

Ghoulfordian

Samhain: The religious aspect of Halloween

Elizabeth Laird
STAFF WRITER

Halloween is not just a time for candy and costumes. To Pagans, it is a significant, deeply religious holiday for meditation and reflection. Halloween is a modern name for the ancient Celtic holiday of Samhain (pronounced "SOW-in" in Ireland, SOW-eeen in Wales, "SAV-en" in Scotland or even "SAM-hane" in non-Gaelic-speaking countries). Many neo-pagan traditions consider this the spiritual New Year or New Year's Eve. The holiday begins at sundown on Oct. 31 and continues through Nov. 1.

Samhain is a celebration of the Last Harvest and the passing of the summer season. It is period to prepare for winter both mentally and physically, and to honor the night and the colder season approaching. Pagans follow the cycles of life, death, and rebirth, through the "Wheel of the Year" forming the eight major holidays. As Wren Walker of Witchvox.com explains, "This is the time of reflection, the time to honor the Ancients who have

gone on before us...As we contemplate the Wheel of the Year, we come to recognize our own part in the eternal cycle of Life."

Pagans see Samhain as a strongly spiritual time when natural forces are at a peak, since it falls between the autumnal equinox and the winter solstice. Samhain is traditionally the night when the veil between the worlds of humans and spirits are at the thinnest. Therefore, it is a time to honor ancestors and heritage, and reflect on the past to gain insight for the future.

Many set aside Samhain to contemplate personal connections and feelings concerning mortality, and to come to terms with changes and passages. The links between this world and the spiritual plane are intense and the holiday is charged with energy for meditation, visualization, and even divination. Some pagans also reflect on their desires for the New Year, similar to making a New Year's resolution.

Modern pagans maintain traditional customs, including feasts of the harvest honoring

those who have passed on or leaving food and gifts for the spirits. Many pagans enjoy making cider, decorating with fall colors, and recalling memories of loved ones around feast or bonfire. Others light candles and ask for guidance from the knowledge of the past. Other festivities are old divination methods or luck tokens, like bobbing for apples, roasting nuts in the fire, or baking small cakes or pies.

The Grove of Sinann (www.iol.ie/~sinann) comments, "Like all main festivals,

Samhain is a gateway, a transition from one season to another....As the Green One dies and is returned to the earth, the Goddess, now the dark crone, mourns Him and all seems to die. But the bringer of death is by definition the bringer of Life. And there is a wildness, a release in Samhain, which is of great and intense beauty. It is a time to let go of all unwanted baggage, attitudes, etc. as the trees let go of the year's leaves. Indeed if the trees did not loose their leaves they would be a hindrance to growth."

Pue-Gilchrist charged with 348 counts of murder

Daniel Worrall
SPORTS EDITOR

Guilford volleyball star, Jennifer Pue-Gilchrist pleaded not guilty before a Greensboro City Court today on charges of 348 counts of murder. She faces over 7,000 years of prison time.

Coach Chuck McCracken, also facing charges of conspiracy, was astonished to learn of the indictment. "She was one of our best players," McCracken said. "No way she could have done this with all the time she spends on volleyball."

Murder is not the only charge facing Pue-Gilchrist. She also pleaded not guilty to 121 counts of accessory to murder. She spoke to reporters at the courthouse. "I can't believe I only killed someone 348 times ... I mean, no comment."

At trial, the prosecutor had an expert explain Pue-Gilchrist's favorite method of killing, the spike. A spike is leaping up, curling your hand into a fist-like shape, and clubbing downwards with a high velocity.

The expert went on to explain that when she "spiked," all those around her looked dismayed and often times angry, but mostly afraid. "The look she gets in her eyes as she spikes it on someone is ferocious. I can't stand to be near her," said Jenn Smith, volleyball player for Elon College.

Other members of our volleyball team are also facing charges. Sophomore A.J. Robertson is facing charges of 159 murder counts, 491 attempted murder counts, and 24 counts of stealing.

Sue Reichel faces 308 charges of aiding and abetting a felon as she helped dig 308 graves for the people Pue-Gilchrist and others had killed.

"This is a grave day for our sports teams," said Athletic Director Mike Ketchum. "Our basketball players are kleptomaniacs, and our football team is going up for many cases of assault, and let's not even talk about the rugby team, but 348 cases of murder is unheard of."

Overall, this is a sad day in Guilford College sports, as many of our fine athletes will be spending several generations doing hard time.

The Real World (for real, yo)

Amanda Wheeler
FEATURES EDITOR

I have procrastinated in writing an article about how the real world is scary. Frankly, that scares me. Mooohahaha.

I am afraid that the real world will not include feather boa bike rides every evening. Or pina coladas in the afternoon before important meetings about my future (see picture). I am afraid that I will not be able to wear a cape and red-and-white striped leg warmers whenever I feel like it. Or dance to Garth Brooks in nothing but my underwear.

Folks, I'm scared. The real world is scarier than talking to Ted Bundy on a ouija board, messier than ax murder, and just a plain bad idea. Don't open that door! Don't answer the phone! Don't eat that cheeseburger!

Ahhhhhhh!

Reality is chasing you through that abandoned house and you - armed with only a feather boa, a pogo stick, a broken toothpick and a shiny turquoise vibrator - must defend

yourself. And chances are you're not even related to MacGyver. Nope, not even a little bit.

And reality is the most relentless antagonist. It hurts; avoid it at all costs. Don't invite it in for cookies. Don't vacation with it to a famous fancy hotel in Colorado because it will get cabin fever and become delusional. All work and no play makes reality dull. All work and no play makes reality dull. All work and no play...



KATY WURSTER

International sign for reality is scary.

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