



# 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>

## Numbers

*By Virginia Strait*

Math has never been my strong suit ... ask any bank back when we received hard copies of account activities and we were supposed to “balance” our checkbooks. At one point I thought “I can’t be broke – I still have checks” ... My junior year in high school, Mr. Carl L. Baum sooo tried to make geometry something I could do, still not good at it. But some of his statements still ring in my ears and have proven true more often than not. Numbers never lie ... each number has power i.e. Duncan McLeod the Highlander “there can be only one” – anytime you see triple numbers 111, 222, 333 this indicates legions of Angels are nearby. At the phone companies Directory Assistance position, we were tested as operators on just how many phone numbers we could correctly quote without looking up requested business names, I was accurate for 57 numbers. These days I am very interested in the Numerology explanations about our birth time, nautical settings of location etc. – I do find it peculiar that I married my 1<sup>st</sup> husband on the date of 2<sup>nd</sup> husband’s birthday – divorced on Sadie Hawkins Day, the extra day in February of leap years. I deal with numbers everyday, connecting callers with extensions and providing direct dial numbers and fax lines. All of this increases my online bank statement total momentarily – diminishes quickly when I make necessary monthly payments. I consider myself blessed to be able to plus and minus the numbers – I now know too many others that cannot.

**111**

**222**

**333**

*All paths to the future  
begin with a simple walk  
to school!*

*-Louise Ambrose*



*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.*

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## Mentors

- Jody Donovan

So many thoughts were colliding in my brain (more than usual) the last few weeks, that it took awhile to line them up in some sort of order.

I often read and reread Jan's blogs and recently one called 'Back to School' hit home. Combining it and this newsletter's theme (mentors) coalesced into this article.

A mentor is a wise and trusted counselor or teacher OR friend. I've had years of mentoring, during most of those, unaware of what was really happening.

Not just teachers and professors, but relatives and friends were wonderful mentors. Presently, some are still in my life, but many have passed on. I wish they were here now so I could thank them for being the wonderful guides they were.

The most important were my father and mother, Larry and Elizabeth Farley. They taught not only by word, but by being lifelong examples. They showed and guided me and my siblings to the clear understanding of: family values, the strength of Faith, how to be loving, caring, giving, FORgiving individuals with a broad acceptance of ALL, in a fair and just way.

"When the student is ready, the teacher will appear."

*Buddhist Proverb*

## Affirmation Corner

By Margie Gray

When I pause to reflect on all of the teachers I've had in my life, I feel such a sense of gratitude. Every person and situation I meet has the potential to teach me something. Or more accurately, I have the opportunity to learn something. I'm taking a journey back in time when I wrote about one teacher who initiated my relationship with affirmations. I wrote this column 14 years ago.

About 8 years ago I read a book that changed my life. I say that very deliberately. Reading this book changed the way I approached my life on the most basic level. The book was "You Can Heal Your Life" by Louise Hay. I still refer to the book, if not daily, certainly weekly. I often say, "What would Louise say about this?" and head for the bookshelf.

Louise teaches that our thoughts and words create our experiences. If we want positive experiences in our life, LOVE is the best place to start. Judging our history or past as bad has no value. We do the best we can in every given moment. Accepting all of who we are is a place to start loving ourselves. One affirmation from Louise to support us on this journey is...

"I love and approve of myself exactly as I am."

She suggests we work with our negative thoughts about ourselves to turn them into affirmations. Make a list of things you think are wrong with you or the changes you want to make. Select three and turn them into positive affirmations.

Some of her examples are...



Nobody loves me/I experience love wherever I go.

I hate my job/I now create a wonderful new job.



I should get organized/I am now very well organized.



A couple of others that I love are...

I deserve the best and I accept it NOW.



I am divinely supported in being the full measure of my purpose NOW.

You are amazing. You are part of the perfection of the Universe. You deserve to love yourself as much as you are loved!

## Prayer Circle

Jody  
Julie  
Eleanor  
Jean  
Virginia  
Carrie

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

### Calendar of Events

Due to the current health climate, we're still not meeting other than the 3rd Saturday of the month.

