

CHINESE NEW YEAR 2007
“THE YEAR OF THE RED PIG”
(PIG TRAVERSING A MOUNTAIN)

18 FEB 2007
 © Malvin Artley

Hour	Day	Month	Year
Stem: 7 Yang Metal	Stem: 9 Yang Water	Stem: 9 Yang Water	Stem: 4 yin fire
Branch: I Water Rat <i>Rat on the Crossbeam</i>	Branch: VII Fire Horse <i>Way Horse</i>	Branch: III Wood Tiger <i>Tiger Crossing the Forest</i>	Branch: XII Water Pig <i>Pig Traversing a Mountain</i>
Combined Earth <i>Earthen Walls</i>	Combined Wood <i>Pliant Wood</i>	Combined Metal <i>Bronze Mirror</i>	Combined Earth <i>Rooftop Slates</i>

CHART

Name: CHINESE NEW YEAR 2007
 Date/Time: 18 Feb 2007, 0:14 am (AWST -8:00) [4:14 PM UT 17 Feb]
 Adjusted: 17 Feb 2007, 11:45 pm (LAT -7:31:39)
 THE CHINESE CALENDAR

Solar Period (Fortnightly Festival Period): 1 Spring commences (N); Autumn commences (S)
The eye bound by the luster of jewels blinds one from future profits. 17 Feb (Nighttime)

Or

Does the mountain collapse from its own height? 17 Feb (Daytime)

Or

Self-protection leaves one in the abyss. Even worms follow their upward course unprotected.
 18 Feb (Nighttime)

Happy Chinese New Year Everyone!

This letter will be a bit long, but it is necessary in order that we get the full meaning of what this year means and what it will bring for us. Let's begin by taking a little step back in time.....

Sleep can be a blessed thing. As the dusk began to give way to night at the station, the Red Dog settled down for the evening. His belly full and his mind still racing from the day's events, he looked forward to a rest with his mates and a night spent dreaming of what might come on the morrow. This particular flock of sheep had been quite difficult that day and all the dogs at the station had been worked hard driving them in for their annual shearing. The job was done, though, and the rest was well deserved. They had even had time to take a few dips in the dam at the station and to chase away a couple of 'roos who had ventured too close to the housing. They had fun chasing the 'roos, but to be kicked by one wasn't particularly pleasant, and a couple of his mates in the past had met their demise that way. There was no love lost between the Red Dog and the neighboring kangaroos. Still, it was fun to run them off. Just after he had settled, though, the hair stood up on his back and the sheep began to get restless and mill around in an unsettled manner. The Red

Dog sat up and drew the air in through his nose. No, it couldn't be smoke, he thought. Just then he heard the phone ring in the station house and, before he knew it, the farmer and his family came running from the house and turned on all the lights, shouting and rousing all hired hands at the property and the dogs. Fire! There was a large grass fire that had started a kilometer away and the wind was bringing it toward the station. There was no time to waste. The sheep had to be moved, or everything would be lost. The Red Dog's instinct for sensing danger had served him well.

There was a cleared paddock about several hundred meters beyond the dam where the grass had been eaten down to stubble. The sheep would be safe there—certainly safer than where they were. Getting there was a problem, though, and they may not get the sheep there in time. What to do?—and then a brilliant idea flashed through the station owner's mind—run all the sheep through the deepest part of the dam and soak them in case they got caught in the fire. At least, then, they might have a chance. They had to go around the dam anyway to get to the cleared area beyond. They may as well make use of their resources there. **Anything securing the future is justified.** So, it was done. The hired hands opened all the gates and the owner set the dogs upon the sheep, herding them toward the waters of the dam. Now, it is difficult to move 200 sheep in the best of circumstances, but when they are nervous about an approaching fire and reluctant to take a swim, life gets even more interesting. The hands and the dogs had their work cut out for them.

