



Red Wind Councils

Spiritual & social awakening through indigenous restitution

~ Thanksgiving Newsletter 2013 ~

Renewal of Maya Traditions & the Dignity of the Feminine

Dear friends & supporters of Red Wind Councils,

This new era in 2013 is requiring people everywhere to have greater awareness of & more responsibility for moving beyond personal & collective limitations, & it is increasing concerns about the impacts of modern ways of life on the ecological balance of Mother Earth.

As the ancient Maya foretold, old paradigms, rigid institutions, & economic structures everywhere are falling apart under the weight of their arrogance & lack of roots in the sanity of Earth's dream. Meanwhile, the people closest to the Earth, of which the Maya are visionary modern leaders, continue to hold out to the world their profound, ancient wisdom, strength, & hope.

This Thanksgiving, Red Wind & I would like to share a special, true story of a young Maya indigenous activist woman who I am most fortunate to personally know. She has devoted her life to & serves, with us, the Maya people that we have been privileged to work with for 30 years in Chiapas, Mexico.



We sincerely hope your hearts are touched to donate this holiday season to support your Maya brothers & sisters who have shared so generously with the world their amazing, millenary prophecies of hope, ancient teachings, & their actual, tremendous model of resilience & illumined consciousness in the face of the many terrible abuses affecting us all on this planet today.

Wishing you & your loved ones the full abundance of our beloved sacred Earth's dreaming in her timeless wisdom,
Ohki Siminé Forest for Red Wind Councils

Save the Date ~ April 21—May 25, 2013

Red Wind is pleased to announce that Ohki Siminé Forest will be offering teaching seminars, drum circles, private sessions, Limpias & ceremonies in the US this spring.

To learn more visit: www.ohkisimineforest.com/events/

Donations to Red Wind Councils:

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

SEND DONATIONS TO:

RED WIND COUNCILS

P.O. Box 85

Uxbridge, MA 01569

www.redwindcouncils.org
(978) 633-7388

Your contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law.
Tax ID#: 20-3633955

Website Renewal

Red Wind Councils & Ohki Siminé Forest are very pleased to announce the recent rebirth of our 2 websites. Please take a look at the info on the Red Wind Centers of Chiapas, Ohki's teachings, our vision, & project plans through beautiful photos from Amalia, Ohki's daughter.

www.redwindcouncils.org
www.ohkisimineforest.com



You can now follow
Red Wind & Ohki
on Facebook & Twitter at



Red Wind Councils & Ohki Simine Forest

Sparkling Dreams to Life:

For over 520 years, it has been too painful for the Maya to dream of a better future. Without any resources whatsoever, it was impossible for them to even think they could improve their lives. But the work of Red Wind Councils for the last 30 years has brought many inspiring opportunities for the people to express themselves & sparked life into dreams that have been so often frustrated. We share a common desire to change an oppressed mind-set born of 520 years of repression, a mind-set that has instilled deep feelings of inferiority & lethargy. We at Red Wind believe in the inherent strength & spirit of the people. Our focus with the Maya encourages greater self-confidence & an experience of unity through the recovery of their traditional spiritual ways. Through spiritual, educational, cultural & social projects, we create islands of sanity, & egalitarian alliances with the people to help them revive their traditional ways before they are lost.



Islands of Sanity sustained over 25 years:

The spiritual Medicine Centers in Chiapas, created by Ohki Siminé Forest (www.ohkisimineforest.com), have, over the past 2 decades, served the spiritual, cultural & practical needs of Maya indigenous & international students. These Medicine Centers are the heart of the Councils in Chiapas & the U.S., the strong central fire that supports mature awareness & spiritual growth. The living models of Council Ways at these Centers are deeply rooted in the dreaming of Mother Earth & her Medicine Wheel ways. The beauty, power & healing emanating from Chiapas, considered the 3rd eye of the Americas, make these Centers crucial locations for the awakening of consciousness & expansion of indigenous vision so needed in our world today.

For 30 years, Red Wind Social Projects have included:

- Medicine Center Support: Operating expenses, staff employment, renovations, vegetable greenhouse & flower garden projects for the Centers where people come for healing, spiritual renewal & to learn more about the vast legacy of Native wisdom.



- Women's Development: Sewing, weaving, embroidery, bread making & corn mills, literacy employment, family planning

- Healthcare Development: Funding for emergency medicines & surgeries, food & transportation subsidies for local volunteer health promoters, building & supplying local pharmacies & clinics

- Educational Development: Building materials for alternative schools, school supplies, food & transportation subsidies for local volunteer educators, shoes & lunches for the children

- General Community Development: Water systems, solar systems, communication systems, community meeting buildings, community stores, community transportation solutions, Fogon wood-saving stoves, organic farming, greenhouses & other ecological efforts

- Urban project: Providing Hope & Skills for Urban Maya Youth. A program that provides culturally respectful education, decent work, legal protection & healthcare to Native children & teenagers who are homeless & exposed to domestic violence, sex trafficking & drugs.



Christmas for Indigenous Children in the Highlands of Chiapas

Christmas in rural Chiapas is primarily a religious holiday. Christmas Eve is celebrated as "Noche Buena," the Good Night. Late into the night among the hills, indigenous pilgrims walk singing & drumming to visit the local manger scene. Christmas Day is a time of family celebration, & while the richer Mexican mestizos feast on chicken mole & chile rellenos, for the majority of indigenous, their feast is a simple chicken soup, if they have chicken. In the majority of families, they share the same bean & tortilla meals as all year long but with maybe a little twist of simple, corn tamales.

Yet, all the indigenous children are excited with the festival atmosphere. Little do they know that for so many in this world it is a time of giving & receiving presents. But this year, we at Red Wind Councils want to give them what they wish for Christmas.

- Carlos (10) asks for shoes for himself & his 8 siblings.
- Little Angelita (3) wants a new chicken "so there will be eggs for mamá"
- Juan is a sturdy boy (4)--he wants a machete so "he can help in the fields"
- Maria (6) wants notebooks for herself & her 3 older sisters, who now all go to the local community alternative school, & "some extra tortillas for everyone."



These amazing kids all want something that impacts those they love--they all think about their families & community, not just themselves. As a part of your Christmas, please help them fulfill their dreams of a better tomorrow for all & donate generously!

Please read Ana Maria's story & find in her the same voice & potential that is innate in every one of these heart-breaking indigenous children's beauty & innocence, struggling hard for a bit of the decency & opportunity we all have & often take so much for granted in the Global North.

Ana Maria: A rising voice for healing, dignity, & justice for women & children

When you are introduced to Ana Maria, her fiery, clear eyes see through you. They are eyes that have seen much & are not easily deceived. Those eyes are much older than her young face. Yet she laughs easily, contagiously. You cannot help but feel her inspiring dignity, her outstanding strength.

Ana Maria was the 8th of 9 children from a family of impoverished Maya farmers. Her mother was sickly & died when she was barely 2 years old. Her father was alcoholic, one of the terrible, widespread diseases of the conquered & oppressed indigenous. She was raised with abuse, fear & hunger. In her early years, the machismo & poverty of the community prevented much intervention by her extended family. Her aunts tried to offer support. There was no possibility of government aid, no schooling.

She married at 13 years of age to get away, but her husband's family was also deeply traumatized & impoverished. Despite her attempts to grow corn & care for her new in-laws, her husband became verbally & physi-



Ana Maria's story; continued

cally abusive. She starved during her first pregnancy, the son was sickly & died when only 5 weeks old of preventable diarrhea. She also nearly died & while recovering, too weak to even help in the house, her husband forced her out, calling her useless.

Homeless, Ana says that this is when the fortune of her life changed. She was then welcomed into the home of one of her aunts. This aunt's community has declared themselves in resistance against governmental abuses. Along with so many other Mayas, the people are seeking to regain their dignity & autonomy after 500 years of brutal conquest & extreme marginalization. In the face of constant low-intensity warfare from the government, this community, like so many others, has made a clear stand to refuse government handouts & control.

Close to death from illness & grief, Ana Maria discovered with great interest a profound inspiration in the community meetings. There she learned about human rights, indigenous & women's dignity, & the basic laws of women & children's protection that the rebel Maya women had written into their constitution in 1994. She learned that, at last, she is of vital worth as a woman, & that she can have a strong voice that can directly change others' lives. When she understood that her small story is a part of the greater society's illness & that her healing is not just for herself, but for her people & the coming generations, she irrevocably chose then to live & struggle until the end to improve the lives of other women, men & children of her community.

Like all rural women, she is rarely without something to do. During her long recovery, she improved her embroidery skills. When it became apparent to her family that she was a gifted artist, her work was shown to the crafts cooperative that Red Wind supports. Eventually, she became a main coordinator of the craft cooperatives, whose sales of the beautiful pieces the talented crafters make support many families of the communities.

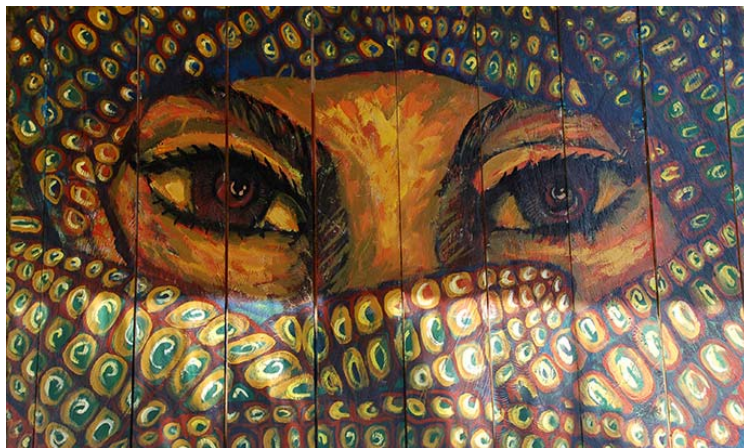
But Ana Maria's connection to Red Wind Councils proved life-saving not only because it gave her the opportunity to support herself & her community. She had never fully healed from the difficult birth of her child, & at age 19, she developed a severe abdominal abscess. She would have died without surgery paid for by the emergency medical fund, & lodging at the Centers that Red Wind provided. After recovering, she chose to become a health promoter & now works tirelessly to advance & protect the health of her community through teaching sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, & acting as an increasingly skilled healer.



Today, she also remains a strong voice in her community for women's rights, speaking to both men & women, confronting some of the difficult, machismo customs entrenched in the society. She encourages the young women to become educated & to learn skills. She has a vision of the future of her people, & knows the road to it requires the courage of all people around the world now to make change in a common vision. She receives this motivating vision from the Earth, & shares it so generously with us all.

She, like so many like her in this new indigenous movement of to transform & heal the first wound of the Americas, needs our help. If we are to support Ana Maria's efforts, Red Wind needs your generous contributions to weave a web of powerful changes & re-create altogether the sacred Earth's dream for a better world - here, now, on this planet.

We, at Red Wind Councils, extend to you our muchissimas gracias on behalf of our Maya brothers & sisters.



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