

C.Φ.R.D. Biquarterly

Connexus Of Reformed Druids

An RDNA Publication

Leaf: Northern Red Oak – *Quercus rubra ssp borealis*

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64 Foghamhar, 58 Y.R.

Volume 1

Issue 1

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Autumnal Equinox



Photo: Druid's Circle, Carleton College Cowling Arboretum, Northfield, MN

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Carleton Grove – Northfield, Minnesota

Carleton College Grove is the Mother Grove of the Reformed Druids of North America since its foundation in 1963. Every five years the Grove membership has a guaranteed 100% turnover rate, and it seems reasonable to conclude that most Carleton Arch-Druids haven't held that elected office more than three years of their sojourn at the college.

Carleton Grove is also the seat of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu (CoDAL), the governing body of the Reform comprised of all duly ordained Third Order Druids around the world. Naturally, the chairperson of CoDAL is the Arch-Druid of Carleton Grove, elected by the members of that fellowship. It is always fascinating to ponder that while most world religions have an old sage selected by other sages of similar tenure, the Reformed Druids of North America has a council chairperson aged 18-22 selected by others in the same age range. Generation Z is now the figurehead of the RDNA.

Carleton Grove has had strong leadership and an enthusiastic team in the last several years. There was a gap from 2012 to 2015 where Carleton Grove had no ordained Third Order Druids and only provisional Arch-Druids. Sadly this interregnum period even occurred on the 50th anniversary of the Reform! At long last, Anna Smith. was ordained, and she led Carleton Grove into a time of prosperity for the fellowship, followed by Rebecca Stover, John Scott, Daniel Quintero, and now the torch has been passed on to Jo Berlage, and she is working closely with her grovemates to keep things going strong during the trying times of the pandemic.



In other news from Carleton Grove, last year it was reported that the fire pit in the Druid's Den had been destroyed. The Druid's Den is a secluded glade in a hollow of the Upper Arboretum at Carleton College. In RDNA lore this place was once called the Little Grove. There was an additional slight miscommunication that sounded like the trees around the hollow of the Druid's Den had been bulldozed, but it turns out that was only a

threatened outcome from the arboretum staff. Partying (from the student body in general) was becoming a problem so the fire pit was indeed removed and the den was re-sodded.

The Druid's Den is actually a longstanding sacred space in the arboretum for the druids at Carleton Grove. Dozens of druids have had their All-Night Vigil and ordination there. Last year, Daniel Quintero (who was Arch-Druid at



the time) was able to have a new fire pit installed in the Den, on the condition that it is covered and locked when not in use, and the Office of the Chaplain controls the key. Interestingly, the Arch-Druid of Carleton is also one of the official Chaplain's Assistants, which means the Reformed Druids really have come a long way since 1963, but I digress.

What it really means, is that the Druid's Den has been prioritized *for the druids*, or anyone who makes the proper reservations with the chaplain. It's not the greatest looking fire pit cover, rather it looks like a small diamond shaped UFO landed in the Den. It is a relief to know the trees around the glade weren't bulldozed after all, and it's heartwarming to hear the druids saved the sacred space for future generations. If you want to vigil here to enter the Third Order, just remember to reach out to Carleton Grove long in advance to petition them to reserve the fire pit. Then you too will be able to scry into the flames, meditating in the sacred grove.



Tucson Protogrove – Tucson, Arizona

Report on Tucson Protogrove, RDNA Alban Elfed 2020

Tucson Protogrove, RDNA met on Sunday, September 20th, for Alban Elfed. We met (as usual) atop Barnum Hill at Reid Park here in Tucson. Three of the four members of the protogrove were present, along with one guest (one of the members daughters).

We opened with "The Druid's Prayer," and talked about Alban Elfed being the time when day and night were once again in perfect balance, a gateway into the dark half of the year, and that in other times and places (other than the Sonoran Desert), Alban Elfed would be a celebration of the harvest, and a time of giving thanks for it. We then talked about some of the things we can give thanks for all we have been given in life. Some of the suggestions included:

- Share a meal with loved ones and friends. Go around the table and have each person give thanks for something in their life.
- Take some time to recount the good things that have happened in your life (maybe even record them in a journal, if you keep one).
- Plant a native seed, make a contribution to an organization that will plant a tree on your behalf, or get in touch with the Arbor Day Foundation (www.arborday.org) to learn more about planting them yourself.
- Dedicate part of your home (a shelf, window, etc) to celebrate the earth's abundance. Decorate it with fall colors (brown, red, orange). You can also use berries, squash, pumpkins, etc).

NOTE: For Alban Elfed, we had a pumpkin on the altar... after the ritual, this was given to Ian's Daughter...

- Consider the concept of “balance”. As the day and night are in balance at this time, make any adjustments needed to bring your own life into balance...
- Drumming/Dancing. Maybe a “Dance of Gratitude” would be appropriate. NOTE: as we were talking about this point, a drum circle started up down the hill from us... couldn't have planned that if we tried!!!

(Thanks to [TADHGTALKS](#) for the ideas to celebrate Alban Elfed).

During this time of Covid-19, I believe that it is more important than ever to recognize the gifts and blessings that we have been given in this life, and to give thanks for them.

For our reading, I read a poem By Linda Davis, which appeared in Issue 279 of Touchstone, the journal of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids:

[Editor's note: OBOD requests that Touchstone article content is reserved for members of the Order. Or visit the RDNA Facebook page to view the poem. For information on joining OBOD please visit www.druidry.org]

We were planning on doing the 3 Powers Meditation (From Ár nDraíocht Féin)... we ended up cutting the ritual short though.

Respectfully Submitted,

C, Adam G. Grose (Meirneal)
Tucson Protogrove, RDNA

Oakdale Grove – Minneapolis-Saint Paul, Minnesota

We've largely been in stasis over the course of 2020. We had a great turnout for Oimelc, despite it being below freezing out, but we held our ritual outside the Como Park Conservatory in Saint Paul followed by retreating indoors to enjoy the tropical plants. Twice in March we visited Carleton Grove, once to bring ordination gifts for Jo Berlage who had vigiled bravely at the cusp of Geimredh several months before. The second visit was upon the invite of then Arch-Druid Daniel Quintero to attend a folk music singalong hosted by the druids, and Carleton College's beloved folk musician known as “Folk.” I think about half our Grove was able to attend.

