

The LEADer



Rebecca Jim and Michael Scruggs at the spring 2020 NEO College Health Fair

NEO Health Fair

One of the last public events LEAD participated in March was at NEO's 2020 Health Fair held in the Activity Center. Over 20 vendors set up to share information about health and safety with students and the general public. LEAD shared our information and showed many how to use the DEQ's new interactive map to find out if properties test clean for lead or have been cleaned.

COVID-19: WE ARE ALL CHANGED

LEAD Agency Office COVID-19 Policy

The health and safety of our staff mandates that we change our agency business practices during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Beginning March 17, 2020, our office will be closed to visitors. Although we won't be accepting visitors, business will continue with modifications. For now we are working remotely. We may be at the office occasionally, but we are being cautious to not expose ourselves or others.

If you have questions please call 918-542-9399.

You can use either mailing address:

LEAD Agency, 223 A. St. SE, Miami, OK 74354

or 19289 South 4403 Drive, Vinita, OK 74301

We realize that this change is problematic, but the safety of our community must be our priority.



Stay connected: [Facebook](#)
email leadagency@att.net

www.leadagency.org

What Will You Do?

CDC Recommends:

- Wash your hands frequently
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- [Clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched objects and surfaces Be prepared if your child's school or childcare facility is temporarily dismissed or for potential changes at your workplace.
- Keep away from others who are sick Limit close contact with others as much as possible (about 6 feet)
- Take care of the [emotional health](#) of your household members, including yourself



STAY HOME STOP THE SPREAD SAVE LIVES

ASBESTOS - GONE ! LET'S DEMAND MORE

There are lots of reasons to speak out in Ottawa County. Those who know me understand having a soft voice can be a challenge at first, but speaking out can be contagious. Those who Flood are signing our DEMANDS that they are not going to take it anymore! They ARE speaking out, too. There are lots of ways to have your message heard. Everyone who had signed these showed up last **weekend** to meet with the woman who is challenging Senator Inhofe for his seat in Congress. You were there, your name was. Keep signing, and we will keep sharing your messages to any politician coming to town, or to those who will carry them with them to seats of power. We are on a roll.

You say? Yes, we got 25,120.74 tons of asbestos-containing material removed in 1,675 trucks loads and shipped out of here. AND all 53.82 tons of Carbon Black are GONE all done in 166 days. That is power to the people with EPA finding \$4.6 million to serve and protect us. Remember there is more to be done and when you are the Conscience of the County, you would expect the rally cry to begin, get more done, do more at the old BF Goodrich site, finish the investigation, the state must force the companies to DO RIGHT by the people, or move over and allow the EPA to step in and help us determine how much danger the neighbors are in, how much benzene and other chemicals are we talking about, how far have they spread. Who is going to do something about it?

We need to be protected from the next flood and we deserve representatives who will fight for us. We will hold "I Flood I Vote" rally again soon. Need a shirt? We have them.

Sign a Demand. We are LEAD Agency - Local Environmental Action Demanded. These are not appeals, or pleas. We demand and deserve to be protected.

The responsibility lies with each resident in Ottawa County to demand of each other to find out if their property is contaminated with lead in the soil, and if it is to have it removed, both for free by calling the DEQ Hotline. They are not going to be knocking on your door anytime soon, but you can call and ask them to come and take some soil samples, take some samples from gravel driveways. You can be a Conscience of Ottawa County. You can ask your neighbors. We can share the title. We can make our community safer for the children who are going to play in that backyard of yours or want to plant their very own garden. What's that number? 1-800-522-0206.

We are not going to take it anymore. We all have a conscience and we can all muster up some courage to use our voices. But during this time we are all staying inside and protecting ourselves and our community from the COVID19 virus. We all have more time to speak out!

Your Tar Creekkeeper ~ Rebecca Jim

LEAD Agency, Inc.

