



Pagan Federation / Fédération Païenne Canada

To protect and promote the reputation of
Pagans and Paganism in Canada

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Comments??? Send them to us. Have something to say? Send it to us too. We are always looking for input from our members and we would love to print your article or comments.

“PFPC? What’s In It For Me?”

We get asked that a lot. When I talk to anyone about joining PFPC the first question asked is “what’s in it for me”. I thought maybe an answer to that question might be in order.

PFPC has been around since 1994. It has been an advocacy group “To promote and protect the reputation of Pagans and Paganism in Canada”. That’s our motto. That’s what we do.

What that means is we go to bat for you and your beliefs. We work behind the scenes with the media (radio, TV, and print), the government, the schools, universities, colleges, hospitals, boys and girls clubs, Children’s Aid, Ontario Multi-faith Council, and at one time prisons, educating and defending yours and our pagan rights. This is desperately important. Paganism is quickly growing as a religion and PFPC is helping to clear the path through our society.

We are also asked why we don’t do festivals or hold workshops. You know, the fun stuff, and honestly, we just don’t have the time besides someone has to do the not so fun stuff. Not to mention that there are more than enough good

festivals in Canada already. We do attend festivals and conferences promoting PFPC as best as we can, but we are a small board of directors each wearing more than one hat and all of the above takes a lot of time.

This is where you, the PFPC member comes in. We would love our membership to get involved. It doesn’t take much, if you are a member of PFPC and attending a festival, workshop or other pagan events, let us know we can supply you with handouts and information papers.

In the end “what’s in it for me” is something you can’t see or hold or go to for the weekend. It is something that will be answered in the future. By all members of PFPC.

And it is our ongoing promise to promote and protect the reputation of pagans and paganism in Canada.

--PFPC Board

The Scottish Witch Who Wore a Chiton.

by: Katherine Morrison

Why the name Gaia *anything* would come to one learning Scottish Witchcraft, I leave to the Gods ...it makes no sense to me. Regardless, the name Gaia Gathering came to me as I worked weeds from a friend’s garden. I remembered it because it came to me clearly and without any previous thought of what-to-name something. I

remember remarkable things such as this. What groceries I need will never be remembered.

A few years later - yes, it would be three come to think of it - Richard James (WCC-Toronto) put forth a suggestion that I organize a national conference for Pagans. We initially referred to this potential conference as the Canadian National Pagan Conference, which is still included as part of the conferences' name. Hawk, someone I chose to work with from Edmonton, the first host city, suggested something along the lines of Gaia's Children... then I remembered that which came to me while gardening: Gaia Gathering. So, the Canadian National Pagan Conference - Gaia Gathering was born.

Planners that first year were Gina Ellis (Ontario), Sydney Lancaster (Alberta), Hawk (Alberta), and myself (Ontario). We had more hope than expectation, which worked well for us. We felt that if we got a dozen people from across the country, who had never met before, in one room for any length of time, the conference would be a success. But! And a big but... it had to be done well and with quality.

Excitement grew as more and more registrations came in. It was really happening - it wasn't like trying to herd cats. People from across Canada offered to help. It was clear that the time was right. People were excited to be part of Gaia Gathering. I won't go into details about the usual organizational monsters that inevitability reared their ugly heads; whatever they were - we chose to use them as learning tools. And we learned a lot!

We didn't want another festival type of event. We wanted something unique, informative and mature. The people who showed up were incredible. They are the ones who made the conference. I remember feeling quite overwhelmed at times with the level of intellect and maturity as well as the years of knowledge that walked through our door. But it is the openness and love I remember and cherish most.

That is the model for this year in Halifax: The beautiful people who follow our path. Their love and openness. Their knowledge, intellect and wisdom. We'll discuss some very heavy topics, we'll sing our songs, and we'll share our hearts, laughter and wisdom. In the end we'll know just that much more about who we are, as Canadian,

as Pagan, Witch and Heathen. You know, we really are unique.

Mike from New Brunswick ended our Edmonton conference with, "I'm Mike and I am Canadian". Everyone followed by saying their name and that they were Canadian... well, except for the few Americans who came to celebrate with us.

I'm Kit, and I am a Canadian Witch.

PFPC Elections 2006

PFPC will be holding elections on Hallowe'en 2006 for 3 positions on the PFPC Board of Directors. In order to qualify for nomination (and you can nominate yourself), you must be a member in good standing for one year and current in your membership. You don't have to be in Ottawa to be on the board; with the advancements in technology, meetings can be held on-line as easily as everyone being together in one room. We need you!!! Join PFPC and make a difference!! All nominations must be received before midnight on Saturday September 30, 2006.

