

Wheel of the Year

Inside the Wheel

Volume 3, Issue 3

FREE

OSTARA 2006

Special points of interest:

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- Election Results
- Sotto Voce
- Pagan Poetry
- Book Review
- April/May Events
- WOTY Update

Blessed Ostara



From WOTY

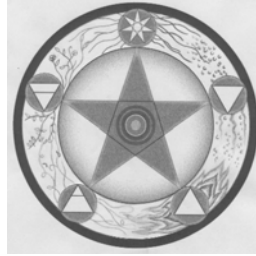
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Future Topics for Readers to Submit Articles About.

In the broom closet or out? What have your experiences been with public perception?
Deadline: April 16th 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

Merry Meet again!

The wheel keeps turning and time moves forward sometimes a little too quickly for some of us and for others maybe a little too slowly. As Editor I've faced a number of personal challenges during this turn of the wheel and I am looking forward to planting new seeds and enjoying the idea of a hopefully calmer existence and a physically healthier one as well. The coming of spring has reminded me about the joys of high pollen counts and the havoc it wreaks on me in particular especially when my system hasn't adapted to the Florida flora and fauna at this time. On the bright side it's absolutely beautiful and smells

Decadent (When I can smell) :).


Once again there is a wide assortment of articles on a range of subjects.

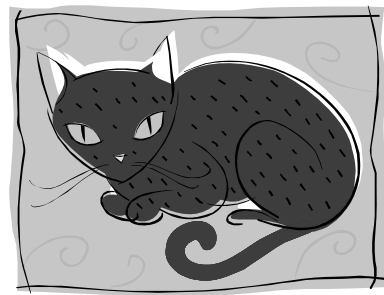
WOTY has decided to put our board meeting minutes into print to give the Pagan community an idea of where we are headed and what we are all about.

There are several poems written by a new submissions. One of which is a local individual and the other set by an incarcerated gentleman sent to us by Shadow brightener.

Thank you all for your contributions and support.

Blessed Be,

Augur -n- Chaos 



As the Wheel Turns

As The Wheel Turns

March has been another busy month for Wheel of the Year – and it's not even over yet! Here's what's cooking:

JDRF: Thank you to everyone that donated and participated in the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation's *Walk for a Cure*. There is some very promising research going on that may provide a cure for Type I diabetes, and Wheel of the Year is part of what's going to make it happen!

Spiral Scouts: is an international scouting organization for children, ages 3 –18, of non-mainstream traditions. We have two people who have volunteered to lead the Circle, but we would like at least one more male and one more female to take on leadership roles, that way not too much burden will be placed on any one person. Our first informal meeting is April 9th. See the event section for details. If you would like to help or need more info, please contact Niki by emailing Lorax@WheeloftheYear.org or give us a call.

Spiral Recovery: is an addiction recovery program similar to traditional 12 step programs like AA and NA, but with a Pagan focus. It uses the tools and values of Paganism to aid in the recovery process. We have found a tentative meeting place in Bradenton and are in negotiations on a time we can use the facility. We plan to start having meetings in May. Contact Direwulf by emailing Direwulf@WheeloftheYear.org or call Wheel of the Year at 776-1235.

Ordination: I know, I know, we've been talking about this one for a while, but it really is going to happen. Wheel of the Year will be able to bestow legal ordinations creating Pagan clergy by the end of 2006. We need one or two more volunteers for the ordination committee to make this happen. The ordination committee is in charge of coming up with recommendations for what our ordination procedures and requirements will be and presenting the recommendation to the Officers' Council and Council of Elders for approval. If you would like to help out or make suggestions, please contact Bear by phone or email at RevBear@WheeloftheYear.org.

Officers' Council: And of course the newly elected Officers' Council had their first meeting. (See the minutes on page ???) If you are interested in all the fascinating behind-the-scenes workings of Wheel of the Year, feel free to come to our next meeting on April 22nd.



