



# Bek'ésoredlie Yati Kón Lát'e

## Respecting Talk is Like the Sacred Fire

### **Preface:**

This web site is a collection of 16 stories from the Dene (Dene Suline) & Cree (Nêhiyawak) communities in Northwest Saskatchewan . Joseph Naytowhow (Sturgeon Lake, SK), a Cree speaker, has been gathering these stories from Dene and Cree Elders since October of 1995. Saskatchewan Elders say each of the poles of the tipi represent a moral value. Represented in this collection of stories are values borrowed from this model - reflective of both Cree and Dene worldviews. This site has four titles: Cree and Dene with English translations for each. The stories are also in both Dene and Cree with English. Welcome!

### **Elder's Biography:**

Couronne was born in Dillon on September 6, 1922. At the time she was born very few people lived in Dillon. She continues to live there with her husband George who she has been married to for 58 years. They have six children; three daughters and three adopted from extended family members.

Couronne speaks, reads and writes Dene, Cree and English. She was exposed to Cree language as a young person when with her grandparents, they lived beside a Cree family from northern Alberta, during trapping season. While playing with the Cree children Couronne would teach them Dene and in exchange they would teach her how to speak Cree.

Today when she listens to the Aboriginal radio station, Missinipe Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) out of La Ronge, SK she understands the Dene, Cree and English languages that are spoken on the air. She has also been very instrumental in retaining the Dene language in her home community.



# Honéj̄ chu Horegóth

## (Happiness and Freshness)

**Elder's Name:**

**Mrs. Couronne Byhette**

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1. In the spring many of the people from Dillon (Buffalo River Dene Nation) would go trapping for muskrat and beaver. They would leave in April to return during the middle or end of May since the Hudson's Bay Company would usually buy fur up until June. I remember once, in 1968 a group left in a plane (using the frozen river as a winter airstrip) and when they came back all the ice had melted, so they had to travel by canoe. Other times, they'd leave by dog sled and return by canoe.



1. Ł uk'é dé Ejerdesche (Buffalo River Dene Nation) hots'j̄ dene dzen chu tsá kádánj̄dhen ńí. Ts'eli Zaé k'e thédét dé, Egháze Zaé tanj̄ze de nídánadét ńí, ekúhú húj̄ k'odhere tsádhéth nátnígh ho'á. Benasńj̄, j̄táh 1968 k'e, dene

ts'eret'ái yéh hédeť (ten k'e ts'eret'ái k'é ts'et'j̄ nj̄?á), nj̄ts'j̄deť nj̄ ?ú, ten dódí, horelyú naghelghj̄, eyihoť'á ts'i yé nj̄ts'j̄deť nj̄. T'ahhą tth'i ńj̄ k'e ts'edeť dé, ts'i yé nj̄ts'j̄deť nj̄.

2. Once back home, they could usually sell their pelts for a good price. You could earn as much as 50 or 75 cents per muskrat pelt alone. All together you might make 100 dollars and buy enough supplies for the summer time. So springtime became the time of year when there was 'special money' to get special food with; supplies like Robin Hood Flour, Roger's Golden Syrup, sugar, baking powder, bacon, tea and tobacco. These items were not as expensive as they are today. But then, the olden days are not like today either.

2. Bekóé nj̄deť dé, ts'dhéth nezó behghą nánígh nj̄. j̄tághe dzen dhéth s̄olónéna tsątsąne?aze húto, j̄tásdj̄ghe ts'én s̄olághe tsątsąne?aze húto nághenígh nj̄. Horelyú t'á j̄tághe beschené tsba hoťé, eyi bena s̄j̄ne hok'éť'á ha bér nághenígh ńí. Ł uk'é dé, t'asie hok'éch'a náłtsi ńí, Robin Hood ts'j̄ tés yaiyé ?ú, Roger's ts'j̄ dalałsis ?ú, s̄uga ?ú, tésťaghé ?ú, gugós tth'én ?ú, lidí ?ú, ts'ilt'úi dáj̄ náłtsi nj̄. Dúhú k'ésj̄ edhiri t'asie dárétí híle nj̄. Kúlú yanj̄s̄j̄ dúhú ląhhút'e híle nj̄.



