

Letter From the President

We are well into September, almost 4 weeks since LBLD. Our 25th LBLD Silver Spectacular celebration was amazing! Friday night's opening ritual was a little different this year, separating everyone there by how many years they have attended the festival. East, 1-5 years; South, 6-10 years; West, 11-15 years; North, 16-20 years; and Center, 21-25 years. There was representation in every part of the circle, but most surprising was the number of people in the East. It's my sincere hope that all of our East people come back and bring more people with them. Saturday night was Sister Clara's Auction Extravaganza. If you have never experienced an auction like this, well I don't think I can accurately describe it, join us at LBLD next year (if you are over 18) and see why this is such a fun and exciting auction. Our last night's activity was the No-Talent Talent Show. WOW. That night it was just Talent from all of the acts. All in all, it was a great festival with almost 600 people in attendance. And we totally broke records with how much money was raised for camp, but I will let our Treasurer, JD tell you about that!

Next up is the first Earth Day Planning Meeting on October 1st @ noon in the Main Hall. If you are interested in helping with Earth Day please feel free to join us. The regular Board Meeting will follow, this is also an open meeting.

Erin Marshall

Caretakers' Corner

It's that time of the year again, the leaves are falling and Gaea is settling down for her winter's nap. It becomes primitive here very fast in the off-season. Here are some things to keep in mind: The shower house and dining hall will be closed on November 1st, when the water is shut off for the winter season. Portable toilets are available in front of Main Hall and in front of cabin N3. Potable water is available near the foot of the stairs by the shower house. Firewood is not provided or sold, you are responsible for providing your own firewood for campfires or the wood stoves (please contact Rhi or Clint if you are bringing in wood from outside of Leavenworth county, prior to bringing the wood on property). Winter cabin space is limited, please call or use the Contact Us link on our website to make reservations. Please be aware that the gate is opened at 7:00 a.m. and closes at dusk. If you will be arriving after the gate closes, contact Rhi or Clint to make arrangements. In the case of inclement weather, roads and parking will be limited as weather or conditions dictate. Notifications about road closures and parking will be posted on the Gaea Retreat Center facebook page and directly on our webpage. If in doubt, call camp and talk with the caretakers. We hope you will be able to take the time to enjoy Gaea in her quiet wonder.



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Our Third Annual Camp Tuck In

The Tuck-In is a clean up for Gaea, removing broken items that have served their purpose, the energy of the items has passed, a clearing of the energies that also no longer serve the space. Usually on one of the first 2 weekends in October.

A few years ago, at the suggestion of someone I respect highly, I started this little clean up event out at camp, with the help of a few close friends. The first year we had a lovely crock pot- pot luck after cleaning all day. Which was perfect, as the sun dropped so did the temperature. It was a nice low key start, but it was already decided we would do it a second year.

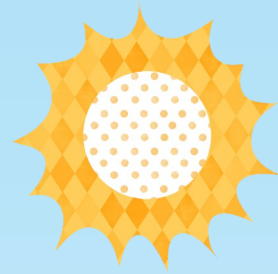
Year 2 comes around and we had the most beautiful weather, a much bigger crowd, more friends and family came and had everything done in just a couple hours. And again, before the event was over, it was decided there would be a year three. Our potluck was so big we had to move some table around, one of which collapsed and dinner went all over the floor. In slow motion and we all fell about the place laughing, it was a joyous mess. Thankfully there was enough food, everyone still got to have dinner after the sacrifice to the floor. Afterwards Cat lead us in a beautiful full moon ritual about letting go, and what you leave behind.

Here we are at year three, plans laid out, ideas are formed and we are almost ready. October 7th we will be meeting at 10am, to our locations shortly after. About 6 pm, this years ritual will be couples drumming from Hens to Venus and back again, to balance out some of the energies. I have been told there will be a couple drums that will be lent out and a few single people who would like to pair up to represent the energies. Dinner to follow at 7pm. I am greatly looking forward to spending the day with my camp family cleaning up the land to get her ready for winter.

