

There's two kinds of altars. In the winter time they have a low moon, cause it throws heat. Summertime when it's hot, they dig in about four or five inches and put that fire down in the ground where it won't throw too much heat and they also use about three or four different kinds of wood. Now the best wood they used to use is this mesquite, and these redbuds, and elm--white elm. Not red elm. Difference between red elm and white elm is red elm pops. Sounds like a fire-cracker. Whereby white elm don't pop. On once in a while there might be some work in there and it pops. You notice the kind of wood they use--the one we use now is Chinese elm.

Once in a while it'll spark. But you take red elm and some other wood--that cotton-wood--they don't use cottonwood because it don't make coals. I'm just telling you the woods and their uses what has to do with religion. They use these coals--like this oak and elm--it's got coals. Retains that heat, especially in wintertime. And they also put it in the drum--charcoal inside the drum.

PEYOTE DRUM:

(Why do they put it in the drum?)

To keep that water from running through too fast. It's like, if you don't that water just runs out, and before you know it your drum be out of water. It comes out of the buckskin.

(I noticed the other night that every now and then a man would pick the drum up and it looked like maybe he was getting water through the buckskin. What is that?)

Well, it is, you know. Sometime when you beat that buckskin it sinks in. It ain't got no--too much pressure. The buckskin is too--I don't know--it's new. Sometimes they punch hole in it. And if they ain't got no hole they'll blow through there and bring that hide up even with the kettle. As long as that hide stays even with the kettle, the sound's good. But you take one that sinks in, it ain't got no sound in it. So therefore, they'll blow on that drum and bring that back out.

(Are they blowing on it or sucking on it?)

Both. But I do that because my mouth gets dry, you know, from eating peyote. I'll just take a swallow or two of that hide and then blow back in--blow that pressure back in there. Because when you suck that out, you naturally sink it in. And when you take a drink out of it, and then blow it back in there, it keeps that pushed up.