.

University. Not far from there is the mouth of the Mississippi in the Itasca State Park and two well-organized reservations: Red Lake and Leech Lake. And the hospitality and warmth of the Cheepawa Indians were great.

The theme of the conference, "Living Water/Source of Peace"/Renewal of Creation," was a rich source of meditation during the welcoming ceremony, the sunrise ceremonies and the Eucharists celebrated with fine homilies. Of course, rites of native inspiration

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which becomes part of your own spirit."

The updating of Kateri's Cause by the two Vice-Postulators seemed to have stirred interest, because on the last day a resolution was passed by the Tekakwitha Conference Committee asking every Circle to sign a petition towards Kateri's canonization to be sent to the Pope.

The signatures are on their way to Rome, hoping that the Holy Spirit will inspire the authorities in Rome to declare publicly that Kateri is a saint soon.

Once more, brothers and sisters from the four corners of America met. "How good and

pleasant it is to be together..." especially when our two Native Bishops, Bishop C. Chaput and Bishop Donald Pelotte are with us.

The grandiose celebration with them, Saturday afternoon, reminded us of the solidarity that Kateri creates among us.

Everyone went home Sunday morning renewed interiorly more alive for having come closer to Blessed Kateri and full of peace for having been instruments of peace with everyone.

Till we meet again, Segon!

*Jacques Bruyère, S.J.*



Some banners of the entry parade.