

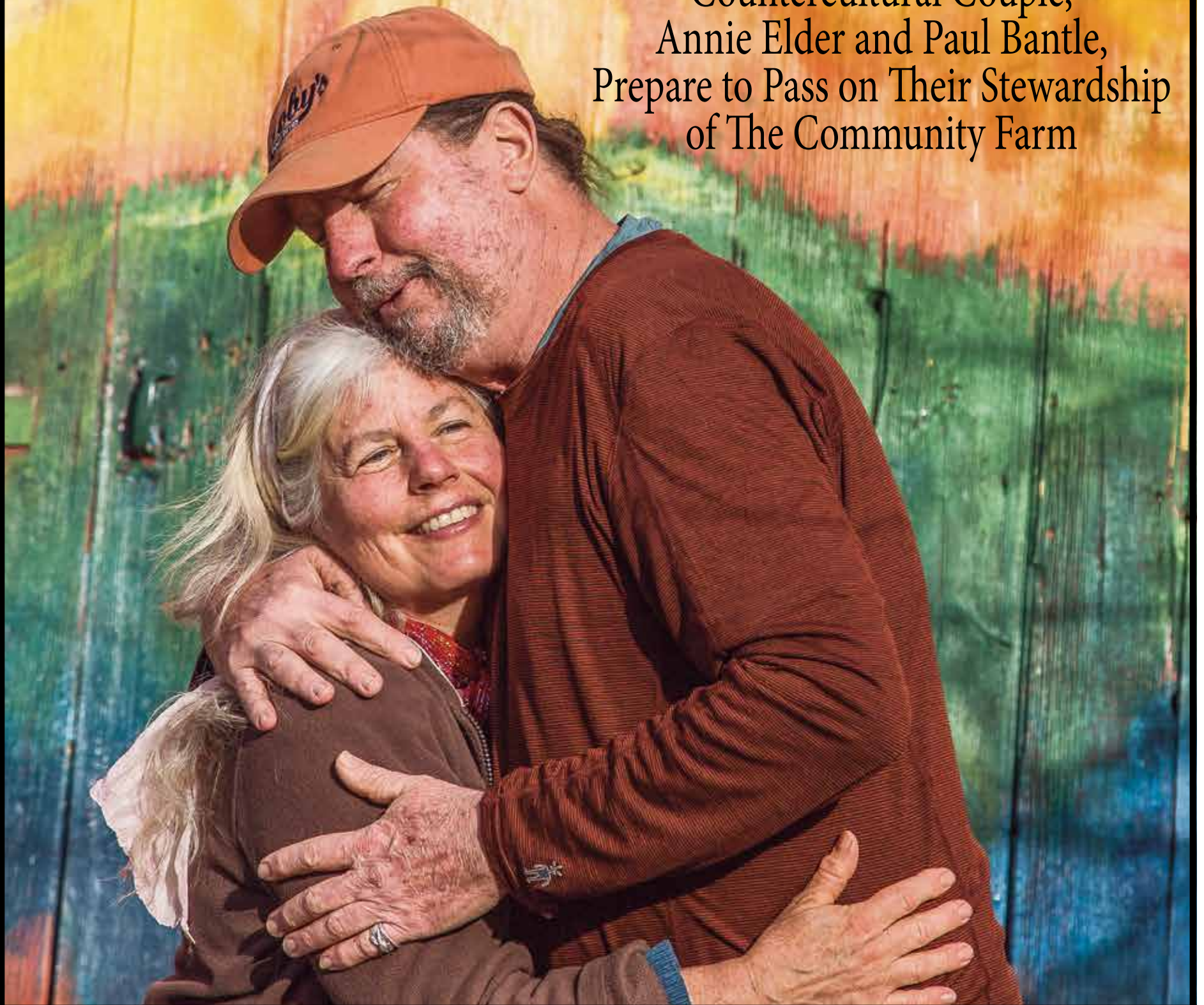
THE CRAZY WISDOM COMMUNITY JOURNAL

SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN'S CONSCIOUS LIVING MAGAZINE

FREE

MAY THROUGH AUGUST 2017 - ISSUE 66

The End of an Era —
Ann Arbor's Most Beloved
Countercultural Couple,
Annie Elder and Paul Bantle,
Prepare to Pass on Their Stewardship
of The Community Farm



Purpose is Good for You — The Meaningful Life and Work of Vic Strecher

A Panorama of Meditation in Ann Arbor as told by Libby Robinson

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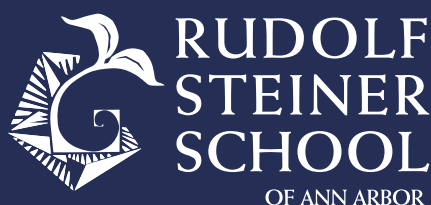


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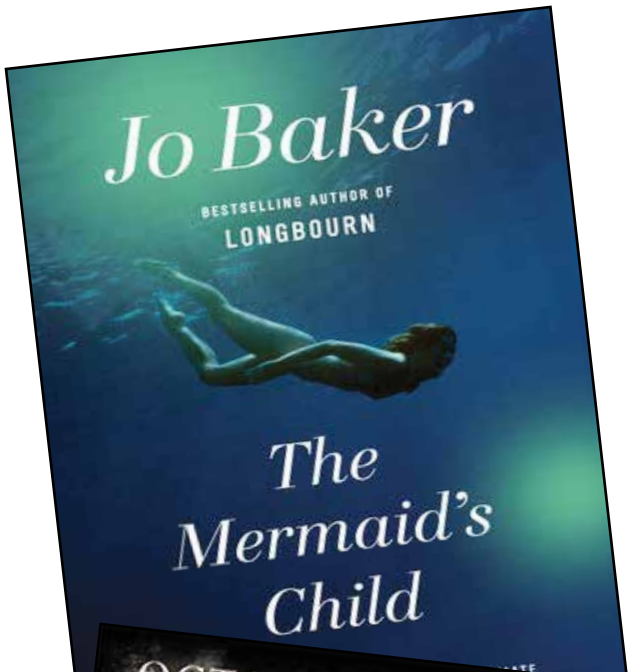
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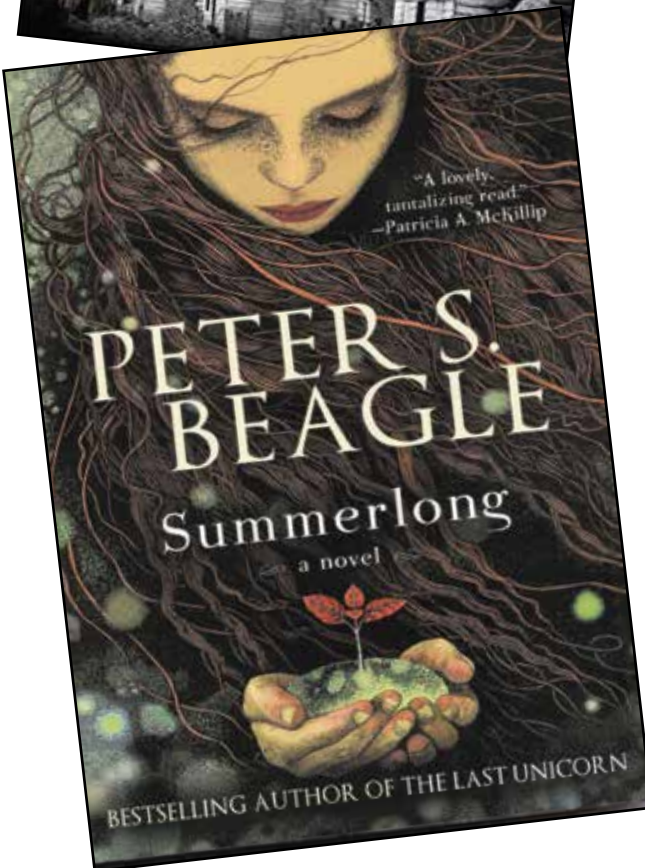
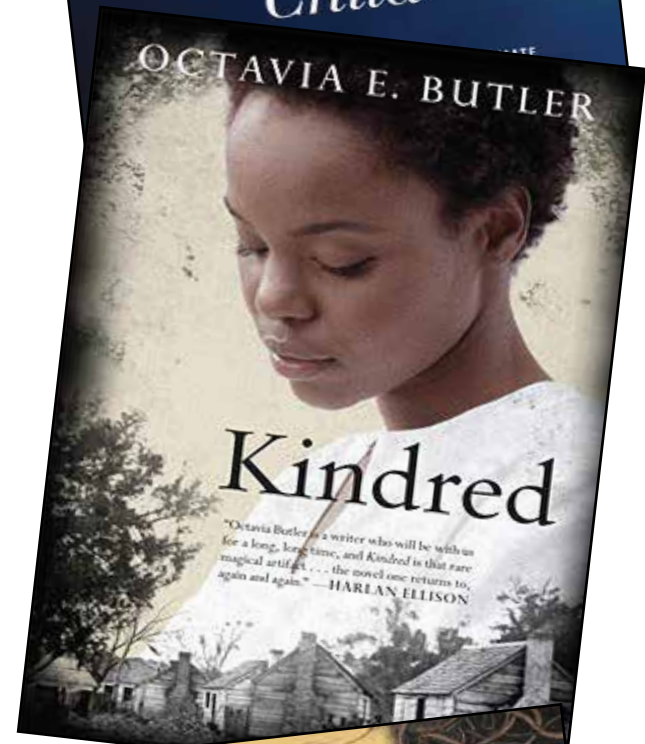
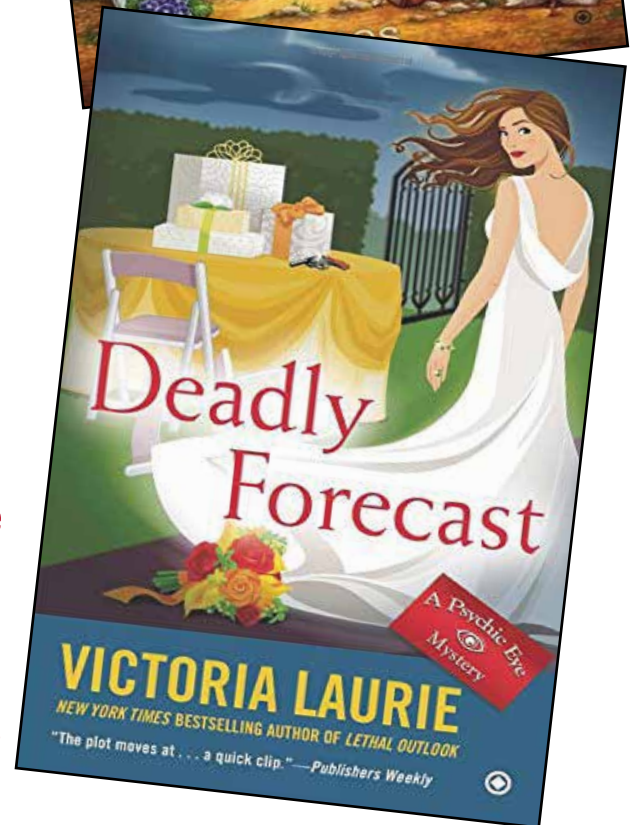
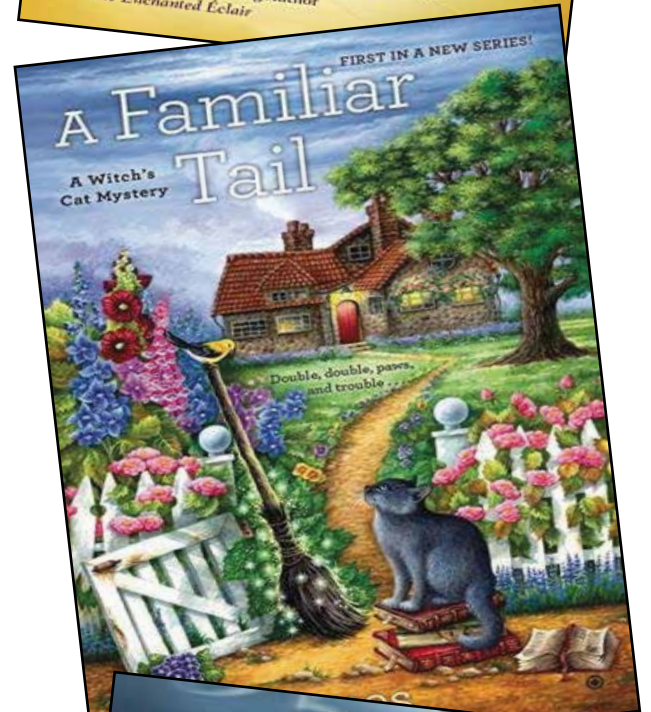
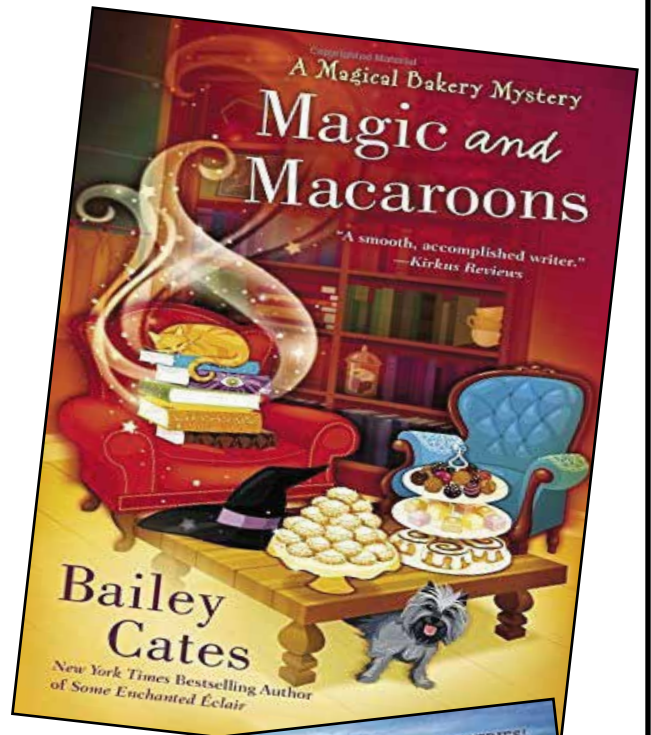
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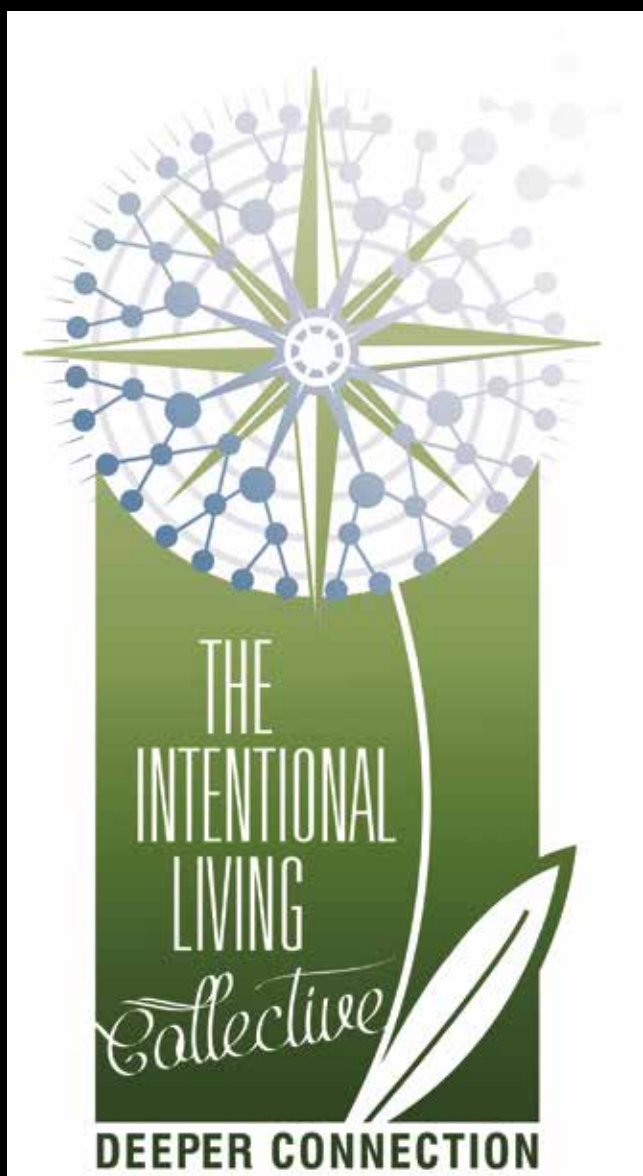
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THE CRAZY WISDOM COMMUNITY JOURNAL

SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN'S CONSCIOUS LIVING MAGAZINE

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by
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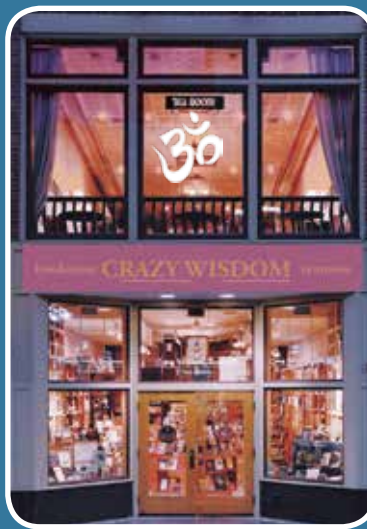
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The deadline for Free Calendar submissions for the September thru December 2017 issue is Monday, July 17. Contact Robin at calendarforms@crazywisdom.net The deadline for Paid Advertising is Tuesday, August 1. Contact Rory@ crazywisdom.net

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May 19 • *The Trump Survival Guide: Everything You Need to Know about Living through What You Hoped Would Never Happen* by Gene Stone, hosted by Bill Zirinsky

June 16 • *Escape Routes* by Johann Christoph Arnold, hosted by Deb Flint

July 14 • *We are Afghan Women, Voices of Hope* (Introduction by Laura Bush) hosted by Deb Flint

August 18 • *The Path* by Michael Puett, hosted by Deb Flint

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Vic Strecher – A Public Health Scientist’s Inquiries into Purpose

By Rachel Urist
Photos by Edda Pacifico

“I don’t care about dying. I care about not living.”
— Professor, Visionary Businessman and Author Vic Strecher

Vic Strecher, a behavioral scientist, is an energetic, trim, and youthful sixty-two year old. He teaches at the University of Michigan’s School of Public Health and is Visiting Professor at the Peking University’s School of Public Health. He has given hundreds of talks the world over. (He jokes that his frequent flyer miles are sky-high.) His TED Talks and recorded lectures, replete with PowerPoint presentations featuring trademark symbols from his graphic novel, *On Purpose*, have given him a YouTube presence and a popular culture crossover audience. He has long been admired for turning his research into practical applications and is the recipient of over a dozen prestigious awards. These include: the Secretary of Health and Human Services Award for Innovations in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, the Delta Omega National Merit Award for Outstanding Achievement in Public Health, the Smithsonian’s “Laureate Medal” in both 2001 and 2002, the C. Everett Koop National Health Award, the University of Michigan’s “Distinguished Innovator of the Year,” and the U-M School of Public Health’s “Award for Translating Research into Practice.”

With the uniquely innovative spirit he brings to the field of public health, Strecher commands widespread admiration for his scholarship, and practical contributions to the area of public health. Strecher holds a Masters and Ph.D. in Health Behavior and Health Education from U-M’s School of Public Health. Since 1995, when he completed his Ph.D., he has been on the U-M faculty at the School of Public Health. He has served as director of several research centers, including the Health Communications Research Library at the University of North Carolina’s School of Public Health; the U-M’s Health Communications Research (which he founded in 1996); and the Cancer Prevention and Control at U-M’s Comprehensive Cancer Center. Currently, he is Director for Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship at U-M’s School of Public Health.

His TED Talks and recorded lectures, replete with PowerPoint presentations featuring trademark symbols from his graphic novel, *On Purpose*, have given him a YouTube presence and a popular culture crossover audience.

Strecher is a scholar committed to making his scientific approach accessible to the lay public. The protagonist of his graphic novel, *On Purpose*, beautifully illustrated by Kody Chamberlain, is a wise dung beetle named Winston. (Winston blogs on his own website: www.dungbeetle.org.) The graphic novel was followed by Strecher’s more academic version of the book: *Life on Purpose: How Living for What Matters Most Changes Everything*.

In both these books, Strecher begins each chapter with a quotation from a famous figure in history. (These quotations offer a glimpse at the breadth of Strecher’s reading and his methodical approach to the things he does.) *On Purpose* has eight chapters. Prefaces are from Rumi, the 13th Century Persian poet (“The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you. Don’t go back to sleep.”); Thomas Merton, a 20th century Trappist monk, poet, social activist, and student of comparative religion; Viktor Frankl; Saint Francis of Assisi (12th century, “Every life needs a purpose to

which it can give the energies of its mind and the enthusiasm of its heart.”); Elizabeth Kübler-Ross; William James; Rainer Maria Rilke; Basho (16th century Japanese poet, “A bee / staggers out / of the peony.”).

“Every life needs a purpose to which it can give the energies of its mind and the enthusiasm of its heart.”

—Saint Francis of Assisi

In the second book, *Life on Purpose: How Living for What Matters Most Changes Everything*, chapters are prefaced with quotations from Leo Tolstoy; Charles Darwin; Viktor Frankl; Søren Kierkegaard; Aristotle; W.C. Fields (“Now don’t say you can’t swear off drinking; it’s easy. I’ve done it a thousand times.” — for the chapter called “Willpower”); Steve Jobs; Friederich Nietzsche; Thich Nhat Hanh (“When you are grateful, you are happy.”); David Foster Wallace (“Learning how to think’ really means learning how to exercise control over *how* and *what* you think. It means being conscious and aware enough to choose what you pay attention to and to choose how to construct meaning from experience.”); Seneca (“The life we receive is not short, but we make it so, nor do we have any lack of it, but are wasteful of it.”).

In addition to the dung beetle, Strecher uses the metaphor of a frog in a pot of water, slowly boiling to death, to represent mankind’s passivity in the face of a daunting crisis. This image came to him in the wake of his daughter’s death, at age nineteen, six years ago. It was a devastating blow. Strecher thought of himself as that frog. The frog doesn’t recognize the danger, and before he knows it, he’s dead. Strecher adds — in conversation and in his many talks — that if a live frog is put into boiling water, the frog jumps out. If, however, the frog is immersed in cold water and the water boiled slowly, the frog falls asleep and dies. For Strecher, this boiling frog is a metaphor for our lives. The image represents myriad problems — climate change and obesity, for example — and we do little or nothing about them.

Typically, when people try to intervene, they use scare tactics to trigger behavior change. But scare tactics don’t work. Subjects become defensive. So how is one to get that frog out of the water? Strecher is convinced that a sense of mission is key. Strecher says that when he suffered the death of someone dear to him, he lost his purpose. When he regained his sense of purpose, he felt revived. His goal now, he says, is to offer others a sense of mission. He cites Steve Jobs who, upon being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, said: “Death is the single best invention in life. It’s life’s change agent.”

Strecher is a compassionate and conscientious teacher, a meticulous researcher, and an innovative entrepreneur. He is also caring, a description used by every person interviewed for this article. As an entrepreneur, Strecher’s success is notable. His first coup, in 1998, was to found HealthMedia Inc. Based in Ann Arbor, the company was created to develop and disseminate tailored health interventions for health promotion, disease prevention, behavioral health, and disease management. The company’s interventions benefited millions of users in North America, Europe, and Asia through health plans, employers, pharmaceutical companies and governments.

“What would Viktor Frankl have done now?” Strecher’s answer: “He’d create an app to help you find your purpose.” Similarly, he asked himself what Aristotle would do now. His best guess: “He’d write a graphic novel!” Strecher did both.

Strecher started the company (with Rick Snyder, Michigan’s current governor), and sold it in 2008, to Johnson & Johnson. By then, the company had over 185 employees. According to Strecher, the company sold for about 175 million dollars.

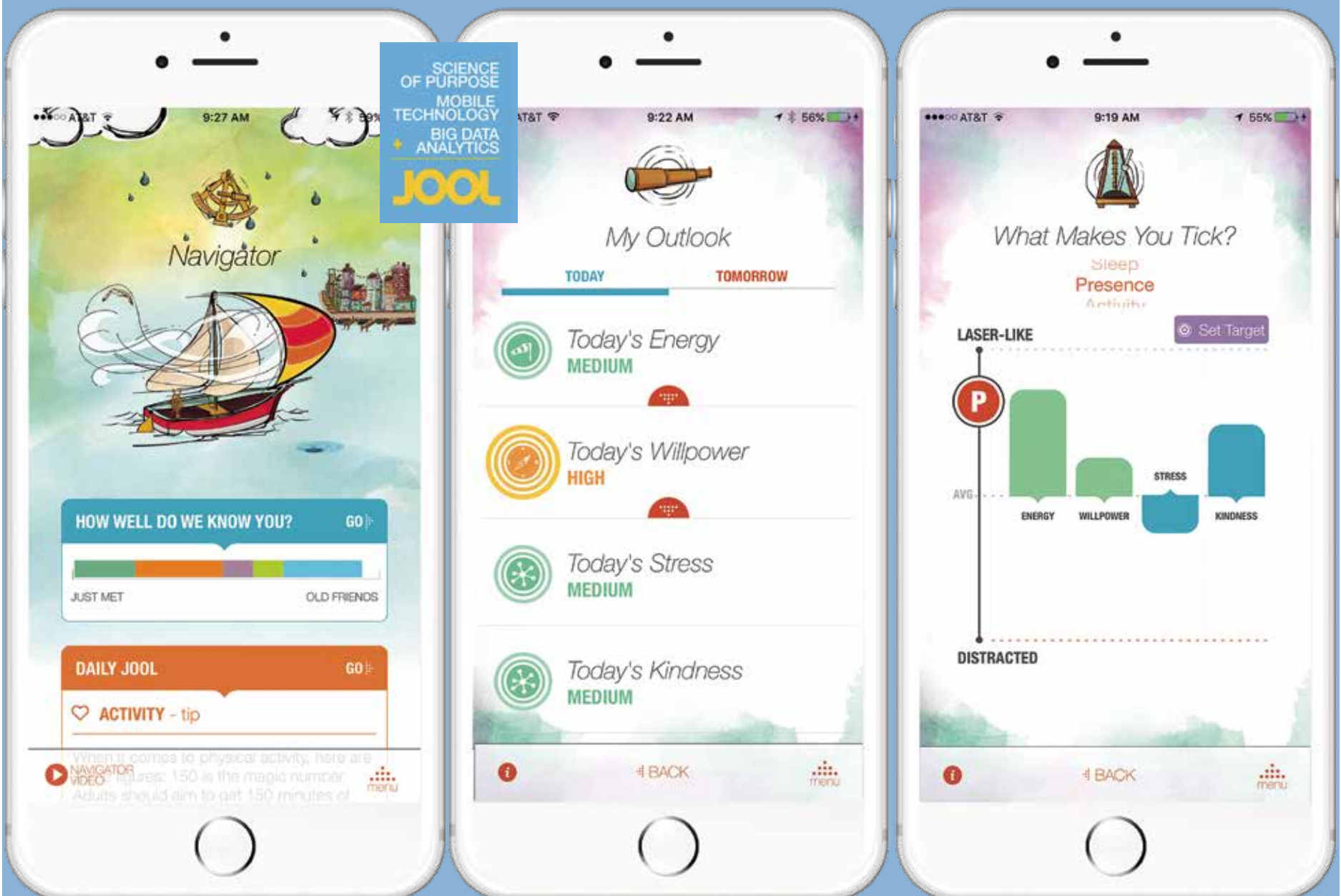
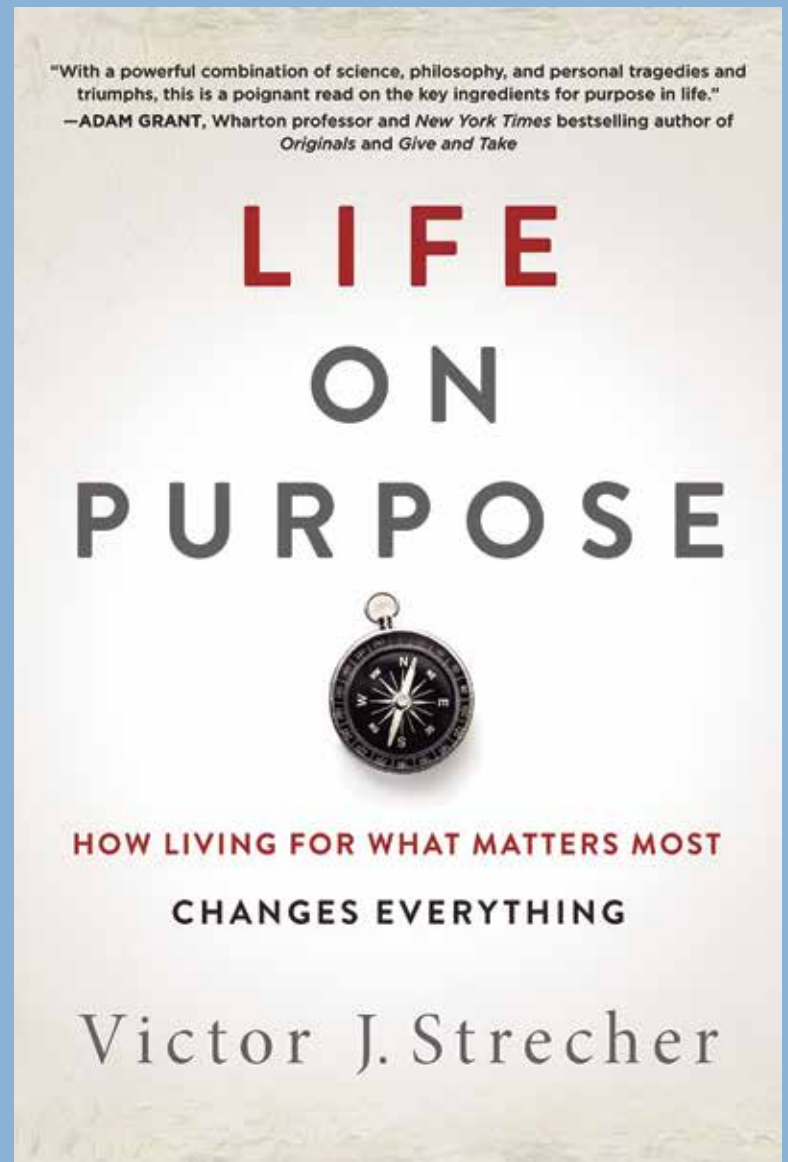
Today, Strecher and his wife, Jeri Rosenberg, live comfortably in the lovely Ives Woods neighborhood, in walking distance of U-M’s central campus. They appreciate what they have, and they express that appreciation through philanthropy.

Their generosity has benefited the University of Michigan Pediatric Cardiology Department at Mott Children’s Hospital, the U-M Nursing School’s Julia Strecher Scholarship Fund, the Steven Gradwohl Art of Primary Care Award, the Ann Arbor Community Foundation, SafeHouse, the Huron Valley Humane Society, and Project Grow.

The couple is also involved in the local arts scene. Rosenberg, an artist, was a founding member of Wonderfool Productions, a nonprofit dedicated to encouraging public art education and presentation. She and her husband were among the founders of FestiFools and FoolMoon, annual events they continue to sustain. In 2013, the couple was presented with the Golden Paintbrush Award by the Ann Arbor Public Art Commission in recognition of the recipients’ role in starting and sustaining two annual public art events, FestiFools and FoolMoon. In October 2015, the Neutral Zone celebrated Rosenberg and Strecher at its annual event honoring “local community leaders and philanthropists for their interest in and support of the arts, both at the Neutral Zone and within the wider community.”

Strecher’s current professional enterprise is JOOL Health. Its pet project is the “JOOL App,” a product designed to be individually tailored by and for each user. It already has over one thousand users and has helped substance abusers overcome drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and food addictions. It has also helped healthy people become healthier. The website explains that it offers: “Purpose-driven health engagement

Continued on page 10



“Purpose-driven health engagement for individuals. Powerful analytics for organizations.”

—JOOL Health website

— Vic Strecher —

Continued from page 9

for individuals. Powerful analytics for organizations.” Effecting change with this app is completely private. It dispenses with embarrassing interpersonal interactions that might thwart one’s desire to change. The challenge for the app user is twofold: 1. to launch oneself into the process; and 2. to persist. Once begun, the program can seem to propel itself. At JOOL Health, Strecher and his staff work not only to improve the app continually but also to create methods to assess its efficacy.

His goal now, he says, is to offer others a sense of mission.

David Rossiter, Chief Creative Officer of JOOL Health, notes that the app is currently available only through employers, health plans, and health systems. A consumer version of the tool may be made available in the future, both as app and in a web version. He also notes that the app is part of a larger platform that also offers, among other things, ways to participate in workshops and podcasts.

Rossiter is an avid user of the app. He explained that it encourages people to reflect on their life in a manner that allows for a sharper, clearer discovery of personal purpose. It encourages users to monitor how well they’re living in accordance with their stated purpose, and helps them develop the energy and willpower they need to effectively pursue it. It helps users improve the key health behaviors that support purposeful living in the areas that Strecher considers elemental: Sleep, Presence (mindfulness), Activity, Creativity, and Eating. (SPACE is the acronym Strecher has adopted.) Rossiter lists the benefits for people who use the app — even for a minute or two each. Users:

- Chart their SPACE, energy, willpower, alignment with their four-dimensional life purpose (personal, family, work, and community), along with two personal outcomes of their own choosing (e.g. migraines or kindness)
- Receive personalized tips on how to improve their health behaviors and outcomes
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- Receive personalized, accurate predictions for their levels of energy and willpower over the coming day, along with tips they can use to offset low predictions or capitalize on high ones

Rossiter is enthusiastic about the tool. “We’re adding more features and functionality at a furious clip,” he said. He remembers when the app was just “a glimmer in Vic’s eye.” Rossiter mused over the work he’s done with and for his current boss.

We brought [the app] to its current state of maturity. It’s the kind of tool it’s best to spend time with. It has multiple layers of functionality that directly relate to understanding who you are, why you do what you do, how you can improve things in meaningful ways. It all starts on the premise that in our fragmented, modern life, it’s easy to get separated from what’s most important to you. We want people to consider what they care about most — their “core values.”

But Rossiter is quick to point out that the app is not the only focus of the company.

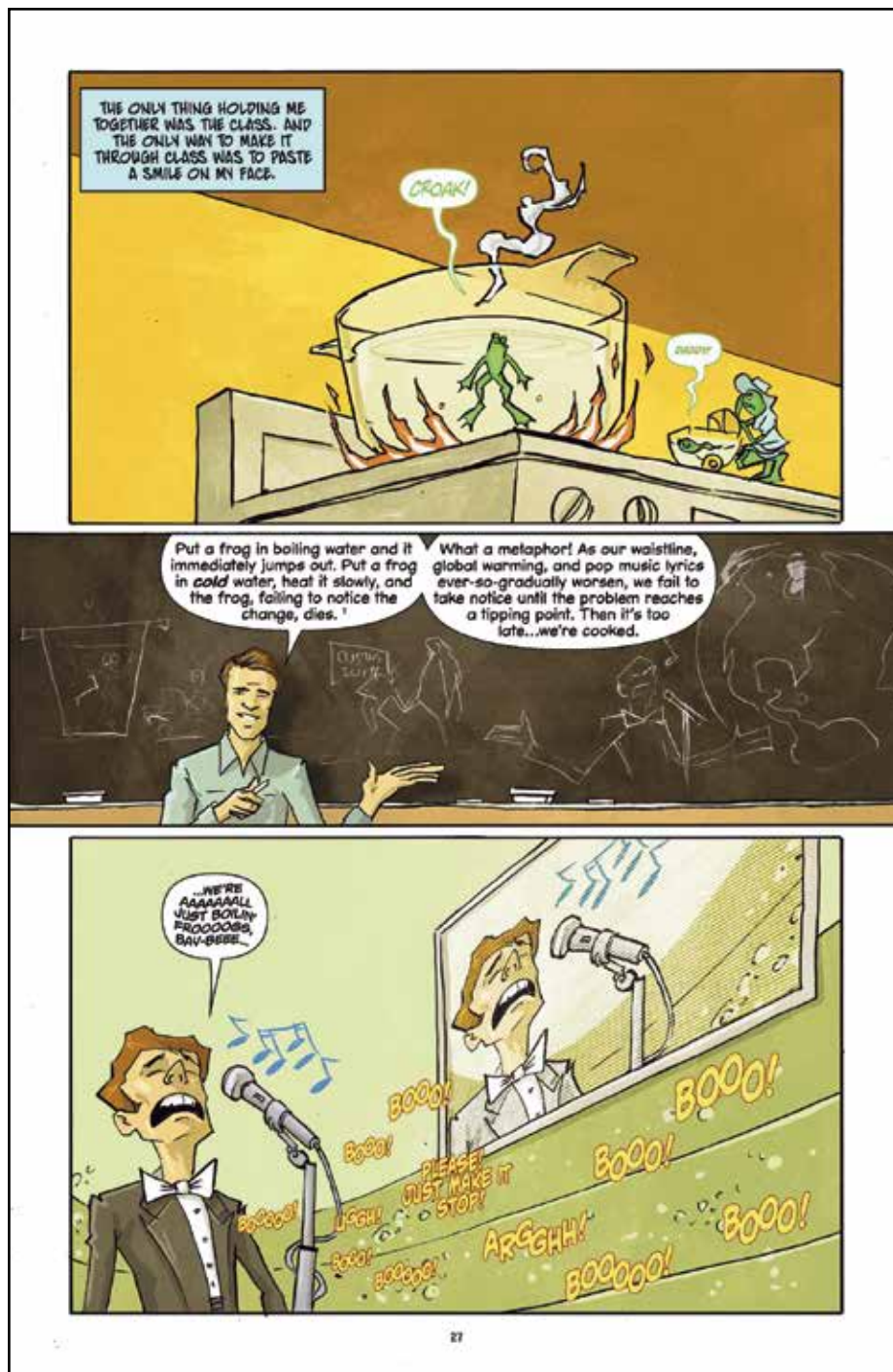
The core goal of the company is to help people find and succeed in their life purpose. They can use the app to achieve that. But we have other things: large-scale workshops, keynotes, videos, workbook [in progress — a companion piece to the app — and to Strecher’s book], and JOOL vibe, a tool to look at the data of the population to see what’s happening in the lives of the app users.

“Research shows that self-transcending values are more likely to create well-being and greater willpower to change behavior than what we might call ‘self-enhancing values’” —Winston the dung beetle

Rossiter is enthusiastic about both the company and the app, which he uses daily. He said, “I’m 64 with the energy level of my 25-year-old self. I ride my bike to work; I play guitar and sing in a musical band.” (He has performed at Crazy Wisdom.) “I’m a super user of the app.” He also enthuses about his boss, who is “an exemplar of what he’s talking about: energy, will-power, stamina, purpose. He will go on the road, giving talks, sales presentations, for weeks on end, if that’s what’s on the schedule. He’s inspiring. He takes time to get to know people.”

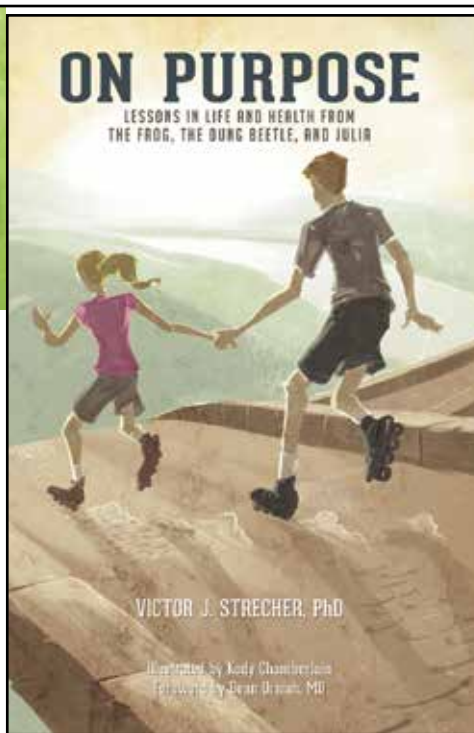
Danielle Butbul, one of JOOL Health’s young interns, was also happy to talk about her boss. “I really can’t say enough good things about Vic — as an individual and as a co-worker,” she said. Butbul appreciates the workspace that Strecher created. Rossiter adds: “A lot of the joy comes from Vic. He’s set up a beautiful environment, which is not typical for a start-up.”

My first meeting with Strecher took place last summer in his company’s airy fourth floor suite in an industrial park on West William Street. Strecher works alongside his



... Strecher uses the metaphor of a frog in a pot of water, slowly boiling to death, to represent mankind’s passivity in the face of a daunting crisis.

14 full-time employees. In summer, there are, typically, three or four additional interns. Upon arrival, I was escorted to the kitchen — sleek and spare — and introduced to Strecher, who was seated at a counter along with six young staff members. Unaffected and unassuming, he introduced himself to me, then introduced me to the others in the room — an equal number of males and females. They were dressed casually. Each had a laptop open. Conversation flowed comfortably. After fifteen minutes, the two of us left for more private quarters; within the open and transparent spaces of JOOL Health, privacy is effected with glass walls. One staffer calls the place “organic.”



It encourages users to monitor how well they’re living in accordance with their stated purpose, and helps them develop the energy and willpower they need to effectively pursue it.

Strecher took great pains to make his workplace match his purpose. Butbul said:

Vic has put a lot of thought into designing a warm and comfortable workplace that stimulates creativity and positive energy, from the physical design of the office — which he completely renovated to be an open space office — to the furniture he chose: beautiful, comfortable, and practical, to the people who now work there — each genuinely kind, fun, and extremely impressive. Vic also made

sure that there is a yoga room — we have yoga classes twice a week, a nap/meditation room, and a spacious kitchen. The space is designed to help us build creativity, activity, and presence into our day.

Vic has put a lot of thought into designing a warm and comfortable workplace that stimulates creativity and positive energy.... The space is designed to help us build creativity, activity, and presence into our day.

Strecher's focus on caring is evident not only in the way he designed the workspace but in the way he relates to people around him. One staffer addressed this with the following:

His deep consideration for the well-being of his co-workers is not only evident through his creation of a vibrant and comfortable workplace, but also through the way he addresses everyone in the company as being equally significant. He is also always asking how everyone is doing, and always available to answer questions and provide insight. Fun fact: this summer his desk was at the same table as all of the interns!

His caring was clear to me even before I met him. Before writing this piece, I asked him whether he'd agree to be its subject. His response came with barely a moment's hesitation: "Yes, I'll help you out." His response was about *helping*, not about being featured.

While success is nothing new to Strecher, his career took a turn — and a new intensity — when his daughter died. It happened during a family vacation. Julia, an idealistic nursing student, died in her sleep. She had a history of heart disease, so her death was a shock but not a surprise. At six months, she contracted chicken pox. It affected her heart. Thereafter, the family's life was marked by frequent and harrowing hospital visits. Her first heart transplant occurred before her first birthday, her second when she was nine. There were touch-and-go moments. More than once, they thought they had lost her. On that fateful vacation, just hours before dying, she uttered words that remain indelibly etched in her father's memory: "I'm so happy, I could die right now!" In retrospect, those words convey a kind of reassurance, if not validation. Her parents had long struggled with how they might help their daughter have a life worth living. Her words seem to say that their efforts were not in vain.

But Strecher was crushed. He began having visions of his daughter. She counseled him. She even chided him. As he kayaked into a sunrise, he saw her emerge from the sun, saying: "You have to get over this, Dad. You have to change your life." From beyond the grave, Julia shepherded her father through the grieving process. He embarked on a reading binge that included the writings of great minds from ancient to current times: Aristotle, Socrates, Seneca, Nietzsche, Mozart, Shaw, Kierkegaard, Camus. Paralyzed by his loss, and in an effort to stay afloat, he devoured their words. That journey into these minds proved transformative. His response was visceral: "As I was reading philosophers — over two thousand years old — I started feeling these were letters written for me." He decided that getting out of his own grief meant he should stop thinking about himself. He realized he was feeding off of this crisis, and it was all negative. He added: "I needed to start thinking about other people, other things. Heal yourself by helping other people."

He makes no secret that Julia's death triggered the work that drives him today. One might say he wears his heart on his sleeve to drive his point home. He decided that he would teach all his students "as though they were Julia." His purpose statement is his mantra. "My purpose is to help others create a purpose in their lives, to teach every student as if they were my own daughter, to be an engaged husband and father, and to enjoy love and beauty." He paused, then added: "That's why I try hard to stay healthy. My hedonistic personal purpose is to enjoy love and beauty."

"Learning with Dr. Strecher is both purposeful and purpose-full." —Michigan student Andy Ying

The story of Julia's life and death figures large in each of the two recent books he wrote, yet there is nothing exhibitionistic about his display of grief. His experience, however painful, changed his life, and he uses it in the hopes that others will learn, too — without having to experience the painful loss that he suffered.

The paternal, nurturing quality of Strecher's relationship with his students and co-workers is reflected in their descriptions of him. Andy Ying, a former student, rhapsodized about his teacher. Ying recalled that after each class, at least a dozen students lined up to speak to the professor, a situation Ying had never encountered before. After his first Strecher course, Ying summed up the experience by saying: "Learning with Dr. Strecher is both purposeful and purpose-full." But Ying had experienced Strecher's outreach even before enrolling in his courses. During a personal crisis, Ying had approached another professor to discuss the advisability of proceeding with his long-held plan of attending medical school. Was medicine truly the right career path for him? That professor urged him to contact Strecher. Ying sent an email, and Strecher responded immediately. Ying looks back now and says: "Most professors would have thought I was crazy. That he took time out of his busy schedule to meet with me struck a deep chord." Ying, who took his MCATs last summer, plans to use his medical training to enhance a career in patient care, public health, and entrepreneurship.

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In an age of "selfies" that follows on the heels of the "me generation," transcending oneself for the greater good proves far more gratifying than simply "actualizing" oneself in a personally ambitious, self-centered, and ultimately less satisfying way.

Asked to talk about his experience as Strecher's student, Ying responded:

Dr. Strecher presents the material in a transcendent way. He gives his own personal examples and invites students to do the same. Students would reveal personal stories and issues, relevant to material. He was a catalyst in helping students connect to the material.

Strecher himself has no qualms about addressing the personal. Asked about the role of grief in his life, Strecher said:

Grief doesn't go away. I don't want it to go away. It's a direct reflection of my love for [Julia]. I never want to forget her. This ache, this hole, should be there. The best metaphor I heard, for death of a loved one, is: if you're a tree on a mountainside, and a boulder rolls and hits the tree, the tree grows around the boulder; it doesn't go away.

Asked how this experience of loss has affected his relationship with others who underwent such travails, Strecher responded:

I always welcome conversations with people who've lost loved ones, but I don't feel I'm in a 'club.' Yes, we share something in loss, but I don't seek out others who've lost children. My daughter always said 'I just want to be normal.' She didn't want to go to camps for sick kids, special kids. She didn't want to give inspirational talks. That wasn't her identity. She wanted to give back.

He added that he doesn't mind meeting with grieving parents, but he has no need to affiliate with these support groups. I asked about his core values, a term that figures large in his philosophy. He replied:

I started thinking about what I cared about most personally. I started realizing: I love these students. I love teaching. I feel a tremendous sense of responsibility toward them. I wondered: how do I translate that into my life? My hedonistic personal purpose is to enjoy love and beauty. To me, even climbing a mountain smacks

Continued on page 12

— Vic Strecher —

Continued from page 11

of narcissism. Why are they really doing this? They have families, children, but they put their lives at risk. People who perform such “heroic” feats — if they’re doing it for something beyond themselves — then it’s not heroic. It’s narcissism.

I asked him to name some of his “core values.” He said they’re listed in the book. The books were checked out in the libraries, so I bought both books and found his list of “core values” — guiding principles that people must be able to identify in order to define and reach their goals. The list includes: achievement, community, creativity, enjoyment, expertise, independence, kindness, relationships, reputation, responsibility, security, self-control, spirituality, tradition, and vitality. He hastened to add that these principles are not carved in stone. People can and should remain flexible, even as they prioritize. Lists are malleable. The point is to achieve and maintain a sense of balance while pursuing and achieving one’s goals. At the same time, one must learn to keep stress at bay. Hence the meditation. And yoga.

Using the scarab as metaphor, the Egyptians saw Khepri as the god who pushes the sun up every morning, over the horizon, ensuring the renewal of day — the continuance of time.

In the course of Strecher’s mournful but productive year of binge reading, he developed a fascination with the lowly dung beetle as a symbolic representation of purposiveness. The dung beetle spends its life creating and then rolling balls of dung to their destinations. This insect navigates according to the stars — the only creature on earth that does so. Like the dung beetle, the Greek mythological figure, Sisyphus, was also destined to fulfill an endless and seemingly pointless task. Sisyphus was to push a rock to the top of a hill each day, only to see it roll back down. Note that the name “Sisyphus,” synonymous with scarab, is a genus of dung beetles of which there are more than 90 species.

Upon closer examination of Sisyphus/scarab/dung beetle, Strecher discovered that the ancient Egyptians revered this insect. They named their god of renewal Khepri, which is the Egyptian name for dung beetle. In forming his dung ball, the scarab attracts a mate. She lays her eggs in the dung ball, then travels with her mate. Using the scarab as metaphor, the Egyptians saw Khepri as the god who pushes the sun up every morning, over the horizon, ensuring the renewal of day — the continuance of time. Albert Camus’s use of the name Sisyphus was a way to recognize the value of all creatures and all positive endeavors.

If one were to ask: Why do scarabs and Sisyphus persist in their respective tasks? Strecher might respond: that is the wrong question. Every living creature is destined to complete certain tasks. Our roles are assigned by time and circumstance. None of us can know in advance what our tasks in life will be. As we discover what life has assigned us, we must embrace and fulfill our roles with determination and dignity. Rather than think of Sisyphus’ task as absurd, one must think of it as his purpose, nevermind that he’d need to repeat the task everlastingly. Camus ended his essay, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, with the words: “One must imagine Sisyphus happy.”

Among the writers who made the greatest impact on Strecher during his mournful reading spree was Viktor Frankl (1905-1997), who viewed purpose as the kernel of hope, an essential ingredient of living. Frankl’s most famous book, *Man’s Search for Meaning*, was written after the author was liberated from Nazi concentration camps. A Viennese psychiatrist and neurologist, Frankl treated suicidal patients both before and after World War II. As a Jewish prisoner, he was a slave laborer in four different camps. In Auschwitz prisoners deliberately, and not infrequently, ran into the electric fence to kill themselves. One day, when he saw fellow prisoners about to take that route, he stopped them to ask why. They responded that they could expect nothing more from life. Frankl flipped their statement around and admonished: “Do not ask what you expect from life; ask what life expects from you!” Frankl understood that it is not suffering itself that causes despair. Rather, if you feel you have nothing to give and no one to love, you have nothing to live for!

As we discover what life has assigned us, we must embrace and fulfill our roles with determination and dignity.

Frankl developed a new school of psychology called “logotherapy,” based on a philosophy that we are strongly motivated to live purposefully and meaningfully. Finding one’s purpose is key. When we respond positively to life’s challenges, we find meaning in life. By drawing on a person’s strengths, logotherapy can bring about a profound shift in awareness. Since Frankl believed that a major cause of depression is self-absorption, he posited that patients can move from a victim mentality to an optimistic outlook. Frankl further posited that:

Only to the extent that someone is living out this self-transcendence of human existence is he truly human or does he become his true self. He becomes so not by concerning himself with his self’s actualization, but by forgetting himself and giving himself, overlooking himself and focusing outward.



“Do not ask what you expect from life; ask what life expects from you!” –Viktor Frankl



“One must imagine Sisyphus happy.” –Albert Camus

This notion of transcendence became central to Strecher’s theories of how people can change and improve their lives. In an age of “selfies” that follows on the heels of the “me generation,” transcending oneself for the greater good proves far more gratifying than simply “actualizing” oneself in a personally ambitious, self-centered, and ultimately less satisfying way. Strecher draws on countless research studies that prove this.

As Strecher contemplated the writers he read, he became intensely aware of the centrality of purpose in their philosophies — and in life. He calls Seneca “an Ann Landers of ancient Rome,” and cited a letter in which a woman, writing at her son’s graveside, asked the sage: “What should I do?” Seneca replied: “It doesn’t matter how much wind is in your sails if you don’t have a harbor.” Strecher also cited Socrates’ famous saying: “The unexamined life is not worth living,” and added Aristotle’s less well-known response: “Yes, but the purposeless life isn’t even worth examining.” In their writings, both Frankl and Strecher quoted Nietzsche, who also weighed in on this point: “He who has a why to live can bear almost any how.”

In *Life on Purpose*, Strecher discusses Aristotle’s use of the word “Eudaimonia” to mean the true self. One’s daimon is what’s true and most divine inside us. The authentic self transcends one’s ego-focused desires. Aristotle said that the self-transcending state of Eudaimonia contrasts with the self-enhancing “hedonia” (as in “hedonism”), which concerns the pursuit of (short-term) pleasure. Strecher, being the researcher he is, points out that recent studies have shown that people who score high on the eudaimonic (v. hedonic) scale are healthier. More specifically, they show “less inflammatory gene expression.”

Strecher also points out, that according to the latest research, roughly half the disease and deaths in the U.S. are caused by lifestyle — in other words, by our behaviors. (He said this in his “Vic Strecher TEDMED 2009” talk, <https://youtu.be/bxMGuGUROiA>). Strecher had already intuited this phenomenon when he embarked on his most recent contribution to public health: the creation of the JOOL app.

In approaching his self-appointed task of making his findings useful to the public, Strecher asked himself: “What would Viktor Frankl have done *now*?” Strecher’s answer: “He’d create an app to help you find your purpose.” Similarly, he asked himself what Aristotle would do now. His best guess: “He’d write a graphic novel!” Strecher did both.

The breadth of Strecher's professional literacy shows itself in his frequent mention of researchers at work in his areas of interest. Among the many he cites is Elizabeth Blackburn (author of *The Telomere Effect*), who won the 2009 Nobel Prize in medicine for discovering the role of telomeres at the end of our chromosomes. Telomeres, like the protective caps on shoelaces, keep our chromosomes from fraying. We're more likely to get sick when our telomeres shrink, which makes our chromosomes more susceptible to damage. An inability to cope with stress can shorten our telomeres. Scientists have discovered that telomerase, an enzyme that helps repair damaged chromosomes, may carry anti-aging properties. It may, in time, be used to fight cancer and improve the quality of other medical treatments.

Strecher names dozens of other university researchers. They include Emily Falk; Jennifer Crocker; David Yeager; Frans de Waal — who concluded that it's "nature, not just nurture, that promotes empathy and altruism"; Adam Grant — who urges people to be "helpful and altruistic" while preserving their own goals ("Don't be a chump!"); Edith Chen and Greg Miller — whose "shift-and-persist" axiom emerges from their deduction: "To adjust to life's stresses, making shifts in perception, when it's accompanied by a persistent pursuit of a goal, helps."

Vic Strecher has no plans to slow down. If and when he is satisfied with the JOOL app, he will move on to future innovations. He remains helpmeet to his wife, who treasures his companionship. His elder daughter, a professional photographer, remains devoted to her dad and has made him a grandfather, a role he reveres. Strecher does not lack for purpose, and he continues to extol transcendence over self-enhancement. Winston, his alter ego, has much to say on this last point, the egotistical versus communal impulse:

Research shows that self-transcending values are more likely to create well-being and greater willpower to change behavior than what we might call "self-enhancing values"; and that college graduates who placed importance upon close relationships, community involvement and personal growth were, two years later, more likely to have achieved these goals *and* to have greater *well-being*, whereas graduates who aspired more to money, fame, and appearance were, two years later, more likely to have achieved these goals *but* had greater *ill-being*.

Strecher's drive to help others find purpose is, within his circles, legendary. Again, in Winston's words:

People with a purpose appear to be more likely to avoid illnesses. In fact [researchers found], people with a low purpose in life were more than twice as likely to get Alzheimer's disease than people with high purpose in life. Having a purpose is associated with living longer! Having a purpose is associated with well-being: happiness, better sleep, even better sex!



"To adjust to life's stresses, making shifts in perception, when it's accompanied by a persistent pursuit of a goal, helps."

If Winston were real, he might be pleased to know that in today's world, the dung beetle is highly valued, especially among cattle-raising farmers in Australia who import the bugs to nourish their pastures. Flies, too, process dung, but flies carry disease. The dung beetles do the job with utmost efficiency and no collateral damage.

###

In a Fractured, Divisive World, the Poets of All the Nations Guide the Way Toward Peace

The Parliament of Poets An Epic Poem By Frederick Glaysher



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Coffee with Zain Shamoon, Co-founder and Host of the “Narratives of Pain” Storytelling Showcase

By Sara Vos • Photographs by Joni Strickfaden

I was sipping a nitrogen-infused cold brew at Mighty Good Coffee Co. when a purple-splashed flyer caught my eye, “NARRATIVES OF PAIN” boldly emblazoned across the top. At first I thought “Narratives of Pain” was an indie-satirical play on words, or perhaps an improv comedy showcase with a dark twist. But after some online investigation, I learned that Narratives of Pain is “a community storytelling experience aimed at individual and collective healing, as well as quality entertainment.” Someone had chosen to not only dive into, but publicly address and provide a venue for, those human experiences which are sometimes shunned, derided, or otherwise only talked about behind closed doors? I needed to know more!

It was very important to us to strip down the show and make sure the storytellers didn’t have to be artists. They could make the art for themselves and for their own catharsis — not for the audience, but for themselves. So there is no right or wrong or good or bad, and “no shaming” is our biggest rule. Our Narratives team is personally responsible for making sure that happens.

We went on to produce more shows in other locations, such as Novi, Warren, Ann Arbor, and even at the Detroit Institute of Arts. As of January 2017, we have had eight shows and try to offer them every two or three months. We also continue to produce a show at the Muslim Mental Health Conference each year.

Storytelling is practicing resiliency and forgiveness. Forgiveness is not a passive thing. Forgiveness is an active thing; you need to go to the site of the wounding and practice active spiritual forgiveness around that...

I attended the winter showcase in 2015 and was moved by the diverse array of talent: poets, storytellers, songstresses, rappers, and other folks hollering, laughing, crying, whispering, and talking through some of the harder aspects of their humanity. What a gift it is to witness someone in their healing process and to feel moved by their courage and creativity to take the mic and share their story. Similar in feel to “The Moth StorySLAM,” what makes Narratives unique is that it is purposefully created and contained to be a healing venue. Their tagline is: “Healing Through the Telling and Witnessing of Stories.”

After the event, I followed up over coffee with Zain Shamoon, the soft-spoken visionary behind Narratives of Pain, to learn more about his personal background and inspiration for creating Narratives, as well as future goals.

Who are you, and how did Narratives of Pain get started?

I am a family therapist and, at the time we started Narratives of Pain, I was also the Creative Director for the Institute of Muslim Mental Health. At our professional conference every year, most of the presentations were academic or professional in nature. But in 2015, my friend Hammad Ali and I decided to make something different together. “I trust myself as an artist, and as a therapist — is there a way to put those worlds together?” And so we put on a storytelling session.

That first Narratives of Pain show was received really well. Approximately 100 people attended, and it was also promoted to the public. People said, “Keep doing this,” “We need this.” From the start, it was my intention to make the storytelling show a separate entity from the conference, so the conference was the unveiling.



Telling your story to an audience matters...because people deserve to feel that their pain is valid.

How did you know how to do this?

I had done a lot of performance art, including spoken word, hip-hop, and music production, and was inspired by Def Poetry Jam [a former HBO-TV show], The Moth storytelling show, the play "Vagina Monologues," and even Alcoholics Anonymous—avenues where people can share and also get support. I've directed and performed in theatrical showcases. I used to put on a show called "Tunnel of Oppression" at MSU with actors that was more scripted, so I wanted to continue that, but in a new and more personal way.

Sometimes, as artists and activists, we create the very things we wish we would've had in our own lives; we fill gaps. If you're comfortable sharing, why did you create Narratives of Pain, or what motivates you to keep it going?

I have a lot of personal conviction for it. Sharing my own stories of alienation in writing and performance has been a healing outlet for me, so now I'm trying to give back to the community. I need to be part of healing spaces for my own emotional survival. It's been a journey to find a home with that. Narratives has felt the best so far.

It's amazing why people gravitate towards the Narratives space. It's either people who've been waiting to tell their stories — and either they're finally ready to be honest with themselves about it, or to be honest with other people about it — or they're people who've been suffering here and there in different moments in their life, and they need spaces like these. Some wounds in life require looking at.

Storytelling is practicing resiliency and forgiveness. Forgiveness is not a passive thing. Forgiveness is an active thing; you need to go to the site of the wounding and practice active spiritual forgiveness around that, or else it's just a mental game of "pretend."

You have to be willing to go through the process. Narratives of Pain can be part of that process for some people.



The show helps to alleviate pain, but it's also about refreshment. Confronting pain is basic-level healthcare... It's about bringing you back into balance.

Why does telling your story to an audience matter? Why not just journal, for example?

Because people deserve to feel that their pain is valid. One of the most exhausting things in the world is experiencing observable, felt pain, and either you tell yourself (or the world tells you) it doesn't exist — or that it shouldn't exist, or that you created it. What does it mean THEN to radically say, "Nope, that's my pain!," and have other people honor that? It takes courage to take care of yourself like that.

What do the witnesses contribute to the space by being there?

First: Validation — of each other, and the storytellers. Second: The opportunity to gain courage. Audience members can tell their own stories at the end, in the open mic portion, and they are the holders. It's the witnessing itself that allows the healing to happen for the storyteller.

Do you have a vision for Narratives of Pain?

Yes — maintaining what we're doing. In 2016, it became a nonprofit. We want to keep doing it. This thing does not go away. Healing is a journey.

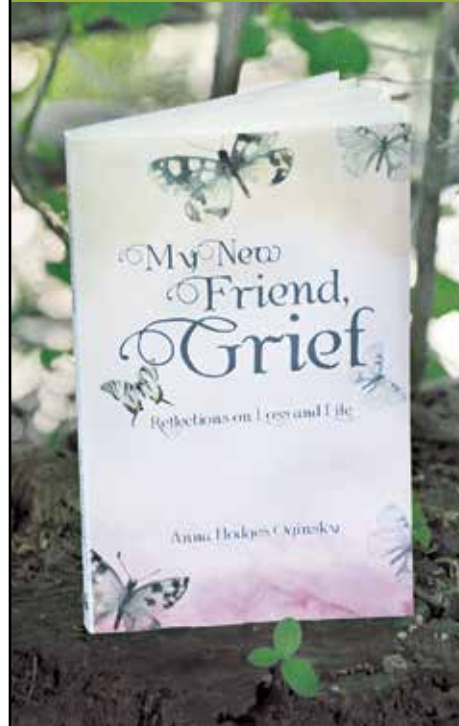
Healing is multifaceted. The show helps to alleviate pain, but it's also about refreshment. Confronting pain is basic-level healthcare. Wellness is about adding health. It's about bringing you back into balance. I think people deserve to feel healthy!

How can people participate or be involved?

Come witness. Story-tell. If you want to learn how to help people heal through reframing or telling their stories, talk to us. People can also help by being honest about what's hurting in their own lives.

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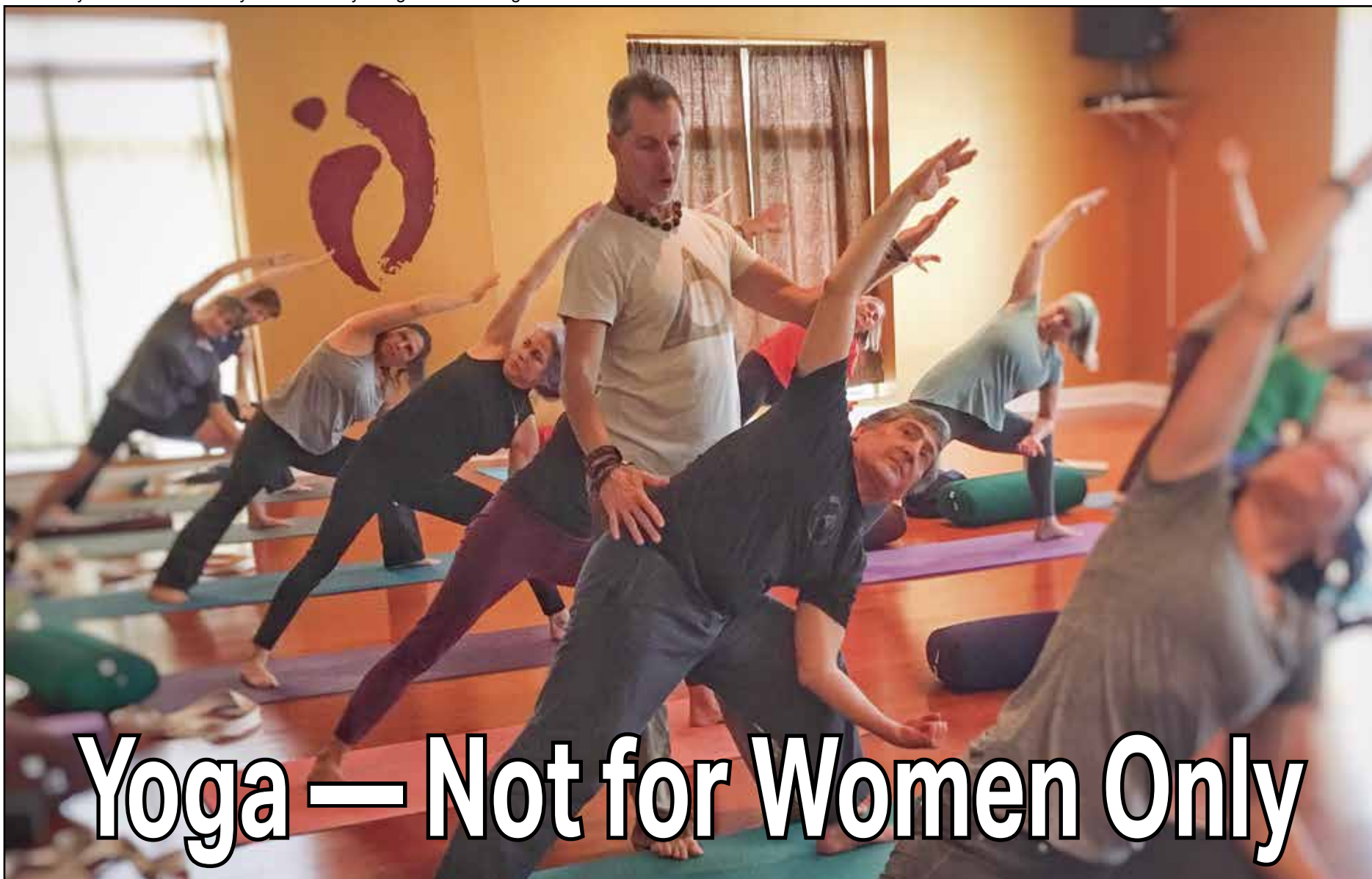
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People who want to be featured storytellers in the first hour of the show can contact me through our Facebook page. Then the second half of the show is like an open mic, where people can sign up onsite to share their own stories after being inspired by the storytellers in the first half.

I believe that people are the gatekeepers to their own experience — nobody else can be. Within that gate, there is pain — and they have to access it, and they have to let it out. I hope we can be a part of that for people who need it. We can create structure, allow stories, and help them find that conviction within themselves.

Zain Shamoan, MA, LLMFT, is a family therapist at Heron Ridge Associates in Ann Arbor and Plymouth, MI. Find the "Narratives of Pain" schedule or contact Zain Shamoan at www.Facebook.com/NarrativesOfPain.





