

Stone Circle News

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Mailing Address: 2549 Clarinet Drive
Orlando, FL 32837

Orlando—Ms. Janet Herrick (407) 247-5391
Web Site: <http://www.stonecircleonline.org>



Loss of a Dear Friend

It is with a very heavy heart that we share with you the sad news of Jean Gold's passing. She passed away on Monday, October 3rd, after a brave and courageous battle with cancer. She was surrounded by family who loved her and cared for her immensely. She will be missed by her family and so many dear friends, including former neighbors, her church family, and those of us in the Stone Circle group.

Jean was an integral part of Stone Circle for many, many years. She was our most efficient and dedicated editor of the Stone Circle Newsletter. Her kind heart and gentle personality touched us in so many special ways. She leaves behind a legacy to remember and treasure.

Prayers go out to Jean's husband Bob and the rest of her loving family and friends. Bob has arranged for a Celebration of Life in Orlando at Family Funeral Care on John Young Parkway on December 10th at 11:00 AM. Lunch will be served and Bob will be there to welcome those paying their respects.

Stone Circle is collecting donations for a Memorial gift to Doctor's Without Borders to be given in Jean's name. This is an organization Jean supported.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR:

This picture of Jean was given to us by her daughters Maureen and Kathy, who took it to look like a freewheeling wheel chair. I looked at it again and saw Jean saying "goodbye, it's all good and it's time". There's so much to say about this amazing woman and I'm taking the front page of this for the first time. My name is Paul. I'm Jan's partner and have taken over the editing of this Newsletter with Jan since Jean took ill a while back.

Jean Gold was our next door neighbor, Jan for 30 years and mine for 6. She and Bob were more family than neighbor. She was honest, warm, fun-loving and one of the most insightful people I've ever known. She was comforting in her listening, acute with her thinking, and so very sincere. Bob definitely married up with this one. Don't be sad about this. You are who you are in part to Jean's impact on your life. She lives on through that impact. Stone Circle was built for this. A haven for women to get to know each other and support each other when options were limited. A veritable stronghold for growth, sharing, and knowledge. You are all heroes in my eyes and I'm privileged to watch the positive effects of what you've all built...Rock On.

So with this pic, which I personally named, "Fare Thee Well", I invite you to turn the page and read some heartwarming comments from her closest friends.



Asheville, NC August 2022

I wish I could write something that really reflected the love I have for her and how sad is the feeling of knowing that she is not between us anymore. I truly believe in her pass to heaven and resurrection; but her loss is very painful. For Women Only gatherings will never be the same. She was so special. ... **Enri Coll**

So sad, Jean was a wonderful friend and sister. I loved her soft voice and kind heart. Truly a warrior against her illness. ... **Sonia Diaz**

I'm so very sorry to hear this. I know she was a very special lady and a dear friend to you all for many years. I am thinking of you and her family. ... **Melissa B.**

So sorry! I know she will be missed by all! Love and best wishes to her family and friends!...Love, **Fred and Shelby Holden**

I know your heart aches from the loss of a remarkable woman, Jeanne Gold. I thank The Stone Circle for giving me a small introduction into her amazing life through a cruise I shared with so many! She touched my life for years through messaging on Facebook. We shared profound thoughts, jokes, pictures and videos. Her optimism, grace and courage will follow me down through this journey we call friendship and life.... **Louise Ambrose**

I met Jean many years ago when Holy Cross had its first ever choir and Judy Galligan was the director. We had great times singing, practicing on Wednesday evenings and especially at our Christmas festivities. I recall at practice when Terry Bednar would have us welcome Jean as she walked in with a loud "hi Jean". We all laughed because it was the same as saying "hygiene". She would laugh along with all the crazy choir members. Funny memories of great times with friends!... **Amnesia Delgado**

