

Hallowmas is a far cry from tricks and treats

■ For Women in Conscious Creative Action, Oct. 31 marks a day of healing and ritual



By Will Wyer
For the Emerald

For most students at the University, this time of year usually brings about notions of costumes, parties and possibly riots; but for the women of the pagan spiritual group WICCA — Women in Conscious Creative Action — the upcoming holiday takes on a different meaning. For them Halloween, which is called Hallowmas in the pagan tradition, is a time of healing and ritual.

Hallowmas

"Most pagans think of Hallowmas as the highest holiday. Metaphysically, it's when the two worlds are closest together and the veil between the two is the thinnest," said WICCA founder mother Norma Joyce. "We honor the people [who] have passed over in the past year," she said.

The women's group, based in Eugene, seeks its energy through goddess figures, which are esteemed in the pagan religion. They also stress the importance of recognizing responsibility for the care and survival of Mother Earth. Joyce, 69, says that's why they refer to themselves as "organic dianic," which is a reference to Diana, the Roman goddess of the forest.

Hallowmas, celebrated Oct. 31, is one of eight pagan celebrations

“In WICCA, we find that strength within ourselves.”

Susan Walker
A founding mother of WICCA

during the calendar year. The festivals are six weeks apart. In addition, WICCA members meet once a week to discuss issues, meditate and practice rituals.

A circle of solidarity

The WICCA Hallowmas ritual includes the gathering of women at a site where the women hold hands in a circle and attempt to reach the other side. Not all attempts are successful and each ritual concludes with a meal.

"After all the spiritual, you need something physical," Joyce said.

"When we're doing ritual and raising energy by holding hands, we're allowing that electrical energy to pass through us and start moving," she continued. "It becomes stronger and we're able to send it out on a wavelength to another receiver."

Growth and tradition

The group formed in the late spring of 1983 after Joyce became observant of the pagan tradition and asked friends if they would be interested in exploring it with her. They planned a retreat and the group has been steadily growing ever since. While Joyce didn't fully acknowledge the power of the goddess until she was an adult, the

knowledge of a greater feminine power has been with her since she was a child.

"I knew that there was something there and I knew that the moon was female even though it was always the man in the moon," Joyce said.

Another founding mother of the group, Susan Walker, credits the pagan tradition and that of WICCA with strengthening her self-identity and that of other women in the group.

Empowerment

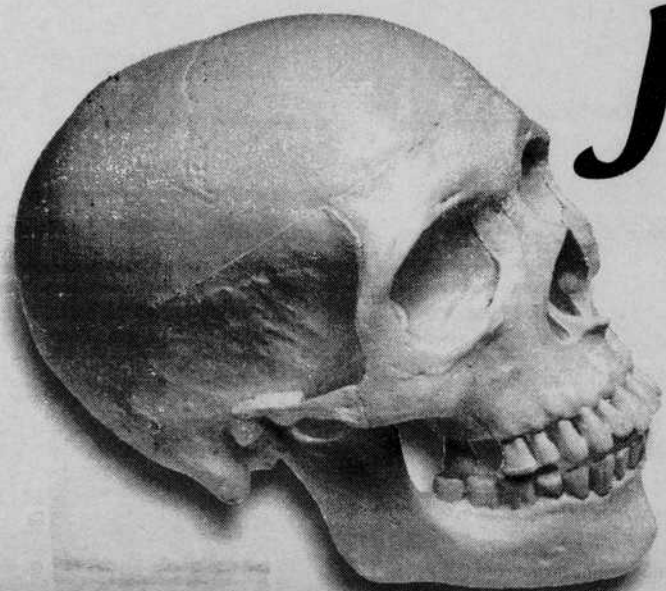
"WICCA has truly empowered me. It has taught me a lot about ... responsibility," Walker said. "For today, this is how I feel and believe and I'm not told what to think, what to feel, how to believe. I'm allowed to figure that out for myself."

What's more, Walker credits the group with helping her recover from a car accident that caused serious head trauma 11 years ago.

"I believe that part of my rehabilitation has come from my spiritual growth," Walker said. "I lost part of my brain and when that didn't work, the spirit kind of jumped in and helped me to function."

For the women of WICCA, the pagan tradition has become not only a source of empowerment, it has become an integral part of their lives.

"In all of the different spiritual groups I've been involved with, it was always about how we were too weak and had look someplace else for your strength," Walker said. "In WICCA, we find that strength within ourselves."



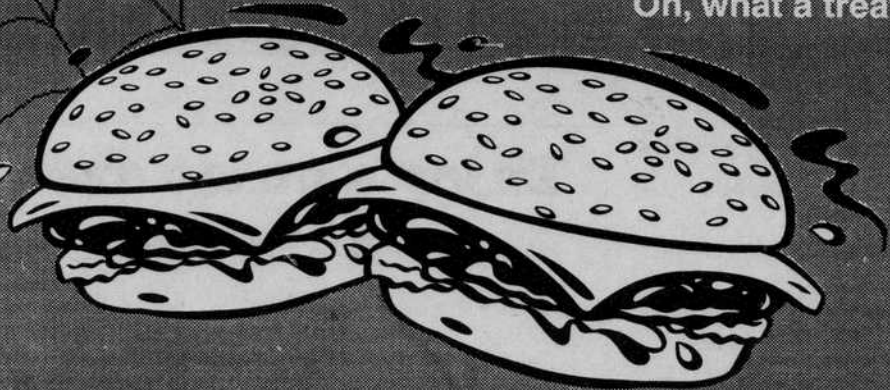
Jiggles

The sexiest ghosts and goblins around.

Open Daily 11:00 am - 2:30 am • 2165 W. 11th, Eugene • (541) 344-6897

TRICK OR TREAT?

It's no trick!
Oh, what a treat!



2 Deluxe cheeseburgers
for \$2.00

13th & Hilyard • New Drive-Thru • 343-7512

We Treat You Right!

10am-10pm Everyday



MORETTI'S

HALLOWEEN FRIGHT NIGHT
SATURDAY, OCT. 28, 10P.M.

COSTUME CONTEST

with more than \$500 in scary cash & prizes!

GET YOUR FREAK ON!

DANCING BY BIG DAWG PRODUCTIONS

\$5⁰⁰ COVER



and **NIGHTCLUB**
21 and over please.

On the Corner of
Franklin & Hilyard
730 E. Broadway
344-6673