

Interfaith Inspirer



An Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth News Publication

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Quitting to Get Ahead

by Gretchen Leonhardt

This is an adaptation of a longer talk given on May 12, 2019 (Mother's Day).

Wouldn't you know, a man walks into a monastery and takes a vow of silence; however, once a year, he's allowed to say two words.

After the first year, the father invites the monk to speak. The monk scowls and says "Hard bed." The father nods and says "I'm sorry to hear that. We'll bring you a softer mattress."

After the second year, the monk crosses his arms and says "Cold floor!" The father nods and says "I'm sorry to hear that. We'll find you a warm rug."

After the third year, the monk clenches his fists and says "I quit!"

The father shakes his head and says "Well, I'm not surprised; you've done nothing but complain since you got here!"

Richard Paul Evans says that "It's not always wrong to quit. We should never hold onto mistakes just because we spent a long time making them."

When is it acceptable to abandon a bad plan? How are we able to make that judgement? Surely, we may be excused for dismissing that first anxious whisper, but it becomes harder to ignore the growing disquiet, the nagging doubt, the exhaustion, the chronic insomnia, the recurring nightmares, the persistent colds. Rwandan wisdom says that we can outrun that which is running after us but not that which is running within us. When you feel as though you're trying to outrun your pain, then it's time to quit the treadmill and to look inward.

Whenever I encounter people who have suffered traumatic injuries, I ask them about their lives before their accidents. Invariably, every person had been coping with one or more major events – death, divorce, a major move, a job termination or layoff. If we don't view these events as signals to change course, we may not realize, until it's too late, that we've run out of road.

In Chinese, "danger" and "opportunity" spell "crisis." Why are so many able to see the opportunity only after we've survived the danger? It's no wonder that illness is regarded as the western form of meditation.

The exhortation to never quit is founded on a belief that life is one continuous journey rather than a series of smaller journeys. In truth, we live our lives in fits and starts. How much richer might our lives be if we regarded quitting as an acknowledgement that one journey is ending and another is beginning?

If you don't have any idea about how the new journey should look, then eliminate everything that it is not. The pope asked Michelangelo about the secret to his genius as it pertained to the statue of David. "It's simple. I just remove everything that is not David."

Removing ideas, things, and even people from your life should be a thoughtful process. Remember to take care to not cut off your nose.

Begin by removing old signposts for opportunities long past. When your goals and your desires are not in alignment, it's time to re-examine your dreams. Are they still relevant?

For example, while your parents were alive, you postponed your desire to move across the country. Now that they're gone, are you ready to make that move, or has that ship sailed? If so, then it's time to shed the literature, the emails, the phone contacts. For every obsolete dream that you're able to shed, your step becomes lighter and your destination clearer.

When I'm tempted to compare my life's journey to that of another, I remember Seth's wisdom in *The Nature* of Reality: "In the spontaneous playing of the bees from flower to flower, there is discipline beyond any that we know and laws that follow their own knowledge and joy that is beyond command."

I'm that bee who plays among the flowers. By accident or by design, I somehow manage to move from one end of the field to the other; and, while I love the idea of the spontaneous dance, I'm still learning how to transform the dance into intentional, forward movement.

Just four years ago, following a series of job terminations, I was sitting in the middle of my road, painstakingly disentangling desire, purpose, and direction. Now in my 65th year, my step is much lighter, and I have become much more adept at recognizing and interpreting the signposts before shift happens.

So it is.

Ministerial Miscellany

By Annie Kopko

Be willing to be Foolish

I ran across a wonderful quote from the Greek Philosopher Epictetus "If you want to improve, be content to be thought foolish with regard to external things". Or as Swami Beyondananda puts it: "attain Fool Realization". Remember, no one is thinking about us after their initial reaction. They are thinking of the next best thing about themselves. We might as well surrender, it can happen again and again as our spiritual being explores being human. When we are willing to seem foolish, we don't have to pretend to be perfect anymore. What a relief! Nor are we so concerned about what other people might think about us. It is interesting, like I said, they are not thinking about us.

