

# Ostara News

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## Pagan Pride Day Hamilton Sunday, 15th September 2013

### Seasonal thoughts from HPPD

Another season is slowly drawing to a close and our thoughts are looking to Spring. A time for the land to reawaken and new beginnings. A bit of a cliché but this year we will have some new life and beginnings. A new committee is working on this year's Hamilton Pagan Harvestfest (Pagan Pride Day) which will see some new features added and some old standards retained. Vendors and workshops for sure will be there but we will have some other new things as well so please remember to watch our Facebook [page](#) for more info. This year we will be running the day on Sunday Sept 15th in Gage Park so please mark your calendars and come on out and enjoy.

One of the things we will be trying to do over the year is to be more engaged in our broader community and not just a single day event. Yes the main day is the festival but what I mean is we will be making some efforts to make sure the bigger community – pagan and non – realise that there is a Pagan community out there. There are many other events over the year that Pagans in the community can take part in collectively. In Spring there are Earth Day events or cleanups for example that maybe we could gather a few from our community to assist the larger in. It is all about giving back to the communities we live in. I will post “events” on our Facebook group for things like these as they come up. If you can I would encourage you to participate in helping.

I mentioned that it is a time of not just rebirth but new as well. New workshops and events are coming up across SW Ontario. Vendors are hosting new workshops, new festivals and gatherings are coming up as well. If you are an organizer of these please let us know so we can maybe post the info on our Facebook page and spread the word. A growing community is great and we would like to assist in growing the community and continue the outreach to the greater community.

We will have a couple of Harvestfest (PPD) fundraisers between now and Sept 15th. Looking for a Mother's Day or Father's Day gift? We will be brining a spring on-line auction to you the last week of April/first week of May. Also there will be Moot fundraisers in Feb and May thanks to the Hammertown Pagan Pub Moot.

We all love entertainment at PPD but we need your help. We are seeking an Entertainment Coordinator that will run that for the day. They will need to organise the equipment rental, setup and operation of it as well as book as schedule the entertainment for the day. We do have contact info for several entertainers so you won't be doing everything cold but we really need someone that can step up and take this on so I am planting the seed in hopes of a quick harvest as the work on this needs to start soon. Believe me you don't want to listen to me sing! If interested or you would like more info please email me at [info@ppdhamilton.org](mailto:info@ppdhamilton.org)

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#### HAMILTON EVENTS

- [Hammertown Pagan Pub Moot](#)

#### Upcoming Dates:

- March 24th 2013
- April 21st 2013
- May 12th 2013—PPD Fundraiser
- Wiccan Church of Canada - [Hamilton Temple](#)
- [White Flame Company](#)
- [The Spiritorium](#)



**There is a very powerful magic that we can all do to transform our world.**

## Modern Knighthood: Kerr Culuhain

When we founded the Order of Scáthach back in 2007 we didn't know if those showing up for training would be novices or whether they'd be people who'd been around the Pagan community for a while. It turned out to be the latter. To this day the majority of those joining the ranks of our order are people who have been Pagan for years. People fully identifying themselves as Pagan and who had committed themselves to self empowerment: To take a fearless self inventory and use everything they had to become everything they could be. They saw our precepts and saw this as a way to live their Pagan path 24/7, not just at the occasional weekend gathering. They saw our code of chivalry and saw this as a way of standing up and by their example showing the world how things could be. That is what modern knighthood is really all about: Knighthood isn't about appearance, but action, not about tinsel, but tenacity, not about glitter, but genius, not about fashion, but faculty.

There is a very powerful magic that we can all do to transform our world. As Pagans, as the fastest growing spiritual community in North America, we are in an ideal situation to do this magic, and possess the magical potential and ability to pull it off. We no longer need to get the attention of the greater community around us. We have the eyes of the world on us now. Now we must stand up and by our example show the world how it could be. We can make it a stronger, healthier, safer, peaceful world. That is what knighthood is all about.