**October 16**  
**09:30**

**November 20**  
**09:30**

**December 18**  
**09:30**

**Everyone coming needs to be vaccinated and for the sake of you and everybody around you, please wear a mask.**

## JEAN GOLD

NEWSLETTER EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

We are sending out a huge thank you to Jean Gold for her amazing job as Editor of the Stone Circle Newsletter. It is a huge job and one that takes much time and effort. Compiling the submissions, editing them and putting the Newsletter in some semblance of order is no small task, which she has handled flawlessly time after time. She has undertaken this task tirelessly for many, many years, and all of us who are part of Stone Circle are very grateful.

Jean is taking a step back for a time to focus on her health and taking a well deserved break. Thank you Jean for all you do and have done, and know we all send our love, support, and healing your way!

### Early Recollections of School Teachers

by Joan Macias

The first teacher I remember was my third grade teacher Miss Giganti. Our class was her 1st year of teaching. She was a very nice, diminutive, well-dressed Italian woman. She showed us how to make homemade butter by shaking a jar of cream and every one in the class got a turn. Then we had crackers with the butter we just made. For Christmas we made homemade wrapping paper! How fun!

My 4th and 5th grade (taught both grades that season) was older and I remember that she wore orthopedic shoes. Unfortunately, we did nothing that was fun or memorial, although, when thinking of teachers my mind lovingly goes to Mrs. Nyland. Oddly enough years later, when I worked for 3M Company, two of her sons were Supervisors. By that time, sadly, she had passed away.

## In loving memory of Jean Henry

Jean has been a committed participant of Stone Circle for many years. She passed away due to complications from Covid in September. We will all miss her enthusiastic interaction and humor.

On the following page is an article she wrote for the Newsletter in July 2013. She writes about

Summer with her Grandmother, but obviously she was very much also a teacher and mentor to her. We include it in this newsletter as a testament to Jean. She will always be part of the Circle and in our hearts and memory.



The Hazy Days of Summer -  
"Summertime and the Living is Easy"  
*by Jean Henry*

Just thinking about what I am going to write puts me into a sweet reverie of memories.

When I was a child my summer began in NY on June 1. School was not over until the end of June, but my child mind and spirit were already in a small town in Pennsylvania with my beloved "Grandma Cahill" and her eight children, the two grand babies she raised, my aunts and uncles, and their children.

Then the joyous day would come. We would pack up my Dad's old Chevy and leave at 5AM for the five-hour trip "Home." I'd bring my pillow and sleep the whole way. Somehow, I always woke up in Athens, PA, the closest town to her home in Sayre, PA. I'd awake with a start, sit up and look for a big red and white Victorian house sitting back from the road.

Soon we'd pull into her driveway and I'd be first out of the car. I'd run to the back porch, through her wonderful kitchen with the smells of baking bread and pies, There she was taking a nap (where I get my love of naps from) in her housedress, apron and black-tie shoes. I'd call to her softly, "Grandma we're here." She'd sit straight up and grab me to her big bosoms (breast feeding 8 babies will do this). She and I would hug and kiss and she'd call me her "darling girl."

And then the fun would start in my piece of heaven-on-earth. She would have already taken my toll toys, the doll crib and a pretty metal pink, yellow and blue stroller out of the garage attic. I knew where my place to sleep was - with her in her four poster bed, where we'd giggle and make a tent with the sheets.

I was small, but I knew every street in that town. When settled, she'd always give me money and I'd wheel my dolls in the stroller "downtown" to the 5 & 10 with the smells of paper and of course, the bakery. I would buy one big white chocolate cookie and start on my way back. Of course, a block from her house, I'd stop at "Dunfy's" small candy shop.

There is so much to write about: the wonderful home cooked meals surrounded by aunts, uncles, and cousins; 4th of July fireworks at the VFW or the Sons of Italy; mass at the Epiphany church; and getting my yearly pair of "Keds" downtown. Sitting on her lap at night in her white wicker chair listening to the night sounds. She would always say that it is in this quiet time, with soft gentle breezes, that we will hear God. She loved our Lord, but was a very feisty Catholic.

I knew that I only had two weeks with her so I didn't play with my cousins or the other kids that I knew in town. I just wanted to be with her.

