

# Green Egg

Litha  
2007



Legendary Journal of the Awakening Earth

**GREEN EGG IS DEDICATING THIS ISSUE TO THOSE WHO  
HAVE WORKED SO HARD FOR PAGANS AND WITCHES TO BE  
RECOGNIZED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ON A HEADSTONE.  
MANY THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO MADE IT POSSIBLE.**

## **GREEN EGG MAGAZINE, LITHA 2007**

<b>Contributors' Showcase</b> .....	3-4
<b>Inside the Veteran Pentacle Quest</b> (Selena Fox) .....	5-7
<b>ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> Press Release: Esoteric Education: Restoring the Wonder .....	8-9
Wizard School and Witch School form Cooperative Alliance .....	9
<b>EVENTS</b> Three day magick and occult festival announced .....	10
Family Synergy Conference (Terry Brussel-Gibbons) .....	11
Heinlein Centennial .....	11-12
Starfox: Polyamory and Galactic Diplomacy .....	12
Burning Man Festival: Alternative Lifestyles .....	12
Etiquette of Alternative Lifestyles .....	12
Alternative Dating Etiquette .....	12-13
<b>FEATURES</b> Beltaine Thoughts 2007 (Rev. Terry Power) .....	14
The Nature Church: An Update (Ellen Evert Hopman) .....	15-17
Dealing with Storms (Nydia Walker) .....	18-19
My Neighbors, The Mysterious Melungeons (Tom Donohue) .....	21-26
The Power of Sekhmet (Nydia Walker) .....	27
Poem: Hymn to Sekhmet (Nydia Walker) .....	28
The Miracle of the Maypole (Patrick McCollum) .....	34-35
For the Love of Pharaoh (Nydia Walker) .....	42-49
<b>COLUMNS</b> African Medicinal Plants: Chinchierinchee (Andi Fisher) .....	20
Brief Bits: Legal Topics for Pagans (Dana D. Eilers) .....	29-30
CRITTER CORNER Mother Nature's Jester (Nydia Walker) .....	31-33
Dog found after 6 months, 430 miles from home (AP Story) .....	33
The Cantankerous Celt: Where Have Half the Faeries Gone? (Michael R. Gorman) .....	36-41
From Eggs Past: Apocalypse in Holy Land (from GE 92, Ostara 1991) .....	50
The Legendary Green Egg Forum (Ian Lurkingbear, Moderator) .....	
The U Files .....	51-54
Brothers and Sisters of Bohemia .....	55-56

Oberon Zell-Ravenheart ~ Founder  
 Ariel Monserrat ~ Publisher/Managing Editor  
 Tom Donohue ~ Asst. Managing Editor  
 Science Editor  
 Subscriptions Manager  
 Jeanne Koelle ~ Art Director/Advertising Director  
 Ian Lurkingbear ~ Legendary Green Egg Forum Director  
 Jymi X/0 ~ Webmaster, Layout & Design

GREEN EGG is the official Journal of the Church of All Worlds, whose mission is to evolve a network of information, mythology and experience that provides a context and stimulus for reawakening Gaea, and reuniting her children through tribal community dedicated to responsible stewardship and evolving consciousness. We publish online 8 times a year, on every Sabbat. Subscriptions are \$13 per year and includes membership to the Green Egg message boards. Visit the website at: <http://www.greeneggzine.com>

Address all correspondence to:

Green Egg  
 P.O. Box 443  
 Rogersville, TN 37857

© 2007 Church of All Worlds. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission from the publisher. Opinions expressed are those of the authors.





# CONTRIBUTORS' SHOWCASE

**ERRATA:** It is with sincere regret and apologies that we neglected to give credit for **Katlyn Breene's** artwork last issue. Katlyn is a brilliant and gifted artist, whose work is absolutely amazing. She created the cover page artwork for the last issue (Sun Queen). Her credits from the Beltaine issue (GE 138) should be as follows:

Cover art  
Greenman - p. 28  
Forest Face - p. 34  
Dream Awake; Aphrodite - p. 35  
Fairy Ring - p. 36  
Sekhmet - p. 37

**KATLYN BREENE** has been creating sacred art for 20 years. Her artwork is a manifestation of her beliefs and can be seen in homes, on altars and in temples in six countries. She is the creator of Mermade Magickal Arts which makes fine hand blended incense and oils and is the author and illustrator of five books on spiritual arts and practices. Since 1980 her sculptures, "The Ladies of Magic and Mystery", have been on display at The Magic Castle in Hollywood. Her work includes cover art and illustrations for many books and magazines, Goddess calendars, and countless images of the ancient Gods and Goddesses and creatures of myth and magic. In 1989 Katlyn was commissioned by Shapes of Spirit to sculpt "Aphrodite" and "Athena" which were cast in alabaster in Italy and distributed around the world. Katlyn is currently working on a series of large sculptures called "Asherah", which represent the many faces of the Goddess. At the center or heart of each piece is the trunk of a small tree, representing the Tree of Life.

<http://www.heartmagic.com/katBio.html>

**DAVID DONOHUE** does free-lance photography as a hobby and has been Pagan for 20 years. He is a member of CUUPS and often performs rituals, acting as HP. Together with his wife and 3 children, David lives in Pennsylvania in a woods that he grew himself.

**TOM DONOHUE** is a recently retired teacher from Lowell High School in San Francisco, where for twenty years he was best known as "Mister Donohue". In the years prior to that, he was a Public Health Microbiologist, first in Bacteriology then in Virology. He has also been a researcher on telomerase at the Blackburn Lab, UCSF. He has been a member of CAW for over twenty years but considers himself Pagan since the age of seven. He also has an identical twin brother who is also Pagan.

**DANA D. EILERS** is a 1978 graduate of Smith College and a 1981 cum laude graduate of New England School of Law. She holds legal licenses in three states and for nearly twenty years, she worked as a civil litigator in the

St. Louis metropolitan area. Now retired from the active practice of law, Dana is the author of THE PRACTICAL PAGAN and PAGANS AND THE LAW: UNDERSTAND YOUR RIGHTS. She has written extensively on the web and in print on the issues of Pagans and their rights.

**Rt. Rev. ANDI FISHER:** As a young child she was surprised to find that not everyone shared her gift of clairvoyance. Her father, a dedicated and gifted Christian, encouraged her to seek divinity in all ways that rang true to her, never imposing his own views on her. In April 2001 she followed through with a vision that had deeply motivated her to reach even higher. Andi believed that it was possible to gather representation from the Four root Tribes of Man(kind) to stand firmly and peacefully in their individual faiths, together within one space and time. Proudly dignified in their beliefs without the need to defend or protect these beliefs, therefore secure to respect and acknowledge the same of other -- perhaps conflicting -- beliefs in people who shared the circle with them. The goal was to discover whether indeed it was possible to create religious and racial tolerance and acceptance amongst mankind -- even if only for a brief moment in time. The Four Tribes of Man(kind) was an extraordinary success, attracting visitors and guest speakers from many corners of the globe to share in global spiritual unity. This was the first step in what has become Andi's mission on earth. Finding and focusing on the commonalities, the golden threads of truths that are woven throughout all religions and spiritual paths, instead of focusing on the differences that exist amongst colour and creed. To this purpose the Universal Spirit Sanctuary was recently birthed, a global vehicle with which to teach, learn and commune with mankind these common threads of truths that prevail. Members are from all paths, and are encouraged to learn of one another's spiritual paths in order to cultivate tolerance and understanding. Ordained in the CNCI, Andi is 3rd degree Archpriestess and Elder. She recently accepted an appointment to represent the CNCI as Chief Director and Chief Priestess CNCI South Africa. She is looking towards obtaining her Doctorate in Divinity next. She considers herself a Universal Maverick, rather than representing one faith, and does not enjoy labels as these imply limitations. It is Andi's goal to co-write books and produce multi-media educational tools in order to widely spread the message of global spiritual unity. Born and raised in South Africa, Andi will always flow to the pulse of Africa in her veins. However, she is planning on immigrating within the next few years to either the USA or the UK where she will be further empowered to continue her greater spiritual work and to take it to the next level. Visit Andi's Universal Spirit Sanctuary web site at: [www.uss.za.org](http://www.uss.za.org).

**Rev. SELENA FOX** is High Priestess and Senior Minister of Circle Sanctuary, an international Shamanic Wiccan church and Pagan resource center located on a 200 acre forested Nature preserve in Southwestern Wisconsin, USA. Selena, who has been facilitating Pagan rituals for more than 35 years, is founding editor of CIRCLE Magazine, and is the author of Goddess Communion and other works. Selena is the Executive Director of the Lady Liberty League, a Pagan rights organization, and is founder of the Circle Craft tradition, which combines old European folkways, shamanism, traditional Witchcraft, and contemporary Paganism. Selena travels internationally presenting workshops and facilitating rituals. Selena, who has a MS in counseling from the University of Wisconsin, also is a psychotherapist, counselor, and shamanic healer in private practice.

More info: <http://www.mhtc.net/~selena>

Selena Fox, PO Box 9, Barneveld, WI 53507 USA

[selena@circlesanctuary.org](mailto:selena@circlesanctuary.org)

**MICHAEL R. GORMAN** is the Chief Druid Emeritus and Founder of the Sacramento Grove of the Oak, Inc., an eclectic Pagan community that gathers regularly in Midtown Sacramento, California. He is the national Lambda Literary Award winning author of the innovative biography of Jose Sarria called *The Empress Is A Man*. His writing covers a range of genres; journalism, poetry, lyrics, playwriting, short stories, and non-fiction scholarship. He holds a bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts degrees from California State University, Sacramento, and has since his formal studie become a student of Celtic Druids out of Lewes, England, a teacher, and an ordained minister. He currently is working on a biography of Irish poet and Druid, Ella Young, and a book of Celtic philosophy. He lives in Midtown with his partner of 10 years, "Dr. Dean" and their black cat Sabbath, whom Michael calls his "reluctant familiar." You can contact Michael at [PoetGorman@aol.com](mailto:PoetGorman@aol.com) or visit his website: [www.groveoftheoak.org](http://www.groveoftheoak.org).

**ELLEN EVERT HOPMAN:** A master herbalist, psychotherapist, and lay homeopath, Ellen Hopman is the author of *Tree Medicine, Tree Magic* and co-author of *People of the Earth: The New Pagans*.

**IAN LURKINGBEAR** has been the moderator of the Legendary Green Egg Forum for many years. In his own words, "I am a starry-eyed mystic, crackpot theorist, and freelance social critic. By day I am a harmless-seeming hippie computer programmer." Ian has been a member of Church of All Worlds for over 20 years and was trained in the Feri tradition of magick. His website can be found at: <http://www.feri.com/lurkingbear/lurkingbear.html>

**PATRICK MCCOLLUM** has walked the Sacred Path since 1965. An initiate and High Priest of one of the nation's earliest covens, Patrick has worked diligently to keep alive the mysteries and magic passed down by Witches through oral tradition for centuries. Patrick has been active as a teacher of the old ways for over forty years and is known for his prison ministry work. In 1997, Patrick became the first government-recognized Wiccan chaplain in the United States. He currently advises numerous state and federal agencies on Wiccan religious

practices and is a member of the American Correctional Chaplains Association.

**TERRY POWER** is a High Priest and ordained minister in the Correllian Nativist Tradition of Wicca. A child with Cherokee and Irish ancestry; he was a teen ager in the 70's and young adult in the 80's. Raised in the Episcopal Church in the US, he found the freedom to pursue his spiritual side. As an empath, he has always had a firm sense of the Divine, as an entity, at work in the universe and in the world. By the mid 80's he had begun his work as a "practical magician" and developed his will and a deeper connection to the Divine. By the end of the millennium, he had realized his understanding of the Divine was more in line with the rapidly emerging Pagan movement.

Since embracing his Wiccan path, Terry has become a prolific writer on Pagan topics. His Sabbat articles, called "pagan sermons" by friends in Ohio, speak to the deeper inner growth of pagan faiths using the Wheel of the Year as the vehicle for his message of Love and spiritual development.

Current projects include the development of a workshop on Clergy Ethics in the Pagan communities (recently attended by Oberon Zell) and an expanding ministry of religious unity, mutual respect, and tolerance.

**NYDIA WALKER'S** interest in Ancient Egypt began as a small child and is evident today in her work as a freelance writer and as High Priestess of Temple Ankh. When not working, she relaxes with her family on their Kentucky farm and chats with Temple members on the Yahoo groups message board. She can also be found at Pegasus Production Psychic Fairs working as a Psychic and Lecturer at their fairs in Evansville, IN and Owensboro, KY.

**JYMI X/O** builds websites, produces small-press 'zines, draws, writes, spends too much money on electronics, and takes more photographs than should be legal. Her portfolio can be seen at: <http://www.dreamsoverzero.com>

**OBERON ZELL-RAVENHEART** is featured prominently in *The World of Wizards* by Antonia Beattie. For more than three decades, beginning in 1968, Oberon founded, edited and published the legendary, award-winning journal Green Egg. His editorials and articles won him the Wiccan/Pagan Press Alliance "Pentacle Award" for "Favorite Pagan Writer." He also creates beautiful statues for Mythic Images, the company that he and Morning Glory founded. He also has created the Grey School of Wizardry.

<http://www.greyschool.com>

<http://www.mythicimages.com>

---

**The cover photo was taken by  
Mr. Kooiman's daughter.**

---

# Inside the Veteran Pentacle Quest -- An American Pagan Religious Freedom Victory

*By Selena Fox, High Priestess of Circle Sanctuary*

The decade-long Veteran Pentacle Quest resulted in victory on Monday, April 23, 2007, when the pentacle, symbol of the Wiccan religion and some other paths of Paganism, was finally added to the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) list of emblems of belief that can be included on the US military veteran grave markers it issues. The pentacle was added to the list as a result of the settlement of the federal lawsuit, Circle Sanctuary vs. Nicholson, which had been filed by Americans United for Separation of Church and State on behalf of Circle Sanctuary and others in the US District Court for the Western Wisconsin District on November 13, 2006.

This settlement also resulted in the expedited production of grave markers with pentacles for families of deceased Wiccan veterans. On Tuesday, May 1, Beltane, the first four markers arrived at two national cemeteries - two granite markers at Circle Cemetery, a national Pagan cemetery at Circle Sanctuary headquarters in Wisconsin, and two marble upright headstones at Arlington National Cemetery, a government-run veterans' cemetery in Virginia in the Washington, DC area. Five more markers with pentacles were produced and shipped to cemeteries in May, including two more granite markers for Circle Cemetery.

## HISTORY

The Veteran Pentacle Quest took ten years and the combined efforts of many organizations and individuals of a variety of religions and beliefs. (See:

[www.circlesanctuary.org/liberty/veteranpentacle](http://www.circlesanctuary.org/liberty/veteranpentacle)).

The Quest began in July 1997, when John Machate, founder, and then national coordinator, of the Military Pagan Network, sent an email to the VA inquiring about requirements for adding an emblem of belief to its list of symbols authorized to be included on VA-issued veteran grave markers. He received a reply several weeks

later indicating that clergy needed to send a letter requesting the addition of the symbol, plus a graphic representation of the symbol and a description of its meaning.

In late August 1997, Rev. Pete Pathfinder Davis of the Aquarian Tabernacle Church complied with these requirements and requested that the VA add the pentacle to its list. He received no reply. In 1998, Rev. Rona Russell of Isis Invicta Military Mission

sent in the required materials and also requested that the VA add the pentacle to its list. She received no reply. Both Pete and Rona applied and inquired multiple times, but the VA did not approve the pentacle. Other groups applied during the ten year period, including the Nomadic Chantry of the Gramarye, Correllian Nativist Church International, Fire Dance Church of Wicca, Covenant of the Goddess, and Circle Sanctuary.

On April 8, 2005, Circle Sanctuary shifted our involvement from supporting the efforts of the others that had applied to direct involvement by applying ourselves. We applied because increasing numbers of our members were being deployed to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and because increasing numbers of our veterans were in the final stages of life. We also applied because we thought that discrimination was preventing the pentacle from being approved and hoped that our extensive Wiccan/Pagan religious accommodation experience with the federal government of the US would help.

In applying, we used the form of pentacle that is a solid black line pentagram within a circle. Circle Sanctuary priestess Jerrie Hildebrand, Managing Director of Lady Liberty League, created the graphic. We selected this form not only because it the one most commonly used in our community, but because of its universality among Pagans of different traditions. There are variants in how pentagrams are interlaced in forms that show the interlacing. We wanted something that a wide variety of Wiccans and Pagans could use.

In May 2005, the VA sent us a letter and acknowledged receipt of our application. The VA also told us what it had been telling others -- that it was in the process of revising its emblems of belief additional procedures. In October, the VA finished its process of procedure revision, and in November 2005, the VA informed us and others that it had adopted new procedures and invited reapplication.

On January 6, 2006, Circle Sanctuary, which had been the last Pagan organization to apply under the old procedures, became the first to apply under the new ones. For the next year and a quarter, we diligently focused our efforts on getting the pentacle approved. We had direct negotiations with top VA officials, we worked with numerous US Senators & Congresspeople, we networked with Pagans of many paths, we repeatedly told the story of the Quest in



the media, we gained support of leaders and practitioners of many religions, we held Quest-related events around the country, and we were involved in three federal lawsuits.

### **LITIGATION**

Circle Sanctuary and I provided informational and strategic support for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) lawsuit filed in a VA oversight court in Washington, DC in September 2006. ACLU was representing Aquarian Tabernacle Church, Correllian Nativist Church International, Kathleen Egbert (daughter of Abraham and Rosemary Kooiman), Patricia Corneilson (mother of James Price), and Scott Stearns (member of ATC and a veteran).

On November 13, 2006, represented by Americans United for Separation of Church and State (AU), we filed lawsuits ourselves in federal courts in Washington, DC and in Madison, Wisconsin. AU represented Circle Sanctuary, two of our members -- Roberta Stewart (widow of Sgt. Patrick Stewart) and Karen DePolito (widow of Jerome Birnbaum), and Isis Invicta Military Mission. We announced our lawsuits in a national press conference in Washington, DC.

The VA sought to dismiss on jurisdictional grounds both the ACLU and AU lawsuits filed in federal courts in Washington, DC. The VA acknowledged that the matter was to be heard in a US District Court, but then moved to stay (delay) the hearing of our lawsuit in the US District Court for the Western Wisconsin District. The VA called for the hearing to be delayed a year or more.

Fortunately, in late January 2007, the federal judge in our lawsuit in the US District Court in Wisconsin denied the VA's motion to stay, and ordered our case to proceed. He also set May 1 as a date for our filing for summary judgment, and June 29 as our trial date.

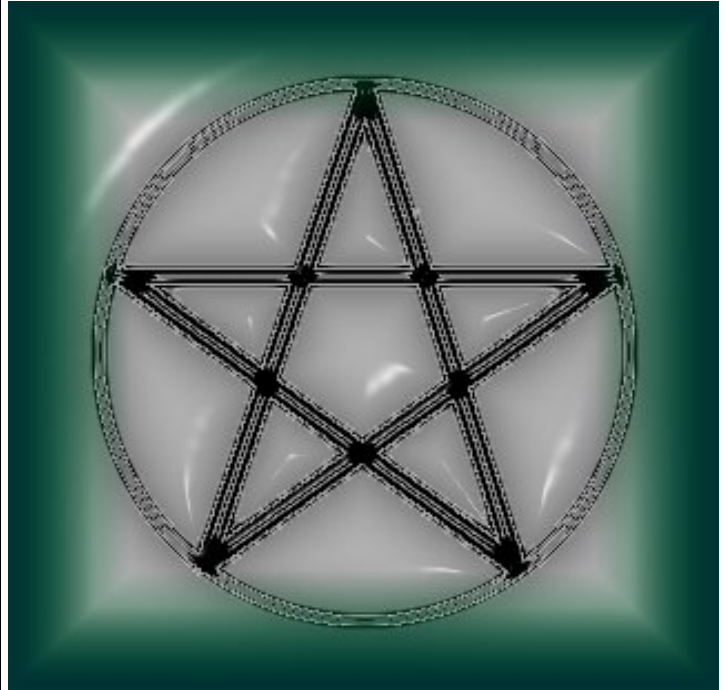
### **DISCOVERY**

On February 1, Imbolc, the legal process of discovery began in this lawsuit as a result of the judge's ruling. In the two months that followed, the VA had to turn over internal memos, notes, letters, and other documents to us pertaining to their emblem of belief adoption process.

Included in the more than 30,000 documents turned over to our attorneys was additional evidence that VA officials had discriminated against the Wiccan religion. We already had proof that the VA had added emblems of belief for six other churches and organizations during the time it kept pentacle requests pending.

Now, added to this was evidence of prejudice

against our religion, including the citing of an anti-Witchcraft remark George W. Bush had made against the right of Wiccan soldiers to practice their religion while serving in the US military. He made that remark on national television in June 1999 while he was campaigning to be US President.



## **VICTORY**

On April 5, 2007, we prepared to file an amended complaint in our lawsuit in US District Court. We revised it to include the additional evidence of religious discrimination we discovered. We also added two other Circle Sanctuary members as plaintiffs, Jill Medicine Heart Combs and her husband, Gerwin Combs, a veteran in a coma in a VA hospital in Ohio.

Before filing with the judge, our attorneys emailed a copy of our amended complaint to attorneys representing the VA. Within minutes of reading this, the VA's attorneys asked for settlement talks with our attorneys. Those talks began the next day, which also happened to be Good Friday.

After two weeks of intensive negotiations, both sides agreed on terms of the settlement and signed the agreement on April 20 (see: [www.au.org](http://www.au.org)), the start of Earth Day weekend. On April 23, 2007, it became official when the judge received and signed the settlement agreement. The Pentacle became the 39th emblem added to the list.

That morning, we announced our victory in a national press conference organized by Americans United for Separation of Church and State and held

at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. Rev. Barry Lynn, Executive Director of AU; Richard Katskee, our lead attorney; Roberta Stewart and I each spoke. Media present included national and international journalists in television, radio, film, and press.

Within minutes of the start of our press conference, the word was out. News of the victory spread rapidly around the world through reports posted to media websites and blogs and through thousands of emails sent by Pagans and other supporters.

## CELEBRATIONS

Celebration of the Veteran Pentacle Quest victory began that day and continues. A nationwide national day of celebration was held on May 1, which was the day the first four gravestones arrived at cemeteries -- the Kooiman and O'Rourke headstones at Arlington National Cemetery, and the Birnbaum and Stewart markers at Circle Cemetery.

Victory celebrations were as part of Beltane events across the land, including at the Florida Pagan Gathering at the Ocala National Forest (May 3-6), Circle Sanctuary Nature Preserve (May 4-6), Minneapolis (May 5), San Francisco (May 6), and elsewhere.

On Wednesday, May 23, the marble headstone with pentacle marking the gravesite of World War II veteran Abraham Kooiman and his wife Rosemary was dedicated by their daughter, Kathleen Egbert, and others at Arlington National Cemetery.

On Memorial Day, Monday, May 28, three granite markers with pentacles were dedicated at Circle Cemetery in an interfaith service I facilitated. Widows for all three veterans with markers being dedicated took part: Karen DePolito of Utah, widow of Korean War veteran Jerome Birnbaum; Roberta Stewart of Nevada, widow of Sgt. Patrick Stewart, Desert Storm veteran and first Wiccan soldier killed in action in the war on terror, Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan; and Sandy Wilkey of Kentucky, widow of Douglas Wilkey, veteran of the Korean War and Vietnam War. In addition, Jill Medicine Heart Combs was there as well as Wiccan/Pagan veterans who are members of the Order of the Pentacle. Pagan leaders joined me in doing gravestone consecrations with the Elements - Angie Buchanan & Dr. Drake Spaeth of Gaia's Womb, Steven Allen of the Guardians of the Sacred Circle, and Ruth Barrett of Temple of Diana. More than seventy people took part in the dedications of

these markers, including public media.

