

# Reclaiming

N E W S L E T T E R

NO. 68  
AUTUMN 1997  
\$5





# Reclaiming

A Center for Feminist Spirituality

P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco CA 94114

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.

## Submissions

We encourage people to submit articles, letters, or graphics related to political, pagan or spiritual issues and happenings.

Submissions on 3-1/2" diskettes or via email (newsletter@reclaiming.org) make our job much easier. Please include a hard copy of your submission, just in case something funny happens during layout. Graphics are ALWAYS welcome!

We may edit for length, punctuation, grammar and readability. We do not alter poetry.

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

Articles appearing in this magazine are often posted on the Reclaiming web page. If you do not want your article to appear on the web site, you must let us know in writing at the time you submit it.

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.

**Winter deadline**  
**November 1, 1997**

The views expressed in articles and ads in this publication belong to the authors... not to the Reclaiming Community or the editorial staff. Some of us don't even like some of the stuff we print.

## Contacting Reclaiming

To request information from Reclaiming, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

## Reclaiming Events Line

(415) 929-9249

This recording carries announcements and updates of events organized by Reclaiming and others. Often, these come up too late to be put in the magazine. 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.

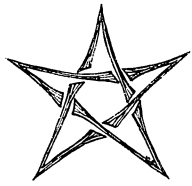
— The Recording Faerie

## Reclaiming Web Page

<http://www.reclaiming.org/cauldron/>

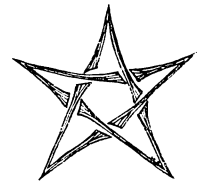
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Cover design by Elka. Cover graphic: "Tamlin," by Pomegranate Doyle. See page 19 for the folk poem which this cover illustrates.



# Reclaiming

NEWSLETTER



Number 68

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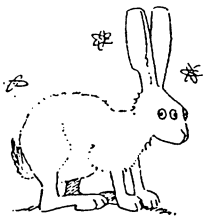
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This issue was coordinated by M. A. Bovis, George Franklin, Sabrina, and Heather Vuchinich, with production help from Elka Georgie, Chris Rubacky, John Fox, Laura Rose-Wind, Elizabeth Howland, Jim Morton and Laura Kemp. Special thanks to: M. Macha Nightmare, Starhawk, T. Thorn Coyle, Panthera, Morgaine, Madrone, Patti Martin, Judy Foster, & Dover Publications.

Want to help produce the next issue? Call George, 415-255-7623 or Margaret, 415-885-0775 — production is in November 1997

# To Our Readers...

Dear Readers,

Do you like our new format? Most of the response has been positive, and response is what we live for.

Several new people have joined to help us produce this issue, and we are grateful to have them. New artists and writers have also contributed their efforts, and we are excited about the new energy and creativity flowing in.

We have some new, tasty things for you in this issue:

- the debut of a column by Starhawk, *Making It Real*, which will cover Magic, Sex and Gardening (oops!), we mean Politics
- a really good recipe to spice up your autumn menus
- A "Forgotten History" article on 17th Century Astrologer Nicholas Culpeper
- quarterly calendars listing Wiccan holidays and noteworthy dates, Reclaiming events, political and cultural happenings, and more. We are really excited about this addition, and we would love your calendar items — *please* send some

The articles by Starhawk, Heather and Robin all talk about magic being present and possible in everyday aspects of your life. We hope you will make this magazine part of your life. There are several ways you can do this...

1. **Subscribe** — if you are reading your friend's copy or a free sample, please buy your a copy. Or better yet, send in some money and get your copy delivered to you at home.
2. **Ask** your friends to subscribe, and ask your local bookstore to

carry the magazine — see back inside cover for more info.

3. **Send in** those articles, letters, photos, graphics, hot ideas, interviews, reviews, etc. This is especially important if you live outside of the SF Bay Area. Our divination skills are somewhat limited, so you need to tell us what is happening in your region. Everyone wants to know — share the news.

For this issue, for once, we received more material than will fit. Several articles and poems were held for the Winter issue. Please remember that we do not return submissions, so be sure to keep a copy for yourself.

Keep in mind that when we do print an article, we may edit it for length, punctuation, grammar and readability. We do not alter poetry. We are working on a Reclaiming stylebook — more about that later.

Finally, we are still nameless (*see box*). This is your last chance to send us your suggestions and help us choose a name for our new magazine.

Please write or email us and let us know what you think, hate, love, or opine about this magazine! You can contact us c/o Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114, or email us at [newsletter@reclaiming.org](mailto:newsletter@reclaiming.org)

Blessings,  
The Staff



A vintage Reclaiming Newsletter cover by Donald Engstrom

## Name This Magazine!

Last issue, we asked readers to help us name our new magazine. From amidst the thousands of impassioned responses, we have gleaned the ten most popular nominees, and submit them to you for the ultimate decision. The finalists are:

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| —Reclaiming Newsletter | —Reclaiming Journal                    |
| —Reclaiming Magazine   | —Reclaiming News Quarterly Journal     |
| —Reclaiming Gazette    | —Reclaiming                            |
| —Reclaiming News       | —Weave & Spin: A Reclaiming Quarterly  |
| —Reclaiming Quarterly  | —Revolutionary Pagan Workers' Vanguard |

If we were forced to choose based on current responses, the name Revolutionary Pagan Workers' Vanguard would easily win. However, we are suspicious that the small but devoted Crypto-Leninist Cell within Reclaiming stuffed the ballot box, so we are giving readers one more chance to exercise their democratic right to vote for the name of their choice. Write or email us today!

Send your ideas and comments to: "Name That Newsletter," c/o Reclaiming, PO Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114. Or email us at [newsletter@reclaiming.org](mailto:newsletter@reclaiming.org)



# San Francisco



Photos and text by Anders Corr

Chaos reigned in San Francisco July 26. At the biggest Homes Not Jails takeover ever, 65 people occupied and barricaded doors and windows of two vacant houses at the Presidio, a decommissioned Army Base turned National Park. About 150 more demonstrators made speeches, and danced outside, and two squatters locked themselves to a steel handrail on one of the houses.

Earlier in the day, 500 demonstrators listened to Ramona Africa speak, and then marched through San Francisco with huge puppets, snarling traffic at major downtown intersections.

Homes Not Jails, a squatting group that promotes affordable housing for homeless people, has since 1994 demanded that the Federal government stop a planned demolition of 466 vacant units at the Wherry Housing complex in the Presidio. Homes Not Jails cites the McKinney Act, a law passed by Congress in 1987 that requires federal agencies to turn vacant federal properties over to homeless advocacy groups for affordable housing.

Homes Not Jails adopted tactics more militant than usual for the takeover. They barricaded themselves inside by nailing the doors and windows shut, and two activists locked themselves to steel railing on the buildings with a



# Housing Takeover



## Biggest Ever for Homes Not Jails

### 65 Arrested in Presidio Action



"black bear." Earth First! cosponsored the event and gave tips on black bears, which are heavy iron pipes welded together at an angle, with a welded bar in the middle.

Activists locked themselves to the bar and gave police the choice of gingerly cutting the black bear to avoid maiming the activists, or cutting the railing. Police first threatened to leave activists for the mountain lions (in San Francisco?), then to cut the pipe, possibly along with their fingers. After cutting the railing, the police arrested, fingerprinted, and then released the two, who remained locked together throughout.

### Lockdown Devices

Police foiled original plans to occupy other units, where someone had constructed more permanent Earth First! lockdown devices: black bears embedded in two 55 gallon drums filled with concrete. Police tried to roll the drums down the stairs from two second-story apartments. When the first drum got to the landing, its weight crushed the cement and it fell halfway through. It remained there, suspended in midair. The second drum fell all the way through another landing, and crashed to the ground. "It looks like they bombed the place," said a member of Homes Not Jails who visited the scene.

Police charged all arrestees with illegal assembly and trespassing, and those who gave names like Dorothy Day or Emma Goldman got charged with giving false information. But surprisingly, police released even those who had no identification. The 65 arrestees have a Federal

court date on August 14. No San Francisco member of Homes Not Jails has ever been convicted.

### Housing in Limbo

The ultimate fate of Wherry housing remains in limbo, but the outlook for saving it from demolition has transformed from hopeless to plausible. In 1994 when the Presidio occupations started, only 32 people got arrested for the housing. Established housing and environmental groups derided Homes Not Jails for choosing to defend the unpopular condemned housing, which they thought

*continued on page 44*



HOMES

# Margie's Crossing...

california witchcamp 1997

By Julie Dodd

MARGIE WAS MY AUNT, my father's sister, my last living relative of the older generation, my vital link to family in a lifetime of precious few blood relations. She was dying of heart and kidney failure.

I knew when I went to camp that the timing of her death couldn't be a mistake. If she needed me to be with her physically when she died, she'd wait until I got back. I strongly suspected that it would be easier for her to die if I wasn't there.

The third night of camp was scheduled for affinity group rituals dealing with ancestors. My affinity group, the Ferns, was *way out* in the woods enjoying each others company, telling ancestor stories and hiding when people went by on the path near us.

"Julie Dodd?" came a questioning voice out of the darkness. "There's a phone call for you." "Oh fuck." I started to howl, and I started to cry, my affinity group all attentive. "What do you want to do?" I called out to the universe and it didn't feel like she was gone. I realized, "I need to know what's going on." "To the phone! To the phone!" affirmed the Ferns, "We'll all go to the phone!"

Mobile circle time. We rose up, Ferns flanked me and we marched out through the forest singing a justice song. We moved swiftly, but, in my memory, that journey took *forever*.

Behind the kitchen, the phone was waiting off the hook, my friend Sara on the line. "Margie went into a coma. They're trying to do things Rhea doesn't think you'd want them to do."

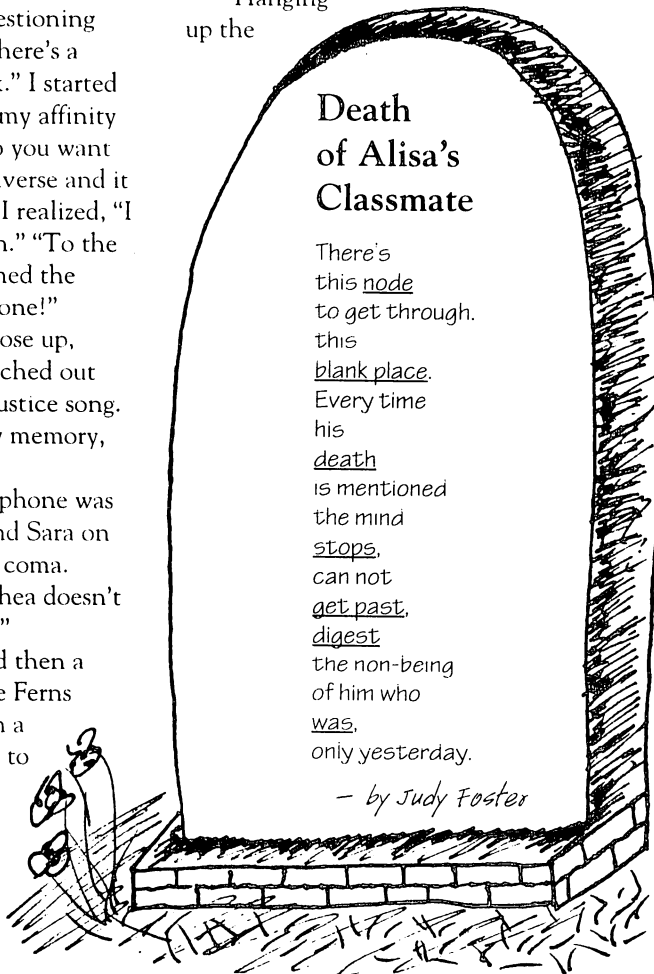
Another explanation and then a wait for THE DOCTOR. The Ferns arranged themselves sitting in a semicircle around me. I stood to be grounded. I listened to the doctor with his smooth voice tell me how this life support lung machine with tubes going into her lungs was a good thing, the appropriate

thing, the right thing to do in this situation.

I felt my grounding. I felt totally supported by the Ferns with no distraction and I focused. I can't remember all that I said. That conversation was another aeon of time, but I told him that these life-support measures were eddies. Maybe they'd keep her alive for another day or two until the next crisis, but the flow of the river was that she was dying. If something could bring her back to full and vital health, I would do it, in a flash. "She's my aunt and I love her and I want her to be comfortable. You know I have the right to make this decision."

We agreed that they could keep her on the oxygen. If she regained consciousness the next day, they would ask for her approval to take everything off. If she didn't regain consciousness, they would take her off everything in the morning.

Hanging  
up the



phone, I felt like a warrior. I'd fought for her life. I'd fought for her death. I'd won.

The Ferns all said how awesome I was and what a tremendous thing it was. We all sighed with relief and decided to devoke and go inside to eat desert.

They put me in the middle and supported me with their hands as I leaned against them. I asked for a song "Spiraling into the center...the center of our lives." The Ferns were singing... and I began to keem, I cried out, "Margie, you can go. Margie! It's okay, you can go!" A voice whispered that she'd seen the Crone — and I called her. I'd been afraid the call her before. It hadn't been the right moment, it hadn't been the right time. It was Margie's death. I didn't want to take it into my hands. I just wanted to help the time to help had come.

I called the Crone with her glinting knife. I called all our ancestors. I called Margie's Beloved Dead by name, "Daddy, call her! Grandma call her! Aunt Mary call her! Aunt Irene... Aunt Emmy... Unky... Tom... Hilda... Roberta..." I felt a great hole opening in the sky way above my head. I remember myself three feet above the rest of the Ferns, keening and calling and calling and keening... We grounded and opened and went inside. There were baked apples for dessert, apples from the Shining Isle — the land of apples, of the dead and of the unborn.

When I went to bed I prayed to all the Goddesses and Gods I'd worked with in the last few years to help ease her journey. The next morning came a call. She didn't regain consciousness. They were "unplugging her." I felt triumphant. "We did it! We did it!"

I spent the morning singing. I called the ancestors by family name calling those way back whose first names I'll never know. I checked in with her being who said they were "really busy right now — catch you later." I intended my singing to lubricate the birth canal, "Bless the passage. Bless the portal. Bless the journey. Bless the flow."

Just after lunch the Ferns gathered. We talked about how awesome

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# Perfect Love and Perfect Trust: Safety in the Group

## What It Is and What It Is Not

by *Rose May Dance*

I have often felt bemused when I hear people worrying about safety in the group. What they seem to want is not safety from attack, but for the group to be conflict-free. Do people want unconditional agreement? That's not productive. Certainly we should be able to hope that no one will attack us in the group. But in a healthy group, people will get angry at each other and express their emotions. Sometimes emotions might be so high that one group member may attack another. The safety in the group comes when other members immediately call the attacker on her behavior and mediate the conflict, facilitating a fair fight. Safety in the group does not mean that nothing will hurt you in the group. It does mean that the group is committed to working conflict through to resolution.

Sanctity of the circle is essential. A Witch knows how to keep silent. All that is said within the circle (including the weather reports that are told before the circle is actually cast) is private information, confidential, and not to be revealed without permission. This gets tricky when we are close to people who know our circle members. Keeping silent is a discipline which must be constantly practiced and sharpened. How can we ever let down our hair in circle if we are not guaranteed safety from gossip?

Sometimes people make mistakes, and amends must be made. Sometimes, because we know something about a person, and that person does not know that we know, it gets dangerous. We are tempted to manipulate a situation to "fix" the person in question. We are tempted to do a little magic to straighten out the matter. But we must not do so. As mothers everywhere say, "This will end in tears!" The four sides to the Witches' magic box are To Know, To Will, To Dare, and To Keep Silent. We will meditate on "To Know" and on "To Keep Silent."

In practice it can be very difficult to

prevent circle members from sharing information with their mates. This is a problem if the mates are not members of the circle and do not have the constant reminder of circle discipline to keep silent. Sometimes the reality of the situation is that we have to remind each other with each sensitive piece of information not to share the news with partners. It would be great not to have to do this, to have perfect sanctity of the circle, and that is what we should strive to attain, but it may take some work to get there. In the circles I have been in, this issue was something to which we always had to pay attention.

Building trust in the circle is rewarding. One of the greatest treasures in my life was that for more than fourteen years I poured out my soul every week in Coven, and listened to my sisters do the same. We held so much information about each other, and were the witnesses to each other's lives and fates. How many people beside yourself know the meaning of your life? How many people truly understand you? In Coven we had some terrible fights and ruckuses, hissy fits, long silent treatments, grudges, high dudgeon exits, and hours of everyone staring at the floor because we were too stuck to speak. We also were very bonded, shared jokes and joys, helped each other with healing and with life passages, and talked, talked, talked. We each had several people who

held the thread of our lives and who understood us, we spent at least three hours a week together, and we didn't pay a penny for it.

In the end, our lives changed, our interests changed, our alliances changed. Perhaps we had become overly

intertwined. We drifted apart. But after a period of the blues,

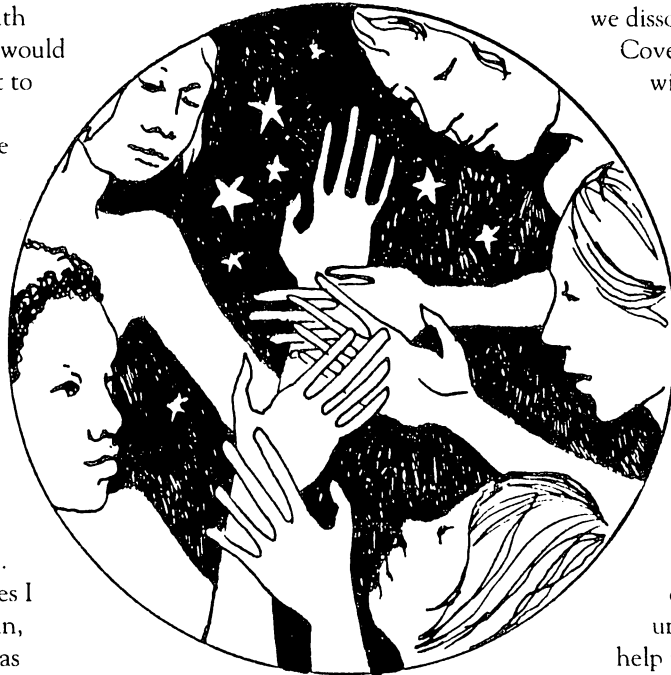
we dissolved our Coven honorably, with love, and with the sense of history intact.

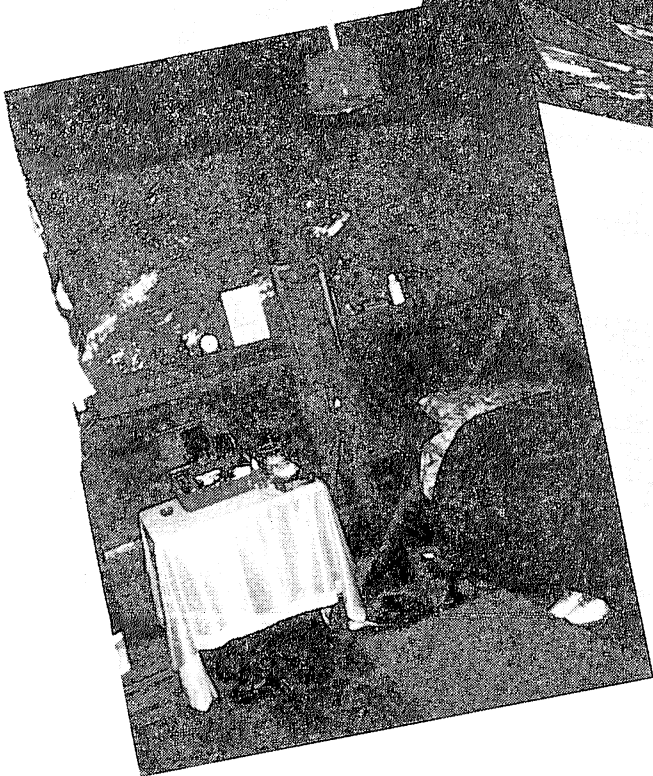
The relationships remain, ready to grow and change. I can rely

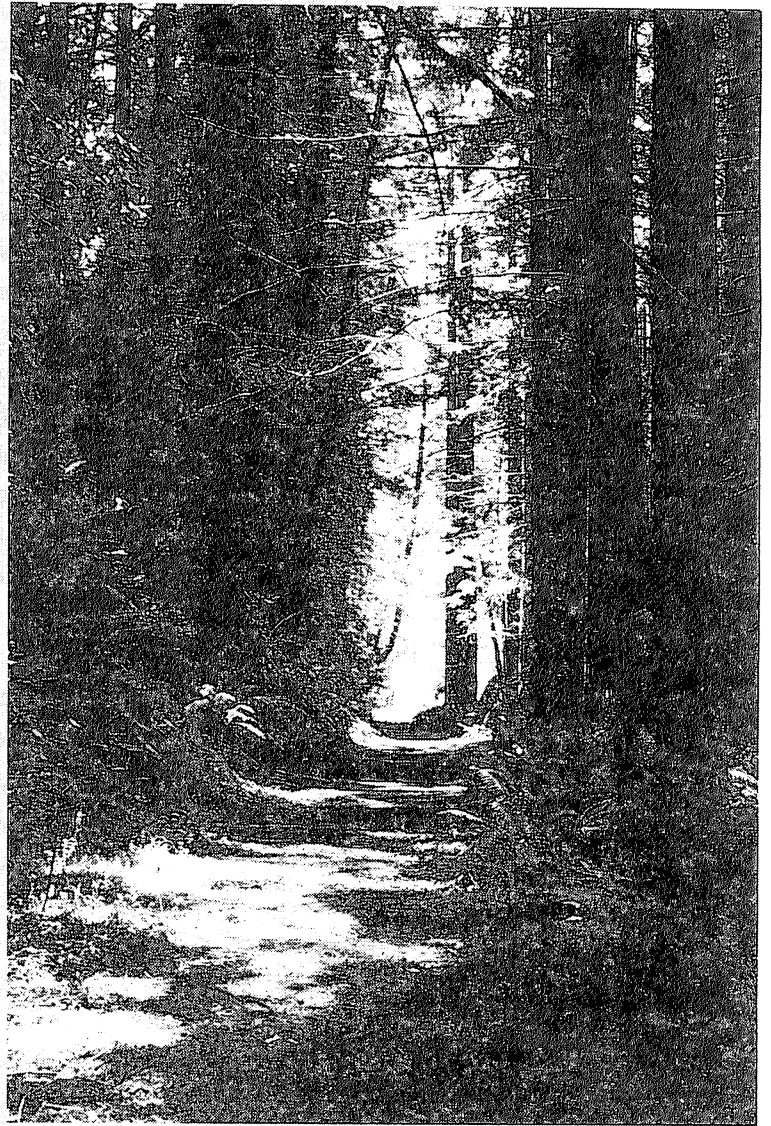
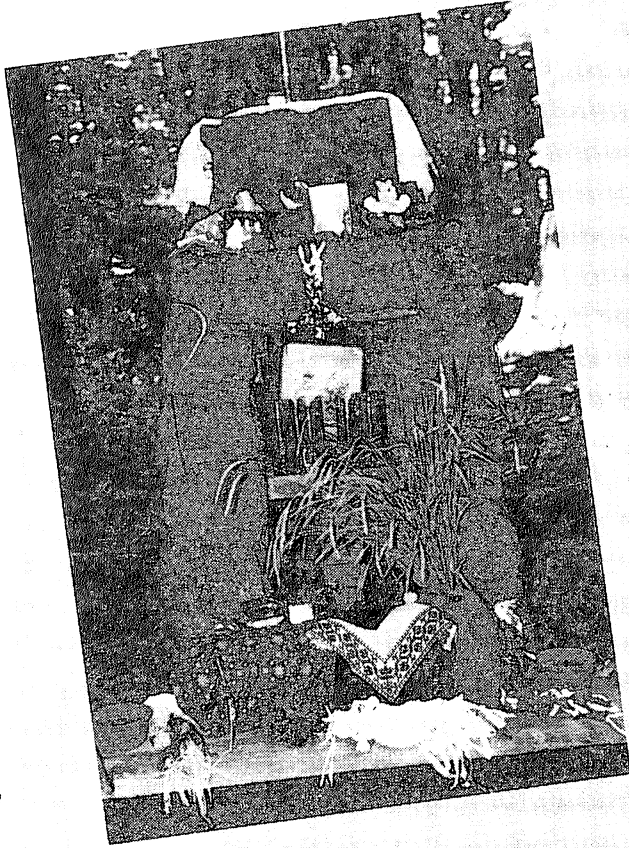
on my former coveners to understand me.

help me out, and be magical support when I need it.

