

first things first



During this time of year our deities are especially imminent. We see the Green Man in the leafing trees; we can smell the Goddess's perfume in the budding flowers. Persephone has risen from her underworld prison *cum* kingdom and the Oak King is seated once again on his throne. It's a time when the hopes that carried us through the long winter are rewarded. Just as everyone is Irish on St. Paddy's Day, a fine Beltane morning can leave the most closed-minded muggle feeling positively witchy.

For Christopher Knowles, our gods might be as close as your local comics store. He postulates that Superman may be our Samson and the Fantastic Four and X-Men our Knights of the Round Table. It's an idea guaranteed to stir up arguments, not to mention a few smug "I always *knew* you got your theology from comic books!" comments. But since we at have never shied away from controversy, we present an excerpt from his new book, *Our Gods Wear Spandex*. Christopher's book covers the history (and pre-history) of the superhero(ine) phenomenon, including its roots in ancient legends and 19th century occultism; we are only able to offer you a brief taste of his work, but even that nibble make convince you to view the latest big-screen adaptation of a comic-book mythos in a new light.

Those who love both comics and role-playing games are in for a special treat: Phil Brucato's latest column continues his series on gaming, magic and the nexus between them, including a description of the vast number of games (and game designers) who are conscious that the worlds they have created have more resonance than a few late-nights of dice-rolling and dungeon-mashing.

At Beltane, our thoughts often turn to love — or, at the very least, to mutually gratifying physical encounters. If you want to celebrate the season by exploring a little bit of sexual magic, you've come to the right place. The dynamic duo of Lupa and Taylor Ellwood have given us a tantalizing taste of the exotic with their article on kink magic; read it amongst yourselves or invite a special friend (or several) to share the experience. Should you want something afterward to commemorate the occasion, Sheela Ardrian's latest column offers some helpful pointers on erotic body modifications.

This is a season when promises are fulfilled — and few newcomers are quite as promising as the multitalented Regan High Priestess. Michael Night Sky's conversation with this scintillating singer, harpist, composer, and producer Regan High Priestess (who can now add "cover model" to her already impressive resume) gives us lots to think over, and her beautiful portraits (featured in our first-ever color interior

pages) provides plenty of luscious images to enjoy as well. Meanwhile, Kohinoor Setora takes us to Europe for a short visit with the performer and Witch Nebelhexe, while Natalie Zaman provides an extended guide for a visit to Glastonbury — an article which should prove most useful perfect for folks who have been promising themselves a summer pilgrimage.

What's that? Something about the currency exchange rate and the cost of flying? Never fear: if you can't travel across the pond this summer, there's plenty to keep you occupied here in North America. A.C. Fisher Aldaag has provided a comprehensive review of the last year's 25th anniversary Pagan Spirit Gathering, one of America's largest and longest-running Pagan festivals, while Bronwen Forbes clues us in to steps to take to enjoy whatever summer festival we choose to attend. We added a list of twenty-six Pagan (and Pagan-friendly) summer festivals for you to choose among for your outdoor revelry. Enjoy your summer!

We are also enjoying what appears to be a hint of political renewal, as three challengers have stepped forward to claim power in D.C. All three are promising to be agents of change, but those of us who have felt like outsiders during the past three-quarters of a decade aren't waiting for change to be handed down from above; we are taking matters into our own hands. On February 8, 2008 Wiccan High Priest and prison chaplain Patrick McCollum spoke before the United States Commission on Civil Rights. McCollum discussed the Dominant Lens Religion Factor, "a process whereby administrators and [prison] security staff view all faith practices from the perspective of the Dominant faiths only, leaving no consideration that there are different ways to practice religion." We congratulate McCollum on his historic presentation: let us hope it marks the beginning of a new era of tolerance and religious pluralism for all.

But as the French say, "plus ça change, plus ça meme chose." Spring and summer are part of the Eternal Cycle: all births are really rebirths. We may have some new features (we're particularly proud of our new color section!) but we're still bringing you the stuff you love. Our columnists are still offering sage advice and astrological tips: our reviewers are still tipping you to the best (and worst) newbooks, products and music. We're growing (and we hope, improving), but we're still the *newWitch* you've loved since our maiden voyage. But enough from me. Enjoy the weather and this issue! See you at Lammastide.



new **Witch**
CUTTING EDGE PAGANISM

table of contents

#17 SUMMER 2008

FEATURES

32 CREATING BEAUTY WITH REGAN HIGH PRIESTESS

Regan High Priestess was looking forward to a comfortable future; well on her way to completing a degree in Computer Information Systems, she could have had her choice of lucrative high-tech jobs. Then, one evening she found herself in the audience of Cirque du Soleil's *Mystère*, and her world turned upside-down. Suddenly, she realized her true vocation. "I realized that I had to follow my calling — a calling to create beauty in the world." Regan changed her major and became a full-time performer. Now she's an up-and-coming performance artist with a growing following in the Pagan/Faery communities. INTERVIEW BY MICHAEL NIGHT SKY.