Photos courtesy of Yoga teacher Scott Carter

Yoga — Not for Women Only

Myths and Misconceptions Keep Many Men Away from Yoga Studios

By Chelsea Hohn

I am settling into my breath. I am on my mat, in a yoga class, lying down before it begins. Eyes closed, I hear the door open and several pairs of feet pad their way into the warm room. When I finally sit up and glance around, I see I am surrounded by women — where are all the men?

According to the 2016 Yoga in America Study, 37 million Americans are actively practicing yoga. Of the 37 million practitioners, 72 percent are female.

In my experience, this isn't unusual. Most classes that I attend are almost all women, almost all the time. In a world where many forms of physical activity are dominated by men, why aren't there more men taking yoga classes?

According to the *2016 Yoga in America Study* by *Yoga Journal* and Yoga Alliance, 37 million Americans are actively practicing yoga (a practitioner is defined as someone who has practiced within the last six months). Of the 37 million practitioners, 72 percent are female.

According to the American Osteopathic Association, yoga can increase flexibility, increase muscle tone and strength, improve respiration and athletic performance, and prevent injury. Yoga provides tangible benefits that should attract anyone interested in bettering themselves physically. So why is it that mostly women are reaping these benefits?

I can speculate. For me, my yoga practice is personal and deeply feminine. While I'm on my mat, I feel that I'm embodying the characteristics I see my ideal woman self as having: strength, grace, awareness, patience, and self-love. Yoga for me is a time to dive deeply into myself and my strength, mentally and physically. It is a time to connect my body with my mind, and one of the only times out of the day when I can truly turn off my thoughts. My practice is raw, strong, beautiful, and something I constantly work at as a living thing in my life. I suspect many other female practitioners view yoga in similar ways.

I spoke with Risa Gotlib, owner of Tiny Buddha Yoga, a newcomer to Ann Arbor's long-standing yoga scene but a positive space and my personal place of practice. Classes at Tiny Buddha are mostly women; the classes I attend typically have no more than four men, compared to about 20 or so women.

Gotlib shared a thoughtful perspective on why men are more reluctant to tap into the benefits of yoga. "I think it's more a conversation about how men are socialized

in this country rather than yoga. It's more about what men and boys are taught to value and aspire to," she said.

In our culture, most men are taught that it's not okay to be soft, to be emotional or even spiritual. This idea is reinforced by everything from mass media to peer pressure: men are supposed to be strong, period. It's somewhat ironic, then, that yoga, which actually builds strength and stamina, tends to be avoided by men. So we must ask ourselves whether yoga classes that are primarily women are inadvertently perpetuating the idea that men don't have a place in them. Is that the message we want to send? As women who practice regularly, what can we do to make yoga studios more welcoming for men?

Gotlib finds that the best way to get men on a yoga mat is via a male friend or someone they're dating. Even so, she has found that once you get them to a class, getting them to come back may be the hardest part. Making yoga seem welcoming is one thing, but making it enjoyable and worthwhile is another one entirely. This responsibility falls more to the teacher than the students.

"A man may feel more comfortable with a male teacher," speculated Ann Arbor yoga instructor Scott Carter, who can be found at A2 Yoga, Red Yoga, The YMCA, and ProFit. Carter has been teaching since 2005, and before that he was an athlete. Hockey, motocross, dirt biking, and other fast-paced sports were a part of his life, and that influences the way he teaches now. It could be why he has so many men attending his classes.

"The speech that I use is not full-on hippie," Carter said. "The verbiage I use is what I would want to hear as an athlete that doesn't know much about yoga but wants to move my body."

In our culture, most men are taught that it's not okay to be soft, to be emotional or even spiritual: men are supposed to be strong, period. It's somewhat ironic, then, that yoga, which actually builds strength and stamina, tends to be avoided by men.

This is different than the approach I've seen from female teachers in all the classes I've personally been to. I can see where Carter's style would appeal to men, when athleticism is most likely what they're more familiar with. But Carter isn't convinced that his gender alone is enough to draw in more male students: "I don't know that I offer something that is much different than a woman teacher; people say I hold the same energy."

I asked Carter why he thinks so many more women than men are drawn to yoga. He had a simple answer: "I think the reason is because it's promoted as yoga is a women's thing."

I think he's right. Take the popular magazine *Yoga Journal* — an overwhelming number of their covers feature women. Almost every yoga-centric clothing brand features a woman in their ads, and all of the marketing is directed to women. Companies like Lole, Beyond Yoga, and Athleta don't even offer men's clothing. Even Lululemon, Prana, and Onzie, companies that do offer men's yoga clothes, rarely feature a man in their ads.

Carter continued, "When you say yoga, the first thing in your mind is a woman that is soft and flexible — it's not masculine." Softness and flexibility aren't exactly priorities for most men, and in fact, women do have the upper hand in terms of flexibility. According to a study done by Katherine Whitcome of Harvard University, the female spine has evolved to accommodate pregnancy by being more flexible. In addition, most women have less muscle mass than men, making flexibility more accessible to women on average.

I asked yoga teacher Scott Carter why he thinks so many more women than men are drawn to yoga. He had a simple answer: "I think the reason is because it's promoted as yoga is a women's thing."

So while men go to the gym and build muscles, women go to the yoga studio and build flexibility in a gentle, low-impact way. But despite this perception of gentleness, anyone who has taken a hot vinyasa class and left with legs made of Jell-o and a completely soaked shirt can attest that yoga isn't all soft. As Carter said, "There is strength and there is power." Yoga can build strong beautiful bodies, confidence, and mental stability — qualities that compliment both genders.

How do we "sell" yoga to men, then? Carter does it by framing it as injury protection, a supplement to rigorous physical activity and a way to ensure longevity. He has friends who are professional athletes that do yoga, and he finds that once other men catch wind of that, they realize yoga can be both athletic and beneficial.

In actual practice, there is nothing that makes yoga an inherently "male" or "female" discipline. It wasn't until the Western world got a hold of yoga that it started to get handed over to women; yoga was actually developed by men. Some five thousand years ago in India, it began as various forms of meditation, and was written about in ancient scriptures by male Vedic priests. The body wasn't even a factor in yoga until two thousand years later; asanas (poses) and physicality were late to the yogic game. The yoga we practice now is primarily due to the efforts of well-known yogi B.K.S. Iyengar, who popularized it in the U.S.

How do we "sell" yoga to men, then? Carter does it by framing it as injury protection, a supplement to rigorous physical activity and a way to ensure longevity.

So let's turn the question. Why are there fewer women in a sport like football? Strength, bulk, speed, and power are important components of being a successful football player. These characteristics are typically more common in men. Is yoga less attractive to men because it's harder for them?

Tom Waters, 32, started practicing yoga when he was 20 years old, and he said it was much harder than he had ever anticipated. Waters kept practicing because he wanted to take care of his body, and now his practice is helping to keep him in shape. He finds it calming, and he enjoys both the physical and mental aspects.

"It's a total reset," he explained. "It's the easiest and most productive, healthy way to shed a bad day or week." For him, yoga is a way to release thoughts and emotions and get a new perspective on things, but he understands the stigmas that come with yoga for men and why others may be unsure about it. For instance, going into something new can be intimidating, especially as a man in an activity dominated by women. "It's pretty exposing," Waters acknowledged.

I agree with him: yoga can expose your weaknesses — to classmates and to yourself. "The discipline in yoga and the postures require you to push through and not sacrifice your posture, which means the only lever you can release is your mental ability to deal with pain," Waters said. "I think guys don't think about that."

In actual practice, there is nothing that makes yoga an inherently "male" or "female" discipline. It wasn't until the Western world got a hold of yoga that it started to get handed over to women; yoga was actually developed by men.

Waters also made a point about yoga classes that I was completely blind to. He is sensitive to the fact that he is in a room full of attractive, healthy women that often wear semi-exposing or tight clothing, and he doesn't want to make anyone feel uncomfortable. Take, for example, a full class doing a wide-leg forward-fold. If mats are parallel, your head comes into close quarters with another's behind, and it can be awkward. Waters' awareness comes from a place of wanting to make sure everyone feels comfortable, and hoping classmates understand he is there for himself, not for a look at anyone else.



for Meditation and
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channeled by
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May 10
Local and Online

Evening Workshop
Barbara Brodsky and
Tavis Taylor, MD
May 24
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Oakwood Silent Retreat
Barbara Brodsky, John Orr
and Aaron
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The physical strength of yoga brings some men into the practice, but what about the spiritual part of yoga, the "hippie verbiage" and all the benefits that can't be seen on a surface level? According to Harvard Medical School, yoga can cause one to develop a better body image through inner awareness; it can boost weight loss, lead to healthier eating habits, and provide cardiovascular benefits. However, this connection to "inner awareness" can seem off-putting to some people.

Yoga began as meditation and was a key part of religious texts. Ancient yoga is flushed with religion and prayer — things modern men and women aren't as familiar with. When asked to sit silently, many of us struggle to turn our thoughts inward, and to turn the mind's volume down. Most of us are simply not used to slipping into quiet reflection or prayer to find a spiritual connection. Combine this lack of inner awareness with a completely new space dominated by the opposite sex, and it's easy to see why accessing yoga's spiritual dimensions might be especially difficult for men.

This is unfortunate. For me, the spiritual element of yoga is cultivated inside and manifests in my life as patience, understanding, the ability to love others without judgment or competition, and to celebrate the successes of others without jealousy. I come to the practice because it releases the burrs of life that stick to the outside of my brain. When someone asks me why I do yoga, my answer is usually, "It's cheaper than therapy, and just as good for my mind, and better for my body."

Carter recognizes that everyone has this same mind-body-spirit connection, whether they're tapped into it or not, and he encourages them to develop it. He works closely with his students in each pose, making adjustments and cueing deep breaths. He asks his students to ask themselves if they need more or less in a given pose. That starts the conversation within the self, between mind and body, which opens a connection that is spiritual by nature.

"Once you start asking 'What are my needs?' it starts to create intimacy within the physical body," said Carter. He tries to remind his students of their power and their strength. Through this empowerment, he also teaches them to be okay with sensation, to be okay with themselves, and to be okay with forging a spiritual connection. This can ultimately lead to a student being okay as a man in a yoga studio full of women.

Carter is confident that yoga has something to offer every student, regardless of gender and regardless of the level on which they approach it. "At the end of the day, at least you are breathing and moving your body," said Carter of yoga practice. "If you get something more — awesome."

So what will it take to bring more men into the rewarding practice of yoga?

First and foremost, it will take better awareness of the myths and misconceptions that overemphasize women's participation while overlooking men's. In other words, it takes ordinary men being open-minded enough to give yoga a chance.

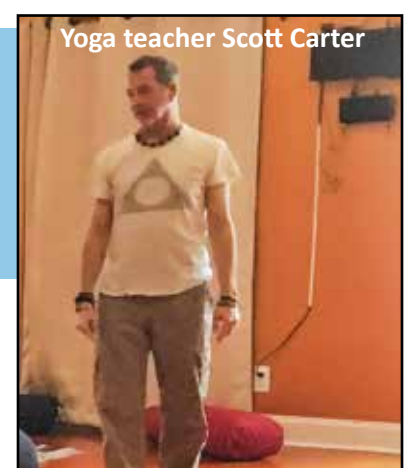
It takes men like Scott Carter, who lead classes in a supportive way that allows men to open up to their bodies and to their spirituality in a comfortable setting.

It takes men like Tom Waters, who are comfortable enough with themselves to defy society's norms, to introduce other men to yoga, and to show that manhood and yoga can coexist.

When someone asks me why I do yoga, my answer is usually, "It's cheaper than therapy, and just as good for my mind, and better for my body."

More than anything, it takes the women who make up the classes. If we're open, receptive, and supportive of men joining our community, men might be able to experience the benefits women have claimed — and we would all benefit from that.

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CRYSTA GOES VISITING

In this column, Crysta Coburn writes about crazywisdom-esque people and happenings around Ann Arbor.



Supporting Women's Health with Emily Buchler

When I saw local jewelry artist Emily Buchler's new project, Lady Glitter Bits ("Handmade Jewelry Celebrating the Divine Feminine), I knew I needed to hear her story. Emily is also the artist behind Woodland Caravan ("Handcrafted Jewelry and Vintage Clothing").

Being a lifetime fan of fantasy and all things magical, I was long ago drawn to Woodland Caravan's earthy, spiritual, and enchanting aesthetic. The Etsy shop, opened in 2011, currently features over 150 items

ranging from Forest Spirit, Celtic, and Om earrings to Cat Fae, Pirate, and Enchanting Mermaid bookmarks to Romantic Vintage Art pendants and Faery Crystal necklaces. You will also find select vintage clothing pieces from the 1960s through 1990s. All reflect Emily's own colorful, Bohemian style.

Her new Etsy shop and line of jewelry, Lady Glitter Bits, came about when Emily was feeling a slump in creativity for Woodland Caravan. "[I'd] been kind of in a rut," she told me. Just playing around, she made a few of what would later be named Glitter Bits and "it was really fun!" The shop was launched to coincide with the epic Women's March on Washington in January of this year. The name "Lady Glitter Bits," in case you haven't guessed, is a reference to women's outer genitalia (which sounds so boring when put that way).



Local artist Emily Buchler's new project is called "Lady Glitter Bits." The whimsical yoni pendants bear names like "Bohemian Faerie," "Sparkly Mermaid Babe," "Hoo-ha" (the owl), "Cosmic Princess," and "Nature Goddess."

The whimsical yoni pendants are sculpted from polymer clay across a spectrum of jewel tones. They come in various, mostly innocuous, shapes and incorporate beads, buttons, and other cute little sundries, such as owls, cats, flowers, and stones. They bear names like "Bohemian Faerie," "Sparkly Mermaid Babe," "Hoo-ha" (the owl), "Cosmic Princess," and "Nature Goddess."

Lady Emily, as she is named on Etsy, wanted to do something to draw attention to women's health. Thus, "10 percent of your purchase will be donated to the wonderful Days for Girls foundation, which focuses on women's health and sustainability."

She also enjoys the handmade aspect of all her products. "It's cool because with the society we're in right now, you buy something and you're not super attached to it.... It falls apart really quick and you're like 'Eh, whatever,' and throw it out. But if you buy something that's handmade, someone's time was spent making it. It's more special somehow."

Emily sells her wares both online via Etsy ("There's not much overhead!") and occasionally at local events and craft fairs, where she is often joined by her husband, Sheldon Buchler. Sheldon is a product photographer and graphic designer and does all of the photography for his wife's shops.

Shop Woodland Caravan at www.etsy.com/shop/WoodlandCaravan and Lady Glitter Bits at www.etsy.com/shop/ladyglitterbits. Woodland Caravan can also be followed on Facebook, Instagram, and Tumblr. Lady Glitter Bits is on Instagram and Tumblr. Emily can be reached at ladyglitterbits@gmail.com.



Music and Art with Alexis Ford

When they say "it's a small world," it's no joke. The universe reminded me of this when my husband came home one night after attending an event at Grove Studios in Ypsilanti — a new community practice space and studio for musicians — and handed me the card of Alexis Ford, an artist and organizer at Grove. You see, when I was a young teen, I wrote my first novel with a friend who had a friend who was a talented comic artist. On one visit, she asked her friend to draw character designs for our novel. That artist's name was — you guessed it — Alexis Ford.

Alexis no longer makes comics, saying, "They are exceedingly time consuming, and it's near impossible to become an artist who can pull in some income. Kudos to those who work in the format." She is still a fan of comics, though, especially those "made for girls." "Currently I'm collecting *Paper Girls*, *Jem*, and *Power Rangers: Pink*."



After graduating high school, Alexis "started doing gig posters instead of comics because it was an easy way to do illustrations, see [them] on display all over town, and get paid a little bit for it." She is currently finishing her B.S.A. in Drawing from Eastern Michigan University.

Alexis also has a background in music and currently plays "bass guitar and an odd electronic instrument called an Omnichord." She moved to Ypsilanti about 12 years ago, and her life was filled with music, "living in a punk house where [they] held shows."

She got involved at Grove Studios when founder Rick Coughlin contacted her about hosting pop-up performances and art galleries with her organization, the Music & Arts Guild. Rick opened Grove Studios last year, and while his primary focus is to provide studio space to musicians and bands, he approached Stefanie about hosting events and art galleries as a way to raise money to eventually purchase the property, which he is currently renting. Stefanie's organization, the Music & Arts Guild, has been in operation for three years as a nonprofit collective of musicians and artists. In addition to providing networking opportunities, the group also puts on workshops and music and art showcases. When Rick approached her about collaborating with Grove Studios, she didn't hesitate to say yes. "The rest is an ongoing project!" she said.

She called Grove "a big dream — but not an unrealistic one," further adding, "The idea is to have quality musicians' work spaces in a brightly lit, easy-to-get-to location with 24/7 access and ample parking.... Six bands currently find their homes at the location at 1145 W. Michigan Avenue, and we have space to add more to that roster. The current building design and the partnership with the Music & Arts Guild allows us to be open every Friday for small performances and gallery shows." In March of this year, Grove Studios won the Pitch Ypsi competition and was awarded \$5,000.

Alexis Ford is a musician, artist, and president of the Music & Arts Guild. Her latest collaboration is with Grove Studios, a community practice space for musicians in Ypsilanti. Her self-portrait is pictured above.

Those interested in regular rehearsal space or renting the performance space (available on an hourly basis) should contact Rick at rick@grovestudios.co (note the lack of an 'm'!). The Music & Arts Guild books Friday performances. Bands interested in donating a performance in order to raise money for Grove may contact Alexis at AlexisKFord@gmail.com, and calls for art for the First Fridays gallery openings will be posted on the Grove Studios Facebook page.

Grove Studios is located at 1145 W. Michigan Avenue, Ypsilanti and online at www.facebook.com/grovestudios1. The Music & Arts Guild is at musicandartsguild.org. Contact Alexis at AlexisKFord@gmail.com.

3 An Army of Peppers and Tomatoes with Stefanie Stauffer

When I asked Stefanie Stauffer, of Nightshade Farm Industries (formerly known as Nightshade Army), what inspired her to start a farm-based business, she answered, "It more found me." Stefanie has no formal training as a farmer, learning from her peers and other, more experienced farmers. She has volunteered with Growing Hope and Food Gatherers. But, she affirmed, "It's a constant learning process."

Nightshade Farm Industries is a small plot intensive, no spray vegetable farm known for heirloom tomatoes, peppers, and other nightshade family produce. 2017 is Stefanie's eighth season in business and ninth season growing. "My first real food growing experience was just in 2009 at Frog Island Community Garden in [Ypsilanti]." After former Michigan governor Jennifer Granholm signed the Cottage Food bills into law in 2010 (the ceremony took place at Growing Hope), Stefanie began to use her "excess garden stuff to make hot sauce" — the best hot sauce, according to my friend's husband, who is known for his love of heat and has an impressive hot sauce collection. Under the Cottage Food Law, non-potentially hazardous foods that do not require time and/or temperature control for safety can be produced in a home kitchen for direct sale to customers at farmers' markets, farm markets, roadside stands or other direct markets.



Stefanie Stauffer is the owner of Nightshade Farm Industries. You can find her products at the Argus Farm Stop in Ann Arbor and the Farmers Hand in Detroit. But for the fun and goofy products like hot pepper candies, you need to stop by DIYpsi.

The name Nightshade Farm Industries comes from the plants that Stefanie specializes in — peppers and tomatoes, which are both in the nightshade plant family. This year, she has also added garlic to the roster, a key ingredient for her salsa. It is a seasonal fresh produce farm that "celebrat[es] heirloom varieties." Stefanie is the grower as well as the maker of small batches of salsas, single varietal chili powders, garlic chili paste, hot sauces, and more. She has no staff. "Products are available seasonally and while supplies last." Though they double the workload, the salsas, sauces, and other products are a perfect way to make use of "produce that might not sell in traditional markets," so less food goes to waste.

Stefanie is also the program manager at the Tilian Farm Development Center — protected farmland owned by Ann Arbor Township — where she also grows her produce. "I'm growing on less than a third of an acre," Stefanie told me. In 2016 she had 550 tomato plants and 600 pepper plants, 400 hot and 200 sweet, and the harvesting season lasted from the middle of June to mid-November. This year, seedlings started March 1 in the hoop house (a simple kind of greenhouse).

Stefanie is a familiar face at the Saturday Ypsilanti farmers' market in Depot Town and events like DIYpsi, which is where I first met her, introduced by Jen Gossett of Fairytale Baked Goods (whom I interviewed for Issue 63 of *CW Journal*). You can also find Nightshade Farm products at the Argus Farm Stop in Ann Arbor and the Farmers Hand in Detroit. But for the fun and goofy products like hot pepper candies, you need to stop by DIYpsi. Enjoy!

Follow Nightshade Farm Industries on Facebook at www.facebook.com/nightshade.army.salsa. Contact Stefanie at tilianfdc@gmail.com.

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WHAT'S NEW IN THE COMMUNITY



By Lynda Gronlund-Naeem

This ongoing column features upcoming events within Ann Arbor/Washtenaw County and surrounding areas' Body/Mind/Spirit communities, new (during the past year or two) practitioners and holistic businesses, new books written by local/regional authors, new classes, as well as new offerings by established practitioners and holistic businesses.



“We are committed to following Gelek Rinpoche’s wish to help others and will continue to make his life’s work authentically accessible to those with interest at any level.”
– Kathy Laritz, Jewel Heart Program Director

Photo by Peter van Wanrooij

Gelek Rinpoche, founder of Ann Arbor’s Jewel Heart Tibetan Buddhist Center, passed away on February 15, 2017

He was born in Tibet in 1939 and as a young child was recognized as an incarnate lama (a reincarnated spiritual teacher). Raised and educated in a Tibetan monastery, he was forced to flee for his life in 1959 as a result of the Chinese occupation, and fled to India.

In the 1970s, his teachers, who were also teachers to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, directed Rinpoche to teach Western students of Tibetan Buddhism. Rinpoche was especially known for his familiarity with modern Western culture, making him a very effective teacher.

His connection to Michigan began in late 1980, when he met a young woman, Aura Glaser (who had been raised and educated in this area), in Dharamsala in front of the Tibetan Library. Glaser provided an abbreviated recounting, in writing: “As a result of my meeting Rinpoche, (my friend) Sandy Finkel was introduced to him in New Delhi a few weeks later, in January 1981. We studied intensively with Rinpoche in New Delhi and returned to the States, and to Ann Arbor, later in 1981. I opened Crazy Wisdom on the vernal equinox of 1982. Rinpoche was in India at the time and did not have a direct part in my opening or naming the bookstore... Sandy and I invited Rinpoche to the United States not long after our return but he was completing some projects and told us he wouldn’t be able to come until 1984. We brought him to the States (we bought his airline ticket with money we didn’t have), and directly to Ann Arbor, in September of 1984. It was then that we sponsored his first teachings here.” Jewel Heart was founded in 1988.

Gelek Rinpoche’s collected works include over 32 transcripts of his teachings, numerous articles as well as the book, *Good Life, Good Death* (Riverhead Books 2001) and the *Tara Box: Rituals for Protection and Healing from the Female Buddha* (New World Library 2004). Rinpoche traveled widely throughout the United States, Europe, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Singapore on the invitation of many Buddhist centers, universities, conferences, and retreat centers, sharing his understanding of Tibetan Buddhism and supporting Tibetan culture. His dear friend and student, Glenn Mullin, said that Rinpoche was so prolific and skilled in each of these activities that any one of them could have been the work of a whole lifetime.

Jewel Heart will continue to offer retreats, workshops, events, and Sunday programs and meditations. There will be a retreat this summer, July 29 to August 5, called “GPS For Your Spiritual Journey.”



Photo by Kathleen Foxworthy Laritz

While in the hospital the week before he passed away, Rimpoche directed his students to go forward with the scheduled week-long retreat that would have hosted him as the primary speaker. In addition, a special White Tara Initiation with Rimpoche was scheduled at the U-M Michigan Union the Saturday before he died. Wanting the program to continue, Rimpoche requested that two of his students lead the meditation while he remained in the hospital.

In discussing Rimpoche's passing, Jewel Heart's program director, Kathy Laritz, explained that, after physical passing, Tibetan Buddhist lamas may stay in the body in deep meditation for a period of time. While Rimpoche was in this state, monks and other Rimpoches from Tibet and various locations quickly arrived at the hospital to manage arrangements and begin traditional prayers. ["Rimpoche" is an honorific title attributed to reincarnated lamas meaning Precious One.] When those who had returned home from the U-M White Tara retreat received word that he had died, many immediately flew back to Ann Arbor, some from as far away as the Netherlands and Singapore. Continuous prayers and ceremonies were given for several days both at the Jewel Heart Center and at the Nie funeral home, where his students (whom he always called his "friends") could be near him while he was in the meditative state. On Saturday, February 18, his body was cremated. Relics were collected from his body and brought back to the Jewel Heart Center for a Relic Blessing Ceremony that afternoon. "Rimpoche has been preparing us for his death," said Laritz, "and everyone joined together to carry out his wishes."

Rimpoche's wishes, said Laritz, included carrying on the activities of Jewel Heart in his absence. "You could say that Jewel Heart and Gelek Rimpoche are synonymous," she said. One aspect of Rimpoche's life work was guiding his students to become instructors themselves, and Jewel Heart will continue to invite the various teachers and guest speakers that Rimpoche has included in programs over the years. The Center has a vast archive of his teachings with audio/video recordings and both digital and paperback transcripts dating back over 30 years. Jewel Heart has chapters in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan; Chicago; Cleveland; Houston; Lincoln, Nebraska; New York; Pittsburgh and Philadelphia; Malaysia and the Netherlands. Jewel Heart will continue to offer retreats, workshops, events, and Sunday programs and meditations. There will be a retreat this summer, from July 29 to August 5, called "GPS For Your Spiritual Journey." Laritz said, "We are committed to following Gelek Rimpoche's wish to help others and will continue to make his life's work authentically accessible to those with interest at any level."

Jewel Heart's website, www.jewelheart.org, has a page for remembrances of Gelek Rimpoche, as well as information about continuing offerings at the Center. The Jewel Heart Tibetan Buddhist Center is located at 1129 Oak Valley Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108. Kathy Laritz can be reached by email at kathyjewelheart@gmail.com or (734) 994-3387, extension 221.

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New Offerings by Established Businesses and Practitioners



Michael Peters, creator of Dance Meditation Technique (DMT), has moved his weekly Sunday DMT practice to the 1420 lofts, a huge open event space on the sixth floor of the historic Julian Madison Building in downtown Detroit.

The space features bathrooms, a changing area, and over 6,500 square feet of dance floor. Peters said the space is about 15 times larger than the previous venue, and while he currently attracts a group of about 25 students weekly, he hopes to build up to 100 as the space will allow it. The arrangement is on a trial basis, but Peters said that it is working out well.

Dance Meditation Technique is a meditation practice, a workout, and an unchoreographed dance in a non-judgmental setting. Sunday practice begins at 10:00 a.m. and ends around noon, though people often socialize afterward until as late as 1:30 p.m. Feed People, a healthy catering and nutrition business, has been providing brunch.

Peters will also offer a three-and-a-half-day weekend immersion DMT teacher training June 22 through 25. The location is to be announced, but will most likely be in Grass Lake, Michigan. Students must register by May 11 so they can begin the prerequisite training, which is done by phone or Skype with Peters. Training is also provided after the immersion weekend for those who want to start teaching their own DMT classes. Peters said that this process can guide someone with no teaching experience to successfully teaching their own classes.

Michael Peters can be reached at michael@dancemt.com or (248) 910-3351. His website is www.dancemt.com.

Community Acupuncture

Wong explained that most back problems can be addressed with acupuncture to the arms and legs. She also said that acupuncture was recently recommended by the American College of Physicians as a first line treatment for back pain.



Husband and wife team Dr. Cheryl Wong and Evan LeBow-Wolf opened Ann Arbor Community Acupuncture (ACA) in March of 2015.

In February of this year, they completed the process to become a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, which had been a longtime goal of theirs. The clinic will now be known as the Ann Arbor Community Acupuncture Project. Wong and Lebow-Wolf follow a model that many clinics have adopted from the People's Organization of Community Acupuncture. This means that acupuncture is administered in a group setting, allowing the practitioners

to work on more people and to make treatments very affordable. Treatments are provided on a sliding scale, increasing accessibility even more. Initial health intakes are done in private to protect confidentiality, but treatments are done mostly in the clinic's group treatment room, which contains eight recliners. Another room contains a massage table, where Wong and Lebow-Wolf can administer therapies such as cupping, or access a patient's back for acupuncture. Wong explained that most back problems can be addressed with acupuncture to the arms and legs, making the recliners a viable option for most treatments. She also said that acupuncture was recently recommended by the American College of Physicians as a first line treatment for back pain.

Wong and Lebow-Wolf moved to Ann Arbor in 2014, returning to the state of Lebow-Wolf's childhood. The couple met in acupuncture school at Bastyr University in Seattle, Washington. Both practiced acupuncture in other locations prior to relocating.

By converting to a nonprofit model, Wong and Lebow-Wolf hope to ensure that the clinic will always be a resource for the community. They are committed to keeping acupuncture accessible and the clinic sustainable. Three Detroit-based community acupuncture clinics have closed in the last three years, said Wong, and she and her husband are working to ensure this does not happen to their clinic. ACA holds quarterly open houses with free treatments for those interested in learning about acupuncture. The clinic, which gave over five thousand acupuncture treatments last year, is open five days per week.

Dr. Wong is also a naturopathic doctor who offers nutrition and naturopathic treatments separately from the acupuncture clinic.

Dr. Cheryl Wong and Evan Lebow-Wolf can be reached at (734) 780-7253 or info@annarborcommunityacupuncture.com. Their website is www.annarborcommunityacupuncture.com. The Ann Arbor Community Acupuncture clinic is located at 2500 Packard Street, Suite 100, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

Upcoming Events

Merri Walters and Robin Grosshuesch

The May retreat, titled "Spirit of the Great Waters," will take place on the edge of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. Activities will include studying the local plants and elemental presences, learning about flower essences for personal healing, meditation on the water, nature walks, and a land healing in the park.



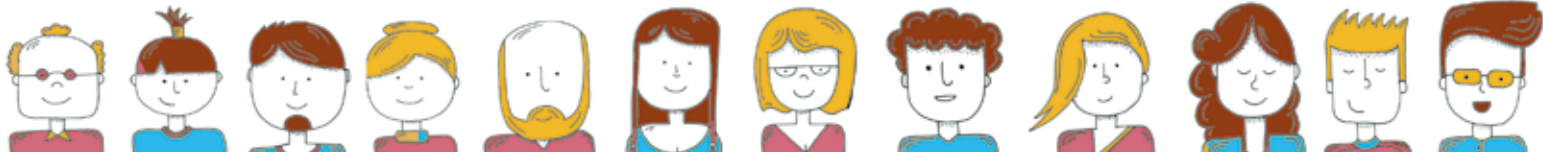
Merri Walters

Merri Walters and Robin Grosshuesch, married co-creators of Great Lakes Sacred Essences, will offer their first retreat on Mother's Day weekend, May 12 through 14.

"My purpose is to bring people to Lake Michigan to connect them with the sacred geography of the whole area," said Walters. As a holistic healer, she has been making flower essences for over 30 years and said, at 52, she is "ready to transfer power to new generations and new people." The retreat is just a start, but Walters explained that she will also begin offering a mentorship program in the fall. The retreat will address her desire to teach, as well as meet the wishes of people across the country who have

Continued on page 22

WHAT'S NEW IN THE COMMUNITY



Continued from page 21

expressed interest in learning from her. She is still putting the program together, and said that it will likely consist of an online component along with a retreat for hands-on work. She will also be teaching in-person standalone classes locally.

The May retreat, titled “Spirit of the Great Waters,” will take place on the edge of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. The location is important. “We live in this great energetic basin,” surrounded by a huge amount of the earth’s fresh water, she said. Knowing how this influences us can help us know “how we can stand stronger and make our prayers stronger and our intentions stronger.” Participants will stay in houses from a turn-of-the-19th-century logging town, now used as summer cottage rentals. The town is right next to Sleeping Bear Dunes National Park, where some teachings will take place. On the other side of the town is a nature conservancy.

Activities will include studying the local plants and elemental presences, learning about flower essences for personal healing, meditation on the water, nature walks, and a land healing in the park. Walters said that when teaching to a group she leaves some flexibility in order to channel the right knowledge for the people in front of her.

The retreat will start on Friday morning and end on Sunday afternoon. Food will be provided. To anyone considering the retreat or learning more about her healing work, Walters said “this is a really important time we’re living in. We need to stop just sitting around and meditating, and start doing things for the earth, and healing our broken relationship with nature which supports everything we are and do.”

More information about Great Lakes Sacred Essences, including online registration for the Spirit of the Great Waters Retreat, is at www.sacredessences.com. Those interested in future mentorship and classes can join their mailing list. Merri Walters and Robin Grosshuesch can be reached by phone at (734) 663-3160 or by email at sacredessences@gmail.com.



Dr. Samm Pryce

Balanced Integration, LLC, and AcuThrive Acupuncture will hold a free Open House on Saturday, May 6, from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at their shared location on State Street in Ann Arbor.

Dr. Samm Pryce, ND, founder of Balanced Integration, is a naturopathic medicine provider who uses a variety of methods, including homeopathy, Reiki, hydrotherapy, intravenous vitamin c, blood type and genotype diets, and herbal medicine. Her emphasis is on treating the whole person, not just a group of symptoms, and each wellness plan is tailored to the individual. She has experience working with people who have diabetes, cardiovascular problems, and cancer.



Ellen Porter

Ellen Porter is a registered and licensed acupuncturist, certified by the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM). She specializes in Five Element Acupuncture. She engages patients on the levels of body, mind, and spirit to determine root causes of energetic imbalances, and helps people with insomnia, high blood pressure, menopause, allergies, depression, fatigue, diabetes, and more.

The open house will provide an opportunity for people to meet Pryce and Porter, ask questions, and observe demonstrations. Snacks will be provided.

Balanced Integration, LLC, and AcuThrive Acupuncture are located at 2190 South State Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. Dr. Samm Pryce can be reached at drpryce@balancedintegration.com or (734) 730-2265. Her website is www.balancedintegration.com. Ellen Porter’s website is www.acuthrive.org. She can be reached at ellen@acuthrive.org or (734) 845-2166.

The Interfaith Round Table of Washtenaw County will offer an interfaith music event on Sunday, May 21 at 4:00 p.m. at Genesis, the building shared by Temple Beth Emeth and St. Clare of Assisi Episcopal Church on Packard Road in Ann Arbor.

The event is titled “Voices of Children: Many Faiths, One Song” and will feature four area children’s choirs: the Hindu Chinmaya Mission, Temple Beth Emeth (a Reform Jewish congregation), St. Clare’s Episcopal Church, and the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation. The Interfaith Round Table has operated in the community for the last 22 years. Its mission is to “help create a culture of understanding and inclusion,” said co-director George Lambrides. He explained that the organization is focused on religious inclusion, which he sees as a unique need since there are many organizations devoted to other types of inclusion around gender, race, sexual orientation, and other differences. In general, he said, “the Buddhists don’t know the Baptists, the Jews don’t know the Hindus,” and so on.



Interfaith Round Table

In the “Places of Faith” program, the Round Table invites members of the public to visit four different religious spaces for two hours. This gives people the opportunity to get to know people of a different religion, to visit them in their sacred space, experience their hospitality, and gain new understanding.

Even in our current climate of unease and increased discrimination, particularly against Muslim and Jewish people, people are willing and able to spontaneously step up and give aid, Lambrides said. The recent fire at the Pittsfield Township mosque and Islamic school is a good example; within hours, community members donated more than the stated goal of \$20,000 to the repair efforts. This is what he describes as an “emergency room” situation, whereas the Interfaith Round Table is more of a long-term “rehab unit,” providing opportunities for people of different faiths to get to know and support one another all of the time.

The Round Table offers a changing variety of programs to support its mission, the most recent being its “Places of Faith” and “Faces of Faith” events. In Places of Faith, the Round Table invites members of the public to visit four different religious spaces for two hours on four consecutive Tuesday evenings. This gives people the opportunity to get to know people of a different religion, to visit them in their sacred space, experience their hospitality, and gain new understanding. Faces of Faith is a yearly event in which approximately six different religious leaders are invited to speak briefly on questions like “what brings you joy about your religion,” and “what do you never want to hear again about your religion?” Then, small groups converse and get to know more about the religions represented.

The children’s choir concert will be the first such event sponsored by the Round Table. The choirs will sing separately and together. Lambrides said he hopes to see between 200 and 300 people attending, and said it will be a fun and beautiful way to show support for diversity and inclusion. The concert is free, but there will be an opportunity to donate to the work of the Round Table.

More information is available at www.irtwc.org. George Lambrides can be reached at gbrides@umich.edu or (734) 424-1535.

Ypsilanti Reiki practitioner and teacher Andrew Anders will host Kathleen Prasad for a Reiki III and Animal Reiki teacher training course from May 5 through 7, at the Devoted Barn in Newport, Michigan. Kathleen Prasad is a Reiki practitioner, teacher, author, and Animal Reiki specialist.

The course will consist of three full days, each made up of half lecture and half hands-on work with the animals of Devoted Barn, which include dogs, horses, barn cats, and pigs. Based in California, Kathleen Prasad is the founder of the Shelter Animal Reiki Association, an international nonprofit organization that works with caregivers, veterinarians and their staff, and volunteers to “teach and promote Animal Reiki through mindful meditation practices.”

According to Prasad’s website, “Animal Reiki is a spiritual practice of compassion for all beings. In a nutshell, it means learning to meditate with your animals.” Andrew Anders, founder of Michigan Reiki, explained that Animal Reiki uses a slightly different approach than human Reiki, as animals can’t verbalize consent or explain what hurts. He explained that when Prasad works with a group of animals, she starts by sitting and “emanating” energy, which the animals react to in their own way. In addition to helping with issues of aggression, trust, eating and digestion, Reiki can simply provide animals with a sense of “ease,” which they often reflect back to the practitioner, making it somewhat of a “trade effect.” Animal Reiki can be especially helpful when practiced in shelters and rescues, like the Devoted Barn, where the animals are often in poor health and may have trouble trusting humans.

The class is for Level II practitioners who want to learn how to teach Reiki and Animal Reiki, and for Level III practitioners and teachers who want to go more in-depth in their Animal Reiki skills and teaching. It will include initiation as a Reiki Master and



Animal Reiki Teacher Training - Kathleen Prasad

The class is for Level II practitioners who want to learn how to teach Reiki and Animal Reiki, and for Level III practitioners and teachers who want to go more in-depth in their Animal Reiki skills and teaching.

a certificate of completion from the Animal Reiki Source — a prestigious credential for anyone working with animals. Prasad and Anders both emphasize traditional Japanese techniques in their teaching and practices. As the founder of Michigan Reiki, Anders said his goals are to promote credible and practical standards of Reiki practice and to serve as a reliable resource for the health and wellness community of Michigan. He hopes this event will serve not only to teach practitioners, but also to “establish credible Animal Reiki practices, representations, and resources in the Midwest.”

Andrew Anders can be reached by email at aanders@michiganreiki.org. His website is www.michiganreiki.org. An event page has been set up at <http://annarborshinpiden.com> with more information and a link to register online. The Devoted Barn is located at 6517 N. Dixie Highway, Newport, MI 48166.

New Classes

Tammy Braswell

Each workshop is designed to raise vibrations and empower participants to improve their ability to manifest their desires.



Energy healer and coach Tammy Braswell is now offering workshops in various topics related to expanding energetic awareness and consciousness.

In the fall of 2016 she taught a continuing education course at the Wayne County Community College downriver campus called “Understanding Your Energy for Health and Happiness.” This inspired her to start offering more classes, in particular classes for women over 40, many of whom, she said, “have been living their lives for everyone else first.” Workshops are offered in a brand new classroom on the lower level of Braswell’s private residence in downtown Wayne. The address and directions are sent upon registration. The classes are limited to 11 people to keep an intimate atmosphere with individual interaction. Workshops are held on Saturdays and weekdays at varying times to fit as many schedules as possible, and last from 90 minutes to 3 hours depending on the topic. Braswell records each session so that participants can go back and re-examine them at any time. She does encourage people to bring a notebook for journaling.

Topics include “Healing the Child You — Freeing Yourself from Past Pain, Hurt, and Fear”; “Loving Yourself for Who You Are — Love Your Body into Wholeness Through Your Connection and Word”; “Breaking the Chains that Bind You — Healing Emotional Wounds and Finding Freedom in Forgiveness”; and “Pre-Paving Your Tomorrow — Designing Your Future the Way You Want It To Be.” Over 12 different topics are currently offered, and more will be added as Braswell creates them. Each workshop is designed to raise vibrations and empower participants to improve their ability to manifest their desires.

To view workshop listings or to register, visit www.createbyvibration.com/workshops. Tammy Braswell can be reached at Tammy@CreateByVibration.com or at (734) 252-6196.



Lisa Gottlieb, Jeff Brown, and Francois Beausoleil

Lisa Gottlieb, MSW, SSW, is a Certified Trainer Candidate in Nonviolent Communication, set to complete her certification through the Center for Nonviolent Communication in June.

She has been a social worker for over 20 years, and became interested in Nonviolent Communication in 2014. Finding a lack of practice groups and workshops in the Ann Arbor area, she made it her goal to form a local community around the practice of Nonviolent Communication (NVC).

Continued on page 25

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Free Informational Session Sept 22, 9:30-10:30 p.m.
 Please register with Paulette

Paulette Grotrian, M.A., MBSR & MSC Instructor, experienced meditator and teacher. Trained with Jon Kabat-Zinn and colleagues, UMass, and Kristen Neff and Christopher Germer, UCSD. Founding member, Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness.

Contact her at mindfulnesswithpaulette@gmail.com or 734-276-7707
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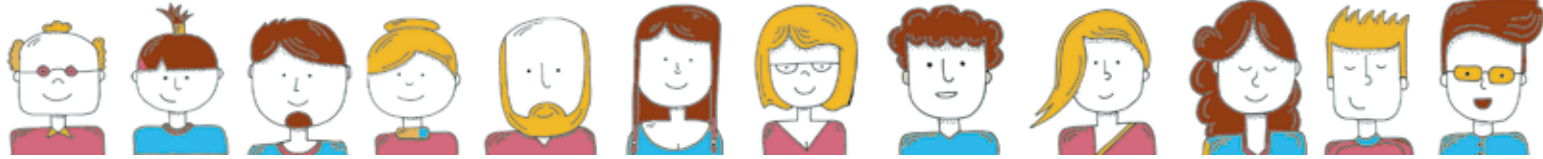
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WHAT'S NEW IN THE COMMUNITY



Continued from page 23

NVC was developed in the 1960s by Dr. Marshall Rosenberg, who believed that peace on an internal, interpersonal, community, and global level can be achieved through empathy, deep listening, and honest self-expression. The international nonprofit foundation he began — the Center for Nonviolent Communication — states “NVC can be seen as both a spiritual practice that helps us see our common humanity, using our power in a way that honors everyone’s needs, and a concrete set of skills which help us create life-serving families and communities.”

Lisa Gottlieb

On June 2 and 3 at the Zion Lutheran Church in Ann Arbor, Lisa Gottlieb, along with NVC-Certified Trainers Jeff Brown (Columbus) and Francois Beausoleil (Quebec), will offer a day-and-a-half long workshop titled “Speaking and Listening from the Heart: Introduction to Nonviolent Compassionate Communication.”

On June 2 and 3 at the Zion Lutheran Church in Ann Arbor, Gottlieb, along with NVC-Certified Trainers Jeff Brown (Columbus) and Francois Beausoleil (Quebec), will offer a day-and-a-half long workshop titled “Speaking and Listening from the Heart: Introduction to Nonviolent Compassionate Communication.” This standalone workshop can also serve as an introduction for those looking to enter Gottlieb’s intensive nine-month NVC program consisting of four weekend workshops, teleconferences, coaching, and more. The program begins on the weekend of August 17. This will be Gottlieb’s third year of offering this program. She also offers two monthly NVC groups: one is a practice group and the other is a support group for parents.

More information is online at www.lisagottlieb.com. Events and information are also listed at <https://www.facebook.com/Compassionate-Communication-of-Ann-Arbor-1555734017972787/>. Lisa Gottlieb can be reached at nvclisagottlieb@gmail.com or (734) 417-1144.



“We are bringing back something essential that has been lost — intergenerational music-making.”

—Robin Robinson, facilitator of the Generations music class for children and seniors.”

Robin Robinson, owner and teacher at Robinsongs for Kids, is offering a new intergenerational class for young children and seniors, called Generations.

Robinsongs is a music teaching program for kids, using the Music Together approach. Music Together is an international organization that trains music teachers to offer music programs for children ages five and under and their parents. Robinson has offered Music Together classes in Ann Arbor and Chelsea since 2008, when she moved back to Ann Arbor from New York City. She spent 22 years in New York as a performer after studying musical theater at the University of Michigan. Singing and playing music from a very young age helps children prepare for musical training as they get older, but it also brings families closer. Robinson explained, “We are bringing back something essential that has been lost — intergenerational music-making.” With the Generations class, which she began offering in the fall, families are able to interact with an additional generation — one which is too often not attended to in the busy-ness of young families working and raising children.

Robinson calls the seniors “grandfriends,” as they are usually not relatives of the children but play a similar role to grandparents when they interact. “This is not a performance that the seniors watch; they sing, move, and play instruments right along with us,” she said. The children interact with the seniors in many ways that benefit both groups. Children will be given the task of handing out instruments to the seniors, who praise them and allow them to see “how wonderful it feels to give.” Robinson said she is constantly amazed by how even the most withdrawn seniors “perk up” and sing the songs they know from their own childhoods.

The Generations class is offered at the Chelsea Retirement Community. About 15 seniors participate with the families who come in. Robinson said that the class is being offered in fall, winter, spring, with the possibility of summer sessions being added.

More information is available on Robin Robinson’s website, www.robinsongsforkids.com. She can be reached by phone at (734) 929-2133 or by email at director@robinsongsforkids.com.

Grotrian became interested in Mindful Self-Compassion when she became aware, in teaching Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, that people were struggling with the compassion component of mindfulness — specifically compassion for the self.



Paulette Grotrian will offer an 8-week course beginning in September on Mindful Self-Compassion. Grotrian is

a Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) teacher, and a founding member of the Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness.

The Mindful Self-Compassion course was developed in 2013 by Kristen Neff and Christopher Germer at the University of California at San Diego Medical School. In 2015 they developed teacher training for those who wanted to teach the course. Grotrian completed teacher training with Neff and Germer in 2016, and this will be her second time teaching the course in this area — the pilot course was required for completion of her training.

She became interested in MSC when she became aware, in teaching MBSR, that people were struggling with the compassion component of mindfulness — specifically compassion for the self. She read Neff and Germer’s books: *The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion: Freeing Yourself from Destructive Thoughts and Emotions* by Germer, and *Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself* by Neff. When Grotrian discovered that Neff and Germer had developed a teacher training program, she decided to pursue it. She traveled to California, where Neff and Germer personally trained a group of about 30 people. Currently, said Grotrian, there are about 300 teachers who have completed this training in the United States.

The MSC course consists of eight two-hour weekly classes and a half-day retreat. It includes guided meditations and teaches coping skills related to mindfulness and self-kindness, self-soothing, and emotional resilience. It will be held at the Center for Innovation and Education (formerly St. Joseph Hospital) in Saline.

More information is at www.mindfulnesswithpaulette.weebly.com. Paulette Grotrian can be reached at (734) 276-7707 or mindfulnesswithpaulette@gmail.com.

New Practitioners and Businesses

Bridging US 23

Abramson feels that a great divide exists between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti and the surrounding communities. He said that US 23, in addition to being a physical boundary between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, is a metaphor for the things that divide us: race, religion, political affiliation, socioeconomic status, and so on.



David Abramson and Belinda Dulin

Bridging US 23 is a new initiative jointly sponsored by the Association for Youth Empowerment and the Dispute Resolution Center.

It is modeled after a successful Detroit initiative: Bridging 8 Mile, which aims to bring different communities together to get to know each other and find common ground. Detroit is hugely divided by race and socioeconomic status. David Abramson, one of the creators of the Bridge programs, explained that when people don’t know how to interact with one another, it’s easy not to care about the problems the other group faces. When people begin to communicate in depth, compassion and action are born.

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WHAT'S NEW IN THE COMMUNITY



Continued from page 25

Abramson feels that a great divide exists between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti and the surrounding communities. He said that US 23, in addition to being a physical boundary between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, is a metaphor for the things that divide us: race, religion, political affiliation, socioeconomic status, and so on. Belinda Dulin, Executive Director of the Dispute Resolution Center (DRC), said that a recent equity report found that life expectancy is lower by 10 years in Ypsilanti than in Ann Arbor. This is just one symptom of the separation of our communities that concerns her.

The initiative's first public event is being held on April 7 at Washtenaw Community College for the entire day, with more events to be scheduled. Abramson said he hopes the event will draw people who work in local nonprofit agencies, as well as people who receive the services of those agencies, and members of the general public. The goal is to bring people together and find commonalities, he said. Facilitators will ask questions, make people laugh, and enable people to share more than they normally would, turning strangers into friends and allies. Dulin said it is important to come into this process without a list of assumed problems and solutions, and to first listen to people talk about what problems they actually experience and what they need. Sometimes, she said, "all that's needed is a connection or someone who's interested." Much of the time, conflict arises when people do not feel heard, she said. Robert Cooper, President of the Association for Youth Empowerment (AYE) spoke of "calling forth the beloved community," an expression used by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The event will also incorporate aspects of Nonviolent Communication and peacemaking.

Abramson said that what comes of Bridging US 23 will ultimately be decided by the people who get involved, but he predicts that some of the program's effects may include expanded support for existing literacy, tutoring, and mentoring programs; networking, fellowship, and community nights; cross-cultural dialogue events; music and art festivals and events; ethnic pot luck dinners; entrepreneur round tables and resource sharing; and anything else people come up with that would be of value to people in the communities. He continued:

We believe that there's no distance too far that can't be bridged. And the basic premise is that to the extent that we know each other, we can trust each other. To the extent that we trust each other, we can team together. To the extent that we team together we can make a difference. And that's what we're committed to: making that difference; of a world where people are treated with dignity, respect, justice and honor.

We regret to report that David Abramson died unexpectedly on March 23. This interview was conducted prior to his passing. The Bridging US 23 project will move forward, and, at the time of publishing, the April 7 event at Washtenaw Community College will still happen. Please direct any questions to Belinda Dulin at the Dispute Resolution Center.

The Dispute Resolution Center is online at www.thedisputeresolutioncenter.org and Belinda Dulin can be reached at (734) 794-2125 or dulinb@ewashtenaw.org. The Association for Youth Empowerment is at www.associationforyouth.org.



Rob Meyer-Kukan

Meyer-Kukan now helps other musicians get and stay healthy through massage, which can help with repetitive strain issues, and through teaching what he calls "healthy musician practices."

Rob Meyer-Kukan founded the Healthy Musician Institute in 2015.

Through the Institute, he focuses on helping professional and amateur musicians "create healthy music practices leading to a lifetime of music making."

As a professional church musician, Meyer-Kukan sings, and plays piano, organ, handbells, and percussion. Several years ago, he injured his shoulder, resulting in neuropathy in his hand that impeded his piano and organ playing. His doctor sent him to a specialist who recommended physical therapy. It helped somewhat, but he still had trouble playing. Seeking alternative treatments, he met Alice Greminger, a local music teacher and practitioner of the Alexander Technique — a system designed by F. M. Alexander for reducing harmful bodily tension in daily activities through body awareness and mindfulness. Meyer-Kukan found that the technique helped him return to his full abilities. He also developed an interest in anatomy, and at Greminger's suggestion, enrolled in the now closed Ann Arbor Institute of Massage Therapy (AAIMT). He said AAIMT gave him a thorough education in anatomy, and he became a licensed massage therapist.

Meyer-Kukan now helps other musicians get and stay healthy through massage, which can help with repetitive strain issues, and through teaching what he calls "healthy musician practices." He has helped a violinist who was no longer

able to lift her arm high enough to play; pianists who have had to stop playing due to a breakdown in dexterity; and musicians who complained they were no longer able to play as they had before. His teaching incorporates aspects of the Alexander Technique and Body Mapping; anatomy education; posture correction; and examination of the musician's approach to his or her instrument and what is required of his or her body to play. He offers one-on-one instruction as well as classes and workshops.

Meyer-Kukan also offers massage for non-musicians, including the Raindrop Technique, which incorporates aromatherapy with essential oils into the massage. In addition to massage therapy, he offers individual music lessons and lessons in healthy musician practices out of his home studio in Southeast Ann Arbor near Packard and Platt Roads.

Rob Meyer-Kukan can be reached by email at info@healthymusicianinstitute.com or phone at (248) 962-5475. More information about the Healthy Musician Institute is available at www.healthymusicianinstitute.com.



Carla Samson

Samson and Van Sice are former circus performers who used fire dancing and acrobatics in their shows. Samson said they both "love creative movement and playfulness," and the studio's culture reflects this.

Carla Samson, along with her fiancé Scott Van Sice, opened Align Divine Yoga on Liberty Street in downtown Ann Arbor in December of 2016.

The studio offers a mix of classes, workshops, and events combining "yogic, shamanic and mystery traditions," explained Samson. During the last several years, Samson has traveled extensively throughout India, South and Central America, and Australia, learning about these traditions. She and Van Sice are former circus performers who used fire dancing and acrobatics in their shows. Samson said they both "love creative movement and playfulness," and the studio's culture reflects this. She explained that her vision includes "building a tribe or community, and moving toward the authentic divine," through "diving deeper into human connection" and "finding new ways to enhance our health, wellness, self-care, creativity, and playfulness."

Samson is a certified yoga instructor, holds a B.S. in Exercise Physiology and Holistic Health, and is now pursuing a master's degree in Spiritual Nutrition in preparation to become a nutrition counselor. Together she and the other instructors at the studio offer a variety of classes. These include, among others, "Alchemy Vinyasa" — a yoga flow incorporating shamanic techniques; "Tantric Vinyasa" — which combines traditional hatha yoga techniques with visualization, sacred sound, and other techniques focused on "lighting the soul's inherent flame"; and "SoundBath Meditation" — a sound mediation with quartz crystal song bowls.

Align Divine also offers a weekly Ecstatic Dance class called Dance Tribe Fridays. Samson described this as "a transformational experience, exploring freeform, creative conscious movement" in a "safe and sacred space."

Monthly, the studio holds a Cacao Ceremony. Cacao is the raw form of chocolate. Its Latin name is 'cacao Theobroma,' which means "the food of the gods." Samson explained that the cacao she uses is from Guatemala where it is traditionally grown and blessed. She mixes it into a sort-of "hot chocolate," sweetening its bitter taste with superfoods like maple syrup. It is then used in a ritual to "set intentions" and "lift our spirits, dance our hearts, and connect with our divine purpose on this planet."

Align Divine Yoga is located at 201 East Liberty Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48103. Carla Samson can be reached by phone at (734) 276-7242 or by email at aligndivine@aligndivineyoga.com. More information, including class and event schedules, is available at www.aligndivineyoga.com and www.facebook.com/aligndivineyoga.





Grace Helms Kotre started her business, Power to Be, LLC, in mid-2016.

She offers mindfulness instruction for children and families. Her background includes a bachelor's degree in child development from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a master's degree in social work from the University of Michigan. She began practicing mindfulness meditation in 2009 and received over a year of in-depth meditation training with

Carol Blotter of Chelsea Meditation. She then completed a year-long Mindfulness Instructor certification program through Mindful Schools, a California-based organization which offers education programs for educators who want to teach mindfulness practices to children. She is a member of the Michigan Collaborative for Mindfulness in Education and has additional training in mindful parenting, nonviolent communication, intergroup dialogue, and racial justice.

Helms Kotre has intentionally started her business slowly, as she has been staying home with her two young daughters, but found that it has taken off more quickly than she had planned. She started by volunteering her services at Peace Neighborhood Center in Ann Arbor and at her daughters' preschool. She then began offering classes through Ann Arbor Rec & Ed and in local schools and youth organizations. She also offers individual lessons for children and their parents, so that lessons can be reinforced and practiced at home.

Power to Be

Helms Kotre explained that mindfulness benefits children by helping with stress, increasing capacity to pay attention at school and at home, and developing emotional self-regulation, and the studio's culture reflects this.

Helms Kotre explained that mindfulness benefits children by helping with stress, increasing capacity to pay attention at school and at home, and developing emotional self-regulation. She said that parents have reported their kids using their mindful breathing or emotional mindfulness to calm themselves down at home, and even explaining to the parents in stressful situations how they can calm themselves. Though she does work with some children with diagnoses, such as ADHD, she said the practices can help anyone. She simplifies the practices so children can understand and uses games and activities to reinforce the ideas. She always encourages the kids to practice at home and school, then share what they did at the next lesson. She explained that whether in a classroom or individual setting she prefers to do repeated lessons, so that the children and their families can really incorporate the mindfulness practices into their lives. She said that she works most with children ages three to five, though she does work with elementary, middle, and some high schoolers as well. She emphasized that even very young kids can grasp and use the skills.

Grace Helms Kotre can be reached at gracekotre@mindfulpowertobe.com or (734) 255-0090. The website for Power to Be, LLC, is at www.mindfulpowertobe.com.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE COMMUNITY

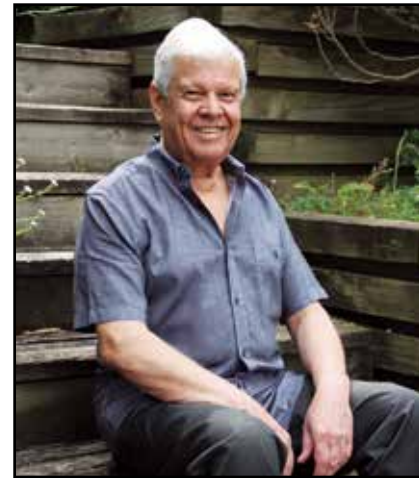
Please note that the "What's New" column is an editorial (not paid-for advertising) feature of the Crazy Wisdom Journal, and the editors may or may not include what you submit. Whether the editors include material or not will depend on space considerations, as well as other editorial issues, such as the need for high resolution jpgs and the overall mix of stories included in the "What's New in the Community" column in a given issue.

If you would like to submit information to be considered for this column, please email communitynews@crazywisdom.net or drop off or mail to the store: What's New in the Community, 114 South Main, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. The firm deadline for submissions for the next issue (September through December 2017) is July 1, 2017.

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* Read more about Dr Rose's work in Issue 64 of
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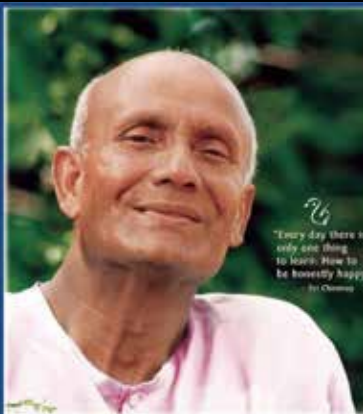
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Leaps of Faith

Tales of Local Businesses

This is one of a series of articles we've been doing on local business owners and their relatively newer businesses. As the economy in Michigan has struggled over many years, there are still brave souls who have taken the leap of faith to open their own businesses here. What follows are personal profiles of two businesses that are thriving despite the odds.

By Mary Stokley
Photos by Susan Ayer

Bloom City Club — Downtown's Blooms, Buds, and Flowers

Bloom City Club
423 Miller Ave., Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103
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In August 2015, Dori Edwards opened Bloom City Cannabis Club, her second dispensary venture, alongside her business partner, Allison Ireton. Both women came to Bloom via circuitous routes but ended up right here, where they're needed, and during an exciting time in the medical cannabis industry. With Allison managing the retail side of the business and Dori applying her skills to the growing side (she's affectionately known as 'Gangamama'), the two have turned what was once an old service garage into a thriving business committed to quality and customer service.

The knowledgeable staff at Bloom City Club works together to provide the "highest grade, pesticide free, craft/small batch, natural (organic) cannabis," grown only by selected providers who subscribe to the Blue Bud standard of growing. Any products sold in the dispensary are from "like-minded vendors whose ideals reflect our values of serving people," according to Bloom's website. You'll feel welcome in the 5-star rated customer service environment designed with patients and people in mind. The staff understands cannabis laws can be confusing, so they've made Bloom a place where anyone can feel comfortable having questions answered. Bloom is not just a dispensary — it is also a place to be educated about the use and many medicinal purposes of cannabis. Dori, Allison, and their staff hold cannabis classes, covering subjects such as Cannabis & Pets, Concentrates, How to Make Your Own



"It's a really exciting time in an industry that is still relatively new, and the awakening is amazing. Our patients bring stories back to us that affirm that what we're doing here is worthwhile, that the stress and the struggles are worthwhile, and it's an amazingly rewarding feeling for all of us. - Dori Edwards

Cannabis Butter, Cannabis and Cancer, as well as a host of other topics. They not only encourage their patients to learn as much as possible about cannabis and its health benefits, they also encourage their bud tenders to learn and share that knowledge with their patients.

"It's amazing that everyone is so easily able to stay on the same page," Dori said. "Our growth has been fast and we're addicted to growing the business and visioning what the future may hold. It's a really exciting time in an industry that is still relatively new, and the awakening is amazing. Our patients bring stories back to us that affirm that what we're doing here is worthwhile, that the stress and the struggles are worthwhile, and it's an amazingly rewarding feeling for all of us."

Dori is originally from Jackson, Michigan, but moved out West at about the age of 19 to explore what the world outside of Michigan held for her. She spent most of her time in Northern California and the mountains of Colorado. While in California, she learned about living and eating healthier. "California is more advanced than Michigan when it comes to healthy food; even in the 90s they had juice bars everywhere and people were interested in knowing the ingredients in their food," she said. "They weren't worried about the fat content, but wanted to know what the actual ingredients were." Dori realized that by eating a healthier diet and exercising regularly, her body responded in positive ways.

She returned to Michigan in 1997, attended the Rudolf Steiner Teaching Institute, married, and began a family. Dori chose this path because Steiner's system values natural means to optimize and maintain physical and mental health and wellbeing. These were things she fully believed in and had already put to practice in her own life. After having her daughter, Dori taught in a Waldorf school for five years and



Bloom not only encourages its patients to learn as much as possible about cannabis and its health benefits, it also encourages its bud tenders to learn and share that knowledge with patients.

Dori Edwards & Allison Ireton

began studying West African Dance with her husband. She and her husband started Like Water Drum and Dance Troupe and danced all over Michigan in different festivals. She even stopped teaching because the drum and dance troupe did so well. In 2008, when funding was pulled from the Arts and Humanities Council, the troupe lost all its contracts, and Dori and her husband decided to sell. Shortly thereafter, the pair separated, and her husband moved to Boston. Now a single mother during the time when Michigan first became legal for medical marijuana, Dori decided to open Treecity Health Collective, a medical marijuana dispensary, in 2010.



The staff understands cannabis laws can be confusing, so they've made Bloom the place where everyone can feel comfortable having their questions answered.

Because she had never taken any pharmaceuticals or antibiotics and had been passionate about natural medicine, she decided it was time "to put my philosophies behind my business and livelihood. I've also only ever immunized my children when we went to West Africa, and only the things that they absolutely needed. I feel it was an educated decision, not just a philosophical one. I've raised my kids with anthroposophical medicine because I'm very strong-minded about being able to make our own educated choices about what is important for our bodies and how we want to heal ourselves." Dori expressed her frustration with the medical establishment and how she feels we aren't taught about real health, but simply provided with band-aid solutions. "So, when Michigan legalized medical marijuana, I took it upon myself to advocate for our civil right to have a choice for our own bodies," Dori said. Unfortunately, the timing was off, and she ended up selling the dispensary in 2013. At the time, she felt she would never return to the industry, but that changed when she met her business partner Allison a few years later.





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Allison Ireton is from the East Coast, just outside of Philadelphia, and her path to healthy living was perhaps less a personal choice and more a result of her upbringing in a health-conscious family. "My mother was a health nut," she explained, "so I was the kid at school in the lunch room with a sandwich made of bulk peanut butter on wheat bread with sprouts coming out of it." But those early moments, although slightly embarrassing as a youngster, helped her make healthier choices throughout her life. After graduating college, she worked in Human Resources for Perdue Farms in Salisbury, Maryland. She then married and moved to Maine and worked as a technical writer in software for Paychex. When Allison was in her 30s, Paychex was bought out by another company, and her job was going to move to Rochester, New York. "I didn't really like what I was doing well enough to move to New York, so I decided to go to law school instead. My mother always said that I was an argumentative child who liked to justify and rationalize things and that I should go to law school and make it official," she laughed. "So, I did. I received a full ride scholarship to Ave Maria Law School and moved to Michigan in 2003."



After graduating in 2006, she took a job with a law firm in downtown Detroit and learned that, oftentimes, laws are written without any practical understanding of how they will actually work in the real world and then need to be tweaked and fine-tuned. "It's a way of getting a ball rolling on a given matter and then improving the law as it begins to be applied," Allison said.

Eventually, Allison left her position to open her own practice in Ann Arbor. To market her practice, she got involved with Business Networking International (BNI), where she met Dori Edwards. She provided legal assistance and friendly support to Dori while she went through a divorce. "I didn't know as much about cannabis as Dori did," Allison explained. "All I knew was the criminal penalty for possession. I also knew that so many more bad things happen from alcohol and heroin abuse than from marijuana use." She was interested in doing something to change the laws and attitudes surrounding marijuana, especially in relation to its health benefits, so she and Dori collaborated to open Bloom City Club.

Dori manages the growing side of the business, tending to the strains and ensuring they're raised 100 percent organically, while Allison manages the retail side of the business. They have also partnered with a business/sales coach who drives world-class customer service as a priority focus. Although a few men have joined the staff, Bloom is primarily operated by women. "The women rock Bloom," Dori said. Their patients often come to Bloom in extreme amounts of pain and discomfort, so providing the best customer service and sharing the knowledge they have is of paramount importance.

###

Feature continued on page 34

Leaps of Faith

Tales of Local Businesses

Feature continued from page 33



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The idea behind "Leaps of Faith," as the title suggests, is to celebrate individuals who have taken a leap of faith in their lives by foregoing more mainstream employment avenues to dive into the one thing they are truly and absolutely passionate about. Sensei Thomas Wright certainly exemplifies this concept. Sensei Wright, who goes by Tom, opened Wright's Karate and Fitness in 2002. The studio began small, focusing solely on Tom's first love, teaching karate. Now, the studio has expanded both in size and offerings. In addition to karate classes, workshops, and private lessons, Tom also offers personal training, training for two or more, boot camps, self-defense seminars, corporate self-defense seminars, workshops and hands-on clinics, mixed martial arts (MMA) core training, and all around fun with fitness training.

When the dojo first opened (dojo simply means room or hall where martial arts are practiced), it occupied a small but sufficient portion of the building where it's currently located, near Lillie Park in Pittsfield Township. Tom taught the art and history of Isshinryu karate to kids and students of all ages. "I didn't begin training in karate until I was 22 years old," he explained. "So, I know you can learn it at any age."



"My goal in training is to take students who are right handed, with the majority of strength and coordination [being] on their right side, and make them equally strong and coordinated on their left side, bringing them into balance, and making both mind and body strong." - Sensei Thomas Wright

Isshinryu karate focuses on "One Heart Mind," Tom explained, which means body and mind working in tandem. "My goal in training is to take students who are right handed, with the majority of strength and coordination [being] on their right side, and make them equally strong and coordinated on their left side, bringing them into balance, and making both mind and body strong." Tom has been in love with the practice and discipline of Isshinryu karate since the first day he began training. In 1982, he earned his first-degree black belt and began teaching other students under the tutelage of his *Sensei* (teacher). Tom currently holds an eighth-degree black belt and has instructed hundreds of students in the traditions, or *Katas*, and weaponry of Isshinryu over the last 35 years.