223 A. St. SE.

Miami, OK 74354

Phone: 918 542-9399

918-256-5269

leadagency@att.net

www.leadagency.org

Board of Directors

Louis "Red" Mathia, president

Grace Goodeagle

Kelda Lorax

Carl Hayes

Roxanne Weldon

Kindel Maymi

James Walkingstick

Executive Director

Rebecca Jim

LEAD Staff

Martin Lively

2nd Yr. VISTA

Lois Lively, AARP—retired

Jamie Chance, WIOA

J. Michael Scruggs

(LEADON / Artist in Garden)

Berkeley Ulrey, Volunteer

Grand Riverkeeper

Tar Creekkeeper

Programs

Tar Creekkeeper - Rebecca Jim

Grand Riverkeeper - Earl L. Hatley

**The LEADER is published quarterly
and special editions**

Riverkeeper and Creekkeeper are registered trademarks and service mark of Riverkeeper, Inc. and is licensed for use herein.

Waterkeeper is a registered trademark and service mark of Waterkeeper Alliance, Inc. and is licensed for use herein.



SPEAK OUT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

From *Your* Grand Riverkeeper—*Earl L. Hatley*



At the time of this writing, I am learning that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has suspended all enforcement of its rules during the COVID-19 outbreak. This was the result of a letter and lobbying by the American Petroleum Institute (API) and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. This is an industry that still enjoys federal & state subsidies and tax breaks without a crisis. Although the price of oil has gone way down and the price for gas at the pump here in Oklahoma is down to \$1.55 p/gal., on my trip to Vermont last week I discovered pump prices from Ohio to Vermont are the same (\$2.35-2.79) as they were when I left there last December. Where else are they receiving the same price for cheaper oil? And, yet, asking for a handout?!

Now, that handout poses a risk to our communities in terms of more air, water and soil pollution that they cannot be held accountable for. And, this is for ALL industry! Question is how will “normal” be restored and what will the “new normal” look like, since the Trump Admin. Has been working hard to de-regulate our environmental protections since day one?

Just in the past two months, new coal ash rules are coming out that change everything we have worked for years to hold industry accountable for the ground and surface water contamination at sites where coal ash from coal-fired power plants are stored (dry landfills and waste water ponds). In Oklahoma, all of these sites (including GRDA) are known to have caused groundwater contamination and most are next to streams (like Grand River). Under proposed rules these sites will take years to require cleanup (if at all), and without public knowledge.



The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is in the process of being rolled back. The first Act in a string of new environmental laws starting in 1969 that started a new wave of government accountability with how our gov't and industry conduct business where there may be possible impacts to human health and the environment. The law requires Environmental Impact Studies where such impacts may be possible. Trump, as a real estate developer, doesn't like this law and is trying to do away with it. The law gets in the way of pipelines and oil, gas and mining development in National Parks and Monuments, *et cetera*.

These are just a few examples, but doing away with enforcement, while it is convenient, is a slippery slope for those of us who do environmental policy work for a living. I spent 40 years working to get the laws that one Administration is getting rid of faster than I ever thought possible. How long will it take us to get back on track, let alone move forward once this Administration is gone? I don't have the answer, but I fear a moderate Democrat administration will be too slow to recover and move us forward with the onslaught of climate change coming at us. We need bold leadership to take climate change head on. If not another pandemic, then climate change will be our next major disaster and we are doing nothing but watching it arrive!!!

HARD FOUGHT RULES HAVE BEEN LOST

“This is an open license to pollute” — Gina McCarthy

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/27032020/coronavirus-covid-19-EPA-API-environmental-enforcement>



ASBESTOS CLEAN UP COMPLETED AT MIAMI BF GOODRICH

The B.F. Goodrich plant, which opened in 1946, was Miami's largest employer for years. But in 1986, Goodrich shut down its operations and abandoned the site, selling it to Michelin who never reopened the plant.

When asbestos was discovered, potentially putting community members at risk at the abandoned plant, ODEQ requested and received immediate response from EPA's Superfund Program. The project was broken into 2 Phases with the highest priority removal and off-site disposal of debris piles and two structures containing asbestos contamination.

