

# The Kindred Spirits Newsletter Fall 2005



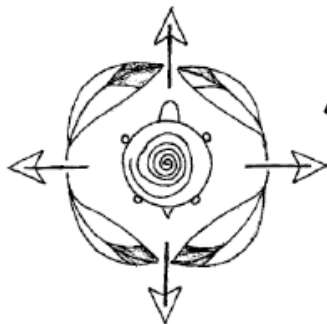
Hello, Kindred Spirits old and new, near and far. Welcome to the **Fall 2005 Kindred Spirits Newsletter!** Here you'll find news and notes, announcements, and sharing from the heart. The purpose of this newsletter is to help keep us connected across the months and miles.

Thank you to everyone who contributed this time around. I look forward to hearing from the rest of you when the spirit moves you. Remember, this is **OUR** newsletter...you have a say!



Love, Vandy

## Announcements:



# ANCIENT WISDOM SACRED GROUND

**APRIL 24-29, 2006  
EAST ZION, UTAH**

*Come join us among the red cliffs next to Zion National Park for a five-day journey to explore and experience ceremonies for deepening our connection with animals and the sacred in our lives.*

## **OUR GATHERING FEATURES:**

- Experiential workshops and ceremonies
- Drumming, indigenous songs, and dancing
- Informal talks by glowing campfires under the starlit desert sky
- Lodging at Clear Creek Ranch
- Close proximity to Best Friends Animal Sanctuary and Anasazi ruins

**For more information or to request a brochure, please contact:**

The RiverWind Foundation  
307-734-0838  
email: riverwind@wyoming.com  
www.theriverwindfoundation.org

## **The Retreat Faculty Includes:**

- **James Medicine Tree**, ceremonialist, pipeholder, and author of, *"The Way of the Pipe."*
- **Brenda Edwards Domyan**, ceremonialist, steward of Anasazi ruins, poet, and author of, *"Voices in the Canyon."*
- **David Bearclaw Abrams**, Cherokee elder, ceremonialist, and Sun Dancer.
- **Alan Willes**, drummer and indigenous song keeper.  
....and more.

**\$795 paid in full by March 17, 2006; \$855 if paid afterwards. This fee includes five-nights lodging, meals, and all program activities.**

**Registration is limited and expected to fill early.**

Janet Woodland would like to announce the arrival of her new Granddaughter, Cameron Lea!

October 11, 2005



Cameron Lea,  
Bienvenido a la luz, Chiquita! By the way, your fairy name is Ellewyn, or so the fairies told me earlier today just before your mom arrived at the hospital to deliver you. So you come into the world already being different, because your grandmother (Nani) talks to fairies—no, worse—they also talk to me! Your being born in Texas, and me here in Wyoming, is the sweetest of all possible agonies. There's the ecstasy and relief of knowing you are finally and safely here and perfect in every way, and then there's the torture of not being able to hold you...

🌸 To put my cheek against your buttery new skin

🌸 To hear the sweet baby music coming from your mouth and listen for your almost imperceptible breathing as you sleep

🌸 To smell the scent that only new life carries

🌸 To kiss the soft folds of baby fat at your knees and wrists

🌸 To brush my fingers over your dark downy hair

🌸To marvel at the perfection of your  
impossibly tiny fingers, toes, ears and  
nose

🌸To watch your little rosebud lips pucker  
as you dream of nursing

🌸To experience the physical miracle and  
reality of you

🌸To pour the ocean of love from my  
grandmother's heart into yours

🌸To whisper to you my certainty of your  
connection with all that is, has been and  
ever will be—all of your relations..

❖The frigid winds that blow across the  
Tetons and the hot winds of the Sahara

❖The clear cold waters that flow  
between the banks of the Snake River and  
those that dissipate into the white sands  
of a Caribbean beach

❖The moon and stars glimpsed from the  
deck of a boat in Manzanillo Bay and  
through the canapé of the branches of the  
massive redwood trees along the Northern  
California coast

❖The pair of lions sunning on a flat  
rock on the African plain and the beluga  
whales surfacing in icy Alaskan waters

❖The Dalai Lama and the autistic child

❖The fiercest wildfire and the flame of  
a single candle lighting the faces of two  
lovers

All these—the fire, earth, water, air, the animals, the humans--are your relations, with whom you are infinitely and inextricably connected and interdependent. Your brother has an innate understanding of this, and if I have a legacy to leave you, it will be that you, too, will understand the nature and reality of your connection with everything.

