

# Sage Woman

*Celebrating the Goddess in Every Woman*



NUMBER 67

**Finding Our Treasure**



# SageWoman

*Celebrating the Goddess in Every Woman*

NO. 67

FINDING  
OUR TREASURE

FEATURES

## 6 THE GEODE *Nirvan Hope*

The rediscovery of a precious stone reminds us that the greatest treasure lies within.

## 9 PROJECT GODDESS *Goddess Dina*

For nine months, we had met every month to embrace and encourage the Goddess within ourselves and our sisters. Now the day had come to share our empowerment with the world.

## 13 THE PLAY'S THE THING *Lori Brady*

The sense of magic as the play opens is similar to the sense of magic I feel when I enter a ritual circle. In both we are brought out of time, into a place and world not our own, not our workaday world.

## 16 RIDING THE RED TIDE *Lupa Virida*

Within the days of our body's natural cleansing and renewal lies a wealth of magical potential. The pursuit of menstrual magic results in the healing of our minds, bodies, and souls — a healing that can touch everything around us.

## 20 THE TREASURE BOX *Patricia Martel*

The items in my treasure box are precious to me, but it is the Goddess who resides in my heart that is the greatest treasure of all.

## 23 LABYRINTH: WALKING THE SPIRAL PATH *Linda Missouri*

A journey into the center of the labyrinth became a metaphor for the spiritual path, a way to surrender to one's inner wisdom.

## 27 GIFTS OF THE GARDEN *Tammie Burnsed*

Some Witches turn to their Tarot cards when they need guidance. Some find answers in the silent flickering flame of a blessed candle. But through the years I've learned that no discipline helps me to really *hear* what Goddess is telling me more than working outdoors.

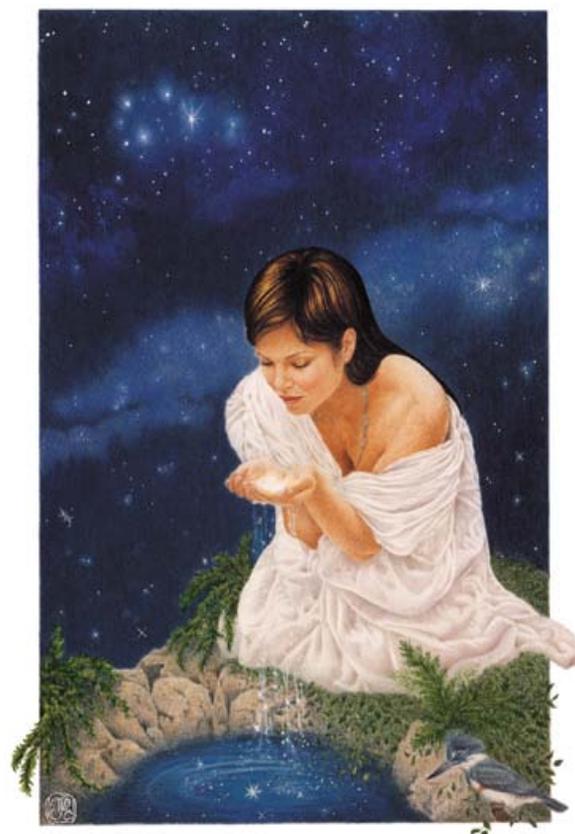
7

Cover art: *The Star* by Joanna Powell Colbert  
For prints, see [www.gaiantarot.com](http://www.gaiantarot.com).

# SageWoman

*Celebrating the Goddess in Every Woman*

NO. 67  
FINDING OUR TREASURE



## COLUMNS

- 4 Living the Dream *Anne Newkirk Niven*  
32 One of Ten Thousand: Into the Dark with Inanna *Diana Paxson*  
41 Herbal Adventures *Susun Weed*  
45 Everyday Enchantments *Lunaea Weatherstone*  
49 AstroBlessings *Bee Smith*  
53 Time to Celebrate *Waverly Fitzgerald*  
57 Sisters of the Earth *Cristina Eisenberg*  
61 Goddess Muse *Anne Markel*  
63 Sacred Self Care *Valzora Spriggs*  
67 Sweet Medicine Stories *Loba*

## DEPARTMENTS

- 71 A Circle is Cast  
79 Leaves of Sage  
83 Tools for Transformation  
87 The Rattle  
95 Weaving the Web  
96 A Pinch of Sage

## POETRY

- 19 *Brigid's Song*  
19 *Your Hands*



## Living the Dream: Letter from the Editor

by Anne Newkirk Niven

For the first time in more than almost twenty years, I feel rootless. It's an odd sensation, like bobbing up-and-down on an inner tube in the middle of a warm lake on a sunny day. The horizon seems endless, and, for the moment, I don't seem to be going in any particular direction. And for the moment, that's just fine.

The last time I felt this "void of course" was the summer before I left home to go to college. Back then, I was flush with the endless energy of youth — I'd be the first to admit that I'm a bit slower off the blocks these days. But sometimes the more things change, the more they remain the same; today, I am once again looking for my place in the world.

"How can that be?" I hear you saying. "Haven't most people settled down by the time they are forty-five?" That's certainly true, and one might imagine that exploration — or even adventure — would be pretty low on my list of priorities just now.

But the truth is, I've been feeling restless for a while now. I've been annoyed by a niggling suspicion that life was passing me by, combined with whiff of disillusionment and even envy. To make matters worse, my friends kept going ballistic: I watched, stunned, while one after another ditched careers, broke up marriages or even ditched their kids for what appeared to be no reason at all. Even our family doctor and the principal of our school (whom I had come to think of as a sister) up and suddenly moved away.

"Of course," I said to myself as I watched these goings on, "I would never do anything like *that*." Then I went back to The Daily Grind. Occasionally, I "woke up" and saw myself as others might — and it wasn't the most flattering picture. I was becoming irritable, cynical, and downright cranky. This worried me; I knew that I loved my husband and children, appreciated and enjoyed my work, and generally had a pretty darn good life. So why was I so darn *angry* all the time?

I didn't know how to handle these thorny feelings, and with my friends splitting town, my support systems started to unravel. Slowly but surely, anxiety began to grip me. I clutched more and more tightly at what I still possessed — my work, my children, my husband — and tried to maintain control. Overwhelmed, my ability to function slipped and I hung, for about a year-and-a-half, over the edge of the abyss. I started toying with suicidal thoughts, like a magpie collecting colorful baubles. I wasn't really serious about them — was I? — but they were oh, so shiny ...

I think it was love, pure and simple, that gave me the will to fight back. I started seeing a new therapist and got back on medication (which helped a lot). Most of all, I eventually realized, simply, that I wanted to live — and that there were many, many people; both those I knew and loved, and even more, those that the Goddess was reaching through me — that wanted me to live.

This wasn't as easy as it might sound; for anyone who hasn't lived in the depths of clinical depression, it is difficult to explain how seductive that dark place actually can be. Among other things, for me the Pit of Despair was a place to retreat, to rest — even to collapse. For me, to be depressed meant to be tired, sad and withdrawn, even despondent, but it also meant a chance to lick my wounds and rebuild. Being depressed gave me a chance to drop my masks and stop working so hard to make things right for everyone else and instead, to concentrate on listening to my inner voice.

As I began to edge away from the cliff, I realized that this depression was not as deep as those I'd experienced before, and that was encouraging. My work with an EMDR therapist\* helped remove layers of old emotional sludge and, as the fog and darkness began to lift, I realized that what I was craving most was time: time to simply be myself. I became aware that what I had gotten out of this vacation in the Underworld was a chance to see myself naked — to find that I was still loved, even when the accoutrements of control and mastery had been stripped away. Once again, I danced with Death — and my life has been given back to me.

\*EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) is an information-processing therapy used since the mid-1990's. EMDR is controversial, but evidence suggests it is effective for post-traumatic stress disorder and related conditions. To find out more, see [www.emdr.com](http://www.emdr.com).

One of the first things that happened as I came up for air was that I found myself letting go of control. It was as if I were a flower, tightly closed against the frigid blasts of winter, but now the soft warmth of the spring sunshine began to tease open my petals. This gradual blossoming was a gift of Grace, pure and simple; I have always thought that I have to work for my blessings, but I'm beginning to realize that sometimes the only thing to do is accept the gift and simply say, "Thank-you."

This process wasn't all butterflies and roses, however. When I started coming back into myself, I discovered that there had been a few casualties along the way. In fact, I now realize that it probably was the burden of these ungrieved losses which overwhelmed my defenses and started me down the path that led to Ereshkigal's realm.

First of all, I realized that I no longer have a mother figure in my life, and I should stop looking for one. My three mothers (my birth mother, my mother-in-law, and my step-mother-in-law) have all become unavailable to me in that role; two through death and one through changes in our relationship. I now realize that I am the only mother in my life now — and that's ok.

Secondly, I discovered to my shock that I have outgrown my community here in Point Arena. I have done good work here and this has been a nurturing, loving place to live. But, as I looked around in the sunshine after my time in the depths, I realized that my time here (and that of our family) has come to an end. I will miss the salt taste of the ocean in the air, the rich buttery California sunshine (all year long!) and the sound of the surf breaking to the west. But sometime soon, we will move on, and I do not yet know

where we will fly to next.

Finally, and most deeply, I am beginning to taste the end of my time as the "protective mother" of our children. I look at our eldest son, sixteen-year-old Arthur, and I see a young scholar who very soon will be making his own way in the world. I can no longer shield him under my wings — among other things because he is now almost a foot taller than I am! I look at Aidan — who has gone from puppy-fat to whippet thin and grown six inches in the course of his fourteenth year — and I see a restless ball of energy, not a child to be protected from the world. Even our youngest, ten-year-old Andrew, reveals with every day his wry and keen eye for the world — a viewpoint which is no longer innocent. Soon, he will feel the need to spread his wings and fly as well. I don't know who I will be without "someone to take care of" and the prospect of leaving that role behind is unnerving. Yet, I feel in my bones that the wind is a-changing, and it is now time for me to look in a new direction.

This is a time of transition: a time of waiting, of searching, of being open. I know that the Goddess would not send me — and us — out into the world searching for what cannot be found, so I am trying for the moment to simply relax and wait for what will be next to unfold. For the moment, I will simply eat the ripe red strawberries of spring, and wait for what the summer will bring.

May this time bring you the first fruits of blessings yet to be revealed, and the luxury of being open to the new.

Blessings, 

*Anne Newkirk Niven is the Editor-in-Chief of SageWoman, PanGaia and newWitch. She lives with her husband and their three sons in Point Arena, CA.*

## Editorial Notes

We encourage all Goddess-friendly women to submit to us. Our material comes from our readers — write from your hearts! You do *not* need to be a published author to write for *SageWoman*, but you do need to write from your own experience, preferably to theme. *SageWoman* focuses on first-person women's spiritual experience. Please direct fiction to *PanGaia* or *newWitch*.

*SageWoman* accepts submissions from women only, while *PanGaia*, *The Blessed Bee*, and *newWitch* accept material from all genders; email submissions to [editor@bbimedia.com](mailto:editor@bbimedia.com) with "submission for \_\_\_\_ (name of magazine)" as your subject line.

### #70, "Goddess Virtues: "Harmony" Deadline extended to August 1, '05

*Harmony is a word not frequently in use these days. Connoting peace and tranquility, it also can mean a joining of divergent voices to form a richer and more holistic community. Harmony contains an element of blending, of listening, of transformation and change. Please write and tell us how you create and find harmony in your daily life.*

### #71, "Goddess Virtues: "Joy" Deadline Nov. 1, '05

*Joy comes unexpectedly — when we least expect it, when we are looking the other direction, the Goddess surprises us with a gift and we find ourselves smiling, laughing, even crying with a free heart. Please share your stories of discovering and welcoming joy into your life.*

### Coming in 2006-2007

#72: *Visions of Goddess — Warrior*  
#73: *Visions of Goddess — Mother*  
#74: *Visions of Goddess — Queen*  
#75: *Visions of Goddess — Priestess*



Magazines that feed your soul and liven your spirits.



## Navigation Controls

Availability depends on reader.

