The organization for Professional Astrology

THE CAREER ASTROLOGER The Newsletter for Professional Astrology

OPAastrology.com

THE PRESIDENT’S REPORT

BY ALEXANDRA KARACOSTAS

As I write this report, Jupiter, Venus, Mars and Pluto are in a grand earth trine enjoying a celestial dance. This is treating OPA kindly. After a couple of years of restructuring and making significant changes on our board, OPA has once again nestled comfortably into what it is; a small, but influential organization dedicated to the advancement and excellence of astrology students and professionals.

As Pluto continues its journey through OPA’s first house, and transiting Saturn marches back and forth over our Progressed MC at 29 Libra and Progressed Sun at 23 Libra, we continue to grow while we endeavor to meet the needs of our membership and professional community. Jupiter’s benevolent influence in our fourth house has assisted us in expanding and establishing our organization in new and meaningful ways.

One of our new ventures includes OPA’s new Certification Program for Professional Astrologers. It is a unique hands on approach, holistic and comprehensive! Learn more about it on our new and improved web-site.

Equally significant is OPA’s new Elections Committee, dedicated to our upcoming board elections this spring. We ask each and every one of you to vote! The Elections Committee will be sending out more information shortly. This is your organization and you have a voice. Please make it count. This is vital to our democratic process. We appreciate and thank you for your participation! It is a privilege and honor to serve OPA.

One of the essential parts of keeping our organization alive and healthy is maintaining our membership. This means the renewal of membership dues. If your membership has lapsed, please consider rejoining today. This is easy to do on our web-site. We benefit from and need one another.

We are also asking for volunteers to help man OPA’s table during the five day long conference at UAC. It is a wonderful way to network, catch up with old friends, make new ones and have fun! If you are interested in more information and would like to help, please contact Maurice Fernandez, our Community Outreach Director. Note there is a new candidate for Publications and Products Director. It is wonderful that two OPA members threw their “hats in the ring” to participate in this election.

As an OPA member please participate in this election by confirming your choice for OPA’s Board.

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OPA is having an Election of Officers. The election will be set up with Survey Monkey.

Members who have paid OPA dues by April 14th will be confirmed as voters. If you get a notice from Christine Ferraro, OPA Membership Secretary, regarding your dues being delinquent or up for renewal in March or April, please renew so you can vote!

All paid members of OPA will receive an e-mail on April 21 with the link to Survey Monkey. The voting will close on May 18 at 11:59 pm. A report of the voting results will be submitted to the Board at their regular monthly meeting on June 4. An e-mail to all members will follow.

Last year’s officers are running for positions, but not always the position they held last year. Read carefully and check out the candidates below. We have two candidates for OPA President and the Community Outreach Director. Note there is a new candidate for Publications and Products Director. It is wonderful that two OPA members threw their “hats in the ring” to participate in this election.

As an OPA member please participate in this election by confirming your choice for OPA’s Board.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 11]
Elections Committee: Jacqueline Janes, Dianne Eppler Adams and Twink McKenney

**PRESIDENT**

- The President is responsible for running and overseeing all aspects of OPA’s activities.
- This includes membership, finances, marketing, by-law review, organizational development, publications, and conferences.
- Drafts agendas for Board of Directors and Group Leader meetings.
- Facilitates Board of Directors and Group Leaders’ meetings.
- Creates Board committees as needed, and makes committee appointments.
- Participates in board sub-committees.
- Responsible for the visioning and strategic planning.
- Writes quarterly President’s Column for *The Career Astrologer*.
- Coordinates interaction with other entities such as NCGR, ISAR, etc.

Alexandra Karacostas

I have served as President for the past two years. In this period, OPA has reorganized its Board, held two retreats, and implemented a professional certification program. OPA has progressed in serving its members and the astrological community at large. I seek a second term to continue progress toward organizational excellence and to promote OPA’s interests and mission of advancing professionalism in astrological practice, promoting of the Certification program, expanding OPA’s website, and nurturing OPA’s relationships with other astrological organizations. I am devoted to the work of OPA and all we represent. Please vote for me as we continue to work together on behalf of astrology and professional leadership.