Depending on attendance we will be cleaning up ritual and sacred spaces, working on the fire pits, removing trash, and possibly even gridding out a few of the larger spaces and picking up bit of trash. All while maintaining the intent to clear away trash and or energies that no longer serve their purpose for that space.

As I write this in advance of the actual event, I hope you can join us. If not, please consider it for next year as we will have year 4.

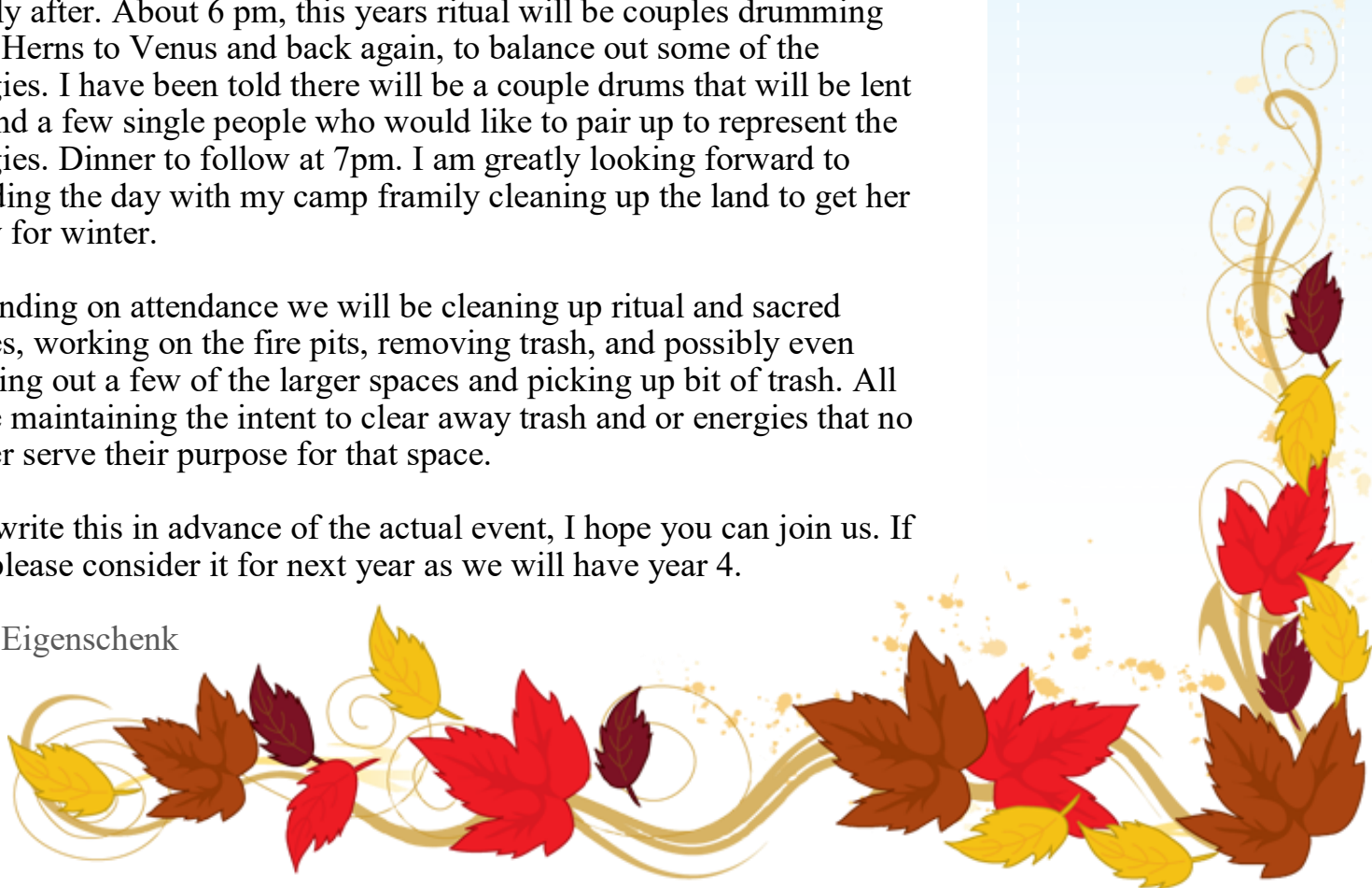
Elfie Eigenschenk



We want to know!

What is your favorite camp memory?

Your answers will be shared in the next edition of Gaea's Own. Send your answers to newsletter@gaearetreat.org with the name that you prefer to be published.



Call for Artists

This is an invitation to all the artists and writers in our Gaea community. If you have an awesome photo, painting or drawing of camp, send it and maybe we can put it on the cover or in the Newsletter. Same for all the writers. If you have an article that you would like to contribute, a story, a memory or poem, we would love to include them.

We want to have an artist page in every news letter. If you are interested, send up to 5 of your pieces and a short statement and we will feature you!

Send your work to
newsletter@gaearetreat.org

"The outside is the only place we can truly be inside the world."