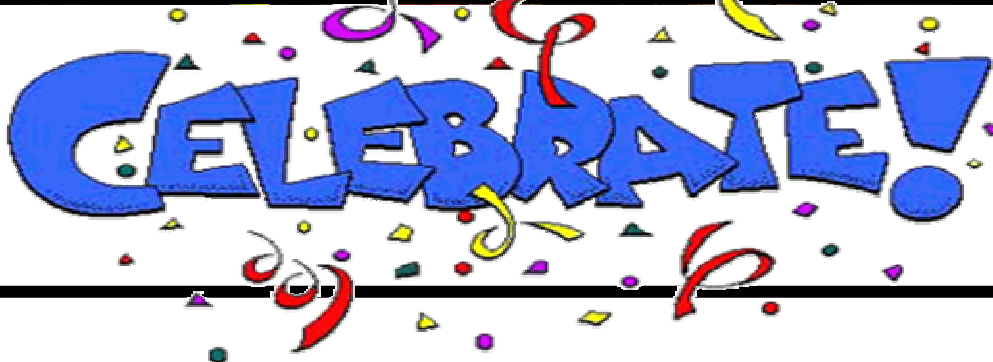
In the second Phase the powerhouse building was abated leaving it a structurally sound building ready for safe reuse. The carbon black was removed and the "iconic Banbury" mixers were left cleaned.

Air monitoring was conducted throughout their 166 days of work to ensure the public and their workers

Oversight was conducted by Mike McAteer, EPA federal on-scene coordinator. Mike had previously been a Project Manager for the Tar Creek Superfund Site and has recently received a LEAD Agency Mike Synar Environmental Excellence Award.



Carbon Black was removed from the BF Goodrich site.



Total Cost:
\$4.6 Million

Days: 166

Truck Loads:
1675

Waste:
25,120 tons

Carbon Black:
53.82 tons

Personnel:
Phase 1 - 14
Phase 2 - 28

OUR COMMUNITY SHOWED APPRECIATION

Beginning last November and continuing until the EPA crew finished the cleanup at the Miami BF Goodrich site, the appreciation team LEAD Agency organized showered the local crew with homemade cookies and fresh hot donuts. Some of the team-members had never participated in any previous LEAD efforts, but this one hit home and volunteers came forward. A grateful bunch of community members showed their love to strangers who were putting their lives on the line each day to make our community safer. They did what we could not do. EPA brought teams trained in safe asbestos removal to remove the 25,000 tons of waste from our neighborhood and haul it away in 1,675 truck loads. Martha Jordan, Debbie East, Carla Lillie, Elaine Irvin were just a few who teamed up to sweeten the lives of these workers. The students of Miami's Academy made batch after batch of cookies at the LEAD kitchen.

The Project Manager at the site, Mike McAteer was not new to our issues, as he had also served as a Project Manager for the Tar Creek Superfund Site many years ago. McAteer was moved by the gestures made by members of the community and stated he had never experienced that much appreciation in his whole career with the EPA from any community.



The managers and the crew were motivated in

The cleanup project at the BF Goodrich site for asbestos was sleek and almost stealth, operating long hours including Saturdays all those months, creating no controversies.



their work by simply looking across the street to see a Head Start, an elementary and the only middle school in town. In all 900 children went to school so close to the dangerous substance they were cleaning up. They saw children walking by after school to the houses in the neighborhood across the street. They saw the buses pass by during warm weather with the windows down. The final celebration was held just days before the work was successfully completed.

With the help of neighbors, and the Miami Academy LEAD Agency held a home cooked meal for the crew at the Northwest Baptist Church. The church is visible from the BF Goodrich property and was gracious to allow us to host the EPA for the day.

Community members brought place settings from their homes for each of the dinner tables and each of the menu items were homecooked



favorites. The Miami Academy decorated with quotes from letters they had written the previous year requesting a cleanup for the site.

LEAD Agency's board President Louis "Red" Mathia former Miami Mayor and a former employee at the BF Goodrich site welcomed the group.

Neighbors joined us in giving a heartfelt thanks for a job well done and work that will protect our community.

The secret of success is constancy of purpose. Benjamin Disraeli

Grand Lake

normal
surface
elevation of
745 feet
covers
45,200 acres
stores app.
1,680,000
acre-feet
of water.
650 miles of
shoreline &
extending
66 miles

Senator Inhofe:

We didn't elect you to **flood** us.

