

The Journey...



Official Newsletter of Church of the Spiral Tree
an Ecumenical Pagan church

Issue 23
Summer Solstice, 2003

NEWS

Survey Says... Inside this issue you'll find a survey concerning CST. Please fill this out and return it to us as soon as possible. This will greatly help us in determining what changes, if any, we need to make in the structure and services of CST! Currently, Linda is doing 90% of the work involved in maintaining CST, including checking the PO box, processing memberships and keeping the database current, keeping up with the checking account, putting together the newsletter and mailing it out, setting dates for CST rituals, keeping a list of emails for folks to be notified of rituals, sending out emails for upcoming rituals, hosting the rituals at Waverly, calling the BOD meetings, sending out notices of annual meetings and absentee ballots, usually in newsletter. This is not a *lot* of work, except for the newsletter and keeping up with the sabbat rituals, and most of the secretary-treasurer work is a one-person job. However, it's always good to know that our efforts are actually appreciated by the members. Also, if any new services are added, or any new project undertaken, someone other than Linda will have to be in charge of them. Furthermore, if things such as the newsletter, web page, and rituals, which involve the most amount of work, or even the memberships themselves, are not seen as useful by most of the members, then those things can be reduced or stopped altogether. Most likely, though, things will not be cut out, but without some acknowledgment, support, etc. from our members, we really can't take on anything new.

Becoming a Grove of CST: In this issue we have forms for starting your own local CST group, and the general and specific rules for groves. While CST has members in all areas of the country, all of its rituals are in the Southeast, as this is where the officers live. However, if you'd like to host CST rituals in your area, or just have a group that receives the same benefits that CST does (tax-exempt status, etc.), then you can form your own CST group! If you are interested in forming a Grove, you will need at least three paid church members, and the three of you will need apply to CST for a charter, and pay the first year's fee of \$35.00. We will list your group in the newsletter and on the web page (unless you'd rather us not), so that others can contact you.

Pagan Prisoner Committee: Join this committee! Write letters! Be an important link to members on the inside!! Currently, the members of the Pagan Prisoner Committee are Cliff Landis, Violet Jade, Nion, Eugene Chapman, and Tarl Hoch. The purpose of the committee is to help out our incarcerated members. We have a web page where we list addresses of those inmates who wish to receive letters and information, linked to the CST web site. If you'd like to be part of this committee, just email and let us know!

Want to Review Books? CST receives new books from various publishers quite often. The publishers are hoping we'll read these books, and publish a review in our newsletter. *I* don't have time to read all these, but if someone else would, that'd be great! Just let me know, and I'll mail you the book. By the way—you get to keep it if you review it! A list of books for review is inside this issue on page 7.

Disaster Relief Fund: In the past we've been able to send checks to disaster relief agencies (mostly Red Cross) in the wake of disasters. To help with these efforts, we need to build up our Disaster Relief Fund. Please consider donating to this fund—all donations are tax-deductible. And it's really nice to be able to mail a check from a *pagan* church!

- Linda

Who Are We?

Church of the Spiral Tree (CST) is a non-profit, volunteer-staffed, ecumenical pagan/wiccan church, designed to foster and celebrate a sense of community and family among pagans, both locally and in other regions of the country/world. CST celebrates the unique pagan family: parents, children, elders, and extended family. It is an ecumenical church in that it encompasses all traditions, and is non-exclusive. It welcomes all who revere the Earth Mother and adhere to the tenets of the Wiccan Rede (“An it harm none, do as you will”), regardless of which tradition one is affiliated with.

CST was incorporated in August 1997 to provide a legal, tax-exempt status to the Pagan community. This status enables us to offer to the community a variety of open rituals that anyone may attend, to ordain ministers, and to extend our tax-exempt status to sub-groups of CST. One of our projects has been the forming of a Pagan cover school program for homeschooling families in Alabama (Sacred Grove Academy). CST also has a Disaster Relief Fund, so we can collectively donate money in the name of an established Pagan church to disaster relief efforts, including the American Red Cross.

If you would like to help with any of our projects, have any further ideas for the church, or have any resources which would be of benefit, please contact us. CST is also seeking volunteers to help with various parts of the church. Call us with ideas!

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Info About Our Services:

Ministers: CST, being a church, may ordain any member over the age of 18 a minister. The fee for this is \$35.00, and you must also be a paid member. This ordination is for life; you do not have to maintain your membership to continue to be a CST minister, but we would really appreciate it. Each year we have to renew our “Registered” status in various states in order for our ministers to be legal, and your continued membership fees help pay for this. Ministers are entitled to perform legal weddings, baptisms, and funerals. Ordination as a minister does not automatically confer “Elder” or “High Priest/ess” status upon anyone.

Subordinate Organizations: The main form of a local CST group is a Grove. This can be formed by at

least three paid church members, who apply to CST for a charter. If you are interested in forming a Grove, simply find two other like-minded friends, and encourage them to send in their membership to CST, then apply to us for a Grove charter. The application and first year’s fee is \$35.00. Note that whomever forms a Grove and runs it, including writing and performing rituals and teaching mysteries, does not automatically become a “High Priest/ess.”

Natural Family Planning: Cathy, a health services professional, is offering counseling on natural methods of family planning, both fertility and contraception. For more info, email her at cathycst@yahoo.com.

