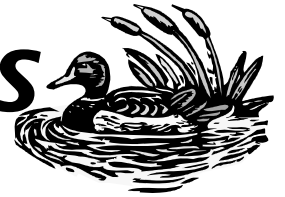




Shining Lakes News

A Newsletter for Shining Lakes Grove, A.D.F.



Autumn Equinox 2006

Vol. 13, No. 3

Nurturing the Nature of the City



This newsletter will be published three weeks after the release of the new version of *The Wicker Man*, and while I didn't see it (did anyone?), the brief images shown in the commercials showed images of animals, plants, and a rustic village. The recent piece on neo-Paganism on *Nightline* showed people doing some odd dance in the woods, and Susan Wood taking the reporter out into her backyard to visit a fairy ring. For better or worse, the few images the mainstream media show of our religion are set in secluded wooded spaces, with few if any of the trappings of civilization.

Certainly there's some truth to this image of nature worship, as anyone who's been to our nemeton and honored the Nature Spirits in our rites can attest. And our Ancestors certainly honored the spirits of the land, of the winds and the waters, and of the animals and plants around them. But many of those same Ancestors also lived in cities, and worshipped in cities, and even honored the gods and spirits of those cities. The Romans managed to divert streams into aqueducts to bring water to their cities, and still honored the spirits of those streams. The ancient world didn't see as sharp a boundary between "nature" and "not nature" as we moderns do, and I think that's something we should keep in mind as we try to understand how the ancients worshipped and apply it to our own practices.

I was thinking of "urban paganism" a few weeks ago when our Grove made its first appearance at the annual Pagan Pride Day event in Wyandotte. Gen and I made the trek downriver so we could sell some of our Producers' Guild wares and hand out fliers. I would have preferred a little less rain, but it was a fun way to meet pagans from the Detroit area and get the word out about our Grove. I even got to talk

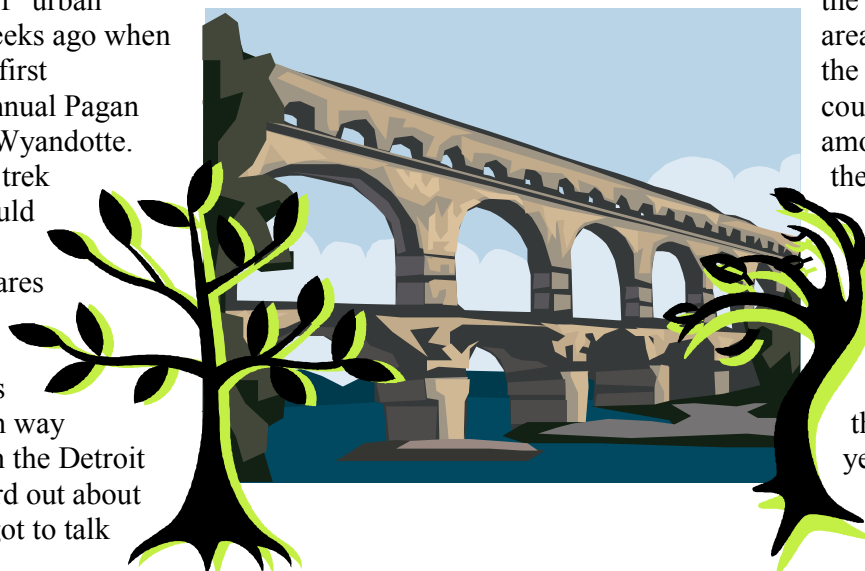
to a reporter from *Real Detroit Weekly*, and hopefully we'll be seeing that article on their website soon.

The event was held in a park on the banks of the Detroit River, with a huge water processing plant right next to it—a very urban setting, and a large gathering of pagan groups and vendors from the area certainly seems like an urban pagan kind of thing. But there was that large river right there, connecting three of the Great Lakes to the rest of the St. Lawrence Seaway. And being in a park, we were surrounded by many trees. So who's to say there wasn't any presence of nature there?

On the other side of the rural/urban coin, just this past weekend we once again helped the Huron River Watershed Council in their twice-yearly River Roundup. Rodney Cox, Sean Keller, and I (and maybe some other folks who attended the morning session and I didn't hear about it) joined over a hundred other people and traveled to various sites along the Huron River and its streams. SLG has been sending people to the River Roundup for ten years now, to both honor our river mother Ana and to fulfill our public service requirement for ADF. We collected small samples of the water and the insects that live in the water, to gauge the health of the river system. After attending this event for nearly ten years, I know that the more diverse the insect population, the healthier the stream is—and

the more paved surfaces in the area that drain into that stream, the less healthy it is. And of course, over the years the amount of paved surfaces in the area has only gone up.

