

Living Into Right Relations – August, 2026

Hello,

I am still reliving this year's Two Row on the Grand paddle - ten July days spent in the company of our "Paddle Family" as we made our way down the lower Grand River, living and learning together. It's always a powerful journey - physically, emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually. This year, we were on the river during the worst days of wildfire smoke in Southwestern Ontario. While we had some setbacks because of the smoke, it was minor considering all of the wildfires burning and displacing people and wildlife across the country. Some Northern Ontario First Nations communities were evacuated to Niagara Falls, not far from where we were paddling, and close to home for some of us in this LIRR group. Some I spoke with on the Two Row offered volunteer support on the ground in Niagara Falls. Another way to support is financially, through [True North Aid](#).

This newsletter usually focuses on the events or information related to the Grand River Watershed and Six Nations such as the Water Walk online auction that has just begun. This edition includes other local ways to support more remote First Nation communities, in addition to the wildfire support mentioned above. Please especially note Section 3v & 3w for opportunities to amplify Indigenous voices.

We hope this continues to provide support for your journey. We always welcome relevant information if you'd like to pass it our way. Thanks!

May we walk in good company,

Nancy (nancydykstra@gmail.com) Henriëtte, Bev and Lorna, the search and edit team.

1. Land Back

- a. [O:se Kenhionhata:tie](#) - at Willow River Centre, 243 King St. E., Kitchener.
 - i. Read their [Facebook](#) posts.
 - ii. How to support? [Support us | O:se Kenhionhata:tie](#).

2. Some summer events in and around the watershed.

- a. [The Complete Guide to Ontario Pow Wows 2026](#)
- b. [Tour | Native Canadian Centre of Toronto](#) A walking tour in Toronto featuring the largest collection of Canadian Indigenous artwork in the city of Toronto. Thank you, Norah Menzies.

3. Learning at home and connecting in person

- a. [Crow Shield Lodge](#) in Waterloo Region has a range of events related to education, healing, land stewardship and reconciliation. Events listing [here](#).
- b. [Exhibitions](#) at [Woodland Cultural Centre](#), 184 Mohawk St., Brantford.
 - i. **Ending Fri, Aug. 14.** You Are Not Forgotten. Presented within the former Mohawk Institute Residential School, these quilts invite visitors to reflect on the lasting impacts of Residential Schools, the importance of community, and the relationships that connect people to place. Together, these quilts speak to healing, remembrance, and the enduring strength found in shared stories. Closing reception Fri, Aug 14, 6-8:30 p.m.
 - ii. **to Oct 9.** Indigenous Art: 51st annual juried exhibition. Always worth the visit!
- c. **Tues, Aug 4 - Sun, Aug 23 at 7 p.m.** [Grand River Water Walk 2026 Facebook Auction](#) supporting this year's Water Walk which is scheduled for Sept 20-25. Click on "Featured" for detailed instructions on how to donate and bid on items. Donations can be posted throughout the auction until the final day.
- d. **Fri, Aug 7, 7-10 p.m.,** [Exhibition Opening: Rosalie Favell | Belonging \(1982 - 2024\)](#), Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, 101 Queen Street N., Kitchener.
- e. **Sat, Aug 8, 2-3 p.m.,** [Artist Talk: Rosalie Favell | Belonging \(1982 - 2024\)](#), Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, 101 Queen Street N., Kitchener. Free.
- f. **Mon, Aug 10, 2-4 p.m.,** [Métis Dot Art](#), Hamilton Public Library, West Harbour Branch, 77 Harbourside Way, Hamilton. Ages: 6-12 yrs. Free.
- g. **Wed, Aug 12, 2-4 p.m.,** [Métis Dot Art](#), Hamilton Public Library, Central Branch, 55 York Blvd, Hamilton. Ages: 6-12 yrs. Free.
- h. **Sat, Aug 15, 8 a.m.** [Grand River Water Ceremony](#), at [Otterbein Kayak Launch](#) in Kitchener. Please arrive on time to walk to the river together and smudge. Wear ceremonial regalia as your spirit calls; drums and shakers are also suggested.
- i. **Sat. Aug 15, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.** [Annual Smoke Dance Celebration](#), Woodland Cultural Centre, 184 Mohawk St., Brantford.
- j. **Sat, Aug 15, 1-4 p.m.,** [Indigenous Branch Opening Ceremony - Hamilton Public Library](#), New West Harbour Branch, 77 Harbourside Way, Hamilton.
- k. **Sat. Aug 15 & Sept 5, 4:30-6:30 p.m.,** Chiefswood Park - Free Music in the Park see: [Things to Do - Adventure awaits at Chiefswood Park](#). 1037 Highway 54, Ohswegen. Free. Food available for purchase.
- l. **Wed, Aug 19, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.** film screening of [The Nature of Healing](#), followed by a Q&A with survivors of the Mohawk Institute. At Grand River United Church, 1585 Mohawk Rd., Ohswegen. Light refreshments provided. Limited seating. See attached poster.
- m. **Thurs, Aug 20, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.** Gihekdagye Friendship Centre is proud to invite you to a very special [Grand Opening](#) as they celebrate the purchase of the building for their Friendship Centre. 274 Colborne St.E., Brantford.

