

All spirits and souls can find a safe space in Bancroft



Now that his business has settled in after moving to Bancroft in April, Mystickal Paths's Darryl Marks is ready to start performing private tarot card readings for patrons by appointment. / SARAH SOBANSKI Staff

By Sarah Sobanski

A new shop in Bancroft is helping locals experience their spirituality in a deeper and more meaningful way.

Mystickal Paths New Age shop opened in late spring. Since then, the shop has been praised as the only of its kind outside of the big city.

"New Age shop is kind of a wide definition, but by being a wide definition it allows us to carry a wide variety of product. Our mandate is to be a place where people, regardless of what spiritual path they may or may not be following, can have a place to come and find supplies to utilize on that path. We want to be a place that is a one-stop-shop for people to express their spirituality," explained owner Darryl Marks.

Marks has brought into fruition a rare inclusive place for all religious avenues. Christians to Buddhists to Wiccans are welcome at Mystickal Paths. His shop has also been praised for its selection of incense and tarot cards.

Marks explained incense can be used as for aromatherapy but it can also be used to support prayer.

"In a lot of cultures, the smoke of incenses rising are like prayers going to your deity, that's the long and short of it. The other way of looking at it is the sense of smell. If you can provide a specific fragrance or odor, that can sometimes put you in a more receptive state."

Marks is a self-described Eclectic Wiccan. He and his partner left the GTA when the stress of the city began to affect his health.

Since coming to the community, Marks has been searching for like-minded individuals to develop and connect with.

"I'm trying to establish and find others of like mind, not necessarily Wiccan but people maybe who resonate with earth spirituality," said Marks.

Marks has founded the Bancroft Pagan Circle for like-minded individuals. It will celebrate the fall equinox on Sept. 22.

"It is open to the public. We want people who are coming with an open mind and good intent and goodwill. If people want to be involved and worship the fall equinox and they're of pure intent then they are certainly welcome. You don't want people coming and heckling. Participation would be preferable," he said.

Marks has also begun providing private tarot card readings. For those of you who don't live in the Bancroft area, you may wish to have a look at this [comparison and review on juneauempire.com](#) of different online tarot card readers. Online reading may be a slightly different experience to in-person, but maybe one day you'll get the chance to visit Bancroft and have your cards read here. That said, if you would want, you could look up tarot card readers in your area and get a consultation done. But for the same, you would have to get complete information about them. If you would want to hold off on your offline consult, and get it done online, you could find some genuine options on Herald Net and similar other websites.

Marks took a moment to explain what tarot card readings are for those who have are unfamiliar with the cards.

"The very cool thing is that even though the shuffling and the dealing of the cards is random, where the cards end up laying is arbitrary with what it means in relationship to the entire reading. Even though it's random, the wild thing about it is that it always works. You can always tell a story, you can always see a path," said Marks.

He added, "Let's say for that last card, it ended up being one where the result wasn't very good ? a negative kind of card. It doesn't mean that is going to happen. What that means is then, and what that reading can be helpful to do, is that it is saying look this could be the potential outcome in regards to the situation that you asked about. It's a heads up sometimes to people. What I love about the tarot, it's a tool for psychological growth because even though it's random, the way it works is just uncanny. Some people attribute that to forces we don't understand, some attribute it to just the way the tarot has been decided. But either way it is a really wonderful tool for personal growth."

Marks invites anyone looking to explore their spirituality to come to the shop.

"Some are religions, some are paths. I can only offer suggestions. Spirituality is a very personal thing, people have to choose their own paths."