

## Event Rules

In order to ensure we have a safe gathering and also abide by the rules set by our host, the National Park Service we ask all to be aware of and follow these basic rules:

**Alcohol:** Alcohol is not permitted on park grounds.

**Weapons:** No weapons are permitted within the gathering. Blades may be used during ritual by those with designated roles.

**Drugs:** Illegal drugs are not permitted in compliance with national and Virginia laws.

**Clothing:** Clothing is required. Please feel free to wear comfortable, climate appropriate, and ritual attire throughout the event.

**Smoking:** Please only smoke in designated areas and use the sand-filled buckets provided to dispose of your smoking trash.

**Pets:** Only registered service animals are permitted.

**Interaction with Wildlife:** If you encounter any resident wildlife, please do your best to avoid as much contact as possible. If you feel uncomfortable or in danger, please contact a member of staff.

**Violence/Conflict:** Violent, rude, & inappropriate behavior will be addressed by staff as needed and *may* result in being asked to leave.

**Fires:** The only fires permitted are in the Feast Hall, Craft Cabins and Fire Circle. Only designated fire tenders can light, maintain & extinguish the fires for the safety of the participants and the park.

**Sacred Fires:** The Feast Hall and Fire Circle are designated as "Sacred Fires". Please respect them appropriately by not throwing trash in them.

**Kitchen:** For your safety and the safety of the Kitchen Staff, please do not enter the kitchen without permission. The kitchen is full of Hot and Sharp items – unexpected people can be hazardous to all involved.

**Volunteers:** Please arrive for your volunteer shift on time. If you will not be able to perform the duty you volunteered for, please check in with Registration or the coordinator of the area you are scheduled to help in.

**Trash/Recycling:** Please ensure all trash is deposited in designated receptacles. When you depart, please ensure all trash is deposited in the dumpsters near the Feast Hall.

**Communications:** If you are using an FRS radio, please use the **odd channels** only.

**Identification:** Please ensure your participant lanyard is visible at all times. **Staff** can be identified with "Staff" lanyards.

**Please see any Staff if you have any questions.**

# Hallowed Homecoming: A Samhain Retreat Nov 6-8, 2015



# Featured Presenter

## Rev. Selena Fox Circle Sanctuary



Selena Fox is a priestess, environmentalist, religious freedom activist, writer, teacher, and psychotherapist. Also known as Rev. Selena Fox, she is senior minister of Circle Sanctuary, which has been serving Nature religion practitioners worldwide since 1974. Selena, who was among the many who helped organize events for the first Earth Day in 1970, continues to be active in environmental education and preservation. She is founder and Executive Director of Circle Sanctuary Nature Preserve, located near Barneveld, Wisconsin and home of Circle Cemetery, one of the first Green cemeteries in the USA. Selena has a M.S. in counseling from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She does counseling, readings, and life coaching through telephone consultations with clients of many places and backgrounds. She travels widely presenting workshops and facilitating ceremonies on campuses, at conferences, festivals, and other venues. She also teaches at Circle

Sanctuary events and through her weekly internet radio show. Selena's writings, chants, rituals, meditations, and photographs have been widely published in-print and on-line. She is author of the online guide, Celebrating the Seasons. Selena's approach to spirituality emphasizes Nature communion and blends together transpersonal psychology, multicultural shamanism, Nature mysticism, and Pagan folkways. Selena is Executive Director of the Lady Liberty League, a global Pagan civil rights network. In addition, she is active in local and international interfaith endeavors and does diversity consulting and training for federal and state agencies and other institutions.

## Selena's Workshops:

### Journeying to Ancestral Places

(Saturday @ 9:30am in C)

Explore ways to connect with the Spirits of your Ancestors at Samhain time and throughout the year. Learn how to identify ancestral omens and guidance, do ancestor rituals at cemeteries, pilgrimage to ancestral lands, and work with ancestral portals on altars and shrines.

### Honoring the Dead

(Sunday @ 9:15am in C)

Creating and working with rituals, altars, meditations, chants, and other ways of remembering and honoring the Beloved Dead around the time of death, at Samhain and throughout the year. Discuss traditions when visiting graves, as well as remembrance rites & bereavement healing.

# Presenters

### Mary Agnes Costello

Mary Agnes Costello has a BA in Ancient Near Eastern History and Culture from the University of Chicago, a MA in Art History and Museum Training from City College of the City University of New York and a MA in Modern East Asian History and Military History from the George Washington University. She is a member of MENSA and Phi Alpha Theta, the history honors society. She has worked and studied with a number of groups over the years, notably the Nomadic Chantry of the Gramarye and was ordained a High Priestess in that tradition by its founder, the late Rev. Rosemary Kooiman. Currently she is a solitary practitioner who nevertheless once in a while manages to celebrate a full moon or a sabbat with friends.

### Renu K. Aldrich, MA, LMFT

Renu K. Aldrich, M.A., LMFT, also known as the Hindu Druid, has been a member of the Order of Bards, Ovates & Druids since 1998. She is a doctoral student at Virginia Tech, where she specializes in working with developmental trauma survivors and studies how to incorporate Eastern healing techniques into Western psychotherapy. Initially a journalist, Renu also has served as a communications executive in the publishing world, in academia, and on Wall Street. She launched Druid Magazine in 2015 in service to the spiritual community.

### Nicole Franklin

An Italian witch by birth, Nicole Franklin had been a member of the DC pagan community for over a decade. She has served on the Board of Open Hearth Foundation and trained as a Celebrant with Becoming. Combining her mundane work with spirituality, she has lectured on fundraising for pagan organizations and is an avid supporter of religious equality. Together with her husband, David North, she is a the organizer of the Seed Group of the Oak and Eagle in Burke, VA—a Druid group associated with the Order of Bards Ovates and Druids (OBOD).

