



EARTH TIDES

PAGAN NETWORK NEWS

PAGAN PRIDE STATEWIDE! LAMMAS 1998 \$1.50

About EARTH TIDES PAGAN NETWORK

The Maine Pagan community is diverse, independent and geographically distant. We worship in existing groups or as solitaires, but feel a need for contact and a shared forum to express opinions and concerns over issues bearing on the Pagan Community in general. The EarthTides Pagan Network was established in 1989 as a support resource for Maine Pagans

The EPN keeps names, addresses and phone numbers confidential except to other network members. Direct consultation with a custodial parent is required when individuals under 18 years of age attend gatherings or study with members. The EPN will aid in establishing contacts between individuals if asked to do so, but accepts no legal responsibility for the results.

This newsletter comes out eight times per year around the Sabbats. Literary, poetic and artistic contributions are welcome as well as letters, and opinion pieces. Please keep submissions to no more than two pages, typed and double spaced. Submissions on disc or by e-mail to mugwort@ime.net are preferred

Articles are edited for grammar, spelling and to fit available space. The EarthTides Pagan Network News is copyrighted 1998 by The EarthTides Pagan Network. All submissions remain the property of the authors and may not be reproduced without their permission.

Memberships are available for a suggested donation of \$11.00 US funds per year. Single copies may be obtained by sending a \$1.50 donation and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to EPN, PO Box 161, East Winthrop, ME 04343. The next EPNN will come out just around Mabon We hope to hear from more of you before then. Blessed Be!

EPNN STAFF: Mugwort, Elkwing, and Harper Meader



LAMMAS

First Harvest

Reflect

on sacrifices made
for your existence

Harvest that

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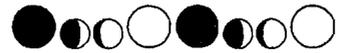
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E.P.N. P.O. Box 161, EAST WINTHROP. ME 04343

<http://www.mix-net.net/~annemarie/earthtides/>

e-mail:wachel@wa2000.winarea.biddeford.com



The calendar section is a service to our members. It is intended for events that are either free or have a nominal donation. Several of these places have more extensive workshops; please call them for info. Support our supporters!

- Aug. 1 LAMMAS
- Aug. 2 Portland area Pagan Coffee House. Call 828-2032 for more information
- Aug. 7 Full Green Corn Moon 10:10 PM
- Aug. 9 Augusta area Pagan Coffee House 1:00 PM Bring a mug and pot luck snack to share. For more information call 377-3967
- Aug. 21 New Moon 10:03 PM
- Aug. 22. Silo 7 4th Annual Holistic Fair 11-5 PM at Silo 7 Bookstore in Bangor. Call 942-5590 for more information.

Sept. 5 PROSPERITY RITUAL Sacred Oaks, Wells, Maine. The Temple of Brigantia will lead a ritual honoring Mercury and Rosmerta, a Celto-Roman divine couple who were worshiped in ancient times as bringers of prosperity and success. Bring your own prayer for prosperity (earthly or spiritual), food for yourself and some to share. Admission is \$3, with proceeds going to the Hypatia Fund, which donates books on historical, environmental and spiritual topics to Maine libraries. Doors open at 6 and close at 7 as we begin the ritual. PLEASE NOTE: Attendance is limited to the first 40 participants; for registration and directions, call Jane at 207-885-0424 or e-mailing pjane@journalist.com.

Sept. 6 Full Barley Moon 7:21 PM

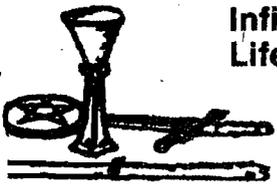
- Sept. 6 Portland area Pagan Coffee House. Call 828-2032 for more information
- Sept.13 Augusta area Pagan Coffee House 1:00 PM Bring a mug and pot luck snack to share. For more information call 377-3967
- Sept. 18 Immanent Grove Open Mabon Ritual to be held near Augusta. Call 3773967 for information.
- Sept. 19 7:00 PM Pagan Coffee House at Silo 7 Bookstore in Bangor. Please bring a small donation to cover costs and/or a donation to the Pagan Pantry. For info call Silo 7 942-5590 or Mugwort 848-2850
- Sept. 20 New Moon 5:11 PM
- Sept. 23 MABON, equinox 1:37 AM
- Sept. 25-27 MONGER Common Ground Fair. Be sure to stop by the EarthTides' booth.

