

# *The* METAPHYSICAL TIMES

*are here!*



Winter 2014  
Volume IX Issue 5

## *Winter Solstice Edition*

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# EVENTS

## 2014

### SYRACUSE, NY

#### Making Spirits Bright:

#### *A Reiki Solstice Celebration of Sound & Light*

Saturday, December 20th from 1-4 pm

at Infinite Light Center for Yoga & Wellness

Open to all Reiki Practitioners

\$30 (\$25 for CNYRA members)

Info & registration: [www.InfiniteLightCenter.com](http://www.InfiniteLightCenter.com)

### DEWITT, NY

Dec. 27 & 28

Shoppingtown Mall

## 2015

### ROME, NY

Jan. 17 & 18, Sat. 10-7, Sun.. 11-6

#### *The Biggest Little Psychic Fair*

126 Liberty St. (Elk's Club)

### LIVERPOOL, NY

Feb. 21, 22, 23

#### **25th Anniversary of**

Syracuse Psychic Fair

Holiday Inn (Electronics Pkwy)

### EAST SYRACUSE, NY

AMY'S SLUMBER PARTY 92QFM

Feb 20-21, Double Tree Hotel,

### UTICA PSYCHIC FAIR

March 21-22, Sat. 10-7, Sun. 11-5

Holiday Inn, Burrstone Rd.,

Utica, NY

### CANASTOTA, NY

April 11 & 12

Greystone Castle, 201 N. Main St.,

### WATERLOO, NY

April 25 & 26 10-7

Holiday Inn

### CLAYTON, NY

May 2 & 3 Clayton Opera House

## *Rambling Along the Metaphysical Path*

by Georgia E. Warren

*Publisher, Metaphysical Times*

## “Happy Holidays,” I say.

I’m one of those people who says “Happy Holidays.” I’m not trying to be *politically correct*. I just like to celebrate all the *Winter Solstice* Holidays.

The *Winter Solstice*, *Yule*, *Yalda*, *Lohri*, *Koliada*, *Hanukkah*, *Christmas*, *Kwanzaa*, *New Year’s Eve* *New Year’s Day*, *Greek Orthodox Christmas*, *Russian Orthodox Christmas*, *Saturnalia*... I will celebrate all of them *and more*.

I first began being excited about the winter holidays when I was a little kid and realized that the first day of winter was REALLY the last day that the hours of daylight were getting shorter and that in a day or so we would have more daylight and spring was coming once again.

Daylight and the thought that Spring were coming again was better than gifts, Christmas trees, big holiday meals. Spring... Spring was better to little kid Georgia than Santa Claus.

I was lying in my bed just a little while ago imagining what it must have been like to be a prehistoric person seeing the days get shorter and shorter as well as the temperature going down. How frightened I would have been to watch the crops freeze, the trees seeming to die, the ground harden up. How hard I would have worked to keep a fire going, wondering if I lost my fire whether I could get it back. How much food would be enough if the days just kept getting shorter and shorter until night and the cold would take over my world snuff out my life as well as my fire?

How many years, how many generations would there be before we would trust the winter solstice? How many years and generations while we had only **hope**, not **trust** or **knowledge** that the sun would stop running away and start to come back home.

Of course the prehistoric Georgia would have celebrated. It would be a miracle of light and hope and joy. Whether I was a Punjab celebrating *Lohri*, an ancient Eastern European celebrating *Koliada*, or from the northern areas of the Roman empire celebrating *Saturnalia* or a Christian celebrating *Christmas*, these days as my Sun started to come home would be a miracle worth celebrating with food and presents for the hope of the coming seasons.

At 6:03 P.M. EST on December 21st 2014 I will ring a bell. “That’s my thing.” I will open myself to **trust** the coming Spring. I will see in my mind the Pear blossoms, the Daffodils, the early Asparagus and this vision in my mind will be *my miracle and my best Holiday present*.

Happy Holidays my Friends,  
Georgia

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### PUBLISHERS

David S. Warren & Georgia E. Warren

For sales or information:

[sales@metaphysicaltimes.com](mailto:sales@metaphysicaltimes.com)

or mail, POB 64 Aurora, NY 13026

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# Winter Solstice Issue

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DECEMBER, 2014

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We have updated the look of the Metaphysical Times digital magazine,  
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images that pop up to go directly to that article, the events calendar, or index



# Escape from Christmas

by David S. Warren

From the time I was seven or eight years old, I would get sick most every Christmas. I suppose it started with my loss of faith in Santa Claus, and my disappointment at not getting the big gifts I wanted. What greedy child would be happy with a ukulele when he had hoped for a guitar?

*After all, it isn't  
like I asked for a  
pony!*



Other than that ukulele, the only Christmas present I remember right now, was the miniature “spy” camera I got in my stocking when I was fifteen, and never used until I took it along on my junior year abroad in Austria.

For the Christmas/New Year holiday that year John Irving, Eric Ross, and I had booked a room in the Postmaster’s pension, right at the foot of the ski slopes at Kaprun, which had very little snow cover at the time. If any spy photos from that ski trip had survived, they would have shown broken skis.



Because of the poor snow at Kaprun and just about anywhere in Austria that year .... a year of winter olympics in Salzburg ... we three left Kaprun temporarily, taking the bus to the train to a town further up range, where we caught another bus that took us up a long steep valley to a hamlet built around the terminal base for a gondala the size of a railroad car that was used for pulling timber off the slopes of a long draw that was another twenty miles up a roadless swath to a lodge at the foot of Grossglockner, the highest mountain in Austria. From the lodge, you could walk up the talus slope and ski back the lodge, or ski the twenty miles down valley under the gondola line.

There was plenty enough snow under Grossglockner, but it was so cold up there, that as soon as we could step outside the lodge and put our skis on, we had to take them off and go back in for tea with rum.

The next day we took the gondala, the bus, the train, then a bus again, back to our rooms in the Postmaster’s pension at the foot of Kaprun’s milder mountain, where we tried to ski again, despite the nearly naked slopes.

I hit a fence while falling in an attempt to avoid some bare rock. I broke one ski ... which is as effective as breaking both.

We three took a break from trying to ski. We ate, slept, and drank. We took steam baths. When it snowed a little bit, and they didn't plow the streets of Kaprun, we held on to the rear bumpers of unsuspecting cars, and skidded around the streets on our boot heels.

Alone on foot Christmas eve, I strolled around Kakprun, and stopped to watch a church service from outside the doors, which were wide open and imploring.

Why was I ... why AM I ... suddenly smelling butterscotch cookies? Is that priest fueling the incense burner with butterscotch cookies? Are butterscotch cookies the communion wafers in this church?

No, it is just the pungent memory of Christmas Past:

The Christmas eve when my Sunday school teacher Mister Hutter had invited us kids out to his farm. It was probably not functioning as a farm then, though I suppose there were chickens, because Mr. Hutter was a poultry science professor, remembered for having developed the famous Cornell Barbecue sauce, which is still used by many a fire department at fundraisers. We were invited to the farm on Christmas Eve in order to wrap gifts of toys and food, which

we would put in baskets that we snuck onto the porches or front steps of the local, rural poor ... then running back to the car, parked just out of sight.

When we got back to the farm house after a few such raids, Mrs. Hutter was baking butterscotch cookies. The smell of hot sugar hit me with such a Tsunami of nausea that, right there in the kitchen, I lost my cookies before I could even eat them.

I don't know if there were any actual butterscotch cookies anywhere near me that Christmas eve in Kaprun, but with odor ghosts threatening invisibly and Church bells all around ringing, I hurried back to the Postmaster's pension.

It snowed a little more the day after Christmas, so I rented a pair of skis.

But on my last run ... a little too late in the day to notice some bare granite ... I broke another ski.

So the next day Eric and I checked out of the pension again, collected the several days of lunch sandwiches we had already paid for at the hotel, and headed off hitch-hiking toward the sunny coast of Italy.

The first day we were passed by truck after truck, carrying snow from the peaks to Salzburg for the olympics.

We got very few rides that first day and ended up sleeping in a corn crib ... which was enough of that sort of thing for Eric. He turned around and hitched back to Kaprun the next day.