When we are not concerned or afraid to be laughed at, we will experience more trust and peace in just being ourselves. Laughter is our own best remedy for all kinds of embarrassment. Comedians make a living at this! Part of me has always wanted to be a stand-up comedian, and sometimes I already am. The older I get, the more mistakes I make, so the easier it is to make people laugh. And it makes life a whole lot more fun for me too!

Each of us is the light of the world, no matter what we think. We each have our own angel of Love who knows for us, nothing else matters. Our angels will be gathering with us for events at Interfaith. More information is always on our website: https://interfaithspirit.org.

One last Drum and Dance Jam for the year with Curtis Glatter, drummer extraordinaire is happening on Saturday, August 5, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. Donations gratefully accepted. Drums available at the Center or bring your own.

Cafe 704 on Saturday, August 12, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. features the Kozora Quartet: "Global Fusion music" Ken Kozora: Composer, Bass Guitar, Synth, Percussion, Dulcimer, Paul Vornhagen: Sax, Flute, Clarinet, Robert Spalding Newcomb: Guitar, Sitar composition and Enrique "Kito" Pardo: Drum Set. Tickets \$10.00 in person at the door or via livestream on Zoom. Go to

https://interfaithspirit.org/cafe-704-coffeehouse/ for more info or to purchase tickets for Zoom.

Enjoy the beautiful weather. Enjoy being everything you are.

Blessings, Annie



Happy Birthday to Our August Celebrants

August 6Alex PennAugust 6Barb FisherAugust 7Jack RichardsAugust 12Judy MosavatAugust 17Andrea Shaw

August 2 Sandy Hill

- August 18 Oana Popa
- August 18 David Winfree
- August 21 Donald Prevost-Hart
- August 21 Diane Gledhill
- August 25 Cathy Dyer
- August 28 Heather Thomson

Adding another Candle doesn't make you older, it makes your life brighter!



Volunteer Corner

Submitted by Annemarie Howse

At the last Quarterly Conversation in Community (QCC) there was a lot of discussion about how the building has evolved over the years, from an industrial building, to *Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth; and what our vision is for the future. In response; things have been happening!*

It began with an inventory of our blessings. We discovered that some of the things we have in stock are true gems! However, some are broken (can they be repaired?), some are left behind by others (to whom do they belong?), and some we've simply outgrown or are no longer in use. Sorting, organizing, cleaning, restoring, and discarding is a work in progress.

* You may have noticed that the TV in the sanctuary is now on a proper stand, allowing more space in that area. The piano now has a presence, inviting musicians to take advantage of the opportunity to play. * The Children's arts and crafts supplies have been neatly organized and put into the storage cabinet in the large classroom.

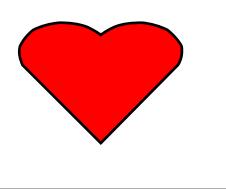
* A group met to discuss painting.

* Repairs are in progress, organizing, cleaning, and much more.

Most of the work is being done by a handful of people. The blessing has been that we have gotten to know each other quite well, and enjoy spending time together. If you have a few hours to lend a hand, and would like to have the opportunity to get to know us better, please let me know. Some projects are underway now. Others will not begin until the fall.

Organizationally,

Annemarie Howse <u>ahowse21@gmail.com</u> 818-667-2815



Caring Committee July Report

respectfully submitted by Annemarie Howse

The mission of the Caring Committee is to assist individuals or families primarily within the community of the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth, and selectively support outreach groups or people that aren't part of our Interfaith Community but we know about them through our members and affiliations.

Since the Caring Committee may not always be able to provide the services that are requested, we may reach out to the Interfaith Community for help. For example: if someone is moving or needs a ride, we might make an announcement or send an email with their request. We would then ask that you contact a member of the Caring Committee to let them know you are able to help.

During the month of July the Caring Committee provided the following services: Transportation-2 Cards sent by individual members-1 Texts/emails/facebook-3 Phone calls-16 Home or hospital visits-3 Meals-1 Outreach-4 Reiki (provided remotely)-2

These supports and services were provided to 10 different individuals or families in our Interfaith Community and 4 organizations (outreach) during the month of July.

Financial Report-Our balance at the end of July was \$2,523.93. There were no donations received this month. The amount spent was \$47.61.

