

2 The Evening Sun/ Friday, December 1, 2006

COVER STORY

To Have & To Hold

To Have & To Hold is published the first Friday of each month in The Evening Sun.

Each month features a local story, plus announcements of weddings, anniversaries and engagements.

Announcements must be sent to and confirmed by The Evening Sun office by the 15th of each month for inclusion in the next edition.

Share your story

We're looking for couples who will share their unusual love stories with us.

If you think you have a story to share, call 637-3736, Ext. 166, or write The Evening Sun, 135 Baltimore St., Hanover, PA 17331 or send an e-mail to ksterner@eveningsun.com.

Guidelines

WEDDINGS – Weddings older than six months will not be published. Photos of the bride and groom only OR of the bride only will be printed.

ENGAGEMENTS – The Evening Sun will publish announcements if received at least one month before the wedding date. Photos of the couple only OR bride-to-be will be accepted.

ANNIVERSARIES – We will only publish announcements for observances of 25 years, 40 years, 50 years, 60 years and at five-year increments from 65 years on. Two photos (an original wedding photo and a current photo) will be accepted for 50th anniversaries only. One photo will be printed with other announcements.

Anniversaries older than six weeks will not be published.

FORMS – Forms can be picked up at The Evening Sun office or obtained by mailing a self-addressed, stamped envelope to The Evening Sun, 135 Baltimore St., Hanover PA 17331.

PHOTOGRAPHS –

Handfasting binds two souls

Strickland-Calp

By **CAITLIN HEANEY**
Evening Sun Reporter

Hanover couple Shawnya Calp and Ronald Strickland tied the knot – or, rather, their officiate tied it for them.

Calp and Strickland practice the Druid religion and incorporated the ancient tradition of handfasting, in which a couple's hands are tied together, into their Nov. 4 wedding. The term "tying the knot" derives from the pagan practice.

"Being that we're Druid, we try to go back to older customs," Calp said. "That's one of the customs that we really liked and wanted to incorporate."

Calp and Strickland joined left hand to left hand and right hand to right hand to create an infinity symbol. An ordained clergy member officiating the ceremony then wrapped a cord around their hands as the couple recited vows. The cord is wrapped around the hands four times.

"Every time we say 'we do,' she drapes another cord," Calp said.

The cords are not what ultimately binds the couple together though, which is explained during the ceremony, Calp said. The words behind the cords are even more important, according to Strickland.

When the ceremony ends, the pair is able to keep the cord. Calp and Strickland picked out the material themselves, selecting a white cord with gold woven through it. They have

Shawnya Calp and Ronald Strickland were united in marriage Nov. 4, 2006, at a local farm in Glenville, with the Rev. Heather Choppin officiating.

The bride is the daughter of Mary Thomas, of Hanover.

The groom is the son of Ronald Strickland, of Middletown, and Mary Miller, of Inverness, Fla.

A reception was held at Mother Earth's Coffee Nook, Highland Farm, Glenville.

The couple reside in Hanover.

The bride is a 2001 graduate of Harrisburg Area Community College and she is employed as a system support specialist at Snyder's of



Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Strickland
Hanover Inc.

The groom is a student.

"Being that we're Druid, we try to go back to older customs. That's (handfasting) one of the customs that we really liked and wanted to incorporate."

SHAWNAYA CALP
Bride

have followed Druid beliefs for about four years.

Strickland said they began following the Druid religion after they started looking for answers to questions they had about the origins of Easter staples like rabbits and eggs. After some research, they uncovered a connection to an ancient goddess. That discovery led down the rabbit hole, Strickland said, no pun intended.

Besides handfasting, the couple included other pagan elements in the ceremony as

and, instead of having someone else give me away, we gave away ourselves," Calp said.

The ceremony continued with "calls." They called to their ancestors; the four cardinal directions; "shining ones," or gods; nature spirits; and outwellers, which are chaotic forces that may interfere with or disbelieve in marriage. By speaking to outwellers, they placate their adversaries, Strickland said.

"What we do is make an offering to them as we would make an offering to

HANFASTING TRADITION

Ron and Shawnya, please join your right hands and your left hands, thus forming an infinity symbol. Thus shall your love be never ending.

"Do you vow to keep open your hearts and minds, that neither words nor the lack of them shall ever cause a silence to dwell between you that your love can not bridge?"

"Do you vow to ever remember to take joy in life and in each other, never forgetting it is the matters of the heart that are real?"

"Do you vow to share whatever burdens the mundane world may present, in that overcoming them together your spirits shall grow towards a common hope, dream and reality?"

"Do you vow to ever love and cherish each other, keeping sacred above all else, the place your hearts hold for one another?"

The knots of this binding are not formed by these cords but instead by your vows. As your hands are bound together now, so your lives and spirits are joined in a union of love and trust. Above you are the stars and below you is the earth. Like the stars your love should be a constant source of light, and like the earth, a firm foundation from which to grow.

a second?" Strickland said.

Calp and Strickland shared personal vows and exchanged rings as well, blending the modern traditions with the Druid practices.

Still, Strickland emphasizes the connection their handfasting represents apart from the rings he and his wife now wear.

"The symbology of it goes back beyond the rings," Strickland said. "It's a bind-

Photos will be returned if a self-addressed, stamped envelope is provided. The Evening Sun will not be responsible for lost or misplaced photos.

ordered a box in which to keep the memento, Calp said.

Calp and Strickland met nearly eight years ago and

well as personal touches. The wedding took place outdoors at a friend's farm.

"We actually walked down (the aisle) together,

any other spirit or god, to say, 'Hey, we know you're there, we recognize the chaos you represent, but hey, can you sit over here for

ing of two souls rather than simply a uniting of two families."

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