

PAGAN Moonbeams

Vol. 2 Issue 3
April - May 2009

Staff Notes

A little note to the readers' from our small staff.
Staff Members listed in croniglical order.

TristA

Writer, Admin, Webmaster since: Aug. 07

Enjoying the changes of nature sometimes causes us to forget that it is a reminder that time is passing. Be sure to make the best of your time and measure it with your views as nature changes clothes.

Laura Shadley

Editor since: April 08

If you've never been thrilled to the very edges of your soul by a flowerin spring bloom, maybe your soul has never been in bloom. ~Audra Foveo

Mandi Aumann

Writer & Admin. since: July 08

As the rains come to feed the soil, and the seeds blossom into blooms, may your life be filled with life and abundance. Blessed be!

Raven Moonshadow

Editor since: Aug. 08

Spring, a time of rebirth, renewal and blossoming. New growth abounds everywhere. Not only are the plants in a new re-growth, but many animals are scurrying about, pregnant and preparing to welcome new life. A wonderful time to see goals start to come to fruition.

Pandora

Editor since: Dec 08

As the Wheel of the Year turns, we look toward birth, growth and renewal. Revel in the new life surrounding you, and breathe deeply of Nature's Magick. Until next time, Blessings Abound

A Few Words

Watching nature during it's rebirth time is a wonder in itself. Seeing how things start out or are born adds to its meaning and beauty as it reaches maturity.

There is nothing as amazing as seeing the buds that have been sleeping over the winter to begin working again. Brown bumps on branches become those smooth green buds making flowers or leaves.

Take the time to walk around and see the free things of nature coming alive again. See if you can find one that touches you and will become your favorite.

Enjoy living the Spring and preparing for the Summer!

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Issue Shorts

- In case you haven't been following Pagan Moonbeams in the last few months you should know that we have decided to become a bi-monthly publication.
- There is a new section that will act as a simple Pagan newspaper for kids each week. Be sure to check the parents page if you like it so it can continue.
- Staff, once again has decreased, so some content that you have been used to will not be in this issue, but don't worry the line up for it is very good without them.
- Pagan Moonbeams is always looking for volunteers. If you would like to send in an article or operate a regular column please contact us: paganmoonbeams@yahoo.com

We Appreciate Your Readership

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**Want to see something
else? Let us know!**

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Crafty Pagan

By: Pandora

Spring Time Crafts

Design Your Own Garden Markers

You'll need:

Popsicle sticks
Light-colored paper
construction paper, cut to size
glue or glue stick
colored pencils, crayons or markers
wax paper or clear packing tape (to waterproof)

Instructions:

Find out from a parent or grown-up what different kinds of plants are going to be in the garden, this year. Make a list, or have them help you. Find different pictures in books or have an adult help you find some on the internet. Now, draw your own picture of these plants and flowers! Be as creative as you like. You can include the name, if you want. Just remember to make two of each one, so you have a front and a back for each marker.

When you are finished making your pictures, and they are dry and not going to smear, carefully cut the pictures off of your drawing paper. Make sure that the construction paper that you'll paste these onto are the right size for your drawings...you don't want them to be too big or too small! You'll want to use one piece of construction paper for each drawing, so you can glue the backs together. Just remember that the popsicle stick needs to go in between! Once all of your markers are put together, you can waterproof them, so that they won't disappear with the rain. A really easy way to do this is to use packing tape, with a grown-up's help, to seal both sides. Another method would be to have the grown-up iron your markers between sheets of wax paper, if they'd prefer.

When all of the markers are finished, have your parent show you where each of these plants is located in your garden. Gently place the markers in each area, by softly pushing the end of the popsicle stick into the earth, thanking Mother Nature as you go.

As the plants and flowers start to grow, you'll know what each one is, and where it's located in your family's garden! You can even use them again, next year, if you'd like!

Variations for Teen Pagans

1. Instead of double-siding your markers with the same images, try adding in the magickal correspondences to the 'back' side!
2. Draw a diagram and arrange your garden so that the correspondences relate to each other. For instance, you can group together love and protection OR protection and banishing.
3. Consider those herbs, plants & flowers that have multiple uses or can be mixed in for multiple uses. Using the previous example of protection herbs, you might use that as a barrier between drawing and banishing, since it's an ingredient you can use for both.
4. Arrange your plants and herbs based upon those your family uses mostly for medicinal purposes and those used for their metaphysical properties.
5. Remember to take pictures of your garden, as it grows.
6. Keep a growth journal or scrapbook. Use your pictures, drawings and even nature's rubbish to embellish it! Don't forget to add small stories about experiences with them, even if it's just the story how watering the garden turned into a water fight, for the whole family! Remember to get some photos representing these 'events', too!
Keep track of worked well, and what didn't. This will help you plan next year's garden! Even if you just want to rotate what goes where. If you write it down, you'll be sure to remember!

***Any & all of these suggestions will lead to great stories and memories, to share with friends and family.
It's also a great way to keep the seasons alive, as the Wheel of the Year turns!***

Many Blessings!

Pandora's Recipe Box

By: Pandora

Glazed Salmon on Greens & Orange Salad

Ingredients

4 (5 oz.) salmon fillets
1/3 cup Asian ginger salad dressing
2 Tbs Clementine or orange juice
1/2 cup thinly sliced red onion
8 cups salad greens (try arugula, mizuna, and frisee)
4 Clementines, peeled and sliced
1/3 cup chopped unsalted toasted almonds



Directions

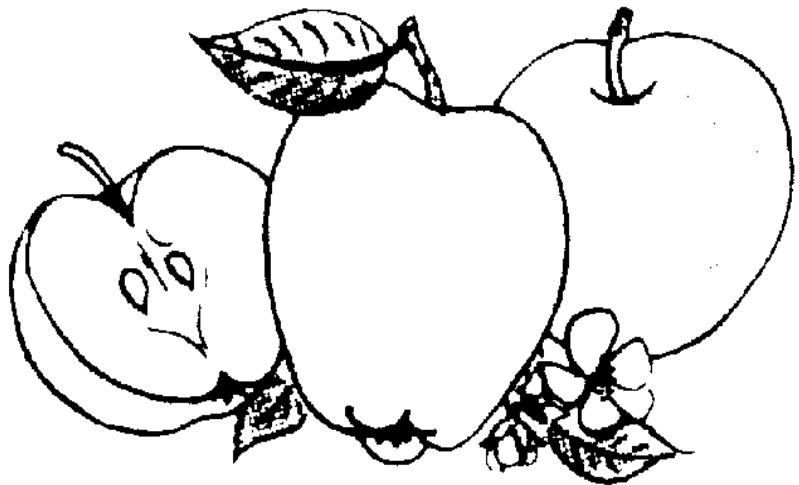
1. Place salmon, skin-side down, on foil-lined, rimmed baking sheet. Spoon on, or brush salmon with 2 Tbs of the dressing. Let stand 15 minutes.
2. Put remaining dressing and the juice in a large bowl; add onions and toss to coat. Heat broiler.
3. Broil salmon 8-10 minutes, or until just cooked through.

Add salad greens and Clementines to bowl with onions; toss to mix and coat. Arrange salad on serving plates. Lift salmon off foil, leaving the skin behind. Place salmon on salad and sprinkle with almonds.

Apple and Dried Fruit Compote

Ingredients

2 tsp canola oil
1 medium onion, sliced
1 lg Granny Smith apple; peeled, cored and cut into 1 inch pieces
1 cup dried apricots
1 cup dried plums (prunes)
1/2 cup Craisins or raisins
1 3/4 cup apple juice or cider
1 tsp cider vinegar
1/4 tsp pepper



Directions

1. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat.
2. Add onion; saute 3 minutes or until just translucent.
3. Add apple; saute 2 minutes or until golden.
4. Add remaining ingredients and cover.
5. Reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes or until apples are tender.
6. Serve warm or chilled.

Pandora's Recipe Box

By: Pandora

Homemade Trail Mix

Try this with portable mix with any combination of dried fruits and nuts.

Ingredients

1/4 cup whole shelled (unpeeled) almonds
1/4 cup unsalted dry-roasted peanuts
1/4 cup dried cranberries
1/4 cup chopped pitted dates
2 oz. dried apricots or other dried fruit

Directions

1. Combine almonds, peanuts, cranberries, dates and apricots (or other fruit) in a medium bowl.

Nutrition Information

Per serving
Calories: 156
Carbohydrates: 21g
Fat: 7g
Saturated Fat: 1g
Mono unsaturated Fat: 4g
Protein: 4g
Cholesterol: 0mg
Dietary Fiber: 3g
Potassium: 247mg
Sodium: 0mg



Old Fashioned Southern Lemon Icebox Pie

Ingredients

1 can Eagle Brand Sweetened Condensed milk
3 lemons
3 eggs, separated (save whites for meringue)
1 graham cracker crust
enough vanilla wafers to go around top of pie after filling
cream of tartar
granulated sugar

Directions

1. In a mixing bowl, beat egg yolks until creamy. Add milk and juice from lemons (remove seeds first). I like adding a little extra lemon juice for a kick.
2. Mixture will thicken on its own. Pour into graham cracker crust and arrange vanilla wafers around top of crust.
3. To make meringue: Beat egg whites until stiff peaks form. Add 2 teaspoons cream of tartar. Mix well.
4. Add sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time until desired sweetness. Pour over top of filling and bake in 375°F oven until nice and brown. Allow to cool before cutting.



***Variation** Instead of a meringue, you can buy whipped topping or make your own fresh whipped topping. Pour over top of filling and freeze~*

Serve Frozen

Wee Pagans

By: TristA

Gardening Unit

Moon Activity

It is believed that during the full moon you can see fairies, nature spirits and devas under the moon. May is the magickal month when you can see them the most. Draw pictures, read, sing, dance, or just sit and talk to them under the full moon this May.

Gardening Ideas

There are many gardening opportunities for you to have fun and learn about symbolism and nature's magick. Try to grow at least one of the following gardens this year.

- Crystal Garden
- Herb Garden
- Animal Garden (butterfly garden, bee garden, etc...)
- Fairy Garden
- Color Garden
- Season Garden (one garden area with different season specific plant life to bloom at each of the seasons)
- Symbol Garden (arranged in a way to comprise a symbol of your choice)
- Labyrinth Garden
- Dedicated Gardens where contents are dedicated to the Goddess, Astrological sign, etc...
- Altar Gardens (placement of items are figured as is the representation of them)

Egg Carton Garden

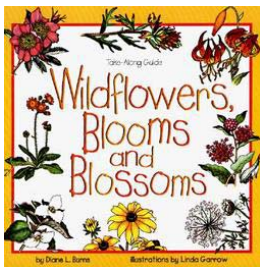
Start your own garden in a paper egg carton. Follow the steps below.

- Have an adult cut the top off of the paper egg carton. Use a toothpick or skewer to poke a hole in the bottom of each pocket of the carton (have an adult supervise).
- Put some potting soil or local dirt in each pocket of the egg carton. Use your finger to make a hole in each one to put seeds in.
- Get seeds of the things you choose to plant. If they are large put one in each pocket, small seeds can fit 2 or 3 in each pocket.
- Cover the seeds with dirt and put the pocket section on top of the tray section of the carton. Water the carton well and don't worry if some water goes into the tray because it will water the seeds later.
- Keep your egg carton in the window. Check it often and remember to add water when the dirt feels dry. Make sure that it doesn't get too wet either. If the dirt is shiny and you can see water floating, let it sit in the sun for a few days until it uses that water up.
- When your seeds have turned into plants and they are about 1-1/2 inches tall, ask an adult to help you replant them.
- If planting them outdoors, cut them into individual pockets and plant them in your outdoor garden. If planting them into pots or planters, cut apart the one's that need to be planted separately to plant into the proper containers.

Snap It!



Gardens offer a wonderful time for kids to snap pictures of the wonders they hold. Take a camera with you each time you go to the garden or, for that matter, anytime you are walking in nature, and snap the things you feel are amazing. You can even make an album to put them in.



While learning about flowers and gardening, a great beginning book to learn with is: **Wildflower Blooms and Blossoms**.

Explore the whole summer and what it has to offer by checking out the complete Young Naturalist Field Guides published by Gareth Stevens Publishing.

Don't forget to make the garden God or Goddess in any size you feel appropriate using household scraps that will stand the trials of mother nature's weather!

Wee Pagans

By: TristA

Secret Garden Club

I live on an organic farm located near the flatlands of the United States with my gran and gramps. My name is Kwonda, which is short for Kundalini the Aztec goddess of vegetation; a great name my parents gave me. My life was not real hectic like the other kids that I knew. My gran and gramps were always busy, but they had a calm about them, one that I had too. My gramps was always busy and didn't really spend a lot of time with me, but when he did it was always amazing.

The farm is full of magic and I can't count the times my gran took me to different parts of it to watch the wonders of nature. I always found myself watching for her in hopes today would be the day I could share some special times with her. We watched the farm animals being born and hatched, we watched animals go from one form to another, we watched the baby spiders float in the wind, we watched frost come, and just about anything else really magickal that you can think of.

It was a mid-spring day when I had the biggest magickal experience on the farm, and it was with someone I never thought would do it with me. It all started when my friend Maci spent the night with me and, for one of the first times, my gran wouldn't let us sleep under the stars. We had just about drifted off to sleep and the moon was a little over past sky peek when me and Maci heard the knock at my door. I opened it to gramps standing there in a nightgown and a candle lantern.

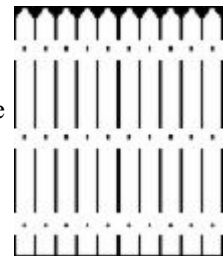
Gramps told me and Maci to grab a jacket and slip it on over our nightwear. He led us outside to a corner of the yard that was very bare and surrounded by a picket fence. He placed a few small stones on the ground and told us to have a seat. He spent that night talking about Kundalini and the magickal garden that was blessed with her hand. We were told that that night was the most special time because not only would Kundalini be watching, but the moon, sprites, fairies and even the light bugs would be watching all the things going on.

Gran pulled a wheel barrel up full of gardening tools. She gave me and Macy some gloves that changed colors as the moonlight hit them. Once she left, gramps started handing out tools and we all dug a perfect square in the middle of the picket fence that surrounded the area. Gramps gave us a pile of those thin rocks we sat on while he told his stories earlier and we were allowed to each make a path through the ground. Gramps gave us seeds and bulbs and helped us pick the best place to plant them in that square. Gran came in when we were almost done to bring us some warm milk and walked with us around the picket fence and we all planted seeds as we walked the square.

Almost every night that Macy spent the night we would get that knock at our door to go with gramps out to our garden and water, weed, and care for it. We would also sit on the stones we placed in special places and listen to gramps tell stories of many magickal beings, gods, and goddesses that could have come to or seen our creation. We would look for footprints from them and even put some things out for them to eat or sit in next time they came by. Walking around the square next to the picket fence was one of my favorite parts because gran would let us play with a squirt bottle and spray the vines growing up the fence. When done, we could sit and watch the drops of water fall under the bright moonlight.

As things grew in our garden we noticed that it only smelled and looked nice in the night. If we secretly went there in the day the whole garden didn't smell good and everything looked dead. We once asked Gramps why it was this way and he told us because it was a moon garden. We always kept the garden a secret from friends and other family members that came to visit because we wanted it to stay magickal.

It was towards the end of the summer when Maci and I understood everything. Gran came in as we were putting on our pj's and took our shirts replacing them with one she had made. They were made of that same color changing material our garden gloves were and on the front was a large moon with fairies and sprites all around it. The back said "Secret Garden Club"; Gran and Gramps had one exactly the same. We thought the shirts were really neat and even today we talk about how great it was to be in the club.



Draw Moon Flowers on the picket fence above

Herb Focus: **Cinquefoil**



Color: Cinquefoil is a delicate plant that has 5 to 7 jagged leaves under its flowers. It creeps similar to a strawberry plant.

Parts Used: The flowers, leaves, and roots. Leaves can be used raw or cooked

Location: Cinquefoil is native to Eastern and Central, North America. But grows wild in many countries.

Healing Properties: Cinquefoil has a high level of tannins which makes it very astringent. Cinquefoil is used to reduce fever, toothache, hoarseness, sore throat, coughs, and diarrhea. It can be used on the skin as an ointment or bath to heal sores and rashes. The root is known to stop bleeding. It is an excellent pain killer.

Magickal Attributes: Cinquefoil can be put into a bath to help with prophetic dreaming, burned as an incense for divination, stuffed into dream pillows, and is a component in modern-day flying ointment. It can also be used in love potions to dream of one's future mate. Some believe it will give protection in court cases.

Latin Name: Potentilla simplex

** Cinquefoil has no known side effects and can even be used on infant rashes.

Topic

- Agrippa includes cinquefoil in a recipe for Mercury incense and said that cinquefoil drives away devils and helps one to resist poison
- When "fingers" are mentioned in old grimoires, it is usually this magick herb that is meant.
- It is also the patron herb of fishermen
- Flowers bloom in late May thru August. Harvest edible young shoots and leaves before flowers bloom. Gather entire plant, in bloom, dry for later herb use.
- Cinquefoil has been used as a primary herb since the time of Hippocrates.
- According to Bacon, Frogs, not toads, have a fondness for sitting on Cinquefoil.

*** As with all natural medicinal items and purposes, be sure to check with a parent before using.*

Mineral Focus: **Sodalite**



Color: Sodalite is colorless to pink, pale violet, pale to dark blue, violet and transparent to opaque. The dark blue color is the most common

Chakra: Throat

Healing Properties: Sodalite helps regulate the metabolism and flow of the digestive system, it promotes a healthy thyroid and can aid in simple weight loss, it also boosts the immune system and combats insomnia

Magickal Properties: Clears up mental confusion and reestablishes inner peace, encourages rational thinking, logic, intelligence, emotional balance, intuition, higher knowledge, clarity, truthfulness, communication, fellowship, self-esteem, trust of others, clears emotional turmoil, and perception, strengthens the power of mind over body and bridges the gap between your thoughts and your feelings.

Element: Air

- ◆ Sodalite gets its name from the high sodium content it contains.
- ◆ The astrological sign of Sodalite is Sagittarius.

Topic

- Worn as a necklace Sodalite will help with communication and give confidence while speaking.
- This is a great stone for promoting group harmony and will aid mediators and peace makers
- It is said that Sodalite eliminates fears and guilt better than any other stone
- Keeping Sodalite on your person or in your home will promote inner peace
- Sodalite promotes creative expression
- Can lessen the effects of anxiety and panic attacks
- Sodalite stimulates endurance and strength in athletes
- It can be fluorescent which will cause it to glow under a black light

*** Crystal Healing is an acquired art and shouldn't be practiced without parental permission and/or guidance.*

Young Pagans

By: TristÅ, Pandora & Mandi Aumann

Correspondence Journal

Sky Traffic

From the times of Pagan ancestors, the skies have been insight into everything, from the outcome of crops to what the day was. Both natural and manmade items that are found in the sky have great meaning and, in some way, connect with the God and Goddess that control them. Observing them is a wonder in itself, however, understanding them brings more than knowledge to you!

This month let's add in sky traffic to your correspondence journal.

Sun

God mysteries, physical health, employment, leadership, prosperity, money, the performing arts and celebrity, self confidence, and new ventures

Atmospheric Optics

Eternity, circle of life, wheel of the year, seeing projects through, shedding light on something, extraordinary

Noctilucent Clouds

Focus, hope, joining earth & water, blue correspondences, correct timing

Meteors/Fireballs

Cosmic Consciousness; the direction of North; Community of Life; the Divine; Creation

Auroras

Action, positive motion, speed in a situation, the correspondences of the colors that are seen, coming out of hiding, consistency, truth

Eclipses

Balance; Duality; Sun & Moon energies, in conjunction; High energies for Magickal workings; Joining; Bonds

Moon

Goddess mysteries, women's health, the home, children, prophetic dreams, reincarnation, sleep, emotional healing

Comets

Death of Fame

Some of the items listed here are not so easy to spot or know they are in your area. You may want to turn to the scientists to be more familiar with your sky traffic and weather information. Try visiting Space Weather Flash: <http://spaceweather.com/submissions/map.php?cat=all> .

Be sure to keep up with your local sky traffic, messages from the God and/or Goddess, and to keep track of your findings!

Young Pagans

By: TristA

Though your pet may not share religion with you, it does not mean that you can't share yours with them. There are many things that you can do with your pet that will help bond you and them, as well as them to the God, Goddess and spirits.

Not only can they be a part of your path, they can also act as a stand-in for you to practice different traditions and important things. Here is a short list of things you can include your pet in:

- Rituals - there are many rituals that can be performed with them present, especially those directed to them. You can have a ritual to adopt them into the family, for any outside ritual that has space for them to lay or stand quietly as it takes place (even if that means in a crate). Daily rituals can also be adapted to involve the fur, scaled or winged pet that is considered part of the family.
- Rites of Passage - Animals age too; some do it at a quicker rate than we do, and it is nice to recognize those stages with rites of passage.
- Handfasting – Yes, there are those that perform a handfasting with their pets. These can be as simple as a few words or as elaborate as a ceremony with friends and family.
- Festivals & Ceremonies - All path-specific special days, as well as the wheel of the year dates, are great to share with your pet.

Pet Adoption Ritual

Welcoming a Pet into Your Pagan Family

By: Mandi Aumann

If you have met your pet and are waiting to bring him home, take some time to buy a special trinket for him to have, at all times – a pretty collar or special tag. If the kind of pet you're bringing home isn't the kind that wears a collar (like a gerbil or bird), then buy something special for his cage or space. If you've already brought your pet home, it's OK ; buy the gift, as soon as you can.

In blessed space, and with your parents' help, if you need it, cleanse and consecrate the gift. Sprinkle it with holy water and fire (pass it through the heat of a candle). Say a prayer to your chosen deity (some good choices include Diana, Artemis and Bast) and ask Them to watch over your pet and bless your lives together.

Go to your new pet and talk to him quietly. Tell him how glad you are that he chose you and your family, and tell him how you will take care of him. While you're doing this, imagine a bubble growing from your heart and getting so big that you and your pet are now inside the bubble. Give him the special gift (put the collar on, put the tag on the collar, or put the new toy in his cage) and pet him to show how much you love him.

That's it! You're done!

Forever Pet Bonds

There have been bonds between pets and their owners, forever. There are tons of evidence that the ancient cultures, most that we consider our ancestors, had animal companions. Most of the time, they were treated with great respect and as a member of the family.

One of the latest finds was discovered last year. A 4,000 year old Irish grave site found, while digging on Tara, a dog companion of one of the kings. It is assumed that the dog was a pet since he had his own grave, separate his owner.

Almost every generation can give an example of pets being used throughout the years by their ancestors. Pagan roots are strong with pets, as we attempt to connect more with the natural world. Keep your eye out in the news and in history books to find out the different kinds of pets sprinkled throughout history.



Your pet can actually act as a link between you and your future relationship with nature. They hold natural values and knowledge that people have lost throughout the years and are more than willing to share them with you. Building a spiritual, Pagan bond with your pet can bring to you more than you have ever known.

***Spend time with them and learn,
share what you know and grow with
them in both life and spirit.***

Young Pagans

By: TristA

My Beauty

I had over 20 animals and lived in a small trailer. This was way too many and my husband put his foot down, saying that they all had to go. It took me two weeks to get good homes for all but three of them. Then I found myself at a place I thought I would never go: the animal shelter. Not only was I uncertain about the thing I had to do, I was very nervous about even being there. As the Goddess helped me, I ended up in a line behind five other people, waiting my turn with a kennel full of cats in it.

This is when I took the time to actually look around and see that there was a nice couple in front of me with two cats. We made small-talk and I found out that the two cats they had were theirs from birth, and that they were just getting rid of them because the cats were 'bad and in the way'. Before it was my turn, I headed back to the car with my cats and the ones from that couple that I was talking to. It confused me to death how two grown men would just get rid of an animal because they felt it was too hard to work with and correct.



My husband wasn't so happy when I got home but, as usual, he agreed and dealt with my decision. So we made a home for the four cats and the thought of giving them up had gone out of our minds, completely. It was then that I got to know Beauty who was one of the cats that came from those two guys I met in line before. As special as she was, she wasn't what you would think. I usually bond so much with animals and spoil them to no end.

The other cat had a name of Spice and had a soft personality. She would sit and watch me cook, lay with me each night as I slept, and just spend all the time she could with me. Now, Beauty was a different story. She didn't like anyone to come near her and chose to take residence in the bottom cabinet. She chose to have the door shut and would bite anyone that came near her, including me. Everyone told me to get rid of Beauty, but I refused. I allowed her to live in her cabinet and put a blanket down there for her. Each night you would hear the cabinet doors bang as she left her hidden spot and, in the morning, I would get up and open it, then disappear. Later, I would walk by and close the doors again. I kept her food and water under there with her and changed it when she was out and about; she ran around the house and outside, as well. Although Beauty and I didn't spend time together, we came to an agreement to respect one another.

It was really early in the morning when she screamed like I had never heard before. I looked around and finally found her, in the closet floor, where I hadn't closed the door all the way. After just glancing at her, trying not to invade her space, I saw that she was having babies. I looked into her eyes and just felt that she didn't want me to leave. Out of the blue, I sat down and pet her as she had babies. As each one would come out I would pick it up and make sure it was breathing, then sit it back down. She and I, together, cleaned them after they all came out. To my surprise, all that came out were in good health and most looked like her: totally black with golden eyes.

The day Beauty had her babies was a brand new life for me and Beauty. We continued to give one another space, however, we shared a lot, together. I helped rear the kittens that she'd birthed, and anytime I was upset she was there trying to comfort me. I would think things and she would know what was on my mind. We had a connection, like no other.

Looking back, I realized that Beauty came to me when life was getting hard. She bonded with me when things were falling apart around me. She left when things got better and her issues were ironed out because the kittens were grown and had moved on, by choice. Some would probably consider her to be my familiar or that we were emotionally bonded. Whatever the case, Beauty will always hold a special place inside of me. It really touches me that the God and Goddess blessed me with such a special animal and relationship.



My Beauty is a non-fiction short story that tells of the connection one can have with nature. It is amazing when nature sends things to help you in your endeavors - it shows amazing dedication on both nature and your own part. Think about things that have happened in your own relationship with nature and write a story of your own that tells about it!

School Bell—English

By: Raven Moonshadow

Which Witch is Which?

We all know that writing anything can be daunting enough. Add in spelling and grammar and your world may just turn upside down. Homophones, words that sound the same but have different meanings, can be incredibly confusing. The English language uses many of these words. It is very easy to mistakenly use these words in your writings. You can't depend upon your computer spell checker to tell you that the wrong word has been chosen; if you spelled it correctly, it won't come up. Kids aren't the only ones to fall into this grammar trap; adults do, as well. In all of the years I have worked in business, I have seen many an adult completely change the meaning of the memo or email they mass distributed to the entire company because they chose the wrong spelling of a word. Have no fear! I will go over some of the common homophone word traps. When in doubt, a dictionary and/or a thesaurus may become your greatest resource for sorting out the crazy world of homophones.

WHICH – WITCH:

The first, WHICH, can be used when needing more information to specify difference between two or more items. Example – Which holiday is your favorite, Imbolc or Samhain? The second, WITCH, is a noun and I don't think needs too much clarification.

KNOW – NO:

Yes, there are times when adults misuse these two words, too. To KNOW something is to be aware through observation. I know that not all Pagan religions are exactly the same. NO means not any or the opposite of what is being specified. Sometimes raising five children in Pagan traditions is no easy task.

WEATHER – WHETHER:

Another common mistake made is using these two words interchangeably. WEATHER - Think of Mother Nature with this one. This weather is not good for an outdoor ritual, it is pouring down rain with thunder and lightning. WHETHER can express doubt or uncertainty about something. He has not decided whether he will go to the Equinox celebration or have a private celebration at home.

TO – TOO – TWO: TO can be used to express location or a point of reference. I devoted myself to study one new god or goddess each day. TOO, meaning also or excessively. Jane wanted to learn different religious traditions, too. TWO – this is the number. Two is Sam's magickal number.

THEY'RE – THERE – THEIR:

One of the most common mistakes I know I have seen. THEY'RE is the contraction for THEY ARE; as in, "They're going to celebrate the Solstice at sundown. THERE is more directional; you are referring to a specific place. For example: Our ritual items are kept there, in the cabinet with the triple moon engraved on the side. The last one, THEIR, is possession; it belongs to them. The ritual participants placed their offerings to the Goddess Brigid underneath the tree.

While I could go on and on regarding homophones and their differences, there are far too many to be covered here. For a list of homophones listed alphabetically, check out: www.homophone.com.

WRITING CORNER

With the recent celebration of the Vernal (Spring) Equinox and the coming of Beltaine, there is much to celebrate. New life is showing its self everywhere in nature around you. The air is crisp; flowers and all sorts of vegetation are in bloom. The sounds, smells and sights can be of wonderful enjoyment and inspiration. Take some time to meditate outside in the fresh Spring air. Find something that inspires you. Take a picture or recreate it, then, doing as a bard would, use it as your focal point. Write a song or a poem about it. Send us your ideas! We'd love to read them and put them in future issues of Pagan Moonbeams.

DID YOU KNOW? – FACTS ABOUT ENGLISH

We all know that Americans and British speak and write in English, but did you know that they don't necessarily spell the same? In fact, there are many variations. Listed below are some examples of differences between American English and British English. The American English spelling will appear on the left with the British English spelling to the right. Remember, no matter which spelling you use, both are correct and understood.

-OR vs. -OUR
Color – Colour
Favorite – favourite
Honor – honour

-ZE vs. -SE
analyze – analyse
criticize – criticise
memorize – memorise

-OG vs. -OGUE
dialog – dialogue
analog – analogue
catalog – catalogue

-ER vs. -RE
center – centre
meter – metre
theater – theatre

For more common differences in spelling between American English and British English, or to add a twist to your writing, check out the following website: www2.gsu.edu/~wwwesl/egw/jones/differences.htm.

School Bell—Geography

By: TristÅ

Trekking Pagan Ancestors

Pagan ancestors have walked on almost land that is now settled. Pick a Pagan culture of your choice (maybe the one's connected to your favorite path or pantheon). Learn a little about the lands that they once called home, conquered and considered their own. Follow the steps below to comprise a map of your own on a large piece of construction paper, papyrus, or scroll:

1. Find out what lands your chosen Pagan culture owned at the end of its rule on a modern day map and draw the outline of the land on your own paper. Label the area with a light color or certain manner so it can permanently be seen as a background in your finished map.
2. Draw all of the natural (be sure to omit manmade) forms of water and significant changes in earth itself (mountains, valleys, etc...). Label them in the names that were used during the rule of your Pagan ancestors. If you wish, you can also place the names of the deities, spirits or other swwhich ruled that particular area.
3. Find out the proper naming of cities, villages and famous religious spots of the time. Label them as you find them.
4. Add color and special effects to your map but do not fill it up too much with designs. Be sure that the parts that only refer to the Pagan ancestors of the map are darker or stand out more than that of what we see in modern maps.
5. Compare the map you have comprised with the way the land looks today. See how many modern day names have roots from those things on your map.
6. As you learn more about the Pagan culture that you feel connected with, add the new findings to your map.

As a child, I did this as a personal religious assignment. As an adult, it is the nicely framed map hanging above my desk, to remind me where my religious blood came from. I do find myself using it as a reference which I need more often than you would think.

If you are near the area's you are studying take the time to physically visit some of these sacred areas. It is believed that you will gain a special kind of energy by breathing over places where those from your religion's roots did.

Map the Language

The simple sentence: "I am a Pagan" looks so different when in languages you are not familiar with. See if you can pronounce or read the translations in different languages.

Chinese - 我是一名异教徒

Dutch - Ik ben een Heiden

French - Je suis Païen

German - Ich bin ein Heide

Italian - Sono Pagano

Japanese - 私は異教徒です

Portuguese - Sou Pagão

Russian - Я - Язычник

Spanish - Soy un Pagano

Take out a world map and see if you can find the area where these different languages are connected to. The translation was taken from a free online translator service, so you can be sure that a form of Paganism is practiced in those areas or they wouldn't have translated smoothly!

Sacred Places

Each month a Sacred place will be listed for you to research on your own. If you would like to share an article, picture you have drawn, small report, or anything else about it with readers or staff, feel free to send it in with your first name, age, and let us know if you want it placed in the next issue of Pagan Moonbeams. Email: PaganMoonbeams@yahoo.com

This Month's Sacred Place:

Tikal

School Bell—Science

By: TristÅ

Weather is something that everyone watches and has, since the times of our Pagan ancestors. It has become a habit of watching the news, reading the newspaper or simply going online to see what others predict for the weather. Although these resources are good and sometimes accurate, you can learn more by figuring out what the weather is on your own. There are tools that you can buy and make to aid you in weather prediction, however, the most enjoyable, accurate and educational is learning how to read nature to make predictions.

Since the beginning of time the skies, and what they have to offer, have been of interest to Pagans. Reading these heavenly bodies and understanding their interaction with those living on the earth because being able to read the skies helps us understand more of the gods and goddesses that rule and operate them, and the messages they are sending our way .

Take time this month to learn more about the skies, keep records of them, learn what they mean and try to narrow the gap between you and your god and goddess. Keep special notes on your findings and memorize them. It won't be long and you will be able to master a trait that your Pagan ancestors had.

The Moon's Aid

Although it is in great argument right now between naturalist and scientists, there is not much proof that the moon aids in our weather.

Science The moon effects tides, earth atmospheric temperature, and it stabilizes the earth's axis making the weather stabilize, as well.	Naturalists If the moon is controlling that much of the weather, what makes you believe it isn't controlling more? Its position and phase effect the weather.
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Night Sky Weather Connection

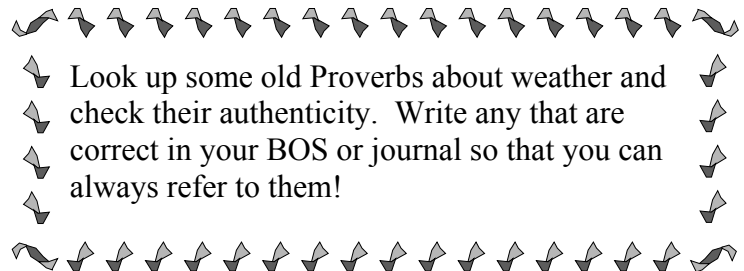
Although present all the time, many things found in the sky can be seen more in the night. With a little work, you will be able to read the night sky like a map and understand the titles of the constellations and other heavenly bodies. Once you have mastered this skill, you will be able to start exploring the idea that they effect the weather you will get that night and the next day as well.

Many people are presently studying the skies and tracking the weather. Some of their hypothesis are below. See how many you can prove or disprove. You can even use your findings to come up with your own idea of how weather and the skies are connected. Who knows you might be the next natural scientist, and there aren't many of them out there!

If you can see the Constellations, their exact position and other factors can predict certain weather patterns.

For a detailed list of them and the weather they bring, check this website: <http://www.astrologyweekly.com/astrology-books/tetrabiblos/nature-of-the-signs.php>

The Stars brightness and time they can be seen in the sky determine what the weather will be. Stars are usually connected with the amount of moisture and water-related weather for the coming weeks.



Look up some old Proverbs about weather and check their authenticity. Write any that are correct in your BOS or journal so that you can always refer to them!

	<p>Abnormal Views in the sky have been known to predict certain kinds of weather. Keep your eye out for them and determine their meaning, in conjunction with the weather that follows them. To get your motors running, some ideas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Glistening ring around the sun or moon mean ice or snow will be coming.• Large clusters of what looks like stars called Beehive mean that a storm is on its way.• A murky looking cloud is the first sign of a rain fall.	
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Tie in more of the Pagan beliefs by using this lesson in coordination with this month's correspondence journal !

School Bell—Math

By: TristÅ

The First Woman of Math

Hypatia was a very special Pagan that was born around 350 AD. She was a Greek that attended the best schools in Alexandria, Athens, and Italy. Her accomplishments and titles are numerous, however, there are a few that stand out more than others. She is believed to be the first notable women in mathematics.

In religion, she was very open-minded and seemed to receive it from others, as well. She was labeled as a sign of virtue and innocence from the Christians of her time, although she was a well-known Pagan.

Her death was a mystery and stays that way today. The major belief is that she was killed by a mob of Christians and many versions give different reasons as to why and how. If this is true, she could possibly be the first Pagan to be put to death for her belief. It is also believed that her murder marked the end of the Hellenistic Age.



Math's History

During the times of some of the most intelligent people, like Hypatia, there was the belief:

“Math was the bond between science and religion.”

Think hard on this saying. See if you can find the connection they have. Explain your findings and an example to support your view on it!



Garden Math

This time of year everyone seems to be planting. It is natural to want harvest as our ancestors did. Take the time to do just that, this year., harvest indoors, outside pots, around the house or in a full-fledged outdoor garden. Add in some math skills for fun, by using these suggestions or coming up with some on your own.

- Read on the packages of seeds or markers of plant starters to find out how much room a full grown plant will need. Measure your garden and make a planting plan complete with measurements that will make your harvest more organized.
- Comprise the best soil for your harvest by measuring and adding in specific amounts of dirt, sand, natural fertilizers, etc. This project can be carried over to other years, as you can fine tune things making the best potting soil for your growing needs.

Counting Book

There are many learn-to-count books, however, there aren't many that are Pagan-specific. Take the time to make your own wee Pagan counting book. In the process, you will learn more about your religion or path.

Do research in Paganism, your chosen path, or use a random Pagan topic to use as the focal point of your book. Fold paper in half and comprise a traditional book, a slide show, or a computer book for younger Pagans to learn their numbers.

Be sure to double check everything and iron out errors. Add some nice color to your book, too. Name your creation and give yourself credit (magickal or nicknames and age only please). Feel free to mail it to: paganmoonbeams@yahoo.com so it can be shared with the regular readers!



Pagan Puzzler

By: Mandi Aumann

Do some Pagan researching to find out the numbers used in the problem below:

The lowest number considered in numerology + the number of moon cycles in a year - the number of elements divided by the number of Sabbats traditionally celebrated by Wiccans.

Answer = 1

Pagan Teens

By: TristÅ

The Elements, An In-Depth look

As you are getting older a deeper more meaningful look at the elements becomes a need. Although you should always have a connection to the elements as a Pagan that connection should grow as you do. With the growth comes a new understanding and tighter bond with them as well.

A great series of articles have been found online and the author; LINK has graciously agreed to share them with you. You will see a different article posted each month for the next 4 months. Take your time reading them, learn all you can, be sure to take notes, add information in your correspondence journal, and put the idea's into practice. This is your chance to start on the path to a deeper bond with the elements, one you will need as you grow in life and magick.

You will notice in the articles there may be reference to things that you don't believe in or are not a part of your path. Do not just pass up what is written about them even though you don't believe in them. Instead, make them a lesson and/or insight to how the elements effect these things and/or how other's connect them to the element.

The wisest Pagan will be familiar with all of Paganism, but, totally true to his/her own path.

Everyday Air

We breathe it in every day. It surrounds us, fills us, yet often we don't even notice it: Air.

Of all the elements, Air is perhaps the most illusive. It can be the most difficult to describe, buy can also be one of the most vibrant. Air brings us the light sensation of a cool breeze, the sudden rage of a storm, and the sweet smell of every scent we experience.

An Airy Aura

Think of what Air actually is: a layer of gases surrounding our Earth. When we visualize Planet Earth, we usually focus on a solid object, the round Earthly globe. But in reality, our world rests in the center of a gaseous atmosphere 500 miles high. Rather than a mere solid alone, Planet Earth is a solid object surrounded by a glow of gas. Likewise, many of Earth's creations are also solids within their own special gas glow. Think of the way a fresh-baked apple pie fills your kitchen with its cinnamon-scent. The actual pie itself is only a few inches wide, but its Airy glow expands to fill the entire room! Perhaps it is the nature of solid things to be surrounded by a less-tangible outer cloak, an atmosphere of sorts. Knowing this helps us recognize things at their first blush, before they appear with full force. Just like we can smell the pie before actually touching it, we can sense many things around us by being aware of more than just their physical aspect.

People too have their own Airs about them. Our bodies have a natural scent that surrounds us like an aura. It changes uniquely from person to person, from day to day, even from mood to mood. As we expend more physical energy, our scent reflects that change and becomes even stronger. Don't underestimate the power of scent. When you are close enough to share a whiff of someone, it is as personal a gift as giving a lock of hair or a drop of blood. Your scent is a part of you; it may be even more personal than a solid gift. For example, if someone gave you a coin or stone or "lucky charm" you may merely put it in your jacket pocket. But the gift of scent is breathed in, actually taken deep inside you.

Air is one of the ways you can bond with a special place. You may eat its fruit, drink its waters, but you can also take time to smell its roses and breathe in a part of that place! You've heard the expression "you are what you eat?" Well, you are also what you drink, see, hear, feel - and yes, breathe!

Pagan Teens

By: TristÁ

Communication

Magically, the element of Air is often associated with communication. How fitting! Look how things in nature communicate with each other, how animals sense one another or flowers share pollen. We often augment ourselves with perfumes and oils, enhancing our personal scent to create the desired "atmosphere." Is this also a form of communication? Remember communicative Air the next time you hear someone whistle - an act performed how?

As a historical form of Airy communication, in the 17th century women used hand-held fans as a means to communicate romantic intent. According to the Harris Farmer's Almanac, fans fluttered in a certain fashion signaled the desire to be kissed and romanced. Held another way, fans meant "back off - this woman is engaged to be married," a similar gesture to the way someone today might wear a ring to ward off over-eager suitors.

Air wraps around the entire surface of the planet. It links all things together, tucked under the same sky like a big comfy blanket touching each and every one of us. This connection sounds like a very powerful medium for communication. On a more practical level, mass media like TV and radio travel through the Air to millions of people each day. Perhaps it is no accident we describe the act of broadcasting as putting something "on the Air."

In the cycle of life and death, all things die (and eventually smell dead too). Ever wonder why? Perhaps death's odor is an Airy signal within nature's food chain, alerting some little hungry creature to come along and enjoy a meal! Whether sensing a predator, a food-source, or a mate, smell is often the key way one part of nature communicates with another.

Air Spirits

We can find Air Spirits all around us, just like we'd find other elemental Spirits in rippling lakes, the woodsy Earth, or dancing candle flames. Know that Air Spirits are nearby; try to feel them as individuals. Pick one out and just listen to it - whether a howling nightwind or the gentle whirring fan within your PC, household appliance, or the tingle of wind-chimes.

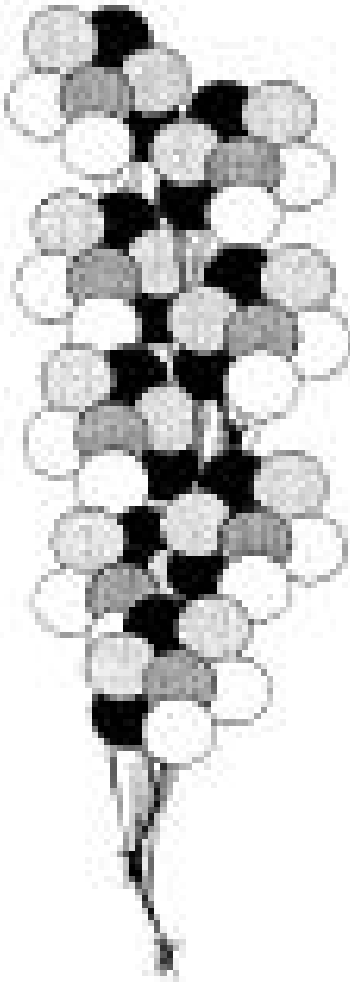
A family member of mine spends much of his leisure time boating, and has learned to sense sudden danger at sea with his sense of smell. As a storm blows in, he actually recognizes the scent of fresh water (rain) replace the usual scent of salty sea Air. I have witnessed this with my own eyes (and nose) seeing him pull up anchor in time to sail us to safety just minutes before a nasty squall hit! This may work well for sailors, but what about your own surroundings? If Air communicates, what aspects of your own surroundings might you want to learn? In what ways can you open yourself up to simply "breathing in" the messages you need to hear? Not sure how? Just follow your own nose!

The Air in your yard, your home town (and all across the world) is a unique mix of the scents, gases, and breath of all its inhabitants. All the tiny Airs around us - from the aroma of our incense to each breath we let out - all become part of the Air, like the way each drop joins to make up the entire sea. Air is a mix, a mosaic of many different things swirling together. Perhaps the lessons of Air apply to other mosaics - like diverse society, an ecosystem, or any other magical mix you might be a part of in your everyday life.

Pagan Teens

By: TristÅ

Air Magic



Want to try some Airy magical fun for children, even us big ones? Get a supply of colored balloons. Pick a balloon colored to fit your wish. Take in a big-big breath of the magic that surrounds you, and breeeeeeeeathe it into the balloon. Whoosh! When your balloon is full, take a magic marker (yes, we do call them magic, don't we?) and write your wish upon the balloon. Or maybe draw and create a magical "balloon friend" with a specific job to do for you. Have fun with your new magical tool. Rub it on your hair or wooly sweater; stick it to the wall. Tap it with your finger back and forth, back and forth ad nauseum. Drag it around on a string like an imaginary pet on a leash. Be creative. Then with a sudden burst, break the balloon and release the energy stored up inside. (With balloons, the magic usually happens by being both creative and destructive. Pop!) A school teacher friend, someone wiser than I when it comes to kiddies, once taught me this type of balloon magic. Try it and see what results you might find for yourself. What lessons can you learn from a simple balloon? What else in nature might work the same way?

All out of balloons? Try just the simple act of breathing as a magical device. Inhale. Take in from your surroundings. Gather the energy around you. Take in as much as you can handle - your own body will let you take no more, and no less. As the seconds fly by, your body is absorbing millions of tiny oxygen atoms which the blood in your lungs will send to every cell in your body. Feel it change you; feel its magic become yours for just a moment in time. Then exhale... Release your magical breath out into the Air currents all around you. Send it forth with a sigh, and let the winds carry your wish wherever it needs to go. This can be a quiet meditative moment, or a loud joyous one filled with gasps of laughter and song. Remember Air magic next time you blow out your birthday candles and make a wish!

To understand the sheer power Air has compared to other elements, remember that we can survive weeks without solid food, days without water - but only a few minutes without Air. Paramedics do Air magic whenever they give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. They may breathe mere gases into a dying person's lungs, but they charge that Air with their healing intent and will. Their intent says "C'mon - breathe. Live!" Air magic is used for the simplest, or the most vital of intents. Remember this. (If you smoke, what intent does that action have?)

Whether we do so purposely or not, all things on Earth share breath. Through the windy currents and chemical reactions that happen around us every day, the same molecule of Air that was a sea breeze yesterday, might be a baby's first breath today, or end up as car exhaust tomorrow.

Gases are less material than Earthly solids, so Air can be symbolic of that which does not exist on a material plane. Ideas, dreams, hopes, desires, fears, thoughts and wishes. These things are not flesh and bone, but they are certainly very real. Perhaps Air reminds us that something exists, even if you can't see or feel it. In the Zodiac, the fixed sign of Air is Aquarius - and just think of this sign's detachment from Earthly limitations! In the Tarot, Air is depicted as the Wand - quite a magical tool.

Air. Breathe it in...



Pagan Resources

There are many Pagan resources for kids, however, they seem to be hard to find. Below is a small list of the ones we found for you to check out. If you know of others or want your own listed here feel free to email us!

PaganMoonbeams@yahoo.com



Grey School
of
Wizardry



Meagan Stories



ANCIENT LIGHT
Challenge for the mind, fun for the hands, joy for the soul



To The Parent

By: Tristá

Early Introductions

The Pagan ways and family traditions will pass on to your child with time and situations that we feel are cues to do so. Even though we understand that this is in the works, it still leaves our child lost in some of the things they see and hear.

Not only is it hard to keep your religion, ways and reasons for your traditions from your child, it is unfair to your child. By keeping things from your child you could damage the bond that you have made with them.

It is believed that a solid foundation is needed for a deep Pagan foundation. It can be seen that people coming from a Pagan family seem more comfortable and secure in a Pagan world. These same people seem to be strong, and advance with a secure sense within the Pagan realm.

It is every Pagan parent's dreams to allow your child to have that solid foundation, however, direction in doing this seems to be lacking. As each parent reaches for that solution, it seems that more chaos arises. It will take parents bonding together, spreading ideas and working together, to find the best ways to introduce the Pagan world to the wee ones.

A few ideas are listed here in hopes that Pagans will bond together and add their small change to.

- Give young children a stuffed animal or toy. Explain to the child that the chosen medium (animal or toy) is a Pagan. Act out any upcoming Pagan activity with the medium and explain each step to your child. This will take the 'mystery' out of Paganism. This medium can be used for many purposes, as the child grows. Certain situations can also be explained (religious differences with friends, why holidays aren't celebrated, etc...) with this medium, as the child is comfortable with it. The chosen animal or toy can accompany them to be a fixture on their first altar and every stage of life as they learn and grow.
- Older kids will enjoy more mystery and comfort, at the same time. Sharing with them some healthy techniques (meditation, yoga, small rituals, casting a circle, securing a room, etc) will be the foundation to a more advanced information session. After the technique, feel free to sit across from one another in opposite corners, with lights out, having an open discussion about any Pagan topic will be more effective. A few rules need to be adhered to: be positive, allow open communication, allow room for jumping from topic to topic (allow the child to lead them), be honest and try not to candy-coat things, stay totally open to the many ways of looking at things (questions aren't asked for only one answer).

Feel free to add in your own advice. You can share them with the other Pagan Moonbeams readers in future issues by emailing : paganmoonbeams@yahoo.com.

Weekly Beams

With this issue of Pagan Moonbeams, a new idea has been included called Beams Weekly. It is in great hopes that this feature will be of some use and of interest to you, the readers.

You will find Beams Weekly as the last pages of this issue. Look them over and try them out for a while. If you feel you'd like to see them as a regular in Pagan Moonbeams, please be sure to email and tell us: paganmoonbeams@yahoo.com. Without reader interest, they will be omitted from future issues.

What you will find in an easy-to-print black and white:

- 2 page printable newsletter for each week of the issue's life. It will be written for the elementary age student but can be read or explained to other ages.
- Pagan-related special days and topics covered. A great addition to your homeschool curriculum or Pagan training.
- Small exercises, assignments, or activities corresponding to the content.

Homeschool Resource

Clickschooling is a great resource delivered to your email box daily. The resources are always secular and target all ages.

The Clickschooling Schedule:

Monday - Math
Tuesday - Science
Wednesday - Language
Thursday - Social Studies
Friday - Virtual Field Trip
Saturday - Elective

Sign up through the Yahoo group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ClickSchooling/>

You can also sign up for Clickschooling and other great free homeschooling resources at Homefires.com: http://www.homefires.com/about/lets_be_friends.asp

To The Parent

By: Tristá

Choosing Proper Toys

Toys are bought for our kids from many different areas and usually, it is what they ask for or enjoy. Although this is a good practice because it makes them happy, maybe it should be something that we rethink.

When allowing toys to become property of your children you may want to think about some important things.

- Colors that are in harmony with one another bring forth emotions of comfort. Be sure that everything is not just one color because that limits the environmental emotion.
- Offering fuel for their own creativity will give them free thinking. This may mean buying a toy and taking things from it, like instructions or diagrams showing solutions.
- Be sure the educational value of the toy is not just a marketing gimmick and that it is actually educational. Giving education in a 'negative' way will only teach false education to your child.
- Think about the message that the toy relays to your child. Try to avoid the ones that are not productive, in values or that does not follow the things you want to pass on to your child. Army men may teach that violence is good for playing and/or take the actual seriousness from it.
- It is great for the toy to double as serving a purpose. That purpose doesn't actually have to be a 'total' package, as long as it gives a little purpose. For example, a plant in the window that you end up having to water does bring nature inside and add freshness in sight, smell and vibe to the room.
- Consider the complexity of the toy. The belief that more complex toys produce more educational kids is definitely not true. According to the child and situation, the more complex the toy the more confusing and stressful it is. The same can be true for quantity. Sometimes, less really is more.
- Consider the age recommendations for the toy. Even though the 'expert age' seems to not be on-the-level you feel the child is on, it is there because of a round of reasons. This is not saying you can decide to give toys not in their range; however, be sure to check all angles of the toy before doing so.

Remember that you are the one in charge of what comes into the home, to begin with. You will notice, as time passes, that your child will be making better toy' choices, as you regulate what they start with.

Spiritual Parenting

By: David Carroll

The article opposite this book review 'Choosing Proper Toys' was written using this book as its only resource.

This book is rather old, published in 1990, however it can still be considered a true find. The ideas presented were way before their time: omitting negative enforcement and offering positive reinforcement; however, there are still enough that will be new and effective today. It is very spiritual, when considering a lot of regular parenting issues, and it covers almost all religions which are mentioned, specifically, throughout the book. The book focuses on children from birth to probably end of elementary age in the topics of spiritual education, discipline, understanding their bodies, home life and values.

Consider this title when making your parenting library.

Cauldron Curriculum

<http://cauldroncurriculum.onefireplace.com/>

Cauldron Curriculum is a fairly new Pagan site, offered as an online subscription, running about \$30 per year, for unlimited access to all materials as well as those that are added throughout the year. It is run and created by 3 members of the Council Elders and things are added each week, which you can view on the news page. You can find something for Grades preK through 8, broken down into subjects. While not a full curriculum, these tools can easily supplement your current curriculum.

Outside of the actual curriculum you can join the newsletter to find out what is new at the site or the parent forum to exchange parenting views and idea's with others. Both of these services are free to anyone, not just the members.

I can see this site easily being the supplement of all Pagan's home school in the near future!

Mythmatical Battles

Grade 4 - 7



A great combination of math and mythology is something that you might want to consider. The game not only enforces general math skills, it can operate as a manipulative when learning the god and goddess of different pantheons. The card sets are around \$15 per set, which covers the major gods and goddesses of 2 pantheons. The game its self contains a variety of math skills enforcement and usually lasts about 45 minutes to complete.

To check this game out or buy them check out their website: <http://www.mythmaticalbattles.com/>

Magickal Touch

By: Mandi Aumann

What is Magickal Touch?

This section is dedicated to finding ways in our daily lives for incorporating our beliefs. A pagan life is one of symbolism and mysticism. We recognize and celebrate the emotions and memories that daily life holds for us. A bed is not just a bed—it is a mystical place of dreams, peace, togetherness. Everything in our lives holds new meaning when we open our eyes to the emotions and energies around us. How can we bring that to our magickal lives? Join me, as we explore the magickal energies we awaken every day.

Trait of Month: Spirit

Herbs: salt, pepper, clover

Appliances: lights, windows, coffee pot (the ability to change water into something)

Colors: white, silver, gold, black

Rooms: formal living room, anywhere you have an altar

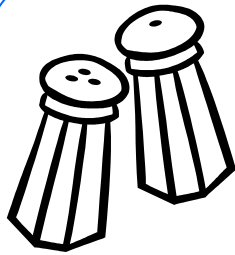
Direction: all directions

Activities: praying, meditating, visualizing, daydreaming, spiritual cleansing

Food: corn, peanuts, apples

Drinks: chocolate milk, wine, any fermented beverage (fermented does not always indicate alcoholic), herbal teas

Item of the Month: Salt & Pepper



To me, the greatest household symbols of the Great Mother and Her Consort are salt and pepper. Rarely seen apart, salt is a universal representation of the Earth we live on, and pepper is the exact opposite. Since salt comes from the earth and water itself, it's no wonder it has a natural ability to boost the flavors of every other food. Pepper, on the other hand, comes from a plant, thereby feeding off the Earth itself. It's flavor is sharp and it has the sense of action and motion, where salt is more static and solid.

The Kitchen as the Family Altar

Whether you are a thoroughly modern family eating mostly microwaved, pre-fabbed food or an old-fashioned family making the bulk of your food from scratch, everyone needs to eat. The center of your family is the kitchen. The core of your strength comes from what you eat and where you prepare it. You can't help but think about your family's well-being when you plan meals and menus. Why not add a little magick to it?

First off, you must institute organization into your kitchen. Think about the way the kitchen

is oriented—is the stove on the southern wall? Is the sink on the western wall? Obviously, there are some things you can't change about your kitchen set. Regardless of which direction your water-source is facing, you can still align the surrounding cabinets with related items.

Use the top of your stove as a mini-altar—consider your stove as your cauldron. Make sure you have your deity symbols there—you do have salt and pepper shakers, right? Consider a wooden spoon as your wand and air symbol. The exhaust fan over your stove is another example of an air symbol. For water, you can simply keep a wine glass near your cooking area (with or without water or wine). Your earth representation is simply all the herbs and spices in your spice cabinet. You can keep your most common herbs on your stove, then you have everything at hand when you need it.

Continue these themes throughout your kitchen. Take some time to think of magickal properties for your kitchen appliances. Use them when you want to infuse your meals with these traits. Of course, if all else fails, visualization of the love and peace you want for your family will come through in their meals.

Scotland Pagan Roots

Scotland is very rich with Paganism. You will find roots of religions such as the Hedge Witch, Goddess Worship, Astaru, Druid and Wicca have strong roots in this country.

Paganism is more than just roots to this country. There are Pagan customs that are a part of everyday life to most who live. Pagan religions are strong to this day. Even the language spoken by many path roots are still spoken and even recognized by many.

The country itself has facts that are very interesting to know. The flag they fly is the oldest National flag still in use. There is no official Country song even though one has commonly been accepted as one. Do your own research and see if you can find more interesting facts about this great country.

Take a look at the map here of Scotland and try the two activities below with your view. See if you can come up with an activity of your own also.

- Imagine this was the image saw in scurrying. What do you make of it and what do you think it means?
- How many Pagan symbols do you know of that can be found in the outline of the country?



New York Tartan Parade



The city of New York will be filled with celebration on April 4th as a very large parade marches through the city as a part of the weekly festivities for Tartan Day which actually falls on April 6. The holiday is for recognition of those wonderful Scotsmen that aided North America as it gained its independence and became a country.

There will be plenty of bagpipes, drums and other Scottish instruments marching through the New York city streets. People will come from all over the world to be a part of this large parade. There are pipe bands, movie stars, authors, and maybe even some of the Scottish parliament that have or will show up in New York.

Tartan Day is celebrated in many other parts of the world to show appreciation of those with Scottish blood that aided in other ways. Grab a map and see if you can find the places listed below.

- | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Argentinian | Illinois | New York | South Australia |
| Arizona | Massachusetts | New Zealand | South Carolina |
| Australia | Michigan | North Carolina | Texas |
| California | Minnesota | Ohio | Utah |
| Canada | Missouri | Oklahoma | Virginia |
| Colorado | Montana | Oregon | Washington |
| England | Nevada | Pennsylvania | West Virginia |
| Florida | New Mexico | Scotland | |

Define

Tartan Plaid

* What is the difference?

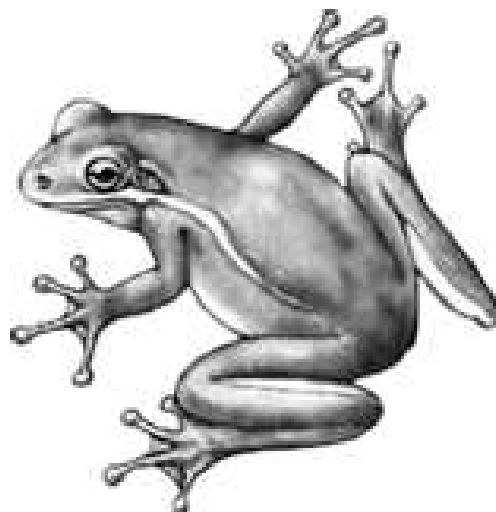
Frog Updates

Frogs have been in the news since 2007. There have been many different changes in their world, which makes everyone take a good look at how they are personally affecting the world.

First, there was word that the number of frogs were getting low. Next, there was a big worry as tons of frogs lay on the ground dead; so many, to the point that the entire species was in trouble of disappearing.

Back in February, it was released that new breeds were found in the mountains on the west side of India. These frogs were many different colors: one for almost every color there is. They were all named after the area they were found or people who have gained way in the fight for animals and the environment.

Scientists continue their effort to find more of these much needed animals. There are high hopes more will be found and that some of the already existing species will survive the hardships they face.



**Design your own frog with colored pencils.
Give it a deserving name as well.**

Help scientists as they work to help the frog population by identifying, counting and reporting frogs in your area!

<http://www.nwf.org/frogwatchusa/index.cfm>

Magna Mater & Megalesia

Magna Mater (also known as Cybele) is one of most well-known goddesses of the ancient world. Her legacy has lived through almost all cultures and ages, even through Christianity. She is known as the Great Mother, where all goddesses are said to have a likeness. There is an ancient ceremony which is most known, during the Roman rule, as Megalesia that is dedicated to her, it is still celebrated by some Pagans and geographical areas today.

The celebrations that are held today are very similar to those of our Pagan ancestors. Most of the festivities contain a variety of activities such as: large dinners, theatrical performances to the Goddess, offerings given to Magna Mater, races (foot or horse today, chariot in ancient times) and visiting among all Pagans in the area.

Draw Magna Mater using the bullet statements about how she looks, below. Add color to your drawing and write her name really nicely under her picture when finished. Be sure to place her picture in a sacred place during the 7-day festival dedicated to her, that begins on the 4th. Leave an offering to her at least once.

- Crowned older woman
- Carrying corn and keys
- Wearing a robe containing flowers in all the colors of the earth that she looks over.

Moretum Recipe

This is one of the translations to the offering that was given to Megalesia during the Megalesia festivities..

Ingredients:

4 garlic cloves
Celery
Rue
Coriander
Salt Grains
Cheese

Use these ingredients to make whatever you feel would be appropriate, as an offering. The amounts and finished product are both up to you.

It is customary to leave an offering to Magna Mater at least one evening during Megalesia.

** source: The Historical Cookery website*

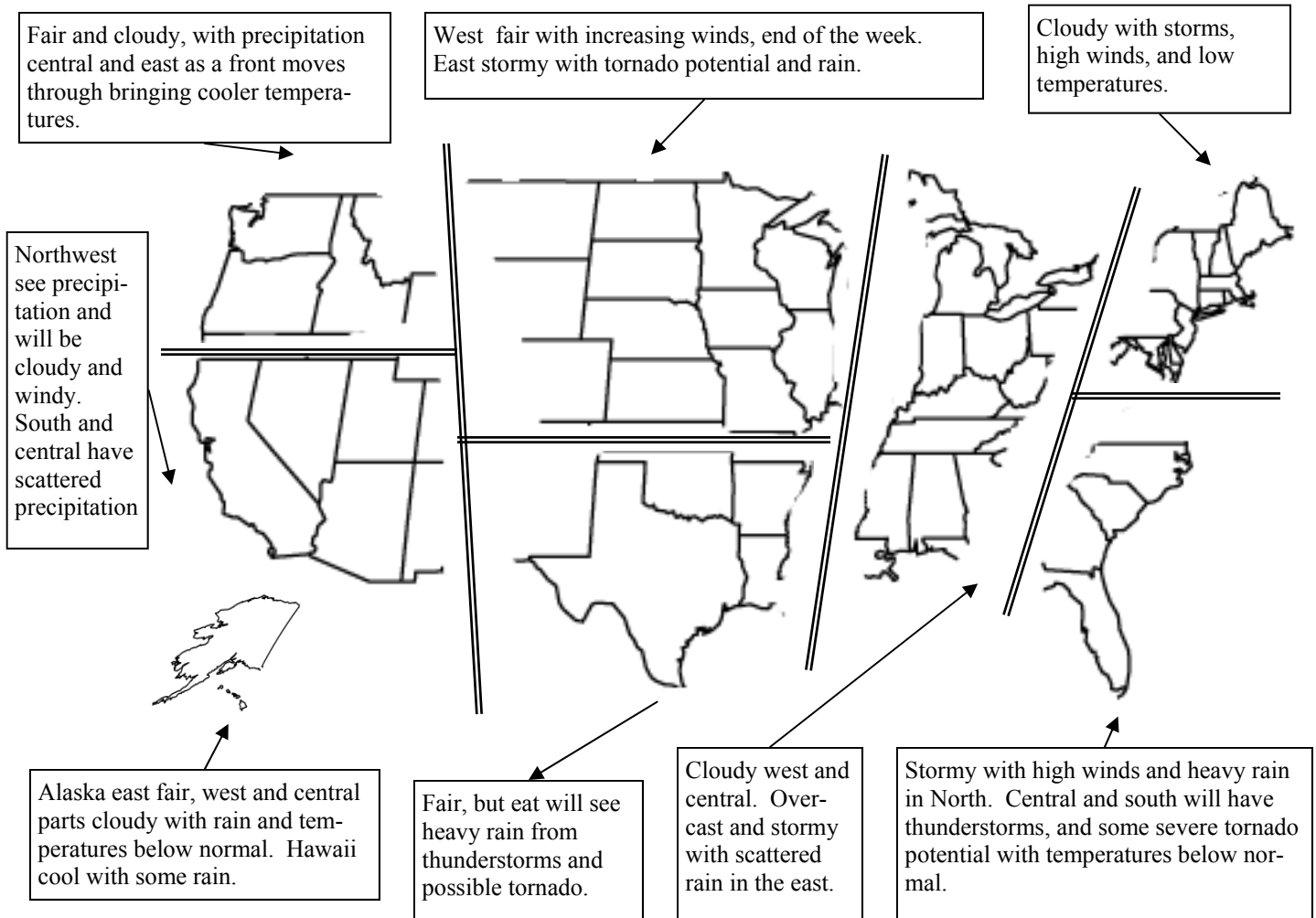
Cool Fact

The first bagpipe was made from the liver of a sheep.

Weather Prediction

Although science has a way of predicting weather, it is believed that nature and the Pagan's way of viewing it can bring in more accurate results. A great publication, from Llewellyn, published each year: "Moon Sign Book" offers a weather prediction for each day of the year, in the United States. They came about their predictions by experts using Pagan and nature's ways. This is the same procedure that Pagans have been using for many years.

Take a look at the prediction for the week April 9th—16th and see how well the predictions made more than a year ago compare to the actual daily weather:



Make your own weather predictions using nature!

- Old Wives Tales
- Observations from animals
- Observation from Plant life
- Cloud formations and sky signs
- The conditions of weather in year last year
- Patterns in nature
- Conditions of areas around your own
- Space traffic and alignments

Keep a dairy or journal of your predictions as well as outcomes. Compare them as well as learn from them. In years to come you might be a great weather person!

Nature's Tricks?

Have you ever thought about the odd things that go on, around us? You hear of things that either are a freak of nature or an act of the God/Goddess, all the time. Do you think these things really happened? Why do you think they happen? In all religions, there is a measure where you are to understand things that aren't 'normal' and believe in things that you can't physically see. As Pagans, we are lucky enough to see more than many other religions because we are taught to read more than books: nature, our inner selves, reading and observing others, etc...

There is something odd going on and there are some Pagans that are trying hard to determine the reason and message of it. Think of all the things you know about Nature, the Gods, the Goddesses and see if you can find messages, meaning or lessons from any of the strange things happening around you.

Do your own research to find strange happenings or use the one that is listed below. Once you find them, learn more about them, then try and read into them. Don't just see if you can find the main point of it. Look a little deeper and see if you can connect it to a god, goddess or spirit that could be relaying it to you.

Fish Poisoning

Large reef fish like grouper and leatherback have gotten a disease that, when passed on to humans, becomes very serious. There is no way of telling that the fish have the disease through sight, smell or any other sign to warn you. Once people eat the fish, they get poisoned to an extreme. The symptoms are the same as regular poisoning with an added touch of slowing down heart beats and hands and feet start to tingle.

Extra Info:

- There have been a few signs of this from all directions, however, the Gulf of Mexico is high on producers of fish with the problem.
- It is so new and random, that most doctors are unaware of it.
- The problem has hit all over the tropical islands, all over the world.
- The disease actually started with microscopic sea plants and spread from small fish to larger fish.

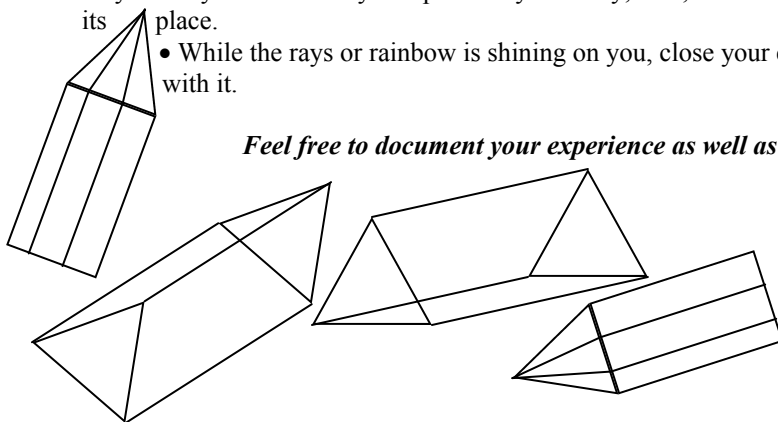
Full Moon Ray Bath

The full moon has been revered as containing power beyond belief. It has been worshiped and thought highly of, as long as can be traced. In modern days, people still think highly of the moon. There are lots of things that people do in the light of the moon, especially the full moon. People take an emotional bath, do certain types of rituals or magic, as well as confide in it.

This week, there will be a full moon, so take this time to do your own version of connecting with it. One idea would be to take a full moon ray bath. Grab a crystal or prism (the bigger, the better) and practice with the sunlight on how to find the rainbow that shows the colors it is made of. Once you have mastered how to use your tool, follow the steps below to perform your own simple full moon ray bath.

- In a rather large area, position your tool while in one hand, to show the rainbow of the moon on your hand.
- Slowly move your hand away and position your body, face, or whatever part you want to cleanse with the moon's rays in its place.
 - While the rays or rainbow is shining on you, close your eyes and feel its energy and share some of your energy with it.

Feel free to document your experience as well as notes on how to make it better next full moon!



Cool Fact

The word NEWS is really an acronym for the cardinal points; north, south, east and west.

Buzzing Salem

This week, Salem, Massachusetts will be full of commotion from Witches, Wiccans, and paranormal followers. Yes, the city that once held a great portion of the Witch trials will now allow large events dedicated to the education of Witches and their neighbors.

Witch School's largest campus, of the 3 that are open, can be found in Salem and they are planning to hold a 3 day convention on April 17th through 19th that is full of workshops, meetings, speakers, rites of passage and a lot of Wiccan networking. The festivities are planned to be held downtown, which is where the school is considering moving the campus in the future.

This major event paired with Ghoststock '07, which will be a large paranormal enthusiasts' convention to be held April 16-19 in the same town, has the whole town buzzing. The local hotel hit it's capacity before the first of this month.

Keep your eye on the news, especially Salem's online newspaper, to see how a town changes when Pagan events such as these take over the town. I am sure you will be surprised at how well things have changed since those awful days long ago.



The Aye-Aye

As nocturnal animals go, this one's pretty unique. They live in Madagascar and slightly resemble lemurs. Aye-aye's are mammals that sleep during the day, and move and eat at night. So what's so unique about them? Their eyes are too large for their faces. They find their meals of grub worms by knocking on trees to find hollow spots. Once found, the mammals gnaw through the trees to make a hole. Finally, they use their extra-long middle finger to dig out the grubs. What makes them especially unique is their natural ability to defend themselves through disease, do your own research to find out how.

Earth Day Changes

Next week is Earth Day—April 22 to be exact, and everyone will be doing something to celebrate it. It has been suggested that people turn over a new leaf this year and make at least one vow to take action to better the Earth. The day, for the most part, will be dedicated to the education of Earth's problems, how you can help, and many causes looking for people to join them.

Although you will hear about major changes taking place to help that are way out of your reach do not feel that you can't do something on a small tip. Each month if you dig around you can easily find articles that give you idea's on small things you can do to aid the earth. An example to show this was pulled from the Feb. 09 news.

Feb - Cut back on your use of toilet paper and use single ply. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/feb/26/toilet-roll-america>

You can also search kid focused 'go green' sites like the one's below:

Green Guide for Kids Blog: <http://greenguideforkids.blogspot.com/>

EEK Our Earth: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/eeek/earth/index.htm>

Go Green Man News Site: <http://www.gogreenman.com/>

White Fire Bug

Mid-April is around the time when most places can begin seeing Fireflies, as the larvae changes into a bug. They are a beauty to watch, play and enjoy this wonder of nature as a blinking light brings comfort and a sight like no other, in nature. Although, for most of your life you have seen them, how much do you actually know about what we call the firefly or light-nig bug? See how many of these facts about them you already knew below:

- They can only fly 6" above the ground
- They automatically space themselves out when flying together
- They do not fly in wind
- They are more active during misty, foggy nights, following afternoon or early evening light to moderate rainfall.
- They do not fly when air temperature is below 55 degrees
- They fly more on full moons
- They live for 2 or more years
- They are only in the bug stage for 2 weeks, the rest of their life is spent underground as larvae

It is believed that everyone has seen fireflies, but most have actually never seen a female firefly even though they light up just like the male. These females do not fly and are found on the ground, usually in leaf piles. They do light up when the males from the sky call to them. Take the time to see if you can see them lighting up, however, it is best not to disrupt their environment and remember they usually move a foot in a second.



See if you can find a deeper meaning in the Native American Lullaby 'Firefly Song' written above, out of Neil Philip's book "Weave Little Stars into My Sleep". Write about your experience finding the female firefly, the meaning you found in the poem, or write a poem of your own about the female firefly.

Firefly Song

By: Ojibwa

Flittering white-fire insect!
 Wandering white-fire bug!
 Weave little stars about my bed!
 Weave little stars into my sleep!
 Come, little dancing white-fire bug!
 Come, little flitting white-fire beast!
 Light me with your white-flame magic,
 Your little star-torch.

Simple Lessons

1. Set a glass down in front of you and fill it three quarters way with water.

This is you, as you were when born; without pain, anger, and problem: pure.

2. Squirt a little Lemon into the water. Squirt any other kind of juice into the water. You can even put as many as you want to. Taste your creation each time you add things to the water.

Notice the difference in the flavor each time you add a new flavor to it. This is just like you; you are the same, even when things influence you as small changes take place.

3. When you are done adding juice flavors to your mixture, add in some sugar and try your creation.

As we grow and learn we are given the knowledge of how to change things to make them better we become our best. Adding the sugar was the right thing to do so the mixture became sweet, in life there is always something we can add or change to make ourself better.

Become the best you can be by keeping an eye on yourself, your surrounding influences and watching for the 'sugar' of life.

Arbor Day on its Way

Next week April 24th will be Arbor Day. Take this week to prepare for it by trying some of the things below.

- Learn about the different trees in your area. See if you can identify them by their leaves or bark.
- Adopt a tree that you see needs help and spend the rest of the summer or year watering it, wrapping bad spots with rags, trimming off dead parts, etc...
- Plant a tree and nurture it as it grows.

Visit The Arbor Day Foundation website for more idea's or to find out what is being done in your area that you can join in!

Cool Fact

Earthworms make up one half the combined weight of all species of animals on the planet!!

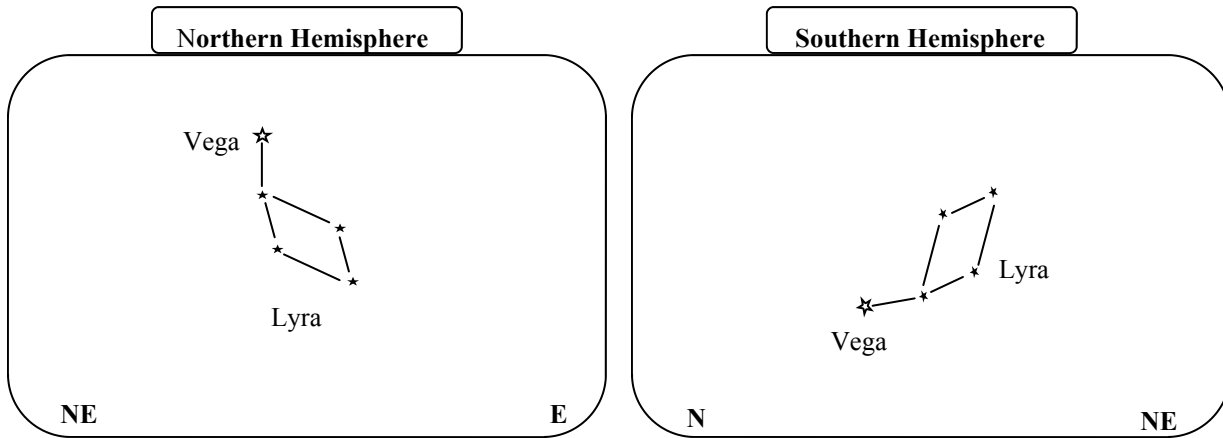
Meteor Shower

Keep a lookout for the Gods' display of power, in the form of a Meteor Shower on the night of April 21-22. The peak light show, created by Lyrids Meteor Shower, can be viewed a little after midnight for the northern hemisphere and near 3am for the southern hemisphere.

The Lyrids have a great history that goes back at least 2600 years, the longest of any meteor shower. Rest assured that you will be watching the same wonder that Pagans down the centuries have. There are many mysteries to this meteor shower that even the science of today can not explain. This makes one wonder about the other secrets that are being kept from us by the many god and goddesses.

It is easy to locate the Lyrids because they are always not far from the Lyra constellation and the brightest star of the constellation Vega. Use the map to the side of this to mark the approximate place you would look to see the Lyrid Meteor Shower this week.

- Northern Hemisphere will look 3/4 the length of the bottom of Lyra to the north and even with Vega.
- Southern Hemisphere will look to the North of the bottom of Lyra and even with Vega.



The World's Largest Party

This would be the Green Apple Music & Arts Festival held each year in the United States, in celebration of Earth Day. The first festival started in New York City with over 35 venues in 2006 and has grown in size and states. This year, there are planned to be 10 large cities involved in this party. The parties consist of education on ways to work together for the earth, music, activities, and just free fun for the whole family.

The large-scaled events held in the cities are not always the same for each city, however, they are all worth the time to check out. Look in your area to see if you and your family can attend the world's largest party. If you are not where you can, simply pick a city that is doing it and follow the activities there. Either way, you could make a great scrapbook and gain a lot of knowledge along the way!

To find out more about the Green Apple Festival largest earth day celebration check out their website: <http://www.greenapplemusicfestival.com/>

Being Green

You hear it all the time, "Be Green". What exactly does that mean by those saying it and what does it mean to you? Believe it or not they are two different answers. Do your own research and thinking to figure out answers to both sides of the question.

Cool Fact

China has more English speaking people than the United States does.

Our Country Foundation

In the USA, the main foundation is religious freedom. This is something that seems to be far from the truth in today's world, however, today is a little better than the generation that came before. People tend to argue over 'religious freedom' and what it actually consists of, on a regular basis. There are actually two sides of the coin: those that say religious freedom is present and those that say it isn't. Read the following scenarios and decide what side of the argument they represent, then come up with incidents of your own to support each of the sides. When complete, come to your own conclusion as to whether you feel there is truly religious freedom in the 'home of the free'.

Put a "yes" in front of the things that support religious freedom and a "no" in front of those that does not support it.

- _____ 1. The public schools ban books, prayers, and other Christian actions from the schools.
- _____ 2. Wording in the 'Pledge of allegiance' returned to how it used to be, which omitted the words 'under god'
- _____ 3. March of this year, public school students were required to sing a song to God or be taken out of a play.
- _____ 4. A woman was found in contempt, in court citation for wearing a 'head wrap' required in the Muslim religion.
- _____ 5. A statue of Jesus was taken out of a courthouse in Texas, never to return.
- _____ 6. The largest Christian Television Network now provides television program required for all prison inmates.
- _____ 7. After great debate, Witch School has opened a physical campus in Illinois.
- _____ 8. Approval for a 49-foot-tall statue of Buddhist goddess, Quam Am, has been approved to be constructed in Oklahoma.
- _____ 9. The Amish are exempt from paying state taxes since they do not use the things that those taxes pay for.
- _____ 10. American Indians are denied the removal of stereo-typing Indians in mascots and Thanksgiving reenactments.
- _____ 11. _____
- _____ 12. _____

All religions have problems in almost all parts of the world, not just in the USA. It is hard for all races, religions, and social status to be totally accepted. Individuals and religions which are divided by color, origin or beliefs will need to bond and work together on all matters that threaten the true freedom of religion. Until this happens, there will always be problems.

Take this time to make a vow to add a new tolerance to yourself in your effort to get religious freedom for all!

Walpurigsnacht will be celebrated on the 30th. This is a holiday that finds its roots in Paganism and has drifted throughout many different paths and even other religions. Today, this holiday will contain a great bonfire but, other than that, the celebration its self differs according to the religion or geographic area it is celebrated. Take some time to join in some of the fun of the holiday this year. To give you some insight on other celebrations for this special day throughout the world, check out Walpurigsnacht in the following cultures or parts of the world:

Norse Sweden Germany Finland Estonia

In many modern Pagan paths Walpurigsnacht is combined with the celebration of Beltaine, starting the festivities early!

Cross - Corner Days

The first of this month brings on a cross-corner day. To learn a little more about this special time of year let's turn to the globe paying special attention to the imaginary line across the middle that is called the equator. Everything to the north of it is considered the northern hemisphere, everything to the south is known as the southern hemisphere.



This week everyone in the Northern Hemisphere will be celebrating Beltane with the Southern Hemisphere celebrating Samhain.

Fill in the blanks:

On _____, the _____ hemisphere will celebrate the beginning of _____. In the _____ hemisphere

Date *direction* *Holiday* *direction*

will celebrate the end of the h _____. So when one side of the world watches a b _____ the other will be seeing a

Planting ritual *life stage*

 d _____.

Life stage

Spend some time this year showing both holidays in your festivities. You can do a craft, make a recipe or simply hold an activity or tradition connected with each of the cross-corner days. Choose one of the ideas below or come up with them on your own.

Besom Craft

Make a homemade Besom which is used to sweep away the old or to clean tombstones on Samhain. Adding some ribbon at the top of the handle to make a small version of the may pole is a great representation of Beltaine.

Focus on your maypole as the sun rises and rules to show respect to light part of the year. When the moon is ruling focus more on the dark portion of the year with the besom.

Animal Totems

Using the Raven or Cat (in honor of Samhain) and the Robin or Bunny (in honor of Beltaine), make totems out of clay. You can make one for each animal or one totem with each side showing a different animal.

Use nature's scraps to add details and decoration to your totem(s). Add them as decoration to your altar or sacred space. Allow them to attend your holiday festivities or keep them on your person, to bring both energies to you as your day unfolds.

Potato-Hot dog Fry

Add a dish that can be used for both Samhain and Beltain celebrations from "A Kitchen Witch's Cookbook" by Patricia Tele-sco:

Ingredients:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1/2 c. vegetable oil | 1/4 c. sour cream |
| 3 lrg potatoes (cut in 1/4" cubes) | 1/4 c. dill relish |
| 1 med. Onion, sliced | 1/4 t. dried dill weed |
| 3 hot dogs (sliced in 1/4" pieces) | Salt |
| 1 T. butter | Pepper |

Heat oil in frying pan over med. Heat
 Add potatoes & onion
 Cook until potatoes are tender.
 Stir in hot dogs and cook until they are thoroughly heated
 Melt butter in small pan over low heat.
 Mix sour cream, relish, dill, salt and pepper.
 When hot, pour over the potatoes and serve.

Cool Fact

Pollen never deteriorates. It is one of the few natural resources that really does live forever.

Water Usage

Everyday we use way too much water and it is causing our carbon footprint to get larger and larger. When you think of the statement you probably think that we are talking about running water when washing hands and similar things. Take another look at the things you use on a regular basis and think of the water usage it took just to get them to you in the form they are in. Take a look at the water usage for common things below:

1 Gallon of water	a cow will drink 4 gallons of water to produce one gallon of milk
13.8 Gallons of water	to produce one orange
100 Gallons of water	to produce a watermelon
120 Gallons of water	to prepare an egg for purchase
150 Gallons of water	to prepare one loaf of bread
39,090 Gallons of water	to produce a new car
300,000,000 Gallons of water	to supply one day of newsprint in the U.S.
2,100 Gallons of water	to make a single pair of shoes
630 Gallons of water	to make one hamburger
50 Gallons of water	runs through a garden hose every 5 minutes

To help cut down your water carbon footprint, simply make a few shortcuts here and there.

- Cut out some meat because they take a lot of water to prepare.
- Use appliances that are low-flow, they cut off at least half the water that will be used, in some cases more than that.
- Cut down on the utilities that you use, they consume a lot of water to produce as they are in your house.
- Use less water in your own life by cutting down on washing hands, shower and bath times.
- A dishwasher uses less water than washing dishes yourself.
- Only use the amount of water that is needed for jobs, this may mean cutting off the faucet while you soap up, brush your teeth, etc...

Active Meditations

This is a great time to practice active meditations. Nature is at it's most active time and there are many things you can use as a model for the active meditations. This is also a great time to control the length of active meditations to match your own meditation needs.

Although you will have fun finding your own active meditations once you are familiar with them, a few are listed below to get you started and/or to try. Do several and keep notes on your reactions to trying, doing them, as well as the overall outcome. Compare several to each other and see if you can find things in common with the one's that you feel best to aid you in finding one's that fit you later.

- Watch the sun set or rise
- Ice melting inside or outside
- Night sensitive plants and flowers opening and/or closing
- Leaves floating downstream and out of sight
- Any animal doing a small task (breaking a nut, carrying food off, etc...)
- Clouds moving across the sky
- Trees, bushes, flowers blowing in the breeze
- Sunlight shinning through raindrops
- Falling rain making a path in the earth

Where To Spend

In all stages of life a constant decision will be present: how to spend money. This is true for everyone and even the president has to address this dilemma. Take a look below at several of the spending decisions that the president had to decide on. Put a check mark in the “yes” or “no” column in the table below to show your opinion.

	YES	NO
Research on pig dung to determine why it smells so bad. A state claims the smell is too much.		
Renovate lighthouses owned by the government in Maine. All privately funded lighthouses have been renovated.		
Restore Tiger Stadium in hopes of bringing more money to local merchants.		
South Carolina Convention Center.		

As you get older your views on things will change because religion, values, causes and other influences will kick in. The views you grow into will aid you in political decisions and the political leaders that you follow. Be sure to always stay true to yourself in those views because they help make you who you are.

Ten Most Famous Homeschooled People

Back in 2008 a list was comprised of the 10 most famous homeschooled people. The list consisted of people throughout the years that have made a mark of some kind on the world. Take a look at the people that made the list and see if you can match who taught them. Check to see if you are right in the next Weekly Beams.

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Agatha Christie | Father |
| Pearl S. Buck | Parents |
| Alexander Graham Bell | Father |
| Thomas Edison | Mother |
| Ansel Adams | Father |
| Robert Frost | Confucian Scholar & Mother |
| Woodrow Wilson | Father |
| Mozart | Mother |
| Laura Ingalls Wilder | Father |
| Louisa May Alcott | Mother |

There is one person on the list that helped in homeschooling all his children, who was it?

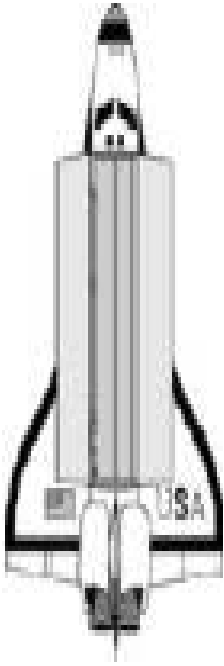


Robert Frost never really spoke of his religion. His father was from a Universalist background and his mother was involved in the Unitarian Church. He avoided all questions about religion and when cornered, stated he had a religious love of nature.

Cool Fact

All Swans in the United Kingdom are actually property of the Queen.

Space Travel & the Pagan



Space travel, not too long ago, seemed to be an impossible task, however today it is a common occurrence. There are mixed feelings in many Pagans as to whether space travel is a good or bad thing. No matter what side of the coin you believe in, the sights, pictures, and videos that show what is in the vast unknown is amazing. Space has been referred to as the final frontier and for good reasons. There are so many things that we don't know about or haven't been seen by humans, and we are all thankful that the god and goddess have opened the door to these wonders for all to see.

Although there are many avenues to see the workings of the sky, the most accurate would be telescopes. They can be found everywhere, however, the telescopes that are permanently in space show the closest to eyes' view of space. Once such telescope is the Hubble Space Telescope. It was put into space in 1990 and, since then, has been our main link to space doings, pictures and evidence of the world we are not that familiar with.

There have been many trips to do repairs and upgrades on this massive telescope since 1993. The schedule for repairs are made way in advance and many times are cancelled for many reason like weather, timing, equipment failure or problems, and many others. The next scheduled repair mission will be the fifth and final one, and is scheduled for May 12, which is this week. It is labeled Mission STS-125 and will be leaving from Kennedy Space Center's Shuttle Landing Facility with seven astronauts on an eleven day trip. The plan is to replace the batteries and gyroscopes, as well as install two new instruments that should keep Hubble going until the year 2013. They are also hoping to install a docking module that will help it make a controlled re-entry to earth when it will no longer be repaired.

Take the time to watch and follow the flight of the shuttle, if it happens. This will be the 6th attempt to complete the trip, all 5 in 2008 were cancelled for various reasons.

Space Trash Information

Throughout time, the people of the world have ventured into space many times. Each trip, they have left their marks behind in the form of some kind of pollution. Although this catastrophe is destroying one of the last natural voids given and watched over by the Gods, there is some good coming from it. We are able to view and see things that only the Gods have seen in the past. The pictures from the sky paired with the telescope open this new incredible world for us to see. The good that comes from it does not excuse the dangers that go with it, however, a lot of care and thought are now taking place to assure this new part of the world does not meet the same fate as the one we walk on.

Seed Jewelry

As everyone is planting, now is the best time to make seed jewelry. You can use any seeds you choose, but be sure to pay attention to the size of the seeds. They should be sized correctly to the item you are making. Be sure to remove any flesh and/or debris from all the seeds and then soak them in a mixture of 1/2 c. bleach to 1 qt. water for 20 minutes. Rinse the seeds and try to get as much liquid off of them as possible. Place seeds in a single layer between two paper towels and microwave them on 50% power for 5 minutes turning half way through. Check to assure they are completely dry, and if they aren't, repeat microwave procedure for 1 minute intervals until totally dry. Dye seeds with natural ingredients, store bought, or permanent markers to add the colors you desire. Have an adult permission and/or help, bead the seeds into your jewelry. You may want to brace the needle with its eye end down against a hard surface, center a seed on top of the point, and press the seed down the needle.



Volcano Watching

From the beginning of time, Volcanoes have been a marvel and their power compared to none. There have been many myths and stories written about them that depict a time and the views of those living in that time. Some of these stories are still very alive, as offerings are still a major part of people's lives, like in the traditions surrounding Mount Bromo in East Java.

There are many people throughout the world that watch for volcanoes to erupt. There is a great interest in ash and fire coming from below being shared above the ground. The fascination with the erupting volcano could be explained by the power it exerts, the power of fire taking over or the God or Goddess shuffling power of their own.

Although volcano action is not in the news as it once was, it has not left the mainstream yet. There is usually not a month that goes by that there isn't a volcano eruption of some kind. In March Alaska was looking at a sleeping volcano waking up which hit the headlines everywhere. There was also a volcano that erupted underwater near the island Tongo (between Australia and Tahiti) that didn't get too much news coverage.

You can feel the power of the eruption just by reading about it, however, it will last longer if you are following the eruption as it goes through the many steps to that all-powerful blast. There are many stations set-up throughout the world that watch a small section of inactive volcanoes and the scientists that man them notify the world each time something of interest pops up. You can locate one near you, no matter where you live, simply visit the organization that help fund and keep track of them. WOVO (World Organization of Volcano Observatories) to follow actions throughout the world at any time. Local newspapers, especially the online versions from the area near the activities, will aid in keeping up with the volcano and it's eruptions.



Take the time to do your own study on volcanoes for one month. I am sure you will be surprised at how many come about and understanding the power they possess. Learn about the volcano its self, the terms that are associated with it, it's magical and spiritual connections, as well as the God/Goddess of your pantheon that connects with them. Keep charts and maps available to track where the eruptions are taking place and see if there is a pattern that can open up more correspondences to aid in totally understanding them. Keep track of all your findings and as a closing comprise an overall view of the experience and jot it into your private journal.

The Ides

The Ides is actually a mid-point of the month and acknowledged more to the Roman Pantheon. In the days where the lunar calendar was used, the day was also lined up with the phases of the moon, usually falling on the full moon of the month. With today's calendar, the Ides falls mid-month but doesn't actually line up with the lunar phases.

According to the month and/or era examined, the day would be dedicated to a god or goddess. The day was spent relaxing and regrouping thoughts with a small celebration and/or feast towards the evening. Today few people still celebrate this day. However, it has changed with the time and religion of those who acknowledge it. Take some time to find out a little about the Ides dates for the year, the gods and goddesses that are part of it, the month symbols and connections which mark it, as well as your own touches to come up with your own version of the Ides.

The Ides of May falls on the 15th of this month!

10 Most Famous Homeschooled People Answers.

Agatha Christie - Mother
 Pearl S. Buck - Confucian Scholar & Mother
 Thomas Edison - Mother
 Ansel Adams - Mother
 Robert Frost - Father (homeschooled his own kids too)
 Woodrow Wilson - Father
 Mozart - Father
 Laura Ingalls Wilder - Parents
 Lousia May Alcott - Father

Cool Fact

Rice is the main staple food for over half the world's population.

2 For the Woods

This time of year brings such great weather, what better thing to do then hit the woods with a friend. Go all out for a fun day in the woods with just you and your friend (parents, if the area calls for it, but only watching, not participating). After checking the weather and, with both parents, send your friend an invitation and do some great planning for this special day. Below are a few ideas to make things better for your woods outing.

- Pick your section of the woods by finding some place that offers a lot of walking trails, area for games and fun, facilities for nature calls, natural water source and an area for picnicking or eating.
- Pack everything needed in one or two backpacks for easy carrying. Some things to think of are food, first-aid supplies, equipment for games, personal and sanitary needs, anti-bacterial wipes, cell phone, camera, compass, eco-friendly items to use for rubbish and all other personal or place specific things.
- Outline a portion of the day; however, leave time to do spontaneous things. Planning keeps boredom away and doing a few things on-the-fly add great adventure that usually adds the best parts of the trip.
- Be sure to be familiar with the time the sun rises and sets, to assure you aren't in the woods in the night. On this trip, you might want to check the place you are going to be for opening and closing times as well as take a watch along.

Enjoy your '2 for the woods' trip !

Wood Game Bank

Strong Hand

Stand with right toe to right toe, right hands clasped together, left foot placed solid on the ground, left hands free. Once 'go' is called game begins and round ends when one player gets the other to move or shift any of their feet. Overall winner is determined by the most wins of any odd number of rounds higher than 1.

What's Different

Walk a small amount of path in single file. The person in the back will make a few changes in the things that changes the view of the path (moving or adding items). Both players will turn 180° and the first player in line will try and guess the correct amount of changes that were made by the other player. Most guessed changes after a even number of turns wins.

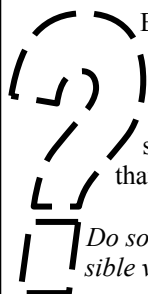
Blank Tracking

One player stands out of view of the other or covers their eyes. The free player will use any item found on the ground (acorn, odd shaped stone, twig, etc...) and makes consistent tracks that make a shape but not so easy to see. The player out of view is then told the item used and must determine the shape made by following the impressions it made in the ground. Winner is determined by the most correct tracks.

Wood Activities

- Meditation
- Sketching
- Natural Scuffling
- Wildlife Tracking, to observe
- Scavenger hunts
- Determining the root of odd shaped shadows
- Identifying different sounds or smells
- Finding certain areas in the woods using nature signs only
- Make crafts using nature items found laying around
- Follow the leader, while moving

What Happened?



Back in February of this year an illustrator, Steve Nelson, and an astronomer, Chris Luginbuhl, came up with an ideal they felt brilliant. The plan was to build a 21 feet tall chiseled granite observatory and work of art in Flagstaff, Arizona to be called Star Henge. They went in front of the Flagstaff City Council with their proposal to create a primitive type henge creation which would both track the sun and moon during the solstice and equinox events and align with the North Star each night. Both Steve and Chris was in great hopes that the city would approve the chosen area to be used for this purpose as well as fund the project.

Do some research on this topic and see if you can find out what happened. Keep up with it as time passes. If possible view pictures of it online or visit it if local.

Your Day

Did you know that there was a Children’s Day? Yes, to be exact there are many different Children’s days. Most holidays are celebrated close to the same time each year, however, it seems that Children’s Day has fell through the cracks when it comes to a solid date. Write the 2009 dates for each of the areas on your own calendar or write on a printed world map showing where and when Children’s day will be celebrated.

Children’s Day Dates

January	3rd Sunday Cuba
Second Saturday Thailand	Aug, Venezuela
March	2nd Sunday Argentina, Chile, Uruguay
1st New Zealand Children’s Day	16th Paraguay
First Sunday New Zealand	17th Peru
April	Sep
4 Hong Kong, Taiwan	9 Costa Rica
Last week-end Colombia	20 Germany (although some celebrate it on 1 June)
23rd Turkey	Oct
30th Mexico	1 Guatemala, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Trinidad
May	First Monday Sweden
5 Japan, South Korea	12th Brazil
27 Nigeria	19th Israel
Last Sunday Hungary	Last Sunday Malaysia
June	Nov
1st International Children’s Day	14th India
2nd North Korea	20th Universal Children’s Day supported by the United Nations
National Children’s Day for the United States (2nd Sunday in June each year)	Dec
July	25 Central Africa
1st Sunday Australia	

Hawaiian Bird Problems

Unfortunately the native birds of Hawaii are in grave trouble of vanishing. People trapping the birds to become pets and/or parts to be used for other reasons and many invasive species coming in and taking over their habitat are the main reasons for this decline in bird population.

Hawaii is loaded with very unique and beautiful birds and it will be a true loss for them to disappear. It is just as odd that many Americans are not familiar with the birds, themselves. Take the time to learn about a few of the birds by memorizing how they look, their common name and a little about them. Make a small coloring book, notebook, or lapbook of the interesting birds you chose to learn.

Here is a small list of the most common native Hawaiian birds for you to begin your own research.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Akekee</i> | <i>Laysan Albatross</i> |
| <i>Akiapolaau</i> | <i>Masked Booby</i> |
| <i>Black-Neck Stilt</i> | <i>Maui Parrotbill</i> |
| <i>Black Noddy</i> | <i>Nene</i> |
| <i>Bulwer’s Petrel</i> | <i>Red-Billed Tropicbird</i> |
| <i>Great Frigatebird</i> | <i>Red Footed Booby</i> |
| <i>Hawaiian Coot</i> | <i>Sooty Tern</i> |
| <i>I’iwi</i> | <i>Wedge-Tailed Shearwater</i> |

Whimbrel

Cool Fact

The moon is moving away from the earth at the distance of 1.5 inches per year.

Religion Turns

The American Religion Identification Survey (ARIS) has been doing surveys and closely watching America's religions. The survey, and those monitoring it, have been going on since 1990.

Complete the rest of this article by using the information in the chart below.

	1990	2001	2008
% Catholic	26	25	25
% Other Christian	60	52	50
% Other Religions	3	4	4
% None	8	14	15
% Don't Know/Refused	2	5	5

ARIS survey, when it began in _____. showed that there were a total of _____ Christians which decreased in 2001 by _____. By 2008, the Christian community had dwindled to _____. Those claiming other religions were _____ in 1990, and increased _____ percent by 2008, leaving the total for that year _____. Those keeping their religion more private by claiming they don't know, or refusing to answer the survey, went from _____ in 1990 to _____ in 2008. The people that have no religion went from _____ to _____ within the _____ years the survey's were given.

The important thing to take note of in this project is not actually the rise or decline of any certain religion. It is not a great time when everyone is questioning what they believe to the point of changing it.

Memorial Day

The U.S. has deemed May 25th to be Memorial day this year. As tradition, it is a time to show respect to those that have served in the military and are no longer with us. Although fighting is not always condoned in the Pagan realm, honoring warriors is. Take a Pagan walk this year and add a Pagan touch to your patriotic views by trying some of the things below:

- Remember those that have gone on to a different stage of their life by adding touches of them or things that remind you of them to your altar. Include these items as you do daily rituals, or even begin a new version for this holiday that you can do each year.
- If there are those close to you that you plan to include in this honoring day, make a feast of the foods that were favored by them. Wear their favorite color, listen to their favorite songs or type of music, or simply do something that would be considered 'them'.
- Take a trip to the local cemetery and visit, picnic, or simply add something to the area blocked off in remembrance of them. You can pick those you know or those that you just 'feel' need you to share some time with them.
- Start a plant, flower or any other plant in their honor. Nurture it all year, and then next year, place it in the ground and allow it to expand as it will.

Fish Chat

There are several kinds of fish that can talk or relay verbal messages to other fish of their kind. Research is going on, and has been for years, on this subject. Although many advances have taken place, there are many questions still to be answered.

Take the time to get to know about some of the species that have been determined to go in the verbal fish category from the list below (you can add to it, if you wish to continue researching):

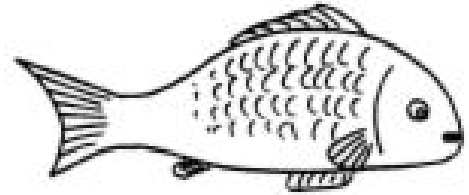
Pearl fish
Toadfish

Triggerfish
Male Codfish

Midshipmen Fish
Butterfly Fish

Expand the fun by coming up with a list of questions on the subject and see what answers you can come up with for them. A few questions to begin with or get your ideas flowing:

1. When different species are determined to talk, are we just finding out that they can or is it species specific?
2. Could all fish actually talk even though we aren't able to prove or hear it?
3. Do all the fish understand each other or only their own species?
4. Do other water animals that communicate understand and/or hear the fish that do the same?
5. Is this communicating between fish something that has evolved?



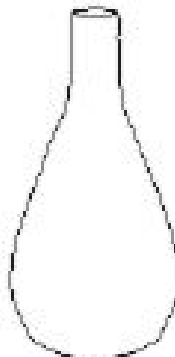
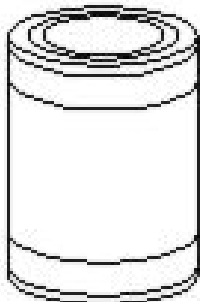
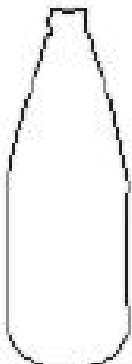
Paint, Reuse and Decorate

To aid in the effort to be environmentally conscience, take some used items and, with the aid of a little paint, reuse them as you add a new look to your room, in preparation of the upcoming season!

Try these or ideas of your own.

- Used bottles can be painted to become really neat holders for small items you use regularly: vases or a scaled down village.
- Old furniture (chairs, desks, etc...) that have become a sore sight can be revived with a little paint, to add to the room theme or color.
- Old plastic bags from the grocery store can be cut, weaved or hung up to make almost anything of use, like flowers, baskets, wall hangings and anything your mind creates for you and by adding a little paint they can fit anywhere.
- Tin cans can be used for pencil holders or planters, after adding a little paint to bring them back to life.
- Boxes of different sizes can be staked to make drawers or interesting containers to hold any item you would like by using tape, staples and some paint.

Decorate these household scraps with colored pencils as you would your own room!



Cool Fact

If you peel a banana from the bottom to the top there would be no strings to pull off (primates do this).