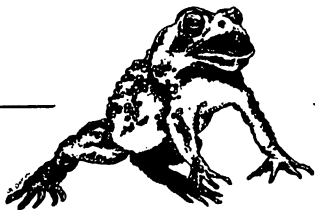


RECLAIMING NEWSLETTER



SPRING 1993
No. 50 \$2



Reclaiming
A Center for Feminist Spirituality
P.O. Box 14404
San Francisco, CA 94114

When requesting information from Reclaiming, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Newsletter Submissions: The Newsletter encourages people to submit articles, letters, or graphics related to political, pagan or spiritual issues and happenings. Submissions on 3-1/2" diskettes, created in Wordperfect or Microsoft Word, make the job of the Newsletter staff much easier. Please always include a hard copy of your submission, just in case something funny happens during layout. We will return your diskettes - just be sure we know where to send them. **Graphics are ALWAYS welcome!**

We may edit for length, spelling, punctuation and grammar; we do not alter poetry.

While we are pleased to print letters or articles on ethics, we will not print personal charges or countercharges.

All submissions, whether we print them or not, eventually find their way into our cauldron, so keep copies for yourself. Please do not ask us to return them.

Submissions are due on or before the deadline. The Newsletter staff has sworn off its lamentable co-behavior and will not chase down late submissions. We really mean it this time.

The views expressed in articles and advertisements in this Newsletter belong to the authors and advertisers ... not to the Reclaiming Community or the Newsletter Staff. Some of us don't even like some of the stuff we print.

Spring Deadline is Saturday, May 1, 1993

N E W Reclaiming Events Line - (510) 236-4645

This recording (listed under "Reclaiming" in Berkeley) carries announcements (and updates) of events organized by Reclaiming and others. Often, these come up too late to be put in the Newsletter. Call us with events and announcements to add to the message. They can also be mailed to the Events Line at the P.O. box, but this is slower. Please allow plenty of time, and remember to say where we can reach you with questions.

- The Recording Faerie

Information for **DEAF/HEARING IMPAIRED ONLY:** (510) 237-6207
(V/TDD)

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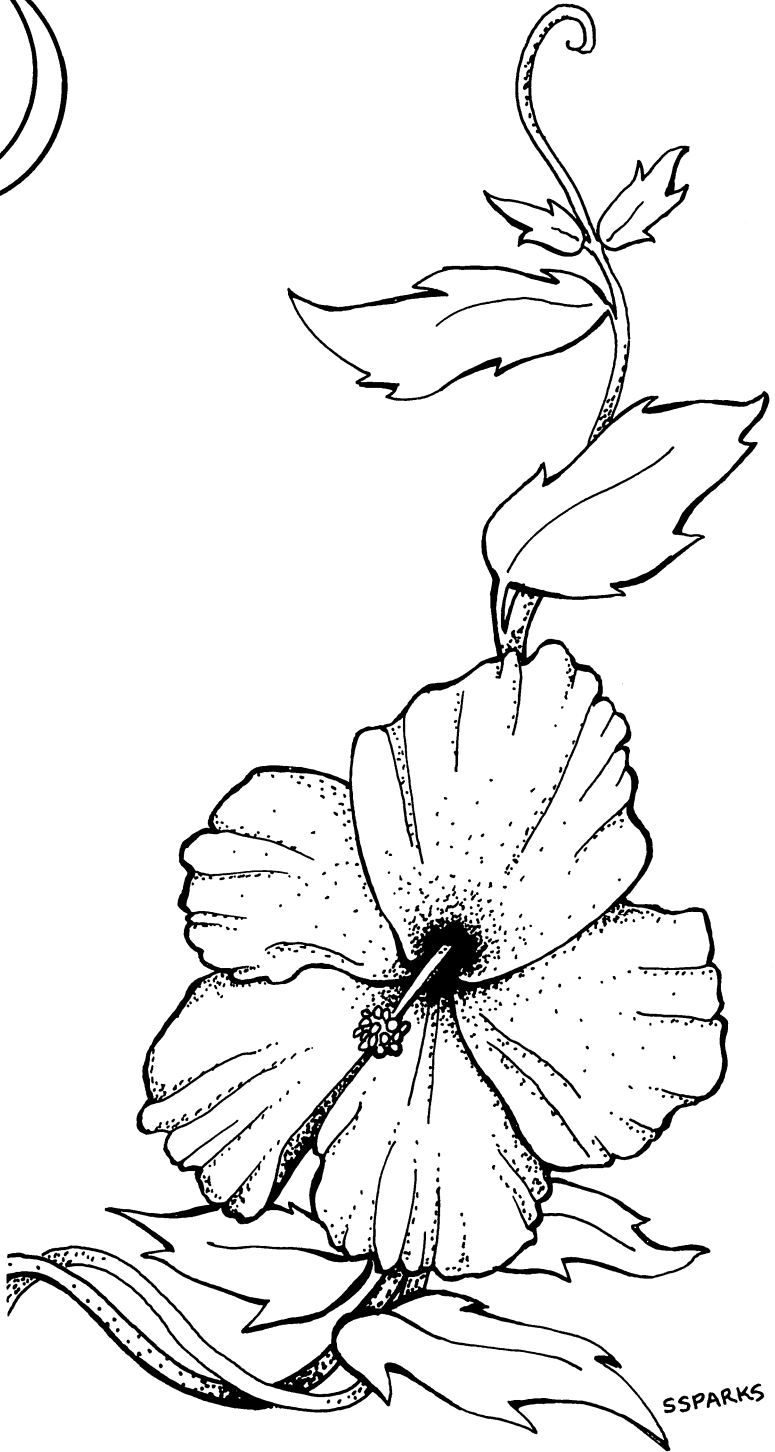
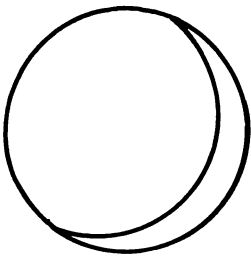
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Cover design by Bob Thawley, who says: *"The 'ground' is a cosmic snake and egg design, the source of life and life energy, while the 'moon' is a design in which two deer, doubles for the goddess of regeneration, whirl in opposite directions and merge into lunar crescents/antlers. Both are from the late Cucuteni civilization of the western Ukraine, c. mid-4th millenium B.C. Thanks to Marija Gimbutas."*

This newsletter was put together by Karen, Rose, Rebecca, Patti, Robin, Laura, Julie and Jody in spite of respiratory ailments and major life transitions. Whew!

Printed on Recycled Paper



The Magic and Healing of Flowers

by Kevin Roddy

Here in Hawai'i, flora abounds. "Put a broomstick in the ground and it will grow" is not too far from the truth. Lately, as our world glides into summer, wild flowers have been springing up all over. Though the growing season is pretty much year-round, there is a definite Summer—Winter difference (about 7 degrees) and we see even more flowers in Summer. In day-to-day island life, flowers play an important role—they are gifts of love freely given to one another, and thus used ritually by almost everyone; they are also a vibrant economy on our mostly agricultural island. My purpose here is to awaken in you the many uses of flowers, right now, when flowers are poppin' up all over. Here are some ideas I've discovered on the use of flowers in magic and healing.

As many of you know, Hawaiian *lei* are exquisite examples of our island *aloha*, and their use is pervasive in all aspects of island life. It is not unusual to see someone wearing a *lei* at work, at construction sites, at parties or in a classroom. My colleagues at work gave *lei* to two visiting librarians from O'ahu, and throughout the day in our conference, each subconsciously drew the plumeria blossoms to their nose and breathed deeply, exalting in the fragrance. *Lei* can be given for infinite reasons—"May Day is Lei Day" in Hawai'i, and on this day the *lei* itself is celebrated, as we

begin to see the richness of earth's bounty spring up around us. All it takes to fashion a *lei* is a needle and string and a wee bit of imagination. Instead of Morris dancers and maypoles on May Day, it is *lei*, the garland of flowers, that we cherish—the rich bounty of the Goddess.

Local forests in your vicinity contain some types of vines. Woody vines make excellent *lei*. Hawaiian *maile lei* are vines of a leafy, aromatic type, and there are several ways of wearing them—open in a large U shape, letting the ends flutter freely and the *aloha* surge through them, or tying them off so that the *aloha* is contained. Using this *lei*-lore, one can experiment and create one's own powerful uses. I discovered the magical uses of woven flowers recently when I made several *lei* for friends who were getting handfasted. Fortunately, I fell in with a *lei*-making crowd when I arrived in the islands, and they showed me the right way to fashion them. But I brought in a little Wiccan creativity to the weaving process—I began to weave spells between the flowers and the raffia twine—concentrating my dreams and hopes for the bride and her consort in their individual *lei*. I wove both *lei* together and allowed them to rest on my *kuahi* (altar) before I sent them with a friend to the mainland. I tightly wove my spell in the *la'i* (*ti* leaves) so that it would remain strong. Recently, two student workers graduated at the Uni-

versity, and in their *lei* I wove spells of success and bright futures.

One afternoon I went picking in the forests with a Hawaiian friend, and was surprised at the variety of items she took, with thanks to Tutu Pele before she clipped them. Flowers, leaf buds, weed tops, and tufts of *paina* (Hawaiian pine needles) were but a few. We had to be careful, and watchful for forest rangers, as we supplemented some of our pickings from Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, off limits to native gatherers. But my friend is three-quarters Hawaiian, and to me, deserving of any area on the island in which she wishes to pick—she gathered while I stood guard. Almost as if we were being aided and abetted, every time we got into the car, a ranger would drive by, and we'd smile and wave, then burst out laughing as the jeep rolled by!

All kinds of flowers and foliage have a deserving place on one's altar and throughout one's home. They feed the spirit and the physical body with their vibrations and beauty. Many kinds of spells can be cast using flowers and foliage. I use *la'i* leaves to protect and ward off evil and intruders; I place them above my front door and underneath the windows. People over here know their significance, and stay away. Only the most intrepid (and foolish) will ignore them. You may not have access to *la'i* (urban areas usually have a flower mart where *la'i* or *ti*, can be purchased). But in every area of the world, there are plants right outside your door that are used to provide the same protection. Don't be a slave to tradition—let plants talk to you. Experiment to see what works best for you, what speaks to you.

One example is using a flower as a poppet. Envision the person you are trying to help, and cast your spell into the flower. Every day as you pass your altar, you are reminded of the spell, hence strengthening it as it goes about its work. As it fades, visualize the spell coming to fruition. (Remember, you have to work under a time constraint, depending of the life of the flower.) As flowers and foliage wither, and return to the Dark Mother, I do not discard them thoughtlessly. I return them to the forest, and give thanks. In this way, I link them back into their cycle of life and death, as their bodies provide nourishment for the yet unborn sprouts.

Gathering one's own tea is new for me, but I have discovered it's fun, and the tea retains more *mana* (power) if I do the growing, collecting, and harvesting myself. There are many plants used for tea in Hawai'i, and their uses are as simple and as complicated as the conventional "tea wisdom" I learned on the mainland. My knowledge grows daily.

Don't ignore weeds—as a child growing up in the midwest, I got a distorted version of weeds—yet some of them had the most beautiful flowers. Hawaiians use weeds in healing and in decoration. Living in harmony with nature, the Hawaiians did not waste, and found use and beauty in all. They believe all plants and animals are *kino lau*, "physical embodiment of the gods." They also believe they are equal, not superior, to plants. Nature would not have included weeds if they served no purpose. She does not waste. Some of the most powerful magic and healing are contained within weeds. The possible uses of plants outside your door are limited only

by your imagination.

I mentioned the health aspects of plants above—don't overlook the obvious! Health-wise, cut flowers, foliage, tea or a *lei* fashioned of local flowers can invigorate and spiritually feed an ill person. Remember to feed the less fortunate—in these dark days of AIDS, many people need the gift of life and beauty. Flowers are an elegant, yet simple, gift to brighten one's surroundings.

Help the Mother by planting new seeds. I take sprouting coconuts to the new black sand beach near my home. Every time I plant a new coconut, I gaze towards the mountains and see Pu'u 'O'o cone, source of this massive flow, smoking furiously. I see the cycle of life and death flash before me. And I realize: to get, one must give. Give to Her unselfishly, and you will reap. The magic of

watching young sprouts grow is truly remarkable, and has never gotten old. I am imbued with a sense of awe.

Last, but not least, is the power of flowers in music and poetry. Ancient and contemporary Hawaiians mention plants frequently and praise them in chants and *mele* (songs). I've discovered that listening to these songs deepens my awareness and appreciation. Pay attention to poetry and songs that sing the praises of the rose, the nightshade, etc. They're out there, in pagan music and poetry, as well as in mainstream poetry and music. You just have to listen for them!

Enjoy the Spring!

Aloha friends,
a hui ho (until we meet again)
Kevin



I Must Go to Hephaestus

I try to find comfort for myself
not only with words in private
but, by howling from the ashes;
a raven from dust.

Not words in private,
just to go slowly as I tell my tale
of a raven from dust;
knowing how one can surely wish to die.

I go slowly as I tell my tale
of how she chained my heart away -
I know how one can surely wish to die.
She had all my love, and betrayed it.

She chained my heart away
hung to hang dry in my belly;
she had all my love and betrayed it -
the wailings now burst in flame.

Heart hung to dry,
I carry my head, a quiver
full of wailings burst to flame.
You, have stuck a flower between my ribs.

Carry my head as a quiver,
shoot down every advance,
but you, have struck the flower between my ribs.

Each advance shot down
lay in a circle around iron -
I will seize this chance, as prey,
to destroy this cycle inbred, bound.

In a circle iron round
many voices not my own
echo the cycle inbred bound -
I must go to Hephaestus.

My voice my own
reaches from mud thick molten rust
for Hephaestus, his craft;
change shifting shame to sterling.

I reach through thick molten rust
my tongue, flames for his fire -
shift shame to sterling, silence broken;
a raven from dust risen.

My tongue from flame to flower
freed from chain and iron
the raven now rising, risen
heart with no wish to die.

Freed from chain and iron,
I come from Hephaestus,
with heart, and no wish to die.

Mark Hannan

A Condom Blessing

from *Moonweb* No. 5

This simple blessing calls forth the powers of the elements to strengthen the bond of protection afforded by a condom without diminishing the pleasure of having sex.

On a plate or in a bowl on the Altar is a collection of condoms to be blessed. Sprinkle them with pure water into which salt has been stirred, calling forth the power of earth and water that formed the Primal Sea and from whence all life has sprung. Pass the bowl through the smoke of incense or other fragrance for air, and over the candle or other flame for fire.

Take the bowl to the four Quarters, beginning in the East, and say:

EAST: “Guardians of the East, Powers of Air and pollen and the wind-borne seed, bless these with your power that they may sheathe the wand of life as the pine-cone sheathes the seeds that will become the new tree. Let only love and pleasure pass between those who use them.”

SOUTH: “Guardians of the South, Powers of Fire and the flame of passion, bless these with your power that they may increase pleasure and love for those who use them, and let only that pleasure and love pass between.”

WEST: “Guardians of the West, Powers of Water and all things fluid, of the waters of our body, bless these with your power that the sea within us should know its bounds, even as the seas of the world are contained by the land. Let only pleasure and love pass between those who use them.”

NORTH: “Guardians of the North, Powers of Earth and all barriers, bless these with your power that they may be a boundary and protection for those who use them, letting only pleasure and love pass between.”

Returning to the Altar, hold one condom aloft and say (these or similar words):

“Circle of pleasure
Protect and guard,
From contagion
Keep and ward,
That every act of love and lust
May be enjoyed in total trust.”

Please note: Dental dams and other latex barriers also can be charged in this way. However, all the charms and spells in the world won't help if you use natural skin condoms, or petroleum-based lubricants with your latex condom (petroleum rapidly erodes latex, literally eating the condom away until it breaks — a matter of minutes), or if you forget to put the thing on!

Talking Self

by Hilary Valentine

When we learn about the concept of Self in the Reclaiming tradition, we often talk about the three Selves: Talking Self, Younger Self, and Deep or High Self. In the notes to the second edition of the *Spiral Dance* (see pp. 35-36 of *The Spiral Dance*), Starhawk talks about how she altered the term High Self which she had been taught, because she came to believe that the terms high and low, light and dark, contained inherently misogynist and racist assumptions which had no place in an earth-based religion. I want to suggest that we also take another look at the term "Talking Self".

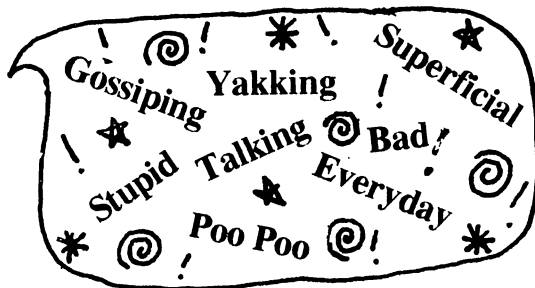
"Talking" is a word that covers an immense number of different human experiences. Talking can flow from many different states of consciousness, not only from the goal-oriented, analytical mode of consciousness which is commonly agreed to be sane and real in our culture. Words can come from the ecstasy and deep intimacy of lovers, words can come in the miracle of poetry from a deep fire, and words can drop like pebbles into the depth of a coven in group trance. Words can shine and

clash like blades in a courtroom, at a demonstration, or between angry friends or lovers in a passionate clearing of the air.

I am writing this article in the time of Brigid, and I am reminded that she is poet, as well as smith and healer. I also remember that to spell meant at one time to "speak loudly", and this is one of the linguistic roots of the "spells" we cast. I am also reminded of the magical principle that to know something's name is to have power over it.

We are taught to learn from the powers of plants and animals, the far-sightedness of the eagle, the secrecy of the motionless fawn, the flexibility of the fish which moves with the waters and not against them. We are animals, too. Surely along with tool-making and healing, words are one of our animal powers. Brigid knows that we must be ourselves, in full pride of the powers that make us human. These powers become a source of guilt only if we use them to place ourselves above or outside of nature.

If there are many kinds of talking, which come from many different parts



of the self, then I need a better phrase than "Talking Self" to describe the part of myself which goes to work, shops at Cala, and obeys most traffic signals. I thought of "Yakking Self" or "Gossiping Self", which does get a little bit more specific, but then I was ashamed of myself for even thinking such a thing. Yakking and gossiping are holy, sacred activities of the crone, the tool by which she pulls Spiderwoman's web of community and culture through into three dimensions. Attaching powerful words like that to the most superficial part of the self would be terribly misogynist. The old self-hater almost slipped one by me again.

Well, how about "Everyday Self"? After all, working, doing housework, driving in traffic, these are the activities which take up most of my waking hours everyday. But that doesn't stand up under close examination either. My own experience is that I do most of those activities in a light trance state, which seems to be brought on quite naturally by repetitive, physical work. This is an ancient self which connects me to my ancestors who wove, carried water, ground grain and plucked fowls. The light working trance I go into when I drive up 18th street at 5:00 p.m. connects me to my deepest roots.

Alright, let's approach this slippery "Talking Self" backwards. We know what it's not. It's not Younger Self, and its not Deep Self.

So why not just call it Older, Superficial Self? For that matter, why not call it Bad Self, or Stupid Self? Now, we're on the scent.

As I have been trained, and trained myself as a witch, I have experienced

over and over the tremendous sense of liberation as degraded and unused parts of my mind and self have been rescued, one by one from a twentieth century prison. Instead of being randomly firing neurons, my dreaming self is honored as having access to deep, intuitive truths. Instead of being selfishness, my will is sacred. Instead of symptoms of insanity the things I see and hear are visions and angel voices. My impulsive, playful side is younger self. The "irrational" things I am compelled to say, or which I seem to have always known, but no one else knows, are "channeled". As these parts of myself or modes of my consciousness emerge, something darker comes with them. It's the resentment, no, the rage of the imprisoned and the disempowered. We do not like that good girl who got straight "A"s. We do not like the Western, "scientific" worldview which imprisoned us. We do not like people who say that the sun only seems to travel South in the Winter. We can see for ourselves that it really does.

We want a name to call the few powers of the self who got fed and approved of while we were in jail. We want it to be a bad name. We want it to be worse than Talking Self. We want to call that twentieth century self Poo-Poo Self. But no one will print that.

With great difficulty I reintegrate myself to finish writing this article. When I tried to find an actual content for the "talking" self, I kept coming up empty. I, personally, do not believe there is any content of the self which deserves a limiting or demeaning name like "Talking Self". My intelligence, my lan-

guage, my scientific mind, my goal-oriented self are all valued and necessary parts of me. But in a culture which elevates some powers of my mind and degrades others, there is a natural tension amongst them. There is a natural reaction which in turn wants to degrade the powers which are highly valued by the culture. There is a sort of bizarre

sibling rivalry going on inside me. "Who do you like better, Mommy? No, really, tell us, we all want to know." My answer, like good mothers way back to Eve and the Garden ... there is enough for all; like nursing mother animals everywhere ... the more you take, the more there is. It's a mystery. No bad selves. What do you think?

Blind Vision

A metallic voice splits the night
Cracking luminous dreams to numb shards on the asphalt
So insatiably silent of the footfalls of heroes
Awaiting only the machines to awaken
To fill up at dawn with thin cardboard echoes
Who inadvertently serve to people this world

Reality's legions of granite ideals grind down our nerve
These battle-hewn giants are grit
In the eye of my mind, blinding my passage
All this vain talk of Gods would be laughable were
It not so sanctimoniously cruel

I cast spells like spears at a sky of dim mirror
To implode all these swollen, shadowless idols
Gilded iron masks of command and damnation
Flashing to dull our acute scars of being
Of ubiquitous history too dense to relinquish
Substructures of torment too twisted to stand

Spawned in the bowels of identity's dungeon
By a red snake who consumes her own essence
In a dream of awaking I unlock the maze of
Untouchable stars that pierce me like eyes

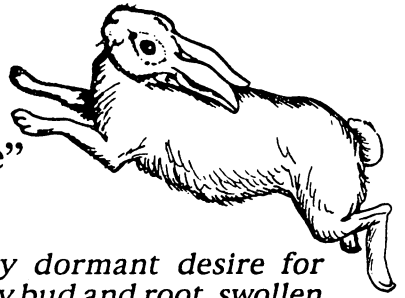
A gnarled root, I grip the rock skin of formation
As sharp blades of the sun entice me to rise
To burn with the ghost life of mineral moonlight
A green shoot of soul in the maelstrom of time

Roy King

Passages

“Mad as a March Hare”

by Robin Weaver



Winter came to us like a wet kiss. Every dormant desire for moisture was touched and stroked, every greedy bud and root, swollen by storm after passionate storm. And now spring is in full swing. The hyacinths are pushing up, as purple as my prose.

• • •

Of course Yule began with its usual splash as 100+ gathered on Ocean Beach for the traditional dip. It was the first rush of the Lemmings, as other swimmers from both coasts honored the season. Polar Bear Clubs of various sorts followed suit on Solstice, the 25th, & the Calends of January. Well not literally “followed suit” since the pictures in the paper showed most dippers in the swimming variety, not the birthday. I understand that next year the time and location of the plunge will be handled discretely, by word of mouth, so that our attire may continue to be at our discretion.

How many kept the Solstice vigil by staying up all night? How many honored the sun’s birth in the “breach”? How many went out to watch the newborn sun’s first rays & stood pleading under cloudy skies? About 75 brave souls clambered about Red Rocks on Yule morn, under the edge of the coasts foggy blanket while the sun kept the holiday by sleeping in.

The community would like to offer congratulations to its initiates, who have shown with their lives the labor in darkness and the blossoming of light. Their struggles/trials/challenges elicited virtues unsuspected both in themselves and their sponsors and deserve full praise. I’ve heard the phrase “really hot” bandied about a bit. Our warmest wishes to Falcon, Patti, and Brook, and to Cybele on her second initiation.

Brigid’s well was dressed in beautiful spring attire. We gathered around it, a fount of the world’s waters. Star reminded us of how often we’ve gathered around it full of tears & despair, and used it to temper our resolve to work for social justice. Carol led us to recall how much our own lives fulfillment we find in meeting the twin calls of self and community. We walked into the fog of the past until we could feel something turn again, and then we began to move towards the

brightness of Her Forge. Brevity being the soul of wit, our pledges, for the most part, came quickly to the point. There is some secret there, where we strengthen our will as we open our hearts.

For those who enjoy good poetry, you didn't miss a thing at Rose's Bad Poetry Bash, but for those who appreciate self-parody, it was the place to be. The poesy was florid in a hot house kind of way: the bloomin' stuff was rank. From angst to Eliot to lame limericks, from a beastly birthday rap to a couple of odes on genitalia, it well deserved the audiences hoots and howls. Ve haf hardly heard worse verse.

As the children looked at their elders in disbelief, or otherwise politely ignored us, I was looking at them. I counted nine or ten little ones including two new arrivals: Best wishes to Jo on joining Anne, Ross, Bowen, and Lira, and to Robert on joining Mary. If you kids can grow up in this kind of chaos you'll be well suited to take on the U.S. government, or any other disorganization you care to name.

And in the last-but-not-least category let's offer our fondest hopes to Rose & Bill on their engagement. The plan is for June, natch. In its "instant replay form" the actual proposal seemed a model of chivalry. Do we really believe this drivel? I have it on good authority that Monkey doesn't. Since the original rumors began we've all been awaiting the Question & the Answer. Is it too rude to say its about time? Well felicitations then.

• • •

Now a word from our author. In the interests of our common entertainment, er, in furthering communication, I'd like to alert you to the notice about an upcoming Personals Service, in this very rag. We hope it will give its users a shot at lasting happiness, and our spies and potential spies a chance to flush out all sorts of juicy titbits. If your party, book publishing, or lovers' quarrel hasn't made this column it's because your friends are too discrete to give me the details, or even enough sly innuendo to fill out an item. Get new one's. You can find them by placing an add in the Personals. And you jilted ex-comrades will have the perfect chance to keep communicatins open by letting us know just how you feel. Remember: everyone loves to see their name in print!

• • •

Spring has sprung. Balance an egg on its end. Do something crazy.

Blessed be.



To A God With Attitude



by *Stephan Schoenfield*

med. shuffle

1 What ya gon-na do when the boo-gy man boos? In-

4 voke Him, voke Him!