When I first came to Stone Circle – via Jan being on a flight with a co-worker – I felt I was on Jean Gold's last nerve all the time. After a while I believe she recognized I am just loud and silly. She always amazed me with her recounts of living in diverse neighborhoods, always being respectful – she experienced a variety of religions and their practices, assorted races and their customs. I believe these encounters made her the wonderful person we had the pleasure of being with. She was wonderful to travel with...while in Ireland she was paying for an item and commented she needed a particular coin. I reached into my pocket and retrieved quite a collection of coins – she plucked out what she needed. As we stepped away she asked "do you know the denominations of what you call "Pretty monies?" I did not – she very calmly explained the values of the coins. This kept me from showing how much of a tourist that I was when I just had the shop keepers take the amount they needed.... This meant I did spend with greater confidence. I will miss the postcards she sent from everywhere ... when the cards were viewed at my desk, many created discussions about peoples' bucket list destinations. She had more effect than she gave herself credit for... **Virginia Strait**

Years ago when we had our monthly Stone Circle Meetings at the Clubhouse, Jean was always thinking of others. She never missed coming over to me to ask how my husband was doing since he'd been very sick for a long time. Her thoughtfulness was so appreciated and her kind and loving ways will always be remembered. Love and Prayers to a very special person...*Arline*

I met Jean at exercise class. It was a large group of ladies and I didn't know anyone. She came over and made me feel welcome. There wasn't much time to have a conversation but she always made time to talk to me or even a wave across the crowded room. Her kindness will always be remembered...*Sharon Lavigne*

I met Jean through Stone Circle. She always seemed calm and put-together. Dignified is a good descriptor. She'd travelled more than I and further than I so she became my resource for travel etiquette. Jean listened more than she spoke, at least in Stone Circle. I will remember her grace and wisdom...*Mary Reichert*



At Jean's new Asheville, NC home
August, 2022

I sang in the Holy Cross Choir for many, many years. Jean Gold was my Alto buddy. We sat next to each other since the beginning. We had our secret laughs and shared many things that made us chuckle, while no one knew what our giggles were for. My fondest giggle moment that we shared had to do with the song "Change our Hearts". I am sure you are all familiar with this hymn. The second verse starts with "Brought by your hand to the edge of our dreams...One foot in Paradise, one in the waste. Well...the first time we ever sang it, as we sang "one in the waste", she turned to me and started giggling, which caused me to giggle with her. From then on, whenever we sang that song, when it got to that particular line, we would share a glance, and a laugh with each other. To this very day, wherever I am, and in whatever Church I am in, When I hear that song, I think of my dear friend Jean, and smile....Save me a seat next to you in The Alto Section of Heaven's Choir, my friend....*Gloria Winter*

Jean was my neighbor and friend for over thirty years. We became acquainted shortly after she and Bob moved here when she noticed me walking my very large Old English Sheep Dog. She was astounded to see that as we walked her vision of one dog became three. Yes, we had three of them and I walked them together. It inspired her to approach me the next day and we instantly became fast friends. It was wonderful knowing we had such a great couple right across the street. Over the years we shared many impromptu visits and a good many holiday meal together. She was also there to offer a welcome hand in my times of grief and loss.

She became a part of Stone Circle many years ago, was a member of our board, and was the competent editor of the Stone Circle newsletter for more years than I can count. She made putting the newsletter together look easy. I will miss her gentle presence at our gatherings and her welcoming manner to everyone she encountered. You are greatly missed my dear friend...*Janet Herrick*

Jean Gold was one of a kind. She was a gem of a friend. She was thoughtful, kind, giving, loving, and very special. She will be missed. I miss her stories and her humor. I miss being able to play a word game with her and miss our conversations within those word games. She was a faithful Stone Circle member. And she will forever be woven into the very thread of the women's group by her many years of participation.

Jean was my roommate on our last group trip, the one to Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons in the summer of 2019. What a special trip! I told Jean once that the jewelry I wear is sort of a like a travel log. Whether it's a strangely twisted silver ring I bought at Lake Powell, or the ID bracelet I bought in Ireland, or the \$5.00 beaded bracelet I got at the Crazy Horse monument. Jean was with me for each of those purchases. And more ironically, I told her this jewelry story when she sent me a beaded bracelet from Asheville last year. So, when I wear any or all of these pieces, Jean is close in heart.

