



Peppermint And Sage

17

Samhain 2015





# MERRY MEET



Welcome to the start of our third year. We are starting to get back on time. We need people to start putting together their submissions as soon as possible. Deadline is December 16.

One again I ask for feedback. We have downloads, we have over 800 likes on Facebook , 155 members of our Facebook group. But we have had two letters of comment. Drop us a line at [pas@dragonpalm.com](mailto:pas@dragonpalm.com) - even if it's just to say you downloaded an issue of PAS. People who submitted would like to know that people are reading or viewing what they have submitted. This is their only pay.

I want to thank everyone who has submitted to this Issue and all our past issues of Peppermint And Sage. I could not have put this out without you all.

Blessed Be

Dreamweaver

## **Peppermint And Sage Issue 17 Samhain 2015**

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Editor/Publisher: Dreamweaver

All submissions should be sent to [pas@dragonpalm.com](mailto:pas@dragonpalm.com)

Peppermint And Sage is published eight times a year: Samhain, Yule, Imbolc, Ostara, Beltane, Litha, Lammass, and Mabon.

All issues are free in PDF format. Permission to print as long as all content is included and nothing is added.

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# November 2015

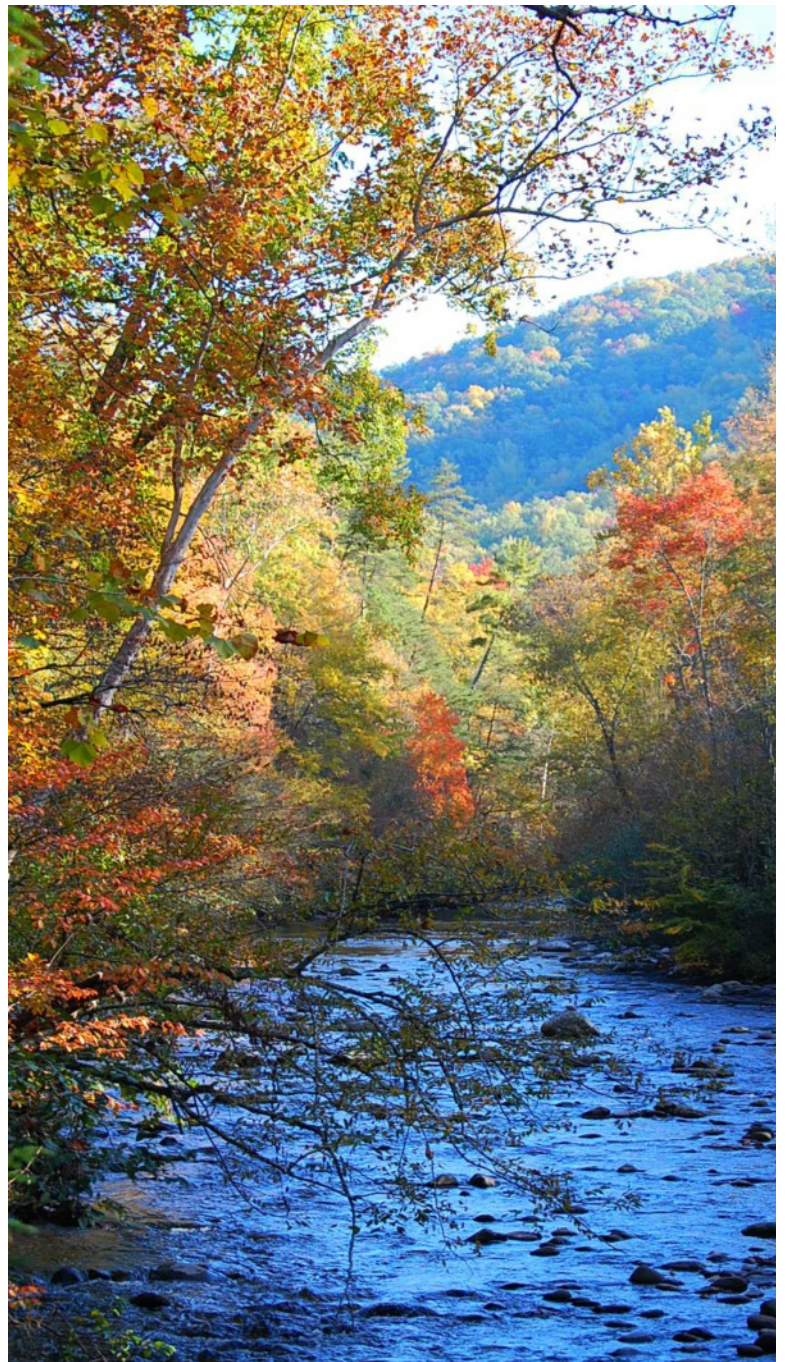
- 1 Sun All Saints Day
- 2 Mon
- 3 Tue
- 4 Wed
- 5 Thu
- 6 Fri
- 7 Sat
- 8 Sun
- 9 Mon
- 10 Tue WIP
- 11 Wed Veterans Day/ NEW MOON
- 12 Thu
- 13 Fri
- 14 Sat
- 15 Sun
- 16 Mon
- 17 Tue
- 18 Wed
- 19 Thu Dragon Palm PNO
- 20 Fri
- 21 Sat
- 22 Sun
- 23 Mon
- 24 Tue
- 25 Wed FULL MOON
- 26 Thu Thanksgiving/DPC full moon
- 27 Fri
- 28 Sat
- 29 Sun
- 30 Mon

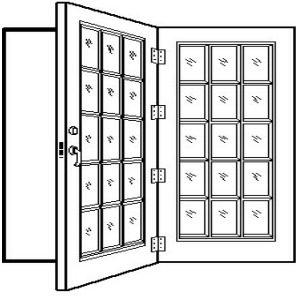
# December 2015

1	Tue	
2	Wed	
3	Thu	
4	Fri	
5	Sat	
6	Sun	St. Nicholas Day
7	Mon	Hanukkah begins
8	Tue	WIP
9	Wed	
10	Thu	
11	Fri	NEW MOON
12	Sat	
13	Sun	
14	Mon	Hanukkah ends
15	Tue	
16	Wed	Deadline for Yule issue
17	Thu	Dragon Palm PNO
18	Fri	
19	Sat	
20	Sun	
21	Mon	Yule
22	Tue	
23	Wed	
24	Thu	Christmas Eve
25	Fri	Christmas Day/ FULL MOON
26	Sat	Boxing Day/ Kwanzaa begins
27	Sun	
28	Mon	
29	Tue	
30	Wed	
31	Thu	New Years Eve

## Calendar Events:

For more information on Dragon Palm Circle Events join the Dragon Palm Events group on Facebook or contact:  
dreamweaver@dragonpalmcircle.org  
For Earth's Web events information go to their web site: EarthsWeb.org  
If you have a calendar event mail the information to: pas@dragonpalm.com. The calendar can be used for festivals, retreats, open rituals, PNO's, concerts and other events of interest to pagans.