- n. **Fri, Aug 21, 10:30 a.m. - noon.** [Knowing Truth: Tanya Talaga](#) at the Stratford Festival. Meighen Forum series in the Lazaridis Hall, Tom Patterson Theatre.
- o. **Aug 25, 10 a.m. - noon,** Cedar Foot Soak at Nations Uniting. See attached poster.
- p. **Wed, Aug 26, noon - 2 p.m.** Grandmothers' Tea at Grace Anglican Church, 4 Pearl St. Brantford. Potluck lunch and sharing time. Bring your favorite dish and recipe to share. Please bring your plate, cup, and cutlery. For more information contact Doreen at doreenlevett@gmail.com.
- q. **Ending Aug 30.** [Couzyn van Heuvelen: CAMP](#) at [Art Gallery of Guelph](#), 358 Gordon St., Guelph. Free, donations appreciated.
- r. **Mon, Aug 31, 2 p.m and 7p.m.** RC Diocese of Hamilton "Listening to Indigenous Voices" online book study of [Ragged Company](#), by [Richard Wagamese](#). Discussion facilitated by Donna McGreal. To register and for more information contact dwmcgreall@gmail.com.
- s. **to Feb 28, 2027, 5:00 p.m.** [Maawnjidyang Maa – We come together here](#) Guelph Civic Museum, 52 Norfolk Street, Guelph. Cost: \$6.25 Adult.
- t. Other events in your area may be found on [Eventbrite](#).

On the radar

- u. **Mon, Sept 14, 7-9 p.m.** KW and area Ecumenical LIRR meets at MCC offices, Community Room, 50 Kent St., Kitchener. Thanks for the reminder, Verna Friesen.
- v. **Thurs, Sept 17, 7-9 p.m.** [Together for Nature Tour](#). [Ontario Nature](#) and Legal Advocates for Nature's Defence invite you to hear from [Okiniwak](#), [Here We Stand](#), and [the Friends of the Attawapiskat River](#) to amplify the voices of Indigenous youth and land protectors from Northern Ontario. Inuk singer-songwriter [Susan Aglukark](#) will join us on tour.

One of the four stops in Southern Ontario is Kitchener! St Matthews Centre, 54 Benton St. Kitchener. Tickets available [here](#). Want to help out? Spread the word using the attached poster and contact Dorothy at nvecoboosters@gmail.com for volunteer opportunities.
- w. **Wed, Sept 23, noon.** [Free Grassy Narrows](#) River Run Rally, Toronto. See United Church support and transportation options [here](#).
- x. **Wed, Sept 30, 7:30 p.m.** [Logan Staats](#) returns to Emmanuel Concerts, Emmanuel United Church, 22 Bridgeport Rd. W. Waterloo. Tickets through the link.

4. Good Reads, News, Views and Podcasts

a. Reads

- i. [How Western Christianity Got It Wrong: Replacing the God of Fear with a Spirituality of Healing](#) by [Randy Woodley](#). Thank you, Bev McNabb.

b. News

- i. [Leaders of First Nations hit by Ontario wildfires speak out about way climate crises are handled](#) [Sarah Law](#) July 19, CBC News
- ii. [New Kitchener elementary school officially opens](#) Willow River Public School.

c. Views

- i. [Indigenous Stories | CBC Gem](#)
- ii. Book an [imagineNATIVE tour](#) for your group, school, etc.
- iii. Visual of "Indigenous Days of Significance" from July to December 2026, from the Ontario Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and Economic Reconciliation. Please see attached jpg file. Thanks, Henriëtte Thompson.

d. Podcasts - If you know of a podcast focused on Indigenous affairs, let us know! When we have new ones to share, we'll post them here.

- i. Storykeepers <https://www.goodminds.com/pages/storykeepers> Between 2021 and 2023, [GoodMinds.com](#) hosted Storykeepers: Let's Talk Indigenous Books. Waubgeshig Rice and Jennifer David invited a third guest host to discuss a book by an Indigenous author. Each episode is approximately 40 minutes.