



*Enhancing lives with
healing hands.*

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Tranquility

A publication of A.M. Massage

New Year Traditions



Traditions from
around the world.

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Hogmanay : The New Year in Scotland is called Hogmanay. People in Scotland follow a ritual that appears nutty but actually has a great significance. One can find barrels of tar set afire and gradually rolled down the streets in the villages of Scotland. This ritual symbolizes that the old year is burned up and New Year is going to begin.

Baby New Year Tradition : The tradition of using a baby to signify the New Year was started around 600 B.C by the ancient Greeks, who, at the start of a year would carry a baby around in a basket. The purpose of it was to honor Dionysus, the God of Fertility and symbolize his annual rebirth.

Burning "Mr. Old Year" : In Columbia, Cuba and Puerto Rico families stuff a life-size male doll with things and then they dress it up in old clothes from each family member. At the stroke of midnight, this 'Mr. Old Year' is set on fire. This is done with the simple belief that a doll thus stuffed have bad memories or sadness associated with them, and that the burning of these will help one to do away with all past grief and usher in happiness in life with the coming year.

Eating 12 Grapes : In Spain people eat 12 grapes as the clock strikes midnight (one each time the clock chimes) on New Year's Eve. This peculiar ritual originated in the twentieth century when freak weather conditions resulted in an unseasonable bumper harvest of grapes. Not able to decide what to do about so many grapes at Christmas time, the King of Spain and the grape growers came up with the idea of the New Year ritual. Now, if only this happened all around the world...

Eating Noodles : Late on the evening of Dec. 31, people of Japan eat a bowl of buckwheat noodles called "toshikoshisoba" ("year-crossing noodles") and listen for the sound of the Buddhist temple bells, which were rung 108 times at midnight. The sound of these bells is said to purify the listeners of the 108 sins or evil passions that plague every human being.

Gifts in Shoes : In Greece children leave their shoes by the fireside on New Year's Day (also the Festival of Saint Basil in Greece) with the hope that Saint Basil, who was famous for his kindness, will come and fill them with gifts.

Carrying a Suitcase : In Venezuela, Argentina, Bolivia, and Mexico, those with hopes of traveling in the New Year carry a suitcase around the house at midnight. Some even carry it around the block to ensure traveling at greater distances.

Burning Crackers : People in China believe that evil spirits roam the earth. So on New Year they burn crackers to scare the evil spirits. Doors and windows of every home in china are sealed with paper to keep the evil demons out.

Times Square Celebrations : The first Ball Lowering celebration atop One Times Square was held on December 31, 1907 and is now a worldwide symbol of the turn of the New Year, seen via satellite by more than one billion people each year. The original New Year's Eve Ball weighed 700 pounds and was 5 feet in diameter. It was made of iron and wood and was decorated with 100 25-watt light bulbs.

Foods : It was thought that one could affect the luck they would have throughout the coming year by what they did or ate on the first day of the year. It is still held in some regions that special New Year foods are the harbingers of luck. For that reason, the Dutch believe that eating donuts on New Year's Day will bring good fortune. The hog, and its meat, is considered lucky because it symbolizes prosperity. Cabbage is another "good luck" vegetable that is consumed on New Year's Day by many. Cabbage leaves are also considered a sign of prosperity, being representative of paper currency. In some regions, rice is a lucky food that is eaten on New Year's Day. The ancient Persians gave New Year's gifts of eggs, which symbolized productiveness.



Recipe of the Month

Eight Layer Casserole

Ingredients

- 3 cups dried medium noodles (6 ounces)
- 1 pound ground beef
- 2 8-ounce cans tomato sauce
- 1 teaspoon dried basil, crushed
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 8-ounce carton dairy sour cream
- 1 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/3 cup chopped onion (1 small)
- 1 10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach, cooked and well drained
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese (4 ounces)

Directions

1. Grease a 2-quart casserole or baking dish. Cook noodles according to package directions; drain.
2. In a large skillet cook beef until brown. Drain off fat. Stir tomato sauce, basil, sugar, garlic powder, salt, and pepper into skillet. Bring to boil; reduce heat. Simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes.

3. In a medium mixing bowl beat together the sour cream and cream cheese until smooth. Stir in milk and onion. In prepared baking dish, layer half of the noodles (about 2 cups), half of the meat mixture (about 1 1/2 cups), half of the cream cheese mixture (about 1 cup), and all of the spinach. Top with the remaining meat mixture and noodles. Cover and chill remaining cream cheese mixture until needed.

4. Cover baking dish with lightly greased foil. Bake in 350 degree oven about 45 minutes or until heated through. Uncover; spread with remaining cream cheese mixture. Sprinkle with the cheddar cheese. Bake, uncovered, about 10 minutes more or until cheese is melted. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

5. Makes 8 servings

6. Make-ahead directions: Prepare as directed through Step 3. Cover with lightly greased foil and chill for up to 24 hours. Bake for 1 hour or until heated through. Increase baking time to 1 hour, then continue with directions.

Nutrition Facts

Calories 472, Total Fat 30 g, Saturated Fat 17 g, Cholesterol 127 mg, Sodium 683 mg, Carbohydrate 25 g, Fiber 3 g, Protein 27 g.
Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet



Cheaper AND Hypoallergenic

The Green space

Dryer Balls

Sure, they've probably been around for a long time. I wouldn't know, because I just recently discovered this great alternative to using dryer sheets. So with the chance that there are unknowing others out there, I want to pass this along.

The dryer ball looks like a dog toy at first glance. And they would probably make great ones if I didn't have a better use for them in my dryer. They come in a pack of two, plastic balls with little stubby prongs all over them. And they are inexpensive, if you know where to go.

How Do They Work?

First, they work to cut down

on your drying time up to 25% by constantly separating clothes as they bounce around and creating space for air to get through and dry more efficiently.

Second, they make clothes softer by the small prongs that are all over the ball. The prongs massage the fibers and cause them to come out fluffy without using fabric softeners.

Third, this process also reduces static and lint, without the use of dryer sheets.

Where To Find Them

Check the stores where you buy your detergents from.

But they are also available online. But make sure you don't pay too much for them. They are a money saver, at only about \$10 for a set of two. I am not sure how many different kinds there are, but the picture shows what mine are like, so look for something similar.

What Else?

They are also hypoallergenic, since there are no chemicals used. And these balls last for years, without having to purchase anything else for drying clothes in my dryer. And who knows? Maybe, when they are old and worn out, my dogs will get their dog toy use out of them after all.

What's Goin' On

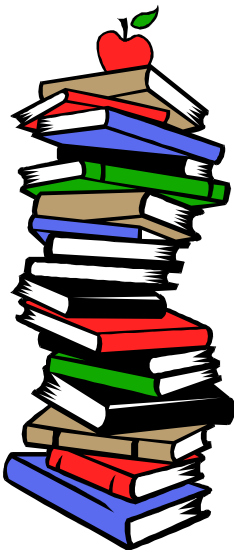
Did you know Gypsy who has her office in our suite loves books? No, I mean she REALLY loves books. All kinds of books.

Well, beginning this Thursday evening she will be hosting a reader's group in the lobby of AM Massage for all who want to come to discuss, bash, question or just enjoy books.

This will be a very informal group from 7-8 or so - drop in when you can, leave when you

must arrangement. The group will decide what books to read and a list will be posted on the gypsy website and announced here. The first book will be *The Shack* by Wm. Paul Young. The reading pace will be relaxed. The group will chose the next book.

If you'd like another time, day, let her know from the website www.gypsy2008.com or give her a call at 303 549 3332.



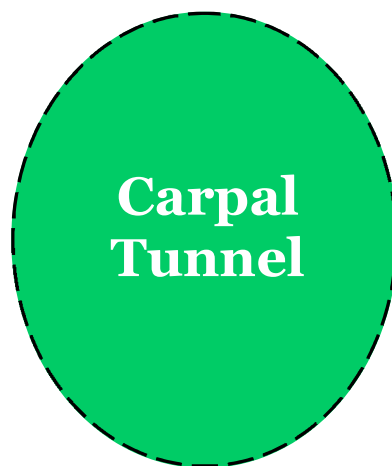
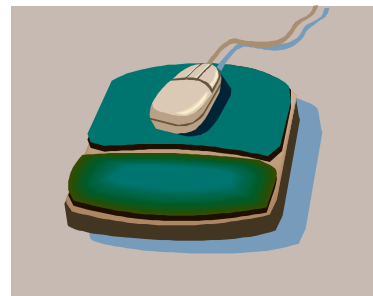
Stretch to Health

1. PULL THE FINGERS on your dominant hand (where the effects of CTS (carpal tunnel syndrome) are more likely to be severe) back and away from your palm. Relax your wrist and let it follow your fingers. Hold for five seconds and then repeat with the other hand.



2. WHILE STANDING, PUT BOTH HANDS, palms facing down, on the top of a desk or table with fingers facing in toward each other. Push down gently, and slowly let your wrists stretch backward. At first, your wrists will probably only extend a little less than 90 degrees. As you get more flexible, try deepening the stretch by moving your arms farther apart.

3. EXTEND YOUR FOREARMS parallel to the floor, palms facing down, and make fists with both hands. Now flex your wrists downward while keeping the fist. Hold for five.





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Of Current Interest

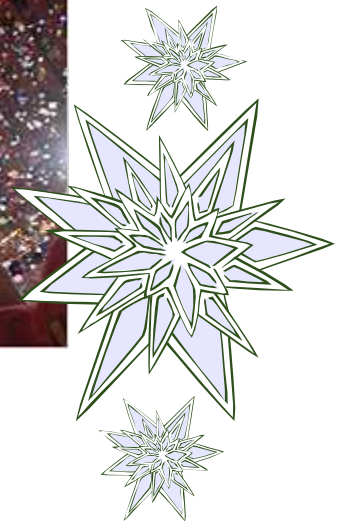
It's a BOY!

Denver Zoo is thrilled to announce the birth of a male De Brazza's Monkey named Kanoa! He was born to mother, Marinda and father, Kisoro, on November 27. This is the second birth for Kisoro, who came to Denver Zoo after being rescued from a black market in the Congo. Like his sister Kanani, born December 19, 2009, Kanoa is described as very independent and precocious despite his mother's early attempts to be protective. This makes his name all the more appropriate. "Kanoa" is Hawaiian for "free one."



Michael's Message

Happy New Year



**Let it
SNOW!!**

Happy new year everyone!! Sorry this newsletter is getting out so late, as most of you know I work at PAMA and all the holiday break remodeling really took over my life. The good news is the fixes are mostly done and I have time to spend at AM massage again, yeah! I hope all your holiday wishes

came true and all your new years resolutions come true as well.



Namaste,
Michael

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**DEAL OF THE
MONTH**

REFER A FRIEND
GET A FREE MASSAGE
(regularly - half off for 'Refer a Friend')