# **The Door to the Beyond:** **Mental Health and Paganism** **by Moss Bliss**

## **Door to the Beyond**

Part XVII

### Rest & Recovery

Last issue we talked about action. In this month's walk through the Door, we are walking to our campsite, blowing up our air mattress, and climbing into our sleeping bags, in the company of our Family.

There are two things to remember about community action – 1. Always work FOR something, and 2. never do more than you can, which includes resting up. If you have pagan Family or good friends to rest up with, you get a double recharge over doing it alone.

I originally wrote this in October 2008 on a tiny Netbook in my tent at Splendor Hollow. My closest friend was getting handfasted “tomorrow”, and I'm “best man”. The Drum Circle is sounding great; our best drummer, Greyfix, was back after a long absence. The crickets and tree frogs are adding their music. There are probably over 100 people here, it's Friday night, and more are coming in tomorrow. I've given-and-gotten more good hugs in the past 8 hours than in the previous 5 months. (I hadn't been to a Gathering for months.)

Each time I come to a Gathering, my Family comments on how much better (more well) I look than when they last saw me, which is needed feedback; each time I return, my local friends comment on how much more relaxed and recharged I seem. It's a great cycle to have going. I think I've mentioned before how this Family has stood by me through times when it was all I could do to lay in my tent and whimper. By contrast, I am now working two of my own non-profits, putting in time on a third, writing several websites, doing this article, and working professionally as an editor. This is not being said to puff myself up, but to show you how much improvement is possible, to give you hope in dealing with your own recovery if it is needed. It was not a rapid recovery – I came to SerpentStone in 1996 after years of mixed rejection and acceptance elsewhere.

There are lots of good Families out there, and lots of local and regional Pagan Festivals. I recommend finding the “family” gatherings over the “whoopie Wicca” festivals, but that is my choice. (There is a lower chance of long-term rejection among people who want to be together, rather than those who are looking for a good time.)

Every step along then path was magick. The magick involved asking for help, finding it, and accepting it. Wanting to change is the first step, being willing to change comes next, and then accepting the opportunities to change,, and accepting the length of time it takes to walk the path. I found my Family 19 years ago; found the people who wanted to start the ALT-therapies4bipolar Yahooogroup in 2002; started taking some supplements in 2003... and got totally off psych drugs November 5, 2003. I started doing volunteer work after that, and helped to found Asheville Homeless Network December 2005, but it took a few moves and a lot of years before I thought I could hold a job, my first job com-



ing in July 2012 and my first *good* job in May 2013. Each step was an act of magick, each step required some amount of faith on my part, and I was not taking these steps alone... but having Family would not have helped a bit if I were not willing to take the risks, to do the magick.

It wasn't a straight path lined with constant successes; probably far more failures than successes. I took offense many times when none was intended, and gave offense often when that was not my intention. Most of the time I was sure nobody could screw up as badly as I was doing... (Ever feel like that? Then you're probably bipolar.) Some people helped me feel like that, but it's not like I needed a lot of help. But I knew I didn't want to feel that way, and kept trying to do better.

There were a *lot* of setbacks. I didn't give up, but I sure took some long breaks before getting my resolve up to try again. It will likely be just about as hard for you. (I truly hope some of my readers are ahead of me, and can pat themselves on the back for making it easier on themselves than I did.)

“Try, fail. Try, fail. Try, succeed.” - A. Low, M.D.

“She changes everything She touches, and everything She touches changes.” Nobody has the power to prevent Goddess from helping you, and even the power you have to keep Her from helping you is limited. As the Hindu teachings state, Grace (Anugraha) is unlimited and always available; the only thing you need do is believe yourself worthy of asking for it – and then ask.

I'm aware that perhaps not everyone's path involves totally discontinuing psych drugs, but be aware that, if you find it necessary, it is not only possible but quite safe, with help and support. Part of that support will come straight from Goddess, but it won't happen if your love of yourself does not eventually catch up with your love of Goddess. Don't be hard on yourself along the way, but give yourself a huge pat on the back for each step you take, no matter how small you think it was. Every step adds up.

And soon you will join me walking through yet another Door: The door to freedom and mental health. I will see you next issue.

Hugs,  
Moss



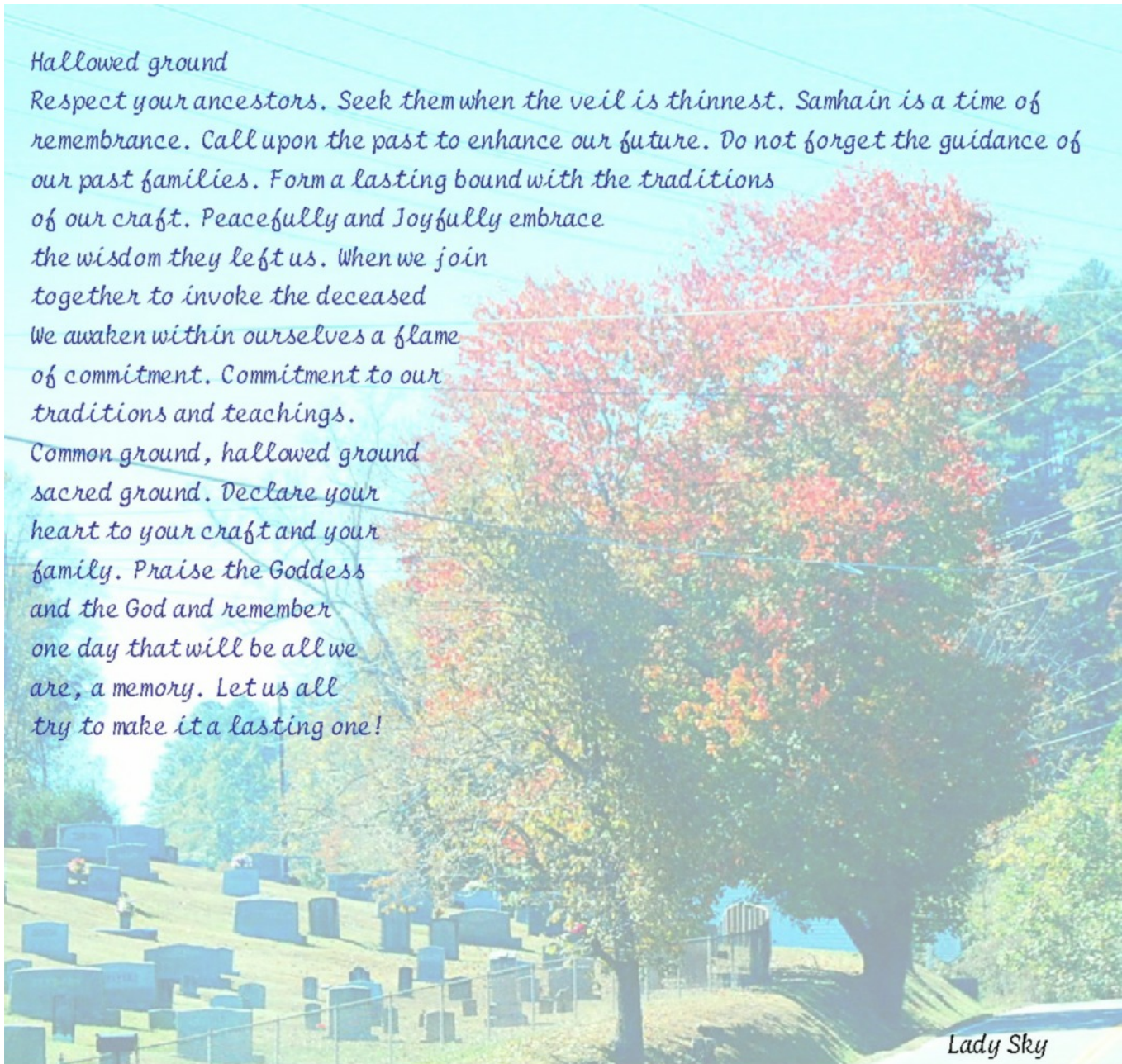
**Shadow on the ground  
You may see me today,  
I'm here and then I'm  
gone.  
But remember me and  
know  
I'm just a shadow on the  
ground.**



### *Hallowed ground*

*Respect your ancestors. Seek them when the veil is thinnest. Samhain is a time of remembrance. Call upon the past to enhance our future. Do not forget the guidance of our past families. Form a lasting bound with the traditions of our craft. Peacefully and Joyfully embrace the wisdom they left us. When we join together to invoke the deceased We awaken within ourselves a flame of commitment. Commitment to our traditions and teachings.*

*Common ground, hallowed ground sacred ground. Declare your heart to your craft and your family. Praise the Goddess and the God and remember one day that will be all we are, a memory. Let us all try to make it a lasting one!*



*Lady Sky*

### **Magickal Tip**

***Carry  
a piece of  
juniper  
for luck.***

*CharissasCauldron.com*

### **Magickal Tip**

***Use ginger  
for  
financial  
gain.***

*CharissasCauldron.com*



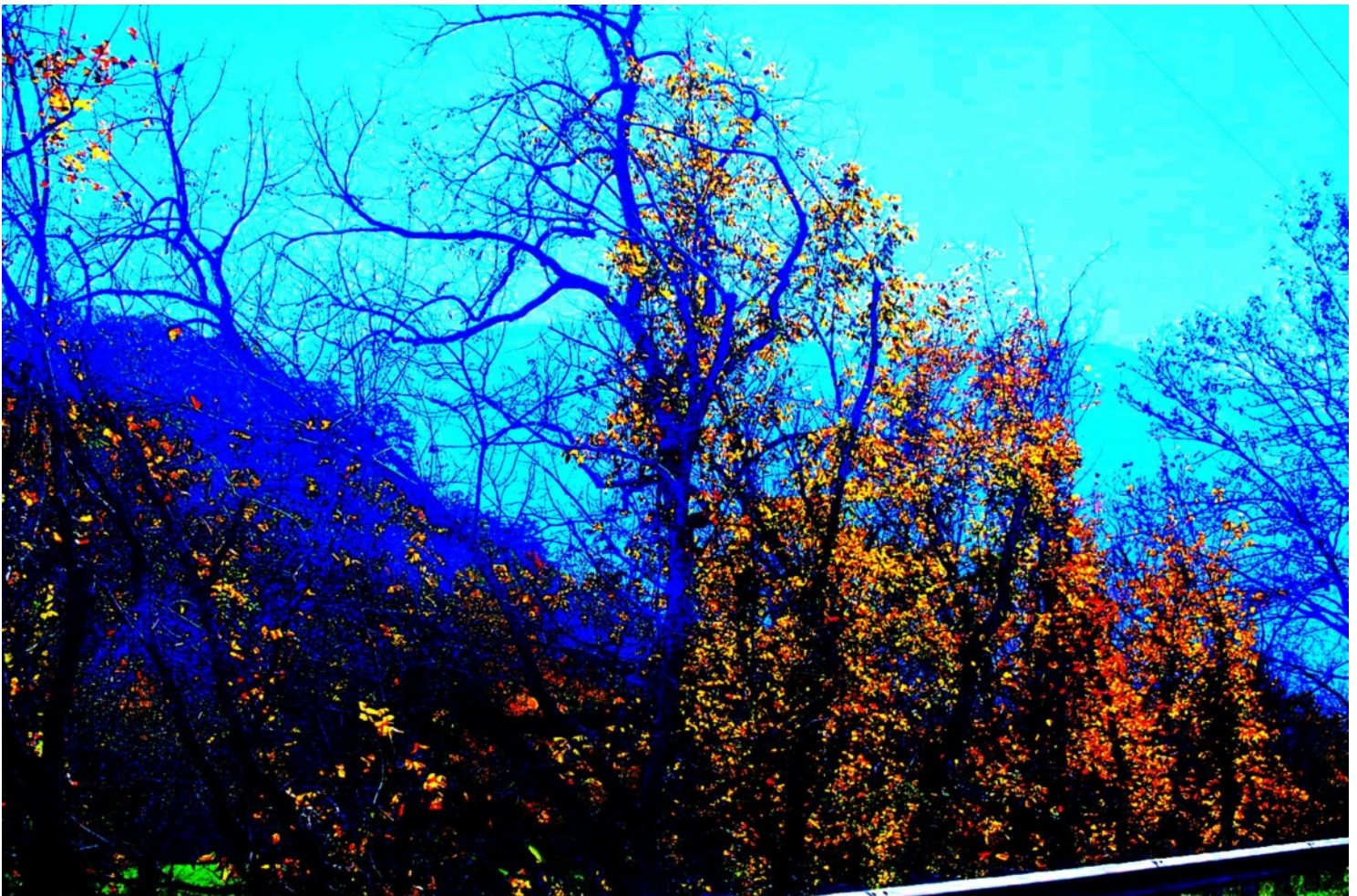


# Dragon Palm Circle Pagan Night Out

When Dragon Palm first got to Tennessee we started using Books a Million in Sevierville as a place to meet new Pagans. We soon realized it would be nice to have a regular meeting place where local Pagans could get together. Back in Florida we would go to a PNO at a new age store called Ancient Ways in Pompano Beach. They would hold several in a month. We held our first PNO on Wednesday February 18<sup>th</sup> , 2004 at BAM. We latter changed the day to the third Thursday of the month

Our PNO's are informal gathering of Pagans - we talk about just about everything and check out the new books. We usually meet in the coffee shop at BAM - but we could be wondering around the store until people start showing up. If you live in East Tennessee or are visiting the Great Smoky Mountains when we are having a PNO - please come. Join our Facebook group Dragon Palm Events this way you can find out if something comes up that will keep us from having a PNO. Here is a list of PNO's for 2016:

Jan. 21, Feb. 18, March 17, April 21, May 19, June 16, July 21, August TBA, Sept. 16, Oct. 20, Nov .17, and Dec. 15. The third Thursday in August will be a full moon - so we will either have it on another night or cancel for the month depending on what's going on the rest of the month.





**Alexandra Merchuant**

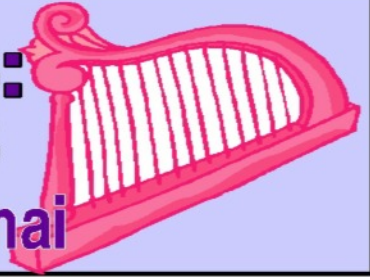




Alexandera Merchuant

# **SINGING IN THE TREES: THE MAKING OF BARDS**

by Moss Bliss, Steward of Shemai



**Singing in the Trees**  
**Samhain 2015**

**by Moss Bliss**  
**Steward of Shernai and Chief Bard of Earth's Web**

There has been a bit more amber fluid pass through the pipes since our last chat, but here we are again.

Samhain is a time of remembering, and the purpose of the Bard is to do just that. We remember the good times, the bad times, the brothers and sisters who passed through or just passed on; we save the stories whether we wrote them or another did.

My brother Amergyn was Chief Bard of SerpentStone. He promised to teach me the path before he passes, but the passing was too quick to facilitate this. Somehow or other, I was guided to meet Lady Emrys, the one who had Barded him. It was a while floundering around looking for the path, but I am upon it once more.

Which means the tradition itself is preserved, my main reason for seeking the path. Even in Triad Bardic College, many have left the path to find their own way, and some have left the plane as Amergyn has. I should have in my hands (and hidden on the website) a nearly-complete history of Triad shortly.

I am pleased to state that the last few Earth's Web Gathers have had very good Bardic circles. This is in part due to my own efforts, and in part due to Aquilis Firehaven, and also the Earth's Web Board and various event organizers. We are remembering. We are singing. We are reciting the tales, the poetry, which has brought us on our respective paths. This is a huge gain over where we have been as a Family since B.T.D. (Before Tuatha Dea).

It also means I have finally achieved a personal detente in my conflict with drumming. From my earliest days in the Craft, people have wanted to dance and drum more than sing and remember and foment growth. At times it seemed a war, at other times the drummers wanted me to sing when they were all done (which usually meant I was pretty far done myself). I wish it known that I have never born ill will against drumming, but there must be a space for barding or we will forget who we are, and why we are that. History should not be relegated to pages which few bother to find, let alone read. It should be created in the moment, shared in the moment, and remembered and sung around the fires.

I returned yesterday from a fundraiser for Wolf PAWS, Inc., a wolf and wolf-dog rescue and recovery operation near Dandridge, where both Lady Emrys and I spent time lovingly stroking our strings and giving wind to our pipes. In my case, I was asked to do a half hour set, and was encouraged to keep going until I had done at least an hour. This was the most appropriate place I have ever sung my "The Last Wolf", and it was well-received.



It is my wish that you each find the time to properly honour Samhain, as the time of remembrance of those who have gone before. Remember what you did together, remember the good you caused in the world together. It's not about candy. You have a story to tell; go tell it!

Hugs,  
Moss

[Moss Bliss is a fallible human being who also appears to be a decent musician, singer, and songwriter, and is an Elder Bard in the Triad Bardic College tradition. He can be reached at [zaivalananda@gmail.com](mailto:zaivalananda@gmail.com) or at TBC's phone, (865) 344-7156.]







Raven wood



Raven wood





Raven wood

***Magickal Tip***

*Stick mint leaves in your shoes for protection against a curse.*

*CharissasCauldron.com*

***Magickal Tip***

*Burn rosemary to cleanse a space.*

*CharissasCauldron.com*



When I am asked to give name to my path, I call myself a Primal Pagan. It's not an easy path to describe in words, but those are the ones that resonate best with how I see myself. This path isn't all flowers and light; sometimes it's gory and reeks of death. It's deeply spiritual while also being fleshy and solidly mundane. The following is an example of one of the many ways I walk this path.

It was a fairly nice day, late morning, when the power went out for not immediately perceivable reason. That happens a lot out here, especially since the big ice storm in February, so we mostly just roll with it. I grabbed a book to read while my beloved went out on his motor-bike for a ride and asked me to call when the power came back.

