

Woman's Way
RED LODGE

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OUR COMMUNITY CALENDAR IS NOW ONLINE!

CLICK HERE <http://wwrl.org/Calendar.aspx>

Have an event to add? It is easy & fast. CLICK HERE.

<http://wwrl.org/CalendarWelcome.aspx>



Fall

Festival

FREE!

November 10, 2007
10:00 am to 8:30 pm

VFW HALL
3601 SW Alaska
West Seattle

Join our multicultural holiday celebration,
while supporting like-minded businesses...
a great way to shop for the holidays!
There will be a raffle with wonderful
prizes available throughout the day.

Contact Sarah at FallFestival@wwrl.org

Men, women and
children welcome!

www.wwrl.org

Local artist's crafts, jewelry, drums, rattles,
scarves & more plus food, music, drumming,
dancing and JOYOUS FUN! Check out the amazing
line up of "Mini-Programs"! Through out the day you can
participate in presentations to educate, enliven and expand
your body, mind and spirit...remember, our MoonSongs CD
will be available for purchase here too!

- 11am MAUREEN BEARWOMYN OAR | Yoga
- 11:45am KIMBER SONGWEAVER GODSEY | Song and Chanting—"Divine Feminine Rising"
- 12:30pm MARIAH WINDDANCER HOYT | Sensuous Movement
- 1:15pm THERESE CHARVET | Sacred Circle Dance
- 2pm AMY WOLFF AND STACY | "Blood"
- 2:45pm JOANNE MARCOE | Ayurveda: Science of Life
- 3:30pm DR. RAKESH CHOPRA | "Enjoy the Material World Through Spiritual Merger"
- 4:15pm DRUMMING | "Namaste-Women Who Drum"
- 5:30-6:30 POTLUCK | Please bring an item to share!
- 6:30-8:30 CELEBRATION | Drumming, singing, dancing, following the dedication of our new Woman's Way Red Lodge Mother Drum.



'TIS THE SEASON FOR RED LODGE WISDOM COUNCIL

DEC 1 & 2 – JOIN US!



To celebrate the spark of hope and belief that is Red Lodge, we are planning a different Wisdom Council at Sahale. People are hungry for what we can share, and step by step we are reaching out to bring our ways to the world. Join us to celebrate the gift of doing this work together.

Highlights this year include World Peace and Prayer Day, an intergenerational women's Hoop, South Sound Drum Circle, Fall Festival, and the creation of our Red Lodge Mother Drum. We received our IRS approval as a non-profit! We have laughed and cried together at gatherings, ceremonies, and meetings. We have navigated conflict and ridden the waves of paradox and unresolvable dilemmas.

Now is the season to gather round the hearth to renew and reconfirm what calls us to Red Lodge, to share the importance and impact of all we do together. It's time to affirm and witness, celebrate and honor the many ways our members have contributed in 2007.

Our hope is that you will be willing to share the deep places you have experienced in service to Red Lodge. The invitation is to have fun and be creative. Tell your story in words, with a poem, with a prayer, through a song. Make a skit. Recall the funny moments. Honor the passion of your call to Red Lodge. Sharing our experiences will help us connect with what this means in our lives and for our world.

While we share, we will engage our hands and hearts in making a simple solstice GiveAway. Chalice Bailey works at Angelina's, a women's shelter in Seattle. The staff there, about 25 people, works 24/7 all year round and is currently experiencing the wave that comes indoors when the weather turns (140 for evenings, 40 overnight, plus 35 in temporary residence). In the six years she has worked there, Chalice says she has never seen the staff gifted, witnessed, or honored. She would love it if a small group might deliver our gifts of hope in person. This is our vision for Saturday, December 1, noon-6 PM.

You are also invited to come early for brunch at 11, stay for "Ecstatic Dance: Movin' and Shakin' the Sacred" led by Kathryn Johansen Saturday night, and sleep over to Awaken the Drum, a sacred ceremony honoring our new Mother Drum and inviting her voice to be heard for the first time. This ceremony will also be a blessing towards our work for 2008. We will see what arises and how our new drum calls Red Lodge into a new year. Our meeting will end around 2 PM on Sunday.

Look for an E-vitation to Red Lodge Wisdom Council soon. Registration details will be included. We need to know how many are coming for overnight and meals before Thanksgiving. For women who need it, the Leadership Development fund can help.

–Mary Shackelford

SISTER'S SOUL FOOD Wild Oats Organix Spices MMMM...