A National Lights of Liberty Celebration of the Veteran Pentacle Quest victory is taking place at this year's Pagan Spirit Gathering, June 17-24 in Ohio. Nearly one thousand Pagans from many paths will be taking part. Although registration for this event is now closed, all are welcome to join in spirit.

On the 4th of July, Quest victory celebration will continue. In the morning, at Arlington National Cemetery, Gardnerian Priestess Paula Johnson and I will lead a public dedication of the headstone with pentacle for Jan O'Rourke of Florida. Jan is buried with her veteran husband, Captain William O'Rourke. Her side of the headstone has the pentacle; his side has the cross.

At Noon on July 4, in the heart of Washington, DC, there will be a Pagan Religious Rights Rally organized by Caroline Kenner and others. Rev. Barry Lynn of AU and I will start the rally by describing our work on the Veteran Pentacle Quest and its success. Our remarks will be followed by Pagan leaders of many traditions who will speak about the need to get other Pagan emblems of belief on the VA's list of emblems that can be include on the gravestones it issues, as well as Pagan chaplains in the US military. More details will be released through Circle Times (occasional e-bulletin; sign-up at [www.circlesanctuary.org](http://www.circlesanctuary.org)).

## LEGACY

The Veteran Pentacle Quest victory is being celebrated in many ways and for many reasons.

We celebrate that Wiccan and Pagan soldiers and their families who have the pentacle as the symbol of their religion can at last have it on the government-issued gravemarkers that the VA issues to next of kin after the death of a veteran.

We celebrate the Quest and its success because it helped bring better public understanding about the Craft and Paganism in America and elsewhere in the world.

We celebrate the Quest victory because it has shown the importance of protecting and upholding freedoms.

And, we celebrate the Veteran Pentacle Quest victory because it has demonstrated the power and success Pagans can have when we work together with each other and with those of other paths.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 14, 2007

**CONTACT:** Oberon Zell-Ravenheart (Grey School of Wizardry), [Oberon@mcn.org](mailto:Oberon@mcn.org) 1-888-698-4421

## Esoteric Education: Restoring the Wonder

Once, not too long ago, education was considered a rare privilege—a goal to achieve, a dream to fulfill. Schools were seen as repositories of esoteric knowledge that would unlock the keys to the universe, and the secrets to success. Scholars were held in the highest esteem by all members of society. What we take for granted today was once considered a cherished opportunity to be strived for at any cost. Indeed, throughout most of human history, education—even the basic ability to read, was limited to a small and privileged class of literati. Now, at least in America—it is available to everyone, and anyone.

But today, it seems, many students hate school! They only attend because it is compulsory. They do everything they can to get out of actually studying, from watching TV and not doing homework as kids, to partying all night in college. Their interests center around their friends and relationships, not around actually learning anything. And Pop Culture supports this disdain for education. How did a depressing song with the recurrent line, "We don't need no education"—become the theme song of an entire generation?

### Harry Potter and the X-Men

And then along came Harry Potter! With seven novels and movies, and more toys, games, clothes, ancillary books, and other tie-ins and spin-offs than you can wave a wand at, J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series is the greatest literary phenomenon ever known.

Every kid who reads Harry Potter wishes that they could attend Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The very fact of its exclusivity makes it irresistible, to say nothing of the lure and wonder of forbidden and arcane knowledge it promises. Magic and Mysteries, spellcraft and sorcery, hidden history, secret societies, wands and wortcunning, things that go bump in the night...everything that the mundane ("muggle," in Rowling's parlance) world doesn't know about, or believe in.

And then there is the enduring popularity of the "X-Men" comics, Marvel's best-selling series—which began publishing in 1962, and have spawned an ongoing animated TV series and three feature-length movies. As with the Harry Potter stories, the X-Men saga centers around a very special school for mutant misfits with various uncanny abilities and

powers: "Professor Charles Xavier's School for Gifted Children."

### Mystique

Young people find the lure of secret societies and esoteric associations irresistible. They yearn to be on the "inside" of an exclusive group, to access forbidden knowledge and arcane secrets unknown to their parents and their contemporaries. "Knowledge is power," they know, and "with great power comes great responsibility."

Unfortunately, this demand and trend towards a universal education diluted the mystique of learning itself. When a thing is available to everyone and mandated by law, it ceases to be regarded as something special; it becomes "common." What is needed today, says Oberon Zell-Ravenheart, Headmaster of the Grey School of Wizardry, is to restore the wonder and mystique that once surrounded the very idea of education.



### The Grey School of Wizardry

On August 1, 2004, the Grey School of Wizardry opened its virtual doors. It was incorporated as a non-profit educational institution in the State of California on March 14, 2005. Designed for students of all ages over

11, the Grey School provides an extensive seven "year-level" program of studies, at an Apprenticeship level. Graduates will be certified as "Journeyman Wizards."

Courses offered in the Grey School provide a grounded classical education in history, mythology, geography, mathematics, literature, natural history, general science, astronomy, chemistry, physics, zoology, botany, and even Latin—with Greek to be offered shortly. The performing arts are included as well, with classes in poetry, music, theater, and illusion. The wonderful thing is, with the mystique of enrolling in a magickal "School of Wizardry," students are eagerly studying all these subjects which would bore them to tears if they were taking them in a mundane public school! And ¾ of the students currently enrolled are adults—up into their 70s!



## The Future

As Oprah Winfrey said about her new school for impoverished girls in South Africa: "I wanted to take girls with that 'It' quality, and give them an opportunity to make a difference in the world." (*Newsweek*, Jan. 8, 2007)

And this is the goal of the Grey School of Wizardry—to find students who have unique potential that is

not being addressed by their experiences in public schools, and give them the inspiration and information that will enable them to go out and make a real difference in the world. This is true education. For the difference between wisdom and folly is really all about considering the consequences—"unto the seventh generation," as the Hopi proverb says.

To learn more about the Grey School of Wizardry: [www.Greyschool.com](http://www.Greyschool.com) or phone 1-888-698-4421

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 4, 2007

**CONTACT:** Oberon Zell-Ravenheart (Grey School), [Oberon@mcn.org](mailto:Oberon@mcn.org) 1-888-698-4421  
Don Lewis (Witch School), [DonLewisHP@aol.com](mailto:DonLewisHP@aol.com) (217) 283-4360

# Wizard School and Witch School form Cooperative Alliance

The world's two leading metaphysical schools have formed an alliance to teach real world Magick for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This is an important step forward for the new Renaissance in magickal thought that is emerging globally.

The Grey School of Wizardry and Witch School International are now working cooperatively to create the largest and best magickal education system in the world. The Internet has enabled a growing number of aspiring Wizards of all ages to meet with teachers of the ancient wisdom and has rekindled an interest in these legendary skills.



**Grey School** of California ([www.greyschool.com](http://www.greyschool.com)), led by Headmaster Oberon Zell-Ravenheart, the most famous Wizard living today, is a non-profit educational institution not associated with any religion, as Wizardry is a secular pursuit, like Science or Philosophy. The Grey

School offers training in the esoteric arts through Zell-Ravenheart's popular books (*Grimoire for the Apprentice Wizard*; *Companion for the Apprentice Wizard*—New Page 2004; 2006) and over 200 online classes.

## Witch School International

([www.witchschool.com](http://www.witchschool.com)), a leading seminary for Wicca and Magickal studies, is training thousands of people in the sacred arts and practices of Witchcraft. They



offer a wide range of courses, taught by live mentors, chatrooms, video classes, and other educational resources on- and off-line.

The alliance of these two popular teaching sites to act cooperatively will expand and improve access to magickal education worldwide. Through sharing resources and accrediting some of each other's classes, the Grey School and Witch School will greatly expand educational services to students, with over 350 available classes. This alliance allows each school to focus on their respective specialties, offering even more knowledge and wisdom for students, now and in the future.

Other cooperative projects under discussion include; guest teacher programs, shared live events, hosting tournaments of magick, and development of online video classes. Both schools will focus on their core specialty to provide the very best in magickal education for students. This alliance creates the most complete education in Magick available anywhere today and assures that unknown and mysterious arts will be taught for generations to come.

"All Knowledge is worth knowing" --Oberon Zell-Ravenheart.

To find out more about the Grey School of Wizardry: [www.Greyschool.com](http://www.Greyschool.com) or phone 1-888-698-4421

To find out more about Witch School International: [www.Witchschool.com/main.asp](http://www.Witchschool.com/main.asp) or phone (217) 283-4360.

# EVENTS

## Three day magick and occult festival announced

(Portland, OR) June 11, 2007

This August, the City of Roses will play host to esoZone, a unique, three-day event billed as a "Designer Reality Expo."

esoZone will bring together people from disparate Internet subcultures to exchange art and intellect from Fri., August 10 to Sun., August 12 at the Someday Lounge in downtown Portland, Ore. It will feature mind-altering performances, dangerous entertainment, occult art, futurist rituals and a dance floor, all to culminate with an epic meditation by cult phenomenon artist Paul Laffoley.

The event will showcase members of the experimental occultists and artists, and other highly active anti-professionals toiling away in isolation.

"We're trying to create a bridge between the sort of intellectual aspects of these fringe cultures and the artistic aspects," says art director Danny Chaoflux. "We want this to be a great party, as well as an event where people learn something."

esoZone is being coordinated by people from online communities all over the world and locally supported by Portland Occulture, a loose affiliation of people with an interest in esoteric subjects.

Performers will include: syndicated television host Freeman; alternative Internet radio personalities the Viking Youth; the London theatre troupe Foolish People; and acclaimed local performance artist the Red King.

Klint Finley, esoZone executive director and Portland Occulture organizer describes esoZone as "a natural extension of both the international Internet culture and the local network we've built."



*Portland with Mount Hood: National Weather Service Photo*

"Portland, Ore. has long had a reputation as a city for outsiders, marginals and malcontents," says event director Nick Pell. "It seemed the natural place to hold a weekend dedicated to both high and low weirdness."

Other organizations contributing to esoZone include the Key 64 webzine, the online community Irreality.net, and the Foolish People.

For tickets and more information, visit [www.esozone.com](http://www.esozone.com).

-----# # #-----

Contact: Nick Pell, [nick@esozone.com](mailto:nick@esozone.com),  
413-455-8913.

Media kit: <http://www.esozone.com/media>

-----# # #-----

## **Family Synergy Conference**

### **September 7-9 in Big Bear, CA**

**by Terry Brussel-Gibbons, PhD, CHT**  
**(C.A.W. Scion)**

#### **Keynote Speaker: Oberon Zell-Ravenheart**

Oberon Zell's Keynote Address will be "Group Marriage: How to Put One Together and Make It Last." He and Terry Brussel-Gibbons will also offer a workshop on *Stranger in a Strange Land* and how Heinlein's writings have been of inspirational and practical value in truly living a polyamorous life style. Speaking of polyamory, Oberon and his lady Morning Glory coined the word itself!

1969, at age 16, I was part of a Stranger in a Strange Land type of Nest formed by ten science fiction fans who went to high school together. Many of the original group scattered to the four winds, but my first water brother is still my best friend and we've drawn many others to us over the years – thirty-eight at last count. Some of these with us, some are lovers. All of them are Family by choice. While all of us Share Water in our own ways, I myself am pretty traditional about it. I mean to see to it that no water brother of mine shall hunger, thirst or want for hugs. My Family by water is in many ways closer to me than my Family by blood. *Stranger in a Strange Land* has been my interpersonal relationships Bible all this time and has served me well. I have used it (with some help from such other Heinlein books as *Moon is a Harsh Mistress* and *Time Enough for Love*) as a touch stone for educating people about alternative lifestyles such as multiply-committed relationships, group marriage, and families-by-choice. Family Synergy was my first forum for such discussions as an adult. It was founded in the early 70's by Hyim Levy and Pat La Follette. It was based largely on the writings of Robert Rimmer (Harrad Experiment, Proposition Thirty-One), though both Hy and Pat were also heavily into science fiction as were many of its members. Hy and Pat were both in long term triads in which they raised their children during much of the 70's and 80's.

In the late 80's, my own organization, Live the Dream, split off from Family Synergy as a more science-fiction oriented group (as of 2007 sharing more events with the original organization, since I am on the governing board of both groups). It was about this same time that I heard about Church of All Worlds and discovered to my delight and amazement that Heinlein's fantasy concept existed in the real world and that its organizers and I had been walking similar paths separately for nearly 20 years. As I made my pilgrimage to meet with Otter

(now Oberon) and Morning Glory soon after that, a filk (science fiction folk) song played "We were traveling north to see some friends we'd never met...there were unicorns..." It seemed unbelievably appropriate, though I didn't know at the time I'd soon meet a real unicorn. I found out later the song had been written for the folks I was about to visit. It's been special to me ever since.

Naturally, I became a member of Church of All Worlds. I have been part of it ever since.

CAW was the first neo pagan religion to be legally recognized in the US. Many (though not all) of its members originally believed in the relationship concepts presented in that book: multiple, committed, deeply loving relationships, group marriage and group living. Oberon has been in an open committed relationship with Morning Glory Zell since 1974. They have been in group marriages for much of that time, with as many as eight of them living together as mates. Oberon has been in a triad lasting ten years and a five person group marriage lasting nearly that long (Ravenheart). He and Morning Glory continue to be close to many of those they lived with. Oberon says "Poly means never having to say goodbye." One reason those relationships lasted as long as they did is that the people were involved in building Church of All Worlds, raising unicorns (*real ones!*), producing the Green Egg Magazine, and Oberon's spiritual sculpture business (Gaia and other Gods/Goddesses beautifully rendered.) Groups doing meaningful things together tend to last longer. I was initiated as a Scion in the late '90's. Live the Dream became a Nest of CAW. While our events focus more on poly living and science fiction than on Paganism, we do include Beltaine, Yule and Samhain rituals (along with celebrations of Passover, Hanukkah/Christmas and Halloween) among our activities.

I loved the Green Egg magazine with its fascinating articles which frequently contained lifestyles-related material. I was sorry when it stopped publication a few years ago and was overjoyed to discover it is now an online magazine.

Find out more about Family Synergy at [www.familysynergy.org](http://www.familysynergy.org) and Live the Dream at [www.livethedream.org](http://www.livethedream.org). (818-886-0069 ext 3)

**News for Heinlein's children (that's us!):**  
**Heinlein Centennial** July 5-8 in Kansas City: Celebrating the 100 year anniversary of the birth of Robert A Heinlein, Grand Master of Science Fiction. Heinlein wrote his first novel *For Us the Living* in 1938 (discovered in someone's attic and finally published in 2004) with open marriage and freedom



from jealousy as some of its major themes. Moon Is a Harsh Mistress and (of course) Stranger in a Strange Land have these themes as well. So did all of his Lazarus Long novels from Time Enough For Love through To Sail Beyond the Sunset. Group marriages are shown in detail from who sleeps with whom and how they relate to each other to how property is handled and children are raised. With the discovery of this first novel and Bill Patterson's work on Heinlein's biography showing he actually lived this lifestyle for much of his life, the idea that he was "just writing stories" about this lifestyle were put truly to rest. He believed in what he was writing and we salute him as teacher and inspiration for so many of us who believe you can love and be deeply committed to more than one significant other. Terry and Paul Brussel-Gibbons will moderate three Families themed panels with an emphasis on polyamory at this convention. See [Heinleincentennial.org](http://Heinleincentennial.org) for more info. Tickets are still available for this event. Join us there!

#### More Events:

Saturday June 16, 2007, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm

#### **Starfox: Polyamory and Galactic Diplomacy on a Starship**

*led by Will Jarvis, Author and political activist for Free Speech*

Will "Taliesin" Jarvis has attended Live the Dream meetings since 1997. Will is a published author who writes novels on alternative lifestyles and is carrying on for fellow New Englander Robert Rimmer since Bob's passing. Will has a wonderful SF novel series, scheduled to be published later this year, which features poly living, empathic aliens, and diplomatic derring-do on board a star ship! 1:00 pm – Potluck lunch: Bring something delicious and other worldly (no Denebian slime worms, please, and hold the anchovies while you're at it!) to share. Clothing optional hot tubbing. Location: At the home of Terry, Paul, Marcus, Will, Carl & John. Address: 8515 Penfield Avenue, Winnetka, CA 91306

Saturday July 21, 2007, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm

#### **Burning Man Festival, Expanding Awareness of Poly and other Alternative Lifestyles**

*led by Harold Goldstein*

A 7 year veteran of the Burning Man Festival, Harold is very well versed in the many Alternate Lifestyle experiences the festival offers, and how this is actively reaching out into Society. We will discuss some of the many ways Burning Man is spreading many of its primary principles: (*Radical Inclusion; Radical Self-reliance; Radical Self-expression; and Communal Effort*) into mainstream society

expanding awareness and tolerance/acceptance of Polyamory & other Alternate Lifestyles. If time permits, we can watch one of the various Burning Man documentaries. 1:00 pm – Potluck lunch. Bring something healthy and delicious to share. Clothing optional hot tubbing. Location in Winnetka (see above)

Saturday August 18, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm

#### **Etiquette of Alternative Lifestyles**

*led by Terry Brussel-Gibbons*

What do you do when your wife brings her lover home for dinner? Who sleeps where if he offers (or she invites him) to stay over night? If your wife is sick on a night you've got a date, should you cancel and stay home with her? Should your girl friend keep you company if you do stay home? Emily Post did not cover this stuff, but we will! 1:00 pm – Potluck lunch. Bring something healthy and delicious to share. Clothing optional hot tubbing. Location: In Winnetka as above.

*Unless otherwise noted, all events are at 8515 Penfield Avenue in Winnetka, CA, 91306. This is a group house – home of Terry, Paul, Marcus, Carl, Will and John. For all events: RSVP to LTD Hotline (818) 886-0069. From the 118, get off at Tampa coming west or De Soto Avenue coming east and go to Chase St. Take Chase to Penfield (one block East of Winnetka) and turn north. The white house will be on your left. From the 101, get off at Winnetka, turn North off the exit. Turn right (East) on Chase (one signal north of Roscoe). Make a left on Penfield.*

### **Alternative Dating Etiquette**



If you are a couple meeting another couple, dinner at one of your homes is generally best. Again as a couple, inviting a single male to your home for a first meeting over dinner is appropriate. If you are a couple meeting a single lady, the best way we've found to handle it is to court her together. Take her out and treat her nicely--let her know that dating a couple doesn't mean giving up the joys of romantic single dating, but doubles them instead! The husband is taking both of the ladies out--he should pick up the check without a fuss. The single lady can reciprocate later with dinner at her place if things work out. If the single is male and you go out together, he and the husband should split the

check--you are both taking *her* out. None of this on who pays applies to feminist ladies who wouldn't *think* of allowing a man to buy her dinner--but we've run into amazingly few of those in this movement.

**Three in the Car** If you all go out together as three, the wife and single lady should alternate sitting in the front seat if your car has bucket seats. In the case of a couple dating a single man, the gentleman whose car is being driven will usually drive with the lady beside him. Three in front is much better if you have a vehicle which can do it.

**Three at a Restaurant** If you are going to a restaurant, plan things so that round booth seating (preferable) or individual chairs avoid the couple sitting on one side and the single on the other. Whether that single is male or female, avoid anything with a two against one feel to it.

**Couples Together and Apart** Be sure you not only do the obvious of sitting in cars or restaurants with the opposite sex member of the other couple, but spend time with the same sex one, too. This goes for separate meetings, too. The gentlemen can go to a computer fair together while the ladies go for a drive or whatever. You are *all* in a relationship together if this works out.

### **Separate Dating--Couple with a Single**

Depending on the couple's comfort level with it, after getting to know them both on two or three joint meetings, you as a single male could offer to take the lady out for lunch alone, or to dinner or even a play. This works particularly well if this allows her husband to go to some meeting or activity he is really interested in (but she is not), while you entertain the lady. You, as the male member of a couple, can also ask the single lady out, assuming this is OK with your wife--best to have your wife assure the lady that it is, especially if your previous meetings have been as three.

**Know Where You Stand** There are many ins and outs to the etiquette of poly dating. Much of it depends on the agreements a couple have with each other before another person enters the picture. Contrary to popular beliefs, having an open relationship usually does *not* mean "Anything Goes." Some couples date only together, while others have a limit of one evening and/or night out separately a month or a week. Some require a week's warning about a whole night out while others just need a call earlier the same evening letting the spouse know they'll be out until morning. Couples, be sure you are clear on such agreements between yourselves and that you make them clear to prospective intimate friends before someone gets hurt feelings from not knowing the rules.



Photo: Jymi X/O



# Beltaine Thoughts 2007

Rev. Terry Power, HP

## **"Tra-la, It's May... the Lusty month of May..."**

I often begin my Beltaine articles with that quote from the musical Camelot. It seems to sum up much of the tradition that surrounds the joy of life and frivolity of Beltaine. It puts me in a celebratory mood every time.

As with many things in my life this year, this article, too, is a bit late. Time seems to be passing so quickly this year. So much is happening. Such great wonders have I seen. Such amazing places have I traveled. Such miracles have I experienced in my life.

Mercifully, my articles are rarely about the day of the Sabbat itself, but more about the season that follows. So, please accept my sincere apology for the tardiness.

As we look back over the past few days of celebration – We have jumped our bonfires and danced the Maypole. We have feasted and celebrated and lived life. We have beaten the boundaries of our properties and re-enacted the God and Goddess caring for one another.

It really is a truly amazing time of year. We join with others to enjoy the bounty of the new season and to celebrate the fulfillment of the promises of the passing season of Spring. We look forward with excitement to the new season of Summer and its growth.

So many of these themes are powerful in my life this year. Unlike most articles I write, where the central theme is singular and clear; this season there seem to be so many to choose from.

Take for instance the mention of "beating the boundaries." In recent months, the idea of setting apart a protected space to live has become more meaningful to me. I have experienced a need to mark those boundaries and keep mine safe. Beltaine is a traditional time for this. It is a time for mending fences and blessing the boundaries of our homes.

In my case, marker stones at the quarters have been an important theme. These stones have kept me safe through much negativity surrounding my life. They have helped me to create a safe refuge to continue to grow and love when all things around me seemed in turmoil.

This season, I will honour the spirits of these stones with a special celebration. I will recharge them and decorate them further in recognition of my love and appreciation. Beltaine is a time for rejoicing with the Spirits of a place. This is a great way to honour them.

The second theme this season – and the one we will discuss most fully – is that of the God and the Goddess caring for each other. In our rituals, we celebrate the Union of the God and the Goddess. We call upon the God in our invocations as "the Helpmate of the Goddess". We recognize the need to care for another that transcends our human existence and applies also to the Gods themselves. No part of creation is an island. All entities

will benefit from care and company and courtship of some fashion.

As I did my research for this Sabbat article, I found mention of a ritual called an "Axis Blessing." It almost sang to me from the pages as I read it. It is an Earth and Sky healing centered on the Maypole (or on a staff if the Maypole is not used). It is our chance to share of ourselves to help send energy to the Earth and Sky – to help heal and care for our Parents in a powerful and moving way.

Then it occurred to me – "What if we extend this healing to all of creation?" "What if care for all creatures as part of the body of the Holy Ones that we honour this season?" "And what if we ALL take it outside the ritual circle and put it to work in our lives?"

WOW!!!

What a powerful idea! I know that my life has been surrounded by chaos and turmoil. If I were to extend such a simple blessing into my everyday life, how much could I raise the energy of those around me? How much could I make a difference in the world? And if I encourage others to do the same, could we not shake the Universe with our Loving and Healing energy?

Further, what if we took it beyond the energetic level and actually took action? What if we really spent time this season caring for others? What if I took a few minutes a day to do something nice for my family, or my friends, or particularly for a total stranger? What if we all did? What kind of world could we help create?

