



PUC's Voice



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The Lady and the Fanatic

Two warriors faced off in the City of New York on September 11th, 2001. One warrior was the Lady Liberty and the other was the Fanatic.

The battle was not about water rights, genetically engineered foods, jobs or even taxes. This battle is about freedom and our very right to exist. By the word "our", I mean those who are free or want to be free.

Even though some see American fixtures such as the Pentagon as a source of third world oppression, it is the same organization that saved the world from the last Fanatic. And the World Trade Center may have been seen as the symbol of the slave master for the third world, however it housed the records and managers of the world's largest retirement funds where workers from all over the planet have placed their retirement savings. When people write checks to the International Red Cross or World Wildlife Fund, chances are companies with offices at the World Trade Center handled those account transactions.

One of the goals of the Fanatic is to accelerate the loss of freedom. We will have more intrusion into privacy, impediments to travel and our rights to protest will be heavily curtailed. These mindless attacks are a bane for those of us who strive to change society by peaceful means - through printed words,



In spite of time and change 'Lady Liberty,' remains a symbol of freedom for America and the world.

pressed ideas and marches in the streets.

The Fanatic did make war upon The Lady Liberty and we, you and I, are The Lady. The Fanatic made war upon us, each and every one. So how do we, the physical embodiment of The Lady, fight the Fanatic? By maintaining our resolve to be free. The very act of maintaining freedom is the mightiest weapon that can be used against The Fanatic.

We must be diligent in our efforts to preserve freedom and to continue to press our elected officials to support initiatives that fight terrorism, fundamentalism and extremism of any kind. Other than scale, there is no difference between a pro-environmental bombing of a timber mill and an anti-capitalist destruction of a major world financial center. None. Belief, faith and cause are the foundations of terrorism,

fundamentalism and extremism - all of which should be avoided by those who truly embrace freedom.

The Lady does have a very black eye from her battle with the Fanatic on Manhattan Island, but the victorious Fanatic walked away with a death sentence carved heavy upon his brow.

Intolerance in the 'Land Of Liberty'

I am a news hound. I listen to the news every morning while preparing for work. On the morning of Sept. 11, I heard news of an airplane crashing into the World Trade Center. I immediately called my Pastor, my mother and a few others who were not prone to watch the news in the morning. When the second plane crashed into the second tower, visible to all watching the news, terrorism was confirmed. I had to leave for work shocked, numb and dumbfounded.

I am an Office Manager and had to go in regardless of my inclinations at the moment. I am also a Witch of the Wiccan faith, a Pagan and a realist. I didn't have a hair of gas in my car and needed to stop at the Shell 5 blocks away. That station is owned by Muslims and for the first time in my life, I didn't want to look at them. The owner of the station has always been rude to me, but I never reflected that on his faith, I just assumed it was a personality defect. I had no choice but to go to that gas station. None of the Muslim men were anywhere in sight. A Muslim woman who had never been there before was behind the counter. This further fueled my new-found religious intolerance. I thought "Of course, women are dispensable in their faith."

I had lunch with my Pastor and several others. My Pastor was feeling the same way that I was. She spoke of going to the Mosque and talking to the Iman. She wanted the Iman to look in her eyes and explain how this act of terrorism could be justified spiritually. As we discussed this, we realized how religiously intolerant we sounded. We also realized what danger Muslims in this country were in. We decided to do a prayer circle that night for healing for this earth, for this country and for religious freedom. By the end of lunch, my Pastor had decided to go to the Mosque to extend her hand in help to the Iman.

I returned to work, afraid for her. I was afraid that she would be gunned down by some jerk, mistaking her for a Muslim and I was afraid that she would be harmed by Muslims thinking that this blonde-haired woman came to harm them.

When my Pastor got to the Mosque, she took off her shoes, covered her head and approached. No one was there. As she was leaving a note for the Iman, some idiot drove by screaming obscenities as to how all Arabs, Ragheads, Camel-jockeys etc. should die in the lake of fire of Christendom, etc., ad nauseam.

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Showing Support With Peace Plantings

Since the tragedy on September 11, many Americans have made a special effort to attend religious services designed to be plural in expression. As Americans we are unified by our compassion for those who are suffering. As Pagans we are in addition unified by our desire to see acceptance and humanity in our world. Many Pagans have been praying for peace and healing these last few weeks with the rest of America by making "Pagan Peace Plantings".

Spreading throughout the Southeast the Peace Planting is being used as a unifying pagan prayer action in response to the terror attacks. This type of prayer is simply called a "prayer bundle". In creating the prayer we gather certain items, both for their symbolic value and energetic properties, to place in a small bundle. Just as you would gather ingredients for a main dish to achieve the taste you prefer, we gather herbs and minerals of high quality and combine them.

This Peace Planting prayer has been passed to hundreds of people and you are encouraged to create your own. It only takes a few moments and is a pleasant and meditative way to engage the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual aspects in prayer or directed thought.

The first step, and the most important part of any prayer

bundle, is the written prayer to focus the mind and heart. This prayer may be addressed to the Goddess or God of your faith or any expression you choose such as to the One God; to Those Suffering; to Humankind etc. Remember to concentrate on healing, peace and balance.

The ingredients for the Peace Plantings could include, a written prayer for peace, white sage for purification, rose quartz for love, hematite for balance, rosemary or sea salt for protection, coins for prosperity, or any other object of meaning devoted to the purpose of the Peace Planting. Place the ingredients in the center of a cloth circle and cinch it with a cord. Cinch the bundle three times. As you tie each knot repeat the word "peace" or if you prefer shalom, amen, so mote it be, bless us, or whatever works best for you. Bury the bundle at your home and visualize the energy of these Peace Plantings rising up from the earth, infusing our water, food and foundations with their messages.

One of the strongest statements Pagans make is that 'feeling' must be combined with action. Just as we use recycled paper products to augment our prayers for a healthy planet, these Peace Plantings are also combined with blood and money donations, and resistance to fear and hatred in our daily lives and in all our relations.

A Measure of Responsibility

We live in a world that is filled with pain and sorrow. Over the past several days, this has really been brought to our attention. We have had an attack made upon American soil that overshadows any attack that has ever been made upon us by an outside force. We have seen hundreds of people killed or wounded and thousands of families torn apart by this act of aggression. Millions of people within the U S have been touched by these terrorist attacks upon us. Millions upon millions more across the world were also touched by what happened. We have seen outpourings of grief from countries such as Kosovo, Poland, and dozens of others have thrust themselves upon our attention. We have even seen countries that we believed to be our political and military enemies show us that they feel for our losses. Sadness and patriotism have become intertwined and run through almost every heart in the United States as well as throughout world. We have seen acts of bravery from people for whom we expect it, such as the Police and Firefighters, but we have also see it in the acts of ordinary citizens of our country who have done so many things to help and recover those who have been lost, and to provide comfort and care for those that were left behind by those killed in the attacks.

Here in Denver, Colorado where I live, there were hundreds of people who began to line up just minutes after the attacks to begin giving blood for those that were injured and dying. People opened their homes to those who were left stranded by the airlines being grounded, asking for nothing in

return. I know that this is not the only place that this happened, and I do not intend to make it sound that way. I only mean to say that even here, halfway across the continent from the area of attack, the people banded together to do what they could to help. All across the nation, actions like this became common. People gave of their time, their blood, and their money; anything that would be needed. It was a beautiful and heart-wrenching sight to see. People did things like this without even being asked. They did it because they felt that it was their responsibility as Americans to help those who were fallen.

We live in a free democracy. With this privilege come a plethora of important responsibilities that must be answered to insure that democracy continues. Freedom is maintained precariously on a fine line. It takes little to upset that balance. So it is with life in general. We of the Pagan communities understand balance. It is one of the benchmarks of our religious beliefs and practices. For many of us, it is also one of the main points of our magical practices. As Pagans, what is our responsibility at this time? Do we have a responsibility of any kind in this time of preparation for war and revenge? If we do not then I would have to say that we might as well pack it in as a group, because we are a sorry group of individuals. Fortunately, though, we do have a responsibility. Not just here in the United States, but across the world. At this time we have become more aware of what it is like for many of the other nations who have been experiencing this