It didn't seem like it was long before the power did come back on; surely it couldn't have been more than an hour. I picked up the phone to call him, but it was at that moment that he came rolling back up to the cabin and asked if I wanted a couple deer carcasses. Being who I am, I immediately got dressed for leaving and grabbed my roadkill kit. I knew we had to hurry; I'm not the only scavenger around.

It was a bit of a drive, him leading on his bike and me driving the somewhat slower Kawasaki Mule, but we got both deer hauled back home without incident. One was just bone and connective tissue with some skin still attached, but the other was whole and had only just begun to rot.

I took both down to the meadow with my kit and a bucket. The long-dead deer was first and done quickly, her bones stowed in the cage for nature to finish cleaning. The whole deer took several hours to process. It was dark when I was done and I blessed the forethought to bring a flashlight.

The whole deer was male; he had the obvious parts and little nubs on his head that would have become antlers. Beginning my work on the body, I felt his spirit lingering near; it was a fairly recent kill, indeed.

Feeling his attention on me, it would have been rude to ignore him, so I talked to him as I worked. I told him that I would not have wished his death, especially not in such a wasteful manner, but I am appreciative of the resources I've gained by it, and I'm sorry for any suffering he experienced. I shared with him my thoughts on the mechanics of death, though I didn't speculate on where the spirit might go once he passed beyond the veil. I told him about all the different things I can make from his parts and assured him that I would make respectful use of everything I could.

It was hard work, and very messy. I had never before processed a deer alone and I apologized for any sloppiness in my skinning and de-fleshing. I felt him fade the further into the process I got. It felt peaceful, like he was satisfied with my work, however in-expert.



His bones have joined those of the other deer; amazingly, I managed to fit both skeletons in the two small cages I already had down there. Once the insects have stripped the bones clean, I will scrub them with soap and water, de-grease them in a crock pot on a low setting, then whiten them in a bath of hydrogen peroxide before turning them into various creations for my store. They will become wands, athames, rune sets, pendulums, and more; all will be things of both beauty and purpose.

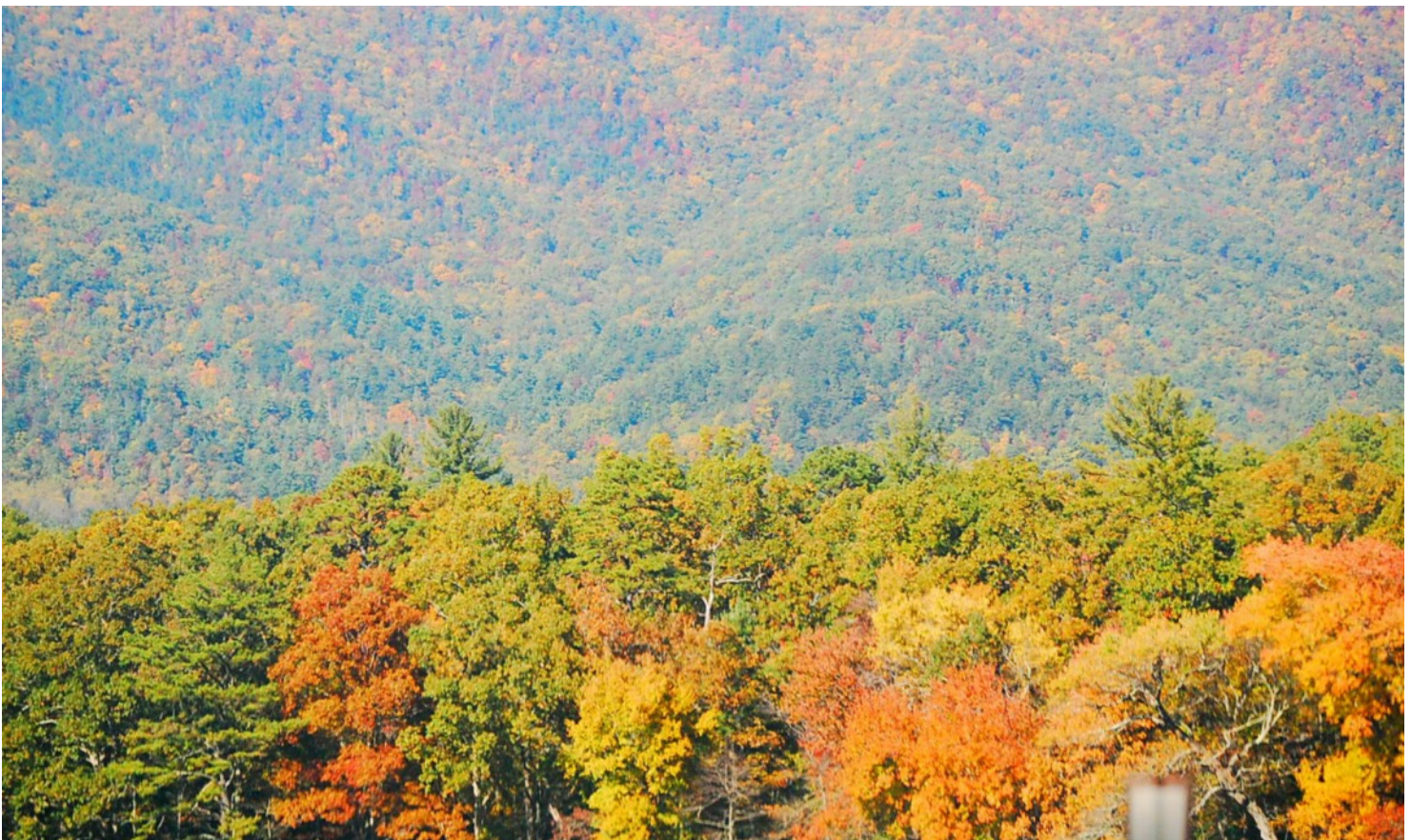
I also harvested the deer's skin, heart, ears, and even managed some decent looking pieces of sinew. The heart will be sold to someone to preserve as a wet specimen. Though macabre, I like that it will be admired as beautiful and interesting for many years to come.

Working the skin, I was up until around 1 AM that night. I scraped the meaty bits from the inside, then immersed the skin in a bucket of warm water and wood ash for about 48 hours so the hair would more easily scrape off. I spent another 4 or 5 hours Thursday in scraping the hair and re-scraping the flesh side. The bare, clean skin is currently covered in borax and black pepper (fly deterrent), and stretched on a board to dry by the wood-stove. My hope is that I've done well enough to get usable rawhide out of it for rattles (at the very least), and hopefully even a passable drum-head.

The sinew, I cleaned and dried. I hope to use it in crafting with the rawhide. I've read some about how to separate and use the strands, but have no experience with it so far.

The ears, I have yet to clean. Honestly, I just ran out of steam. But they will keep in the fridge until I have the energy to work with them again. I am not sure what I'll do with them, but my intuition whispered to take them. I'm learning to listen to that whisper more and more, so there they are.

All together, that's around 15 hours of work I've so far put into this raw material, but it's been very rewarding. Time well spent, and (I hope) path well walked.





**Alexandera Merchuant**





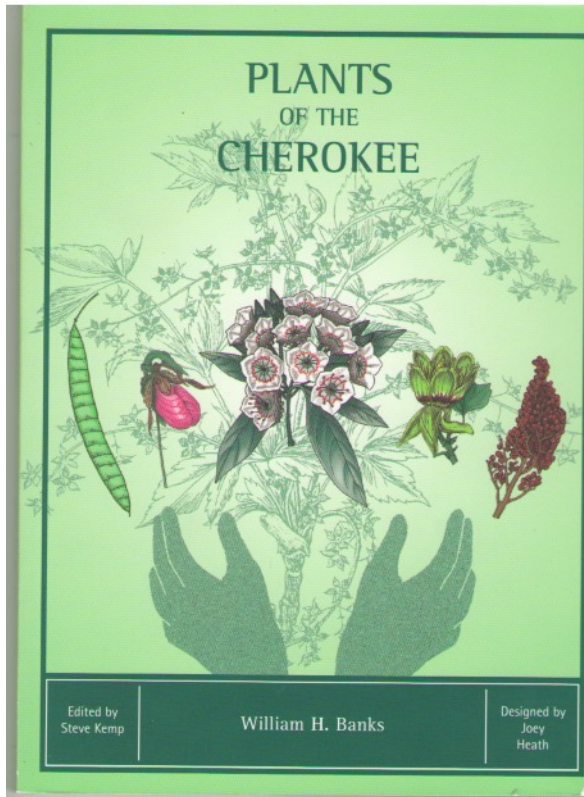
**Alexandera Merchuant**



# Book review –

Plants Of The Cherokee by William H. Banks, trade paperback \$11.95 Published by Great Smoky Mountains Association.

Ever since we have moved to the Great Smoky Mountain area of Tennessee I have been looking for a book on local plants and herbs and how to use them. I would check local book stores, gift shops, and park stores. But I would look where they had the nature guides which would give you plants, rocks, birds, and other wild life – but they were to identify the plants – not it uses. We were going on the loop road through Cades Cove in the National Park and stopped at the gift shop in the middle of the loop. After doing my looking in the nature books – I happened to look at some books on the Cherokee and low and behold – they had the type of book I have been looking for.



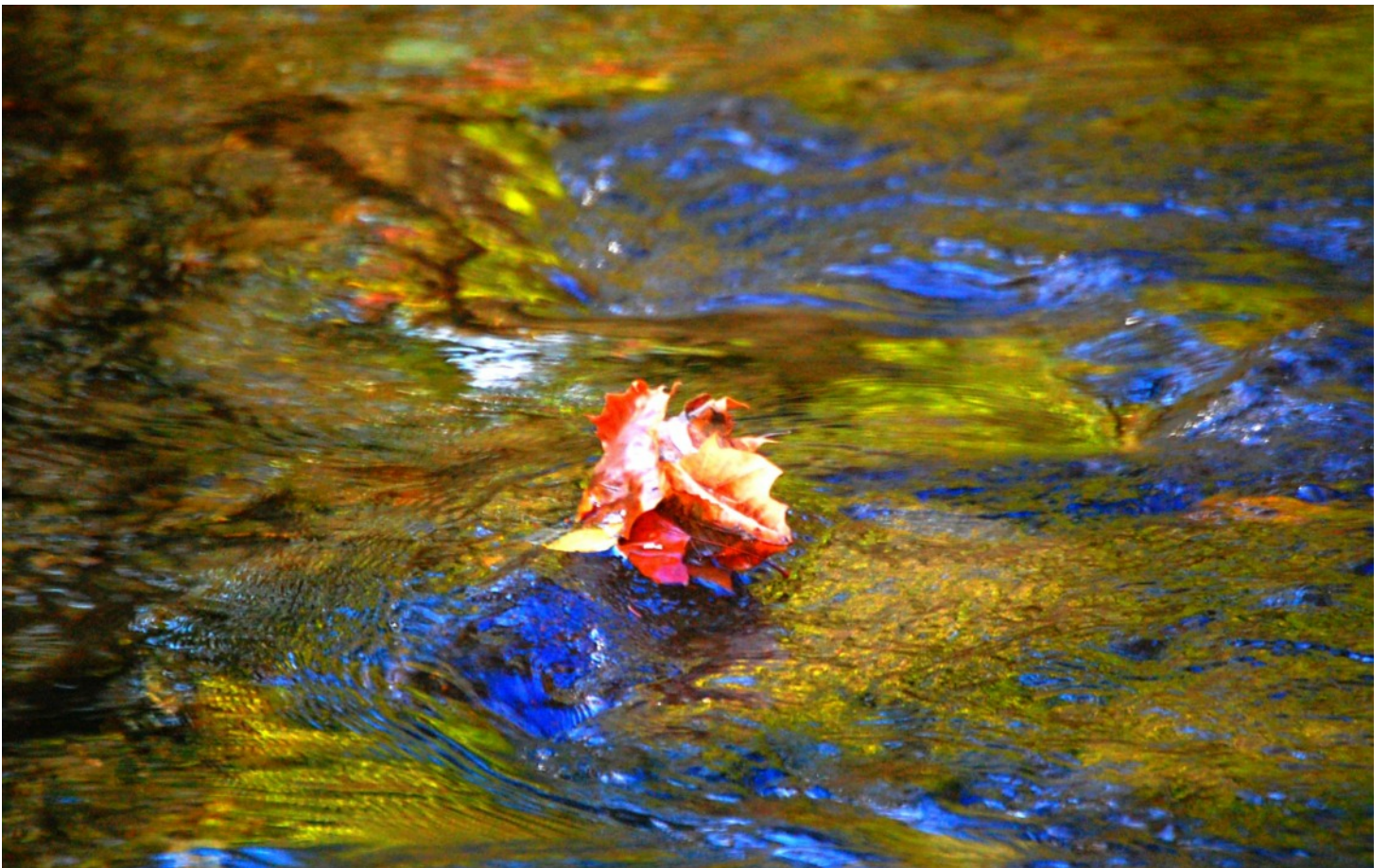
The subtitle of the book is Medicinal, Edible, and Useful Plants of the Eastern Cherokee Indians. The section of the book on the plants have the plants divided into families. They give the common name, real name, and Cherokee name of the plant and then tells what it's used for and how to use it. With some it gives very detailed drawings of the plants.

Chapter five of the book is on the Sacred Formulas of the Cherokee. Some are rituals or spells some are how to mix some of the cures.

This book would be a good addition to any Pagan library. If you live close to or visit the Great Smoky Mountains National Park you can find it in the gift shops within the park. If not you can get by writing to Great Smoky Mountains Association, P.O.Box 130, Gatlinburg, TN 37738. Their website is [www.Smokiesinformation.org](http://www.Smokiesinformation.org)







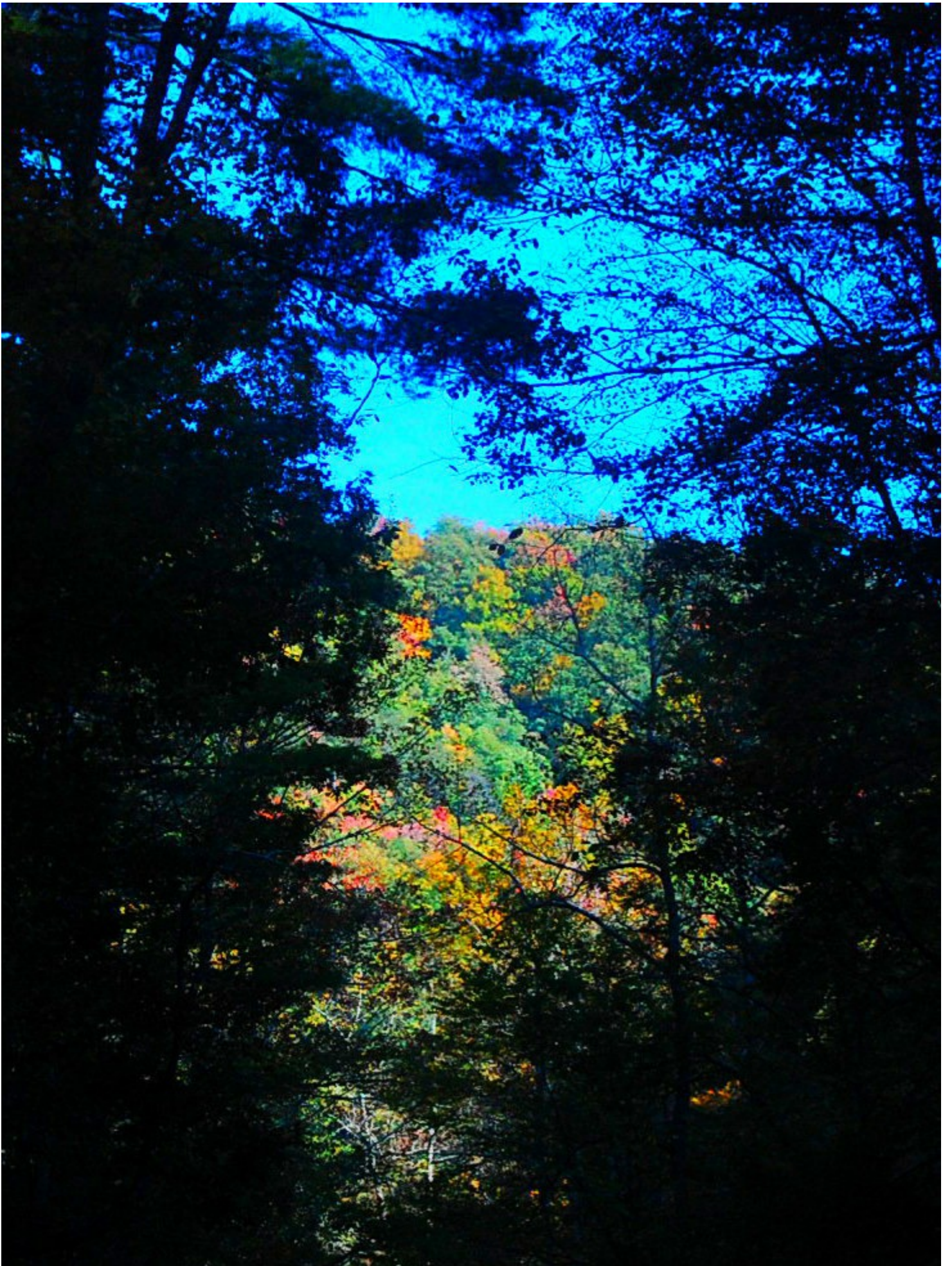




This month cover was done by Dreamweaver. The above photo is what we took the cover from. Ashampoo Photo Commander 12 was used to enhance the colors. It was shoot in Cades Cove in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Dreamweaver has been taking pictures for over sixty years as a hobby. Starting at five with a brownie box camera. In college built a darkroom so that he could develop and print his pictures at home. (Black and White - it was cheaper to have color developed professionally than do it yourself.) Used for years a Pentax 35mm SLR - and when digital cameras came into being stated that digital would NEVER replace film. Today he uses a Nikon D40 DSLR - and wishes he had digital in his college days - being about to shoot over 2000 picture on one SD card is much better than only being able to shoot 36 pictures at a time before reloading. And computer photo programs are much better than a dark room.









# NEXT ISSUE!!!

# YULE 2015

## Deadline for submissions is Dec. 16th

This marks our third Yule issue.

We are always looking for new contributors.





# Pagan Fun Time



## SAMHAIN WORD SEARCH

U	J	O	D	W	C	A	P	P	L	E	S	B	R	Q
K	Z	B	T	I	P	U	M	P	K	I	N	K	F	Y
X	O	J	R	C	D	S	F	C	H	B	Q	J	R	H
O	R	C	L	D	A	I	S	B	A	E	M	O	B	J
Y	L	S	I	M	N	T	V	C	D	T	C	E	Q	C
E	I	U	H	T	I	O	I	I	R	B	S	A	D	W
O	R	A	N	A	N	R	J	R	N	Y	Z	J	T	Z
D	I	D	E	E	X	A	P	U	I	A	I	S	I	E
N	H	F	E	R	H	T	V	Q	W	P	T	N	F	L
M	O	Q	W	T	I	M	R	X	I	E	S	I	G	K
Y	T	H	O	Q	J	O	J	I	T	R	C	E	O	R
Z	S	F	L	Z	E	O	S	E	C	N	A	É	S	N
J	W	B	L	F	J	N	C	U	H	K	G	M	R	U
C	Y	K	A	S	T	A	B	A	E	X	A	L	F	Z
P	B	I	H	H	A	R	V	E	S	T	S	H	K	T

HALLOWEEN  
SAMHAIN  
APPLES  
CATS  
CIRCLE  
SPIRIT  
DIVINATION  
DRUID  
LYCANTHROPY  
HECATE  
PUMPKIN  
SCRYING  
SÉANCE  
TRICK  
TREAT  
WITCHES  
TAROT  
HARVEST  
MOON  
BATS  
BOO

$$3 \text{ skull} + 8 = \text{pumpkin} - 4$$

$$-3 + \text{pumpkin} = -4 + 8 \times 2$$

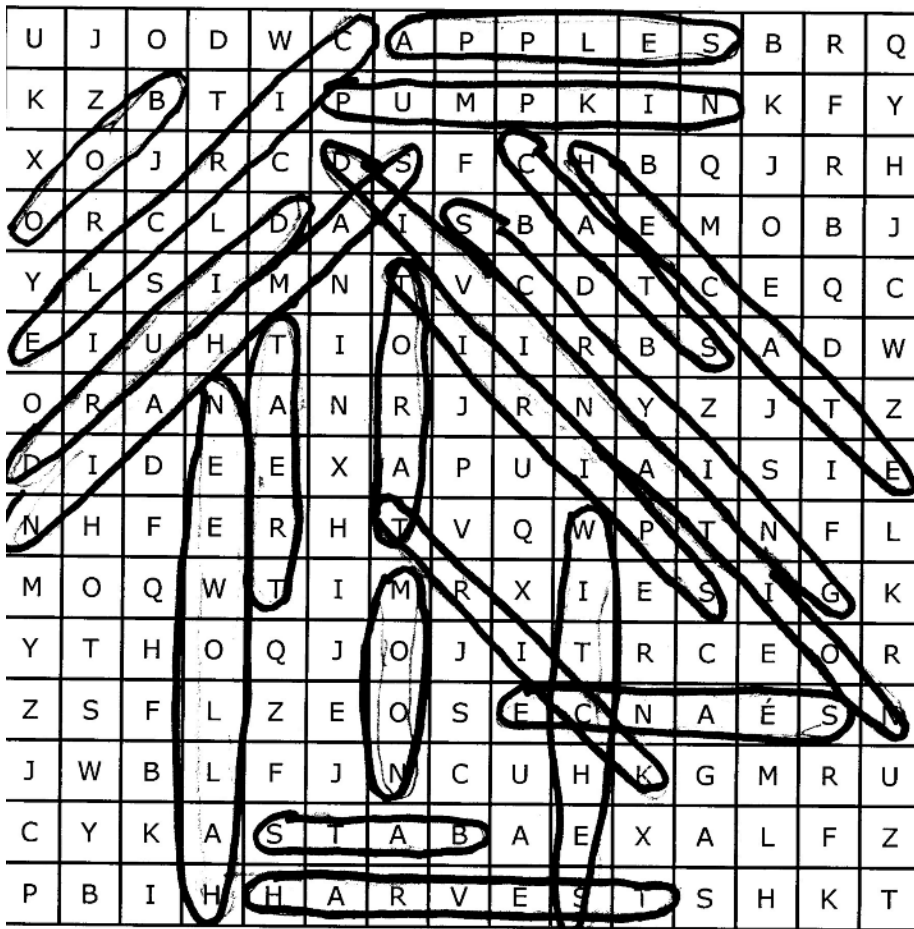
$$\text{pumpkin} - \text{skull} = \sqrt{\text{candle}} \times 7$$

$$\text{candle} = ?$$

Brought to you by  
Hearthside Handmade

[HearthsideHandmade.Storenvy.com](http://HearthsideHandmade.Storenvy.com)





What is the difference between New Age and Pagan?  
Around \$500.00 a weekend.

What is the definition of a saint?  
A dead liberal who is worshiped by living conservatives.

What do you call 13 Witches in a hot tub?  
A Self-Cleaning Coven

What is one thing Homeland Security never worries about?  
An airplane being hijacked by a group of radical Unitarians.

What is the definition of Atheism?  
A non-prophet organization.

What do you call a dating club for unattached Witches?  
Craft singles

### 20 Ways To Not Get Invited Back Into A Coven!

1. Take the ritual sword from the altar and make sounds like Darth Vader..."Luke, I am your father!"...and start making light saber noises.
2. Start skat-singing when chanting.
3. Take the ritual athame from the altar and start cleaning your nails with it.
4. When taking a sip of the ritual wine, act like a wine snob and comment on it.
5. When doing the spiral dance, make a conga line.
6. Call down the Goddess with "Get your ass down here, Big Momma!"
7. Call down the God with "Our Father, who art in Heaven..."
8. When chanting the names of the Goddess, randomly include Pokemon names.
9. When being smudged, complain about second-hand smoke.
10. In a drumming circle, laugh insanely and start drumming the beat to "Wipe Out".
11. When in a skyclad circle, randomly point and laugh.
12. When the ritual wine goblet is passed to you, chug it and ask for more.
13. Invoke Satan.
14. Take out a bible and start evangelizing.
15. Light up a cigar.
16. Bring a cute furry creature and offer it as a blood sacrifice.
17. Talk a lot about casting spells for revenge against people who have offended you.
18. At a handfasting say "Thank God! Maybe now i'll get some grandchildren!"
19. When in circle, answer your cell phone.
20. Respond to "So Mote it Be!" with "Amen!"



