

THE CUUPS NEWSLETTER

Mid-Winter/ Spring 1997

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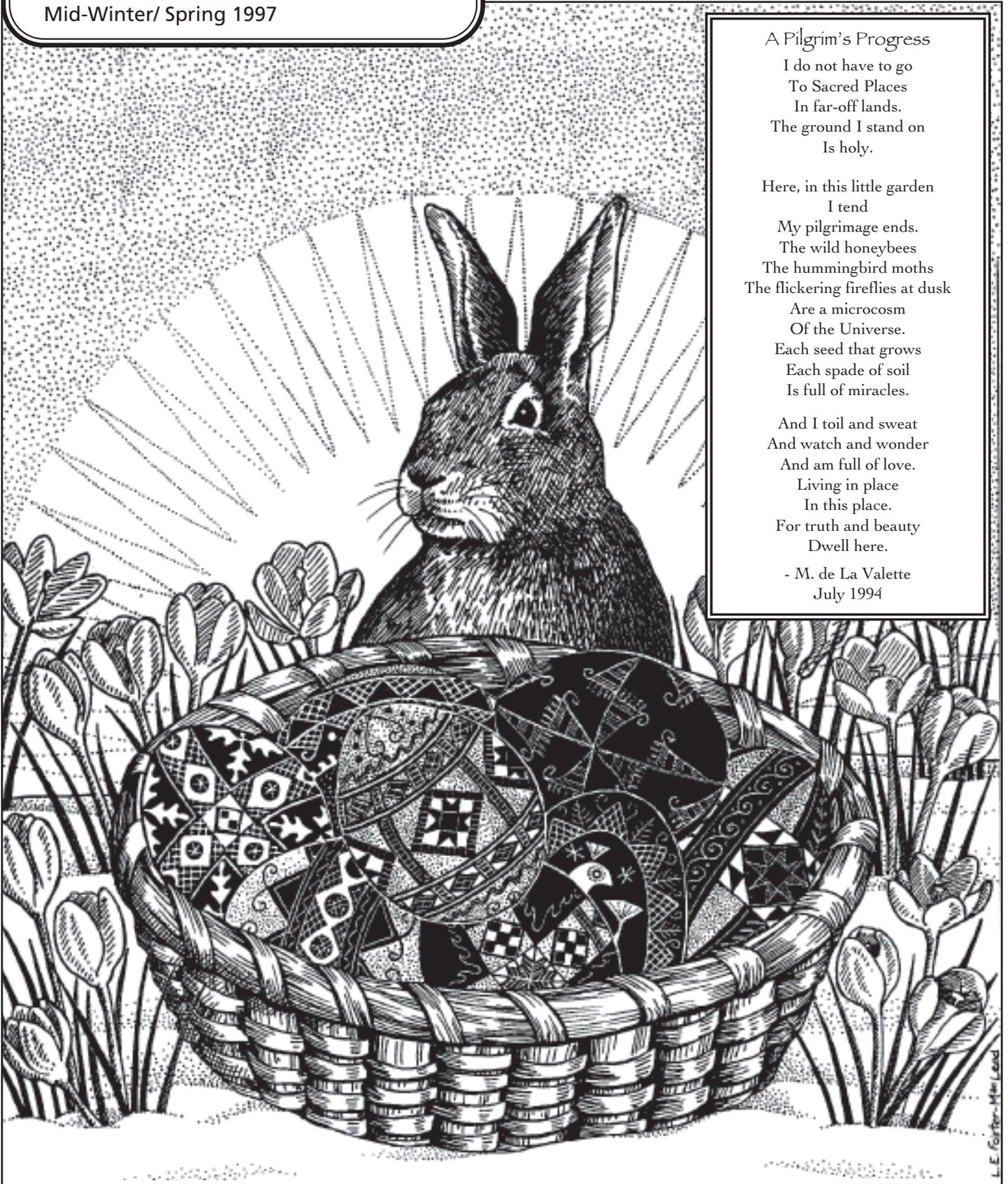
A Pilgrim's Progress

I do not have to go
To Sacred Places
In far-off lands.
The ground I stand on
Is holy.

Here, in this little garden
I tend
My pilgrimage ends.
The wild honeybees
The hummingbird moths
The flickering fireflies at dusk
Are a microcosm
Of the Universe.
Each seed that grows
Each spade of soil
Is full of miracles.

And I toil and sweat
And watch and wonder
And am full of love.
Living in place
In this place.
For truth and beauty
Dwell here.

- M. de La Valette
July 1994



L. E. Foster - Mar Land

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Universalist Pagans
Coordinating Committee**

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Convo 97 Chair*

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*Ancient cultures purposefully
added mistakes into their work
to show it to be the work of humans.
While we will work to make our
publications as good as we can
...we will always be human..*

From the Chair...

In these final days of Winter and beginning days of Spring the Coordinating Committee has been very busy creating the means by which the organization will be able to incorporate.. It is very exciting to think that we will soon be complete in carrying out the charge you the members gave us at last year's annual meeting. We have also been working to convince the UUA Board of Trustees to renew our status as an Affiliate which allows us to provide programs and an information table at General Assembly.

In this issue you will find an article regarding confidentiality issues in our organization. This along with many other past practices of the organization are being reviewed. We will be asking for your input on those which effect the members. These will be formed into written policies and procedures which will help to guide us and our growing organization. In the meantime, we do have members who have asked to remain confidential, which includes receiving mailings in plain envelopes. We will continue to honor our commitment to those members while we consider our direction for the future.

So as we continue to plant the seeds of a changing organization, we invite you to stay in touch with us and offer us your wisdom. We in turn will nurture this organization's growth.

Brydie Palmore
CUUPS Coordinator/ Chair

From the Vice Chair...

The UU General Assembly 1997 in Phoenix will be an exhilarating time for CUUPS. The theme, *Interfaith Dialogue*, opens up a number of exciting opportunities and the

CUUPS GA Committee believes that we have a lot to contribute to this dialogue.

CUUPS is planning six events for GA,, including our annual meeting, which will feature our own home-grown talent from among the membership.

Consequently, we need a number of volunteers for a variety of tasks, including panel and workshop presentations, assistance with rituals, as well as CUUPS table help.

***Special Theme-Related
Workshop***

CUUPS is working with the UU Christian Fellowship and the Fellowship of Religious Humanists to offer a special theme-related panel discussion titled "*Many Streams, One Ocean. Many Voices, One Song.*" The UUs for Jewish Awareness and the UU Buddhist Fellowship have also been invited to participate. This panel will explore the history, interaction and mutual understanding of the spiritual traditions that have contributed to the development of the modern UUA. This should be a wonderful opportunity for meaningful dialogue and a chance to highlight the religious perspective that earth-based spirituality contributes to Unitarian Universalism.

***Sacred Play: Ritual and Worship
on Sunday Morning***

One of the stated purposes for CUUPS is to foster the development of new and creative elements for UU congregational worship. This hands-on workshop is a chance for CUUPS members to share some of the wonderful ritual elements, chants, dance movements, service structures, etc. they have successfully used in congregational Sunday Service. We need a number of volunteers willing to share and teach others what they have developed.

***Opening the Closet Door: Being
"Out" in Modern America***

A panel of CUUPS and Interweave members will explore the issues and reactions surrounding the act of "coming out" as pagan or as gay/ lesbian/ bisexual within ones family, church, and the greater society.

What support does UUism provide those who decide to take this step? We will also explore some of the first amendment right conflicts facing adherents of earth-based spirituality.

Rituals

In addition, we are planing a large outdoor Summer Solstice ritual for Saturday evening and, perhaps, a morning meditation service for the larger UU community. As of the publication date of this article, we have not heard if we have been given the morning opportunity or not. We will need musicians for the morning service and drummers for the solstice ritual.

CUUPS Information Table

There will once again be a CUUPS Information and Sales Table at GA this year. Not only is it a great meeting place for CUUPS folk at GA, it is also a good place to find unusual bits of jewelry, t-shirts and books.

CUUPS Annual Meeting

We are looking at alternative times for the CUUPS Annual Meeting. One popular suggestion is that we hold it on Saturday afternoon, June 21. We plan to follow the meeting with our Solstice ritual and a party. I will let you know what the committee finally decides in the next newsletter.

Volunteers

If you would like to share one of your favorite Sunday service ritual elements in the Sacred Play workshop or have a special concern with

issues of confidentiality and freedom of religion, please contact Joan VanBecelaere. If you are a musician and would like to participate in the morning meditation service, also contact Joan.

If you can donate some time to help with the CUUPS Information Table, please contact David Pollard.

For the Solstice ritual, we specifically need skilled drummers and ritualists familiar with doing psych-drama. If you can help, please contact Jerrie Hildebrand.

You can contact Joan, David or Jerrie at the CUUPS address or by e-mail at:

Joan Van Becelaere
jvanbece@carbon.cudenver.edu
or gaia-spirit@worldnet.att.net

David Pollard
cuups@aol.com

Jerrie Hildebrand
kishbilde@earthblink.net

I believe that this GA will be a defining moment for CUUPS as a vital part of the ongoing thea/ological evolution of the UUA. You can help make this happen through your active participation.

Joan VanBecelaere

CUUPS Vice Chair and GA Committee
Chairperson

From the Communications Director...

We again welcome the artwork of Lauren Foster McLeod in this issue of the newsletter, Lauren's Cover illustration reminds us of the Spring's coming and the welcoming symbols of the Goddess.

The poem was written by Mary de La Valette, of Eastern Massachusetts where she spends time in her garden, writes and observes life in microcosm.

Mary founded the Gaia Institute, a non-profit tax

exempt organization which has produced a television series "Animal Rights" which has aired coast to coast.

In the last issue we referred to Arena Press as being a publishing house. While they certainly have the expertise to be such, they are a printing company of many different kinds of magazines and printed media. We welcome their continuing support with this issue of the newsletter!

I have received many letters from our readers in the past few months supporting the changes they are seeing in the newsletter. I would like to applaud the efforts of the newsletter team of the Publications Committee. They have worked through some difficult circumstances this time and done a fine job.

Many of you have written regarding the need for a plain paper cover for your newsletters. In the changing of administrations the information regarding who needed this service was not passed on to the newsletter team. If you are one of these people please write me a note at my mailing address so I can be made aware of this need. I will work with the Secretary to make sure a special note can be made on the mailing labels for such a need so the printer will know of the procedure.

This issue releases advertising information for those wishing to market products of use to those following Earth-centered spiritual paths. We hope this will create resources for our readers as well as networking opportunities.

I look forward to your letters and submissions. May you all be blessed with a fertile Spring!

Jerrie Hildebrand
CUUPS Communications Editor

From the Secretary...

Last newsletter I asked you to look at your mailing labels for the expiration date. As Murphy would have it, our new printer (who otherwise did a very fine job) left the date off the labels. This time, I'm told it will be different.

If your membership or subscription came due in January (or earlier) you should have also received a letter informing you of your status.

Please take the time to fill it out and drop it in the mail. Make sure that it is addressed to the CUUPS Office in California, as the old address has not been forwarding mail since October.

On a slightly different topic, if you'd like to help staff the CUUPS booth at this year's General Assembly in Phoenix, AZ - send me a note either through the CUUPS Office or via email CUUPS@aol.com.

It is a fantastic way to meet UU-Pagans from all over North America.

David Pollard

CUUPS Secretary

From the Treasurer...

Here is the financial standing of our organization as of this printing:

As of Jan 15, 1997

Checking Savings	\$ 2,450.08
Liabilities	\$16,124.27
Net Indebtedness	\$13,674.39

Patrick Sileo

CUUPS Treasurer

Newsletter Articles...

The deadline for articles, letters, art, and photography for the next newsletter is *December 15, 1996 and Spring Planting and Herbalism* is the theme..

With our electronic publishing capabilities send your articles or art on disk, e-mail or typed articles. For electronic files use MicroSoft Word, or Wordperfect for either IBM or MAC. Send a printout and a 3.25" disk. If you do not have these tools available, please send the article typewritten double spaced and someone will put it on disk.

Other deadlines and themes to come:

May Issue: 3/01/97

Theme: GA information
Summertime fun, Pagan festival and gatherings

Aug. Issue: 5/29/97

Theme: Post GA stuff, Anti-defamation efforts and organizations, Fall equinox stuff

Dec. Issue: 9/29/97

Theme: Celebrating Our Creativity.

Please send all articles and art to the attention of *The CUUPS Newsletter* Editor, Jerrie Hildebrand at: First Universalist Society, 211 Bridge Street, Salem, MA 01970 or via e-mail at kishbilde@earthblink.net.

The editorial staff of the newsletter will read the articles and edit for grammar, spelling and for fitting copy into our newsletter space. We will do our best to publish what we receive.

For ad rates please contact The CUUPS Newsletter Editor. Send your request with a SASE.

ETHNOBOTANY

DAVID R. BURWASSER

The use of plants and herbs for healing and magick has become an integral part of the practice of contemporary Paganism. In their reverence for Mother Earth, modern Pagans are discovering the hidden riches in Her abundant vegetation. As with other ancient customs, rituals and traditions, Pagans have been reclaiming this wealth of knowledge. Interest in ethnobotany, the study of the use of plants by various ethnic groups for nutritional, medicinal and religious purposes, is spreading like kudzu in Kentucky. But, federal restrictions are also a growing concern.

In the United States, the Food and Drug Administration recognizes medicines that have been scientifically tested, but ignores the medicinal uses of plants and herbs which have been field-tested and employed by human beings for millennia. Those plants which the pharmaceutical companies can market and profit from get a stamp of approval, but other valuable plants are ignored by the FDA or legislated against by the government. Unfortunately, the FDA is seeking to extend its authority in this area, and was momentarily rebuffed by popular protest. The implications for ethnobotanists are serious.

For example, Jeanine is a Pagan herbalist. Her father has prostate cancer, which isn't active at the moment, but the symptoms are very aggravating. She gives him Saw Palmetto berry extract, a Native American treatment. This relieves his symptoms. Jeanine's husband has an enlarged prostate--benign at the moment--and he takes Saw Palmetto berry extract, too. He also takes Hawthorn berries for his blood pressure. Jeanine takes Chaste-tree berry for her fibroid tumors. These herbal treatments are part of her magickal tradition's practices.

If the Food and Drug Administration gets its way, she may find it difficult or impossible to get these items. She may find it difficult to ascertain the properties and active ingredients of other herbs because the FDA wants to prohibit the listing of these ingredients on labels. Even worse, it may become illegal for her to teach what she knows about these herbs to her students. Jeanine wonders if she can pass on her tradition.

The FDA is not the only federal agency concerned with the use of medicinal herbs. Last year, the voters in California and Arizona decided that their state governments were no longer to classify medicinal marijuana as a contraband substance. They are now embroiled in a classic American state-vs-federal confrontation with the Drug Czar, stoked by the claims of each side to be on the side of science versus error.

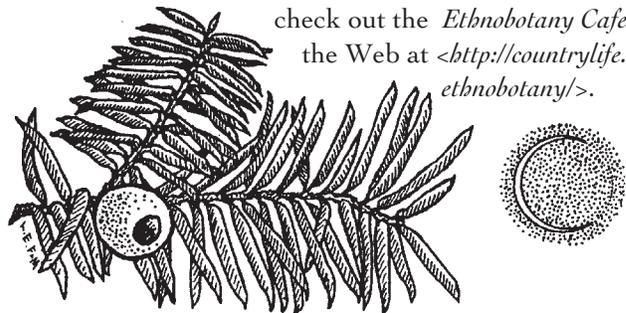
Even if the dissident states prevail, the shamanic use of psychotropes will have a way to go before it is out of the woods and universally accepted. These herbs and plants are called "entheogens" which means that they can help create knowledge or lead to experiences of the divine. Entheogens are the focus of a small but vigorous publishing industry which promotes their use and legalization. It is difficult to understand how the United States, considering the First Amendment to the Constitution, can legislate against adult use of psychotropes for spiritual communion--any more than it can forbid drumming, ecstatic dancing or meditation.

Not surprisingly, there are differences in opinions between scholars and between traditions over entheogens. Those who practice shamanism and enter altered states of consciousness by other means, tend to look down on the use of psychotropes as unenlightened or as a short-cut. However, this is a matter of theological differences which shouldn't be legislated against beyond creating legal guidelines for the procurement and safe use of entheogens.

Prohibition criminalizes a long-standing form of religious communion, while failing its task of controlling addictive drugs and suppressing the attendant violence of any commerce in such contraband. The right to use entheogens has been re-established only for Native American peyotists, via the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which some judges are challenging because it contradicts a U.S. Supreme Court ruling adverse to the peyotist religion.

Unfortunately, many Pagans in the United States seem to disappear into the vast, silent majority, unless the "War on Drugs" affects them personally. Pagans who understand the value of ethnobotany and the shamanistic use of entheogens should be supporting the rights of responsible adults to gain access to these plants and herbs under appropriate regulatory safe-guards based on the consent of the governed. Education about ethnobotany and the use of entheogens is sorely needed. The government can only erode our rights if we let it.

For more information about ethnobotany check out your local bookstore or library. Two perennial herb journals are *The Herb Companion* (bimonthly, Interweave Press, 201 East Fourth St, Loveland CO 80537-5655) and *The Herb Quarterly* (Long Mountain Press, 223 San Anselmo Ave, Suite 7, San Anselmo CA 94960). *Pagani on the Net*, check out the *Ethnobotany Cafe* on the Web at <http://countrylife.net/ethnobotany/>.



SABBAT BREAD

NAN ALEXANDER



A very fast yeast bread!

For close to two decades I have been making this bread for ritual occasions (as part of the "cakes and ale" of a Wiccan ritual) or even for dinners among Pagan friends. The recipe takes advantage of the magical properties of the herbs, of course, but the magic is further enhanced by preparing the bread with intention.

The Herbs

Thyme: the Maiden, pureness, Venus, air; clairvoyance, purification, renewal

Basil: Mars, fire; sacred to the Hindu tradition; purification, protection, exorcism, love

Rosemary: Sun, fire; dedication, purification, love, intellect, protection

Caraway: Mercury, air; love, protection, passion, strengthens memory

Onion: Moon, water; strong wared against negativity; protection, purification, exorcism, healing

Chives: renewal

Dill: Mercury, fire; protection, love, protects children

Sage: Jupiter, earth; spirit, awareness, healing, prosperity

Put a half-teaspoon of each dried herb into a mortar and work it around a bit with the pestle in order to loosen up the caraway seeds. Chop a large onion very fine. As you work, thank the herbs and put your own best thoughts into the mixture. Feel your connection to your many ancestors who baked blessed bread before you.

The Rest of the Stuff

1- 1/2 cup [skim] milk	1/4 cup sugar
3 tsp. salt	3 Tbs. butter [or olive oil]
3 packages (or 3 Tbs.) yeast	1- 1/2 cup warm water
3- 3/4 cups whole wheat flour	3 cups white flour

Scald the milk and dissolve the sugar in it. Add salt & butter or olive oil. Cool to lukewarm. Waiting for the milk mixture to cool to body temperature is crucial, as temperatures above 110 degrees F. kill the yeast. In a large bowl dissolve the yeast in warm (110 degrees) water. Add both types of flour and the cooled milk. Stir well. First, use a wooden spoon. Then, take your rings off and get your

hands in there. Think about how the bread will be consumed, and the good effects of the herbs and healthy ingredients on those who eat the bread. If there is discord, invoke especially the calming, healing properties of the herbs. If there is another pressing need within the group, invoke any aspect of one or several of the herbs that might be useful. If the loaf is to be served at a potluck after the ritual, keep in mind that food is a very useful part of the grounding process, and work with this in mind.

When the batter is smooth, cover the dough with a moist towel and let rise in a warm place until triple in bulk-- 45 minutes to an hour and 15 minutes. Stir down and beat vigorously for a few moments. Divide the dough into three globes and place on greased baking sheets. (Two loaves will fit on one baking sheet.) Inscribe with the symbol of your choice.

The bread is gummy, so work patiently with a paring knife, and don't go too deep. (I inscribe a pentagram.) Let stand in a warm place 10 to 15 minutes before baking in a pre-heated 350 degree oven for 50 minutes to an hour. As you put them in the oven, you may want to honor "Hestia," the Greek Goddess of hearth and home whom the Greeks believed was incarnate in the oven itself, which is why there are no images of Her. Hestia is a true "Goddess of the people" and of average women, particularly and is a favorite of mine.

Notes: the bracketed ingredients are low fat substitutions I have made recently. For the shortening, you may wish to go for a combination of olive oil and butter. The recipe can easily be cut in thirds; just use a small onion and one third of the herbal mix and store the remainder. Also, if you have leftovers, or just like the bread and want to use it generally, it's perfectly OK. Sometimes we forget that eating is a sacred act under any circumstances.

HERBAL MOTH REPELLENT

NAN ALEXANDER

Make sachets of dried wormwood. Use muslin or cheese cloth to wrap a tablespoon or two of the stuff up and tie with string. The dust is just awful in the back of your throat, so you may want to wear a mask and work with a window open because the stuff is nasty, but not nearly as nasty as the manufactured chemical stuff. Tuck LOTS of these throughout your stored woolens. I've also made a strong "tea" of wormwood and cayenne and used it to wash down a pantry and kitchen which had become infested with pesky little beetle things and flour moths. In combination with vacuuming every crevice, it seemed to work.

EARTHMAN

DAVE BURWASSER

FINDING THE GOD

Today, men are bereaved of the certainties of what being a man means; of the symbols to sanctify their sacrifices for family, community, the nation, and the Earth. Too many men are turning to the male supremacist symbols of the Promise Keepers or to the mythopoesis of a Men's Movement which carelessly incorporates the toxic elements of the patriarchy which, in turn, fuels the fires of further alienation.

Yet, through our souls still wander the memories of the old sacrificial, resurrected male gods: the Green Man, cut down in harvest and resurrected in bread; the Horned One, cut down in the hunt and resurrected in the life of the folk; the Oak Log, sacrificed in flame and resurrected in light. The God is in our flesh: fierce, proud, sly, bold, lusty, fallen and risen. The concept of the fallen and resurrected God is embedded in the majority religion. But, His resurrection is for our "sinfulness," rather than a celebration of the eternal cycle of life. His sacrifice is unique to one moment in history, not to the still point in the heartbeat of each year. We must go further back historically to discover the richness in the symbols of the male aspect of deity.

The old God comes to us most articulately as the agricultural God, the male principle in the annual fertility cycle. He fertilizes and dies like the mantis and the dandelion. Is His sacrifice another symbol of the fertility aspect of becoming compost once He has pollinated?

Where does this symbol celebrate the man whose life, love or biology preclude offspring? Does the agricultural God speak to the gay man, the sterile man or the celibate man? Can we go further back?

Before cultivation was developed, hunting and gathering provided for the community. The human community could "sacrifice" male life with less risk to its biological continuity. Herein is the sensible root of the sacrificed male God: it's the celebration of the fallen of the hunt, Hunter and Hunted alike. The women risked death in every childbirth while the men, to stand with equality before the council fire, risked death to provide food, clothing and protection.

A God who manifests this sacrifice brings authentic sanctification to the sacrifices of modern men for family, the community, the nation and the Earth. But, the celebrations of that God are lost, overlaid by the majority religions' God of farm and town. The ancient One stares down from cave walls and from behind dancers' masks, but His song has been stilled. So, today we men must do what women have done in their quest for the Goddess. Remember. Remember in the sense that is the opposite of dismember. The shamans and priests of the Hunting and Hunted God made His acquaint-

tance long ago. And so must we. With the drum, the song, the smoke of sage, the circle, the quest, the ritual dance to the pulse of the day and the heartbeat of the year, and the vigil which brings us round to embrace Him once again, to sanctify Him and be sanctified by Him anew, therein is found the heart of Pagan men's spirituality.

UUMeN -- A UU Resource for Men

The Unitarian Universalist Men's Network (UUMeN) is a Men's Movement affiliate of the UUA which seeks to network men's groups in UU congregations. UUMeN puts out a quarterly newsletter and sponsors General Assembly programs. The organization offers a guide to creating men's groups and programming in congregations.

Information is available from UUMeN, c/o UU Church of the South Hills, 1240 Washington Road, Pittsburgh PA 15228.

The well-edited newsletter's reports of the men's groups' activities, reflect ritual sophistication and spiritual depth. UU Pagan men might find it worth checking out.

Guest Columnists Wanted

EarthMan would like to run a guest column from a gay UU Pagan man about how he deals with the highly gender-oriented Pagan theologies and a guest column from a UU Pagan father of a young son explaining how he educates his son about what is sacred within him.

EarthMan also invites all UU Pagan men to send their contributions so that we may begin to learn from one another. All contributions may be sent to the Editor.



© Lauren Foster McLeod

PLAYTIME HONORING THE GODDESS

JERRIE HILDEBRAND

Spring is coming!", I hear people both young and old, at our circles say. They are very excited and waiting anxiously for the bulbs to begin to peak through the ground, for boats to be settled in the harbor again and for those first warm days of Spring to reappear.

At my son's daycare, they have asked for a list of fun things to do for the Springtime and what it may mean to a Pagan family. A list for supplies for projects this Spring has been posted. The mulch on the garden will soon be turned into the soil for fertilizer. I too, begin to get caught up in the excitement of Spring and the reawakening Earth Mother.

This is a time to begin planning gardens - flowering, vegetable, fruit, and herbs. We plant a small garden with enough vegetables for a city family to eat as the summer progresses. For canning and freezing we will go to the local farms when the time comes. This is really a change from my farm girl days in the countryside of upstate New York.

So I begin the list of activities and supplies I can contribute to the school and the meaning they hold for our family. In this school diversity and the celebration of it is a big thing. Okay...colored eggs, neon bright dyes, empty eggs cartons and seeds, balloons and string dipped in sugar. The list becomes endless.

Colored eggs start to get made in our home early. The brighter the colors we can find the better. Bright oranges, yellows and reds are indicative of the glowing Sun and the warmth we feel retuning to the Earth.

At Spring Equinox, my family in our home, and our CUUPS chapter at the church, will adorn their creations with symbols of special meaning. An upcoming nuptial, a baby on the way, a new job, a new home or simply a new way of being. These all become a symbol carefully etched in crayolas, markers, wax or pen on the colorful background. Folks will bring books of symbols to share or make up their own.



We then meditate holding our eggs as symbols of the dreams we are building. We visualize nurturing them, seeing them grow, watching them grow in the many directions. Each person holding close the thought of this time of the agricultural cycle and the dreams and intentions they wish to grow.

We chose for ourselves what to do with the egg. Some

eat the egg, feeling that this nourishes and empowers them as the creators, to bringing dreams into reality. Others take them home, planting them in a garden spot in their yards to bring the wish to their whole household.

Bulbs for the summer, and flower seeds also make up part of our rituals. We bless them with wishes for our greater congregation and community. Then, we give them to the committee accountable for planting the church gardens. We patiently wait, and watch them grow.

In my home, we begin gathering things for planting seeds in egg cartons. We drop tiny seeds for tomatoes and the herbs we love to eat and to dry for ritual and culinary uses this year. Then, when the earth is warm and the last frost has ended, we will transplant the tiny plants which have sprung up into the ground. My son loves to play in the dirt. He runs and gets his own shovel, rack and hoe. He will dig a big hole and in it he will plant his egg into the ground. Hoping for dreams a three year old wishes for to come full circle.

May your Mid-Winter dreams begin to take on reality in the Springtime's planting!



CHAPTER HAPPENINGS...

Seattle CUUPS Chapter Full Moon

The Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS) is a gathering of: practitioners of liberal religion, U.U. Pagans, and Witches. Our annual calendar includes the solar and earth holidays, discussion groups, classes and business meetings. All rituals and classes listed below are open to the public and unless otherwise stated are held at the University Unitarian Church (UUC), 6556 35th Avenue N.E., Seattle, Washington, 98115

CUUPS will provide child care for CUUPS programs upon request only. Contact us at least 48 hours in advance. Donation requested.

February 22 Sat. 7:00p Full Moon - Gather at 7:00 to plan ritual; doors close at 7:30. This ritual is planned by the participants, and tends to be celebratory.

Calling All Chapters!!!

Send us information to share about the happenings in your chapters and upcoming events for the Summer season! We welcome listings of meetings and just general information you wish to share.

Many CUUPS members have no idea where the chapters near them are. This is a great way to get information about your chapter networked. Send all information to the Editor.

THE CUUPS CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY - WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

DAVE BURWASSER AND JERRIE HILDEBRAND

Since the inception of CUUPS, some members have requested confidentiality. In 1986, these people comprised about 10% of those seeking membership. At first, the confidentiality status was handled directly and informally by those handling the mailing list. As the organization grew, it became necessary to create a more sophisticated system for tracking the confidentiality needs of the membership. Some of the reasons for choosing that course of action were based on how the UUA affiliate "Interweave" has had its confidentiality managed by an office of the UUA..

After the CUUPS Board had discussed these concerns at length, a confidentiality form was created. It was based on the then existing Covenant of the Goddess confidentiality form. Since 1988, most CUUPS members have been able to select the level of confidentiality they want.

It was explicitly stated in the form that by not responding to the confidentiality question would result in the applicant being placed in the highest confidentiality category. The same policy about non-response has remained in place and the confidentiality form is included in the material sent to every person seeking membership. Any omissions have been oversights.

A few members have made their own confidentiality arrangements by joining under a Pagan name, using a post office box address, and paying fees by money order rather than check.

In 1996, the membership was polled about individual confidentiality status. Only 30% of those solicited responded. There are fewer people requesting confidentiality, but there are still some members who still need a high level of confidentiality. A larger number of members are willing to be "out" to other members with at least some personal data listed such as names, but not home addresses. Again, a large group of folks did not respond to the request and they are still being maintained on CUUPS' membership list at the highest confidentiality level by default.

Now that CUUPS is working on finishing its incorporation, we need to continue the dialogue regarding confidentiality. Most states are creating laws for voting members to be able to access the public records of their organizations. This would include membership records of voting members. The UUA also wants access to CUUPS membership lists since it is an affiliate organization.

Today, our country is not a safe place for many people on Pagan or Earth-centered spiritual paths. Religion is being used in courts of law to take children away from their Pagan parents. Jobs are being lost if an employer finds out about an employee's spiritual path. Death threats are often invoked and homes are terrorized. Worship services are being disrupted. Libraries are being told to remove books on alternative spiritual teaching from their shelves. Minority religious rites, especial-

ly at death, are being denied to families. Religious freedom may be a reality in our country on paper with the signing of the Religious Freedom Act by President Clinton, but it is often not the reality which is experienced by those who are part of minority religions. So many people need to cloak themselves and hide who they are and their beliefs. There is much fear. The concerns about confidentiality open many issues for us as Pagans and Earth-centered peoples, and as UU's. For those members and friends of our organization who are not UU, how do we protect their interests while standing for our own? How do we as UU Pagans begin to create our freedoms? How do we do this and maintain confidentiality regarding our personal lives in the age of information?

How do we allow members to participate in a open, voting, democratic organization where voting members are allowed to know who the other voting members are? How do we create an open democracy if some members are closeted? How do we maintain the balance between "the inherent worth and dignity" of every member who requires confidentiality and the use of democratic process? How do we accept members not knowing whether or not they are affiliated with bigoted organizations that could threaten our homes, families and general safety?

How do we create an organization with voting members either not willing or unable to be "out"?

These are many of the questions currently facing the CUUPS Coordinating Committee and the membership of CUUPS. As part of this process, the Coordinating Committee is inviting you, the members of CUUPS Continental, to share your input with us. We will publish as many letters as we can on all sides of the issue in the next newsletter if you give us permission in your letter to do so.

Please feel free to use your real name or Pagan name and the congregation or CUUPS chapter with which you are affiliated. Send these letters in an envelope marked "Confidentiality Issues" to the Editor of The CUUPS Newsletter, Jerrie Hildebrand, c/o First Universalist Society, 211 Bridge Street, Salem, MA 01970 or email them to her <kjshilde@earthblink.net> by March 30, 1997.

These are currently the confidentiality levels:

At no time does CUUPS sell or promote the use of the members or subscribers lists for commercial purposes. The use of these lists are for member purposes only and CUUPS related business. To ensure this we are offering three levels of confidentiality, at this time. Please check one.

Level 1/ Your name, address and phone number will be available only to the current members of the CUUPS Coordinating Committee and their agents.

Level 2/ Your name, address and phone number will be available only to the current members of the CUUPS Coordinating Committee, Standing Committee Chairs and Chapter Coordinators in your area.

Level 3/ Your name, address and phone number is available to anyone interested in UU Paganism!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CUUPS Newsletter is a Link with Paganism

I am a longtime observer of CUUPS, not active in a chapter or church but supportive and pleased with the growth and energy of the group.

I am just dropping you a note to say that the new newsletter format is great. Having worked as an editor myself, I know what went into this, and it works. I particularly appreciate the "tips" and readings and things to do. It would be great to go through the year pointing out seasonal events, giving background and activities.

Right now this newsletter is my primary way of being connected with Paganism and, as a tool to reach the unaffiliated like me, it is wonderful.

Keep up the good work.

Judy Robbins, Glastonbury, CT

Questioning Facts

Secretary Pollard's report in the Winter 1996 issue of The CUUPS Newsletter states that present CUUPS membership numbers are lower because of "changes in our bylaws that change how we count our members" and that (presumably as an example of recurrent practice) "if you joined in 1988 but had *never* renewed you were still considered a member."

The first statement is misleading; the second is patently false.

Prior to last June, active (voting) members were recognized as defined by the then By-laws. Individuals whose dues were in arrears were still considered members, but without voting privileges (colloquially, "inactive") until 60 days after receipt of a notice of their expiration pursuant to a Board policy adopted back around 1989; this notice was sent when someone was about a year past due. (The exact point varied as CUUPS then had a fixed membership year, and we always tried to give the "benefit of the doubt" when dealing with memberships that started mid-year.) These "former members" were then sent up to three additional reminders to reactivate (and, for the record, many did -- always more than enough to cover the expense of these mailings); and it is worth reporting that more than one individual who waited for that very last notice before rejoining has been highly visible in continental CUUPS affairs during the past year or so!

In the last few years of our administration, the total of voting members plus non-voting ("inactive") members as defined by the By-laws and Board policy ran pretty much in the 800-1000 range -- not all that far from Secretary Pollard's figure of 859 as of 9/30/96. When higher figures than this were sometimes loosely mentioned, it was with those technical "ex-members" who were still getting regular mailings added in.

As to the second point, someone who joined during 1988 but never renewed would have lost their voting status a year later, been removed from membership by no later than the summer of 1990 as a result of the Board policy on lapsed membership, and would have finally been dropped from the mailing list sometime from 1991 to early 1992 at the latest. A similar pattern would have occurred for other initial membership years.

Please try to get your historical facts straight in the future.

Bright blessings,

Lesley Phillips & Linda Pinti
Co-founders of CUUPS
Co-Coordinator of CUUPS Continental, 1987-1996

CUUPS Secretary David Pollard responds,

While in the above letter Rev. Phillips claims that membership in past years has been around 800-1000, this is strongly contradicted by what she has been telling the UUA. From CUUPS' Independent Affiliate Applications:

Lesley R. Phillips answered in a signed document dated 4/22/92, "1. Approximate number of members as of date of this report? 1325 members; 450 newsletter subscribers; total mailing list of 3900."

Lesley R. Phillips answered in a signed document dated 4/30/93, "1. Approximate number of members as of date of this report? 1475(*plus additional 600 paid subscribers to our newsletter)"*

Lesley R. Phillips answered in a signed document dated 4/28/94, "1. Approximate number of members as of date of this report? 1525(*plus approximately 500 additional newsletter subscribers)"*

Lesley R. Phillips answered in a signed document dated 4/25/95, "1. Approximate number of members as of date of this report? 1750, plus approx.. 500 additional newsletter subscribers. (Total active mailing list approx. 3000)"

While I don't have a copy of the 1996 filing in front of me, I have been told that the last renewal application did not approximate the membership of CUUPS in the 800-1000 range, but was close to 2000 - which dovetails very nicely into the membership file of about 2050 people that Rev. Phillips handed over to Patrick Sileo back during last summer.

Nowhere anywhere in the IA renewals does it mention that ex-members were surreptitiously being added to the total - only that: "...all statements made herein and in the attachments hereto are true and correct as of the date of this application..."

While this problem with numbers is troubling, what is even more disturbing is Rev. Phillip's admission to stripping people of their CUUPS membership at a time when there was no allowance made for this in our bylaws. CUUPS is not someone's private club, but an organization with bylaws that define what membership is. Until this past Annual Meeting, where we amended our bylaws, that definition of membership did not include an end. No one, not even coordinator(s), were granted the authority to terminate individual CUUPS memberships under those bylaws.

These are the opinions of you our readers and not necessarily those of the CUUPS Coordinating Committee or their officers.

CUUPS NEWSLETTER OPENS TO ADVERTISING

The CUUPS Newsletter is accepting advertising from organizations and product distributors for Earth-centered spiritual people. Our readership is predominantly Unitarian Universalist though not exclusively. For more information regarding advertising in CUUPS please contact the Editor at the addresses below.

Classified advertising:

\$1.00 per word with a twenty word minimum; 10% discount for ads pre-paid for 1997 newsletters (4 issues). Additional 5% discount on ads for paid CUUPS members. Classifications for ads are Books and Publications; Events and Learning; and God/Goddess Goods. Deadlines for 1997: 3/01/97 for May issue; 5/29/97 for the Aug issue; and 9/29/97 for the Dec issue. Active voting members of CUUPS may run one free classified ad for one issue per year of up to 20 words maximum.

Display rates:

At this time we are only accepting three sizes of ads in order to have the best possible articles for our members.

Size	One-time rate	Four issues
1/12 pg.square (2-3/8"x2-3/8")	\$50.00	\$180.00
1/6 pg. vertical (2-3/8"x4-7/8")\$85.00\$272.00
1/3 pg. vertical (2-3/8"x10")\$150.00\$480.00

All ads must be camera ready, legible and clean. We can produce your ad for you at an extra charge if needed. Inquire at the addresses below.

The CUUPS Editor, Newsletter Team or the Coordinating Committee have the right to reject any advertisement with a full refund to the advertiser. (This includes membership ads.) Please send checks payable to CUUPS, and camera ready ads, to CUUPS Newsletter Editor, First Universalist Society, 211 Bridge Street, Salem, MA 01970, Attn: Jerrie.

Goddess Pilgrimages to Crete with Carol Christ.

May 28 to June 13, 1997
October 1 to October 17, 1997



For more information please contact:

Ariadne Institute,
1306 Crestview Drive, Blacksburg, VA 24060 Phone/Fax (540)951-3070

MID-WINTER BARGAINS FROM CUUPS:

All prices indicated are postage paid.

CUUPS Resources:

The Well Grounded CUUPS Chapter - \$5 A short (16pg) booklet on CUUPS Chapters and UU-Paganism based on the experience and opinions of CUUPS Board Emeritus David Burwasser.

Gift Subscription to CUUPS Newsletter - \$12 (2 for \$20)
Let your friends know what is happening in CUUPS.

Back issues of Newsletters: (While supply lasts)

The CUUPS Newsletter -\$2

Winter 1996/7 August 1996

Pagan NUUS - \$1.25

Spring/Summer 1996

9.1 Fall/Winter 1995

8.1 Fall 1994

7.2 Winter/Spring 1994

Spring/Beltane 1996

8.2 Winter/Spring 1995

7.3 Spring/Summer 1994

7.1 Fall 1993

CUUPS Chapter Updates

Vol1 - 6 issues combined 25+pg (Covers 1995 - 2/96) - \$4

Vol 2 Num.1 - \$2

Vol 2 Num 2 - \$2

Tapes (Limit supply . Copyrights being negotiated)

All \$8 each (\$6.50 for current CUUPS members) unless otherwise noted (!)

Riane Eisler '88 GA

Starhawk '89 GA

Charlene Spretnak '90 GA

Margot Adler '91 GA

Luisah Teish '91 GA

Harvey Cox '91 GA

Chants For Celebrating the Earth \$12/\$10

T-Shirts

"*Four Directions*" A colorful depiction of the medicine wheel. Available in Medium, Large and X-Large. \$15

"*The Girls Are Back In Town*" Goddesses of many different cultures adorn this shirt. Available in Large. \$15

"*Coffee*" kneeling figures worshipping an enormous pot of coffee. Available in Medium and Large. \$16

Books

Gaia e's God - Rosemary Radford Ruether, 310 pp. hard-back Harper San Francisco \$12 "I read this book while the much-touted Earth Summit in Rio was crumbling and I saw again how crucial the inspired theological reconstruction Ruether does in this book is. This is theology that really matters." - Harvey Cox

Walking With Mother Earth - Story by Deirdre Pulgram Arthen, Illustrated by Jerrie Hildebrand 36pp paperback D&J Publications \$10 A delightful story for children of all ages! A poetic walk with the goddess as she teaches of the elements, death, birth and rebirth. Beautifully illustrated!

COVENANT
OF UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
PAGANS



PO Box 422
Boyes Hot Springs, CA 95416
(707)939-7559

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I want to become/ remain an active member in CUUPS. I understand as a active member of CUUPS, I will receive a minimum of four newsletters per year, a membership packet membership card and mailings regarding upcoming events for CUUPS. Please find enclosed my membership fee checked below. This is in US funds only.

- Basic Active Membership \$25 - \$35
- Basic Active Family membership \$40 - \$50
(Family means any two adults and/ or children at one address)
- Supporting Active Membership \$50
- Supporting Active Family membership \$65
(Family means any two adults and/ or children at one address)
- Sustaining Active Membership \$75
- Sustaining Active Family membership \$90
(Family means any two adults and/ or children at one address)
- Friend of CUUPS \$100
- God/dess Parent of CUUPS \$250
- Student \$15

I am interested in receiving a CUUPS newsletter subscription. \$12.00
(Canada and overseas \$14.00)

New Membership Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

City/ State/ Province/ Postal Code _____



CUUPS

P.O. Box 422

Boyes Hot Springs, CA 95416

(707) 939-7559



NOTE!

New Organizational
Mailing Address &
Phone Number