

## **A Ritual to the Spirit of a Particular Place**

Saturn's Day, September 16th, 2006, Grove of the Other Gods ADF performed the main ritual at the second annual Pagan Pride Picnic at Colonial Park in central NJ. The ritual was fashioned to honor the land itself, the sacred space in the park. In this, it was a little unusual: at the place in the ritual to invoke the "main deity" we honored the park itself. All the invocations honored some aspect of the land: ancestors of that land, nature spirits of that land, Gods and Goddesses of that land. Natural omens were taken. 130 people (or so) attended this ADF Druid rite, an unusual experience for many.

The invocations were designed to be brief, and to explain the rite as we progressed through it, as most of the attendees had never attended an ADF Druid rite. It went very well, and was very much our style of "tent revival" Druid ritual. When people couldn't help themselves and joined in the invocations, we knew that it had really worked! Somewhat more carefully scripted than our usual rite, we thought that this would be a good one for the ADF Liturgy Yearbook.

The day itself went well, with the grove helping with registration and cleanup (and handing out garbage bags after the ritual to clean up the park...) 16 grove members attended and invoked, sang songs, beat on drums, or otherwise helped out. The response from the varied Pagans in attendance was very positive, and we wound up quite proud of ourselves!

Ritual Set-up: A large cauldron was placed in the ritual area for the well and filled with park well water. Our indoor grove bile was set up and decorated (by Maria, mostly) with foliage and white ribbons, and a candle at the top for the fire. A small clay pot with a sapling in it was also part of the vertical axis. Bottles filled with park well water and cups for the waters of life were placed near the bile. A large drum was set up.

Druid in Charge: Norma

### **Ritual:**

*Opening procession:* (Ritual teasers drumming and coaxing people into the ritual space. We sat them in the shade, rather than in a circle: this made it immediately clear that the ritual wasn't Wiccan-style. Grove members and friends handed out small packets of birdseed to ritual participants as they got settled in the space.)

*Clear opening / purification of space:* (from Norma's notes: Drummers come together in ritual space, drumming builds to a crescendo, then drummers stop together. This quiets the crowd. In the silence following, three clear chimes are sounded and allowed to reverberate through the space, consecrating the space and focusing the participants. (15 minutes to get folks together, less than 1 minute for chimes) )

*Earth Mother invocation* (Tricia) - incorporating the *Meditation* (3 minutes):

"We have come from points near and far to honor the land of Colonial Park. It is here that we are gathered together from our various paths to honor the Gods. To begin our ritual, we start by honoring the Earth Mother, for without Her, there would be no Colonial Park to gather in.

Please close your eyes and get comfortable for a short meditation. If you can, put your hands on the ground and feel the pulse of the Earth Mother, beneath you, supporting you. Can you feel the thumb-thumb?

She's in a good mood, there are people gathered to acknowledge Her presence. Feel the power of the Earth Mother seep into you, feel Her presence in your hands, in your bones, in your head, and in your heart.

Without Her, there would be no land to walk on, no water to drink, no air to breathe. Without Her, we can not survive. She deserves our honor and respect. She will not be ignored.

As you sit here, on the planet Earth, in the north-western hemisphere, on the continent of North America, in the country of the United States, in New Jersey, in the town of Franklin, in this park, acknowledge the blessings of the Earth Mother and thank Her for Her support.

Slowly open your eyes.”

(Tricia pours out water) “Earth Mother, accept our offering”

All: Accept our offering

*Statement of Purpose* (Norma): (3 minutes)

“Hello and welcome to this ritual honoring this place, Colonial Park, the place where we’re all enjoying this lovely day and each other’s company at the Central Jersey Pagan Pride festival. We are Grove of the Other Gods, Druids, part of the national organization Ar nDraiocht Fein -- that’s Irish Gaelic, in my own really bad pronunciation, for Our Own Druidry.

