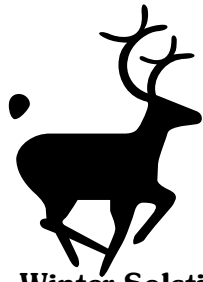


The Journey...



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

Issue 29
Winter Solstice, 2004

NEWS

Losses: Since the last newsletter was published, we've lost three good friends.

Stormy passed on October 1 after a two-year battle with pancreatic cancer. She had been involved with CST since its beginnings in 1997, and prior to CST she contributed artwork, poetry, and many, many articles for The Hazel Nut. She was a leader in the pagan community, and her festival Earthdance is being continued by her daughter. Sandi passed on November 26 after a long series of various illnesses.

Sandi was a long-time CST member, who was on the Pagan Prisoner Committee, and who helped out at every available opportunity—just recently she had donated some sweet treats to our East Alabama Pagan Pride Day, to be sold as a fundraiser.

Finally, we lost Ossian Gillebert in Atlanta on November 25 after being diagnosed with lung cancer back in March. He used to write articles, under the name of Adrian Loaghrian, for The Hazel Nut, the magazine that preceded CST, and that I published from 1994-1997. Ossian was an Irish pub singer, a computer wizard, and a high priest of his own tradition.

Stormy, Sandi, and Ossian will be sorely missed by all, and we will raise a glass to each at our Yule ritual on December 19.

Raffles: As a fundraiser, CST is having two raffles, for some gorgeous tables that Hans Brandt made and gave to us at FallFling 2004. We will have more photos of the tables soon, as well as physical dimensions, but as you can see from the photos on the web page, these tables are absolutely beautiful! The pentacle table opens to a storage compartment, and the three moon tables together are very striking. Any of these would be the perfect centerpiece for an altar or other ritual space. We will draw for these raffles at Moondance 2005 (<http://www.faeriefaitth.net/Moondance.html>), but you do not have to be present to win! Tickets are only \$2 each per raffle, and you can view the tables and buy your tickets at the CST raffle web page: <http://www.spiraltree.org/raffletables.html>.

Helping the Community: Since January of this year, CST has given monetary donations to seven families, who were dealing with issues ranging from being out of work and thus not being able to pay their family's bills, to having their house burn down, to severe injury, to death of a spouse, for a total of \$2250 in donations. We also recently donated \$500 to the American Red Cross to help with their hurricane relief efforts. Thank you to everyone who has bought a membership, enrolled in Sacred Grove Academy, or participated in one of our fundraisers!

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.

- 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!

CST Board of Directors:

President Cathy Rankin
706-596-0052; <cathycst@yahoo.com>
Vice President Don Mikovitz
770-830-8681; <nion011@aol.com>
Secretary/Treasurer Linda Kerr
334-332-3065; <cst@spiraltree.org>
Member-at-Large LeePhether
770-830-8681; <LeePhether@aol.com>

Newsletter Staff:

Editor/Publisher Linda Kerr

Church of the Spiral Tree
PO Box 186
Auburn, AL 36831-0186
334-332-3065 (Linda Kerr)
cst@spiraltree.org
http://www.spiraltree.org

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.

Pagans Be Proud!

By Wayne G. Carter

Some of us are familiar with the Rolling Stones song “Girl With the Far Away Eyes.” There is a verse where Mick is singing about riding around in his car “listening to the preacher on the A.M. gospel radio station and saying ‘the Lord will always be on your side’ ...and send a donation.”

I was sitting around last Sunday morning flipping through the T.V. channels listening to the gospel preachers tell me the same thing, including send a donation, when I happened upon a conservative Christian-type politician talking about the “Godly” foundations our country was built upon. He went on about our “Godly” democratic form of government and that our judicial system was founded “under God” and that the “underlying principles” of our democratic society were founded and formed by “Godly” men.

The man was knocking those ungodly Muslim countries in an indirect way. That the God of Abraham is the God of Mohammed, Jesus, Paul, and the Hebrews seemed to escape him.

Nonetheless, an epiphany with an attitude struck me while listening to this spewer of fertilizer and I thought I would share it with you all.

Fourth grade history taught us all that the “cradle of democracy” is Greece. The Greeks of that time were

Hellenist; Pagans! When those pesky hedonistic Romans invaded from the Italian peninsula and adopted the Greek religion and democratic form of government for themselves, what were they?

Pagans!

The Roman pagans fine-tuned the Green pagans’ ideas to a remarkable degree. The whole idea of a senate, a house of representatives, as well as equal justice under law came from them.

Cicero, founder of modern defense counsel, often exclaimed “by Hercules!” No followers of the God of Abraham were either one.

The Brits of course adopted the Roman form of government for their own use and we in turn adopted theirs to fit our own needs. But let us never forget that the “underlying principles” have nothing to do with the God of Abraham, and everything to do with those long-ago pagans.

Though our ancestors were crushed with zeal and abandon by the Christianized Holy Roman Empire the legacy of democracy and equal justice under law lives on with us today. Even the architecture of Washington, D.C. would make a Roman senator feel right at home.



Green House Gardening

by Frank Palmer (Bridget)

Before deciding anything about your greenhouse, stop and ask yourself this one simple question: “What do I want this greenhouse for?” Usually the answer to this question will be one or more of the following: Self-sufficiency, heating a house, or raising flowers for show. This treatise will deal with two separate issues: 1) heating a house, and 2) growing food for self-sufficiency.

Even when a greenhouse is to be used mainly used for heating one’s house, it’s foolish to waste space, so you’ll probably want to plant some flowers and veggies in it still.

Heating:

If your primary concern is heating, then you’ll want to build an attached greenhouse, which is a forced shelter—an artificially-made environment used to force vegetables to grow. This structure should be built on the south side of your home. Optimally make the shelter between 8’ x 16’ to 10’ x 20’. This sort of structure, built properly, can heat 1-to-3 square feet of home per square foot of greenhouse, cutting bills for heating.

This structure will probably consist of a wood frame placed on top of a short wall of brick or stone. Make the inside floor of flagstone or similar substance as a heat receptacle. You will want to use flat luscolite, filon, or vinyl plastic to cover the frame. Use a double pane, i.e.,

cover the inside and outside of the frame.

You will need a total of four vents; a low southwest vent, a high southeast vent (about 1/3 larger than the low southwest vent), a high vent into the house, and a low vent into the house. You will probably also want to place a door in the greenhouse.

Make a small portion of the roof of this structure out of solid roofing, as well as part of the west wall out of solid wood and insulation. It will also help immensely to make the remainder of the greenhouse roof out of partially glazed, corrugated lascolite/filon sheeting. This is the basic construction method of an attached solar greenhouse. Remember the main purpose of this structure is to supplement heating for your house, so you'll not get a lot of food production from it. We will later discuss heating and extending your growing season.

Food:

The next, probably oldest, style of greenhouse, at least in the Americas, is the pit greenhouse. The pit greenhouse attempts to utilize geothermal heat and an embankment. A pit is dug so that your structure will be a few inches below the frost line. At this depth your year-round temperature average should be about 50°F.

Simply shore up the north wall of your pit (your pit should open up to the south, preferably) with wood or cinder block. Then build a wooden frame using the same materials as in the attached solar green house. Also double glaze this. Place a door on the east or west side. Be sure you have a good mound on the north side. During winter you'll probably want to use supplementary methods to retain heat; these will be discussed later.

A helpful thing to both greenhouse and you is to keep rabbits in this greenhouse—not only will they provide extra food for you (meat), but the CO² from their respiration aids in plant growth and their excrement can be used to make fertilizer. This will be further expanded upon in a future treatise.

As to this date year-round growing is pretty much a myth, at least as far as our self-sufficiency is concerned. The methods of power production (solar with possible back-up generator) are probably not going to be able to give enough extra light during the four winter months to make it worth while to grow plants at that time.

The effective growing season follows our sacred wheel. Planting for cold weather starts just after Imbolc and ends around Samhain (approximately February 21

to October 21). In the Zodiac it goes from the beginning of Pisces to the end of Libra. If you want to try to extend the growing season you will need to keep three factors in mind: 1) intensity of light, 2) spectral content of light, and 3) duration of light. Of these three, the hardest to control is going to be duration of light. It isn't necessarily difficult, but takes a lot of energy, generally making it impractical. It may not yet be impossible through. Later we will discuss possible solutions to all three factors.