I myself detoured to Germany and look up Peter Kruger, a German friend at the University in Stuttgart.

I hitched only so far as the next town and went the rest of the way to Stuttgart by rail arriving late on New Years Eve.

The university was not in session and I couldn't find Peter Kruger in the phone directory.

With help at the railroad station I found a room in a household a short walk away.

Outside the pension, a jolly group of roving students saw me with my rucksack and invited me along, but I declined, and checked into the pension about fifteen minutes before midnight. The Frau put me in my room abruptly, then went back to her family celebration.

At midnight I watched the fireworks from my window.

Next day, I bought a train ticket to Vienna.

But the train wouldn't leave for another six hours, so I sat down in the station restaurant and ordered a bowl of Liver Dumpling Soup: a grey broth with a grey, fist-sized

dumpling half sunk in the middle of it ... a homely comfort food for which I often stopped in for at the Westbahnhof station near my room Vienna .

The only other person eating there at the time was a kindly smiling older man who asked if I was an American and where my travels were taking me and if I was a fan of The Reader's Digest. Learning that I had to wait six hours for my train, he invited me to his apartment for tea and to look at his Reader's Digest collection.

So O.K. I was young, far cuter than I am now, innocently appealing, and ignorant.

His room had a cot, a chair, and a hot plate. He made tea, and we sat on his cot to read a Most Unforgettable Character story... which I don't remember.

He put his hand on my thigh and I lifted it off. Though his advance was a surprise to me, the scene was not as awkward as it might have been ...unless it was more awkward than I remember ... but I do remember clearly that my friend said he guessed it wasn't his lucky day; and I think we even read another Most Unforgettable Character or Life In These United States articles.

When my train time came near, I left politely and went back to grey Vienna with its bare streets and liver dumpling soup at the Westbahnhof.



Now, as I recall the year in Austria ... I realize that I actually DIDN'T get sick that Christmas.

*I don't want a pony anymore, I have a guitar,  
and too much other stuff, but I have been  
ill for the last two Christmases, and I may be ill  
again this Christmas too. I'll stay home,  
and you can go shopping if you wish to.*



# The Longest Night

The slow light of autumn has given way to the shorter days of winter. Late season greens huddle under assorted tarps in the garden awaiting their fates. The first serious snow of the season is bending the brown leafed stalks of perennials, reaffirming gravity. Just last week I was scurrying around like a squirrel stashing garden tools, tomato cages and other potential obstacles, getting ready for this first snow. The "winter preparation list" has mostly been whittled down; the firewood is under cover, the harvest is pretty much done, the snow shoes and shovels are within reach and the slippery slope of winter is truly before us as the longest night approaches.

Winter Solstice has always been my favorite of the "Old Holidays". It holds an undeniable peacefulness during a time that has become quite a minefield for so many many of us. The old hustle and bustle of gift hunting has become too stressful to be pleasant. Many of us are trying to simplify our lives and clear out things we no longer need, on many levels. Some of us are struggling due to economic changes. For many of us, the important "things" in life are no longer things.

At our house the longest night is usually celebrated with a really good meal made with as many home grown foods as we can include. Candlelight and music fill the house. The pets get extra goodies with their dinners. The feeders get filled late in the day to provide early morning sustenance for the yard birds and squirrels and any "wild-lings" in our care get fed, cleaned, and tucked in early. I usually get outside for a short time to listen for signs of night life, smell the clean cold air, and appreciate the beauty I am so fortunate to live amongst. Frequently we get something special from the library to watch later on in the evening.

These customs are distilled down from many seasons. To this day I can recall the scent of the "Christmas Tree" sales lot from a late night visit to buy a tree with my dad (probably I "got to go along" so my Mom could enjoy a few peaceful moments). Annually I gather assorted evergreen boughs and duplicate that scent in the house for the holiday season. I also recall car trips with my family around various neighborhoods to look at lights and displays people created, and I still do that too. Some of my fondest childhood memories of this season are linked to creativity. The preparations and decorating were

very home made in my growing up time. Sharing of time with loved ones was also a major feature, during the preparations as well as the celebrations. Sure, there were many much loved gifts and trinkets, but the celebration and spirit of the season are what remain with me, and I know that is true for many of my friends. It's the people we love and the comfort of our memories and traditions, that make whatever circumstances we find ourselves in manageable.

Annually I make jellies and relishes to share at holiday time. I am grateful to have a talents to share and I am hopeful that others will share some of their talents with me in this season of exchanges. Works of the hand and heart are always great treasures to receive. I encourage everyone to spend some time pondering what gifts and talents they have that might make a meaningful gift for friends and family. A gift made or purchased with caring intentions is always appreciated. One year a group of friends pooled resources and purchased a seasons worth of snow plowing and walk shoveling for an elderly friend who had no family near by to help her. It made her winter safer, more manageable, and helped support a small seasonal business.

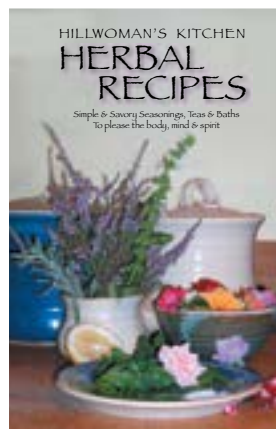
The longest night is also a time to contemplate hopeful winter plans. I used to sign up for a couple of classes every winter, some years a new craft was learned, other years it was yoga or Tai Chi. Recently a list of "non-credit classes" at the local community college was published in the local newspaper. Many libraries also have programs scheduled. Carpooling can keep the night driving from being a challenge. The slower pace of winter creates a space to focus on new skills or revisit old ones.

Winter is the season when we feel the need to stay closer to the fire. That could mean the wood stove, the kitchen hearth, or a warm "den" in which to nurture a small but passionate ember into something that will bring beauty and joy into the world we all share. It can also be a time out, to hibernate and re-energize ourselves with an appreciation for the earthly beauties, supportive loves, and gentle blessings that surround us each day.

*Be thankful each day  
for the fire in your hearth  
and the fire in your heart.*

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# Our Christmas Miracle Christmas 2000



by Cindy Griffith Bennett

Let me tell you about the snowy Christmas Day that we were blessed by a healing visit from a true Christmas Angel and the miracle that she blessed us with. We now know that miracles do happen and that if you are open to receiving, they can come at any time! I give you a little background, so you can understand the blessing we received that day! Dave was recently diagnosed with Stage 4 lung and bone cancer. Radiation 5 days a week and once a week Chemotherapy treatments had been leaving him quite drained.

The Doctors have not been able to tell Dave how much time he had left, so we are looking at an optimistic ten year plan, yet at the same time taking care of his affairs. Many people have been offering us their healing advice. We have gotten suggestions ranging from jumping up and down on a trampoline to this very healing Essiac Tea! Because the cancer in the spinal column has deteriorated Dave's top three discs, we have decided not to go the trampoline route! Due to a near-death experience a number of years ago, Dave has a good connection to Spirit and has been able to sift through all the well meaning suggestions and take what works best for his healing.

Now back to the story. Because both radiation and chemotherapy treatments deplete the white blood cells that help fight infection, if Dave gets sick, he wouldn't have the ability to fight off the infection. It would be silly to die of pneumonia while healing his cancer! We all know that not only is Christmas a time of sharing love, it is also known as a time of sharing germs (especially from the wonderfully loving children in the family). Now don't get me wrong, I love the little ones, yet we decided that Christmas with the family was not in our best interest this year. I knew that I probably could of gone myself, but I really didn't want to leave Dave alone for Christmas Day. As the 6 hour round trip and few hour visit would take most the day, I made plans to go down the day after Christmas. Most of the family would still be there, but all the extra visitors would not. This was the first Christmas in my 39 years that I had missed!

Now family guilt, self inflicted or not, is one of the worst types. I called a number of times through the day and with all the "We miss you!" and "We are running behind schedule, you always keep us on track!", the guilt kept piling on! About 5pm, Christmas night, the phone rang. Now, I get a lot of clients calling for appointments, so on days I am not working, I usually screen my calls. For some unknown reason, this time I just automatically picked up the phone.

