

Blessings to everyone during this Covid 19 spring! Special prayers for those in the North!

Did you know that the new Bond girl's name is supposed to be Pandemic? I believe the story and film, *No Time to Die* was put together long before this outbreak; although, it does make one wonder....what are we doing on this planet???

Since we are on the eve of Beltane, May Day; (an Indigenous Gael – Scots, Irish and Welsh ceremony); who in fact, share blood memory with many of our First Nations, Inuit and Metis of North America, (and other parts of the Indigenous world); we can look forward to that richness of *LIFE*, from Mother Earth. That cleansing of the spirit, as we pass our livestock (along with ourselves and other things), through the Beltane fires; and partake in the Beltane ceremony. Our Pte Oyate, *Kiwani Owapi* and *Welcoming the Thunder* ceremonies have similarities; inciting *our consciousness* to be awake, and aware, of the above and below. The beauty and richness of *Mahpiyato* and *Maka Ina*.

The other day I was returning on the Anthony Henday from visiting some relatives at Evergreen Memorial. The sky was amazing...a storm was coming, and the rain fell...I thought no one on Earth can duplicate that beauty on canvas; or mimic the sound of the hundreds of cranes that I had heard earlier; trilling and twerping... way-way-way-waaayyyy... up in the sky! We are so blessed!! For our *Pte Oyate*, this is when the warm winds of summer are coming!

Personally, it also makes me think of herbs; and particularly, the simple marigold flower, that I plant and harvest every year. Did you know that after one marigold dies in the autumn, and then, dries out over the winter; that by spring, when you lightly crush that dried marigold flower between your thumb and forefinger; that about 30 tiny seedlings result, which you can then sprinkle in a new flowerpot and lightly cover with soil. Water sparingly, and before you know it you have a zillion marigolds, so bright and lovely! AND you can make marigold buns with the flowers...I digress!!

The point being; we are given back *more than tenfold*, when we *conscientiously sew seeds of spirit* inside and outside ourselves. Reflecting on the earth, and its continual bounty provided to *us*; and *for us*; FOR FREE, helps us understand, that we are *somewhat* responsible, through the choices we make; in building our spiritual immune system, and sociocultural well-being. AND; that taking this time with the earth and the sky, is in fact; *very beneficial* to our souls. Covid 19 has caused the *whole planet* to *pause and reflect*:

How are *we*, and *all our relatives*, *living this life*? What is *really* important? *Who* is important? *Where* is important? *Why* is it important?

How do we reconcile all these thoughts and images in our minds? On my personal reflection, I have turned to spiritual music like *Rocky Mountain High and Annie's Song* by John Denver, a native man, who did spend time around Jasper, Alberta years ago. My Star Sister Ruth met him then; she had lived in Jasper most of her life.

For our global Indigenous people, (without trying to sound too pompous), many of us see this pandemic time as an opportunity for the rest of humanity, to get to see why our *relationship* to the land is so important. Why the conducting of our ceremonies is vital to our spiritual well-being; the seasons of our life. AND; how it helps us to remember, restore and renew inside and outside ourselves; from one generation to another; to forever return, to the *Mitakuye Oyasin*, conceptual understanding, with our Creator, *Wakan Tanka*.

On a trilling note, Red Road is excited to share that The Red Road Healing Society at The Orange Hub (TOH) was not cut from Children's Services Early Intervention Program; and that we are now the:

RED ROAD

INDIGENOUS WEST HUB

together with

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SPOKES OF SERVICE

Early Childhood Development

Family Supports (from Metis Child and Family Services MCFS)

Home Visitation (from Ben Calf Robe BCR)

Indigenous Cultural Supports (to Family Futures)

Outreach

Parent Education

Youth Supports (from Bent Arrow)

Needless to say, we are delighted to see our programs and services continue to grow and expand. Friends of Bill W and Friends of Lois W Nooners are particularly well attended. People often go from these programs to other services in the agency and the community. Such as; longhouse, literacy, baby bonding, beading, ceremony, counselling, crafting, food, health for two, legal services, outreach, referrals, sewing, storytelling, therapy and our seasonal events; (our Kiwani Owapi cancelled this year as it was the day of the mass Covid 19 shutdown).

AND; on that note, during this pandemic, we need to share what services are *currently* available and where. THE ORANGE HUB, being a city facility, is shut down at this time to the public until the Premier and the Mayor decide otherwise; however, we are doing what we can to get people the services they need online, through our partners, and by telephone.

RED ROAD SERVICES

Closed Hampers – through our Edmonton Food Bank partners, you can telephone us and we will record all your information required by the Edmonton Food Bank, email it to them, there is approximately a 48 hour turn around, then they call us and a helper picks up and delivers to your place of residence.

Counselling – limited counselling is done over the phone and at some sites; such as the Indigenous veterans residence, that has a sterile room that can be used. MCFS also has such a room for counselling during the Covid pandemic.

Outreach – we have an outreach worker who will provide some services maintaining social distancing AND there is always one person at the Red Road office to take messages, provide referrals and to do letters, and some applications for people over the phone or through email

RED ROAD CONTACT

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OTHER SERVICES AVAILABLE

Bissell- Limited Drop In Services; though still available at their downtown location and at the EXPO center.

Ben Calf Robe – is doing modified home visitation and has a sterile room to meet participants in with maintenance of social distancing.

Bent Arrow – has limited services by phone and online. They are also taking closed hamper orders and delivering to residents.

Boyle Street – has limited Drop In Services; though still available at their downtown location and at the EXPO center.

EXPO Center – this is the old agricom building on the exhibition grounds 7515-118 Avenue This is the central location for all critical services in Edmonton; isolation for those with virus, housing services, tax services, medical, food-Boyle and Bissell are located here as well.

Family Futures (Spoke Partner) – Parents go onto the Family Futures website!!! They have amazing virtual parenting programs and ideas that are updated every week. Covid 19 could go on forever with this techy facility; AND, this is very useful going forward, for those who are more isolated; have transportation and other barrier issues.

Jasper Place Wellness- This is a west location for all critical services in west Edmonton; housing services, tax services, medical, food.

Metis Child and Family Services – MCFS is providing family support and other services. They have a sterilized room for meeting with correct social distancing to provide services for families.

West End Boys and Girls Club – 16030 – 104 Avenue has food and other services for youth with correct social distancing.

West End Outreach – 10105 – 153 Street has bag lunches every day and other services.

Yellowhead Tribal Council – 17304 – 105 Avenue location has food program.

Yellowhead Tribal College – located in THE ORANGE HUB is doing online registration and courses.

Mitakuye Oyasin!

Joanne Lethbridge Pompana, Director, Lawyer, Mediator

THE RED ROAD HEALING SOCIETY

Please be patient with us as we develop our You Tube and other Virtual networks. Please see our May 2020 Calendar on www.redroadjourney.ca and facebook; and join us for some of these programs and events when the Covid19 is clear!

Sleep tight and don't let the Covids bite!

Please join me in Covid word play!