GEORGIAN NEWSLETTER The Georgian Church February 1988
1908 Verde
Bakersfield, CA 93304
(805)323-3309

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If you see something you like, let us know. It's the only "payment" our writers get!

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Witchcraft and Quantum Physics: Modern Science Meets Ancient Belief by C. K. Dungan

Note: This was another entry in the 1987 Pagan Studies Contest.

The nature of reality; the reality of nature. The basic stuff of which life is formed and judged worthwhile and which, since ancient times, has been fundamental to both science and religion.

The disciplines historically have chosen to approach reality from opposing points of view. Only recently, as physics becomes increasingly metaphysical and mainstream religious thinking looks less warily toward the scientific, have the two begun a tentative rapprochement.

There are, however, a number of religious traditions that have always confirmed the value of science and concerned themselves with the natural order of things. One of these--probably the earliest--is Wicca.

Wicca teaches that the universe is fluid, an ever-changing pattern of energy rather than a collection of fixed and separate objects. What affects one thing affects, in some way, all things (Starhawk, The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Great Goddess, Harper & Row, 1979, p. 129).

Similarly, quantum mechanics demonstrates that "we are not as separate from the rest of the world as we once thought. Particle physics shows us that 'the rest of the world' does not sit idly 'out there'" (Gary Zukav, The Dancing Wu Li Masters: An Overview of the New Physics, New York: Bantam, 1980, 16). The fundamental assumption of complementarity, to a physicist, posits that one does not experience an external reality, but rather an interaction with reality (Zukav, 93).

Wicca, also called Witchcraft or the Craft, is based on demands for intellectual freedom and close harmony with the cycles of nature. It is not a religion of dogma, but rather a "constantly self-renewed attitude of joy and wonder to the world" (Starhawk, 83). Wiccans recognize and affirm the presence of the natural forces of the cosmos, embodied in the Goddess. The force is seen as female to remain consistent with the Wiccan view of creation as an act of birth. Starhawk, in her book The Spiral Dance, which is considered a primer of Witchcraft, says of the Goddess at the birth of the world, "[She] sees her reflection in the curved mirror of

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Witchcraft and Quantum Physics (cont.) by C. K. Dungan

space, which may be a magical insight into the form of the universe, the curved space of modern physics" (24).

F is a solitary witch presently living in an environment she considers harmonious with nature. She and her family observe the holidays of the lunar calendar. She has spent much time reflecting on the beliefs and values which led her from a liberal Protestant tradition--Unitarianism--into the Craft.

"We are so into 'control' in our ordinary lives that we project that into nature. Nature just is. There are physical laws, but they have no personality, no intent, no will. They're just there. We like to personify them, but the Wiccan way is 'safer' than the Christian way, I think, because Wicca says that the Goddess is the earth, is nature, whereas Christians say God made nature and controls it. This implies will and intent, and of course we project all sorts of feelings--a vengeful God, a loving God, a judging God. This gives rise to all sorts of guilt trips and leaves it wide open for political manipulation. The truth is that we are the Goddess, and the God; the relationship between ourselves and our environment is intimate and complicated. It made us, yes, in the sense that we evolved as the environment evolved, and we fit the environment--we grew up to need what is here. We are made in the Goddess' image in the sense that everything is made of the same kinds of atoms and elements, because that's what's available. We're connected.

"But there is no other consciousness but ours. The universe is conscious, but as far as we know, only through us. We are the maker and the made because we perceive, we give meaning," she said (personal letter, 29 October 1985).

Similarly, modern physics teaches us that one cannot observe an event without changing it; that there is no such thing, at the subatomic level, as the independent observer who can watch nature run its course without influencing it. Everything in the universe that appears to exist independently is actually a part of one great pattern, and no part of the pattern is separate from it or from the others (Zukav, 112, 48).

The words "witch" and "Wicca" come from "wic," to bend. A witch is a shaper, a creater who bends the unseen into form through the use of magic. The meanings of words can also be

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Witchcraft and Quantum Physics (cont.) by C. K. Dungan

bent--religion, for example, into re-linking, and spirituality into reference to the human spirit. In the Craft, according to Starhawk, there is no difference between spirit and matter (14).

Witchcraft calls itself a religion of poetry, not theology. It presents metaphors rather than doctrine, and leaves open the possibility of reconciliation with science in its quest for many ways of knowing. F said, "I think I have always been searching for what Starhawk calls a 'poemagogic' religion, and obviously, I thought this was a good bunch of metaphors" (personal letter, 7 November 1985).

The world view of witchcraft is one that values life above all. The cosmos is considered a polarized field of forces that are constantly in the process of swirling into form and dissolving back into pure energy. Polarity, which is referred to as Goddess and God, creates the cycles that underlie the movements of the stars and the changing of the seasons, the harmony of the natural world and human evolution. Starhawk herself makes clear the connection between Wicca and science: "This view of the universe as an interplay of moving forces--which, incidentally, corresponds to an amazing degree with the views of modern physics--is a product of a very special mode of perception... [that] sees patterns and relationships rather than fixed objects" (32, 18).

Wicca has much in common with Eastern religious thought, including the insight that polarities are in balance, not at war, and that energy moves in cycles. Witchcraft teaches that if either end of the cycle is labelled wrong or unnecessary, the possibility of renewal or sustained power is eliminated. Unlike Eastern mystics, however, Wiccans are careful not to associate religion and spirituality with any withdrawal from the world. The Goddess represents both Self and the world, and therefore, Wiccans actively participate in human events.

Starhawk said, "The world view of Witchcraft is cyclical, spiral. It dissolves dualities and sees opposites as complements. Diversity is valued; both poles of any duality are always valued because between them flows the on-off pulse of polar energy that sustains life. That cycle is the rhythm of the dance, to which the Hunter, the seeker, is always drawn back" (197).

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Witchcraft and Quantum Physics (cont.) by C. K. Dungan

Witchcraft rejects the authority figure of a Father/God in favor of the polar forces of God/dess representing the cycles of nature. Recognizing the difficulties inherent in assuming greater responsibility for one's own life, Starhawk said, "The Craft calls on each of us to be our own authority, and that can be an uncomfortable position... but it is the only condition under which true personal power can develop" (197).

The development and manipulation of personal power, in Witchcraft, is facilitated by the use of magic. As mathematics is the language of physics, magic is Wicca's mode of expression. And the use of magic necessitates a thorough awareness of self. Starhawk said, "... in order to work the magic we are forced to expand and recognize the Self that moves through all beings. Magic involves a deliberate self-identification with other objects and people. To do a healing, we must become the healer, the one who is healed and the energy of healing. To attract love, we must become love.

"The theoretical model Witches use to explain the workings of magic is a clear one and coincides in many ways with the 'new' physics... it is an elaborate--and extremely useful--metaphor," she said.

"That metaphor is based on a world view that sees things not as fixed objects, but as swirls of energy. The physical world is formed by that energy as stalagtites are formed by dripping water. If we cause a change in the energy patterns, they will in turn cause a change in the physical world--just as, if we change the course of an underground river, new series of stalagtites will be formed in new veins of rock.

"When our own energy is concentrated and channeled, it can move the broader energy currents" (112).

