

# Coven wins state tax suit

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**By Karen Harris**

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Since the witches and warlocks of the Ravenwood Church of Wicca do not practice the stereotypical "bubble, bubble, toil and trouble" witchcraft, the state Supreme Court has ruled that their Moreland Avenue church property is exempt from tax.

In the 4-2 majority decision handed down this afternoon, Justice Thomas O. Marshall said that the Ravenwood church is a place of religious worship and therefore is exempt from ad valorem taxes under Georgia law.

Nioma Lehrman — also known as Lady Sintana, the high priestess, elder, founder and director of the House of Ravenwood — wept quietly upon hearing the decision and said: "Oh, God. I can hardly believe it.

"Then again, yes I can believe it. I have had great faith in the system . . . and in this country," she added.

Lady Sintana originally filed suit in November 1979, when the Fulton County tax commissioner billed her \$589.82 for property taxes on the two-story, red building at 522 Moreland Avenue.

She described the Wiccan faith as matriarchal religion which originated in Europe.