When she passed on to heaven to meet her beloved Mike, I was 23 years-old. Standing with my cousins on her front lawn, I was amazed to hear their stories because they were like mine. What a gift she was to us; a miracle that comes along once-in-a-lifetime.

I love you, Grandma. As I write this I turned off the TV and put on the Gershwin music that I love. I hope you sat back, joined my reverie and could feel the love and peace she brought.

## Mentors and Teachers

*By Sonia Diaz*

To choose just one teacher or mentor in my life would be impossible. There were many mentors I had the honor of attending their classes.

Many people know that I'm an army brat. My father served in the US Army during the time I was a student, from the 1st grade at a Catholic school to my senior year at Antilles High School. I attended many Department of Defense schools during those years. These teachers had to have been carefully chosen and trained.

My fondest memories of wonderful, caring and inspiring educators were mostly in my high school years. As compared to what some high schools enrollments are, my school would be considered small. Our senior graduating class had 94 students. Everybody knew everyone and we were a family.

My teachers and my mentors were these:  
There was Mr. Agacinski (RIP) who taught arts, his saying "take your best and do it better" what a great philosophy! He taught arts, but really he taught you to be the best, to outperform yourself. Never to accept mediocrity. Mrs. Juanita Anguirra (RIP) Spanish teacher, inspired us that knowing languages well would open doors to travel, jobs and opportunities. In our case Spanish and English.

Mrs. Virginia Woollis, (RIP) Home economics, let you explore your inner being taught us perseverance and confidence.

Mrs. James, (RIP) Spanish teacher, a mentor of dressing up and looking your best. You always present yourself in your prime attire and remember first impressions are as important as last impressions.

To conclude, I want to dedicate this article to a special lady, who became my friend and mentor. Iris Bland, higher mathematics. She taught me the impossible, she gave me the tools to understand math (never my favorite). She was patient with me and taught me it was acceptable to fail, by all means unquestionably to become a stronger person to get up and be resilient. To never feel sorry for yourself and remember that each new day was another opportunity to be a better person. Thank you to all who were instrumental in my education and I forgot to mention.



## Mentors In Motion

*By Dorie Croissant*

I have thought long and hard about trying to come up with a story or comment about a mentor in my life. The dilemma seems to be that many people and many stories come to mind. So, it's really hard to pick just one. Mentors, aka parents, family, friends, teachers, co-workers, etc. have thankfully continued to show up in my life for as long as I can remember. And I am incredibly grateful for each one of them.

Mentors have moved in and out of my life regardless of my age, what I am doing, or where I am living. Maybe it's more like the right person has crossed my path at just the right moment in time to teach me something, open my eyes, or show me a different way. Each one of these people has a very special place in my heart as they have helped shape and mold me to be the person I am today. One incredibly wise friend said to me many years ago, "Don't be afraid to doubt, don't be afraid to question. Be open to change." I remember exactly where I was and what I was doing when this comment was made. Ironically, in a car, driving a friend to an appointment. Mentors in motion. I have to say that I've internalized this statement and carried it with me ever since I heard it. It helps to move me forward. It helps to keep me focused. Another friend once said, "Watch those forks in the road." And we all know there are many forks in the road.

So, indeed, mentors are in motion. They are everywhere. We all experience teachable moments as we move through our day. Thank you to each and every mentor. Always grateful and filled with thanks.



## Teachers and Mentors

*By Janet Herrick*

Growing up, all of my teachers taught me something. Aside from the curriculum that they were instructing, I learned how their personality and teaching style affected me. Some intimidated me, some encouraged me, some made learning fun, others were strict, and still others made me want to learn because they were passionate about their subject and about teaching. I realized then how everyone learns differently. We are all unique, and teaching styles do not always match the student's best way to learn. One size does not fit all.

Contemplating mentors and teachers, I realized that the people who taught me the most were those I met after my initial schooling was over. Without a doubt, my children were my greatest teachers. I was totally unprepared for the moment I first held my baby daughter in my arms. I thought I understood love, but she ignited the spark of total unconditional love in me. This little tiny being that had grown inside me made me a "Mom" and her first cry bonded us for life. Yet, that was only the beginning of my learning. In less than three years I realized that I had fallen in love again, without reservation, when my son was born. I learned that now that there were two children the amount of love I was capable of was not in the least divided between them, but only expanded enough to encompass them both in the same unconditional blanket of love.

