

CRANE CHATTER



SAMHAIN
2010 edition

Around the Fire

It's hard to believe. Imbolc 2002, Seamus and I met up with a group of pagans calling themselves druids at an apartment on the east side of Columbus. They seemed to have been around a while. A few months later we were members, and the rest as they say is history.

As we have grown as a grove, people have come and gone. Some stay for a few rites, some stay for years. For some their paths take them another direction. For others, life circumstances have dictated that they move away or adjust their schedule. The important thing is that they have all made their mark, shaped this grove of trees, just as much as one of our grove patrons, Teutates, has shaped it.

One of the boring things about being senior druid is... PAPERWORK! Every quarter I have to send a report to the Mother Grove, and on that report I have to identify the number of members we have. Now, for this report, "members" are those who match the description of members included in our bylaws. So, we've seen them at least once in the last six months, and they've paid dues. So we dutifully count them up and put that number in the box. They get to vote in grove elections and take part in the grove mailing list (which can either be a benefit or a challenge, depending upon the day).

But that's not the only kind of membership, of course. What about those people who have moved away, or who now work a different shift? What about those that come to our rites, but their path leads

them a different direction? I have started calling them members of the heart. They sing with us, sacrifice with us, send us good wishes and participate in prayer requests.

What is the point of all this? The fall of the year is special for Three Cranes Grove. It's our anniversary, and many of you blessed us with your attendance. It is also Samhain, which I have described as being Thanksgiving, Memorial Day, and New Year's Eve, all rolled into one. So I am thinking of what I am thankful for, and one of those things is both kinds of "members." Those that join the grove as an official member, and those that are always there in any context. Members of the heart and members "on paper" (and those that are both of COURSE). Anyone who has touched this grove with your energy, and your presence, for one rite, or seventy-two, for you, I am thankful. And I think our late founder, Isaac, would be thankful as well.

- *Tanrinia*
Senior Druid,
Three Cranes Grove, ADF



Journey to Helheim

By: Melissa Burchfield

Warding the Folk

First, Children of Earth, we must ward ourselves and make ready, for the sounds of life resound loudly in the Halls of the Dead. We cloak ourselves in the same manner in which Groa cloaked her son, Svipdagr, to prepare him for the journey.

First, we create a barrier that will cast of anything harmful.

Second, we prevent ourselves from wandering, deprived of will, in the ways’.

Third, we protect ourselves against the power of rivers which might overwhelm us and cause us to sink back into Hel.

Fourth, we turn the hearts of enemies who lie in wait for us away from their hostility.

Fifth, we loosen any fetter that be laid upon our limbs.

Sixth, we calm the raging sea, wilder than men know.

Seventh, we preserve ourselves from death from intense cold on the high fells.

Eighth, we protect ourselves from the malignant power of those who lurk within, if we are suddenly overcome with darkness.

Ninth, we grant ourselves eloquence and wisdom when we converse with the wise and terrible giant who stands before the realm with eagle’s wings.

Invocation to Sleipnir

Thusly warded, we must also call on a guide, whose powers will allow mortals such as ourselves not only entrance to the realm of the Dead, though we may be easily allowed in, but also a way back, for Hel does not easily release those who dwell so freely into it’s mists. Sleipnir, Mighty Stead of Odin, we call to you now! Fastest and strongest of horses who glides on eight stalwart legs, Runes carved into your very teeth, we call you to come forth! Come, join us at our fire!

You have guided Odin through realms of spirit and matter, over land, sea and sky. We have brought gifts for you, which we give freely in honor and in reverence, and in return, we ask that you guide us as you have Hermodr on our journey over the Gjoll bridge and into the heart of Helheim, there to greet those who have gone before us and to pay honor to the Goddess, Hela, in all her majesty! Sleipnir accept our sacrifice!

Folk: Sleipnir! Accept our sacrifice!

Journey to Helheim

Sleipnir, with his great speed, shall carry us through the cold ring of fire at the entrance to the burial mound, over a nine days’ journey through mists and eternal blackness to the Crystal Bridge thatched with glittering gold called Gjollar, which crosses the Gjoll River, full of weapons, flowing from the spring of Hvergelmir. The maiden, Modguðr, asks us our names and our purpose. We each give our names and state our purpose: to pay homage to the Lady who rules here and greet our beloved dead during Winter Nights, the time of the Ancestors. She smiles to us, noting the presence of the Giant Horse, and bids us down and north, toward Helheim.

(continued on page 6)



Recipes from the Kitchen of Skarlett ~

Apple-Cheddar Triple Loaves

3 Cups unbleached all purpose flour

1/2 Cup Sugar

2 Tablespoons baking powder

3/4 teaspoon salt

1 beaten egg

1 beaten egg yolk

1 1/2 Cups Milk

1/2 Cup Butter

1 Cup diced Granny Smith Apples

1 Cup Shredded Cheddar Cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Mix flour, salt, baking powder and sugar in a large mixing bowl. Blend whole egg, egg yolk and softened butter in a medium sized bowl, then gradually pour and stir egg mix to the flour blend. After the batter is well mixed, gently stir in the apples and cheese. Divide dough between three greased 7 1/2" by 3 1/2" loaf pans. Place pans in the oven and bake for 35 minutes or till a toothpick inserted in the center of the loaves comes out clean. Remove from oven and cool 10 minutes. Remove loaves from pans and serve. Wrap leftovers in plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator.

(continued from page 4)

So, onward we travel, through caverns with jagged rocks and dripping waters, along Hels-way. Darkness surrounds us, and we are washed in the winds from the wings of the giant Hraesvelg who sits at the edge of the world in the form of a giant eagle. Downward, further and further, beneath the third root of *Yggdrasil*. In the distance can be heard growlings, most likely from Garm, the four-eyed hound, chest drenched in blood, who guards the entrance to Hel. Do not fear him, for those who have given bread to the poor can easily appease him with Hel cake, if he dares venture from the Gnipa-cave and into the presence of Sleipnir.

Darkness begins to give way as we approach the iron gates, thrown back in anticipation of our arrival. One final deep breath as we pass through the Gates of Hel.

Invocation to Hela

And lo, there she stands, Hela, Goddess of the Underworld and Ruler of all nine realms of the dead. Half of her, a beautiful maiden, half of her, death and decayed flesh, Hela, the embodiment of the cycle of life and death stands balanced in her beauty and her horror. Hela! The Children of the Earth have come to your hall to pay respect to you and to those over whom you hold dominion! We come bearing gifts to lie at your feet, you into whose hands we commend our spirits at our life-journey's end. Hela! Accept our Sacrifice!

Mighty Goddess, we have opened the gates to the nine realms, at your permission and call now for all the Ancestors of those in this company to join us in the hall! Children of the Earth, find those loved ones who have gone before you, greet them with all your heart, be open and ready, and commune awhile.

Ancestors Visitation Song:

*From far beyond this mortal plane, mothers and fathers of old,
We pray that you return again, mothers and fathers of old.
To share with us the mysteries and secrets long untold,
Of the ancient ways we seek to reclaim, mothers and fathers of old.*

Returning to the Grove

And now, we bid farewell to our beloved Ancestors, giving farewell hugs and kisses, and noting the details of all that we have seen, heard and experienced to bring back with us as we return.

Sleipnir, you whose presence allows us to return, lead us back through the gates, onward and upward, back through the darkness through which we came. We arrive back at the Gjoll-bridge, where Modgudr nods to us and allows us to cross the bridge southward once more. Over nine days' journey, Sleipnir, speed us back to our Grove!

Children of Earth, become aware once more of the world around you and reorient yourself as we prepare to move forward. Heilsa!

Invocation to Ancestors of Hearth

By: Diane "Emerald" Bronowicz

Ancestors of Hearth, across the ages we call to you!

You who worshiped our gods before us
You who walked the lands that gave them birth
You who kept the old ways alive despite the en-
croaching darkness

Your ways inspire our ways.

Your history and sagas teach us right action
Your artwork and poetry speak to our souls
We hear your voices in the words of our songs
We feel you beside us as we offer at our fires
We know you live on as we keep the traditions alive

Ancestors of Hearth, across the ages we call to you!

A Family Samhain

By: Abigail Dow

Samhain has always been a favorite time of year for our family. There is a flurry of activity and reflection in our home that has included our 12 year old daughter since she was born. Our celebration has changed as she has grown, but we have always kept a common thread of celebrating the end of the agricultural cycle and remembering our loved



ones who have passed from this world. Our explanations of these concepts have changed with her age and understanding, but we have found that it is important to allow a child this time of remembrance and grief and include fun with the serious. It is also a perfect time for children to become acquainted with ancestors that they never met through stories of those who knew them.

Samhain always starts for us by pulling our out favorite fall and Halloween décor and hanging and displaying them all over our house. This is usually a family day when we all participate and often includes lots of cider drinking. Decorating also involves making crafts to hang. We make things like spider webs out of pop-sicle sticks and yarn, construction paper bats, ghosts and jack-o-lanterns, mobiles, paper chains in Halloween colors or sometimes just drawings that we hang up and admire.

The morning of Samhain we set up our ancestor altar. We include photos, items that belonged to those we love or that remind us of them, mementos, poems, etc. We also include our beloved pets in this remembrance. (cont on page 10)

Ancestors

We call out to the ancestors.
 We stand here in our place in time
 Not the beginning, nor the end
 Just another face in line
 To the ancestors of blood and bone
 Whose hearts beat with ours.
 Whose words echo in our hearts
 We welcome you.

To the ancestors of dirt and stone
 Whose footsteps mark this earth
 Whose words echo in the trees
 We welcome you.

To the ancestors of time untold
 Whose lessons we hope to learn
 Whose words echo in our minds
 We welcome you.

Ancestors of those gathered, of the land and of the folk.
 We ask that you meet us at boundary, join us at our good fire
 Aid and ward us as we walk the elder ways.
 Ancestors accept our sacrifices

Rev. James "Seamus" Dillard



(cont from page 8)

Last year my daughter's pet hamster died shortly before Samhain. She was devastated by this loss and there were many tears. On the alter she included a photo of her beloved Tally, and some of the crinkle papers and treats that entertained the little hamster. We take our time setting this up. We talk about the photos and items. We think about the honored dead whom we miss and love, and those long dead ancestors who've been forgotten. After we have completed setting it up, we light a candle for them and let it burn all day and night.

We generally like to save our pumpkin carving for Samhain afternoon, however if trick or treat comes before Samhain we carve on that afternoon instead. This is fun and messy, as we cut open those pumpkins, scoop out their guts, roast their seeds and carve our masterpieces. Next to the front door we set up a little display with bales of hay, corn stalks and our awesome pumpkins, waiting to greet any goblins looking for candy.

I start cooking in my daughter years we make a corn muffins. a meal more in come to think of



the late afternoon and loves to help. Some big pot of chili with Other years we have line with what we have as thanksgiving foods.

We try to include as many items from our own garden as we can. We have hot cider if it's cold out or cold cider if it's warm. I have even made cider slushies on one especially hot Samhain. We make fun desserts like custard baked in the pumpkin or spider web cookies. We set the table with our fancy wine glasses, black table cloth, napkins, candles and fall table decorations. We really like to make the table extra special; after all, we are inviting our beloved dead to dine with us.

(cont)

If trick-or-treat falls on Samhain then I try to time the meal so it is finished after the candy raid. We love it when this happens and always incorporate it into our personal celebration. Grandma stays home and passes out candy while my husband and I take our daughter out and mingle with the neighborhood goblins, princesses and other assorted creatures. We talk to the kids and parents and have lots of fun. When we get home there is always the official “checking out the candy booty” time. It’s very exciting stuff!



After that flurry of activity settles, we take time to breath and center ourselves. We create sacred space and invite our ancestors to join us for the feast. We always put the first serving of every food on a plate for the ancestors and they get the first drink of a fresh bottle of cider or mead. Back before we had a child, this meal was eaten in silent reflection. After you have a child, there isn’t a lot of silence, so we found a new way to have this dinner. We always have photo albums near by and as we eat, we reminisce, share memories, tell their stories, laugh, cry and just enjoy our time with them. It is truly magical and I always feel touched by their memories and their presence.



When dinner is finished we place the ancestor plate on the altar. We stay up late, usually watching Halloween specials on the discovery channel. Before we go to bed, we thank our honored dead for joining us. We place the foods from the ancestor plate outside and we blow out the candle. I can’t think of a better way to share time with those we love who have moved on from this world.

"Harvest Time"

By: Jan Krueger

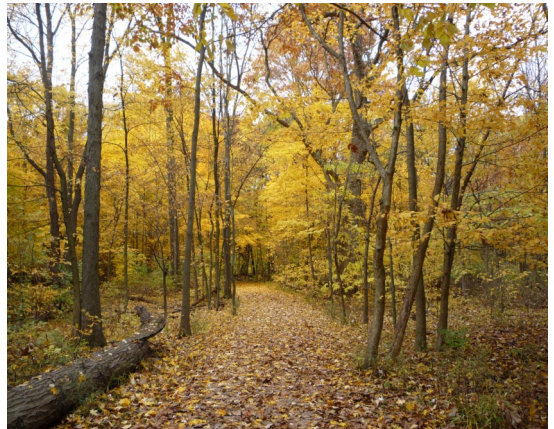
There's a doe in the forest,
A rustle 'mongst the trees.
A bird flits from her nest;
A squirrel scitters 'cross the leaves.

There's a vision in the sky,
And voices in the wind
Telling me to let them fly,
All those reservations that have been.

Your back is to the sycamore,
And hooves upon the ground.
I know who that smile's for,
Just take a look around.

My wild eyes long to see
What my mind already knows.
The Lady walks among the
trees;
Her feet whisper through the
grove.

Heavy breaths of passion
Fill the autumn air.
Watch the Lord of the Sun
Overtake the Maiden Fair.



The sunlight plays upon Her
Like a fawn upon the grass.
If only one could hope to lure
The times like these to last.

Time rolls on, and seasons turn
Yet we shall not lament.
Soon the Lady shall return
For naught is permanent.

Running With Trees

Part 7

By Shawneen

Now, we move on to the next two “trees” in our Ogham forest, the Vine and the Ivy. In this case, both of our “trees” are, in fact, vines. The Vine and the Ivy are the first and second fews of the third Aicme.

Vine

Our first forest dweller is the Grape Vine, *Vitis vinifera*, this plant is not a native of the British Isles and so has been challenged as to its authenticity as the plant to represent this few. It is my opinion, from the number of incidences of wine use in religious and secular occasions among the Celtic peoples that the importance of wine is beyond question. As such it makes perfect sense that the Celts would have chosen a grape vine as one of their sacred “trees”



Grapes have been grown for both food and wine production since ancient times. Artifacts, including flagons and cauldrons for the ceremonial/celebratory serving of wine, date to the Le Tene period and before in the Celtic timeline. It is thought that the obtaining of wine by the Celts from southern Europe led to the Celts erupting onto the southern European scene in history. There are accounts of the “keltoi barbarians” drinking their wine without diluting it with water.



It seems clear that at least one function of this plant for the Celts was as a mood and consciousness altering substance. In this light, the few of Muin (pronounced moo-in) is interpreted as a few of inspiration and prophesy. It also carries the message of exhilaration. It can also be seen as a sign of inhibition

(or lack thereof) depending the overall sense of the reading. Indeed, the loosening of the tongue may be one reason why another of the few's meanings is of communication. Communication can be between humans and otherworld kindreds in the case of prophesy or between humans in the case of uninhibited (or inhibited) speech. The few is formed by a single stroke that bisects the stem line at an angle from the upper left to the lower right.

The plant is a deciduous perennial vine, with stringy bark on its mature vines and has broad lobed, toothed and roughly pentagonal leaves. Its rough textured leaves are light green in the summer and turn shades of russets and purples in the fall. Grape vines are long lived and some rootstocks are hundreds of years old. As you might imagine, grape cultivation has been known of for thousands of years. In my garden, I have trained some of the vine to grow in a natural wreath.

Ivy



The next few, also a vine, is the evergreen perennial known commonly as English Ivy or *Hedera helix*. It has spread throughout the world both as an ornamental and as a form of fodder for livestock. As its scientific name implies, this plant grows in a helical pattern. Its glossy leaves exhibit a roughly pentagonal shape on the young

stems and a more round shape on older, more mature plants. The habit of the older stems is more branch-like compared to the trailing spiral of the younger stems. To see good examples of the younger and older habits of this plant in central Ohio, one may visit the Franklin Park Conservatory. Examine the ivy growing on the trees to the southwest and northwest of their Palm house exterior. In my personal grove, the ivy fills the beds it shares with the Holly. The two glossy evergreens have adorned my Yuletides for many years.

Many of the word ogham meanings for this few refer to the ivy being used as a source for forage for cattle. As a vigorously growing evergreen, the plant served as a late fall and overwinter source of food for the herds. In a time when few other plants could be found to serve as such, Ivy probably was seen as a vital resource.

It is in its habits of growth however, that I think the oracular meanings of the Ivy few can be best understood. The helix can be seen as a repeating, yet ever changing metaphor for ones life trajectory. With each year of our lives, certain events in the year wheel repeat but with each cycle there is (hopefully) change and growth. We can take comfort in the sameness while striving for refinement and advancement. Our lives seldom travel strictly from point A to B. With each turning, we mature and the patterns formed in youth can be seen as the basis of our habits as we grow. By living our virtues, these habits come to more fully express our character. Perhaps it is understandable that our flexibility as youths gives way to the more ingrained and strongly expressed traits of later life. We must be on guard however, that we don't become too rigid and brittle. As with all things, a balance should be sought.

The Ivy can be seen then as a sign of the spiral nature of our lives. It can serve as a reminder that we don't move in a linear fashion, but in a cyclical and circuitous manner. Its presence in a reading can signal to us that it's time to examine (or re-examine) our path. The few of Ivy is a sign that we need to look for the repeating patterns as well as the direction of growth in our lives. This few is formed by two strokes bisecting the central line (also at an angle).



It is interesting to note that the Thyrsus, the wand or club carried by Dionysian Satyrs and Maenads was depicted as being entwined with both grape and ivy vines. Its shaft was a symbol of the farm (a species of giant fennel) and its tip a forest symbol (the pine cone). There is some evidence to suggest that a mixture of the two vines formed the basis of the psychotropic wines that the followers of Dionysus consumed.

Plant it forward!

Grief and Reclamation: Samhain is a time for healing

Each High Day symbolizes a new process in our lives; whether it's the beginning or end of a harvest, or a day to revel in the abundance and joy of fertility, we all come to understand the importance behind meaning and essential needs that each celebration encompasses. Samhain is most often attributed to being a close to the year and a chance to step forward anew; it is a time when the veil between our world and the next is thinnest.

Why, then, would we seek to bring grief into a time that would otherwise be seen as joyful?

A part of the process of ending and beginning is recognizing those two primal forces. We remember our Ancestors at this time of year especially, and in doing so we remember their lives and their deaths; it is in this that grief, which in my opinion is a never-dissipating process, allows us strength and a chance to reclaim our history and our story - as if we are poised above a book about our own lives, coming to the close of another chapter and setting ink for the new.

How can we use this High Day and Grief to heal?

Healing through grief allows us to learn a simple lesson: How to Live again. When we grieve, we often do so with a purpose: to learn the lesson(s) meant to accompany the grief of the situation, and in that learning, to find closure. Too often, however, the lesson goes unnoticed; closure never comes. We linger, and we find ourselves drawn back to the issue the same time next year, and the year after - becoming entangled in a cycle that is viciously hard to break without coming to a realization and a finality.

At this time, when the veil is thinnest, is the opportunity to share with those who have passed on the grief that we so often desire closure for. It is a time when we can believe and focus on Samhain being the marker for an ending; although not permanent, rather one of closure so that we go forward with the knowledge that we have healed our inner hearts, which become less

clouded for the work and the time ahead.

Marcus Aurelius was a Roman Emperor from 161 to 180 who wrote *Meditations*, a collection that has become a living history of literary excellence on the topics of duty, service, and virtue.

I was led to Book 1 of his *Meditations* by fellow ADF member Michel Daw, as I struggled to find closure with several deaths and losses that have occurred to me in the past three years. In Book 1, Marcus Aurelius lists influential people within his life and the examples they have taught him about life and virtue. (Book 1 can be found at Michel's blog, *The Stoic Life*)

https://sites.google.com/site/thestoiclife/the_teachers/maurus-aurelius/meditations/01#16

Michel suggested that I take a page (proverbially, of course) and write a reflection of my gratitude for each person I have lost - what they taught me, what I learned from their time in my life, and how important they were to the overall person that is here today.

Before being introduced to this exercise, I was unsteady, unsure and hesitant to write.

I felt like I was stuck with no words to say; no inspiration. Once I began to write, I found that it was hard to stop. While grief poured from my eyes, it poured from my pen as well, allowing me the opportunity to write from the heart and soul - giving my Ancestors the words they deserved to be described as, and allowing me to pen thoughts to them directly and share my very inner feelings. It was cathartic, and it was closure.

My expressions went into our Ancestor's box. It stands as a tribute and a testament to my loved ones, and it has brought a firm sense of completion to this year - and brings me looking towards the future, where I may celebrate with my Ancestors in the closure we have found - together.

-Bonnie Cyr



Recipes from the Kitchen of Skarlett ~

Curried Pumpkin-Chicken Soup

- 3 Quarts of chicken stock
- 2 Cups canned pumpkin
- 2 Boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 2 Boneless skinless chicken thighs
- 3 Finely chopped Celery Stalks
- 2 Large carrots sliced
- 2 Large Finely Chopped onions
- 3 teaspoons curry powder
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- Salt and Pepper to taste

Cube chicken, then add all ingredients save for the curry powder, salt and pepper, to the pot and bring to a boil. Turn it down and let it slowly simmer for an hour or till chicken is tender. Stir in curry powder and salt and pepper it to taste. Serve hot.

The First Ancestor

By Nicholas Egelhoff

This story is true.

Long ago, after the worlds had been shaped from the body of that Ancient Etin, Oðinn and his two brothers were walking along the shore of Miðgarð. As they traveled, they came across two pieces of drift-wood that had washed up on the sands. The trio decided to make something from the wood, and so they crafted the first human beings - Askr and Embla - giving them form, speech, reason, and spirit.

The two begat many children and lived quite long; longer than most of their children and grandchildren, for they had come from trees, of course, and shared in some of that longevity. But one day, after many years, Askr woke to feel a stirring in his aged-being, but knew not what it might be.

The elderly patriarch felt compelled to go walk in the fields and forests near his home, and so he set out that day with a thick staff of Ash in hand to help him in his meandering. He walked for several hours, up and down hills, across streams and through meadows. And after a time, he began to feel tired. He had a hard time catching his breath. His chest and arm ached. Askr decided to sit down on a smooth, rounded boulder that lay near a stout, ancient tree, if only to try and catch his wind again.

He closed his eyes briefly, feeling the weight of his lids growing heavier, and when he opened them again, Askr saw that he was no longer alone. A man stood nearby, in the shade of the trees. He wore a long, hooded cloak and had a thick, grey beard. In his hands, he held a staff similar to the one that Askr carried.

Askr leapt to his feet in surprise, but the other held up a pacifying hand. The bearded man greeted him, and when he spoke, Askr caught a glimpse of the man's one eye.

“Blessed Alfoðr, Mighty Shaper, for what reason do you grace me with your presence?” Askr said.

“I am here to guide you on to your new home Askr,” Oðinn replied.

“New home’?” the man questioned.

The Hooded-One nodded. “Indeed. You have passed beyond the mortal world this day, and cannot return. Not as you once did, in any case.”

“I do not understand,” Askr replied.

Oðinn nodded passed the mortal man’s shoulder. “Turn and look.”

When Askr turned, he found himself staring at...himself. Slumped on the boulder, still and unmoving. Fearful, he looked at Oðinn.

“You have died, Askr. As all things do. Come with me now.” And with that, Oðinn turned and walked off into the trees. Numbly, Askr followed. Oðinn led the man to the entrance of a cave in the side of a hill and produced a lamp from within the shadows of his long cloak. They walked deep within the cave in silence, descending through tunnels, and though it must have become colder the further they traveled, Askr felt no chill upon his skin.

Suddenly, the silence was broken by the sound of a low growling in the darkness. Oðinn stopped and held the lamp outward, reaching into his cloak once more. In the darkness, two eyes appeared, reflecting the light of the All-Father’s lamp, and the growling continued. Oðinn withdrew two honey-cakes and set them at his feet. A moment passed, the growling ceased, and a form slunk into the circle of lamp-light. It was a dog, a massive beast, and jet-black in color. It gobbled up the honey-cakes and before long was sitting at Oðinn’s feet, looking expectantly upward at the Hooded-One, as if waiting for more. The hoary-bearded god placed one more cake on the ground in front of the dog, patted the beast on the head,

and lead Askr onward.

“What was that dog doing here, so deep within the bosom of the Earth?” the man asked.

“Garm guards the Gate, keeping the dead within and the living without, and making sure that none - at least, none who are not supposed to - cross the boundary,” Oðinn replied.

They continued downward until they entered a vast cavern, whose walls and ceiling were lost in the darkness. A darkness which was punctured by dim lights off in the distance. As they walked, Askr suddenly became aware that they were traveling on a cobblestoned road; and as they grew closer to them, he saw that the lights were torch-lights, situated in tall clay lamp-posts.

Though it must have been a great distance, the journey seemed to pass quickly, and Askr was surprised at how quickly they came to a bridge that spanned a mighty river. On the other side, he could see the dim outline of a grand hall. A figure appeared on the bridge and stopped them not long after they had set foot upon it.

“Stop!” the tall, stout figure barked. “Who seeks entrance to the Hall of Hel?”

“Beauteous and ravishing Moðguð,” the All-Father said with a sweeping motion of his hands. “I am simply escorting this distinguished soul into the care and hospitality of your mistress.”

The giantess stood up straighter. “Is this him?” she asked Oðinn, and the Hooded-One nodded in reply. “By all means then, please enter.” And with that, she stepped aside and let them continue.

When they finally stepped off of the bridge, Askr saw a monolithic hall before them. As they approached, its mighty double doors were pulled open by twin teams of pale, dark-bearded men and warm light poured out from within. Oðinn led Askr inside the great hall and the man saw fires burning in several hearths, there were

mighty trestle tables laden with food, and music filled the air emanating from instruments wielded by more spirits of the Deep Earth. At the end of the great hall was a raised dais, upon which stood a throne, and seated on the throne was a young woman.

Oðinn and Askr crossed the intervening distance quickly and each knelt briefly before the seated woman. “Uncle,” the woman said, inclining her head to the All-Father. “Renowned Askr of Miðgarð.” She made a similar bow of her head to the mortal man.

“Blessed Lady Hel, I have brought your guest to your hall as agreed,” Odin said, gesturing to Askr.

“Thank you, Wise Uncle,” Hel replied. “You have my gratitude and hospitality. You will always be welcome within my realm.” She turned to Askr. “Noble Askr, First of Men, welcome to my Hall, may you find it a restful and inviting home during your stay. I apologize for the lack of guests at the present, you are the first of many to arrive.”

Askr voiced his thankfulness to the Lady, but he was still unsure of everything that was happening. He was given free-reign to wander about the hall and he took that freedom. Many days and weeks passed and Askr slowly began to acclimatize to his new home. One day, he was surprised to find a gleaming shield and sword resting on one of the trestle tables, neither of which had been there before.

He asked Hel about the objects. “They are yours,” she said. “They are gifts from your family.”

“How does my family know that I am here?” he asked.

Hel smiled and gestured to a basin of water that sat on a pedestal near her throne and Askr looked down into it. In its waters, he saw a grassy field with a great mound rising up from it. “Your family found your corpse in the forest where you had died,” Hel explained. “They raised a great mound and buried you inside it,

Noble Askr. They laid the shield and sword, along with other gifts, inside with you.”

“How did they end up here?”

“They are yours now,” Hel replied. “If they are offered up to you as such, they will come to you no matter where your journey takes you.”

More gifts came as the weeks passed: trinkets and weapons, casks of mead food. In time, a cloak and staff Askr, and Hel the First Man a job within as the All-come and the Under-world now do newly dead. Miðgarð once gladly took up ferrying souls Descendants did not recognize first to follow the Earth, but bla and their Askr there, along with many others that the First Man had known in his mortal life.



and plates of deep-hooded appeared for explained that had been given her court. Much Father had well-guided him into world, Askr that for the Eager to see the again, Askr the mantle of into Hel’s Hall. of his that Askr nize were the him deep into eventually, Em-children joined

And they feasted, and they laughed, and all was well.

Thesmophoria

By Irisa MacKenzie

Attik festivals to Demeter revolved around the agricultural year. Thesmophoria, thought to be one of the earliest Greek festivals, lasting a minimum of three days, was a festival in honor of Demeter Thesmophoros (law-giver to those who work the land). This was thought to be a secret woman's festival to honor Demeter and Persephone. Along with Demeter's supervision of fertility of the people and the land. Married women specifically honored the goddess at this time and focused on fertility of the womb.

Thesmophoria was considered the most important of all Demeter's rites. This honored the third of the year when Demeter mourned the loss of her daughter Persephone and allowed all agriculture and vegetation to die. The first day of ritual was procession to sacred space, most likely on the hillside of the Pnyx in Athens. Two women were elected to preside over the rites and it was decreed that women must remain chaste during the time of festival. Crowns were forbidden, as was the eating of pomegranate seeds that fell to the earth.

The second day of festival women made beds from an aphrodisiac plants, fasted and imitated Demeter's mourning for Persephone. In the city no public business was done nor sacrifices made. The final day of festival included a feast and torch-light ceremony, as Demeter searched for Persephone by torch.

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Of Warriors

~ Bonnie Cyr

enduring the heat
the soundless breath of the
day
even strong men sleep

warriors of Earth
even weakness can mean
strength
all call Mother home

those in the valley
go where old home was before
strengthening themselves

what days will come here
the least of all will reign free
as all stand in strength

even in these times
in the still of the Mother
grown men are still small

Bardic Invocation to Odin

By: Diane "Emerald" Bronowicz

Hail Odin, Keeper of Lore
Storyteller, myth-weaver, wandering bard
One-eyed traveler, we open our door
Be welcome in our hall
Be welcome at our fire
A horn is filled for you.

Hail Odin, Keeper of Lore
Storyteller, myth-weaver, wandering bard
One-eyed traveler, we open our hearts
Enliven our minds
Enliven our tongues
Let the mead of inspiration flow.

Hail Odin, be welcome among us!

Earth Mother, our mother
You who nourish us, clothe us and shelter us
I give you praise and devotion.

Garanus Crane, transformer
You who wards us, teaches us and leads us
I give you praise and devotion.

To the Kindred of my heart and bones,
Mind and soul,
Hearth and home,
Kith and Grove
I give you praise and devotion.

I thank you for the blessings in my life.
Health and happiness
Family and love.
Friends and work.

I pledge my head, my heart and my hands to the
work of ADF, the folk and the land.

May I be an example of my virtues.

I give the sacrifice of self, accept my sacrifice.



Rev. James "Seamus" Dillard

Home Shrine

A Dedicant Essay by Abigail Dow

We decided to set up a family home shrine, although individual shrines may also be set up at a later time. We spent quite a bit of time discussing where we would place it. It was originally set up in the bay window of our dining room and we would decorate the area with the seasons. This seemed to work out well at first but our cats decided it was in their way and often knocked over the tree. We decided we needed a different place for our home shrine.

We have a hallway that has a “bumped out” area that we never used for anything. It faces North East and we decided that this was the perfect spot for our family home shrine. It is in a spot that every family member passes daily. Also my husband, being Norse pagan, likes to have his altars in the North and the rest of us tend to like to place our altars in the east. A northeast location seemed like the perfect compromise

The first thing we did was paint the area a deep beige color called Hazelnut cream. We took an old computer table out of storage and covered it with green fabric and green lace. We placed totes underneath that we are using to store other ritual items such as candles and incense. Eventually I would like to use something prettier.

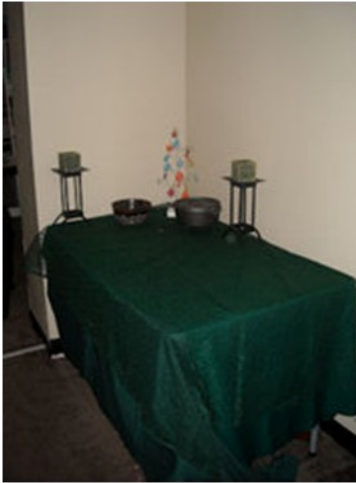


The well is a beautiful clay bowl a good friend made for me about 20 years ago as a Yule gift. I love that bowl and always wanted to use it for something more special than holding

fruit on the table. When I look into that bowl filled with water, it reminds me of an old well that goes deep into the ground. My family agreed that it would



make a great well for our home shrine. I think we may purchase a small mirror to place on the bottom for that reflective quality.



I have several small cauldrons that I have used over the years. My issue with most of them is that they are too small so several years ago I purchased a Dutch oven for the job. We decided to use it for our home shrine fire. It's a nice size and can hold both candles and incense.

Our tree is a white "Easter" tree that I purchased along with spring ornaments many years ago at a craft store. We decided it would make a lovely home shrine tree. We tend to decorate it with the seasons so we could continue this tradition on our home shrine. *(In the*

photos it was decorated with paper sun's, stars, and flowers)

Also on the altar are a couple of decorative green candles and my husband's valknut. We want to add representations for the ancestors and the nature spirits but are still deciding what those representations should be.

We also want to add art work or maybe even create a tree sculpture right on the wall. We will probably add four shelves, one for each family member, to add their own personal items. It is very much still a work in progress as we learn and grow on our dedicant paths.



Busy Summer Daze by Rev. James "Seamus" Dillard

The air has turned cooler at night, the trees have already begun to turn and I know that summer has faded and autumn has arrived. I sit here and think about where the summer went and I must admit it was a busy one for me. Here is a quick travel log of how I spent my summer. I hope everyone else had a great time frolicking in sun. I know I did...

Trillium Spring Festival - Apr 15-18, 2010; Cross Junction, VA



I had a great trip down to the festival traveling with Rev. Michael J Dangler and it was a great event. I was lucky enough to see Rev. Crystal Groves consecrated that weekend. I also got a chance to catch up with people I don't get to see often. It was a might bit chilly at night but a wonderful time. I presented a workshop on "The Order of the Crane" and also got a chance to sit in on Michael's workshop on "Chaos Magic."

The Medieval & Renaissance Faire at The Ohio State University – May 1, 2010; Columbus, Oh

Out third year of being a part of this event. We once again did Druid readings and staffed an information booth. It was raining early in the day but we had a great time and all in all another good avenue for outreach.

Fires of Aisling Pagan Arts and Music Fest – May 16, 2010; Reynoldsburg, Oh

This was a neat local event that highlighted some wonderfully talented artist. I presented a workshop on "Basic Elements of Ritual" and did a community style ritual that added elements of Asatru', Wicca, Native American and ADF style Druidry.



Wellspring Festival - May 27-31, 2010; Sherman, NY

Another year and another wonderful Well-spring, Stone Creed Grove always makes this festival a great time. Rev. Jessie Olsen did a "Fallen Warrior" ritual and built a warrior shrine at the ADF Nemeton. I was honored to help with some of the pre ritual work for Rev. Kirk Thomas' ordination. I also had parts for the main sumbel and did a workshop on oaths.



ComFest (Columbus Community Festival) June 25 – 27, 2010: Columbus Ohio

Three Cranes once again had an information booth at the festival and we performed mini rituals every three hours at the booth and hung out and answered questions. Sunday morning we held a Summer Solstice Ritual and for the first time was "officially" on the schedule.

Brushwood SummerFest – July 19 – 25, 2010; Sherman, NY

This is the new festival at Brushwood that replaced the moved Starwood Festival. The festival was smaller than Starwood and maybe even Sirius Rising Festival and it comes on the tail end of three weeks in a row of pagan festivals so the mood was subdued. It was a nice festival and ADF had a druid track of workshops that included daily devotional rituals. I did three workshops, one on piety, another one on the Warriors Guild and the third one on the different sub groups (Guilds, Kins, SIGs and Orders) in ADF.

Dublin Irish Festival – August 7-9, 2010; Dublin, Oh



After a few years of meetings and a lot of work by April Ford and others we were honored to perform our ritual on stage at the Dublin Irish Festival. We had a few hundred people get up early on a Sunday morning and join us at this ritual. It was a great event and I am so very proud of all the Crane-kin who worked hard at rehearsals etc to make sure we put our best foot forward. It showed the power and magic of ADF and our core

order of ritual and shows the promise of a future when we have groves performing rituals for hundreds of people all the time.

Summerland Gathering – August 19-21, 2010; Yellow Springs, Oh

This year's Summerland was a bittersweet event. The Cranes had reason to celebrate as Michael finished the third circle of the clergy training, I was presented in ritual as clergy and took the vow of ADF clergy and Nick completed his work in the IP and fulfilled his oath. The bitter part was the passing of Isaac before the event and the Bonewits right memorial ritual that kicked off the festival. I am proud to have had a small part in the memorial ritual and was equally proud of ADF for a GREAT and moving ritual. I once again had the opportunity to do pre-ritual work for Rev. Michael J Dangler for his ordination. I was able to continue and build on the work we did for Rev. Kirk at Wellspring.



Crane-Fest Private Retreat – Sept. 10-12, 2010; Ostrander, Oh

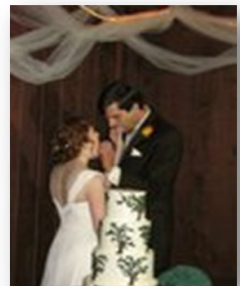
This was a nice change of pace after working most festivals and being very public this was like a family reunion. We had 20 or so cranes get together for the weekend and camping out, hanging out and just relaxing. Thorn wrote a very nice 911 memorial ritual and we did some private grove journeying. The focus this year was Celtic and next year is Norse...this was just a wonderful weekend. We also held a yearly business meeting type thing on Sunday morning to allow for a more intense, yet relaxed (no time limits) discussion.

Earth Warriors Festival – Sept. 23-26, 2010; Clarksville, Oh

This year was hard for me because I had to drive down and back due to work. I did enjoy me time there and Heather and the gang always do a top notch job. I was asked to do the closing ritual and once again pulled the community ritual out from earlier in the year. I felt like I was really in the groove on this one. The Kindred really helped me.

Crane-kin Wedding (Michael Dangler and Maggie Collins) Oct. 2, 2010 Columbus, Oh

It was a great summer and I was very blessed to spend so much time with so many wonderful people. I love me ADF family and my Crane-kin. The perfect ending to the summer was being asked to perform that wedding for Michael and Maggie. It was just a beautiful wedding and day. Two great people who deserve each other and a lifetime of happiness! Most people said it was a good ceremony and in the end it was, but I know I screwed up a few little things, nothing that wasn't fixed with a side-step and a few words. Michael and I were probably the only two to even notice. He wrote most of the service and I added the fluffy parts in between to fill it out and make it personal.



Up next for me is the Clergy Retreat October 15-17, 2010 and Samhain with Skarlett and Richard's wedding. Another wonderful couple that I am honored to asked to perform their ceremony. This year has seen many rites of passage for the cranes and for ADF. The passing of Issac, the ordination of Kirk and Michael, a new Archdruid, the grove having people growing into different roles and finishing different study programs, weddings and romances, the sound of children laughing in ritual...like many years there is good and bad and winds of change continue to blow through our grove. I know we are deeply rooted in our piety and love for one another and we can and will weather the storms and celebrate the blue skys and happy days. Everyone have a great winter, use this time to refill the cauldron of your soul. To reflect and turn inward to rest and ready yourself for next year and another wonderful year of festivals and fellowship.

Let us pray with a good fire!
Rev. James "Seamus" Dillard



Mintha's Mouth

by: Melissa S Burchfield
2010 Wellspring Bardic Chair Competition

Many of you may not know, but before Persephone was taken down to the Underworld by Lord Hades, Hades had shared his bed with a Nymph named Mintha. Mintha, as you can well imagine, was none too pleased when Hades brought Persephone down and crowned her as Queen of the realm!

"Look at her," she scoffed in her jealousy. "She is not nearly as desirable as I! I don't know what he sees in her! I am of far nobler form and more excellent is my beauty. My hips are more shapely, my breasts are more succulent, and my lips make men who've never touched me cry. I surpass her in every way!"

On and on she went, raving about her superiority, and making excuses for Hades, for she loved him dearly even still. "Poor Hades, dear," she mused. "He is so caught up in this foolishness! Just you wait. As soon as he realizes his mistake, he will banish her from his side and return to my arms where he belongs! Why, I wouldn't be surprised if he returned to me after he beds her but once. No mere girl is a match for my skills of amorous pleasure."

One unfortunate day, Mintha was overheard ranting and squawking about Persephone's inferiority by the Queen herself.

"Mintha, you look lovely today," Persephone greeted her with a smile. Mintha was startled by the sound of her voice, for she assumed the Queen to be well out of earshot.

“Why, thank you,” Mintha replied and added under her breath “I wish I could say the same for you.”

Persephone was familiar with Mintha’s retorts and was not surprised when Mintha simply walked on, mumbling to herself, for her ill feelings consumed her. Persephone giggled to herself as she envisioned the Naiad green with envy, and she thought, “I know just how to rid myself of her inane babbling and continuous insults.” Persephone held in her mind’s eye an image of the Naiad. She blew her magic across her hands, and a stream of silvery light enveloped Mintha, shrinking her smaller and smaller and turning her greener and greener until Persephone picked her up and completed her transformation into a beautiful and fragrant mint plant. Carefully, she pushed her up through the soil, past the bedrock and clay and roots and worms and topsoil until she popped out above in the Middlerealm, smack in the middle of Demeter’s garden. Mintha shook her leafy head with a screech and a new string of foul words flew from her mouth now fueled by anger. Below, all Persephone heard was a faint mumbling grumble.

“There you are, darling,” she sang. “Now you have a full and captive audience to listen to how wrongly you have been treated and how much better than me you are. Ta!” She closed off the hole, and walked away, happily whistling to herself.

Now, Persephone’s mother, Demeter, whose love for her daughter is fierce and unending, heard of the torrent of insults being spewed at her daughter, and she became furious!

“How dare she!” she cried. “I will put a stop to this once and for all!” Demeter marched right over to the garden, and when she ar

rived, what she saw infuriated her further, because the mint was spreading like wild already! Her carefully cultivated herbs and beautiful flowers were drooping and weak from Mintha's overwhelming presence.

"What nerve!" cried Demeter, whose patience had been spent. She stomped her to dust, and Mintha was no more.

Moral of the story: Do not overcrowd the garden with negativity, lest you invite the foot of a Goddess to land on your head.



Apple Cider Slushy
Contribution from: Abigail Dow

Halloween 2007 was unseasonably warm so I decided to make apple cider slushy instead of hot mulled cider. Early in the day I made several trays of ice cubes from cider and used those with chilled apple cider in a blender to make a slushy-smoothie drink. Garnish with apple and enjoy! It was yum and hit the spot after trick or treat

Thorne's Thoughts

By Thorne aka Michael Dorn



The Leslie Dauterman Award for Contributions to the Pagan Community

Three Cranes Grove, ADF recently awarded The Leslie Dauterman Award to two individuals this year at our anniversary ritual. Initially established by the now defunct Pagan Community Council of Ohio (PCCO), the Dauterman Award was established in memory of Leslie Payne Dauterman and her contributions to the Central Ohio Pagan Community. With the blessings of the last board of officers from PCCO and several award winners, Three Cranes Grove, ADF has taken responsibility for awarding the Leslie P. Dauterman Award to those individuals who have proven to be concerned for promoting the Central Ohio Pagan Community.

This year's awardees are Cynthia Hartline who runs the monthly Witches Meetup Meetings and the annual Pagan Pride gathering which allow the Central Ohio Pagan Community to come together in an open and non-threatening manner; and April Ford who has become a driving force in the Central Ohio Pagan Community and was very helpful in Three Cranes Grove, ADF being able to provide a Druidic Sunday Service at the 2010 Dublin Irish Festival on August 8th 2010.

The Call for the Crane-kin Cookbook

Calling all Crane-kin! Do you have an excellent recipe that you make for potlucks? Do you make a brilliant breakfast omelet? Do you have drink recipes galore? Well, I know just what you should do: write them down and send them to Jan for the Crane-kin Cookbook.

So, whether it's a recipe you've developed, or your favorite dish, or a family recipe, please send me those recipes! The more the better. Be sure to include a name for your dish, the name of the person it's from, especially if it's not you who developed and perfected the recipe, but a family member, the category (entree, side, dessert, beverage, etc) and the designation (vegetarian, vegan, GFCF, etc.) you see it belonging to. When writing down the recipe be sure to include a list of ingredients, thorough directions, and if possible how much the recipe makes/serves.

Contact Jan at skylark913@gmail.com

In order to get your taste buds watering and your inspiration to write down a recipe, I've included one for your cooking and devouring pleasure.

Buckeyes (the candy, not the people)



Make about 5 dozen (or more)

- 1 ½ cups creamy peanut butter
 - 1 cup butter, softened
 - ½ tsp vanilla extract
 - 6 cups confectioners' (powdered) sugar
 - 4 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
1. In a large bowl, mix together the peanut butter, butter, vanilla and confectioners' sugar. The dough will look dry. Roll into 1 inch balls and place on a waxed paper-lined cookie sheet.
 2. Press a toothpick into the top of each ball (to be used later as the handle for dipping) and chill in freezer until firm, about 30 minutes. You can wait to put the toothpicks in one by one as you dip, but you risk splitting the frozen concoction down the middle.
 3. Melt chocolate chips in a double boiler or in a bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water. Stir frequently until smooth. Do not let water touch the chocolate or the chocolate will seize and you'll have to start over. Be patient in this step, it is important to go slow and take your time.
 4. Dip frozen peanut butter balls in chocolate holding onto the toothpick. Leave a small portion of peanut butter showing at the top to make them look like buckeyes. Put back on the cookie sheet and refrigerate until serving.



Crystal Skull Shamanic Healing
Michelle Lee Handa - Lightwork Visions
Universal Light Expo 2010, Columbus, OH
 written by Bonnie Cyr

This past weekend I had the chance to ring in my birthday in special style—at the Universal Light Exposition in Columbus, Ohio. For vendors, this weekend showcases a rare opportunity to focus on a crowd that is in attendance for the fun and energy of being surrounded by so many faith, healing, and metaphysical workers. There are workshops, panels, and booths, all run, maintained, and led by some of the world’s top researchers, adventurers, and scholars.

Michelle Handa is a member of Sassafras Grove, ADF - and a researcher and practitioner of Hypnotherapy (she is a Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist), Reiki (Reiki Master) and offers Shamanic Healing Sessions with the help of her Crystal Skull, Rain. When I realized Michelle would be giving a class at ULE, I was very excited. But then I said to myself: “Self? So what is Crystal Skull Healing, exactly? How does it work? I’m confused. Her booth is full of skulls, and skulls sometimes make me uneasy with connotations of death and, well...death. So..Healing? I love Druids, and I’m a healer, but...skulls?”

What I learned was that Crystals (Crystal Skulls, in this case) have the ability to store a lot of energy in them (understatement.) and that some of the Crystal Skulls have been around for “who knows how long”. Rain, Michelle’s crystal skull has spent time with Synergy, a Crystal Skull that is believed to be from very ancient times (<http://www.crystal-skulls.com/>). As I learned in Michelle’s workshop, all Crystal Skulls have the potential to do things, like: Focus, Reflect, Attune, Transmit, Transform, Store, and Amplify, Energy.

Think of it as a computer before computers were ever invented or even thought of. Crystals lingered in the rocks, absorbing the history and energies of generations and ages, silent witnesses to the past and bridges to the future. Tribes and Ancients passed objects such as Crystal Skulls down for generations, and each generation’s time in essence flows through such objects, preserving them further. The idea that individuals can “tap into” the energies of crystals and be in-tuned with the energies around them is such an amazing thought, and there is a conscious thought that by doing so, we may be able through a meditative state and a mutual energetic relationship to learn more about ourselves and the world around us. As Michelle pointed out in her class - Crystal Skulls don’t make us do anything, but they can affect the way we view the world and its energy - just like other Crystals, gems and artifacts can allow us to deepen our mindset on the energies that exist in this plane.



Michelle pressed on with a power-point presentation, discussing how a person can begin working with Crystal Skulls; She introduced meditative breath to the class and took us on a short, meditative (read: Two Powers, ADF’ers) journey and then opened up a panel for discussion about Crystal Skulls and questions from the crowd. Where before I had been struggling to understand the

concepts, Michelle had clearly introduced Crystal Skulls as another tool for insight and meditation that is both a powerful meditative practice and a bond between a person and the energies that flow through all living things; she placed a genuine and enlightening perspective on an icon so “normally” viewed as a symbol of death by American society, and her class was just amazing.

Thank You, Michelle!



"An Autumn Sonnet"

By: Jan Krueger

Chill October breezes wind about me.
 Around my ankles the crisp, cold air swirls.
 Away from my lips my frosty breath curls.
 Orange, Red, Yellow leaves fall from browning trees.
 Eddies of wind go where ever they please.
 Down out of the branches an acorn hurls,
 Knocked from the paws of two chattering squirrels.
 They dash 'round the tree as fast as can be.
 Yet too soon, snow will come and food be gone.
 Now is the time to harvest the crops,
 If only in vain hope that food will last.
 The drifts of snow shall glow with morning's dawn
 As the icicles into their beds flop,
 And the seasons roll by but oh so fast.

Stonehenge or Foamhenge

~ Tamie McKenna

If the Gods ever wanted to make mankind realize how small and insignificant we are, they succeeded by creating the Blue Ridge Mountains. I love mountains you see, and standing on the mountain top being surrounded by other mountains, is perhaps the most impressive view. One that



I'll not soon forget. I felt Nature all around me and saw an old mans face in a mountain (I still say it was his penis). If those mountains had telephone service to the Gods it would be a local call.

This chain of mountains is more extensive than many realize. It begins in Canada and ends in Northern Georgia. It goes through numerous name changes along its route, and with claims of this or that name being "The Name" it is no wonder that the statement "Tis nothing but a name that differentiates us" can be applied to such diverse magnificence.

Many wonderful natural views along the Blue Ridge Mountains should be seen in

ones lifetime. For example, the oldest (1600 year old) Arbor Vitae in North America which is unfortunately now dead, the James River, and Natural Bridge where George Washington carved his initials in an early example of young person graffiti.



What should not be forgotten is a little road called Hwy 501, where tucked upon a mountain top is a piece of modern day art called Foamhenge.



What, may you ask, is Foamhenge? Long story short, it is an exact replica of Stonehenge made of foam. For those of us who have yet the privilege of seeing Stonehenge in person, or may never have the opportunity, there is perhaps an easier drive. Not to

mention dryer, which you could take. This unique setting is so grand that one needs to experience the view for ones self. There is a majestic feeling to Stonehenge, but for all of its modernity, Foamhenge does quite nicely emulate this simply by being surrounded by the beauty of the mountains.

Like the original, Foamhenge is visited by bus loads of people taking snapshots and laughing at the creativity and anecdotes posted along the uphill path. As a bonus, it is free. The magnitude of their size, what the stones looked like, and what was needed to erect them are clearly evident for any that take the time to visit. What must have been sacrificed to formulate such a meditative ceremonial space in Wiltshire, one can come close to understanding with Foamhenge. And it leaves you feeling tiny. The creator of Foam



henge goes to great lengths to describe and explain the multiple theories of how/why Stonehenge was built. Some of which are quite humorous. He duplicates all of the megaliths but none of the three outer circles of stones (the mountain top would not have been big enough).

The Nature exhibited all around you is the biggest draw, but visiting Foamhenge is just fun. There, the kids can touch and stand next to the large “stones” for the experience of something they have only read about in books, and which they would not be able to do at the real Stonehenge. For school age children this is definitely a history replication worth visiting. The drive to Virginia, from Columbus, takes about seven hours and the trip is both beautiful and simple.

Although, I would not recommend driving the mountains of Virginia at night; there are too many times your trunk will say hello to the front bumper. Along the way, take the time to visit southern Ohio and the cliff sides of West Virginia. Have fun and enjoy the trip, it will take your breath away.



*Earth Mother, your children call out to you.
When in health and when in pain,
our hearts and our minds
sing praise to your name.*

*Before us is a loved one, who's hour's drawn last breath;
but they were hardy, and stead-fast. And beloved.*

*Sky Father, your children call out to you
the sunlit star of all,
shining deeply and truly whether dark or light,
we sing praise to your name.*

*Let our fingers wander back,
to the rivers of the Well,*

*Let our minds bring forth light,
of Fire and of warmth,*

Let our bodies be one as the Everlasting Tree,

*Let energy arise from us -
healing energy, warm energy.*

*Let us heal with the powers, me and mine.
And, until we meet again,
let us be held in your depths and uplifted with your strength.*

/\

~ Bonnie Cyr

Next High Day: Yule (December 19th)

Neo-Pagan name: Yule

Gaulish name: Rivros

The winter solstice is a dark time, but a time full of hope and newness. The earth has descended into darkness, but at the moment of triumph, the darkness gives way once more to the light, and the momentum swings. It is the dawn on the morning of the winter solstice that assures us that winter cannot and will not last forever.

The ancients would celebrate in halls, or by wassailing between them. There may have been many associations with rebirth, as evidenced by the shaft of light that enters the Newgrange burial mound in Ireland. In Rome, social orders were reversed at Saturnalia. In secular America, our rituals are mostly focused around family and kindness. Gift-giving is common, as are roaring fireplaces and kisses under the mistletoe. The Grove focuses on being together and giving to those less fortunate, holding a toy drive each Yule. This year we are also including a drive for mittens, hats and scarves to help those who would otherwise do without.

Please join us for a Hellenic themed Yule located in Whetstone Park at 3 pm. See our website for more details.

Three Cranes is proud to recognize and acknowledge to achievements of the following members for this quarter:

Leesa Kern, Senior Druid ~ Completing the Dedicant Program

Melissa Burchfield, Grove Bard ~ Earned four First Circles and one Second Circle in the Bardic Guild Study Program

Go Cranes!!!!

The road that I'm walking is high,
steep and narrow;
And all that surrounds me seems hopeless
and gray.
I know far ahead is a land of bright beauty,
But I'll have to get there day by day.
The Old Gods, I know, have been there
before me.
I hear their soft whispers sometimes
when I pray.
The secrets They've taught me
all come to one answer:
I'll have to get there day by day.



From the song "The Ascent" 2001 Isaac Bonewits



Isaac Bonewits
October 1, 1949 - August 12, 2010