

December 2020

OWL Café

Optimism,
Wisdom,
and Laughter

usOWLs.com

*Project of Michele Jackman
Enterprises and Adventures*



The café is open to share inspiring stories, catch a healthy laugh, or experience an insight that helps you cope with things not going so well.



HANGING IN THERE! RING OUT A SEASON OF MORE MIRTH! **Where did 2020 go?**

This unique year is leaving many of us with things undone in so many ways, but as OWLs (optimistic, wiser, and seeing the hidden humor in everything eventually), we are not as discouraged as we could be. A holiday wish list for good times is still possible!

If you believed 2020 was going to be a symbolic year with greater vision, –let's hope 2021, like turning 21 means liberation from feeling trapped or fear of dying by social engagement.

For those who never stopped working, thank you for your “essential” qualities and chosen work with risks taken by you. In 2021, let's hope there

will fewer negative emotions as we cope with incessant and unpredictable restrictions. Pray for fewer instances of reckless driving and road rage around us. Here is my attempt at "reflective humor" going into the season:

"There is not enough mistletoe in the world to get all the kisses or hugs you need just to get past this season of chronic disappointments

...in 2020 there is no reason to watch, wait or listen for Santa's footsteps

...he is quarantined, cannot ride his sleigh at night, or even deliver a pizza

...and poor Rudolph's nose is covered and cannot show the way. We must do that for ourselves and with our own gifts." Michele 2020



KEEP THIS HOLIDAY SEASON HEALING, POSITIVE, AND FUN!

Therapist Dr. Deepak Chopra suggests during such times as these, *"find a way to be happy for no reason..."* This refers your "net mirth", what your "net worth enables, and refers to stored up positive memories, joyous moments when you could see the humor and irony in absurd things around you.

"Transcend the trivial things of the world and thus become restful" advises Chopra. I believe he means "restful" (relaxed) in all activities not stopping them but with a calmer approach. It is not a good idea to "sit out" the season as a recluse, because "sitting" itself is causing many other medical risks when we don't "circulate," or use aerobic breathing much of the day as we were used to doing.

OWLS proceed by creating more fun and joyous moments with a plan for more peaceful living put into action. That is what the holiday cards usually *wish* each year. COVID need not stop harmony in all our endeavors. There is a new game of life emerging - sharing our gifts - differently and exchanging gifts that matter. **There have been many positive fresh insights and *game changers* good for us as we have adapted. We have maintained our most important and basic activities- "staying in the game" and reaching out to others so they do also.**

The antonyms of Optimism/Optimal are sources of pessimism: *cynical, despairing, depressed, uncompromising, dependent, discouraging, and disheartening feelings.* Since March I have experienced and had to fight against all those feelings with too much time on my hands. Empty or half full we still have a glass, something to hold onto! This year giving takes on a new meaning. The person who made my very empty calendar knew what was coming. The cover reads, **2020—Kind Heart. Fierce Mind in mixed colors against the white space I have faced!**



GIFTS THAT MATTER THIS SEASON: WHAT DO I GET SO AND SO?



GOOD NEWS: There are new ways to enrich our lives online

You can gift musical events, theater, or fun connections. You can still share love and appreciation for friends without masks—or other fears or stresses of the season.

Online “cocktail” parties are much safer. You can also experience learning with C-Span and attend important lectures on subjects you always wanted to know more about for free to set you free from anxiety. Smithsonian channel will take you by drone across America, internationally and learning from an Aerial view. (Aerial America Series, etc.)

We seek *peace of mind*, not more stuff to misplace or return! The COVID derailment of our old rituals and activities, and being more home bound than ever, **means less is more.**

We suggest three packages of valued gifts choices:

RED GIFTS CATEGORY represents medical equipment, health items, and safety improvements. Who knew toilet paper and paper towels are critical these days as shortages come again to create long lines and exposure to others? The *humor*—they were rarely even mentioned on survival lists I checked. This category includes essential medical aids, electronic alert items, Alexa, or Google devices to help one recall things, herbs or pain-relieving creams, or gift cards that help us manage medical conditions. These gifts help us survive in states of continued isolation or make our homes safer as we age and seek more creature comforts.

BLUE PACKAGE GIFTS – Helpful gifts and out of ordinary life tools...You can even give a catalog with a gift card attached and say, “pick something!” Create a *personal coupon* with a card for an adventure you will share with a person—*lunch or wine tasting date*? Give *the gift of an odd job or repair overdue*. A *gift of time* to spend helping others finish things where extra hands and minds are needed. What about arranging for *computer help or cleanup* from a cyber-Elf? (Best good sites for OWL items are Hammacher.com, Signals.com, Sharper Image, and Whatever Works.com), carrying items that can make life easier). **A face-time or Zoom call can replace isolation. Read reviews with Amazon gifting.**

IN THE GREEN PACKAGE - Outdoor gifts and products that assist with comfortable and *safer driving*. Ideas: Mirror extensions, a rotating seat pillow to get in and out of the car, devices which massage while you drive to keep circulation flowing and tension down. Special screens for blinding glare. **Environmental gifts include solar lights** for the outside, and battery-operated devices to reduce electrical use. Green gifts can also include a car ride to a scenic place, where clean air and new space reinvigorate a person who no longer gets out so much.

