

FOURTH BIENNIAL ALL-RECLAIMING

DANDELION GATHERING

SALEM, MISSOURI • SEPTEMBER 8-12, 2010

Early in September of 2010, dozens, if not hundreds, of Reclaimers will gather together at the 4th biennial Dandelion gathering. This time Dandelion is in the heart of the Midwest at Diana's Grove, long-time host of Midwest Witchcamp.

By Shauna Aura

As my fellow organizers and I have begun to plan the fourth Dandelion Gathering we've met and talked to many people who identify as Reclaiming

witches.

Many of them ask us, "What's Dandelion?"

The Midwest organizing team has many goals, and one of them is to help Reclaimers understand what the Dandelion Gathering is.

participants.

Past gatherings have seen a host of rituals, workshops, skill-building, entertainment, coordination between groups, children's programming, social gatherings for teachers and community leaders, and lots of time to connect together as a community.

Dandelion also hosts the biennial BIRCH meeting.

WHAT IS DANDELION?

Dandelion is a gathering of the tribes within the Reclaiming tradition which occurs every two years.

An open-format event, it has been hosted in the Southwest, the Northeast, and the Bay Area. The fourth gathering will be located in the Midwest.

The programming of Dandelion Gatherings comes together from you, the community of

BIRCH

The Broad Inter-Reclaiming Council Hub is a meeting that takes place during Dandelion and is a format to support many voices from across the Reclaiming tradition to be heard together. The intention of this assembly is to deal with wider issues in the Reclaiming tradition, nurture seeds of connection and communication, facilitate resource-sharing and skill building, and in general offer a way for Reclaiming practitioners to come together and grow our community. The meeting is open to any Reclaiming-identified individual or group.

HISTORY OF DANDELION AND BIRCH

How Dandelion came to be may offer some insight into the intention of the event.

Fall 2002: Having heard a call

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Photographs from the first Dandelion Gathering, 2004

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from their respective communities, the WitchCamp Spokes Council consensed to create a 4-day gathering of the tribes. The event was envisioned as a large gathering, accessible physically and financially, and open to anyone supporting the intention and the Principles of Unity. The intention was to support opportunities to manifest the community that we envision for our future, and "To celebrate, with a re-union of greater Reclaiming Community, tend the hearth, dream the future, and nurture the wild seed."

Spring 2004: The first Dandelion Gathering was held in Texas. The event was nearly cancelled through lack of early registration, however, enough people registered, and the gathering of the tribes manifested.

2005: Spokes Council dissolved into the Witch Camp Council.

Spring 2006: Vermont hosted the second Dandelion.

Lengthy consensus meetings resulted in the creation of BIRCH as a way to hear many voices—solitaries, small communities, and large communities. BIRCH offers a structure by which all Reclaimers accepting the Principles of Unity can work together to shape the future of Reclaiming.

The BIRCH Administrative Hub was formed to manifest future meetings of BIRCH and future Dandelion Gatherings.

Spring 2008: Dandelion's third gathering, and the first actual BIRCH meeting, was held north of San Francisco. Several working groups, also called cells or pods, were formed to carry the work between BIRCH meetings.



The current working groups listed on the Reclaiming.org BIRCH page include: Identity (as Reclaiming), Healthy Reclaiming Body (group process), Communications, Supporting Local Communities, Strengthening Wider Community, Outreach/Fostering/Welcoming, History and Lore-Keeping. Groups are open to anyone who wishes to do the work, and the groups are empowered to set membership criteria and make decisions to do their work.

DANDELION 2010

The fourth Dandelion Gathering will occur September 8-12, 2010, with the organizing team coming from around the Midwest. This will be the second formal meeting of BIRCH.

The Midwest organizing team for D2010 is working hard to support a few goals, including:

Accessibility—making the event

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Ortha Spingaerd, the owner of All Travel, has been a member of Reclaiming since 1997. I'm the REALLY short gal (4'10") with the bun, usually reading a book if you see me on the street or the San Francisco MUNI.

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as affordable and easy to get to as possible. Our outreach team will work to coordinate ride-shares and resource-sharing. If you'd like to attend the gathering, and either finances, travel, lack of camping supplies, or other obstacles hold you back, contact the Dandelion organizers for help.

Eco-Sustainability: Traveling long-distance has an environmental impact, and we're exploring ways to reduce that, from renting bio-fuel buses or vans for carpool to using locally-grown organic produce. We invite you to bring items from your own garden.

Most personally inspiring to me about Dandelion are connections and long-term sustainability. I'm looking forward to connecting to Reclaimers from all over. What are the challenges other communities and individuals face? What excites you about Reclaiming?

I see a tremendous opportunity for



Photograph from the first Dandelion Gathering in Texas, 2004, by Luke Hauser/RQ

Reclaimers in Dandelion/BIRCH to connect. To share resources. To look into the future. I believe that building bridges is key to sustainability.

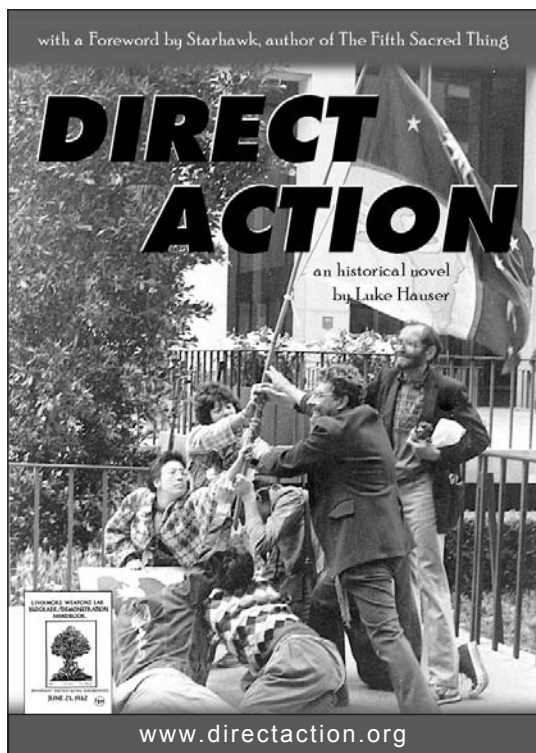
I hope that you will join us at this gathering, add your voice, tend the roots, and blow a wish on the wild seed.

The next Dandelion Gathering will be held in Salem, Missouri from September 8-12, 2010. Anyone involved with or interested in Reclaiming can attend.


For more info on the 2010 Dandelion Gathering, visit www.dandeliongathering.org

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DIANA'S GROVE TO BE SOLD

Near press time, RQ received the sad news that Diana's Grove, home of Midwest Witchcamp and other magical events, will be sold later this year. The following is excerpted from a letter by the current owners.

Diana's Grove was founded in January 1994. The dream was to create a sanctuary where people could come to experience the world of nature free from the distractions of modern city life.

We dreamed of a place to be in touch with the natural elements and to honor wind, fire, water, and earth. We also dreamed of a community of people striving to find ways to heal self, world, and relationships.

While it might have been unrealistic — some have said impossible — we have managed to keep this dream alive with our determination, support of our community, and magic.

We've been blessed with wonderful supporters who have given their time,

energy, and money. We have also been suffering from the current economic challenges. Sadly, we have decided to make major changes before major changes are forced on us. We will be selling Diana's Grove.

We anticipate sale sometime during 2010 or 2011.

However, we are committed to being here on the land through at least November 2010. All scheduled events will be held with the same commitment and support as before.

MYSTERY SCHOOL TO CONTINUE

Mystery School will continue, although its form will change. We have found other locations where we can gather to continue this work. We will continue seeking out the natural world as our stage for Mystery School and continue with myth, story, and transformation.

What will happen to the trees? We have no intention to sell to a logger.

What will happen to the dogs? We are working to find placement for many of the dogs currently at the Grove.

If you would like more information, please contact us.

What can you do to help? Continue to support us in our transition. Come to Diana's Grove as often as you can. Recommend our work and let people know this may be the last opportunity to experience a very special and unique place and people. Do magic for the future of the Diana's Grove Philosophy and land.

If you or anyone you know is interested in continuing the work here, contact us. We would dearly love to see Diana's Grove continue in the same or similar environmental/magical tradition.

We will plan a "grand reunion" for Fall Equinox September 17-19, open to everyone. Please join us if you can.

— Patricia and Cynthia. Contact us at info@dianasgrove.com



Teen Earth Magic

Teen Earth Magic 2009, in California, drew together two dozen teens and eight teachers from Reclaiming groups across North America.

The five-day retreat worked with the "Journey of the Salmon," shaping our rituals and workshops to reflect the life-cycle of this endangered local species.

TWO TEEN EARTH MAGICS IN 2010!

The third California Teen Earth Magic retreat is planned for June 12-16, 2010. We welcome youth and young adults ages 13-25 (ages 19-25 will be part of a mentoring path).

Vermonters also plan to host a Teen Earth Magic retreat in August 2010.

For more information, contact RQ — quarterly@reclaiming.org