

Interfaith Inspirer

An Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth News Publication



VOL. XIII, NO. 05, May 2017



Get A Grip----Let Go! By Marilyn Alf

Several years ago, on the spur of the moment, with little knowledge of what to expect, I agreed to participate in my first sweat lodge. I assumed it would be hot. I had been asked to wear a long skirt and to bring my "intention" (whatever that

was supposed to be). A granny nightgown was the best I could do on short notice, and since I'd been struggling with indecision and dread concerning a complex problem, I figured I'd be thinking about it, "intentionally" or not.

Twelve of us entered the tipi in the northern Michigan woods. I was the only woman, (probably old enough to be the mother of the others. Oh, well.) We crawled through an opening into an area about 10 ft in diameter and sat on the ground around a shallow fire pit. Stones heated in a fire outside were brought in by shovel and placed in the pit. Their glowing created eerie shadows. The Native American medicine man who was conducting the ceremony poured water on the stones, creating steam. He sang, expounded in words I couldn't understand, and tossed something herbal onto the stones. The smell was quite pleasant. I was interested in the "theatrics," but not really involved in the program. This first "session" was hot, but endurable. After about 20 minutes we exited the tipi and cooled off in a shallow stream nearby.

When we returned, the stones had been replenished with ones that seemed hotter and more numerous. There was more song, more steam, more heat. (My grandmother used to say "Horses sweat, men perspire, and ladies are all aglow." I was beginning to feel somewhat equine.) My nightgown was sticking to me; my hair fell lank; I really could use a long, cold one. Plus, the hot air was getting hard to breathe. Had I gotten myself into something over my head in this strange and unfamiliar space? Before panic could take over, the round ended, and we merged again into the night air and the refreshing little stream.

The third session proceeded much as the others, but the enveloping heat was becoming oppressive. I listened, really concentrated, on the medicine man's chanting and the rhythm of his drum. The sound was mesmerizing. A pipe was passed and I cautiously participated, concerned it might be something hallucinogenic. It wasn't. The break for the night air and a quiet sit in the stream came none too soon.

I could think of several perfectly good reasons for not going back into the tipi. (But I'm a persistent cuss and hate starting things I don't finish.) In the calming, cooling respite of the stream, I realized I had been so focused on physical things that I had given no thought to my worrisome problem. Was uncovering the source of my denial, indecision, and fear of making a mistake the unrecognized "intention" that had drawn me here?

I returned to the tipi. The fire pit was piled with white-hot rocks, glowing opals the size of my head. I never imagined anything could get that hot. Soon my body was slick with sweat. The urgency of the singing crept into my center. The reddish semidarkness and the aroma of burning herbs seemed suffocating and the space inside the tipi too small to contain us. My eyes hurt. In defense of the everywhere heat, I was taking small gulps of air that went little deeper than my throat. There was no room to pass the people between me and the exit. I felt the fluttering of panic. Desperate for coolness and air, I lay back and pressed my face into the base of the tipi.

The medicine man, who was sitting next to me, leaned down and whispered. I don't remember his exact words but they were softly spoken, gentle, authoritative, compelling but not demanding. "This is your Fear holding you. Sit up. Relax. Breathe in. Breathe in DEEPLY. You will open." Feeling too overwhelmed to do otherwise, I complied. The oppressive air reached for my lungs, caught up my breath. Gasping, I reflexively breathed in. Defiantly, another breath. Then, willfully, another. And another. An insight and a profound sense of spiritual power came to me. I stopped running, had opened.

Continued on page 6





Ministerial Miscellany

By Dave Bell

Dear Friends,

Well, here it is. This is the last miscellany column that I will be writing, as I retire from the Senior Minister post on the 28th of May. It has been an amazing twenty years (well, nineteen and a half.) There have been good times, difficult times, great times and many wonderful relationships as a result. What we have accomplished, as a community, is quite extraordinary. From the small group of twenty-five or so who gathered to give birth to the Center in 1998, to the vibrant and growing community that welcomes and loves all who cross our path, is testament to a path that has clearly been guided by Spirit. None of us who function as mortals could have been wise enough or strong enough to accomplish what we have accomplished without the direct involvement of Spirit. There have been so many contributors to this growth that no attempt can be made to create a list. Needless to say, I am extremely grateful for all of the yeoman efforts that volunteers and staff have contributed over the years. It would not have happened without them.

