



Crescent Moon

Crescent Moon is the newsletter for Namasté Yoga Center in Springfield, Illinois. Your comments and ideas are welcome!

WINTER INTO SPRING

2008

Issue No. 1

Volume 8

NAMASTÉ YOGA CENTER - since 1991

≈ *Our Vision* ≈

To develop & support a community of people dedicated/committed/aspiring to Yoga as a means of realizing peace.

≈ *Our Mission* ≈

To advocate health, equanimity and Self-awareness through Yoga.

FROM NANCY'S CUSHION



Last month Mary & I celebrated our 60th birthdays with a wonderful open house. Thank you to everyone who shared this special event with us. One particularly exceptional activity was collecting 60 blessings for Namasté. Wendy Allen suggested that each of us write a blessing on a yellow ribbon. Then she would craft a dream catcher from grapevines and attach all of the blessings. We will display this treasure as a reminder of our blessings!

Blessings have a long history in nearly every culture and they are truly powerful. Rachel Naomi Remen states in *My Grandfather's Blessings* that a blessing is a connecting back to our self, a remembering of who we are. "When we offer our blessings generously, the light in the world grows stronger, around and in us."

For now the yellow ribbons are hanging on the mirror in the Chandra (Moon) Room. We still need a few more to reach 60. So, when you come to class next time, please take a moment to add your blessing. Namasté is your Yoga center, a supportive community offering a space to practice Yoga, to be your Self, to celebrate with like-minded students, and to share peace and abiding joy from moment to moment.

In gratitude, *Nancy*
Executive Director



Celebration and Salutations

Mary and Nancy celebrate sixty years with sixty sun salutations. See page 3.

NEW DESIGN FOR WEBSITE!

The website for Namasté Yoga Center has been redesigned. Thanks to designer Julie Roland and webmaster Carol Kneeder, the layout is clean and simple with soft, peaceful colors that reflect the philosophy and teachings of Namasté. The content has been expanded and re-organized. The site has been optimized to make it easier to find what you are looking for: news, classes, calendars. The current issue of *Crescent Moon* is posted on the website along with archived previous issues. There is also a printable custom Google map of the area around Namasté so new visitors can find the entrance doors that are set so far off Clocktower Drive!

The website does look great. With its soft blues, purples, and yellows, the site mirrors those feelings that arise when you first walk into Namasté Yoga Center: quiet, welcoming and peaceful. Incorporating our present logo and adding the backdrop of Shiva, the site comes together offering news, information about classes and, soon, easy online class registration. Eventually, you will be able to purchase membership hours online. There is also a plan to offer pod casts of classes for downloading. It's a great new website. Check it out at www.namasteyoga.com!

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NAMASTÉ RETREAT

Perfect Just As You Are

In September, a number of yoga practitioners once again immersed themselves in the quiet space at the Villa Maria Catholic Life Center on Lake Springfield. The fall retreat was a very special time set aside to “greet each moment just as it is.”

It was a silent retreat, not an enforced silence, but a “social silence” where participants lived together without engaging in distracting conversation. Each had the luxury of just being in present awareness, at ease in his or her own quiet hearts: “perfect just as you are.” While each enjoyed this time of silence, participants also engaged in Hatha Yoga, body sensing, pranayama, meditation, Yoga Nidra, and satsung.

The retreat inspired some participants to express their feelings and share them with us. Turn to page 7 for some lovely inspirational thoughts.

If you have never experienced a retreat, we invite you to come and taste the delightful sharing of deep awareness. Two more retreats have been scheduled at Villa Maria, one this spring and one this fall. Check this newsletter or our website for more information.



NAMASTÉ'S LITTLE LOBBY SHOP

Recently, our most popular item is the Neti Pot™ complete with sea salt! Currently, we offer ceramic and non-breakable pots. The salt is pure, non-iodized and is a pharmaceutical grade with no additives or caking agents. We also offer two forms of Net-Wash Plus designed to support the health of your sinuses and immune system.

If you have been to Yoga Nidra, and enjoy the music played at the end of class, you may be happy to know that you can now purchase the music CDs in our shop.