Bob Mulligan

My history with OPA includes sponsoring the first meeting (7/89), planning the first conference (7/91), authoring first edition of “How to Start, Maintain, and Expand an Astrological Practice” as well as an article in every newsletter, creating the first retreat, forming the first group leaders gathering, and developing the peer review concept. I have worked for OPA since its beginning, whether in a board position or not. I believe the organization will benefit from my leadership because I have an absolute commitment to OPA and the professional success of every member.

**VICE PRESIDENT**

- Assumes President’s duties when President is unable to do so for any reason.
- Backs up and supports the President’s responsibilities on the Board and is a confidant and sounding board for the President.
- Functions as an archivist by collecting and filing important OPA materials and documents.
- Attends all Board meetings.
- Assists and supports other Board Members with their tasks.
- Automatic member of the Retreat Committee.

Arlan Wise

I wish to continue as Vice President. I have been on the OPA Board since 1996, including four years as President. I was instrumental in setting up OPA retreats. I bring my experience to the Board meetings, where I feel I act both as historian and visionary. I have a good understanding of what makes OPA tic, what OPA needs, and where OPA needs to go. Please elect me to serve another term.

**TREASURER**

- Maintains a positive balance in the account.
- Prepares a monthly fiscal report that is distributed at the Board meetings.
- Maintains the checking account in a bank.
- Pays bills on time.
- Reconciles income from Authorize.net and PayPal with bank account.
- Maintains contact with Membership...
Secretary to reconcile members with membership payment received.
• Reconciles income from workshops and retreats given expenses.
• Makes suggestions in budget preparation.
• Prepares intermediate reports to inform the board of current status of income and expenditures relative to budget.

Alice Kashuba
I have professional experience as financial overseer of research grants for Mount Sinai Medical Center. My volunteer experience includes being Treasurer of South Florida Astrological Association and ISAR and a first term as Treasurer of OPA in 2001. Currently, I keep records on Quickbooks and am familiar with online means of collecting dues and other payments through Authorize.net and PayPal.

Recording Secretary
• Sets up conference calls and notifies the Board of the time and place of the meetings.
• Takes minutes for the conference calls and the Annual Board Meeting.
• Assists the Membership Secretary.
• Sends e-mails or postal mail thank you notes to people associated with or connected to OPA.

Sandra-Leigh Serio
I have been a member of OPA for more than 10 years and was on the Board when OPA departed from PROSIG to become its own unique organization. In previous years, I served on Board in different positions. In the last few years, OPA has grown in a new direction with the popularity of OPA’s unique format retreats. I wish to continue to be a part of that vision. My objective is to increase the membership and attendance at retreats and to help the Certification Program blossom into a desirable experience for all members.

Membership Secretary
• Maintains and keeps up-to-date the active membership list.
• Sends membership renewal reminders in a timely fashion.
• Works with other members of the board to strategize about growing OPA’s membership base.
• E-mails The Career Astrologer to current members.
• Provides membership information to those in the group who need it to perform their jobs effectively.

Christine Ferraro
I have been OPA’s Membership Secretary for approximately one year. As a dedicated astrologer, I am proud to support OPA’s mission. I take great pride in accurately maintaining the membership database, in working with others on the Board, and in connecting on a personal level with OPA’s members.

Community Outreach Director
• Keeps the public informed of OPA’s activities and developments, through the website, Facebook, and other internet media.
• Organizes and manages OPA tables at conference tradeshows.
• Places advertisements in printed media.

Maurice Fernandez
I have been organizing astrology journeys and conferences in the US and around the world for the past decade and wish to take OPA to a new level of exposure and success so that many more may enjoy OPA’s unique value and contribution to the field of astrology. We are very dedicated to making the coming 2013 retreat an event to remember—an important step into this new direction. Thank you for your trust and dedication.

Janine Manguno
With Sun/Moon in air signs and planets in air houses, I am a born networker. I have been a theater manager, producer of live events, and owned a new age store among other endeavors. My intention is to build OPA’s ranks with qualified and dedicated astrologers. I would consider it an honor and privilege to serve OPA and will do my utmost to gain its respectful place in our society.
We learn many subjects in life. When we study astrology, though, it is not just another subject that finds a place in our mental filing system; it becomes a path in life. Some fields of knowledge are like this, they not only tell us about some aspect of life, they become a context or container for all other experiences. These fields of knowledge become a spiritual path, or yoga.