My wish for you is that, in your walk through this life, your heart will lead the way. That your seed of selfhood will shine brightly within you, igniting your passion and creativity. That you will live in awareness of each day's enchantment and miracles. That you will be steadfast in your authenticity. That you will know in your core that love and fear cannot abide in the same instant, and you will choose love. That you will see and honor the sacred in every aspect of creation. That you will know each day that you are held in the arms of God and you are never ever alone.

I will hold you in my heart and mind until I see you in three days (!), and whenever I'm not with you.

I love you all the way to the moon and back,

Nani

## **Congratulations, Janet!**

Tim would like to remind everybody to share a bit about themselves in the KS Community section of the RiverWind website. Also, please feel free to share any writings in the KS Writings section.

### **From Alan Willes:**

Hi family,

Not much going on with me lately. Things have been very slow in the drum sales business the last month. That has let me get started on a drum that I dreamed about many years ago. It is a walnut drum and I've now started the carving on the frame. So far I've roughed out a bull and cow elk, some trees and an eagle with a big fish in it's talons. It will take a long time to carve. Maybe a year or so. We'll see. The dream was to carve an extremely beautiful walnut drum with carving, gold and other types of inlay work. I want it to be extremely beautiful. It took me a long time to find the quantity of walnut. I found it about 2 years ago and finally glued the frame about six months ago. It will be a long project keeping me out of trouble.

Lucinda and I are traveling to NY for Thanksgiving. While there we will visit Karen and hopefully, Alina from last years retreat here in Jackson. It will be great to see them. Other than that, all is quiet on the home front. Much love to everyone and if I get to your area, I will certainly visit.

Alan [awilles@wyom.net](mailto:awilles@wyom.net)



### **From Ann Marie Hardcastle:**

2005 Christmas

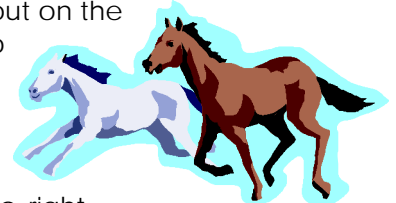
Happy Holidays to you and yours! I hope this letter finds you well and happy. The letter is coming early this year as last year it was so long and close to the holidays that I think it best to write early for a little more free time to enjoy the letter. Perhaps I will even write twice a year once before the holidays and another one 6 months later in April/May to keep in touch.



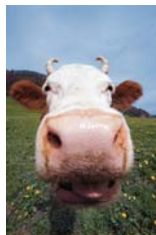
The cats are doing well. I still have the 5 cats that I mentioned last year. They are so much fun and loving. They all sleep with me and go outside briefly in the morning to help feed the horses and do other ranch chores. They are the special icing on the cake that makes life enjoyable. They have come together nicely as they were separate rescue cats.

The horses have come together nicely in fact so nice that they have separation anxiety. I have never had this problem until I got a place of my own. I think at boarding stables there are so many horses that it helps to alleviate the problem. I have never known of anyone to have this problem when boarding, but my neighbors do that have 2-3 horses, too. Montana has the hardest time being away from Oro Blanco. Montana is a rescue horse so not knowing much about his history except that he was not treated kindly by people he has gotten very dependent on Oro. He doesn't like being away from him. Horses are herd animals so this is natural, but can create problems if you need to take them out for separate rides, etc.

I have friends that I ride with twice weekly and we have enjoyed the beautiful trails in the area and the changing of the seasons. Mike and I take the horses out on the weekends. Having 3 horses of my own and place of my own to keep them keeps me very busy. I had my very first ever trail ride close to the ocean at Pebble Beach. Oro Blanco and Buck went out. We stayed away from the water as it was a rocky shoreline, but it was good exposure for them to see the water. I want to take them to Moss Landing Beach which is sandy so they can go right along the shoreline next to the water and perhaps even in it. Rescue horses and friends' horses have stayed here this year, too. Buck has had a few of his horse friends over that he was at horse shows with and with during training.



One of the highlights of the year has been the opportunity to cow sit. I do a lot of pet/house sitting for friends, but I have never taken care of cows before. They were kept down the street at the Carmel Valley Trail and had lessons working with the cows. It was a lot of fun. The highlight was Oro together. Oro had never been around wasn't scared and that he would follow that on our first time with him the four of competition. The next week Oro worked cut a cow from the herd which he had the line and gate like he had the week before. Most cow work is done with quarter hoes and Oro is a Peruvian Paso. I have never seen that breed work cows before. At first people were thinking and joking about how easy it would be to beat us and then after seeing him the joke was who needs a quarter horse let's get a Peruvian Paso.



I went to my very first horse show this year where I showed Buck in reining level B, trail, western pleasure and equitation. Buck was shown professionally as well as in amateur classes by Mike and I. He did very well even though showing is very nerve wracking for me. He won a special award for being Western Horse of the year as he is young and had to learn himself (be trained) how to do things for show and cows, etc. and then Mike and I had to learn on him and we have very different styles of riding plus we had never ridden this way before - only trail riding. When you are over 50 years they joke and say it is the Beyer Aspirin class, however I must say it was for me and I am still forty something. It is hard work and the body agrees. Going down the fence with a cow leaves you breathless from the work as well as how fast and quick it is.

So now you are wondering just how ancient I am and now you will find out. My 2 best friends from high school and their husbands came for a visit over a long weekend. It was the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary from high school this year and we all couldn't make the reunion so we had a mini one here. It was a lot of fun. We all agreed though we are glad to be out of high school.



I am still doing all the animal work I mentioned last year. The highlights of the work this year have been to be at Best Friend Animal Sanctuary where I transported special needs animals to them from Animal Friends, a local organization and worked at the Best Friends especially loving the special needs cat wards and bunnies where I was able to be with Tony the rabbit and help him pass to the other side. Tony was an original bunny at Best Friends and very old. In Colorado I was blessed to see a wolf sanctuary and I am helping a friend here in establishing a wolf sanctuary locally. While in Rome, Italy it was a highlight to see a cat sanctuary that specializes in special needs and feral cats at ancient Roman ruin sites. This sanctuary is affiliated with Best Friends from Utah. Best Friends does profound work all over the world with all forms of animal life even helping out on site at the hurricane and earthquake tragedies. Meeting Kindred Spirits through this work is especially meaningful. It has been a joy to foster many animals once again. Neighbor and friends children love to come and see the kittens. Animal Friends Rescue Project had their first major fund raising campaign this year and I was asked to help out. It was hard for me even though I whole heartedly believe in the cause. I don't think of myself as a fund raiser or sales person so it was a challenge for personal growth.

The wild geese came again this year and hopefully they will return soon. What a joy it is to have them around. I am still enjoying the abundance of wildlife in this area from critters in the ocean, to butterflies, bird, lions, etc.

Most of the landscaping and patio work are complete so I was able to entertain both inside and outside this year after July 3. Outside is the most enjoyable for me as it is nice to have pleasant weather and flowers that attract butterflies, hummingbirds etc. Seeing the horses graze is relaxing for everyone plus it is fun to play crochet, horse shoes and ball games. It has been 6 years since I have been able to entertain. I joined a gourmet cooking group and we get together 4 times a year once a year at each members home. I planted a garden this year, as well as fruit trees, citrus trees, and herbs. It has been over 20 year since I have lived at a place that had good enough weather to plant a garden. It has been fun to pick things to eat fresh and cook with. Neighbors and friends have enjoyed the organic produce, too.



