

## RupertsLand Wechetowin – July 2020

Hello RupertsLand Wechetowin friends,

I hope this letter finds you well in the midst of these COVID-19 times. It has been a challenge to find ways to address healing, wellness and reconciliation during this time of social distancing and limited hospital access. We however, continue to be Wechetowin - 'people helping people'.

Here are a few updates on activities that have occurred since our last gathering:

- Prayers continue for wellness and reconciliation in RupertsLand.
- Remember those "Resource/Care Bags that we stuffed with good items for children and we prayed over them in anticipation to bless those receiving those items? Many of them have been distributed to various communities.
- Metis CFS agencies who have been helping Metis children and their families during these difficult times, were able to give some of the Resource/Care bags to children who are in the midst of transitions, to find some moments of comfort. *Billie Schibler, MMF CFS CEO, extended her thanks to RupertsLand Wechetowin "for your kindness and caring."*
- The Health Science Centre in Winnipeg were not allowing people into the Children's Hospital during this COVID-19 time and are following strict protocols for the safety of all concerned. RupertsLand Wechetowin, working with the Child Life Department, (Child Health Program) found a way to get the Resource/Care bags to families. This department extends their thanks... *"... to all of you for your wonderful donation of care bags. We strive to help alleviate the stress and anxiety of hospitalization on children and their families. Your meaningful donation created smiles and good cheer and brightened their hospital stay. Please know we appreciated your thoughtful gesture." Suzanne Harms (Child Life Department, Children's Hospital)*
- The Interlake Women's Resource Centre were able to use the comfort quilts donated to them.
- The books donated by St. Stephen's Anglican Parish, the material donated from the University of Winnipeg Aboriginal Student Services Centre, the work of sewing all those bags by the Canadian Muslim Women's Institute – CUTTING EDGE Sewing Training – 62 bags completed, all these gifts and collective efforts are helping bring hope in times such as these.

Sadly, we lost one of our founding Elders, Velma Orvis on April 24<sup>th</sup> 2020. She has gone to be with Creator God. She faithfully served RupertsLand Wechetowin by leading the Healing Circle supports at RiverView Health Centre. On a personal side, I certainly miss my cousin and Elder, her gentle spirit and her living example of treating everyone with respect and dignity. May we remember her always, Amen.

I encourage you to continue to pray for RupertsLand Wechetowin. As Jesus modelled to us, God knows our need to be welcomed, find a sense of belonging, to love and be loved. May we continue to find ways to journey together - all of us in Rupert'sLand, Indigenous, non-Indigenous, and Newcomers.

As time with COVID-19 continues, we will continue to look for ways to be active in the communities that we find ourselves. Please do not hesitate to email me with prayer requests, ideas for continued ministry opportunities and maybe just to be together.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Deacon Tanis Kolinsky RupertsLand Wechetowin Coordinator