

**Issue 1 Samhain 2010**

**Contents**

**Hearth and Home**

*Childhood Halloween Memories, Sea Dragon*

**Ritual Work**

*Isis Samhain Ritual, Moonwater Chalcedony Ashwood*

**Gardening with the Goddess**

*Lying Fallow, BellaDonna Oya*

**Sacred Sites**

*St. Sophia of Novgorod, Ajna DreamsAwake*

**OWM Awareness**

*OWM Happenings, Kerritwyn Ceannaire*

**The Bardic Soul: Poetry and Song**

**for the Spirit**

*Magickal Samhain Eve, Maeve Clíodhna MoonBird*

*Samhain Blessings, Moonwater Chalcedony Ashwood*

*Temple of the Dark Mother, Moonwater Chalcedony Ashwood*

*Touch of the Morrighan, Moonwater Chalcedony Ashwood*

*In The Darkness, Moonwater Chalcedony Ashwood*

## **Reviews**

*Wise Woman Herbal, Healing Wise by Susun Weed, Sea Dragon*

*Podcast Review, Ajna DreamsAwake*

## **Recipes Fit for a Goddess**

*Lemony Potato Salad, Lady Zephyr*

*Roasted Pumpkin Seeds, Ajna DreamsAwake*

*Spooky Popcorn Hands, Ajna DreamsAwake*

*Gross Out Monster Fingers, Ajna DreamsAwake*

## **Childhood Halloween Memories**

When I was a child so many years ago, my mother and I would have such fun at Halloween. She was a Witch too and so we did many things many other families in the neighborhood didn't. My mother would each year teach me about the story of our family and my ancestors, these stories were wonderful adventure stories about our family during the Spanish Inquisition, The Crimean War, immigrating to America, and staying quiet about some of our traditions. Another fun thing we did was ritual sacrifice.

Now don't get scared, we weren't decapitating small furry animals. My mother each Ostara would give me rodents, fish, reptiles, small pets to have, knowing I would be tired of them and cleaning the cage by Halloween. And for Halloween we would bag them up and give them to the Trick or Treaters. The kids in the neighborhood

loved the possibility of pets and I learned about ritual sacrifice not meaning killing, but of letting go and releasing for others blessing. Over the years it became great fun as we populated the street with turtles, mice, gerbils, lizards etc.

This is a fun way to share Pagan traditions and stories of the past on the day when the veil is thin with our children. I don't give these small pets to my children but we do take the time to share ancestor stories and seek their guidance on the wonderful New Year Holiday. By the way, while the kids loved getting these pets, their parents weren't as thrilled, probably why I didn't continue that tradition.

© Sea Dragon

*Sea Dragon is an Initiate with the [Sisters of the Rising Moon school](#). She is a Reiki Master, and in her spare time enjoys learning about herbalism, aromatherapy, and spending time with her animals and family.*

## **Isis Samhain Ritual**

Items needed:

White altar cloth (new beginnings)

3 black candles (past/present/future, maiden/mother/crone)

Sweet grass oil

Native Smudge incense

Large scrying bowl with water

Bowl of acorns (promise of rebirth of the God)

Bowl of saltwater

Tarot cards or other divination tools

Table set for potluck feast

**Ritual:**

Set up the altar, placing the candles in a semi-circle around the bowls, but far enough away that they won't reflect directly in the scrying bowl. Anoint the candles with sweet grass oil and carve an ankh onto each one. Purify yourself and the space with incense.

Cast the circle, sprinkling saltwater to mark its boundary.

