

As this Newsletter is getting pulled together (Tuesday), the snow is swirling down and is utterly BEAUTIFUL!!! That first real snow of the winter is always something of a treat to watch! Especially if you can be inside! The birds are collecting at the feeders already; they are always a pleasure to watch, too. And the cats still think that somehow if they would just go out the front door instead of the back door, all that nasty white stuff won't be there... Good weather for WOOLIES and, if you can be home, to get some spinning done!!

YOU MISSED a good, informative session with Sunny Bixby at the November meeting. We had many handsome items on display (perhaps more knitted things this year than before) and Sunny did a splendid job with her "judging." We all learned a great deal from her and from each others' projects on display. We also spent time talking about the State Fair handspun judging and categories, and discussed the Ontario Handspinners categories (see elsewhere in this Newsletter for a rundown). For those keenly interested in seeing the State Fair categories changed, we have some fast work to do... (Read on!)

We are pleased to announce the new officers for our Guild -- duly elected at the November meeting (motion made by Suzy Hokanson, seconded by Marian Steve; unanimous vote)!!! Please make note of them. Their terms begin January 1st, 1979. Let's give them plenty of support this year, and make it another good year for the Guild (after all, five in a row isn't such a bad average!)

President - Gretchen Sachse	
Vice President - Libby Martin	(Nominating Committee for next
Treasurer - Linda Dickinson	year: Nancy Morey-Brower, Alice
Recording Secretary - Patty Mutkoski	Wood, Suzy Hokanson.)
Corresp. Sec'y/Newsletter - Jean Warholic	

The position of Guild librarian is still up for grabs. If you are interested, please contact Barbara White (844-9235) or Jean Warholic (539-7648) immediately. The job is not difficult, but involves carrying two rather heavy boxes of books. (A good job for a stout, energetic beginning spinner!)

A big THANK YOU to Marion Wikoff, Sharon Moen, and Linda Dickinson (this year's Nom. Committee) for all their efforts in pulling together this slate of candidates -- it is no mean feat! It has been a busy year for all of us. (Jean Warholic: I, for one, have enjoyed being President this past year, even though it meant getting very little spinning done, among other things. As much as I would have liked to remain President another year, too many things have suffered -- working full-time just doesn't leave one much of anything in the way of time or energy -- and I feel a real need to get back on keel. We have a good group of officers and lots of things to look forward to in the new year for the Guild! And it is gratifying to see the number of new spinners coming to the Guild meetings, too!! We have all sorts of good possibilities coming up this year...)

DECEMBER 11th MEETING. Our gala Christmas Party will be held at the Heritage Craft Shop in Dryden this year! Bring a chair, sandwich, mug-- two big soup-pots are being supplied by Linda Olds/Kay Ross, Linda Brecht. *Bring your handspun tree ornament* for exchange, too. Business meeting will be negligible; it should be a good, yackety day. Catch up on news, try several spinning wheels you haven't tried before, and we'll also have a show-and-tell (if you still have your items from the November show, please bring them)! Dress comfortably (when don't we?) and bring a friend. Directions from Ithaca: Tale Rt. 13 to Dryden, the Shop is on the right (big sign) when you come down the hill and hit the flat. If you come to railroad tracks, you've missed it and gone too far. (Telephone: 844-4381.) Dryden is not overly large, so you can't get too lost!

ROCK DAY. January 6th, Dryden Presbyterian Church (brick church near stoplight, Rt. 13), from 10 a.m. to about 4 p.m. (*Snow date: Jan. 13*). Dish-to-pass (bring own plate, silverware, mug) and we need volunteers for soup-pots. The Guild will provide flax to spin, so in addition to your wheel, bring a distaff or spin from a "muff". We are inviting the guilds in the area to join us and it should be an especially nice day! Good to see old friends and get some spinning done... (Note: Rock Day will be held unless we have an absolute blizzard. See SNOW POLICY below.) Interested friends and visitors are always welcome!