"Hi Cindy" said the unidentified voice. As she kept talking I recognized the English accent as this very sweet massage therapist that specializes in Tai Massage. "Have you ever heard of Padre Pio?" I told her that I had visited Padre Pio's when I made a trip to Italy. I knew that Padre Pio was born in the late 1800's and was the only 20th century person that had received the stigmata, the wounds that Christ had experience on the cross. He lived until the 1960's. Padre Pio was known for his compassion and healing works. He also was known to bi-locate (be in two places at once). It is documented where during the second world war, the air force was going to accidentally bomb an area that was occupied by allies. The fighter pilots reported a monk appearing in the air, in front of the plane, motioning for them to go back. They were so scared that they did go back and the disaster was averted! She then asked me if I had heard about the healing miracles that happened around a glove of Padre Pio's. This I was unaware of. She offered to put another woman on the phone to tell me about it.

The woman had a very sweet and calming voice. It turns out that she is a local television personality, known for her beauty inside and out. She started to tell me about Padre Pio's glove. It seems when the priest that used to be a custodian of Padre Pio in Italy returned to his parish in Brooklyn, New York, he was given two of the gloves that Padre Pio had worn to keep the blood from the Stigmata wounds from dripping on the floor. These gloves were considered a sacred object and known to have healing properties. There were multiple stories of how the glove had healed the parishioners of this Brooklyn church. One thing that helps support this claim is the uncanny and beautiful rose scent that emanates from the glove. It grows stronger and weaker, yet is always present.





She continued to tell me that the Priest kept one glove for himself and gave one to his sister. The sister felt that it really should be available for all to benefit from. She figured that the parking lot attendant knew everyone from the parish, so he would be the best guardian for the glove. The glove shares a box with a sheet that came from Padre Pio's bed, a book that people write to Padre Pio in and one of those famous double image pictures of Padre Pio that changes as you tilt the picture from side to side! The Parking attendant's little booth used to be a shrine to Frank Sinatra, but now Frank shares his glory with Padre Pio! The Attendant gives the Box full of healing goodies to who ever needs it. There is a waiting list which the woman on the other end of the phone had somehow gotten on and so now, on Christmas eve, she had received the glove for two whole days! Our English friend had told her about Dave's cancer and she had called to see if Dave would like to touch the miraculous glove.

Well, Dave was tired from a visit earlier in the day and when I mentioned that, the woman kindly offered to come to us. Now, for those of you that don't know where we live, it is known as Windy Hill! Our place used to be a cross country ski resort on top of a high hill that is often buffeted with lake effect snow. We were currently getting hit with a snow storm. The land lord was out of town so the drive hadn't been plowed. She still was willing to make the trip! We gave her directions and, an hour and a half later, via cell phone, we guided her into our hard to find driveway!

The stranger arrived, covered with snow and bearing a canvas tote. We sat in our living room and she pulled out a wooden box with a little picture of Padre Pio on the top. She gently opened it and took out the picture, a little book and then gently brought out the glove. At first I was surprised. It was a little tiny brown glove with no fingers in it. It looked like a glove you would see on a homeless person. The funny thing to me was that it was so simple. You would think it would be ornate or at least a little bigger! Padre Pio was a large man. I remembered seeing his slippers when I saw his monk cell in Italy. They were so big!

The little brown glove had a simple metal cross gently sown onto the top side. Later, when I turned it over, I saw that someone had sown a tiny piece of cloth with a little "x" in the place that must have been where the hand wound from the stigmata was. The amazing thing to us was the aroma that came from it. Anyone that smelled this rose scent could tell you that it's like no other rose smell you had ever smelled. You couldn't recreate it even with the best of oils or perfume. The sheet from his bed also had that scent. The sheet was in a little plastic bag, but the glove was naked except for the cross sown to it.

Dave put the glove in his hand and you could just feel the calm that came over him. This is how he explained it to me. "At first, I just sensed a type of love similar to what I feel when I touch my near death. When

I touched the glove I was feeling with my heart and not my mind. I could feel my heart opening up and feeling that light and love. I could feel both Spirit and human emotion because it was vast amounts of unconditional love. It is like going back into the light a little bit, not all the way. In order to experience the near death you have to accept that light back. And I have been having trouble keeping my heart open and working with my light and love because of the physical fatigue and drug induced emotions. But as I stroked the glove it felt like some of the barriers were just melting away and the light in my heart was just able to open and shine as bright as ever. Well, I could just say that my spirit was singing. Spirit gets in this joyous frame of (not mind but) Spirit. When Spirit is joyous, it feels like a song in your heart, and it interacts with your human emotions. It just brings tears to the corners of the eyes. It gets you a little choked up. You can feel it emanate through out your whole body. It isn't just your heart that expands, it expands through out your entire body physically."

As our new friend told Dave the glove's story and how she ended up with it, he sat and stroked the sacred glove as it lay in his right hand. Later he told me he could actually feel the glove, which is its own little miracle as he has permanent nerve damage in that hand and hasn't felt any sensation with it for over six months! She had told of how Padre Pio was able to bring his compassion and insight into the confessional and would help people to know what it is that they really want to release. Later Dave told me, "A funny thing was that it was almost like I was giving a little confession, when I was talking to her, about my near death, cancer and what it all was like. She had told us about when he would give confessionals from his heart. I felt compelled to talk about the near death, to give confession of it. I didn't realize it till later."

He handed me the glove and I could immediately feel the energy coming from the center of it. I felt calm and at peace. I knew this was real. I handed it back to Dave and then took the piece of sheet in the little bag. Again, I was taken back by the undescribably intense rose scent growing in the room as she and Dave talked about everything from how his near death experience is helping him deal with a terminal disease to the wonderful experiences she has had while the glove has been with her. She said she felt like a Christmas Angel. We told her that she is definitely our Christmas Angel! The rose scent kept growing stronger and stronger and was starting to fill the room. It was accompanied by a pervading sense of peace and love.

At one point our Christmas Angel stopped the conversation and said, "I have had this glove for two days and the rose scent has grown stronger and weaker depending on who was holding it, but I have never smelled it this strong!" She was amazed. The smell had filled the whole room by now and so had the sense of peace and love!

Together we shared stories, feelings, hot tea and ginger bread cookies as if

we were old friends. An hour and half later, our Christmas Angel was calling the next person she was going to share the glove with to let them know she was on her way! We wondered if she had been able to spend any holiday time with her family, and with the number of people she had visited, we doubted she had.

The miracle continues. After she was well on her way to share the healing glove with the next blessed person, we could still smell the rose and feel the peace and love

Dave told me that when we went to bed that he could still smell the roses. I told him that I couldn't smell them, yet when I reached over to touch his hand, the minute I made contact, I could smell the roses too! I slept through the rest of the miracle, here is how Dave explained it to me the next day. "I could smell the roses as we went to bed. It just made me go into a really nice calm peaceful sleep. It helped my body to relax and drift off to sleep which is a lot closer to normal than in a long time. I don't just drop off to sleep that easily lately. I used to be able to just go to sleep right away, now I have to sit. That night I went right to sleep and it reminded me of when we used to do a nice pipe ceremony. (A Native American tradition of giving thanks and offering prayer) It was very comforting. The smell of the roses and the glove just comforted me. I was able to get a restful sleep."

He continued, "At two o'clock I awoke and the smell of roses was just like it was every where. I just started to cry. I could feel my heart fully open and I could feel my light and my spirit shining as bright as in my near death. So, I got up and meditated and just enjoyed taking that energy in. It has helped me since to keep my heart more open when I am feeling the physical and drug related difficulties that are associated with the therapies that I am on. That is how it is helping me now."

As we talked about our Christmas miracle, we realized that part of the miracle was that I was even home to get the call! If I had followed my guilt (Dave was feeling a little guilty too) and went to my family's on Christmas Day after all, we would of missed the phone call and our Christmas miracle all together! As it was, I went down the day after Christmas and had a wonderful visit with my family and two friends! The kids were downstairs for most of the visit (thank you Kay and Gigi) and Dave got to have some quiet time alone to take in all the love, peace and light offered from the previous day!

