



Gulf Coast Gathering 2023! Part 1

Well, what can we say, other than that it was another awesome gathering! They've all been good, but this one was way up there at the top...the energy the participants brought to all the activities—as well as just goofing around—was terrific! Way too many of our regulars could not make it this year, but newcomers filled the gaps and it was great to see so many new faces and make so many new friends! The weather was unusually uncooperative (read: cold and wet!) so much of what would have been outdoors was held in the dining hall, but our spirits were undampened and the camaraderie was some of the best I have ever seen.

Thursday was taken up with people arriving and getting settled in, then, after the opening ritual, an excellent dinner was served up by Victoria Laborde and her co-worker Tylor Riviere who cooked for us that weekend.

Activities kicked off Friday morning after breakfast when Kate Laborde led the group in a guided meditation to set the tone for the gathering. Jacob Pewitt Yancey followed with his talk on "The Roles of a Druid in a Dying World," with an interactive session for in attendance to participate. After lunch, our special guest Pat Booker gave her keynote presentation, "Dancing with the Maiden and the Crone." Both talks were stirring and cathartic for many—truly some looks at the darkness what we sometimes experience in our lives, but balanced with the knowledge that the light will return.

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Later, the initiations began, welcoming several to the Order. we initiated six new Bards into the fold. Bardic

initiations are always such fun—group initiations are wonderful to begin with, but there is always something special about one's Bardic ceremony!

A big "Welcome to OBOD!" goes out to Casey Deans (Texas), Adam Denoon (Denham Springs), Michael Rollins (Georgia), Timairee Schultz (Florida), Tabitha Trimm-Hooson (Georgia), and Tea Vincent (Sulphur)! We are so glad you chose to be initiated in our group!

Our friends Pat and Sue Yglesias visited with us on Friday and brought gumbo for dinner! They took a break from the whole-exhausting-weekend thing this year, but we really appreciate their contributions to our Friday night dining pleasure!

After dinner, initiations continued for four Ovates, and one Druid. The vibe for Ovate and Druid initiations is much different than it is with Bards, but anyone who has gone through one can attest to the power of the experience. Newly initiated Ovates are Steven Armstrong (Georgia), Leiana Funck (Baton Rouge), Asha McIntyre (Gonzales), and Joshua Smith (Texas). Al Cheatham (Alabama), who has been with us for his Bardic and Ovate initiations, completed the triad by initiating as a Druid!

—Kathleen Harrington

Part 2 of the Gulf Coast Gathering 2023 will continue in the May issue!



The Pink Full Moon

Venture outside on the night of Wednesday, April 5, to catch a glimpse of April's full Pink Moon that reaches peak illumination at 11:37 p.m. CDT. For the best view of this lovely spring Moon, find an open area and watch as the Moon rises just above the horizon, at which point it will appear its biggest and take on a golden hue!

Paschal Full Moon: The First Full Moon of Spring

This year, April's full Moon is the first full Moon of the spring season, which began with the Spring Equinox on March 20, 2023. This means that April's full Moon is the **Paschal Full Moon**—an important Moon to those who celebrate Easter, since Easter's date depends on the date of the Paschal Full Moon.

Why Is It Called the Pink Moon?

The full Moon names used by *The Old Farmer's Almanac* come from a number of places, including Native American, Colonial American, and European sources. Traditionally, each full Moon name was

applied to the entire lunar month in which it occurred, not only to the full Moon.

The Pink Moon

Although we wish this name had to do with the color of the Moon, the reality is not quite as mystical or awe-inspiring. In truth, April's full Moon often corresponded with the early springtime blooms of a certain wildflower native to eastern North America: *Phlox subulata*—commonly called creeping phlox or moss phlox—which also went by the name “moss pink.” Thanks to this seasonal association, this full Moon came to be called the “Pink” Moon!



Pink moss phlox, or “moss pink,” lends its nickname to the April Moon. Image courtesy of [almanac.com/content/full-moon-april](https://www.almanac.com/content/full-moon-april)

Alternative April Moon Names

In April Moon names, references to spring abound! Breaking Ice Moon (Algonquin) and Moon When the Streams Are Again Navigable (Dakota) reference the melting ice and increased mobility of the early spring season, while Budding Moon of Plants and Shrubs (Tlingit) and Moon of the Red Grass Appearing (Oglala) speak to the plant growth that will soon kick into high gear.

For more information on this and other full moon names and meanings, please visit the Farmer's Almanac at <https://www.almanac.com/content/full-moon-april>



Jen Delyth Original



Highland Oak Nemeton Announcements



Grove Happenings

Community Board



The Sixth Source Sharing Circle, Sunday, April 9th, will meet at the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, located at 8470 Goodwood Blvd, Baton Rouge, LA 70806 at 12:45 p.m. For more information, please contact Salvatore Culotta at salcc99@gmail.com.



Baton Rouge Magical Market 2023, Saturday, April 15th, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and will be held at the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge,

located at 8470 Goodwood Blvd. There will be local artists, several food vendors, and discussions from some of our local pagan communities. This event is family friendly, and the general public is encouraged to attend. For more information, please visit <https://allevents.in/baton%20rouge/magical-spring-market/200024047312911>



2023 BREC BioBlitz begins on Friday, April 21st and continues Saturday, April 22nd. This is a fantastic outing that has

something for the whole family, teaching biodiversity within the Frenchtown Conservation area in Baton Rouge. For more information, please visit their website at: <https://www.brec.org/bioblitz>

This month's grove meeting will be at La Madeleine Restaurant, located at 7615 Jefferson Hwy in Baton Rouge from 3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 8th. We meet in the private dining room, and we hope everyone will be able to join us.

This month, we will discuss thoughts on GCG 2023, talk about this year's Beltane celebration, any suggestions for guests we can invite to join us remotely for a future grove meeting, and discussion of the next book we might read together. We may have some guests this time, so I hope we can get a lot of members, too!

If you are unable to join us in person, we invite you to join us in Zoom. To join Zoom, go to: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88338465418?pwd=TjFJb1h6NmKzSzUrN0czTzFuRVlvQT09> Meeting ID: 883 3846 5418 Passcode: 319206



Highland Oak Nemeton~Bardic Circle Meeting, Saturday, April 8th, will meet in the private dining room at La Madeleine's immediately following the HON Grove meeting, from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

For this meeting, the discussion will be "The Magic of Children's Stories," and sharing a story from your childhood or making art based on your favorite story. There will also be an activity afterwards. If you are unable to make this meeting, you can share your experiences with your fellow Bards at <https://discord.com>



Highland Oak Nemeton~Ovate Circle Meeting, Saturday, April 29th, will meet under Grandfather Oak, located at 14024 Highland Rd, Baton Rouge, LA 70810, from 11:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

We will discuss where everyone is in their studies, ritual writing, and other topics. Be sure and bring a folding chair, something to eat and drink. If Mother Nature cries, then we will move our meeting to one of the open pavilions. 😊



**Highland Oak Nemeton
Announcements
Continued**



Highland Oak Nemeton~GCG Board Meeting,
Saturday, April 29th, from 3:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.
Discussions on this past year’s gathering and the
2024 gathering. If you are interested in serving on the
GCG Board, please contact Kathleen Harrington,
Kate Kane Laborde, or Marsha Fowler.



The Seven Gifts of Druidry



The seventh gift of Druidry is the gift of Magic: it teaches the art of how we can open to the magic of being alive, the art of how we can bring ideas into manifestation, and the art of journeying in quest of wisdom, healing and inspiration.

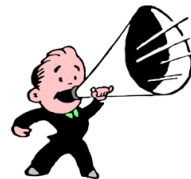
You may have noticed that I use the Welsh name for the month on each Grove agenda. In the not-too-distant past, the months as we know them were not aligned like we know them. Early Cymru most likely used one of the variants of a lunar calendar common among Celtic cultures.

The calendar we use is the Gregorian calendar which was adopted in Wales in 1752. The names of the months therefore are aligned with that calendar. Beginning with Ionawr (January) many of the names are quite easy to interpret.

—Art Scarborough



Eisteddfod!



Calling all storytellers and poets! If you are interested in having your writings featured in future newsletters, please send me an email at corknderry@gmail.com.



Parting Shots

In the May issue, I promise to have more pictures!
Here just a few to start. 😊

Final Thoughts



Each year, GCG grows in so many ways, and this year was no different. Seeing familiar faces returning, missing those who were not able to make it, and welcoming new faces to our growing community! There was a wonderful and powerful spirit about and around the Tickfaw, a renewed energy that was deeply felt and appreciated by all who attended.

But what makes all this work? So much goes into putting these gatherings together, so much behind the scenes that some may not be aware of. As I am writing this, our board is about to meet to discuss this past gathering, what worked and what did not, but more importantly, the coming GCG 2024.

So, at this moment, I would like to recognize and thank the following people for their continued commitment, not only to our Grove, but also in organizing a wonderful gathering each year:

Art Scarborough
Kathleen Harrington
Marsha Fowler
Markaus Fowler
Wendy Bourg
Judith Sinclair
Kate Laborde
Salvatore Culotta
Ashley Rodriguez

It is their commitment to presenting the best gatherings for all our guests and presenters, and in doing so, maintaining the spiritual cohesiveness of our local Druid community.

Yours Under the Sacred Oaks,
Kate Kane Laborde /\



Wendy Bourg and Pat Booker



Hannah Buras, Honora Buras, and Adam Denoon





*Grant, O Spirit, thy protection;
And in protection, strength;
And in strength, understanding;
And in understanding, knowledge;
And in knowledge, the knowledge of
justice;
And in the knowledge of justice, the
love of it;
And in that love, the love of all
existences;
And in the love of all existences, the
love of God,
Gods and Goddesses and all goodness!*

