Covenant of the Goddess Newsletter

Litha 2021
Volume 46
Number 5
As is consistent with the values and beliefs of our religion, the Covenant affirms our belief in the spiritual and social wisdom of peace in the world. We aspire to stand in fellowship with the people of all religions, cultures, and ethnicities in our shared desire for peace. We do this for the sake of our shared love of the Earth and all living things that dwell upon it.
MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE AT LAMMAS

Lammas renewals are due on August 1, 2021. The Drop-dead date is August 11, 2021 after which your membership will lapse and you will need to reapply. Renewal forms are emailed to the email address on file from your last renewal. If you have NOT received this form, please contact the National Membership Officer immediately (membership@cog.org).

CALAFIA LOCAL COUNCIL: None

CHAMISA LOCAL COUNCIL:
- Circle of the Winter Moon
- Crowymmin Coven
- Lady Athena
- Jude Harrison

EVERGLADES MOON LOCAL COUNCIL:
- Dragonwhisper Coven
- Spiraling Heart Coven
- Silver Sanctuary Coven
- Lord Gwydion
- Miraselena

HILLS AND RIVERS LOCAL COUNCIL:
- Circle of Diana
- Grove of the Ancient River

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA LOCAL COUNCIL: None

ORANGE COUNTY LOCAL COUNCIL:
- Celtic Circle of Wisdom

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA LOCAL COUNCIL: None

TEXAS LOCAL COUNCIL: None

TOUCHSTONE LOCAL COUNCIL: None

NATIONAL COVENS:
- Temple of the Amethyst Moon
- Gryphonsong Clan

NATIONAL INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS:
- Frodo
- Lady Magdalena
- Scott Rhodes
- Link
- Robin Almaas
- Lady Phhoenix Duir

FRIENDS OF COG: None

OUR GOVERNING BOARD

- National First Officer – Lord Verderius
- National Purse Warden – Manny
- Calafia Representative – Catherine
- Chamisa – Tiffany B.
- Everglades Moon – Raven
- Hills & Rivers – Lauren T.
- Northern California – Thea Bristlebroom
- Orange County – Janine
- Southern California – Monica / Lady Mariah
- Texas – Orin
- Touchstone – Lord Soec
- National Covens – Lord Solandrin
- National Individual Members – Grace Moonhawk

LETTER FROM THE FIRST OFFICER

Greetings Fellow CoG Members,

As we celebrate this longest day of the year, we are reminded that the Wheel has turns once more to the Summer Solstice. Embracing the Sun’s light helps strengthen and nourish us in mind, body and spirit. Try to get outside and enjoy these warmer days of summer. Collectively as a people, we have had to face many challenges this year, and more than we had expected. And we are aware that there will be more challenges ahead of us, but we shall persevere and work through these challenges together.

The “Board” consisting of National Officer and LC Reps have been diligently meeting and discussing the upcoming Virtual Grand Council and setting plans on how we will be able to best assist the membership have the best online experience. Additionally, we have had to move the original scheduled date back a week to accommodate the needs of the National Membership Officer with the many tasks she will have to manage and prepare us to fully meet the requirements of our annual business meeting.

The new dates for our Virtual Grand Council are August 14th – 16th.

To assist the board, kindly help us by following the requested deadlines for Quorum Forms and Proposals to be submitted to us by July 15th. We have lots to accomplish this year and working to host a Virtual Grand Council, which is no small task. Your cooperation and assistance on meeting the suggested deadlines is greatly appreciated. This will help to keep everyone’s stress levels down during this time of the global pandemic crisis.

We are still working to review a few differing online meeting platforms to host our Virtual Grand Council, and we hope to have more news on what we find in the next couple of weeks. We look to make this a productive and inspiring Grand Council, as we
all meet from a distance to fulfill this important need of the Covenant.

Our dutiful NetCo has been actively working on the new web-server and our CoG Website to finalize the complete and total mover over of our information. All the Forums are up and working and many folks have accessed the new member’s area of our website. We need all members of the Covenant to establish their personal connection to our website and member’s area. If you missed the first announcement and sent instructions, please reach out to your Local Council Rep to help get you in touch with Canu to get your re-authorization email with instructions resent to you. Our goal is to have all members accessing the CoG website member’s area before our Grand Council. Please let us know if you need our help...

Wishing you all a very Blessed Litha and Happy Summer Solstice!

With Radiance,
Lord Verderius
National First Officer

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

FIRST OFFICER

Once again this year, there has been a lot going on in our planning process for hosting the upcoming “Virtual Grand Council” in August. The Virtual Grand Council will be held on Saturday and Sunday, August 14th and 15th.

There are a few items that have a fixed deadline of July 15th. Kindly complete and send in your Quorum (proxy) form and submit any Proposals by this deadline date. Your attention and observance to these requests are greatly important and truly appreciated. The next four weeks should be sufficient time for everyone to meet these important deadlines. Thank you.

Additionally, we need all Local Council First Officers’ Annual Reports for the July 15th deadline. We are also requesting that all National Interfaith Reps to prepare and submit your annual reports by the deadline as well. This way we can put everything together for the Grand Council agenda.

We have worked diligently over this past year making sure that everyone has access to the Forums. However, we have noted that usage of the Forums is much lighter than anticipated. The tech team is looking into other options for possible email service. This is not going to be an easy or quick fix. There will be more discussion on this matter at Grand Council.

Also, if you are still having any difficulties accessing the CoG website sign-in to the Member’s area, please contact me or Canu directly on that matter. We are here to assist you in gaining access to the Member’s area of the website and the communication Forums.

The Quorum forms have been sent out and we will be sending out further details on our second Virtual Grand Council plans very soon. Thank you all for your continued support as we work to host our next Virtual Grand Council again this year. Brightest Blessings!

In Service,
Lord Verderius

SECOND OFFICER

OCLC will be holding a Virtual Psychic Faire on Sat. December 5th-Sun. December 6th. This is a fundraiser for MerryMeet 2021. At this time, we are hopeful that we will be able to have a live Grand Council/MerryMeet next year. I have nothing further to report.

MEMBERSHIP OFFICER

Please accept my heartfelt apologies for my absence these last several months! Personal health issues and family matters continue to delay membership renewals and applications. Thank you for your continued patience! Please know that there has been a contingency plan put into place that will prevent this from happening in the future!

Litha and Lughnassadh pre-filled renewal forms were mailed out on June 5th. Due to this delay, all will have a revised deadline of July 15th 2021. Please note that ALL LUGHNASSADH RENEWALS WILL HAVE A REVISED RENEWAL OF SAMHAIN FOR NEXT YEAR! This is due to Lughnassadh being so close to Grand Council that it makes it harder for the Membership Officer to deal with both renewals and Grand Council Quorum Forms at the same time.

Speaking of Grand Council, Quorum Forms will be going out on June 8th! Deadline will be July 15th. If you have already designated your proxy to GC on your annual renewal form, there is no need to resend. Please know that if you would like to create an Individual Member Caucus or have ANY questions on how to complete the form, I am available to help in any way!

The NEW FORUMS LIST began going out with the Mabon renewal packets. If you would like to subscribe to any of the Forums, please contact us! We have transitioned to individual usernames and passwords for better security. Contact us if you need this information reset.

As always, please know that there is money in the Grace of the Goddess fund to assist those who might need it, and the NMO is willing to work with
you for deferred tithe payments. Please do not let a temporary situation keep you from your membership in CoG! We are here to help! However, Grace of the Goddess funds may only be used for tithes and cannot be used to pay for Credential renewals.  

Please read these statements and letters on AIR and DD! They can also be found below. If there are any objections, please contact me at membership@cog.org.

APPLICATIONS:
- Friends of CoG
  - Scorpia Starfall
- Covens and Individuals
  - Aurie & Michael Goulding (Hills & Rivers)
- Welcome New Members and FoCi
  - Keala Datura (Texas LC)
  - Breila (Texas LC) - Transfer
  - Ryan Coe (Chamisa LC) - Transfer
  - Jordan Lewans (Summani) (FoC)
- Transfer Requests
  - None at this time
- Overdue/Lapsed Members (Contact me immediately to avoid cancellation!)
  - Bendith y Cyrn ~ National
  - Circle of Earth Sea Sky ~ Texas
  - Lady Pythia ~ National
- Cancelled Members
  - Glenda Phillips ~ Texas

Membership Status: We currently have 132 Members total, consisting of 67 Covens, and 65 Individual Members; and we now have 11 Friends of CoG. Our growth has been steady.  

Because things can change quickly between the Newsletter publishing deadline and the actual date of publication, this may have changed by the time you read it.

