

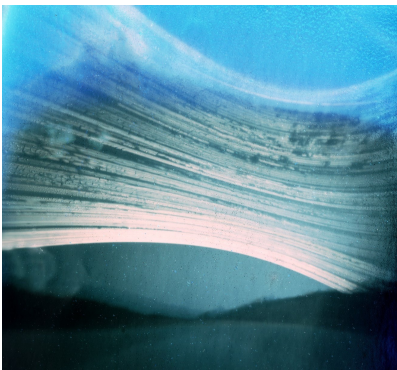
GAEA'S OWN

Summer 2016



Front Cover by: Aaron Smith

Solargraphic Images are photographs created with hand-made pinhole cameras installed in a fixed location and left to capture an exposure taking place over the course of several months. This image was captured from the North dam bank of Lake Onessa, at Camp Gaea, between May 20, 2015 and February 12, 2016.



Invitation to contribute to Newsletter.

Invite to all the artist and writers in our Gaea community. If you have an awesome photo, painting or drawing, of camp, send it to 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 send it to:

<http://gaearetreat.org/contact>

President's Letter

Erin Marshall

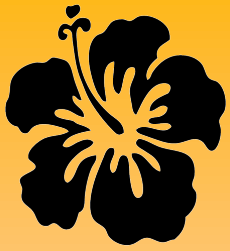


The major topic when I write the Summer Letter is always Earth Day, how well it went, some numbers regarding people on property, estimate of funds raised, etc. I am still stunned by this year's numbers. We didn't just better last years numbers, we trampled them. With 477 people on property, 60 of which were children 12 or under, we topped last years numbers by over 150 people! I will let our Treasurer have the honor of announcing the money, but I can tell you it's a doozy!

I was delighted by the number and variety of Workshops we had this year. There was Yoga, and several classes on making home-made cleaning or personal products, a gardening discussion, a tour of the sacred areas of Gaea, and a blessing of energy to and from our Earth. Thank you to everyone that taught ran a workshop. And if you are interested in running a workshop, or have an idea for one, feel free to email me year round at President@Gaearetreat.org

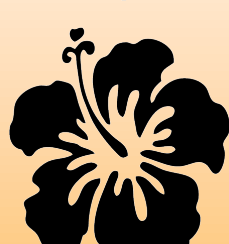
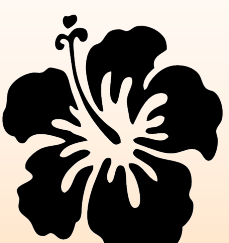
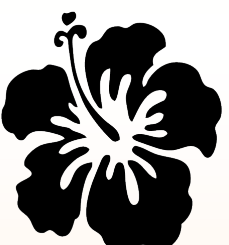
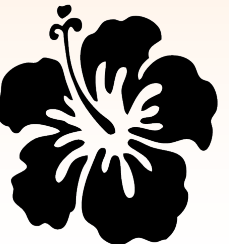
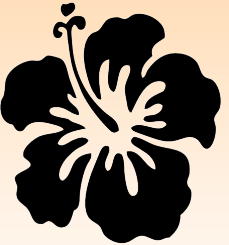
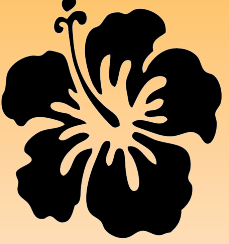
My focus will now turn to LBLD 2016 and it's planning. The first planning meeting will be AFTER the Cabin Sponsor Meeting, on June 26th @ noon! If you are interested in helping to run or just to work on any of the Work Exchange Committees or just curious about how we plan for this event, please feel free to join us for the meeting.

On that note, with Earth Day and LBLD getting larger each year we need a larger workforce for our Work Exchange to make the festival run smoothly. If you have never before done work exchange, or you have not gone to either festival because of funds, please consider Work Exchange. We can work with anyone to find the committee that will be the best for you. Again, feel free to contact us on our Facebook Page, on our Contact page on our Website, or the email address mentioned above.



