

# RECLAIMING NEWSLETTER



#56

*Autumn*

1994



***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. **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.

**WINTER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS November 1, 1994**

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.

**Reclaiming Events Line – (510) 236-4645**

This recording (listed in the residential pages under "Reclaiming E L" in Berkeley and "Reclaimig E L" in SF) 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. 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)

*Reclaiming is a member of the Wiccan/Pagan Press Alliance.*

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Cover, "*An Autumn Goddess*", by Donald Engstrom

Reya, Julie, Robin, Mary, Calla and Patti, working telepathically, telephonically, and—finally—in the flesh, pulled this newsletter together, while in the meantime doing a whole lot of other stuff.

*Printed on Recycled Paper*

# IS IT TIME TO BUILD THE TEMPLE?

by Starhawk

At this time of year, as we gear up for the Samhain holiday season, I start to become aware of an imbalance of energy between those of us who provide rituals for the community, and the community we serve. Last year nine hundred people attended the Spiral Dance—only one of the three rituals Reclaiming and the Multicultural Ritual Group offered over Samhain weekend. Each of those participants entered a ritual space hung with draperies, filled with elaborate altars and equipped with lights and a sound system. How many of the participants are aware that every object on the altar had to be brought in that morning, assembled, and would be dismantled and carried out later that night, after the ritual was over? That the draperies and lights and sound system had to be rented, hung, and taken down after the circle was opened? That someone (Kim Jack, Pagan Saint of the Sound System) sacrificed her own ritual experience to run the sound system? That someone else sat outside the ritual space to guard the door? That the priestesses and priests, after channeling the energy of nearly a thousand people, would jump out of trance, throw on their jeans, and begin carrying heavy boxes for half the remainder of the night?

All of this is created by the energy of hundreds of volunteers. Nevertheless, we always fall somewhat short of the amount of energy actually needed to assure that the main co-ordinators can come through Samhain without burning out. In the name of egalitarianism, non-

hierarchy, and accessibility, we are not taking good care of the people who offer their time and energy to the community. We are not asking clearly enough for what we need.

For example? Money. That five letter word. Reclaiming has always had a policy of pricing our rituals as low as possible, offering sliding scales and work exchanges, making them available to anyone, regardless of their means (always provided they can get a ticket!) When space is available, we never turn anyone away for lack of funds. We are deeply committed to accessibility as one of our core values, and should be.

However, in order to keep our rituals available to people of limited funds, we end up subsidizing many people who could easily afford to pay more, and, in any other religion, would be expected to. I've always hated money-grubbing preachers and greedy gurus, but after fifteen years of providing services to the Pagan community, I've become interested in the practical question of how a spiritual community provides for its material needs. There are several traditional methods (leaving aside the 700 Club) by which other religions support buildings, paid staff, telephones, clergy, and social programs—

**MEMBERSHIP DUES:** I'm not sure about churches, but most synagogues charge dues. Shahar Zahav, the lesbian and gay synagogue in San Francisco, which holds many similar values to ours, asks for 1% of its members' incomes.



Someone making between \$20,000 and \$29,000 a year, for example, would pay \$250.

**TITHING:** The Metropolitan Community Church charges no membership fee, but many members voluntarily tith. This might not mean literally giving 10% of one's income (\$2,000 for someone making \$20,000 a year), but making a commitment to give a fixed amount or regular donation.

**EXPECTED DONATIONS:** Being Jewish myself, I'm more familiar with synagogues than churches, and Jewish congregations face a space crunch similar to ours around the High Holidays, due to the large numbers of people like myself who only attend services at that time. Most synagogues sell tickets which may cost up to several hundred dollars. The Aquarian Minyan offers free services but publishes a budget which makes clear what each attendee's fair share of the costs would be —over a hundred dollars for the entire Yom Kippur evening and day-long services, for example. The donation is voluntary, but

expected from those who can afford it.

**FUNDRAISING AND SMALL DONATIONS:** Rummage sales, raffles, benefits, etc.

**LARGE DONATIONS, ENDOWMENTS, BEQUESTS, ETC.:** In most cultures, wealthy people are expected to support community rituals. In Bali, for example, rituals are open and free and are subsidized by people of means in the community, who receive prestige in return. In churches, large donors can bask in the glory of their name on stained glass windows. I'm not sure if we want to be in a position of according people prestige for their wealth, but Reclaiming is now a tax-deductible organization and we could certainly put any endowments to good use.

**HOW HAS RECLAIMING MANAGED SO FAR?** Thanks to lots of volunteer labor, energy and creativity, Reclaiming has actually run in the black for many years now, and this year was able to fund \$2,400 worth of scholarships to the California Witch Camp. We

are able to do this and still maintain low prices for our classes and rituals because—

- We make money on the sale of tapes, thanks to many hours of donated labor by the authors and composers of chants and music, the producers, singers and musicians, as well as those who take them around and sell them.

- We charge something for our rituals, classes and newsletters.

- While we are committed to paying people for teaching and administrative work, many people never claim what is due them. We don't pay for ritual making, priest/essing, ritual planning, etc.

**WHAT COULD WE DO WITH MORE MONEY IF WE HAD IT?** Immediately, we could—

- Hire a part-time co-ordinator for the Samhain rituals, say, half-time for three months at \$1,000 for a total of \$3,000.

- A group of young Pagans down on the peninsula is eager for training,

but being teenagers, cannot afford even our modest class prices. We could subsidize classes for young people. (Two teachers for a six-week Elements of Magic class at \$360 each—approximately \$15 an hour not including travel time—would be \$720.)

- Provide more scholarships for next year's California Witch Camp, and possibly for some of the other camps, as well as subsidizing some of the travel costs for teachers in training. We could use all the money we could get for this.