In reflecting upon who we are and where we have come from, one is immediately struck by the benefits we now have in our physical space as opposed to schlepping all of our stuff back and forth every week between cubby-hole closets and school auditoriums. I remember all too well, being tired out before the service had even started. In the summer we were sweaty as well after setting up in an unconditioned environment. This move to our own space came about as the result of concerted efforts on the part of members and volunteers to work tirelessly in remodeling this space, not to mention the amazingly generous donations that financed the acquisition and remaking of our space. Have I said how grateful I am to have been continuously surrounded by loving supporting folks throughout this journey? Well, let me say it loud and clear. Grateful!

Speaking of gratitude, I have to take a moment to say thank you to my bride, roommate, best friend and life partner. What a blessing it is to have had Judy at my side throughout this trek. I would have been totally overwhelmed without her support. This is the same woman who said to a newly-minted seminarian (me), you can do whatever you want except start a church. We have been partners for fifty-five years. No one knows what will show up during a lifetime. It is certain that neither of us knew what was in store during our life together. However, it can be emphatically said, it was very good and thank you, thank you!

Lastly, I want to say how thrilled I am with selection of Lauren Tatarsky as the next Senior Minister. The MSC has done a fabulous job and Lauren will lead us to even greater heights.

Come to my retirement party on the 17th of June.

Blessings

Davíð

Welcome Spring	pg. 1	Tidbits	pg. 10
Ministerial Misc. & CMM	pg. 2	Faces of the CC	pg. 11
Board Minutes	pg. 3	Service Flyer	pg. 12
Calendar	pg. 4	ESL Flyer	pg. 13
Peggy's Column	pg. 5	Interfaith Entrepreneurs	pg. 14
CC announcements	pg. 6	World Peace Clock	pg. 15
Imprint	pg. 7		
Café 704	pg. 8		
Youthful Spirits	pg. 9		



Community Member of the Month

Remarkable Ray

By Heide AW Kaminski

Ray Fix is this month's CMM, and this award is well-deserved!

Ray is wearing numerous hats at the Center.

He has served on the board for a year so far, with the intention to help with a smooth transition, organizational issues, and stability during and after the important transition we are about to embark upon.

He came to the Center as a participant in the Science of Mind group and decided to join the service as well. He found a place where everyone can feel free to themselves.

"Aside from being on the board, I try to help out here and there," he says. "It's my way of paying forward."

Ray has also been supporting the Youth Ed with gifts such as tickets to the 50/50 raffle on Potluck Sundays (and one was a winner already!).

Ray, you are a ray of light in our Center and we appreciate and love you!

Thank you for joining US to be free to be yourself!