At that time the pandemic was already known to have spread in Minnesota, so we were a bit nervous, but in retrospect the pandemic here really wasn't that bad yet and we were fine. The Vernal Equinox

was approaching, and I didn't want to endanger my grovemates on the off-chance that any of us were in the incubation period of an infection (I don't think we even knew about the possibility of asymptomatic cases at that point in time). So I went and pre-recorded a Vernal Equinox ritual video (see Videos section) and uploaded it on the high day. I did the same thing for Beltane.

In June, the pandemic in Minnesota wasn't so bad, so I wanted to convene in person for the Midsummer Solstice, however travel plans were overlapping, so I had to reschedule the ritual for the following weekend. Unfortunately my grandmother passed away from complications of advanced Parkinson's Disease, so the solstice gathering was canceled. Then as the pandemic bounced back, it just felt like a bad idea to meet because I'd rather everyone stay safe and healthy.

In accordance with RDNA tradition, Oakdale Grove conducted annual elections for the formal offices of Arch-Druid, Preceptor, and Server, as well as the informal office of Bard. We also voted by mail which put our Grove's PO box to good use. Everyone was reelected to their incumbency except for the Server, which was a four-way tie. That means if three candidates don't concede, we will need to conduct a bardic duel, and the most entertaining contestant will win the office. I think the bardic duel is a later RDNA custom. I'm tentatively planning a Samhain ritual, outdoors, with social distancing and additional precautions, so that we can have our bardic duel and meet one last time before the Season of Sleep (Meán Geimredh) sets in for the next six months.

An RDNA Druid Training Program

[Editor's note: I had a typo in the line above that said "Druid Draining Program." It looked so morbid and funny, I just felt like sharing. I think the proper Millennial or Gen Z neologism would be "spooky" which is a pop-culture typo that was supposed to say spooky, but now means spooky & funny.]

Lastly, I've been working on an RDNA style Druid Training Program (that's the working title so far) for Oakdale Grove. I started it pretty much immediately after finishing the 2020 Grove Census project. My expectations for this training program is that it will be a free interactive PDF workbook that can be filled out in certain areas and submitted for review by program facilitators. Since the workbook is in a digital format, distance learning will also be an option and can be utilized by anyone around the world.

Since druidry is so subjective, the review merely ensures that participants demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter and that they made an effort to go through the motions in their own way. That portion of the training program will result in a *Complete* or *Incomplete* status and won't be graded. The second portion of the program is an adaptation of Mike the Fool's 2014 ARDA study course. There will be an ARDA exam that requires a passing grade of 80% or higher. The steep curve is due to the fact that it is a distance learning workbook. We can't have a proctor supervising students taking the exam all the way in Seoul, so it's an open-book test.

I had a couple volunteers contribute to some of the workbook modules and proofread sections, and I am super grateful for that. I had a few other volunteers who said they wanted to help, but unfortunately no other contributions have been delivered yet. When the workbook draft reached 114 pages, I really started to get burned out. I don't want this training program to be "indoctrination of John's opinions" but at this rate, that's what it's becoming. With each update, I uploaded the current state of the draft to the training program Facebook group (see *Blogs & Social Media Links* page), and added a new comment in the discussion as to what sections were completed and needed review, critiquing, and proofreading, as well as what sections still needed to be started by anyone willing to help.

Here is a list of topics that I am specifically looking to have written or expand upon:

- Shadow Work
- Sit Spots
- Journaling Topic(s)
- Devotional Types & Methods
- Spiritual Cleansing Methods (self care?)
- Tree or Plant Planting Ideas, Tips, Tricks
- Unrealistic Expectations in Druidry
- Augury (omens and divination)
- Recruiting and Proselytizing (why we avoid it)
- Saining
- Do you have additional ideas that can be tied into Reformed Druidry? We ask that topics range from 1-10 pages, single spaced, Times New Roman 12.

Please avoid the following Cultural Appropriation topics:

- Spirit Animals, Spirit Guides, Totems, Power Animals, etc
- Smudging
- Dreamcatchers
- Shamanism (which is properly an initiatory tradition the RDNA can't provide)

If anyone has spare time during this ongoing pandemic and you feel you can commit to voluntarily contributing to a workbook that *may* help druids develop a well-rounded practice, please let me know.

—*John the Verbose*

Three Letters From A Bríatharogam

Coll

The Well of Wisdom, in the Otherworld
Is overhung with windblown hazel boughs
Which, shaken once, nine times, shed nine nutshells
Thrice fell down sweet brown clusters, husks unfurled,
From this fair nutshell's friend and tree most sweet.
Nine times the silver salmon rose to eat.

Onn

By human hands his flesh is worked with ease
Flesh from his corpse fine craftsmanship can form
Into a warband's weapons. He brings harm
To horses, too, the two must link. These trees
Hold no such source of harm horseflesh should fear
Save when man shapes ash flesh into a spear

Edad

Where trees meet to talk to one another
Trembling Aspen, most sensitive of trees
Soon susurrates his secrets on the breeze
Whispering most of all to Birch, his brother.
Can any sounds more blessed than these be heard:
Whistling trees, and friends with friendly words.
—Neil Rhind



Road to Jim's Cabin
by John the Verbose

Dusios

There were three parts to God, and three to Gaul
And those from Rome who once would understand
Their new home's god as form of faun or pan
Spared not the rod come paganism's fall

But showed as flawed, an Angel of the Fall,
What once they'd shown a spirit of the land,
Whom bed-to-bed would roam, and clad as man
Their women pawed as playthings, in his thrall

As to a beastly baud, in hope to haul
A harvest grown in wombs, part of a plan
Where demonseed was sewn by goatish glands.
What once had awed the folk left them appalled.

