

THE TEMPLE BELL

Official newsletter of the Temple of Witchcraft

Quarterly

Imbolc 2013

From the Editor...

"Let us love winter, for it is the spring of genius."

— Pietro Aretino

I'm a Virgo. A *very* Virgo Virgo (it's my Sun and Moon sign, also my Mercury and three other planets, all of them clustered in my Ninth House, the house of Mental Exploration). We Virgos occupy paradoxical territory. On the one hand, we represent the energy of the Virgin, the one who is sovereign unto herself. On the other hand, Virgos are the sign of service. I have often wondered how this came to be. Why is Virgo — the most solitary-natured of the signs — the sign of helping and community?

I decided to take my question to Virgo herself, working a bit of stellar magic with the stars in her constellation. Astro-nomically speaking, a constellation isn't really a group — the individual stars making up these images in the sky are actually millions of miles apart. And yet they are connected when observed from Planet Earth, a singular confluence of time and place and perspective. I make Virgo — and so do you — in our separate yet connected acts of vision and naming.

That was my first clue to understanding the conflicting nature of service — singular, yet collective. Our individual actions do not affect only ourselves — they connect us one to



Nurture - by Debo

another, creating a web that is greater and stronger than the sum of our individual parts. But it all begins with the individual action, the seed. No surprise that Virgo's most conspicuous star is Spica, which means "ear of wheat," that symbol of potential and sustenance.

It's one of those spiritual paradoxes — each seed I plant, every act of service I offer, ends up strengthening my own individual self. But service must come from joy, not drudgery. It must come from my natural talents. It must, to borrow Joseph Campbell's exquisite phrase, "follow my bliss." Virgo solved my riddle by showing me that the highest service — that which connects my will to the Highest Will — doesn't deplete, but instead enriches. That every seed we plant in the fertile ground of community eventually flourishes into fruit and blossom, renewing us and renewing the cycle.

And so we come to Imbolc — the Sabbat of darkness and seeds and faith. A time to look deep within and find the tiny kernel that we alone can offer and then plant it in the good, rich ground of our community, knowing it will eventually grow toward the strengthening light.

This quarter's newsletter explores service in its many phases and forms, beginning with Steve Kenson in a Founders' Corner that invites you to find your place among the Temple's volunteers. Volunteer Coordinator Kriya Kinai shares a personal story of presence and action that will resonate with anyone who worries they don't have enough time or skill to make a difference. SilverMoone introduces the Stitch n' Witch, a ministry of textile magick, while Kim Vale reminds us that

service extends beyond the human sphere and includes our animal companions too. Our crystal columnist Joy Costanza and plant columnist Irma Hacket introduce Fluorite and Rose, and Howling Hill asks if you might be an activist and not know it. Raye Snover profiles renowned Pagan priestess and activist Selena Fox as Fox recounts her historic achievements in equal rights for all, especially those who follow a Pagan path. And since this is the season of Brigid — the Irish Goddess of Healing, Smithcraft, and Poetry—you'll find lovely inspirational verse and evocations from Colleen Corcoran.

Enjoy this offering of literary service from your fellow Temple members, and have a blessed and inspiring Inbolc.

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Stitch n' Witch: Shawl Ministry

By SilverMoone

In 2012 I wanted to take my love of knitting and gather other Witches to “stitch and witch” together, where we could enjoy our common love of crafting with added elements of our spirituality to enhance our creations. In doing this it would allow us to awaken to the spirits of the fiber, align with the magickal properties of what we were creating, and weave the web, in all forms it needed and wanted to take.

We stitched projects for ourselves (items such as altar clothes, divination bags, holiday gifts) and for charity as a way to give back to the community. We made baby hats, booties and toys for local hospitals, knitted and crocheted comfort blankets for animal shelters. We lovingly stitched teddy bears for children in rehabilitation centers, and we completed our charity work for the year making some shawls for the Temple's Rites of Passage project.

After a year of alternating our projects, I felt the call to follow the vision of creating a Shawl Ministry. What exactly is a Shawl Ministry? It is a prayerful practice and service of weaving the threads of life together with the intention that the recipient may be held in comfort, healing and love. It is not simply crafting for crafting's sake. It is a way to meld art and magick together, to create and pray, to form and intend—to embody divinity within and without. Here we are truly weaving the web of life, which we are all a part of. In its creation, the comfort we share we embrace within ourselves. The healing we pour into the fiber, we receive as well, and the love we hold in its entirety is felt deep within our souls.

I've always felt called to Service, even as a child. It has called to me in various forms all leading back to the Divine, and one of those forms was as a creatrix, just like the generations of women in my family who came before me. They

were healers and knitters, midwives and knitters, artists and knitters—We all knit, from one generation to another. Much of it at the time was a service to our families, as a necessity to keep them warm and safe from the brutal country cold winds, but it was also a meditative practice of attuning with the mother who stitched before them. It was interconnected, and each generation initiated another person into this sacred art. I was initiated by my aunt first, in the art of crochet (which still tangles me up at times) and then knitting by my grandmother and mother. When I surpassed the first level of initiation (teeth clenching, eyes widening, breath withholding) I found the peace in this craft. In that peace, I wanted to share it with others somehow.

Why a Shawl Ministry? We all have those days—days where life feels challenging and difficult, where we feel pain or sadness, where we become ill and our health isn't as vital as before, where we lose someone, where we sometimes feel lost ourselves, where we celebrate new life, where we celebrate new love, where we celebrate our divinity. Whatever “those” days are, we've each had them, or we have held the space for someone else who has had them. I wanted to honor the celebrations as well as hold the sacredness for life's transitions. I wanted others to know that they were being cheered on, or that they weren't alone in the cycles life had taken them through. I wanted someone to know that they could be held and loved, through their greatness, and through their challenges. That is why I wanted to devote this shifting Stitch n' Witch to a Shawl Ministry. The calling became more urgent after a couple of our distant members had crossed the veil (or their loved ones had) and they weren't in our physical location to wrap our arms around them. While we prayed, sent healing and lit a candle for them, I thought how wonderful it would have been to be able to send over a prayer shawl, to have something tangible to wrap around them that was the embrace from their community.

What is so beautiful about the Shawl Ministry is that it crosses and weaves into many of the other ministries within the Temple of Witchcraft: in Leo as we connect with the Artisan, in Virgo for healing, in Scorpio for bereavement, in Capricorn for Rites of Passage, in Sagittarius for ordination, in Cancer for rites of the Women's Mysteries, and so much more. It is an opportunity to connect our members, near and far, to our growing community and organization. Our web is truly larger and greater than we realize, and this is just one way to thread those pieces together.

The shawl, whether it's woven through thread or sewn with other fibers, is a beloved connection to the Great Mother. It is her arms we feel wrapped around us when we are rejoicing or when we are mourning, when we have succeeded or when our knees have been scraped. The shawl is the symbolic wrapping of the loving Mother's arms around her children, and it is a healing initiation in its own way.

Since 2012 we have had some distant members keep up with our themes on the Temple's Facebook page, stitching and witching alongside of our projects, and connecting with us in spirit. If you feel called to be part of the Stich n' Witch Shawl Ministry, I encourage you to contribute shawls and mail them to us, like one of our distant members recently did. We will have them charged and blessed at the office ready for distribution to those in need, in our community and beyond. This allows us to also network with others and embody the beauty of giving.

If you're not a knitter or crocheter and still would like to be part of this ministry, you can always mail us new yarn that speaks to you and tell us how you would like us to create it on your behalf—do you want it to hold the energies of comfort, for a special Rite of Passage, for those in grief, or for healing on all levels? We could always use more new yarn in various colors and soft textures to wrap around those in need. Or if you are someone who could benefit from a prayer shawl, please contact me. While we want to connect with those in need, we also want our community to feel empowered to ask for what they need. That's what this ministry is all about: support, prayer, and love for the highest good.

May you feel the weaving of the Great Mother as she spins her magical thread, connecting us all as her divine children.