Call the directions, emphasizing their remembrance associations:

*"I call upon the guardian of the North, the elemental of Earth,  
to join me within this sacred space,  
that I may remember all who have walked upon the land before me.*

*I call upon the guardian of the East, the elemental of Air,  
to join me within this sacred space,  
that I may remember all who have breathed the air before me.*

*I call upon the guardian of the South, the elemental of Fire,  
to join me within this sacred space,  
that I may remember all those who have felt the passion of the Goddess  
burn within their veins.*

*I call upon the guardian of the West, the elemental of Water,  
to join me within this sacred space,  
that I may remember all those who have shed tears of love.*

*I call upon the guardian of the Centre, the elemental of Spirit,  
to join me within this sacred space,  
that I may remember all those who have crossed the veil."*

Invoke the Goddess, saying:

*"Blessed Isis,  
Queen of the Earth  
And the Heavens,  
Mistress of Magick,  
High Priestess to us all,  
I ask that you join me  
Within this sacred space  
That I may mourn your loss  
With you and celebrate  
The promise of Light's return.  
Blessed be, Glorious Mother!"*

*Light the candles saying:  
"Light that shone in days of old  
Light that burned with love so bold  
Light snuffed out shall be reborn  
As the mighty oak grows from the acorn."*

Read "The Mourning of Isis":

*"My beloved was taken from me  
His body in pieces, not to rise again.  
Yet Ra's light shines within me,  
So I shan't rest till Osiris rises again.  
As hawk and swallow I will scour  
Across the land for my love's pieces.  
None shall stop me, I'll not rest an hour,  
Till Osiris is whole, my search never ceases.  
Reborn to me, my love shall be,  
Osiris my love, my blessed king.  
By the turquoise sky and the lapis sea,  
The land shall rejoice and my heart will sing."*

Meditate on those you have lost, remembering them fondly and wishing them well, but also remember those who have wronged you, seeing any lingering hatred fade away, replaced with compassion. If there is anything you wish to ask your ancestors, departed loved ones, or spirit guides, ask them freely, then seek your answers within the scrying bowl (or with whatever divination tool you are the most comfortable with).

Thank the Goddess.

Thank the directions.

Open the circle, saying "The circle is now open yet never broken. May all who have gathered go in peace, harming none. Blessed be!"

Snuff out the candles or move them to your feast table. Celebrate the promise of rebirth with friends and family, setting an extra place at the table for your ancestors.

[Moonwater Chalcedony Ashwood](#) is a High Priestess, Ordained Minister and co-founder of the [Sisters Beneath the Whispering Willows school](#). She is a Reiki Master, writer, and family historian. Originally initiated into Celtic Wicca, she now practices Eclectic Wicca, leaning strongly towards the Goddess in Her various aspects.

## **Lying Fallow**

In the Spring, gardens go from dead and sleeping to awake and full of life. New green shoots come up out of the earth, buds and leaves swell on branches and stems, baby birds and animals are born, and the crisp, cold air does its best to wake us up from our winter sluggishness. Gardeners run around frantically, preparing the ground, sowing seeds, digging up the old and transplanting the new.

Summer finds some things blooming, while others wilt and shrivel in the heat. This includes people; some thrive in hot weather, while others (like me) just want to crawl under a rock and wait for cooler days. Planting and transplanting in hot weather is never advisable, so for many, Summer is mainly a time of watering, pruning and weeding to keep things looking decent.

Fall brings the harvests; the fullness of Mother Gaia is showered on us. Corn, wheat, fruits, vegetables, the weight of them making stalks and branches sag and groan with abundance. We also feel the fortunate weight of our blessings at this time, as we reap the profits of the hard work we have done during the year.

The end of the harvest signals the beginning of Winter, which is ushered in by rain, winds, and sometimes snow. No planting is done while the ground is cold and hard. This is the fallow time of the year, when the earth rests and regenerates, building

up its resources for the year to come. It looks dead and bare, but new life is generating, slowly but surely, far beneath the surface.

Every so often in our lives, we have periods of fallowness. We may think we are stuck in a rut; nothing seems to grow or progress. Sometimes it seems as though time has stopped, and we wonder if we will stay forever in the same dreary place. It may even feel as though the Goddess has forgotten us.

But She hasn't. Because we NEED those fallow times, to rest and regenerate, to build up our dwindling resources, to sleep and to dream... Eventually, we'll begin to notice new energy, new ideas, and new opportunities popping up around us, and we'll remember with surprising gratitude the time of fallowness just past.

