

# RED WIND COUNCILS

"Spiritual consciousness is the highest form of politics. This is the only enduring way to truly touch and serve the heart of the People."

—Ohki Siminé Forest



Issue #3 Volume #1

Holiday, 2007

## SHARE A GIFT OF HOPE WITH MAYA CHILDREN

During this holiday season, Red Wind Councils warmly invites you to join with us in extending to the children of the Maya lands of Chiapas our Circle of giving and receiving. As adults we rediscover the magic and abundance of the holidays that we so loved as children through giving to our own children and to those of our family and friends. We are also blessed with the opportunity to experience the joy of giving to those whose lives are less materially rich than our own.

At a time of year when we celebrate such abundance in our own lives we feel even more poignantly the deprivations of others. When we think of the Christmas that most North American children experience, with a sea of presents under the tree, a warm home, a table laden with food for the holiday meal, and compare it with the celebration that the Maya children experience, simple homemade altars, no toys, and the meager fare of little more than the usual daily beans, tortilla, and coffee, the contrast is stark. The next day, these children return to their daily round of work for bare subsistence. Truly these children cannot be said to have a childhood in any sense that we would recognize it. They are the inheritors of a legacy of bigotry, exploitation, and actual slavery, and their lives reflect this painful reality.

### THE LIVES OF THE CHILDREN

Recently the Red Wind Councils Board of Directors asked members of the Chiapas Council to share stories about their own children and child-

hoods so that we could pass these along to you. Here is what they would like to share with you.



Against the backdrop of the incredibly lovely and resource-rich lands of Chiapas, the lives of these beautiful yet vulnerable children are filled with poverty and lack. Many children die young, often victims of curable diseases that go untreated due to lack of access to healthcare and to the inability of their families to pay for any healthcare even when it is available. They are often poorly nourished and from an early age must help their parents eke out a living rather than going to school and receiving an education.

In the cities, the little boys and girls of poor backgrounds have no other choice than to ask for a few pesos at the traffic lights, disguising themselves as clowns, shining shoes in the parks, or selling cheap crafts and chewing gum in the streets. There they are exposed to all sorts of dangers and abuses. Many are stolen, or forced into child prostitution in Mexico, a country with one of the highest child prostitution rates in the world.

Tragically, in the rural communities children are asked to help their parents spray the sacred corn with DDT and other toxins outlawed in the US, exposing their health at such a young age to these potent poisons.

While it is rare for boys to have any schooling, it is even rarer for the girls.

### Donations To Red Wind Councils

Your donation to RED WIND COUNCILS goes directly to support spiritual, social, cultural and economic project development, emergency relief funds, and operating expenses for the RED WIND centers in Chiapas, Mexico.

Donations can take the form of general donations, **monthly pledges** which are most stabilizing, or contributions to our permanent endowment fund.

#### SEND DONATIONS TO: RED WIND COUNCILS

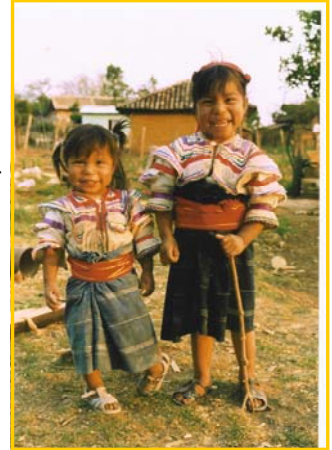
P.O. Box 15  
Maynard, MA 01754

Tax ID#: 20-3633955

Red Wind Councils, Inc. is a U.S. non-profit organization. Your contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law.

They are expected to help their mothers with childcare, food preparation, and all the many responsibilities of the women in the home

and in the fields. Four- and five-year-old girls must begin to carry their heavy (for them) one-year-old siblings on their backs. They work hard alongside their mothers in the corn fields, planting, cultivating, and harvesting;



daily they fetch the family's water and firewood. They prepare all the community's food, wash all the clothes, clean everything from the houses to the latrines, take care of the animals and raise the children. Little girls do all these things with their mothers to prepare them one day for their role as women.

In the brief times when the children aren't working to help their mothers with the daily chores, they exercise their imaginations creating toys: a bottle becomes a horse, an empty sardine can becomes a little car, with a few sticks and seeds from the earth a pig is created. Otherwise, their only "toys" are machetes to chop firewood, buckets to haul water, and tools to till the earth for their family's food.

As agrarian and simple as these children's lives are, they still live in a world of media. As more of the rural communities receive electricity, and television becomes more available, ironically their problems become even more acute. Now the young children see what is available to the richer classes. This creates a lot of emotional maladjustments and shame, making them feel even poorer, envious, or powerless. These

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call: (978) 897-6463

Visit our website:

[www.redwindcouncils.org](http://www.redwindcouncils.org)

Email:

[pathways@redwindcouncils.org](mailto:pathways@redwindcouncils.org)

children's spirits are wounded with the knowledge of the injustices that they are the victims of, and often internalize these wounds with feelings of worthlessness and passivity.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

Fortunately it is within our power to help the children of a people who are in resistance to the exploitation and degradation of their past and are working hard to ensure a dignified future for their children. **This holiday season, Red Wind Councils, in partnership with indigenous communities in Chiapas and volunteers in North America, are able to offer these ways you can help.**

### 1) MAKE A DONATION OF HOPE FOR THE MAYA CHILDREN.

Many of us in the US have begun giving donations to organizations in the name of those whom we wish to gift but who already enjoy many material goods. For those on your list who already have all that they need, a donation to Red Wind Councils is a meaningful and impacting gift. The following will give you an idea of the good just a few dollars can do:

*\$15 buys a child a toy and school supplies*

*\$25 buys a child a toy, school supplies, and a pair of shoes*

*\$35 buys a child a toy, school supplies, a pair of shoes, and a sweater*

*\$50 buys a child a toy, school supplies, a pair of shoes, a sweater, and a chicken for Christmas dinner*

*\$100 buys all these things plus a complete Christmas dinner for the whole family*

*(Substitutions may be made at the discretion of Red Wind Councils)*



This is another way that your desire to give can help to move us along the path to a better world.

