

Winter, 2010



EarthTides Pagan Network News

Living in Maine, Celebrating the Earth



The Rise of Wicca and Neo-Paganism in the United States

by Govannon Thunderwolf

Wicca is becoming the fastest growing religion in the United States. This statement was something I was hearing and reading more and more. Being a member of the Pagan community, I didn't really notice any of this growth happening. The more books and articles on the internet that I read, the more I kept seeing this statement. The research into this declaration became

my focus of interest. What fascinated me the most about this account was the fact that Wiccans and neo-Pagans do not go around with the specific

intent of finding converts. In the teachings and ideas of Wicca and Paganism, the idea of looking for converts is not encouraged and is looked down upon. Anyone seeking converts into Wicca or Paganism is breaking a cardinal rule.

Even though Wicca is generally a female dominated religion, there are men involved as well. Wicca is a religion that recognizes women and men as equals, but it does put a slight emphasis on women and the Goddess. Female witches outnumber

males two to one in the United States, according to the Covenant of the Goddess's estimates. Covenant of the Goddess is one of the oldest and largest Wiccan groups in the United States. They also state that much of the recent growth in Wicca and neo-Paganism has been among women. (Sanders xiv)

Where would someone look to find followers of Wicca and Pagans? They can



be found anywhere and everywhere. The actual number of Wiccan and Pagan followers in the United States changes constantly, but in 1999 Helen Berger, a sociologist

who spent ten years as a member of the neo-Pagan community, estimated that there are between 150,000 and 200,000 Pagans in the United States. It is suspected that there are many more among the ranks of Pagans today. Berger's census also found that California has the highest amount of Pagans living within its boundaries at 15.7 percent, followed by Massachusetts at 7.6 percent, and New York at 7.3 percent. (Sanders xiv)

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To Everything; Turn

by Keri Stratton Alley

A single, scarlet spot spread lacy, fernlike; stretching tendrils of warm liquid into the tiniest crevasses of powdery snow. Crystal stopped, her gaze fixated on the one tiny speck of brilliant red against the glaring white. The sudden silence of stilled snowshoes echoed against her eardrums, accentuating the thrum of her pounding pulse.

Heedless of humanity's crafted paths, she had been mindlessly following openings in the boughs and underbrush, letting her body's exertions mirror the same spontaneous, natural byways as her meandering thoughts. Familiar with the woods since childhood, and confident that the wide trail carved by her snowshoes would lead her back to the beginning when she was ready, she had not bothered to take note of her surroundings.

Until now.

Slowly she lifted her eyes, returned from ruminations to reality. Aside from the herringbone pattern of her snowshoes, the new fallen snow was flat, even; pristine. Not even the tiny, telltale, dot-and-line pattern of a mouse's wee feet marred the glittering expanse. Crystal raised her eyes higher, noting for the first time the almost perfectly circular shape of the clearing in which she was paused. Of course. Her clever feet had led her to the one place her heart needed to go; the grove her father painstakingly tended in life was the haven to which she had returned after his death.

Almost directly across from her, the scattered remains of her father's annual holly harvest were poking haphazardly out of the deep banks. Bringing the holly for their circle's Yule ritual had been his pride and pleasure; this year he had not been able to return and tidy the sacred

clearing.

Here, in this grove, the first aneurysm had ruptured. Later Crystal would hear from her mother that when that first bell tolled, her father had seen a young boy, dressed all in green, who told him he was being called to the Summerlands. Her father, touched by death's finger, had calmly bundled up the ritually reaped holly and returned home. He placed the holly on the altar for the upcoming Yule ritual, told his wife he loved her and of the boy in the grove, and sat down in his favorite chair by the fire as a second aneurysm propelled him beyond the veil. When



Crystal arrived that evening, his face was serene and peaceful; a sprig of holly tucked behind his ear.

Bluejay called into the stillness; shrill, piercing. Crystal's vision ventured outward from memories to the diminutive patch of flagrant color atop the snow. Blood? Crystal knelt carefully, leaning her weight on the ornately carved walking stick her

father had crafted. The end of the feathered staff descended almost a foot before coming to rest on the frozen earth. With discerning scrutiny, she poked a gloved finger at the red. Not blood: holly berry.

A bolt of vivid winged blue shot from behind Crystal, streaking across the clearing as though a piece of the fresh winter sky had broken off and plummeted to the Earth. Crystal's inner voice chanted in sing-song: *the sky is falling, the sky is falling*. Then, in a tender, heart-wrenching echo from last night's Solstice ritual: *the Holly King has fallen. Long live the Oak King!*

Crystal had cried unselfconsciously throughout the night-long ritual. Within their circle, the wise Holly King

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The Maine Pagan community is diverse, independent and geographically distant. We worship in groups or alone, but sometimes need contact and a shared forum to express our ideas and concerns for this community.

The EarthTides Pagan Network was established in 1989 as a support resource for Maine Pagans. All solitaries and groups are welcome to join.

A subscription to this newsletter is available for a suggested donation of \$11.00 per year for the electronic version

sent via e-mail and \$15.00 to receive the paper version (as of the Summer 2010 issue). Single copies may be obtained by sending a \$1.50 donation and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: EPN, P.O. Box 161, E. Winthrop, ME 04343. E-mail: epn@maine.rr.com. ☼

**Submission deadline for the Spring
2011 edition is 3/1/11**

About the EarthTides Pagan Network News

This newsletter comes out four times a year, around the beginning of the seasons. Literary, poetic, and artistic contributions are welcome, as are opinion pieces. Please keep submissions to no more than two pages, double-spaced. Please submit on disk or e-mail to blacklion@felinedreamers.net.

Subscribers' names, addresses and other personal information are kept confidential except to other network members. EPN will aid in establishing contact between individuals, but accepts no legal responsibility for the results.

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View from the Aerie: When It's Not Time to Heal

by Cynthia "Raven" Grimm

Many of us have experienced working with someone who requests healing energy but turns it away once offered. I've been reflecting on this a lot lately as several people in my life are blocking healing for one reason or another. It's very easy to react with judgment, frustration, or anger when this happens.