3. Ever since I can remember there was a Hudson's Bay Company here in Dillon. Today, there is none. We always managed, back in those days, and our families were happy. We thought we were well off because we would be able to buy a little clothing and the children would be happy when their dads came home from trapping; spring would be in full bloom and ducks and geese would return singing their songs.

3. T'ots'i henasni hots'i eja, Ejeresche k'odheri k'õę hó?ą ni. Dúhú dódí. T'asie hot'á noheba hó?ą hñi, nuheba hodórélya ni. Nuheba súghá dádeniłdhen tñi, nuheskene beheba yú nághilnigh dé. Sekwi tth'i tuk'é,dé, betá iłdzuze hots'i niđánahdeł dé, beheba dórélya tñi. Ł uk'é t'asie dánanilya hét, cheth ?ú, hah tth'i niđét hét dájen ni.

4. It wasn't always lucky for the men when they went trapping and fishing, though. Sometimes they didn't kill many muskrats or beavers. It just depended on the weather. You see, sometimes they had a difficult time trapping because the snow was too deep and they had to set their traps. But finally, when the ice was gone from the rivers and lakes, they would go after the muskrats in canoes and shoot them with little rifles (.22 caliber). They used these small rifles for killing beavers too. Yes, that's how they did it a long time ago.

“...Sometimes they had a difficult time trapping because the snow was too deep and they had to set their traps.”

“ T'ahhą yath ą dé, iłdzuze níralé ha dúe yath ą hot'á iłdzuze níralye ha hóreni híle.”

4. T'ahhi dene iłdzuze chu ąue t'á, hok'étt'á behets'édóreni híle. T'ahhą dzen chu tsá ąą feghárátdé híle tí. T'ahot'e losii begharé déza ni, T'ahhą yath ąą dé, iłdzuze níralé ha dúe yath ąą hot'á iłdzuze níralye ha hóreni híle. Desk'é chu tu k'e ten naghelgi dé, dene ts'i yé (.22) etk'idhe t'á dzén ka, dánidhen tí. Eyi etk'idhe

?aze hot'á tth'i tsá fegháratdel ni. Ekót'u yanizi nakótde ni.

5. Today, my husband and I still live on fresh meat from the bush. Sometimes people give us rabbits and fish. One of my son-in-laws went fishing recently and just today he brought me a lot of fish; whitefish, mariya and fish heads - the old way of life.

5. Dúhú senekwi chu ?atõ ber dedliné t'á ghída si. T'ahhą dene gah chu ąue nugháttí. iłághe súnaghe?aze tabít ghą nághidher hot'á ąue ąac seghą nıla, ąuh ?ú, nídelé ?ú, ąue tthi dáłi, yanize k'ésí.



6. Some of my grandchildren still eat wild food and my girls like it too. Today for lunch we ate the heart of a moose and the stuff from inside its stomach (tripe). My girls call it ‘the rug’ because that’s what it looks like. Even though they have a good jobs and they can buy whatever they want to eat, still they like to eat food from the bush. That is the way we raised them.

6. Nani setukée bér dedłiné dáłkum, seskene t’a ts’ékwi tth’i, kót’i bér dálkum s̄i. Dúhú dz̄idize denie dzié chu denie daghór gh̄a sh̄ilyi s̄i. Seskene níh ts’i tét dáyúshe, eyi ʔahot’i hot’á. Eʔah nez̄o dábets’i ʔú, t’ahhi losii nánik’e yegh̄ashelyi ha nádárelnigh bér dedłiné h̄úti dáłkum. Ekót’u dánetthilya hot’á.