Canadian Pagan Studies Colloquium - Part of the CSSR [Canadian Society for the Study of Religion]

Annual Meeting May 28-31, 2006 (specific date for seminar TBD)
York University, Toronto ON

Panel: Paganism In Canada

Mandy Furney - Laurier-Waterloo PhD in Religious Studies

"The faces of NRMs: Paganism, A New Religious Movement in Canada."

*examines how contemporary Paganism in Canada is constructed in relation to other New Religious movements.

*attention will be given to media presentations and popular understandings of Paganism.

Laurel Zwissler - University of Toronto
"Change Yourself or Change the World? Activist Ritual in a Toronto Pagan Collective."

*investigates the different understandings of how ritual can address political problems

*through ethnographic fieldwork, ways are explored in which an activist, Pagan collective in Toronto ritualizes around political and social concerns

*argues that these approaches are dialectic, rather than contradictory.

Sian Reid – Carleton University
“Paganism by Numbers: Preliminary Results from the Canadian Pagan Survey Project” (2004-5)

*updates the findings of Sian Reid’s 1995/6 survey of Canadian Pagans and data from the 2001 Canadian census in light of the results of her current Canadian Pagan Survey project.

Roundtable: Defining Pagan Studies

Doug Cowan – University of Waterloo
Barb Davy – Independent Scholar
Brian Walsh – University of Toronto



Kit’s InKurable Kitchen Kabalism

Poached Pears

Self-indulgence made too easy

4 Bosc Pears
White wine
Brown sugar

- ❖ Slice the bottoms of the pears enough to enable the pears to stand up on their own.
- ❖ Prick the pears with a fork

- ❖ In a bowl, make a syrup out of 1 cup of the wine and ¼ cup of brown sugar, heat in the microwave.
- ❖ Stand pears in a casserole dish.
- ❖ Pour the syrup over the pears.
- ❖ Fill the bottom of the casserole with wine until about ¼ to ½ inch deep.
- ❖ Cover the dish with foil.
- ❖ Bake at 350F until the pears are soft, basting often.
- ❖ Wipe pretend sweat from your brow as you serve each pear with a drizzle of heavy cream or a small dollop of whipped cream. Sprinkle with a teeny bit of cinnamon.
- ❖ Libate yourself generously with the rest of the wine as you indulge in this dessert fit for the Gods.

Is There Really A Need For Pagan Hospital Chaplaincy?

by: Dale Dalessio

It’s a good question. One we at PFPC have frequently asked ourselves. Is there really a need for Pagan Hospital Chaplaincy? We decided that, yes, there is.

Most pagans already have a High Priest/ess or Elder to call on if they need to see someone while in the hospital. The problem arises when the patient wants to see their HP/s after visiting hours. They can’t get in. Here is where PFPC comes in. We have found that Hospital Spiritual Care Units are more likely to let Pagans come in when they are attached to an organization. The organization, rather than an individual, is then available for contact if the hospital has a problem or needs information. PFPC has been filling that spot since 1995 and will continue to do so in the future.

Most hospitals and their staff are unfamiliar with the term “Pagan”, “Wiccan”, or “Norse”. Getting involved with a hospital’s Spiritual Care Unit puts us on the hospital map, so to speak.

When working with a hospital, there are some things we do that smooth the way for us:

1. we ask that hospital admittance forms have the term “Pagan” included
2. we will give a small workshop, if asked, to the volunteer clergy of all denominations or the hospital staff on Pagans, Paganism and PFPC

3. we give the Spiritual Care Unit a book of information...about us, that they can keep in their lending library
4. we participate in hospital events that the Spiritual Care Unit organizes to pass on information about hospital procedures for volunteers visiting in the isolation ward or an information day on religious practices concerning death for staff, visitors, etc.

If you are interested in the PFPC Hospital program, either as a volunteer or as someone in need, please contact us.

PFPC Proudly Sponsors:



May 19-22, 2006 in Halifax, Nova Scotia
Gaia Gathering: www.gaiagathering.ca



March 3-5, 2006 in Toronto, Ontario
Toronto Pagan Conference:
www.torontopaganconference.com

Announcing the First Pagan Sovereign State!

by: Brendan

It is my pleasure to announce the founding of the first fully Pagan sovereign nation in the modern era. A lot of people might be wondering how did it all get started. Well, a few enterprising pagans read in the news that there is a Christian fundamentalist group that wants to get as many Christians as possible to settle in the state of North Carolina and eventually declare the state an independent Christian theocracy, devolved from the rest of America. This got us thinking, we can do the same! Wouldn't it be cool to have our own Vatican city, somewhere in the world? It's been tried before, and never successfully, but

our attempt has something no previous attempt at herding pagans I mean uniting them in harmony—has had. People are showing up! Huge crowds are converging on our sovereign territory, a farmer's field in Greenland, every day.

Our new state started slowly. At first, only a few pagans even showed up. Many stayed at home to gripe about how the proclaimed new pagan state didn't consult them, or doesn't have any real authority. They said to themselves, "Who are they to rule over all pagans? What gave them the right to tell me what to believe?" Of course, these are the pagans of the Ancient and Venerable Begrudgery Tradition. We sent them invitations, of course, so they wouldn't feel left out—but we gave them the wrong time and place. Our pollsters determined, however, that most of the naysayers to our state said nay because they felt slighted for not having been asked to become the leaders of the state. You know the kind of pagan we mean: he's the one who hates all forms of religious and spiritual authority but is secretly willing to accept the creation of a Pagan Catholic Church just so long as he himself gets to be Pagan Pope.

So who did show up to the proclamation of the pagan state? Most of them were American refugees from the "Democrat" tribe, fleeing the reign of George Bush II. But a few came from the "Republican" tribe; they kept muttering something about not wanting the new state to tax them. Yet they came from all over the world, from every walk of life, from every pagan tradition and community. The crowd was so large we had to count it with both hands. There was, of course, a small troupe of the members of the Druid School down the road who set up their own Pagan State in opposition to ours, just a hundred yards away. Their leader, a self-proclaimed enlightened elder, at first encouraged his followers to play their drums as loud as possible to disrupt the founding of our state. But then he left, when it dawned on him that if he did become the head of state of a new government, his welfare allowance would probably be cut off.

Putting together a nation and a government is not like putting together a Wiccan coven, a Heathen tribe, nor a summer camping festival, nor an umbrella service organization like the Pagan Federation or the Covenant of the Goddess. *Large* amounts of money, material resources, labour power, and military power has to be

mustered. We had to get the backing of wealthy people: bankers, industrialists, entrepreneurs, had be secured, which is not an easy thing to do. Most of them have no need for spells to make money, because they've already got their money. So paganism doesn't offer them much they don't already have. But we managed to convince a few progressive-minded wealthy people to bankroll our cause in a different way. We told them we had the secret of turning lead into gold, and once we struck our blow for freedom, we would make our pagan state a banking haven. Little do they know we plan to turn lead into gold the old fashioned way: clubbing them with a lead pipe and then stealing their gold. Anyone reading these words is asked not to leak the secret, or else the jig will be up on us, and we'll have to raise money by reading tarot cards again.

Our fledgling state still needs leaders who can make decisions about economic planning, criminal justice, national defense, labour allocation, foreign relations, and the like. But so far all we have are pagans who made themselves famous (in the pagan community, that is) for their ability as spell casters, workshop presenters, and ritual performers. It was, after all, the best we could do on such short notice. (Pagan Standard Time being what it is, after all) The ritual for the Opening of Parliament was absolutely lovely, everyone agreed, but the next day, when Parliament was in session, no one brought forth any bills to debate. No one had thought that far ahead.

However, we in the Inner Circle (I mean the Provisional Cabinet) have not been idle. We've recently agreed to put forward a good long list of new laws and executive orders, starting with the armed forces. Now the White Light pagans complained that the very existence of the army was contrary to the Goddess' wishes, since the Wiccan Rede clearly says "Harm None". And isn't it the job of the soldier to harm people? On the other hand, no other nation in the world would take us seriously without an army. So we reached a workable compromise. We would still have an army, but it would not have any guns. Instead, it will have soap-bubble rings. Our soldiers will march into battle blowing bubbles of peace and love. The United Nations Security Council recently asked us to send our bubble battalion to join international peacekeeping forces stationed in a high school in Arkansas.

Actually, unbeknownst to the White Light contingent, we have secretly created a 'special forces' unit. We're recruiting them from the SCA, and arming them with swords, pikes, spears, knives, and axes, and the artillery units will operate catapults and trebuchets. We also have a unit of Celtic warriors, recruited from the Celtic Reconstructionist tribes. Their heroic spirit, their courage and bravery, will be both admired and feared all over the world. Their first mission will be to see if they can find any trace of the Bubble Battalion, who we haven't heard from in over two weeks.

We have been busy on the home front too. In primary school education, we have decided that the myth of the burning times should be a standard item on the curriculum. We don't really care if the myth is true or not—it will give our graduates a reason to think themselves lucky. For history classes we'll get them to watch *The Wicker Man* in grade eight and *Robin of Sherwood* in grade eleven. At our colleges and universities we will have departments of divination and magic right alongside departments of economics, and engineering. National Pagan University will have a morning of lectures on classical Greek philosophy and literature, followed by an afternoon of experimenting with telepathy. Graduates from the PhD program at Lady Raven Moonspider School will now be able to up shop next to PhD graduates from Oxford, and Harvard.

Look for PFPC's contact information in the new resource guide of Margot Adlers revised 2006 "Drawing Down the Moon" due out this year.

What about health care? Our new state has the whitest of white witches in all hospital emergency wards, both accredited third-degree witches and fam-trad hedge witches, to cleanse the charkas of car accident victims and to purify the aura of leukemia sufferers. Surgeons, nurses, and paramedics will have to be Reiki masters and we'll revoke their license to practice if they refuse.

The National Pagan Housing Authority reported in its year-end review that it has not built a single

house, due to legislation preventing infrastructure development within one hundred and fifty meters of a tree. But there have been some nice canvas tents set up in the capital city's Bealtaine fairgrounds. The four newly naturalized immigrants this year (up 50% from last year) are presently being sheltered in them.

Some people have been asking whether our pagan state is a democracy. Most of the ancient pagan societies which we looked at for inspiration, and which some of us regard as our direct forebears, including the Celts, Norse, Greeks, Egyptians, societies of the ancient near-East, to the pre-"civilization" societies of aboriginal people, were not democracies. They were tribal societies or chiefdom societies, or kingdoms, or even empires. And many pagan organizations and societies of today are not democracies either, but rather are run by their founders as benevolent and enlightened (one hopes!) dictatorships. Well, we've decided to merge the best elements of modern parliamentary democracy with the age-old system of absolute monarchy that our ancient forebears believed in. The spiritual and political head of our state shall be a King, or a Queen, depending on which way he swings. But to keep our king honest and just, we're going to insist that our elected king rules for only seven years, after which time he is killed. That way, if you want to be the king, you have to really, really want it. This system of government used to be called "the sacred king". We think that other countries will soon see the wisdom of this system, and will follow suit.

The Inner Circle and I have just finished drafting the new Constitution. We were stalled for quite some time by the Radical Tree-Hugger Party who wanted the constitution to outlaw fossil-fuel engines, and steel foundries. Their persuasive party pod-people pontificated passionately about the need to return to our ancient roots, and do things as the ancients did things. But it rained on the day we planned to vote on it, and all the pod people ended up in hospital with pneumonia (and the best energy-healers in the world are even now smudging them with sweetgrass that was blessed by a Real Live Native.) Meanwhile the Fair Weather Pagan Party, whose members stay indoors on rainy days, were told the vote would take place in a rented Unitarian Universalist church. So they showed up to vote in greater numbers, and managed to turn the tables at the eleventh hour. Our economic planners have

thought long and hard about the skills and resources available in our community, so that we can put them to best use in the dynamic global market of today. We decided that our state will put the lion's share of its economic development budget into the entertainment industry. After all, so many pagans are also such excellent showmen, whether they know it or not. We're also going to focus on the fashion and design industry. A survey of the merchant's areas of most festivals showed us that most of what was on sale was what the British call 'bling': that is, fancy clothing, rings, bracelets, armlets, necklaces, anklets, ear rings, tiaras, leather medicine pouches, and all kinds of other crap. We'll be able to sell a few of them for ridiculously inflated prices by adding little notes about how it was consecrated by a witch to attract love and money to its possessor. There will be a few fools in the world who will buy them, but we'll try to reserve them for the export market in case the fools who want to buy them are mostly our own citizens.

All in all, we are planning great things for our Pagan state. We'll grant licenses to perform marriages and funerals to just about anyone. And all kinds of marriages will be legal here: straight, gay, polyamorous, and so on. We'll legalize public nudity. We'll make Samhain and Bealtaine national holidays and make them a whole week long. We'll put a horse shoe over the arch of every door for good luck. And most important of all, we'll standardize that long list of elemental correspondences. Our state will be a shining beacon of liberal freedom, where anyone and everyone will have the right to live any way they want, and believe whatever they want, no matter how stupid. We hope you will join us, and raise our flag over your homes and magic circles as a sign of your solidarity.

Solidarity!

The Inner Circle of the Sovereign Pagan State

PFPC is always looking for articles for the newsletter. Submission date for the Spring 2006 issue is March 21, 2006