6 Who d' ya call when ya got Bee-zle-bub's blues? The

8 Horned One, The Horned One He can die and

11 be re-born. can smile when he's cut with the corn.

14 He gets knocked down, but comes up new. He's

16 e-ven in most chur-ches a-bove the pews! T'

18 who do ya turn when the de-mon sque-ls? When you've been burn't on

23 just how he fee-ls: In-voke Him, In-voke Him!

Chords: F, Dmin7, Gmin7, C7, Bb, Bbmin6, D7, G7, A7, Gmin7, C7, F, Bb, Bbmin6, F

Well, the Air met the Fire and the Fire burned, warmth and light.

The Fire met the water and the Water filled up with life. From the tiniest amorphous protozoic blob, to sea otters splashing through the kelp, and even the great gigantic slow moving whale.

Next, the Water met the Earth and the Earth, too, burst forth with life. The trees, the grasses, the mosses, and animals. Two-legged, four-legged, winged, no-legged, all the animals appeared on the Earth. The Water tickled the Earth, running over her body in rivers and streams, oceans and lakes, lapping at her sides.

Last, the Earth met the Air, and everything breathed. The trees, the animals, the rocks, and sea life, even the Fire, breathed, breathed life.

And that's the story of what happened in the beginning, when she laughed.

Julie Dodd Tetzlaff



Starhawk's Spring and Summer Schedule, 1993

April 2-4, 1993: Austin, Texas
WomanSpirit Gathering Weekend
Contact: Pat Cuney (512) 247-2597

May 2, 1993: San Francisco, California
Whole Life Expo Workshop
Contact: Whole Life Expo (415) 333-4373

June 4-6, 1993: New York, New York
Weekend Workshop at the New York Open Center
Contact: Learning Alliance (212) 226-7171 or
Open Center (212) 219-2527

June 7, 1993: Cambridge, Massachusetts
Evening Lecture and book signing at Interface
Contact: Interface (617)876-4600

June 11-13: Chicago, Illinois
Women's Spirituality Conference with Luisah Teish, Margot Adler
Contact: Oasis Center (312) 274-6777

In **late June/Early July**, Starhawk will be travelling in the Pacific Northwest giving workshops and signing copies of *The Fifth Sacred Thing*, her new novel that is due out in June.

For Starhawk's cassette tapes, The Way to the Well, or Magic, Vision and Action, send \$11.50 each to Harmony Network. Cost includes shipping.

To confirm dates, or for more information, contact:

**Harmony Network
PO Box 2550, Guerneville, CA 95446
(707) 869-0989**

Reclaiming Classes & Events

ELEMENTS OF MAGIC for women, by Leaf and Kim Jack in San Francisco
With the art of magic, we deepen our vision and focus our will, empowering ourselves to act in the world. In this class we begin the practice of Magic, Witchcraft, 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, spellcraft, and structuring rituals. Group experience follows feminist consensus process. We hope to provide a fair and nurturing environment for all participants. Beginning six-week course. Prerequisite: Reading of the first six chapters of *The Spiral Dance* by Starhawk. We ask that applicants be committed to attending all six classes, which will be held on **Wednesday** evenings, starting April 14. Call Leaf at (415) 328-4272 for information, registration, and location. Sliding scale \$60-120.

ELEMENTS OF MAGIC for women and men, by M. Macha NightMare and Suzanne Sterling, with Tami as student teacher. In Marin county. See above description. Six **Wednesdays**, beginning **March 24**. Sliding scale \$60-120. Contact Macha (415) 454-4411.

THE IRON PENTACLE for women and men, by Jody and Theresa
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). We ask that all applicants be committed to attending all six classes. Prerequisite: Elements of Magic class. Six **Tuesdays**, beginning **April 13**. \$60 - \$120 Sliding scale. Call Theresa (415) 239-2417, for location, information, and registration.

rites of passage for women by M. Macha NightMare, Margaret, and Minerva Earthschild, in Marin County

The Rites 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(s), meet our helpers, work through our blocks and emerge renewed, reborn. This class culminates with a ritual created by the students. Prerequisite: Elements of Magic class. Six **Wednesdays**, beginning **May 12**. Sliding scale \$60-120. Contact Macha (415) 454-4411 for information and registration.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE taught by Hilary Valentine and Rebecca

You bought that knife, wand, cup and pentacle - they weren't cheap, either. Now, what do you do with them? In this class, we will show you some of the ways we use our magical tools, and maybe learn a few tricks from you, too. Six **Tuesdays**, starting **May 3**. Prerequisite: Elements of Magic class. Call Rebecca at (415) 979-5539 for information, registration, and location. Sliding scale \$60-\$120

ABORTION & FEMINIST SPIRITUALITY: A WORKSHOP FOR HEALING taught by Vibra and Minerva Earthschild

In this workshop for women who have had one or more abortions, we will use Wiccan practice and feminist process to heal ourselves. As feminists and Pagans, we believe abortion is a responsible exercise of the sacred power of choice. However, for many women, it has emotional, psychic, spiritual and physical consequences which will be addressed. Weekend of **April 17 and 18**, Saturday 9 am, Sunday 2:30 pm. No fee. \$5 materials. Contact Minerva (415) 648-6089 or Vibra (510) 237-6207.

HOLY GROUND — A day of magic for women survivors of incest and child sexual abuse — taught by Hilary and Cybele

Gather with other survivors to create a safe place of your own to trance to. Let your younger self come out and be heard and understood. We will work with the polarities of victim - persecutor, numbness - overwhelm and good girl - bad girl as well as visiting the deeper source that sustains us. We will use our hands, voices, bodies, will and imagination. Prerequisite: Elements of Magic or equivalent. **Saturday, May 8**, 10 - 5. Limited to 9 women. \$40 - \$80 sliding scale. Call Hilary at (415) 821-7656 for info/registration.

RECLAIMING SPRING HERB WALK with Andraste and M. Macha NightMare in the Marin Headlands Sunday, April 18, 9:30 a.m.

Andraste has an M.A. in plant ecology and has led groups of intrepid herb seeking Witches on walks each Spring since 1979. She is interested in magical medicinal and food uses of plants, and in experiencing plants in their wild states. M. Macha NightMare is an organizer and collaborator/co-conspirator who likes to get city Witches in the open country air. Meet at Rodeo Lagoon, warehouse building T-1111 [clearly marked and with adequate parking], on the Marin side of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Dress for all weather, bring water and lunch, binoculars are nice if you want to watch the many birds in the area. We will not be collecting herbs so as not to disturb the ecosystem of the Headlands. Walk is expected to conclude around 2:00 p.m., but, of course, we can stay until sunset if we wish. Donations requested (\$5 - \$15 suggested). If it rains we will move the workshop to April 25.

RECLAIMING RECOMMENDS

BREATH AND BODY CLASS FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF INCEST AND ABUSE

Ongoing class cycles of bodily-focused work facilitating contact with Younger Self while teaching the adult self how to work *with* her body in the healing process. Grounding processes, movement exercises and body maps are utilized. Spirit is incorporated through focusing within the breathing body and in the simple creation of sacred, safe space. Instructor is a survivor, and a certified Lomi Practitioner. Next class begins **Tuesday, May 4, 1993**. Eight week class. Sliding scale. Call Suzette Rochat (a.k.a. Cybele) at her new number, (415) 541-5650.

Witch Camp 1993

Reclaiming teachers will offer summer intensives again both in British Columbia and in Michigan. The theme of both camps this year is Sacred Drama/Sacred Vision. We will deepen and expand last year's theme of Sacred Drama. We will continue to develop and refine the skills of trance, aspecting, and energy work which are central to the practice of ritual. How do we translate our visions into new stories, new myths that can transform the world? How do we enact them in ritual to move the broader energies around us? All three tracks at camp will partake of the thematic work.

We will not offer a Teachers' Track this summer. Instead, we will offer two "advanced" tracks, both with the theme of Sacred Drama, but with a different focus.

The Inner Focus Track will concentrate on using ritual and drama for our personal healing and transformation. What is our unique, individual vision — to what myths does it link us, what power can we draw from it?

The Outer Focus Track will concentrate on taking ritual out into a broader world, creating public ritual, issues of priest/essing circles and covens, organizing in the pagan and political communities, leadership and power.

For newcomers and those with less experience, the Elements Track will teach the basic skills and understandings of ritual in the Wiccan tradition: visualization, energy work, trance, movement, breath and body work, spellcasting, and ritual planning, as well as an introduction to the theology of Goddess spirituality.

Both camps are open to women and men. Fees are based on a sliding scale, and some scholarships are available. Contact organizers, below, for fees. Camps tend to fill up rapidly.

Vancouver Witch Camp: Rustic setting near Vancouver, BC August 1-8. Teachers are Starhawk, Pandora, Beverly, Fern, Pomegranate, and Willow, with student teachers. Contact: B.C. Witchcamp, P.O. Box 21510, 1850 Commercial Dr., Vancouver, B.C. V5L 4K2 (604) 253-7189.

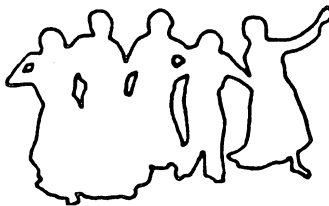
Michigan Witch Camp: Rustic setting in South Central Michigan August 21-28. Teachers are Starhawk, Sharon Jackson, Rose May Dance, Beverly, Marnie, and Paul, with student teachers. Contact the Edge of Perception, 110 South Second, Springfield, Illinois 62704, phone (217) 744-2914.



Witch Camp

At Llamas time
our small circle of four
swells to a hundred strong
holdings hands and hearts
around the huge circle.
Thanks Habondia, for the
richness of harmonies
and the power that
blossom bursts in the fullness
of community.
Through the dark time
We journey solo
or in clusters,
doing piecework
invisible and potent.
But here, in the lushness
of summer
we are many, and we are seen
in each other's eyes, and felt
in the sparks which leap and fly
from our connection
bigger and fuller and pregnant
with splendid fruit
to nourish us in our partings

Sophia Rosenberg



In 1981 at Brigid, Reclaiming held a ritual for political despair, after Ronald Reagan was elected. Since that year, each Brigid has been a ritual of political dedication in standing for the earth, and also an occasion where we shared our pledges to the Goddess with our community. In Wiccan tradition, Brigid is a time for initiation and personal integration. And so this year we called for a balance between individuality and community, and for a way to take a new look at ourselves, during a time of political possibility. We have asked Starhawk to share the litany she wrote for our Brigid ritual with our Newsletter readers. — Rose May Dance.

Litany of the Holy Well and Sacred Flame

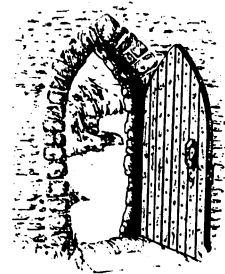
February 2, 1993

Holy Well and sacred flame
Holy Well and sacred flame

Holy well
the cauldron
well of fire
well of hope

Brigid
twelve years ago
we stood before you
in despair
looking for our power
we made this ritual
and pledged to you
and fought battle after battle
with the weapons you forged for us
not weapons of the hand
but of tongue and heart and body
while fires raged around the world
and the nuclear arsenals grew
If we are still alive ten years from now
we once said
That will be our victory

And now here we stand
hesitant to make claims
almost afraid to risk
hope



Holy well and sacred flame
Holy well and sacred Flame



Sacred flame
the forge
fire of rage

Brigid, these have been hard years
and we have been burned
many times
and failed many times

we've beggared ourselves to buy firepower
and watched flames shoot across
the Baghdad sky
and pillars of fire rise
from the oil fields
and paid for explosions
in the fields near Jalapa
that took a limb of a child,
or an eye, or a life
we rained white phosphorus
on the rebel camps of El Salvador
educated the torturers
and trained the soldiers
who fired on the villagers
of Santiago Atitlan

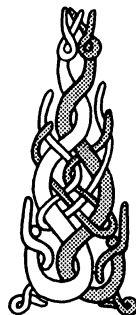
while in our own streets
thousands burned with cold
and everywhere the hungry
burned the tissues of their own bodies
to survive

we burn oil
fling it onto beaches,
coat whales and seals and seabirds
and burn away the ozone
and warm the air

and the flames return to us
eating the East Bay hills
in the drought
devouring L.A. at Beltaine
despair is tinder
hopelessness the oxygen
of flame

ten thousand are gone
from this city
given to fire, given to earth
from a disease
unnamed twelve years ago

and still we burn and burn and burn
in Bosnia Herzegovina
in Somalia
in Iraq
on this street
around the corner
just down the block



We have the power to fight for our freedom
we know that
But are we winning or losing?
Brigid, what more can we give?

Holy well and sacred flame
Holy well and sacred flame

Holy well
of sacred water
Brigid we have saved this water
year after year
and carried it to your lakes and springs and rivers
it has become our offering
we brought it back
to Ireland

to your sacred well
 which was filthy
 choked with mud and stones and plastic
the women cleaned it
 swept the portals
 dug it deep
we made an offering and gathered
 a measure of muddy water
And so you have sustained us
 in the dry years
 we have managed to plant some seeds
Now that the hills are green
 and the snowpack heavy
 and blossoms push their way out of the earth
Let us claim credit—

We have worked for survival
We are alive as the earth is alive

Holy well and sacred flame
Holy well and sacred flame

Flame of victory
How will we know it when we see it?

