

## Let us Seek Out the Light

Dear Friends,

We have a new puppy at our house. I didn't want a dog. My heart had been broken by pets so many times, I just couldn't stand the thought of another heart-ache. But it was the only item on Nathaniel's Christmas list, so his dad and I went searching. When I met this puppy, a little fuzzy black poodle, my heart cracked open. His name is Mojo. He reminds me that puppies, like toddlers, find toilet paper irresistible. He reminds me to be present to the sheer joy of a winter walk. He makes me smile. He cracks my heart open.

It seems to me that these days that we all have to learn to let our hearts crack open. We have to take the risks that love and compassion demand. It is the only way through the fear that seems to dominate our culture at this time.

Last night, with my Artist's Way class, we did a ritual . We sat in the darkness -- the womb -- the cave -- the Winter earth. And we contemplated what it is that needs to be born through us. What is it that blocks the light? What is it that keeps us from giving birth to that which only we can name? Slowly we lit candles, naming that which we must bring into form, and naming the fear that keeps us in darkness.

I do believe that getting in touch with our creativity provides one answer. I believe that if we do not express our creativity through the good work we do, through artistic expression, through a healthy family or a healthy garden, creativity can be put to other uses. Like war.

I've been impressed by the creative responses to the rumors of war. Here in the Northwest, many people have been holding signs at freeway overpasses throughout Oregon and Washington, every Saturday from 11:00AM to 1:00 PM. Our Women in Black group joins the Peace Vigil in Bellingham weekly at 4:00, and the crowds continue to grow. Light is beamed into the dark places of our political and military decision-making on a daily basis. I listen to Democracy Now!, a nationally syndicated radio show out of New York. It's the stories I don't get in our local papers. I think it was Utah Phillips who once said, "We could be winning and not even know it!" Indeed, we wouldn't know it if we relied only on traditional news sources. At the end of this newsletter I'm sending the text of a flyer I received from a sister UCS student who was arrested on Martin Luther King's birthday for civil disobedience. She and a small group of others were arrested for blocking the gate to Westover Air Force Base in Chicopee, WA. They dressed in Moslem women's clothing, with signs saying, "Please do not bomb us," and distributed the flyer. Her words and her actions are a very creative response to these times. Here are her words:

"My conscience moved me to participate in this action as the most consistent keeping with the ideals and vision of the man whose life we celebrate. We were arrested and charged with "disturbing the peace", We suggested that we were trying to "disturb the war". We actually did close the gates on a day in which the big transport planes were being loaded to go overseas."

The text of Paki's flyer follows this newsletter.

Here's a little song I wrote for this dark time of year. We sang it at several musical gatherings, as a round. When I think of it now, I think of that circle of friends, singing together, laughing and talking, keeping away the darkness.

"On this cold Winter's night  
Let us seek out the light  
May our hearts be warmed by each other tonight."

Here's what's happening:

There's one more Saturday workshop - this Saturday. We'll be playing with harmonies. Come play with us! Then off to Oregon for concerts in Corvallis and Portland, and a keynote address and workshops at Grant College in Vancouver at what promises to be a very interesting women's conference. There's also a workshop in Pt. Townsend and a retreat on Shaw Island -- and a poetry and music night in Bellingham. And there are the ongoing private lessons. Here's a link, but I've also put it into the body of this newsletter for those who can access it better this way. Hope to see some of you at these events. I'll leave you with one of my favorite quotes:

"Why should we use our creative power...? Because there is nothing that makes people so generous, joyful, lively, bold and compassionate, so indifferent to fighting and the accumulation of objects and money." Brenda Ueland.

Peace,  
Linda

Linda's events:

<http://www.lindasongs.com/pages/itinerary.htm>

Lift Up Your Voice

Saturday workshops through January.

10 AM to Noon.

Call 360-734-7979 for information on these and future workshops.

Friday, January 31st  
CORVALLIS, OR

In Concert: Linda Allen, Jen and Kristin Allen-Zito  
Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis  
2945 NW Circle Boulevard  
7:30 PM \$10.00 at the door  
For more information - 541-757-9025 or 541-752-5218.

February 1, 2003  
VANCOUVER, WA  
Clark College Women's Conference  
Keynote Address:  
The Bridge Between Earth and Sky: The Spirituality of Voice  
Workshops:  
Like a Leaf on the Wind: Dancing with the Creative Spirit  
Linda Allen and her daughter, Kristin Allen-Zito, share their creative process in  
the crafting of  
songs. Where does the creative impulse come from? How do we set the stage?  
How do we deal  
with creative blocks?  
Open the Door!: A Natural Voice Workshop  
It's been said that if the eyes are the window of the soul, the voice is the door.  
Linda Allen and  
her daughter, Jen Allen-Zito, offer games, songs and exercises to free the  
authentic voice.

Contact: Angela Guess-Westbrooks  
360-546-9587 or [guesswes@vancouver.wsu.edu](mailto:guesswes@vancouver.wsu.edu)  
There are some wonderful workshops being offered on this day. Registration is  
just \$30.00 for the day.

Call 360-992-2905 for more information and brochures.  
Sunday, February 2nd

PORTLAND  
In concert: Linda Allen, Jen and Kristin Allen-Zito  
Bridgeport United Church of Christ  
621 NE 76th Ave.  
4:00 PM \$8.00 - \$12.00 sliding scale.

Tickets available at  
In Other Words Book Store, 3734 SE Hawthorne  
Annie Bloom Books,  
7834 SW Capitol Hwy.  
It's My Pleasure  
3104 NE 64th (off Sandy Blvd.)  
]For more information:  
[marylyn@easystreet.com](mailto:marylyn@easystreet.com) or 503-230-9416, 503-957-4748.

Saturday, February 22nd

PT.TOWNSEND, WA

Vocal Workshop: 9AM - Noon.

The Bridge Between Earth and Sky:

Reclaiming our Voices

is a multi-arts journey of discovery, open to all skill levels, in which we will explore the power of the natural voice. If you have ever felt silenced, this class offers a safe environment to experience your voice and its connection to your body and soul. Your empowered voice may then come into service to speak out for justice, nonviolence, and peace on behalf of all our relations who have no voice. The fee for the 3-hour workshop is \$40.00.

For registration information please call All My Relations, 360-344-4267, or email [info@allmyrelations.org](mailto:info@allmyrelations.org).

Saturday, February 22nd

PT. TOWNSEND

All My Relations' Family Reunion Concert

All My Relations first Family Reunion of 2003 will feature Linda Allen in concert.

The music and

original songs of Linda Allen weave humor, politics, insight and vision into a reflective tapestry of

human experience. Doors open at 7:00 PM, with the concert starting promptly at 7:30 at the All

My Relations' Songhouse, 443 N. Jacob Miller Rd., Port Townsend, WA. Tickets for the evening

concert are \$8.00, and are available at the Songhouse.

For information call: 360-344-4267.

Visit the All My Relations website to find out more about the many activities of this great group.

[www.allmyrelations.org](http://www.allmyrelations.org)

Sunday, March 2

BELLINGHAM

Waking Up: An Evening of Poetry and Music

Literature Live series.

with Linda Allen and Munira Judith Avinger

Village Books. 1210 11 Street

5:00 PM Free

For more information: 360-671-2626

Visit their website: [www.villagebooks.com](http://www.villagebooks.com) Canadian poet Munira Judith Avinger and Bellingham

songwriter Linda Allen welcome the advent of Spring as a reminder to awaken to

the world. It is a  
time to take inventory of our inner resources to face the challenges of the outer  
realities of these  
times. It is up to us to make a difference.  
Songs, poems, and stories to awaken the heart and ignite our creativity!

Poet Munira Judith Avinger was born in the US and moved to the Eastern  
Townships of Quebec in 1992. Munira's first book, *The Empty Bowl / Le Bol  
Vide* was published by Borealis Press in December, 2000. Her second book,  
*Lifting The Veil / Soulever Le Voile*, was released by Borealis Press in  
October of 2001.

Linda Allen is a songwriter, performer, Expressive Arts educator and Natural  
Voice practitioner. She's  
released six recordings of her original songs and two songbook collections of  
Northwest songs. She's  
served as Washington's resident songwriter, and is currently a doctoral student.  
April 11 - 13:  
SHAW ISLAND, WA  
A WEEKEND RETREAT: Singing By Water

"The voice is the barometer of the spirit. To work with the voice is to work with  
the spirit." -- Sufi  
saying.

I have always known that when I found my voice, I found my soul. It has been my  
passion in my life  
and my work to give voice to those who have no voice through my songs, and to  
empower others to  
find their voice.

We'll journey together to find that place where the voice hides and let it free. We'll  
coax, cajole,  
bribe and entice it forth through a variety of playful exercises, song-sharing,  
journaling, art play,  
meditation and chocolate!

We'll leave time for rest and renewal as we explore this beautiful Island setting.  
And we'll listen to the  
voices of the water as it takes us deeper into our own soul's purpose.

Sponsored by:  
SongandWord  
P.O. Box 860

Ph:360-468-3964  
info@songandword.com

### PRIVATE LESSONS

The garden office is now complete and ready for visitors! So if you need help finding your voice, physically or creatively, please give Linda a call at 360-734-7979. Lessons in songwriting and beginning guitar also are available. \$45.00 per lesson.

Linda Allen  
October Rose Productions  
360-734-7979  
<http://www.lindasongs.com>

Paki's flyer:

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

We are here today inviting YOU to join us in honoring the life of Doctor Martin Luther King, to end poverty, racism and MILITARISM.

We speak on behalf of the innocent children women and men of Iraq, the faces you may never see, the lives you may never know.

\* If we continue the war on Iraq, the U.N. estimates that the nutritional status of some 3.03 million people countrywide will be dire and that they will require therapeutic feeding This consists of 2.03million severely and moderately malnourished children under 5 and one million pregnant women"

\* Some 900,000 Iraqi refugees requiring assistance, of which 100,000 will be in need of immediate assistance.

\* An estimated 2 million people will require some assistance with shelter.

Since the existing sanctions-induced humanitarian situation in Iraq has produced a population in which

16 million innocent civilians, children women and men (60% of the population) "have no other means with which to provide for other essential requirements" other than monthly government food rations.

You have within you the power to join us in saying:  
**WAR IS NOT THE ANSWER!**