Perfect love and perfect trust among Witches means that first we try to give unconditional love and trust to our selves. We love our selves even when we err gravely, knowing that we are human, these things happen, and we can start over again. Perfect trust in our selves means trusting our selves to make a genuine effort toward behaving ethically towards others, and to constantly improve in this matter — that if we behave in an untrustworthy manner, we catch the mistake, make amends, work it out. If each person, understanding her own humanity and endeavoring to keep open, to keep changing, enters the circle with perfect love and perfect trust in herself, the circle will be safe, sanctified by the members' covenant to grow and to change.



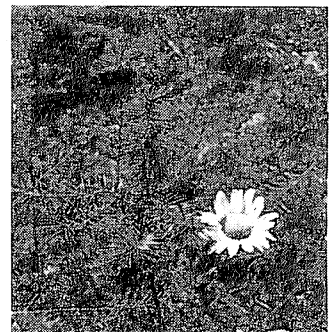




California Witchcamp photos by  
Randy Ralston & Panthera



# Witchcamp '97



# Headwaters Forest Protests Continue through Fall

[Editor's note — because of the timing of our Fall issue, we went to press before the September events at Headwaters, in which many Reclaiming community members took part as a Wiccan cluster. Actions and protests continue through the fall — see info below.]

Thousands of people headed for Humboldt County in Northern California in mid-September to protest Pacific Lumber's government-approved logging plans in the Headwaters Forest area.

Headwaters is the world's largest privately-owned stand of old-growth redwoods. Only about 3% of the original redwoods — which once covered much of the western U.S. coast — remain.

With the end of the mating season of the endangered marbled murrelet, Pacific Lumber corporation planned to commence logging. A huge rally was held near the forest, followed by a mass direct action sponsored by Earth First!.

A base camp is planned for the rest of the fall, from which ongoing direct action will take place.

As described in the last issue of *Reclaiming Newsletter*, a deal to bring the

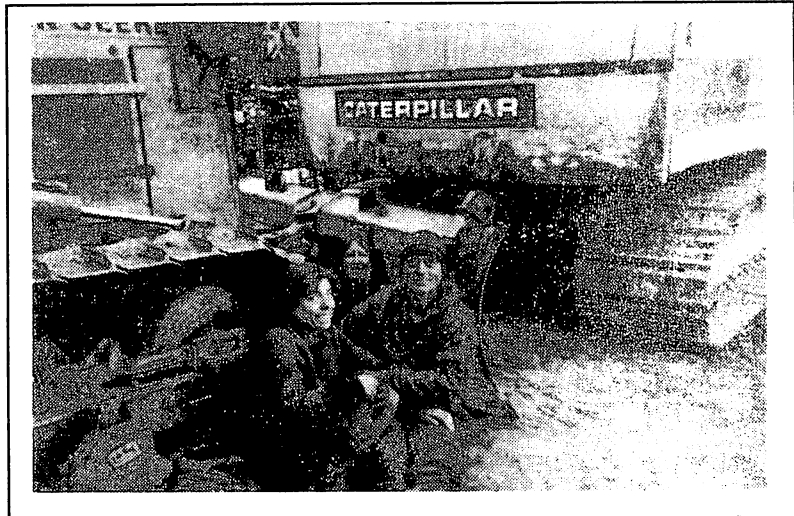
entire Headwaters Forest area into the public domain is possible. Pacific Lumber's parent company, Maxxam Corporation, is responsible for hundreds of millions of dollars of public debt due to defaulted Savings & Loans payments in the Reagan era.

So far, the Clinton administration is trying to barter the debt for a only small portion of the Headwaters Forest. Activists are demanding that the entire

60,000 acres of the Forest be included in any deal.

Support is urgently needed to defend Headwaters. Donations can be sent to Bay Area Coalition for Headwaters, c/o the Ecology Center, 2530 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, CA 94702.

For up-to-date information on Headwaters and the ongoing protests this fall, call the Hotline: (510) 835-6303.



*Equipment lockdown during a September 1995 protest. Photo courtesy of Earth First!*

## Nuxalk Indians and Allies Defend B.C. Rainforest

Indigenous Nuxalk people and environmental activists are working to save Ista, which is part of the Great Bear Rainforest, the largest continuous area of unprotected rainforest in British Columbia. Half of the world's temperate rainforests have already been destroyed, and the Ista region is already scarred by several clearcuts by the International Forest Products (Interfor) corporation.

Eleven more clearcuts are planned in the next three years, and seven pristine valleys are slated for logging in the coming decade. The plan has the collusion of the provincial government.

In a 1997 action, Nuxalk Hereditary Chief Qwatsinas and a dozen other protesters were arrested for blockading access to Ista, which, according to the Nuxalk creation myth, is the site where the first woman descended to Earth. "When they clearcut our ancient forests,"

Nuxalk Hereditary Chief Nuximlayc declared, "They clearcut the Nuxalk culture. As they clearcut Ista, which is sacred to the Nuxalk, they are clearcutting our history."

In a 1995 blockade, 22 people were arrested for peacefully blockading Interfor from building a road into the Great Bear Rainforest. Since that time, many B.C. activist groups have joined

the struggle among the coastal fjords, building important links between First Nation people and environmentalists.

Support is urgently needed. Contact Forest Action Network, Box 625, Bella Coola, BC, V0T 1C0, Canada. 250-799-5800. Website: [www.fanweb.org](http://www.fanweb.org)

[Thanks to Gavin Edwards/Earth First! Journal — see address on these pages.]

### Forest Resources

To stay in touch with forest and wilderness defense across the continent, read **Earth First! Journal**, \$25 a year (8 issues), P.O. Box 1415, Eugene, OR 97440.

For an overview of forest defense as well as nuke news, Native American news and other grassroots organizing throughout the U.S. and Canada, call 415-255-7623 for a free sample of **GroundWork** magazine. Ask for Issue #6, with a theme section on forest activism.



# Defending the Last Wilderness at Cove/Mallard

[Editor's note — For the past several years, activists have fought to defend the largest roadless forest area in the lower 48 states — the Cove/Mallard area of the Nez Perce National Forest in Idaho. While working in coalition with diverse groups, ranging from mainstream environmentalists to "sporting" groups (hunters and fishers), nonviolent activists have been on the front lines of a last-ditch attempt to stop road building and logging in this national treasure.]

The summer of 1997 saw several significant developments in the campaign to end the Cove/Mallard timber sales, and proved once again that the ability of the legal system to rule justly is far inferior to the power of people committed to finding justice.

In a scenario that is growing increasingly common across the country, the U.S. Forest Service, far from protecting the forests, is busy selling logging rights to the highest bidder. Under pressure from the Republican Congress and the Clinton administration's compromises, the Forest Service is acting as a clearinghouse for corporate logging in National Forests throughout the United States.

In the past several years, several timber sales have been authorized in the previously inviolate Cove/Mallard area.

And the roads being carved into this wilderness will facilitate future logging.

In June 1997, an Idaho District Judge ruled against a lawsuit by the Idaho Sporting Congress which would have blocked recent sales. An injunction to stop logging until appeals were heard was also rejected.

The last legal remedy is a hearing in federal court in January, 1998. In the interim, the courts are doing nothing to protect this vital piece of the lower 48's last Big Wild.

## Direct Action

While the lopsided wheels of justice have been stuck in the same old rut, committed citizens have gotten busy, putting themselves between the chainsaws of the U.S. Forest Service and the trees.

On June 15th, as the protection of the elk calving season expired (logging is not permitted during the calving season), two brave souls perched in tripods, blocking the logging road to one of the sales. The protesters remained aloft for three days before finally being plucked with a cherry-picker and hauled off to jail.



*Tripods were erected behind road blockades, closing down the Forest Service's roads into the Cove/Mallard wilderness. The sign on the blockade reads, "Keep It Wild." Photos courtesy of Cove/Mallard Coalition.*

## Wild Rockies Free State

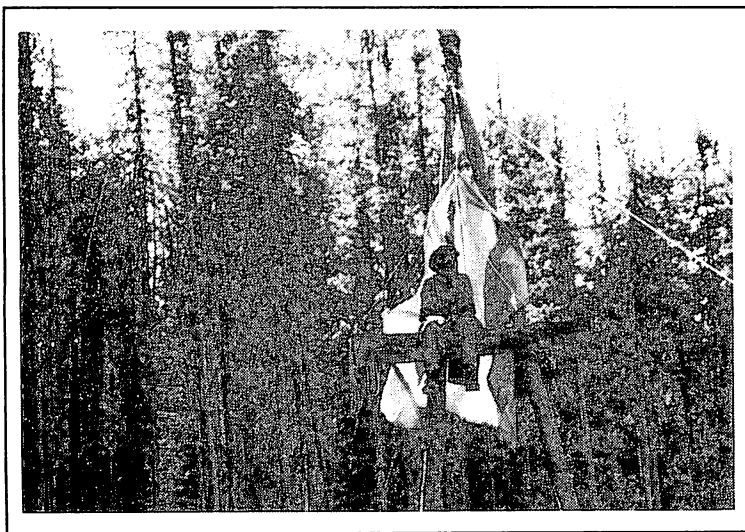
Other protesters declared the 4th of July to be "Forest Independence day," and set up a blockade on the road to the Jack Creek timber sale. The blockade, which was still in progress at press time, was an impressive sight. Several activists remained aloft in tripods 35 feet off the ground. Others were locked into cement barrels buried in the road. Supporters built log-blockades across roads, and maintained a camp kitchen for the blockaders.

Activists remain committed to continuing the protests until the Forest Service stops selling logging rights to Cove/Mallard.

"There are much prettier places to camp in this forest than on the Forest Service's stupid roads," said one protester. "But that's the point. Putting roads into this place is insane. When the Forest Service starts seeing this place as more than just a bunch of money trees, maybe then we'll go on a real vacation."

To support the Cove/Mallard protests, contact Cove/Mallard Coalition, P.O. Box 8968, Moscow, ID 83843, (208) 882-9755, email: [cove@moscow.com](mailto:cove@moscow.com)

— edited by Reclaiming Newsletter from Cove/Mallard Coalition reports

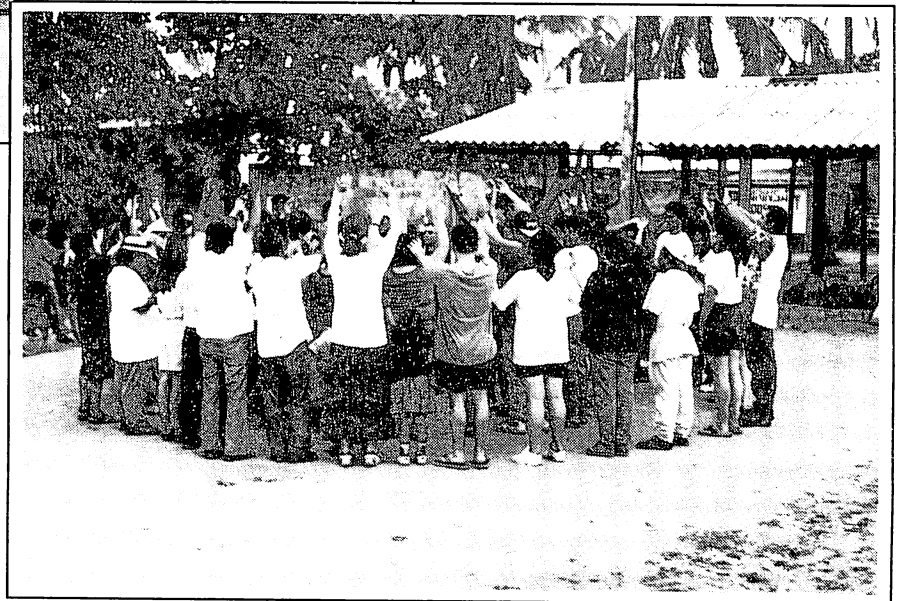


*Protesters perched high above the logging roads, blocking access to portions of Cove/Mallard. Tripods, which require law enforcement officials to bring in special equipment to remove protesters, have been used as a successful delaying tactic in forest defense actions across North America.*

# El Salvador: A Circle of



IN AUGUST OF 1996, at the Mid-Atlantic Witch Camp, the community of campers and teachers came together in support of the work of Marta Benevides, a member of our extended community. Marta is Salvadorean, and has been working with small co-operatives and campesinos in the countryside, teaching sustainability, organic farming, and gardening, and attempting to preserve indigenous culture. Reclaiming has raised over



## PHOTOS

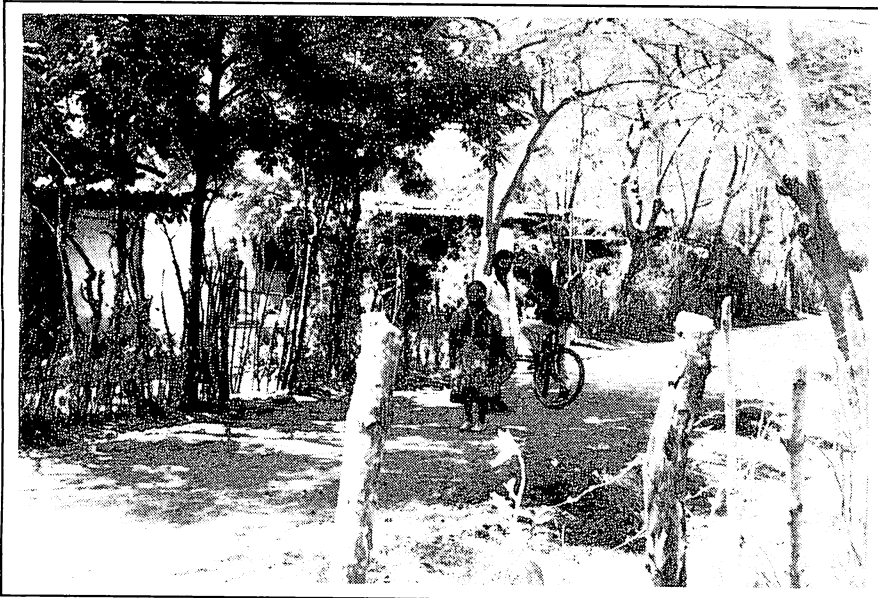
*upper left: Reclaiming visitors share a  
Spiral Dance with residents*

*middle: first-ever cone of power in El  
Salvador*

*below: residents at Planta Nueva*

*top right: Mayan temple/city*

*lower right: mural on the campus of the  
National University of El Salvador*



*Photos and captions by  
Amie Miller*

*Based on reports from  
Aurora & Starhawk*

*Edited by Reclaiming  
Newsletter*

# Love to Preserve the Land

twenty thousand dollars to help some of the co-operatives through a financial crisis that would have taken their land. Mid-Atlantic community members organized a speaking tour for Marta on the East Coast and a University-sponsored study tour to El Salvador.

In January 1997, Starhawk, Aurora from Victoria, B.C. and Amie Miller from San Francisco traveled to El Salvador to see first hand the work Marta is doing. Marta works with people in several communities around the country, fostering an appreciation of beauty, teaching ecology and sustainable living, and sharing skills for transforming conflict.

Besides participating in sustainable agricultural projects and helping to rehabilitate an old building for use as a trades school, the three visitors took part in a ritual which culminated in a Spiral Dance, chanting "Ella cambia todo lo que toca, y todo lo que toca cambia" — "She changes everything She touches, and everything She touches changes."

Reclaiming continues to organize support for this important work. You can be directly involved by joining the El Salvador Circle of Love.

## *El Salvador Circle of Love*

A Circle of Love is 200 people who are willing to pledge \$100 a year for five years to support programs of sustainability and cultural development in El Salvador. You will be contributing to the positive work of healing and transformation among some of the world's poorest people. You will receive a yearly update letter describing the work and future directions.

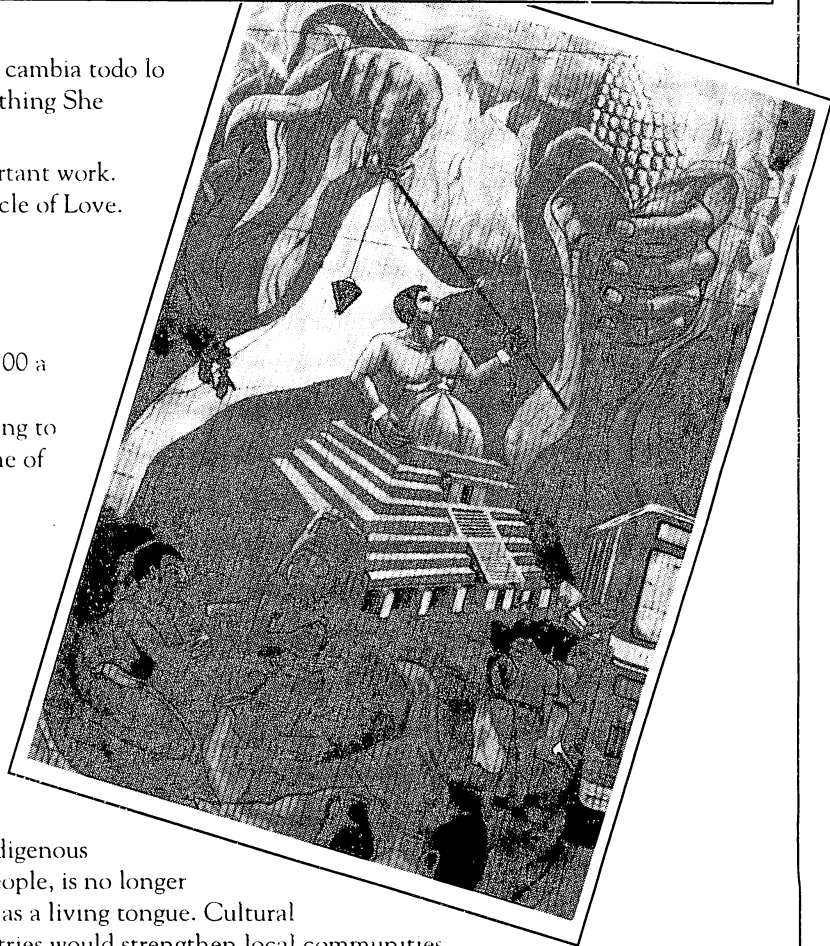
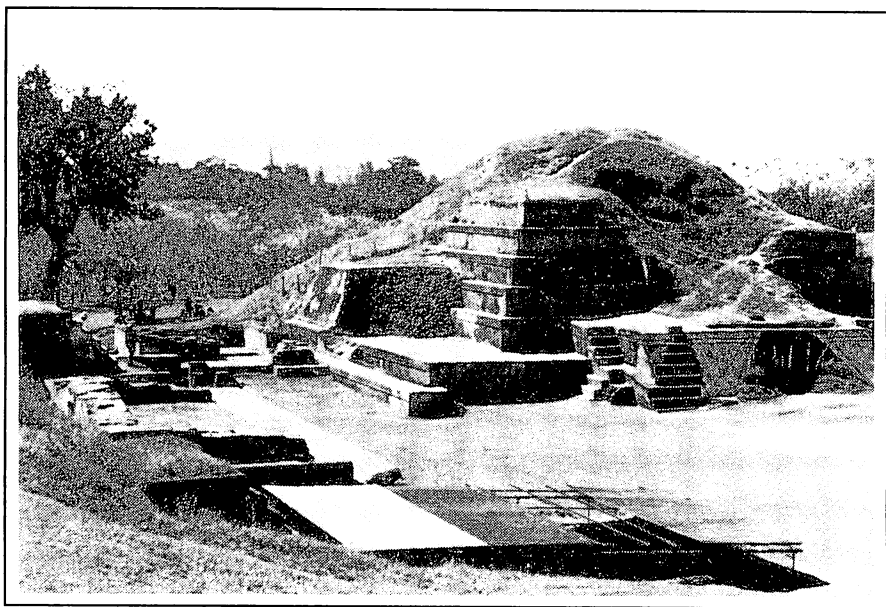
Examples of the work you will be supporting:

- Youth Leadership Programs in ecology, population, sex education and relationships, identity and history.
- Facilitators for Sustainability: Salaries for indigenous leaders, trained in sustainable agriculture, to travel to outlying communities and teach.
- Wholeness and Wellness: Trainings in nutrition and food preparation for local women.
- Cultural Exchange Programs: In El Salvador, the indigenous culture is almost gone. Ullua, the language of the Lenca people, is no longer spoken. But across the border in Honduras, it still survives as a living tongue. Cultural exchanges between indigenous people of neighboring countries would strengthen local communities and help revive lost traditions and pride.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Reclaiming's Web Page will contain periodic updates and analyses. Look for our Web Page — <http://www.reclaiming.org>

Or send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.