We also talked about our Christmas miracle acting as a sign to let us know we are right where we need to be. We feel that Dave's cancer has brought about a situation that is allowing us to come back to our spiritual center. We are allowing ourselves to enjoy every day, communicate our love more frequently and sincerely and to accept all the gifts from not only God but also all of our friends and family. We are adjusting our priorities and are hopeful that Dave will receive the gift of full remission. We recognize our

Christmas miracle as a sign that miracles do happen and that people like our Christmas Angel are around to bring miracles to us and everyone else on a daily basis. We are reminded that Angels don't always have wings, sometimes they appear in a snow covered coat and scarf!

Epilogue: The next day I was telling one of my clients about our Christmas miracle. She was instantly reminded that someone had given her a medallion of Padre Pio's about three months ago for her daughter who has neurological impairments. She said that she had been carrying this medallion around in her purse and never thought to have her daughter hold it like Dave held the glove. She asked me to hold on while she went and got the medallion. She hadn't taken it out of the box. I felt like I was getting to experience the blessing of last night over again! She came back to the phone and sounded like she was in shock. She had opened the case and what she smelt ran shivers up and down both our spine. Roses, she smelt roses. Her daughter was being fussy in the background and my client decided to put the medallion in her daughter's hand. Instantly the girl calmed down and started her version of talking. My client and I sat, in two different states, in silence. I felt like the Christmas miracle was being passed on. My client said to me that she had realized, as she was getting the medallion out of her purse, that it must go back to the woman who originally gave the medallion to her. It turns out that the woman had been diagnosed with cancer. My client realized that the medallion didn't need to be hoarded, it needed to be shared. She was going to return the medallion in the next few days. The miracle was being passed on. My client was truly demonstrating the true spirit of Christmas. A second part two:

As of April of last year, 2001 ( Dave was diagnosed November 27, 2000) Dave is in remission. What the nurse had told us seemed to be a shrinkage of the Tumor was really full remission!! The Doctors didn't believe it, so they waited until July to make it official! As of January 2003, he is still in remission! We feel very blessed by God and Padre Pio and were excited to hear that in June 2002, Padre Pio was canonized by the Catholic Church as a Saint! It is now Christmas Season 2013 and Dave is still in remission! He has written about this and more about his spiritual journey in Voyage of Purpose: Spiritual Wisdom from Near Death Back to Life.

PLEASE NOTE: We have lost touch with the glove and do not know where to find it. It might be the glove that is now at the Padre Pio Shrine in NYC. They have a glove and a sock.

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Revised: June 12, 2008 .

# I can read your hands over the phone.



If you want an in-person reading, come to  
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email me: [gc@metaphysicaltimes.com](mailto:gc@metaphysicaltimes.com) for details.

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink. The signature appears to be 'Georgia E. Warren' written in a cursive, flowing script.

Georgia E. Warren



# HARRUMPH!

## THE GRINCH OUT-GRINCHED BY

# GOOGLY-GOO!



AND HIS ~ TEN MERRY MEN





## Professor Booknoodle on Books

Harrumph! The Grinch Out-Grinched by *Googly-Goo!*

The celebration of Christmas advances backward through the Calendar. Months before Christmas the blasted holiday is upon us like an unwelcome guest, crowding out other more sedate and less hectic observances.

Christmas is fast upon us and people rush about willy-nilly looking for gifts. Not just one gift, but thousands of gifts. The shops are over-laden with bright garish things ... piled high with unsightly ties and ugly sweaters that nobody in their right mind would ever wear (but people deal with this, for I know there are Ugly Sweater Contests). People bustle here and hustle there, arms full, eyesight blocked so they bump and jostle each other. If one has the temerity to attempt a casual evening stroll just for the sake of constitutional ... one had better walk defensively..

Sigh. I am not all crotchety harrumphery. I understand Christmas. But I pine for a quieter, more sedate and personal observance. Where have the merry Yule logs gone? The happy carolers have been crowded out so that their raised voices merely add to the din, rather than being a pleasant surprise outside one's door. They are lost amidst inflatable lawn ornaments. Giant Rudolph reindeers, Frosty Snowmen with top hats (do today's children even know what a top hat is?) and giant, sneering Grinch-Santas casting their blubbery cheer over the landscape.

In the end, I prefer the sound of a crackling fire in the hearth.

And all that running around looking for the perfect gift. When, if people would just settle down and stand quiet for a moment they would realize just exactly what the perfect gift must be. Is there anyone reading here who does not know what it is?

I know when this frantic Yuletide mania began. It began with a blasted war. A war so long ago most people have forgotten that it ever was, even though it was barely a century past. Only crusty historians seem to remember and study it. It was a war that poisoned everything it touched. Even the story of Saint

Nick was infected.

Is there any one still reading here who does not think a book to be the perfect gift? Or cannot remember receiving, at least once, a book as a Christmas present that turned out to be so exactly perfect?

I thought not.

Books fulfill "perfection" in many ways. While all too many children seem to be of a scampish nature, (imps tossing snowballs at the hats of innocent by-passers - the scallywags!) - there are those rare lucky children who eschew unruly mischief and are blessed with a particular perception when gazing upon a book. (and, really there are many like this). They will have, always, a favorite tome. And it is usually near to reach. It little matters what book is perceived as perfection. What matters is that the book exists and it is near to hand, a friendly companion. When ideally situated, it is in hand, and open - and the hand is attached to a little person who has found a place of quiet refuge wherein to enter a world that opens only when the covers of their favorite book are opened.

Let me briefly take a passage from a great book that most people have forgotten was presented to the world as a Christmas gift by its author.

*Child of the pure unclouded brow  
And dreaming eyes of wonder!  
Though time be fleet, and I and thou  
Are half a life asunder,  
The loving smile will surely hail  
The love gift of a fairy tale ...*

That verse, which opens Lewis Carroll's immortal story, *Through the Looking Glass (and What Alice Found There)*, embodies - exactly - just that perfection for the strange tale that unfolds with puissant magical grace.

In *Alice in Wonderland*, Alice observes, rather peckishly, I always thought (child after my heart!),

"What is the use of a book without pictures or conversations?"

Harrumph, what indeed. What more perfect pair of books for wonderment ever were there, than those penned by Mr. Carroll?

But for now, let's not look at the perfect Christmas book. Let's look, instead, at a book from that dim wartime past (mentioned above) - a book that was thrust unsuspectingly into the hands of children that Christmas morning so many years ago, under the pall of fear the war engendered. It was a vessel of fear. A harbinger of future Christmas frantiness and worry. It carried the chaos of the world war into the nursery.

This particular book is forgotten now to literary history and reader's alike. And, thankfully, unknown to the children of today.

Among Christmas books there have always some very pretty books, granted. Books of unrelieved and vapid presence. ABC booklets with moo-moo and A-Apple pie simplicity. Pretty little books with pretty little pictures. But there have also been some pretty strange books. And, as I said, I would like to focus on just one of them, as I found it so unsettling. And if it is unsettling to an old curmudgeon like myself, what must it have been to a small child?

It is possibly the strangest Christmas book to have ever been published, at least until Dr. Seuss arrived on the scene with his Grinch.

What must the children have thought upon receiving the following harbinger of punishment?

The book was titled *Googly-Goo and His Ten Merry Men*.



Written by Helen Jeffers and published by the Stecher Lithograph Company of Rochester, New York in 1916, the book presages somewhat *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.

Googly Goo looks like a roly-poly, self-indulgent brat. All of his Ten Men look just like him. They all look like brats. They look like Santa's Elves gone bad - sycophants to a one, they are, dressed all in blue. They are Blue Meanies with googly eyes and vapid grins. Googly-Goo and his Ten Men don't like naughty children. And they mean to do something about it. And they do.

The text spells it out, short and simple, in poor, ragged verse, no less:

*This Googly-Goo, His Ten Men too,*

*In gowns of blue,*

*Got together and caught Saint Nick -*

*Before he knew it -*

*Bound him, quick.*

*They stole his sled,*

*So full of toys, the sled he'd packed for girls and boys!*



A page in the book shows Googly-Goo and his Ten Men flying through the air in Santa's sleigh, drawn by Santa's six reindeer. Googly-Goo is blowing a trumpet announcing his evil deed to the world. Where Santa would fly quietly over rooftops with an occasional Ho! Ho! Ho! and softly jingling sleigh bells, and a farewell Merry Christmas, Googly Goo must trumpet his arrival with noisy fanfare! The book also shows Santa tied up. The children are looking out of windows at this madness with horror.



