

Bob Brown, 62; Cultural Preservationist Led Dakota Group

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Bob Brown, 62, an American Indian cultural preservationist who led the Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota community, died Friday in St. Paul, Minn., after heart bypass surgery.

Brown was born in 1941 in Mendota, Minn., and moved to Minneapolis as a child. He painted houses for 38 years until the Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota community was organized in 1996. Brown became the first chairman of the 280-member Dakota group.

He studied the Dakota language throughout his life and for the last four years held a traditional powwow in Mendota Heights every August.

Among the sites Brown sought to protect were four oak trees and a spring he believed figured strongly in Dakota history.

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