



William Blake Lodge Newsletter

“Promulgating Thelema Starting with You!”

www.williamblakeoto.org

Volume 1 June 2008
Vernal Equinox – Summer Solstice

WHAT'S NEWS - Kerry Kurowski/Soror Hypatia - editor

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Can you believe 2008 is half over? It's already been a busy year full of big developments and formidable changes. We've installed a new Lodgemaster, signed a lease on a 24/7 temple, and the east coast has another lodge strengthening our region. We've shared sorrow as well with the deaths of a sister and brother, members of Tahuti Chapter of Rose Croix to which members of William Blake Lodge also belong. It is a thoughtful time for us. The cards have reshuffled, so to speak, and WBL continues to play its hand to evolve in ever-expanding directions.

So... with the Sun reaching its apex in the north, we welcome you to the new William Blake Lodge Newsletter! No, this isn't a replacement for the *Heaven and Hell* quarterly journal, but quarterly updates on local Lodge news, upcoming events, member accomplishments, and other points of interest. Feel free to contact the editor with newsworthy items. We wish you Life, Light, Love and Liberty. Please enjoy!

In the Bonds of the Order,

Hypatia

Love is the law, love under will.

Change of Master Ceremony and Celebration

Saturday, March 22, 2008 e.v.

With the Vernal Equinox came the installation of Br. Christopher Surprise/Br. Freeshadow as the fourth master of William Blake Lodge. One of the Lodge's longest-standing members since 1994, Br. Chris previously held the officer positions of both treasurer and deputy master, is a chartered initiator, and is an ordained priest of Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica. He assumes leadership of the Lodge during an exciting time of growth during which the Lodge will be moving into a permanent temple space.

Kerry Kurowski/Sr. Hypatia, stepped down as master of William Blake Lodge after seven years of leadership. During her tenure, the body hosted NOTOCON V, moved out of member's homes into a non-residential space, and was recognized for its work by an elevation to lodge status. We thank Sr. Hypatia for her term of service to the Lodge.

The joyful day, attended by 23 people including guests from Tahuti Lodge, New York, NY, included the Knight of the Red Eagle initiation for the upper degrees, a community master installation, a Gnostic Mass, and a reception with wine, hors d'oeuvres and cake. Speeches by Fr. Freeshadow, Sr. Hypatia and Past Master Paul Hume served to compliment Bishop Tau Roncelin's installation ceremony. Guest Priestess Lena Bender of Tahuti Lodge officiated the Mass with the new Lodgemaster along with Deputy Master Br. Von Hohenheim as deacon, and Brothers Paul and Assistant Treasurer Q'tasshi as children.

We welcome Br. Chris to his new role and offer him support and love during his tenure of leadership. Thank you for your service to both the William Blake Lodge membership and the O.T.O. May the Lodge continue to be a strong, active and prosperous body – a jewel in the crown of the O.T.O.!





Establishing a Permanent Temple

William Blake Lodge Moves to 24/7 Lodge Space

Only weeks after the Lodge's change of mastership, a call with the Odd Fellows revealed they no longer wanted to have outside groups rent their space. Despite a recent increase in the Lodge's rent, rising costs in utilities led IOOF Providence Lodge to make an abrupt decision that left the Lodge with little time to research additional options. The lease with the Odd Fellows is scheduled to end June 30, 2008.

In spite of the sudden shift, the Lodge moved to action and began seeking a rental space for the exclusive use of the Lodge members. Surprisingly, a 24/7 space was located quickly in an industrial building known as *The Cambridge Building* in Baltimore City to suit the Lodge's needs. Although the space needs internal improvement work to transform it into a temple, the size and adaptability of the space will give William Blake Lodge's membership a good home for the Great Work.

The large suite is 2367 square feet and allows enough space for a Mass temple, separate initiation temple, kitchenette, classroom/sitting area and storage. It is located on the fifth floor and shares community bathrooms and a washer/dryer. The elevator in the building is perfectly functional, but old-fashioned. The rent is \$550 per month plus utilities; however, the Lodge needs the investment of its members to sustain the space through volunteer work and the reliable payment of dues. Undoubtedly members will rejoice since the need for Mass set up and tear down teams will be omitted. Paying higher expenses are not without their advantages.

Dais



Dais and Sub Floor



Brothers Chris, Von Hohenheim, Ausharrenwille, Traves, Richard, Scott, and Coph Nia Baphomet under the excellent direction of Br. Libras Abrasax, are among those who have volunteered their weekend days to do the build-out for the Lodge. We were even both surprised and pleased to have a non-member guest assist. Please extend to them your personal thanks for working to manifest our vision of a permanent temple. Even better, volunteer help is still needed with the build-out, so please join in making our Lodge a cool place for ritual and community. Handyman or woman experience is not required - there are plenty of easy jobs like sweeping to help the build-out move efficiently.

In order to fund the project, we will have to undertake the work in stages as we can afford it, so donations are extremely welcome and vital. The Lodge would also like to thank the brother who provided a generous donation of \$500 to help with the expenses. Please contact the Lodgmaster for build-out details and we thank you for investing in the Lodge's future.

