



DECEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

President's Message

Doug VanOrsdall

Life Goes On

As the days grow shorter and the holidays draw near, this time of year has always felt magical—full of hope, renewal, and anticipation for what lies ahead. Yet, this year, 2024, feels different, doesn't it? Instead of the familiar warmth, some of us are navigating uncharted waters, facing personal and collective challenges, that leave us wondering what has happened to the light we once felt so clearly.

On a national level, the atmosphere seems incredibly heavy with division. The recent election has shaken the foundation of what many of us thought we understood about our country. Regardless of which side of the divide we stand on, the uncertainty about the future of democracy in the United States, weighs on us all. Globally, the struggles in places like Palestine and Ukraine, remind us that suffering knows no borders.

Closer to home, we are often reminded that everyone around us is carrying a burden, many of which we may never see. Someone may be mourning the loss of a loved one, the loss of their special pet, adjusting to a life-changing health diagnosis, or struggling to find joy in the face of overwhelming challenges. Others may simply be seeking connection or meaning in a world that feels increasingly uncertain. Though the specifics differ, the truth is that we all walk our own paths of hardship, healing, and hope.

But here's the thing: despite everything going on around us, **life goes on**. It goes on through the laughter of conversations around a shared table at Thanksgiving, the unexpected kindness of a stranger, our pet(s) greeting us at the door, if we've been gone 5 minutes or 5 hours, or the beauty of a sunrise after a sleepless night. Life doesn't wait for us to be ready for its changes; it moves forward, indifferent to our resistance,

(Continued on page 2)



UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

Dec 1.....Craig Eister
Dec 8.....Donna Corso
Dec 15.....Pam Keyser
Dec 29.....Kim May

**SLC is pet friendly.
Leashes please...
(Rabies shots current)**

giving us opportunities to learn, grow, and love amid all the chaos. Through all of this, I have come to realize the incredible power of gratitude. Even in challenging moments, I am deeply thankful for the blessings that surround me. I am eternally grateful for my family—the relatives bound to me by blood, my husband who is my life force and greatest inspiration, our nine beloved dogs who fill our home with life and love, and my chosen family at Spiritual Light Center of Franklin. These relationships sustain me, each one, a unique source of strength and joy. I am grateful for our closest friends who live so far away from us geographically. I am grateful for the lessons my mother-in-law has taught me during the years of sharing our home together—lessons in resilience, patience, gratitude for things others may take for granted, and the inner strength she maintains as a woman. I am grateful for Barbara, someone who has become an adopted mother of sorts, who always calls me, “just to check in” like my Mom

used to do. It's in those conversations that she offers me words of encouragement, the challenge to look at things from a different perspective and sharing her wisdom in every conversation we have. I am grateful for all the women in my life—for the strength and independence they display, especially with all the challenges and changes, we as a collective nation, are facing now. I treasure the simple, but profound moments I share with my husband every evening, as we hold hands and reflect on our day, grateful for yet another day spent together. And I am grateful for the strength that sustains me, allowing me to care for those who depend on me.

In moments like these, I turn to a deeper understanding—a metaphysical truth that offers both comfort and perspective. Change, no matter how unwelcome, is the essence of life itself. The universe is ever evolving, and so are we. Like the cycles of the moon, we too experience phases of fullness and emptiness. And just as the moon's light wanes, it inevitably grows again. It's in these challenging times that we are called to step into the power of the present moment; just as my 96 year old mother-in-law does, at this chapter in her life living in an assisted living home. She lives without fear of the past or worry for the future. No matter what type of day she may be having, she always displays a huge smile when my husband goes to visit her. I have witnessed the upbeat sound in her trembling voice, when she sees him walk through the door to her new space, and she says with all her force, “Hi Craig, I'm so glad to see you!” While her memory may not recount all the chapters of her life, she teaches us something profound: the present moment is all we truly have, and life goes on for all of us.

So, how do we find hope when everything around us feels different or uncertain? We do so by remembering that hope isn't a grand gesture; it's found in the

(Continued on page 3)

INDOOR YARD SALE

DATE: Saturday, December 14th

**PLACE: Robert Carpenter Center
1288 Georgia Rd. Franklin, NC**

TIME: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.



100% of proceeds go towards helping
the shelter animals of
Macon County.

A 501c3 nonprofit organization

Quality & Gently Used Household & Outdoor Items

*If you would like to donate items, please
contact Romaine at (910) 478-5491.*

To make a monetary donation, please use the QR code.





Wear bright colors on your woodland jaunts.

Gun season for **deer** is from Nov. 30th until Jan 1. (It's either sex for archery.) **Bear** season resumes from Dec. 14th to Jan. 1. Coyote and feral hogs may be hunted all year. Be visible when in the woods!

(President's message, continued from page 2)

small, quiet acts of love and resilience. It's holding a loved one's hand, even when it trembles. It's in the lighting of a single candle in a dark room. It's in reading the pages of a book written by a close friend. It's in showing up for life, at every single moment, even when we don't feel ready. Life goes on—not despite its challenges, but because of them.

Each tear we shed waters the seeds of compassion within us. Each heaviness in our heart expands our capacity to love. Each struggle along the way teaches us to cherish what truly matters. This season, though it may be different from other seasons, let's hold space for all our emotions—grief, anger, fear, and hope. Let us remember that the human spirit, like the universe itself, is vast and resilient. Though the road ahead may be uncertain, we walk it together, carrying the light of love, faith, and the promise of life's renewal.

Because, after all, life goes on. And so do we.

Much Love and Vast Blessings To Everyone,

Doug

Rockin' Round the Tree

PKKeyser

Bring down boxes from the dirty attics above
Full of decorations, a trove of recollected love!
Oh, the treasured tchotchkes we embrace.
Handled with care, and smiles upon our face!

The smell of cookies fills the merry air
And we cluster round the tree with flair
Each glass bauble a memory so clear
Of holidays past, which we all clasp so dear.

Now the stars atop. Center place of glory!
We sit and gab, telling a familiar story.
Wow, doesn't the time seem to freeze
While we're designing new memories with ease.

The tree sparkles; a loving beacon bright
Guiding family and friends through a long night
Symbolizing joy, hope and, of course, peace.
And our love is ever lasting, never to cease.



Our Vision

The Spiritual Light Center is a peaceful and joyful fellowship of individuals, centered in love, dedicated to the God within, and honoring the many paths to truth.





Thanksgiving with our Spiritual Family and Friends



*Wear gratitude
like a cloak and it
will feed every
corner of your life.*
Rumi



Poinsettia Care

by Master Gardiner Sue Ditch

Place your poinsettia near a warm, sunny window, but don't let it touch the glass. Check the soil every day, and water when it's dry to touch. Don't allow the soil to dry out completely or remain soaking wet.

If you want to enjoy your poinsettia for another season, stop watering and store in a cool, dry place when the leaves fall off.

In the spring, water it again and cut the stems back to 6 inches tall. Keep the stems pinched back, as the new leaves begin to form, to make a short compact plant.

From early October until blooming starts, place the plant in a dark closet for 12 hours each night, say from 8PM to 8AM. Keep the plant in a sunny window or under grow lights for the other 12 hours of the day, and you should be rewarded with bright beautiful blooms.

Keep poinsettias well out of reach of pets and toddlers who might be tempted to treat them as food. Poinsettias are not lethal poisons, but they are severely irritating to stomach, and a few nibbles could result in a trip to the emergency room.



Join us on Tuesday, Dec. 24th at 5 PM for an all inclusive holiday candlelight service with our spiritual family, followed by a bit of frivolity in the Fellowship Hall on National Eggnog Day. A Chinese gift exchange is planned (one gift under \$10), music and fellowship. Please bring finger food snacks to share. (BYOB if you wish something other than water, coffee, tea or hot chocolate.)



Grammy's Kitchen

By PKKeyser (thePam)

Her stove hums a peaceful tune,
As Nana does magic with her spoon!
And flour besprinkles the air like snow
Tested recipes passed down, faces aglow.
Nutmeg, peppermint, and cinnamon dance!
While we watch, fully in grammy's trance.
Snowmen and star cookies so bright
All baked in grandma's love and light!
A wooden rolling pin, a maestros' staff
Produces a banquet, times one and a half.
Laughter abound, yarns, lore and tales shared
As delectable scents satiate the air.
Kith and friends flock around the smorgasbord
No one goes hungry or is lonely or ignored.
In this galley, love's the main ingredient, the key
We're toasting to a holiday full of bliss
For you and for me!

Save the Date...or Not !!

No Wonder We Get Stressed

When it comes to holidays and observances, December just might be the busiest month of the year.

Between the first day of the month and the very last, you've got Advent (12/1—12/24), the Winter Solstice (12/21), Christmas Eve (12/24), Christmas Day (12/25), Hanukkah (12/25—1/2), Kwanzaa (12/26—1/1), Boxing Day (12/26), New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

And that's just the beginning.

Then there's National Cookie Day (12/4), Eggnog Day (12/24), Ugly Sweater Day (12/20), and Bathtub Party Day (12/5), along with more socially significant days dates like Giving Tuesday (12/3), Pearl Harbor Day (12/7), Nobel Prize Day (12/10), and Wreaths Across America (12/14).

You'll also find December holidays for just about everything else seasonal you can think of, including gingerbread, candy canes, fruitcake and even re-gifting your old Christmas presents (12/19).

In all there are 248 specially designated days in December—rather extraordinary for a month that is only 31 days long. So whether you celebrate National Ding-a-Ling Day on Dec.12th, National Christmas Movie Marathon Day on Dec.23rd, or National Resolution Planning Day on the 30th, we wish you a blessed, joyous and love filled month.

Volunteer Opportunities at SLC

Are you comfortable with computers? Consider helping with music and recording the service on an occasional Sunday. Other volunteer opportunities include facilitating, decorating and setting up for covered dish events, being a greeter on Sundays, or being on a committee to help with the occasional minor maintenance tasks that arise..



Newsletter Submissions Wanted

This is your newsletter. Help us to improve, be current, and shape it into something you look forward to receiving every month. We are looking for member generated articles, poems, quotes, photos, recipes, tips, event announcements and anything else that you feel might be of general interest.

Looking forward to hearing from you at
slcfranklin@frontier.com

Our Mission Statement

**We are developing our highest
selves by continuous sharing of
spiritual ideas in an environment
of unconditional love and respect
for others.**

FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance on 9/30/24.....\$ 8116.25

Income.....1704.50

Expense..... 709.00

Balance on 10/31/24.....\$ 9111.75



The **Spiritual Light Center** is located at 80 Heritage Hollow Drive in Franklin (28734) right behind the Gazebo Restaurant in Heritage Hollow. 828-369-3065

slcfranklin@frontier.com www.spirituellightcenter.com

If you would like to contribute to SLC, we have a PayPal account, <https://tinyurl.com/SLC-donate>. This link takes you to a page where you can easily donate one time or make a recurring donation.