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Kerr is the Grand Master and founder of an order of modern Knighthood called the [Order of Scáthach](#) in Surrey, British Columbia. The Order was founded in October 2007 and is now a registered society in the province of British Columbia and the sponsor of Vancouver Pagan Pride 2011. The Order of Scáthach embraces the philosophies, precepts and code of chivalry outlined in Kerr's books, focusing on empowerment, personal development and creative expression. The training focuses on the effective use of magical energy and developing psychic skills.

Kerr has been a Wiccan for 42 years and was involved in anti-defamation activism and hate crimes investigation for the Pagan community from 1986 to 2005. Kerr was awarded the Shield of Valor by the Witches League for Public Awareness. Kerr was the former Preceptor General of [Officers of Avalon](#), an organization representing Neo-Pagan professionals in the emergency services (police, firefighters, emergency medical technicians). Kerr retired from the Vancouver Police Department in November 2005 after serving 29 years with them. He was awarded the Governor General's Exemplary Service Medal. His past job assignments within the VPD include the Emergency Response Team, Hostage Negotiator, Child Abuse Investigator, Gang Crime Unit, and the Mental Health Emergency Services Unit. Kerr is currently working as a police dispatcher and trainer for ECOMM for Southwestern BC.

To keep in contact with Kerr go to:

Order of Scáthach web site: <http://www.dunscathach.com/>

Twitter: @warriorwitch

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/#!/kerr.cuhulain>

## What is happening in the sky & why is the world going nuts? by Franco of Soulbody

Because I am an astrologer, I have had a lot of people asking me what is going on with the world. It seems that everyone is going nuts. One thing that people talk about is that there is more this and more that happening in the world and more disasters. Personally, I do not think there is more of anything. There are more people on the planet now so the probability for robberies, murders and etc., will increase proportionally. The stories of abuse and rape are now coming into the public eye, because of instant news of the internet. Governments are having trouble containing bad press because as I have said, you fart today and the world will have the video of it in a matter of seconds.

However, with that being said there are several astrological triggers happening in the sky that will bring out rather transformative tendencies in humanity. The big one is the cycle of Uranus and Pluto. I know some of you are probably saying "But Pluto isn't a planet anymore". So a bunch of people have told Tony Soprano that he isn't part of the country club anymore, but he does have an effect. Pluto's effects are still very powerful events. As an astrologer, when I see transiting Pluto making a connection to planets in a client's chart it usually signifies something heavy is coming down the pike.

Pluto is a slow moving planet having a cycle of 248 years. The name Pluto, the Lord of the Underworld, god of death, was given to it when it was discovered by Clyde Tombaugh in 1930 as they were developing the atom bomb. Death is nothing but a transformation and, believe me, this planet brings it on or at least mirrors it in your life. It says to change yourself or it will bring on the conditions to change things in your life. Pluto will tear away at the dead wood and discard it or if you haven't healed properly it will peel your scab off which is what an unprepared person will feel like. Astrologically, Pluto does deal with all these things but Pluto has some beautiful treasures in his realm. His abduction of Persephone (yes, stories vary) but the abduction myth leads to him wanting power and control which is what this planet expects.

Pluto is in Capricorn right now. Capricorn is the sign of the authority, the boss, the structure and order or the status quo in life; it is work and diligence. Pluto entered Capricorn in January 2008 but retrograded back into Sagittarius for a while and came back to stay in Capricorn in November 2008. What happened at this time? I think everyone remember the banks collapsing and the automotive industry tanking out. Death to the banks and our carefree spending methods and big corporations carelessly taking what they want. They are still doing it but now it has to go into the underworld, the hidden realm of Pluto. Governments are trying to take away our freedoms, by privatising government controls into the hands of corporations. Look at what happened with the G20 Summit in Toronto as that was a perfect example of the energy of Pluto in Capricorn. Here in Canada, Prime Minister Harper, runs his cabinet in secret where nothing is known until it is passed without any debate. This Draconian style of government will continue until 2025. Canada is a safe and free country, so imagine what is happening in a place like Syria!

