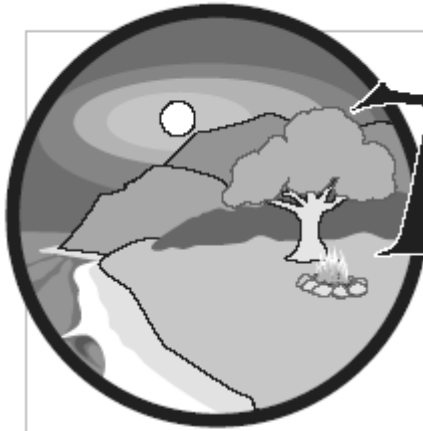


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The Quarterly Journal of Ár nDraíocht Féin

Autumn 2006 ~ Issue No. 34





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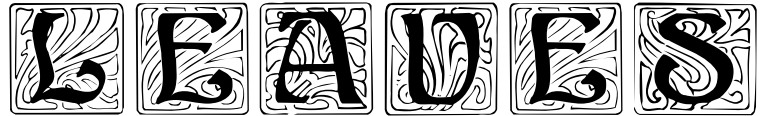
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Archdruid

This issue focuses on our Warrior's Guild. Over the past year, I have watched with interest as many good things have happened with the guild. This spring at the Wellspring Gathering, I was privileged to attend the first Warriors ritual held at a festival, at least as far as I've been able to find out. From the talk on the Warrior's list, this is a tradition they want to continue and I applaud them for it. I believe that this type of spiritual activity is what makes our religion grow.

As the festival season winds down, I hope that many of you had a chance to attend at least one event. The workshops, rituals and opportunity to meet other members that take place at festivals is a wonderful way to deepen our understanding of our path and we all learn so much from each other. As we grow, I hope to see more festivals starting so that people all over have the opportunity to have one close to them so they can attend!

Bright Blessings,
Rev. Skip Ellison

OAK LEAVES

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A Warrior's Role

By Daniel Quiray

In ancient times, the role of a tribe's warriors was, primarily, to look after the physical safety and well-being of their people. When the horn sounded, it was the job of the warriors to grab their weapons and run off to face the grim and unpleasant realities of carnage and death, all the while risking life and limb for the sake of the people back home.

Fortunately for us, most of us don't live in a war zone, so picking up highly deadly weapons probably isn't necessary (for those who do need to, they have much more to worry about than what we can help with). So what is it, exactly, that we warriors should do?

Unlike many Neo Pagan warrior groups that have popped into existence recently, the ADF Warriors Guild has actually made the safety of celebrants one of its primary concerns. This is a refreshing change from many groups that engage in delusional fantasy thinking and ego-indulgence, and usually consist of little more than a few well-trained LARPerS. When I joined, I was glad the guild did not take part in this sort of behavior, especially when considering the reputation of trying to live in another time that many Pagans have rightly earned. All too often I've seen people dressed as if they were going to a Renaissance faire and not a religious service.

As a non-professional civilian security force, our main purpose is to simply be a visible security presence. In this way we act as metaphorical preventative medicine. The presence of someone designated as security is usually enough to keep troublemakers from causing disruptions. We should also be available for people to come to with safety and health concerns, and be constantly looking for hazards ourselves. For all of these purposes, guests to public events should be made aware of who is in

charge of safety and security.

And finally, should the worst arise, it is our responsibility to act as first response. Organized evacuations, first-aid, notifying authorities, and dealing with hostile people and animals: correct behavior in these sorts of situations can sometimes mean the difference between life and death for a victim.

In these ways, we work to ensure the safety of our groves and families. While on the surface, what we do seems drastically different from what ancient warriors did, at the core we're doing the same thing: we're worrying about and dealing with the uncomfortable and unpleasant things others don't want to deal with. We just happened to land the easy version. ☪



A Brief Look Back

By Jesse Stills

In 1937 Georges Dumézil proposed that Indo-European society was composed of a priest class, a warrior class, and a commoner class. Dumézil was a comparative philologist, one who studies ancient texts and languages. Dumézil was also a warrior himself as he served as an artillery officer during World War I.

In 1983, P.E.I. Bonewits organized *Ár nDraíocht Féin*.

Following the path of Indo-European ancestors and Georges Dumézil, in 1995 ADF had the “Triple Guild Festival” where the Seers, the Bards, and the Warriors Guilds were organized. Since then the Guild has been going strong.

The word “Warrior” has its origins in Old North French *werreieor*, one who makes *were* (“war”).

Within the Guild, we do not make war. In fact, our purpose statement is:

The Warriors Guild of ADF is dedicated to serving the ADF community with members who are trained in spiritual, mental and physical defense, designing & performing liturgy for Warrior spirituality, and emergency response. All this is done through the study of warrior magic, history, strategy, and physical training.

Historically, Warriors use codes to control their war-like behavior. In Japan, the Warrior class was the Samurai and they lived by Bushido. In Europe, the Warrior class were Knights and they lived by Chivalry. Today, the Guild follows this Code of Ethics:

1. All Warrior Guild members will abide by the laws of the communities they are in.

2. No Warrior shall use his/her position to put undue influence on any person, including but not limited to sexual exploitation, financial extortion, etc.

3. Any Warrior who has cause to suspect that a person may cause harm to themselves or others will make the appropriate referral to professional services or law enforcement.

4. No Warrior shall misrepresent his/her abilities or qualifications.

5. A Warrior will not refuse reasonable requests to provide services to any ADF member, if only to refer them to another Warrior or professional. This does not apply if the ADF Warrior is unable to perform those services competently.

6. A Warrior shall avoid providing service to an ADF member when this places the Warrior in a conflict of interest.

7. No ADF Warrior shall charge a fee to a ADF member for Warrior Guild services. This does not include professional services provided outside the ADF setting

What does the future hold? Since Wellspring 2006 there has been a lot of discussion about: how can we serve ADF, our guild, and ourselves better. Many Guild members are looking inward for ways to help their fellow Druids. Talk to them, maybe they can help you, too!

Sources used:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georges_Dumézil
Email from Skip Ellison
<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=warrior>
www.adfwarriors.org ☞

Iron Age Ritual Murder

By Kirk Thomas

Dying for the Gods: Human Sacrifice in Iron Age & Roman Europe, by Miranda Aldhouse-Green, 2001. Stroud, UK: Tempus Publishing Inc.; ISBN 0-7524-2528-5 paperback 2002; £17.99 and US\$29.99, 203 pp., 106 ills.

The idea of human sacrifice is distasteful to most people, and has been used by Pagans to attack Christians and vice versa over the past two millennia. Christianity attempted to redefine the concept of sacrifice by asserting that Christ's acceptance of His Father's will was the last blood sacrifice ever again needed, that all the sacrifices of the Old Testament merely foreshadowed that final one, and that the act of Communion allowed later peoples to participate in that sacrifice. Modern ADF Pagans have revived the idea of sacrifice, concentrating on the offering of foodstuffs, art and music while usually avoiding blood-letting. But an understanding of how the ancients viewed sacrifice is necessary for us to imagine how anyone could think that human sacrifice might be a proper and pious religious action.

The idea of human sacrifice was quite out of fashion for archeologists for some time, when in 1998 Miranda Green began speaking and writing about it publicly. For the ancients, blood sacrifice was a primary way that people could be sure of establishing reciprocal relationships with those powers greater than themselves. These sacrifices required a mediator of some kind that could pierce the veils separating this world from the other worlds of spirit, and this mediator (preferably an animal or human) could only manage to accomplish this through a sacrificial death. For sacrifice was often a defensive act, used to drive away evil spirits, to enlist the good will of dangerous entities and as 'thanks offerings' for the repayment of a debt or for help in recovery from an illness or just for a run of

good luck. Normally, domestic animals (and occasionally plant stuffs) would be used as this sacrificial mediator, and often the meat would be shared with the gods by the people in a communal meal (though holocausts also occurred). In ancient Athens, for example, sacrificial meat was the only animal protein available to most people. Cannibalism is rare in the archeological record, so human sacrifice, if it existed, must have fulfilled some other function than that of the shared, communal meal.

In this book, Miranda Aldhouse-Green has taken the concept of *substitution*, first articulated by E. Westermarck in 1906, and expanded it beyond the idea of offering one life so that another life can be spared. While there are many kinds of sacrifice, substitution, as used by Green, applies primarily to the immolation of animals or people. Since sacrifice is performed with the expectation of receiving something in return, self interest is usually involved. While self-sacrifice might be the highest form of sacrifice, the form most desirable to the Gods, it leaves the problem that the sacrificer would not be alive to receive any benefit. Thus the theory of substitution enters in, where something (or someone) of lesser value is sacrificed in the place of the sacrificer, and this idea of substitution is central to the entire practice. Usually, an animal would stand in for the sacrificer, but occasionally, especially in times of stress, a human of low status might be considered more desirable (as this would be the closest type of substitution for the person making the sacrifice). These victims were usually criminals, war captives, hostages, children or people with disabilities who could all be considered expendable by society. Other possible victims may have been seers and priests who may have been sent to intercede directly with the Gods. The author also notes, interestingly, that in later years, animals (and even

puppets in the case of Rome) would be substituted for the human sacrifices of earlier years. From the discussion of the theory of human sacrifice, Green then goes on to explore the evidence, from classical literature to the latest archeological findings, to try and shed light on this highly controversial topic. While mentioning the many classical sources concerning human sacrifice in the 'barbarian' parts of Europe, Aldhouse-Green correctly acknowledges the problem that the classical authors might not be altogether reliable, as they tended to cite one another's works with little first-hand experience, and probably had strong cultural prejudices that colored their writings. However, the author puts forward a very convincing case for the existence of human sacrifice in Iron Age and Roman Europe through a series of chapters based on the archeological evidence for different types of death. Deaths by burning come first, followed by those involving the spilling of blood, then the practice of head-hunting and the cult of the head, and finally those of suffocation, drowning and burial while alive.

In all of these, the classical sources are cited, where they exist, and parallels are drawn to well-documented practices in North Africa and the Middle East, but the primary evidence given is archeological. Most human remains found by archeologists consist of bones, which can only reveal evidence of certain types of trauma, such as the breaking of bones, or show the possibility that limbs were tied together during burial. And these finds can be quite suggestive. At the Celtic cult site of Agy-Romance in France, archeologists found a group of bodies of young men of fighting age that had been carefully dried in caskets deep under the cult building, and then brought out and buried in sitting positions under the terrace in front of the temple, as though they were living guardians or sentinels. At a time when cremation was the primary burial custom (2nd and 1st centuries B.C.E.), this group of men had to be quite low status, and probably captured enemies - prime sacrificial fodder. But there was no evidence of how these young men died. The

discovery of human remains in peat bogs, the author points out, gives a much clearer picture of how these people met their deaths, as their skin, hair, soft tissues and clothing have been preserved in the anaerobic environment. Lindow Man (Lindow II) suffered a triple death – he sustained a blow to the head, was garroted and had his throat cut. Other victims were garroted or hanged, had their throats cut or even drowned in the bogs, their bodies held down under the water by stakes and bundles of branches (normally used for temporary fencing) called 'hurdles.' This contention, that the bog bodies are the remains of sacrificial victims, is not without controversy. Some archeologists maintain that these bodies could simply be those of people who fell in the bogs and drowned accidentally, with the wounds found by archeologists occurring sometime after death. The presence of branches and hurdles on top of the bodies could simply be due to limbs falling into the water after death, or as evidence of rescue attempts before death. They also maintain that the bodies found their way into the bogs at a much later date than the first or second century C.E. in any case, when human sacrifice was no longer practiced. Aldhouse-Green barely mentions these arguments, dismissing them as "not convincing."

But even while bearing these criticisms in mind, *Dying For the Gods* is a very powerful, thought-provoking and well argued book. The author examines evidence from all over Europe and gives a clear and concise view of what may have been a fairly rare but nonetheless central religious practice in the cultures of the time, including those of the Mediterranean coasts (even though the Romans used the barbarity of human sacrifice as an excuse to destroy the Druids during their conquests of Gaul and Britain, there were at least two recorded instances of human sacrifice in Rome during the Republic). The evidence for human sacrifice in northern and central Europe appears overwhelming, and Miranda Aldhouse-Green has done an excellent job in demonstrating its widespread nature. ☪

Dorm Room Druidism

By Michael J Dangler

By far, the largest "occupation" listed by Pagans is "student." According to one recent study,¹ the number rests at 16%. I've also noticed a large upswing in the number of students (college-aged and non-traditional) in ADF. Despite this, we tend to look at our membership as if they're established in their careers and with a few restrictions on their worship. This is, perhaps, understandable, as it seems to be a new trend within our membership; doesn't mean we should continue to ignore it, though.

Another group that faces some similar questions and issues is a segment of Our Fellowship that is in the military. These also tend to be younger members who may face some interesting restrictions on their worship.

One of the things that is a constant battle of new college students (and, as it turns out, a few military members who are also in a similar situation) is conducting worship on a level where they feel pious and fulfilled. A number of each group will spend at least part of their respective careers in some form of dormitory or group-living situation, and the primary thrust of this article will be working through that particular issue.

The rules of dormitories are, generally speaking, fairly reasonable. They are primarily based on the safety and comfort of the group. Most dormitories are extremely strict about open flames (candles in particular), smoke (both tobacco and incense), weapons (or anything resembling a weapon, like a ritual knife), and

noise (drumming at 3 AM is generally off limits).

It is interesting that the primary tools that most Pagans and occultists "grow up on," such as candles, incense, knives, and chants are generally forbidden in these settings. For a wide number of young Pagans, this is so disheartening as to cause them to stop their worship entirely out of frustration.