For the next several hours they worked furiously. Two dogs were placed at the opposite side of the dam to keep the sheep in line when they came through and three dogs drove them into and through the dam. It took over an hour to get them all through, but eventually all the dogs and the hands, along with 200 soggy sheep were well on their way to the cleared paddock—and none-too-soon either, for the fire was in site of the station houses now and all hands had to be rushed back to hose everything down once the sheep were safely locked in. It had been a big night, and everyone was exhausted, especially the dogs, but the station and the sheep were safe. As the Red Dog made his way back to the station, he was even too tired to chase off the 'roo he saw in the distance. It would have to wait until morning, he thought. All he wanted to do was to take another dip in the dam to cool himself down and settle down for a much-deserved sleep, and sleep eventually did overtake him. Danger averted, as dawn broke at the station the Red Dog was awakened by the sound of the station owner's approaching foot steps. Wagging his tail and rolling onto his back to greet him, the Red Dog was too tired to do much else. "Rest, boy." The station owner said. The owner knew to **take rest when it is needed, for even the finest machine will break if it is run too hard.** "You lot did well last night. No moving sheep today. Sleep all day if you want, but if you get a chance, the 'roos are gathering around the dam." "Roos! ", the Red Dog jumped up. Tired or not, no 'roo was going to get the best of him and, with that, the Red Dog and his mates set out about their entertainment for the day. They could all take their well-deserved rest after a little bit of fun.

Why am I starting with the story for last year when this year is about the Red Pig?—context, actually. Without understanding what went on last year at a subjective level the story for the Red Pig would have little meaning. I recently gave a talk on the coming lunar year and began it with a show of hands. I asked first how many people had enjoyed a happy year in 2006. Only a few hands in the audience went up. I then asked how many people had a difficult year. Better than three quarters of the people in the room raised their hands. In talking with a great many folks over the past year, most have stated that they would be happy to see the back side of 2006, the Year of the Sleeping Dog. As I stated in the last new moon letter, "...there is a point to be made here with regard to why 2006 has seemed to be a time in which so many people have felt stuck or bogged down in personal matters and seemingly unable to advance from a higher perspective and to somehow be able to make their dreams in life materialize. The main reason for that has been the persistent and sometimes overbearing influence of the Earth Element throughout 2006. The 'count' [out of 12 possible, and we will look at that more next time] for Earth has been as high as 7, 6 for a couple of months and never lower than 3, which gives reliability at the lowest count and a soul-defying stubbornness at the highest. This month that count of 6 or 7 is in effect for no less than 8 time zones—a third of the world—and will be strongly felt in eastern Australia. Hence, we will continue to see that certain people or sectors of society will still be unwilling to move from entrenched positions and too insecure to change."

Firstly, in explaining how last year played out, the stage will be set for getting an idea of how this year will go. Last year, as we saw, the Element Earth was in the ascendancy. It ruled the year in many ways, even though Fire ruled the Year Pillar. Earth is associated with the planet Saturn in Chinese astrology and Saturn, as we know, is intimately tied up with the notion of karma and restriction. People felt like God was out to get them in general. The seers I have talked to over the year all said something similar—a lot of old ‘stuff’ is being pulled out of people’s psyches at the moment in order to bring about an accelerated healing in the world. What has exacerbated the ‘karmic overflow’ is that there has been very little Metal available for people this past year. That will be a little better in the year of the Pig, but not by much. Happily, the Earth will be toned down to a greater degree and the Element ‘count’ will be more balanced. Metal is the Element that gives one ‘intestinal fortitude’—the ability to stand up and be counted in the face of life’s trials and challenges. It rules the ‘animal spirit’—‘guts’, in other words. It gives us the strength to speak and live our truth and to prove our mettle. It has been in short supply and people have felt as though they have been pummeled by life and unable to move forward with things as a result. That brings us to how we look at and interpret the Four Pillars diagrams, like the one at the head of this letter. It is important that we get a feel for this, for it tells us how the year will work at a subjective level.

You will notice that there are four vertical columns, one each for the Hour, Day, Month and Year. Under each heading we see that there are three boxes in each column, and that each box is assigned an Element. The Element at the top of each column is called the ‘Master’ Element for each column, and that Element rules the qualities associated with that particular Pillar. Once the count is taken of all twelve boxes and the Elements are tallied and weighted, one can get a view at a glance of how the various aspects of life will be affected, whether for an individual or a group of people. To give a quick synopsis of what each Pillar represents, we have the following:

Hour=friends, children and creative output

Day=the Self and one’s partner

Month=the immediate family, aunts, uncles and first cousins/also local government and service organizations

Year=the world at large, extended family and ancestors, society, our work in the world and national governments

So, when we look at the Year, we are looking at the energies that will be extant for the world at large and that will shape the social fabric for the year to come. It also governs the blessings the Ancestors bestow upon us for the Year and where that will be most strongly expressed. The Year Master for both this year and last is Fire.