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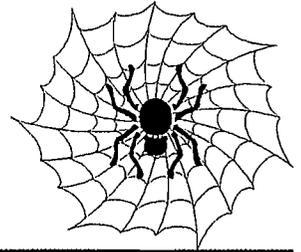
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 Winthrop, ME 04364
 (207) 377-3967

<http://www.ctel.net/~applebooks/>
 e-mail: applebooks@ctel.net

NETWORKING

NOTE: While all those listed below are EarthTides members, The EarthTides Pagan Network does not screen the contacts listed below. We are not the "policemen" of Paganism in Maine and would frankly resent such an authority. Everyone should be able to follow their own path. But the downside to this freedom is that You must exercise GOOD JUDGEMENT when using this list. Anyone who makes you uncomfortable or asks you to do anything which makes you uncomfortable is probably wrong for you. Individuals who are under 18 years of age must submit written parental approval to attend gatherings or study with members. EPN will aid in establishing contacts between individuals if asked to do so, but accepts no legal responsibility for the results



Augusta Area:

Bill and Johanna Chellis - 685-3860 Pantheists working with the circle, wheel, and labyrinth.

Immanent Grove a fellowship of practicing Pagans of all persuasions. Members pursue their own personal relationships with the Gods. We're interested in corresponding with experienced Pagans who would like to work with us. Contact Harper or Arwen at Immanent Grove, PO Box 233. Readfield, ME 04355.

Wahtonah Grove - A Pagan circle honoring a variety of traditions, newly founded, April 11, 1997. Dedicated to seeking knowledge and understanding, as well as to good friendship. Contact: Wahtonah Grove, PO Box 257, East Winthrop ME 04343-0257 or e-mail: QGCY88B@prodigy.com

Bangor Area:

Elkwing and Mugwort - Organic Gardening-arians following the garden path to enlightenment. We can help you locate Pagan happenings in the Bangor area. 848-2850 or e-mail mugwert@ime.net

Clinton Area:

Nemeton Community Center Celtic Spirituality - 426-2964 We are rediscovering and practicing the nature-centered spirituality of the Celtic tribes. We observe and celebrate agrarian festivals, and holy days based on a celestial calendar and lunar cycles.

Jay—Farmington:

Circle of the Jade Tiger - *Kerry Robinson* 645-9570 (after 5:00) - Goddess-oriented Shamanism, with a definite splash of Green Man energy. Simplistic and creative rituals that allow for growth and the understanding of death, change, and personal healing. seeking to start a coven and/or teach

Lewiston—Auburn Area

House O' The Greenwood - *Lorelei* - 782-8704 or [lorelei@exploremaine.com](http://lorelei.exploremaine.com) Focusing on using our spirituality and Eclectic Wiccan concepts to help us cope with daily life. While there is no formal coven at the moment, Lorelei is available to teach. <http://www.exploremaine.com/~lorelei>

Meditation/Study/fellowship group forming. We're looking for other sober experienced pagans to share, study and hang out with. Send us a letter about your path, topics you wish to study and what you want to commit to. PO Box 272 W. Paris, ME 04289.

Portland—York County Area:

Jane 885-0424 Wiccan Priestess: networking, community, and ritual

LaWRENce and Seshet - We are the Iseum of the Hidden Mysteries and a member of the Fellowship of Isis. We worship the God and Goddess in their many forms. We are an eclectic group focusing on the development of the higher consciousness of the hidden realms. 207-727-5844 or anubis@mix-net.net or <http://maine.home.rr.com/mepagan/iseum>

Waterville Area:

Dragon of the Mist - Druid/Pantheist Wicca. Contact Dragon of the Mist 9-5, M-Sat., 873-7776, 5 East Concourse, Waterville

Melissa Moon - 873-0528 Eclectic Wicca and Woman's Spirituality - Networking with all in the area online: mmmoon@colby.edu.