**When Grand Lake levels are high,
our community suffers.**

Call **202-224-4721** demand the removal of section 6021 from the NDAA

Learn more at leadagency.org or call **918-542-9399**

**LEAD Agency did not know this billboard
would be used by politicians during this
election season running against the Senator**

Scott Kreeger allowed LEAD to cover his Pizza Hut billboard on Main Street with the Allen Sign Studio and Waterkeeper Alliance designwork which was funded by a small grant from the **Anthrocephene Alliance-Higher Ground**, an organization which is dedicated to helping flood victims throughout the country. The group also donated a number of shirts with the slogan, **I Flood and I Vote** while the phrase "LEAD Agency has my back" can be found literally on the back of the shirts.

YOUR STORIES AND EXPERIENCES TOUCH OUR HEARTS



Carol McCool — *It's like this is the norm. But this is not normal. I didn't think I was going to survive this one. There just wasn't any hope. I don't know what else to do — where to begin now. When I get done dealing with this mess, I will come up fighting. This can't go on. The people who help are frustrated. I don't want to be here anymore, but I have never been offered a buy-out.*

Mary Daugherty — *7 months after the flood that left my home destroyed the Catholic Charities called to ask if there was any unmet needs. It was then I asked for beds with real mattresses and springs. A few days later a big truck pulled up outside bringing them and all the bedding to go with it.*

My grandchildren lost all their toys, one of my sons lost all of his tools, and in the aftermath of the flood and being homeless, one of my sons passed away and there has been no money for a real service to honor him yet.

Natasha McKibben—*This was a time when we should have been celebrating my sons' birthday not worrying about where we were going to sleep and if the water was going to reach our home. It was horrific; no amount of words can express.*

CHECK OUT THE USGS MIAMI OK WEBSITE

I Flood and I Vote Rally

LEAD encourages each area resident to contact Senator Inhofe to convince him to protect Miami and the surrounding area from flooding that can and will probably occur when the lake level rises at Grand Lake.

Senator Inhofe had submitted an amendment into the National Defense Authorization Act that could put more people at risk of local flooding. **The First I Flood and I Vote Rally** was held at noon in February with speakers including Miami's Mayor Schultz speaking in the street.



LEAD's months-long efforts to appeal to Senator Inhofe began with the Christmas Parades in Miami and Picher with over 100 postcards mailed to his office following the parades.

LEAD suggests each resident check out the flood map at the USGS website to see what flooding may affect your property or how you navigate during flooded times.

Flooding is destructive and disruptive to communities as well as individuals and businesses. But when Tar Creek floods, there are additional issues with the metal contamination spread throughout the reach of the water!

Citizens are signing petitions
demanding to be protected.
They are not going to take it anymore



FLOODING
TAKES A TOLL
ON EACH OF
US, AS WHAT
HAPPENS TO
ONE AFFECTS
US ALL. BE
PATIENT, DRY
WEATHER WILL
COME. HELP A
NEIGHBOR OR
THE GENTLE
SOULS YOU
NEVER MET

LEAD Agency has copies of the remarkable book **Disaster: Flood & Ice**. Miami High School poetry, essays and artwork inspired by what they endured during the ice and flood in 2007. Read it and get a copy



Who'll Stop the Rain ... Creedence Clearwater Revival

TOXIC TOURS & VISITORS



Earl Hatley, LEAD's Grand Riverkeeper conducted a Toxic Tour for a group of entrepreneurs looking at Ottawa County for areas that would be viable for planting hemp and using biochar for remediation and for alternative renewable energy and sustainably sourced products that could then be produced in the county.

Hatley also conducted the Oklahoma portion of the Toxic Tour for the Emporia State University faculty and students on their bi-annual visit to the area. One of the last stops on that tour was at the site of our now famous billboard!



*Emporia State University Professor of Geology **Marcia Schulmeister** and her students chose specimens for their mineral collections from the gifts Dale Allen had donated to LEAD Agency.*

The Emporia State University students were hosted by LEAD Agency for dinner and a movie at our office, with half of the students actually doing a "sleep-over!" in the office.

Michael Scruggs prepared both dinner and an early breakfast for all those attending. What movie? "Tar Creek" of course!

Rebecca Jim explained how LEAD's environmental justice efforts impacts our community and helps protect the health of our residents, especially the very young. She explained and demonstrated the way the XRF in our lab is used to give back information on the toxic metals that can be found in our local environment.