L A I D B A C K L A B O R D A Y

SEPTEMBER 2-5, 2016



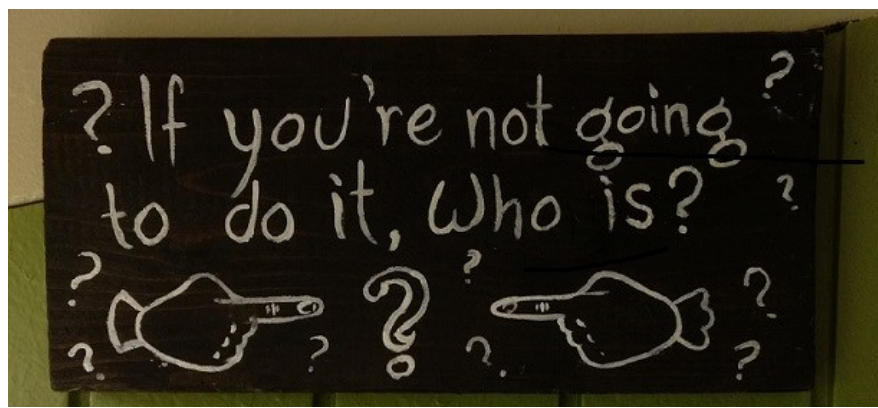
L U A U

A L O H A



***I GOT LEI'D BACK AT
LAID BACK LABOR DAY!***





Driving to work on a Monday morning, I am at a stop light behind a truck that has some damage to the quarter panel and back. Suddenly, I see a sleeping cartoon squirrel's face. Every time I look at it, I now see the squirrel face. Why do humans do that, I wonder? Why do we attempt to assign meaning to meaningless objects or events? We make them omens or good luck charms (wearing a certain shirt or socks means your sportzball team will win, eating a particular food will guarantee a good outcome to something else, etc.) We humans long for everything to make sense. We yearn for everything to be connected. Even the peacefully sleeping squirrel face in a dented fender.

From the moment we are born, we are conditioned to respond to other humans. Our parents demand we speak their relationship name (Mama, Papa) before we speak any other words. My poor parents were so disappointed when my first word was "Uh-oh." Somewhere along the way growing up we develop relationships with animals, plants, trees, houses, other places. They gain meaning through the experience we have with them. Those experiences to which we assign seemingly arbitrary meaning lead us to be more open to similar experiences. For example, in my childhood backyard, there was a small stand of staghorn sumac at one of the farthest corners. My father wanted to root it out to make the lawn more uniform but I begged him to leave it alone. He was puzzled but I didn't give up my secret hideout location. It just so happens that at one end there was a small opening that I could squeeze through and crawl inside to hide from my little brother. The trunks were long and slender with plenty of green branches along them and at the top an umbrella-like leaf structure. I could lie on my back and gaze up at them and even through them when the breeze blew right. It was a wonderful safe and cozy haven. Ever since then, I have associated sumac as a guardian plant, one that is flexible and tough enough to withstand just about anything. One of my other "best friends" growing up was the Russian olive tree in my front yard. I was devastated when it was destroyed in a microburst when I was twelve. It was my first real experience with a loss that cannot be fixed. Even as my father and neighbors were sawing it apart, I was begging them to fix it, to make it stand up again, surely it would heal itself. So, early in my life, nature has been my friend, my comfort and confidante. When I first drove down that magical driveway from 235th Street to Gaea, I knew I was home. It was my sumac haven grown up. It was my Russian olive tree multiplied. And I knew then, like any other relationship, that if I wanted it to grow and flourish, I would need to put some work into it.

Continued next page

In the mid-1990's, some friends and I started driving from Omaha to Gaea as often as possible to attend festivals or just camp and volunteer work. I was a single mom and so being able to earn my stay was a huge help. I know a lot of people today who come out and work to earn Gaea Bucks so they can attend Laid Back Labor Day without having to pay cash or camp on a quiet weekend with their family. It is a wonderful program that is self-reinforcing; the more you come out and work, the more you can come out and play! Plus you get to know that you've invested part of your own personal energy in a helpful and useful way to Gaea. The caretakers have always had a variety of jobs that need done (mowing, weed-whacking, cleaning, hauling, sorting recycling etc.) Sometimes they have large projects that need to be done (graveling the trails, repairing the Blood Trail bridge, painting the buildings) and sometimes it may be picking up trash and cigarette butts. There is ALWAYS something to do to give back to Gaea. Right now, Gaea bucks can only be earned by workers 18 and older but can be used for anyone. We have two wonderful caretakers who work hard every day for Gaea and by extension for US. But we need to participate in keeping our beloved Gaea happy and healthy. If you come out for a the day, see if there is an hour (or more) of work you can do to pay for your stay. If are tenting, work two hours or renting a cabin, work three hours. You will make a connection to the land, the infrastructure and the other people working for Gaea. It is the way you can assign meaning to a place with experience.