We currently live on a cusp. I feel that Love and Fear are balanced in the world and that Love CAN triumph – ushering in the New Aquarian Age. If we stand up as the prophets of this Age by filling ourselves with the Love of the Divine and expressing it into the world – by celebrating Life in the simple act of caring for others – we CAN tip the scales. Our Love will be a tidal wave, helping Love triumph over Fear.

We CAN make the Aquarian Age a safe refuge for the children that follow. We CAN make OUR Love the boundary stones of Creation – at the Four Quarters of the Universe, keeping ALL within safe and protected.

Together – Right now – This season – WE can celebrate Life by creating a world where we ALL care for EVERY other. Let us be like our God and our Goddess. Let US be the Helpmates of Creation – the Bringers of Light and Love.

And let it start today!!!

May the Blessings of the Ancestors and the Holy Ones fill you with Love and Life this Beltaine season.

So mote it be!



# The Nature Church ~ AN UPDATE

by Ellen Evert Hopman  
Order of the Whiteoak (Ord na Darach Gile)

Dear all:

*Here is a history of the Nature Church. Fund raising is proceeding, we will need more \$ that we originally anticipated for the building (see the bottom of this message for where to send funds). There is huge potential here, the possibility of purchasing the land next door, having a Pagan cemetery and any other good thing we mutually agree on. The next step is to have a meeting with local Pagan elders. I will continue to post updates as we progress. Many thanks to Green Egg for their support and to all who have contributed!*

*Ellen Evert Hopman*

Work in the organic garden is progressing. The beans are sprouting, day lilies have been transplanted into the garden to be used in salads and vegetable dishes. Broccoli is in as are leeks, though they won't be ready till next year. We have a hillside of wild mint and raspberries. Little hills of cucumbers and strawberries are growing nicely. There is still a swath of untouched garden that someone can dig into and plant if they feel the urge!

The hillside is being mowed weekly to keep down the bugs and I personally tore out a hill of poison ivy so that people's feet would be protected.

The burned structure must come down in the next two months or we will have difficulties with the town. This could be accomplished in two days if we had \$1,000.00 for equipment rental. We are considering the purchase of Pea Hens who are semi-wild chickens, adept at clearing bugs off of the land. We want the place to be as safe and child friendly as possible. Supplies have been bought to renovate the sauna and as soon as that is up we can start having Full Moon Saunas again, and charge a modest fee to be used towards construction costs.

## The Elders Meeting

We had our big elders meeting on Saturday, May 19. About half of the local elders who were invited showed up. Some were busy with festivals, others never said why they or a representative could not make it. We speculated about that at the meeting. It is apparently still hard for many Pagan groups to work together. Hopefully over time everyone will understand that this is a project to everyone's benefit, for all Pagan paths.

First, a little metaphysical musing. The big fire that destroyed the Church happened on Imbolc, the festival of the Fire Goddess Brigid, who happens to be my Patroness. When She decides that things have to be shaken up She reacts swiftly. I see Her hand in all of the rapid change and transformation going on with the land, the people, and the Pagan community around this project. Three days ago we had a massive thunderstorm with tornado warnings. A bolt of lightning hit one of the white pines on the property. To me this is a signal that the Sky Gods are watching very closely and that we have attracted Their attention.

A month or so ago we found one page from Margot Adler's *Drawing Down the Moon*. It was all that remained of the Church copy of that book. It was black around the edges but intact. I read the page to see what it was about. It spoke of The Church of All Worlds. We sent the page to Margot.

Yesterday we found another page from the same book. It, too, is charred around the edges. It also is about The Church of All Worlds and Oberon Zell. I plan to mail that page to Oberon. Margot and Oberon (via Green Egg) have both been very supportive of our plight and I feel the Gods have been speaking to us through these discoveries.

## What we Discussed

We met at the Jones Library in Amherst, MA. It was a well organized presentation, with photographs of the site mounted on display boards, name tags for the attendees, forms to fill out for everyone's contact information. We had vast quantities of food on hand; pizzas, sandwiches, cookies, coffee, fruits, juices. We sat in a large circle.

After everyone enthusiastically greeted and hugged we began with a reiteration of the history of the Church and of the Fire, given by the HP, Bob St. Cyr. We introduced ourselves to each other. It was a very enthusiastic group.

Juliana was there, an architect who brought a very impressive computer model of the proposed temple building, in a 3-D presentation. It will be a round building with a star shaped roof and thirteen trees as support columns (at least that is the present incarnation of the plan.)

Amy, Kristin and Jeff from Sacred Space and Sacred

Spiral, traditional Witch Covens from the Ware, MA area were there. Cara, a local Pagan and long time member of the Church came with her two kids, Wes and Xander, and offered gardening and painting expertise. Cara also wants to form a Spiral Scouts group that can meet on the land.

Helena came as a representative of the S.O.T.E.S. Witches from Providence, RI. She was so enthusiastic about the project that she said she might like to live on the land. Helena is an expert at forest micro-gardening, fund raising and construction.

Penny Novack, a true elder who has been doing public rituals since 1964, came to represent Weavers, the local C.O.G. Contingent, and Step by Step farm. She offered to do fund-raising and networking. Penny was very enthusiastic about our desire to work with all Pagan paths. Orion Stormcrow offered his services as a handyman and in management and festival planning.

Emily, a Druid graduate of MIT and mother of four very talented kids (who all sing and or play musical instruments) offered to contact MIT because they are focusing on new methods to combat global warming and their projects need real life places to test out ideas. MIT students and teachers may want to get involved in the building project. Emily also wants to form a Spiral Scouts group.

Meira Butterfly came as a representative of the Rose of Gaia coven who have offered physical help and workshops. Dan and Gypsy came from Salem, MA. They are leaders of The Temple of Nine Wells which has been looking for a country place to do spiritual work. Tiana came as a representative of Sophia, a Goddess group here in the valley. Pentacle Press in New Hampshire is very supportive of this project, as are Margot Adler and Green Egg Magazine. They will be receiving this update and others.

Elissa, Bob, Joshua and myself were all there as facilitators. Bob St. Cyr is the HP for the Nature Church. Elissa is an expert grant writer. Joshua is the Church President and will take on the reconstruction of the sauna. I am offering networking and gardening skills, and eventually workshops.

Another Bob who is a McMac was unable to attend due to his mother's illness but he wrote to me offering financial support and labor as needed. We have plans for a local Pipe Carrier to do a land purification ceremony once the building is demolished and removed from the site.

### **What We Discussed**

Who is legally responsible for the property? Answer

– the Church. Did we have insurance at the time of the fire? No. That was because of code problems. Right before the fire we had an able volunteer who had offered to get the electricity and other infrastructure up to code. The church was also about to be 'in the black' and insurance was one of the first concerns. Did we fully own the land? Yes. The land was donated to the Church in 1979.

Some asked about tax status. We are certified as a church with the IRS and with the state yet the Church is still being asked to pay \$543.00 a quarter to the town. We have no idea why. We need a good lawyer to get on this (and a good accountant). It appears that the original founder, back in the 1970's, may have angered a town official somehow. We will contact local UU churches and find out exactly which legal forms we need to have on hand to be fully tax exempt. We may also contact MA Fair Housing who deal with discrimination and unfair housing practices and possibly the Secretary of State or State Attorney General.

We will be rewriting the charter. We invited all at the meeting to help. The original charter was written in the 1960's and is somewhat politically skewed and non-egalitarian. We want everyone's input and anyone who shows up is welcome to have a voice in this process. This Church really is for all Pagan paths and no one has to be a "member" to participate in the seasonal rituals, saunas, or other activities.

The Belchertown Conservation commission may be allies for us because there is a stream on the land, a forest and organic farm. Deer, Bear, foxes, and other wildlife frequent the property.

We discussed the building plans in some detail. It will be a cob structure using recycled materials. The cob will be made from straw, sand and mud from the property. A demolition site in Northampton will supply used building materials. We will need expert, licensed electricians, plumbers, and contractors of all kinds. We estimate that we can build a \$200,000.00 structure for \$100,000.00 by using our own labor. Liability insurance will be a must.

As currently envisioned there will be a large circular hall with a kitchen, restroom and office on the first floor and two bedrooms on the second floor. Some concerns were expressed that a group renting the Hall might not want non-group members in the bedrooms on top of the Hall while they were doing private ceremonies. Some discussion ensued about possibly putting the bedrooms to the side.

We discussed fund-raising possibilities such as grants, charging for the sauna, offering the land for

city Pagans who need a place to do retreats and camp-outs, getting the MIT and U Mass architecture students involved, and asking for monthly dues from members and supporters.

Several kinds of membership were proposed; group membership where the group would get a discount on renting the site or attending events; supporting memberships where folks just donate money; active memberships for voting members. The HP, Bob, has moved an RV on to the property and once the electricity and water are back on he can start paying rent again.

We offered the elders and group representatives present to be partners and officers in the Church. We do not want to be isolated as this Church is on Pagan-owned land that is available to all Pagans of New England (and elsewhere). We are aware that a Pagan group in RI is looking to do something similar to this project and we offered to give them advice on anything we learn in this process.

### **What we want to see Happen At the Church**

Everything that was before has been washed away. How things were done in the past has been washed away. The will of the Gods is that we start with a fresh clean slate of activities.

We want the Church to be a community religious center for hand-fastings, life passages, and family

celebrations. We also want a Pagan cemetery. There is no Pagan cemetery on Pagan-owned land on the East Coast as far as we are aware. Tiana pointed out that when the tragedy of 9/11 happened many of us were forced to go to churches and synagogues for community support and reflection because as Pagans we had nowhere to go.

The Church and land can become a magical matrix for mutual support amongst all Pagan groups. It can be a country retreat for Urban Pagans. It can be a summer camp for Spiral Scouts on Pagan-owned land. The Church can be a teaching center for all paths to teach and perpetuate our beliefs and way of life. If we are able to purchase the property next door (a large cow farm) we may even be able to build elder housing with the assistance of Habitat for Humanity.

As evidenced by the recent VA Pagan headstone marker victory, we are becoming a mature and recognized religion. It will be to the benefit of all Pagans if we can point to a Church and land that we can call our own. Having a building we can point to will increase our credibility and status as a religion. If just 20 people gave \$50.00 each we could tear down the old building.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Please send donations to me (EE Hopman) made out to THE NATURE CHURCH. My address is POB 219, Amherst, MA 01004. May the Gods bless.*



*Photo: Jymi X/0*



# Dealing with Storms

By Nydia Walker



Many people have a fear of thunderstorms and the devastation they can cause. Fears of the devastation are very real and can only be helped with good insurance coverage. But fear of the storm itself should be worked with until each person understands that this is not a negative event. It is a positive one. Storms are needed in order for Nature to continue on with her work.

Lightning strikes a tree and it falls. Most likely, that tree was diseased or rotted to the point where it needed to fall anyway. Once a tree falls, it becomes a home to many forest creatures and insects, and it begins to produce much needed nitrogen which leaches into the soil as it decays. In death, trees give life to the plants around them.

Wind is needed to strengthen the limbs of young trees. It is said that the stronger the wind, the stronger the tree, and that does prove to be true. Rain of course is the very lifeblood of our wildlife, be it plant or animal, and quite often saves the lives of humans as well.

I've not found much use for thunder yet, except to scare the crap out of you when it seems to crash two inches from your head. You always know when a particularly nasty one is going to sound when a lightning bolt snaps down and your entire body puckers.

The thunder and lightning can be used as a way to tell you how far away a storm is and how soon it will land on top of you. You can count the seconds between a flash of lightning and the crash of thunder to discover how far away the storm is. For each second you count, the storm is about one thousand feet away; therefore, if five seconds elapse, the storm is about a mile away.. The seconds can be counted in several ways:

"One one thousand, Two one thousand..." OR "One Mississippi, Two Mississippi,...." OR  
 "OhCrapThatWasClose, OhCrapThatWasClosier..." OR any phrase that fits that same rhythm. I've come up with numerous ones, none of which I can print here.

I have heard experts say that this method does not really work, and I have heard experts say that it does. Doesn't really matter, it is doing something proactive, which is always a good thing.

For those who prefer the more spiritual or magical side of the world, storms are perfect for raising power, as they bring their own. You can't find a more powerfully charged time to do magical work than when a good storm is happening. This is because the veil between the worlds is pushed aside for the energies of the storm to pass through.

Those who like to work with storm magic find it easier to contact those who have passed over, and can work directly with the Great Gods for miracles to happen. This is especially true for Healing work and Banishing Negativity work. You will never be closer to your Creator than during a storm.

This is also the best time to have Seances, or to meditate upon your personal God/dess, as well as a very good time to work with the Great God Set, Bringer of Storms and Chaos. Use his help to fling any negativity around you into the storm as it leaves your area. To bring him closer to you and enlist his help, just say the following out loud as you watch the storm:

A storm is brewing on the horizon.  
 I can hear the thunder  
 And feel the electrically charged air,  
 As it moves ever closer.  
 The raindrops beat a savage serenade  
 On the leaves of the trees around me.  
 The Great God Set approaches.  
 The thunder increases its tempo  
 Until it sounds like the pounding  
 Of the hooves of the thousand horses  
 Which make up the army of Set.  
 The lightning flashes,  
 Sending me to my knees  
 In praise of this powerful God,  
 Who rules the storms of chaos.  
 The wind strengthens,  
 Making the trees sway in time  
 To the heartbeat of this Great God.  
 I call to you, Great God Set, and scream your name in praise,  
 So you will hear my voice through the chaos of your storm.  
 Come to me Set, let me bow to your strength  
 Come to me Set, that I might use your power  
 Come to me Set, and take this negativity that I freely give to you  
 And take it from me to the furthest regions of chaos  
 So I will never see it or know it again.

Visualize the negativity as a cold black ball in your hand. As the storm reaches it's height around you, visualize the Great God Set walking towards you, and hand him the negativity ball. As the storm moves away from you, so does the God, taking your negativity with him. Now is the time to thank him in your own words.

When working with storms, always be safe. Never go outside during a storm that involves thunder, lightning and/or high winds. Stay away from windows and doors and have a battery-operated radio tuned to a local station for weather updates. Be prepared to move to a shelter should the storm worsen and your current shelter is in danger of collapse or damage.

*Powders & Potions © Andi Fisher*

## **African Medicinal Plants**

By Andi Fisher, Cape Town, South Africa

### **Ornithogalum thyrsoides**

Wonder-flower, Star-of-Bethlehem, Chincherinchee



#### **Medicinal Properties:**

Remedy for diabetes mellitus  
The leaves are used in an infusion

#### **\*Metaphysical properties:**

Facilitates painful initiations & rites of passage  
Eases bereavement  
Reduces negative energies in the workplace  
Encourages generosity

#### **Caution!**

Powders & Potions articles contain general information about medicinal plants & their uses. It is not intended as medical advice for self-treatment. Many of the medicinal plants described are highly toxic and may cause severe allergic reactions or serious poisoning. Neither the author or publishers can be held responsible for claims arising from the mistaken identity of plants or their inappropriate use. Do not attempt self-diagnosis or self-treatment. Always consult a medical professional or qualified practitioner.

*\*Illustrations & metaphysical properties may not be reproduced in any format, electronic or otherwise without express written permission from the author. For application or further information contact Andi Fisher [andi@cbd.co.za](mailto:andi@cbd.co.za)*



# My Neighbors, The Mysterious Melungeons

Tom Donohue

The Cumberland Plateau region of the Appalachian range is nestled between the Great Smokies and the Blue Ridge Mountains. When my beloved Ariel and I first decided to move here from Berkeley California, we were attracted by the landscape, the forests and the wondrous biodiversity of the oldest continuing terrestrial ecosystem on the planet. The first Appalachian orogeny, (geological uplifting, mountain building ) occurred when all of the Earth's landmass was concentrated in the single, ancient super continent of Pangaea. When this land mass separated into today's continents, some of the mountain range remained in Norway, some in Ireland, and most of the rest ended up in what is now the Eastern United States. These mountains have sustained life in various forms for over four hundred million years.

This region's ecology is not its only fascinating characteristic. It is also the home of the mysterious Melungeons, a population group whose very existence has been denied by scholars, governments and self-styled experts for nearly four centuries. Many of these simply dismiss the Melungeons as a "tri-racial isolate" ( White European, Cherokee and African American.) and deny that they have any special origins or history. The Melungeons say otherwise!

My introduction to the Melungeons came in 1970 in a newspaper article, which I encountered while serving as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Coast Guard in Gloucester City, New Jersey. Unfortunately, I don't remember the exact date or even the name of the newspaper. I do, however, remember the **story** quite well.

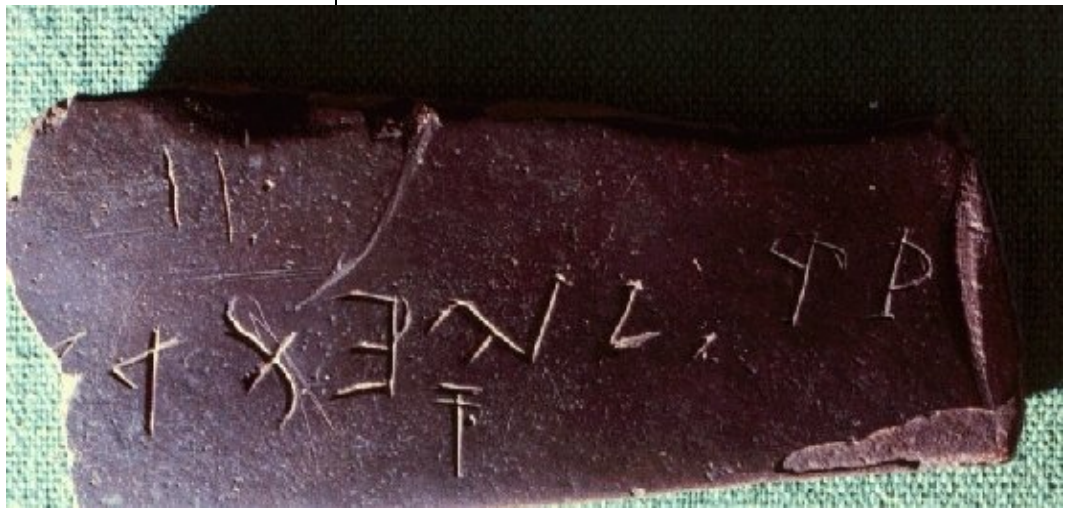
A professor of archaeology was contemplating an incised stone tablet that he had placed in front of him on his desk. The inscription had never been translated; the language had not even been identified. Although the tablet had been found in the mountains of Eastern Tennessee, the single word it bore had the look of an old-world language using a phonetic alphabet. The tablet had been positioned such that the letters seemed to read from left to

right as in a modern European language.

Another professor entered the room, a friend and colleague who specialized in ancient Semitic languages. He glanced at the stone tablet from his position on the opposite side of the desk, and said aloud, " For the land of Canaan"

He then added, " Where on Earth did you find this, and why are you looking at it upside down?"

Canaanite text, like Hebrew, reads from right to left,



*The Bat Creek Stone*

in fact, the letters are similar to Hebrew. The linguist added that the text was from a period when the Canaanites lived in Carthage after having been driven from their homeland by the invading Israelites. As nearly as I can determine from a recent web search, this story refers to the Bat Creek Stone. For recent evaluations of this artifact, check out this link:

<http://www.econ.ohio-state.edu/jhm/arch/batcrk.html>

The archaeologist was instantly reminded of a people who lived in the area where the rock was discovered, the Melungeons. One of the myths about them was that they had arrived from somewhere in North Africa, many centuries before the first Europeans landed on North American shores. Thor Heyerdahl had recently crossed the Atlantic Ocean in the *Ra II*, a boat made of papyrus reeds, thus proving that the ancient Egyptians or other North Africans, could have done so as well. This and the artifact seemed to substantiate the myth. <http://www.plu.edu/~ryandp/RAX.html>



This is an artists impression of  
"The Pearl of Great Price"

I showed the newspaper article to a fellow Coast Guard officer, Lieutenant Loveridge, a member of the LDS church. He showed me where the *Book of Mormon* spoke of an ancient Semitic people living in the Appalachians who they called the *Mulekites*. *The Book of Mormon* itself claims to be a translation of tablets which were discovered in North America, by Joseph Smith, the founder of the LDS church. These were conveniently "lost" soon after the discovery of the Rosetta stone which might have facilitated a real translation. (The first "translation" was done via two quasi-magical devices, the *Urim* and the *Thummin*.) Drawings of these tablets look like Carthaginian bills-of-lading. Later, Smith came into the possession of several similar tablets which had been unearthed in the southern Appalachians.. Smith dubbed these the Pearl of Great Price. They too were conveniently lost.

There were several other hypotheses concerning the origin of the Melungeons. Someone noticed that many of them included a Jewish ritual in their religious practices, specifically, the lighting of the Shabbas candle. This led some to believe that they were a lost tribe of Israel. <http://www.chabadpv.com/shabbat%20candle%20lighting%20times.htm> Others observed the European Pagan practice of building triangular shelters over the graves of their dead.

And the plot thickens. When English colonists first came into contact with the Melungeons early in the seventeenth century, most of them identified themselves as "Portyghee." (Portuguese) others said that they were Turkish. To further complicate matters, the language they spoke was broken English of Elizabethan times. Words and phrases from this period, like "blaggard" (Blackguard) and "vittles" (victuals) still occur in their local dialect.

At the present time, Ariel and I live on Newman's Ridge near the town of Sneedville, Tennessee. Until recently, this area was considered the most isolated part of the Appalachians, a fact that made it most attractive to us. It also seems to be the reason why the Melungeons originally settled here. They have a long history of persecution by lighter skinned people; their only safety lay in isolation and secrecy. Most of my nearest neighbors are Meluneon, but it is considered impolite to use the term since it is only recently that a few of them have embraced this name. A Meluneon pride movement has recently



A view Southwards from Newman's Ridge

emerged which has led many of these people to begin searching out their roots. One group, the Meluneon Heritage Association, or MHA has a website which provides regular updates on the results of their research. <http://meluneon.org/>

As Americans we have been taught that the first old world people to arrive in this country were the pilgrims in 1620 and, about a decade earlier, the founders of the Jamestown colony including the ill-fated settlement on Roanoke Island. Somehow we were expected to ignore the fact that Squanto, the



native American who provided so much assistance to the New England Puritans, was already fluent in English. The Spanish settlement of Florida began early in the sixteenth century and the Explorer, Hernando DeSoto recorded that his expedition had traveled as far north as eastern Tennessee. The journals of many early explorers are filled with reports of people who appeared more European than native American. An explorer named Needham wrote:

*Eight dayes jorny down this river lives a white people which have long beardes and whiskers and weares clothing, and on some of ye other rivers lives a hairey people. Ye white people have a bell which is six feet over which they ring morning and evening and att that time a great number of people congregate together and talkes he knows not what.*

On his second voyage, Christopher Columbus observed three ancient wrecked ships of European design near Guadalupe.

Probably the earliest report of people who were most definitely Melungeon was recorded by Tennessee Governor John Sevier, in 1784. Their numbers were quite substantial, possibly as many as one thousand individuals living in several communities in Eastern Tennessee and Western Virginia. They were described as:

*Dark skinned, reddish brown complexioned people supposed to be of Moorish descent, who were neither Indian nor Negro, but had fine European features, and claimed to be Portuguese.*

Many of them claimed descent from a group of Portuguese who had either been shipwrecked or otherwise abandoned on the Atlantic coast. They already had English surnames and practiced Protestant Christianity. The state government originally classified them as neither black, nor white, nor Indian, but as "Free Persons" or "F.P." This was soon changed to F.P.C. or "Free Person of Color", and later altered to F.C. or "Free Colored". This last designation was used to deprive them of civil and political rights.

In the decades that followed, many of them dispersed throughout the Appalachian chain fleeing persecution. Early in the nineteenth century, several states made the declaration that there was no such thing as a free person of color and that all persons of African descent were to be regarded as runaway slaves. This led many Melungeons to claim to be Cherokee in order to safeguard their freedom. Unfortunately the Cherokee also became the victims of racial persecution and were banished to Oklahoma along the infamous Trail of Tears. Those Melungeons who settled in the mountainous regions

of Pennsylvania called themselves 'Black Dutch'. As a child, I lived in a mountain village in Pennsylvania where a few of my neighbors were said to be "Black Dutch". I remember arguing with my mother, telling her that there were no black Germans or Hollanders. I was quickly and sternly corrected, "Yes there are Tommy, and don't you forget it!"

In retrospect, all of them looked Melungeon. One of them was my best friend at that time and claimed to be "part Indian and part Black Dutch". In Western Virginia they are often called "Blackfoot Indians" and have no connection to the Blackfoot tribe of the western United States.

The amazing array of apparently anachronistic artifacts discovered in earthen mounds from Alabama to Ohio reads like a chapter from Charles Fort's *The Book of the Damned*. An engraved Phoenician tablet was excavated from Mammoth Mound in West Virginia. The stone has not yet been translated but scholars agree that it is a Punic inscription used during the first century B.C.E.



*The Grave Creek Stone*

The inscription on a stone tablet from a mound in Grave Creek West Virginia has been identified as the form of Punic used in Spain during the first millennium B.C.E.

The three line fragments read from right to left and have been translated:

*The mound raised high for Tasach  
This tile  
Queen caused-to-be-made*

<http://www.econ.ohio-state.edu/jhm/arch/grvcrk.html>  
<http://www.stevequayle.com/Giants/Ancient.Civ.Technol/contact.in.Americas.html>

The Metcalf stone found near Fort Benning, Georgia also appears to be of Near Eastern origin. The script



seems to be Aegean with a Phoenician influence. It has not been translated. According to Dr. Joseph B. Mahan Jr., Director of Education and Research at the Columbus (Georgia) Museum of arts and crafts, the Yuchi Indians who live nearby share a great many religious practices with the Ancient Hebrews. The Yuchi fled to Georgia from Tennessee after being defeated by the Cherokee. Another tribe, the Siouans (as distinguished from the Sioux) appear to have been related to the Yuchi. And also claimed partial European origins. <http://www.yuchi.org/>

Hebrew coins of Bar Kokhba's rebellion against the Romans (132-135 C.E.) have been found in Louisville, Hopkinsville and Clay City, Kentucky. <http://www.econ.ohio-state.edu/jhm/arch/barkokhb.htm>

If you find artifacts of this sort particularly fascinating, the links I've provided will lead you to information and theories of many more such discoveries.

The origin of the word *melungeon* is as mysterious as the Melungeon people themselves. The most commonly held theory is that it is derived from the French, *melangeon*, the mixture. People came to this supposition primarily because they believed that the Melungeons were a "tri-racial isolate" of white, African and Cherokee. French trappers and traders had established a presence in Tennessee before the English. In fact, by 1714, the French settlement of Charleville occupied what is now Nashville.

Since, in the earliest recorded contacts, the Melungeons usually said that they were "Portyghee" scholars searched the Portuguese language for similar terms. One word they uncovered was the Portuguese *melungo* which translates "shipmate".

Other Melungeons claimed Turkish descent. The Turkish words, *melon can*, pronounced, "melun-jun", translates, "cursed soul".

Arguably, the most famous Melungeon on Newman's Ridge was Mahala "Big Haley" Mullins. Storytelling has evolved into a high art in Appalachia, and all tales grow into tall tales. The mythic Mahala has attained the same stature as Paul Bunyan or John Henry. She is alleged to have had thirty husbands, to have "out-rassled" a dozen men at a church picnic, and to have outsmarted scores of revenuers. This last part is apparently true. Big Haley lived in a six hundred square foot log cabin high on Newman's Ridge. She sold moonshine for a living. In the mid

nineteenth century, the Melungeons had been forced up the hill by white settlers and were trying to eke out a living from marginal land.

Corn brings in the most money as corn "likker" and is a lot easier to transport over rugged mountain terrain. I am reminded of the words from *Rocky Top*, one of Tennessee's official state songs.

*Once two strangers climbed ol' Rocky Top,  
lookin' for a moonshine still;  
Strangers ain't come down from Rocky Top;  
Reckon they never will;  
Corn won't grow at all on Rocky Top;  
Dirt's too rocky by far;  
That's why all the folks on Rocky Top  
get their corn from a jar*



*Mahala Mullins' cabin; North face of Newman's Ridge visible in background*

Mahala was a large woman by nature. She stood over six feet tall; she was big-boned and of even bigger frame. As she matured she added weight, a lot of it, reaching a weight in excess of three hundred pounds, not seriously obese considering her height. Then her problems were suddenly compounded by a filarial worm, *Wuchereria bancrofti* which blocks its host's lymph vessels causing elephantiasis. *W. bancrofti* is not native to this continent but is endemic in parts of Africa. There were a few outbreaks in America as a result of the slave trade. It was during one of these outbreaks that Haley contracted the disease. Her arms, legs and other parts swelled to enormous size increasing her weight to over eight hundred pounds. There is a tale of a sheriff attempting to arrest her.

The lawman scaled the rugged path to Haley's cabin, knocked on her door and informed her that she was under arrest.

She made an attempt to squeeze her eight hundred pounds through the cabin door demonstrating to the sheriff that it was quite impossible for her to leave. When the sheriff threatened to tear down the cabin she reminded him that it was against Tennessee law to destroy a persons home. The Sheriff returned the arrest warrant to his superior with the simple message written on the back "Mahala Mullins catchable, but not fetchable".

The local historical society has recently disassembled Haley's cabin and reconstructed it on a site just across the road from the Vardy Presbyterian Church, near Blackberry Creek at the base of Newman's Ridge.

N. Brent Kennedy, a man of Melungeon descent, and the author of *The Melungeons, The Resurrection of a Proud People*, has listed and commented upon the most popular theories:

1. *Surviving descendants of the "Lost Colony" of Roanoke Island who later intermarried with Native Americans. The Elizabethan English spoken by the first- encountered Melungeons, as well as their English surnames have been cited as evidence in support of this theory.*
2. *Descendants of the Welsh explorer, Madoc, who supposedly trounced around the Southern Appalachians in the 1100's C.E. There is absolutely nothing to support this theory except that Madoc may have actually been in the Southern Appalachians. Certainly the Melungeons do not look Welsh.*
3. *One of the lost tribes of Israel ... an interesting theory.*
4. *Descendants of early Carthaginian, or perhaps Phoenician, seamen who may have discovered the new world over two thousand years ago. The Melungeons physical characteristics mesh almost perfectly with this theory.*
5. *Shipwrecked Portuguese sailors. The earliest Melungeons invariably claimed to be Portuguese, and occasionally shipwrecked Portuguese.*
6. *A simple tri-racial isolate ... the progeny of a few eighteenth-century whites, escaped slaves and Native Americans.*

Recent genetic studies have indicated that the Melungeons are only about five to ten percent sub-Saharan African and a similar percentage Native American. These data alone show that the original Melungeon population must have been fairly large and endogamous. ( Only marrying within ones own community.) Studies of mitochondrial DNA which is only passed through the mother, and of the Y

chromosome which is only passed father to son, have shown that the original population must have included nearly as many women as men. The predominant genes are Turkish/Greek, Middle Eastern and West European.

<http://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/chromosome=MT>

Throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, both the Spanish and the Portuguese were in nearly constant war with the Moors and the Turks. Many Moorish and Turkish seamen were taken captive in naval battles and forced to become oarsmen in Spanish and Portuguese galleons. Many Turks are known to have been taken captive at the battle of Lepanto in 1571.

Portugal's inquisition was even more cruel and brutal than Spain's. Muslims, Jews and Pagans were all persecuted. Streams of escaping Moors fled throughout the world probably accompanied by Jewish and Pagan refugees. It is possible that some of them commissioned a ship to take them to the new world. It is also known that many of them were exported to Brazil to serve as slaves. One theory that explains how they came to speak broken Elizabethan English suggests that a number of slaves bound for South America, were liberated by the privateer, Sir Francis Drake, and put ashore in the Carolinas. They learned English while on his vessel.

While most Melungeons have English surnames like Gibson, Collins, Miser, Mullins, etc. their given names have a distinctly Mediterranean flavor. Names like Louisa, Helena, Salena, Salvadore, Mahala, Navarrh, Canara, Eulalia and Elvis. ( Yes, the king of rock and roll is believed to have some Melungeon ancestry.)

According to Helena Geraldles, an officer at the embassy of Portugal in Washington D.C., the term Melungeon has been around for centuries, and was primarily a term used by the Portuguese Muslims to describe themselves.

It seems that the mystery of the Melungeons has finally been solved. Well, almost. There remain some big questions about their first landing on American shores, the absence of Mediterranean words in their vocabulary and the early migrations that led them to Hancock County, Tennessee.

There are other "mystery people" in or near this region. The Lumbee Indians, the Redbones, the Yuchis, the Mandans etc. as well as a population with distinctly East Asian features and blonde hair. The unusual artifacts discovered in the earth mounds and the mound builders themselves remain largely unexplained. Prince Madoc of Wales and Brendan the navigator from Ireland may well have

visited this region as well, although no real evidence has been unearthed.

*Rumors abound of a population of people with Marfan's Syndrome, who may well have been the source of this genetic condition in Abraham Lincoln. In a future issue I plan to discuss the legendary Blue People of Troublesome Creek.*

## Grey School of Wizardry

[www.GreySchool.com](http://www.GreySchool.com)



**Do you want to study real magick and arcane lore?**

Enroll in the **Grey School of Wizardry** and attend our online campus! We offer over 200 classes at 7 levels with readings, projects, exams, and practical exercises. 16 Departments encompass **Wizardry, Nature Studies, Magickal Practice, Mind Magicks, Healing, Wortcunning, Lore, Divination, Performance, Alchemy, Lifeways, Beast Mastery, Mathemagicks, Cosmology, Ceremonial Magick, and Dark Arts**. Graduates will be certified as "Journeyman Wizards." The Grey School is highly interactive, with four Elemental youth Houses, four adult Lodges, the Great Hall, and other forums in which students can communicate directly with teachers and each other.

Tuition for first level is \$20 for students aged 11-17, or \$35 for students 18 and older.



# The Power of Sekhmet

by Nydia Walker

Sekhmet is an Eye of Ra and symbolizes the fierce, destructive aspects of the sun's power. It is she that brings drought, famine, pestilence and death to the land when its people neglect the worship of the Great Gods.

Some scholars would have you believe that Sekhmet is an aspect of the Goddess Hathor or that they are two sides of the same Goddess, but this simply is not true. As you can see in the following table, she is an individual Goddess in her own right, deserving of her own worship.

## Sekhmet

Mighty One

**Cult Center** – Memphis

**Main festivals** –

Feast – March 31, May 12, June 14;  
Day of the purifying flame – May 4;  
Day of Offering to Sekhmet – May 8;

**Statue** – a woman with the head of a lion

**Family** – Daughter of Ra. Wife of Ptah, Mother of Nefertem

**Cardinal Point** – South

**Element** – Fire

**Herbs** – Bay, Carnation, Cedar, Cinnamon, Ginseng, Juniper, Lime, Marigold, Sunflower

**Crystals** – Bloodstone, Carnelian, Garnet, Red Jasper, Lepidolite, Sugilite, Tigers Eye

**Metal** – Silver

**Wood** – Oak

**Color** – Red, Orange

**Incense** – Mint, Patchouly, Vanilla

**Day(s)** – Sunday, Tuesday

**Time(s)** – Noon

**Season** – Summer

Sun Goddess, representing the fierce destructive heat of the sun. Goddess of war. Bloodthirsty destroyer of the enemies of Ra and Osiris. Attempted to destroy mankind when Ra believed we had become rebellious and no longer worshipped and respected the Gods and Goddesses.

**Other Names:** Brighid (Irish), Feronia (Etruscan), Cybele (Greek), Jord (Norse), Balor or Nemain (Celtic), Shapshu (Canaan), Gerra (Assyrian), Yarris (Hittite), Shapash (Phoenician)



Nydia Walker

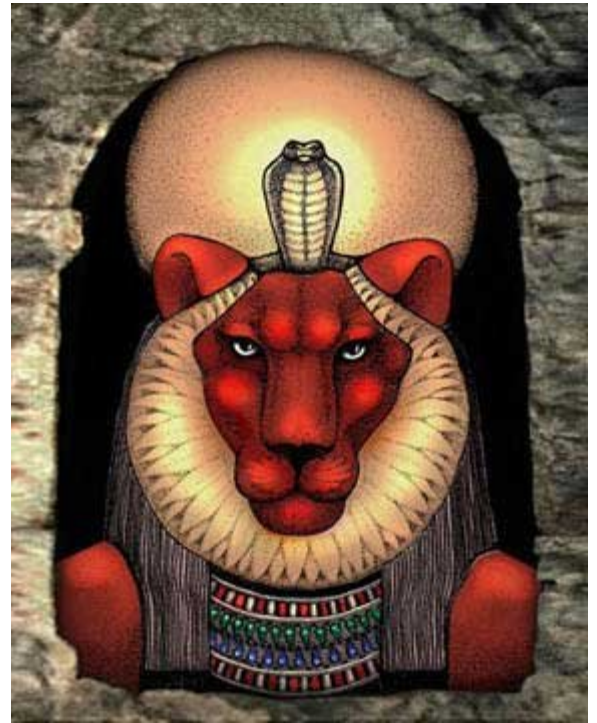
Sekhmet's festival was held each year to appease the Goddess and keep her from sending the destructive heat of the sun to kill the crops in the fields. Offerings were also made to the Goddess in her Temples on a daily basis to show her that Mankind still loved the Great Gods and worshipped them.

This was done because long ago, before written history, man had stopped worshipping the ancient Gods. They believed that they were advanced enough and intelligent enough that they no longer needed the Great Gods in their lives. This angered Ra, so he sent Sekhmet down to Earth to punish man and she went about doing so with a bloodthirsty vengeance.

Then Ra realized that without mankind, there would be no one to worship the Great Gods and no one to serve them, so he called Sekhmet home, but she would not listen. Rather than to allow her to completely wipe out the race of man, he mixed pomegranate juice with beer and poured 7,000 jars of it over the sands of Egypt. Sekhmet mistook this for blood and drank it until she passed out. When she awoke, the anger and bloodlust had left her and mankind was saved.

## Hymn to Sekhmet

Praise to thee, Mighty Sekhmet.  
 Lady of the West and avenger of thy Father.  
 Thou art the most powerful of warriors  
 Deemed worthy to enter the Eternal Field of Reeds  
 Your bow sings quicker and your arrows fly further  
 Than even those of the Medjay.  
 As the sun does set, it is your face  
 That appears in it's final glow.  
 And as darkness descends upon the land,  
 We can rest safe,  
 Knowing that you are there to watch over us  
 And to keep our enemies from harming us.  
 No harm can come to us as long as we worship you.  
 That is your commandment  
 And we are happy to honor it.  
 Great Goddess, accept our offerings  
 As a token of our devotion to you,  
 Bless our bodies and our homes  
 So that we may serve you for eternity.  
 May your name live forever in the hearts of man.



Katlyn Breene

**Mythic Images**  
 Sacred Statuary & Magickal Jewelry  
 by Oberon & Morning Glory Zell

[www.MythicImages.com](http://www.MythicImages.com)

## BRIEF BITS: LEGAL TOPICS FOR PAGANS

*by Dana D. Eilers, Attorney and Author*

### TOPIC: Condoms and the Wiccan Rede

So, there I am reading a 2006 Supreme Court of California case dealing with the issue of civil liability for the negligent transmission of the HIV virus. (Translation: can you be held responsible for giving your partner HIV in a court of law and thereby be required to pay your partner monetary damages? Newsflash: YES!) While I am reading this very interesting stuff, I happened upon some rather familiar language: "[a]ll persons are required to use ordinary care to prevent others being injured as result of their conduct ..." John B. v. Bridget B., 2006 Cal. LEXIS 8011 (Supreme Court of California, 2006), quoting Rowland v. Christian, 69 Cal2d108,112 (1968). It suddenly struck me that some of the California justices had been reading the Wiccan Rede.

Wiccan or not, nearly every Pagan I know is familiar with the Rede. When I talk to most of the Pagans that I meet, I discover that, Wiccan or not, the Rede is one of the rules that they live by. For those of you who need a refresher course on the Rede, it is a little ditty written by Gerald Gardner and Doreen Valiente, which sums up Wiccan ethics. Although there are many variations of the Rede, its most popular and concise version goes like this: 'An it harm none, do what ye will. (For a very good discussion of the Wiccan Rede, see the on-line Wikipedia encyclopedia entry at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiccan\\_Rede](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiccan_Rede).) Basically, the Wiccan rule for good behavior is that you can do what you want, as long as you don't hurt anyone.

To me, it sounds like the Supreme Court of California and Wiccans are talking the same language. However, as much as we Pagans seem to revere the Rede, some of us forget that it even exists when we are in the throes of passion. Regrettably, there are Pagans out there who are having unprotected sex. It gets worse. There are Pagans out there who have sexually transmitted diseases who are having unprotected sex. It gets even worse. There are Pagans out there who have sexually transmitted diseases who are having unprotected sex WITHOUT TELLING THEIR PARTNERS. And for a group of people who like to say that they live their lives without hurting others and that they take responsibility for their actions, this is pretty darn bad.

MAJOR Newsflash: not only is this most un-Pagan like, it violates the Rede, and it can get you into big trouble with the law. So, for those of you who think that I am just a big Buttinsky trying to pry into your

sex life and impose my own values on it, listen up. Many states have made it a crime not to disclose HIV/AIDS status to a partner. In California, it is a felony for an infected individual to willfully expose another to the disease through sex. If a jury finds you guilty of this felony, you can go to jail. (If you don't want to read a lot of legal mumbo-jumbo to find this stuff out, try reading Ellen Rosner Feig's article entitled "Can you sue over Transmission of a Sexual Disease?" at: [http://legalzoom.com/articles/article\\_content/article14106.html](http://legalzoom.com/articles/article_content/article14106.html).)

"But, Dana," you whine to me, "I don't have HIV. I just have herpes, which is controllable, or something else that is curable with a shot or something."



Honestly, just because the disease is not as catastrophic as HIV/AIDS, is it any less reprehensible to risk exposing someone else to it? Of course not. Don't believe me? Again, let the law be your guide. You can be sued if you negligently or intentionally give someone else a sexually transmitted disease. See Feig, supra.

"Oh, gee, Dana," you say, "I didn't KNOW that I had herpes or warts or whatever."

You are still not off the hook. You don't have to actually know that you have an STD; you can be liable for transmitting the STD if you knew or had reason to know that you had it. See John B., supra, where the California Supreme Court discusses this very issue. Uh, what does that mean? In Minnesota, a man with a history of genital sores



who had never actually been diagnosed with herpes was found liable for the transmission of herpes to his partner. *M.M.D. v. B.L.G.*, 467 N.W.2d 645 (Minn. App. Ct.1991), at 647.



"Yeah, well," you might smirk, "it turns out my ex did not get anything from me after all. I am made out of teflon, and nothing sticks to me. Nanny, nanny, boo boo."

Let's see how this sticks to your teflon. In a very famous case, the lover of Rock Hudson recovered a jury award of 5.5 MILLION DOLLARS for the emotional distress he endured cause by mere exposure to the virus. See Feig, *supra*.

"But, Dana!" you laugh. "I am a poor, poor Pagan. Five and half MILLION dollars? I don't have five hundred and FIFTY dollars! Who is going to sue me?"

Answer: an ex lover can sue you and even if you are a poor, poor Pagan, some local news reporter is going to get hold of that court pleading and think it is very juicy. How would you like to be at the center of this headline: "Local Pagan sued by ex-lover for transmission of herpes"?

How bad does it have to get before we live our lives by the rules we set for ourselves?

If you profess to live your life by the Rede, or the Golden Rule, or the language of the civil courts, it is unethical, illegal, and tortious to have unprotected sex if you know or have reason to know that you have an STD; furthermore, it is unethical, illegal, and tortious not to tell your partner that you have an STD or that you might have an STD. Look at it from your partner's point of view. You are taking away your partner's right to choose how they want to conduct themselves. Unless you 'fess up, your partner cannot make an informed decision. Of course, that informed decision could be "Go away, fool! Do I look THAT desperate?" I realize that this is exactly the reaction you are trying to avoid by keeping your little secret to yourself, but honestly, it is not cool; it is not Pagan; and it can land you smack in a courtroom.



There is a relatively easy way around all of this. If you are sexually active, get tested on a regular basis for STD's, including HIV/AIDs. Know your status. Use condoms. Live according to the Rede. Not only will you look incredibly responsible among your Pagan brethren, you will actually be incredibly responsible, no matter with whom you congregate. You will be healthier. Your partners will be healthier, and the extra perk is that it will probably keep you out of jail and out of court.





## Mother Nature's Jester

*By Nydia Walker*

I'm not sure when Mother Nature decided to make me her personal Jester, but that is what has happened. I am Mother Nature's Murphy. When it comes to her animals and plants, She often lets me know that they are the ones in control, not me. This is perfectly understandable, as I am well aware that when I am camping I am visiting their home and I should behave as their guest. But I must say, they are not very gracious hosts.

Camping is my way of relaxing and getting back in touch with what really matters in life. Spending a few days living a simple lifestyle, centered around nothing but your basic needs is a wonderful way to really feel in tune with your body, your Faith and your spirit guides. Waking up to a breakfast of fresh fruit while watching a beautiful sunrise, going about my day taking care of my body's requirements and my spiritual needs and enjoying dinner while gazing at a gorgeous sunset is my idea of the perfect life.

To be allowed to do that until this life is over, I would easily put up with the unending gathering of firewood, the lack of electricity and plumbing, (ok maybe not plumbing), but I would willingly give up modern luxuries to be able to fully enjoy every second of every day in total blissful peace. Sadly though, such is not my lot in this life - my husband and children vetoed that idea pretty quickly.

So we compromised, I get 8 weeks out of the year for my bliss, as long as I stay on our farm. I built a little cabin back in our woods and called it home. The trees are very dense so you can't see the cabin from our home, but if you yell really loud from the back porch, I'll hear you. Oh Joy.

Everything went so well at first, I anxiously awaited each spring, so I could open up the cabin and live within the bountiful arms of the Great Goddess.....and those cute, furry, creatures who live there. But now, I don't know why I continue to go camping, and allow myself to be the target of the cute, little, furry, forest creatures.

It all started with the squirrels. They were the first to turn against me. Oh, they were pleasant the first year I camped up there. But the second season,

they became annoyed. Especially when I cleared an even bigger campsite, so tents could be set up and had friends join me. Those furry creatures screamed and chattered at us so loudly at times, we couldn't hear each other talk.

Then they became silent, and the silence got loud...and it became scary. We knew they were up to something, but what?

And that's when they got violent. Those sneaky little buggers would go out on a tree limb until they were directly over our heads, and then drop nuts down on us. Everything would be quiet, and then WHAM, a nut slams into the top of your head, or your lap, if they targeted lower. There was no doubt about it, they had declared war!

The next year we took a defensive position and erected a plastic rain fly, so their bombs would simply roll harmless off the plastic and never touch us. We thought it was a brilliant move and were sure we had achieved victory. We were wrong, so very badly wrong.

The squirrels were not just being quiet, they were in training. Soon we discovered they had taught themselves how to throw sidearm, and again we were pelted with nuts from all directions. Oh no, not a steady stream, they were more clever than that. They would do sporadic ambushes. Just as the first nut hit its target and everyone was laughing, two or three more would fly at other targets, making everyone duck.

Then the diabolical creatures would scramble away without a sound. We never knew when or where the assaults would occur, and we never knew if there would be just one bomb, or ten. Our defense had failed and we were back to square one.

Then a possum showed up inside our Temple during a ritual. We thought it a good sign from Mother Nature, believing it to be a sign of peace, a truce to cease fire. We even took it's picture and posted it to our Yahoo Group Site! We were delighted that no more blood would have to be shed from our heads by the missiles of the enemy! How could we have been so blind?

The first camping trip of the next year, found the possum dead on the front porch of the cabin. It was



tragic. Our intelligence sources told us that the possum had been sent to our camp by those crafty, underhanded squirrels, to be a spy for them. And when the possum grew to love us, they tortured him and he told them everything he knew about us. The poor possum was so filled with remorse over betraying us, that he died from his grief.

Hah! Like I believed that! The Possums have aligned themselves with the Evil Squirrels. That possum on the porch was probably our Possum's twin who died from natural causes and the beasts took advantage of the situation by dumping the carcass on the porch so we would think that it was the same possum, when in fact it was not, it was just the evil twin of our beautiful, loving Possum.

(Takes Deep Calming Breath)

Ok, I'm better now, sorry for the interruption...  
...Now, where was I? Oh Yes...

...So, the Squirrels and the Possums are both out to get me. No problem, I can handle this. I must make my plan of attack most carefully. I dare not even write it down, in case the squirrels have learned to read. HEY, if they can learn to throw sidearm, they can learn anything. Have you met this spawn of Hades?



Photo: Jymi X/0

The next year was the year of the frogs. Oh sure, some people have the nerve to say it's my own fault and that I did it to myself. But I know the truth. It was those evil spawn of Hades, those sneaky little demons, the Squirrels. It began in late February. I was on the site, Pogo, chatting with my best online cohorts.

Now, you must understand, it was very late at night, and I had several drinks under my belt, and was feeling very happy. One of my friends, Shrinky,

went to bed, so Cagles and I decided to do a little spell to send a bunch of frogs to her in her dreams. I don't know why we decided to do this, we thought it would be funny or something. Did I mention I had been drinking?

The next day, Cagles and I met online earlier than normal and we were joking around about it and how we had to make sure that Shrinky never found out what we had done. Unbeknownst to us, Shrinky was lurking in the shadows of the chat room under another name, and saw everything we said. It was hilarious! At least until Shrinky reminded me about my faith. Surely you know what's coming next. Yep, that three fold rule hit us hard.

Once the weather warmed up, both Cagles and I got hit with a plague of frogs that made the biblical one look downright uninspired. Our ponds were filled with the LOUD little creatures, and the woods echoed with their croaks 24/7. Not only that, but we started seeing frogs everywhere we went, on billboards, semi trucks, commercials, even in our own mail, as Shrinky couldn't resist mailing both of us stuffed frogs.

All told, Cagles and I both now own a small collection of all things frog. There were several people in that room that night who witnessed our little spell and also couldn't resist mailing us frogs...ceramic frogs, stuffed frogs, frog candle holders, frog incense burners, frog stickers, frog stationary...ARRGGGHHHH.

Of course, Dear Friend, you can plainly see that the little spell I did, was quite harmless. It was used as a dark plot by the squirrels to bring the frogs into the war. I know this to be true, they did this, those blasted Squirrels, they heard that spell and used it for their own benefit.

As soon as the weather warmed up, the battalions of frogs took position and began blasting me daily with their noise from the ponds, and nightly from the trees. Trees???? TREES??????? TREE FROGS???????????? OH NO!!!!!!!!!!!!!! PANIC!!!!

(Takes a deep calming breath)

AAAAAARRRRRGGGGHHHHH!, Damn, didn't work that time.

The squirrels want war? I'll give them war...  
...and their little froggies too!

Oh, I plotted and planned most carefully, never giving any of my secret plans away by my thoughts or actions. But, I was ready! So, the first camping trip of the next spring, a friend of mine, Chuck\* and I were, preparing for guests the next day. When Chuck went to the store for supplies, I planned to



make my move. But as his car pulled out of the woods, the damn rodent spawn from Hades launched a surprise ambush, and let me tell you folks, it was a doozy.

There was a very loud cracking sound, from somewhere in front of me. Loud enough that you knew whatever wood had been snapped, was a big piece. A minute or so later, there was another one, from behind me. Ok, that got my attention. The cracking sounds came more frequently, and grew louder. It was like a huge giant was walking towards me, his big feet crushing tree trunks underneath. Man, have I watched way too many scary movies.

As I was peering through the trees, trying to catch a glimpse of what was happening, a tree top fell past my line of sight. It took me a minute to figure out what I had seen. . I was kind of shocked, then scared, then I didn't know what to feel, and the only thing I could think of.....the only thing in my mind.....was.....I now know the sound a tree makes when it falls in the woods, and it is not a nice sound.

But did I go over to investigate? HELL NO, I waited for Chuck to get back so he could go first. Think about it, in ever scary movie set in the woods, the girl goes to investigate a strange sound, and she gets killed. If the guy goes, he might live through it long enough to warn the others to get away. I was counting on the warning. Also, I knew, that if I went, I might be walking into an ambush, and those evil rodents would destroy me. So, I made Chuck go.

What I had seen was not a mirage or my imagination, a tree top had fallen, and that was the source of the noises. And then, I knew. Life as I knew it was about to end, as my enemy had taken a bold step forward. The Trees have joined with mine enemy and now seek my destruction. They had boldly sacrificed one of their own to seal their bloody union!

What chance do I, a mere mortal woman, have against such a formidable foe. Kill them, Kill them all!

Huh? Who said that? No! Killing is too easy, I must find a way to squash their rebellion and make them my slaves!!!!!! MUAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

The mutant rodent spawn from Hades and their evil minions have now allied themselves with the trees, and soon the bushes and vines shall follow, and then..... and then.... Can the flowers be far behind?????

But that's ok, cause I know the secret.

Would you like to know the secret?

Come closer Dear Friend, and I shall tell you.

Would you like to know what was in Pandora's box?

What evil was unleashed upon this world by this insane woman's curiosity?

**IT WAS THE &%@#\*!^ SQUIRRELS!!!**



Photo: Jymi X/0

*\*names have been changed to protect those involved.*



## Dog found after 6 months, 430 miles from home

June 9, 2007, 5:04PM  
Associated Press

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. A basset hound that disappeared from its California home in December has been found 430 miles away in Arizona.

The dog, named Fred, was found by an employee Wednesday in the parking lot of the Second Chance Center for Animals in Flagstaff.

The next morning, staff members with the shelter found a

microchip in Fred that let them figure out he was registered at Riverside County Animal Control.

The shelter contacted Fred's speechless owner on Friday.

The owner said Fred disappeared after she moved to Riverside in December. She didn't know how he could have ended up in Flagstaff.

Paul Fink, a veterinarian at the Flagstaff shelter and a pilot, has offered to fly the dog home to his family.

# THE MIRACLE OF THE MAYPOLE

*By Patrick McCollum*

I just wanted to share an incredible experience I had yesterday, which is a direct result of some of our religious freedom work. Yesterday I facilitated the first Maypole Dance for sixty-something Pagan female inmates in a state prison here in California. This is the second Maypole I've done in a correctional facility, and I'm pretty sure that this is history in the making. The approval of the ritual was a direct result of religious freedom work I've been doing in prisons, and the fact that the VA approved our Pentacle, which has in a significant way increased the legitimacy of Wicca in the eyes of government officials.

To facilitate the ritual, I brought in a 20 foot, 4 inch diameter Maypole, around 3,000 feet of various colored ribbons, and 12 dozen flowers of every color and type. The women spent several hours making Beltane decorations and adorning themselves with ribbons and flowers in their hair in the prison's chapel. We then moved outside to raise the Maypole. A number of women cried as others helped them put flowers in their hair and a large number of them shared that they had not seen a flower, let alone been able to have one in their hair, for many years. In fact, a number of the women in the ritual had not seen or touched a flower in close to 20 years. I just can't imagine being so removed from any type of beauty. Overall, it was a very moving and emotional experience to be a part of the process to say the least, and I feel blessed to have been there.

The women raised the pole on the main yard in the prison, surrounded by a sea of curious onlookers, made up of both inmates and staff. What made our event even more compelling, was that the prison scheduled our ritual to follow a Mega Revival by Bill Glass Ministries, a Christian organization, who had actually brought in a large group of Evangelicals on Harley's to convert inmates, in an unbelievable chrome and candy-apple lacquer extravaganza. Prior to our ritual and dance, there were some snide remarks from correctional officers and jeers from a number of the Christian inmates as we created sacred space and raised our Maypole, but when the dance was finally over an incredible and exhausting two hours later, all of the spectators watching from the sidelines were in total awe and silence.

After the dance, comments from staff and inmates changed from jeers and negative comments to

things like, "Wow, that was one of the most sacred things I've ever seen," and "This is nothing like what everyone said it would be, it's beautiful and very spiritual." One guard even shared that he used to dance the Maypole when he was a kid 50 years before, but had totally forgotten about it.



*Source unknown*

Many inmates later came over to ask about our beliefs and practices and a number of them asked to be included in our regular services in the future, but the most significant thing for me, was the two correctional officers who carried our ribbon-laced Maypole back out of the prison. When they asked if it was okay to touch it, Malendia Mccree from Davis, California, who was helping me to facilitate the ritual, told them that in our traditions, it was an honor to carry the pole for the community. The officers picked up the pole with great reverence and negotiated the pole through various electronic doors and security check points. They later told other



staff who asked what they were doing, that they were privileged to have the honor of helping our community. They even went so far as to offer to drive our Maypole to another prison where we were supposed to have a second ritual the next day.



*Source unknown*

When the dance was over, Malendia and I met with the inmates back inside the chapel where we had a discussion about what their experience of the Maypole was. Numerous women expressed that when they first started the dance, they tried to keep in their own little clicks and gangs, but when they did that, the pole would get pulled too much to the side where one group or another congregated. So in the course of the dance, they learned that each participant had to work together equally to make it work. And they also expressed that as the ribbons became shorter and the participants became more tightly knit, they found that they had to make eye contact and often change their plans in order to allow someone else to pass. In the end, they expressed that they thought it was a lesson about what they as inmates needed to do to be able to reintegrate into society; to be able to learn to share equally with others and to work together with their community rather than against it. They also saw the

weaving of the multi-colored ribbons in many different patterns as a message that "Diversity is Sacred," and "That it was the many different and unique dances of everyone involved that brought beauty into the world." Just so you can get a sense of how significant these statements are in a prison, our dance was made up of every ethnic group and women of every sexual orientation, and the norm in prison is for each of these groups to be in gangs that oppose and battle with one another. In the end, several women walked to the center of our circle, and offered to make peace with others who they had differences with. Everyone joined in a pledge to work together toward a sustainable community that honored all of their differences.

Doing this ritual really brought home to me how much of a difference all of us who work so hard to bring about positive changes and fight discrimination are really making. Because of us, our veterans are being acknowledged for their service, people are beginning to stop losing their children just because they are Pagan, and most importantly, our ideals and principals are starting to be seriously considered as we are gradually invited to the table to contribute to the society we live in.

Blessings to all,  
Patrick McCollum

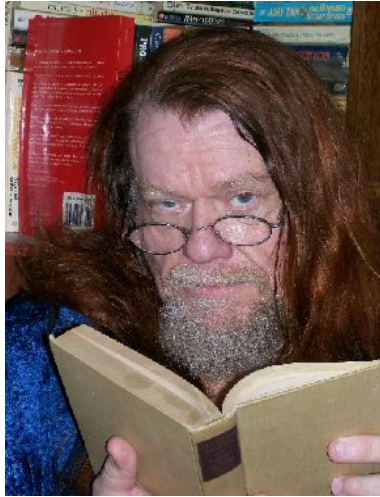


*Photo: Jymy X/O*



# THE CANTANKEROUS CELT

by Michael R. Gorman



*A note to our readers:*

*This is the second installment of what will be a regular column in the Green Egg. We are calling it "The Cantankerous Celt", because its purpose and intent will be to bring up and examine issues that are controversial in our community, or that should be, and because the columnist is sometimes, well, cantankerous. Writer and Druid Michael R. Gorman has a strong belief in the value of the colloquy, the informed debate, and its power to advance our enlightenment and evolution. Or as he puts it, "I love a good intellectual donnybrook!" Perhaps if we can engage in more frequent lively debate, we can diminish our tendency to express our frustrations in "witch wars" that do nothing to advance anything. The Cantankerous Celt is a nickname given to Michael by his friend and mentor, Patricia Nell Warren, author of One is the Sun, and The Wild Man.*

## Where Have Half the Faeries Gone?

As a classically-trained Poet, I recognize that a large part of my art and craft is understanding the power of images, yet anyone, trained or not, can easily see this same power in the everyday symbols in which we are immersed. Raise the American Flag in front of certain groups of people, and you can get them to literally march to their deaths to defend the things they associate with that flag. Hold a Peace Sign up to many baby boomers, and you will see smiles of remembrance and perhaps frowns of regret for ideals long since abandoned. (Former hippies in San Francisco, now shopkeepers and homeowners, are demanding the removal of the street kids in Height Ashbury.) Flash the "Golden Arches" on a television screen, and children watching will think of clowns and playgrounds and good times with their families, all of the things that Madison Avenue carefully associates with that simple yellow symbol. I don't even have to name the company represented by the symbol for the reader to understand what I mean, so powerful is that symbol.

We Pagans, too, have our symbols, like the Maypole and the Goddess of Willendorf, the Pentacle and the Awen. Some of our symbols we discuss and examine, and some of them we embrace far less consciously, which is a philosophic danger for us given the dominant culture's tendency to appropriate our symbols and rework them in its own image and for its own purposes. In some of these

mainstream distortions of Pagan beliefs associated with our symbols, we have, perhaps unknowingly, been trained by that culture, like the kids in front of the television, to embrace meanings and interpretations that are more in keeping with the dominant culture than the teachings of our Pagan elders. I believe it is the poet's job to create symbols, but it is also the poet's job to uncloak the power of those distortions of our symbols that we may not want to face because we have unthinkingly perpetuated them. But if we Pagans are ever to reclaim our symbols as our own, we must face these distortions and expose them for what they are, even in our own back yards. Especially in our own back yards.

The idea for this column actually came to me while I was browsing the web in search of cool graphics for my profile page on MySpace. (Yes, a MySpace pusher in our local Grove got me hooked.) Being a good Celtic Druid and an admitted lover of all things fey, I clicked on every graphics list I could find titled "Fairies." As a Celtic researcher, I found the disconnect between the images that popped up and what I knew of the ancient lore of the faeries quite disturbing, much like enduring those tales that paint The Morrigan/Morgana/Morrighu as an evil witch. Being a Two-Spirit Druid in particular, I faced disappointment once again with every click of my mouse. Graphic after graphic showed sexy, buxom, female faeries, fem fatale faeries, frilly dressed country maiden faeries, white-faced Goth girl faeries, cute little child faeries, and mysteriously androgynous, sexless faeries.

It is as if some strange and fatal disease linked to the Y chromosome hit faerieland and wiped out half of the population. As a collector of faeries, I am well aware of this almost universal sexist bias in the art world and in the kitschy tourist-store world when it comes to faeries. My repeated disappointment once I perused the hundreds of pictures of the fey folk reminded me of my childhood

spent searching the Barbie collections of my girlfriends in the vane hope that one of the Ken dolls would actually have more than that androgynous bump between his navel and his thighs. Even Barbie didn't have nipples, so my search was certainly doomed from the outset. In all my searching of the e-fairies, I found a grand total of four images of male faeries, and all but one of them definitely leaned a bit toward the fem side. Even from Pagan artists. And that's what I found most disturbing, and what I want to discuss.

Bear with me a moment while I paint a setting for our discussion: we are a people of stories, after all.

*It is Midsummer, and the lazy, hazy gold and green days of summer are upon us. Our labor of plowing and planting and protecting the seedlings is over, we have a brief time of respite, a time of rest from spring's toil. The first harvest has not yet begun, and the cool rivers and lakes beckon us away from the heat. The livestock are fattening languidly in the high meadows. With gratitude for these interim days of rest, we turn the work of the creating and ripening of the food over to the plants themselves, and their partners in creation, the soil, the rain, the sun, the balmy breezes, and the push and pull of the moon's magic. The lovers and poets among us lie beneath the shade of the fruit trees and weave their own magic of creation. Integral to this process of blooming and ripening around Midsummer are the faeries who bless the growth of all plants and watch over blossom, bud, and ripening seed. Many a gift has been left over the years on the gnarled Hawthorne Faerie Tree beside the sacred well in order to ensure a good harvest, and we ourselves continue to honor the Good People, the Fey Folk, for their part in providing for us the bounty of the land.*

*With the food stores from the previous year a bit depleted, and the main harvest not yet begun, the diets of the people must be supplemented with sweet red and black and midnight blue berries and tender brown roots and leaves for tea, all the interim bounty of the forest glades. Honey drips invitingly in the hives humming in the hollows of the forest's trees, and reminds us that come Lughnasa, the grains will come in season and the bread will again be plentiful. The sustenance of summer is indeed sweet, and each child's thoughts often wander toward berries and sweetened cream. For older youths and maidens too, there is also a sweetness in this season, but of a different kind. The summer woodland's hidden gifts of food are a tasty and wonderful excuse to wander into the cool, overgrown and fragrant woodland with a lover, or alone and in search of a lover. "Just remember to bring your basket home full of berries now lass, lest your mother know how you really spent your time in the forest!"*

This time between planting and harvest is a common setting for the many stories in the old lore about the Faerie Folk. Children and young adults were sent off with their collection baskets, but also carefully warned about beautiful folk in the forest who would use food and music and other varieties of sensuality to lure them across the veil to the Otherworld. The Midsummer season marks a borderland of time in the cycle of the plants between their birth and their bounty, and the thinned veil of Beltaine is

not yet only a memory. The forest itself is a place between worlds, and the magic of the woodland was as ripe and plump and sweet as the berries in season. "*And whatever you do, child, accept no food from a beautiful stranger, and eat nothing nor drink nothing from the land of the fey, for accepting their nourishment will tie you to their world, and who knows when you will return: perhaps when all your loved ones are long buried beneath the sod.*"

The Faerie Folk are proud of their lives of pleasure and sensuality. They love to eat and drink and dance and sing and make love, and they frequently fall in love with mortals whom they wish to bring into their celebratory lives beyond the mists. But as the Celtic countries fell more and more under the sway of Christianity, especially the Roman form of Christianity that began to dominate Europe in the Middle Ages with its austerity and distrust of "the sins of the flesh," the warnings about the faeries began to take on a moralistic and sinister tone. The sexuality that the faeries so cherish and celebrate became anathema to the sacrificial lifestyles based on denial of the flesh which the church so stringently demanded of its flock. Suddenly being lured across the veil to the land of the faeries became synonymous to being dragged into the profligacy that leads to hell. In the Roman Church's view, Faeries were like demons, only prettier and more seductive.

That fearful image of the faeries dominated the lore and beliefs of the majority of Christian people in Europe until the era of Queen Victoria, who gave her name to the period and the cultural understandings of her time in the middle and closing decades of the 1800's. This Victorian period saw a strong rebirth of interest in the faeries, often tied to the budding mysticism of the Theosophist and Spiritualism movements that sought to unite science with spiritual phenomena. In a giddy rush to escape the rigid materialism of the age of reason and early industrialism, though with a growing distrust of mainstream religion, people began to embrace the faeries as reassuring, modern evidence of an after-life and a benevolent world of spirit. This period set the stage for the celebrity of two young girls from Yorkshire, England in 1917 who claimed to have photographed some faeries near a naturally overgrown stream below the carefully trimmed English gardens of their home, leading to an upheaval of opinion and belief that resonated internationally, and in Britain became a subject of titillating news stories which caused a shiver up the spine of the empire. The photographs that the girls presented were studied by the photography experts of the time leading to public debates about their authenticity that involved such internationally known celebrities as Arthur Conan Doyle and Houdini. It seemed the faeries were back, but thanks to Victorian sensibilities, they were viewed with one very significant difference from the ancient understanding of the Fair Folk.

We now know that sexuality in Victorian times was quite wild, but the cavorting was all underground and very hush, hush. No one in polite society would ever talk about sex. Clothing was designed to hide any part of the body that might be a temptation to the sins of the flesh, pretty much anything but the head, the hands and the feet (a decided home court advantage for those whose fetishes sexualized the extremities). As we good Pagans know,



there is nothing stronger than a taboo to increase the public's interest in a subject. Writers dream of having their work become models of sin for the conservative religious and banned in conservative places, with all the accompanying debate and hand-wringing -- and publicity. You can't pay for that kind of exposure. It's what made Kurt Vonnegut a best-selling author, and few people had heard of photographer Robert Maplethorpe before North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms went apoplectic over the ethnic penises and homosexual sadomasochism in his work.

So too with sex in the Victorian Age. The underground sexual habits of the Victorians can still serve to shock many moderns. It seems that if something was taboo, the Victorians went there. Publicly, however, the Victorian world was as chaste as a Disney princess. And the faeries were an issue very much in the media, the town squares, and the tea houses of Victorian England. The faeries were public, and therefore had to be dressed in the proper, albeit shallow and hypocritical, public Victorian attire.

The faeries at the time of Queen Vicky had to be presented as chaste, pure, and antithetical to the sins of the flesh. Anything less saintly would have been an affront to polite society and an indication that the faeries were indeed evil. And how exactly did the folklore of the time accomplish this feat, given the hedonistic nature of the faeries of old? In addition to dressing the female faeries in long drapery, and the faerie children in conservative pinafores and pantaloons, the Victorian world simply removed from the realm of faerie any traces of the adult male faeries, letting only the demure female faeries, the demure girl faeries, and the playful little boy faeries survive the censor's scissors. If there are no male faeries, there can be no faerie sex. Problem solved. For those of you whose imaginations are mulling over a world of sexually deprived female faeries with no men in sight, Victoria refused to believe that such a thing as lesbianism existed -- "Women would never do such things!" -- so the sisters of Sappho were no threat to the chaste portrait of the fem faerie world.

Where exactly the little boy faeries and little girl faeries came from, and where the boy faeries disappeared after puberty is a bit problematic, but no one in Victorian times talked much about the mechanics of procreation, so this conundrum could be conveniently ignored. Apparently the boy faeries either died at puberty or grew up into those androgynous creatures with the frontal lumps where their genitals should be, which brings us full circle back to the Ken dolls issue. Queen Elizabeth II now reigns over

England, but Queen Victoria is not as dead today as most people believe and as many would wish. And that brings us to the faeries today, at least to our perception of them.

Why is it that today, among Pagans as well as the non-magical folk, at a time when sexy faeries are the norm, and the women of faerie land are shedding their Victorian clothing . . . why still no male faeries? Look at the art even in our community and there are faerie breasts and gently curving faerie thighs by the double thousands. There are faerie children still dressed modestly, but they apparently have only mothers and not fathers. Has the world of faerie gone lesbian separatist and no one told me? Does Heather Faerie have two mommies? Does every faerie child live in a world without fathers, or even gay uncles? Was there an epidemic of prostate cancer in the land of the fey and no one who was stricken survived?



David Donohue

Why was there no memorial? Have the male faeries all converted and become monastery monks hidden away in some secret stone buildings with robes over their wings? And who is sexually satisfying all those doe-eyed, gossamer draped, long legged, breasty female faeries? Is that why they all look so sexy? Do we all mistake sexual deprivation and desperation for simple faerie come-on looks? Must be so.

The answer to the question, "Why still no male faeries?" is a simple one, actually. It is a remnant of Victorian and puritan culture, and we all know what it is. The answer to that question is the elephant in the living rooms of we good Pagan folk. We claim to be different, open-minded, tolerant, and sexually free. We claim to be absolutely comfortable with diversity and diverse sexual expression. We claim to be reclaiming the sacredness of our bodies in honor of the Goddess. Yet until recently, most of us never even mentioned the God in our public rituals, content to



abandon that word to the tribes of Sinai.

So I ask again, "Why no male faeries today?" Think about it. What comes to mind when you say, "male faeries" or "faerie men" aloud? Try it. Say "male faerie" and "faerie men" aloud repeatedly, now. What comes to mind? Will and Grace? Queer as Folk? Queer Eye For the Straight Guy? Castro Street in San Francisco? We need to face it. Men in our culture today, even the Pagan ones, do not want the word "Faerie" associated with them, except in the love of the faeries who have breasts. Don't believe me? Really?

Then I have a challenge for all you Pagan men reading this. It's a challenge that will make the elephant in the living room harder to ignore. At the next large gathering of Pagans you attend, I want you do stand in the center of the group and say loudly, "I love male faeries! Faerie men rock!" I double dog dare you! Then record the reactions you get.

Why should this challenge even be a challenge? None of us would hesitate to shout out "I love the faerie women! Female faeries rock!" It is a challenge for the same reason that none of us dare to use the word "gay" to mean happy, even though there are many such words in our language with double meanings. We don't like to talk about male faeries, because, well, male faeries are so...faerie....so gay! Not that there's anything wrong with that! Besides, boys can be elves. And Trolls. That makes it equal, right? But, uh, not girls. Here we have a kind of spiritual and artistic attempt at "separate but equal," (Sexless but equal?) and we all know how well *that* works out. At least Lord of the Rings has female elves, though not as the main characters of course.

You may try to cover yourself by saying that faeries are spiritual beings and therefore have no gender at all. Really? Have you ever actually read the old Celtic lore? And if your claim is true, what's up with all the sexy female faeries we Pagans all love so much? We support several artists whose success is based solely on representations of hot female faeries. "Oh, those are just symbolic representations of the faeries," you say; "the bodies are just metaphors, symbols." Really? So does that mean there is nothing about the real faeries that could best be represented metaphorically or symbolically by the male body with wings? The stories that our Celtic ancestors told around the hearth would beg to differ. And still you are left with the conundrum of where the child faeries came from, metaphorically or otherwise. I didn't get the memo, apparently, about the virgin birth being a major Pagan theme.

How is it possible that a group of people who are willing to ignore a large part of their own spiritual heritage of lore out of their modern cultural discomfort with associating men with faeries can see itself as sexually liberated or blessed with a gender inclusive view of the world? In a sub-culture of people whose rare artistic expressions of masculine energy and spirituality is limited to a picture of the Horned God or a picture of a fully clothed, white-bearded, grandfatherly wizard long past his sexual years, or an angry and barbaric looking warrior in a blood frenzy, or a male accompanied by a sexy female, why would such a people proudly proclaim their freedom from sexism and

homophobia and sexual repression and gender stereotyping? Those images are no different from the images you will find in beer commercials.

And why is it that heterosexual Pagan women are not at all bothered by the fact that the vast majority of images of sexuality in the Pagan world are the images that please a man's libido and not a woman's? Is a woman's power contingent upon her ability to arouse a man? Again we have the beer commercials. How then are Pagan women different from the rest of women in this male hierarchical world if they do not demand images that honor their thoughts and desires and fantasies? And images of love between two women or between two men, any kind of love between them, sexual or otherwise, is not even on our sub-cultural radar. And what of the images of fathers to match our images of Mothers? Where is the balance? How are we different from the male dominated Christian churches if we have simply taken their sexism and reproduced it with the genders reversed? Putting men in the shadows is just as sexist as putting women in the shadows. There is no such thing as better sexism or more enlightened sexism. Christian girls grow up with no images of themselves in deity. Pagan boys suffer the same fate.

We are not talking about art for Playboy magazine here, but rather images we create of our Goddesses and Gods and the spirits we claim to honor. Our rhetoric about them does not match our artistic portrayals of them. We talk a great deal about balance in all things, but our artistic expressions, and many of our ritual traditions, the expressions of our souls and our spiritual understandings are as unbalanced as the culture we claim to have escaped. We are either being deceitful in our claims of spiritual gender inclusiveness, or we are being dishonest in our art and ritual. In truth, we are allowing the cultural biases we were raised on and that we seek to leave behind, to drive our art, our practices, and our perceptions of the spirit realm.

Well...at least many of us are no longer killing the God off several times a year in our rituals in honor of the sacrificial king or in reenactment of the eternal battle between the Oak King and the Holly King. I fear for the emotional health of our young boys who grew up with the belief that their place in the eternal scheme of things was to die at the hands of a rival god or from the blade of a priestess of the Goddess.

"Love the Goddess with abandon, my son, and be happy when she drives the athamé into your heart. It's your job to die, if not in ritual, then in battle."

Seems the stuff of nightmares rather than a foundation of spiritual elevation for our boy children. Associating the oak with death and battle is particularly painful to me as a Druid, a "wise one of the oak," and I had quite enough of sacrificial kings in my Catholic childhood, thank you very much. I was more than happy to leave the weekly spilling of a God's blood behind.

I am proud that we have created positive images of the Goddess and the spirits for our young girls growing up in a culture that still treats them as lesser beings and second class citizens. But how does it serve them to give them

yet another unbalanced view of the world? Do we want them to be as conflicted about men as muggle men are about women? The majority of our daughters will grow up to love men. What images have we given them that show how to go about creating healthy relationships with those men? Goddess help us if they ever start treating the men that they love the way that our rituals do!

"Come here, honey, it's summer solstice and I have a sword I need to plant in your chest. To bless the land, of course. Then I'm going to put on a low cut dress and faerie wings and pose alone for some pictures."

I do wish we had as many prints of Queen Boudica or the female Druids of old as we do of breasty fairies, however. But what of our boys? I have never once seen a representation of the sacred child, the Mabon whose kidnapping ruined the cycle of the seasons and whose return restored the balance. I know of no paintings of the young Finn Mac Cumhaill learning the arts of the Druid and the Warrior, under the patient tutoring of his two obviously lesbian foster mothers. Who makes a statue of the Celtic poet and love God Oengus Mac Og? I have a copy of one that our ancestors made, but it could use some updating --- say by three thousand years! Who among us has even heard of this poet, lover, and resident of the famous Bru Na Boyne, now called Newgrange who refused kingship in favor of the love arts? May I see some postcards with the image of the scholarly God Ogma who invented the ogham alphabet? Where can I get a poster showing the quiet, enduring bravery of the young sons of Lir, cursed with their sisters to live in isolation on the sea as swans? Where can I buy a statue of Manannán Mac Lir to place in the west of my garden? Who has produced a CD of music in honor of Lugh of the many talents?

Where are the images that Pagan boys can look to and say, "See, I am reflected in the world of spirit! I belong and am honored in the world that my parents love. There are deities who are just like me. There are cool faeries just like me. There are gentle scholars, just like me. There are dancers just like me. There are woodworkers just like me. There are tricksters just like me. There are stories about me too. There is a place for me. I can be a scholar or an artist, or a warrior, or a poet, and my divine parents will still love me no matter what! You can see it right there! See, there's a picture!"

But in reality, if our children look at the vast majority of Pagan art and practice the boys get to be macho soldiers or old wizards. Girls can grow up to wield a sword or a wand or a hammer, just as long as they do so in a very sexy outfit with a slit up the side and their cleavage showing. The lack of images of female deity that girls suffer in the Christian church, our boys suffer in our stone circles. That is unless we want them all to aspire to be old wizen wizards or soldiers. Have we bought the inclusion of our daughters at the cost of the exclusion of our sons?

And that does not even begin to address the emotional and spiritual well-being and self images of our gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered kids. The mainstream culture gives them no positive images of themselves, and neither do we. Even our straight children suffer from the dearth of positive images of the queer folk among us, because we doom our straight kids to

repeating our own struggle to come to terms with the issue long after their basic moral and intellectual development is hard wired and set. I have heard Pagan parents say, "If my kid grows up to be gay, I won't have a problem with it."

Well, news flash! By the time your kid is "grown up," it is far too late to begin offering positive images. In case you haven't noticed, the larger culture is teaching them daily about who is acceptable and who is not, so our Johnny-come-lately enlightened viewpoint will likely fall on deafened ears. If all that our children see growing up is the goodness of heterosexual couplings, and conventional ones at that, do we really think we can make up for lost time when they turn sixteen? Or twenty? Are we suddenly going to be able to inject into our world views a place for them that was not there before? Will we even know how? And how will we counteract those formative years filled with nothing that includes them? How will we make up for the pained exclusion from the rights of passage like the first kiss or the prom date or talking about a first love?

Let me tell you, from one who has been there, after suffering through the isolation of a childhood spent hiding behind my good-boy mask and desperately trying to fit into the expectations of my family and the culture that they didn't even know they were imposing upon me, the fact that my parents could finally say the word gay to my adult ears at age 30 did nothing to erase the suffocating years of isolation. The self-hatred was pretty much set by about age ten. Once our children, whomever they are, begin to understand why they felt isolated growing up, our born-again open-mindedness is way too little and way too late.

What would even prompt our less conventional children to stick around long enough to benefit from our frantic web searches for something positive to show them of the identity we ignored when they were growing up? Once they hit puberty, they already know what our world is like, and they have likely never seen a place for themselves in it. They will make a place for themselves elsewhere, and we will be stuck back home wondering, "Why didn't he just come to me and tell me?" At least young gay men can vicariously connect to our community by way of the female images, a kind of Yin Minus Yang compromise. But where do our straight boys make the connection? Let's see, there's Thor and there's Merlin. Take your pick kid! And once you decide, we have some breasty faeries for you to not objectify.

I had a conversation once with one of the neo-Pagan community's early leaders and pathfinders, a wise and wonderful crone who is much revered in Pagan circles, and rightfully so. I knew that her spiritual practice was exclusive to women. No males were allowed into her rituals or her cosmology. Because I support each person's right to understand spirit in their own fashion, I honored her decision to work only with women. Women had certainly been shorted in the mainstream religions, so I understood the desire to help women find a safe place and a place where the feminine was honored. As a gay man, there was a time when I needed to get away from even the echoes of the domineering male god under whom I had suffered in the first half of my life. Goddess

centered worship in a circle of gay Pagan men was my refuge for a long time.

But being the father of a straight son, I eventually sought out and helped create a community that had a place for both of us and for the women and men we both loved in our own ways. At the time of my conversation with the woman elder, she was enjoying a wonderful new relationship with her very young grandson. She adored her grandson, and her grandson adored her. She told me that he was coming to the age when he would want to discuss things of spirit, and he was interested in the spiritual wisdom of this woman who had loved him since birth. I will never forget the sadness in her eyes when she said, "I want to find a place for my grandson in my spiritual world, but I'm not sure how to do that at this point. I hope I can find a way."

Perhaps it is the children who will show us the way. Perhaps if we learn to pass down to them our traditions and the lore of our ancestors without the filter of the mainstream culture and its biases, we will make a freer and more magical world for them to grow in, one that we wish we had been born into but were not. Children do not define themselves or their friends according to gender, race, culture, and societal biases until we teach them to. And when children see the faeries, they see them as our ancestors described them in all their glorious diversity,

not as the distorted vision of our dominant culture portrays them, and for me, the children are authority enough. Sadly, through our images, we eventually force them to abandon their first knowledge of the Faerie Folk, and of themselves, and that is just wrong. We owe them better.

Until we honestly face and examine our cultural biases concerning gender, sexuality, and sexual expression, biases bequeathed to us by a patriarchal, hierarchical, and narrow system of belief, we have no hope of teaching the world to abandon the inhumanity of sexism, homophobia, religious persecution, and the condemnation of the natural world's gifts of pleasure, sex in its many forms, and individual identity. It is not enough that we recreate the system that excluded us by accepting an equally unbalanced matriarchy. In doing that, we are only perpetuating that same fractured system, but with a female mask on its face, and while masks are fun, they don't change the mind behind them. Mahatma Gandhi said, "Become the change you wish to see in the world." We would do well to heed his wisdom.

We could start this Midsummer by stepping into the forest glade, and welcoming the faeries to come and dance with us --- all of them. And guys, I'm waiting to hear if you had the wisdom and the huevos to take the dare.



Photo: Jymi X/O



# For the Love of Pharaoh

By Nydia Walker

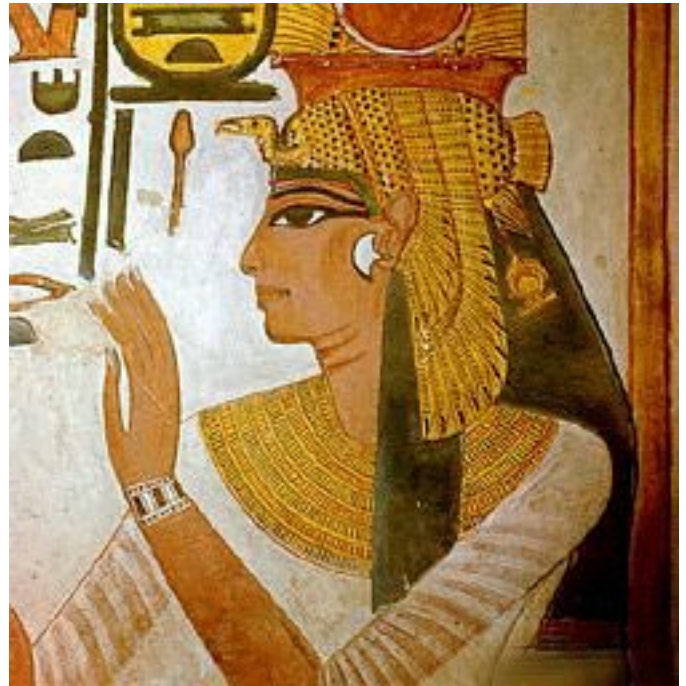
This is the story of my life, as well as the story of Egypt during the span of my life. I am Nefertari, chief wife of Ramesses II, son of the Great Seti I, who has become a God and resides in the Eternal Field of Reeds. Seti was a wonderful man and a very kind person. He ruled our land with firmness, compassion and wisdom. When he passed into his Eternal House he was much missed by all who knew him. Especially his son, Ramesses and myself.

I met Ramesses during my first time at the annual Festival of Bast when we were both young in spirit and in age. Seti was our Pharaoh then. I was 12 years of age and my body had just passed into womanhood, which is a requirement for attending the Festival. I was quite overcome by the multitude of people and the amount of wine I had drunk, so I went to find a quiet place, off from the others. There was a storage room hidden behind the main Sanctuary inside the Temple that I knew would be deserted at this time of day, but there was a boy about my own age already there. I didn't notice him until I was inside and had shut the door behind me. He stood up quickly, startling me. I started to leave but he asked me not to, as that might call attention to the fact that he was hiding here, then we would both be found and might have to suffer through more hours in the crowds during the heat of the day.

I agreed, as it was nicely cool in the room and I really wanted to sit quietly for awhile. He smiled and we sat down with our backs against the cool marble of the wall. His smile lit up his entire face, which was quite handsome but rather pale in color for an Egyptian. His hair was rather long and a bright red color. Since he was not bald, nor did he wear the side lock of a noble family, I believed he was of common birth.

We began to talk, then we shared some wine, then we shared our bodies. This was the first time for both of us and we were very awkward with each other and not quite sure what to do. It became rather funny and we were both highly amused. It was a lovely way to learn how to properly share your body with another and I was happy that my first time had gone so well. Shortly afterwards I had to leave and I did not realize until I was on my way home, that I had not even asked his name.

I did not see that boy again until the Festival the following year. He came off the boat from Memphis and stood on the dock looking around. I could see him from a window in the Temple, and I watched as



he walked slowly towards the festival grounds. I waited until he was underneath my window, then I spoke to him. He looked up, shading his eyes from the sun, and smiled when he saw that it was me.

"I was hoping you would be here," he said.

"Silly Boy, where else would a Priestess be today?" I replied.

"Come down and spend the day with me," he asked, but I had to tell him I could not, as I was expected in the Sanctuary shortly to prepare for the opening Ritual. Before he walked away, he made me promise to find him as soon as the Ritual was over. I was delighted to make that promise.

As I walked in the procession to the Festival grounds to begin the Ritual, I found him standing at the side of the road. It was hard to keep my mind on what I was about to do, as his bright smile and vivid red hair were the only things I could see. Once the Ritual was over, all the Priestesses were free to enjoy the festival. I had no more than turned around from my place, than he was there beside me, taking my arm and leading me away, a basket of foods in one hand and a jar of wine in the other. We walked to our special, quiet place within the Temple of Bast, and he spread a cloth upon the floor. We ate and drank and talked for hours and then we made love.

That is when I found out he was named Ramesses. I did not know he was the son of the Pharaoh Seti, I just thought he shared the same name as the great Son. After all, why would the Son of a living God spend time with a simple Priestess. We talked about

the last Festival and he told me that he had thought of me every day since then and had refused to attend the Festival this year with anyone. His Father had wished that he attend with several young ladies, but Ramesses had declined politely, saying that this Festival was the one time that he was able to be with whomever he wished and he was going to make sure to be with the person he really wanted to be with. I was very impressed that he wanted to share this Festival with me, and I had to confess I had not thought of another man in the last year but him. We ate, drank and made love for many hours in that dark corner of the Temple storehouse.

The next day, he was waiting at the Temple doors when I came out, and we spent the whole day together. I knew he would have to leave that evening to go back to his home, and I would have to leave to return to my own Temple in Karnak, so we made the best of the day that we had left to us. It was wonderful. We played many of the games that were set up on the Temple grounds and shared our food and our bodies with equal abandon. When he left, I walked with him to the boat and waved until he was out of sight.

That evening, on the boat ride to Karnak Temple, everyone wanted to know who the man was, with whom I had spent so much time. I told the girls his name and that he was the most wonderful man I had ever met. They shared their stories of their day and their lovers as well, as we all went to sleep dreaming of the men we had been with.

The next year, I waited on the dock for the boat from Memphis. When it arrived, he was the first one to jump off. He picked me up and kissed me very deeply. I told him I did not have to participate in the Ritual this year, so we ran to the Festival grounds hand in hand to watch it together. As always it was a very moving ceremony and we held each other close throughout.

Once it was over, we grabbed some food and some wine and found our dark corner of the Temple storehouse once again. We had just begun the sharing of our bodies, when a soldier came into the Temple and called for Ramesses. We grabbed for our clothes, and just had time to cover ourselves when the soldier came upon us. He told Ramesses that his Father was looking for him and had asked that Ramesses join him for the Blessing of the Fields Ritual. This was a very private Ritual that is usually only attended by the Pharaoh, the High Priestess of Bast, a very select group of Priests and Priestesses and the Gods and Goddesses. Ramesses grabbed my hand and pulled me to my feet, saying, "If I have to go then you are going too."

That was when I realized that my lover was the son of Pharaoh and would one day become the living God himself. I was so shocked I could not move. I fell to my knees and begged his forgiveness. What I needed to be forgiven for, I truly had no clue, but it seemed the right thing to do. Perhaps by touching the Royal body I had brought shame upon myself. He knelt beside me and lifted my chin until I was looking into his eyes.

"Does knowing who my Father is make me a different person?" he asked me.

"Yes, umm... no....umm..Yes!" was the best I could reply.

"Nefertari, I am nothing more than the man who loves you more than his own life," he replied. "who happens to have a living God for a Father and who shall one day become a Living God himself."

I answered, "Man or God, I will always love you."

As he kissed me as only he knew how, he said, "Now come on, we have a real God to speak with."

We walked into the Temple where the Great Pharaoh and the High Priestess of Bast were waiting. I tried to slip away into a corner, but Ramesses would not let go of my hand and pulled me along to the Altar.

"Welcome my son." The Great Pharaoh said, a slight hint of amusement in his voice.

"Welcome Father," Ramesses replied, totally at ease, "May I present the Priestess Nefertari?"

I bowed to Pharaoh and glanced at the High Priestess. She had a frown on her face, which I knew did not bode well for me.

"Why are you here, Priestess Nefertari?" she asked me.

"Because I wished it." Ramesses said, before I could even find my voice to reply.

"I am pleased to meet you, Priestess," the Great Pharaoh said, "You are surely the one my son has spoken of so often these last two years.

"Yes, Great Pharaoh," I replied in a shaky, timid voice. "I am honored to be in your presence and wish to apologize if I have offended you, my King."

"I sincerely doubt that anything you are capable of doing would ever offend anyone. You are welcome here," Pharaoh told me, and I relaxed a little and moved to where I was standing slightly behind Ramesses. The High Priestess still had a frown upon her face, but she was looking at me with a different expression than annoyance.

"Ramesses, I have asked you here so that you could understand the Ritual of the Blessings of

the Fields. The time shall come when you must perform this duty as well."

"I am honored, my Father," Ramesses replied.

Three people entered the Temple and came to the Altar. There were two older Priestesses of Bast and a Priest from the Temple of Min. The High Priestess told one of the Priestesses to leave and rejoin the festival, as I would be taking her place for this Ritual. The Priestess, who was named Shenankh kissed me on the cheek and whispered "Thank you," before running out of the Temple. I knew that she was pleased because this meant that she could spend more time with her lover.

The High Priestess told us to perform the Ritual which causes the protective barriers to be in place, which Ramesses, the Priest and the other Priestess as well as I did. I was surprised to discover that Ramesses knew the ancient words of power which created this sacred space. He performed his part perfectly, which inspired me to perform my own part just as perfectly. Of course, I knew these words as well as I knew my own name, having spent the last several years within the Temple of Karnak learning to do this.

Then the High Priestess performed the act of drawing down the Goddess into her body that I had never seen before. The High Priestess actually became the Great Goddess Bast. I could see the change come over her as the Goddess entered her. The Pharaoh gently laid the Goddess upon the altar and they shared their bodies, thus fertilizing our crops. As they shared, the four of us who had created the protection joined in and shared our bodies too. Ramesses and I lay together at the foot of the altar and shared our love for one another with complete abandon.

When it was all done, we performed the Ritual to consecrate the seed of the Pharaoh that lies within the Goddess, and then we lowered the protective barriers. We walked together as a group out upon the balcony of the Temple and the Pharaoh and High Priestess threw the altar cloth that we had all coupled upon, out among the cheering people as a sign that the fertilization had happened. Several Priestesses were waiting to catch the cloth and cut it into many small pieces, which were distributed among the people who gave donations to the Temple. I now understood why a new altar cloth was needed to be sewn each year after the festival, and why the cloth was so big that it covered the altar as well as the entire area that was used during this Ritual.

The next day, I was called into the Rooms of the High Priestess. I was sure that I would be in trouble

for daring to enter the Temple during the Holy Ceremony. But the High Priestess was very pleased that I had been there and that I had the attention of the son of our Pharaoh. She did warn me though not to expect anything more than to be Ramesses Festival lover, for even though I was the daughter of a nobleman, I was not of royal birth, and could never be his wife. I assured her that I was well aware of that and that I was happy to simply enjoy his visits during the Great Festival. She told me that was very wise of me, and then allowed me to go and rejoin my fellow Priestesses for the trip home.

Of course, everyone had heard that I had been involved with the Great Rite of fertilization and that I had actually been with the son of our living God. For almost a week, I was bombarded with questions about what Ramesses was like, what happened during the great Rite, and on and on and on. I tried to explain as best as I could, but the questions kept coming, until I began answering, 'I can't tell you anymore than I already have'.

Then several Priestesses became upset with me and started finding fault with my work. That lasted about a week, until the High Priestess herself told them to stop, and moved my rooms nearer to hers and asked me to start working directly with her in the Temple. It was then that she started teaching me the herbs and work that heals our people. I was happy to have been chosen for this honor since I felt that it was something very important for me to learn.

After a couple of months, I went to the High Priestess, very concerned for my health. I had not had my monthly flow for 2 months of our calendar. I feared that I was dying and begged her to advise me. She felt of my belly and without a word to me, sent a messenger to Pharaoh. I was terrified and began to cry. Then she told me that I was with child. I was amazed! Then I realized that I was carrying the child of the son of Pharaoh. I did not know if I would be struck dead for this, if I would be forced to give up my child or what would happen.

Our Great Pharaoh and Ramesses arrived at the Temple the next day. Ramesses swept me off my feet and into his arms when he came into my room. Pharaoh Seti smiled at me and wished me much good health as I was carrying a potential God within my body. Then he said that since I had been given a child from the Great Goddess Bast during the Great Rite, that this child was truly a blessing, and it meant that the Great Goddess would make sure that our land was fertile for many years to come.

Pharaoh instructed my High Priestess to spend the next months instructing me in the arts of a full High



Priestess, and that as soon as my child was born, I would be placed in the Palace as the High Priestess of the Great Goddess Bast, in service to Pharaoh. I know that my High Priestess agreed, but I do not know much of what was said, as Ramesses kept kissing me and whispering of what we would do once I joined him in the Palace. We were not allowed to spend private time together or share our bodies, as Pharaoh was afraid it might hurt the child within me.

As the child grew inside me, I spent the time learning the things I would need to know to become High Priestess of Bast. I learned the Rituals and the Festivals and the Great Rite, and the way of keeping track of donations and expenses. I chose a Priestess to assist me who would move to the palace with me when my time came. Her name was Amaranth. She was expert in the ways of bringing a child into the land with as few problems as possible and would be helpful to me in my new role as High Priestess of the Goddess Bast in service to Pharaoh Seti.

When my time drew near, I traveled to the palace with Amaranth. It was a difficult journey which caused me to become ill. Once we entered the Palace I soon recovered, as was expected. The Great Queen, Tuya, herself told me that traveling with an unborn child often caused an illness that goes away once the travel is completed. So it was with me.

I spent my days getting a Temple prepared for my Goddess. I was granted access to the palace Treasury and I chose many fine pieces of furniture and items that would work well for our Rituals. Ramesses spent much time with me, both during the day and at night in my chambers. We did not share our bodies for we feared hurting the child, but we lay in each others arms and dreamed dreams of what our child might become.

When the time came to deliver the child, Ramesses carried me to the birthing chamber that had been prepared. Amaranth and Queen Tuya assisted me in delivering to Ramesses a son. He was named Amun-her-khepsesh. When all of the birthing fluids had been cleaned up and I had changed my robes, Ramesses sat with me in the bed while I nursed our son. Pharaoh Seti entered and asked to hold the child. I placed the babe in Pharaoh's arms and Seti was pleased.

Then, the most extraordinary thing happened. Pharaoh Seti told me that I was indeed worthy to become a Great Wife to Egypt if I would but accept his son as my husband. Ramesses and I looked at each other and I broke out into tears of joy, and told Pharaoh that nothing would make me happier. Queen Tuya came in and took the babe, as Pharaoh

blessed Ramesses and I and welcomed me as his daughter.

I had become the Great Wife to the son of Pharaoh, the living God. My husband would become a living God, as would my son. I attempted to rise from my bed and go to the Temple to give thanks to the great Goddess, but Ramesses would not allow it. He told me that on this day, the Goddess would come to me, and ordered the statue of Bast to be brought to my rooms. I lay in bed and prayed to the Goddess for as long as I could stay awake, then fell asleep in the arms of my new husband and holding my new son, both of whom I loved above all others.

The next day, I was able to rise from my bed for short periods of time, and even dressed in a new gown that Queen Tuya had brought for me. It was made from a beautifully soft white linen and fitted me perfectly. Ramesses told me I should always wear white for it truly made my skin glow with beauty from the great Goddess. Pharaoh Seti asked that we bring the child and go with him to the balcony of the Palace. Many people waited below to greet the child and welcome the Great Wife of Ramesses. I was overcome with emotions, but went with my husband and new Father and Mother to show the people of our land the newest member of the Royal Family, my most beloved son.

The next several days were very exciting and busy. I spent much of each day resting and regaining my strength. When I could, I attempted to move my belongings into the rooms I would share with my husband. They were a lovely suite of 9 rooms on the second floor of the Palace, opposite the rooms of Pharaoh and his Great Queen. From the doorway into our rooms, you entered a large meeting room in which Ramesses and I would entertain guests and hold meetings with those who would assist us in carrying out our work. To the left of this room, were two rooms that were for our private work, my private temple and workroom, and Ramesses private workroom which contained his maps and charts of our lands. In these rooms we would carry out the work which was needed by our people.

To the right of the main meeting room was a storage room and a bedroom for the servant who kept our rooms clean and well-stocked with the necessities of life. At the back of the main meeting room, were the doors which allowed entrance into our private family room which is where we would spend time with our children and each other. To the left of this room, was our private bed chamber and to the right was the children's bed chamber with another room for the servant who would care for the many children we hoped to fill these rooms with. Each of the bed chambers and our private family

room opened onto the balcony that encircled the upper floor of the Palace.

Ramesses had changed the decorations in the rooms to better reflect my personality (or so he said). The walls had been painted white and portraits of Ramesses and myself, our son and many of our favorite Gods and Goddesses adorned the walls. All of the furniture had been removed, and I was allowed to go to the Palace store rooms and choose what furniture I wished to be brought into our rooms. The only request that Ramesses made was that we break from tradition and share one room together as our sleeping room instead of having separate sleeping rooms which was traditional. I thought this a wonderful idea and agreed to it readily. I had two beds brought to our sleeping room and placed side by side in its center. I had linens sewed together so that they were large enough to be flung over both beds, and Ramesses and I would be able to share these covers.

Once I had recovered completely from the birth of our son, Ramesses and I moved into our rooms and made a true home of them. These were some of the happiest times we shared. We were young, madly in love and had a son to whom we would have given the world. We were truly blessed by the Gods of our land.

Ramesses wished me to be a part of his work, so I went with him when he traveled to distant cities on behalf of his Father. I was also asked to be present for the meetings with his advisors. Ramesses often asked for my thoughts on important matters during these meetings and came to respect my opinions. It was not long before the advisors sought my thoughts as well. They told me that I was able to show them what was best for all the people of our land and they welcomed my thoughts. They began to call me "Lady of the Two Lands". I find this amusing as I do not feel particularly 'Lady' like, especially when I am with my husband in the privacy of our bed chamber. My behavior at these times would make our advisors run screaming from the rooms in terror, I have no doubt. As my husband is fond of saying, I am capable of making even the Great Goddess Bast blush.

Ramesses and Pharaoh Seti have become fond of giving me gifts each year upon the date of my birth. This year Pharaoh presented me with a new Title, "Lady of the Two Lands". It has now been added to my royal name, along with "Lady of Upper and Lower Kemet". Ramesses has had a Temple built at Karnak which has been dedicated to the Great Goddess Hathor as well as to myself. I am not sure what to think of such a lavish gift, but I am determined to be as helpful as possible to both my

husband and his father, the Pharaoh. Hathor was the patron Goddess of my parents household, so this tribute is quite thoughtful of my husband and makes me desire to do something in return to honor him.

There was much I could do behind the scenes, but I wanted to do it more openly, for the people, so I began to secretly study the palace accounts and the way in which the country is governed. I spent an hour or so each day in the upper gallery, hiding behind a column as I watched Pharaoh Seti deal with those who were seeking his help. Once I almost got caught when I tripped on my gown and fell rather heavily. I tried not to make much noise, and I did not think anyone had noticed. I wasn't sure if Seti would be angered that I had been watching him or not, and I wasn't sure I could explain why I had watched him and my husband conduct their daily business.

At dinner that night, Seti asked me what I thought of the messenger from Syria, and if he should honor his request for assistance during the famine that Syria was suffering through. I responded that I thought a small donation was in keeping with our country's policies, but we should take care not to deplete our granaries in case famine should strike our own people. Seti smiled at me and was silent for a few seconds before asking politely if I had injured myself when I fell in the gallery that day.

I have no doubt my face turned as red as my husband's hair when I realized I had given myself away. I attempted to apologize but Seti shushed me and said he was delighted that I had taken an interest in the way our country is ruled. Then he invited me to attend the daily meetings any time I wished, but only if I came in and sat beside my husband, and did not ever again lurk in the shadows of the galleries.

After that, I made sure to spend a couple of hours several days a week watching Pharaoh and Ramesses work. It was a delight to watch Father and Son handle the numerous requests for food, armies and everything else our neighboring countries might have need of. Most of the requests were truly needs of the people, but every so often someone would ask for something so outlandish that it was amusing. For instance, one day a small boy was escorted into the palace meeting room and stood before Pharaoh. From the expression of the Grand Vizier as he escorted the small boy in, I knew that this request would be the highlight of the day, if not the week. I had never seen the Vizier attempt so hard to keep from laughing, as he introduced the boy as Malankhre, son of Malankhre.

Seti leaned forward and in a serious voice said,

"What may I do for you, young master?" The little boy told Seti that he wanted to ask Pharaoh to make his sister stop teasing him. Ramesses gripped my hand under the table and I could tell from the small tremors in his hand that he was laughing inside, just as I was. Seti was able to keep a straight face, but his eyes showed the laughter he felt. He asked the boy for details of the sister's behavior, and the little boy told of several instances where his sister had played jokes on him and teased him as older sisters tend to do. Seti gave the boy permission to tell his sister that she was to stop teasing him immediately on order of Pharaoh. The boy thanked Seti and turned, walking steadily out through the doors of the room. The Grand Vizier shut the doors after the boy and we all gave in to the laughter we had barely contained.

The next day, the Grand Vizier came up to us and said Malankhre was back and this time had brought his sister with him. It seems that the sister did not believe the little boy and had teased him even worse that night, so the little boy had returned to prove to his sister that she had been ordered to stop teasing him. Pharaoh Seti cleared the room by asking that everyone take a few minutes to enjoy some refreshments. Then the Grand Vizier brought the little boy and his sister into the room. The little boy marched straight up to Pharaoh, pulling his frightened sister after him. He pointed to Seti and said, "See, Istnofret, I did too speak with Pharaoh and he said you gotta stop teasing me."

The young girl fell to her knees and begged for Pharaoh's forgiveness for her brother's outburst. Once again we all had to bite down on our tongues to keep from laughing. How Seti kept a straight face must have been due to the will of the Great Gods for none of the rest of us could have done so. We were hiding our smiles behind our hands, fans, scrolls or whatever else was handy. Seti spoke gently to the girl, asking her to stand and explained to her that he had indeed told her brother to tell her that she must stop teasing him. "After all," Pharaoh said to her, "One day he may grow up to be a great man and start teasing you."

The girl, Istnofret, caught on to the laughter in Seti's eyes and informed Pharaoh Seti that when she grew up, she was going to marry Pharaoh's son so that she could then tease her brother all she liked. She stood there as she said that with her hands on her hips looking as determined as anything to stay one step ahead of her brother. It was Seti's undoing, he could no longer control the smile on his face and began to chuckle right along with Ramesses and the Grand Vizier.

I could no longer remain silent, so I introduced the

girl to Ramesses and told her that the two of them might need to get to know each other if they were going to get married. Seti roared with laughter and then ordered our lunch to be served in the meeting rooms and asked Istnofret and her little brother to eat with us. We spent a delightful hour or so listening to the tales the two of them told, each one trying to outdo the other by telling the biggest tale of their family life. Just as we were finishing eating, the children's parents were escorted into the room. I could tell by their faces that they were concerned that their children had offended Pharaoh, but Seti made sure to quickly put them at ease, by inviting them to sit down with us and even served them a glass of beer himself. We enjoyed the company for awhile and then the family took their leave. Seti told the parents that the children were welcome at the Palace anytime they wished to visit. Istnofret pulled me aside just before they left and asked me if I minded that she would marry my husband when she was older, and I told her I would find that delightful, as long as she did not mind that I was Ramesses Chief Wife and always would be. We agreed and I gave her a hug before sending her off with her family.

We saw much of those children in the next few years. Istnofret was only 5 years younger than I and she had been taught to work with healing herbs, which was a great love of mine. Malankhre became close friends with my son and the two of them played together often. While the boys played together, Istnofret and I worked with herbs and performed Rituals to the Goddess together.

During this time, my husband, Ramesses was away for long stretches keeping the borders of our lands safe and extending them. He was an excellent military leader and brought much glory and treasure home with him each time he returned. He would be home for a couple of months, then he would have to leave again. Twice he returned home to discover that he had increased our family during his previous visit. My pregnancies went smoothly and it was easy for me to be delivered of these children, especially since I had Istnofret and Amaranth to assist me. After the birth of my second child, Istnofret moved into the Palace to be with me and the children as much as possible. She became the sister I did not have, and I enjoyed her company greatly.

After the birth of my third child, Ramesses came home for an extended stay. He had been home a week when I decided to speak with him about an idea I had been thinking over. It was my desire that my husband take Istnofret as a wife. That way, I would not have to worry that her family would wed her off to someone else and take her away from me. And besides, who ever heard of a Pharaoh with only



one wife? He was reluctant to agree to my request, but I enlisted the aid of Pharaoh and Queen Tuya. They spoke with Ramesses also on my behalf and convinced him that Istnofret would make an excellent wife for him. Finally he agreed, and all that was left for me to do was to get Istnofret to agree.

I spoke to Istnofret the next day as we worked together in my workroom. I simply asked her if she would like to fulfill a promise she made when we first met. She had no clue what I was talking about, so I explained what I wanted and why. She was overjoyed, and swore that she would make me proud of her by being the best wife to Ramesses possible, other than myself of course, and she would always remember that I was Chief Wife and came first in Ramesses heart, in his bed and in his life.

They were married the next week in a quiet ceremony with only the family present. Afterwards, we all went out onto the balcony to announce the marriage to the people. I stood behind them with Seti and Tuya and my children, preferring to allow Istnofret to have this glorious moment with our husband to herself. She was beautiful as she stood beside my handsome Ramesses, waving to the cheering crowd.

Seti had given Istnofret a suite of three rooms on the floor directly under our rooms. She had a private bed chamber, a main room and a room for the future children she would bear our husband. Ramesses had a stairway built from our private family room to her main room so that we could travel between the floors without having to use the main staircase.

Two months after their marriage, Istnofret discovered she was with child. We were all very happy as this proved that the Gods had truly blessed Istnofret. When she was safely delivered of a son, named Merenptah, Ramesses declared a Great festival that lasted for three days. I did not attend much of the festival as I felt I was needed to make Istnofret as comfortable as possible so she would recover quickly. We had studied childbirth and herbs that make recovery quicker and less painful, so I was needed to prepare the tonics for Istnofret to drink and she quickly regained her strength.

When the child was a week old and Istnofret was able to move around easily, she brought the child to my rooms and spoke with me about our children. She placed her son in my arms and declared that this child was the son of the three of us, Istnofret, Nefertari and Ramesses. My eyes filled with tears at the love I felt for this sister of mine, our husband and our children. We were truly blessed by the Gods.

It was not too long after the birth of Merenptah that Pharaoh Seti entered his Eternal House. He went gently in his sleep. Tuya, Istnofret and myself cut each others hair for our mourning. The Royal embalmers came and took Seti's body to the Temple to prepare him for his journey with Ra to the hours of Tuat. Seventy days later, Ramesses performed the Great Ceremony which would release Seti's Ka to journey to the Eternal Field of Reeds. Istnofret and I stood side by side behind our husband as he performed this ceremony for his beloved Father.

Then our husband became the living God, Pharaoh and ruler of our lands. I became the Great Queen and Chief Wife, but I wore this title with a heavy heart, for it carried much responsibility, which Istnofret shared with me. We divided the duties between us, each taking those things at which we worked best, but always leaving time within each day in which we shared private time with our husband and our children. For that was the source of our strength. We were a family first, rulers second.

Queen Tuya asked Istnofret to change rooms with her, as she no longer had need of a 9 room suite on the same floor as Ramesses and I. This change was welcome as Istnofret was again with child, as was I. We were due to be delivered of our children within weeks of each other. With the additional children, Istnofret needed more room, so this worked out perfectly.

There was a stairway from Istnofret's main room that went down to the rooms of Pharaoh's harem. Istnofret and I would send Ramesses down those stairs on the evenings when we felt he should perform his Pharaonic duties for those women. And besides, we were older now and did not feel the yearning for his touch when we were great with child. Ramesses was not pleased on these evenings, and once even dared to say we must have spent time with the women from the Island of Lesbos when he would come upstairs to find Istnofret and I napping in each others arms. We sent him down the stairs for seven evenings straight after that remark, and he never complained again.

He did however sire many children during those days. It seemed as though our husband was able to give a child to every woman he shared his body with or even looked at. It was a very happy time for us all. The Palace rang constantly with the delighted cries of many children, and our husband was pleased, for the children ensured our legacy. They hold the future of our land within their souls, as well as the seed of our immortality.

My own eldest child, Amun-her-khepsesh, whom

we call Amun, turned 12 years of age during the first year of Ramesses reign. He was now old enough to join his Father during the daily work in the Royal meeting room. I continued to join them when possible as well, as it seemed to have become expected of me. I did not mind this extra duty, as it kept me well informed on the needs of our people and helped me to feel closer to them.

The years passed quickly and even more children were born. I was delivered of three sons and two daughters in total, and Istnofret was delivered of two sons and three daughters. We were also joined by another wife for our husband, Maathomeferure. She was the daughter of the Hittite King, Hattusilis III. The marriage of Maathomeferure and Ramesses formed a bond between our two nations and ended the war. Peace was very welcome, as was Maathomeferure to our family. Our lands are experiencing the greatest times since before those that shall not be named.

And now, my time runs short. I know I do not have much time left before I shall enter my Eternal House. Ramesses has prepared a lovely place for me, a beautiful House where the walls are filled with those things that I love. He has decreed my name to mean "The Most Beautiful of Them". I have also seen the name 'Hereditary Princess' as a part of my name, and I asked Ramesses about it, for it is not true. Ramesses told me that he was simply doing as his father, The Great Pharaoh Seti had asked him to do, and portrayed me as being of Royal birth. I questioned this, and Ramesses explained that Seti felt that I was his daughter as if I had been born from his body, therefore, I was deserving of this title. I cried and of course could not refuse to allow anything my dearest Seti had asked.

I have seen my Eternal House complete, and I am awed. It was designed and created by Ramesses and Istnofret and kept secret from me until now. I trusted them to make me comfortable, but I had no idea of the absolute beauty that they had created. If it were not for leaving them and our children, I would enter my House of Eternity now and beg the Great Goddess to accept me. However, I do not wish to leave my family. They are a constant source of joy and strength for me and a continual boost to my soul. I love them so very much and know that in return, I am loved. The Gods could not have blessed me more.

\*\*\*\*\*

*My beloved wife has now passed from my arms into the arms of her beloved Goddess. As she drew her last breath, I begged that my breath also be taken from me so I might join her in the eternal Fields of Reeds. In my grief for her, I became inconsolable and angry. I raged at the Great Gods and wanted to destroy their Temples and deny them their offerings and worship.*

*No one in the Palace dared to come near me in fear for their lives, with the exception of Istnofret. She came to me carrying my battle sword. "If you desire to lose two wives on this day then take this sword and kill me now, my King," she said, "but if you do not, then please allow me to help you through this time of sadness." She looked so small and helpless kneeling before me with my huge sword in her hands. But there was no fear in her eyes, only a deep, profound sadness and loss.*

*Istnofret taught me on that day, that grief is a very selfish thing and that while it is necessary for each individual to grieve for the loss of a loved one in their life, they should do so in the privacy of their own home. In public, they should always remember that those around them have also suffered that same loss and should conduct themselves with dignity and grace. We should not mourn the death, we should celebrate the life.*

*Nefertari was truly a living Goddess, for no woman of this world could ever be so gentle and pure and honest. Her love for me and for our people was evident in her every glance, her every move and thought. Her every step was to bring more glory to our land. She was perfection, and everything she touched became perfect in the hope of making her smile.*

*To hear her name was to love her. Everyone knew what a wonderful woman she was, and most have been touched by her gentle kindness in one way or another. What she thought were simple acts of kindness, we saw as miracles. She could soothe the most savage beast with her smile and her soft voice. To me, she was the embodiment of the spirit of the people of the Two Lands.*

*My beloved Nefertari, may the Gods whisper your name for eternity.*

#### **Links for further information:**

Nefertari: <http://wysinger.homestead.com/ancientafrica5.html>

Ramses II: [www.homestead.com/wysinger/ramessesII.html](http://www.homestead.com/wysinger/ramessesII.html)

Seti I: <http://www.homestead.com/wysinger/seti1.html>



**A Special Editorial by the staff of Green Egg:**

# Apocalypse in the Holy Land

There is a prophetic myth believed by quite a few people which says that "the world" is about to come to an end. In much of the Christian community that once identified itself as "The Moral Majority," belief in the immanence of the Apocalypse is keyed to a series of Biblical references and prophecies. This conviction has been expressed even by those in positions of high leadership in the political hierarchy of the United States, such as former president Ronald McDonald and his Secretary of the Inferior, James Whaaat? The latter achieved notoriety for his statements that this was the last generation before the Apocalypse, thus there was no need to preserve anything for our children to inherit, as there was to be no future anyway.

The logic behind these statements is very interesting, and has been delineated in a number of Christian publications. Rev. Paul Miller, associate pastor of the charismatic Harvest Community Church in Santa Rosa, California, was interviewed on this topic in the *San Francisco Chronicle's* "This World" section, Oct. 9, 1988:

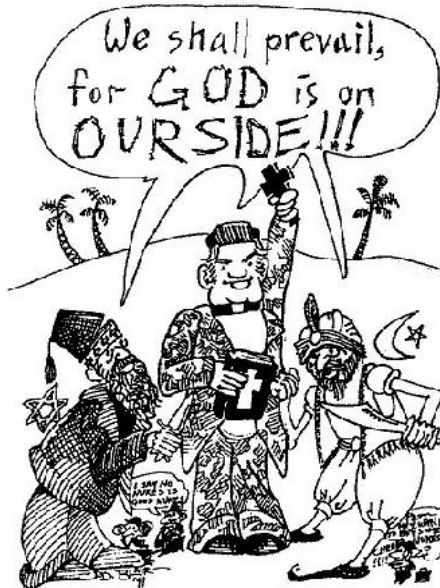
*Miller subscribes to the belief, popular among some evangelicals, that human history will span 6,000 years—a period linked to the six days the Bible says it took God to create the Earth. Four thousand years passed before Christ's birth, giving great significance to the approaching year 2000.*

*"There are events on God's timetable," he said. "If somebody believes in the Bible, they believe God is going to fulfill his word and those prophetic passages. The year 2000 is the ultimate date."*

Miller's calculations may be a bit off. The most widely-accepted Xian chronology remains Bishop Usher's famous dating of 4004 BCE for the Creation. Current thinking also has it that Yehoshua ben Yahweh was born not in the year zero, but in 4 BCE. Counting 6,000 years from 4004 BCE, or 2,000 years from 4 BCE, brings us not to the year 2000, but to 1996, which is the widely-anticipated date of the Apocalypse among many fundamentalist Xians.

However, as printed in the last issue of GE, Mother Shipton's prophecies foretold the end of "the world" in this very year: "The world then to an end shall come/in nineteen hundred ninety-one."

What does "the world" mean in these contexts? Most people today assume it means the Earth, but this is not necessarily so. When we speak of "the ancient world," "the third world," "the free world," "the civilized world," "the entertainment world," "the new world" or "between the worlds," it is plain we are not talking of the planet as a whole, but rather of *conceptual realms* which, by their qualifying adjectives, are clearly meant to be proscribed in scope.



We hereby contend that "the world" referred to in the Biblical prophecies of Armageddon/Apocalypse (see the *Book of Revelations*) may be equated with that area of the Middle East popularly known as "the Holy Land." This land was once known as the "Fertile Crescent" and is now referred to as the "Empty Quarter," largely because it has been a battleground for the major monotheistic faiths for nearly 3,500 years. It is a field of contention even now, presided over by that old Sinai volcano-demon, the patron claimed simultaneously by all three combatants. Having driven the Mother out of the household entirely it seems the children will smash the "Cradle of Civilization" with their fratricide. From this vantage point, it does indeed seem that all are on a collision course of mutual destruction, in lemming-like pursuit of their own self-fulfilling prophecies.

It is very tempting to dismiss all the combatants as packs of fanatical fools, but the reality is much more tragic and complex. Ask yourself to imagine for one moment, coming home to find your house burnt to the ground and your family butchered horribly. How would you react? Wouldn't you want to "do unto others..."? This has been the personal experience of far too many Jews, Moslems and Christians. There is no right and wrong side; there is right and wrong on all sides. No one has clean hands. This is a vast and tragically tangled riddle that neither Solomon nor even Alexander the Great could solve. George Bush's solution would be to cut the baby in half. To paraphrase Mark Twain, the argument over whose God gave which land to whom, may soon be adjourned, along with plaintiffs and defendants, to a higher court.

However, they need not take the rest of us with them. Those prophecies of doom might be interpreted to end with the destruction of the "Holy Lands" alone. Such a horrible tragedy even on this large a scale, a kind of self-generated triage, is certainly preferable to a global holocaust. If monotheistic madness impells its proponents to annihilate each other and their holy heartland, we only pray that the rest of the people and nations of the Earth may be forced to take a good hard look at where this insanity leads. Surely, at last, the world would demand global nuclear disarmament!

But must we passively wait for this Fate to unfold? Need we go to war against one band of oppressive medieval fanatics on behalf of another? Hel no! Especially not when the special interests battle seems really to be over the custody of Kuwait's oil fields. Petroleum as a fuel has been obsolete ever since 1966, when high-school senior Roger Billings won the Gold and Silver award at the International Science Fair in Dallas, Texas, for converting his father's old Model-A Ford to run on hydrogen. Since then, public transportation systems in Provo, Utah, Independence, Missouri and Riverside, California have been converted to hydrogen, which is efficient, economical, and entirely non-polluting. We would like to see this current crisis impell our nations to abandon petroleum as a fuel, and turn instead to hydrogen, the most plentiful element in the universe (after stupidity), the by-product of the combustion of which is distilled water—truly the Water of Life.

And as for this war: with complete conviction of the futility and insanity of war, and with a 29-year dedication to Peace on Earth, the Board of Directors of the CAW has voted unanimously to reaffirm our long-time support for Conscientious Objectors among our membership. As always, we take a stand against this lunatic *jihad*, praying devoutly on behalf of the women, children, plants, animals and other noncombatants among the beings of the Middle East (once the very birthplace of the Goddess Inanna/Ishtar/Ashera/Astarte, Queen of Heaven and Earth), that all-out war will be miraculously averted, and that all will learn to live in peace. Failing this, that Middle Eastern monotheism will at least have the grace to confine its Armageddon to its own turf.

Thus we sing, in a magical attitude of "controlled folly," and against all apparent probabilities, another verse of *Old Time Religion*: "If they'd only summon Isis to avert the Arab crisis, they could lower oil prices and all live in harmony!"

As for prophecies, we offer one of our own: "And they shall beat their missiles into starships; neither shall they learn war any more." So Mote It Be.





# The Legendary Green Egg Forum

During my time in and among CAW, I've witnessed some impossible things. One of those impossibilities was the presence of unicorns. This forum, we bring you the unicorn files. Over the years lurid rumors have gathered like flies around the story of the unicorns, and in this age of instant chat and hysterical hypersuggestability leading to countless "urban legends," people will believe almost anything. The unicorn story is actually a rural legend, and the truth about them is already so weird that little needs to be made up to keep it interesting, but in the era of hate radio, some seem to groove on pure disparagement, and so the need to set the record correctly askew. I've seen some of the rumors alluded to here floating around on the web, so I believe they are better off addressed than ignored, lest they become accepted truth. Believe it or not, sometimes people are in denial because what they're denying is actually not true.

It seems lately that we elect our officials based on who has the most money to surreptitiously spread vile rumors and misrepresentations about their opponents. When you hear awful things about officials and candidates, even those whose policies you thoroughly disapprove of, stop, think, consider the source, double check, before our civic discourse ends up entirely in the toilet. Likewise, when lurid accusations crop up in the Pagan community, as they have and will, keep your BS detectors turned up, and make sure you know what you're talking about before you pass anything on. Rumors are like grass fires, much easier to start than to get rid of.

The truth is out there. Way out there.  
*Ian Lurking Bear*

Please send letters for this forum to [lgeforum@greeneggzine.com](mailto:lgeforum@greeneggzine.com)

## The U Files

*I recently saw an interview you had with someone regarding the unicorns and I was so curious as to how you manifested them. I also read on an anti-Ringling Bros. site that Lancelot was purchased from a serial killer. They never mentioned leasing out 4 or you at all. Did they pretend to only have the one and really swap unicorns so one wasn't overworked?*

*Anyway I really am truly curious of how the creation took place. And why you stopped after creating 10. Did you feel they had any health conditions caused by their creation? Or any personality flaws that could have been changed if you chose to create more?*

*Did you have the last one as a pet..the one that most recently died?*

*Thank you for all you do in the universe.*  
**Lori**



Thank you for your interest. People keep asking these questions, so I have written an entire chapter on the Unicorns for my upcoming book, "A Wizard's Bestiary."

No, Lancelot was not purchased from a serial killer. He wasn't purchased at all. The Circus arranged a 4-year-lease with us, and when the time was up, Lancelot came back home to live out his remaining years.

We were not happy at all about how we were treated by Kenneth Feld after his father, Irwin, with whom we had made all the arrangements, died of AIDS. Kenneth then took over the circus and fired all the gay performers, and generally purged the whole thing of folks he didn't like. That apparently included us, so he refused to communicate with us at all over the entire 4 years. Many things I could say about that, but this is not the place.

The serial killer thing has plagued us ever since. Here's some of the story: When we were living on Greenfield Ranch (1977-1985), we had a next-door

neighbor who knew all about livestock, etc. His name was Leonard Lake, and he helped us in many ways getting our act together in raising our animals—what kinds of barns and stables to build, fencing to put up, feed, medical care—many things. In the fall of 1980, when our first Unicorn, Lancelot, was old enough to take out into the world, we got a booth at the back of the Renaissance Faire, where we set up a corral and photo scene. People could come in their costumes and have their photo taken with a real live Unicorn! As he was himself a professional photographer, we invited Leonard to come along as a booth assistant, and he helped with the photos, as well as going down the road barking for us: "Come see a real live Unicorn!" Of course, he also had to have his picture taken with Lancelot. It was at the Faire that he met the lady who became his wife. Her name was Cricket.

After several more years of touring the entire country doing Ren Faires, we made the deal with the Circus in 1984. They were due to open the following spring, as the stars! We leased four of them, so they could rotate who was on at any one time. Leonard had married Cricket, sold his land on the Ranch, and moved away, back in 1982, and we hadn't seen him in several years. But in June of 1985, just as the circus was starting the summer season with the Living Unicorn headlining on all the ads and posters, something terrible happened. Leonard got caught shoplifting and arrested. He asked for a pen and paper, and a glass of water. With these he wrote a note to Cricket, and popped a suicide pill. When the police checked his wallet, it was full of drivers' licenses of a number of missing persons. Baffled, the police went to Cricket's father's house (they were not living together at the time), gave her the note, and asked if she knew what was going on. She asked for total immunity, promising to take them the next day to Leonard's hidden place out in Calaveras County. But that evening, she went out there herself and cleaned it up a bit, taking away anything that might incriminate her. The next day, she took the police to a horrific crime scene. Leonard had been kidnapping, torturing, and murdering people systematically for quite some time. He'd built an underground bunker and cells, and his victims included several entire families, including small children. Moreover, he'd photographed and videotaped it all! Remains of over 30 people were found on the grounds, but it was hard to be certain, as many had been dismembered, butchered, burned, and scattered. From the photos he'd carefully filled albums with, many were girls from the school where Cricket worked as a teacher. But she had been granted immunity, and therefore could not be charged or even questioned.

When the newspapers came to her for a story, however, they asked for a photo of Leonard they could run. And she gave them one of those taken at the Faire with Lancelot. So here on the front page of every newspaper and magazine in the country—and on every news show—is suddenly a picture of our lovely little Unicorn in the lap of the most hideous mass murderer of our time! And our contract with the Circus absolutely forbade us to speak to the press about our Unicorns in any way, as they had secured exclusive rights to all publicity.

So the story that got imprinted in the public mind was that the Unicorns had been created by this homicidal monster, Leonard Lake, who sold them to the evil Circus. And the Circus—now run by Kenneth Feld (Irvin died in the fall of '84)—simply stonewalled the whole issue, refusing to comment on their true origin, or us.

This whole thing is, as you can imagine, an immense sore spot with us! Our greatest act of magick was sabotaged and twisted into a grisly horror story—and none of it had anything to do with us at all!

As to your other questions—they were all supremely healthy, and quite long-lived. Lance and Bedivere lived to be 11 years old, and little Oberon (named before I got the name) reached the age of 17. The others fell in between those spans. But Bedivere, who was Lance's brother, born a month later, injured his leg playing,, and wasn't suitable as a show animal, so we always kept him at home as our pet and companion. Likewise, Eo and Obie were lifelong pets, living their out last years at a lovely Pagan retreat center near here called Isis Oasis, where they were very popular with all the guests. As to personalities...well, Lance was trained as a show animal, and he was quite full of himself. But they were all highly intelligent, and generally very sweet and good-natured. After all, we raised them as our babies—they even slept with us when they were little!

I hope this addresses your questions. There is so much more that could be said—we've always hoped to write a book about this adventure, to be called "A Unicorn in Our Garden."

**BB-OZ**





*Oh my goodness I feel honored that you would even take the time to write out such a full explanation with all that is going on with you and Morning Glory right now. That certainly answers my questions! What a wonderful, full life the two of you have shared. How tragic the rest of the world made it take the turn it did.....just goes to show you the circus is not a happy, splendid place like they would want us to think!*

*I read a little about the procedure that takes place to have the horns become one...do you feel it hurt them at all?*

*So was the Leonard Lake guy doing any of those horrific things when he lived next door to you? In hindsight was he a peculiar guy? Or any more peculiar than anyone else in the world?*

*Which renaissance festival were you apart of? I used to own 3 attractions at the New York Renaissance Festival about 10 years ago. You could take a picture with my 5 foot and 8 foot snakes, and I also had a castle with juggling lessons and magic lessons.*

*Thank you for all you do. You are an absolutely amazing person in case no one has told you lately. :)*

**fidgit**

**AKA Lori**



Well, the simple operation would have been painful, but we used general anesthetic to knock them out, and local anesthetic in the procedure; all efforts were made to ensure the whole experience was as painless as could be. Imagine getting a cut bad enough to require stitches. That's about what we're talking here.

Are you at all familiar with the procedures normally used to dehorn goats and cattle in conventional animal husbandry? Now THERE's painful!

No. According to our experience and the police, Leonard didn't do any of that sort of stuff while he was living next door to us; it all began a couple of years after he'd moved away. However, during his last year on the ranch, it did turn out that he was systematically stealing from other ranchers. He'd go to visit them, ostensibly to deliver the ranch newsletter that I was editing at the time, and he was contributing to. If there was nobody home, he'd just go in and steal stuff he wanted. Mostly tools, guns, jewelry, cash, herbs...

Far from being a "peculiar" kind of guy, Leonard was

the most "normal" person you could imagine. He was basically Mormon in all ways other than actual religious practice. His homestead was a perfect model in every way—straight out of "Mother Earth News," wind-powered turbine and all. He built the whole place with his own hands, and it was palatial. He raised pedigreed livestock, and his garden and orchard were amazing. Like most of us, he thought of himself as a "Survivalist," preparing to survive what we all thought was the immanent destruction of civilization in a nuclear holocaust (indeed, one of the main reasons so many of us came to live in that remote corner of Mendocino County!).

He kept a year's supply of food and other goods in storage, like a good Mormon should. He didn't smoke tobacco or anything else, nor drink alcohol—though he always offered excellent wine when he invited you to dinner. He was a superb cook and charming host; dinner evenings at his place were delightful, full of erudite and witty repartee. He was educated, literate, intelligent, charming, and charismatic. He showed up at all work parties, and worked hard, offering considerable knowledge and skills. He also participated fully in social events, parties, Ranch meetings, pot-lucks, and our own Pagan rituals.

Around the campfire, Leonard would tell stories of his time as a Marine in Vietnam, and his determination to spend the rest of his life trying to atone for the damage to the land that he witnessed there, by working for the Earth—gardening, planting trees, etc. He made friends easily, and had several lovers over the years we knew him. Only much later did we come to know that one had been a teenaged girl who remained adamantly loyal even years after his crimes had become known...

Our Unicorns appeared at every Renaissance Faire throughout the US and Canada from 1980-1984. In '83, we had four different teams in the field simultaneously, each with a different animal: Morning Glory, her daughter Rainbow, my son Bryan, and me. MG and I didn't see each other for 4 months—the longest time we've ever been apart in all our many years together. We were in every newspaper in the US, and several foreign ones as well, from major pubs like the SF Chronicle and the Chicago Tribune, down to tabloids like the National Enquirer and the Weekly World News. We were on more TV talk shows than I can remember (though we did keep a record). We were included in the Encyclopedia Britannica Yearbook, had write-ups in a number of magazines (including Omni and several kids' zines), and were featured in several books that were written about unicorns during that period—including ones in French. When we flew on our tours, the pilot would make an announcement to the



passengers that the airline was proud to be conveying the Living Unicorn!

Yes, it was all quite an adventure! We were on a roll, bringing the magick of the unicorn back into the world! And then to have it all scuttled by association with Leonard—well, that was just heartbreaking!

You had snakes? Cool! So did we. And so do we still. Boas, huge Burmese Pythons (11-ft!), and now a charming little Ball Python named Desdemona. We've also had iguanas, tegus, caymans, ferrets, possums, feral pigs, wild deer, and for many years, a great horned owl with a broken wing (we worked with the local Wildlife Rescue). And, of course, generations of beloved kitties.

**BB-OZ**



*Hi again. How is Morning Glory doing? Is there any plan for her to come home anytime soon from the hospital?*

*I am sure if you approached the procedure with love and compassion it was a million times more humane than a typical dehorning with animal husbandry. Animals are completely disregarded by way too many members of society. I know several die-hard Catholics that believe animals do not have souls so therefore it is ok to treat them horribly.....ooooooooooooooooooooo.*

*That is so interesting about Leonard. I wonder what happened to make him do these acts only at a certain time in his life...and not during the other time. Did you ever wonder if he had also stolen from you? It sounds like you had alot of social contact with him. I wonder if it had something to do with meeting Cricket...since she was also involved. Is he in jail now? Do you see him or talk to him or Cricket at all?*

*How much did you charge for a photo with the unicorn? We charged \$5.00 for a photo with our snakes. I had a 5 foot ball python and an 8 foot albino burmese python. I found it was ALOT of work! I was Enchantress Honeysuckle and would also be in the pictures most of the time holding the snakes. I found one child got scared and threw my snake on the ground, dropping him from about 4 feet up and I flipped! So for the overall safety I pretty much did the holding.*

*Are you finding alot of people with sudden interest in the unicorn saga? I saw something on the front page of America Online and a few clicks later found you and am so grateful you are taking the time to talk to me. But it was something about "this day in pop culture history" or something..and showed "bogus unicorns" with a picture (probably of*

*Lancelot)*

*I am so happy to hear at the end of the 4 years the four unicorns got to come home. Do you feel the circus treated them well during that time? I hear such horror stories on the circus, esp. Ringling Bros, and their mistreatment of animals...all four made it back home safely I hope...*

*Well, happy Friday the 13th to you. :) Hugs to you and Morning Glory.....*

**fidgit**



Hospital? MG has been home for nearly a year. She was only in the hospital for a few weeks last year, and a few short 1-day stays over the summer.

I thought I explained about Leonard—he committed suicide immediately upon being apprehended. He'd obviously been preparing for this, and had no intention of ever going to jail or paying for his crimes.

Unfortunately, I know exactly what was going on with him. Before he started on his kidnapping and murder career, he set up a videocamera, then sat down in his favorite chair and carefully explained for posterity exactly what he was about to embark on, and exactly why. Years later, after the case was concluded (a complex issue involving an accomplice named Charles Ng), the investigators gave me a copy of that tape—I guess in appreciation for our cooperation in the investigation. I am the only one who has watched it. It sits on a shelf in my office for anyone to look at, but no one but me has dared to do so.

I don't recall for certain, but I think it was probably \$5. And yes, that was a lot of work! This was the first time I fully adopted the persona of Wizard, with full costume.

No, other than an occasional inquiry such as yours, I haven't noticed any particular renewed interest in our unicorns. We really should put up a website, however, with stories, photos, etc. We have quite a lot of material. And this new book will certainly increase interest... I suppose I should start looking around for a website designer...

"Bogus," huh? Hmf! Ours were the first fully-authentic Unicorns in nearly 500 years!

Well, no, we don't think the Circus treated them well. Lance was the only one who came home. We have no idea what became of the other 3. No one would talk to us.

**BB-OZ**



*I saw Lancelot soon after he returned from Ringling Bros., and based on what I saw, I will never be going to their circus, ever.*

*I remember when survivalists were mostly concerned about demented superpowers having their nuclear war. Those survival supplies may yet come in handy as the environmental crisis accelerates. It seems we're determined to make our planet uninhabitable one way or another. But check out those quarterly earnings! That justifies everything. Party on dudes.*

*I never met Leonard, but I've certainly heard stories. One story says that there may still be a sealed survival cache somewhere on his old land containing a year's supply of men's underwear. Sheesh, the lengths men will go to in order to avoid doing laundry!*

**--ILB**

## Brothers and Sisters of Bohemia

We know this to be true, that the world is composed, not only of black and white (with shades of grey between), but also by the many spectral hues of the rainbow. It is the rainbow which spans the gap, bridging polarities, adding color and richness to life. People, like plants, rocks, and everything else in nature, are birthed in a diversity of styles. Diversity is our strength. Polarization is our weakness. Those who seek to divide the world into good and evil, male and female, right and left, emphasize weakness. Their day is soon passing. The uniqueness of each individual is nature's way of creating stable and sustainable ecosystems.

Brothers and Sisters of Bohemia understand, accept, and praise the virtues of the Rainbow Way. We are no longer confined to one side of the chasm or the other. We're walking, skipping, and dancing our way across the bridge we are building together. We are actively constructing a better reality than that offered by the dualistic mentality which proclaims the superiority of Us over Them. Our task is to bring the polarities together peacefully, without explosion. This can be accomplished with love.

Love is not weakness. Love is strength. It is easy to be lazy and fall into the polarizing programs offered by corporate controlled media, consumer product manufacturers, and corrupt political cohorts. People give up their individuality in order fit into brand-identified subcultures. It is a simple matter to be swallowed by a crowd, to become part of a mindless mob. That's exactly what the polarizing powers program people to do: choose a side, compete for prizes, support a team, wear the proper costume,

and buy the props. Someone is getting rich in the process and most likely it is not you. Divide and conquer is the root of the oldest military game in town. Dehumanize the enemy so you can plunder their riches and rape their virgins. All we need to do is go along with the official script, do our grunt jobs without complaint, be on time, and kill the enemy when ordered to do so. The Brothers and Sisters of Bohemia do not choose the easy way. Bridge building is hard work. We are up to it because we have integrity.

Integrity is that which holds one together and imparts soul. Bohemians have soul. Soulful acts endure beyond death so we are not afraid to die. We have courage, honor, and respect for ourselves and each other and for all the rays of the rainbow. As bridge builders we look beyond opposing viewpoints. We realize that we are all Spokes in the Wheel of Life, sharing a common center as well as a unique perspective out here on the rim of the universe. We are connected in so many amazing ways, interdependent, linked by nature. What is done to one is done to the whole. It's a small world after all. We whole heartedly choose to be a part of the solution rather than a part of the polarity problem - because we understand that soul is something shared. Soul does not belong to one person to the exclusion of another. The Rainbow Way is inclusive. Light and dark are welcome in Bohemia - for they are the two sides of the chasm we are bridging, pillars of the Sacred Temple upon which material reality is founded.

We're putting a puzzle together in Bohemia. Each of us is, potentially, an important piece in a larger picture. As Brothers and Sisters of Bohemia, we are yearning to meet the surrounding pieces we are made to fit into. As it is within, so it is without. We cannot find mates outside without also putting ourselves together inside. The doctrine of programmed polarization tells us that we can be this or that but not both. Nature deems it otherwise. We're composed of a combination of colors. One cannot leave a color out of the rainbow without sacrificing integrity and becoming less than a whole soul. Wholeness within is reflected without. Please put your personal puzzle pieces together, create balance, become the entire spectrum, so your wholeness will fit in with mine. In fact, since every part affects every other part, I make it easier on you by putting myself together and vice versa. Do this with love and our bridge will soon be complete and the chasm between polarities will be no more.

Come out of the closet into the twilight where the shades of grey merge into rainbows. You can do that in Bohemia. It's a practice stage, carefully set, where you can try out various characters, wear a

wide variety of rainbow oriented costumes, safely and securely - because, as Brothers and Sisters of Bohemia, we are all each other's keepers, protectors, supporters, and caregivers in our joint journey over the bridge we are cooperatively building between the competing factions created by the great dividers who, without the unifying influence of the Bohemian Brother/Sisterhood, would surely lead humanity to its doom.

Let's not root for either side as they seek to destroy each other. Let us nurture our construction project. If you need help doing so, please ask for help and thank those who do by helping someone else when they need it. That's what we're all here for - incarnate in the material world. You wouldn't be here if you didn't want to make a bit of magic in your life. So, let's get on with it.

Bohemia Social Club is a magic theatre. The Bohemian stage is perfect for creative improvisation. We'll help facilitate the play but we won't often direct it. We might suggest a play theme or point out a common thread to follow. It is futile for a few people to script the future for everyone else. We would rather have a wild and crazy mixture of confused characters than a bunch of confirmed clones following a sadistic director's orders. Out of confusion, facilitated by improvised interaction, clear and focused characters may unfold. Feel free to take a peaceful part of yourself and play it out.

Tired of playing a bouncing brainless bimbo bowing to your master's dominating whim? Feel free to be a rebellious lesbian dyke or a Mistress with the upper hand. Reverse the roles. Sick of being typecast into another one of those stressful "nothing can harm me" macho man roles? Step out of the programmed stereotype. Dare to relax in a skirt. Be the bi slut you always wanted to be. Permission is granted to

mutate. Some folks find a study of the various god/desses of world mythology to be helpful when choosing an archetypal character. Princesses can shift into Priestesses. Princes can transform into Pucks and Pans. Faerie is a wonderful world populated with fauns and fey folk and the wise witches and wizards who protect them. Cross over into faerie if you wish. The Brothers and Sisters of Bohemia are behind you, playing supporting roles as you let your star shine!

Take a walk on the wild side. Gender blended shamans make great rainbow bridge designers and decorators because they partake of and can identify with both sides of duality. Divine Androgynes merge the polarized worlds into One. Remember, the primary objective is to play out parts of your personality in order to get in touch with repressed sides of one's whole self. Any character is permissible in Bohemia as long as it (and you) remain peaceful, respectful of others, and non-violent. All acts between players must be consensual, agreed upon by all characters concerned. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. From that basis, play until your heart is content and your fantasies are fulfilled.

Love is the Law - Everyone is a star!

**Jade Dragon (aka: Terry the TODE\*)**

\*Tindome Orendil Dor Elda

personal contact: [aeonarc@yahoo.com](mailto:aeonarc@yahoo.com)

networking:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bohemiaclub>



Got anything to add here? Please send letters for this forum to [lgeforum@greeneggzine.com](mailto:lgeforum@greeneggzine.com)



Litha 2007