What we need to do in those situations, however, is to treat the person with love and compassion, to try to understand (and help her to understand) why she is making this choice, and to form a foundation to support the healing that will come. We also need to remind ourselves of our role in others' lives. We can offer all sorts of things to others, but it is always their right to decline that offer. I accept the titles of Priestess and Shaman, but I consider myself to be a Guide. A Guide is not above others; she walks beside them. She doesn't drag someone in the direction she feels is best; she points out the available paths and shares the potential outcome of each one.

After talking to many people and evaluating a number of situations, I've found several common reasons why individuals do not accept healing that they believe they want. Many of you have probably experienced some of these situations either as healer, as the person seeking healing, or both. Here are this Guide's methods of laying foundations for each one.

Some people simply do not love themselves enough. This may be due to a difficult childhood or other experiences in this life, or due to experiences in a prior life. Because they don't value themselves, they don't feel deserving of the love of others. For these folks, the most important thing that you can do is give them your love and be their mirror. If a child is told over and over that he is ugly, he begins to believe it. If the man he becomes is

told over and over that he is beautiful, he begins to change his belief and look at himself differently. Tell him all the good things you see in him over and over. That's the foundation.

Another situation I've seen frequently is the fear of

losing community. If someone's community and social interactions are based on an illness or disability, it is natural to fear the loss of those relationships. If Sally comes over once a week to clean your house and then stays for a long chat over tea, will Sally still visit you when you're able to clean your own house? It's important in this situation to help this person see all the wonderful reasons why someone would want to be her friend and all the opportunities for social interaction there are for someone who is healthy. Encourage her to look for things she wants to do but

isn't currently able, and then set goals for doing those things later. Helping this person see that she will have a life filled with love in sickness and in health is the first step.

The situation that I faced when I embarked on my own healing journey is quite common, as well. I have lupus, which causes a myriad of symptoms which all conspire together to limit mobility and the ability to live a full life. I knew I wanted to be healed and not face the daily pain, exhaustion, etc. that plagued my life anymore. My biggest fear, though, was that I would find healing, build a new life around being healthy, and then have the lupus come back and take it all away again. I didn't think I could handle the loss a second time. It's a very real fear. I'm in full remission (which happens in less than 5% of cases) and doing great, but there's always that shadow on the cusp of my sight, waiting to pounce if I'm not vigilant in taking care of myself.

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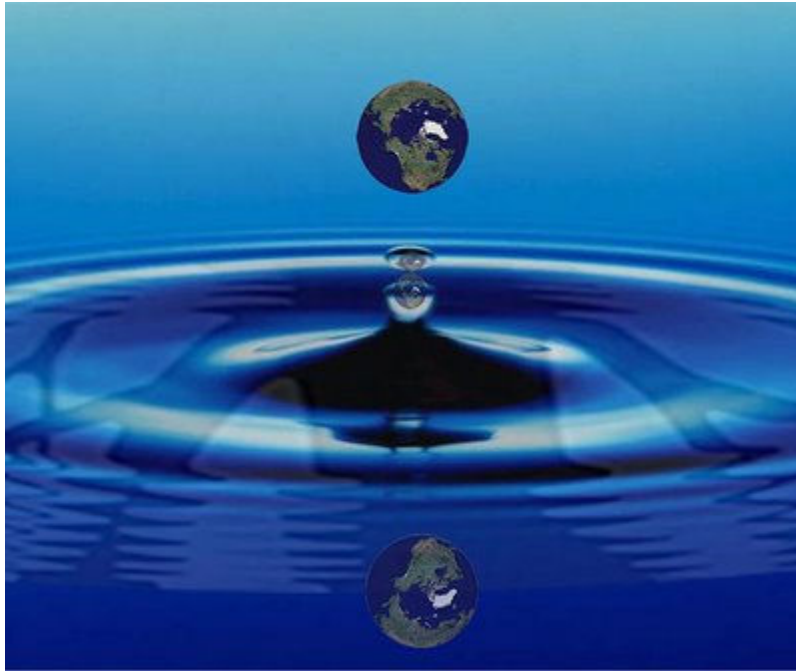
Starcat's Corner: Transitions: Water and Earth

by Starcat

As part of a group of longtime Pagans, I've been taking part in an in-depth study of the elements. This article is the final one in a four-part series about the transitions between the elements and how they interact with one another. These transition points are also known as The Borderlands. They are places of possibility, where we can explore the intersection of elemental energies.

As we conclude our trip around the circle of elements, we reach the transition between Water and Earth. Water's dreamy fluidity gradually gives way to the more solid reality of Earth. Our dreams and passions will soon manifest themselves in our lives and we must be patient and positive as the often slow transformation unfolds. We dive deeply into our selves, discovering our most cherished dreams. From there, we can rest in the assurance that our intentions are being knit together and will be born into our daily reality. We weave our spells, drop our wishes into the still pool of intention, and then wait for the right time to take action.

Water and Earth intersect in the northwest. Rain prevails, yet the climate here is still mild. As we move from fall to the onset of winter, the rains may turn to snow, particularly in the mountains, where Water touches the solid rock of Earth. There is a gentle quality in the relationship between the rains and the forests. At the rocky shoreline, you can feel the ocean spray. The misty landscape feels dreamy, yet safe and protected. The animal totems who make themselves known are bear and eagle, owl and salmon, sea otter and bobcat. These totems move through our dreams, protecting us and guiding our way through our inner terrain. The transition between Water and Earth peaks at Samhain, when we allow our deep inward movement to carry us into the darkest part of the year, dreaming like the trees as the Earth goes to



sleep. Fall moves into winter, and we let our souls rest and hibernate.

Looking at this transition in terms of time, Water and Earth represents evening, the time from sunset to midnight. We settle into our nightly routine, which means some of us head off to bed, while the night owls among us enjoy the quiet of evening to create or relax. It is time for peace and calm, for reflection and winding down towards sleep. The moon's light is mostly hidden from us now, as the waning crescent thins. The dark of the moon allows us to rest in the deep silence of the night. We are held gently in the womb of the darkest time of the year.