The next thing we need to consider is that Animals ‘run’ in pairs in Chinese astrology, and the Dog and the Pig happen to be one such pair, that pairing ruling family, home and hearth. People have had to make big decisions around the home and family in this Dog Year, and with all the Earth in evidence, there has been a lot of unfinished business with which to contend. In the Five Element system, Fire ‘feeds’ Earth, so the energy of the Year Master has served to accelerate the energy of Earth and has thus produced a huge karmic clearing throughout the world. Excess Earth also produces extremes of climate and puts a great deal of stress upon the land. Australia has been in the grips of a major drought and fires have raged over the past month or so. The Northern Hemisphere has been gripped by bitter cold and extremes of precipitation. There were also large fires in the North during the Northern summer. Families and intimate relations have been stressed to the breaking point in many instances and there has been little in the way of security at an emotional level. The Dog and Pig are the last two animals in the Chinese ‘zodiac’ and in that we see that there is always something finishing prior to the start of something new when those two animal signs are in evidence. We have all been dealing with a large amount of ‘unfinished business’ this year, some of it being very ancient in its origins. In the Year of the Red Pig we will garner the accumulated wisdom from the year about to pass.

Finally, in considering the Four Pillars, the Elements all interact and have an endlessly repeating cycle of their own. They both generate and control one another. The *generating cycle* goes like this:

Wood fuels **Fire**, which produces **Earth** (ash), which when smelted, gives us **Metal**, which when heated enough, produces **Water** (liquid metal), which when evaporated, forms clouds and falls as rain, enabling Wood to grow. And the cycle starts all over again.

We see implicit in this cycle the idea of *heat*. Fire is the master Element, for without it, nothing transforms. So, we also see that Fire governs transformation. Hence, both this year and last will be and have been years of transformation and growth—hopefully.

The *controlling cycle* works as follows:

Wood covers and binds **Earth**, which absorbs, shapes and governs the course of **Water**, which can cool or even put out **Fire**, which can melt **Metal** or render it too pliable to be of use. Metal, when strong, will cut Wood, and the cycle endlessly repeats.

If the generating cycle forms a circle with the Elements placed equally around it, the controlling cycle inscribes a five-pointed star within the circle. This, along with the above, gives us all we need for a basic interpretation of the Four Pillars. I have had requests from some readers wanting to know how it all works, and this is how. There is a lot more to it, of course, but the preceding will give us the basic outline for proceeding with our interpretation for the year to come. At a glance, the Element ‘counts’ for Australia last year, month by month, were as follows:

	Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
Jan	3	3	3	1	2
Feb	2	4	4	1	1
Mar	0	3	5	2	2
Apr	1	3	3	1	4
May	2	3	5	2	0
Jun	1	3	7	1	0
Jul	3	3	3	1	2
Aug	2	3	4	2	1
Sep	3	4	3	1	1
Oct	2	1	6	2	1
Nov	4	1	5	0	2
Dec	2	1	4	1	4
Jan	1	2	7	1	1

At a glance we notice several key points about the year that was. Earth was strong all year, as we have seen. Fire was strong and steady for two thirds of the year, being weak the last third. As a result, all the other Elements were weakened except from October through December (remembering that we are talking about the period from the new moon of each of each month). Since Fire produces Earth, Earth was doubly strengthened all year. There was little in the way of Water to control the Fire, except in April and December. Hence, we had a dynamic wherein we were heavily under the subjective influences of Mars (being the Fire Planet) and Saturn (the Earth Planet) for the biggest part of the year—in old terms, the two malefics. The Year Master did its work in grand style, aided by the surfeit of Earth, and we thus had a scenario wherein there has been a massive work of psychic clearing going on throughout the year. It has been a period of brilliant spiritual

opportunity and the stage has been set wherein we can now walk into a much brighter future with far fewer encumbrances than would have otherwise been the case. Venus (the Metal Planet) was in abeyance, as was Mercury (the Water Planet), so it was difficult for people to see their way out of situations, or to feel the love in them, and there were only scattered times wherein Jupiter (the Wood Planet) gave us any feeling of expansiveness and openness.