- Subsidize scholarships for classes and for another Teachers' Track here in San Francisco.

- Provide many free tickets for the Multicultural Ritual at Samhain, in particular as a way of doing outreach to our sister communities here in the Bay Area and broadening our diversity. \$1,000 would cover most of the expenses of this year's ritual, allowing us to provide at least 100 free tickets and still make some money to seed other projects and allow the group to become financially independent.

**IN THE LONG RUN, IF WE COULD DEVELOP A STABLE BASE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT,** we could consider—

- Hiring full-time or part-time administrative staff to help us run more efficiently, expand our services to the community, and provide real jobs for one or two people. I'm not talking about paying clergy—I'm talking about paying the church secretary.

- Building the temple—or at least, the warehouse—the great dream that arises in our hearts at 3:00 a.m. every Samhain as we schlep that last load of



boxes out of a rented space—the dream of a big, big space with a wood floor where we could leave the altars up for awhile and dance as long as we wanted. I don't think our community is yet ready for the financial commitment this involves, but I hope that eventually we can be, before I get too much older and my back gives out.

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So, if you consider yourself part of the Reclaiming Community, I ask you to consider what kind of energy you can afford to give. Over this next year, we will be discussing what it means now that the I.R.S., in its infinite wisdom, has blessed us with church status. We may or may not decide on some kind of membership structure. But in the meantime, you can donate to any or all of the above projects by sending a tax-deductible! check to the P.O. Box.

If you don't have money (or even if you do), consider also supporting the Samhain rituals with your energy. We always have abundant volunteers to sing in the chorus or help set up the ritual, but we are sadly lacking in three major areas:

**TECH**—If you know how to run lights or a sound system, how to set them up or take them down, we need you! Contact **Kim Jack at (415) 923-1458**.

**DRAGONS**—That is, security. In this role, you can be a part of the ritual, but available to take care of emergencies, sometimes being stuck by an altar while everyone else is dancing. Understandably, this is not a popular position, but consider it in the light of a gift to the community. Or volunteer for one of the



rituals you are less interested in participating in.

**CLEAN UP**—Here is where you can perform a true act of service to the Goddess and express in a meaningful way your appreciation of the ritual. Cleanup is a hard job, because it must be done after the high of the ritual when everyone wants to either party or collapse. It means staying late, therefore providing your own transportation after BART closes down. It means being prepared to wait for half an hour after the ritual is over, for the energy to settle, before you can even begin, and not wandering away after performing one small task, but staying until the floor is swept and mopped and the last box is carried out. We have had a long-standing problem with cleanup volunteers who disappear before the cleanup is done with all kinds of plausible excuses—"I thought you didn't need me; no one was telling me what to do." "I had to catch the bus." The long suffer-

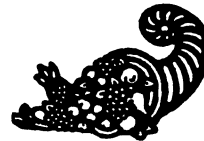
ing Judy Foster and I have too often ended up staring at each other over a broom handle at 2:00 am, wondering where all the cleanup people have gone. We are deeply bonded from this shared experience, as we are with all those dear, dear people who do turn up at the last minute to mop the floor or load the car—often not the ones who received free tickets in exchange for their promise to stay and help. So please consider being part of the cleanup crew. There is no surer way to expiate sin, shorten your time in purgatory, cleanse bad karma (whoops—wrong religion), no better offering to the ancestors and no surer way to feel part of the core of the community than to be there at the end which would be not nearly so late or bitter if more people were helping. To volun-

teer, call **Judy** at **(510) 653-5616**, or leave a message on her voicemail at **(510) 843-07222**. There are, of course, other volunteer needs such as setup people, ticket takers, etc.

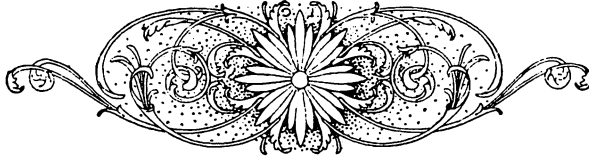
The Pagan community is growing and thriving, and we are excited by the expanded possibilities our new status allows us in serving that growth. We've moved over the years from being a totally disorganized (but cute) bunch of people running chronically in the red and unable to keep books to being a nonprofit organization legally recognized as a church, solvent, and only moderately disorganized. Now our challenge is to become sustainable, to create a balance of energy flow among and through the various parts of the community. With your help, I know we can.

## THANK YOU

Reclaiming wants to express our gratitude to the Foundation for a Compassionate Society which awarded us a \$2,000 grant to bring people of color to the California Witch Camp. The grant allowed us to offer full scholarships to four wonderful women who enriched our community with their spirit, joy and presence. Thanks!







**You Are**  
*for reya*

Priestess of the seven worlds.  
Beloved of the Divine,  
Of the holy and the human.  
Walker in beauty  
And singer in the fear of death.  
Brave one and coward  
Lover of your lady's feet  
Lover of the sacred arms  
Lover of the beating heart  
Breather of the sacred names  
Speaker of the stories of the worlds.  
Snake at the root,  
Fire in the branch,  
Bud on the leaf,  
Sap that runs like honey  
To your knees.  
Falling sticky to the ground  
Prostrate lover  
Heavy breath and tears.  
Rising to the calling of the bride.  
Rising to the beautiful and radiant.  
Servant of the changed and changeless love.  
Speak the names  
Speak the names  
Speak the names.

