

# GAEA'S OWN

# WINTER 2017



Photo by Charles "Cheshire" Frager



WINTER 2017  
Earth Rising, Inc.

# Gaea's Own

newsletter@gaearetreat.org

Now that the camping season has slowed down with the colder weather, (sorta), this is the time that we begin planning the Earth Day Festival. Registration will be going up sometime after the start of the New Year. Look out for updates or information on our Facebook Page, as well as our website. As always we will need people to do work exchange. You can send an email to [earthdayworkexchange@gaearetreat.org](mailto:earthdayworkexchange@gaearetreat.org) to inquire about work exchange.

We are also looking for anyone that would like to do a workshop for the event. Workshops need to stay within the spectrum of Earth Day related ideas. Past workshops have included Solar Cooking, Plant Walks, build your own fire starter, Yoga, Worm Farming, to name a few. If you have ideas, there is a link on the "Schedule of Events" tab of the Earth Day event page.

Also, don't forget the Reduce/Reuse/Recycle Rummage Sale! Leslie will be organizing all your donations on Friday as they come in to have ready bright and early Saturday morning. (9-ish is early by some people's standards! lol) So, clean out your closets and bookshelves and magical items and donate them to the rummage sale. (yes it is almost spring cleaning time!) This year we will have a \$5 table, a \$2 table and a \$1 table. If you want to donate, please drop your items by the ERI/Rummage Sale located at the Pavilion before dark on Friday if possible! See you all there!

-Erin Marshall, President



Fairy Gate, after a clean up on Oct 7.  
Photo by Elfie Eigenschenk

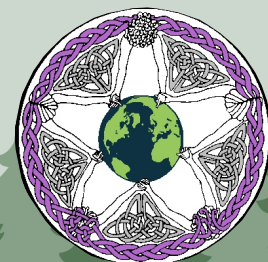


## Earth Day 2018

The land may be quiet for now but Earth Day will be here before you know it. Save the date for April 20-22. Check our website, facebook and future newsletters for details on our art show, community art project, garage sale, vendors, workshops and more!

## Can you cut it?

We need your help with our community art project! What do we need? WOOD! Specifically 1/4 inch thick slices of wood from branches about 4-6" wide. We will need about 100. If you can give any number, contact Audrey Domskey!





## Taking the Path

"I want to go *home*." I'd had a particularly bad day at work, and immediately my partner knew what I meant. He packed my car with me, hugged me tightly, and waved as I started down the road.

There wasn't anything particularly different about this weekend than any other weekend that I'd been out to camp. My feelings about it didn't suddenly become clear, my heart didn't suddenly want Camp where it never had before. The only thing that changed, really, was the fact that I finally said it out loud.

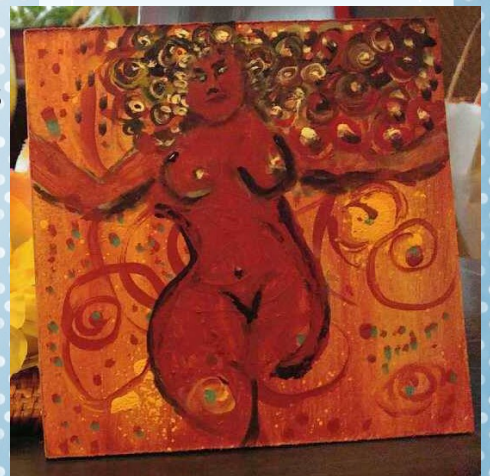
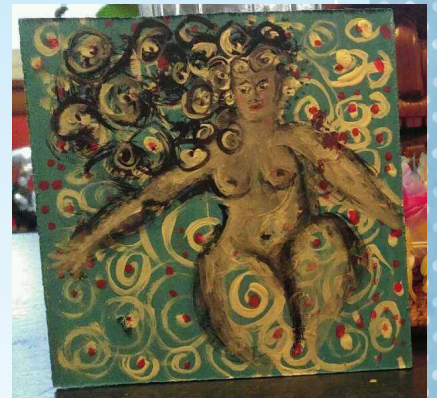
The spring and summer were particularly good, full of friends at camp. The festivals ran smoothly, the community banded together to protect the land, the dining hall got a roof repair, and the water heater is maybe the Best Thing That Ever Happened. Every day, people were stepping out, being the eyes, the ears, and the hands of Gaea.

It's funny, watching this community. It happens to you in the little moments - sitting quietly early in the morning at the coffee clutch, slipping down the path when newcomers greet you like you've been friends for years, laughing and talking so deep at a fire the sun starts to creep over the hills, and you don't know how it came to be morning. The next thing you know, your feet ache to wander their way *home*. To your family that is there to protect you, each other, the land.

If it's been a while, come out to the land. Come back, check the board in the dining hall, wander for an afternoon down the paths, laugh by a fire. Take your path home.

~Lorelei Tanner

Art by Audrey Domskey





# Upcoming Events

Yule Ritual

December 9, 7pm-9pm

January Board Meeting

January 13, noon

Imbolc Ritual

January 27, 7pm-9pm

February Board Meeting

February 4, noon

Earth Day Weekend

April 20-22

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

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.



## Cat Andrews speaks about Stewardship

One night, more than ten years ago, I found myself lying in the middle of Sunflower Field late at night. The grass had not been mowed and so I had my own personal nest of stiff, prickly rust-colored grass. I had put a blanket down on it and was looking up at the cloudless night sky. All around were the sounds of the night insects and, occasionally, I would get a blink of a firefly in my peripheral vision. Otherwise it was quiet of human sounds. It takes me a long time to relax in a situation like that; I was born and raised in a suburb of a small city with only occasional forays into the country. Even then, it was country that had been tamed by farming and ranching with thin strips of wild places between the properties. On family vacations, my mother made us pile into the light blue station wagon and travel across states to see national parks and forests, mountains and deserts. And yet, those were not so wild either with well-kept roads and signs pointing in the right directions, nice log cabins and walkways with handrails. So, lying on a blanket alone in the middle of a field takes me awhile to relax enough to soak it in.

I forced myself to lie there; my fears of snakes and rodents, raccoons, opossums, bugs running electric shocks through me. Finally I imagined the worst: me dying due to some injury I received from nature and leaving my child alone in this world. My heart pounded and I struggled to control my breath until finally, my body calmed. I made myself scan the stars and look for the two constellations I knew: the Big Dipper and the Little Dipper. Eventually I realized I could see the faint path of the Milky Way sweeping across the sky. The breeze smelled sweet and was beginning to get cooler. Bats flitted between me and the stars and I silently thanked them for eating the mosquitoes. I heard rustling nearby and held very still, willing myself to experience whatever it was that was approaching. It stopped and I slowly turned my head. Through the thicket of the grass, I made out one of the camp cats staring at me like puzzled cats do. I reached out my hand but off the cat bounded, not to be bothered by some strange human in the field.

At some point later, I cried. Nature, and this untidy parcel of land in particular, was not out to get me. I was a part of this world and I fit in. I was in the arms of the Goddess and, as long as I honored Mother Nature's rules, I would be safe and nurtured. So I sat up and began to speak to her, putting my bare feet on a dusty patch between grass clumps and my hands on top of my feet. It took me a few minutes of rambling to get to the heart of what I wanted to say. "Mother, I honor you and pledge my attention to you on this spot at Gaea as long as I am able and as long as you'll have me. Show me the ways I can

serve you by caring for the land and also by caring for the people who come to the land. I don't have the strongest body or the purest spirit or the sharpest mind but what I do have is yours. Help me remember your children here and elsewhere are my brothers and sisters and it is my wish to treat them with the love, respect and compassion all of your children deserve. Give me strength to stand up and protect you and my brothers and sisters if others come here to harm you or them. I ordain myself as your steward this night and all the days and nights to follow until my end." I heard no answer but the sweet cool breeze and the rustling grasses but my heart sang with the echo of her acceptance.

Not everyone who comes through that mystical path from 235<sup>th</sup> Street to Gaea, feels this way. They don't have to. I recognize my fellow stewards as we walk Sunset Ridge, Olde Way, Nemeton, Coyote Run, Davawood, Moonstar Meadow and all the other named and unnamed areas of the 168 acres. Lake Onessa takes tribute from everyone; the stewards smile and shake their heads, and perhaps toss the matching earring in to the lake or leave as an offering to the fairies. As our community grows from dozens to hundreds the mowing still needs done, the trash sorted, the cabins and main buildings painted or cleaned. People with specialized skills are still needed to fix plumbing, build steps or decks, fix machines, wire buildings, crunch numbers, paint signs, brainstorm Gaea's future. These are all things to be done by volunteers, some of them stewards. Each of chooses our path at Gaea; each of has power to change our own world and the world of those around us. The cabin sponsors are one such group; they pledge a minimum of 5 hours community service to camp each month during the regular season and 2 hours community service to camp each month during the off season in addition to cleaning and maintaining the cabin before and after each festival and in between. There are other groups that are stewards of fire and firewood, special projects like the smoking pavilion and stairs from the shower house to the ridge, small sacred spaces around camp, trail blazers and flower tenders. There are people who rake and dig ditches. Clint and Rhi are mighty caretakers but they need us, the volunteers and stewards, to give of ourselves to the land we love so much.

Buckets of sweat, streams of tears, drops of blood. All given freely to this magical bit of land tucked away in Kansas. Consider gifting Gaea with your specialized skills. Push a mower or lift a weed trimmer if you have the gift of bodily strength. Build community with your purity of spirit. Write for the newsletter with your sharp mind. Open yourself to the blessing of giving to Gaea. Become a volunteer; become a steward of this land.



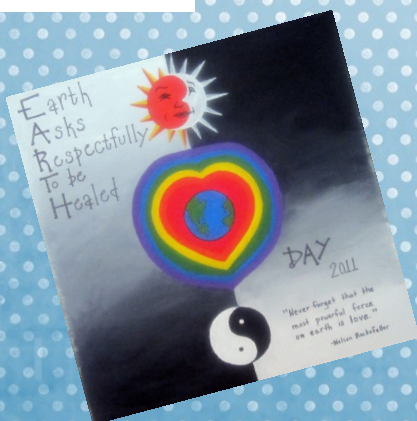
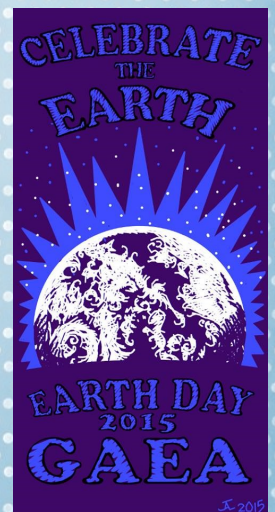
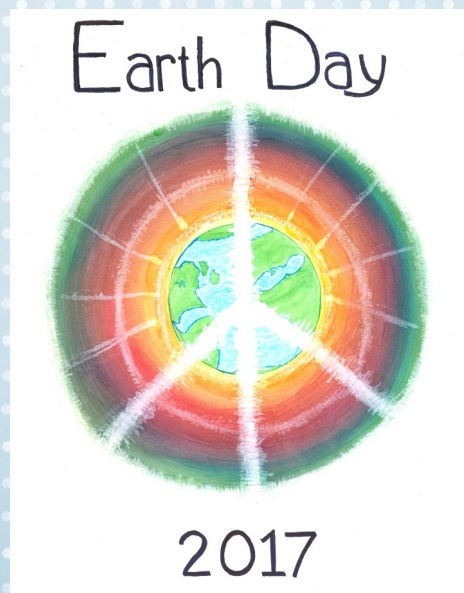
# CALL FOR ARTISTS!!!

Earth Day 2018 planning is underway and we need art submissions for this years t-shirt design. Below are some of the designs from the past few years. The only theme is Earth Day, so let your imagination take over. We do ask that you try to stay with at most 5 colors.

Digital artwork is best, or a really good quality scan.

Deadline is January 12, 2018.

Please email all submissions or questions to:  
[president@gaearetreat.org](mailto:president@gaearetreat.org)





# 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>

## 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



Photos by Deena Bennington

## Our Rules for Dogs

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).

## 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](mailto:newsletter@gaearetreat.org)



# Third Annual Tuck In, - October 7



House of Thoth, photo by Charles "Cheshire Frager

Art at S3, photo by Lorelei Tanner



Olde Way, photos by Scout Crow

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.



## *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.

*For More Details:*

Our Website

<https://gaearetreat.org/>

Calendar

<http://gaearetreat.org/calendar>

Donations

<http://gaearetreat.org/donations>

Contact Us

<http://gaearetreat.org/contact>

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!