40 ESOTERIC ECSTASY: AN INTRODUCTION TO KINK MAGIC

Vanilla" sex — no frills, no kinks, just the basics — is so named because it's the most popular type of sex. That being said, just like ice cream, there are numerous flavors of sex. Generally these flavors fall under the heading of "kink", a category that includes BDSM* and numerous other consensual fetishes. And, just as with vanilla sex, kinky sex can be applied to the practice of sex magic. BY TAYLOR ELLWOOD AND LUPA.

45 THE WANDERING WITCH GOES TO GLASTONBURY

Looking for King Arthur, Pagan Britain and just possibly the Isle of Avalon? Our guide to one of the world's oldest New Age centres and pilgrimage sites — the magical, mystical town of Glastonbury — will show you the way. BY NATALIE ZAMAN.

50 FESTIVAL SEASON: GUIDE TO PAGAN SUMMER FUN

SPOTLIGHT ON PSG'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY BASH: Combine a Forth of July parade, a three-ring circus, an old-fashioned drive-in movie theatre, and a Renaissance fair, you'll have some idea of what Pagan Spirit Gathering is about. Add a liberal sprinkling of fairy dust, some moonbeams and rainbows, and, well, you get the picture. BY K. A. LAITY.

PLUS: 10 STEPS TO SURVIVING AND ENJOYING YOUR FIRST PAGAN FESTIVAL and 26 PAGAN SUMMER FESTIVALS.



57 OUR GODS WEAR SPANDEX

Today's cult of the Superhero has deep roots in the human psyche. This excerpt traces the connections between the gods of antiquity and today's caped crusaders. BY CHRIS KNOWLES.
PLUS: a look at the kinky daddy of Wonder Woman.

COLUMNS

- 17 **FOXY WITCH:** Erotic Body Mods
BY SHEELA ARDRIAN
- 19 **BELL, BOOK, & CANDLE:** Honor Your Dead
BY REV. GALINA KRASSKOVA
- 21 **ASTRO SPELL:** Spell-casting almanac.
BY ELIZABETH HAZEL
- 27 **CHALICE AND KEYBOARD:** Pagans and RPGs, Part Deux
BY PHIL BRUCATO
- 80 **GOOD WITCH/BAD WITCH:** Pagan personal advice.

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 1 **FIRST THINGS FIRST:** Editor speaks.
- 5 **RANT & RAVE:** Dear *newWitch*.
- 15 **NEW WITCH VOICES:** Your dreams, ideas, stories.
- 29 **CARGO CULT:** Cool bling for your Witchy thing.
- 61 **SPELL IT OUT:** Home of the famous "zero broomstick" review.
- 62 **SPOTLIGHT ON:** Pagan culture highlights.
- 78 **SPELLBOUND:** Find it, sell it, buy it here.

Issue #17 Summer 2008

newWitch (ISSN 1546-2838) is published quarterly by BBI Media, Inc., P O Box 687, Forest Grove, OR 97116, and at additional mailing offices. POST-MASTER: Send address changes to *newWitch*, P. O. Box 687, Forest Grove, OR 97116.
Editor-in-Chief: Anne Newkirk Niven
Managing Editor: Kenaz Filan
Cover Design, Art Editor & IT Support: Alan Niven
Proofreader: Shanti Fader
Office Assistance: Arthur, Aidan & Andrew Niven
Back Issue Fulfillment:
Publishers Data Management Group

newWitch Office NEW ADDRESS!
P O Box 687, Forest Grove, OR 97116
Customer Service, call toll-free 888-724-3966 or 503-430-8817
Email: anne1@bbimedia.com;
order online at www.newwitch.com,
\$20 per year (\$30 outside U.S.)
Office hours 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Pacific.
Contents ©2008 BBI Media, Inc. Printed by
Ripon Community Printers, Ripon, WI.

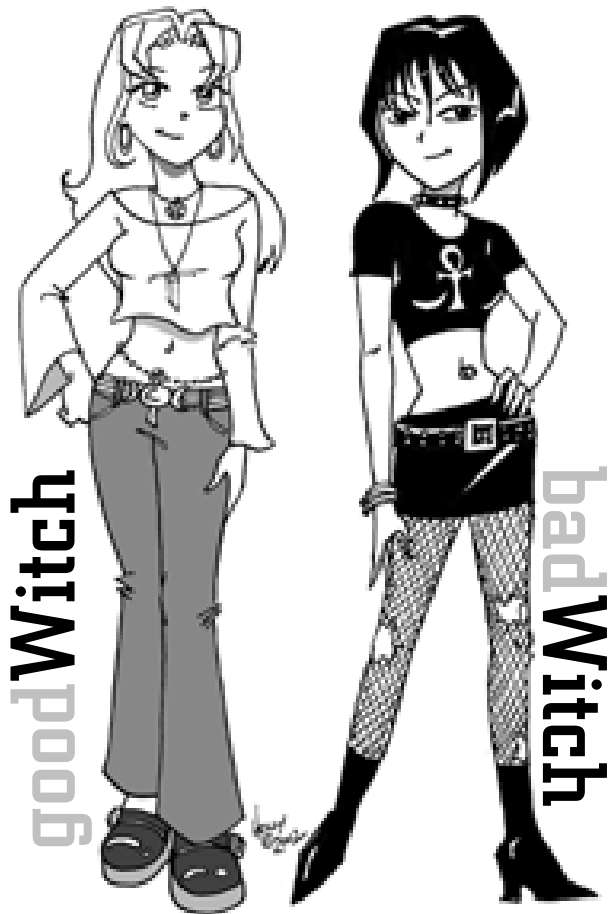
Unless otherwise noted, all photography of people included herein are of professional models, for illustrative purposes only and do not represent any person(s) affiliation with Paganism, Wicca, or other magical practices; or their participation in any activities or professions other than as photographic models.

Dear GW/BW,

As an occultist with very little magical experience, I'm not sure I should even fancy an attempt at what I wish to try. I would like to infuse different types of magick (mostly with mixed practices as well) and create my own Craft. What I would like to accomplish most by doing this is helping the families who have recently lost loved ones find peace and comfort knowing those lost have done the same. (I would, of course, not charge them for my services as happiness is better spent than money.) The things I would like to use are: necromancy, Wicca, elemental, Faerie, blood, herbs, stones and anything else possible. In your opinion, would this be possible without harming those on the Planes and tearing the veil to where it couldn't be fixed, basically bringing doom to us all?

Blessed be!

Keegan in Kentucky (incarcerated)



Dear Keegan,

Call me conservative, but I get a chill right up my spine when you, an self-described Craft newbie, talks about dabbling in necromancy. While I agree with BW that you are unlikely to call down the wrath of the Great Old Ones and their minions upon the world, there's no telling what harm you might do to yourself. GW is getting awfully cranky about this point: she believes that mixing-and-matching pantheons and magical methodologies, particularly when one is attempting advanced work like contacting the deceased, is a *baaad* idea. GW also firmly believes that necromancy is a discipline best left for experienced practitioners. Contacting the dead (your ancestors or that of your clients) is more risky than the fluffy-bunnies of the world would have you believe: first, because there are a lot of entities wandering around, and not all of them are friendly (hence advanced skills in discernment, shielding, and psychic self-defense are absolute "must-have" skills) and second, because the dead aren't necessarily smart, or even good. Just like anyone you might meet on the street (or behind bars) the dead have their own motives and needs, and they might not always match your own.

Do yourself a favor, Keegan, and grow your skills for a time; begin, for example, by working with your own ancestors. (See Galina's column in this issue to get you started.) When you have several years of ancestor work under your belt, then ask your dead if they think it is a good idea for you to take up this cause — and seriously consider following their advice.

Good Witch

Dear Keegan,

First, a word of reassurance: you are in no danger of rending the veil and bringing doom to us all. (It's good that you thought about these things, though: BW only wishes her boyfriend could show such forethought once in a while). As far as drawing from a number of different sources and creating your own magical tradition, BW has always believed that variety is the spice of life. While it might not be a writer's retreat, your current location gives you plenty of free time to work on your project. And it sounds like your heart is in the right place, so BW sees no reason why you shouldn't buckle down, study hard, and set about creating your Craft. Sure, its a big project, but ambition is a great thing. BW thinks her boyfriend left his ambition right next to his forethought, but that's another story altogether...



Got a sticky question for the ladies? We love 'em. Email your questions to: meditor@newwitch.com or mail to: Good Witch/Bad Witch, c/o newWitch, P.O. Box 687, Forest Grove, OR 97116. ©