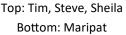
We thank you for your generosity and are grateful for our ability to be of service.



Meet Our Newest Members

Welcome (back) Steve and Sheila Orlowski, Maripat and Tim Perkins, and Teresa Craig-Priley







Teresa

Steve and Sheila once were a very involved couple at the Center. As they drove over an hour, they finally decided to find a similar group closer to home or start something. The long drive also interfered with their ability to make commitments for classes and activities. Steve did spend a term on the board though.

They found a small group which rotated meetings at people's homes weekly. Their discussions were highly influenced by Science of Mind. The group members became good friends, but with Covid regular meetings were not the norm anymore.

Fast forward: pandemic declared contained, services at the Center went back to in-person and Steve and Sheila decided to give it another try. They missed their "old" family. They realized, "Ann Arbor won't come down here (Adrian)." Steve and Sheila travel a lot throughout the year, so if we don't see them for a while later in the year, don't worry, they won't be gone as long this time!

Maripat and Tim were members of the group, as was Teresa. They decided to come along.

Maripat, originally from Toledo, was raised Catholic, "with schools and the whole bit." In her late 20s, she was introduced to A Course in Miracles and has been doing this steadily for 20 years. "Sheila and Steve told us about Interfaith and how much they had enjoyed it before Covid. I'm drawn to Interfaith because of the openness and warmth and like-mindedness of the people. It's very soothing and welcoming."

Tim is from Detroit. He was also raised Catholic and still goes to church sometimes and on Christmas- he enjoys the ritual. His spiritual beliefs started in his mid 20s.

"Steve and Sheila spoke highly of Interfaith so I was curious. I like the wide variety of perspectives- from the Torah to the Satanic Bible. Plus, people are very friendly!" Maripat and Tim live in Tecumseh now.

Teresa is from Adrian. Aside from earning a BFA from Siena Heights, she was also inspired to earn a Masters in Blind Rehabilitation from Western Michigan University. Her inspiration came from having a blind daughter. Teresa's motto is "We create our lives by what we believe and think and speak."

She says: "When I lived in San Francisco in the 70's I got involved with a group of people studying Seth material written by Jane Roberts. This was very interesting to me and it was my first 'official' inquiry into the metaphysical."

Recently, she began studying "Science of Mind." In her research for a local group, she found Steve, Sheila, Maripat, and Tim. Alas, that's how she ended up exploring the Center. "I like the energy of Interfaith, very calming and accepting. It's good to meet people who are also open and spirit filled."

Welcome!

Mark your calendars!

CAFE 704 CONCERT SERIES

Saturdays, 7 p.m.—9 p.m. In person and on Zoom

Aug. 12: Kozora Quartet

Sep. 9: Nutshell

Oct. 14: Vornhagen and Kaufman

Nov. 11: Jean Wilson and Friends

Dec. 9: Emily Slomovits and Billy King

Interested in performing at Cafe 704?

Send an inquiry to cafe704@gmail.com

PEACE GENERATOR

7—9 pm Every 3rd Friday

Leadership Team Meeting 2nd Sunday 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Bob Hopkins (734) 985-5572

Board of Trustees Meeting 3rd Sunday

1:30 – 3:30 p.m. Marice Clark & Claire Groshans, Co-Chairs <u>board@interfaithspirit.org</u>

Caring Committee Meeting

1st Thursday 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. o**n zoom** Marilyn Alf, Chair <u>sdtoaa@gmail.com</u>

Singing for Comfort

with Layla Ananda 7-8:30 pm every 2nd Thursday (resumes in September)

THE SUFI WAY By Bob Hopkins

THE SUFI WAY EXPLORED IN MORE DEPTH

I am finding it harder to explain what I am learning in the Sufi class each Tuesday night. There is a group of regular attendees and I would invite anyone from the Center to join us. There has come to be a variety of Muslim students that Kamau has attracted that join us with regularity. The class started out four years ago as a study of specific texts which extended through two to three books. More recently, the class has a variety of topics that suit the Muslim calendar and Kamau's choice for that particular night.

When those of us who have been with it from the beginning gather in that small group, it seems there is a general theme with which we are all quite familiar. When there are newcomers, as any reader of this would be, there is a special effort to make more of the Sufi tradition visible to the unfamiliar. I find those times quite refreshing because it is a chance to get back to the roots of the belief system. However, when the group is familiar with each other, the group soars into concepts of light, heart linkages, the remembrance that is the essence of Zhikr and flights of ideas from the most mystical to the curiously mundane.

Two things are always consistent and provide a bedrock foundation. Kamau will always open with an Arabic blessing that ties into the evening's opening topic. The session always closes with an experience of Zhikr that varies in duration based on the extent of the conversations and teachings that are the essence of that night's proceedings. Curious yet? Come join us on the Interfaith website any Tuesday night at 7 PM.



Science of Mind

Submitted by Janet Somalinog Spiritual counselor in the Religious Science tradition

What a glorious summer time we are living in. Isn't it easy to say that when our temps are perfect, skies are clear and green abundance is all around? Let us connect this feeling into our physical, mental and emotional bodies so that we can access it at any time under any circumstance. Let us KNOW this Truth for all places and communities world wide. It is written in first person and is to be spoken with confidence and trust. Here goes:

There is only One Mind, in all places and ever available, ready to pour Goodness into the One Life that is so fresh and open right now. I am fully aware of this joyous, abundant energy that shows up easily and effortlessly in my day, my family, my home, garden and community, in all of my relationships and circumstances and all events in my life and across the globe. I am One with these experiences of Light, and the crisp winds of change and the abundant growth all around. I am warmed to the core with the loving embrace of this Essence, always available, always providing and always responding to my thoughts and beliefs. I take this moment to anchor myself into this Truth of Infinite Generous Nature that unfolds Its Bounty and Love right before me and guides each step of mine. I breathe this Consciousness in. This Essence permeates every cell of my being. I am Love, I am Healed, I am Whole. My body temple knows this clearly as I let go of small thoughts and small beliefs. This Goodness declares Its Strength, Its Power, Its Love and Its Prosperity right into my being for I am One with this Mind of Grace and One with the Infinite Wellspring of Source. I let go of any barriers to this process of God as me. I humbly stand with my hands wide open and my Big Heartfelt thoughts and dreams overflowing into manifestation for myself and others, In deep gratitude, I release these words into the respondent Law of Mind. My trust is true, I let go of any doubts and say...And so it is. Amen !!



A CONVERSATION WITH THE CONSTELLATION **DELPHINUS, THE DOLPHIN** By Peggy River Singer

Back in the 1960's, we spent summers at Clark Lake in the Irish Hills. Mom and I would take our little telescope out on the dock at night and see how many moons of Jupiter we could count, and find different constellations. I've been in love with the night sky ever since, and this article is about one of my favorite constellations!

About Delphinus

Delphinus isn't the brightest group of stars (it's kind of faint), or the largest (it's pretty small); and it doesn't have any exotic features. Even so, it's been a favorite of countless stargazers of all ages for a very long time, because it actually does look like a dolphin leaping out of the water.

Who is Delphinus?

This constellation reminds us that humans and dolphins have shared a long, long relationship. It represents a dolphin who saved the life of Arion, the most famous singer/musician of his time. He traveled to many lands to present concerts, then hired a ship to take him and his treasure back to Greece. The captain and crew decided to kill him and throw his body overboard, so they could split his riches. He begged to be allowed to sing one last song, and he truly sang for his life; so sweetly that dolphins gathered around the boat and sang along with him. Knowing that dolphins often help drowning humans, Arion realized they were his only chance to survive. As he finished the song, he jumped overboard. The dolphins immediately surrounded him, and Delphinus, the leader of the group, gave him a ride all the way to Greece. The Greek gods honored Delphinus for his compassion by placing him in the night sky, where he still sings his own beautiful silvery songs on clear summer evenings.

Finding Delphinus

(You may need to look at a star map, but it will be worth the trouble!) Face southeast and look for the Summer Triangle formed by the brightest stars of Cygnus, Lyra and Aquila. Then look to the lower left of Altair (in Aquila) for a diamond shape formed by four stars, with the fifth star forming the dolphin's tail.

