

6th Annual Gaia Gathering for Women

Class Descriptions

STORY AS SOUL FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

Dianne Bearinger

Stories can often be used as maps for our life journey and speak directly to the soul. Women were traditionally the keepers of these stories and handed them down through their telling and retelling. In this class we will hear the ancient teaching story, Skeleton Woman, (as told in Clarissa Pinkola Este's book, *Women Who Run With the Wolves*). We will then use it as a template in understanding the life-death-life nature of commitment, whether it be commitment to another person, to a project or ourselves.

SACRED DRUMMING:

Jennifer Borishansky

The body of a traditional djembe is carved whole from the trunk of a tree. Its head is covered with skin taken from the back of a goat. Both tree and goat must die for a djembe to be born, thus it is a sacred object as is the music produced when played. Whether moving us to dance around the Beltane fire or guiding us on an inner journey, drumming alters our state of being and opens our hearts. We will make sacred music together, drumming rhythms and singing songs of the Malinke people of West Africa. Bring a hand drum!

A LANGUAGE OLDER THAN WORDS

- SACRED COMMUNION AND DIRECT SENSORY PERCEPTION OF PLANTS

Mary Ann Copson

When you consciously reconnect to plant/relationship/ awareness, you reawaken your dormant Ancient Way of Knowing and Being. We will set out on the beginning Adventure of stirring awake your own conscious awareness of this language older than words. We will invite the Plants to activate your own multi-sensory ancient way of knowing and being informed and taught by the Plants and all of Nature. With sincerity and openness on your part and graciousness and willingness from the Plants we will knock on the door of your Direct Sensory Perception of Nature.

CONNECTED IN LOVE: A CLASS FOR THE MAIDENS!

Ursula Goadhouse

Come explore what it means to be connected together, to be community, and to be friends! Together we will create sacred space and lovingly use our words, our art and our bodies to build a bridge, a wheel and a circle!

YOGA

Kate Hallahan

Kate is honored to offer alignment-based Hatha Yoga classes at the Gaia Gathering that will be appropriate for all levels of yoga student. A basic level of physical fitness is helpful. No serious injuries, please.

FERTILITY AWARENESS FOR EVERYONE:

Maya Hawthorn

This workshop will consist of an overview of our cycles from a hormonal perspective, the three main signals of fertility and ovulation and how to chart them. We will discuss rules for safe, non-fertilizing intercourse, as well as tips for achieving pregnancy. We will also discuss troubleshooting for confusing signals as well as the (occasional) 'sloppy' charting. Finally, we will look at special rules for contraception while breastfeeding before the return of menstruation.

COMMUNITIES

BRIDGING THE GAP: SCIENCE, TRADITION, AND INTUITION IN HEALING

What is the difference between scientific, traditional, and intuitive evidence in plant medicine and how can our languages overlap? What can we learn from each model? How can we become bridge builders in our communities for the integrative whole? Various herbal examples will be presented. Mimi Hernandez

LET THEM EAT BERRIES!! A PANACEA FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH

Mimi Hernandez

If we all ate berries everyday life would be sweet! Berries are sweet yet their low glycemic activity and their bright colors suggest the presence of potent antioxidant compounds. Berries can have a significant impact on the health of our blood vessels, our eyes, and even our brain. Ingredients in many berries can prevent cancer, autoimmune disease, and can improve conditions like ADD and ADHD making them truly regenerative for people of all ages!

GLUTEN-FREE AND EASY!

Wendy Vigdor-Hess

Eating without gluten can be fun and easy whether you have celiac disease, choose a gluten-free diet or are curious about the increased "buzz" around this subject. Come learn basics about gluten, benefits of eating without gluten, what to look for on food labels, how to substitute some of your favorite foods at your local grocery stores or restaurants. Included are tasty samples from my book: Sweetness Without Sugar: A resource Guide for Delicious Dairy-, Egg-, and Gluten-Free Treats Made with Healthy Sweeteners.

RECLAIMING DEATH

Martha Hughes

Since the beginning of time, women have tended their loved ones before, during and after death. Due to a cultural shift that occurred 150 years ago, death (and birth) were taken from the home and family. Come explore the many facets of reclaiming death and learn how to care for your loved ones at this sacred threshold. This workshop will explore urban myths surrounding death and will prepare you and your community for green and home burial.