Cyberspace Resources

The Maine Pagan Mailing List All Maine Pagans with e-mail capability may join in the lively conversation. Send e-mail to pjane@maine.rr.com to sign up.

Special Interests

I am interested in being a contact for EPN to the deaf community. My youngest daughter is deaf, and I would love to meet deaf adults who are pagan and other pagan parents of deaf children. Ede 353-6202 TTY/V or ede@clinic.net



NOTES ABOUT LISTINGS ON THE NETWORKING PAGE

This pages carries notices of EarthTides member groups and individuals seeking to network with each other. If you are an EPN member group or individual that wishes to accept new members, begin a discussion group, accept new students or hold open rituals, or if you are an individual wishing to find a teacher, group, or ritual, please send us a notice for publication. (send by mail to EPN, P.O. Box 161, East Winthrop, ME 04343 or by e-mail to mugwert@ime.net). We hope listings will be specific as to what they are offering: classes, formation of a new group, taking students, being a clearing house for local events or simply offering Pagan fellowship. Listings on this page are FREE to all EarthTides members. Non-members wishing to advertise are advised to take out an 'Unclassified Ad'. Please see Advertising in EPNN on page 4. If you wish your listing to appear in the next issue be sure to send your copy in. DO IT NOW!

Tue.-Sat. 10-7
Sun. 10-5
Mon. Closed

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EARTHTIDES' NEWS

Full Circle Summer Fair

This year's Fair was a great success. EPN had a booth in the book barn for two days. We sold enough books and T-shirts to pay for the booth and talked to a lot of people. EPN donated a free membership to WERU's raffle and passed out a lot of literature. We also gained four new members. Welcome! Mark your calendars for next year's fair; if you missed helping on this one, you missed a fun time!

Holistic Health Fair in Ogunquit

Thanks to Jane, Solitary Rep and Maine Pagan Mailing List Listmom, EPN had a presence at the Holistic Health Fair in Ogunquit to benefit the Marlee Animal Shelter. She gave many Tarot readings and spoke to a lot of interested folk. Money was made to donate to the shelter to help homeless animals.

Silo 7 Holistic Health Fair

EPN will be at Silo 7's Holistic Health Fair in Bangor on August 22. This is an all day event featuring speaker and practitioners from many places. There will be talks on subjects ranging from Reiki to Role of the Goddess. EPN will be there with literature, information about events, T-shirts and other donated goodies. If you are in the area, stop by, talk with us or help out.

Common Ground Fair

This is the big one! Most of EPN's operating budget is generated in our booth at the Common Ground Fair. We have a corner booth in the Social/Political Action Tent. We will be there for the full three days and are giving a presentation Sunday afternoon. What we can sell is limited, but if you have items of a Pagan Ritual nature to donate, please call. Also, help is needed to watch the booth, set up and tear down, talk to people, and take part in the discussion. To be a part of this always magickal time, call 848-2850/ e-mail mugwert@ime.net.

Want to Join the EarthTides Pagan Network?

Be part of the Network! The annual membership fee is \$11.00. You will receive 8 issues of this newsletter and discounted rates for certain EarthTides' events. Fill out the form below and mail with your check to E.P.N., P.O. Box 161, East Winthrop, ME 04343

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

New membership Renewal

If you are a member of an EarthTides' member group or groups, please list them here: _____

e-mail address (optional): _____

Silo Seven

7 Bomarc Rd, Bangor • www.silo7.com
10 - 6 Mon-Fri; 11 - 7 Sat-Sun
(207) 942-5590 • email@silo7.com

For your magickal enrichment...
books, candles, incense, magazines,
jewelry, tarot, runes, music, gifts

THE PAGAN PANTRY

Maine has it's own "Pagan Pantry"! It is here to help people and animals in need, Pagan or not. Those who are in need should call (207) 296-3482 and ask for "Star". You may also write to her at PO Box 10, Stetson, Maine 04488

Donations of non-perishable food, money, and non-food items such as cleansers, pet food, toilet paper, shampoo, etc. can be dropped off at Silo 7 in Bangor, Dragon of the Mist in Waterville or with Star in Stetson - call for directions.

OTHER PAGAN PUBLICATIONS

EarthTides Pagan Network News has subscription exchanges with the following Pagan publications. They are all worth your interest:

Di Veteres: The Kin of the Old Gods Newsletter, 497 Cumberland Ave. Apt 5, Portland, ME 04101

Horns and Crescent P.O. Box 540622 Milieu, MA 02054

Our Pagan Times New Moon New York P.O. Box 1471 Madison Square Station New York NY 10159

PAEAN P.O. Box 635 Farmington NH 03835

ADVERTISING IN EPNN

UNCLASSIFIED ADS: Here you can advertise *anything* you want: goods and services, personals, etc. Non-EarthTides members may advertise for Pagan contacts here (Members will get their contact listings free on the new "NETWORKING" page - see the notice on page 3). Cost is \$1.00 per 15 words, in \$1.00 increments. i.e. both a 16 word ad and a 30 word ad will cost \$2.00. Maximum ad size will be 150 words.

BUSINESS DISPLAY ADS: Business card size (2" x 3.5") are \$5.00 per issue, excepting the Mabon Issue where the fee is \$10. Annual subscription (8 issues) for a business card size ad is \$35.00 saving you \$10 and includes a business membership in the EarthTides Pagan Network. Larger size ads can be accommodated, write for details.

Send your ad copy, along with payment to E.P.N. P.O. Box 161, East Winthrop, ME 04343. While we will allow great freedom of expression, we reserve the right to reject ads too indecorous or illegal or for other reasons.

BOOK REVIEWS: TWO ON TRICKSTERS

Trickster Makes This World by Lewis Hyde, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York., 1998, hb, \$26.00, ISBN 0-374-27928-4

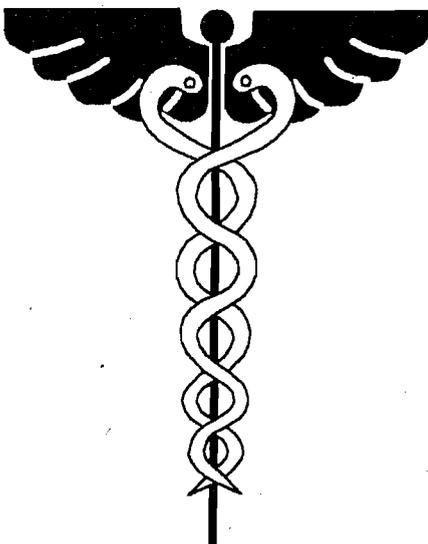
The God of Impertinence by Sten Nadolny, translation by Breon Mitchell Penguin Books, New York, 1997, pb \$12.95, ISBN 0-14-025452-8

Those of you that know me, you know the importance in my life of the Tricksters, particularly Hermes. If the Tricksters are important to you, you need to read these books. If they aren't important to you, you probably need to read them even more than the rest of us.

In the tales of Coyote, Eshu, Legba, Monkey, Loki, Krishna and Hermes, Hyde shows us how these Gods created the world in which we live. Others Gods tried to create a perfect, clean world. But the world we live in has ambiguity and dirt. This allows creativity and *this* world is the product of the Tricksters' actions and energy. As a Pagan, I have rejected the typical Christian concept of heaven: sitting on a cloud, wearing a robe, playing the harp, singing hymns. That is all very nice but it is ultimately boring. If this were a perfect world that, too, would be boring. For creativity, you need to be surprised and to have the intelligence to deal with the surprise. These are the gifts of the Tricksters. Hermes is a thief and a luck bringing. His actions may bring what we term as loss or gain. But in his territory who is to say what is loss or gain? To the Greeks, all accidents, "good" or "bad" were *hermaion*, gifts-of- Hermes. You make of them what you will. Hyde's book also contains an excellent prose translation of "The Homeric Hymn to Hermes".

Nadolny's book is a novel. Hermes reawakens in the modern world. I won't ruin the plot for you, but suffice to say the old Gods are not gone, they are just doing other things. Zeus has retired and plays golf, Aphrodite is living as a man, Hephaestus is running things, which pretty explains the current state of the world. It's a fun read and shows great insight into the natures of the Gods.

- Mugwort



A SAD SITUATION

Kelmscott Farm is a non-profit farm dedicated to the preservation of old breeds of animals. A lovely setting, with an authentic garden and friendly atmosphere, last year marked their first Ren Faire to raise money for the farm. Several EPN members, and other members of the Maine Pagan community, worked there as entertainers.

Accordingly, I as an EPN member and professional Mid-Eastern Dancer called for information on dancing at this year's fair, to be held August 29-30. Asked what my fee would be, I decided to do the EPN community some good. I asked for a free ad for EPN in the Faire program as recompense. I made sure that they knew precisely what the EarthTides Pagan Network is. The arrangement was accepted.

In late July, the editors of EPNN drew up an ad that seemed to fit the Ren Faire theme (see below). The ad

Interested in The Olde Religion?



EarthTides Pagan Network

P.O. Box 161

E. Winthrop, ME 04343

<http://www.mix-net.net/~annemarie/earthtides/>

was designed to be inoffensive. However, the farm objected, insisting that the word "Pagan" be removed from the ad. I pointed out that without "Pagan" the whole ad was pointless. The farm stated that it was too controversial and they did not want to alienate the general public. I pointed out that there was a great deal of support for Ren Faires in general and this one in particular among the Maine Pagan community, but it made no difference.

I approached the Council of EPN and the overwhelming view was that we could not alter our ad or pretend to be other than what we are. Therefore, I regretfully pulled the ad and my offer to dance.

Aside from my personal feelings about not being able to share my art in an appropriate venue, and my dislike of having a contract voided, I am angry at the way my religion and co-religionists have been treated. Please write to Kelmscott Farms, RR2 Box 365, Lincolnville, ME 04849 to express your displeasure. The mission of the the farm, saving rare breeds of farm animals is laudable, however these folks need to be educated about Paganism.

- Elkwing

Please note the The Kelmscott Ren Faire and its management have nothing to do with the Maine Renaissance Faire held in Lebanon, ME from July 25 to Aug. 16. This faire has many Pagan entertainers and deserves the support of the Maine Pagan community

SOME PRACTICAL THOUGHTS ON PAGAN DEATH

While reading a news report today, it occurred to me that Pagans, more than others, need to make specific and careful arrangements for our own deaths. This is a good idea even if you're relatively young; a few of us have sad reason to know that some Pagans do not wait until retirement age to pass into the Summerland.

The trouble is, there is no consensus on what constitutes a Pagan funeral, and many Pagan groups don't write this ritual until they suddenly are faced with a dead member. Also, our families, while they may love us, do not always share our religion, and thus many a Pagan has received a Christian or Jewish funeral.

These decisions are among the most personal you can make. They're also not easy to think about. But I'd like to encourage you to do so. A couple of Pagan books - "Into the Summerland" by Edain McCoy and "The Pagan Book of Living and Dying" by Starhawk - might give you some good ideas.

Some questions for you to answer:

*How do you feel about being resuscitated by heroic measures?

*Would you be willing to donate your organs?

* Would you consider donating your body to a medical school for research and education?

*Do you prefer burial or cremation?

*Do you want to be embalmed (it's expensive and is NOT required by law)?

*Where do you want to be buried? Where do you want your ashes buried or scattered?

*What sort of services would you like performed, and by whom?

*Are there any personal magical tools or items with which you'd like to be buried or cremated?

The Funeral and Memorial Societies of America is a group of volunteer organizations dedicated to helping people arrange simple, affordable funerals. For a small lifetime fee, members can take advantage of low-cost arrangements. There's one in Maine, which you can reach at Memorial Society of Maine, Box 3122, Auburn, ME 04212-3122, or call 207-786-4323.

FAMSA has many helpful pamphlets on such issues as eco-friendly burial, legal issues, avoiding scams and saving money. You can write to them at FAMSA, P.O. Box 10, Hinesburg, VT 05461, call 802-482-3437 or visit their web site at <http://www.funerals.org/famsa/>

You may also wish to check out the book "Caring for Your Own Dead," by Mary Azarian of East Calais, Vermont. (Note that its advice will not be helpful in New Hampshire, where the funeral-home industry has been able to convince lawmakers that a funeral director must be involved at every death.)

Whatever your wishes, don't lock them up and expect

your family will find them. Write them down, share them with your family and put the written statement of your wishes in a place where they can find it easily.

If you own property - even just a car or computer - you'll want to consider having a will. Otherwise, your property goes to your next of kin (spouse, parent, child, sibling) automatically. This is a legal matter and I'm not a lawyer, but it's my understanding that holographic (handwritten) wills are legal in Maine, provided you use paper with no printing on it and write the entire thing by hand, yourself. Please don't just take my advice, but consult a lawyer or legal-services agency to make sure yours expresses your wishes correctly; it's worth it to spare your survivors big legal fees if something isn't right.

When arranging for the distribution of your property, don't forget your magical tools and books, so that they pass into the hands of those who will appreciate them and use them wisely.

These questions aren't easy to think about, particularly if you're young. By making your decisions and letting them be known in your family, you're doing them the favor of sparing them tough choices at a time when they'll be vulnerable.

- Jane Raeburn

A POEM

Once upon a time

Once I was young
I thought young
I played young

I grew foolish
I thought foolish
I played foolish

I grew old
I thought old
I played old

I grew wise
I thought wise
I played wise

I died
I played dead
I stayed dead

- LAWRENCE

MEANDERINGS

What About Joy?

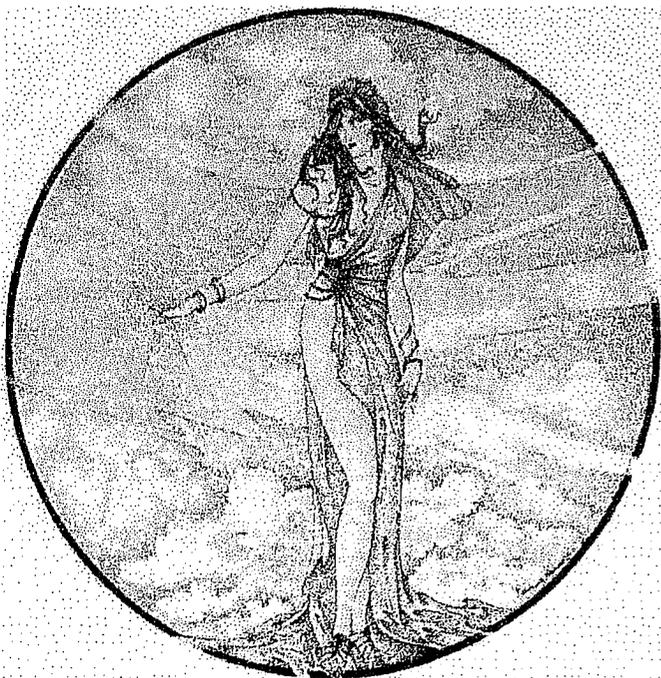
Just finished going through several excellent publications of the New Spirituality persuasion, and became aware of something I hadn't noticed before. Seems that most of the articles, and nearly every ad, contained the word "healing" in one form or another. There's herbal healing, touch healing, astral healing, chiropractic healing, polarity healing, aura healing, and too many more to even consider listing.

Now don't get me wrong, please. I'm not a worshipper at the altar of the patriarchal medical profession; I certainly both understand and prefer other, more traditional (yes, I meant that) methods of treating what ails ya. My problem here is with the focus. You can't emphasize healing without also focusing on something being wrong, whether with one's body, mind or spirit.

Anyone who knows me well will agree that I've had my share of hard knocks on my path through this world, including a pair of knees that try to teach me who's boss on occasion, but I refuse to let them take over my life. The first thing I want to think about when I get up in the morning is enjoying another sunrise and smelling that first cup of coffee. As I go through my day, my focus is more on exchanging smiles with as many people as possible than exchanging aches and pains.

What I notice most of all are life's treasures--my step-daughter's laugh, my partner's latest pun, the flowers on my African violet, or slicing onions for a good dinner--not life's stresses. And maybe, just maybe, for me that's the real healing.

-Arwen Evenstar



JANE'S TIDINGS

Thanks and blessings to all the delightful people who send news for this column! It may or may not be true that sending news to Jane makes you more prosperous and attractive - but why take chances? Send your Wiccan- and Pagan-related news to Jane, P.O. Box 64, Portland, ME 04112. Electronic correspondence should go to my new address, pjane@journalist.com.

Witch denied license

A Virginia judge denied a Wiccan priestess a license to perform weddings on the grounds that "your religion does not qualify as a religious denomination." Rosemary Kooiman, 69, one of three Wiccans turned down by Fairfax County Chief Judge F. Bruce Bach, plans to appeal the decision. The law in Maryland, where she lives, allows her to perform marriages as an official recognized by her religious order. The couple who had wanted a Virginia wedding went ahead with Kooiman as priestess, but had to be legally married by a justice of the peace first. Kooiman's case caught the attention of a Washington Post reporter and she was widely interviewed. (Washington Post, 5/8/98)

Welcome back, Druids

After 10 years of banning rituals in the ancient monument of Stonehenge, the British government is allowing a few groups to celebrate the Summer Solstice. The ban came after a group of "New Age travelers" (that's British for "hippies") tried to hold a free festival that turned into a riot. A select group of 100 will be allowed in to observe the solstice sunrise. Among those planning to attend are Rollo Maughfling, Arch Druid of Britain, and Kevin Carlyon, High Priest of British White Witches. (Agence France-Press, 6/11/98)

Happy Beltane

A nicely-written article in the Chicago Tribune heralded the coming of Beltane and gave a poetic and sympathetic description of Pagan worship. "Whatever the true numbers, a sort of pagan consciousness does seem to be seeping into the mainstream," said the article, citing Loreena McKennitt's "Mummer's Dance" video and the singer Donovan's recent "coming out" as a Pagan. The writer interviewed the leaders of a suburban coven and concluded, "They are, in many ways, typical of contemporary pagans. They're bright, educated free spirits who searched diligently for a spiritual tradition."

Heritage, not hate

The Southern Poverty Law Center's "Intelligence Report" highlighted the exploitation of Asatru and Norse heritage by neo-Nazis and other racists. In response, a group of Pagan leaders, led by Cairril Adair of the Pagan Education Network, sent a letter describing Norse Pagan religions and strongly rejecting any form of racism or anti-Semitism, and denouncing those who try to twist Pagan faiths to support such views. (Intelligence Report, Winter 97-98; PEN, 5/30/98)

(Continued on page 8)

JANE'S TIDINGS (CONTINUED)

Amazon healing

Scientists now are just beginning to discover the full range of health-giving plants in the Amazon rain forest. Nicole Hughes Maxwell knew about them for decades, and spent more than 40 years bringing them to the attention of Western medicine. Maxwell, who died recently at age 92, didn't begin life as a scientist, but as a debutante who posed nude and danced in the Paris Ballet in the '20s. She was a worthy heroine for Pagans: Besides her healing work, she showed early signs of religious independence, finding her own doctor at age 9 when her Christian Scientist grandparents wanted to pray over her broken arm. (San Francisco Chronicle, 6/4/98)

You can't look it up

A teen-ager in Winter, Wis., is protesting after being told she could not look up Witchcraft, magic or Earth religion sites through her school library's Internet connection. Burklin Nielsen, 15, complained that the supervisor of an after-school computer lab open to the public told her she could only look up Christian religions. The school district is considering a policy that would bar students from visiting "inappropriate" sites, as determined by adult monitors; at least one school board member vowed to vote against such a policy as violating freedom of speech. The Nielsen family has hired a lawyer but has not yet taken any action. (Associated Press, 5/15/98)

Nicks nixed

A Huntsville, Ala., minister refused to allow a graduating high-school senior to sing the Fleetwood Mac song "Landslide" at a baccalaureate service on the grounds that the band's lead singer, Stevie Nicks, is "a witch and a Satan worshipper." Ms. Nicks, who has denied this rumor for years, responded, "I can't believe people are still telling me I'm a witch because I wear black." She and the band planned to dedicate the song to the Huntsville students at an upcoming Alabama show. (Associated Press, 5/30/98)

Pagan revival

A World Pagan Congress in Lithuania drew a gathering of Pagans who issued a statement calling for international solidarity among Pagans and greater tolerance from other belief systems. Lithuania, the last of the European countries to convert to Christianity, is home to a number of Pagan groups since regaining its independence. The largest of these, Romuva, hopes to build a Pagan university in Vilnius. (Associated Press, 7/4/98)

UU could be you

A census by the Unitarian Universalist Church revealed that 19% of members consider their theology "earth-centered." While not a firm count of Pagans within UU churches, the number nonetheless was higher than expected and gives UU Pagans a more secure niche within the church. (UU World, 5/98)

History of freedom

Paganism flourishes in the United States in part because of a strong tradition of religious freedom. An exhibit at the Library of Congress explores attitudes toward religion at the time that our Constitution was being written. Among the more interesting items are letters written by Thomas Jefferson in defense of the separation of church and state. The letters had been known for years, but new scientific techniques make it possible to read some phrases Jefferson crossed out - phrases that, if anything, put Jefferson even more firmly on the side of keeping religion out of government and vice versa. (Washington Post, 6/12/98)

A vote for freedom

Many Pagans had been concerned about the "Religious Freedom Amendment," a misnamed bill that would have amended the Constitution to specifically allow prayers and religious recognition in schools and other government institutions. Though the wording is innocuous on the surface, Pagans and other minority religions had feared it would open the door to further dominance of public space by the majority religions of Christianity. The bill failed in the U.S. House, but was taken up again by Sen. James Inhofe of Oklahoma. If this bill worries you, please remember to write your Senators and let them know about it. (Congressional Record, 6/4/98)

They paved Stonehenge and put up a shopping mall

Artist Norm Hines created a Stonehenge-inspired set of megaliths in a Texas field in the 1980s, the most successful portion of an office complex that never materialized. In 1996, with the economy back in gear, the land was set to become a shopping mall, and owners offered to give the sculpture to the city of Arlington to put in a park. Christian ministers, noting that local Wiccans and Pagans have held picnics and gatherings at the site, protested the creation of a "witchcraft park," and the sculpture was put in storage. Now the stones, lying on their sides near the waterworks, are likely to remain there, since no one has the \$300,000 it would take to move and reinstall them. (Fort Worth Star-Telegram, 6/9/98)

Papal penitence

On March 8, 2000, Pope John Paul II plans to lead a penitential procession in Rome to ask forgiveness for the Roman Catholic Church's actions against those branded witches and heretics during the Inquisition. Along with Jews, to whom the pope has already apologized, will be representatives of those whom the Inquisition tortured and killed for their beliefs. (The Age, Melbourne, Australia, 6/30/98)

A king can look at a cat-goddess

Archaeologists have found a larger-than-life granite head of the pharaoh Ramses II at Bubastis, sacred city of the ancient cat goddess Bast. It was the first time any statue of Ramses II, who was very fond of representing himself in stone, had been found there. The head is topped by a solar disk and a representation of the beetle-god Khepr, one aspect of the sun-god Ra. (Agence France-Presse, 5/29/98)