NEW THIS SEASON: Our line of BodySense products were a hit over the holidays. They combine the benefits of moist heat and aromatherapy. Each item contains aromatic herbs and spice selected for their healing properties, and rice for its moisture content and weight. Products include wraps for the back, knees, and elbows, sinus eye bags, muffs for the hands, and booties for the feet. BodySense products are calming, soothing, and provide deep penetrating relief for stiffness and inflammation. They got rave reviews over the holidays as gift items. Valentine's Day is coming...

NAMASTÉ STUDENTS DESIGN NEW WEBSITE

Many thanks to Carol Kneedler and Julie Roland, Namasté students, for all their hard work in making our website sparkle!

Julie, of BeCreativeWeb.com., is a long-time student at Namasté and has been designing our brochures and artwork for some time. That Namasté t-shirt you are wearing? Designed by Julie! She is on the Board of Stewards and is a Friend of Namasté. Her creative energy and commitment to Namasté are apparent in the graphic design that incorporates our original logo with new images and colors.

Carol started her home-based business (O3 Internet Consulting, Inc.) in July, after working at LRS Web Services for seven years. As our newest “Friends of Namasté” member, Carol generously volunteers her time and talents. With her extensive knowledge and experience, Carol will provide ongoing assistance and training to keep the website updated.

Thanks to Julie and Carol, the website is awesome! It will support our growing community, highlight our vision and mission, and provide accurate information for current and prospective students.

Happy Birthday, Mary & Nancy!



CELEBRATION & SALUTATIONS

On December 15, Namasté was hopping with students who came to celebrate the birthdays of Mary and Nancy: Nancy having turned 60 years of age (yes, that's right, 60) on November 23, and Mary looking forward to her 60th year (yes, right again, 60th) on December 23. Mary and Nancy decided to combine their special-year birthdays on December 15 and invited everyone to come and celebrate with them on that day. As part of the day's festivities, Mary and Nancy each planned to complete 60 sun salutations.

The celebration began with the morning class led by Mary. After class, Mary and Nancy (and any one else desiring to join them), finished their 60 sun salutations. Accompanied by Wendy, Becky, and Kathy chanting the Gayatri Mantra, both

Mary and Nancy accomplished their goal of 60 salutations with two more "to grow on."

Sixty yellow ribbons were cut and everyone there wrote a blessing for Namasté on a ribbon. The ribbons now hang in the Chandra Room at Namasté.

The food was delicious, thanks to Wendy who set up the scrumptious looking table of treats, Becky who provided us with two of her infamous desserts (recipes in this issue), Nada who baked some wonderful ethnic sweets, Kathy who brought a big tray of fresh fruit, and to all who contributed to the fun.

It was a special day for us all. Even Mother Nature contributed to the festivities that December morning by covering the outdoors with a lovely blanket of white snow.



NAMASTÉ STUDENT GALE MYERS DESIGNS 2007 CITY OF SPRINGFIELD ORNAMENT



“Would you like to be on the committee to choose the next City Ornament?” the director of public affairs from St. Joseph’s Home asked **Gale Myers**, Namasté yoga student, last spring. Each year, for their main fundraiser, this home for the elderly produces a golden ornament depicting one of the local landmarks around Springfield. Not crazy about being on

committees, Gale offered to do the photography for the ornament and organized a proposal with one of her favorite photos - one of the Lincoln-Herndon Law Offices State Historic Site.

“On a cold day in February, 2005, with the wind making my eyes water, and the sun making it nearly impossible to see my camera’s screen, I took several shots of the building where Abe Lincoln practiced law. In the 1970s, this very building was the one that my in-laws, with partners, had restored to what it was like during Lincoln’s time there. They gave tours and produced a slide show to educate tourists about its history. When he was younger, my husband used to conduct tours there and had the slide show memorized, so I repeatedly hear excerpts from it even today.”

Gale submitted her proposal to the director and the director liked it. She told Gale they were thinking about using Larry Anderson’s statues outside the law offices in the new ornament, too, and asked Gale if she could take some photos of that. So in June, Gale set out to take shots of Abe, Mary, Robert, and Willy as they stand on the Old Capitol Square. With some separation, cutting, shrinking, and moving around of the photos of the statues and the law office background, Gale came up with the ornament scene. “Here is Robert waving to his little brother Willy, and Mary tidying up Abe’s jacket. Presumably, little Tad is already up in his dad’s office spilling ink, climbing on the desk and annoying Abe’s partner, William Herndon.”