F, on the subject of directed energies, has said, "I don't know when we started to think things were fixed, black and white, good or bad, instead of knowing that energy is a process, fluid, adaptive; but I think it was when we got heavily invested in cities and 'civilization.' Now we think sameness is salvation. We're like beaching whales--they lose directional sense, it's electromagnetic. It's metaphorically like that for us--we've lost direction and keep ploughing into the beach. And we get scareder and meaner and energize the manifestations of our misery--fear, hate, ignorance, etc.

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Witchcraft and Quantum Physics (cont.) by C. K. Dungan

We call them demons and deny they are any part of us" (personal letter, 22 October 1985).

She said, "People often forget that they are part of nature, that there is a flow here, a cycle, into which our destiny is to meld. The culture does not do much for this, of course. It's considered a weakness, if not a sin, to be in touch with our feelings, to be aware of the influence of the seasons and the moon and other of nature's cycles. So naturally, when confronted with the energy of nature, people panic, and generate mega-emotions, often inappropriate, almost always with bad effect. We encounter those of other people, and we call it a ghost, and we 'see' it as a human form because we are desperately trying to make sense of something that actually already does make sense, but we've been taught to deny the sense of our being part of nature" (personal letter, 29 October 1985).

Complementarity and the uncertainty principle--which explains the inability to measure accurately and simultaneously the processes of nature--lead to the realization that man is not separate from his environment. In The Dancing We Li Masters, Gary Zukav noted, "The tables have been turned. 'The exact sciences' no longer study an objective reality that runs its course regardless of our interest in it or not, leaving us to fare as best we can while it goes its predetermined way. Science, at the level of subatomic events, is no longer 'exact', the distinction between objective and subjective has vanished, and the portals through which the universe manifests itself are, as we once knew a long time ago, those impotent, passive witnesses to its unfolding, the 'I's', of which we, insignificant we, are examples. The Cogs in the Machine have become the Creators of the Universe" (114).

Just as the new physics says clearly that it is not possible to observe reality without changing it, Witchcraft, the religion of "a long time ago" has recognized from its ancient beginnings the need for a scientific foundation.

Starhawk called the dispute between science and religion a "spurious conflict created by absolutism. When God is felt to be separate from the physical world, religion can be split off from science, and limited to the realm of things having to do with God. But the Goddess is manifest in the physical world, and the more we understand its workings, the better we know Her. Science and religion are both quests for

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Witchcraft and Quantum Physics (cont.) by C. K. Dungan

truth--they differ only in their methodology and the sets of symbols they use to describe their findings. The field of inquiry is the same.

"... Religion becomes dogmatic when it confuses the metaphor for the thing itself. Metaphors themselves are not contradictory or antithetical; many can be true at once. They point to something beyond themselves; they are separate lights beaming at the same spot.

"Scientific metaphors strive to be consistent and testable. They are expected to conform to objective reality. The myths and symbols of our nature-oriented religion also began a metaphors for observed reality: for the movement of the sun and moon, plant growth and decay, animal behavior and seasonal changes.

"... I would like to see the Goddess religion of the future be firmly grounded in science, in what we can observe in the physical world. Observation is meditation, as the builders of Stonehenge--temple, astronomical observatory, calendar and calculator--knew well. Witchcraft has always been an empirical religion" (190-91).

Both Wicca and science use spiral models to demonstrate the movement of energy. Quantum physics talks about "That Which Is"; Wicca grapples with "That Which Cannot Be Told," the absolute reality that limited human minds can never completely comprehend. And both recognize the cyclical nature of the universe.

It is apparent that both Wiccan belief and the physical theory support the claim that observation of an event influences its outcome. The assumption that logically follows is that nothing exists without interaction with an observer.

It is not so unreasonable, then, to pose the ultimate question: Did God create man, or did man--as "observer"--create God?

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Folks too busy to get a job done usually seek help from those who are busier.

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A Tale From the Bar 20 by Stan

My name is Sir William, I am the master goat on the old Bar 20 and in charge of all affairs concerning the barnyard.

The other issue of the GNL you published a letter Scout had written to you and he came down to the barn a-wagging his tail, almost suffocating a momma hen and her chicks.

Scout is alright (all right) as dogs go but my people don't cotton much to dogs. Oh, I know, they were sacred to Diana and they tell a fairy story of how Cubilon, Melampo, and Lubina went along to see the birth of one of the early prophets, but don't forget Cerberus guards the place bad goats that only eat the leaves of the alfalfa and not the stems go. But I am sure you are not interested in any dog.

Stan says I am the most handsome goat in Calaveras County and he has been to the fair where they give out ribbons for such. No doubt I could win all of the ribbons if we had time to go but Stan and I are kept busy looking after things. My name is really Sir William the 243rd. My family goes back to the days of Pan, IO PAN, whom I very much resemble especially in the hindquarters. My family have always been noted for their beauty and association with the Gods. I seldom say so, since modesty is among my many virtues.

Let me tell you about Pan.

Pan lived in Greece, a country about ten hours away from here and famous for being the home of many of the Gods and Goddesses. Pan, the son of Hermes, was the shepherd God of Arcadia. He tended sheep (we have sheep, too) but it was the goats who were his favorites. It was Pan playing his pipes to the accompaniment of a drumbeat and the dance that taught the early day Pagans to create energy in a circle (we still haven't found a better way to do it). Pan's father, Hermes, fell in love with Dryope, the daughter of Dryops. She bore him a son, Pan, but she was frightened at his looks and would have naught to do with him. Hermes took the child to Zeus and the other Gods who welcomed him. Dionysus, especially, was enchanted and called him Pan, meaning the All.

My people know the story of how, when the Arcadians were attacked by the Persians, Pan went to a place where the mountains created a mirage and appeared so large and fierce to the Persians, they broke ranks and were easily defeated. Later, the Athenians held the Marathon in his honor, games

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A Tale (cont.) from Stan

and feasting--a race that has endured to this day although little credit is given to Pan.

Well, I hear the phone ringing and since Stan isn't here, it is my job to answer it. I have to go now, but if you would like to hear the true history of the old Gods, you just come up here. Bring along a bag of salted peanuts with the shells on and, as we munch peanuts, I will tell you the tales that have been in our family for generations. IO PAN.

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From Runestone

After all these years, the AFA is finally closing its doors and dissolving.

There's no easy way to say that, and you can imagine how it makes us feel, but it's the case nonetheless.

We won't bore you with a long, rambling discussion of what happened, but a brief account goes like this: Maddy and I (Steve) had exhausted our resources, financially and otherwise. For the past several years we had put everything we had into making the AFA into something special, and we were tottering under the strain. We called a conference of some of the most highly respected members of the AFA and in accordance with the constitution inducted them into the Executive Council. They responded to the challenge with vigor and began to take up a great deal of the load we had carried over the years.

As the weeks went by, though, Maddy and I realized that this had come too late for us personally. We resigned from our various duties, and I stepped down as leader of the AFA. Managership of the AFA went to Mike Murray, Jace Crouch took over Runestone publication, and other tasks were distributed among the Executive Council members. It looked as though we might do something rare for groups of our size and nature--make an orderly change of leadership!

However, one Council member resigned for personal reasons. Separately, Jace came under attack from forces outside the Council by means of a scurrilous poison pen campaign, and he chose, under this pressure, to withdraw from his position as Runestone publisher. Simultaneously, these same attackers

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From Runestone (cont.)

were "stirring the pot" against the Council in general and making our position harder and harder to maintain.

It became obvious to me that the organization I--and we--had birthed and nurtured could only be a pathetic, misshapen parody of its former self. I called up the members of the Executive Council and asked them to dismantle the AFA. The vote carried, though not without objection.

As you may guess, this was not the most joyous thing we had ever done. Our beloved organization, our child, had become a draugr, one of the walking dead that inhabit the pages of our Nordic sagas. There may or may not be a rebirth of the AFA in years to come--but before such a rebirth is even possible, the draugr must properly die and be laid in the mound, there to dissolve or, possibly, to germinate.

Regarding that dissolution, it will be accomplished in accordance with the rules, regulations, and laws that apply. Assets after the payment of debts will be donated to an appropriate "religious or charitable" organization as specified in our Articles of Incorporation.

We thank all of you who sacrificed along with us to serve our Gods in Midgard. We could not have continued as long as we did without your help.

This letter is being sent to you by Arizona Kindred because we've had difficulty managing the whole procedure of shutting down the organization. We appreciate the help of Mike Murray in this regard, and we urge all our readers to support the Arizona Kindred and other Asatru-oriented groups. Certainly we wish them success in their endeavors.

It's been a wild, wild ride for fifteen years. The AFA is dead, but the Gods live, and so do we, and the lack of an AFA need not change your personal religious habits much. Keep on fighting for our troth and tribe. Now, as ever, ODIN LIVES!

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Didja know...

... why are railroad tracks in the entire civilized world with the exception of Russia spaced 4'8 1/2"? That was the width of Caesar's chariots' running gear which left 4'8 1/2" ruts all over the world.

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The Christian Occult Underground by Tarostar

I ran across a little blurb in the transcript of the Oprah Winfrey program with Laurie Cabot which I do feel needs further investigation. It was mentioned on the air, but no follow-up commentary was made on it. I think the matter deserves looking into.

The author, Streiber, mentioned that when he was researching for his book, he wanted to meet Witches, and to find out what they do. He said he went with a group which performed a "Witchcraft" ritual for him, killing a small goat. Then he found out the group was not Witches, but a fanatical... "a Christian little Church", which had put on the ritual to make him think he was seeing what Witches do!

This smacks very familiar to similar cases involving Jewish students at major universities from across the country a few years ago. It seems some fundamentalist groups were setting up miniature synagogues complete with Jewish ceremonial implements to attract Jewish students and then during sacred prayers, stand up and make a pitch for Jesus! The real Rabbis were furious about such lack of taste and dirty pool. The cases made the UPI and AP and were in our local papers.

Was this experience described by Streiber something similar? Who would know how to attract Jews but a renegade Jew? Who would know how to perform a false Black Mass but a renegade Satanist? Come on, Witches, get the spies out and scout around for these weirdos parading in Witches' garb to frighten everyone away from the Craft. Let me know what you find out, so we can lift up the rock under which they slither and let sunlight and fresh air work its magic!

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Didja know...

which is the oldest language still in use?
It is the language employed by the Indian mahout--the professional elephant driver and keeper. In addressing the elephant the mahout uses neither Hindi nor Arabic nor Persian. Instead he employs the tongue of the cavemen--with which the latter first tamed an elephant 50,000 years ago. This survival--one of the most astounding in history--furnishes some basis for the traditional elephant memory since the pachyderm still refuses to understand any other tongue.

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Bee's Tongues

You've probably heard of bee's knees. But have you ever heard about bee's tongues? Bees do have tongues--short, medium or long. And the kind of flowers they visit depends on the length of their tongues. Bees with short tongues visit flowers from which it's easy to get nectar. These include carrot, maple, saxifrage, grape, stone fruits, strawberry, raspberry, cactus, buttercups and cruciferous plants. The bees with medium to long tongues work on legumes, mints, sages, violets, delphinium, iris, honeysuckle, trumpet flowers, tobacco, phlox and many orchids. Sometimes bees will bite holes in the flower tubes to steal the nectar without pollinating. These bees may be considered as either lazy, or thieves, or especially bright. All do their jobs to keep the human race in food. The USDA reminds you not to use pesticides when the bees are at work in your garden. If a bee or wasp terrifies you because of a potential sting, take comfort in the fact that bees and wasps use their stingers in defense of their nests. Very rarely are their protective instincts aroused while they are visiting flowers. It's extremely unusual for anyone to be stung by a foraging bee or wasp unless the insect is sharply disturbed. Bees and wasps around their nests are much more easily aroused to defend the nests. If you have such a nest in your garden, avoid it if you can. If you can't, eliminate it (or try to relocate it).

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There is an enduring tenderness in the love of a mother to a son that transcends all other affections of the heart. It is neither to be chilled by selfishness, nor daunted by danger, nor weakened by worthlessness, nor stifled by ingratitude. She will sacrifice every comfort to his convenience; she will surrender every pleasure to his enjoyment; she will glory in his fame and exult in his prosperity; and if adversity overtakes him, he will be the dearer to her by misfortune, and if disgrace settle upon his name, she will still love and cherish him; and if all the world beside her cast him off, she will be all the world to him.--Washington Irving

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Men are wise in proportion, not to their experience, but to their capacity for experience. --George Bernard Shaw

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A Social Snapshot by dean

The General Motors plant that makes Camaros in California is going to have to cut back. There are more Camaros than there are Camaro buyers. The plant currently works a day and a night shift all week. Plant management and labor union officials put together a solution that would keep everyone working, but only half of the time. They suggested that the day shift work two weeks then let the night shift work two weeks and everyone would stay employed albeit with a drastic reduction in income--but lots more free time. The plan was rejected by the rank and file membership of the union. The majority voted that those with more than twelve years of seniority would get to work all the time and the other half of their union brothers and sisters can make do the best they can.

Seniority is a funny thing isn't it? Most everyone I have ever met in or near the 'Craft community has been involved in the Old Ways much longer than I have. Many of those who present themselves as prospective students have been studying longer than I, to hear them tell it; never stopping to consider how much merit such a claim has if one really does believe in reincarnation.

But in my short time here, I have tried to learn what I can. If I have not learned as much as some might judge that I should have I would only say that it is definitely not because of any shortcoming on the part of my teachers and that I decided that I needed some fun for its own sake along the way.

Stef and Bob taught me about trusting others, the importance of mythology, and floor feasts. My Lady, if you are reading this, I could use a refresher on floor feasts. The thought of stuffed grape leaves and zipper a' la mode makes my taste buds yearn for enlightenment. Pat taught me more than I will ever probably admit in public. The primary lesson he taught me wasn't the sort of lesson I had come looking for. Pagans, being the creative lot that we are, are often coming up with neat ideas. I was no exception. But when ever I would offer up my latest brainstorm as to a situation's solution; or dare to utter, "Wouldn't it be great if we ..." Pat unfailingly had the same reply (it's a technique called space-repetition) his reply, "Who's gonna pay for it?" The second lesson he taught me went something like this: "Say something happy!" How many of you remember the appropriate response?

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Spring Equinox from Marguerite deVita Ville

This is one of two days each year in which the daylight hours are equal to the nightlight hours, the other day being the Autumal Equinox. Spring Equinox falls on March 20th this year on a waxing Moon in Taurus. It is the time for "celebration of returning fertility along with the magical stimulation of fertility" (Man, Myth, and Magic XX, 2677). Like the ancient Babylonians once did, it is appropriate to decorate with new leaves and flowers. Dionysus is celebrated; dancing and parades, drama are favored. It is also an excellent day for planting above-ground annuals and blessing seeds.

Set up the altar in the usual manner. Using wax or resin, attach a small pine cone to the tip of the wand. Decorate the altar and circle with flowers. Incense should be a spring floral scent--violet is nice. A flower pot filled with earth and some seeds should be placed on the altar.

Prepare salt and water, cakes and wine in the usual manner. Cast the circle in the usual manner.

Priest Pagans all awake to me.
It is time to greet the Spring
Maid of Light, hear us sing
Sweet Lord of Youth, light does bring
And to our rites, we welcome thee.

All Blessed Be.

Priestess (raising arms)

Welcome, welcome, lovely Spring
Join us as we plant the seeds
With our energy them feed
Look again to what lies ahead
Blessedness to every thing.

All Blessed Be.

Priest picks up the wand and holds it vertically before him.

Priestess By the power of this Bough
Honor to it, may it ever be thus
(Ps kisses wand and continues)

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Spring Equinox (cont.) from Marguerite deVita Ville

Symbol of the love of us.
As the seed is sown in dust
Help them find their home and grow.

All Blessed Be.

Priestess moves to west of altar and, facing east, raises arms.

Priestess Goddess of the Earth, tonight
As Maiden of the forest glade
Bring us joy where we now play
Where winter's silent snow once lay
Bring crops of green, protect from blight.

All Blessed Be.

Priest moves to west of altar and faces east.

Priest O Laughing God with pipes in hand
Shepherd of the creatures wild
Join with us, each a child
In this season, warm and mild
Let life be born in this fair land.

All Blessed Be.

Priest and Priestess lead dance in couples around the altar, the Priest carrying the wand. When the Priestess calls a halt, the Priest replaces the wand on the altar. Priestess holds up the flower pot.

Priestess Oh ye who come to plant the seed
In symbol recreate the act
As we did in ages past
In rites of love for which we asked
The Gods to share and grant our needs.

Priestess holds flower pot in front of her and Priest plunges two fingers of his hand into the pot.

All Blessed Be.

Each person, alternating male and female, moves around the altar and, taking the seed from the Priest, drops it in the hold created by his fingers saying--

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Spring Equinox (cont.) from Marguerite deVita Ville

May the strength of the old enter the new and life begin once more.

Priest covers the hole. All repeat the following:

Priest
These seeds we place into the womb
(repeat)
by light of Sun and light of Moon
(repeat)
Unto us grant this boon
(repeat)
That life return to Earth--and soon!
(repeat)

Priestess
O Great Ones of the Glade and Wood
(repeat)
Make the plants strong if you would
(repeat)
To fortify our lives and blood
(repeat)
With love, and life, by your good food!
(repeat)

Blessing of additional seeds may occur at this time.

Proceed wtih cakes and wine. Dissolve Circle as usual.

Additional reading

Cavendish, Richard. Man, Myth and Magic XX, 2677-83.
James, E.O. Seasonal Feasts and Festivals. Barnes & Noble, 1961.

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Beth: When meeting strangers in a strange land, what would you want to know about them before engaging in a relationship?
Louis: Are they civilized and do they feel compassion?
Beth: How would you know if they were civilized?
Louis: By how they treat their spouses.
Beth: How would you know if they had compassion?
Louis: By how they treat their animals.

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Ego and Pride by Blacksun

Since I first started reading the GNL, I've always looked forward to finding it in my mailbox. It has been a source of news, gossip, wonder and inspiration for me which has never failed me. In years gone by, I have been involved in small ways with some of the things that caused others to disagree. For the most part, I have tried to stay out of most of the running battles that expose themselves in these pages. Sometimes there are honest disagreements which are written about by both sides in a cordial manner and nobody gets too hot under the collar. An example might be my recent letter about the green button idea. I had my say and they had theirs. We may not agree, but at least we have had our chance to express ourselves in print for others to read and think about the issue. There are going to be such disagreements amongst us always; debate of issues is a very good way to get us all thinking. Hopefully, wisdom will prevail.

But...

Two of the letters in the November issue sadden me deeply. I refer to the letter from Malcolm Brenner on page 4 and the Statement of Disownment on page 11. I happen to know almost all of the people involved on both sides of each of these issues and yet have the advantage of not really being affected by them in any big way. This letter is not designed to take anybody to task or to declare anybody right or wrong in these areas. What my point is is this: it is very likely that none of these problems would have happened if EVERYBODY involved in the situation had acted in a responsible way and had prized love and trust over pride.

Yes... that's a lofty and judgmental statement. And I make no claims to sainthood or its Craft equivalent. But I think I can see something going on here that the people who are deeply involved in the events are perhaps blind to. And maybe it can serve us all to look at the lessons that can be learned.

So where do I get off claiming that pride was the driving force behind the two events? Well, let me explain. First, let's take the case of the Portlandia re-dedication which was the site of confrontation between Mr. Brenner and the group known as the ASA. I've known Malcolm and his wife for several years. He phoned me a day or two after the event he wrote about took place and told me about it. I did not think

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Ego &tc (cont.) by Blacksun

that he did the right thing and told him so. Later, I spoke with another person from the Portland area who was "on the other side" and listened to their story. I told them that I didn't think they had acted correctly either. Both parties were more concerned with what they "had a right" to do more than how right their actions were. Each of them wanted to stress that their actions were within their "rights" either as participants of a Craft ritual or citizens of America. Not once did either of them claim that their actions were right because they led to the betterment of others or of the deities they claim to serve. What vanity.

As for the Statement of Disownment, I also know the parties involved. Considering the situation between those who wrote the statement and the persons against whom they are at odds, I believe their decision to leave the staff of the SEMF producers was wise and gracious. However, the reason that such strong feelings developed was again a result of pride, both on their part and on the part of the persons they wanted to get away from. Pride which may have been a driving force for the high quality of work done by everybody on the '86 and '87 festivals, but pride nevertheless. ALL of the people named in that letter have decided that they have an ego attachment to protect.

So what lesson, if any, can be learned by these two sad, divisive and angry happenings? I think several lessons can be seen:

1. The harder you hold onto something, the more it rules you. Investment of ego is a great way to disappointment.

2. Not MAKING SURE you understand one another is a real quick way to hostility. Also, not paying attention to etiquette WILL ENSURE misunderstanding.

3. Justifying ones actions by attaching them to "rights" does NOT make them right actions. Or, stated another way: having the right to do something does not make it the right thing to do.

4. As stated in the laws and ordains of many groups: "those who cannot bear your rule will leave you."

Once again, I don't claim to be one bit better than anybody involved in these disputes. But that does not make these

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Ego &tc. (cont.) by Blacksun

observations less valid. So I would propose a possible "good" that may be born by these events:

Is it possible that we of the Craft are getting so big that we should start thinking about producing a widely accepted statement of etiquette so that people from one area and identity can interact fruitfully and peacefully with others? Are the "Ordains" widely followed and are they sufficient? Could there be a better way? Are we getting so big that we are changing into something other than what we want to be? How can we use this growth; should we encourage it or discourage it? Is there some way to rid ourselves of negative factors that constantly misuse our religion's name and make us work against ourselves?

These are real and pressing problems which require courageous answers and wise leadership. And they require PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY for the production of WISE actions.

It's about time we relaized that the Craft is not a cute social phenomenon but rather a structured religion. We may not all have the same structure and that may or may not be to everybody's liking, but that should not make it impossible for us to interact in love and trust. We just have to remember that we have just as great a capacity for error as those with whom we deal.

Well, these are things that I've been chewing on; maybe others can come up with some answers which will help us all.

From Jeannie: Yeah, well, it should be obvious that there are some changes afoot in the pagan community. Back when Pat crossed over, I made use of an analogy to pruning plants and I think this is applicable here. I'll come back to that.

My brother-in-law has a joke he loves to tell when I go to visit (which isn't very often): What do relatives and dead fish have in common? After three days, they stink. This little number is a variation on another platitude--familiarity breeds contempt. Most traditions have some method of coping with this little bugbear in hardcopy. For some, it's a thirteen-member limit. For some, there are procedures for parting ways--something along the order that whoever wants to go goes and whoever wants to stay stays and that's that.

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Reply to Blacksun (cont.)

But, lest we get too contemptuous of each other, let's go back to the pruning analogy. Anyone who has worked in an orchard or has fruit trees knows that if you do not prune them, limbs break, fruit production drops, the tree becomes more vunerable to disease and pests and can become a menace during inclement weather conditions. Pruning promotes health, stamina, yield, beauty, longevity. If you overdo it (like I did when I went to work on the plum, as well as a myriad of other things, last year), you can damn near kill a tree, you don't get any fruit, you spend a lot of time stroking and apologizing to the tree. If you wait too long, it might be too late and the entire tree might have to be sacrificed or, as was the case with the plum, it was too late in the season for the tree to recover, rebud, and rebloom.

This year, things may be different. We'll just have to wait and see.

I think the Pagan community (such as it is) would consensus an etiquette to death and perhaps rightly so. Weren't we given some "simple" instructions? Do As You Will, Harm None; What you do comes back to you; Perfect Love and Perfect Trust? I have enough trouble keeping up with that, trying to live up to it, much less a formalized etiquette imposed on me by my peers. I guess what I'm saying is what's right for you may not be right for me and vice on my versas. I don't love you any less for it but I might if I saw you every day. That's why it's once a month and eight times a year. Sometimes that's more than enough and occasionally the two mercifully overlap.

Change is. The harder I fight it, the harder it is to give in to it which I MUST. Anyone who subscribes to reincarnation knows that lack of change is non-existence, non-being, utter unknowing. Lack of change is a subset of information--one of many--of which we have no knowledge. All we know is change. We have absolutely no evidence to the contrary, scientific or otherwise. Change is something to be surrendered to--like good sex and with much the same spirit. We celebrate change, hopefully in the same spirit (if not the same breath) as we would participate in good sex. Stagnation is the heresy.

If you were to ask ten Witches how a particular change is going to affect a particular situation, you will get ten distinctly different answers, even if all ten Witches are in

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Reply to Blacksun (cont.)

the same tradition, even if all ten Witches are in the same coven, sometimes with all ten Witches in the same room different opinioning at the same time. This is bad? Not in my book and my copying wasn't all that awful. What is it, O Lady of the Wild Things? There is strength in diversity. Isn't it a marvel that, with all these diverse opinions, with all the freedom we have to pursue their validity according to our own judgement, we can still all do it and still all be Witches? Try catholicism on for size to see just how wonderful diversity really is. And so we can come back to one more thing about pruning. It really puts a cramp on the tree's style if it isn't pruned regularly. Sooner or later, stuff happens and things... change.

So, I guess, it would be nice if some day we could look back and remember that we did walk the path together for a while, there were some pleasant conversations mingled with the footfalls, that pain at parting--all pain--is temporal, that prizes of wisdom often come at a dear price, that most Witches have sworn and been most willing to pay it, if not remember the promise to do so or understand why the price is asked.

On seeking answers. Fortunately, I don't have to come up with something original. Something old comes immediately to mind: "Know thy seeking and yearning shall avail thee not unless thou knowest the mystery; that is, that if that which thou seekest thou findest not within, thou wilt never find it without. For behold, I have been with thee since the beginning and I am that which is attained at the end of desire."

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Didja know...

... "barn", the word for a farm structure where animals and hay are stored comes from the Old English words "bere" meaning barley and "aern" meaning building or house?

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Those who desire fame are fond of praise and flattery, though it comes from their inferiors. -- Pliny the Younger.

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From Chrystalynne

Siskel and Ebert would surely give Rik a "thumbs up" for "The Varlock's Vocabulary." After drudging through a stressed-out and oh too serious day, I sat down with my latest issue of GNL only to have my ribs and sides split and beg for mercy. The unexpected and oh so badly needed collection of hysteria brightened up what would have ended in a rather ho-hum day. Thank you for the laughter. I will definitely post it for later enlightenment!

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From Ogaea and Canyondancer

We must thank Tarostar for another stimulating contribution in the October 1987 GNL. His essays never fail to motivate us to more clearly define our own relationship to the Craft.

We are ecology freaks, the more so since we embraced Wicca. We don't understand how we can keep our awareness of the interconnectedness of life and systems on the planet separate from our awareness of... the interconnectedness of life and systems on the planet. We've noticed that not every "law of the land" contributes to human growth, relaization and evolution, and some laws are so antithetical to humanity's survival that they cannot be obeyed in good conscience. Civil disobedience is a traditional tool, we think, one consecrated to the gods, spirits, martyrs and work for freedom and justice. Finally, the Founders, at least, did not intend the "wall of separation between church and state" of which Jefferson wrote to keep religious citizens from being active in public life. They intended to be sure that no positions in any branch of government were reserved for or had to be filled by church-appointed delegates. It's absurd to think otherwise, for one thing, there probably aren't enough atheists to run the bureaucracy.

The Craft is changing--along with life, the universe and everything. The Goddess has touched the Craft through the many who have come recently to Her. She has touched the Craft with our new experiences, with our ever more varied backgrounds and visions. The Gods' vision is wider and farther and clearer than ours because each of us is one, while They are All. The Gods use our increasingly assertive diversity as a resource, while we individuals sometimes feel that diversity as a threat. When we can no longer feel perfect love and perfect trust for each of us, we need to

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Reply to Ogaea and Canyondancer (cont.)

focus on the Gods to re-empower ourselves. The perfect love and trust that can reunite us with the Mother will reunite us with each other if we remember we all live in Her, and if we let ourselves go to the flow....

....And about being "behind" on the newsletter, don't worry. Time isn't really linear anyway!

From Jeannie: While I understand your position on civil disobedience, I believe the point that Tarostar was trying to make was that's fine and dandy as long as you aren't out there marching with Witches For Rats' Rights banners in your hands as all Witches may not be for rat rights. If I am wrong, Tarostar will undoubtedly correct me and handsomely reply on his own behalf. As for me, I have enough natural chaos in my own backyard, I try not to let my disobedience get so uncivil as to disturb the neighbors, I don't believe there are any rights, just responsibilities. For example, I don't have the right to vote, I have the responsibility of voting. Marguerite deVita Ville sent some thoughts on Perfect Love and Perfect Trust and we'll get around to them in an upcoming issue. I believe in the same article she also addresses Pagan Standard Time.

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From Leo Martello

Thanks so much for sending me the October GNL with review of my book, Witchcraft: The Old Religion. I wish to comment on the review by Stan.

Book first published in 1973, hardcover. In 1974 was published as paperback. The new edition paperback published 1987. As to my "not mentioning by name" the Frosts in my "harsh comments" it would have been best if Stan had also done the same, especially since at the time of writing the book there were two other courses being offered the public which were horrendous (the Frosts were Craft Saints in comparison). Also with so much else to review in book why zero in on this?

The name is Raymond Buckland (not Buckley!)

Please clarify this sentence: "There is a little in the book that fill but not much." Have no idea what this means!

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From Leo Martello (cont.)

Review generally fair. I've always maintained that a review reveals as much, or more, about the reviewer than the book. Just as I've insisted that a Craft initiation is as valid as the person receiving it.

Enclosed reprint of my article in October 30, 1987 USA Today, which has over 5 1/2 million daily readers. They called me and I dictated it over the phone. Had to be 400 words or less. The entire Editorial page was devoted to Halloween in which one of the columnists, a Fundamentalist minister, had tried to get Congress to outlaw Halloween as a "Satanic holiday." Rather than waste precious space on refuting him I simply presented what the Craft is, concentrating on the positive. This part of my Witches Anti-Defamation League activities.

In May I will give a lecture-seminar at the Heartland Pagan Festival in Kansas City, MO. Topic will be "Mind Magick, Secret Symbols and Dreams."

Your newsletter is delightful. Enclosed my check for a subscription.

Reply from Jeannie: The column in USA Today was delightful. I especially liked: "When people ask me if I put curses on people, my reply is, 'Yes, I have one guaranteed to work: I wish everyone on himself.'"

Dr. Martello is also interviewed in the Fall 1987 issue of The Wise Woman, 2441 Cordova ST, Oakland, CA 94602, $2/copy.

Witchcraft: The Old Religion is available in both paperback and hardback from Dr. Martello. Send SASE to 153 West 80th Suite 1B, New York 10024 for details.

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The personnel manager asked the young job applicant if she had any special qualifications or unusual talents. "Yes, sir," she said. "Last year I won several prizes in crossword-puzzle and slogan-writing contests."

The manager smiled. "That sounds good--but we need people who are smart during office hours."

"Oh," said the applicant, "this was during office hours."

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From Merlin the Enchanter

Having read "We're Witches and We Believe" in the September issue of the GNL, I have a few small comments that I would like to add.

While I do agree with some of what the author says, I find more of it pompous than intelligent.

The author is correct in stating that no one can really speak for the entire Craft community. It is one of the truly wonderful things about the Craft, that we have no Grand Poobahs and Lord High Muckedy Mucks.

But, there are times when SOMEONE has to stand up and speak for Witches in general. I for one have been called upon many times to answer the questions of reporters and talk show hosts. In doing so, I try to make it clear that I speak for my own beliefs and those of those who have asked me to represent them. However, the mind of the public at large may not be concerned with such petty details.

For my own part, I would be delighted if someone else (anyone else) would decide to deal with the press in this area. Dealing with reporters is a very time-consuming and hassle-filled project, but I would rather not let the BS of local fundies go unanswered.

If you have read the "Magickal Media" column in the last issue of my newsletter (The Graverobber's Gazette), you will be up to date on the grave robbings and media reports down by Indianapolis. This is a good case in point!

The media began getting into this story at a time of year when Moonstone and I were very busy with family projects and the holidays. The local tv stations had tried to talk to a number of Indianapolis Craft people and the owners of several occult book shops. None would have anything to do with the press. Fine, that is their choice.

But, the local fundies were not so disinclined to the press attention. They go on issuing all the crap about how Witches hold blood sacrifices and pray to satan, etc.

Well, I do not pretend to speak for anyone but myself and our group, but I'll be boiled in oil before I let the fundie crap go unanswered.

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From Merlin (cont.)

The result of all this was that I ended up doing several tv interviews, a number of press interviews, including one with the Wall Street Journal and another with the New York Post and having to add the duties of "special consultant" to the police on the matter to all my other projects.

So, I was able to keep Witchcraft from being linked with "devil cults"... in fact, the only mention the WSJ article made of "Witchcraft" was that Mike (the police officer in charge of the case) has a book on Witchcraft on his office window sill... yet when the WSJ reporter was up to see me, he was sure "Witches" were behind the whole case!

Lest you think I am not being serious about all this being a hassle, let me give you some facts: the day the WSJ reporter was here, he showed up unannounced just as I was getting ready to take two of my children into the doctor's for their shots... it was too late to cancel, so I had to pay for the unused visit. For the tv people, display cases have to be unplugged and moved so they can plug in their lights and other antiques and furnishings must be moved to allow them to set up shots. In the case of the New York Post, I spent five and a half hours having roll after roll of photos taken of me and several more hours putting things back after they left (first they wanted the suit of armor behind me, then in front, etc., then unbolt and move the antique hi-wheel bike off the front porch so that they could get a "witchy shot" that just showed the Totem Skulls and 54 sets of wind chimes (the bike seemed to spoil the shot), and after all this, they will no doubt just run one shot with a small caption!

What is "in it for me?" Well, first someone will say "the publicity!" Okay, that would be great if I was Joe Blow from Kokomo and could not get on tv or get my name in the papers any other way. But, I have 40 scrapbooks filled with not Craft-related newspaper articles about me, can get on tv any time I choose, and in fact am a semi-regular on one talk show in non-Craft roles/subjects and my photo in the local paper at a White House dinner did much more for my local image than the one in my robes in the Stone Ring here at the Museum!

Does it make me money? Well, I retired some years ago, so am not trying to make money! Yes, I do own and operate the oldest and largest Witchcraft Museum in North America (no brag, just fact), but admission is free, it does not accept cash donations, and does not sell anything nor is it

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From Merlin (cont.)

connected with any sort of store or shop. It is just a way to share my and my family's collections with interested parties. But, after the tv and press spots, we are so swamped with visitors that we can't even have a meal in peace and quiet! Hassle. Actually, it costs me money, time and money.

So, if you would like a job addressing the press as a Witch, boy, do I have the place for YOU!

Like the man says: it's a dirty job, but someone has to do it!

Each person came into the Craft from a different background and seeking a different future. Each Tradition and each belief is just as valid as any of the others. Most witches I know today seem to take a very timid and shy Path. Very Quiet! That is fine for them. For myself, many years ago, we spent a couple of weeks one summer with old GBG at his cottage on the Isle of Man. This was when he had his "Witch's Mill Museum and Restaurant!" (If you think all Witches are veges, you should have seen his list of offerings.)

I had went into town with him one day, and as we walked along I noticed how when the local fishermen saw him they would look away and make the sign to protect against the evil eye as they passed him. This fascinated me to no end, and later we had several long talks about the deep need for a Witch to develop a strong "magickal Personality." Ever since, I have followed his way, and am ever so happy doing so! When someone makes the sign of a cross as I walk by, which does happen once in a while, it just warms the glow in my old heart and I thank old GBG for the best life ever.

I have noted a lot of Craft folks bitching at one another, and this has always been so. In 1965 or 1966, I wrote an article that was published in the old Green Egg and which was called "The New Witch Hunt;" that same article, with a change of names would fit today just as well! The story was about a game show called "The New Witch Hunt," in which Witches were hidden in an old house and on the count of three, nuns, priests, ministers, and rabbis charged in, the first to find and burn a Witch won! If I recall correctly, the prize was a round trip to Rome on "Vat Air," a year's supply of "Brother John's Holy Water" (good for what ails you and ails what's

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From Merlin (cont.)

good for you) and a personally autographed 8 x 10 color photo of Christ.

Now, you need to know that among others, Gavin Frost and Herman Slater (who at that time had "The Warlock Shop" in NYC) were in a war over Gavin's book. So, in one instance, the rabbi had wandered into the kitchen of the house and heard, "Not NOW Yvonne!" coming from the freezer. He opened it and inside were Gavin and Yvonne. "Who is this?" the rabbi asks and up runs Herman Slater screaming, "That is Gavin Frost the WITCH, BURN HIM!"... Gavin replies that the rabbi should read what it says on the freezer, so the rabbi reads, "THIS IS A FROST FREE FREEZER!", "so I can't be Gavin FROST and be in here can I?" Gavin asks. The rabbi then asks, "so who is this that says you are this Frosty person?" Gavin: "Why that is Herman Slater, he owns the Warlock Shop, he's a Witch... GET HIM!!!" And everyone is after poor Herman. Anyway, I think you can fit in your own favorite names and still play the New Witch Hunt today!

Soooo, perhaps it is time to list MERLIN'S COMMANDMENTS (okay, so the other guy came up with ten, but then he didn't have that much to do up on the mount, did he?)

1. BE YOURSELF! Be yourself, for yourself, and don't worry about what "others" think. ("If you worry about what others think then you won't think for yourself, and if you don't think for yourself, you might as well be DEAD"--Merlin the Enchanter).

2. ALLOW OTHERS TO BE THEMSELVES! Gee, what a delightful new idea, treating others with the same respect you want for yourself, and honoring someone's rights to live THEIR LIFE as they choose to, even if they have the terrible bad taste to follow a Path we do not approve of.

3. DON'T ASSUME! And DON'T ASK SOMEONE'S OPINION UNLESS YOU REALLY WANT IT! Too many folks just assume you agree with them, and are shocked when they ask, "What do you think?" and ASSUME you will "yes man" it up. ("When you ASSUME, you make an ASS out of U and ME!"--Benny Hill). And this includes not assuming that you know everything or that others will kneel down at the sight of you. EXAMPLE: a few weeks ago, I received a very formal letter from a man and his wife asking how dare I do an interview as a Witch? It went on, "we have been active Wtiches for 13 years and by our rank due to

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From Merlin (cont.)

having been in the Craft of the Wise so many years, you should defer reporters to us." Sadly, I had to inform them that I have been a practicing Witch for almost forty years, and have been in the public eye as a Witch for over twenty years, and sent them a stack of clippings and my articles to back it up (some of the articles I sent were dated well into the early 1960's). They ASSUMED, and they made an ASS....

4. DON'T EVER BE THE LEAST IMPRESSED BY FANCY TITLES, CERTIFICATES, DEGREES (EVEN UNIVERSITY ONES), OR THEIR LIKE. "Witchcraft titles" are all but laughable! Yes, they are nice within your group, and it is nice to respect those of others, but when it is presented as "I am the Grand High Poobah and MY WORD is GOD!', just tell 'em to take their word and shove it! As for college and university degrees, well, I earned my doctorate in the field of archeology, so does that make me a better or wiser Witch than you? HELL NO.

So much for that. With regard to the October '87 issue, I agree with Tarostar 101%. Re the review of Witchcraft: The Old Religion by Leo Martello (he was in "The New Witch Hunt" by the way) has no copyright date in the hardcover edition either, but the hardcover was published by University Books, Inc., 120 Enterprise AV, Secaucus, NJ 07094. Also, agree with Rik on what he has to say about outdoor Sabbats. And, with reference to "Warlock", in England, warlock is the "title" given to a Witch who has broken their vows with their Coven, in other words, an outcast. Always has been such.

Merlin The Enchanter, Curator; The Lawrence Museum of Magic and Witchcraft; High Priest of Unicorn Coven; Grand Magister of The Order of the Black Ram; Editor/Publisher of The Graverobber's Gazette. (E, Gods! A Grand High Poobah!) POB 219, Galveston, In 46932.

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The story is told of the sad-eyed, wretched fellow who went to a physician with a classic case of acute melancholia.

"My prescription for you," quoth the medico after an exhaustive examination, "is a trip to the circus to laugh at Grimaldi the clown."

Groaned his patient, "I am Grimaldi!"

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Bulletin Board

Another way of saying "BB".

Mostly, I'm hoping this is just short replies to folks who have written or called or are looking for contacts or whatever. If you have something specifically for the bulletin board, please mark it such when you send it. I hope the following serves as some examples. If you don't understand your message, send a SASE.

Carla: I do not have enough information to process your request. The article in next month's issue, "Making Contacts", may help you formulate your request a little better. Carla is looking for contacts in the vicinity of Houston. Can anyone help facilitate?

Equal Time. Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow at Candlemas and thus makes me a contrarian; I still foresee a late spring. Someone has a weather rattlesnake out in the desert--never did find out if it came out and offered a different perspective.

Meanwhile... back at the ranch... I was off at the feed store getting seeds for us and chow for the fur critters and the lady at the counter asked if I was going to can one of the crops. "I don't know," I said, "I haven't had much luck with this particular crop." "Plant by the Moon," she shot back, "Plant by the Moon and you won't have any problems." "I will," I said and thanked her for mentioning it. Ain't it great? ...and Grandma keeps beatin' off the Indians and they keep coming... and coming....

Roger, Lester: do you have all your newsletters now?

Phone call from Jim (verbatim, transcribed from the recorder): "This is Jim ____ in ____. I have just received another one of your little green stick-on letters with three words as a message. That is hardly adequate for the letters I have written you. You tell me to see the January GNL and I haven't gotten the October, November, December GNL so I'd like to know what the hell kind of game you people are playing and I want an explanation. If I don't get an explanation, then maybe you'd like to talk to the postal authorities. So let's get with it and get me some information here and stop playing these goddamn games. You're taking Pat's concept and taking it right down the toilet. I want to hear from you. Thank you."

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Bulletin Board (cont.)

Reply: Did you also get your stamps back? I returned one for each one envelope you sent. You should have all these issues by now. If not, please let us know and we will send them to you with our next regular mailing.

Stan: We no longer sponsor any gatherings. You might try the folks at Pacific Circle, POB 9513, North Hollywood, CA 91609. Thanks for the encouraging words.

Thanks to Jeffrey Russell who sent a copy of the pages about the Georgians in the 1987 Japanese translation of his book, A History of Witchcraft. Picture this: Pat's picture with a Japanese caption.

Mary: Am sending a spare copy of the GNL with the article you requested. Will this help? Thanks for asking. Will return your stamp.

Cuhulain is looking for literature on Witchcraft produced by law enforcement agencies. He is particularly interested in compiling a handbook to distribute to such agencies. Can you help? Write %POB 8736, Salem, Mass 01971-8736. Cuhulain, you might check with Pagana, POB 9494, San Jose, CA 95157 and COG: Attention Public Relations Officer, POB 1226, Berkeley, CA 94704. When you write these folks, please send a SASE.

Tarostar: mailing back issues with this mailing. If you still don't have them by next week, let us know.

Mystery person: who leaves gifts, cryptic notes, and no signature, do you really enjoy the dog house that much? Thanks for the gifts--applied to ritual use.

If we still haven't caught up with your requests made before Candlemas, please try again. We think we are caught up now.

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For Butch: A man complained to his teenage daughter that the modern generation lacks modesty. "When I was your age," he said, "girls still knew how to blush."
"Good heavens, Dad," his daughter replied, "what on earth did you say to them?"

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Extract from Eve's Autobiography by Mark Twain

Adam has just discovered the first law of nature, after much secretive observation and experimentation, Adam's Law of Fluidic Precipitation; which is: that water flows down hill.

"I [Eve] scored the next great triumph for science myself; to wit, how the milk gets into the cow. Both of us had marveled over teat mystery for a long time. We had followed the cows around for years--that is, in the daytime--but had never caught them drinking a fluid of that color. And so, at last we said they undoubtedly procured it at night. Then we took turns and watched them by night. The result was the same--the puzzle remained unsolved. These procedings were of a sort to be expected in beginners, but one perceives, now, that they were unscientific. A time came when experience had taught us better methods. One night as I lay musing, and looking at the stars, a grand idea flashed through my head, and I saw my way! My first impulse was to wake Adam and tell him, but I resisted it and kept my secret. I slept no wink the rest of the night. The moment the first pale streak of dawn appeared I flitted stealthily away; and deep in the woods I chose a small grassy spot and wattled it in, making a secure pen; then I enclosed a cow in it. I milked her dry, then left her there, a prisoner. There was nothing there to drink--she must get milk by her secret alchemy, or stay dry.

All day I was in a fidget, and could not talk connectedly I was so preoccupied; but Adam was busy trying to invent a multiplication table, and did not notice. Toward sunset he had got as far as 6 times 9 are 27, and while he was drunk with the joy of his achievement and dead to my presence and all things else, I stole away to my cow. My hand shook so with excitement and with dread failure that for some moments I could not get a grip on a teat; then I succeeded, and the milk came! Two gallons. Two gallons, and nothing to make it out of. I knew at once the explanation: the milk was not taken in by the mouth, it was condensed from the atmosphere through the cow's hair. I ran and told Adam, and his happiness was as great as mine, and his pride in me inexpressible.

Presently he said, "Do you know, you have not made merely one weighty and far reaching contribution to science, but two."

And that was true. By a series of experiments we had long ago arrived at the conclusion that atmospheric air consisted of water in invisible suspension; also, that the components

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Extract (cont.) by Mark Twain

of water were hydrogen and oxygen, in the proportion of two parts of the former to one of the latter, and expressible by the symbol H_2O. My discovery revealed the fact that there was still another ingredient--milk. We enlarged the symbol to H_2OM."

from: Letters from the Earth. Harper and Row, Publishers. Walter Harding of the New York Times Review said of it:

"The high point of the book is the title section, which presents a series of letters supposedly written by Satan, reporting on a visit to the 'Human Race Experiment'...Here Twain takes some of man's most revered beliefs and demonstrates their downright preposterousness when examined in a cold light. He is iconoclastic, and not all that gentle in his idol breaking. But reading the letters should be stimulating to anyone interested in looking at the world around him objectively and a delightful experience to anyone with a sense of humor."

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Events

The Third Annual Spring Mysteries Festival, March 31st through April 3rd, 1988 in the luscious Pacific Northwest. Send SASE to: Aquarian Tabernacle, POB 85507, Seattle, WA 98145.

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Institute for Stellar Influence Studies, 1564-A Fitzgerald DR Suite 143, Pinole, CA 94564. Continuing classes, March through October. Send SASE for schedule.

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The J. Paul Getty Museum, "Human and Divine in Ancient Greece," Tuesdays, March 8, 15, and 22, 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. The realm of the ancient Greek gods and the world of men and women are the subjects to be explored in this three-session course. Each class will consist of a slide lecture and study of related objects in the Museum's galleries. The first session will concentrate on the Olympian gods and the Trojan War, the second will primarily be devoted to Athena and Herakles, and the third will examine

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Events (cont.)

various aspects of life in Athens. Call (213) 458-2003 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. daily for required reservations. Good way to explore a topic for the Pagan Studies Contest.

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Experience a weekend with Murry Hope, parapsychologist, author, lecturer at the Isis Oasis Lodge in Geyserville, CA. March 25-27, 2 nights, 6 meals, all seminars and workshops, $175. Includes a Vernal Equinox Ritual and the Inauguration of the Temple of Isis. Call (707)857-3524 for details.

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Goods

Technicians of the Sacred Supply Catalog, $3. 1317 N. San Fernando BL Suite 310, Burbank, CA 91504.

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Patricia Donegan's Mud Hut, POB 3737, S. Pasadena, CA 91030. Send SASE for catalog. Organizational Quantity Discounts.

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Contests

The Georgian Church is pleased to announce its fourth annual Pagan Studies Contest. Those of you who have hung in there with us for the past few years know the purpose of the contest is to stimulate interest and research in the area of the study of pagan peoples, their practices and belief systems. This year, the prize has been increased to $200 and will go to the author of the best research article, term paper, or essay submitted. Entries must be footnoted or endnoted and contain a bibliography. Formats can be located in the MLA Stylebook. All entries must be submitted with written permission of the author for one-time publication rights in the GNL. Entries will not be returned. Entries will be judged by the board of directors of the Georgian Church, with the winning entry published in the January 1989 newsletter. One free copy of the newsletter in which the article appears will be sent to each published author. The

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Contests (cont.)

deadline for submission is December 21, 1988. The cash award is made possible by donations to the scholarship fund.

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RING OF TRUTH

What is it? What has it? Do we want any? Lady Mariah, are you reading this too? Next year, in addition to the Pagan Interest Studies Scholarship/stipend contest we will sponsor a Ring of Truth award. The rules for the Ring of Truth award are as follows: YOU pick the winner. That's right, lovely Lady M., I finally took your good counsel. Now we will not put all our award eggs in one basket and we - no, YOU - will recognize efforts which do not necessarily conform to more rigorous constraints. Here is how it will work: At the end of the year, or any time before that, you send in your vote for the article of any classification which left you saying, yeah or maybe even feeling misty-eyed. To cast your ballot, send your check or money order for $1.00 to the GNL along with your nomination for the Ring of Truth award winner. If you like, you may designate $1.00 of your annual subscription fee towards the contest prize. That way, all paid subscribers get to vote for no extra donation; they only need expend the energy to vote and let us know to place the first dollar of their subscription renewal in the Ring of Truth award fund. Anyone who reads our pages can vote. You may vote as often as you wish; however, only your first vote will be applicable to your annual subscription. The winner will be the author of the piece with the greatest number of votes, and in some sense, all of us. The winner will be announced at the same time as the Pagan Studies contest award, so votes will have to be cast by December 21, 1988. Pick your nominees from any (or all) issues from December 1987 to November 1988.

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That's all for this month...

Blessed Be,

dean, jeannie, and the Georgians

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