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Sword & Chalice

magazine of the Wiccan Church of Canada



Vol. 5 | #4

Equinox



Beltane

Mar 21-May 1, 2022

HAMILTON ★ TORONTO ★ WINDSOR

The Wiccan Church of Canada

The Wiccan Church of Canada has offered open Wiccan temples facilitating classes, rituals, and training to the public since 1979.

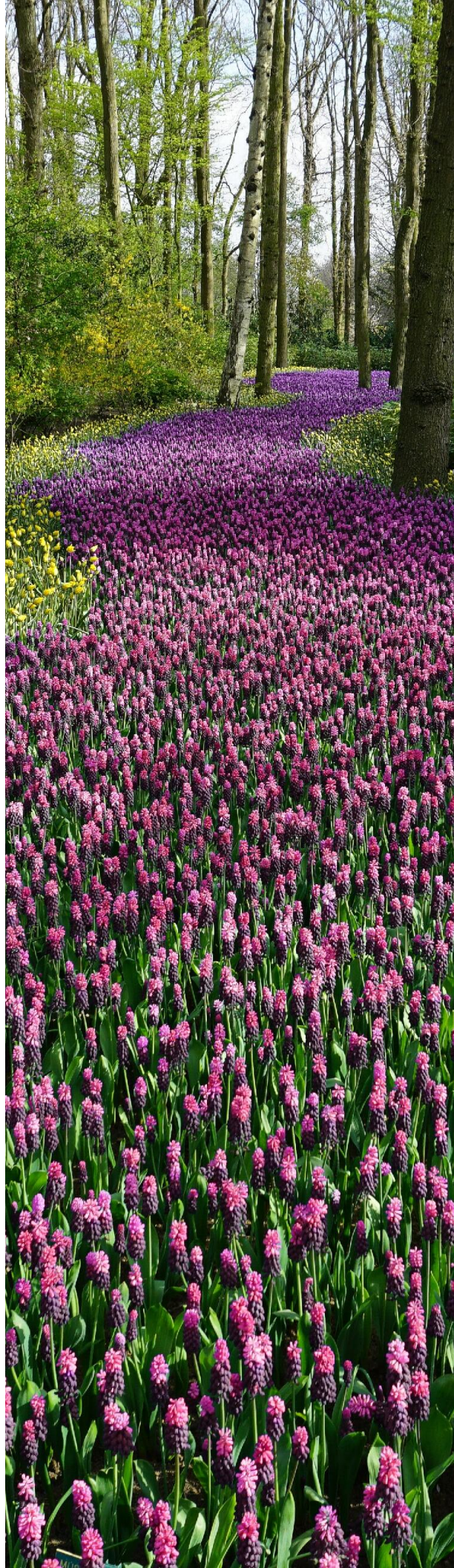
Drawing on resources available in our own communities and temples, we are a diverse, accepting, caring group of people united by our love of the Gods and our own journeys. W.C.C. classes and rituals are open to one and all, regardless of one's level of experience in the Craft. We offer an open, and accepting place to worship as an experienced practitioner or someone who's vaguely curious, all are welcome. We encourage you to check out the F.A.Q section on our website or contact us if you have questions.

We hope our publication will reflect the diversity of our membership in offering a local pagan magazine written by the community for the community. Our articles are the voices of our community, those with knowledge and resources to share. Herbs and seasonal recipes we've tried and keep bringing back to our feast tables. We'll keep you abreast of pagan events, vendors and local artisans, as well as WCC classes & rituals.

The WCC is pleased to offer free online weekly classes alternate Saturday & Sunday.

As well as a social Meet & Greet every Wednesday night via the ZOOM conferencing app.

If you wish to participate, please email LPH.WCC@gmail.com with your email address.



The Wheel Of The Year

with Xylia

Look around....its coming.....Spring!!!

Although there are still patches of snow on the ground and some will even be floating in the air, we are upon the Vernal Equinox and know the Wheel of the Year is turning. All the signs are present for us to see.

The soil is softening as the Goddess awakens from her winter slumber and stretches her arms up to the growing warmth of the sun. She hears the sounds of the birds singing their melody of life awakened, like the flutes of Pan enticing the buds of new growth to come forth, amazing us with the cycles of nature.