At the stage of life represented by the intersection of Water and Earth, we move from elder-hood towards our death. We don't know exactly when we'll make the transition to the other side, but we can begin to prepare ourselves emotionally. We may be inspired to give away our treasured possessions to our loved ones, complete our autobiography, and complete creative projects. We explore our faith, thinking about our passage through the veil and our return to the Earth. As autumn turns to

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Faerie Tidings: Dancing with the Jingle Faeries

by Starcat and BlackLion

We rummage through our big old steamer trunk, in search of blankets that don't mind going outside on this chill night. It is Winter Solstice and the starry skies beckon. There are celestial events afoot tonight – the lunar eclipse is a good omen for the coming year. Inner secrets will be revealed and open for sharing. The two black cats, curious about what we're up to, lurk about. The orange cat is nowhere to be seen. Blankets retrieved, we slide the steamer trunk back into the eaves with a grunt and latch the door.

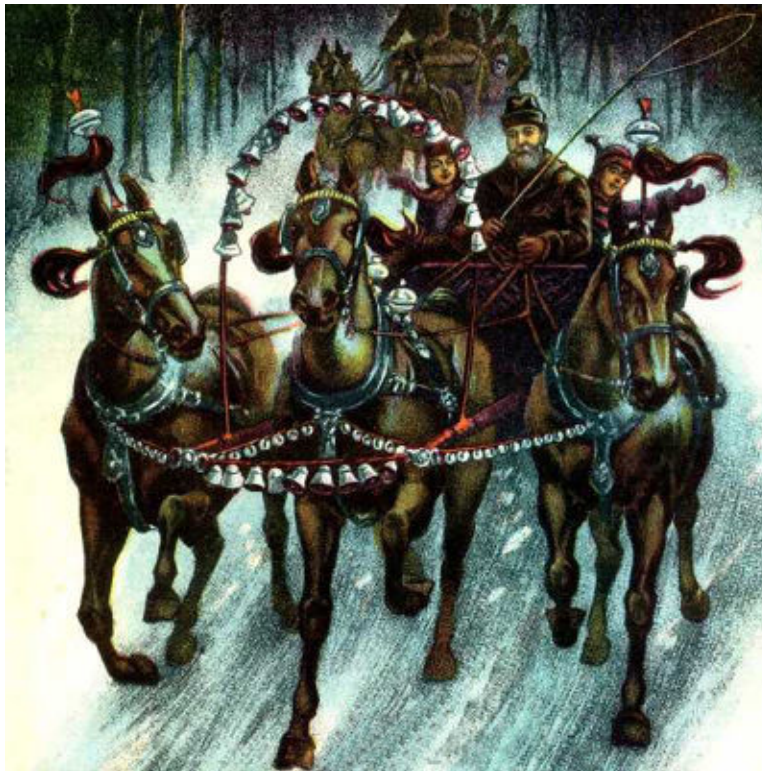
We peer out the window, which Jack Frost has been busy decorating, but don't yet see any guests arriving. We take a moment to check our reflections in the big antique mirror, tucking in wisps of hair and tugging clothing straight. Our garments are brightly colored, but are warm as well as festive. The patchwork quilt on the big bed is ready to hold our guests' coats and capes and wraps after the circle, when everyone comes in to feast. The black cats are sniffing around the eave door as we head toward the stairs with armfuls of blankets.

The banister is festively garlanded, and we smell the evergreen boughs we've laid on the mantel, sills, shelves, and all other available surfaces. There are candles in every window and our eyes are drawn to all the sparkling ornaments we've hung about the living room. The centerpiece is the big Yule tree, adorned with lights, crystals, and handmade ornaments, and surrounded by gifts for all our friends. We eye the candy canes, grabbing one or two or three as we pass by. We thank the tree for its bounty.

We hear footsteps on the porch and happily greet our musician friends, handing them candy canes as they troop in. We pass out steaming mugs of cocoa as we chat and

await the other guests. The long table is already laid out for the feast, decorated with crackers and swan-shaped napkins and place-cards with all the reindeers' names, just for fun. Our centerpiece is a sleigh made of layers of various types of cheese.

We hear jingle bells outside as Farmer Dilly and his family arrive in their sleigh. There are merry greetings all around and we sip cocoa as the musicians tune up. The sideboard is soon heaped with delectable dishes: cranberry sauces, a pot of chili, crusty breads, berry jams, stuffed squash, olives and pickles, roasted carrots, sweet yams, garlic potatoes, peas and onions, and a heaping platter of cookies.



On the way to the kitchen for more mugs, we giggle as we see the huge chocolate elaborately-iced Yule cake resting on its glass stand. We startle at a loud "pop" from the other room – one of the young ones has found the crackers! Laughter and music fill the air and

soon it's time to head outside and begin the ritual. As we guide everyone toward the door, we see the black cats racing up and down the stairs. They must have gotten into the catnip! We invite them outside too, but they zoom off to the second floor in a rush.

To the sound of drums and flutes and lutes and bells, we proceed to the circle with much aplomb and mock seriousness. The fire is lit with a whoosh and a roar, and our merry celebration of the returning light has begun! With growing anticipation, we watch as the full circle of the moon begins to get dark. The magick of the eclipse entrances us all, even the younglings, who pause in their game of tag to watch the moon being engulfed. At its peak, the once-white moon becomes a ruddy version of itself. Later, as the darkness retreats at last, we give up a mighty cheer and the music resumes. The Jingle Faeries

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Happy Anniversary

by Keri Stratton Alley

And in the end I watch you burn

light limbs ablaze

dispense dreams to dragon tongues.

Standing saturated by smoke

watching

waiting

until the last celestial spark

...dies...

My altar becomes a simple barbecue grill again

all the magick gone from it

now that you are veiled.

Shivering beneath layers of overcoating

I pull the blanket of impending snow

up around my now lonely shoulders

and settle into sleep without you

A wicker's wife, a winter widow

until blessed Beltane's blaze and blooms

resurrect your form. ☉

Starcat's Corner (cont'd)

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winter, the frosts come and the plants die away. The leaves have dropped from the trees and the earth sleeps.

