



A newsletter of EarthLove Fellowship: a Grove of FoDLA



Reflections of the Rev – Quiet Beauty

By Rev. Linda Costello

Imbolc is the time of year when winter starts slowly turning again towards Spring. I always think of it as a quiet, gentle time, partially because it is a time when we honor the goddess, Brighid, and partially because the word, Imbolc, may be translated to mean "In the Belly" or perhaps Ewe's Milk. In either case, it's a time that symbolizes the time of new birth, or the time just before. This can be thought of as the time when the seeds under the earth start to stir, not yet cracking open the hard outer shell. It's a time when the babe awaits that mysterious moment of labor that heralds the transition to a new existence. It's the time in the darkness, just before the sun's light begins to shine on the eastern horizon, calling forth the new day.

There is much to be gained from stillness. Stillness is a gathering of oneself, a time of great potential, a time of inner peace. Have you had those moments when the world stops and you can just be with the beauty of a glorious sunset, or the way the mountains cut through the sky, rising up to touch the heavens? Have you ever been shushed into awareness by the fluttering of a hummingbird outside of your window? Have you had your attention drawn to a seagull circling over a calm blue ocean? Have you ever felt the whisper of a butterfly's wings as it lands, ever so gently, on your shoulder?

These types of moments enrich our souls. They give us back a sense of wonder for the awesome, inspiring world all around us, so full of the gifts of beauty and abundance. Imbolc is such a moment – a time of quiet beauty.

I just read an article in Newsweek by audio ecologist Gordon Hempton, about the deficiency of silence. There are hardly any places in the United States where one can experience silence for more than fifteen minutes without being interrupted by air traffic. In fact, Hempton says that there are only three places in the country where one can experience silence for at least 15 minutes. What a loss! We need silence to heal, to reconnect ourselves with the world around us, to be able to see the interconnections within life.

So let's take the time during this season to listen to the quiet beauty within our lives. Take some moments every day to still your mind and listen to the silence. Feel the peace as it permeates your spirit. Let yourself be soothed by stillness and sense the fullness as it fills you with what is great in life.

Within the peace of silent blessings,

Rev. Linda Costello

Grove News

EarthLove Fellowship continues to do public ritual for each high day. We are gathering more regular participants at our rituals, as well as seeing new folks. We are dedicated to serving the public by providing an opportunity to celebrate the turning of the year.

In the Ancient Celtic Studies Discussion Group, we are making progress with Ronald Hutton's book, *The Druids*, and learning a great deal in the process.

Blessings Rites have begun again this year. We had our first Blessing Rite to bless the people and land of Haiti, after the devastation of the earthquakes. Our next blessing rite will be on Feb. 21st at Agua Linda Park. The theme is to be announced on our yahoo group list. Please join the group for announcements of all of our events.

Avery and I will be traveling to Pantheacon by car this year. Although I will not be presenting this year, I plan on being a part of some discussions in our hospitality suite.

EarthLove Fellowship now has a board of directors. Members include Avery Goodman, Randy and Cindi Pitcher, and myself.

Blessings of quiet beauty,

Rev. Linda

Schedule of Events for 2010

High Day Rituals

*Held at El Dorado Park
77th St and McDowell Rd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85251*

- Imbolc – 1/30 @ 5:00
- Spring Equinox – 3/20 @ 6:00
- Beltane – 5/1 @ 6:00
- Summer Solstice – 6/19 @ 7:00
- Lughnasadh – 7/31 @ 7:00
- Autumn Equinox – 9/19 @ 6:00
- Samhain – 11/6 @ 5:00
- Winter Solstice – 12/18 @ 5:00

Ancient Celtic Studies Discussion Group

1st & 3rd Tuesdays
8:00 PM

*Held at Comic Zone
5909 N Granite Reef Rd
Scottsdale, AZ 85250*

- Jan 5, 19
- Feb 2
- Mar 2, 16
- Apr 6, 20
- May 4, 18
- June 1, 15
- July 6, 20
- Aug 3, 17
- Sep 7, 21
- Oct 5, 19
- Nov 2, 16
- Dec 7, 21

6th Night Blessing Rites

Blessing Rites are held at Agua Linda Park in Scottsdale, AZ on the 6th night following the new moon.

- Jan 23 @ 7:30 pm
- Feb 21 @ 5:00 pm
- Mar 23 @ 7:30 pm
- Apr 21 @ 7:30 pm
- May 19 @ 7:30 pm
- June 20 @ 5:00 pm
- July 17 @ 7:30 pm
- Aug 15 @ 5:00 pm
- Sep 15 @ 7:30 pm
- Oct 13 @ 7:30 pm
- Nov 13 @ 7:30 pm
- Dec 12 @ 5:00 p



ELF Seeds is a quarterly publication of EarthLove Fellowship: a Grove of FoDLA.