The Service						
begins at 10:45 a.m.	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
The speaker/ topic are in bold/italic R indicates the reader M indicates the meditator MU indicates the musician.	l 10-noon Dynamic Transformation 6:45 p.m. ACIM 7 p.m. Great Bal- anced View Video Meeting <i>Kellie Love</i>	2 10:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discus- sion Group 5:30 p.m. Commu- nity Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share	3 6:30-8:30 p.m. Creative Writing Workshop	4 Noon—1:30 p.m. ACIM 5 p.m. ESL class 6:30—8:30 p.m. Science of Mind 7:15-8:30 p.m. Speaking Circle	5 7-9 p.m. Healing Energy Session with Gregory Weathers	6 8:30 a.m. AA 7:30 p.m. Drum and Dance Jam
7 Rev. Dave: The Illusion of Time R: Marilyn A. M: Craig H. MU: Laz Slomovits and friends Potluck	8 10-noon Dynamic Transformation 6:45 p.m. ACIM 7 p.m. Great Bal- anced View Video Meeting <i>Lindsay Passmore</i>	9 10:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discus- sion Group 5:30 p.m. Commu- nity Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share	10 6:30-8:30 p.m. Creative Writing Workshop	11 Noon—1:30 p.m. ACIM 7:15-8:30 p.m. Speaking Circle	12 7-9 p.m. Healing Energy Session with Gregory Weathers	13 8:30 a.m. AA 8 p.m. Café 704
14 Open Mic on Motherhood R: Melissa W. M: Bill S. MU: Marlena Studer Happy Mother's Day!	 15 10-noon Dynamic Transformation 6:45 p.m. ACIM 7 p.m. Great Bal- anced View Video Meeting <i>Craig Brann</i> <i>Judy Sauer</i> <i>Rob Michalowski</i> 	16 10:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discus- sion Group 5:30 p.m. Commu- nity Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share	17 6:30-8:30 p.m. Creative Writing Workshop	18 Noon—1:30 p.m. ACIM 6:30—8:30 p.m. Science of Mind 7:15-8:30 p.m. Speaking Circle	19 7-9 p.m. Healing Energy Session with Gregory Weathers 7-9 p.m. Peace Generator Dave Bell	20 8:30 a.m. AA 8 p.m. Spiritual Cinema
21 <i>Rev. Delyth:</i> R: Mary Alice T. M: Dawn S. MU: TBA Board meeting <i>Marilyn Alf</i>	22 10-noon Dynamic Transformation 6:45 p.m. ACIM 7 p.m. Great Bal- anced View Video Meeting <i>Lisa Pappas</i>	23 10:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discus- sion Group 5:30 p.m. Commu- nity Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share	24 6:30-8:30 p.m. Creative Writing Workshop <i>Rose Wisniewski</i>	25 Noon—1:30 p.m. ACIM 7:30 p.m. Urantia Book Study 7:15-8:30 p.m. Speaking Circle	26 7-9 p.m. Healing Energy Session with Gregory Weathers <i>Tommy Kaminski</i>	27 8:30 a.m. AA
28 Rev. Dave: It's Been Quite a Ride! R: Johanna N. M: Rob H. MU: David Mosher CC meeting	29 10-noon Dynamic Transformation 6:45 p.m. ACIM 7 p.m. Great Bal- anced View Video Meeting	30 10:30 a.m. The Power of Now Discus- sion Group 5:30 p.m. Commu- nity Gathering/ Potluck and Reiki Share	31	Birthdays are indicated in bold/italic Happy Birthday!	Board meeting this month is on May 21	The newsletter submission deadline is May 28

FOR BIRD-WATCHERS AND OTHER NATURE LOVERS

By Peggy Lubahn

Animals are fully "plugged in" to the energetic world around us, in all its unseen complexity; and this permits instant communication with each other. It also helps them pick up on our energies, especially our emotional energies. They can easily sense when they're being watched by humans, especially when that attention is magnified by unblinking binocular or camera lenses.

For two weeks now, I've been hearing a mystery bird down by Ford Lake. Like many warblers, he's skittish about humans and he hasn't allowed me to get close enough to see his field marks; and whenever I've tried to focus my binoculars on him, he's zipped away into the trees.

Do you see what the problem was? I really wanted to figure out what kind of warbler he is! It's exciting to "meet" a bird you haven't seen before, and I could share it on my neighborhood blog. But even though I offered Reiki energy, my ambition to "capture" the identity of this bird scared him away.

As a guest in the forest, in order to be a considerate observer it was necessary to soften my energy so it would be heart-based. Now when I hear that special song, I put away the binoculars and send loving Reiki energy toward the songster. I tell him I'd love to meet him face-to-face for a conversation, but only if he's comfortable with that nearness. And I assure him that whatever he decides is fine with me, and his wishes will be respected.

Last time I saw him, he perched in some brush about 20 feet away: close enough to show me he was thinking about my invitation, but far enough away for him to feel safe. Warblers are very active birds, so he didn't stay still for long, but I got the message!