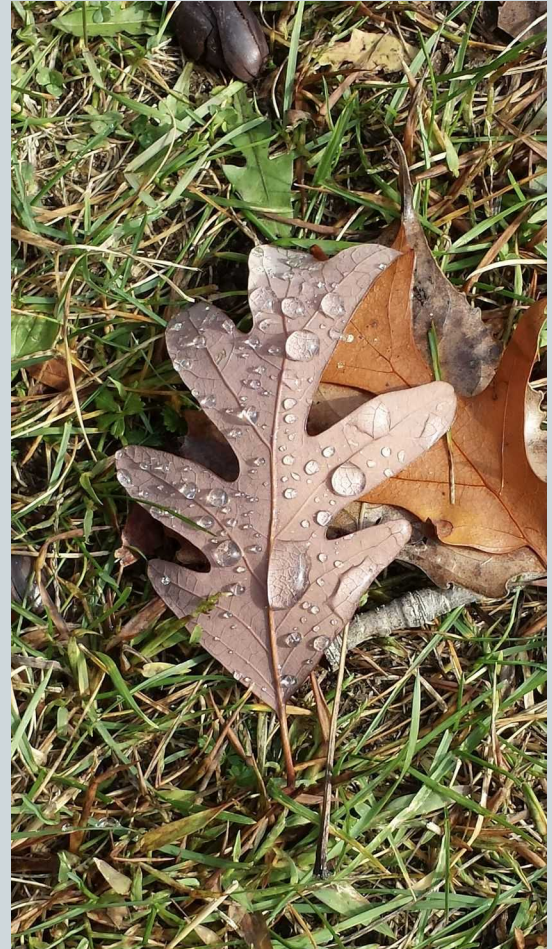
A god who now recalled a lone wild man,
A wodwose all grown hairy at their hands.
—Neil Rhind

The ABCs of Merlin Ambrosius

Ambrosius Aurelianus, An Anecdote:
Builders behold a burach of broken bricks
Construction crumbling; Call for counsel quick!
An ancient advisor arrives, alleges an antidote:

Blood-sacrifice of a bastard Brythonic bairn!
Culling a Celtic Child could cancel a curse,
Averting any accidents, and worse.
By command, a boy is brought to the broke cairn.

Counsellors, Crown and Cambion child converse
Asking advisors about anticipated acts;
Building boon by brutal bloodshed backed.
Child corrects counsellors concerning curse:



White Oak leaf with raindrops
By Johayan Sycamore Bear

Didn't Druids discern destruction down to Dragons?
(Emrys/Ambrosius educates enchanters)
Foundation faults flow from foes of fairytale freelancers
Grappling in their grotto; great ghastly radge ones

Hostile horrors hiding in their hypogean hole
Inculcating instability in their incessant fight,
Jealous jousting giants, one giant red, one giant white
Kolour Koded Kimeras, Kontesting for Kontrol.

Let loose these Leviathans, the little laddie lectured,
Make them move their mischief many miles from this mound
No need to nick my naive neck to make newbigging sound
Or ooze out awful sacrifice based on old ones' conjecture.

Perhaps priestly pride was placed in perfect peril
Quickly they quizzed and quibbled qua: the quake
Reluctantly, they rooted round for reasons for the shake
Supposing the subterranean space sterile.

The trusty tyke had told a tale that's true
Uncovering underground unrest upheld the dragon's fault
Vortigern was visibly vexed when the vermis vacated their vault
Watching warring wyverns weave away, he wondered what to do.

Explanation was Extracted from the Xenogenic boy
"Yonder White's the Saxon yeomanry, us, why, we're the Red
Zoologically depicted, they will battle till one's dead.
And the old order will be lost and utterly destroyed."
—Neil Rhind

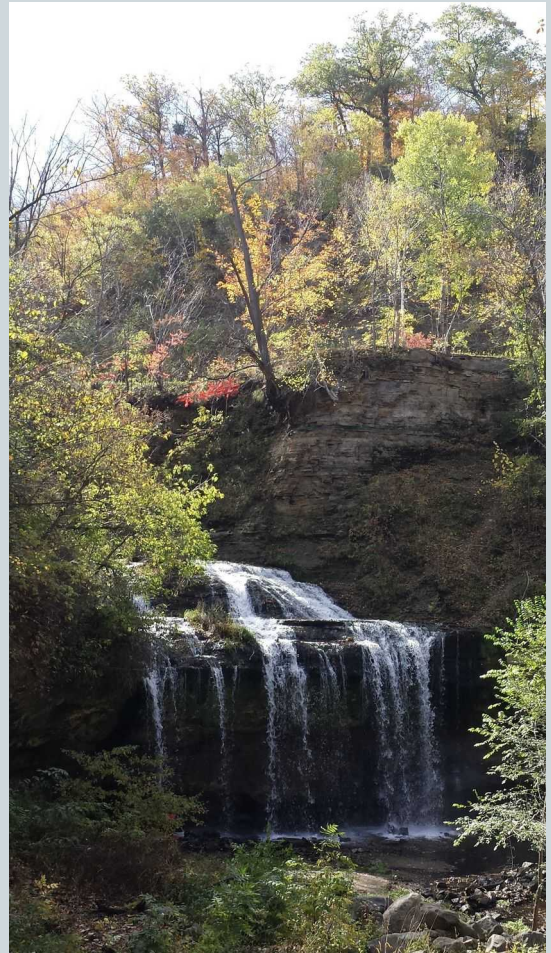
Coraniaid

Cariad they are not. No, not Welsh too.
Of the Three Oppressions, they were the first.
Raiding, like Northern Pict then Saxon crews
And like the Saxon's Welsh Knot, brought the curse,
Not of being disregarded, but heard
In fact too well. A whisper on the breeze
All they required to make out every word
If the Knot thought with shame to make Welsh cease,
Dwarves well heard Welsh not with unsubtle ears

Come Cymru's clash the stunted soldiers knew
Our every plan. For fear his folk would fall
Regal Ludd, the Welsh form of Irish Lugh,
Asked Llefelys, his brother-king in Gaul
Now for his aid. Then, once the pair had drowned
In brass-horn-blasts their conversation's sound,
A plan was hatched based on an insect found
Innocuous to Britons, but when ground
Deadly poison to the Coraniaid.

Calling all clans, Cymric and Coraniaid
On pretext of a council of both camps
Resolving rifts between man and dwarf, Lludd had
Assembled them not to give Peace A Chance
Nor to risk a single man of his in slaughter
Instead he planned to make the dwarves extinct, where
Anointing every head that came with water
In fact exposed the meeting to a tincture,
Diluted insect saviour of the Welsh.

—Neil Rhind



Cascade Falls, Osceola, Wisconsin
By Johayan Sycamore Bear

I love....

