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Candlemass 1982

# Children of the Earth

Vol. 2, No. 5

*Rowan Tree Church Periodicals Collection*

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# Children of the Earth

CANDLEMAS

P.O. BOX 584, PETERSBURG WV 26847

No. 5  
(Vol. 2, #1)  
© Cote 1982

## From the Dining Room Table ~

Hello again, and a happy Spring to all! Goddess knows I'm ready for it. I've had many sympathetic thoughts of you in Wisconsin and thereabouts during the recent cold wave. I expect your springtime celebrations will be extra-enthusiastic this year.

As promised, much of this issue pertains to home birth. It seems the medical profession didn't come off too well, so for balance, I'd like to point out that it is NOT impossible to find enlightened and cooperative doctors. It would, however, be easier if they would not get so much static from the hospitals.

For instance, my doctor, who works as backup for the midwife who delivered Jossy, does an occasional home birth himself, but would be in trouble with his hospital if they found out.

The hospital here in Petersburg, I understand, once had a doctor who tried to institute family-centered care, and the nursing staff rebelled to the point where he is no longer here.

Another problem is the risk of malpractice suits. In these times, where malpractice is big business for lawyers, many doctors are under great pressure not to do anything innovative or otherwise take what would be considered risks in court. And the relative safety of home birth is not necessarily taken into consideration by judges dealing with unusual cases. This is the problem behind the alarming rise in C-sections.

But, there are sympathetic doctors out there. There are probably even Pagan doctors out there. But they didn't send me articles to print.

I must say that Cote as such has no opinions, much less recommendations, on medical matters except that everyone should make conscious choices based on as much knowledge as possible.

Again, my plea for articles. Especially activities and such. C'mon, people, WRITE!

Blessed Be!

Hestia\*

# LETTER

To: Children of the Earth

I like read your letter because I agree fully with you about children. I personally have 3 children and give to them all my time and energy. I feel with ~~them~~ live their various enjoyments and pray for their happiness. Many people said to me "You not normal, you must live your life." Then I stop for a minute and look around. What I see? Mothers are free enjoy them self and child stay on street all time. She have na money, she is be busy with herself.

I have my children birth home with no help or assistance, just my self. After came a midwife and check baby and that all. I love Nature and she give us life energy and more help than anybody else. Hospital is not for me. No husband stay and look, he never be have understanding from childbirth. I like he stay out. I'm proud my self be a mother full time. Very sad many people not like children an they call themselves Pagans or Wiccans. They forget what God teach us - life-birth-motherhood can't be with no children. I feel very angry when I read where a mother's doing to children cut they sex body out. (circumcision. ed.) I wish be every woman feel herself the pain what she doing to baby or child. She is burden, not a mother.

Sorry for bad English. I'm from Csechoslovakia and I only start my study. Here is not many people from Craft, only young and single.

Blessed Be.

Valerie, South Australia

## Contacts

If anyone has any questions about home birth, where to find a midwife that will do a home birth (with or without ritual), and where to find out about how to become a midwife, feel free to contact me. I'd also be interested in hearing from other midwives, mothers, lesbian pagans (Dianic or otherwise).  
Raven, P.O. Box 11792, Fort Worth, TX 76109

4 Pagan Young Teens want to contact other Pagan teens from all over the world. Shawn, Rebecca, Michael, and Paula  
C/o POB 367, Lane Cove 2066, AUSTRALIA

## THE RETURN OF SPRING

\_by Joyce Baker

Are you tired of the long, cold nights and drab winter days? Fear not, for a long awaited Lady will soon arrive, bringing with Her the warm, gentle breezes of Spring! This special Lady is Persephone, pretty young daughter of Demeter. Demeter loved Persephone very much, and taught her the secrets of the life-giving Earth. Demeter was the Queen of all growing things, and Persephone loved to help her mother. Her favorite task was creating and naming new flowers.

