

SpiralHeart

A Spiritual Community
in the Reclaiming Tradition

SpiralHeart WitchCamp

2005 Intent:

SpiralHeart challenges
itself to discover how to

... create support for each
other in claiming and
growing into our
responsibilities...

... recognize and nourish
our individual and group
diversity...

... build a community
container for our
transformation...

... bring the fire of our
individual and collective
passion to the world.

Wolf's Wramble

Steward asked me for a "chatty" piece for this, the first regularly-published SpiralHeart newsletter in years. I hope he doesn't equate "chatty" with "happy." 'Cause I've really got my knickers in a twist. Fasten your seatbelts.

So, it's Yule again and Bush is still president. It's like a nightmare I can't wake up from. It's the dark time, folks, in spades! We're living in a country that thinks (by a 3.5 million moron margin) that a trained

monkey is fit to be our leader. Me? I resisted the urge to slit my wrists and asked the Mystery for guidance. The answer? "Work harder!"

Or, I could move to Canada. The Canadians are such nice people, don't you think? But then I'd have to give up my fancy job and my hybrid. I'd need a four wheel drive. I hear the snow's deep in the winter, maybe a Hummer, hmmm ... Nah!

The saber rattling from country next door would keep me awake at night anyway. In the words of Mel Brooks, "Destiny, destiny, no escaping destiny."

That's right, you Fairies! This is our wake up call. We let the nattering nabobs of narrow mindedness beat us in this election, but we're witches, dammit! And we're not going to go back into the broom closet.
(continued on next page)

Magic, Intention and Responsibility by Deborah

Author's note: This article is a rewritten version of an email reply sent to SpiralHeart's discussion list in 2002. Thanks to Kila for starting the conversation.

Magic & witchcraft is a path of both great risks & rewards. As witches, we recognize ourselves as no longer simply children of Deity, making pleas for our wants to be met, but now

grown-ups & co-creators, with the ability to invoke and shape the forces to bring about what we desire.

(continued on pg 4)

Wolf's Wrangle (continued)

SpiralHeart

We're not going to take this lying down. This is our country and we're not going to let any draft dodging war mongering, privileged little frat boy of a fascist trample on our constitution!

We are going to speak out, to our friends and neighbors and co-workers. We are going to educate ourselves and others. We are going to sing and write and march and persuade. We are going to work magic.

We are going to do our best to keep the monkeys from marching in lock step, from consolidating their power. Because, make no mistake about it, this is for keeps. The junta won't go quietly. They'll lie and cheat and kill and try to frighten us into submission. But we're witches, dammit! We don't scare easy.

Yeah, it's Yule again. The Light has returned, and it's time to let the monkeys know that Fairies wear boots!



**The 12th Annual SpiralHeart "WitchCamp" Summer Intensive!
July 31st - August 7th, 2005**

We've got the dates set and a teaching team selected—Aurora, Anna Gibson, Ellen Adams, Paul E., Stan Holt, Suzanne Sterling, Urania, & Willow Kelly. Look for the registration form in the mail in a few weeks!

The Camp Operations cell is currently looking for people to help put camp together and run it this year. If you'd be interested in helping make your camp happen, please contact Kathie either by email at ops@spiralheart.org or by leaving a message at (202) 728-7510.

General SpiralHeart News

The next two regularly scheduled membership meetings will be:

- Saturday-Sunday, January 8-9, 2005, hosted by Rook & Joe (in Cheverly, MD)
- Saturday-Sunday, March 5-6, 2005, hosted by Dragon Fyr (in Ashland, VA)

For more information about times, directions, etc., please send email to newsletter@spiralheart.org or, if you don't have internet access, leave a message at (202) 728-7510.



If you know of a store or other establishment that would be interested in having our newsletter available for their customers to take for free—or if you want extra copies to give to friends, etc.—let us know how many copies you need and we'll send them right out. Send email to newsletter@spiralheart.org or, if you don't have internet access, leave a message at (202) 728-7510.



And then there's the next issue to consider. We need articles! Artwork! Poetry! Please send submissions to newsletter@spiralheart.org or to SpiralHeart, Attn: Newsletter, POB 1773, Wheaton, MD 20915-1773.



Finally, a reminder: If you attended the 2004 camp and participated in Elizabeth W's study, and have gotten the follow-up questionnaire, please complete it and return it to her as soon as you can. The aggregate of her information, with personally identifiable information removed, will be shared with the camp organizers so that together we can co-create a better camp experience in the years to come!

Almost all religious traditions, whether in their main ideology or in their more mystical offshoots, provide a path of this expression. Such power, however, also brings the equally "adult" potential to Really Screw Things Up.

An important piece of handling magic wisely is to understand where our desire for a particular outcome comes from, our "intention". No matter what our intention may be - mundane or magical - we are responsible for the outcome of our actions. Being clear about our magical intention, and acting from a strong, centered place within, can go a long ways toward ensuring that our magic will bring about the best possible outcome.

One way to help clarify intention is to perform self-purification, in order to better understand ourselves. Purification - through such vehicles as meditation, prayer, fasting, cleansing - is not done to put ourselves down as evil or polluted. Instead, it is a way to release unhealthy blocks, further refine our character, and deepen the channels of our relationship with Deity. Purification helps us to open our eyes & truly know who we are, so we can begin to release that which no longer serves us.

Knowing our whole selves (shadow & bright) is important too, as our whole selves informs our intention. Our shadows serve us just as much as our brightness, although if we deny our shadows, their power can impact our lives (and magic) in painful ways. Acknowledging the shadow energy that informs our intention can often be enough to ensure the shadow energy doesn't subconsciously "take over" the shaping of the spell

or magic. It's not necessary to have resolved or integrated all our shadow aspects to create a clear intention; simple recognition of fears, jealousies, shame etc. can be enough.

Knowing our emotions is also important. Casting a spell in a blind emotional reaction to something has the highest potential for backfiring. When we finally re-center, we might realize that we were wrong, or misinterpreted the situation, or in the heat of the moment didn't realize that there was another way. Then it's too late, the spell is already out there. Depending on our tradition, we can sometimes work a counter-spell, or perform an "undoing", but it doesn't always work. Holding off performing magic until some sort of emotional equilibrium is achieved is a good guideline. We don't have to lose the emotion of anger/sadness/what-have-you, but knowing the emotions that inform our intention can help guide us in determining whether we should go ahead, or wait until we can re-center.

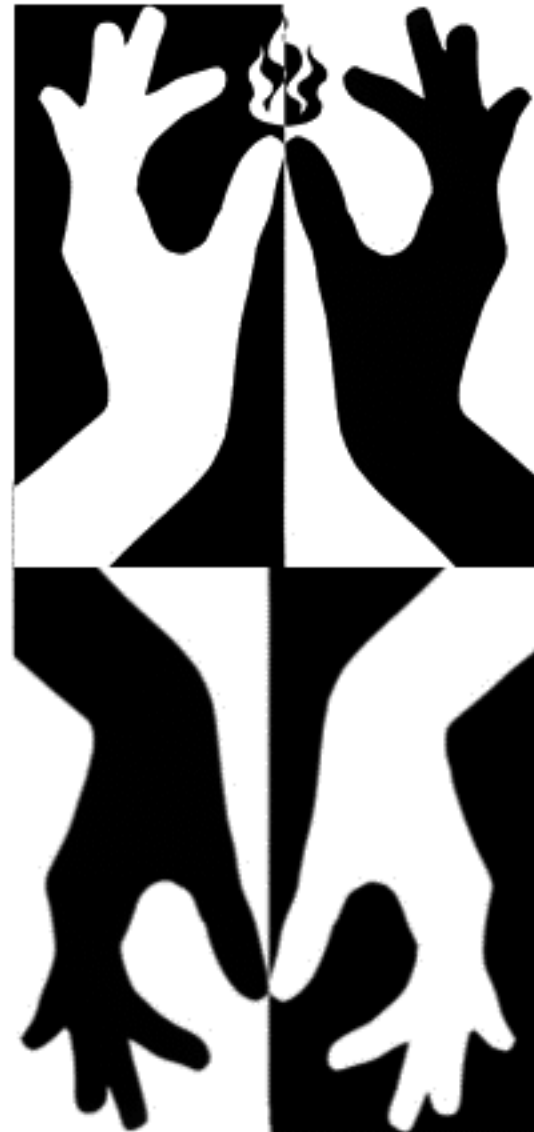
Working magic in a group also brings it's challenges of intention and clarity. For instance, in a public ritual, if the ritual leaders don't communicate the intention clearly, most often the outcome is that nothing happens. Everyone involved has such a different idea of what the ritual's intention and/or outcome should be, and approach it from such different states, that the energy simply loses shape once the cone is released. Purification and grounding by the group, before the magic begins, is a good start towards bringing everyone "in" to the magic on a more equal mental & energetic footing. A strong intention, stated clearly & repeated, further clarifies the work to be done.

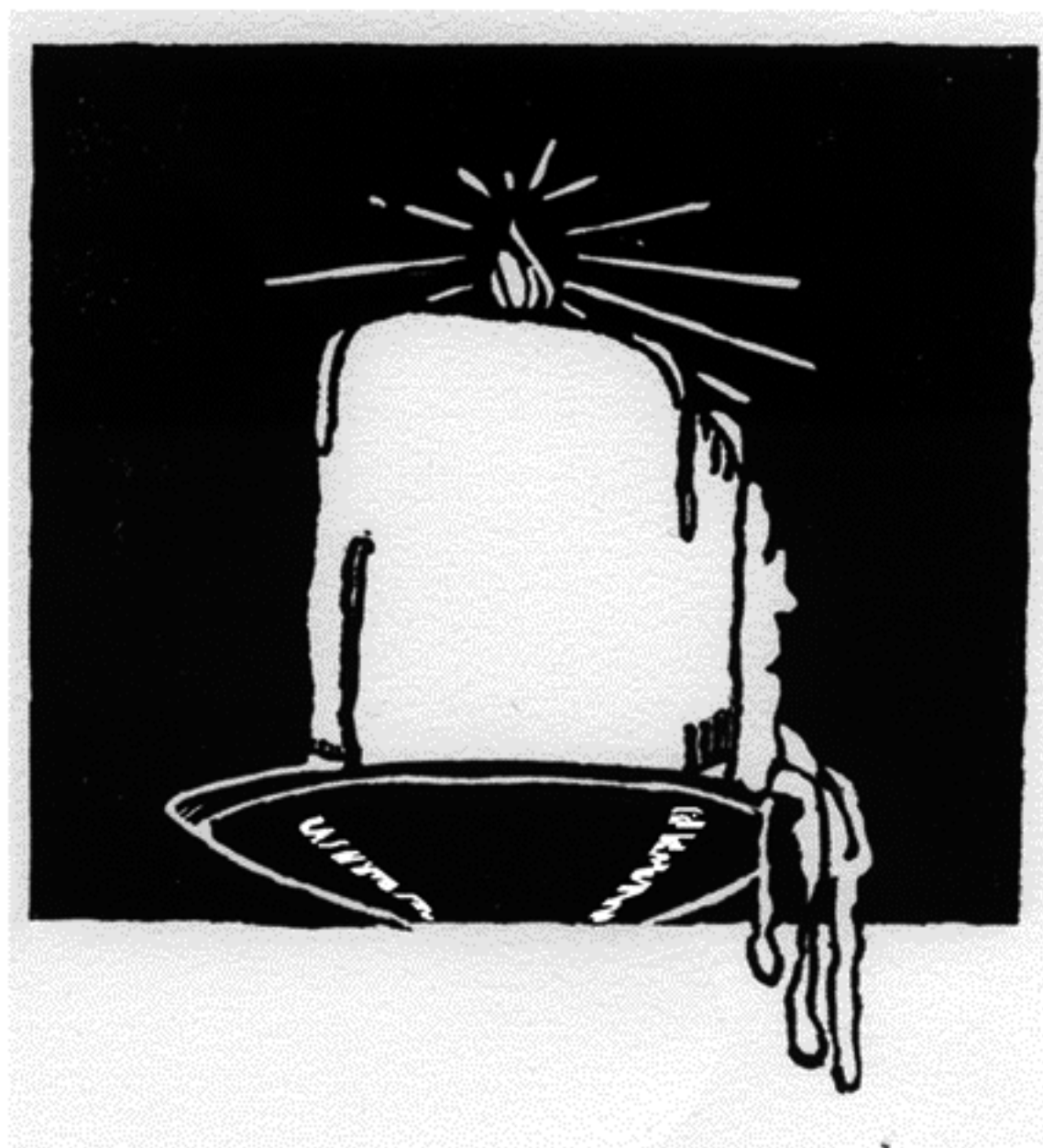
As a side note, if we're in a group ritual and the stated intention doesn't feel right, or if the energy takes shape in a way that causes concern, it is up to us take responsibility and cut ourselves out of the work. It could be that the work is something we (as individuals) aren't called to do. It could be that the work is being formed by unacknowledged (or deliberately hidden) energies brought in by the other participants or leaders. The energy could also be a reflection of something unresolved within ourselves, and our projection of it upon the group. This is another case where purification, in group and on our own, can help.

One final suggestion: whether in a group or by ourselves, adding a heart-felt caveat to the work such as "may this be done to the benefit of all, and harm to none, according to free will" can help shape the intention and magic for the best possible outcome.

What's written above doesn't cover all aspects of how to develop clarity of intention, and responsible magic-making. To those of us new on the path of witchcraft, wielding the power of "spiritual adulthood" can often best be learned by first practicing & gaining mastery within a structure, tradition or path that has been walked upon and tested by others. Feedback from trusted peers and/or teachers on the same path is invaluable. Ultimately, the most important thing is to take the time to grow our skills with care. Know that you are responsible for the fruits of your labors, and be prepared to deal with the outcome! May the outcome of your efforts be healthy and positive.

Deborah is a long-time member of the SpiralHeart community and can be reached at deborah@spiralheart.org

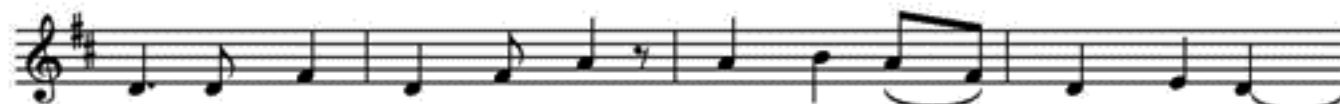




A Pagan Irish Carol (music Irish trad, lyrics by steward)



Yule - tide now is come ; let's all pre - pare for mirth, Which
 Wan-d'ring fro - zen Earth , 'midst Oak and Ash and Thorn The
 Time has come u - pon us: Great bright-ness now does soar The



fills the Sky and Earth , to greet the sun's re - birth!
 lon-gest night u - pon us, e'en stout hearts makes for - lorn.
 sun re - turns to warm us And cheer our hearts once more.



The earth-fruits in the fie - lds, where - e'er they still
 Our hands are joined to - ge - ther our fin - gers in-
 The light has come from dark-ness Its warm rays make



do lie Re - join their qui - et mo - ther, un - til the
 - ter - twine Our cir - cle draws the daw - ning that will the
 it clear: The Earth will yet a - wa - ken To nur - ture us



sun grows nigh. Swift bree-zes waft the white snow, Whose beau-
 stars out - shine. through the year.



- ty rare at - tires The Earth as she lies slee-ping Be-



- neath the Yule log fires.

One day at WitchCamp 2003 Joanna asked if I would help to wrangle her while she aspected Athena for the evening ritual. The concept wasn't entirely foreign to my mind; according to a Daoist priest with whom I'm acquainted, one of the things Daoists do is wrangle the Yyu, bringing them out of trance if they're having trouble doing it themselves and otherwise keeping watch over them. However, that's not the sort of thing they teach to the laity, so I had no idea as to what they precisely do in those situations. Yet there I was, being asked to serve in that capacity. I agreed to do so because:

- a. I figured the person doing the asking would have known that this was my first year at camp and that the only experience I had with ritual was what I was learning / experiencing that week, and
- b. There would be another person to co-wrangle who had more experience.

It turned out that Joanna didn't realize I was a first-year camper. No problem. Before the ritual I was given a summary of what to expect and do. For the benefit of anyone who might find themselves in a similar situation, I thought it might be useful to give a brief summary of what to do based on what I was told and on my observations at the time:

1. Remember that the primary purpose of a wrangler is to support the person aspecting.
2. Bring a flashlight for outdoor, nighttime rituals.
3. If you don't already know the person, talk with hir beforehand to learn what sort of information would likely bring the aspector back to hirself. Asking hir questions about the name of hir pet dog, street address, or other matters that relate to hir mundane, everyday life can help to disengage the aspector's mind from the deity being aspected.
4. Be prepared to lug a folding chair and water bottle etc. up and down hills.
5. Be prepared to stop the aspector from doing anything that she is likely to sorely regret afterwards. If you don't think you can do that yourself, a co-wrangler should be recruited.
6. People who have experience with aspecting often have an item such as a piece of jewelry or garment that has been charged with hir own energy that is used to help the aspector get back into hirself. Collect this item before the ritual and give it back at the end of the ritual.



Heather Sutherland, one of SpiralHeart's co-founders, is moving to Toronto this winter after 10 continuous years of organizing camp. I got a chance to sit down with her before she left and reflect on SpiralHeart's first 10 years.

Evelyn: You told me that you had never been to a Witchcamp before deciding to start one in the mid-Atlantic region. What made you decide to do it?

Heather: Starhawk came to my house. The woman who does the programming at the Smithsonian is a friend of mine, and that year she brought a whole lot of people who had to do with Wicca to speak at the Smithsonian, and she invited Starhawk. She phoned me up and said, "Starhawk is coming, and we're not paying her at all, but she'll be here for the weekend if you'd like to set up some workshops with her." So I did.

At the time I was really involved in the Partnership Way, Riane Eisler's work, and *The Choice and the Blade*. I had a center in Washington at the time, Center for Partnership, or something like that, with a sign on my lawn and everything, and I did a lot of workshops.

I had gone to a meeting in Chicago for the Partnership Way, and at that meeting there was a woman who had just come from the Midwest camp, which was in Milwaukee then. She talked about it all the time, she raved about it. And then lo and behold Starhawk's in my house – she was there all week – and she was talking about how if you really want to build a community, you need a camp. And at that time I was really needing a community.

Evelyn: What's been most rewarding for you over the years with SpiralHeart?

Heather: Watching people grow. And solving the rough spots and still carrying on. And developing, and seeing it broaden to other camps. I was delighted when New York camp was started. I really have a warm spot in my heart for Harvest. She came to the first camp. I met her at the train in Martinsburg. And it was a few years later when she said she wanted to start a camp, and I said that would be really wonderful! And in Georgia there'll be one starting soon, and of course in North Carolina. And to think of Barbara starting one in Florida is great, too. So that makes me feel good, I can sort of think that from my initial effort there are camps up-and-down the eastern seaboard now.

Evelyn: What's been most surprising to you in the last 10 years?

Heather: That we've had as many conflicts as we have, and that we've resolved them. Well, lots of them aren't resolved. Sometimes people have just left.. I think we often aren't as careful with each other as we should be, and e-mail is notorious for that. We have e-mail disasters all the time, and then it takes ages to do the damage control.

I've been surprised that we've had trouble continuing on and trouble in growing. Of course the economy has been hard on us the past few years.

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Evelyn: What message would you give to everyone going forward?

Heather: Keep pushing the edges. I think we've pushed the edges all along, and I think the biggest edge that's facing everybody right now is the idea of buying land. I think that would be really exciting. There's many things that could go on there because SpiralHeart would have the husbandry of a whole set of land, the responsibility of that, and the ecology and so on. And they could learn a lot from Cindy and Pat who have their own land, at

Diana's Grove, and use them as mentors or something like that. But however that happened it would be very good.

Evelyn: I wish you well in your journeys. Sounds like you have very exciting times ahead of you. We sure will miss you here.

Heather: You won't miss me. There is so much energy here, you've got so many good people. Just hang onto them, and appreciate them.

Upcoming Reclaiming Core Classes in the Eastern United States

The Delaware Valley Reclaiming Community is offering a two-day **Elements of Magic** class in New Hope, PA, on Sunday, January 23, 2005 and Sunday, January 30, 2005, from 10 AM to 8 PM. Cost is \$75—\$150 sliding scale, no one turned away for inability to pay. For more information see <http://www.delvalreclaiming.org> or send an email to classes@delvalreclaiming.org

The Chicago Reclaiming Community is offering a two-day **Pentade of Pearl** class at Innergy in Chicago, IL, on January 22 and 23, 2005, from 10 AM to 6 PM. Cost is \$75—\$150 sliding scale, no one turned away for lack of funds. For more information see <http://www.chicagoreclaiming.org>, send email to maggie@chicagoreclaiming.org, or call 773-395-4104.

The Chicago Reclaiming Community is also offering a six-evening **Elements of Magic** class at Links Hall in Chicago, IL, Monday evenings February 28 through April 4, 2005, from 6:30 PM—9:30 PM. Cost is \$75—\$150 sliding scale, no one turned away for lack of funds. For more information see <http://www.chicagoreclaiming.org>, send email to maggie@chicagoreclaiming.org, or call 773-395-4104.

The Reclaiming Healer List: an open invitation, by Heather Damell

As a Witch and a Healer, I found that combining the transformational power of Reclaiming ritual and the energy of Reiki (an energy healing modality) worked well for me. I found, however, that I lacked connection with others who practiced the Craft who are also active healers. It is one thing to heal, but I was missing how incredible it is to work healing with those that share the gift of Magic and knowledge of the Goddess.

It was this desire for connection that led me to create the Reclaiming Healers' list. My hope is that the list will become a resource to the greater Reclaiming community. On the list one can connect with those within this tradition who are called to be healers, have opportunities to discuss the topic of healing, and to explore the role of Healer and healing tools within the Reclaiming community. Healing modalities include, but are not limited to, body work, naturopathy, herbalism, energy healing, and counseling through intuition and divination tools.

The other intention for creating this list is the

state of our planet and all who inhabit Her. In light of world changes and recent events we are challenged with healing ourselves, healing each other, and healing our planet. We are currently discussing the possibility of creating a healing project using various healing modalities (energy, ritual, Tarot.) Let this be your invitation to join us.

Whether you have chosen the path of the Healer, or are just interested in finding out more please feel welcome to come and explore the possibilities. You can find the list on the web at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Reclaiming_healers/ and for any additional questions please feel free to e-mail me at despoena7@yahoo.com. All are welcome to share and learn. All that is required is an open mind, open heart, and willingness to embrace compassion for yourself and others.

Bright healing blessings,
Heather



Yule, 2004 C.E.

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Local Independent Reclaiming communities in the Eastern United States:

- Arkansas Reclaiming
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/reclaiming_trad_ar
- Chicago Reclaiming <http://www.chicagoreclaiming.org>
- Delaware Valley Reclaiming <http://www.delvalreclaiming.org>
- Florida Regional Reclaiming Alliance
<http://www.geocities.com/flreclaimingwitches/FRRRA.html>
- Gaia Reclaiming (Atlanta, Georgia area)
<http://peregrineretreats.homestead.com/>
- Lakes Region Reclaiming (Southern Wisconsin/NW Illinois)
<http://www.lakesregionreclaiming.org/>
- Long Island Reclaiming
email awe4@msn.com or asherahscaldron@msn.com
- Reclaiming in Central Illinois
<https://mail.prairienet.org/mailman/listinfo/cireclaiming>

If we missed your local group, please let us know (email newsletter@spiralheart.org). Also, we'd like to do some feature articles about local communities; please contact us if you'd be interested in writing an article about your local community.

*◇ Creating Our Future ◇ Embracing Our Past ◇
◇ Celebrating Our Spirit ◇ Restoring Our World ◇
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