May you eternally rest in peace, my friend. *Love, Dorie*

What have the last two years taught you about yourself or how have you changed in these last few years?

How I've changed in the past few years.

By Arline Conklin

The past few years have been very difficult for me. First my husband passed away after a long illness & just three weeks later Covid hit. All of the things I used to look forward to ended. We could no longer have the Bocce team at our clubhouse, going to the library on a Tuesday morning to meet with a group of movie fans to exchange the latest CD releases was cancelled, our Stone Circle monthly meetings ended and even the theme parks closed down. Going for food wearing a mask & hoping to find toilet paper became an unpleasant outing. I knew I had to find something to do and then remembered all my years of taking photos & accumulating about 40 albums was the answer. It is still an ongoing pastime of grouping friend and family photos and sending them to everyone so they could enjoy the years of many happy memories. I discovered what made me happy again was seeing all the good times with family and friends over the years. I made a collage of favorite photos on the back of my front door and garage door so, whenever I left the house or went in the garage to do laundry I'd pause and enjoy so many years of happiness that I'm fortunate to have had. Finding something special to do during those years helped to change sadness into happiness.

That's good but we can do better

By Virginia Strait

The pandemic has clearly revealed the lack of social graces, even the most basic of common courtesies. No please or thank you. No holding the door for the next person to use. No letting anyone into traffic. Now the news is saying "the time at home has handicapped our children's learning ability" – well how about more educational shows on their phones, tablets or TV? Even a game of shooting pool can apply geometric shapes and angles if presented in the proper manner.

I want to know just what the parents (not working) and their children (not in school) did together each day in their homes? Was there no cooking together? No card playing together? Yoga? Teach the dog to sit, stay, come, down, shake, or roll over? Did they catch up on the laundry-ironing, folding, putting it away? Even home-made flashcards could have been beneficial. I believe a solution would be to have education 12 months of the year to get caught up...

I pray most of each day for Peace... All of us have to be involved, or some of us will not evolve ...

Old Dog, New Tricks

By Mary Columbo Reichert

In the last two years I:

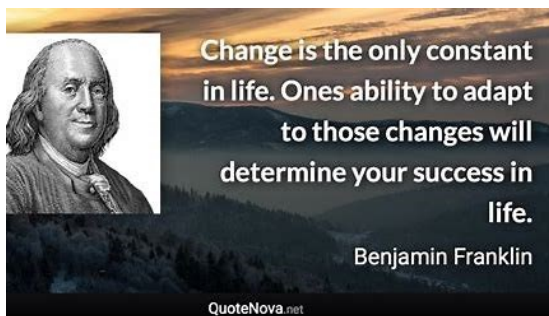
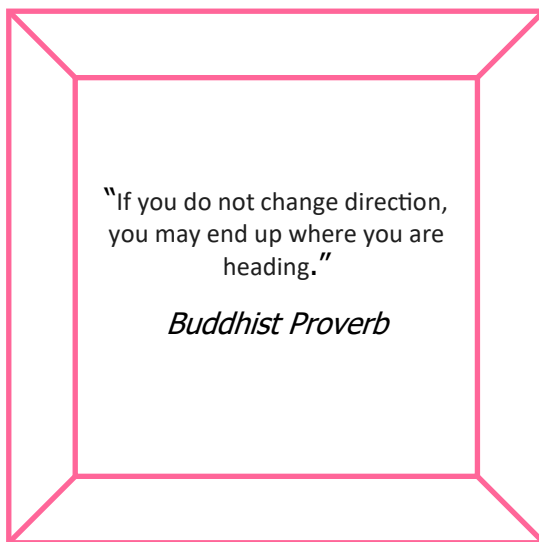
Realized my dream job wasn't; I did some soul searching; I took a cruise to the Panama Canal; I hiked the Everglades National Park; I toured Thousand Islands, Florida; I took a cruise to Jamaica; I got Covid; I recovered; I did more soul searching; I quit my job; I learned to line dance; I made new friends; I kept long-time friends; I sold my house; I moved to the Blue Ridge Mountains; I sold my car; I had a battle with underground wasps (who knew?!); I made my first long-distance drive alone; and in the dark; with two dogs; I moved in with my son and daughter-in-law; I remembered that hiking up hill is hard; I began using a mental health app (Finch); I learned more Spanish; I said good-byes; I learned to communicate better; I learned to shoot (a pellet gun); I drove a truck; I slowed down; I made pleasant conversation with strangers; I began to define my spirituality; I swam in a pool and in the ocean; I owned my age (61).