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SOTTO VOCE

By Shadow Brightener

The various sects of Christianity base their faith almost entirely upon a collection of writings referred to as the “Holy Bible”. Considering the antiquity of the majority of those writings, extending well into years B.C.E. when the Kings and Judges ruled the Israelites, it is amazing that the documents exist at all. That is part of this particular pundit. At some point in history some of the oral traditions became written and the stories were held to be sacred. In contrast, the Druids considered it a sacrilege to write any of their sacred knowledge.

The “Holy Bible” is often referred to as “The Word of God”. The Christians revere their god as THE Almighty Living God. The gods are all Almighty and Living. But I wonder, why is “The Word of God” not continually expanding? Nothing has changed about the “Holy Bible,” “The Word of God” since the Protestant Reformation when a council of men decreed what was to be included in the “Holy Bible.” This council actually removed several “books” from the bible and these

books became known as the Apocrypha. Did God “take it back”?

My intent is not Christian bashing and there are portions of the “Holy Bible” which are quite interesting and useful. I was raised Catholic and that structure was a good foundation to build upon yet the substantive part of my spirituality was not satisfied. My inquiring mind could not be quelled until I began to learn the secret—“That which you not within, you will never find without.”

*“To know, to will, to
dare, to be silent,”
the alchemical
axiom of magick.....*

The deepest mystery of the Goddess and the God, the most sacred of knowledge is the admonition to look within. “To know, to will, to dare, to be silent,” the alchemical axiom of magick, saves for last the principle ingredient for success. It is in Silence that we are at last able to hear the words of the Living Gods for they speak to us SOTTO VOCE, without voice.

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In the density of physical existence our Spirit Beings gain experience through electrochemical stimuli from our brains' responses to our senses. Our psyche records these stimuli as memories and thus we learn. Every one of those stimuli, whether sight, sound, smell, touch, or taste is part of the living Universe set in motion by the Lord and Lady. Sotto Voce they speak to us from the very beginning when sperm cell meets ovum and creation begins again, thousands of times each day.

We are the children of the Lord and Lady, we are all gods and have only to realize the truth of their Words. We need to gain the maturity of caring for our parents whose bodies are the Earth and Sky. We have been shrouded beneath a pall of strangeness, spookiness, and even evil, and the result has been that precious few know the worship of the Lord and Lady. In history we have known and practiced healing arts. Pharmacopoeia is much different today than the Craft of the Wise. For many Witchcraft is a novel curiosity and for some a rebellion or the misguided belief that Wiccans can do whatever they want to do.

It's just not that simple; We must also Harm None. The intent behind every

action must be carefully examined and even what we say can be evocative of permanent results. Just because we can do something is not sufficient evidence that we should do it. Likewise, the ability to speak does not mean that we should say something. If in silence you could "hear a pin drop", just imagine what else you might hear. There is a precious time here in prison when everyone has gone to sleep— it is literally "Otherworldly" and only happens occasionally. It is then that I can be at peace to know myself.

Find out for yourself if I am right. The "Word of God" is Sotto Voce, but ever within your soul.

In perfect love and trust. Blessed Ever Be. I invite all correspondence. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for response.

Shadow Brightener
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Children of the Goddess

By Azula Amora Avalon

We are children of the Goddess
Hidden children of the night
By the light of the Moon, we worship
giving thanks with our magickal rite.
Goddess provides her children
with everything we need
And in Her light we walk with pride
Living by the Witch's Rede.
We look to the cycles of Nature
for it is there our lessons are learned
We adhere to the Witch's Law of Three
Goddess returning what we've earned.
We are children of the Goddess
She is Beauty, She is Love
She is Maiden, Mother, Crone
She's the Viper, She's the Dove.
And as I walk the well worn path
I'm protected and never alone
By the light of the full and glorious Moon
the way is always shown.
It's good to be a Witch!



Ritual Drama

By Mary Edda

There are various ways of writing and producing ritual drama. Which, I have found to be a really good way to learn about the myths behind our *Wheel of the Year* celebrations and to bring them to life for the participants and the spectators.

