

## Living into Dying

By Nancy Jewel Poer



Everywhere I go, lecturing and giving workshops around the country, people come up to thank me for my book, *Living Into Dying, Spiritual and Practical Deathcare for Family and Community*. For me, it is heartwarming that it helps people in so many places. To empower people to make decisions about the care of

their loved ones in dying and after death is the reason I wrote it. Most often, it has helped them realize they have choices that they didn't know they had. The majority of people live with the impression they cannot care for their loved ones after they die, cannot have them at home for a vigil, and that embalming is a legal requirement.

It is especially rewarding to hear the stories of families that have received the book just at the right time, such as two loving daughters who, with their father, had been so devotedly caring for their mother dying of cancer at home. They were given the book just a week before she died and then realized that not only could they care for her after death, but their father learned he could make her casket, and he did so. The closure and completion of their care of their mother was then entirely different. If they hadn't known their rights to care for her, the body would immediately have been taken away by the morticians and cared for by strangers, and any visitation would have had to comply with a funeral home schedule. It was right for this family to be able to give the ultimate care for their mother and wife with their devoted deeds of love and a natural and fulfilling rhythm of closure.

The book was written out of our experience as a family in nursing and caring for our elders at home as they died, and then helping community members who wanted to do the same. In time I became a national consultant and have helped to teach and encourage groups across the country to prepare 'threshold committees' for deaths in their communities. In my

many years of working with families around the death of loved ones, I have experienced again and again the healing and ability to begin to cope with the grief that comes when the family is involved with the death to the greatest extent that is appropriate for them. The sense that they have been able to do every possible thing to honor and support their dying family members and friends is deeply important for living with the loss. But even more healing can be their dawning realization that there are great gifts given to us by those crossing the threshold. The experience of the powerful presence of the spirit when an individual is making the transition can be one of the most profound and authentic experiences in our life.

We are not just plants, old vegetables falling off a vine when we die. We are spiritual individuals with an immortal spirit. Our spirit is expanding, incarnating, preparing to separate from a physical body grown old and/or unusable. Yes, the body is dying, and the dying is quick or peaceful or longer or harder, depending on the unique way of dying for each individual. But the spirit is not dying, it is going home to the spiritual world.

I often share with people the concept that when we are born into this world, our mother gives us birth, but when we are born into the next world, we give birth to ourselves. When we can recognize dying as labor, the striving work to be born into spiritual existence, the attitude and support we bring to the bedside of the dying is entirely different than our impulse to turn away from a process too painful or unpleasant for us to witness. Rather with prayer and encouraging support we honor the great effort of the dying one to cross back over the threshold. Rudolf Steiner tells us that if we could only see death from the other side we would be amazed that what we experience as suffering and diminished physical existence on this side of the threshold, becomes a glorious flame of spiritual light and life on the other when the transition is made. It is the flame of victory, for the transient, the mortal, the merely physical, has NOT prevailed. The immortal spirit is victorious over death! He goes further. Not only does this beautiful light of the individual spirit triumph over matter at the threshold, but it lights the whole existence of the soul throughout their experience in the spiritual world.

Living in our time of consciousness soul, surely a major step is to come to terms with death with as much courage and awareness as we can. Our life unfolds against this stark truth of earthly existence, and if we accept our lives and time with our loved ones with the knowledge and gratitude for the finite time we have, then we can truly honor and fully appreciate our lives.

Those on the other side can continue their love and connection to us when we share our spiritual striving and love with them. They have the capacities to see the great picture of our unfolding lives. But they have no ability to affect change on earth except by inspiring us. We are the hands to do the deeds, the souls to think and act upon the spiritual thoughts. World progress so greatly depends on our uniting in this tremendous partnership. The profound gifts I have received from counseling and being with the dying have made such a difference in my life that I want to share the tremendous value of these threshold experiences and encourage and

support others on this great journey of life, death, and new life in the spirit.

Nancy Poer will visit the Portland Branch April 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> to give a lecture and workshop on the theme Helping Loved Ones at the Threshold of Death, Spiritual Insights and Practical Aspects. See the calendar and flyer insert for details.

### Easter 2008

By Theo van Gaalen, The Netherlands

Easter 2008 is a rare event. The Spring equinox, the full Moon and Easter Sunday are each succeeding the other in rapid succession this year. This circumstance happened in 1913 and will happen once again in 2160. What is the significance of these events from an earthly viewpoint, and as seen from a cosmic spiritual viewpoint?

The celebration of Easter has a connection to the history of the Jewish people, recalling the journey out of Egypt, the Exodus. According to the Bible, Passover (now the Christian Holy or Maundy Thursday) was fixed on the full Moon night in the spring month of Nisan, approximately 14 days after the New Moon. The New Moon is the anchor point for the beginning of the Jewish New Year, the first day of which is just after the New Moon closest to the spring equinox. Due to the several different time calendars of the Romans and the Christians, such as the Julian calendar, the Diocletian calendar, the Gregorian calendar and the several corrections made to them, confusion and discussion arose about the celebration of Christian Easter where the Resurrection rather than the Exodus was celebrated. In addition, the Christian calendar starts with the 1<sup>st</sup> of January while the original Bible calendar began sometime in March or April, depending on the date of the New Moon closest to the spring equinox.

According to the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D., Easter was determined by the now well known rule: it falls on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after the full Moon following the spring equinox. What was the point of view at that time in Nicea? Nowadays this is not clear; we only can guess and find that many viewpoints may have existed.