The 2007 City of Springfield Ornament, “The Lincoln Family in Springfield,” was unveiled at a press conference on November 6, at the Lincoln-Herndon Law Offices. It is the 15th in a series of 24-karat gold-plated ornaments featuring local landmarks. The ornaments are signed-and-numbered limited editions. Ornament sales support a worthy cause: resident care at St. Joseph’s Home, a sheltered-care and nursing-care home for Springfield’s elderly since 1903.

Gale has been working at Prairie House since 1995 as the manager where she also sells her artwork. “I’m a photographer and I have been practicing yoga for 15 years. Yoga helps me focus on the important things; to me that means the tiny, beautiful parts of my life that I don’t want to take for granted.”

Below and on the back page of this issue are recipes Becky Croteau made for the December 60th birthday celebration. They were so popular at the celebration (because they are so delicious), Becky agreed to share them with us. Enjoy!

Lemon-Rosemary Crumb Cake

1/2 cup unbleached & 3/4 cup whole wheat pastry flour
1/2 cup sugar
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup butter (small pieces) (trans fat free margarine works almost as well)
3/4 teaspoon fresh rosemary, minced
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon baking soda

1/3 cup low fat buttermilk (or 1/3 cup soymilk with 1/2 tablespoon cider vinegar (let sit 5 minutes))
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 large egg or egg substitute
cooking spray
2 teaspoons grated lemon rind
3/4 teaspoon water

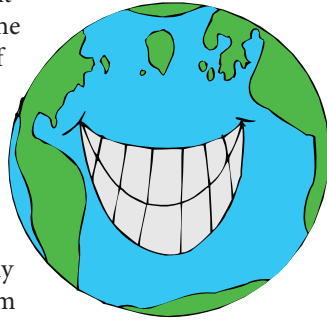
Cut together flour, sugar, salt, butter (save 1/2 cup for topping and add lemon rind and water). Add all other ingredients to remaining flour mixture and spoon into an 8 inch round cake pan (sprayed with cooking spray). Sprinkle with crumb mixture. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

TIPS FOR BEING ECO-FRIENDLY IN THE KITCHEN

by Julie Roland

Being "Green" is not a fad. Quite frankly, it is a necessity. We must each learn more about what we can do for the world in which we live. Recycling is essential, but it is not enough to get us where we are going. We have the power to create an environment that our children deserve. It is people that brought us to where we are today. And people will make it right. I can't think of a better physical gift we can give to generations to come than a world of abundant health, endless beauty—evident reverence for humanity and the planet. Once again, a world of peace between man and earth.

The Green Book by Elizabeth Rogers and Thomas Kostigen tells how we can be more environmentally friendly in all aspects of our lives. From our homes to our finances, there are conscious choices we can make to positively impact our footprints while we are here. Each chapter explains "Little Things" you can do that really add up!



GO GREEN!

Here are the Little Things you can do in your kitchen alone:

Composting

Keep scraps from food and coffee grounds in composting bin. If everyone in the US composted their kitchen scraps over a year (instead of putting them in the garbage), the organic waste diverted from landfills could make a three-foot-high compost pile to cover the city of San Francisco.

Dishwasher

Run full loads and save energy, and don't pre-rinse them before putting them in. Do both and you'll save up to 20 gallons of water per dish load, or 7,300 gallons over a year. That's as much as the average person drinks in a lifetime! (If you must hand wash, turn off the tap while you scrub.)

Food Waste

Avoid wasting food by using ingredients before they spoil. Measure carefully when baking and cooking. Save leftovers for future meals. If all U.S. households reduced their food waste by 25 grams per day the savings would be enough to provide three meals a day for a whole year to each of the 1.35 million homeless children in the U.S.

Garbage Disposal

Use cold water when you run your garbage disposal. Better yet, try not to use it at all by composting your food waste. Disposal waste can disrupt nutrient balances in water and soil ecosystems, which in turn can harm wildlife.

Microwave

Microwaves are between 3.5 to 4.8 times more energy efficient than traditional electric ovens. If everyone in North America cooked exclusively with a microwave for a year, we'd save as much energy as the entire continent of Africa consumes during that same time. (Don't use plastic in the microwave. Toxic chemicals are released especially when food and plastics interact with heat.)

Preheating

Never preheat for longer than 10 minutes. Don't bother preheating when broiling, roasting or baking for more than an hour.