Church of the Spiral Tree

Incipient Grove Application

Responsibilities and advantages of the local Grove are listed in the Bylaws and in the General and Specific Rules for Groves and Branches. It is the responsibility of the governing body of the local group to know and understand these responsibilities. The Incipient Grove will become active once this application is received and properly recorded at CST's headquarters. It will remain active only as long as the points of the agreement are kept. CST's Board of Directors reserve the right to suspend or revoke the charter if any of the specific or general rules governing Groves are not met.

WE, THE PROPOSED INCIPIENT GROVE, AGREE:

1. To abide by the General and Specific Rules for Groves and Branches.
2. To abide by all the laws of the local, state, and federal governments.
3. To meet monthly and report quarterly to CST. This quarterly report will include services held, special meetings, attendance, and a treasury report.
4. To pay a yearly fee of \$20.00 by December 31. The application fee includes the first year's fee.
5. To maintain a governing body of at least three active members, including a Grove Steward, of legal age whose signatures appear below. CST is to be notified immediately of any change in the governing body or of any change in address.
6. That any charter granted is subject to be suspended or revoked if the specific or general rules governing Groves are not met, in which case all assets will revert to CST Central.
7. That each Grove is a largely autonomous body which is responsible for its own financial affairs. The signatories promise that they will indemnify, save harmless, and defend CST from all liability from damages to persons or property in any suit at law arising out of any charter granted. The signatories acknowledge that CST is not responsible for any debts incurred by the local Incipient Grove.

NOTE: The above agreement does not preclude the general and specific rules governing Groves.

We, the undersigned, having read the general rules governing CST Groves and Branches and the specific rules for Groves, do hereby apply for status as an Incipient Grove. We understand that after a period of at least a year and a day, we may apply to CST for full Grove status. We further understand that granting of any charter is upon approval by the Board of Directors.

Member #1

Name (Print): _____
Address: _____
City, State, ZIP _____
Phone #: _____
Email: _____
Legal Signature: _____
Date: _____

Member #2

Name (Print): _____
Address: _____
City, State, ZIP _____
Phone #: _____
Email: _____
Legal Signature: _____
Date: _____

Member #3

Name (Print): _____
Address: _____
City, State, ZIP _____
Phone #: _____
Email: _____
Legal Signature: _____
Date: _____

Proposed Name for Incipient Grove:

Application & 1st Year's Fee: \$35.00

**Please include a check made out to
Church of the Spiral Tree, Inc.**

The charter activating the Incipient Grove will be returned to you along with a file number. Use your file number on all correspondence to us. If you should move please send your old and new addresses immediately so your file can be changed quickly and correctly. Please advise us immediately of any change in officers.

Return this application with original signatures to CST, P.O. Box 186, Auburn, AL 36831-0186. Please keep a copy for your records. Also keep a copy of the quarterly reports submitted to us.

GENERAL RULES GOVERNING CST GROVES AND BRANCHES

There are two types of subordinate organizations within Church of the Spiral Tree: Groves and Branches. Groves consist of three or more members, while Branches consist of five or more members, and are designed to be formed from one or more existing Groves. All Groves or Branches begin as Incipient Groves or Branches, and after meeting monthly and meeting all other requirements for a minimum of a year and a day, may be granted full status as a Grove or Branch.

Group Exemption: Groups chartered by the BOD shall be legal Subordinate Organizations of CST as incorporated under the laws of the United States, and shall be eligible to be covered under CST's group exemption. Groups do not have the power to incur debt in the name of Church of the Spiral Tree.

Financial Accountability: Groups must submit a quarterly financial statement to CST's Board of Directors (BOD). Failure to do so for two successive quarters shall be grounds for investigation and suspension of the Branch's Charter.

Reports: Each group, whether Incipient or full status, must submit quarterly reports of its activities and financial status to CST's Secretary/Treasurer at least two weeks prior to each meeting of the BOD.

Membership: The governance of groups shall be by Stewards, Directors or Councils. Should the group be authorized to open a bank or checking account, there shall be three approved signatories on the account. Chartering and serving as administrators or officers of groups is open only to Active Members of CST. Membership in CST does not automatically confer membership in any local Grove or Branch.

Innovation: The BOD and Clergy of CST do not wish to impose any doctrinal constraints upon local Groves beyond the requirement that their activities be in accord with the purpose of the Corporation as stated in the Preamble and Article III of the bylaws. We in fact encourage creativity and innovation on the part of all local groups in the lawful pursuit of the goals of CST.

Protecting People's Life Work Within the Church: In order for members to be willing to devote their lives, assets and resources to the church, each individual and group shall have as much autonomy and freedom of action and expression as possible.

Disbanding a Grove or Branch: The BOD may accept and note the disbanding of a group or incipient group upon written notification from that group's administrative body and the return of all group materials issued by the BOD. In such case, all group assets are to be delivered to CST Central, unless the group has independently incorporated as a non-profit 501(c)(3) entity, in which case assets shall be divided by mutual agreement or by arbitration. The records and materials of the group will go into the BOD's "inactive" group file, where they will remain until or unless the group may be reactivated. If no one reactivates an inactive group within three years, it will be declared "discorporate" and filed accordingly. Incipient group charters will lapse automatically after one year from the date of their last quarterly report.

Suspending Charters: The BOD may suspend the charter of a group pending investigation of problems that may be brought to the BOD's attention, or if the quarterly reports (or lack thereof) from that group fail to indicate its continuing function. A group whose charter has been suspended will be regarded as an inactive group, and its charter may be reinstated if the group can resolve its problems to the satisfaction of the BOD. If this does not happen within a year and a day, the suspended group will be declared "discorporate." This action may be appealed to the BOD, whose decision will be final.