The next in this astrological puzzle is Uranus. Uranus is a planet that was originally sighted by Galileo but he did not have sophisticated equipment. It was eventually discovered in by William Herschel in 1781. If you note two major events sandwiching its discovery were one, the American Revolution 1775-83 and the French Revolution, 1789-99. So it is no surprise when this planet has a label of rebel. In astrology it is synonymous with rebellion, revolution and the traits of the French Revolution are applied to it: Libert ,  galit , fraternit  or Liberty, Equality, Fraternity! He also has the reputation for sudden, surprising or quick action.

Uranus has an 84 year orbit and is currently travelling through the sign of Aries. Aries is ruled by Mars and that is why this sign is about action, most of the time without thinking. It is aggressive, brash, violent and energetic. When you take the planet of rebels and rebellion and toss it into Aries, the mix will be one to pay attention to. In May of 2010, Uranus entered the sign of Aries. Aries is head strong, combative, selfish, and explosive. We have seen a lot of rebellions starting to brew. A fellow astrologer from Turkey noticed a pattern at occurring when Uranus went over the point of 4-5  of Aries:

Uranus (Retrograde) 4  30' Aries

On 22 July 2011, mass shooting at a camp of the Workers' Youth League (AUF) on the island of Ut ya, Norway where Anders Behring Breivik killed 69 people, mostly teenagers

## What is happening in the sky and why is the world going nuts?

Uranus (Direct) 4° 36' Aries

On 11 March 2012, the Kandahar Massacre occurred where a US Soldier massacred an innocent village - women and children included. While this happened in a war torn country, it was a "good guy" that did it and not the "bad guys".

Uranus (Direct) 4° 36' Aries

On 14 December 2012, mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary; 27 Dead, Including 18 Children as well as the stabbing in Hunan, China where 20 were injured.

I decided to see if I can find out what happened when Uranus was at this point 84 years earlier. The date comes up is February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1929 with Uranus at 5°5' of Aries – the St. Valentine's Day Massacre.

As a foot note to those who are not familiar with astrology and what the degrees of sign mean, there are 360° in a circle, 12 signs in zodiac, so that makes 30° per sign. The Spring Equinox is 0° Aries, Summer Solstice is 0° Cancer, Autumn Equinox is 0° Libra and the Winter Solstice is 0° Capricorn.

Now that you understand what energy these two planets have in their current signs independently, now it is time to understand what they bring when they connect with each other. When they square each other or are 90° apart, that connection that brings crisis and difficulty when we apply the key words of Uranus (rebellion, freedom) in Aries (action, war) going against Pluto (death, power) in Capricorn (government, status quo, control). Listed below are some of the trends we are starting to see.

Arab Spring

This was about the breaking from the strict control, Pluto in Capricorn, and as Uranus moved into Aries by March 2011, at which point more Arab countries were involved. Some of the rebellions have ended but some have set countries, like Syria, into civil war.

Idle No More

This is a grass movement where the Aboriginal people of Canada will stand idle no more to see the way the Canadian governments has been eroding their land rights. It started to pick up steam in December 2012 and is continuing to build momentum.

Women's Rights

Look for this movement to start to gain momentum with injustices that have been around the world and in particular in India with the cases of gang rapes that dismissed or not even reported. This all changed with the death of a 23 year old physiotherapy student when news broke and started riots on December 21, 2012. Cases are now being reported and the complacent Indian police force is now being forced to take action. This is shaking the fibre of the culture. Rebellion can shake down the status quo.