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MYTH WORKINGS: A POLITICAL PAGAN'S PERSPECTIVE

As modern neo-pagans, we strive to lead spiritual lives and to allow our spiritual beliefs to infuse our day-to-day choices. As spiritual people, we look for opportunities to better our world in accord with our morals and beliefs. In this information age, we are daily overwhelmed with concepts, ideas and causes leaving it hard for us to sort out what is actually going on and how to take part in making a difference. In this column I will provide information on causes and political issues that earth-centered faiths may find a common interest. The information is provided as a springboard for doing your own research and forming your own opinions. I will provide easy links to informational sites and a brief synopsis of current issues. In addition, I will try to provide ideas and opportunities for actions that can fit into a variety of busy, modern lives. I urge each person to read the informational links provided on each issue and decide for themselves if the cause fits within their own personal goals and views.

Massive Grassroots Mobilization to Protest the World Bank and IMF Meetings

What: The World Bank and the IMF are two linked organizations that loan money and resources to developing nations to build infrastructure. They also make loans to restructure a country's economic system by funding structural adjustment programs (SAPs).

Why: The IMF/World Bank has a list of conditions a developing nation must meet to qualify for their SAP's which force countries to promote sweatshops, export to rich countries and enter into trade agreements with corporations that are detrimental to their economy. The IMF/World Bank also funds infrastructure projects that have often been associated with monumental environmental devastation and social dislocation.

Where and When: There will be a massive protest in Washington D.C. from September 29th through October 3rd featuring a coalition of progressive social action groups concerned about the actions of these institutions. Politically active groups as diverse as Starhawk's Reclaiming tradition, the AFL-CIO (the U.S. national union center with 65 member unions and more than 13 million members) and the Rainforest Action Network (RAN) will be there in solidarity.

How: If you are interested in attending the action in Washington D.C. the following website can give you the information you need to get involved :

The web page for the DC action: <http://www.september30.org/s30/>

If you are interested in learning more about the issues or cannot attend the protests and want to show your support from home, check out:

Fifty Years is Enough: <http://www.50years.org/>

Reclaiming Community Activism <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RWTO>

The Washington DC Indy Media Center: <http://dc.indymedia.org/>

Addendum:

Due to the tragic events of September 11, all official anti-globalization street actions and protests scheduled for 9/30 in Washington D.C. have been cancelled. Instead the organizers are going to be holding marches and talks for peace and tolerance. For more information go to: <http://www.september30.org/>

Save the Alaskan Wildlife Refuge

What: The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the only arctic refuge in the U.S., is a vast and beautiful wilderness. The refuge is unique because it has a full range of arctic and sub arctic ecosystems that are whole and undisturbed, functioning as they have for centuries, largely free of human control and manipulation.

Inupiat Eskimos and Athabascan Indians live on the land encompassed in this wildlife refuge, following closely the ways of their ancestors who have lived on this land for generations.

Why: President Bush is trying to push through a bill that would enable oil exploration and drilling in this pristine land. Many environmental scientists believe the proposed action will damage the biological and ecological integrity of the entire Refuge.

Where and When: While the bill to allow drilling has passed the House, it has yet to pass the Senate. At this point it is unclear what the fate of Bush's bill will be and the debate rages on. This is a critical time to let your representatives know your feelings on this issue.

How: Below are links to sites giving information on this issue from a variety of perspectives.

The Debate: <http://arcticcircle.uconn.edu/ANWR/anwrdebate.html>

The ANWR Homepage: <http://www.r7.fws.gov/nwr/arctic/arctic.html>

Why the Bush oil energy policy will fail: <http://www.oilanalytics.org/policytop.html>

For help on finding out who to contact and how to write a letter to your representatives look at:

<http://www.sierraclub.org/wildlands/arctic/alert7-01.asp>

Houston Pagans Share Magickal Experience

Houston Pagan Pride Day started off with a lot of rain and there was some uncertainty if the event would have to be cancelled. I had faith because Houston Pagans rarely give up and went about getting ready. The rain was coming down fast and my kids were singing as we headed out.

I was the assistant 'Kid Wrangler' and though I wasn't completely aware at the time, it was going to be a very long day. I expected 20 or so children in the course of the day and was not worried. When the rain stopped the children started piling in. We had different activities such as mask and wand making. The parents signed their children in and out and these little wonders started showing us what beautiful objects they could create.

The atmosphere around The Garden in the Heights, was the perfect location for Pagan Pride Day. It is very peaceful, has both indoor and outdoor settings and though it was a bit muddy outdoors due to the early rain it didn't slow down the momentum that the event picked up. I watched as people walked through the vendors and the music played.

We were gathering items for no kill shelters in the Houston area. We gathered both money and supplies and also donated some to the American Red Cross, Noah's Ark, Homeless Orphaned Pets Endeavor and Citizens for Animal Protection. By the end of the day I had seen about 50 or so children and several adults. I was covered in glitter and the music continued. At one point a very large storm threatened to make the evening cut short,

but thanks to several weather witches it passed over.

Charlie Denney and her coven Sea Myst Moon Coven performed the main the ritual. It was beautiful. We all held hands together and as quarters were called and the Lord and Lady invited into the circle you could just feel the power rising within. You could feel the energy welling up to even higher amounts as they passed out incense to everyone in the circle. Then we began humming, first low and then higher and higher, you could feel the greater whole as we connected. The humming reached a peak and Charlie sent the energy where it needed to go. It was so magickal and wonderful I had tears in my eyes!

The music of Spoonfed Tribe started after the ritual and continued into the night. Later there was drumming and dancing. For a while I stayed dancing to the music and then to the drumming but I had things to do. Those of us who volunteered began cleaning up while the drumming took place. I could hear the drums rolling and I went back to the Children's area to continue the final sweep. My goal was to leave it better than I found it.

Happy, exhausted, and full of the feeling of a strong community, I left. I must say, it was one of the most magickal evenings I have ever had the pleasure of donating my time to. The Coordinators did such a great job my son did not want to leave. His eyes were full of tears and he kept asking to stay or if we could come back tomorrow. I told him that it would be next year but we would definitely come back.

Including the Kids in Samhain Celebrations

Everyone knows that kids love parties. With Samhain quickly approaching there are many preparations going on for adult oriented celebrations. The kids may be feeling left out when hearing of all the great fun Mom and Dad are having at all their adult functions. Try one or all of these great party ideas with your kids to help them celebrate.

Kooky Cookie Decorating Party

Invite over all the scary ghouls in your neighborhood to help spookify your kitchen. A few bottles of food coloring, a good cut-out cookie recipe, some cookie cutters, and a few basic frosting recipes will be able to turn your kitchen into a baking cave of horrors. Some great shapes to try are bats, cats, ghosts, jack-o-lanterns, pumpkins, leaves, acorns, full moons, broomsticks, cauldrons, martians, spiders, eyeballs, tombstones and any other spooky shape that you can come up with! Arm the hobgoblins with gummy worms, sprinkles and colorful icing. Challenge them to create cookies that would scare the dead back into their graves! Here are just two great cookie recipes the kids will love.

Black Widow Spider Cookies

Make a batch of cutout cookies. Add enough black food coloring to the dough to get a nice black color. Roll out the dough to 1/8 to 1/4 inch thick and cut into circles, using two different cookie cutters, one smaller and one bigger. Place the cookies on a cookie sheet, attaching the smaller cookie (spider's head) to the larger cookie (spider's body). In the larger circle make a small hourglass-shaped hole and fill it with crushed red hard candy. In the smaller circle make two small holes (for eyes) and fill with yellow or green crushed hard candy. Attach strips of cookie dough to the body for legs.

Mounds of Brains Cookies

Using your favorite refrigerator cookie recipe, add some black food color gel or paste until you get a gray color, then push the dough through a colander to make worm-like shapes. Take small handfuls of the wormy dough and gently shape it into a brain-like shape, then bake. For an added touch, drizzle a little green colored icing over the tops of the baked brains.

Pumpkin Carving Party

You all know the drill! Journey to the pumpkin patch (or your favorite grocery store) and get the pumpkin with the best carving potential. Cut off the pumpkin's top and scoop out its innards. Don't forget to save the seeds! Separate the seeds from the sludge, rinse them and let them dry for about 4 hours. Then hull 'em and roast 'em with dribbles of olive oil and sprinkles of salt in an oven preheated to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for 30 minutes or until golden. Stir the seeds every 10 minutes or so during the roasting to ensure even cooking. Make those pumpkins freaky and maybe, just maybe, they'll scare the wandering dead away from your house!

Your Silence Speaks for You

Many people, Pagan and otherwise, don't vote. While we all expect to hear about voter apathy as the cause, there are a certain number of people who have said, either to me or to the media that they refuse to vote because they feel that their silence speaks for their opinion of the political system. I couldn't agree more!

Perhaps you are one of these folks. I've met many of them, and they all seem to be nice human beings who are well intentioned. I know that you will not be swayed by words like "civic duty", because you feel our politicians do not represent you. Instead, I ask that you note the following things your silence actually says.

1. Politicians have few people who will vote specifically for them. In order for politicians to get elected, someone has to vote for them. With the raging apathy out there, they will focus their efforts on pleasing the people that they are pretty sure will vote. Unlike a lot of people, religious fundamentalists (and conservatives in general) vote, and their groups are geared to interacting with the people around them. It was this principle that allowed Religious Right "stealth" candidates to take over school boards and city governments, and create the radical composition of the 105th Congress.

2. Politicians have few people who will vote specifically against them. This is a corollary of item #1. Basically, it means that politicians can expect few real repercussions when they do something offensive - i.e., there are no consequences to their actions. Refusing to vote says that you don't like them, but it also says that you're not going to do anything about it, either.

3. Referendums are easier to put on the ballot. This is not currently as applicable to a state like Kentucky as it is to California, but a lot of voter initiatives only require a number of signa-

tures equal to a specified percentage of participating voters in the previous election to get on the ballot. In other words, all it takes is a certain number of nuts out there to threaten hard-won rights.

4. Election results are skewed. If you don't feel represented by the government, you're probably right. If only the people who have an axe to grind vote, it means that the most contentious people out there are choosing your leaders. Whether you approve of them or not, these people have a big say over what happens to you. Voting for the saner of two loons might be a public service on your part!

5. The chances of the system changing are nil. If no one does anything about it, the system you despise and wish you didn't belong to will continue on with 'business as usual'. Many disillusioned voters only focus on the big elections, such as the presidential ones, while ignoring the opportunity to change their own corner of the world. Your vote has a much greater impact on the local scale, and today's city council member could become tomorrow's state senator, and one day move on to Washington. Use the power you have to create a change at the grassroots level - this is something the Radical Right has used in a way their opponents haven't since the 1960s.

Overall, your silence says: "Do whatever you want to me. I may not like it, but I won't do anything concrete to stop you." Complaints to the politician in question and letters to the editor are effective in many cases, but not always. Some of the most relentlessly theocratic and homophobic have enough financial and voter support already, and don't really care what you think or say. It is much harder to ignore being voted out of office or finding the election a closer call than it used to be. Who knows, you could help change the face of today's major parties, or help one more to your liking to become a strong contender. If it goes to your head, maybe you will be the one bidding for office!

♦Responsibility

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time of conflict for decades if not hundreds of years. For the people in New York and Washington DC, they have an even clearer view of what it is like. For so many people, incidents like what recently happened in New York are a common event. These people see death and destruction on a weekly or daily basis. For us, this is a new thing and will hopefully never happen again. Maybe there is something that we can do to help.

In World War Two, the Pagan community of England banded together to erect a cone of power to repel Nazi invasion. Over the past few days, many groups across the US have done the same type of thing. This is a good thing and it is something that many more of us need to start doing with the groups that we practice with or by ourselves if we are solitaires. It is a very serious time that we live in and it is time that we begin to take our religion and magick serious. We have an understanding of the natural energies that exist all around us and we have an understanding of how to use them. It is a great power that we have,

and with that power comes a great responsibility. I am not suggesting that we would even consider using this power to harm anyone. For myself that goes completely against my beliefs and I know that there are many others that believe the same. There are many things that we can do, though. Right now there are already many hundreds of people that are out of work with the airline industry, and there are cutbacks that are being made in many other industries across the nation. There are many people who at this time would be able to benefit greatly from our use of the knowledge that has been passed down to us. It is our responsibility to help care for Mother Earth and all of her children: here in America, in Europe, all across the world.

Damage has been done, and we have a responsibility to help and maintain a balance that is necessary to keep our Mother healthy. At this time there is much anger and hatred in this country. I have been subject to it just as much as anyone, but we have to remember that the only true control is in balance.

♦Intolerance From Front

I was sick and couldn't attend the prayer circle. Minutes after it started my Pastor's daughter called me. The Imam had called her house looking for directions to the prayer circle. He could not attend as the media was on the way to interview him, but he wanted to send some of his congregation to pray for peace. Our Wiccan Church was the only Church that had extended a hand of tolerance and support to the Muslims on that day. He had never heard of Wicca, but we were the Church who had extended a hand. When my Pastor got home and got the message, she immediately went to the Mosque.

Now we have been criticized for extending our hand to the Muslims. I do not agree with their religion in some of its ways. However, America is a country of religious freedom, and I must honor that very religious freedom even if I don't agree with it. Our hand was extended to the Mosque in the acknowledgment that we have religious freedom in this great country, and we knew that they would

suffer at the hands morons hell-bent on making "someone" pay for the attacks.

Later, my Pastor received an e-mail invitation for our congregation to join in an all-faiths prayer service in a public park, sponsored by the city of Kenner. She received this from the secretary of the Pastor of River Fellowship. Once the Pastor of River Fellowship realized that we were a Wiccan Church, he un-invited us. He told my Pastor that we were not allowed to pray in a community service for the dead and the living, and for our country. We were not ALLOWED to come to a public park for a community prayer service that all communities were asked to come to. He did tell my Pastor that if she came early, he would pray with her alone, but her Congregation was not invited to a public community event.

Now I see the other side of the coin of Bin Laden's fanatics. A zealot is a zealot. They come under many religious denominations and titles. But a zealot is always of the same ilk, intolerance for anything other than him/herself. The

lunatics who hijacked the planes that crashed into the towers, the Pentagon, and Pennsylvania were not cowards by any means, they were lunatic religious zealots, hell-bent on destruction.

I idolize our Founding Fathers. They were a brilliant group of men who were so far ahead of their time that their principles still stick to the ribs. They were a diverse group of Atheists, Deists, Christians and others who looked beyond their differences to found a Nation conceived on the principles of individual freedoms. Our nation, conceived in liberty, is the greatest nation on Earth because of its foundation in personal freedoms. We are all immigrants. None of us have the right to say "Go back to where you came from, you're not welcome here." We do have the right to say in this land of liberty, "How dare you tell me how to worship or who to worship or when to worship?" Freedom of religion also means freedom FROM religion and from persecution because of zealots within your religion.

In Your Neighborhood!

For Details Visit:

www.witchvox.net/xevents.html OR www.paganunitycampaign.org

Kansas

There will be a Pagan Networking party at the North end of Linwood Park in Wichita at 6 pm on Saturday October 6. This is a bring your own everything event. There may be a ritual but it will be after 8 pm. The Kansas State Chair, Bailey McCann plans to attend to answer questions and pass out flyers. Contact him at pyfog@aol.com with questions. **October & November Classes/workshops** taught by Sosenda. Contact at leanashe@wichitalife.com

October 13th to November 17th.

Saturday nights from 6pm to 8pm. **Seekers of the Magick** - this is an introductory class, starting from the beginning. Some lessons include thought discipline, new holidays & blending. A small donation to cover materials is welcome.

November 3rd- Workshop- Witches Together

This workshop will cover working with others, sensing other's energy, guided meditation, beginning psychic diagnosis, aura detection and divination. Workshop is four hours long, held from 1:00pm to 5:00pm. Cost \$8.00. Due to space, class size is limited. Please sign up in advance with me. 4 more classes follow.

South Carolina

PUC PAC SC should be hosting their fall gathering with another group (The Pagan Alliance Of South Carolina) on Saturday the 27th of October and their Winter gathering in the middle of December. Contact the South Carolina State Chair, Shadow Wolf, at carolinawitch@usa.com for more information

PUC's Voice

PUC's Voice is the official newsletter of the Pagan Unity Campaign Political Action Committee. PUC's Voice is designed to provide information not only about PUC PAC's work but also about the entire pagan community within the United States.

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