



Red Wind Councils

Spiritual & social awakening through indigenous restitution

Celebratory Thanksgiving & Holiday 2015 Newsletter

30th anniversary at Red Wind Councils! The Maya Hope for the World



We, at Red Wind Councils, have been so privileged to support Maya people in Chiapas in their ongoing struggle for life, dignity, peace & justice for the world. Contributions from hundreds of open-hearted people have helped sustain 30 years of life-saving projects with the indigenous.

Dear friends & supporters of Red Wind Councils,

I bring you heartfelt greetings from our Maya brothers & sisters in the highlands of Chiapas! We sincerely hope your year has been abundantly blessed. It is with tremendous excitement that I am announcing our 30th birthday at Red Wind Councils!

Our voluntary organization started in Chiapas in 1985 by Eliberto (www.redwindcouncils.org/home) & myself (www.redwindcouncils.org/home) stemmed from a growing awareness & deep desire to fulfill the many needs of truly impoverished Maya communities. At that point our spiritual vision was to bring

back ancient Native ceremonies to the indigenous of this area. For Eliberto & myself, life had also blessed us with sharing our ways in the USA, & as Natives ourselves, it was clear to us that we could not just be content with this new creative abundance in our lives without offering it to the very Native people we lived among, the Maya.

Even from the start it was obvious that Spirit was sustaining our passion & vision of this renewal of social, cultural & spiritual Native models of autonomy. Even in times of despair when we had not enough resources to feed the hungry & cure the sick, seeing young children dying & elderly people suffering with no medicines, there was always rescue around the corner; the way would always open somehow. This magical, yet real, red carpet unrolling in front of us to fulfill the vital needs of people gave us the immense hope & awareness that many Native prophecies were actually alive:

There truly exists a wind from below that is rising...a wind of hope in this world of utmost imbalances, a new yet ancient wind blowing from the very heart of the Earth, down here from the basement, raising from the hearts of people, from the very Spirit of Natives... It is there, under.... under the insanity of this world.... a wind which is not coming to smash down anyone anymore, but a wind, red, Native, protected by the Earth herself, a wind which has reversed itself from down up, a wind which loves & frees all... this powerful wind exists now, sustaining & bringing the call of the people of the color of the Earth to all those who place their humble hearts with them... you, me, us...

Even after 30 years of my close alliance with the Maya people, they continue to surprise me with their incredible resourcefulness, & their grounded yet enlightened solutions for social change & justice. Today their model of resistance continues to be a powerful well-spring of inspiration & hope for the world. I have been astonished over & over to watch their amazing courage & resilience at play in the most extreme situations with often no other resources than their inner wisdom. The Maya, oppressed for so long, most of them illiterate, suffering from malnutrition & living below the level of poverty show the same brilliance of their ancestors. With their key model of autonomy based on the great universal Wheel, they are the living embodiment of their remarkable prophecies for the Earth.

And, dearest friend, you are part of this. You have helped this wind to blow a new way, in the right direction for the world, in your own way with us, whether as a donor, whether as a participant in my circles, or whether someone put you on our mailing lists! You are with us. Thank you, thank you on behalf of the many Maya of Red Wind Councils.

I can only humbly & warmly invite you to celebrate in your hearts with me & read our 2015 Thanksgiving & Holiday newsletter. Join us in sharing what you can to support the courage & creative determination of the Maya in their struggle for justice & a better world for us all!

With my heartfelt muchissimas gracias,
Ohki Siminé Forest



A Bit of News from Chiapas

Many often ask us, at RWC, what is the news from the social justice struggle in Chiapas, it seems there is not much information in the media today.

The important changes in Chiapas since 1994's uprising have focused on the resilient work & visionary planning of the Maya people for strengthening indigenous communities in resistance. In the face of the constant threats of paramilitaries & government tactics to undermine their efforts, the people, thanks to their immense determination, have maintained, for over 2 decades, sustainable efforts in areas such as permaculture, natural medicines & Native education by creating a strong base of dignity & autonomy.

Important milestones the indigenous have realized more specifically this past year are:

- The creation of *Leadership universities* for indigenous to hold effective roles in guiding the people towards balanced & healthy communities.



- The *Education of younger generations* based on the preservation of Earth Mother for the protection & renewal of Native traditions.
- Direct application on a larger scale of *Gender equity* by encouraging women (young & old) to hold more roles at all levels in their communities & indigenous government.
- *Active & peaceful national manifestations* against transnational corporations which show up in the people's homelands unannounced & uninvited, to mine, drill oil wells, build highways, spread GMO seeds, profane sacred rivers with hydroelectric projects, & privatize ancestral & communal natural resources of water, land, minerals, oil, forests &

air. The Maya Natives are resisting these injustices to protect the people of the color of the Earth as a common front with all Native & non-Native peoples of Mexico & the world.



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Donation by check to: **Red Wind Councils**, P.O. Box 413, Littleton, MA 01460

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www.redwindcouncils.org & www.ohkisiminéforest.com



The Red Wind Centers of Chiapas



Over a thousand years ago, the ancient Maya predicted what they called the *Maya Return* for these times. This foretold the restoration of their social, cultural & spiritual ways in an unprecedented resurgence of their people after 500 years of terrible oppression. The great Serpent raising from the Earth since the Maya uprising has been felt, not only throughout Chiapas & Mexico, but in the 3 Americas & the entire world as a vast awakening of humanity's consciousness.

The Medicine Centers of Chiapas were born out of this ancient yet living Native vision. Held by Ohki Siminé Forest for the past 25 years in alliance with the Maya, the Centers have provided a vital source of inspiration to many indigenous in search of their ancestral ways. Sweat Lodge & Prayer Wheel ceremonies, Vision Quest preparations, Teachings & Drum circles for healing Mother Earth & all people are practiced at the Centers to enhance spiritual growth & learning, not only for the Maya & other indigenous, but for all people.



30 Years of Maya Accomplishments

From the beginning of our work with the Maya, we realized that we could not focus on one area only, the needs were everywhere & interconnected. For example, to help women in their craft projects, they needed a corn mill to ease the task of time-consuming tortilla making. For the indigenous to bring their organic produce to the market, they needed a truck. For the kids to use school supplies, they first needed a school building.

The simple farming & craft projects of our beginnings expanded to fulfill more & more needs. To help our work of organization with the Maya at all these new levels, we created democratic Councils based on the ancient circular model of the Medicine Wheel in every community. We respected how the people wanted to use the funds. We encouraged women & children to participate & create their own projects & circles.

Today, we are proud & honored to have accomplished with the Maya people so many life-giving changes in their quest to manifest a dignified life. Below you may read a summary of some of the main projects & areas we have created with them in the past 30 years. In the end, we, at Red Wind, consider ourselves simple instruments, for deep down we know that it is THEIR 30th anniversary of Maya determination & autonomy.

These busy 30 years have brought many profound changes to the Maya people we are privileged to serve. Where once 5 centuries of oppression & terrible poverty had crushed the hope & lives of an entire people, now children are taught to read & write in their own tongue, women's lives have improved dramatically, communities of people are dreaming & working together for a dignified future.

But perhaps even more so the Maya have changed us all.

From them we heard some of the most painful, tragic stories which touched us so deeply; we barely know of a Maya who did not have a traumatic childhood of extreme poverty, parent's alcoholism, abandonment, malnutrition & illnesses. Instead of play, their childhood was replaced at a very young age by the difficult necessity of taking on adult burdens of having to work for their family's survival. Despite that the Maya are a people who have been enslaved, tortured & marginalized by the world for so long, they have endured & they are returning to guide the world. They are reaching out today to us all for a new world filled with light, decision, truth & compassion. We also have learned from the Maya the highest spiritual values, how to move together as a true council, how to respect the community first, how to respect the elders & to care for the children. We have learned their values of resilience, wisdom, humility & love for our Mother Earth, how to live not only for ourselves but to support the lives of all, for we all are inter-related.

Let's join our Maya brothers & sisters to brighten this world all together at this larger Circle of Earth. We encourage those of you who have been blessed with material abundance & opportunity to share those gifts with the Maya. They have generously shared their spiritual & cultural knowledge which carries the answers & the solutions to heal humanity's problems & wounds. In these times of great upheaval, insanity & uncertainty, their legacy of powerful, ancestral wisdom has brought solid roots of hope & spiritual stability that the world needs today.

We also pray that for the next 30 years you will continue to stand with us in creating a community of hope, & a saner & more just world! For this Holiday season, we can only share with you the poignant image of the beautiful Maya children looking at us with their bright, shining eyes & receiving us with pure, sweet & natural laughs which melt all our hearts.

With our muchissimas gracias & warmest blessings,
Ohki, Amalia, Francisco, Eliberto, Pedro, Roberto, Chusi Maria & Ramon in Chiapas,
Patricia, Deborah, Rosa, Mary Jo & Nancy in the USA,
The Red Wind Councils Family



30 Years of Sustainable Projects

Women's Development:

- * Creation of *Craft projects* & successful *Women's cooperatives* with expanding markets outside Mexico.
- * Traditional *Bread making* project for women to create their own community funds.
- * Acquisition of *Corn mills* to reduce the time-consuming task of making tortillas & for women to be able to dedicate themselves to their crafts, & of *Fogon stoves* (a clean wood-saving, smoke-free stove) to reduce pulmonary & eye diseases in women, children & babies, the most affected in the traditional kitchens.



Educational development:

- * Building of 20 *alternative community schools* where people in resistance refuse the official educational program of Mexico City, & where hundreds of children can receive a primary & secondary education in their own Native tongue, education based on respect of Earth Mother & their indigenous view of the world.
- * Funds for *lunches & school supplies* in rural places where there are none.
- * Support for transportation of *Education promoters to their 3 years of training sessions & their basic sustenance*.
- * Help, through partnership with Mexican Urban NGOs, to *Urban Maya children* in dire situations, homeless in the streets & exposed to drugs & prostitution.

Nutritional Support:

- * Creation of dozens of *organic Farms* in rural communities based on an innovative model of animal husbandry, organic vegetables & fish tanks which recycles animal & vegetable waste as fertilizers & food for animals & fish.
- * We have built 15 *Greenhouses* in different communities. Located at the Red Wind Center of Chiapas, the Greenhouse project has become an important resource for the Maya to learn organic techniques of planting with natural pesticides & fertilizers adapted to their environment & climates.
- * Planting of several *thousands of Trees* (including fruit trees) for sustainable wood consumption, & restoring forests & the atmosphere.
- * Funding of *Agriculture promoters* to receive training & teach people in their villages about organic vegetable cultivation, an important effort to combat malnutrition through a more diverse diet for better health.
- * *Emergency Food Relief*; for the past 5 years due to climate changes, communities have suffered from devastating floods &/ or droughts that destroyed their main sustenance, corn & beans. Red Wind has provided several tons of corn & beans to feed affected people.

Medical Health Support:

- * We have built 12 *micro-clinics* & provided *basic medicines* in many communities comprised of thousands of indigenous where often people die of simple curable diseases.
- * We have created an *Emergency Medical Fund* & we tend to at least a dozen emergencies a year. Often left to die in the corridors of hospitals for simply being indigenous & having no funds to pay for private care, people seek our help with a variety of illnesses & injuries.
- * We have helped *Health promoters* to receive the training needed to tend to ill people in their villages where there are no clinics nor any health care.

Community Infrastructure Development:

- * Red Wind has provided support, expertise & funds for *community wells, cisterns, solar power, communication systems, transportation & trucks* for rural communities as well as *Community stores*.

Cultural projects:

- * Encouraging *Maya artists* to revive ancestral ways of art through paintings, murals, sculptures, millenary designs & theater plays, & the purchase of marimbas (music instrument) for the preservation of *traditional Maya music*.

Red Wind Medicine Centers:

- * There are 2 spiritual Centers in Chiapas, created & held by Ohki Siminé Forest, with a *treatment room, a Maya school, a model Greenhouse & a Medicine center* for the revival of ceremonies & traditional ways.
- * Ohki & her Council in Chiapas have worked with dozens of Maya medicine people to recover ancient forms of *healing & spiritual ceremonies*.

Donations to Red Wind Councils:

The Maya people face constant institutionalized discrimination & violent threats from paramilitaries, government soldiers & corporate interests. For them, the reality & hope of your understanding of their struggle & your heartfelt financial support is a vital & encouraging aspect of their determined & humble resistance to the injustices of this world.

*Red Wind is an entirely volunteer organization with less than 3% administrative costs;
100% your donations go directly to the indigenous.*

Please send your donations to: **Red Wind Councils**

P.O. Box 413, Littleton, MA 01460 / (978) 633-7388

Donate by credit card on our website with the **PayPal** button
www.redwindcouncils.org & www.ohkisimineforest.com

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