

The Journey...S

**Official Newsletter of Church of the Spiral Tree
an Ecumenical, Faerie Faith church**

**Issue 8
Fall Equinox, 1999**

NEWS: CST now recently formed a cover school for pagan homeschooling families in Alabama, called Sacred Grove Academy. We have two students enrolled already, and expect more soon. Details on the school are on the CST web page.

In response to the devastation caused by Hurricane Floyd, CST now has a Disaster Relief Fund. You can donate money (tax-deductible) to this fund, and when a natural disaster strikes an area, we'll be able to send out a donation from a Pagan church.

This issue has some great reports from our members—let's keep this trend going! Send me your articles, poetry, stories, reports, artwork, just whatever you'd like to present to our members, and I'll do my best to publish it.

For those of you who wish to form a local group or become ordained as a minister, if you're somewhere besides Alabama or Georgia, you just need to let us know a bit ahead of time. For the group and the ministership to be legal, we need to be registered in your state. This takes a little time to get the paperwork done and sent in. We will register in other states as needed, as there's a bit of expense involved. Your

membership fees and the fees for ordination (\$35) and forming a group (\$35) help pay for these costs. CST is already registered in Georgia, so anyone wishing to put together a local CST group there can do so. Full info on starting a CST grove and becoming a minister is now on the web site, < <http://www.mindspring.com/~spiraltree> > .

Faerie-Faith Link: Don't forget that you have the option of participating long-distance in our rituals, both lunar and sabbat. All you have to do is let us know that you want to do this, and tell us which rituals, either lunar, sabbat, or both, and before each of our planned rituals, we will mail, email, or FAX a copy of the ritual to you, along with the "kick-off" time and date of the ritual. This way, members who wish can do the same ritual the rest of the group is doing, at the same time, on the same day.

Let me know if you're interested in participating this way. As our rituals sometimes are not completely written till the night before, I'll need either an email address or FAX number to quickly send you the ritual. However, you will know the date and time of the ritual well enough in advance (at least 2 weeks) to make plans for it.

-Linda Kerr

Newsletter Staff:

Editor/Publisher Linda Kerr

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Vice President Rob Von Allmen

Secretary/Treasurer Linda Kerr

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EarthDance Report

by Stormy

At this time, I do not know exactly where Earth Dance 2000 will be held. We are on a quest to either find a new place or resolve some of the problems we have had with FDR State Park at Pine Mountain, Georgia. There were a number of instances when things were interpreted incorrectly by certain park officials and in some cases by us. The main concern about holding an affair at a state park is that you must abide by the park rules. The committee for Earth Dance, consisting of Sherry, C.L., Paul, Don, William, Chris, Doc, Magus, and myself, all say we should have it at FDR if they will have us again.

Many changes well definitely have to take place in the future if they allow us back. The main one is the noise curfew. We will dwell more on spirituality rather than partying. We will have only one band with amplifier system and that is Moonstruck, our all time favorite people and good friends. The other performers (consisting of acoustical guitar and singing) always welcome are Live Bait, which is our very own Odessa and Synder. We hope to welcome back our same vendors and have found out where Ray of Panthers Fair hangs out so we can invite him, too! Our plight of where we go is now in the hands of our Lord and Lady. As always, I will trust the Fates that the right thing will happen and we will be where we need to be next year for Earth Dance 2000!

Our Friday night ritual by the Twilight Coven went very well! The Bard Circle officiated by Sheridan of Tallahassee, FL and I was a great deal of fun and rewarding for some folks as well. The vendors donated prizes for us to give out to the winners. Live Bait performed right after the Bard Circle and were in fine form. They just completed a CD, are designing a cover and are getting a web page built by Paul. Paul and I are building a web page for William's pottery business as well.

I want to thank all the women that stayed up till 1:30 a.m. to attend my Croning which was very special to me. My two daughters Sherry and C.L. were there with about eleven other women to complete the circle including Odessa and Annie. The classes held the next day were varied, excellent and taught by outstanding teachers. The pot luck supper Saturday evening was absolutely wonderful. The

gathering of so many different folks from all over sharing food in the great hall was very moving. This can only be experienced at FDR by the way.

I lost my voice at the Pavilion while smelling some incense. I have a really bad allergy and asthma problem. We managed to get all the luminaries lit and the above ground fire cauldron going strong. Odessa and Steve taught the chant to everyone. Odessa and Larry led everyone to circle singing "The Goddess Chant." They both made a very handsome set of Cronos! The ritual went very well and was very beautiful. I have come to really love the way those luminaries look through the trees when you are going down the road to the open field. I've always imagined it as a Faery Ring and hope all the people that come feel the same way. Our Maid was Annie and one of our newest of friends, Mark, from Ft. Benning was her consort. Many of the members of our tribe participated. Chris and I presided as HP and P. The quarters were called by C.L., Paul, William, Jennifer, Angela, Cliff, Pheonix and Nion.

The next morning was the last breakfast, clean up and Potlatch time, known as the Sacred Give Away. That is always one of my favorite times. You bring something that you feel will help someone else on their spiritual path. Then you look at the items and choose one that will help you spiritually on your path. It's a very sacred and beautiful tradition I believe observed by Native Americans along the St. Lawrence Seaway of the North East and the Pacific coastline of the North West through to Alaska.

Move over, Captain Craig, our local hero, legend and now myth, here come the broom witches of East Witch! As we were cleaning up and trying to pass inspection with a great number of brooms, a fire got started from a spark in the fire pit down by Lake Franklin. By the way, trivia aficionados, Lake Franklin is the same lake known as Crystal Lake in that famous movie, Friday the 13th! Well, I couldn't get my cell phone to work, probably ran down from all the use. We already had turned in the walkie talkies back to Craig and Linda (I owe you guys some new batteries for use at Fall Fling!) so after it was reported to me there was a fire I went to the Rangers at the entrance of the park.

By the time I got back I saw all these witches with brooms and 30 gallon empty plastic trash cans

running to the fire pit. I can't remember everyone but will try, they included: Chris and William, Jennifer and William, Paul, Jody and all her children (I had her two babies at the Registration Hut with me), plus the four young men, Killi, Linda and Craig, (Linda help me with names here if you can if I forgot anyone!), and of course Kevin. They were beating the fire out with t-shirts and brooms and pouring water filled trash cans everywhere to put the fire out. They fought the flames along with the Park rangers, and it was under control by the time the firetruck made it. Remember down at the fire pit you couldn't see the lake? Well, now you can. The trees were saved but the underbrush is gone to the bare ground.

This was during a very bad drought. It is so important to practice fire safety at all times. This fire was a smudging done by the God and Goddess to remind us who we really are. We are lucky to be here and share this story with you. We have to change and take hold of our spirituality as Pagans. Our

example is powerful and important as we go into the new Millennium. I have never been so moved in my life as watching that many witches with brooms putting out a fire. We have much to be thankful for.

By the way, everyone needs to know this. The Park Ranger was very cordial with us upon passing inspection. We had an Army of Pagans with us at all times to quickly clean up and tidy. He commented on how clean we were and made suggestions for us to be better next year. Well, I don't know if we'll be back there or not. It just depends on if they'll have us. If so, we'll be there. If not, we'll look somewhere else. Meanwhile, Kevin, our tribe's Bard and Joker, please work on the latest hero story of which you participated in that will soon be a legend and then a myth. I await your version as it grows into an epic story almost as great as that our Captain Craig and the Frat Boy Massacree!

Hugs to All and Blessed Be! ~ Stormy

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Who Are We?