ROCK DAY is one of our most important spinning traditions! The following description is from one of the Thistledown Handspinners' newsletters awhile back: "Rock, rocke, and roc are obsolete words for that important distaff, the implement used for holding unspun fibers (not just flax) when spinning was accomplished solely with a handspindle. ... From the German, rocken, which means 'distaff' came the long-used phrase, 'spinning on the rock,' and the name of the ancient English holiday, Rock Day or St. Distaff's Day. Rock Day followed Twelfth Night, the Festival of Epiphany, which marked the end of Christmas merrymaking and, on this day, the maids were expected to resume their constant chore of spinning. (No spinning being permitted during the Christmas holidays.) The plowmen, however, were free until Plough Day, the first Monday after Twelfth Night, and they amused themselves by playing pranks on the spinning maids... Most recently, our Colonial ancestors celebrated the Monday after Twelfth Night by having a "Rock Day," a gathering of neighbors for a day of spinning. It was much like the coming together on other days for quilting bees."

THERE WILL BE NO REGULAR JANUARY MEETING -- come to ROCK DAY or get some spinning done instead!!!

This is a good time to reiterate our SNOW CANCELLATION POLICY... In the event of severe snowstorms or truly inclement weather, cancellation of the meeting (decided by the officers) will be on the radio (WHCU, WTKO) by 7:30 or 8:00 a.m. Unless stated otherwise, the meeting will be postponed to the next Monday. When in doubt, call your nearest Guild officer. Use your horsesense, too -- if it is a blizzard outside, stay home! We want no snowbound spinners stuck somewhere enroute. Guild members are spread over a large area and some will have more snow problems than others... (Saturday Group-ers should call Eleanor May or Ernestine Wright, below.)

SATURDAY GROUP. *New hours for meetings:* 12-4 p.m. (bring a sandwich, mug). (For far-away spinners, this will save some after-dark driving.) Meetings are at Northeast School -- Rt. 13 to Warren Road (near Airport), turn south, pass BOCES, turn right on Winthrop Drive, school is soon after turn.

Nov. 18 was a good inkle loom session with Eileen Oldham. (Too bad if you missed it!) There will be NO December meeting -- come to ROCK DAY instead, at the Dryden Presbyterian Church. Bring your spinning wheel, dish-to-pass, etc. (see above). Jan. 6, don't forget! The January 27 meeting will be flax spinning. The Guild is providing the fiber; we will have some extra for purchase. This is a good chance to learn to spin flax and learn about a new (for some) fiber. Hope we see you!

Again, with the exception of ROCK DAY, call Eleanor May (272-8224) or Ernestine Wright (257-0027) or Jean Warholic (539-7648) if you plan to come to Saturday meetings or to check about snow cancellations. This helps us plan the afternoon better...

THE GUILD'S CARDING MACHINE will be available for rental beginning in February. (Washed wool only to be carded -- start now if you hope to rent it in the near future.) GUILD SPINNING WHEEL (Ashford) available for rental in December. Call Marion Wikoff (387-5410) for information or to sign up. (Members only on these machines.)

AD SECTION

THE TABBY SHOP now has an Inca on hand for you to try. It is a 4-harness counter-balance 36" floor loom, comes in kit form, \$250. COMING SOON; the Cassandra I, a Thought Products loom. Ask about its counter-shed tie-up. Mondays through Thursdays, 12 to 5 p.m., at 49 German Crossroad, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. (607/273-3308) *3/3*

MACHINE WASHABLE SHEEP SKINS, \$25 each. Bartlettyarns, natural and dyed, 1- to 3-ply, \$8/lb. Have your sheep shorn, \$1 per head. Mohair, \$9/lb. Patterns, 50¢. Roving, \$4/lb. Two pure fine black ram lambs. Gjeter Wool Co., Libby Martin Llop, RD #2, Locke, N.Y. 13092. (315/497-9545) 1/3

FOR SALE: One ram lamb, black, Hamp/Dorset/Corriedale cross. Also, two neutered lambs, both black, good to raise for fleece or eating. If interested, contact: Gretchen S. Ham, RD #2 - Box 239, Pine City, N.Y. 14871. (607/732-3001) 1/1

SILK FIBERS -- Beautiful white and tussah in combed and carded roving. Send SASE for free samples and price list. Cocoons, waste silk, silk hankies, spindles, and flicker-combs also. FALLBROOK HOUSE, RD #2 - Box 17, Troy, PA 16947. (717/297-2498) 8/9

RENT OUR ASHFORD SPINNING WHEEL, \$8/mo. Or our hand carding-machine (for washed wool only), \$5/mo. Only BSHG members, please. Call Marion Wikoff (387-5410) to sign up for either of these. Also, the Guild has a few pairs of carders left from the Beginning Spinning Workshop -- curved-back carders, medium teeth (\$14/pair). They will be brought to meetings until sold, or call 539-7648 evenings.

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PRICING OF HANDSPUNS -- a decision to be made in the New Year... An important one! And if you have been spinning wool (Bartlettyarns roving provided by the Guild) for the Guild, please get your skein(s) in as soon as possible to Toby Chambliss. It would be nice if we could get them all in as of Rock Day. Skeins should be washed and/or the twist set (Gerber method below), tagged with their yardage and weight.

SETTING THE TWIST à la Fred Gerber (who got it from Lee Carlin, a professional spinner in Colorado): Tie your skein in a number of places (in a loose O, not a figure-eight and with cotton string or anything but wool), and plunge into HOT water, give it a squeeze or let it sit just a moment, and plunge into COLD water, letting it sit a moment. Hang to dry after squeezing out. This sets the twist beautifully and brings out the loft in the spin. If you are doing this with wool in the grease, it does an amazing job of cleaning the fiber if you add a squirt of detergent and a little ammonia. This method may sound drastic to you -- and most of us did indeed cry out and clutch our bosoms when Gerber demonstrated it -- but do give it a try. Neither you nor the wool will be the worse for it...

LOST: Still missing is one of Jean Warholic's white enamel dyepots from the Gerber workshop. And FOUND at the last meeting, a brown ceramic mug with flowers on it.

REFRESHMENTS. A sign-up sheet will be passed at Rock Day. In the meanwhile, Patty Mutkoski made a good suggestion to save us money and the earth we live on: bring a mug or cup to the meetings for your tea/coffee and let's minimize the use of those awful styro-foam cups. (They aren't even biodegradable.) The Saturday Group is attempting to do this (and so are the other Guilds around the area). So put a mug in with your spinning things the next time you head for a meeting or get-together...

Marry a wife who can read and she'll find all the holidays on the calendar.
-- Old Russian Proverb.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!! We've been pleased to have you join us...

Active

- Rebecca Church, 542 Warren Road, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. (257-3951) (Weaver, dyer, knitter/crocheter, embroiderer)
 Lou McIsaac, 107 Forest Home Drive, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. (257-0720) (Weaver, knitter/crocheter)
 Susan Quick, 848 Snyder Hill Road, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. (273-7454) (Spinnable dogs, cats)
 Sally Wright, 706 Warren Road, #16-2A, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. (257-6461) (Knitter/crocheter)

Inactive

- Deborah Dinnan, 94 Stevenson Road, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. (273-7833) (Knitter/crocheter; macramé; spinnable dogs, cats, horses)
 Jo Ann Flynn, 1091 Whalen Road, Penfield, N.Y. 14526. (716/377-5732) (Knitter/crocheter)
 Karen Gould, 246 E. Main Street, Penn Yan, N.Y. 14527. (315/536-6298) (Knitter/crocheter)
 Mary Ann Lynch, 31 Rotary Avenue, Binghamton, N.Y. 13905. (797-4257)
 Jean Mailhot, 512 Warren Road, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. (257-0580)
 Ardeen Sprentall, Box 423 - RD #5, Penn Yan, N.Y. 14527. (315/595-2879) (Knitter/crocheter; herbs, dye plants)
 Mary Ann Vogt, 107 Neimi Road, Freeville, N.Y. 13068. (257-2434) (Knitter/crocheter)

Newsletter Exchange

- Lamb-to-Loom Guild, c/o Joan Koster, RD #1 - Box 32, Whitney Point, N.Y. 14862.
 Cherry Valley Country Spinners, c/o Sunny Bixby, Lowell-Greenway Road, Verona, N.Y. 13478.

Corrections

- Karen Straight's new address: Box 549 - Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa 50677.
 Cindy Smith is back and we were glad to see her at the last meeting: 72 W. Miller Road, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. (273-0916)
 Maria Steve's new address (after Dec. 17) in her NEW HOUSE: RD #3 - Cold Spring Road, Trumansburg, N.Y. 14886.

(We will be sending out the new Guild membership list in Jan. or Feb. -- if you have corrections or additions to your entry, please get them as soon as possible in writing to Jean Warholc, 280 Ringwood Rd., Freeville, N.Y. 13068.)

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WHAT A NICE SURPRISE! We've been given an award by the Thompsons County 4-H Program. It is a fancy certificate for our "service to youth" with special thanks for the part we have played in providing incentives and opportunities for 4-H young people, and it is from Judith B. Meier, Cooperative Extension Agent in the county. Take note, you hard-working Guild members!!

SPEAKING OF SERVICE TO YOUTH, we have been asked by the Learning Web to help find a teacher for apprentice Reka Tamas. She would like to learn to spin (and more) and would like to apprentice to someone willing to work with her. If you are interested, please call Jean Warholc (539-7648, or office 256-6262) immediately. Reka would like to get started as soon as possible... (And I have been tardy in getting this to members.)

BOONS AND SHIVES... Charlotte Altmann's baby is due any day now! // Joan Johnston had a baby boy, Aidan, born Oct. 6. They were at the Nov. meeting! // Rodney Van Vleet whose black lamb fleeces have been at Wool Day, recently married and it is rumored he and his wife will expand on the black sheep part of the flock! // Libby Martin is getting married shortly -- at last she is making an honest man of Quentin!

DUES, DUES, DUES... Your membership with the Guild runs out as of December 31st unless we receive a renewal from you. (Members having joined since Sept. 1st are carried over thru the next year.) You will receive one more Newsletter from us (in January) and then, goodbye! Again, Active Memberships are \$4.00/year, Inactive are \$6.00/year, and Student Memberships are \$2.00/year. Make your check payable to the Black Sheep Handspinners Guild and send it to: Maria Steve, Apt. #1-C, Lansing West Apts., Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. Or give your check or money to Maria at the December meeting, or Rock Day. Please follow up on this as soon as possible -- we would hate to lose you!!

Also, Maria will be clearing the Guild books at the end of this year and needs to have all bills, reimbursements, renewals, etc. *as soon as possible*... Make sure you've turned in anything and everything pertaining to Guild finances at the December meeting or immediately thereafter.

The YARN COMMITTEE (from the Gerber workshop) will be making its decisions about the beautiful dyed skeins before long (January?). Please get your suggestions, ideas, etc to its chairperson, Suzy Hokanson. They will be making several recommendations for the Guild to vote on. We want YOUR input. Write Suzy: RD #2 - Box 144, Cricket Farms, Marathon, NY 13803.

PEWTER SHEEP PINS/PENDANTS have been ordered from Guyot Designworks. They should be in by the December meeting...

ONTARIO HANDSPINNERS CRITERIA. (Thank you, Sunny Bixby!) We reviewed these at the Nov. meeting, with the promise to include them in the Newsletter. With increasing talk about standards for spinners, goals to work toward, etc., and with the dissatisfaction we have had with the State Fair categories, these criteria should give us good ideas and something concrete to think about. We will need to formulate some good, well-thought-out suggestions for the State Fair people by early January. PLEASE give us your ideas for new and better categories, based (for the time being) on 4-5 categories. The sooner we get ideas to them, the sooner they can make some decisions, and the sooner we will know (we hope) what to spin for. *Get your ideas, preferably in writing, to Jean Warholie or Doris Brown (8 Oak Crest Road, Ithaca) -- we will be working with Sunny Bixby, Madeline Adkins, and others on the project and should have it pulled together around Rock Day (hope to give you a report then). DO IT NOW, before you forget or put it aside...*

(Note: as you read through these, remember that the competition is end-purpose oriented -- in case it doesn't jump out at you -- italics have been added by Jean W. for emphasis.)

"The skein competition is designed to encourage people to *spin for a particular purpose*. The following categories have been designated, with a *quantity of material to be provided* and in each case some *information about the proposed finished article*. Any single fiber or combination of fibers may be used at the pleasure of the spinner, but the skeins must be labeled as to fiber content. *Judging is based on spinning control and suitability*. A fine yarn may suit the proposed purpose well, but keep in mind that a fat, slubby yarn may suit the purpose better. Also taken into consideration will be the *suitability of the fiber to the end purpose*. For example, the selection of Merino fleece for a carpet is in no way a suitable choice of fiber for the purpose. Both the selection of the fiber and the spinning itself must be *end purpose oriented*. This is the reason that spinning is such a challenge and fun, for one may tailor-make your yarn so as to meet the needs of the article to be made.

- Class 1 - Knitting and crocheting: 1/2-pound of material, submit proposed pattern.
- Class 2 - Rug or Floor Covering: 1-pound of material, proposed plan for pattern/use.
- Class 3 - Tapestry: 1-ounce skeins, totaling 1/2-pound. For example, if three colors are to be used, provide 3 ounces of each color. Drawing or cartoon should be submitted.

(over)

- Class 4 - Wall Hanging: 1-pound, showing color range (if applicable) and proposed plan for use of materials.
- Class 5 - Clothing Fabric: 1-pound, showing color range if applicable, and proposed plan for use of materials.
- Class 6 - Upholstery Fabric: 1-pound, showing color range if applicable, and proposed plan for use of materials.
- Class 7 - Drapery Fabric: 1-pound, showing color range if applicable, and proposed plan.
- Class 8 - Needlework, Crewel, Embroidery: Each skein must contain 6-yards. Provide 10-20 skeins with a minimum of 60-yards in total. Each color must consist of at least 3-ounces.
- Class 9 - Cording for Braiding and Macrame: 1/2-pound. Show plan for materials.
- Class 10 - Weaving: 1/2-pound warp and 1/2-pound weft. Both must be submitted. Provide a plan for the use of both.
- Class 11 - Lace: 4-ounces are required. (And pattern submitted.)
- Class 12 - Table Covering: 1/2-pound, showing color range if applicable. Show plan.
- Class 13 - Cushion Covering: 1/2-pound, showing color range if applicable, and proposed plan for use of materials.

SPECIAL CLASSES (these are awarded special prizes)

- Class 14 - Novice Spinning: (a) on the spindle, (b) on the wheel. Supply a 2-ply skein or 2-ounces. The spinner must have learned within the last year.
- Class 15 - (a) A well-spun fine 2-ply yarn, hand prepared from fleece. The aim is to produce the greatest yardage in a 1-ounce washed skein, while maintaining spinning quality.
(b) A well-spun fine 2-ply yarn, prepared from silk hankies or combed silk. The aim is to produce the greatest yardage in a 1-ounce washed skein while maintaining spinning quality.
- Class 16 - "For Shear Delight": This class is for people who own their own sheep. The owner must shear the animal him/herself, using any type of shearing he/she wishes. You must provide (1) a photograph of both the sheep and the owner before, during, and after the shearing; (2) a 1-ounce sample of the raw fleece; (3) a 1-ounce sample of the washed fleece; (4) a spun, washed 2-ply skein of 4-ounces; (5) the number of months of fleece growth. Any breed of sheep may be used. Please provide as much as possible the parentage or history of the animal, as well as information on how the animal is fed. Also give the address where the animal is kept. It is not necessary for the owner to actually keep the sheep -- someone may board it for you. Finally, please provide the age of the sheep when the fleece was taken.
- Class 17 - Please provide a spindle full of singles, spun yarn, of any fiber. The yarn is to be spun on and displayed on a spindle that is suitable to both the fiber and the diameter of the yarn. "

(Well now, do you have your categories picked out? Do at least several sound like real possibilities? Perhaps the two most striking features of this competition are the *quantities of fiber* required in the classes and the *proposed plans* for those fibers. Let's talk about this subject in more detail at the December meeting and see what we can pull together for both the State Fair and for our own County Fair competitions!!)