One day, as Persephone was painting yellow stripes on a white lily, she noticed an odd-looking flower growing nearby. She decided to get a closer look. The flower was so lovely that she pulled it out of the ground to show her mother, and it left a large hole in the ground. Suddenly, with a great rumbling, the Earth opened up at Persephone's feet, and out sprang a golden chariot pulled by four powerful black horses. At the reins was Hades himself, Lord of the Underworld!

Terrified, Persephone cried for help, but Demeter did not hear her. Amidst clouds of dust, Persephone disappeared into the great, dark depths of the earth, along with the chariot, horses, and Hades.

In his Underground Kingdom, Hades tried to comfort the frightened girl by offering her tasty foods, gold, and jewels. "You are beautiful!" He said. "I want to make you my Queen."

Demeter was frantic when her beloved daughter did not return home that day. She roamed the Earth, seeking news of her, but no one could say what had become of fair Persephone. Demeter was beside herself with grief. She forbade the trees to blossom or the birds to sing. It was a dark and lonely time on the Earth. The land became barren, the leaves fell, and the crops withered and died. Demeter's cold sorrow covered the Earth.

Soon Demeter learned that Persephone was being held in Hades' dark kingdom. She went straight to Zeus, Persephone's father and the King of Mount Olympus, and demanded that he bring her Persephone home to her again. Zeus agreed, but only if Persephone had let no food pass her lips during her stay in the land of the dead.

Hermes, the messenger of the Gods, was sent to release her. However he discovered that Persephone had eaten six pomegranate seeds that day. So an agreement was reached that since she had eaten six seeds, she must spend six months of the year in the underground domain of Hades. For the other six months she was permitted to return to the Earth.

With the return of Persephone the Earth rejoiced! Birds sang, flowers opened, trees blossomed with fruit, and grass and grain sprang up. The fields and meadows rang with joy. The Sun shone happily on the green land, and the breezes sighed their relief. All was well again!

So, children of the Goddess, when you grow tired of seeing blankets of snow and brown grass, just remember that fair Persephone will soon return, bringing Spring with her once again!

# News from Younger Readers

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THE SEA IN FLORIDA by ANGEL

The sea in Florida is beautiful. The Goddess made it so. She made it clear and salty. To this she added the touches of a feminine decorator, shells of many colors, stones polished smooth, and many pieces of coral to catch the eye of a passer-by.

I love it at the beach. The magical waters wash the beach with grace and the sky is a spectacular sight. There are a lot of curious fishes who are so pretty and they like to look at you as much as you like to look at them. They also like to brush up against you and say hello as if they too realize that we are all Her children and should love and play with each other.

The sea gulls are a lovely white vision and the pelicans, yes, there are pelicans, fly over your head looking to dive deep into the sea for their food.

No one could doubt Her existence while standing on the shore or in the water and feeling the energy and life force of Her, the birth place of us all.

THE GODDESS by David Matyear

I help my mother talk to the GODDESS every full moon. I'm glad to help my mother do full moon festival. We love the GODDESS with all our heart.

We use our energy to help the GODDESS.

As I said before we love the GODDESS, and the GODDESS does a lot of good in the world. If more people loved the GODDESS, the Earth would be a happier place to be.

The GODDESS helps us! SHE brought us the computer and brings us love, happiness, and life.

Is there a 10/11 year young "Goddess to be" out there in our wonderful readerland that would like to write to me? I will answer your letter. My address is Box 951, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814. Blessed Be To All!!

David

## Announcements

CHURCH OF SEVEN ARROWS (4385 Hoyt St, #201, Wheatridge, CO 80033) plans publication of a new Woman's Ritual and (hopefully) a Menarche Ritual soon! (\$1 each cost to cover printing and mailing - in booklet form.

CIRCLE (Box 9013, Madison, WI 53715) announces the 1982 National Pagan Spirit Gathering will be held June 20-26, with an Open House at Circle Farm June 18-19. Also a Pagan Clergy Weekend Feb. 19-21.

Also a Magickal Pagan Weekend in Eugene, Oregon on April 3 & 4 (Stephanie Fox, 2345 Patterson, #21, Eugene, OR, 97405)

Also a Magickal Healing Weekend in Cleveland OH. April 24 & 25. (Chameleon Club, Box 174, Perry, OH 44081.

# NOTES FROM THE BROOMCLOSET

by CLOUD

"I do not recall whether I was ever admonished not to tell anyone, but wise child that I was, I knew a dirty secret when I heard one, and I knew that dirty secrets don't get talked about either in the family or out of it."

-Babette Dalsheimer

When Dalsheimer made that statement, she was referring to her childhood awareness of being adopted. ADOPTED! Not a dirty secret, really - not even culturally frowned-upon. But she perceived, from the way her parents told her, and from the fact that they never talked about it, that the fact was something to be ashamed of.

We could do that too, and it would work as a deterrent to the old "taking Mommy's Athame to show and tell" syndrome. But oh Gods, at what cost! I see our kids grown up and in therapy for the ill effects of having known dirty secrets about us. I see our kids thinking all the stereotypes about witches about us, conjuring up all kinds of awful ideas about what we're doing in the basement. On and on. What I don't see coming out of that kind of approach is a lot of free, happy, adult pagans.

That leaves us in a quandary, though, as to how to handle kids and the broom closet. If we need them not to talk about the Craft in the world, they need to know that. But we need to keep "we're different" from becoming "there's something wrong with us".

Maybe, I think on alternate Tuesdays, what's needed is to avoid the Noun. We are an ecologically oriented family, with several odd and magical approaches to problem solving and an interest in comparative religion. I think of a friend who took care of the Noun problem at a hospital admissions department by using the word "eclectic" in the religion blank - they were too embarrassed at never having heard of eclectic before that they didn't ask, and having some word in the blank kept the chaplain away. Why ever use the word "Witch" at all?

Because for most of us, it's necessary. That's what we are. For better or worse, it's the noun that defines our practice and gives us community. And we can't deny those who went before, who in a sense died for us. If you're anywhere, somebody made that place, and for that alone, yes, I'm afraid the Noun is it. Mommy, at least, is indeed a Witch.

So my job is not to keep the little darlings from knowing that; my job is, first, to give them enough information that they mean approximately the same thing by it that I do. Arne says Witches are people with a particular way of thinking about God. That's also his definition of every other religious word he knows. Sounds good to me, for now.

My second job is to teach them to cope with defamation - without getting into fights in any case, and without protest if secrecy is necessary. This one's a bear, because what's necessary is an attitude of "if he doesn't like my people, that's HIS problem"- Some grownups aren't big enough kids to manage that one. When they're older, there may be ways for them to deal out correcting information without spilling beans ("the Witches I know are regular humans" isn't a lie, but it's a long way from "my Mommy doesn't either have a warty nose").

It may be my job to provide them with camouflage. One of my favorite young Pagans was taught stage magic at a tender age, in part so mundane types would be confused when she talked about her real magic.

It is my job to keep from making guilty secrets without need. In my neighborhood it's all right that we have no visible religion, and astrology, card-reading, and picking the yard fall into the eccentric but loveable category. If they, or I, ever have occasion to be open about reincarnation (like at a cat funeral) we'll probably find out half the people around us believe in that. About the only secret is the Noun, and the rituals.

And I believe it's my job not to isolate them completely. They need to know I'm not the only Witch in the world, and they need festivals and the local Pagan community to reinforce that message and give them a chance to talk about it all.

I can't prophecy, but I can hope...that if I do my jobs, they will be able to do theirs, even if they have to keep a few secrets along the way. And what's theirs?

To grow til they're grown, and keep growing: to be their own men, open to their own potential and able to live without stereotypes and games; to be unlabored by "dirty secrets" and their aftermath; to live their lives in the ways they choose.

Of course, if they should happen to choose the Craft and end up as happy, free, adult pagans, I wouldn't kick. So Mote It Be.

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*Send Articles! Please!*

PARENTING THE CHILD WITHIN  
by Dana

This column is about self-directed change. We took the first step in the last issue when we examined current attitudes and programs (like computer programs in your mind). Now is the time to evaluate them and ascertain what needs to be changed to bring you into line with what you want to be. But I can't overemphasize: this is NOT a judgmental process. There's no ultimate "right" or "wrong" when you're dealing with yourself; the words are more like "inappropriate" and "currently undesirable". Obviously the programs you're finding were right for you at some point in time or they wouldn't be there - no matter how inappropriate they may be now! So let's just get to work and skip the value judgements.

The easiest way to explore the working-through process is to start from an example, and leave it up to you to extrapolate in the ways that are most productive for you. For example, let's say that when you were examining your feelings on Deity and Religion, you discovered a program that says: "If I'm right, then 'they' must be wrong." The first question is: Who is 'they'? A: 'They' is Christianity (or whoever). Q: Why are they wrong? A: Well, if I'm right, and it's obvious that everybody can't be right at once, then they're wrong. (Hmmm, we've found a dogmatic half-program.) Q: OK, when and how did I learn this? A: When Mommy/Daddy taught us (me) religion at 3. Q: Why did they teach this? A: To justify their own beliefs. Q: Do I still want to believe it? A: No. Q: Why not? A: It's not conducive to cooperating in the Pagan community. Q: So it's currently inappropriate? A: Yes. What do we do about it?

Go back, in memory or imagination to when you first became aware of the program in question. Picture yourself learning this from the person who taught it to you. Get a feeling for their motives. Then, firmly but politely tell them: "I don't need this any more, you can keep it. But thank you for trying to do what you thought was right." Then bring your attention back to the present and inform your current inner child: "I will be tolerant. I will try to learn something useful from every different kind of person I meet. You will help me to do this by reminding me of this change if I'm ever in danger of forgetting. Thank you." The current child should be told this every day for a week or until s/he and you will remember it, which ever works. And be sure to keep an eye on your actions and interactions to make sure that your change is clearly evident in your behavior. After a while, it will become a healthy habit. Don't forget, though, that even your chosen attitudes need checking up on occasionally, to make sure they're still in line with your beliefs.



Let's also use a childhood example, since your own childhood reflects directly on your ideas. Let's say that you have a deathly fear of dogs that you don't want your son/daughter to share. How do you keep him from catching your fear?

You talk to the current inner child, who's blubbering in the corner at the thought, and ask all the questions to establish why you're scared. (you were bitten when you were 3) You gently remind your current inner child that you're not 3 any more, not all dogs are vicious (many of your friends have dogs), and there is no longer any reason to be so scared. Teach your current child that dogs can be fun and your son/daughter should never pick up on a fear that you no longer have!

To briefly recap the steps in changing your programs:

1. Examine and question everything pertinent.
2. Choose the form the change will take, and implement it.
3. Make sure the change manifests in your behavior (where appropriate).
4. Keep checking your attitudes and programs at regular intervals.

NOTE: Don't hesitate to obtain professional help if that's necessary.

It's a beautifully free feeling to be in complete control of your own life. Any changes you can make alone, or with a friend's help, is one more episode of personal growth you've mastered, and an exciting challenge to reaffirm your personal power and capacity for Immanent Divinity. I wish you the successful fulfillment of all your strivings. For now - STRENGTH. Blessed Be -

Dana.

#### SPIRITUAL MIDWIFERY

by Ina May Gaskin and the Farm Midwives  
The Book Publishing Company, 156 Drakes Lane, Summertown,  
Tennessee 38483

This book is amazing. Part one is the story of the development of the birthing system at The Farm, and the stories of the many babies who have entered the world this way. Part Two is a practical manual for midwives, practical, complete, and yet not hidden in esoteric technical terms. The whole thing shines with a special down-to-earth sort of spirituality. I would recommend that any pregnant or potentially pregnant woman - men too - study this book whether or not you plan a home birth. The attitudes are beautiful, and the birthing knowhow is essential. After all, not all home births are PLANNED that way.

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NEO-NATAL NOTES: BIRTH AT HOME  
BY ROBIN

It's not surprising that there has been a surge in the Homebirth movement in the past few years, considering the growth of Paganism (not to mention the growth of hospital costs!). What is surprising is the number of Pagan women who continue to subject themselves to the inhuman birthing practices found in most hospitals and so-called birthing clinics.

I was told that I could not become pregnant. I began practicing a daily meditation to explore my mind and body, to discover if this pronouncement was indeed fact. Within three weeks I conceived, though it took the medical establishment four months to agree that I did have a child growing in me. It seems unbelievable that the "professionals" couldn't figure out with all their tests and procedures that the little being was indeed there. At first I was told that I had a cyst, to which I replied, "If that's so, it has a mean kick".

That was the event that put me on the road to research the birth procedures used in hospitals. I knew then that I would have my baby at home with or without assistance of any kind. And I knew it was right and safe, and decided to prove it.

Most of what I discovered both amazed and appalled me. Through my research, I came to realize that homebirth is FAR SAFER than hospital birth, that standard procedures cause untold complications, that the drugs given in the hospital reach the baby's bloodstream in doses ranging from 12 to 20 times that given the mother, and that statistics show infant and maternal mortality rates to be 55-70% HIGHER in hospital deliveries. Frightening, isn't it?

Let's begin at the beginning. In a hospital, unless you have found an extraordinary doctor, birth is handled like any other disease. Every time the rhythm of the natural process is interfered with, the risk to the mother and baby increases. Did you ever wonder why women are forced to deliver flat on their backs in "civilized" societies, while in the rest of the world, squatting, kneeling and standing are the norm? Well, you may find this hard to believe, but the real reason doctors began the unnatural practice was because Louis XIV informed his physicians to construct a table to tie his mistresses on when they gave birth which would give him a clear view of what was happening. Ever since Louis' perverse decree, women have been subjected to this degrading and dangerous practice. To quote just one specialist in the field of natural childbirth, "Short of being hung by the ankles, the supine position is the worst possible position in which to give birth."

Lying flat on your back compresses the arteries bringing blood and oxygen to the baby, often causing the heart rate to rise or fall dangerously. The mother is uncomfortable, she begins to feel pain instead of contractions, labor slows, she is offered a pain killer, and pitocin, a drug to speed labor. No one tells her the pit causes hard unnatural contractions. No one tells her the pain killer will cause the infant to go into distress.

Then comes the routine episiotomy, an incision made because gravity can not help this baby out and because no one wants to take the time to massage the perineum, that precious piece of skin

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between the vagina and the anus. Then, when the child is born in spite of the interference, silver nitrate drops are placed in its eyes. Drops given by law "in case the woman has VD" then blur the infant's vision, making bonding to the mother impossible. The infant is then wrapped in a blanket and placed on a heated table without the warmth of human flesh or the comfort of its mother's smile.

In most hospitals, the birthing I just described is considered NATURAL CHILDBIRTH! WHY??? Because the mother was not unconscious and the child was delivered vaginally, not by a "C-section."

We who are aware of the power of the mind should surely know that our responsibilities, capabilities, instinctual responses, and security cannot and should not be handed over to the Patriarchal society as represented by most birth practitioners.

While it is difficult in some states to find a legal midwife, or a lay midwife with the guts to thumb her nose at the law, it can be done. If you need medical assistance, then search hard and long for a doctor who respects Nature, and who will support you as you deliver your baby, not claim that he can deliver it for you.

If you are interested in delving into the subject further, I can highly recommend the following books:

SPECIAL DELIVERY by Rahima Baldwin

IMMACULATE DECEPTION by Suzanne Arms

TOUCHING: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SKIN by Ashley Montague

EVERY WOMAN'S BOOK by Paavo Airola

MAGICAL CHILD by Joseph Chilton Pearce

My child, Pandora Isis, was born at home. She delivered herself into her father's waiting hands and looked around at each person in the room, knowing that she was welcomed and loved by all seven people who were present. I wouldn't have wanted it any other way.

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ITEM: Research done with monkeys show that depriving baby monkeys of their mother's touch not only caused psychological and behavioral problems, but actually caused physical brain damage.

ITEM: For some twenty years, the Russians have been experimenting with birthing babies under water. Some people are starting to explore this now in America, and I know a midwife who did it one time. The important thing is to have the baby in the air and breathing before the placenta detaches, and of course to be super clean. The water used is warm as the amniotic fluid is. People interested, of course, should research VERY thoroughly.

ITEM: Could it be that that supine delivery position caught on so well among male doctors because it induces an artificial helplessness in the mother, this giving power to the doctor?

# Morgan's Birth

by Richard & Janel Clarke

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## MOTHER'S VERSION

Richard and I are great believers in allowing nature to take her course. When we discovered we would soon have a baby in the house, we agreed that we both very much wanted to have our baby at home. We were not comfortable with the thought of fetal monitors, sterile incubators, or possible exposure to hospital drugs. We were ready to learn more about alternate birthing methods. The day after we made our 'no hospital' decision, Richard discovered a group called H. O. M. E. They were holding a series of classes that helped educate couples about the experiences of a home birth.

During the next six months we slowly prepared for the big event. Each month at our H.O.M.E. meetings we gathered more information, contacts, book lists, helpful hints and moral support. Good nutrition was really stressed. I have learned more about what constitutes a good diet in this past year than I knew in my previous twenty-eight years of life! I found it really makes a difference, as I only gained twenty-seven pounds during this pregnancy, compared with forty-five pounds I gained with my first child - who was born eight years ago.

As a result of my eagerness to learn more about good nutrition I have slowly developed quite a bit of information on helpful herbal preparations. There are all sorts of herbal teas that can be prepared for morning sickness, teas with lots of vitamin C, teas with healing properties, teas for starting lactation and/or increasing milk flow.

As my pregnancy progressed, many of our friends and family expressed a deep concern about our home birth decision. Many folks felt that if a doctor were present, the responsibility would rest on his/her shoulders and everything would work out fine when he/she 'delivered' the baby. My feelings were that the responsibility rested on MY shoulders (especially mine, as I was physically carrying the baby), and the only person who could 'deliver' the baby was ME. The doctor's only function should be as an assistant in case of an emergency.

Ninety-five percent of all deliveries are completed with no complications and those odds increase when the mother takes responsibility to obtain adequate exercise and a good diet. Richard and I prepared ourselves in the event of any emergency situations which might arise. We were less than one mile from local hospital, we prepared a list of emergency phone numbers and posted it beside our phone, and we read about possible complications and emergency procedures for dealing with same. La st, but not least, we kept a positive attitude and trusted the Goddess to guide us.

The day finally arrived, I started labor in the early morning hours and finally delivered in late afternoon. As time ticked on, I began to worry the events were not progressing as 'normal'. Those feelings were quite unfounded, as Morgan finally arrived just after the moon changed to Cancer.

Total muscular relaxation is important through each contraction. Each individual has to discover her own method(s) for reaching this goal. I worked with chanting to help release my tensions and aid in proper breathing. If we ever decide to go through our birth experiences again, I will work with hypnosis as a means for relaxation. Each mother-to-be knows herself best, and must make her own decisions based on that knowledge.

During the final stages of labor our eight-year old joined us to watch the big event. She was very concerned and very involved with what was happening. Everyone in the room was holding their breath, and was very involved during the last few minutes. When Morgan finally slid into the world, there were no cries, silence for a few seconds; then I caressed his little body and encouraged him to join us. Gurgles, coos, and then he was looking around. I wanted so much to cradle him in my arms and nurse. He was the absolute center of attention.

Morgan is a calm and happy baby. He bonded to the entire family the first few minutes of life.

Richard caught the action for a home movie when the cord was cut. We experience the emotional high every time we see the film, and I am sure Morgan will enjoy our 'home movie' in the years to come.

The birth experience has strengthened our bond as a family unit. We have found the adjustments that have followed Morgan's birth much smoother, more natural, because of the way in which he arrived - a gift from nature.

#### DAD'S VERSION

In February of 1980 my wife learned she was pregnant. We discussed the situation and agreed we should have the baby at home. She had a 7 year old daughter, born in a hospital and had not been pleased with the experience. I had been present at the birth of a son via the La Maze method. So we agreed to do it at home but where do you get information, tips, etc.

The morning after the discussion I was driving to work and saw on the marquee of a restaurant, "Home birth meeting tonight". (Strange how things like that work for Pagans-what you need is always provided). Naturally we went and kept going once a month.

The meetings, sponsored by HOME, for Home Oriental Maternity Experience, were indeed a joy. Held monthly, they covered all aspects of having a baby at home; the pros and cons, medical problems, emergency measures, lists of what would be needed, what to do with the hot water, etc.

The classes were conducted by two midwives who were also childbirth educators. Several home movies were shown of home deliveries, as well as personal experiences being related by the mothers' who had had children at home. There were horror stories told of how and what constituted routine hospital care and why what was convenient for doctors and nurses was not necessarily best for babies or mothers. The clincher was meeting a half dozen moms and their babies (all under a year) who were all healthy and happy. The moms all swore by HOME.

Well time went on. Pre natal care became a problem as first one doctor then another refused further involvement when they learned we planned a home delivery. We were warned of the dire consequences of attempting such folly-one M.D. even pointed out that we had no oxygen at home(I guess he thought we stopped at the clinic a couple of times a day to breathe). Another came close to a stroke upon learning that the family cat might be in attendance. The final check(about July 1st) was by an M.D. who did no deliveries; as a favor to a friend he checked Jan out to make sure everything seemed normal. It was.

On the morning of July 12th, Jan said the time had come. We called a friend and got ready, at 5:45 PM Jan delivered Morgan, a 10 pound boy. In attendance were myself (the husband) and Sook Young Starks, a friend who had assisted in a couple of births in her native Korea. Evy, the before mentioned 8 year old, was present and got to hold her new brother even before the cord was cut. We did not cut it for 1/2 hours. The family cat stayed out of the way.

We were so excited over the baby and the birth that it was almost 2 hours later that we realized there had not been an after birth. A call to our HOME coach followed and a suggestion was given to squat over a pan and push and the after birth was taken care of. It was later planted in the back yard with an appropriate ritual to return to mother earth.

The total cost to us was under \$20. as opposed to \$3,000 to \$5,000 at a hospital.

Needless to say we attended the next HOME meeting with our new son and have gone back since to pass on the moral support given to us earlier. We urge all Pagan parents to be to consider home delivery. Morgan has been breast fed milk, then started on bread sticks, apples, applesauce and now even has a sip of beer every now and then. At 8 months he has never had an illness or even been upset for more than a few minutes.

HOME is a National group and can be contacted at----- HOME, 511 New York Avenue, Tacoma Park, Washington, D. C. 20012. Dues are \$8.00 per year and include a quarterly news letter. Or just ask for a HOME contact near your home.

#### THE DAY I MET MY SISTER by Sonja

It was a time of change. I woke up in the morning and found Mom's midwife's van outside. I thought I had missed it. Mom had promised earlier that I could watch my sister or brother be born. I was awake and dressed like lightning. To my relief, Mom hadn't given birth yet. Our neighbors came over to help. Mom broke her water outside, and then came inside to her bedroom. When my sister's head came out, we put a mirror up so Mom could see the head. When Mom looked in the mirror, she smiled and said "It's a baby!" and we all laughed. When my sister was born she was a beautiful bright purple, but after she breathed she turned pink. When Mom was nursing her, I crawled up on the bed next to her and asked if I could kiss my sister. Mom said yes. When she let me hold her, I was afraid I'd drop her, she was so small. She was less than an hour old. I'm not jealous of my sister. She and I are 10 years apart and good friends. I'm glad she was born at home. I think we are closer than we would have been if she was born in the hospital.

# Billy's Birth

by Raven

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I believe that people's liberation should begin at birth and this is probably why I am a midwife.

Allow me to share with you my first experience as a midwife (sort of.). In 1971 I was pregnant with my second child. My daughter, Heather, was born a short while earlier in a Catholic Hospital, in a metropolitan city in Canada. Her birth was a nightmare in every possible way. I was bound and determined that my second child's birth would be a positive experience and so I shopped around for a Doctor who would allow a home birth. Alas, none could be found. When I popped the question, each and every Doctor I approached looked at me like I was some kind of a monster and informed me that it was a human life I was "fooling around with". And so I finally ended up at my family physician's office struggling for my right to have a normal, healthy birthing experience. The closest I could get was his "permission" to leave the hospital 24 hours after the birth, with baby, if there were no complications.

Fortunately for me, I was busy with my young child throughout my pregnancy, and didn't dwell too much on my previous experience in a labour room. One afternoon I found myself washing windows and thought that perhaps this was a "burst of energy" which often happens with women about to deliver. Calmly I asked my husband to drop me off at the hospital on his way to work because I had a feeling I would be having the baby some time that day. He thought I was absolutely crazy since I had no signs of on-coming labour and my water hadn't broken yet. However, being used to my extra-sensory perception, he did as I asked him to. My doctor met me at the hospital, examined me, and told me that yes, it was possible that I might begin labour that day. He admitted me and told the nurses that I was not one to complain so if I asked for them to call him, to do so IMMEDIATELY, because I gave little notice and wasn't known for putting up a fuss. The following two hours went by with not too much happening, with the exception of me befriending a student nurse named Cathy, who was interested in my interest in the occult (I had brought a tape of pagan chants to hospital with me for comfort while in labour).

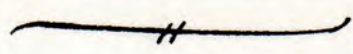
I meditated and prayed to the Goddess to help me with a healthy normal birth and a healthy child. My labour began with just a few queasy feelings in my stomach, and eventually a couple of contractions began. I massaged my stomach and spoke softly to the baby I was carrying and continued meditating on a safe birth. Finally, about 2 hours after this began, I felt the babe begin to push and called for the Nurse. Cathy came in and I asked her to call the doctor because I had a feeling the baby would be born soon. She thought I was teasing her because she had admitted to me that this was her first birth experience and she was a little frightened. However, I asked her to come

over and examine me, and when she did she panicked. She ran around the room in a frenzy and eventually ran out to find the floor nurse, who was busy with another woman in hard labor. Cathy came back into my room to find me squatting on the bed in the last stage of labor. She came over to help, but when she saw the babe's head, she passed out. I had no time to panic. My babe was telling me he wanted to be born right then and there and he wasn't about to wait for anyone. I continued to rub my stomach and bear down and after a few good pushes, my babe dropped into my hands. I lay back on the bed just enjoying his beauty, his perfection, and after wiping his eyes nose and mouth, began to nurse him. I looked around for something to cut the cord with but could find nothing that would work, so I just lay back, enjoying my babe.

I rang for the nurse and she came in and found Cathy on the floor. Needless to say she was quite upset to find that I had just delivered my babe and she then proceeded to take care of Cathy and call for the doctor. He arrived soon since he was in the hospital visiting other patients, and was quite shocked, and pleased to see that I had managed quite fine without him. I asked for something to cut the cord with and he was really hesitant to allow me to complete a job I had begun, but reluctantly gave in and provided me with the necessary instruments. I didn't require any sutures, and the following morning my 8 lb. babe and I went home to my daughter and husband.

I healed well, the babe grew, and his infancy was much healthier than his sisters. Whether or not this is because of his calm birthing I may never know, but I am convinced that this is so. Billy was a very "fast" child, content to be alone, and rarely cried other than when he was wet or hungry. Compared to his sister's colicky first 6 months, he was a real pleasure.

Since Billy's birth, I have assisted in many home births and have many birthing experiences to share.



in retrospect, I realize that I should have had Sonja come to prepared childbirth class with me; she would have been better prepared, and I recommend it for all older siblings to attend births. It was nice to have her there, chanting and sharing the energy. Jossy's birth was truly

A FAMILY AFFAIR.

Hestia



Children of the Earth  
PO Box 584  
Petersburg WV  
26847



To: The Unicorn  
Box 8814  
Minneapolis, Minn  
55408

A CHECK ✓ HERE MEANS ITS TIME TO RENEW!