# Blessed Blenders, Sacred Sidewalks: Making the Everyday Reverent

"Reaping Blessing: On Tuesday of the feast at the rise of the sun, And the back of the ear of corn to the east, I will go forth with my sickle under my arm, And I will reap the cut the first act. I will let my sickle down/While the fruitful ear is in my grasp, I will raise my eye upwards, I will turn my heel quickly, Rightway as travels the sun/From the airt of the east to the west, From the airt of the north with motion calm/To the very core of the airt of the south..."

— The Carmina Gadelica

by Heather Vuchinich

Many modern witches live in urban environments, surrounded by cars, concrete and noise. Maintaining a nature-based spiritual practice in this environment requires creativity, flexibility, and frequent trips outside of the city. Yet I have found that despite my own efforts to come to terms with city life, I still feel a sense of separation and disconnection from the natural world.

I became most aware of this split when I began to study the Carmina Gadelica, a book of blessings and prayers collected in the 19th century, in and around the Scottish Highlands and Islands. The Gadelica is a blend of paganism and Catholicism, and the prayers celebrate the sacredness of everyday life. Every sort of daily activity had a corresponding prayer: waking, sleeping, milking, reaping, working a loom, spinning, etc.

Reading the Carmina Gadelica left me moved and inspired by the beauty of the language and the deep sense of connection manifest in the prayers. Yet the more I read, the more I became uncomfortably aware of a lack of sacredness in my own daily life. Realizing this got me to thinking about the question of "What is sacred?"

The Highlanders and Islanders found spirit in every moment of their day. Their working life and their spiritual life were seamlessly intertwined. Imagining my own life in this way raises questions and conflicts that only a modern witch would have to deal with. If I were to sacralize my daily routine it would involve making my car, answering machine, computer and telephone sacred tools, and the use of them would become reverent. But because the use and operation of these tools involves the polluting and destruction of the earth,

which I hold sacred above all things, I have an inherent conflict. My house plants are sacred but not my VCR. Most of Golden Gate park, except for the concrete, is sacred, Ocean Beach, but not the Great Highway, sacred, etc.

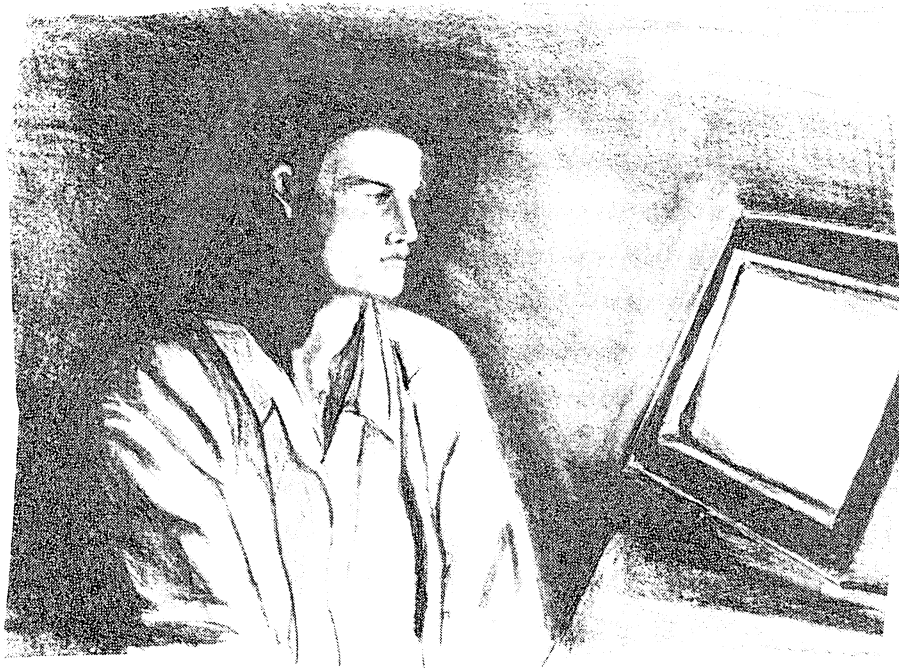
Realizing this contradiction, I became aware of the difference between what is sacred and what is sacred but necessary. I can use my computer as a sacred tool, but I do not need to use my computer to survive, (although some people might disagree), ditto my phone, car and answering machine. Earth, Air, Fire and Water on the other hand are not only sacred, but necessary to human survival. Yet despite this understanding that my everyday tools are not necessary to life, I believe that continuing to view them with a split consciousness does more harm than good.

## Sacralizing Technology

What does it do to us to live daily with tools and technology that inherently contradict our spiritual beliefs and values? How does it affect us to know that every light we turn on is using energy generated by a power plant? That our telephones are made by polluting plastic companies? And yet we continue to turn the lights on, because we cannot afford solar power. We continue to use the telephone, because we want to hear the voice of our friend, lover or relative and they are in another state, country or city.

I think knowing the technology that we use destroys life, and yet not being able to stop using it, creates untold guilt, shame, and a sense of doubt in the truth of what we say about our values and beliefs. We know it's bad but we can't stop, so we continue to live in a manner that conflicts with our spirituality.

continued on page 45



Elizabeth Howland



# Why I Call Myself Pagan

by Sam Webster

*For Macha, because she asked...*

I call myself Pagan. Pagans are people of a new religion that got started in about 1850, though we could assign a date as early as the Florentine Renaissance.

What has historically been called "pagan" are the non-Christian religions of the world. Originally pagan referred to those folk of the Italian part of Rome who did not participate in the Roman State Cult worshipping variations of the Greek Olympian gods. Essentially it meant the same as calling one unsophisticated, or less politely, a "hick."

Later, when Christianity became the Roman State religion, this term was transferred to anyone not participating in it.

Yet this term was not used by the people to whom it was applied. Thus it is not a valid term. They were Norse, Celt, Briton, German, Greek, Egyptian and so forth and their religions varied widely. They can not functionally be lumped under a single term. They self-identified as members of those cultures, not as pagans.

My theoretical preference here is to let people self-identify, and honor their names for themselves. Also, I prefer to deal with the actual phenomenon, rather than indirectly through ideas about it in order to let it self-define. Thus when I turn to what is happening today, certain characteristics come to the foreground:

1) What we do today draws on a variety of cultures and does not match any single culture of the past. Thus we cannot claim to be the inheritors of any single culturally bound religious tradition. We are not Greek, Roman, Celt or whatever.

2) We participate in the post classical world-view begun in the Renaissance, and today most of us are

steeped in the Modern world-view. Some of us actually participate in the Post-Modern world-view, which has still to fully define itself, but the principal characteristic of which is



disenchantment with the rationalistic and mechanistic Modernist world-view's claims to adequacy. For instance, who believes the Earth is the center of the Universe? Or that the Sun orbits around the Earth? Or that any material can be composed by combining proportions of Earth, Air, Fire and Water?

3) We arose not out of the original culture of some place, out of some tribal heritage. Rather we arose in reaction to a culture we either rejected or sought to reform. In the Renaissance, our forebears reclaimed the Platonic, Hermetic and Orphic traditions in an effort to reform a corrupt Christianity, whose hegemony would fall one hundred years later to Martin Luther's hammer blow. In the French occult revival of the 1850s, stifled bureaucrats sought something satisfying beyond the horizon of the Industrial Revolution by turning to occult practices. And when, during this time Eastern holy texts were first being translated into Western tongues, it awoke two contrary impulses;

appropriation, which in literature is seen as the Transcendentalist and German Romantic movements and in religion as the forming of the Theosophical society; and rejection, in which the participants

essentially declared that the West possessed the same depth of material and so turned to native resources and began to recompose the Western esoteric tradition. Eliphas Levi, the Golden Dawn, and

Dion Fortune are examples of this across three generations. We Pagans are the inheritors of the work of both the appropriators and the rejecters. The material we use is a new synthesis of what they acquired, discovered and created. But what we have today never existed before this process of reclamation began.

And so what is this new thing to be called? I would not use Neo-Pagan, because it has no predecessor. And to speak of us, who gather in living rooms and backyards, at festivals and workshops — this odd collection of people practicing this wildly polyphonic way — I would call them by the name of disgrace with which they were labeled. And I would now insist that it be capitalized, since it is a proper noun and a name. We have become what our detractors feared us to become. We, the inheritors of the traditional cultures of the past, have become a single, though not united, heterogeneous religion. We are Pagan.

# Showdown Over Proposed Ward Valley Nuclear Dump

By **Tori Woodard**

[Editor's note — The ironically-named U.S. Ecology Corporation, with the support of California Governor Pete Wilson and the entire nuclear industry, has been trying for over five years to build a nuclear dump in the Ward Valley desert. The resistance of Indigenous tribes and their allies has so far thwarted this effort. See the past three issues of Reclaiming Newsletter for more background.]

It looks like a showdown in Ward Valley is in our near future. Both the federal government and the State of California plan to test for tritium in Ward Valley this fall. The Ward Valley Coalition has agreed to resist any further desecration of the land, which is sacred to local Native Americans. Most likely the testing will involve disturbance of the land; if so, we will use nonviolent actions to try to stop it.

The Fort Mojave Indian Tribe requested an action training workshop, so we are setting one up for Saturday, October 4. It's open to the public, so come on down! In the morning speakers from the Quechan Indian Nation, the Coastal Band of Chumash, the Torres-Martinez Cahuillas, the United Farm Workers, and the Indigenous Environmental Network will tell stories of past successful nonviolent campaigns. In the afternoon, role plays will teach

participants how to plan safe and effective actions. The training will be held on the Fort Mojave Indian Reservation adjacent to Needles, California.

On Sunday, October 5, we will meet in Ward Valley, walk the site, and plan logistics for direct action.

We don't yet know when government testing for tritium will take place.

On the two days before it begins, Save Ward Valley and the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe will sponsor a two-day action training camp. There, participants will take basic nonviolence training and learn:

- how to use state-of-the-art blockade equipment
- how to be a peacekeeper
- how to be a legal observer
- how to do media work
- how to choose an affinity group



*A Fall 1996 Gathering at Ward Valley, sponsored by the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, brought together local youth for a day of workshops and teachings of the area's Native American tribes. Here, elders share craft skills with young participants. Photo courtesy of Bernadette Del Chiaro.*

- how to protect critical habitat for the threatened desert tortoise that lives in Ward Valley
- Native American concerns about Ward Valley and the action
- legal information
- support roles
- action strategies
- jail solidarity tactics

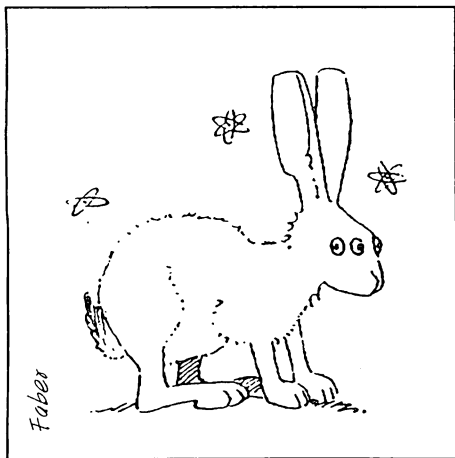
People who come to the action training camp will form affinity groups and choose spokespersons to attend our planning council meetings. The planning council will coordinate logistics and decide on strategies and guidelines.

The best way to know when there's an action in Ward Valley is to join our Emergency Response Network. If you would like to do that, or if you want more information about the action trainings or our campaign, contact Save Ward Valley at (760) 326-6267.

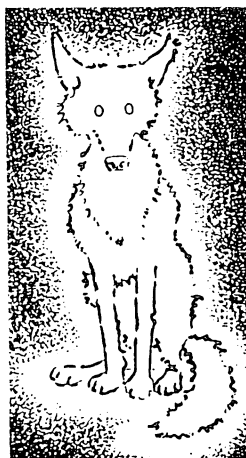
We also have a new email address: [swv1@ctaz.com](mailto:swv1@ctaz.com)

"Save Ward Valley News" is published by the Ward Valley Coalition. It brings you the latest news from the Coalition, and helps support all of our work to stop the proposed dump. Send \$20 (or more!) to 107 F Street, Needles, CA 92363.

## Possible Future Entries in the Encyclopedia of Wildlife



*Ward Valley Jackrabbit*



*East Mojave Glowing Coyote*

# United Religions Experience

by Rowan Fairgrove

Last night Rhiannon and I went to the Stanford Chapel for the “public participation event” that was the only public event during the United Religions Global Conference held there this week. There, a hundred delegates from the historic religions and a hundred representatives of spiritual and other movements, have come together to craft a charter-writing process for the United Religions Initiative.

I didn't really know what to expect — I had called and asked what they were planning to do and hadn't found anyone over there who knew anything about it. But I'm committed to doing Interfaith work, so off I went!

I had never been in the Stanford Chapel, which is really a splendid bit of architecture — wow! It rivals Catholic churches of Europe, albeit on a smaller scale.

A Hindu woman from South Africa offered opening prayers in Sanskrit, English and Zulu, followed by a Rabbi, a Muslim and a woman who was from some spiritual peace group. Bishop Swing (dressed down in street clothes!) got up and gave a bit of an overview of the process so far. In the last year he and his wife have travelled all over the world trying to bring his vision of a United Nations of religions into being.

Then an array of interesting folks — a Malawi man with a drum made the strongest impression on me — got up and gave their perspective on how the conference was going. It was very interesting to hear the different perspectives. Some of them were very intellectual about what was happening, one sang a song, the drummer drummed and told stories about youth who wanted peace but seemed to forget as they grew older and went on fighting against their neighbors because of religion. A wonderful Buddhist fellow from Siam got up and said that all this intellectual stuff was great, but we should be silent more and listen to each other — and break the consumer paradigm. I felt like cheering!

Then we broke into small groups for

20 minutes to talk to our neighbors. I wound up talking to a British fellow who'd grown up Church of England and spent his adult life trying to decide whether he should be a Buddhist (got a Ph. D. in Buddhist studies) or a Catholic (because CoFE didn't have enough depth and he didn't feel totally Buddhist!) We had an interesting conversation about whether interfaith gatherings would ever get beyond trying to come together over the idea of “there is a Supreme Being that we all call by different (or even many) names, but it is all the same source.” He said he had recently written an article regarding pluralistic unity in diversity for which I'm going to look.

Next there was a flute interlude while we filled out our program inserts, describing an idea or dream that we would like to see realized in the United Religions Initiative and what we would do in our lives to make that dream happen.

## World Peace Prayer

But the most moving thing was the World Peace Prayer Ceremony for the people of the world's religions and spiritual traditions. The basic prayer is something created by the Prayer Society in Japan which arose after the bombing of Hiroshima to pray for peace. They do it to pray for the people of each nation to have peace, with a flag representing each nation as it is prayed for.

The URI folks had made banners for 15 religions, plus one for all others and one for the people of all beliefs yet to come. Each religion flag had a big silver circle with a small symbol of that religion in the center. The Other flag had a NASA picture of the earth from space on it and the Yet to Come flag had the silver

circle with a blank circle in the center. The flag of the Wiccan people was carried by Deborah Ann Light, who so ably represented us at the Parliament of the World's Religions in 1993. I was very moved, and was happy that we Wiccans

have come far enough in our Interfaith work to be seen as a contributor.

The folks carrying the banners lined up along the processional aisle of the chapel. We spoke the opening prayer in unison:

May Peace Prevail on Earth. I will pray for the happiness of the people of all the spiritual traditions of the world.

Then a woman led the prayer by speaking the name of the religion which we would insert in the blank:

May the \_\_\_\_\_ people live in peace  
May peace prevail on earth.

In the blank we inserted: Aboriginal, Muslim, Sikh, Baha'i, Jain, Taoist, Buddhist, Jewish, Unitarian, Christian, Native, American, Wiccan, Hindu, Shinto, Zoroastrian, and finally, The People of all Other Spiritual Traditions of the World and The People of all Beliefs yet to come.

The closing prayer was:

May all the religions and spiritual traditions of the world live together in peace. May Peace Prevail on Earth.

Afterwards, Rhia and I grabbed Deborah Ann Light and took her out for a chat. I made it home happy and tired and looking forward to Interfaith challenges ahead with a bit more optimism.

*P.S. If you are interested in learning more about URI, check out their website at <http://www.united-religions.org/>*

Would interfaith gatherings ever get beyond trying to come together over the idea of a Supreme Being that we all call by different (or even many) names, but that is all the same source?

# Music and Magic, Magic and Music

by Robin Dolan

When I was first being trained in the craft, I was taught that there are different techniques one can use to raise energy, to enter trance, or to connect with the deities. In each of the techniques, we will find our abilities vary, and we may choose to develop our inherent abilities more fully in different areas. One technique

is, of course, to use drumming or chanting in a ritual. Even if you have been told or believe you can't sing, it's still an activity you can take part in.

Singing is a joyful act - to open your mouth and let sound come out. You breathe in air, filling your lungs, and as you push the air out, your vocal cords and sinuses vibrate with sound. Part of the magic of singing is that your body becomes the instrument itself. Whether you sing, make sounds, play an instrument, or provide rhythm, using music in ritual is a chance to express a part of yourself and your vital energy.

I came to Reclaiming through music. This was unusual for me in that I began by using my craft, rather than observing or taking a class. I'd been working in another tradition for several years, and had just been initiated. I believe that I was directed that year towards my heart's desires, in the way that initiation often pushes us to exactly where we need to be. I was painfully aware of my longing to sing, and a friend who knew this told me that "they" were looking for singers for the big Samhain Spiral Dance ritual that happened every year. I auditioned, was accepted, and thus began my opening. I was enthusiastically swept up into this amazing experience, singing music I loved, about what I believe in, and getting to use my abilities. And it didn't just happen once - it wasn't a one-shot deal of experiencing joy and then having

it taken away from me. I've sung in the chorus almost every year since, and have also sung on two of the Reclaiming tapes. I think part of why Reclaiming-style magic resonates with me is that this is an ecstatic tradition, about exploring and expressing your bliss. Part of the purpose of the magic is doing just that. To become who we are. We are encouraged

to be all we are capable of being. And to not feel shame for wanting to feel good about ourselves and pursue our joy. Singing for me is more than just a tool of the craft. It is a defining part of who I am. It is what gives me the most joy in life.

I feel spoiled, in a sense, by having most of my musical experience be in a Pagan context.

Firstly, I have a

supportive community that encourages me in the way I described above. But also, spiritual music is unlike any other musical form. If it's good, it takes one to a place of mystery, of awe, of suspension of worries and practicalities to pure being in the moment. It's often about connection with one's own concept of the divine, or with love, or with life itself, and one's part in it. It is an expression of devotion, of dedication. In performing divine music, there is a feeling of surrender to the music itself, to something larger than oneself, the web we are all woven in that is life. I can even feel this call, this awe, when listening to the music of other spiritual traditions, even if I don't agree with their particular beliefs or practices. Good music communicates passion to anyone.

Performing Pagan music is especially powerful, as our religion is about honoring all things as part of life. It's such a gift to communicate that connection through music, and to share that feeling with others. Actually, that's part of what makes all music spiritual.

One gives so much in performing, and yet gets so much back at the same time.

The main reason I wanted to write this article is to share how it works for me to use sound as one of my main magical tools. There are different things I try to focus on at different times. In developing my priestessing abilities, I try to be aware of the energy around, sensing where it is going, and being aware of what is the intent of the ritual at that point. Often we use sounds to express an emotion during a ritual — grunts as we ground, moans or wails to express great emotional release. These are places where energy need not be directed — people are just letting sounds out. One should just leave an opening for that to happen and be truthful to oneself about where one is at, and express that. There are times when we may sing or dance to invoke a direction or deity in a circle. As I have developed my abilities, I've become more aware that I am responsible for using my voice consciously during those times. It would be easy to dominate an invocation and sing really loudly. But it's my job to remember it's not about me. It's about whatever work we are intending to do at that moment, and I must blend my voice and energy so that it is part of the group working together towards whatever our goal is. There are also times that we sing to raise energy. I work very consciously to check out the energy of the group then. Is it building, is it ebbing, is it at a plateau? And where does it feel like people want the energy to go? Does it need filling out at the bottom or more complexity to express the depth of the spell? The key thing to remember is what is the group purpose and to listen to the group energy.

At a recent ritual at witchcamp, we were building energy towards a cone of power while doing a spiral dance. We were singing the same chant we'd been singing while doing a very long trance. I sensed people wanted it to build, but felt stuck in the hypnotic feel of the song we'd captured while in trance. This is one of those times that I felt it was okay to use my voice with strength, so I started singing a contrasting harmony. Soon

*continued on page 46*

In performing divine music, there is a feeling of surrender to the music itself, to something larger than oneself, the web we are all woven in that is life . . .

# The Ballad of Tamlin

*[The traditional ballad of Tamlin and the myth and metaphors it embodies served as the "storyline" for rituals at Reclaiming Witchcamps the past two summers. Although the ballad is named for Tamlin, the magical work focused more on Janet's struggle to gain and hold her heart's desire, as described late in the song.]*

The King forbade his maidens all  
Who wear gold in their hair  
To come and go by Carterhaugh  
For young Tamlin is there

And those who go by Carterhaugh  
From them he takes a fee  
Either mantles or their rings  
Or else their maidenheads

Janet kilted her green mantle  
Just above her knee  
And off she went to Carterhaugh  
As fast as she could flee

She had not pulled a double rose  
As rose but three or four  
When up and spoke young Tamlin  
"Lady please pull no more

"How dare you pull these flowers  
How dare you break these wands  
How dare you come to Carterhaugh  
Without my command"

Carterhaugh, it is my own  
My father gave it to me  
And I will come and go by here  
Without any leave of thee"

Four and twenty ladies gay  
All sitting down at chess  
When in came fair Janet  
As pale as any glass

Up and spoke her father dear  
He spoke up meek and mild  
"Alas my dear Janet  
I fear you go with child"

"And if I do go with child  
It is myself to blame  
"Tis not a knight in all your hold  
Shall give my child his name"

Janet kilted her green mantle  
Up above her knee  
And she went off to Carterhaugh  
To pull the scathing tree

"How dare you pull that herb"  
Said young Tamlin  
For to kill the bonny babe  
That we got us between

"You must tell to me Tamlin  
Now you must tell to me  
Were you once a mortal knight  
Or mortal hall did see?"

"I was once a mortal knight  
I was hunting here one day  
I did fall off from my horse  
Faerie Queen stole me away

"Tomorrow night is Hallowe'en  
The Faerie Folk do ride  
Those who would their true love win  
At Miles Cross they must hide

"First you let pass the black horse  
Then you let pass the brown  
Run up to the milk white steed  
And pull the rider down

"First they'll turn me in your arms  
Into a snake or adder  
Hold me close and fear me not  
For I'm your baby's father

"Next they'll turn me in your arms  
Into a lion wild  
Hold me close and fear me not  
As you would hold a child

"Then they'll turn me in your arms  
Into a red hot iron  
Throw me into the well  
And throw me in with speed

"Last they'll turn me in your arms  
Into a naked knight  
Hold me in your mantle  
And hide me close from sight"

So well she did what he said  
She did her true love win  
She wrapped him in her mantle  
As blithe as any bird

Up and spoke the Faerie Queen  
An angry Queen was she  
"If I'd known of this, Tamlin  
Some Lady borrowed thee

"If I'd known of this, Tamlin  
Before we came from home  
I'd have plucked out thy heart  
And put in one of stone"

*Arranged by Beverly Frederick*



*Pomegranate Doyle*

# SEVEN WEEKS OF COLOR MEDITATION

## RED

Spicy  
Raging  
Fiery

## FED

Danger  
Alarming  
Vicious

## DREAD

Vivacious  
Victorious  
Celebration

## RED

Earthy  
Mother  
Birthing

## BLED

GOLDEN GODDESS

RESPLENDENT PIERCENESS  
SLIDING THROUGH THE NIGHT

WILD HEART POUNDING  
RHYTHM WITH MOONLIGHT

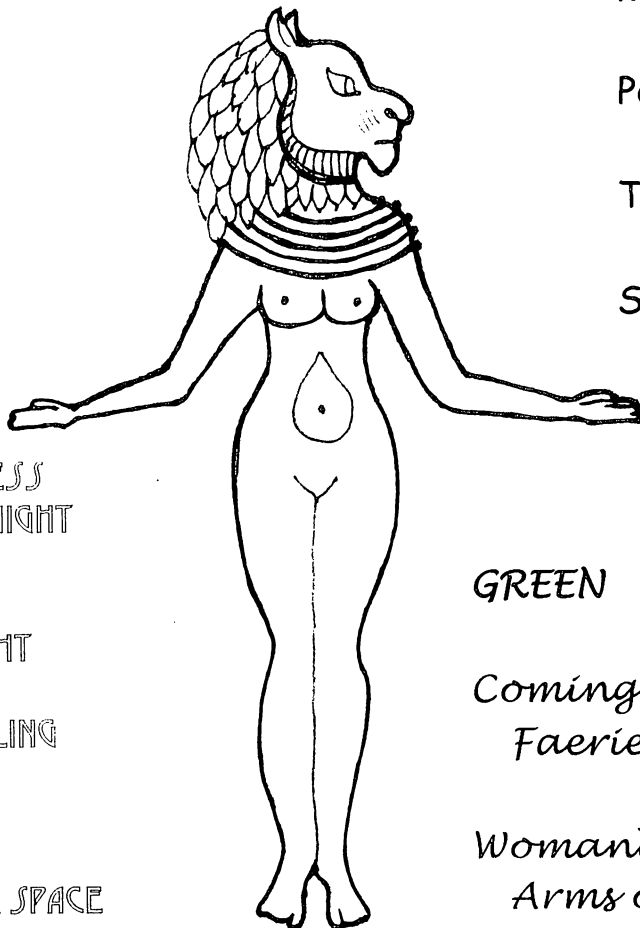
BURNING COURAGE FUELING  
LIMBS OF GRACE

BY WILL AND ANKH  
YOU SIMPLY HOLD YOUR SPACE

## Ode to the Orange Fever-Flu Blues

Fever fires burning  
in my head  
Alarming signs sounding  
sense of dread  
Sweet and sour juices  
down my chin  
Hearth kindling leaping  
to begin

Monarch's poison beauty  
does declare  
Poppies screaming lust  
through the air  
Tiger's patient stalking  
towards daylight  
Slow passions building  
silent sight



## GREEN

*Coming home  
Faeries fed*

*Womanly breasts  
Arms outspread*

*Tender heart  
Peaceful bed*

*Blue Center Calling*

Diving into the beautiful blues  
Sinking through the fading hues

Past the Heart-of-Blackness of the well  
Drifting , dreaming of her spell

Until the ebb and flow begin  
To spin the spiral deep within

Salty rivers coursing through blue veins  
Rhythmic breathing washing earthly pains

Rising, sinking, cresting, breaking  
Fireworks flaring, consciousness waking

Silently floating in void of Black  
Pregnant possibility buoys me back

Creation without, creation within  
Dreamer begets dream again



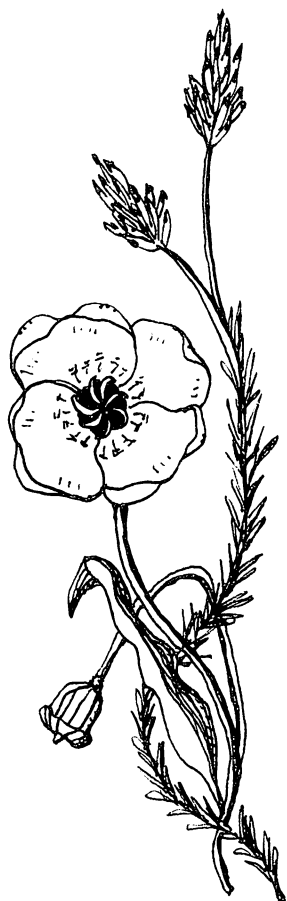
*Purple Heart*

*Smiling Sweetly -  
The white porcelain angel  
cracks wide apart  
revealing violet gashes  
and tears within her heart*

*Sitting Pretty-  
The purple pain inside her  
oozes, rips and twists  
hemorrhaging countless abuses  
isolation, shame and fists*

*Pleasingly Poised-  
Indigo bruises on her soul  
trapped in a frozen mirror  
barren of tender embraces  
or a single healing tear*

*Shattered Free-  
Blessed be*



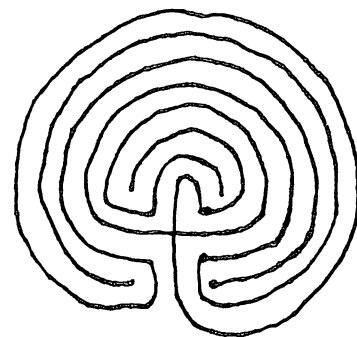
*Lavandula  
A Woman Unto Herself*

*Lilac, Lavandula and Lilith  
I call to you and softly step  
into the center of the Labyrinth*

*Knowing not, what will come  
and gently opening into the void  
Pearly rivers flowing freely  
through my Grecian column*

*My own emptiness touches the silvery moon  
and harmonizes with the Dark Goddess  
Until—the Faeries begin  
to play upon my harp strings*

*They pluck an ancient melody  
which stirs my sacred cauldron to life  
and I know in my Heart-of-Blackness  
that sex is the creator's love for herself*



Morgan le Fay Proctor  
Spring '97

# The Daily Fabric of Our Lives

A NUMBER OF YEARS AGO, I was in Manhattan being interviewed by a feminist historian who was writing an article on the women's movement. In the course of our conversation, I mentioned that my husband and I were uncertain of our summer plans as we might be facing a short stretch in jail for blockading at Clayoquot Sound up in British Columbia, where we had been protesting the logging of old growth forests.

My interviewer peered forward and said something high on my list of Least Favorite Responses to Political Action: "Are people still doing that sort of thing?"

When I assured her they were, she leaned back thoughtfully and said, "You know, I think to most New Yorkers the environment is sort of unreal." When I looked at her in a mild state of shock, she went on, "I mean, we support it, save the whales and all that, but we don't really believe in it."

This conversation made a lasting impact on me. At first, I laughed and felt superior, but as I began to consider her words I realized she had articulated a

problem that went far beyond New Yorkers — that was, in fact, a condition shared by lawmakers, corporate executives, decisionmakers of all kinds. The environment seems less real than the balance sheet or the latest results of voter polls. No wonder we're in the mess we're in!

But as I thought longer about the situation, my smugness began to erode. For if I were honest, I would have to admit that to most city dwellers, even most environmentalists, even most Pagans who claim to worship nature, in reality the environment is sort of unreal, something we visit from time to time, or appreciate aesthetically, without deeply grasping that our lives depend upon it.

My family and I had been arrested for trying to protect old-growth forest, but the truth is that until our friends took us hiking, we wouldn't necessarily have known old-growth when we saw it. How could we? There isn't enough of it left anywhere reasonably accessible for us to have become familiar with it. Like many Pagans, I garden — but the vegetables and fruit I grow are a wonderful addition to the food I buy, not my major source of subsistence. I may worry about the weather, but it rarely

determines my income or my daily caloric intake.

We all live in a culture that has more and more made the environment unreal, something exotic we watch on PBS, not the daily fabric of our existence. I began to feel that perhaps the most important work we could do, spiritually and politically, was to begin developing a real relationship with nature.

## UNDERLYING ATTITUDES

To do that, we need to be aware of the underlying attitudes that separate us from the natural world. There are, of course, the overriding philosophies which see human beings as above nature and therefore entitled to exploit the natural world for human ends. These philosophies arise both from religious sources and secular worship of profit, and the damage they cause is massive and visible.

But there is another more subtly damaging view of the human relationship to nature, and the damage it causes is perhaps more insidious because this view is often held by activists and environmentalists themselves. That is the attitude that human beings are somehow worse than nature, a blight on the planet, doomed to despoil whatever we touch, and that nature would be better off without us. Now, I admit that a case can be made for this view.

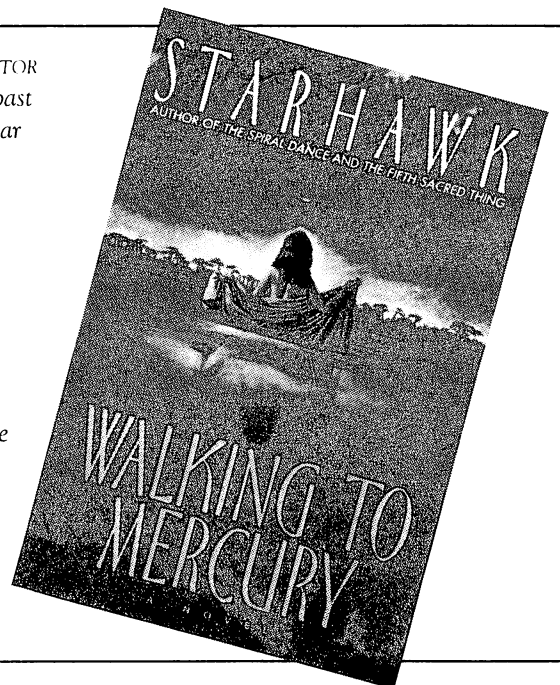
Nevertheless, I think that in its own way it is just as damaging as the worldview of the active despoilers. For if we believe that we are in essence bad for nature, we are profoundly separated from the natural world. We are also subtly relieved of responsibility for developing a healthy relationship with nature, for learning to observe and interact and play an active role in nature's healing.

The humans-as-blight vision also is self-defeating in organizing around environmental issues. It's hard to get people enthused about a movement that even unconsciously envisions their extinction as a good. As long as we see humans as separate from nature, whether

STARHAWK, A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR to *Reclaiming Newsletter* over the past fifteen years, will be writing a regular column for our magazine called "Making It Real." Starhawk is the author of *The Spiral Dance*, *Dreaming the Dark*, *The Fifth Sacred Thing*, and several other works.

Her latest novel, *Walking to Mercury*, was reviewed in our last issue. Copies will be available at the *Spiral Dance* (see page 31 of this issue) and at many bookstores.

You can write to Starhawk c/o *Reclaiming*, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.





we place ourselves above or below, we will inevitably create false dichotomies and set up human/nature oppositions in which everyone loses.

### AN INDIGENOUS VIEW

There is another view, and that is to see humans as being ourselves as much nature as any old-growth redwood, mosquito, or wildflower. We are, in fact, animals. We are bodies evolved over billions of years to eat, shit, breathe, drink, reproduce, die and decay like other bodies. In nature, every giant whale and tiny micro-organism has a role to play in the balance of the whole. How arrogant to think that we don't!

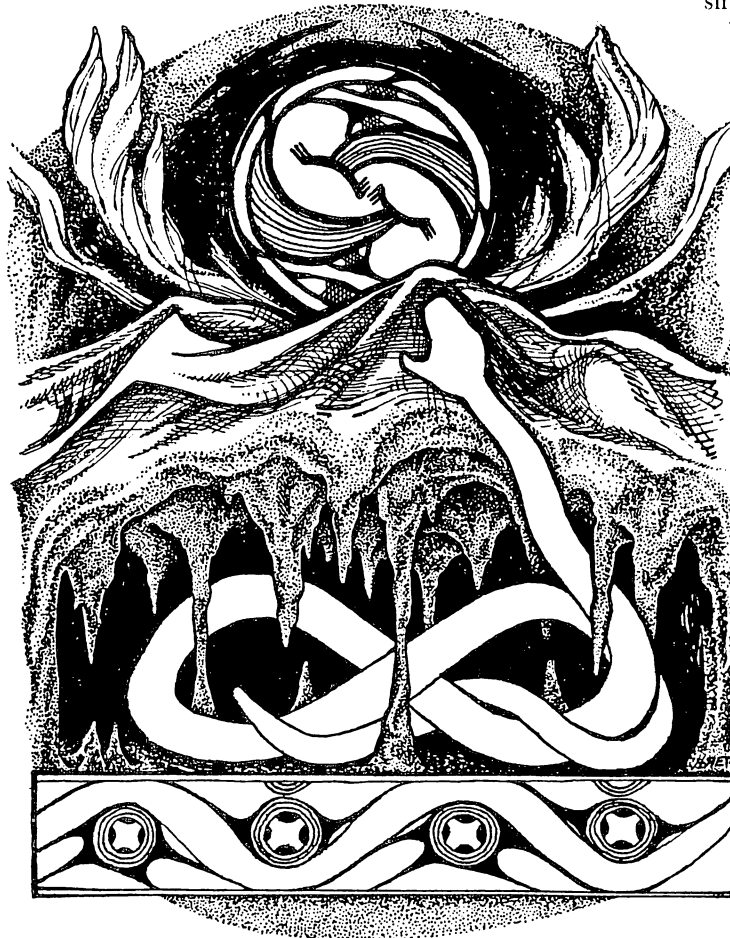
What might that role be? One hint might be in the words of Mabel McKay, Cache Creek Pomo elder and basketmaker. "When people don't use the plants, they get scarce. You must use them so they will come up again. All plants are like that. If they're not gathered from, or talked to and cared about, they'll die."

Could it be that we are supposed to be talking to the plants and animals, interacting with them, accepting the gifts they offer and using them in ways that further their growth? The Pomo basketmakers, by collecting sedge roots, pruned and thinned the stands of sedge and improved their habitat. The sedge, flourishing by the riversides and on the banks of creeks, helps hold the soil with its roots, preventing erosion. The First People of California pruned, coppiced, harvested, and burned the grasslands and forests in patterns that created optimum conditions for wildlife, for both open meadows and the growth of the great trees. Their interaction with the land was so elegantly attuned that European invaders missed it entirely, believing they had found a wilderness untouched by human intervention (and open for their exploitation), when what they had actually found was more in the nature of an exquisitely cared-for wild garden.

All over this continent, native peoples used fire, prayer, tools and ceremonies to influence their natural environment. The ecosystems we revere in forest and prairie co-evolved with

human cultures. Outside of the highest mountain peaks and the glaciers, no "untouched" wilderness existed here. European preconceptions and racist dismissal of other cultures created the fantasy of the "virgin" wilderness. The very "nature" we see ourselves as blighting was formed by millennia of cohabitation.

Indigenous cultures around the world, including those we draw from in



our present-day Pagan traditions, have seen themselves as part of nature. Not all have been successful in keeping the balance: indigenous cultures have hunted animals to extinction, have destroyed forests and desertified cropland. We must not romanticize other cultures, but neither should we close our eyes to what we can learn from them.

### THE FIRST LESSON

The first lesson is that we as human beings do have the capacity to meet both our needs and that of the nonhuman

beings around us, in ways that actually increase diversity, habitat, balance and beauty. If we fail to do so, it is because of a flaw in our attitudes, our observations, our goals or our actions, not our inherent being.

The second lesson we can learn is that nature wants to talk to us. Far from being better off without us, nature would be incomplete without human eyes

admiring her and human voices singing praise. human hands tending, pruning, and gathering, and human bellies filled with her bounty. The plants will die if they are not cared about. And especially right now, when so much of nature suffers from human-inflicted wounds, we need human creativity, ingenuity, and sweat to renew the balance our out-of-tune culture has damaged.





How do we do it?

I hope in the course of this column to explore many approaches to restoring the human/nature connection. To begin with, we can each commit ourselves to developing a personal relationship with the natural world, to

making that relationship the heart of our spiritual practice and the inspiration of our actions in the world.