— Daniel J. Rice

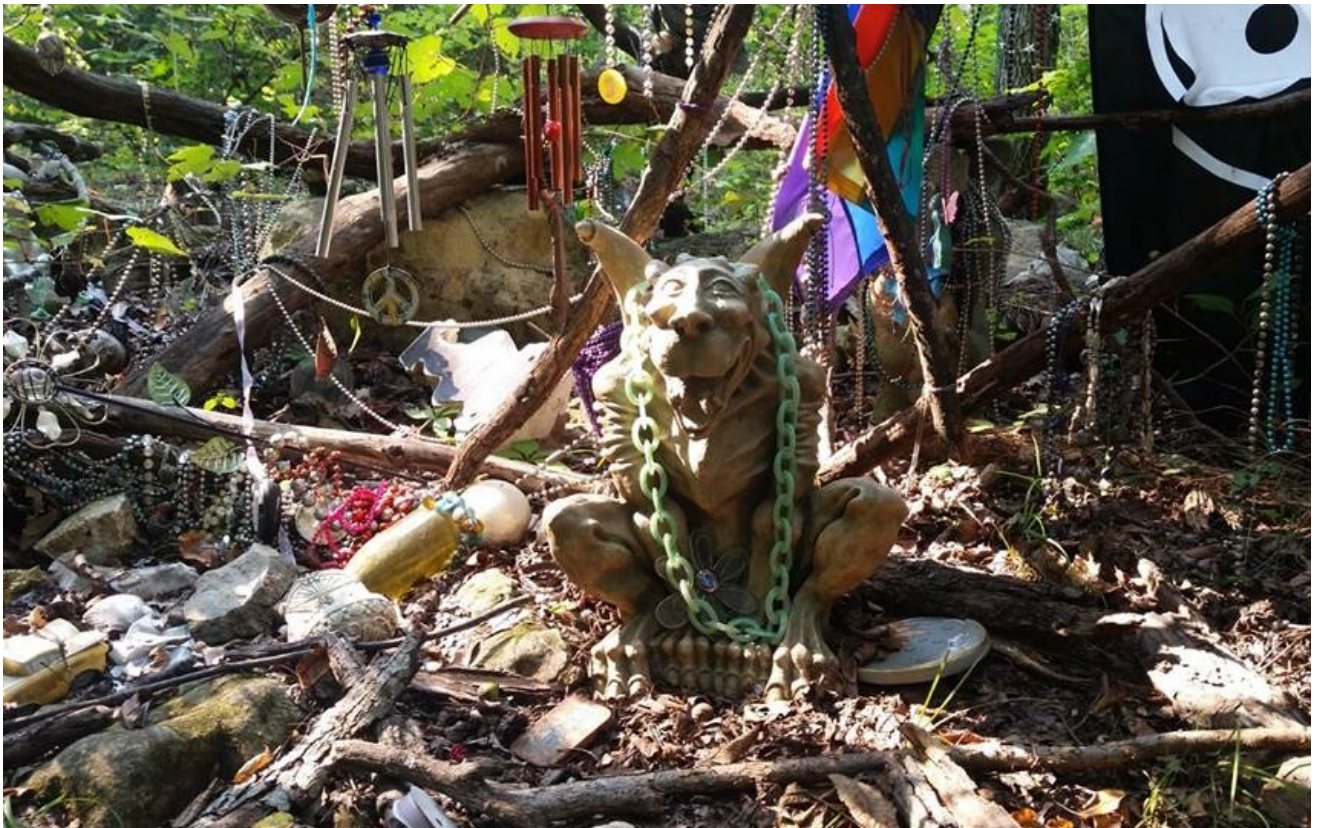