Pluto and Uranus did not come into an exact square until June 24, 2012 but the tensions of these planets connecting will definitely raise some high powered energy. The following are the dates of exact squares:



June 24, 2012	September 19, 2012	May 20, 2013
November 1, 2013	April 21, 2014	December 15, 2014
March 16, 2015		



While these exact dates might not play out to be the exact timing of events we do not always know what is happening at that exact time as there could be decisions which play out at a later time as Pluto is a planet of secrets. When Pluto went through Sagittarius (Nov. 1995-Jan. 2008) the sign of philosophy/religion we saw the rise of fundamentalism in the US and radical Islam (Al Qaeda) using the power and control (Pluto) of religion (Sagittarius), as well as Pluto's aspect of taboos, dark secrets of religion coming out with all the sex scandals which have devastated the Catholic church.

Pluto will do the same in Capricorn, with more Big Brother style government but with also dark secrets of said governments being exposed. The difference now is the rebellious Uranus forcing his hand in the way this will be played out.

**We are in for an interesting ride until 2016, so hang on.**

Franco of Soulbody — <http://www.soulbody.ca/>

## Honey and Orange Tea Loaf (Scottish)

6 oz. self rising flour  
 6 oz. honey  
 1 oz. margarine  
 1 large egg  
 1 tsp. baking powder  
 6 Tbsp. milk  
 1 large orange, with rind grated off



Preheat oven to 350°. Grease and line a 2 lb. loaf tin. Cream the margarine and honey together in a bowl, mixing thoroughly. Add the egg and beat vigorously. Sieve the flour, salt and baking powder and add alternately with the milk, to the creamed mixture. Sprinkle in orange rind and mix well. Spoon the mixture into the tin. Bake for 45 minutes. Remove from the oven, glaze with honey and return to the oven for a further 10 minutes. Remove from the tin and cool on

## Hedgewitchery and the Turning of the Wheel by Amy Lou Taylor

**March:** Ahh, March!! The promise of many wonderful things to come! The weather with any luck will be warming up and I will get to see into the garden again. In January I ordered all my garden and seed catalogues, renewed my Canadian Gardening magazine subscription in eager anticipation of warmer times ahead! But I can't just wait; I have to get my hands in the earth! These days you will find that most larger supermarkets have floral departments, or at least they will have a smattering of plants available. Well the ones that I am looking out for the most are all the spring plants and bulbs, Hyacinth, Crocus, Daffodils, Iris and as well perennial Primroses, all those beautiful little harbingers of spring. I am going out to buy the biggest, well, the most reasonably priced, prettiest, biggest pot I can find, some really good potting soil and a pile of these little lovelies and make myself a big spring pot garden to put right in the middle of my dining room table! And after they have spent all their blooms and start to look tired, I'll pull them out of the pot, put the bulbs into paper bags in the basement to be planted into the garden at the end of March.

The Primroses though, they can stay in their pots in a bright area of your home and be looked after until the middle of April, and then they can be planted into the garden. The Primrose is a wonderful little perennial, it will thrive in a slightly shady garden, not too dry and it will thrive. The primrose, known by its botanical name of *Primula vulgaris*, and known as English Primrose is one of the most lovely flowers of spring that will, when it's happy, continue to bloom right into the end of June. This is not Evening Primrose by the way, that is called *Oenothera* and a different plant all together.

But the other reason I love the Primrose is the magical meaning of it. This herb is held sacred to the Goddess Freya. It may be worn when invoking the Goddess or to decorate the altar. Frequent use of Primrose as a bathing herb increases beauty and the ability to attract love. Magickally, Primrose is one of the herbs of Immortality, holding within the secret of eternal bliss. Primrose in a garden protects it from all adversaries, and they also attract Faeries. The Victorians believed, using the Language of Flowers, that giving a loved one Primroses meant "I can't live without you". It corresponds with the feminine and can be used for love, self love, beauty and protection.

