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Children of the Earth

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CHILDREN OF THE EARTH

P.O. Box 417
Keyser, WV 26726
(304) 788-0470

Number 11
c. CotE 1983
YULE

TIPS

To get candle wax out of rugs / furniture/ altar clothes etc.:

- put paper towels above and below the wax (under the cloth)
- iron the paper with a warm iron
- for larger spots use newspaper, then paper towels
- caution: even a warm iron will melt nylon, so check your rug first.

also: bake your metal/wood/glass/ceramic candle holders in a "warm" - 200 F oven to clean them - put them on newspaper to catch drips.

-Cassandra.

CONTACTS / BUY PAGAN!

We would really like to make contact with Wiccans and/or Pagans, especially in our area.

Sarna & Antaeus
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CHILDREN OF THE EARTH
NOTES FROM THE BROOM CLOSET

by Cloud

I WOULDN'T PULL MY KIDS OUT OF ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL IF THEY PUT ME ON ADC TOMORROW and even though I knew that before, it's been re-emphasized lately from contrast. You see, Birdgirl came back for a while as a foster child, and went into a Normal second grade just as Arne started his first year in a 31-child, 2 teacher primary group (age 5-8) at the local "free school". I've learned a lot about the divergent styles of education in the schools available for my kids, and, well, like I said in the title...

There's the matter of learning rates and individualization (BG being held back in math because the class couldn't keep up with her, vis a vis Arne jumping into the 6-7 age group for math as soon as he finished the book - the 5-6's were in, no sweat). There's the matter of Arne's school emphasizing creativity where Birdgirl's school was emphasizing being Right (about everything - for one ghastly while she needed a ruler to draw a picture). I like creativity; it makes me happy about his education. I also like the absolute nonsectarianism of his school, where Thanksgiving is celebrated with a month of harvest related activities and a wonderful program in thanks to the kids' parents and others who have given gifts of time to the school, especially in contrast to the embarrassed food-worship that goes on in public schools where they studiously avoid mentioning god but can't get straight that a roast turkey isn't the only possible cult object for the season.

My real delight, though is that at Arne's school, everything is integrated with everything else. If the guinea pigs have babies, for the next few days everything (even math) is co-ordinated with that. During Harvest month everything centered on the hands-on experiences of harvesting, cooking, grinding, preserving (they took a whole school day and picked what they prepared for their Harvest Fest). It is fully recognized that to prepare a recipe from the field to the freezer encompasses large muscle exercise, math, reading, eye-hand co-ordination, science, history, and a solid lesson in Work-for-the-good-of-all-is-a-Good-Thing, and nobody calls a halt to the proceedings to make sure the children get their daily dose of Official Reading Lessons. And y'know what? They sure enough learn to read, etc., test some phenomenal test scores, and they do it while losing very little of that integration of the parts of an experience that characterizes the learning of preschoolers. It works, it really does.

It's a Pagan education of the best kind, to my way of thinking, though children of all possible religions and non-religions are part of it, because it never lets you lose sight of the fact that everything is connected to everything else. You are not more important than the toad in the moment you let him go, and when you're following a recipe reading is no more important than math. Neither could exist without the other.

I like the whole place, especially for the reason of integrated learning in contrast with which we have Birdgirl coming home from school having read a story about ants and she didn't show any interest in going outside to check out the real ones; if it had been Arne, they would have spent recess checking out the ants on the playground. And actually I think I like it better because it ISN'T (consciously) Pagan. Not only is there this lovely exposure to kids of all sorts of backgrounds from Methodism to Marx, but if you have religion you set up one category division even if you set up no others: the artificial line between the sacred and the non-sacred.

I'm lucky; I knew about this school from its inception, and only had to wait for my kids to get old enough. But if I moved tomorrow, I'd be looking for its like elsewhere; if there wasn't any I'd consider starting one; if I lost my job I'd apply for a scholarship; if I couldn't get a scholarship I'd agitate the public schools for as much real learning as they could squeeze in between "subjects".

I'd even consider home teaching.

But this isn't the next best thing to home teaching. It's better. Please check out the possibilities where you are.

So mote it be.

ARADIA'S SONG

While carving out our Samhain Jack-o-lanterns, my 5 year old daughter started singing - as she is apt to do now and then. I wasn't paying much attention until I caught the name "Mother Nature". Then I copied her song line for line as best I could with pumpkin slimy fingers. No one taught her this song - it just came off the top of her head. -Lady Cassandra

Mother Nature is everywhere.

Oh! Mother Nature is everywhere.

Sing songs of Mother Nature.

Kids know that it's true.

Mother Nature looks like trees,

Mother Nature looks like flowers,

Mother Nature looks like everything, and kids know that she's there.

Everybody knows Mother Nature is true even though the Lord is her husband.

Everybody is on earth.

Mother Nature looks like everything just like you.

She looks like seeds,

She looks like pumpkins,

She looks like people,

All these things are true.

All is All.

-Aradia, age 5

LA BEFANA

by Sonja

In Italy people celebrate Christmas with a 24 hour fast, from December 24 to December 25. They celebrate the "Birth of Christ" with solemn church services. On the night of the 25th they break their fast with a big feast and party. They they party for 12 nights more. On January 5, the eve of 12th Night or Epiphany, children put their shoes or stockings by the hearth. In the night, La Befana comes down the chimney and fills the good children's shoes with presents and the bad children's shoes with bags of ashes. That evening, the families feast and exchange gifts after dinner.

La Befana is portrayed as a crone, and called a Witch. She is reputed to be stern and judges the kids harshly. If a child wakes to find presents in their shoes, they know they've been good enough to beat even La Befana's standards.

The Christian Italians justify the presence of a Witch in their (pagan) Yule-lore with the following legend: They say that she was working when the Wise Men passed by and was unable to join them. When she finished her work she couldn't catch up with them, so she set out to find the Child on her own. She still wanders on 12th Night giving gifts to children hoping to find the Christ Child.

Read between the lines. **ARADIA'S SONG**

LETTERS

I especially enjoyed the articles by Robyn... Your publication is right on the mark - speaking to relevant issues that concern us all (Parents or not, I would say if a HPS or HP). As spiritual leaders we should be well informed regarding subjects of Parenting in a Pagan Way.

I only wish I had your '82 Fall Equinox issue on hand when my Step Daughter Became a Woman - for the Menarche Rite!

How about a "Pagan Way" Rites for Children - Book? Including rites of Passage for Young People., as well as "Wiccaning" Rites for infants, etc. - What does your daughter say when people ask her if she's "ever seen a Witch?"

My Sunny used to say "my mother IS a Witch!" and then get balled out by the teachers - "Don't call your Mother names!" (Just as I told him he would if he ever told anyone!)
-Sarna

ed. note: Childrens' Rites booklet sounds like a good idea. We'll compile one if folks will send rites. Meanwhile, there is a Wiccaning in Ferrar's book 8 Sabbats for Witches.

I'm probably going against the grain but- less on babies / breast feeding / child birth and more on living pagan in an anti-pagan world. The mag. seems to be spending too much time on only one aspect. There are more. How about the youth and vitality of the Maiden and the wisdom of the Crone? As the song says "All our life's a circle"
-Assandra

ed. note: Send articles! Will print.

As a Pagan Papa of a nine month old (and another on the way) I often shudder at the thought of my children having soon, (so soon!) to deal with the "outside" world. As Morag na Bienne said in this past issue, we really must help them to understand how to deal with that other world, and also be strong in the values that maintain the breath and life of our Mother Earth. Keep up your work, bringing CoTE to those of us needing very much your grounding influence. I see so few local Pagans who choose to have babies, tis sad and lonely to find a kindred spirit, but we are here!
-Everett

Aurora's problems with her group alerted me to the fact that pagan parenting involved not just interacting with the local Christian community, but also with other Pagans. Having a child will always cause difficulties in any activity. Sacrifices, compromises, adjustments, and all those other adjectives fully apply. But it never occurred to me, or those in my Circle, that a child would be considered unwelcome, a nuisance, simply because of the difficulty involved with adjusting. After all, children are what all those fertility rites are all about. If you participate in fertility rites, you are going to have to adapt to having children around. Our Circle adapted to and accepted the presence of my daughter so readily and willingly that none of us can visualize doing anything without her. We compromise and make preparations for her almost unconsciously. Perhaps some of our techniques might help some group having difficulty adjusting to the addition of a baby.

When I knew I was pregnant, our whole Circle rejoiced - "I" was not pregnant, "we" were pregnant. They all participated - even through delivery (I had a very understanding doctor!) Throughout our pregnancy we discussed rituals and ceremonies pertinent to our baby (birth, naming, weaning, puberty, full adulthood), what to do with her during ceremonies, how much she could participate, when to permit her to participate, etc. It never occurred to anyone to suggest that I leave her with a sitter. We took it for granted that where I went, she went. I breastfed her the first 15 months, and during most of that time, as far as ritual was concerned, she and I were one.

The first few months were the easiest- she slept through everything. Once she started being wakeful, I would nurse her either before or during the ceremony. During this time period, I carried her in one of the chest carriers (Snuggli) which allowed me to take care of her and take full part in our rituals. No major adjustments were needed other than the inevitable interruption of a hungry or sleepy baby. Once she no longer slept through the ceremonies, unless the timing of the ritual was critical (must be done at moonrise, etc.) we held the ritual during her naps or bed time, when she slept in a cradle inside our Circle.

When she became ambulatory, we considered her old enough to participate in those rituals she did not sleep through. We would focus her attention on any action, during any dancing she rode in either the backpack or chest carrier (we took turns carrying her) and I sewed large pockets at knee level in my robes and kept them filled with snacks and toys. Most importantly we made the rituals short. Those rituals we could not condense, we held after her bedtime. All the ritual tools and such were held out of the reach of her eager little hands up on tables or tree stumps.

Now, nearing 2 years, we are devising short rituals for her to be a major part of or give her simple roles within our own (condensed) rituals. The pockets in my robe keep her occupied when she gets bored. Or she goes off to play with leaves or cats.

Because of the very nature of babies (hungry NOW, play NOW) we have had to bear with an occasionally fussy baby and to tolerate (sometimes frequent) interruptions. Several times we have had to completely redo rituals. But even with the hassles, no one ever suggested leaving her with a sitter. (she's OUR daughter!) She brightens our rituals, deepens the meaning of our beliefs, brings us laughter, love, hugs, smiles, and sloppy kisses.

The article "Children in Pagan Communities" by Morag na Bienne, is a great start. I can hardly wait for future installments. And what about pagan children in Christian communities? -Starsight

ed. note: Morag, like everyone else, was not expecting this issue so soon after the last one. (neither was I.) Her column should be back next time.

THE CULTURE OF THE PLANET VALHALLA

By Beowolf, age 13

The planet's name is Valhalla. It's one of the most beautiful planets in the galaxy. The ruler's name is Odin, to some a friend, to some an enemy, and to others a God.

Odin decides the weather. Normally it is just right. The planet is full of Vikings and at certain times they Battle, getting stabbed and limbs cut off but that's the fun of it, their body regains strength and the parts that have been cut off grow back after a piece of magical lambs' skin is wrapped around.

After that there is a feast. The feast consists of roast pig and chicken. To drink there is mead which is like a honey wine.

Odin isn't very hard to meet but most of the time you don't know it. Some claim he is a one-eyed old man, wearing a hat and cloak.

The main religion is Paganism but everyone has their own religion and no one says anything about it. You worship as you wish.

Some worship animals and spend a lot, if not all of their lives in the woods. Some worship the Stars. Some worship the Sun and Others worship Odin. And that's known as being an Odinst or a Pagan.

Religion is often taught by the Parents and there occultist worship with others of the same religion. As you get older you become higher in religion. A neophyte is when you are just coming into the religion, and a higher would be a High Priest. Different from other religions the woman is the higher and she is known as the High Priestess. There is no such thing as a heaven or hell because Valhalla IS a heaven.

The language is scandinavian. All the art is handmade. There are many craftsmen in Valhalla and many musicians. The most common instrument is the flute, it can be heard all over Valhalla.

The main art is Silversmithing. Some make jewelry and some make swords. There are many other artists there that can be seen all through the town streets, it's just like a Renaissance Festival.

The main clothes are hand made too, no designer jeans. Instead they wear pants made out of animal skin, a wool shirt, with a belt to carry a pouch on for money, a vest, a leather hat, handmade moccasins with lamb skin around the legs for leg warmers. The women would wear a dress, an apron, and a shawl, also moccasins.

The warrior's clothes would be much more barbaric with a cape made out of bear skin fur. Helmets, wristbands, and a big belt. Some would get their clothes from a raid and others would make them.

There would be about 4 meals a day, breakfast, a lunch, a mid dinner, and a dinner feast. The breakfast would consist of goat's milk and seagull eggs. The lunch would be goats milk and cheese sandwiches, the mid dinner would consist of soup or sandwich and goat's milk, the dinner feast would consist of roast pig parts and potatoes, goat's milk or mead.

The warriors would feast after every battle, their meal would always be a meat meal which also consists of fish. Sometimes roast Pig, Roast Cow, potatoes, fruits, and Mead.

There is really no main sport except the battles which are watched and enjoyed by others.

The laws are mainly anything Odin says. Anything he says is done or else - you obey his command. Don't forget he decides the weather.

The government is really simple. A town speaker from each town goes before Odin and tells him who stole, then He makes His judgement. Or if the weather is bad for a fee he will change it.

YULE CAROLS

All the Yule Carols written by Elexa have previously appeared in The Georgian Newsletter. Thank You to Elexa, and to Pat, for permission to reprint them here.

BROTHERS, SISTERS, COME & SING
(Hark the Herald Angels Sing)

Brothers, sisters, come and sing, Glory to the Newborn King.
Gardens peaceful, forests wild, Celebrate the Holy Child.
Now the time of growing starts, Joyful voices, joyful hearts
Cheer the Yule log as it burns, For once again, the Sun returns.
Brothers, sisters, come and sing
 Glory to the Newborn King.

YE CHILDREN ALL
(It came upon a Midnight Clear)

Ye children all of Mother Earth, Join hands and we'll circle around,
To celebrate this Solstice night, when our lost Lord is found.
Rejoice! the year has begun again, the Sun blesses skies up above.
So share this season together now in everlasting love.

SILENT NIGHT

Silent night, winter night, All is calm, all is right,
Nature slumbers in forest and glen, Til in Springtime She awakens again,
Sleeping spirits grow strong, Sleeping spirits grow strong.

Silent night, solstice night, Silver Moon, shining bright.
Snowfall blankets the slumbering Earth. Yulefires welcome the Sun's rebirth.
Hark, our Lord is reborn, Hark, our Lord is reborn.

Silent night, winter night, Quiet rest 'till the light.
Turning ever, the rolling wheel brings the winter to comfort and heal.
Rest your spirit in peace. Rest your spirit in peace.

O, COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

O Come, all ye faithful, gather round the Yule fire,
O come ye, o come ye, to call the Sun.
Fires within us call the Fire above us.
O Come, let us invoke him,
O Come, let us invoke him,
O Come, let us invoke him,
Our Lord, the Sun.

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born again at Yuletide,
Yule fires and candle flame are lighted for Thee.
Come to Thy children, calling for Thy Blessings.
O Come, let us invoke him,
O Come, let us invoke him,
O Come, let us invoke him,
Our Lord, the Sun.

JOY TO THE WORLD

YULE CAROLS

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
 Let Earth receive her King.
 Let every heart prepare him room,
 And Heaven and Nature sing,
 And Heaven and Nature sing,
 And Heaven, and Heaven and Nature sing,

Welcome our King who brings us life.
 Our Lady gives him birth.
 His living light returneth to warm the seeds within us,
 And wake the sleeping Earth
 And wake the sleeping Earth
 And wake, and wake the sleeping Earth

Light we the fires to greet our Lord,
 Our Light, our Life, our King!
 Let every voice be lifted to sing His holy praises,
 As Heaven and Nature sing,
 As Heaven and Nature sing,
 As Heaven, and Heaven and Nature sing,

GOD REST YE MERRY, PAGANFOLK

God rest ye merry, paganfolk, let nothing you dismay.
 Remember that the Sun returns upon this Solstice day.
 The growing dark is ended now and Spring is on its way.
 Oh, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,
 Oh, tidings of comfort and joy,

CHRISTMAS TIME IS PAGAN

(Angels we have heard on high)
 Christmas time is here again, Decorations everywhere.
 Christmas carols ringing out, Gentle pagans, we don't care.

Glorious!
 Christmas time is pagan!
 Glorious!
 Christmas time is pagan!

Let them have their Christmas trees, decked with red and green and blue.
 We rejoice at every one. Christmas trees are pagan, too.

Glorious!
 Christmas time is pagan!
 Glorious!
 Christmas time is pagan!

Bowls of Bubbly Christmas cheer fill your cup and quench your thirst
 They think the tradition's theirs. Wassail bowls were pagan first.

Glorious!
 Christmas time is pagan!
 Glorious!
 Christmas time is pagan!

Modern folks all celebrate what they learned in Sunday School.
Each December they don't know they are celebrating Yule!

Glorious!
Christmas time is pagan!
Glorious!
Christmas time is pagan!

Every door and window bears wreaths of holly, wreaths of pine.
Circles represent the Sun, every wreath is yours and mine.

Glorious!
Christmas time is pagan!
Glorious!
Christmas time is pagan!

Christmas lights on Christmas trees, Candle flames burn higher and higher.
And we giggle joyfully, as they light their Yuletide fire.

Glorious!
Christmas time is pagan!
Glorious!
Christmas time is pagan!

Thank you, Elexa.

WE WISH YOU A MERRY YULETIDE
Tune of "We Wish you a Merry Christmas":
by Hestia

We wish you a merry Yuletide,
We wish you a merry Yuletide,
We wish you a merry Yuletide, and a happy new year.

Good tidings we bring, for cattle and corn,
The Sun, from the South, is returning reborn!

WISHING YOU ALL A BLESSED YULE!

Hestia

15

MISHINE AOU VGT A BLESSED AUGE

the ship' from the soldier' to the military service;

me when you are really interested in me, really interested in me, really interested in me.

love of me when you are really interested in me.

Thank you' Steve'

Children of the Earth
P.O. Box 417
Keyser, WV 26726



and me through the night' as they try to find their way through the night.

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P.O. Box 417
Keyser, WV 26726

Rowan Tree
Box 8814
Minneapolis, MN

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