

Wheel of the Year

Inside the Wheel

Volume 3, Issue 4

FREE

Beltaine 2006

Special points of interest:

- Letter From the Editor
- Free Spirit
- In or Out of the Broom Closet?
- May/June Events
- WOTY Update

Blessed Beltaine



From WOTY

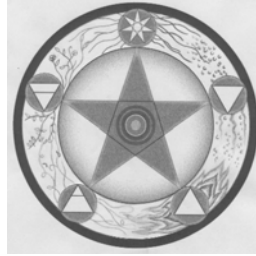
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Future Topics for Readers to Submit Articles About.

The next Newsletter is an Open forum.
What do you want to talk about?
Submissions due by June 14th 2006

Wheel of the Year (WOTY) is a nondenominational Pagan church. We are here to provide a forum for Pagans to network, gather information, and build a community. We hold regular discussions and classes on topics related to Paganism and celebrate the eight major Sabbats of the year. We are a family friendly group. WOTY is not a coven, and all our events are open to anyone who comes with an open mind and a positive attitude.



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Letter from the Editor

Here we are again with another turning of the wheel. WOTY is still going strong and moving along at a fast pace. There are some interesting events scheduled and fun things to do. I encourage everyone to participate.

Many of us here at the Wheel are preparing to go to Florida Pagan Gather- ing in Ocala this time. There is a lot of excitement about learning new things, both for personal knowledge and to pass on to others, and meeting new fellow pagans to network with.

The Beltaine event promises to be exciting. It is being held at a new location and facilitated by new people. A traditional may pole dance is a part of the program- ming.

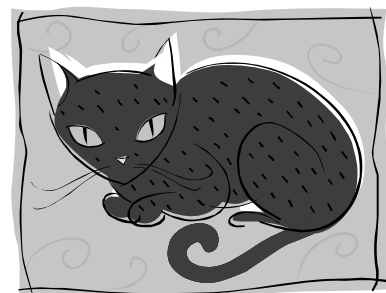
Chad Hidalgo has again contributed to this newsletter with a wonderful article on being out as a pagan. I believe everyone will enjoy reading it.

On a less happy note I would like to say that the WOTY newsletter is about you. It is submitted by the community for the community. This newsletter is smaller than my previous editing endeavors due to the fact that other pagans are not contrib- uting to the cause.

We at WOTY believe that editing a newsletter for the community, printing it, and distributing it is a worth while effort. It takes time and money. So, if the pagans in the community want a rich and full newslet- ter than the community must participate. If the community doesn't participate than it has no value.

So, Blessed be and may the God- dess and God light the path of all that this newsletter touches.

Augur -n- Chaos



“Free Spirit”

Mister John Adams was born in Massachusetts in 1735. He studied law in Harvard. In 1765 he became involved in colonial politics to denounce the Stamp Act. Some of his thoughts were immortalized in the *Boston Gazette* -

“Let the pulpit resound with the doctrines and sentiments of religious liberty. Let us hear the danger of thralldom to consciences from ignorance, extreme poverty, and dependence; in short from civil and political slavery. Let us see delineated before us the true map of man. Let us hear the dignity of his nature, and the noble rank he holds among the works of God-that consenting to slavery is a sacrilegious breach of trust, as offensive in the sight of God as it is derogatory from our own honor or interest or happiness-and that God Almighty has promulgated from heaven liberty, peace, and goodwill to man!”

Wow! I can see why he was elected President of the United States in 1797 and before that, he was the first Vice-President, and participated with Thomas Jefferson on the committee that drafted the *Declaration of Independence*. I wonder how many of us know that greatest of historical documents begins...

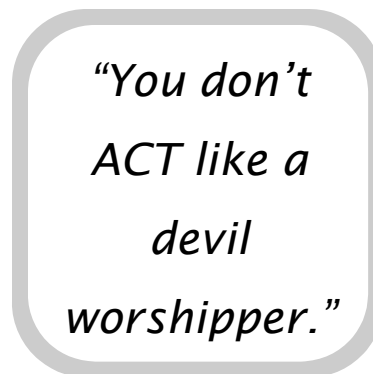
“When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political hands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God entitle them to the separation.—We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights; that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.”

If every person understood those words



and adopted them as their own, we would never be concerned with being in or out of the broom closet. Such as it is, we are all faced with public perception of our beliefs, because we dare to dance to the beat of a different drummer. In my very small world, my experiences of “cowans” has run the gambit from fear to admiration with curiosity forming a middle ground.

Although I do not ever deny my beliefs or practices, I find also no need or desire to publicly shout or otherwise demonstrate my beliefs. I wear a small “Star of the Muses” amulet and it is hardly ever visible because D.O.C. policy requires that I wear it under my shirt. That is as it should be because I wear it for myself to be reminded of all that I can do. Because I enjoy the liberty of believing as I do, I am careful not to denounce what any other sovereign being believes. I do ask questions and try to grow in understanding WITH others. Many people have been very surprised to find out that I am a wicca because in their own words. “You don’t ACT like a devil worshipper.”

A quote in a rounded rectangular box with a light gray border. The text is centered and reads:

*“You don’t
ACT like a
devil
worshipper.”*

I concentrate on my actions and my words SO THAT public perception will become what I want it to be.

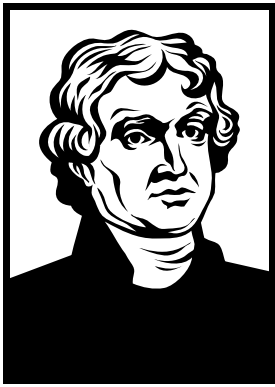
“What might that be?” you ask.

Simply that anyone who is seeking will find truth wherever they may and that no one

will cause us any harm; to heed the words of the charge of the God- “You shall be free from slavery and as a sign that ye be truly free you will free those still enslaved...the price of freedom is often high and yours was purchased by the sacrifices of those who came before’; to insure that we have “NEVER AGAIN the burning times.”

Before I started on this path I was taught there was only one way to find God. Now I understand that there are as many ways as there are people in the world to build a spiritual relationship. If it had not been for an ugly demonstration of intolerance and willful disrespect. I might not have realized the need to wake-up and really look inside. AHH! There is the VALUE of public perception– if we can be objective, we can come to understand what we are often too close to see for ourselves. It MAY BE that we are sometimes perceived negatively because that is what we are projecting. Like attracts like– hmm?

Yet there is a balance to everything. Public perception should never be given the power



to alter your course in the quest for spiritual enlightenment. I know this because I have lived much of my life trying to satisfy others, but I have come to realize that I was denying myself the freedom to be happy just as I am. In doing so I was giving my “consent to slavery.”

Thomas Jefferson wrote, “the truth is great and will prevail if left to herself; that she is the proper and sufficient antagonistic to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate; errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them.”

Truth is something slightly different for everyone because of perception. Because someone else sees something differently from what you see, does that make what you see a lie? Truth is a faceted gem and the beauty of life is that there are so many ways of looking at things. People sometimes become much too earnest and vehement when their minds have “SEIZED” upon the truth” and stagnated there.

In MY PERCEPTION, all spirituality is meant to obtain PEACE and HARMONY. It is counterproductive to argue about some “right way.” If someone has hatred within themselves because what another believes is different, then what they believe has not led them to peace and harmony, but rather to bigotry, and to “civil and political slavery.”

I AM one being evolved enough for the expression of individual thought. At times I am arrogant, but even then I can realize that I MAY BE mistaken; that perhaps I missed something. I have come to cherish unique and individual expression and contribution. I was weary of trying to believe what somebody else commanded me to believe. I have chosen to break the bonds and shrug off the yoke of religious persecution so that I can BE as I AM-

FREE SPIRIT

May my every word be of service to the highest good. I am interested in exchanging ideas and view points through letters which you can send to:

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Blessed Ever Be,
Shadow Brightener



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In or Out of the Broom Closet?

When I saw this month's topic, I thought, "Uh oh, I'd better keep my mouth shut on this one. People are probably tired of hearing my opinion." Well, as usual, I haven't stuck to my good intentions, so here's my two cents.

Those who know me or have had this discussion with me before know that this is a subject I am passionate about. I am definitely "out of the broom closet" as the saying goes. I wear my pentagram to work. When people ask me what I did over the weekend, I'll tell them I did a full moon ritual. Heck, I organized last year's Pagan Pride event and was in the local media. I even convinced my Catholic mother to help with WOTY's robe making class the last time she came down to visit. On a personal level, it is not a hard decision for me. I wear my heart on my sleeve. I cannot hide who I am.

I also want to make it clear that I understand that not everybody can afford the luxury of being "out." People do still face very real threats from a discriminatory and prejudiced society. People do lose their jobs, their homes, and even their families due to the hatred and ignorance that still exists in the world. Those aren't things to be taken lightly. I respect each person's decision for what is right for them and how open they are able to be.



What really upsets me is when people make unilateral statements across the board about what everybody else should be doing. I already stated that not everyone *can* be out. And I certainly don't agree that everyone should continue to hide. The time that secrecy was a matter of survival has passed. In some cases that secrecy has become part of our dogma. Some people feel that we should all continue to be the "Hidden Children." I respectfully disagree. We as Pagans are in a position now to make a real difference in the world. There are many people, myself included, that are willing to take the risks, make our voices heard, and fight for the rights of all Pagans. If we do that, there *will* come a day that anyone who

chooses to can practice their religion openly and freely without fear of the frightening consequences we still face today.

And before that, there is another demon we must face. We must face the discrimination and prejudice I have encountered within the Pagan community. We must learn to respect and support one another as we each travel our own paths. Without solidarity from within, we will not be able to achieve our outward goals.

So anyway, that's my rant for today. Letters to the editor are welcome. Blessed Be.

Lorax



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As the Wheel Turns

The Wheel continues to turn, and turn, and turn. We're getting lots done, so here is an update:

Spiral Scouts had its first official meeting and should be able to be declared an official Spiral Scouts International circle by the end of June. We all met up on Coquina Beach and had a great time. Hope to see you and the kids at the next gathering on May 21st.

Spiral Recovery is gearing up. We have been in touch with Cynthia Collins, the author of the Recovery Spiral, and she is going to help us get the group off to a good start.

The ordination committee will meet at 7:00 pm on May 19th to come up with recommendations for WOTY's ordination process. Contact us if you are interested in sharing your thoughts on the subject or go to the ordination message board at www.wheeloftheyear.org.

The ritual certification class is being revamped and will be available by correspondence course in July. Those wishing to receive the certification will be able to work at their own pace and then contact the instructor for the final written and practical test.

We are almost ready to file for federal non-profit status. Niki has been working hard on filling out all the paperwork and gathering the necessary information, but it would be better if we had a lawyer to go over everything and make sure it is A-Okay. So if anyone knows of anyone...please give us a call.



WOTY Events May/June

May 21st 12 pm to 3 pm - Spiral Scouts Meeting @ Twin Lakes Park in Sarasota: The groups will participate in a craft and learn how it is used in Pagan tradition. Call 776-1235 for directions and specific times for each group.

May 27th @ 7:30 - New Moon Ritual: The new moon is a time of contemplation and introspection. Join us in ritual as we ask help of the Dark Goddess in this time of preparation and transition. Babysitting will be provided.

June 3rd @ 5:00 pm - Officers' Council Meeting. The officers and any interested members or participants of Wheel of the Year will meet and discuss the day-to-day operations of WOTY. Dinner will be provided for those who RSVP.

June 10th @ 6:30 pm - Candle Magick Class: Learn techniques for using candles to create simple and effective spells. June 24th @ 4:00 pm - Litha Ritual: Join Wheel of the Year as we celebrate the Solstice. Bring a snack to share.