SilverMoone is a Shamanic Buddhist Witch, Clinical Hypnotherapist, priestess, teacher, healer, writer, seeker... Her spiritual journey has taken her to the deepest layers of Self, where the heart of her personal practice is devotion. Her vocation has led her to embracing the teachings of Womyn's Empowerment and Mysteries and facilitating the journey of re-birthing into Spirit. She can be reached at silver@templeofwitchcraft.org.



Moving Forward with Selena Fox

By Raye Snover

One can barely pick up anything on Pagan activism without seeing Selena Fox's name. The founder of Circle Sanctuary, Lady Liberty League, and Circle Cemetery, the first Green cemetery in Wisconsin, the sixty-three-year-old Fox has been an activist for forty-five years. Working tirelessly for "most of her adult life," Fox has fought for the environment and women's rights, though she is predominately known for her work on behalf of Pagan rights. The Temple Bell was honored to have a lengthy conversation about activism and service with Selena from her Wisconsin forest home.

Temple Bell: How did you come to Paganism?

Selena Fox: Ever since I was a very young child, I have had a strong affinity for communing with Nature — this is foundational for the Paganism I practice today. I have had mystical experiences as part of my Nature communion work throughout my life. It wasn't until I was a teenager that I started encountering and understanding differences in forms of beliefs and religious identifications. As a teenager I started calling myself a Pantheist because I became aware that being a Southern Baptist was not meeting my spiritual needs and that I needed to have a form of spiritual expression that really fit who I was evolving to be.

I became aware of Paganism as I was growing up through my studies of the Classics, mythology, and Latin as a language. As I read old myths in the original Latin and as I did translations into English, I felt a deep resonance and affinity with the Ancient Ones. Later, as I was in college, in addition to studying psychology as my major, I continued my study of Classics and ancient Greek and Roman civilizations. I explored not only those cultures, but deepened my understanding of those Pagan peoples, their worldviews and religious frameworks.

I began calling myself a Pagan in the Spring of 1971. This resulted from my facilitating my first public ceremony during my senior year at the College of William and Mary in Virginia. As part of my work as President of the Eta Sigma Phi, the Classics Honor Society on campus, I decided to create an experiential learning opportunity. With the full cooperation and support from the professors of the Classics Department, I created and led a Rite of Spring, inspired by old Greek and Roman traditions. Dressed in tunics, togas, and other Greco-Roman styled garb, we processed to a large

green space on campus and welcomed in the Spring by invoking Dionysus and Mother Earth using ancient chants. As I called upon these ancient Divinities through my role as priestess of the ritual, I spiritually connected with them in powerful ways. What started out as a fun, educational exercise, ended up changing me and my life. I found my spiritual home in Nature religion rooted in antiquity.

Since that time, my Pagan spiritual journey has evolved through my contact with Pagans of many different paths and traditions, including not only those practicing contemporary Paganism but also those whose Paganism is rooted in folk-



ways survivals and revivals.

TB: It would have been easy to become solitary or have a small coven. How did you morph into an activist?

SF: During my teenage years and my twenties, I was very involved in social change movements of the 1960s and 1970s. I worked for equal rights for women and men. I also was involved in the quest for racial equality in the U.S. and around the world as well as in the quest for world peace and non-violent approaches to conflict resolution. And I was involved in environmental work and social justice endeavors. I started applying some of my activist approaches and under-

standings about working for a better world to my Pagan experience.

I continued doing personal solitary practice in addition to facilitating small group practice as I was growing and developing as a Pagan priestess in the 1970s. And, at Samhain 1974, I expanded my work by founding Circle, also known today as Circle Sanctuary, as a way of bringing Pagans of many paths and places together to connect with each other for support, knowledge, and celebration of the cycles of sun, moon, and life.

Through speaking travels and through the growing Circle Network, I learned that some Pagans in various parts of the U.S. and elsewhere were not getting equal rights, and I learned that some Pagans were keeping their spiritual identity private because of concerns of being harassed and discriminated against. I began applying my skills as a social change activist to Pagan rights endeavors.

At Samhain 1978, I, assisted by others, incorporated Circle as a nonprofit religious organization in Wisconsin and then began the process for registering our church federally. In 1980, Circle obtained federal 501(c)(3) church status. I guided this governmental interface process not only to help Circle in its growth, but also to help the Craft and Paganism as a whole.

There were very few Witchcraft, Wiccan, and Pagan groups at that time that were on the institutional path within the larger society. I realized that most groups did not want to take this approach, but I thought that there was a need for this, and that is how I came to move in that direction.

This approach soon proved useful in Pagan Rights work. A few months after we got church status federally, I was asked to do a legal Pagan wedding in a Wisconsin state prison. The couple wanted to use the prison chapel for the ceremony. Because Circle was legally established as a church in Wisconsin and also federally recognized, and I was an ordained minister through Circle, I was able to meet with officials, overcome concerns, and do the ceremony in the chapel. The Pagan handfasting I did was the first non-Christian ceremony held in the chapel. It also was the first Pagan wedding done in a correctional institution in Wisconsin. This began my journey in working for equal rights for Pagans in correctional systems not only in Wisconsin but also across the nation. I was one of the first Pagan ministers to do Pagan prison ministry and in the 1990s became an advisor on Pagan religious diversity federally. Being part of a legally established and recognized Pagan church structure not only helped with this but [with] other Pagan Rights work I have done through the years.

TB: How did Circle come into being?

SF: I gave birth to Circle in 1974. The name Circle, its logo of twelve circles around a circle within a circle, and its focus of gathering Pagans of many paths and places together came to me in a vision in a meditative ritual I did as I celebrated my 25th birthday and Samhain that year. I envisioned having a land-based center that could bring Pagans and Pagan-spirited people of many different paths together to build community and to have mutual support. This was the beginning of Circle, now also known as Circle Sanctuary.

At Yule 1974, Circle had its first event, a small gathering held in my home in Madison, Wisconsin. We celebrated the Winter Solstice with a feast and a social celebration. Taking part were Pagans from the US, England, and Scotland.

In May 1975, Circle had its first rural headquarters at a farmhouse we rented near Sun Prairie, Wisconsin. This gave us the opportunity to have a center in a rural area with natural beauty and where Pagans could practice Nature religion outside under the open sky. This first "Circle Farm" became Circle headquarters for four years.

1979 was a transformative year for Circle and for Paganism as a whole. This was the year that we published the first edition of the Circle Guide to Wiccan and Pagan Resources. In this pre-public Internet era, this in-print directory made it possible for hundreds of Pagans of different traditions and paths to learn about each other and connect.

Also that year, we ended up doing some very public education about Paganism as a result of Time Magazine showing up at a Pagan gathering we were helping with. Although I and others connected with Circle did not want and were not seeking that publicity, we ended up being among those featured in the article that appeared on the Religion page of the August 6, 1979 issue of *TIME* Magazine. The coverage was good, but it set a lot of change in motion.

Circle's land project that we were hoping to manifest within a twenty-year period of time needed to happen sooner. While the publicity that came out in *TIME* and other national and international articles in other media sources that followed helped improve understanding about contemporary Paganism, it also brought some prejudices out among some locals which led us to being evicted from our rented farmhouse in November of 1979 because of our religion.

As a result of being driven out of our first rural rented home, we started raising funds to purchase land and to have a center. In addition to doing fundraising, we started looking for suitable property. In 1983, we found a site, began purchasing it, and founded Circle Sanctuary Nature Preserve, a 200-acre piece of land about 30 miles west of Madison, Wisconsin. We were glad to at last have a place where we could put down roots for our center.

However, within a few months of purchasing the land, some local people prejudiced against our religion tried to get us run out of the area using zoning laws. We fought a four-year zoning battle for the right to use our land for spiritual purposes. During this time, we went to many meetings, worked with multiple attorneys, did public education through media, and received support from Pagans and those of many religions and beliefs across the nation and in other countries.