—Theresa L. Dutton

## VERA NEGOTIATES WITH NERO: Step XI

Time affects gravity  
Gravity and time electrify  
Lightning thunders in assent  
Does gravity have emotional charge?  
Nero in his grave thinks so  
And the path of least resistance hangs in the balance  
Robin teaches Batman some old tricks  
Batman thought he knew  
The tragic comedy unveils  
As classical hydrogen fused  
And uranium split to the test  
The affect of an effect  
Effectively affective  
Affection effects  
And revolution is a touch away  
The contemporary martyr  
A willing sacrifice of an older cycle  
A sacred satellite in orbit  
Goes to heaven only to find  
Johnny Cash in the jukebox  
"Ring of Fire"  
On extended replay  
Vera wakes up in a sweat  
Then laughter can levitate after all  
Something not to be taken lightly  
Lest we can control our flight  
Of Icarus on dual wings  
Lost in space  
Forever radiating into light  
Vera reacts actively  
This is Vera's time  
And Nero's shadow is her own  
They walk the line  
Relative alchemists hand in hand  
Tango, tangle and tumble  
A motion of E motion  
Flip sides of a spinning coin  
Suspended in thought  
That takes a life of its own  
In light and dark  
And the grey matter  
Inside Vera's head

### The Twelve Steps of Nero & Vera

*(an inquiry  
into  
Pendulum  
Whiplash)*

## VERA PLEADS HER CASE: Step XII

And Nero plays his future like a past in the present  
Go Nero go Vera go  
Two steps forward  
One step back  
Stop  
Take hold and jump  
Stop  
Two jumps forward  
One jump back  
Stop  
To the next ledge  
Of a time filled ledger  
Of growing density  
The weight of words  
Waits for this moment  
The spark of its wholly mass  
Like a black hole of love  
Dare you enter?  
To be charged with change?  
Vera pleads her case  
St. Cecil grants her space  
So she adopts Sophie and Lily  
When dreams never seemed so real  
And nature flosses in flux and flotsam  
In the blood and honey of tribute  
Even the skid marks of Horus are in the foundation  
Father, Mother and the unholy cat  
Dance the slow burn  
Unless your sign inspires, expires and perspires other  
Of Martin Luther laid to waste  
Of ignorant barbers of a tortured past  
Of Caesar fighting one step back  
The two steps forward of Hermes and Aphrodite as one  
Of pendulums in equilibrium  
"Nero, sun phantom on our altar  
My fiery son"  
Vera muses



THE END

—Doug Orton

# Hallowe'en and the "Spiral Dance:"

## A Brief History

by Anne Hill

The Pagan celebration of Hallowe'en, or Samhain (*sow winn*) is rooted in the traditions of the western edge of Europe. For the Celtic peoples and their predecessors, the onset of Winter was the time when the ancestors returned to visit, advise, and help their descendents. Offerings of food and bowls of milk were set out, and to guide the Beloved Dead on their way, candles were lit, set in hollow turnips to keep them from blowing out in the wind. The souls of the dead were believed to dwell in a magic place called Summerland, the Isle of Youth, or the Isle of Apples, where they walked in the orchards of the Goddess and were healed from the wounds and pains of life. Each soul grew younger and younger until it was young enough to be reborn. The Goddess presided over the Cauldron of Rebirth, and Her great gift was the return to life.

We who still celebrate this holiday say that at Samhain the wheel of the year turns toward the darkness, a darkness that is a place of nurturance: the dream country, the realm of the dead, the land of winter. Now the veil is thin between the worlds of the living and the dead, and also between the worlds of realization and possibility, giving us a chance to draw from the dark the visions we wish to see take shape in the light. We can empower our visions of what the world could be, of what we would like it to be. To do this, through ritual we call on those who have gone before us, honoring them and asking for their help and blessing, and we call on that which is to

come, giving it our strength, cherishing and blessing it.

The story of Reclaiming's Spiral Dance Ritual begins in 1979 in San Francisco, when Starhawk wanted to hold a big party to celebrate the publishing of her book, *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*. She enlisted her coven and other talented friends to make costumes, masks, banners, write songs and choreography, and rehearse all the volunteers for the event. The first Spiral Dance ritual was a mixture of Sacred Drama and participatory ritual, with many of the mythological elements acted out by chorus and dancers, but at the core was a participatory structure where everyone could remember and connect with their Beloved Dead on the Isle of Apples.

Harper and Row, the book's publishers, paid for the Spiral Dance ritual, since it was ostensibly a book party, and Starhawk and her coven expected maybe 300 people to show up to the free event. They were amazed when 500—600 people filled the hall, and even more amazed that everything went smoothly. The ritual was a huge success, and for the next couple of years a crew of San Francisco Bay Area witches and pagans organized a Spiral Dance Ritual in San Francisco every Samhain.

By 1981, the Reclaiming Collective had coalesced from a network of teachers and students of magic into a group of women and men who, as well as teaching, put on public rituals for most of the

pagan holidays. Reclaiming's style, influenced by the feminist group process of political organizing that many members were involved with, was non-hierarchical and participatory. The Spiral Dance ritual (as it continued to be called), though a scripted ritual, grew and changed over the years with input from many members of the community. More songs and chants were written, performed by musicians and chorus: songs to invoke God and Goddess, songs to accompany the trance, and songs to sing while dancing the great spiral. The litanies remembering war and ecological disaster increased significantly through the Reagan/Bush years, and the naming of our Beloved Dead has grown so tremendously during this decade of AIDS deaths, that it is now limited to naming only those who have passed on during the preceding year. At the end of the ritual, the names of the children born during the year are sung, and that list too continues to grow.

In the early 1980's, when Reclaiming took a break from organizing the Spiral

Dance, similar rituals using the Reclaiming script were held in the South Bay Area. The Reclaiming script also travelled to the East Coast to influence the creation of Samhain ritual there. Z. Budapest, who had long been putting on rituals in the Bay Area, began organizing a Women's Spiral Dance, which has recently celebrated its 10 year anniversary.