Karate is not just about fighting, and Sensei Wright makes sure his students understand that one should engage in fighting only as a last resort, when all other options have been exhausted.

Sensei Tom Wright

But karate is not just about fighting, and Sensei Wright makes sure his students understand that one should engage in fighting only as a last resort, when all other options have been exhausted. Other attributes students (and parents) should seek within the practice of Isshinryu karate, or any other martial art, include self-confidence, good citizenship, flexibility, physical strengthening, mental agility, and an increased sense of respect for self and others. While he's not a drill sergeant, Tom does command respect inside the dojo and fully expects his students to practice that same respect at home, as well as in their schools and communities. One of Tom's favorite karate precepts is, "strike when the opportunity presents itself." "It's good advice not only in karate, but in making good business, life, and personal decisions as well. It's advice I encourage my students to follow wholeheartedly," he said.



Other attributes students (and parents) should seek within the practice of Isshinryu karate, or any other martial art, include self-confidence, good citizenship, flexibility, physical strengthening, mental agility, and an increased sense of respect for self and others.

In 2012, after 22 years of employment with Conway Freight Company, Tom seized the opportunity to step away from the freight business to focus full time on his dojo. He expanded the space and branched out into fitness training and other classes besides karate. He loves to teach karate but wanted to make sure his days were full. For him, it also "took some time to really grasp the idea that people were willing to pay me to keep them in shape," he said. This sentiment comes from the heart of a man who truly loves what he does. Karate, training, and physical activity have been a part of Tom's life for so many years that they've become ingrained in his being. And, according to the testimonials of his clients, he is very good at it. According to Jon Kroll, a software engineer and student of Tom's, "Tom has always made me feel like my fitness, my self-improvement was a personal mission of his... that is his excellence as a teacher."

Tom also told me about an elderly couple who train with him regularly. The man told Tom that he decided he needed his help because he wanted to be "living to die rather than just waiting to die." That's a pretty accurate assessment of the difference regular exercise can have on the body and mind of an individual. Exercise keeps your body moving more easily and gives you a good feeling about yourself and your overall condition, thanks to the endorphins that are released. So, it's easy to see how that change in mindset can be attained.



Businesses and corporations are starting to see the value in exercise for their employees and some are even beginning to pay for their employees to participate in programs like Tom's corporate self-defense seminar. In a pamphlet he gave to me about the self-defense seminar, I read that "for every \$1 invested in health promotion, small businesses can save between \$3 and \$5 in health and safety costs, including medical expenses, absenteeism, and workplace accidents," according to the Small Business Wellness Initiative, a community collaborative project funded by the Department of Health and Human Services. The same Small Business Wellness Initiative also reported that other benefits small businesses could expect from healthier employees are increased productivity, enhanced social behavior, fewer sick days, better team players, and higher morale. Healthy employees help motivate the people around them, which can all help to reduce insurance premiums.

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One of Tom's favorite karate precepts is, "strike when the opportunity presents itself." "It's good advice not only in karate, but in making good business, life, and personal decisions as well. It's advice I encourage my students to follow wholeheartedly."



According to Tom, more and more companies are willing to pay for their employees to exercise through corporate self-defense training and seminars or corporate fitness training programs, both of which he now offers either in the dojo or at a remote location. Self-defense training and seminars are good for all employees, but martial arts fitness programs can reap positive benefits for female employees especially, including a stronger sense of security, plus the strength and knowledge to diffuse potentially dangerous and threatening situations and the ability to protect themselves when a situation cannot be diffused.

Going to the gym is a great way of getting exercise and helping your body to become a strong, well-oiled machine that moves with ease as it was intended to do, but doing the same thing every day can become monotonous, and, in addition, the body might reach a plateau with repetitive workouts. The diversity of classes at Wright's Karate and Fitness, and the mental and character-building components of a deep mind and body practice like Isshinryu karate, will continually engage you and your body in your exercise practice. "Make me your co-pay, not your doctor," Tom likes to tell potential clients. He believes he can help his clients reach and exceed their personal goals, as well as decrease their need to visit the doctor.

###



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**Opening Top of the Park!
June 9th • 5-6pm**

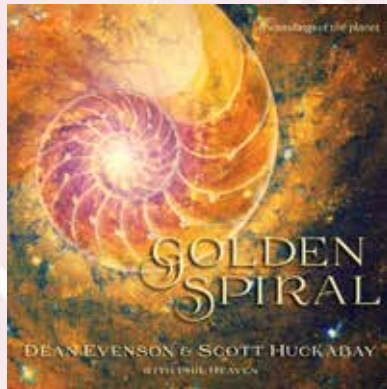
<u>Monday</u>	<u>Classes</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
9:15 - 10:30AM	Vinyasa (Preferably no Beg.)	Sandra
9:30 - 10:30	Gentle Yoga & Meditation	Carter
6:00 - 7:15PM	Heart-Centered Hatha Yoga	Carter
7:15 - 8:15PM	Gentle/Restorative Yoga	Natasha
7:30 - 8:45PM	Vinyasa	Carter
<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Classes</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
9:15 - 10:30AM	Vinyasa	Rachel P.
9:30 - 10:30AM	Hatha	Carter
10:45 - 12:00PM	Gentle Flow Yoga	Sarah
11:00 - 12:00PM	C2* <i>FREE Community Yoga: On-a Flow</i>	Ana
6:00 - 7:00	Hatha Flow	Colleen
6:00 - 7:00PM	NIA	Megan S.
7:15 - 8:30PM	Vinyasa	Wendy
7:15 - 8:30PM	Pre-natal Yoga: Mommy Time	Lisa T
<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Classes</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
9:15 - 10:30AM	Heart-Centered Hatha Yoga	Carter
9:30 - 10:30AM	Vinyasa: PrAna Vinyasa Inspired	Ana
10:45 - 11:45AM	Beginning Yoga / Hatha Fundamentals	Ouafa
11:00-12:00PM	NIA	Ana
12:00 -1:00	Power Hour: Hatha Flow	Martina
5:45 - 7:00PM	Vinyasa: Movement Flow	Natasha
6:00 - 7:15PM	Ashtanga Fundamentals: Primary	Wendy
7:30 - 8:30PM	Hatha Flow	Sarah
7:30 - 8:45PM	Hatha: YIN Inspired & Meditation	Dina
<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Classes</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
9:00 - 10:15AM	Gentle Yoga & Meditation	Dina
9:15 - 10:30AM	Vinyasa: Classical Yoga (Preferably no Beg.)	Samantha
6:15 - 7:15PM	Vinyasa: Moment Flow	Lisa W
7:15 - 8:30PM	Vinyasa	Jo
<u>Friday</u>	<u>Classes</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
9:15 - 10:30AM	Vinyasa	Wendy
9:30 - 10:45AM	Pre-Natal Yoga: Mommy Time	Lisa
12:00 - 1:00PM	Vinyasa: PrAna Vinyasa Inspired	Sarah
5:30 - 6:30PM	C2* <i>FREE Community Yoga: On-a Flow</i>	Ana
<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Classes</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
8:00 - 9:15AM	C2* <i>FREE Community Yoga: Ashtanga</i>	Self-led
9:15 - 10:30AM	Vinyasa	Rachel P.
11:00 - 12:15PM	Hatha: Traditional Yoga (All levels)	Natasha
<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Classes</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
9:00 - 10:15AM	Heart-Centered Vinyasa	Natasha
9:15 - 10:15AM	Hatha: Yoga Foundations (Great for Beg.)	Carrie
10:30 - 11:45AM	Pre-Natal Yoga: Mommy Time	Dina
10:30 - 11:30AM	NIA	Megan S.
4:30 - 5:30PM	C2* <i>FREE Community NIA: NIA</i>	Ana

*C2 Classes: DONATIONS WELCOME 4 Weekly classes supporting local Non-profits!

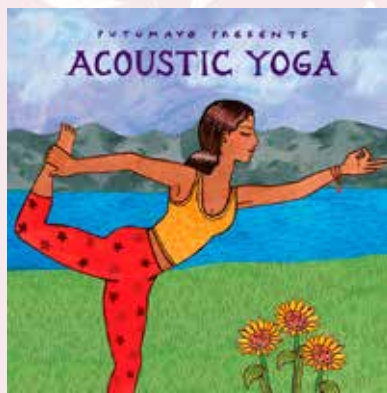
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Music Reviews

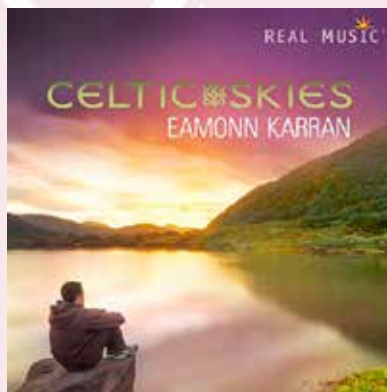
By Sarah Newland



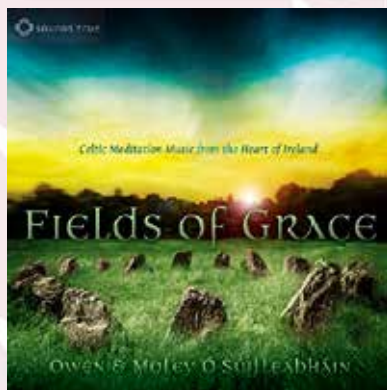
Golden Spiral cd
by Dean Evenson & Scott Huckabay
A harmonic, free-flowing journey that opens the listener to the deeper places in the soul where healing can occur. Atmospheric arrangements, gentle swirls of energy and rolling rhythms make the music perfect for yoga, sacred dance, relaxation, and massage. "Each moment is a sacred spiral of energy vibrating our inner chord of bliss. Music is sacred geometry. The perfect ratios of harmonic intervals move toward a harmonious moment." -Dean Evenson
\$15.98



Acoustic Yoga cd
By Putumayo World Music
This has become my new favorite cd. It's a peaceful musical journey that will soothe your mind and ease your soul. It's far more low-key than most Putumayo cds, and it really is wonderful for your yoga practice or just to listen to.
\$13.95



Celtic Skies cd
By Eamonn Karran
Just as the Rowen Ash spreads its shading branches, Karran has branched out on his third release, laying soulful Irish female vocals down alongside piano, uilleann pipes, drums, and synthesizer, providing a carpet of comfort to the listener.
\$17.98



Fields of Grace cd: Celtic Meditation Music from the Heart of Ireland
By Owen and Moley O Suilleabhain
This cd spans three worlds of sacred expression in one rich soundscape: the old style of Irish Sean-nos, medieval Gregorian chant, and more recent songs from the English hymn tradition. Sharing the musical inheritance of their mother Noirin Ni Riain, brothers Owen and Moley blend beautiful harmonies atop a bed of relaxing instrumentation to carry us into a timeless lineage shared by all.
\$16.98



Haseya cd
by Ajeet Kaur
This new chant album is a journey with sound to heal with the earth. Haseya means "to rise up" or "she rises" in the language of the Navajo people. It is a call to come together across cultures and divisions and heal the pain that separates us from one another. Haseya is deeply integrated with the rhythms of nature, the wisdom of our ancestors, and an awakening of healing space. Produced by Maneesh de Moor, this music is an invitation to bring peace to our minds, heart, and world.
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These CDs are available for purchase at Crazy Wisdom!



Namaste, Katie...

Whether you're a seasoned yogi or getting ready to roll out your mat for the first time, here you'll find a variety of useful tips from local yoga instructor Katie Hoener.

allow yourself to stay here and breathe. If and when it feels right, you can inch the leg back, opening up release points not only in the quads, but in the hip flexors as well. As you are sliding your leg back, be sure you aren't resting your weight on the kneecap, but rather on either the tibia or the femur. Over time (and this can be years for some of us!) you may wish to raise the lower leg, and take the ankle with the right hand, adding to the opportunity for release (see photo below). If you are there now, feel free to give it a try. When you feel ready, move to the other side.

Namaste, Katie —

During meetings, I have been routinely noticing that I am clenching my jaw and face. I have enjoyed the breathing exercises you have written about in past issues, but I find that once this tension has already settled in my body, I need something a bit more than the breath to release it. It would be nice to have a few postures I could do in my cubicle to release that held tension.

Lisa S., Chelsea

One of the best resources for relaxing through the face and jaw is to allow space into the neck and release tension there.



Dear Lisa,

I hear you on this one! Breath exercises are fantastic releases and work in conjunction with so much of our asana work. That said, there are certainly times when we don't have the space or quiet to focus on the breath exclusively, and, as a result, we aren't able to let go of tension with the breath alone. One of the best resources for relaxing through the face and jaw is to allow space into the neck and release tension there.

At Sun Moon Yoga (which is now closed), we called this particular release "Ear to the Stars," though I am certain other yogis have different names for this particular sequence. Here is how it goes: On an inhale lengthen through the neck and allow the right ear to float up toward the sky. Here, it is important to keep our attention on lifting through the right ear, not on how far the left ear is moving down toward the left shoulder. This allows the scalene muscles (muscles along the side of the neck) to become long. When ready, move to the other side (see photo above).

Next, on an inhale, lift through the crown of the head, lengthening through the neck, and allow the chin to make its way over toward the left shoulder. Some days, the chin may make it to hover over the left collar bone; other days, it may only make it half way. Breathe into

this space, and perhaps, on the exhale, you'll find that the sternocleidomastoid opens up, or maybe not on this particular day. The sternocleidomastoid (a long muscle in the side of the neck that extends up from the thorax to the base of the skull behind the ear) is quite involved in holding tension in the neck area of the body. Once you have moved to the other side for a few breaths, you may want to try a flow from one side to the other: inhale to center; exhale and move the chin out toward one shoulder; inhale back to center; then exhale over the opposite shoulder. Be mindful to keep the shoulder blades relaxed, spine long.

Namaste, Katie —

In my regular yoga class, some people use a strap in Seated Forward Fold, and others can hold onto their feet. I see some people not using any props and bending the legs, and others without props not touching the toes/feet. Help! I have no idea what to do!

Ebony S., Ann Arbor

Dear Ebony,

Not to dodge your important question, but what do you want to do? You have tapped into one of the most beautiful aspects of the practice of yoga — it is *your* practice. First and foremost, you get to decide in each and every posture how it feels to you and what the posture will look like. An important element to practice each time we step on the mat is to do our very best to "stay" on our mat. Once we know how to perform an asana safely, we should try to let go of what those around us are doing, and find the expression of the posture that suits our needs on that day. Ebony, I am not saying this is easy — I still have to remind myself of this.

For a more direct answer, there are a few variations you could try. Paschimottanasana, or Seated Forward Fold, has many opportunities for growth and exploration, as you mentioned in your question. In any yoga asana, we want to be mindful to not lock the joints, so wherever we are, we want to make sure we have softness in the knees. Perhaps start with legs long on the mat, length in the spine, and try walking the hands out. See where they end up. Perhaps they rest on the mat next to the legs, or on the thighs or shins. Noticing where you feel tension in the body is key to developing that opening and length in the body.

Once we know how to perform an asana safely, we should try to let go of what those around us are doing, and find the expression of the posture that suits our needs on that day.

Using props, as you mentioned, can be fantastic. One caution with using yoga straps is to make certain that we aren't yanking or tugging on the body. We simply use the strap as an extension of the arms. When we use straps, there is a strong temptation to want to force the opening to happen, rather than allowing the body to get there on its own. But, if you find that sweet spot of opening and length with the strap, please utilize the support.

Katie Hoener is an RYT 500, receiving her 200 and 500 hour trainings. She is also a Licensed Master Social Worker. She is a partner at Verapose Yoga in Dexter (www.veraposeyoga.com). Please send in your own yoga questions to Katie@veraposeyoga.com.

Photography by Hilary Nichols

Namaste, Katie —

I am getting back into gardening this spring and have noticed that after this long winter my quads are quite tight. I am struggling with crouching down to the flower beds, and this hasn't been an issue for me in the past. Though I've been going to yoga, I haven't found quite the right posture in my regular class. Any tips?

Dan G., Ann Arbor

Hi Dan,

With quadriceps being one of the strongest muscle groups in the body, getting an adequate stretch for them in your usual yoga class may prove difficult, especially if you regularly strengthen and tone these muscles through your day-to-day activities. A good place to start with adding some extra length to the quadriceps is through a Low Lunge Pose, or Anjaneyasana. The added benefit of starting with Low Lunge is that it is a progressive posture that can be deepened as the muscles become suppler.

To come into Low Lunge, start in Table Posture, then bring the right foot forward in between the hands, close to the right hand. Feel free to use blocks under the hands if it feels more comfortable. The left leg will be the focus of the release here. If the left leg (currently at a 90-degree angle) is feeling a release,

A good place to start with adding some extra length to the quadriceps is through a Low Lunge Pose, or Anjaneyasana. The added benefit of starting with Low Lunge is that it is a progressive posture that can be deepened as the muscles become more supple.



Green Living

Coming Home: Returning to Our Place in the Web of Life

By Kirsten Mowrey

I'm Kirsten Mowrey, the new columnist for *Green Living*. For many of us, "green living" is really a synonym for "green shopping." How do I know what kind of light bulb to buy? How can I purchase less polluting foods, appliances, clothing, toys, cars, and phones? Paper or plastic? What businesses walk their environmental talk, and who is just green washing? Excellent questions all, but they arise from the framework of people as consumers, standing outside ecosystems and objectifying the planet.

Part of my goal as the new columnist is to broaden the definition of green living. I want to explore being *deep green*, and propose we shift our orientation from separate to connected. Seeing ourselves as intrinsic to nature, living in reciprocity with our environment in ways attuned to that situation. Remember "Goldilocks and the Three Bears?" We are looking for "just right"; symmetry in our connections, place, rights, duties, giving, and receiving. Our Earth is unique in the universe. Our current paradigm, adopted in the early twentieth century, views any biological form not human as object, rationalizing the use and abuse of it. Even "human" has a very specific definition, separating skin colors, genders, and religions. In opposition, many religions hold that we are all connected and united. Recent decades of scientific data show collaborating and assisting strategies are preferred over competitive ones for meeting a species' needs. Mycelial networks connect trees in a forest, transporting nutrients where needed; herbivores graze particular plants to encourage birds that will eat their parasites. While I will focus on a local organization each issue, I will also reflect and suggest ways to experience this broader perspective. How can we, here amid the oak savannas of southeastern Michigan, plant ourselves in the wonders of our place in the Great Lakes?

For many of us, "green living" is really a synonym for "green shopping."

You can try exploring the beginnings of that paradigm shift now, in Buhr Park in Ann Arbor. If you enter off Packard Road and drive past Cobblestone Farm, past the ice arena, and continue up the curve of the gravel overflow parking lot, you will see a planting on the hill. Walk up the slight rise toward a wooden structure. Once you are in the circle, look around. You are standing in the middle of a food forest.

A food forest is a concept from permaculture. Permaculture is the idea of "permanent agriculture" where there is continual food and bounty (permanent), with minimal human work and maintenance (agriculture). In many ways, it echoes the Potawatomi and Ojibway, living mostly off the local landscape with small cultivated areas, except that the entirety is planned and planted to create a deliberate forest. Rather than oak, maple, and beech, here you see peach, pear, cherry, and paw paw. Planted in "guilds" — a grouping of plants that work together — the forest takes time to establish but maintains itself over time. Guilds are created to mimic a native forest: understory and canopy plants, fast growers and slow, soil feeders, and fruit bearing. Buhr Park's food forest contains 25 fruit trees of the types mentioned, surrounded by 20 shrubs including currants, gooseberries, serviceberries, hazelnuts, and a raspberry patch.

I want to explore being deep green, and propose we shift our orientation from separate to connected.

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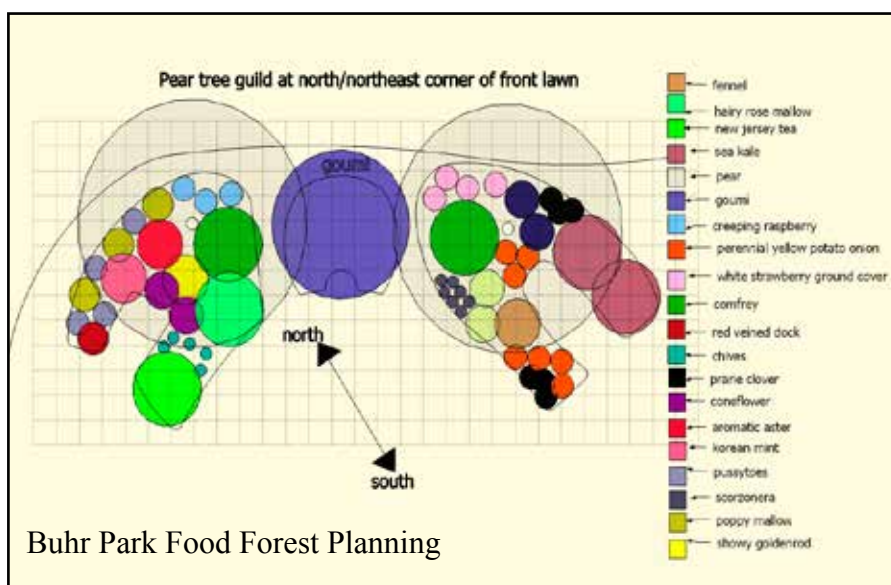
A food forest is a concept from permaculture.

The creation of the forest is a story of giving — of generosity, sharing, and abundance over and over, expanding each time, to benefit the community. In 2010, the Ann Arbor Parks Department was redoing the sidewalk from Essex Road to Allen Elementary to make it American Disabilities Act compliant. In planning the excavation, they saw that the Wet Meadow Project had, as part of their zero runoff goal, proposed a third wet meadow in the area. AA Parks contacted them and asked if the Project wanted the area scooped out and offered to pay for the plants. Wet Meadow Project contact Jeannine Palms agreed. The sidewalk required a great deal of earth moving to construct correctly, and as a result, a large area south of the wet meadow boundary ended up with no grass. Palms asked the Department if they could have that area for a food forest, and they agreed.

Recent decades of scientific data show collaborating and assisting strategies are preferred over competitive ones for meeting a species'

For the next year, the Wet Meadow Project did its best to hold off the grass while focusing on the newly planted third wet meadow. Three high school students developed a goal and plan for the forest area and Allen School Pride Team wrote a grant for the first fruit tree seedlings. In 2012, those plants were put in and tended through that summer and the next by Allen School and Green Camp students. Ann Arbor Learning Community and Summers-Knoll students have also assisted with maintenance, and Blossom Daycare and Forest School children visit the park all year. In February 2017, daycare children wove wreaths from pruned grapevines and decorated them with seed heads. Gift after gift after gift created the forest. Money was needed, yes, but what really mattered was human attention and time.

All this, despite challenges: the schools that sent children have had curriculum changes so they no longer assist; Green Camp no longer exists; neighbors have taken tools; and last year the raccoons enjoyed all the peaches, picking them at perfect ripeness. Some children, not understanding where food comes from, pick unripe fruit to use as balls and discard when finished. In the future, Palms hopes for more community involvement. Yet, she says, "With all this, our triumph is we've figured out ways to manage despite the challenges, and [I] see the fruits of it on lots of different levels."

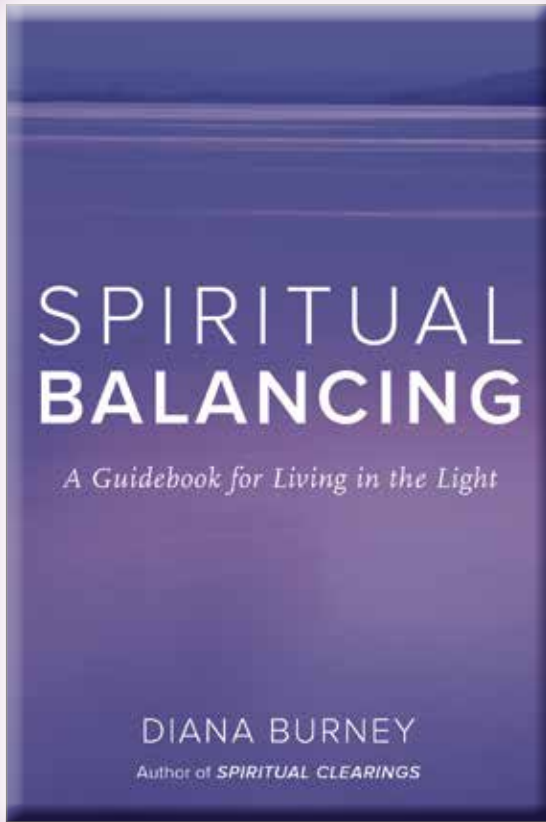


I'm writing this column in February, but you will be reading it in May, when the sun is out and we all burst outside after being captive indoors for months. Try wandering over to the food forest and see what's blooming. Maybe you will sit in the grape arbor and hear the birds looking for mates. Maybe you will pull a few weeds, or feel the soft soil underfoot while your kids dig in the dirt, or watch the wind blowing clouds high above. Maybe you will visit when there is fruit on the trees or some ready serviceberries to taste. Enjoyment of the food forest does not depend on money, position, or achievement. It invites: Will you step into relationship, join, and unite — let down the walls that separate and open to the abundance all around you?

To participate in the Buhr Park Food Forest, contact jeannine@wetmeadow.org.

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Diana Burney is a registered nurse, certified hypnotherapist, and ordained minister of the Order of Melchizedek from the Sanctuary of the Beloved in Conesus, New York. She is also a certified Reiki Master/Teacher as well as a Magnified Healing Practitioner.

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Higher Self Anchoring



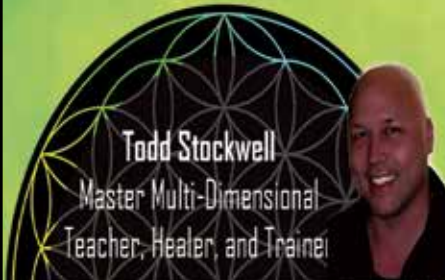
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Sustainable Health

Elimination Diets — a Tool for When Food is Causing Problems



By Gaia Kile

I learned about allergies at an early age. I had some respiratory symptoms that ultimately brought me to an allergy specialist who conducted skin tests and determined that I had a number of food allergies. From a child's perspective the most significant among these was chocolate. (Note the author's appeal for sympathy.)

The question is not whether these foods are good or bad for us generally, but whether they are a problem for you in particular.

At times, skin tests and blood tests can prove useful in sorting out food reactions or suggesting possible problems, but the screenings that specific allergy or food sensitivity tests offer are incomplete. A food elimination and oral reintroduction challenge offers meaningful results and can help clarify whether a particular food is a problem for you. People with symptoms that don't suggest a specific diagnosis can often benefit from food elimination and reintroduction.

First, a bit about food reactions.

The term food allergy sometimes refers to a wide array of phenomena. Reviews of immune mediated food reactions have identified more than a dozen specific types of reactions. Of these, the most serious is anaphylaxis, which involves the closing of the airway that can lead to a trip to the emergency room or even death. I like the more restricted use of the term food allergy: reactions that are akin to anaphylaxis, or more technically Immunoglobulin E (IgE) mediated reactions. How prevalent are IgE food allergies? A reasonable contemporary estimation might be 5% of the adult population and 8% of children.

At times, skin tests and blood tests can prove useful in sorting out food reactions or suggesting possible problems, but the screenings that specific allergy or food sensitivity tests offer are incomplete.

We might call other food reactions sensitivities or intolerances. Food sensitivities tend to refer to reactions that are not caused by IgE antibodies, but are nonetheless driven by immune system reactions.

An example of a food intolerance that is not caused by an immune system response is lactose intolerance. Lactose intolerance is an inability to break down lactose, a sugar found in dairy products. As infants, our bodies make an enzyme that can break down lactose, but by adulthood as much as 25% of Americans no longer make this enzyme. The classic symptoms of lactose intolerance include abdominal cramping and diarrhea.

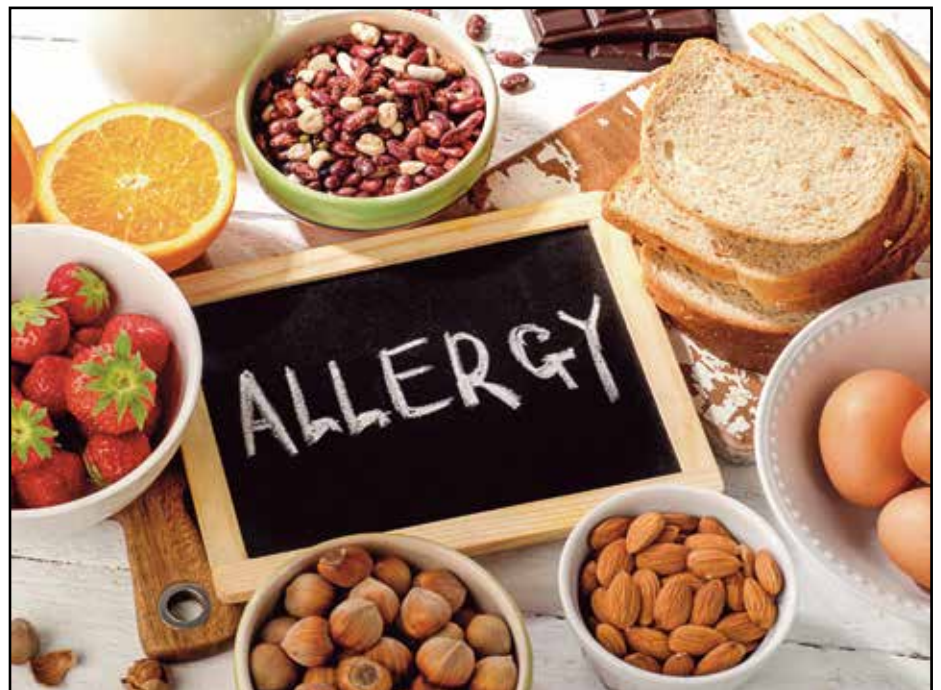
The various types of food reactions, allergies, sensitivities, and intolerances, can trigger or contribute to a myriad of symptoms including but not limited to: digestive system issues such as constipation or diarrhea, excess gasiness, abdominal pain including classic gallstone symptoms, and feelings of bloating; rashes and skin complaints; joint pains; autoimmune conditions as diverse as thyroid disease and type I diabetes; respiratory symptoms including anaphylaxis, but also asthma; heart problems; headaches and brain fog; anxiety; depression; ADHD; even schizophrenia.

Except when anaphylaxis is a concern, an optimal way to test for problems that may be related to a reaction of specific foods is an elimination and reintroduction trial. The basic idea is to eliminate the concerning food from your diet, then reintroduce it to see if a reaction can be elicited. Although sometimes elimination is enough to clarify that a food was causing a problem, often a clear answer about a food's potential contribution to a health problem comes about only with reintroduction. Typically foods should be avoided for two to four weeks. When you reintroduce the food, I usually say "reintroduce it with a passion," as long as anaphylaxis is not a concern. If you suspect that a food might cause swelling of your airway or respiratory distress, food reintroduction should not happen except in the presence of a health professional with the capacity to respond to anaphylaxis.

Somewhere around the age of 12, I got a hold of some chocolate and conducted a reintroduction oral challenge. Fortunately, no anaphylaxis and no reaction. Either I had desensitized to chocolate with avoidance and time, or the original test gave false results. Children often outgrow their allergies.

About a dozen foods frequently cause problems. These tend to be foods that we are regularly exposed to. At the top of the list are beef, dairy, and gluten. Soy, citrus, corn, peanuts, processed foods, and other animal foods are also common suspects. The question is not whether these foods are good or bad for us generally, but whether they are a problem for you in particular.

The hard part of the test is not so much the elimination of foods; with a little coaching it's possible to manage for a few weeks without too much difficulty. After depriving yourself, reintroducing foods one at a time, allowing three days between each reintroduced food, is when it gets difficult. You may find yourself wanting to reintroduce everything at once.



The hard part of a food elimination test is not so much the elimination of foods; with a little coaching it's possible to manage for a few weeks without too much difficulty. After depriving yourself, reintroducing foods one at a time, allowing three days between each reintroduced food, is when it gets difficult.

Reintroduction is the time when you get answers. If a symptom presents during the three days after starting a new food, that food may be a problem. When in doubt, you can conduct the experiment again. The point is to get information about how you respond to the foods you're testing. What you do with that information is a whole other issue, and a topic for another column.

Gaia Kile is a Family Nurse Practitioner with a practice in Ann Arbor. He is dedicated to holistic patient-centered care grounded in science-based information and the individuality of each patient. Depending on a patient's needs he will: encourage lifestyle modification; provide emotional support; use mind-body therapies; engage energy healing; recommend herbs and nutritional supplements; and prescribe hormones and conventional medications.



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Fairytale Baked Goods



Their Scones are a favorite at Crazy Wisdom Tea Room!

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THE BEST THING YOU'LL EAT TODAY

Great Tastes in LOCAL FOOD

Column by Crysta Coburn • Photography by Rachel Everheart



One summer I was delighted by a s'mores sundae! The marshmallows were toasted right there at the cart with a cooking blow torch, served still warm and melting the ice cream just a touch. In fact, their unique sundaes have occasionally been the deciding factor for me heading out again after a long day at work. A limited-time-only ice cream sundae is not to be missed! Especially if it's from Go! Ice Cream. My tastebuds and I can't wait to see what they've got planned for this year.

The Go! Ice Cream Alley Store is located at 10 North Washington Street in Ypsilanti and can be reached at (734) 219-7484 and rob@goicecreamgo.com. They're open Wednesday through Sunday from 12 p.m. to 9 p.m. Door-step deliveries are made every Thursday. For more info, visit www.goicecreamgo.com.



Go! Ice Cream: Sweet Browned Butter Ice Cream Sundae

Go! Ice Cream Alley Store

Established in 2013, Go! Ice Cream is Ypsilanti's favorite go-to for artisan ice cream and vegan sorbets, made from organic, all-natural, and (when possible) local ingredients. Born on the back of a Workman tricycle, Go! Ice Cream has served its small batches of frozen treats at farmers' markets, local events like Ypsi's First Fridays and DIYpsi, and in neighborhoods, even delivering right to your door (per their website, "\$5 delivery fee to any address in Ann Arbor or Ypsilanti, FREE delivery for orders over \$20"). Pints are available for purchase from Ann Arbor's Argus Farm Stop and the Produce Station, as well as the Ypsilanti Food Coop. And now, after an exciting renovation process, Go! Ice Cream has its own Alley Store, complete with an old-fashioned soda fountain, located in downtown Ypsilanti near the corner of Michigan Avenue and North Washington Street.

Born on the back of a Workman tricycle, Go! Ice Cream has served its small batches of frozen treats at farmers markets, local events, and in neighborhoods, even delivering right to your door.

As of this writing, flavors include Brûléed Banana (made with real, organic bananas), Sweet Browned Butter (using Calder Dairy Farm Butter), Three-Bean Vanilla, Coffee and Cookies, and the popular dairy-free Chocolate Sorbet that promises "maximum chocolate overload." In addition to handmade sodas and ice cream floats, the soda fountain at the Alley Store mixes up unique items like a Chocolate Egg Cream (an East Coast soda fountain favorite), and Pupsicles, which are "beef-flavored ice cubes and a dental bone" for canine customers.

What I most appreciate about Go! Ice Cream is its unique flavors, sometimes temporarily available and based specific events or themes. At the yearly Festival of the Honey Bee in Ypsilanti, one of the Go! Ice Cream flavors of the evening included real honeycomb. DIYpsi's 2016 Winter Market had them teaming up with another local favorite, Fairytale Baked Goods (see article in CWJ issue 63), to create a Grinch sundae: ice cream topped with a green mint scone, fudge sauce, and two eyes made from sugar.

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Avalon Cafe and Kitchen

Twenty years ago, in June of 1997, the delicious Avalon International Breads was born in Detroit, MI. In December of 2016, their first restaurant, Avalon Cafe and Kitchen, opened in downtown Ann Arbor at the corner of East Liberty Street and Fourth Avenue, in the original Pretzel Bell Building.

When you enter, there are actually two parts to the business. To your right is the coffee bar, which has a casual seating area with an eclectic assortment of comfortable furniture. In addition to the usual coffee shop beverage offerings, there are pre-assembled sandwiches, salads, and yogurt cups. It's a convenient spot to stop in and grab, for example, a peppermint mocha and a strawberry fruit-on-the-bottom yogurt cup with granola (that tastes an awful lot like strawberry cheesecake – I recommend it) for a quick lunch-on-the-go. Or stay and hang out with friends in the lounge.



Avalon Cafe and Kitchen: Macchiato with Amazon Brownie and Whipped Cream



Avalon Cafe and Kitchen: Cafe baked goods wall

If you follow the ramp up to the left, though, you will find the café/restaurant. I love the naked brick walls and old wood floors. Swaths of burlap are draped across the ceiling interspersed with evenly spaced star-shaped lamps. The atmosphere is casual, backyard elegant.

There are actually two parts to the business. To your right is the coffee bar, which has a casual seating area... If you follow the ramp up to the left, though, you will find the café/restaurant.

Water is served in glass goblets, and the drink menu includes beer on tap (some are Avalon-exclusives, like the Jolly Pumpkin Ancient Egyptian Ale), wine, cocktails, a selection of teas, and specialty coffees. The dinner menu is divided into Start and Share (appetizers), Bun and Bread (burgers and sandwiches), Fork (entrees), Bowl (a salad and vegetable dishes), Sides, and Desserts. There is also a six-item kids menu and “Fancy Toast” items, taking full advantage of their bread-oriented heritage.

The bread is made with 100% organic flour. Avalon also promises (per their website) “organic ingredients when possible, local ingredients whenever feasible, and environmentally friendly practices at every opportunity.” They are a “right livelihood” business, which means they are promoting positive social change with their business.

There is also a six-item kids menu and “Fancy Toast” items, taking full advantage of their bread-oriented heritage. The bread is made with 100% organic flour.

The care and emphasis on quality shows in the food’s freshness. The egg yolks are rich in color and flavor. The pickled vegetables are crisp, not mushy. And the cultured butter spread on a thick slice of grilled farm bread is simple and deeply satisfying. I could happily devour half a loaf while sipping on a salted caramel latte, but I really sank my teeth into the more substantial mushroom burger on a challah roll. I had assumed it would be a portobello mushroom top, but it was like a patty made of mushroom stuffing, reminding me fondly of Thanksgiving dinner.

I look forward to trying what else the Kitchen comes up with, and with a motto like “Eat Well. Do Good,” Avalon is a company to keep your eyes on.

Avalon Cafe and Kitchen is located at 120 East Liberty in Ann Arbor and online at avalonbreads.net. Their phone number is (734) 263-2996. Hours of operation are Monday through Thursday from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., Friday from 7 a.m. to 12 a.m., Saturday from 8 a.m. to 12 a.m., and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Kouzina Greek Street Food

332 South Main Street in downtown Ann Arbor, Michigan, the former location of Middle Kingdom restaurant, sat vacant for some time. Many watched with anxious eyes, wondering when – if! – anyone would move in. Then we watched, excited, as the building was gutted and transformed in June 2016 into Kouzina Greek Street Food, their second location (after downtown Royal Oak). So not only is our new neighbor a local, Michigan-based restaurant, but perfect for a quick, healthy lunch in busy downtown!

With Kouzina’s casual, made-to-order counter service style, I can get my food with plenty of time to enjoy it before heading back to work.

As a downtown employee, I am always on the lookout for new places to procure my lunch. With Kouzina’s casual, made-to-order counter service style, I can get my food with plenty of time to enjoy it before heading back to work. I can even order online and have it delivered if I’m really short on time, or just don’t feel like walking that day (this is really handy in winter — sorry, delivery person!).

Ordering is simple. First, you pick if you want a gyro in a pita, rice bowl (rice pilaf or brown rice), or Greek salad, regular or large size. Next, the meat choices are chicken, pork, and lamb (or all), or order it vegetarian if you prefer.

Toppings are plentiful! There are onions, cucumbers, tomatoes, roasted red peppers, beets, and olives, just to name a few. Sauce choices include sweet tomato sauce, tzatziki (the classic yogurt-cucumber sauce), and zesty feta sauce. My favorite combination is a rice pilaf bowl with chicken, tzatziki sauce, tomatoes, cucumbers, spinach, chickpeas, and feta cheese. My mouth is watering just thinking about it...

Side options include homemade, hand-cut fries (rendered even tastier with feta crumbled on top), pita chips, rice pilaf, spinach pie, chicken lemon rice soup (a.k.a. avgolemono), vegetarian lentil soup, and more. If you’ve still got room, I suggest the baklava or bougatsa, a “warm custard wrapped in filo dough, sprinkled with cinnamon and powdered sugar,” for dessert.

The food’s authenticity is due to 75-year-old chef Panagiotis Laskaris, who worked at various restaurants in the Greektown area of Detroit during that neighborhood’s heyday.

For \$12.75, I can get a healthy and filling lunch of my usual chicken rice bowl (regular size), a bowl of soup, and a bottle of Coke, and since that’s over the \$10 minimum requirement, I can also have it brought to me for free. (Yes, I said free delivery!)

If you check Kouzina’s website, you will also find their catering menu, which is more diverse than the restaurant menu, but still authentically Greek. They require 24-hour notice for catering orders.

The food’s authenticity is due to 75-year-old chef Panagiotis Laskaris, who worked at various restaurants in the Greektown area of Detroit during that neighborhood’s heyday. He came out of a 10-year retirement to return to the kitchen with his son, owner Bobby Laskaris.

Kouzina Greek Street Food has two locations: 121 North Main Street, Royal Oak, Michigan (phone: 248-629-6500) and 332 South Main Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan (phone: 734-997-5155). Both locations can be found online at gokouzina.com and are open daily from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.



Kouzina: Greek Gyro Bowl with Chicken and Fresh topping for made-to-order menu

Well-Fed on a Budget


Part 2 of 2: a Sampling of Global Fare




By Angela Madaras

In the last issue of *The Crazy Wisdom Journal*, I wrote part one for this series, which focused on enjoying local American fare on a budget. I proved I could eat quality tasty food from local eateries, prepared by the hands of skilled chefs, all for a reasonable price. Good food can be easy on the wallet at every level of the dining experience when one exercises discipline and knows where to look. Temptation to order beyond ones means and “pig out” has become woven into our psyche with popular culture’s special interest in all things food-centric. For proof of this, look no further than two of the United States’ most popular mainstays: the all-you-can-eat buffet and the super-sized fast food meal. I respect these dining options but I’ve found I can satiate myself in higher-end restaurants by ordering with intention. In this concluding part of my budget dining series, I will introduce you to a variety of global fare from West Ann Arbor to downtown Ypsilanti, all of which boast quality, healthful products for any budget and any taste preference.

Temptation to order beyond ones means and “pig out” has become woven into our psyche with popular culture’s special interest in all things food-centric.

 **MI COMPADRE** is conveniently located on Packard Street, across from Morgan and York (reviewed in part one of this series) in Ann Arbor. This Mexican restaurant is family owned by cooks who have a unique way of preparing their ceviche and seafood soup. Both seafood dishes are tomato-onion based with a certain sweetness that tastes like a fusion of Central American and Thai. It’s a great place to meet a crowd even though the dining area is not large. It is set up in a way tables can be easily moved around the brightly painted interior. They are usually playing lively music or a soccer game on television. Mi Compadre does not serve alcohol; however, they have traditional beverages worth trying like horchata, tamarindo, and liquor-free sangria. I highly recommend sharing the Ceviche de Shrimp and their homemade guacamole. Their tacos are very economical, flavorful, and traditional. By *traditional*, I mean the taco shells are soft. They will bring as many free chips as you want and two kinds of housemade salsas. I can eat lunch here for under ten bucks, and on some days tacos are two for three dollars. If you’re a fan of this kind of Mexican food but can’t make it to the restaurant, you’ll be happy to know Mi Compadre also recently started to operate a food truck that moves about town.


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 **SEVA** was a downtown Ann Arbor institution for vegetarians for many years. I found it to be my favorite restaurant in the mid to late 80’s. It was the first restaurant where I dined by myself at age 19. I felt very grown-up and mature having a candlelight dinner all by myself. It was a rite of passage for this food lover. I eat at Seva more since they moved to the Westgate Shopping Center, off Jackson Avenue and S. Maple Road. I love the ambiance, although it can be very loud due to hard floors, wood furniture, high ceilings, and wide open space. That being said, the stained glass that once donned the original store’s windows exist here in the new location. But the food is the main topic. For a budget meal, I love their salad menu with side items and add-ons from which to choose. I generally grab a salad with dressing/sauce and two sides (brown rice and steamed broccoli are my usual choices) for under ten bucks. For breakfast, I suggest the Eggs Veracruz. You cannot go wrong with their Mexican specials! Finally, for desert you also will be delighted with daily specials that would make any sweet tooth dance for joy. Whether vegan or vegetarian, you will find many satisfying and creative meal options at Seva.


It was the first restaurant where I dined by myself at age 19. I felt very grown-up and mature having a candlelight dinner all by myself. It was a rite of passage for this food lover.




PHOTO BY RACHEL EVERHEART

 **STAR’S CAFÉ**, also located in the Westgate Shopping Center, offers Middle Eastern favorites for an extremely reasonable price. They specialize in lunch and dinner but are open most mornings at 8:00 a.m. for coffee, pastries, and freshly made juices. Their sandwiches are satisfying enough by themselves for around six dollars, or make it a combo for a couple bucks more, which allows you to add a cup of soup or fries. The fries are crispy as all get out. They bring them piping hot in a large basket with plenty to share. Fresh juices are made-to-order depending on the season’s availability. I crave the carrot-apple-celery juice combination with a little parsley, but you can create your own. I am also completely infatuated with their refreshing housemade Chicken Lemon-Rice Soup. This flavorful soup contains ample amounts of carrots, celery, and onions finely diced in a light, non-creamy chicken broth with rice, lemon juice, and black pepper undertones. For vegetarians, Star’s Café has many options, but the ones my friends seem to gravitate towards are the falafel or cauliflower sandwiches and the lentil soup. Of course, there’s also the usual Middle Eastern fare of hummus, baba ghanoush, fattoush, tabbouli, and stuffed grape leaves, to name just a few.

The fries are crispy as all get out. They bring them piping hot in a large basket with plenty to share.

 There is a new kind of Greek street food in Ann Arbor found within **KOUZINA’S** hip new Main Street eatery. Similar to Chipotle-style ordering, you walk up to a large counter with a glass half-wall protecting salad bar-style containers filled with freshly prepared vegetables, dips, sauces, and toppings for their homemade gyros. Beyond this, thick and long gyro meat slabs sizzle and slowly spin on large metal skewers over a low heat. A top hat of tomato and onion drizzle juices down onto the rotisserie as it roasts the tender, juicy, yet crisp, lamb-beef combo. There are two other meat options, chicken and pork, plus a veggie option. Onto a plate go your grilled pita, and then your protein of choice. Add from a wide variety of homemade condiments and fresh toppings to self-create your perfect gyro. If you prefer, Kouzina even make gluten-free pitas and offer a salad or rice bowl instead of a filled pita. Freshly cut fries jump out of the hopper plain or Greek-style with feta and oregano. Traditional Greek salad and lemon chicken rice soup are staples, as are the pastries and spinach pies. You can definitely fill your belly, with a little extra to take home, for ten bucks. Eat inside or out on a private patio. Or avoid eating “out” altogether by getting takeout or having them deliver.

 **DALAT** has been serving up homemade Vietnamese food to the lucky residents of downtown Ypsilanti for 25 years. As a family owned and operated restaurant you may see a few children at a table doing schoolwork, a grandparent gently sweeping the floors, and women of

all ages folding napkins or doing paperwork. Lunchtime is not as busy as dinner, but service can still be a little slow. I prefer to order from the dinner menu as it is their most comprehensive of menu choices. The dish names are written in Vietnamese with English descriptions of just the ingredients and are somewhat vague. For example, I would like to know what type of sauce or flavor profile exists within the mix of ingredients. One of the most popular dishes is Pho Tai Nam, a traditional beef-based rice noodle soup with medium well-done beef brisket, cilantro, and scallions. It comes with a side of bean sprouts, lime wedges, and sliced jalapeños for seven dollars and fifty cents. However, through several flavorsome visits, I discovered that I prefer Ga Xao Sa Ot. Concocted with stir-fried chicken, lemongrass, chili sauce, and onion on a bed of chopped iceberg lettuce, it is served with steamed white rice. I also always get a large pot of hot green tea to share because they do not offer free refills on any of their beverages.

As a family owned and operated restaurant you may see a few children at a table doing schoolwork, a grandparent gently sweeping the floors, and women of all ages folding napkins or doing paperwork.



WHITE LOTUS FARM'S CREAMERY AND BAKERY

reside within a private Buddhist community and rich farmland. On the last Saturday of each summer month, the community members provide an open farm day with a farm stand selling their freshly baked breads, pastries, fresh craft goat cheese, hot coffee, a summer infused iced tea, handmade soaps, and organic produce. The pièce de résistance is at exactly 11:30 a.m. when a line begins to form for wood-fired pizza orders. It fills fast and is first come, first served until they run out. The humble artisan-farmers offer pizza by the slice or by the whole pie, and you can choose to eat on the grounds or take it home. I have dined al fresco on site, but my favorite experience was in ordering a whole pie to accessorize with a variety of additional edible treasures at home. The pizza du jour was cheese and heirloom red peppers sans sauce. That alone was fabulous, but as a cook I had to add some embellishments. Once home, I gathered arugula, my homemade vodka-tomato sauce, thin slices of prosciutto, and pickled asparagus with which to manifest the perfect balance. The saltiness of the brined asparagus in harmony with the sweetness of peppers and tomato pottage connected the earthy chewiness of the meat atop a slightly smoky thin crust and, with the nutty melted cheese, filled us to the core in a most profound way.

At the end of the day, there are a plethora of choices all laid out on a platter from which to choose healthy, quality, crafted meals for under ten dollars. I challenge each of our readers to explore the culinary treats of greater Ann Arbor on their own and let me know what you find. I will post reasonable reviews on my blog: angelasguide.blogspot.com. The more we can share our experiences, the more attention gets placed on quality over quantity, and fiscal restraint can be happily attained within our little bubble of Southeast Michigan.



Please note: before visiting these establishments, always check their hours on their website or by phone, as they may change seasonally.

Mi Compadre, Mexican Restaurant and Taco Truck

211 Packard Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Ph: (734) 604-3868

Find them on Facebook.

Free parking, wheelchair accessible, reservations, catering, casual indoor seating, no alcohol, family friendly, food truck moves to different locations.

Seva, Vegetarian Restaurant and Bar

2541 Jackson Avenue, Ann Arbor MI, 48103

Ph: (734) 662-1111

www.sevarestaurant.com

Private free parking lot, wheelchair accessible, reservations, catering, indoor casual seating, full bar, gluten-free and vegan options, Wi-Fi.

Star's Café, Middle Eastern Restaurant

2575 Jackson Avenue, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103

Ph: (734) 996-0299

Private free parking lot, wheelchair accessible, no reservations, catering, counter service only, no alcohol, vegan options, family friendly, Wi-Fi.

Kouzina, Greek Street Food

232 S. Main Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Ph: (734) 917-5155

www.gokouzina.com

Metered parking, wheelchair accessible, no reservations, counter service only, casual indoor-outdoor seating, catering, no alcohol, family friendly, Wi-Fi.

Dalat, Vietnamese Restaurant

100 W. Michigan Avenue, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Ph: (734) 487-7600

www.dalatinc.com

Free parking, wheelchair accessible, no reservations, casual indoor seating, beer and wine, family friendly.

White Lotus Farms, Creamery, Bakery and Farm Stand

7217 W. Liberty Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

www.whitelotusfarms.com

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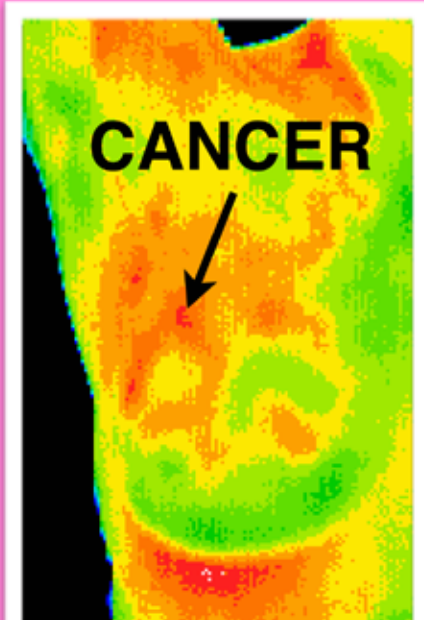
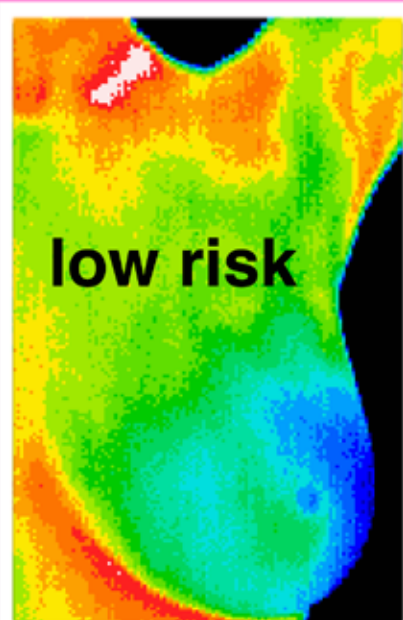
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DIGESTION 101 and 5 Ways to Improve Digestion

by Karen Lang

As a nutritional therapy practitioner, I have worked with many clients to improve their digestion with some very simple techniques. In this article, I will explain how digestion is supposed to work, what happens when things go wrong, and some key things we can do to improve our digestion.

We may be eating the healthiest foods, but if we aren't digesting properly, we will not get the benefit. We will still feel sluggish, bloated, irritable, and "hangry"!

Digestion is key to our health. We may be eating the healthiest foods, but if we aren't digesting properly, we will not get the benefit. We will still feel sluggish, bloated, irritable, and "hangry"! The good thing is there are some simple things we can do to help our bodies digest! First let's look at how digestion is supposed to work.

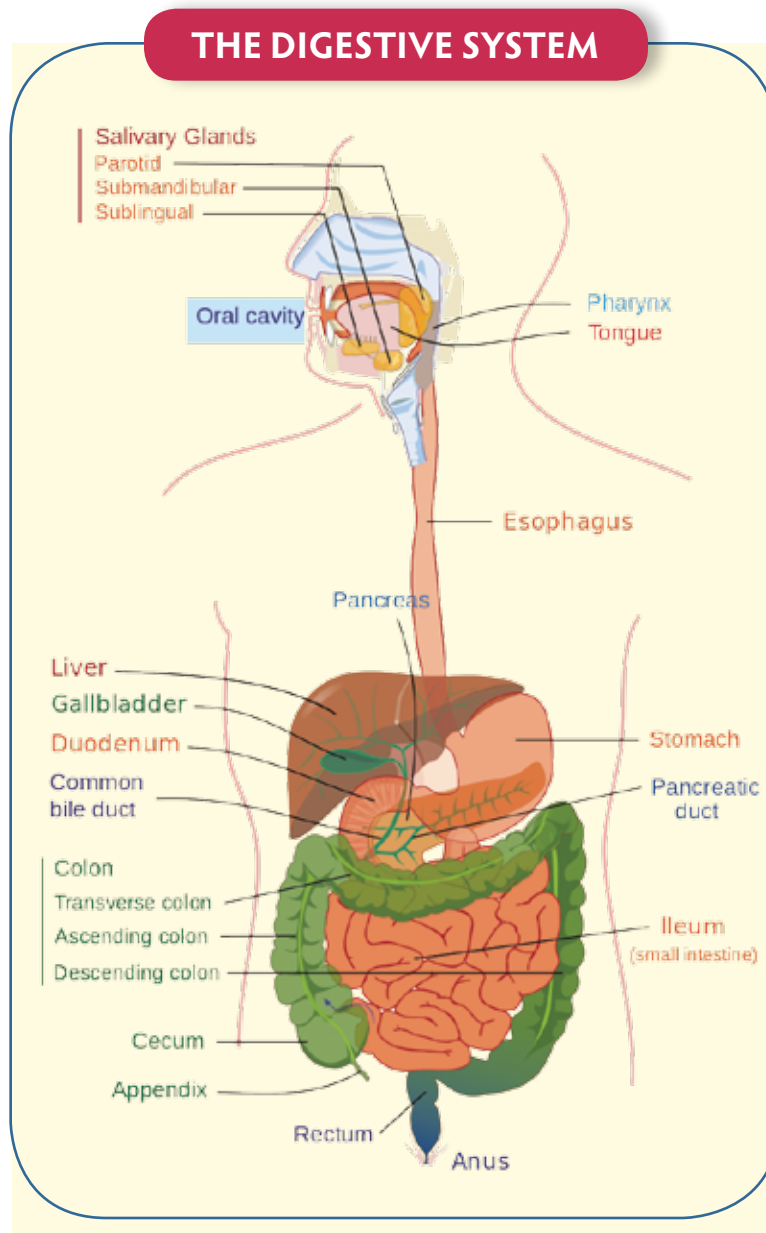
Proper Digestion

Digestion is a north to south process.

- Digestion actually starts in the **brain**. The sight and smell of food triggers the salivary glands to begin producing saliva and the body gets ready to ingest the food. We need to be in a relaxed (parasympathetic) state to properly digest food.
- Once food is in our **mouths**, the teeth break down the food into smaller pieces; saliva moistens the food and starts the chemical breakdown of carbohydrates (using salivary amylase).
- The food (now called bolus), travels to the stomach down the esophagus through the cardiac sphincter. Gastric juices in the **stomach** continue to breakdown the bolus. Hydrochloric acid kills bad bacteria and microbes and breaks down the food further. Once the bolus is at the right acidic level (1.5-3.0 pH), it travels to the small intestine through the pyloric sphincter. The bolus is now called chyme.
- The **small intestine** is made up of three sections (Duodenum, Jejunum, Ilium). The chyme is released into the Duodenum. The pancreas releases bicarbonate to neutralize the acidic chyme. Pancreatic enzymes are released to further digest the food. Bile is released by the gallbladder into the small intestine to emulsify fats and allow for absorption. Peristalsis moves the digested chyme into the Jejunum. Millions of tiny hair-like fingers (villi) absorb nutrients. Most nutrients are absorbed in the small intestine. The mass passes through the Ilium and then into the large intestine through the ileocecal valve.
- The **large intestine** is made up of the ascending, transverse, descending and sigmoid colon. It is populated with trillions of beneficial bacteria. The colon recycles and captures water and many remaining nutrients are converted to vitamins K, some B vitamins and butyric acid. Some of which are used to nourish the colon lining and the remains are excreted.

Digestion Gone Wrong

- **Brain:** As mentioned above, we need to be in a relaxed/parasympathetic state for digestions to work properly. Eating on the run doesn't allow the body to properly digest food. The body is focused on other things instead of putting effort toward digesting and absorbing nutrients. This can cause digestive upset — gas, heartburn, and malabsorption of nutrients.
- **Mouth:** If we do not chew our food well, we will have large pieces of food to digest, which puts a huge strain on the digestive system. Also, if we do not coat the food in saliva, we will not have the enzymes that start the breakdown of the food (e.g., salivary amylase).



• **Stomach:** Hydrochloric acid is very important to the digestive process. It can be reduced due to stress, high sugar and processed food consumption, nutrient deficiencies, allergies, alcohol consumption, and age. Without the proper acidity, the chyme will not be released into the small intestine on a timely basis. It can ferment, putrefy, and become rancid. This can back up into the esophagus, resulting in heartburn. It can also feed the bad microbes in our gut and cause damage throughout the digestive tract. The food may sit in the stomach until we eat again, when it is pushed to the small intestine and can irritate the lining causing ulcers and worse. Taking antacids will relieve the symptoms, but actually make the problem worse.

• **Small Intestine:** If digestion up stream was not functioning optimally, it can cause many issues in the small intestine, such as ulcers, leaky gut, malabsorption of nutrients, autoimmune issues, and food allergies.

• **Large Intestine/Colon:** Any issues in the digestive process end up in the colon. Maldigested foods can clog the ileocecal valve and disrupt the healthy gut flora. This can lead to irritable bowel syndrome and other disorders of the colon.

Slow down and relax before eating — digestion works when we are in a parasympathetic/relaxed state. Taking a few relaxing breaths before eating can help a lot!

Five Simple Steps to Improve Digestion

There is hope. Below are five things you can try to improve your digestion.

1. Slow down and relax before eating — digestion works when we are in a parasympathetic/relaxed state. Taking a few relaxing breaths before eating can help a lot.
2. Chew our food well — don't worry about counting, just chew until you can't recognize the consistency of the food. This helps by using both chemical (salivary amylase) and mechanical breakdown of food so that it is easy to digest.
3. Stay hydrated during the day, but don't drink too much while eating. Digestion takes a lot of water, but drinking too much while you are eating can lower the acidity level in your stomach and can slow digestion. Sip a lot of water during the day, but only a small amount around meals.
4. Reduce/Eliminate processed foods and added sugar. Eating processed foods and added sugars can upset the microbe balance in our guts and lead to dysbiosis (when bad microbes outnumber the good microbes).
5. Stop eating before we get full. Eating too much puts a huge strain on digestion. Stop eating when you feel comfortable, but not full. It takes about 20 minutes for our brains to realize we've had enough (the slower we eat, the better our brain can keep up with what is going on).

Another thing that can help digestion is sipping water with apple cider vinegar added to your water and drink it either 15 minutes prior to eating or sip during your meal. To make, add 1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar (the cloudy, unfiltered kind — e.g., Bragg) to ¼ cup of water.

Karen Lang is a nutritional therapy practitioner working in Ann Arbor. Nutritional therapy (NT) is a growing field based on the idea that most disease is a result of the foods we eat — either due to nutritional deficiencies, eating too much food, or eating the wrong foods. On the flip side, eating high-quality whole foods can help improve health. Karen can be contacted at healthybalnutrition@gmail.com.

TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE — FOOD AS MEDICINE



by Bart Vermilya

Have you ever caught a cold, and then been practically force-fed chicken soup and made to rest by your grandmother? This is a common memory across many cultures. What did your grandmother know? Quite a lot according to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM).

The ancient Chinese saw qualities in food that went beyond calorie, fat, carbohydrate, and protein content. They observed health benefits in a food's flavor, temperature, nature, and function. They found that combining foods according to these properties could have positive effects on our health. Yang Sheng, or life nourishing practices, are used not only to keep a person healthy but also to extend his or her life. The ancient Chinese truly viewed food as medicine!

Food has two natures that should be taken into account: "Wei," which nourishes and constructs substance in the body (think of a juicy steak), and "Qi," which promotes function and imparts energy (rice is a good example).

About 100 years ago, the common diet consisted of mostly grains and vegetables. Most people ate meat only once or twice a week. Because refrigeration wasn't widely available, people ate what was in season and what could be stored in a root cellar through pickling, fermenting, salting, and drying. Sugar was too expensive for most people to afford, except in small amounts from sources like honey and syrups. It was also known that affluent people who ate too richly and exercised too little were more prone to chronic health conditions than others who lived more modestly. Approximately 2000 years ago, the Chinese wrote the *Huangdi Neijing* (The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Chinese Medicine). The first chapter was about eating modestly and with the seasons.

Food has two natures that should be taken into account: "Wei," which nourishes and constructs substance in the body (think of a juicy steak), and "Qi," which promotes function and imparts energy (rice is a good example). Wei foods are harder to digest, but they build the body up. Qi foods are easy to digest and usually go straight to energy. When a person is ill, he or she should eat easy-to-digest foods that are mostly Qi. Grandmother's chicken soup was mostly Qi (liquid, cooked veggies, rice or noodles) and slightly Wei.

The words "flavor" and "temperature" have deeper meanings in TCM. There are six flavors, and each has a different action within the body. Acrid or spicy tastes function to disperse, invigorate, and promote circulation. Think of sweating out a cold using spicy chicken soup. The sour taste is used to absorb and consolidate fluids. Remember how your lips pucker and your mouth waters when you suck on a lemon? Sour-flavored foods are used to help stop abnormal sweating. Bitter tasting substances have the action of drying dampness and clearing internal heat. As an example, eating kale is used to eliminate edema. Salty foods help to soften and dissolve hardness in the body. Traditionally kelp was eaten to treat goiter. The sweet taste has the action of fortifying and harmonizing the body. This is why a person is drawn to sweet taste when he or she is experiencing low energy.

The sweet taste has the action of fortifying and harmonizing the body. This is why a person is drawn to sweet taste when he or she is experiencing low energy.

The temperature of food is more than just its physical temperature — TCM also considers the nature of the food. Foods encourage a certain "temperature" in the body. I'm from Phoenix where it regularly reaches 115 degrees in the summer, and, on a summer day, nothing tasted better than a barley salad with cucumber dressing and fruit for dessert. That type of meal had a cool, fluid nourishing balance, which

was perfect for the season. Most fruits have a cooling nature, while most meats have a warming nature. To balance the body, eat warming foods in the colder months and cooling foods in the warmer months. This is easy to do if you eat with the seasons.

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So, how can you use this information? At the heart of Chinese nutrition is the "Qing Dan" or "clear bland" diet, which is very similar to a hypoallergenic diet. It consists of mostly grains, vegetables, legumes, and some fruit. There is less emphasis on meats, oils, fermented, chilled, and uncooked foods. To deal with constitutional or acute issues, different types of foods are added to the base diet. If one is constitutionally cold, for instance, then more warming and spicy foods are added. If someone is robust and red in the face, then cooling and bland foods are emphasized.

The winter is a time for quiet reflection, but, by the time spring and summer hit, people are ready to get out and move. It is very easy to get overheated when having fun on the first warm days of the season. Below is an example of a cooling soup that tastes great, is good for you, and will help to cool you off during the warmer months.

Melon Soup

3 cups cubed watermelon
1 medium-sized cucumber
¼ cup cooked mung beans
3 slices raw ginger
¼ cup mint
water

Place the ingredients in the refrigerator for about two hours. Then peel, halve, and take the seeds out of the cucumber. Blend the watermelon, cucumber, ginger and ½ of the mint in a blender. You might have to add a bit of water to get a smooth consistency. Pour into a bowl and add the mung beans. Chop the rest of the mint and garnish the soup. Enjoy!

According to Chinese Medicine, **watermelon** has a nature and flavor that is sweet and cooling. Its functions are to moisten, clear heat, and to disperse swelling. Modern research has shown that watermelon is a diuretic and a great source of Lycopene, which may help lower blood pressure and be cardioprotective. **Cucumbers** are cooling in nature and may help to clear heat and protect against the irritability that comes from becoming overheated. **Mung beans** clear heat and toxins from the body. They function to help the skin stay clear. Since they are high in fiber and protein, they will give the soup some staying power. **Mint** is spicy and cooling in nature. It is thought to promote sweating, which in turn cools the body. It clears heat from the head and so can help with headaches, red eyes, and stress from being overheated. **Ginger** is warm and spicy. Chinese medicine is concerned with balance, and too many cold or cooling foods can unbalance the body, so ginger is added to the melon soup to aid in digestion. Its spicy nature can also help to promote sweating, which helps to cool you off.

Bob Flaws has written two great books on this subject: *The Tao of Healthy Eating* and *The Book of Jook*. Both are available at Crazy Wisdom.

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This Isn't Your Grandmother's Chopped Liver

by Angela Madaras

According to Mark Sisson, athlete, nutrition-wellness specialist, and author of *The Primal Blueprint*, liver meat is possibly the most common organ meat consumed in the U.S. Liver was once regarded as a meal for the affluent and was even named one of the Eight Delicacies in the *Li-Chi*, a handbook of rituals published during China's Han era. So why should you be eating it? According to many in the medical-nutritional field, liver is an excellent source of high quality protein; contains an abundance of vitamin A and several B vitamins; is an excellent source of folic acid and iron; is the number one food source of copper; and contains CoQ10, which is important for cardiovascular function.

Chicken livers and beef livers are easy to come by at your local butcher shop, from a farmer, and a neighborhood meat processor. I call the processor who cuts up my half of a cow, which I buy from my farmer friend, and I tell him I want all the livers, hearts, and sweetbreads (thymus gland) that others do not want. I think it runs \$2.00 per pound.

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When we raised chickens I had plenty and would make it a ritual that on the day we culled, I kept all livers for sautéing with lots of onions and garlic for that night's meal. Chicken liver is sweet and hearty with lots of black pepper, garlic, thyme, a little cinnamon, a small amount of grated nutmeg, a tad salt, and lots of Worcestershire sauce. I mash it slightly so I can easily serve it over rice with the onions or spread it on toast points for an appetizer.

In most German restaurants you will find a different version of chicken livers. They are rolled in flour and pan-fried. In the winter, I try to make liver paté at least a few times. It is a comforting and filling way to butter my toast or crackers. I love serving it for company with sweet spices because they cannot believe how good it tastes. It can be used to make a beef wellington instead of mushroom paté. Try to get organic and grass fed. Liver is a cleansing organ so you want the animal to be healthy!

Chicken liver is sweet and hearty with lots of black pepper, garlic, thyme, a little cinnamon, a small amount of grated nutmeg, a tad salt, and lots of Worcestershire sauce.

I have compiled some organ meat recipes I prepared and liked. You may want to try them at a reputable restaurant first and experiment. Mexican restaurants usually have tripe soup which is intestine meat. They also make tongue, heart, liver, and sometimes sweetbreads. If it is on a taco, you can easily try one of each. Tripe soup is said to be a good treatment of hangovers. I have never tried it honestly, but it is a staple in Mexico that is served in the morning and all through the day.

You might be able to find blood sausage if you live in a heavily German populated area like Detroit, and every store has liverwurst or Braunschweiger. My grandmother's favorite sandwich was Braunschweiger on white bread with mustard and a large slice of red onion. I love it to this day.

Many Jewish delis serve chopped liver. My very favorite is Zingerman's Delicatessen in Ann Arbor, Michigan. They sometimes do not have it in the deli case, so just ask for it by the pound. It tastes amazing on a bagel with red onion and tomato.

Try the following recipe for a Midwestern version of liver spread from *The New Midwestern Table* by Amy Thielen. It takes time and seems involved, but is well worth it.

Homemade Braunschweiger

- 1 1/2 teaspoons fine sea salt, or more if needed
- 1 1/2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 1/2 pounds fatty pork (either marbled pork butt or half pork butt, half fresh pork belly)
- 8 ounces slab bacon
- 8 ounces fresh pork liver
- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 2 tablespoons salted butter plus more for the dish
- 1 large onion, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, sliced
- 6 tablespoons dry sherry
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon grated nutmeg
- 2 teaspoons dried marjoram
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 1 cup shelled salted pistachios

1. Combine salt and pepper in a small dish.
2. Cut the pork and the slab bacon into 1-inch cubes and put them in a wide-bottomed 2-quart pot. (The pot should be large enough for the meat to fit almost in one layer, although a little double-up is okay.)
3. Add water to just cover and 1 teaspoon of the salt-and-pepper mixture, and bring to a simmer.
4. Cover, reduce the heat, and cook at a slow-bubbling simmer until the meat is very tender when poked with a fork, about 3 hours.
5. Uncover and drain, reserving 1/3 cup of the mixed juices and fat. Press plastic wrap on the surface of the meat and chill in the refrigerator.
6. Meanwhile, prepare the liver by rinsing the liver, blot it dry on paper towels, and cut it into 1-inch cubes.
7. Heat a two-inch cast iron skillet over medium-high heat, and when it's hot, season the meat with a bit of the salt-and-pepper mixture. (I prefer to cook liver in cast iron, but any heavy-bottomed pan will work.)
8. Add the canola oil to the skillet and when the oil is hot, add the liver.
9. Sear the liver on all sides until browned then add 1 1/2 teaspoons fine sea salt, or more if needed, and 1 1/2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper, or more if needed.
10. Brown the liver for 5 minutes or so until the outside is brown, but inside remains pink.
11. Take out of pan and set aside in a large rimmed bowl.
12. Add to same pan 2 teaspoons canola oil 2 tablespoons salted butter, plus more for the casserole dish, 1 large onion, diced 4 cloves garlic, and sliced 6 tablespoons dry sherry.
13. Allow this to cook at medium heat for 20 minutes stirring occasionally. Then at very end, add 1 1/2 cup heavy cream, 1 teaspoon grated nutmeg, 2 teaspoons dried marjoram, 1 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice, and a pinch of cayenne pepper. Stir constantly for 5 minutes more and turn heat off.
14. Place all these ingredients on top of liver in the bowl and refrigerate until very cold.
15. Preheat the oven to 325°F. Fit a grinder with a fine blade (I use the grinder attachment for my stand mixer). Alternately, feed the chilled cooked meat and liver mixtures through the grinder. Then grind the entire mixture again, this time into the bowl of a stand mixer or a heavy mixing bowl.
16. Add the remaining salt-and-pepper mixture and the nutmeg, marjoram, allspice, and cayenne pepper.
17. Drizzle in half of the reserved rich cooking juices.
18. Whip with the paddle attachment (or a hand mixer) until these final seasonings have been completely incorporated.
19. Add the rest of the cooking juices and whip until fluffy.

20. Fry a small amount of the paté in a small pan to taste for seasoning, and add more salt and pepper if desired.
21. Scoop the mixture into a lightly buttered glass or metal 9 x 4-inch loaf pan.
22. Smooth the top and press the pistachios into the surface.
23. Set the loaf pan in a larger baking pan and pour hot water into it to reach halfway up the sides of the loaf.

NOTE: This recipe stakes its success on the freshness of the liver, which tastes sweet when brand new, but grows slightly bitterer with each passing day. Serves 20.

Another easy way to integrate organ meats into your family's diet without them even knowing is by making meatloaf or meat balls. Albondigas soup is a hearty Spanish and Mexican stew made with meatballs, rice, vegetables, and stock. Normally ground beef, or maybe ground lamb, would be the base for the balls. Some chefs prefer a mix of several kinds of ground meats (turkey, pork, beef, veal, lamb) with a little less fat than normal so it holds together in the soup.

The following recipe is one I adapted from SimplyRecipes.com. I find this recipe to be easy and accessible. You can use frozen vegetables in the winter months and any ground meat you like, but don't forget we are sneaking in some organ meat. Let's try ground beef heart. Ask your butcher to procure a cow heart, clean it, and grind it with a mix of whatever meats you like or he recommends for the balls. You could use any organ you fancy.

Another easy way to integrate organ meats into your family's diet without them even knowing is by making meatloaf or meat balls. Albondigas soup is a hearty Spanish and Mexican stew made with meatballs, rice, vegetables, and stock.

Albondigas Soup

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large white sweet onion
- 3 large cloves minced garlic
- 3 quarts chicken stock or cut in half and use water for the other half
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce or chopped tomatoes
- 1/2 lb string beans cut into one inch pieces
- 2 large sliced carrots
- 1/3 cup raw white rice
- 1 pound ground meat (I would make more and freeze them. In this case double everything)
- 1/4 each chopped fresh parsley and mint leaves (always abundant in spring)
- 1 raw egg
- 1 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- Tad of cayenne
- 1 1/2 cup frozen or fresh peas
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano (try to find Mexican Oregano)
- Salt and pepper
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro for garnish

I added finely diced jalapenos mixed with finely diced red onion and tomato for additional garnish on the side for people to add their own. Put hot sauces out for those who like a lot of heat. Sour cream can be used to lower intensity. Also serve with tortilla chips, salsa, guacamole lime wedges, and sliced radish.

Sweetbreads are from the thymus glands traditionally. I have heard some people use other glands, as well. They look like raw chicken nuggets, but have a smell all their own. Make this dish when you can have windows open and when only people who like this type of food will be coming over for dinner.

I made this recipe, adapted from cookingchannel.com, one afternoon for the first time, but was surprised to find out midway through the recipe that I had an unexpected visitor. I was taking this dish to a birthday party, so I finished as fast as I could, placed it in a casserole dish, covered it with foil, then placed it in the fridge. I spent an hour airing out my house with fans, filters, and sprays to get the heavy metallic odor out of the house. In the end, the house smelled OK, but there was a little hint of it for a day or two. Everyone raved about how good it was, and, thankfully, no one mentioned the smell.

Sweetbreads and Mushroom Pasta

- 2 ounces unsalted butter
- 1 ounce mushroom trimmings
- 6 cloves garlic
- 2 stalks celery
- 1 bay leaf (I used 2)
- 1 carrot, chopped (I used 2)
- 1 leek, chopped and cleaned in cold water
- 1 large onion, chopped

- 1-3 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 quart dry white wine
- 8 cups stock or broth
- 1 pound fresh-brined sweetbreads or hearts cut into small chunks
- 1 1/2 sticks unsalted butter
- Two cups of cleaned and sliced mushrooms (porcini, cremini, portabella, etc.)
- Egg Noodles (only use the best here)
- 1 small bag frozen peas
- 1 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 2 teaspoons salt and black pepper
- Juice of one lemon and zest of lemon
- 4-6 ounces thinly sliced prosciutto gently torn atop each serving
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley sprinkled on top of each serving
- 2 raw asparagus spears shaved on top of each serving

1. Wash off meat and place all sweetbreads in a brine of saltwater and a cup of white vinegar for at least 2 hours in the fridge.
2. Take each one out of brine with a slotted spoon and place in a colander that sits on a plate.
3. Pour out brine and wash the container well with soap and vinegar. The vinegar helps clear the odor as well as clean.
4. Pat the sweetbreads dry with paper towels and set aside.

First you make a ragu with the mushrooms, leeks, herbs, vegetables, wine, and stock, then add sweetbreads after stock has cooked down and thickened.

1. For the ragu, you want to sauté all the vegetables and herbs with butter until golden brown.
2. Add wine to deglaze pan and let it cool down a bit. Add to the broth or stock.
3. Poach the sweetbreads in the wine and broth at a boil for 10 minutes.
4. Take out sweetbreads and set aside while you strain the liquid from the ragu.
5. Discard ragu remnants but use the stock later when you bake the pasta.
6. In a large frying pan get butter melted add mushrooms, onions, and sweetbreads until golden brown. Stir constantly.
7. The water should be at boil for pasta. Add pasta and peas and boil for 2 minutes then strain.
8. Mix the pasta with the ragu-stock and the cheese.
9. Place in large casserole dish. Add lemon zest and juice of lemon.
10. Cover with parchment paper and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.



If it seems dry, drizzle olive oil over the top, add some of the stock and more cheese. I like to use garnish with parsley, asparagus shavings, and prosciutto. If you want to be real fancy you can make gravy with the stock and a little butter, flour, and wine. Use the same spices and herbs for flavor profile. Serve with crusty bread.

At the end of the day, one must decide for themselves if organ meat is going to make it to their table and belly. My hope when starting this article was to offer guidance, information, and, perhaps, inspiration for those who want to dabble in the culinary adventures of "offal." After sharing the paté recipe with a good friend, who had been a long time vegetarian, she surprised me by asking if she could come to my kitchen and make liver paté together as a tutorial. That alone encouraged me to share my recipes here. I sincerely hope you are inspired to venture into new meaty territory as well.

Angela Madaras is from Ann Arbor and can be found online at angelasguide.blogspot.com. She can also be found in her organic garden or in her kitchen cooking for her husband, family, friends and Mister Kitty.



The Indoor Cat Initiative ~ Environmental Enrichment, or Looking at Life from your Cat's Point of View

by Dr. Nancy Smaltz, DVM



The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) recommends keeping your cat companion indoors. Outdoor cats have an average life expectancy of only three years due to the hazards of predation, disease, and accidental death. Once confined indoors, your cat still retains its natural behaviors, such as scratching, chewing, and elimination, and has a need for environmental enrichment to provide an outlet for these behaviors.

Dr. Tony Buffington, a professor emeritus at Ohio State University's College of Veterinary Medicine, spearheaded the Indoor Cat Initiative for environmental enrichment. (Further information can be found at indoorpet.osu.edu. He also offers a course on iTunes called U Course Cat Mastery.) Environmental enrichment has gained particular relevance now that animal welfare legislation mandates that owners are responsible for allowing an animal to continue normal behavior patterns as an indoor pet.



Nancy Smaltz, DVM

In a multi-cat household, allow each cat enough social distance with adequate space for sleeping, eating, and lounging to prevent competition.

Nutritional Enrichment

Keep food bowls away from kitchen appliances, and in multi-cat households, do not share food bowls to avoid aggression. Separate bowls are best rather than divided bowls to prevent food spillage. Use a fountain water dispenser to supply fresh water. For dry food, use one of the food puzzle dispensers. For wet food, place small amounts in muffin tins to encourage slow eating, reduce vomiting, engage your cat's mind, and, to an extent, stimulate prey acquisition.

Social Contact

Despite the myth that cats are solitary creatures, they are social animals and need to spend time with you. Your cat will decide on the amount of time he/she wants to spend with you, and it's best to let your cat come to you. Some cats enjoy being petted and groomed while others prefer play.

If you travel a lot, you might consider getting another cat to keep your original cat company. Cats usually view their home environment as a safe space. However, cats can perceive threats from dogs and humans, experience competition from other cats, and regard smaller animals within the home such as birds and fish, as prey. You need to be aware of what is active in your cat's world from your cat's point of view. Litter box issues can develop if an outdoor cat passing by the window is perceived as a threat by your indoor cat.

Elimination

Litter boxes should be placed in a safe, quiet area and kept clean. In multi-cat households, provide one for each cat. Unscented clumping litter works well. If a cat begins eliminating outside the litter box, this can be a sign of illness or territory issues. Your cat does not do this to be difficult, but is signaling something is wrong. A large plastic under bed box can accommodate larger cats and provide a sense of security.

Behavioral Enrichment

Environmental enrichment allows cats to express their natural behaviors such as scratching, chewing, and playing by providing outlets for these behaviors. Scratching posts can be carpet, sisal, or wood, and placed near resting places or where your cat spends a great deal of time. Scratching posts can be seasoned with catnip. Chewing behavior can be directed to cat plants and grasses.

Active play with your cat provides an outlet for predatory behaviors such as stalking, chasing, pouncing, and biting. If your cat is tired and thoroughly exercised, there is less chance for destructive behaviors. Cats enjoy playing with toys they can pick up, toss in the air, or pounce on. Use toys that keep distance from your body to avoid play-related aggression problems. Wand toys and battery operated toys should be rotated to maintain your cat's interest. You can reward with treats to replicate hunting prey during play sessions. Cat DVDs are also highly entertaining. Your cat may enjoy watching Animal Planet or Sesame Street while you are away.

Without environmental enrichment, a boring environment contributes to health and behavior problems for your cat, so it is an essential part of your responsibility for your cat's well-being and quality of life.

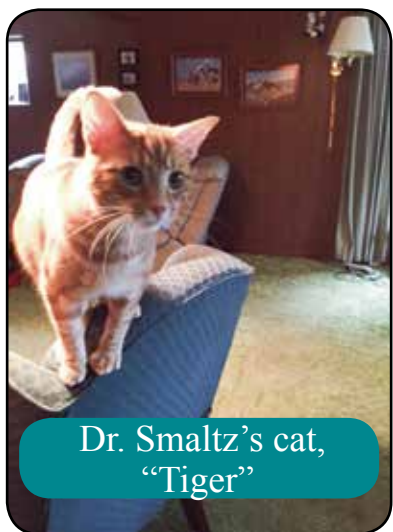
Without environmental enrichment, a boring environment contributes to health and behavior problems for your cat, so it is an essential part of your responsibility for your cat's well-being and quality of life. The larger implication of environmental enrichment is that it cuts down on the number of cats surrendered to shelters because of behavioral problems and the possibility of euthanasia depending on the shelter. Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease (FLUTD) and urine marking because of stress are primary reasons cats are surrendered to shelters. FLUTD is one of the health consequences indoor cats face without environmental enrichment, which is a connection that has been made for a long time, although the etiology is unknown.

Practical enrichment strategies to prevent behavioral and associated health problems include your cat's: 1) physical environment or space; 2) nutritional needs for food and water; 3) social contact; 4) elimination and litterboxes; and 5) behavioral, involving play activities. Cats are sensory driven and need tension releases as they are not meant to be sedentary. By providing your cat energy outlets, your cat will have enough stimulation and not be driven to destructive behaviors out of boredom.

Cats are sensory driven and need tension releases as they are not meant to be sedentary. By providing your cat energy outlets, your cat will have enough stimulation and not be driven to destructive behaviors out of boredom.

Physical Environment

Cats live in a vertical world and are territorial. They climb (as they do in the wild) for observation and safety. They like a predictable routine and need hiding and perch areas for security where they can feel safe from people and other animals in the house. You can provide a tall cat tree with curved perches that will not tip over. Cat window perches to observe animals outdoors and window bird feeders will keep your cat entertained.



Dr. Smaltz's cat, "Tiger"

Create a tasteful cat super highway on your wall by purchasing premade curved shelves at a home improvement store, using furniture pieces for the on and off ramps. Jackson Galaxy, the Cat Behaviorist on Animal Planet, has written several illustrated books on Catification. You can also purchase connected tunnels for cats.

In a multi-cat household, allow each cat enough social distance with adequate space for sleeping, eating, and lounging to prevent competition.

Environmental enrichment allows cats to express their natural behaviors such as scratching, chewing, and playing by providing outlets for these behaviors. Use toys that keep distance from your body to avoid play-related aggression problems.

Environmental enrichment will ensure a healthy, joyful, and long relationship between you and your cat. Additionally, several health conditions such as FLUTD that may not have responded to traditional treatment in some cats, are relieved when environmental enrichment methods are instituted.

Dr. Smaltz earned her doctorate in veterinary medicine at Ohio State University. She has been with Brookside Veterinary Hospital, located at 3010 Warren Road, Ann Arbor, MI, for 32 years. Brookside's phone number is (734) 761-7523.





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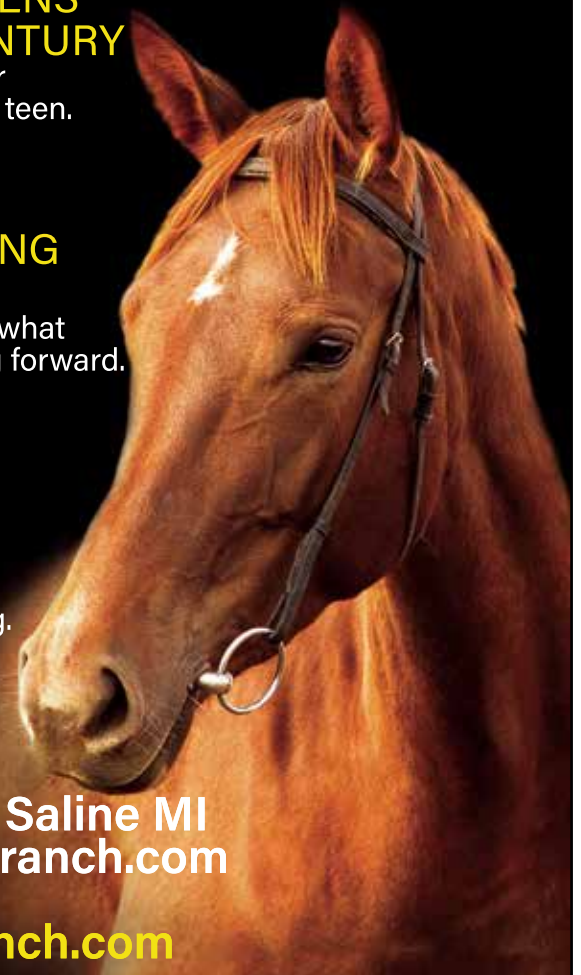
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Against Civic Apathy: Mary Morgan and the CivCity Initiative



CivCity intern Meghan Cuneo, left, with Mary Morgan at CivCity's Party at The Polls outside of the Slauson Middle School polling location on Election Day, Nov. 8, 2016

by Joshua B. Kay

Photographs by Tobi Hollander

Mary Morgan is the founder and executive director of the CivCity Initiative and former publisher of the Ann Arbor Chronicle (2008-2014), which she co-founded with her husband, Dave Askins. The Chronicle reported on the activities of local government. Launched in November 2014, the nonpartisan CivCity Initiative works to promote year-round civic responsibility and involvement by encouraging and educating citizens to participate in all aspects of governance.

Joshua B. Kay: When did you come to Ann Arbor?

Mary Morgan: In 1996, from Rochester, New York, where I was working for the *Rochester Business Review*.

Ann Arbor thinks of itself as this really great, “we can do anything” kind of place. I love this town, but I also recognize that there are a lot of things we could do but don’t, and having a local newspaper that the community can be proud of is not happening.

Kay: What brought you here?

Morgan: I took a job with the *Ann Arbor News*. I was brought here to increase business coverage and cover the tech community, which did not previously have a reporter focused on it. I had a variety of positions there, including business editor, columnist, and, when I left in 2008, I was the opinion page editor. It was a great gig in many ways, but I wasn't happy with how the paper was going. At the time I was considering leaving, I thought there were important pieces of the community that weren't being covered or weren't being covered well, including many government entities. The *News* covered the city council and city government, and they covered to some extent the county board, but they didn't cover the library board and the DDA [Downtown Development Authority], entities that have significant authority, in some cases elected and in some cases appointed.

[When we started the *Chronicle*], I felt there was a lot that we could do well and comprehensively. Frankly, by that time, the technology barriers were low enough so that we didn't have to have a print publication. We didn't have the financial resources to publish in print, and with a couple of laptops and a domain name, it was conceivable to do.

Kay: Do you have a sense of how many *Chronicle* readers you had?

Morgan: We got 30,000-40,000 unique IPs [Internet protocol addresses] on a monthly basis. We didn't really track a lot of the metrics that other websites would track, so we didn't pay attention to page views or time on site, because we didn't want to sell the *Chronicle* to advertisers based on those metrics because we couldn't compete. But 30,000-40,000 unique IPs per month was pretty respectable.

Kay: What was the *Chronicle's* business model?

Morgan: We started off thinking it would be advertising only. We almost immediately started hearing from readers asking, “Why can't we give you money as a subscription?” They were getting something out of what we were doing, and they wanted to pay for it. So we set up a PayPal subscription option. Unless people opted out, we listed all of the subscribers, because we didn't want to get into the question of people wondering if we were backed by shadow individuals. By the end, it was 60 percent advertising and 40 percent subscriptions. With the *Chronicle*, we really were proud of what we were doing, and we did it for six years and it supported the two of us. We also paid all of our freelancers, and we're proud of that. We had an idea of what might need to be done to increase revenue. It involved creating a different kind of content or additional content that would drive site traffic to make a broader pool of advertisers willing to support us. But that's not the kind of publication that we wanted to run.

When we closed the *Chronicle*, I started thinking about how the work of the *Chronicle* could be amplified in a different way. And I added the idea of an organization that would try to inspire and do outreach and try to provide educational opportunities, but not just in a traditional sense.

Kay: Dave recently took a newspaper job with the *Madison Daily Leader* in South Dakota. How did that come about?

Morgan: He really missed doing local journalism and came to the conclusion that it wasn't going to be possible to do that here in Ann Arbor. So he started applying for jobs in other parts of the country. All along, I've said I'm not just going to move wherever Dave found a job. I'm committed to CivCity, and it's not clear what I'd do in Madison, South Dakota. But there's a lot that's intriguing and really exciting about this for him. For one, we're definitely getting out of the Ann Arbor bubble, and given the political context in our nation, I think it's an interesting and important time to do something like that. I don't actually know what the community is like,

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Against Civic Apathy: Mary Morgan and the CivCity Initiative

Continued from page 53

and that could shatter any assumptions I have, so that could be good, too, right? I'm certainly looking forward to hearing from him as he learns about the community there. But also it's an interesting move in terms of going to a small, family-owned, daily newspaper that is a viable enterprise and has been for well over a century. To put that in the context of our national media and what's happening in Ann Arbor, we can't sustain a daily paper. Ann Arbor thinks of itself as this really great, "we can do anything" kind of place. I love this town, but I also recognize that there are a lot of things we could do but don't, and having a local newspaper that the community can be proud of is not happening.

The idea is to saturate the community so that you're constantly bumping up against ways to make you think about what is happening and what the government is doing and providing ideas for how you can get involved.

Kay: Are there linkages between the missions of the *Chronicle* and CivCity?

Morgan: I come from a place as a journalist of believing in openness and inclusiveness. When we did the *Chronicle*, we didn't have outreach and education as part of our mission, but we did believe that if people had more access to information, and if we pulled back the veil on how government operates, it would eliminate some barriers to participation. We found that a lot of people, even if they went to a meeting [of a governmental body], would have no idea what was happening or wouldn't understand the jargon. When we closed the *Chronicle*, I started thinking about how the work of the *Chronicle* could be amplified in a different way. And I added the idea of an organization that would try to inspire and do outreach and try to provide educational opportunities, but not just in a traditional sense of offering workshops or something. Instead, I really looked at education and motivation in a broad way. The idea is to saturate the community so that you're constantly bumping up against ways to make you think about what is happening and what the government is doing and providing ideas for how you can get involved, whether you're a kindergartner or a senior or anyone in between. So that's a pretty big idea. Geographically, we have a contained area to try to do that in. Some people ask, "Why aren't you doing it in places like Ypsilanti or other parts of the country?" We're trying to do a proof of concept [in Ann Arbor] with as many partnerships as we can create to have a high impact and start to change the culture and how people view their government. We want to break down that "us versus them" sense that "those guys" are making decisions and really help everyone understand instead that it's all of us. We are collectively either participating directly or electing our neighbors as representatives to act on our behalf, and that's a very interactive relationship.

My allegiance is to the voters, so I want to provide the spectrum of their options the best that I can.

Kay: It sounds like after the *Chronicle*, you were reflecting on what you had accomplished and how you could grow certain elements of it.

Morgan: Yes. I say this, though I have no data to back it up: let's just say there are a couple hundred people in town who understand in a deep way how government works, and they know most of the players in town, and they are the ones who have influence over public policy. So you have that small core. You see the same names come up over and over on boards and commissions, and in elected office and on campaign finance sheets. How do you make that a bigger core? I don't think we'll ever get *everybody* in the community intensely involved in that way, but surely there are a lot of bright people, people who are engaged in the world in other ways, oftentimes beyond the borders of our city. How do we get some of that attention diverted back into our own community?

Over and over in elections, you have candidates who are unopposed. In this past election cycle, the mayor was unopposed. Several ward seats were unopposed. The county board is another example where the Ann Arbor representatives — there are three main districts — none of them had opponents in the primary and again in November. There are consequences to not having choices. We just don't have a very deep bench. People say, "Well, we don't have very many Republicans here." Even if you accept that, there isn't very much competition at the primary level for Democrats, either. If you look at diversity on the city council, they tend to be pretty homogeneous as far as race and socioeconomic level, so that doesn't reflect all aspects of our community. I would love to have different voices and see a wider variety of representatives. And if you look at boards and commissions, they're not very diverse, either. How do we eliminate the barriers to participation, whether it's a lack of information or a lack of services like childcare for people when they need to go to [civic] meetings? Or is it just inspiring people to think about themselves in a different kind of role in the community? How do we, as a community, make those changes?



We want to break down that "us versus them" sense that "those guys" are making decisions and really help everyone understand instead that it's all of us. We are collectively either participating directly or electing our neighbors as representatives to act on our behalf.

Kay: CivCity's tagline is "fighting civic apathy." Tell me about that.

Morgan: What I hear regularly is "I couldn't get in to participate because I didn't know the right people." Or there's this distaste for politics, and I think that reflects the national and state level. That's what the media focus on. That's where we get bombarded with the toxicity of political discourse. That gets translated to the local level even if people don't have any experience here. There's also competition for people's time. You have family responsibilities, entertainment options, professional constraints — you're competing for that. There's also a sense that Ann Arbor is doing okay, and it *is* okay. By many, many metrics it's a great place to live. People sort of have a sense of, "Yeah, sure, somebody's taking care of that." Unless they have a perception that things are off the rails, they can let things coast. They don't need to know who's on the school board or even who's on the ballot. On the night before the election, maybe they'll call or email somebody they know and say, "Who should I vote for for [University of Michigan] regent or whatever?"

It's good to know what issues are coming up so that if you want to weigh in, you can. Particularly in the kind of media landscape we have, I think a lot of people don't have that awareness of what decisions are in the pipeline now, so they don't know until the eleventh hour, when it's too late to weigh in, that this is something they can give feedback on. I'd like to increase that awareness, too.

The barriers are time and attention, and it's a sense that if I do have time, do I really want to spend it thinking about city council or the library board or issues that are so beyond what I know at this point? We're trying to chip away at that by providing little ways to get a little bit of information over time so that you wake up one day and say, "Oh yeah, I *do* know who my city council representative is, and this is going to be coming up on the agenda, and what do I think about that?" And then have a conversation over dinner, or send an email about it.

Kay: I saw on the CivCity website that you want to make participation fun.

Morgan: I think you have to meet people where they are. You have to make it fun. You can inspire and make it fun while people learn, and then they will participate, even if it's just by having intelligent conversations about these issues.

I don't think we'll ever get *everybody* in the community intensely involved... but surely there are a lot of bright people, people who are engaged in the world in other ways, oftentimes beyond the borders of our city. How do we get some of that attention diverted back into our own community?

Kay: CivCity is nonpartisan. Is it progressive, in the sense that you're trying to advance a progressive agenda?

Morgan: We are nonpartisan. "Progressive" carries with it a lot of baggage, I think, because it is associated with the Democratic party and liberal leanings. So I wouldn't

use that word to describe our work at all. That said, social issues like poverty and other issues that governments and citizens can address to create a healthier community are definitely something we're interested in. Shouldn't we all be?

Kay: So CivCity would provide information about candidates of any stripe?

Morgan: Yes! I think our Ann Arbor Votes site did a way better job than any voter guide I saw at covering all of the candidates [in the last election]. I can't tell you how much time I put into finding information about them. My allegiance is to the voters, so I want to provide the spectrum of their options the best that I can.

Kay: How are you getting the word out about CivCity?

Morgan: That is a big challenge because we're on a shoestring budget. We use social media, and that reaches people to a certain extent. We have Facebook and Twitter accounts for both CivCity and Ann Arbor Votes, and I try to leverage my Facebook presence personally and try to publicize that way. Our general philosophy is to partner as much as possible, and part of how we spread the word in general about what we're doing is through partnerships. For example, I made posters about registering to vote with a link to AnnArborVotes.org. We're giving those to anyone who wants them, but we're also creating a distribution network. Food Gatherers gets a bunch to distribute to all of their food pantry partners, and the Ann Arbor Housing Authority posts them in their public housing complexes. Avalon Housing does that, too. Community centers get a bunch. We want to put them in libraries and in social service agencies like Ozone House. I would love to get a better network in places of worship, because I think those are important places for civics to have a presence, although there are widely varying degrees of acceptance. Some people say that goes against separation of church and state, and others are fine with it. We try to post in places around town that reach people in different demographics. It's about partnerships and networks that reach into places where people are for other reasons. I would love to partner with FestiFools and build a big "citizen Ann Arbor" puppet and have volunteers passing out information. So it can be fun and entertaining while getting in some information, and it is going out to where the people are.




CivCity intern Meghan Cuneo (seated) helps a future voter spin the Local Civic Trivia Wheel at CivCity's Party at The Polls

Kay: And what other projects are going right now or you're thinking about launching?

Morgan: Ann Arbor Votes is a big deal. And this effort to increase the diversity of our boards and commissions, that's a pretty big thing that we're just in the initial stages of. I'd like to get an advisory group together to figure out what we can do realistically to start a news and information service, given our constraints. I've also asked one of our interns to push the city and county to see if we can create an election task force that would work collectively to publicize local elections. Another possibility, though I hesitate to mention it because it's just at the beginning stages... There's an organization in Seattle called Citizen University, and they've started doing something called Civic Saturdays. I love the idea of having a place and time people can get together and share information about what's coming up. I haven't made a lot of inroads into that yet. It would have to entail partnering with lots of organizations. I think it would be important not to just have it downtown but also at community centers and other places like library branches and maybe places of worship and community organizations or public housing sites in order to reach people who might not come downtown for something like this. Or coordinate it with things like food pantry pickups.

Kay: It sounds like, at its core, there's a strong motivating belief that if you can reach people and invite them in, ultimately they're going to enjoy civic involvement.



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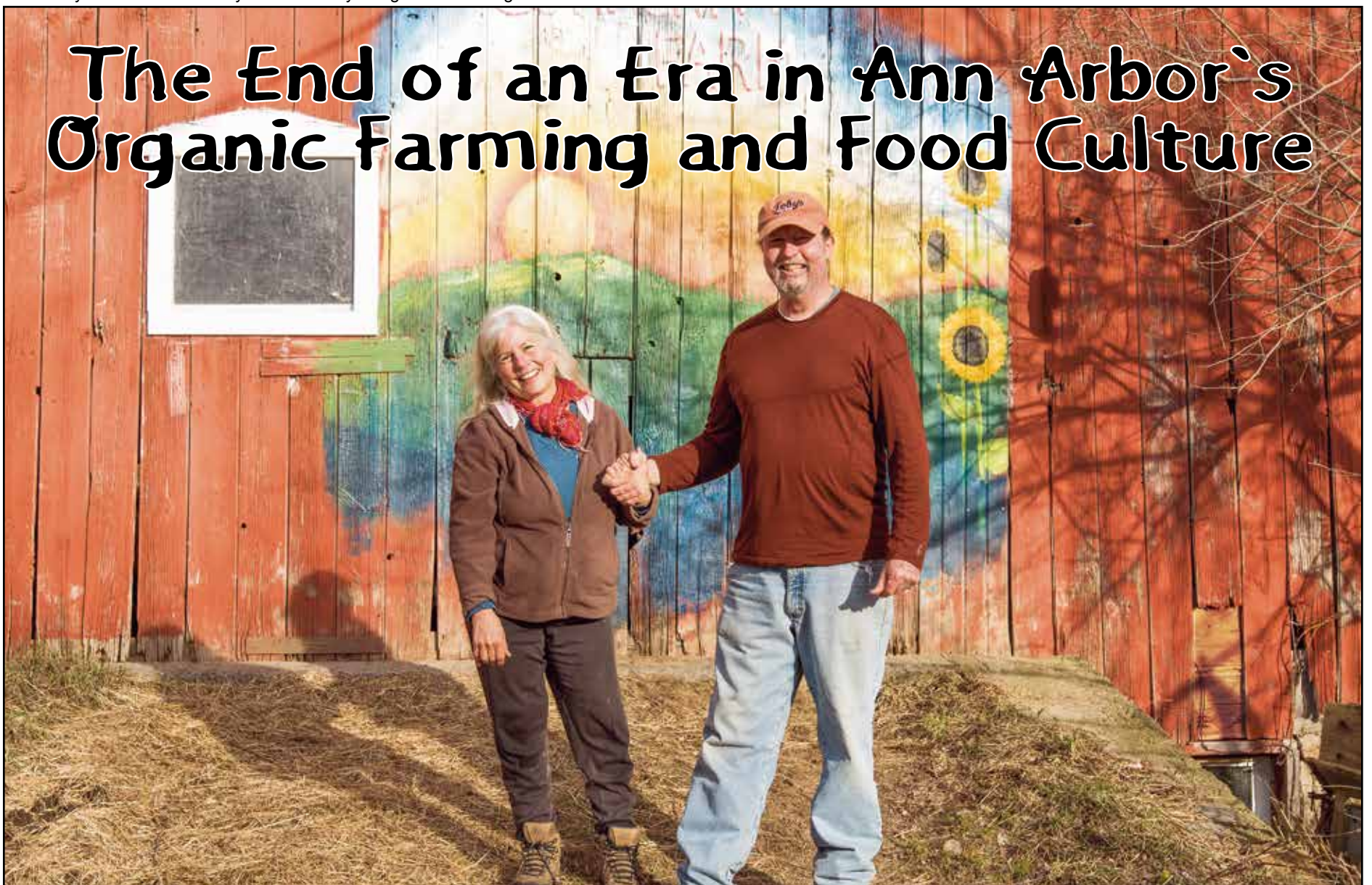
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Morgan: Yes. The premise is that it's a good thing to be involved, and that people would, if given the right set of circumstances and opportunities, want to be involved. Not all at the same level, but we're living in a democracy, and I think the bigger goal is to heal our democracy and make it work. If you look at the national level and say, "I wouldn't even know where to start," you might feel somewhat hopeless and small. So we can ask, "What can I do where I am with what I have?" I think that if everybody asks that question, they will find that it won't take forever and it's not hopeless. We do have problems, like poverty and economic disparity and homelessness. Why can't we fix those within our community? We should fix them nationally, but let's at least fix them where we live. We're not an advocacy group for ending those problems, but we are an advocacy group for giving people the tools and the interest, for trying to inspire them in whatever way they might want to participate, to then address those problems themselves. In our strategic plan for CivCity, we say that we're trying to increase civic access and participation, particularly for marginalized groups, low-income residents being among those. We're trying to expand access and bring a wider group of people to the table.

Learn more at www.civcity.org or call (734) 645-5368. Also, check out CivCity's online voter resource, Ann Arbor Votes, at www.AnnArborVotes.org, where you can find sample ballots, descriptions of candidates and ballot proposals, and information about voter registration, polling places, and absentee voting.

The End of an Era in Ann Arbor's Organic Farming and Food Culture



Ann Arbor's Most Beloved Countercultural Couple, Annie Elder and Paul Bantle, Prepare to Pass on Their Stewardship of *The Community Farm*

By Sandor Slomovits

Photography by Fresh Coast Photography

The 2017 planting, growing, and harvesting season will be Annie Elder and Paul Bantle's last at the Community Farm of Ann Arbor. The two have been the head farmers tending the land and the animals there for more than 25 years. Even before they began working at the Farm, they were deeply entwined with the Ann Arbor community through their associations with the Wildflour Community Bakery, the Soy Plant, and Eden's Restaurant (all three were natural food establishments of the seventies and eighties). But early in 2018 the couple will be moving to California to start the next phase of their lives.

Their language is colorful, dramatic, vibrant, often almost poetic, and our conversation was frequently interrupted by joyous laughter.

Aptly enough, on the morning of November 8, 2016 — talk about big changes — Paul, Annie, and I sat in the greenhouse on the Farm and talked about how they came to be at the Farm, what it has been like to care for it for over a quarter century, who will take over, what will change once they leave, and what's in their future.

Annie and Paul both have ruddy, weathered faces, attesting to their many years of outdoor work. Annie has long silver hair, while Paul sports a full beard and often wears a hat. I have known them for many years and have always found them to be exuberantly cheerful, welcoming, and enthusiastic. Their language is colorful, dramatic, vibrant, often almost poetic, and our conversation was frequently interrupted by joyous laughter. While we talked I found myself wishing I could supplement this article with a video of our conversation. They clearly respect and enjoy each other enormously, listening intently while the other one speaks, often chiming in with affectionate, generous praise or agreement. When I start by asking them to tell me about their childhood and families, Paul says, "Why don't you kick it off, dear one?" and Annie does — surprising me by beginning with Paul's story, rather than her own.

"Pauli was raised in Adrian, Michigan, and his family ran Lenawee Hills Greenhouse and Nursery." Born in 1955, Paul was the sixth of seven children. "The seven children were always a hope, I think, to their parents to continue the business," continues Annie, "And the seven children, as fast and far away as they could go, moved. So, none of them took over the business." Nevertheless, Paul was surrounded by plants and by growing things throughout his childhood. While he was still a young boy, his mother suffered a heart attack that weakened her, and Paul became her main support. "It was a lovely thing," says Annie, "I think mutually. She really enjoyed having Paul as her helper, and he learned very loving, tender, domestic things from her."

Paul attended the University of Michigan, intending to become a medical doctor, graduated with a Bachelor's degree in zoology, and then joined the Peace Corps for two years in Korea. He worked with a traveling nurse caring for people, particularly tuberculosis patients, in rural villages in the mountains. He stayed in Asia for two years after his Peace Corps stint, "Wandering, vagabond style," adds Paul, picking up his story. "I was almost all the time outdoors, even nighttime. I walked everywhere up in the mountains and along the coasts, all over India, Thailand, Burma, Philippines, Nepal. What Asia did for me was crystallize my spiritual pursuit, and crystallized my relationship to nature and food and how that could be a basic vehicle for service."

Paul shifts the focus. "Annie was born in 1956, and she likes to tell folks that she was conceived in Alaska, and that there were even some moose involved." (Delighted, prolonged laughter and we move on.) Growing up in New Jersey, Annie was the oldest of six children and, like Paul, she was her mother's main assistant, in her case helping to raise her younger siblings. Her father was a biology teacher in the local high school, and the family was politically very progressive, particularly around issues of race. In her teens Annie started working "across the tracks" at an after school program for African American kids. "Our family encouraged us to not even think about color. We had three heroes that my parents taught us: Gandhi, Jesus Christ, and Martin Luther King. So we just followed those teachings, and when I worked there, it wasn't like, 'Here are these poor black children and me,' it was just, 'Here's some kids that need some help and want to have some fun.'"

Paul chimes in, "I think that was a pretty amazing thing, that during that period, in the early 1970s, when people were trying to figure out how to dissolve the race barrier, you were just doing it. You were just living it naturally. Anyways, you got off to a good start."

"I walked into the Bakery and this woman comes bounding up to the goodie case, with a gorgeous smile and just radiant! I bought a goodie and I thought, 'Wow, this woman is something else!'"

Annie teases Paul, "You talked a lot more about me than I got to talk about you." Paul laughs, "OK, let's move on to the next topic."

They met at Ann Arbor's Wildflour Bakery in 1984 after Paul returned from his travels in Asia. Annie was working there, having moved from New Jersey earlier. "We

actually were in Ann Arbor together before that because I was in school here from '73 to '78," says Paul. "We could have been in Mr. Flood's Party at the same time!" adds Annie dramatically, referencing a favorite 1970s downtown music bar and hangout.

Paul goes on:

I got back to this country, and the only thing I knew was I needed to go to the People's Food Co-op, because I knew there would be like-minded people there. And lo and behold there is the Bakery right next door to the Co-op. I walked into the Bakery and this woman comes bounding up to the goodie case, with a gorgeous smile and just radiant! I bought a goodie and I thought, 'Wow, this woman is something else!' This was fall, winter was coming, she had boots on, and I said to her, 'Winter is coming and I don't have the proper footwear. What would you recommend?' And she told me that I should get some Sorrels. And I said, 'OK' and that's what I went and bought, and indeed that was a very good choice. (Laughter.) Not to mention the goodie was pretty good too. (More laughter.)

"So Paul came into the Bakery and he would volunteer," continues Annie.

"Always on her shift," interrupts Paul, and Annie giggles.

"He was a wonderful, wonderful volunteer, always clear, always kind, very thorough, willing to do anything all the time, just the *ideal* worker. I just could feel there was something pretty special about that fellow. And the more I worked with him the more apparent that was."

"Our family encouraged us to not even think about color. We had three heroes that my parents taught us: Gandhi, Jesus Christ, and Martin Luther King." –Annie Elder

Paul gradually went from volunteering to working at the Bakery. "He continued to just be amazing. He's very skilled at peacemaking, being very, very fair. Paul was always just this wise, kind person, helping work out all the conflicts that would come along, and celebrating. So, of course, he was the fond guy of many of the gals that worked in the Bakery."

"Oh really!" asks Paul. (Laughter.)

"Yes," says Annie emphatically.

"You didn't tell me back then!"

"Well." (Laughter.)

"Could have changed the course of life," says Paul, laughing. "No, I think it worked out good, didn't it?"

"So in the end, we decided that we would come together," says Annie.

"Slowly we unveiled our fondness for each other."

"It was rough sometimes, too," says Paul.

"Yes," agrees Annie. "The beginning was very rough."

Paul explains:

She was a single mother with Mahogany when I came onto the scene. As a young fellow travelling, I had daily rhythms, I always woke with the sun and went to bed with the sun, I was pretty regular that way. But to come into a home and learn from Annie how to be in a home and be with a child growing up was a wonderful undertaking. And she was much better equipped in that regard than I was. So I learned a lot. You've got one girl in the family, Mahogany, who is still very in love and attached to her father, and you've got this kind of interloper coming in. That takes a lot of years to settle into a loving family. It took five years of working together in a collective setting, the Bakery. It was a great training ground for a long-term relationship, for making a household.

Finally, on a family camping trip in Washington State, they hiked up a mountain and found a hot spring. "There's nobody around," says Annie, "So, of course, without our clothes, we sat in the tub, talked about life and love and commitment, decided that we would be monogamous, and kind, and loving to each other, and serve our community together. That was the full moon of August 1989, and we consider that our wedding."

"That was essentially our vows," says Paul, "That our relationship would be grounded in being of good service in our community. There were clearly other aspects to it that were very passionate and moving through all the years, but I think that's what we've returned to over and over again."

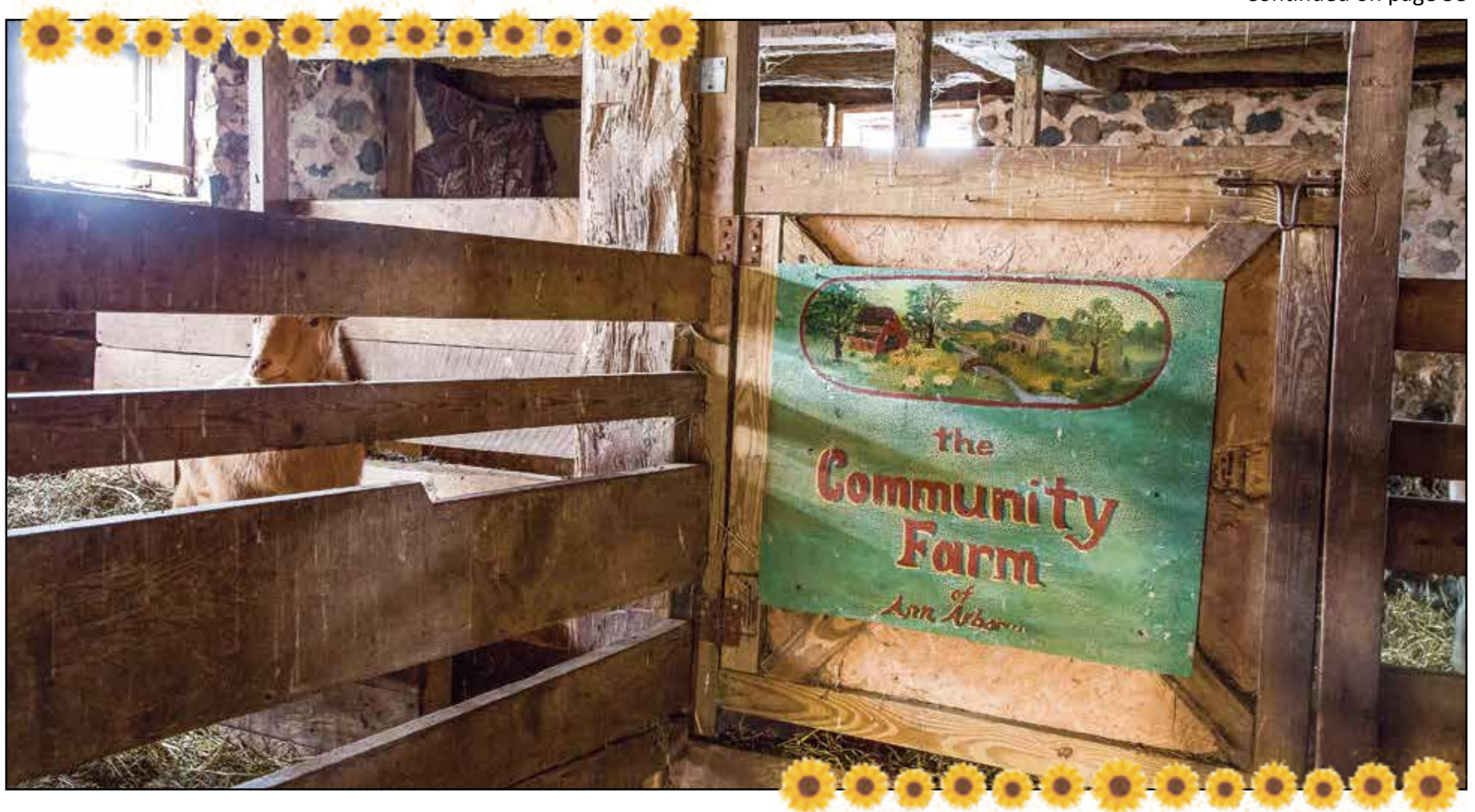
Annie and Paul became farmers after Cindy Olivas, one of the bakers at Wildflour, along with her partner, Marcia Barton, helped found the Community Farm of Ann Arbor. Olivas and Barton had studied biodynamic farming in Kimberton, Pennsylvania, and brought Trauger Groh to Ann Arbor to talk about CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture). Groh, a German farmer steeped in the biodynamic agriculture ideas of Rudolf Steiner, helped bring those ideas and practices to the United States in the mid-1980s.

Olivas and Barton began running the Community Farm in 1988, and in 1991 they asked Annie and Paul to take over for them. Annie and Paul had long been associated with Ken and Cathy King at Frog Holler Farm, Paul having worked there as early as 1978. "They were like mentors to us," says Annie. In the spring of 1992 they became the head farmers at the Community Farm. "In our 25 years on this farm, we've watched children be born, grow up on this food, and then come back as workers. We've been so intimate with so many people for so long."

"I got back to this country, and the only thing I knew was I needed to go to the People's Food Co-op, because I knew there would be like-minded people there." –Paul Bantle

And now they are planning to move on. The whole time they have been farming, and even for several years before, they have been practicing a form of meditation called Passage Meditation. In 2018, they plan to move to Northern California, to Tomales. There, on the coast in Marin County, is a residential community of people

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who have also been practicing Passage Meditation, and is where the organization's headquarters and retreat center are located. "We both already have roles that are quite nice, and we can be occupied there on a full-time basis," says Paul. He has been leading meditation retreats throughout the country for years and will continue to do that there, while Annie will help with preparing food, taking care of some of the elders of the community, and gardening. But, Paul hastens to add, "It's a garden, not a four acre farm."

Annie: Something that I really aspire to do, in the words of Dick Siegel, [popular Ann Arbor songwriter] is to 'walk a little softer on this earth.' I feel we've done really good. We're conscious of our carbon footprint and we're trying to bring as much local agriculture to our area [as we can] and raise consciousness in that area, but I still think there's something more I can do. The changes that I feel we need to make, and I need to make, are changes in ourselves, in myself. And those are changes like becoming less self-oriented and really putting others first in all of my choices: not only people, but also the planet, in everything I do. Also, really slowing down. I don't drive a car but I can still slow down my mind. I think that's really important. [These are among some of the basic tenets of the Passage Meditation path that Annie and Paul practice.] I always hope that what I do can somehow inspire others to do. That's what I'm hoping for from me in this move.

"So, of course, without our clothes, we sat in the tub, talked about life and love and commitment, decided that we would be monogamous, and kind, and loving to each other, and serve our community together. That was the full moon of August 1989, and we consider that our wedding."

Paul: We're trying to find that next stage of inner growth. It's not that we couldn't find it here too. This is a beautiful context for that. The whole biodynamic agricultural stream is founded on spiritual discipline. Rudolf Steiner suggested to the farmers in his agricultural lectures that they become meditators, and so we were really fortunate to be able to meld this path with the biodynamic farming pursuit.

But now we're at this threshold where I think if we kept going in the fashion that we've been going, we would be exploiting our bodies. We've already probably taken it over the edge on that (laughter), and it's our instrument for our spiritual development, and for our service. We have a lot of service left in us. And if we just use that body up without paying attention, it's not a smart way to go. This offers us another opportunity.

But they're finding it difficult to find people to take over for them — for a variety of complex reasons. The Farm was only the eighth CSA in the U.S. and the first in Michigan, but the movement has grown tremendously since those early days in the mid-1980s. There are now thousands of CSAs throughout the country and they have morphed and changed in many ways over the years, but the Community Farm is still run in the original CSA form. The members own all the assets of the farm — the cow, the equipment, the land — and the farmers do not own anything. They have no personal equity in it.

**"In our 25 years on this farm, we've watched children be born, grow up on this food, and then come back as workers. We've been so intimate with so many people for so long."
—Annie Elder**

Paul: We're still out of that classical mold, and it's made it difficult in some ways for us to survive in the modern day context, because all these other CSAs offer a kind of convenience that makes them very attractive. We kind of have to hustle a lot, and educate, and show people why they would want to be a part of this.

The other thing is, almost thirty years have passed since the founding of the Farm and we're confronting new issues, new obstacles. One of the things about the whole CSA movement in the beginning was that family farms were failing because the next generation didn't want to take it up. They were going to universities, to urban areas; CSAs were going to be the ready-made vehicles for handing it off. Well, here we are, we're aged farmers, now it's the test of the experiment. And I think there must be other farms in the country that are the same age group, that are confronting the same thing.

One of the earlier issues was land tenure: how these farms were going to secure the land they were farming. Many of them had to address that, and many of them did it through land trusts, and many of them established non-profit educational arms, like we have. But now it's the people issue. What do you do with aging farmers, who can't crawl around on the ground as easily, but the pension outlook isn't like a corporate outlook.



Annie: Our situation is tricky because if we were traditional farmers and we owned our land and assets and we had children that didn't want to take it up, we'd sell those and that would be our pension. But we don't own the land, the equipment, we don't have a pension.

Paul: We've got to find this new clan of farmers. We've got this organism that's been so driven by this centralized passion and work ethic. How are we going to find the right people, and find an economy that supports them, and keep the vitality of the organization going?

Annie: That's our conundrum. We're looking for people to take our place but not to do what we do. And that's partly why we have to leave, because the farm has to also shift. What it has been doing for 28 years so beautifully doesn't really fit society right now. Society has changed in all this time. So the farm has to take on maybe a new look, make some changes. But we are old school, and the ideas that we keep thinking are sort of new really aren't; they're still that same form, so if we step out our hope is that new blood, new ideas, new youth will come in to take our place and that will keep the farm going.

Paul: We keep knitting it together through our will forces, which are strong. The food's good, the way of life is good, and our passion is good. So we can keep figuring out ways to thread the economy together to support it and we're frugal in our own personal life, but that's not a construct that will carry the farm forward. It's too oriented around us at the center, pulling all those threads. And we're getting worn out doing that. It's not sustainable for us either.

Annie: For me...you get to be outside, and smell the air, and watch the sun and the clouds. You get to watch the plants grow, you get to tend the animals, you get to see these children grow more healthy because they're eating this food. Wow! Anyone would want this job! [Her voice drops to a whisper.] We're not finding that.

When we first started farming, we hired co-workers. Some were our age, but a lot of them were a little younger. Then, after a few years, as we were hiring the same age people, we realized, 'Wow, we're as old as their parents!' And now, in the last couple of years, we've realized we're as old as their grandparents! (Laughter.) It's so wild.

Paul: The fun thing is we get along really well with them. It just feels like we're not that different. We know we're different from them, but we don't feel that different too. They keep us vibrant and vital. Their pay, relative to what other young people are making at entry-level jobs, they are not making money. So they come to it for the sake of what it is. They're passionate. But it's another level then to take on the totality of running it [the farm] and being with the animals day in and day out.

“Something that I really aspire to do, in the words of Dick Siegel, [popular Ann Arbor songwriter] is to ‘walk a little softer on this earth.’ I feel we’ve done really good. We’re conscious of our carbon footprint and we’re trying to bring as much local agriculture to our area [as we can] and raise consciousness in that area, but I still think there’s something more I can do.” –Annie Elder

We've heard this from many young people now; I think they've watched their parents and grandparents do what we've done, and they don't want to give their all to one thing. They want a more balanced lifestyle. They want to be able to have time to go to the lake and canoe and swim, explore friendships. I think there was a period, maybe in the '60s and '70s — and I'm guessing this — people got so passionate, almost driven, about the causes they were engaged in, that that's where they principally got nourished. My sense is this generation has watched that and they want to be nourished in lots of different ways. So it might take a combination of people to run it. I think it could take years for this transformation to get to a good solid position.

Another of the issues facing the Community Farm's transition is its structure, where the farmers, members, and board of directors need to work together on decisions affecting the farm. Paul and Annie have decades of experience in leading and working in collective communities, first through their work at Wildflour Bakery and then in their years on the Farm, helping to lead in a manner that manages to include and involve everyone in a diverse group of people. They speculate that whoever takes over after them will need to be a leader who has, as Paul says,

That ability to include all different kinds of people. This is why we thought that if a core group [of the members of the Farm] meets, and it's small — because many people have been with the Farm for twenty years or more, and they're not interested in coming to meetings any more so much — they won't be represented in that process necessarily very strongly, unless the people that are present there recognize there is all these different types of people, and figure out how to draw them out and really represent their perspectives in evolving the farm forward. That's a big thing. It's consensus-based, not simple majority rule. Some people have come from the inside out, they've worked with us and they've got all the other stuff going on, but then they get into these meetings and they go...

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“This farm is predicated on that whole journey of seeing more and more of the unseen and developing a relationship to it and trusting it and listening to it. It’s a living being, it’s a spiritual entity now and radiates all around and threads into our community of creatures and plant life and people.”

–Paul Bantle



“We’re trying to find that next stage of inner growth.” –Paul Bantle



The members own all the assets of the farm — the cow, the equipment, the land — and the farmers do not own anything. They have no personal equity in it.



“Whatever comes into the future of the farm, love will be its center, like it has been for all these years.” –Annie Elder

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“That’s our conundrum. We’re looking for people to take our place but not to do what we do. And that’s partly why we have to leave, because the farm has to also shift. What it has been doing for 28 years so beautifully doesn’t really fit society right now.” –Annie Elder

Annie inserts, “‘You mean I can’t just go and do this?’ Nope, you’ve got to check with the whole membership and they have to agree before you make that change. It’s a hard thing for people.”

Paul: So even that may have to adjust itself somehow.

Annie: The farm needs to shift to be sustainable. And if we’re here, without meaning to, we could stop that shift.

Paul: We occupy a lot of space. (Laughter.) It’s hard for us not to. It’s a great dance to learn to recede into the woodwork a bit to create the proper space and vacuum for others to enter into, but also to be present to support that process and use your intelligence that you’ve developed over time, because they’re calling for that too. We’re learning a lot about detachment in this process, but we also have a responsibility to the cow and the animals — they’re living beings that are counting on us. We make sure they’re taken care of.

Annie: This farm uses biodynamic agriculture; it really tries to incorporate the spirit of the earth itself as our mother, and the spirit of the sky above, the cosmos and all those forces, all those influences. The people that dwell on the farm, the people that work it on the earth and the cosmos, it all comes together with love.

Whatever comes into the future of the farm, love will be its center, like it has been for all these years.

Paul: Down through the ages, brilliant beings that have come and gone, including Rudolf Steiner, they’re all trying to help us see that there’s an unseen world, they’re helping us get a glimpse of an unseen world that they can see. This farm is predicated on that whole journey of seeing more and more of the unseen and developing a relationship to it and trusting it and listening to it. It’s a living being, it’s a spiritual entity now and radiates all around and threads into our community of creatures and plant life and people. It really is much more than its material incarnation, its physical body. And that’s interesting at this time because the attachment part of me says, ‘Don’t let that go.’ There’s a part of me that just wants to hold on to this form and have it last forever. And then there’s the detached part that I’m trying to learn about that says there’s an impulse here that’s way more vast than I know about, and it’s love — it’s what Annie said about love — and I don’t get to say how that’s going to take its new form.

“It’s a great dance to learn to recede into the woodwork a bit to create the proper space and vacuum for others to enter into, but also to be present to support that process and use your intelligence that you’ve developed over time, because they’re calling for that too.” –Paul Bantle

Annie: This community, the life that we overlap with here, has filled my being, my heart, and my soul. It’s in my dreams, and to let it go is a lot like dying to me. We’re so, so lucky because we have a spiritual practice. Thanks to our practice and to Paul, who’s often been taken by this subject, I have been able to embrace death in a much easier way.

With tears filling her eyes, Annie says, “We’ll miss this place.”

I checked in with Paul and Annie again in mid-February to ask how things were progressing with the transition. I had gone to a membership meeting in December and then also heard at several other meetings in the last few months that the Farm’s membership had gotten clearer on the qualifications for Annie and Paul’s replacement(s). Annie confirmed this,

We’ve restarted the search and we’ve got a number of beautiful applicants. They’re young, they’re green, they’re new at it, but they have enthusiasm and creativity, and I think what’s going to happen is just what we need to have happen. The farm will turn over to a stream of young, vibrant health.

We then continued to talk more about the unique qualities of the Farm.

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Paul: I think in our earlier conversations with you we talked about the farm being a healing center. In the last few years, as we've been on the farm longer and longer, that's what we've recognized it to be. You know in the early 1900s, or maybe the late 1800s, there were a lot of farms that were essentially hospitals. They closed many of them down, they turned them into other things. People that were quite ill or mentally imbalanced, however one says that, would go to these farms that served as therapeutic centers. Then I don't know what happened, but they evolved away from that. I actually think that that's what's going on now, not just with our farm, but with farms all over this country and all over the world, at really healthy farms people are coming to get healed. I think in this age, where the world is in such a tumult, that at these farms people feel safe and secure, they quiet down.

“This community, the life that we overlap with here, has filled my being, my heart, and my soul. It's in my dreams, and to let it go is a lot like dying to me.” –Annie Elder

Many people over the years have come from other countries, and they're often very in touch in some way or another, they're brilliant beings in their own fields, and they come to our farm and they bless the farm with their presence. A healer from the Andes came, a plum farmer from France, and this whole contingent from China. This last year a Filipino woman that wants to start collective farms in the south of the Philippines, and a woman from India who is doing...

Annie: Healing the earth from the Tsunami damage. She came.

Paul: Every year these people come. And they're thrilled with the farm, but they're brilliant beings and there's something about their presence on the farm that takes it to a different place. It's that kind of exchange that's happened over all those years, I think, that's saturated the spirit of the farm.

Annie: Education is an essential element of our farm and it starts with the members educating and sharing with each other, what to do with the vegetables, et cetera, so there's a lot of communication that goes on within our membership because they come to the farm to get vegetables. That's where our education starts.

Paul: That's really probably our biggest offering in the community: on-farm experience for young people. I know that there are other farms that are oriented in that direction, but I think we've got a very well-developed program.

I recalled that I had brought my daughter here for a whole weekend some years back when her whole class from the Steiner School spent the weekend camping on the farm, participating in the farm's activities. It was a wonderful experience, one we still talk about.

“Our Farm doesn't have any secrets. We are totally legal, totally aboveboard, totally open to anybody. So if people come and inquire, we share with them, because we want people to do good on the earth.” –Annie Elder

Annie: We have field trips that go from third grade up to U-M students that come out to the Farm. Our Farm doesn't have any secrets. We are totally legal, totally aboveboard, totally open to anybody. So if people come and inquire, we share with them, because we want people to do good on the earth. If we have something that could help them, we want to share it with them. So people have come, even from other countries to learn from our Farm. We welcome that. We love that. Competition is tricky but we don't let that rule us. Really what's important is that we look at the world all together.

I ask Paul and Annie if they grow love. “We do, we really do,” replies Annie as she giggles with delight.

Paul: Over the years we've always shared our planting calendars, our planting rhythms, all our seeds, seed sources, our bookkeeping, all our books are totally open to whoever would like to look at them. We've shared how someone new to the world of CSAs could form and operate their own CSA.

Annie: Sometimes when people ask, “What is the most special thing we grow?” We really do come back to love.

I ask Paul and Annie if they grow love. “We do, we really do,” replies Annie as she giggles with delight.

I suggest to Annie and Paul that that may be what is drawing all those people here, those who want to offer something, as well as those in need of healing, maybe even whether or not they know it.


Building on this, Annie explains:

The essence of biodynamic agriculture, which is the farming practice that we use, recognizes that the earth is a living, breathing being and that we need to be gentle to her and help heal her and give gratitude when she supplies us with this wonderful food. That's been an important part of our farming practice and I think people can feel that even without talking to us.

Paul responds, “Yes, it just goes around and around and around.” (He chuckles with delight.)

To learn more about the Community Farm of Ann Arbor, Annie Elder, and Paul Bantle, and for information on their search for new farmers, please visit communityfarmofaa.wordpress.com/.





Being in Place — A Panorama of Meditation in Ann Arbor as told by Libby Robinson

Interview by Kirsten Mowrey

Photographs by Joni Strickfaden

"[Mindfulness is] more of a clearing out. I think it allows us to clear out the barriers to effective action, the barriers within ourselves."

We are a community of meditators. In the last Crazy Wisdom Community Journal there were listings for 25 different organizations offering meditation. Many more people practice as part of church, temple, or mosque prayer time. Some meditations are specific to cultural or religious traditions, while others do not require membership to participate. Mindfulness is now a trending topic, prompting articles, videos, social media threads, and books to be available. The Ann Arbor community has been at the forefront of embracing such trends for the past 45 years. To get some local history about the slow and steady rise in Ann Arbor's interest in meditation, as well as a sense of what it means to be a longtime meditator, I spoke with Elizabeth (Libby) Robinson, part of the Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness.

Libby, a retired researcher from the University of Michigan, has been living in Ann Arbor since 1970, leaving only to teach at Buffalo and Case Western in the early 1990's. After retirement, she and her husband moved from their longtime home on White Street to the West Park area. I was able to catch Libby for an interview at the new Westgate branch of the Ann Arbor District Library, where we conversed in the large exhibit room while visitors perused the art.

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Being in Place — A Panorama of Meditation in Ann Arbor as told by Libby Robinson



Interview by Kirsten Mowrey
Photographs by Joni Strickfaden

Kirsten Mowrey: Libby, thank you for speaking with me. How did you get started in mindfulness meditation?

Libby Robinson: You're welcome. I was in my mid 30's and really wanted to learn meditation because I was pretty troubled emotionally and not in touch with what I really wanted to do and how I felt about things. I certainly had zip piece of mind, or very little. I tried to learn meditation through a book — that didn't work very well. I tried to learn it by hanging out with some of the groups in Ann Arbor that I knew about, but they were very guru focused. I just wasn't comfortable with a guru, the stories I heard about gurus; they felt very cultish to me.

Kirsten Mowrey: So your mid-30's would have been the late 80's?

Libby Robinson: No, late 70's (laughs).

"I tried to learn it by hanging out with some of the groups in Ann Arbor that I knew about, but they were very guru focused."

Kirsten Mowrey: When you say gurus, you mean like Ram Dass or Osho?

Libby Robinson: Not Ram Dass, though his book was really helpful because that's where I found out there are lots of different kinds of meditation, not just one type. That was helpful for me — ooh there are lots of different ways of doing this. *The Meditators Guidebook*, I think is the name of it, I really recommend it (*Journey of Awakening: A Meditator's Guidebook*, Bantam, 1981). My brother was at the Insight Meditation Society (IMS) in Barre, Massachusetts, at that time. He was there for a three-month retreat and after that he got hired as a staff member. I learned about IMS and a little bit about the kind of meditation they taught, the people, and the teachers — they were *called* teachers, they weren't the guru who must be obeyed at all costs or whatever, so I thought, OK, go check it out. So I signed up for a one-week silent retreat.

KM: For your first one?

LR: First one ever, *right*? Right, and it was scary and wonderful and I didn't like the teacher and I broke silence by calling my husband and having an argument with him. When I told my teacher, she wasn't supportive because I'd kind of created this situation myself. But I learned so much about my mind. About these — mental traps, cognitive traps, stories — that we get caught up in. And one of my big insights —

that's why it's called insight — was how these emotional states will come and then they are gone and you can have a totally different mind state. Becoming aware of how temporary our mind states are, unless of course we hold onto them and define our inner selves by them. Ruth Denison — she was my first teacher, she's a real character. I got home and started meditating 45 minutes a day and went to another retreat a year later and have been going to retreats every year or two ever since. Insight Meditation is also called mindfulness or Vipassana and what I was learning was American Vipassana and that's what I've practiced ever since. Initially I couldn't find anybody in Ann Arbor who did it and I was just by myself.

KM: So from nothing, then daily meditating for 45 minutes?

LR: For about five years, pretty solidly. In 1984, I started the M.S.W. and Ph.D. program here at U-M. It was while I was working on my dissertation that my practice went through a hiatus, shall we say. It was hard, because I would, over the years, keep trying to connect with other people. I would find out there were groups of other people sitting in this tradition and this approach but they weren't open groups and they weren't taking in any new people. So I was still just sitting on my own. I'm sure that affected my practice. It would have helped to have been part of a group.

KM: Local groups such as Deep Spring and Insight Meditation Ann Arbor, are those groups open?

LR: Those groups are open *now*. We have a bunch of groups that are open; there are drop-ins all over the place now.

"And one of my big insights [was]... Becoming aware of how temporary our mind states are, unless of course we hold onto them and define our inner selves by them."

KM: When did you start to see that changing in Ann Arbor?

LR: Good question. Probably in the mid 80's, I think. I met Barbara Brodsky at a retreat. She and I and a couple other people started a group and then I dropped out, but that's the group that went on to become Deep Spring. When I got my Ph.D., I took a job on the faculty of SUNY Buffalo. I continued to meditate, continued to go to retreats.

KM: So your practice became regular again?

LR: Yes, a bump and then reestablish. There have been periods all along, these 37 years, of not doing much meditation, daily meditation, and then getting back into it, rededicating myself to it.

KM: 37 years is a long relationship!

LR: That's true.

KM: What has it taught you? Especially with coming and going.

LR: Oh so much. The more you do it, not just the more insights you have, the more you can cultivate that sense of peacefulness and compassion. I really appreciate, over the years, how important cultivating compassion and non-judgment is, because I'm very hard on myself and very judgmental. That's a mental habit that had been established even before I got into meditation, and when those thoughts come up, I don't take them as seriously. I'm more likely to say, "Oh, there's that thought again, that I'm not good enough, or that nobody likes me," or whatever, and knowing that it's not necessarily true and that if I wait, it will probably disappear. That persistent thought will disappear.

KM: Arises, blossoms, and fades.

"...what I was learning was American Vipassana and that's what I've practiced ever since. Initially I couldn't find anybody in Ann Arbor who did it and I was just by myself."

LR: Right, right, not holding onto it and not allowing it to define who you are, who I am. "Oh, there's that thought," and maybe it's not a thought about you, maybe it's a thought about other people. I like to tell the story in my classes, at my first retreat, I was standing behind somebody in line to get tea, and she was making her tea in front of me and she was doing it *wrong* (chuckles). And I was going through this whole thing in my head about how she was doing it wrong and she must not understand about tea and when the retreat was over I was going to tell her how to do her tea right. And I suddenly noticed — mindfulness is all about noticing — what I was doing and laughed at myself. I mean, I was embarrassed too, I think, but laughed at this ridiculous judgment that was going on in my head. A lot of it is letting go, letting go of judgment.

KM: When did you make the transition to teaching?

LR: In the early 2000s, I was working here at U-M in the Psychiatry Department as a research fellow and I'd gotten a National Institutes of Health grant. My research was about whether or not spiritual and religious change plays a role in people recovering from alcohol. That's what I was funded to investigate; it was just a longitudinal survey. John Greden, the head of the department, met with me and he thought I should do an intervention, a spiritual/religious intervention (as part of the study). I said "Ack! Well, the only one I could think that I would be comfortable doing, because I'm definitely not into proselytizing — was teaching meditation." He said, "Do you know about mindfulness based cognitive therapy and depression by Segal and Teasdale? Why don't you try that?" The department paid for me to go off and I got trained in mindfulness based cognitive therapy, mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR) and the teacher development intensive.

In 2003, I started teaching. Initially it was a very casual thing. I started a class at Chelsea Arbor Treatment Center, which no longer exists, but which used to be an outpatient treatment center for people with addictions. I was a part-time clinician there and I taught it to some of the other folks I was working with. In 2007, I offered it to anybody in the department [of Psychiatry] and I taught it three times. Faculty, staff, fellows, anybody who worked there — and I offered the eight-week MBSR class. I learned a lot. I hope that everybody who took it got something out of it. I know that some of the people who took it went on and are part of the Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness. I don't know that it was their first exposure. I'd keep trying to find other people who taught mindfulness [in the area].

"The more you do it, not just the more insights you have, the more you can cultivate that sense of peacefulness and compassion."

KM: At this point Deep Spring existed?

LR: Yes, Deep Spring existed at this point and I would go there sometimes on their Sunday morning sats.

KM: You've been teaching now in a university setting and private setting.

LR: And community. I started teaching in the community to anybody who wanted to in 2010. I rented space at the Lotus Center, they have a nice classroom space there, and I've been teaching three to six classes a year ever since.

KM: As you've come into teaching in different communities, what do you value in a teacher? Ruth, your first teacher, you didn't like.

LR: Well, that was my stuff.

KM: Right, your first introduction.

Questions for Paulette Grotrian, Co-Founder of Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness

Maureen McMahon: Paulette, you have a long history of teaching Humanities at Washtenaw Community College (WCC) and you trained at U-Mass Medical School Integrative Medicine Center for Mindfulness. Now your teaching has shifted to meditation. How did you begin to learn meditation and what were some highlights of your training? What was it like?



Paulette Grotrian: My first experience with meditation was in the 1990's with Transcendental Meditation. In early 2000, I met a teacher who taught Mindfulness, Martha Kimball, who is in Ann Arbor and is retired now. I studied with her for quite a few years. In 2010, she suggested I become a Mindfulness teacher. That took me by surprise, but she said, "You *get it*. You have something to share."

I began my mindfulness teacher training at Omega Institute, where Jon Kabat-Zinn, the founder of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), was my teacher; I went on to study in his program at University of Massachusetts Medical School, and after silent retreats at Spirit Rock in California, much coursework, and Intensives, I became a qualified MBSR teacher. I have been teaching in the Ann Arbor area ever since. For me, it has been a personally and professionally rewarding journey.

MM: Is there an Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness initiative you are most excited about? What is your current focus with teaching and facilitating Mindfulness? Who's attending?

PG: A group of us started the Center for Mindfulness in 2015. We Mindfulness teachers and practitioners found strength in collaboration, that we can support each other, and that we have much more to offer the community as a resource. This year we added Teacher Support Meetings for those who use Mindfulness in their professions, and this has increased our personal and collective effectiveness.

As for my current teaching, in 2016 I trained to be a Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) teacher and will be teaching that course again in the fall in Saline, along with a MBSR course in Ann Arbor. This June, I'm excited to teach a five-day MBSR Intensive, June 21-25, 9:30-3:30 p.m. at the Naturopathic School of Healing Arts in Ann Arbor. This will be the first time the Intensive has been offered in the Ann Arbor area. It is designed for those who would find it hard to take the 8-week course. Also, it is ideal for teachers. Registration is open on my website. Additionally, I host a weekly drop-in meditation called Open Meditation Saline on Tuesday mornings.

As for who attends, MBSR and MSC are really for everybody. Participants include those with health challenges; some dealing with loss and grief; folks dealing with anxiety or feeling overwhelmed, including university students; married couples interested in learning mindfulness together for a healthier relationship; and those newly retired.

MM: What are some groups or partnerships you are excited about working with to teach MBSR?

PG: One exciting development is at WCC, I taught an MBSR course to Campus Services in the Facilities Management Division and I've done some work with faculty through Professional Development. WCC Facilities Management leadership is strongly considering the training for their managers and eventually for the whole division. In short, there is a desire to build the principles of MBSR into the fabric of the workplace.

MM: Sounds like it can change the place from the inside out. Thank you, Paulette.

For more information on Paulette's class offerings, visit mindfulnesswithpaulette.weebly.com.

— Libby Robinson —

Continued from page 65

LR: I think a mindfulness teacher, first and foremost, has to have a strong personal mindfulness practice. A pretty solid experience with meditation using mindfulness approaches. For a while, not just six months or one class, and retreat experiences need to be part of that: going to week-long silent retreats really cracks that open and lets you see your own mind traps that you get into and softens them. Which is an essential part of what we are trying to convey to other people, and I think you need your own personal grounding in that. If you are teaching one of these mindfulness based interventions, you need to get trained in that, whether it's mindfulness based cognitive therapy of depression, or the granddaddy of them all, MBSR, or one of the newer ones that's out there now. Some of them have nice, well written up curriculums that you can find in books, but there's nothing like going to a training and getting to work with someone — advanced trainings too if you can. Susan Woods does a lot of trainings, [and] there's an open ended discussion at the end of a meditation about what people have experienced, what they noticed and how does that relate to their well-being. The training is really important and then teaching: How much teaching has this person done? Is this their first class? I'm so different from that first class I taught; I think back now on that and I go (makes a face) "ewehh." You know, so, the more you teach, the more solid your understanding gets about how to convey this approach, which is so different from how we typically go in the world.

Mindfulness isn't for everybody and every mindfulness teacher is going to be different and it's worth checking out — Is this somebody that I can learn from? Even my first teacher, whom I didn't like, I learned so much from her. And *that* is more important than I felt irritated with her and felt she put me down — that's my crap. I learned so much from her, so that's the question: What do you learn about your mind? Are you more liberated from your mental traps when you do these things, when you practice this way? When you learn from this teacher? When you read Jack Kornfield's books or Sharon Salzberg's books or listen to one of her recorded podcasts or guided meditations. That's not a bad place to start: listen to Jon Kabat-Zinn on the web or Jack Kornfield or Sharon Salzberg. They are wonderful teachers. That's your practice, for five minutes a day you listen to one of them.

All my original teachers, my Vipassana teachers, are Buddhists. What they are teaching are the teachings of the Buddha: the dharma, the sangha. Whereas, these mindfulness based interventions are secular. There's actually this whole interesting conversation going on within the Buddhist community: Can you have Buddhism without Buddha? Secular Buddhism. There are some people in the Buddhist community who see the mindfulness movement as antithetical: "They aren't teaching ethics, they aren't teaching compassion." I do, it's more subtle than "thou shalt not"; it's more what cultivates compassion and friendliness and how do we do that and strategies for doing that. To me, it's never been about beliefs, whether you are Vipassana or not, it's about the practice and you don't have to believe Buddha even existed, you don't have to believe in karma or reincarnation or any of that kind of stuff. It's not about beliefs; it's not about ritual. There are other branches of Buddhism that are much more focused around ritual and beliefs. But Mindfulness and Insight Meditation and Vipassana, they are all kissing cousins.

"a lot of it is letting go, letting go of judgment."

KM: I'm curious about origins of the Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness.

LR: Initially we started out as a teacher support group. I was desperate to have some support for teaching from other people who were teaching. It was me, Lynn Sipher, and Julie Woodward got together once a month and talked about teaching. We started attracting people who were psychotherapists and then somebody had the bright idea, "Well, let's have an event. Let's bring in..." I forget. We started having these events, [and] organizing these events. We realized we needed to organize ourselves. Gradually, it got bigger. It kinda got too big. We're down to about ten people who are really committed to working on creating an organization that fosters mindfulness and fosters the cultivation of mindfulness.

What the group is about now — besides getting ourselves organized — we still have a monthly teacher support group and we do presentations now, on the self, compassion, or mindful yoga. [We want to] broaden it out and invite people to join us. We're becoming a nonprofit, I think we'll be a membership based nonprofit, that provides quality teaching and mindfulness strategies, to the public, specific populations, the medical school, or a business if they want it.

KM: How did you come to teach in Flint in February of 2016?

LR: I was approached by somebody from U-M Flint who had gotten a grant and she heard from Jesse Jackson at Institute of Social Research that I taught mindfulness. The first people she'd approached didn't work out. I was happy to do it, to go up there and teach MBSR. The population that they were focusing on were people who had somebody in the family who was incarcerated. We taught two classes (MBSR class format is weekly for eight weeks). I brought in another teacher, which I'm really glad I did. Patrice (Trice) Berlinski, who lives in Fenton, she'd had some experience

and most of her experience was teaching to kids. Which was really great, because some of the people brought their kids, their little kids.

KM: The study was open to any family member?

LR: It was supposed to be adults, but you know how it is, you might not have the funds or access to someone who can babysit the kids, so what are you going to do — make sure they don't get into trouble. It was kind of interesting, we had kids 8, 10, 12 [years old] who were in the group and Trice was great at using analogies and metaphors that helped them kind of grab — understand what we were talking about.

KM: So you kept to the format, and still did the class as a big group?

LR: In the second group, there were kids. [We had] two classes, one on Thursday nights and one on Tuesday nights. Ahh, it was intense. We were teaching this in the midst of the water crisis, and that was a dominant stressor for everybody. That was actually a bigger stressor in many ways than having a family member who was incarcerated.

"My research was about whether or not spiritual and religious change plays a role in people recovering from alcohol... and I got trained in mindfulness based cognitive therapy, mindfulness based stress reduction..."

KM: Did people mention it as a stressor?

LR: They always talked about it all the time, at many classes the issue of the water came up.

LR: How did you & Trice address it, if you did?

LR: We talked about it. It was part of what people were experiencing at that point. How do you — you know, mindfulness isn't just about putting up with stuff that is annoying or disheartening, or where you're being abused, it's also about, "This is going on. This is not good for me. How can I strategize around how best to work with this?" They were all *very* involved, in the public meetings, a really interesting bunch of people and doing what they could about it, using bottled water. I remember someone else in a class once asked me, "OK, so we work with anger in this way?" We're not trying to pretend the anger isn't there or that injustice isn't there, but more like, How can I best respond to this situation? And for some people, because of all the other things going on in their lives, they are doing the best they can to get one foot in front of the next and make sure there's clean water and food in the house and things like that.

[Mindfulness is] more of a clearing out. I think it allows us to clear out the barriers to effective action, the barriers within ourselves. You know, if I am so angry that every time I see officials I blow up at them, that's not going to be as effective as if I can come up with a response that allows me to connect with them and [I'm] more likely to come up with a creative solution to the situation if I'm not caught in my own reactivity about something.

KM: How was the class received by the participants?

LR: It's like any class; it's a mixed bag. You know, some people got a lot out of it. This one woman was so proud — her blood pressure was dropping and it had been very high. Some people are like, "What's this about?" Everyone was very respectful and open, and it was obviously hard for people to [physically] get there. It's very different from a regular class because it's a research project; people were paid to be there. There was data collection on the first day and the last day people filled out questionnaires. Later, Trice and I, when we were talking about it, [realized] it would have been really helpful if one of us had been a person of color. I think that would have given some authenticity to it, for them. I think it was hard for people to see, "Well, what does this have to do with my having a family member who is incarcerated?"

"In 2007, I offered it [Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction] to anybody in the department [of Psychiatry] and I taught it three times. Faculty, staff, fellows, anybody who worked there — and I offered the eight-week MBSR class..."

KM: Does the Flint experience relate to the Center of Mindfulness at all?

LR: Not obviously, although I think broadening ourselves in terms of bringing in people of color and LGBT people. Making sure that we're not just a bunch of white middle class women, I think that's important and figuring out how to make that happen.

KM: Who is your typical mindfulness student?

LR: In Ann Arbor?

KM: Or classes.

LR: I've had retired people in current classes. I've had graduate students. I've had people who are working, people who are disabled, people with lots of physical problems and physical pain.

"...going to week-long silent retreats really cracks that open and lets you see your own mind traps that you get into and softens them."

KM: Any people of color or LGBTQ people?

LR: LGBTQ, yes, not that many people of color.

KM: There was an article in the May/June 2016 *Spirituality and Health* magazine about meditation, suffering, communities of color, and meditation being more accessible.

LR: Yeah, it does. People whose finances are stressed, whether black or white, are going to have a hard time coming up with four-hundred bucks for an eight-week class. They may not have health insurance that will cover it.

KM: Is the financial the sole barrier?

LR: No, I don't think that's the only barrier. I think another barrier is that it's a white people thing. I think another barrier is there's a lack of reaching out, of connecting with people of color on our parts. There's now a drop-in group in Ypsilanti, at the Michigan Avenue Library. It's still getting established; it's not well publicized.

KM: Is that sponsored by the Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness?

LR: No, it's an offshoot of the Thursday night drop-in group that goes on at the Lotus Center. The Lotus Center Thursday night Ann Arbor open meditation is a drop-in group that is unrelated to Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness. At this point in Ann Arbor it's the Wild Wild West.

"Can you have Buddhism without Buddha?"

KM: There are many groups and you are with a couple of them.

LR: Yes, there's Mindful Cities, which Lynne Sipher and others have started, where the focus is beyond mindfulness, social justice and other issues.

KM: What do you think about apps that have you breathe?

LR: Well, people may find those helpful. I've never tried them, so I really can't say. You know, it's all about — does it reduce suffering? Not like putting a band-aid on it, like having a drink or smoking some weed, but does it genuinely reduce suffering? Does it foster greater well-being and happiness?

"But mindfulness and Insight Meditation and Vipassana, they are all kissing cousins."

There's this emphasis on what is wholesome — the Buddhists would use the word skillful — what is a skillful response? If it works great, if it's a pain in the ass when it goes off, maybe you need a different strategy. Try something else. There's no hard and fast rule with this. A really busy working mother with three toddlers is going to have a hard time finding 15-20 minutes to meditate, so maybe just taking two minutes, after she drops off the kids for daycare, noticing the breath — not even manipulating the breath, not even going into the big deep breath, but just sitting there and noticing. Then putting the keys in the ignition and going on. Or spending time to really do one thing at a time for two minutes, those kind of informal kinds of mindfulness can be really helpful.

KM: Thanks, Libby.

LR: You're welcome.

Information on the Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness is available at www.aacfm.com.



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Paulette Grotrian, M.A.
Experienced MBSR teacher, trained at U. Mass. Ctr. for Mindfulness by Jon Kabat-Zinn and colleagues

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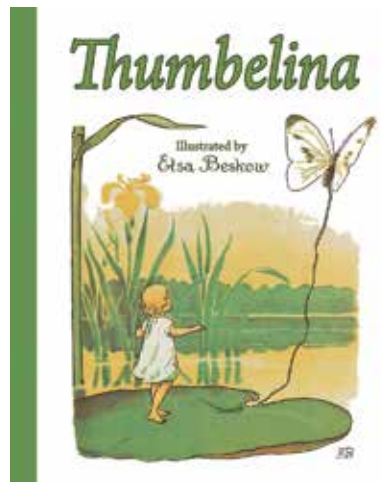
By Sarah Newland (Waldorf parent)

Thumbelina

By Elsa Beskow

Whenever a new book is printed from the estate of Elsa Beskow, I always worry it’s the last one. But here is a new publication from Floris Books – a retelling of Thumbelina. She is so small, she sleeps in a walnut shell bed with a rose petal sheet. One day, a toad steals her away from home. Will she ever find a new home with people just like her?

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By Thomas Hegbrook

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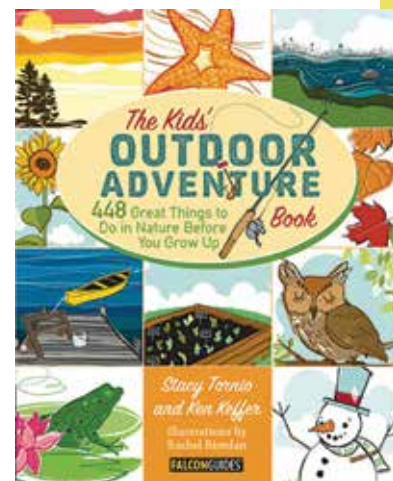
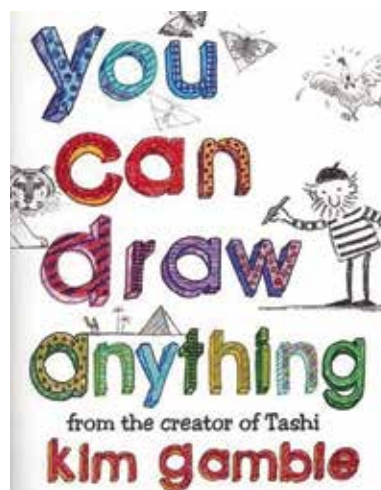


You Can Draw Anything

By Kin Gamble

If you can write numbers and letters, you can draw anything. If you look, really look, and see the lines and shapes things are made of, you can draw whatever you can think up. With lots of examples, step-by-step guidance, helpful tips, jokes, stories, and flip pictures, Gamble shows how to draw animals, faces, bodies, people in action, buildings, and machines. Includes how to give pictures depth using perspective and how to give them form using light and shade.

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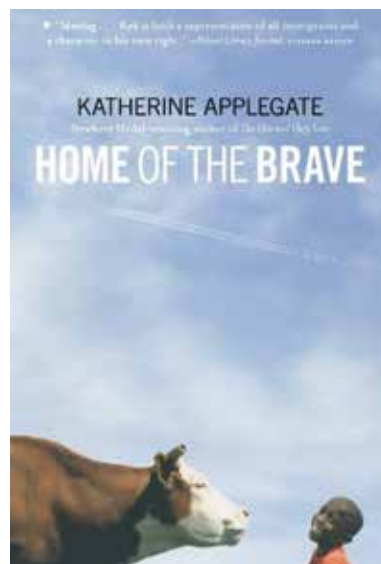


The Kids’ Outdoor Adventure Book: 448 Great Things To Do in Nature Before You Grow Up

By Stacy Tornio and Ken Keffer

A child-friendly year-round activity guide to help shape the next generation of nature lovers. A fun, hands-on approach to getting involved in nature, this guide offers craft projects, fun outing ideas, yummy garden recipes, outdoor games, facts about nature, and useful tips and tricks. Here are some examples: try outdoor yoga, find 20 different kinds of leaves, create a fort, watch bats at sunset, find a moss-covered log, and plant an indoor garden.

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Home of the Brave

By Katherine Applegate

Kek comes from Africa, where he lived with his mother, father, and brother. But only he and his mother have survived. Now she’s missing and Kek is sent to a new home. In America, he sees snow for the first time and wonders if the people in this new place will be like winter – cold and unkind. But he makes friends: a girl in foster care, an old woman on a farm, and a sweet, sad cow that reminds Kek of home. As he waits word of his mother’s fate, he weathers the Minnesota winter by finding warmth in new friendships. For middle schoolers.

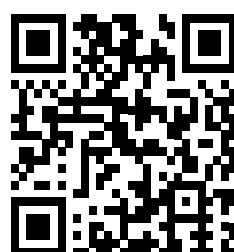
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**“You can find magic wherever you look. Sit back and relax. All you need is a book!”
- Dr. Seuss**

The Importance of Nurturing Children's Intuition

By Christina DePugh

Intuition is a natural intelligence everyone possesses. "Mother's intuition" and "trust your gut" are common phrases used to describe intuition. If we acknowledge that adults innately have intuitive abilities, then we must recognize that children also inherently have intuitive capabilities. Through their experiences, that intuition is either fostered or suppressed.

If we acknowledge that adults innately have intuitive abilities, then we must recognize that children also inherently have intuitive capabilities.

It is common for highly intuitive children to sense events beyond the scope of their short life-experience. Some children may feel an overwhelming sense of anxiety or sadness when a catastrophe happens elsewhere in the world, without the child ever having knowledge of the event. Other children may be cognizant of events that happened long before their birth, without ever having learned that particular part of history. Additionally, children may even recall choosing their parents before they were born.

Even highly recognized childhood staples such as "imaginary" friends indicate an underestimated and undervalued resource of intuitiveness among our youth. While it is perfectly common and acceptable for children to have imaginary friends, we must also look more deeply. A child may be spiritually gifted — communicating with a spirit guide, angel, or departed loved one — yet we may disregard their clairvoyance as "imagination" if we are not mindful.

Children need to be able to trust themselves, know their strengths, and embrace their weaknesses, but this is only possible when parents show trust in their abilities. Encouraging them to follow their "inner compass" and listen to their gut is fundamental. Children's intuitive experiences should be respected as their truth and not discounted, distorted, or brushed off as imaginary or not "real."

A child may be spiritually gifted - communicating with a spirit guide, angel, or departed loved one - yet we may disregard their clairvoyance as "imagination" if we are not mindful.

If we support children's intuition, this highly developed inner compass will help steer them away from potential danger and around unnecessary problems throughout life. Anecdotes abound of individuals avoiding disasters due to a gut feeling, and there are just as many accounts of people ignoring their intuition, to their detriment. Intuition is a gift and should be treated as such.

Within the metaphysical community, many people remember being an intuitive child, but their intuition was repressed by a society resistant to the unexplained. Some were repressed by religious organizations, others by their parents' beliefs. When these children approached their parents speaking of extrasensory phenomena, the parents often reacted with fear, judgment, or punishment.



Christina DePugh



This parental reaction suppressed their children's natural connection to the "World Beyond." The harmful effects of the pervasive sense of shame and "wrongness" that some of these intuitive children grew up with cannot be understated. Now, these children are adults and are trying to rediscover their gifts.

If we support children's intuition, this highly developed "inner compass" will help steer them away from potential danger and around unnecessary problems throughout life.

Fortunately, we have the ability to further society's understanding and acceptance of intuition. We must commit to nurturing our children more wholly and openly than previous generations. Let's help our children not have to "re-learn their gifts." Instead, let's help them embrace their intuition from the beginning.

When we trust ourselves, are mindful, and listen to our inner compass, we live an authentic life. As spiritual actualization is a fundamental right of the intuitive child (and every person, for that matter), so is the experience of being around other authentic beings. Children need to see adults in their life live authentically, be mindful, and support those around them to do the same.

If children are listening to their inner compass, their passion will lead them where they are supposed to go.

As "being present" is the foundation of developing intuition, adults who are present themselves can have a more positive impact on their children's intuition. When we are present, we also notice more, and we are modeling both the path to engaging with our deepest selves and exploring our own innate intuition. This normalizing of authenticity and mindful presence is a protective agent against a society that puts enormous pressure on conformity, distraction, and external validation.

In furthering the goal of fostering intuitive children, it is imperative that we support them in finding their passion and following it. If children are listening to their inner compass, their passion will lead them where they are supposed to go. If they are able to follow their passion from adolescence through adulthood, they can grow up knowing exactly who they are and what their life purpose is.

Unfortunately, too many of us...realize late in our lives that we are not pursuing the passions that our spirits and hearts have been telling us to follow all along.

This is a significant improvement to the current scenario where, as adults, we often hit a metaphorical wall in personal growth because we don't know who we truly are, nor how to trust ourselves and our intuition. Unfortunately, too many of us experience this barrier, and then realize late in our lives that we are not pursuing the passions that our spirits and hearts have been telling us to follow all along.

If we want the world to reach toward a more enlightened place, we need to begin with the children. If children grow up in an enlightened, supportive, growth-centered, and affirming environment, they will not only be comfortable with themselves and have an appreciation of their intuitive gifts, they will also be uniquely prepared to show more tolerance and understanding of others. These children will be our leaders of tomorrow; let's help them be the best version of their selves.

Christina DePugh is the Co-Owner of the Enlightened Soul Center in Ann Arbor and Co-Director of Intuitives Interactive's Holistic & Psychic Expo. She runs a monthly group for parents and kids ages 5-10 called the "Intuitive and Sensitive Kids Gathering," which meets the fourth Monday of the month, 6:00-8:00 pm, for yoga and meditation; and once a month for a metaphysically minded activity. For more information, see: enlightenedsoulcenter.com

The Power of Strength-Spotting To Encourage Your Child

By Annie Zirkel



“No matter what I do, you always find something wrong! I can’t win!”

I can still hear my son hurtling this accusation my way when he was 12. He saw me as a constant nagger, always on him to do his homework or chores, turn off the computer, or get in the shower. Back then I worried that his lack of self-care and motivation surely foreshadowed a jobless, relationship-less existence with him living in my basement at 40. It was comments like the one above that helped me understand that while some of my guidance helped, the cost was a discouraged rather than energized child.

“No matter what I do, you always find something wrong! I can’t win!”

If you’ve heard this comment from your child, you are not alone. The good news is that this observation is a gift. A hint from your child that you might not want to bank on that motivational speaking career. Of course, even if you already knew that, it doesn’t tell you what to do instead. That’s where Strength-Spotting comes in.

Strength-Spotting is the practice of noticing and sharing examples of strengths (capabilities, talents, gifts, skills, abilities, assets) to give you perspective and a more balanced, hopeful, and whole picture of your child. It also allows you to slice larger skill sets into their component parts so that the effort doesn’t seem as monumental and can help your child notice progress toward a goal, thus keeping motivation and engagement higher.

Strength-Spotting is the practice of noticing and sharing examples of strengths...

What Parents Need to Master Strength-Spotting

If Strength-Spotting sounds challenging, you’re not alone. So before we discuss what you need to master this technique, let’s spot one of your strengths to show some of its power. Just by reading this article your dedication to your parenting is shining through. And that is no small thing. Showing up and investing in finding ways to improve is essential to long-term success. Yes, more is needed, but engagement in learning—whether it’s you or your child—is a crucial element. With that in mind, here’s what you need to know to develop the skills of Strength-Spotting:

Noticing the positives is not meant to replace challenging your child to grow or holding them accountable.

Have Buy-in. It can seem counter-intuitive to focus on strengths when you feel a child has so far to go. The fear is often that pointing out a strength can demotivate a child from stepping up to the next challenge. And, this fear could have merit, but only if Strength-Spotting is what you mostly do. Noticing the positives is not meant to replace challenging your child to grow or holding them accountable. But helping your child see they are capable of improvement can give them more motivation to challenge themselves.

Contain Your Fear, Impatience, or Discouragement. Especially when your child has really struggled, is discouraged and/or when their greatest strength seems to be in resistance to your guidance, parents can lose hope or grow impatient with their child’s progress. On the other hand, a parent’s own frustration or discouragement may be unintentionally contributing to this situation. Check if your expectations for how well and how quickly your child should progress are reasonable. Then, before trying to support your child, seek to rebuild your own hope and perspective. Some strategies for this include:

- Step back and take some time to observe your child from a more neutral place. Seeing your whole child, seeing them over time, seeing them outside of a particular problematic area. (Consider making a list to remind yourself of positive attributes and specific growth they have made.)
- Ask others to share the strengths they see in your child (relatives, teachers, coaches).
- Allow un-loaded consequences, such as having to do their chores before going out to play, to assist with teaching life lessons and help create motivation to learn.
- Tap others — family members/teachers/tutors/coaches — to directly support whatever skill you are trying to encourage. (Acknowledge possible burn-out.)



- Look beyond strength-attainment. Ask yourself: If my child never learned this life skill or task or any tangible life skills or tasks, would they be worthwhile anyway? (See “A Gift From Alex” in the sidebar.)
- Get coaching or support for your parenting. Just like children, parents do better with good support.

Check if your expectations for how well and how quickly your child should progress are reasonable.

Practice. Getting good at Strength-Spotting takes knowledge, time, and practice. The great news is that trying this technique can remind you of the parallel challenges that child may be facing and help you find some kindness and patience for both of you. The first strength to notice and note? Even trying something different is a strength!

Before focusing on Strength-Spotting check the reasonableness of the expectation (think age, temperament, starting point, timeline for mastery)

Techniques of Effective Strength-Spotting

Before focusing on Strength-Spotting check the reasonableness of the expectation (think age, temperament, starting point, timeline for mastery). Then consider these techniques for mastering your use of Strength-Spotting:

- Watch the sarcasm, exaggerated surprise, or back-handed compliments at your child’s improvement. Not: *Wow! You actually got that one right! or It’s about time!* Try: *I knew you would get it or Better now than never.* (Because isn’t it?)
- Avoid over-the-top praise or a shiny vision that doesn’t jive with what your child believes and/or the evidence supports. (*Oh, you’re just the best artist I’ve ever seen.*)
- Focus on effort or other attributes such as creativity, especially when there is improvement there. *Wow, you did more than half of your homework without asking for help (or only a little help).*
- Savor a success rather than immediately moving to the next challenge. *Well, you learned your 5 times tables. Now you just have to learn your 6, 7, 8, and 9 times tables.*
- Slice strengths thinner: Point out any and all strengths your child possesses that are building blocks of a bigger skill set. *You’ve got A and you’ve got B. Now all you have to do is figure out C.*
- Ask your child to lead the conversation. What strengths do they know they have already? What other strengths are needed? Where do they already possess some of these strengths? And if not in this area, maybe another?
- Notice how your comments land. If your child is rejecting your positive spin, stop pushing and check your delivery and timing. Give them a listening ear to acknowledge any fear or frustration. Let them grieve a disappointment rather than trying to quickly move past it. And if it’s not going well, ask permission to offer a strength. (*Can I tell you something good I see?*)
- Follow up Strength-Spotting with reasonable challenges to continue progressing. Don’t be afraid to point out positives *and* challenge them to grow.
- When challenging, remind them of the big-picture reasons for mastering skills and then focus on the next building block needed to continue progress.

Let them grieve a disappointment rather than trying to quickly move past it. And if it’s not going well, ask permission to offer a strength.

Where to Find Strengths to Spot

- Spot established strengths, small or emerging strengths, and strengths sandwiched between struggles.
- Look for improvements from previous attempts. (Compare them to themselves at an earlier time.)
- Point out glimpses of the person they are becoming.
- Notice strengths in values or foundational traits like honesty or personal accountability. (*At least you...were honest.*)
- Acknowledge any planning or improvements in organization, time

- management, or self-initiative.
- Spot moments of grit, attention, resilience, creative work-arounds, or good humor.
- Note (though possibly share later) times when they have better stress-, anger-, or frustration-management.
- Spot strengths in any awareness of issues that might be getting in their way.
- Find examples of a strength needed in a current situation that you have seen in them under different circumstances. *(You do know how to organize, like the way you've lined up all of your hats.)*

Savor a success rather than immediately moving to the next challenge.

My youngest son is 20 now and a junior in college. He manages to take care of himself, learn and get good grades, keep himself clothed and fed, and is very driven to work when he is home. I believe Strength-Spotting was largely responsible for a more positive march toward adulthood. If I had known that the things I worried about when he was young would resolve themselves at this point, while I am sure I would have still pushed back then, it would have come more from confidence that he was up to the challenge. That said, I am glad I learned this approach — was taught it? — even if it took so long. Because, better late than never.

Annie Zirkel, M.A. L.P.C., is a local parenting consultant. You can reach her at annie@practicehow.com.

Think Bigger! A Gift from Alex

When thinking about strengths, think bigger than skill attainment.

While my two younger sons are off using all of their strengths to explore the world, my oldest son Alex is severely disabled. As far as skills go, I am proud to note that at 25 he: can hold his own cup and drink from a straw; feed himself blended food; offer his arms through his shirt when being dressed; walk assisted by a gait-trainer up to 500 feet; sign for eat and drink; and is working on learning to choose activities based on photo choices.

If strengths were only seen as skills, the list would stop there. In fact, one of my biggest challenges over the years has been not focusing so much on the much longer list of things he can't do.

But strengths are more than just about doing things. Some of his other strengths include his ability to soothe the world with his amazing and simple smile. His defiance at doing stuff just because others want him to. His insistence that he matters. His ability to forgive my imperfect support of him. His ability to remind the world of more able beings that heart matters. And that there is plenty for people to be grateful for about their own lives.

When looking for strengths in your child (yourself and others), it can help to remember that people matter and are worthwhile even if they can't do all that much to prove it.

— Annie Zirkel

Common Situations and Strength-Spotting

Situation: Child is being flip, rude, challenging, disrespectful
The Strength: It sounds like you are trying to be funny...You clearly want to stand up for yourself...You have strong opinions...You are learning how to use your power...You are trying to express your anger...

Then the Challenge: But it feels more rude or hurtful on my side... Now can you say it in a more respectful way?

Situation: Child is very discouraged and giving up
The Empathy: Your brain/body is working really hard to figure this out/complete this goal...You've been trying to do something really challenging (outside your comfort zone)...

The Strength: I am impressed with how you are still trying even a little!...I know you don't think you can do this, but I have seen you conquer similar challenges like when you learned how to ride your bike, etc. (give concrete examples).

Then the Challenge: (For the child) Maybe your expectations are too high for how quickly you are going to get this. Maybe you are being too hard on your brain and need a break. (For you, the parent) Find and share your faith that you know your child will get this, or if they don't, will still be ok. Then helping them break the goal down into however small of a next step they need to progress.

— Annie Zirkel



HONEY CREEK SUMMER CAMP 2017
 JUNE 21 - AUGUST 25
 Care 8AM-6PM by the day or by the week
 Themed weeks • Weekly field trips • Daily swimming
 Enrichment programming and extended daycare for campers entering kindergarten to 13 years

SPECIALTY CAMPS

- Theatre Camp • Environmental Ed-Ventures
- Scratch Programming • LEGO Robotics
- Spanish Language, Arts & Culture

honeycreekschool.org/summer-program
 hcsummercamp@hc.wash.k12.mi.us
 1735 S Wagner Rd. 734-994-2636 x2240



2017
Ann Arbor Civic Theatre Summer Camps!
 your theatre. your town.

A2CT TECHNICAL THEATRE CAMP: June 26-30, 2017
 Monday - Friday 9AM-4PM | grades 4-12 (fall 2017)
 \$280 for A2CT members/\$300 for non-members

SPINNING DOT GO THEATRE! CAMP: July 10-14, 2017
 Monday-Friday 9AM-12Noon | ages 4-6 (fall 2017)
 \$135 before June 1/\$145 after June 1

SPINNING DOT G2T CAMP: July 5-14, 2017
 Monday-Friday 12:30PM-3:30PM | grades 7-12 (fall 2017)
 \$216 before June 1/\$232 after June 1

SPINNING DOT GLOBAL SPARK! CAMP: August 7-18, 2017
 Monday-Friday, 9AM-12Noon | grades 2-7 (fall 2017)
 \$270 before June 1/\$290 after June 1

FOR MORE INFORMATION: www.a2ct.org OR 734.971.2228

DANCER'S EDGE
 Invites you to join us for Summer 2017 Classes and Camps!

Classes Include... Ballet, Tap, Lyrical, Pointe, Contemporary, Jazz, Acro, Hip Hop, Pom, Creative Movement, Baton, Musical Theatre, and more!

Summer 2017 Camps: Princess Camp, Musical Theatre, Trolls Camp, Disney Jr Camp, Hip Hop Intensive, Acting/Storytelling Camp, Day Camps, and more!




For More Information...
 Call: 734-424-2626
 Email: dextersdancersedge@yahoo.com
www.DextersDancersEdge.com



Crazy Wisdom's Newsletter »
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If you want to know what's going on in the body, mind & spirit community in Ann Arbor and the surrounding areas, sign up on our Email List!

You will get our **Weekly E-newsletter** which features coupons, news about sales and new products, and information about store events and music nights.

You will also receive emails, through us, from organizations, centers and groups that sponsor the **kinds of events, classes and programs that you care about.**

To subscribe, go to www.crazywisdom.net.
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Dancing for Birth — A Language of Movement for Pregnancy



Pregnant moms dance to teach their bodies this language of movement so that when labor begins, they can use these movements to lessen pain, shorten labor, and increase satisfaction with their birth journey.

**STAND UP ↑
for BIRTH!**

dancing for birth™
www.DancingforBirth.com



Dancing for Birth — A Language of Movement for Pregnancy

By Whitney Kolongowski
Photos by Susan Ayer

Dancing for Birth is a group where we explore a language of movement for pregnancy, birth, and after birth. It was created by birth worker and dancer, Stephanie Larson.



Whitney Kolongowski

I have extensive experience in the birth community, although I am not a dancer. This keeps the classes informal and relaxed. In 2007, I became a Certified Professional Midwife. I have attended births in Michigan, Maine, Oregon, Texas, and Senegal, Africa. I am no longer a CPM but am very busy within the birthing community. As a birth and postpartum doula, I assist in home births with local midwives, and I teach childbirth education classes as well as the Dancing for Birth group. I have three children and live in Ann Arbor.

When you experience this class, you will see it is deeply rooted in sacred sharing and wisdom exchange. As an “instructor,” I facilitate this by holding the space, but much of what is gained is

through the essential connection that happens during class time, which is lacking in our society. We have become so separated from one another that we have lost this connection. Coming to circle with your sisters to share and learn is needed the most during the childbearing year. Many moms feel disconnected, alone, and afraid. Eighty percent of mothers experience some baby blues, while twenty percent will experience postpartum depression. Furthermore, we can be fairly certain that these numbers are lower than reality, as the stigma around mental health remains strong. The way to combat this is to participate in a loving community who will respect you and your choices as a mom (whatever they may be), and encourage self-love, acceptance, and growth. This is Dancing for Birth.

Many moms feel disconnected, alone, and afraid. The way to combat this is to participate in a loving community who will respect you and your choices as a mom (whatever they may be), and encourage self-love, acceptance, and growth. This is Dancing for Birth.

Pregnant moms participate in the group dance to encourage positive positioning (helping the baby find its fit within the pelvis to promote easier labor) and for toning and strengthening to prepare for birth. They dance to teach their bodies this language of movement so that when labor begins, they can use these movements to lessen pain, shorten labor, and increase satisfaction with their birth journey. After birth, mom can dance with her baby to help to strengthen her core and pelvic muscles, as well as maintain flexibility during a strenuous time in her life. Dancing lasts about half of the 90-minute class, and is done in a circle. We focus on belly-dancing-type moves, but dabble in other types of dance as well.

All moms learn from each other, gather birthing and parenting tips, and participate in rituals of growth. We explore topics from the birthing community and from abroad (with cultural reverence), such as “Closing of the Bones,” baby wearing, meditation, pelvic floor repair tips and maintenance, “Spinning Babies” exercises, Rebozo use for labor, and many others. I share my tried and true practitioner referrals for common issues relating to pregnancy and birth, and am available to answer questions or to help navigate through difficult emotional times, which often present themselves during the tumultuous life events of pregnancy, birth, and becoming a parent.

Come join us! This is a group that will fill your cup for the week, leaving you connected, thankful, and supported. (Providers and doulas are welcome.)

Whitney Kolongowski is a childbirth educator, birth doula, and Dancing for Birth certified instructor. She teaches at the Center for the Childbearing Year located in Ann Arbor. For more information about Dancing for Birth classes, visit center4cby.com/dancing-for-birth.



This is a group that will fill your cup for the week, leaving you connected, thankful, and supported.



Coming to circle with your sisters to share and learn is needed the most during the childbearing year.



The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal

Events Calendar for Kids • May through August 2017

New, Fun, and Just Plain Cool Things to do!

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"There is no seven wonders of the world in the eyes of a child. There are seven million."

—Walt Streightiff

Mother's Day Fairy Tea in the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room •

May 14, 1 p.m. • Children and their families are welcome for a special Mother's Day tea, including story time and a special activity. Fairy attire is encouraged. Be creative! Tickets are \$11/person (free for babies 18 months and younger), and they are available online at crazywisdom.net prior to the event. For more information, contact Jessica at jessicameyer@crazywisdom.net.

Toddler Massage! with Amber Lee • May 3, 6 p.m. • Learn the benefits of good touch for little ones! Attendees will also find fun ways to incorporate massage into everyday activities. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Kindergarten: What It's Really Like with AAPS Teachers •

May 4, 6:30-8 p.m. • This presentation is for the parents of children who are going into Young 5's or Kindergarten in AAPS this fall. Learn what to expect from AAPS staff and teachers. Includes time to answer questions. Free. Call Marj to register at 994-4949; hyde@aaps.k12.mi.us.

Create BIG Minds: Botany and Color Theory with Flipside Art Studio • Mondays, May 8-29, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. • Gardens are a great place to learn about plants and colors! Parents can bring little ones ages 3-5 for a combined class of art and science involving interactive art projects. Children will learn how plants grow and how to mix primary colors. For details please visit flipsideartstudio.com.

Nature Playgroup with Leslie Science and Nature Center •

May 10, 24; 10-11 a.m. • Outdoor environments are great places for toddlers to develop their senses and for children to exercise. Come for a mix of guided and self-guided outdoor activities that allow children ages 1-3 and their grown-ups to experience the outdoors. Please dress for the weather. Registration recommended. \$4/child (\$3 for members). Call 997-1553; info@lesliesnc.org or lesliesnc.org.

Nature Tales with Leslie Science and Nature Center • 10-11 a.m. • Each themed session includes hands-on activities like live animal encounters, guided hikes, group games, and enticing stories to inspire parents and children to explore and appreciate the outdoors in Ann Arbor's backyard. Open to children age 5 and under. Please dress for the weather. \$4/child/session (\$3 for members). Call 997-1553; info@lesliesnc.org or lesliesnc.org.

May 11, 13 • In the Garden

May 25, 27 • In the Sky

Critters up Close with Leslie Science and Nature Center at Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum • LSNC staff will bring a selection of live animals to the museum for hands-on activities. Animals will meet and greet visitors on Saturdays from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (with a mid-day animal naptime) and on Sundays from 1-4 p.m. All ages are welcome. Free with museum admission. Call 995-5439; aahom.org/experience/event-calendar.

May 13-14 • Vernal Pond Life: Salamanders and Friends!

June 10-11 • Turtles!

July 8-9 • Insects!

Aug. 12-13 • Snakes!

Fairy Garden Workshops with Bloom Gardens • 2 p.m. • These workshops welcome children and guide them through creating magical miniature landscapes. \$25/event. Call Atsal at 426-6600; atsal@bloom-gardens.com or lotusgardenscapes.com.

May 13 • Mom's Day Fairy Gardens • Kids and the special women in their lives will make lovely landscapes.

June 10 • Small Plants and Little Gnomes Fairy Garden • Try adding tiny plants and garden gnomes!

July 8 • It's a Party Fairy Garden • Kids can create fun and festive places for fairies.

Aug. 12 • Come to the Beach Fairy Garden • These mini-beach scenes are appropriate for fairies and mermaids alike.

Family Adventure Day with Deanne Bednar • May 28, 2-6 p.m. • Learn about natural building and sustainability by touring the grounds and enjoying hands-on interactions with nature. Make an earth sculpting mix, create a fairy house or stick fort, and learn other nature skills. Bring a picnic to eat by a waterfall or bonfire. \$30/adult, \$15/youth (\$5 discount by May 14). Call 248-236-5432; ecoartdb@gmail.com or strawbalestudio.org.

Outdoor Survival for Kids with DeLynn Lake • June 7, 6 p.m. • This interactive workshop is for all ages. Participants will learn simple ways to survive if they become lost or stranded. DeLynn will share Native American Indian skills for all areas of life. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Meditation for Kids! with DeLynn Lake • July 5, 6 p.m. • Meditation is a key to success. Learn simple ways to meditate and how it affects the mind, body, and soul. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Blue Turtle Nature Awareness and Wilderness Skills Day Camps • June 19-July 28 • Children will learn shelter building, water and food gathering, animal tracking, and plant identification. They will also participate in craft projects and go on culinary adventures. Boys and girls ages 7-13 are welcome. For details please visit blueturtlenaturecamp.com.

Clay and Creativity Camps with Ann Arbor Art Center • June 26-Sept. 1 • Choose from over 20 themes! Creativity Camps are suitable for children ages 5-12. Clay Camps are suitable for children ages 9-12. For details please visit annarborartcenter.org/education/creativity-camps.



Once Upon a Time Camp with Wild Swan Theater • July 17-21, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. • Children will use favorite stories and nursery rhymes as starting points to travel where anything is possible! Storytelling, creative movement, and just plain silliness will make this class ideal for young actors ages 4-6. \$110. For details please visit wildswantheater.org/education/classes-and-camps.

Broadway Bound! with Wild Swan Theater • Aug. 7-Aug. 11, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. • Dive into the world of musical theater! Students ages 8-12 will learn to express emotion and objective through song. Each day will consist of dance technique, theater games, crafts, music rehearsal, and choreography rehearsal. The session will conclude with a showcase. \$160. For details please visit wildswantheater.org/education/classes-and-camps.

Thrive's Kids Lecture with Thrive! Wellness Center • Aug. 9, 7 p.m. • This event is designed for parents who struggle to get their children to understand the importance of eating healthy. Dr. Shannon invites parents to bring their young ones to learn about healthy eating habits. Call Jessica to reserve seats at 470-6766; jessica@thrive-wellness-center.com or thrive-wellness-center.com.

FAST(Tattum) Reading Program for Dyslexia with Susan Major • Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m. • This innovative technique synthesizes current brain research with the principles of several reading programs, including the language structure of the Orton-Gillingham method. It has produced remarkable results for dyslexic readers of all ages. Free. Call Susan at 996-0702; samajor@comcast.net or majortutoring.com.

Tai Chi for Kids with Jonathan Buckman • Sundays, 4:30-5:30 p.m. • This class invites kids to learn about themselves and introduces them to skills that can bring a lifetime of happiness. It covers the slow tai chi form, playful pushing hands, and meditation techniques to use at home or school. Open to children ages 5-17. \$21/drop-in or \$70/month. Call Alexis at 845-9786; alexis@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

Camp PAWS Jr. with Humane Society of Huron Valley • June 12-16, July 24-28; 9 a.m.-12 p.m. • This camp is ideal for young animal lovers ages 4-5. It includes animal-themed games, crafts, snacks, animal care lessons, and visits with adoptable animals. \$115. Contact Amelia at 661-3584; humaneed@hshv.org or hshv.org/camppaws.

Camp PAWS with Humane Society of Huron Valley • June 19-Sept. 1; 9 a.m.-4 p.m. • This camp is designed for budding animal-lovers ages 6-11. It includes visits from animal rescue groups and daily interactions with adoptable animals, games, and humane education lessons. Participants will learn about animal behavior, animal needs, and the environment. \$225. Contact Amelia at 661-3584; humaneed@hshv.org or hshv.org/camppaws.

CampPURRS with Tiny Lions Lounge and Adoption Center • July 10-14, July 24-28, Aug. 7-11, Aug. 21-25; 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m. • This camp is designed for young adults who want to dive into special animal topics and interact with furry feline friends. It covers animal behavior, veterinary science, animal cruelty investigations, and animal photography. \$125. Contact humaneed@hshv.org or tinylions.org/camppurrs.

"Muck Boot" Camp: Life Skills for Youth at Heritage Hill Haven with Kathleen A. Hinderer • June-Aug. • Campers will learn to effectively deal with the "muck" in life through activities such as groundwork, riding, games, crafts, and optional service work. Engaging equine-centered activities will emphasize effective social skills, communication, teamwork, leadership, "herd dynamics," and empathy. Sign up for one or multiple sessions with different themes. Prices vary. Call 622-9500; haveninfo@heritagehillhaven.org or heritagehillhaven.org.

Horseplay and Horse Feathers at Heritage Hill Haven with Kathleen A. Hinderer • Ongoing by appointment • Combining "horsepower" and farm life with therapy and learning makes horse sense! Discover the healing power of horses through ground work and mounted learning activities in individual or group sessions. For youth with attention, learning, or social interaction challenges. Prices vary. Call 622-9500; haveninfo@heritagehillhaven.org or heritagehillhaven.org.

Equine Assisted Therapy at Michigan Abilities Center with Kathleen Hinderer • Ongoing by appointment • Innovative therapy, learning, and wellness facilitated by horse sense and horsepower for all ages and abilities with special needs. Equine assisted therapy combines unique learning with the uncanny instincts of horses. Hippotherapy, therapeutic riding, and mental health and recreational riding services are offered through customized individual, group, and inclusive programs in a sensory-friendly and barrier-free facility. Prices vary. Call 622-9500; macinfo@michiganabilitiescenter.org or michiganabilitiescenter.org.

Fireside Fun: A Good Old-Fashioned Campfire Circle with Leslie Science and Nature Center • May 21, June 18, July 16, Aug. 20; 6:30-10 p.m. • Families can enjoy a relaxing campfire while roasting marshmallows and swapping stories. Bring camp chairs, and s'mores fixings. LSNC will provide the campfire and marshmallows. Free. Call 997-1553; info@lesliesnc.org or lesliesnc.org.

Great American Backyard Campout with Leslie Science and Nature Center • June 24-25 • Families can participate in a nationwide event dedicated to enjoying nature. They can pitch tents near the LSNC raptors and critters, bring a picnic dinner, and enjoy a campfire. Breakfast provided. Minimum of one adult per family required. Preregistration required by June 15. \$50/family. Call 997-1553; info@lesliesnc.org or lesliesnc.org.



"Children are made readers on the laps of their parents."

—Emilie Buchwald



New, Fun, and Just Plain Cool Things to do! List your kid, tween or teen events in the September through December 2017 issue of the CW Journal!

The deadline for submissions for the next issue (September through December 2017) is July 1, 2017.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

A Free Guide to Local Classes, Workshops, and Events
May through August 2017

Edited by
Robin Lily Goldberg

Addiction and Recovery

Does Addiction Treatment Work? with Carl Christensen • May 16, 7:30-9 p.m.

• Dr. Christensen will review recent research on treatment for addiction including Twelve Step, residential, and medication-assisted therapy approaches. He will also address controversial issues in the addiction and recovery field. Free. Call 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series.

Tobacco Cessation and Addiction Recovery with Anna Byberg • May 23, 7:30-9 p.m.

• This program will describe the prevalence of tobacco use and recovery, information on tobacco cessation techniques for people with alcohol and other drug addiction, and suggestions for implementation of tobacco cessation support by addiction treatment programs and professionals. Free. Call 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series.

Co-Occurring Disorders: Understanding Self-Medication and Complex Recovery with Jeremy Suttles • May 30, 7:30-9 p.m. • This presentation will provide an overview of what co-occurring disorders are, how they are identified, their prevalence, and the most effective methods of treatment. Emphasis will be placed on a comprehensive model of recovery that provides for emotional and physical health as well as ongoing sobriety. Free. Call 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/education-series.

Teens Using Drugs: What to Know and What to Do with Ray Dalton and Jules Cobbs • Part One on May 2, June 6; Part Two on May 9, June 13; 7:30-9 p.m. • This ongoing series helps participants learn to understand, identify, and address adolescent alcohol and other drug problems. Targeted primarily to parents, inclusive of teens, other family members, professionals, and others interested. Free. Call Ray at 485-8725; info@dawnfarm.org or dawnfarm.org/programs/teens-using-drugs.

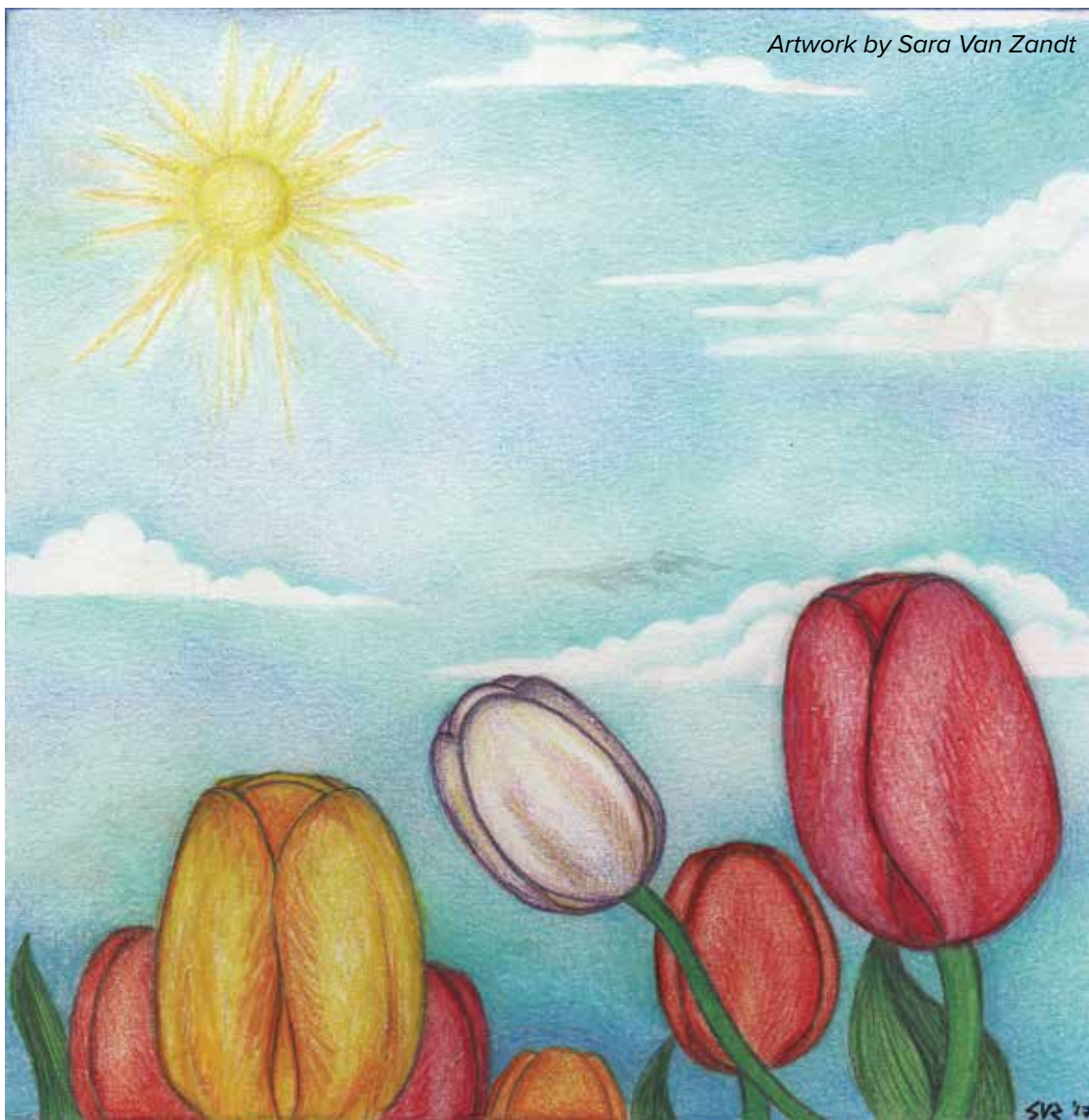
Animals and Pets

Animal Communication Basic Class with Judy Liu Ramsey • May 12-14 • Learn how to communicate with animals and how they communicate with each other. Participants will open their intuitive and telepathic abilities through a fun, step-by-step process of exercises and interaction with live animals. \$150 (\$50 deposit due by May 1). Call 665-3202; ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com or hearttoheartanimalcommunication.net.

Community Cat Training Class with Humane Society of Huron Valley • May 19, June 16; 1-3 p.m. • Become an advocate for feral cats. Participants will learn how Trap-Neuter-Return (TRN) helps reduce the number of free-roaming cats, lowers stray intake and euthanasia, and creates better environments for community cats. Free. Call Cheryl at 661-3523; tnr@hshv.org or hshv.org/tnr.

Walk and Wag with Humane Society of Huron Valley • May 20, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. • Participate in the area's biggest party and fundraiser for needy animals! Attendees can run a 5K with their dog, or just enjoy the dog-friendly activities. \$30. Call Joy at 661-3536; joyj@hshv.org or hshv.org/walkandwag.

Artwork by Sara Van Zandt



Sunday Afternoon Naturalists with Leslie Science and Nature Center • 3:30-4:30 p.m.

• Join LSNC educators to hike through Black Pond Woods and see what's happening. Recommended for teens and adults. Preregistration recommended. \$1/person. Call 997-1553; info@lesliesnc.org or lesliesnc.org.

July 9 • Insects • These six-legged creatures are important for the health and vitality of prairie woods.

July 23 • Wildflowers • Search for summer wildflowers that are in bloom.

Aug. 6 • Reptiles and Amphibians • These critters can be found in the vernal pond in Black Pond woods.

Aug. 20 • Trees • Dive into dendrology by visiting oak savannahs, mulberry bushes, and tulip trees.

Animals and Therapy

Happy Horse Hour with Kirsten Tang and Loretta Pickford • May 5, 19, June 2, 16, July 7, 21, Aug. 4, 18; 6:30-8:30 p.m. • This is an opportunity to relax, have fun, and experience the restorative energy of horses.

Participants will interact with horses, enjoy the beauty of the farm, and learn more about themselves through Equine Assisted Psychotherapy and Personal Development. Appetizers provided. Call 419-575-0016; aktailsandtrails@yahoo.com or facebook.com/AKTailsandTrails.

Equine Assisted Therapy and Mindfulness with Kathleen Hinderer • Ongoing by appointment • Therapy on horseback and equine-inspired mindfulness create a powerful healing session as the motion of the horse generates a deep sense of relaxation, and the connection with the horse draws in energy. Through mounted and grounded activities that promote wellness, participants of all ages can discover the ABCs of Horseplay (agility, balance, and coordination). No experience necessary. Facility is sensory-friendly and barrier-free. Prices vary. Call 622-9500; macinfo@michiganabilitiescenter.org or michiganabilitiescenter.org.

Horse Back Riding Lessons with a Holistic Approach with Jayne Bailey • Ongoing by appointment • Participants can nurture body and soul as they learn to ride. Programs are personalized for each individual's physical and spiritual wellbeing. Offering training from the ground up to classical dressage. Call 780-6723; dressagebyjayne@gmail.com.

Aromatherapy and Essential Oils

Be Young Total Health with Dana Clay Young • May 11-13 • The first two days involve advanced trainings in Physical Aromatic Touch (PAT), Lymphatic Aromatic Touch (LAT), Emotional Aromatic Touch (EAT), and Nutrition. The third day features a free introduction to Total Health for new people. Reservations required to attend. Call Barb for prices at 517-914-4133; barbmcconnell7@gmail.com or beyoungth.com/partners/barbmcconnell.

Back 2 School and Building Confidence with Michelle McLemore • Aug. 23, 6 p.m. • Learn how herbs, plants, and oils can improve general health, increase focus, peace, confidence, memory, creative thought, and recovery from computer fatigue. Great for teen students or office workers of any age. \$10. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

“Miracles are not contrary to nature, but only contrary to what we know about nature.”

— Saint Augustine

Art and Craft

Westside Art Hop • May 13, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. • Take a walk through one of Ann Arbor's most historic neighborhoods as residents open their homes, studios, garages, and workspaces to local artists. Attendees will see a wide variety of high quality artwork in different mediums for show and for purchase. Get to know Ann Arbor's talent with a unique twist! Free. Call Sophie at 649-9850; sophiegrillet@gmail.com or westsidearthop.weebly.com.

Backyard Art Fair with Lynlee Sky, Jimmy Neal, and Jan Wilkiemeyer • May 20, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. • Visit three clay artists in their studio for an art sale and demonstrations. Free. Contact Lynlee at skynstars@hotmail.com or artandyoga.blogspot.com.

DIY Dragon Boats with Robin Hills Farm • Mondays, Wednesdays, Saturdays; May 15-June 17 • During this course, participants will learn how to build a two-person Dragon Boat. They will leave with a seaworthy vessel to take on future adventures, and have the opportunity to race in the annual Dragon Boat Festival in August. Course registration may be shared among a team of friends or family members. \$450. Call Ben at 834-8496; education@robinhillsfarm.com or robinhillsfarm.com/events.

Broommaking Workshop with Michigan Folk School • June 3, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. • Discover the art of making handmade brooms. This class introduces broommaking materials and construction. Participants will learn how to use simple materials to make a real broom (whisk broom or pot-scrubber/cake-tester) for decorative or functional use. \$49 tuition, \$20 materials. Call Anne at 477-8943; astevenson@wccnet.edu.

Fundamentals of Upholstery with Ana Barge • Sundays, June 4-July 2; 1-4 p.m. • Learn basic upholstery methods for both reupholstering and constructing upholstered pieces from scratch. Participants will learn which textiles are suitable for upholstery and they will work with foams, batting, piping, and zippers. \$89 tuition, \$25 materials. Call Anne at 477-8943; astevenson@wccnet.edu.

Introduction to Stained Glass with Michigan Folk School • Aug. 15-17, 6 p.m.-9 p.m. • Discover the beauty of stained glass. Participants will learn basic techniques with small projects like dreamcatchers and nightlights. \$85 tuition, \$100 materials. Call Anne at 477-8943; astevenson@wccnet.edu.

Discover SoulCollage!® with Laura Seligman • May 11, 31, June 21, July 11, Aug. 17; 1-4:30 p.m. • This workshop begins with creating a personal deck of collaged cards to reflect one's life and inner wisdom. Then participants will explore how the many facets of their personality, relationships, archetypes, and energetic dimensions impact their lives and how the personalized cards can bring more self-awareness, guidance, and transformation toward a richer and more creative life. For artists and non-artists alike. \$55 (includes materials). Contact lauraseligman@gmail.com or lauraseligman.com.

Astrology

Drop-In Astrology Readings with Alia Wesala • Second and Fourth Saturdays, 3-6 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom • Alia provides brief astrological consultation sessions to individuals, couples, and families. \$1.50 per minute. No appointment necessary. Call 719-0782; astrolibration@gmail.com.

Open Forum: Intro to Medical Astrology with Debra Rozek • June 11, 1:30-4 p.m. • Learn about the astrological building blocks of biology, personal health, and health habits. Includes natal charts to illustrate basic concepts plus Q&A period. \$10. Call Sue at 248-765-3131; smartmich2010@gmail.com.

SMART Annual Round Table Summer Luncheon • July 15, 1:30-4 p.m. • Come to talk about astrology and eat fine food. The only cost is the price of lunch. Call Sue at 248-765-3131; smartmich2010@gmail.com.

Predictive/Forecasting Astrology with Pam Gallagher • Aug. 20, 1:30-4 p.m. • Pam will cover major transits, secondary progressions, solar arcs, declinations, eclipses, and their use in predictive astrology. \$20 (SMART members \$15). Call Sue at 248-765-3131; smartmich2010@gmail.com.

Author Events

In a Fractured, Divisive World, the Poets of All Nations Guide the Way Toward Peace with Frederick Glaysher • May 13, June 10; 7-9 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • *The Parliament of Poets: An Epic Poem* is a shaman tale chant about journeying toward healing the psyche of the planet. In a world of Quantum science, Apollo calls the poets of all nations to assemble on the moon to consult on the meaning of modern life. The author will talk and read selections. Free. Call 248-933-1206; earthrisepress@gmail.com or earthrisepress.net.

Ayurveda

Learning about Panchakarma and How to Make it Part of Your Lifestyle with Nia-Avelina Aguirre • May 23, June 20; 6-8 p.m. • Everyone needs a gentle detox now and then. Attendees will learn several Ayurvedic ways to cleanse, build, and balance the total self—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual bodies. \$60/session (includes take-home package). Call 883-7513; niaaguirre.nd@gmail.com.

Food Series Using Ayurvedic Herbs and Spices for Healing and Prevention with Nia-Avelina Aguirre • June 3, 9:30-11:30 a.m.; July 25, 6-8 p.m. • Learn easily prepared Ayurvedic recipes to improve digestion and healing. The June theme is "Spice Up Your Rice!" and the July theme is "Rekindle Your Digestive Fire!" \$50/session (includes take-home kit). Call 883-7513; niaaguirre.nd@gmail.com.

Bodywork

Talk and Demo on Ortho-Bionomy with Susan Phare and Cinda Hocking • May 6, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. • This healing modality uses gentle movements, including comfortable compression and traction positioning, to help remind the body how to heal itself. It uses osteopathic principles for pain relief, relaxation, empowerment, and well-being. Ortho-bionomy is a welcome addition to any bodyworker's repertoire, especially as the gentle nature of focusing on the comfort of the body allows the practitioner to be easy in their own motions. Free. Call Mary at 796-7794; nshaassociates@gmail.com or naturopathicschoolofannarbor.net.

Deep Diving with Ho'oponopono with Robert Auerbach • May 11, June 15; 7-9 p.m. • Work with this powerful Hawaiian forgiveness process to explore and release limiting life stories and the illusions of duality and separateness that lie behind them. \$30. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Are you Losing the War with Gravity? An Intro to Rolf Structural Integration (Rolfing) with Robert Auerbach • May 25, June 29; 7-8 p.m. • Explore how injuries, emotional traumas, and belief systems get stored and organized into chronically "frozen" postures within the body. Rolf Structural Integration bodywork reverses these patterns to improve mobility, reduce pain, and increase flexibility. Donation requested. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Thai Bodywork Training with Jennifer Giacomelli • June 22-24 • This is an expert foundational training of Thai bodywork theory, practice, and hands-on techniques for classical work and table work. Open to all. 18 CE for massage therapists. \$350 (\$295 by May 15). Call Mary at 796-7794; nshaassociates@gmail.com or naturopathicschoolofannarbor.net.

Book Discussion Groups

Crazy Wisdom Monthly Book Discussion • 7:30 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • The monthly book discussion connects participants through the selection, reading, and discussion of books from Crazy Wisdom Bookstore's diverse inventory. All book selections will be available at Crazy Wisdom Bookstore at a 30% discount. Discussion is free. Call 665-2757; email deb@crazywisdom.net or visit the Crazy Wisdom Monthly Book Discussion page on meetup.com.

May 19 • *The Trump Survival Guide: Everything You Need to Know about Living through What You Hoped Would Never Happen* by Gene Stone, hosted by Bill Zirinsky • The election of Donald Trump rocked an already divided America and left millions of citizens feeling bereft and powerless. This book offers invaluable guidance and concrete solutions citizens can use to make a difference – showing them how to move from anger and despair to activism. A free-wheeling conversation about living in the Age of Trump.

June 16 • *Escape Routes* by Johann Christoph Arnold, hosted by Deb Flint • This title tells real-life stories of people who have found their way out of life's hells despite the odds. The author says it's not a self-help book, but it will guide you to a more hopeful and meaningful life.

July 14 • *We are Afghan Women, Voices of Hope-Introduction* by Laura Bush, hosted by Deb Flint • This book chronicles the lives of young, old, educated and still learning women as they create new paths for themselves in Afghanistan, which has been described as "the worst nation in the world to be a woman."

August 18 • *The Path* by Michael Puett, hosted by Deb Flint • What Chinese Philosophers can teach us about the good life. Described as a part practical guide, part philosophical exploration showing how ancient ideas can guide us on the path of a good life today.

Jewel Heart Readers • May 9, June 13, July 18, Aug. 8; 7-8:30 p.m. • All are welcome to enjoy a lively discussion on monthly dharma-related book selections with fellow sangha. Free (donations welcome). Call 994-3387; annarbor@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

If you are interested in obtaining some biographical information about the teachers, lecturers, and workshop leaders whose classes, talks and events are listed in this Calendar, please look in the section that follows the Calendar, which is called "Background Information" and which starts on page 101.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Breathwork

Consciousness Rising Breathwork/Meditation with Dave and Pat Krajovic • May 8, June 12, July 10, Aug. 7; 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. • This workshop will combine group energies with meditation and conscious breathing to expel stress, uplift the spirit, and bring more joy and peace. Includes invocations, choreographed music, guided meditation, affirmations, and personal hands-on facilitation. \$29. Call 416-5200; relax@bodywork-healingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Transformational Breath® Experiential Evening Workshops with Julie Wolcott and Marcia Bailey • May 18, 23, June 14, Aug. 15, 24; 7-9 p.m. • This workshop will present the benefits of the breath process and lead participants through setting an intention, experiencing a full breath session, and ending with integration. The rewards may include new awareness, physical and emotional healing, clarity, and joy through circular, connected breathing. \$40/session (\$30 for repeaters). Call Julie at 355-1671; info@BreatheAnnArbor.com or BreatheAnnArbor.com.

THE BREATH with Julie Wolcott and Marcia Bailey • June 10; 10 a.m.-5 p.m. • This full day of Transformational Breathwork (TBr) will enable participants to embrace innocence and forgiveness through two fully facilitated breath sessions. The event will also cover didactic material from Michael Brown's Presence Process (TPP). These complementary practices are simple yet profound. \$100 (\$90 for experienced breathers). Call Julie at 355-1671; info@BreatheAnnArbor.com or BreatheAnnArbor.com.

Buddhism

White Tara Meditation Sessions with Jewel Heart • Sundays, May 7-Aug. 27, 9:45-10:45 a.m. • Tara is the mother goddess of Tibetan Buddhism. She is particularly associated with healing and long life. These gatherings involve guided meditation using visualization techniques to overcome physical, mental, and emotional suffering. Free. Call 994-3387; programs@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

Unlimited Compassion and Wisdom: Three Principles of the Path with Jewel Heart • Wednesdays, May 3-Aug. 9, 7-8:30 p.m. • The Three Principles of the Path is a condensed summation of the path to enlightenment, which includes the determination to be free, unlimited compassion, and wisdom. Gelek Rinpoche's transcript serves as course material for this six-month course offered in three eight-week parts. \$80/part (free for members). Call 994-3387; annarborregistration@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

Sundays with Gelek Rinpoche • Sundays, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. • Recorded talks by Gelek Rinpoche are shown weekly at Jewel Heart, and they are available as video webcasts. Open to all. Free. Call 994-3387; programs@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

Sunday Services with Zen Buddhist Temple • Sundays, 10-11:30 a.m. or 4-5:30 p.m. • The morning meditation service consists of two periods of meditation followed by chanting and a talk. The afternoon dharma service has two shorter periods for sitting meditation, sometimes a walking meditation, reflection, chanting, and a short talk. Donations accepted. Call 761-6520; AnnArbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org or ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

Introductory Zen Meditation Courses with Zen Buddhist Temple • Five Thursdays beginning May 25 or July 13; 6:15-8:30 p.m. • The viewpoint of Zen is that life lived fully in each moment is the end and purpose in itself, not the means for something else. This course takes place in the temple's meditation hall and includes simple stretching exercises, work with the breath, meditation postures, concentration, and mindfulness practice. \$160 (\$120 unwaged). Call 761-6520; annarbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org or ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

Overnight Introductory Meditation Courses with Zen Buddhist Temple • July 21-22 • Designed for those unable to take the Thursday evening course because of schedule or distance. These weekends take place in the temple's meditation hall and includes simple stretching exercises, work with the breath, meditation postures, concentration, and mindfulness practice. \$160 (\$120 for students or unwaged). Call 761-6520; annarbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org or ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

Summer Lecture Series with Zen Buddhist Temple • July 12, 19, 26; 7:30-9 p.m. • This series features panel discussions on topics of socially engaged Buddhism including climate change, reformation of the prison system, and a special art exhibition from death row. Call for details 761-6520; annarbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org or ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

Summer Peace Camp with Zen Buddhist Temple • July 28-Aug. 2 • Programs focus on learning about peace and happiness from the Buddhist perspective on the interrelationship of all things. Activities emphasize fun, mindfulness, cooperation, and appreciation for animals and plants while seeking to balance structure and spontaneity. Tent camping for families and children of all ages. Call for prices 761-6520; annarbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org or ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

— ◆ —
“Dare to be different. Enjoy all of life.”

— Michael Singer —
— ◆ —

Ceremonies, Celebrations, and Rituals

Buddha's Birthday with Zen Buddhist Temple • May 6-7 • This weekend celebration features chanting, entertainment, a public forum on Zen and social media, a vegetarian buffet, a blessing service for youth, and a lantern-lighting service. Call 761-6520; annarbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org or ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

Community Summer Solstice Celebration with In Sacred Balance • June 17, 5 p.m. • This annual family-friendly celebration is a lovely opportunity to honor the season at a local park with song, stories, community, and a ritual blessing on the waters of the world. Free. Call ShuNahSii at 761-9148; robin@insacredbalance.com or insacredbalance.com.

Summer Solstice with Esther Kennedy • June 18, 3-4:30 p.m. • The summer solstice awakens the world to the triumph of light over darkness. In the northern hemisphere, it is the day of most light in the year. Attendees will gather to open themselves to the light of consciousness and promise. Donations welcome, registration requested. Call the Weber Center at 517-266-4000; webercenter@adriandominicans.org or weber.adriandominicans.org.

Summer Solstice—A Multigenerational Celebration of Light and Growth with Michigan Friends Center • June 21, 6-9 p.m. • This event celebrates the longest day with a potluck dinner followed by a bonfire around which people will share thoughts, stories, and songs. All ages welcome. Bring food to share, a personal place setting, and a story or poem to read after dinner. Donations welcome. Call 475-1892; manager@mfccenter.org or mfccenter.org.

Ullambana Day Service with Zen Buddhist Temple • Aug. 27, 11:30 a.m. • The day involves rites and service to wish the dead a rightful place among the living, and to release them from suffering in their next rebirth. Prior consultation appointment necessary. Call 761-6520; annarbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org or ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

Channeling

The Gathering with Karlta Zarley • Third Tuesdays, 7-8:30 p.m. • Participants will share a channeled message from spirit about what is happening in the world and how to shift energy so that humanity can move forward along ascension pathways easily. Time for questions and answers, and personal messages may also come through. Participants are welcome to drop in at any time. Suggested donation \$10. Contact kzarley88@gmail.com or kartazarley.com.

Evening with Aaron Channeled by Barbara Brodsky • May 10, 7-9 p.m. • Aaron will offer talks channeled by Barbara Brodsky on topics such as vipassana and pure awareness meditation, working with inner guidance, and supporting changes in both physical and spiritual bodies through work with body energy, the elements, sound, and open heart. Followed by Q&A. Donation requested. Call Tana at 477-5848; info@deepspring.org or deepspring.org.

Remembering Wholeness—Darshan with the Mother • May 21, June 18; 2 p.m. • Energy sharing (darshan) with the Mother is channeled through Barbara Brodsky and provides an interaction between the human and the divine, which focuses and draws upon the consciousness of the human as the Mother takes each person's hands and looks into his or her eyes. Donation requested. Call Tana at 477-5848; info@deepspring.org or deepspring.org.

Chanting

Guru Gita with Atmaram Chaitanya • Saturdays, 10-11 a.m. • The Guru Gita is a devotional chant from the Skanda Purana on the esoteric significance of the guru and the guru-disciple relationship. Guests are invited to bring a small photo or murti of their guru to place on the altar during the program. Chanting books are provided. Free. Call Kashi at 883-6947; atmaram@kashinivas.org or kashinivas.org.

Chanting with Ann Arbor Kirtan • May 3, June 7, July 5, Aug. 2; 7:30-9:30 p.m. • This event is an informal evening of yogic and Sanskrit chanting. Kirtan is a participatory call and response, cross-cultural music experience that incorporates the audience into the performance. Suggested donation \$5. Call Kashi at 883-6947; kashi@kashinivas.org or kirtanannarbor.org.

Childbirth

One-Day Birth Preparation with Deb Rhizal • May 6, June 3, July 8, Aug. 12; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. • A practical “nuts and bolts” how-to class about helping labor to go smoothly. The class is designed to help expecting mothers clarify what a positive birth means to them and empower them to prepare for it. \$175. Call 604-1841; contact@debrhizal.com or pregnancyarts.com.

Mindfulness for Childbirth with Melissa Marback and Susan Greenlee • June 2-4 • An obstetrician and a nurse-midwife team teach this mindfulness-based childbirth preparation course. Limited to 14 participants. \$157.50/person (includes mp3 with guided meditations for pregnancy). Call Susan at 248-231-7188; susangreeleecn@gmail.com.
Birth and Baby with Katy Gladwin • Starts June 5 or July 31 • This six-week series covers birth and baby basics to provide effective, practical, relevant information that cre-

ates healthier and happier lives for parents and babies. Three weeks focus on making labor go well, and three weeks discuss the transition after bringing baby home. \$290. Call Deb at 609-1841; contact@debrhizal.com or pregnancyarts.com.

Half-Day Baby and More! with Sierra Hillbrand • May 20, June 24; 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
 • This class addresses life after the baby arrives! The class covers vital information on breastfeeding, understanding and soothing newborns, and holistic wellbeing. \$135. Call Deb at 609-1841; contact@debrhizal.com or pregnancyarts.com.

Labor Support Workshop with Ariana Riegel • June 18, 2-5 p.m. • This class offers the labor team (consisting of mother, primary partner, and additional support person) tools to help the birthing mother. This will include very basic birth physiology, comfort measures, routine procedures, and decision-making skills. Free. Call 635-5676; ariana@sacred-rootsservices.com or sacredrootsservices.com.

Meet the Doulas with Toni Auker • May 15, July 17; 7-8:30 p.m. • This class is for those who are considering hiring a doula. It begins with a short presentation on the role of a doula, followed by informal mingling for attendees to meet and chat with several local doulas. Free. Call 663-1523; aukertoni@gmail.com or center4cby.com.

Advanced Business Training for Birth Professionals with Patty Brennan • May 20, Aug. 5; 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. • This highly interactive workshop covers thinking like an entrepreneur, establishing value, acing interviews, marketing on a budget, optimizing websites, online marketing tips, networking, goal setting, time management, and more. Learn from a small business expert and author of *The Doula Business Guide: Creating a Successful MotherBaby Business* and *The Doula Business Guide Workbook: Tools to Create a Thriving Business*. \$195 (\$175 early bird). Call 663-1523; patty@center4cby.com or center4cby.com.

Ready for Birth with Center for the Childbearing Year • Wednesdays, May 17-June 21; 6:30-9 p.m. • Navigate the birth journey with confidence by learning natural approaches to pain management, support techniques, and comfort measures (how partners can help). \$275/couple. Call 663-1523; patty@center4cby.com or center4cby.com.

Ready for Birth Condensed Class with Center for the Childbearing Year • June 3, 10; 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. or July 22, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. or Thursdays, Aug. 17-31, 6:30-9 p.m. • This interactive, hands-on class is perfect for couples with busy schedules or those seeking a refresher class. Learn natural approaches to pain management, support techniques, comfort measures, and tips for smoothing recovery and adjustment postpartum. \$175/couple. Call 663-1523; patty@center4cby.com or center4cby.com.

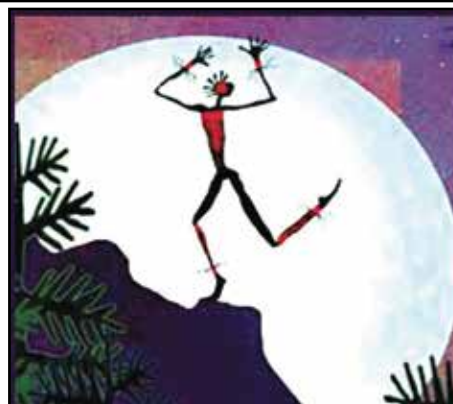
Dancing for Birth with Whitney Kolongowski • Six Wednesdays, May 2-June 6 or July 12-Aug. 16; 6:45-8:15 p.m. • This class is a fusion of pre/postnatal fitness, birth preparation, and support circle. Laugh, move, and get endorphins flowing while learning moves that open the pelvis and help baby settle into a good birthing position. New moms can wear their babies and keep dancing. First week free; \$25/drop-in; \$127/six-week series. Call 663-1523; patty@center4cby.com or center4cby.com.

Breastfeeding Basics and Caring for Your Newborn with Center for the Childbearing Year • June 17, July 29; 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. • This hands-on class is designed to guide new parents through their choices and teach skills to start strong with breastfeeding and caring for newborns. Take the full-day workshop or choose Breastfeeding Basics in the morning (topics include reading hunger cues, latching and positioning, and how often and how long to nurse) or Newborn Care in the afternoon (topics include techniques to calm a newborn, baby wearing, diapering options, and bathing). \$100/couple for the full day, \$60/couple for a half day. Call 663-1523; patty@center4cby.com or center4cby.com.

Breastfeeding Basics for Doulas with Barbara Robertson • June 22, 6-9:15 p.m. • Learn the latest in evidence-based breastfeeding support from a lactation expert. This class will enhance a doula's ability to assist breastfeeding mothers immediately post-birth and in the early days postpartum, and it fulfills a DONA International certification requirement for doulas. \$80 (\$65 early registration). Call 663-1523; patty@center4cby.com or center4cby.com.

DONA Birth Doula Workshop with Patty Brennan • June 23-25 • This workshop prepares participants to become professional doulas through hands-on training that fulfills two certifications requirements through DONA International. Neither motherhood nor a medical background is necessary to become a doula—just a passion for birth and the desire to support moms. \$535 (\$485 early registration). Call 663-1523; patty@center4cby.com or center4cby.com.

Top Seven Questions about Becoming a Doula: Monthly Teleseminar with Patty Brennan • May 1, June 5, Aug. 7; 8-9 p.m. • Doula business expert and author of *The Doula Business Guide* will host an interactive conference call for anyone wanting to learn about doula training, career paths, the "on call" lifestyle, blending doula work and family life, the viability of doula businesses, and more. Free. Preregistration required. Call 663-1523; patty@center4cby.com or center4cby.com.



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- IMPROVED HEALTH
- LESS FEAR
- TO AGE WELL
- HAPPINESS
- FUN
- GETTING UNSTUCK
- GREATER EFFECTIVENESS
- LESS ANXIETY
- CLARITY
- TO BE ALL THAT YOU CAN BE?

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The Crazy Wisdom Community Room

A great space for classes, workshops, meetings and more!



Our community room has comfortable seating, and is a warm and relaxing space.

If you would like to hold an event, teach a class, bring an author to town, give a lecture, demonstrate your bodywork skills, lead a seasonal ceremony, or organize a lunchtime group meditation in downtown Ann Arbor...

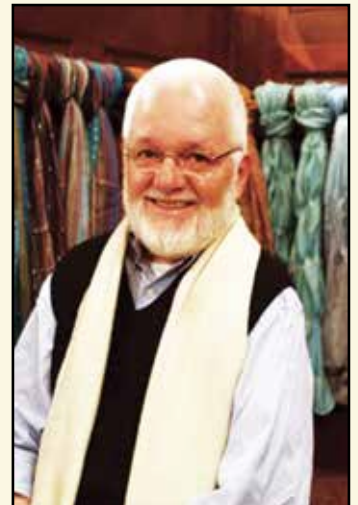
then, Crazy Wisdom Bookstore & Tea Room is the place to do it!

Call Deb Flint at Crazy Wisdom 734.665.2757 or visit: bit.ly/CWcommunityroom



Train to be an independent spiritual director?

Spiritual director Jonathan Ellis is a former co-owner of Crazy Wisdom and then continued to be a mentor and friend to the longtime current owners. He serves five dozen or so individuals each month from a variety of backgrounds, faiths, and professions who seek guidance on their own spiritual journey through life. He writes:



"If you do something over 10,000 times, you are ready to teach! I have had more than that number of sessions with folks, in person in Ann Arbor and by phone around the country, as an independent spiritual director for over 20 years now.

"I will turn age 70 soon and want to train new colleagues in the next few years. As a spiritual director, you are not someone who decides a direction for others. In sessions once a month, you help people sort through their ideas and feelings about the spiritual path of their own choosing. With your support, folks get to step back, see their life from a spiritual perspective, and focus their intention.

"I have so far mentored over a dozen people to become independent spiritual directors, all of whom had a background in a helping profession and a well developed spirituality of their own. Training now involves two individual sessions a month with me for a year, then working yourself under my guidance for a second year.

"In a common practice, I offer this independent spiritual director training on an open donation basis. To inquire, please see www.blogellis.weebly.com and then call 734 761-5155 (no text). Afternoons or evenings are best times to reach me. Jonathan Ellis"

On May 1, 2017, the Crazy Wisdom Calendar will be available on our website: www.crazywisdomjournal.com.

A Simple Nature Walk Yields a World of Discovery

By Steven Parrish



“Stop! Do you hear that? Shhh, listen . . .”

On a morning in early spring, I’m standing with a group of fifth graders near the edge of a wetland. A sound like a thumbnail going up and down a fine-tooth comb can be heard in the distance. “Anyone have any ideas?” I ask. “A bird?” says one. “A chipmunk?” asks another. I shake my head. “What might be in the water at this time of year?” I ask. “Frogs!” one answers. “You got it, it’s a western chorus frog.”

Michigan is home to 12 different species of frogs and toads. And just like with birds, you can identify the kind of frog or toad by knowing the specific call it gives. At this point, I

usually give the group my best impersonation of a number of other species, such as a deep twangy “gung...gung...gung,” like the plucking of a loose banjo string, which signals the presence of a green frog. Or I’ll whistle the long monotone trill of the American toad. The natural world becomes more vibrant when you start to make sense of its mysteries. It’s also nice to simply stay with the moment and appreciate the sense of wonder that nature inspires.

The natural world becomes more vibrant when you start to make sense of its mysteries. It’s also nice to simply stay with the moment and appreciate the sense of wonder that nature inspires.

One Discovery Leads to Another

What does it mean to take a walk in nature? As a natural areas specialist at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, I ask myself that question every time I take a walk in nature with

one of my volunteer groups or kids-ed class. Sometimes I start with no agenda, just remaining open to walking and observing. When I combine my sense of wonder with my scientific understanding, and invite participants to become aware of their senses, our walk becomes an adventure where many discoveries and connections are made.

See what genius and inspiration can come from taking time to observe nature’s brilliant designs.

Of course, it helps to select an interesting site for walking, somewhere along a creek, wetland, or woodland, but basically, if you can slow down, have an open mind, and be in the moment, it’s amazing what you can behold.

I love sharing with people this free-association in nature, where one discovery leads to another. Take, for example, the phenomenon of mimicry, where one animal is disguised to look like another animal. When one of our groups goes out on a walk, we might see something we think is a bumblebee ... until we take a closer look. It’s remarkable to watch a robber fly, a bumblebee mimic, lie in waiting on a sun-dappled leaf in an oak-hickory forest, its head shifting quickly with every little movement, gauging whether an insect flying overhead is within striking range. I have observed robber flies do mid-air captures of beetles, moths, wasps, other robber flies, and even other aerial predators, including bright blue damselflies. It’s no wonder this creature is considered the “peregrine falcon of the insect world.”

Nibble on a sassafras leaf stem for its root beer taste, or crush one of its leaves and be transported to memories of childhood when the smell of Froot Loops cereal wafted through the air.

Often along our walks, folks ask me a lot of questions. For example, if I point out the radial or zig-zag pattern of trails left by a bark beetle in a fallen elm or ash, someone will invariably ask, “Why do the trails get bigger?” I want people to look, observe, wonder, and see what kinds of ideas they can come up with. I give clues or answer a question with another question, and — eventually and collaboratively — we realize that an egg is laid under the bark, and a hungry young bark beetle larva matures. The larva begins to eat the bark, and as it eats, it gets bigger, thus producing a trail that increases in width.

In late summer the jewelweed seeds mature and put on an exciting show. I like to find the seed pods that look like plump green bananas, ever so gently pull one from its translucent stem, hand it over to the first unsuspecting pair of eager hands, and have them give it a squeeze. POP! The seeds scatter in every direction; the seed-holder (victim) jumps and is left with several twisted green tendrils. This is a great time to discuss the magic of seed dispersal. There are many ways a plant disperses



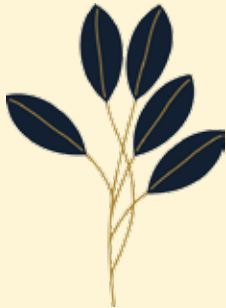
• Robber flies mimic the appearance of bumblebees — and they’re known for capturing their prey on the wing. Here, a robber fly takes down a damselfly in distress.



• Spring heralds important pollinators, including bumblebees. Here, a bumblebee laps up bladder nut nectar.



its seeds: via wind (think tufts of milkweed silk floating on a breeze, or maple-seed helicopters spiraling to earth); thanks to animals (squirrels burying nuts, or birds eating berries and distributing seeds); water (some seeds, such as the bladdernut, float); and the aforementioned jewelweed's explosive method of mechanical seed dispersal that scatters the seeds far and wide. The burdock plant, with its burs that attach to the fur of animals, was the inspiration for the invention of Velcro! See what genius and inspiration can come from taking time to observe nature's brilliant designs.



Closely observe and consider whether your eyes (and mind) are jumping to conclusions. Is what you're seeing in fact a bumblebee? Is that sound actually coming from an insect or an amphibian?

Engage All the Senses

For an optimal nature walk experience, I encourage participants to fully engage all the senses. Nibble on a sassafras leaf stem for its root beer taste, or crush one of its leaves and be transported to memories of childhood when the smell of Froot Loops cereal wafted through the air. Gently slap the smooth and solid trunk of a musclewood tree, or feel the invigorating (sometimes painful) zing of a run-in with wood nettle. Closely observe and consider whether your eyes (and mind) are jumping to conclusions. Is what you're seeing in fact a bumblebee? Is that sound actually coming from an insect or an amphibian? Next time you find yourself in a natural setting, try to clear away the usual sensory bombardment life throws your way and become open to the discoveries that await. In looking for connections in nature, you, too, will become more connected.

Steven Parrish is a Natural Areas Specialist at Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum. He can be reached at parrishs@umich.edu.



• "You eat more, you get bigger." Galleries left by bark beetles expand as the larvae consume the inner layer of a tree's bark.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Children and Young Adults

Complete listings for children and young adults are found in the Events Calendar for Kids section on page 74. This section is devoted to events for children and young adults along with their families.

Mother's Day Fairy Tea in the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room • May 14, 1 p.m. • Children and their families are welcome for a special Mother's Day tea, including story time and a special activity. Fairy attire is encouraged. Be creative! Tickets are \$11/person (free for babies 18 months and younger), and they are available online at crazywisdom.net prior to the event. For more information, contact Jessica at jessicameyer@crazywisdom.net.

A Course in Miracles

A Course in Miracles Study Group with Lorri Coburn • Thursdays, 12-1:30 p.m. • All are welcome to study in a non-dualistic interpretation of *A Course in Miracles*. Free. Call 646-6585; lorri.coburn@gmail.com or loricoburn.com.

A Course in Miracles Reading Group with Rev. David Bell • Mondays, 6:45-8:45 p.m. • Facilitated group reading of the spiritual text *A Course in Miracles* at the Interfaith Center. Donations accepted. Call 327-0270; dave@interfaithspirit.org or interfaithspirit.org.

Crystals

Using Crystals to Connect with Our Guides with Jennifer Vanderwal • May 28, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. • Learn about angels and guides/teachers as well as how they help people to live fuller, healthier lives. Participants may experience a deeper, clearer, and present connection to angels and guides. \$44. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Melody Crystal Healing Level One with Jennifer Vanderwal • June 4, 11; 11 a.m.-6 p.m. • This workshop teaches how to use laser wands, balance chakras, lay on stones, perform negative energy elimination, and do a variety of healing crystal arrays in order to amplify energy and enhance life in many ways. Certification upon successful completion of Levels One and Two. \$250. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Using Crystals to Maintain Optimal Health with Jennifer Vanderwal • July 9, Aug. 6; 11 a.m.-1 p.m. • In this two-day class, participants will learn to identify various crystals that can be used to help the physical body maintain its perfect state of health. Discuss different techniques for using crystals in healing arrays and guided meditation. \$88. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Crystals for Empaths with Jennifer Vanderwal • July 23, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. • Learn what it means to be empathic and how to enrich your life by becoming more empathic. Participants will identify and discuss crystals that can benefit empaths and learn techniques for using those crystals. \$44. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Using Stones to Enhance Psychic Abilities with Jennifer Vanderwal • Aug 27, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. • Learn the various stones that can be used for psychic enhancement. Includes discussion of crystal healing arrays, affirmations, colors, aromatherapy, herbs, feng shui, and elixirs. \$44. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Death and Dying

Death Café with Meryllynne Rush and Diana Cramer • Third Saturdays, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room • Eat cake, drink tea, and talk about death. This event has no agenda and participants guide the conversation. This is not a grief support group, but a way to further the cultural conversation about the one thing everyone has in common. Free. Call Meryllynne at 395-9660; mrush@afterdeathhomecare.com or afterdeathhomecare.com.

Death and Dying: How to Handle Spirituality with Jewel Heart • May 6, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. • Death and the dying process, while difficult to face, are realities for everyone. This workshop will present the stages of the dying process as understood in Tibetan Buddhism. Participants will also explore compassionate methods to help ease the passage of loved ones as well as their own transition. \$20-50 (free for members). Call 994-3387; annarborregistration@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

Build Your Own Dharma Box with Jewel Heart • July 15, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. • This workshop is based on Anyen Rinpoche's powerful book, *Dying with Confidence: A Tibetan Buddhist Guide to Preparing for Death*. In this hands-on event, participants will create their own dharma box containing the items needed for family and entrusted spiritual friends to carry out their dharma wishes as death approaches. Purchasing the book and thinking about dharma box contents in advance are recommended. \$20-30 (free for members). Call 223-0660; annarborregistration@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Death and Dying (cont.)

Grieve Well: Understanding Grief with Christy Miller • May 2, June 6; 7-8 p.m. • Participants will learn about grief and the effects it has on physical and emotional health. They will receive information and resources to help them move through grief toward healing. Free. Call 975-0238.

Advanced Care Planning: Respecting Choices 1st Steps Facilitator Training with Merilynne Rush • May 6, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. • This training is for healthcare providers, counselors, clergy, administrators, family members, and anyone in helping professions. It includes learning how to assist healthy adults to identify a healthcare advocate, discuss their values and wishes, and complete an advance directive document. Respecting Choices® is an internationally recognized, evidence-based model of Advance Care Planning (ACP). \$185 (includes certification). Call Merilynne at 395-9660; mrush@afterdeath-homecare.com or afterdeathhomecare.com.

End-of-Life Doula Training and Certification with Merilynne Rush and Patty Brennan • June 2-4; 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. • End-of-life doulas accompany a dying person and their loved ones through the final months of life by providing support, resources, education, and friendship. Learn about the dying process, the needs of the dying, biopsychosocial, spiritual, and cultural aspects, facing fears and grief, active listening, comfort measures, self-care, and working with hospice and palliative care. \$535 (\$485 by May 5). Call Patty at 663-1523; pattybrennan@gmail.com.

Divorce Support

Cultivate Peace During and After Divorce with Melanie Fuscaldo • May 2, 12-1:30 p.m. • Cultivate inner peace during and after divorce using a process that focuses on the gifts in any situation. This seminar is designed to help participants find hidden blessings and move into joyful power. \$30. Call 668-2733; mfuscaldo@gmail.com or melaniefuscaldo.com.

Drumming

Drumcommunity Circle with Lori Fithian • May 17, June 21, July 13, Aug. 22; 7 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • Get your hands on a drum and add your sound and spirit to the community groove. All are welcome to join the circle. No experience necessary. Drums available. Free. Call 426-7818; lorifithian@mac.com or drumcommunity.com.

Drum and Dance Jam with Curtis Glatter • First Saturdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. • Join a facilitated community drum circle! Attendees may borrow a drum or bring their own to the Interfaith Center. \$5 donation. Call 720-0270; cgindetmi@gmail.com or interfaithspirit.org.

Energy Healing

Intro to the Human Energy System with Michelle McLemore • July 26, 6 p.m. • Explore the basic and advanced chakras as well as how the biofield, aura, and meridians relate. This class also covers methods for boosting and maintaining a high frequency for health and wellness. \$10. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Chi Clinic with Joanna Myers and Alexis Neuhaus • Monday-Friday, 2-3 p.m. • The Chi Clinic was founded to support individuals in person or remotely by helping them feel centered, rested, focused, and energized. This modality is designed to provide a sense of wholeness from the inside, deep healing, mental stability, and ability to reach full potential. \$100/month (first week free). Call Alexis at 845-9786; alexis@sunshen.org or chclinic.org.

School of Inner Cultivation and Healing with Master Sang Kim • Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Fridays, 3:15-5:30 p.m. • The SUN SHEN Internal Cultivation and Healing System is an intimate, hands-on integrated approach which incorporates spiritual counseling, tai-chi, energy cultivation, and healing to resolve physical, emotional, and spiritual problems for oneself and others. \$300/month. Call Alexis at 845-9786; alexis@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

Natural Spiritual Healing Course Diploma Program: Weeks One and Two with Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre • July 23-Aug. 5 • This course supports people in transforming themselves and the lives of others. It covers developing a healing practice and taking healing skills and knowledge into daily life or work. The Self Development program involves five weeks of training over two years, including an independent assessment. \$990 (includes meals). Those who cannot afford the fee may inquire about a bursary. Call 517-641-6201; info@SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org or SelfRealization-CentreMichigan.org.

Healing Touch Certificate Program, Level One with Barb McConnell • June 10, 11 • Learn 12-14 basic techniques to balance and energize the human energy system and promote healing. This class involves lectures, demonstrations, and hands-on practice. 18 CE for nurses and massage therapists. \$290 (\$275 early bird). Call 517-914-4133; barbmcconnell7@gmail.com.

“We but mirror the world. All the tendencies present in the outer world are to be found in the world of our body. If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him. This is the divine mystery supreme. A wonderful thing it is and the source of our happiness. We need not wait to see what others do.”

—Mahatma Gandhi

Healing Touch Certificate Program, Level Two with Barb McConnell • July 15-16 • Review level one plus learn back techniques and spiral. Emphasis on developing healing sequence for specific needs. Completion of level one required. 17.5 CE for nurses and massage therapists. \$275 plus \$15 workbook. Call 517-914-4133; barbmcconnell7@gmail.com.

Healing Touch Certificate Program, Level Three with Barb McConnell • May 6-7, Aug. 12-13; 8 a.m.-6 p.m. • Participants will learn to increase their energy level to facilitate deeper healing with clients. Covers chelation, lymphatic drain, and additional techniques. \$275 plus \$15 workbook. Call 517-914-4133; barbmcconnell7@gmail.com.

Exercise and Fitness

Fitness and Wellness Via Horsepower at Heritage Hill Haven with Kathleen Hinderer • Ongoing by appointment • Discover the healing power of horses. Agility, balance, coordination, and core strength will be emphasized through mounted activities to promote fitness and wellness. Stress reduction and relaxation strategies will also be incorporated. Sessions are customized for each person's age and abilities and those with challenging health problems are welcome. Prices vary. Call 622-9500; haveninfo@heritagehillhaven.org or heritagehillhaven.org.

Festivals and Fairs

Summer Solstice Fest 2017 with Robin Hills Farm • June 23, 5:30-9:30 p.m. • Robin Hills Farm and Breathe Yoga are teaming up to host this untimed and untamed 5K run or walk along the Robin Hills Farm nature trails. Followed by a yoga class designed for post-distance recovery and rounded out with a guided-meditation to complete the mind-body connection. The evening also includes live music, kids' activities, food, beverages, and local vendors. Portion of the proceeds go to the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice. \$5 admission (\$20 families), \$35 race registration. Call Ben at 834-8496; contact@robinhillsfarm.com or solsticefest.com.

Dragon Boat Festival 2017 with Robin Hills Farm • Aug. 5, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. • The Dragon Boat Festival is an annual celebration of DIY building and design, culture, competition, community, and fun. This event features adult and family boat races using hand-made boats, live music, local farm fresh food, kids' activities, and the famous “Dragon Wars.” \$5 admission, \$50 race registration/boat. Call Ben at 834-8496; contact@robinhillsfarm.com or robinhillsfarm.com/events.

Film

Free Films and Discussion at Jewel Heart • 7 p.m. • Enjoy a film followed by discussion about dharma and film. Free. Concessions available. Call 994-3387; annarbor@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

May 12 • Yangsi, Reincarnation is just the beginning (2012) • This coming of age documentary offers an intimate portrait of a young Tibetan boy who is recognized as the reincarnation of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche.

June 30 • Paths of the Soul (2015) • This docu-drama follows the journey of a group of Tibetans on a pilgrimage to Lhasa, the holy capital of Tibet. Over ten months, they cover 1,200 kilometers on foot in a continuous repetition of prostrations on the ground.

July 28 • It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World (1963) • Enjoy an epic Cinerama comedy featuring an all-star cast. This wildly uncharacteristic film directed by Stanley Kramer is unlike any other!

Aug. 25 • Queen of the Sun. What are the bees telling us? (2011) • Taking us on a journey through the catastrophic disappearance of bees and the mysterious world of the beehive, this engaging and ultimately uplifting film weaves an unusual and dramatic story of the heartfelt struggles of beekeepers, scientists, and philosophers.

Cinetopia International Film Festival • June 1-11 • Created for the people of southeastern Michigan, Cinetopia features the best feature-length dramas, comedies, and documentaries from esteemed film festivals around the world. This event also honors Michigan's contributions to cinema through special pre- and post-film events such as presentations, discussion panels, and Q&A sessions with directors, writers, and stars. For details please visit cinetopiafestival.org.

Flower Essences

Bach Flower Remedies with DeLynn Lake • July 12, 6 p.m. • Flower remedies are designed to promote emotional healing and spiritual awakening. This event addresses the origins of flower remedies and how they are made. Attendees will leave with an understanding of how to make their own flower remedies. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Fundraisers

Friends of the AADL May Book Sale • May 20, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; May 21, 1-4 p.m. • This sale features specially priced books, including antiquarian books. Free to browse, books priced as marked. Call Melanie at 302-7774; melaniebaldwin89@gmail.com or faadl.org.

Mayfly with Leslie Science and Nature Center • May 20, 5:30-9 p.m. • Current and potential supporters will gather for an upscale evening to celebrate the work of LSNC and ensure continued success. They can wander the grounds under twinkling lights and enjoy drinks and a meal with live music. LSNC staff will mingle and provide presentations and up-close interactions with live birds of prey and Critter House animals. Adults only. \$125. Call 997-1553; info@lesliesnc.org or lesliesnc.org.

Healing

Sat Nam Rasayan Practice Sessions with Mohinder Singh (Billie Wahlen) • May 7, June 10, July 16, Aug. 13 • Sat Nam Rasayan is a meditative art form that involves entering a state of consciousness called shunyia, or deep silence. From this space, people can heal themselves and others. Come to receive healing, give healing, or both. \$10-20. Call 276-6520; starbillie@gmail.com or a2kundaliniyoga.com.

The Weekly Word for Healing and Ascension Blog with Eve Wilson • Fridays • Sign up to receive practical and spiritual support for riding the waves of change on Earth. These weekly blog posts include the latest information about current changes and tools for responding effectively and finding increased ease and joy in life. Free. Call 780-7635; evew@spiritualhealers.com or spiritualhealers.com.

The Healer and Ascension Certification Course with Eve Wilson • Every other Thursday starting June 21, 7-10 p.m. • This series of 28 classes involves earning a UCM Healing Practitioner certificate to practice deep levels of healing and ascension. It will cover auras, chakras, the healing Qabalah, archangels, ascended masters, spiritual surgeons, DNA, treating root causes of disease, and assisting people, animals, and the planet into harmony with their true essence and to ascend. \$2,900 (\$2,750 early bird). Call 780-7635; evew@spiritualhealers.com or spiritualhealers.com.

D.O.V.E. Divine Original Vibration Embodiment Workshop with Karen Greenberg • Three Fridays, beginning May 5, June 9, July 7, or Aug. 4 • Participants first learn to identify and repattern a client's limiting beliefs and thoughts, and then assist them in expressing any commensurate low vibrational emotions through the tree of life and by balancing a client's energy kabbalistically. Techniques will include art, movement, music, toning, sound, aromatherapy, gemstones, and more. \$777 (plus materials fee). Call 417-9511; krgnrbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

Advanced Healing Techniques for Experienced Healers with Karlta Zarley • Aug. 12, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. • This is the second in a three-part series where participants will learn to repattern the energy field so that it can hold more energy and balance the endocrine and limbic systems. The course also covers helping the physical body adapt to Light Body changes, repairing interdimension fissures, and using energetic embers and the hyoid portal in healing. Practitioners will also learn how to hold more light themselves to make their work easier. \$125 due by July 29. Call 834-1566; kzarley88@gmail.com or karltazarley.com.

Healing Night with Lighthouse Center • Third Thursdays, 7:30-9 p.m. • Half-hour meditation followed by Reiki healing provided by healers from Lighthouse Center. Donations accepted. Call Prachi at 417-5804; cprachi17@gmail.com or lighthousecenterinc.org.

Drop-in Healing Night with Enlightened Soul Center • First Mondays, 7-9 p.m. • Practitioners of body work, energy work, medical intuition, and other alternative healing modalities are welcome to offer their services while those seeking healing are invited to drop in. The goal is to help people feel better affordably, as well as to provide an opportunity for those who have been trained in a healing modality to practice. Donations for the Enlightened Soul Center requested. Call Amy at 358-0218; amy@enlightenedsoulcenter.com or enlightenedsoulcenter.com.

CRAZY WISDOM POETRY SERIES

Crazy Wisdom Tea Room
hosted by Joe Kelty
and Ed Morin

Second and Fourth Wednesday
of each month, 7-9 p.m.

Second Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.: Poetry Workshop at Crazy Wisdom Tearoom. All writers welcome to share and discuss their poetry and short fiction. Sign-up for new participants begins 6:45 p.m.

Fourth Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.: Featured Reader(s) for 50 minutes. Open Mic reading for 1 hour. All writers welcome to share their own or other favorite poetry. Sign-up begins at 6:45 p.m.

Crazy Wisdom Poetry Series Featured Readers



May 24 - Bill Yarrow, Professor of English at Joliet Junior College and editor at *Blue Fifth Review*, is the author of 3 books of poetry—*The Vig of Love*, *Blasphemer*, *Pointed Sentences*—and four chapbooks. He has been nominated 8 times for a Pushcart Prize.

AND

May 24 - Zilka Joseph teaches creative writing. Her chapbooks *Lands I Live In* and *What Dread* were nominated for a PEN America and Pushcart award, respectively. Her book of poems, *Sharp Blue Search of Flame*, was recently published by Wayne State University Press.



June 28 - Saleem Peeradina is the author of five books of poetry including *Final Cut (Valley Press, UK, 2016)* and *Heart's Beast: New and Selected Poems (Copper Coin, India, 2017)*. He is Professor Emeritus at Siena Heights University and lives in Saline, MI.

July 26 - Richard Solomon is a poet and developmental pediatrician influenced by the psychedelic Vietnam War era and the resilient suffering of children. His poems have won prizes from *The 57th Street Bookstore Contest (Chicago)*, the *Wurgel Flomp* comic poetry contest, and *Ann Arbor Current*. They have been published in *Michigan Quarterly Review*, *5am*, and *3rd Wednesday*.



There is no Poetry Series reading in August.

CRAZY WISDOM POETRY CIRCLE
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

The Poetry Series is open to all.
There is never a charge.

Crazy Wisdom Bookstore
114 S. Main St., Ann Arbor
734.665.2757 crazywisdom.net
cwpoetrycircle.tumblr.com

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Herbs, Plants, and the Garden

Philosophies of Herbal Healing with Linda Diane Feldt • May 16, 7-8:30 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • Attendees will explore different beliefs about herbs, including how they work, how to use them, complementary approaches, and benefits of herbal preparations. Learning and adopting an understanding and personal philosophy of herbal medicine are critical to choosing herbs. Free. Sponsored by People's Food Co-op of Ann Arbor. Free. Call 994-4589; ldf@lindadianefeldt.com.

There is a Free Lunch with Linda Diane Feldt • June 20, 7-8:30 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • This class covers foraging ideas and cautions, as well as ways to get kids interested and excited about wild foods. Free. Sponsored by People's Food Co-op of Ann Arbor. Free. Call 994-4589; ldf@lindadianefeldt.com.

The Ethics of Herbology with Linda Diane Feldt • July 18, 7-8:30 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • In the last installment of the Herbal Wisdom series, Linda will discuss what practitioners and consumers need to know about wild harvesting, finding an ethical supplier, herbal consultations, conflicts of interest, and other areas of concern. Free. Sponsored by People's Food Co-op of Ann Arbor. Free. Call 994-4589; ldf@lindadianefeldt.com.

Wildcrafting: Vernal Virtues with Jim McDonald • May 4, 5:30-8:30 p.m. • Herbalist Jim McDonald will lead participants through the fields and woods around the Michigan Folk School to explore the medicinal vernal virtues, folklore, and preparation of the common "weeds" and wildflowers that people pass every day. The information presented will be specific and practical, enabling participants to use new skills to maintain health and perpetuate an awe of nature. \$40 (\$35 early bird). Call Julia or Jason at 985-0198; registrar@mifolkschool.com or mifolkschool.com/upcoming-courses.

Backyard Edible Mushrooms with Michigan Folk School • May 6, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. • Prepare to be surprised by the world of fungi. This class will cover the basics of mushroom growing and easy ways to create mini-mushroom farms. By the end, participants will have prepared a mushroom log and learned how to grow them at home. \$39 tuition, \$18 materials. Call Anne at 477-8943; astevenson@wccnet.edu.

Permaculture Solutions Series: Rain Gardens with Michigan Folk School • May 9, 6-8 p.m. • Acquire the skills to design and build rain gardens that accept stormwater runoff to recharge groundwater and provide wildlife with habitats and food. Rain gardens are affordable, aesthetically pleasing, and nearly maintenance-free additions to yards. Attendees will learn how to choose native plants to populate a rain garden. \$39. Anne at 477-8943; astevenson@wccnet.edu.

Wilderness and Herbal Field Medicine with Sam Coffman • May 5-7 • This course teaches wilderness first aid and herbal medicine applications. Students will learn to deal with emergencies including accidents, trauma, and gunshots. They can earn 24 credit hours. \$325. Call Mary at 796-7794; nshaassociates@gmail.com or naturopathicschoolofannarbor.net.

Mother's Day Wildflower Hike with Leslie Science and Nature Center • May 14, 1-2:30 p.m. • Treat mothers and mother figures to a guided wildflower hike through Black Pond Woods and the LSNC grounds. Participants will attend a short presentation on local wildflowers and proceed outside to find lovely blooms popping up through the grass or sprouting on the forest floor. Registration required by May 10. \$5/person (moms are free). Call 997-1553; info@lesliesnc.org or lesliesnc.org.

Foraged Brunch with Deanne Bednar and Kelly Theide • May 14, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. • Roam the lawns, fields, and woods of Strawbale Studio to forage wild spring edibles! Special treats may include fiddle heads, mushrooms, and an array of nutritious greens. Brunch will include a tasty omelet featuring the foragings and local organic eggs, plus homemade sourdough wraps made in the outdoor rocket cooker. Bring-a-friend discount. \$45 (\$35 by May 1). Call 248-236-5432; ecoartdb@gmail.com or strawbalestudio.org.

Sprouting Seeds Easily at Home with Corinne Bonafino • May 17 • Purchasing sprouts can be as risky as purchasing hamburger meat since sprouts may contain E. coli, Listeria, or Salmonella bacteria. Growing them yourself can be risky too, but participants will learn how to grow them safely in this class. \$30. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Horticulture Workshop Series with Stacey Rayer • 2 p.m. • Participants will learn a variety of strategies for making the most of their gardens this season. Free. Call 426-6600; stacey@bloom-gardens.com or lotusgardenscapes.com.

June 3 • Fruit Trees and Pest Control • Learn how to ensure a bountiful fruit crop with organic pest control options.

July 15 • Herbs and Medicinal Plants • Discover how plants can heal the mind, body, and spirit.

Aug. 5 • Preserving Cut Flowers • Find out which flowers are best for bouquets and how to keep them fresh.

Bee Friendly Gardening with Monica Milla • June 7, 6-8 p.m. • Learn about the major types of bees in Michigan as well as what bees need for food, shelter, and nesting. This course will also cover which plants attract bees and how to garden without pesticides that harm bees. \$29. Anne at 477-8943; astevenson@wccnet.edu.

Wildcrafting: Midsummer Medicines with Jim McDonald • July 6, 5:30-8:30 p.m. • Herbalist Jim McDonald will lead participants through the fields and woods around the Michigan Folk School to explore the medicinal midsummer virtues, folklore, and preparation of the common "weeds" and wildflowers that people pass every day. The information presented will be specific and practical, enabling participants to use new skills to maintain health and perpetuate an awe of nature. \$40 (\$35 early bird). Call Julia or Jason at 985-0198; registrar@mifolkschool.com or mifolkschool.com/upcoming-courses.

Keeping Kids Healthy with Chinese Medicine with Bart Vermilya • Aug. 2, 6 p.m. • This class teaches parents basic tips they can immediately use to keep their children healthy through natural means. Topics include diet, nutrition, herbs, and recipes for common childhood complaints based on the ancient wisdom of Chinese Medicine. Parents can also learn Tui Na, a Chinese massage that can help with illness ranging from colic to fevers up to age six. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Great Lakes Herb Faire • Sept. 8-10 • This educational extravaganza will feature dozens of teachers, classes, and workshops for adults and children. Families can also enjoy food, music, and a kids' tent within the beautiful forests and grounds of the Cedar Lake Outdoor Center. See website for prices. Call Anna at 395-5868; info@greatlakesherbfaire.org or greatlakesherbfaire.org.

Holistic Health

Ayurveda—Ancient Wisdom for the Modern Life with Kapila Castoldi • June 10, 11; 3-6 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • This introduction to the principles of Ayurveda includes the ancient roots of Ayurveda, Ayurveda as a philosophy of life, Ayurvedic constitutions, awareness, and the secrets of balanced, conscious living. Free. Call 994-7114; castoldi@oakland.edu or meditationannarbor.com.

Herbal Medicine with Naturopathic School of Ann Arbor • May 13, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. • Learn basic skills in field identification for local therapeutic plants. Through sensory hands-on experiences, participants will make plant medicines, medicinal field guides, and water-based medicinal preparations. \$99. Anne at 477-8943; astevenson@wccnet.edu.

Cannabis Classroom 101 with Bloom City Club • Third Sundays, 6:15-7:15 p.m. • Canna Curious? Cannabis is a safe and effective medicine that is becoming widely accepted in medical communities around the world. Each month's event will cover a different topic to explain the benefits of cannabis and dispel the myths that plague its acceptance. Snacks provided. Suggested donation \$10-25. Call 585-0621; events.bloomcc@gmail.com or bloomcityclub.com.

Not Your Mamma's Condiments with Delynn Lake • June 21, 6 p.m. • Participants will make delicious and nutritious condiments to duplicate in their own kitchens. These no-fuss, no-muss condiments are made from super foods and may seem like guilty pleasures. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Heightening Your Vibration: Alchemy with Karen Greenberg • June 25, 12:30-8:30 p.m. • This class will teach myriad tools and techniques to change one's vibration from lower to higher, and to sustain it. Includes sacred letters, Archetypes, sacred oils, affirmations, visualization, meditation, prayers, gratitude, breathing, drumming, movement, music, Holy Geometry, traditions, toning names of G-D, Archangels, and Masters of Light. \$125. Call 417-9511; krngnbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

If you are interested in obtaining some biographical information about the teachers, lecturers, and workshop leaders whose classes, talks and events are listed in this Calendar, please look in the section that follows the Calendar, which is called "Background Information" and which starts on page 101.

Introduction to Pal Dan Gum Qigong with Antonio Siera • May 17, June 14, Aug. 16; 6-8 p.m. or July 12, Aug. 9; 11 a.m.-1 p.m. • This workshop introduces the eight silken movements of Pal Dan Gum Qigong that have been used for thousands of years to promote health and cure disease. Participants will engage in moving meditation where the body learns to move in a mindful and graceful way that releases stress and reenergizes the body. \$40 (\$20 for repeaters). Call 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Thrive! Wellness Series • 7 p.m. • Glean insights on a variety of common health concerns. Free. Call Jessica at 470-6766; jessica@thrive-wellness-center.com or thrive-wellness-center.com.

May 10 • Allergies • Learn about nutrition and supplements to minimize allergy symptoms.

May 22 • Hormone Balance • Discover natural ways to balance the hormonal roller coaster.

June 7 • Get Your Energy Back • Find ways to stay energized throughout the day.

June 19 • Detox • Learn about cleaner diets and healthier lifestyles.

July 12 • Digestion • Explore easy ways to get digestion back on track!

July 24 • Memory and Brain Health • Learn nutritional tips and tools to maintain brain health.

Aug. 21 • Autoimmune Issues • Discover lifestyle modifications for preventing or managing autoimmune syndromes.

Intuitive and Psychic Development

Drop-In Intuitive Readings and Dreamwork with Irena Nagler • Second and Fourth Fridays, 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom • Participate in a shared, interactive dream, allowing the soul to release energy, flow, and insight. Irena can use card decks or other objects to focus or simply tune in with the intention to help activate the client's own powers of discernment, creativity, and confidence in choosing the adventures that call to them. She can help with exploration of dreams recalled from sleep or waking dream-states. \$1.50 per minute. No appointment necessary. Call 996-1772; birena@umich.edu.

Drop-In Intuitive Readings with Marg Heeney • First and Third Saturdays, 12-3 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom • Marg uses various healing methods to assist the individual in removing physical, emotional, and spiritual pain. \$1.50 per minute. No appointment necessary. Call 615-0652; margheeney@gmail.com.

Become a Medical Intuitive: Seeing with X-Ray Eyes with Tina Zion • May 20-21 • Participate in a hands-on medical intuition workshop and learn to develop "inner sight" for the deeper cause of illness—feel, sense, and see the entire person on all levels. Attendees will understand the electromagnetic energy of thought and emotion, assess what vibrational colors are indicating, do distance assessments, and more. Designed for lay people, medical practitioners, energy healers, psychics, mediums, and anyone wanting to develop intuitive abilities. \$299. Call Amy at 358-0218; metafizzy@gmail.com or metafizz.org.

Intuitives Interactive with Amy "Metafizzy" Garber • First and Third Sundays, 2:30-4:30 p.m. • For intuitives, indigos, and anyone wishing to explore metaphysical topics with like-minded individuals. Includes exercises to develop intuition, demonstrations by practitioners, discussion, sharing, and social time. Donations accepted. Call Amy at 358-0218; intuitivesinteractive@hotmail.com.

Message Circle with Amy "Metafizzy" Garber • Second Mondays, 6:30-8:30 p.m. • Those with prior experience who would like to practice giving psychic/intuitive messages in a safe circle are invited to come and share. Space limited to ten, advance registration encouraged. Donations accepted. Call Amy at 358-0218; amy@enlightenedsoulcenter.com or enlightenedsoulcenter.com.

Mystic Night: Taurus New Moon Gathering with Tatiana Scavnicky • May 5, 7:30-9:30 p.m. • This will be a fun night of meditation, live music, light refreshments, and oracle card readings. Participants will set new moon intentions. Please bring a magical notebook and pen. \$33. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Mystic Night: Goddess Gallery Reading with Tatiana Scavnicky • June 9, 7-10 p.m. • Enjoy a night of one-on-one mini-intuitive readings! Attendees may receive guidance about current issues and learn from the rest of the group's readings. Includes live meditation music with Mark Watson of Angel Earth Music. \$44. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Intuitive School: How to Get Your Intuitive Guidance with Tatiana Scavnicky • June 14, 7-10 p.m. • Everyone has intuitive abilities! Participants will unlock and learn how to use their inner-guidance by discovering their unique style. Recommended for all Oracle Card classes and for healing practitioners. \$44. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Intuitive School: Moon Magic—Working with the Magic of Moon Cycles with Tatiana Scavnicky • June 21, 7:30-9:30 p.m. • Discover how the cycles of the moon help to supercharge desires and empower people on the night of the full moon. \$33. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Share your poetry with the Crazy Wisdom Community!

Do you appreciate the inspiring quotations sprinkled throughout the Calendar? Now we're adding poetry written by our readers. If you enjoy playing with words and transforming them into poems, please submit your work for consideration.

Submission Guidelines:

- **Maximum length:** One page
- **Submission Limit:** One submission per person per edition
- **Restrictions:** Unpublished poems only please
- **Contact Information:** Name, email address, phone number
- **Format:** Electronic files (docx) sent to Robin at calendarforms@crazywisdom.net
- **Due date:** July 1, 2017 (for potential inclusion in the fall Calendar)



Teleconference: Psychic Psychology Women's Group with John Friedlander • May 2, June 6, July 4, Aug. 1; 8-9 p.m. • This group is for women only. It will feature meditations concentrating on women's issues relating to biological energies as well as that of the aura. \$12.50. Call Violeta at 677-2761; mvaviviano@gmail.com or psychicpsychology.org.

Spring Intensive 2017 with John Friedlander • May 6-7 • Participants will delve into newer meditative areas, exploring topics outside John's core curriculum. Expect powerful healings and growth in skills for daily use. Available as a teleconference. Prerequisite: Level One, CD, or instructor's permission. \$275. Call Violeta at 677-2761; mvaviviano@gmail.com or psychicpsychology.org.

Teleconference: Focused Mind Meditation Practice Session with John Friedlander • May 14, June 4, July 2, Aug. 6; 10 a.m.-12 p.m. • The development of sustained focus meditation makes it easy to develop a whole new magnitude of psychic skill and healing ability, as well as a new level of mental clarity and spiritual openness. \$15. Call Violeta at 677-2761; mvaviviano@gmail.com or psychicpsychology.org.

Teleconference: Prep Class for Seminars with John Friedlander • May 17, Aug. 16; 8-9 p.m. • This course involves background and training for John and Gloria's seminars. For all students, from beginning to advanced level. Free. Call Violeta at 677-2761; mvaviviano@gmail.com or psychicpsychology.org.

Teleconference: Kundalini Meditation and Clearing with John Friedlander • May 23, June 27, July 25, Aug. 22; 8-9 p.m. • Channeled personal aura clearing and manifestation exercise with Mataji, who will work individually with each participant, using their own kundalini to increase power and clarity. \$12.50. Call Violeta at 677-2761; mvaviviano@gmail.com or psychicpsychology.org.

Summer Webinar: Exploring Core Techniques and Advanced Material with John Friedlander • July 13-16 • This course involves developing advanced skills for practical use in everyday life. Prerequisite: Level One Psychic Development class, CD set, or instructor's permission. \$275. Contact Gilbert at gchoud@yahoo.com or psychicpsychology.org.

Iridology

Introduction to Constitutional Iris Analysis with Carole Florence • May 18-21 • Students will learn to identify the nine basic constitutional types, how to read the iris, and how to begin giving natural health advice based upon what the iris reveals. This course is led by Farida Sharan, a traditional naturopath and global iridology pioneer. \$300 (\$270 by Apr. 30). Call Mary at 796-7794; nshaassociates@gmail.com or naturopathicschoolofannarbor.net.

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*“Our heads are round
so our thoughts can
change direction.”*

— Francis Picabia

—◀────────▶—

Guru Gita Chanting in Ann Arbor

By Atmaram Chaitanya



Once, while Shiva was expounding the supreme truth to a group of sages, he appeared to be reverently prostrating before an unknown deity. Goddess Parvathi was surprised to see Shiva bowing to someone else and asked him, "Brahma, Vishnu, and Indra are always offering their prostrations to you. You being the recipient of their prostrations, who could possibly be so exalted that you should prostrate yourself before them?" Lord Shiva's response was simple and direct, "It is to the supreme guru I bow." He goes on to say, "The supreme guru is none other than one's own Self. This is the truth. It is the duty of all mankind to make every effort to realize this. This supreme truth will reveal itself to the one whose devotion to the true guru equals his devotion to God." Upon hearing Shiva's response, Parvathi said to him, "For the sake of humanity please reveal the path by which devotees may come to know the true guru and the non-dual nature of Brahman." Responding to her request, Lord Shiva sang the Guru Gita to her and described the guru principle, the proper ways of worshiping the Guru, and the methods and benefits of studying the

"In chanting the mind becomes saturated with the mantras and automatically becomes one-pointed. The heart becomes fixed on its goal and tastes the joy which is the inner essence of the mantras. Dreariness is overcome, anxieties vanish and the smoldering coals of failure are extinguished. You are spontaneously absorbed in the love and the contentment inside, in the realization that the heart is the abode of deep peace from where love springs, where steadfastness lies and the image of God shines forth."

— Swami Muktananda

The Guru Gita is an Indian devotional scripture that consists of a set of Sanskrit verses expounding the esoteric significance of the inner guru principle and the outer guru-disciple relationship. It is accepted by most Hindu scholars to be the foremost text expounding the nature of the true guru and the importance of having a guru on the spiritual path. The guru-disciple relationship is one of the most potent of all spiritual practices that promotes an authentic experience of the inner Self. History is full of examples of powerful spiritual teachers who have shared their wisdom through direct contact with sincere seekers. The Tamil Shaiva Siddhanta saint Umapati Shivacharya says, "As people catch beasts and birds by presenting one of the same kind, so grace has taken the human form to catch men, or make them draw nigh without fear." The regular study of the Guru Gita provides a framework for understanding how the grace bestowing aspect of the Divine can manifest through human form for the benefit of all humankind.

Locally, the practice of chanting the Guru Gita has a delightful history.

The full text of the Guru Gita, as we know it today, is made up of over 400 verses from the Upanishads, various Tantras, and an ancient text known as the Skanda Purana. It is believed to have been compiled between the 6th and 15th centuries and is ascribed to the sage Veda Vyasa. Over time various scholars and teachers have selected verses from the original text to make smaller versions for teaching and chanting purposes. The Guru Gita narrates a long dialog between Lord Shiva and his consort Parvathi, in which she asks him to teach her about the true nature of the guru, the secret of all secrets that frees one from the cycle of birth and death, and bestows worldly fulfillment as well as spiritual liberation. The Skanda Purana contains stories, teachings, and various devotional hymns that provide guidance on how to live a virtuous life. One of the narratives in this scripture tells the story of how the Guru Gita came into existence.

Many of the spiritual aspirants that chanted the Guru Gita with Swami Muktananda over 40 years ago, are still chanting it in Ann Arbor today.

॥ श्री गुरु गीता ॥

Śrī Guru Gītā

अस्य श्री गुरुगीता स्तोत्रमन्त्रस्य ।

asya śrī gurugītā stotramantrasya ।

भगवान् सदाशिव ऋषिः ।

bhagavān sadāśiva ṛṣiḥ ।

नानाविधानि छन्दांसि ।

nānāvīdhāni chandānsi ।

श्री गुरुपरमात्मा देवता ।

śrī guruparamātmā devatā ।

हं बीजम् ।

haṁ bijam ।

सः शक्तिः ।

saḥ śaktiḥ ।

क्रौं कीलकम् ।

krom kīlakam ।

श्री गुरुप्रसादसिद्धयर्थे पाठे विनियोगः ॥

śrī guruprasādasiddhyarthe pāṭhe viniyogaḥ ॥

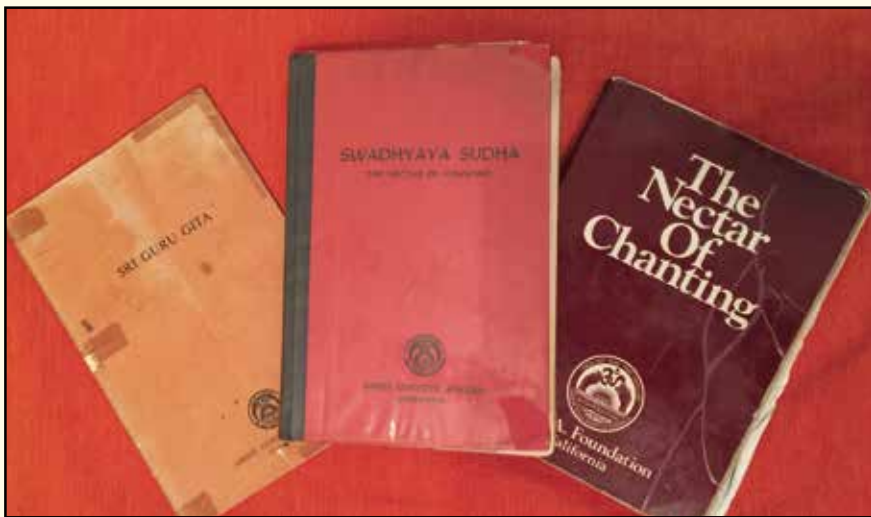
Guru Gita.

Locally, the practice of chanting the Guru Gita has a delightful history. Forty-five years ago, in January of 1972, the influential Indian meditation master, Swami Muktananda, began having his devotees chant the Guru Gita as a daily practice at his ashram in Ganeshpuri, India. In September of 1974, during his second world tour, Swami Muktananda came to Ann Arbor and inaugurated his first residential ashram outside of India; it was named Siddha Yoga Dham of Ann Arbor. It is now the Siddha Meditation Center of Ann Arbor, and the daily practice of chanting the Guru Gita continues there to this day. Recitation of the Guru Gita is also open to the public every Saturday at the Kashi Nivas Shiva Meditation Center in Ann Arbor. Many of the spiritual aspirants that chanted the Guru Gita with Swami Muktananda over 40 years ago are still chanting it in Ann Arbor today.

The chanting and study of this sacred text has become assimilated into the spiritual practices of other popular yoga traditions such as Transcendental Meditation, Integral Yoga Institute, Yoga Life Society, and many others. It has now become a daily practice in temples, ashrams, yoga centers, and homes all over the world. Arguably, no one in centuries has been more influential than Swami Muktananda for introducing the sacred and profound teachings of the Guru Gita to spiritual seekers worldwide. Speaking on the benefits of chanting the Guru Gita and other sacred mantras, Swami Muktananda said, "In chanting the mind becomes saturated with the mantras and automatically becomes one-pointed. The heart becomes fixed on its goal and tastes the joy which is the inner essence of the mantras. Dreariness is overcome, anxieties vanish and the smoldering coals of failure are extinguished. You are spontaneously absorbed in the love and the contentment inside, in the realization that the heart is the abode of deep peace from where love springs, where steadfastness lies and the image of God shines forth."

There are two locations in the Ann Arbor area where the public is invited to participate in the sacred practice of chanting the Guru Gita. It is chanted every day at the Siddha Yoga Meditation Center, 3017 Miller Road, Ann Arbor, MI, (734) 726-0318, www.symcannarbor.org. It is also chanted every Saturday at the Kashi Nivas Shiva Meditation Center, 515 Manor Drive, Ann Arbor, MI, (734) 883-6947, <http://kashinivas.org>.

Atmaram Chaitanya is the director of the nonprofit Kashi Nivas Shiva Meditation Center. He has offered over 40 years of service as a teacher of meditation, self-inquiry, and kirtan chanting in the Ann Arbor area. He can be contacted at atmaram@kirtanannarbor.org.



Kashi Nivas Altar

Crazy Wisdom Tea Room Readers



**Tarot • Psychic Intuitive
Astrology • Palmistry**

No appointment needed; Readings \$1.50 per minute

Monthly Schedule

Tarot Readings with Kathy Bloch.

1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

kibloch@hotmail.com

Tarot/Psychic Readings with Rebecca Williams

Thursdays, 6-9 p.m.

rebeccawilliams999@comcast.net

Tarot Readings with Gail Embery

1st and 3rd Fridays, 6:30-9:30 p.m.

1st and 3rd Sundays from 3-6 p.m.

ReadingswithGail.com - 313.655.7694

Intuitive Readings with Irena Nagler

2nd and 4th Fridays, 6:30-9:30 p.m.

birena@umich.edu - 734.996.1772

Intuitive Readings with Marg Heeney

1st and 3rd Saturdays, Noon to 3 p.m.

615-415-0652 - margheeney@gmail.com.