The group's efforts ended with conducting one last sample collection to take back to the labs at the university before the bi-annual visit ended. Each of the students who came previously had graduated and all were working in environmental careers. We hope this group is that inspired!



Teach your children that the earth is our mother. — Chief Seattle

Ottawa County Residents: Do you use well water?

How **safe** is your
WELL WATER
to drink?



**Get it tested.
Testing is
FREE!**

LEAD Agency will be partnering with Indian Health Service and the DEQ to survey rural residents in Northeastern Ottawa County about well water use.

There have been wells in that area that have tested high in lead recently.

Allow testing of your well for lead, bacteria and other contaminants.

NEW DEQ Yard Remediation MAP Now Digital

Go to the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality website, scroll down to Citizens and click on Yard Remediation. Suddenly you will see Ottawa County and a multitude of pink dots. Each dot indicates the yard or gravel driveway has been remediated or has tested clean for lead. Get your own pink dot call to get on the list :

[DEQ](#) Hotline **1-800-522-0206**

**Use the same number to
REPORT POLLUTERS!**



**GET YOUR YARD
TESTED AND
CLEANED UP FOR A
SAFE YARD/GARDEN**

**ALL RESIDENTIAL
YARDS IN OTTAWA
COUNTY CAN BE
TESTED FOR FREE.**





LIFE GOES ON WITH TWO WHEELS

Miami has one fewer car on the road since our VISTA Martin Lively gave his car away and has been winter and spring already with only his bicycle as his means of transportation. Living the life as a fossil fuel fighter? No, actually he just loves to be on a bicycle and prefers it!



LOIS LIVELY RETIRES

Lois Lively helped us thank the EPA, but as she retires from LEAD Agency, WE have lots of reasons to THANK HER! She brought her many talents and insight and was a great help from day one.

Almost as soon as she left us she began using one of her many talents making masks for the hospital. We are grateful for her time with us and for the AARP program.



LEAD's ESSENTIAL WORK

Food Production is essential. As I watch the news, I hear all the talk about essential workers going into harm's way. Honestly I may be jaded because I grew up in a family of Police officers, firefighters, nurses and veterans. But to me this is a very normal thing to do. Go into a potentially dangerous and life threatening situation. Watching and hearing the news people talk calling the essential workers *Heroes*. It made me think and realize here at the LEAD Agency our volunteers are Heroes. More than anyone realizes Our volunteers go into areas that are Toxic! Full of poison, heavy metals. Areas that the ground is unstable that could give way under our feet. We can Die from this. And yet we do it. The work that will save people's lives, children's lives from being poisoned. So I say it's ok to stand a little taller walk with a little swagger and pat each other on the back. We the Volunteers of LEAD are Heroes. Even if no one else believes it. — **Michael Scruggs**



While social distancing but taking in the beautiful weather, Kate Tunks of Commerce Middle School spent time being an essential volunteer. Making repairs to the Bottle Bed in LEAD's Community Garden.

"NOTHING WILL WORK UNLESS YOU DO." – MAYA ANGELOU

22nd National Environmental Conference at **TAR CREEK** Sept. 14-16, 2021

See you next September at NEO!

We will be renewing old friendships and making new friends with WMAN

Make plans to attend.. Catch up on Tar Creek,
BF Goodrich, Flooding, Climate Change, Lead
and Health Impacts on Humans,
our Birds, Pollinators and Fish



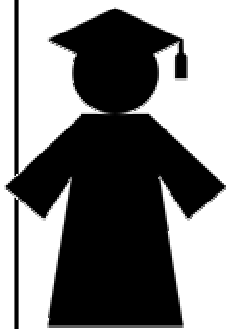
Save the Date

*LEAD is Seeking Sponsorships for this important event
Contact us if you would like to be a sponsor*

LEAD's 2020 Scholarship

LEAD Agency announces our \$250 Scholarship for 2020 graduating high school seniors.

Funding for the annual scholarship is raised from the Silent Auction held during our fall National Tar Creek Conference. We remain grateful for those who give items for the auction and those who bid to help fund this cause.



Application for the Scholarship is located on our website. This year's high school graduates from Commerce, Miami, and Quapaw may apply until August 1.