Peggy: May I speak to a representative of the dolphin folk about this legend?

Dolphin: I am here, little one. What would you like to know?

Peggy: We have many stories of dolphins helping humans in different ways. The Delphinus story is one of the earliest examples we know of. Do the dolphin folk know about this legend?

Dolphin: [gentle chuckle] Yes, of course! It is a tale told to our young, an illustration of the connections between our peoples. A fine example of the proper way to BE Dolphin, you see.

Peggy: How long has this beneficial connection existed?

Dolphin: It was conceived of in the great era of human seafaring, thousands of years ago. So many vessels experienced storms and other dangers; so many humans perished. You understand, up to that point we (and other sea folk) would often assist a human in peril, as an individual act of Grace. But with more and more sea

travelers, and more and more assistance needed, our people called for a "virtual conference." from all the seas. and much talking was done. And we agreed, as what you humans might call a "policy," to set aside our own doings if necessary, in order to be of service in this manner.

Peggy: Are the dolphins able to see the group of stars that represents the legend, and the heroic Delphinus?

Dolphin: Yes, we can see quite well through air. But we primarily feel/see it internally, in our hearts, as we do many other sky objects; so we may share its energy whenever we wish to. Your description of the "silvery songs" is very accurate; that is how the energy of the constellation feels to us. The spirit/soul of the constellation is also with me here, and willing to speak to you.

Peggy: Thank you. Delphinus, I never would have dreamed, as a child, that I would ever be able to talk to a constellation! It's a great honor.

elphinus: [a higher pitched, thinner voice] I too am pleased. We have felt your affection, from your heart to ours. You are comparing our FEEL, our appearance, our vibration to the mineral Selenite; and this is very perceptive. Selenite, with its glistening threads and its purity, is a good representation of our energies.

Peggy: Thank you, I was wondering about that. Did your group of stars exist as a personality before it was recognized as a dolphin by humans?

Delphinus: A very astute question. I shall say, we knew of each other, as all stars can communicate at will, even though we are many light years apart. The legend was brought to our attention when a human named the group of stars. So we stars formed an alliance/family, you might call it, taking the identification of the dolphin hero. This brought us closer in relationship, and we are quite enjoying being associated with the legend. The physical dolphins chat with us, and we exchange news and ideas -- so it is a very pleasant relationship.

Peggy: Do other constellations have similar stories? **Delphinus:** Yes, indeed. It provides variety and freshness in our lives, which as you know are very long indeed.

Peggy: Is there anything else you'd like to share with those who will read these words?

Delphinus: The connections between our peoples are beyond ancient; far deeper and more complex than most humans realize, and those connections are based on, and woven from, Love.

Peggy: My thanks to you all; I am grateful for this talking.

Dolphin and Delphinus: Go with our blessings, little sister.

AUTHOR BIO

Peggy River Singer is a Lightworker, all-beings channel and communicator, faerie ally, Reiki practitioner, and life-long writer who combines her gifts to help create harmonious relationships among all who share the Earth. Connect by phone at 734-548-0194, or by email at newbluecanoe@aol.com or

peggytalkstoanimals.wordpress.com. More articles and columns are posted on

angelsfairiesandlife.wordpress.com.

Member Contributions

I Came to Faith by Science by Cayla Tchalo © 2023

I came to Faith by Science, through thinking, logic, and facts, not through religious bias which to me seems much to lack.

An endless list of Miracles causes me to ask, "How did *that come to be?" That sets me on my task* to examine and inquire & to question again and again. Mystery inspires. Curiosity & Wonder are my friends.

Each amazing Discovery elicits endless Awe. And that is how God *me to Faith has called*.

In the Good Old Summertime Lyrics by Ron Shields

"There's a time each year That we always hold dear, Good old summer time; With the birds and the trees'es And sweet scented breezes, Good old summer time.

When you day's work is over Then you are in clover, And life is one beautiful rhyme, No trouble annoying, Each one is enjoying, The good old summer time."