Tiled dais



View of store room from EGC temple





In the future, the Lodge will provide a list of furnishings and equipment needed for the space. Please remain watchful for announcements.

Lodge events will be located at the following address:

208 South Pulaski Street, Suite B, 5th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21223

Postal correspondence will continue to be at the Catonsville P.O. Box.



Lodge Members Gather in Philadelphia for the Kaaba Colloquium Thelemic Leadership Symposium

O.T.O. members traveled from around the region Memorial Day weekend for the Kaaba Colloquium Thelemic Leadership Seminar co-hosted by Thelesis Lodge, Philadelphia, PA and Tahuti Lodge, New York, NY. The event was held at the Thelesis Lodge space in Philadelphia and was attended by members of eight different bodies including Abrahadbra Oasis, Alombrados Encampment, Knights Templar Oasis, Sirius Camp, Tahuti Lodge, Thelesis Lodge, William Blake Lodge and Xanadu Oasis.

The weekend offered a rich tapestry of topics, plenty of thoughtful discussion, as well as time to socialize with regional members. Among the topics presented by the Kaaba Team were leadership and sexual ethics, lodge funding, mediation, outreach, and "the creepy guy" just to name a few. The presenters included the Treasurer General, the Grand Treasurer General, the Public Information Officer, a member of the electoral college, five EGC bishops, an oasis master, five past masters and other credentials that layered years of experience for participants to draw upon. WBL Past Master Soror Hypatia was invited to present as a guest speaker on lodge funding. This event was the first regional gathering hosted by Thelesis Lodge, who just received their elevation to lodge status in April 2008.

In all, nine members of William Blake Lodge attended which accounted for 25% of Kaaba participants. In attendance were all the WBL officers except the Lodgemaster (who stayed behind to work on the Lodge build-out). The ideas inspired by Kaaba were met with appreciation, and the expanded toolbox will be useful in the Lodge's welfare and continued development.

Family Fun-in-the-Sun Day Saturday, July 12, 2008 at Patapsco State Park

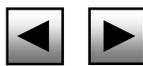
In 2007, two of the most popular Lodge events were held at Pavilion # 66 in Patapsco State Park, Elkridge, MD. Lodge members, friends and families gathered to barbeque, listen to classes, receive a tarot reading, have a beer and enjoy the outdoors. Picnics were held in June with a Fun in the Sun theme and October with a Halloween theme. The excellent response inspired the Lodge to host a picnic again this summer.

Once again, the picnic will be held under covered pavilion #66 on Saturday, July 12, 2008, from noon until dusk – rain or shine! There will be classes, balloon animals, face painting, Tarot readings, plus the organized potluck of foods and drinks with plenty of fun for everyone. You can even go tubing in the Patapsco River. Attendees should enter the park via the entrance on Route 1 in Elkridge to the Glen Artney area. Link to directions below.

<http://www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/central/patapscovalley.html>

Would you like to attend? Sign up to bring a salad, veggie, meats, toppings, chips, drinks or a dessert. People should plan to bring enough food for themselves plus five other people. Contact BJ Swayne/Br. Von Hohenheim to coordinate your food item at deputy@williamblakeoto.org

What should you bring? Water, sunblock, bug spray, squirt guns, a towel, a camp chair, \$2 per car for park entry, your dish and drink to share, and a \$5 donation for adults. Kids and dues current William Blake Lodge members are free!





New Priestess and Deacon Make Their Debuts

Penny Tull/Sr. Pennis I° made her debut as priestess on Saturday, May 18, 2008. Our sister said that she was very nervous this first Mass, but she commented,

"The point when that all changed was being seated up on the altar and having this sense of calm wash over me."

Regarding what it was like to do the invocation, she said,

"And it's kind of surreal to feel like you are looking out someone else's eyes and still be aware of what is going on around you."

Sr. Penny is looking forward to celebrating additional Masses. Joining her in the ceremony were Br. Von Hohenheim as priest, Br. Q'tasshi as deacon, and Brothers Ausharrenwille and Jack-in-the-Green as children. She has been an O.T.O. member since June 2007.

Another Gnostic notification goes to Hank Kuhfeldt/Br. Ausharrenwille II° who made his debut as deacon on June 6, 2008. Br. Hank's last minute step up to deacon was much appreciated by the Lodge and describes the experience as "an exercise in patience, preparation, and perseverance". He commented,

"Initially, I was reluctant due to time constraints but by the time we were munching on curry and other Indian delicacies, he [Von Hohenheim] had me convinced,"

He had the honor of officiating with Br. Von Hohenheim, guest Priestess Sr. Iris of Sirius Camp, Br. Clintax and Br. Jack-in-the-Green.



Building Fund Update

Excellent news! The total in the William Blake Lodge Building Fund is presently \$13,605.86. We have met over 27% of a \$50,000.00 goal to buy a building for the Lodge.

Members and non-members can donate to this fund via *Paypal* to buildingfund@williamblakeoto.org or make out a check or money order to [William Blake Lodge, O.T.O.](#) Please mail donations to the postal address listed below. Donations are tax deductible.

WELCOME NEW INITIATE MEMBERS!

Join us in welcoming our new brother and sister who took I° initiation May 4, 2008:

Brother Clintax
Sister Ann G.

Congratulations!

Are you interested in initiation? Do you have questions? Please contact the Lodge initiation secretary, BJ Swayne at initiation@williamblakeoto.org for further information.

ECCLESIA GNOSTICA CATHOLICA

We would like to congratulate the following members of the E.G.C. upon receiving their sacraments officiated by Br. Paul Hume on May 3, 2008:

Welcome Guest Clintax – Baptized
Katherine – Baptized
Welcome Guest Clintax - Confirmed
Br. Ausharrenwille – Confirmed





GREATER FEASTS



Sister Lena Bender, *The Scarlet Mother*, VI°; Tahuti Lodge, NY, NY

Illustrious Dame Companion of the Holy Grail Lena Bender, VI°; celebrated her Greater Feast on Sunday morning, April 20, 2008 e.v. She passed quietly in her sleep of natural causes and was found around 6:30 a.m. She was in Philadelphia at the time, having attended the Gnostic Mass at Thelesia Oasis the day before.

Sr. Lena was an indispensable member to both Tahuti Lodge as well as to the other local bodies in the region that she frequently visited. Known affectionately as The Scarlet Mother, she was an ordained priestess of E.G.C. and a member of Tahuti Chapter's Committee of Four. She had recently received her initiation charter and conducted her first Minerval initiations. She is survived by her parents, her two sons, her niece and her brother, Br. Kent Finne/Tau Roncelin.

Brother James Garvey, *Br. Aladdin*, VI°; Tahuti Lodge, NY, NY

Illustrious Knight of the Order of Kadosch and Companion of the Holy Grail James Garvey, VI°; celebrated his Greater Feast on Tuesday, June 4, 2008 e.v. Several months ago Br. Jim had some back pain that turned out to be cancer which had already metastasized to some of his major organs. He had some radiation therapy, but was too weak to continue with the treatment. He spent his last days in Ithaca, NY near family in hospice care.

Jim made his mark on our community without fancy titles and visible positions. He supported Tahuti Lodge in other ways such as finding the dance space the lodge used for events for many years. He lives on with us in a dramatic reading recorded in Tahuti Lodge's rendition of *The Heart of the Master* and is also photographed as The Psychopomp card in the New York City Tarot. He served the Order as an ordained priest of the E.G.C., and a member of Tahuti Chapter of Rose Croix.

MEET THE WILLIAM BLAKE LODGE OFFICERS

Christopher Surprise/Br. Freeshadow
master@williamblakeoto.org

Master/
Treasurer

BJ Swayne/Br. Von Hohenheim
deputy@williamblakeoto.org

Deputy Master/
Publications Officer/
Initiation Secretary

Scott Plyler/ Br. Q'tasshi
treasurer@williamblakeoto.org

Assistant Treasurer

Ken Megill/Br. Dougal
secretary@williamblakeoto.org

Secretary

Jessica Melusine/Sr. Kaywinnit Lux
egc@williamblakeoto.org

EGC Secretary/
New Member Relations

Richard Kaczynski/Br. Richard
rkaczynski@earthlink.net

Librarian



LOOKING AHEAD

Calendar of Events

Sat. June 28: EGC Seminar at Tahuti Lodge (Closed)

A seminar regarding the responsibilities and ability to be of service in times of illness; hospice care; bereavement counseling; funeral rites.
\$55 includes meals.





Sat. July 12: Family Fun-in-the-Sun Day (Open)

Details to be announced

Food: Organized potluck, bring a food and beverage item for yourself plus 5 other people.

Alcohol allowed for 21 and older. BYOB or W.

Cost: \$5 donation per adult. Kids and local dues current WBL members are free!

Note: Patapsco Park charges an *additional* \$2 per person for park entry.

Location: Patapsco Valley State Park, Glen Artney Area, **Pavilion #66.**

Directions: <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/central/patapscovalley.html>

Sun. Jul. 13: William Blake Lodge Membership Meeting (Open)

12pm: Arrival

Doorkeeper will let people into the Cambridge Building between 1 & 1:30pm.

Please arrive punctually.

12:30pm: Membership Meeting

Please bring a snack & drink to share.

Bring a lounge chair or cushion if you don't want to sit on the floor.

Location: 208 South Pulaski St., Suite 5B; Baltimore, MD 21223

Directions: <http://maps.google.com/maps?q=208+South+Pulaski+Street+Baltimore,+MD+21223>

Fri. Nov. 14 to Sun. Nov. 16: Mystics, Mothers, and Magicians: Women and Goddesses of O.T.O.

National O.T.O. event, sponsored by U.S. Grand Lodge

Sequel to the O.T.O. Women's Symposium held in Las Vegas in 2006

Cost: \$175 (early registration); \$190 (after 8/31/2008)

Location: Sacramento Convention Center; Sacramento, CA

More information at: <http://www.mysticsmothersmagicians.com>

2009

O.T.O. National Conference

August 2009, west coast

Date and location TBA



As always, please contact us anytime – we welcome your questions, comments or feedback.

William Blake Lodge, O.T.O.

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Thought for the Day: Existence is pure joy!