## Hedgewitchery and the Turning of the Wheel

I also can look forward to seeing the blooms on the Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis*), shrub in the park not far from my home. Witch Hazel is one of those plants that is magickal not only by the use of its medicinal and therapeutic properties but it's magickal because it traditionally blooms in February and March. The blooms are so unique, but it is also the whole plant in my opinion that makes it so magickal. The name "witch hazel" alludes to a historical association between the plant and witches and magic. It has been thought to protect one from witches; the medieval English word wych, wiche or wice, meaning pliant, bendable or flexible, may have been correlated and applied to the characteristically flexible witch hazel branches.

Most modern witches consider witch hazel a magical herb and utilize it in spells to guard against evil influences and to heal broken hearts. Its bark and leaves are also used as astringents in herbal healing baths. Dowsers or water witches use the forked branches of witch hazel to find subterranean water, lost items, or hidden treasures beneath the earth.

March also ushers in the Spring Equinox also known as Ostara and by many other names. It is one of my most favourite times of year! This is not just about bunnies and eggs and chocolate, even though that is delightful, Spring Equinox means so much more to me. This is when we can really see and feel the Earth awakening from the deep winter slumber. In the garden we can see the tips of the spring bulbs starting to crest the ground and in some places the snowdrops and crocus are already in bloom.

I take this time to do the pruning of the last of my shrubs and perennials in my yard as everyone is still in dormancy, the hydrangeas, the last of the sticks of the Echinacea and Black Eyed Susan's that are still hanging about since last fall are now cut down. Any of the taller grasses are trimmed down to about 6 inches as well.

Later in the month, the 21st being the Spring Equinox, we celebrate the time of year where the days are equal in light and dark with the light about to become much stronger. I find that this is an important time to bless all your seeds, the plants that have overwintered in the garden shed or green house and as well to bless your garden tools for the growing season ahead.

*Blessings be upon these seeds so that they grow well and be representative of ourselves in our own growth.*

***Blessings be upon these seeds so that they grow well and be representative of ourselves in our own growth. Blessings upon these plants, whom still slumber but will soon awake to burst forth into leaf and flower to remind us of the beauty of the Gods and the world. Blessed be upon these tools so that they may aid us in the important work.***

## Hedgewitchery and the Turning of the Wheel by Amy Lou Taylor



**April:** April showers bring May flowers, and not to mention that at the end of April brings Beltane! Early April is a good time to collect the woods needed for the Beltane fire. Now I don't have all of these woods in my yard so I discreetly go and do it in the wild. If I can I try to use naturally fallen branches or preferably twigs but if that is not possible then each time I break a branch, below a node on a tree or shrub, I thank the tree for its wood and bless it for a bountiful growing season and make an offering of some used tea leaves at its base (being a Tea Leaf reader professionally, I usually have lots of spent tea leaves around). I do not use pruning shears or any sharp metal implement for this magical act as I don't want to offend the Fae.

The woods to collect are Birch, Rowan, Ash, Alder, Willow, Hawthorn, Oak, Holly and Hazel. Once the woods have been gathered, bundle them together into a manageable faggot. I like to use a bit of Wild Grape Vine to tie it into a bundle, call it my homage to Bacchus. I then place them somewhere where they can dry out for their use in the Beltane Fire.

Now, briefly I want to voice my concerns about Wild Grape Vine. It is running rampant and not a Native Plant of Ontario, the region that I live in, in fact it chokes out native vines like Virginia Creeper. So, as far as I am concerned, you would be doing Mother Earth a favour by taking and cutting as much as you would like once it begins to grow later in April. It is useful for use in many weaving projects, but I will discuss them another time.

The nine woods are based on the first 9 woods of the Celtic Tree calendar. Birch represents renewal. Rowan represents spiritual protection and good health. Ash represents divination and knowledge. Alder represents spiritual decisions and magic. Willow represents protection from floods and storms. Hawthorn represents decisions with regards to business and defence. Oak represents the light half of the year, fertility, protection, strength and money. Holly represents the dark half of the year, good luck and safety for your family. Hazel represents wisdom, dowsing, divination and dream journeys.

The Beltane fire is a sacred fire with healing and purifying powers. The fires further celebrate the return of life, fruitfulness to the earth and the burning away of winter. The ashes of the Beltane fires were smudged on faces and scattered in the fields. Household fires



The Victorians believed, using the Language of Flowers, that giving a loved one Primroses meant "I can't live without you".

Amy Lou Taylor—<http://www.taotat.ca/>



Education  
Activism  
Charity  
Community

**Pagan Pride Day Hamilton  
Contact Us:**

Pagan Pride Day Hamilton  
50 Palmer Road  
Hamilton, ON  
L8T 3E7

E-mail: [workshops@ppdhamilton.org](mailto:workshops@ppdhamilton.org)

**DONATIONS:**

If you would like to make a financial, prize or gift in kind contribution please contact us and we will gladly assist you.

We also have sponsorship opportunities available .

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## We are on the web!

[www.ppdhamilton.org](http://www.ppdhamilton.org)

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# Hamilton Pagan Pride Day

The Hamilton Pagan Harvest Festival's primary goal is to educate the public about Paganism. As such, the festival centres on a series of religious ceremonies. But that's not all that you will see! In addition to the ceremonies there will be workshops on a variety of subjects related to health and well-being, both spiritual and physical, vendors displaying their products, live entertainment and activities for the kids.

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## Did you Know?

1. The story of the White House Easter Egg Roll, which begins at one end of Pennsylvania Avenue and continues at the other, is one of the oldest and most unique traditions in presidential history. Rolling eggs on the Monday after Easter was a tradition observed by many Washington families, including those of the President. Some historians believe Dolley Madison first suggested the idea of a public egg roll, while others tell stories of informal egg-rolling parties at the White House dating back to President Lincoln's day.
2. The custom of giving eggs at Easter time has been traced back to Egyptians, Persians, Gauls, Greeks and Romans. The ancient Egyptians, Persians, Phoenicians, and Hindus all believed the world began with an enormous egg, thus the egg as a symbol of new life has been around for eons.
3. The tallest chocolate Easter egg ever was made in Italy in 2011. At 10.39 metres in height and 7,200 kg in weight, it was taller than a giraffe and heavier than an elephant!
4. In some parts of Europe, scarlet Easter eggs are planted in the fields and vineyards to protect crops from thunder and hail.
5. The word 'Easter' is derived from Eostre, an ancient Anglo-Saxon goddess who symbolized the rebirth of the day at dawn and the rebirth of life in the spring.
6. The first chocolate Easter egg was produced in 1873 in the UK by Fry's. John Cadbury soon followed suit and made his first Cadbury Easter egg in 1875.
7. A notation in the household accounts of Edward I of England showed an expenditure of eighteen pence for 450 eggs to be gold-leafed and colored for Easter gifts.
8. 76 percent of people eat the ears on chocolate bunnies first.

### CONTEST - A THANK YOU TO YOU!

We are awarding 3 GOLDEN TICKETS to 2013 MEAD & MINGLE, an evening where you and a guest will have the opportunity to sample 4 types of mead with a special dish paired to the mead and it will be an evening of laughter and mingling.



To enter simply submit a picture that represents your golden moment by May 3rd to:

Pagan Pride Day Hamilton

50 Palmer Road  
Hamilton, ON  
L8T 3E7

Or Email - [workshops@ppdhamilton.org](mailto:workshops@ppdhamilton.org)

If you haven't had a chance to check out the video montage of photo's from 2012 HPPD please do so. They truly highlight the essence of the day.

Our [THANK YOU, TO YOU!](#)

These our early attempts to bring you a newsletter please print & share with others who may not be on-line.

### NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Make sure to share you ideas and suggestions, submit an article, a favorite recipe your artwork, or anything you feel maybe of interest to your magically inclined community.

Our submission deadlines will be:

- May 5th, 2013
- September 1st, 2013
- December 1st, 2013

Pagan Pride Day Hamilton

50 Palmer Road  
Hamilton, ON  
L8T 3E7