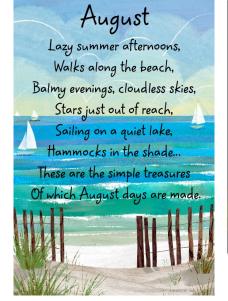
When on a Summer's Morn William Henry Davies

"When on a summer's morn I wake, And open my two eyes, Out to the clear, born-singing rills My bird-like spirit flies.

To hear the Blackbird, Cuckoo, Thrush, Or any bird in song; And common leaves that hum all day Without a throat or tongue.

And when Time strikes the hour for sleep, Back in my room alone, My heart has many a sweet bird's song --And one that's all my own."

Submitted by Annemarie Howse



Summer Must Go

Summer has lingered a little too long, The grass and the trees wear a rusty look, The calendar cries the last day of August, And so say the leaves that float down the brook.

The mists hang low in the morning hours, And the smell of harvest grows more strong. The calendar cries the last day of August – And summer has lingered a little too long.



Found online by Heide Kaminski



Contributors Needed!!!

In order to keep the newsletter going in a more timely manner, I need contributions. Many thanks to my regular contributors, Annie Kopko, Bob Hopkins, Janet Somalinog, Annemarie Howse, Peggy Lubahn!

I need:

- Inspirational front page articles (approximately 750 words
- Photos, poetry, tidbits, quotes, announcements

Please submit written work in google doc format, Times New Roman, font size 12 to heide.kaminski1959@gmail.com

Put "Newsletter Submission" in the subject line. THANK YOU

Looking for a way to support the "Next Generation" of Spiritual Leaders? Here's your opportunity!

Meet Lu Evergreen

Submitted by Rev. Delyth Balmer

You may recognize Lu, as they have recently attended several of our Sunday Celebration Services and announced their involvement with the Centers for Spiritual Living and the upcoming retreat for the next generation. I felt so inspired hearing about this movement that I went to the nextgenretreat.org website to see how I could personally support the cause. I encourage you all to check it out and add your support. And, if you see Lu at the Center, be sure to spend some time chatting and finding out more about this mission. Below is a note from Lu and a bio as posted on the <u>nextgenretreat.org</u> website.

Hello,

We are NextGEN, the premier annual spiritual retreat for people 18-35ish. This year's retreat will be held from Oct 20th-23rd at Camp Cedar Ridge in Vernonia, Oregon. Our goal is to inspire and support the next generation of leaders in the Centers for Spiritual Living and New Thought movement.

This is the ONLY spiritual retreat designed by and for people 18-35ish within the Centers for Spiritual Living communities. We believe an investment in our next generation of spiritual leaders is CRUCIAL to the future and success of our movement.

Our goal is to raise 20k by September 15 through <u>attendee</u>,

sorships and donations.

Your contribution will make a huge impact by allowing up and coming young leaders to embrace their inner fire and keep the light of the New Thought movement shining bright. Whether you donate \$5 or \$500 or commit to sponsoring an attendee, every dollar helps!



-The (Very Excited) NextGEN Team

Lu Evergreen, LMSW Pronouns: They/Them



Lu Evergreen is a God-loving, nature loving, genderqueer social worker. Lu was raised Jewish and found their way to New Thought practices and traditions in 2009 after attending a Sunday service at the Bodhi Spiritual Center in Chicago for the first time. Lu has centered their life around maintaining their own inner peace

through spiritual practices so they can show up as their highest Spirit-led Self for those who are in need of love and compassion in this world.

Lu is a licensed social worker and has worked in the mental health field on and off for several years. Currently Lu works with transgender adults in a medical system to help folks access gender-affirming care. Lu is interested and committed to helping create systemic changes that will make this world a friendlier place for QTBIPOC folks and others on the margins of society. Lu loves to commune with nature and recognizes the power of Spirit that shows up through hugging a majestic tree, marveling at the sight of a magnificent sunset or sleeping under a starry night sky.



Experience the Next Generation of New Thought: a community of young adults (18-40ish) from CSLs worldwide.

This retreat offers the opportunity to develop heart-centered leadership skills, engage in discussions about social justice, explore financial prosperity, and learn how to cultivate healthy and successful relationships in all aspects of life.

Scholarships Available! October 20-23, 2023 Camp Cedar Ridge | Vernonia, Oregon