This issue was written and edited by the Reverend Linda Costello.

Please contact Rev. Linda at 602-722-2562 for information regarding advertisement in our publication.

*EarthLove Fellowship:
a Grove of FoDLA
PO Box 10706,
Phoenix, AZ 85064*

It's Easy Bein' Green

Part 1: Energy-efficient homes

By Linda Costello

Being a Druid means my spirituality is much more attuned with the cycles of nature. This tends to make me much more concerned with what we can do to live more harmoniously with our planet. This article is the first in a series of articles about how to live a greener lifestyle.

Do you live in an energy-efficient home?

Whether you do or don't, here are some simple techniques to make your home more energy efficient, which will, in turn, help you to save money, to make an impact on your health and well-being, as well as contribute to future sustainability.

To give you some background about me, I have been interested in sustainable living and environmental concerns since the early 90's when I worked the Global Action Plan – a twelve-week endeavor to systematically make one's home more energy efficient. I have lived in a sustainable living community, and spent some time off-grid in an earthship in Taos. I plan to have an off-grid sustainable living retreat center in the future. I am currently in the process of obtaining the National Association of Realtors' Green designation on my real estate license, and I do my best to live a green lifestyle.

There are several ways you can make your home more environmentally efficient. Many of them require a significant initial investment, but over time, you make it back in savings, and these days there are also many tax incentives available.

Today, however, I will be informing you of three relatively inexpensive things you can do to bring down energy costs and make your home more comfortable involving your appliances, lighting, and heating and cooling.

Here is some information about Energy Star appliances. According to the EPA, appliance use comprises 18% of your total home energy bill. Energy Star appliances are guaranteed to use 10-50% less electricity than their counterparts. According to an article in the real estate section on MSN, if one in 10 homes replaced their appliances with energy star appliances, it would be like planting 1.7 million new acres of trees. It's also helpful to run your appliances during off-peak hours as much as possible, especially if they emit heat. For example, in our household, we run the dishwasher at night and only when full. We often do laundry after 7 pm also.

In regards to lighting, of course the most energy efficient way to increase light without incurring an energy cost is to use natural lighting... open a shade or a door, or install a

skylight. But we all need light when the sun goes down, and that means lightbulbs.

Many people currently use Compact Fluorescent Lightbulbs in their homes. Nowadays, you can buy a CFL bulb for a little more than a dollar a bulb. They use 66% less energy than incandescents. Replacing a 100 watt incandescent bulb with a 32 watt CFL will save you \$30 over the life of just one bulb!

There are disposal issues with CFLs due to the fluorocarbons, so in the long run, I predict that the light of the future will be the LED bulb. However there are still some developmental issues with LEDs for regular home use, and the cost of \$15 per bulb doesn't yet justify the savings. So for now, replace your bulbs with CFLs for the best savings on light.

Heating and/or cooling your home is what makes up 50% of your energy costs. There are a few simple ways to cut your heating and cooling bill. Ceiling fans cost about \$10.00 per year to run, and they will make a big difference, especially in your cooling costs, by redistributing and circulating air. Programmable thermostats also make a big difference. You can set them at different temperatures during the times when you know you are home and active, when you are sleeping, and when you know you won't be home. This will greatly reduce your energy costs. And the third way is simply to use the concept of shading the south side of your house. You can install thermal shades or curtains that can be opened or closed to allow in heat and light or to keep it out, depending on whether it is winter or summer.

When I lived at the sustainable living community, we used this, coupled with a greenhouse on the south side of the house, as our primary heating method in the winter. Currently, my home has indoor shading, shade screens on the outer windows, and we use foliage to shade the south side in the summer. In the winter, we cut away the foliage and open wide the shades.

There are many more ways you can live a greener lifestyle, but these three simple practices will go a long way to making a difference in your energy consumption:

Buying energy-star appliances
Changing your lighting sources
Cutting down on Heating and cooling by using ceiling fans, programmable thermostats, and south side shading

You will be benefiting your wallet, your health and the future of our world community by being more eco-aware. It's easy bein' green.

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**GRAPHIC DESIGN
AND
ILLUSTRATION**

**ANDY COSTELLO
480.710.0423**



EMAIL:ANDY@PSYCHOANDY.COM



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Linda Costello, M.Ed.
602-722-2562
Linda@LCostello.com

Seminars, Classes, Life Coaching

Office: The SMART Center
4131 N. 24th St. #C210,
Phoenix, AZ 85016

<http://www.LCostello.com>