Refrigerator

Keep your head out and the door closed! The refrigerator is the single biggest energy-consuming kitchen appliance, and opening the refrigerator door accounts for between \$30 and \$60 of a typical family's electricity bill each year.

Storage Containers

Instead of plastic, store food in glass or porcelain. Chemicals that transfer from plastic to food and from food to body may cause health risks.

Stove

Use the right size pot on stove burners. You could save about \$36 annually for an electric range or \$18 for a gas range. Over a year, each person in the U.S. exceeds twice the energy for preparing and cooking food that a person in Africa uses to power everything in his or her life.

Trash Bags

Use leftover paper or plastic bags as liners for trash cans. When one ton of plastic bags is reused, the energy equivalent of eleven barrels of oil is saved.

Water Filters

Install water filters on your faucets instead of buying bottled water—you'll save money over time and get better tasting water. About 1.5 million tons of plastic are used in the bottling of 89 billion liters of drinking water each year. That's enough plastic to make two water filters for every household on the planet. One billion people around the world lack access to clean drinking water.

Bats



A group of bats, hanging at the ceiling of a cave, discovers a single bat **STANDING** upright underneath on the floor of the cave.

Surprised by this unusual behavior, the group asked the standing bat, "What the heck are you doing down there?"

And the bat shouts back, "Yoga!"

(Thanks, Hernando!)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

NAMASTÉ WILL BE HOSTING TWO YOGA RETREATS IN 2008

Spring:
April 18 - 20

Fall:
September 25 - 28

Villa Maria Catholic Life Center
Lake Springfield
Springfield, Illinois

Call the office or check our website
for more information.

VALENTINE PARTNER YOGA

Experience deep, sensual yoga with your favorite Valentine. Only one partner need be a yoga practitioner. Mary will lead a class of Valentine Partner Yoga on Saturday, February 16, from 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. For more information, check our website or call Namasté.

VACATIONASANA

As many of you may remember, in the early years of Namasté we had a small bulletin board dedicated to Vacationasana, pictures of us in an asana on vacation. We are continuing this tradition and have found a new place for it, the *Crescent Moon!* Send us your pictures and they will end up in the "Moon."

IN SERVICE TO THE SPRINGFIELD COMMUNITY

On Tuesday, January 22, Nancy will be participating in a panel discussion for the Slow Food Program from 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. at Holy Land Diner. For those who wish to skip the 6:30 buffet, the program begins at 7:00. The topic will be the benefits of incorporating yoga techniques with eating. For more information, contact the office at Namasté.

TRY POETRY

by Tina Biderman

I never got into poetry. I did try, though. I once bought a book of poems by Robert Frost thinking it would open my world to bigger and better things. I skimmed through it once. It did nothing for me. I'm not sure I even have it anymore. I remember studying poetry in high school. I remember poetry as lines that rhymed or didn't make any sense to me. Except for Edgar Allen Poe, poetry always struck me as something too romantic and hard to understand. But one Wednesday night during our Living Presence Class, Mary read some poetry to all of us gathered there. And it was wonderful.

She began with some poems from a collection by Roger Housden. After she would read a poem, we would all sit quietly and reflect. We allowed our bodies and minds to absorb all the words. Then, if the feeling arose, we would discuss the poem, or have Mary read it again. This tweaked my interest in poetry. I went out and bought one of Housden's collections, *Ten Poems to Last a Lifetime*, and I love it. At first, some of the poems were still not hitting home. But, Housden's comments after each poem in his *Ten Poems* helped open me to all the wonderful feelings that can be brought out by poetry.

If you like to read, if you like to sit back and relax and read something that doesn't take days or hours to finish, try reading some poetry. I heard about this married couple who discovered a wonderful way to get the best out of their precious time together. After work each day, as a way of winding down from their busy work-a-day worlds, they each choose one of their favorite poems. And they read their poems to each other. Imagine that.

And if you think poetry is boring, or above your head, or too deep for you (like I used to think of poetry), try Housden's collections. I promise you, at least one of the poems will make you smile, and they all will make you think. Here are some collections by Roger Housden you might want to check out:

Ten Poems to Set You Free
Ten Poems to Open Your Heart
Ten Poems to Change Your Life
Ten Poems to Last a Lifetime
Dancing With Joy

You may want to begin your new world of reading poetry with the lovely poems on the next page. They were written by our own Namasté students. Who knows? You may soon be enjoying Rumi or Hafiz. Now, to find that book of poems by Robert Frost...

The 2007 fall retreat at Villa Maria brought about deep emotions and inspirational thoughts for some of the participants. Here are three beautiful examples of what came out of the retreat.

Meditations by Bob Croteau:

Meditation Saturday Morning

*Oh, it's you again, mind. How are you?
My, you have been busy. You must be tired,
Taking care of all that business, endless business.
We are in a good place here. We can rest here.
You have done such a good job, you deserve a rest.
You can settle down now, and rest.
It's okay, that noise was just a bump
Made by a friend; we are safe here.
You don't have to worry, we are among friends.
Just try to rest now.
It's okay. That was just the whoosh of a
Friend going by, you are safe here.
Just be still now. It is my turn to be aware.
We are among friends. We are all friends.
We are all one. I am all one.
I am at peace now.*

Meditation Saturday Noon

*My anger is slipping away.
What will I do without it?!
It protects me from those who would do me harm.
It helps me to get what I need from those who would
be greedy.
They laugh as they take, but then, that is all they then
have.
They cannot take and also be at peace.
They are sad and empty inside so they take more to fill
the emptiness.
I feel sad for them.
I feel compassion for them.
I feel love for them.
They find it hard to laugh at love.
It begins to soften their hearts as it is welcomed in,
even against their wills.
It begins to fill the void, and the pleasure of taking is
diminished.
I feel my anger slipping away.*

A Poem by Hernando Albarracin:

FAMILIARITY

*I meet a stranger
and I see myself.
Emotions? I am emotions.
Hello... Anger, Resentment, Joy.*

*I hear a stranger
and I see myself.
Feelings? I am feelings.
Hello... Inadequacy, Perfection, Peace.*

*I experience familiarity
Hello... Safety, Pride, Confidence.*

*Hello, Familiarity!
Hello, Smile!
Hello, Peace!
Hello, Home!*

*I turn to a stranger.
I see myself.*

*There is happiness
The heart is overjoyed,
Smiling nice and wide,
Bringing tears to my eyes.*

*The heart is open,
Inviting and accepting,
Wrapped in compassion,
Emitting light in all directions.*

*There are endless possibilities.
There is love.
There is peace.
There are no boundaries!*

*I meet a stranger,
I smile.
I hear a stranger,
I laugh.
I turn to the stranger,
You are no stranger!
I hug the stranger.
I kiss the stranger.*

*I sit with the stranger.
I am the stranger.*

Oh What a Moment.



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Namasté Yoga Center

Established in 1991

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Integrative Yoga Therapist

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Nancy Long, M.A., H.I.T.A.

Secretary:

Joann Svetlik

Newsletter:

Tina Biderman

topping:

¼ cup rolled oats

3 tablespoons brown sugar

¼ teaspoon cinnamon

1 tablespoon softened butter (or margarine)

Buttermilk Coffee Cake

One of the delicious recipes made for the Birthday Celebration by Becky Croteau adapted from *The New Vegetarian Epicure* by Anna Thomas:

1-2/3 cups whole wheat pastry flour

1/4 cup flax meal

4 teaspoons baking powder

pinch of salt

¼ to ½ cup sugar

½ teaspoon cinnamon

½ cup rolled oats

¼ cup finely chopped walnuts

1 large egg

1 cup buttermilk

(or 1 cup soymilk with 1 tablespoon cider vinegar)

3 tablespoons melted butter (or margarine or oil)

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries

Sift together the flour, flax meal, baking powder, salt, sugar, and ½ teaspoon of cinnamon. Stir in the ½ cup of rolled oats and the chopped walnuts.

In another bowl, beat the egg with the buttermilk, melted butter, and vanilla. Stir the wet mixture into the dry one, just until a batter is formed. If using fresh blueberries, rinse them and pat them dry. Stir the fresh or frozen blueberries gently into the batter.

Spoon the batter into a buttered 8-inch square baking pan. In a small bowl, combine all the topping ingredients and rub them together with your fingers until you have a crumbly mixture. Sprinkle this over the batter in the pan.

Bake the cake at 400 degrees for about 40 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Allow the cake to cool slightly, then cut it into squares to serve. Serves 9-12.