

‘Priest of Pan’ Wins Right To Wear ‘Horns of Power’ in License Photo

Yarmulkes, hijabs, wigs, turbans and habits are all religious head coverings allowed for wear in U.S. driver’s license pictures.

Add “horns of power” to the list.

A Maine man named Phelan MoonSong is now the proud carrier of a state-issued driver’s license that shows his bespectacled eyes peering out beneath a pair of pointy goat horns emanating from his forehead.

“My horns have become very important to me, the feel of them on my head,” MoonSong told The Wild Hunt, a website for pagan news and commentary. “They are like a spiritual antenna.”

When he wore the horns to the Bangor, Maine, Department of Motor Vehicles, a clerk asked if they were implanted in his head. He said they were not. He told the clerk he was a “Priest of Pan”—a neo-pagan with an Earth-based spirituality—and they were part of his religiously required garb.

The clerk snapped his picture but told him he needed to send the state various documents showing the horns were religiously required attire.

MoonSong’s request is not unprecedented. Numerous “Pastafarians”—those who maintain a tongue-in-cheek belief in the Flying Spaghetti Monster—have won the right to be photographed wearing colanders as hats.

MoonSong sent the state documentation from four scholarly tomes on pagan traditions, including one titled “Pagan

Religions: A Handbook for Diversity Training.” He also fired off a personal essay about why his horns were important to him, according to the website.

Last month, when he called Maine’s secretary of state’s office, which handles driver’s license photos, he was told his horns would have to go.

MoonSong then appeared at the state’s motor vehicle office—horns firmly in place—and mentioned he was seeking help from Maine’s Civil Liberties Union, a civil rights advocacy group.

His horns were approved and he expects his license soon.

“I do not see any problem as long as sincere beliefs are held and whatever rules are applied are applied to all fairly and equally,” MoonSong told The Wild Hunt. “Freedom of religion means all religions, not just your own.” {eo}

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