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Hide and tremble in your trundle-beds, kiddies.



## The Great Bear in Winter

She's not fond. She sometimes  
cuffs you down about four  
when the shadows have stretched  
your plans to ribbons.  
It's not right; you roll up cranky  
several hours later  
lost in deep snow, you'll never make tracks.  
She's gone to the sky. And you're stuck,  
not content to luxuriate as  
a furry ball, feeding on your own fat  
with that winter gift—can they really  
manage all season in hollow trees?  
You envy her steadiness. She  
shines in her kingdom and you know  
she'll elude you all night.

Mary Gilliland

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[first published in  
Stone Country 16, 3 (1989)]

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# Barbara Bennett

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A clairvoyant since birth, Barbara's fascination with psychic readings began in childhood as she watched her grandmother perform intuitive readings from an ordinary deck of cards. It wasn't until many years later that she was given her first deck of tarot cards. The cards were merely a key which opened a door to her own personal spiritual development. Under the guidance of her beloved Aunt Kay, an internationally known psychic, medium, healer, and her teacher, she learned to trust her own natural intuitive talents.

Barbara is an experienced Reiki Master/ teacher. She practices Traditional Usui Reiki, Karuna Reiki\*, Shamballa Multidemential Reiki, and Ama Deus method of healing. Offering classes as well as healing sessions in Syracuse New York, her approach is simple yet practical. Her classes are relaxing, healing and fun. Barbara believes that Reiki training can be appropriate for people of all walks of life and she would be happy to introduce you to this healing art. Her knowledge and guidance will help you begin your own journey into self-healing and self-discovery.

Currently, Barbara is affiliated with Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY as a CRMT (Certified Reiki Master Therapist). She provides Reiki sessions to cancer patients. Passionate about her work, she enjoys helping people on their path to recovery.

Today, Barbara is grateful for her intuitive abilities and is willing to assist you find peace and happiness through her Spirit guided readings. Barbara's psychic readings empower her clients and help them to find positive direction in their lives, and assist them towards the path that leads them to greater happiness.



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# The Art of Giving



By Don Brennan

This time of year is the holiday season for giving. And it gives each of us the opportunity to think about the art of giving. During this season, it is important to reach out to others through presents, through service and through acts of kindness. What we give is less important than how we give of ourselves. Emerson once said,

*“Rings and jewels  
are not gifts,  
but apologies for gifts.  
The only gift is a  
portion of thyself.”*

Whitman also supported this idea of letting ourselves be the gift when he said, “When I give, I give myself.”

In giving of ourselves, in giving to others, we are ultimately giving back to ourselves because we are all connected. When we give freely, without thought of receiving anything in return, blessings from the universe come our way. When we give through pure unconditional love we receive the satisfaction of helping someone in need. We feel validated through our service. We feel worthy of Divine Love.

We give because it gives us pleasure. We receive so much joy when a thoughtful gift is appreciated. The perfect gift has nothing to do with cost. It is the knowledge that we have been intuitively guided to provide the perfect match to fill a need or bring happiness into someone’s life. The perfect gift might just be to listen to someone and to offer kind words of support. As Jean La Bruyere says, “Generosity lies less in giving much than in giving at the right moment.”

The holiday season can be incredibly stressful for all of us. There are so many hyped up cultural expectations. It’s a busy time with all the parties, reunions and social obligations. We are sometimes forced to spend time with people we would rather not be around. Past memories, both good and bad, come flooding back to overwhelm us emotionally.

In spite of, or partly because of all the joyful celebration, people feel more depressed during these holidays than at other times of the year. Loneliness, grief, anger, jealousy, disappointment, fears, and regrets all become amplified to greater intensity. Seasonal changes also affect our minds and bodies as winter sets in with colder temperatures and less daylight.

As anxiety builds, we contract our bodies and our energy fields, making it even harder to let go of negative feelings and attitudes. At the same time, we are bombarding each other with toxic energy. Instead of fueling more emotional imbalance in each other’s lives, we should strive to engender harmony and love.

When we are centered, we intuitively know what is needed. We sense what can bring peace, harmony and happiness into someone else’s life. We allow Divine Love to flow through us. By being calm and connected with spirit, we raise the vibrations of all those around us. We are guided in what to

say, and what not to say.

Be patient with others during this season. Remember, we’re all struggling to do the best that we can with the circumstances of our lives. But honor yourself. Some people are so stuck that they are unwilling to have their vibrations raised. If you realize that you can’t help them, let them be. Honor their right to stay stuck, but honor your need to let go, if they refuse to let go.

As you form your gift giving plans this year, make sure that you put yourself on the top of that list. If you’re going to be a gift for others, make sure that you’re a proper gift. Take care of yourself so you can be a fountain of light and love.

Take some time, each day, to clear yourself. Do whatever it takes to get back into balance. Get some Reiki, do some yoga or tai chi, or simply meditate. Get proper rest and exercise. Connect with nature. Take a walk or go for a run. Carve out some time just for yourself. A long hot relaxing bath can easily wash away conflicting energies.

Then you can be refreshed in order to be uplifting again for others. As St. Augustine tells us, “Fill yourself first and then only will you be able to give to others.” Heal yourself first so you can be filled with patience and Divine Love to bring healing to those who need it.

*Be kind to yourself  
so you can be  
kind to others.  
Be a gift that is  
truly worth  
receiving.*





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Addressing Your Concerns - With Dennis Cole  
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Dennis,

Can you say anything about my concern over the future potentials of my marriage? Thanks, K.  
Thanks for your question, K; it's one that most of us have wondered about at times. Partly because of the "happily-ever-after myth" and mainly because so many people believe that life is just "happening to us"!

Both of these concerns can be soothed when we learn to care about and pay attention to how we feel! To communicate and experience Life by truthfully bringing the whole of whom we really are into our experiences with others. But to do so, without judgments, anger, resentment, vindication - or any negative attitudes! For these would just attract and keep us repeating unwanted negative experiences.

When we develop the habit of choosing thoughts and courses of action - without dragging others into the equation - that truly make us feel good, we will begin to attract and be in relationships that we do feel good about. This entering into relationships consciously, instead of living by default - as billions of us have done - is a much more "heavenly" experience!

This is easier said than done; because most believe that it is wrong to be "Self-ish". To be aware of our Soul's call for us to "become like a little child" and to feel good; to share love and joyfully experience Life with that missing side of Self!

Many believe that they need to tolerate or "sell their Soul" in order to "be with someone" - especially when holiday times roll around. Our search for that "soul mate" or love is actually rooted in a deeper desire to unite in full intimacy with our Source Energy - that "kingdom of God within," spoken of in Luke in the Christian Bible.

Now K, if we don't learn, what our Soul intended for us to learn, with the person - or job, or other situation - and leave it without learning what might have helped us to grow, then we will just run into a similar situation with someone else in the future.

Yes, it is sometimes true that a relationship could have "timed out"! And it might be better, for all involved, to move on to what may be more in alignment with what we've become. "Like will always attract like"! That's why we said that there's nothing more important than you caring about and paying attention to how you feel! We can't love another, nor receive love from others if we don't love ourselves!

It can be very helpful to our Well-being and Life focus, when we come to a point in which we're wondering whether we can go on living the way we are, if we would consider trying the following: Without telling anyone, just focus on those things that you really love about this other and/or your relationship. Try this for about 3 weeks but without expecting anything in return. If it's time for change, things will line up and someone will smoothly be able to "exit, stage right".

On the other hand, because of the unconditional Love you were vibrating for those 3 weeks, your relationship might turn around and amaze you. The Inner creates the outer!

The important thing is to put the "Inner Marriage" first. This would not "short change" the one you're with, because putting the "Inner Relationship" first is facilitated by Oneness Consciousness, and this does involve the "other"! Unity Consciousness brings forth our Source Energy of Unconditional Love, our highest state of grace - and the only thing in the Creation that does not change! When we take on the responsibility of Loving others and Self, and realizing that we create our own reality in perfect accordance with our current dominant, average, choice of thoughts, then the people and conditions that will be around us must match that choice!