Our capacity to love comes at us in so many ways if we are open to expanding it. Every time we are met by another person and understand how connected we all are just by virtue of our common humanity we find an opportunity for our love to grow. It expands further within our families, parents, siblings, spouses and partners as well as our dear friends and even our loving pets. They not only teach us about the emotion of love, they teach us about all human emotions. This gives us a chance to learn more about ourselves and make better choices in our daily lives.

Every relationship, good or bad, positive or negative, hostile or friendly, loving or confrontational, teaches us something. In this way, everyone can be a teacher and some can become our mentors by prompting us to become our best selves. What we glean from any relationship is up to us. Individuals come in and out of our lives in so many ways, some for just a moment in time, some for years, and still others for a lifetime. We must always remember that we too are teaching others through our relationships. May we always inspire others in a positive manner by our words and our example. Let us be open to the lessons we can learn every day from each and every person we meet.

## What Does It Mean to Be a Mentor?

At its core, being a mentor is being a trusted advisor. It can mean a lot of different things, but it all boils down to making yourself available to support and advise someone when they need it, delivering that support in a way that makes sense to them, and always, always keeping that person's best interests in mind.

A mentor/mentee relationship can last for years, or it can last one coffee date. When you mentor someone long-term, you really get to know and understand their personality, learning style, and goals, which can set you up to offer richer, more relevant advice over time. Mentorship doesn't have to be long-term. It can also be a one-off or short-term relationship, like when someone needs help working through a specific problem.

Regardless of the situation, individuals in our world, family, friends, co-workers etc. learn from us just by our example. Life itself is a tremendous teacher, but we often do not give ourselves enough credit for the wisdom we possess. We have probably already been a mentor to someone consciously or unconsciously. So, do not be afraid to share what life has taught. Pass it on! Here are five ways to be a good mentor: Communicate and listen. Offer constructive criticism. Be empathetic. Let your mentee make their own decisions. Work to become a positive role model.

# Remembering the WOW Award

September has been the traditional month for our annual WOW Luncheon. Unfortunately, once again this year we were not able to gather. However, in lieu of that, I would like us to take a moment to remember the wonderful women who have received the award in the past. Since the first Awards were presented in 2010 we have honored 16 deserving women. They are as follows:

Harriet Ryan  
Lena Moriarty  
Gladys Kelly  
Jody Donovan  
Virginia Strait  
Janet Herrick  
Dorie Croissant  
Salome Harasty (Lifetime Achievement Award)  
Jean Gold  
Jill Munzial  
Del Pinault  
Jean Henry  
Margie Gray  
Lucy Reda  
Sonia Diaz  
Betsy Williams

All these deserving recipients truly exemplified the qualities and attributes of a woman who embraced her eldership and was Sage-ing not merely Aging. This is what Stone Circle is all about, supporting and empowering women to become the individuals they are meant to be. Over the years, since 1999, Stone Circle has been a resource for women to come together, support, and encourage one another allowing them to continue to learn and grow. This growth allows all of us to express ourselves and be instruments of positive growth and change wherever we are. We can all be proud of ourselves, our past WOW recipients, and what we have accomplished together.

With the exception of our monthly For Women Only Gathering, all other events have been postponed in order to keep everyone safe. As soon as we feel it is reasonable, events will be added. Remember to check out the Stone Circle website for any updates to our schedule of events in the future.

Also remember that the current Stone Circle Blog, as well as previous ones, are available on the site. Please feel free to share your feedback and also pass on the blogs to others.

**[www.stonecircleonline.org](http://www.stonecircleonline.org)**

# Stone Circle

Proudly presents the  
Annual Woman of Wisdom

## WOW Award

To

All Stone Circle Women

who exemplify the qualities and attributes  
of women who embrace their eldership and are  
Sage-ing not merely Aging.



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 21<sup>st</sup> century. We truly rely on the generosity of friends and those who participate in programs.