However, there was an interesting scenario at the December new moon (from 20 Dec-19 Jan). At that time there was a window of opportunity that allowed people to make some important choices about their direction and future. Fire was weakened, meaning it could not produce much Earth. Mars and Saturn subsided. The heavy karmic currents were shut down long enough for people to see their way clear of things. The light of intuition (Water) shone through and held the clearing fires at bay. The time for decisions had come (Rat on the Crossbeam month). Notice there was only a count of one for Metal. Although the decision could be made, the time for *acting* upon it was still to come. January saw a resurgence of Saturn, so people felt stuck once again, but some important issues were seen in their true light as a result. Now, as we enter the New Year and the month of the Tiger (which is always the start of the lunar New Year), the time for *action* upon December decisions is upon us. That brings us to the Year of the Red Pig and the opening of a new chapter on things.

There is no turning back. The scent of smoke was beginning to lift as the midnight hour came and passed. The air cleared on the ascent up the mountain slope as the fires raged on in the now-distant valley behind the mountain. The climb had been difficult at first, but the Red Pig soon found herself upon more level terrain as a plateau was reached in her journey across the mountain. Driven from familiar feeding grounds in the forested valleys by the fire, she was in unfamiliar territory now. The ground was rocky and the vegetation was getting more and more sparse the further up the slope she had climbed. Pausing on the plateau and resting herself, she turned and looked back at the red haze that ominously embraced the horizon she had left behind hours ago. All that she had known was now engulfed in flames. The summer heat had done its work in the area and the lack of rain had combined with it to make the land ready for the purifying fires that inevitably came to kiss the land and make way for new life to take the place of what had been. It was just as well, the Red Pig thought to herself. The fire was just the push she needed to move her along from a life that had been growing ever more difficult.

The forest where the Red Pig had lived had not seen fire in a long time and it had become choked with undergrowth and litter on the forest floor. With the lack of rain the forest floor was hard and the Red Pig's poor snout had borne the brunt of it in the past months. What she wouldn't give now for a succulent, moist tuber or a grub from the base of a tree! Her stomach rumbled as the night wore on, but from the plateau she could see the forested areas beyond—and a small lake in the distance! Yes, water! She could be very happy there, she thought. Surely the fire wouldn't get that far. There was certainly nothing now in the valley she had left behind, and it would be another year before she could return, if she even wanted to at that point. Life had driven her forth, and new adventures awaited her. Who knows what she might find in the valley beyond? Time would tell, but her course was now set. **There were still obstacles to overcome on the way, but determination would bring the desired result.** Yes, she would reach her distant valley and start a new life. **Anything securing that future was justified,** she thought, so she got up and pressed on. And, as the Red Pig left the plateau and started her next climb up the mountain slope, a water-bomber plane roared its way overhead to the fires beyond. She could smell the water as it flew past, and it had come from her distant lake. What she wouldn't also give for a cool drink now! That lake beyond was looking better and better to the Red Pig. The dawn would find her in a much better place.

In the Year of the Red Dog we were admonished to “take rest when it is needed”, and that “sleep can be a blessed thing”. In other words, last year we see that we should have taken a lot of time out to sit and reflect upon things and lay the cares of the world aside when possible, otherwise we would be prone to burn ourselves out. This year, we see that “there is no turning back” from the decisions made last year. Really, once Fire has done its work, it is pointless to look back over old ground and fruitless as well. We see also that “there are still obstacles to overcome, but that determination will bring the desired result.” We have to

stick to our guns, in other words, move forward and not look backward. We see, too, that for this year as with the last year “anything securing the future we need to have is justified.” If we could see issues from a higher perspective I think we would become aware that a big piece of subjective clearing work was done last year at the individual level. Now it is time to set ourselves about the business of learning from what we have experienced, sharing it amongst ourselves and setting ourselves up for the coming new cycle to commence in the Year of the Yellow Rat in 2008. With that, we will have the following Element counts for Australia in the Year of the Red Pig:

	Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
Feb	3	1	3	1	4
Mar	2	3	1	1	5
Apr	2	3	4	2	1
May	3	3	1	3	2
Jun	1	4	2	2	3
Jul	1	3	4	1	3
Aug	2	1	7	1	1
Sep	0	1	5	2	4
Oct	1	2	6	2	1
Nov	0	2	5	3	2
Dec	3	1	4	0	4
Jan	1	2	4	2	1

Pig years are always Yin. Yin Fire is a gentle, warming Fire. It is not burning and bombastic like the Yang Fire of last year. This will be a gentler, more inward year. Yang changes the structure of things. Yin changes the substance of things. This year will be about substance or essence, getting back in touch with our center and rebuilding upon new foundations, since many of the old ones were altered or crumbled last year. Pigs are known for their love of family life and communal living. They are workers toward the future and are highly security-driven. A point about this year has to be made now. I was recently asked to comment on what I knew about this being a Golden Pig year. Apparently there is a big ‘to do’ in Korea about this and it is claimed—without it ever being satisfactorily verified—that an old Korean text states that this is to be a Golden Pig year. I will have throw in my bit here and say that is not the case. This is not a Golden Pig year. That year will come in another 24 years in the Year of the Farmer (White) Pig. The Element that is associated with gold is, of course, Metal. That year will have two of the boxes in the Year Pillar containing Metal, with Metal as the Year Master. Golden Pig years are supposed to be blessed years for children and children born in those years are said to be gifted, bringing honor to their families and wealth to the land. It is a big deal in the East. So, for those who thought this was to be a particularly auspicious year, I do not mean to throw a wet blanket on it, but all the evidence points to the fact that the Year of the Golden Pig will take place in 2031. That being said let us have a look at the Elements throughout the year and see what we have in store for us.

We start the year on a particularly cheerful and uplifting note, compared to last year this time. We see that Water has the highest count, completely swamping Fire, which helps Metal and feeds Wood. Wood and Water rule the first month of this year, which will segue nicely into March. What this means is that we have Jupiter and Mercury in the ascendancy for the first two months of the Pig year. We will *know* what we have to do, because Mercury (Water) rules the intuition, and Jupiter (Wood) will help us to expand into that. If you want to move on your plans, from mid-February to mid-April would be the time to do so, but especially this lunar month (Tiger month). We start to get a bit bogged down again after that because Fire and Earth enter into a dynamic similar to what we had last year, although on a gentler note. The Pig is a Water Animal

in Chinese astrology, even though the Year Master is Fire, but in this combination we have the possibility for very strong sacrifices made for the sake of love. The most testing time of the year will be from mid-August to the start of November. In Western terms, Venus will be retrograde for much of that period and hovering around Saturn and there is a Moon wobble at the last of August, too. It does not sound like a particularly cheerful time by any standards. That will be the time of year to go inward and retreat. It is the tail end of the coldest part of the year for Australia anyway, so it is better to curl up in front of the fire with a loved one than to be too concerned with life outside of home. Sounds good to me.

December will be a very creative interlude—still a very inward time, but great for all sorts of meditative, contemplative or artistic work. Fire (Mars) is actually under a fair amount of stress throughout the year, figuratively speaking. Either it receives no support from (is not fed by) Wood, it is largely suppressed by Water, or it is drained by excess Earth. So, we will be more gently warmed in 2007 than ‘out of the frying pan into the fire’. A quick look at the Element count will show us the dynamic. Fire’s best period for the year is in April and May. That will be a time wherein some wonderful healing and inwardly transformative work can take place. In April and May we will see the most natural expression for the Year of the Red Pig. The first four months of the year will be dedicated toward putting the past behind. After that we should be building solidly for the future. The difficult period toward the last of the year can be largely offset if we get the first part of the year correct. As we saw, there will be obstacles to overcome, but if we can see that last period of the year through we will come out ahead and achieve what we want. On the whole the second half of the year will play out one of two ways—either it will be a period of frustration or it will be a time wherein some very solid work for the future can take place—that is, if we are on the right track. The second half of the year will be frustrating if we get the first half wrong. As we saw, though, the intuition will be much stronger in the first half of the year, so we should be able to see our paths clearly.

As for what all the preceding means for the world, since the Year Master is under stress for most of the year, national governments will have to answer more to the people than they have in the past. There is a lame duck president in the White House now, seen to by the Year of the Red Dog and various countries such as Australia and the UK are having elections this year. The potential is there for some very sweeping changes in governments. There is widespread and growing opposition to the war in Iraq and people are not happy with many of the reforms put in place by governments over the past ten years. The average ‘battler’ (citizen) is doing it tougher than ever and the gap between rich and poor has reached the point to where it is obscene. Public discontent is on the rise, and 2007 will strengthen the voice of the populace. If we look at the Four Pillars chart for the year we see that it is set for Beijing (because it is Chinese New Year). Two of the four Master Elements are Water. In Australia that count is three out of four in Water. (The Hour Pillar changes every second time zone, so the ‘count’ will vary according to the location in which one lives. What I have given in the table above will generally apply all over with modifications, of course.) It is interesting that in Australia there is a new opposition leader who displays great potential and his popularity is increasing. The man is also very good with the media (ruled by Water), so the Howard government may well be in for a big battle this time around come time for elections. Of interest, too, is the fact that Yang Water and Yin Fire form a special pairing—the ‘greatest sacrifice for love’, with Fire having to make the sacrifices. Governments in the world are going to have to make some big concessions this year if they want to keep the populace happy. It is on the cards. Watch for it. This will be the year of the people and service organizations (Month Pillar).

It will be a wetter year. Australia is in the grips of one of the worst droughts on record, but the Year of the Red Pig will bring precipitation with it. Unfortunately, it will likely dry up again after this year, so enjoy the water while you can. Strangely, with all the extremes in the land with the Red Dog, the summer here has been fairly mild. The ‘heat’ has been more internal (subjective). With the Red Pig we will find that weather patterns will be more moderate. It is of interest to note that weather reflects the subconscious outflow of humanity. Is it any wonder we had weather extremes last year? Individuals and small groups will be much more able to control their immediate environment with the Red Pig and to establish much better relations between individuals and the collective. Last year was like a huge mirroring effect in that life constantly

seemed to hold us to account for ourselves and our respective pasts, not that we necessarily saw it that way. Many people felt victimized to a greater or lesser extent. This year will see a reversal of that, even though there will still be issues around the past to tidy up. It will be the same for small to mid-sized organizations. The media will play a larger role in 2007 than has been the case in the past with all the Water present in the chart. It should be a big year for movies, theater, literature and the like. In all, however, this year is best spent with family and close friends, repairing fences and tending to affairs of the home and hearth. With regard to family life, the tone for the year is set by the Month Pillar—the Tiger Crossing the Forest. The main indicators are to beware of hidden perils if one is to leave a pre-existing situation, but that we have the ability, with loved ones, to see the future clearly and to ‘divine the future and distant worlds’. If the vision is clear, then we will have safe passage. Water, which is the Month Master, is all about trusting the intuition—especially Yang Water. As always, trust in the inner Voice marks our course for us, and danger is thus avoided. We should proceed cautiously, however.

Finally, I would say to view the year that was as a prelude to something really wonderful. As old doors close, new ones open, without being too New-Age about it. Do not look on what has happened, if it has been difficult, as loss. *Look at what has been cleared away.* What we have lost is only that which holds us back from a brighter future. And, if the Red Dog was good to you, all I can say is to let the good times roll! You will have more of the same with the Red Pig. New love is coming for us all, and it will be more in line with our higher Purpose. We are finishing things this year—being done with the past. Be happy, step into the future and know that this will be a better year for us all. A new cycle awaits, and it will be one in which we fulfill a greater destiny. We are being moved toward that. Do you feel it? The people with whom we find ourselves this year, as the year progresses, will be the ones with whom we shape that destiny. Let us commune together and find our place in the Sun. We all deserve it! A little travel wouldn’t go astray, either—perhaps to the mountains? Blessings and prosperity to you all in the Year of the Red Pig!

Xin Nain Kuai Le! (Happy New Year)

and

Kung Hey Fat Choi (May prosperity be with you)

Malvin.

14 Feb 2007

(Happy Valentine’s Day, too!)