Who says you can't teach an old dog new tricks? (And who defined "old," anyway?)

I thought it was fitting.

Opportunities

We can sometimes forget that each day presents us with countless opportunities. They may be things to do, places to go, people to meet, things to learn, and even opportunities to rest, recover or heal. The list goes on. When we are truly aware of our surroundings and the opportunities in our path we can better choose things that serve us best. When we go about our day in a rote mindless fog we can get stuck in a repetitious routine. We can miss so much. Our next best friend, a new adventure, a wonderful discovery, or even better health and wellness can be right around the corner. Our next best opportunity is awaiting your discovery. Be open and aware, you might be surprised at what you find.



AFFIRMATION CORNER By Margie Gray **Lessons Learned**

The last three years have changed me. I have felt isolation. I've felt the divisiveness in our country and in our world. I've felt the frustration of wanting things to be the way they were "before." I feel less optimistic. "Who are we and what do we stand for?" is a question I ask frequently. Looking for answers and finding my balance again is definitely a work in progress. As always, affirmations help me to get clarity about my intentions and focuses them.

I am connected to my natural knowing NOW.

I recognize opportunities to be my contribution in the world NOW.

I find balance and peace in my life NOW.

The change in me isn't good or bad. Whether we recognize it or not, change is constant. For the last 2-3 years change has been "in our face." Intense and dramatic. For many, the change has been frustrating and offensive. I lean on those who are like-minded. I engage in informed conversation. There is already too much fighting. It feels like too many people are trying to control the world around them by any means available without regard for the people around them. Leaning into the flow of life supports a feeling of peace and working WITH what I can't control rather than fighting against it.

It's The Little Things

By Dorie Croissant

Two years, almost three years now, things changed for everyone. And I mean everyone. A lot of it was not good, a lot of loss, a lot of sadness, a lot of heartache. Changes that we just couldn't imagine ever happening. Changes that were bigger than all of us. Therefore, we somehow had to change to adapt. And for me, those changes sometimes had to happen daily. What worked one day, didn't necessarily work the next day.

So, it's the little things. Decisions took place that made little things count even more. Each moment of every day was unique. Do I leave the house today? Do I NEED to leave the house today? Can that errand be put off to another day? Another week? Moments in time became more precious. Reaching out to a family member or a friend via a phone call or text or through a word game, making a connection. It didn't take much, but it was important, and it still is important. Tasks and projects became strategic and more meaningful.

I engaged in more thinking, more meditating, more reading. The little things added up. For me, paying attention to the little things and accepting what I could not change, as well as doing my part when and where I could, was somehow freeing. Freeing in the aspect of not being weighed down by worry and anxiety. It all translates to acceptance. I'm not always successful in letting the worry and anxiety go, but I'm working on it.

The song from Disney's movie Frozen, *Let It Go*, gets stuck in my head sometimes, but just repeating those three little words is helpful and freeing. Let it go. Let it go. It's the little things.

Two Years of Learning

By Janet Herrick

Now that things are somewhat returning to normal, it seems like the past few years have flown by. However, in the midst of living them, they seemed to be endless. Suddenly, going from what was assumed to be normal to lockdowns and masks, was totally out of my wheelhouse of experiences. I found myself remembering my father telling me stories of having to stay home from school because of the Influenza Epidemic of 1917. He was only eight years old at the time and was not allowed to be with other children, let alone go to school or socialize in any way. At the time I thought that it could never happen in my lifetime, and yet it did.