Here are a few things you’ll want to know about GOG’s ADF Druid ritual style. First -- we don’t cast a circle. That means you’re welcome to come and go quietly and respectfully throughout the ritual. You’re invited to position yourself where you can see and hear us, even if that doesn’t close off the space. You’re invited to sit down and get comfortable. We don’t cast a circle because our ritual space is not Between The Worlds like many magickal rituals are; we’re placing ourselves in the Center of All Worlds, right here and right now. We can do that because our main rituals are always celebratory and not magickal in nature. The reason we’re here is to let this wonderful park know we acknowledge it and we love it.

And we’ll begin by setting up the space. So where are we in the world? Our horizontal directions will tell us.”

*Horizontal Directions:* (Ed, Bob, Maria, Carol, Donna) (2 minutes)

(Ed) “In the old days, people knew where they stood. They knew what mountain was to the west of them, what ocean to the east, where the rivers were, where the deer were running, where the birds flew, and who lived north, south, east, and west of their village.

When they would gather at a temple or a sacred grove, they would have no need to make it sacred.

It had always been sacred, it would always be sacred, and everybody knew it was sacred.

Today, we Druids make our ritual space sacred by first talking about the land around us.”

(Carol) “In the West... Asia, the Pacific ocean, the mountains and great plains of America, the Delaware River, Sourland Mountain, the Millstone River, the Delaware-Raritan canal, Colonial Park...”

(Maria) “In the South... Antarctica...South America... the hills and fields and swamps of southern America, Delaware Bay, Cape May, the Pinelands, Mercer County, Hillsborough, Griggstown, and in Colonial Park, the ice skating pond and the Rose Garden...”

(Donna) “In the East... all of Europe, the Atlantic Ocean, Barnegat and Raritan Bays, New Brunswick, Somerset, Middlebush, and in Colonial Park, Powder Mill Pond and Spooky Brook Pond...”

(Bob) “In the North... Hudson's Bay and the Arctic, the mountains and rivers of Canada, the Adirondack Mountains, the Catskills, the Shawangunk range, the Watchung mountains, Chimney Rock, Bound Brook, Lindy Lake, and the hills of Colonial Park...”

(Ed) “The fifth Druid direction is the center, where we stand right now. We declare this the center of the world, the center of all worlds, the center of the infinite universe, our sacred grove.”

*Vertical Axis- Well, Fire and Tree / Invocation of Gatekeeper / Gate Opening* (Norma) (4 minutes): “We GOG ADF Druids believe that there are Gates everywhere -- what many of you would call veils between the worlds -- and that they are opening and closing all the time. Every major event in your life, and I think many of the minor ones too, opens a Gate that you pass through. Getting so many local Pagans of different types together for a day of harmony and learning and fun in the park has opened a Gate. Now we’re going to talk about opening Gates formally, in a ritual space. That’s really what a ritual does. It takes the things that happen naturally and formalizes them in a set space so we can all feel them at the same time. It formally makes a space sacred that was already plenty sacred to begin with. The ritual is just the formal group acknowledgement of that. And this is very much an audience participation thing. We’ll be saying things, as we did with the Earth Mother offering, and asking you to say them back. We’ll be asking you to help us by picturing the Gates and by calling in your Patrons. This ritual won’t be so great if we don’t have help from all of you.

We begin by honoring the Well. The Well will be the Gate that goes downward. To the ancestors in the earth, but also to the underground Gods and nature spirits. It would be a sad place for me, and probably for all of us, if we couldn’t access this Gate and feel the love from beneath us. And we say: Sacred Well flow within us!

All: Sacred Well flow within us!

Next we honor the Fire. The Fire will be the Gate that goes upward. To the Gods that dwell above, also to the ancestors above, if that’s what you believe, and to the nature spirits of air. This connection lifts us up and makes us feel Their radiance and Their power. And we say Sacred Fire burn within us!

All: Sacred Fire burn within us!