It is a time of new beginnings, a time to think about putting into action the plans of the past few months. We tend connect the Spring Equinox to the planting of seeds. Although for most of us in Canada we are not at a point in the Cycle of the Wheel where we can plant in the ground yet. However, you can plant seeds in pots in preparation for transplant to warmer soil later. However, there is so much more to this Sabbat than planting seeds and so much more you can do.

We have all been stuck indoors over the winter months, especially with the health situation around the world. It is time to get out! Go for a walk and see the Goddess awakening. See the world with new eyes, paying attention to the tiny details of renewed life. Look to the ground for the pale yellow-green shoots, or up to the skies for the nourishing rain. Listen for the sounds of life, the birds singing songs of welcome to each other or the clicking of claws on tree trunks as the squirrels race up and down in the freedom of play. Open your senses to the smells in the air, the scent of damp soil as it softens. Go for a walk by the water and see how it has been unlocked from the grips of winter and is starting to move again, feeding the roots back to life.

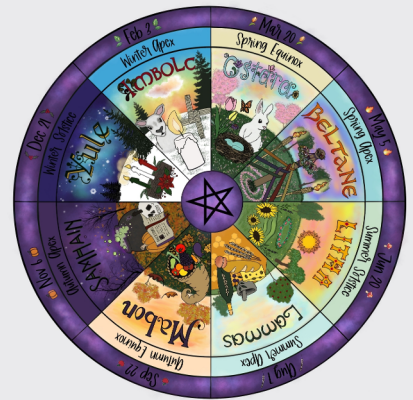
Just as we did at Yule adorning our trees and altars with lights and decorations, so too can we add this sympathetic magic to the Equinox. Decorate your altars with the colours of spring, pale greens, yellows, pinks and purples. You can create an altar cloth by weaving coloured ribbons together or filling a vase with pussy-willows.

With the turning of the Wheel, we move into the element of Air, a time of awareness, alertness and communication. When you awake, breathe deeply the beginnings of a new day and start off with a clear, mindful, renewed outlook.

The Equinox is also a time when daylight and darkness is equal. It gives us a unique opportunity to balance ourselves within the transition from Winter to Spring. Take this time to acknowledge the sunrise and sunset, and rebalance the energies from dark to light within you. It is an awakening of your spirit to the lighter half of the year.

The Gods have given us so much to be thankful for. Sometimes, people are waiting for "a message" from the Gods, for guidance, for a direction to go, for inspiration. Well they give us those messages and it is very apparent at this time in the world around us. Revel in all they give. Revel in the transitions of the Wheel.

Participate in Natures beauty and renewed life, and give thanks.



Bellas' Book Nook



The spiritual journey that each person embarks on, is unique to that person. I feel that when we seek the Ancient Ones, They make Themselves known, Especially, when we are about to be overwhelmed; which is what has happened to me on several occasions. This is part of my own and unique personal experience, with the Gods.

One of the Gods who has manifested in my life is Odin, the All-Father. His timing was impeccable, and the God who showed me what I needed to know. As a result, I did more research into the Norse Tradition and The Norse Gods; They have more than just a place in my heart, they have become revered in how They have helped me. Showing me how to find balance in my life, especially during uncertainties.

As we are approaching the Light of Spring Equinox, what better way to pay my respects, but to review some books on the Gods who helped me find, balance.

When I started to do research into the Norse Gods, I came across -

The Prose Edda – Tales of Norse Mythology,
by Snorri Sturluson
Dover Publications Inc., 2006.
ISBN: 13-978-0-486-45151-0.

At 240 pages, it's translated from Icelandic with an introduction by Arthur Gilchrist Brodeur, that was written back in 1916. The cost - approximately \$12.00.

It's a narrative, a verbal family tree of sorts. This book has two sections - It begins with the Beguiling of King Gylfi, Ruler of the lands, now known as Sweden. King Gylfi disguised as a wanderer came across a great hall, when asked his name, he called himself - Gangleri. With that the great stories begin,

and the names of the Gods, the Giants, the dwarves, a veritable who's who of Norse mythology. After hearing all the tales, there were great noises, and Gangleri finds himself on a level plain, whereupon he returns home to tell the tales he was told..."and after him each man told these tales to the other."

The second part consists of the Skaldskaparmal – The Poesy of the Skalds. Once again, the stories continue, and the poetry when, read aloud is beautiful, reverent, and stirs the heart.

One of the first authors I encountered, who gave me insight was

Taking up the Runes – A Complete Guide to Using Runes in Spells Rituals, Divination, and Magic, **Diana L. Paxson.**
Weiser Books – 2005,
ISBN: 1-57863-325-7

A starting point. The explanations of the runes, hit a cord within me, and my curiosity grew as I tried to figure out what was going on. This book has also been revised, and a new 2021 edition is available.

The first part of this incredible book explains the runes, in easy to understand terms. An explanation of how to use the book for individual or group study. The runes are paired with their meanings.

The second part consists of a guide on how to use the runes for magical, spiritual and meditative purposes. The chapter of further reading, and the bibliography, will keep you reading for quite a while. Cost of this book is about \$35.00. Available as an eBook, pdf, and paperback.

Another Diana L. Paxson book is -

Essential Asatru, Walking the Path of Norse Paganism,
Citadel Press Book 191 pages
Kensington Publishing 2006,
ISBN: 0-8065-2708-0.

This book begins with – Heroes and Ancestors – Before History – The First Heathens. From that point it moves through the various ages, including the conversion to Christianity, and the beginning of the revival movement.

Part 2 consists of the Gods and Goddesses. Ways to celebrate and honour the Gods, as well as celebrations through out the year.

Part 3 is titled... Toasts, Boasts, and Oaths. The part dealing with Heathen Virtues begins on page 140. It finishes off with a how to... host your own event. Keep reading and you hit a section called resources and bibliography, both are quite extensive and worth further research.

With 20/20 hindsight, one of the books I discovered later, was from the Pagan Portal Series.

**Odin, Meeting the Norse Allfather,
by Morgan Daimler
ISBN: 978-1-78535-480-9.**

It's, is published by Moon Books in 2018, and is available through Indigo Books, at a Canadian price of \$13.95. 83 pages, but packed with insight, a section called Prayers and Poetry, an extensive list of books in the Biography for further reading, an appendix with lists of multi media connections to Odin and the Norse Gods.

Chapter One, contains the following passage...on page 8.... *"In many ways he is a contradiction: a force of change that seeks to maintain the status quo, a God of wisdom that seeks to outwit others, a leader of the Gods who is known for wandering far from his home. The more you learn about Odin the more you will learn to accept the contradictions and appreciate the layers to his myths."*

In my search to understand Odin, he has left me with plenty to ponder. One thing that I actually appreciated in this book, had to be Morgan Daimler's personal

experiences with Odin, not just as a God of Inspiration, but one of Healing as well. The author's story of the one-eyed squirrel, is remarkable.

My last offering is a book by Soraya –

**Runes.
Soraya
ISBN 1842051067**

It was a book that I found at a discount shop and was a wonderful...How to book. Part one explained the runes with simple stories, and an illustration at the end of each Rune Story, with the traditional meaning.

Part two is about the various ways to use the Runes, meditations, spreads, general guidance, and ends with names and numerology. There have been a few updates to the book, but it is a nice staple for anyone's library. It can be found through Abebooks, at more than a reasonable price, and shipped from the United Kingdom.

With this, I end Part One, of my journey into Norse Mythology and the Gods. Looking forward to having a few book recommendations from others with a connection to the Norse Gods.

Until next time, stay safe, stay healthy and Bright Blessings for Spring Equinox and Happy Ostara.

Happy Reading,
Bella

Hamilton Temple Legacy Library

Learning through lending and legacies.

The Hamilton Temple of the Wiccan Church of Canada is pleased to be able to offer to its members, a Pagan lending library. All of the books contained in the Library have been graciously donated by members of the Hamilton Community, both past and present. We hope that in sharing this diverse collection, our community can support personal growth and experience through shared knowledge.



THE SABBAT TABLE

With Spring finally upon us, the ancient motifs surface and assure us of our own place in the dance of the seasons. Spring brings us new birds and beasts, growth and renewal, with emblems connecting us to the process since the beginning of time. Whether it is the ancient greek concept of the Orphic Egg and the beginning of all things, or a cosmic eggs hatching creators and sun gods; the egg has long been a symbol of fertility and rebirth. A motif that threads its way through all of our cultures, our myths and our hopes for the future.

Eggs as part of our Spring rituals have been used to ensure fertility, prosperity and peace. Always treated with reverence, the egg is a fragile symbol of Life and balance. There is a ritualistic element involved in the painting of eggs, a magical thinking, calling out to the gods and goddesses for health, fertility, love, wealth, and peace. We imbue our hopes in the language of art, colour and symbols; sharing with each other that need for renewal.

Many design motifs on modern Easter eggs date back to pre-Christian times to early Slavic cultures, some even give evidence to dating as far as matching neolithic imagery. While the symbols have remained through the ages, their interpretation has changed or been repurposed through artistic or religious license. However, underneath of it all, a triangle still speaks of the three elements, earth, fire and air. The equal armed solar cross which depicts the rising sun is also now the symbol of the risen Christ, but its power remains steadfast through time. Sun and star symbols once referred to Dazhboh, a sun god, and the fish, spoke of a plentiful catch and a full stomach. In decorating our eggs today we still speak to our ancient connections through flowers, vines, the serpent, the sun and the moon, the old gods, the old ways, and the old beliefs.

One of the most enduring examples of the talismanic use of the egg is the Ukrainian pysanky. A pysanka is an egg decorated using a wax resist (aka batik) method of application. Its name derives from the Ukrainian verb "pysaty," meaning "to write." Colours, symbols and rituals were often unique to each family or region, however, customs were preserved faithfully and passed down, from mother to daughter, through many generations. A pysanka held very strong magic, and was used for protection of the family and the home throughout the year. Often on display throughout the spring and summer, a bowl full of colourful pysanky kept fire and harm from the home.

In connecting with this age-old practice of offering an egg to your household and friends for prosperity, explore the significance of the Egg in your own cultural heritage. Embrace the energy of the season, inscribe your hopes and prayers with colour and meaningful symbols. Create magic.

As an emblem of life, the egg is the perfect magical tool. It is recognized globally as a symbol of fertility, new life, growth and prosperity.

- Make a wish: Write a wish on a hard boiled egg, then leave it in the woods or natural setting as an offering.
- Bury a raw egg in the garden. A buried egg in your spring garden blesses the harvest for fruitful yield.
- Try Ovomancy, a method of divination which involves dropping an egg white into boiling water and then reading the shape it takes.
- Leave eggs at the graveside of a loved one to bless their eternal life and heal grieving souls.
- Craft some candles, eggshells make excellent candle vessels. Use natural beeswax and a cotton wick, and they are also 100% biodegradable.

Naturally Dyed Eggs

Per cup of water use the following:

- 1 cup chopped purple cabbage = blue on white eggs, green on brown eggs
- 1 cup red onion skins = lavender or red eggs
- 1 cup yellow onion skins = orange on white eggs, rusty red on brown eggs
- 1 cup shredded beets = pink on white eggs, maroon on brown eggs
- 2 tablespoons ground turmeric = yellow eggs
- 1 bag Red Zinger tea = lavender eggs

Add one tablespoon white vinegar to every cup of dye.

STONES WITH SORCHA

PERIDOT

also known as Chrysolite and Olivine.

Peridot was regarded as a wondrous stone in many ancient cultures, including the Romans and Egyptians. Peridot was found on the Serpent Isle, a snake infested island in the Red Sea, and was mistaken by the Egyptians as emeralds and golden topaz. Hawaiians believe the crystals to be the tears of the volcano Goddess Pele. Known as the stone of compassion, peridot calms anger by giving renewal to all things.

- **Element:** Earth
- **Energy:** Receptive
- **Planet:** Mercury & Venus
- **Chakra:** Heart & Solar Plexus
- **Sabbat:** Spring Equinox
- **Zodiac:** Leo, Virgo, Scorpio, Sagittarius
- **Tarot:** Empress, Hermit, Strength

Magical Properties: Abundance, Awareness, Balance, Beginnings, Calm, Change, Clairvoyance, Attracting Comfort, Health, Inspiration, Peace, Protection, Purification, Rebirth & Renewal, Success, and Well-Being.

Magical Uses: Wear as an protective amulet to guard against illusions and the evil eye. It is worn or carried for general healing purposes. At work, peridot is helpful for business that involves direct selling or money exchange. Add it to a prosperity charm bag to increase your luck and money flow. Set in gold, it will achieve its highest powers. Worn in combination with citrine, it will keep us balanced.