The Church of the Spiral Tree (CST) is a non-profit, volunteer-staffed, ecumenical pagan/wiccan church, designed to foster a sense of community and family among pagans, both locally and in other regions of the country/world. It is an ecumenical church in that it encompasses all traditions, and is non-exclusive. It welcomes all who revere the Earth Mother and adhere to the tenets of the Wiccan Rede ("An it harm none, do as you will"), regardless of which tradition one is affiliated with. CST is also a Faerie Faith church, in that it has a goal of spreading the teachings of the Faerie Faith to all who are interested, and giving people better access to this ancient and beautiful Irish belief system. The Faerie Faith itself is a non-exclusive faith; one who is studying the Faerie Faith is always free to

study other traditions or join other organizations.

If you would like to help with any of our projects, have any further ideas for the church, or have any resources which would be of benefit, please contact us. CST is also seeking volunteers to help with various parts of the church. Call us with ideas!



CONTACTS:

Remember, you get a free listing with your paid membership. You may also submit your listing at any later time.

Amy Blount: I wish to correspond with all members. Contact Amy c/o CST, P.O. Box 186, Auburn, AL 36831.
< rhab@netzero.net >

Ametisi Hawthorne (Merilee Barber): 36, new student, stones, crystals, herbs, books on the craft. Alone here in Mobile. P.O. Box 91781, Mobile, AL, 36691.

Cassandra Lee: < Cll19@hotmail > .

Cliff Landis: I'm a laid-back kitchen witch interested in sharing knowledge and fun. Harper 109, Auburn, AL, 36849,
< wiccadog@yahoo.com > .

Coven of Nocturnal Flight: HP: William (Gwalchmai) Moore; HPS: Linda (Pelayah) Moore.
< http://hometown.aol.com/Pelayah/Falons_Way.html >

Frank Palmer: #546776, 2101 FM 369N, Iowa Park, TX, 76367-6568. Eclectic Druid student (nearly full Druid priest), male, feminist, seeking anyone who wishes to correspond. I study Ayurvedic Healing, plus any other healing methods. I'm knowledgeable in several forms of magic and divination. Please write? I practice a zoomorphic form of Druidism and am a 2nd year Shaman student.

Kat Steingraber: 1373 Dunbarton Rd., Montgomery, AL 36117, 334-279-6071.

Laurel Silverlion: email: < laurel113@aol.com > .

Lora Melendez: 35 yr. old Scorpio, divorced, Celtic solitary practitioner, interested in candles, incense, crystals, and meditating, looking for like-minded pagans in Dothan or Panama City area. 110 Colonial Ave., Dothan, AL 36304.

Marijane Wilcox: Crone Goddess, Minister/Spiritual Counselor/ Herbalist. 101 S Burbank, Apt. E-62, Montgomery, AL 36117, 334-244-8614, email: < marijane@mindspring.com > .

Melody Pettus: I would welcome meeting or writing to any like-minded Faery trained folks in the Atlanta area. 2347 Melinda Dr., Atlanta, GA 30345-1914, or email to < mpettus@telco.com > or < mpettus@atl.mediaone.net > .

Morgain: 40 yr. Old eclectic witch (bi). Enjoys the outdoors, tarot, Pathway cards, children, crystals, and stone people. Open minded to all the universe has to offer. Seeking pagan/metaphysical friends. P.O. Box 16536, Panama City, FL 32406.

“Skippy” Rob Von Allmen: Tired? Bored? Wanting to find true love and happiness? Well, what are you doing talking to me?! I don't have all the questions, much less the answers. But I do have a clue (I found it in a cereal box) and am licensed to share the wisdom of the ages (answered an ad in Rolling Stone). If you also ponder such mysteries as “Is there life after death?,” “Was he a man dreaming he was a butterfly...?,” and “Where am I parked?,” then please drop me a line at: Swann's Tr. Pk. #1, Lot 130, Auburn, AL 36863, < skippy_the_witch@yahoo.com > , 334-826-3953.

Steven D. Richert: Celtic shaman, still new t this path, is seeking any others of like mind to correspond with while I'm in prison and out. Steven D. Richert #17987, W/D-225-T, U.S.P., P.O. Box 250, Draper, UT, 84020.

Stormy: < stormycloud@mindspring.com > , < earthdance@mindspring.com > ,
http://www.mindspring.com/~stormycloud/.

Willow Blue: < willowblue21@hotmail.com > .

similar calendar, and their extra days were named Tiw, Woden, Thor, Frig, and Seterne. From these last names, plus two other later ones added by Christian missionaries, come the names of our seven weekdays.

The Day Apart is also seen in the expression, 'A year and a day,' of Irish and Welsh myths. This stems from the calendar of the British Isles, and denotes a lunar year of 13 lunations of 28 days each (364 days), plus the extra day to make 365. This extra day is the Day of (the birth of) the Divine Child. This 'son of a virgin mother' is always born at the Winter Solstice (Graves, 95), and refers to the Sun King, or the Oak King; the young sun who defeats the darkness of winter, and will grow in strength until the Summer Solstice. Physically, of course, this symbolizes the lengthening of the days, which occurs after the Winter Solstice.

The Day Apart is thus a day out of time, apart from the normal year, and on such days, magical things can occur.

The Day Apart, also called the Earth-Mystery Day, is still a magical day, and quite relevant to us. Those of the Faerie Faith use this day in a ritual sense, to go to their own special place of rebirth (best if it is outdoors), and communicate and reconnect with the Earth Mother. To truly benefit from this, you should first seek out your own spot before that day. This place of rebirth will be one where you feel at peace, both with yourself and your surroundings, and it should be near enough your home so you won't have any excuse not to go. This spot will feel totally right to you, and may imbue you with a certain feeling of power and energy.

On the Day Apart, go to your spot, and sit in a still, receptive state. Reach out and communicate with the Earth Mother, and give her a chance to speak to you. Remember your impressions, but don't attempt to analyze them right now. Stay as long as you feel you need to—usually a half hour or so. Then thank the elements and the Earth Mother, and return home. Be sure to write down your feelings and memories at this time.

The Day Apart is the day we choose for this Earth-Mystery primarily because of the heavy yin energy, with just the beginning of yang coming in right after the Winter Solstice. However, this ritual is not intended to be enacted only once a year, but at any time you feel is right.

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Pagan in Alaska

by Cassandra

We arrived in Fairbanks Alaska on June 21st, the solstice. It was a lot different than familiar sweet home Alabama. Alaska is a land of extremes. The summer is lush and green and surprisingly hot. The woods were alive with creatures and plants in a frenzy to grow in the short season. The fall came and was brief and wet. We soon found ourselves swamped in huge flocks of beautiful large Canadian geese. All of nature was slowing down. The frenzy of summer was replaced with the quiet anticipation of winter. It seemed as if over night the lush green of the forest was replaced with spectacular golds and burnt orange. Now as first snow falls outside my window I realize how lucky I am as a pagan to get to live here in the last wilderness. Here the seasons change, not in the mild subtleties that we are used to in the south, but in sudden contrasts. Here you can witness the primeval connections between all life and the seasons. I think that in our

crowded, hurried lives we often lose touch with the harshness of the elements. Here they are right outside the door. As a pagan I think that being surrounded by the vast wilderness and the seasons allows me to reconnect with the earth. I feel I can relate to the ancient pagans who had to face nature in all its beauty and wrath. I can feel the winter closing in and I can watch the earth and her creatures preparing for the hardship and death. I can pay thanks that I have a warm house, food and loved ones to help me through the cold dark days ahead. I can prepare for the winter knowing that spring and rebirth is lying right around the corner.

We (me, My hubby, Joshua and our son, Ashton) are stationed at Ft Wainwright Alaska. Josh is a Military Police officer in the US Army. We are from Huntsville Alabama and will be home in three years, after our Alaskan experience!!

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CST Calendar:

October:

Ivy Moon ritual, either October 23, at Serpentstone's Samhain Gathering at DragonHills, or Sunday, Oct. 24, 5:00 pm, at Waverly, AL. Stay tuned for the date!