THE SACRED IN EVERYDAY

Beth Le Grande

Every moment is a gift; every day becomes an opportunity to honor ourselves and all that surrounds us. Join us as we explore the power and purpose of simple, daily ritual, altar building, prayers and offerings. Each intentional act, no matter how small has a profound effect on the healing of our precious Gaia. Come light the fires that are we.

WORKSHOP:

CREATE YOUR OWN BOTANICAL SANCTUARY ALA UNITED PLANT SAVERS

Susan Leopold

In this workshop we will go over the steps and application for how to make your property, and or school/community garden a Botanical Sanctuary. We will also go over the UpS community grants program, and the UpS internship program at the UpS Sanctuary in Ohio. Furthermore you can participate in our spring seed and our fall roots giveaway, not to mention access to all our amazing resources on our members page and our informative bulletin and journal.

A VISUAL JOURNEY THROUGH THE ARTWORK AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF SEVEN WOMEN TO THE COMMUNITY OF BOTANICAL KNOWLEDGE AND EXPLORATION.

Susan Leopold

This inspirational talk with power point images is meant to inspire women attending Gaia on what they can do with their gifts to share with the greater community. The stories of seven women span the historical timeline, and bring perspective to how our connection to plants inspires something in all of us. Marie Sybylla Merian (1647-1717) first to document metamorphosis, Elizabeth Blackwell (1821-1910) author and illustrator of a curious herbal, Marianne North (1830-1890), world traveler discovered several unknown species, Mrs. Delany (1700-1788) master of paper mosaics, and the women (1940's) of the WPA that built the Norfolk botanical gardens. We will end appropriately with Rosemary Gladstar, Founder of UpS

PLANT WALK: SHADE MEDICINALS

Kathleen Maier

Wander the woods in wonder and meet the lush plants that grow deep in the woodlands. Medicinal uses will also be spoken about in favorite stories each plant holds.

SACRED TREE MEDICINE: HOW TO HARVEST AND PREPARE THE GIFTS FROM THE TREES

Robin McGee

Confused about making medicine from the Trees? Should you use inner bark, outer bark, roots or leaves? Tincture, syrup or tea? In this demonstration class you will learn how and when to harvest and how to prepare White Oak, Wild Cherry, Tulip Poplar, Black Walnut, and Sassafras for medicine. Gain the skills and confidence to go home and do it yourself!

TREE MEDICINE: HONORING THE TALL STANDING ONES

Robin McGee

Since the beginning, Trees have given us shelter, shade, food, tools, and beauty. Join us for a journey to the Trees and learn some of the magic and medicine that our Tall Standing Ones have to offer. This is a gentle walk to the end of the driveway and back. We will visit Tulip Poplar, Pine, Sassafras, Oak and others along the way.

WISE WOMAN WAYS FOR A NATURAL PREGNANCY

Cheryl Morrison

In this circle we'll discuss some of the common concerns of pregnancy and how to prevent and/or alleviate them using herbs, homeopathy, yoga, whole foods and the wise ways of our Grandmothers. Issues such as anemia, morning sickness, edema, constipation and more will be addressed.

WILD FOODS PLANT WANDER

Rain

Grown by the Mother in its own time, wild food offers optimal nutrition, vitality and deep spiritual connection. On this plant wander we will focus on the identification and uses of the wild bounty growing all around us. Let thy food be thy medicine.

WILD EDIBLE AND MEDICINAL PLANTS - IDENTIFYING, HARVESTING, AND PREPARING

Vickie Shufer

Surrounding us are many wild plants which can be our food and medicine if we know how to identify them. Discover which plants growing around us can be used for food and/or food medicine. Learn how to harvest and prepare them and taste samples of dishes that have been prepared from wild plants.

NATIVE PLANTS FOR SURVIVAL

Vickie Shufer

Native plants were known and used by American Indians for food, medicine, and crafts. These plants still exist today and can be used for the same purposes. Discover which plants were used for food and medicine as well as plants that were used to make rope, weaving materials, fire-making, etc. .

POWER OF OUR DANCING BODIES

Sam Stefens

Movement and Dance have the power to inspire a spark of creative freedom inside us all. We will support each other on a journey of inner growth for our mind, body and spirits through a variety of fun and relaxing movement art modalities. We begin with a body wake & warm up rooted in yoga, ballet, and mixed martial arts .We will flow into the healing and ancient womanly art of belly dance along with fun and exciting tools like Poi and Staff spinning.

HERBAL FIRST AID: FILLING YOUR MEDICINE BAG

Suzanna Stone

Using herbs for acute care can be a way to enact effective healing quickly. In this class we will discuss some of my favorite first aid herbs including Plantain, St. John's Wort and Yarrow and how to use these and other herbal remedies for common first aid situations such as sprains, burns, and bites.

CREATING A FIRST MOON RITUAL- A CLASS FOR THE MAIDENS

Naomi Weingarten

This workshop for young maidens will focus on preparation for the first moon ritual. The first moon is an opportunity to honor the Goddess within and this workshop will help the young maidens celebrate their own special ritual. For maidens that have already begun to bleed, this workshop will include how to create a monthly moon ritual that helps to capture the power of this significant time. Please bring a journal to this class.

HERBAL ENERGETICS

Heather Wetzel

"Take this for that" is a very popular modern paradigm for herb use. However, if the energy of the plant and preparation are considered when making a match between people and plants, then our chances for success go way up. Learn about the process of being an herbal matchmaker using the time tested and honored energetic frameworks of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Classical Western Herbalism, and Ayurveda.

PLANT WALK FOR BEGINNERS

Heather Wetzel

Come meet our old favorites and new ones for you.

6th Annual Gaia Gathering for Women Teacher Biographies

Dianne Bearinger

Dianne is mother to two amazing humans: Elias and Zoe. She is a retired home school teacher and currently works as a home school consultant. She also works as a postpartum doula with Month 10 and is a Waldorf Early Childhood Educator. Her life journey has been fed and supported by many voices, plants, and sisters, and by many, many deep and nourishing stories.

Mary Ann Copson

Mary Ann is the Director of The Evenstar Earth Path School of Nature Centered Healing and Spiritual Practices in Nelson County, Virginia. She teaches a multi-dimensional, multi-sensory approach to Herbal Medicine and the Web of Healing. She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Eco-psychology through Project Nature Connect from Akamai University and ordination as a Pastoral Counselor from the Avalonian Theological Seminary. www.TheEarthPathSchool.com

Ursula Goadhouse, MSW, RYT.

Ursula is an everyday Goddess, moving with love and awe of the beauty all around us. She is the mother of two and yoga instructor for adults, children and women carrying a child in Crozet, VA. She is devoted to the practice of yoga and in love with all that is creative. Come play! Look her up: www.SpiritJoy.us

Kate Hallahan E-RYT

Founder of the Guerrilla Yoga Project and co-director of Charlottesville Yoga School, Kate has been teaching yoga since 2002. With a background deeply rooted in the philosophy of yoga, her teaching emphasizes awareness, poise, and presence in our postures both on and off the mat. Perhaps most influential in her teaching style is her devotion to her daily practice. Kate is grateful to her primary teacher, Kofi Busia, who is one of the world's foremost instructors in the Iyengar tradition

Maya Hawthorn

Maya is a mother, home herbalist, apprentice midwife, certified lactation counselor, and dedicated fertility charter. Originally from Harrisonburg, VA, she has been living in Louisville, KY for the past 3 years while pursuing her apprenticeship. She is also a member of WENCH, a collective that teaches workshops on self-care and reproductive health.

Mimi Hernandez MS, RH(AHG)

Mimi is an herbal and holistic health educator whose courses balance traditional reverence with scientific understanding and intuitive awareness. She is the Coordinator of the Appalachian Center for Ethnobotanical Studies at Frostburg State University. A member of the AHG Council, Mimi received her MS in Herbal Medicine from the Tai Sophia Institute. She also draws upon her rich ethnic background & the Granny healers in her life.

Wendy Vigdor-Hess

Wendy has been a lover of carbohydrates, grains and sweets since birth. She has lived predominately gluten-free for 11 years. As a nutritionist, educator, author, speaker and consultant for nearly 18 years, Wendy passionately spreads the message that addressing challenges through diet is an important key to a healthy and happy life. Her newly published book: *Sweetness Without Sugar: A Resource Guide for Delicious Dairy-, Egg- and Gluten-Free Treats Made with Healthy Sweeteners* is available for sale.

Martha Hughes

Martha Hughes is a Virginian Midwife whose practice has led her from the womb to the tomb. She currently is practicing as a Hospice Nurse in Fauquier County, where she uses the principles of the Midwifery Model of Care and Wise Woman Traditions to prepare her clients and their families for this sacred journey.

Beth Le Grande

Beth Le Grande has worked with and learned from the plants for 25 years, as a gardener and the owner of Jefferson Greenhouses, in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia. Her Spirit life has been nurtured and enhanced by her 27 year connection with The Sun Temple, a spirit group founded by the late Cherokee teacher Mellow Rye. As a group we explore the many facets of the Spirit and celebrate through ritual our collective power as well as the beauty and many gifts of our Mother, Gaia.

Susan Leopold

Executive Director of United Plant Savers, has her Doctorate in Ethnobotany from Antioch New England, and her Masters in Environment Landscape Design from the Conway School. She has studied Amazonian ethnobotany, and been involved for the past ten years with a traditional medicinal clinic among the Bribri in Talamanca, Costa Rica. Currently she lives in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. Read her blog at www.unitedplantsavers.org.

Kathleen Maier, AHG. PA

Kathleen has been a practicing herbalist for over twenty years. Her studies of plant medicines began as a Peace Corp volunteer and her training as a Physician's Assistant allows her to translate the language of medicine we know today and ground it in the wisdom of earth-centered practices known for millennia. She is co-author of *Bush Medicine of the Bahamas: A Cross-cultural Perspective from San Salvador Island*, including *Pharmacology and Oral Histories*

Robin McGee

Robin is a community herbalist and educator in Anderson, SC. She teaches herbal medicine classes and workshops throughout the eastern United States. "It is my mission to empower people to care for themselves, their family, friends, and animals using the plants and trees that grow around us for food and medicine, and to foster a deep relationship between plants and people. The plants were here before we were; without THEM we would be extinct."

Cheryl Morrison

Cheryl's passion and love for homeopathy was inspired by her seven year studies with Traditional Midwife and Homeopath Whapio. Cheryl graduated from The Matrona's Holistic Midwifery program specializing in Homeopathy, Herbalism and Well-Woman Care in 2002 and is certified in Permaculture design. She helped create The Spirit of Birth Midwifery Conference and co-created a Holistic Prenatal Yoga Teacher Training and Certification.

Rain

For the past 15 years, Rain has been weaving traditional lifeways. She currently lives in the Blue Ridge on an intentional community with her man and their six children where she has been re-claiming her Wild-Wombyn Self while Re-Membering the Ancient Skills of Wombyn-hood. Her current threads are hunting, gathering, midwifery, plant medicine, wild foods and tribal culture.

Vickie Shufer

Vickie Shufer is a naturalist, forager, and publisher who has been living in Virginia Beach since 1979. She is the author of *The Everything Guide to Foraging*, published by Adams Media and the editor and publisher of *The Wild Foods Forum* newsletter since 1994. Vickie also has a certified, 16-acre native nursery in northeastern North Carolina where she propagates coastal native plants. Using False Cape State Park's Environmental Education Center, she hosts weekend programs on Wilderness Survival Skills and Wild Women Weekends.

Sam Steffens

Sam has been sharing her art and craft with others for over ten years. She is the owner of Mountain Song Herbs and co-founder of Still Spirit Community Project an agricultural and artistically based intentional neighborhood. With the loving support of her husband and two children, Sam enjoys teaching and performing movement arts with her partners at Rhythm Fire Cultural Dance Company. She is a holistic health educator, nutritional therapist and supports families in her local area as a birth-to-death midwife.

Suzanna Stone

Suzanna is an herbalist residing in Scottsville, VA. She founded Owlcraft Healing Ways where she offers clinical consultations, classes and apprenticeships. Her passion for the drum led her to Senegal where she studied traditional West African drumming and dancing. She has a BFA from Virginia Commonwealth University and her work has been in *Surface Design* magazine and the *We'Moon '08* date book. She is a graduate of Sacred Plant Tradition's three-year community herbalist program where she is on staff and serves as a guest lecturer.

Naomi Weingarten

Naomi lives in Rappahannock County with her parents, sister and 2 singing dogs. She is inspired by art, spirit and gourmet food. She apprenticed under Herbalist Teresa Boardwine in 2009 and has been in love with the plants ever since.

Heather Wetzel

Heather's deep love and respect for the green world began early on her family's farm in remote northern Pennsylvania and she's been dedicated to walking her herbal path and listening to the plants for the last decade. She earned her herbal certifications from Clayton College of Natural Health and Sacred Plant Traditions where she serves as staff herbalist and apothecary manager. Heather practices energetic herbology to support women's and children's health and is the owner of Heather's Herbals.