

## Living Into Right Relations – July 2021

Hello,

Every year I look forward to the annual paddle called [Two Row on the Grand](#). This year it had a sombre beginning on June 22, as the news of the 215 unmarked graves in Kamloops was fresh in our minds. Felicia and Dean, two of the “paddle family” as we call ourselves, joined us for the opening ceremony, but were not paddling the river. They spoke about the hard mix of emotions they felt at hearing the news of the childrens’ graves, and how they wanted to find a positive way of moving through this and towards healing. They had decided to run 215 km, to honour the children and support the survivors, and to help them move forward. They were marking each kilometre on an orange painted stone, placing it in a spot visible to others. That day they placed stones to mark kilometres 131 - 150. Here is their [June 29 Facebook post](#) at the end of the 215 km.

When we asked how we might support them, they directed us to an initiative of the Residential School Survivors of the Mohawk Institute - creating the [Mohawk Village Memorial Park](#). The goal of the project is to provide a space of remembrance for the thousands of Survivors of the Mohawk Institute.

I suspect I’m not the only one looking for ways to support local Indigenous communities at this time. I’m sure there are many possibilities. This is one. If you’re interested in supporting Dean and Felicia, and the park project, you can help fund the project here at [Canada Helps](#).

As we all know, since Felicia and Dean began their 215 km there have been hundreds of other graves identified. They have decided to continue running.

Nancy

1. [Bill C-15: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) The Bill was given Royal Assent on June 21. Now the real work begins.
  - a. Kairos media [Passage of national UN Declaration Implementation Act a milestone for Indigenous rights and reconciliation](#)
  - b. [APTN debate on the Bill](#) from May this year gives a sense of the differences of interpretation and wariness of some Indigenous leaders.
  - c. For detailed parliamentary and senate discussion click [here](#)
  
2. [1492 Land Back Lane](#)
  - a. A major milestone: The development project has been cancelled! Read CBC coverage [here](#).  
Cindy S. was at the Unity Festival on July 3. In response to my question about the Friday lunch support she wrote: “the land defenders will be at the site for the foreseeable future, regardless of the developer’s decision to cancel. They intend to continue living in their newly built homes and growing their gardens on 1492 Land Back Lane. They appreciate the ongoing support of continuing to bring meals.”

b. Supportive actions

i. **Friday Lunches for 1492 LandBack Lane - Next delivery date: July 9**

Cash donations can be made through [Parkminster United Church](#). Please identify your donation as 1492 LandBack Lane. For more info or to lend a hand contact me at [nancydykstra@gmail.com](mailto:nancydykstra@gmail.com). Thank you!

ii. Check their list of needed supplies on the facebook page. We may be able to help find transportation of supplies on a Friday. Let me know if you need help.

iii. Support the [legal defense fund](#) that will be needed for the land defenders.

3. Searches for unmarked graves at the former Mohawk Institute Residential School will be starting soon. Related media coverage:

[CTV June 28](#)

[APTN article June 25](#)

[CBC article June 3](#)

4. You will recall that the Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs Council placed a [moratorium on development](#) along the Haldimand Tract in April. There is a facebook presence now called [Protect the Tract](#) through which you can follow information about the moratorium.

5. **[O:se Kenhionhata:tie](#)** are at Laurel Creek this year, and actively connecting with other Indigenous groups along the Grand - e.g., 1492 LandBack Lane and Protect the Tract. Watch their facebook page for public events. Here are a couple of their current initiatives:

a. [Sat, Jul 31 at 12 PM EDT, Two Spirit Social & Community Gathering](#)

b. [Gofundme campaign to help Land Back campers get started in a new home](#)

6. **[All Nations Grand River Water Walk](#)** - year 4 begins Sept 13. Watch for events leading up to it, including an [online auction, Aug 15-29](#).

## 7. Learning at home and virtual events

a. **June - Nov. 2pm second Sunday of the month.** Honouring the Missing Students of Indian Residential School System through Community Prayer and Dialogue. Neenahnew Oskapewasik in partnership with Five Oaks. Dates and registration [here](#).

b. **June 24 - Aug 26 Hot Docs Cinema** - [Celebrating Indigenous Stories](#)

c. **July 8, 6:30 p.m. Sewing Resilience: A conversation on "Breathe"** Art Gallery of Guelph. Tickets [here](#).

d. **July 10** Next Two Row paddle. Future dates: July 22, Aug 1, 12, 18, 24

- e. **July 14 and 21, 7-8 pm** [Woodland Cultural Centre](#) public virtual tours - screening of the former Mohawk Institute Residential School. Learn about the history of the school, hear survivors in their own voices, support the [Save The Evidence Campaign](#)
- f. **Until July 31 Tuesdays 12:30 - 1:30 pm** [Virtual Tour of Early Days: Indigenous Art at the McMichael](#)
- g. [Sacred Teachings](#) series from the Anglican church.
- h. **Other events on Eventbrite:**  
<https://www.eventbrite.ca/d/canada--ontario/indigenous/?mode=search&page=1&q=Indigenous>
- i. **In case you missed it...**  
[Artists conversation from the McMichael - Christi Belcourt and Bonnie Devine](#)

## 8. Good Reads - and nurture your own inner author!

- a. [Good Minds Books](#) Video podcast special, [13 Moons 13 Reads](#) with host Janet Rogers and guest Author & Educator Wilfred Buck (Cree). The series offers interviews with various Indigenous authors. You may find some new reading material here while listening to engaging conversation.
- b. I believe living into right relations applies not only to relationships with people, but also with the Earth we inhabit. Part of the beauty of the annual Two Row paddle is the relationship it is fostering between the river and us. But there are myriad ways to develop this relationship. How do you connect to the land and water along the Grand?

On Day 1 of the Two Row this year I met Phil Martin. Phil has created a website called [Grand River Explorations](#) which is dedicated to exploring and expressing this relationship with the river. You can read and be inspired by others' thoughts here. If you have Grand River stories to tell here is a place you might share them!

Phil points out that the site has two places for stories. [Featured Stories](#) are larger pieces that different people have written. The Themes tab is better set up for shorter stories, outlining specific experiences. Check it out! Thank you, Phil.