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we will honor the Tree. The Tree -- in Norse mythology it's Yggdrasil, the World Tree -- connects the three Worlds. It also will be the Gate to the Nature Spirits and Spirits of Place, to the Gods in this World around us right now, and to the ancestors who are resting in our hearts right now. Of all the Gates I think this is the most important one and would be the saddest one not to have access to. Could you live a Pagan life without having a connection to the magick of the here and now? (pause for response) No, I couldn't either. And we say: Sacred Tree grow within us!

All: Sacred Tree grow within us!

And we're going to ask a Gatekeeper to help us formally, ritually, open these Gates together. The Gatekeeper we'll be honoring and asking for assistance today is Colonial Park itself. The Gates in this particular place belong to the park and to this piece of land.

Colonial Park, you've been a beautiful piece of land long before any of us or our ancestors were here and we wish for you that you will continue to be one long after we are all gone. Today we acknowledge your wisdom, your beauty and your magick.

(Norma pours out water)  
Colonial Park accept our offering.

All: Colonial Park accept our offering.

And I ask you all to help by picturing the Gates opening and feeling Them open. And I ask -- Colonial Park-- Let this Well be a Gate, Let this Fire be a Gate, Let the Tree be a Gate -- Colonial Park, Keeper of the Ways between Worlds --Let The Gates Be Open!

All: Let the Gates Be Open!

And now, with the Gates of Well, Fire, and Tree open between the Worlds, we will acknowledge the Outsiders. In GOG we think of Outsiders as both -- ooh creepy -- Spirits that would disturb our ritual space and as the things in our own heads that would keep us from enjoying and participating in a ritual. Which one do you think we'll have more trouble with?

*Outsiders* (Hillary) (3 minutes)

"Living in New Jersey, we all complain about the development, the pollution, the cancer clusters. We accept that we're a national joke, and some of us turn that into a badge of pride, while others secretly chafe under the humor.

It's easy to bitch about development. A beautiful drive is suddenly marred by a sign saying the land is for sale. Another year goes by and it's sold. Before you know it, the trees are down, the bulldozers have moved in, and there are even more deer trying to murder your car. "This isn't like when I was a kid," you say. "It used to be all trees here." "I miss the trees, the openness, the park." "Why isn't Green Acres doing more?"

But how many of you live in a development? (wait for a show of hands) Or know someone who does, someone you wouldn't want to live without? (show of hands) How many of you have ever had ancestors who came to this country and lived in a house or apartment? (show of [all])

hands) And what qualifies as old, acceptable development, and what qualifies as new? It seems to me that the "acceptable" development includes things that were around just a smidgen longer than you were, and "intrusive" development is anything you saw being built. We couldn't have homesteads without development, going back to the Dutch who came 400 years ago and saw an awful lot of trees that needed cutting, to the East Indians who came over last decade and made New Little India in New Jersey.

When Colonial Park was made, it was a little bit of civilization in the wilds of New Jersey, and now it's a little bit of tamed wild in the encroaching civilization of NJ. First it was a haven of tameness and now it's a refuge from the housing developments.

Now, I hate developments too. I cringe when a new one goes up, I bitch with the rest of them that it's not as pretty as it used to be. But you know what? New Jersey is change, NJ is the edge of the nation, NJ is where the influx comes and takes over. And if you would have it any other way, then maybe you should move somewhere that's never going to change. Let me know if you find where that is.

Outsiders, accept our offering.”

All: Outsiders, accept our offering.

*Muse- Spirit of Creativity* (Marc) Audience participation here. (3 minutes)

“Start clapping your hands. (wait a moment) See how a rhythm is forming in the group? Follow that rhythm. Sing, dance, do whatever you want to add to it. (wait a full minute) That. That is creativity.”