Nutmeg

Lemon and Blueberry Ricotta Pancakes

3/4 c. all-purpose flour
2 tsp. baking powder and pinch salt
1/2 tsp. ground **NUTMEG**
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1 c. ricotta cheese
2 large eggs
2/3 c. 1% milk
juice and grated zest of one lemon
1 tsp. vanilla extract
canola oil, for cooking
1 c. frozen blueberries, thawed/drained
confectioners' sugar

In a large bowl whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt, nutmeg and cinnamon. In a separate bowl, whisk together ricotta cheese, eggs, milk, lemon juice and zest, and vanilla. Fold dry ingredients into the wet ingredients. Heat griddle over medium high heat. Drizzle with a small amount of canola oil. Pour half-cup batter onto griddle. Spread batter into a 5-inch circle. Sprinkle with blueberries. Cook until golden, turning once. Dust with confectioners' sugar and top with maple syrup.

Sweet raspberry Peach Soup

20 oz. frozen peaches, sliced (let thaw slightly)
1/3 cup sugar
1 1/2 cups water
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp. ground **NUTMEG**
1 T. cornstarch dissolved in 3 T. water
3/4 cup fruity white wine
2 ripe peaches
sour cream, for garnish

1 cup raspberries, for garnish
1. In a saucepan, combine sugar, water, cinnamon and nutmeg and bring to a

boil. Boil for one minute. Add the cornstarch and stir until the mixture thickens and boils. Stir in wine, and transfer mixture to a bowl.

2. Puree frozen peaches in a food processor and add to a bowl. Cut the fresh peaches into thin slices and add to the soup. Cover and refrigerate. When ready to serve, garnish the soup with a dab of sour cream and several raspberries. Or chill and serve cold topped with light whipped cream.

Star Anise

Spiced Pomegranate & Apple Cider

1 gallon apple cider
3 c. pure pomegranate juice
1 orange
20 whole cloves
4 cinnamon sticks
4 **STAR ANISE**

Poke cloves into orange. Pour cider and pomegranate juice into a saucepan or crock pot. Place clove-studded orange, cinnamon sticks and star anise in the cider. Heat on low for an hour before serving.

Cranberry Apple Chutney

Makes: About 2 1/2 cups

1 c. orange juice
2/3 c. raw sugar
1 (12 oz.) package fresh cranberries
1 c. apples, peeled, diced
1/2 c. apple cider vinegar
1/2 c. golden raisins
1 Tbsp. fresh ginger, grated
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 **STAR ANISE**
1/2 tsp. ground allspice

Combine juice and sugar in a saucepan. Bring to boil. Add cranberries, apples, vinegar, raisins and spices. Return to boil, then turn to a simmer, stirring often. Cook for 20 minutes. Pour in serving bowl, and cool to room temperature. Remove star anise before serving.

Cinnamon

Tzimmes

2 sweet potatoes, peeled/chunks
4 carrots, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks
1/3 c. dried apricots, diced
1/3 c. dried apples, diced
2 tsp. **CINNAMON**
1 to 2 c. orange juice
4 tbsp. clover honey

Preheat oven to 375° F. Combine potatoes, carrots, apricots, apples and cinnamon in a large casserole dish. Drizzle with honey and pour enough orange juice over mixture just to cover the bottom of the pan. Cover and bake for 1-1/2 hours.

Cinnamon Baked Pear

1 ripe, but firm pear
2 Tbsp. low-fat granola
1/4 tsp. **CINNAMON**
1 tsp. maple syrup
1/2 tsp. butter

350°F. Core pear. Mix together granola, cinnamon and syrup. Stuff pear with granola mixture. Dot with butter. Place in baking pan. Bake 20 minutes or until the pear is soft.

Grilled Mango Sundaes

2 mangos, halved
3 tbsp. melted butter
1 tbsp. brown sugar
1/4 tsp. **CINNAMON**
3 tbsp. dark rum (optional)
1/2 c. shortbread cookies, crumbled
2 c. vanilla bean ice cream

Heat grill to medium high. Cut mango halves "hedgehog style" but do not turn inside out. Mix butter, brown sugar, cinnamon and rum, brush on mangos. Place face down on grill for 1 minute, slightly char. Remove and cool before turning inside out. Cut mango chunks off the skin. Place a scoop of ice cream in a bowl, top with grilled mangos and sprinkle with cookies.

visit wildoats.com to get their fabulous, after thanksgiving spicy turkey soup recipe!



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Mothers of Red Lodge

Written by Peg Hopkins

At the September Board retreat Ragini Michaels, our guest Paradox Management consultant, shared with us the perspective that Red Lodge is now an organic and separate being. Since the nonprofit classification from the IRS, Red Lodge has completed a significant rite of passage and is evolving into her own identity. I was initially surprised and puzzled by this comment. An organization, a construct created from human hearts and minds can be a separate, organic and evolving entity? As I sat longer with this new concept it made more and more sense.

