



Happy Summer Everyone!

We are experiencing strange beautiful days as we approach our ceremonial season. The summer solstice or longest day actually lasts from June 19 - June 21, 2020 this year. The winter solstice or shortest day of the year lasts for seven days from December 18 – December 24, 2020. How long has it been for some of us urbanites since we went into quiet, prayerful contemplation...seeking a vision alone on a mountain top; and dancing with our relatives on the plains.

Pipe, Chief Arvol Looking Horse together with Gandhi's daughter declared that day in 1990 in South Africa. Canada declared it National Aboriginal Day in 1997. AND then suddenly everything took off! I remember Red Road had their Akicita program going on, and we did the first tipi village on the legislative grounds June 21, 2000. We borrowed a tipi from Fort Edmonton (that I had actually painted a black horse on and worked out of as a historical interpreter with two older Cree ladies whose daughters work there now...I think it has been repainted another design and color...no black...I digress), borrowed a tipi from the Friendship Center, and the Native Seniors Center...and one more to have the tipis in the 4 directions. Someone who had helped set up Red Road had gone on to develop their own business which entailed having a semi truck. They cut 103 lodgepole pine trees for us in Saskatchewan and hauled them to Red Road; and the Akicita peeled the poles with draw knives!!! However; after the celebration was over, we never saw our tipi poles again. In the meantime, we managed to make our own tipi (through an Elder who heard we might lose our funding one year; and suggested we do a deal with Elk Island Park who had canvas and wanted four? Tipis..can't remember exactly how many ...anyway, they would pay us \$700.00 per tipi and any left over canvas we could have...so we had an industrial sewing machine and that is all we did amidst serving clients was sew tipis...Red Road was in trailers then, and there was canvas everywhere...we had fun...my sisters in spirit helped then; Deanna Tootoosis Wuttunee and Peggy Attatahak Richardson...the upshot was there was enough canvas left over to make a tipi for Red Road) which we still have though it is showing signs of wear...AND; we finally have a place to store our tipi poles...

So for 20 years, June 21, became a very public celebration for our urban Indigenous; whereas twenty years earlier it had always been a time of reflection and prayer.

Interesting times as we move through the pandemic, racial unrest, turbulent weather and general social upheaval. Even more reason to PAUSE and hit the RESET button. I remember when Russel Means was up here at the university talking about water, Canada, and our renewal coming from the north...I believe it was 1993, right about the time of Gustafson Lake...he mentioned that he needed to

recycle his own life as much as recycling needed to be done on the Earth...personally, I look forward to going into that peaceful time of prayer, reflection and enjoying this beautiful Earth....in the places I have been in the last few weeks, I have noticed increased tension with people...tempers flaring....it makes me all the more conscious of my own moods...and whether I am reconciling within myself...never mind anyone else...then life shifts again and the beauty returns of the birds, the flowers, the green...the gentleness of Mother Earth...my kzillion marigolds getting ready to bloom along with nasturtiums, sweet peas, sunflowers and other plants started from seeds...simple joys to be celebrated...

Red Road has the go ahead to open more fully on Friday; the beginning of the solstice; however, we will be social distancing, minimizing client intake; that is, one person at a time, requiring that people wear masks which we have on hand; our 12 step meetings Monday and Wednesday will be outside when the weather is warm; and in room 131 when it is raining; crafting will also be in that room on Thursdays; Health For Two on Tuesdays; legal services, counselling and therapy, will be first come first serve and by appointment, home visitation, in home family support, outreach, parent education and Indigenous family cultural support is available at the HUB and with our partnering spokes. Please call in for those needs....also Food Mondays either room 131 or outside...take advantage of all the Indigenous service that is currently available...there is a registration procedure with Red Road...if you are not registered, please come in and get registered...and register at Yellowhead Tribal College and or The Learning Centre for literacy at the same time if those are some of your goals...applications are free and there are ways and means to get laptops and tablets...AND Yellowhead Tribal Council is at 17304-105<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor...I got the address wrong on my last communique for food availability

As I have stated many times THE ORANGE HUB (TOH) has great synergy...people love to help...its mostly a Paddington type world...not really...but sometimes...

Please let us know how we can help if you are struggling or just want to chat...

Stay well my relatives...so those around you may be well too!! ODAT

Mitakuye Oyasin

Joanne Lethbridge Pompana

THE RED ROAD HEALING SOCIETY

PS Red Road did not do a calendar this month as notice for a safe opening to deliver programs and services was still a mystery. July 2 is the official opening date from the premier so look for our summer calendar coming out next week. JLP