In 1985, a dress rehearsal for Reclaiming's Spiral Dance was filmed by Donna Read for her "Goddess Remembered" film series, and footage was incorporated into "Full Circle," the final film. Through the mid-80's, the Spiral Dance sold out consistently, and more and more people had to be turned away at the door of the Women's Building. This led to experiments in creating more than one night of ritual on the weekend closest to Hallowe'en, focussing on a different part of the journey to the Land of the Dead each night.

Finally, in 1989, Reclaiming was able to put on a Spiral Dance that would hold, we hoped, as many people as wanted to



come. The occasion was the publishing of the 10th anniversary edition of *The Spiral Dance*, and again with the help of Harper and Row, we rented a pier at Fort Mason and began planning the ritual on a grand scale. Then, a couple days before the event, the Loma Prieta earthquake struck, collapsing roads and bridges all over the Bay Area, and postponing the Giants/A's World Series.

Even with the bridges damaged and peoples lives in chaos, over 1,000 people made it to Fort Mason for the event, a mammoth feat of organization and patience. That was the first year that Reclaiming tried to broaden the script, to include elements of many different traditions in the ritual. We never tried using Fort Mason again,\* but from that year on, one night of what has become three full nights of Samhain ritual has been dedicated to nurturing a truly multiethnic culture, with dancers, singers, and dramas representing many of the diverse peoples living in the Bay Area.

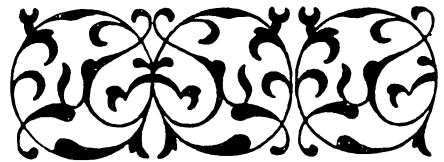
In 1992, Reclaiming produced a recording of the music performed at the Spiral Dance, in response to the overwhelming interest in the Samhain event. Utilizing many of the musicians who wrote the songs and had performed them after year, "Let It Begin Now: Music from the Spiral Dance" has sold thousands of copies and continues to inspire communities around the world in their celebration of the ancient festival.

1993 saw the creation of Spiral Dance rituals in several more cities in the United States and Canada, some affiliated with Reclaiming, some not. At this point, it is clear that the name, attached with the festival of Samhain, has acquired a life

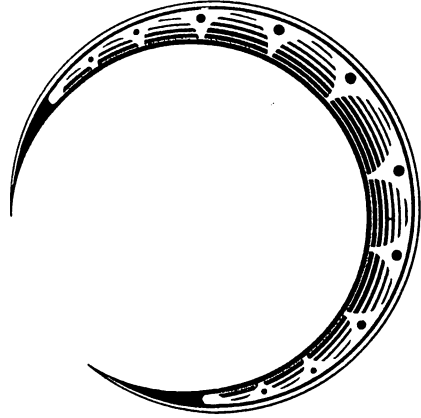
of its own, as it continues to spread across the globe.

Reclaiming has copyrighted the Spiral Dance script, so presumably those who want to use the Collective's material in other places must ask first. Yet the themes are universal, the traditions are ancient, and improvisation abounds in the pagan world. Starhawk and Reclaiming have been associated with the name Spiral Dance for so long, though, that it seems timely to state that the members of the Reclaiming Collective, including Starhawk, are not responsible for anyone's experiences in a Spiral Dance organized by any other group in any city. It is up to each participant to find out the ethics or intentions of any group or individual producing an event called a Spiral Dance in their town.

Many different pagan groups around the United States, Canada, and Europe are experimenting with ritual at Samhain, and some are calling their creation a Spiral Dance. Though each will be different, they all should have at their core the story of the Dark of the Year, and how our yearly descent into the Underworld makes us more able to face the challenges waiting for us in the year to come. Samhain is, above all, a festival of hope, an affirmation of our faith in the cycles of Nature and the strength of the human spirit.



*\*That is, until this year—see page 17 for details.*



## **Invocation to Hecate**

Gold bones imminent  
you show us we need not  
fear the death, rather  
guide us through to renewal, to regeneration.  
Crone mother, priestess of the dark moon,  
you of sagacity, of seasoning, of true experiential wisdom  
show us through your acumen, your propensity for vision  
the magick of your sight.  
by your ancient power  
to give or deny that for which we hunger,  
Magickal bestower  
give us dreams for clarity,  
for expansion.

Your dominion over all that our eyes discern  
clearly shows us the covenant of dissolution  
of vacillation.  
Divine Hecate  
bestow upon us the blessing of life which we seek  
and blessings will flow back to you.

Blessed be.

—*Zella Bardsley*

# RECLAIMING CLASSES & EVENTS

## **ELEMENTS OF MAGIC for Women by Hilary Valentine and Reya**

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, breathing/chanting/singing, trance, creating sacred 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. Class will meet six **Thursdays**, beginning **November 3**. Call **Reya (415) 826-2342** for information, registration and location. **\$60-\$120 sliding scale.**

## **POWER & MYSTERY by Beverly and Doug**

*"... When you hear the call from the Land Below, it sounds both strange and familiar, like the chorus of a song whose words you can't remember, like the promise of a lover you don't completely trust ..."* —from *Truth or Dare*.

This six week class is based on Starhawk's book, *Truth or Dare*, and will begin **Thursday, November 10**. Prerequisite: Elements of Magic, and it is recommended that you read the first four chapters of *Truth or Dare*. Call **Beverly (415) 927-2044** for information, registration and location. **\$60-\$120 sliding scale.**

**To order Reclaiming's new chant tape, "SECOND CHANTS," or "LET IT BEGIN NOW—MUSIC FROM THE SPIRAL DANCE", send \$11.00 plus tax (7.5% in California) and \$1.50 for shipping for each tape to Serpentine Music Productions PO Box 2564, Sebastopol, CA 95473. If you order more than one tape, shipping is \$.75 for each additional tape. Checks should be made out to Serpentine Music Productions. For more information about ordering, call (707) 823-7425.**





# The Samhain Cycle

Hallowe'en 1994

Reclaiming will be presenting four rituals for Samhain. We're still working out many of the details as we go to press, so call the events line (510) 236-4645, for information not included here.