Actually, I believe Red Lodge has been her own spirit seeking birth in the world since her initial conception at our Feast of Possibilities with Connor in 2000. As I sit with this newly initiated being, I have a fresh way of seeing our community's often tentative understanding of who and what she is and who she will become, our mothering of her first steps...and the missteps we've made as we grow in relationship to her

We are the Mothers and Aunties (and hopefully soon Uncles) of a new being finding her way. Each of us has a role in parenting, befriending, witnessing and even practicing detached non-involvement...just like the world around us when a young one comes into our midst. Our mothering provides the immense gift of our collective wisdom and experiences, which enable us to see the strengths, potential and hidden gifts of this new being in our keeping. The possibilities of Red Lodge are equally immense and are developed by our encouragement as well as the wisdom of knowing when to get out of the way. Our behavior, choices and decisions regarding this new and impressionable youngster informs her development. In the not too distant future this young one will be clearly expressing her needs and individuation while we marvel at how she relates to the world.

The Red Lodge Board and council members are the front line Mothers to Red Lodge. Day to day we mother her with the commitment (and endurance!) to tend to her needs. Our organizational methods such as our Bylaws, decision-making processes, membership structures and communication methods are the food, water, shelter and nurturing elements of raising a healthy being.

Just as the leaves on the trees change every autumn so does the Red Lodge Board. And just like nature's cycle of transformation our board leadership shifting and changing is vital to the health and well being of this growing being. This dynamic change results in meeting the needs of this equally dynamic being coming into the world. New Mothers and experienced Mothers are coming together to find ways of supporting, listening and encouraging her to be all that she is meant to be. I am pleased to announce:

The Mothers of Red Lodge for 2008

Chair	Mary Shackelford
Vice Chair	Kristina Turner
Treasurer	Susan Landau
Program Chair	Debbie Fank
Communication Chair	Peg Hopkins
Conflict Evolution Chair	Kendra Thornbury
Long Dance	Paula Rathbun

Council Members

Kathleen Hanning, G. Maeve Aeolus, Drai Bearwomyn McKi, Grandma Billie Sockwomyn, Julia Bear Heart Moore, Therese Charvet, Valli Sanstrom, Norleen Overman, Marsha Cook, Amy Wolff, Lori Kramer, Catherine Dwyer, Chalice Bailey, Water Albin, Bobbi Edwards, Sarah Blum, Victoria Jensen, Connor Sauer, Ruth Raven, Bonnie Lee Cleverdon, Christiann Howard, Kim WombFire Woman, Baba Willow Dreamfeather

If you feel the stir of mothering within, please join us! Several Board and Ad Hoc Council Chair openings are waiting for the right mother. Consider being chair of Abundance Council or Elder Council. Become the Secretary?! Or join a council and add your nurturing energy to our mothering collective.

Red Lodge's Fall Wisdom Council

NOV 30-DEC 2 at Sahale is a time of celebration, renewal, and getting to know our young one first hand. She is reflected in each and every one of us. Come meet her!

GRANDMA SHADOW WOLF – A LONG DANCE CRONE–

Delores Thatcher

May 31, 1938-September 26, 2007

Survived by 4 daughters, 1 son, 10 grandchildren, 3 great grandchildren and her soul sister, Grandma Billie Sockwomyn.



Drai Bearwomyn, LD ©2001

–A story based on an interview with Grandma Billie Sockwomyn October 21, 2007. Written by Drai Bearwomyn

12 year old Delores met 12 year old Billie at Port Angeles' Roosevelt High School in 1951. They were both starting 7th grade. They've been best friends for the 56 years since.

They did everything as a team. They had their moon times together. They rode horses together. They graduated high school together in the class of '56.

Together, they went from girlhood to motherhood. Delores got married and had a baby. Billie got married and had a baby. They raised their children together, had picnics and camp outs. "My children consider her like an Aunt" says Billie.

Along with being a mother, Delores worked many years as a secretary with the Sheriff's office and then for Boeing. Later she became a Certified Nurse's Aid and worked in hospital elder care.

In 1990, Grandma Billie took Delores to the 2nd Long Dance, at Palo Alto. According to Billie "Delores took to it right away!" There, Delores experienced her Maiden Ceremony and then was initiated as a Crone side-by-side with Billie. Together, they went from motherhood to being elders of the tribe of women.

Delores went to several Long Dances throughout the years. Her last one was at Camp Singing Wind in 2002. "She really considered herself a Long Dancer. She talked to her daughters about it quite a bit. She especially loved the songs." Billie shared.

When asked what she wanted to be called, Delores said "Grandma Shadow Wolf". Delores had enormous love and respect for the wolves, along with horses who were her totem animals. Many of us will remember her wearing her "famous" black t-shirts always with awesome wolf pictures and moons.

Wolves. Cats. Dogs...An avid animal lover, Delores had a favorite dog whom one of her daughters had named Mötley, after the heavy metal band, Mötley Crüe. Years ago when Mötley died, Delores said "When it is my time, I want to be cremated and have my ashes scattered with Mötley's ashes."