This year, one of the sites I visited was in the huge rural farmland area between Chelsea and Manchester, where Mill Creek passes below a road that has been shut down for years. We had to park our vehicle by the "Road Closed" barrier and walk



a fair way to get to the bridge, where plants were growing over much of the old road's surface. Is the rivershed fighting back against those nasty paved surfaces? I'm not sure, but traveling from downtown Ann Arbor out to the country and back downtown in order to do service for our river goddess and keep the streams healthy is quite the blurring of the urban and the natural.

So what's a neo-Pagan to do? Spend more time in the woods, or less? Find more urban spirits, or more rural spirits? Indoor rites, outdoor rites, rites in a doorway between the indoors and outdoors? (Actually that last one sounds quite Irish!)

No, I think the key here is not to think of nature and city as an either/or thing. The Ancients didn't see an "iron curtain" between the two, and I don't think we should either. After all, we humans are a part of this world, and the things we make and the homes we build are a part of it as well. Remember that life of some sort is all around us even in the city (especially when the city our Grove is based in is nicknamed "Tree Town") and also remember that the human community you are a part of, and the Gods of that community, are still with you even when you travel far from any road or building.

(For additional thoughts on modern urban paganism, check out the 2-9-06 entry on Ceiswr Serith's blog, <http://www.ceiswrserith.com/blog.htm>)

Yours in service to the Kindreds and the Grove,
Rev. Rob Henderson, Senior Druid

Calling All Potential Dedicants!

By Jude Howison

Have you ever wondered what the Dedicant Study group is all about? Well, the Dedicant program is the first step of the ADF education program. All of the Guild study programs, the Clergy program and the Generalist program require completion of the Dedicant program as a prerequisite. But you don't have to plan to become a priest to work on the Dedicant program. Indeed there is no requirement to complete the program at all. You can work on as much or as little of it as you choose to further your own spiritual growth. It's a great way to deepen your relationship with the Kindred.

If you have any questions about the Dedicant program or ADF, please come and talk to me or Rob. We'll be happy to answer your questions. Or, plan to attend one of the Dedicant program study group meetings. We meet the second Saturday of each month at the Whitaker branch of the Ypsilanti public library (the address is in the newsletter, or check the SLG website).

The Leadership Council election is underway! Ballots will be sent out to eligible voters along with this newsletter. All members of SLG who are also ADF members may vote. If you haven't gotten a ballot and feel you should have, contact the Election Committee Coordinator (that would be Rob, of course) at 734-262-1052 or robh@cyberspace.org.

SLG Leadership Council

Senior Druid

Rob Henderson robh@cyberspace.org

Assistant Senior Druid

Rodney Cox uberrod@comcast.net

Administrator

Jude Howison uputat@yahoo.com

Scribe

Jude Howison uputat@yahoo.com

Pursewarden

Rodney Cox uberrod@comcast.net

Chronicler

Genevieve Stoyak gstoyak@hotmail.com

Outreach Coordinator

Charles Howison pherrix@hotmail.com

Youth Activities Coordinator

Matt Tannehill garbh9@aol.com

SLG Guild Leaders

Magicians' Guild

Rodney Cox uberrod@comcast.net

Warriors' Guild

Rodney Cox uberrod@comcast.net

Healers' Guild

Rodney Cox uberrod@comcast.net

Producers' Guild (unofficial)

Genevieve Stoyak gstoyak@hotmail.com

No e-mail access? Contact our officers at our snail-mail address or phone number.

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Thank you to everyone who helped with our food drive at Lughnasadh! We collected 38 pounds of food for Food Gatherers.



Grove Calendar: Fall Equinox to Yule

Rituals

An Bruane: Rituals and advanced spiritual exploration for those who wish to go beyond the standard High Day rites. Members only, please. *9/26 11/7, 12/19, 7-9 pm at Rod/Liz's*

Liturgists' Roundtable—Ritual Planning: Help us plan our Samhain and Yule rituals. All welcome. *10/17, 10/24, 11/28, 12/12, 7-9 pm at Rod/Liz's*

Fire Watch: We follow the traditions of our ancestors and keep the hearth fire burning the night before ritual. We also initiate the Leadership Council for the new year. *11/3, Dusk at Botsford*

Fire Lighting Ceremony: We gather together to kindle the hearth fire and take it to our homes, to tend through the night and bring to the ritual. *12/15, 7-9 pm at Rod/Liz's*

Samhain Afternoon Rite: Join us as we celebrate the reunion of our tribal father Lugh and our river goddess Ana. This ritual will feature a craft project, and is suitable for all ages. There will be a raffle and potluck after the rite. *11/4, 2-4 pm at Botsford (rain date: 11/5)*

Samhain Evening Rite: Join us as we honor the Ancestors and Mannanan, our god of the Otherworld. This ritual uses themes of death and rebirth, and may not be suitable for children. There will be a potluck after the rite. (If you've never been to our ritual site before, *please* come early, as the driveway is very difficult to find in the dark.) *11/4, 6-9 pm at Botsford (rain date: 11/5)*

Yule Rite: Join us as we honor Danu and Bel, our primal mother and father deities. There will be a raffle and potluck after the rite. *12/16, 2-5 pm at ICC Ed Center*

Classes and Study Groups

Dedicant Program Study Group: Join us as we work toward completing the ADF Dedicant Program. *10/14, 11/11, 12/9, 3-5 pm at Ypsi Library*

Social Events

Coffee Hour: Join us for our monthly discussion of interesting topics. *9/29, 10/27, 11/17, 12/8, 7-9 pm at Borders*

Helping the Huron

Bug ID Day: Count the insect samples we collected from streams in the rivershed. Sponsored by the Huron River Watershed Council. (You must register in advance for this! jmartin@hrwc.org or 734-769-5971) *10/1, 12-3 pm or 2-5 pm, meet at NEW Center*

Meetings

SLG Business Meeting: Discussion of general business and setting of the calendar. *10/10, 11/14, 12/5, 7-9 at Borders*

Magicians' Guild: Studies of magic and its uses in Druidry. January's topic: Energy Work. *10/1, 11/5, 12/3, 2-3 pm at Rod/Liz's*

Healers' Guild: Studies of natural remedies and other forms of healing. January's topic: Runic Reiki (Rod's new system). *10/1, 11/5, 12/3, 3-4 pm at Rod/Liz's*

Warriors' Guild: Studies of honor, strength, and protection of boundaries. *10/1, 11/5, 12/3, 4-5 pm at Rod/Liz's*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
September 24 12-3 or 2-5 Bug ID Day NEW Center	25	26 7-9 An Bruane <i>Rod/Liz's</i>	27	28	29 7-9 Coffee Hour Borders	30
<i>October 1</i> 2-5 Guild Day Rod/Liz's Mage/Heal/War	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 COLUMBUS DAY	10 7-9 Business Mtg. Borders	11	12	13	14 3-5 DP Study Group Ypsilanti Library
15	16	17 7-9 Liturgist RT Rod/Liz's	18	19	20	21 SWEETEST DAY
22	23	24 7-9 Liturgist RT Rod/Liz's	25	26	27 7-9 Coffee Hour Borders	28
29 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS ENDS	30	31 HALLOWEEN	November 1	2	3 Fire Watch Botsford	4 Samhain Rites 2-4 Afternoon 6-9 Evening Botsford
5 2-5 Guild Day Rod/Liz's Mage/Heal/War	6	7 7-9 An Bruane Rod/Liz's	8	9	10	11 3-5 DP Study Group Ypsilanti Library
12	13	14 7-9 Business Mtg. Borders	15	16	17 7-9 Coffee Hour Borders	18
19	20	21	22	23 THANKSGIVING	24	25
26	27	28 7-9 Liturgist RT Rod/Liz's	29	<i>30</i>	<i>December 1</i>	<i>2</i>
3 2-5 Guild Day/Lit RT Rod/Liz's Mage/Heal/War	4	5 7-9 Business Mtg. Borders	6	7	8 7-9 Coffee Hour Borders	9 3-5 DP Study Group Ypsilanti Library
10	11	12 7-9 Liturgist RT Rod/Liz's	13	14	15 7 Fire Lighting Rod/Liz's	16 2-5 Yule Rite ICC Ed Center
17	18	19 7-9 An Bruane Rod/Liz's	20	21 WINTER BEGINS	22	23

Addresses:

Borders Books and Music: 3527 Washtenaw, Ann Arbor
 Botsford Recreational Preserve, 3015 Miller, Ann Arbor
 ICC Ed Center, 1522 Hill St., Ann Arbor

NEW Center: 1100 N. Main, Ann Arbor
 Rod and Liz's: 263 Larkspur, Ann Arbor, (734) 998-1029
 Ypsilanti District Library, 5577 Whitaker Rd., Ypsilanti