November:

Samhain ritual, sponsored by Pantheon, October 31, at Auburn University. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

FallFling, Nov. 11-14, Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA.

Reed Moon ritual, November 21 (Sunday), 4:00 pm, at Craig & Linda's HOUSE in Auburn (NOT Waverly!).

December:

Elder Moon ritual, December 17 (Friday) or 19 (Sunday), 4:00 pm, in Auburn (not Waverly). Date tba in future emails.

Yule celebration, December 18, either at Auburn or Waverly, AL. Site tba in future emails. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards.

Birch Moon ritual: There is no full moon for Birch, so this can be done any date after December 22. Date and site tba in future emails.

2000

January:

Rowan Moon ritual, January 23 (Sunday), 4:00 pm, at Waverly, AL.

February:

Imbolc celebration, February 5, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

Ash Moon ritual, February 20 (Sunday), 5:00 pm, at Waverly, AL.

March:

Spring Equinox celebration, March 18, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards.

Alder Moon ritual, either March 17 (Friday) or March 19 (Sunday), 5:00 pm, at Waverly, AL.

April:

Willow Moon ritual, April 16 (Sunday), 6:00 pm at Waverly, AL.

May:

May Day celebration, April 29 or May 6, at Waverly, AL. 9:00 am! Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

Hawthorn Moon ritual, May 21 (Sunday), 7:00 pm at Waverly, AL.

Moondance, May 25-29, Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA.

June:

Oak Moon ritual, June 18 (Sunday), 7:00 pm, at Waverly, AL.

Summer Solstice celebration, June 24, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 7:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards.

July:

Holly Moon ritual, July 16 (Sunday), 7:00 pm, at Waverly, AL.

August:

Lammas celebration, August 5, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 7:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

Hazel Moon ritual, August 13 (Sunday), 7:00 pm, at Waverly, AL.

September:

Vine Moon ritual, September 10 (Sunday), at 6:00 pm, at Waverly, AL.

Fall Equinox celebration, September 23, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards.

October:

Ivy Moon ritual, October 15 (Sunday), 6:00 pm, at Waverly, AL.

November:

Samhain celebration, November 4 (date subject to change), at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

Reed Moon ritual, November 12 (Sunday), 4:00 pm, at Waverly, AL.

December:

Elder Moon ritual, December 10 (Sunday), 4:00 pm, at Waverly, AL.

Yule celebration, December 22 (Friday) or 23 (Saturday), at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 4:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards.

For info on any of the above, email Linda Kerr at <spiraltree@mindspring.com> .

Upcoming Festivals (Not CST events):

| | | |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| FallFling | Nov 11-14, 1999 | Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA |
| Moondance | May 25-29, 2000 | Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA |

MINUTES

CHURCH OF THE SPIRAL TREE

Board of Directors

September 25, 1999

The meeting was called to order by Craig Kerr at 7:45 pm, at 1831 Opelika Road, Auburn, Alabama, with the following Directors and members present:

Linda C. Kerr, President; James C. Kerr, Vice-President; Rob Von Allmen, Member-at-Large; Rowan Kerr.

Old Business

It was noted that this meeting is being held much later than originally planned, as we had attempted to wait till all four directors could be present, but that wasn't possible for this meeting.

The trees that were ordered in April still haven't come in, due to unforeseeable problems on the part of the supplier, but they will be coming in sometime early next year. This works out better, as it will be winter, a much better time for planting.

The homeschool cover school program is up and running - Sacred Grove Academy now has two students, with more expected. This gives legal coverage to pagan homeschoolers in Alabama, where in order to homeschool your kids, you either have to be a certified teacher or you must enroll them in a church cover school.

The local grove in Atlanta is doing great - they've already sent in three quarterly reports, and they're listed on our web page as contacts in Atlanta.

On June 11 we received our tax-exempt status, as a 501(c)(3) organization.

New Business

Underage drinking at events seems to be under control; we haven't seen any instances of it.

The lunar rituals are going great - we will do them again next year. This time most of them will be held on a Sunday night to lessen conflicts Linda and Craig might have with schedules.

After the fire at Earthdance, we will have Fire Nazis at future festivals, and classes on fire safety.

We have a member in Alaska now, who is thinking about forming a grove up there, and a possible member in Germany.

Linda is still searching for a health insurance provider for our members. This is a slow process, and because we have members instead of employees, it may be more difficult to find good, affordable insurance.

We have just recently formed a Disaster Relief Fund, inspired by the efforts to help victims of Hurricane Floyd in North Carolina. We have a few donations, and CST will put in \$100 to it. A check will be sent off to North Carolina next week.

We may want to redefine the role of a CST minister, so it is understood that being a CST minister does not make one a High Priest/ess or Elder.

The next two meetings were scheduled to be held October 30, 1999, and February 5, 2000 in Auburn, Alabama.

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

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Church of the Spiral Tree

Membership Application

Legal Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Do you wish to be listed in the **Contacts** section of the newsletter? If so, please use the space below to write your listing exactly the way you want it published. Be sure to include a way for people to contact you. **WRITE LEGIBLY!** We are not responsible to errors due to "chicken scratch."

We have several different types of memberships available to suit your needs. All include full membership benefits, and run for one year, with a renewal notice sent to remind you next year.

| | | | |
|-------|-------------------------|----------|---|
| _____ | Individual | \$20.00 | |
| _____ | Student/Poor Person: | \$15.00 | (please attach a short note demonstrating financial need) |
| _____ | Family (includes kids): | \$35.00 | (must be in immediate family only, same address) |
| _____ | Sustaining Member: | \$50.00 | (receives all benefits plus our undying thanks) |
| _____ | Contributing Member: | \$100.00 | (receives all benefits, our eternal thanks, and a listing in the newsletter once a year) |
| _____ | Patron(ess) Member: | \$200.00 | (receives all benefits, our everlasting gratitude, a yearly listing in the newsletter, and a certificate) |

OTHER:

| | | | |
|-------|-----------------|----------|--|
| _____ | Donation to CST | \$5 & up | (all donations are tax deductible; you will be sent a receipt for your records, as well as our undying thanks) |
|-------|-----------------|----------|--|

Make checks out to: The Church of the Spiral Tree, Inc., and mail to:

Spiral Tree
P.O. Box 186
Auburn, AL 36831-0186
334-821-4683

spiraltree@mindspring.com

Visit us at our web site! <<http://www.mindspring.com/~spiraltree>>

CST Calendar:

Board of Directors' meetings:

October 30, 1999, Auburn, Alabama; February 5, 2000, Auburn, Alabama

Annual Meeting of the General Membership:

May 28, 2000, Moondance, Dragonhills, near Carrollton, Georgia

Lunar Dates for 2000 (all subject to mundane schedules, of course):

| Lunar | Date of Full Moon | Date of Ritual |
|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Birch | none | December 22, 23 or 24, 1999 |
| Rowan | January 21 | January 20, 2000 |
| Ash | February 19 | February 20, 2000 |
| Alder | March 20 | March 17 or 19, 2000 |
| Willow | April 18 | April 16, 2000 |
| Hawthorn | May 18 | May 21, 2000 |
| Oak | June 16 | June 18, 2000 |
| Holly | July 16 | July 16, 2000 |
| Hazel | August 15 | August 13, 2000 |
| Vine | September 13 | September 10, 2000 |
| Ivy | October 13 | October 15, 2000 |
| Reed | November 11 | November 12, 2000 |
| Elder/Birch | December 11 | December 10, 2000 |

Sabbat Dates:

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Imbolc | February 5, 1999 |
| Spring Equinox | March 18, 1999 |
| Beltane | April 29 or May 6, 1999 |
| Summer Solstice | June 24, 1999 |
| Lammas | August 5, 1999 |
| Fall Equinox | September 23, 1999 |
| Samhain | November 4, 1999 |
| Yule | December 22 or 23, 1999 |

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED