



Stone Circle News

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New Year, Fresh Start *by Jan Herrick*

Having a fresh start means just that... starting fresh and leaving the past behind. It is such a powerful notion if we are willing to embrace it. The problem for a lot of us is that having a fresh start seems like we are forgetting the past. On the contrary, a fresh start is based on taking what we have learned from the past and moving forward in a new and better way.

If I am honest with myself as I remember the challenges and stumbling blocks of my past, I must accept responsibility for my thoughts and actions. Doing that I can move forward in a more effective way, embracing the wisdom I have gained. Real honesty about myself is where wisdom is born. Seeing the reality of my flaws, how my ideas, beliefs, and actions have impacted others is the basis of a fresh start.

Sometimes we resist a fresh start out of sadness or guilt. Hanging on to those emotions is more of a detriment than anything else. We must accept all aspects of the past in order to leave them behind. Memory is a beautiful thing, but it is very different from holding onto the past. Memory allows us to visit moments and people from our past when we want. We are in control of those moments. When we hold onto the past we give up control to our emotions and become a slave to them.



Turn Turn Turn... *by Jackie Fitzgerald*

I was looking through my photos on my phone tonight and came across something to share. The turning of the year always feels like a magical time. A chance to begin a fresh start, not only about all those plastic storage bins we organize our home with, but also ourselves with feelings of renewal and new goals and dreams.

*Women have gathered in circles
since the dawn of history
for birthing,
to share story,
at cisterns for washing,
at fires for warmth,
at wells to draw water,
in embraces of profound joy,
in prayer,
in rings of sorrow and mourning.*

*With hands grasped, we gather our
collective wisdom,
energies and strengths
binding us and
guiding us into the future.
Each woman brings her gifts,
placing herself
as a stone in the unbroken circle.*

© Janet Herrick

Affirmation Corner

by Margie Gray

Journey Into a New Year

The New Year is a natural time to take stock of where we are and where we are heading. Many people take the time to assess how that trajectory matches up with their goals. The result for many may be New Year's Resolutions. Unfortunately, it is very common for Resolutions to quickly fall by the wayside and have little impact long term. While I'm not opposed to using the marker of the new year to pause and reflect, I think that taking that opportunity all year long is useful.

Every moment is an opportunity for a Fresh Start. But this doesn't always come naturally. It requires building the awareness and intention to recognize those moments. My goal this year is to build that muscle. I want to have the awareness to pause, reflect on the moment, and then move forward with intention. It can be especially useful during challenging times. Possibly requiring that pause multiple times a day.

- ◆ I am present in the moment, now.
- ◆ I see my life with clarity, now.
- ◆ I act with intention, now.
- ◆ I live my life with focus that is driven by my purpose.

I long to have that presence and awareness moment to moment in my life, but until then, I will continue to practice the ability to Pause, Reflect and Act with Intention. Best wishes to all as we journey into 2023.



Prayer Circle

Jody
Eleanor
Nerri
Kay

Please let us know the names of those you would like to have included in our prayer circle.

Calendar of Events

Below are the dates for the next few gatherings.

March 18, 9:30 AM For Women Only
March 25, 1:30 PM Simple Soup Lunch
April 15, 9:30 AM For Women Only
April 22, 10:00 AM: In the Company of Trees
May 20, 9:30 AM For Women Only
June 17, Sunrise Summer Solstice
June 24, 9:30 AM For Women Only

Funding Donation Request

Stone Circle is totally dependent on your donations for all our operating expenses, the newsletter, the website, monthly gatherings and additional events. If you benefit from any or all of these items, please consider supporting us in some way. Mailings, website servers, printing costs add up very quickly. All donations are welcome and greatly appreciated. Please make checks payable to Stone Circle.

In the Company of Trees

This year our visit to the beautiful five hundred year old tree in Mennello Park, 900 E. Princeton Street, falls on **Earth Day April 22**. What could be more perfect. Plan to join us under her magnificent branches from **10:00 AM till 12:30 PM**.

Bring a chair or blanket to sit on and a bag lunch. We will honor nature and reflect on her gifts to us in this beautiful park setting. Water will be provided.

Call Jan to reserve your spot.

Simple Soup Lunch, March 25th

Every year we share a simple meal of soup and bread, acknowledging that so much of the rest of the world is grateful for even this meager sustenance. We may not be able to change the world with this action, but we can remember the suffering of others with compassion and love, and helping where and when we can in the future. This year we will gather at 1:30 PM on March 25th at Nancy's home in Kissimmee. Call Jan to respond and to get directions.

Summer Solstice Save The Date

June 17, Saturday

This year we have secured a limited number of rooms at the Inn at Cocoa Beach , Friday night, June 16th. If you are interested, call Jan for more information. The Summer Solstice Ritual will take place Saturday morning at Sunrise. If you plan to come, be at the Inn at 6:00 AM. Call Jan for more details.

Inside the Scrapbook of Life *by Dorie Croissant*

The topic of this newsletter is *"New Year. New Start. New Direction ~ What does that look like?"* Well, that's a darn good question. I think we all sometimes wish we had a long lens to see into the future or wish we had a pair of those rose-colored glasses that we often hear so much about.

What's up? I can sit here and say that I have no idea. I do know that the first month of this new year is rapidly coming to an end. It's also cold and raining outside. I can't change the weather today and I can't stop the calendar from turning over. What I can do, however, is stay focused on the positive. A sense of balance always seems to be a recurring theme for me. I keep working on that. Balance for each day. Balance in my thinking. Balance in my planning. Each of these things bring clarity to my day.

If it is raining outside, I adjust what I am going to do that day. If I have an errand or two to run, I figure out if I really have to do it today or can I combine that outing with another one later in the week. With the price of gas these days, I'm sure I'm not the only one who is combining errands in one trip. For me, it's about being organized and flexible.

I can't say these ideas are new or different, but it's like building a scrapbook. Looking at all the pictures from the past and seeing all the good times, all the trips, and figuring out how to go forward with new ideas or a new direction. We are offered a new start each and every day. And we can begin a new year any day we choose. We can add pages to our scrapbook whenever we want. My 2023 wish for each of us is healthy and peaceful additions to our daily scrapbooks.



Perspectives

by Cindy Jank

I passed by the small field, grass a little damp from the early morning cold. The sun was now bright and strong! The football rolled across my path. I stopped without thinking and dropped my stack of books to pick up the ball. A little boy started running to me. "Go out for a pass!" I called to him. He did and I let the ball fly. It went high and smooth and the little boy jumped up only to miss it. I laughed and he ran to get the ball. Then he continued to toss it up and around and eventually set it up for a kick. I stood silently on the side and watched as he ran to make his imaginary goal. He did a perfect kick. I felt like playing with him but decided against it. I smiled and waved good-bye and slowly picked up my books. As I walked, I turned to take one last look at the small boy and the shining grass.

Truly written October 15, 1978, in Art class. I was 18.

I passed by the small field, annoyed that my sandaled feet were getting damp from the wet grass. The sun felt great on my back, and I was grateful for the sidewalk in just a few steps. Just then a football rolled across my path. I looked up to see a little boy who looked around seven running towards me. I set my books on the sidewalk and then picked up the football. I instructed the boy to go out for a pass. He willingly complied and I let it fly with confidence. After all, I had been the quarterback on my college intramural team. The ball flew high and smooth and long as my strong arms enjoyed the throw. I laughed as he ran and tried to catch it but missed. He continued to run after it and tossed it up and around and eventually set it up for a kick. I stood silently on the side and watched his joyful face as he ran to make his imaginary goal. He did a perfect kick. I wished I had more time, but I had an appointment to make. I smiled and waved good-bye and picked up my books. As I walked, I turned to take one last look at the small boy and the shining grass.

Written from the perspective of age 35- the year 1995.

I passed by the small field, grass slightly damp as the morning dew faded. It was a beautiful day for a walk and the sun was a welcome sight as the days had been filled with clouds and rain. How I missed my loyal Maggie who loved her walks more than me. Even in her old age she had continued to want to go, though the way was slow. Just then a football rolled across my path. I stopped and looked up to see a young boy running towards me. I carefully bent down and picked up the football. I considered trying to throw it but decided against it. How my body wanted to play but the rotator cuff surgeries on both arms had handicapped my abilities. I smiled as I made a simple underhanded flip to the boy who was now standing next to me. He caught it easily and ran off, tossing the ball up and around and eventually set it up for his imaginary field goal. He made a perfect kick. I loved seeing his face filled with joy. He reminded of my son who was now 25. He too had loved playing football too. I stood for a while, silently enjoying the moment and then smiled and waved goodbye. As I continued my walk, I glanced back and smiled again at the small boy playing in the grass.

Written from the perspective of age 63 – the year 2023. by Cindy Jank

I slowly walked by the small field; grass looked damp from the dew. I had to stay on the sidewalk with my walking stick. I still tried to get out for a short walk now and then when the weather permitted. Not sure how much time I had before I wouldn't be able to since my feet already seemed to swell at the slightest demands of staying on them. I saw a young boy off in the grass having a grand time playing alone with his football. He must have kicked it because it rolled onto my path. I stopped and watched the boy run to me. He came up next to me and I smiled saying "Hi there young man." He just looked at me, gave a quick grin and scooped up his ball and ran off. I kept watching and saw him make an imaginary field goal kick. What a perfect kick! What joy I felt seeing this child who had all the time in the world to play. I stood silently as my mind went out to play with him. I yelled "throw it here!" and I ran and caught it, my chest feeling the pump of a strong heart. I motioned with my hand for him to go for a long pass and let the football fly. Spinning in a tight spiral it flew, sailing high, and then down into his hands as he reached to make the catch, screaming in delight. We played and laughed the day away, the glittering sun rolling along its marked course in the sky. Finally, it was time to head home. I smiled and waved goodbye. I walked and then stopped. I took a long last look at the boy still playing and the ever-shining grass.

Obstacles by Joan Macias

As for me, the New Year has a few rather stressful obstacles that I must hurdle. I am trying to focus on one day and situation at a time. I believe my faith will get me through. I know the Lord is always with me. I am staying focused on one day at a time. I don't like doom and gloom, so I keep all these issues deep in my heart. No, I am not sick. Although, I have a huge dental issue that will not be fun, very costly too. That's what the New Year brings for me!! Rah! Rah!

A Quote by Dorie

"It's good to go with the flow. But it's better to go with what you know – what you know to be true for you. Trusting yourself is the ultimate lesson. It's where all the guidance leads."
....Melody Beattie

New by Virginia

New is such a small word ...but it always involves energy of thoughts and usually some physical effort. New can be change of routine, as simple as adjusting your workout to the AM instead of PM. New can be stepping into a totally different homestead - or just a new "bed in a bag" to update your bedroom. Today I am learning new roadways... new people... the new schedule of being retired. I will be better at it as time goes by. New - is now challenges, opportunities and adventures. I am blessed to be able to do so.

Yankee Swap at the December Gathering

Thanks to Jody, we were able to gather once again at her home for the December Gathering. At her invitation and suggestion, we each arrived with beautifully wrapped packages befitting the Season, but mysterious just the same. Per the rules of the Yankee Swap, in the order of the number you chose from the hat, you got to choose from the bountiful display of surprise packages. As the game progressed, the swapping of items from others began. Of course, there is always one gift that becomes the focus, and it became the butter keeper, only made more hilarious from not knowing where the butter went. Seems crazy, and it was! A good time was had by all. And, thanks to the butter keeper conundrum several of us now have acquired our own. They do keep the butter well. Thanks for this great memory, Jody!



8 for Brady

Eight of us went to see the movie "8 for Brady" at the Regal in the Loop. Even ladies who were not into football had a great time. The movie had a great story and a very positive inspiring message. The Stone Circle review gives it five stars.



Decade Day 2023

This year was our 22nd Annual Celebration of Decade Day honoring all women's birthdays and particularly those who are entering a new decade of their lives. On February 7th, this year's celebration spanned the decades honoring women from their twenties to their nineties. A wonderful time was had by all. Happy Birthday to Everyone!



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Stone Circle operates as a nonprofit entity whose presence seeks to enhance the feminine milieu for women of the 21st century. We truly rely on the generosity of friends and those who participate in programs.