The "Good news" is, that we cannot make a mistake! Every experience is an opportunity to create Self anew from the NOW...Onward into Forever!

Knowledge of all this can bring us to a realization in which we can say to the significant other: "I want you to know that, from this day forward, there's nothing you can say or do that will ever again pull me from Alignment with my Center of who We really are! I want you to know that I will never again need to hold you responsible for how I feel."

In Oneness,  
Dennis

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PO Box 44, Aurora, NY 13026  
fingerlynx@gmail.com
- **Georgia Warren**  
PO Box 64, Aurora, NY 13026  
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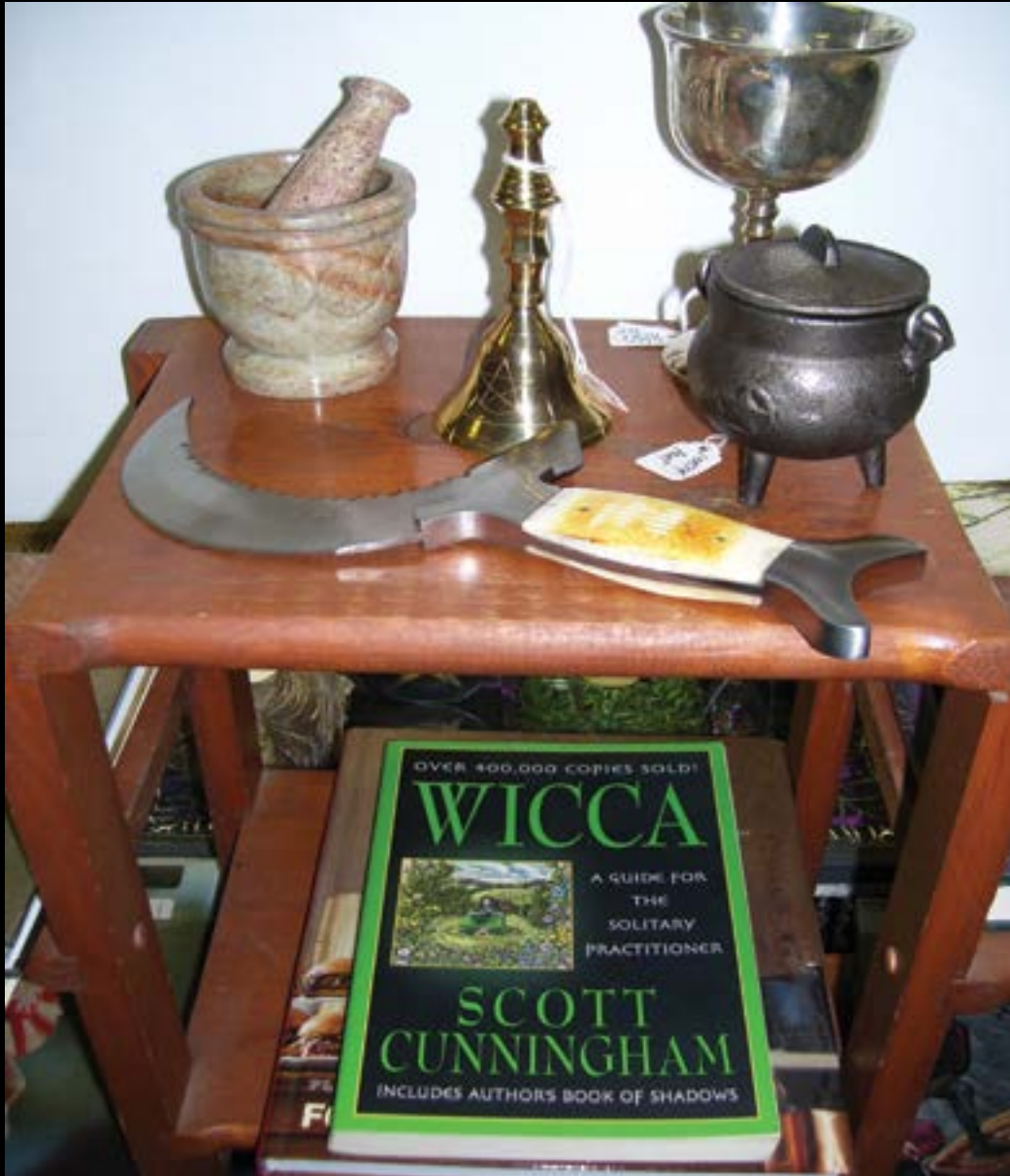
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# SUN SIGN POTENTIALS

*A Guide to Understanding  
Self and Others*



## 2015 Planet Earth – An Astrological Perspective for the New Year

*by Dennis Cole*

As our planet revolves into the New Year, 2015, we can expect that there will be changes and new beginnings around the globe.

In Numerology the vibration of 2015 reduces to an “8”. And that power number is associated with such things as: Mastery, Big Business, Government, Broad and important matters, as well as Material and Financial potentials for Achievement. These factors as well as new leadership can come more into focus in our year ahead.

Astrologically speaking, transiting Uranus (the “awakener” and ruling planet of Aquarius) is still riding in a square aspect from the Sign, Aries (Leadership, war, new beginnings...) to transiting Pluto (Transformation, birth and death) in the Sign Capricorn (Government, Big Business, Politics, Perseverance, Ambition, Control/Respect issues and Responsibility).

“Squares” (90 degree angles) between planets (Psychological driving force symbols) represent blockages or delays. In a yin and yang Universe they can also represent constructive crises! In fact these contrasting experiences are always constructive “stepping stones” in disguise! It all depends on our free-will choice to focus more on what we’d prefer, and less upon the lack of it!

Individually and collectively, we always attract in accordance with what we choose to think about most – whether we want it or not! It’s nice to know, that “like attracts like”!

So what does this imply? Well, if we want to have a “Happy New Year,” we might want to consider how super important it can be to care about and pay attention to, how we FEEL!

A major key to working constructively with these developmental tensions and constructive crises “squares” – which are so necessary for our growth and the expansion of the Creation as well – is RESPONSIBILITY! Maybe knowledge of this was a factor in inspiring James Allen to write: “There’s no room for a complainer in a universe of Law.” Allen also wrote: “A man is literally what he thinks. His character is the sum of all his thoughts.”

We can look further into the potentials for some of our 2015 experiences by considering the larger cycle we’ve all come into over the past couple centuries: “The Age of Aquarius”. Although the exact beginning of the “Aquarian Age” may be a few decades away, it is obvious that we have been in the “cusp” (a bit over two centuries” into this 2150 year cycle) since Aquarian keynotes have come into focus on the Earth. These keynotes include: Revolution (think Revolutionary and Civil Wars!); Electricity (Consider Ben Franklin and the key on the kite, lights, radio, TV, computers, the Internet, iPhones...); Freedom and the rights of humans (Bill of Rights, ACLU, voting rights, The Carter Center, FDA, Social Security, Consumer Reports, Democracy, etc.); Discovery, by Sir William Herschel, on March 13, 1781, of Uranus - the ruling planet of Aquarius and the “New Age”); Science (Uranium and the Curies...) Chemistry (Charles Hall and Aluminum, Cyber War and security); Aviation (the Wright brothers); Space travel (NASA and the International Space Station – Mars is next!); Inventions (Cat Scans, robotic surgery, Whitney’s cotton gin, toilet paper... : ). Well, you get the idea; so much for humanity to appreciate that has been emerging under the energies associated with the Sign, Aquarius, and its ruling planet, Uranus!

As New Age Groups, “Psychic Fairs”, Astrology (which is an Aquarian tool for Self and Spiritual knowledge), Reiki, and other spiritually-based healing modalities emerge all over the Planet, they often have that “think-outside-of-the-box” and revolutionary Energy behind them. People are beginning more to allow opening of their “crown chakras” (mastering the “Seventh Seal” of judgments) in order to allow Consciousness or Source Energy to guide them into the Joy and unconditional Love that resides at the core of our Be-ing.