The following members were due at Yule, Imbolc, and Ostara and had until 6/15/2021 to renew:

Roster Name | Local Council
---|---
Darrell N. Riffe | Friend of CoG
Alta Nerissa Sparkman | Friend of CoG
Paul Abijah Raphu | Friend of CoG
Dragonweyr | National
Jeffrey Wolf | Friend of CoG
Coven of Bran-Faol Reannag | Orange County
Coven of Diana's Moon | Texas
Amber | National

The following members are due at Beltane and have until 6/30/2021 to renew:

Roster Name | Local Council
---|---
Maclamont Forestdancer | National
Merlyn | Chamisa

Pursewarden

CURRENT ASSETS
- Chase Main Account: $90,641.72
- Wells Fargo Interfaith Checking: $5,585.62
- PayPal Account: $5,547.12 but questionable $400 transaction (see below) so $3,961.83
- Synchrony: $33,106.58 (as of 3/31/2021)

CURRENT ISSUES/UPDATES
- Order Debit (deposit only) card for Zenah
- Respectfully submitted,
  Manny Tejeda-Moreno
  National Pursewarden
  Covenant of the Goddess

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

In May, our first Wednesday with Witches was a discussion about “bridging the generation gap in the Craft”. Our discussion was eye opening. Here are just some of the comments and suggestions we received:
- Be better listeners to those who are starting on their journey as Witches, Wiccans or Spirit Workers.
- Don’t preach dogma.
- How can we find out about covens?
- We want to see action, not just words or statements.
- Some come to Wicca because they are wounded.
- Be more open to gender identity.
- How can we better respond to younger generations who identify as non-binary or gender neutral and reflect those identities in ritual?
- Would like to see more connections by and for Wiccan Moms.

It was an enlightening conversation and hope that we can continue this conversation in the future.

Our second Wednesday with Witches was a follow up to this discussion and share with those members in attendance the information we gleaned from our public discussion.

The June 2nd Wednesday with Witches was “Ask a Witch” with focus on coven leaders to share their covens, traditions and provide insights to those seeking connections. This was our largest attendance with engaged folks new to the Craft and Members. We will have this discussion again and hopefully more member covens will attend to share their tradition, and experiences to give newer Wiccans a safe place to learn about CoG, the traditions and an amazing community of Witches.

Our Marketing & Outreach Team (M&O…or MOM had a request to host an additional Salon on an
alternate day (other than Wednesday). Based on this request, we will launch the first CoG’s Sunday Salon on June 13th. By having an alternate day, and as it was a request by membership, we hope this brings more members to our Zoom Meeting. Many members have expressed their feelings of disconnection from community and membership. It is our hope that those members who feel disconnected will join us.

Our next M&O meeting will be Tuesday, June 8, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. We have reached out to all Local Council PIOs to join us and communicate their activities as well as those of CoG National. If you didn’t know, there is a PIO Forum where all PIOs can exchange information, ask questions and get to know the other PIOs from around the U.S. If you would like to join, please let me know at pio@cog.org.

The M&O Team has launched a current Book List of books recommended by Members. It has been posted to the CoG Website on the public side. If you want to add books to the list, please provide the title, author and ISBN for each book along with a brief summary of the and your own review of the book. We will be adding to the list monthly.

This will be my last year as National Public Information Officer (NPIO) as my term is up. This experience has put my public relations and social media experience to the test, but was worth every minute. It was a challenging position, as well as a learning experience. We expanded our social media beyond posting on Facebook to increase our presence on Twitter and grow our Instagram following. In each case we used digital platforms to their fullest by producing Facebook Live videos, and events, developing conversations with fans on Twitter and Instagram. We have provided videos on Sabbat rituals, crystals, and basic Craft information.

I spent time listening to Members and community leaders learning about their perceptions and feelings about CoG. With the challenge of Covid-19 our M&O team of volunteers provided new experiences for our communities. Our out-of-the-box thinking helped expand the visibility of our organization to broader and younger audiences.

If you are interested in being the next NPIO, below is the basic information about the role of NPIO.

Covenant of the Goddess Bylaws 2019-2020as Amended at Grand Council 2019

Article 3. The Officers and the Governing Board

B. Executive Board of the Covenant(also known as the National Officers) [GC2019]
C. Officers of the Covenant

The Public Information Officer shall develop and disseminate general information regarding the Covenant and Our Religion where appropriate, within the guidelines set by the Council and the Governing Board. She or he shall work under the regular supervision of the First Officer, and shall coordinate her or his efforts with those performing the public information function in each Local Council.

Current Year Policy Manual 2018-2019

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (PIO)(Article 3.A.2.e)National Public Information Office Guidelines: The National Public Information Officer shall function within the following guidelines:(1)S/he shall speak for the Covenant of the Goddess, or use the name of the Covenant, only to the degree that the position and will of the membership have been defined in the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and acts of the Council and Board.(2)S/he shall never release specific information regarding an individual member, a local congregation, or a represented tradition of our religion, without the express written consent of the party or parties involved. He or she shall be provided with copies of the Confidentiality statements of those members who agree to be public.(3)S/he shall not intervene in a local context without the consent of the Board and any local members who maybe affected by such involvement.(4)S/he shall not communicate with individuals or agencies with aims which are clearly hostile to our religion, without the consent of the Council or the Board.(5)S/he shall submit a public information plan and suggested procedures for the coming term at the first meeting of the Board following his or her election, and such plan shall be published in the National Newsletter.

Public Information Officers are urged to consult with professional PR people to MOVE TOWARD PROACTIVE images we desire to project, rather than merely reacting to negative PR generated by others. Local members should advise PIOs before media issues become public so the best image may be presented. (1986)

The PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER is empowered to be of assistance to the POLICE where possible. (1987)

Any member doing POLICE LIAISON WORK should be knowledgeable about Satanism in order to be able to properly differentiate between it and Wicca, and should inform the Public Information Officer about their activities. (1988)

The PIO commented that all members of the Covenant should be wary of any VIDEO INTERVIEWS. Ask who owns the rights to the videotape because it can be edited and used to portray Pagans in a negative light. (1991) Formation of an ongoing PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE, to be chaired by the National PIO: Local Council PIOs would be urged to join, but membership is open to anyone in COG who is interested. The Public Information Committee would inform the Covenant of situations that arise in the press and elsewhere, and respond (mostly written) as needed. The
Committee would network, produce letters for stock situations, meet crises, support each other, brainstorm and exchange email messages. (1997)

A SINGLE NATIONAL PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER shall serve as a member of the National Board. Deputies are encouraged, and the National PIO should work closely with the various Local Council officers tasked with PIO responsibilities. (2005)

The NPIO shall build, maintain and manage the National Covenant of the Goddess’ Social Media presence. All National Social Media is considered to be a part of the public face of the Covenant as such all postings and statements should be made with great care and in line with the Covenant’s bylaws and policies. (2013)

The NPIO may appoint a Social Media Assistant(s) to manage the various social media platforms used at the National Level. (2013)

The NPIO may issue public statements to the extent of views and positions of the Covenant have been expressed in its bylaws, charter, policies, and oral traditions. When the NPIO does issue a public statement on behalf of the Covenant, the NPIO must make the membership aware of this in a timely manner through normal channels of communications, such as the website and newsletter. (2016)

**Publications Officer**

Happy Litha! The sun is definitely shining on what will be the longest day of the year and the heat that goes with it has made its presence felt all over the South West. Try and stay cool wherever you are and be careful as this fire season is in full swing not just here, but everywhere this year.

As always, please send any articles, poetry or minutes to newsletter@cog.org. If you have an obituary for Beyond the Veil, training material, or past MerryMeet rituals for the website (or anything else really) please send it to cogweb@cog.org.

**Correspondence Officer**

Please see Board minutes, pg 8.

**National Recorder**

I will not be running for National Recorder of the Covenant of the Goddess again so these next few months will see the end of my term. It has been a very important and satisfying role to fulfill in the administration of the Covenant of the Goddess. I have enjoyed my time these last three years since I took on this role in late 2018. I hope you will consider running for this National Office. Below are the duties of this necessary position:

1) Capturing and summarizing the Minutes of the Governing Board and National Officer meetings for publication in the Newsletter each Sabbat
2) Preparing and consolidating the Grand Council Agenda for distribution prior to Grand Council each year
3) Capturing Minutes of Grand Council proceedings and completing Grand Council Minutes for publication by Samhain each year
4) Updating the Bylaws and Policy Manual according to decisions made at Grand Council each year by Samhain for publication in the Newsletter and on the website

This role is necessary to keep our membership informed of discussions and decisions made by the Governing Board and the administration of those decisions by the Executive Board. Though it is an administrative role, one gets the chance to be at the heart of much what is happening in the Covenant and the best part is that you meet so many wonderful people and get to know and work with them each month.

Don’t let the added responsibilities of a new Governing Board deter you from considering yourself a candidate for this critical role. It is just another meeting, and the process is the same! You will have a lot of experienced people to call upon for assistance and information too.

Full details of the duties of the National Recorder can be found on the website in the National Recorder Manual.

I do hope you consider becoming a candidate for National Recorder and that you might find this as fulfilling as I have!