Gaea gives so freely to us. The beautiful trees, open meadows, and a lake to swim in! Gaea gives us shelter and places to gather and wonder of wonders, hot water to shower with! Give of your talents or time or strength and you will not regret it. This season I would love to see people to commit to give just 1 hour for every 12 hours they spend at Gaea. That one hour can make a difference for so many others. The last twenty-odd years that I have volunteered I like to think that I have helped maintain Gaea for myself as well as YOU. I hope you get to experience the satisfaction of being able to do that for yourself and so many others. See you soon!

By

Cat Andrews

Seasonal Rituals

2016

Summer Solstice June 25th

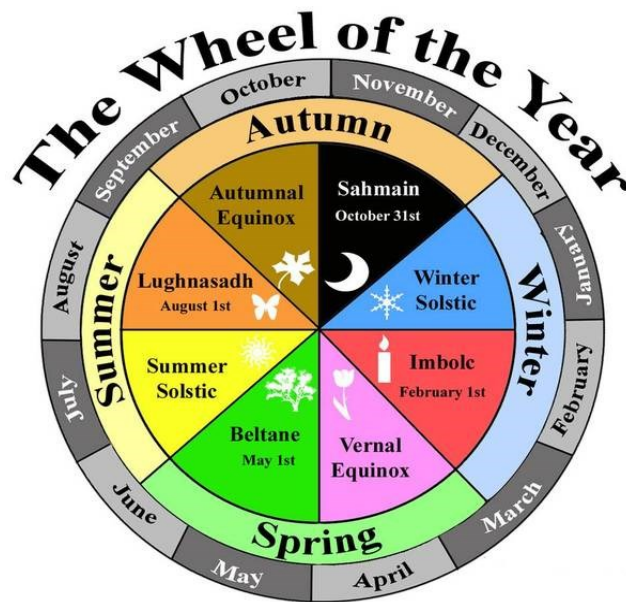
Lughnasadh July 30th

Autumnal Equinox Sept 24th

Samhain Oct 29th

Winter Solstice Dec 17th

Rituals start at 7:00 p.m., and are followed by a potluck feast in the dining hall.



Individuals and groups are welcome to officiate seasonal celebrations at Gaea, and we encourage contributions from multiple paths and traditions. If you are interested, email rituals@campgaea.org with your contact information on open dates.

Earth Rising, Inc. Intern Program

The Earth Rising, Inc. board has decided to implement 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.

Treasurer's Report

JD Besares

You guys are amazing! We had the largest Earth Day yet, with about 477 attendees and staff! This year we raised \$7,383 total after all extraneous donations & the rummage sale. The Art Show was a huge success this year bringing in over \$400 in donations. The rummage sale was fantastic as well coming in around \$320. Thank you so much for keeping the spirit of the celebration in mind as we create, reuse and recycle for camp!

Speaking of recycling... It is with a heavy heart that I have to break this to the community. Unfortunately, our regional recycler, Deffenbaugh, was purchased by Waste Management Corporation. In the past we managed our glass recycling through Deffenbaugh as part of the Ripple Glass program. Annually, we'd pay a reasonable fee for them to remove the glass from camp and they would leave a container for us to fill. After the change in ownership, Waste Management wanted to bill our nonprofit monthly for "inactivity." Their inactivity fee was over \$100 monthly, which annually would have been 4.5 times our budget for glass recycling. Ripple Glass was willing to sponsor us for ½ the pickup fee (which Waste Management also doubled) however Waste Management was not willing to waive the inactivity fee. So, here's the long and short of it... We are no longer doing business with Waste Management and we need the community to rally with us to recycle glass. If you bring glass to camp, please take it with you and recycle it. Here are locations where you can recycle it for free: <http://www.rippleglass.com/how-to-recycle/where-to-recycle/> We are still looking for options and ways to resolve this dilemma but in the meantime, we could use your help.

Looking for other ways to give? Earth Rising is on [Amazon Smile](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/43-1589203). <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's your sort of thing.

“May many hearts burn with the desire to see Gaea receive the care she needs and many blessings upon those who give to her in this spirit.”

Park and Walk: Help keep Gaea beautiful

I'd like to take a moment to address the issue of driving and parking at camp. 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? Of course it is not. 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 Day art Show And Community Project





Rules for Pets at Camp:

- 1) All dogs **MUST** be on a leash, **AND** under your control. This means the leash is in your hand.
 - A. Although you believe your animal will never harm someone, you cannot predict every situation.
 - B. You don't know how another animal, or another person, may react to your animal running up to them.
 - C. Dogs are **NOT** allowed in the Dining Hall or Bath House.
 - D. You **MUST** clean up after your dog when it makes messes (i.e. poop).
- 2) Do **NOT** feed any animals that you do not own. This refers to wild, stray and domestic animals.
 - A. Feeding the wild animals encourages them to come into people's camps and steal food; this is dangerous as this can also provoke a wild animal to attack.
 - B. Feeding strays encourages them to come back to camp, and to enter people's camps and steal food. We do not want to encourage strays to stay on the land.
 - C. Feeding domestic animals that you don't own may cause problems with that animal. You do not know if that animal may have a food issue, or is food aggressive.



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! We are launching a drive for camp – bring your labels to camp. Instead of throwing those labels away, recycle them for a good cause!

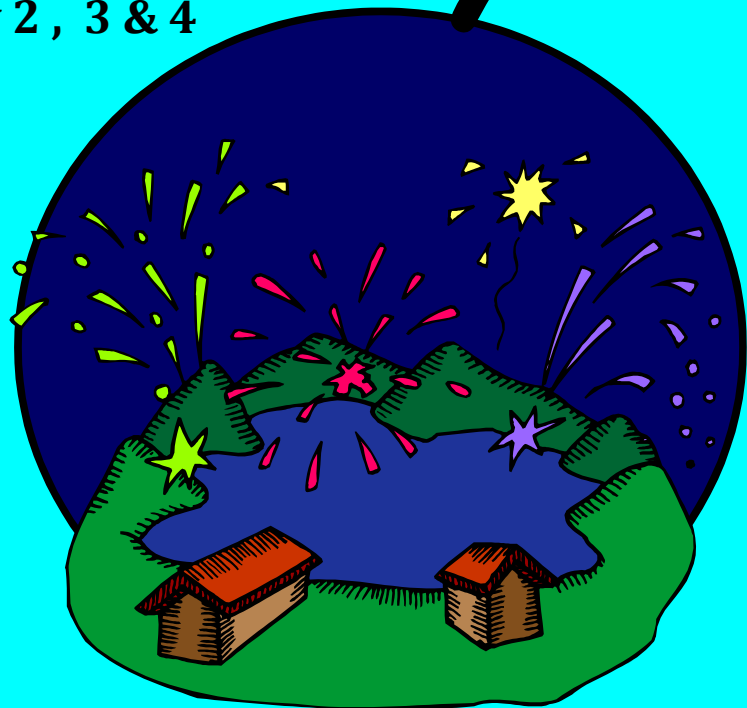


4th of July

Come to camp on the weekend of July 2 , 3 & 4

Normal Camp Fees Apply

**Fireworks off the dam
Saturday July 2 ONLY!**



Potluck with grilled hot dogs , Saturday July 2 at 7:00

Bring side dishes!! Come Hang out with the community and our families!

Ice cream cones for dessert and \$1.00 for a bag of popcorn

before Fireworks!



FIREWORKS ARE NOT ALLOWED UNLESS APPROVED BY A CARETAKER. There are **NO** exceptions to this. Anyone shooting off unapproved fireworks will be asked to leave.

***Must be fired from the dam – not at campsites**

***No aerials with plastic parts**

***No commercial grade pyrotechnics**

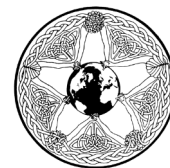
***No fireworks are to be shot into the water or trees, or at people**

***All trash must be picked up and taken to the dumpster by Phoenix Hall**

Fireworks on July 2th off the dam ONLY!



Summer Events



MMNG	June 13-19	Exclusive Event
Midsummer Ritual	June 25	Public Event
Gaea Family Reunion	July 2-4	Public Event
ERI Board meeting	July 10	Public Event
Midwest Men's Festival	July 19-28	Exclusive Event
Lammas Ritual	July 30	Public Event
ERI Board meeting	August 7	Public Event
LBLD 2015	September 2-5	Exclusive event
ERI Board meeting	September 11	Public Event
GGG	September 15-18	Exclusive Event
Autumnal Equinox	September 24	Public Event
ERI Board meeting	October 2	Public event
Samhain Ritual	October 29	Public Event

Most Cabin Sponsor meetings will be on the Sunday after the Public Ritual at Gaea.

Please visit <http://gaearetreat.org/calendar> to ensure there have not been changes to this list!

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



RESPECT YOURSELF

RESPECT OTHERS

RESPECT THE LAND

Mission of Earth Rising Inc

The Mission of Earth Rising 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.

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

For More Details:

Our Website –

<http://gaaretreast.org/>

Calendar –

<http://gaaretreast.org/calendar>

Donations –

<http://gaaretreast.org/donations>

Contact Us –

<http://gaaretreast.org/contact>