You can apply the ideas I've described any time you go into nature. If you don't practice Reiki, simply project peaceful thoughts. Your positive energy, respect and desire to SHARE a space, instead of trying to dominate it or take something from it, will be universally understood.

The rest of the story: After I finished this column and went to bed, I was gifted with a vision of one of the shallow inlets in North Bay Park. It was bustling with waterfowl as usual, but right in front of me was a larger-than-life Wood Duck and a Pintail, both with a haze of Light around them. They were ambassadors for their kind, and they had felt the energies I sent out while writing. They gazed at me with great interest, mixed with approval and appreciation, before the vision faded.

Memory Book for Dave

Dear Family and Friends,

As you may know, our minister David Bell is retiring at the end of May. His Retirement Party is scheduled for June 17, from 6-8 pm at the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth.

You are invited to contribute to a memory book for Dave. The computerized pages will be created by Norah Reilly and Sue Booker. You are invited to provide a short description of your favorite memory or interaction with Dave. If you have photos to go with your memory, we can use either a digitized or hard copy of the pictures. Higher resolution photos work best for this memory book.

Please email your memory (and photo if you have one) to Sally at <u>ssearls@sbcglobal.net</u>. You can also submit a written memory and hard copy photo to Sue or Norah at the Interfaith Center or mail to Susan Booker at 1106 N. Congress St., Ypsilanti, MI 48197.

The deadline for submitting your memory and photo is Sunday, May 21.

Thank you for getting your contribution to us as soon as possible.

Sincerely, Sue, Norah, and Sally

Get A Grip-----Let Go! By Marilyn Alf

Continued from page 1

The rest of the sweat lodge experience isn't relevant. What had already happened was revelation enough! I had experienced the power of claiming confidence and courage; in clearing the mind, of relaxing; letting quiet flood through without the hindrance of thinking; experiencing "it", unjudged and in the entirety of "it." Knowing I can then move ahead without fear. Knowing I am truly at choice to determine "its" meaning, importance, if I want/am able to use "it" or parts of "it," and how I will rid myself of "it"...or (exhale) let "it" go. Even if my choice misses the mark, it has been my choice and I learn from my error.







Image from peaceseeds

Caring Committee Contact List

Marilyn Alf, Chair sd2aa@hotmail.com, 734-761-6698 Heide Kaminski, secretary and co-chair, mommyk@tc3net.com, 517-423-9001 Kellie Love, co-chair kellie.love@interfaithspirit.org, 248-343-8725 Tommy Kaminski, tally keeper, 517-423-9001 Judy Bell, dabellsj@comcast.net, 734-994-0018 Annie Kopko revanniekopko@gmail.com, 734-358-1328 Malcolm Shaffner mshaffne@gmail.com, 734-709-4205 Delyth Balmer, delyth.balmer@interfaithspirit.org, 734-657-5384 Jack Richards, handymanjack45@gmail.com, 734-489-5703 Beth Rockwell, rocksnotes@aol.com Idgie Patterson, bdgidg@gmail.com Jan Peacock, jpea80@comcast.net, 734-660-8411 Mike O'Shea, mwposhea@yahoo.com 586-770-2904 Khristian Speelman, ksmithspeelman@gmail.com Sue Booker Diane Lindberg, dialind@aol.com

CONTRIBUTORS WANTED!

We would love to have your input in the newsletter: spiritual moments, movie/book reviews, exciting announcements, poems, etc.

We try to have the newsletter ready for final editing by the third Sunday of each month. Please send contributions to Heide at mommyk@tc3net.com with "Interfaith submission" in the subject line. If you do not mention Interfaith, your email might get kicked right into the recycle bin by my spam filter.

If you cannot email your contribution, you may give it to Heide on Sunday.

To receive the online newsletter, go to http://lists.interfaithspirit.org/listinfo.cgi/interfaithinspirerinterfaithinspirer.org to subscribe.

Want to hear from us throughout the week? Receive or send email through Interfaith Yahoo by going to

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/InterfaithSpirit/

Namaste from your newsletter team: Heide, Esther, and Lindsay.

_ _ _ _ _ _

- BOARD OF TRUSTEES
- Pat Root, Chair
- Ray Fix, member
- Mary Alice Truitt, member Lindsay Passmore, member
- Tommie Parker member
- Steve Orlowski, member
- Tony Nader, member
- Board email address is
- board@interfaithspirit.org

STAFF

David Bell, Minister Delyth Balmer, Administrator and Associate Esther Reilly Proofreader Minister Annie Kopko, Associate Minister Laura Massaro, Music Director Dawn Swartz, Choir Director Heide Kaminski and Kellie Love, Youth Education Directors Tommy Kaminski, Nursery

NEWSLETTER/WEBSTAFF Heide Kaminski, Editor-in-Chief Lindsay Passmore, Steve Lyskawa, Webmasters NEWSLETTER ADDRESS Heide AW Kaminski heide.kaminski@interfaithspirit.org



5th Annual Benefit Concert In Loving Memory of Helen Slomovits

Saturday, May 13, 8 pm

Café 704, 704 Airport Blvd., Ann Arbor \$8/person; \$15/couple

Laz Slomovits, of the folk duo Gemini, played a number of concerts at Cafe' 704 over the years, always with his wife Helen, until she passed away in 2012. To honor Helen's memory, and to celebrate her life, Laz is dedicating this yearly concert to her. Proceeds from the evening will be donated to two organizations: one that supports nature preservation, and the other, an emergency shelter for homeless children and their families. Both causes were very close to Helen's heart.

Laz will be joined by a number of guest musicians, all of whom performed or recorded with Helen over the years. Laz and his guests will sing some of Helen's songs, as well as original and traditional music in both folk and classical styles.





We had an absolutely amazing month in April!

We learned a lot with food. One such lesson was about not judging a book by its cover, giving new things a try (new friends with unappealing looks, for example), etc.

Lentil soup and Ugly Fruit... who would have guessed! They look kind of gross, but our taste buds do not agree! It's just a little bit of an obstacle to get over the initial encounter..



Heide's favorite soup!



James Archer went nuts with delight over this one...



We used Skittles to learn how to work together in tricky situations. Key: Patience, take it slow!

And, of course, we always practice community service by prepping food for the Sunday potluck!





Love, Light, and Laughter Heide, Kellie, Tommy, Dawn, and the Youthful Spirits



For Easter, we had a record turn-out of all ages!



While we do have separate age groups, we do a lot of "intergenerational" things together!



Inspíratíonal Tídbíts

I just had a great experience getting rid of my last one. This morning as I stopped to get gas, a young man with a big black garbage bag holding his stuff stood by the door ready to beg as people went in and out. I got out of my car and told him I had extra vitamin water, would he like one? He acted so grateful that I thought possibly he was homeless. Next I brought out my last handy pack and asked if he could use anything in the Ziploc. Boy then he really brightened up! He said "You have made my day! If there is anything in this bag I can't use, believe me, I know people who can!" Then a grin that spread from ear to ear blossomed across his dirt-smudged face as he pulled his stocking cap off a bit from his forehead. I noticed then that he had red hair and could have been no older than 30. As I walked back to my car, he looked me in the eye and added, "Nobody is happier than me right now."

He was wrong. I am quite sure that I was the happiest one around.

~ Dawn Swarts



Most of you have received our Spring Fundraising Letter, and some of you have sent us your donation. Thanks so much. Given the national climate and the need to work hard at creating a culture of understanding and inclusion, we have our work cut out for us. Please

consider supporting this work. Either send us a check or go to <u>www.irtwc.org</u> and use any of the Donate buttons. Thanks, George Lambrides, <u>gbrides@umich.edu</u>

I saw this a while back in Project Happiness. It appealed to me and I decided to try it out. Easy to do if you think about what you're saying...though occasionally I catch myself and have to back up and start over. But it actually does seem to change the way I feel about the interaction and the responses of those I'm with. I'm trying to do it automatically. Try it and find out how it works for you.