**General information for all four rituals:** All four rituals are drug and alcohol free. Tickets prices vary depending on the ritual. Advance purchase is strongly recommended. Mail orders must be postmarked no later than October 13. Please mark your envelope "TICKETS", include a SASE and the order form from page 18, and make checks payable to Reclaiming, PO Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114. Tickets will also be available at selected stores Call the events line for store names and locations.

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28:

**The Cave of the Fates—Women's Mysteries at Samhain.** Come with us, on this night when the veil is thin, to meet the Fates—She who spins, She who weaves, and the One who cuts the thread. This ritual is for women only, please. Location: San Francisco Women's Building, on 18th Street between Valencia and Guerrero. Doors open at 7:30; ritual begins at 8:00. For information, or to volunteer, call Theresa at (415) 587-8699.

**Men's Samhain Ritual.** This ritual is for men only, please. It will be held at 848 Divisadero in San Francisco. Bring a pumpkin to carve. \$5 donation at the door. Ritual begins at 8:00.

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 8:00 pm: THE SPIRAL DANCE

We will again celebrate the Dead with music, dance, a journey to the Shining Isle, and the Spiral Dance at the **Herbst Pavillion at Fort Mason**. Tickets are \$10-25, \$15 at the door. The floor of this huge space is very uncomfortable, so please bring a pillow to sit on. Children are welcome in the ritual. Call **Macha (415) 454-4411** with the names of your loved ones who have died since last October 31st. Call **Reya (415) 826-2342** with the names of babies who have been born this year. Please pronounce and spell the names. To volunteer, call **Judy (510) 653-5616** or leave a message on her voicemail (510) 843-0722. We will need many volunteers for Gracing, Dragoning, and most importantly, Cleanup. Call the Events Line for information about parking.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30: A Celebration of Ancestors of Many Cultures in Shared, Sacred Space,** at the Women's Building, 18th Street between Valencia and Guerrero in San Francisco.

See page 19 for details about this ritual.

# The Samhain Cycle

Hallowe'en 1994

**General information:** All four rituals are drug and alcohol free. Tickets prices vary, depending on the ritual. Advance purchase is strongly recommended, except for the Men's Ritual; tickets will be available at the door. Mail orders must be postmarked no later than **October 13**. Please mark your envelope "**TICKETS**", include a SASE and the order form below, and make checks payable to **Reclaiming, PO Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114**. Tickets will also be available at selected stores. Call the Events Line (510) 236-4645, for store names and locations, and for more information.

Please send me Samhain Cycle tickets as follows:

RITUAL	PRICE per TICKET	QTY	TOTAL
October 28: Cave of the Fates			
October 29: The Spiral Dance (\$10-25)			
October 30: Ancestors of Many Cultures			

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form and a SASE with your check, payable to Reclaiming, to PO Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114. Thank you.

# CELEBRATING THE ANCESTORS OF MANY CULTURES, '94

*by Starhawk*

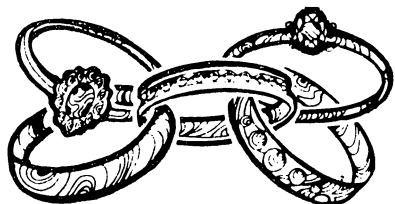
For five years now, the Multicultural Ritual Group has offered a ritual/healing experience during the Samhain season to honor and celebrate the diversity of our many heritages here in the Bay Area. This year, the theme we're working with centers around immigrants, migrations and emigrations, and what happens when our human lives undergo transitions. Like the experiences themselves, some of the material is disturbing and some delightful. A particularly disturbing example is the anti-immigrant racism being promoted in the media and the upcoming elections that enrages many of us. Aside from the Native Californians among us, we are all "illegal" immigrants—the original peoples of this land didn't invite any of our ancestors to come. Some of our progenitors came voluntarily, others were brought here as slaves or indentured servants, others came fleeing oppression elsewhere. We hope to honor our varied histories, our pain and our pride, and to delight in creating ritual space in which we can tell our stories to each other, and raise power to counter bigotry with acceptance and love for our differences.

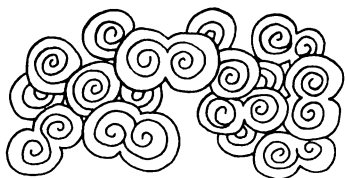
Last year, we experimented with a new form of ritual, allowing people to come and go throughout an afternoon of storytelling and cultural offerings, culminating in an evening trance journey and basket weaving. This year's form is still being planned as this goes to press, but we will probably do something simi-

lar. Those of us who stayed throughout the day and evening had a profoundly moving experience. If you can, we encourage you to set aside the full time to participate, but you are welcome to come for any part of the afternoon and/or for the evening. Children's activities and/or child care will be provided by pre-arrangement (call the events line for information). Exact times have not been set yet, but the date is Sunday, October 30, and the location is the San Francisco Women's Building, on 18th Street between Valencia and Guerrero. This is a smaller location than last year, and we are hoping to reserve many tickets for outreach, so please buy your tickets early by mail or at the same stores as Spiral Dance tickets. People of all ancestries, genders and "isms" are welcome. The ritual is wheelchair accessible.

As always, we need many volunteers (especially for cleanup!) We seek people of color with experience in ritual to volunteer as Graces—those who help the flow of the ritual. Call Judy Foster at (510) 653-5616 or leave a message on her voicemail at (510) 843-0722.

We also seek donations to help subsidize free tickets to be used for outreach. Tax-deductible checks can be made to Reclaiming and sent to the P.O. box.





## Twilight Fire

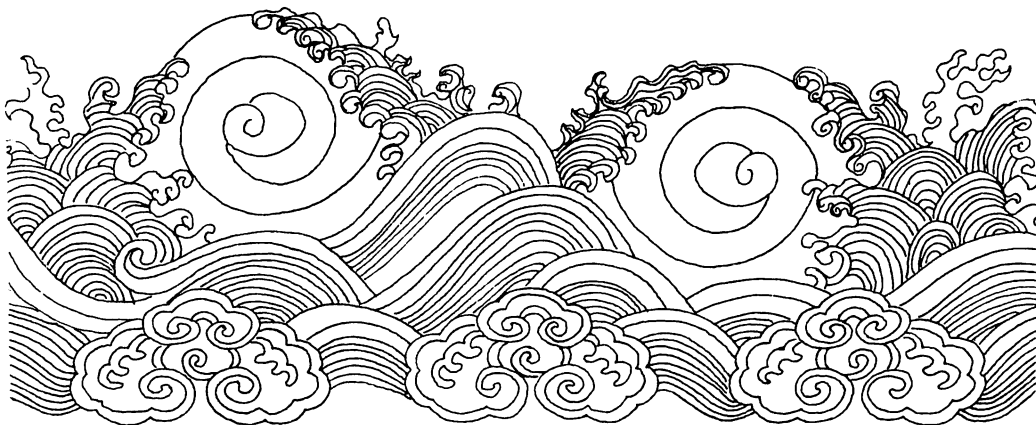
Twilight floods the California shore  
Shattering mind into spray on the rocks  
Although sight remains calm and unmoved

Clouds mass high like brooding dreams of the sea  
The deep water's gate is unhinged  
My body has become an organ of the moon

Reflecting inward  
The landscape, glowing without light  
Is split between death and awaking

Spirit hovers in the gap like a faint lunar moth  
a pale phosphorescence  
Pregnant with inconceivable fire

—Roy King



# WITCH CAMP CALIFORNIA STYLE AND THE SINGLE BOY

by Doug Orton

My third Witch Camp. I got it down. The mixed vibes, I mean. Of course there will be the faction that doesn't want me there. And the faction that thinks I'm not doing enough for men to bridge the gap to heal the genders. One out of five men in a camp of 70 ... my brain will be picked: "Why Reclaiming? Why a feminine-based organization? Why all this exclusion? Women's Mysteries. Men's Mysteries. What about the Homo Sapiens' Mystery? Can't I be the Cosmic Band-Aid?"

No, I can't. And I'm no "pioneer," I'm just a Fool who tripped over the welcome mat. At a "Men in the Craft" dinner at camp, women who care shared: "Two years ago, I didn't think there was a place in the Craft for men. Today, I need them to heal in totality."

I'm touched. But what about the women today who are where this woman was two years ago? In a perfect world ... but it isn't perfect, is she? If pressed to sort out the male mystery—my first reaction would be to segregate the men so we could express our pain, anger and frustration as aggressively as the need presented itself, to clean the fester. Behind Iron John is a little boy pissed. Sulking and brooding about the boys at Chevron in suits and ties who scare him as much as anyone else. And did he ever successfully wean from mom, really? To face his ghosts, what isolation will it take? Jane Goodall's Flint stands in the sidelines waiting for his cabaret cue. When in Catal Huyuk ... (a rose is a rose

is a rose).

The situation is that Reclaiming is a 12-step tradition when 80% or more of its population are. Reclaiming is a Therapy tradition in shadow work that must be repeated again and again. In a perfect world all groups meet as one. In a perfect world ... so the egg breaks over a basket we wove the best we fucking could. The point is that in this age of healing, we briar rabbits resent the tortoises. Yet only the brick house will withstand the wolf's huffs and puffs to blow our stability down. Repeatedly asked such questions, I felt compelled to put some of the abstract fragments in written form. Camp is never what you think it should be, but after the fact it's always worth it.

I'd like to end with a quote from a Christian who was as Pagan in his denial of the fact as many of us who do the same with our Christian shadows:

*"I chiefly remember delighting in fairy tales. I visualized them so intensely that I came to the very frontiers of hallucination; once, walking in the garden, I was for a second not quite sure that a little man had not run past me into the shrubbery. I was faintly alarmed, but it was not like my night fears. A fear that guarded the road to Faerie was one I could face. No one is a coward at all points."* —C.S. Lewis

P.S. As for heterosexual cross-dressing ... life is a gender fuck—so take the joke. Carve a pumpkin.

# LAUGHTER & FIRE AT CALIFORNIA WITCH CAMP '94

*by Coven Ouroubourous*

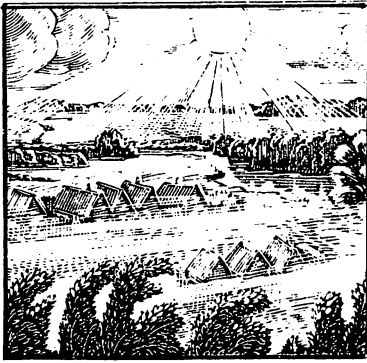
During the week we spent at Witch Camp California 1994, we ritually lived the story of Vasalissa's meeting with the crone Baba Yaga, the keeper of the fire of life itself. We lost our connection with the world outside and received an inner ally to guide us; our inner antagonist challenged us to find fire for our lives and sent us into a wild and unfamiliar setting. When we arrived at the woman's house in the deepest part of the forest inside us, magic gave us the means to clean up ten thousand years of our own and our ancestors' mess, and still get some sleep. We sorted ten millennia's worth of seeds and soil, burned up all our possessions and self-conceptions, and swept out the ashes to make room for a new fire to take home. In our own ways, we made ourselves strong enough to carry the fire home, where some of those we left behind would welcome us back with complaints and heckling. And so we made ourselves strong enough to withstand the consumption of old habits by the new fire we carried.

For much of the week, we laughed a lot, sometimes painfully and breathlessly, aching, with a stitch in the side. We laughed at chants that made us tired and bored. One night we laughed hard at how one of us looked buried in bed under a shroud of laundry. We yukked it up over sex attire and gags; we laughed ourselves stupid with fatigue. We laughed over the recent sadness in our lives and over the sadness accumulated

in ten thousand years of our households' messes. We laughed and ate so much we gained ten pounds we're still carrying. We laughed after we stood under stars that spoke to us; we laughed even after we slipped in a ditch and received the gift of scarification (among other fabulous prizes). We laughed on ankles aching from dancing in five inch spike heeled boots at the talent show. We kept laughing after a teacher launched herself onto our naked, sweating backs when we danced Center in during circle casting. We laughed, although our throats burned from howling with desire, for the Baba Yaga's knowledge of our deepest secrets. We laughed though we were sunburned after days in a valley of parched golden hills. We laughed before, during, and after our hearts opened like young flowers when we discovered the movement of energy from one chakra to the next. And we laughed when we realized how we were becoming connected to each other and to the other 60-or-so people around us.

But it wasn't all a laughing matter.

One of us remembers feeling alone, burnt out on the Outer Track and the anti-god energy, badly needing a morning off. "My partner walked with me away from breakfast, towards the creek bed near the buckeye tree under which the Outer Track met each day. A brilliant red finch perched on a branch warbled to us as we stood, transfixed, soaking in the healing energy. My partner and the finch began a conversation,



and my heart softened. We found a sunny, secluded spot and a big rock on which we sat, nestled against each other. The healing energy resonated between us, echoing, enlarging, and interpenetrating. Then my partner left for the Outer Track meeting, promising to return. After some meditation and commiseration with the stones, soil and plants, bird children gathered nearby: finches, sparrows, thrushes, juncos, hummers. I discovered an old and weathered deer skeleton near a clear pool along the stream. I sat and watched as dozens of life forms—tadpoles, water boatmen, giant water bugs—performed their dance of life and death. But around me I persistently felt the presence of fox, grey sister, hiding in camouflage. I practiced fox medicine, hiking through steep fields of thistle, past groups of unsuspecting witches, and returned to the sacred pool with blanket, water and food, to wait for my partner.”

Another of us remembers with special fondness our affinity group’s own closing ritual, which initiated a sex priestess and sent a huge cone of power off for vitality and healing. Afterward, we wondered: did other affinity groups get off quite like we did?

We worked alone and together. How

difficult it is to convey what went on when so much happened! Some memories linger: the night when five of the seven males in camp made up the Men’s Mysteries as we went along, eagerly returning afterwards to tell others how it went. One of us recalls draping sweaty dance clothes on the bike rack in front of our dorm and turning around to find two cautious grey foxes watching.

We remember having a few very rare minutes alone and standing by the ranch’s power plant and repair shop to take in the power of the parched auburn hills, and to thank the spirits and the Goddess for bringing us to this place at this time.

One of us remembers the pain during the first meeting of Outer Track when the combined energy was so intense that leaving the group became a possibility (even after receiving trance gifts from mother and from the Goddess, having an anchor revealed, and getting an aura wash-and-fluff). We found out how difficult it would become later on when an energy vampire or two made their presences felt.

We made new allies, too, and talked at length with each other about gender and the division of energy into only male and female. We ritually celebrated our queerness by telling our stories inside sacred space. We told each other about our needs from the God and other male spirits. We remember our surprise at finding how passionately we wanted the Baba Yaga’s secret knowledge of us, how strong we could will ourselves to be in order to bear her flame.

We recall with surprise how we could meet such profound challenges and have it tickle so much!

## BOOK REVIEW

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### **Homemade Money: How to select, start, manage, market and multiply the profits of a business at home.**

by Barbara Brabec

Betterway Books, softcover, 1994.

392 pp., \$19.95

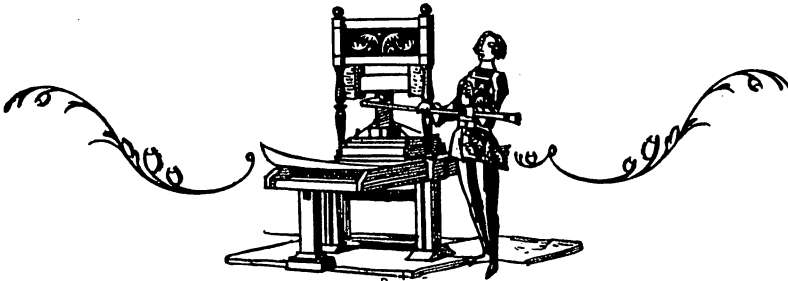
*Reviewed by Anne Hill*

This is not a book on magic per se, but for all the folks out there working to set up their own businesses on a shoestring, this is the perfect book to place on your shelves right next to those money magic and creative visualization books. Barbara Brabec, a well-known authority in the home business field, has put together simply the most comprehensive, concise book on how to start and succeed in a small business venture. Written in a supportive, down-to-earth style, the new completely revised and expanded 5th edition includes hundreds of resources for readers in Canada as well as the US.

Of all the reference books I have accumulated for my mail-order business,

*Homemade Money* is still the one I refer to the most. Barbara Brabec has been self-employed and working from home since the mid-1960's, and she speaks from experience to those who market crafts out of their homes as a hobby, as well as those in more full-time pursuits.

Writing with the belief that you don't need a fancy seminar or degree to support yourself doing what you love to do, Barbara carefully outlines the steps to starting a business, marketing your stuff, getting free publicity, and planning for success. As this calendar year draws to a close, treat yourself and your small business idea to a nourishing infusion of common sense and sound experience. And may you and your endeavors thrive!





# ***Starhawk's Schedule***

## ***Winter 1994, Spring 1995***



**November 11-13: Washington DC**  
Common Boundary Conference: "Embodied Soul"  
Contact: Common Boundary (301) 652-9495  
4303 East-West Highway, Bethesda, MD 20814

**December 18: Winter Ritual Celebration** (location TBA)  
Benefit for 1995 California Witch Camp  
Contact: Harmony Network or the Reclaiming Events Line

**January 6-8, 1995: Santa Cruz, California**  
"Honoring the Sacred Mysteries" workshop for women and men with David Miller  
Contact: Mount Madonna Center (408) 847-0406

**February 10-12, 1995: Minneapolis, MN**  
"Urban Magic" and "Reclaiming the Sacred" workshops  
Contact: The Winged One, 2821 Nicollet Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55408

**Women's Witch Camp in Hawaii in February or March ... ??**  
Working on the details now—Contact: Harmony Network if you are seriously interested.

**March 11-18, 1995: Austin, TX**  
Witch Camp  
Contact: Sylvia Adame (512) 288-6615, 8702 Appaloosa Run, Austin, TX 78737

**In the works for March, April, and beyond:**  
Provincetown, MA  
Seattle, WA

**To confirm dates, or for more information, contact:**  
**Harmony Network**  
**PO Box 2550, Guerneville, CA 95446**  
**(707) 869-0989**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**PANTHEOS** — National Pagan Gay Men's Network. Send stamp for info: Pantheos, Box 9543, Santa Fe, NM 87504

### **DEVOTIONAL DANCE WORKSHOP WITH THERESA, October 1**

A 3-hour intensive in Intentional Movement honoring our sacred bodies & the sacredness we walk through, breathe in, and live with. Tap into the Goddess & God through stillness, gentle movement and sacred music from around the world. You need not be a dancer to attend. **\$15-25 sliding scale.** For information, location and registration, call Theresa (415) 587-8699.

### **WICCAN HOLIDAY COOKBOOK**

I am writing a cookbook based on the Wiccan Holidays and Traditions. Any recipes and stories you would like to contribute will be greatly appreciated. All contributions will be acknowledged with your name, coven name or in any other manner you choose. Please send contributions to: **Nicolina Nicthe, 11024 Montgomery NE #123, Albuquerque, NM 87112.** Thank you and Blessed Be!

### **THE EARTH CONCLAVE, INC. ANNOUNCES:**

**Fall Conclave: SACRE ECOLOGY: Community, Commitment and Connection, October 6-9, 1994**—A conference about the Earth and our place in it. How do we/can we fit into the sacred dance of life and energy that is an ecology?

**Spring Conclave: THE POWER OF WORDS AND THE CREATION OF CULTURE, April 21-24, 1995**—A conference on the influence of literature, poetry, film/theater and music on the creation of pagan culture an in-depth exploration of how writing influences and is influenced by Pagan Culture.

**Ongoing: PAGAN MODERN POSTART**—A mail art show for all! Maximum size 5"x7" artwork mailed to the Exhibitions Coordinator of the Earth Conclave, Inc. Any medium, any topic/theme related to the Earth, Magic, or Nature Spirituality. Paint, sketch, collage, etch, carve, assemble, photograph, knit, crayon, or whatever you fancy and send it to us (no envelopes, please). Pieces will become part of a traveling exhibit of Pagan Art. Come see it at a Conclave!

**Contact: The Earth Conclave, Inc., PO Box 14377, Madison, WI 53714, phone (608) 244-4488, fax (608) 244-9443, email: conclave@localis.1.lic.wisc.edu**

### **HELP!**

Laura, Charles, Florence (5 years) and Ami (2 years) are still looking for a place to live in San Francisco. If you know of anything, please let us know ASAP. Please write c/o Reclaiming, PO Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114. **THANK YOU!**

# ADVERTISING RATES

Display Ads	Size & Proportions		
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) \_\_\_\_\_

**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 costs \$2.00 if you get it at a store or an event. Additional contributions are welcome.**

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES:** \$6 - \$25 sliding scale for 1 year; \$12 - \$50 for 2 years; \$2 for sample copy by mail. For foreign mailing, please add \$8 per year to cover costs. Free 1 year subscription available for people who cannot afford to pay.

**Sliding scale for subscriptions and events:** We use a sliding scale to keep costs low for people with minimal income. We hope people with larger incomes will place themselves higher on the scale to help us in this. Please place yourself where you feel comfortable on the scale, or maybe a little higher.

**Canadian and foreign subscribers:** We would appreciate payment by international money orders in U.S. currency, as it is difficult and costly for us to cash your personal checks or use your personal cash.

**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.

**SUBSCRIPTION FORM**  
**Reclaiming Newsletter**

Send to: Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.

\$6 - \$25 for one (1) year       minimal income, free subscription

\$12 - \$50 for two (2) years      \_\_\_\_\_ additional contribution  
(add \$4 U.S./year for Canadian and \$8 U.S./year for foreign mailing)

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY:**

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This is a  renewal

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