### Frank Stormcatcher

Frank Stormcatcher, Guardian, has been practicing for over two decades, specializing in various modes of protective magic and exorcism. In addition to his metaphysical training, Frank has a degree in Anthropology of Religion and the History & Philosophy of Science, of which he is rather proud and makes frequent use.



# Workshop Descriptions

## Spiritual Steel:

- **Frank Stormcatcher (Saturday @ 1:15pm in C)**

This workshop is intended to give participants a solid understanding of magical protection. We will explore various methods of active and passive protection measures to cover a wide variety of situations in which individuals may find themselves. The workshop will cover various useful material components as well as energetic techniques and history.

## Welsh Tradition of the Mari Lwyd

- **Nicole Franklin (Saturday @ 1:15pm in D)**

The Mari Lwyd ("*Grey Mare*") is a Welsh midwinter *wassail* tradition, probably originating from a rite associated with the Celtic goddess Rhiannon. One participant wears a horse costume created from a mare's skull on the end of a pole, with the pole and wearer covered by a sheet and other decorations. The Mari Lwyd party then travel house to house (and pub to pub) beginning at dusk, singing and rhyming with the hope of gaining admittance and being rewarded with food and drink—similar to Halloween. If entrance was refused, the rhyming became a back and forth contest between the Mari Lwyd party and the inhabitants of the house, exchanging improvised verses through the closed door until one side gave up. This workshop describes the historical tradition, how it is practiced as resurgence in modern-day Wales, and how it could be adapted for an American audience.

## Healing Through the Expressive Arts

- **Renu K. Aldrich, MA LMFT (Saturday @ 3:15pm in C)**

Storytelling is as old as language itself as a means for exploring the human condition. In the earliest of recorded civilizations, poets documented and interpreted experience and then shared their insights – first through public performance and later the written word. Art helps us to access the emotional part of the brain and to express what words cannot. The expressive arts—writing, art, movement, music—can trigger our inner healer as well as deepen our connection to ourselves, each other, and the world around us. In this experiential workshop, we celebrate the Druid healing tradition of the Bardic Arts. Through a sequence of expressive art directives encompassing music, movement, art, and writing, we will seek to know a deeper or unknown part of ourselves, to increase our self-awareness and self-esteem, and to release trapped emotions in safety. No previous writing or other artistic proficiency required.

## To Speak the Name of the Dead: Death & the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt

- **Mary Agnes Costello (Saturday @ 3:15pm in D)**

This Workshop will investigate both the mortuary practices of ancient Egypt, from the Old Kingdom through the New Kingdom, and the changing Egyptian conception of life after death. Among other things we'll look at are letters to the dead, the so-called "Book of the Dead", mummification and the reason why female mummies are often less well preserved than those of males, cults of the dead, the geography of Amduat and the religious rituals connected with death. We will also touch on the differences in royal burials with those of nobility and commoners. No knowledge of hieroglyphs required.

# Schedule

## Friday, November 6, 2015:

1:00pm – 8:00pm: Registration Open  
1:00pm – 6:00pm: Snacks Available in Feast Hall  
1:00pm – 6:00pm: Ongoing Crafts & Activities in Feast Hall  
Pumpkin Carving in Feast Hall – Carve a pumpkin for a special use later in the weekend!  
1:00pm – 6:00pm: Socializing, connecting with the land, commune with the Ancestor Altar  
6:30pm – 7:15pm: **Ritual: Feast Hall** - Welcoming and Opening Ritual in Feast Hall  
7:30pm – 10:00pm: Witches Ball / Costume Party & Dinner in Feast Hall  
10:00pm – TBD: Bardic Circle in Feast Hall

## Saturday, November 7, 2015:

7:30am – 1:00pm: Registration Open  
7:30am – 9:00am: Breakfast in Feast Hall  
9:30am – 11:00am: **Workshop: Craft Cabin C**  
- Journeying to Ancestral Places w/Selena Fox  
11:30am – 1:00pm: Lunch in Feast Hall (Please gather in front of FH for Blessing & Attunement)  
1:15pm – 2:45pm: **Workshop: Craft Cabin C**  
- Spiritual Steel w/Frank Stormcatcher  
**Workshop: Craft Cabin D**  
- Welsh Tradition of Mari Lwyd w/Nicole Franklin  
3:15pm – 4:45pm: **Workshop: Craft Cabin C**  
- Healing Trough the Expressive Arts w/Renu Aldrich  
**Workshop: Craft Cabin D**  
- To Speak the Name of the Dead: Death & the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt w/Mary Agnes Costello  
5:00pm – 6:30pm: Dinner in Feast Hall (Please gather in front of FH for Blessing & Attunement)  
8:15pm: **Main Ritual** – Gather near the Infirmary for first portion of tonight's journey to connect with our Ancestors & Beloved Dead.

## Sunday, November 8, 2015:

7:30am – 9:00am: Breakfast in Feast Hall  
9:15am – 10:45pm: **Workshop: Craft Cabin C**  
- Honoring the Dead w/Selena Fox  
11:00 – 11:45am: **Ritual: Cabin Area C** - Warrior Blessing Ritual  
11:45am – 1:15pm: Lunch in Feast Hall  
1:30pm – 2:00pm: Closing Ritual in Feast Hall  
2:30pm: Departures & Post-Event Clean-up