Thinking back over their time together, Grandma Billie said "Delores was a big reader. She always seemed to know things but she learned a lot about spirituality from me. She was somebody I could talk to about it and she really understood."

When asked to describe Delores, Grandma Billie smiled and extolled her many virtues of kindness and generosity. "She was a big hearted woman. She even took in her ex-husband, for a while, and gave him a place to live so he would not be out on the street. I could have showed up on her doorstep at any moment and she would have opened her door and taken me right in! That is just the kind of person she was."

Billie went on to say, "She was a serious sideby for me. She was my sister. Better than my sister. We NEVER fought. Even as girls....you know how girls fight? We never did, never fought or had hard words for each other. It's so hard for me to understand when I hear about girls now days that are so mean to each other. I just cannot relate to that, because Delores and I were best buds, the best of friends."

Around 2000, Grandma Billie decided she wanted to have a Sister's Ceremony with Grandma Shadow Wolf to formally name their relationship as sisters, that deep step beyond just friendship. She approached Delores with this idea and, of course, Delores agreed. "We did a sweat and became sisters at Raven Turtle Lodge. Connor was there. It was so right for us to be called sisters....Delores had known me for so long, warts and all. She knew my weaknesses and my strong points, she knew it all and loved me anyway. Just as I knew all things about her and loved her as well."

Then, Delores decided to move to Vegas. She wanted to live somewhere hot. Her eldest daughter and 2 of her grand-children moved with her. In July of 2005, Delores had a going away party. It was the last time Grandma Billie and her were together. Since then, they have been phone sisters.

In 2006, Delores' 69th year, she became sick with a perforated bowel. During surgery, they found a cancerous tumor. It was determined the cancer had originated as breast cancer, albeit undetectable via mammogram. Delores went through a year of ups and downs. Chemo. Diabetes. Blood sugar issues. Her ultimate struggle was when the cancer moved to her colon.

Grandma Shadow Wolf laid down her earth robe and stepped through the veil in September. Her children, honoring her wishes, did indeed scatter her ashes on Ediz Hook, in the Strait of Juan De Fuca – along with Mötley.

With love, sadness, loss and honor, Grandma Billie ended our interview reminding me "Grandma Shadow Wolf is one of our Ancestors now." –Aho.



NEW MOTHER DRUM CALLS US TOGETHER

A very lively group of women gathered in Port Angeles on October 20 to help bring a dream to life. With spirit's guidance and help and inspiration from Paula Rathbun, Lori Kramer and Della Floyd, together we created the new Red Lodge Mother Drum. We also made a beautiful cover of red Pendleton wool, a matching satchel to hold the grandmother's arms, and a half dozen drum sticks.

A small group of men are at work creating the stand for this Mother Drum to rest upon.

The group included oldtimers and newcomers to Red Lodge, teens and children.

Grandma Billie and Melvin dropped by, and we were able to share a circle to honor the passing of Grandmother Shadow Wolf.

Otter Woman and Spirit Dancer offered their voices in celebration of the new drum.

We are so excited that this new drum will be present at Fall Festival on November 10 at the VFW Hall in West Seattle. This FUNdraiser is Red Lodge's first official membership outreach effort. The new Mother Drum will be gathering her voice and will not be played, but her presence will inspire and honor us. After the potluck at Fall Festival, we will take time for a Drum Blessing to introduce ourselves to the new drum and welcome her.

At Red Lodge Wisdom Council, December 1 and 2 at Sahale, we will hold an Awakening Ceremony for the drum on Sunday morning. At this time, we will hear her voice for the first time.

Sometime next fall, the drum will call us to a Naming Ceremony.

This drum carries the medicine of Red Lodge. She will show us the way. It is envisioned that her care and keeping will be shared among a committed group of Keepers of the Drum so that she may spend time in the different homes of our community and be accessible to the men, women and children who are drawn to her medicine. Keepers of the Drum will agree to a consistent protocol to care for, feed, and honor the drum.

For more information, contact Paula Rathbun at paulabeing@aim.com.

"The drum is the Great Spirit's favorite instrument. That's why we were all given a heartbeat."

—Mano Navajo Elder



CALLED BY THE RED LODGE MOTHER DRUM

When we sit down to make a drum it becomes our teacher. As we begin our relationship with it, the drum helps us remember that we and it are sacred.

It reminds us to be respectful to the spirits of the trees and animals. It teaches us our connection to our community. On Saturday, October 20, the new Mother Drum for Red Lodge called women drum makers to gather at Paula Rathbun and Lori Kramer's studio. We spent the day in ceremony and hands/heart work to listen, learn, watch and connect in deep places as the Red Lodge Mother Drum was born.