Blessings,

Faelind

**National Outreach Officer**

Please see Board minutes, pg 8.

**Welcome to CoG**

Please welcome:
- Datura Texas LC
- Breila Texas LC
- Ryan Coe Chamisa LC
- Jordan Lewans (Summani) FoC
Lord Verderius invoked Coventina and opened the meeting.

We have quorum with 9 out of 13 GB Reps and/or required National Officers present.

Verderius invoked Coventina and opened the meeting.

National Officers:
- First Officer – Lord Verderius – Present
- Pursewarden – Qabal – Present
- Recorder – Faelind – (Does not count toward Quorum)

Governing Board Representatives Present:
- Calafia LC – Catherine – absent
- Chamisa LC – Polaris / Alt: Lady K – absent
- Everglades Moon LC – Raven (Debby) / Alt: Lord Rieken – Raven
- Hills & Rivers LC – Lauren / Alt: Jamie D. – Lauren
- Northern California LC – Thea / Alt: Deborah B. – Thea and Deborah
- Orange County LC – Janine / Alt: Morgana – Janine and Morgana
- Southern California LC – Lady Mariah / Alt: Lisa M. – Lady Mariah
- Texas LC – Orin / Alt: Willow McKenna – absent
- Touchstone LC – Lord Soec – Lord Soec
- National Covens – Lord Solandrin – Lord Solandrin
- National Individual Members – Grace Moonhawk – absent

Governing Board Rep Reports:

Lord V noted that he still hopes to visit areas after things are more open. He gets his second shot next week and notes different states are opening up and more people are getting vaccinations. He is hopeful he can travel on the behalf of the Covenant soon.

He has heard from members that they are concerned there is no communication and CoG is going dark. He suggested that attending Wednesday with Witches is a great way to stay connected until we can implement a solution for email communication.

Lord Solandrin noted that Wednesday with Witches is often hard to attend with work, could we also do an alternative, a Sunday or Saturday Tea with Witches or something so more folks might be able to attend?

Qabal submitted a written report and noted that the recordings on Zoom will be deleted – Zoom is asking for more money to increase the space to more than one gig. The recordings are from early Military Liaison Committee and Governing Board Committee meetings.

Qabal also noted a bill he received from a Chamisa member that he will not be paying. It might be a fishing expedition, which could be a real person, but it will be looked into.

Calafia LC – Absent – Sent in a written report.

Chamisa LC – Absent

Everglades Moon LC – Raven notes that EMLC had their last meeting on April 24. They discussed Turning the Tides. They will have their next meeting on May 16 and will be discussing their retreats or mini-retreats around the state.

Hills and Rivers LC – Lauren shared that the Covens in the LC have been conducting regular meetings and will have their next meeting on May 13. They have been doing virtual meetings but hope to do an in-person meeting in July in the middle of the State. Different Covens have been meeting and working in the communities as they can. Public events are on hold due to the Pandemic and they hope to begin meeting in person for mid-Summer. Lauren mentioned that she often cannot find what she is looking for on the website and does not know of a lot of benefits to show folks to join CoG. Hills and Rivers welcomed two new Individual Members and one new Friend of CoG.

Northern California LC – Thea has started a Groups.io account for testing and encourages everyone to send her their email address if they want to be added. This is for an alternative to the forums. She wants to know if people have any issues or ideas to please let her know. Deborah added that she was approached in an Outreach capacity and was able to provide resources to a seeker.

Orange County LC – Janine submitted a written report for OCLC.

Southern California LC – Lady Mariah said they are starting to wake up with one coven meeting in person. They are communicating with each other.

Texas LC – Absent

Touchstone LC – Lord Soec is concerned about the lack of response from the NMO. Touchstone is anticipating meeting in person as they have been doing their LC meetings via phone. Lord Soec noted that he found some transcripts of an old talk that Allison Harlow gave at GC that is in the newsletter. He wondered if he should put it on the public side of the Website. Deborah suggested he change any names to pseudonyms to protect folks as that was an issue brought up last year at GC.
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National Covens – Lord Solandrin also noted that he has been waiting on the NMO to meet with the National Covens. He is happy to report that his Coven was able to meet for Beltane as they are all vaccinated.

National Individual Members – Absent

Old Business:

Action Items from prior meetings: Governing Board Committees

Which active national committee should be under Governing Board oversight? Do we have new committees? Should we start any? Should we revive any? Deborah notes that we have the Military Liaison Committee under the Governing Board as well the Survey Committee that Lady Mariah is chairing. Thea brought up the Path to Membership Committee as one that should be under the Governing Board. Deborah notes that perhaps we need a Tech Committee again. Lady Mariah notes that her Survey Committee is short-lived.

Moving forward, every Committee that is established should have a Chair and should report to the Governing Board. The Committee should inform the Governing Board when they plan to meet and there should be minutes provided or a short summary of the meeting within 48 hours. Thea added that successful Committees have 1) a focus, 2) a timeline, and 3) accountability.

Recruiting new National Officers: Verderius suggested Governing Board reps to begin soliciting volunteers for National Office positions in their constituencies. Janine suggested that perhaps we send out a note via Mail Chimp to the membership so folks could see all the Officers that will not continue. Each Officer not running again will create an email with their roles that we need folks to step up to volunteer for. If we find someone who is interested, they could ‘shadow’ the role prior to taking on the role to get hands-on training.

Qabal suggested that the Pursewarden role be divided up and the Covenant hire a bookkeeper. Then we might have more folks who might want to be a Pursewarden. It is a specialized skillset. Lady Mariah is concerned that knowing QuickBooks could be a barrier to having folks step up. Qabal noted the new QuickBooks is addressing some of the intricacies so it will be easier to use and more people could learn it. Qabal suggested we could also use QuickBooks via the Cloud and train all the LC Pursewardens to use it so that even more folks would be able to learn it.

Faelind brought up that now that we have nearly a year of actual Governing Board meetings, we might want to look at how we conduct business. Are we effective and being efficient? We may not need National Officer Meetings, Governing Board Meetings, and Combined Board Meetings. It was also suggested that the Governing Board might have their own recorder, so we have two National Recorders. More discussion to come on this topic as we have learned a lot in this first year of the Governing Board.

NetCo Items (Minutes updated from meetings held the week of May 10)

Verderius met with Canu, Faelind, and Orin to discuss the following items:

Assistant NetCo – Orin is appointed assistant NetCo. Canu to create account for Orin who is technical and familiar with the website and forums back end and will assist Canu as needed.

Create Military Liaison email to be directed/forwarded to Deborah. Canu confirmed that the existing email military@cog.org is forwarded to Deborah and has been for some time.

Canu confirmed that it is possible to set up emails on the new server. They could be email lists and/or email forwards. Setting up an email list would require more space on the server where email forwards would not. Adding space by upgrading to a higher package with our service provider is estimated to be approximately $400 per year. (We currently pay $275.)

Discussion ensued on whether we would run into the same issues we faced with the old server with email being marked as SPAM due to modern email security restrictions where emails that are relays and not true email addresses are flagged as spam.

Canu created a tech@cog.org email group on the new server with himself, Verderius, Orin, and Faelind as members to test whether email lists would continue to have the problems the old server had with bouncing. Testing revealed that we would run into the same issues with the emails marked as SPAM by email providers. This reveals that perhaps a third-party email provider such as Groups.io or Google groups would be a better option as they are structured to deal with email providers in different ways so they are NOT flagged as spam.

Over the next few months, the National Officers and Governing Board Reps will discuss these findings and determine next steps.

Lady Mariah to send Survey Questions to Governing Board for review. They are working on breaking it down to a more focused survey. She is meeting one of the Committee members to discuss. She will report back.

Grace Moonhawk to research and prepare search report for word and service mark “MerryMeet” and associated costs to trademark MerryMeet. Grace is absent so this is tabled.

Thea to test Groups.io as a way to enable Friends of CoG access with CoG members. She is happy to show people what Groups.io is like behind the scenes. Thea asked for volunteers to sign up for
the testing and walked through the Groups.io interface (after the call) to show interested folks.

**New Business:**

Lack of response from National Membership Officer – The NMO has been non-responsive for many months. The Governing Board grants Thea the full power and authority to perform the role as the National Co-Membership Officer starting immediately.

Waiving /prorating/refunding fees for Credentials for those who have not received their Credentials. (Have at least one person in the Texas Local Council who renewed last October and has still not received Credentials.) The Governing Board has determined that no refunds will be issued, but electronic Credentials will be delivered, and they will be good through 2022 to make up for being late.

