

IPAN
PO Box 861
Iowa City, IA 52240-0861
www.ipan.org
ipan@ipan.org



SAMHAIN 2009 ISSUE

NOVEMBER 2009

From the Collective

A Year and a Day

At the retreat on November 7 the IPAN Collective decided to go on hiatus for a year and a day due to lack of sustainable community involvement. Services that will remain active are:

- IPANReminder yahoo group
- IPAN Weavings archives
- IPAN Educational materials available on the website

We'd like to extend a sincere thank you to those who have contributed to Weavings and joined us at events throughout this year. We plan to use this year to rest and recharge. We will gather again on November 7, 2010.

Blessings,
- the IPAN Collective

Table of Contents

Event Reviews... 2
Article... 5
Hearth & Home... 4
Spirituality... 6
Poetry & Prose ... 9
Community Calendar... 11

Features

3 New to this Path
4 Savory Sabbats
6 Interpreting Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching
7 The Goddess Pages
8 Sticks and Stones
9 The Sunset Was So Beautiful
12 Ode to John Coltrane

Event Reviews

Hundreds Attend Pagan Pride Day in Des Moines

Pagan Pride Day was held on September 26, at Union Park in Des Moines. There were approximately 400 in attendance to celebrate the autumnal equinox. Admission to the event was two items to donate for the Dallas County Food Pantry or the Animal Rescue League; 482 pounds of food were collected. People attended not only from Iowa but also from Minnesota, Nebraska, and Illinois.

Three readers (crystal ball, palm and tarot) were present, while eight merchandise and two food vendors did a brisk business. The event began at 10 A.M. and ended at 6 P.M.

A variety of workshops and lectures (including Celtic lore, tarot, pendulum, raising vibrational rate, Goddess, and coven) were presented, as well as entertainment by belly dancers, musicians and a body artist. There was also a spiral dance.

Administrator Linda Countryman (Summerfire) has handed over the wand to Chrissy Dunham from Coralville for next year and started a new organization called Iowa Pagan Alliance that will hold monthly meetings, classes, and outings. The next one coming up is the Samhain Ball which will be in Redfield, Iowa on October 31st, with a solemn ritual at five, potluck at six and a dance with a D.J. at seven; for more information, contact her at Summerfire_2@yahoo.com.

New to this Path

-BigJohnDolphin

Although I'm new to this, maybe I'm not – I'm starting to see things that I'd been checking out years (no, decades) ago. And I didn't feel the fear and trepidation, upon hearing the word "pagan" that many others seem to (but probably wouldn't, if they'd only take the time to read the definition in the literature). Having spent most of my life searching for what feels right for me spiritually, I've not felt comfortable with "locking in" to an organized system and the dogma that often goes with it. So while I've always felt at least somewhat grounded spiritually when faced with some of life's trials and tribulations, I've never attempted to claim membership in any religion, though I've recognized the validity of many and taken bits and pieces from them all. But I've always been strongly drawn to the earth, and felt a strong bond there.

So I guess I've always considered myself a universalist of sorts, but always seemed to have trouble finding kindred spirits. And it seemed like no one could tell me anything about any kind of earth-based belief systems, although a couple college roommates (one from Africa, another from South America) had spoken to me about the spirits that exist in all things, herbal healing, and speaking to ancestors who have exited.

My spiritual journey picked up some speed this past spring when I fell in love with a psychic, Kelly Sheridan (www.morningstarbodywork.com). Since I was already open to a lot of ideas, I have been drinking it all in; I began meditating and reading all I could about spirituality. I also found myself looking at the world with a new sense of wonder, as the moon, sky and stars took on new meanings for me.

Attending my first metaphysical fair this summer was also a real eye-opener for me, as I participated in a couple of ceremonies, and met many people with interests similar to mine. At the Denver Celebration Festival (www.celebrationfair.com), where Kelly is an annual reader, I had the opportunity to truly get my feet wet. I did a past life regression, found out my spirit animal is dolphin, and participated in my first drum circle. And during those three days I attended a lot of other workshops, visited with a lot of vendors, and reconnected with many folk I'd met before. Later in that month I attended Pagan Pride Day (www.paganpride.org) in Des Moines, which brought me a lot more connections, and the weekend after that I went to Mystic Fest (www.magicalomaha.com) in Omaha; since then I've been able to meet with more people and be in more drum circles.

I've found that Iowa really is fertile ground for those of us pursuing a metaphysical path. Having been warmly welcomed by everyone I've met in these circles, including the members that I met at the IPAN meeting, I no longer feel alone in my journey, and am excited about what lies ahead.

Hearth & Home

Savory Sabbats with Ursa and the Weavings Community

Sabbat menus created with gatherings of friends and family in mind with recipes from Ursa's family gatherings past, present and future. In each menu is at least one recipe from my family's holiday favorites. For recipes listed in a menu, but not included in the Weavings newsletter contact me at materurusasum@gmail.com.

Yule – Feast of Riches

Rich foods are the expectation for the winter holiday in my family. I can honestly say that some family winter holiday gatherings there are so many rich foods I can't eat more than a bite of each. The richness certainly helps us feel rich in the middle of the dark time of year.

Menu

Pecan & Pineapple Cheese Ball with crackers
Roast Beef
Barley Casserole
Turkish Green Beans
Aunt Jenne's Pecan Pie
Homemade Eggnog

Barley Casserole

This recipe came to our family by way of one of my dad's college friends. My dad and his friends got together for Thanksgiving for many years and she brought this dish every year. Now we can't have a cold weather holiday meal without it.

1 cup barley
1 can chicken broth
1 packet onion soup mix
1 can mushrooms, drained
¼ cup butter

Put all the ingredients in a casserole dish and bake at 325 ° to 350° (whatever you need the oven to be at for other dishes) until barely is done, 1 to 2 hours. If it gets dry while cooking, add a little water.

Aunt Jenne's Pecan Pie

Now this is rich!

1 pie shell, unbaked
1 8 ounce package cream cheese
1 egg
1/3 cup sugar
1 ¼ cup pecans
3 eggs
½ cup sugar
1 cup Karo (corn syrup, light or dark)

Beat cream cheese and 1 egg and 1/3 cup sugar until smooth. Spread cream cheese mixture in the bottom of the unbaked pie shell. Pour pecans on top of cream cheese mixture. In a bowl, beat the 3 eggs, ½ cup sugar and 1 cup corn syrup until fluffy. Pour gently over the pecans. Bake in a pre-heated 375° oven until center is set, 35-45 minutes or longer.

Hearth & Home

Imbolc – Comfort Foods

It's cold out there. The fall and winter holidays are over and even though the days are longer spring seems far away. This is the time of year I like to make the comfort foods that didn't make to the holiday menus. I also like to make baked dishes.

Menu

Pickle Tray
Baked Ham
Scalloped Potatoes
Peas & Onions
Hot Wacky Cake with butter
Chai

Scalloped Potatoes

I make scalloped potatoes a differently than my grandmother, who counts scalloped potatoes and scalloped corn at the same meal as two vegetable dishes. She sprinkles layers of sliced potatoes with flour, salt and pepper and pours milk over the whole thing before baking. This sometimes makes a stringy goopy sauce. You could make a white sauce with the flour and milk, but that's an extra pot to wash. Here's how I do it.

Potatoes, at least one for each person to be served
Cheddar cheese, shredded, about ¼ cup per potato
Evaporated milk, have two cans on hand
Salt and pepper to taste

A casserole dish big enough to hold twice as many potatoes as you are using with a lid if you have one. You want to be sure to use a casserole that will be filled only half full because the milk and cheese will bubble up while cooking and if they spill over and burn the smell is awful and getting the burnt milk off the bottom of your oven will be a dreadful task. I still put a foil lined cookie sheet under the casserole, just in case. Scrub clean or peel the potatoes. Into the casserole, slice as thinly as you can enough potatoes to make a layer about two slices thick. Sprinkle the layer with salt, pepper and cheese. Continue this until you have used up all the potatoes. Pour evaporated milk over the potatoes and cheese until it just covers them. Cover the casserole with a lid or foil. If you are using foil, don't seal it tightly because you want liquid to evaporate. Bake at 350° for 45 minutes to 90 minutes. Cooking time depends on the size of your baking dish, the bigger the dish, the longer it will need to cook. A half full 2-quart casserole will need to cook about an hour. When the potatoes are tender, uncover and cook until the top is nicely browned.

Wacky Cake Hot Out of the Oven with Butter

This one I get strange looks about this until people try it. I LOVE this chocolate cake and hot with butter on it is my favorite way to eat it. Wacky Cake is an egg less cake recipe I believe someone in my family found in a Hershey's Cocoa cookbook. I grew up only seeing it written on the recipe cards in my family's kitchens. There are many versions of this recipe. This is the one we use.

1 ½ cups all purpose flour
1 cup sugar
¼ cup cocoa powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup water, hot
½ cup (1 stick) butter, melted
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 Tablespoon vinegar

Preheat oven to 350°. Butter and flour a 9x9 cake pan. Mix the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking soda and salt in a bowl. Make a well in the middle of the dry ingredients. Into the well, pour the hot water, melted butter, vanilla, and vinegar. Stir just until combined. Don't over stir, small lumps are OK. Pour into prepared cake pan and bake 30 to 40 minutes until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean. Slice like cornbread and serve while hot with butter spread on top. This recipe can be doubled and baked in a 9x13 cake pan.

Spirituality

Interpreting Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching – 4th Verse

-Yuena Zhen



*The Tao is Empty
But inexhaustible,
Bottomless,
The ancestor of it all.*

*Within it, sharp edges become smooth;
The twisted knots loosen;
The sun is softened by a cloud;
The dust settles into place.*

*It is hidden but always present.
I do not know who gave birth to it.
It seems to be the common ancestor of all, the father of things.*

The fourth verse of the Tao Te Ching describes the nature of the Tao in greater detail. I see this verse as inspiring, an invitation to never feel limited in your life. Too often, people feel that there is only so much of something out there to be had. For example, maybe they believe that only so many people can be successful in their career, while the rest of the people must settle for less. This verse urges you to believe that anything is possible, the Tao has no limits and never runs out. We can all tap into the powers of the Tao, and never have to worry about it being used up, there is always plenty for all.

In essence, this philosophy could put an end to jealousy in our society. There is no reason to covet what someone else has, if it's entirely possible to have it ourselves. This verse also plays into the power of intention that is very popular these days. By tapping into the Tao, you can manifest whatever you want, you can smooth sharp edges and loosen knots. The important thing to remember is that the Tao is always present. Whatever thoughts populate your mind, is what the Tao will bring to you.

It also reminds us that we ALL come from the same place. There are many times in life when it's hard not to see the differences between other people and ourselves. People of differing backgrounds often quarrel over the most basic of life's decisions, so it is easy to judge and condemn those different than us. Lao Tzu tells us that no matter what differences we have, we all have a common ancestor in the Tao.

***an invitation to
never feel limited
in your life***

Contact the
author at
yuenazhen@ipan.org

Spirituality

The Goddess Pages: Create a House of Peace -Astra Dawn

The town I live in has many churches, and many of them have billboard-type display pieces out front. These billboards usually contain information regarding service times, but some of the more creative ones contain clever messages. For example, one I saw the other day read "God answers knee-mail." Another said, "Seven days without God makes one weak." Usually, I chuckle and drive on.

However, I passed one recently that contained the simple message of "Create a House of Peace". It wasn't clever or cute, and maybe that was the reason why it stayed with me. However, it occurred to me later that the universe speaks to us in ways we don't expect. There was something about peace She was wanting me to know.

With one message already in my mental Inbox, the next one came in the form of Laurie Sue Brockway's book The Goddess Pages. When it comes to choosing a goddess from this text to discuss for Weavings, I usually select one based on the "feeling" I get as I glance through the table of contents. Many times, one of those deities speaks to me because of a personal issue I am enduring. So, with this peace concern in the back of my mind, who should stand out but White Buffalo Calf Woman?

White Buffalo Calf Woman is a Native American spirit who is credited with instructing the Lakota Sioux on how to live the sacred life through special rituals. Practicing these rituals, she advocated, would lead to a lifetime of peace and honesty.

Most of us don't find the time to stop and contemplate an ancient Native American holy-woman's wisdom. However, with three children still living at home, two part-time jobs, and a husband that is juggling graduate school with his work, I do constantly search for a house of peace. Many days I wonder if that peace is a pipe dream. With cold weather settling in and the chaotic holiday season only a few weeks off, this need for tranquility is paramount. It would seem that the need for a holy-woman is great.

Taoists remind us to remember the masculine and feminine energies of this universe, and White Buffalo Calf Woman does likewise. She honors both warrior and peace-maker and strives for balance between the two.

Strife-ridden headlines splash across the newspapers everyday, and to many, the thought of a peaceful planet is unattainable. However, it might be a comfort to understand that world peace can begin at home. Brockway's book encourages women to hold their own sacred peace ceremony. Gather friends "in the name of peace" and pass around an object of meaning (a crystal, a rock, or a stick). The holder of the object shares their definition of peace and everyday ideas for creating a more peaceful life. This can continue for as long as the ideas flow. Not only is there a meaningful exchange of ideas and fellowship, but an instant cache of practical tips that could be implemented immediately.

Peace does not exist without conflict, and it is nearly impossible to interact in the day-to-day world without some kind of struggle. Remembering the wisdom of White Buffalo Calf Woman may carry you through each day. She asks us to focus on peace as much as possible. If you are one who watches the news right before bedtime, consider skipping it – the images of tragedies may follow you into your dreamtime. Playing meditation music, burning incense, taking a warm bath may also help induce an atmosphere of peace. Any conversations before bedtime should be of a playful, yet calm, nature. Take advantage of any and all opportunities to step away from a stressful or overwhelming situation. Run an errand, step outside for a breath of fresh air, take a walk – any of these activities may help regain your sense of control. Peace within yourself can be created at any moment, and it radiates from you. Brockway affirms, "You radiate peace everywhere you go."

**Peace
does
not exist
without
conflict**

Contact the
author at
astradawn@ipan.org

Spirituality

Sticks and Stones -Cheryl

Juniper (Juniperus communis)

We have all seen the juniper bushes commonly used as a landscape shrub, but did you know they are a magical plant? They are considered to be very protective and it is supposed to be unlucky to cut them down. By carrying three of the berries with you will be protected from natural dangers and be guarded against disease. This sounds good to me with the H1N1 virus going around like wildfire. Or you could just drink gin!

This tree has an abundance of healing properties and is used for a variety of medical problems. Again I say Gin.

When burned it improves your psychic powers and is used in exorcism rites as it protects you against evil forces. It will also assist you in breaking the tie between the "victim" and their attacker.

Now I have never tried this but you are supposed to use Juniper in love potions and to increase male potency. Alright this really screams Gin to me.

I have been told it can be used in cooking to make sauces. I don't have any idea how since if it doesn't come out of a can I'm lost. I vote for going out to dinner and drinking Gin.

Gender: Masculine

Planet: Sun

Element: Fire

Powers: Not a very bad hangover

If you drink please drink responsibly and let someone else drive.

Peridot

This oily green or yellowish green stone is an overall balancer of mind and body (you will need it after all that Gin). As another one of those healing stones it is good to have around when you need it.

If you are looking for a stone to help you with your personal growth Peridot should be considered. This stone accelerates personal growth and opens the doors to new opportunities. With any growth you must be willing to accept things as they are and Peridot also helps with this.

Calming is the best word for Peridot. It not only calms anger and jealousy it will help you to dispel negative energies and emotions. In our stressful world we need all the calming we can get. Try wearing Peridot to bed in a necklace or place some under your bed for a peaceful nights sleep. Or try Gin.

Gender: Feminine

Energy: Receptive

Ruling Planet: Venus

Element: Earth

Chakras: 3 and 4- Solar plexus and heart

Tarot: The Empress

Hardness: 6.5

References

Foa, Emma. *Pocket Gem Stones*. DK Publishing, 2003

Cunningham, Scott *Encyclopedia of Crystal, Gem and Metal Magic*. Llewellyn Worldwide 2003

My personal notes gathered over the years. So if I plagiarized you sorry about that.

Juniper -

Gender: Masculine

Planet: Sun

Element: Fire

Peridot-

Gender: Feminine

Energy: Receptive

Ruling Planet: Venus

Element: Earth

Contact the
author at
cheryl@ipan.org

Poetry & Prose

The Sunset Was So Beautiful

The sunset was so beautiful ...as I held you close to me
The colors of the evening sky were bright ... as bright can be

Orange ... purple ... blue like ink
The snow on the mountains turned to pink

I turned and whispered ... I love you ... and gave you kisses on your ear
We stayed and watched till darkness fell ... the night owls we could hear

We slowly walked away ... as the lake turned into lace
With our arms still holding our passionate embrace

We stepped so carefully ...and left without a trace
For this is ours and ours alone ... our beautiful sacred place

-Kelly Sheridan

Poetry & Prose

Ode to John Coltrane

From humble beginnings in
 Hamlet, North Carolina
 The grandson of a simple country
 Preacher,
 You rose to heights unheard of
 (professionally, artistically
 and spiritually)
 before cancer felled you
 prematurely at the age of 40.

You paid your dues
 A tour of duty in a Navy band,
 "walking the bar" with those god awful
 R&B outfits in Philly,
 Just to pay the rent,
 And later apprenticeships with
 The Masterful Monk and Miles
 As your spiritual journey
 Progressed,
 You explored all the worlds
 Religions, as well as
 Einstein's theories;
 From sheets of sound to
 Modal improvisation to
 Dissonant honking,
 You were always an innovator.

Coaxing, cajoling, coalescing,
 Caressing
 The
 Silky, smooth, screaming, scorching, searing,
 Sullen, squawking, sizzling, sensual, seductive
 Soprano saxophone sounds
 Never before heard in this universe.

Your legacy is
 The volumes of pleasure
 You left behind
 To inspire generations to come.

John Gallaher

Community Calendar

November 2009

- 1 Daylight Savings Time Ends at 2:00 am – set your clocks back
- 2 Full Moon ○
- 16 New Moon ●
- 16 Obsidian Moon Mediation (contact materursasum@gmail.com)

Recurring events in November:

- 6, 10, 17, 24 Cedar Rapids Pagan Community Coffee Social (www.crpagans.org)

December

- 2 Full Moon ○
- 16 New Moon ●
- 16 Obsidian Moon Mediation (contact materursasum@gmail.com)
- 21 Winter Solstice, Yule
- 31 Full Moon ○ – Blue Moon

Recurring events in December:

- 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Cedar Rapids Pagan Community Coffee Social (www.crpagans.org)

January 2010

- 3 Perihelion – the earth is at its closest to the sun
- 15 New Moon ●
- 15 Obsidian Moon Mediation (contact materursasum@gmail.com)
- 19 Cedar Rapids Pagan Community Coffee Social ([crpagans.org](http://www.crpagans.org))
- 30 Full Moon ○

Recurring events in December:

- 5, 12, 19, 26 Cedar Rapids Pagan Community Coffee Social (www.crpagans.org)