Astrology and Yoga

Astrology is more than a philosophy, perspective, or point of view; astrology is a way of self development, a spiritual path meant to raise our consciousness. In India we often refer to “yoga” as a disciplined activity or way of life that is meant to lead us to union with God. There are many different schools, branches, and types of yoga. It is helpful if we understand astrology as a form of yoga so that we can see how it is helpful in organizing impressions which are totally natural to the human condition.

By our very nature as human beings, we are destined to project beyond our own life in our thinking. The universe and everything in it is teleological, we grow by some grand design at our own unique pace or speed. When we began doing astrology our consciousness was already working beyond the confines of our personal life limitations; we were driven to see and experience a bigger picture of life; at least in a vague sense we were looking for something beyond the needs of our own physical life. Our identification had moved from thinking that we were reducible to our physical body to experiencing a wider horizon.

Astrology is a mental discipline, but when considered as a type of yoga we can see how the very process of learning it opens us up to such a larger picture of life. It challenges us to see, not just the world, but also ourselves in an expanded context. Our identity changes, we know that we are more than just our own bodies. We work to find out whom, in fact, we really are. This happens in stages as we come to understand our horoscope and the symbolism of astrology at an ever increasing and more profound level.

As human beings we are prompted to serve something beyond our own limited lives. As astrologers we desire to understand this inner prompting, just as we want to understand everything else in life. In the process of mentally exploring with astrology, other aspects of our personality are stimulated. When this happens we become enthusiastic and want to respond emotionally. Out of our understanding of a larger context of life and feeling of identification with a larger sphere of being, we desire to do something for others ... this is an opening of the will to serve. We wish our behavior to match our understanding and our elevated feelings.

When we are called to serve, whether we consciously realize it or not, we are being prompted to grow spiritually; to raise our own consciousness. When we put the needs of anything before our own desires, we break down the boundaries of our limited self ... so, what kinds of things can do this? Love can do this, for one thing. The path of love is one of continually helping us to let go of the false belief that our tiny small self is our Real Self. The love that a mother has for her child, a father for his family, or a citizen of a country for his nation are all examples where we can be prompted to put the needs of something before our own desires.

The romantic love between two lovers can cause them to forget their own concerns as they become lost in the feelings of liberation produced by their love for each other. For students of yoga, when this romantic love is directed toward God it is called Bhakti, or the yoga of love.

As students of astrology, we are prompted to think deeply on many subjects as we wish to understand things about life and the nature of existence. This happens as we dig deeper into life’s mysteries, as we follow the trail of ideas, as we uncover the meaning of planetary placements in a person’s horoscope. As we understand the purpose and meaning of our lives, we disburden ourselves from our narrow selfishness as we are able to understand the relative worth or worthless-

"God alone is real, and the goal of life is to unite with Him through love.”

- Meher Baba


Astrology, Yoga & Service  

ness of our desires. In India this form of yoga is called Gyana, or the yoga of knowledge. Astrology is a form of this yoga.

**Karma Yoga**

Karma Yoga [definition] - The yoga of selfless action; yoga through the selfless performance of duties.

When we translate our feelings of love of life and our understanding of values into personal behavior we enter the path of action. This is *Karma yoga*. Service to something larger than one’s self is another way of breaking down the limitations of the small self. When you join the life of public service you are deciding to put the interests of the whole unit that you serve, ahead of your own needs. This is a brave act for most people ... If you have had many lifetimes of doing this it is second nature. It is instinctive and automatic for someone to step forward to serve the larger unit when they are on this path for spiritual development. For the Karma yogi, behavior in our daily life is the spiritual practice aimed at bringing us closer to the goal of creation. Through putting the needs of a larger unit ahead of our own small self we get closer to reality; personal concerns are sacrificed for the needs of the group.