Finally, I still appreciate gifts given to American causes (e.g. US Forest Service) or international gift donations that help people in need. Direct Relief International is very much in need now supplying many world-wide COVID-19 needs. Or support local agencies.



Next event:

Third Wednesday, December 16 @ 10 to 11 AM

Reservations:

If you are new to our Owl Parliament,
make sure to request an invitation.

Email your name to **Lou** at lou.thompson@sbcglobal.net.
You will get your reservation Monday, December 14 in your inbox.

TOPIC: Where do we go from here?



OWL ALERT: TIS' THE SEASON TO BE WARY!

Don't let "scammers" steal your holidays. Be very careful about **fraudulent online purchases and use only one credit card**. Just heard from a local DA they cannot even keep up with Scam complaints—**costly items that arrive different than what was advertised**. Read reviews on items. These crimes are expanding by three-digit percentages and are getting

more sophisticated. They can even copy logos of familiar financial and your medical providers saying you owe money—the rule is YOU call your providers back, using correct phone numbers, and verify the contact.

They can threaten you with legal threats using your name, common to others who are being sought by police out-of-state—an *investigation fee*, or *special bail* to prove innocence is a scam! Ask yourself, why would I fall for that? Usually it is a time when we are more vulnerable, rushing, tired, or not awake. **Phones are now a blessing for contact and photos, but equally a curse!**



**OWL LONGEVITY DEPARTMENT: TIME TO BRING OUT YOUR
POET/CREATIVE SELF – BEST GIFT AT THIS TIME!**

Our self-reflections in journaling or poetry reveal to us what matters to us in uncertain times or derailment.

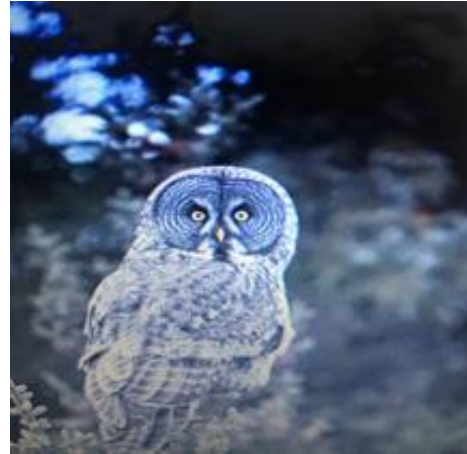
In its broadest definition, a poet is defined as a person possessing special powers of imagination or expression in language or other forms of communication. Other words include dramatist, artist, author, lyricist, rhymers, singer, dancer, and even dilettante. Poetry is the key unlocking our inner artfulness, giving us a voice, guiding our observations and intuition. Our *poetic* forces help us decide **what must happen next.**

CHECK OUT 13TH CENTURY PERSIAN POET, RUMI

Persian Poet Rumi has kept millions sane ever since the 13th Century by encouraging poetry in the face of any struggle **Rumi wrote: "Live life as if everything is rigged in your favor. I am not this hair; I am not this skin. I am the soul that lives within. Be full of sorrow, that you may become a hill of joy: weep that you may break into laughter!"**

Poetry is my own aerobic fitness choice when I am depressed, taking deeper breaths with fewer sighs. This holiday focus on a reconsidered life. **"The greatest gift of is the one we give ourselves, hanging on to life's promise, overcoming the feeling the wrong things are putting us to changes we never invited to the holiday party!"**

But as the Greek Pandora legend reminds us: "Hope dies last" and maybe NEVER will be allowed, when all the evils of the world surround us."



THIS WILL BE OUR LAST MONTHLY NEWSLETTER TO BE REPLACED BY SPECIAL SESSIONS AND UPDATES YOU AUTHORIZE US TO SEND

REAL OWLS HAVE EXTRAORDINARY HEARING...

In the November ZOOM at the Café we shared ways we were adapting to the "game changers" we faced –no work, too much work, no travel, not going to enrichment events. There have been terrible restrictions on life activities that feed our "net mirth" levels and resilience. **We worry we will "kick the bucket" before pursuing new adventures with our bucket lists.**

While we have never succumbed to ads or passwords, we still provide security and find that **people are overwhelmed these days by email and spam.** We have been inviting our large parliament of owls to Zoom meetings and find those more fun and inspiring. **Actual conversations are more helpful and healing during these times.** We will keep these groups small and schedule multiple sessions if needed.

IN 2021, we are combining our websites as well to reflect and integrate our three most important focuses:

- **The Star Team Institute for Corporate/Governmental Training**
- **Informative OWLWorks Personal Development programs**
- **Our monthly ZOOM CAFÉ' online *parliament of owls* convening, a free uplifting discussion similar to talk radio to combat feelings of isolation or invisibility.**



KEEP THIS A MEMORABLE HOLIDAY SEASON
*Don't let your bucket list wash away in roaring tides
nor shifting sands of time.*

More on our enhanced website in January 2021



usOWLs and OWLWorks

Projects of Michele Jackman Enterprises & Adventures

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usOWLs.com

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