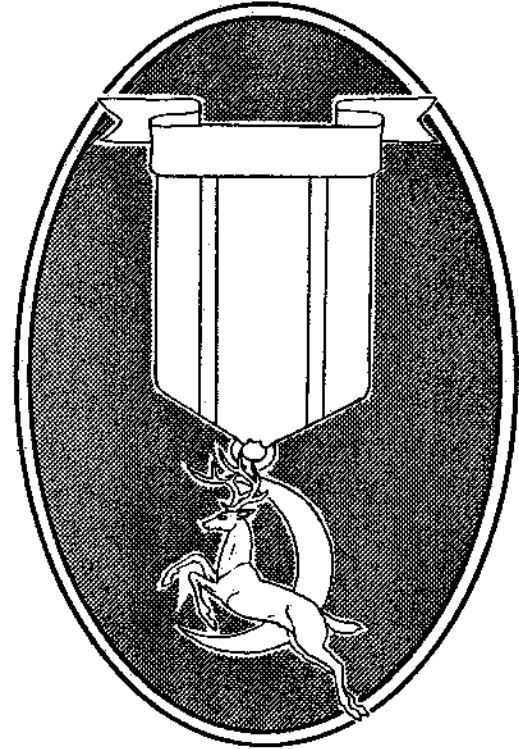


The Hart and Crescent Religious Award



**For Young People of the Wiccan Faith
or Other Earth Religions
Ages 11-18**

written by Amber K
High Priestess, Our Lady of the Woods

Sponsored by The Covenant of the Goddess
P.O. Box 1226, Berkeley, CA 94704

What is the Hart and Crescent Award?

This is a special award designed for young people who are at least 11 years old, and active in Wicca or any other nature-oriented religion. It was originally created for people in Scouting, but you don't have to be a Scout to earn in.

By completing the requirements, you will learn a lot about your family's religion, and help the Earth as well as your coven, grove or church.

As you work on the award, an adult should work with you as your counselor. This can be any priestess or priest who is approved by your parents. If your family is not working with a coven or group right now, a parent or guardian can work with you.

When you are all done, the counselor will sign a form at the end of this booklet and send it in to The Covenant of the Goddess. We will send them the award, which can be presented to you at a Sabbat or Moon ritual with your family or coven, or some other awards ceremony like a Court of Honor or Scouts' Own.

This is not an easy award to earn. If it were easy, you wouldn't learn as much. But when you are done, you can be proud. Sure, you get a fancy medal to wear — but the real reward is in helping the Earth and Her creatures, and growing and learning.

1. Discuss humanity's relationship to Nature, and our responsibilities to the biosphere of Earth.

We are part of Nature, sisters and brothers to all living things. Together with the planet and Her seas and atmosphere, we make up Gaia, the living Earth.

The lives of all creatures are connected, so that whatever happens to any of us. We must keep our environment clean and healthy, so that other species besides humanity can flourish on the Earth. This is not only the respectful and caring way to live — and is also necessary for our survival.

Plan and carry out projects which will help accomplish each of the following goals:

a. Preserve a threatened wildlife habitat, or restore one which has been polluted or otherwise disrupted;

All of us have seen places covered with trash, or with polluted streams, or where the ground is bare and the soil is washing away. All too often, when people build roads or dig mines or farm the land they wind up destroying the homes of countless wild creatures.

You can help. Find a piece of land which needs to be protected or restored, then make a plan. Will you need to haul out trash, or plant ground cover to stop erosion, or talk to people who are polluting the water?

Then find out who owns the land, if you don't know. Usually you can find out by calling the County Registrar of Deeds or Assessor, listed under "Government — County" in the Yellow Pages. You will need to contact the owner, discuss the problem, and work with him or her to fix things up.

Of course, you don't have to work on private land. Often parks (local, county, state or national) or public forests have habitats that could use your energy. Contact the local Parks and Recreation Department, or the chief ranger, and ask.

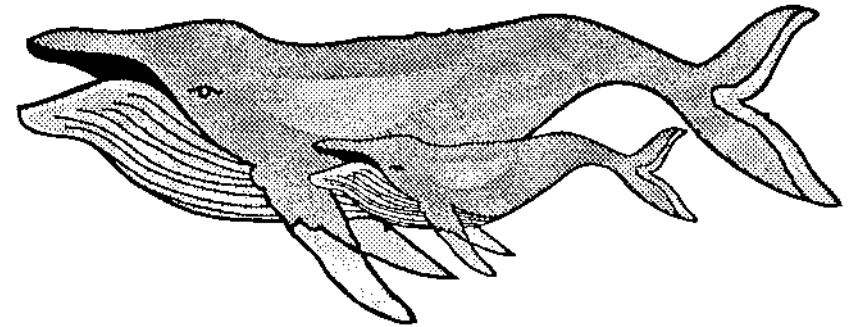
And if you need more hands to don the job, call on your Scout troop or coven to pitch in. You may be leading this project, but you don't have to do it all alone.

b. Defend an endangered species of wildlife;

To find out which kinds of wildlife are in danger of dying out, you can contact The International Wildlife Federation, the Audubon Society, the United States Department of the Interior, or your state Wildlife management bureau.

Ask them for ideas as to how you can help. Possibly the best way will be to create or improve a habitat, as discussed above. Maybe a law should be passed to protect certain animals, and you can write to your representatives in Congress or your state legislature. Maybe you can make some birdhouses of a special kind and put them out. Or you could think of a way to raise money, and send it to the Wildlife Federation, Audubon, the Nature Conservancy or another group which works to protect wildlife.

Once again, don't go it alone. You can be much more effective if you ask for advice and help, and involve as many people as possible.





c. Do a project to educate people in your community about taking care of the Earth and Her creatures.

Many people do not have accurate, up-to-date information about the environment, pollution, endangered species and so on. You can help inform the by giving a talk or handing out leaflets.

You can do this in your class at school, or maybe to several classes or even at an assembly. Or you could talk to a community service organization, or your Scout troop (and others), or to local Cubs or Brownies, or to your coven. Or, you could get some informative flyers from an environmental organization and hand them out at a shopping mall, bank, theater, etc. (with permission). Or you could show a film or videotape, or slides, available from the same kind or organizations or from a large library.

What topic could you use? Here are some ideas:

- The Cutting of the Amazon Rainforests**
- Eagles: Our National Symbol Threatened**
- Soil Erosion in the United States**
- The Danger to Whales**
- Water Pollution in Our Community**
- Protecting America's Wolves**
- The Problem of Toxic Wastes**
- Dolphin Slaughter by the Tuna Industry**
- The Health of the World's Oceans**
- Endangered Animals in Our State**
- The Air We Breathe: Is It Cleaner?**
- Nuclear Power and the Environment**

It might not be easy to give a talk if you are shy, especially in front of large groups or people you don't know; but it's important, and after awhile it gets much easier. Remember too, that your counselor can help you plan and find information.



2. Briefly discuss some of the Nature-oriented religions of ancient cultures; and explain how your family’s religious practices are similar to, and different from, those earlier traditions.

This will require some reading, and maybe trips to museums also. Your parents or librarian can help you find books on Nature-oriented religions such as:

- Northern Shamanism (Innuits, Lapps, etc.)**
- Native American Religions**
- Taoism in China**
- Ancient Egyptian Religion**
- Druidism**
- Early Norse Religion (and “Odinism”)**
- Sumerian & Babylonian Religion**
- Shintoism in Japan**
- Early African Religions**
- Polynesian Religions**
- Greek Pantheism**

...and others. You do not have to become an expert in these, just get a feel for a couple of them and see how they are like your own religion, or different.

Archaeologists tell us that the first religions involved an Earth-Mother Goddess, a Horned God of animals, dancing in a circle, and keep track of the Moon’s phases. Sound familiar?

3. Explain your beliefs about the Goddess and the God.

There are many different ideas about Who created the universe. Some say it was just a force without intelligence or personality. Some say it was a particular god, and that there’s no Goddess — or the other way around. Some say God/dess is a Being “out there” somewhere, Who created us but is very different from us. Most Wiccans and Pagans believe that God/dess — the divine creative power — is in everybody and everything: that we are all part of Deity. But what do you think?

Learn about a Goddess-aspect and God-aspect Who appeal to you, and create an art project which expresses the nature or character of each. You may make a drawing, painting, song, story, poem, invocation, play, stained-glass panel, sculpture, mask, or other art form.

There are many, many names and “aspects” of The Lady and The Lord. If The Goddess is like a huge jewel, then each goddess is like one facet of Her.

You are the same way. You might be a student, a piano player, a Scout, a daughter or son, a rock collector, and a swimmer — but those are all just parts of you. So Diana, Isis, Freya, White Shell Woman, Yemaya, and Kwan-Yin and thousands more are all different aspects of The Goddess. And of course, Odin, Cernunnos, Poseidon, Osiris, Apollo, Coyote, and many, many more are all part of The God.

So choose a goddess and a god you like, and start your art projects. Here are a few ideas, but you should look at some books to find more.

GODDESSES

AMATERASU - The Japanese sun goddess

ATHENA - Greek goddess of wisdom, defender of home & family; owls sacred

BAST - Egyptian goddess of joy, music, fertility and the sun; cats sacred to Her

BRIGID - Northern European goddess of fire, healing, smithcraft and inspiration

CERRIDWEN - Celtic mother-goddess with the magick cauldron of rebirth

DIANA - European goddess of the Moon, magick and the open sky; also the huntress

EPONA - Celtic goddess of rulership; horses are sacred to Her, especially white mares

FREYA - Norse goddess of love, battle, wolves

INARI - Japanese goddess of rice and abundance; foxes are sacred to Her

ISIS - Winged Egyptian mother-goddess and protectress

KWAN-YIN - Chinese goddess of compassion

SPIDER GRANDMOTHER - Native American crone-goddess who brought fire to humanity

UNKATAHE - Native American goddess who guards against sickness, and heals

YEMAYA - Afro-South American goddess of love and prosperity

GODS

APOLLO - Greek god of the sun, music & healing

CERNUNNOS - European horned god of wildlife

COYOTE - Native American creator-god and trickster

GANESHA - Hindu god of good fortune; seen as an elephant

LUGH - Celtic god of the sun and harvest

MERCURY - Roman god of travel and communications

ODIN - Norse god of wisdom and rune-magic; ravens are sacred to Him

PAN - Greek god of joy and the outdoors, Who played the sacred pipes

POSEIDON - Greek god of the oceans; horses are sacred to him

RA - Egyptian god of the sun; shown as a hawk

ROBIN - British god of the greenwood and archery

THOTH - Ibis-headed Egyptian god of scribes, magick and knowledge

VULCAN - Roman god of fire and smithcraft

When both projects are completed, explain how the qualities represented there are also present in you.

Do you see wisdom, or bravery, or magick in your goddess and god projects? Tell about times in your life when you acted wise, or brave, or magickal...or whatever.

4. Explain what each of the following phrases means:

- a. “An ye harm none, do as ye will.”
- b. “All that you send out returns to you threefold.”
- c. “Perfect love and perfect trust.”
- d. “Blessed be.”
- e. “Merry meet, and merry part, and merry meet again.”

These traditional sayings sum up much of the spirit and ethics of the Craft. If you are not Wiccan, perhaps you can think of sayings which are important to your spiritual path.

Explain what is meant by “karma” and “reincarnation.” Then write or tell a story, where an action performed in one lifetime has important consequences for the next.

If these words are new to you, then your parents or counselor can explain them. You might or might not remember anything about lives you have lived in other times and places, but when you get older you can help yourself remember through past life recall techniques.

Why do this? Sometimes you can understand yourself better if you know where you have been and what you have done before. Maybe a problem or challenge you are coping with began in some earlier life, and you can deal with it better if you know how it started. And aside from all that, it’s fascinating to remember what it was like in different countries throughout history.

5. List the major holy days of your religion. Briefly explain the meaning of each, and some customs or traditions associated with it.

To help get your started, we have listed the eight Wiccan sabbats on the next page; you will need to do some extra reading to find out more details. Also, your family may have some special holiday traditions of its own: ask your parents to help you think of some.

Participate in an important role in your family’s or group’s celebration of a holy day. If it is appropriate, make and wear a special costume or mask for the event.

Perhaps you could choose the music, or lead some songs and chants, or a dance. You could call the quarters or read a poem or invocation. You might write a “mystery play” that expresses the meaning of the sabbat (like Persephone’s return from the underworld at Ostart), and perform a part in it. You could organize and lead a special activity, like making candles at Imbolc (Brigid/Candlemas), or a corn roast at Lughnassad.



THE MAJOR SABBATS

YULE (Winter Solstice) - Between December 20-23 (varies). The shortest day and longest night of the year. Marks the beginning of winter, and the rebirth of the sun god/dess. Customs: decorating the Tree of Life, Yule log, gift-giving.

