

# Love those witches

By James H. Bowman  
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When Jane and John Doe, a witch and her high priest, pass a truck belonging to Ross Cascio's well-known Lincoln Towing Service, they slap a quick curse on it.

They don't like the company, which tows away cars parked in private lots and then charges drivers to redeem them.

But that's about the extent of malice that the other five members of the coven of witches ever permit themselves.

"Basically, our whole thing is love and joy," said Jane, who makes a living as a psychiatric social worker. (She didn't want her true name used.)

"Our witchcraft is a force for good."

There are good witches and bad witches, she explained, and evil comes much easier for her. But she chooses not to be evil.

**ONE RECENT** evening, three members of the coven celebrated Candlemas, one of the year's eight witches' feasts (or sabbats).

They lit candles, sang and danced around an altar. Later they ate cakes, wine, fresh fruit and vegetables. It was a "love feast" like those of the ancient Christians.

Even though it was a "love feast," there was no sex or nudity or degenerate behavior, Jane said.

"We are not satanists (disciples of Satan)," she said. "We are pre-Christians."

The pagan religion they follow consists mainly of the nature-worship that co-existed with Christianity for centuries.

A divine force can be released from every man, they believe. They evoke "the power" through concentration and willpower.

**JANE WAS** raised a Jew and attended synagog until she was 19. But when she was eight, she began to sense that she

could get things just by wanting them enough.

"I saw a dress I wanted in a store window, priced too high for me. I knew I was meant to have that dress. Later, I walked into another store and found it reduced to \$15.

At 19 she escaped a serious auto accident with only a few scratches, and the experience

gave her a sense of "special protection," from a "higher force."

Judaism was not sufficiently mystical for her. She found the same fault when she tried ethical humanism and Unitarianism, and she began to believe that the mystical element is de-emphasized in every organized religion.

**HER COVEN** holds classes for young people in reincarnation, one of its most fervent beliefs. It also teaches "magnetism" (the ability to use "the power"). Many of the students, however, are drawn away to the other kind of witchcraft — black magic.

"Some kids can go either way," Jane said. "We try to keep them from going wrong."



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