

Inspiring people to make a difference

Special to The Nugget

Martha Lucier returned to the homeland of her family this week where she played a role in opening the Peace in Education conference in Budapest.

Martha and Todd Lucier, with two of their children, Emily, 21, and Tim, 13, are in Budapest, Hungary, where Martha helped open the 10th international Spirit of Learning conference.

Spirit of Learning has been held semi-annually and moved around the world.

In 2000, the Luciers attended the inaugural international gathering at Findhorn, Scotland, where they helped develop and orchestrate a closing ceremony for more than 200 delegates.

"It is sometimes challenging to get in front of over a hundred people and guide them to participate in an opening or closing experience, but my decade of training in shamanism and experiences teaching at the Edge have prepared me well to handle such an experience," Martha says. "Also, I know how important these experiences are in helping people who want to make a differ-

ence in the world, so it really doesn't matter if it's one person or 200."

Northern Edge Algonquin, the couple's nature retreat, 20 kilometres east of South River on the edge of Algonquin Park, has been in the news over the past few years.

Despite coverage in the New York Times for their canoe trips and in Maclean's magazine for their spiritual retreats, many people in the Almaguin Highlands are not aware of the couple's stature in international circles.

A few years ago, Todd was a key presenter in Brazil at a gathering for the International Year of Ecotourism.

"Not only do we get invited to travel to take part in a variety of conferences, people travel from across Canada and sometimes internationally to take part in the shamanic learning retreats and medicine for the Earth trainings as well as canoe trips in Algonquin Park."

Northern Edge Algonquin will host an introduction to shamanism program Nov. 20 for people in the Almaguin Highlands.

Leaders and those who aspire to lead are in-

ited to a one-day symposium Jan. 15. Each event is an opportunity to learn to look within for answers to challenges faced by individuals and organizations. Both events will be facilitated by Martha at the nature retreat east of South River.

"We all have power to make a difference in the world. My main task is to inspire people who want to make a difference, to be the change they want to see in the world as Ghandi invited people to do," she says.

Martha's grandfather emigrated from Hungary in the 1930s. She and her family have already had an opportunity to travel in the countryside with a Hungarian relative to visit the home villages where her family roots originated.

They also have visited a number of sites and gone on a cruise on the Danube.

The family plans to stay in Hungary for a few days after the conference to continue learning more about this part of eastern Europe.

To learn more about the upcoming Introduction to Shamanism workshop or Leadership Within symposium, call 386-1595.



Martha Lucier

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