Besides enjoying company I have enjoyed the opportunity to travel. I love to travel, but haven't been able to much for several years for several reasons. However, this year I have gone to Utah for the animal work and to see my Dad's side of the family for our annual reunion, to



Colorado to see my Mom's side of the family as well as the wolf sanctuary, Italy/Spain where the wonderful cat sanctuary was. The trips to Italy/Spain were sacred to me and I was especially blessed to be in Assisi, Italy known for St. Francis the patron Saint of Animals. Those trips have reawakened an interest in language, art, history and a desire to travel more of Europe. We took our horse Buck up to Northern Calif. right at the Oregon border to visit with 4 sets of horse friends and family. Buck got to be with the man who bred and raised

him. He was with his Mom and all of her children. He was her first born and he has a half sister and two half brothers. After the first of the year I leave for Egypt and if the travel plans work out South Africa and Victoria Falls.

Well good bye for now. May you all be richly blessed this coming year.  
Love,

Ann Marie



**From Brenda and**

1. Prayer Flag Reminder. This is just a friendly reminder for those of you who have not yet sent your piece of material for our prayer flag. I have put all the pieces together that I have received thus far and I must say that our Prayer Flag is beautiful. If you have any questions, just contact me via telephone at 435-644-5620; or by email [brenda@thunderpaws.com](mailto:brenda@thunderpaws.com); or snail mail at P.O. Box 237, Kanab, UT 84741. Also, if you have your piece ready, you can just mail it to the P.O. Box.

2. Voices in the Canyon. I have finally self-published my collection of verse which is entitled Voices in the Canyon. For those of you interested in a signed copy or copies, just contact me. The price is \$10 per copy which includes shipping.

Vandy, please make adjustments where you feel necessary. Thank you for your commitment to this newsletter. How's is your self-publishing coming along?

As always, big hugs and lots of smiles and  
Bren



PS - Hi (Lenny



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## **Baby J's Story—From the Best Friends Newsletter**

A quick happy ending

Wow – that was fast! Baby J went from being a seemingly lifeless body on the road to a happy kitten in a new person's arms in just a couple of weeks! Here's how it happened.

**Lenny Domyan**, who looks after Best Friends' pet cemetery, Angels Rest, was driving on Highway 89 in Utah. He passed a motionless little body on the road – a ball of black fur. A kitten had been run over – how terrible! He knew there was nothing he could do; he could see from his car that the kitten's days were over. But, since he works at a pet cemetery, he values giving animals dignified burials. So he pulled over so he could give this little nameless one a respectful farewell.

When Lenny lifted the little guy in his arms, though, he found he was faintly breathing!

He rushed the kitten to the nearest clinic – Kanab Veterinary Hospital, where Dr. Kathy Backus looked at him right away. She found he had a head trauma, and was bleeding from the nose. She kept him for two days, tending him and looking after him as he went from a lifeless ball of fur to a woozy, but very alive kitten.

Since he had no home, Lenny called Best Friends to see whether there was an opening for a very small kitten. There was! So that was Baby J's next stop. "Uncle Lenny would come to see him," said Lenny. "He was batting at things now, and would go for the hair on your head." The little tyke's head was still bobbing strangely, but he was getting stronger every day.

Then Lenny went on a one-week vacation he'd scheduled long ago. And when he got back, the first thing he did was check on Baby J. But wait – where was he? Anybody seen him?

Baby J had fully recovered and was already adopted! He'd been looking and feeling well enough to go to a mobile adoption event in Las Vegas. When Christopher Warner met him there, he practically bought out the pet supply store for the little guy. You've never seen a kitten go home with so many new toys! The packages that followed Baby J and his new dad to the car were about a hundred times the little kitten's size.



So that's what you call a quick turnaround. From flat on the road to a new dad with a palace of kitten furniture – Baby J is one happy little fellow. And boy, is Lenny glad he stopped his car!

**From Arlene  Dreste:**

Lots of things going on in my life, as usual, lots of traveling back and forth to NY, in fact, am heading there this weekend.

I haven't written any poetry since I returned from Kenya, but I have started my book finally.

Have been having lots of trouble with my hip, but I don't let it keep me down. Life is good! Love and hugs to all.

--Mama Bear

P.S. I neglected to mention that I just celebrated a very special anniversary on 8 Nov. It has been 9 years since I have been drug free. Just wanted to share that milestone with my family.