Perhaps the best way to begin is simply to step outside and observe. Find some spot that is still at least partly wild. If you live in the city, that might mean a less-tended corner of a park, or a vacant lot filled with weeds, or an unkempt garden — not a monoculture lawn under a few clipped trees, or a manicured flowerbed, but anyplace that seems slightly out of control. Spend a few moments each day there, if you can, just

*continued on page 45*

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
SEPT 21 Reclaiming Equinox <i>see page 31</i> LAST DAYS OF SUN IN VIRGO	22 FALL EQUINOX Elements of Magic Class Starts ★	23 SUN ENTERS LIBRA	24 Tarot Class Starts ★	25 Druidic Feast of the Guardian Spirit Rosh Hashanah	26 Entertain Tonight Reclaiming Harvest Moon Retreat begins <i>see page 33</i>	27 Breath & Body Work for Women Survivors Monthly Group ★
28	29 OCT 1  LIBRA	30	8 Celtic Beginning of the Fading Time JUPITER GOES DIRECT 12" AQUARIUS	9  CAPRICORN NEPTUNE GOES DIRECT 27" CAPRICORN	10	11 Ancient Celebration of "The Old Lady of the Elder Tree" Headwaters Protest <i>see page 10</i>
5 Reclaiming Harvest Moon Retreat ends	6	7	15 BLOOD MOON  ARIES Isis' Feastday	16 <i>A good time to end a relationship</i>	17	18 Southern California Harvest Moon Celebration begins <i>see page 32</i>
12 Southern California Harvest Moon Celebration ends	13	14 URANUS GOES DIRECT 4" AQUARIUS	22  CANCER			
19	20	21 <i>Good day for haircuts</i>				

Things to look for in Autumn

- Swelling, ripening and splitting seeds on the grey bare horse chestnuts (*Aesculus californica*)
- Pineapple Sages (*Salvia rutilans*) in bloom, provide autumn and winter food for hummingbirds
- Mexican Bush Marigolds (*Tagetes lemmonii*) in full bloom
- September is often the warmest month of the year in the Bay Area
- Buy spring bulbs now and refrigerate them before planting
- Gossamer on the winds, and baby spiders in the houses
- Work magic for rain

Notes

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		OCT 23			24	25
					<i>Feast of the Spirits of Air</i>	Reclaiming Spiral Dance <i>see page 31</i> Illinois Samhain
26	27	28	29	30	31	NOV 1
Daylight Savings Ends			<i>Meditate on the apple today</i>		 SCORPIO SAMHAIN EVE Critical Mass SF	<i>Feed the Dead</i> Rewcaving Samhain <i>see page 32</i>
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>Dance with the Dead</i>	<i>Support your local soup kitchen</i> Feast Day of St. Martin de Porres			<i>Birth of Tiamat</i>	 AQUARIUS	<i>Gwynn ap Nudd— The Lord of Faerie opens the door for a day. Step thru, but don't eat anything!</i>
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	Power & Mystery Class Starts ★	<i>Lunant Shoes— Irish festival honoring the Sidhe</i>			<i>Druidic Fest of the Musicians</i> MOURNING MOON  TAURUS	<i>Good time to cut wood</i>
16	17	18	19	20	21	
<i>Hecate Night</i>				<i>Good time to travel</i>	 LEO	

*Things to look for at Samhain*

Paperwhite narcissus start to appear

Chrysanthemums in bloom

Leaves are turning

Newts start to migrate

Mushrooms fruit after rain

Horse chestnuts' polished nuts begin to fall from the naked trees

Ferns and moss uncurling

Plant spring bulbs after Thanksgiving

*Notes*

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						NOV 22
23	24 <i>Good day to visit physician</i>	25 <i>Good day for legal matters</i>	26	27	28	29 CRONE MOON  SAGITTARIUS
30	DEC 1	2	3 <i>Roman Bona Dea, The Good Goddess, celebrated today</i>	4 <i>Feast of Chango, Orisha of Fire</i>	5 <i>Good day to sign contracts</i>	6
7  PISCES	8 MERCURY GOES RETROGRADE	9 <i>International Human Rights Day</i>	10	11	12 <i>Hanukkah</i>	13 LONG NIGHT'S MOON  GEMINI
14	15 <i>Halcyon days — following days before Solstice are blessed</i>	16	17 <i>Saturnalia — Roman Saturn honored with feasting, merriment &amp; gift giving</i>	18 <i>Good day for travel</i> <i>Saturnalia</i>	19 <i>Saturnalia</i>	20 Reclaiming Solstice see page 31 Illinois Solstice <i>Saturnalia</i>
21 Yule  LIBRA WINTER SOLSTICE						<i>Many thanks to Deborah for her Celtic Tree Calendar and to Anna Thorn for her "Things to look for."</i> ★ Classes & Workshops: See pages 28–29

*Things to look for at Yule*

Jasmine and jade plants start to bloom

Leptospermum & calendulas in bloom, callas start to sprout

Magnolia soulangeana begin to open their buds

Sweet gum leaves are brightly colored

Horse chestnuts sprouting

Look for robins and Oregon juncos flying in from the north

From now til Brigid, a good time to plant trees and roses

The California bay laurels start to bloom

Look for miners' lettuce

Mustard makes the hills gold

*Notes*

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# Wild Woman of the East

(a.k.a. Ode to Mary Ellen Donald)

She drifts to the stage  
Nonchalant as can be  
Hiding her storehouse  
Of fire energy

Fills the empty chair  
That becomes her throne  
For she is true Queen  
Of instruments alone

Reaches down for dark drum  
That yearns for her lap  
Instant quiet rules full room  
Babies wake from their nap

The crowd awaits  
Thousand eyes peer her way;  
Hello, all you people!  
Let's make a fire today!

She beats on the drum as fast as she can  
Her nimble fingers work in time with her hands  
A doom and a tech and a left and a grab  
What beat was that? Who can keep a tab!  
Faster and faster, no time to spare  
Gotta squeeze in those fancies plus a left-tech pair  
Sparks shoot out all one-eighty degrees  
Triggering tribal queen dance of the bees  
And the fire she makes that encircles her feet  
She creates with pure pulse of doumbek beat  
Oh, Mars' lightning bolts are under her control  
For she tamed them to strike on goatskin bowl...

The crowd that came  
Just sit aghast  
(When Mary Ellen plays  
The jaws drop fast)

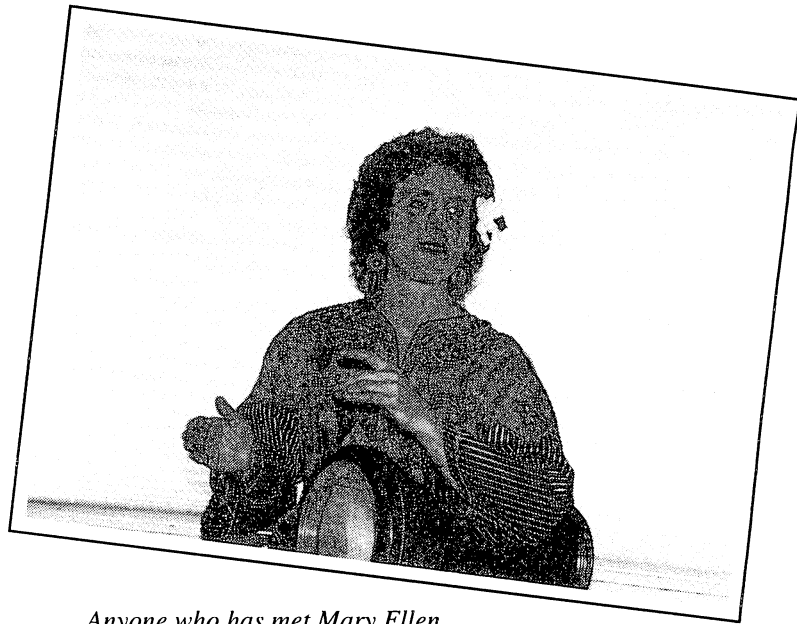
Clapping like madmen  
They stand and cheer  
Hold on, people!  
You've got zills to hear!

And with the zills  
Another fire is made  
Sweet chimes and claps,  
Sudden arm cascades!

Another roar  
From exuberant guests  
Speaks for itself —  
She's clearly the best!

Send your sounds out to the air,  
Wild Woman of the East  
They shall stir both man and beast;  
Rhythmic southern fire never to cease.

— by Sabrina Spinali, April 13, 1997, Copyright 1997



Anyone who has met Mary Ellen Donald — a master of the drum, the cymbals, the tar, the piano and many other musical instruments — and heard her play knows that she is a channel for rhythms that are hidden within the bowels of the earth. If you aren't taking music lessons from her now, you may have seen her play at a Reclaiming ritual — Samhain is her usual gig. And if you haven't seen her play, you've probably danced wildly, in a Dionysian frenzy, to her music! I went to one of her recitals in April, and felt so enthralled afterward, I decided to write her a poem. I hope Reclaiming readers who know her can identify with it.

— Sabrina

Reclaiming presents....

## The Spiral Dance

a Samhain ritual



Saturday, October 25, 7 p.m.

Herbst Pavilion, Fort Mason, San Francisco

For more information, see page 31 or call the  
Reclaiming Events Line, 415-929-9249.



Reclaiming recommends:

## RHYTHM LABORATORY

Witchcamp rhythm teacher extraordinaire Jeffree Alphonsus Mooney will be hosting a weekly Rhythm Laboratory using body, voice, and percussion. Fall workshop in San Francisco. Call 415-346-3900 for location and info.



## Tarot for Beginners

An introductory class  
taught by Margaret and Mariah

Six Wednesday evenings beginning Sept 24

We will study the cards using Rachel Pollack's "78 Keys of Wisdom" and learn some simple readings to use at home.

Six Wednesday evenings in San Francisco.

Starting September 24th. Location TBA. \$75- \$150 sliding scale. Contact Margaret at 415-885-0775 if interested.



## Reclaiming Classes with Beverly & Doug



### Elements of Magic

Monday eves, Sept 22 - Oct 27

With the art of Magic, we deepen our vision and focus our will, empowering ourselves to act in the world. We begin the practice of Magic by working with the Elements: Earth, Air, Fire, Water & Spirit.

Six Mondays from 7:30-10 p.m., Mill Valley/Marin County. \$150-\$75 sliding scale. Call for registration, 707-865-WAND.

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### Power & Mystery

Monday eves, Nov 10 - Dec 15

"When you hear the call from the land below, it sounds both strange and familiar..." Descend with Inanna. Class is based on Starhawk's book *Truth or Dare*. Prerequisite: Elements of Magic.

Six Mondays from 7:30-10 p.m., Mill Valley/Marin County. \$150-\$75 sliding scale. Call for registration, 707-865-WAND.

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### Beverly & Doug's Fall Schedule

September 27-28, Pacific Grove, CA: Ashtanga Yoga Saturday & Sunday noon-3 p.m., Sacred Dance Healing Ritual Saturday 7:30 p.m. Contact Emily at 408-649-5065.

October 3-5, Los Gatos, CA: Harvest Weekend Retreat, Santa Cruz Mountains. See page 29 for details.

October 9, Sebastopol, CA: Reweaving Our Lives / A Ritual Journey at Milk & Honey. 7 p.m. Call Jill at 707-824-1155.

### Magical Apprenticeship

September 1997-February 1998

Beverly Frederick, drawing on years of magical study and practice with Starhawk and the Reclaiming Community as well as daily yoga and meditation practice, is offering a Magical Apprenticeship beginning September 1997.

Participants will learn and practice Herbalism and Medicine Making; Yoga, Movement & Stillness; Deep Meditative States; Anchoring & Aspecting; Rhythmic Entrainment Possibilities; Energy work to clarify blocks & boundaries; Dialogues with inflated & deflated Selves; Trust Games to contact Younger Self; Divination; Enchant-ment.

The group will meet 10 a.m.-5 p.m. one Saturday of each month: Sept 20, Oct 18, Nov 15, Dec 13, Jan 10 and Feb 7. Participants will also meet in threes and fours during the month, at our homes, to keep our practices fresh and alive within a community context.

To begin this journey, you should be able to ground, create sacred space and invoke with relative comfort, go into trance states and return, and have an understanding of your personal energy and boundaries, either through the Iron Pentacle, the Chakra centers or some other definable process.

If you are ready, send a letter of intent, up to three typed pages, describing your present gifts, present challenges and current magical practice. Sliding scale \$360-\$600. Group size is limited, so reservation by full payment requested.

Send registration payments and letters of intent to: Beverly Frederick, P.O. Box 298, Monte Rio, CA 95462. Call 707-865-WAND for further information.



## Transformative Tarot

taught by Flame and Robin Dolan

6-12 week class forming in October

Guided by tarot, we will explore our full potentials. No previous experience required. All participants will use their own Tarot deck, and establish daily practices for transformation and evolution of self, community, and the Universe. Classes will meet weekly for three hours to develop, support and explore this practice. Sliding scale \$150-175 (6 weeks), \$300-\$325 (12-week). Class sizes are limited.

Call 415-346-4374 for information.

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Reclaiming recommends:

## Breath & Body Work for Women Survivors of Incest & Abuse

With Cybele (a.k.a. Suzette Rochat)

Ongoing Monthly group in Santa Rosa

Saturdays, 12-6 p.m. — Sept. 27, Oct. 11, Nov. 8.

Bodily-focused healing group for survivors. Our work will include movement, meditation, intuitive practices, writing, sharing, work with Younger Self, drawing, and trance work. Three-month commitment required if accepted into the group. Call Cybele at 707-525-4992 or 415-541-5650 for information/to schedule an intake interview.

\*\*\*\*\*

Cybele plans to resume San Francisco morning class of Intuitive Practice through the Body in early 1998.

## Elements of Magic for Women and Men

with Madrone (Kim Jack) — Second teacher t.b.a.

Beginning in November

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 follows feminist consensus process. We hope to provide a fair and nurturing environment for all participants. Beginning six-week course. Prerequisite: Read first six chapters of *The Spiral Dance* by Starhawk. Be committed to attending all six classes. \$150-75 sliding scale. Call Madrone, 415-923-1458.

## The Magic of Sexual Empowerment

with Madrone (Kim Jack)

One-day workshop in November

I have been offering this Workshop at Witchcamp for the last two years. It has been a wonderful experience sharing this work at camp, so I decided to offer this class in the city.

Within safe sacred space we explore the realms of our sexual energy. This class is a day-long experience for the adventuresome. We will be working naked, exploring our personal boundaries in group work, learning to sense our sexual power, experiencing energy orgasms and sexual healing through breath work, self love of the physical body, working with the sexual woundings we all have. Feeling the joy of allowing ourselves more sexual fulfillment.

For more information, call Madrone (Kim Jack), 415-923-1458.

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## Reclaiming Harvest Retreat

October 3-5 with Beverly & Doug in the Santa Cruz Mountains

Share in a weekend of Earth based spirituality, deep visioning, story sharing and song. Enter the temple of your body and explore, cleanse, and begin healing your vital energy centers with yoga, breathwork, meditation and chanting.

Join us as we sing in the hot tub and drum and dance by the fire. Learn what holds you back from the passion you seek, while exploring the labyrinth, the redwoods and open fields of our secluded retreat.

Sumptuous vegetarian meals provided Friday dinner to Sunday lunch. \$300-\$195 sliding scale. Work exchange

available. Space is limited so send your \$100 deposit early. Call 707-865-9263 or 415-339-8313.



# Reclaiming Restructuring Update

As of the collective's most recent meeting (June 23), we have made the following progress on restructuring.

In our March meeting, we began to gather information from the local San Francisco Bay Area cells (such as newsletter, public rituals, administration, special projects, women in prison, etc.). We had asked them to meet and decide who they were, their purpose, what they wanted to do, how they wished to define themselves, and what they may or may not want from Reclaiming Collective. This process is ongoing.

Starhawk and Beverly came to the brilliant realization that consensus process is fine for decision-making, but it's not a process for design. So as of June, we've decided to begin the process of forming charettes. The definition of charettes we are using is the one Starhawk and Beverly used in permaculture workshops — "small teams of two or three people look at a problem and come up with independent solutions. Then the larger group can look at the range of solutions and pick and choose the elements from each that they like the best."

We want to use this process to get restructuring designs, and a statement of core values. These small charettes are initially comprised of two collective members and one or two interested community (non-collective) members. We will shift membership, hopefully twice before the collective's November retreat.

Each charrette looks at both Reclaiming's structure and at the core values lists to try to come up with a core statement and/or their own synthesis. In our January '97 retreat and at further collective meetings, we've managed to articulate some core values, and we have a list of other ideas which we haven't consensed on. Charettes will be provided with copies of these lists (notes from the January retreat; comments on same; a core values statement that Starhawk formulated; comments on same; lists from retreat; "bucket" items [unresolved and unclassified]).

For the time being, the scope of this process is necessarily

limited to what is now the San Francisco Collective and basically, Northern California, as well as coming up with our statement of core values. But it does not at this point answer questions about the larger community — we need to do this step first, and then we can tackle that aspect.

After the charettes meet, we will then move into a phase of review and synthesis. In addition, we've decided to cancel the community meetings, and will look for other structures in which to get community input.

— *Love and blessings, Macha (with input from Rose and Starhawk)*

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## The Ritual Planning Cell

### Who are those people?

The Ritual Planning Cell (RPC) is a small but growing group that plans and produces Reclaiming public rituals (the Solstices, Equinoxes, Brigid, Beltane and Lammas). Because it is a larger and more complex ritual, The Spiral Dance at Samhain is planned and produced by a separate cell (some participants are members of both cells). Members of the cell may plan particular rituals or commit to a cycle of rituals encompassing the wheel of the year.

The RPC meets several weeks before each sabbat to brainstorm, plan and coordinate the ritual. The discussion includes a review of what has been done for the ritual in the past, and a process of spinning ideas and visions for the overall theme or intent of the ritual, as well as the specific actions, words and songs to achieve that intent. Ritual planning meetings are often lively and lengthy, because, like Reclaiming, we operate by the consensus method.

Members of the RPC often priest/ess the ritual (the various parts of creating sacred space, leading the trance, teaching and leading songs, gracing, dragoning or anchoring, for example), or volunteer to ensure that a member of the community can fulfill the priest/ess role. A member of the cell also does the introduction and explanation for each ritual. The RPC also ensures that the more "mundane" necessities for doing magical work — wood for the fire, flowers for the garlands, Epsom salts and alcohol for the cauldron, trash bags for clean-up — are provided. Some time after each ritual the members of the cell gather to critique the ritual and share the feedback received from participants.

We would love to hear your comments about all or any part of the rituals and answer any questions you have about the rituals or the cell. The Ritual Planning Cell contacts for Summer Solstice through Winter Solstice 1997 are:

Flame 415-346-4374 or [latinasexy@aol.com](mailto:latinasexy@aol.com)

Morgaine 415-648-8781 or [morgainew1@aol.com](mailto:morgainew1@aol.com)

We hope to hear from you — and to make magic with you at the next Reclaiming public ritual!

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## Reclaiming's Prison Work Cell

The Northern California Women's Facility near Stockton has allowed Wiccan clergy to come into the prison twice a month to lead a circle and study group since December 1995. Volunteers are needed in the prison work cell, which had its first meeting in early June. Cell members from anyplace in California can: (1) correspond with a prisoner; (2) act as a support person for carefully-selected women when they are released on parole, befriending them with carefully set boundaries. In addition, Bay Area volunteers can: (1) go into the prison to do ritual with the women on an occasional basis; (2) go into the prison once a month for six months.

Donations of money to provide literature, tapes, videos, and ritual supplies, as well as books of shadows for the prisoners, may be sent to: Vibra Willow, c/o Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114. Checks should be made out to Reclaiming and earmarked "prison work."





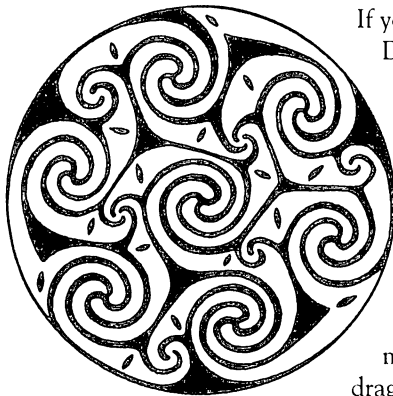
# Reclaiming's 1997 Rituals

## The Spiral Dance

Saturday, October 25, 7 p.m., Herbst Pavilion, Fort Mason, San Francisco.

*"This is the night when the veil is thin that divides the worlds. It is the New Year in the time of the year's death, when the harvest is gathered and the fields lie fallow. For tonight the King of the Waning Year has sailed over the sunless sea that is the womb of the Mother, and steps ashore on the Shining Isle, the luminous world egg, becoming the seed of his own rebirth. The gates of life and death are opened; the Sun Child is conceived; the dead walk, and to the living is revealed the mystery: that every ending is but a new beginning. We meet in time out of time, everywhere and nowhere, here and there, to greet the Lord of Death who is Lord of Life, and the Triple Goddess who is the circle of rebirth...."*

Reclaiming has been producing Spiral Dance rituals since 1979. The Spiral Dance has become Reclaiming's largest ritual of the year, a pageant of music, poetry and dance that carries us to the Isle of Apples to commune with our ancestors.



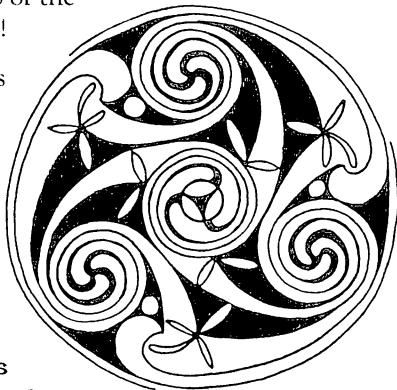
If you have names of Beloved Dead from the past year, call M. Macha Nightmare, 415-454-4411. Call Patti Martin with names of new-born babies from the past year, 415-647-9675.

Volunteers are needed to help with this ritual. Experienced participants may want to be graces or dragons. Others can help with set

up or the

all-important clean up crew!

Advance purchase of tickets is recommended. Tickets are available at selected Bay Area locations or by mail. For more information call the Reclaiming Events Line, 415-929-9249.



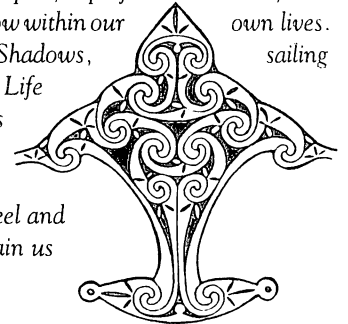
## Women's and Men's Samhain Rituals

Separate Women's and Men's rituals are planned for San Francisco the weekend of October 24-26. For more information call the Reclaiming Events Line, 415-929-9249.

## Autumn Equinox

Sunday, September 21, 1 p.m., Beltane Grove, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. Bring food and drink to share.

*"This is the time of harvest, of thanksgiving and joy, of leave taking and sorrow. Now day and night are equal, in perfect balance, and we give thought to the balance and flow within our own lives. The Sun King has become Lord of Shadows, sailing West: we follow him into the dark. Life declines; the season of barrenness is on us, yet we give thanks for that which we have reaped and gathered. We meet to turn the Wheel and weave the cord of life that will sustain us through the dark...."*



## Winter Solstice

Saturday, December 20, 4 p.m., Ocean Beach south of Taraval. Bring wood, a towel if you want to plunge, food and drink to share.