In one sense, everyone has a temperament for Karma yoga in the spirit that everyone goes through sacrifices in order to grow in consciousness. We all sacrifice for others, for our various groups, and for some ideal or cause. But some people have a special temperament for Karma yoga and this is shown by the circumstances of Saturn in their chart. Elsewhere I have written in detail on the meaning of the signs, houses, and aspects of Saturn to describe how this temperament for service manifests.

Necessities are ruled by Saturn; desires are ruled by Mars. We have certain needs that must be fulfilled in order to sustain life. We have desires, which give us energy, but also create complications which slow our progress down. The path of action, Karma yoga, not only requires us to deal with the principle of limitation (Saturn) but also we have to harness and finally raise the vibration of our own personal desires (Mars) in order to grow spiritually.

**Saturn, Mars, and Service**

In order for our lives to progress we have certain requirements or necessities e.g. food, clothing, and shelter. These things are shown by Saturn. We also have things that we want. These things are shown by Mars. The interplay between these two conditions in our chart shows something of how we progress in our spiritual journey. Being able to correctly channel the energy of our desires in a constructive way requires discipline. This discipline or lack of it is shown by the level of functioning of Saturn.

We all have things that we must do, we have things that we must have, and we are faced in life every day with things that must be accomplished.

When we think of Saturn we think of discipline, limitation, structure. Saturn is hard, it is the law of gravity, it is karma. But, Saturn has a special role to play in Karma yoga, as Saturn rules sacrifice. Because Saturn presents us with limitations, we have the task of prioritizing when presented with many courses of action. Because of the limitations of time, money, and energy; we go through the process of saying no to ourselves in order to work for the good of something or someone else. When a mother only has enough food to feed her children, she is able to go through the sacrifice of giving up her own dinner to feed them. We have all had this experience, even if it normally presents itself in less dramatic ways.

We need to put time and energy into our personal lives in order to survive, in order to be alive to make sacrifices. A mother who only feeds her children and never eats herself, starves to death ... and then her children starve as well, unless someone else takes them in and also makes sacrifices for them.

Astrologers must have a professional practice in order to generate sufficient resources to be able to give to an astrological organization. Yes, the astrologer can have an alternate source of income, a different job, a working spouse, large savings or inheritance; most astrology organizations run on the backs of people who are in this category. But what about OPA, an organization for professional astrology? It is important that we have astrologers working in the field who are capable, visionary, and generous enough to donate to the organization. This requires that we astrologers involved are successful enough, are self sustaining. From this we have been able to craft
Astrology, Yoga & Service  [CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5]

guidelines, ideas, and techniques for sharing with others in the field. Astrology as a whole has improved because of this.

Without successful astrologers, this organization would have no vitality. We may have ideas, but the ideas lack substance until they have been put to the test and they work. The backbone (Saturn) of any professional organization is the working professional who, on a daily basis, proves or disproves every idea and method that the organization espouses.

Blending of different yogic paths

Astrology, as a path of knowledge or Gyana yoga (Mercury) helps us understand the relative value of our various desires. Deep introspection or meditation helps us go through a pattern of evaluation and develop a plan. But we still have to translate our ideas and ideals into action in order to make spiritual progress. In today’s world, the soul can emerge from the limitations of the personality only when our mind, feelings, and behavior all grow organically. This is analogous to how all parts of our body normally develop at the same pace.

Different parts of the personality are brought into play by different forms of yoga and all of them are important in the life of the spiritual aspirant. In Gyana yoga (Mercury) the mind is central focus, in Bhakti yoga (Venus) the heart is primarily functioning, and in Karma yoga (Mars) we have our behavior aimed at selfless service as the focus of our attention. And in order to keep developing in consciousness, all parts of the personality have to develop.

Through the years many of us have been driven to serve the needs of the professional astrology community through our dedication to OPA; this is one useful expression of Karma yoga. But, just being driven by a sense of duty to do the right thing does not supply sufficient motivation to push us into service. In the final analysis, it is only love which can supply the motive power to lift us up to the level of service where we are able to put our own petty interests aside in order to express the attitude of the genuine bodhisattva; when we do this we are on the way to really helping in the grander picture of raising consciousness on the planet. We start with our own organization; it is through helping others that we are finally able to be lifted out of our own limited lives. As my Spiritual Master, Meher Baba has said, “Real happiness lies in making others happy.”

Astrology can not really be used effectively in our own lives as astrologers unless it touches the core of our being. Astrology reveals the meaning of life and gives us an intelligent pattern of living; dictating our thoughts, feelings, and actions. As a spiritual path, astrology ultimately leads us toward the goal of life.

Public vs. Private life

There is a dichotomy between our personal life and our public life. Taking actions meant to maximize the fulfillment of our desires is positive in our personal lives, i.e. we work for things that we want. But, what about our public life? Does the same set of assumptions apply to decisions in our public life that we have in our personal lives? No. When you are an elected public official serving for a community of people, you have a new karmic responsibility to put the needs of the group that you represent before your own personal wants.

With a few notable exceptions, OPA has benefited many times by having a group of people on the board that have been able to put their own needs aside while conducting the business of the organization ... does this mean that all was peace and harmony? No; well intentioned astrologers can have sincere disagreements of vision, tactics, and methods. But, when we all share the underlying motivation, to put the needs of the organization first, something beautiful happens.

OPA has grown and prospered only because our mission is clear and the people have been able to put their own egos behind them and work together for the common good ... this is what keeps us vibrant, relevant, and visionary.

Lessons from our history

In the early days, the organization was relatively safe from parasitic mischief. Famous and not so famous astrologers came and looked at what OPA was doing ... sometimes they even got involved for a while. But, when it became obvious that the organization was going to require time, money, and energy and was not going to be available for personal plunder, they went on. The organization was going to require a lot and was not going to give back very much in the way of material gain or personal prestige. There was nothing to feed one’s vanity; OPA only presented an opportunity to serve the higher needs of the field of astrology. And, for many of us, this was more than enough.

So, what are the choices that have to be made to keep our organization healthy? A healthy organization is built on the shoulders of healthy astrologers. This means that we need to be working toward success in our own individual practices; the basic thrust of our work together has to be for our collective good.

The purpose of the organization (our conferences, publications, retreats, and new certification program) is so that astrologers would have a method, a systematic manner to help each other to be better astrologers. Only by each of us developing as astrologers can the organization improve so we can live out our destiny to aid in the raising of consciousness on the planet.

So how is it possi- [CONTINUED ON PAGE 7]
ble to switch between our work in our own practice and our work for the organization? One way is to separate our time into personal and public. Another way is to separate the people in our daily life; we have our clients, and we have our colleagues. Again, the ability to separate one thing from another is the quality of using your Saturn correctly. This is to say, we establish correct boundaries; we wear two hats, so to speak...we are promoting our business and we are advancing the needs of the organization.

When we are reading a chart for a client, looking for new clients, or writing a copy for an advertisement for our business, we are in the mind and motivation of building our business. When we are working to build a conference, a newsletter, or a program for the organization, we can only think of what is good for the whole unit. This state of mind is not so different than what we do in other areas of our lives — we put the needs of our clients before our own when we are in session with them — we sacrifice for our family even when it limits our ability to do things that we want. Requirements of life and profession force us to act beyond our self interest all the time ... the trick of living life consciously is to do this consistently. This is why it is necessary to have this discussion.

Are we able to do something for OPA without it being a promotion for our own business? Can we be in a position of decision-making or authority, always keeping the focus on what is in the organization’s highest and best interest? To do so is to tread the path of Karma yoga. There is a saying that the spiritual path is a “razor’s edge”. It is so narrow as to have almost no dimension. We fall off the path before we realize it. We are all vulnerable to taking this fall through the shortsightedness of our own unconscious desires.

Although this organization was my brain child, several other professional astrologers have served selflessly from the very beginning in 1989. This organization was conceived in and born of the spirit of Karma yoga. Those of us who served at the beginning had no illusion of our service doing something for our own practices directly. We were only motivated by the desire to see something good happen for the field of astrology.

It has been a pleasure to serve this organization in one capacity or another since our inception. That so many people have stepped forward to give of themselves for the onward development of the field of astrology has continually inspired me personally to want to do more. As a discipline, astrology has continued to improve because we all work together. OPA members emanate this spirit of personal sacrifice for the good of the whole unit. We have a role to play in the greater picture of professional astrology. OPA is practicing real Karma yoga. May our commitment to OPA and to each other be unswerving and absolute. Somebody say, “Amen”!


We’ve added a new forum on the OPA website! The purposes of the forum are many — each section has different content, from different updates on OPA programs and activities, to discussions about charts of current events. The third section compiles Dvora’s monthly question! This way, we are now able to archive Dvora’s questions and answers and are able to reflect back on earlier postings!

Most of you seem very shy to post—no pressure, you can just come by and passively follow what is going on. However it would be meaningful (and more fun) if lots of us would actively participate and make it even more interesting. To post replies, you simply need to register to the forum and take it from there!

The link to the forum:
http://www.opaastrology.com/membership/forum

See you online!

Maurice Fernandez
OPA Community Outreach Director
Schedule of 2012 Free Presentations
An OPA Membership Privilege ... Enhance Your Practice

Check out our FREE conference-call presentations offered to OPA members! Mark your calendars, and call in to participate in these special and timely discussions. The earlier you sign up, the more presentations you can attend! This series of presentations will run on a monthly basis until the March 2013 OPA retreat in Myrtle Beach — your membership allows you to sign up for this very special event. We plan on making the 2013 retreat the event of the year! (New presentations will be added later this year.)

To become a member or renew, visit: http://www.opaastrology.com/membership/membership

Members will receive the updated number to call prior to the presentation time

Your membership supports OPA and your growth as an astrologer!

Maurice Fernandez
OPA Community Outreach Director

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MUSINGS on Career Development

BY ALEXANDRA KARAKOSTAS

I have discovered that the starting point to success on any chosen path, but particularly astrology as a profession, is spoken by Polonius in Shakespeare’s “Hamlet”, “to thine own self be true.” It is easy to be deceived by how simple this sounds! But self awareness, realization, and acceptance of who we are, reveal our purpose and precipitate clarity. As professional astrologers, we are skilled and trained to recognize the interplay and patterns of celestial cycles, and relate them to human-centric considerations. Let’s not kid ourselves; we must start with ourselves.

As I embarked on my astrological career many years ago, I confronted several illusions. One was that astrology would be a rather simple profession, a straightforward skill, that is, erecting and interpreting horoscopes. Yes and no. In today’s tech age erecting charts is not a challenge, to say the least. The work begins in its interpretation, in development of a cohesive, all-encompassing picture of a set of attributes. While interpreting a chart can be systematic, there is nothing straightforward or unilateral about it. It is an art. As artists, in this sense, we each have unique perspective and expression. In order to optimize our potential we must be true to our authentic self!

I also had no idea how isolated an astrologer can be. Yes, we “see” clients, but without regular peer contact and community support it is a solitary profession. I really hadn’t thought much about this, but found that it is an important factor. Having lived off the beaten path for many years, I was often isolated from. 

(Continued on Page 9)
Hello Career Astrologer,

The meeting occurred right after the total Solar eclipse of July, 2009, at a spiritual gathering in Allegan, Michigan. Victoria was the groups’ astrologer and Richard was an attendee. Richard listened to Victoria's lecture on that eclipse and thought, "Why have I not heard of Victoria before? She is really good." Richard later learned she had been a friend and student of Robert Buzz Myers, studying with him and planning conferences for 20 years.

Victoria had recently survived a roll-over accident in April 2009 and realized that she wanted to spend the rest of her newly saved life doing much more of what she loved – astrology. She then finished researching an article on the lunar eclipse “Lily Chart” of 12/21/2010. Seeing Richard’s smiling face in the audience, Victoria recognized someone who looked like he understood her talk. Later that evening, Richard introduced himself and asked her if she would like to submit an article for The International Astrologer! He also invited her to come to the ISAR 2009 Conference. For Victoria, that conference was like coming back home. He published her article in the December 2009 ISAR Journal.

The story continued with good humored e-mails and visits to Victoria’s home. Richard moved into Victoria’s home on April 1, 2010 … quite appropriate for a major life change for both. In 2011 Victoria and Richard made a team by publishing and editing of the ISAR Journal. Recently we announced our engagement and set our wedding date on June 23, 2012 in California. Gisele Terry will give away the groom.

Victoria Peltz & Richard Smoot

MUSINGS [con’t]

my astrological and metaphysical community. However, I have found that working with peers and others in the astrological community is imperative and a great asset to my personal and professional development. We are not designed to work alone!

Much later in my career I came to the realization that astrology is simply not only a profession, rather, it is a way of life. I am fortunate and grateful to be on this path.

Alexandra
at OPA’s 2010 Astrologer’s Retreat at Asilomar.

From Arlan Wise’s Writers Group
OPA Retreat, November 2011

Jacqueline Janes

Haiku

Haiku lost, misplaced?
Found in the study cleaned up
Hurrah! Arlan smiles

Sun Aquarius 9th House
Frosty heat pours out
What it knows and doesn’t feel
Striving mind to heart

Moon Gemini 12th House
I think then I feel
Sometimes numbness settles in
Drop into Silence

Mercury Capricorn 8th
Inconjunct Saturn Gemini 12th
Speak carefully please
Triangulated shaped words
Confusion sneaks in

Jupiter Leo 3rd House
Happiness is talk
With friends over a good meal
Wine and dessert too.

Mars Gemini Conjunct Uranus
Gemini 12th House
Survival in words
Spoken immediately
Not comprehended

Mars Gemini Conjunct Moon
Gemini 12th House
Beneath the words feeling
Urgency to be seen real
Run fast, too scary

Saturn Gemini Conjunct Ascendant
Form your expression
Bring thought into groundedness
Carefully choosing Self

Pluto Leo 3rd House
Right use of power
Found in words expressed simply
Ego checked with Love

Victoria Peltz & Richard Smoot

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Victoria Peltz & Richard Smoot
From the window of my friend's beach house, I often see dolphins swimming along the coast in the morning and returning later in the day, so when a few dolphins appeared on a recent October day, it was a welcome, but familiar site. As I watched, numerous groups appeared until I counted at least 20 in all. Perhaps they were migrating south along the New Jersey coast. I usually view the appearance of animals as a sign, and began researching the meaning of dolphins as a totem, or spirit animal. When dolphins come to you, they are sending the message of living in tune with nature, in harmony within yourself and with others. Dolphins are playful creatures who express an innocence, allowing their emotions to come to the surface.

A quote from "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Universe" tells us: “... on the planet Earth, man had always assumed that he was more intelligent than dolphins because he had achieved so much — the wheel, New York, wars and so on — whilst all the dolphins had ever done was muck about in the water having a good time. But conversely, the dolphins had always believed that they were far more intelligent than man — for precisely the same reasons.”

The ongoing transit of Neptune into the sign of Pisces came to mind. This transit began on April 5, 2011 GMT, briefly took a break while Neptune was retrograde from August 5, 2011 through February 4, 2012, and will remain in Pisces until leaving in January 27, 2026. Spirituality, harmony, compassion, universal love and being in tune with nature are all delineations of this transit. Could this be the sign that the dolphins were bringing to me?

We have lost our respect for nature and for the planet earth. Trees are for cutting. Wild animals are either a nuisance or something to kill for our own selfish needs. We have strayed so far from the natural, intuitive beings who we once were, that the average human is oblivious to the signs from nature that surround us. We simply have forgotten how to pay attention. We’re too busy riding on the merry-go-round of our lives, spinning ever faster out of control.

My hope is that we will all become more like the dolphins under Neptunian energy. That we will stop fighting, stop abusing the earth and all forms of life that inhabit it, and begin to spend more of our energy and time living in harmony. Perhaps slowing down, paying attention, and living in tune with our inner spirituality will lead us to what the dolphins appear to be suggesting.
I would like to end by mentioning an excellent commentary by Roxana Muise, published in ISAR’s March 11, 2012 e-zine, entitled Astrology and Prosperity Consciousness. She clearly articulates what it means to be a professional astrologer and how important it is to contribute individually as well as collectively to our beloved and honorable profession. The manner in which we present and conduct ourselves publicly is as important as the choices we make regarding the use of our resources. Let’s walk our talk and support our colleagues and allied organizations. As we prosper and sustain ourselves we can nurture and promote our profession. Let us celebrate each other’s success!

In closing, I look forward to seeing you at UAC. With the Sun, Mercury, and Venus all in Gemini it suggests a time ripe for rich and progressive exchange. Meanwhile, may you all be well!

Warmly,
Alexandra Karacostas, OPA President
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530-520-9992
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Our new Russian Member, Dmitry Paranov, hails from the city of Izhevsk, which is about 1200 km from Moscow. He is a practicing professional astrologer with students in four different cities: Moscow, Izhevsk, Omsk, and Sochi. He wants to start a chapter of OPA in Russia and is translating articles from our Career Astrologer into Russian. He and Bob Mulligan skype frequently and his English keeps improving (he always has a translator with him when they talk). His enthusiasm for professional astrology and his dedication to the field has interested several other Russian astrologers in joining our organization; we will doubtless see more of his work in the near future. Dmitry’s students are very interested in OPA’s certification program and we will welcome them into our organization. Perhaps we can get some of Dmitry’s thoughts on astrology translated into English so we can start to understand their culture and the way that professionals live and work in his country.

Using Windows 7 Free Speech Recognition Software
by Donna Woodwell, MA

I’m always on the lookout for ways to make my work life more efficient. Since I’ve recently started on a research project, I’ve wondered how I can make my note taking easier. This led me on a journey into the world of speech recognition software.

While investigating my options, I discovered that Windows 7 has speech recognition software built into the operating system. It’s easy to enable the software: just follow the instructions on the Windows website, take a simple tutorial, reboot your computer, and your computer will respond to voice commands as well as take dictation.

If you want to write blog posts or newsletters, or make notes about your clients, but have not learned touch typing, speech recognition software may be exactly what you need. In fact, I’ve written this entire post using the speech recognition software on Windows 7. Just open a document in your word processor, and start talking. I’ve found the software to be quite accurate in transcription, though a little slow.

If you are using Windows 7, and speech recognition software sounds intriguing, it’s worth playing with—especially since it’s free!

PS. For iPhone and Blackberry users there’s also a free application from Dragon Naturally Speaking which turns your phone into a dictation machine. You could take notes on a client on your phone, e-mail the notes to yourself, and save them in a client folder.
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OPA Shines at UAC An All Day Event Presented by The Organization for Professional Astrology

- **Welcome from OPA’s President** 10:00 – 10:15 AM
  Alexandra Karacostas

- **Peer Group Work** 10:15 – 10:45 AM
  *Presenters* Arlan Wise & Monica Dimino
  This will be a presentation of how astrologers help each other. We will explain how we in OPA help each other with our problematic clients, assist each other to improve our astrology and life in general, as well as remind each other about ways to plan our lives to live them more intentionally.

- **Chart Fundamentals** 11:00 – 11:30 AM
  *Presenters* Alexandra Karacostas & Grace Morris
  How we have come to recognize and focus on basic chart ideas. We will review certain basic concepts and interpretive techniques that we as astrologers tend to agree on. This will, by necessity, be a brief outline and review.

- **Astrologer’s View of the Future** 11:30 – 12 Noon
  *Presenters* Bob Mulligan & Sandra-Leigh Serio
  Everyone entertains ideas about the future. How do astrologers view the future? And, how do we, as astrologers, picture our own futures? How do we learn to create the lives we want using our charts and planning tools? This will be a lively discussion of forecasting, business planning, and the astrologer’s role in society.

**NOON – 1:30 PM BREAK**

- **Experience OPA’s Signature Group Work** 1:30 – 3:30 PM
  Attendees will break into small groups through random assignments to work with OPA Group Leaders. This group encounter work will be the substance of the afternoon. We will focus on our own charts and analyze them in these small groups using the principles from the morning talks.

- **Summary & Recap** with audience participation 3:30 – 4:00 PM

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Join us after for

**OPA’s General Business Meeting** 4:00 - 5:00 PM

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