I love when the sun Rises.

The colors it brings.

I love when the clouds capture the rays.

Make them glow just a bit differently.

I love when the trees kiss me in the morning.

They are saying good morning my love.

I love when the animals are out chatting away.

It makes my heart sing.

—*Courtney – I Speak To The Trees*

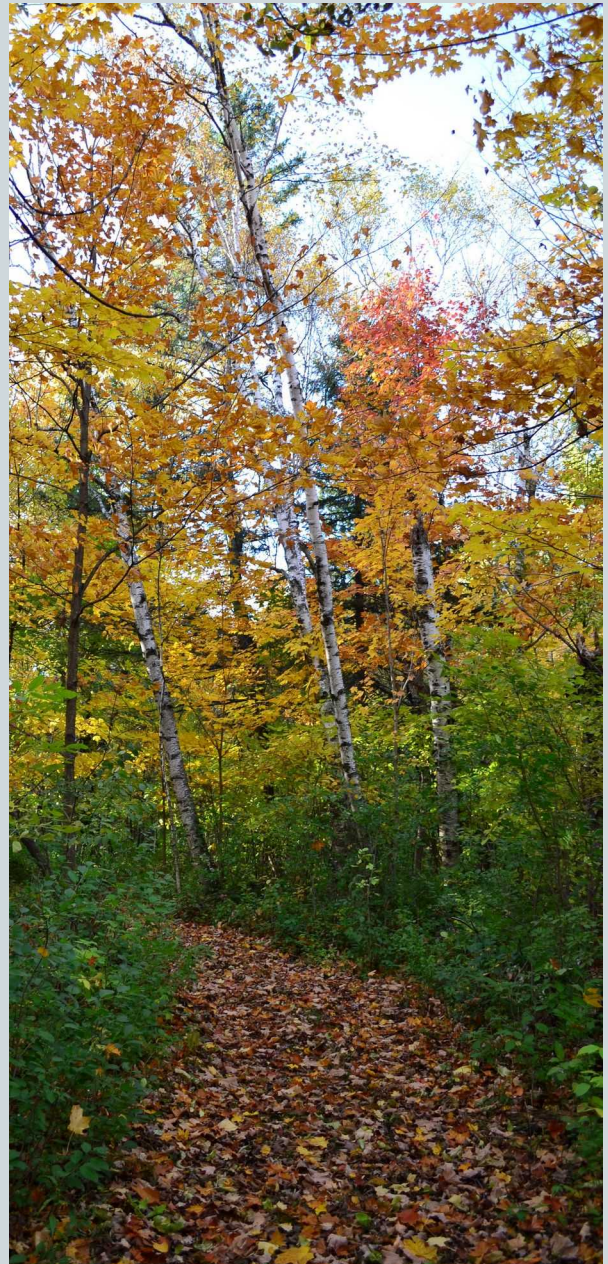
Untitled Haiku

I vow to write these

Only while out in Nature

'Cause I'm a druid.

—*John the Verbose*



Trail in Duluth, Minnesota
by John the Verbose

Overview

This section is an open forum for opinion pieces, letters to the editor, druidic gossip, philosophical exposition, news of solo druids, relevant product reviews, tutorials, and other discourse.

Contribution from Johayan Sycamore Bear

On October 3rd, as part of the Northern Roots Grove, I went to Birkmose Park in Hudson, Wisconsin which is an “Indian Mound” park that claims to have mounds from the Woodland Culture.

The mounds in the park at the crest line are not original mounds but of the original mounds remain. We met there for a veneration of the ancients, an informal gathering of druids from across the Twin Cities and across multiple traditions. RDNA, ADF, and non-aligned druids were present and participated in the ritual. Prayers and offerings were given by the assembled members and then it was my turn to make an offering.

I am 1/8th Western Cherokee and so given the place, I was going to give a simple prayer to the Anishinaabe (the demonym of the local Tribes and Nations who lived in the region) while touching own my own ancestors.

I stepped forward to speak but something told me to kneel and place my hand on the mound. As soon as my hand touched the bare earth, my eyes filled with tears and the most wailing cries I’ve ever heard resonated through my hand and through my entire body. I gave thanks to the Ancestors, the present Anishinaabe, and those will come after us then also thanked all the Tribes and Nations of the Americas.

By the time I finished, I was on the verge of ugly tears and my voice was wavering. Pulling my hand away from the ground was one of the most difficult things I have done as I was giving a small respite of peace to those whose graves had been desecrated and destroyed.

My brothers and sisters, as the wheel of time turns and Samhain comes around again: Please take a moment to thank your ancestors, those are who still here, and send love and energy to those who will follow us for we are all of the Earth Mother and we are all stewards of each other.

Go in Peace my Brothers and Sisters.

Johayan Sycamore Bear

2nd Order RDNA – Bard of Oakdale Grove

Tales of Mad Sweeney's Daughter

Stacey Weinberger, ODaL
Poison Oak Grove, Canyon, CA

Homegrown tomatoes, homegrown tomatoes,
What'd life be without homegrown tomatoes,
Only two things that money can't buy,
And that's true love and homegrown tomatoes

I was laid off the end of February from my job of 20 years. The last four years had been particularly hellish with hours long and stress high. Though I **know** getting out in Nature is supposed to be good and rejuvenating, and I live in the woods, I was too exhausted to even do that. It was enough to just come home, make dinner, and crash. It sucked my life blood. I was not living what I call "La Vida Druida." A pledge I made to myself therefore was tend more to the outdoors. There had to be some good to come out of this.

I am a steward of the land. I might own this little plot of three quarters of an acre, but as Dolores Keane sings in her album Solid Ground, "It's the land-you cannot own the land, The land owns you." It is a privilege to be here. And it is my responsibility to take care of it. I have three bird feeders that I keep filled. I have four containers and a bird bath that I put in fresh water daily. There is no reward in our society of instant gratification for doing this. Knowing I am providing food and water, especially during a time of high temperatures in this parched Nor Cal landscape is enough. It is my way of reciprocating the privilege of being here.