*"Mother Gaia, I am grateful for the fallow times You send.*

*Help me to remember they eventually will end.*

*Let me rest and dream and heal,*

*Until the Springtime sun I feel."*

© BellaDonna Oya

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## **St. Sophia of Novgorod**

*Russia herself, as has been observed, is a woman nation-*

Stephen Graham, Undiscovered Russia

Nestled along the Volkhov River in the Northwest corner of Russia lies the city of Novgorod. Founded in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, Novgorod was colonized by Vikings and the local Slavic people. In the 9th century, the first Russian state was formed here.

Situated on the ancient river routes between Central Asia and northern Europe, Novgorod was an important way station for traders. This brought a cosmopolitan style to the area which was heavily influenced by Slavic, Middle Eastern and Mediterranean cultures both artistically and spiritually. As the city rose to prominence as the Russian capital, the ruling prince attempted to unify the multi-cultural state by erecting statues of the many pagan Gods and Goddesses throughout the city.

A legend relates that Prince Vladimir, looking to simplify in order to bring together his people, called upon ambassadors from the primary monotheistic religions including Jewish Rabbis, Catholic and Muslim scholars and clergy. He also sent out representatives to Europe and the Middle East in order to find the One True Religion that would unify his people. Finding no basic distinction between these three religions, he decided that his choice would be determined on aesthetic values. When his ambassadors returned from their travels, they described the most perfect temple, a place where God was truly felt, the Hagia Sophia in Turkey. And so, Greek Orthodox Christianity became the dominant religion in Russia because it aroused such passion, enthusiasm and admiration in its followers. Russia's first

church was erected in Novgorod, the Cathedral of St. Sophia, so named in honour of the Turkish wonder.

Over the next two centuries St. Sophia cathedral became a main center of Christian spirituality in northern Russia and remained an important pilgrimage centre until 1929 when the cathedral was closed by the Soviet government. With the fall of Communism, churches are being restored and Sophia is gaining prominence once more.

The original wooden structure, built in 989, was destroyed by fire and rebuilt as a stone cathedral in 1045. In Her prime, Sophia housed a library, school, collections of art, metalwork and jewelry, and served as the treasury of the city. One of the oldest structures still in use in Russia, it was the first to feature wholly Russian architecture. Although adapted from the Byzantine style, the plain, austere stone walls and the famous onion domes are uniquely Russian. Its frescoes, painted in the 12th century, feature images in the Novgorod style typical of many Russian icon paintings. Bold strokes and bright colours make these images easily identifiable as Russian. One can assume the Novgorod artists were heavily influenced by Middle Eastern and European culture as demonstrated in the "Virgins of Tenderness", the Black Madonnas (often connected to Isis and other dark Goddesses) which feature prominently in Russia's religious iconography.

No Cathedral would be complete without the resident "miracle" and St. Sophia is no exception. The story goes that in 1170, an invading army attacked the city. Inspired by a vision, the local bishop carried an icon of the Virgin to the city walls. Pierced by an enemy arrow, tears began to flow from the icon, the invaders were blinded and easily defeated. Since this time, this icon of the Virgin has been named 'Our Lady of the Sign' and is Patron and Protector of the city. Her festival is celebrated on December 10. Visitors to the Cathedral can still see the notch in the

icon believed to be where the arrow pieced it.

Novgorod's cathedral is dedicated to the Sophia, the Holy Wisdom of God, often thought of as the Feminine aspect of God. Sophia may be pictured as a hag, a black goddess (linking Her to Black Madonnas?), queen of heaven, an aged woman, human, divine, a harlot, faithful wife, lover, mother and sister. She is often connected with Mary Magdalene. Red is the color most associated with Sophia. She is righteous, wise, loving, communicative, knowledgeable, creative, protective, giving and truthful. A Sophia woman sees it and tells it as it is; she has no fear of the truth. Sophia's feast day is November 28<sup>th</sup>. Sophia plays an important role in Russian Orthodoxy, during mass, priests will often shout "Sophia!" to draw the congregation's attention to a sacred teaching.