When putting together a ritual drama, I like to have the basic story told by the narrator and then add in dialogue. I usually modernize the speech although it could also be told in the style of the ancient tongue. The Imbolc ritual drama which the group performed was from a book containing Celtic mythology and the author mentioned it was one of the few stories in existence about the goddess, Bridget.

There are many interesting tales from Celtic, Greek, Egyptian and Nordic pantheons, for instance, on which to base ritual dramas.

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While I personally like to modernize the dialogue and do the ritual with narration that the entire group can respond to and enact, the dramas could also be written and performed without the narration. Dialogue only, either stylized or in everyday language would make it more like an actual play, which would serve an alternate purpose if the group leader were to prefer that choice.



Performing the part of a god, goddess or other mythical figure helps one to take on that persona and to find the qualities within that one would like to emulate. To use an example from my own personal experience; I took the part of Cailleach, the old woman of winter, in the Imbolc ritual drama. While she would mainly considered a negative figure that one would hardly want to emulate, she has a lot of strength and

power and her sheer visual presence captures one's attention, which I consider to be desirable characteristics.

While ritual drama may not necessarily be everyone's cup of tea, I find it to be a most challenging and enjoyable enhancement to a ritual celebration.

Quote of the Month

Only actions give life strength; only moderation gives it a charm.

Jean Paul Richter

German author (1763 - 1825)

*WOTY Election Results from
February*

The annual Elections for the *Wheel of the Year* board were held on February 19th at the Parrish sight. We had a record attendance and/or participation this year and thank all those who participated. So, here are the results:

Vicar: Jeanette Hess/Augur

Prefect: Niki Kissell/Lorax

Secretary: Karl Doom

Treasurer: Holly Doom

We all look forward to serving you in the upcoming year. Please feel free to contact any board member regarding questions or ideas that you may have in the future.

WOTY THANK YOU!

Thank you to our generous benefactor who donated so many books and other items to Wheel of the Year! We wanted to contact you and ask your permission to put your name here, but we can't find your phone#. Please call us, we'd like to talk to you! And thank you soooooooooo much!!!

Wind of Souls

By: James Griffin

Peaceful Pastures of green blade grass
Will sing a tune if you will listen
Of good advice and loved one's passed
In mornings of sun and dew glisten
As the wind blows through harps of reed
The voices of those forgotten
Memories cut from endless time



Rain Keeps falling

By: James Griffin

How lightly the rain keeps falling
Delightful the natural tune
Advance of memories mending
How I love to hear till noon
The falling rain keeps on cleansing
A trance that brings into light
A larger picture of my heart
Illuminating the light

My Favorite Authors and what I'd like to ask them

By Slothe

My favorite writer is Morgan Llewellyn. Reason: She writes historic fiction that is educational, creative, and realistic. Two books of hers that I enjoyed immensely are "Finn McCool" and "Druids." I like this author so much that I named my daughter after her.

I'm also a big fan of Orson Scott Card who mostly writes science fiction. He is a Mormon and his values are woven into his story telling. The "Ender's" series was fantastic and raised many thoughts about mankind's responsibility to other species and the possibility of interplanetary travel.

This is the stuff I read when I want to leave reality for a while.

Questions I'd like to ask: "Could we all get together for a week at a swishy resort in the mountains?"

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Bridgit's Fire at All World Acres

There will be nudity." She said, after I asked her what I could expect. I was invited to attend this festival, called Bridgit's Fire, with my friend Wendy. Bridgit's Fire is a pagan festival to celebrate Imbolc hosted by a pagan campground known as "All World Acres". I'd never been to All World Acres before. I have to tell you, Bridgit's Fire was a weekend I won't soon forget. It was one of the most magickal places I've ever been to. Magick works in wondrous ways, and so its effects are different for everyone. However, I will be sharing with you my experience of that weekend in this article (minus a few tawdry details).

For some reason, I always thought of Tampa as being very urban, and not very rural. Yet, there we were, driving down State Road 39, straight into the country. Wide open spaces, filled with a quilt-work of trees and pasture land. Much of the homes we passed seemed like ranches to me.

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Had I been driving along this road with no knowledge of this place, I would not even have known it was there. There was only a simple faded green sign with the image of a unicorn surrounded by the words “All World Acres”. There was no fancy paved road leading in the direction the sign guided us. There was barely even a dirt road. There were just worn down grooves in the ground where many tires seem to have tread. This path took us past horses in wide open pens, strutting their stuff for the guests as they arrived.

Little had I known from the road that there would be such a large area of land tucked away for everyone to convene.

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The moment I stepped out of my car, I felt the place buzzing with energy. Not in any physical way that could be seen. We were early, so there were very few people there. The weather was overcast, and windy, with scattered showers visiting us throughout the day. Though the place was relatively empty and the weather was not the most desirable, I could still sense a strong connection to the natural world around me. I felt so at ease with such “strange” conditions in such a new and interesting place. The rest of the day was spent setting up camp, eating, and socializing with the other vendors (who also showed up for the event early, as we did). Everyone was so nice and easy going.

It wasn't until dark when things got really going. As it got darker, Wendy and I decided to use the restroom and see if they had started the large communal bon-fire yet. Wendy explained to me that people sat around the fire on all nights that the weather permitted it.

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We were so busy setting up our camp site and vending booth and basically just getting situated, that I had not even seen the rest of the grounds at that point. Wendy escorted me to the bathroom and gave a quick tour of the facilities on the way there. We passed a house where the owners of “All World Acres” lived. They opened their home to guests for certain hours to shop in the little general store they set up in their home. You could also buy food that they prepared themselves and sold to guests from their own family kitchen. They served food like really yummy pulled pork Bar-B-Que sandwiches, or black beans and rice for the vegetarians. You could also bring your own food (which is what I did). Behind the home was a covered area with lots of seating and some tables and a stage that they used for entertainment and workshops. Beyond that were the bathroom facilities and a large double sink on the side for people to do their dishes. The bathroom facilities are not for the faint of heart, but they are perfectly safe and cleaner than most public bathrooms I’ve been to. In the handicap stall, our hosts placed a large cardboard box filled with toilet paper and any other toiletry item you could possibly need. This

building had two private showers, and one for those who preferred to shower in groups. Colorful puffy-paint is scrawled all over the walls with positive words and statements, pagan sayings, pagan jokes, pagan symbols, peace signs, and the names of people who have left their mark for future bathroom-goers to see.

All the beautiful colors, words, and pictures cast a glamour over the building, actually making it a fun place to visit, (as I soon discovered). You never knew who you were going to meet going to the bathroom. At one point in the night, I met a man named Papa John giving people free samples of his mead that he was making and selling. I think I liked his orange mead the best. I also met a woman who offered to give me a massage or rub me down with a bath sponge and soap when I showered in the morning. This was not just an offer to me, but an open invitation she made to anyone that happened to be listening. After our adventure to the bathroom (and it was always an adventure), we notice that there was a fire going in a large field in the center of the property, and there were a few people sitting by the fire.

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We grabbed our drums and ran for the fire with mead in hand. We couldn't wait to drum around the fire and socialize with everyone.

“We couldn't wait to drum around the fire and socialize with everyone. I drummed so much that night my hands were sore the next day.”

I drummed so much that night my hands were sore the next day. More and more people started to gather around the fire and pretty soon, there was quite a large crowd singing, drumming, chanting, dancing, and playing their instruments around the fire. Some of the more interesting instruments brought to the circle were a flute, and a sitar. The sitar was so entrancing. In fact when its owner began to play it, everyone became very quiet in order to just listen to the sounds of its music. This drumming circle was also where the expected nudity first showed itself, as some people danced around the fire skyclad. It was such an open and free environment. Everyone felt safe just being in the moment and being who they were.

It was a great night.

The next day was beautiful! It was in the mid seventies and sunny. Small clouds would occasionally cover the sun for a small cool refreshing break. They had workshops running all day. I passed by many workshops that day. I saw a group of people learning how to weave Bidgit's Crosses. I saw Tai Chi workshops, Judo exhibitions, healing workshops, and so much more. Every time I walked by that workshop area, there was a workshop going. The first thing I did that day was attend the Sweat Lodge Ceremony. It was excellent. I felt purified, invigorated, and much healthier afterwards. I spent the rest of the day meeting people and socializing, (and vending of course). Later that day they held a large ritual with some very dramatic elements, and it turned out great. There were so many different people from so many different walks of life. It was fun meeting each person that I met. That night we attended a raffle where my friend Larry won some mead, followed by the Bardic Circle, where people honored us with a display of their talents.

Continued pg. 14

Then we made our way back out to the field where the bon-fire was held for another night of drumming and dancing around the fire. It was another really great night!

The last day, there were still a few things going on, but most people were packing up to make the long journey home. I didn't want to leave, and had I not had obligations back in the "real world", I would have begged to stay. All World Acres is a place where magick truly happens.

If anyone is interested in discovering more about *All World Acres*, you can visit their website at: http://healingtoday.com/all_world_acres.htm.

They can also be contact by email: info@divineecstasy.org or call 813-748-0761.



The Forest

By: James Griffin

The forest of green I see
Ever so softly speaks to me
The leaves on the forest floor
Hold for me a secret door
Between the trees treasures are found
In nature's soil where riches abound
Fragrant mists in morning be
Silent souls of older trees
The air I breathe so green the scent
So sweet the sound beyond my tent
May the forest I never met
Be the one I don't forget

Why

By James Griffin

O mother why have you done this
The rain is here to stay
You can't celebrate your fullness
On this stain of a day
If by chance it clears up for us
And you allow us space
We will cherish the moment
And your warm loving grace

Book review: The Circle Within
By: Dianne Sylvan

By Lorax

Recently, I found a book that has helped me along my spiritual path and has had a direct influence on my day-to-day spiritual practice. *The Circle Within* (Llewellyn Publications, 2003) by Dianne Sylvan challenges the reader to “walk the walk” of Pagan life and form a personal relationship with the Deities we honor. The author brings both a sense of humor and reverence to daily practices as she reveals mysteries of the God and Goddess we encounter in our world as well as in ourselves.

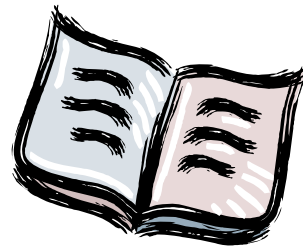
One of the things that I like about this book is that it assumes some basic knowledge of Wicca or similar practices. It does not have a glossary of terms or a list of rebuttals to common misconceptions. The basics it does delve into are our very conceptions of God/Goddess/Deity/Spirit and why we worship at all. She addresses the Elements, Directions, and Sabbats from a perspective of personal meaning and connectivity to everyday spirituality.

She also gives voice to controversial opinions, such as questioning the need to cast circle in many cases and drawing ideas for practices and rituals from Christian traditions.

Sylvan gives great ideas and examples of ways to incorporate spirituality into everyday practice, rather than leaving it to times of Sabbats, Esbats, festivals, and coven gatherings. At the end of each chapter, the author has included a list of “three things to think on” rather than long, involved exercises.

In *Part II: The Book of Moonlight*, are beautiful rituals and devotional prayers ranging in scope from a Full Moon Ritual, to altar dedication, to morning and evening devotions, to a prayer for assistance in dealing with difficult people.

I highly recommend *The Circle Within* as a wonderful addition to any Pagan’s library. Sylvan’s ability to bring our common concepts and practices into focus and make them personal makes it well worth the read.



**Minutes: Council Meeting for March 4th,
2006**

Start Time 6:37pm

Present for this meeting were-

Council Officers: Jeanette Hess, Niki
Kissell, Karl Doom, and Holly Doom

Treasurer's Report:

- Niki handed out the pre-quarter report for treasury
- Niki went over financial business
- Niki reprinted and explained new budget for 2006

Old Business

- The Events for March are as follows:
Sun March 12 Intro. to Tarot by
Bear in Parrish, Sat March 18 walk
for the cure-JDRF on Siesta Key
Beach, Sun March 19 Ostara
celebratory cookout, egg hunt etc.
in Parrish - Cookout begins at 3:00
pm. Holly will bring macaroni salad
and a dozen colored eggs, "A" will
bring hot dogs and buns, Jeanette
will provide veggie burgers and
potato salad, Niki and Bear will
contribute plates, cups, etc., WOTY
will provide hamburgers and buns.

- Since new officers elected, Jeanette will write a letter to the bank showing change in officers so that we can get Holly added to the bank account.
- Bear got info on becoming a notary public: the education class, state fee, bond, and stamp will come to \$123. Holly suggested WOTY pay half and the person who will become the notary public (probably Niki) pay half. Matter tabled until next meeting.
- Pay Pal on website- in progress, Bear asked to have up and running within 30 days
- 501(c) not done yet. (Federal non-profit status for church.) Niki on page 3 of 23
- Request for donated were posted on website during the meeting.
- Members only section of website- pending, will be posted within 30 days.

Continued pg. 17

➤

- Church Library- Bear found a program for cataloguing libraries, you can type in the ISBN, and it will pull up the rest of the info, including picture. Jeanette will ask “H” about being the librarian. Library doubled- Thank you to our generous benefactor!
- Spiral Recovery- Spoken to Slothe. She has talked with the Unitarian church in Bradenton about using that as a site. Hopefully will be able to begin in May
- Spiral Scouts - April 9th - Coquina Beach- Membership drive. Membership fee is \$12 per scout. \$45 is needed to start a Circle. Holly will check with Myakka State Park about yearly membership fees to use camping and other facilities for scouts.
- Ritual Class- Jeanette planning to change to correspondence course form. Students will get written info in mail and then come in person to do written and practical test. Jeanette will have class ready to go in June.

Committees

- Newsletter- Still exists. Want to put

notes from meetings, Spiral Scouts, and Spiral Recovery

- Children and Charities- Have not received pledge sheets from JD RF yet. Will collect pledges without them for now.
- IF- \$4 per 10. 8 times a year. Awesome newsletter and free ad for distribution. Jeanette will contact to set up order. Will get 20 to start to distribute through WOTY.
- Ordination committee - Bear will stay head of this committee. Need a couple more volunteers.

New Business

- Jeanette suggested having a sign-in sheet for gatherings. She will have one ready by next class.
- Events for April and May: 20th of April- April 15th – Pantheon class, April 30th – Beltaine, May 27th, New Moon Ritual

April 22nd next meeting

Ended 8:27pm

Respectfully submitted by
Karl Doom, Secretary



WOTY Events April/May

Sunday, April 9th 12pm to 3pm - Spiral Scouts Meet 'n Greet: Bring the kids (Ages 3 to 18) and join us for a picnic on Coquina Beach. Learn about what Spiral Scouts do and how you can join or help out. Bring your own picnic fixings, and the kids will probably think the water is fine for swimming.

For more info on Spiral Scouts international visit www.SpiralScouts.org

Saturday, April 15th @ 6:30 pm - Pantheon Series: Join us for the first in a series of classes about Gods and Goddesses from around the world. Free to members, \$5 non-members.

Saturday, April 22nd @ 5:00 pm - Officers' Council Meeting: The Officers' Council is in charge of the mundane business of WOTY. Any member or regular participant is welcome to attend, give suggestions, and help out.

Sunday, April 30th @ 5:30 pm - Beltaine Celebration: Wheel of the Year will celebrate Beltaine at a new location in East Bradenton. A traditional maypole dance will be performed. (Contact us if you would like to help out with the dancing.) And don't forget the potluck feast following ritual.

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