Sometimes, students have recourse: they can discuss these limits with their resident advisor or a dormitory director. Often, an understanding can be reached, and things can be permitted at certain times or even (with a very understanding dorm director) any time the student wishes to use them. This article, other than

suggesting that the student should have the courage to ask their advisor or director about these policies, won't always be of much use to a person who can do what they want, but I hope that it can at least inspire some alternative, creative modes of worship.

Military personnel living in a dormitory setting are far less likely to reach such an understanding, and some students will never have luck talking to dormitory directors. The real purpose of this article is to suggest replacements that are not only easy to find (especially in today's online marketplace), but also perfectly okay in most circumstances (of course, always check carefully with your dorm rules to make sure that the alternative doesn't break any other rules).

A note: I'm not going to only address the ADF-style of ritual and building an altar. A number of

our members also use four or five elements, various occult tools, and other things, so we'll address those as well.

Fire, Candles, and Incense

The most obvious problem for most Pagans is the rule against open flames that you find in most dormitories. Some local Pagan student groups have taken the fight to their universities' Boards of Trustees and won, and now "candles with religious significance" are allowed on a number of campuses, but these are the exception, not the rule.

The rule, of course, is in place because candles are extremely dangerous things. They're a leading cause of house fires, and in the eight years I've been in Columbus, there have been five or six small fires in dorms at Ohio State caused by candles, even though candles are explicitly forbidden.



The ban on incense is generally marketed as an extension of this policy ("Where there's smoke, there's fire," reasoned one resident advisor to me), but generally seems to have more use to the resident advisors in preventing illicit drug use. Either way, with both candles and incense banned, the most common symbols of fire and air are taken away.

To top this off, every room is generally equipped with a smoke detector and (sometimes) a particle detector, meaning that anything sprayed (perfume or hair spray included) could set it off. Tampering with the detectors, of course, is illegal (not to mention stupid), so that option is out.

My favourite solution to this is remarkably simple, so much so that some people flat out refuse to use it: battery-operated candles. Not

only are they safe, easy to maintain, and pretty darn cheap because of their re-usable status, but they can be left to "burn" until they run out of batteries or the bulb dies if your spell calls for that. You can also paint them various colours if you feel that they need to match the intent of your spell or ritual work, and if you use rechargeable batteries, there's no waste, no smoke, and no worries.

There are some very neat LED tea light candles available now (a quick search on Google for "led tea light" will bring up a number of different ones, about \$3 apiece),² and most of them have a flicker and a soft light that actually looks pretty cool. The brand I most recently bought around Halloween is called FunKin (they go in fake pumpkins by the same name), and three of them grouped together makes a nice representation of fire, each one puts out almost as much light as a regular tea light, plus they come with extra batteries.

If that's not your cup o' meat, you can also make a simple representation of fire rather than keeping an open flame or a battery operated candle on the altar. This can be a picture or sculpture, or just an orange cloth balled up and set into a cup so that the corners come out the top.

Incense is actually surprisingly easy to solve. First, you can take an essential oil, put a few drops into a spray bottle filled with water, and spray it around the room. Just a few pumps, and you'll get an amazing amount of scent from that, along with a good dispersal. You can also buy a small lightbulb scent ring, which is a small metal or ceramic ring with a trough that is heated by the bulb, and placing a drop of essential oil on the ring disperses the scent nicely. Finally, if there are rules against scents that disperse well enough to leave your room (as in military

dorms), you might consider just keeping some potpourri in a jar, and opening that when you need the scent.

Permanent Home Shrines and Altars

If you're the only person in your room, creating a home shrine isn't all that difficult, and the choice between permanent and temporary altar is a matter of taste.

Some special considerations apply to altars in dorms. Dorm rooms have high traffic from friends, roommates, and (in some cases) dormitory directors. All these people have a tendency to want to touch and handle things that are left out. There is nothing more annoying to most Pagans I know than someone picking up and handling their ritual gear. And with a roommate, it might happen when you're not there.

One good option is to use a drawer in a dresser. You can place all your ritual supplies into one drawer (often, dormitories provide a lockable drawer for each person's use), and take them out when you wish to use them. It's not so nice as having an altar that's always there, but it's usually pretty convenient (and helps you keep the top of your dresser clean when you go to pull it out). Don't use the drawer for anything other than storing altar supplies.

If the drawer is tall enough (and your altar items short enough), you can even make a sort of "pull-out" altar that you don't have to set up in order to use. Such altars work very well, and when you feel like you need to chat with your deities, it's nice to just pull the drawer out and start into a ritual.

People living in dorms (especially students) often move out for weeks at a time, and so are without their altars for all of spring and winter breaks if they have set them up as permanent shrines. A good option for altars that need to be moved out

every 10 weeks or so is to make or buy a box for all of your altar supplies, and keep them in that. It can also serve as an altar itself if it is large enough to hold all your equipment.

Another interesting (if somewhat amusing) idea is to check your local Pagan shops for "portable altars" or "travel altars". Usually, these come in small boxes and have a number of nifty items. If you can't find anything like that, (this is where it gets amusing) there's always the *Teen Witch Kit* from Silver Ravenwolf and Llewellyn Worldwide, a cardboard box that comes with a few (rather poorly made) items. The best part of this particular kit is that it folds down quite small and can be carried around (actually, that may be it's *only* advantage).

If you're into carrying around your ritual kit, you might consider getting a blanket or a rug and rolling all your altar items up into that. The rug can either make a good altarcloth (they come in many colours and some are pretty cheap, too), or you can kneel on it and use it to save your knees some hardship.

At the *Walking With Fire* festival in 2005, Narabali made each participant a portable altar. It was simple, containing a small glass cup, a tealight, a clothespin with some moss on it, and a felt cloth to cover the box it was in. It was small, compact, and worked beautifully. Such an option is not only amazingly cheap, but also highly effective.

Ritual Wear (or None at All)

Boy, it's embarrassing to be interrupted by your roommate opening the door with his date when you're standing naked in a chalked out pentagram holding a knife and chanting something about a "horned god." We won't discuss how I know this. . . it's best just to accept it. On the bright side, you may not have a roommate after such an incident. On the not-so-bright side, it might

seriously fracture your relationship with your roommate, and could lead to a crazy rollercoaster ride of investigations and questions from neighbors.

If you're set on worshipping skyclad (in the nude), make sure that either your roommate really is totally okay with it (i.e. he or she hangs out completely naked while in the room), or that they're certainly away. Remember that classes let out early (sometimes people don't go, too. . . which is a revelation I'm sure comes as a shock), social plans fall through, and sometimes roommates get curious and wander in on you on purpose. Be sure you know you'll be alone if the thought of being interrupted while naked (and the thought of being called "that naked Pagan chic") bothers you.

Oh, yeah: and close your curtains. You'd be surprised what times of night maintenance men need to be on a ladder headed to the roof.

If you don't practice skyclad, but rather have a special dress or certain outfit that you like to use for ritual, make sure that if you allow your roommates free-reign over your wardrobe, or if they take such allowances without permission (even some guys do this in college), you are very specific in saying what is off limits.

Cleansing for Ritual

Nearly every book on ritual gives the same piece of pre-ritual advice: take a cleansing bath. While I have seen pictures of dorm rooms that have bathtubs, I have never seen one in person (much less lived in one). I believe the dorm room bathtub to be a rare creature indeed, so the most common bathroom fixture is likely to be the shower, shared with at least one other person (and, as I did my freshman year, up to twenty other boys).

While a ritual bath is not at all required to get

into the ritual mindset, it certainly helps. The difficulty of getting this kind of cleansing is obvious, though. With no access to a bathtub, how can someone reasonably take a cleansing bath?

The solution I came up with for a friend who was still living in the dorms seems to have taken off quite nicely, and to work well. Because the idea behind the ritual bath is to have some time alone in a situation that is different from a "normal" bathing experience, you need to find a way to make things different than usual when you shower.

To replicate the ritual bath, buy an extra shower caddy, another towel, and a special pair of shower shoes (don't ever forget shower shoes in a communal shower!). They don't have to look any different from your normal ones, but you will only use them for ritual cleansing. Fill the shower caddy with herbal soaps, special-smelling shampoos, and body oils that you find aromatically reminiscent of the ritual you plan to do. Only use this shower caddy before ritual, and you'll be surprised how effective it can prove.

I also have it on good authority that good-smelling bath-stuff is highly prized by roommates, so it might be wise to put this shower caddy somewhere particularly special (and thus hidden) as well.

Noise Restrictions

Chanting, drumming, and singing are pretty common in our worship, as are shouts of "Deities, accept our sacrifice!" and similar phrases. We like to be loud and boisterous in our rituals, and to have fun and show our enthusiasm. Dorms, though, generally limit the noise allowed, and a loud noise, especially prolonged outbursts, will usually bring the posse down on you.

The most obvious solution, of course, is to keep

your mouth shut and just avoid drumming and otherwise banging on things. Some of us, though require drumming or chanting to get into a ritual mindframe, and especially to enter trance-states.

While there is no substitute for the euphoria or depths of experience actual drumming can bring some people, a solution might be found in the various tapes and CD's of drumming that can be found, as well as the .Mp3's and other music files that are proliferating on the internet. Get a good pair of headphones and your iPod, sit down in the center of your ritual space, and trance out to a drummer without disturbing a single other person's studying.

Roommates

When I was a sophomore, I brought my herbs from home to keep in my dorm room closet. One day, my roommate walked by and the pretty glass jars with strange green herbs caught his eye, and he tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Mike, can I borrow some herb?"

It says a lot about me that it never crossed my mind exactly what he was asking, and I only caught on when I saw him tearing paper out of his physics lab book and rolling something green and flaky into it. He'd never bothered to read the label, and was going to try smoking some witchhazel. I'm still not sure who was more embarrassed about the whole situation, but he never asked me for any "herb" again. Our definitions, it seemed, were a bit different.

One of the primary problems with roommates is that, no matter how little they may question us or how much they might pretend to understand us, if they aren't Pagan there might be a communications issue sometimes. Often, roommates don't understand why you need the room for a whole night, and telling them that you

want to "draw down the moon" or "become one with the Goddess" might get you a weird look, or it might get you a lot of uncomfortable rumours.

It's mentioned above how roommates can affect what you wear (or don't) for ritual and how they can affect keeping an altar. Roommates can also cause you some of the biggest problems you can face for the entirety of the time you live in the dorm.

Often, these problems can be reduced or eliminated if they're addressed early. When you first meet or talk to your roommate, tell them that you're Pagan and offer to describe what that means. It's possible to simply keep quiet, but it's difficult at best, and you can't expect them to understand or respect something that they don't know about.



Even if you are up front, though, don't automatically expect your roommate to respect your beliefs. While most roommates won't really care what your beliefs are, some will, and unfortunately it's always impossible to tell exactly what the reaction will be until the situation explodes.

Always remain tolerant in your interactions with your roommates. If you're lucky, it'll rub off. If you're unlucky, being able to show that you've been tolerant toward him or her will go a long way when you complain to a Resident Advisor or dormitory director that your roommate isn't managing to show such restraint.

Some dorms that involve roommate situations require the roommates to sign a sort of "roommate agreement". Usually, in colleges and universities these outline the most basic things: when you'll study, when you'll sleep, how loud music can be. If one of these is offered, *jump on it*. You can really use it to your advantage.

Usually, such agreements allow you to set "alone

time" for yourself. You can, if you can get your roommate to agree to it, set specific times and days when you want the room to yourself. Go into the agreement process with a full set of dates you want (as well as backups), and put them in writing. You don't really have to say what you want the time for; just say you want it.

Also, most college kids will eventually come up with some sort of "symbol" for when the room is unexpectedly needed for some alone-time, usually in which another person is, ah, "entertained". Set such a symbol ahead of time (usually socks or neckties on the doorknob are traditional), and use it when you want to do ritual.

If things start to become problematic, take notes and talk to your dormitory director. Make sure you include the date, time, and a description of the incident, and take pictures if you have a camera and the evidence can be photographed. There is almost always recourse if you feel uncomfortable, and there is always recourse if you feel threatened. Check and find out what those avenues are *before* you need them.

Dorm-Specific Symbol Replacement

As mentioned above, dorms have some unique restrictions on them. Most often, we can work around these restrictions through simple replacement of our usual altar supplies with things that are similar. Here are some suggestions:

Symbols:

Wiccan/generic Pagan symbols:

- **Earth:** dirt in a bowl, a tree/seedling/ bonsai, turf
- **Air:** essential oils, potpourri
- **Fire:** picture of fire, flashlight, battery



- candle, hand-warmer, lightstick
- **Water:** bowl of water, aquarium, cup of water
- **Spirit:** pentacle, triskel

ADF Symbols:

- **Fire:** picture of flame, flashlight, battery candle, hand-warmer, lightstick
- **Well:** bowl, caldron, jar, cup
- **Tree:** a twig, bonsai, wire twisted into a tree shape

Kindred Symbols:

- **Deities:** pictures, symbols, printoffs, statues (SacredSource.com has a good selection)
- **Ancestors:** hazelnuts, apples, pictures, Halloween decor
- **Nature Spirits:** sticks, leaves, branches, acorns

Misc:

· Quarter candles:

Get four or five battery operated candles and paint them in the colours you want, or else purchase coloured bulbs for them.

In single rooms, chalk is good for marking the boundaries of a circle, and will usually come out with some warm water if you mark light enough. In doubles or multi-person rooms, rope is a good solution, as it can be gathered up quickly with no mess.