IMBOLC (Oimelc, Brigid, Candlemas) - February 2. Midwinter. Themes: the waxing sunlight, purification, initiation. Sacred to the fire-goddess Brigid. Customs: cleansing home, tools and self; making and blessing candles.

OSTARA (Spring Equinox) - Between March 20-23 (varies). Days and nights of equal length. Marks the beginning of spring. Themes: fertility, rebirth. Customs: decorating eggs, celebrating the sacred Moon Hare.

BELTANE (May Eve) - April 30. The great festival of life and joy. Themes: celebrating the female and the male, sensuality, sexuality. Customs: weaving flower garlands, making May gads, dancing around the Maypole, sabbat bonfires, enjoying ones body.

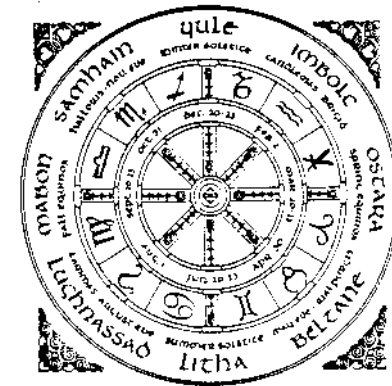
LITHA (Summer Solstice) - Between June 20-23 (varies). The longest day and shortest night of the year. Marks the beginning of summer. Theme: the zenith of the sun's power. Customs: "Drawing down the Sun" ritual, Catherine wheels.

LUGHNASSAD (Lunasa, Lammas) - August 1. The sacrifice of the sun-god Lugh. Themes: first harvest, sunlight transformed into nourishment (corn & grain), sacrifice and transformation. Customs: "sacrifice" of a corn dolly in the bonfire, corn roast.

MABON (Fall Equinox) - Between September 20-23 (varies). Days and nights of equal length. Marks the beginning of autumn. Themes: second harvest, abundance, thanksgiving. Custom: feasting.

SHAMHAIN (November Eve, All Hallows, Hallowe'en) - October 31. The great festival commemorating the dead. Themes: third and final harvest, death, remembering those departed. Customs: scrying (divination), past life recall, communicating with family who have passed on.

Of course, these aren't the only holidays Pagans celebrate - don't forget anniversaries, birthdays, and the occasional holiday somebody makes up just because we need it!



6. Explain the meaning of the pentagram, and of Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Spirit.

It's not easy to find this in a book, so we'll explain it briefly here in case you don't know. The pentagram is an ancient symbol of balance and protection: it has been used in many lands, for at least the past five thousand years.

As a Wiccan symbol, it is made with one point up and generally surrounded by a circle. The circle stands for wholeness, oneness, and the magick circle we cast in rituals. The points have these meanings:

EARTH - The Earth, land, mountains, soil; also the physical world, and our bodies.

AIR - The atmosphere and the wind; also our minds, intelligence, and imagination.

FIRE - Flames, the fire of stars, the molten fires deep in the planet; also will, purpose, and energy.

WATER - Oceans, rivers, streams and rainfall; also our emotions and intuition.

SPIRIT - The Goddess, The God, The All.

The pentagram is often worn as jewelry, usually made of silver, which is special to Diana the moon goddess. A disc of wood, ceramic, stone or metal inscribed with a pentagram is a ritual too call a pentacle.

Make a plan to help you balance these elements in your life.

Are you a very, very emotional person, who feels very deeply - sensitive and intuitive? then we would say that you have a lot of Water in your life. If you're very energetic and ambitious, you have a lot of Fire. Someone who is very physical and body-conscious, like an athlete, or very solid and slow to change, or very concerned with money and material things, would be strong on Earth qualities. And a very intelligent or imaginative person is Air-oriented.

Nobody is perfectly balanced among these elements, but we can all work toward becoming more balanced. You can make a plan to do this. Let's suppose your life is going pretty well except for the Earth element. Maybe you have trouble handling basic Earth-plan stuff - you don't eat right, your room is a mess, you forget to help around the house, you never have money when you need it...

1. Make a plan to change one thing at a time. For example, "I will keep the floor of my room clear. Every night before I brush my teeth, I will pick up everything on it."