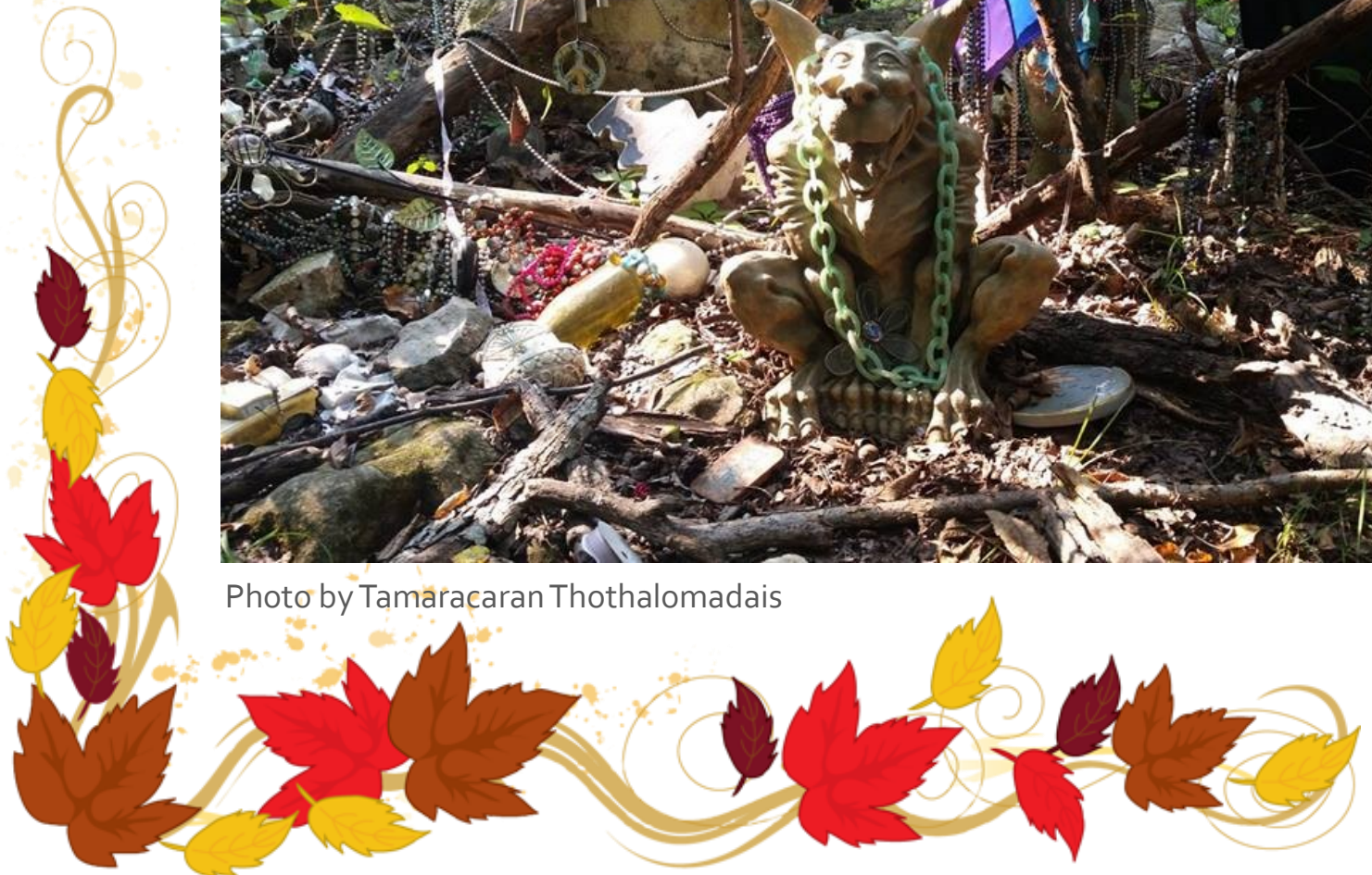
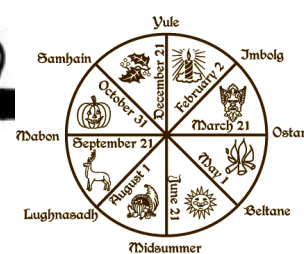


