



*The Mind is like a mirror- it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of Soul Wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions.*

-- H.P. Blavatsky

## A Year of Living "Silently"

In the silence of the winter months we gathered to discuss our upcoming newsletter. What did we want to share with our fellow Hollowers? Many ideas were discussed, but the one we kept circling back to was our group effort to study, understand and begin to embody the classic Theosophical text, *The Voice of the Silence* by H.P. Blavatsky. A beautifully poetic book, *The Voice of the Silence* can be read in a single evening. But, oh Lanoo\* do not be fooled, *The Voice of the Silence* is not to be read and ingested in an evening, a day, a week or a year. Nevertheless, the Pumpkin Hollow Study Group endeavored to delve into her beauty and silently plant the seeds of her wisdom here at Pumpkin Hollow.

In the winter months of 2016 we met weekly to read and discuss her beautiful poetry. As summer approached, we turned our attention to Rohit Mehta's *The Creative Silence*, an analysis in prose of our chosen subject. When the hot days of summer were ending we prepared to host and take part in the Northeast Theosophical Federation program featuring *The Voice of the Silence*. And in October, as we did in the spring, we welcomed people to our Silent Retreat using *The Voice of the Silence* as inspiration.

What did we learn from our study of *The Voice of the Silence*? The truth is that we are still absorbing her wisdom and endeavoring to live up to the universal ideas she puts forth. Part of Pumpkin Hollow's vision is to use the insight conveyed in *The Voice of the Silence* to guide our inner motivations and at the same time direct those principles in action.

Principles to live by, as expressed in *The Voice of the Silence*, are thus: DANA, generosity without judgement; SHILA, harmony in word and deed comes from the awareness of all life; KSHANTI, patience sweet that naught can ruffle; VIRAG, the light of discernment, neither to accept nor reject a view without color; VIRYA, dauntless energy is to be fearless and without doubt, sustaining the pilgrimage of the Soul; DHYANA, meditation, a quiet mind, the heart space of deep peace; PRAJNA, Wisdom, Truth, Oneness.

May the 'Silence' of Pumpkin Hollow be a source of refuge and renewal for you, our fellow Hollowers, and all who have yet to visit here.

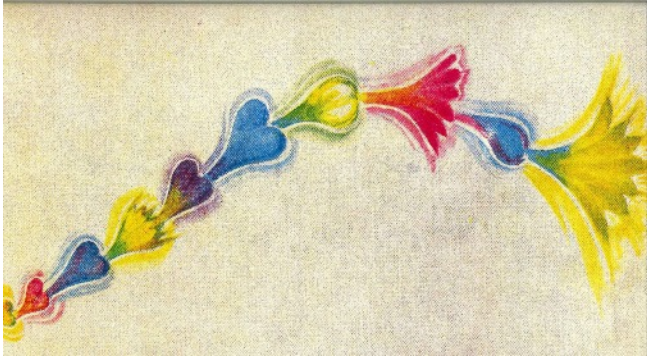
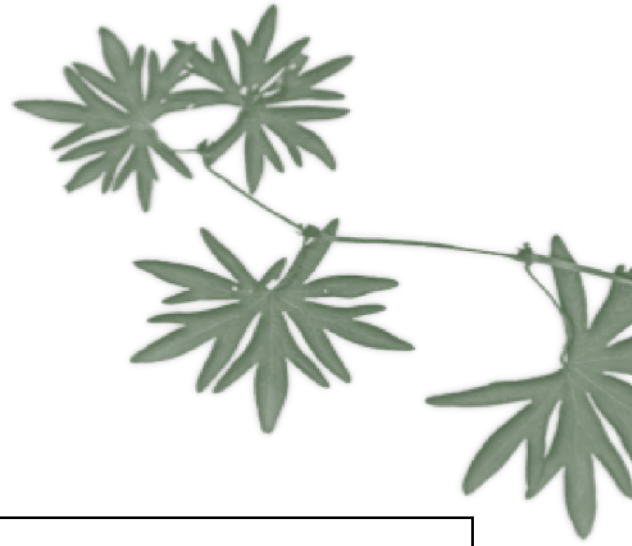
\* Lanoo is a Sanskrit word for student, a seeker of truth.

Have patience, Candidate,  
as one who fears no  
failure, courts no success.  
Fix thy Soul's gaze upon  
the star thou art, the  
flaming star that shines  
within the lightless depths  
of ever-being, the  
boundless fields of the  
Unknown.

Be humble, if thou would'st  
attain to Wisdom.  
Be humbler still when  
Wisdom thou hast  
mastered.  
Be like the Ocean which  
receives all streams and  
rivers.  
The Ocean's mighty calm  
remains unmoved; it feels  
them not.

- H.P. Blavatsky, Voice of the  
Silence

# Melodies of Pumpkin Hollow



*"Song Ribbon" Musical notes sung as perceived by Geoffrey Hodson in his book "Music Forms"*

If you have visited Pumpkin Hollow chances are you have sung one of the many songs we here at the Hollow consider "*ours*." Perhaps, you sang the wonderfully unique birthday song, "Happy Birthday to you, happy birthday to me, every day we are born, every day we are free." Or maybe, you were in the dining room when Carolyn led you in an uplifting call and response rendition of "Open My Heart." Possibly, you were here for a Summer Solstice celebration when song fills the evening air with a myriad of old-time Hollow favorites like "Down on the Farm" and "Spiraling to the Center." There is a long tradition of song here at the Hollow, not only for the communal joy it gives, but also for the spiritual enrichment it offers.

Dora Kunz, one of Pumpkin Hollow's founders, understood that one of Pumpkin Hollow's truest gifts was her ability to help visitors commune with Nature, "to feel kinship with a tree," and in so doing expand their emotional body. Dora taught that if we could become, in a small way, as conscious of our auras as we are of our physical form, and with awareness of the emotional body help it along, we would notice big changes in our daily life. The songs we sing here at the Hollow help us experience the uplifting power of emotion through meditation song and movement. Each time we lift our voices in song it is cleansing for ourselves and helpful to others by making a contribution to the reservoir of goodwill in the world.

We welcome all who visit us to partake in the joy and inspirational fellowship of song.

## Open My Heart

Open my heart, let love pour through me.  
Center my soul upon the path of peace.  
Make of my life a melody of love,  
Singing alleluia (3x)

Open my body to the rainbow of heaven.  
Open my mind to the knowing within.  
Open my spirit to the manifest power.  
Open my heart to the love all around.  
Open (4x)







# Greetings from the Hollow



*"It is love of man which makes karma into karma yoga."*

*—Ernest Wood*

The serenity, peace and natural wonder of Pumpkin Hollow are among the many gifts she offers to all her visitors. As H.P. Blavatsky said in *The Voice of the Silence*, "Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance."

Pumpkin Hollow is fortunate to have many volunteers who help sustain, nourish and work to ensure that it is a haven for Nature and her kingdom. We would like to thank all our volunteers who continually demonstrate that "it is love of man which makes karma into karma yoga."

This season we welcome Collins Birmingham to our full time resident staff, helping in maintenance and grounds. He arrives in April and we would like to wish him a hearty welcome. We'd also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Peggy Nichols, our devoted garden fairy, as well as longtime Hollowers and volunteers, John and Susan O'Neill, for their tireless dedication to the Hollow.

*We wish for all who come to Pumpkin Hollow the peace and serenity of her sacred space.*

With your generosity, since 2007 there have been continuous capital improvements to all the cabins, the barn including solar panels, a new maintenance center, kitchen and dining room insulation and makeover; and this year, painting The Bridge, and a new kitchen septic field. In this, Pumpkin Hollow's 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary year (1937-2017), we begin fundraising for the Farmhouse Renovation, with the initial target of a new roof for the main house this Fall.

Pumpkin Hollow Foundation Inc. is 501(c)(3)non-profit. Financial contributions insure continuity of growth and well-being in our sanctuary. Pumpkin Hollow depends on your generosity. You can also visit our wish list on [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com).

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For complete information about program descriptions, registration and program fees visit our web site at [www.pumpkinhollow.org](http://www.pumpkinhollow.org) or contact the office: (518) 325-3583; email [pumpkin@taconic.net](mailto:pumpkin@taconic.net). Programs are added throughout the year.

Yes! I want to support Pumpkin Hollow Retreat Center and its continuing growth.

I have enclosed a tax-deductible contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card: (Circle) Visa    Master Card    # \_\_\_\_\_    Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Check one:                      Please use my contribution where it is most needed.

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*Pumpkin Hollow Retreat Center*



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