We’ll wind up on these highlights of “seed potentials” for 2015 by focusing in on a few relevant astrological factors to blend in with the greater Aquarian Age cycle we’ve been discussing. We mention at the beginning that Uranus in Aries will still be transiting in a “Square” aspect to the planet, Pluto, which is moving through Capricorn. So we still have some hurdles to deal with. And these will naturally center on the shakeups in leadership and the tearing down and rebuilding of outworn structures. This can involve such things as business, politics, and government. The leaders and people in power in organizations and businesses will have to deal with the revolutionary fighting spirits of the masses. Humanity is getting a “wakeup” call to change! Change to fit the higher positive potentials of Capricorn and Aries. These potentials include: Humanitarian ideals, proper use of power and social responsibility (Capricorn). They also call for : Courage, initiative, leadership and openness to new ways of taking action (Aries).

All of us can benefit as we reflect on Carl Jung’s: “We spend the first half of our lives discovering ego; the second half, learning to relinquish it.” And, quite simply, what could be more conducive to bringing about more of the Love and peace that we all

desire, than to “walk our talk” with “The Golden rule”!

The drive toward that end can come on more in 2015 as Neptune travels in its own Sign, Pisces” – the Sign of Peace! This may be unified with, at new levels, at the end of February as the transiting Sun conjoins with Neptune in Pisces. And, depending on the spirit of that encounter, there may be a more practical approach to repairing the past as the last weekend of August rolls around under the illumination of the full moon conjunct Neptune in Pisces.

“Squares are Squares” and it’s not likely that here will be any sudden transforming of the status quo – individually and collectively – especially as it relates to government, power, and big business. For sure, this can involve some subjective growth for down the road. Patience, initiative, perseverance and leadership are called for as we move closer toward shocking exciting

humanitarian and new ways of seeing the unique Perspective of our One Source Energy in each other (“Namaste”).

Our primary “New Age” is NOW...Now... Now...the holy Moment, and “Place” from which we always create Self anew. Things can’t get any better than right NOW....until right Now gets better! And how can we make our Now better? Teachers of Teachers in non-physical say: “By following the trail of thoughts that feel increasingly better.” It sure is nice to know, that we always attract into our lives whatever we choose to think about most – whether we want it or not!

May we all be Blessed with Love, Joy and Peace, over the Holiday Seasons and in the “Nows” before us along this Eternal Trail.

In Oneness,

Dennis



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## Traveling in a Sun Wise Manner

From autumn to winter, from the West to the North  
As we walk this journey in a sacred manor, following the cycles of the seasons, the prayers begin to strengthen and become more often. When one opens up his heart, her mind, body and spirit in a season of meditation, the prayers become the moving silence – the undoubtable reverence for the transitional experience. In the seclusion of “silent knowledge”, a virtue of going within, as introspection harmonizes with fall, so too the prayers harmonize with stillness.

When walking in a sacred manner, one always travels Sun wise.

Fall is in the West. It is within us as the place of introspection. It is with the virtue of gratitude for the inner knowledge, our shamanic journeys and deep level psychic work. We have an inner song. We have our love and emotions. Our dream states are speaking to us. And with our compassion to breathe, we release and renew - attune and balance the self. This is our inner journey and when walking in balance, it is as much a harvest as the sustenance we take in from the fruits of our labor in the gardens.

Winter is in the North, so too is the element of Earth. As we walk upon our Grandmother Earth, we encourage a Sun wise manner. Walking in a sacred manner always encounters a relationship to the natural world. And through our ceremonies and prayer, our teaching and learning, practicality and patience become a virtue for seeking the sacred knowledge within the dynamics of our lessons. And with our understanding, bring us strength, prosperity and wisdom. This is where we find our place and define our Earth walk. This process, like the long blanket of snow upon the Earth, cleanses and purifies our mind and heart, allowing us to walk in balance.

When walking in a sacred manner, one always travels Sun wise.

Now as our Grandmother Earth and all that grows begins to sleep. I raise this body to the sky, an extension of my own body – the Mother Earth and all that grows upon her and I sing the honoring songs. I pray the long blanket of white snow, the cleansing winter's spirit, will keep this land safe and pure. And as we walk together into the winter months, may we walk with pure hearts in the same mannerism to be cleansed. And during this quiet time of season for the Earth, be with our sacred center. And from here, walk in a sacred manner... traveling Sun wise towards the upcoming spring, a time for beginning, and a time for planting new seeds. Until then, my wish for you is to feel the peace and joy of this special season.

Peace on your journey, Kris



Hi Kris,

In a previous reading you told me that I would want to go to New Zealand between the snowfall and feb 2014. You also mentioned the name Simone. That spirit was saying that name was important. I haven't told you, but I had just come back from New Zealand 2 wks. before our reading. During my time there I met a new friend. You blew me away when you stated her name-it is Simone!!!

I just thought you deserve to know that like clockwork as this snowstorm rolled in, I heard from her recently. She is severely depressed and I had to notify help for her and now I am going to go there. I just thought you should know how amazingly accurate you are.

Christine.

***Questions about Past, Present, Future***

***Are you interested in Communication***

***with Ancestors, Family on the other side***

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Kris

I came to you at a psychic fair in Rochester, NY on March 6, 2010. You mentioned my father Ed, who had passed 8 years earlier and he was there with us. I never mentioned my father or the fact he passed. I asked about a future relationship. You said 3-7 years and it would have something to do with the South Pacific.

I recently met a man, (3 years later). It feels like we have known each other for years. I asked where he got his name from. He said it was given to him after an orphan boy his dad met in WWII in the South Pacific.

You are amazing! Thanks, K. from Rochester

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# Slabsides in the Rain - For John Burroughs



Stopped by here to pay homage.

Walked through the woods,

Thinking -

It was gently raining -

Thinking -

This -

This is the way life smells.

Slabsides in the Rain

I came to visit

With no expectation.

Only to see -

Only to walk

Through the woods

To the cabin - It is

Such a small crude abode.

It is ... Perfect.

Your sweet secluded sanctuary -

It is perfect;

Perfect midst the stolid,

Protecting rocks and

Misty trees.

Old pots hanging

On the wall -

Seen through the dark window.

A book on a desk -

The Catskill rocker -

I've seen that chair!

Yes, in a photograph.

You were sitting in it.

Now,

Your Old Man's Spirit

Lingers - Indelible ....

Nobody about -

Not a soul -

The woods alive with

soundful silence.

You knew then it was so -

You knew then it was so

Precisely perfect.

Slabsides sits silent -

But full

And waiting -

In eternal pause

As if ....

As if you have just stepped out

To try on the forest -

Fitting raiment .... indeed.

.... If you ask me ....

What is not fern and tree

And moss,

Poison ivy or fragile flower

Is hard rock - everywhere -

Persistent granite

Nibbled by lichen,

Cushioned by lush liverwort,

Worn by water

Dripping from above,

Trickling in secret passage

Below

This is the way life smells

*by John DeForest*

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# Priceless Presents for the Holidays

The holiday season is upon us. No matter what tradition you honor, you likely celebrate the holiday season by practicing some kind of giving. This year many of us are reexamining our patterns of gift giving. But how can we give generous yet meaningful gifts this holiday season, and not break the bank? Many gifts carry no price tag at all, yet are priceless. Consider the following “priceless presents”- which ones will you give this year?

The gift of time. Spending time with friends and family doing something you love creates memories you’ll have for the rest of your lives. Take the time to bake cookies with your grandkids, go to a tree lighting ceremony with your family, or go shopping with friends. Time goes by too fast; use it wisely before it’s gone.

The gift of helping. Offer a helping hand to someone in need,

no matter how simple the gesture. Hold the door for someone or let that stressed-out driver get into your lane. You’ll feel good about yourself, and you’ll feel good knowing you’ve helped someone else as well.

The gift of presence. When we’re busy or stressed, we tend to do project our consciousness into the future; we rush around and become impatient when someone asks us to slow down or stop. All of this rushing makes life a blur and soon we lose touch with the present moment. This holiday season, try something different. When you’re interacting with someone, try to remain completely present to the experience. Be still, smile, and make eye contact during conversations. Slowing down and listening with your heart will help the other person feel as if they’ve been truly heard.