Which brings me back to the topic of this article. One of the things I wanted to do during this time of not working was to "get back to the garden." For three years I tried growing tomatoes. For three years I killed the tomatoes. This year was going to be different. I was not going to give up. Having the time, I made the time to water the plants I planted. Every day. They lived. They grew. They supplied me with enough tomatoes to make fresh tomato sauce and bruschetta. As we head into October and towards Samhain, the growing season is coming to an end. There are still a few apples on the tree and a few tomatoes still ripening. The local fauna, raccoons, deer, squirrels, usually get to the apples before I do (and I'm okay with that. It's my "land tax" after all...) but this year I was able to pick three. Picking the last of the tomatoes, one fell onto the deck and rolled across to the earth below. Was this of concern? No. I looked to see where the fruit had gone and was reminded that at Samhain any fruits not gathered must be left in the fields to feed the birds and wild animals, or the Sidhe. So I let them be.

When you grow something, leave a bit behind. It's a good practice, of gratitude and reciprocation for the bounty you have received, no matter how small. It reminds us we are not here alone, but part of a bigger web of give and take. Don't forget to give.

With thanks to Les Craig-Harger for the inspiration of her Heathen on the Heath column from the original A Druid Missal-Any, and to my mentor Emmon Bodfish.

The Seeker's Corkboard

Overview

This is the place where you can state that you are seeking other druids to form a protogrove. Long has it been said, something to the tune of *in the proper way, at the proper time, at the proper place, may another druid cross your path*. Well, here is a little nudge to help this happen sooner! These bulletins will be cumulative on each issue of C.O.R.D. until you send a stop request. They will be arranged alphabetically by country, then by state/province/region, then by town name.

To submit a Seeker's Corkboard request, email the editor and **provide your preferred name, location, and an email address** that you check consistently at least once per month. Just remember that any contact information you submit to this section does become *public*. Your email address in the newsletter will be split apart and will use different characters (& and /) instead of @ and '.' to prevent or mitigate random harvester bots from scanning them for spam.

Example Bulletin

USA: **Kansas**: Hutchinson: Dorian seeking others for starting RDNA protogrove. Email (dorian_the_druid & gmail/com).

Standard Disclaimer

I advise Googling *safety tips for meeting people from the Internet* or something to that effect. Furthermore, this is not intended as a section for personals ads or soliciting hookups.

Bulletins

None submitted yet...

Vivid Visions Gallery

Overview

It's a druidic photo gallery. Enjoy!

Contributions from Victoria S.



Montreal, Quebec, Canada



Montreal, Quebec, Canada



Montreal, Quebec, Canada

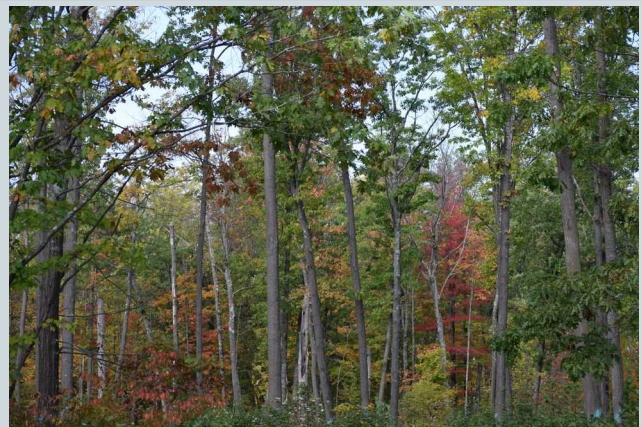


Cedar ogham set from *Rhiannon's Apothecary*

Contributions from Johayan Sycamore Bear



Oakdale Nature Preserve, Oakdale, Minnesota



Oakdale Nature Preserve, Oakdale, Minnesota



Oakdale Nature Preserve, Oakdale, Minnesota



Castle Rock, Castle Rock Twp, Minnesota

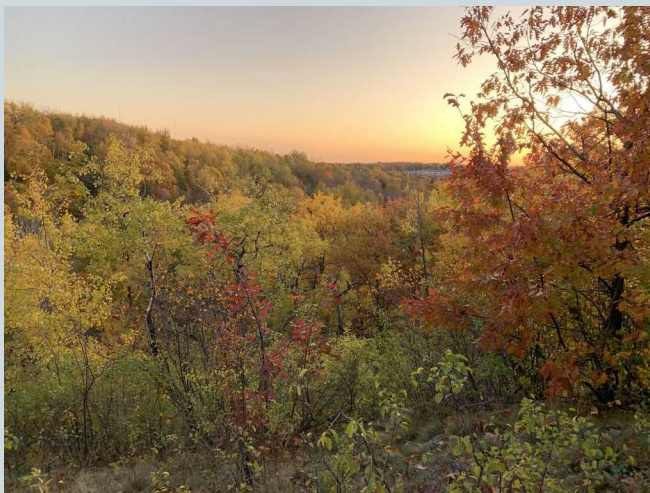
Contributions from John the Verbose



Rowan with berries, Duluth, Minnesota



Bedrock formations, Duluth, Minnesota



Valley of Silence, Duluth, Minnesota



Valley of Silence, Duluth, Minnesota

Videos of Interest

Overview

This section is reserved for videos relevant to druidry. Enjoy!

Oakdale Grove's Vernal Equinox Social Distancing Ritual



Oakdale Grove's Beltane Social Distancing Ritual



Standing With Stones Documentary of the remains of prehistoric Britain and Ireland



[Editor's note: When Rupert is inside the tomb at Bryn Celli Ddu he posits that the standing stone in the burial chamber looks like petrified wood with cut marks on it. Scientific analysis of the stone has determined that the stone is schist, which is metamorphosed shale, warped by high pressure and volcanism. Schist varieties can have the appearance of having "woodgrain," and can fracture or break in ways that resemble manmade cut marks. It's not petrified wood.]

Memes of the Month

Overview

This section is reserved for memes or fun creations that were meant to be shared *ad nauseam*. These days it seems so many druid groups and social media just share memes 90% of the time, but I think that takes away from deeper conversations that end up buried. Here is a place designated to the celebration of all those catchy kitschy memes. However, I'm limiting those to two per article.



What is your Halloween Name?