There are resources available to help us in exploring the Water-to-Earth transition, such as spiritual practices, tools, and symbols. Here are some ideas:

- Meditation is a fitting practice for the Water to Earth transition. There are many types of meditation to explore. Mindfulness meditation works particularly well with Water and Earth. As you move through your day, stay grounded in the present moment, letting your thoughts and feelings flow through you freely, letting go of any attachment to them. Come back again and again to the present moment, without judging it, but simply letting your experience be fluid and natural.
- In the Tarot, the card that represents "Water of Earth" is the Queen of Pentacles. She is a down-to-earth, grounded woman who enjoys the sensual pleasures of the body. She receives her dreams and feelings, transforming them into creations that delight the senses. It is time to put your full effort into a task, yet remember to allow yourself to go with the flow and take time to play and relax.
- The mythical creatures related to this transition are dryads. These fae creatures live in the trees and are closely connected to the cycles of nature. They are protectors of the forest, guarding it from those who intend harm. When winter comes, they

dream with the trees. We can learn from them by taking the time to nurture our dreams and giving them space to grow slowly into a beautiful grove.

- An affirmation for use during this transition might be: "I empower my most cherished dreams to become manifest in my life."

As we move from late fall to the depths of winter, notice how Water and Earth interact with one another. Seek out ways you can integrate this dynamic energy into your daily life. I hope you've enjoyed our year-long explorations of the elemental Borderlands. Blessed Be! ☉





The Rise of Wicca and Neo-Paganism (cont'd)

(Continued from page 1)

While there were many contributors to the construct of Wicca since the 1890's, there was one man, who in 1954 wrote and published *Witchcraft Today*, and that man was Gerald Gardner (1884 – 1964). Even though Druidism, Witchcraft, and other forms of Paganism were originally oral traditions, their revival is attributed to written text. (Clifton 14 – 15)

Very little is known about Gerald Gardner except for what is public record. He was a civil servant for the United Kingdom, and spent most of his career in Britain's Asian colonies before he retired and settled in southern England. Gardner was one of the many who thought it more prestigious to have learned the "craft," a term used for Witchcraft, an elder of one's own family. Gardner didn't claim to have learned Wicca from an elder of his own family, but did claim to have learned it from elders with family ties that went way back many generations. For most people in the Pagan community, it was well known that Gardner was considered a bit of a pervert due to his tendency toward bondage and ritualized punishment. It came through in his writings and ideas of practice, but the resurgence of "the craft" is mainly attributed to him. The people of Britain have always made changes to religions to try and make them their own, but Wicca is the only religion that originated in the United Kingdom. (Clifton 14 – 15)

Wicca is generally a solitary religion and seventy percent of its followers are solitary, taking personal responsibility for their own religious practice, rather than following an authority figure. Without a strict set of beliefs, "each practitioner can add or subtract beliefs at will," this is a part of what makes Wicca so popular. (Sanders 5)

Now I will continue this paper on three main reasons that I found the most compelling reasons for people of all walks of life to be drawn to Wicca and Paganism, beginning with a concern for the Earth.

The fear of Global Warming and preserving what we now have for future generations is a major common concern among contemporary Pagans. Most of modern society has lost an important connection with nature. In some cases there is even a fear of nature. To be fearful of the natural world, in which we as human beings came from, just as all life has, is quite a cause for alarm.

When the system of Wicca was originally developed, its focus was on fertility, just as the ancients were focused

on fertility. As history has shown, fertility was a main concern for all people in ancient times. Life was hard for our ancient ancestors and fertility of the land, animals, people, etc. was the only way for them to continue life and surviving. With human fertility becoming less of a concern in modern times because of improvements in science, the focus has now shifted to nature. This change is another way in which Wicca and Paganism can remain a positive religion. It is a religion that recognizes change and changes with it. If something can't change with the times, it will get left behind and become history.

The American mainstream religions have done very little to foster concern for nature. Never, have I heard of any sermons given on how people should be encouraged to care for the environment, be good caretakers of nature, and preservation of natural resources. This again, leads many to view Paganism and Wicca more approvingly. (Sanders 22)

Paganism also acknowledges nature by following the cycles of the seasons and life. Pagans and Wiccans are encouraged to live their lives by looking to nature as their guide. They live in the here and now as opposed to living and planning for the end of life. Through this view of nature, Wiccans and Pagans acknowledge their connection to all life and the greater cosmos. Many mainstream religious writers believe that honoring nature is not enough for religion or life because it contains violence and brutality. (Harvey 187)

This world view on life and nature is the basis for Wiccans and Pagans to believe in no absolute good or evil. All things in nature are good and evil at the same time and therefore it applies to life as well.

The second reason for the attraction to Paganism and Wicca is empowerment for women. The Christian church has treated women like "second - class citizens" for much of its history. This treatment of women is also prevalent in much of the Western world as well. (Sanders 22)

Many women have become quite discontent with the Christian church. When women have expressed an interest in becoming more involved in the church, they are usually directed to make coffee and teach Sunday school. With the concerns of equal rights coming more and more to the forefront in our society, how do the patriarchal religions expect women to remain subservient? (Sanders 22)

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The Rise of Wicca and Neo-Paganism (cont'd)

For the last several thousand years of patriarchal religions domination of the Western world, large numbers of women have been searching for a spiritual existence free from the patriarchal dogma. With Wicca's emphasis on Goddess worship, it attracts those women who want to find a spiritual side to their feminism. (Adler 207 – 24)

The feminist views of women have been the main driving force pushing Wicca to be accepted as a religion. Not all Wiccan groups are feminist though. Most Pagans and Wiccans have a more moderate view of the feministic ideas. Feminist Wiccan groups have dropped a lot of common beliefs in the Pagan community in favor of an all female belief system. By doing such things as only recognizing the female deities and eliminating the male deities, they are alienating themselves from the rest of the Pagan and Wiccan community. (Adler 180 – 81)

One doesn't need to look very hard to see the atrocities that have been committed against women in history by patriarchal societies. One common saying in modern Pagan communities that can be found imprinted on t-shirts and bumper stickers is, "Don't forget the burning times." This refers to the days of the infamous witch hunts. *Malleus Maleficarum* (*The Hammer of Evildoers*) published in 1486/87 by Jacob Spenger and Heinrich Krämer was the authoritative witch hunter's manual. One key phrase from this manual that modern Pagan writers like to quote is: "All witchcraft comes from carnal lust, which in women is insatiable." (Clifton 100) This "authoritative" work also stated that women were created from the bent rib of Adam, therefore women are "imperfect animals" if they are even animals at all. (Pearson 302)

In the *Malleus Maleficarum*, inquisitors, the ones who were authorized to verify involvement in witchcraft, were informed that guilty women would make sexual pacts with Satan. Therefore, after this pact was made, any event

in the local community that disrupted the well being of the people was most certainly caused by a witch in their ranks. (Pearson 302 – 3)

When the inquisitors were in search of a "witch", one could be found quite readily. More often than not, the accused was just a woman that someone had a grudge against. Many also speculated that these "witches" may have been highly learned women, such as early scientists. Because of the ridiculous information contained in the

Malleus Maleficarum on how to proceed with the "trials" of the accused, there generally was "no mistake" of finding them guilty. Guilty women and a few men as well, were relatively few in the colonies of America. On the other hand, in Europe the numbers of the accused were astronomical. Imagine the amount of people that lost their lives due to the feelings of resentment of some sort or other, such as the amount of land they owned or a person's general success. Many Wiccans and Pagans feel that the amount of people who were actually true witches during these "trials" was closer to none.



(Gibson 112 – 18)

The final main reason that I would like to point out for the attraction of Wicca and Paganism is the attraction of the supernatural. While Pagans and Wiccans accept the belief in an unseen world, forces, and entities, many, if not all, Christian churches, in these modern times, ignore this belief. In many cases, a person could stir up quite a bit of trouble for themselves by stating a belief in an unseen world in the Christian church. (Sanders 23 – 26)

Reading ones future by using tarot cards and runes are very popular forms of divination among Pagans and Wiccans. There are many other popular forms of divination and occult sciences such as the use of crystals. Even though many of these beliefs forms were allowed by Christianity in their early years of development, now these systems have no place in Christianity. When and



The Rise of Wicca and Neo-Paganism (cont'd)

(Continued from page 9)

why this shift occurred has been speculated by many people. Modern science has been trying to validate these occult sciences for quite some time now, but with limited success. The simple fact that the occult sciences are being tested, gives valid support in their existence. (Handbook of Contemporary 425)

There are still many things in the world that can't be explained by modern science. In the acknowledgement of this fact is where modern Pagans revel. It still gives room for belief in the ideas of fairies, mythical beings, and other such beliefs.

Discussions of the supernatural will quickly conjure up visions and ideas in relation to recent popular movies such as *Harry Potter*, *The Seeker*, *Lord of the Rings*, and many, many other movies. While these movies and books quickly catch the imagination, their similarities to actual supernatural occurrences are very, very limited. For the most part, these movies and books are purely fantasy. Even so, there have been some Christian based groups that are in opposition of these forms of entertainment. They believe that it sways people, especially children, to take an interest in Wicca and Paganism. (Handbook of New 459 – 60)

As Catherine Edwards Sanders, a Christian journalist, points out, "most Wiccans [and Pagans] have thought more seriously about spirituality and some of life's big questions than many in the secular and even Christian cultures. They have not been content to skate through life seeking the gods of fashion, peer pressure, or materialism, reserving religion for weekends and special holidays." (30)

Most Pagans and Wiccans actually view their lives as being interconnected with the rest of the world as a whole. They realize that there are, in fact, fewer chance events in their lives through this interconnection with the rest of the world.

With the impending end of the Mayan calendar in 2012, there have been many theories in reference to the end of the world. In fact, recently the "dooms day" movies have been coming out more and more frequently. One can only speculate that as 2012 draws nearer, the apocalyptic world movies and theories will be coming out at a frantic pace.

In the Wiccan and Pagan groups though, ideas of the world coming to an end are not so prevalent. Many think that the date of 12 December 2012 will be a beginning of

a 'New World Age.' Many experts believe that this will be an age of peace and interconnection with the rest of the world and beyond for the next 5,200 years. The experts are also saying that the 'veil' that separates our world from the spirit world will be lifted. The descendents of the Ancient Mayan's say that we are already in the twenty – five year timeline of this change. (Rennison np.)

This information of the coming change according to the Mayan calendar is something that modern Pagans and Wiccans are looking forward to.

In conclusion, is there a rise in the Wicca and Pagan belief system? Given the research, the answer would definitely be a resounding yes. The movement is very broad and difficult to pin down, but it has been noticed. Many authors and professionals are calling on others to try and do research on the subject. With others taking an interest in the movement, maybe someone or maybe a group of individuals will come forward with some new views or theories on this movement. With these new views and theories we can only hope to find a definite reason for this shift.

Until then, there will be many I'm sure who will take on this daunting task. There are hundreds of theories already studied or in the process of being studied. I'm sure that there are many other ideas out there that have not yet been discussed or found in the public forum. With the case of the ancient Mayans, their descendants have said that there is plenty more information that they are in possession of, but have yet to let the rest of the world know about it. Whether there is more information yet to come remains to be seen.

I'm sure that there other ancient civilizations out there that have possessed knowledge or information, now lost. Unfortunately, just as these civilizations have disappeared, so has their immediate knowledge of this information. They did leave behind recordings of information that are in the processes of being deciphered and theories investigated. The only problem is that many individuals in the modern world have a very difficult time believing what the ancients were saying. This in turn leads to very different ideas in what is being told, many times the information is right there, but many misinterpret the information only because the obvious is just too difficult to comprehend. ☸



To Everything; Turn (cont'd)

(Continued from page 2)

was portrayed by the oldest male in attendance; a role with which her father had been honored for nearly a score of years. Crystal missed him; his patience, his humor, his wisdom and faith. Last night, the longest night of the year, his urn and ashes had attended in his place and another distinguished gentleman had been crowned Holly King for the pageant.

Today, the first day of Winter, Crystal had that same urn in her backpack. She had not slept; she shared her father's annual traditions. She, too, had stayed awake all night stoking the fire to communalize the weary sun's heaviest burden. She, too, had sung in jubilant celebration with the dawn chorus. Now, she had ventured into the wood with the intention of spreading her father's ashes on the newly fallen snow. She could think of no better place than here, in his beloved sacred grove.

She crunched on squeaking snowshoes across the remaining distance to the hedges and again knelt carefully, leaning her father's staff against the holly. Reaching her gloved hands into the snow, she pawed through sharp edged clippings that had not made the trip home with her father. Determined that his ashes should nourish the roots of the bushes he had loved, she tossed aside handfuls of holiday color; pure white, glossy green, and vibrant vermillion flew from her hands in arcs.

When she finally cleared enough snow to see the ground, she found a thick layer of Autumn leaf mulch under the prickly boughs. Not yet fully frozen, the leaves, liberally mixed with acorns from nearby oak trees, moved aside easily. A sweep from her right hand sent a capless acorn weebly awkwardly to bump up against the curved edge of her snowshoe. She reached down to toss it aside. Stopped.

Beneath the white of Winter, within the faded fall foliage – Spring! From a crack no wider than the jagged edge of her thumbnail, a delicate, chartreuse sprout poked out a timid, tightly spiraled head. Crystal plucked it from the ground. Fingers trembling, she curled gentle, gloved fingers to cradle the future in her palm. ☼





View from the Aerie (cont'd)

(Continued from page 4)

The other aspect of this same fear is getting your heart set on being completely healed and being disappointed. What if it doesn't work? What if I do all these things and ask all these other folks for help, and then it fails? The fear of disappointment is one that each individual must find his own way to conquer. We can support him as he finds his path to courage, but we can't do it for him. The answer is within.

For me, the most frustrating form that blocked healing takes is in those people who don't want to be healed because they enjoy the attention that complaining about their ailments brings to them. I haven't really found a solution to that one yet. I've tried showing them that there are better ways of getting attention, that people won't forget about them if they are well, that life is so much more enjoyable when we talk about the positive aspects of our lives, to no avail. While this is very frustrating for me, I remind myself of my role in their lives. Mine is to offer, theirs is to accept or reject at their discretion. I've learned to let go. When these folks are ready for healing, I'm ready to help. Until then, my role is to stand aside and let them walk the paths of their choice.

There is also another possible reason that healing is blocked that has nothing to do with choice. Sometimes,

it's simply because that person needs to follow that path a while longer. Lupus was, for me, a gift from the Goddess. Sounds crazy, I know, but I had things I needed to learn from that experience. I am far more compassionate towards others with life or health challenges now. I'm far more aware of the challenges facing disabled people, from too few motorized shopping carts in large stores, to aisles that are impassable while riding in one, to the glares and rude comments from people who apparently missed the cane in the basket and thought a young person like me should be running through the store singing "tra la la," etc.

I also learned a great deal about me. I learned to accept limits. I learned to accept the limitations in others. I learned how to ask for help. I learned who in my life was truly supportive and who was only there in fairer weather. I learned how strong I can be. I learned how weak I can be. I learned what is truly important in life, and what is just baggage we carry with us. Sometimes, these lessons can't be learned any other way. Until that path has been traversed, we can support that person. We can give them the love, compassion, help, and strength they need. We can stand in place of the foundation that will be laid and point out the available paths to take next. ☸

Faerie Tidings (cont'd)

(Continued from page 6)

join us as we dance and sing and frolic until our tummies begin to rumble. Our fingers and toes long for more heat and we all head for the warmth of the cottage. Some of the more animated dancers are steaming in the chill air.

A couple of our dear friends came in a bit early and have warmed up all the food for the incoming feasters. Everyone is feeling jolly and bright. We collect piles of coats as they are shed eagerly and tromp up the stairs to throw them onto the bed. The two black cats are, strangely, resting near the eaves with their paws tucked under, looking like they are waiting for something. We hear a thump and a muffled "mew?" from behind the eave door. As we open it, out strolls the orange cat, blinking in the light and stretching. We apologize and giggle as we pet his fur, from head to tail. He gives an appreciative purr and follows us down the stairs, along with his ebony companions, glad to join the celebration and perhaps sample a taste of the centerpiece. ☸





Networking

The people and groups listed here have volunteered to serve as points of contact for those seeking Pagan community. Any person or group may be listed here by contacting EPN to arrange such a listing.

EPN has no interest in serving as the "Pagan police," and explicitly supports the autonomy of each person and group in matters of faith, belief and worship. The Maine Pagan community encompasses a wide variety of people and practices, and seekers are cautioned that any person or activity that makes you uncomfortable is probably wrong for you.

For more in-depth information on many of the groups and contacts in the network, see the EPN website at earthtides.org. ☉

BANGOR AREA

Eastern Maine Pagan Pride Day (EMPPD). Monthly meetings and additional fundraisers, leading up to EMPPD. Bangor. Keri Alley, (207) 947-7290. Keri Alley, coyotewalkingtree@gmail.com or Teresa Cassinelli, asetmoonglow@gmail.com.

Temple of the Feminine Divine. Legally recognized "church" with ordained clergy offering public Sabbat rituals, library, meditation space, ordination program, rites of passage, and religious counseling. Bangor. (207) 941-0261. TOFDBangor@aol.com.

DOWNEAST

Leslie Linder. Public rituals, classes, and workshops (including online), handfastings and Wiccanings. Ellsworth. leslielinder@hotmail.com. www.universalclass.com/l/crn/13095.htm.

KENNEBEC VALLEY

Red Tail Alliance. Twice-monthly open traditional Native American Sacred Circle meetings and Full Moon Ceremonies (Shoshone). Starks. Carmen Gauthier, (207) 696-8262. redtailali@peoplepc.com. www.redtailalliance.org.

Bill and Johanna Chellis. Pantheists working with the circle, wheel and labyrinth. Augusta. (207) 685-3860.

LAKES AND MOUNTAINS REGION

Snowhawke/Kevin E. Emmons. An active Druid priest offering public classes, one-on-one mentoring, prison ministry, press contact, Druid sweat lodges, and free training material including a year-long course in Druidry. Casco. (207) 655-1211. snowhawke@gmail.com.

Kerry of Forest Sanctuary. Clergy services include rites of passage, coordination between hospitals and prisons, formal or informal training, and therapy. Jay. forestsanctuary@yahoo.com. www.forestsanctuarymaine.org.

Ananta Androscoggin/ Rev. Peter W. Jokinen. Offering use of the Groves of the Greene Man's Denne facilities for ritual, private or public events,

handfastings, and weddings. Contact person for Pagan Newswire Collective. Greene. (207) 946-7732. greeneman@fairpoint.net. www.fairpoint.net/~sirpeterj.

Silver Circle. Open Sabbat and Esbat rituals and instruction in eclectic Wicca and Pagan paths. Lewiston, Livermore, Bath-Brunswick. (207) 897-9673. angashsash60@yahoo.com or elfmanofnemedd@yahoo.com.

Lorelei Greenwood of Cynwyd (KIN-wood) Circle. Teaching basic Wicca with Shamanic leanings, offering occasional public rituals and gatherings and rites of passage. Lewiston/Auburn. (207) 577-5946. firebornspirit@yahoo.com.

PORTLAND AREA

Beans, Leaves & Deities. Monthly coffee talks with open discussion. Portland. Joie, beansleavesdeities@yahoo.com. www.beansleavesdeities.blogspot.com.

The Red Temple. Monthly gatherings for Pagan women. Westbrook. Kat Schorr, kat@wiccanlife.com. www.redtemple.ning.com.

SOUTHERN MAINE

Govannon Thunderwolf (Brian J. Schrader) . Sympathetic ear, counseling, instruction, handfastings (weddings), etc., and a place to relax. Biddeford/Saco. (207) 283-6494. wizard76@hotmail.com.

Jo Stories. Counseling, teaching, handfasting, coven membership, courses, and public rituals. South Windham. Jostories@aol.com.

13 Moons Coven. Open full moon magical rituals with a focus on Egyptian deities and mythos. Kennebunk. temple@13moonscoven.org. www.myspace.com/13moonscoven or 13moonscoven.org.

Taliesin and Star Weaver (Dirigo Reclaiming). Classes in the Reclaiming tradition, workshops, rituals by invitation, Tarot readings, and a sympathetic ear. York County. dirigoreclaim@earthlink.net. www.elementsofmagicaliving.com.

BE A PART OF EPN

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____

ZIP CODE: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

This is a (check one):

New membership Renewal

Mail to: EPN, P.O. Box 161, E. Winthrop, ME 04343.



Calendar of Events

NOTE: If you'd like your event included in our calendar of events, please send us an e-mail, with Calendar Listings as the subject, to grove@ctel.net before the deadline for the issue in which you'd like it listed. Each issue of the newsletter lists the next deadline on the front page.

If you would like an extra copy of this calendar to post on a public bulletin board, please feel free to photocopy it. If you know a business in your area which would like to post one, please send the information to the above e-mail address and we'll add it to the mailing list.

As a service to the Pagan community, we seek to list as many events as possible that would be of interest to Maine Pagans. You need not be a member of EPN, or even a subscriber to this newsletter, to list an event here. All we ask is that events be non-profit -- that is, that any fees for participating not exceed the reasonable cost of putting on the

event -- and submitted to us by e-mail or post by the publication deadline. (Those planning for-profit events are welcome to avail themselves of our very affordable advertising opportunities.)

We make no claim as to the value or safety of any of these events, and caution our readers to rely on their own best judgment when assessing any situation, particularly those involving strangers. That said, we also encourage you to participate in as wide a spectrum of the Pagan community as you can, both for your own enjoyment and because our community needs your positive energy and good fellowship.

For up-to-date calendar events, see the EPN website at earthtides.org ☸

— December 2010 —

21 Full Moon, Lunar Eclipse, and Winter Solstice ☸

31 Secular New Year's Eve ☸

— January 2011 —

4 New Moon ☸

7 Kennebec County Pub Moot

Augusta area, 7pm. Held on the first Friday of every month. Hope to see you there! Location TBA. FMI: check our Facebook page, Pagan Pub Moot Maine. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pagan-Pub-Moot-Maine/104146562954178> ☸

16 13 Moons Coven Ritual to Heka

Kennebunk. We ask those attending to begin showing up at 5 PM. Ritual will begin around 6 PM. All are welcome to attend so far as our space will provide. Children are welcome so long as you feel that they will be able to stand still for a 30 minute ritual ... Those under the age of 18 will need to attend with a parent or guardian or work out arrangements with us beforehand. ☸

18 Cumberland County Pagan Pub Moot

Portland. 6-9pm. Come join us at the Cumberland County Pagan Pub Moot! Location TBA. FMI: check our Facebook page, Pagan Pub Moot Maine. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pagan-Pub-Moot-Maine/104146562954178> ☸

19 Full Moon ☸

31 Silver Cauldron Open Ritual for Imbolc

Saco. All Silver Cauldron Coven open celebrations are held on Sunday afternoon. We meet at 3:45 PM, and begin preparation for ritual at 4 PM, and rituals will be outside if at all possible so please dress accordingly. If you have a need to show early, Please let us know ahead of time... As much as we would love to have you visit early ... we are unable to be proper hosts due to our time constraints with pre-ritual set-up. Directions? Comments? Questions? Please email us through our website: www.silvercauldroncoven.com ☸

— February 2011 —

2 Imbolc and Full Moon ☸

4 Kennebec County Pub Moot

Augusta area, 7pm. Held on the first Friday of every month. Hope to see you there! Location TBA. FMI: check our Facebook page, Pagan Pub Moot Maine. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pagan-Pub-Moot-Maine/104146562954178> ☸

13 Maine Pagan Clergy Association

Quarterly meeting in South Berwick. Board meeting 2:30p, general meeting 3:30p, educational programming, if scheduled, at 4p. Potluck afterwards. E-mail mtngoddess2001@yahoo.com for details and directions. ☸

17 Cumberland County Pagan Pub Moot

Portland. 6-9pm. Come join us at the Cumberland County Pagan Pub Moot! Location TBA. FMI: check our Facebook page, Pagan Pub Moot Maine. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pagan-Pub-Moot-Maine/104146562954178> ☸

18 Full Moon ☸

20 13 Moons Coven Ritual to Bes

Kennebunk. We ask those attending to begin showing up at 5 PM. Ritual will begin around 6 PM. All are welcome to attend so far as our space will provide. Children are welcome so long as you feel that they will be able to stand still for a 30 minute ritual ... Those under the age of 18 will need to attend with a parent or guardian or work out arrangements with us beforehand. FMI: <http://13moonscoven.org/> ☸

— March 2011 —

4 New Moon ☸

4 Kennebec County Pub Moot

Augusta area, 7pm. Held on the first Friday of every month. Hope to see you there! Location TBA. FMI: check our Facebook page, Pagan Pub Moot Maine. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pagan-Pub-Moot-Maine/104146562954178> ☸

18 Cumberland County Pagan Pub Moot

Portland. 6-9pm. Come join us at the Cumberland County Pagan Pub Moot! Location TBA. FMI: check our Facebook page, Pagan Pub Moot Maine. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pagan-Pub-Moot-Maine/104146562954178> ☸



Calendar of Events (cont'd)

19 Full Moon ☾

20 Ostara ☽

21 Silver Cauldron Open Ritual for Oestara

Saco. All Silver Cauldron Coven open celebrations are held on Sunday afternoon. We meet at 3:45 PM, and begin preparation for ritual at 4 PM, and rituals will be outside if at all possible so please dress accordingly. If you have a need to show early, Please let us know ahead of time... As much as we would love to have you visit early ... we are unable to be proper hosts due to our time constraints with pre-ritual set-up. Directions? Comments? Questions? Please email us through our website: www.silvercauldroncoven.com ☽

27 13 Moons Coven Ritual to Sobek

Kennebunk. We ask those attending to begin showing up at 5 PM. Ritual will begin around 6 PM. All are welcome to attend so far as our space will provide. Children are welcome so long as you feel that they will be able to stand still for a 30 minute ritual ... Those under the age of 18 will need to attend with a parent or guardian or work out arrangements with us beforehand. ☽

April 2011

1 Kennebec County Pub Moot

Augusta area, 7pm. Held on the first Friday of every month. Hope to see you there! Location TBA. FMI: check our Facebook page, Pagan Pub Moot Maine. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pagan-Pub-Moot-Maine/104146562954178> ☽

3 New Moon ☽

16 Cumberland County Pagan Pub Moot

Portland. 6-9pm. Come join us at the Cumberland County Pagan Pub Moot. We plan to get together and enjoy company, spirits, and spirit. Pagan Pub Moot Maine. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pagan-Pub-Moot-Maine/104146562954178> ☽

17 Full Moon ☽

May 2011

1 Beltane at the Beach 29th Annual

Maine Pagans will gather at Popham Beach to celebrate Beltane by circling around several May poles. Bring 9 yards of ribbon if you want to participate. We also enjoy a pot luck lunch, a traditional torch race, and each others' company. Weather permitting, there will be a Pagan Motorcyclist's Bike Blessing, done by members of the Ancient Riders. We'll announce details as it firms up, but lunch will be at noon circle-time will be at 2:00. High tide is at 10:58, so that should give it time to give us back enough space on the beach for the celebrating! ☽

Monthly & Weekly Events

Abrahamadabra Oasis Social Hour Every second Tuesday. Come join us for our monthly social! Abrahamadabra Oasis is an official body of the Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.) located in Portland, Maine. Its mission is to provide and support the growth of a Thelemic community in northern New England. 276 Woodford Street in Portland, 6:00 PM. See www.abrahamadabra-oto.org for more info.

Acorn Circle: 5:30 – 7:00 PM the fourth Wednesday of each month @ Sam's Restaurant in Lisbon Falls. Acorn circle is an eclectic American Wiccan group with degree training & workshops at Sabbats and Esbats. All training is free and done entirely on a voluntary basis. To join the group and/or to get more info, e-mail vernalnox1@yahoo.com. Adults only.

Beans, Leaves & Deities: Pagan Coffee Chats – 2nd Saturdays, New Portland Church, Portland. Coffee, tea and meet other Southern Maine Pagans. All Pagan paths are welcome. Our goal is to provide a safe, fun and welcoming space for local Pagans to meet, network, share ideas and enjoy a cuppa. One hour topical discussion followed by social time. FMI: call 671-4292, jgrandbois@gwi.net, or www.beansleavesdeities.blogspot.com.

The Groves of the Greene Man's Denne, 31 South River Road, Greene. Available for group or individual worship. FMI: www.fairpoint.net/~sirpeterj/greeneman@fairpoint.net.

Healing Circle on the last Tuesday of the month from 7-9pm at 584 Maple Ridge Rd in Winslow. You can find more info by calling (207) 692-4957 or via the web at www.becomeonewithspirit.com or www.becomeonewithspirit.com/news_letter.htm.

Lewiston Auburn Pagans presents... LAP Meet and Greet. Every Sunday at Governor's in Lewiston from 7-9pm. We meet to network with other Pagans and spread education of our paths. See www.witchvox.com/vn/vn_detail/dt_ev.html?a=usme&id=52018 for more info.

The Magick Closet presents...Free Weekly Seminar: Which Witch is which? Every Monday night from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM at The Magick Closet, 995 Forest Avenue, Portland, ME. Must call for admission, (207) 221-6820.

Pagan Home-schoolers. Each Wednesday before the full moon, a group meets in Standish from 9:00 to Noon. Call 207-642-5045.

SpiralScouts Moonrise Circle #218 Meeting First Sunday of Every Month in Steep Falls at 2pm. We are looking for other families interested in sharing this Scouting experience. Children ages 3-18. Registration Required. Please contact Carolyn_lh@yahoo.com for directions and more information.

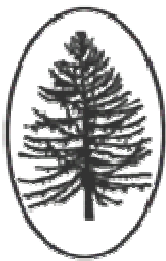
Temple of the Feminine Divine Red Tent (Women Only) Second Saturday of every month at TOFD, 31 Central St, Suites 203-205, Bangor, ME 04401. FMI: 207-941-0261

USM Pagan Chaplaincy sponsors regular rituals open to USM students, faculty and staff as well as the wider community. Stress-relieving meditations are at noon on Wednesdays at the Interfaith Chaplaincy office ("old farmhouse" on the Portland campus). For more information, e-mail cynthia.collins@maine.edu.

Wisdom House Shrine Discussion Group/Open Ritual. Sundays at 1:30pm in Presque Isle. For more information see www.witchvox.com/vn/vn_detail/dt_ev.html?a=usme&id=62236.

Merry Yule and Happy Solstice!

E. Winthrop, ME 04343
P.O. Box 161
EPN



MAINE PAGAN CLERGY
ASSOCIATION

February 13th, 2011

Maine Pagan Clergy Association
Quarterly Meeting

See Calendar for details.