The event at Golgotha took place on the Friday before Pesach (Jewish Passover) when the Jews celebrate their Exodus, an event that is related to the full Moon. In Chapter 7 of her book *Anthroposofie und Astronomie*, an

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article about the Easter Festival in which the process during the initiation is explained, Elisabeth Vreede refers to a lecture by Rudolf Steiner – *das Osterfest als ein Stück Mysteriengeschichte*, Dornach 19-22 April 1924. In summary, the ether body leaves the physical body and reaches into the sphere of the full Moon, while the ego-astral organisation finds itself in the powers of the sun. So you could say that the determination of the date of Easter by the Council of Nicea goes back as far as the old mysteries, and at the time of the Council, might still have been known.

Astronomically speaking, Easter 2008 has a concentration of cosmic events; Sun in Spring equinox, full moon, 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday as a new start, and all three are close together. This concentration of events stimulates a strong remembrance of Golgotha in a very intense way, and invites us to reconsider it in a spiritual way.

The real date on which Golgotha took place is still an estimated calculation. Rudolf Steiner gives April 3, 33 A.D. as the date. From this we can determine that the Christian celebration of Easter is not a “birthday-event” occurring on the same day each year or a memorial related to the date calculation. But these three phenomena so close to each other, when seen as cosmic events, give reason to commemorate the Resurrection in a spiritual contemplation.

The line connecting the 2 equinoxes is the most intimate place between the 2 spheres of sun and earth. The physical sun on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March at 06:48 hr MEZ (Middle European Time Zone) will be in the ascending equinox: the beginning of new life in spring. It is full Moon (opposite the Sun) on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March at 19:38 hr MEZ. Easter Sunday, the beginning of ancient Christian year, is nearly 2 days after crucifixion. At Christ’s death at Golgotha his ether body submits itself unto the light of the full Moon. His ego-astral-organisation connects with the sun power, becomes a Sun carrier.

For nearly 2 days Christ is totally present in the earth-Moon-Sun-sphere. Rudolf Steiner tells us how, generally speaking, approximately 2 days are necessary to incorporate the soul events into the physical and etheric body. This period is also the time-difference between the sidereal and the synodical Moon orbit.

In the context of this writing it is not important to have exact calculations. The phenomena show us something in which we, in a spiritual way, can imagine the processes that were there at the time of Golgotha.

During Golgotha there was also a sort of darkness, and one might think of a solar eclipse. This was however not possible, because such an event is only possible during the New Moon. Emil Bock describes this darkness as a sandstorm that lasted for hours. However, there may have been a Moon eclipse; in the Bible it is written that a full Moon came up with a red colour like blood.

The phenomenon of a sun-eclipse has been described by Rudolf Steiner as a valve through which evil forces can leave the earth. The Moon eclipse however is a valve through which evil will from cosmos can come to earth. Darkness and a moon-eclipse were both present at Golgotha. Darkness while Christ became the Master of earth whereupon the dark forces had to leave. The Moon eclipse gave opportunity to Ahriman and his rigid forces of death. Death becomes reality. In the Resurrection on Easter Sunday Christ overcomes this ultimate rigid force.

These phenomena announce themselves as cosmic events. In the spiritual world everything is there at the same time. What happened here in the physical world in time processes is on the other side independent of time. It is there as endless consciousness. Non-local space, as von Lommel said in his study about *Near Death Experience*. The Akashic chronicle is another term for the pictures that are present in the ether world. Time on earth is just translated as “non-local space.” The physical reality of Golgotha can never be proved with the scientific methods of our material world, said Rudolf Steiner in his lecture: *Die Evolution vom Gesichtspunkt des Wahrhaftigen*.

- ❖ Behind the element Warmth is the sacrifice reality.
- ❖ Behind the element Air is the blessing, the giving reality,
- ❖ Behind the element Water is the resignation reality,

Sacrifice, blessing, and resignation are all understandings of the spiritual world that we cannot prove using physical methods. This is the true reality behind our physical world. In other words, the true reality of death cannot be proven as an historical earthly fact. Death is the only true reality on earth, and it was conquered by Christ at Golgotha through the Resurrection.

This article was written by the author to encourage the reader to think about Easter 2008 as something special. Are we capable of considering Easter in a spiritual way?

## JANNEBETH RøeII'S BIOGRAPHY

By Diane Ramage, Vancouver, Washington

Meeting Jannebeth for the first time in connection with First Class, I experienced a very regal, composed demeanor, which manifests also as she stands before an art class, quietly explaining just what needs to be done, then stepping modestly back as the students work. A quiet elegance. But there are the other moments, when she reminds me of a dragon fly, darting close to you on transparent wings, with a bright colorful body, full of intense hovering scarcely inches away, then darts as suddenly away, or perhaps a hummingbird, with similar intense darting towards red (her favorite color), hovering, then darting away. In those hovering moments, she utters questions she has been living with, totally open to any answer that might come, waiting in quiet expectation for the light, suggesting thoughts or feelings or images that have come to her. Even the most mundane shared moments seem brought to a higher level by her thought filled questions.

She says her life really began at 18 years old when she met Anthroposophy, when her life up until then finally started to make sense. Before then, she had asked herself often "why am I in these situations?" She felt out of place. She had asked once for an encyclopedia for her birthday to try to figure out what it was all about. Even literature was in Greek and Latin. She felt so bored. In school she didn't know what she was learning it all for. She only got one A, when studying blood circulation. When she went to a smaller school as an older teenager, a teacher spoke about existentialism and Sartre, and it was the first time she felt something was interesting.



She was born in Amsterdam during the war years, the third born child, growing up with a brother and two sisters. She loved her nanny, and remembers the seasonal play during the warm months when the children poured into the streets and played jump rope and marbles, and the colder months spent

inside when she would sew doll clothes while her mother embroidered, knitted or sewed. At one point she thought she might become a seamstress, but her mother said that would never work because she would tell people what to wear. She still loves to work with her hands though, and feels she learns so much better that way. She had longed for colored inks, and when she finally received some for her 9th birthday, she was so excited she couldn't touch them for a week. For her first project, she made a mask.

Jupiter is near the top of her chart, unsuspected, given free reign one might say, and the 12 year Jupiter cycle seems to be pivotal in her life.

When she was 12, she had a conversation with a girl friend as they were walking the friend's dog in the dark. The girl wanted to hang herself, and asked Jannebeth if she thought it was a good idea. Jannebeth said perhaps so, but at least she should try to solve the problem first. Then the girl asked Jannebeth if she believed in reincarnation. The girl continued living, but Jannebeth didn't question more about reincarnation.

Also at age 12, she met a girl who became her good friend. The girl was tall and thin, and in comparison Jannebeth was round and fat, and they were called the stork and the elephant in school. This same girl suggested to her at age 18 that she ought to take an exercise class called Mensendieck. During one of the Mensendieck sessions, a woman spoke about seminars in Dornach. Her friend asked if she thought it was Catholic. Jannebeth replied, "who cares if it is Catholic, if you can learn something there." The woman told her it involved Rudolf Steiner and the Goetheanum. Jannebeth asked how she could learn more about Rudolf Steiner. She had heard vaguely of him via her sister and brother-in-law, a physician, who traveled to Arlesheim for a year for help for their son, who only sang, but didn't speak. The woman gave her a biography of Rudolf Steiner, written by Dr Zeylmans van Emmichoven. She never read it. It was unusual, for she could see in the index that it had very little about his life, but much of what seemed important to Zeylmans-- the resurrection of thinking, feeling and willing. What did strike her were the eyes of Steiner's picture on the cover, which seemed to follow her everywhere. When she couldn't stand the image of Steiner following her around, she turned the book over and saw the warm, radiant image of Zeylmans. It said he was a psychiatrist, and had done his doctoral thesis on how color affects feeling. That grabbed her! She never met him, but met people who had. She kept a picture of him

on her desk later on, and people thought that was her father, and she didn't correct them.

At this same time, her father, a very authoritarian figure, insisted she attend an important social gathering on a boat. She had planned to go to French speaking Switzerland to train as a "pouponniere", and this training started two weeks before the social event. A pouponniere was someone who trained to learn all about early childhood, nutrition, and childhood illnesses, and could be seen walking behind the prams. Her parents were adamant that she learn English and French after graduation. She was already familiar enough with English, having been invited by her cousin to travel by boat to Sri Lanka to visit her cousin's uncle, a consul. There she also discovered different religions. The guard at the estate gave her a book on Buddha's eightfold path, and she experienced how the whole island breathed religion, that it was not just a once a week affair as she had experienced at home. There were many religious processions, and she recalls one where the tooth of Buddha was carried on an elephant. The Buddhist guard would catch the many dangerous snakes on the grounds, and the Hindu servants would set them free again, due to their religious belief of the transmigration of souls. She was awed by the beautiful sunsets on the Indian Ocean.



Jannebeth won the battle and went to Switzerland. One of the governesses had a brother who lived just north of the school. She visited one Sunday, which happened to be Michaelmas. She saw the children, home alone, stringing leaves on a rope to decorate the house and she asked them what it was for. They said Michaelmas, so she thought for some time that that was what it consisted of. A year later their father was the one who first showed her the Goetheanum. When she first saw the Goetheanum, she thought it was big. She was struck by the luminosity and warmth of Steiner's pastel sketches. The rest sort of went over her head.

She got very ill, and decided to leave all her things behind at the school and go to her sister in Arlesheim.

Her father insisted she return to the training, since it had been her decision to go there. Jannebeth held her ground. Her father then dreamed that she appeared to him totally exhausted, emaciated, ill and bald accompanied by a monk. Her father, hard as a rock usually, relented and called the next day to tell her she should come home. She had a tonsillectomy.

Her brother-in-law suggested she take up regular nursing and leave the baby study behind. One thing that impressed her strongly at the Pouponniere was a Red Cross nurse's wisdom. Babies were put up for adoption there, and the young students would be on one side of the glass looking at prospective parents viewing the children, and the nurse would be on the other side watching the child being viewed. She finally asked her why she only looked at the child, not at the parent's reaction. She said: "The child decides."

She worked for a while at the Maretak, which gave her a chance to get out of the city, and met Dr Mees, an Anthroposophical doctor. It was a retreat for people. She had not yet read an anthroposophical book, yet one of the patients wanted Jannebeth to read to her *From Jesus to Christ* by Rudolf Steiner. It did not take Jannebeth a back at all, and I find it interesting that her first reading was done in service to another. Two nurses visited and they were training for nursing in the Rudolf Steiner Clinic in Den Hague. She decided to train there as well. She had signed up for a well recommended clinic in Amsterdam to the delight of her parents who thought she was finally going to amount to something, and to their consternation she canceled that and went to the Hague. It had just enough beds to qualify for a nurses training clinic.

For three years she played Mary in the Christmas Play for the patients. As they were all women, they had to ask a male doctor from outside, Dr Engelbrecht, to play Joseph. After each rehearsal he kindly and patiently answered all their questions about medical issues and what to think when people die. He stressed the importance of the Foundation Stone meditation as the best meditation for medical work and anthroposophy. Eventually she got Zeylmans book on the Foundation Stone. He was a family doctor, but had hospital privileges at the clinic.

She met a girl there who did hydrotherapy. After graduating, she went to the same place in Stuttgart where the girl had trained, and studied for six months with Julian Schnabel, a curative practitioner who worked with chestnut baths, doing movements in the

water around the patient. When she asked why not the other direction, he told her he just knew it intuitively. Thus, she learned a technique but had no idea why. She then went to Boll to do rhythmic massage, hydrotherapy and painting therapy. She had earlier been to Boll during a vacation, and had picked up a brochure that spoke of painting classes. She thought she'd take a vacation in Boll and combine it with color classes. She hadn't read it well, and thought it would be with Dr Hauschka, but discovered it was with Liane Collot d'Herbois. It was over her head, because she had never painted before, but she was still excited enough that after the course she decided when her nursing training was over to go for a year of painting there, taught mostly by Dr Hauschka, but with one block by d'Herbois. Dr Hauschka often spoke about the old Goetheanum in relation to human physiology.

She did a quick internship in Arlesheim with Frau Dr Suchankte. Then she received a letter when age 24 (another Jupiter return) from Dr Engelbrecht asking her to be a nurse for his practice. She asked him to find someone else. He wrote another letter telling a story about a patient, and when she heard the story, she packed up her bags and joined him. The patient had ovarian cancer, had had radiation therapy, and was given up. Her husband, a craftsman, was not the type to give up. He was walking through Rotterdam when a bird pooped on his new suit. He knew a fishmonger in the neighborhood, and went in to get some water to clean it off. The monger inquired about his wife, and was told the story. He said "I have a customer that was looking so miserable. She was gone for a while, and then I saw her again. She was doing so well--she had gone to a doctor in the Hague. I'll find out the phone number for you." The husband went home and didn't expect to hear from him. But the monger called, and the husband in turn called Dr Engelbrecht and was put on a several months waiting list. The husband felt he couldn't wait, so he went to the Hague and sat in the waiting room. The Dr had a sense for destiny, so he told him if he could bring his wife there, he would do his best for her with Iscador, but since they'd given up, he couldn't promise anything. The husband saw the wretched outer condition of the clinic, but was soon won over by the care and the atmosphere. After receiving treatment, her hair grew back, she regained her hunger and was doing well enough to go home. At that point, Jannebeth arrived in January and visited her regularly to care for her in her home. The patient died in September, so it was almost like a pregnancy of nine months duration. The day she died, the Dr bought a

house for the external therapies, where he put the baths, the massage and painting equipment.

He asked her specifically to pick up the external therapies in his practice. He showed her the lectures where Steiner speaks of the importance of external therapies. Steiner says there are three fields where Anthroposophical medicine can penetrate into the world: the healing of cancer, the approach to psychiatric therapy, and the external therapies. Dr Engelbrecht had worked in Arlesheim with the external therapies, and wanted to work more with them. It can be difficult to work for doctors, but each time the higher call of the external therapies kept her going.

She gave baths to many children. After one nutritional bath, a young baby with bronchitis had the strength to breast feed again. Most were older patients who were at the last stage of cancer. She learned how to accompany people in their homes in the dying process. She noticed some people seemed to flock to the clinic for its warmth and sense of home during Christmas time. So she started a Christmas festival, and then one for Easter and also for Michaelmas. As with the medicine, she learned how as she went. At the festivals the Dr would speak about anthroposophy, which impressed the patients to think that he didn't just care for them medically. The families of patients would bake and come as well. The clinic also became a weekly pick-up center for biodynamic vegetables.

Downstairs she had a wooden bath for the fever baths, the 2nd floor had a porcelain bath for the oil dispersion baths, and a eurythmy room, and on the 3rd floor was a painting room. She and the Dr would travel to different cities in Holland, Belgium and Germany, and give health care classes. In all of those cities there are now clinics and anthroposophical doctors. She worked there for a 12 year cycle, but she had to quit due to sensitive skin that got aggravated with so much hydrotherapy. She decided at that point that it was a good time to pick up the art therapy.

In 1980 she and Robert van Santen, her future husband, traveled to Sacramento, since he had met Rene Querido and wanted to work with him. She thought if she was going to start something new, she might as well do it in the United States. Everyone wanted to hear about her nursing experiences though. At the end of 1981 they moved to LA for 10 years, which were filled with nursing activity. In 1984 the American Anthroposophical Nurses Association was founded. Her marriage started to dissolve and Jannebeth decided

she really had to pick up what she had come to America to do, so she attended the Arts Center College of Design. She graduated and divorced in 1990. She has seven overlapping colored gels she designed as her project (some day to be made in glass hopefully) of the stages of The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz. Her teacher said that if Matisse had lived, he might have created something like that.

She moved back to Sacramento, hoping to work in the Raphael Clinic, but that didn't work out. She then went to work in San Francisco with Dr Marti, painting with Aids patients. She also painted with the homeless at a homeless day shelter.

In 1994-95 she moved back to LA where she had a private nursing job, then taught painting in her apartment.



In 1995 she met James Lee in Ann Arbor at a First Class conference given by Ernst Katz. In 1997, since James couldn't find a job in LA, she moved to Florida where he lived. He was working with the Everglades Restoration Program, and decided to quit when he saw no future in continuing to work with his employer.

They moved to Cortlandt Manor north of New York City for 4 years. She worked 1 year at Weleda potentizing medicines. Then she worked for Volunteers of America in a homeless shelter located in an old motel. She went to a management convention on her 60th birthday to teach painting to management, and also worked with the homeless. James' project came to an end, so they moved here to Portland in 2003. James likes water and she likes the West Coast and wanted to be near an airport, and neither one wanted to start a new Anthroposophical Community.

She discovered the homeless shelters here already have artists. She has given several painting classes at her home studio which James remodeled for her, another series starting this month. Through a referral by James Knight the Pacific Oncology group of clinics has heard about her, and she has taught painting to patients there.

She loves to give health care classes to parents of the Waldorf Community, since the parents are so excited and put it into practice. The Nurses Group dissolved, mainly for a lack of administrative ability. None of the nurses seemed to have those skills. Whenever she has failed, it has been due to lack of social skills, not lack of practical skills. (I don't think she is alone in that!) She felt many nurses came for the nursing, but also wanted to see different social interaction. She believes that Anthroposophical medicine will really succeed if all the therapies work together in a social unit. A clinic should become a new mystery place where people come for more than healing.

She has been a reader for First Class since taking over for Virginia Sease in 1983 in LA together with John Brousseau. She currently reads for the Portland group. She became a member of the Anthroposophical Society in the 1970's, and a member of First Class in 1975. She never thought she would join anything anymore, but felt that the spirit needs a body to incarnate. She has not yet determined which stream she belongs to. A friend once saw her dressed in white with black accents, and exclaimed "a Cistercian!"

Knowing the wide range of interests anthroposophists can have, she asked James right away what sort of books interested him, to see if they were compatible. History and karma. Her favorites were color and karma, with *Occult Science* being her favorite book. Soon after coming to Portland, they wanted to start a karma study group, but waited until they were asked. Chrystal Godleske spoke with them about Christof Wiechert's seminar on karma, and so it began four years ago. They host it not just by providing a warm space in their home, but by a delicious shared dinner, followed by study discussion, and then dessert, tea and conversation. The yearly bocce ball beach trip brings out the lighter side.

She, James and Marijo Rogers initiated the Foundation Stone group which met for some years in Sacramento in the spring and at their house the week before Christmas.

She was active in the Portland Branch formation, and continues to be a part of the Branch newsletter team, with her main emphasis on the calendar, and communicating with the Branch Council.

She and James also have a plant connection. During their first walk in a park, she pointed out a Chelidonium and began discussing its medical uses. James contributed his knowledge about the soil it was growing in. They may have disagreements, but when they see a dandelion, they fall in love again. They have translated two plant books together, written by Dick van Romunde in Dutch. It has also helped them to bridge the language gap, and to realize there are jokes and subtle nuances one can't really translate. Dr Mees told her long ago that she didn't need to understand everything, but she did need a picture of the plants and metals to work in medicine. She has worked with the science section when it met in Portland, teaching plant drawing.

She has colored all the panels of the Goetheanum glass windows. She has an astounding geometrical imaginative ability living in her limbs, which she translates into creating the different geometric solids. She has led groups in creating the double dodecahedron of the Foundation Stone. She has a keen eye for detail in nature, and rises before dawn one day of the week to visit Sauvie Island with Patricia Lynch and recently Donna Patterson-Kellum and Cheri Munske to sketch the same spot over the course of the year. Browse through her studio and her home to admire her wide range of artistic skills.

She isn't homesick for Europe. She became an American citizen last year, though she still asks herself what it means, and admits it is not a popular time to become one.

She has returned each January to Arlesheim for over 30 years to meet with a group that feels a connection with the Foundation Stone, and which for the past 5 years has worked with a karma exercise. It was founded almost 60 years ago by Dr Zeylmans, and has met without fail. They meet in the Arlesheim clinic, where one can sense Dr Ita Wegman's presence. She died in 1943 2 months before Jannebeth was born, and her style of working has



always impressed her. Ita Wegman used to say: "In doing, the gods bow to you."

Her parents indirectly came into contact with anthroposophy via the use of Iscador for cancer, but her father was always afraid she would go to hell, that it was something demonic. Her mother thought that at least the anthroposophists did something, and would sometimes accompany her to the health classes.

In 1998 Dr Engelbrecht wanted her to come to Europe to give a course with him. She didn't want to handle all the practical details it would involve,

so she said no. He gave her a date, and she insisted he change it. He did. Try as she might, he insisted and she finally went, and he died 1 week later. On the one hand, it taught her not to fight what comes to you, and yet if she hadn't made him change the date, he would have died before the event happened and they reconnected. There was something musical in the way he would compose the injection schedule and the prescriptions. Jannebeth would then picture the plants and choose the outer remedies for the baths, compresses and massage. She would propose those to him and he might add something. They had a very special destiny together.

Last year she re-met the girlfriend who first took her to the Mensendieck exercises in her youth. The woman had found her address and connected with her. Steiner speaks of how often those we are together with in the middle time of a life, we meet at the beginning and end of another life.

Now that she is nearly 65, (she seems so youthful when you meet her that that is scarce believable) she feels she needs only to do things she really wants. She feels her medical time was what she came here to do, the rest is now all investment for the future incarnation. If she had pursued the arts earlier, it would have distracted her from her dedication to the medical field.

As she looks forward, an image arises we both can sense, in ancient Egypt, a kingly court, a temple, ancient rites with images on the walls, herbs and incantations leading souls on their journey to the land of the Dead.



# Portland Anthroposophical Society Calendar - March 2008

## Ongoing Events and Study Groups

### **African Drumming**

We're back on a weekly schedule: Every Thursday evening from 7-8 pm in the high school building of Portland Waldorf School (2300 SE Harrison Street, Milwaukie). \$40 for 5 lessons, \$10 drop-in. Drums provided. No experience necessary. Marion Van Namen (503) 956-4046.

### **Anthroposophical Medicine Study Group**

Once a month Monday (after the second Sunday) at the Takacs Clinic 7-8:30 PM. John Takacs at [johntakacsdo@hotmail.com](mailto:johntakacsdo@hotmail.com) or Kevin Kane at [drkev@involved.com](mailto:drkev@involved.com).

### **Curative Education**

Second and fourth Friday 7:30 PM – 9PM study of Rudolf Steiner's Education for Special Needs. Call Betty Baldwin for information 503-747-6367.

### **Deepening Our Experience with the Six Basic Exercises**

Saturday 9:00-10:00 AM once a month. Beginning and advanced students welcome. 2525 NE 13th Ave, Portland, OR 97212, For information call Twila at (503) 281-9349 or write her by e-mail at [Twila@spiritone.com](mailto:Twila@spiritone.com)

### **Embryogenesis in Myth and Science**

We are beginning a study of the above book by Thomas Weihs, Anthroposophical physician and teacher. It compares the Genesis of the Bible and creation myths with the science of embryology enlightened by Anthroposophy. We meet weekly on Tuesdays from 7:30 - 9:00 pm at 3046 NE 33rd Avenue, Portland, OR 97212. Contact Diane Ramage 360 241-7854 for information.

### **Eurythmy**

Training offered by Portland Eurythmy on weekends and evenings. Please contact Natasha Moss at 503 233-0663.

### **Karmic Relationships**

Working through Rudolf Steiner's Karmic Relationships Cycle of lectures. Call James Lee for information 503 249-3804.

### **Mystery Knowledge and Mystery Centers**

Meeting once a month on the fourth Thursday at 7 PM at Bothmer Hall. Contact Joan Takacs ([docstakacs@comcast.net](mailto:docstakacs@comcast.net)).

### **Mystery Dramas, with Speech-Formation Exercises**

Two Wednesdays a month, 7:30 - 9:00 PM in NE Portland. Currently working with Rudolf Steiner's *Portal of Initiation* and the *Genesis* lectures. No acting experience necessary, just a love of the Word. Call Diane Ramage at 360 241-7854 for information.

### **Portland Waldorf School Community Choir**

Every Friday morning from 8:45 - 10:00 am (at the Portland Waldorf School, 2300 SE Harrison Street, Milwaukie) in

the music room of the high school building, whenever school is in session. Anyone in- and outside the PWS community who enjoys singing songs through the seasons, across the centuries and around the world is very welcome, including drop ins. This event is free and a community builder. More information: Marion Van Namen (503) 956-4046.

### **Portland Youth Discussion Group**

The Portland Youth Discussion Group, a group of people youthful in mind, body and spirit, gathers to discuss questions of how Anthroposophy compares and relates to other ideas in the realms of philosophy, spirituality, religion, economics, social activism, individual and social development, and relationships. We welcome new people who are open to exploring Spiritual Science and conducting their own research to join us. For more information, please contact Leslie Loy at (503) 819-3399 or [leslielal@yahoo.com](mailto:leslielal@yahoo.com).

### **Spinning and Spiritual Science**

Gathering on the first Saturday of each month, 3 PM to 5PM, to study *Art as Spiritual Activity*, lectures by Rudolf Steiner 1888-1923. We work with the fiber arts and spinning wheels. Call Marsha Johnson 503- 309- 4223 to sign up.

### **Waldorf Education and Teacher Training**

Lectures and courses conducted throughout the year by the Michael Institute. Contact John Miles at 503/774-4946. [johncmiles@usa.net](mailto:johncmiles@usa.net)

## Upcoming Events

### **MARCH 5 – MAY 14**

#### **New Course - Music through the Arts**

The question has come to me to have an artistic experience of musical elements such as major, minor, scales, etc. We may know the dry facts of how many whole and half steps are in a particular scale or chord, but how does that feel, what does it look like at a deeper level? In a series of 10 lessons we will explore through painting, drawing, poetry, eurythmy, but also through simple improvisation and composition, what's unique about melody, rhythm, major, minor, a scale, a particular note or instrument. Classes will be held from March 5th through May 14th, 2008 at Bothmer Hall (5909 SE Division Street, Portland) on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 - 8:30 pm. \$15 per class or \$100 for the series of 10 classes. Register by calling Marion Van Namen at 503-956-4046 or writing her at [marion@octavemusicttherapy.com](mailto:marion@octavemusicttherapy.com). Must have 5 people signed up for the series for classes to take place.

### **MARCH 6 – APRIL 17**

#### **Michael Institute - Introductory Course "The Waldorf Curriculum"**

3/6 An Overview of the Waldorf Curriculum; 3/13 Before the Nine Year Change Grades 1, 2 & 3; 4/10 The Golden Age of Childhood Grades 3, 4, 5 & 6; 4/17 The Middle School Years Grades 6, 7 & 8; held in the Music Room at Portland Waldorf

School, 2300 SE Harrison, Milwaukie. Contact 503 774-4946 or email [johncmiles@usa.net](mailto:johncmiles@usa.net).

### Sunday, MARCH 9

#### First Class of the School of Spiritual Science

Bothmer Hall, Blue card required – Discussion on Lesson 5 at 8:30 AM, class at 9:30 AM sharp. Lesson 6. Please contact Jannebeth Röell 503/249-3807 or Diane Rumage at (360) 241-7854.

### MARCH 15

#### 2008 Silver Jubilee Auction Gala

Celebrate our 25th Anniversary with an evening of magic and fun, including a delicious gourmet meal and exciting auction. For information e-mail [auction@portlandwaldorfschool.org](mailto:auction@portlandwaldorfschool.org).

### MARCH 16-20, Portland, Oregon.

#### Self World Disorders with Jaimen McMillan

ADHD, Autism, Bullying, Depression. These discomforts and dis-eases have many names and faces. Each has a myriad of causes, but one factor in common: the difficulty to relate. Many behavioral disorders exhibit dis-order in space. Balanced movement can create bridges over these gaps. We will experience that spatially-oriented exercises may enhance the individual's ability to connect, communicate, and cooperate. This course is open to everyone and begins at 7:30 pm on the first night and concludes at 12:00 noon on the last day. SDI graduate will receive Level II credit. Tuition is \$500. Please contact [sdiaadmissions@earthlink.net](mailto:sdiaadmissions@earthlink.net) or 518-695-6377 for information.

### MARCH 16

#### Consciousness and Brain Physiology

Consciousness is one of the unexplained mysteries of science. Dr. Elsas will discuss this mystery and contrast it with his physiological observations. 3:00 PM at Theosophical Society, 2377 NW Kearney Street, Portland, Oregon 97210. Doors will open at 2:30 pm.

### Wednesday, MARCH 26

#### Portland Branch Council meeting

7 PM at the home of Ruth and Tom Klein and, 3609 SE Center, Portland OR 97202, phone: 503-777-3176. All Branch members are welcome to attend.

### Thursday Evenings, APRIL 10-MAY 8

#### "The Language of Parenting- Words Weave Magic"

In this five-week class series we will acknowledge the wisdom you have in your parenting and add to it through story, discussion, lecture and self-reflection. You'll learn positive language that increases confidence and deepens family connections. Janet Allison is a Waldorf Teacher and Parent Educator and, best of all, a mom of 22 years! Fee \$195. Bothmer Hall, 7-9pm. April 10 - May 8th. Call Janet 503-493-7404 or [janet.familycoach@comcast.net](mailto:janet.familycoach@comcast.net) to register.

### Friday, APRIL 11

#### Helping Loved Ones at the Threshold of Death, Spiritual Insights and Practical Aspects - Lecture

Nancy Jewel Poer will give a public lecture (Friday) and workshop (Saturday) on death and dying at home. This event is sponsored by the Portland Branch of the Anthroposophical Society. Nancy Jewel Poer has been a national consultant for home death care for 30 years. With her family she pioneered deathcare work in her community, first nursing the family elders so they could die at home and then helping others to do the same. She and her husband wanted to not only care for their loved ones but to help their six children know that death is a natural part of life. Their children built the caskets for their grandparents and all the family members have helped with many community deaths since that time. Nancy has lectured across the United States helping to form "threshold groups" in many places so that people can be ready and knowledgeable when death comes to their communities. She was part of a documentary shown nationally on PBS television called *A Family Undertaking*. Nancy is a Waldorf educator and one of the founders of Rudolf Steiner College where she has taught for 33 years. She is also the founding teacher of Cedar Springs Waldorf School in Placerville, CA. Nancy lectures and teaches courses in parenting, child development, American studies and the spiritual feminine and is known for the warmth, humor, and practical life experience she brings to her lectures. She and her husband of many decades live on a cattle ranch in the Sierra foothills where they host many group retreats. An artist, she has created a children's book, *Mia's Apple Tree*. Friday's lecture is \$20 and the workshop is \$25 when purchased separately. Lecture and workshop together are \$35. Friday lecture (7:30 PM) and Saturday workshop (9:00 AM) will be held at 3135 NE 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Contact Jannebeth Röell for information at 503 249-3807. Please RSVP.

### Saturday APRIL 12

#### Helping Loved Ones at the Threshold of Death - Workshop

Nancy Jewel Poer will lead this workshop on death and dying at home. The Friday night lecture will complement the workshop, although it is possible to attend only the workshop. This event is sponsored by the Portland Branch of the Anthroposophical Society.

#### Sat. 9:00 AM – Noon: The Gifts of the Threshold

Noon – 1:00 PM: Potluck Lunch – Please bring a dish to share that is sufficient for about 15 people. Bring serving ware. Plates, cups and flatware will be available at the workshop.

#### Sat. 1:00 PM – 3:30 PM Legal and Practical Aspects of Home Death Care

Sat. 3:30 PM: *The Most Excellent Dying of Theodore Jack Heckelman* This new film about conscious dying and community supported deathcare before and after transition is optional for those that would like to stay and see it. A biography of Nancy Jewel Poer can be read under the Friday, April 11 lecture *Helping Loved Ones at the Threshold of Death, Spiritual Insights and Practical Aspects*. The lecture and workshop together are \$35. The workshop starts at 9:00 AM and will be held at 3135 NE 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Contact Jannebeth Röell for information at 503 249-3807. Please RSVP.

**Saturday, APRIL 12****Blending Temperaments within the Family**

Janet Allison will introduce you to the Temperaments and how to work with them in your unique family circle. Bothmer Hall, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 Fee \$25. Call Janet 503-493-7404 to register or [janet.familycoach@comcast.net](mailto:janet.familycoach@comcast.net)

**Sunday, APRIL 13****First Class of the School of Spiritual Science**

Bothmer Hall, Blue card required – Discussion on Lesson 6 at 8:30 AM, class at 9:30 AM sharp. Lesson 7. Please contact Jannebeth Röell 503/249-3807 or Diane Ramage at (360) 241-7854.

**MAY 24-25, 2008****Facing Karma in Life and Rudolf Steiner's Mystery Dramas**

Those who are young at heart are warmly invited to attend an anthroposophical youth conference on the weekend of May 24-25, 2008 (Memorial weekend) at Heartbeat Lifesharing in Hardwick, Vermont. For further information and the suggested list for pre-reading, please contact Rachel Schwartz at [raugustina@hotmail.com](mailto:raugustina@hotmail.com) or 802-472-957

**Thursday, MAY 29****Renewal of Religion**

Lecture by Sanford Miller, a priest from the Christian Community visiting Portland. 7PM at Bothmer Hall, 5909 SE Division St. Contact Lucia Mello 503- 892- 5296 or [luciamello@earthlink.net](mailto:luciamello@earthlink.net) . Donations welcome.

**Friday, MAY 30****Why Rituals?**

Lecture by Sanford Miller, a priest from the Christian Community visiting Portland 7PM at Bothmer Hall, 5909 SE Division St. Contact Lucia Mello 503- 892- 5296 or [luciamello@earthlink.net](mailto:luciamello@earthlink.net) Donations welcome.

**Saturday, MAY 31****Confirmation and Baptism**

Conversation with Sanford Miller, a priest from the Christian Community about confirmation for youths 14 to 16 year olds at 10:30 AM; Conversation about baptism at 2:30PM, both events at Bothmer Hall, 5909 SE Division St. Contact Lucia Mello 503- 892- 5296 or [luciamello@earthlink.net](mailto:luciamello@earthlink.net) . Donations welcome.

**Sunday, JUNE 1****Religious Services**

For complete schedule contact Lucia Mello 503- 892- 5296 or [luciamello@earthlink.net](mailto:luciamello@earthlink.net) . Donations welcome.

**JULY 17-20****Young Economist Course**

The course is intended for students who study economics and (young) people who are active in business but everybody with a strong interest in economics is welcome to attend. The course will be held at the Goetheanum, Switzerland, in the English language. Contact: Els Woutersen, [Els\\_Woutersen@yahoo.com](mailto:Els_Woutersen@yahoo.com)

**AUGUST 12-16****Mystery Drama Conference**

The Threefold Mystery Drama Group in Spring Valley, NY, under the direction of Barbara Renold, is planning a conference on the theme of the connection between Goethe's fairy tale, *The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*, and Rudolf Steiner's first mystery drama, "The Portal of Initiation". Contact Barbara Renold at [barbararenold@yahoo.com](mailto:barbararenold@yahoo.com) or by telephone at 845-356-0674.

**Friday, OCTOBER 24****An Anthroposophical Publisher's Private Conversations with Saul Bellow on Spirituality**

A lecture given by Stephen Usher. This lecture tells the story of how Saul Bellow came to write the foreword to Rudolf Steiner's *Boundaries Of Natural Science*. In the process of obtaining the foreword publisher Stephen Usher came to know Bellow and had a number of interesting talks with him about Steiner's spiritual scientific discoveries including those described in *Work of the Angel in Man's Astral Body*. The talk will explore the conversations and Bellow's attitude to Steiner and Anthroposophy. It will also discuss what Bellow had to say about Steiner in *HUMBOLDT'S GIFT*, a book for which Bellow received the Pulitzer prize. 8PM Location TBA, admission \$15.00

**Saturday, OCTOBER 25****Anthroposophist Rudolf Steiner & the Three-Folding of Society**

A lecture by Stephen Usher. The lecture will explore the history of the threefold idea, the idea, and its opponents. Going back to 1917 Stephen Usher will point to the moment when Steiner first postulated the idea in a conversation with Otto Lerchenfeld in response to Lerchenfeld's heartfelt question about how to bring some sanity into the madness of the First World War. The basic threefold idea will then be outlined along with Steiner's idea of the Fundamental Social Law and the Law of True Price. From there the lecture will look at the opponents of the Threefold idea both historical and current. 8PM Location TBA, admission \$15.00

**Sunday, OCTOBER 26****The Christmas Foundation Conference and the Foundation Stone**

In this presentation Stephen Usher explores the central event of the Christmas Foundation Conference of the Anthroposophical Society (Dec. 1923-Jan 1924) with particular emphasis on the events of December 25, 1923. In particular the talk will explore the distinction between the Christmas Foundation Verse and the Foundation Stone itself. Members with Pink cards only, 4 PM Location TBA, admission \$15.00

**AUGUST 1-8, 2009****Encircling Light-Expectant Silence**

Anthroposophical Society in Canada hosts this conference on the North in White Horse, Yukon. Full details about all aspects of the Conference will be available on our website, [www.encyclinglight.ca](http://www.encyclinglight.ca), which will be in operation early in 2008. The flyer can be viewed online at [PortlandBranch.com](http://PortlandBranch.com).

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## Helping Loved Ones at the Threshold of Death Spiritual Insights and Practical Aspects



Nancy Jewel Poer has been a national consultant for home death care for 30 years. With her family she pioneered deathcare work in her community, first nursing the family elders so they could die at home and then helping others to do the same. She and her husband wanted to not only care for their loved ones but to help their six children know that death is a natural part of life. Their children built the caskets for their grandparents and all the family members have helped with many community deaths since that time. Nancy has written a book *Living Into Dying, Spiritual and Practical Deathcare for Family and Community*, which has empowered many people to care for their loved ones at home when they realized it was both possible and legal to do so. Nancy has lectured across the United States helping to form “threshold groups” in many places so that people can be ready and knowledgeable when death comes to their communities. She was part of a documentary shown nationally on PBS television called *A Family Undertaking*. Nancy is a Waldorf educator and one of the founders of Rudolf Steiner College where she has taught for 33 years. She is also the founding teacher of Cedar Springs Waldorf School in Placerville, CA. Nancy lectures and teaches courses in parenting, child development, American studies and the spiritual feminine and is known for the warmth, humor, and practical life experience she brings to her lectures. She and her husband of many decades live on a cattle ranch in the Sierra foothills where they host many group retreats. An artist, she has created a children’s book, *Mia’s Apple Tree*.

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**Sat. 9:00 AM – Noon: *The Gifts of the Threshold***

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**Sat. 1:00 PM – 3:30 PM *Legal and Practical Aspects of Home Death Care***

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**The lecture and workshop together are \$35. The workshop starts at 9:00 AM and will be held at 3135 NE 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue.**

**Contact Jannebeth Röell for information at 503 249-3807 or [jannebeth@mindspring.com](mailto:jannebeth@mindspring.com). Please RSVP.**