Award will be announced early in September.

Want to Help LEAD Agency?

Just Select

Local Environmental Action Demanded
on amazonsmile & each purchase helps

**Support
LEAD Agency, Inc..**

When you shop at smile.amazon.com,
Amazon donates.

[Go to smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)

amazonsmile

Choose *goodsearch* as a search engine and
each search will raise a penny for LEAD

 **goodsearch**

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STARTS WITH YOU

GARDEN TALK — KELDA LORAX

It is a great solace to watch a robin couple build their nest in the elm by my back porch. Yesterday I saw some geese fly north, due north, exactly as the long side of our high tunnel indicates. The sound of them even startled 6-year-old Gela out of the house, "Mom I heard something amazing out here!"

This time of year, when we're so excited for everything to be happening at once, I think a lot about **phenology**, the study of when things happen in relation to other things. There are probably textbooks that describe it academically, but for me it means learning what happens when.

"The asparagus comes up when the redbuds bloom" has been incredibly helpful for me in the past. It's an observation I noted one year that has stayed generally true. Why is it helpful? Because the redbuds blooming is a big obvious thing. The asparagus, on the other hand, with my extensive mulched over, winter bedded gardens, is hard to see and I can easily miss it. So I see the redbuds bloom and I go scampering to toss leaves and mulch off of my many asparagus beds so we can find and eat them!

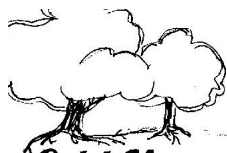
Another one that may (or may not) hold true for future years: the crickets started up with their nightly sojourn about the same time that a frog laid her eggs in our pond. Again, one is more noticable, so next year the sound of the nightly crickets can send us examining the pond edge.

Not so much in the realm of guessing, I share a calendar I cold during Cold Moon, and not again, the redbuds I got right. what you notice each moon!



phenology as much as phenomenon-made this year. So far it was not very all that windy during Wind Moon, but Clip out the calendar and let me know

Stardust Market Garden supplies fresh organically-grown produce to the general Ottawa * Delaware County areas. Contact me at 253-370-9946, I'll let you know what's fresh, and we'll figure out a time for delivery or pickup. I'll also let you know my system for packing produce as sanitarilly as possible.



Green Country's Lunar Year 2020



In Central Time Zone, adjusted for Daylight Savings
Made by Kelda Lorax at DivineEarthGP.com

Cold Moon

Jan 15:42 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 Feb 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22

Wind Moon

Feb 9:32 25 26 27 28 29 Mar 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

Redbud Moon

Mar 4:28 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 Apr 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21

Storm Moon

Apr 21:26 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 May 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21

Berry Moon

May 12:39 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 Jun 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

Firefly Moon

Jun 1:42 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 Jul 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19

Swim Hole Moon

Jul 12:35 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 Aug 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17

Katydid Moon

Aug 21:41 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 Sep 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

Monarch Moon

Sep 6:00 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 Oct 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

Spider Moon

Oct 14:31 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 Nov 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Frost Moon

Nov 23:07 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 Dec 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Long Nights Moon

Dec 10:17 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 Jan 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

*

New
Moons

Holidays

Full
Moons

IN THE TIME OF PANDEMIC



And people stayed home
and read books and listened
and rested and exercised
and made art and played
and learned new ways of being
and were still
and listened more deeply
someone meditated
someone prayed
someone danced
someone met their own shadow
and people started thinking differently----
And people healed...



And in the absence of people who lived in ignorant ways
dangerous, mindless, and heartless....
The earth began to heal---
And when the danger ended
and people found themselves...
They grieved for the dead
and they made new choices
and dreamed of new visions
and created new ways to live
and heal the earth fully
just as they had been healed.



[Kitty O'Meara](#) — A retired teacher from Lake Mills, Wisconsin
How appropriate for today. This poem was written for this pandemic. \

This poem has been falsely credited as being written in 1869.

**LEAD AGENCY, INC.
223 A. ST. S. E.
MIAMI, OK 74354**

*Have a cup of coffee and check out our website or
our Facebook page.*

918-542-9399 WWW.LEADAGENCY.ORG