*"This is the night of Solstice, the longest night of the year. Now darkness triumphs; and yet, gives way and changes into light. The breath of nature is suspended: all waits while within the Cauldron, the Dark King is transformed into the Infant Light. We watch for the coming of dawn, when the Great Mother again gives birth to the Divine Child Sun, who is bringer of hope and the promise of summer. This is the stillness behind motion, when time itself stops; the center which is also the circumference of all. We are awake in the night. We turn the Wheel to bring the light. We call the sun from the womb of night...."*



All events are clean & sober — no alcohol or drugs, please.

For more information, check out events online at <http://www.reclaiming.org/cauldron/> or call the Reclaiming Events Line, 415-929-9249.

*Quotations from "The Spiral Dance," c. 1989 by Starhawk.*



# Thorn Coyle

## Summer/Fall 1997 Schedule

- September — Toronto: Devotional Dance  
Contact Dona Saunders, 64 Spruce Hill Rd., Toronto, Ontario, M4E 3G3
- October — Kalamazoo, Michigan: Devotional Dance  
Contact Carnell@wmich.edu
- January — Portland/Vancouver BC: "The Descent of Inanna: Sacred Dance and Magic," with Sage Goode  
Contact ravnglas@aracnet.com



# Starhawk

## Summer/Fall 1997 Schedule

Information: Harmony Network 707-823-9377

- September 19-21: Rowe, MA  
Autumn Equinox Retreat for Women  
Contact 413-339-4954
- September 26-28: Bangor, PA  
Weekend workshop for Women and Men  
Contact: Kirkridge 610-588-1793
- November 21-23: Northern Florida (with David Miller)  
Weekend workshop for Southeast Friends of Reclaiming  
Contact: Michelle, 352-373-9078, e-mail gincin@msn.com
- 1998 — Goddess Sites Tour of Malta  
Contact Harmony Network, 707-823-9377

## ReWeaving Events in the Los Angeles Area

ReWeaving is a group of women and men in Southern California working together to teach and make magic: the art of empowering ourselves and each other. Our classes, workshops and public rituals are presented in the Reclaiming tradition. Dates for our fall rituals are:

September 20 — Fall Equinox

November 1 — Samhain

Rituals are clean and sober, no drugs or alcohol please.

Classes and workshops are being scheduled for coming months as well. For more information, contact Ilyana MoonFire 818-368-5215, email: lunafire@ix.netcom.com.

### Join the ReWeaving Mailing List!

Get the latest announcements about ReWeaving classes and events plus other local and worldwide events. Discussions of pagan-related topics are also encouraged. To subscribe: Send e-mail to: reweaving-request@renaissoft.com with "subscribe" as the subject and a single space in the body of the text.



## Harvest Moon Celebration Planned for Southern California

Harvest Moon Celebration will be held on October 18th and 19th at the Will Geer Theatricum Botanicum, located in beautiful Topanga Canyon.

Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. and the festival runs until 6:00 p.m. both days. Workshops, rituals, pagan wares and networking all located in a beautiful wooded setting.

Our presenters this year include Donald Michael Kraig, author of *Modern Magick*; M. Macha NightMare of Reclaiming and author of *Death & Dying*; Timothy Roderick, author of *The Once Unknown Familiar*; Deirdre Sargent, First Officer of ESP and Gardnerian High Priestess; Ann Finin, of The Roebuck, Linda Underhill, Director of Presenters of the Past and Educational Society for Pagans-Northern California (ESP-N) Board Member; and Cerridwen's Daughters, an all women's singing group.

This year we have lowered prices 25%. Day of event prices are \$50 for two days and \$30 for one day. Discounts apply for ESP-N Associate Members and groups of 4 or more. Scholarships are also available either on work study or through the Harriet Becket-Bond Memorial Fund.

Write to P.O. Box 10975, Oakland, CA 94610, or email ESPfirst@aol.com for more information. Thanks, Deirdre Sargent, First Officer ESP-N.



## Reclaiming Community Potluck Dinner & Talent Cafe

**Theme: Red Dragon Ritual for healing blood disease and  
immune disorders**

**Saturday, October 4, 1997, 6:30-9ish**

225 Potrero Avenue, San Francisco

Come weave magic for all those you love who are suffering from blood disease and/ or immune system related disorders. Of course, as with all Reclaiming magic, pleasure will be a central focus, so bring food (preferably vegetarian), drink or dessert goodies for the usual potluck supper.

Wear red and bring dishes and spells that look and/or feel "red" to deepen the magic. Such intense work must always be followed by some good play, so we'll have the usual talent café after dinner and a short blood healing ritual.

If you have any questions or you would like a time slot of up to 10 minutes to share your poetry, song, dance or other unique performance, please call Chris at (415) 241-9656.



## Edge of Perception in Springfield, Illinois

In our last issue, we reported on the Beltaine ritual sponsored by Edge of Perception in Springfield, Illinois. Upcoming events in the Springfield area sponsored by the Edge of Perception Collective include:

Fall Equinox	Sept. 13
Samhain	Oct. 25
Winter Solstice	Dec. 20

All holiday celebrations are on Saturday to make traveling easier for folks, and we try to stay off the actual holiday for private groups to have their own.

For more information, contact the Edge of Perception Collective at 217-523-4225, or write P.O. Box 1424, Springfield, IL 62705-1424.

You can also email Ruth Souther at [RSouther@aol.com](mailto:RSouther@aol.com)

## CALIFORNIA WITCHCAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Your support this past year helped send more low-income Witches than ever to camp. This year's California Witchcamp raised twice as much money as last year's camp. This was due to the hard work and efforts of many people.

We thank all those who donated money, time and efforts to the Witchcamp Scholarship Fund.

Next year's planned events are :

- A Rave (hopefully co-produced by the Witchcamp ravers)
- Another of our very successful garage sales
- a benefit ritual
- ongoing sales of the Witchcamp Chant Book — see below

Look for announcements in future issues to help volunteer or get involved in organizing these events!

### Chants Books in Third Printing

Witchcamp Chant Books are available (now in 3rd printing!). Features 100 chants from Reclaiming camps and rituals. Here's a perfect way to jog your memory on a favorite chant or song, or to get all the words for one you almost know. Send \$6ppd to Reclaiming, attn: George Franklin, Box 14404, San Francisco CA 94114 (make checks payable to Reclaiming/WCSF).

Donations to the scholarship funds are welcome anytime. Donations will sponsor low-income Witches at the 1998 camp. Send any amount to the above-listed P.O. Box and specify that it go to scholarship funds.

Again, many thanks for everyone's support!

## Sundays with Stone Soup in British Columbia

The Stone Soup Collective is a teaching collective based in Victoria, British Columbia, made up of Aurora, Catherine and Sophia. For five years, we've been offering ongoing classes and workshops in eco-feminist witchcraft in the Reclaiming Tradition.

This fall we are offering a wide variety of evening and full-day classes in the Victoria, BC area. For more information, contact Aurora at 250-361-4680 (calls will be returned collect).



# A RECOUNT OF NICHOLAS CULPEPER'S REVOLUTIONARY PREDICTIONS FOR 1652

...Delving into Olde Texts...

by Sabrina Spinati

Hidden in the paper-ridden reservoirs of the British Museum's library in London, England are a mass of unreclaimed occult texts just waiting to be read by eyes of the metaphysically inclined. In the library one can view, with permission, texts hundreds and even thousands of years old. The construction of paperback and hardback books produced today cannot be compared to the grand craftsmanship of the ancient ones held in the British Library: leather bound texts in a deep, rich mahogany color, impressed and stamped with interlock designs and inlaid with gold filigree — an artist's delight. Imagine yourself in this library: a small green lamp illuminates the small desk where you sit among a row of seven other desks and text investigators, as you open an alchemy text from 1553. The text you hold in your hands happens to be made of "vellum," the old term to denote pages made of goat or other animal skin. The odor is peculiar — a sort of old potpourri smell, but nevertheless pleasing. The printing is in calligraphy type, and you spy illustrations of strange invocation symbols created by ancient magicians. Carefully, with delicacy, you turn the pages in awe, feeling the heaviness of the page in your hand. You feel your blood rise and your pulse immediately quicken, as you experience the thrill of uncovering old knowledge currently unavailable to the masses because many of these texts have never been published in modern editions.

Last year I felt with such

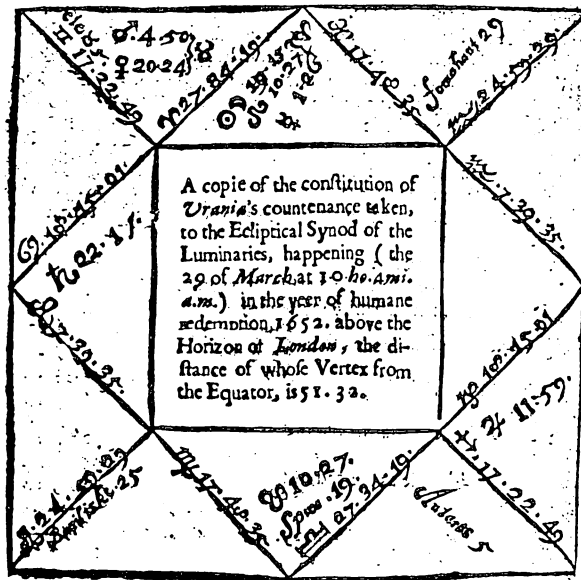
intensity these emotions while investigating old occult texts there as part of a master's degree program. I decided to focus researching on one author and his text in particular, and as a result, I ended up having a textual affair, with dead man Culpeper.

## Nicholas Culpeper

Nicholas Culpeper is a name people are familiar with if they read about herbal medicine and traditional astrology (as opposed to modern astrology). Culpeper was born on October 18, 1616 in Ockley, Surrey to Mary and Reverend Nicholas Culpeper only a few weeks after his father died. He had a relatively strict upbringing (no doubt a contribution to his rebelliousness) and was raised by his grandfather, William Attersoll, in Sussex. Attersoll was a well-known clergyman of the local church, an author, and a Cambridge scholar who held a lot

of weight in the area. He and Culpeper's mom sent Culpeper off to Cambridge with the idea that little Nicholas was going to become a minister, but did they have a surprise! It is noted in several books that Culpeper played hooky often, didn't like to study the ministry and in his spare time, used to sneak into medical classes because he liked the medical field much better. While he was at college, he was in the midst of a heavy love affair, sending and receiving letters to and from his childhood honey Judith Rivers, a well-off girl from Sussex. Something was amiss; for status reasons the two wouldn't be able to marry, so they eloped. Not the typical happy ending of American movies — while Culpeper waited around at the spot they had decided to meet at, Rivers was on her way and a lightning bolt struck her down and killed her — no joke. Culpeper's family was pretty ashamed and Culpeper was just emotionally demolished so he dropped out of college and hung around until his grandfather granted his innermost wishes: apothecary school.

Culpeper was trained by different apothecaries, but he never received any credentials. Still, he dispensed and made drugs with his friend Samuel Leadbetter at Leadbetter's shop in London. The College of Physicians, the college of medicine interested in controlling and regulating what went on in the medical field, just hated Culpeper, thought him a quack doctor, and sent him warnings to stop. He not only continued, but translated their preciously guarded medical texts from Latin into English so the public could understand and have access to them (plus, he added his own observations that were inherently astrological, which was quite absurd to those physicians!). Culpeper later married Alice Fields and moved to Spitalfields, where he set up his own drug



Traditional-style astrology chart for the famous "Black Monday," the day of the eclipse; from Culpeper's treatise.

shop. He died of tuberculosis on January 10, 1654.\*

### Culpeper and Astrology

Culpeper became interested in astrology when he met William Lilly (date of meeting unknown), who became his astrology teacher. Lilly was one of the most famous and respected astrologers of the 17th century, and he counseled just about everyone from every social scale. Both Lilly and Culpeper were involved in the “astrological boom” of the 17th century; that is, nobles, politicians, intellectuals, scientists, doctors, criminals, housewives, commoners, mathematicians, and more sought the astrologer’s advice and took their words as gospel. Astrology was an important part of English culture during that century. Because of its popularity, astrologers had success publishing their own almanacs and prognostications (the total almanac production in the 17th century for England was 3,000,000 to 4,000,000). One common and favorite activity of astrologers, especially Lilly, was to make political predictions. During the 1650s in particular, political propaganda was widespread because people were expecting a new political and religious cycle. The beheading of Charles I in 1649 and the abolition of the monarchy, the House of Lords, and the Church of England led to the flourishing of radical groups during the Commonwealth era—groups like the Diggers, Fifth Monarchists, Ranters and Quakers, who were interested in a just political order, communal property, religious toleration, and a reform of morals and laws. Culpeper was a part of these movements which rebelled against authority and establishment, and, especially, authoritarian Oliver Cromwell, who had gained state power after Charles I was dethroned.

Culpeper held the view like many

\* *Interesting side note:* Culpeper was tried for witchcraft on December 17, 1642 for allegedly bewitching a woman named Sarah Lynge. The reason for this charge is still considered a mystery. He was found not guilty and acquitted.

others at this period that because a new cycle taking place in the culture, in the political arena, that the “golden age” was about to occur. When though? Well, a solar eclipse was set for Monday, March 29, 1652, and because eclipses had always been thought of in ancient times as a potent omen, capable of inducing revolutionary change, astrologers—acting as the mediators



between God and the people—predicted for “Black Monday” that a new messiah would arrive, that kings in power everywhere would fall from their positions, that there would be mass destruction, wars, thefts, new laws, religions, customs, and governments, sacking of cities and towns, miscarriages, rapes, and more. The astrologers’ predictions only helped to further the alarm, excitement and political unrest already widespread in England at this time.

### Culpeper’s Text

Culpeper’s predictions were bound as *Catastrophe Magnatum: or, The Fall of Monarchie. A Caveat to Magistrates. Deduced from the Eclipse of the Sunne, March 29. 1652. With a Probable Conjecture of the Determination of the Effects.* (1652) He predicted that kings

would indeed fall, the biblical Apocalypse would materialize and Christ’s arrival would bring utopia (Culpeper was a Puritan). What Culpeper did, however, was build up a case for his predictions by quoting from ancient astrology texts that dealt with eclipses. He quotes a variety of astrologers, such as Abu Ma’shar, a Persian astrologer (AD 787-886); Johannes Heinrich Alsted, a German astrologer (1588-1638); Tomaso Campanella, an Italian philosopher (1568-1639); Guido Bonatti, an Italian astrologer and professor (1235-1296); Ibn Abi ‘L-Ridjal, an Arab astrologer (birth unknown, he was a medieval astrologer); Cyprian von Leowitz, a Bohemian astronomer and astrologer (1524-1574); Masha’allah, an Iraqi astrologer (AD 762-815); David Origanus, a German astronomer and mathematician (1558-1628); Diadochus Proclus, a Greek philosopher, astronomer, mathematician and grammarian (AD c.410-485); Ptolemy, an Egyptian astronomer, mathematician and geographer (c. AD 100-170); and many more interesting men. His text is only 76 pages, a little book, but it is compact with astrological information.

When March 29 finally did arrive, and the eclipse took place, people were so well prepared and scared out of their wits that it is documented many of them locked themselves in their houses. None of the predictions made came true, and the astrologers were totally ridiculed, specifically Culpeper. He was briefly taken to jail on account of his text

Source for article: Spinali, Sabrina. “A Modern Spelling Edition of Nicholas Culpeper’s *Catastrophe Magnatum: Or, the Fall of Monarchie.*” *Diss. U of Birmingham.* 1996.

For those seriously interested in knowing more about this Culpeper text, please contact Sabrina Spinali via Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.

Articles and ideas for *Forgotten History* can also be sent to this magazine via the above P.O. Box. We welcome reader input for this column.

# Start Making Scents

By Oak

**O**ur household was blessed this past season with the presence of a new baby. My housemates Patti and Karl have been working magic for years to bring through a baby and finally that magic paid off. Their adopted son, Colin Breasal Auld, was born on July 11, a month prematurely. He came home a week later. As a baby who was adjusting to formula, he in the beginning was having trouble digesting. Given that he was born prematurely and was tiny, we all wanted him to be able put on weight. What could be more gentle and appropriate for working with a newborn than aromancy! I prefer the term "aromancy" as it suggests the magic of working with oils, rather than aromatherapy, as I am a psychotherapist by profession, and that is enough therapy for me, thank you very much!

Letting the molecules of an essential oil evaporate and circulate throughout our home by the help of a diffuser was a simple yet effective way to assist baby Colin in learning to digest. Dill oil is the oil of choice here, as it is gentle and works to heal all digestive upsets. Magically, it has correspondences to Air, Mercury, and Gemini. Mary Greer associates it with the tarot card of the Magician. It is said to protect children from malicious spirits. The word dill is Norse and means "to lull." Ancient Roman warriors were crowned with garlands of dill on their return, and dill was used in the banquet halls to stimulate appetite. All in all, I thought this essential oil was the perfect one to use to assist Colin.

Diffusers can run from ten to over a hundred dollars, depending whether you get one which uses a simple candle flame, or an expensive electric diffuser. I am satisfied with my \$10 model. I added a few drops of dill to water in the bowl of the diffuser and lit the candle underneath. Karl and Patti's flat (we share a four story Victorian) began to be infused with the smell of dill. Like magic, Colin's appetite seemed to increase, and there was a noticeable decrease in his spitting up. He has now has fattened up a great deal, and you can tell who lives in this household by our scent of dill, which follows us everywhere.

As Colin spent the first week of his life in the hospital, this meant that he

spent that week in disposable diapers. Disposable diapers are not only bad for our beloved planet, they automatically spell "diaper rash" for most infants, including our new Colin. One of the most effective remedies for almost any skin irritation, including diaper rash, is calendula cream or oil. Calendula is the fancy name for marigold. In my last column I discussed the rose as the flower of summer. If there is a flower of autumn, it would have to be the marigold. In China, the marigold is considered a symbol of long life — "the flower of ten thousand years." In Mexico, the marigold is believed to have been tinted by blood of the massacred Aztecs. They are the traditional flower that is put on Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) altars on November 2nd. The marigold is a flower that symbolizes both life and death, has incredible soothing properties, and possesses the orange hue of autumn. I like to think that there is no mistake that this flower is used for soothing both grief and the skin.

Calendula oil is an oil that is not steam distilled but is infused. This means it can be made very easily and with no special equipment. It is very expensive to buy, ranging from \$9-\$18 for about two ounces. This same amount costs about 50 cents to make. My recommendation would be to cover your Samhain altars with marigolds, and before they get droopy, use these to make oil for the winter, when all our skin can use some soothing from the wind and cold. It also of course, can be given to anyone with a new baby, for either baby or mother. I used calendula oil on my episiotomy scar (and believe me, with a 10-pound baby, you don't want to tear, you want to be cut!) after giving birth to my big Casey. The doctor was amazed how fast I healed. It also is fantastic for treating nipples cracked or sore from breast feeding. It is also good for treating broken capillaries and varicose veins.

In aromancy, the scent of calendula is not essential, but it is used as a carrier oil for other scents. A carrier oil is an oil to which you add other essential oils. Adding chamomile, lavender, or yarrow increases the anti-inflammatory properties

of calendula oil. To use it as an anti-fungal, add some tea tree or myrrh. Here is an easy recipe for making this useful oil:

## INFUSED CALENDULA OIL

Collect enough flower petals to fill a large glass jar. Make sure all the moisture is removed from the petals. Fill the jar and pour enough olive oil into the jars so that the petals are covered. Place the jar in the sun for a few days. Then strain the



# The Minor Arcana & the Number Five

By Alexandra Genetti

[EDITOR'S NOTE — Last month, Reya wrote about the Hierophant card (major arcana number 5) and its relationship to the Reclaiming community and hierarchy in general. This issue's tarot article is a further discussion of "fives," specifically minor arcana fives and our relationship to them as witches.]

I'M SURE YOU ALL HAVE noticed that in all the popular Tarot decks from Waite-Smith to Motherpeace the fives are pretty universally negative. Waite-Smith has the dismal five of cups with the spilled wine (or blood) and the person mourning the loss, the fives in the Thoth deck have words at the bottom: "Worry," "Strife," "Disappointment" and "Defeat." In the Motherpeace book Vicki Noble describes five as "the number of struggle and conflict." And in the Barbara Walker deck, the fives are certainly no exception.

In making my own deck I wanted to understand the reasoning behind this dislike of the number five. As a Pagan it seemed to me wrong that the number of the manifest Goddess, the number of women should be the most universally negative number in the Minor Arcana. I wanted to understand where the negativity had come from and why it was so pervasive.

**Illustrations:** top, 5 of Wands from the Color Wheel Tarot; bottom, 5 of Cups from the Wheel of Change Tarot. Both cards copyright 1997 by A. Genetti.

Numerology is a pretty complex study. But in relation to the Tarot, I believe it is generally related to the Cabalistic notions of the Tetragrammaton or the holy unspeakable name of God: "Yod - He - Vau - He." Each part of the name symbolizes the process of the magical triangle. This is the description of Magick in the world as two opposites combined (numbers 1 and 2) through an action (3) to produce a result (the final 4) which then becomes the new 1 of the next triangle. In this way the numbers 1, 4, 7 and 10 symbolize the individual, the numbers 2, 5 and 8 represent what opposes the individual and the numbers 3, 6 and 9

represent the action taken. For a clearer understanding you can draw the diagram as a series of triangles moving upward (or downward).