Common tools:

Of course, magicians and ritualists should ideally be able to function mostly without physical tools, but they do come in handy. Most of the time, you can get by with things that do double-duty (there's little sympathy for the need to keep a full-sized two-handed sword in your dorm room, even for religious purposes), and so it's always helpful to think, "What can I get by without, and what do I definitely need?" before you start packing up your tools to take with.

- **athame/dagger:** butter knife, pocket knife, kitchen knife, scissors
- **wand:** stick, finger, dowel rod, pencil/pen
- **sword:** leave it at home. Athame will do.
- **staff:** leave it at home. Wand will do.
- **chalice:** cup from Wendy's, dixie cup, beer mug, measuring cup
- **caldron:** bowl, jar, salsa bowl, plate
- **candles:** battery candles, flashlight, lightstick
- **pentacle:** a disk or plate, frisbee

Table runners and even coloured napkins make great altarcloth options, especially since they come in seasonal designs (and both are fairly cheap).

It's also good to keep an "offering box," a small box of items that is self-contained and easily transportable.

Offering Box:

Most of the time, these things include incense, oils, and silver, but they can contain anything you wish. Generally, the following items are good for dorm-room paganism:

- a) water from your well (or your Grove's well)

- b) essential oils in drop-bottles
- c) silver and/or gold beads for offerings
- d) bird seed for nature spirits
- e) dirt from home/ancestral land
- f) other types of offerings

Remember the most important thing: You don't need anything to do ritual or magic. The only tool required is your *self*.

Be patient and tolerant in the face of intolerance, and don't worry about getting things "by the book," but rather worry that they work for you. Religion is something between you and your deities; not you, your tools, your roommate, your Resident Advisor, and your deities.

¹ Berger, et al. *Voices from the Pagan Census: A National Survey of Witches and Neo-Pagans in the United States*. University of South Carolina Press; Columbia, SC. 2003.

² As an example, you can find one like I mention at <http://www.coolsafetyproducts.com/> under "flameless candles": Item no. AL-06130 ☾

Blood Black and Raven Red

Author Unknown

Grey rain falls bitter from black clouds,
 Bitter milk from the breast of the Mor Rioghain.
 Milk that gives life and strength
 To the disenfranchised and the outcast.
 Breasts that suckle black cats,
 Razor-clawed and desperate-eyed.
 The eyes of war orphans and convicts' widows,
 Red milk, red as dawn, red as rage.
 Dread Mor Rioghain, take me to your breast
 Lend me this strength.

My Journey With the Warriors Guild

By Selene Tawny

Ahhh, where to begin? I guess at the beginning.

I joined ADF in October 1999 and immediately joined the Warriors Guild. My immediate draw was that there were people like me. Maybe I could learn some skills and warrior spirituality? How disappointed I was when I found that there were no rituals, nor articles on Warrior Spirituality and no way to learn self defense except by going to some classes on my own? Woe was me.

The Warriors list was mostly quiet so I sat back and observed. I did learn some sword fighting from the Warriors Lodge with Triskele Rivers Grove, but I was not going to walk down the street with a sword. I wanted to learn self defense so that if I am walking down the street I could defend myself. I attended Trillium and was able to meet other Warriors outside of my area and attended my very first National Warriors Championship Games!

The next thing I knew I was helping to organize Warrior Games for the Summerland Gathering and Triskele River's Lughnassadh. I became the Grove Warrior and was granted the Warrior part in our Rituals. I was absolutely fascinated. I thought finally, I'm going to learn and feel Warrior Spirituality.

Quite a few of us left Triskele and formed our own Grove. We didn't have a lodge there but most of us were Warriors so we continued with our sword fighting. We, members of the Warriors Guild, continued to have games at our Lughnassadh and did security for Pagan Pride Day, Witch's Ball and other Pagan events, but I was still lacking the experience of Warrior Spirituality.

I left Ancient Path Grove and applied to form another Protogrove, but was denied. Through rumors, my bad temper and bluntness, I became

known as a troublemaker. Okay, I thought, I know I'm not a troublemaker and sooner or later others will realize this. And so I became a solitary. After about a year, Ancient Path Grove was falling apart, so folks who thought I was a troublemaker were finally coming to the conclusion that I wasn't after all. I applied again for a Protogrove again and this time it was granted.

I have participated in all of the Warrior Games that were held at events I have attended save for the year of 2005, when surgery kept me from competing. More and more women are starting to compete in the Games, which is absolutely wonderful. I say to the women, just because you are a woman or think you cannot win because you are a woman does not mean you shouldn't compete. It's not the winning that counts, it's the accomplishments that you fulfill along the way. I am a 44 year old woman now and not in the best of shape, but this does not stop me from trying.

In 2002, I ran for the Council of Honor seat, and I won. I thought I could really get some things done, put together some of the Warrior Spirituality information I was so longing for, but it was not to be so. Organizing takes a lot of time, and I began organizing the Guild. For those who don't know me personally, I am a HUGE organizational person: I became the Guild webmistress and whipped our website into shape, I became the Guild Registrar and got that organized. While doing this, we were still organizing the National Games and games at other events and were paying for the awards. I thought, the Guild should really be paying for the National Games awards and we really should have our own equipment instead of borrowing all of the time. I knew the Guild had no cash and unless we instituted a membership fee, would never have any. So I asked the members what their

opinions were about this and it was overwhelmingly positive. We decided that the Guild would have a membership fee. Now we could start buying our equipment and event awards.

Then came the problem of folks thinking, Okay, I'm paying membership dues but for what? Non-paying members have the same access and/or privileges that paying members have. I asked the members what their opinion was as to what privileges that thought they should have over the non-paying members. We made it so that only paying members (or "Active Members" as we call them) have access to the full Study Program. I thought that there should be more incentive for the folk to become Active Members, so I designed our Guild Badge, asked a member if he could manipulate the image to what I wanted, posted it to the members to find out if they liked it. They did, and now we have a Guild Badge that only Active Members receive.

When it came time for a new Guild Chief, I asked that I have that pleasure and my wish was granted. I set goals for myself:

1. **Form a group to go over the bylaws and get them whipped into shape once and for all.**
 - While we have tweaked certain sections of the bylaws, they have not been whipped completely into shape yet.
2. **Form a group to get together some spiritual stuff, like rituals, meditations, etc.**
 - We have not formed a group but some action can be seen in this direction.
3. **Buy books for the Study Program and then ask for volunteers to type them up so that we may put them on the web for our Active Members to use.**
 - I have bought the books for first circle and have typed some of them up, but alas I am but one person, but there has been pro-

gress in this direction.

4. **Get appointed advisors for all regions for students that wish to test out for the Study Program.**
 - This has not yet happened.
5. **Tweak the Study Program.**
 - This has not yet happened.
6. **Form a group to put together a Policy and Procedures Manual that will replace the FAQ.**
 - This has been completed. While we did not rename the FAQ, it has been tweaked and updated.

As you can see, we didn't quite get done what I wanted to get done but we are getting there.

When I began my crusade of helping to run the Guild, we had around 13 members. As of May 2006 we now have 39 members with 28 of them as Active Members.

These are the events that have taken place since I started my crusade:

- The Guild has its own domain name and website
- We are able to purchase event awards
- We purchased a Champion Torc for the National Champion, this torc gets passed on to the next National Champion
- We have purchased 2 bows and some arrows
- We have designed our Guild Sigil
- We have purchased badges for Active Members
- We have a joining form for those who wish to join the Guild, which gets sent to the Guild Registrar
- All positions in the Guild have their own email addresses
- Per our members input, we have an article that can be worn to show that they are members of the Guild
- We have something to recognize those that have completed the circles in our Study Program

- We give certificates to past Champions and past positions held in the Guild.

A lot has happened these past 3 years and I hope it shall continue to happen.

As to the Warrior Spirituality I have long been searching for, I've had it all along, I just didn't realize it.

A Warrior strives for balance in mind, body and spirit.

I have learned through maturity, balance of mind and spirit; the body still needs some work though.

A Warrior is true to herself/himself and others.

I have had no problem being true to others, it's being true to myself that is difficult sometimes.

A Warrior does what is right, no matter what the cost.

This I have done throughout my entire life; though it may be easier to take the path of least resistance, I have never been one to back down from what is right.

A Warrior faces her/his fears.

There are some fears that I have not faced like heights and death, but I believe I have faced most of the fears that I have.

A Warrior shows respect for herself/himself and others.

I always show respect for others, and while sometimes I am a bit blunt and folk think I am being disrespectful, I'm not. I believe that I am showing you respect by telling you what I think, not what you want to hear. As for showing respect to myself, this I do most of the time but sometimes it's difficult.

A Warrior is responsible for her/his actions.

I believe this goes hand and hand with being true: if you are true then you will accept responsibility for your actions.

A Warrior places others and their welfare above his own.

I believe I have done this throughout my whole life, more so as I have matured. Yes there were times when I was young that I did not, but these are virtues that I believe grow as we grow.

A Warrior strives to continually improve in all aspects of mind, body and spirit.

I don't believe there will ever come a day when I will not strive to improve.

I have enjoyed being in the Warriors Guild and being able to help improve the Guild. I am deeply honored that I was chosen to be on the Council of Honor and the Chief. I am extremely grateful for all of our members. ☞

The Serenity of the Divine
Francesca

Kindred, make me an instrument of your peace!
Where there is hatred, let me show love.
Where there is injury, pardon.
Where there is conflict, harmony.
Where there is doubt, faith.
Where there is despair, hope.
Where there is darkness, light.
Where there is sadness, joy.

First Ones, grant that I may not
so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive;
it is in forgiving that we find mercy;
and it is in dying that our life becomes eternal.

A Warrior Path - A Way of Being

By David Smith

'He stands over the tangled bodies at his feet, his gore-drenched axe finally satiated in its bloodlust. He takes in the destruction around him, barely seeing it through the still red gaze of his slowly subsiding fury. Another glorious battle, he thinks to himself, more fallen enemies to my name, and most assuredly, one step closer to Valhalla...'

For most, this is the quintessential Warrior. A man-at-arms, a champion, a blade-slinger; fighting great battles and marking his many names throughout heroic epics with the blood of his foes. While there are of course grains of truth to that image – both historically and within contemporary society- this limited idea falls quite short of the true nature of the Warrior. It is not necessarily a path forged by the sword; it is a path of the mind, the heart, and the spirit. Fortunately, more and more people are becoming aware of this understanding, but still there are many misconceptions and untrue stereotypes of what constitutes a Warrior.

The first, and perhaps most prevalent, misconception is the strictly male dynamic often attributed to warriorship. One has only to look into our history to see examples of strong woman warriors (Boadicca of the Iceni tribe, for instance, who led uprisings against the Roman legions occupying Britain in her time. Appropriately enough, her name translates as 'victory'). We can even see examples of a Woman Warrior in our very own society. The single mother working valiantly to provide for her children and to better her situation; or the activist fighting

with perseverance for societal change and a sustainable environment for future generations. I have had the great privilege of training several women who earned black belt rankings through me. They are not only exceptionally skilled martial artists, but also excellent examples of the strong Spiritual Warrior -using their skills to teach and guide others on the path of self-empowerment.



These situations are not the blood-drenched fields of battle conventionally associated with the Warrior, but it is a 'battle' nonetheless. A core virtue of the Warrior is determination, always striving towards a goal, or needed change, with an unwavering sense of purpose. Self-discipline is a crucial element of this virtue, keeping to one's intentions and staying focused on the task. This often requires great courage- not necessarily in the face of spear and sword, but the 'slings and arrows' of negative influences, undue criticism, and obstacles (even self-imposed ones). So, like our conventional archetype of the victorious soldier, the modern Warrior strives against all odds to achieve goals, whether it's a better life situation, personal healing, or even just to grow and learn in a new direction.

"It is not the critic who counts, nor the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes up short again and again (but) who

knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.”

-----Theodore Roosevelt, 1910;
addressing the Paris Sorbonne

Another misconception of the Warrior is what is portrayed through modern media and popular movies- unbridled rage and aggression, and larger-than- life ‘heroes’ dealing with problems with fists rather than brains. This is also not necessarily what it means to walk the true path of a Warrior. Another core Warrior virtue is balance-seeking a harmony within the mind, the body and the spirit. This develops a greater sense of ‘center’, and being more grounded. Or, as my sifu (teacher) Grandmaster Khan often said to me “Be of calm mind, and rightful spirit”. To me, this means maintaining center, and always knowing who I am and what my intentions are at all times. If we lash out violently in anger or rage, or just plain stupidity, we are definitely not in control of that center. A Warrior is aware of their control, and maintains it. There is a great difference between reacting emotionally, and acting appropriately (or ‘acting as trained’ as I tell my students). In my professional experiences working abroad, I have had cause to use my skills and training in a protective context in some risky situations. However, I responded with only what was necessary for the situation, nothing more and nothing less. One who is on this path should not hesitate to act in an appropriate manner to do what is necessary, nor should they overreact out of uncontrolled fear or blind hostility.

For a Warrior (especially a trained one), a dynamic of personal control is taking responsibility for one’s actions. In the context of the martial arts, if you are fully aware of what you are capable of, you will have greater control over how you choose to respond to any given situation. In everyday life, our awareness of personal control gives us a strong sense of responsibility- knowing

how our physical, mental, and energetic actions connect to and affect the world around us. For the Warrior, it boils down to a very simple truth- ‘knowing self’. With that, one can walk the Warrior path with a strong sense of resolve, greater self-confidence, and a peaceful and balanced mind, body, and spirit.

