

FENG WHAT?

Good karma in the Year of the Dog

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Got the New Year blahs? Cheer up. 2006 is the year of the dog according to the Chinese feng shui horoscope and a chance to leave '05 in the dust.

Who knew that Fluffy in his rhinestone collar could be so influential and wise?

This year, instead of making the same list of resolutions — like throwing out your embarrassing collection of Debbie Gibson tapes, getting your teeth whitened or taking up a hobby like backgammon — why not feng shui?

Certified classical feng shui (pronounced fung-schway) practitioner Linda Ellson has more than 12 years experience counseling corporate and residential clients in the art of what literally translates into “wind and water,” which includes living in harmony with the environment. Ellson described her craft as “helping you to balance and harmonize your home and business.”

She offered some quick and low-budget fixes for '06.

“Each year energy shifts a bit throughout our personal spaces with the Chinese New Year, which is on January 29th. The best area to enhance is in the North. Add crystals here to give your career a boost,” she said.

How it works

To demonstrate the powers of feng shui, Ellson agreed to come to my house and work her magic in my living room and office. Beginning the new year in the right direction — in my case southeast, symbolize wealth and success — Ellson plugged my date of birth (1977), the year my home was built (1900), and the direction it faces (east, symbolizing family and longevity) into the feng shui compass, called the Pa Kua. After a number of “feng shui calculations,” she devised a plan to take full advantage of power energy positions and to balance the five elements: Earth, fire, metal, water and wood in my home decor.

Feng Shui fixes on a budget

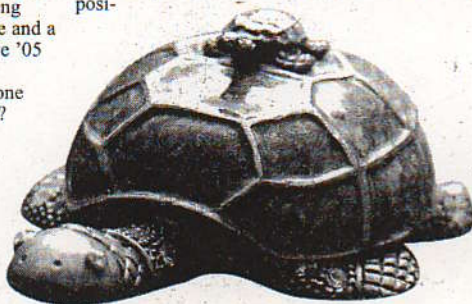
Ellson's first observation was that my house faces east, and the living room faces Southeast, symbolizing wealth and prosperity.

If you want to look up the direction of your home, log onto Yahoo or Google maps. Plug in your address and use the compass on the screen to chart your direction.

Because water and metal were my primary and secondary power elements, Ellson focused on “tapping into the rhythm of these posi-

to it. The more earth you add, the cloudier it becomes until it's thick like mud and you can't see the water.”

She suggested adding more water in the form of colors: blue and black or pictures of water and sky. A cost effective way to do this, she said, is by painting the walls a deep



Turtles symbolize support and the Earth. They promote good karma

PHOTO BY JAYNE BURKE

tive forces in a mindful way.” She then went around the room playing “feng shui detective,” noticing the different elements in the room and making sure they were in equilibrium. She explained that by adding new items to the room, or by simply rearranging existing furniture, I would be able to tap into positive energy for career, prosperity, travel or family and relationships. Here's what she came up with.

Ellson noticed there was too much earth element in the room, between the light green wall colors, square tables and color of the wood floors (all symbolize earth). She gave the following analogy to illustrate balance.

“Imagine a cup of water and you add earth

blue. Or, if you are unable to paint the walls in an apartment, add a water feature or small fountain in the room.

“Water adds flow for finances and deep blue walls increase the flow of prosperity. Energy travels most importantly along the walls,” Ellson said.

Too much wood was also throwing the positive energy in the room out of whack. Between the wood floors, desk and plants, wood was consuming the room. Ellson suggested a colorful, decorative rug with blue and black accents to tie in all of the elements. She also recommended relocating the plants on the desk to other areas of the house.

Ellson approved of the green and bronze turtles on the desk, saying “turtles represent support and the Earth.” But she added that the television could be hidden behind an armoire and the couch should be moved in front of a solid wall for support.

Her final suggestion was to promote prosperity by purchasing a piece of citrine, a brownish yellow semi-precious stone, to keep in the southeast corner of the living room.

“I suggest that people keep a piece in their pocket and wallet if they want to increase cash flow,” she said.

Ellson's final thought was to “surround yourself with the things that make you happy.”

For example, if travel is on your wish list for the new year, leave travel brochures in plain sight to help make your dreams a reality.



PHOTO BY JAYNE BURKE

Surround yourself with objects that help remind you of your goals.

10 feng shui tips for the New Year

contributed by Linda Ellson

In General

1. Keep clutter to a minimum. Before purchasing that swanky pair of Coach fur-lined ski boots, be sure you absolutely can't live without them. Then donate last season's dated Steve Madden to charity.
2. To the men in our lives. Keep bathroom doors closed and toilet lids down.
3. If something in your home is broken, fix it.
4. Don't make the TV the focal point of your living room. Enclose bulky electronic equipment in an armoire or use a large decorative fan or fire screen to obscure the view.
5. Couches and chairs should be placed in a conversational circle to keep communication flowing. The back of the couch should abut a solid wall for support.

In the Bedroom

6. Sleep with your head against a solid wall, if possible.
7. Sleep in a bed big enough for two even if you're single. Thinking in pairs and acting “as if” promotes the positive energy you'll need to find a partner, if you're looking. In that vein, make sure bedside tables and lamps come in two's for equality among couples.
8. Get rid of mirrors in the bedroom by covering them or taking them down.
9. Keep the TV out of the bedroom, think rest and romance instead.
10. Do you rely on the serene sounds of water emanating from your plug in fountain to lull you off to sleep at night? Buy a relaxation tape instead. Fountains, aquariums and other water features should stay out of the bedroom. They can contribute to financial loss.

Can the clutter

Feng shui courses

- Sat., Feb. 4, 1-3 p.m. — Chinese New Year Annual Energy Change class
 - Thursday, March 30, 7-9 p.m. — “Feng Shui Basics”
 - Thursday, April 6, 7-9 p.m. — “Cleaning Clutter with Feng Shui”
 - Saturday, May 6, 1-3 p.m. — “Advanced Feng Shui”
- Above classes taught at the Northeast Holistic Health and Education Center, 1961 Wehrle Drive, Williamsville.
- Sat., Aug. 26th 1-4 p.m. — “Creating Love and Balance in Your Personal Relationships with Feng Shui” at the Lily Dale Assembly, Lily Dale.
- To register, call (716) 626-1585 or e-mail twofeathers@northeastholistic.com