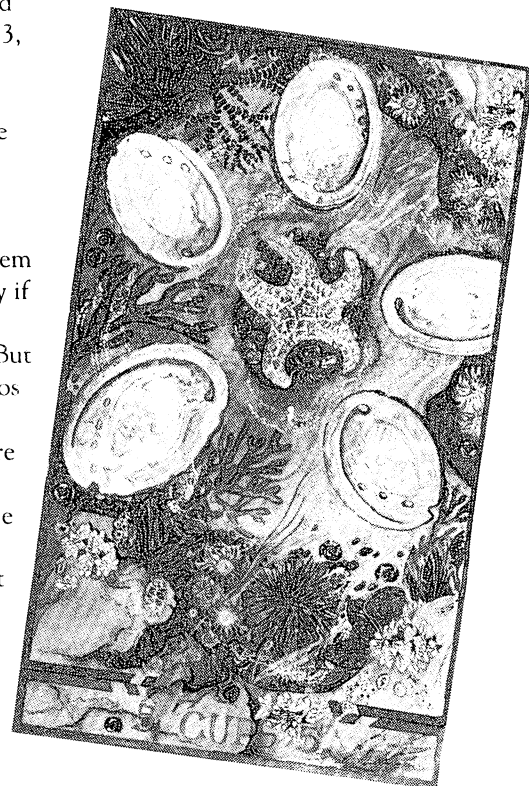
Because the numbers 2, 5 and 8 signify opposition one might expect them to show this nearly universal negativity if indeed it is the quality of opposition which has permeated their meanings. But this is not the case - for indeed, the twos show generally positive meanings. The thumbnail words in the Thoth Deck are "Change," "Dominion," "Love" and "Peace." Waite shows generally positive or neutral scenes such as the 2 of Wands, which shows a man staring out to sea with the world in his hands. The 8s are mixed with some negative and some positive. So clearly it is not just their status as other or opposites that determines the negative meaning of the fives.

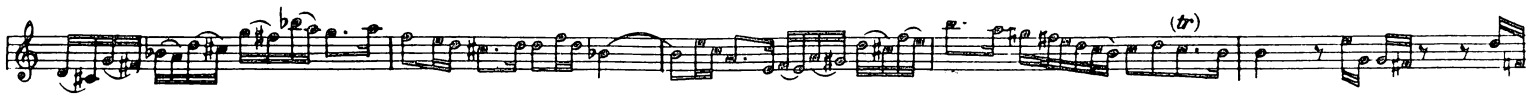
In the case of the series 2, 5 and 8 the numeral in the middle is odd; in both the other series the numeral in the middle is even. Somehow, this oddness between evens must set five off as a particularly negative number. In Christianity five is the number of the wounds of Christ on the cross and is symbolic of the brutality of humankind. It has also symbolized the condition of humanity through our five senses and our starlike nature. In Christian thought, then, 5 is a symbol of suffering and travail here on earth, while the coming world of heaven is perfect and without human travail.

This negative assessment of our lives here, and the negative associations of any experience as trouble and complication, is a symptom of our tendency to think that whatever is beyond us is better than what we have here. It seems to arise from the assumption that we are, at the root of our existence, "bad," and that our lives here are made up of extensive suffering.

This leads us to environmental abuse and

*continued on page 44*





## Solas

### Sunny Spells & Scattered Showers

When I told my friends that I was writing reviews for the *Reclaiming Newsletter*, I asked that they make suggestions for future reviews. I was handed the newest release from the New-Irish Traditionalist band Solas.

Solas is comprised of Karan Casey - vocals; John Doyle - guitars, acoustic guitar effects, mandocello, vocals; Seamus Egan - concert flute, banjo, low whistle, tin whistle, mandolin, nylon-string guitar, bodhran, percussion; Winifred Horan - fiddles; and John Williams - button accordion, concertina.

*Sunny Spells* is a collection of songs and instrumentals in what I have come to see as a "new-traditional" style. Solas have taken (mostly) traditional Irish tunes and added a slight contemporary feel. (This does not detract from the beauty of these melodies.) The arrangements are lovely as the various instrumentalists weave their strands within each tune.

Of the songs, "The Wind that Shakes the Barley" is a rousing tune that commemorates the United Irishmen's 1798 uprising, and it's sentiments are certainly timely in light of efforts to bring peace to that country today.

"The Unquiet Grave" is a love song wherein our hero:

"...never had but one true love And in the Greenwood she lies slain."

He pledges to mourn for a year and a day, and is then visited by the spirit of his departed lover. She demands to know who disturbs her rest, and upon finding her bereaved she cautions him towards

life. A fey and haunting piece, this one.

An homage to the women who have been written out of history books, "Vanished Like the Snow" is a rich and moving ballad. Karan caresses the lyric in a way that shows her deep appreciation of the subject.

Then there is my favorite of the vocal pieces, "Aililiu Na Gamhna." This is a pretty little air, sung in Irish, telling the story of a cowherd. I am reminded, once again that Irish can make any topic sublime!

A competent version of "The Maid on the Shore," and a cautionary love song, "Adieu Lovely Nancy" round out the vocal selections.

The instrumental choices include readings of reels, jigs, an air, and even a barn-dance tune! As I have said, the musicians are exemplary and I really found the use of banjo on some of these tunes intriguing.

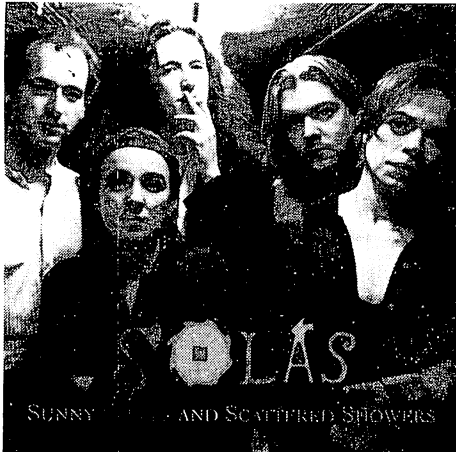
I found the reels to be the most satisfying. I particularly enjoyed the set made up of "The Primrose Lass," "Molly from Longford," and "The Four Kisses." The tunes develop and build with the interplay of flute and fiddle that I found quite infectious.

The jigs were a small disappointment for me. Competently performed, they never really made me want to get off my backside and dance (which I think is the absolute measure of a good jig). However my five-year-old son, Kenton, really liked "Mom's Jig" paired with "Bill Nicholson's 67th"! (This is playing as I type, and it has grabbed me a bit more on second listen.) Perhaps I just prefer a bit more tradition in my "traditional" music.

I did enjoy the mournful air "Song of the Kelpie" which Solas plays with great feeling and deference.

The CD clocks in at just under an hour (56:07) and contains 13 tracks.

*continued on page 44*



## Reclaiming

### Let It Begin Now — Songs from the Spiral Dance

Months after attending the Spiral Dance in San Francisco last year, I heard "Set Sail" at a friend's house, and was immediately swept back to the dark, swaying crowd and the wake-like hush of last Samhain Eve at Fort Mason.

Listening to the tape *Let it Begin Now: Music from the Spiral Dance* brings back many memories. Each song in this collection marks a different point in the ritual, and as I listened to the songs, years of different invocations and different Spiral Dances passed through my mind.

The "Guardian Song," which invokes the directions and elements, is sung near the beginning of the ritual. I remembered flame-dancing stilt walkers invoking south, and the flowing blue robes of the guardians of the west.

"No End to the Circle" is sung during the invocation of the Goddess and God. Last year the Goddess came in as a great crone puppet in a patchwork skirt, while the God was danced by horned, painted dancers.

"Let it Begin Now" is usually sung

*continued on next page*







# If A Tree Falls

## Various Artists

It takes a great cause to bring together Buffy Sainte-Marie and Jello Biafra on the same CD.

And a great cause it is. *If a Tree Falls* benefits the Trees Foundation, dedicated to saving the 3% of this nation's ancient forests which have not been logged. That 3% includes Headwaters Forest, the last privately-owned stand of ancient redwoods in the United States [see page 10].

"This album tells a story," read the liner notes, "With each song a chapter. It begins with the beauty of the forest, exposes and decries the destruction, and concludes by offering solutions."

A compilation as diverse as this 15-cut CD is bound to strike any given listener unevenly. One person will love the earnestness of Bruce Cockburn or the Wyrd Sisters. Another will lean towards more satirical numbers, or perhaps the spoken-word "Song of the Trees" by Native American poet John Trudell.

For this reviewer, the "beauty of the forest" numbers come on a bit heavy, although Joanne Rand's haunting "Never Alone" is particularly engaging.

Fortunately, the seriousness is relieved midway through the CD by a pair of "exposé" songs penned by Earth First! organizer Darryl Cherney. Cherney and friends sing his country-fied hymn,

"You Can't Clearcut Your Way to Heaven":

Today I heard they mined the rock of ages  
'Cuz they thought it had a chunk of gold inside....

Two songs earlier, former Dead Kennedy vocalist Jello Biafra joins Mojo Nixon and the Toadliquors for a rockabilly romp through Cherney's "Where Are We Gonna Work When the Trees Are Gone?"

In between these two cuts is the deadpan "Trees Like to Rot in the Forest," a jugband number by the Tinklers. This song alone is worth the price of the CD, with its inspirational conclusion:

People like to rot in the ground  
Near where their families can be found  
Happy to be finished with their toil  
Grow softer and mingle with the soil

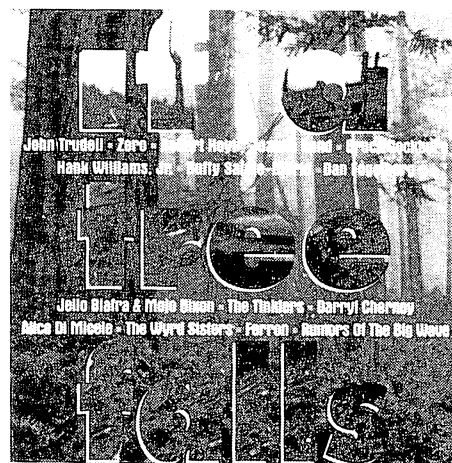
The concluding "solutions" section of the CD features several outstanding numbers. The jazz-based "Defend the Earth" by Alice Di Miele provides a moving counterpoint to the predominant folk and rock sounds of the CD.

And Ferron's "Heart of Destruction"

brings one of her finest compositions to a wider audience. Few performers today have such a knack for weaving together personal, political, and spiritual threads as does this British Columbian songwriter.

Other artists on this compilation

include Rumors of the Big Wave (singing Charlie Murphy's "The Only Green World"), Dan Fogelberg, Hank Williams, Jr., Robert Hoyt, and Zero (performing a new Robert Hunter song written especially for this CD, "The



Devil and the Trees").

Among these 15 songs is something for anyone with a taste for topical music. The fact that Earthbeat! Records and many of the artists are donating part of the proceeds to the Trees Foundation makes it an especially worthy project. Lend your support by picking up a copy.

Contact Earthbeat! Records, Box 1460, Redway, CA 95560-1460, 1-800-346-4445, email: mlp@igc.apc.org

The Trees Foundation can be reached at Box 2202, Redway, CA 95560.

— reviewed by George Franklin

continued from preceding page

near the end of the ritual, as we dance the Spiral Dance. Hearing this song later filled me with the same hope, the same sense of purpose and commitment that I felt when we returned from our trance journey to meet the dead on the Isle of Apples and dance the spiral of life.

From the mournful hush of "Lyke-Wake Dirge," to the hypnotic soothing of "Set Sail," or the hopeful strains of "Let it Begin Now," this recording of music from the Spiral Dance brings together the best of Reclaiming's musicians, singers and writers.

*Let it Begin Now* is also a wonderful accompaniment to *The Pagan Book of Living and Dying* (previously released as *Crossing Over* — see page 42). Many of the songs in "Let it Begin Now" were shaped and created by experiences of death, grief and loss and are thus appropriate for rituals reflecting these themes.

Whether you are interested in experiencing the Spiral Dance aurally, or seeking music for a particular ritual of your own, this collection of songs and chants is a classic compilation of traditional Reclaiming music, one that

you will listen to for years to come.

*Let It Begin Now* is available in cassette form, as is Reclaiming's collection, *Chants: Ritual Music*. The *Second Chants* compilation is available on cassette or CD.

Reclaiming tapes and CDs are distributed by *Serpentine Music Productions*, Box 2564, Sebastopol, CA 95473 — see order form on page 46.

— reviewed by Whim Muir

Musical excerpt at top of page is from Georg F. Handel's *Concerto Grosso #4*.

# Consensus & the Heart of the Spiral

## A Facilitator's Eye View

by Brook

[Editor's note — this is Part II of Brook's article on Consensus Process as used at a recent Reclaiming Teacher's Retreat. Part I appeared last issue.]

On the second day, a group of us met beforehand and tried to organize the agenda. Like many agendas, there was more on it than could probably be done in an afternoon.

Still, we optimistically figured out ways to keep ourselves focused and that might help solutions appear out of the process. We planned more small group time to create a vision from our core values. Our only process suggestion was that the reports to the whole meeting be succinct and not repeat what had already been said. Then we would meet in our small groups again and try to build those visions into a structure.

The second discussion was to be more focused, answering the following questions: What would it look like? How will it affect me? What do I have to lose? How will/can it serve me? What do I need?

Then, we thought we would ask the groups to organize their answers to these questions. This would begin the process of synthesis in preparation for proposals.

One of the stickiest issues was deciding how to introduce Star and Paul's proposal. Not everyone had seen it, which created a sub-group with more information than the whole. Since inside information fosters inequality of power, we decided to have the proposal presented after the visioning and before the structuring of small groups. We hoped that this timing might feed into the more analytical structuring work, while not constricting

the visioning.

Willow was my co-facilitator. This time, we did not divide the duties, but rather shared them. It was great that she wanted to work this way, as I was hoping that each day I would be able to step away from facilitation so that the group was facilitating itself. This, I felt, would lead to greater empowerment, and, hopefully, no reliance upon me as the designated facilitator. Rather, the role would become the group's to fill by the end of the meetings. Because of Willow's style — perfect for the second day — I could take a step back, handing more power back to the group.

After all the power struggles of the first day, the process was much smoother. The empowerment gained through the expression of our principles of unity, I believe, helped folks work together. Another help was the telling of our herstories. This began to bring down the walls separating those in the "know" and those outside. Between the two planned small group sections, we got our first consensus:

"We'd like to do something different." No one wanted to leave the organizing of the camps and teachers as it was.

We heard from Star and Paul, and then two other proposals. There were some questions about the proposals. Willow and I kept the focus very tight so that energy would not be

dissipated in trying to fine-tune these offerings. Then, we broke down again and worked to find the structures that could be created from our visioning.

Out of the structuring of small groups, our differences were more apparent. Some small groups wanted almost complete autonomy of the camps, while others wanted more centralized decision making and coordination. Now

it seemed to me that the difficult work was ahead. But at least both our agreements and differences had been brought into the open. And, as often happens with such work, we were out of time for the day. We put the reports from the small groups onto butcher paper so that everyone could think about them overnight.

As on the second day, a group of us met to organize the agenda for the final day. Little did we know that the meeting would take on a life of its own. We thought that now was the time for free form, whole group discussion. Our hope was that as we talked, our differences might coalesce into a proposal that would synthesize as many of the visions as possible. Two other facilitators were chosen. I hoped to turn the active facilitation over to them so that I could step away from the role I had been playing. I remained available as a resource, both to the facilitators and to the whole in case my experience or viewpoint might prove helpful.

We talked around the issues for quite a while. Those favoring more autonomy had a chance to talk about how the central decision making of the San Francisco teachers cell had not worked for their camp. The teachers expressed fears that without our coming together into some kind of body, teachers would not be able to work on copacetic teams presenting cohesive themes. Here was the real center of the question. A proposal or two were offered. The proposals didn't generate a lot of juice, not many clarifying questions, no amendments. We hadn't yet found the key to unlocking the differences.

The facilitators, Kevin and Ruah, had their hands full wending their way through a full group discussion. This is the most difficult process. Those who talk feel invested, but listening for a long time is exhausting. People may begin to repeat themselves and the energy of the group drains away. The elements added overview by seeing the whole of the process. Earth said, "Look for the



common root," Fire said. "Burn away the brush." Earlier, Air called out, "Wind blowing through evergreen wishes you to know gratitude." And later, West said, "Deep, still pool."

I had been working a tarot deck during this process, trying to get a handle on what I could not see or hear. I simply shuffled the deck until a card fell, one at a time until I had a three-card spread. This is a technique I use sometimes for divining an ongoing process. I believe the first card (where we started from, if you will) was the Hanged Man — not a bad card for the situation as it stood. We had been through some of the process and now, perhaps, the old way would no longer work. We were a bit stuck, having to wait and see what lay ahead. Also, important changes may be coming along.

The middle card (the process, the present) was the six of Swords (Rider-Waite deck): the journey, without knowing the ending, a bit of faith that the boatmen knows the way, putting ourselves onto the river and being carried to the other shore. Or, the whole family having to move together, the destination not necessarily known or understood. Either way, I read this card as Process and Journey, just what we were doing.

Finally, the Emperor fell. That gave me pause. But we were trying to build something lasting, fair, permanent, just. "Okay," I thought. "I like this reading, but we're going to have to deal with issues of power, too, I think." To me, there's more than a hint of patriarchy in the Rider-Waite Emperor.

Since we were not moving the energy, we decided to change it by going into Dropped and Open Attention (*see last issue, page 40*). Reya took us down. The stuck energy dissipated. We agreed to start with a Spokescouncil. We described this as a body of empowered spokespeople who would meet to distill concerns, to pass information to each other about what the groups had decided, and who might be empowered by their group to consense to a certain range of solutions. A Spokescouncil was not to be a representative government.

A couple of people started to look again at all the small groups' visions and structures from the day before. Earth suggested that we "find the root." An old consensus technique occurred to the facilitators: build a committee to attempt

to synthesize a proposal. We asked a small group, made up from those who had offered proposals and those searching for the root, to go out and try to coalesce the visions of the small groups into a proposal that would cover as many of the recurring themes as possible. We were heeding Earth's call for us to "Find the root."

While the committee was working, Earth started to sing, and we all joined in. Then we began to move, to dance, to work the energy. Indeed, we had entered sacred time, sacred space. Waves of song and energy moved through us as we waited for the committee to synthesize the visions. It was a great ritual and it was unlike any business meeting I've ever been to.

Finally, the committee came back and read us the proposal.

They had taken the common words and images from the structures and visions and had woven them together. They asked us to realize that many of the details would need to be worked out. They had tried to synthesize as many of the central ideas from the small groups as possible. There were no concerns. In our linked, altered state, our energy was pulling together to create something. We were not in our analyzing minds. It just sounded great.

I was so amazed at how beautifully a group could work together, that I simply tested for consensus — that is, checked for any dissent that would stop us from going forward, or for any people who would not be able to live or work with the proposal. I used a pretty formal set of words for this, to underscore the seriousness of the decision making. I asked, "Is any one standing aside? Is there anyone who would not prevent this decision from being made but who will not work to implement it? Is anyone Blocking? Is there anyone who has a moral objection to this proposal that they feel should stop the group from making this decision?" This was, fatefully, a mistake. Whenever testing for

consensus, it's a really good idea to read back the proposal in its final form to make sure that everyone knows precisely what it is that they are agreeing to. I completely forgot about this important step. Literally entranced and quite delighted with how well the introduction of magical techniques had changed the quality of the decision making, I didn't really have all the details of the proposal and our process in my mind.

Then we broke down to start implementing the proposal.

We had a final ritual that night to move the energy of decision making from

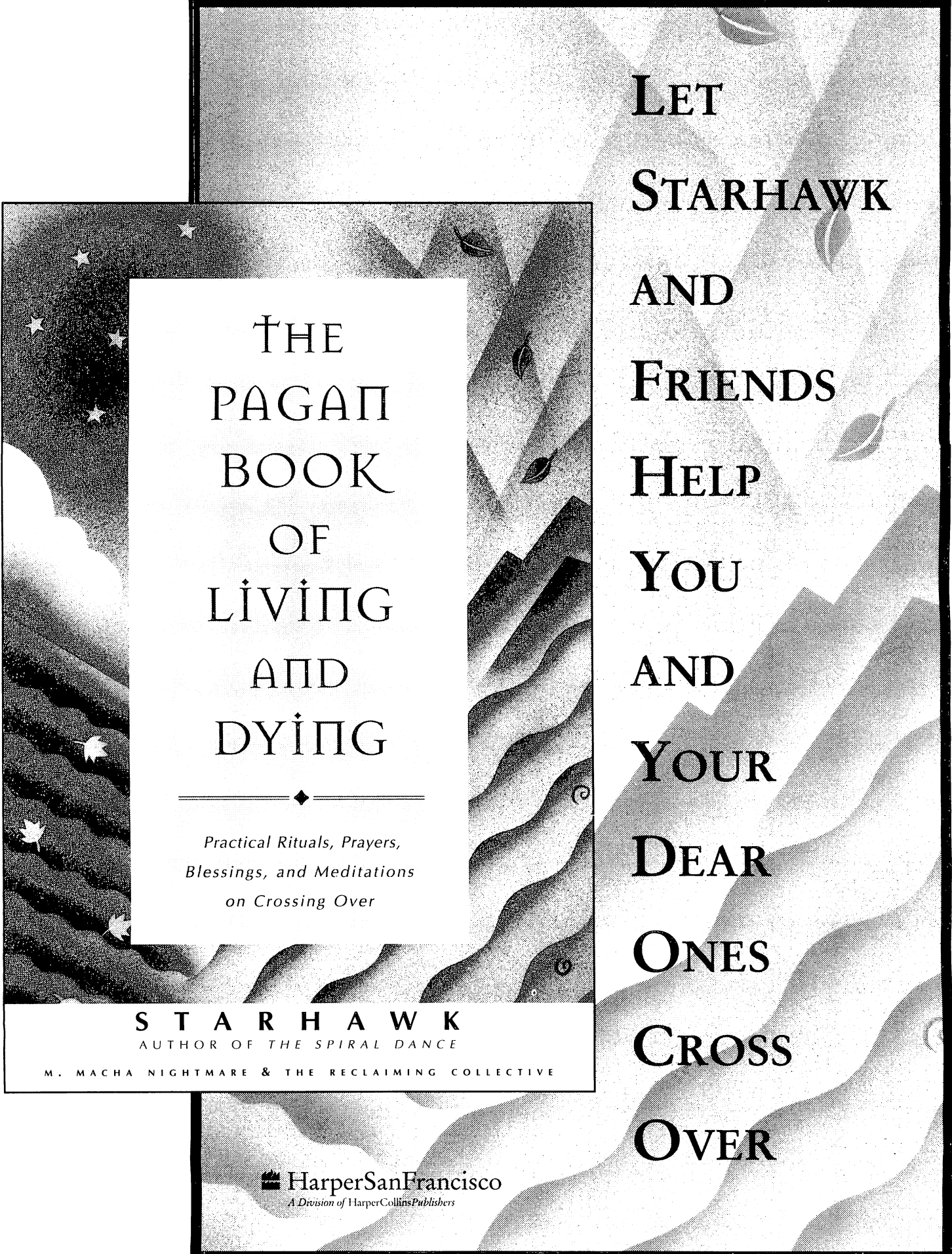


the San Francisco teachers cell to the new decision making body. At a key moment, when magically the energy was let go and ready to be passed on, a woman realized that she could not work the spell in good conscience. She spoke out because one extra group, not agreed to in the proposal, had coalesced and formed. Indeed, I was not the only person there who was not quite clear on what we had agreed.