2. Ask your family and friends for help. "If you see me throw anything on the floor, please remind me what my goal is."

3. Put magick into your plan. Put up a picture of a clean, windswept desert. Buy a cactus. Hold a ritual and ask the Earth elementals (gnomes) and Earthy goddesses and gods to help.

You may need your counselor's help in putting together a plan to balance yourself.

7. Learn and demonstrate exercises or techniques which will help you to do each of the following:

a. Relax - Lie down and, beginning at your feet, stretch and relax each set of muscles until you reach the top of your head. Then remember a wonderful time when you felt very relaxed, in as much detail as you can.

b. Concentrate - Sit in a relaxed position and inhale deeply through your mouth. Then exhale through your mouth and make a long, steady humming sound. Do it again, but make the humming a little longer and smoother. Nine breaths should do it.

c. Raise energy - Try different ways - clapping, chanting, singing, drumming, dancing, breathing in light - until your whole body is vibrating with power. Whatever you do, it should be rhythmic and sustained.

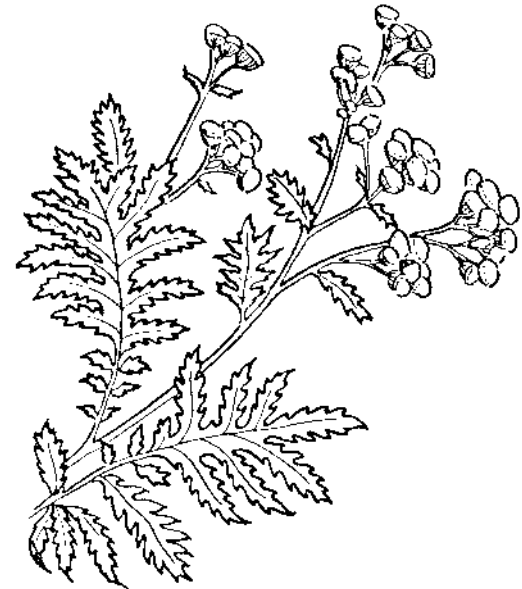
d. Ground excess energy - After you have raised energy and sent it toward a goal, there will be extra which should be released. Try putting your palms flat on the ground and breathing it into the Earth, or putting it in a large stone, or eating something with grains in it.

e. Protect yourself - Imagine yourself within a pentagram of silver-blue light surrounded by a circle. Now envision yourself as your favorite goddess or god; breathe in energy, feeling more strong, brave and self-confident with every breath. Do this in any scary situation.

HINT: This doesn't replace caution and common sense. The best protection is still to avoid dangerous situations, and to "be prepared."

f. Heal yourself - You might want to find a good book on herbs and learn to use some of them, under the guidance of a knowledgeable adult. Chamomile, comfrey and rose hips are a few helpful ones you can make into healing teas. Also, imagining yourself healed and healthy is useful.

Of course, if you do get ill, you still need the help of a qualified healer, and the basics like pure water, good food, sunlight and lots of rest.



8. Define magick. Explain when it is appropriate to use it, and for what purposes. Explain when, and for what purposes, it should NOT be used.

Magick - real magick - has been defined as “the art of changing consciousness at will.” It is first of all something you do inside yourself, though it can have effects in the outside world. You may want to discuss this and other definitions with your counselor and parents, and read some good books on magick.

You have probably heard The Wiccan Rede, which says “An ye harm none, do as ye will.” So when you learn to work magick, you will use it only for good purposes - like healing yourself, or protection, or helping people who ask you for help. Talk about this with your counselor and parents.

Then design and perform a ritual for some positive purpose. It should be visually, aurally, and kinesthetically effective, and include the following elements:

- a. Self-preparation**
- b. Creation of sacred space**
- c. Invocation of the elements and God/dess**
- d. Raising, channeling and grounding energy**
- e. Celebration**
- f. Closure**

Hopefully you have participated in sabbats, esbats (“Moons”), and other rituals with your family and coven, so you have some idea what one is like. Now it’s your turn to design one, with your counselor’s help. You can make it a solitary ritual, with your counselor observing, or invite your family, Pagan friends, or coven to be involved.

Your purpose could be to heal, to protect, to bless, or to draw something positive like wisdom, self-confidence, or prosperity.

Remember, your ritual should appeal to all the senses: for the ears, include music, singing and chanting; for the nose, flowers and incense; for the eyes, bright colors and beautiful things on the walls and altar; for the tongue, “cakes and wine” or a feast; and for all of you, dance and movement, and nice things to touch.

As part of the preparation, or during the ritual itself, create a talisman or ritual tool appropriate to your purpose, and consecrate it.

You can create a talisman of wood, stone, ceramic or metal for some special purpose; or you can make a ritual tool, such as an athame, wand, chalice, pentacle, staff, special candles, runestones, or a cord.

There is not room here to explain how to make or use these, so you will need to read about them in books and talk to your counselor.

When your project is done, consecrate it in your ritual: bless it, and dedicate it to its special purpose and to the service of the Goddess and God, or their appropriate aspect.



"Shekhinah of YHWH"



Talisman of the Sun



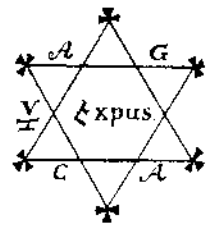
Talisman of Mercury



Pentagram of Solomon



"Pentacle" of Solomon



Another
"Pentacle" of Solomon

9. Explain your responsibilities to other people within your religion, and to those outside it.

Explain why tradition discourages you from trying to convert people to your spiritual path. Discuss what might be a constructive attitude toward other religions, and the people who practice them.

Discuss when it is or is not appropriate to discuss your religious beliefs and practices with others. Role-play a situation in which an acquaintance from another religion asks several questions about yours.

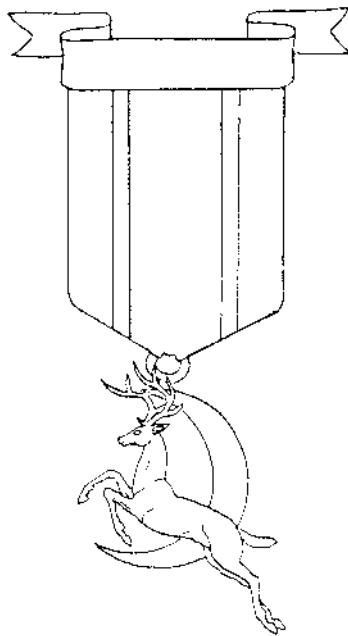
There are billions of people on this planet, with many different customs and religions. Most of them are not Wiccan (or Christian, or Jewish, or Hindu, or Islamic... no single religion has a majority).

So we need to learn how to get along with them, without having to necessarily think or act like them. Sometimes this involves being private about our religion. There are people in the world who believe that only their way is right, and who are not always respectful or kind to those who have different ways. Often the best way to deal with such folks is just to not talk about religion with them.

Before you meet such people, it is important to talk to your parents or guardians about what to do. But whether it is your family's policy to discuss your religion openly or not, remember this: Wicca is a wonderful way of life, and you can be proud to be Wiccan.

Not everybody has to agree with us, but they have to allow us the freedom to be Wiccan and celebrate in our own way. Wicca is legally recognized by the federal government of the United States of America; and in any case, Americans are guaranteed freedom of religion by the Constitution.

So earn the Hart and Crescent Award, wear it with pride, enjoy being who you are - and blessed be!



Requirement Checklist

COUNSELOR'S
INITIALS

- _____ 1. Discuss humanity's relationship to Nature, and our responsibilities to the biosphere of Earth.
- _____ 2. Plan and carry out projects which will help accomplish each of the following goals:
- _____ a. Preserve a threatened wildlife habitat, or restore one which has been polluted or otherwise disrupted.
- _____ b. Defend an endangered species of wildlife.
- _____ c. Do a project to educate people in your community about taking care of the Earth and Her creatures.
- _____ 3a. Explain your beliefs about the Goddess and the God.
- _____ b. Learn about a goddess-aspect and god-aspect who appeal to you, and create an art project which expresses the nature or character of each. You may make a drawing, painting, song, story, poem, invocation, play, stained-glass panel, sculpture, mask or other art form.
- _____ 4. Explain what each of the following phrases means:
- _____ a. "An ye harm none, do as ye will."
- _____ b. "All that you send out returns to you threefold."
- _____ c. "Perfect love and perfect trust."
- _____ d. "Blessed be."
- _____ e. "Merry meet, and merry part, and merry meet again."
- _____ f. Explain what is meant by "karma" and "reincarnation." Then write or tell a story where an action performed in one lifetime has important consequences for the next.
- _____ 5a. List the major holy days of your religion. Briefly explain the meaning of each, and some customs or traditions associated with it.
- _____ b. Participate in an important role in your family's or group's celebration of a holy day. If it is appropriate, make and wear a special costume or mask for the event.