Palmistry Readings with Vijayalaxmi Shinde

1st and 3rd Saturdays, 3-6 p.m.

and 2nd and 4th Sundays, 3-6 p.m.

vijaya_laxmi@comcast.net - 734.961.8052

www.positivepalmistry.com

Astrology Readings with Alia Wesala

2nd and 4th Saturdays, 3-6 p.m.

astrolibration@gmail.com - 734.719.0782

114 S. Main St, Ann Arbor - 734.665.2725

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Kabbalah

Beginning Kabbalah: Kabbalah Miracles with Karen Greenberg • May 24, June 28, July 26, Aug. 23; 10 a.m.-1 p.m. or 7-10 p.m. • This three-hour workshop meets monthly for about a year. This life-changing journey is an ordered, systematic approach to develop and balance all the important areas of life. Participants will become empowered to join with G-D and become co-creative, proactive manifestors of dreams, desires, and goals, opening to miracles, and fulfilling destinies. Call Karen for prices at 417-9511; krngnrbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

Brand New Kabbalah Pathworking Class with Karen Greenberg • May 11, June 8, July 13, Aug. 10; 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. • Discover powerful archetypes along with the 22 Hebrew letters connecting the ten spheres in the Tree of Life. The 22 letters plus the ten spheres equals 32 paths to wisdom. Integrating these components into the subconscious may enable people to access solutions to any problem. Call Karen for prices at 417-9511; krngmbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

Life Transitions

Helping Kids Adjust to Divorce with Natasha Kendal • May 15, 6:30-8 p.m. • Children at different ages and stages of development have different reactions and needs as they cope with their parents' divorce. Attendees will learn how to talk to their children about divorce and assist them during and after the divorce is final. Free. Call Vicki at 248-915-0847; info@womens-divorce.org or womens-divorce.org.

Having the Talk—Between Adult Children and their Aging Parents with Linda S. Bender • May 24, 7 p.m.; June 11, 2 p.m.; July 20, 7 p.m.; Aug. 17, 7 pm. • This talk will help family members learn new ways to adjust as parents age and changes may need to be implemented. This conversation will enable both generations to be heard and support each other. Free. Call 395-2285; lindabendertransitions@gmail.com.

Women's Divorce Workshop with Women's Divorce Resource Center • June 3, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. • Experienced divorce professionals will present a workshop addressing the emotional, legal, and financial aspects of divorce. The more support women have during the divorce process, the more confidence they will have in their choices and decisions moving forward. \$40 (\$35 in advance). Call Vicki at 248-915-0847; info@womens-divorce.org or womens-divorce.org.

Divorce Financial Matters for Women with Women's Divorce Resource Center • July 24, 6:30-8 p.m. • Financial concerns are significant for many women experiencing divorce. Attendees will find out what they need to do and know about money issues as they start, go through, or experience divorce. Handouts provided. Free. Call Vicki at 248-915-0847; info@womens-divorce.org or womens-divorce.org.

Introductory Session: Living Your Calling for Women with Holly Makimaa • Aug. 21, 6:30-8 p.m.; Aug. 30, 9-11 a.m.; Aug. 30, 6:30-8:30 p.m. • Those seeking to live more in line with their true self may come to see if a spiritually-minded coaching class is right for them. They will learn empowering journaling and self-inquiry practices that help them begin living their calling now versus waiting for a distant day to begin the journey. Free. Contact hollymakimaa@gmail.com or yourtransformationaljourney.com.

Love and Relationships

Kabbalah for Couples with Karen Greenberg • May 7, 1-3 p.m. • This program is for couples in basically good relationships in which both parties are willing to work to make their relationship even better physically, emotionally, mentally, financially, spiritually, and energetically. The monthly two-hour format enables couples to get more work done in a shorter amount of time. \$205/two-hour session (if one or both have taken beginning Kabbalah). Call 417-9511; krngnrbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

Creating Your Ideal Mate with Karen Greenberg • May 7, 3-8 p.m. • This workshop helps participants identify and enhance an ideal mate's qualities and presents how to use techniques such as ceremony, meditation, movement, fragrances, elixirs, herbs, metals, colors, altars, and more. Participants learn to work through blockages in order to trust divine order and timing. \$125. Call 417-9511; krngnrbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

Massage

Massage Therapy: Thai Bodywork Methods with Naturopathic School of Ann Arbor • June 2-4 • Acquire the basic skills required to practice holistic bodywork and massage therapy. Participants will learn about preparation, ethics, massage strokes and methods. They will also gain information about using this practice for family, friends, or a career. \$270 tuition, \$50 materials. Call Anne at 477-8943; astevenson@wccnet.edu.

Massage Training Open House with Naturopathic School of Ann Arbor • May 24, June 21, July 12; 6:30-7:30 p.m. • Learn and observe more about the Naturopathic School of Ann Arbor's massage therapy training, which is based on 24 years of education and successful professional practice. This program creates diversely trained therapists with the confidence to offer massage therapy services within a progressive natural medicine foundational base. Free. Call Mary at 796-7794; nshaassociates@gmail.com or naturopathicschoolofannarbor.net.

Meditation

Mastering Meditation with Kapila Castoldi • July 17, 24, 31; 7-8:45 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • This three-week introductory meditation series includes topics such as quieting the mind, meditating on the heart, awakening inner awareness, and exploring a meditative lifestyle. Techniques include concentration, breathing, visualization, and chanting. Free. Call 994-7114; castoldi@oakland.edu or meditationannarbor.com.

The Yogic Way of Meditating with Ema Stefanova • May 6, 4:30-6:30 p.m. • The yoga tradition abounds in meditation techniques for every temperament. In this workshop, participants will focus on three ancient practices: Antar Mouna (Inner Silence Meditation), Ajapa Japa (a Kriya meditation), and Chidakasha Dharana (Meditation on the Space of Consciousness). Suitable for all levels. Call 665-7801; EmaStefanova@cs.com or YogaAndMeditation.com.

Awaken Higher States of Awareness with a Gong Meditation with Mohinder Singh (Billie Wahlen) • May 13, 7-9 p.m. • The dynamic sound of the Gong can supersede the mind and create a deep healing space for relaxation. It can rejuvenate the nervous system and update one's frequency. Attendees will meditate with sacred mantras, using sounds to activate energy centers and vibration to stimulate higher states of awareness. Concludes with pranayama and a long Gong meditation. \$20-25. Call 276-6520; starbillie@gmail.com or a2kundaliniyoga.com.

Kundalini Yoga and Meditation with Mohinder Singh (Billie Wahlen) • May 6-June 9, July 7-Aug. 25; 5:30-7 p.m. • Meditation is the process of clearing away subconscious garbage that clouds the awareness of true reality. People who free themselves from an unclear view can become happier, healthier, and have more vitality. \$12-16. Call 276-6520; starbillie@gmail.com or a2kundaliniyoga.com.

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“People do not need saving. People need love, support, and encouragement that they can withstand any trials and will always come out stronger, wiser, and more compassionate.”

— Brian Weiss

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Chakra Clearing and Meditation with DeLynn Lake • May 24, 6 p.m. • This one-hour session, produced by Jill Mattson, is designed to help tune the seven major energy centers of the body using special frequencies, rhythmic patterns, colors, elements, emotional subtle energies, and affirmations. Benefits may include deep relaxation, balanced energies, less anxiety, better sleep, and improved sense of wellbeing. Bring a pillow and blanket for warmth and padding. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouch-brooklyn.com.

Just One Bite! with Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness • June 4, 12-3:15 p.m. • Come to the Taste of Ann Arbor to participate in a mindful eating experience. Guidance provided. Free. Call Lynn at 332-3365; lynnsipher@gmail.com or aacfm.com.

Concentrated Meditation Practice Weekend with Jewel Heart • June 9-10 • Concentrated meditation, or GOM, is an essential tool that helps develop peace and joy as well as the power to deeply understand wisdom. This weekend intensive, offered according to the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, will include practice sessions with light guidance. Instructors available for assistance. Free, donations welcome. Call 994-3387; annarborregistration@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

Day of Mindfulness with Paulette Grotrian • June 24, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. • This retreat is modeled after the one developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, creator of the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction course for the UMass Medical School Center for Mindfulness. The day includes sitting meditation, walking meditation, and mindful eating, along with instruction and inspiration. It is a time for rest, self-care, renewal, and healing. \$30. Call 276-7707; mindfulnesswithpaulette@gmail.com or mindfulnesswithpaulette.weebly.com.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Intensive with Paulette Grotrian • June 21-25 • This five-day intensive is based upon the eight-week course developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn at the UMass Medical School Center for Mindfulness. This event is designed for those who cannot take the eight-week course, and it is the first time this format is offered in the Ann Arbor area. Benefits may include reduced stress as well as improved health and wellbeing. \$400. Call 276-7707; mindfulnesswithpaulette@gmail.com or mindfulnesswithpaulette.weebly.com.

Learn to Meditate with Nirmala Nancy Hanke • Second Saturdays, 4-6:30 p.m. •

Participants will learn how all meditations are good and how thoughts are an essential part of the process. Talk followed by 20-minute meditation experience with a mantra. Vegan snacks after meditation. Register one week in advance. \$35 (\$25 for students; \$15 for repeaters). Call Prachi at 417-5804; cprachi17@gmail.com or lighthousecenterinc.org.

Meditation in the Garden with Carole Caplan • Fridays Starting May 26, 10-11 a.m.; Sundays Starting May 28, 8-9 a.m. • Come nurture inner peace and happiness at The Farm on Jennings. Includes meditation instruction, practice, and gentle stretching. \$10. Call 847-822-9693; carolecaplan@livebychoice.com or livebychoice.com.

Being in Tune: Mindfulness Meditation at The Ark with Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness • Tuesdays, 12-12:30 p.m. • This is a weekly mindfulness meditation gathering in the warm, inviting environs of The Ark. This practice has no religious affiliation, and instruction is provided by experienced mindfulness meditation teachers. No experience necessary. No meetings on May 16, July 4, July 18. Free. Call Lynn 332-3365; lynn-sipher@gmail.com or aacfm.com.

Drop-In Meditation with Atmaram Chaitanya • Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. • Meditators from all backgrounds can share in the collective synergy of group meditation at Kashi Nivas. The evening begins with chanting and meditation, followed by group contemplation, and concludes with refreshments and social time. Free. Call Kashi at 883-6947; atmaram@kashinivas.org or kashinivas.org.

Meditation Sessions with Jewel Heart • Sundays, 8:30-9:30 a.m. • Facilitators provide basic guidance in concentrated meditation. Participants will use the breath as a point of focus. Open to all levels of experience. Free. Call 994-3387; programs@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

Sunday Meditation Group with Deep Spring Center • Sundays, meditating 5-6 p.m., mindful sharing 6-6:30 p.m. • All levels of meditators are welcome and there is a facilitator each week. No registration necessary. Donations accepted. Call Tana at 477-5848; info@deepspring.org or deepspring.org.

Sunday Candlelight Meditation and Healing with Lighthouse Center • Sundays, 6-7:15 p.m. • Candle lighting, Sanskrit chanting, meditation, affirmations, visualization, and healing circle. Reiki healing available. Donations accepted. Call Prachi at 417-5804; cprachi17@gmail.com or lighthousecenterinc.org.

Pure Meditation Course Including Raja-Kriya Yoga with Self-Realization Meditation Healing Centre • June 30-July 6 • This course addresses the whole being—mind, body, and spirit. It is designed to enable participants to realize the God-within, and bring love, peace, joy, and fulfillment to all aspects of life. It can help them learn how to master their mind and energies in today's challenging world. Call for prices (517) 641-6201; info@selfrealizationcentremichigan.org or selfrealizationcentremichigan.org.

Myriad Meditations with Karen Greenberg • July 30, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. • Participants will learn meditations with fire, water, air, earth, the Four Worlds, breathing, Holy Geometry, sacred letters, Archetypes, spiritual beings, movement, music, colors, scents, gemstones, and trees. They can discover which meditation techniques resonate with them, possibly dissolving years of resistance to meditation. \$125. Call 417-9511; krngnrbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

Intensive Meditation with Lighthouse Center • First and third Fridays, gather at 7 p.m., chanting, 7:30-10:15 p.m. • Chanting and prayer, followed by meditating 20 minutes on each of the seven chakra energy centers. Participants may enter and leave meditation room at any time. Donations accepted. Call Prachi at 417-5804; cprachi17@gmail.com or lighthousecenterinc.org.

A Day of Solitude and Meditation Practice with Carol Blotter • June 10, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. • This day-long silent retreat practices sitting and walking meditation in the quiet of the country. Beginners will have break-out instruction, experienced meditators can be in silence all day, and those in-between can practice and have their questions answered. Suggested donation \$30. Preregistration requested. Call 475-0942; cb.meditate@gmail.com or mfcenter.org.

Days of Mindfulness Meditation—Living Consciously with Esther Kennedy • May 20, June 10, July 8, Aug. 12; 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. • This mindfulness community gathers monthly for contemplative meditation. They practice mindful breathing and simple chants and seek to release the fruits of experience into a world of beauty and suffering. \$35/event. Registration required with \$10 non-refundable deposit. Call 517-266-4000; webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

The Mindfulness Meditation System™ (MSS) with Antonio Sieira • June 6, July 13; 6-8 p.m. • The MSS™ is a system of breathing, flexibility, and mental focus/concentration practices designed to create a total mind-body meditative experience. These techniques help people to start or improve meditation. \$50 for initial instruction; \$15 for repeaters. Individual sessions by appointment. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Open Mindfulness Meditation Practice with Antonio Sieira • Tuesdays and Thursdays, May-Aug., 6-7:30 p.m. • Mindfulness meditation including Tibetan singing bowl, Metta meditation, with discussion of philosophy, science, and spiritual basis of meditation. \$15/class (\$60/six sessions). Call Pat for dates at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

Siddha Yoga Satsang: Chanting and Meditation with Siddha Yoga Satsang Center • Thursdays, 7 p.m. • Each satsang consists of a reading, video, or audio teaching, followed by chanting and meditating. All are warmly invited. Free. Call Dunrie at 726-0318; symcannarbor@gmail.com or symcannarbor.org.

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Movement and Dance

Authentic Movement: Embodied Wisdom with Stefanie Cohen • Mondays, May 1-June 19, 6:30-8:30 p.m. • This is an investigation of the contemplative practice of Authentic Movement. Participants will move and witness one another in guided, meditative, self-directed ways. They will spend time reflecting upon their movement explorations, extending their experiences creatively through drawing, writing, and dance. The practice supports people to mindfully tend to their bodies, expand their range of motion, extend artistic creativity, and meaningfully engage with others. \$140. Call 474-1517; stephaniemovingstories@gmail.com or somastories.net.

Geometric Configuration Technique with Treneti Sens • May 6 • Embody sacred geometry by connecting and dancing the natural geometric patterns of the body. Movers are guided through a practice of learning a dance pattern that increases the body's fluidity, agility, and core dance powers, such as locomotive prowess, floor work, leaping, and articulating clear forms all through the lens of sacred geometry. \$50. Call 276-7242; aligndivine@aligndivineyoga.com.

Align Divine Cacao Ceremony and Sacred Dance with Carla Samson • May 12, June 9, July 7, Aug. 11 • Cacao has the Latin name "cacao theobroma," meaning "the food of the Gods." Using Cacao (the raw form of chocolate) in ceremony allows people to physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually access the places within that need healing, more love, and less fear. This intentional ceremony concludes with a sacred flowing dance that allows participants to move the energy. \$25 (\$20 in advance). Call 276-7242; aligndivine@aligndivineyoga.com.

Dances of Universal Peace with Judy Lee Trautman • First Fridays, 7-9 p.m. • Dances of universal peace began in the 1960s in San Francisco where Sufi teacher Samuel Lewis celebrated the world's religions through simple folk dance steps. The dances are a form of moving meditation that require neither partner nor experience. \$5 donation. Call 419-475-6535; jltrautman@sbcglobal.net or peacedance.multifaithjourneys.org/.

On May 1, 2017, the Crazy Wisdom
Calendar will be available on our website:
www.crazywisdomjournal.com.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Music, Sound, and Voice

Café 704 Concert Series with Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • 8-10 p.m. • A concert series of local folk, rock, acoustic, and electronic music. Smoke-free and alcohol-free. Refreshments for sale. \$8/person (\$15/two people). Call Al 327-0270; cafe704@gmail.com or interfaithspirit.org/café-704-coffeehouse.

May 13 • Folk musician Laz Slamovitz

June 10 • Folk musician David Mosher

July 8 • Jazz singer Marlena Studer

Aug. 12 • Café 704 All-Stars Benefit Concert

Integrative Breathwork with Linda Adamcz • Fridays and Saturdays, May-Aug. • This musical journey for insight, emotional healing, creativity, and renewal may assist with life changes, grief and loss, job stress, burnout, trauma and abuse, depression, and addictions in order to help find peace, joy, meaning, and purpose. Daytime and evening options of varying lengths. \$30/two hours, \$40/three hours, \$70/seven hours. Call for dates 269-388-2988; lindaadamcz@gmail.com or AdamczAssociates.com.

Naturopathy

Dr. Nia's TOP Ten Head-to-Toe Natural Health Suggestions for Women with Nia-Avelina Aguirre • June 13, 6:30-7:30 p.m. • This is a "don't miss" opportunity to learn new information that addresses areas of concern for women of all ages. \$30. Call 883-7513; niaaguirre.nd@gmail.com.

Dr. Nia's TOP Ten Nutritional Tips that are Beyond the Basics with Nia-Avelina Aguirre • July 13, 6:30-7:30 p.m. • By now, most people know to cut back on or avoid white sugars and processed foods. This event goes beyond those basics and presents other logical and effective nutritional tips. \$30. Call 883-7513; niaaguirre.nd@gmail.com.

Bug-A-Boo About the Flu with DeLynn Lake • Aug. 16, 6 p.m. • This is a fun and informative workshop that teaches how the immune system is built and how it works. Participants will learn how to create a healthy terrain in their bodies so they do not have to worry about every bug that comes their way. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Nonviolent Communication

Speaking and Listening from the Heart: Introduction to Nonviolent-Compassionate Communication with Jeff Brown, Francois Beausoleil, and Lisa Gottlieb • June 2-3 • This interactive workshop is an introduction to learning and practicing empathetic listening and honest self-expression through the lens of Nonviolent Communication. It offers practical tools and a deeper understanding of how to authentically connect with oneself and others to reduce conflict and build peace. Appropriate for those new to NVC and those who want to practice in community. Group discounts available. \$135 (\$110 by May 6). Call Lisa at 417-1144; nvclisagottlieb@gmail.com or lisagottlieb.com.

Speaking, Living, and Sharing Peace: A Nine-Month Intensive Program in Nonviolent-Compassionate Communication with Jeff Brown, Francois Beausoleil, and Lisa Gottlieb • Begins Aug. 17 • This program involves four weekend gatherings between August 2017 and May 2018. Participants will learn practical, life-changing communication and peace-building tools through the lens of Nonviolent Communication. Includes teleconferences, coaching, and other ways to connect. Group discounts available. \$1995 (\$1865 by July 9). Call Lisa at 417-1144; nvclisagottlieb@gmail.com or lisagottlieb.com.

Nutrition and Food Medicine

How to Kick the Sugar Habit with Rachel Lozon • July 15, 1-3 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • Attendees will learn the three main challenges people experience when trying to kick the sugar habit and the seven solutions to reduce sugar cravings and improve health. Free. Call 365-6614; revitalizebodymind@gmail.com; revitalizebodymind.com.

Heart Healthy Vegan Breakfasts: Weekend Brunch with Vicki Brett-Gach • May 4, 6-9 p.m. • What do vegans eat for breakfast? Gain a deeper understanding of how easy it is to cook simple, delicious, healthy dishes that the family will love. Examples include baked French toast, veggie scramble, and homemade granola. \$39 tuition, \$30 materials. Call Anne at 477-8943; astevenson@wccnet.edu.

Creative Back to School Lunches with DeLynn Lake • Aug. 30, 6 p.m. • Attendees will pack lunches that need no refrigeration to stay fresh. Meals will include foods that are fun and easy to eat so that kids' friends will want them to share. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Paganism

Witches' Night Out • May 9, June 13, July 11, Aug. 8; 7 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room • These gatherings involve drinking Witch Brew tea and networking with like-minded others. No cover. \$3.50 for a pot of tea with free refills. For more information, call Carol at 665-2757; info@crazywisdom.net or crazywisdom.net.

Palmistry

Drop-In Palmistry/Tarot Readings with Vijayalaxmi Shinde • First and Third Saturdays, 3-6 p.m.; Second and Fourth Sundays, 3-6 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom • Using palmistry, numerology, and the art of Tarot cards divination, learn the subconsciously hidden answers to important concerns in life to guide towards positive energy, joy, peace, abundance, and health. \$1.50 per minute. No appointment necessary. Call 961-8052; vijaya_laxmi@comcast.net or positivepalmistry.com.

Parenting

Relaxation for Body, Mind, and Spirit Day with Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre • May 13, June 17; 10 a.m.-5 p.m. • This nurturing day includes a relaxing yoga class, delicious home-cooked vegetarian meals for the body, quiet time for the spirit, and an optional Pure Meditation Foundation class for the mind. Overnight stays before and after are also possible. \$39-86 depending on accommodations. Call 517-641-6201; info@SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org or SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

Kabbalah for Indigos with Karen Greenberg • May 5, June 2, July 7, Aug. 4; 6:30-8:30 p.m. • Utilizing multi-sensory input and experiential learning, parents will learn to build the self-esteem of awake and spiritually evolved teenagers and young adults. Over the course of a year, they will aid in integrating organizational skills, navigating low-vibrational emotions, and fostering their children's genius so they can fulfill their mission of revamping the entire planet. \$50/session. Call 417-9511; kmgrnbg@gmail.com or clairascension.com.

Parenting Teens in the 21st Century with Diane Ratkovich • May 6, 20; 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m. • This mini course takes place outdoors in the presence of horses. The small herd will help parents explore new ways to maintain leadership and connection with their teens in this conflicting culture. Limited to ten participants. \$40/both sessions. Call 845-6542; myredhawk@gmail.com.

Mother-Daughter Day at the Farm with Diane Ratkovich • June 3, 1-5 p.m. • Deepen your relationship while enjoying an afternoon in the pasture with horses and exploring awareness and creativity. Have fun together and feel pampered. This is a non-riding day designed for daughters age 12 or older. \$90/mother-daughter team. Call 845-6542; myredhawk@gmail.com.

Parenting Teens in the 21st Century: Discussion Group on the Farm with Diane Ratkovich • First and Third Tuesdays, 6:30-8 p.m. • Experience a creative open space in nature and the presence of horses. Parents will nurture their soul and focus on the important work of teen parenting in the 21st century. Call 845-6542; myredhawk@gmail.com.

— Jonathan Fields

“If only we'd learned how to harness and ride rather than hunt and kill the butterflies that live in the gut of every person who strives to create something extraordinary from nothing.”

— Jonathan Fields

Personal Growth

HAI Workshop: Exploring Intimacy with HAI Global • June 15, 28; 6:30-9 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • Everyone is welcome to explore and enhance their capacity to love and be loved, to create deeper connections, and develop relationships that are healthier and more fulfilling. Free. Call 523-8566; midwest-office@hai.org or hai.org.

Creating Internal Resources with Cam Vozar • May 10, 6:30 p.m. • This workshop will help participants create internal resources to cope with stress and increase wellbeing as they learn to connect to spiritual, nurturing, and protective resources. \$10. Call 747-9073; cam.vozar@gmail.com.

Tantric Energy Exploration with Leslie Blackburn • May 13, 7-9 p.m. • This event involves a guided exploration of energy through breath, sound, and movement. Participants will enhance physical and energy body awareness and discover the sacred geometry of their energy bodies. Adults of any sexual orientation or gender identity are welcome. No need to bring a partner. Wear loose, comfortable clothing to support breath and movement. \$15 (\$10 in advance). Call 313-269-6719; leslie@leslieblackburn.com or leslieblackburn.com.



Fun events at Leslie Science & Nature Center

Leslie Science & Nature Center educates and inspires children and adults to discover, understand, and respect their natural environment. For more information, see **Herbs, Plants, and the Garden** on page 84.



Building Resilience and Increasing Energy with Rachel Eggherman • May 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m. • Learn strategies for renewing perspectives on life! With gentle support and easy exercises, reverse the effects of everyday challenges on mind, body, and spirit. This is the first in a series of three workshops designed by Head to Toe Therapies to promote resilience and bring joy to everyday life. \$50 (\$35/three-session series). Call 665-3202; tellrachel123@gmail.com or thecelebratedheart.com.

Finding Hope in Worrisome Times with Dave and Pat Krajovic • May 21, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. • Struggling to maintain peace in the chaos of this world? Feel like a ship being tossed in the waves of emotional stress and turmoil? This event is designed to help people tap into skills to navigate the tides of chaos and maintain resilience, groundedness, and presence. \$120. Call 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com, BodyWorksHealingCenter.com, or ascensionbreathing.com.

Mindful Living—Two Day Course with Self-Realization Meditation Healing Centre • June 10-11 • By living more in the moment and in inner harmony, people can enhance their lives, including work and relationships. This course teaches practical tools and exercises to help cultivate a more present and balanced state of mind, to be more in charge of emotions, to enhance intuition and the ability to work with life-energy flow, and to center and ground oneself. \$225 (includes meals). Those who cannot afford the fee may inquire about a bursary. Call 517-641-6201; info@SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org or SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

Sustainable Change with Molly Fitzgerald • June 17, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. • This event provides a look at the nature of the mind with a simplified and straightforward approach to accessing and harnessing the innate power to change. It is designed to help increase one's peace, strength, and stability of mind. Bring a lunch. \$20-50 (free for members). Call 994-3387; annarborregistration@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

Live Fully Awake and Aware with Dave and Pat Krajovic • June 19, 6-8:30 p.m. • Imagine living life fully present, deeply aware, and being open to life as it flows. Experience techniques to achieve a state of calm presence. \$39. Call 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com, BodyWorksHealingCenter.com, or ascensionbreathing.com.

Creativity for the Soul: Tiny Travel Altars with Judy Ramsey • June 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m. • Participants will craft a tiny altar that can be a focal point to ground their spirit and remind them that wherever their heart is, they're home. All supplies provided. This is the second in a series of three workshops designed by Head to Toe Therapies to promote resilience and bring joy to everyday life. \$50 (\$35/three-session series). Call 665-3202; ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com.

Small Comforts: The Blessings of Self-Care with Rachel Eggherman and Judy Ramsey • July 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m. • Learn how little strategies, including personal ceremony, flower essences, and blessings, can help people receive life as it happens. Participants will leave with an action plan designed just for them. This is the third in a series of three workshops designed by Head to Toe Therapies to promote resilience and bring joy to everyday life. \$50 (\$35/three-session series). Call 665-3202; ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com.

Psycho Somatic Soul Map with Lauren Tatarchuk • Aug. 9, 6 p.m. • People are not their symptoms, traumas, circumstances, or past experiences. In this introductory class, participants will use the Psychosomatic Map to uncover the essence of who they are. It is intended to help them optimize life so they can get their motors churning and embody their essence. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Kabbalah Teacher Training with Karen Greenberg • Aug. 12-13, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. • It is a life-changing decision to become a Clair-Ascension Kabbalah Teacher, with myriad opportunities to grow and ascend. This is for people who are committed to constantly working on themselves and to help others. It involves making healthy attachments to G-d and enabling clients to feel safe enough to do the same. Please call to determine readiness. \$777. Call 417-9511; krngnbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

SUN SHEN One Prayer Class with Joanna Myers • Wednesdays, 6-7:30 p.m. • The One Prayer is a dynamic, custom-designed, self-management tool that people can take anywhere and update as they learn and grow. This course is for anyone wanting a greater understanding of themselves, more focus in life, and more satisfaction. The One Prayer is about having a vision and following one's heart, but it is also concrete and practical. \$65/month. Call 384-8486; joanna@sunshen.org or sunshen.org/oneprayer.

How to Be a Happier Person—Now! With Bob Bedard • Last Saturdays, 1:30-4:30 p.m. • Each class will focus on a component of the intrapersonal happiness theory as a means to becoming a happier person. Monthly updates at ihthappiness.com. Sliding scale. Call 426-5685; happinessdocin@comcast.net or ihthappiness.com.

Professional Development

Yoga Teacher Training at the Farm with Carole Caplan • Begins May 2017 • This nine-month weekend program invites yoga practitioners to deepen their experience by completing a Yoga Alliance 200-hour certification in a beautiful setting at The Farm on Jennings. Includes traditional Kriya hatha postures and techniques with an emphasis on alignment, breath, and philosophy. The small class setting provides individual attention. Call for dates and prices 847-822-9693; carolecaplan@livebychoice.com or liveby-choice.com.

Advanced Business Training for Birth Professionals with Patty Brennan • May 20, Aug. 5; 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. • This highly interactive workshop covers thinking like an entrepreneur, establishing value, acing interviews, marketing on a budget, optimizing websites, online marketing tips, networking, goal setting, time management, and more. Learn from a small business expert and author of *The Doula Business Guide: Creating a Successful MotherBaby Business* and *The Doula Business Guide Workbook: Tools to Create a Thriving Business*. \$195 (\$175 early bird). Call 663-1523; patty@center4cby.com or center4cby.com.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Reiki

Experience Reiki Healing Energy with Andrea Kennedy in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • June 3, 1-3 p.m. • Learn details about the Japanese healing practice of Reiki and then experience Reiki in two ways. First, feel the energy throughout a guided 20-minute healing meditation that anyone can do. Second, Andrea will provide one-on-one Reiki mini-sessions so participants may directly experience Reiki. Free. Call 664-2255; andrea@mainstreamreiki.com or mainstreamreiki.com.

Reiki Energy Healing with Greg Weathers • Fridays, 7-9 p.m. • The Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth offers one-on-one Energy Healing sessions by Reiki Master Greg Weathers. He uses a non-touch approach. All donations go toward the Interfaith Center. Contact gregtheweatherman@gmail.com or interfaithspirit.org.

Usui Tibetan-Karuna Seiryoku Reiki Level One with Jennifer Vanderwal • June 25, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. • Learn how to feel energy, energetic protections, hand positions, symbols, and crystals to enhance Reiki energy. Connect to universal life force energy to heal and help others, and become attuned to the Usui Tibetan Karuna Seiryoku Reiki Lineage. \$150. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshalingcenter.com or BodyWorksHealingCenter.com.

First Degree Reiki with Suzy Wienckowski • July 14-15 • This two-day workshop is the first level of training in the Usui system of Reiki healing. Reiki is a gentle, hands-on healing art that is easily learned by all. Students learn the history of Reiki, hands-on treatment forms for self and others, and receive four individual initiations. Certificate awarded. \$150. Call 476-7958; suzyreiki@aol.com.

Holy Fire II Reiki Class—Levels One and Two with Andrea Kennedy • June 24-25, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. • This healing workshop will enable participants to provide Reiki healing energy to themselves as well as other people and animals. This class is a combination of lecture, practice, and experience. \$325. Call 664-2255; andrea@mainstreamreiki.com or mainstreamreiki.com.

Holy Fire II Reiki ART/Master Class with Andrea Kennedy • July 28-30, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. • Learn advanced Reiki techniques such as how to set up and use a crystal grid to continuously send Reiki over a distance. Become a certified Reiki Master practitioner and instructor through a combination of lecture, practice, and experience. \$800. Call 664-2255; andrea@mainstreamreiki.com or mainstreamreiki.com.

Retreats

Silent Retreat with Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre • May 19-21 • This retreat is for people of all faiths, traditions, and practices. \$140/person (shared room, vegetarian meals). Private rooms and bursary may be available. Call 517-641-6201; info@SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org or SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

Holy Land Pilgrimage at Weber Center: An Experiential Journey with Roland Calvert, Carol Johannes, Cheryl Liske, Karen McDermott, and Anneliese Sinnott • June 5-10 • This event has been designed with the hope that pilgrims will experience the Jesus of ancient Palestine and the Jesus of today with an immediacy that gives them access anew to his living presence. The pilgrimage begins at the Orthodox Church of St. George in Madaba, Jordan, continuing to Nazareth, the Judean desert, Capernaum, Galilee, and on to Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Call the Weber Center for prices (517) 266-4000; webercenter@adriandominicans.org or adriandominicans.org.

Private Directed Retreat with Janene Ternes • July 17-21 • Come away for a few days of peaceful presence with God. Experience the serenity and clarity that comes from listening to God's Holy Spirit within. This retreat will provide time and space for solitude, personal prayers, and optional participation in campus liturgy and peace prayer. Each participant will meet daily with a Spiritual Director. \$375 or \$250 commuter (\$25 deposit required). Call 347-2422; prayerinmotionllc@gmail.com; prayer-in-motion.com.

Transformational Healing Retreat with Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre • July 21-23 • These three days include a private appointment to receive Natural Spiritual Healing, a chance to learn a healing breath, a group hatha yoga class for all levels and abilities, as well as time for meditation, rest, reading, contemplation, or walking in nature. \$240/person (shared room, vegetarian meals). Private rooms and bursary may be available. Call 517-641-6201; info@SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org or SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

Peace and Quiet Weekend Retreat with Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre • Aug. 5-6 • Spend time in the peace and quiet, with lots of free time and a silent Sunday morning. \$75 covers comfortable shared room lodging and delicious home-cooked vegetarian meals and refreshments. An optional Pure Meditation Foundation class is offered Saturday afternoon for an additional \$60. Private rooms and bursary may be available. Call 517-641-6201; info@SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org or SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

Imagining Our New Stories with Joan Ebbitt • Aug. 14-17 • Transformation is always about change. Change is about surprise and surrender. Developing and growing new life stories is about metamorphosis. This interactive retreat will invite participants to use their imaginal cells to respond to the flaring forth in their souls. \$300 or \$150 commuter (\$25 deposit required). Call the Weber Center (517) 266-4000; webercenter@adriandominicans.org or adriandominicans.org.

Peaceful Living and the Art of Nourishment Retreat with Amy Brusca, Dave and Pat Krajovic • Aug. 18-20 • Is life becoming more difficult to manage in today's frenetic world? Being at peace requires a focused effort to step back. Learn tools and techniques to be grounded and fully present. Relax body, mind, and spirit during a loving and spiritually uplifting weekend. \$345 single occupancy or \$290 double occupancy (includes two nights and five meals). Call 416-5200; inspire@ascensionbreathing.com or ascensionbreathing.com.

Healing the Sacred Feminine and Masculine in Hot Springs, Arkansas with Karlta Zarley • Aug. 18-22 • Synergize the healing and balancing of the sacred feminine and masculine with the Earth's transformation of those elements while enjoying prime viewing of the total eclipse of the sun. Participants will use the massive quartz crystalline structures in the hot springs area to further their work. They will visit a crystal cave and the Toltec Mounds—some of the largest Native American mounds in the U.S. \$525 (\$500 by May 15). Call 834-1566; kzarley88@gmail.com or karltazarley.com.

One-Day Retreat with Zen Buddhist Temple • May 20, July 15, Aug. 19; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. • The retreat offers sitting and walking meditation, simple manual work, vegetarian lunch, and rest for an interval of deepening, slowing down, silence, and mindfulness. \$60. Call 761-6520; AnnArbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org or ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

Five-Day Summer Retreat (Yongmaeng Jeongjin) with Zen Buddhist Temple • June 28-July 3 • This retreat takes place in Chicago, conducted by Ven. Samu Sunim, spiritual director of the Buddhist Society of Compassionate Wisdom. It is an intensive period of Zen practice geared toward the experienced student. Partial attendance can be arranged. \$60/day (\$50/members). Call 761-6520; AnnArbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org or ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

Temple Stay/Visitor's Program and Residential Options with Zen Buddhist Temple • Ongoing • This program provides participants with an opportunity to spend time living in a Buddhist community. They follow the daily schedule and participate in programs such as retreats, study groups, public services, and yoga classes as their schedules permit. One can seriously pursue a spiritual path or simply seek peace and harmony in a wholesome environment. Prior arrangement with the Temple Director is necessary. Call 761-6520; annarbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

Holistic Yoga and Meditation Retreats at Lake Michigan with Ema Stefanova • June 9-11, June 30-July 5, Aug. 11-13 • These intimate retreats are open to beginners, continuing students, and teachers who would like to experience classical yoga and meditation as a way of life, healing, and growth. The Vivekananda Retreat Center provides lodging, vegetarian meals, and a beautiful setting. RYT200 and RYT500 teachers can earn CE hours for Yoga Alliance. Register early to save. Call 665-7801; EmaStefanova@cs.com or YogaAndMeditation.com.

Shamanism

Introduction to Journeying with Connie Lee Eiland • June 4, Aug. 27; 10 a.m.-5 p.m. • During this class, participants will learn power animal retrieval and journey to upper, lower, and middle worlds with drums and rattles. This class is a prerequisite for advanced classes. \$80 (\$70 three weeks in advance). Call 248-809-3230; clshebear7@gmail.com or shewolfshaman.com.

Connection & Empowerment with Connie Lee Eiland • May 20-21 • With journeys and divination, this class will advance one's skills and enhance their connection to Spirit and the Web of Life. Includes an initiation plus time in nature to assemble a medicine bundle for healing. Ability to journey is a prerequisite. \$220 (\$180 three weeks in advance). Call 248-809-3230; clshebear7@gmail.com or shewolfshaman.com.

Five Day Soul Retrieval Training with Connie Lee Eiland • June 30-July 5 • This residential training is for people who want to bring soul retrieval into their practices. Participants will be trained in diagnosis, soul retrieval, and after care. Application required. \$475 plus food and lodging (\$400 by June 3). Call 248-809-3230; clshebear7@gmail.com or shewolfshaman.com.

Community Shamanic Journey Circle with Kate Durda • May 6, 7-9 p.m. • A Journey Circle is a gathering of people who practice the shamanic journey together. This event is open to all who practice shamanism, both beginners and advanced practitioners. \$15. Call to preregister 517-667-0694; SpiritWeavers@gmail.com or spiritweavers.net.

“The dark does not destroy the light; it defines it. It's our fear of the dark that casts our joy into the shadows.”

— Brené Brown

Divination: Methods of Shamanic Inquiry (Basic Training in Shamanism) with Kate Durda • May 6, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. • One of the core practices of the shaman is “divining the truth,” so come explore this effective method of seeking knowledge. This workshop enables participants to more fully understand what the spiritual practice of shamanism has to offer in daily life. Beginners and advanced practitioners welcome. \$100. Call to preregister 517-667-0694; SpiritWeavers@gmail.com or spiritweavers.net.

Medicine for the Earth: Restoring Health to Self and Nature with Kate Durda • June 24, 9:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m. • This is a powerful experiential workshop and retreat based on the work of Sandra Ingerman. Participants will learn how to transform personal and environmental energy blockages and “pollution” by transmuting negative beliefs, attitudes, and the energy that comes from emotions. \$125 (\$100 by June 17). Call to preregister 517-667-0694; SpiritWeavers@gmail.com or spiritweavers.net or medicinefortheearth.com.

Ninth Annual Shamans’ Walk and Community Healing Circle with Spirit Weavers • July 29, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. • Practitioners will come together to journey deeply, dance passionately, and support each other with time and space to hear from the spirits. Concludes with a potluck and shamanic bazaar featuring rattles, drums, medicine bags, and more for purchase. All traditions are welcome, but ability to journey is a prerequisite. Limited to the first 50 people who register. \$60 (\$50 by July 22). Call 517-667-0694; SpiritWeavers@gmail.com or spiritweavers.net.

Skincare

Making Healing Creams, Salves, and Lip Balm with Michigan Folk School • May 27, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. • Wellness is not just about what people put into their bodies, but also about what they put onto their bodies. This class focuses on healing herbs that can be easily found or grown in a garden. Participants will learn how to infuse oils with herbs and blend them. \$39 tuition, \$15 materials. Call Anne at 477-8943; astevenson@wccnet.edu.

Skincare 101 with Ashley Arnold • May 31, 6 p.m. • Learn the basics of daily skin care, how diet affects the skin, and why sun protection is important. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Soap-Making Workshop with Michigan Folk School • June 20, 6-9 p.m. • This class addresses how to formulate recipes as well as how to use, store, and mix lye with water. Other topics include oils for soap-making, goat milk, fragrances, essential oils, additives, exfoliants, coloring, molding, and curing. Attendees will leave with a list of supplies and a bar of soap made during class. \$59 tuition, \$30 materials. Call Anne at 477-8943; astevenson@wccnet.edu.

Spiritual Development

A Simple, Brief, Effective Spiritual Exercise with Spiritual Growth Meetup and Eckankar of Ann Arbor • Fridays, 6:30-7:15 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • Singing HU, an ancient name for God, can be a way to tune into the spiritual currents and initiate profound experiences. This group sings HU as an undirected prayer to harmonize consciousness, open the heart to God’s love, and for spiritual upliftment. Free. Call John at 320-2010; tutdebon@gmail.com or eck-mi.org.

Expanding Your Consciousness with Tammy Braswell • May 13, June 10, July 8, Aug. 12; 1-4 pm. • Participants will discover how to expand their consciousness so that they know themselves as the limitless, divine spiritual being that they are. They will learn how to journey beyond the limits of the physical, work in higher energies of creation, and experience the freedom their soul knows is possible at the deepest level. \$127. Call 252-6196; tammy@createbyvibration.com or creatbyvibration.com/workshops.

World Religions Series with Susan Van Baalen • Wednesdays, May 3-31, 9:30-2:30 p.m. • This program will introduce the religious beliefs and practices of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism/Daoism, Judaism, and Islam. The introduction to each religion includes a survey of the deities, historical development, sacred writings, beliefs, practices, rituals, and the ethics or value system of each. Christianity is not included as a separate unit with the assumption that most people will bring an understanding of Christianity to the course. \$110/full series or \$25/session (\$10 nonrefundable deposit required). Call the Weber Center (517) 266-4000; webercenter@adriandominicans.org or adriandominicans.org.

Introduction to the Diamond Approach with Lou Weir • May 11, 7-9 p.m. • The Diamond Approach is an embodied spiritual practice that uses meditation and inquiry in the journey to discovering one’s essential nature. Suggested donation \$15. Call 657-1821; diamondworkmichigan@gmail.com.

Joy and Curiosity on the Spiritual Path in the Diamond Approach with Lou Weir • June 16-17 • The Diamond Approach is an embodied spiritual practice developed by A.H. Almaas. This weekend will involve exploring connections and barriers to joy and curiosity in spiritual practice. Direct and intimate contact with one’s immediate experience can lead to the openness and depth of one’s true nature. \$75. Call 657-1821; diamondworkmichigan@gmail.com.

Deepening with Spirit with Michelle McLemore • June 28, 6 p.m. • This event covers practical approaches to becoming more in tune with the great I AM. Daily peace practices range from creating a sacred space to physical, mental, and verbal processes to improve health, which in turn increase the ability to collaborate, cooperate, and contribute positively to society. \$10. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Weekly Torah Study with Karen Greenberg • Thursdays starting May 4, 9-10 p.m. • Participants can join a weekly study of the Torah (Old Testament) from the comfort of home. Sessions are conducted via conference call and access codes are provided with each monthly prepayment. \$40/month. Call 417-9511; kmgmbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.



*Rebecca Williams has been a tarot reader at Crazy Wisdom for over 10 years and worked in the healthcare field for over 20 years. She is now training in other healing modalities, like crystal healing and Rahanni Celestial Healing, that treat the whole being. For more information, see **Tarot and Divination** on page 97.*

Monthly Oral Torah Study with Karen Greenberg • Tuesdays starting May 16, 6:30-9:30 p.m. • The written version of the Old Testament tells a story while what has been passed down orally is the backstory. It is rich, colorful, detailed, and elucidates complexities that lend themselves to deeper comprehension and more sensitive codes of behavior toward humanity and all living things. \$125/month. Call 417-9511; kmgmbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

Connecting with Archangels with Karen Greenberg • May 25, 6-9 p.m. • Participants will become acquainted with the archangels represented in the sephirot (spheres) in the tree of life. Course will explore archangels, their roles, what assistance they provide, and how to safely call upon them. \$125. Call 417-9511; kmgmbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

Vision Quest with Debbie Mast • Aug. 6-11 • Connect with nature, seek the guidance of Spirit, integrate life transitions and discover new directions through the time-honored practice of the Vision Quest. This annual event is held on private land in western Michigan. No previous experience required. \$250. Call 586-306-6075; ftrelodge@aol.com.

Light Worker Activation with SANDYA—Sandra Shears • Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m. • Participants will learn how to serve as a light worker or world server who has incarnated at this special time to facilitate the transition to the next age. It is time to bring the gifts that will accelerate healing and activate spiritual purpose. Ongoing commitment required. \$25/session (\$80/four sessions if prepaid). Call 340-2616; sandya2033@yahoo.com or sandya-sandrashears.com.

Light Worker Development with SANDYA—Sandra Shears • Third Fridays • Group light work with current spiritual, astrological, and energy events. Includes energy activation and sound attunement. Involves an individual setup the week before. Ongoing commitment required. Call for prices 340-2616; sandya2033@yahoo.com or sandya-sandrashears.com.

Sunday Celebration with Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • Sundays, 10:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m. • Sunday services may draw upon sources as diverse as the poetry of Rumi, a teaching from the Buddha, a story about Jesus, a Jewish chant, or a reading from *A Course in Miracles*. Each week features guest musicians, a spiritual reading, a guided meditation, and a lesson by a minister, followed by open-mic time. The first Sunday of each month concludes with coffee and a potluck in the social hall. Free. Call Rev. Delyth Balmer at 720-0270; info@interfaithspirit.org or interfaithspirit.org.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Spiritual Development

Story Night with Members of the Ann Arbor Storytellers' Guild • May 11, June 8; 7-9 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room • Listen to old and new tales during an evening of adult stories. Ann Arbor Storytellers' Guild members perform for the first hour, with an open mic for the second hour. Desserts, exotic teas, or light supper available for purchase. Free, donations accepted. Contact annarborstorytelling.org or facebook.com/annarborstorytellers.

Ann Arbor Storytellers' Guild at the Ann Arbor District Library • Fourth Sundays, May-June, 2-4 p.m. • Monthly meetings always start with stories and then more stories! Listeners and tellers welcome. Free. For more information, see annarborstorytelling.org or facebook.com/annarborstorytellers.

Stress Management

How to De-Stress with Lauren Tatarchuk • May 10, 6 p.m. • Learn quick, easy tips and tricks to de-stress in a world where stress is everywhere! Reducing stress allows people to regain balance and take back the reins of their life. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Five-Minute Technique Proven to Boost Your Life with Fred George Sauer • May 20, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. • SciStress, the new improved EFT-based methodology, can help people to decrease stress at home and at work. Participants will learn to reduce anxieties, fears, and pains, as well as to improve health and personal power. \$149 (\$119 by May 12). Call 945-8275; fred@scistress.com or scistress.com.

Your Inner Source of Peace with A Place of Light • May 19-21 • Participants will determine their physical, emotional, and psychic sources of stress and learn tools to manage them. Experiences include guided imagery, past life regressions, psychic awareness, and herbal remedies. \$375 (includes meals and lodging). Contact Susan at (774) 289-7986; apolfriends@earthlink.net or placeofflight.net.

Pure Meditation Foundation Class for Adults with Self Realization Meditation and Healing Centre • May 13, 19, June 17, Aug. 5; 3 pm. • Conquer stress, improve concentration, and find inner peace. This course is valuable in all walks of life because it helps people to be in charge of how they feel physically, mentally, and emotionally. Includes a book and follow-up appointment. Also available for children and by Skype. \$60. Bursary may be available. Call 517-641-6201; info@SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org or Self-RealizationCentreMichigan.org.

Sustainability

How to Support the Bees: Reworking Our Properties and Buying Habits with David M. Hall in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • May 23, 7-8:30 p.m. • Interested in saving our pollinators? Come to discuss and share how to grow a better habitat at home and to see how money can vote to support bees. Free. Sponsored by the People's Food Co-op. Contact outreach@peoplesfood.coop or peoplesfood.coop.

Superfoods for Dynamic Nutrition: Myths and Facts, Local and Sustainable with David M. Hall in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • June 6, 7-8:30 p.m. • With a new "superfood" or a new amazing healing attribute announced every month, how can consumers determine what is real? Come to discuss the truth beneath this issue, and learn how to supplement one's diet in a cost-effective and simple way with the wonders that nature provides. Free. Sponsored by the People's Food Co-op. Contact outreach@peoplesfood.coop or peoplesfood.coop.

Permaculture/Sustainable Lifestyle: A "Hippy" Niche for Liberal Elitists? with David M. Hall in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • July 19, 7-8:30 p.m. • Take a hearty look at what it looks like to live in a way that benefits the whole. Break down misconceptions and idealistic traps around such efforts. Free. Sponsored by the People's Food Co-op. Contact outreach@peoplesfood.coop or peoplesfood.coop.

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*"You are the sky.
Everything else — it's
just the weather."*

— Pema Chödrön

◆—◆
Cultivating Community: Resilience in a Fragmented World with David

M. Hall in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • Aug. 15, 7-8:30 p.m. • Participate in building a culture of lasting worth for the present and future generations. Free. Sponsored by the People's Food Co-op. Contact outreach@peoplesfood.coop or peoplesfood.coop.

Volunteer Day: Invasive Plants with Robin Hills Farm • May 13, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. • Start with a crash course in common invasive plant species in Michigan, and then take your new knowledge to the field for a hands-on experience in invasive species management and remediation. The field component will focus on dame's rocket and garlic mustard, both wild edibles. Free. Call Ben at 834-8496; education@robinhillsfarm.com or robinhillsfarm.com/events.

Norwex with Lindsey Marshall • July 19, 6 p.m. • This event will be a fun hour of learning about a true type of clean. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

Internship and Worktrade: Natural Building and Sustainable Skills with Deanne Bednar • May, June, July, or August • Interns will immerse themselves in a one-month learning experience that includes a variety of hands-on skills and classroom subjects in design and construction. They will live and learn on-site with others in a beautiful natural wooded setting. \$850 for internship, \$450 for worktrade, or free with woofing. Call 248-236-5432; ecoartdb@gmail.com or strawbalestudio.org.

Earth Oven Workshop with Deanne Bednar • June 16-17 • This weekend involves hands-on construction of an earth oven at Wild Apple Farm. Participants will learn about cob architecture, earth building, and everything they need to know to make another earth oven at home. \$125. Call 248-236-5432; ecoartdb@gmail.com or strawbalestudio.org.

Nine-Day Natural Building Skill Builder with Deanne Bednar and Chris McClellan • June 1-9 • Gain hands-on experience in the many different natural building skills necessary to create a snug, beautiful cottage or shed from local natural materials. This is a family-friendly program held at Strawbale Studio. Call for prices and group rates (440) 221-6609; info@naturalcottageproject.com or strawbalestudio.org.

Tai Chi, Martial Arts, and Self-Defense

Wu Style Tai Chi Chuan with Sifu Genie Parker • Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays; 6-7:30 p.m. • Wu style tai chi is a soft style martial art emphasizing balance and relaxation. All are welcome to learn this ancient art of meditation in motion. \$45/month for one class/week; \$70 for two classes/week. Discounts for seniors, students, and families. First class free. Call 248-229-1060; wustyleannarbor@gmail.com or wustyle-annarbor.com.

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Tai Chi, Martial Arts, and Self-Defense (cont.)

Chen Style Tai Chi with Joe Walters • Mondays and Thursdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m.; Saturdays, 10-11 a.m. • Classes cover Chen style tai chi chuan basic principles. This is a unique movement art that emphasizes inner stillness and relaxation developed through disciplined whole body integration and refined awareness. It focuses on balance, relaxation, and whole body unity. \$85/month. Call 761-8786; annarbortaiichi@gmail.com or annarbortaiichi.com.

Tai Chi for Arthritis with Jan Katz • Thursdays, 1-1:50 p.m. • Medical studies have shown that this particular program can relieve pain for people with arthritis and improve their quality of life. It can also prevent falls in older adults. This class is also a great start for beginners to improve health and wellness. \$17 drop-in; \$55/month. Call Alexis at 845-9786; alexis@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

SUN SHEN Basic Tai-Chi Form with Ann-Margaret Giovino and Alexis Neuhaus • Mondays, 6-7 p.m.; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7-8 p.m. • Participants will learn to build a solid foundation in tai-chi principles in an intimate setting, with guidance and personal adjustment in the SUN SHEN 35 forms. Learn the sequence and details of the form as you experience the calm, effortless power which comes from relaxed focus. \$17 drop-in; \$55/month. Call Alexis at 845-9786; alexis@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

Morning Tai-Chi with Master Sang Kim • Mondays-Fridays, 7-8:30 a.m. • Participants will learn how tai-chi enables them to cultivate happiness, power, and potential, and get to know a part of themselves that was hidden and that they have been looking for all their lives. \$225/month. Call Alexis at 845-9786; alexis@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

Tai-Chi Pushing Hands with Sifu Joseph Wang • Wednesdays, 5:30-7:30 p.m. • Pushing hands is an interactive tai-chi training, which helps participants experience the world in a non-reactive, calm way. Participants find freedom and power within themselves and interact with others without compromising the self. \$21 drop-in; \$70/month. Call Alexis at 845-9786; alexis@sunshen.org or sunshen.org.

Tai Chi: Beginning through Advanced with Good EnerChi Studio and Staggerin' Dragon School of Tai Chi • Ongoing classes • Tai Chi classes are for individuals of any age and fitness level who seek to relax and have fun with this engaging body/mind activity. Tai Chi is a peaceful, flowing, low-impact exercise, well-suited for calming and centering. Free/low fee. Call Karla at 325-4244; karla@goodenerchistudio.com or goodenerchistudio.com/classes.

Wu Style Tai Chi at Jewel Heart • Sundays, 4-5:30 p.m. • Learn the ancient art of meditation in motion with this "soft style" martial art emphasizing relaxation and balance. Suggested donation \$5. Call 994-3387; programs@jewelheart.org or jewelheart.org.

Silk-Reeling Qigong with Joel Robbins • Fridays, 9:30 a.m. • Qigong is an ancient Chinese exercise that combines posture with breath work, meditation, and easy-to-learn movements. It helps develop a healthy body-mind connection, increases natural range of motion, and circulates energy throughout the body, much like acupuncture treatment. Open to all ages and levels. \$15 drop-in fee (\$5 YMCA members); \$75 for eight classes (\$25 YMCA members). Call 734-315-0573; http://daoinnerhealth.com/inner-culture-practice/classes/

Beginning Tai Chi with Peaceful Dragon • Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays • Tai Chi is a Chinese internal martial art consisting of a series of postures linked together in a continuous and fluid form. As a moving meditation, it promotes balance, coordination, concentration, and relaxation. Beginners can attend any or all classes for the same tuition. \$185. Call 741-0695; info@peacefuldragonschool.com or peacefuldragonschool.com.

Martial Arts Classes with Huron Valley Aikikai • Monday-Saturday mornings and evenings • Huron Valley Aikikai is a community of martial arts practitioners with the goal of providing an authentic, supportive, and high-quality environment for the study of Aikido. Classes include Aikido, Zen Meditation, Mixed Martial Arts, Batto-ho, Weapons, and Children's Aikido. For complete information, call 761-6012; hv-aikido.com.

Martial Arts Advantage • Morning and evening classes daily • An extensive collection of fitness and martial arts courses, Martial Arts Advantage offers classes for young children to adults in their 60s and older. Classes include yoga, pilates, cardio kickboxing, boot camp, and specialized martial arts training. First class is free. Memberships available. Call 996-9699; themartialartsadvantage.com.

Aikido Yoshokai Association of North America • Evening classes offered four days per week • Aikido is a form of Japanese Budo, a way of study including both physical and mental training. The word Aikido can be loosely translated as "the way of harmony with nature or universal energy." Aikido is a way of studying harmony through physical movements. We study moving in harmony with others to eventually strike harmony with nature. Children's classes offered also. Call 662-4686; aikidoyoshokai.org.

Tai Chi with Michigan Tai Chi Association • Ongoing Classes • Tai Chi is a great overall exercise that can be practiced by people of all ages and health conditions. Tai Chi is a meditation form of exercise that promotes balance and flexibility, and it has been found to reduce stress and lower blood pressure. \$50/month unlimited, \$40/month for seniors. Call Sally at 591-3530; michtaichi@aol.com or taotaichi.org.

Classes with Asian Martial Arts Studio • Ongoing Classes • Martial arts classes include Aikido, Kung Fun, Karate, Tai Chi, Wing Chun, and Lion Dance with the goal of developing a truthful knowledge of the fundamental elements of our martial arts traditions and their roots in Asian culture. Children's classes also offered. Call 994-3620; a2amas.com.

Tai Chi Classes with Richard Miller of Ann Arbor Tai Chi • Ongoing Classes • Classes include Chen style tai chi chuan basic principles, a unique movement art that emphasizes inner stillness and relaxation developed through disciplined whole body integration and refined awareness, with an emphasis on balance relaxation, and whole body unity. \$85/month. Call 973-0226; ribrumi@sbcglobal.net or annarbortaiichi.com.

PKSA Karate • Ongoing Classes • This center offers martial arts training in a family-friendly atmosphere. All classes are mentored by Black Belts. Unique offerings include day camps and sparring classes. For details please visit pksaannarbor.com.

Quest Martial Arts • Ongoing Classes • Quest Martial Arts is a life skills academy that has been improving lives since 1998. Classes for children, teenagers, and adults emphasize leadership, goal setting, conflict resolution, and communication skills in the context of martial arts. For details please visit quest-martialarts.com.

T'ai Chi and Qigong with Spiral Chi Center • Ongoing Classes • Classes are available for beginning or continuing adult students, and opportunities are provided for those seeking to practice push hands. For details please visit spiralchicenter.com.

Japanese Martial Arts Center • Ongoing Classes • This center values fitness, focus, and self-defense. Special classes are offered specifically for children, women, and beginners of all ages and genders. For details please visit japanesemartialartscenter.com.

Ann Arbor Mixed Martial Arts • Ongoing Classes • Learning a variety of martial arts has proven to be more beneficial than studying a single style. Classes include kickboxing, mixed martial arts, and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. For details please visit annarbormartialarts.com.

American Warriors Academy • Ongoing Classes • Being a warrior involves a courageous mind-set and a heart-driven need to stand for good. This academy encourages students of all ages to do their best as they train in self-defense, martial arts, and physical conditioning. For details please visit americanwarriorsacademy.com.

Fighting Spirit Personal Safety • Ongoing Classes • This organization offers progressive safety programs to empower women and children. Instead of traditional martial arts, Fighting Spirit teaches hands-on activities that incorporate verbalization and practical self-defense skills. For details please visit fightingspiritsafety.com.



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Socially Responsible Investing — You Can Make a Difference in the World

By David Kent

In the course of my day to day practice as an investment advisor representative, I meet people with a wide range of circumstances. It is a privilege to help them pursue their goals particularly when they have the intention to also help others or the planet. When we want to help specific other people, the process is usually through a will or trust, or by designating a beneficiary for an investment. When we want to help the planet or the population as a whole, then we can have an effect by how and where we invest our money.



Socially responsible investing (SRI) is the process of making investment decisions based on the investor's individual values regarding social issues such as politics, culture, finance, ethics, health, government policies, or the environment. Naturally, it can mean very different things to different people, but the intention is to seek financial growth and social wellbeing at the same time. One of the things that sets SRI apart from most investing strategies is that it intentionally involves an emotional component.

Until recently, the average investor did not have the financial resources

or the tools to investigate and evaluate each company in which he or she might want to invest. Because of our more advanced Internet technology, values-based investing is available to many more people. SRI is bigger than ever and more effective than ever. Until now the average person had not been able to achieve such a high degree of awareness about the world at large. Companies and whole industries are now more transparent, whether they want to be or not. Those seeking a more peaceful world are now able to avoid investing in arms and military industries if they wish. Those concerned with global relations are now able to determine more accurately what companies demonstrate quality governance and positive leadership. A person concerned about the stewardship of the environment may want his investment to reflect his concerns. Spiritually based values can be effectively expressed in the local and global marketplace and with little fanfare, if that is the desire. Even though the objective of investing is to improve your future financial position, it is becoming easier to manage investment goals and to make a positive impact on the world at the same time.

Socially responsible investing (SRI) is the process of making investment decisions based on the investor's individual values regarding social issues such as politics, culture, finance, ethics, health, government policies, or the environment. Naturally, it can mean very different things to different people, but the intention is to seek financial growth and social wellbeing at the same time.

Most of us, including myself, already make many purchases based at least partly on our values and sense of justice. When I purchase goods and services I may choose to buy local rather than from a huge corporation. Sometimes I notice there are ingredients in food I want to avoid. By choosing not to buy that product I send a small but noticeable message to the manufacturer and the industry as well. In the same way, by making conscious investment choices, we can encourage companies to make healthy decisions for their shareholders as well as the planet.

According to the "Conference on Sustainable, Responsible, and Impact Investing" [www.SRIconference.com] the history of SRI can be traced back to ancient times when more advanced ethical thinking developed. Ancient religious leaders and philosophers began to encourage the populous to practice this new ethical enlightenment and extend it to investing in more ethical ways. As they encouraged a more just and sustainable society, the leaders even discouraged the procedure of charging interest when lending money. Imagine today's business world without



the use of interest. In the mid-1600s, the Quakers brought to America the idea of "values based investing." For example, they did not invest in anything related to slavery or war. In the 1700s, John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church, believed making financial equality a routine part of the social fabric would lead to a more just and equitable society. Modern SRI began to develop in the 1960s in conjunction with other forms of social activism. Throughout the 80's and 90's, the amount of socially responsible investors grew drastically, in response to the major social and environmental issues of the time, such as Exxon Valdez, Chernobyl, and Apartheid. Now, in the age of the Internet, it is much easier for people to become aware of issues and then to research on their own how they can address them.

I find socially responsible investing to be a small but sure way of putting my personal spirituality in motion.

Most investors will find that they enjoy the process of participating in this potentially rewarding form of investing. It can be factored into retirement planning or personal investing. Some people may have a special interest in SRI because of their circumstances or a meaningful event in their lives. For most investors, the intent is to influence companies to improve their stewardship of the company's money and other resources. I find SRI to be a small but sure way of putting my personal spirituality in motion.

Like the world at large, the financial industry is becoming more complex. A financial professional with a special interest in SRI would be glad to help you choose the right investment and help you through this process. As for me, I believe in the law of gradual change. As long as it happens quickly of course. For today I will accept any movement in the right direction.

In the same way, when we choose to purchase a product that is produced locally, sold by local merchants, or is produced in an acceptable manner, we send a positive message of caring in action.

So, in the end, the question may be, is it possible for an investor to attain their financial goals and still feel good about being engaged with the world in order to make it a better place? I sure hope the answer is yes, and maybe we can even have some fun while doing it.

David L. Kent is an independent Investment Advisor Representative with, and offers securities and advisory services through, LPL Financial, a Registered Investment Advisor, Member FINRA/SIPC. He has a long-standing interest in yoga, meditation, and seeing the universe as interconnected. He enjoys the teaching aspect of his job the most. David can be reached at (810) 422-7439 or at david.l.kent@lpl.com.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Tarot and Divination

Drop-In Tarot Readings with Gail Embery • First and Third Fridays, 6:30-9:30 p.m.; First and Third Sundays, 3-6 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom • Make enlightened life choices as Gail guides you through difficult times by skillfully consulting the Tarot to get answers for you and by accessing her psychic/medium abilities. \$1.50 per minute. No appointment necessary. Call 313-655-7694; readingswithgail.com.

Drop-In Tarot/Psychic Readings with Rebecca Williams • Thursdays, 6-9 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom • \$1.50 per minute. No appointment necessary. Contact rebeccawilliams999@comcast.net.

Drop-In Tarot/Psychic Readings with Kathy Bloch • Tuesdays, 5:30-8:30 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom • \$1.50 per minute. No appointment necessary. Call 663-0435.

Tea Events

Mother's Day Fairy Tea in the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room • May 14, 1 p.m. • Children and their families are welcome for a special Mother's Day tea, including story time and a special activity. Fairy attire is encouraged. Be creative! Tickets are \$11/person (free for babies 18 months and younger), and they are available online at crazywisdom.net prior to the event. For more information, contact Jessica at jessicameyer@crazywisdom.net.

Theology

Evolution, Ecology, and God with Denis Edwards • June 17, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. • This event begins with a brief description of the way the sciences describe the emergence of the universe and the evolution of life on earth. Then it will discuss the theology of God creating an evolutionary world through the Word and in the Spirit. Thirdly, it will cover the theology of the natural world that Pope Francis offers in *Laudato Si'*. The final portion will explore the interconnection between ecological conversion and the Eucharist. \$45 (includes lunch), \$10 nonrefundable deposit. Call the Weber Center (517) 266-4000; webercenter@adriandominicans.org or adriandominicans.org.

Thermography

Adelpha Breast Thermography • June 7, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. • Participants can experience a noninvasive breast imaging technique that is the safest, earliest detection of functional physiological changes in the breast tissue. It measures heat emissions and displays them for computer analysis with no contact, compression, or pain. \$165. Call Pat at 416-5200; relax@bodyworkshealingcenter.com or bodyworkshealingcenter.com.

Wilderness Awareness

Black Pond Woods Expedition with Leslie Science and Nature Center • May 6, 6-8 p.m. • Participants will walk through the woods of Black Pond with dipping nets and video microscopes to study the creatures of this ecosystem. They will have the chance to meet some animals from the pond and woods up close. Appropriate for children ages 5-12 and their families. Registration required by May 4. \$9/person (\$8 for members), \$34/family (\$30 for members). Call 997-1553; info@lesliesnc.org or lesliesnc.org.

Spirit of the Great Waters Retreat with Merri Walters and Robin Grosshuesch • May 12-14 • This is an opportunity to meet and communicate with the sacred waters of Lake Michigan. It involves a retreat on the beautiful shore with the creators of Great Lakes Sacred Essences. \$795. Call 662-1638; info@sacredessences.com or sacredessences.com.

Ecology Series: Insects! with Robin Hills Farm • June 17, 1-3 p.m. • During this hike, participants will learn how to find and identify common insects including butterflies, beetles, and bees. They will also dip-net for aquatic insects and their larvae, so be prepared to get a little muddy. \$15 (\$25 for family groups). Call 834-8496; education@robinhillsfarm.com or robinhillsfarm.com/events.

Women's Health

The Fifth Vital Sign: Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor with Ariana Riegel • May 12, 6-8 p.m. • Come together for an evening of self-love and love of community. The menstrual cycle is a vital sign, just as important as blood pressure or pulse. This class will cover menstrual cycle awareness and charting, hormonal and non-hormonal contraception, menstrual care products, breast awareness, diet and lifestyle choices for hormonal health, and how to discuss options with a health care provider. The content is applicable and important for everyone from adolescents to adults. Free. Call 288-7784; info@sacredrootsservices.com or 5thvitalsign.com.

WomanSafeHealth Open House with Elizabeth Shadigian and Marnie Burkman • May 18, July 13; 5-6 p.m. • Meet Dr. Elizabeth Shadigian, Dr. Marnie Burkman, and the WomanSafeHealth staff. Attendees can explore the office, eat snacks, and talk about women's health and integrative psychiatry. They will also have the chance to meet with Dr. Elizabeth privately and she will sign copies of her new book, *WomanSafeHealth: The Antidote to Status Quo Health Care*. Free. Call 477-5100; info@womansafehealth.com or womansafehealth.com.

WomanSafeHealth Open House with Elizabeth Shadigian and Elise Aikman • June 13, Aug. 8; 5-6 p.m. • Meet Dr. Elizabeth Shadigian, massage therapist Elise Aikman, and the WomanSafeHealth staff. Attendees can explore the office, eat snacks, and talk about women's health and integrative psychiatry. They will also have the chance to meet with Dr. Elizabeth privately and she will sign copies of her new book, *WomanSafeHealth: The Antidote to Status Quo Health Care*. Free. Call 477-5100; info@womansafehealth.com or womansafehealth.com.