(We used a general “Spirit of Creativity” rather than a deity from any specific pantheon. The Muse invocation involved drumming and getting people to sing anything they wanted to, all at the same time. Grove members got folks up and dancing. This wonderful and joyous cacophony lifted everyone’s spirits and loosened them up for the Kindred invocations)

*About Inviting the Kindred* (Norma) (2 minutes):

(Unscripted, reconstructed) “Whoo. I didn’t know we were going to be dancing. I need a moment to catch my breath. Do you know that about us, about Grove of the Other Gods? We don’t really know what’s going to happen next at any invocation during a ritual. Oh, this one’s planned out a little more than most because we don’t want to talk your ears off -- too much -- but even here there’s plenty of room for what we call Awen. It’s a Gaelic word that means divine inspiration, fire in the head. In practical terms it means getting the large size Doc Marten boot of creativity applied to your skull. Not a bad thing. And you only get that in a ritual space by being creative in a ritual space -- by daring to fail, by trusting the Gods and the Kindred to hold you up.

The ritual space is set and now we’re going to invite our guests. We start with the Kindred: the Ancestors, Spirits of Nature and Place, and the collective Gods and Goddesses of everyone present. When we first started the Grove years ago I remember rushing through the Kindred invocations to get to the main Deity or guest of the occasion. Over the years I think we’ve all

come to realize that our dear beloved friends are just as important as the main guest and maybe even more important. Your magick lives where your hear lives and your heart lives with the Kindred. We begin by inviting the ancestors - your ancestors.”

*Ancestors:* (Misha) Ancestors of Colonial Park land (3 minutes)

“Who are the Ancestors? Who are the Ancestors?”

Our mothers, our fathers, their mothers and fathers before them, and each one who came before them, from the first day a human stood upright and looked at the earth under the sun, and further beyond in the depths of time, when the first being took its first breath of life.

They were all different – just as we are. But they had one thing in common. They survived. They helped their children survive, and their children after them, while all around them, others perished. And every part of them, of their bodies, their souls, everything that let them live while others died, is part of us today.

(Misha picks out individuals from the crowd)

[To some big, tough-looking guy] Your 600 times great grandmother was a beautiful young girl. Men courted her with offerings of food and protection. She chose not only the strongest, but the kindest as well. She had ten children – all but three died as infants. But she nurtured those three, until they grew, and when they had children of their own, she stayed and cared for them. All her life, she learned, to make clothing to keep them warm, to gather plants and herbs to heal sickness. And although she died 12,000 years ago, a million of her descendants walk the earth today. You are one of them. And everything that made her survive, and her children after her-- her beauty, her wisdom, her kindness, the striving to learn, and to teach-- everything that was part of her is part of you. Honor her – and honor that part of her that is in you.

[To some smallish woman] Your 500 times great grandfather was a hunter. He traveled in hunting parties, miles away from his village, in search of prey. Once, his hunting party was lost, in winter, in the snow. Ten men, struggling against the cold, with only enough food and water for one. He murdered the others, took the food and made it back to his village. And that's how he survived. That's part of you. Honor him – and that part of him that is in you.

Honor the Ancestors. Honor the Ancestors. All that they had, all that they were. It's part of every one of us. Their ability to work in harmony, and to take for themselves. Their love, their power to nurture and protect. Their rage, their hatred, their power to murder. Honor them, and honor yourselves, that all of them is part of all of you.

And honor the ancestors of the land. The men and women who lived here and died here. The Native Americans, before the first ships sailed from Europe. The Dutch. The British, and their descendants. Hunters. Tradesmen. Soldiers. Slaves. Yes, slaves – this county was one of the largest slave-holding counties north of the Mason-Dixon line.

Their bodies are buried in the earth beneath us. Their souls weave in and out of our ritual. Honor them. Honor the land. Honor the ancestors. Call in the ancestors you wish to honor.”

(many ancestors names called out, whispered or thought)

“Honor the ancestors. Biodh se.

Ancestors, accept our offering.”

All: Ancestors, accept our offering

Bridge to Nature Spirits (Norma) (1 minute)

“Biodh se. That’s Irish Gaelic for “It is,” or we use it more like “so be it.” It’s one of the few Gaelic terms you’ll hear at a GOG ritual. We use it to mean “Well done.” You’re welcome to use it too, if you think it’s appropriate.”

*Nature Spirits* (Keriana Sidhe) (3 minutes)

“Hark, hark, O Spirits Of Nature, of this place called Colonial Park!  
We visit you, and we bring you a party from noon until dark!

Whether there's rain, or whether there's sun,  
We all are here to have plenty of fun,

Please welcome us as we welcome you,  
With praise and offerings and with hearts that are true.

So let's begin and name you kin,  
And raise our voices in a mighty din,

"SPIRITS OF PLACE, OF FAUNA, FLORA, AND FAERIE!  
Hail and Welcome, and Blessed Be,  
All you fine beings of the forest, who are wild and free!

Please come to our party,  
and let us come to your wood!  
We'll drum and we'll dance  
and we'll make it all good!"

Fun for us and fun for you,  
A slew of things for us all to do,  
We'll feast and frolic, flirt and fling,  
our birdie seeds and praise offerings.

Spirits of Nature, large and small in stature,  
Let me introduce some of you to us:

(prepares to read list)

Ok, people,

There is no way to make all of this rhyme,  
To do so would take up WAAAAYYY too much time,

So rather than sing you a dorky song,  
I'll chant this list, and yes, its long,

So gather round and pray attend,  
And listen up right until the end,  
And when reciting this list is finally done,  
Let's move along and start having fun!

(Begins the species list quickly)

Original forest: Mostly oak, hickory, and beech.  
Also willow, sycamore, box elder, ash, pin oak, red maple, silver maple  
Later invaders: ailanthus, mulberry.

On the forest floor: ferns, may apples, jack-in-the-pulpit, trout lilies,  
poison ivy, virginia creeper, wild grape,  
sassafrass, black cherry, sumac,  
spicebush, elderberry, bluebells.  
At our feet: clover, plantain, grass, dandelion.

Planted in the Arboretum:  
conifers, firs, maples, ironwoods, spruces, hackberries, cedars, buckeyes, yews, hollies,  
junipers, pines, oaks, ashes --flowering and shade trees of many types, all neatly labeled,  
enough to make a Druid weep with joy.  
And then there's the lovely rose garden, and a fragrance and sensory garden.

Birds: cardinals, robins, blue jays, sparrows, crows, wild turkeys, canadian geese, mallard  
and wood ducks, woodpeckers, herons.

Mammals: squirrels - eastern gray squirrels and northern flying squirrels- rabbits, groundhogs,  
oposums, raccoons, mice, black bears, fox, deer, lots of deer...

Water insects: water boatmen and back swimmers -- like small beetles, water striders -- like  
water spiders, dragonflies.

Reptiles and amphibians: frogs, garter snakes, salamanders, turtles.

Fish: largemouth bass, blue gill sunfish, pumpkinseed sunfish, brown bullheads.

(Ends the species list)

Call in the Nature Spirits and Spirits of Place you wish to honor.”

(lots of audience participation and many animal noises)

“Let there be peace and harmony between us.

Nature Spirits, accept our offering.”

All: Nature Spirits, accept our offering.

## *Gods and Goddesses (Norma): (3 minutes)*

“And now to honor the Gods and Goddesses. (pause) So. My husband Ed and I often come to this park with blankets and beach chairs to read and relax. One day several years ago we were sitting -- right around that bend there -- by the Delaware Raritan Canal. I was falling asleep and Ed was reading a book called *The Cult of Pan in Ancient Greece*. He said “Wow. That’s a really beautiful Pan invocation I just read.” And me -- well, either we can be charitable and say that I was half asleep or I was just being an idiot -- I said “Read it to me.” So he read it. And it was beautiful. And as I started to drift back to sleep a scruffy-looking man walked up to our blanket and said, “Nobody talks to me anymore.” Now I’m either still sleepy or still an idiot because I don’t get it. Ed jumps to his feet, shakes the guy’s hand and says “I’m Ed and this is my wife Norma and we’re pleased to meet you.” The guy then starts talking about the park and how sad it is that the park rangers remove the deadfall from the woods because the deer don’t come by here so much anymore. “Take a walk in these woods,” he says. “You can’t smell the deer on the leaves on the forest floor anymore”. And I still don’t get it. He talks about how beautiful the full moon was the other night and how he went to the top of a hill and drank a case of beer watching the moon. He talks about nature. He also has a big problem keeping the fly of his pants up and keeps turning around saying “sorry, sorry” to fix it. Finally Ed asks him his name. It is, of course, Dick. He shares some of the food we’ve brought and then walks away saying, “It’s really nice to meet people like you who want to talk to me.”

And Ed says to me. “Do you know who that was?” And all at once I get it. And I jump up and run after him, after the great God Pan, after as close as I’m ever going to get to seeing a living Deity on this earth, and I round the corner he’s just rounded. Right to this very space. And he’s gone. Vanished. Disappeared without a trace.

And you’re saying “that’s a nice story. I wonder if she made it up.” I didn’t. It’s true. And it happened here. Right here. This spot is sacred to me. And \*somewhere\* in these woods there’s a Pan altar that we built and stocked with an unopened bottle of beer. We’ve gone back since. There’s always a bottle of beer there, but it’s always a different one. Someone is restocking that altar and it’s not us.

Do you believe in magick? I mean \*really\* believe. Do you think your religion is metaphorical? Nice stories to inspire you but nothing more? I tell you it’s not. It’s very very real and very alive. This place is alive with Gods, with Kindred. Can you feel them?

I’m going to ask you to call in your Gods and Goddesses. To honor and invite Them. But don’t do it unless you’re prepared to meet Them face to face. I tell you this space is magick. (pause) Or maybe, just maybe, your Gods and Goddesses are already here. Look around you. How many faces are new? How many people are here that you’ve never met? Never seen before? I’d say hello to everyone here if I were you...just in case...

Call in your Gods and Goddesses now!”

(lots of people shout names here)

Norma: “Gods and Goddesses, accept our offering.”

All: Gods and Goddesses accept our offering.

*Main Invocation / Praise (Norma) (3 minutes)*

“We’ve talked a lot about Colonial Park -- about its beauty, its history, its nature, its magick. Now we’ll take a minute to honor It. We never invite a main guest of honor to a ritual without honoring them. So now it’s time for the sacrifice -- ooh big scary word that. Think about sacrifice for a moment. What did you give up -- what did you sacrifice to be here today? How many of you took the scenic tour through the park over and over trying to find this place? But you kept looking even though it was hard to find, right? How many of you worked your butts off to make this day happen? I can see a lot of you from where I’m standing. How many of you donated time, money, things you’ve made, things you’ve cooked? That’s sacrifice in the modern sense. Giving of yourself to the Gods. Sitting here and listening to us and participating when you could be lounging in the grass. That’s sacrifice. Don’t sell it short. Call it what it is. Sacrifice.

And we’re going to ask for another sacrifice for this beautiful park. We’re going to ask you to make some noise. Make some noise until it hurts a little. Get up and move around. For a full minute and that’s not so easy to do. If you care, make some noise -- start NOW.

(General beautiful chaos ensues for a full minute timed on Norma’s watch. Everyone is exhausted. Many fall over after the praise is done.)

STOP. (silence and people catching their breath) Colonial Park accept our offering.”

All: Colonial Park accept our offering.

“We’ve given you packets of birdseed to take with you. You can offer them out in the woods here to the park or you can offer them at home. Please don’t offer them all right here and leave us leave a pile of birdseed for the park rangers to clean up. It’s a birdseed mix of mostly nuts, raisins, and berries, so the wildlife can eat it too and so we won’t be sprouting non-native species all over the place with our offerings. It’s yours to do with as you see fit, but please dispose of the container responsibly.

Now that we’ve spoken and given of ourselves to the Kindred and to Colonial Park, we’re going ask Them to speak to us. We’re going to take a natural omen from the park itself.”

*Omen* - Maria, Ed, Marc, Misha, Kerry, Monika - Maria, Ed, and Marc to take quick natural omens while Misha, Kerry, and Monika sing “From All the Worlds Below” in 3-part harmony. (4 minutes)

(Omens: ??? Interestingly, we don’t have an exact record of these omens. Usually we record the omens of a ritual as soon as they’re given, but everyone from the Grove was just too busy to do that this time. We all remember that the omens were good and about community and listening to nature, but no one remembers exactly what they were. We think that, in itself, is a kind of omen that the effort was more important than the message this time.)

*Catechism of the Waters and consecration* - Norma (2 minutes)

“The water we’re about to pass out contains the spirit of the whole of this ritual. The water belongs to this park-- it comes from that pump right over there. It contains the omens we just

heard, certainly, but it also contains all of our effort, all of your participation, all of the presence of the Kindred and of this park. You are invited to join us in drinking the water, or you can pour it out on the ground as an offering, or any combination of those. Or you can decline to participate if you're saying "who are these weirdos and what kind of ritual is this?" That's perfectly fine too. It's your choice.

And this is what we always say over the water to \*formally\* make it sacred. Not that it wasn't sacred already, we're just formalizing it in ritual.

N: Of What does the Earth Mother give that we may know of the eternal renewal of Her blessings?

GOG: The Waters of Life!

N: And from whence flow these Waters?

GOG: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All Mother!

N: And has She given forth of Her bounty?

GOG: You betcha!

N: Then gimmie those Waters!"

*Pour and Pass out Waters* (from cauldron) - (six previously volunteered passers out and six pourers distribute water to crowd in small paper cups. All sing *99 Waters of Life on the Wall*. Remember to tell people to "hold their water" until the toast.) (4 minutes)

N: Behold the Waters of Life!

All: Behold the Waters of Life! (and various other toasts given. All drink)

*Thank everyone/close Gates* - Norma - (3 minutes)

"Now, like good guests at a celebration, we'll thank our guests.

N: Colonial Park we thank you

All: Colonial Park, we thank you.

N: Gods and Goddesses, we thank you.

All: Gods and Goddesses we thank you.

N: Spirits of Nature and Place, we thank you.

All Spirits of Nature and Place, we thank you.

N: Ancestors, we thank you.

All: Ancestors, we thank.

N: And again as Gatekeeper, Colonial Park, we thank you and we ask you, with the help of everyone here, to let this Well once again be a plastic cauldron full of water, let this Fire once again be a simple candle, let this Tree be a metal thing with a tree trunk in it. Colonial Park, Keeper of the Ways between Worlds -- Let the Gates be Closed!"

All: Let the Gates be Closed:

N: But we're not quite done yet, there's one more thing--

*Trash bags and cleanup rap* - Marc (1 minute)

"Another sacrifice? We've asked you to love this beautiful park where we've had the last two Pagan Pride Days. We've asked you to love it with your hearts and with your voices. Now

we're asking you to love it with your feet and with your back muscles. I have some trash bags here and after the ritual if you'd like to take one and start patrolling for trash we would appreciate it and so would the park. We at GOG did the cleanup after last year's Pagan Pride day and, let me tell you, it wasn't so pretty. Let's not have it be that way again this year. If you say you're a worshiper of nature -- prove it. Clean it up. Now. Today. Right here in this beautiful space."

*End rite* - (Norma) (1 minute)

"Thank you all so much for being here. If you have questions or if you'd like more information about Grove of the Other Gods or about Ar nDraiocht Fein, see any of us after the ritual or go to the websites listed in today's program. Thank you all for sharing in this praise of Colonial Park. Go in peace. This rite is ended!"

(Running time with the approximate times listed (without gathering time) is 49 minutes. By going quickly and tightening things up -- remember this is a rough draft of what we said and GOG doesn't use scripts during an actual ritual -- the actual running time was about 41 minutes.)

(The best omen of all: when we went to clean up the park at the end of the day there was absolutely nothing to clean. The space was spotless-- a lot cleaner than it was when we started the day. Ritual a success.)