GOINGS-ON -- GET OUT YOUR CALENDAR!!! Thistledown Handspinners Guild of Norwich will have their Christmas Luncheon (dish-to-pass, with recipe) on December 21 at the Museum. Bring a gift related to spinning to exchange. Rock Day date in January yet to be announced. Their January 20 (Saturday) meeting, at the Museum, will be a pot-pourri -- spinning different fleeces for different projects; making a belt distaff; spinning problems, discussion from the floor. The February 17 (Saturday) meeting will be Spinning

wool from a belt distaff and plying with a drop spindle. (If you are interested in getting to a ~~knitdown~~ meeting, ask around. Usually there are several from Black Sheep going -- Dora Swart, Eleanor May, Jean Warholic, Suzy Hokanson come to mind.) // The Lamb-to-Loom Guild (Binghamton area) will meet on Dec. 12 at the Vestal Public Library. It will be a show-and-tell with woven bags (done as projects?). They will have no January meeting. February's to be announced. // Ithaca Textile Arts Guild will have its December 14 meeting (8 p.m.) at the home of Mary Ann McNeil, 207 Eastwood Ave., Ithaca (off Cornell St., one block north of State St.). The theme will be Dolls and members are to bring dolls and doll-like figures from travels, attic, child's room, etc. in addition to the show-and-tell items. January meeting (18th?) will be groups working on the banners and wall hangings for the Hangar Theatre (commissioned pieces). Meeting place to be announced -- call Mary Ann McNeil, 273-3553, if you plan to come. February meeting to be announced; probably will involve working more on the banners...

Save your pennies for these... both in the past have been marvelous events and a good source of Christmas presents! The 9th Annual Trumansburg Christmas Craft Sale, held at the same big barn (Weick's barn, on Rt. 89, about 4 miles north of Taughannock Park), hours 10-4 on Sat., 12-4 on Sunday, Dec. 2-3. As always, dress warmly for this one -- the barn is not heated. // The Rochester Folk Art Guild will also be having its Holiday Exhibition and Sale, Dec. 1-3, Women's Community Building, Ithaca. Hours are 7-10 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. on Sat., and 12-6 p.m. on Sunday. (Admission is a donation of \$1.00.)

One last bit of workshop information... Monday, Dec. 4 there will be a "Costume Workshop-Seminar" at the 1890 House in Cortland, with Cornelia Frisbee of Historic Cherry Hill (Albany) the featured lecturer. It will involve dating costumes, costume care, and display. Reg. fees are \$4.50 and \$5.00 -- register at the 1890 House or with RCHA by calling 682-7088 before Nov. 27th.

THE NEXT NEWSLETTER will be coming out in January -- please get any info. or whatever to Jean Warholic no later than Rock Day...

STILL LOOKING FOR GOOD CHRISTMAS PRESENTS for fiber friends and relations? Don't forget our good friends in the area who have shops with all sorts of goodies... To mention a few: Mildred Scudder and THE TABBY SHOP (weaving supplies), 49 German Crossroad, Ithaca, 273-3308). Meridith Wood and MERRYWOOD (needlework supplies, spinning & weaving supplies), 2509 Slaterville Road, Slaterville Springs (539-7436). Linda Olds and Kay Ross and the HERITAGE CRAFT SHOP (spinning, weaving, knitting supplies), 87 W. Main Street, Dryden (844-4381). Jean Case and FALLBROOK HOUSE (silk, spinning items), RD #2 - Box 17, Troy, Pa. 16947 (Send SASE for samples -- see ad.) Madaline Adkins and WOOLHAVEN (spinning, dyeing supplies), 3386 County Rt. 1 - RFD #2, Oswego, NY 13126. (We still have a few of her price lists left.) Libby Martin Llop and GJETER WOOL COMPANY (Bartlett yarns dealer, patterns for cozy knitted items), RD #2, Locke, NY (315/497-9545). These people have been very generous with us in the past, helping us out in all sorts of ways -- this time of year is a good time to pay them a visit if you haven't been to see them lately! (Oops, don't forget Joyce Scott and her nice array of sheep/spinning wheel aprons, totebags, stationery, etc. -- she comes to the Saturday Group meetings [and will be at Rock Day, too late for Christmas perhaps, but then comes Valentine's Day and birthday presents!].)

We hope you have all had a wonderful, fattening Thanksgiving! Hope you were able to have family with you, or visited good friends or family! And for those unable to get to the December meeting (since this is the last Newsletter for 1978!), a very *Merry Christmas* or *Happy Hanukkah* or whatever you are celebrating!!! We look forward to seeing you in the New Year, at Rock Day we hope, and hope this coming year will be an especially happy, healthy one for you...