The gift of empathy. When we’re rushing around trying to get all of our holiday preparations completed, we tend become impatient and our connectedness with others can suffer. This holiday season, try maintaining your connection with the people in your life. When a difficult situation comes us, put yourself in the other person’s shoes and try to understand it from their point of

view for a moment. Empathizing with someone for even a short time can be so validating. It’s amazing how good it feels to be understood.

The gift of gratitude. A sincere “thank you” can be a gift in itself. Thank someone for doing something that’s usually taken for granted and see what how much the energy shifts. Write a thank you note on your napkin and

leave it with your tip for that hard working waitress or leave a holiday card in your mailbox for your mail carrier. It doesn’t have to cost a lot to give the gift of yourself!

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**10am - 7pm**



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## Six Poems

by Peter Fortunato

### 5 October 2014

There is here no before after.  
Now won't become something new.  
Forever the leaves refrain from falling.  
Where is the sun rising.

### November

These last leaves  
of maple and box elder,  
the black locust finally:  
coins and feathers  
on the wet lawn.

I rake and sweep  
the stepping stones  
beside a stream.  
In another country  
a man clicks his keys and reads  
aloud to himself:

These last leaves.

### 17 Syllables

Fallen leaf: right now  
it goes beyond birth and death,  
your Buddha Nature.

### Warm Blood

You don't know it, but you're  
living on a mote of dust,  
and your life is the span  
of a dust mite's life.

Actually, you do know this,  
but you think of yourself  
as a mammoth, a saber tooth  
tiger killer – or are you

another kind of mammal?

### Snow Blind

Look to the right, look to the left,  
above you and below you:  
a pure white world.

When you have the view make use of it.  
If you can't believe your eyes, use mine.

### After Reading Shoitsu \*

The inner light, the outer light  
where are they when  
you open your eyes?

Asleep, your dreams have  
difficult stories to tell;  
why can't you accept  
the marvelous world  
was never born?

What appears like a mirage  
is like a mirage,  
what appears like a god  
is like a god,  
and devils wear horns  
because you believe in them.

One moment awake is  
one more moment of illusion  
if you cling to words.

(\* Zen master Shoitsu, 1202 – 1280)



**Peter Fortunato** received his Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, where he held the Randall Jarrell Fellowship in Poetry. His most recent book is *Late Morning: New and Selected Poems*. He is a Certified Hypnotherapist in private practice in Ithaca, New York. Learn more at [www.peterfortunato.wordpress.com](http://www.peterfortunato.wordpress.com)



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## THE HOLY NIGHTS

On these nights  
when our dreams predict  
the course of the next year  
I hope for your sake  
you won't stay  
stuck between your sheets  
like that but get out  
and run a little  
little stick person  
and may it be fair  
on the moonlit snow  
and may you not bog down  
there are no passersby  
remember how parched  
your salty food made you  
remember to try to cry  
the only good escape  
from this year  
will be painstaking  
the best prospects  
of the approaching one  
show through tears  
time is cheap spend  
all you want looking  
but when you're ready  
to go on consider  
the slim company  
you'd prefer to keep  
and whether this  
or that fleshy prospect  
could begin to match  
your stride across the piazza  
or tumble with you  
beneath that illuminated  
bridge span where the tugs'  
long notes seem a mere  
arm's length out of  
apprehension or mightn't it  
be preferable to be  
a spider wrapped in your  
own arms against the breeze  
unmolested now that  
you've made it so far  
you need to think  
holding off the surge

of the idea of any particular  
body until the time  
comes around that events  
include you ineluctably  
in this battle with rest  
and every condition of yielding  
in which your austerity  
is so drastic it won't  
permit purchase even  
to death there is nevertheless  
an occasion against which  
it may find itself  
defenseless and which  
afterward it may privately  
acknowledge it had sought  
irremediably: The wise men  
arrive on foot. It is a cold  
afternoon, in a place that seems  
stranger for the normality  
of its enterprises. These  
kings have cherished an idea  
so long they have begun  
to be jealous of it. They go  
to the local honcho, to toss  
it around one more time,  
then they hit the streets  
again, and by now they're just  
dragging along. There's  
a stumpy little person  
pounding some laundry, another  
hauling debris in a broken  
basket, where's a good meal.  
They're let in through  
a surprisingly picturesque  
stable door, and they see.

You must too.

You are here.

Sit.

Eat.

by Chris MacCormack

# Resolving Not to Resolve,

or How to Keep Those  
Pesky Resolutions  
From Making Your  
Holiday Cheer Turn to  
Holiday Drear



by Corbie Mitleid

Every December, we look back at the past twelve months, count all the things we haven't done, and set our jaws and write those New Year's resolutions that we can MAYBE keep for three weeks. Do you really want to keep putting yourself through that every year? What if you decided that you didn't have to? Because you DON'T – and you won't waste all that good New Year energy, either. Here's how:

I invite you to make a new New Year's tradition for yourself: review, preview, and new view.

First, the review. Give yourself a good space of time: a couple of hours, an afternoon or evening if you can, some time during the last week of the year. Sit down and think about how this year has been for you, from the good to the bad, and include the weird. Write it all down, as if you were sitting with your coach and mentor (in this case, God and your angels and guides) and be as objective about it as possible.

Why? When you review the year quietly, thoughtfully, and objectively, you will begin to see greater patterns in your life. You will find places of true growth that you hadn't planned on. You will very probably find out that times you thought were the absolute nadir of your existence aren't as dark and horrifying in retrospect. You got through them – perhaps permanently changed, but you got through them. And for every task you completed, every hurdle you jumped successfully, every triumph, no matter how small – congratulate yourself. And thank all those wonderful people Upstairs who are your guides and teachers for being there with you.

Now preview. Think about your goals for the next year. Divide them into different sections: for example, physical (the material world), mental/emotional, and spiritual. Write down everything you'd like to accomplish. And I mean EVERYTHING. Then, prioritize them. If you could only do three in each category, which ones would they be? Then, which two? Then, which single goal in each area of your life is most important? Once you do that, you again may see a pattern. The four, six, ten things you wrote down under mental/emotional – what single thing do they all point to? You've probably

**TIRED OF THE SAME OLD HOLIDAY HO-HUM?  
TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT THIS YEAR!**



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**DATES  
WILL FILL UP  
QUICKLY SO  
ACT NOW!**



found a goal you'll be passionate about.

And finally – new view. This is where we take those resolutions and turn them inside out. Don't concentrate on things where you've been unsuccessful before. Dump 'em. Just for this year. Instead, ask your heart what it really wants. Make affirmations instead of resolutions. Affirmations are part positive thinking, part reprogramming, and a whole lot more constructive than resolutions. Even the word "resolve" sounds like you're dealing with a problem . . . not raising a hope and a dream. Here are a few that some friends have used over the past years (and they have all worked wonderfully).

INSTEAD OF I will go to church (synagogue, temple) every week TRY I deepen my dedication to Christ (YHWH, Allah, Buddha, the Goddess) and His (Her) Work for me.

INSTEAD OF I will donate x-dollars to charity no matter what TRY I settle into a giving path – locally, gently, with meaning. I make a difference in the world.

INSTEAD OF I will go to the gym every day – lose ten pounds – stop smoking, TRY I love myself unconditionally, and take care of myself the way I would a cherished friend or lover.

INSTEAD OF I will learn a new language – join three social clubs – volunteer at three nonprofit organizations TRY I discern what single thing means most to me, and shape my life around it.

What we want to model here is that, while it's certainly laudable to want to make our lives better, sometimes we can't see the forest for the trees – literally. We are so busy focusing on one particular thing that we think might make things better that we forget to look BEYOND the particular task to what we are trying to accomplish. If we leave the path open for the Universe to take part in our journey, rather than insisting we must know every twist, turn, rest stop and gas station ahead of time, then we usually find that the road is (a) more beautiful, (b) easier, (c) shorter, and (d) far more fulfilling than we could have traveled on our own. Many blessings to all of you – may this be a holiday of peace, joy, truth and beauty for all.



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