Womenspirit

Ladies' Night Out at Crazy Wisdom Bookstore • May 19, 5-9 p.m. • All day, Crazy Wisdom is offering 20% off purchases for women with the mention of Ladies' Night Out. From 5-9 p.m., women can stop by to have passports stamped and to enjoy free hot tea samples, chocolate, and shopping. The first 15 women who bring passports and make a purchase of \$15 or more will receive a free goody bag containing various items, including a book, incense, greeting cards, body products, jewelry, and more. Call 665-2757; sarah@crazywisdom.net.

Writing and Poetry

Crazy Wisdom Poetry Series hosted by Joe Kelty and Ed Morin, Second and Fourth Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m. in the Crazy Wisdom Tea Room • Free. Call Ed at 668-7523; eacmorso@sbcglobal.net or cwpoetrycircle.tumblr.com.

Second Wednesdays: Poetry Workshop • All writers welcome to share and discuss their poetry and short fiction. Sign up for new participants begins at 6:45 p.m.

Fourth Wednesdays: Featured Reader for 50 minutes, Open Mic Reading for one hour • All writers welcome to share their own or other favorite poetry. Sign up begins at 6:45 p.m.

May 24 • Bill Yarrow, Professor of English at Joliet Junior College and an editor at *Blue Fifth Review*, is the author of three books of poetry—*The Vig of Love*, *Blasphemer*, *Pointed Sentences*—and four chapbooks. He has been nominated eight times for the Pushcart Prize.

May 24 • Zilka Joseph teaches creative writing. Her chapbooks, *Lands I Live In*, and *What Dread*, were nominated for a PEN America and Pushcart award, respectively. Her new book, *Sharp Blue Search of Flame*, was recently published by Wayne State University Press.

June 28 • Saleem Peeradina is the author of five books of poetry, including his more recent *Final Cut* and *Heart's Beast: New and Selected Poems*. He is Professor Emeritus at Siena Heights University.

July 26 • Richard Solomon is a poet and developmental pediatrician whose writing is shaped by the psychedelic Vietnam War era and the resilient suffering of children. His poems have been published in *Michigan Quarterly Review*, *5 AM*, *3rd Wednesday*, and *Peninsula Poets*. He has won several poetry contests.

Wellspring Writing Workshops with Julie Mariou • Apr. 6, 13, 27, May 4, 11, 18, June 1 in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room • This creative writing workshop group focuses on nurturing and developing the writer's authentic voice. It uses the Amherst Writers & Artists group teaching method. \$160. Call 730-6175; julie@wellspringwritingworkshops.com or wellspringwritingworkshops.com.

Sacred Storytelling with Holly Makimaa • Aug. 5, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. • In this experiential workshop, participants will explore the transformative power of writing and sharing stories in a sacred container. They will discover the healing that comes from sharing their own stories and acting as a witness to others as they share theirs. Each person will work toward a new narrative for themselves and the world. Suggested donation \$40. Call 757-5700; hollymakimaa@gmail.com or yourtransformationaljourney.com.

Yoga

Yoga Flow at the Farm with Carole Caplan • Tuesdays Starting May 23, 10-11:30 a.m.; Sundays Starting May 28, 9-10:30 a.m. • Come nurture inner peace in a beautiful setting at The Farm on Jennings. Classes feature traditional Kriya hatha postures with an emphasis on alignment, breath, and philosophy. The small group setting provides personalized instruction. \$15/drop-in; \$60/six weeks. Call 847-822-9693; carolecaplan@livebychoice.com or livebychoice.com.

Candlelit Yoga with Peachy Fitness • Mondays, 7:15-8:15 p.m. • This class enables participants to loosen tense muscles and prepare for the week ahead. It leads students through a sequence of gentle asanas, pranayama, and meditation. Appropriate for all levels. \$15/drop-in; \$30/three classes. Call Zaini at 681-0477; info@peachyfitness.com or peachyfitness.com.

Eight Silken Movements for Better Health: Chinese Yoga with Bart Vermilya • June 14, 6 p.m. • Qi Gong is often referred to as Chinese Yoga. The eight silken movements (Baduanjin) are a set of gentle stretches done from a standing or sitting position. They can be modified for all ability levels. This class covers basic Qi Gong breathing and theory as well as a workout. No mats required, just wear loose clothes and a smile. Free. Call 517-592-3030; info@sacredtouch.net or sacredtouchbrooklyn.com.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Yoga (cont.)

Kundalini Yoga and Meditation with Mohinder Singh (Billie Wahlen) • Tuesdays, May 2-June 6 and July 4-Aug. 29 • Kundalini Yoga consists of postures (asana) combined with special breathing (pranayama), hand and finger gestures (mudra), body locks (bhandas), chanting (mantra), and meditation. It is the supreme technology to awaken awareness and allows one's true nature to unfold. \$12-16. Call 276-6520; starbillie@gmail.com or a2kundaliniyoga.com.

Gentle Yoga with Robin Lily Goldberg • Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m. • Gentle yoga enables everyone to experience the mental, physical, and emotional benefits of yoga by blending influences from hatha, yin, and restorative yoga. It includes poses modified for individual needs, as well as stretches and breathing exercises to incorporate balance and mindfulness into daily life. All levels of experience welcome. \$20-\$22. Call 274-9482; robin@aurily.com or aurily.com.

Yoga with Zen Buddhist Temple • Six Tuesdays, beginning May 30 or July 18 • Beginning and experienced students learn traditional hatha yoga postures with an emphasis on relaxation, concentration, and working with breath. Instructors were trained by the Sivananda yoga organization and combine that experience with meditation training. Early registration recommended. \$60/six sessions (\$12 drop-in). Call 761-6520; annarbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org or ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

Iyengar Yoga with David Rosenberg • Mondays, 6-7:30 p.m.; Thursdays, 7-8:30 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays 10-11:30 a.m. • Experience invigorating yoga postures using the methods of B. K. S. Iyengar to strengthen the body, create a feeling of well-being, reduce stress, and release tension through physical activity and meditation. The instructor emphasizes use of yoga props and individualized instruction so students of varying experience, age, flexibility, and strength can participate together. \$85/7 classes. Call 646-4195; massage4@aol.com or aareced.com.

Hatha Yoga with Kashi • Mondays, 7-8:15 p.m. • This class involves quieting yoga sequences that help to de-stress and restore the body. The movements calm the nervous system and bring energies back into balance. Please bring a mat. \$12. Call 883-6947; kashi@kashinivas.org or kashinivas.org.

Restorative Yoga with Kashi Walters • Thursdays, 6:30-8 p.m. • This class involves yoga to soothe and refresh at Kashi Nivas. Please bring a mat. \$15. Call 883-6947; kashi@kashinivas.org or kashinivas.org.

Yoga Nidra with Ema Stefanova • May 27-28 • This workshop involves hands-on training in the original yoga nidra technique designed by Swami Satyananda Paramahansa. Stages 1-4 will be practiced. Suitable for both beginners and seasoned practitioners. RYT200 and RYT500 teachers are eligible for Yoga Alliance CE hours. Call 665-7801; EmaStefanova@cs.com or YogaAndMeditation.com.

Free Yoga with Sue Salaniuk of the Yoga Space • Last Fridays, 6-7 p.m. • This class is open to anyone interested in learning how to develop stamina, strength, flexibility, and focus. No experience or preregistration necessary. Free. Call Sue at 395-6297; sue@yogaspacennarbor.com or yogaspacennarbor.com.

Yoga Classes with Sue Salaniuk, Sally Rutzky, Alicia Rowe, Pam Lindberg of the Yoga Space • Daytimes and Evenings, May 1-Aug. 18 • Iyengar yoga can increase focus, reduce stress, balance strength, flexibility, and stamina. Classes for beginners, intermediate, and more advanced students with individualized instructions in all classes. \$20/drop-in; \$105/seven-week session. Call Sue at 395-6297; sue@yogaspacennarbor.com or yogaspacennarbor.com.

Inward Bound Yoga at Friends Meetinghouse • Spring and Summer Sessions, May 8-July 29 • Since 1995, Inward Bound has offered a variety of approaches to the ancient discipline of yoga. Class options include several levels of hatha yoga, prenatal and postnatal yoga, ashtanga yoga, and flow classes coordinated with music. For class descriptions and fees, see ibyoga.com.

Iyengar Yoga with Karen Ufer, David Ufer, Marlene McGrath, and Alicia Rowe of Yoga Focus • Day, Evening, and Weekend classes • All levels of classes are taught including gentle, new beginner, and prenatal. All props are provided. Instruction in Iyengar method is invigorating, safe, and enhances wellbeing. \$18/drop-in (\$15 in advance). Call Karen at 668-7730; info@yogafocusannarbor.com or yogafocusannarbor.com.

Open Level Yoga with Michele Bond of Yoga House • Sundays, 7:30-9 p.m.; Thursdays, 6-7:30 p.m.; Saturdays, 10-11:30 a.m. • Each student is encouraged to honor their unique abilities and limitations in this mixed-level class, with variations offered for all levels. This method blends the science of biomechanics with an openhearted, uplifting philosophy. \$18/drop-in with instructor permission (\$14 in advance). Call 358-8546; michele@yogahouseannarbor.com or yogahouseannarbor.com.

Yoga Essentials with Michele Bond of Yoga House • Tuesdays, 6-7:30 p.m. • For those new to yoga or new to this system, this course teaches universal principles of alignment that are an invaluable aid to learning the postures, deepening understanding of the body, and developing a yoga practice that is safe, joyful, therapeutic, and fun. \$18/drop-in with instructor permission (\$14 in advance). Call 358-8546; michele@yogahouseannarbor.com or yogahouseannarbor.com.

Yoga for Athletes and More! with Michele Bond of Yoga House • Wednesdays, 6-7:30 p.m. • This class caters to anyone looking for an energetic practice who enjoys increasing core strength, flexibility, agility, balance, and mental focus. Includes universal alignment principles to open the door for peak performance in sports and other areas of life. \$18/drop-in with instructor permission (\$14 in advance). Call 358-8546; michele@yogahouseannarbor.com or yogahouseannarbor.com.

Yoga Happy Hour: Basics Plus Restorative with Michele Bond of Yoga House • Fridays, 6-7 p.m. • Learn basic alignment, simple postures and breath, along with delicious restoratives. Feel stress melt away during candlelight practice in a peaceful setting surrounded by the inspiration of nature. \$13/drop-in (\$11 with semester registration). Call 358-8546; michele@yogahouseannarbor.com or yogahouseannarbor.com.

Compassionate Yoga with Mary Seibert • Ongoing Classes • All levels are welcome in this intimate setting for classes taught at a relaxed pace. They involve a gentle series of breath work, stretching, postures, meditation, and relaxation. The focus is on meeting the body where the body is at with individualized attention and self-compassion. \$15/drop-in; \$80/six classes. Call 323-2520; mvsa2mvs@gmail.com or compassionateyoga.info.

Purna Yoga: Begin with the Basics with Raisha Janet Love • Ongoing Classes • The Purna tradition offers safety in a non-competitive setting where students can practice and progress toward healthier lives with more purpose and direction. \$16-20. Call (989) 284-1042, askraisha@yahoo.com or purnayogaannarbor.com.

Yoga with Cats with Humane Society of Huron Valley and Tiny Lions Cat Café • Sundays, 8:30-9:30 a.m.; Thursdays, 7:30-8:30 p.m. • Practice hatha-style yoga with the furry feline masters at the new cat café. This class is designed to bring peace to the mind and body while filling hearts with joy and supporting animals in the community. Open to ages 16+. Advance registration required. \$10. Call 661-3575; humaneed@hshv.org or hshv.org/yogawithcats.

Yoga Fusion with Ypsi Studio • Ongoing Classes • Options include gentle or vinyasa classes as well as those that focus on strengthening the core, holding deep poses, or integrating yoga with tai chi and Pilates. For details please visit ypsistudio.com.

Therapeutic Yoga with Ayurvedic Healing Center • Ongoing Classes • Milford's Yoga School within the Ayurvedic Healing Center is known for yoga therapy, yoga for seniors, and classes that incorporate massage and meditation. For details please visit ayurvedichealingcenter.com/yoga.

Yoga and Nia with A2 Yoga • Ongoing Classes • Students of all levels are welcome to try traditional hatha or vinyasa yoga styles, along with specialty classes including nia, prenatal, restorative, or onã flow yoga. Over 35 classes are offered each week, including four free/donation based classes. For details please visit a2yoga.net.

Align Divine Yoga • Ongoing Classes • This studio is dedicated to circulating dense physical matter into light spiritual awareness with breath, movement, and sound. Classes include alchemy vinyasa, heart medicine flow, yin breath, and spirit of asana. Workshops feature gong baths, tai massage, or ecstatic dance. For details please visit aligndivineyoga.com.

Holistic Yoga Meditation Classes with Ema Stefanova • Ongoing Classes • New and continuing students are welcome to experience yoga as a way of life, healing, and growth. Learn posture sequences for strength and flexibility plus breathing and meditation techniques in a small group setting. Call 665-7801; EmaStefanova@cs.com or YogaAndMeditation.com.

Drop-in Gentle Yoga with Erica Dutton • Wednesdays, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. • Iyengar Yoga for all levels, no experience necessary. Gentle enough for those with back and other body issues. Please bring a yoga mat and wear loose clothing. Preceded by optional meditation from 10:30-11 a.m. Donations welcome. Call 417-4385; eld0306@yahoo.com or enlightenedsoulcenter.com.

Slow-Flow Vinyasa Yoga with Ellen Livingston • Wednesdays, 5:30-7 p.m.; Fridays, 9:30-11 a.m. • These classes lead a slow, mindful yoga flow with breath, movement, and sacred music. New students are welcome and everyone is encouraged to find their own pace. Classes are small and take place in a unique round yurt studio heated by a woodstove on five beautiful acres. \$15 drop-in; \$96/eight weeks. Call 645-3217; ellen@ellenlivingston.com or ellenlivingston.com.

Intensely Gentle Yoga with Patty Hart • Ongoing classes • These classes are for those seeking a slower-paced class, those who are new to yoga, or those needing more adaptation for postures using props. Students are encouraged to develop a deeper sense of self-observation and concentration by focusing on their breathing while moving into, sustaining, and exiting poses. Call 645-7251; patty@everybodyhappy.net or everybodyhappy.net.

Yoga Classes with Christy DeBurton • Ongoing Classes • This is a small, supportive, non-competitive, friendly yoga studio teaching various yoga styles that focuses on individual attention to challenge you in a balanced, rejuvenating way. See website for rates. Call 761-8409; info@christydeburton.com or yogaroomannarbor.com.

Iyengar Yoga with Laurie Blakeney of Ann Arbor School of Yoga • Ongoing classes • Iyengar classes are safe, challenging, and transformative. Prices vary. Call 663-7612; info@annarborsofolyoga.com or annarborsofolyoga.com.

Prenatal and Postnatal Yoga with Marlene McGrath • Ongoing Classes • These classes are designed to support the changes of a pregnant body, instill confidence in the body's abilities, and provide physical, mental, and emotional preparation for birth and mothering. Postnatal yoga is practiced with babies present. See website for times, dates, and costs. Email at marlenemamayoga@yahoo.com or Marlenemcgrathyoga.com.

Gentle Yoga with Marlene McGrath • Ongoing Classes

• Expanded offerings of gentle yoga classes designed for students who want a more supported and slower-paced class. These classes feature props and modifications to promote elasticity, strength, and stability for those who may have mobility, stamina, or balance issues. Suitable for beginners or experienced students. See website for times, dates, and costs. Email at marlenemamayoga@yahoo.com or Marlenemcgrathyoga.com.

*With the silent mind
comes a widening of the
consciousness and it can
turn at will towards any
point in the universal
reality to know there what
it needs to know.*

— Satprem

Iyengar Yoga Classes with Karen Husby-Coupland of Harmony Yoga • Ongoing

classes • Small yoga studio on Ann Arbor's west side offers classes for beginners and for more experienced yoga students, as well as gentle yoga for those who prefer a supported, slower-paced approach to the practice of yoga. \$18 class (discounts for multiple classes). Call 222-9088; Karen@HarmonyYogaAnnArbor.com or HarmonyYogaAnnArbor.com.

And Now Yoga: GLYTA Spring Yogananda Retreat with Golden Lotus Yoga Teachers • May 19-21 • Experience a total yoga immersion that focuses on the science of yoga as expressed by Paramahansa Yogananda, and termed by Swami Vivekananda as Raja or Kingly Yoga. This weekend is intended for those seeking meaning in life, God realization, or simply relaxation. \$55 (\$35 for GLYTA members). Call Justine 989-983-4107; justine@songofthemorning.org or songofthemorning.org.

Spring Karma Yoga Weekend with Song of the Morning Community • May 26-28

• The weekend schedule includes yoga, meditation, meals, seva shifts, and meditation. Other activities include cleaning, planting, and preparing the garden for the growing season. Come to give and receive. Free for those serving and staying in the dormitory. Call Erin for prices for private accommodations 989-983-4107; erin@songofthemorning.org or songofthemorning.org.

YogaFest with Song of the Morning Community • July 27-30 • This annual gathering of truth-thirsty souls takes place on the sacred grounds of Song of the Morning retreat, a sanctuary in northern Michigan. Festivities include yoga classes, Kirtan workshops, hiking, camping, swimming, art, dance, spiritual discussions, and more. Please come for a blissful and communal celebration of spirit, nature, and all things yoga! \$160 (\$140 by July 26). Call Brian 989-983-4107; yogafest@songofthemorning.org or yogafestmi.org.

Yogacharya Birthday Weekend with Song of the Morning Community • Aug. 31-Sept. 3

• Participate in a celebration of the eternal message of Yogacharya J. Oliver Black, a direct disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda and founder of Song of the Morning Ranch. Attendees will be moved by stories shared by members who have benefited from his energy and teachings. This annual reunion includes talks, walks, meditations, and a dedication through music and song to this beloved Master. Free plus lodging. Call 989-983-4107; office@songofthemorning.org or songofthemorning.org.

Yoga Teacher Training at the Farm with Carole Caplan • Begins May 2017

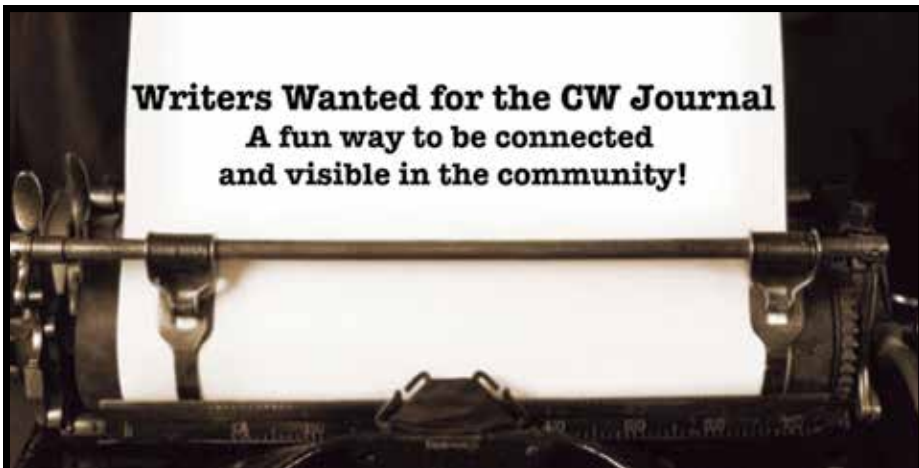
• This nine-month weekend program invites yoga practitioners to deepen their experience by completing a Yoga Alliance 200-hour certification in a beautiful setting at The Farm on Jennings. Includes traditional Kriya hatha postures and techniques with an emphasis on alignment, breath, and philosophy. The small class setting provides individual attention. Call for dates and prices 847-822-9693; carolecaplan@livebychoice.com or livebychoice.com.

Holistic Yoga Teacher Training with Ema Stefanova • Flexible dates with Intensive May 7-July 4

• This unique teacher training provides intensive and self-paced instruction in group settings and one-on-one. The program enables students to teach from a place of understanding all aspects of yoga and to work with diverse populations. Participants can become certified at the RYT200 or RYT300 level. Retreats may be required. Call 665-7801; EmaStefanova@cs.com or YogaAndMeditation.com.

The Aquarian Teacher™ Level One Teacher Training Program: Kundalini Yoga and Meditation as taught by Yogi Bhajan® with Mahan Rishi Singh Khalsa of Kundalini Research Institute • May 20-Feb. 2018

• Participants will gain a deep understanding of the science of Kundalini yoga. They will develop skills to instruct students in Kundalini yoga kriyas and meditations as taught by Yogi Bhajan. They will practice teaching, participate in early morning sadhanas, and experience the powerful transformational energy of White Tantric Yoga. This 220 hour course includes 180 hours of classroom instruction and a thorough curriculum. \$3,750. Call 276-6520; starbillie@gmail.com or a2kundaliniyoga.com.



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We're looking for a new columnist for our ongoing CW Kids Column. Each issue, the columnist writes a feature article which includes 3 or 4 profiles of interest to parents and their kids. We focus on people, organizations and businesses offering cool, fun, meaningful and sometimes therapeutic activities, programs, events and classes for kids. Great opportunity for a writer who is also a parent.



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LIVE YOUR CALLING

By Holly Makimaa

Almost 15 years ago, a friend asked me a question I frequently ask others now: "Are you willing to risk finding out what your gifts are?" The world could not be more ready for each of us to discover, cultivate, and use our gifts to help heal our society. Yet, how many times do we let fear get in the way of us stepping forward to listen to and act on our inner callings?



Photo by Rick Rokely

At the time my friend challenged me to listen to my inner calling, I was contemplating teaching my first public series of writing for healing classes. Even though I had been sharing these tools informally for years, my doubts almost kept me from moving forward: Would the classes really help people? What if I didn't know enough? What if I failed in some way? Yet, my friend's loving words flipped fear on its head and helped me to get curious about the possibilities. Since that day, I have facilitated nearly 100 classes and workshops, sat with people at critical junctures in their lives, and seen miracles regularly occur as people listen deeply.

It has been one of my life's greatest joys to watch people's lives transform through writing about and sharing

their spiritual journeys in small classes, on retreats, and in private coaching sessions. I have witnessed individuals leave unfulfilling careers and start their own businesses or nonprofits based on their soul passions; I have seen students go back to school or begin additional training in their 70s; I have held space for men to find the courage to grieve the loss of children; I have energetically held men and women as they find forgiveness for the tragedies in their lives; I have watched people risk all to listen to their hearts' longings; and I have encouraged students to release the weight of stories they carried alone — only for them to recognize they are not alone. Along the way, I have learned more than I could have ever imagined I would need to know about holding sacred space, and I am still learning. I went back for additional training as a journaling facilitator, an interspiritual minister, a bioenergetics facilitator, and a spiritual coach during the 15 years since my friend's question. But, none of it could have happened without my saying yes to the initial calling. Of course, none of it would have happened either without my own spiritual coaches and writing peers holding me in a sacred space when I went through challenging times with illness, the death of loved ones, or other life changes.

My doubts almost kept me from moving forward: Would the classes really help people? What if I didn't know enough? What if I failed in some way?

The dictionary defines a calling as "a strong inner impulse toward a particular course of action especially when accompanied by conviction of divine influence." In a more long-term sense, calling refers to "the vocation or profession in which one customarily engages." I like to define it more simply. I think what it takes to live our calling is the courage to be honest about what needs to be called forth at any given time. There's a thread line or calling we might follow our whole lives, like to be a healer, an artist, or a parent, and then there are the callings we find ourselves called to in any given season. For instance, after the death of a parent, some are called to be still and make sense of the mystery of life and death by going inward. Other seasons, for instance, are far busier, like when launching a project, raising young children, responding to a social movement, and so on.



Photo by Petra Daher

How many times do we let fear get in the way of us stepping forward to listen to and act on our inner callings?

Urgency demands a more masculine output of energy. Times of reflection require a more feminine approach. Our world is learning how to balance these two approaches, and it is more important than ever that we honor both ways of being in the world as we live our callings.

Listening to our callings and acting upon them is a refined skill. People who go into formal religious life spend a lot of time discerning their life direction. But the majority of people don't have a container or space to be able to honor and really listen to what is drawing them. I was raised in a religious tradition that had a forum for people to discern how to act on their spiritual inclinations. I found that extremely helpful and am passionate about making sure people of all faiths, spiritual backgrounds, and from all walks of life, including those with no official ties to a community, have such a space to explore their callings. I once heard a woman at a workshop say that something "called her forth." I like that notion. What calls the real you forth? In the coaching sessions and groups I offer, I create a sacred container for people to listen deeply and voice what moves them. What moves people is often what lights them up inside or continues to knock at the door of their hearts.



At this critical time on the planet, each of us is being invited to do our part. I believe that by each of us digging deeper into our truths, together we will live into the answers. We must forge the new way by listening deeply to our callings and inspiring those around us to follow suit. No longer is there a time when someone else will do the work for us. We are the ones who are called to co-create. Will you risk finding out what your gifts are this year?

As an avid dancer, I am moved by the famous quote from choreographer Martha Graham. It applies every bit as much to dance as it does to life and to listening to our callings:

There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all of time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and it will be lost. The world will not have it. It is not your business to determine how good it is nor how valuable nor how it compares with other expressions. It is your business ... to keep the channel open ...

Holly Makimaa facilitates classes, rituals, groups, and private spiritual coaching sessions to support people in healing and transformation. She holds the vision of all people creatively and joyfully activating their gifts within their communities. As an interfaith/interspiritual minister, she honors all spiritual paths as sacred. To learn more, visit yourtransformationaljourney.com or email hollymakimaa@gmail.com.

Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders, and The Centers

Photo by Rachel Pastiva

Aaron is a spirit who has been a Buddhist monk and scholar in many previous lifetimes and is a being of great love, compassion, wisdom, and gentle humor. In his final lifetime he was a vipassana meditation master, but he has lived in many different bodies and followed many spiritual paths. He is channeled by Barbara Brodsky.

Linda Adamcz, MSW, is a Certified Practitioner of Integrative Breathwork and Psycho-Spiritual Integration. She has worked in the mental health field for nearly 30 years.

Nia-Avelina Aguirre, ND, is a board-certified Naturopathic Doctor and has been in the natural health, fitness, and wellness profession since 1983. She offers non-toxic, non-drug options along with bodywork and energy therapies for radiant health.

Elise Aikman, LMT, graduated from the Ann Arbor Institute of Massage Therapy in 2015 with certifications in therapeutic massage, neuromuscular therapy, and myofascial release. She is passionate about helping clients who face chronic illness or pain, particularly headaches.

Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness has a mission to cultivate and support the understanding of mindfulness to promote health and wellbeing.

Ashley Arnold earned her massage therapy training through Baker College and her license in Esthiology through Douglas J. Aveda Institute. Her passion for horses also led to her certification in equine massage therapy.

Robert Auerbach is a certified Advanced Practitioner of Rolf Structural Integration who has studied with two of Ida Rolf's senior proteges and been in practice for 19 years.

Marcia Bailey, MA, PhD, is a certified Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy Practitioner, Kripalu Yoga Teacher, Certified Transformational Breath Facilitator, and Senior Trainer with the Transformational Breath Foundation.

Bob Bedard, PhD, is the author of five books about happiness. He has 25 years of experience teaching and speaking about the Intrapersonal Happiness Theory to individuals and groups.

Deanne Bednar, MA, has taught middle school art for 28 years, and sustainable future classes for 15 years. She is the director and teacher at Strawbale Studio, focusing on natural building, and sustainable living skills since 2003.

David Bell was a founder of Ann Arbor's Interfaith Center and he has been a longtime teacher of *A Course in Miracles*.

Linda Steinborn Bender, ACSW, LMSW, has spent 30 years helping adults manage day-to-day life by adjusting to health, trauma, abuse, and grief. She has worked in several hospice settings.

Leslie Blackburn, MS, RCST, is a Sacred Sexual Healer and Transformational Guide. She is a leading educator and coach of sacred sexuality and tantra in the U.S.

Bloom Gardens is a local nursery and garden boutique specializing in unique plants, local and organic gardening supplies, and whimsical garden décor.

Carole Blotter draws her meditation practice from dual roots in Quaker and Buddhist traditions. She has been teaching meditation since 1999, and she is a teacher for The Forest Way, an organization dedicated to providing retreats conducive to balanced and integrated spiritual growth.

Bodyworks Healing Center offers a variety of holistic health services from certified massage therapists and other certified practitioners.

Michele Bond has over 800 hours of training in yoga, yoga therapeutics, and meditation with internationally-recognized instructors. She has a background in martial arts, dance, competitive synchronized swimming, gymnastics, stunt fighting, and swordplay.

Breastfeeding Center of Ann Arbor offers comprehensive and professional support services for breastfeeding mothers and babies, including private consultations, weekly MotherBaby support groups, and breastfeeding-related retail.

Tammy Braswell is an Energetic Creation Coach who supports women in expanding their levels of consciousness and awareness to turn their desires into reality.

Patty Brennan, Director of Center for the Childbearing Year, has advocated for childbearing families for over 30 years as a childbirth educator, doula trainer, midwife, and nonprofit executive. She is a DONA International-approved birth and postpartum doula trainer and author of *The Doula Business Guide—Creating a Successful MotherBaby Business*.

Barbara Brodsky is the founder and guiding teacher of Deep Spring Center and an ordained Interfaith Minister. She has been practicing meditation since 1960, teaching since 1989, and she draws from dual roots in Buddhist and Quaker traditions. She became totally deaf in 1972, and is a channel for the spirit, Aaron.

Jeff Brown and Francois Beausoleil are Certified Non-violent Communication trainers.

Jonathan Buckman is a lifetime student of the martial arts and an instructor with SUN SHEN. He is also a social worker and a chess teacher to over 2,000 children.

Marnie Burkman, MD, is an integrative psychiatrist who is dedicated to helping others recover and enhance their wellness on every level of health—including body, mind, spirit, and community. She is board-certified in psychiatry and integrative holistic medicine.

Anna Byberg, LMSW, CAADC, is the Program Coordinator of the Dawn Farm Sera Recovery Center and co-presenter of Dawn Farm's Family Program. She was instrumental in implementing Dawn Farm's tobacco cessation initiative.

Carole Caplan, E-RYT 500, teaches yoga and meditation to weave ancient wisdom into modern life. She bases her yoga teaching on traditional Kriya techniques and she is also certified in Thai Yoga Bodywork.



Dr. Elizabeth Shadigian is an obstetrician-gynecologist, researcher, consultant, and author of the book *The Antidote to Status Quo Health Care*. Since 2007, she has been offering her care through her personal practice at *WomanSafeHealth*. For more information, see **Women's Health** on page 97.

Kapila Castoldi has studied meditation under the guidance of spiritual teacher Sri Chinmoy for 30 years. Her interest in Ayurveda as a complement to meditation spans two decades.

Atmaram Chaitanya is the director of the non-profit Kashi Nivas Shiva Meditation Center. He has offered over 40 years of service as a teacher of meditation, self-inquiry, and kirtan chanting in the Ann Arbor area.

Center for the Childbearing Year is Michigan's premier DONA doula training center. It is a childbirth preparation and parenting community offering comprehensive online childbirth preparation, hosted by Patty Brennan, in addition to community-based education.

Carl Christensen, MD, PhD, FACOG, FASAM, ABAM, is a board-certified addictionologist and pain management specialist.

Lorri Coburn, MSW, is a psychotherapist and interfaith minister. She is author of *Breaking Free: How Forgiveness and A Course in Miracles Can Set You Free*.

The background information listed here pertains specifically to individuals and centers whose classes and workshops and events are listed in this current issue of the Crazy Wisdom Calendar. If you are a holistic/spiritual/psychological growth practitioner in the area, but you don't regularly lead classes or workshops, you can still be listed for free in our Holistic Resource Guide on the Web. Go to AnnArborHolistic.com.

Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders, and The Centers

Stefanie Cohen, MA, RMSE, is a performing artist, curator, movement teacher, and somatic practitioner with a focus on the integration of bodily awareness and the creative process. She holds a Masters in Dance and Somatic Wellbeing and she is both an Authentic Movement facilitator and a Registered Somatic Movement Educator.

Diana Cramer, MA, has been co-facilitating the Ann Arbor Death Café since 2012. She is a natural death educator, home funeral guide, green burial advocate, and advanced care planning consultant.

Dawn Farm Youth and Family Services Team provides assessment, intervention, treatment, education and support services for adolescents experiencing problems with alcohol and other drug use and for their families.

Christy DeBurton, RYT, is a Registered Yoga Teacher who has received training from both Omega Institute for Holistic Studies and The Center for Yoga. She has been teaching yoga since 1998.

Deep Spring Center for Meditation and Spiritual Inquiry is a nonprofit organization devoted to offering teachings of nonduality and the meditation practices which support those teachings. Barbara Brodsky is the founder and guiding teacher.

Kate Durda, MA, is a shamanic practitioner, esoteric healer, published researcher, developmental psychologist, and co-founder of Spirit Weavers. She has extensive training with the Foundation for Shamanic Studies, Sandra Ingerman, and various cultural shamanic traditions such as Tibetan, Andean, Celtic, Buryatan, and various Native American traditions.

Erica Dutton is a retired nurse who has practiced and taught yoga for many years.

Joan Ebbitt, LMSW, is a spiritual director and licensed clinical social worker. She specializes in ministering to religious clergy and others in their quest to experience the divine.

Denis Edwards is a professional fellow in theology at Australian Catholic University, Adelaide campus, and a priest of the Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide. He is a member of the International Society for Science and Religion.

Rachel Eggherman is a massage therapist and HeartMath coach at Head to Toe Therapies in Ann Arbor. She has been guiding people to wellness for over 20 years.

Connie Lee Eiland has been a shamanic practitioner for 15 years and a physical therapist for 47 years. Since 2000, her shamanic studies have been with Sandra Ingerman, Betsy Bergstrom, Carol Proudfoot-Edgar, Nan Moss, and Larry Kessler.

Linda Diane Feldt, a student of the healing arts since 1973, is a holistic health practitioner, teacher, and writer who has taught herbal classes locally for over 40 years.

Lori Fithian is founder and creator of Drummunity and has been facilitating drum circles and rhythm workshops since 1998. A student of drumming tradition for 20 years, her teachers include Arthur Hull and Barry Bateman. She has made a career out of her passion for building community by bringing people together to drum.

Molly Fitzgerald has many years of professional experience helping prisoners, probationers, and those struggling with substance abuse. She holds a B.S. and M.S. in Criminal Justice.

John Friedlander is a psychic, author, and teacher with degrees from Duke and Harvard Law. He has studied with Jane Roberts and at the Berkeley Psychic Institute with founder Lewis Bostwick. His newest and third book, with Gloria Hemsher, is *Psychic Psychology: Energy Skills for Life and Relationships*.

The Friends of the Ann Arbor District Library is a committed nonprofit group of volunteers that operates the Friends Book Shop in the downtown library and supports the activities of the Ann Arbor District Library.

Melanie Fuscaldo, MA, LPC, NCC, is a licensed and nationally-certified counselor and life coach specializing in joyful transformations.

Pam Gallagher, CAP, has over 40 years of experience in practicing, studying, and teaching astrology. She has a full-time astrological practice on Wholistic Astrology at the Midwest School of Astrology.

Amy Garber, BA, RMT, is a medical intuitive, psychic, and channel who aids people on their path by consulting with their spirit guides, illuminating past lives, encouraging intuitive development, and connecting with departed loved ones. She is the co-director of the Enlightened Soul Center and co-founder of Intuitives Interactive.

Robin Grosshuesch was trained as a social worker and has decades of experience in the construction and remodeling trades. He and Merri Walters have traveled across the country praying with the land and following spiritual guidance.

Paulette Grottrian, MA, was trained through the UMass Medical School Integrative Medicine Center for Mindfulness and the University of California San Diego Center for Mindfulness. She has studied with Jon Kabat-Zinn, Jack Kornfield, Sharon Salzberg, Kristin Neff, Christopher Germer, and Thich Nhat Hanh. She is a founding member of the Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness.

David M. Hall is a bee-keeper, educator, and rescuer, having rescued over 4.5 million honeybees from extermination and founded two apiaries. He also has a Permaculture Design and Permaculture Teacher certification.

Nirmala Nancy Hanke, MD, is a long-time meditator and teacher of meditation at Lighthouse Center. She is a psychiatrist and therapist who integrates meditation, Reiki healing, and other spiritual practices with psychotherapy.

Patty Hart, E-RYT, has been teaching yoga classes, private sessions, and workshops since 1998. She specializes in adapting poses for specific student needs while maintaining a safe space for grounding and exploration within yoga practice.

Marg Heeney, MSW, is an intuitive and empathic healer with decades of experience as a psychiatric social worker. She has studied many modalities including Spirit Response Therapy, Innerspeaks, and Yuen Method. Her work focuses on how the body responds to life experiences and how to clear issues physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Sierra Hillbrand has been providing parents and families with compassionate support during pregnancy and birth since 1997. She has worked as a midwife, doula, and child-birth educator as well as a psychotherapist specializing in trauma and attachment.

Kathy Hinderer, PhD, MS, MPT, PT, has more than 35 years of experience as a physical therapist, and ten years of experience with equine assisted therapy. She has considerable clinical experience treating a broad spectrum of disabilities across the lifespan.

Karen Husby-Coupland is a certified Iyengar Yoga teacher who has been practicing yoga since 1993 and teaching since 1999.

Inward Bound Yoga has offered a variety of approaches to the ancient discipline of yoga since 1995.

Jewel Heart was founded by Gelek Rimpoche and is dedicated to the preservation of Tibetan Buddhism and to bringing the practice of this rich tradition within the context of contemporary life to everyone. Among the last generation of incarnate lamas tutored by the masters of Old Tibet, Gelek Rimpoche's command of western culture enabled him to convey the Tibetan Buddhist tradition with wisdom, wit, and kindness.

Jan Katz is a senior student of SUN SHEN Founder, Master Sang Kim. She is also a certified instructor of the Tai Chi for Arthritis Program of Dr. Paul Lam's Tai Chi for Health Institute.

Joe Kelty is a poet and teacher of English and biology at area community colleges.

Natasha Kendal, LMFT, specializes in working with individuals, couples, and families in transition. She also provides co-parenting support and assistance for couples who are separating or divorcing.

Andrea Kennedy is a Reiki Master Practitioner and Instructor, practicing since 1995. She sees clients at Borer Family Chiropractic in Saline, MI, and brings Reiki into the mainstream through education and social media.

—
*The privilege of a lifetime
is being who you are.*

— Joseph Campbell

Jennifer Giacomelli, LMT, is a mother, performer, and licensed massage therapist who encourages balance in the lives of others through the art of touch. Her decades of experience studying and teaching dance have expanded her knowledge and understanding of the body.

Ann-Margaret Giovino and Alexis Neuhaus are SUN SHEN tai-chi instructors and senior students of SUN SHEN Tai-Chi Lineage Holder Master Sang Kim.

Katy Gladwin is a doula and childbirth educator. She has been providing prenatal, birth and postpartum support to the Ann Arbor area through Sacred Roots Services LLC since 2011.

Curtis Glatter is a professional percussionist and multi-instrumentalist.

Frederick Glaysher is an epic poet, rhapsode, and the author or editor of ten books. He has lived and traveled in Japan, China, and on the Colorado River Indian Reservation.

Robin Lily Goldberg is a writer, researcher, and holistic healthcare practitioner. She holds certifications in Reiki and Reflexo-qi along with Hatha Yoga, Street Yoga, and Laughter Yoga.

Golden Lotus, Inc. teaches the science of yoga and its practical applications so that all can achieve the highest levels of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing as they progress on their path toward self-realization.

Lisa Gottlieb is a social worker, local food activist, and Nonviolent Communication certification candidate.

Karen Greenberg is a registered physical therapist who has taught for many years at University of Maryland Hospital, dance studios, and via Skype around the world. She is currently a metaphysical teacher of personal and spiritual growth.

Sarasvātī: The Divine Current

By Ana Pilar Cruz

*"Goddess of wisdom, who appears as syllables.
Words, sentences, and understanding,
Goddess in whom all meaning inheres
From beginningless time, grant me your
grace. Goddess who purifies and enriches
the soul, You who are the treasurer
of intelligence, Please accept these
words, my humble offering!"*

— Sarasvati Rahasya Upaniṣad

How does one begin to describe the essence of the Eternal Muse? From Calliope and her eight sister Muses in ancient Greece to the Green Fairy in bohemian 19th century Paris, the metaphorical concept of pure artistic enlightenment, exploration and inspiration is found throughout the ages of human history. One of the very oldest representations of this creative current is found in India: the Goddess Sarasvātī. Sarasvātī embodies Divine Inspiration, that which many an artist, whether they be a painter, poet, writer, musician or dancer, has chased to the end of sanity. Sarasvātī is the avatar of inspiration who incites us to drop everything and dive deep into our creative impulses.

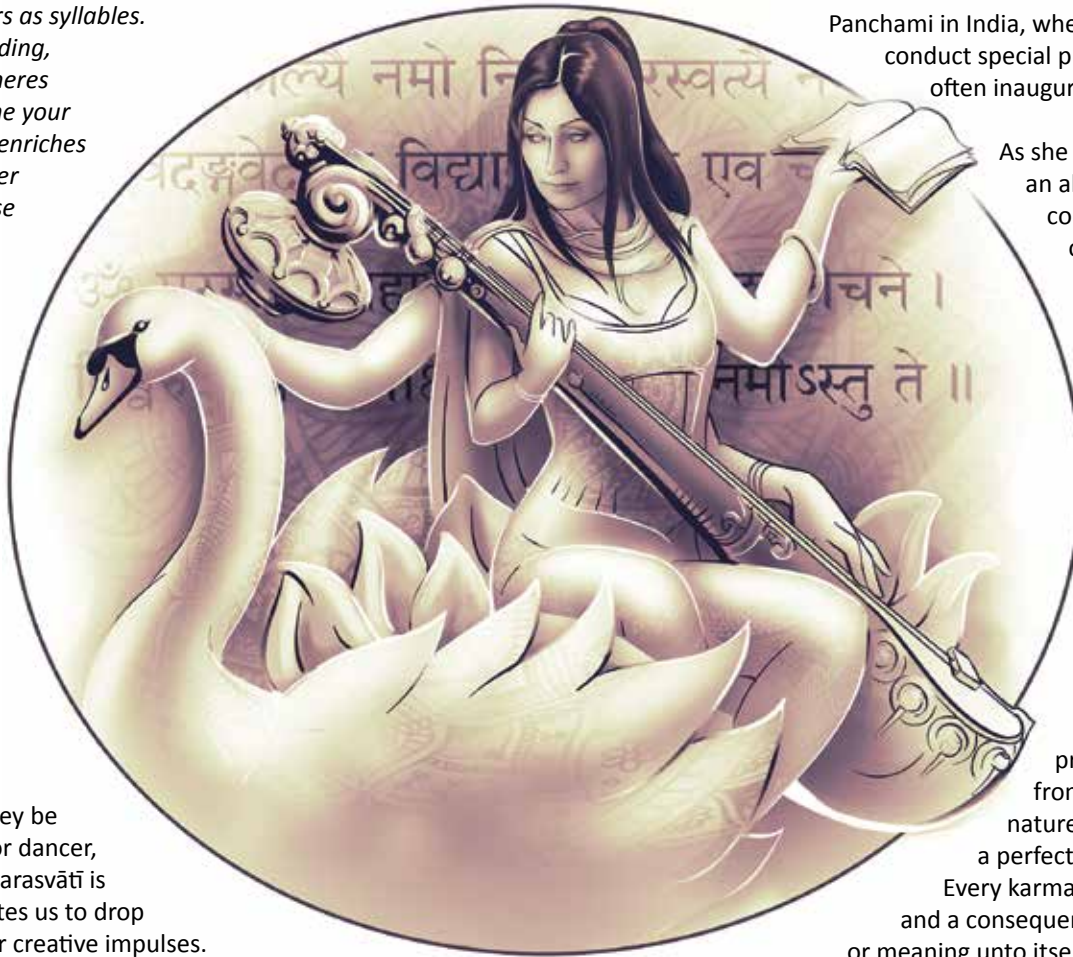
Her name, in Sanskrit, is comprised of two words: "saras," meaning "essence" or "current," and "vātī," meaning "possessed." Thereby, Sarasvātī's name translates as "possession of the Divine current or essence." A current (whether of water or electricity) is never itself; it is formless, taking its shape from what is around it. Moreover, the term "essence" evokes the idea of something that never changes, a core or fundamental truth.

She provides the penetrative inspiration that literally hits like a thunderbolt (electrical current) when least expected, and like a hard prismatic diamond (essence) that is unchanging. She is the refractive clarity of revelation.

These two meanings for the same Sanskrit terms may seem paradoxical at first, but they take us into the true heart of this incredible Goddess. In the Tantric tradition, she is said to have a "vajra kaya," a lightning or diamond body. Within this paradox of lightning (current) and a diamond (essence), we can delve further into the philosophical truths of Sarasvātī. She provides the penetrative inspiration that literally hits like a thunderbolt (electrical current) when least expected, and like a hard prismatic diamond (essence) that is unchanging. She is the refractive clarity of revelation.

Sarasvātī is always portrayed dressed in a white sari, relatively unadorned, and seated on a lotus or swan. She has either two or four hands which are playing a vina (a stringed instrument), holding a book (the sacred text of the Vedas), a mala, and sometimes a barbed hook or spear. Her role as Goddess of the supreme Word, both divine and mundane, spoken and vibratory, is represented by the book she holds as well as the mala, which is used to count mantra during japa (recitation).

Her aspect of Parā Vāch, or "Supreme Word," is represented by the book of knowledge or the "Vedas," the oldest layer of Sanskrit or Vedic literature, which encompasses liturgical material, poems, and hymns of the Vedic religion. Language and speech are considered the vehicle for the knowledge of spiritual liberation, as the sacred teachings of the Vedas were passed down orally for thousands of years. Her crystal mala represents her power to chant "mantra," sacred sound or vibration, and her mastery of the Sanskrit alphabet. Mantra is believed to have the power to alter the nature of reality itself, as the Universe is nothing more than vibration, and thus reflects the creative power of Sarasvātī. Her immense knowledge and wisdom is celebrated during the festival of Vasant



Artwork by Logynn Hailley

Panchami in India, where educational institutions conduct special prayers to her, and new schools are often inaugurated during this auspicious day.

As she plays the strings of the vina, an allegory for the human spinal column, she plays us into being on the fabric of consciousness. Sarasvātī is Divine Consciousness descending into this reality as if in migration, embodied by the swan, a bird taking flight at the most optimal moment, in the moment, rather than by a predetermined schedule. As Sarasvātī descends she is likened to the swan, or "hamsa" in Sanskrit, which is the onomatopoeia for the sound of the passage breath as we inhale and exhale. So too like the Moon, reflecting the light of the Sun, does Sarasvātī reflect the process of consciousness as it moves from Source into Self. Her divine nature is pure "līlā," or play, serving as a perfect complement to "karma" (action).

Every karma has a causality, an accountability, and a consequence, while līlā has no purpose, goal or meaning unto itself. There is no point of play other than to play!

Sarasvātī is loosely associated with the god Brahma (the Creator), but she is not a wife or attached to any one god in a sensual way. She remains fully autonomous, abiding in her own nature like a current that will not be contained. Sarasvātī is the intoxicating nature of Ananda (bliss), in which we experience the invariant presence of the Self, or the "atman," as part of Consciousness. Within this ecstasy is a toxicity; for that is the price of wildness, as it would otherwise become domestic. She is anything but domestic.

If this ecstasy was not at least somewhat toxic, we would stay in that state of bliss forever and therefore lose the play of consciousness. She invites us to the experience of "abhisara," the peaks and troughs of life. We must experience both the highs and the lows, for without these polar experiences, neither would be possible. We are tasked to savor the experiences, both shadow and light; to ride the cyclical nature of embodied experience like the peaks and valleys of ocean waves, or the waxing and waning nature of the Moon.

Sarasvātī is Divine Consciousness descending into this reality as if in migration, embodied by the swan, a bird taking flight at the most optimal moment, in the moment, rather than by a predetermined schedule.

One of my teachers, Douglas Brooks, always reminds us that we are every character in the story or myth. The invitation that Sarasvātī extends to us then, is one of reflection. We are entreated to see ourselves within the images of the Divine and then to recognize ourselves as the Divine's own reflection. Sarasvātī represents our creative expression, the integrity and truthfulness in our speech, and the accumulated wisdom from our experiences of our life. Her autonomy reminds us that everything we need, we already possess, and when she invites us to stop and play for a moment, we are able to reconnect to the experience of inner bliss, spontaneity, and our very own wild, uninhibited nature.

Ana Pilar Cruz, E-RYT 500, has been teaching yoga since 2001, and, in the modalities of Hatha, Hatha Flow, and Ashtanga Yoga, has been training yoga teachers since 2006 at both 200- and 500-hour levels in the United States. She brings the history, philosophy, and mythology of yoga to communities and conferences across the United States with her company Hello Shakti!. She can be contacted at theblueyedgirl@gmail.com.

Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders, and The Centers

Esther Kennedy, OP, MSW, a Dominican Sister of Adrian, is a spiritual director, retreat leader, and clinical social worker.

Mahan Rishi Singh Khalsa, D.C., has been teaching Kundalini Yoga for the past 40 years nationally and internationally. He cofounded the Khalsa Healing Arts and Yoga Center which combines chiropractic, nutritional counseling, massage therapy, acupuncture, Kundalini yoga, meditation, and healing traditions from around the world.

Master Sang Kim is an engineer, Christian mystic, and inheritor of Master Gabriel Chin's Yang Style Tai-Chi lineage. Originally from Korea, he has practiced martial arts, cultivation methods, and healing for more than 30 years and has been teaching since 1992.

Whitney Kolongowski is a childbirth educator, birth doula, and Dancing for Birth certified instructor. She teaches at the Center for the Childbearing Year.

Brent Koors is a homesteader and carpenter in Grass Lake.

Dave Krajovic and **Pat Krajovic** founded Body Works Healing Center in Plymouth, the Global Breath Institute, and Ascension Breathwork. They have advanced training in a wide array of healing techniques, esoteric teachings, and breath mastery.

DeLynn Lake, ND, RN, uses a wide variety of tools to educate the next generation on the marvels of their creation and relationship with nature, encouraging balanced wellness one person and family at a time. She has over 23 years of experience with helping clients to reach their health goals.

Amber Lee, LMT, is a recent graduate of the Adrian School of Massage. She plans to further her training in Neuromuscular Therapy, Myofascial Release, Pediatric Massage, and Sports Massage.

Leslie Science and Nature Center educates and inspires children and adults to discover, understand, and respect their natural environment.

Lifespan Doula Association provides End-of-Life Doula Training and Certification. Owners Merilynne Rush and Patty Brennan are experts in end-of-life issues and the doula model of care.

Mary Light, ND, MH, LMT, is a traditional naturopath and consultant herbalist with a private practice and state licensed school of natural medicine in Ann Arbor.

Lighthouse Center, Inc. in Whitmore Lake is a center for spiritual development founded by Chetana Catherine Florida in 1979. Open to all pathways, the Center is guided by Jain Master Gurudev Shree Chitrabhanuji and embraces Ahimsa, non-violence toward all beings.

Pam Lindberg is a certified Iyengar Yoga teacher.

Ellen Livingston has been a student of yoga for 30 years and a certified instructor for a decade. She is also a coach, mentor, public speaker, author, and retreat leader living an authentic, heart-centered, healthy lifestyle.

Raisha Love has been teaching since 2007. She is a Purna Yoga Certified Teacher at the 500-hour level. She is currently enrolled in the 2,000-hour program at the College of Purna Yoga.

Rachel Lozon is a certified holistic health coach. She is passionate about nutrition and helping people work through their challenges with emotional eating.

Holly Makimaa is a transformational life coach, spiritual counselor, holistic writing teacher, and sacred activist.

Julie Mariouw is a former English teacher and published author who has completed an intensive Amherst Writers & Artists training program in leading writing workshops. She is an AWA affiliate.

Lindsey Marshall is a Norwex leader who is focused on helping others by removing chemicals from their homes and lives.

Debbie Mast, MSN, RN, is apprenticed to a native shamanic tradition and has 25 years of experience in leading ceremonies for groups and individuals.

Chris McClellan has been building for over a decade, leading and participating in the construction of earth ovens, rocket stoves, and other structures. He is also a bookseller and networker who presents at Mother Earth News Fairs.

Barb McConnell, LPN, CHTPI, is a nurse, Certified Healing Touch Practitioner, and instructor for Levels 1-4 with 30 years of experience in hospital, clinical, industrial nursing/industrial management. She also teaches Total Health which includes essential oils.

Jim McDonald has taught herb classes and workshops throughout the Great Lakes bioregion and the U.S. He is a community herbalist, a manic wildcrafter and medicine maker, and an ardent student of the most learned teachers of hercraft . . . the plants themselves.

Michelle McLemore is an energy therapist certified in Healing Touch, Reiki, and Sacred Geometry. She is also a psychology teacher, an ordained minister, and a Be Young essential oils consultant.

—◆—
*“The only limits for
tomorrow are the doubts
we have today.”*

— Pittacus Lore

Michigan Friends Center, built in 1994, is a not-for-profit organization located on the wooded 90-acre land of Friends Lake Cooperative Community. As a spiritually grounded community, they enjoy discussions that explore their shared experience of renewal through nature.

Christy Miller, LMSW, ACSW, is the Program Director of GrieveWell (formerly the Kite Network). She has more than 20 years of experience as a psychotherapist for individuals, groups, and families.

Ed Morin is a poet and former English teacher at area universities and colleges.

The Mother is a combination of many expressions of the Divine Mother such as Mother Mary, Kwan Yin, and others, and expresses different aspects of herself depending on the needs and karma of the person with whom she is sharing darshan. She is trance channeled by Barbara Brodsky.

Joanna Myers is a SUN SHEN healer, disciple, and senior student of the SUN SHEN founder, Master Sang Kim. Her passion is listening deeply and tapping into a person's ability to change quickly, effortlessly, and permanently.

Sifu Genie Parker has trained and taught Wu Style tai chi chuan for over 20 years. She is a disciple of Grandmaster Eddie Wu Kwong Yu, head of the fifth generation of the Wu family and a gatekeeper of the Wu style.

Peachy Fitness is a small friendly yoga studio in Ann Arbor that provides classes for beginners as well as long-time yogis. The studio is designed with the entire family in mind.

Judy Ramsey has offered animal communication and interspecies counseling for over ten years. She applies her social work and linguistic skills to animals. She has mentored with Penelope Smith and Teresa Wagner and teaches three levels of animal communication.

Stacey Rayer is the Horticultural Sales Specialist at Bloom Gardens. She loves sharing her gardening expertise with green thumbs and novices alike.

Deb Rhizal is a birth doula and childbirth educator. She has been practicing since 2004 and has assisted hundreds of families through childbirth. She is also a registered nurse, the mother of four girls, and a student in the nurse-midwife program at U-M.

Ariana Riegel has been a doula and childbirth educator with Sacred Roots Services for over two years. She also works with teens, teaching body positive sexuality education.

Barbara Robertson is the Director/Owner of the Breast-feeding Center of Ann Arbor. She is a board-certified Lactation Consultant and breastfeeding educator who loves working with moms and babies.

ShuNahSii Rose began her practice as a feminist educator, healer, and community organizer in Ann Arbor in 1990 to honor the connection between the natural world and hope for the future.

David Rosenberg has been teaching Iyengar Yoga since 1993 and traveled to Pune, India, in 1996 to study at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute.

Debra Rozek is a Medical Astrologer and an Experimental Psychologist with advanced degrees in psychology and public health. She has numerous publications and has lectured on the faculty for UAC 2012 in New Orleans.

Merilynne Rush, RN, has been co-facilitating the Ann Arbor Death Café since 2012. She is a natural death educator, home funeral guide, green burial advocate, and advanced care planning consultant. She is also a certified Respecting Choices 1st Steps Trainer who teaches end-of-life doula training through Lifespan Doula Association.

Sally Rutzky is a certified Iyengar Yoga teacher with 32 years of experience.

Sue Salaniuk holds a Senior Intermediate One Iyengar Certificate. She has studied with the Iyengars in India 12 times and continues to advance her studies regularly with teachers in the U.S.

Carla Samson is the Creatrix of Align Divine Yoga. She has been teaching a variety of different styles of yoga for over six years. She has also traveled the world to study shamanic and yogic practices.

Fred George Sauer, MS, is the author of *The Girl Who Couldn't Laugh: The Neuroscience of Stress Management*, and a 2016 Foreword INDIES Book of The Year Finalist. He has over 30 years of business, training, and coaching experience. He is also a certified EFT and Psych-K practitioner.

Tatiana Scavnicky is a psychic intuitive, teacher, songwriter, and Angel Therapy Practitioner with Angel Therapy Advanced Training.

Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre, founded by Mata Yogananda Mahasaya Dharma, is a nonprofit near Lansing. Its aim is to give support to those struggling or suffering in life on any level, and to assist those who seek inner knowledge and personal growth in the pursuit of peace, health, and happiness.

Mary Seibert, BSN, RYT200, is a Certified Kripalu Yoga Teacher with a foundation in Iyengar. She is also a holistic nurse and Healing Touch Practitioner.

Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders, and The Centers

Laura Seligman, MS, is a SoulCollage® facilitator, artist, and docent. She also volunteers at the U-M Museum of Art.

Treneti Sens dances for the healing of the planet and specifically focuses on being a voice for the trees as a beacon of inspiration and action in the reforestation movement. She works in collaboration with Community Carbon Trees Costa Rica.

Elizabeth Shadigian, MD, is an obstetrician-gynecologist, consultant, educator, and researcher specializing in the health, safety, and wellbeing of women.

SANDYA-Sandra Shears has been a Spiritual Channel, Healer, and Counselor since 1990 as guided by the Higher Communities of Light. As a Light Worker and Vibrational Practitioner, she specializes in activating other Practitioners, Light Workers, and World Servers.

Antonio Sieira, PhD, is a professional member of the American Hypnosis Association, with certifications in past life regression, smoking cessation, and weight loss therapies. He is also certified by the American Alternative Medical Association as an Alternative Medical Practitioner, and is the creator of the Mindfulness Meditation System.

Anneliese Sinnott, OP, is a Dominican Sister of Adrian, MI. She recently retired from the profession of professor of systematic theology at Ecumenical Theological Seminary of Detroit.

Lynn Sipher, LMSW, has provided psychotherapy since 1985 and mindfulness-based classes and workshops since 2006. She is a founding member of Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness.

Southeast Michigan Astrologers' Round Table (SMART) is a local chapter of the National Council for Geocosmic Research (NCGR).

Dave Sporer is a lifelong craftsman, sailor, and boat-building enthusiast. He studied naval architecture and marine engineering at U-M.

Ema Stefanova, MA, E-RYT500, YACEP, Member IAYT, is a yoga and meditation master as well as an experienced teacher trainer, healer, author, and therapist. She belongs to the Satyananda yoga lineage and has taught worldwide for over 30 years.

Jeremey Suttles, MSE, LMSW, is a Clinical Social Worker at the U-M Hospital's department of adult inpatient psychiatry.

Janene Ternes is a commissioned spiritual director and founder of Prayer in Motion, LLC. She has developed a variety of workshops that teach and inspire holistic forms of prayer to help others find and achieve their own inner connection with God.

Craig Terrell is a landscape designer with a passion for native plants, forest ecology, and soil science. He owns and operates Land Architects, Inc. in Ann Arbor.

Thrive! Wellness Center uses Nutrition Response Testing™ involving the body's reflexes to determine the underlying cause of illness.

Stephanie Tighe, MSW, is a teacher and shamanic healer who co-founded Spirit Weavers, a training and support organization for shamans. She has over 25 years of experience healing and leading workshops nationally and internationally. She has trained extensively with Sandra Ingerman.

Judy Lee Trautman is a certified leader of the dances, an initiated Sufi, and an ordained Sufi Cherag.

Susan Van Baalen, OP, is a Dominican Sister of Adrian, MI. She holds graduate degrees from the Jesuit School of Theology in Chicago and Georgetown University. She is currently an adjunct professor of Theology and Religion at Saint Leo University in Florida.

Jennifer Vanderwal is a Healing Facilitator, Reiki Master, Intuitive Spiritual Counselor, and Melody Crystal Healer Instructor. She has taught classes for over ten years.

Bart Vermilya, L.Ac., has a master's degree in Oriental Medicine and training in Tui Na (Chinese style massage) and Seifukujitsu, a Japanese style of restorative body work used by martial artists. He also specializes in Chinese herbs, cupping, and Gua Sha.

Cam Vozar, LMSW, LMFT, a psychotherapist in private practice for over 25 years, has worked with individuals and couples focusing on trauma, recovery, spirituality, and EMDR.

Joe Walters has over 20 years of experience practicing Chen style Tai Chi with Richard Miller.

Kashi Walters is the Co-Director at the non-profit Kashi Nivas Shiva Meditation Center in Ann Arbor. She is an experienced hatha yoga, meditation, and self-inquiry instructor.

Merri Walters has practiced as an intuitive holistic healer for over 35 years. She is the mother of eight children and the founder of Great Lakes Sacred Essences. She is gifted in the arts of herbology, homeopathy, flower essences, essential oils, and Native Spirituality.

Robin Hills Farm in Chelsea, Michigan, offers up an array of classes, events, and activities, from an insect class (top picture), to a Garden Party cooking class (middle), to a DIY Dragon Boats workshop (bottom). For more information, see **Wilderness Awareness** (p. 97), **Art and Craft** (p. 77), **Festivals and Fairs** (p. 82), or **Sustainability** (p.94).



—◆—
*“Take rest; a field that
 has rested gives
 a bountiful crop.”*

— Ovid

Kirsten Tang and **Loretta Pickford, LPC, NCC**, are certified in the EAGALA model of equine-assisted psychotherapy and personal development.

Lauren Tatarchuk, CNHP, has a BBA plus certifications as a Natural Health Professional, Loomis Digestive Health Specialist, and Biofeedback and Bioresonance Specialist.

Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders, and The Centers

Sifu Joseph Wang is the Head SUN SHEN Tai-Chi Instructor and Senior Tai-Chi Students of Master Sang Kim. He has been teaching since 2005.

Greg Weathers is an advanced healer and Reiki Master who leads Reiki sessions at Ann Arbor's Interfaith Center. He has also taught Reiki at Washtenaw Community College.

Lou Weir is a long-time student of the Diamond Approach and a teacher-in-training. He is also a founding teacher of Insight Meditation Ann Arbor.

Billie Whalen, also known as **Mohinder Singh**, has been practicing and teaching Kundalini yoga and meditation for 14 years in Ann Arbor. His experience and radiance can hold the space for one's transformation.

Ben Wielechowski is the Education Director at Robin Hills Farm. For over seven years he has been a teacher specializing in college-level composition. He is a new father, writer, and adventure enthusiast.

Suzy Wienckowski is a Reiki Master and Massage Therapist with over 35 years of experience in healing arts. She teaches the traditional Usui System of Reiki Healing and is a member of the Reiki Alliance.

Jan Wilkiemeyer, Jimmy Neal, and Lynlee Sky display creative talents in their wheel thrown and hand-built functional (and non-functional) ceramic and porcelain art.

Eve Wilson is the creator and Director of the Healer Development Program and a full-time Healer Practitioner since 1986. She is a groundbreaking leader in healing and ascension who helps others access their gifts and realize their potential as healers.

Julie Wolcott, MA, CSW, LPC, has practiced in the fields of counseling and psychotherapy for over 40 years. Besides being a Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy Practitioner and Kripalu Yoga teacher, she is also a Certified Transformational Breath Facilitator since 2004 and a Senior Trainer with the Transformational Breath Foundation since 2006.

Women's Divorce Resource Center (WDRC) is an all-volunteer, nonprofit, educational organization. It offers workshops by experienced divorce professionals including Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Certified Divorce Financial planners, and Attorneys.

“Too many people
overvalue what they
are not and undervalue
what they are.”

— Malcolm S. Forbes

Yoga Focus, an Iyengar Yoga studio, is celebrating 25 years as a yoga center. Teachers value their practice of yoga and the respect for their students. **Yoga Space** consists of teachers certified in the Iyengar method with decades of experience. They excel at making yoga fun and accessible for everyone.

Patricia Yiu is a yoga teacher and Reconnective Healing Practitioner who aspires to empower women so they can live from a place of inner wisdom and connection.

Dana Clay Young, PhD, is a world-recognized leader and teacher in the natural health and wellness industry. He is driven by the desire to understand the chemistry of health and wellness through essential oils and other all-natural products.

Master Wasantha Young is a Master of T'ai Chi and Qigong with over 48 years of experience. She has received formal instruction in different styles of meditation and massage therapy and has a master's degree in Transpersonal Studies.

Karlta Zarley, RN, CHTP, has 36 years of experience in preventive and holistic nursing care, and is a Certified Healing Touch Practitioner. She has been in private practice for 19 years as a professional healer and educator. She leads classes and retreats, and also provides energy work, spiritual direction, and consultations on essential oils and flower essences.

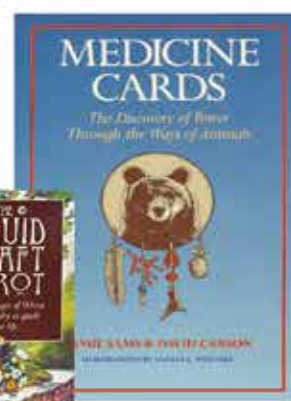
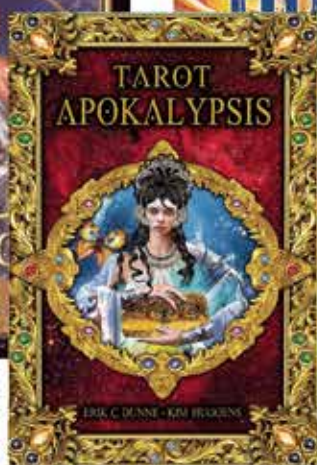
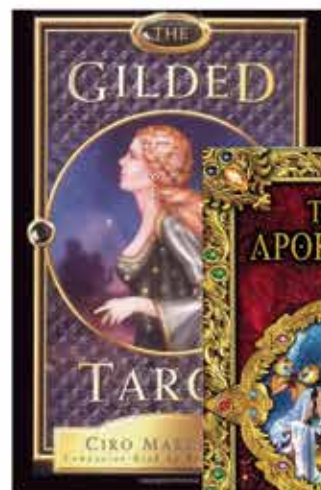
The Zen Buddhist Temple was formally opened in 1981 as part of the Buddhist Society for Compassionate Wisdom. The Temple functions on three levels: as a temple serving the public, as a training center for ordained members, and as a Sangha or community of members.

Sean Zera has more than ten years of experience as a wildlife biologist. He grows, grafts, and hybridizes rare and unusual flowers and fruits.

Tina Zion, RNC, BA, CHt, RMT, is a fourth-generation psychic who has been practicing and teaching holistic healing for over 30 years. She is known internationally for her books including *Become a Medical Intuitive: The Complete Developmental Guide* and *The Reiki Teacher's Manual*.

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Starting in May, new blogs will be posted related to stories in this issue. Guest bloggers include: Annie Elder and Paul Bantle on their agricultural and spiritual evolution, Libby Robinson on meditation, Carter Scott on his path to yoga through filmmaking, Mary Morgan on the CivCity initiative, Karen Lang on topics in nutrition, Holly Makimaa on living joyfully, and more . . .

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In Deep Gratitude

For the love, compassion and tremendous wisdom Rinpoche brought to the Ann Arbor community over the course of thirty years, we honor this great being for his contributions to helping find better ways to face the most difficult aspects of life and death, and to grow into stronger, kinder, and wiser human beings.

Jewel Heart will continue to support Gelek Rinpoche's vast legacy of programs so that others may continue to benefit and grow.

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