

OLYMPUS NEWS

A newsletter for Olympus Campground Resort

Winter—Spring 2018

Welcome to our first newsletter

Welcome to our first edition of the Olympus Campground Resort Newsletter. We are currently researching possible locations in central Virginia for our campground resort. In the meantime, we are hosting semi-regular events through the Hampton Roads Men's group and Alternatives HR. Currently, most events take place in Hampton Roads, Virginia.

What is this newsletter about?

This newsletter will mostly be providing updates about events we are hosting and any progress made toward founding Olympus Campground Resort. Sometimes we will publish other articles of interest, especially if they relate to any of our events. We may also review other campgrounds and gatherings similar to those we'd like to host when our campground becomes a reality.

We're also looking for a catchy name for our newsletter that somehow matches our theme. If you have ideas, please send them.

What is Olympus Campground Resort?

Olympus Campground Resort will be a private, alternative, adults-only campground located somewhere in central Virginia. The campground will be a merging of LGBTQ and Pagan campgrounds with some fetish and other alternative communities thrown in.

Visit our webpage: www.olympuscampgroundresort.com/

Upcoming events:

"Lost Boys and Neverlands: Creating Magickal Connections in a Mundane World" Men's Retreat

March 23-25, 2018 in the cabins at First Landing State Park in Virginia Beach.

FMI:

www.olympuscampgroundresort.com/index.php/events/brotherhood-by-the-bog-pagan-men-s-retreat



Photo from EPM Men's Retreat in 2011 at First Landing State Park

In This Issue

- Hero's Adventure Men's Retreat Review
- Alternative Pride Picnic
- The Green Man
- Friday the 13th Campout and Halloween Picnic
- Eric Eldritch is Keynote Presenter for upcoming "Lost Boys" retreat

A Gathering of Men

The weekend of March 10-12, 2017, a group of men gathered in a cabin at First Landing State Park in Virginia Beach for a weekend of discovery. The gathering included men gay and straight, mostly around middle age, and mostly Pagan. The theme of the weekend was “The Hero’s Adventure” and the weekend was facilitated by Shaman, writer, and teacher Tom Crockett.

Crockett used pop culture icons to explain the archetypal masculine model of hero’s journey. The hero’s journey is a process where the hero receives some kind of call in his life to something greater. If he answers the call, he goes through a journey where he is challenged by obstacles and given assistance along the way by allies and mentors. Eventually he passes an ultimate test to prove what he’s learned along the way. He then returns to his life with more knowledge, skills, and confidence than before. He often brings back something that benefits his community – whether knowledge, defeating a common foe, or some magical tool.

In his overview of the hero’s journey, Crockett included movie heroes such as Luke Skywalker, Frodo Baggins, Neo from the Matrix, Harry Potter, and even Ripley from Aliens and Katniss Everdeen. According to Crockett, there is a feminine version of the hero’s journey, but that’s different. He also explained that female characters such as Ripley and Katniss actually follow the masculine model. Crockett used the concepts of masculinity and femininity as “archetypes and not stereotypes.” He explained that everyone has access to both, that different situations might call for pulling from one archetype or the other, and that different people are comfortable existing at different places along the spectrum (regardless of their sexual orientation). He explained that superheroes usually don’t go through the hero’s journey process, except perhaps in their origin stories. He also explained the difference between a hero and a warrior. Hero’s aren’t necessarily involved in war or battle, but they can be. Folks were given the opportunity to define what they see a hero to be. Their ideas included people who help out, champions, and people who step up to help in unexpected situations.

Crockett used tools such as dream incubation, a spirit walk, worksheets, and conversation to help those attending open up about what call they might not be answering in their lives, where they might be stuck, or places in their lives where their skills might not be properly or fully utilized. They were challenged to determine if there was something they were unwilling to confront, if they were using distractions to avoid their journey, or if there were ways they could be of better service.

Toward the end of the weekend, folks distilled their experiences into making a magical sigil. They burned this symbol into a katana that they got to keep.

Attendees at the Hero’s Journey Men’s Retreat Weekend.

Left to Right:

David Coffman

Charles Gnilka

Tom Crockett

Roger Scott

Not Pictured:

Mel Frizzell



Alternative Pride Picnic a Success

Alternatives HR hosted our very first event on June 25, 2017. We hosted an Alternative Pride Picnic at Northside Park in Norfolk. Approximately 50-60 people attended throughout the afternoon, and the weather was perfect. The picnic was held as a grassroots, community-funded, and community-focused event. While this was largely an LGBT Pride event, all friendly “alternative” communities in Hampton Roads were welcome to attend.

Funding to cover the shelter cost and basic supplies were raised through crowdfunding and a raffle at the event. As a first-time event planned in about 6-weeks, many folks stepped up to help. Community involvement was what this picnic was all about. The Hershee Bar, a Norfolk LGBT bar, stepped up to provide burgers, veggie burgers, and hot dogs for the crowd. The LGBT Life Center provided bottled water. There wasn't a sound system so one guest brought his own to help. There were no electrical outlets at the shelter, but we got by anyway. Another guest brought a Rainbow flag and a Trans flag. A few folks stepped up to help staff the grills. The owner of Aries Apothecary, a local metaphysical shop, provided a gift certificate to include in the raffle on the spot. The show of community support was awesome!!!

Besides the food and raffle, there were a few games such as “corn hole toss” and some throwing discs. There was also a dessert contest. One of the contestants made cupcakes in the shape of the Bisexual flag. Other entries included a Vegan Peach Crisp, Vegan Chocolate Cinnamon Cake, and the most popular dessert was a Pineapple Upside Down Whiskey Cake.

We hope to hold this event again next year. With more planning, we hope to be able to offer affordable community group and vendor tables, as well as local entertainment.

Thanks to everyone who helped make this event a success!!!



Scenes from the Alternative Pride Picnic.

Top Left: Corey Mohr and Christopher Reybrouck from the LGBT Life Center play Corn Hole Toss. (photo by David Coffman)

Top Right: The Alternative Pride Picnic was all about local community involvement. (photo by David Coffman)

Bottom Left: Stephanie Newsom from Aries Apothecary makes some new friends.



Photo courtesy of Matrixwerx Photography.

The Green Man

By Mel Mystery

Who's that face watching from within the forest leaves and foliage? Perhaps it's the Green Man. The Green Man is in many ways the counterpart to Cernunnos. Whereas Cernunnos symbolizes the wild and untamed animal nature of the forest, the Green Man is the embodiment of the wild and fertile vegetation of nature. The Green Man is often depicted as simply a face in the leaves. Branches or vines might sprout from his nose, mouth, or other parts of his face. They may even bear fruit or flowers. He may have leaves for hair or a leafy beard. The face is almost always male. Green women are rare and green cats, lions, and demons are also found. Green Man carvings and sculptures are often found as part of the architecture of churches from the 11th century to the present day. The Pagan-esque symbol of the Green Man in Christian Churches would seem to indicate the vitality of the Green Man and his ability to survive as a symbol of pre-Christian traditions despite the influence of Christianity, while at the same time co-existing with Christianity.

The Green Man is considered a symbol of growth and rebirth, as when forests spring back to life in the spring. The Green Man is found in many cultures throughout the world. He may have developed independently in these cultures rather than having a common root. There are many characters that are related to the Green Man, and they may even be a different representation of him. The Egyptian Osiris, the Norse Freyr, the Celtic deity Viridios, and the Greek Dionysus are all gods that have Green Man aspects. Other possible mythical and folktale representations of the Green Man might be the Green Knight in the tale of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, John Barleycorn, Jack in the Green, Robin Goodfellow, Puck, and Robin Hood.

Modern representations of the Green Man include Peter Pan, and might include superheroes such as the Green Arrow, the Green Lantern, and Robin from Batman and Robin.

Alternatives HR Hosted Halloween Picnic and Friday the 13th Camp Out

Alternatives HR hosted a Friday the 13th Camp Out the weekend of October 13-15, 2017 at First Landing State Park in Virginia Beach. Planned events for the weekend included a swamp hike, scavenger hunt, Samhain ritual, campsite decorating contest, and "adult" pumpkin decorating. The weekend culminated in a potluck Halloween Picnic on Sunday afternoon. The picnic included Halloween music and divination activities. Grace Gemini came out to offer Tarot readings. DJ Jessica Fisher provided Halloween music at the picnic and throughout the weekend.

Rainy weather put a damper on many of the weekend's activities and turned away many who had planned to attend. Those who did attend enjoyed a relaxed, albeit soggy, weekend.



Jessica Fisher tests the magical Sphinx at the Friday the 13th Camp Out.. Photo by David Coffman.

Between the Worlds Gathering for Queer Pagan Men

by Mel Mystery

Three local men (Jesse Walker, Shariff Burgos, and Mel Frizzell) attended the Between the Worlds Gathering for Queer Pagan men at a Pagan campground in Southern Ohio. The location of the campground is undisclosed due to the conservative nature of the town where the campground is located. The six day gathering is a celebration of Queer spirit hosted by the [Green Faerie Grove](#) of Columbus, Ohio.



Pictured left to right: Jesse Walker, Shariff Burgos, and Mel Frizzell

According to their website:

"The Between the Worlds Gathering was designed to provide a safe place for men who love men to explore alternative spiritual practices and paths, to empower themselves, and to plant the seeds of spiritual renewal within the gay community. Between the Worlds (BTW) offers rituals, workshops, drumming, dancing, performances, a marketplace, and sacred safe space for queer men to learn, worship, network, and explore."

This year's event marked the 16th year of the gathering. Each year a different deity is selected to honor and each year offers different guest presenters. This year's patron deity was Agni, the Vedic and Hindu god of fire. Keynote speaker for the event was Kirk Thomas, Archdruid Emeritus of Ar nDraiocht Fein: A Druid Fellowship (ADF) and an ordained Senior Priest in that tradition.

A variety of workshops and activities took place at the gathering. Workshop topics included herbalism; sex magick; connecting with ancestors and deities; leather mask-making; hula dancing; tarot, runes, and other divination practices; polyamory; meditation and daily practices; flying ointments; Seidhr; Faery traditions; symbol and sigil design; and much more. Other activities included a "No-Talent" show, a theatrical production, Komos (a Dionysian party), a cocktail contest, a fire-lit labyrinth walk, a rite of passage for gay elders, various rituals, and also the usual drumming and dancing found at Pagan festivals. Keynote speaker, Kirk Thomas, spoke about fear and not letting it rule your life.

For more information on Between the Worlds, please visit: <http://www.betweentheworlds.org/>

Lost Boys and Neverlands: Creating Magickal Connections in Mundane World

A Men's Retreat Weekend

March 23-25, 2018

At First Landing State Park, Virginia Beach

[www.olympuscampgroundresort.com/index.php/events/
brotherhood-by-the-bog-pagan-men-s-retreat](http://www.olympuscampgroundresort.com/index.php/events/brotherhood-by-the-bog-pagan-men-s-retreat)

Eric Eldritch to Present at March Men's Retreat

Eric Eldritch of the DC Radical Faeries is the keynote presenter for the Brotherhood by the Bog men's retreat to be held, March 23-25, 2018 in the cabins at First Landing State Park. This year's theme is "Lost Boys and Neverlands: Creating Magickal Connections in a Mundane World." The weekend will feature workshops and activities aimed at helping participants find and connect with their tribe, rediscover the magick within, and find a balance between their inner adult and inner child.

The retreat is open to men of all backgrounds, spiritual paths, and orientations. Eldritch hopes to present to an audience that represents the spectrum of manhood—whether straight, gay, bi, trans, or whatever.

Eldritch is a Radical Faerie, Urban Shaman, and Stone Circle Wicca Priest, who lives at the intersection of Sexuality and Spirituality. Eldritch is a community organizer with leadership experience in organizational development based on principles of group identity, sociolinguistics, and cross-cultural relations. Drawing on twenty years of experience in ceremonial and ecstatic forms of worship for ritual construction, he specializes in interfaith worship and spiritual retreat planning. Eldritch consults with Pagan and community groups to create events that organize, energize, and inspire.

For additional information and to register for this event, please visit:

<http://www.olympuscampgroundresort.com/index.php/events/brotherhood-by-the-bog-pagan-men-s-retreat>



Visit our Website

www.olympuscampgroundresort.com/

We have:

- An overview of the proposed campground
- Progress reports on the campground
- Investment opportunities
- Calendar of retreats and events
- Virginia LGBTQ and Pagan Resource Directories

Contact Us

Visit us on the web at :

www.olympuscampgroundresort.com/

E-mail:

support@olympuscampgroundresort.com