Healing Uses: Cool fevers and ease liver, kidney and gall bladder issues. It also helps with breast, heart or lung problems. Use peridot to flood your mind, body and spirit with a sense of peace and well-being. It is very useful in shielding your aura, releasing and neutralizing toxins on all levels. It has the ability to bring health and vitality to the whole body.

Why use Peridot with the Equinox?

Peridot is a springtime gemstone, with its fresh spring colour. It has the ability to transition you into a new beginning, which is important when coming out of the stagnant and dullness of winter. Worn at the time of spring, it will help move us forward and get us going in our new cycle of the Wheel. It is a stone of the Sun, and helps us rejoice in springtime's reawakening and new growth.

Community Happenings

WCC Meet & Greet

Meet the Wiccan Church of Canada community every Wednesday evening @ 7 pm via Zoom. Open to the public across Canada, as our members across the country sign on for our online Community Get Together. A time to meet new friends, see the faces you have been missing. Whether the conversation is around sharing how you honour your Gods, your magics, or just to soak up the support of community during a tough time, it is a great get together. Come on out and join in the fun!

Email LPH.WCC@gmail.com FOR THE LINK

Toronto Pagan Pub Moot

"It is an open and friendly social event that meets in person every Third Calendar Monday of every month and virtually every Fourth Calendar Monday of every month. It is open to Pagans, Wiccans, Witches, Druids, Asatru, etc of ALL ages and those who are new and would like to learn more, to those who have been walking the path for decades."

TPPM dates 2022

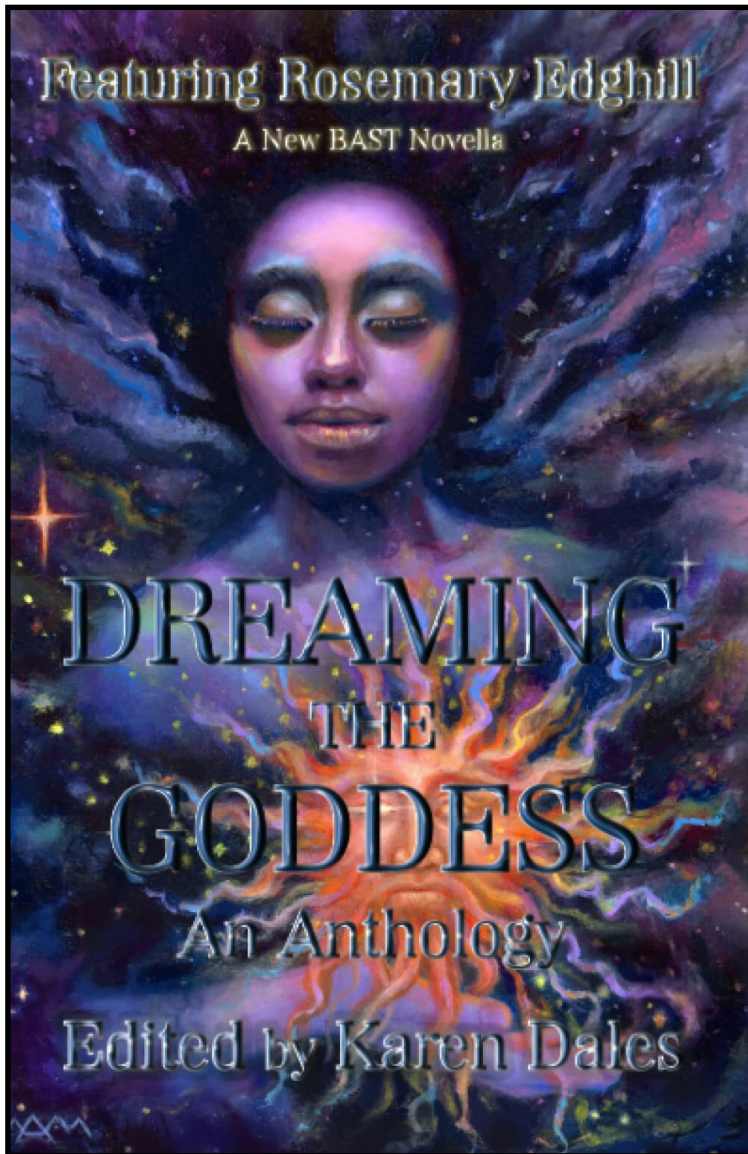
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Gone is
the Old Woods

Back for
Beltane !!

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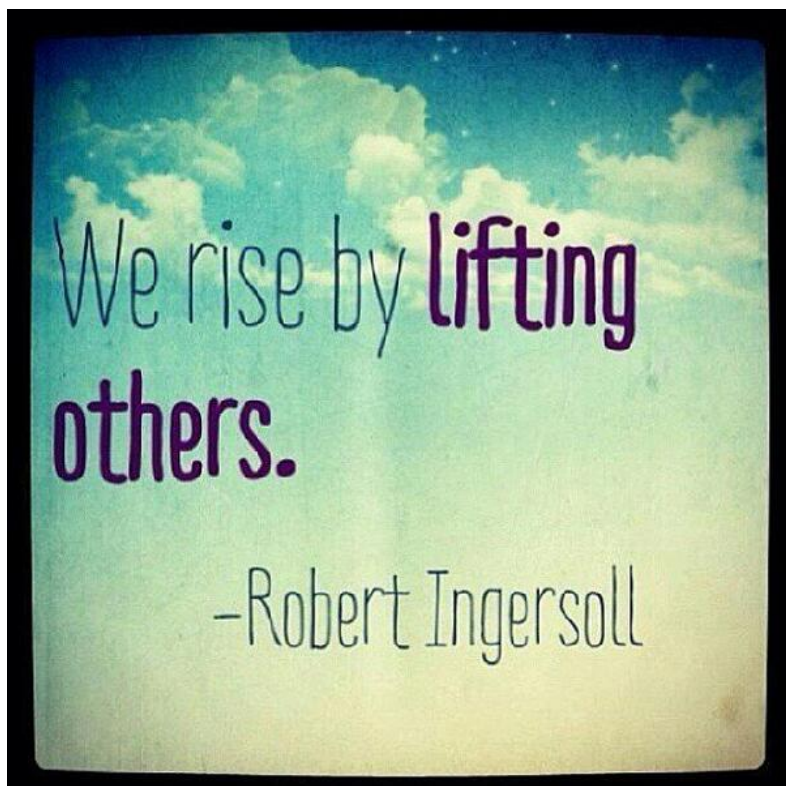
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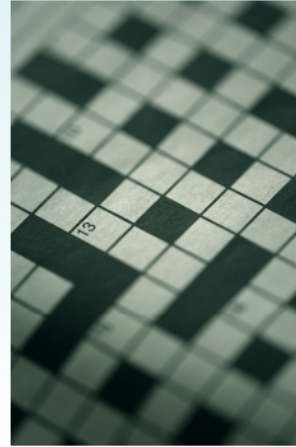
PUZZLE PAGE NSD

PUZZLE LINKS

click the image for this
sabbat's challenge



AT A LOSS FOR
WORDS



CROSSED PENS



JOURNEY THROUGH
THE MAZE

solutions on our Facebook page on Beltaine!

**What's the name of the
(alleged) Witchcraft ritual
performed in 1940 to stop Hitler
from invading Great Britain?**

- A. Operation Mistletoe
- B. Bell, Book, and Candle
- C. Operation Cone of Power
- D. Stop in Your Tracks Spell



More
diversions for
the season...

What's That Phrase?

rodiamondugh



Click the image to download the
colouring page.
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“I’m tall when I’m
young and I’m
short when I’m old.
What am I?”

MISS SPIZZLE AND THE MAP OF THE STARS

Miss Spizzle let out a long sigh of exasperation. Once again, the shelves in the warehouse were full of candy and she knew that in a few days; after EB finished all of his deliveries, the shelves would still be about one-third full. It was the same every year; there was more candy than there were children to give it to. And every year, on the Monday after easter, EB would deliver the leftovers to the local supermarkets and pharmacie. He would then sell it for a reasonable profit but at a price low enough that the rest of the children - the one's who didn't believe in the Easter Bunny - would be able to buy at a really good price. "Everybody wins!" he would say.

"We need to sell the leftovers to keep the business going!" he'd explain, every year. "I get some profit from the leftovers, enough to restock next year, and the other kids get cheap candy, candy so cheap that their parents just can't say no to buying it for them. It's a win-win situation!"

And every year, she'd respond with "But what about all the children that still believe in the magic of spring and rebirth? They may not believe in you, but they still believe that spring is a time of new beginnings, and a time when mother nature can restore all of her beauty and magic once more?"

And every year, EB would sigh and say, "It's for the economy!"

And that's exactly what happened this year, only this time, Miss Spizzle had a plan.

Miss Spizzle had been EB's executive assistant forever, having started in shipping and receiving as a pup. Being a fox, she wasn't intimidated by the rabbit that was EB - in fact, he had more to fear from her and he was well aware of that. But to tell the truth, Miss Spizzle was rather sweet on her boss. She admired his math skills especially when it came to multiplication. To tell the truth, he was rather sweet on her as well.

"I'd like to make a proposal," she said. "You let me take say, one-third of the leftovers and I will pay for it by working for free for the next three months." It was as much a question as it was a proposal.

EB, tired of the same old argument every year, sighed once again, and said "One quarter. No more. And I want a full, written report on the inventory that you used, and what children you delivered to, so just like I call the children I deliver to either Easter Children or other children, you'll need a category for the one's you deliver to."

"Deal!" Mis Spizzle replied excitedly as she grabbed a shopping cart and started to fill it with her share of the candy.

Come Easter, Miss Spizzle would have the weekend off as this was the one weekend that EB actually did anything that could possibly be called

work, as he went from house to house, following a map that he'd gotten from Santa Clause, to deliver the candy treats.

Miss Spizzle, on the other hand, had made up her own map after searching the world to see if she could figure out where all of the children she wanted to deliver to, lived. She decided to make things even easier for herself by going out on the night before Easter. Following her own map, she marked every home of the children on her list with a five-pointed star. This would make them easier to spot on Easter morning so that she could make all of her deliveries in a much shorter time than EB.

The big day arrived and with her map in hand, she headed out to the first house on the list and, with lightening speed, not only delivered the goodies to the homes, but even hid them for a scavenger hunt of sorts, even managing to write little notes to direct the children to the next hiding spot. Eventually, she would include a pair of socks or mittens for the children, just so that it wasn't all about the candy. As she left the first house, she checked her watch. "11 seconds," she confirmed. "Right on target!" Off to the next house she went, and the next, and the next, and so on.

She had finished her rounds by 6 am and headed home to rest. She was exhausted, yet bursting with energy. What a wonderful night it had been going from house to house, writing notes and hiding the goodies in closets and cupboards and on bookshelves and under sofas. She wished that she could have stayed at one of the houses just long enough to have seen the faces of the children whose homes she had marked with a star. They didn't usually get their easter treats until the day after when they were on sale at the supermarkets and pharmacies. What a pleasant surprise for those lucky children! She sat down to write her report but first she needed a name for the children on her route. She thought, and thought and nearly fell asleep thinking when it then popped into her head. Chuckling she began to write.

And so, it came to pass that every year, Miss Spizzle would make her rounds, delivering and hiding the goodies, the socks and the mittens, writing the notes that excited the children and delighted their parents at the houses with the five-pointed star out front. The people that she, and now even EB refer to as the "Kindred of the Stars".

2021 by Ross Carter

I came up with the idea for Miss Spizzle in 1996 when my two kids, started asking why we didn't get them treat for Easter like many of their friend did. For them, Easter was about the treats. Creating Miss Spizzle turned a day that might have been all about the treats into a rather special event. They still do this now for my grandson



LOCAL RESOURCES

Looking for ritual or metaphysical supplies for your Craft? Check out our local favourites and support the stores in our communities.

HAMILTON

Obskurah Bazaar

Candles, Tarot & Oracle decks, magical curios, ritual supplies, spiritual self-care items, herbs, books, incense and occult inspired accessories are available online or at our retail shop in Hamilton, Ontario. Our goal is to provide ethically sourced, sustainably made, fair trade and ecofriendly products that support fair wages and working conditions for the makers and honor their traditions.

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We offer a variety of New Age, Self Help and Metaphysical Products and Services to aid in your journey of Spiritual Development. You can find many products ranging from spell kits and ritual supplies to herbs, oils, candles, divination tools, magical items, home decor, books and much more

TORONTO

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WINDSOR

The Hag Shack

Hag - a woman considered to be knowledgeable in matters such as herbal healing, magic charms, or other traditional lore.

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