Your next biggest question will be the method of cultivation. You can plant your vegetables conventionally in dirt, or hydroponically. Hydroponics is the best choice. If done properly you can triple or more your yields. Hydroponics generally entails growing seeds in a medium such as pea gravel and flushing them with a liquid solution or liquid fertilizer. In addition to light, this is your other main concern.

It should be noted that CO² is a great concern in growing, and providing CO² can greatly increase yields, as plants use this to make oxygen. If you are building an attached greenhouse (rather than a stand-alone greenhouse), CO² is of less concern as you and your house will provide plenty. In a pit greenhouse, there are two ways offer an excellent yield of CO² : 1) composting manure, etc., and 2) raising an animal such as rabbits. The rabbits will do fine in the winter in a pit greenhouse when you use heat retention methods, and should fare well through the summer because the rabbits will have the plants for shade, plus they will enjoy the cooling effect of being underground (try giving them ice cubes on the hottest of the days). If you manage your rabbits well you'll have both a supply of CO² and food.

Methods of heat retention, to extend your growing season, include: double pane windows, black 55 gallon drums filled with water, and covering the greenhouse at night. Covering the greenhouse at night can be done as elaborately as using styrofoam insulation (encased in wood) panels, to using burlap sacks filled with leaves or wood chips. Also flagstone floors will absorb heat and radiate it at night.

Sources:

The Hydroponic Hot House by James B. DeKorne, Breakout Productions, Port Townsend, WA, 1992, ISBN 1-893626-26-1.



MINUTES

Church of the Spiral Tree

December 12, 2004

The meeting was called to order by Cathy Rankin at 1:45 pm, in Auburn, Alabama, with the following Directors and members present:

Cathy Rankin, President; Don Mikovitz, Vice-President; Linda Kerr, Secretary/Treasurer; Lee Mikovitz, Member-at-Large; and Craig Kerr.

New Business

We are going to have a raffle for the tables that Hans made and gave to us at FallFling. We could start it on-line, and finish it up at Moondance. Linda will set it up on the web page, and people can pay for them via PayPal, for \$2.00/ticket. We will announce it at the Yule ritual this weekend. Instead of traditional raffle tickets, we'll print special tickets on the computer. Linda will keep up with who pays, and type their names onto the ticket forms, and then print all these out, plus some blank ones, for Moondance. We'll have a record of who pays via PayPal, and PayPal will also send the buyer a receipt. We'll also email that person an acknowledgment. If they pay with a check or money order, we'll mail them a receipt. There are actually two raffles - one for the pentacle table by itself, and one for the set of 3 tables. Photos will be on the web site along with the raffle information.

Cathy wants to start a photo album on our web page; have photos of rituals, silent auction, etc. We could have photos of Sandi, Stormy, and others who have passed. We will just have to make sure that the people in the photos are okay with their picture being on-line. We'll ask Cliff if he'll handle this job, since he likes archiving things.

We want to have a blood drive next year. There was some discussion about where and when to have it. Either Auburn, Carrollton, or Columbus would be good, but there may be a better response in Auburn. Pagan Pride Day would be convenient, but not sure if there's enough traffic there to make it worthwhile. Possibly the mall or WalMart. We can ask Papa John's in Auburn to donate pizza for it.

Craig will email Chris to ask about the logo that he had designed. Chris moved away, and we haven't been able to get in touch with him since.

Cathy will get some small gifts, maybe \$1 each, to wrap and place under a tree at Waverly this Sunday for the Yule ritual. People will draw for them. We need to get an accurate head-count so she can get enough gifts.

We really need a PR person, to create flyers, and handle posting them in various locations. There was some discussion about who would be good for this. We need someone reliable and organized, and someone who is good at creating flyers on the computer. Kristi W. would be good, but has transportation issues. Christy S. would also be good.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.



Peace

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.

2005:

Imbolc: January 29, Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

Ostara: March 19, Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards..

May Day: April 30, Waverly, AL. We will hold our traditional May Day celebration, which does not include a ritual in the usual sense, but will be a lot of fun! Plan to arrive at our place in Waverly by 10:00 am, (morning!!) and bring some sort of fun costume to wear. There'll be a pot-luck and party that night at the same location. Please bring a tent to camp. Please RSVP, so we know how many ribbons to cut for the May pole. Cost: CST members are free; others \$2.00 to pay for ribbons. Most anybody is invited, but please ask first! We don't want spectators there, as this is one of our chances to get wild and crazy and go with the energies of the season. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

General Membership Meeting: Sunday, May 29, during Moondance, at Dragon Hills near Carrollton. Includes election of officers.

Summer Solstice: June 18, Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards.

Lammas: August 6, 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: Date TBA, Pagan Pride Day, including the Fall Equinox ritual, at the Arboretum, on the Auburn University campus, Auburn, AL. CST is co-coordinating with Pantheon. Time is from noon-7:00 pm, with the Equinox ritual starting at 5:00 pm Central time. Admission is two canned food items per person, to be donated to the East Alabama Food Bank.

Samhain: November 5, 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 17 OR 18, Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards.

Stone People Lodges (Salem, AL) - Part of Cedar Grove:

October 9 - Sweatlodge

November 20 - Sweatlodge

December 4 - Sweatlodge

Those wishing to attend please contact us for more info and to RSVP: <lightfoot1953@cs.com>; <ajagr1972@yahoo.com> ; 334-448-7296.

Upcoming Festivals (Not CST events):

Moondance	May 26-30, 2005	Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA
Earthdance	September, 2005	Kolomoki Mounds St. Pk., Blakely, GA
FallFling	October 6-9, 2005	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!).

Review guidelines: Please write whatever you think of the book; be honest. When sending in your review, please write neatly, and list the book title, author, publisher name, publisher location, and year of publication.

Asteroid Goddesses - by Demetra George & Douglas Bloch

Irish Witchcraft From an Irish Witch - by Lora O'Brien

Beginner's Guide for the Recently Deceased - by David Staume (Llewellyn Publications)

The Solitary Wiccan's Bible - by Gavin & Yvonne Frost

Book Reviews:

Wicca for Couples: Working Magick Together - by A.J. Drew, New Page Books, 2002

When I decided to review "Wicca for Couples." I expected the main focus of the book to be making magick together as a couple. Instead, what I found myself reading was a collection of tangential diatribes where the concept of couples making magick together was superseded by the author's attempt to admonish. And while I might agree with his position on some things, I found his choice of venue to be improper and ill-considered. Those who read it expecting, as I did, a book about couples making magick together, maybe left feeling disappointed and possibly even alienated. Which brings me to a dilemma —my recommendation.

I do not recommend this book as one for couples wanting to make magick together. However, I do recommend people read it for the issues raised within.

Reviewed by Timothy O'Brien

Spells for the Solitary Witch - by Eileen Holland, Weiser Books

A very informative book, and Eileen Holland does an excellent job at educating her audience about the foundations of spellcraft. The concepts are simple enough for a novice to grasp, and I can guarantee that even an experienced spellworker will learn something from this book.

What I liked the most about this book is the vast amount of spells/potions described; which are written in a very detailed, easy-to-read, recipe-type format. In addition, the spells aren't oriented towards any specific culture group or magical tradition, and are generic enough that anybody (even those that prefer group/ceremonial rituals) can incorporate them into their chosen path. Even if you don't like the spells given, Eileen Holland gives you enough tools to help you create your own.

There's nothing bad I can write about this book, because there is so much a person can get out of it. A must for any library.

Reviewed by James G. Harvey

On the Back Porch With Nion

Reflections on a Life's Journey

XYZs of Being a Student

(Editor's Note: This is an old article by Nion, one of our Board of Directors members, which was originally published in The Hazel Nut, Issue 18, December 1995/January 1996.)

Howdy ya'll, Nion here. I was trying to read and wade through some books that I have been accumulating on all aspects of paganism and various New Age-isms, and as I was sorting through this wealth of material, some of which was either contradictory or smacked of hidebound traditionalism or sectism, that I decided to pass on my perspective of trying to put it all in perspective.

Let me start by referring to an excellent article by Valraven (one of these hidebound traditionalists of the Craft who kind of reminds me of the nuns in the Catholic schools where I was taught in my informative years, who were always ready to smack you upside the head with a ruler if you didn't mind your p's and q's) in the Wiccan Works, a central Georgia newsletter, on the "ABCs of Finding a Teacher." Valraven's article is a very informative how-to for a student hunting a teacher; what to look for, some questions to ask, etc.

Finding a good ethical teacher of the Craft is kind of like the "Dating Game," or marriage, for that matter. Once you find each other, you need to ensure that you are mutually compatible and that both of your personalities are equally supportive of the other. If having found a teacher who is interested in passing on Craft knowledge for money or sex, then I personally question the "ethics" of that teacher, because to my mind, objectivity and the necessary strong true interpersonal spiritual relationships cannot take place when greed or lust is present. Now if two consenting adults want to have sex, or money for equipment and supplies is needed, that is another matter.

Don't get me wrong; I know there are a lot of self-taught pagans who didn't have the benefit of a mentor and teacher, or who choose NOT to have one, who only had the available books that are on the market and the personal drive and dedication to learn and succeed. I have nothing but respect and admiration for those soli-taires, but the thought of diving into murky waters without the benefit of a life preserver scares the hell out of me.

I am a born skeptic by nature -- I'm not quite sure if that is a good or bad thing. But my deepest gratitude goes

to Linda Kerr for taking the time and patience for a very frustrated ME during Moondance 94 (my first pagan festival exposure, in more ways than one, Ha!), when during her dowsing class she took me by the hand to the stone circle and helped me to see for myself that SOMETHING out there actually works. I've also actually done a Tarot reading that was so accurate (only once so far, but I'm still trying) that it scared me, and had rune-readings that came to pass (my poor athames). I guess what I'm trying to say is that if it wasn't for someone helping to guide me and show me, there are meaningful experiences that I probably wouldn't have had. Thanks, all.

Now, I have to truly admit that being kinda new to paganism, I've been an avid reader of everything I can get my hands on, of just about every diverse publication, article and book that is out there, and I want to explore everything and go in a zillion directions (Wow! talk about feeling like having multiple personalities sometimes), and do, feel and experience EVERYTHING, NOW. However, as several good friends and teachers have pointed out, you have to crawl before ya walk, and walk before ya run, and to take it a step at a time. I must reluctantly admit that I'm guilty of wanting to dive blindly into unknown waters over my head without first looking, but AM very fortunate in having a previous AND a present teacher who keeps me on a short leash and whacks my pee-pee (ouch! figuratively, of course, at least so far anyway) when I stray too far. And that is something every new student really needs so as to keep out of trouble and out of over-your-head water when you're just trying to learn how to swim.

Now, besides having a stern (but hopefully likable) taskmaster or mistress, who looks after your spiritual welfare and guides you in proper directions by example and teachings, YOU have to put forth the dedication, sweat-equity, time, mind and spirit to take what is presented, and USE it wisely under proper guidance. It's only YOU who can take what is learned and apply that knowledge for good or ill, but with a wise and ethical teacher, a dedication to the Craft, and the Goddess always in mind and heart, YOU can continue to grow spiritually and as a person.

Blessed Be.



The True Story of Christmas

by Ron F. White (Firedancer)

Most all humans live in a well-organized society, not knowing from where they came nor where they are going. Why? Because they have been told the same lie for so long it has become the truth. We Cherokee pagan spiritual practitioners have always tried to keep an open mind and must feel the truth from within our essence, not being guided or controlled by unconfirmed stories or facts. The confirmed facts can be found in most history books. If you are still not sure of the truth, you can also use what we call “pure inner logic.” This is expressed by the saying, “...if I can think, then I must exist!”

Once-upon-a-time there was an emperor of Rome who was called “Constantine the Great.” He claimed to be “god” of Rome from the year 306 to 337. He was having some troubled times, being at war, and finding it hard just to hold on to his vast Roman empire. The mercenaries (his army), were only interested in money and were known to sell their treachery to anyone with enough silver coins. Rome itself had become a treacherous place because of all the different cultures and classes of people who had been conquered by Rome. So, Constantine moved his headquarters to “Constantinople,” close to the sea of Marmara and the Black Sea, about the year 330. There he found that men would follow a belief, even die for that belief, but would not die for just silver coins. So Constantine created the “Roman Catholic Church,” calling the belief “Christianity,” and to motivate his people, he then used the story of this belief, and had his people write the bible. The word Christ means “all knowledge or enlightened.”

Constantine the Great used the Catholic Church’s religious leader, the pope, to control his army and bring in money, using faith, or the belief of unconfirmed facts. The Christian religion was written to control people with the idea of having “ever-lasting life” in a paradise very far, far away called Heaven. Constantine’s scribes used the man Jesus as the story of the god who came to earth but was killed on a cross.

What most educated people today don’t realize is that back then, people were without schools unless they were from wealthy families. People have been told over and over that the uneducated twelve followers of Jesus, known as the Apostles, wrote the bible. But with a little study of history, you can confirm that the bible was

written by scribes who worked for Constantine over 250 years after the man Jesus was placed on the Roman cross. This time was called the “dark ages,” as people were without schools, intellectually stagnated, living mostly in poverty, mostly ignorant, and living in a period of cultural decline. People in this state of affairs would find it very easy to follow a belief of spiritual immortality. So, using your pure inner logic, how could a big fisherman, Peter, or any of the uneducated peoples, have written one of the books of the bible? Remember, Moses had been educated by Egyptians, who were pagans, but Moses needed a way to move the people with his single-god visions; the same vision that Constantine used to control his people.

It is interesting to note that the Romans kept records of their trials and all official records with the same type of scribes Constantine used to write the bible. After all, it was from these records that we know Pontius Pilate had ruled to put the man Jesus on the Roman cross to die. Just think, what would Christianity be without the crucifixion as a symbol of the Christian god? What if Pontius Pilate had refused to put the man on the cross and no record was ever made of the issue? There would be no Christianity as we know it today.

The man Jesus was telling people, according to the court records, that he could heal people, but they must have “faith;” the same as our “faith healers” of today. It was and is illegal to tell the people you can do something that you in fact cannot do, so when the man Jesus could not do his magic healing act, the people pleaded to have him put on the Roman crucifixion cross to die.

Well, to further Constantine’s created religion, from Roman court records, we see he changed the pagan celebration of the rebirth of the sun to the birth of the “Son.” Winter starts on December 21st, which is the deepest, darkest, longest night of all, and marks the end of the solar year, and on December 25th is the birth of the “new” sun. This is not a belief of faith! It is a fact anyone can clearly see. Even the pagan custom of bringing an evergreen tree into the home and decorating it is still followed; this magical ritual ensures light and food throughout the year and the return of spring. We Cherokee look upon this time of the year as

...Continued on Page 11

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.

Alice Lynch: skyhy@charter.net.

Carla Ann Nelson: P.O. Box 155, Cottonton, AL 36851, email: <herblore@bellsouth.net>.

Ceirdre Branwen: I have been a practicing Scottish witch since 1997, my life studies include Scottish witchcraft and Native American practices. I study and observe the Fire Feasts and solstices with a wonderful group of people in Albany, GA. Slan beo. I can be contacted at <scottish.witch@earthlink.net>.

Firedancer: I am a Cherokee religious practitioner, writing a book called "The Vision Quest Phenomenon." Seeking Mother Earth practitioners who understand the inner origin from the enchanted looms of our mind. Well-educated from old Cherokee holy-man, and litigating pagan rights against Texas prison system. Write Ronald F. White (Firedancer) #368431, Estelle Unit, 246 FM 3478, Huntsville, TX 77340.

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 G. Harvey: Merry meet! 30 year old intelligent SWM incarcerated eclectic Pagan looking for fellow followers of a magical tradition for an exchange of ideas/knowledge as well as friendship. I have a lot to offer anybody willing to give me the chance. James G. Harvey #222760, P.O. Box 500 #5B-26T, Mitchells, VA 22729. Blessed be!

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, Okaloosa Correctional Institution, 3189 Little Silver Rd., Crestview, FL 32539.

Jay Lynch: dragonwolf@ancientmerchants.com.

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.

John Empey: Looking to connect with others who are seeking friendship. I am eager to learn more and to grow in the religion. Blessed Be! John Empey #22166, C.U.C.F., FIR C-03, P.O. Box 550, Gunnison, UT 84634-0550.

Ken Carnes: Seeking friends who believe in open minds/open hearts, love nature, breezes, mountain views, salt air, computers and gadgets, rock-n-roll. My friends are my greatest treasure. To my brothers: Strength; to my sisters: Courage! Ken Carnes, # 191999, CWC, P.O. Box 500, Mitchells, VA 22729.

Lady Bridget: Coven of Bridget Well; 517-541-1511; lady-bridget-82160@sbcglobal.net.

R. Butler: Male creator/inventor enjoys science. At solemnity with Mother Earth. Desires natural alternative medicine and machines that are environmentally friendly. Ste. 280-344, Mitchells, VA 22729-0500.

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.

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@mindspring.com>, 334-826-3953.

Robert Batts: Single male very interested in a new way of thinking in terms of revering Mother Earth and the Pagan community. I am very interested in meeting a male or female that would be a friend in assisting me in my learning process. Hope to hear from you soon! Robert Batts III #216382, P.O. Box 500, 6B 3TOP, Mitchells, VA 22729-0500.

Robert Beckeor: I'm new at this. You are water and I'm a sponge. Fill me up with your knowledge. I'm thirsty. Robert Beckeor #1209446, Rt. 2 Box 500, Teague, TX 75860.

Samara: <kvsmith@farmerstel.com>.

Scott Bingham: 34 year old new member, very interested in learning. Scott Bingham, #26622, C.U.C.F., P.O. Box 550, Gunnison, UT, 84634.

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.

Stephen "Tyernan WaterOak": An intuitive medium and natural healer. Within his Eclectic Witch path, he does tarot reading, Rootwork, Chakra balancing, crystal healing, energy work, and Reiki. Stephen owns Bio-Buzz Botanica, a metaphysical supply and service oriented business. In ordainment, he offers legal communions, handfastings, handpartings, wiccanings, and requiems (passing on rites). At the store and across the US, Stephen and his partner Siryn offer ongoing classes, workshops, and various teachings. The store is also the home of Albany Pagans bi-weekly discussion group and P.A.T.H.S. Center, a non-profit organization for those of non-mainstream belief systems, which has its own private temple and library. Stephen A. Bradford a/k/a Tyernan WaterOak, 612 N. Slappey Blvd., Albany, GA 31701, 229-438-5878, email: tyernan2003@yahoo.com.

Siryn Dolphinsong: An intuitive reader who does Chirognomy and is a Chiromantist. She is also a healer who uses natural stone heat therapy, crystal healing, pendulum centering, grounding and balancing along with some energy work. As a returning spirit, she also helps with Past life regression. Her work as a minister includes offering legal communions, Croning/Sagehood, handfastings, handpartings, wiccanings, and requiems (passing on rites). Born into a Witch family, Siryn does in-depth classes, workshops, and seminars at their store Bio-Buzz Botanica as well as traveling as guest speakers across the US along with her partner Stephen. Join albanypagans@yahoogroups.com to receive updates on their next traveling seminar 'True Witchcraft', which will begin Fall '04 in Florida. Siryn Dolphinsong, 612 N. Slappey Blvd., Albany, GA 31701, 229-438-5878, email: bretonwitch@yahoo.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.

The True Story of Christmas... continued from page 9

Mother Earth cleaning out the dying and recycling life's forces back into Herself to be reborn once again come spring.

Constantine used the birth of the sun to claim that the man Jesus was born on December 25th and called it birth of the "Son," using the same pagan rituals. The lie has kept being told over and over and history will tell you that day one of the old Roman calendar was the founding of the city of Rome. It was Constantine who changed the calendar system to "before Christ" and "after the birth of Christ." It's a well known fact that no one knows for sure when Jesus was actually born, but we do know he was born 8 to 4 years before "day one" of Constantine's calendar and died about 29 years later on a cross for lying to the people.

Machiavelli wrote the book about political deceitfulness and the use of force to control the people. The book was called "The Prince," and Constantine's lies worked the same way as the ideas expressed in that book. Constantine also told his people to follow certain beliefs, and used force to make sure they did.

Once again, history tells of possibly about nine million people, mostly pagans, who were burned in the Christian inquisition, with the courts forcing the Christian lies on people. This reign of terror was partly so the churches could confiscate pagans and wealthy people's property, and also helped confirm the religious lie to control the people.

Today most people don't know that the pagan festival of Yule was the only way Christianity could enter the mainstream of people's religious beliefs.

Many lies have been told to lazy people who will not take the time to learn from where they came nor where they are going... so, keep your Yule beliefs and enjoy the truth of why we pagans celebrate the rebirth of our sun. Only believe what your "pure inner logic" tells you, and know that it is our Creator that gently holds Mother Earth and Father Sun in the vastness of the cosmos. I have found many sacred secrets by my "vision questing" and hope to share with anyone who will allow their "pure inner logic" to open their mind.



Notices:

Prison Writing Program

A program for people in prison who like to write; be it fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, memoirs, jokes, etc. They also have a listing for Pen Pals, books for writers, a directory of small magazines that *pay* for inmate writings, a list of book programs for prisoners that give free books to all that are in a cage, info on opportunities for education, and a punctuation guide. This is all FREE to inmates. Write them and ask for "Handbook for Writers in Prison."

Prison Writing Program
PEN American Center
568 Broadway, Suite 401
New York, NY 10012-3225

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.

Notices (continued):

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.greanpeaceusa.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.

Writer Seeking Memories

Dear American Pagan Community:

I am an American Indian researching history topics; I plan on developing into articles and books. I hope to make contact with Pagan persons (including Elders) who have memories to share. Two topics are on WWII history and the respondee need not have been "out" about his or her beliefs during the war years. I will use a pseudonym if someone wants one. Any anecdote or story, no matter how brief is sought.

Seeking anyone who experienced unusual phenomena or strange happenings during the war. Includes: hauntings, ghost tanks or ships, premonitions, good luck charms, psychic bonds between relatives or buddies, visits to fortune tellers, seances, out of body (near death) experiences, foo fighter sightings, strange animals or sea creatures, vampirism, lycanthropy, Halloween or other Pagan holiday observances, telekinesis, encountering magical beings/creatures, extraordinary coincidences, or any event a person deems to be supernatural or paranormal during the war. Especially, interested in any person (solo) or covens who did spells of protection around individuals, cities or nations.

Seeking any patriotic Pagan who served in the military, Civil Air Patrol, Red Cross, USO, merchant marine, civil defense or held a war industry job during WWII.

For a more contemporary topic, I am researching gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and 2-spirited people's experience with the supernatural and paranormal. If any GLBT2S person can relate experiences like those mentioned in the previous topic, contact me. I am also, interested in any information on this topic as it relates to persons of the past. Sometimes persons are aware of an ancestor's sexuality. Any lesbian distant cousin who had premonitions in the 1800s? What of a bisexual grand uncle who believed he saw a ghost in the 1920s? Contemporary or historic information is sought.

I am researching women's contribution to medicine, natural history, conservation and related fields. As many Pagans have matriarchal influences, I want to know of women who had knowledge of botany, herbalism, midwifery, etc. Does anyone know of women involved in nature preservation, bird watching, scientific illustration, hawking, etc? Women could have been from any century and even brief references are sought. Especially, wanting to hear from Pagans who have pursued natural history or science careers, because a female ancestor or mentor was interested in such fields.

I also, seek any freely donated materials (books, articles, photographs) on paranormal topics for a developing archive. Any freely given responses or donations are appreciated.

Robert J. Clark
PO Box 685
Collinsville, Illinois 6223

Important Dates

Board of Directors' Meetings:

January 29, 2005, Auburn, AL; April 30, 2005, Auburn, AL

Annual Meetings of the General Membership:

May 29, 2005, Moondance, Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA (includes election of officers)

Dates of Sabbats for 2005 (not ritual dates):

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

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED