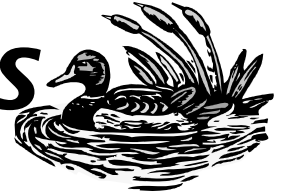




Shining Lakes News



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

Spring Equinox 2007

Vol. 14, No. 2

A Druid Parable

Back in the days of ancient Greece—or maybe not, and I’m making all of this up—there was a small city on the northern shores of the Peloponnesus, named Gastropodus. The people there tended their fields, honored their gods, and were generally happy. And every year, they would send a delegation to one of the great Pan-Hellenic Games.

The Olympic, Isthmian, Nemean, and Pythian games attracted athletes, poets, playwrights, actors, and philosophers from all over the Greek-speaking world, and every city was proud to send its best to compete for glory and honor in competitions of all sorts. While the Gastropodans had a small city, some of their athletes and playwrights were good enough to win the leafy wreaths bestowed upon the victors. They conducted themselves with honor, and every other city in Greece knew how formidable the Gastropodans were.

But over the years, things changed. The athletes and playwrights were just as good, the philosophers just as wise, the actors just as entertaining—if not more, for the Gastropodans worked hard within their city to hone their skills. But sending a delegation of these talented townsfolk grew more difficult and more expensive—and at the same time, the support from the people themselves was dwindling away year after year.

Rhobos, the priest of the local temple to Athena and spiritual leader of the city’s games delegations, couldn’t figure out why. The omens he took told him that the gods were just as eager to see their city win the games, but the people just seemed to have stopped caring. And without the food and money that they provided, the city could no longer afford to send anyone to the games.

In desperation, Rhobos and the rest of the priests gave as much of their own money as they could so their beloved Gastropodus could boast as grand a showing as in previous years. But eventually a year came in which they had nothing left to give. That year the best they could manage was to send one lone runner to the athletic games, and since they couldn’t send a full troupe of actors, the playwrights didn’t even bother to write at all.

The philosophers sat home and discussed their ideas amongst themselves, but no one outside Gastropodus heard their wisdom.

“I don’t understand it,” he asked Aphrodidora, one of the city’s priestesses. “The games used to be among the most anticipated events of the city’s holiday schedule. Everyone still seems enthusiastic about our local holidays, of course, and honor our gods well, but doesn’t it mean something to them that we take part in the greater ceremonies that define our culture?”

“I honestly don’t know,” said Aphrodidora. “The gods tell me of their disappointment every year, and I try to tell the people of it, but they don’t seem to care any more.”

Rhobos shook his head. “And you and I did what we could to send a full delegation last year, but we spent our savings in the hopes that the city would be able to pay for the delegation this year, only it didn’t happen.”

“I suppose there are worse things than having happy citizens honoring our gods locally without taking part in the rites of the rest of the world?” she asked.

“Maybe so. But you know as well as I that Gastropodus must interact with rest of the world in order to grow and flourish. Why, some of our greatest citizens moved to our fair city only after getting to know us at the games!”

Rhobos sighed. “I don’t know what to do. But I know that my great-great-grandfather would have come up with another plan.”

Aphrodidora smirked. “Your alleged ancestor, the god Parametheus? The one who only managed to get things done at the last minute?”

“Yes, but he got them done all the same. He made things happen. You must admit that his blessing was upon us last year, and the year before that, even. Because we did make things happen, even at the last minute and with very little to work with.”

“This year we started our plans earlier than ever before,” Aphrodidora pointed out.

“Yes, and we ended up with less, for the temples have been stripped clean from previous years’ efforts.”



Continued on next page

“Then maybe what needs to happen,” Aphrodidora told him, “is that you need to remind the people how important the games are. That, or at least find out what we can do now to inspire them the way the games used to. The people should know that through their efforts is ultimately how we succeed or fail.”

“A good plan. I’ll do it immediately.”

And so Rhobos went forth and asked the people what the city should do, and what the priests should do, and the people told him . . .

. . . *To be continued, by you!*

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

[Insert title of inspirational article here]

By Jude Howison

Some email discussions have come up recently that have, for me, highlighted the tendency of Pagans to reject anything that may be too [insert mainstream religion here]. The focus seems to be on how we should be different from [insert mainstream religion here].

I would rather focus on the things that are similar, those things that [insert name of spiritual organization here] does to fulfill needs that we all share because we are human.

After air, water, food, and shelter, we need to feel safe.

Spirituality offers us that feeling of safety: the belief that there is some benevolent being or beings interested in our welfare, who will protect us from that which threatens.

Once we feel safe, we want to feel that we belong somewhere. Here is where the [insert spiritual group gathering place here] becomes important. Humans like to sort and organize things, even ourselves. We have always had a tendency to form groups of “US” and everyone else is “THEM”. Spiritually we gather in groups of like-minded folks. There is comfort in knowing that other people believe as we do. By gathering together at [insert spiritual group gathering place here] we increase our own spiritual energy and reinforce those feelings of safety and belonging. In times of stress we can turn to our [insert title of spiritual leader here] to help us sort out that which is truly important. Even if the problems of our lives, like critical illness or death, can’t be solved, at least we can gain some comfort from knowing that there is some order to the cosmos. Our [insert title of spiritual leader here] is there to help us bring some of that cosmic order into our lives to shield us from the chaos.

The next need to fulfill is purpose. We need to feel that our lives have some meaning, that there is something more to all of this than birth-procreation-death. So we build. We build towering structures and we build organizations. These things give us direction and challenge us, to help us grow physically, mentally and spiritually. The purpose of Shining Lakes Grove is to build a place where our members find those common needs fulfilled, a place where they feel safety, belonging and purpose.

Words are powerful tools, but they are only that—tools. In the end, it doesn’t matter what label you use, be it Church, Temple, Coven, Nest, or Grove. I hope that deep in your heart you call it home.

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.

Shining Lakes News (©2007) is published by Shining Lakes Grove, A.D.F., P.O. Box 1732, Ann Arbor, MI, 48106, (734) 262-1052. For information about *SLN*, contact the Chronicler at gstoyak@hotmail.com or (734) 262-1462. For information about Shining Lakes Grove, please contact the Senior Druid at (734) 262-1052 or by e-mail at robh@cyberspace.org, or visit www.shininglakes.org.

Grove Calendar: Spring Equinox to Summer Solstice

Rituals

An Bruane: Rituals and advanced spiritual exploration for those who wish to go beyond the standard High Day rites. Members only, please. *3/27, 4/24, 5/22, 6/26, 7-9 pm at Rod/Liz's*

Liturgists' Roundtable—Ritual Planning: Help us plan our Beltaine and Summer Solstice rituals. All welcome. *4/17, 5/1, 6/5, 6/19, 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. *5/4, 6/22, Dusk at Botsford*

Dawn Beltaine Rite: Join us on our annual journey to the source of the Huron River to greet the sun and bless our water for the coming year. *5/5, 4:30 am, meet at Botsford*

Beltaine Rite: Join us as we honor Aren, our god of love and freedom. There will be a raffle and potluck after the rite. *5/5, 2-5 pm at Botsford (rain date: 5/6)*

Summer Solstice Rite: Join us as we honor Bel and Danu, our primal father and mother deities. There will be a raffle and potluck after the rite. *6/23, 2-5 pm at Botsford (rain date: 6/24)*

Social Events

Coffee Hour: Join us for our monthly discussion of interesting topics. *4/27, 5/18, 6/29, 7-9 pm at Borders*

Classes and Study Groups

Dedicant Program Study Group: Join us as we work toward completing the ADF Dedicant Program. *4/14, 5/12, 6/9, 3-5 pm at Ypsi Library*

Meetings

SLG Business Meeting: Discussion of general business and setting of the calendar. *4/10, 5/8, 6/12, 7-9 at Borders*

Magicians' Guild: Studies of magic and its uses in Druidry. January's topic: Energy Work. *4/1, 5/6, 6/3, 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). *4/1, 5/6, 6/3, 3-4 pm at Rod/Liz's*

Warriors' Guild: Studies of honor, strength, and protection of boundaries. *4/1, 5/6, 6/3, 4-5 pm at Rod/Liz's*

Helping the Huron

River Roundup: Collect water and insect samples 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) *4/21, 9 am-2pm or 11 am-4pm, meet at NEW Center*

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) *4/29, 12-3 pm or 2-5 pm, meet at NEW Center*

Festivals

Trillium: The first ADF festival of the season! *4/19—4/22, The Log Cabin Campground, Cross Junction, Virginia*

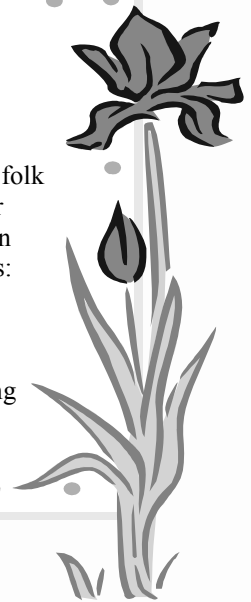
Wellspring: Join ADF members from all over the continent for ritual, workshops, and the ADF annual meeting. *5/24—5/28, Brushwood Folklore Center, Sherman, New York*



Have Guilds, Will Travel

By Rodney Cox, ADF Healers' Guildmaster, ADF Magicians' Guildmaster
(and our very own Assistant Senior Druid!)

Guilds are a very rewarding part of Grove life. They offer a chance for like-minded folk to get together and work in more focused ways than you would be able to do at other events, such as a High Day ritual. Guilds add an extra element to one's experience in the Grove that should not be overlooked. Our Grove has three active Guild Chapters: Magicians, Healers, and Warriors. Guild Days are for people like you who want a chance to practice skills they normally wouldn't be able to practice. And despite rumors, you don't have to finish the ADF Dedicant's Program in order to join and participate in the Guilds. So come to Guild Day and we can do cool energetic healing work on each other, or learn to do weather magic or shielding, or learn what to do if someone comes at you with a bunch of blueberries.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
March 25	26	27 7-9 An Bruane Rod/Liz's	28	29	30	31
April 1 2-5 Guild Day Rod/Liz's Mage/Heal/War	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 7-9 Business Mtg. Borders	11	12	13	14 3-5 DP Study Group Ypsilanti Library
EASTER	15	16	17 7-9 Liturgist RT Rod/Liz's	18	19	20 9-3 or 11-5 River Roundup NEW Center
22	23	24 7-9 An Bruane Rod/Liz's	25	26	27 7-9 Coffee Hour Borders	28
EARTH DAY	29 12-3 or 2-5 Bug ID Day NEW Center	30	May 1 7-9 Liturgist RT Rod/Liz's	2	3	4 Fire Watch Botsford
6 2-5 Guild Day Rod/Liz's Mage/Heal/War	7	8 7-9 Business Mtg. Borders	9	10	11	5 4:30 AM Dawn Rite 2-5 Beltaine Rite Botsford
13	14	15	16	17	18 7-9 Coffee Hour Borders	12 3-5 DP Study Group Ypsilanti Library
MOTHER'S DAY	20	21	22 7-9 An Bruane Rod/Liz's	23	24	19
27	28	29	30	31	June 1	2
WELLSPRING	WELLSPRING MEMORIAL DAY	3 2-5 Guild Day Rod/Liz's Mage/Heal/War	4	5 7-9 Liturgist RT Rod/Liz's	6	7
10	11	12 7-9 Business Mtg. Borders	13	14	15	8 3-5 DP Study Group Ypsilanti Library
17	18	19 7-9 Liturgist RT Rod/Liz's	20	21	22 Fire Watch Botsford	16
FATHER'S DAY	24	25	26 7-9 An Bruane Rod/Liz's	27	28	23 2-5 Summer Solstice Rite Botsford
24	25	26 7-9 An Bruane Rod/Liz's	27	28	29 7-9 Coffee Hour Borders	30

Addresses:

Borders Books and Music: 3527 Washtenaw, Ann Arbor
 Botsford Preserve, 3015 Miller Rd., 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