When we all plant fruit trees
 in the street
 so the homeless
 can pluck ripe apples, plums, peaches
When there are no more homeless
When the men we praise are gardeners
When each woman lays claim to her own body
When we walk fearless in the dark
When every lover can openly love
When we honor the rainbow colors of our ancestors
 and care for each other's children
 and heal each other's wounds



When everyone comes home
back from the wars
the overseas bases
the refugee camps, the jails
When everyone has a home to come to

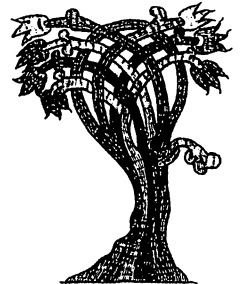
And every year's crop deepens the topsoil
When salmon crowd the bay
And rain falls plentiful and sweet
And clean winds carry no traces of smoke
When we know where our next meal is coming from

Then, Brigid, we will dance in the street
And honor you
Forger of garden tools,
Poet,
Healer,
Cauldron
The broth that sustains us
The brew that heals us
and flows through our own
animal veins

We have the power to create our visions
Nourish us, Brigid
we have so much work to do

Holy well and sacred flame
Holy well and sacred flame

Starhawk



Editorial Note: The Reclaiming newsletter received the following letter and description of a ritual. At our editorial meeting there was much discussion of whether or not to print these offerings. We pride ourselves on being a soundingboard for the pagan political community, and we try not to shrink from controversy. But this article brought out our true colors. We felt we only wanted to print it if we could offer an accompanying article more representative of our views. We realize that Witchcraft, like any other set of beliefs, can be put into the service of various different political viewpoints. We draw our line here, and say that as well-intentioned as this ritual may be, we at the Reclaiming Newsletter do not choose to support the military "warrior", but instead support individuals resisting military induction, and resisting war. We asked David Miller to read the letter and ritual, and to comment. We look forward to our readers' comments as well. rmd.

January 15, 1993

Dear Gentle People:

Enclosed ...find a copy of a Ritual that my High Priestess and I developed for the last time the United States Military went into Kuwait and Iraq, because there really wasn't anything similar at the time, generally available for Warriors of our Community who might be going off to War.

This Ritual was made available to various sources at the time....

Because of the current international instability, and the likelihood of the Military becoming involved in some serious conflict somewhere shortly, we of The Guardians Of The Fourth Face feel it might be appropriate to try to make this Ritual available to as great a number of people as possible.

We feel that this kind of Ritual can fill some of the Spiritual needs of a Pagan Warrior going into battle, and for the community they leave behind. It is based on similar practices of several Native American Peoples and they seem to have good success with it.

....please, if you can, make room for this Ritual in your publication when you see that the time for it is appropriate. The "Politics" or "Morality" of the possible conflict is not the issue here, but the Spiritual well-being of our People....

Blessed Be,
Paul Tuitcan
Guardians Of The Fourth Face

WAR MASK RITUAL

by Dierdre White Eagle and Paul
Tuitean

The departing warrior is called into their circle of family or friends or support group or circle sisters and brothers. His or her face is painted into a war mask. A drawing or photograph of the mask is necessary for use later, with two copies, one to be placed on the group's altar, the other to be carried by the warrior. Even though the face paint itself will disappear, the warrior will wear this mask until return to civilian life is possible.

On the majority of their face, this mask may be as gaudy and intricate as the participants choose; however, behind one ear there should be painted one small spot (either a discrete line or dot for instance) preferably of something that is likely to be available in the field. This spot can be re-applied as necessary, and no one around the warrior will be the wiser.

The warrior is told of the protective value of this mask, of how it will aid in their perseverance and victory, and that whatever actions are necessary within the warrior ethic while wearing this mask are part of a different reality. S/he is instructed that the spot behind the ear (called an anchor) must be carefully maintained throughout the experience; especially before combat. This anchor is a constant reminder of the alternate reality represented by the mask. It may also be helpful in conjuring up an alternate concept of "honor" inherent in a warrior ethic. S/he is also told of how the mask will later be removed.

When the warrior is ready to return to civilian life, his or her face will again be painted the same way, this time before the ritual, using the drawing or photograph made at the departure ritual. Remember to paint the spot behind the ear. The warrior will again be called into the circle. S/he tells of his or her experiences — a most valuable cathartic tool. Then the face will be cleaned and the warrior Ritually Purified (Sweatlodge, Sageing or Ritual Bath, etc.) symbolically removing trauma, guilt and wrongdoing (according to a peacetime ethic). Remember to clean the spot behind the ear. The warrior will be asked to embrace again the ways of peace and civilian life. S/he is welcomed back into the circle of civilian reality as if S/he were the same person who left.

As an additional suggestion, if a photograph is taken of the warrior in full face paint, a Polaroid carries the individual's energies more closely. A copy of this can be kept on the home altar continuing to absorb the protection available there. Another copy can be carried by the warrior providing a link to the protection and providing a place to put the bad things that happen. When the warrior again comes home (after this picture is used to recreate the face paint) it can then be burnt as part of the ritual, releasing the bad that was placed in it.

This is NOT acceptance or agreement with any governmental policy. It is a personal statement of support for our circle member who is unfortunately involved. The ritual telling of the combat experiences can become a very intense

healing time if participants remain totally non-judgmental and supportive. Support can be expressed by simply repeating phrases from the warrior's story just as they were spoken. The nature of every individual's trauma may vary. The healing support comes from treating the warrior in a way similar to the way survivors of incest or rape should be treated. It is their survival of a

traumatic experience that is being celebrated. Supporting the survivor in whatever actions were necessary for them to win through.

We feel this ritual contains deep spiritual and psychological validity. We hope this helps those who are searching for meaningful ritual in challenging situations.

Blessed Be. October 1990.

A View of the War Mask Ritual

by David Miller

In 1965, when I was 22 years old, a recent college grad, and in great shape from dedicated ballplaying, I received a call from my country. It seemed that my services would be required in a country called Vietnam. I am proud to say that I answered my country's call immediately and unflinchingly. I said no.

I answered with the poets,

"Am I a spy in the land of the living that I should deliver men unto death ... If Death seeks to mount his steed, though he switch me with his whip, I will not cinch his girth nor give him a hand up ..."

Edna St. Vincent Millay

"there is some shit i will not eat."

e. e. cummings

My hands, I explained, are meant for the works of mercy, not the works of war. I made and served soup and gave away clothing at the Catholic Worker in

New York. I couldnot, would not, destroy people, their homes, their food. I would go to prison before cooperating with the war effort.

The government eventually accommodated me, in their view, and put me in federal prison for two years.

Now, a quarter century and 40 lbs. later, I continue to hold to the principles of my youth. The work of my hands is still to feed, to clothe, and to shelter. I will not bomb, strafe, or kill for "my country" or anyone else. The honest values of my former Catholic pacifism survive in my practice of feminist Wicca. I see myself as a blessed son of mother earth through one of her living daughters, my own mother. Born of the fire in our mother's belly, I would not burn anyone with that fire nor would I destroy the fruit of her body, or the trees and rocks that shelter us, or the waters that quench our thirst.

It is within this history and context that I approach the "War Mask Ritual" outlined in this issue of the Newsletter.

My strong feeling is that I would no

sooner participate in a war mask ritual for a Pagan warrior at this time in my life than I would have offered a novena or the holy sacrifice of the Mass for a Christian warrior in 1965.

The armed forces have many Christian chaplains who purport to minister after the souls of the warriors. Yet, the effect of this ministry is to bless the war effort at least indirectly and very often directly.

There are no Pagan chaplains that I know of in the armed forces these days but the war mask ritual asks us to assume that role in part. In spite of a disclaimer that the war mask ritual is “not acceptance or agreement with any government policy”, I fear and, in fact, strongly believe that the effect will be the same as the Christian military chaplain ministry.

I simply cannot use my energy and

magical tools for such a purpose. I cannot indirectly or directly bless the war effort. It does not mean that I am braver, or better, or have sacrificed more than the warriors and war victims. It means only that the war will not be given a hand up by me.

To use words such as “totally non-judgmental” and “healing support” is to reach for a distinction without a difference. To see and to treat the individual rapist’s trauma and the rape victim’s trauma in a similar way and light is to hopelessly muddle what occurs in rape. The same is true for the warrior and the victims of war.

Finally, combining the word “warrior” with Christian, Pagan, or peace is like mixing oil and water. They don’t mix. And, when they are mixed together (as in either side bombing oil depots), the water is fouled.



Announcements

Little Cakes for the Queen of Heaven - A Children's Program on Nature Spirituality and the Goddess, taught by Alan J. Hahn and Roberta Werdinger, curriculum consultant and music teacher - Ann Hill.

This program is for boys and girls between the ages of 8-12 and will have gender separated and integrated class time. Crafts, music and the beginnings of ritual will be offered, including: creating a mandala; the turning of the wheel (i.e. seasons and moon cycles); celebrating May Day; the triple Goddess; the Tree of Life; centering and grounding; and celebrating that which is personally important and valuable.

Children may attend one session or the whole series.

The series is scheduled to take place on three Saturdays - March 27, May 1 and May 22, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm, \$20 per class (20% discount offered for two or more children registering together) at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sonoma County. To pre-register, send name(s), address, phone, and \$5 per class per child to Little Cakes c/o UUFSC, 3641 Stony Point Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95407. For more information, call the Fellowship at (707) 584-0511.



Pagan Personals

Are you tired of looking for romance in all the wrong places? Have your personal ads in other publications yielded inadequate results? Do you long to find a pagan partner but don't know how to go about it? Then maybe you're ready, eager, and willing to place a personal ad in the Newsletter. Yes?

Here's how it will work. Submit an ad to us before May 1, 1993 and include payment as for any classified ad (\$.20 per word), and we'll include it in the Summer edition of the Newsletter. If it's way too lewd, we will send your money back and ask you to try again. What's too lewd? Oh c'mon ... you know what we mean.

Who knows? This might open the door to a brand new love life for you, and for the rest of us, it should be fun to read, so get creative, be bold and send us your pagan personal ad.

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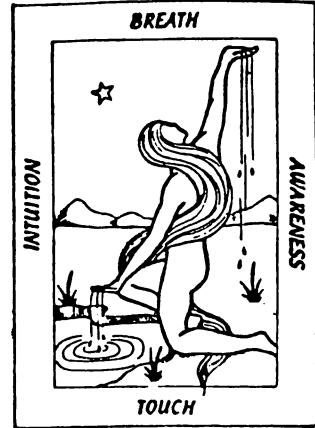
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To be published quarterly, our first issue will debut in Spring 1993. Your contributions are welcome — send SASE for guidelines. To subscribe, send \$13 for 1 year, \$24 for 2 years (\$14/26 in CA includes sales tax.) Sample — \$4.

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Reclaiming 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, and public rituals, 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.

The RECLAIMING Newsletter now costs \$2.00 if you get it at a store or an event. The Newsletter runs at a deficit, and we're trying to cover a higher percentage of our expenses. Additional contributions are welcome.

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Be sure to tell us *how many years* the money you send is supposed to cover (sliding scales for 1 year and 2 years overlap). If you don't say, we will assume any amount up to \$15 is for *one* year.

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|--|--------------------|-------|---|
| 1/8 page | (1-1/4" x 1-3/4") | \$20 | Send us your copy camera-ready and properly sized. Also, we can only accept ads mailed with a check or money order. |
| 1/4 page | (2-1/2" x 3-1/2") | \$35 | |
| 1/2 page | (5" x 3-1/2") | \$65 | |
| Full page | (5" x 7") | \$120 | |
| <i>Classified, Personal, Type-only Ads: \$.20 per word</i> | | | |

- Display Advertising has a higher value than Classified or Type-only Ads. *When you send art or logo with your ad, we charge Display Rates.*
- Type-only Ads over 2" should be computed at Display Rates.
- Include a contact name and phone, in case we have a question.
- *Please do not send dot-matrix printed ad copy. It doesn't print well.*
- Although we do print some free brief community service announcements, *if you're charging money for an event or service, please include us as a part of your advertising budget for helping make it happen.*

Thank you again for your support of Reclaiming work.

WHOLESALE NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

We are now set up to distribute the Reclaiming Newsletter to shops outside the San Francisco Bay Area. Please send us your orders before each Solstice and Equinox for that season's issue. Be sure to order enough for the season; we can only ship once per issue.

Shipping Information

For domestic destinations: We pay outgoing shipping costs. For foreign destinations: We request shipping costs to be paid with each order by check *directly convertible to U.S. currency*. Each newsletter weighs approximately 2.5 ounces.

We request sixty percent (60%) of sales receipts, to be paid with your order for the next issue. Unsold issues may be returned at any time within one (1) year for credit. Merchant pays return shipping costs.

Back issues (prior to Fall 1988) are available for \$2.00 per copy wholesale and are not returnable.

Wholesale Newsletter Order Form

Please send _____ copies of **TO:** _____
 the Reclaiming Newsletter, _____
 Issue No. _____, _____
 _____, 19____
 (season) _____