1ST LETTER	1ST NAME	1ST LETTER	MIDDLE NAME	1ST LETTER	LAST NAME
A. CREEPY	R. CACKLING	A. SPIDER	R. CANDY	A. CASTER	S. DREAMER
B. DEADLY	S. WICKED	B. MIST	S. FAIRY	B. STALKER	T. CRAFTER
C. EERIE	T. PHANTOM	C. SKULL	T. BAT	C. FINDER	U. FINDER
D. HOWLING	U. SCARLET	D. VAMPIRE	U. SPOOKY	D. HUNTER	V. EYES
E. ICY	V. HAUNTED	E. GHOST	V. SILVER	E. DUST	W. HEART
F. INVISIBLE	W. GLOOMY	F. FOG	W. CAT	F. CALLER	X. WIELDER
G. JUMPY	X. MAGICAL	G. NIGHTMARE	X. GHOUL	G. CRAFTER	Y. MANCER
H. DARK	Y. LURKING	H. MUMMY	Y. ZOMBIE	H. THIEF	Z. BREAKER
I. SAVAGE	Z. GRAVE	I. SHADOW	Z. BROOMSTICK	I. EYES	
J. QUIET		J. TROLL		J. WALKER	
K. GRIM		K. BOOGY		K. PYRE	
L. DANGEROUS		L. MONSTER		L. RUNNER	
M. CURSED		M. OWL		M. GIVER	
N. FRIGHTFULL		N. PUMPKIN		N. BLOOD	
O. BITTER		O. POTION		O. WEAVER	
P. GLOOMY		P. NIGHT		P. CATCHER	
Q. MENACING		Q. GOBLIN		Q. TAMER	
				R. GIVER	

The Right Rites For Rampant Ritualists

Overview

This section is for sharing rituals, devotionals, or other liturgical contributions.

A Solo Druid Ritual by John the Verbose

A Simple Rite For Those Who are Solo Either by Choice or by Circumstance

Overview

The following script is based on the outline and structure of rituals in the style of the Reformed Druids of North America. Since no two druids have quite the same practices, feel free to improvise, embellish, or change as needed. As a druid, I highly recommend performing rituals outside unless it's unsafe. The Earth-Mother, which is all of Nature, is central to this ritual. You may also wish to invoke ancestors, specific deities, or other beings. In this script I will use a placeholder phrase of "Sacred Ones" which you can either use as-is, or replace it with whomever you wish to contact. Any ritual segments in [brackets] and italics are instructions.

Ritual Accoutrements

I would recommend designating a ritual satchel that can hold: a drinking vessel of your choice (henceforth referred to as a chalice), a sacramental beverage of your choice, some form of **plant** life that can be given as an offering or sacrifice, and perhaps a small hard surface to set the chalice on if the ground might not be level or stable. If you are able to make a fire, bring some herbs to consecrate the fire with once it's lit. Herbs endemic to your area and bountiful are more eco-friendly.

Opening Invocation

O [*Sacred Ones*], I call upon you in hope that you might grant these threefold supplications: that you might enter and hallow this place, for I honor and venerate you here; and that you might hallow this moment in time, for I honor and venerate you now; and that you might anoint me with your blessings, filling me with Awareness and awe, the likes of which I might gain when I behold the vastness of the Earth-Mother from a mountain top. O [*Sacred Ones*], please grant these threefold supplications which are the desires of the human spirit. O Earth-Mother, cleanse my heart and mind as I prepare for meditations.

Processional

[Circumambulate your ritual site to outline your sacred space while reciting a poem, prayer, chant, or song. The following recommendation is "Hymn to the Earth-Mother" by Kathie Courtice, music by Peter Basquin, 1963]

O Earth-Mother!

We praise thee that seed springeth,

that flower openeth, that grass waveth.

We praise thee for winds that whisper,

through the graceful elm,

through the shapely maple,

through the lively pine,

through the shining birch,

through the mighty oak.

We praise thee for all things, O Earth-Mother, who givest life!

The image shows a musical score for a song. It consists of five staves of music in G-clef (treble clef) with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes. The lyrics are: "O- Earth-Moth-er! We praise Thee that seed springeth, that flower openeth, that grass waveth. We praise Thee for winds that whisper thru the graceful elm, thru the shapely maple, thru the live-ly pine, thru the shin-ing birch, thru the mighty oak. We praise Thee for all things, O- Earth-Mother, Who givest Life." The music is a simple melody with a steady rhythm.

[Click sheet music to hear MP3]

Tree Meditation

[In case you still need to get into a ritual mindset, tree meditations can be helpful, however, a script might not be helpful. **In a nutshell, there are three steps to a typical tree meditation:**

1. **Breathe slowly & deeply,**
2. **Think like a tree.**
3. **You're a tree now.**

Basically meditate on the life cycle of a tree: seed, sprout, roots, water below, earth all around, sky and sun above, grounding, centering, flowing life energy, strength, stability, growth, peace. When in doubt, wing it, improvise, or skip it if you feel you don't need it.]

Bardic Offering

[You may wish to insert a bardic offering to the Sacred Ones. This is all you. Do you have a musical instrument? Do you know a song, poem, or prose of praise? Or perhaps do you have a crafted item or votive offering? Be creative!]

Sacrifice of Life

My praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, my voice have been carried on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, O *[Sacred Ones or Earth-Mother]* I pray thee, as I offer up this sacrifice of life.

Accept it, I pray thee, and cleanse my spirit, granting peace and life unto me.

[Plant sacrifice is placed in fire, on altar, or on ground.]

The Divination

[Augury or aeromancy are typical methods of determining whether or not a sacrifice is accepted. In the Reformed Druids of North America, the spirits of the cardinal directions are sought, starting with north. There is generally no wrong way to do this. As with any segment, switch it up if you like, or perform your favorite method of divination.]

Have you accepted my sacrifice, O *[Sacred Ones or Earth-Mother]*?

I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer,

I call upon the Spirit of the East to give answer,

I call upon the Spirit of the South to give answer,

and I call upon the Spirit of the West to give answer.

The Answer

[Good omens are the best. If you get a bad omen, you may make additional sacrifices as needed. If you keep getting bad omens and the sacrifice is not accepted, you might just want to wrap things up, ask the Sacred Ones for guidance in the days ahead]

Praise be, my sacrifice dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of the mind and heart, has been accepted!

The Earth-Mother gives us the Waters-of-Life so that I may know the continual flow and renewal of life. These Waters flow from the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother. I honor this gift by partaking of the Waters-of-Life. The Earth-Mother has given forth of her bounty, therefore I take up the Waters.