Thanks. Love ya, Arlene

**From Tim O'Donoghue:**

**Who Are We?**



We are those who live lives mostly undiscovered. For we are those who know not the larger realm within which we function and derive our knowledge. Our knowledge is ultimately our own feelings, hunches, intuitions, impressions, and realizations of the inner mechanics and processes of the mind, body, and spirit. Our spirit is a wonderful cohesion of simultaneous factors working in unison to provide us with a perceptual world, a reality of our own making. Our bodies tell us what we are thinking, our thoughts tell us what our spirit is guiding us to and what our ego, that temporary but important aspect of our human existence, is carving into our perceptual reality. The ego sculpts our daily lives into experiences that reflect our loves and fears. Our daily lives are filled with infinitesimal to extraordinary opportunities to overcome our fears and fill the resultant void with increasing amounts of love, the energy of the higher realities of existence,

the existence our souls strive for and the human spirit guides us for.

Who are we? We are an eddy in the flow of universal energy. A lowering of the vibratory rate of a higher self, a higher plane of existence, in order to bring about a denser, serial experience that more simply lets us examine and reflect upon the cause and effect relationships of our thoughts and actions. We leave the free flowing river of energy by slowing down our rate of vibration. We change the frequency with which we are most conscious to a lower frequency, and this lower or denser frequency becomes the manifestation of physical matter, our physical bodies. Our thoughts and feelings exist at frequencies higher than the physical body and higher still is our individual spirit or soul. Higher above our individualized self is the unified self where our beingness exists as one with all other beings: a collective conscious or superconscious. The higher truth of who we are is that we are all one, unified at the higher rates of vibration, the higher levels of energy, the energy of love, where fear doesn't exist. Fear is the separator, the energy that lowers the soul from its unity with all there is towards denser existences, where the fear can be more fully experienced, understood, and overcome. Fears create the blocks from higher energies, fears create walls such as the Berlin Wall that separated peoples that were the same. Overcoming fears bring down the walls, allowing unification to occur.

Who are we? We are appendages of God. We are his hands and feet, her eyes and ears. We are his servants yet also her equal, for God is in everyone as God is everywhere. We are God's co-creators of life and the experiences that life provides. We are unconditionally loved and perfect in the eyes of God, for God is perfection. We only need to live with this remembered: love and be loved. In doing so, we will have halted the source of fear and watched fear wither away. We will raise our energy together and create a reality that we will consciously exist in, a reality defined by love, self-and mutual-acceptance and understanding, and equality. For the larger truth of equality is understood when we know that we are all the same.

We are all one, unified by love, and growing together towards the unification of our souls with God.

From Vandy Shrade:



Hello KS Family,

I can't believe it's almost Thanksgiving already! I feel like I hit the ground running when I returned from Wyoming and haven't stopped yet. I'm acting on some insights I received over the past two KS retreats...Now, in addition to writing, I'm also training to be an Environmental Volunteer (check it out at [www.evols.org](http://www.evols.org), if you're interested). I'll be bringing nature into classrooms, and kids out onto the land. I'll take them on hikes to the mountains ("hills" for you Wyoming people), onto grasslands, and out to the tidepools at the beach. I'll teach them about the seashore, California Native Americans, local ecology, nature in their neighborhood, and

earthquakes. And, they encourage us to bring our own flavor to our teaching, which is really cool.

In December I'm taking a Humane Education workshop to learn whether this might be an avenue I want to pursue. The International Institute for Humane Education ([www.iihed.org](http://www.iihed.org)) defines Humane Education this way...Humane education examines the challenges facing our planet, from human oppression and animal exploitation to materialism and ecological degradation. It explores how we might live with compassion and respect for everyone: not just our friends and neighbors, but all people; not just our own dogs and cats, but all animals; not just our own homes, but also the earth itself, our ultimate home. Humane educators inspire people to live examined, intentional lives so that what they do today helps the planet, animals and all people tomorrow.

Anyway, we'll see if it's something I want to do. If it sounds interesting, check out their web site to see if they're offering some workshops in your area.

Enough about me. I hope you are all well and happy and you're finding (or making) time to let Spirit into your life.

Lots of love,

Vandy