Parliament of the World’s Religions has announced that it will hold a virtual parliament October 17-18, 2021. In 2018, COG gave stipends to members to attend the in-person event in Toronto. This year’s registration fees will be minimal – US $50 until 5/31, US $75 from 6/1-8/31, US $90 after 9/1 and US $10 for students. Morgana mentions that she is fortunate to be able to cover her own costs, but there may be members who want to attend who cannot afford it. Since these costs will be minimal and there won’t be any travel costs, will COG give stipends to members who want to attend online? Last time we had to approve it at Grand Council, but that means we’ll miss the “Early Bird Special” and have to pay a little more. Morgana added, I’m not an Interfaith Representative, but I found my participation in PWR 2018 to be a very valuable experience. The Governing Board has determined that we have the funds to pay for CoG members to attend. The Pursewarden may also be able to purchase a block of tickets for CoG members. The Pursewarden and First Officer will put together an email to be sent out via Mail Chimp to the Covenant Membership. She added that she is using Mail Chimp to send out a newsletter for Pagan Pride LA and suggested that future newsletters for CoG might be done the same way.

Pay for additional space to store Committee Zoom Recordings? The Pursewarden was contacted by Zoom to add space to continue to save the Recordings from meetings chaired by the Military Liaison and early Governing Board Transition Committees. Do we pay to add space to save these meetings? All Officer, Governing Board, and Combined Board meetings are saved on the Recorder’s PC so they are not taking up space. The Governing Board determined that we would not pay to add space and would inform the membership who use the CoG Zoom that if they record any meetings, please record to their own computers, or secure any recordings by downloading to their own computers before the recordings are deleted.

Call for Additions to the Agenda:

Lady Mariah – SoCal LC member application from a friend of CoG. The First Officer wrote to the potential member about the application procedure.

**Action Items:**

- National Officers who are not running again to provide email with role description to be published via MailChimp to the Covenant Membership.
- Governing Board and National Officers to discuss email options for a Proposal at Grand Council.

**Meeting Adjourned:**

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES**

~ June 5, 2021~

Invocation:

Lord V invoked Coventina to begin the meeting at 5 after the hour.

Roll Call – (Quorum is two-thirds present):

We have quorum with 9 of 10 Officers present –

National Officers:

- First Officer – Lord Verderius – Present
- Second Officer – Morgana – Present
- Membership Officer – Lady K – Present
- Co-Membership Officer – Thea Bristlebroom – Present
- Publications Officer – Lord Soec – Present
- Pursewarden – Qabal – Present
- Public Information Officer – Janine N. – Present
- Outreach Officer – Brandon P. – Absent
- Correspondence Officer – Grace Moonhawk – Present
- Recorder – Faelind – Present

**Officer Reports:**

First Officer (Lord Verderius): Please see full report on pg 4. Lord V will submit his report after this call so that he has deadline dates for Grand Council.

Second Officer (Morgana): Please see full report on pg 4. She added that she is using Mail Chimp to send out a newsletter for Pagan Pride LA and suggested that future newsletters for CoG might be done the same way.

Membership Officer (Dee P): Please see full report on pg 4. Lady K reported that all renewals have been caught up at Lord V’s request. Lord Soec is still waiting on the data dump that she will provide over the weekend. She added that she will be sending Litha renewals soon and the update for those 9 Coven renewals (and any Credentials) changing from Lughnasadh to Samhain according to changes made at Grand Council last year. July 15th is our deadline for the Quorum/Proxy form. Lady K will send out the quorum forms and reminders on June 8th. She has 36 people that have marked their renewals forms as giving their Proxy to Grand Council as a whole. We have 132 members (65 are
Individual Members) and 11 Friends of CoG. Dee asked Stachia to look at the renewal form on the website as some of the selections for variables on the form are not working.

Co-Membership Officer (Thea): Thea reported that her and Dee have worked out how to share the membership database so that there is a back-up and this process can be used in the future in case it is needed. She added that she has stepped down as NCLC Governing Board Rep. Deborah will be the alternate.

Deborah will be the NCLC Governing Board Rep and Linnea will be the alternate.

Publications Officer (Lord Soec): Please see full report on pg 5. The newsletter deadline is Sunday, June 20th. Please get reports and any Proposals to Lord Soec as soon as possible. The deadline for the Lughnasadh newsletter is July 21st and we’ll try to include any proposals that have been submitted. Lady K to get the Quorum Form to Lord Soec for the Lughnasadh newsletter. All National Officers that will not be continuing in their roles should submit a letter detailing the duties of their position for publication in the newsletter.

Public Information Officer (Janine N): Please see full report on pg 5. Janine will help Lord V with a Mail Chimp notice to inform membership about attending the Parliament of World’s Religions about a block of admissions for CoG Members for the Pagan sections of the event. Morgana has already signed up individually, but we hope more CoG members will attend. Registration has been extended to June 15. Qabal suggests that we send out a Mail Chimp to remind members there are funds to help them attend. Lord Soec will add to the CoG website too.

Pursewarden – (Qabal): Please see full report on pg 5. He added that he has reached out to the organizers of the virtual Parliament of World’s Religions about a block of admissions for CoG Members for the Pagan sections of the event. Morgana has already signed up individually, but we hope more CoG members will attend. Registration has been extended to June 15. Qabal suggests that we send out a Mail Chimp to remind members there are funds to help them attend. Lord Soec will add to the CoG website too.

Public Information Officer (Janine N): Please see full report on pg 5. Janine will help Lord V with a Mail Chimp notice to inform membership about attending the Parliament of World’s Religions. She has already shared it on the CoG facebook page. The next Wednesday with Witches will be on June 16 for members only. Due to popular demand at the last couple of public Wednesday with Witches. She suggested that we might want to have a Resources tab on the website and perhaps create an app that could be available on a mobile phone. Thea suggested that there is a Silicon Valley coding forum she knows of that she could ask whether a student might want to take on such a project. Janine has organized a Sunday Salon for CoG members to gather on June 13 at 3 PM PST at the request of Lord Solandrin to offer something to folks who cannot meet on Wednesdays.

Outreach Officer (Brandon P): Absent. Lord V added that Brandon does not plan to continue as Outreach Officer, so we hope someone would like to step up for the role now and shadow Brandon to learn how to do it.

Correspondence Officer (Grace Moonhawk): She has been working a new job and finishing her last quarter of school and has been super busy. She has only received a few letters to follow up on. She will be continuing in her role as Correspondence Officer. She’s glad there is a Sunday Salon planned as she will finally be able to attend.

Recorder (Faelind): These Minutes are my report.

Old Business:

Next Gen Summit – There will be no Honorarium for Guest Speakers at the Next Gen Summit scheduled for October 16, 2021 because we hope to have young writers attend who would want to promote their works.

New Business:

Grand Council Planning – virtual Grand Council 2021 will be held August 14 and 15. This year we will hold GC on Saturday and Sunday

Times for each day (6 hours each day):

- Zoom room opens at 8:30 AM PST, 9:30 AM MST, 10:30 AM CST, 11:30 AM EST –
- Meeting starts 9:00 AM PST, 10:00 AM MST, 11:00 AM CST, 12:00 PM EST –
- 2-hour Break from Noon PST to 2 PM PST, 1 to 3 PM MST, 2 to 4 PM CST, 3 to 5 PM EST –
- Meeting resumes 2 PM PST, 3 PM MST, 4 PM CST, 5 PM EST –
- Meeting ends at 5 PM PST, 6 PM MST, 7 PM CST, 8 PM EST –
- Zoom will be left open while on the break so people can visit with each other

Roles we need for Virtual Grand Council:

- Queue-Minder – Janine
- Time-Keeper – Lord Soec
- Vibes-Watcher – Thea
- Tech-Support – Orin (confirmed later as he was not on the call)
- Point-of-Processor – Thea
- Backup Recorder – Morgana

Faelind will open Zoom as Host to Record the meeting and will make Lord V, Dee, Janine, and Thea co-hosts. If anything should happen to Faelind’s connection, a co-host will become host and must remember to begin the Recording again.

Only Dee will admit attendees so she can take role/confirm quorum.

Faelind will create polls for each proposal for consensus and separate polls for the budget and each National Officer candidate vote. Polls may need to be created on the meeting for updated proposal wording.

Break-out Rooms will be used to separate those who are non-voting attendees during the few instances where voting is needed.

Break-out Rooms will also be used for discussions as needed to gain consensus.
Thea and/or Dee to speak about Zoom, Proxy, Consensus, and Voting information for Grand Council as a Topic for Discussion during July Member gatherings. CoG Members only Sunday Salon scheduled for Sunday, July 11, and Members only Wednesday with Witches scheduled for July 21.

Dee will use direct email to send out Grand Council documentation and information and will use Mail Chimp to send out notices for Grand Council that everyone needs to see including Friends of CoG.

We will use the CoG Google Drive to house all Grand Council documentation.

National Officers who will not be continuing in their role: PIO, Recorder, Pursewarden, Outreach, and Second Officer. These roles will need to be filled at Grand Council this year. Officers not continuing will send in a report with the duties of their roles to Lord Soec for the newsletter.

OCLC will be hosting the Friday the 13th CoG (Cock) Tail party and will confirm the time at their next LC meeting this coming week.

Deadlines:
- July 15th for Quorum/Proxy form
- July 15th for Proposals

New Local Council Inquiry from Los Angeles – The folks involved will be provided the information about how the structure of CoG works and what is required to create a new local council.

Inmate Membership Discussion – This is a discussion that should be forwarded to the Governing Board regarding whether membership or Friend of CoG is a possibility for felony convictions.

Call for Additions to the Agenda:
- Inquiry from someone about looking for a Coven or community in LA – Were forwarded to SCLC.

Meeting Adjourned:
Meeting adjourned at 2 hours and 47 minutes.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

 Scorpi a Starfall
Friends of CoG
Mechanicsville, MD

STATEMENT OF PRACTICE
To Whom it May Concern,

Merry Meet! My name is Scorpi a and I have been a witch since 2004. I was initiated into a coven in the Amber Rose Tradition on Samhain, 2008. As of Imbolc, 2021, I am now HPS and 3rd Degree Elder of The Circle of the Sacred Rose in the Amber Rose Tradition. It is my intent to first join as Friends of CoG, then eventually as an Individual Member and/or as a Coven.

My craft name within the Amber Rose family is Lady Hathor. However, my public witch name is ‘Scorpi a.’ My personal focus is on the Goddess Isis as I am simultaneously enrolled in the Priestess program with the Fellowship of Isis. Within the coven, we revere the Goddess and the Goddess equally. For my coven esbats, I focus on the phase of the moon and the sign of the moon. I plan our rituals and magic(k) based on astrology.

I agree to CoG’s code of ethics and I wish to become a CoG Affiliate. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Scorpi a Starfall

Aurie and Michael G
Hills and Rivers
Chautauqua, NY

STATEMENT OF PRACTICE
We are Aurie and Michael G, and we apply to Covenant of the Goddess for re-entry after many years. We joined COG as members of the NROOGD coven Children of the Raven in the Northern California Chapter sometime between 1979 and 1983. We moved to Michigan in 1995, and did not find a COG presence in Michigan until a few years before we left for Chautauqua, NY in 2020; Oberon was that COG presence, and is recommending us. Here in Western NY, there's little pagan presence that we have found, and we wish to rejoin COG through the Hills and Rivers Council for networking and community. We practice a blend of NROOGD and Feri as solitaries together, and have done so for decades.

We are practicing High Priest and High Priestess.

We feel strong connections to Earth as a living being and revere her as Mother and life force, We celebrate the wheel of the year and the turning of seasons, the sun and the moon, growing things, animals, spirits and tides. We connect and find symbolism within, in earth, air, fire, water, and spirit, intermeshed with the compass directions and time. We believe that we follow a path and our actions hold meaning, responsibility, and consequence, and therefore we honor the Wiccan Rede.

When our path deems it necessary, we teach and divine. I have taught classes in individual and group shielding and psychic development at Michigan Pagan Fest, Crazy Wisdom Bookstore in Michigan, and have provided 10-week workshops at my homes in California and in Michigan. In divination I work primarily with crystal sometimes with an older oracle card deck; Michael reads the I Ching using Yarrow stalks. Divination and history, future and past, are
important parts of our belief structure and focuses of honor and meditation.

We believe in the human societal need for inclusivity and diversity of race, gender, sexual (or nonsexual) orientation, age, culture, body type, belief structures, and any blend, shade, harmony thereof.

We believe that there are many paths to get to the same destination, so we honor other practices as equal and valid, especially as our own path is pretty specialized.

We hope that COG (and Hills and Rivers) accepts our statement and our application, so that we can continue on our path, meet others, teach and learn. There is still much for us to learn.

Blessed Be,
Aurie and Michael.

Letter of Recommendation #1
Dear Members of the Covenant,

I would like to recommend for membership Audrey (Aurie) and Michael Goulding, who are applying to membership with the Hills and Rivers Local Council. I’ve known them for about 3 years in our larger community and have participated in rituals and other events with them, I know them to be Witches and they are great examples of long-time members of the Craft. Unassuming and quiet -but not too quiet -their presence and manner receive respect and deference. They are indeed wise elders.

Aurie and Michael came from Michigan from California, and they once belonged to the Covenant through one of the LCs, the Northern one, some years ago. Their history includes training and degrees with NROOGD and Feri traditions. They are honest, rational and reasonable and would make great additions to our assemblage,

Oberon Alan Toubeaux

Letter of Recommendation #2
Dear Members of the Covenant,

It is indeed my pleasure to write this letter of support for Audrey (Aurie) G and Michael G as they seek individual memberships in HRLC. I recently had a lovely conversation with Audrey and I remain confident that she and Michael will be true assets to HRLC. They had been members of CoG in their former coven, Children of the Raven, in San Francisco where they lived for many years, and their involvement in the former NightWing and BloodRose covens suggest an impressive range of experience.

Now that they live in Chautauqua, NY, they are in HRLC’s area, and bring a history, talent and knowledge base that truly complement the covens and members of HRLC. Audrey has taught classes in shielding, Reiki and more, and their work in both Feri and NROOGD traditions adds new magickal ways to HRLC. It is without reservation, that I offer Audrey and Michael for membership in HRLC, and further, I acknowledge them as elders in their traditions.

Many Blessings,
Lady Annabelle
Second Officer (Marla R): I was tasked with 2 proposals for the April meeting. One was mini gatherings for Moonies around the state for 2021. The second proposal was to start a draft of how to add to our monetary balance. Those are listed below. Besides those two items, I would also like to start working on the annual EMLC meeting and possible retreat. I would propose the date to be September 25, 2021. I would also like us to consider a weekend retreat at Fern House that same weekend.

**PROPOSAL: Mini gatherings:** COVID has made 2020 and 2021 problematic to gather for EMLC Moonies. Because of this, I propose that we have a few mini gatherings around the state. We would limit this to 10 people and recommend the use of masks and social distancing. We understand that the makeup of the attendees would be different each time. The intent is that someone would take point, someone take pics and someone do a small write up to let the rest of the Moonies know what happened. Because we are all across the state, I recommend that we have a variety of locations. Regarding dates, we could stagger them OR do it one or two specific days so that we are all meeting at once. Suggestions are:

- **South:** Everglades – boat ride, kayak, walk? A variety of ideas for this area so I didn’t pick a specific one.
- **North West:** St George Island Florida - Vacation Guide to St George Island FL (visitflorida.com)
- **North East:** St. Augustine Florida - Things to Do & Attractions in St. Augustine FL (visitflorida.com)
- **Fort Clinch State Park | Florida State Parks**
- **Little Talbot Island State Park | Florida State Parks**
- **Mid Florida:** Home - Crystal River - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (fws.gov)
- **Silver Springs State Park – World Famous Glass Bottom Boats**
- **Bok Tower Gardens | GFBWT (floridabirdingtrail.com) and Home - Bok Tower Gardens**
- **Visit Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex at Cape Canaveral**
- **Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park | Florida State Parks** (Florida's Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park is the only state park certified by the International Dark-Sky Association.)

If these possibilities don’t work, then let’s look at Florida State Parks Finder (visitflorida.com)

**PROPOSAL: Funds:** EMLC wants to find other ways to contribute to our monetary balance.

- **Proposal:** Zoom Psychic House (Alpandia please share info)
- **Proposal:** Create an on-line merchandise site and stock it with a variety of items such as masks, bags, etc... Use 2 or 3 different pictures. One can be the EMLC logo but not that exclusively so that we appeal to many witches, pagans, and heathens. While it is okay to use a copyright free picture (aka Pixababy), we develop a theme and ask our local artists to develop something. If this is an idea that we want to pursue, it appears that we need to create accounts, etc. If we are going to do this, I think we need to decide what products we want to sell before we put in a "store".

There are a variety of site that do print on demand. [15 Best Print on Demand Companies to Make Money in 2021 (withintheflow.com)](https://www.withintheflow.com) give some ideas.

- **Custom Printed & Embroidered Drop Shipping Products | Printful**
- **Blessings, Marla**

Membership Officer (Lady Bridget): Hello dear ones, All of our members due to renew at Imbolc and Ostara have renewed, so we are all still in good standing.

Those members due to renew at Beltane are:
- Beachfyre Coven
- Kasha

Several members have mentioned that they had not received an email with their renewal form from the National Membership Office, Lady K. Please be aware that she may be having some life issues, and please make yourselves responsible for getting your renewals in to her. You can log onto the Cog.org website, scroll down until you see the "members renew here" link. There you can pay the tithe through paypal, and then download the renewal form to fill out and email to her. Please be sure to copy me on the email so I can be aware of your renewal also. Make sure you save your copy!

This year many people have faced difficulties, whether for themselves or their families, and it is still continuing a level of stress that can make even the smallest of extra jobs seem harder. Let's try to give each other the benefit of the doubt and show a little more kindness.

And that being said, if you are having financial issues, please remember that the Grace of the Goddess funds are there to assist you if you need help paying for your renewal. If you find you are having issues with getting the form online, I can also email you a blank form. Additionally, this form is also in the back of every newsletter.

May all of us be blessed with health and well being, and return to being able to be together soon.

blessings,
Lady Bridget
EMLC Membership
Publications Officer (Cat): Cat not on the call. FO generally updated re: work on EMLC Facebook Page and work to update items to that page and the website.

Public Information Officer (Diana): No updates from PIO who was present in this meeting.

FO – a news update, there is a woman in Naples area, name unknown, of who this woman purportedly swindled people locally of 100K. Offering Witchcraft services to 10 people out of Naples, FL.

Be aware of this in case a statement is needed. FO will post an article on this onto the Board List.


Pursewarden (Raven): newly elected PW. Greetings!

I have to report that the EMLC PNC bank account has a balance of $5,824.61 as of today, and our Paypal account has a balance of $3,491.85. There has only been one expense since I took office; that of the Post Office Box. Lady B was so kind as to take care of paying for that, and she was reimbursed from the Paypal account $134.00 on 3/23/21.

I will spend some time getting the records of the balances of our charitable accounts up to date, and report on that by the next meeting.

My understanding is that the quarter for CoG will end on April 30th, at which time I will prepare a quarterly report for National.

We still need to get the signatures for the PNC account updated; I am in contact with Lady Rayna regarding that matter.

Your Pursewarden,

Raven

Recorder (Ceos): Last minutes submitted by Recorder were for the 3/13/20 meeting.

• Report had errors, which were corrected.
• Report was submitted to the EMLC email group and to CoG
• Reach out to national folks re: deadline and errors.

Old Business
What EMLC-ers are doing
• Various members shared about getting Covid vaccine shots.
• Raven shared re: her work in fostering cats / kittens.
• Shaylee shared re: a class she facilitated. Go to Facebook page re: Luna Bohemia Miami....Shaylee is doing 5 week beginner on Hecate. Also on that page are Psychic Health with Walter. Shaylee has been doing readings, free of charge for now. Shaylee is doing other studies.
• Rayna – Beachfyre is meeting in person for Beltane.....Beachfyre has been going steady throughout the pandemic. Rayna & Canu are invoking the tech gods to be gentle and helpful in circle ☀️. Three have purchased 10 acres of undeveloped land 20 minutes outside of Arcadia, FL hoping to host small meeting, camping, activities, small retreats.
• Diana – exploring interfaith waters. Has a close friend ordained as a Presbyterian minister. There is another group 'Women in Ministry'. Hoping to meet in person soon.
• Spellcaster – shared. CUUPS Chapter of Pagans at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Oakland Park, FL is still alive and well. Moonpath Circle is alive and well, they have invited new. $500 degree offered for any certification program (Ash the Silent)....Moonpath Circle is a 501c30, of witches. All is good. Has Witch friend (Diana from Romania) who was also on the call.

Report from LC representatives to National Board (Raven)

• 4/04/21 – meeting of just the CoG Governing Board...a short 90 minute meeting. Few items...when CoG shares on Facebook, to remember to share with EMLC. CoG Board continues an ongoing discussion of it's function and role.
• "Wednesday with Witches” – group is meeting.
• 5/08/21 (?) is date of full / next meeting.
• Riekin and Raven’s time on Board is nearing completion. Raven likely will not renew in this role.

Turning the Tide 2021 (Rayna)

• Site / Location (if done in person):
  ⇒ Greynolds Park (Miami) has opened up scheduling for the 1st 2 weeks of Dec. 2021.
  ⇒ It is not clear if the problematic man from 2 years ago was still on the staff at Greynolds.
• Date of TTT:
  ⇒ 2nd weekend of December 2021 is Friday, Dec 10- Sunday, Dec 12 – this proposed date was discussed and voted on.
  ⇒ Consensus Twinkle from all present with moving ahead having TTT Date of Friday, Dec 10- Sunday, Dec 12, 2021. However, this was in conflict with the previously discussed date of Dec 3 – 5, and will depend on the availability of Greynolds. This will again be revisited at the next meeting.
• Who Will Do What – Discussion:
1. **Site Coordination with Greynolds Park Staff:**
   ⇒ Rayna agreed to continue to coordinate securing the site and interfacing with the Greynolds Park staff. This will include getting information (from the Park Staff) about whether a vendor’s permit is now required.

   1. **Inquiry RE: if Vendor’s Permit is now required:**
      ⇒ There is rumor that a Vendor’s Permit could be required for this event. This is unconfirmed. Lady Bridget agreed to contact Miami-Dade County directly about this possible vendor’s permit, rather than the Greynolds Park (Rayna will explore with the Park Staff).

   2. **Identified Point Person(s) to Coordinate TTT:**
      ⇒ Discussion about this. Position involves mentoring, giving / getting instructions.
      ⇒ Discussion about a Committee vs. an Individual to coordinate. Feeling was, it is best to have one-person, point person as the Tides Coordinator.
      ⇒ This item will be revisited at the next EMLC meeting. Tabled for today.
      ⇒ Rayna & Shaylee agreed to talk further.

• **Facilitating Online Component of TTT 2021**
  ⇒ Alpandia expressed openness to helping facilitate the online component of Tides.

• **In-Person vs. (or including?) Virtual This Year?**:
  ⇒ This was discussed by the group.
  ⇒ Alpandia would like to seek input from medical persons who are EMLC members.
  ⇒ This will be discussed again at next meeting.

1. **Greynolds Park’s Cancellation Policy:**
   ⇒ Lady Bridget recalled a cancellation policy with Greynolds – this can be researched more.
   ⇒ If there is a cancellation policy in place….consider moving forward, reserving the park.

• **Greynolds & Event Capacity Limitations: (Discussion):**
  ⇒ Shaylee – Explore whether Miami-Dade County has a limit on number of persons permitted on the site.
  ⇒ Marla – Explore whether Miami-Dade County would require attendees to be vaccinated.

1. **Informal Discussion RE: 2020 TTT Virtual Event:**
   ⇒ Alpandia noted that the online TTT Retreat in 2020 was a very active experience.
   ⇒ Some people did live as a group in a location while they did ZOOM.

• **Discussion of possibly having some or all of the TTT event be virtual:**
  ⇒ Rayna suggested having virtual participation either a back-up or in-addition to the in-person
  Alpandia suggested possibility of streaming the event on EMLC Facebook.
  Ideas to Explore:
  • What Internet does Greynolds Park have?
    ▪ Maybe only ZOOM workshops in the Great Hall if Internet is limited?
    ▪ Facilitating ZOOM requires a lot of energy.
    ▪ Lady B – the Great Hall at Greynolds has a lot of echo.
    ▪ Rayna – canvass with EMLC techies re: recording in a room that echos?

• **Technical Equipment (Needed / Available) - Discussion:**
  ⇒ Coyote – can EMLC purchase tech equipment to assist (mics, etc.)
  ⇒ Alpandia – then it becomes inventory, where does it stay when we are not using it?
  ⇒ Alpandia – Aequitas has a projector that is a pre-recorded workshop maybe that could be broadcasted.
  ⇒ Lady Bridget – Sarah – has lapel mics, that are not wireless.
  ⇒ Alpandia – anything projected from Greynolds...we want to get onsite to do a test of the tech.

• **Registration Fee (TTT) - Discussion**
  ⇒ Lady Bridget – if we are limited on how many we have….make sure the registration fee covers the cost of renting the park and/or if number of people in cabin is limited…we may need to encourage tents.
  ⇒ Virtual might also need to be charged, at least a nominal fee. Remember Tides is a fundraiser.
  ⇒ Alpandia – we can lock down the ZOOM – a ZOOM feed.
  ⇒ Alpandia – know if people will have social distancing preferences.
Shaylee – have a one-day charge for people who only want to be present during the day.

Decorations / Potential Themes for TTT 2021

⇒ Ceos – encouraged heavy decoration for Tides. ...Alpandia & Lady B – suggested Ceos and Coyote to coordinate decorations.

⇒ Potential Themes: This year is Tides 15. Steampunk Quincinera. Queer Eye for Yuletide. Yuletide on the Airship....Fluffy Leather?...STEAMPUNK MAGIC by Gypsy B....clocks, gears, machinery, magickal at the same time. Balsa wood cut outs.

⇒ Raven – Roaring 20s Theme?

⇒ Ceos – Seeing texture, color, majesty, fun after the pandemic...would be cool. Renaissance Festivals have been shut down. An over-the-top TTT would be very welcome.

⇒ Neither a theme nor a decorations point person was identified at this meeting. Will be discussed further in future meeting.

Ritual Coordinator - Discussion

⇒ This was discussed, including the idea of a Ritual Mistress / Master vs. an EMLC Coven coordinating the annual Saturday evening TTT Ritual.

⇒ This will continue to be discussed in future EMLC Meetings. No decision made today.

Fundraising and Outreach

Virtual Psychic House Parties

- Alpandia – explore how to do virtual house parties.  
- Pandie – getting a feel for how many would be readers and/or ‘readees’.

- Idea have a gallery for all, and breakout rooms for the reader.

- Pandie was outlining ticketing and how that might work in such an event.

- Doing it virtually could allow persons from a wider area as readers and/or ‘read-ees’.

- Alpandia (Pandie) – will continue to research.

- Shaylee has been doing readers via ZOOM....shows what she is doing. Sometimes she has two cameras, sometimes holds it up to the screen.

- Alpandia – moving it to speaker view on both sides will expand the screen.

- Shaylee – if she has a phone, she can text pics to the ‘read-ees’.

- Coyote – online psychic house party sounds interesting and cool, an in-person one is a personal preference.

Fundraising and Outreach (continued)

Mini Retreats

Marla’s proposal (see 2nd Officer’s Report / same report was read aloud by First Officer, Alpandia....the ideas were then discussed by the group).

⇒ Marla offered to be point person for this.

⇒ Alpandia – feels more like a day trip thing, but maybe people could go up early and leave the next day....possibly persons going would coordinate amongst themselves.

⇒ Discussion re: mini-retreat ideas. Group tending to prefer the idea of Bok Towers (spiritual, peaceful, middle of state, natural iron spike in the middle of the state).

⇒ Coyote would be open to coordinating a sky clad event at a creek.

Fundraising and Outreach (continued)

Mini Retreats (continued)

- Diana – an idea....any interest in going to do volunteer work as a way to get together and in the evening have a ritual? A wolf preserve one hour to the West of Diana with some volunteer opportunities. They have a Full Moon camping (or used to have) that. Called “Seacrest Wolf Preserve”.

- Other ideas discussed: Alpandia: the Logger Heads Preserve being opened up.

- Diana (another idea): River Keepers Group – lostsprings.org RE: Rodham / Kirkland Dams which has been detrimental to the springs in Central Florida.

Online Merchandise Sales

- Marla’s proposal (see 2nd Officer’s Report / same report was read aloud by First Officer, Alpandia....the ideas were then discussed by the group).

- Marla offered to be point person for this.

- Discussion on how to make some of this happen.

- Bridget – we have an account online with Café Press.

LC timeline (An ongoing project for the historical records of the EMLC)

Alpandia is still taking feedback and pics from past EMLC events. Current timeline is scarce and still looking to post it soon. Currently is “EMLC started” and “Tides started”.

Lady Bridget suggested to Alpandia to look at past minutes.

Alpandia has noted this is the last time she will ask. Alpandia is taking pics.

New Business

EMLC Facebook page:

- Rayna asked to put the EMLC Facebook on the agenda.
• General ideas put forward in discussing this topic:
  • The appointment PO (Publication Officer), Cat, is transitioning (moving into her new home) and because of this there is currently a transition still occurring between the current FO (First Officer), who was the prior PO and the new PO (Cat).
  • EMLC’s official page is the Wild Hunt for some time and EMLC also has an official Facebook page.
  • Discussion on how to engage contributors to submit more material and a variety of material.
  • There was a discussion re: the need for guidelines regarding what material could be posted.
  • One member requested clarification on what can be posted. This idea was greatly discussed.
  • This active discussion today also included whether the EMLC Board, possibly in the person of the PO or the Board as whole or part, needs to (or does not need to) approve potential material that might be posted. Some felt that it was ok for the PO to unilaterally decide/approve, some felt that it was the domain of the Board (as a whole or in the person of the PO) to decide/approve posts, some felt clearer guidelines of what can be posted are much needed, some considered the possibility of simply allowing the public to post on the EMLC Facebook page.
  • Some examples of items that currently get posted on the EMLC Facebook page include: EMLC events, events that EMLC members are doing, CoG items (Wednesdays with Witches), Pagan Pride Days, events from people who are really supportive of EMLC (e.g. – CUUPS). The EMLC Facebook page also has conservation articles re: conservation concerns in Florida. Additionally the EMLC Facebook page has also historically been a resource page for natural disasters.
  • It was noted by one of the EMLC Board that all items submitted to the EMLC Facebook page get reviewed / approved.
  • There was a vigorous discussion about:
    1. The EMLC Facebook page benefitting EMLC Members.
    2. The EMLC Facebook page as a way to interact with the broader community.
  • It was noted by one that efforts are made to post with advance notice to give readers sufficient time to see / read the information. Late submissions (e.g. – events occurring within 48 hours of a post) would not be posted because there would not be sufficient time for readers to get that information.
  • Request was made to discuss the EMLC Facebook page, and an observation was made that it currently has approximately 1,600 followers. It was commented that the EMLC Facebook page has great potential. There was a general agreement that the EMLC Facebook page has been doing very little. Some felt it was related to lack of persons contributing materials.
  • A general suggestion was made to be cautious about posting items that suggest EMLC supports, or is against, causes or groups.

Outcome of the above discussion:
  ⇒ Pursewarden Raven will put a proposal of guidelines of what can be posted together to be discussed at the next EMLC Meeting.
  ⇒ Issues to be considered / discussed at next – or future - EMLC Meeting(s):
    o The potential promulgation of a set of clear guidelines of what can be posted,
    o The approval process for postings including who, if anyone, gives the final ok for postings,
    o How to increase contributions (and variety) of postings.
    o The utilization of the Wild Hunt page and/or the EMLC Facebook Page.

Community announcements
Two festivals in Florida:
  • Trees of Avalon – Nov (3-5 or 5-8???)…they are in middle of state. Kiwanis Club
  • Mixed Fires is a potential 2nd event, in October time, 2021.

Next meeting: Sunday, May 16, 2021. Gather: 12:30 pm, Start @ 1:00 pm.
Meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm with Prayer to Coventina.
• Faunina Del Bosco, Circle of Diana – Pursewarden HRLC, taking minutes due to Recorder’s absence.
• Jamie D., Grove of the Ancient River – First Officer HRLC
• Lauren T., Coven of the Wooded Vale – Membership Officer HRLC
• Elizabeth C., Coven of Leita Visindi

Quorum reached? Yes

First Officer Report (Jamie Dana) We began our meeting with a discussion of how we celebrated Samhain and the continuing challenge of COVID-19. Many of the covens met remotely using online video chat and virtual meeting platforms like Zoom. Grove of the Ancient River hosted a Dumb Supper.

With the uncertainty of the upcoming year, discussions turned to our Annual Meeting which is usually held at Lammas as part of a festive weekend. We typically have a public rituals, workshops, speakers, and vendors. This year we cancelled it, but are hoping that with a vaccine in 2021, live meetings will be possible by summer. We discussed the various forms this might take. We want to make an interesting event, while keeping attendees safe. Lauren and Laurie had attended a virtual “witch camp” in which attendees paid $30 for the month with speakers and various classes and wondered if we might consider this as a possible solution.

We are considering having an in-person annual meeting for members only and having the rest of the event virtual. This will all depend in the state of the pandemic by summer. We will investigate getting popular speakers to speak at the event.

We discussed the possibility of hosting Grand Council 2022. HRLC members do have the experience having hosted both Lammas Fest and Gaia Fest over the years. We would hold it in Pittsburgh in the central location of Station Square. There are good hotels and attractions in the area with a beautiful view of the confluence of our three rivers. This area is also close to the airport. To do this, we will have to have a Second officer to coordinate with the Pursewarden and National Board of Officers. We discussed various ideas concerning the Merry Meet festivities and what we might offer. With the Large number of covens that we have and our extensive experience, we should be able to successfully host such an event.

HRLC PIO report (Lady Annabelle): Lady Annabelle began to discuss the challenge of leading covens during a pandemic and during a time of racial tension. With ongoing protests for Black Lives Matter, addressing these racial tensions has become part of our spiritual work—that is, work to foster freedom and equality for all.

Lady Annabelle organized an online vigil in support of this call to action. At 8 PM on Friday, June 12, 2020 we met on Zoom for one hour plus eight minutes and 46 seconds to mark the time it took for George Floyd to be killed while in police custody. We were delighted other members of National CoG were able to join, such as our National Membership Officer. We also honored the death of George Floyd and other people of color killed unjustly within our separate sacred rituals during the month of June.

HRLC Pursewarden Report (Faunina Del Bosco):

$4307.98 was our total, with $3844.00 at PNCBank with $463.98 in PayPal. We have $281.29 earmarked for Lammas Fest 2021, which was cancelled due to COVID-19. This event was to be held in central PA, to do outreach in a new area for us. We are planning to hold our Lammas Fest mainly virtually in 2021.

HRLC Membership Officer report (Lauren Testa):

Coven Leita Visindi (Easton, PA) has completed its CoG membership application and waiting for required time to be officially accepted into CoG.

Morrigan P. from Moon Township, Pennsylvania is a solitary witch applied to Friends of CoG. Her practice consists of tarot, spell work, and ritual worship on each sabbat.

HRLC Governing Rep – (Lauren Testa) We ended the meeting with a discussion of the need for CoG to diversify more and expand CoG. Expand into prison ministry. While there have been some inmate ministry efforts in the past, we now looking to engage with that population more. There are challenges getting materials to the inmates. There is a desire to go beyond “Wicca 101,” but these challenges make it difficult. ministering clergy in institutions such as hospitals and prisons. Jamie has experience as a chaplain in prisons in NE Pennsylvania. Lady Annabelle has served as minister in UPMC hospitals and Western Psychiatric Hospital.

Future meetings on Tuesdays with meetings quarterly planned. Next meeting TBA.

Meeting ended at 8:30
**Southern California**

~No report

**Texas Local Council**

~ No report

**Touchstone**

~ No report
Last published minutes in the Beltane 2021 edition

**Wednesday with Witches**

Come and join us for Wednesday with Witches! We meet on the first Wednesday of the month for the public and every third Wednesday for CoG members only. BYOB (bring your own brew) and snacks and join us for a spell!

Topics are announced on the CoG calendar
- [https://cog.org/whats-happening-around-cog](https://cog.org/whats-happening-around-cog)
- [https://members.cog.org/cog-calendar/](https://members.cog.org/cog-calendar/)

**Blast From the Past**

**Prayer Magic**

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By Bryan Lankford

The United States sets aside the first Thursday in May as a National Day of Prayer. While many erroneously consider this day to be strictly for Christians, others realize prayer is common to all people of faith and is typically central to the practice of every religion. This year in Dallas, one of the largest events commemorating this day was a prayer breakfast sponsored by Thanksgiving Square. This prayer breakfast was attended by over 600 people, and Wiccans not only had a table in the audience but were also represented by a Wiccan priest sitting at the head table along with 21 other clergy people, each representing a different religious tradition in the city of Dallas. The keynote speaker, Ebby Halliday Acers of real-estate fame, gave an address which was moving to all present. People chatted with their neighbors despite their religious differences, and where else could you hope to see a witch sitting between a Sikh and a Bahai minister? The entire event served as an example of what can happen when people of faith set aside their differences and focus on the concepts which unite us all, our love of deity, in whatever form we perceive it, and our shared experience of prayer. Since participating in this event, however, people have asked me why Wiccans would even want to participate in an event dedicated to prayer. My response to them is that Wiccans, just like every other faith group, pray. Wiccans pray in traditional ways, use spells, and meditate, all to bring us closer to the divine.

Ohm Mani Padme Hum, “the jewel is in the lotus,” is a prayer to the Buddhist Bodhisattva of compassion Avalokiteshvara. Hara Krishna, Hara Krishna, Hara Krishna, Rama Rama is a prayer to the Hindu God Krishna, and “Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name” begins a prayer to the Christian God. Across the world prayers go out to a multitude of deities offered by supplicants who seek boons from their gods. Troubled souls cry out for healing of mind and body, assistance with life’s trials, or comfort when the process of living becomes more than they feel able to handle. Every prayer offered, regardless of which faith group asks, is offered by someone expecting a response, some answer to their entreaty or comfort from the divine, and amazingly, all of them receive one. In each instance, throughout every culture in the world, prayers poured forth to deities are answered regardless of to which deity the plea was directed. From Bombay to Sydney, people are healed, receive assistance and are comforted no matter how they view divinity. Prayer is a force which seemingly knows no religious boundaries, is unaffected by denomination or creed, and freely pours forth to all who ask. The only prerequisite is faith, a belief that requests made will be freely answered. Prayer takeson many forms, from loud verbal requests to silent contemplative meditation; for healing, boons, wisdom, and understanding, people pray. The form may vary, but the concept is the same: people communicating with deity through prayer.

Prayer works; research conducted on the affects of prayer show prayer functions in the way it is directed by the person offering the prayer. For good or bad to heal or harm, like rubbing a genie’s lamp, prayer flows out to fulfill the request of the supplicant. In his book Healing Words: The Power of Prayer and the Practice of Medicine, Larry Dossey M.D. documents research on prayer. Research shows that prayer heals people, prayer heals animals, prayer heals bacteria, prayer harms bacteria, prayer can alter genetic mutations of bacteria, even water appears to become more beneficial when prayed over. Prayer works when the prayer is offered in
person and when the prayer is offered from a great distance. No one has proven why prayer works, but there is a great deal of evidence to support the claim that it does work. There is no divine monopoly on prayer. Hindus, Wiccans, Buddhists, and Christians all pray to different concepts of Deity, and yet all of them receive answers to their entreaties. Since each of these different faith groups pray and all of them can offer anecdotal evidence to the miraculous effects their prayers have, prayer would seemingly not, therefore, be the result of the intervention of a single divine entity, at least not deity as perceived by any one religion.

Wicca has prayer, and Wicca also has spells; I view the two of these as exactly the same thing. Divine energy flows around and through us all our lives, and as creatures of the divine, we are entitled to use this energy if we choose. We simply reach out, gather some of this energy, fashion it into the form we wish it to take, and direct it to go where we want. The only requirement is faith, the absolute belief that it will work, and therein lies the problem. How many people pray for a miracle and would faint dead away if it happened? People tend to pray for miracles with little faith their prayers will be answered, and it’s very hard to gather or focus energy with no belief that the prayer will work. Witchcraft uses spells as a ritual means of praying. The various parts of a spell all serve to aid a person in gathering, shaping and directing divine energy. The chanting, colors, herbs, ritual attire, candles, tools, and crystals all serve to aid in the collection of the divine prayer energy available to us all. Each component of the spell adds more energy to the spell because the person wants to gather as much energy as possible since the more energy gathered, the more effective the prayer or spell will be. This is why a hundred people praying for a single cause is usually more powerful than a single person — the prayer energy is cumulative. This is also why some people’s prayers seem to be more powerful than others — they are more adept at gathering the energy and focusing it toward their goal or their need may simply be greater. For example, a person who has complete faith that his or her prayer will be answered is more powerful than a dozen people who pray absent-mindedly, and the prayers of a single child for his dying mother would hold more power than the prayers of twenty of her acquaintances.

In a spell the energy has to be gathered, the goal clearly seen, and the energy released, allowing it to flow outward to fulfill its purpose, and prayers are the same. When one prays or casts spells, one should see the ultimate outcome clearly. If a friend is in a bad car accident, and you pray while picturing your friend alive but in a hospital covered with bandages, you are only sending that person enough prayer energy to keep them going. How much more effective might your prayers be if you prayed for their healing while picturing them fully recovered and enjoying an activity they love. When many people pray, they don’t pray for what they want — they pray for an intermediate step, not picturing what they truly want but rather what they will settle for. Then they may think their spells don’t work or their prayers aren’t answered. In reality they are getting exactly what they are praying for. Without realizing it, we rob ourselves; by visualizing and praying more effectively, we can live closer to our full potential.

People also have an unfortunate tendency to only pray when they are in trouble, feel they are in dire need or occasionally they pray for something while doing nothing to help facilitate their request. For example, if people pray earnestly for a job then sit back, watching television, waiting for the job fairy to knock on the door can they honestly expect their prayer to be answered. How often do people’s prayers fit into this scenario? Meister Eckhart said, “Most people use God like a cow — for the milk and cheese He can produce.” I think a better example is that people tend to view God like Chinese take out: we call and place our order, then sit back and wait for our spiritual dim sum to show up. However, to be fair to Meister Eckhart, Germany didn’t have phones in the 13th century, or Chinese takeout for that matter.

People are always telling the divine what it can do for them without stopping to consider that the Divine already knows what everyone needs, which is often very different from what we want. The typical energy flow in prayer is outward with our wants, needs and desires. If we desire to be closer to deity, the flow of energy in prayer should be inward from deity to us. If we treat the divine less like fast food and more like a garden, we would pray more effectively. People don’t go to a garden to make demands; people go to a garden to take in the beauty of nature and come away feeling refreshed. If, in prayer, we simply opened ourselves up to the Divine and let it fill us with Its energy, allowing It to change us and bring to our lives what we need most, we would be energized with divine energy and given a feeling of closeness to deity. In this way meditation is also a form of prayer. I was told once that prayer is talking to God and meditation is shutting up and listening. When we don’t feel the need to pour forth our words to the Divine and instead simply open ourselves to the Divine, maintaining a calm, meditative, prayerful attitude throughout the day, we stay in constant contact with that fount of divine energy. Literally we are praying without ceasing, letting this God-force fill us, direct our actions and allow us to direct this sacred energy outward to help others when necessary. If we could only maintain this prayerful attitude we would be walking in the light of the Divine and our faith could literally move mountains.