Part of the reason our zoning case intensified resulted from my standing up for Pagan rights and helping to lead a campaign that defeated federal anti-Wiccan legislation. In



September 1985, a U.S. Senator from North Carolina managed to get the entire US Senate by voice vote to attach an anti-Witchcraft/anti-Wiccan amendment to the postal appropriations bill. This unconstitutional amendment would have taken away federal tax-exempt status from Wiccan churches and legislated Pagan inequality. It was in danger of becoming law as it moved to a Congressional Joint Conference Committee for consideration.

My activism on behalf of Pagan rights intensified. I wrote up an action alert, which we sent out in that pre-email era by postal mail to more than 5000 Pagans who were part of Circle Network. In addition, I networked by phone with Pagan leaders and others of many paths to further spread the word about the problematic legislation and the need to contact US Senators and US Representatives in Congress and urge them to defeat it. Within one month's time, it was defeated in the Joint Conference Committee. Paganism had its first federal Pagan rights victory in the USA.

TB: How did the Lady Liberty League form?

SF: Lady Liberty League, initially called the Pagan Strength Web, emerged from the networking and coalition building that defeated the anti-Wiccan federal legislation in 1985 in the USA. As a result of that success, we continued to work with those who had come together to stand up for Pagan rights and started helping Pagan individuals and groups with other issues in various places.

Among the first of those we assisted was Jamie Dodge, who was fired in 1987 because she was a Wiccan. She worked for a battered women's shelter run by the Salvation Army in Pascagoula, Mississippi. Jamie was following the common practice at the shelter that people could do personal

copying on the copy machine if individuals covered the costs of the copies. She was running off a Full Moon Ritual and the first couple of pages she copied did not copy well and she discarded those pages. Her supervisor saw the discarded Full Moon Ritual pages and then questioned her about her religious orientation. She said that she was Wiccan, and she was immediately fired from her job and then was harassed at her home. People drove by her house and jeered at her. I was among those helping Jamie by giving her counseling support and aid in considering options. Jamie decided she would challenge the Salvation Army in federal court. Although Jamie was primarily a solitary Wiccan practitioner, she was part of Circle Sanctuary's Circle Network, and because we were recognized federally as a church and I was giving her spiritual support as a minister,

this helped her quest for justice in court and in 1988, she won.

Lady Liberty League has continued to help Pagans from many places and paths on civil rights issues and we also do public education work to help dispel misconceptions that can lead to discrimination.

TB: How do you pick which issues to go with? I'm sure you have lots of requests.

SF: Lady Liberty League does get many requests for help. We are in the process of restructuring in order to get more people involved to assist in responding to requests. As with some other civil rights organizations that focus on First Amendment issues, we have some criteria that we use as we consider which situations to assist. First of all, we need those seeking our help to accurately and thoroughly document what has happened and to send that information to us. We need to have details about what has happened, what one has done in response to whatever discrimination or other problems that have happened, and what one is looking for in the way of help. We are a referral and support network rather

than a legal aid society. Once we get information about a situation and consider it, we make a determination whether or not there is anyone within our network who may be able to work with the person or the group that is seeking help. We generally follow up the written information that is submitted to us with phone calls and email correspondence, and sometimes, when feasible, with face-to-face support.

We presently have several dozen requests for help that we are reviewing and working with. Every case is different. Sometimes we're working with people on religious accommodation issues; sometimes it is child custody or job discrimination. We've had a number of recent cases pertaining to discrimination in public school systems, and we formed a Lady Liberty League Education Task Force to assist. There certainly is a need to get even more people involved in this work, and I really appreciate this opportunity to talk about some of the things we've done and are doing. Those interested in volunteering help for Lady Liberty League should contact us: Liberty@circlesanctuary.org.

TB: Do you ever get discouraged? Some of your battles have been so long, like the battle to get the pentagram on a military headstone.

SF: Pagan rights work certainly can be challenging, tedious, unpredictable, tiresome, stressful, and labor intensive. It took me 14 years of negotiations and other administrative efforts to finally get a Tarot deck permitted as a religious item for Pagans in Wisconsin prisons. Circle Sanctuary's zoning battle lasted 4 years. The Veteran Pentacle Quest took nearly 10 years, and I spent most of its final two years, 2006 and 2007, working on it day and night. But I was willing to do that type of service and sacrifice because I realized that it needed to be done. It certainly was a long, hard, but fortunately successful journey.

I'm continuing to work on a quest that has been now the longest quest for Pagan rights that I've been involved in — that is the quest to have added to the U.S. Military a military chaplain trained and endorsed by a Pagan religious organization. I began working on this quest 18 years ago when I started training our first Circle Sanctuary minister specializing in US Military Chaplaincy.

In November 1998, Circle Sanctuary became the first Pagan church to apply for US Department of Defense Ecclesiastical Endorsing Organization status and put forth a candidate for US Military Chaplain. Although we received full approval of the Armed Forces Chaplains Board at the Pentagon and its subcommittee, and although all the top attorneys for each branch of the US military supported approval of our application, the US Secretary of Defense at the time would not do the final signature. Circle Sanctuary's application was kept in bureaucratic limbo — not approved but not rejected — a tactic also used by the US Department

of Veterans Affairs for nine years to prevent the authorization of the pentacle for veteran grave markers. In both cases, anti-Wiccan prejudice among elected and appointed government officials was at work. Fortunately, the quest to get the VA to authorize the pentacle for inclusion on veteran grave markers was finally won in 2007. We had to seek justice on that issue in federal court and are glad that the VA finally settled with us and approved the symbol. There are now more than 100 VA-issued pentacle markers in public and private cemeteries across the USA, including 8 at Circle Cemetery at our headquarters at Circle Sanctuary Nature Preserve near Barneveld, Wisconsin.

There certainly have been some long drawn out battles, but part of why I continue to do this work is there have been successes. These Pagan rights cases are opportunities for individuals, groups and networks from many different Craft and other Pagan paths to come together. I see that as a really positive thing. I really hope I live to see the day when there really isn't a need to have so much attention put into countering discrimination in society and we truly have Liberty and Justice for all in the United States. I hope Pagan rights and the ability to freely practice our religion can happen not only across the USA but also around the globe

TB: What advice would you give a budding activist?

SF: Here are some pointers:

- (1) Have a good strategy in place for self-care, spiritual development, and stress management, such as doing a daily spiritual centering practice. Make time to recharge and reflect.
- (2) Develop your intuition.
- (3) Connect with other people who are doing activist work for friendship and mutual support.
- (4) Get experience — volunteer to assist with some projects and cases.
- (5) Develop skills in note taking and record keeping. Have a good way of writing down and keeping track of information, experiences, and ideas, plus names and contact information for people that you are working with.
- (6) Develop public speaking, public writing, and public relations skills.
- (7) Learn the importance of silence, behind the scenes negotiation, and timing.
- (8) Develop skills in interfaith networking and diplomacy.
- (9) Keep learning.

Each year, Circle Sanctuary sponsors the Pagan Leadership Institute during its weeklong celebration of Summer Solstice, the Pagan Spirit Gathering. There are a variety of workshops and other training available that can be helpful for budding activists.

TB: How do you blend your activism with your personal life?

SF: Part of my personal life involves having some quiet time every day during which I connect with the Divine and do reflection. Even when I am deeply immersed in working on a Pagan rights case or other endeavor, I make time to recharge.

One of the shrines that I have in my home is for the Goddess Liberty, known as Libertas in ancient Pagan Rome and as Lady Liberty in America. I work with the Goddess Liberty as part of my Pagan rights work — and I work with Her also for personal growth and development.

TB: Do you notice that some people don't make it as activists because they don't want to do the nitty gritty work of activism?

SF: Those who aspire to be effective social change activists need to work hard and to do as much as possible to achieve success. Activist work should be done well or not at all. It takes serious thought and commitment.

Whether one decides to be an activist or not is part of one's life journey, something that is as important as for all citizens living in a democratically structured society to vote — and to be informed about candidates and issues in preparation for voting.

TB: What do you think is the most important thing that will move forward Pagan civil rights?

SF: Here's my threefold answer: (1) Be an informed voter, (2) Take action when you see Pagan rights violated — let others know and collaborate on effective interventions, and (3) Support others who are working for Pagan rights.



In addition, something that can help is to monitor media reports about Paganism, and when necessary, address misconceptions by posting concise, respectful, thoughtful comments at media sites on the internet. When articles are accurate and positive, post appreciative comments. Well-written, thoughtful communications from Pagans about Paganism can help move public perception of Pagans and Pagan voices forward into something that gets respect rather than more ridicule.

In Pagan rights activism, it is essential that we think through strategy rather than emotionally react. Also, be aware that sometimes the most effective activism is that which is done quietly — through direct, respectful person-to-person communications, dialogue, and negotiation. Being loud and visible can be effective in some situations, but it is best to explore quieter approaches first.

Doing centering and having quiet time each day to renew oneself and be in touch with the sacred is vitally important for activists for Pagan rights. We need to be able to go about our activism, manage the range of emotions that can happen when we encounter discrimination and misconceptions and come from a deeper place of understanding and healing as part of our work.

TB: Aside from getting a Pagan as a US Military chaplain, what else is the Lady Liberty League and Circle Sanctuary working on?

SF: We are helping with several cases involving job discrimination. In addition, we are working on several public education issues as well as religious accommodation in various institutions.

TB: In all your years of activism, what is your proudest accomplishment?

SF: It is difficult to pick just one. Several things come to mind.

Founding Circle Cemetery in 1995 is one of them. In addition to being the first Green Cemetery in Wisconsin, it is one of the first in the USA. It is contributing to the Greening of the End of Life.

Other accomplishments have been in the interfaith realm and include me being the first Pagan minister invited to do a public prayer to open a session of the Wisconsin legislature. I accepted the invitation and did the prayer that opened the October 27, 2009 session of the Wisconsin State Assembly. I had just turned 60 years old and that was Circle's 35th birthday.

Being able to stand in the Wisconsin State Assembly hall and do chaplaincy duties for the day was an important step not only for me in my priestess life but for Paganism in society. I was not only invited to do the opening prayer but the Assembly Speaker invited me to be there to provide spiritual support for the families who happened to be at that particular session whose sons had been killed in war and were being honored for their service and sacrifice. I was able to provide support to military families and their grieving process.

Probably the Pagan rights achievement I am most widely known for among Pagans is helping to finally get the pentacle authorized for inclusion on veteran grave markers issued by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Pretty much for most of my adult life I've worked to bring about a better society — one that upholds the basic principles upon which America was founded.

I think part of my activism is ancestral. My ancestors were part of the founding and birthing of America, including one who served in the first Continental Congress and patriots who served in the Revolutionary War. In addition, I have had various ancestors in public service, both elected officials as well as civil servants, for generations on both sides of my family. I myself have served and continue to serve interfacing with federal, state, and local government officials and agencies on a variety of issues and subject areas. Locally, I was the chair of the Township's Land Use Planning committee that did advising on natural and cultural resources, and prior to that, assisted Township officials in developing its recycling plan.

On the state level, for the past twelve years, I have served on the Religious Practices Advisory Committee to the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. On the federal level I have done diversity education and advising for the

US Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Prisons for more than twenty years, and in 1984, I've helped update the Wiccan section in the US Army Chaplain's handbook at the Pentagon.

Activism in the form of active participation in society is something that everybody can do in some way. You don't have to be marching in the streets for a cause or serving on a government committee to participate. Being an informed voter is something that every citizen can and should do.

Having a free society is not something that automatically happens. We need to be vigilant in guarding the freedoms upon which our society was founded, and we need to work each in our own way and together with others to move our society and world forward.

TB: Any final things that you would like to add?

SF: I'm really grateful for the work The Temple of Witchcraft is doing, and I wish you all well in all your endeavors!

More information about Selena Fox and her work:

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Silent Voices

By Kim Vale

Why am I here? I try to think, but my pondering is constantly interrupted by the humming of the overhead fluorescent lights—the humming a constant drill in my head. The sensation may have a benefit though; it interrupts my focus on the cold, even if it doesn't interrupt the shivering, little involuntary movements that fuel a desire for respite from the frigid New Hampshire winters. The once blue blanket I wrap around my body is far too threadbare to provide any real insulation. It is a meager defense from the concrete floor, chilled by winter winds, assailing my core temperature. I'm sure the drafts would find another way inside, even if the steel door leading outside lacked the half-inch gap.

That steel door—locked, staring at me, mocking me with my inability to pass it on my own free will. The prison gate that gives me glimpses of sunlight and trees whenever it opens, glimpses of freedom. I want the sunlight so bad. Yet I am here in the cold with crummy fluorescent lighting. Being kept prisoner, not by desire for the isolation and ordeal, but by the padlocked chain-link door that is the entrance to my cell—a four foot by seven foot rectangular hell.

Why am I here? How long have I been here? No clock hangs on the wall outside my prison. I try to mark the passage of time by the routine of my captors. Twice a day a meager portion of dried-out food is slid under the door. Twice a day I'm allowed into the yard, though I'm still caged in on all four sides and my feet tread on gravel. For a few minutes I am able to blink my eyes and squint in the brightness, basking in the sun. Past the fences I see grass. If it is Tuesday, I might even be granted the smell of it being freshly mowed. Gray concrete slabs stick up out of grass, the cemetery a constant reminder of how many have died in here. A constant reminder of where I might end up. Yet it is pleasurable, scant moments of joy outside the cage, glimpses of a greater life, a fleeting time I must enjoy before being placed back into my solitary existence.

My existence. Why? Why am I here? I think of what I want. More than freedom from my confines, I simply want love. How I long to be touched. To be held by someone warm, someone to snuggle with in front of a crackling fireplace on this frigid day, someone who will love me, care for me, show me compassion. I want to have the ability to look into their eyes and gaze at their soul. I want someone to greet when they come home and give them a big hug, someone special to say goodnight to and fight over the comforter at night with. I used to have it, but it's gone—vanished overnight. Now I sit here alone and cold. Where did he go? Why am I here?

I stood under the fluorescent lights in the hall to the kennels, staring through the chain link fence at the latest group of dogs to come to the animal shelter. Some were

barking; others timidly huddled in the back of their cages shaking with fear. This one I thought looked out of place. He wasn't a stray. He wasn't from a puppy mill or dropped off by a family who lacked the care to train him properly. He sat there, well behaved, not barking, just looking up at me. His eyes were brown and big as saucers, wide open in that puppy dog way, and full of tears. His once brown, now graying, fur was groomed. He had some years on him and someone had taken the time to train him well. I could almost hear him asking, why? What's happening to me?

Yet here he was now, looking around in tears and shaking. Here he was sitting on a concrete floor instead of the couch with his head on his owner's lap. The blanket he had, donated by generous supporters, was probably nothing compared to what he used to have. Here he got dried kibbles in a bowl. Back at home, his owner probably fed him scraps from the table, maybe even steak. He was eight years old, not prime adopting material given his age. His human companion had passed on and the kids dropped the dog off—they were in no position to care for him. This little guy's life was torn away from him. He went from having it all to having a small little cage, at the mercy of the shelter's volunteers. It's a sad fact that pets are often not thought about past death. He will find a home from here. It's a rare dog that can't find placement. Though the wait time may not be the most pleasant, the volunteers will do everything they can to care for him.

I like coming here, even if it's just to sit with the animals. Inside the cage he would lean on me and we would exchange warmth with each other. I would scratch his ears and belly. Like any person he just wanted to be loved. This place was unnatural and foreign to him. He didn't deserve to be here. None of the animals did. To be quickly torn from a life of comfort and tossed into this type of life overnight isn't easy. Gradual and slow change is difficult enough. This was quick, overnight, and rather painful. He didn't speak the same language as us, so no one could even explain to him what was happening. My heart felt the suffering he must have been enduring.

The volunteers here give and give, but one can only give so much and must spread it around. The donations constantly come in, but it's rarely everything that's needed. Yet without those willing and dedicated to give service, the animals would receive no love or care at all. The dogs didn't choose to be in this situation, but here they are and they need help. Here they find help until they find a new home.

It's not perfect or ideal, but it works because of the volunteers who live part of their lives for others.

To live for another is a great reason to live. Even if you manage to be timeless, experience everything, and have no other reason to live for, there are always others that can benefit from you—those unable to help themselves. Those without a voice. Shelter dogs are just one of these groups.

Service is a way to give and show gratitude to the universe. It's an opening for the Universe to continue to work with you, and to show you gratitude in return—the gratitude of someone looking upon you with the disbelief that you were willing to help, willing to give, something you may find insignificant, yet makes the world happen for them.

Service reminds me of the rune Gebo and the lessons it taught me in relation to giving and receiving. What can I give to the Universe that gives me so much? My gifts, my abilities, my talents, my excess possessions, and most importantly, my heart with the desire to do so. The way of nature is to give and receive. Gebo asks, what are you receiving, and what are you not giving back or having

gratitude for in return? When everyone gives what they can, everyone receives what they need.

Here the dogs needed people who care about them. They were lost, seeking a home, seeking love, helpless save for the kind spirits willing to dedicate their time to help. They received what they needed because the volunteers heard their silent cries while others were willing to make room in their homes for them to live. There's always more though. Just listen and you'll find those who you can share your time with.

Kim Vale is an Ergi Spirit Worker currently on loan to a few Norse gods for further training. She is also a student in the Temple Mystery School.



The Call to Service

By Steve Kenson

During preparations for our recent Yule ritual, I was struck by something sufficiently to post the thought to the Temple's Facebook feed: "How do you know who the high priestesses and priests are? They'll be the ones moving boxes, setting up chairs, and getting everything ready!"

After all, the path of the priestess or priest is, by its very nature, one of service. While we witches are our own intermediaries with the gods, we also serve the needs of a larger community that comes together to worship, celebrate, mourn, and observe all of the many rites of passage that come with the turning of the Wheel. It is good for the community to have these opportunities and good for those trained as priests and priestesses to be able to serve.

In fact, service is the prime reason the Temple of Witchcraft came into being. After a number of years of teaching his successful Temple series of classes and publishing his books, Christopher Penczak, (Temple co-founder) had a growing number of graduates of his program asking the question: "Now that I've graduated, what's next?" Christopher emphasized that it was time to go out into the world and follow whatever calling lay in the direction of the graduate's True Will.

But we noticed many graduates and students looking to follow their calling found it difficult, as they lacked a support structure, a framework in which to carry out their work. Many had to seek their own legal ordinations through other organizations to do ministerial work, or invent their own organizational structures to support it. So we, the eventual founders of the Temple, began to wonder ourselves "What's next?" and decided that the creation of a loosely-structured Temple—an over-arching structure to provide support for all those various missions—was our True Will, a service to those who themselves wished to serve.

This is why we frequently ask those who enthusiastically look to volunteer with the Temple to tell us their passion, their vision, because we want the Temple of Witchcraft to be a place where those things can grow and be nurtured, like a greenhouse full of individual plants: some medicinal, some beautiful, some nutritious, all rooted in the same soil and breathing the same air, but individual in their own way. We can always find people things to do (as there are always tasks that need doing) but our preference is to help find that seed, that start of someone's ministry, and help it to grow.

Towards that end, the Temple has appointed a Volunteer Coordinator, who can be reached at volunteer@templeofwitchcraft.org and, like the Temple itself, seeks to serve those who wish to serve by placing volunteers with the correct ministries and connecting them with resources and existing Temple members and leaders. If you have thought about volunteering with the Temple in any capacity, now is a good time to send off an email or to visit <http://www.templeofwitchcraft.org/Volunteering.html> and fill out a volunteer registration form.

We, the founders and ministers of the Temple of Witchcraft, thank you for this opportunity to serve, and hope to be honored to serve alongside you in the future.



In Love, Will, and Wisdom,

Steve Kenson, Founder and Gemini Minister

Steve Kenson is a Founder and Gemini lead minister for the Temple. A designer of fantasy roleplaying games, Steve is also a freelance author and managing partner of Copper Cauldron Publishing in addition to his Temple duties. He can be reached at geminis@templeofwitchcraft.org.

Volunteerism

By Kriya Kinai

Each year around Samhain, I start to reflect on the last several months of my life and go through a short period of introspection. I think of my achievements and digressions, and try to get a sense of whether I am truly working in accordance with my highest Will. I think of the many hats that I wear — of parent, friend, sister, guardian, animal care professional, teacher, mentor, runner, yogi — and I look at those roles through the lens of service. Have I done enough? Have I given enough?

Service is defined in Webster's as "the act of helping or doing work for another or for a community, being ready to assist." Looking back onto my amazing year, I realize some incredible ways that I have been able to affect positive change. I remember a day in June, when I saw a man with a dog. His dog had sat down in the shade and was having a difficult time breathing. The man looked bewildered and kept trying to get the dog to move. Although I was on my way to meet a friend, I pulled over and asked the guy if his dog was okay. He told me a story of how he let his old dog play in the sun with a puppy for about a half hour, "and then the dog just plopped down on the ground." I went over to the dog and noticed that he was suffering from heat stroke. I quickly got a jug of water out of my car and started to pour the water onto the dog's paw pads, tongue, ear flaps and belly. Then the man told me that his dog also had seizures, so I worked quicker to cool the animal off. After the entire gallon of water had been poured onto the dog, I helped the man pick him up and put him in my back seat so I could take them home. Surely that dog could walk no further, and the poor man was beside himself with concern.

I ask you to think about your own life. How often do you stop to help someone in need? When you see someone struggle, do you lend a hand or turn the other way? How do you help those in your community? In this season of reflection, this season of giving and then looking towards the planting season, we must look inside ourselves. What do we want to grow, to put our energy into? What do you want to reap in the next year? A solid foundation of selfless service can only benefit you and your community, and it is easy to start.

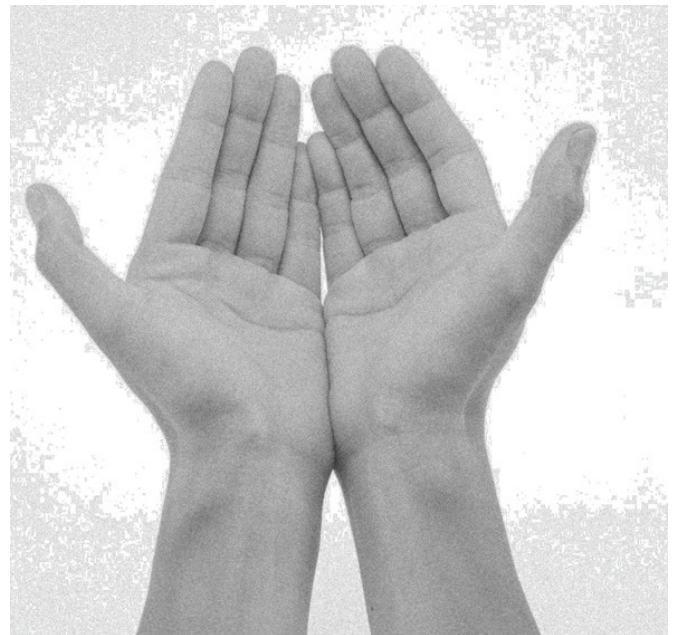
I have been involved with the Temple of Witchcraft for several years now. I started as a Witchcraft I student and will be starting Witchcraft 5 in February. When the opportunity to become a volunteer within the Temple opened up, I asked myself if I could give just a little bit more. Although my

schedule is tight between two jobs and raising a child alone, I felt a strong call to support the Temple of Witchcraft because it has given me a safe community in which to explore and practice my spirituality. Therefore my desire to contribute and pay back is what brought me to the volunteering role. I want to help others who may also find themselves on the same path, and the best way for me to do that at this time is as the Volunteer Coordinator. Now I encourage you to look at your own skills, your own schedule, and see where you can also give. There are no small contributions.

The Temple has many needs for which I believe our members are suited. Some of our short-term commitments include assisting at rituals or at Templefest. Roles that involve more of a time commitment involve helping with web design, assisting with public relations, or being a development (donor) assistant. If you are able to commit some of your time, please contact me at volunteer@templeofwitchcraft.org. Templefest will soon be upon us, and many hands make for light work. If you are able to donate money, please see our Indiegogo page to donate to our parking lot fund or contact our Treasurer if you wish to offer a general donation. I wish you all a very blessed season.

Brightest Blessings.

Kriya Kinai is currently beginning Witchcraft V studies in the Mystery School, and has a background in both volunteerism and in the care of animals. For volunteer opportunities, she can be reached at volunteer@templeofwitchcraft.org.





Rose

By Irma Hackett

As I sit and get ready to write about Rose, I take a dropperful of Rose Elixir to connect with her Spirit. The warmth of her makes me smile as she soothes the sore throat brought along with the flu I've had this past week.

Rose is a flower I've always admired for its beauty, but it wasn't until I began my spiritual journey that I began to understand just how healing and magickal she is. Rose is sacred to a number of different goddesses. To quote Gail Faith Edwards, "Rose: queen-of- the- aromatics, is sacred to Isis, is the flower of Aphrodite, and [is] sprung from the blood of Venus."

Rose teaches us about unconditional love, both for others as well as for ourselves. Anointing the heart chakra with Rose oil helps us to learn to manifest this love. Drinking her elixir can help heal a saddened or broken heart. Rose can be used in many aspects of magick. Petals can be used in magick concerning not only love, but psychic powers, healing, and luck. Her thorns can even be used for protection magick.

Among the many different varieties of roses, one that has become my favorite is the Rosa Rugosa, also known as the Beach Rose here in Maine. Unlike the hybrid — the many petaled, tightly wound blooms most people send to their love on St Valentine's day — Rosa Rugosa only has 5 - 7 petals and her color ranges from white, through light pink, to a dark pink. For me her beauty radiates healing and magick.

Beginning each June and throughout the summer, Daedalus and I like to hike the Maine coastline, the liminal place where the land and the sea meet. We usually go around noon, an "in-between time." Neither morning

nor afternoon, this is a very magickal time to collect the Rosa Rugosa petals for the Rose Elixir we offer through Ancient Star Herbals. It always ends up being a magickal experience for us.

When gathering her petals, we tug ever so gently, and if she is ready, the petals will fall right into your hands. It's important to only take the petals which seek to partner with us and leave the center to form into its rosehips for later harvest. We also leave many of the rosehips for the wildlife as they are an important source of winter food.

To make the rose elixir, fill a pint jar with wild rose petals (make sure roses have not been treated with chemicals; do not use roses from a florist as they have been treated with preservatives). Fill the jar 1/4 of the way up with either honey or vegetable glycerine. Fill the rest of the jar with brandy, vodka or grain alcohol. Cover with a non-metallic lid. Shake well and let it sit 6 weeks before use. You can strain or leave in the rose petals and just pour small amounts as needed. For a typical dosage, one dropperful in your mouth or can be added to a glass of water. Enjoy and be ready to feel the healing magick Rose has to offer as she intervenes on your behalf in matters of the heart.

Irma Hackett is a graduate of W4—High Magick with the TOW Mystery School, although her personal practice tends to have a more Shamanic tone. After her father introduced her to the joy of gardening as a young child, she has developed a lifelong connection with the earth and all it has to offer. Irma is a Reiki Master and has been certified in Level 1 of the Bach Flower Essence Program. She and her husband, Daedalus, own and operate Ancient Star Herbals and live on the mid-coast of Maine.



The Bard

By Colleen Corcoran

Up the path in the dark, on a hill so deeply green I knew it could only be Ireland,

Brigid waited for me.

Her breasts heavy with the milk of inspiration, she suckled me, and a hunger I had long forgotten was sated.

“Speak for me,” she said, her words an ancient echo.

“Be my voice so the world will see my eternal flame.

Let all my children know that I have the strength of a newly forged sword,

the touch of a healer;

I am the muse of all poetry that sings praise to the Ancient Ones.

Tell the tale of an emerald sea and an island wrapped in a blanket of mist, where wind blows through your soul,

Where there is magic as ancient as the universe itself seeped into the ground.

Tell tales of the fey, the sidhe, and the mysteries spoken by bards and druids in song and verse

As they are your stories too.”

She spoke in Gaelic, yet I understood every word,

For I knew that it was the tongue that had lulled me to sleep for a thousand years

In lifetimes long ago.

But what words are large enough to hold the sacred story of a goddess?

None that I have ever held in my hand.

What little I have written in honor of Brigid

Felt like the meager offerings of a poor peasant to his beloved queen.

But in my newly fed heart I felt a stir

And into my outstretched palm fell three seeds that wouldn't lie still

As if quickening to be born, and I knew their power.

Dark bleeds into light, cold into warmth, winter into spring, and it is time

To plant these strange seeds into the still frozen earth

And new words will rise from the ground like promising sprouts that speak a truth long forgotten.

And these words will be indigo and translucent, ephemeral and timeless, primeval and fetal,

And will carry on their back meanings so honest that all who hear them

Will understand the mysteries: the marriage of the earth and sky, sun and moon, male and female, and the cadence of
a wheel that turns endlessly.

The gift of such language will open ears and eyes, and Brigid will have a voice once more.

At last, all the children of the universe will have a tongue that will lull them to sleep for a thousand years

As they are wrapped in Brigid's cloak.

You Don't Have to Get Arrested to be an Activist

By *Howling Hill*

Generally I write small blurbs about how to green up your lifestyle, but today I change tactics to speak more generally about green activism and how it dovetails with Paganism.

There's a general disdain for activists. We are considered to be anarchists who throw Molotov cocktails, loot, are unwashed, and unemployed. While that may fit the description for a rare few, most of us do not fit that stereotype. Myself, for instance, I am a working class woman of European descent in my fourth decade. I've only been arrested once (which occurred earlier this year), and I prepared myself for before the protest. I am often the youngest (or at the young end of the spectrum) at protests and activist events populated by middle class, middle-aged, white folks.

Activism can be so simple and so innocuous that you may not realize you already are an activist. Being an activist doesn't necessarily mean you are willing to get arrested or even willing to march in a protest. It can be as simple as making some of the changes I have suggested in previous columns — things such as using a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) to support local farms and bring organic vegetables to your table or by flushing your toilet only when necessary, stop buying bottled water, or not shopping at Walmart or other box stores. By making conscientious choices when shopping, you are, in fact, an activist. For example, Pagans love to support their fellow Pagans. Buying handmade crafts or supporting small Pagan shops is another small form of activism. I have an Etsy shop in which I sell my hand knit crafts (etsy.com/howlinghill) and I am always grateful to those who purchase my wares. By not giving your money to large, personality-less corporations, you are an activist who speaks through their wallet.

Paganism dovetails with activism in many surprising ways, the most overlooked of which is that by being Pagan, you *are* an activist. After all, you have made a decision not to follow the mainstream. You have already decried the norm and stepped aside to participate and create a spirituality which works for you.

Many Pagans have animal familiars in the form of companion pets. If you adopted your pet from a shelter (or brought a stray into your home), you are an activist because

you did not participate in purchasing your pet from a pet store (often part of a corporation that does not care about the welfare of the animals it sells or where those animals came from). If you advocate to your friends and family to attain pets through a shelter, and to have all pets spayed and neutered, you are an animal activist.

Walking is another form of activism. This simple activity brings you to nature, the very thing we Pagans worship. It requires very little money, so one is not participating in the consumerist culture that is America. Walking anywhere (work, school, ritual) is a great way to protest since America is all about the car and how it demonstrates our individual wealth. The car has led to the destruction of many forests, prairies, deserts, mountains, lakes, and streams to make way for sprawling suburbs and highways. Walking connects you to Mother Earth: what does Air smell like? What is the temperature? Is Water abundant? What is the landscape? These questions are answered more readily as you walk throughout your community than if you drive through at moderate to high speeds.

Ancestor worship is another aspect of Paganism. Canning, cooking, knitting, sewing, woodcrafts, masonry, leather working, blacksmithing and other "old fashioned" skills connect us to those who came before. Learning these skills and passing them along to our children are forms of activism. By refusing to let go of the old ways, we show we value them as much as we value those who taught the skills to us.

All these skills and small changes connect us to one another. Connections are needed to create communities. Nothing is more radical than community building. The Temple of Witchcraft's recent purchase of land in Salem, New Hampshire is a testament to Pagans desiring community and the power we create when we come together as a group to fulfill our deep desires. And that is the most powerful form of activism there is.

Howling Hill lives in New Hampshire. You can follow her on twitter @howlinghill.

Fluorite

By Joy Costanza

Fluorite is one of the most beautiful of stones. The common colors are green and purple, but blues and even yellows can be found. The predominate property of fluorite is “order out of chaos,” which means people either love it or hate it. For the people who like having order and self-discipline in their lives, fluorite is great, but those who seem to be addicted to drama may not like it at all. The green represents physical healing while the purple represents spiritual healing. One of the most interesting things about fluorite is if the person carrying it has a major emotional breakthrough, the stone could break! When this occurs, first be very happy about the emotional breakthrough and that the stone helped, then tune in and see if you are finished working with that particular stone — if so, re-gift to Mother Earth. If you feel like you should keep it, be glad to now have two stones and use them as a pair.

Not all stones are good around electronics, but fluorite does very well near computers. Fluorite earrings are helpful in focus, and clarity of mind

as well as enhancing the psychic abilities of the third eye. Physically it can be used to relieve pain, joint pain, asthma, skin problems, and open blocks. After use fluorite does need to be cleared. I put mine on a windowsill for the sun and/ or moon to clear, or I put it on a piece of Selenite. Energetically it can help keep you from taking on other people’s negativity and clears the aura. It is often used in meditation and spiritual awakening.



Joy Costanza is a full-time Healer, Psychic and Spiritual Teacher with the goal of helping people improve their lives. Joy has created many of her own healing techniques which she frequently calls upon in her work. Joy can be found at JoyCostanza.com for house clearing, spiritual training, and mentoring. She resides in Andover, Massachusetts.

Evocation to Brigid

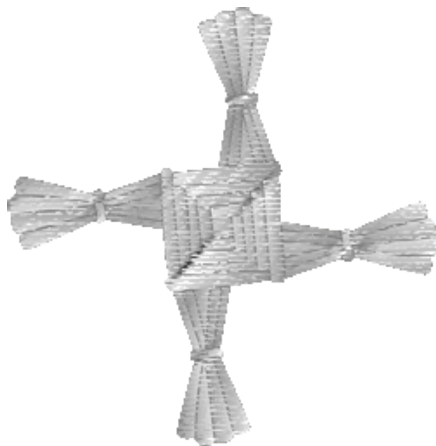
By Colleen Corcoran

Brigid, Triple Goddess, your daughters call upon you. Goddess of the smith, Goddess of the poet, Goddess of healing, we call upon you in all of your aspects. We ask that you join us in this circle.

Brigid, Goddess of Forge and Flame, bond us witches together so that our love remains strong and unbreakable. Let the flames from the fire in our hearts reach out of our chests and join together to create a fire so strong and pure as to burn to ash all that does not serve us. May the ashes blow away on the wind of your breath and combine with the newly fallen snow. All that hasn't burned away in our souls will glow with the heat and strength of a newly forged sword.

Brigid, Goddess of the Poet and Mother of Language, take these simple words as our offering — infuse them with power. May your voice echo our intentions into the universe, so that every space in the cosmos is filled with the sounds of our magical words, and the Great Spirit will carry our spells into the physical world. When that is done, may our simple

thanks touch your heart, so that your voice will merge with ours forever.



Brigid, Healing Goddess, touch us as a mother does a child. Hold us against your breast and tell us that all will be well. We ask that your healing power enter our bodies, so we may become vessels of your healing. May our hands become conduits of your healing magic, and may all who are touched by us today feel your energy and love. May you remove sickness from our bodies like chaff from wheat and replace it with your healing power. May this love end not with today's circle, but continue to live in our souls.

Blessed Brigid, Goddess of the Flame, Inspiration of the Bards, and the Great Healer, we ask for your presence in this circle, and we ask for your blessings on our healing magic. Mother Brigid, smile upon us.

Colleen Corcoran is a graduate of Christopher Penczak's Witchcraft I-V classes. She has multiple degrees in health care, but her true bliss is writing, and the goddess Brigid is her muse. She lives in Boston with her husband and three feline familiars.

Ode to the Goddess

By Colleen Corcoran

I am the hand that moves through mist,
The stars that have shattered an age ago
Into small golden lights that float unchained through space
Like clear water over rocks.
I am what one searches for in the night sky,
A constellation that reaches arms beyond planets
Out of the void to embrace those smaller than me,
Yet have hearts open to all that is unseen and unknown.
For my love began in the shadows,
When the world was fetal and unformed,
Like promising clay,
And darkness swept like waves over desolate cliffs.
This love endured as it moved through the aching paces of time,

Untouched by the human failures that beget misery
In a world so desperately searching for itself.
I am the fingers that extend from this unknown.
To caress your face at times when life is thick
And presses upon you like fresh earth over a newly sown seed.
I am the wind that encircles you as unseen arms
And brings with it the hopeful longing of spring.
I press your face gently against my breast
As mother does to a child.
Hear this and believe,
For I am as real as the dark bitter earth that lies beneath your feet,
As coarse as bark that grows strong on an ancient tree,
As translucent as moonlight cutting through the blackness of night.
Come, and believe in me.

Temple News & Updates

Each issue of The Temple Bell features updates from some of the Temple's twelve Lead Ministers. All of the Temple's ministries are committed to doing important work in the community! For more information on each ministry please see the Ministries page of the Temple of Witchcraft website: templeofwitchcraft.org.

The TOW is pleased to announce that Mark Bilokur has become the Leo Lead minister. Mark Bilokur is a graduate of the Connecticut Center for Massage Therapy and has a Master's degree from the Center for Cartoon Studies in Vermont. He is also a student of the author and Celtic Reconstructionist Sharynne MacLeod NicMhacha. He infuses his spirituality and humor into his art and art and humor into his spirituality. He can be reached at leo@templeofwitchcraft.org.

The Parking Lot Plan was approved and The Temple of Witchcraft continues its fundraising campaign on indiegogo. Those who wish to donate can go to www.indiegogo.com/TOWParking

Treasurer's Report: December, 2012

Account Balances:

Opening Balance: November 30, 2012:
\$28,020.38

Closing Balance: December 31, 2012:
\$24,142.92

Petty Cash: \$185.85

Paypal balance: \$7294.73

Certificate of Deposit: \$2510.12

Events:

Income from W 1-5 (gross): \$6516.72
December events: Mediation workshop, Dark moon, Full moon, Women's circle, Yule, and a workshop the afternoon of the yule ritual. Official Yule attendance was 82.

Stitch 'n Witch

is creating a Shawl Ministry to give comfort to Temple members.

Volunteer Coordinator

Continued to work towards and finalize updated version of volunteer needs for Temple. Reviewed a form that Matooka Moonbear put together for volunteers to fill out and also a sign-up sheet to put out at events.

Aries

Continued to mentor
Performed mini protection ritual in basement of new Sabbat Hall.

Gemini

Launched online fundraising campaign for Temple parking lot.

Got new ministers and volunteer coordinator online and on Temple mailing groups.

Held Queer Spirit Circle meeting
Taught Magick & Practical Pagan workshop

Performed website and online maintenance

Sagittarius

Completed WIV in Personal Initiations.

Continued taking registration applications for W1, W4 and W5 for February.

Placed both *Ancestors of the Craft* and *Waters of Fire* in production.

Completed first draft *Foundations of the Temple* introductory book for fundraiser.

Kicked off Indiegogo Campaign and solicit support via FB and mailing lists

Cancer

Worked on Women's Mystery Ritual for fundraising book.

Continued correspondence with Virgo Ministry in support of Healing clinic.

Touched on preparations for Children's Winter Circle .

Created volunteer application for work exchange helping those who cannot afford monetary donations to our events.

Scorpio

Provided Witchcraft III mentoring.

Provided crossing over materials to students interested in this work.

Mediated unconditional support for victims of Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Capricorn

Continued prison outreach program in New Hampshire with Prison Ministry correspondence.

Continued work on the *Rites of Passage* Anthology

Attended meeting on creation of Men's Mystery Group

Leo

Worked on Templefest t-shirt design.

Performed prosperity working for Temple

Explored how to make possible drum circles

Aquarius

Worked with Leo Minister to create Templefest logo.

Held planning meeting with Volunteer coordinator to discuss volunteer needs.

Taurus

Held meditation workshop and Dark Moon, Full Moon, Women's circle and Yule rituals.

Virgo

Continued search for Temple members who are interested in working in Healing Clinics (must be Reiki Two or higher)

Libra

Discussed press kit development

Coordinated Intro to Dispute Resolution and Meditation Class

Continued to work with others on development of ethics class

The Temple and its Ministries are always in need of volunteers willing to contribute their time, energy, and expertise to our Great Work. You can contact the Temple Volunteer Coordinator at info@templeofwitchcraft.org. Specific volunteer opportunities include the following:

DRUMMERS

The Leo Ministry wants more drummers for larger rituals, such as Samhain, and wants to establish a core drum group for Temple events and to develop new music and beats. Email sagittarius@templeofwitchcraft.org for more information.

ENVIRONMENTALISM

The Taurus Ministry is looking for volunteers who would like to aid the Lead Minister in a variety of environmental projects and education. Please contact taurus@templeofwitchcraft.org for more information.

GRAPHIC DESIGN

The Gemini Ministry is on the lookout for Temple members with graphic design experience and resources, particularly Mac OS X based, and skill with page layout and desktop publishing iWork or Adobe CS . Email gemini@templeofwitchcraft.org for more information or to volunteer.

HEALING

The Virgo Ministry needs a volunteer to coordinate its healing work, including, but not limited to, organizing Reiki shares and other healing events and management of the Temple's online healing list. Experience in different healing modalities is preferred, but not required. Email virgo@templeofwitchcraft.org for more information or to volunteer.

MENTORING

The Sagittarius Ministry is looking for previous graduates of Witchcraft III, IV, and V interested in serving as mentors in the online education program. Mentorship includes giving feedback on homework, answering questions and encouraging students in the Mystery School and Seminary. Interested applications should email sagittarius@templeofwitchcraft.org.

RAFFLE ITEMS

The Temple runs a regular raffle at our Sabbats, and we're always looking for new and unique items to be donated for the raffle to help raise funds. Email rafflee@templeofwitchcraft.org for more information or to donate items.

WRITING & ART

The Gemini Ministry needs writers and artists to work on *The Temple Bell* newsletter. We're looking for articles, poetry, art, photos, and reviews. Contact editors in chief Raye Snover and

Tina Whittle at templebell@templeofwitchcraft.org for complete submission guidelines.

The Leo Ministry is looking for artists interested in creating new pagan oriented works for the Temple and its members. Contact the Lead Minister at leo@templeofwitchcraft.org for more information.

You can also volunteer for work with particular ministries of the Temple by contacting the appropriate lead minister. See the Ministries page of the Temple website and Contacting Us below for details.

CONTACTING US

For general questions and inquiries e mail info@templeofwitchcraft.org.

For website or technical issues, e mail admin@templeofwitchcraft.org.

For questions or inquiries related to a specific ministry, see the Ministries page or e mail that minister at ministry name @ templeofwitchcraft dot org, such as gemini@templeofwitchcraft.org.

Send surface mail to:

Temple of Witchcraft
PO Box 2252
Salem, NH 03079

NETWORKING

The Temple maintains an email notification list through Constant Contact, giving subscribers all the up to date information on our rituals, classes, and other events. To sign up, visit our website at www.templeofwitchcraft.org and go to the "Contact Us" page, where you'll find a "Sign Up for Our Newsletter" box. Just enter your email address to sign up.

If you are a Temple member at any level, you can also join the Temple Web, our interactive Yahoo! group email list for members to stay in touch and network. Registration requires membership verification, so please include your full name along with your request. You can find the mailing list home page at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/templeweb>

You can also find and friend us on Facebook and MySpace for updates and to help spread the word about the Temple!

Donating to the Temple

The Temple of Witchcraft is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, funded by the generous donations of its members to bring you services such as our website, mailing lists, and this newsletter.

If you are interested in making a secure online donation via PayPal including credit card donations, just go to the "Donations" page of our website and click on the "Donate" button and fill out the necessary information.

We can also accept checks and money orders made out to "Temple of Witchcraft" via surface mail at:

Temple of Witchcraft
PO Box 2252
Salem, NH 03079

As a federally recognized nonprofit, donations to the Temple are tax deductible.

LEVELS OF DONATION

The Temple welcomes donations in whatever denomination contributors can offer.

We recognize five levels of donation:

Quicksilver • \$5-\$25

Iron • \$26-\$50

Copper • \$51-\$100

Silver • \$101-\$250

Gold • \$251+

A special "Diamond" level is reserved for patrons of the Temple who establish lasting endowments and trusts. Please contact us directly if you are interested in doing so.

We regularly thank members who donate to the Temple by offering special Wheel of the Year meditations as audio file downloads. See the Donations page of our website for the current thank you offer and watch our website and social networks like Facebook for announcements concerning new thank you meditations and special offers to our generous patrons.

A B O U T T H E T E M P L E

The Temple of Witchcraft is a 501c 3 religious nonprofit organization based in the State of New Hampshire. Co-founded by Christopher Penczak, the Temple started in 1998 as a system of magickal training and personal development, and eventually developed into a formal tradition of Witchcraft. Now, as an outgrowth of the work of students, initiates and graduates of the programs, the Temple of Witchcraft has evolved into an organization based on traditions of modern magick, Witchcraft, and Neopaganism. The work of the Temple is both otherworldly and terrestrial, seeking to strengthen the connections between spirit and matter through inner transformation and public service.

The Temple of Witchcrafts goal on an individual level is to awaken the potential of the human soul to its natural gifts of psychic awareness, communion with nature and the spirits, and magick. Each individual seeks to live a magickal life. Through these awakenings, we seek an expansion of consciousness through the alignment of our souls with Love, Will, and Wisdom to complete the Great Work.

On a greater scale, we seek the restoration, maintenance, and evolution of humanity to the Garden of the Gods, the cooperative consciousness where all things are in harmony and community. Our myths define this awareness as the First Garden, known as Avalon, Hesperides, Zep Tepi, Shamballa, Lemuria and even Eden. We manifest this vision through both our inner workings and service to the greater community. By these actions, we plant the seeds and tend the garden of Witchcraft culture, tradition and community.

Board of Directors

Christopher Penczak • President, Founder
Steve Kenson • Vice President, Founder
Jocelyn VanBokelyn • Treasurer
Alix Wright • Secretary
Adam Sartwell • Board Advisor, Founder
Mary Hurley • Board Advisor

Public Relations

For general questions regarding the Temple, or to contact the Board of Directors, please email info@templeofwitchcraft.org.

For technical or website related questions, please email admin@templeofwitchcraft.org.

Contact gemini@templeofwitchcraft.org for access to promotional materials, fliers, and other media.

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