

**Events Line - 849-0877**

This phone recording, listed under Reclaiming in Berkeley, carries announcements which come up too late to be put in the newsletter; it's also a phone number to contact us (but be aware we can't always reply quickly). If you have news of interest, please pass it on. We appreciate comments. Messages can be left on the machine or sent to the P.O. box; remember to say where we can reach you with questions, and allow plenty of time.

- The Recording Faerie

**RECLAIMING: A Center for Feminist Spirituality**  
P.O. Box 14404  
San Francisco, CA 94114

The opinions expressed in the articles and advertisements in this Newsletter belong to the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the attitudes or opinions of the newsletter staff or other Reclaiming members.

**SUBMISSIONS**

**PLEASE SEND US YOUR GRAPHICS!**

The Newsletter staff encourages more non-Reclaiming people to submit articles, paragraphs, or graphics related to political, pagan, or spiritual issues and happenings. Please understand that due to limited space we cannot print (and anyway might not want to print) everything submitted.

Submissions, whether we print them or not, eventually find their way into our cauldron, so please keep copies for yourself.

Anyone who submits work is responsible for getting it to the work group in time for layout. The closer to layout you come, the more camera-ready the work must be (typed with a carbon ribbon in a 3 3/4" column, justified preferred). We will not take responsibility for chasing down late material.

The Spring newsletter deadline is February 15. Send material to **RECLAIMING, Newsletter, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.**

**HELP! WE NEED YOUR BLOOD!** If you can donate blood into Reclaiming's account (#1913) at Irwin Memorial Blood Bank (567-6400 for information/appointment), please do so. If you or a loved one need blood for surgery, etc., contact Rose at 641-5836 for transfer. If the Goddess blesses you with good health, please share and give the gift of life. And many thanks to our donors.

Blessings of the Season to you and yours! Consider this Newsletter your Yule gift from the following Pagan Babies: Vibra, Robin K., Rick Dragonstongue, Rose, and Roy. Please send our presents to the post office box, marked Newsletter Cell. We like to receive money, shiney glittery things, toys, and we all need sox and underwear.

RECLAIMING NEWSLETTER

Winter 1985

Number 21

Reclaiming Classes . . . . .	9
Other Events . . . . .	18

Letters

Buffalo and D.J. . . . .	6
Dr. Roman Schweidlenka . . . . .	12
Andraste . . . . .	14
Claudia . . . . .	22
William Bearbelly and Leila . . . . .	31

Articles

Reclaiming Our Collective by Rose May Dance . . . . .	3
Hannah's Household Hints by Hannah Clancy . . . . .	7
Anarchism, Paganism and Authority by Bill Simpich . . . . .	10
A Bun Dance in Scare City by Cerridwen Fallingstar . . . . .	15
The Closing of the Gate by Brandy Williams . . . . .	16
More on Pro-Choice and Pro-Life by Valerie Voight . . . . .	29
A Meditation by Rose May Dance . . . . .	33
Goddess of Time by Shekhinah Mountainwater . . . . .	33

Poetry

Solstice by Eric Tanafon . . . . .	8
Translations from the Old European by Starhawk . . . . .	13
Venus in the Persimmons by Westwind . . . . .	17
Kore to Kouros by Westwind . . . . .	21
river worship by Roy King . . . . .	24
Ménage a Trois by Rodrigo Reyes translated by Beth Bone Blossom and Gail Enfiagian . . . . .	25
Chakra Song by Westwind . . . . .	32

The Back Wall . . . . .	28
-------------------------	----

Ads and Announcements . . . . .	35 - 38
---------------------------------	---------



BLESSED BE THE SUBSCRIBERS

RECLAIMING OUR COLLECTIVE: one member reports from the Collective meetings  
by Rose May Dance

Many readers may wonder what the Reclaiming collective is and/does. (Those of you who don't wonder go on and read some of our nice poetry.) I have great trepidation about writing on that subject because we are a large and diverse collective and very often we disagree on what we are and are about. So this is me, Rose, writing, and my impressions of what others have expressed.

Collective meetings are happening again. On September 7, before the Spiral Dance, we met and did some visioning together, trying to find out what we wanted for the collective and how we experienced Reclaiming. I think there are two strong, not necessarily opposing feelings about Reclaiming's purpose. One feeling is that we are a pagan community, or are building a pagan community. As a part of that community we put on public rituals, teach magic, publish a newsletter, practice ritual together, party, foster circles, network with other pagan and political groups, and build our own friendships, helping each other and growing together.

The other feeling about Reclaiming is that it is an organization for spreading (but I prefer the term fostering) Goddess religion, feminist witchcraft, and combining spirit and politics for the purpose of earth-healing. Now I think both of these feelings about Reclaiming are generally held by most members, but it is in question which, if either, is the focus or goal of the collective. Some see the collective as service-oriented, and others see it as designed to nurture the members; I think both are going on at once.

The participants in the September Reclaiming meeting--Iris, Vibra, Kat, Roddy, Raven, Roy, Cerridwen, Cybelle, Starhawk, Rose, Robin, Dragonstongue, and Arachne--thoughtfully discussed the values of the

collective. In several rounds we shared our feelings about what is important in the collective and how we want Reclaiming to be. Almost everyone used the term feminist to describe Reclaiming, and felt that the collective had something to do with witchcraft, although several members were very shy of labels. Vibra said that she felt that "feminist" was different from the term "Goddess Religion", and that feminism implies a feminist approach to process, politics, consciousness, and social relationships as well as to spirituality.

Eleven people agreed that Reclaiming has a focus on the Goddess, but there were at least two strong voices, Roy and Cerridwen, who seemed to find "Goddess" useful but limiting. Roy pointed out that the Goddess is a window, the God is a window, and there are other windows to see through that don't have anything to do with gender. Cerridwen said she does not deny the words "feminist" and "witch", but is not attached to the terms. She feels "Goddess" (or "God/dess") and "God" are powerful archetypes, but would rather use the word "All-that-Is". She said she is opening to new experience and wants to check out anything that has truth. There was discussion among the members about the Goddess and God, and whether they were archetypes or real forces which operate in the world, or both. I feel safe only in saying that Reclaiming collective seemed to love the Goddess, (probably an immanent Goddess) and that there was a web full of ideas of who she is and what she is for.

There were, as usual, lively opinions about the God. Some members felt Reclaiming tends to neglect or misrepresent him. Vibra stated the concern that we not address the God simply because there are men in Reclaiming, that it is patronizing to men to invoke the God just because men are present, because this creates differences

between men and women based on their genitals. Cerridwen was concerned that more men are not attracted to Reclaiming. She suggested that perhaps we have a fear of male power -- "hey, you guys have already had too much", and wanted us to become more conscious of our beliefs in these areas, perhaps by conducting a class in Goddess/God--healing duality between the sexes. Kat stated that she wants to work with men, and that the God means exploring her male side in different ways than she has known; she felt it is important that we are both male and female, and it's also ok "not to mess with it". She added that she wants a God who is at one with the Goddess. I stated that I came to Reclaiming because Starhawk was willing to work with the God and with men, and also that in Reclaiming I had developed strong attachment to working with women only at certain times, and am in a women's Coven which usually invokes only the Goddess.

I think there is a ring of truth in Cerridwen's suggestion that many of us fear (or, better, are wary of) male power -- patriarchy has done a great deal of damage, and many women seek feminist witchcraft because God-the-Father has been a harmful religious experience for them. I need Reclaiming to be a safe place for feminist women. Starhawk said that she likes working with the God, but does not want working with the God to be something that people have to do -- she wants to be sure that people who do not want to work with him are free not to. Roy said that the question of God energy leads him to the question of how he fits in the Collective as a man. He said he identifies with feminist values but wonders if Reclaiming is a place he can develop as a man, or just a place he comes for a while to learn about women. He said he knew men were welcome but wondered how deep this welcome reaches, and he was not sure what would offend or frighten people in terms of male energy. Most members present agreed they were interested in visioning the God and

exploring healing and creativity in working in this area.

In trying to describe and shape our collective, we batted around some concepts and values. We all expressed commitment to earth religion, earth worship, or earth healing. Ecology was a common value. Ecological sustainability was put forward as a goal for the earth, and there was a great deal of agreement. It seemed to me that we all held peace as an objective. We all valued diversity even though our diversity often drives us crazy. Some in the collective stated they have anarchist values, or have politics somewhere on the left, and other members did not want to use those labels. (One anarchist-identified member admitted to sometimes voting and calling the police.) Some people mentioned a strong value they called "the option for the poor" -- especially wanting Reclaiming classes and functions to be available to people of low income. At the same time, the concept of right-livelihood was important to most of the members. Most agreed that visioning the future for positive change was an important part of their spirituality.

About half of the members are active in political groups whose focus is social change, or in the peace, anti-apartheid, feminist, anti-sexist\*, anti-nuclear, anti-militarist, or radical ecological movements (I probably have not covered it all here Goddess help me). It seems to me that Reclaiming members in general are sup-

-----  
\*[Perhaps I should not say here that Reclaiming members-- roughly 3/4 women, 1/4 men-- include heterosexual women and men, gay women, gay men, bi-sexuals, (my count is about 6 bi, 6 het., 6 gay and this can only get me into trouble,) singles, married people, monogamous relationships, open relationships, situational celibates, etc.]

portive of these movements. Children's issues were important to the collective members, and we noted that we were making child-care and children's activities a priority, and that we have a long way to go in this direction.

We talked about Reclaiming style of witchcraft, theology, and ritual. Many enjoyed our eclectic nature, our value of spontaneity and experimentation. But a number of voices expressed the desire to explore traditional forms as well, and a need for structure at least some of the time. Raven called for an open discussion: What is Faery, What is Reclaiming, What is Eclectic in our tradition and experience.

Vibra expressed a tension between wishing Reclaiming were a tight place where all sorts of information were available, and not wanting any definitions or dogma. She identified this tension as very exciting and said this draws us in -- we all state misgivings and we all keep coming. Roy said he doesn't want to be in something which is solidified -- he wants to be in something which is developing, and hopes to see more experimental work.

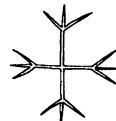
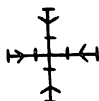
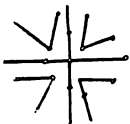
Arachne said she values the spontaneity but we need to guard against being so free-form and spontaneous that we deteriorate into mush; she and others expressed interest in traditional methods such as scrying, aspecting, and sometimes exploring tighter focussed rituals. Arachne mentioned that she has a hard time when we invoke the Powers, then flip back into "normal" consciousness within the body of a ritual or circle. Arachne identified herself as a ritualist whose area of expertise has become life-passages, and would like to see us make more rites of passage connected to our real lives. This was received with enthusiasm, as was Roddy's expression that it is important to network with other traditions and related groups -- working with Faery men and with people like Teish -- cross-fertilization.

Cybelle wanted to work more with healing in Reclaiming and was excited about integrating the body work she does with magical practice and teaching. She questioned what is therapy and what is magic in the way we work, and does therapy have a place in what we do. We all talked a bit about therapy and about transformation magic. My thoughts were that process is important as well as transformation -- I was wary of some "New Age" magic that emphasized quick change without working things through. I felt that therapy is ok in the context of Goddess religion, but needs to be accompanied by mystery.

Robin stated that he takes an oblique approach to Reclaiming in the same way that he takes an oblique approach to art, because the thing approached head-on solidifies, but what is valuable is what you see in the corner. The side gate works better than the main gate. He said the best of Reclaiming is all that swirls around the edges: circles, covens, friendships. Robin said his values are ecological and feminist and these values are embodied and symbolized in witchcraft. The symbols can be interpreted in many ways -- we can argue about them but we can't exhaust the meaning of the symbol. Meanings, he said, aren't stuck in images, and images themselves aren't stuck. We should not be getting stuck in the interpretation of symbols -- neither symbols we use nor other peoples' (e.g., Christian or New Age) symbols. Robin said he was enthusiastic about our projects -- we are creating value as we examine our lives, examine what works, argue -- and we embody all this in our projects. If in the end we find our symbols satisfying -- ok. We do have shared feelings about our symbols. When it doesn't feel like that, then we should fuss. Robin also felt encouraged by our plans for the future, and felt that Reclaiming had strong value as the organization we do things "through and around". Robin received wild applause when he finished his round.

In closing, I think Reclaiming is not quite a family, but we are family-like. Some of us were originally drawn together because we were interested in Starhawk's writing, or were looking for an open witchcraft group. That may have been all we had in common for a while, but at this

stage we have worked, fought, quarreled, played, teased, coupled, and re-coupled (or other combinings) so much, there is no doubt great love and bad jokes shared among us, as well as traditions we are building together.



Dear Reclaiming,  
... "Your Newsletter has become more than that, you know. It comes into our lives, shakes us up, makes us laugh with self recognition, reminds us of what we can be, pisses us off, warns and mobilizes us, moves and charms us with its art work, prose and poetry. We even enjoy the biz. stuff inside the front cover.

Keep it coming as long as you will.

Thanks also for the experience of the Spiral Dance. As a God-dancer I went through it four times, and I was affected by it four times -- in four different ways! When comes time to put it together again, call and I'll be there.

Blessings and Heart-thanks to you all.

Buffalo and D.J.  
Oakland

>>>>>>>>>

**BE ALL YOU CAN BE -- BE A SUBSCRIBER**

<<<<<<<<<<



Well hello all my holy sacred readers who are all shining examples of the holy sacred mother's cleanliness ideals. Here I am trying to help you live clean and good and here it is already time for that thing that used to be Christmas only now it's Season's Happy Yule because we don't say that other word that starts with X. At this time you know that you just have to give up trying to be clean. Everybody vaccuum the living room now before you put the tree up and then you don't have to do it again until sometime near the Valentine's when you take the tree down, and until then you can just throw glitter on the floor to cover the dust and it will look very festive. It will even fool your mother. This is a guaranteed hint.

But we all know that really truly the very important thing now is the food, as the holy sacred butter festival is happening all over the world at this time except where there is no butter and we are joined in sacred fellowship with all the peoples of the world even those who are not eating and so to show this now we are going to eat for about a month and a half.

So here are some useful food hints for you all as my Season's Happy and don't forget I love you all but some more than others.

**COOKING:**

Do not use margarine as it was invented by a mistaken person. Always make about three times the amount of sacred cookies that you think you are going to need because all the people who say they are going to eat only one are lying. When you are going to a big humungous potluck dinner be sure to take something distinctive as you can work all day making the perfect roast that cost you your week's salary and what people are going to

remember is the little olives stuffed with cheddar and almonds that were dressed up like Santa Claus. Children will adore you for the rest of your life and whisper your name reverently for years if you make something out of gingerbread and candy and let them eat it when it is stale. Sugar is a holy sacred substance and everytime you use it you get closer to the Holy Sacred Great Mother, who would like you to come home.

**EATING:**

The lacy napkins that your hostess has provided are not really to wipe your mouth on: use your sleeve. Do not eat all the sacred cookies on the plate; leave one (this is not only polite but is also a secret spell to draw more cookies to the plate). If you are given a piece of the gingerbread house after the festivities, remember that cardboard is not considered edible. At a potluck meal, remember to praise everything, even the burnt vegetables, as this is the holy sacred season of good will, and the holy sacred season of truth is happening at some other time. When you are celebrating the birth of the holy sacred sun god, do not eat all the stew before midnight, because three o'clock in the morning is the time when the temptations of the body urge you to sleep instead of faithfully keeping your vigilance and troth, and if you have already et the stew you are not going to have any food on your side, and food is one of the Great Mother's stalwart warriors in the fight against evil.

Please all my holy sacred readers be happy and safe in this holy season of excess so that we may all be safe for the continuation of the holy sacred butter festival next year and all the years to come and also spread it around some.

Love, Hannah





SOLSTICE

The moon is broken  
like a bone  
when the wish escapes,  
and the world torn...  
Solomon gave back life  
to the woman  
who refused to fight.

Night walks in circles  
around the city,  
turned back at every gate.  
Chains of light  
bind trees down the avenues...  
Christ's revenge on the one  
they nailed him to.

The Goddess in the wood,  
the God sounds his horn  
deep in the treeless maze...  
his hounds find no game.  
Alone, she swallows darkness,  
gives birth to the sun.  
Days grow long like shadows.

Eric Tanafon

ANARCHISM, PAGANISM, & AUTHORITY by Bill Simpich

I began writing this article by drafting a four-page critique to Tom Ness' piece in the previous newsletter; he criticized anarchists that also define themselves as leftists. Among other things, he pointed out that no leftist government has ever advocated anarchist principles.

"Well of course not! no government has ever advocated anarchist principles! And he totally ignored the extent of corporate control over our lives, as well as the illusion of the "invisible hand" of capitalism whittling all big economic institutions down to size in the absence of government control. And.." you get the idea. He got under my skin. He got a reaction out of me. I even agreed with a few parts of his overall argument.

I want to get under the skin of a number of friends and acquaintances that are trying to blend anarchism and paganism in their personal lives. Despite many frustrations, I still think that blending spirituality and politics is a good idea. But I'd like to vent my frustrations for one minute.

On anarchism: My biggest problem with some self-described anarchists comes up in political situations; specifically some bad moments during campaigns at Livermore and Vandenberg. They are generally the first ones to call for "no structure" or "no leaders" in a meeting, in an organizational context, etc. Many of them push for this so they or their inner circle can "lead" the group without being accountable for their actions and decisions. I can't stand steering committees that decide for the group--this situation can be even worse.

Isaac Bonewits had a good quote in his last newsletter, Druid's Progress #2: "...every large organization is actually run by a small number of people, regardless of what they tell the general public." This is due to factors involving human communication capabilities and varying degrees of dedication, as well as with the commonly mentioned (and less ethical) motives of greed and power-hunger. Feminist process and consensus can and should ensure that the "small number of people" will change according to the needs of the group and the individuals within it. But participatory democracy is based ultimately on trust, so that all individuals need not attend all of the meetings.

Leadership should be valued and encouraged in anarchist circles: it is a quality that can be nurtured in all of us. Individuals should be able to rise to the forefront when their specific skills are called for, and to return to the background when the issue at hand shifts to a different subject. If we are serious about building a movement where "everyone is a leader", we owe it to ourselves to be supportive when one or another of us is in the spotlight.

On paganism: My biggest problem with Reclaiming events is the opposite concern -- too few individuals take responsibility for leadership. We have a high priestess that essentially created much of our tradition, and she and another priestess play the central role in most of our rituals. I think that more people should put themselves "out there"; but I must admit that it seems most people don't want to be in the spotlight. Am I mistaken?

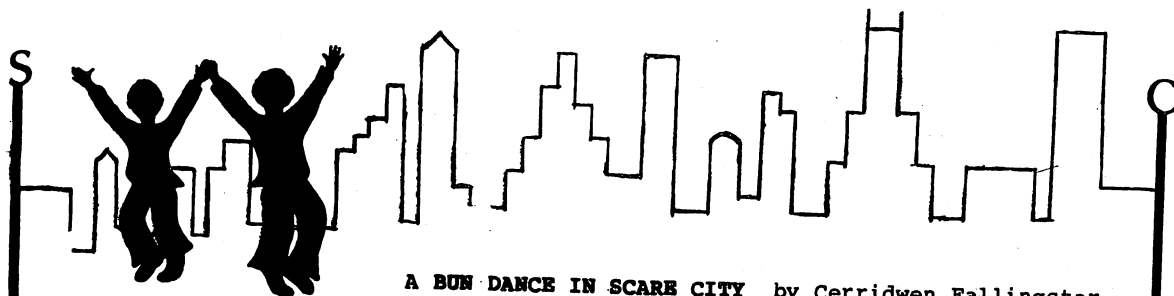
Very odd for a group that harbors so many anarchist-minded people.

This issue comes up for me currently around "initiation". One member of my men's group is seeking it, and I find myself considering it. Which leads to many questions. Who decides when one is ready to be initiated? What must one accomplish to be initiated? Should it be a recognition ceremony, or a test that requires the passing of judgment? Do the participants decide?

Finally, where is the best forum to air these issues? At Reclaiming meetings? Although I have never been to one, it seems that economic issues are usually at the top of the

agenda. These questions come up in the wake of the inspired creativity of so many participants in the Spiral Dance, which brought out great feelings in me of unity and appreciation. It also brought out disturbing questions such as, "Is there room and toleration for further growth from here -- or is this the height of what we can do together?"

A lot more can happen if more of us challenge ourselves and take the initiative in our group activities. I believe that issues of power and authority are best resolved in an open fashion, which is why I submitted this piece. Responses, plaudits, and personal attacks are earnestly requested.



A BUN DANCE IN SCARE CITY by Cerridwen Fallingstar

I have mixed feelings on whether to reply in writing to some of the responses my article on Abundance has engendered. There's a part of me that is still invested in trying to convince people that I'm right and this part is your standard self-importance/self-rejection trip. The less energy I give this worn-out piece of my conditioning, the better. And then there's the part that knows that I'm right on top of a fault line and that I already feel the shift starting beneath my feet and I want to ride it because it feels exciting--the sense that a little perturbation is good for everyone because it breaks up old structures and paradigms and clears some space for--?????

I like Starhawk's insights about sustainability and I'm excited about her practical ideas about how to apply that concept to Reclaiming. The money cell meetings and Marilyn's experienced approach to grounding Reclaiming in a sustainable flow of energy is new territory for us. There are a couple of ideas connected with abundance that seem so vital to me that I want to work for more clarity in communicating them.

First, scarcity is not an illusion, but a creation. The belief that scarcity is necessary is the illusion. All our creations are shaped by our beliefs. If we want different creations, different choices and pictures from what we have now,

we will have to shift our beliefs about reality. Of course our visions will require a series of actions to bring them into reality. And, without the initial leap of faith, the vision, the necessary physical actions to bring about the change would remain beyond our imaginations.

I believe that fear--scarcity is one aspect of fear--is the root of all evil. Evil is live, reversed, is whatever does not support aliveness. Fear does not support aliveness.

Abundance and scarcity are not definable in terms of quantities of things. They are states of consciousness. The first experience of abundance or scarcity a being experiences is love--or the fear that results from a lack of love. A culture where intimacy is the primary experience of every infant is a culture of abundance consciousness, regardless of the degree of natural resources in that area. A culture--like ours--where alienation is the primary experience of most infants is a culture of scarcity consciousness. Living in Marin, I encounter many people who would be considered wealthy by any standard. The level of fear and misery and numbness here is incredible. Many of them drive porsches and live in opulent surroundings, but they do not live in a state of abundance.

Our collective willingness to lay waste to our beautiful planet comes not from a perception of it as infinitely abundant, but from our self-hatred, our alienation, our acute, centuries-old deprivation of love. It is self-hatred and alienation that cause people to rape each other and to rape the earth.

Imagine a man who has always easily had loving, intimate relationships with women--his mother, his sister, his lovers, his companions, his mate, his daughter. Does this man go out and rape women because he perceives that loving beautiful women

are in infinite supply? No, it is the man who feels unloved and unlovable, starving for affection and untrained in how to create it, raging over having never gotten the tenderness and nurturance he needed as a child, who rapes. People who ravage the earth may use "abundance" or "God's will" as an excuse, the way rapists say, "she wanted it" to justify rape. It is important not to accept such rationalizations.

No one ever harms out of abundance.

Visualize yourself in a state of total scarcity. Deeply experience what that feels like in your body.

Visualize yourself in a state of eternal abundance. Deeply experience what that feels like in your body.

In which state are you more likely to experience generosity and sharing? In which state do you have the energy and inspiration to help others? In which state do you experience health? In which do you experience easy creativity?

Choose to live in the state of mind that supports you in being the most loving, beneficial, person you can be.

The longer I work as a Witch, committed to transformation, the more complete my belief has become that I am Goddess-God-All-That-Is. When I kiss someone in my circle and say, "Thou art Goddess", I mean it. I believe simultaneously that I totally create my experience, and that there is a natural flow of things, a truth, a Tao. When I move with that flow, my life feels easy, joyful, beneficial and inspired. When I go against that life current, I experience guilt, dissonance and pain--if I persist, crises.

I choose to move with that flow, regardless of what mass consciousness appears to be choosing. I choose peace, intimacy, ease, ecstasy and love. Now.

LETTER

Dear brothers and sisters!

In the German speaking countries the New Age Movement becomes a danger for the interests of the traditional Indians. New Age is here connected with the so called instant or plastic medicine men, who sell to our people teachings, ceremonies and rituals, that mix up some elements of Indian spirituality, European occultism and elements of old Celtic and Germanic religions. In the German speaking countries there is now every weekend a seminar or workshop with such a person and these activities are very bad for traditional Indians and also for our own people. Instead of working for life and survival they get crazy in an exotic kind of mysticism.

Many New Age people, and especially their opinion leaders say that in some way or the other, traditional people have to die out or have to change themselves into a modern life-style. Because they are "old", they also have to change in order to become part of the "New Age".

This movement has close contact to big business, that is also working more and more with New Age stuff. Many big New Age leaders think that Indians have to die out or have to change: Sphinx AG (Basel, Switzerland), Bernhard Schaer (Interlaken, Switzerland), who organized the "Rainbow Ceremony" in Sept. 1985, Harley Reagan Swift Deer and the very active Arnold Keyserling, who has a lot of influence here. They are all working, conscious or uncon-

scious, to explain ethnocide and genocide as the will of the Creator, who is preparing the New Age, where old things have to move away. I send you the report of a big New Age Congress; it will show you that a lot of things are going wrong now. Please spread this information to your friends; if you make a press, please publish that information in a longer or shorter way. There is a great lack of communication between the English speaking countries and the German speaking countries; so I guess, informations should be exchanged more often and more intensive. What we all want is survival according to the laws of Mother Earth and the Creator. So lets work together!

Dr. Roman Schweidlenka  
Obersdorf, Austria  
A-8983 Bad Mitterndorf

Dr. Schweidlenka has included a lengthy and detailed report of the New Age Congress, which documents how some members of the Congress, who seemed to have big-business or other commercial interests, silenced and manipulated traditional Native Peoples and people who spoke up against uranium mining on Native lands and against other atrocities committed against American Native People and the Earth. We regret that we do not have the space to print this document. Please send SASE to Reclaiming, ATTN: Spirit of Peace Report, PO Bx 14404, San Francisco, 94114, to receive a copy of the report.

Great Woman  
 Mother of birds  
 Your shrine is sticky with beeswax and feathers  
 Your shrine is loud with bird cries and throbs  
     with the beat of wings  
 You are the vessel  
     beaked and breasted  
 You contain us  
     As earth contains us  
     As sky contains stars  
         Our ancestors      our yet unborn  
 We pour through you  
     life after life  
         the vessel dips into the river  
         the water pours out on thirsty earth  
         earth drinks of us  
         as the greedy corn sucks rain from your skybreast  
         as rain feeds the river  
 Great Sky Woman  
     your shrine is deep in the cradling earth  
     your shrine is the spirit's resting place      beginning place  
 We are your vessel  
     You are milk on the wing  
 We contain you  
     as the body contains breath  
     as the breast contains milk  
 You pour through us  
     life after life  
         as breath pours through us  
         the ancestors      the yet unborn      return  
         our bodies are their vessels  
         earth drinks of us  
         as rain feeds the river  
         the spirit rises on the wing

\* Translation from the Old European is made difficult in part by the absolute lack of written texts from this period. Because of the paucity--indeed, the absolute nonexistence--of textual references, the translator is forced to exercise more than ordinary ingenuity in "reading between the lines" of artifacts and archaeological remains. This passage was taken from a mid-Vinca era vessel in the form of a Bird Goddess<sup>1</sup> (first half of fifth millennium B.C.). Marija Gimbutas's discussion of the meaning of the images proved most helpful and enlightening.

The second layer of difficulty for the translator is, of course, to render into modern English what we don't know but have reason to believe was the highly inflected and complex grammatic structure and poetic form of this pre-Indo-European language. If Vinca, to take only one unknown dialect, resembles any modern language, it may be the "nounless" language of the Hopi, in which words reflect no fixed entities but fluid relationships. Coupled with the numerous cases, the irregular endings to indicate not only singular or plural forms but also dual and triple forms, and the tendency



to express complex ideas and emotional intensity by varying the pitch of the voice which would rise and fall accordingly on the long vowels, the difficulty of learning Vinca, even were sources available, might well prove impossible for the modern scholar.

The term I have translated as "Great Woman", for example, might more accurately be expressed by the lengthened monosyllable meaning, not woman, but the entire process of birth, growth, maturation, reproduction and death that makes up woman's life, in the nominative case but pro-

nounced with a rising lilt to the voice indicating extreme respect or awe for something beyond the realm of the natural world.

Faced with these difficulties, I have resorted to the time-honored method of scholarly invention. Yet I venture to say that this translation will hold its own against any others of the same era, and may prove inspiring to other scholars hampered by similar lack of sources.

1. Gimbutas, Marija. The Goddesses and Gods of Old Europe (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1982) plate 118.



## THE CLOSING OF THE GATE



by Brandy Williams

To add to the debate on the meaning of abortion (Spring and Autumn '85):

April tells me abortion should be stopped by social change. Ann For-freedom tells me witches consider abortion a sacred rite.

It's difficult for me to hear the subject discussed as an abstraction. I think of myself and my friends, and our experiences.

April makes me feel defensive again. Until recently I lived as a solitary in a small, agricultural, virulently Christian community, writing pro-choice letters to the local newspaper in response to pro-life articles, and signing my name. It was very difficult, but I felt I had to support women who had made the choice I did. I experience some of the same feelings now. I'm glad to see public discussion of the issue, and I don't advocate every one of us take a feminist pagan party line approach, but a little more understanding would be nice.

To hear, again, that I could have prevented my pregnancies with contraception is maddening. The pill made me violently ill. I became pregnant while faithfully and carefully using my diaphragm. Until now I've been too young to obtain a sterilization. Abortion was a last resort for me. There are no easy answers.

Yes, I have a friend who had an unwanted child because she couldn't face abortion, and she suffers daily and will continue to suffer throughout her daughter's childhood. Yes, I was low income when I had my abortions and could not have supported a child. Yes, I felt pain--physical pain--even in a supportive feminist clinic, more so in an abortion mill.

And I feel shame, not because of the act, but because of the social pressure. Where I live it isn't okay, I don't talk about it, and that kind of harsh judgemental environment makes a part of my life a dark secret.

My third abortion was a quickening, self-induced by black cohosh. When it started, a friend lay on a bed with me, breathed with me, taught me to "exhale" through my womb, and facilitated a conversation between myself and the child spirit. Not this time, not this body, feel no pain, be released, go in peace. I saw the spirit fly away, disappointed, nothing more.

It was a death. I can handle that. My religion taught me to deal with unbindings and losses. There is, quite obviously, a world of difference between this and murder of a grown human being, both in intent and in action. I am alive, I kill to live: carrots and cucumbers, chickens and pigs. What I killed was not yet a person, but a possibility. I closed the gate through which human life would pass.

In the larger context I rendered other human life possible. More statistics: four out of five people in the world are malnourished or starving. Our country uses three quarters of the world's resources.<sup>2</sup> There's a connection there! I handle my own responsibility to humanity by: reducing my own consumption of resources, donating money (Food First is a good organization), and choosing not to contribute other Americans to the world.

I've been pregnant three times. How many children around the world will live because mine did not, and be-







cause I spend the money I would have given just for their toys on food for others?

My own experiences were neither damaging nor sacred. They were necessary. Do not judge me murderer. Do not make me a priestess for it. All I want is respect: I accept the responsibility.



Notes:

1. The Doctor's Case against the Pill, Barbara Seaman, lists the several sorts of damages this particular contraception can do to the female body, in the short and long term.

2. Population, Resources, Environment, Paul and Anne Ehrlich



## MORE ON PRO-CHOICE AND PRO-LIFE



- Valerie Voight

The discussion between April and Ann Forfreedom about Witches and abortion is very educational. I would like to add a few comments.

Ann has pointed up valuable data about the safety of legal, early abortion. As a woman who has had two abortions and one live birth, I feel a need to point out that although Ann covered that aspect of the abortion question very well, she did not really address what seemed to be April's main concern--that of the new entity which has been conceived.

I agree with April that an appeal to the common (but not universal) Craft teaching of reincarnation is not a full solution. Perhaps the soul will return, but is that subsequent incarnation a satisfying substitute for the terminated one?

Secondly, if the fetus or embryo has sensation, does it feel pain when it is aborted? As a Witch, I believe I have come to accept death; I find that ethical questions seem to revolve around pain instead. After all, we are all going to die eventually, whether we have lived out long, fulfilled lives, or died in accidents, or been aborted. I know I will die; but I hope my death will be painless. I avoid giving pain to others.

I do not really believe we have satisfying answers to either of these questions; nor do hard answers seem forthcoming. Thus, I feel, with April, that abortion is a necessary evil. I chose abortion over childbirth twice: I decided, in those cases, that for me and for the embryo, abortion was preferable to the birth of a

child for whom I was not prepared, and for whose welfare I did not feel I could take responsibility. This was my right. I mourned the need to exercise that right.

With Ann, I am concerned about overpopulation. With April, I am concerned about the welfare of the innocent. With April, I wish that adoption were a more attractive, more viable option for more women. Fortunately, in California at least, women have the option of private (as opposed to state-administered) adoptions, and private adoptions give the woman most of the control. Nonetheless, neither adoption nor motherhood is the best answer for many women.

Ann says she wants to see "a new energy . . . that favors womankind in both word and deed . . ." That energy exists. But in its best manifestation, that energy is a balanced energy: it favors womankind, humankind, not elevating man over woman or woman over man. To be opposed to abortion per se is not anti-woman; to be opposed to women having a choice is anti-woman. To try to make women's choices for them is anti-woman.

As a Witch, I celebrate my power of life and death. I celebrate childbearing. Should I meet my rapist and kill him, I would celebrate the kill; when my loved ones die naturally, I celebrate their journey to the Summerland and reincarnation. But I cannot celebrate the deliberate killing of an innocent life. I cannot celebrate abortion.

What I can celebrate is the power, and the freedom to choose; for womanhood is both of these things.





**VENUS IN THE PERSIMMONS**

**- Westwind**



Their leaves I don't remember now  
among all the brittle curls  
lying down.  
Only branches hold out fruit  
to the twilight,  
dot dot dot along the bare bones.  
Up close I know  
they are eager meats,  
screaming Ripe now,  
Pluck me, Peel me,  
Plant me into any pie,

but I want distance  
from their flesh story  
to catch Venus  
rowing into the limbs:  
white-gold ship  
some call The Veil.  
How full I might be,

woman's blood stuck in my womb,  
quarter-moon, half-moon late.  
Or is it already someone,  
a tiny chip of star:  
strand of Her hair,  
crescent of nail,  
a sigh.

Horizon-hugger,  
She lingers in port  
among the persimmons  
urging lovers to the dusk,  
patient even for me blind  
with belly, possibly undone,  
my breath rattling the leaves.





**POLITICS AND SPIRITUALITY: A Talk and Ritual by Starhawk  
Benefit for the Bay Area Green Party  
Thursday, February 20**

Starhawk will discuss the linking of the political and the spiritual, and read from her work-in-progress Truth or Dare: Encounters of Power, Authority and Mystery. A participatory ritual ends the evening. Call Reclaiming Events Line for details: (415)849-0877.



**Reclaiming Presents: THE PRIESTESS AND THE WITCH --  
a weekend experience of the Goddess for women with YANA BREEZE**

Join Yana for a dark moon journey into the realms of ritual and magic. The goddesses Lilith, Vesta/Hestia and Pallas Athene will be our guides to reclaiming our natural power as daughters of this Earth. Self-empowerment happens through experiences interweaving herstory and goddess lore with ritual, magic, visualization and other journeyings into both ourselves and our loving connections with each other as sisters. Friday evening, Feb. 7, 7-10 pm, Saturday, Feb. 8, 11 am - 5 pm and 7 pm - 10 pm, Sunday, Feb. 9, 10:30 am - 2 pm. \$55 - \$75 sliding scale.

Yana Breeze, from Corvallis, Oregon, will also be available for private astrology readings Feb. 10-12. The fee is \$50 for a two hour reading which includes the primary asteroids, or "the goddesses in your chart". Includes birthchart and current patterns. For pre-registration and private appointments, call Mary Greer, 824-8938.



**PSYCHIC DEVELOPMENT FOR CHILDREN -- Cerridwen Fallingstar**

6-week class from beginning of February to mid-March. Class will cover methods and other considerations for encouraging psychic development in children. Child and parent must both attend. Class will be held in Marin County. Call Cerridwen, 461-9220.



---

RECLAIMING, PO Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114  
Events Line (415)849-0877

---

# Reclaiming



# & Classes



## **THE MAIDEN, THE MOTHER, THE CRONE: WOMEN'S LIFE PASSAGES**

Sun., Jan. 19, 10 am to 6 pm

by Bone Blossom, Rose May Dance and Starhawk

Women's lives are full of passages: from girl to menstruating maiden, from maiden to one who is awakened sexually, one who can nurture and create in many ways, from one who is in the midst of responsibilities to one who knows the necessity of letting go and the wisdom that lies beyond.

In this one-day workshop, the three aspects of the Goddess take us on a journey through the passages which occur continually in our lives. Trance story, myth, and ritual we create together become the tools which take us through our changes, and together we celebrate the empowered women we become.

Bring a blanket, pillow to sit on, and food to share. Sliding Scale \$25-\$60. This workshop may be larger than the usual Reclaiming class--we expect 50-60 women. Call 824-8066 (Bone) or 641-5836 (Rose) for registration. Preregistration and prepayment required although individual arrangements can be made. Childcare available by prearrangement.



## **THE RETURN OF THE GODDESS: A Slideshow, Talk and Ritual**

by Starhawk

Friday, January 24 8 pm

A new myth is alive in the world--one that tells us of the mother-times, before patriarchy, of the suppression and destruction of the Goddess, and her rebirth into the world today as a healing and empowering force. Starhawk uses slides of the Goddesses and sacred sites of Old Europe, Crete, Greece and the Middle East as a background for discussing the myths and stories of the Goddess and her new research on the transition to patriarchy in Sumer and its implications for the work of creating a healing culture.

A benefit for Reclaiming. Sliding scale \$4-\$7. Childcare available by prearrangement. Call 849-0877 for location.



and



# Events



## **rites of passage for women and men by Bone Blossom and Rose May Dance**

Once upon a time... The Rite of Passage focuses on dreams, myths and language, using traditional and non-traditional tales and techniques to create a personal rite of passage. Through storytelling, trance, release work and dreams we receive our challenge, meet our helpers, work through our blocks and emerge renewed, reborn. This class ends with ritual created by students. Pre-requisites: Elements or Pentacle. Six Wednesdays, starting Jan. 29. Sliding scale \$45-90. Call 824-8066 (Bone) or 641-5836 (Rose) to register.

## **ISAAC NEWTON, BURNING TIMES, AND THE WAR AGAINST THE EARTH by David Kubrin**

Friday, Feb. 7, 8:00 pm, \$2.50. A talk on how the rise of capitalism in 16th and 17th century England brought with it a conscious declaration and waging of war against the earth, which was manifest in the "Burning Times" and in the rise of extractive industries, especially mining, in England and elsewhere in Europe. The talk will examine the role of a new mechanical science in constructing an ideology to justify that war. Location: call 849-0877.

## **IT MAKES CENSE By Raven Moonshadow Feb. 10 and Feb. 17**

A two-session class. This will be a practical, hands-on workshop in the making of incense. We will explore the historical, personal and imaginative correspondence aromas, culminating in the making of incense within a sacred circle. \$10-\$20 sliding scale each session-- most of the money is for materials -- students keep the incense they make. Phone Raven mornings, 584-6988 for details and registration.

## **ELEMENTS OF MAGIC FOR WOMEN by Bone Blossom and Kay Kat**

With the art of magic, we deepen our vision and focus our will, empowering ourselves to act in the world. We begin the practice of magic and Goddess spirituality by working with the elements of magic: earth, air, fire, water and spirit. Techniques include: visualization, sensing and projecting energy, chanting, trance, creating magical space, and structuring rituals. Beginning 6-week course, starting Thursday, March 6. Sliding scale \$45-90. Call 454-8435 (Kat) or 824-8066 (Bone) to register.

## **PENTACLE FOR WOMEN AND MEN Cybele and Rick Dragonstongue**

Using our magical skills, moving and shaping energy, transforming ourselves through trance to explore the five points of our inner pentacle: Sex (primal energy), Self, Passion, Pride (self-esteem), and Power (effectiveness in the worlds). Six weeks beginning the first week of March, call Events Line, 849-0877, for exact date. To register call 863-8294 (Cybele), or 731-2159 (Rick). \$45-90 sliding scale.



**KORE TO KOUROS - Westwind**

Say we were virgin,  
no one owned our names,  
what would we dally wear?  
Head of foxfire,  
mescal necklace,  
furs still alive with  
small mammals clinging?  
We would not be sore with words.  
Nor live any place we should be.  
Hurricanes of nerve where  
premeditation casts no hook.  
Blood on the sheet:  
no herald of a divided will.

Imagine learning like this:  
one breath after another,  
into the night,  
into your dreams.  
We will never lose our  
reckless-throated song,  
bounding through  
eyelets of the new.



**AVOID FUTURE GUILT -- SUBSCRIBE NOW!**

**OPEN BRIGID RITUAL**

This year Brigid will be celebrated with a public ritual planned and presented by YOU! You will talk to a few friends, or to your circle, or to other circles, call the Events Line--849-0877--to announce a planning date, have a planning meeting to brainstorm about creating this ritual, have another meeting to actually plan the thing, record the info on the Events Line (or spread the word via the grapevine if you like) and DO IT on February 1 or 2. So mote it be.

-- Dottie Matrix



Dear Reclaiming,

I am writing about The Spiral Dance .... It was thrilling to be part of my first large pagan gathering. I want to thank you for making the event open...[however] I was very critical of certain aspects of the Dance.

As a feminist and a witch, I strongly believe that patriarchal dualisms are destructive for human growth. I do not believe that spirituality can be separated from thinking. It is a false dualism that says religion belongs in a church and inquiry belongs in a school. Much of the danger of patriarchal religion comes from this separation of mind and heart; Judeo-Christian women may be spiritually satisfied, but their religious beliefs have caused all women political persecution.

My interest in Wicca began as a reaction to my feelings for nature, yet my commitment to witchcraft intensified as I grew up to become a feminist. I see no dualistic split in my religious beliefs; feminist analysis is a part of my spirituality.

Upon arrival at the Spiral Dance I was very satisfied emotionally. Yet as the portrayal of the cycles of the Goddess and God began, I became very critical of the ritual. Though I tried to continue enjoying the evening more, it was very much like a battle to try to ignore my critical thoughts. I could not separate my heart from my mind, and my intellectual objections affected my emotional enjoyment of the rest of the Dance.

The Goddess has grown to be a part of my witchcraft, mainly because of the feminist scholarship of women like Merlin Stone, Carol Christ, and

Marija Gimbutas. The Goddess represents for me all the potential and possibilities of womenstrength. The Goddess, in Her many representations, can be wise, like Maat or Dike and Themis; creatively sensual, like Aphrodite or Innana; a warrior, like Rangada, Athene or Macha; chaos, like Kali or the Morrigan; in other words the Goddess in all Her aspects is more than the limiting Christian view of woman as Eve or Mary.

During the Spiral Dance, the three aspects of the Goddess, maiden - mother/creator - crone, were presented in a way that did not reflect my images of the Goddess. In fact your representations of the Goddess, at least in portrayal, were very similar to Judeo-Christian views of women as mothering, nurturing, passive. In contrast to this was your portrayal of the God. Your God, in His three aspects, was active, erotic, wild. Your portrayal of both the Goddess and God were dangerous; I found myself identifying with the God more than the Goddess! After such a stunning, dualistic portrayal it was difficult to worship during the rest of the Dance.

Now I do not want to say that it is wrong for a woman to ever identify with a man -- or for a woman to see parts of her own humanity in the God. Yet all characteristics of human potential exist in both Goddess and God, as they do in women and men. If a portrayal of the Goddess is so one-sided it excludes many human characteristics, it is oppressive to women. Obviously one-sided views of the God are also oppressive to men. In fact stereotypical masculine-feminine dualisms are oppressive to all people.





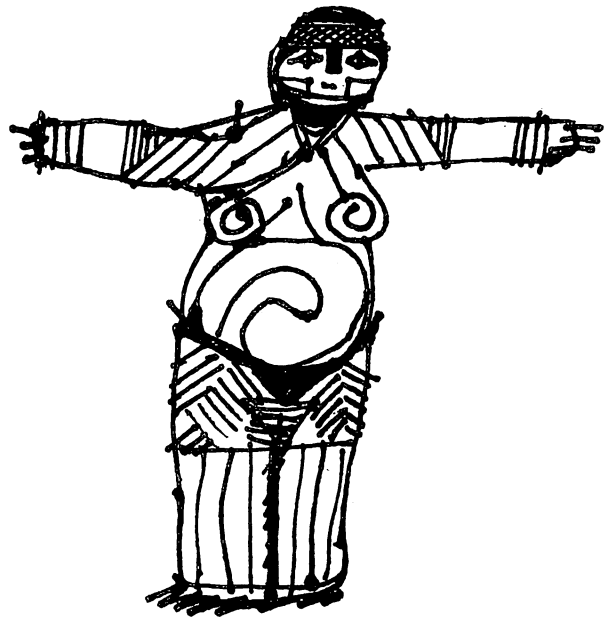
SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL PAGAN FORCE -- SUBSCRIBE

I am currently a student in divinity school. It is very common for christian feminists to divide up their god into masculine-feminine parts. Some christian feminists feel it helps women to "bring feminine" characteristics into christian worship of God. Since I am highly critical of attempts to assign certain traits to women exclusively or men exclusively, I wonder if christian feminists are not contributing to stereotyped oppression of women's potential.

These same criticisms are valid for the craft. If we worship a Goddess and a God, it is imperative to avoid patriarchal definitions of "masculine" and "feminine" in our portrayals of Goddess and God. I feel witchcraft is so essential for feminists because it moves beyond patriarchal duality. As women come to know the Goddess, they find a unity of their inner potential. As a woman I manifest the Goddess when I nurture and when I rage. She is part of me when I create and when I destroy. She is in me when I think and when I feel. In craft rituals I do not want any part of Her, or myself, ignored.

As a witch I deeply believe that all pagans have a right to worship as they believe; diversity is a strength of the craft. Yet as a feminist I can not ignore practices that oppress women. I offer my criticisms to you respectfully. For the good of all, and according to the free will of all, may we help each other create a new world beyond patriarchy.

Blessed Be  
Claudia





---

---

---

river worship

spirit is a river running wild

religion is a dam

    a utilitarian device

        to use a river

            control the flow

            store the power

            hold

            contain

a river runs in her way

    cutting her natural course

        surging and dissolving

            always changing

                flooding

                    ever forming

                        between the thunder and the sea

in time

    breaking all dams

beliefs

    like walls

        though strong and true

            cannot remain

spirit

    however trapped

        cannot be contained

roy king

MENAGE A TROIS

BY Rodrigo Reyes

Aquí entre nos  
la muerte no es  
una calavera,  
una preciosa  
calaca.

No es un ser  
como dicen  
del más allá.  
Esta aquí,  
entre nosotros,  
vivita y  
culeando

Aquí entre nos  
vida, pasión y muerte  
son mas que un  
bonito título  
una bonita linea  
sino  
una estupefaciente  
realidad.

No, la muerte no es  
una calavera,  
una preciosa  
calaca.

Ahora se cubre de besos,  
de huesos,  
se unta perfume  
de sexo,  
se invita  
solita  
a los lechos  
y llega  
a formar el mal  
tercio  
de un mortal  
menage a trois.

-San Francisco  
Año de la Peste, 1985



---

translated by Beth Bone Blossom and Gail Enfiagian

Here among us  
death is not  
a skull,  
a precious  
skeleton.

She is not a being  
as they say,  
from the other side.  
She is here  
among us,  
living and  
slithering.

Here among us  
life, passion and death  
are more than  
a beautiful title,  
a beautiful line  
but instead  
a stupefying  
reality.

No, death is not  
a skull,  
a precious  
skeleton.

Now she covers herself with kisses,  
with bones,  
she anoints herself with the perfume  
of sex,  
she invites  
herself  
to the bed  
and arrives  
to form the  
unwanted third  
of a mortal  
ménage a trois.

-San Francisco  
The Year of the Plague, 1985





## PAGAN STRENGTH WEB FORMS

A Pagan Strength Web has recently formed with Circle Network to protect religious freedom for Wiccans and other Pagans. The Web emerged this October to fight Federal legislation aimed at denying tax exempt status to groups with any connection with Witchcraft. The great outpouring of phone calls, letters, and magick from Pagans and others around the USA protesting this attack on religious liberty helped kill the Helms Amendment (705) to the Postal Appropriations Bill on October 30 and prevent it from becoming law. However, similar measures, the Walker Bill and the Schulze Amendment to the Tax Reform Bill, are still pending in the House Ways and Means Committee.

Because of time and financial constraints, Circle mailed its special Pagan Action Alert about this legislation only to current subscribers to CIRCLE NETWORK NEWS and to some non-subscribers living in states of the Joint Conference Committee Members who would be deciding the fate of the Helms Amendment. While the Circle mailing reached several thousand Pagans, Circle wants to be able to alert even more whenever the need arises in the future.

Here are some ways to help the Pagan Strength Web in its work. The Web can be contacted c/o Circle, Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572 USA; phone: (608) 924-2216.

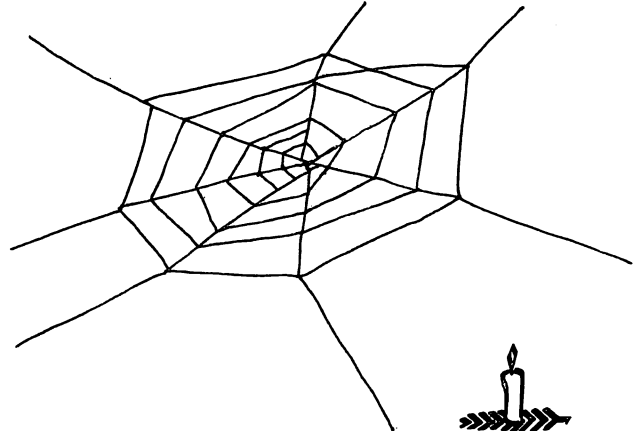
**Group Contacts** - Every Wiccan Coven, Goddess Circle, Magickal Lodge, Shamanic Studies Group, and other Pagan Group that wants to be part of the Pagan Strength Web needs to select a contact person to be responsible for quickly relaying information to the rest of the group about Pagan Rights issues. Write Circle as soon as possible with the following information: contact person's name, address, and phone, plus group's name and orientation. This information will be kept confidential, unless you specify otherwise.

**Lawyer Referrals** - Circle has already been working closely with an attorney from the American Civil Liberties Union to defeat the Helms Amendment and similar legislation.

Circle is also compiling a special list of other lawyers interested in working with the Pagan Strength Web by providing counsel and/or helping defend Pagan religious freedoms in the courts. Interested lawyers should contact Circle as soon as possible with the following information: your name, address, phone, short summary of legal training and experience, and background in Paganism. Also, please specify what services you are willing to donate and what fees would be charged for other services you may provide.

**Reports** - Updates and reports on Pagan Rights issues and actions will be published in CIRCLE NETWORK NEWS, and in cases of emergencies (such as the Helms Amendment), through special alert mailings. Keep Circle informed of media coverage, instances of discrimination/persecution, and efforts to uphold Pagan religious freedom in your local area.

**Donations** - Money is needed to help pay for phone calls, printing and postage of special mailings, and other expenses incurred in Pagan Rights work. Circle has started a special Pagan Rights Fund to cover the several thousand dollars it spent in helping to defeat the Helms Amendment and to have on hand for future actions. All donations, large or small, are appreciated, and as of now, are still tax deductible. Make checks payable to Circle and specify that donations are for the Pagan Rights Fund.



MAGIC IS JUST A STATE OF MIND  
**NO GRAFFITI**  
(i love sin) NO BIOTECH!!

you are what you eat!  
You Are Not What You Shit!!  
SO WHAT??

1  
feel  
sick  
Dad is  
over

Is There Life After Reclaiming? NO WAY!!  
WHO CARES!  
Oh Wow!!

see this sign? respect authority!  
NO MORE OF THIS TRASH FOR THE  
NEXT ISSUE! BULLSHIT  
cow pie

King for Pope!  
Pope for Dope!  
Dope for King!  
is there hope for Dope?

principled struggle keeps me regular  
you poor bastards!!  
NO GRAFFITI BY MACHINES!!  
Dope  
Death  
to you  
NOW,  
NOW.

JESSIE HELMS  
IS A DILDO - a limp  
one!!

Reclaiming  
WHAT??  
WASTE WASTE WASTE  
WANT YES  
Eat the  
goddamn  
YUM YUM  
YUM IT'S  
GODS

Hannah douches  
with Pinesol.

XAVE A  
GOOD NIGHT

NO GRAFFITI BY MACHINES

...and he eats Pagan babies!  
scum brain

She changes  
everything she touches  
Cause she can't leave  
well enough alone  
wants  
in etc!!!!!!

It's all Rick's  
Fault - rose

is there life  
after puberty?  
IS  
THERE  
IN SEX  
IN THE  
WOMB?  
peace & love

Trans  
question autonomy  
Grow up?  
degenerate!  
group  
Believe  
Me!  
pig  
meat

Stalhawk

Real Pagan  
eats Cherios  
dog  
power!

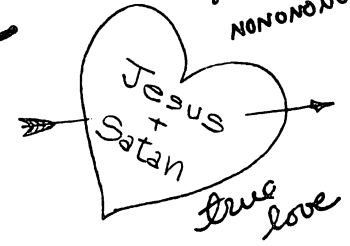
WHAT DO REAL GOATS DRINK??  
DARK  
POWER  
dragonstongue is the  
answer - what is  
the riddle?????

Witches Rule!

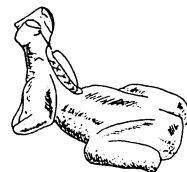
Shut up!  
If I'd wanted to hear  
you I'd have called  
yer goddamn  
message machine!  
GODS  
BALLS  
this is just too sick  
ROSE  
KNOWS  
stop  
reading  
this  
garbage!!!

NO NUKES ☺  
I know  
myself  
Robin does  
Classic Coke

Roy King  
is redundant  
wonderful  
NONONONONO!



Meditation



O Mother  
Oh oh oh  
the light was so noisy and I feel  
afraid of the dark.  
I am too busy to do the meditations I used to do  
to make myself get everything done.  
Breathe deep.  
So afraid of my own self I sit down to meditate,  
get right up to make another phone call.  
I know I must do healing work  
but I obsess morbidly on possible-ARCS diagnosis  
of two loved ones.

I fear I sink I swirl -- I get up and run further.



I space out a third of my commitments,  
think rotten horrid thoughts,  
breathe shallowly,  
clutch -- always clutching  
a telephone, a fork, a cigarette, a calendar.  
Failure, failure, partings with 3 lovers  
in not so many years,  
and friends I no longer see,  
my room is a shambles,  
there is uneasy trust among me and my companions,  
I sleep, I sleep, I cannot sleep,  
I sing no songs to myself.

I fear I sink I swirl  
I twist I wring  
    wring it out  
    wring it out  
    let it go through me  
    let me weep  
    and weep in the dark  
    standing before my mirror  
    let it go through me

I twist I change  
    let it go through me  
Mother  
    let it go through me, change me  
Mother.

Into the dark  
into the dark  
stir and change and  
into the dark.





Bring me to light  
but not just yet  
Mother  
let me be quiet in here, in you,  
growing  
protected  
carried.

And birth will come.  
Light will come after a long night's watching

When I read these words  
I will have stood on the hill  
I will have prayed  
O

"Queen of the Sun, Queen of the Moon  
Queen of the Horns, Queen of the Fire  
Bring to us the Child of Promise"  
Bring us the light.

May it work.  
Can it work?  
Let it go through me.

Mother

Let me grow  
Let me grow in your womb  
I turn  
I turn in your womb  
I turn  
I twist  
I change  
I turn

Into the light  
Into the light  
Stir and change and  
into the light

Bear in me the Fire of Promise.  
Mother.

Blessed Be.



--rose  
early December



Dear Friends,

As much as I enjoyed the latest issue of Reclaiming, I was bothered by a trend in paganism which seems to be surfacing.

First, there was the existence of Stormclouds and its anxiety to achieve some sort of ideological and religious purity, with the attendant tone of self righteousness. Right now, their violence is verbal, but who knows what my come?

Then we hear about Isaac Bonewits' new magazine, and his attempt to give a new and proper "rigor" to paganism. He wants to clean up our scholarship, set up a nice set of qualifications, establish a pleasant little hierarchy of clerics (a hierarchy is a hierarchy, whether you talk about up vs. down or in vs. out) and "qualified" folk who will be just the type we need to tell us what "real" paganism is and lead us in how to practice our religion.

I'm sorry folks, but this is just the sort of trash I left Catholicism to escape. This sort of thinking belongs in a hierarchal monotheism, not the anarchic polytheism of paganism. These folks are puritans! They search for purity, cleanliness, the TRUTH, THE ONE WAY. If and when they find it, we'll find that they will be "justified" in telling all of us what to believe. ("Oh, but it's not me telling you that your religion is garbage! It's the experts, the authorities, the research, the documentation, the TRUTH. How can you argue with that?") These are the kinds of folks who will work hard to keep the "faith" clean, and let the people go hang.

Paganism needs no central authority, no Vatican, no Holy Office, no Book of Approved Rites, no Pope (sorry Isaac) and certainly no PLO/IRA (sorry Stormclouds), no matter how dedicated, well meaning, or well

educated. The world is full of religions anxious to enforce ONE GOD on us all, with a group of authorities anxious to give us the answer to all our questions. I hope the puritans trying to "clean up" paganism will go there and bother those people.

No one is denying the problems associated with the way paganism is organized (or not). But these are the problems of FREEDOM, the same sort of sloppy rough edged way of operating that can be found in any vital, living organism. It may not be the neat, computer-clean system many like, but that is its attraction for most of us.

So what is the answer? The techniques inherent in a pagan (i.e., country, folk, pastoral/hunter-gatherer) religion. Keep it small, keep it simple, know the people with whom you deal, use what works for you and your group. The attempt to do it any other way ("We must spread the faith across the world!") will kill paganism's value. You can't have an inherently small personal religion that's marketed like McDonalds hamburgers.

As to your choice of religion. If you get a practice from some fantasy writer or other and it's beautiful and good and works . . . fine! Concentrate on what is Good and Beautiful, let the anal retentives worry about TRUTH.

Unfortunately, we'll see more and more of this sort of thinking as paganism spreads and tries to build a world/continent-spanning organization. That puts the cart before the horse, in order to spread paganism, we'll find people turning it into something other than paganism. They may be as loud and dangerous as Stormclouds or as quiet and "reasonable" as Isaac Bonewits, but in either form, they have to be resisted.

Thank you.

Blessed Be,

William Bearbelly  
Lella





What the Episcopalian Said When the Witches Took Off Their Clothes At the Ritual

Why  
That woman's figure  
is no better than  
mine

so why  
should I remain  
hidden  
any longer?

-Starhawk



CHAKRA SONG

This is the red of my root  
and I send it down, down  
to molten center,  
and I am firm.

This is the orange flame of my sex:  
It is several tongues laughing,  
it is a glow in repose,  
tracking heat to trade.

This is the yellow of delicate gut:  
Valley of the hard-working,  
gears of a miracle,  
transformation screened in belly.

Green is this forest that loves back,  
debating in leaf-talk: I or We?  
The emerald heart lifting up  
a new tree after the ax has swung.

These are blue echoes: voice.  
How clear will they ring  
ricocheted off the chipped  
flint of the self?

Indigo of the odd eye  
hidden but deep between  
the two. It travels,  
wearing you through space.

Crown, fountain of violet,  
joys that race by a word.  
This is no seizure out of body:  
the spray bends down to replenish earth.

-Westwind

"Yet I prefer the word Witch to prettier words, because the concept of a witch goes against the grain of the culture of estrangement."

- from Dreaming the Dark  
by Starhawk

Winter Solstice is the longest night. People huddle together for warmth, for closeness, for comfort. We rediscover our love for one another, and feel the irresistible urge to celebrate this. We kindle the light of the coming year, and tell our stories that give meaning to the season. The stories often describe a particular star in the sky that foretells the coming of the child or year. What other star could this be but our own Sola, sun of our system? For it is she who marks our year as we on earth cycle around her. After this long dark night we will begin our journey back to her and the days will lengthen and grow warm.

The Child in the stories is often miraculous, or possessed of special powers. This Child promises renewal, another round, a second chance, a future. This gives us hope for better things. The Child is promise, innocence, faith, inherent goodness and gentleness. The New Year is a new Self, childlike, spontaneous, playful and ever growing. As we welcome and call in the New Year Child we call and welcome all of these things in ourselves.

As we tell of the Mother of this Child we affirm and honor Mother Nature, our own mothers who birthed us, our own birthings, and the nurturance we give to those in our lives. Her message is unconditional love, the love we all need. She is the compassionate one who forgives our mistakes and loves us no matter what we do. The image of a miraculous birthing by a loving goddess to a magical child is older than time as we know it, and ours to reclaim.

These are universal human themes, symbolized in many mythologies, and found in the familiar Christmas traditions of today. Other outstanding symbols are the kindling of many lights in the darkness, the decorating of a life symbol, such as a tree, and the giving of gifts.

When I was a child Christmas was a time of magic and miracles. My mother (a latent pagan) would spend the entire night creating packages so magnificent one almost regretted opening them. And there were so many! We were bone poor, and I had no idea where all this joy and abundance could come from. Later I had children myself, and discovered the delicious and heartwarming rituals anew: the surprises under the tree, the squeals of joy, the closeness of loved ones.

Then I became a witch. A feminist witch at that! How was I to reconcile these with my love for Christmastime? Witchcraft taught me that Christmas is part of a belief system that denies the power and divinity of the female, and whose tenets led to the burning of nine million witches. Feminism pointed out the crass commercialism associated with modern celebrations, bringing in questions of class and power-over. Why did I not become disenchanting as so many around me seemed to be? I could not ignore the voice of my heart, the gut-level sense of something deep and compelling about this season.

And so I pursued my studies. I learned of the widespread mythologies of the Divine Child, who also was the personification of the year's birth, death, and rebirth. At one time the Year deity was a goddess, later a god. In many cases the Great Mother was sole parent. Violent sacrifice, first to Her, and later to male deities, is relatively recent. The earliest rituals were gentle and sensuous.

I learned that trees were worshipped and seen as goddesses, such as Asherah of the Semitic tribes. Yggdrasill was the great life tree of Norse tradition, and the Druids have a complex tree mythology. The tree of Eden with its twining sensual serpent and its apples of wisdom goes way back into mother-worshipping cultures.

In Mexico elaborate fireworks are lit at Christmastime. The Jews celebrate Hannukah, the Festival of Lights. The ancient Picts and Druids lit great bonfires on the hilltops at Winter Solstice to welcome the returning Sun. I also learned that there are many sun goddesses, such as Amaterazu, Lucine, and Innanna. (Even Santa Claus has female origins as the all-giving pregnant Mother Goddess.) The ever-recurring theme of light birthing out of darkness, or life out of death, is apparent through all the layers of variation.

I sought a way to keep what was good and loving in traditional myth and to transform what I felt was violent, dualistic, or sexist. I longed for a myth that would affirm woman and the powers of the female, and would also include the loving traditions I grew up with. We can see what the violent metaphors of crucifixion and bloody death have led to in today's world. It is coming clear that the stories we tell ourselves become the realities we live. To change the stories is to change the world.

In Goddess-loving societies all people and creatures were seen as Her children, all equally loved by Her. Women were honored, mothers were loved, old and young people treasured. Birth, Life, and Death were equated with the three aspects of the feminine principle: the Maiden, the Mother and the Crone. The cycle of the year's Light and Darkness were personified as

passionate lovers (of a variety of genders), longing for each other during times of separation, coming together in ecstatic union. Death was another birth, gentle and natural.

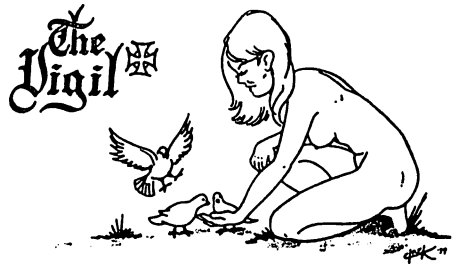
In gathering these mystical symbols, I experienced a vision. In my mind's eye I saw the moon give birth to a star. This led to the composition of a myth in which a Golden Star Child is born to the Moon Mother. The Child is the Sun Goddess in Her Maiden aspect, a female archetype of the universal divine child. At Her Mother's instructions, she descends to earth to teach the people of love and the nature of things. Her message is of peace and goodwill amongst all earth's creatures. Honoring the symbols in this myth is honoring what they represent in ourselves: the creating Mother, the awakening Maiden, the connections between us all. I like to think that these forces can also stir in men, and what we have known as "female" is essential life's blood to everyone.

With the telling of this tale I hope to be part of a new wave of re-tellings. For if our beliefs are made reality through the tales we tell, then new ones must be made. We can initiate a universal shamanic healing by introducing strong, loving female images. We can see Time as a Goddess, endlessly cycling through her births and deaths, endless birthing and re-birthing us, eternally loving us as Her children. I encourage you to think about what sort of reality this would create, and to try writing myths of your own, or make some up with your loved ones. The divine child could be twins, or an animal or spirit . . . truly this is a time of wonder, when we are given a chance to recreate our culture and influence our future.

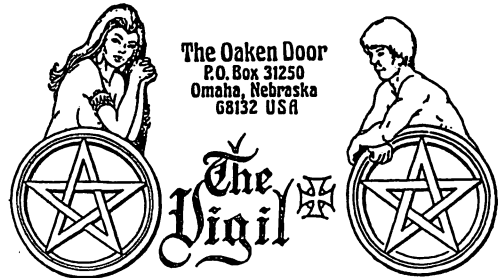
SHOW US YOU REALLY LOVE US

>>>>>>>>>>SUBSCRIBE<<<<<<<<<

**INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORY OF GAY AND LESBIAN PERIODICALS** - H. Robert Malinowsky has signed a contract with Oryx Press of Phoenix, AZ, to compile and publish an International Directory of Gay and Lesbian Periodicals. Each entry will include the full name of the publication, frequency, date of first issue, publisher, organizational affiliation, address, telephone, editors, circulation, subscription and membership information, advertising type and rates, author information, and a general description of the publication. Individuals who publish a periodical, have not heard from Mr. Malinowsky, and would like their periodical included, or who are interested in purchasing the Directory should contact Mr. Malinowsky at 211 E. Ohio, #2303, Chicago, IL 60611.



THE VIGIL IS WEAVING THE GENTLE MAGICK INTO ITS PAGES WITH FEATURES AND ARTICLES FOR EVERYONE. SERVICE FEATURES AND "SUBSCRIBERS ONLY" FEATURES MAKE IT A MUST FOR ADAPT OLD TIMERS, AND NEOPHYTE ALIKE. MAILED IN A PLAIN BROWN ENVELOPE, SAMPLE ISSUES ARE ONLY \$2, AND SUBSCRIPTION IS \$8.50 FOR BULK, \$10 FOR FIRST CLASS, FOR 6 ISSUES. PUBLISHED BY THE ENGLISH TRADITIONALIST, COVEN OF THE SACRED OAKS, AND AVAILABLE FROM:



The Oaken Door  
P.O. Box 31250  
Omaha, Nebraska  
68132 USA

A GRAPHIC JOURNAL OF WICCAEN AND EARTH RELIGIONS

**WOMEN'S TOURS 1986**

Feb. 9-16 Hawaii. Big Island. Volcanos, legends, rituals, fun. Children's program. West Coast air, condo, car, all trips \$895.

Apr 27-May 10 West of England. Oxford, Avebury, Avalon. Earth mysteries, literary women, holy grail, May Day festival.

June 15-28 France, Rhineland. Historical tour of with Joan of Arc and Hildegard of Bingen. Wine, women song. Chartres, Paris.

Sept. 7-20 Northern England. Harvest Moon. York, Northumbria. Women's mysteries, witches, wells, circles, caves, saints.

Free Brochure: 1903 SE Ankeny, Portland, OR 97214.



**CURIOS & CANDLES**

A COMPLETE VARIETY OF SPIRITUAL  
AND OCCULT MATERIAL  
TAROT READINGS, CONSULTATIONS  
AND CLASSES

289 DIVISADERO ST.  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94117  
(415) 863-5669

12-6 PM - MO.-TH  
12-7 PM - FRI.  
12-5 PM - SAT.

## MAGIC CLASSES FOR MEN Feather Singing

**Beginning Shamanism & Ritual for Changing Men:** I'm teaching in a more shamanic/Socratic style now, meaning I've replaced pre-set course outlines with a more direct response to where you are starting, wanting to go & how you're progressing. Recent classes have become ongoing men's circles.

**Pathways of the Pentacle:** Focused more on the lines of energy connecting the points of the pentacle, traveling from pride to sex, passion, power, self...through central cauldron of transformation. Group trance & energy work. Intermediate - previous experience necessary.

Both start after Brigid. Call after Jan. 15 for details on content. 548-3342

**SCHOOL OF GEOMANCY:** the science of living in harmony with natural patterns.

Introductory Slide Shows & In-depth Workshops:

- \* Principles & History
- \* Mysteries of the Megaliths - patterns of earth energies; ritual & healing uses.
- \* Dowsing Instruction (water witching)
- \* Sacred Geometry & Harmonious Architecture

Feather Singing 548-3342

## HEALING FROM THE HEART: THE MAGIC OF CO-COUNSELING

Charl Hummingbird

Learn practical and fun techniques for personal and political transformation. Develop egalitarian power-with therapeutic relationships to help yourself and your friends heal the hurts of internalized oppression and get out of stuck behavior patterns. Even learn how to make your meetings run smoother!

1-day workshop, Feb 15, 10-5, \$15-\$25, bring lunch. Call 549-2865 for details.

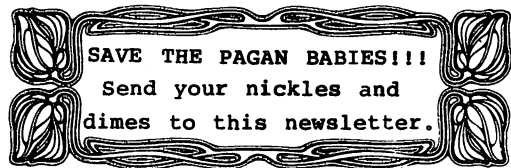
## NEW CIRCLE GUIDE TO PAGAN RESOURCES

**Attention:** Covens, Circles, Networks, Councils, and other Groups focused on Wiccan paths, Neo-Paganism, Goddess-oriented Feminist Spirituality, Shamanism, and other Nature Religions. If you want to be included in the Group Directory of the next edition of Circle Network's Pagan Resource Guide, please contact Circle right away. The new Guide is to be published early in 1986. Send the following: name of group, group mailing address, brief description of path/tradition and focus. Write: Resource Guide, Circle, Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572 USA.

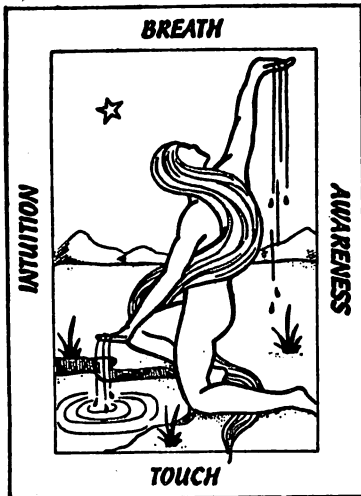


### Tools of magick

UMA'S OCCULT SHOP 668-3132  
1915 PAGE ST. SF, CA. 94117  
Classes in Magical Techniques.  
Tarot Readings Tarot Cards, Books,  
Incense, Jewelry, Amulets,  
Talismans, Herbs, Oils and more!  
Occult Arts and Crafts  
accepted on consignment.



# LOMI BODYWORK



SUZETTE  ROCHAT

415-863-8294



Our Lady of the Woods

MAGICKAL CATALOG of  
publications, badges,  
emblems and more, on

Wiccan/Pagan themes.

Send \$1 to OLW, Dept. R,  
Box 176, Blue Mounds WI 53517.

Records and tapes by

CHARLIE MURPHY and JAMIE SIEBER.

Fierce Love EP \$5.00

Canticles of Light \$8.00

Call Geoff Yippie! -- 386-5386

**DRAGON'S BYTE WORD PROCESSING, EDITING,  
WRITING.** Manuscripts, resumes, form  
letters, mailing lists and labels. M.A. in  
English. Located in the Haight. Call Rick,  
731-2159.

## \*\*\* NOTICES AND ADS \*\*\*

In order to help keep our newsletter afloat financially, we accept ads and notices for goods, services, events, etc. We print 1000 newsletters, mostly distributed in the Bay Area, with a subscription list of about 250.

### Payments


Text only: \$ .50 per 45-character column-line (include blank lines)

or

Display ads: \$7.00 per one-eighth page.

(Layout size for 1/8 page is 3 3/4" horizontal by 2.5" vertical. For 1/4 page double dimensions, etc. Please provide camera-ready copy in these sizes.)

Send payment with copy, to Reclaiming, Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.



JAMBALAYA, The Natural Woman's Book of Personal Charms and  
Practical Rituals by Luisah Teish, published by  
Harper & Row

Reclaiming congratulates Luisah Teish on the publication of her first book. Many of us have been waiting eagerly for its appearance, and it's great to see it finally on the bookstore shelves.

Jambalaya is an introduction to the Afro-Caribbean traditions of Lucumi, Voodoo and Santaria, all based on the Yoruba religion, of which Teish is a priestess. She writes from a feminist perspective in a warm and humorous voice. For those of us coming from a mostly-white pa-

ganism, this book is an invaluable resource, a broadening of our cultural horizons that can help us better understand and enliven our own spirituality. The book is, as it says, full of practical rituals as well as African theology, stories, poems, and anecdotes. It's a real gift to all of us!

We hope to review the book more fully in a later newsletter, but don't wait until then to get it.

-Starhawk

---



--Fellow Survivors of Witch Camp--

If anyone accidentally packed two of my tapes while departing from the lovely realms of Jughandle, please return them to: Cerridwen Fallingstar, 34 Black Log Road, Kentfield, CA 94904. One tape is Andreas Vol-lenveider, Caverna Magica on one side, Behind the Gardens on the other. I have the tape covers but not the tapes. While there is no truth to the rumor that the accidental possessor of these tapes will turn into a warthog after 90 days, I would like them back. Thanks!

---

**1986 INTERNATIONAL PAGAN SPIRIT GATHERING**

The 1986 International Pagan Spirit Gathering will be held June 17-22 at a private natural site in Southwestern Wisconsin. This week-long celebration of the Summer Solstice and Full Moon includes rituals, nature meditations, workshops, feasting, sweatlodge, music, and more. For more information, contact CIRCLE, Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572, USA.

**CIRCLES OF EXCHANGE** - a "round robin" of women sharing women's spirituality - has a new address! Please join us on Circles just forming. Free to all. Send your questions and a SASE to: Nan Hawthorne-Tedford, Box 1703, Juneau, AK 99802.

**R**eclaiming is a collective of San Francisco Bay Area women and men working to unify spirit and politics. Our vision is rooted in the religion and magic of the Goddess—the Immanent Life Force. We see our work as teaching and making magic—the art of empowering ourselves and each other.

In our classes, workshops, public rituals, and individual counseling, we train our voices, bodies, energy, intuition, and minds. We use the skills we learn to deepen our strength, both as individuals and as community, to voice our concerns about the world in which we live and to bring to birth a vision of a new culture.



### SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE

As you may have noticed from our hints spread through this issue, the Reclaiming Newsletter is mounting a subscription drive, and is also asking for outright donations. We are doing this as an alternative to selling the Newsletter in the stores where it is now available for free, because we want people who cannot afford a subscription to have access to our publication. If you are in the habit of picking up your copy at your local bookstore, please subscribe instead if you possibly can. We would like this paper to begin paying for itself, so we are not so dependent on the teaching and other fund-raising activities of the collective.



---

### RECLAIMING NEWSLETTER Subscription Form

To receive issues of the Newsletter at home, send payment to Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco CA 94114.     \$4-\$15 one year;     \$8-\$30 two years;     minimal income, cannot donate.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

This is a  renewal.

COMMENTS:

new subscription.