We stopped the working and tried to figure out what was going on. Starhawk said, "We let ritual into our meeting and now, meeting has entered into our ritual." We eventually found a way to go on, but not without some serious pain and confusion. It was a difficult moment. Some of the analysis that would normally have come before consensus was coming to the group now.

The next morning, several people told me that they didn't express their concerns about the proposal during the meeting because the energy to look for areas of agreement was so strong. What with our linked consciousness, and with the working of energy together, dissent

*continued on page 47*



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# Dark Moon

by Heather V.

Moon  
it's not your  
light  
I want

Curved face  
of darkness  
turning in

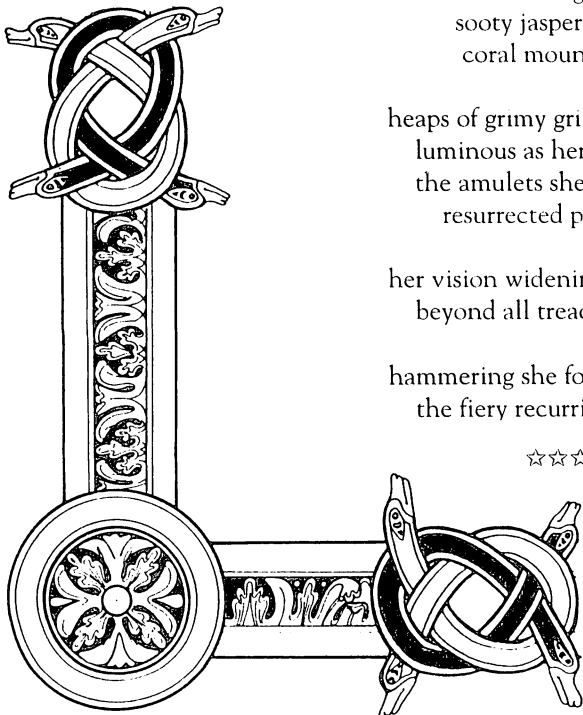
Silent  
cave hands  
repose of womb sleep

Blood starts here  
planetary red  
cell stars

helplessly  
uncontained  
relics of life

A sky show  
in the galaxy  
of me

☆☆☆☆☆



# Her Bead Box After the Fire

For Joanne

by Anna Katherine

she hammers at the demented plastic  
seared lumps

molten as her soul  
steaming from charcoaled fissures  
where once she huddled

shriven by flame  
that when she stood he ignited  
Kali remorseless

she hammers at  
eons of women droning  
to please appease  
thirty cowering years into toxic ash

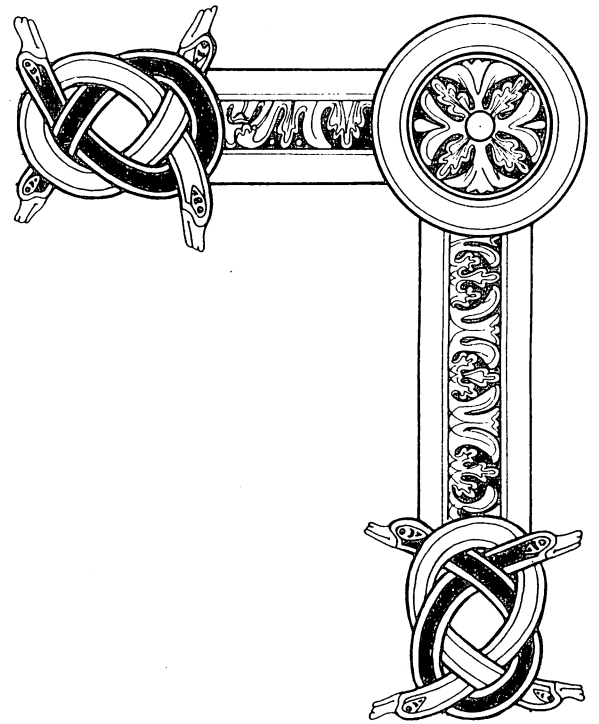
hammers until  
beads tumble out  
smoky turquoise  
ashed crystal  
carnelian figures  
sooty jasper spheres  
coral mounds

heaps of grimy gritty treasure  
luminous as her smoldering life  
the amulets she will shape  
resurrected prayers

her vision widening  
beyond all treachery

hammering she forges new  
the fiery recurring promise

☆☆☆☆☆



# Weaver

by Sarah Elizabeth Rose

Who is it that weaves this beautiful  
tapestry within me, which is me?  
Who chooses the lovely colors  
which are my thoughts, and selects  
the intricate patterns which overlay  
my very being?

If I knew who was responsible  
I would thank them every day  
for their magnificent job!  
For only a true artist possessing  
the highest possible integrity  
could so accurately perceive  
my inner being's most  
beautiful thoughts

And whereas others may choose  
to wallow in self pity  
I experience happiness  
almost every day  
which I realize comes from  
being aware of and appreciative of  
how fortunate I am  
Thank you sweet weaver of life

☆☆☆☆☆

## Music review

continued from page 38

Excellent musicianship throughout and Karan Casey's lovely soprano are quite enjoyable. While not explicitly a "Pagan" release, fans of Celtic music should be pleased with this album.

"Sunny Spells & Scattered Showers" is released on the Shanachie label, catalogue #78010.

A couple of final notes. First the contact information for Sharon Knight (reviewed last issue) has changed:

Sharon Knight, P.O. Box 1020, Occidental, CA 95465, (707) 869-1773, email: [nuit@wco.com](mailto:nuit@wco.com)

Also, if anyone has any music that you feel really would be appreciated by this community, or to cast aspersions, brickbats, or the occasional accolade I can be reached online at: [bwinkle@slip.net](mailto:bwinkle@slip.net)

My snail mail address is: Don Barks c/o Harper Hall Productions, 3073 Richmond Blvd., Oakland, CA 94611.

## Housing Takeover

continued from page 5

had no chance of survival.

Since that modest beginning, the numbers arrested, determination of activists, and political support has steadily grown. This year more than 200 people got arrested and many of those formerly pessimistic established groups have announced their support for Wherry. Even the mayor has an affordable housing plan for the site, albeit a weak one. Religious Witness with Homeless People, a group that includes Pagans, Christians, Buddhists, Native American religious figures, and Jews, has also started organizing takeovers at the Presidio. At the most recent Religious Witness takeover in May, a contingent of about twenty white-clad pagans beat out rhythms on drums, chanted, and got arrested.

Victory seems plausible, if only organizers can keep Wherry housing in the public eye long enough to sway the mood. Otherwise we will pay \$16 million to tear down \$80 million worth of good housing.

To get involved, call Homes Not Jails at (415) 282-5525, or Religious Witness for Homeless People (415) 885-6401. For advice on how to occupy vacant buildings or start a Homes Not Jails in your area, call Homes Not Jails San Francisco or visit the Boston Homes Not Jails web site at <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/7996/>.



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## Tarot

continued from page 37

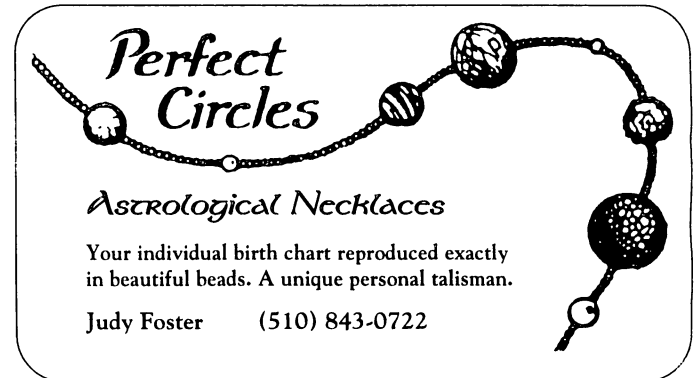
collapse through the prevailing belief that there is another world ruled by an All Powerful God who wouldn't let anything happen to his beautiful and perfect world beyond. Through this underlying belief that we must suffer here we expect no better, looking at this life as only a temporary way station in a progression to better things. We have no special need to improve conditions here or expect joy and positive experience.

Because we are all born into human life and suffering from a woman's body, women are seen as particularly bad, dirty and evil like the temporary earth we inhabit. The number 5, mythologically connected with the feminine through the observation that the lives of women could be conveniently divided into 5 stages. These were Birth, Menarche, Motherhood, Menopause and Death, linked to the evil and suffering that we bring forth in the blood of birth.

Because 5 is the number connected to women and to the cycles of human life I believe that we as Pagans must begin to see it as a positive number that expresses our certain understanding of where we have come from as well as where we journey to. Because it is halfway between one and ten it looks both backwards to our birth in the primeval waters of this planet and forward to our uncertain future. Just like the stardust from which the earth was born, it is the symbol of our eventual return to the mother and our rebirth as part of the cycle of time. It is a symbol of the deep link we have with all that is outside of our temporarily limited vision of the universe.

It is my belief that these unexamined and originally Christian precepts have made their way into the Tarot. Instead of rethinking the raw symbolism of the numbers, Pagans have generally accepted overlying Christian notions of the number symbolism that defines the number 5 as the number of the suffering lot of human life. It is my belief that the number 5 is an especially good and magical number that expresses the first effort that unites us with our opposite on the road to integration that leads us to human joy and love.

Alexandra Genetti is the author and illustrator for "The Wheel of Change Tarot" published by Destiny Books and available very soon. For more information contact her at Color Wheel Creations, Box 293, Cazadero, CA 95421 or check out the website at <http://www.wheelofchange.com>



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## Blessed Blenders

continued from page 14

I wonder what would happen if we named it all sacred? The sacred hot water heater that lets me take hot showers. The sacred phone that allows me to talk to someone on the other side of the world. The sacred computer with which I communicate and connect and organize and plan. Maybe in loving it and honoring it we can really let it go. Maybe in accepting that we have helped to create this, and that we are fallible, lovable human beings who mess up, will help us make future choices that will sustain and celebrate life. At the very least we might heal the split between the sacred and how we actually live our lives.

It is imperative that while we work to sacralize the technology we do use, we also continue to search for and create sustainable, life-supporting technology. Perhaps in letting go of some of the shame around the use of our current technology, we will have renewed energy to seek out and make commitments to tools that are less destructive.

Reading the Carmina Gadelica gave me a good sense of what it could be like to really live as if my life and the life around me was magical and honored and loved. But modern city life demands, that we also shape our sense of the sacred and our magical practices to include its complexities. Thus maybe a revised version of the Carmina Gadelica would include prayers to phones, VCRs and showers. It would have blessings to say before going online, before getting in the car to drive at rush hour, or flying across country. This new Carmina Gadelica would address us as who we are in this time and place, living our lives as modern urban witches.

"I am blessing this screen, this keyboard  
that all my words may kindle  
thought, pleasure or discussion.  
May this grey box, the colour of fog that gathers here  
hold my thoughts, my work and all that is within. May it not  
crash  
may it not be afflicted. Let all that come near it find joy  
let all who helped make it have justice  
may it not cause destruction to any life.  
This day and every day  
by the blessings of Bride who creates  
and Mercury of the clear mind and quick thought.  
So might it be."

## Start Making Scents

continued from page 36

oil into a very clean and dry amber or dark glass bottle. To prolong the shelf life of the oil, add the oil of a few Vitamin E capsules. If the dying sun feels too weak to properly infuse the oil, you can place the flowers in a slow cooker or crockpot and heat the oil on the lowest setting for 24 hours. Keep the oil refrigerated and it will retain its healing powers longer.

So, may the sacred marigold soothe our souls at Samhain, and may all our skin glow by Solstice from its healing properties. Blessed Be, Oak

## Making It Real

continued from page 23

looking at the physical reality around you. Not, if you can help it, speculating on how the trees feel, or using them as a background for your own meditations or personal work, but actually looking at them, at what insects and birds and animals appear, at how they grow and change over time. Just look, feel, listen, smell, taste. If you get bored, either you've picked a place that's too sterile and controlled to have much going on, or you're not really looking. Notice how your mind gets in there, and what your internal dialogue says, but instead of focusing on yourself, focus on what's around you.

Over time, you'll be amazed at how much there is to see, once we open our eyes. And as we relearn our capacity to observe, we'll begin to understand that what we see is real.

Glenn A. Turner



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## Music and Magic

continued from page 18

other people were also singing harmonies, as well as different rhythmic parts, and we built the energy into a fabulous cone. It's about using intuition and consciousness, but at the same time being able to sing without self-consciousness or self-motivation — from a place of truth. Tricky to do and explain. There are times in ritual where the sounds we are making are an expression of our individual selves, and times where the sounds express the group's energy or work. It's important to know when each is happening, and to listen and make noise accordingly.

There is another way that I have gotten to explore the use of music in ritual. This fall will be the third year that I have directed the chorus for the San Francisco Samhain Spiral Dance ritual. The chorus has had up to 20 people in it, plus instrumentalists, all working in Sacred Space with a crowd of about 1300 people. Yeah, whew. Music is used throughout the evening to invoke the directions and the God and the Goddess, to take us into trance, to honor our beloved dead, to honor the Goddess, to bless offerings, and to devote. But most importantly, it is used to weave the spell that builds towards the cone of power we send out for what we want to create that year. Big work.

The chorus rehearses for two months before the Spiral Dance. Each time we got together this past year, as we rehearsed, I purposefully brought our attention to what were we trying to achieve with each song. In this context, I believe the chorus acts as a group in a priestess/priest role. It would be easy to get up there and get into an ego place of being all excited about singing in front of that many people. It would also be easy to just want to have fun with your fellow musicians. But the honor and work of participating is to remember that it's not about us, but about doing the work that the ritual requires. This

is not to say we don't have fun or get excited, but we have to stay focused on our intentions. To further help our ability to work together to move energy, at each rehearsal we grounded together and wove a web between us, informally forming a circle amongst us. We envisioned this as within the web of all the people also working on the ritual, and amidst the web of all the people who will be working together, and all the world that will be affected by the work. We also created an altar, which we brought that evening and kept on our platform with us. I think all of this helped us to recognize the power in music, and in our work as we performed, and to bond us together.

By the time you are reading this, we will probably have begun rehearsing. Agh! Work ahead! But as much as I always get nervous, I also look forward to it. I ask people to attend all of the rehearsals if possible, so if you're reading this and think you'd like to join, it may be too late for this year, and I'm sorry. But you can see why I think it's important for us to be working together and building energy together.

What I hope I have done in this article is given people food for thought about music being a tool of the craft. There is so much to learn from each other about how we use our tools and our abilities. The next time you're in a ritual, think of how sound is working to move energy. And recognize the sacredness in what you do every time you open your mouth.

Blessed Be!



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## Consensus

continued from page 41

had been suppressed. Expressing concerns and then amending a proposal is the refining process, the synthesis that brings about an agreement that truly represents a group. In fairness to all of us, by the time we got to the proposal, we were tired, hungry and had been meeting for three days.

As I acknowledge and integrate the negative feedback, I think I have a clearer idea of what the benefits and dangers are for bringing more magic into our meetings. Clearly, a technique like Dropped and Open Attention will help a group find areas of agreement, areas of linking, help us work through our sticky places. And, like all things, this means that when we have moved, we will be in a different frame, less able to speak critically. I think we need both views to arrive at a clear consensus. We need our analyses to help us refine and understand the details and implementation of our agreements. And we need magical techniques to help us move through the details to find our vision and manifest it.

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## Margie's Crossing

continued from page 6

last night's ritual was, how it was for each of us, healing, powerful.

Tarot cards were laid out for each of us to draw one. I pulled the Death card and a voice called out, "Julie Dodd. Rhessa called."

She had crossed. I'd been worried that she'd be confused feeling pulled from both sides and wander around not knowing what to do. But she made it cleanly, clearly through. Good job Margie!

A while later there was a healing circle for me. I spoke a little about her, received healing and we sang,


"Weaver, weaver, weave her thread  
Whole and strong into your web.  
Healer, healer, heal her pain  
In love may she return again."

I want to thank everyone at camp for their loving support. Thank the voices that called through the forest, thank the

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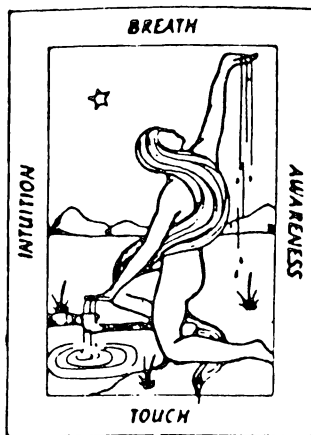
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## Kitchen Witch Corner!

# "My Favorite Thing"

*A Vegetarian Casserole*

*by Mathilda & her sister*

*(serves four)*

Hello folks! Mathilda and her sister here! We've been doing some heavy crystal gazing lately and seen most of you hunched over the kitchen table in a drunken veggie-soup stupor wishing for some variety in your diet, and needing a new addition for your recipe cannister. Here is a yummy casserole dish that is destined to put a little pizzazz in your morning, afternoon or evening. Just gather up your ingredients and begin the casserole stages.

### Ingredients

- 3 cups cooked brown rice
- 1/2 lb jack cheese cubed (dice size)
- 1/2 lb button mushrooms sliced
- 1 small can chopped (mild) green chiles, drained
- 1 small can tomato paste
- 1-2 cups water
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 small onion chopped
- 1/4 tsp cumin



### Optional

You may want to use more cumin powder or whole cumin. You can use pepper jack cheese to spice it up.

### Stage One

The first step is to saute the small chopped onion in olive oil in a frying pan until it becomes limp. Add your cumin powder during the saute. Then slowly add in half the can of tomato paste and half of the required water and stir slowly until the mixture bubbles into a medium thick sauce. Slowly add more of the water and paste to make a lot of sauce.

### Stage Two

In an 8" by 10" baking pan cover the bottom of the pan with sauce and spread at least half the rice over the sauce.

For the layer on top of rice, put on the cheese, the mushrooms, and the green chiles (you may not need the entire can). Cover with the rest of the rice and cover the rice with sauce (don't put too much!).



### Stage Three

Two steps done, and one more to go! This casserole is just about ready to make its debut in the oven, with the exception of, you named it — the spell. Chant this spell thrice, with great passion, and great hunger...

*Casserole plump! My favorite thing  
While I make you I do sing  
Crumple up thy cumin seeds  
Melt away smooth Monterey cheese  
Mixing your bod in a flat-fry bowl  
Casting away those blighted knolls\*  
I send you to bake in a warm, wide womb  
Amidst modern day humid fumes  
Oh, send us to ecstasy! Send us to coo!  
Red juice on rice do give our skin hue!  
Bake away now, mash monster dish  
If you I digest, then do grant me a wish.*



*\*"blighted knolls:" Unwanted lumps in the casserole.*

Phew! We can't wait to hear the details about what happened the night you ate this if you made this for your date! Cover the casserole and bake it at 350 degrees for about 25 to 35 minutes. After this allotted time, open the oven, take off the cover and bake it for 10 more minutes. When it is plump, hot, steamy and ready, take it out and let it sit to cool down for 10 minutes. Serve it with warm french bread and a freshly tossed green salad.

*Remember: This dish serves four people. If you want a groupie casserole you're gonna need to double the recipe and get a bigger pan*

## Let's Get Cooking!

Do you have a favorite recipe of your own? Send it in to **Kitchen Witch Corner!** You write the recipe, we'll write the spell; or, you write the recipe and the spell. Send your recipes to: Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.



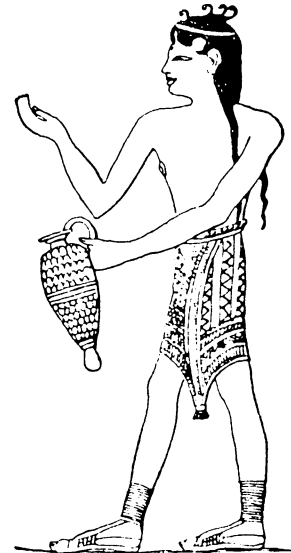
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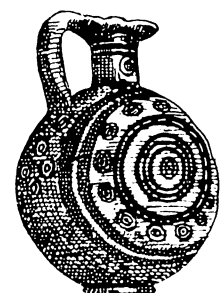
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