Revoking Charters: The BOD reserves the right to revoke a group charter for reasons including but not limited to: The conduct of the group at its meetings and public functions or in its public statements is found to be incompatible with the purposes of the Corporation as stated in Article III of the Bylaws, or contrary to the laws of the country or state of residence of the group;

The conduct or statements of the group in its meetings and public functions or in its public statements, in the judgment of the BOD, reflects unacceptable discredit on CST, its purposes, members and Clergy; or

The BOD has reason to believe upon investigation that the chartered group is not truly functioning as a group in that the contact person does not respond to queries, show evidence of membership or the holding of regular meetings or other evidence that the chartered group is, indeed, functioning as a viable organizational unit of CST.

Removing Group From CST: In case of irreconcilable conflict with CST, the directors of a group, subject to contractual agreement, have the option of removing their organization from CST while retaining its name, function, corporate status (if any) and assets. In such a case, that organization would forfeit the coverage of CST's group exemption, insurance, and any other privileges of affiliation with CST.

If there is a dispute between the BOD and a group, or among Directors or other partners in a group, and if any of these parties are not satisfied with a decision of the BOD, they may seek binding arbitration by a mutually-agreed-upon party or parties, pursuant to CST's conflict resolution procedure.

Assets: All Assets of a chartered group revert to CST Central upon dissolution of that group, whether by disbanding or by revocation of their charter, unless said Branch has separately incorporated as a non-profit organization, in which case assets shall be divided by mutual agreement or by arbitration.

Should a group which has removed itself from CST be disbanded at any time up to a year after leaving CST, any remaining assets will revert to CST Central.

Reactivating a Grove: If within three years, at least two members of the original group and at least one other active member of CST are willing to resume group activities and regular meetings, an inactive group or incipient group may be reactivated under its original name and charter. If there is a dispute among the members of the original group over the group's reactivation, the BOD may request that the name of the group be changed, and a new charter issued under the new name, while still recognizing the legal continuity of that group or incipient group insofar as dating its inception from the original application.

If a group's charter is suspended, the group will have three months to address and resolve the issues that resulted in that action to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Pagan Guidelines for Interfaith Discussion -or- What Do I Say When Someone Tries to Convert Me?

by Cliff Landis

In light of recent circumstances, I felt it necessary to write a set of guidelines for Pagans who are new to the Craft. Hopefully, these guidelines will help prepare these brave souls for the discussions and explanations that are a part of belonging to a Marginal (Non-Mainstream) Religion. Whether Wiccan or Druid, Shaman or Heathen, these guidelines are geared toward Neo-Pagans of all faiths. For the purposes of this paper, I will use Christianity as the basis for my debate, since Christianity is one of the largest religions in the world today, and also the one with which most mission-work, witnessing, and proselytizing are associated. I have listed the following points in no particular order.

- **Don't put up with harassment.** Before anything else is mentioned, it should be clear that all interfaith discussions are entirely voluntary. *You don't have to sit there and listen to someone tell you that you are an evil, immoral person and are going to Hell.* Christ taught with love, and if someone is mean, or rude, they are not acting in a Christ-like manner, and you definitely don't want to hear the "Good News" from someone with a bad attitude. Remember that a relationship based on fear is no relationship at all. Just ask anyone who has been in an abusive relationship. God is love, and your worship of Him/Her should be voluntary, not compulsory. If they're so hot on Hellfire and Brimstone, they shouldn't have any problem finding someone else to harass. At the same time, there are plenty of Christians who are more than willing to share Christ's love in an honorable manner.
- **Know what you believe.** The largest single problem encountered in interfaith discussions is that individuals do not know what they believe, and if they do, they don't know why they believe that. Explore your options of belief. Do you believe in one God or many? Do you believe in reincarnation or not? And why? Does it feel right? Do you have written evidence? Did someone tell you it was so? There are no right or wrong answers, only beliefs and their reasons.
- **It's all right to "not know."** I have been asked a question before that I just hadn't ever thought about. You will too. When it happens, just say that you don't know. This isn't the time to try to stump or trick each other. Just think about it after the conversation is over.
- **Feel free to change your mind.** Do you really want to weird someone out? Agree with them. Beliefs are NOT set in stone. If you find that you feel differently after talking to someone, or after pondering a thought for a while, feel free to change your beliefs. You can't be condemned for changing your mind, only commended! After all, at least you took the time to think about what you believe! But at the same time. . .