Lately I've been replacing my "I'm sorry's" with "Thank you's."

Instead of saying "Sorry I'm late", I'll say, "Thanks for

waiting for me." Or instead of saying, "Sorry for being such a mess," I'll say, "Thank you for loving me and caring about me unconditionally."

It's not only shifted the way I feel about myself, but also improved my relationships with others who need to get to receive my gratitude instead of my negativity.

~ Author Unknown, submitted by Marilyn Alf

Givin' You the Raspberries by Rob Fagerlund

I just ate 87 entire fruits.

I ate a raspberry.

The little round bumps on a raspberry are called druplets. For the purpose of this article, I went through the arduous task of separating and counting the druplets on an average sized raspberry.

There were 87.

So the word raspberry actually refers to a cluster of unique and separate individual fruit.

As an individual fruit, they (I like to think by choice) come together to create something of form and beauty and flavor.

Can you think of another place where unique and separate individuals come together to create a community of form and beauty and flavor?

I can. I'll give you a hint. It's initials are ICSG. Namaste, druplets!



Ponderings

~ submitted by

Peggy Lubahn



Marilyn, Chair

The Caring Committee





Heide and Kellie, Vice Co-chairs



Tommy,



Khristian



Annie



Delyth, Liaison



Idgie



Jan







Judy





Michael

Jack

If you have a service to offer, please contact Marilyn



Interfaith Caring Committee Survey

We are looking for your participation and support of fellow Interfaith members <u>in crisis</u> in any way that is appropriate for you. If you are called on by a caring committee member to support a particular need, you always have the opportunity to decline if it doesn't work for you at that time. Please fill out this survey as completely as you are able. All gifts, skills, and talents are appreciated. Thank you for taking the time!

Name:City/Part of town you live or work in:
Phone:e-mail:
Best way to contact you: Best times to contact you:
Check all areas that you are willing to participate in and specify any limitations
Driver (Interfaith/appointments)Craft Teaching (type)Counseling (type)
Medical Equipment loan (type)Meal PrepConsulting (type)
Child CareErrandsCleaningYardworkSnow Shoveling
Healing/energy workHousehold DonationsClothing Donations
Caregiver BreakSend CardsComputer HelpHealing Music
Fun CompanionshipPet CareMassageMoney Donation
ListeningPrayersRespite CareJoin Caring Committee
Other
Limitations and additional information:

I currently have need of (be specific):



MONTHLY 1 HOUR ESL WORKSHOP

At the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth in Ann Arbor!

Every 1" Thursday at 5pm from April to August

Beginning in April 2017 Curtis Glatter, Heide Kaminski and special guest Larry Mandel will be hosting a monthly workshop for the purpose of tutoring English as a Second Language for those who would like to learn and practice

more English for one hour.



ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

The tutors will provide all of the handouts and supplies that are needed for each student to succeed in each workshop that is taught. These workshops are created for the purpose of tutoring beginning and intermediate non-native English Speakers who would like to practice speaking English before the weekend arrives. Since all materials are provided and teachers are trained to teach beginning and intermediate English speaking families and students, the cost of the monthly workshop will be a donation of \$10 per person per day. Bring your own notebooks and pens or use the ones provided to you at the Interfaith Center.

The location of Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth is 704 Airport Blvd., Ann Arbor, MI.

For more information go to interfaithspirit.org or call 734-972-6098 to reserve your seat for 5 months.





from Nicholas

AppleNicholas.com

tric

Now available on Amazon.com \$14.49 ISBN 1452061262 Paperback and \$9.99 ASIN: B0047DWAFO Kindle

Mac Assistance





Vital Spirit Enterprises Creating Very Special Environments for your peace of mind and easy living "You name it,

we'll organize it!" Valoree Sprentall 734-340-6245 home '34-604-9890 cell



Ann Arbor's Neighborhood **Mac** hanic

734) 945-1246 See what I can offer you at:











ERROR: stackunderflow OFFENDING COMMAND: ~

STACK: