

# Labyrinths Matter-Newsletter

Winter Edition Down Under

Edition 3 2009 Australian Region of The Labyrinth Society, Inc.

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## **The Voice of the Labyrinth Movement By Lauren Artress, Online Radio Interviews**



Lauren Artress has dedicated her life to reclaim the healing powers of the labyrinth for people worldwide. Her seminal first book *Walking a Sacred Path: The Rediscovery of the Labyrinth as a Spiritual Practice* launched the act of walking the labyrinth for prayer, meditation, psycho-spiritual healing and community building. Her work as a psychotherapist and spiritual director for over 30 years addresses the missing ingredient to the spiritual hunger plaguing Western culture, the search for a meaningful symbolic life.

<http://www.modavox.com/voiceamerica/vshow.aspx?sid=1541>

## **Archived Online Radio Interviews Transforming the Human Spirit**

Veriditas, The Voice of the Labyrinth Movement has been the organization behind the labyrinth movement. Lauren Artress, the Founder, started this not-for-profit in 1996 at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, CA. Veriditas has trained over 3500 facilitators and as a result many other organizations have taken root in the Western world. Her in-studio guest will be Dawn Matheny who serves as the Executive Director of Veriditas. Two highly experienced facilitators will join us. Linda Mikell the founder of Little Miracles on the Path will encourage listeners to submit stories over the course of our broadcasts. Ellen Meuch will introduce listeners to The Global Healing Resources Project and announce the worldwide auction sponsored by Veriditas to support this international work.

## **The Labyrinth: Its History, Mystery and Meaning**

[Bookmark] We know that labyrinths have ancient roots, but where did these labyrinth designs come from? How did they originate? Labyrinths are often confused with mazes though they engender different experiences. What is the difference? What folklore lies behind these beautiful designs? Join Lauren Artress with her colleague and guest Jeff Saward. Jeff is the foremost historian and researcher of labyrinths. He travels all over the world to rediscover labyrinths that have been lost from our consciousness awareness.

## **The Wisdom of the Labyrinth: Life is a Winding, Spiral Path**

Join us for this opening show hosted by author and leading force within the labyrinth movement, Lauren Artress. She introduced the transformational practice of labyrinth walking and it has helped guide many people to healing, deeper self-awareness and finding their soul-assignment. If you don't know what a labyrinth is, listen in. Her guest, singer and songwriter Margie Adam—who composed the introductory piece to this show—will share how the labyrinth has touched her life, released her creativity, informed her activism and opened up a whole new world to her.

## **June Interview A Raw Experience of the Holy**

As we awaken to a broader consciousness we are yearning to live a more authentic spiritual life. We are tired of second hand religion, where beliefs have been handed down to us from earlier generations. We hunger for a direct experience of the Holy. We want first hand experiences that open us up to the mystery of life and give us a practical spirituality that guides our lives. Join Lauren Artress with her guest and colleague Alan Jones, author and Dean Emeritus of Grace Cathedral. Together they will address these raw experiences of the Holy, what kind of guidance is needed to integrate the experience into your life. Both the positive experiences and the pitfalls will be discussed.

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## **The Spirit of Veriditas - Newsletter Spring 0-9 "Tails of Spirit: Animals Friends on the Path"**

What a delightful theme for this issue. It taps into a vein of interest because, with labyrinths, we are working with ancient archetypal forms and energies. Animals, as well as humans, seem attracted to these ancient patterns.

I recall a story that comes from a church in Summit, New Jersey, although I don't remember who told it to me. A group of women gathered at the church to paint the Eleven Circuit Medieval Labyrinth that they had worked hard to draw days before. Before they began to paint, they had an Episcopal priest, who is a colleague of mine, give a presentation on the Roman Goddess Diana (known as Artemis in Greek). Diana was the goddess of the hunt and was associated with wild animals. Once, as the myth goes, she was hunted herself. To remove herself from danger she turned into a deer to escape.

At the end of their myth study, they readied the paint and began to paint the labyrinth. Soon they heard an unusual clatter in the stairs leading to the parish hall where they were painting. Low and behold, it was a frightened wild deer! It came into the parish hall, and in its confusion, stepped into the paint and ran across the edge of the labyrinth to the exit on the opposite side. The women, as surprised as the deer, gently guided it up the stairs and back outside. Relieved, they came back in to discover and admire the deer's footwork, captured in the paint on the labyrinth. Of course, they preserved the tracks and I've even seen a photo! Perhaps this is a lesson reminding us that we draw to us what we focus on. May we have a joyous creative, Spring. As I write this, we are beginning a new chapter in the life of Veriditas. We have recently moved to the IONS (Institute of Noetic Sciences) retreat center. Keep track of new developments since we now have a center to work from. Blessings on the Path.

**Lauren Artress.**

<http://www.veriditas.org/newsletters/archive/LJ-Spring2009-Updated.pdf>

## **Cat-centric Circles By Marjorie Patch.**

See article on page 6 of Veriditas's Newsletter

When I was creating a small children's labyrinth on a king-size sheet with a friend in her living room, she screeched on the phone to me that her cat had decided to follow the path, rather than walking across the whole design. The cat started to walk across the sheet to her destination, a favorite chair, but stopped and changed her mind, clearly making the choice to follow the path around the long way. The older I get, the more mysterious Life becomes ~ especially animals, and our relationships. It's really a very mysterious thing, the way they bond with us. And I agree, teach us and heal us. If only they could tell us what THEY make of US, and our mysterious activities, such as labyrinths."

Marjorie Patch has walked labyrinths since 1995, and did her Facilitator Training with Lauren Artress in 2007. For the Fifth Anniversary of 9/11

## **Two Little Miracles on the Path. By Linda Mikell.**

Linda Mikell is long-time lover of the labyrinth and has made it her ministry to collect and share stories on the labyrinth and of how people have been effected by their labyrinth experience. She is a Veriditas trained facilitator, a member of the Veriditas Council and the NE USA Regional Representative. She distributes a story each month.

**If you'd like to be on her distribution list, or if you have a story to add to her collection, email her at [edlinmmik@optonline.net](mailto:edlinmmik@optonline.net).**

The first "Little Miracle on the Path. When we are planning an event for our labyrinths we are always wondering if people will come. How many will show up? Will we be sitting there alone, with the candles lit and the music playing? The following "Little Miracles" story speaks to this common worry. In this case, Canadian Geese telegraphed the message to facilitator Nancy Franz. She sent me this story in 2004 during the first year of Little Miracles on the Path. Enjoy! - Continue on page 4

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## **Its History, Mystery and Meaning By Nancy Franz.**

I went to the facilitator training to learn more about leading larger labyrinth walks. I had a very strong feeling that there was a community of people who would benefit from my labyrinth, but I did not know exactly what that meant to my work. Upon returning home, I sat down at my computer and began writing invitations for the next full moon labyrinth walk. I ended the invitations with the words "Space is limited so please reserve a space." As I typed those words, I felt this immediate urge to go out into my pasture and walk the labyrinth. I have learned to listen carefully to such urges. With one foot inside the labyrinth, I suddenly heard a very loud flock of Canadian Geese. I looked up to see a large "V" flying over head. Instead of flying on by, they made a Uturn and landed not far from where I was standing.



On the ground, their calls became louder. Soon, another large "V" flew over head, made a U-turn and landed in the same spot. Their calls became louder, and even more geese came. For about fifteen minutes, geese came from every direction, making U-turns and landing in response to the calls of the geese on the ground. It was like watching a movie and I got the message very clearly:

Do not worry so much about the numbers. Let the labyrinth call the people here who need it. Let those folks call to others. Just as I received this clarity all the geese took off at once in a tremendous flurry. Grateful for the lesson, I returned to my computer and deleted the line beginning, "Space is limited." More people came to that moon walk than ever before. It was a wonderful evening. Warmly, Nancy Franz [nfranz@h2net.net](mailto:nfranz@h2net.net)

The second Little Miracle Writer, is by Robin Hansel, a facilitator living in Florida. She has graced our Veriditas newsletter many times. She sent me this wonderful timely story. I hope you've had an equally moving experience on our World Labyrinth Day. Please send your story to me so that it may be shared with others. Blessings on your path, Linda Mikell

## **World Labyrinth Day: Hearing the Song By Robin Bradley Hansel**

On May 2, 2009, I had the lovely experience of "Walking as One at 1" in celebration of the first annual World Labyrinth Day. Though I was the singular walker on The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd's outdoor labyrinth at 1 p m, it didn't matter....

In fact, the incredible feeling of being connected via the labyrinth with thousands of other walkers across the globe made me even more grateful that I was able to be there by myself. The solitude helped me to feel personally connected with all the natural creatures of the planet. Additionally, it prepared me for the unique promise I would receive at the end of my walk.

Just as I was finishing my meditative time in the center, a distant church started ringing their 1:30 pm bells. The chimes were immediately followed by a song which I strained my ears to hear. After some careful listening, I recognized the old hymn "How Great Thou Art". I got to my feet and continued my walk, quietly singing the little bits of the refrain that I knew along with the familiar chorus.

When the music stopped, I was surprised to find myself standing in the exact spot where I had shared a very powerful moment with my husband during our Good Friday evening walk just a few weeks earlier. As he was nearing the completion of his walk that full moon night, I was just making my way inward. There, we met each other on the sacred path and embraced for a long time. Our young son was also walking with us, yet he was much closer to the Center....

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## World Labyrinth Day: Hearing the Song (Cont)

By, Robin Bradley Hansel.

I spent quite a bit more time on my knees that afternoon in deep reflection. I thanked God for the grace and the challenges of our eighteen years of marriage. Though the two of us were continuing to weather an extremely difficult period in our relationship, kneeling there, I felt embraced and rooted by the healing power of Love with all of its divine Mystery.

Later, when I told my husband of my experience, he was amazed to learn which song had started playing. Unknown to me, "How Great Thou Art," had always held a level of extreme importance in the spiritual life of his extended family.

Truly, I believe God was sending us an undeniable message on my first World Labyrinth Day. The notes of that old song carried with them a very special promise to us both of renewal and hope.

Visit Robin's blog

<http://labyrinthwellnessllc.blogspot.com/>

Or reach her on Linked In

<http://www.linkedin.com/in/robinbradleyhansel>

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## The Path



When I look at the whole package  
The intricate web  
The many branched tree  
Of all that I know I can do  
I feel overwhelmed

The burden of ability  
Of responsibility

As I place my foot  
At the beginning of this path  
I feel safe  
I know I am loved

It has form  
Its impact can extend way beyond  
its boundaries

It guides me  
Contains me  
Protects me  
Teaches me  
Accompanies me  
Whispers wisdoms  
Takes me in to flight  
Renews  
Cleanses

It looks 2 dimensional  
It has depth  
And height  
It expands  
Contracts  
Like lungs  
Filling and expanding

What a wonderful ride  
On the rise and fall  
Of this sacred path

**Margaret Rainbird**

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## **Healing Resources - Qtrly Labyrinth walks. By Ellen Bintz Meuch**

Hello Dear Facilitators,

I am excited to offer a new opportunity from Veriditas. As many of you know the Global Healing Response was introduced right before Hurricane Katrina as a program that outlines a unified response to a global disaster or event that would benefit from healing. The plan was enacted after Katrina and the China earthquake and Myanmar floods. It proved to be a meaningful and helpful response for those involved and hopefully for those affected by these disasters.

JoAnn Mast and I have created a new way for the Veriditas family (and hopefully beyond) to work together for global healing on a continual proactive basis. We have named this part of the GHR the Global Healing Resources. We have developed a themed walk that each of us, as facilitators, could incorporate into our labyrinth programs. If each facilitator hosted one GHR walk a quarter think of the impact we could have on the world! And, if we passed the GHR on to other healing modalities the possibilities are endless.

Each year we will name a theme and the year will be divided into quarters with a separate focus for each quarter. To accentuate each focus we will have a quote, symbol, prayer, flyer template, ambiance ideas, music suggestions, and even a color. As always, these are just suggestions!!!! Your creativity and instincts are always an important part of your application of the GHR.

The theme for 2009 is Transition and the focus for April, May, and June is Courage. The details for April-May-June are attached. As you scroll down the document you will see a URL for the flyer template that you can adapt to include details that are specific for your walk. The template is over 1 MB and so I didn't want to attach it to this email. If you have trouble opening it let me know and I can send you the file.

JoAnn and I liken this to a Sunday school lesson. If you are a new facilitator we hope this makes your life a little easier if you have wanted to plan an intentional walk and weren't sure where to start. If you are a seasoned facilitator we hope this idea adds a spark to your existing program.

My thanks to Bonnie Odiorne for writing the prayer for this quarter and Warren Lynn who provided the fabulous pictures of the birds you will see as our symbols this year. If you can listen to Lauren's radio program this Thursday (5/28) Lauren and I will be discussing the GHR.

As always, comments and ideas are welcome!  
Peace & Healing,

Ellen Bintz Meuch  
630-235-2150  
Text: [6302352150@tmomail.net](mailto:6302352150@tmomail.net)  
[meuch@msn.com](mailto:meuch@msn.com)

Think without fear