- **Stand firm in your beliefs.** Don't bow down to pressure. What you believe is just as important to you as what they believe is to them. Interfaith discussion is not about converting souls, but opening minds.
- **Know the difference between Paganism and Satanism.** This comes up a lot. Pagans as a rule do not believe in Satan, Lucifer, or any other all-evil deity or demigod. However, if you tell an individual that you're a Pagan, they usually either think that you don't believe in God, or that you're a Satanist. This also occurs when someone sees a pentacle, and thinks it's a Satanic symbol. Understand that Pagans don't believe in Hell and be able to explain why. For more information, go to: <http://www.religioustolerance.org/satanism.htm> and <http://www.religioustolerance.org/witchcra.htm>.
- **Know what your discussion partner believes.** This goes for both Christians and non-Christians alike. It is helpful to have a basic knowledge of world religions, not only for interfaith discussion, but also for your studies in the Craft. You will just as likely discuss religion with an Atheist, Humanist, Agnostic or Deist, as you will a Christian. As for Christianity, you should realize that the evidence most Christians present comes from the Bible either directly or indirectly. The other majority of belief comes from church teachings. Have a background in Christian thought and belief. This will help you to better analyze their beliefs, and help you explain your own. Go to <http://www.religioustolerance.org/christ.htm> and http://www.religioustolerance.org/var_rel.htm.
- **Know what Neo-Pagans believe.** Even if you know what you believe, there are always others in the Pagan community who believe differently than you. Have background knowledge in all Pagan religions, ranging from Asatru to Wicca. Some beliefs such as reincarnation spread fairly well across the board, whereas others like polytheism are particular only to certain faiths. Go to http://www.religioustolerance.org/neo_paga.htm. By knowing other religions' beliefs, you can avoid sweeping generalizations. This brings me to my next point.
- **Don't use words like: all, never, always, etc.** "All Christians are intolerant" is just as rude and generalized as if someone said "All Pagans are going to Hell." By using words like all, never, and always, you are stereotyping everyone belonging to a certain group. This includes your own group. Don't say things like "All Pagans practice magick." None of us knows all Pagans, and as a matter of fact some don't practice magick. There's an old saying in the Pagan community: "If you ask ten witches a question, you'll get thirteen different answers." Needless to say, no one has exactly the same beliefs, so avoid stereotypes on

both sides.

- **Listen.** Just as you don't want others to be condescending and rude, don't be so yourself. Listen to what the other person has to say. If they are trying to convert you, they're doing it out of the goodness of their hearts. Even though Pagans don't believe in Hell, they do, and they are trying to tell you what they believe because they think it will--literally--save you. So in the same way that you don't want to be told that you're "just plain wrong," don't do the same thing to others.
- **Have a sense of humor.** If you do find yourself in the middle of a religious discussion, stay light-hearted about it all. Remember that God invented humor, and it helps keep you from getting personal.
- **Don't get personal.** This is a discussion about beliefs, and not about individuals. Just because someone believes something different, doesn't mean that person is "evil," "bad," or "wrong." In the end, you can always agree to disagree, and remain friends. You might end up meeting a kind Satanist, or a mean White-Lighter. Diversity is a wonderful thing.
- **Understand that no one wins.** The chances that in a period of ten minutes you are going to stumble upon the key to all knowledge of God is slim to none. You're in a discussion to open your mind and the minds of others, not to prove you're right. It's about strengthening your beliefs, not changing the beliefs of others.
- **Don't name call.** Things such as "X-ians," "Bible Thumpers," "Psychotic Christians," "White Christ Cult,"

etc, are just as offensive as "Witch Bitch," "Tree Hugger" and the like. They are just as stereotyping and offensive as getting personal.

- **Know when to stop.** Some people don't want to open up their minds. You can't force them to, any more than you would want them to force you to become a Christian (can we say Spanish Inquisition?). Also, not everyone has hours for religious debate. If someone needs to go--you or your discussion partner--either call it quits or agree to do it again some time.
- **Know when not to start.** Sometimes, new Pagans just aren't ready to begin discussing their religion with other people. If this is you, do what a great teacher once told me to say: tell them, "To me, religion is a personal matter. And I don't discuss personal matters." It stops the conversation in its tracks, and you haven't offended anyone!
- **Don't proselytize.** As a rule, Pagans don't try to "convert." Oftentimes, you will get so excited about your new faith that you might come across too strong, subconsciously trying to convince everyone of how "right" you are. Don't worry, I've done it too. Just relax and let the other person lead the conversation if necessary.
- **Don't try to "debunk" your partner's beliefs.** Trying to get someone to slip up and admit to something they don't believe is not just rude, but all out mean. If you're trying to make a person think differently by asking them a series of questions, that's one thing. But trying to use trickery to prove someone wrong is dishonorable.

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Rules Governing Cst Groves and Branches, continued from page 4

the satisfaction of the BOD. If this can be accomplished, their charter will be reinstated and returned after their current quarterly report is approved.

If a group's charter has been revoked by the BOD, there is no further appeal. The re-establishment of a CST Grove or Branch in that area will require starting all over, with a new application, under a different name and with a new administrative body.

SPECIFIC RULES FOR GROVES

The Grove is the basic local organizational congregational unit of Church of the Spiral Tree. A Grove is a small intimate group of at least three, and we recommend not more than 13, CST members, organized in a local area to learn about, discuss, and creatively practice the purposes of the Church. Groves are largely autonomous units which agree to adopt and practice the values and purposes of CST and are, after applying to the Board of Directors (BOD), granted a charter by the BOD.

Groves are not required to have open meetings and may determine their own internal structure and method of participation. Any new person joining a Grove must be approved by all existing members. Membership in the Grove does not automatically confer membership in CST.

Charters: In order to form a Grove, a group of at least three active CST members must apply to the BOD for a charter as an Incipient Grove. Upon receipt of a qualifying Incipient Grove application, along with application fees, the BOD will issue an Incipient Grove Charter. In order to be granted a full Grove Charter, a group must have been meeting at least monthly for at least one year. Granting of a Grove Charter is by approval of the BOD.

Administration: Each Grove shall choose a person who takes on the major responsibilities of administration, contact and organization of either a Grove or an Incipient Grove. Such person shall be known as the Grove Steward, and they shall serve as contact and liaison to CST's central headquarters and the BOD in all matters of administration and/or corporate needs and concerns relative to their particular Grove or Incipient Grove.

Membership: A Grove must maintain a minimum of three paid CST members. It may have other members who may or may not be paid CST members, but any officers in the Grove, including the Grove Steward, must be paid CST members.

CST Calendar:

Church of the Spiral Tree welcomes church members, beginners, newcomers, solitaires, and anyone else interested in participating in rituals honoring the Sabbats. You need no experience or knowledge to participate, but we do request you come with an open mind and heart, and show respect for your fellow participants. Email us for directions. We share a potluck dinner after each Sabbat, so those who come are asked to bring some type of food to share.

Please wear something comfortable and appropriate for outdoors. Ritual robes are welcome but not necessary. No skyclad, please! Children of all ages are welcome. Donations to the Church are entirely optional but appreciated.

Note: For all upcoming sabbats, we need someone to volunteer to write and run the ritual, and in some cases, we may need someone to volunteer to host the ritual at Waverly in Linda's stead, or to host the ritual at a different location.

2003:

Lammas: August 9, Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

Pagan Pride Day/Fall Equinox: September 20 OR 21, Pagan Pride Day, including the Fall Equinox ritual, at the Arboretum, on the Auburn University campus, Auburn, AL. CST is co-coordinating with Pantheon. (NOTE: This event may be cancelled. Stay tuned for further details.)

Samhain: November 1, Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

Yule: December 20, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. Also CST's bi-annual General Membership (non-voting) meeting.

2004:

Imbolc: January 31, location TBA. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

Ostara: March 20, location TBA. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards.

Beltane: May 1, Waverly, AL, 9:00 am. CST is co-hosting with Pantheon. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

Summer Solstice: June 19, location TBA. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards.

Lammas: August 7, location TBA. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

Pagan Pride Day/Fall Equinox: September 18, Pagan Pride Day, including the Fall Equinox ritual, location TBA, Auburn, AL. CST is co-coordinating with Pantheon.

Samhain: November 6, location TBA. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

Yule: December 18, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. Also CST's bi-annual General Membership (non-voting) meeting.

Upcoming Festivals (Not CST events):

Earthdance	Sept. 12-14, 2003	Kolomoki Mounds State Park, Blakely, GA
FallFling	October 9-12, 2003	Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA
Moondance	May 27-31, 2004	Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA

BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

CST receives new books from various publishers quite often. The publishers are hoping we'll read these books, and publish a review in our newsletter. If you would like to read one of these and write a review on it for The Journey, we'll mail you the book (you get to keep it if you review it!).

When Someone You Love is Wiccan - by Carol McColman

Creating Home Sanctuaries with Feng Shui - by Shawne Mitchell

Exploring Native American Wisdom - by Fran Dancing Feather & Rita Robinson

Wicca for Couples - by A.J. Drew

Raising Witches - by Ashleen O'Gaea

Compass of Health (Using the Art of Sasang Medicine) - by Joseph Kim

Karmic Tarot - by William C. Lammey

Balance Point (Searching for a Spiritual Missing Link) - by Joseph Jenkins

On the Back Porch With Nion

The Big Blue What?

Howdy, ya'll, Nion here. As I have had several requests in regards to the almost certainly (?) fictitious group that reveres the Majestic Big Blue Penis, I though I would pass on, what in my imagination, a celebratory ritual might be like. Before I go on, if you're of a prudish (pagans? prude??? Ha!) inclination, or easily embarrassed, you might want to pass this article up. And of course to be P.C., I hereby give this ritual an R-18 or X rating with nudity, adult language, adult content, and strong sexual content (Hah! The kind of trivial gutter trash I like!).

The Ritual of the Majestic Blue Penis

Preparation:

Participants are Skyclad (naturally). Gather incense, candles, anointing oil (flavored lubricants are an acceptable substitute), and on the altar have an effigy of a Big Blue Penis (available at your local adult bookstore). All male aspirants will have their natural dangly members dyed blue with woad, body paint, food coloring, etc. Females will have a blue penis painted (the sizing of which reflects the female aspirant's reverence/ devotion) upon their lower abdomen (belly, chest, etc.).

Cast/Strengthen Circle:

HP (High Priest) casts circle of choice with a phallus-shaped wand, artificial penis (or if the HP is really ready, using his own naturally erect, dyed blue member as a wand, suitably consecrated, of course).

Quarter Calls:

"Spirits of the East, Spirits of Air, Caress our members,
With gentle breezes, Come play with us"

"Spirits of the South, Spirits of Fire, Fill us with vitality,
And fiery strength, Come play with us"

"Spirits of the West, Spirits of Water, Fill our members to
overflowing, With depths of passion, Come play with us"

"Spirits of the North, Spirits of Earth, Firm our members
As solid as the rocks, Come play with us"

Drawing up the Penis:

HP stands in the God position with his back to the altar. HPS kneels before him, and with reverence anoints his member with oil, while saying:

"I call upon thee, o mighty member,
Thou Majestic Blue Penis.

Come now, arise into this your Priest (name)
Let your power flow into him
As the sap rises within a tree.
I invoke thee, o mighty one,
Father eternal, deliverer of the seed."

HPS touches HP on right nipple, left nipple, penis, right nipple, saying:

"Hail Majestic one,
Proud and upright.
Deliverer of the seed of life,
And with the Mother Eternal,
Bringing forth fertility to the land.
I kneel before thee, thy tumescence at my lip."

HPS kisses member.

"I adore thee, and revere thee,
O mighty one, bringer forth of life."

Charge of the Penis:

HPS: "Listen to the words of the Majestic Blue Penis, He of old, who is called among men, the staff, rod, tool, schlong, pole, dick, cock, pud, and many other names. Hear now the words of his charge."

HP: "Whenever ye have need of me, once a month or whenever I arise, assemble together or alone, and adore the spirit of me, who is the deliverer of the seed of life. Ye shall be free, and as a sign of that freedom, ye shall be naked in your rites. Ye shall make love or take joy in thy self-pleasure, alone or among any or all who revere me. For I am pleasure, and the bringer of pleasure. All acts of love and pleasure are mine, with no remorse or shame, for I am the ecstasy of the body and spirit and joy on the earth."

Power Raising Chant:

Chorus:

Rub-a-dub-dub
Arise mighty pud
(chant 3 times)
Rub-a-dub-dub
Rub it to a nub

Hard and stiff
Dangling free
Wish it was
Down to my knee

(Chorus)

Short or tall

Thin or fat
Stroke it up
I like it like that

(Chorus)

Caress it up
Kiss it down
Have a lot of fun
With never a frown

(Chorus)

Stick it in
Stroke it out
Lots of oil
Make it spout

(Chorus until HP yells SPOUT, I mean Down)

All participants alone or with partner(s) pay homage to the Majestic One in whatever way their inclination strikes them. (The altar effigy may be used if so desired by any of the participants.)

Wine and Cakes:

Wine:

“As the rod is to the male
So the cup is to the female”

Insert athame or wand (don't dip your wick, sanitary reasons, of course)

“Cojoined, they are one.”

Cakes: Blessing of your choice.

Release/Thank the Quarters

Draw up the Circle (and then clean up the mess!)

Well, there ya have it, the fictitious (?) Majestic Blue Penis ritual. Enjoy, and watch out for hairy palms or going blind (or at least have available, if needed, a bottle of Nair and a white cane.) May the Lord and Lady always light your chosen path. Blessed Be.



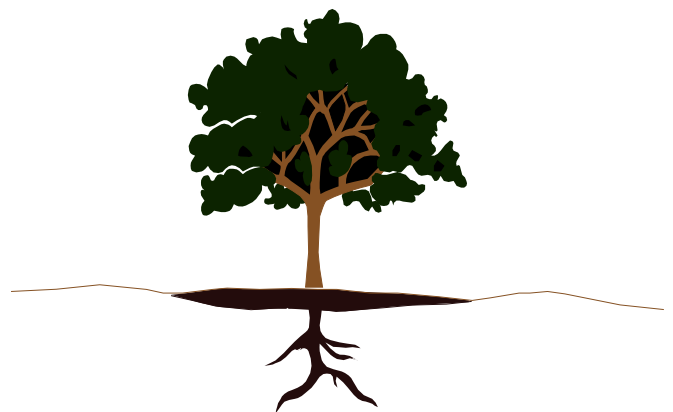
the wheel turns

the maiden stands
arms uplifted to the sky
the winds caress her body
lifting her hair from her shoulders
the falcon soars, the lone wolf cries
the wheel turns

the mother stands
arm outstretched
the wind roars
cleansing rain
she rocks the child
balanced on her hip
the wheel turns

the old woman stands
frail arms outstretched
the wind is calm
the sun descends
the falcon takes his prey
the lone wolf cries
the wheel turns

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Words from the Pagan Prisoners Committee

Greetings CST Members!

The Pagan Prisoners Committee (PPC) unceremoniously launched in August of 2002. Since then we have not been much in the public eye of the Church, so this article is to help acquaint CST members with who we are and what we do. Hopefully this column will become a mainstay of *The Journey*, to be directed at the Pagan Prisoner members of CST.

As many of you may not know, close to one-half of the CST membership is made up of incarcerated members. These members do not have to pay the membership fee that is required of other members, and yet many times the incarcerated members make donations to the Church. In addition, many incarcerated members supply articles for *The Journey*.

As the PPC, we try to serve the needs of these members as best we can. Some of the services we provide include:

- Corresponding with the Pagan Prisoners
- Supplying them with whatever information they request (such as information about certain paths, etc.)
- Mailing books from the CST library
- Providing tools-free rituals to be performed
- Working with authorities to supply authorized materials (herbs, tools, etc.)
- Working with authorities to host rituals (when possible)

Currently, the entire CST staff is rather strapped for volunteers, so if you or any members that you know of would like to volunteer for this or any other job, please send a letter or email to the Church of the Spiral Tree at P.O. Box 186, Auburn, AL, 36831-0186; <cst@spiraltree.org>.

In Service,

The Pagan Prisoners Committee: Cliff Landis, Violet Jade, Nion, and Tramanor

Cliff Landis, PO Box 541, Lake Park, GA 31636; Violet Jade, P.O. Box 55, Alton, AL 35015

MINUTES Church of the Spiral Tree, Annual Membership Meeting May 25, 2003

The meeting was called to order by Linda Kerr at 10:00 pm, at Moondance, Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA, with the following Directors and members present:

Don Mikovitz, Vice-President; Linda Kerr, Secretary/Treasurer; Lee Mikovitz; Cliff Landis, Pagan Prisoner Committee member.

New Business

Nominations for election of officers and directors of the church: President: Cathy Rankin; Vice-President: Don Mikovitz (Nion); Secretary/Treasurer: Linda Kerr; Member-at-Large: Deanna Freeman (Violet Jade). There were 4 absentee ballots sent in.

Results of election: Votes received are unanimous for President: Cathy Rankin; Vice-President: Don Mikovitz (Nion); Secretary/Treasurer: Linda Kerr; and Member-at-Large: Deanna Freeman (Violet Jade).

The proposed changes to the Bylaws, to remove any reference to Faerie Faith, were unanimously approved by in-person and absentee ballots.

Current Business

Cliff asked about Solstice greetings cards. Linda said we still have the cards; we just need someone to volunteer to be in charge of sending them out to people at appropriate times.

It was generally acknowledged that CST needs more volunteers, because Linda does not have enough time to do everything that needs to be done; she can only maintain CST as it currently is.

The CST rituals are going great—we have a good group of core people who show up most of the time, with lots of new people showing up also.

Linda put a list of books for review in the last newsletter; three inmates wrote in asking for some of them. She will be mailing them out soon.

Things To Do

It was suggested that we ask Llewellyn and other publishers to send books so we can review them.

Cliff reported that Frater Yod wrote in that he wants to update his address, and wants back issues of the newsletter.

The Pagan Prisoner Committee needs to come up with policies, like guidelines for correspondence, etc. There may be books out there on how to run a prisoner ministry. We could also network with other pagan prisoner organizations. Cliff is going to go ahead and write eight sabbat rituals for the inmate members, which will be tool-less, visualization-style rituals.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 am.

Contacts:

Remember, you get a free listing with your paid membership. You may also submit your listing at any later time. NEW SERVICE: You can send letters to CST, and we will forward them to your intended recipient.

* = listed on CST's Pagan Prisoner Committee web page,
<http://www.geocities.com/violetjade11/prisonerlist.html>.

Carla Ann Nelson: P.O. Box 155, Cottonton, AL 36851, email: <rcarlats1@cs.com>.

Cori Tindragon: <cori_tindragon@hotmail.com>.

Densho: <densho@knology.net>, from Montgomery and all points thereof.

***Frank Palmer:** (a.k.a. Bridget), Druid (always in training!), seeking friends to correspond. I enjoy role playing games, primitive living, and am looking for pen pals of all interests and faiths. I am incarcerated; please don't let that deter you. Can receive any mail less than 1/4" thick. Frank Palmer, a.k.a. Bridget #546776, Box 9200, New Boston, TX 75570-9200.

***James A. Roesch:** Advanced adept in multiple disciplines and orders. Hermeticist/Qabalist, A.A.S.R. 320, Rosicrucian. Will advise, guide, or discuss the Craft as any may desire. Write to: James A. Roesch #049547, Bay County Jail, 314 1/2 Harmon Ave. Cell 3-A, Panama City, FL 32401.

Jimmy Pesci: Encouraging all members to contact me for intellectual and spiritual rewards. Jimmy Pesci, Box 495, F.C.C.C., 13613 S.E. Highway 70, Arcadia, FL 34266.

***Rev. John Jacob Samulski, Jr.:** I am an extremely open minded person; an outdoorsman; have many interests in most religions. I am a strong believer in "national socialism" and a believer in separatism. I would love to hear from anyone on interests or without interests. John Samulski, #22408, P.O. Box 250, Draper, UT 84020.

***Justin Jessop:** #30967, Utah State Prison, P.O. Box 250, Draper, UT 84020.

***Michael Fugger:** #844334, P.O. Box 9200, New Boston, TX 75570-9200.

Rob Von Allmen: Tired? Bored? Wanting to find true love and happiness? Well, what are you doing talking to me?! I don't have all the questions, much less the answers. But I do have a clue (I found it in a cereal box) and am licensed to share the wisdom of the ages (answered an ad in Rolling Stone). If you also ponder such mysteries as "Is there life after death?," "Was he a man dreaming he was a butterfly...?," and "Where am I parked?," then please drop me a line at: Swann's Tr. Pk. #1, Lot 130, Auburn, AL 36863, <skippy_the_witch@yahoo.com>, 334-826-3953.

Scott Moore: Looking for like-minded people to correspond with. Scott W. Moore #22154, U.S.P., P.O. Box 250, Draper, UT, 84020-0250.

Shane Smith: Looking for like-minded people to correspond with. Shane Smith #31594, OQ 1-105-B, U.S.P., P.O. Box 250, Draper, UT, 84020-0250.

Stacy Lim: <sbandura@tuckercapital.com>.

***Timothy Hornsby:** Seeking pen-pals who are Wiccan/Pagan. Interested in all subjects: divination, Pagan philosophy, ecology, self-improvement, Irish and Welsh traditions. Can receive up to 20 pages in one letter. Timothy Hornsby #166781, C-3, 565 Bibb Lane, Brent, AL, 35034.

***Timothy O'Brien:** Sincere, mature, responsible Irish pagan seeking correspondence - prisoners welcome. Interests: all Wiccan-Druidic-pagan related topics/studies, self-transformation, music, fantasy art, environmental issues. Working to become spiritual counselor and pagan clergy of depth and character. Mentors needed. Timothy O'Brien, #69221, P.O. Box 1010, Canon City, CO, 81215-1010.

Violet Jade: Interests are gardening, herbology, stones, reading, spirituality, drumming, wicca, shamanism and currently studying Faerie Faith. (205) 621-9938, P.O. Box 55 Alton, AL 35015-0055, <violetjade11@yahoo.com>.

Notices:

Wiccan/Pagan Fellowship Club

The Circle of the Goddess sponsors an international pen friend club for shut-ins. What we do is match up people with similar interests from the "free world," with those who find themselves shut-in.

The program has been in operation for over ten years now is ever growing. Many great friendships have developed over the eight years we have been going at this little labor of love.

We are looking for outside people to get involved via the inky trail.

If you are interested please contact the address below and information will be sent to you. Any requests for information will be just that, information only. You will be sent membership forms and full details, and then if you are still interested you can return the forms.

Douglas H. Lagossy (Aspen)

P.O. Box 760

Campbellford, Ontario

Canada K0L-1L0

The following organization puts out a newsletter for prisoners:

The Millennial Kingdom

681 North Second St.

Pottsville, PA 17901

Rev. Paul Salem or Louise Salem

Newsletter: Rays of Light Newsletter

Cost: 6 postage stamps per issue (quarterly) for prisoners

A prisoner may send 6 stamps initially, requesting the most recent issue of the newsletter, and then go from there.

(From: Timothy O'Brien)

Lock of Love web site: <<http://www.locksoflove.org/>>

Locks of Love is a non-profit organization that provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children across the U.S. under age 18 suffering from long-term medical hair loss.

We meet a unique need for children throughout the United States by using donated hair to create the highest quality hair prosthetics. Most of the children helped by Locks of Love have lost their hair due to a medical condition called alopecia areata, which has no known cause or cure. The prostheses we provide help to restore their self-esteem and their confidence, enabling them to face the world and their peers. You can help by donating your hair after a hair cut!

The Breast Cancer web site: <<http://www.thebreastcancersite.com/>>

You can click a button on this site to help fund mammograms for women in need.

Greenpeace: <<http://www.greenpeaceusa.org>>

Greenpeace began in 1971 and for 30 years, Greenpeace has tackled environmental issues. Today their work focuses on six major efforts: Saving ancient forests, stopping global warming, eliminating persistent organic pollutants (POPs), protecting the oceans, eliminating the threat of genetic engineering, and ending the nuclear age.

Contact information:

<http://www.greenpeaceusa.org>

Phone: 1-800-326-0959

9:30 am - 5:00 pm Eastern, Monday-Friday

You can join Greenpeace for as little as a \$5.00 donation.

SURVEY FOR CST MEMBERS

As the Church of the Spiral Tree draws near to its sixth anniversary, the CST staff is reexamining the benefits that are offered to members. The Church of the Spiral Tree is a volunteer-based organization, and we are grateful to be able to offer benefits to our members and to the Pagan community as a whole. However, because of the amount of work involved in many of our programs, and the lack of volunteer support, we are being forced to reevaluate which programs are being offered to members. We value the input of our members, as it is your needs that we are looking to serve. Most of our benefits are only available to active members, but some, like the open sabbat rituals and the library, are available to the community at large.

Please detach and fill out the survey below and mail it to CST, P.O. Box 186, Auburn, AL, 36831-0186, or fill out the survey available online at <<http://www.draknet.com/spiraltree/survey.html>>.

Member Name: _____

Number which member benefits you personally like and dislike the most as a member of the Church of the Spiral Tree. You can have more than one favorite or least favorite! (1=my favorite or most useful; 2=fairly useful; 3-8=varying degrees of usefulness; 9=fairly useless; 10=completely useless): (*=available to active CST members only)

- *Newsletter for members only
- *Networking with other members through newsletter
- CST web page
- Open Sabbat rituals hosted by CST
- *Bi-Annual Membership Meeting at Moondance
- *Bi-Annual Membership Meeting at Yule
- *Having tax-exempt status
- *Having an elected Board of Directors
- *Discount on enrollment in Sacred Grove Academy
- *Discount on Moondance & FallFling
- *Option to get Ministerial credentials
- *Option to begin a local chapter of CST
- Referrals to teachers, groups, healers, clergy, etc.
- *Pagan Prisoners Committee
- CST library
- *Joy of belonging to a Pagan church
- Other (please indicate): _____
- _____
- _____

Which member benefit(s)/services would you be willing to do volunteer work for in order to keep (Please indicate all that apply):

- Newsletter
- CST web page
- CST Sabbat rituals
- Local CST chapters
- Pagan Prisoners Committee
- CST library
- Other (please indicate): _____
- _____
- _____

“I would be interested in volunteering for the following jobs”:

- Newsletter editor & publisher
- Membership Coordinator
- Hosting rituals at Waverly
- Hosting rituals at other locations
- Writing and performing rituals for open sabbats
- Serving on Pagan Prisoner Committee
- Publicity/Public Relations
- Community/charity work
- Fundraising
- Hospitality
- Collecting and storing items to give to needy people
- Linda’s job © (yeah, yeah, I know, but I had to ask!)
- Other (please indicate): _____
- _____

“I think it would be great if CST would”:

- Try to get health insurance for members
- Offer discount on Sam’s Club for members
- Built a shelter at Waverly for rituals
- Hold sweatlodges at Waverly
- Have blanket give-aways at rituals
- Have a CST party at Moondance and/or FallFling
- Other (please indicate): _____
- _____

Why did *you* personally join CST? _____

Will you renew when your membership expires? _____
Why or why not? _____

Comments about CST in general: _____

Important Dates

Board of Directors' Meetings:

August 9, 2003, Waverly, Alabama; November 1, 2003, Waverly, AL

Annual Meetings of the General Membership:

May 25, 2003, Moondance, Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA (includes election of officers)

December 20, 2003, Yule Ritual, Waverly, AL

CST Sabbat Dates:

Imbolc	February 1
Ostara	March 22
May Day	April 26
Summer Solstice	June 21
Lammas	August 9
PPD	September 20
Samhain	November 1
Yule	December 20

Church of the Spiral Tree
P.O. Box 186
Auburn, AL 36830

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED