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Spring 1986

# Children of the Earth

No.13

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# Children of the Earth

P.O. Box 417  
Keyser WV 26726

HI, ALL!

It's been a LONG TIME since the previous issue of Cote came out - since Lammas 1984. It was an eventful year-and-a-half, but not filled with the sort of events anyone would WANT - death, separation, and Incredibly Long work-days. I ALMOST gave up Cote at one point, but I didn't even have the time/energy to gather up the copy and mailing list to send to my possible successor. However, winter moves into spring and The Pits moves into renewal. We're back. I'm glad. I would have missed hearing from all of you more than I can tell.

BLESSED BE!

HESTIA

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CHILDREN OF THE EARTH exists to provide a FORUM for Pagan families to SHARE the joys and hassles of raising (or being) Pagan children. We hope you will ALL send articles, and write letters, to share questions, ideas, problems, experiences, stories, and whatever. In short, PARTICIPATE. THIS NEWSLETTER IS WHATEVER YOU MAKE IT.

Here are some suggestions of what to send:

1. LETTERS expressing your opinions and ideas on issues relating to Pagan Parenting.
2. ARTICLES and regular columns of interest to Pagan Families, book reviews, etc.
3. ACTIVITIES, games, stories, music, etc. that are Pagan/Family oriented.
4. KIDS - material written by and/or for them.
5. CONTACTS for networking.
6. ANNOUNCEMENTS of events, publications, etc OF INTEREST TO FAMILIES in the Pagan community.
7. ARTWORK - black on white, please, so it will photocopy.
8. EVERYTHING ELSE THAT YOU THOUGHT OF AND I DIDN'T. Whatever seems relevant to families and parenting and kids.

Cote does not have a regular printing schedule. When you send me enough stuff to do an issue, I'll do it. Send articles and stuff: if we're too long between issues, it might just be your story I'm waiting for.

Subscriptions are \$5 for 4 issues that you aren't printed in; if something of yours is printed, your subscription is extended.

On names: Unless you say otherwise, I'll print full mailing information if you say you want contacts/pen-pals, and for everything else I'll sign it with your given or pagan name. Really, I'd prefer everything to be marked clearly with the way you prefer to be known.



OTHER RESOURCES FOR PAGAN FAMILIES

PAGAN PARENTS' LEAGUE, PO Box 423-P, Bay Shore NY 11706 USA is a networking group and newsletter that started up during the past year. Belinda is the coordinator and doing a fine job. I really enjoy and recommend the PPL newsletter. Subscriptions are by donation - cash or postage stamps, no checks please.

THE LITTLEST UNICORN, Box 8814, Minneapolis, MN 55408, comes from the folks who publish The Unicorn. \$7/yr., make checks payable to Rowan Tree. I haven't seen this yet, but considering from whence it comes I expect it to be good.

THE CHILDREN'S COMMITTEE of Covenant of the Goddess is currently compiling materials suitable for Pagan children and children new to Paganism, including but not limited to poetry, stories, rituals (for/by children), songs, games, dance, crafts, drama, and art, and especially any info on child God/desses. All contributions will be credited upon distribution. Bone Blossom, 315 Precita, San Francisco, CA 94110.

PAGAN PARENTING NETWORK NEWSLETTER, Nicola Miles, Blaenberem, Mynyddcerrig, Nr. Llanelli, Dyfed, Cymru, Wales. 2 pounds/year. She has an article in this issue of Cote.

YOU KNOW YOU HAVE A PAGAN CHILD WHEN

...the principal of your child's school calls to ask you to stop your child from selling charms and amulets to his classmates.

...he asks his very christian grandmother if she's a witch too.

...you ask if she's studying for her test and she replies, "no, I think I've got this ritual worked out to guarantee a passing grade".

...your child asks to be excused from school on Beltane to help conjure summer in.

...she is invited to church services by a friend for the first time and she stops outside the door to take her clothes off.

...his school teacher complains about the "strange signs and words" he made over the ailing philodendron in the school's courtyard. You ask how it's doing and the teacher replies, "thriving".

- from Starsight



In your Lammas '84 newsletter, Starsight wrote about her literature collection that she reads to her children. I'd be very interested in what she has collected. I have a 4 and a 5 year old and am looking for good stories to read to them. Up until this year my children were involved with the Waldolf School. Nature's mysteries were a part of life there. All the songs and stories were related to the seasons cycles. They would sing about King Winter and the Spring Queen. Now they are in public school. It seems that I have to work extra hard to remind them about gnomes and nature spirits. I really need some good resources to offset all the stories that are read to them in school every day.

-Kelley

I am a dedicated, if somewhat inarticulate, pagan trying to bring up a child with a strong and reverent bond with the Earth. We have celebrated the seasons for years, all around the world, but now I find myself in a small conservative English village banging my head against christians and anthroposophists. I was somewhat attracted to the anthropop attitudes towards education, but find the dogmatism and the underlying christianity quite frustrating. I'm not anti-christian, but would prefer to have a bit of it thrown in with the rest of the world views that I simmer together for my pagan stew.

I would be very keen to hear from you, to hear your ideas and experiments in the family. If you have back issues available, or even provide photocopies - I would appreciate an idea of availability and cost.

It's quite exciting for me to be living here in England, where there are so many traditions alive, and where the seasons so clearly demand a response (the winter paws at me this moment through cracks under the door), and I would be quite keen to exchange experiences and ideas, so I do hope you are thriving.

- Gretchen

Greetings: We would love to hear from other readers of CotE. Pixie would like pen pals. She is twelve years old, likes to read mysteries and write stories, loves all of Nature and Life. She has never attended public school - I have always taught her at home.

If there are any of you who would like information on the laws and rulings about teaching children at home, I'll be glad to share what information I have gathered over the years.

We want to be active in networking with other pagans. We are eclectic Shamans/Druids/Faery oriented and of Celtic ancestry, fairly new to the Pagan way.

I use Motherpeace Tarot cards as a psychological/spiritual counseling tool; my son uses Runes in the same way.

We want to help heal Mother Earth and end pollution and the threat of a nuclear holocaust. We want to help bring about a new social order in a new age so no one is hungry, homeless, ill, soul-sick or in bondage of any kind.

- Brigid & Pixie Engle, 873 Binford, Ogden, UT 84401

Some recipes from Brigid & Pixie's kitchen:

#### FRIED APPLES

Adjust amount of apples used to family size. I use about ten medium red apples. Pare, remove seeds, and cut apples into thin slices. Put in hot oil (I like to use Butter-flavor Crisco); add cinnamon, nutmeg and brown sugar to taste.

Cover and let cook til apple slices are tender and thoroughly coated with spice mix.

Use as an alternative topping for any cake.

#### OATMEAL CAKE

Put 1 cup of quick-cooking oatmeal in a bowl, cover with 1 1/2 cup boiling water. Set aside.

Cream 1 1/2 cups brown sugar with 1/2 cup butter. Add 2 or 3 eggs, one at a time. (I usually beat eggs 'til blended and add slowly).

Mix 1 1/2 cups of flour with 1/2 tsp. salt, 2 tsp. baking powder, 1 tsp. cinnamon, 1/2 tsp. nutmeg.

Add sugar and egg mixture to the oats, then add flour and seasonings. Beat and mix thoroughly.

Add 1 tsp. vanilla to this mixture.

If desired, add 3/4 cup of raisins.

Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes. Remove from heat and add topping immediately.

#### BOILED TOPPING

1/3 cup butter or margerine, 1/2 cup brown sugar, 1/2 cup milk, 3/4 cup coconut. Combine in small saucepan all ingredients except coconut. Melt and bring to a boil, then add coconut. You can also add chopped nuts.



Jossy (6)

"My sister wears  
the Crown of Lights  
at Caudlemas"

## BRINGING UP A CHILD IN A PAGAN WAY

by Nicola Miles, Pipes of Pan

Since my son (now three months old) was born, I determined to do my best to bring him up free from the hangups most kids suffer from, and as untainted by what I see as the evil influences of our sick culture as possible.

I also intend to involve him closely in the pagan practices and values which I try to live by, so that these shall become to him as much 'something one does' as brushing his teeth daily. I have already brought him to every circle I have taken part in since he was born, and I shall continue to do so unless his presence is likely to disturb the work of the circle.

I believe that the Eight Festivals in particular should be as much celebrations for children as for adults - it is good for them to learn the significance of these marker-points in the turning of the yearly cycles by taking part naturally in seasonal celebrations and to grow up with a feeling of connectedness to Nature's rhythms. However, should he show no interest in joining in celebrations, I shall not compel him.

I shall try to make all activities pleasant to him, so as to eradicate the stark delineation between 'work' and 'play' that exists in our culture. In tribal cultures work is not seen as something irksome that is to be got out of the way quickly so as to have time for 'fun'. Daily tasks are not chores, but are part of the sacrament of life and can be enjoyed. Seasonal tasks, such as picking blackberries or planting seeds, that mark the changes of the year keep one connected to Nature and should be performed with love and joy.

We do not have a television, and I shall certainly not expose my son to one. There may well be a few interesting programmes on T.V., but there are many more that are vicious, perverted, violent and injurious. Children absorb everything, and I have no wish to see my son absorbing the anguish and violence of people suffering from extreme forms of estrangement that is portrayed in almost every film. Not to mention the rigid and degrading sexual and class roles. I have seen too many people allowing quite young children to fall asleep in front of the television night after night, even when the late night horror films are on, and I cannot believe that it does them any good. These scenes of violence and depravity seep into their memory banks and become a part of their view of what the world is about. Small wonder that many become confused, violent and unhappy adults, with their sensitive and gentle perceptions knocked out of them. Sitting passively watching while one's fellow-creatures enact killing, being killed and engaging in acts of wanton destruction is a poor form of entertainment at best, and destroys a child's ability and desire to create his/her own amusements.

Our relatives are being very carefully instructed not to give our son guns or any other war toys. How can we hope for a peaceful world when our children are playing at killing? Death and destruction of this kind are not games, they are all too real and horrible. Guns and weapons of war in general are becoming too much a part of the everyday world of our culture, and fond grannies can even be heard urging their infant grandsons to choose a 'nice gun' as a present, because 'boys don't have Teddies'.

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Wanted for private collection = Myths, rituals, lore, sources, whatever you have & are willing to share pertaining to the Goddess Hecate. Thanks for any help! Send to Hestia at CotE.

YJ

Which brings me on to the subject of sex role conditioning. I shall never say to my son, 'big boys don't cry' or 'boys must be brave and strong' or any of the other awful things that can hang a child up about whatever sex they are. I will encourage my son to express all of his qualities and become a whole, fulfilled person. If he wants to sew, knit or cook I will show him how. I feel these sort of skills - 'life skills' - to be useful and interesting for anyone to learn, irrespective of their sex. We do not indulge in rigid ideas about 'male or female' kinds of work, so hopefully he will have an idea that there is a different way of doing things when he does encounter these rigid roles outside the family environment.

We intend to educate our son ourselves, at home or in the company of other deschoolers. He will learn at his own pace, what interests him, rather than whatever happens to be on the syllabus at any given time. I believe that learning should not be something that takes place in a certain building between the hours of nine and four but happens spontaneously all the time, everywhere. Schools do not teach much that is useful, and waste many years of the child's life teaching him/her to respect 'authority' regardless of its merits; about reward and punishment; and to compete, not cooperate with each other. Schools are simply indoctrination factories, feeding children with what society accepts as knowledge, rather than teaching them worthwhile skills, and do not teach children to be independant, self-reliant and confident in their own abilities. Also, school teaching is invariably done from a christian standpoint. I do not wish my child to become steeped in christianity as though that were all the religion there is. I do not wish him to learn that he is a guilt-ridden 'sinner', requiring 'redemption'. Through our pagan faith he will learn that he is a part of the Goddess, and no part of him is 'sinful' or 'dirty'.

My son will be taught to love and respect all living things, not hurting, exploiting or abusing them in any way. Animals' lives are not toys, to be played with or discarded at will. He will not be given animal 'pets' or caged birds to 'own', but will be encouraged to enjoy observing creatures about their lives in their natural environment. His diet, like ours, will contain no meat or dairy products, derived as they are from poisoned, abused and tortured animals. I hope he will grow to feel that animals are not the property of the human race, to use as we think fit, but are our brothers and sisters, to be loved, cared for and respected.

I know I cannot shield him completely from unpleasant influences in life, but I can at least try to give him a wholesome grounding so that when he does confront violence, sexism, power-over, greed, exploitation, abuse of Nature and all the other horrid faces of our culture, he may have enough confidence, self-assuredness and inner strength to percieve them for what they are and reject them, and grow to be a happy, loving, aware, creative and sensitive caretaker of Mother Earth.

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 PO Box 417, Keyser WV 26726. \$5/4 issues, published irregularly.

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\* CHILD'S WORLD \*

by Joyce Baker

My son said, "Mom, I've found a friend,  
He lives out in our yard.  
Come on, I'll show you - by that rock -  
You've got to look real hard."

My brown-eyed son, what have you done -  
Built a little house,  
Of grass and leaves and stones and sheaves,  
Small, as for a mouse?

"No, Ma," he sighed impatiently,  
"That was built by Clem.  
There he is, with his pet, Fael-  
Say hello to them."

I looked and looked and looked real hard  
And then I looked again,  
But you know what, can you believe?  
I couldn't see either of them!

I'm sure he's there, but tell me where,  
I said to my small son.  
"Oh, Ma," he said, and shook his head,  
His smile bright as the sun -

"You grownups, you don't see too well,  
Why do you hide your eyes?  
You can't see Clem, you can't see Fael -  
I hope I stay this size!"



TO:

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 - TIME TO RENEW  
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