What I learned over the past several years is that even more than I ever realized, we are meant to be social creatures. We thrive by being in each other's company and being isolated or alone can be challenging to say the least. Yet, I know that as we grow up it is important to be comfortable enough with ourselves to be alone. If we are not happy and content alone, it is hard to be in relationship with others without unrealistic expectation of them. We cannot rely on others to make us happy. It simply doesn't work. I discovered that not being able to physically be with those I love and care about required me to find creative ways to communicate instead.

The traveling I missed was replaced with reading, travel shows, online classes, and home projects. We humans are ingenious, creative, and adaptable. When one thing was taken away I attempted to replace it with something else that was educational and fulfilling in another way. Yes, I did my share of online shopping, but keeping it within reason, it replaced visits to stores, and I like to think I did my part in keeping the economy going.

All in all the last few years made me look very seriously at my priorities, what and who are really important. Some things changed drastically, some stayed the same, and still others were modified. I learned that every experience is a learning experience, if we choose to pay attention and allow it to be. There is always a take away. We learn what to do, what not to do, and those things we want to incorporate into our way of living. This is life-long learning, and every day presents us with another opportunity.

“If you want to be powerful, educate yourself “



Virginia moving to Georgia

No, the states are not moving, but our effervescent Virginia Strait is! Saying we will miss you is an understatement. Who will provide the laughter, stories, and the amazing head gear for the holiday meetings? Who can forget your homemade Sand Dollars for the Summer Solstice? The picture of you holding up the sun is something we will all remember. You will be sorely missed, but we wish you all the best as you move on to yet another adventure. You will be taking Stone Circle with you, as you will always be a part of us.



WOW Women of Wisdom Award Winner

After a slight hiatus, we once again gathered at the Olive Garden on International Drive in Orlando for the WOW Luncheon on September 24th. In addition to the great company and delicious Italian food, it was the setting for the presentation of the WOW Award. The 12th annual WOW Award was bestowed to Arline Conklin because she exemplifies the qualities and attributes of a woman who embraces her leadership and is Sage-ing, not merely Aging. She has and continues to be a wonderful example of courage and resilience. Thank you, Arline, for being part of Stone Circle.

Mary of the Mountains

Our dear friend Mary Reichert, fondly referred to as Padre, has moved to the Blue Ridge Mountains of Georgia. Mary was a trained Chaplin, serving patients and families at Orlando Regional Medical Center for many years, before deciding to make a big move. We will miss your presence here in Orlando, but hope you will stay in touch and even travel with us in the future. All the best, Mary!



Calendar of Events

Below are the dates for the next few gatherings.

Nov 13, 12:30 pm: Luncheon at Bahama Breeze, The Loop Kissimmee

Nov 19, 09:30 am: For Women Only at Jill's

Dec 17, 09:30 am: For Women Only at Jody's (includes Yankee Swap)

Dec 18, 7:30 pm Winter Solstice
Place to be announced

Winter Solstice 2022

Traditionally, close to the Winter Solstice we gather to reflect on the previous year and focus our positive intentions as we prepare to enter the New Year. This year we will celebrate this ritual gathering on Sunday, December 18th at 7:30 PM. Please bring along a simple snack to share, and feel free to invite a friend. Call Jan for more information, location, and to let us know you will be participating.



Bahama Breeze Luncheon Planned

Come join us for a Sunday lunch at Bahama Breeze on Osceola Parkway in the Loop on November 13th at 12:30 PM. Don't miss this opportunity to have a Caribbean-style meal in the company of some fantastic women. Call Jan to add your name to the reservation.

December For Women Only

There will be a relocation of the December 17th For Women Only Meeting. This year we will be gathering at the regular time 9:30 AM at Jody Donovan's home. In celebration of this season of giving, we would like to have a Yankee Swap. Please come with a wrapped, fun, funny, strange, weird, regift item, or the like. This can be new, used, or regifted or inexpensive. You will not go home empty-handed. You get to pick something weird, strange, funny, or maybe even practical to take home. Come join the fun and celebrate the season early! Bring along a breakfast item to share as well. Coffee will be provided.

Call Jan for directions, information, etc.



Stone Circle c/o Jan Herrick
2549 Clarinet Drive
Orlando, FL 32837

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.