There is little information available about ancient Slavic history. As with so many other Christianized nations, the original Runic writings were destroyed along with the pagan idols and temples. St. Sophia was erected upon the site of a pagan temple and some scholars believe Her name was used in order to continue the veneration of the Mother Goddess. Despite the attempt at eradication, it seems the pagan traditions lived on. Christianity became the state religion, but Russian peasants practiced dvoeverie or "double-faith". On the surface appearing piously Christian but continuing to worship the ancient Deities, and the greatest of these was Mokosh, Moist Mother Earth.

Mokosh was usually depicted as a tall woman with a large head and long arms, flanked by horses, stags, and birds. Mokosh is dark, like good, black soil (another connection to the Black Madonnas perhaps?). The Tree of Life grows from Her body and She bears the symbol of the sun disk on her forehead. She is a Goddess of weaving and traditional Russian houses often display an embroidered towel featuring the Goddess next to Christian icons.

Another way to honour Mokosh was in the Banya (sauna or steam room). The use of the banya calls forth three things: Mokosh, the sacred Earth (heated stones), the Forest Spirits in the birch trees which feed the fire, and the Water Spirits which create the steam. One of the primary religious functions of the sauna was as a holy place of transition. Women were brought into the sauna to give birth, and the dying often lived out their last days there. It was also used for secluding one's self in order to cast charms and spells and for healing rituals. It was sometimes used for such practical purposes as curing meat or drying out malt, hemp and flax. It appears that the bathhouse replaced the sacred temple or grove once Christianity took over. Specific ritual dates associated with the banya were Mokosh's feast day, celebrated on the Friday between Oct 25 and Nov 1 and at Yule.

Mokosh, in Her role as Mother Earth commanded a lot of respect. It was taboo to spit on or strike the ground in the Spring, since Mokosh was said to be pregnant then. Earth was considered so sacred that oaths were sworn while holding a piece of Her, and wedding vows were taken while swallowing a small clump of Earth or holding it on the head. The custom of asking the Earth's forgiveness before death is still being observed, and when a priest cannot be found it is considered appropriate to confess sins to the Earth. Earth worship was transferred to the Virgin Mary and perhaps explains why Mary is such an integral part of Slavic Christianity. Worship of Mokosh was more recently transformed as a reverence for Mother Russia.

In Russia, the feminine identity is deeply rooted within the state. As the national personification of the country, Mother Russia evokes images of a strong, protective mother figure while also alluding to the rich earth which sustains the population. Even Soviet Russia could not escape the Goddess. Great monuments, called Mother Motherland were erected across the country depicting larger than life images of the Mother as protector of the state with sword held aloft. But there is tenderness to Mother Russia, as we see depicted in the Matrioshka or nesting dolls. The egg-

shaped Mother, traditionally holding shafts of wheat, opens up to reveal smaller and smaller versions of herself. The ever-fertile Mother, bringing forth Her children, or offering protection within Her skirts. Matrioshka Dolls are yet another incarnation of Mokosh, the Great Goddess of Russia.

<http://www.sacredsites.com/europe/russia/russia.html>

© Ajna DreamsAwake October 2010

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## **OWM Happenings**

We had two lovely students complete Level I of our Order of the White Moon lessons, to become Initiates and Lifetime Members of the Order!

[Sisters of the Rising Moon](#) was joyous to share the elevation of Ahes Dahut to Initiate, and celebrated her lovely Project on Selene, which appears here:

<http://www.orderwhitemoon.org/goddess/SeleneLevel1Project.pdf>

In addition, [The Sacred Three Goddess school](#) was delighted to share congratulations and delight in the elevation of Peace Whitehorse, who also completed her studies and work for Level I to become an Initiate of the Order! Her wonderful Project on Tara appears here:

<http://www.orderwhitemoon.org/goddess/Tara2/Tara2.html>

Also, [Rising Moon](#), [Sacred Three](#), [Sisters Beneath Whispering Willows](#) and Sisters In

Feohwynn's Grove were all delighted to welcome new students this quarter!! We are so happy that these lovely women have joined us, and we look forward to walking with them, on our shared Path.....!!

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[HP Kerritwyn](#) is the elected President of the Order's Board of Directors, and the spiritual Head of the Order. She is also the Head HP and teacher of two schools for OWM Goddess studies, [The Sacred Three Goddess School](#), for women, and [Rainbow Moon School](#), for transgendered seekers.

## **Magickal Samhain Eve**

*The tree branches crack against the sky  
Like spider webs  
Clouds glow like ghosts in the moonlight  
Leaves rustle in the dark night grass  
As the wind blows and sings its song  
Along the path into the woods*

*The veil between the worlds lift  
Peaks in  
The spirits are close to the earth  
Our Ancestors and departed loved ones  
Visit us as we dance in ritual  
With the Crone, the Dark Goddess  
Pumpkins twinkling with candlelight grins  
Welcome them into our homes  
As we sleep deep in Autumn dreams*

*The final harvest is here  
The year ends  
The new year begins*

*We fall into the dark time of year  
The underworld of introspection  
On this magick Samhain eve*

© Maeve Cliodhna MoonBird, October 2010

*HP Maeve Cliodhna MoonBird is a High Priestess and Ordained Minister in the tradition of the [Order of the White Moon](#). Maeve enjoys an interfaith worship of the Goddess and is especially interested in Wiccan, Celtic, Native American, Shamanism, and Buddhist spiritual practices.*

## **Samhain Blessings**

*There's a crispness to the air,  
An urgent need to hurry  
Along our way, get back  
To where our path began  
So that we may look  
Back and see how  
Far we've come.  
On the horizon burns  
A thousand shades of*

*Red, orange and yellow  
Set against the sharp  
Grey lines of bare limbs  
Swaying in the Fall wind.  
In the breeze is the echo  
Of children's laughter,  
Footsteps along long  
Deserted walkways,  
Emotions long since passed.  
It's Samhain, the time  
Of our ancestors,  
The feast of apples,  
The third harvest,  
The Crone's time.  
My favourite time.  
Blessed Be!*

© Moonwater Chalcedony Ashwood, October 9 2010

## **Temple of the Dark Mother**

*I feel you shivering beside me  
As we walk the winding path;  
You've not seen the Temple  
Before, you're a maiden still,  
Untried and nervous.  
It's not too late you know,*

*You can change your mind  
If you wish, but I know you  
Won't ... you're curiosity  
Drives you forward step by  
Step towards your calling.  
I tie the blindfold over your eyes  
At the last bend in the path;  
You must approach in total  
Trust of those around you.  
You trust me, don't you?  
You feel the ground change  
To smooth pebbles, then  
Marble steps, cool and steep.  
I stay at your side the whole  
Journey, holding your left arm,  
Steadying you on your feet.  
Don't worry little sister,  
I won't let you fall.  
Standing at the entrance  
I remove the red silk from  
Your eyes, and move to  
Stand behind you; I'll  
Be here, protecting you.  
There's nothing to fear.  
I point over your shoulder to  
The grand dais. You look  
Confused, saying you see  
Only red light swirling.  
I breathe in your ear ... wait.  
As you look, She materializes,  
Taking Her place at the centre  
Of the Temple, where She*

*Belongs, where She always is,  
Where She has always been.  
She holds out Her hand,  
Beckoning you to come to Her.  
I feel you centre your own  
Energy before starting to walk  
And smile softly, watching you.  
I can't hear what you say to Her,  
But that is as it should be;  
This is your moment of connection,  
Of reunion, of initiation.  
All I see is our Mother reach out  
With Her arms to gather you  
Close to Her heart; when you  
Return to my side there is a  
New glow to your cheeks,  
And I stay at your side, a  
Proud sister as our Mother  
Speaks ... reminding us that  
Which is Dark is not always  
Evil; more often it is simply unknown,  
The embodiment of the Mysteries.*

© Moonwater Chalcedony Ashwood, January 26 2010

## **Touch of the Morrighan**

*I thought She was gone from*

*My life, drifting further away  
With each passing year.  
I should have known better,  
For once the Morrighan  
Touches your soul, forever  
Will She linger within you.*

*I thought the darkness that  
I related to Her was gone  
From within my heart;  
What a noble idea, but  
We all have both the light  
And the dark at play within  
Us, dancing constantly.*

*I thought if I were to heal  
Myself and others that  
I couldn't acknowledge the  
Warrior within me as well,  
That I had to choose,  
Even though both are within  
Me, both ARE me.*

*I'm happy to feel the warmth  
Of the touch of the Morrighan  
Once again on my skin,  
On my heart, on my soul.  
With Her comes the ravens  
And crows, my "little brothers",  
And I know, for now, I'm home.*

© Moonwater Chalcedony Ashwood, January 18 2010

## **In the Darkness**

*In the darkness  
I do wait  
No breath to give  
Me away  
Teeth drawn  
In anticipation*

*Do you feel me?  
I'm closer now  
Than before.  
Do you fear me?  
Or do you long  
For this embrace  
This first taste*

*In the darkness  
I wait no more  
I move silently  
Quickly beside you  
Not even pausing  
Before biting into  
Flawless white*

*Not a sound  
Escapes from you*

*At first, not even  
A slight struggle  
You actually feel ...  
Relaxed in my arms  
Finally parting your  
Lips to let a gentle  
Sigh slip loose*

*In the darkness  
You've been waiting  
Haven't you?  
Waiting for me to come  
Here, to finally be  
Next to you and  
Taste the sweet  
Nectar that flows  
Through your veins*

*You're smiling!  
Can it be true?  
You've dreamt of this  
Day as I have,  
You want to be by  
My side? I see it  
In your eyes.  
I've missed you too.*

© Moonwater Chalcedony Ashwood, May 4 2010

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*Master, writer, and family historian. Originally initiated into Celtic Wicca, she now practices Eclectic Wicca, leaning strongly towards the Goddess in Her various aspects.*

## **Book Review: Wise Woman Herbal, Healing Wise by Susun Weed**

This is an older book but so very current and pertinent for us all who love herbs and love being Wise Women. It gives clear ideas of how to walk the spiral path and befriend our green allies for our wholeness rather than get caught up in the illusion of healing. There is incredibly practical information on herbs on multiple levels and I highly recommend this book. It is easy to read and a joy to learn from.

This book can be found on Amazon, Barnes & Noble Used books, and other sites where older books are found. It is inexpensive and it has become part of the gifts I love to give to others along with plants and trees for anyone who is drawn to these things.

© Sea Dragon

*Sea Dragon is an Initiate with the [Sisters of the Rising Moon school](#). She is a Reiki Master, and in her spare time enjoys learning about herbalism, aromatherapy, and spending time with her animals and family.*

## **Podcast Reviews**

[Voices of the Sacred Feminine](#) is a podcast that explores the resurgence of Goddess Culture through in-depth interviews with fascinating guests who promote the principles of the Divine Feminine. Each two-hour episode allows plenty of time to fully explore topics. Guests have included such noted individuals as Elinor Gadon and Riane Eisler, Starhawk and David Hillman.

Karen's light-hearted and unpretentious approach is refreshing. She is not afraid to plead ignorance about a subject and ask the questions we are all thinking but feel too dumb to ask. Karen draws on humour and personal experience to gain further insight into topics.

Karen is an impassioned Goddess advocate and she's not afraid to take on the patriarchal establishment. "The personal is political", and Karen embraces this concept to the fullest. This is most evident in her "What's the Buzz" segment of the program, as Karen reports on news items from around the globe that either support or suppress the Divine Feminine. Her enthusiasm is contagious and her impassioned outrage at the injustices occurring in the world will have the listener taking up the cause. Listen live on Wednesday evenings or download archived episodes.

[Voices of the Sacred Feminine](#) is hosted by [Karen Tate](#), author of [Sacred Places of Goddess: 108 Destinations](#) (my personal travel bible) and [Walking an Ancient Path](#).

[Elemental Castings](#) is a bi-monthly podcast journey through the elements. Each hour-long episode focuses on a particular element (Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Spirit) and guests discuss how that element impacts their magickal workings and

daily living. Guests include Karen Tate and Christopher Penczak, Selena Fox and Sharon Knight. Thorn is precise and methodical, an analytical and straightforward interviewer, offering insightful remarks and a perceptivity that can be lacking in many magickal podcasts. Elemental Castings is intelligent discussion that truly raises the bar in the realm of elemental magick. Download podcasts directly from the website.

[Elemental Castings](#) is hosted by [T. Thorn Coyle](#), author, Musician and Mystic.

*Ajna DreamsAwake is an Adept of [The Sacred Three Goddess School](#). She is an eclectic Pagan, rediscovering Her Visionary Goddess Gifts.*

## **Lemony Potato Salad**

Ingredients:

2lbs small red potatoes or new potatoes(which I prefer)

1/2 cup olive oil

3 Tbsp. lemon juice

3/4 tsp. salt

1/4 tsp. dried mustard

1/4 tsp. freshly ground pepper

3 green onions finely diced

2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley

Wash all ingredients and bring potatoes and salt to boil in cold water. Drain and set aside.

Let cool for about 5 minutes. Mix all the remaining ingredients and add to the potato mixture.

© HP Lady Zephyr

*Lady Zephyr is a High Priestess, Ordained Minister and co-founder of the [Sisters Beneath the Whispering Willows school](#).*

## **Roasted Pumpkin Seeds**

Ingredients:

1 Pumpkin (or squash)

Olive Oil

Salt (optional)

Dig out the pulp from the pumpkin and separate the seeds. Rinse thoroughly in cold water. Spread the seeds out on a baking sheet and dry overnight.

Place the seeds in a bowl and toss with Olive Oil and salt. Spread the seeds out on a baking sheet.

Bake at 250 for one hour, stirring the seeds every 15 minutes. Cool and store in an air-tight container.

Enjoy on their own or add to salads or trail mix

Optional- add extra zing to your seeds by mixing the olive oil with any of the following seasonings: garlic or onion powder, cayenne pepper, curry powder...

## **Spooky Popcorn Hands**

These make a great treat to "hand" out to the kids.

Ingredients:

Clear plastic or vinyl gloves (powder-free, non-latex)

Pink Candy corn

Popcorn

Yarn

Place one pink candy corn at the tip of each finger. Fill the glove with popcorn and tie off at the wrist with yarn.

## **Gross out Monster Fingers**

Ingredients:

1 cup sugar

1 cup Butter, softened

1 Egg

1 tsp Almond extract

1 tsp Vanilla extract

2 2/3 cups Flour

1 tsp Salt

3/4 cup whole Almonds, blanched

2 squares of melting chocolate

Combine sugar, egg, butter, almond extract and vanilla in a large bowl. Slowly mix in the flour and salt. Cover and refrigerate the dough for about 30 minutes.

Using a small portion of the dough at a time, shape the cookies into fingers. Use a knife across the top to make the wrinkles at the knuckle. Use your thumb to press an indent into the tip and place an almond "finger nail" on each cookie.

Place the fingers on a cookie sheet lightly coated with no-stick cooking spray and bake at 325` for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the cookies are a very light golden brown. Allow to cool.

Melt the chocolate and pour into a plastic sandwich baggie. Cut a small hole in one end of the baggie and dab the chocolate "blood" around the fingernails.

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