

October 2008

Welcome to the Heron Clan!

I'll start here with the practicalities, so you won't miss them. We will be outside a good deal of the time. **Please bring** good walking shoes and both warm and waterproof outer clothing. Bring a pen and paper for writing. I will bring many 3x5" cards for us to use when larger paper is not convenient.

Make sure to read the regular Twilight Covening letter, and check for any changes since last time. Bring a tasty vegetable for the community soup.

Friday dinner is from 6:30 to 8:30 pm, I hope all of you can be at our clan table for some of that time. The Opening Circle is at 9:00. After that is over (around 9:30), we will all **meet** together at the clan table.

Through out the weekend, we will work together to increase our awareness of the special moments that happen around us all of the time. Beautiful sunsets, amazing flowers, amusing scenes. These occur both as we connect with nature and interact with people.

We will record these, first for our own memory, and then in a concise form that we can convey our experience to others. When writing, we will particularly use the type of short poem called haiku. There is much to learn from the poets that have written well in this form about attention to nature and human nature. These lessons are very valuable even when not writing haiku.

Here are a few examples. Some of you may know this place at Hi Rock, on the island across the floating bridge.

green leaves and needles
with intertwined roots
on one boulder

While commuting on the highway I am still surrounded by nature, writing haiku helps me pay attention.

grassy strip
between off and on ramps
large brown hawk

This is a well known poem from the first master of the form,
Matsuo Basho (1644-1694).

The old pond --
a frog jumps in,
sound of water.

There are a wide range of haiku poets from Japan since his time,
and in the past more than fifty years there are many others writing
in English and other languages. This one is from Wanda Cook, a
contemporary poet living in Amherst.

spring garden
stepping stones
in just the right places

See you soon,

Eric Leventhal Arthen