

News From The Astropoetic School

May 2014

Greetings from **The Astropoetic School of Soul Discovery** located in the heart of the galaxy on **Milky Way Farm** here in the beautiful Ozarks – where the dogwoods are going crazy with resplendence.

It has been a while since I sent out a newsletter – not because I've had nothing to report, but because I was too busy with the creative projects that have engaged me to tell you about them. But it seems past time to check in again, so here I am.

The Launch of My New Website

Most of you receiving this newsletter will know me through my work as an astrologer, teacher and author. But as I move more deeply into elderhood, I have embarked upon a new cooperative venture that is an extension and an expansion of the work that I have been doing on my own for the past 40+ years. This work revolves around a vision I received in the Utah desert in 2011 to create a mystery school-retreat for visionary contrarians.

A visionary contrarian is someone who:

- recognizes that the world is wounded
- refuses to participate in the wounded world because their integrity won't allow it, and
- is ready to tend the wounding they have received from the world and transmute it into a powerful, effective, visionary counterforce for change.

The school-retreat will conduct workshops, intensives, immersion programs (a series of residential intensives with home-based mentoring between intensives), ongoing classes, and residential training programs oriented around four primary soul tasks:

1. **tending sacred wounds** – The first focus of the school will revolve around tending the sacred wound that serves as the impetus of the soul's journey. This will be a natural orientation for those who come to the school-retreat because some aspect of their life has broken down, and they are feeling the need to re-create themselves in a more balanced, more fulfilling and more meaningful image.

I am defining sacred wound briefly as some combination of the following:

- the individual wounds that we bear in this life, in part from our dysfunctional family, and in part from our dysfunctional society;
 - a complex described as 'the wounded masculine' – born by all of us as a consequence of living in a patriarchal culture; and/or
 - the sense of separation that human beings have from the more-than-human world.
2. **cultivating a deep relationship with a visionary calling** – A second focus of the school will be to cultivate a deeper sense of visionary calling. This calling will invariably take the form of creative doing in the world, but doing that stems from a profound sense of being, mythopoetic identity, and purpose. Often visionary calling arises as an outgrowth of our soulful quest to tend our sacred wounds.
 3. **inviting dialogue between diverse intelligences** – As our third focus for soul work at the school, we will cultivate the art of cooperative dialogue with the diverse intelligences within the world – between human beings of different views, between humans and the more-than-human world of nature, and between the ego and the unseen dimensions of the world.
 4. **courting the mysteries of the mythopoetic realm** – The final soul task of the school underlies the other three, and becomes their crowning culmination. When we tend the sacred wound and cultivate visionary calling, we naturally enter into a deeper relationship with ourselves rooted in the mythopoetic dimensions of everyday life. As we interact with each other, with the more-than human-world and with the Soul of the World from this place of mythopoetic connection, we attain a level of wholeness capable of nurturing the Soul of the World and contributing to its wellbeing.

Since I had my vision I have been working with a small band of co-creative adventurers (our [Talking Council](#)) to put a foundation of substance beneath the vision, beginning with [two extraordinary workshops](#). Inspired by these offerings and the lives they have already begun to change, we have decided to go public this year - to reach out to our circle of friends and friends of friends, some of whom may feel the calling to join us.

As a first step in this direction, I offer you a look at our new website at yggdrasilretreat.com.

Yggdrasil is the name of the World Tree in Norse mythology, upon which the great visionary contrarian Odin hung for nine days to channel the magical language of the runes. We envision Yggdrasil, the school-retreat to be a place where souls ripe for transformation can gather to heal, and to learn from each

other, the more-than-human world, and the Animus Mundi – or Soul of the World – at the heart of the World Tree itself.

Our World is suffering greatly now, and needs us all to take our guidance from the Soul of the World, in whatever way we can. Yggdrasil will be a venue for responding to this need.

Feel free to look around our [website](#), and:

- [Contact us](#) with your questions, comments, and feedback.
- [Subscribe to our blog feed by email.](#)
- [Subscribe to our newsletter.](#)
- Like and follow our [Facebook page](#).
- Follow us on [Twitter](#).
- [Request our vision statement.](#)
- Attend a [workshop](#).
- Join the [Talking Council](#).

3rd Annual Tracking the Soul Workshop

**Hearthaven Retreat – Willow Springs, Missouri
November 13 – 17, 2014**

Based on my [book](#) of the same name, [Tracking the Soul](#) is an experiential workshop, integrating the exquisite spiritual psychology of the seven chakras with the intimately personal, image-based approach to astrology that I call astropoetics. The workshop brings the provocative theory of the astro-chakra system into real-life application in relation to core issues brought by participants. This is a venue for tending the sacred wound, and one of the two workshops that we are currently offering through Yggdrasil.

Beginning with a timeline of significant events in your life, and then mapping your astrological cycles to it, we gradually work our way toward a story of the particular thread of your soul's journey you are inspired to track. The story then becomes a launching pad for insight and meaningful changes. Said one participant about the process:

Here, Joe's skills truly came to the fore. He helped us all to see just how unique and valuable our life experiences, as illustrated by our chosen pattern, had been to our souls. Despite the suffering our stories revealed, I think we all felt acknowledged, and honored, in the sharing of them. We gained clues to shifting old patterns.

Included with this workshop are 3 preparatory lessons, designed to teach the basic astrology necessary to get the most value from the 4-day experience of the workshop itself. Each lesson will be customized for each student, based on their current level of familiarity with astrology and the chakra system. Each will include a homework assignment, and a follow-up 90-minute Skype consultation.

Lesson One will cover the chakra system, a psycho-spiritual adjunct to astrology, great for understanding how consciousness is being channeled through life experience.

Lesson Two will cover basic astrology, as it applies to the chakra system, and specifically as it applies to each student's chart. This lesson will be customized to meet each student at his or her current level of knowledge.

Lesson Three will help each participant identify core issues, determine which issue will be their focus in the workshop, and work out the time frame for tracking the relevant soul story.

The workshop itself will be our opportunity to share these soul stories, learn from them and from each other, and move the energy of insight into transformation through authentic movement and other experiential exercises. This is what two of last year's participants said about this powerful combination:

This is a truly experiential soul journey with a unique yogic and astropoetic flavor. It gave me the support and inner courage I needed to go through the confusion and disorientation of uncovering my core wound. I can still feel the empowering moment when my whole being, my own body, showed me how to shift out of fear and become more me. I now have a deeply embedded touchstone for that.

I would say that it was life altering. I feel that strongly and I don't say that lightly, because I've done some personal growth work before.

Limited to a small number of people, the workshop provides each participant with ample opportunity to be the loving center of group attention, while allowing plenty of alone time for integration. To supplement our group work, there will be an opportunity for bodywork, individual sessions, and daily yoga classes.

For more information, go [here](#).

To register, email me at jlandwehr@astropoetics.com.

A New Review

My third book [**Astrology and the Archetypal Power of Numbers, Part One**](#) just received a glowing review by Claudia Johnson, the new book reviewer for the [**ISAR Journal**](#) in its April 2014 issue:

This is one of those books designed to inspire – to breathe life into conversations . . . (The author) takes the cosmos, the stars, the psyche, Pythagoras, linguistics and the work of Arithmologists . . . and gives us a book . . . that you will want to have on your shelf for inspiration, for breaking through, for meditation, for illumination, and beautiful words . . . I recommend this book to anyone wishing to leap and/or relax into the sound of the heartbeat of the world. It's that good.

Thank you, Claudia. You can order, and read the complete introduction and table of contents to all my books, as well as reviews at my [**Ancient Tower Press**](#) website.

My Blog Series

This year, I am committed to writing more on my three blogs:

[**The Astropoetic School**](#)
[**Ancient Tower Press**](#)
[**Yggdrasil**](#)

Here's what I've done lately:

[**Chipping Away**](#) – On my Astropoetics blog, I write a 4-part series about what it actually takes to change a life, based on my experience teaching Tracking the Soul and other workshops over the course of the past 40+ years:

Like a sculptor armed with hammer and chisel and a block of stone – even a skilled sculptor – the soul armed with the tools of transformation can only carve a rough approximation of real life, inevitably shaped as much by what the soul can and cannot see as by the life that shapes the carving. The tools themselves are neutral. It is what we bring to them that matters and what we bring to them is ourselves – broken, questing for wholeness, always en route between here and some elusive horizon. All we can do is

show up – with the best intention we can muster and the sharpest tools at our disposal – and chip away.

[Toward a Working Definition of Soul](#) – On my Ancient Tower Press blog, I have recently posted Chapter One of my first book – [The Seven Gates of Soul: Reclaiming the Poetry of Everyday Life](#) – in its entirety as a 12-part series:

The perennial questions that soul poses – “Who am I?”, “Why am I here?”, “What is my place within the larger scheme of things?” and “What is the meaning and purpose of my existence?” – make sense only within the context of an embodied life. We would not be asking these questions were we not alive in physical form. To realize the full implication of this self-evident truth, is to require a broader definition of soul – one that encompasses both its spiritual essence and its physical containment within a body. Because this is so, I will talk about soul in a slightly different way than it is normally discussed.

[Calling All Dreamers](#) – On Yggdrasil’s blog, I have recently posted an 8-part series about the nature of dreaming and its relation to the waking state:

Most creative enterprises begin with a dream, and yet the reality of the dreamtime out of which the dream emerges is rarely acknowledged. Most of us take credit for what at best is really only partially ours. Yet, if we are honest with ourselves, we cannot truly say where our best ideas come from, or how exactly they evolve into what we shape them to be.

At Yggdrasil, we want to become more conscious about the source of our creative ideas and cultivate a more intentional partnership with the dreamtime. In this blog series, I explore this possibility and invite you to join us in a grand adventure.

[Ceres, Climate Change and the Bardo State](#) – Lastly, I invite you to stay tuned for a new article to be published in August/September issue of [The Mountain Astrologer](#).

Perhaps when a planet is promoted (or as in the case of Pluto, demoted), there may be a similar shift in metaphorical significance worth noting. If so, it is not unlikely that Ceres’ recent designation as a dwarf planet in 2006 by the International Astronomical Union parallels an important sea change in our understanding of who we are and what we are doing here on this physical planet of limits and consequences. In this article, I speculate about Ceres’ rising capacity to illuminate the current state of the anima mundi or soul of the world – given recent developments since her change in status.

Unsubscribing

You are on my mailing list because you were at one time interested in my work. You are automatically subscribed to this e-letter, which you will receive periodically (not more than three times a year). In it, I will share the latest news of my various projects in motion.

Hopefully this news will be of interest to you, but if it is not, please just let me know, and I will take you off the mailing list.

If you know anyone else who might be interested in this newsletter, please feel free to pass it on. But please also be discriminating and do not simply broadcast it to your entire list. No one likes spam, and in no way do I wish to generate it.

Please do let me know if any of this touches you, or you want more information about my books, my blog posts, my astrological consultations, my astrological correspondence course, my workshops, or my unfolding vision of a mystery school-retreat center.

Be well,
Joe Landwehr

The Astropoetic School of Soul-Discovery

Where Your Life is the Classroom

Ancient Tower Press

Celebrating the Sacred Mysteries

Yggdrasil Retreat

Where Visionary Contrarians Love to Hang

Connect with me on [Facebook](#), [Linked In](#),
[Plaxo](#) and [Twitter](#)

Quote for the month: *For this is what we do. Put one foot in front of the other. Lift our eyes to the snarl and smile of the world once more. Think. Act. Feel. Add our little consequence to the tides of good and evil that flood and drain the world. Drag our shadowed crosses into the hope of another night. Push our brave hearts into the promise of a new day. With love: the passionate search for a truth other than our own. With longing: the pure, ineffable yearning to be saved. For so long as fate keeps waiting, we live on. God help us. God forgive us. We live on.*

– from **Shantaram** by Gregory David Roberts.