**2) BECOME A MONTHLY PLEDGER.** The work of Red Wind Councils is vital and ongoing. Please visit our website at [redwindcouncils.org](http://redwindcouncils.org) to see for yourself the many life-sustaining projects we collaborate in with the Maya people of Chiapas. These specifically chosen projects are designed to become self-sustaining, and are undertaken with communities that have proven their dedication and follow-through. The Maya people themselves are the lead developers of each project; this offers each participant the possibility of a truly digni-

## TO MAKE A DONATION OR PLEDGE

**MAIL: REDWIND COUNCILS  
PO BOX 15  
MAYNARD, MA 01754**

**EMAIL: [pathways@redwindcouncils.org](mailto:pathways@redwindcouncils.org)**

**PHONE: (978) 897-6364**

fied future.

By pledging, you become a vital member of a community of healing, hope, and dignity. Monthly Pledgers provide the stable foundation for Red Wind Councils' ongoing projects. Taking action every month to write a check and demonstrate to these loving, intelligent, and hard-working people that they are indeed not alone and not forgotten brings a measure of balance and healing to us as well. A gift of even \$25 per month saves lives and involves you in a Circle of caring whose benefits are immeasurable.

**3) During the weeks before the holidays ATTEND MAYA CRAFT SALES in New England and New Mexico** where you can purchase the exquisite fair trade crafts made by the Maya families who are recuperating their cultural heritage through reviving ancient patterns of weaving, embroidery, and beadwork. As you shop for your holiday gifts, please consider choosing these crafts as a way of sharing their beauty and artistry with your family and friends while giving hope, appreciation, and much-needed funds to the indigenous communities of Chiapas. Because the US sponsors for these Red Wind Councils

## CRAFT SALES

### New Mexico

Sat, Dec. 1, 2007—Tropic of Capricorn  
86 Old Las Vegas Highway  
Santa Fe, NM  
[www.tropicofcapricorn santafe.com](http://www.tropicofcapricorn santafe.com)

10AM-4PM Maya Craft Sale

11AM & 2 PM Talk:

**GIVING HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS:**  
How the Maya of Chiapas are Saving the World

Contact: Patricia Worth  
(505) 429-0529

### New England

Wed, Nov. 28, 2007—Boston College  
11AM-3PM Maya Craft Sale  
McElroy Commons—First Floor  
In front of the Boston College Bookstore  
Beacon Street near College Road

Contact: Mary Jo Fernandez  
(978) 897-6463

Fair Trade Maya Crafts are also for sale by appointment.

Maya craft events are all volunteers, 100% of the proceeds from the sales can return directly to the Maya families to provide some extra holiday funds.



20 years ago, these amazing crafts were dying. Women, burdened by already impossible lives, had no time to create their traditional weavings, embroideries and jewelry, and no money to purchase supplies. Corn grinders, and other Red Wind projects such as craft cooperatives have opened possibilities for them to recuperate their cultural heritage.

See the 'Craft Sales' box for days and times of these craft events.

### What has Red Wind Councils, with your support, accomplished so far?

- The Indigenous Councils chose self-sustaining projects including:
  - Local school to educate their girls & boys
  - Corn grinders that dramatically change the women's work, and open the possibility of crafts and other income generating activities
  - Training health, education and agriculture promoters—members of their own communities—to bring back needed knowledge to the community
  - Community stores to provide ongoing income
  - Water sources, to provide reliable safe access to this essential resource.
  - The Emergency Fund that provides life saving medical care when serious illness strikes
  - Women's Cooperative to provide more opportunities for women through coffee growing, crafts, sewing, weaving and embroidery projects

### What will your support be used for this year?

- Purchase school supplies—books, pencils, notebooks
- Purchase shoes and clothing for the children
- Continue the training of promoters
- Construct local micro-clinics and purchase medicines
- Other projects decided by the people
- Continue the Emergency Healthcare Fund

## THE RED WIND DIFFERENCE

Those of us who have visited Chiapas meet warm, intelligent, and generous people. They have so little yet they share so much with us, often feeding us their only remaining food. They make the most of the donations they receive—almost more than is possible to believe. And they remember our faces for years.

We ask you to please join with us in these efforts of community-supported international relations and donate in any way you can this holiday season.

## SHARE A GIFT OF HOPE WITH MAYA CHILDREN:

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**I wish to contribute the following:**

| QTY.  | AMOUNT   | Total      |
|-------|----------|------------|
| ___ @ | \$15.00  | = \$ _____ |
| ___ @ | \$25.00  | = \$ _____ |
| ___ @ | \$35.00  | = \$ _____ |
| ___ @ | \$50.00  | = \$ _____ |
| ___ @ | \$100.00 | = \$ _____ |
| ___ @ | \$ _____ | = \$ _____ |

Grand Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make my contribution in the name(s) of:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**I wish to pledge** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ months.

**SEND DONATION OR PLEDGE TO:**

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MAYNARD, MA 01754**