The Drum and The Earth Mother

The magic of the Drum and its relation to Mother Earth's heartbeat moves one's consciousness into the inner worlds of vision, experience and learning. The Drum takes us to that special place where we can reconnect to those things that truly matter to our spirits, minds, emotions and body. Morrighan, a new Red Lodge member who is an experienced drum maker, offered this teaching: When playing a drum, let it never be hammered in an aggressive way. Let us not refer to it as a 'beater;' At this gathering of drum makers we invited in calling the drum sticks "Grandmother's Arms," which is a beautiful description. When I played Otter Woman and Spirit Dancer with Grandmothers Arms, I was aware of a deeper medicine, sweet, kind and sacred.

Components of the Drum and Their Connection

The frame is made of maple that connects us to the 'standing people'; maple's medicine is of longevity, abundance and happiness. The skin is a gift from bison, a connection to the four-leggeds. The sinew used to string the drum comes from the long leg muscle of the water buffalo. It ties the

standing people and the human hand that plays the drum to the animal.

The Voice of the Drum

Just like humans, each drum has its own very unique voice and vibration. Upon completion of her making, she sits still, finding her voice, absorbing her medicine, being with spirit for one full cycle of the moon (28 days). Then the drum is awakened to her voice through sacred ceremony. Until the ceremony takes place the drum will NOT be played. This is a hard thing to resist, but this part of the tradition teaches discipline and honoring of the process. Sometime after a year, the drum will call us to her Naming Ceremony. The drum is a sacred object; when not in use, she is shrouded in her own bag.

The vision for a Red Lodge Mother Drum has been shared by many among us for some time. Her presence, spirit, medicine and magic will bring the men, women and children who are called to learn these ways. She will teach us and show us the way to take the medicine we want to share out into the world

*From notes contributed by
Paula Rathbun and Morrighan*



WALKING THE VISION

By Melissa Dreaming Bee



My walking shoes are sacred medicine objects. I wear them on the altar of my feet. A piece of red embroidery thread tied to the laces reminds me of their sacredness.

Each year I dance Long Night I experiment with ways to walk my dancing visions into my life. I want the preciousness of dancing all night long to come home with me and become blood and bone in my waking world, in the world where I stack wood for winter, feed my children dinner, take a warm bath before going to work, pray over wildfire burn on the edge of my land and sit on my porch watching chickens scratch seeds from the grasses.

This year I've been doing two things to continue to claim my own power and bring it out into the world. The first is to wear an intention bracelet I made to stay conscious of my dreams. The second is to wear my walking shoes to climb Rabbit Hill during my lunch hour so I can become physically strong.

Last year a small group of Long Dancers gathered after the dance to braid intention belts. We made these out of simple colored string, braiding beads in when we had an intention for the year that we wanted to hold. As we braided, we spoke our intentions out loud. I wore that belt most of last year, day and night. I danced with that belt this Long Night and now it lives wrapped around a walking stick on my front porch.

This year I made a bracelet and each morning I touch a bead and remind myself about staying in my own power. A bead for taking time to relax so life lessons and my inner work can be integrated, a string of colors to remind me to learn from the wild turkeys, coyotes, deer, chickens and children, two tube beads—one for drumming one for dancing, a brilliant red one for walking with fire of the South, a healing bead, a spiral bead, red thread, strength bead, badger bead. With this bracelet I walk with all the rich and big things in my life simply contained like a constellation around my wrist.



The strength bead tells the story of my walking. I got a pedometer I put on my hip each day and it counts my steps. My basic goal is 10,000 steps a day and for fun I keep a log of where I am when I take my 6,000th step. Today I was picking up a walnut by an old yellow house just past a fence line of blue Morning Glories and thinking about how grateful I am for trees along side the road that give us food if we are awake enough to see them. Then I took the walnut to the Post Office and set it quietly on the window sill beside the doorway because I know that place can use a little more Spirit, a little more nature.

Strength bead reminds me that each day I put on my sacred shoes and hike up Rabbit Hill carrying a rock that I leave at a cairn on the top I become stronger. It's the same bead that takes my Eagle Dance and my Long Night intention of claiming my power out into the world one simple sacred tennis shoe footstep at a time.



Drai Bearwomyn, LD ©2001

Who'da Thank It?

LOURENE O'BRIAN

Hutchinson Island, FL. Richland, WA.
Moscow, OH. Clinton, IL. Midland, MI.
1974–1984

Laureen was a Quality Control Inspector on many nuclear powerplants as they were being built. Her husband was a whistle blower, so the FBI visited her house often, where together they all worked to assure **true** quality control.



