

U.S. Air Force paid to have cadets learn witchcraft

Encouraged airmen to 'dance with ecstasy around maypole'



By Bob Unruh

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Financial donations made to the U.S. Air Force Academy chapel later were used for cadets to participate in "witchcraft, 'Faery Magick,' and voodoo," according to a new report from one of the leading Washington watchdog organizations.

Judicial Watch, which has fought for the public's right to know how government money is spent, including when then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi went profligate with \$100,000 plus for in-flight treats, said it has obtained documents from the academy revealing in 2014 and 2015, the military school used its "Chapel Tithes and Offering Fund" for some pretty exotic expenditures.

The funds were used for worship services featuring witchcraft, the "Faery Magick," voodoo and more, including a trip from cadets to a Wiccan festival in Denver and a Denver Witches Ball, the report said.

The category of government accounting the money came from is described as being funded by "free-will donations," and it also is called "an instrumentality of the United States government," Judicial Watch reported.

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"The Air Force Academy leadership is attacking traditional Christian beliefs but will fund witchcraft and 'faery magick'?" said Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton. "These records show the misplaced priorities in the Air Force and why traditional Christians increasingly feel unwelcome in the Air Force Academy."

The watchdog said it had obtained a brochure explaining that the "Spiritual Programs in Religious Education" held events at the chapel grounds, which the Air Forces calls a "worship area [for] ... an umbrella of traditions that includes Wicca, Paganism and Druidism."

In response to an October 2015 Freedom of Information Act request seeking records linked to "earth-based" worship service events, the watchdog was told the academy paid \$260 in 2014 for "worship-supplies-fellowship" to "Living Earth" for things related to a "Festival."

"According to a purchase request, the \$260 to pay Living Earth was drawn from the Academy's Church Tithes and Offerings Fund under the accounting class 'Wiccan,'" the Judicial Watch report said.

Also, Chapel Tithes and Offering Funds were used to pay for registration and meals for two students to go to the 2014 "Earth Centered Beltania Festival," the group said.

The Living Earth website explained the Beltania Festival as "a retreat and festival for all who follow Earth-honoring religion or spiritual path."

There, attendees are encouraged to "dance with ecstasy around the maypole," "drum with the heartbeat of Mother Earth" and "conjure springtime within nature and yourself."

Another \$120 was spent by the academy for fees for four students to go to the 23rd annual Denver Witches Ball, held in Denver. The cadets involved called themselves "Earth Centered/Pagan Cadets."

Judicial Watch continued, "The Air Force Academy documents also included an October 22, 2014, email from the DFGL [Distinctive Faith Group Leader] at the Air Force Academy to an academy official who apparently had asked for copies of any advertisements for earth-based worship services in order to fulfill the Judicial Watch FOIA request. In the email, the Distinctive Faith Group Leader strongly argued that he/she had 'not used any kind of advertising' to promote the pagan/wiccan/voodoo ceremonies in which academy cadets participated."

But, in fact, material obtained by Judicial Watch included a promotional brochure from the Spiritual Programs in Religious Education "with which the group leader acknowledged he works."

The organization encourages wicca, witchcraft, faery magick, druidism, heathenism, native American traditions, voodoo, African orishas and goddess spirituality.

"In 2013, the Air Force Academy made 'so help me God' optional to its cadet oath. Since 2014, the Air Force has allowed airmen to omit 'so help me God' from enlistment oaths. The Family Research Council (FRC) has been keeping a record of incidents of hostility to religion within the armed services: 'Unfortunately, pressures to impose a secular, anti-religious culture on our nation's military services have intensified tremendously during the Obama administration. This pressure exists across the armed services, but it has become extremely acute in the United States Air Force (USAF),' the report said.

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Bob Unruh joined WND in 2006 after nearly three decades with the Associated Press, as well as several Upper Midwest newspapers, where he covered everything from legislative battles and sports to tornadoes and homicidal survivalists. He is also a photographer whose scenic work has been used commercially.