“Hence to fight and conquer in battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence is in defeating the enemy without fighting.”

– Sun Tzu, The Art of War

The heart of the true Warrior is not one filled with brutality, aggression and arrogance. It is a heart filled with compassion, and the need to aid others. Another core virtue of the true Warrior is service. It goes far beyond service in the name of one’s land or leader, but also service to one’s community. It is a person who possesses the Warrior spirit who reaches out to aid those less fortunate in their community, who selflessly lends a helping hand wherever they are able. The same hand that wields the sword must also reach out gently with love and charity. It is through such compassionate action that one finds peace, harmony, and healing within.

Another way in which a Warrior may be of service is to teach and guide others. This is not only in the context of teaching those skills associated with the arts of the Warrior (physical defense, security, and other related dynamics), but guiding others to discover and implement their own strengths.

‘Regard your soldiers as your children, and they will follow you into the deepest valleys. Look on them as your own beloved sons, and they will stand by you even unto death.’

- Sun Tzu, The Art of War

As an example, I have been teaching the martial arts for over a decade. The core principle I share with all my students is not physical prowess, or combative tactics, but self –empowerment. The most efficient techniques possible would be useless without self-understanding, or awareness of

one's strengths and gifts. It is part of the service of a Warrior to guide others to see their strengths, even if on the most basic level of offering a kind, supportive word to someone in despair, or to offer simple lessons learned from your own experiences.

A Warrior walks his or her path with compassion and humility. Even as I served as a protector, I approached the task with a sense of calmness. This allowed greater safety for myself, and for those under my charge, by not projecting ego or any pretense of what I was actually doing ('ghost walking', as I call it). In that sense, I was able to do what was necessary and serve efficiently without relinquishing my sense of center. I have learned that true humility allows one to be more attuned to their own strengths. 'Open heart, open mind' as I call it. If you are open to always learning, you are open to seeing new potentials within yourself. This is also a strong Warrior trait- always seeking to learn and integrate new dynamics, always seeking personal growth. Although I have been a martial artist for decades now, I consider myself always a student (in fact, in true martial arts terms, I would be considered just a young beginner)!

"The general who advances without coveting fame and retreats without

fearing disgrace, whose only thought is to protect his country and do good service for his sovereign, is the jewel of the Kingdom"

- Sun Tzu

This understanding has also impressed upon me how a balance of compassion and humility serves in a leadership position. My Sifu (Grandmaster Khan) has always been an excellent example for me in this context. He led many personnel in high-risk situations throughout South East Asia. Yet, despite his high rank and vast combat experience, he always signed his name with two Chinese characters that translate as 'man of the fields', essentially 'servant'. He considered himself simply as one who serves out of compassion and strength, while maintaining his own sense of center and self-value (or, as he often would say to me 'bow TO out of respect, don't bow

DOWN to out of fear'). One can lead with the quiet confidence earned through experience and a sense of self. This taught me a deep understanding of the way of the Warrior- one can walk this path with both firmness and gentleness, both a peaceful and protective spirit, and most importantly, tempering action with wisdom. The Warrior must always seek the balance. ☪

Together Again Selene Tawny

**Remember the days when our hand held a sword,
Remember the days when we honorably served a Lord.
The days when we could ride for hours,
Without ever seeing anyone.
The days when we lived for war,
When we lived for fun.
When the bloodlust would take us,
And all died that were in our way.
When we lived by the sword,
When we lived day to day.
We were together then,
Just as we are now.
No one could come between us,
This we wouldn't allow.
We were courageous, we were honorable,
Each others back we would guard.
We stayed together through it all,
Through the soft and the hard.
We are warriors now just as we were then,
I'm glad that we're finally back together again.**

Being a Warrior

By Tanrinia

Often when we hear of 'warriors' in societies, we think of the obvious. We think of the soldier. Obviously, going to battle fits in with this archetype quite easily. But I see the scope of warriors as going far beyond those who fight, although this should be one component of what it means to be a warrior.

Recently, police, firefighters and EMTs have also been added to the category of warrior. While they may not go to far-away places for battle, they still risk their lives in many ways to come to the assistance of people they do not know. Many give their lives in these endeavors. Many suffer from long term disabilities after a certain time. Certainly, being of assistance to people is an additional component of what makes a warrior..

There are some warriors who fight in a different way, without violence, or trying to use the least violence necessary, to right a wrong. These would be social activists on many levels, those who risk reputation, employment, family, and sometimes even lives in order to bring about a change in society in which they strongly believe. Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. would fit in this category, but we could probably list many others.

Not all such warriors work on a national or international level. In many communities large and small, people work to improve their surroundings. They may work tirelessly for a bond issue they feel would improve their schools. They may raise awareness of a local pollution violation that endangers their neighbors' health. They may organize and sustain a neighborhood block watch to protect their homes and families. Is this not what the warriors of old were doing?

This point was brought home to me many years

ago. As a child, I participated in Girl Scouts, and as a Cadet, in addition to badges we had 'Challenge Pins.' Our local council had an "Emergency preparedness for Youth" program in which girls of middle school age would spend twelve weeks out of their summers learning all manifestations of first aid, CPR, and other things. We even learned how to help deliver a baby! To pass challenges, there was a final exam, and in this case we had to render aid and assistance at a mock disaster.

So, one spring weekend, around a hundred or so Cadets all descended upon a local Girl Scout camp to review what they had learned...and wait. Eventually the siren went off, signaling that there had been a mock airplane crash in a field nearby. A hundred or so middle school aged girls grabbed their homemade first aid kits and dashed to the field to help the "victims." Of course, the taller and stronger girls got there first, with those of us who were "small and scrawny" (i.e., me) bringing up the rear.

By the time I had arrived, all the "victims" in view had their attendants. I was asked by one group of girls to help transport a "victim" to the medical station. I agreed, figuring I could find a "victim" of my own after I was done. However, this did not happen. I spent the entire morning transporting people from the field to the medical station, until the "emergency" was over. We had graduation and awards following that, and my parents picked me up, asking me how I did, and did I pass the challenge. My kit never having been opened once, I said "No, I did not." Even though I had the pin, because I did not use my first aid skills, I felt I had failed.

I felt that way for an embarrassing number of years. It wasn't until probably about fifteen years later, that I got what many readers already could

see. It does no good to do first aid in the field, if you can't transport someone to the medical station after that. I did what was necessary to help the "victims" of the emergency, without hesitation, without the search for a really badly hurt "victim" so I could impress others with my bandage-tying abilities. It wasn't until that moment, about fifteen years later, that I believe I truly passed the challenge.

Warriors do not have to be glamorous. What warriors share is a drive to do right by their communities, even if others may disagree with their motives, methods, or conclusions. A warrior does what needs to be done, regardless of the glory that may be inherent in doing so. ❧

Wit - A Warrior Virtue

By Ed Chapman and Norma Hoffman

Wit: quick spontaneous decision-making, the gift of gab, the ability to bullshit, a sharp tongue, a ready bon-mot, the eloquence to talk one's self out of a situation-- this is a warrior virtue.

Wit is wisdom in running shoes. Wisdom can be a great, but passive, virtue. Wit is what gets wisdom out into the world. Wit allows you to get your thoughts out of your mouth and into your actions in ways that people will pay attention to.

We all need wit to some degree-- at work, at a party, while giving a lecture, or while discussing, arguing, or explaining. Druids love to argue-- um, discuss-- and without wit, our arguments would be pretty dull. Wit is also the ability to make people laugh, and to laugh at one's self, and in doing so to point out absurdity, inconsistency, and hypocrisy. With wit, our wisdom has a point.

Every Druid should be able to hold his or her own in a conversation about which they know absolutely nothing. (It's clear, from our experience, that most of us can do this.)

We should be able to speak extemporaneously at every occasion we're called upon to. We should be able to speak up at town council meetings, and with newspaper and television reporters. We should be able to converse intelligently and reasonably with police officers, and get their respect, even though we're dressed in funny robes and burning strange things in a large fire in a public

park.

Wit is the ability to think, talk, and act quickly, appropriately, engagingly, and entertainingly. We usually need both wisdom and wit to interact with other people on a daily basis, however, we've found that wit without wisdom behind it (a.k.a. bullshitting) has carried us through more tough situations in our lives than wisdom without the wit ever has.

Wit is the ability to think on one's feet, but also the ability to stumble gracefully. Wit will keep you moving, and keep your opponent off balance. Wit will get you out of more dangerous situations than any other warrior skill. Our tai chi teacher, while teaching the defensive applications of martial arts moves, always insisted that 'your best weapon is your mouth, and that should be your first choice of weapons.'

Wit takes courage, with an edge of cock-eyed, reckless abandon-- an abandonment to inspiration, to awen. It also takes attention and a bit of focus, and some critical thinking.

Count wit as a warrior virtue; think of Athena and her gift of Metis, the craft of warriors, and the way wily Odysseus ended the siege of Troy and the way he made his way back home-- not so much with his strength, but with his wit. ❧

Enchanted Desert Protogrove says: ADF Perseveres!

By Polarity Phoenix-Mane

It's been a dusty trail over here in southern New Mexico, U.S.A., since we first founded Enchanted Desert Protogrove, ADF, 2 years, 8 months ago. Members have come and gone and come again. Persevere. And we still keep on ticking!

As we first began small, we were all wound up and rarin' to go with the usual great and "new" enthusiasm. The natural course of things were, of course, to set out with our paths to become a community.

I say "we", often really equating into "I" on some occasions at the start. I did turn into a group of we over time, and then again to I, singularly, within the Protogrove itself, on occasions.

Sound confusing? Well, as experience now has it, we (and I) have learned about the outer reaches of community. Focused to fulfill the Provisional Grove criteria a long while back, as that is our goal to become, we have often participated with interaction in the local greater Pagan communities round and about in a variety of ways. More about that later..

Enchanted Desert Protogrove, ADF, also took on some community service within the mainstream greater community by accepting canned food donations for the local food bank as well as accepting the continued responsibility, maintaining a mile for the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) Adopt-a-highway program on state highway 54 south of Alamogordo, New Mexico, mile marker 57.

All this comes to the subject to do with really reaching deep into the virtue bag, such as perseverance, right actions, and speaking the truth, or "oathing" (not loathing, you'll get that play

later) --I'm sure other virtues tie in along the way too; it really also pervades me to the subject of being solitary at times, as well.

Many times and events, come and gone, I've seen solo, though to date, one other joined in with this endeavor for a Druid Fellowship for our local community nearly two years ago, who has remained loyal to each and every event when possible. Before that, I had to suck it in at times before this other members' arrival to Enchanted Desert Protogrove.

Times past now, but reaching again, deeply into my spiritual well, sometimes seemingly nearly gone dry, so much I thought it a match to the Fire Alerts here in our nearby mountain ranges due to drought. (no puns intended, but you can take `em or leave `em, as desired:)

Bare in mind, as peoples' minds may first spontaneously think of the more densely populated areas of New Mexico, such as Albuquerque, or Santa Fe; but truly, we are in the southernmost area in small twin desert towns of Alamogordo and Tularosa, New Mexico, on a dry flat ancient sea bed of a valley named Tularosa Basin surrounded by mountains (thus, basin) and rather isolated. In fact, New Mexico has fewer folks per capita than a lot of states here in the U.S.A, just to give you some insight of the dilemma of our Grove building / community.

Before I joined Our Own Druidry (ADF), I had barely begun to learn what "Pagan" meant. But yes, I'd finally arrived at the point of jumping the fence, because and again, yes! The grass was definitely greener on the other side when I met my first Druid contact, Lady Toadie over 6 years ago now. All that to say, I had a long way to go before I would be prepared to be a knowledgeable and scholarly Pagan leader; yet after much long

consideration and upon returning to my childhood hometown, I had this strong urge to not only plant trees in the middle of the desert, but found it was definitely drought in more way than one here that would challenge this urge. Now, after 6 years in ADF and nearly 3 years as Grove Organizer, I'm convinced have grasped it's beyond an urge, though sometimes I feel I'm pulling out cactus needles in doing all this. -- But it's truly a challenge --I will never give up! Ya gotta love it! The lesson in that is, "walk AROUND the cactus" not into it!

Anyway, we don't always see the thorns coming, and we now understand that the mile on the highway where we pick-up litter really equates into 3 miles since we pick-up on both sides of the highway, AND also down the median. All this gets even longer when we are the only one out there giving back to Earth Mother. Yes, folks when those miles get longer, you really learn something about gratification in giving back to Earth Mother!

A recent lesson derived in learning about reliability is one long talk I had with myself about giving back honesty to those who felt they would go unscathed or unnoticed because the polite thing to do would be for me to quietly not inquire what happened to everyone else in our local Pagan community outside our Protogrove; those who said they were coming out to help pick up at our mile with us on one day.

In the fury of a warrior way, I wiped sweat from my brow while out in the desert heat, and in a passion for truth, had a stern talk with myself about what should I do? I knew I was doing the right thing giving back to Earth Mother, but was I doing the right thing loathing myself by defaulting back to politeness instead of insisting on the strength in truth and accountability? I felt it imperative I should bring up oath, honesty, and speaking the truth out and to the attention of the other Pagans of our area, who enthusiastically support efforts in buying the tee shirt to support a cause. I congratulated them in pioneering our

area as some of the first Pagans to come out of the closet, to have the tee shirt.

Meanwhile, did they also wish to support what it represents to be a Pagan, by inputting into the positive pagan image, by participating in positive pro-activism within our mainstream area too?! There! I'd said it, and not one was scathed, though mighty shocked that I'd later stepped up to the plate with inquiry!

Now we come to the time of the same for myself. Accountability. We find strength in the strangest places, I found mine in leadership, and as my usual, seeming to do things backwards.

Sure, I took on the leadership because there was no one else to do it. But to say, hey! I'm ready now would really have been like waiting for a ship to sail out here in our isolated desert population and more backwards than if I'd waited to take it on.

One of the greatest teachers is experience, they say. I do believe that! My interaction with "getting involved" even where I was new to Paganism when I was just getting started was no excuse for me. I'm still working on my Dedicant Study Program, encouraged that even though I am a great procrastinator, I'm truly turning out to be a better warrior --the battle is mostly within myself!

The moral to this story is be true to yourself, sure, but don't forget, your word should be as good as gold when you speak! May every word that tumbles out show your strength in character by keeping it.

News update: Next Adopt-a-highway pick-up now has 3 new sworn volunteers! What about that number 3, eh! --And our year 3 as a Protogrove is sworn to be a Grove. 3 & me!
Enchanted Desert Grove, ADF: www.edg-adf.org ☞

The Armoring

By Ian Corrigan

Today I gird myself with triple power
Invocation of the Gods;
Attunement with the Spirits;
Reverence to the Ancestors.

Today I gird myself with the Power of the Magic
Cauldron
With the power of the Spear and Sword,
and the Stone of Sovereignty.
With the whole company of the Mother's Kin

Today I gird myself with the Power of the Noble
Ones
Obedience of Spirits, service of the Sidhe
With the loving blessing of the Dead.
Wisdom of the wise, courage of the strong, inno-
cence of the young
And the deeds of heroes.

Today I gird myself with the Power of Heaven
Light of the Sun, brilliance of the Moon, speed
of Lightning;
Swiftness of Wind, depths of the Sea, firmness of
Earth
Hardness of Rock
And the Power Under the Earth

Today I gird myself
With the Goddess' Power to direct me
With the Gods' Wisdom to bear me up
With the Child's Love to content me
Their eyes to look after me, their ears to hear
from me,
Their voice to clarify for me, their hand to guard
me,
Their paths open before me, their shield to ward
me,
From the snares of spirits, from the weakness of
will,
From habit and unmindfulness, from all who
wish me ill
Far or near.

I summon these Powers to be upon me and in
me, to make me equal to any challenge:
To come between me and any power that threat-
ens my body or spirit:
That I may have the wisdom of the wise, the love
of the loving, the power of the powerful;
That I may be known in the Inner Realms and
acknowledged with honor.
Know me. O Mighty Ones, for my name is ...

Magic within me, magic on my right hand, magic
behind me;
Magic on my left hand, magic before me, magic
above me, magic beneath me.
In the eye of all beholders, in the ear of all who
hear
In the heart of all beings
My magic is established.

Today I gird myself with the three fold power
Honor to the Gods! Honor to the Fair Folk!
Honor to the Dead!
And honor to the Wisdom of Magicians
That dwells in me forever
So be it!





Book Review

The Deities are Many By Jordan Paper

Review By Jason L. Cook

The overarching aim of *The Deities Are Many* is “to demonstrate that the ideological bases of non-Western religions, all polytheistic when the effects of Western domination are removed, should be accepted by those studying religion to be as genuine as the monotheistic basis of the Western religions.” The author taking on this task is Jordan Paper, an academic with a large body of work on comparative religious study of Chinese, Native American and other polytheistic faiths. Also as part of his work, he has written on the mystic experience and the feminine aspects of spirituality.

Paper’s approach to comparative religious study is that of a participant-observer. He advocates a view that to truly understand a religious culture, one must understand the native language in order to grasp the inherent worldview of that culture and one must participate in the practices of the religion with the presumption that the resulting experiences are valid and real. The author admits that his work has at times skirted advocacy and, in turn, this has driven him to write this general polytheistic theology. Paper is conscious of objections to the participant-observer approach, but argues that countering what he sees as the Eurocentrism implicit in the study of religion requires “taking non-Western ideologies seriously.” I interpret this to mean that the study of a religion alien to one’s own culture requires letting go of the presumptions of one’s native culture and adopting the studied religion’s presumptions (at least for the duration of the study) in order to fully access that religion’s experiences.

It is important to note that from the above that the underpinnings of Paper’s theology are his experiences in existing polytheistic faiths and not from reconstructionist or Neopagan religions. The theological conclusions are nonetheless rele-

vant to the Neopagan or reconstructionist as they ultimately rely on an argument from direct personal experience. I would note that Paper’s dedication to what I would call a full religious-cultural immersion is consistent with ADF’s emphasis on scholarship to understand the Old Gods we are worshipping, though our task faces additional challenges as we can’t seek out surviving members of those cultures for consultation nor immerse ourselves in those cultures.

Similar to John Michael Greer’s position in *A World Full of Gods*, Paper argues that polytheism is inherent in human nature as it arises from human experience, in particular humanity’s immersion in the natural world for much of our existence. He describes monotheism as a relatively recent phenomenon and one that that is “constantly breaking down.” Evidence of the limits of the integrity of monotheism in some faiths is seen in the Christian understanding of a single deity in three aspects, the veneration of saints, the existence of angels, demons and Satan (which also occur in other of the Abrahamic faiths). Greer does a better job of defining his terms explicitly, whereas the reader must work at times to grasp Paper’s exact meanings.

Paper argues that theology became a central feature of monotheism as repeated schisms over “minute” differences in belief required articulation of sophisticated arguments as each side of a schism sought to prove its “Truth.” The absence of theology from polytheism often led to perverse outcomes when Westerners encountered non-Western polytheistic religions, allowing, for example, 16th century Jesuit missionaries to argue that the Chinese were proto-monotheists and later, allowing 20th century sinologist with Humanist presumptions to argue the Chinese were agnostics or atheists who had carried out rituals

without meaning for two thousand years. Paper may overstate the case that theology is totally absent from polytheism, classical Greek religion appears to have developed it, but his point that the Abrahamic faiths have tended to develop more sophisticated theologies is valid.

Paper admits to a belief that all works of theology are essentially confessional and I think it of note in this regard that the first draft of this book was written in a single month in his cabin retreat. In relation to his belief in the confessional nature of any and all theology, Paper argues that knowledge of the confessee is essential and to that end offers us a summary biography that traces a life with early mystical encounters in nature, an eclectic academic career that wound through undergraduate years spent perusing the South Asian section of the theological library at his university, getting kicked out of divinity school, and studying Chinese language and Buddhism. He came to feel at home in China and ultimately married a Chinese wife. The experiences of her family's ancestor worship are clearly influential upon the author's views of polytheistic belief. A particularly important experience for the author appears to have been finding his fingers, not under his conscious control, typing a second conclusion to an article on Native American religion that he thought he was done with. This additional conclusion argued that Christian influence has suppressed female spirituality in Native American traditions; a topic of some of his subsequent research efforts.

Paper early on adopted a Buddhist-Daoist mindset that he says still underpins his metaphysics. Additionally he admits that his experiences in various religious traditions have also led him to hold multiple, parallel points of view and that often his conclusions may differ depending upon which mindset he is working from. The development of multiple, yet concurrently held, points of view in polytheism is echoed later in Paper's critique of monotheism.

According to Paper, there are two primary shared

characteristics of polytheism. The first is that polytheism is essentially experiential; people come to know deities directly through such modes of communication as mediumism and shamanism. This, in part, gives rise to the diversity of polytheism as people with different personalities and experiences meet differing deities. Faith is not needed because the polytheist has actually met numinous beings "face-to-face." The second characteristic is that relationships with the deities are reciprocal. Nothing is owed to a deity whose favor is not sought and if one deity can not deliver what is needed, another may be asked. If a relationship has been entered into however, the obligations of that relationship must be honored or else we may suffer. Beyond these two characteristics, the varieties of polytheism are determined by the gestalt of a culture's economy, society, government, terrain, climate, and other material realities, which Paper refers to as "religioecology."

Proceeding from the thesis of the role of religioecology in determining features of polytheistic faiths, Paper postulates the commonality of a "Cosmic Couple" in most forms of polytheism. Paper argues that the fundamental reality of early humans made them keenly aware of their dependency upon the earth and the sky for life. Earth gives birth to us and nurtures us while the sky is temperamental and distant, though bringing rain and sun which are necessary to create life. He generally uses the monikers of "Mother Earth and Father Sky" in this description, though noting that some cultures reflect this dichotomy in Morning/Evening Star, Sun/Moon, Sun/Earth and how the female/male attributions are occasionally reversed. The next layer of conclusions arising from this approach discusses how humans relate to plants, animals, and the mineral world as numinous entities.

In Paper's recounting, for most of human existence, our habitations were less separated from nature and were intensely dependent upon the weather, wild plants and wild animals for our survival; none of which were dependent upon us for

their survival. We came to understand that we were dependent upon their sacrifice of their own lives for our continued existence and we therefore developed rituals to ask for this sacrifice and offer token sacrifices in return. Humans also came to understand the wide array of powers wild plants and animals possess: in addition to food, they give us shelter, clothing, ways to heal. In the case of animals in particular, they have physical talents far superior to what we possess and humans sought ways to ask these animals to allow us to use these abilities. In this view, according to Paper, humans came to understand that the wild flora and fauna had both a physical and spiritual existence and that in an encounter with an individual creature, be it a tree or a deer, we were encountering not just the individual in front of us but also the totality of its species. Paper admonishes us to “. . . never forget that all about us are the voluntary self-sacrifices of many numinous beings. Such understanding fills us with awe and gratitude.”

Paper posits that with the shift from foraging to farming, humans did not recognize domesticated plants and animals as divine in themselves, but rather as gifts of the Earth. He cites Native American traditions of sacrificing to the Earth at planting, the Eleusinian Mysteries, and the adoration of the Black Madonna as examples of agricultural rituals honoring Earth instead of the crop itself. He also highlights that domesticated animals came to be seen as something to be sacrificed to numinous beings, rather than numinous beings in themselves and, in some instances, were effectively stand-ins for a human sacrifice.

These different modalities of relating to the divine are associated with different modes of communication with deity according to Paper. In a foraging culture reliant upon wild plants and animals, shamanism is the associated mode of communication, with each individual communicating directly with deities. In such communities, this communication is encouraged from a young age, with practices such as use of psycho-active

plants, fasting, meditation and so forth used to access and build relationships with the deities. Paper is at pains to dispense with certain myths surrounding “shamanism” He stresses that in shamanistic cultures, every individual functions as a shaman, though with varying abilities. The shaman acts not to control the spirits, but to encourage their assistance to the community, and actions are always for the good of the community – these are not individualistic cultures. In fact, Paper stresses that in most of these cultures, the closest thing to a conception of evil is someone using shamanic skills for individual, selfish purposes. (Note: Negative power used against the community’s enemies is a “good action” as it supports one’s own community.)

Paper next turns to ancestor worship. With the advent of horticulture and permanent settlements, the dead began to be kept nearby, in contrast to being left behind by nomadic cultures. With the dead always nearby and on the mind, Paper postulates that people began to try and consult dead elders for advice and this gave rise to spirit possession as a form of communication with the divine. In Paper’s view, ancestral spirits are not deities but are entities with more than human powers whose aid can be sought if they are cared for by the living. For this reason, in such cultures, the family is conceived of as extending in both directions in time. Paper does allow that spirit possession is not the sole means of communication with the spirits and includes practices such as various forms of divination, dreams, visions, and pilgrimages.

Paper’s argues that the numinous natural beings became anthropomorphized deities as humans settled in towns and cities and began to live in a human-built world increasingly distant from immersion in natural phenomenon. In China, some deities arose out of the ghosts of the uncared-for dead who some humans found to be sympathetic and helpful. As the efficacy of these spirits was demonstrated and their aid increasingly sought, their graves became temples and the temples became grander until these spirits became gods.

Likewise, the spirits of those well-known and powerful during their lives became gods over time as their spirits were found to be responsive to entreaties for aid. (This is a striking parallel to the requirements for canonization in the Catholic Church.) Paper also describes how polytheists tend to use images of their deities as focal points for offerings and communication. He points out that these images are not understood to be the actual deities, but are more than just representations; Paper describes how many televisions in Taiwan are arranged to be easily seen from the altar, but not necessarily for the living inhabitants of the house.

Paper describes how polytheism often features “seminuminous” culture heroes and tricksters who are generally absent from monotheistic faiths. I believe this section of the book is clearly directed at Paper’s target of shifting the implicit assumptions of religious studies scholars away from the Western monotheistic mindset and without this in mind, the chapter is somewhat incoherent. The author cites the Western presumption that myths always describe functional deities; i.e. those whose aid is sought in ritual. Many myths in polytheistic cultures relate to entities who are rarely, if ever, the focus of rituals. These tricksters may have given humans gifts of tools and skills, but they are also often troublemakers. These tricksters are frequently key actors in myths of the re-creation of the world. At this juncture, Paper moves on to a discussion of how polytheistic cultures often lack a creation myth that cites how the universe first began. Rather, there may be a myth of clan origin or emergence or migration; myths that describe “how did we get to where we are” from some earlier stage of existence. Most forms of polytheism simply don’t assume some form of ultimate beginning. Paper cites the Old Testament which holds a re-creation myth (The Great Flood) and a first creation (Eden). (It is worth noting that the Eden myth is considered by Biblical scholars to have been added Genesis well after the Flood myth.) I would like to point to the myth of Ragnarok which turns the re-creation myth on its head a bit

by telling how “we” get to the next stage.

Chapter 7 “One or Many: Monotheists’ Misperceptions of Polytheism” is the focus of Paper’s assault on monotheism’s hegemonic position in the Western worldview. He begins by citing that the Abrahamic faiths essentially define their monotheism by rejecting polytheism. For example, the Nicene Creed is nonsense in its aggressive assertion of only one god unless one assumes a context of a polytheistic milieu. Paper then argues that the concept of “polytheism” is a monotheistic intellectual construct because polytheists have no use for such a term themselves as polytheism has been the human cultural norm for most of history: “The only indispensable characteristic that polytheists have in common is not how monotheists identify them, but the very fact that polytheists are so identified.” Likewise, a general theology of polytheism only makes sense in a cultural context of dominant monotheism Paper concludes: “In summary, to admit that one is a polytheist is to damn oneself in the eyes of other members of Western culture.”

To Paper, if a concept is irrelevant or contradictory to practice, illogical to the logical relationships of all other concepts and violates the logical integrity of the religion as a whole, it cannot be part of the original tradition. For example a single master male deity in an egalitarian culture that lacks concepts of a “master” or “king” is hard to accept. He provides a number of examples where he finds that the Western monotheistic mindset has led researchers or observers to reach erroneous conclusions regarding a culture’s religion; the researchers find exactly what they want to, expect to and never critically question the finding. Paper describes what he calls “ur-monotheists” who assume that polytheistic cultures at one time had “the Truth” of monotheism and lost it. Such ur-monotheist who do hold positive views of non-Western cultures are driven to seek a chief or creator deity in these traditions even if it requires that the presumed chief deity is so beyond day-to-day experiences as to be totally ignored in myth and ritual. As part

of this analysis, Paper also levels a brief but withering assault on the myth of a universal prehistoric worship of a single goddess, what he calls “Feminist Goddess Worship.”

In the concluding chapter, Paper addresses how polytheism does not preclude monistic understandings. Paper appears to use “monism” as a catch-all phrase to describe any conception of deities that reconciles numerous deities into some form of a unity. Examples include mystical experiences of a “cosmic unity”, devotion to a single deity that results in conflation of all deities with one (a common occurrence in Hindu practice), and acceptance of an underlying functional equivalence among all deities.

Paper also uses the conclusion of the book to launch a polytheistic critique of monotheism, which includes the desacralization of nature and the elevation of one gender and sex over another (which in turns permits a celebration of celibacy that can mutate into negative views of the body in general). The quest for a single “Truth” can (but not necessarily) lead to intolerance as there cease to be “grey areas” between values. Out of intolerance can be bred fanaticism, though certainly this is not an inevitable or necessary occurrence. The singularity of truth in monotheism transforms dualistic pairs into antagonists; one opposite must be “good” and the other “evil.” The concept of heresy is not compatible with polytheism, as there is no singular truth. As Paper puts it: “My truth need not be your truth, but that does not in any way challenge nor imperil my truth or your truth.”

In contrast, the deities of the polytheists are morally neutral and do not lay out rules for humans to follow, though a particular relationship with a given deity may include certain obligations. The rules of human conduct arise from family and community concerns, ethical considerations, and the “way of the universe” and therefore the resulting rules point toward living in harmony with nature and society. Deities may be willing to help us, or not. If one god can’t or won’t help, you

can turn to another. However, the deities are not all powerful (another fundamental problem for the monotheistic Western mindset) and they can not counter fate but can only enhance what the way of the universe permits. The deities are not distant, but accessible in a myriad of ways. Polytheists therefore do not suffer from angst and doubts about our relationships with the divine that the monotheists often do.

A comparison with Greer’s work is warranted. The two books ultimately reach common conclusions, but get there from different approaches. Greer proceeds with an argument from first principles to describe the philosophical underpinnings of polytheism. Paper, on the other hand, works from observation and experience to build such a philosophy. That they end up in a very similar place is quite astonishing, particularly as Greer primarily works from a Neopagan point-of-view and Paper’s experiences come from unbroken native traditions.

The book is a work of clear, concise writing that is easily read. I have not touched on many of the examples of religious experience, ritual, and practice that Paper uses to drive home his theological points, but these add a richness of detail and enhance the overall effort greatly. Paper is at pains to demonstrate how mistranslations and cultural misunderstandings have led Westerners to erroneous understandings of non-Western religions; this never detracts from the overall theology, but at time such examples may be oddly placed in the book. The book is not heavily burdened by references to factual research; there is an ample listing of further readings in the back for those so inclined. This is the work of a lifetime researcher who has chosen to step away from relaying scientific observations in order to make a statement of principle and of faith. As such, it succeeds in making a strong case for polytheism as an internally consistent, logical, and coherent approach to our world. Lastly, in a sentiment I and many of the members of ADF will share, Paper endorses polytheism as being more than just useful; it is enjoyable and makes life exhilarating. ❧



Arís Mundi

Updating Your Home Shrine
By Julian Greene

As you grow in your understanding of Druidry and of ADF cosmology, as your own worship and practice expands, you will naturally wish to update your altar to reflect this new knowledge.

If you have a particular hearth culture, you may wish to do a little research to find out what kinds of things adorned their homes and hearths and use something similar, particularly where the Well is concerned. An earthen bowl perhaps painted with specific designs of your hearth culture, a glazed amphora, a brass or pewter bowl, or something that you find that speaks to you as being pleasing to your patron(s) or patroness(es) are all excellent ideas. A little research of LaTene, Pictish, Greek, Roman, Mycenaean, Norse or other Indo-European symbolism will reveal a rich source of material from which to choose. Remember that, while quite popular, the majority of Celtic knot work is of Christian origin. That doesn't mean that you can't use it, only that it's nice to be informed.

As you progress in your ADF life, you will more than likely take on new, or renew old alliances with various patron/esses. Choose something for your altar that speaks to you of these deities. When I started out in ADF, I was really unsure of the whole polytheistic thing, and used a small statue of Mary to represent "the goddess." That was as far as my understanding took me at that time. Now, fully embracing polytheism, Artemis usually comes to me in the form of a bee; therefore, I use bee imagery on my altar. My Mary statue has long-since disappeared. For Taranis, my primary patron, who I tend to sense more than see, I have a stone which I picked up near a stone altar I claimed for him during a trip Gaul where he was originally worshipped. What speaks to you is of utmost importance.

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You may have been in a hurry to set up your initial altar, and may have found something around the house to use in creating your hallows. But as you frequent pagan shops, thrift shops, metaphysical or antique stores, something will catch your eye that will be the perfect thing that reflects your idea of the Hallows at that point in time. This was true for me, especially of the Tree. My original altar Tree was a Native American-like talking stick that my son had made me at one time. Its next incarnation was a chunk of crystal base with a wound-wire trunk and branches, with the leaves manifesting as pieces of amber. As it stands now, I am happy with my find of a bronze triple candleholder with a tree of life motif.

If by now you are performing ADF rites at your altar, you have probably from time to time found yourself in need of something for the "waters of life." Many people I know use a bowl (like a small tea bowl), a chalice or a wine glass which remains a permanent part of their altar. Our grove has a standing horn, and if you have room for one, that would be a beautiful addition to your altar. The "waters of life" vessel is a constant reminder of the whole picture of our rites – the old bargain between mortal and immortal, between man and the Kindreds. It represents the act of reciprocity: offering to the Kindreds and receiving their blessings in return – the creation of our own fulfillment of desires by honoring the pact of hospitality and seeing our desires infused with the essence of the gods and consumed.

Your altar should evolve just as your Druidry evolves. ☪



Out of the Mouths of Babes & Teachers

By WrenTek

Ah yes, out of the mouths of babes and out of the mouths of teachers. Last night as our young martial arts students sit on the floor, rather impatiently, for class to begin: I encourage them, as I do each class night. Sit, legs crossed, hands on your knees, eyes closed, I say over this and over. I always say this & they always try to peek making sure that I catch each one who opens an eye. Each one who opens an eye or two I call by name -- it is our game. "Eyes forward", I say as they turn their heads trying to see who just came in the door, through closed eyes. I notice again, as always, every student is slouched. But tonight is different, tonight I say "Sit honorably, sit straight, sit with honor, and respect." A few straighten-up, the other adult students and black belts stand a little straighter,

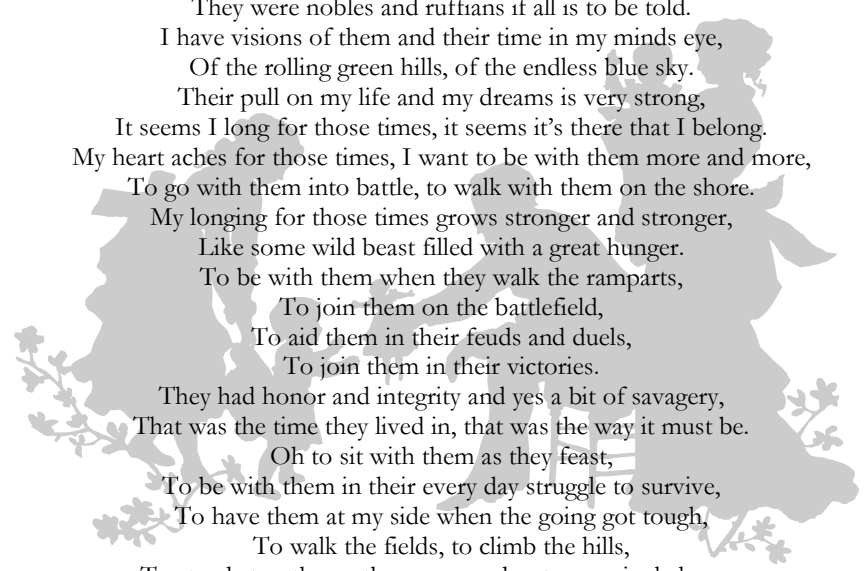
and parents wiggle and straighten up as they sit on the uncomfortable floor.

"For how we stand, how we sit demonstrates the honor and respect we have for others and therefore ourselves." I think I will add this to our game and when they grow-up and are the teacher maybe my words will ring in their ears and they will stand a little straighter and call to their students: "Sit, legs crossed, hands on your knees, eyes closed. Sit honorably, sit straight, sit with honor, and respect."

For as we are, so will be the next generation and the next. So I encourage each of us to stand a little straighter, sit a bit taller, and demonstrate through our daily lives honor and respect for all life -- what a simple way to begin. ☪

My Ancestors

By Selene Tawny



My ancestors were warriors, so strong and bold,
They were nobles and ruffians if all is to be told.
I have visions of them and their time in my minds eye,
Of the rolling green hills, of the endless blue sky.
Their pull on my life and my dreams is very strong,
It seems I long for those times, it seems it's there that I belong.
My heart aches for those times, I want to be with them more and more,
To go with them into battle, to walk with them on the shore.
My longing for those times grows stronger and stronger,
Like some wild beast filled with a great hunger.
To be with them when they walk the ramparts,
To join them on the battlefield,
To aid them in their feuds and duels,
To join them in their victories.
They had honor and integrity and yes a bit of savagery,
That was the time they lived in, that was the way it must be.
Oh to sit with them as they feast,
To be with them in their every day struggle to survive,
To have them at my side when the going got tough,
To walk the fields, to climb the hills,
To stand atop the castle proper and not see a single home,
To go hunting for our food, knowing it was the only way we would live.
To just have an inkling of what they must've went through,
To have just a tad of their desire for life,
Their outlook on life and yes a bit of the strife.

Making a Natural Connection Through Breath

By Bert 'Toad' Kelher

“Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature’s peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you...whole cares will drop off like autumn leaves.” (Muir) These words from John Muir eloquently describe why we as modern Druids still long for the natural world.

Requirement seven of the Dedicant program requires the student to account for their efforts to, among other things, work with nature. It is really up to the students to decide for themselves how they will accomplish this. Many members of ADF belong to organizations that work with the environment or work to protect the earth. This is not, however, a requirement. Some members choose to become vegetarians or only eat food they themselves have grown. This is not a requirement either. What is required of our members is that they *experience* nature and grow their connection with it. Many students of the Dedicant program bemoan the emphasis on scholarship. This is one of the areas where what is done is more important than what one reads or writes.

When most people think of nature, they think of wide-open spaces with green grasses waving in the breeze and the warm sun shining down. Or perhaps a shade dappled wood with the moss draped branches of the ancient trees heavy with the mists. The truth is, nature is surrounds us constantly. Whether one is in the middle of the most remote wilderness far from the works of humanity, or in the middle of the concrete jungle of the city. What?!? Nature in the city? Yes even there the natural world surrounds us. Nature is not only the pretty trees and babbling brooks, but the currents of the air and the rays of the sun as well. It can be found in the cycles of the moon and the turning of the seasons. Even in the largest, and, what would be considered sterile by most, of cities nature finds a way. In

New York City, peregrine falcons build their nests high upon the ledges of skyscrapers (DEP). The question then is not where must one go to find a natural place, but rather how can one connect with the nature right outside their door, regardless of where that door is.

Ideally, when looking for a natural spot in which to reconnect with the natural world, the your job will be easier if a spot outside can be found, so much the better if this spot is untouched by man. However, if ADF Druidry was easy, everyone would finish their Dedicant program in a few weeks. Furthermore, many of us do not have access to pristine natural areas like those shown in the pages of National Geographic. How then can the you connect with the natural world if the only nature they can see is out of their window in the middle of the city?

The answer is, in reality, quite simple. You connect with the nature that is present. This holds true wherever you are. Try this simple visualization:

Begin by grounding and centering yourself. The Two-Powers works very well for this. Once your are ready begin concentrating on your breathing, in and out. Realize that that with each breath, the molecules that make up the air are moving in and out of your body. The small bird chirping in the tree above you breathed these same molecules moments ago. Before that, the tree the bird is sitting in breathed them. Before that they were carried on the wind from far away, where they had been the breath of mighty stag in the woods. Or perhaps, the hot breath of the puma crouched the ledge above that same stag. Continue tracing those molecules back, in and out of each set of lungs, or leaves or blades of grass the molecules have traveled through on their journey. Come to the realization that you are, and

will always be, inseparable from the natural world around you. And breathe.

The beauty of this visualization is that it allows you to reconnect with nature wherever and whenever you happen to be. It also strips away all of the perceived barriers between the natural world and ourselves. You only have to remember to do one thing, breathe.

Works Cited

DEP News: [Peregrine Falcons in New York City](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/news/falcon.html). Department of Environmental Protection. <<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/news/falcon.html>>.

Muir, John. [Wisdom Quotes](http://www.wisdomquotes.com/). Jone Johnson Lewis. 1995-2006. <<http://www.wisdomquotes.com/>>.

03

Invocation to Arianrhod

Carey Reynolds
& Liz Ticer

French Carol

$\text{♩} = 155$

Soprano

La - dy of the to - wer of moon - light, sil - ver queen of
Grace us with your pre - sence and bles - sings, weave your cloak of

Alto

5

wis - dom and might, We shall sing your prai - ses, sing them to the stars!
ma - gic and light.

sing to the stars

11

We shall work your ma - gic in the night! —



Festival Review

Of Financial Importance
By Steven C. Sampson, PhD.

Having just attended Desert Magic, my thoughts are filled with warm wishes towards all and joyful recollections of a magical weekend. I am in a state of bliss and happiness.

We pagans, the laughing people, are blessed in so many ways. The joy that Ian and Sue bring with their song and energy, ArchDruid Skip with his twinkling eyes, and Jenni of the glorious breasts are all part of the magic that I experienced this last weekend, the same magic that happens all around the country as we ADF Druids gather.

I realize that the Sonoran Sunrise Grove paid the travel and lodging for presenters to be at this weekend, and I am so glad that they did I would have missed out on meeting them and getting to experience their energy.

Thank you SSG!

Another realization came to me that we as a group benefit greatly from ADF *Oak Leaves*, the festivals, the writing, the rituals it all works in my heart and spirit and I want it to keep working and keep happening.

If I ask something of the Gods, I expect to gift them something and trust that they will gift me back. This is a basic law of my life. I have come to believe that if I receive a gifting

from anything, then I have to put gifting energy back in order to support it and have it continue and complete the circle of giving. ADF has been

gifting me with a collection of wonderful people, rites, gatherings, and fellowship. I have become aware of my obligation to gift back to ADF. I understand that there is even an old Proto-Indo-European word for this gifting back and forth—**ghosti*—thank you, Ceil!

Starting in June I pledge a monthly gifting to ADF. I realize how important the fellowship is to me and I do want it to continue and to grow stronger.

I know that the ADF office struggles to keep ahead of our debts (laughing - just like we all do) and that my contribution will fulfill my spiritual obligation to complete the energy I get from the organization. I also plan to put ADF in my will and am starting estate planning, so that upon my death the gifting can continue.

I would like others who have an awareness of the responsibility of gifting to consider doing the same it will strengthen ADF and I know it will keep the blessing flowing. So, happy **ghosti*-to ADF and to me! ☞

GHOSTI!

This odd looking word, **ghos-ti*, is the Proto-Indo-European word which refers to the reciprocal relationships of hospitality. In fact, the English words “guest” and “host” both come from this root (the * at the beginning of the word just means that it’s a word reconstructed by linguists and not attested in literature or archeology). Our religion in ADF is based on this idea, that we can form relationships with the Powers by making offerings to Them, with the expectation that we may receive blessings and wisdom from Them in return. Well, we’ve invented a new use for it!

At the Desert Magic Festival recently, during the closing ritual, this word suddenly became a spontaneous cheer or toast. Everyone ended the rite with a resounding, *Ghosti!*, which felt just right. Other cheers we’ve heard at the ends of rites, such as *Hurrah!* or *Huzzah!* or even (dare I say it?) *Woof!* just pale in comparison! So don’t be surprised if you come across a group of ADFer’s all happily cheering each other with this new toast:

Ghosti!
--- Rev. Kirk Thomas

You are Searching For Me - I am waiting For You
WrenTek

You have emptiness within, but you know not why.
You have tried this, that, & the other, you are not happy, but you know not why.
You look high & low, to & fro, but you know not why.
You have something stirring deep within, nagging & pushing, tugging & pulling, but you know not why.
You are searching for me, but you know not why. You know not who.

I am the book that nags to be read on the shelf.
I am the flower that blossoms in spring & the fresh fallen snow in winter.
I am the heat of a summer day & the cool river for a swim.
I am the falling leaves on a crisp autumn day & the afternoon sun that sends joy to your spirit.
I am the darkness of a cold winter's day & the warmth of the hearth fire.
I am the sun that springs forth growth & I am the full moon that beckons your soul.
I am the wind that blows the voice of reason & I am the rising tide.
I am light & I am darkness.
I am warmth & I am cold.
I am loving-kindness & I am the genuine smile from a stranger.
I am everywhere & I am nowhere.

I can light the way to fill the emptiness, but I cannot fill it.
I can lend a hand on the steep path, but I cannot climb it.
I can show the door, but I cannot open it.
I can provide a key to open the mind, but I cannot turn it.
I can invite the soul to awaken, but I cannot wake it.
I can grab your attention, but I cannot hold it.

Follow my light it shows the path, but you may turn back.
Take my hand it can support the next step, but you may turn back.
See the door – open it, but you may turn back.
Stand in the door – have you arrived, but may turn back.
Step across the threshold – when you dare,
bathed in awakened light you may never turn back.

Who am I? I am one who illuminates the path.

Trenfher
Jennifer Gadd

I watched from a safe place on a hill,
itching to fight, but commanded to stay put.
This battle was not mine to fight, but his.
Never have I seen him so angry, blue eyes
glinting like shards of ice. Already flushed
with the coming victory, he threw aside
his shield as an unnecessary burden.
I heard the scrape of unsheathed steel
and saw Orna slice the air on a song.
Oghma Trenfher, the side I hadn't seen,
took the field as champion of the gods:
uncompromising, unyielding, unrelenting.
He scared me like this, and I averted my eyes.
It was over in mere moments, and my beloved
was the only one who remained standing.
He walked long and hard along the beach
that night, but when he returned to me,
was restored to equanimity and grace.
He smiled like the sun at me, but never will I
look again into those bright eyes without
seeing the shadow of ice I know is there.



News and Announcements

Dedicant Program Completions

Athelia Nihtscada,
Completed, April 17, 2006
Chelle Thorla of Clan of the Triple Horse,
Completed, April 24, 2006
Illious of Tear of the Cloud Protogrove,
Completed, May 31, 2006
Avery Goodman of Grove of the Rising
Phoenix,
Completed June 20, 2006

Study Program Completions

Kirk Thomas, First Circle of the Generalists
Study Program, April 3, 2006

New Protogroves

Henge of the Sacred Fire Protogrove, ADF,
West Valley City, UT, April 14, 2006
Apple Branch Protogrove ADF,
Champaign, IL, July 8, 2006

New Chartered Provisional Groves

Tear of the Cloud Grove, ADF, Albany, NY,
On April 3, 2006

New Fully Chartered Groves

Three Cranes Grove, ADF, Columbus, OH,
May 8, 2006

Kin News

Oi Asproi Koukouyayies Kin Report

Nothing too exciting to mention for the White Owls this time. I've added some links to our page on the ADF site for various Hellenic holiday descriptions and ritual scripts, and hopefully our members (myself included) will be inspired to write a few more!

Eulogia,
Rev. Rob Henderson

SIG News

Ecstatic Trance SIG

I am very pleased to announce ADF's newest Special Interest Group, the Ecstatic Trance SIG. The Ecstatic Trance SIG is a group of ADF members, who are interested in enhancing and deepening members'™ connection with the Kindreds by developing practices, ceremonies, and other experiences using ecstatic trance. This SIG will provide a forum to share scholarship, ideas, and practices of using ecstatic trance for spiritual purposes and to document, through research, historical references to ecstatic trance work in Indo-European cultures. You can subscribe to the group's e-mail list ADF-Ecstatic-Trance using the subscription page, or you can contact the SIG coordinator Linda Costello (lindac5755@aol.com) directly. May 20, 2006.

Walk in Balance, Raven Mann ADF Preceptor

Grove News

Grove of the Rising Phoenix

We have held our high day rituals and drumming circles in the park. Attendance has lessened, but is starting to pick up again, and we have gained a small influx of new members.

We continue to hold Druid Meet ups in the Phoenix area although our attendance was negligible, so we started holding classes in subjects of interest after our meet ups, and that seems to be luring others in.

Several of us have volunteered at the Irish Cultural Center as part of our community service, and to support the center, the grove bought a brick to be placed on the map of Ireland that makes up the courtyard area. The brick has the name of our grove on it, and will be placed near the Hill of Tara on the map.

In May, several of us attended Desert Magic Festival in Tucson, and a few of us went to Well-spring. The festivals are always a pleasure to attend, in that we get to meet other people, face-to-face, in the organization, and we all come away with so much more than when we arrived.

We are starting plans now for Medieval Madness, our annual druid campout to be held in the early spring. We are hoping to increase it to more of a festival this year, with some classes and workshops. More to come as it unfolds.

Wild Onion Grove

The "Onions" have been having monthly meetings for our study group at the home of Chris Sherbak and Jack Cole. Jack's culinary expertise made these meetings something to look forward to for all participants. Once again, we braved the Chicago Highland Games for our solstice celebration to watch "men in skirts" throw tree trunks across a playing field, endure 90 plus degree heat in woolen kilts while puffing on a bagpipe in the band competition, and generally celebrate being Scots.

As always, retail therapy was available for those overcome by the moment.

Our July 8 meeting will include several "producers" specialties on the menu. Lughnasadh (weather permitting) will find us in the woods along the DesPlaines River for the ritual and pic-

nic unless the local tornado patterns force us to Barbara's backyard nemeton and grilling in the garage. It's always interesting in August!

Other ADF member can catch us at the Summerland Festival in August where Barbara and Jack will be presenting workshops on self-hypnosis and trance work followed by building your inner temple. Come zone out with us!

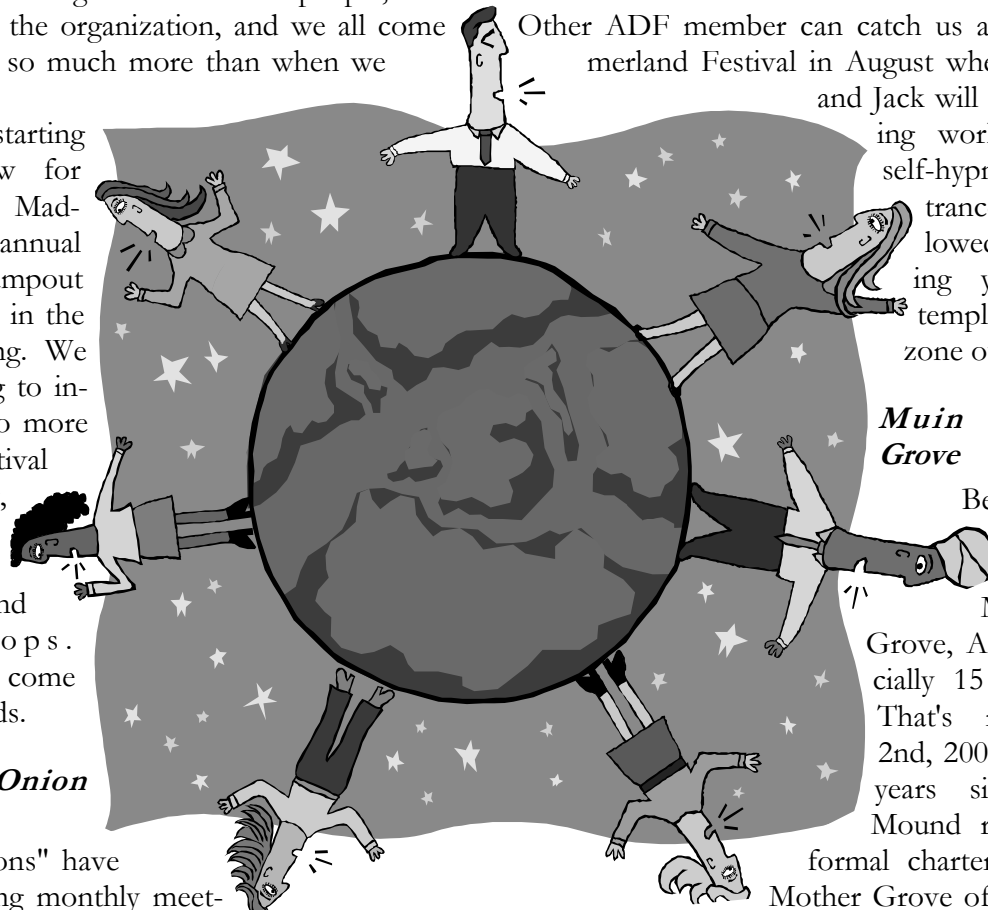
Muin Mound Grove

Be it known that Muin Mound Grove, ADF is officially 15 years old! That's right! July 2nd, 2006 marks 15 years since Muin Mound received its formal charter from the Mother Grove of ADF, and

Lughnasadh 2006 marks 15 years of public rituals as a chartered grove. By the time this announcement is published, Lughnasadh will have passed, but we are planning on camping at the grove over the weekend and members from several other ADF Groves in the area are planning on attending. We will drum; we will sing; we will dance; we will celebrate! So, Artisans get to work on some canes and shawls, our Grove will be needing them before long!

Raven's Cry Grove

Raven's Cry Grove held it's Midsummer ritual in the Celt-Iberian tradition, a first for ADF, and a success! Dedicants groups are still being held, as well as the Warrior Lodge meet ups. ☪





Little Acorns

Little Warriors in Little Acorn's Grove

By Lady DragonStar

Mama Selu had told the boys a wonderful story this morning. She had told them about Finn Mac Cool, the great and ancient Irish warrior.

"When I grow up, I'm gonna be just like Finn," said Collin.

"Yeah, me too!" replied Aidan.

"I know what would be fun," said Collin.

"Let's go into the woods and play warriors!"

"Ok, let's go!"

And off they ran, deep into the forest to play like they were the bravest warriors in the land. They ran through the streams and jumped over logs, and pretty soon, they were trying to see who could jump the furthest and run the fastest.

"I bet you I can beat you to the Great Tree," said Aidan.

"Oh, no you can't!" yelled Collin, and off they went.

They ran on and on until they reached the great tree, all out of breath. When they got there, someone was already there. It was Angus and his buddies, some of the older kids from the village who liked to tease little kids like Collin and Aidan.

"What are you doing?" said Angus, with a snarl to his lips. "Running away from the faeries?"

The other kids joined in on the laughing.

"We're brave Fenian warriors," declared Aidan proudly, "and we're learning to pluck a thorn from our feet without slowing down while running through the forest."

"Or without loosening a single braid from our hair," added Aidan.

"Next you're going to tell me that you're memorizing namby-pamby poetry, too," laughed Angus. "You call that being brave? That's not being brave."

"Oh, yeah?" said Aidan. "I'll have you know we ARE brave."

"Well," said Angus, "if you're really brave, you'll prove it."

"What do you mean?" asked Collin.

"Well, out in the fields is a white bull, and around his neck is a gold bell. If you get that bell from that bull, then you'll be brave."

"But that bull's mean," said Aidan, "and we're just little kids."



"I thought you were BRAVE," mocked Angus, "but if you're chicken..."

"Bok! Ba! Ba! Bok!" quipped the other older boys.

"We'll do it!" yelled Aidan, afraid to show how scared he was.

So they all went down to the edge of the field. Collin and Aidan stepped out onto the field, knowing that they had been told

time and time again not to go out there, because that white bull was very, very mean. Beads of sweat rose on their foreheads as they spotted the bull in the distance.

"Are you sure we should go through with this?" asked Aidan, with a shaking fear in his voice.

"Well, it's too late to back out now. We have to show them what brave warriors we are," said Collin, with a quivering in his voice.

As they crept closer to the bull, they did not see a lone figure on horseback in the distance, but that figure spotted them, and knew they were in for nothing but trouble.

They were close enough now that the white bull caught scent of them, and raised his head from the grass, his long horns flashing in the sunlight. He let out a snort, and scratched the ground. The golden bell around his neck

clanged menacingly.

“Oh, no! He’s seen us!” screamed Aidan.

“Well, of course he’s seen us!” replied Collin. “I didn’t know he’d be that big!”

“Or that scary!” replied Aidan.

“Or that fast!” screamed Collin, as the bull turned and started to run at them. “Run!”

And off they went, trying to reach the fence at the edge of the field before the bull reached them. He was bearing down on them fast, and then it happened. Aidan tripped and fell over a rock! Collin tried to get him to his feet, but the bull was getting so very close so very fast, and just when Aidan thought he was a goner for sure, the white bull suddenly stopped and turned in his path.

Collin did not know what had happened until he looked up. Seamus, one of the warriors of the village tribe was there, sitting on his horse with a rope in his hand. The other end of his rope was wrapped around the bull’s horns, and he was holding him down while Cu, his hound, was nipping at the bull’s heels, distracting him so his master could get the bull back under control.

“Son,” he said, “we’ve got a lot to talk about, after I get you out of this field.”

Seamus got the bull calmed down, and

then he picked the boys up on his saddle and they rode back to the edge of the field, looking very defeated.

“Just what possessed you to do that?”

“Well,” Collin said, “We were trying to be brave like Finn Mac Cool. We thought if we could get the bell off the white bull, we’d show everyone how brave we are.”

“Who put that idea in your head? That isn’t being brave like Finn Mac Cool, that’s being careless like Finn Mac Fool.

“Angus said that it would show everyone how brave we are,” said Aidan, with his head hanging low.

“Well, I’m going to have a little talk with Angus,” said Seamus. “You see, boys,” he said as he helped them off the horse to sit on the stone fence surrounding the pasture, “being brave is standing up for the right thing, even if it means NOT doing something. You should listen to the voice of wisdom within you and know when to act, and when not to act. The true path of the warrior is one of wisdom. Now get on home, boys. I’ll be there this evening to talk over what happened today, but first I’ve got to take care of the bull...and then I’ve got to stop at Angus’ mother’s house.” ☪

Last Issue’s Puzzle Key

Across

2. **HIPPOCRATES**—He’s credited for the modern medical oath
5. **HERBOLOGY**—The art of combining medicinal herbs
6. **AIRMID**—Sister of Miach
7. **SHENNUNG**—Venerated as the Father of Chinese medicine
15. **NATUROPATHY**—Treatment that emphasizes natural remedies
16. **DOCTOR**—A licensed medical practitioner
17. **CULPEPER**—Wrote "The English Physitian" in 1652 (last)
18. **REIKI**—A modern healing system of hands on touching
20. **AROMATHERAPY**—Use of fragrances to affect mood or health
22. **BLACKCOHOSH**—CIMICIFUGA RACEMOSA

Down

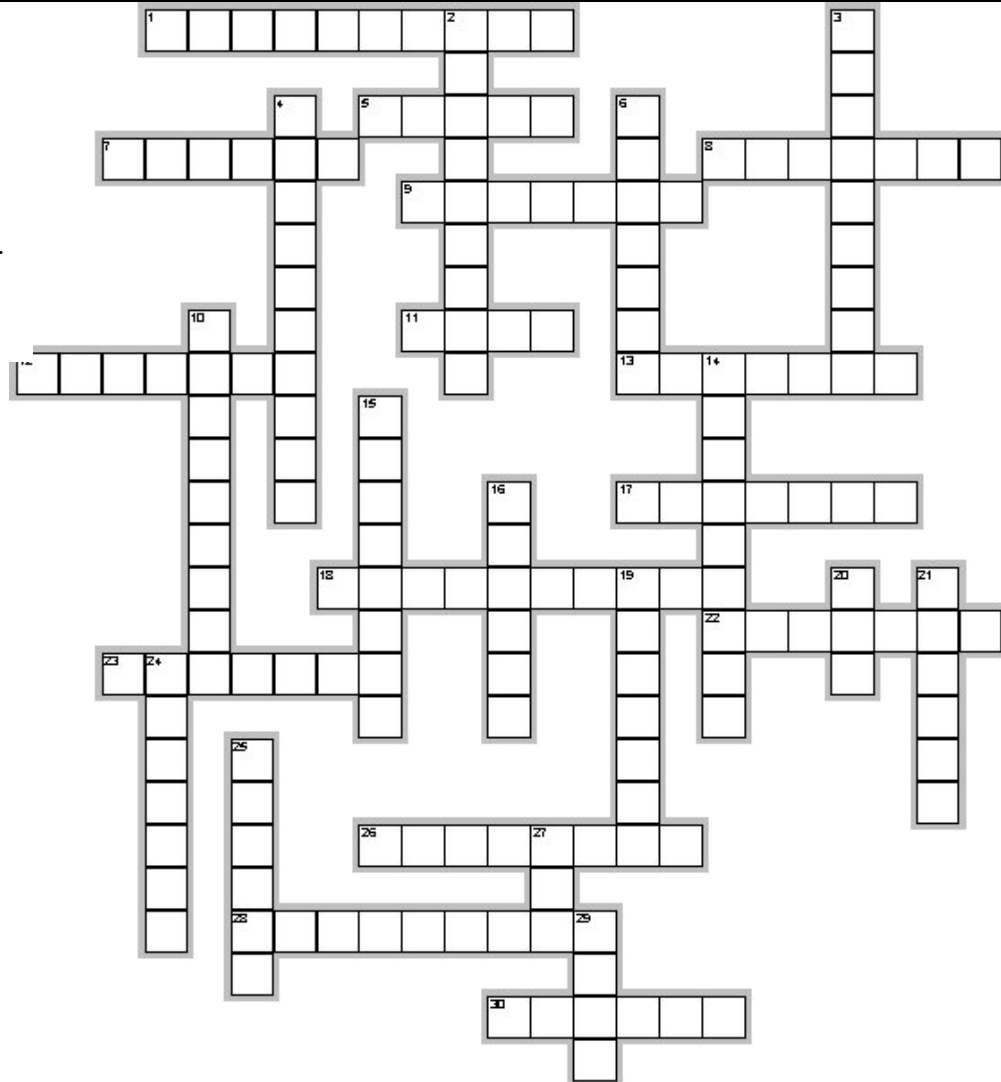
1. **ASPRIN**—Take 2 and call me in the morning...
3. **AVICENNA**—Wrote "The Cannon of Medicine"
4. **PENICILLIN**—Alexander Fleming is credited with discovering this drug.
8. **NUTRITION**—The scientific study of food and drink
9. **CHAMOMILE**—Anthemis Nobilis
10. **TINCTURE**—A herbal extract or concentration is aka?
11. **ACUPUNCTURE**—This treatment uses fine needles for theraputic use
12. **STJOHNSWORT**—hypericum Perforatum
13. **FEVERFEW**—Chrysanthemum Parthenium
14. **VALERIAN**—This herb is used for sleep disorders
19. **EIR**—A Norse Goddess of healing
21. **AMA**—The "group" was founded May 7, 1847 in Phili. (abbr)

Crossword Puzzle

This puzzle covers ancient, modern and fantasy Warriors & Heroes.

Enjoy and good luck.

Chris:)



Across

1. Greek fire thief
5. 7x Tour de France winner (first)
7. A fabled king of England?
8. He battled Grendel.
9. Medusa Slayer
11. Created the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage (last)
12. Famous anti-apartheid activist (last)
13. AKA Strider
17. "way of the warrior"
18. Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces WW II (Last)
22. AKA Granuaile (last)
23. This general won the battle of Actium
26. Slayer of Hector
28. This military genius was born in Macedonia in 356 BC.
30. C in C of Allied Pacific forces WW II (Last)

Down

2. Norse warrior spirits
3. A Jedi Knight (last)
4. The Defender of Ulster
6. Famous Queen of the Iceni
10. A Frenzied Warrior
14. One small step for man...(last)
15. General of the Carthaginian armies
16. author - The Art of War (both)
19. Famous Scottish hero (last)
20. Floats like a butterfly.... (last)
21. Son of Ross the Red (first)
24. AKA "The Great One" (last)
25. Crushed Pompeys army in 48 b.c. (last)
27. Creator of Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do (last)
29. The hero of the Ramayana

Submission Guidelines

Oak Leaves welcomes submissions of artwork, articles, poetry, letters to the editor, and anything else that might be of interest to our readers. Submissions, and especially artwork, relating to the turning of the wheel of the year and the celebration of the High Days are particularly encouraged. Submissions from non-members will be accepted, however, if space is constrained, preference will be given to submissions from ADF members. Certain pieces may receive preference, depending on available space.

References and Notations:

Since excellent scholarship is one of ADF's goals, please document sources of ideas and materials that you used for your writings. Detailed endnote references are preferred rather than simply providing a bibliography. Please follow the standards for references in the MLA Handbook or Style Manual. We will not accept submissions with footnotes, as they require considerable editing to convert to endnotes.

Medium of Submission:

Electronic submissions are preferred, sent as email attachments to the Oak Leaves submissions address:

oak-leaves@adf.org

Please send one submission per attachment specifying the format, author's name, your email, and membership status. Be sure the title of the piece and your name are at the top of the page, and you have checked it over for spelling and grammatical

We will also accept electronic submissions on IBM PC-compatible diskettes, sent to:

OL Editor,
P.O. Box 17874
Tucson, AZ 85731-7874

Please do not upload the article directly to the wiki as this has caused some confusion. Written submissions should be sent in one of the following formats: Rich Text Format (RTF), PDF or MS Word. Submitted materials will not be returned to the sender, unless specifically requested.

Art Submission Guidelines:

We now accept photos as well as drawings and computer generated pictures. Some of the color pictures will need to be modified to black and white but we will do that as necessary. We would like to have pictures submitted at 300 dpi, and in a useable format such as .jpg, .png, etc. Please send them to the Art Director at metrophage@gmail.com. We are not currently accepting hard copies of your art.

Deadlines for submissions are:

Spring: January 1st,
Summer: April 1st,
Autumn: July 1st,
Winter: October 1st

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If you are under the age of 18, you must have a parent or guardian sign this waiver to indicate her/his permission for you to join ADF, and that signature must be notarized.

To whom it may concern: (enter child's name here) _____ has my permission to become a member of ADF, and I am fully aware of the Neopagan nature of this organization.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Notary Seal:

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Thank you for all of your hard work! It is your
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The Publication Team



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