RE-VIVE \ri-viv\ vb fr. L revivere
to live again: to return to
consciousness or life: become
active or flourishing again 1. to
restore from a depressed, inactive,
or unused state: bring back 2. to
renew in the mind or memory

Are you feeling the need to revive?
There are many ways to re-claim our
health and well-being. The Isagenix
system is one we found that works.
It offers a deep nutritional feeding
of our bodies and a cleansing
method that is gentle, effective and
doable within the scope of busy
lives. The result is increased energy,
shedding of excess weight and
coping better with stress. To learn
more click on the link below and
learn about Isagenix in the Woman's
Way or talk to any one of us.

www.wvrl.org/mp/welcome_isagenix.pdf

-To your health, Lori Kramer,
Michelle Elekonich, Susan Landau,
Peg Hopkins, Paula Rathbun,
and Connor Sauer

*"I have been using Isagenix for a few
weeks now and have already lost 1/2"
from my neck and 2" from my big ol'
mama belly. PLUS my energy is back
and I am feeling much better. Yahoo! It
took me a year to make the decision to
start, now I wish I had not waited!!"*
-Drai Bearwomyn



BOOK LOOK

TITLE ONE: Leaving Mother Lake:
A Girlhood at the Edge of the World

AUTHOR ONE: Yang Erche Namu & Christine Mathieu

RETAIL: \$10.17 amazon.com

RECOMMENDED BY: Suzanne Lichau



"Reading this book touched me deeply-this woman's story was amazing and the fact that I actually got to go to Lake Lugu is a miracle and the fruition of a seed that the book planted within me." -Suzanne

EDITORIAL REVIEW From Publishers Weekly

With the help of anthropologist Mathieu, singer Namu describes growing up on the Chinese-Tibetan border in Moso country, "the Country of the Daughters." Detailing her late-1960s, early-'70s upbringing-she was known in her village as "the girl who was given back three times"-she sheds light on the unique matrilineal Moso culture, with its "walking marriages," where women take as many lovers as they want and the men continue to reside in their mothers' homes. The interweaving of the customs of this remote part of China-where "a man and a woman may sing to each other from the peaks of two mountains, but they will need to carry food for three days if they want to meet halfway"-with Namu's determination to have a worldly life despite her family's poverty and her own inability to read and write lend this tale poignancy. Most readers will find themselves rooting for Namu as she runs away from home, travels across the country and successfully auditions for a place in the Shanghai Music Conservatory at age 16. There, she learns to read and write and launches her international singing career. For those who doubt that a land could exist where girls are favored over boys and marriage is viewed with distrust, Mathieu appends an afterword about her research on the Moso and the changes that have taken place, including universal education. While not a stylistic masterpiece, the book brims with vivid descriptions of a fascinating culture.



Moso woman in traditional 'courting' dress and below is Lake Lugu. Susanne Lichau ©2007.



YOUR RED LODGE Elders



By Sarah L. Blum

Woman's Way Red Lodge is creating itself and finding its

way in the world. Your Elders, known as the WWRL Elder Council are part of that. We met in council at the Spring Wisdom Council in Oak Harbor and planned at that time to go cavorting together in the Fall.

Yesterday 6 of us gathered at Josephine's Yurt near the Elwah River, past Port Angeles. Josephine is a spunky activist, storyteller who is 81 years young and who was busy planting bulbs and protesting a rock quarry near her land.

As we gathered for our cavorting it was clear that most of us needed some down time first. Some took naps in the sun, some rested, meditated, read, others walked, and some visited Josephine. We did some drumming and Raven played her mandolin and we shared our crone cards and goddess cards with one another.

About 5:30 we began preparation for our potluck dinner and by 6PM we were eating our feast, laughing, sharing and enjoying being together. Our Crones/Elders in Long Dance and Red Lodge do not have enough time together and this gathering helped provide that. We spent a couple of hours

sharing our personal experiences of the past few months with each other and then had our actual council meeting in the hot tub out on the deck.

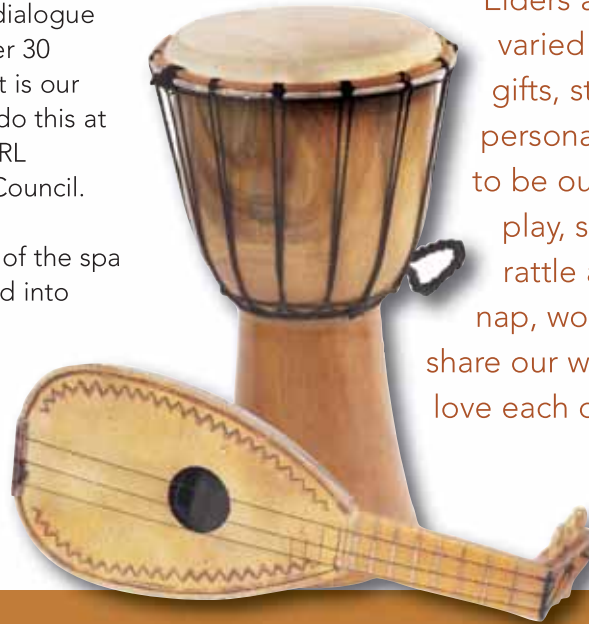
It was wonderful to be soaking our crone bones in the spa, under the stars, and hold our council on a variety of issues and concerns. Out of that council meeting we reaffirmed our willingness to be available to Red Lodge members for support, prayer, mentoring, nurturing and grand-mothering as needed. We also began planning for the FIRST WISDOM HOOP at the December WWRL Wisdom Council. This FIRST WISDOM HOOP will be facilitated by Ruth Raven and Maeve. It will be one hour in length and begin with some of our Elders sharing some important wisdom with those present for about 30 minutes and then having a dialogue for another 30 minutes. It is our desire to do this at each WWRL Wisdom Council.

Once out of the spa we crawled into our cozy beds and agreed that

whenever any of us got up in the night to pee we would add a log to the small fireplace stove in the yurt so we stayed warm through the night.

In the morning we were up early to greet the day and some of us did yoga, some meditated, and we all took care of our bedding and personal belongings while Raven made her special brand of pancakes. Josephine joined us for breakfast and we told stories of mice. We hugged and bid each other farewell and gathered for a picture. We would share the picture with you here but discovered we had no film in the camera so instead Kristina will offer you her version of how we looked as we stood in the sun with the Yurt behind us.

"You have an amazing group of Elders among you with varied backgrounds, skills, gifts, stories, lives and personalities. We know how to be ourselves, to laugh, play, sing, dance, shake rattle and roll, play, rest, nap, work, create, set limits, share our wisdom, opinions, and love each of you and each other exactly as we are."



Code Purple

Need prayer support for yourself or a loved one?

Red Lodge's Elder Council offers their circle in support of community prayer requests. Write to prayerrequest@wwrl.org

the call for a HOME

This month we are gifted with a sharing from Red Lodge member Norleen Overman. Her piece is about a sustainability vision that calls to her. Hope you all are enjoying an abundant fall harvest on all levels.

*Blessings,
Suzanne Lichau*

I hear the call within me, the call to ground our community on a beautiful, bountiful piece of land that we can call home. I hear the call to become stewards in a larger way. I hear and feel the call for our community to become more than a band of gypsies roaming from place to place. I hear the call for a permanent home. I dream of a place where I can delve deeper into community living and finding my true home, within and without.

I share this because it is up for me right now, as it might be for others. I share this to ask the questions, to ask if others are also being called to this vision. I share this because I believe it feels important to others and it

is important to me.

I realize this conversation is not totally new. I also realize that some of us have our own thoughts and perspectives about this subject. I just want to open the airwaves and begin a deeper dreaming of the possibilities of LD and RL having a place to call home and a community living situation within that realm.



I have no true idea what all this might look like, the land, the community the possible future of Red Lodge in conjunction with this vision. I just know that I am stepping up to begin a conversation of possibilities. To begin visioning and putting my heart and passion to words with witness, willingness and action.

My current vision: To be caretakers of a beautiful wooded and open area of land, large enough for us to be comfortable in the spaciousness. The trees would be ancient ones, that tells us stories and holds our prayers. This land would have a river, with clear and clean water. The fish would be strong and vivid with life. There would be buildings, which would house our community events. These would be beautiful and built

with sustainable practices in mind, using recycled materials where possible. There would also be facilities for community members to live and tend the needs of the property. It would house all of our community events if we choose. It could also be available for other like-minded groups to use for events.

I have no true ideas on how this dream will come into being. Maybe the land will be gifted, maybe we can pool together for a shared ownership, and maybe something else will bring it into being. I just know that it is time to bring light to the conversation and the being, of us having a true home.

If you are interested in becoming involved with this conversation and visioning, please contact me and we'll get it going. I am open to hearing about the dreams of others and the possibilities that we all bring to the table. Please make contact with me in November by email at BraveNewHeart@wwrl.org and we can go from there.

Thank you for joining me in this journey of possibilities.

–Blessings Norleen

SUSTAINABILITY CORNER In our every deliberation we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations.



MONOLITH RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT ANCIENT MEXICAN CULTURE

Deep in the Huastec jungle (Mexico) the enormous carved stone monolith stands, suspended over the pool of water where a team of archaeologists discovered it. A powerful woman stands at the center of the carving, flanked by two smaller decapitated women. A stream of liquid flows from the headless women toward the woman in the center.

The women on each side are thought to represent priestesses, and the liquid represents the life force, while the woman at the center represents Mother Earth; so the priestesses seem to be nurturing the Earth with their life force. The truth is, however, nobody knows for sure what these stones mean. One thing is fairly certain—because of the recurrence of the number 13, the monolith seems to be a lunar calendar of some sort. That's why it set the archaeological world abuzz with discussion when it was unveiled last November. It is believed to have been created around 600 BCE—2,000 years before what was previously the oldest discovered calendar in the Americas, the Aztec Calendar, which dates to 1400 CE.

"What this discovery did was to force us to stop, turn around and dig deeper into the history of the Huastecan groups to re-evaluate them," said Guillermo Ahuja, the lead archaeologist at Tamtoc who discovered the stone tablet, or Monolith 32, as it's called. The discovery was especially surprising given that the Huastec people were thought to be a relatively recent culture. Now archaeologists are wondering whether the Huastecs - or their predecessors, the

Proto-Huastecs - might have played a bigger role in the development of Mesoamerica than previously thought. It has also raised questions about whether the Olmecs might have had an influence in the region, since there are cultural similarities, or whether there might have been a third group of people, the so-called Mother Culture, that dominated the area first.

What is known is that Tamtoc was inhabited by a sophisticated people who enjoyed a high standard of living for the time, with one of the most sophisticated hydraulic systems in Mesoamerica. It was first excavated by a group of French archaeologists in the 1960s, but their project was short-lived, and work did not begin on the site in earnest until 2001. It's the only major Huastec archaeological site, and like the Huastec people themselves, it is shrouded in mystery.

The intricate carvings the Huastecs left on the stones leave clues to a culture in which women clearly played a strong role as governors, priestesses and warriors. The monolith was discovered in a graveyard surrounded by the remains of 84 women—90 percent of all the remains discovered there. Ahuja has pieced together a story that might explain why. The monolith seems to have been toppled from its original location, broken into pieces and covered with mud. Ahuja estimates the time period at about the same time that several coastal cities were flooded, probably by a tsunami-type surge, around 300 BCE. Ahuja believes the sacred tablet was impossible to

resurrect, and the people decided to let it lie and create a sacred site where it was buried. The most honored and sacred members of that society were permitted to be buried there. Women became goddesses when they gave birth, and those who died in childbirth were deified, and so they were allowed to be buried along with the Great Mother.

An important item backing this theory was another find: a headless woman's naked figure, carved of limestone and polished to a high sheen. The figure, found in a pool that once stood at the feet of the monolith, was believed to be an offering to the gods. The raised dots on her arms and legs correspond with the number of days in the lunar calendar, according to archaeologist Ricardo Muñoz, while the width of her hips and the fullness of her breasts indicate a woman at the height of her fertility.

With only six years of excavation and analysis behind them, there are many secrets yet to be unearthed, and Ahuja and his team are enormously excited at the possibilities - discoveries that might contradict much of what historians think they already know about ancient Mexican history.

"It really surprised me to learn how little is known about the Huasteca," he said. "It's really the ideal thing for any archaeologist to discover a civilization that nobody knows."

—Shared with us by Peg Hopkins
Source: My San Antonio, 11 October 2007. tinyurl.com/35bdsl

Deadline for submissions is the 20th of the previous month.

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Prayer Requests: Prayer_Requests@wwrl.org If you have a prayer request for yourself, a friend or family member, click our link. Your message will be sent to the WWRL Elder Council who will honor your request either in our individual ways or with a prayer council if that is your desire. Please try to let us know in time to coordinate the members if you would like a council to hold space at a specific time, such as if you have surgery scheduled or a vision quest, etc.) Thank you for letting us be of service to you.

Community Calendar Listing:

wwrl.org/CalendarWelcome.aspx The online community calendar is our new format for members to list their events. Go to the link above and follow the steps to enter your activity.

General Articles: Article_Submissions@wwrl.org We invite women of our community to share their gifts and passions with us in written form, which they believe may interest others in our community. Articles must be original works and must meet 5 of the 15 Red Lodge principles.

Come and Advertise with Us: Advertising@wwrl.org

WWRL fully embraces Community supporting Community. It is our intention to serve as a vehicle for sharing information within our community. We invite you to place an ad in eNEWS. We can even design your ad, either quarter, half or full page. Ads range from \$50 to \$200. All proceeds from ad sales apply to future WWRL projects.

Book Look: Book_Look@wwrl.org With the intention of sharing information we offer "Book Look" and "Movie Madness", fantastic book or film recommendations. If you think a specific book or movie is a must for the community, please share it with us and tell us why! At a minimum, simply provide the title and author. If you wish, you are also welcome to write the review-130 words or less! (optional).

Sister's Soul Food: Sisters_Soul_Food@wwrl.org Send your favorite, tasty, healthy recipes to share with our circle.

Sustainability Corner: Sustainability_Corner@wwrl.org

Come, come, let us sit at the table of life together and feast!! Is there a book or information source that has inspired you in relationship to sustainability that you want to recommend? Is there a business you have used or know of that practices sustainable manufacturing that you want to share? Is there a practice you use that could help others to be more sustainable in any of the three spheres – body, mind or spirit? Are there products or services you offer that relate to the concept and vision of sustainability? Write us with Ideas and contributions.