Photo by Tamaracaran Thothalomadais





October 28, Samhain



Join us as we celebrate the thinning of the veil!

Schedule of Activities:

Pumpkin Carving at 3pm (Dining Hall)

(Bring your own pumpkins)

Trick or Treating / Cabin Crawl at 5:30pm

Ritual at 7pm

Potluck Feast (immediately following ritual)

Fire and Drumming (immediately after feast)

Let's see those costumes!

KID FRIENDLY

Upcoming Rituals

Samhain Ritual

October 28, 7pm-9pm

Yule Ritual

December 7, 7pm-9pm

Imbolc Ritual

January 27, 7pm-9pm

Rituals start at 7pm, and are followed by a potluck feast in the dining hall.

Yule – December 9

The earth is quieting. The frost is going to start to descend on Gaea, and as more people are away from camp, the animals come out. The barren fields give us something special to look forward to; the time of year is coming when we remember the people we love.

Come sit at the Hearthfire with us on December 9th for a Gaea Yule gathering. Join us for a cup of wassail, a quiet ritual, and then a party with a gift exchange!

Our Rituals

Our rituals are open to the public and celebrate the pagan wheel of the year. Rituals at Gaea are opportunities to bond as a community and perhaps learn something in the process.

We welcome all pagan traditions to officiate. If you would be interested in facilitating a ritual, please call Rhi at camp (913-796-2141) to discuss putting you on the schedule.





Helping Gaea Helps You

Did you know you can help Gaea and pay for your camping fees at the same time? It's true. Complete an approved task, and earn one Gaea Buck for every one hour of work. Each Gaea Buck is worth \$5 off camping fees. Let's say you weed eat for three hours, you get three Gaea Bucks, each worth \$5. Pretty sweet deal, right? How do you get on this bandwagon? Get with a caretaker (either Rhi or Clint) when you get to camp, and they will show you the list of priority jobs that need to be done. It's a simple thing, but every hour volunteered helps keep Gaea beautiful, safe and accessible. Thanks in advance for your help!

Donations can be made on the website, <https://gaearetreat.org/donations>

“the fire is the main comfort of the camp...”

- Henry David Thoreau

Upcoming Events

October 1, Board Meeting: 12-2pm, Main Hall

October 7, Tuck In:

- 10 am, meet
- 11am, split up to work
- 6pm, ritual drumming
- 7pm, potluck dinner

October 28, Samhain: (see article on page 4)

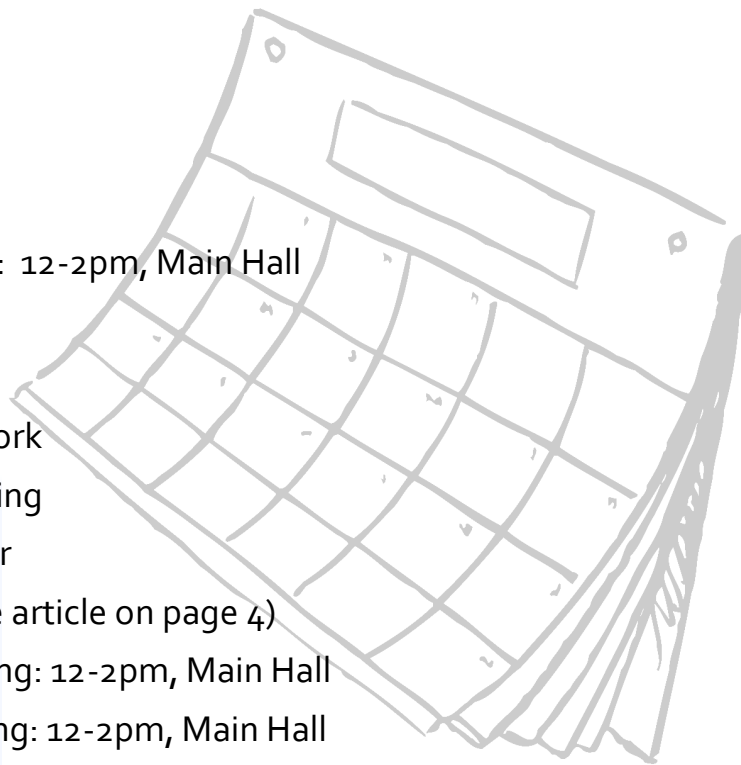
November 5, Board Meeting: 12-2pm, Main Hall

December 3, Board Meeting: 12-2pm, Main Hall


December 9, Yule Ritual

January 7, Board Meeting: 12-2pm, Main Hall

January 27, Imbolc Ritual



Treasurer's Report



Our community continues to amaze me. I cannot imagine a better way to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Laid Back Labor day. We received a very generous donation at the end of Laid Back and broke our record AGAIN! One of our amazing community members gifted Gaea a 10% match of our Laid Back Labor day total. There were 589 attendees this year and we raised \$37,511 after excluding the cost of the meal plan and tank tops. This year's auction was the third best ever coming in just over \$6,000. Thank you Sisters! You are beautiful and amazing and oh, how I enjoy you all working the crowd ;) Now, how about those beautiful folks running the hot dog stand! They also had their best event yet raising over \$2,100 for camp. I have to say, if you've not tried the Renee', you should, like at Earth Day... pencil that in folks. All the proceeds go to camp.

Next month we will plan our winter budget and start dreaming about the projects for the next season. There are always plenty of maintenance items to address. Your donations/camp fees fund the general upkeep and operation of camp. You are always welcome to join us at the

monthly board meeting to see what is in the works. You can find our calendar on our website, <https://gaearetreat.org/calendar>. If you would like to reach out to the board please contact us here: <https://gaearetreat.org/contact>. As we prepare for the holidays, perhaps you might consider picking up a Home Depot gift card for Gaea? Even with our careful budgeting and project management, we always need small supplies to supplement these jobs and random repairs around camp. If you would like to send a holiday gift card to camp, please mail it directly to the caretakers at P.O. Box 696, Tonganoxie, KS 66086.

Are you looking for other ways to give? Earth Rising is on Amazon Smile. <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/43-1589203>. Each time you shop, Amazon will donate 0.5% to camp for your eligible purchases. Now how easy is that? Save this link to your browser for quick access. They even have a handy little button you can install in Google Chrome, if that is your sort of thing.

In her service,

JD Besares

jd@gaearetreat.org

Park Your Car and Walk

Help Keep Gaea Beautiful

It is important that we try to keep driving to a minimum while on property. There are several reasons for this. To begin with, it is in our mission statement that we support ecologically sound practices. It may be easier to drive down the hill to go to the shower or the lake, but is it better for the environment? It is also mentioned in the respect agreement, "Please restrict driving - park, walk, exercise and enjoy the land."

Excess driving also damages our roads. Every year, monies must be budgeted to care for the roads and repair damage that occurs throughout the season. The less we drive, the less damage we cause.

That leaves more money for other projects that we would all like to see accomplished.

Additionally, driving more than is really necessary creates traffic and parking difficulties. Besides the obvious difficulties resulting from the two way traffic on such a narrow road, our smaller parking areas become congested when people drive to shower or get ice.



These areas are really only intended for limited and short term parking.

Of course there are exceptions for those with mobility issues. For the rest of us, being at camp is a wonderful opportunity to get some exercise and enjoy the natural surroundings. Let's leave the cars parked and help keep Gaea beautiful!



Earth Rising, Inc. Intern Program

The Earth Rising, Inc. board has implemented a program that is designed to encourage active participation in the running of Camp Gaea. The Earth Rising, Inc. board is committed to providing a clear and concise list of expectations which will allow a person who is interested in the intern program to understand what is expected of them, and how they might have the opportunity to become a voting member. Being part of the intern program is not a guarantee of board membership, however, any future board member will be expected to have been an intern for a period not less than 6 months, or to have previously served on the Earth Rising, Inc. Board of Directors for a term not less than 6 months.

An intern should be willing to commit themselves to:

Be a self starter. Take on a project and stay with it. Identify areas that need help and develop a plan to improve it. Either create a project, or work with the board to identify what needs to be done.

Attend all meetings. While exceptions will occur, an intern needs to make ERI meetings a priority. Being part of the decision making process is one of the primary responsibilities associated with being a board member.

Be the example and not the exception. Setting an example is one of the most effective ways to communicate with people who are camping at Gaea.

Show good faith in resolving personal issues that might arise during the normal course of board business.

Take the time to connect with other board members and stay abreast of the issues at hand. It will be the responsibility of an intern to stay in the loop.

Show that consideration of the overall well being of the camp is your first concern when new policies are being debated. Working with Earth Rising, Inc. is not the same as being an advocate for a special event or one of the Exclusive Rental groups.

Exhibit objectivity when making decisions.

This outline is designed to assist an intern in their efforts to work with the board. It is not meant to discourage people from becoming involved if they aren't willing to donate as much time as would be required for an intern; rather it is meant to help a person understand the level of commitment that is required to sit on the board of Earth Rising. After a period of 6 months as an intern, that individual may apply for a position on the board if an opening exists or they may continue on as an intern and apply when an opening becomes available if they so choose.



CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

SOUND SYSTEM FUNDRAISER

Our talent show is outgrowing our sound system's capacity, as seen this year when we lost a channel due to awesome microphone prowess. In looking to upgrade our system we are looking to put together something that, with a little care, will last 10-15 years before needing to be overhauled. Minor upgrades and maintenance are expected, we are just looking to build a better experience for those that come after us. Please help donate towards this cause and help us bring clear, crisp, feedback-free joy to future laid back labor days!

Our Rules for Pets

All dogs must be on a leash, and under your control. This means the leash is in your hand.

Although you believe your animal will never harm someone, you cannot predict every situation.

You don't know how another animal, or another person, may react to your animal running up to them.

Dogs are NOT allowed in the Dining Hall or Bath House.

You must clean up after your dog when it makes messes (i.e. poop).

Work weekends are a good opportunity to give back to Gaea, and earn some Gaea Bucks too! Check our [facebook page](#) for more information on projects as it becomes available.



Photo by Leadfoot

R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

Gaea Retreat Center is a beautiful place. It is a great place to enjoy nature, to hold a festival, or just to relax and enjoy interaction with a most unique and eclectic community of people. It was founded with the expressed intent that Camp Gaea be a "recreational retreat center in a natural setting for the purposes of cultural and spiritual education".

Among the goals put forward in our mission statement are the encouragement of free exchange of ideas and experiences, and promoting greater respect and understanding. Gaea has indeed become a place where a person can encounter a widely varied community of people, share thoughts and experiences, and find acceptance that may be difficult to come by in other places. Respect is key to achieving these goals.

Respect for the land is vital in the attempt to maintain "a natural setting". A great deal of thought has gone into the way that we treat the land. Rules like cleaning up campsites, not littering, walking as much as possible rather than driving all over camp, and parking only in designated areas may seem like an inconvenience at times. Nevertheless, these rules are in place to protect the land and keep it beautiful. Respect for the land is truly fundamental to preserving the beauty of this place.

Respect for others is also vital to the success of Camp Gaea, and the goals which were put forward in it's mission statement. With such a varied group of people on the property, occasional disagreements and misunderstandings are inevitable. It is incumbent upon everyone involved, to handle these situations in an adult and respectful manner. Further, it is explicitly stated in the Rules and Regulations, that harassment in any form is prohibited. Whether harassment is verbal or physical, and for whatever reason it may occur, it is unacceptable. Providing sanctuary, promoting understanding, and encouraging free exchange of ideas all become impossible to achieve unless respect is shown for others.

Respect for ones self is certainly difficult to define. The meaning of this part of the respect agreement may be quite different for each individual. However one personally determines the meaning of self respect, it seems clear that an appropriate respect for self is observable in the way that an individual treats others and the land.

It is the responsibility of the board of directors of Earth Rising to uphold the Mission Statement of our organization. The board must deal with the mundane details of operating the facility, and it must always strive to accomplish the stated purpose of Camp Gaea through the goals outlined within the Mission Statement.

Disciplinary actions are without a doubt the least favorite task that the board of directors must face. Where possible, it is always seen as preferable to encourage understanding and between those who encounter a breach of the respect agreement. Where circumstances are such that this is not possible, or when an individual or group blatantly or consistently shows disregard for the land or for others, it is the responsibility of the board to intervene. The board may wait for an issue to be brought to them, or it may choose to act on it's own. When deemed necessary by the board, persons may be asked to leave for the day, for a period of time, or on a permanent basis.

Please read the Mission Statement, the Respect Agreement, and the Rules and Regulations of Camp Gaea before visiting. These are all available on the website at gaearetreat.org. If there is a question as to the meaning of any part of these, please speak with the caretakers, or any member of the board of directors. They will be happy to help.

The Mission of Earth Rising Inc.

is to provide a recreational retreat center in a natural setting for the purpose of cultural and spiritual education. This Mission will be met through the achievement of certain goals.

These goals are

to encourage the free exchange of ideas, views and experiences...

to promote greater understanding and respect between groups and individuals...

to support ecologically sound practices and land and wildlife conservation in the belief that the Earth and all life are interrelated and interdependent, and that respect for all life is a Universal Mandate...

and to provide sanctuary to people who have experienced oppression or discrimination due to their cultural or spiritual practices.

Earth Rising has partnered with Best Choice food brands to raise funds for camp. You give camp a Best Choice label and Best Choice buys it back from us for 3 cents. For every thousand we collect, camp raises \$30! Bring your labels to camp. instead of throwing those labels away. Recycle them for a good cause!



For More Details:

Our Website

<https://gaearetreat.org/>

Calendar

<http://gaearetreat.org/calendar>

Donations

<http://gaearetreat.org/donations>

Contact Us

<http://gaearetreat.org/contact>

RESPECT YOURSELF

RESPECT OTHERS

RESPECT THE LAND