





Hello, Friends!



The End of an Almost Wasn't Year!

I almost think I would have been better off if this year 2020 wasn't. So much has been terrible. So much devastation. Yikes! How do we focus on the good, when there have been so many hardships, calamities, and deaths? I will have to work at this to turn it around.

Much tribulation and trials are eye-openers. They make you sit up and take notice of what is going on in the world around us. God's way of saying it's time to wake up and smell the coffee.

But how can we get past all that has happened that has been horrible, and turn it into something resembling good? It's not easy. It takes a lot of diligent care to bring it out for everyone to explore and see.

I have seen and been a part of more outreach to the world than at any time I can remember in my 60+ years of living. Families helping other families. Churches, Hospitals, Food Banks, Police and Fire Departments, Military Organizations, Local and National Governments, you name it, so many have stepped forward to help others in need. Some with money, some with food or supplies for rebuilding a home. I couldn't be prouder than the way people around the world have brought their A-game to help other people in need out.

Despite the devastation and destruction from hurricanes, wildfires, earthquakes, and the pandemic-COVID-19, people were there to help. They Stepped Up to meet the needs of so many different people. Jobs were lost, other jobs were created. Some continue to go to school online. Some are entering higher education for the first time in their lives. The do-it-yourself stores continue to sell out of supplies for all the people fixing their home, or a neighbor's home.

We've had a revival at churches, people gathering online for a church service. Online I've seen orchestras practice, and ballet performances, choirs, and bands, meetings of all kinds that we used to hold in person. This revival of coming together online is unique and worth noting. Mask-wearing should be required in public, and we continue to work hard at social distancing and staying healthy for our families and for the people around us. We want to survive and move forward towards a better future. Everyone wants to see things get better.

I have not seen my town looking so nice in a long time. The yards were groomed, the trees and shrubs trimmed. It's nice to take pride in your community.

Many have acknowledged the need to make every person count, that All Lives Matter. We don't need any more tragedies to remember. I hope people know that although we all look different, have different ways of doing things, of speaking and living, dressing and acting, under the covering of our skin tone... we all bleed red. We are the HUMAN Race. Please learn to treat others kindly.

In our world, we have had the loss of many family and friends. I lost my youngest sister, to cancer, not COVID-19. I had to move my Mom from a home that was in her family for seven generations. So many have lost so much. These are tough times we're going through.

BUT THIS IS THE KEY...We're Going Through.

2021 has a lot to live up to and a lot to bring into being.

I think we can **make it happen**. (Sorry, I love Jean-Luc.)

For my Christmas prayer and wish for you and everyone around the world:
I wish you Peace.

Peace in your soul, peace in the world, and peace in your families and communities. God's kind of Peace.

The Peace that Surpasses All Understanding. (Phil 4:7)

**Merry Christmas,
Cynthia**



A Japanese Poetry Lesson

This month I'm trying a **Japanese form of Poetry called Kouta**.

Kouta poems have two forms in 4 stanzas
(lines in a poem)

These forms are either 7775 or 7575 (syllables in each line)

and I'll give you two examples for you to follow.

There are no other rules.

I asked my daughter-in-law for a word to start my thinking process. This month she was looking at her Christmas tree and said, 'Ornaments.'

Christmas Tree Ornaments

by Cynthia Saarie (7775)

Gazing outside my windows

The snow falling on the ground

The Christmas tree now sparkles

Ornaments abound!

OR...

(7575)

Gazing outside my windows

Snow is on the ground

The Christmas tree now sparkles

Ornaments abound!

Which do You prefer? Do you have poetry forms you'd like me to explore?

Please let me know!

Have a safe holiday season. See you in 2021.



My Favorite Picture and Quote

This is a picture of my wonderful husband, Skip. This quote and picture came out on his birthday.

In February 2021, I'll be releasing a new E-Book containing all of 2020 in pictures and quotes. I've done a daily posting for a year. I started in February 2020 and will

finish in January 2021. I should have it ready for sale on my website or on my E=book site by the end of February. I hope you'll want an inspiring copy of quotes to look at in your new year. I want everyone to have a safe and Happy New Year, 2021! I look forward to hearing from you and to inspire you some more in January. Until we meet again, God Bless You and Yours.

**Kind regards,
Cynthia Saarie**



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