- _____ 6a. Explain the meaning of the pentagram, and of Earth, Air, Fire, Water, and Spirit.
- _____ b. Make a plan to help you balance these elements in your life.
7. Learn and demonstrate exercises or techniques which will help you to do each of the following:
- _____ a. Relax _____ b. Concentrate
- _____ c. Raise energy _____ d. Ground excess energy
- _____ e. Protect yourself _____ f. Heal yourself
- _____ 8a. Define magick. Explain when it is appropriate to use it, and for what purposes. Explain when, and for what purposes it should NOT be used.
- _____ b. Then design and perform a ritual for some positive purpose. It should be visually, auditorally, and kinesthetically effective, and include the following elements:
- (1) Self-preparation
- (2) Creation of sacred space
- (3) Invocation of the elements and God/dess
- (4) Raising, channeling and grounding energy
- (5) Celebration
- (6) Closure
- _____ c. As part of the preparation, or during the ritual itself, create a talisman or ritual tool appropriate to your purpose, and consecrate it.
- _____ 9a. Explain your responsibilities to other people within your religion, and to those outside it.
- _____ b. Explain why tradition discourages you from trying to convert people to your spiritual path. Discuss what might be a constructive attitude toward other religions, and those who practice them.
- _____ c. Discuss when it is or is not appropriate to discuss your religious beliefs and practices with others. Role-play a situation in which an acquaintance from another religion asks several questions about yours.

**APPLICATION
FOR HART & CRESCENT AWARD
(Youth)**

Candidate's Name: _____

I hereby certify that s/he has completed all requirements,* and is entitled to receive the Hart and Crescent Award.

Counselor's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Relationship to Candidate (priest/ess, parent, coven elder, etc.):

Name & address when award should be sent:

Enclose fee of \$15 and mail to:

C.O.G./Hart & Crescent

P.O. Box 1226

Berkeley, CA 94704

Make check or money order payable to The Covenant of the Goddess.

* A NOTE TO COUNSELORS: Although this award was originally designed for Wiccan young people in the Scouting programs, it may be earned by Wiccan young people not enrolled in Scouting, or adapted for young people of other Nature-oriented spiritual paths.

For adult recognition, see the next page.

**NOMINATION FOR DISTINGUISHED
YOUTH SERVICE AWARD
(Adult)**

Nominee's Name: _____

I hereby nominate this person to receive the Hart and Crescent Distinguished Youth Service Award. I attach a letter describing the nominee's work on behalf of youth, and explaining why we feel s/he deserves special recognition.

Nominator's Signature: _____

Organization Represented: _____

Date: _____

Relationship to Nominee (priest/ess, coven elder, etc.):

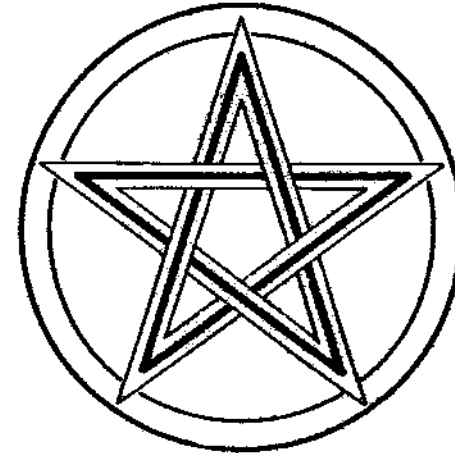
Name & address when award should be sent:

Enclose fee of \$15 and mail to:
C.O.G./Hart & Crescent
P.O. Box 1226
Berkeley, CA 94704

Make check or money order payable to The Covenant of the Goddess.

A NOTE ON CRITERIA: The nominee's work with or for youth may be in the context of religious education, public education, Scouting or other youth programs. Nominees must be members of Pagan or other Nature-oriented religions. Individuals may not nominate themselves.

NOTES



**“Bide the Wiccan Law ye must,
In perfect love, in perfect trust.
Eight words the Wiccan Rede fulfill;
An ye harm none, do what ye will.
Ever mind the Rule of Three:
What ye send out, comes back to thee.
Follow this with mind and heart,
And merry ye meet, and merry ye part.”**