The Consecration

O *[Sacred Ones]*, *[Take and raise your chalice]* descend into these waters and hallow them with your virtues of *[you better know at least one aspect of them]*. O Earth-Mother, ascend into these waters and hallow them with the virtues of the running stream, cooling and rejuvenating. Might I come to know thy power as I take and drink of thy secret essences.

The Waters-of-Life! *[Drink some, but not all.]*

The Libation

To thee, O Earth-Mother, I return this portion of thy bounty, even as I too must one day return to thee.

[Pour the remaining contents of the chalice into the fire or ground]

Final Meditation

[The final segment is a silent meditation which should last for at least a minute, reflecting on all that has happened, taking in the sights and sounds of nature, kindling your curiosity within, with slow, deep breathing.]

The Benediction

Now do I go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that my sacrifice has been accepted, and that I have received peace and blessings of life from *[Sacred Ones]* and the Earth-Mother.

Overview

This section is reserved for reader-submitted divinations, premonitions, soothsaying, prophesies, omens, maybe a Celtic horoscope for the range of a month.

Submission by John the Verbose

Methodology

Rock Art Runes (whole set cast repeatedly until only one faced up, repeated thrice)

Meanings

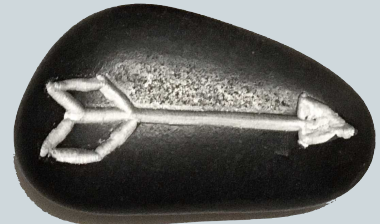
A Torc, Fire, and an Arrow – **Torcs** were typically worn by chieftains of ancient Celtic tribes. The torc is a symbol of power and control.

Fire is a disruptive symbol of destruction, change, transformation, sacrifice, tribulations, or passions, but can be a tool or a comfort when kept in check.

The **Arrow** is truth, a ray of light, always pointing forward from its own perspective, a threat, a warning, action in motion, or a means to an end. Does it find its mark?

Interpretation

The ones in control are facing a trial by fire. Whether it is cleansing, destructive, or a need-fire (which I doubt), then forward motion can commence.



Helping Healing Hearth

Overview

This section is for prayer, healing energy, and meditation requests.

Calendar of Events

Overview

This section is for contributors to add their events, gatherings, any applicable online meetings, etc that they wish to announce publicly. It will also have an almanac of full and new moon dates for the time between issues of this biquarterly publication, as well as the next Wheel of the Year high day. This section will also feature any applicable minor holidays according to the Schismatic Druids of North America (SDNA), one of the early direct offshoots tied to the RDNA.

High Days and Moon Phases

53 Foghamhar (September 22) Autumnal Equinox

62 Foghamhar (October 1) Full Moon

48 Foghamhar (October 16) New Moon

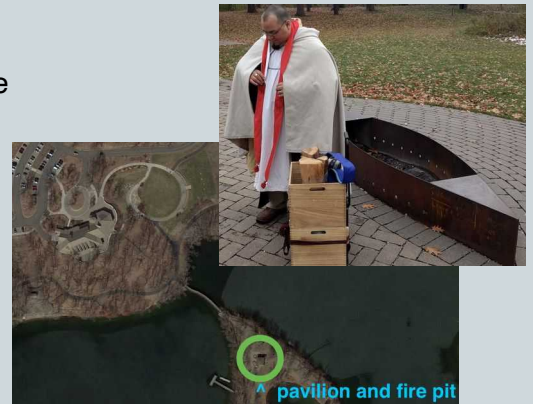
92 Foghamhar (October 31) Full Moon (Blue Moon) on Samhain Eve

Shared Open to Public events

Oakdale Grove Samhain Ritual – Saturday October 31, 2020, 1:00 PM, Silverwood Park, 2500 County Road “E,” Saint Anthony, MN.

Ritual will be outside by the canoe shaped fire pit on the island.

Social distance 6 feet with masks or 12-18 feet without. Bring your own chalice and your own sacramental liquid to put in it.



Upcoming minor holidays of the SDNA (non-canonical)

- 62 Foghamhar (October 1) **Feast of Chwerthin** – tell jokes, awful puns, laugh, and be mirthful.
- 63 Foghamhar (October 2) **Festival of Guardian Spirits** – a time to honor your personal guardians.
- 68-70 Foghamhar (October 7-9) **Autumn Festival of Wine and Pleasure** – Enjoy a mid-harvest feast and abject hedonism.
- 73 Foghamhar (October 12) **Feast of the Autumn Fool** – It’s like the inverse of April Fool’s Day; *you* be the fool.
- 85 Foghamhar (October 24) **Feast Day of Air and its Inhabitants** – Meditate and commune with nature spirits.

Long-term notice for the 60th anniversary of the RDNA

6 Samradh, 61 Y.R. (Saturday, May 6, 2023) is the day of the 60th anniversary reunion of the foundation of the Reformed Druids of North America at Carleton College! More details to follow as the event approaches.

Blogs & Social Media Links

Blogs Curated By Druids

Courtney's blog [Corey Adventures](#)

Ellen Evert Hopman's blog [A Druid's Blog](#)

Social Media

C.O.R.D. Biweekly's [Facebook page](#)

“Official” Reformed Druids of North America (RDNA) [Facebook group](#)

[Editor's note: if you request to join there are four vetting questions. Please answer all four; they're really easy.]

New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA) [Facebook group](#)

Ron Stonemage's [Tumblr](#) & [Instagram](#)

John the Verbose's [Tumblr](#)

Oakdale Grove's [Twitter](#)

Oakdale Grove's [Facebook page](#)

Oakdale Grove's RDNA Druid Training Program Development [Facebook page](#)

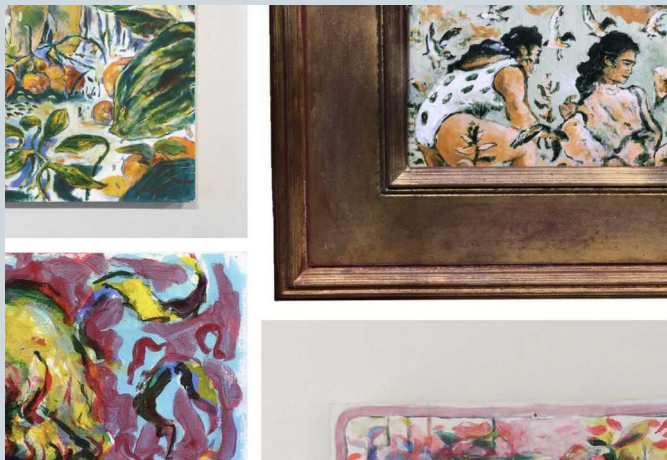
Artisan Promo Page

Overview

Each article of C.O.R.D. will contain one page of featured artists, craftspersons, or small online storefronts that may be of interest to the druid community in some way. There is no cost involved; anyone can request that their content be promoted here on a first-come-first-served basis. If I get a ton of requests, in the future we may have to revisit that policy or add a second page.

Jeremiah Soup's [art gallery](#)

All he wanted to do was subscribe to the newsletter but I was stunned by the art gallery when I clicked through the link in his email signature out of curiosity. I actually asked if I could share this here on his behalf, and I'm glad he agreed to it.



Ron Stonemage's [wire art and wrapped stones](#)

I think we originally discovered each other's Tumblr blogs about a year and a half ago. Not only is the wearable artwork intricate and beautiful, but Ron often has a lot of thought provoking questions about druidry that sometimes takes some time for me to piece together an answer.



Reformed Druid Resources

Overview

The Reformed Druids of North America is probably one of the few major druid orders that provides all resources for learning about our style of druidism at no cost. We might not have all the answers, and unfortunately we don't have a mentorship or official training program, however there is something major in the works on an unofficial capacity. For now, here is a list of resources we *do* have.

A Reformed Druid Anthology – ARDA (2nd edition)

[ARDA II](#) is an 848 page PDF of RDNA history, customs, meditations, debates, rituals, advice, and other information. If the massive PDF file is too big, it is also broken down into its individual sections which makes for easier scrolling [here](#). There you will also find part of an ARDA study course and other documents. The books in hardcover version are rare and out of print, but the PDFs are free.

Grove Finder

Everyone wants to know: is there an RDNA or NRDNA Grove in _____? Well, the most current source of truth is the [Grove Finder spreadsheet](#). It's been updated *en masse* the last two Januaries during the Grove censuses, and if there are any interim changes I usually get to them within two days. It tracks Reformed Druid, New Reformed Druid, and Reformed Druidic Wicca (MOCC) Groves & Protogroves.

RDNA Year Conversion Chart & Calendar

The RDNA Calendar was technically at year 0 during the pre-planning stages of the Reform, and year 1 began on Beltane (May 1) of 1963. It's unapologetically half a year off from the Celtic New Year. As of Beltane 2020, the 58th Year of the Reform (Y.R.) began. I often forget what Y.R. it is, so I refer to the [RDNA Year Conversion spreadsheet](#). There is also a [four-year RDNA calendar](#) to help you learn what day of the four seasons it is, because you'll see the RDNA calendar system is all over this publication.

Black Book of Liturgy

The original 1960s copies of Black Book of Liturgy (which were in three-ring binders) were only to be kept by ordained Third Order Druids, but mimeographed copies leaked out decades ago, and we think that's a good thing. Oakdale Grove has a new adaptation of [Black Book of Liturgy \(PDF\)](#) with a ton of rituals as well as minimum recommended readings from ARDA. Black Book of Liturgy is also available in [hardcover for \\$12.41](#) via Lulu print-on-demand, which is strictly *at cost* of having it printed and bound. Oakdale Grove uses these books in rituals.

Oakdale Grove's RDNA Druid Training Program

This is a work in progress. So far the draft is 114 pages long, and I'm only half way into adding the *basic* content I want to put in it. I am not an educator, so I'm concerned about its flow and efficacy. If anyone wants to help develop it with me, I would greatly appreciate the assistance.

About *C.O.R.D.*

Connexus of Reformed Druids – C.O.R.D. Biquarterly is a free and publicly available newsletter for the Reformed Druids of North America as well as for anyone else who might be interested. It follows in the footsteps of prior publications such as *A Druid Missal-Any* and *Druid Inquirer*. *Connexus* is an homage to the late Emmon Bodfish, who petitioned the Council of Dalon Ap Landu to update RDNA liturgical nomenclature to make it less churchlike and more unique. *Connexus* is Latin for *connection* (not exactly druidic, but I'm not complaining). Emmon's petition never gained traction (plus the Council had lost its ability to gain a voting quorum and it had no chairperson at the time) but it seemed fitting to adopt this word for a publication that connects druids around the world.

Past Articles

[Click here](#) to access all prior *C.O.R.D. Biquarterly* articles and the content contribution forms.

Meet the Editor

Greetings! I'm John "The Verbose." I've practiced generic forms of druidry since I spent a semester in Ireland in 2004. I began interacting with the RDNA in 2011, and in 2013 I was ordained as a priest of Dalon Ap Landu and formed Oakdale Grove in Minnesota with 5 other grovemates. In 2015 I had the rare opportunity to become a priest of Belenos and in 2017 the even rarer honor of becoming a priest of Sirona, as well as the new curator of her Order. In January 2020 I began work on developing an RDNA style druid training program, and as of now that is still a work in progress.



I am absolutely committed to my oath of Service and wish to help others explore Reformed Druidry by a diverse array of means. That includes assembling and issuing these newsletters. Anything in this publication that doesn't have an attribution and is written in the first person is pretty much me sharing my opinions and experiences. That's where your help with contributions is so helpful; we have a newsletter with crowd-sourced content to appeal to a broader druidic audience. I sincerely hope you find this periodical to be a worthwhile investment of your time. I always welcome constructive criticism and suggestions or other feedback.

Peace, peace, peace! ☸

Contribute Content to the Next Issue!

Submission Process

Issues will be released within a day or two of the RDNA Wheel of the Year high days. That's more or less the deadline if you wanted to submit any content for the forthcoming article. Anything received a bit late might end up on the draft of the next article thereafter. **Please ensure content is PG-13 or tamer.**

Gmail Users Can Use Our Full-Feature Google Form to Contribute!

Do you plan on contributing content from a Gmail account? We have a [convenient form](#) that allows you to enter text-based contribs as well as attach files or photos! A Google account is only required to send attachments through the form.

Non-Gmail Users Have Two Ways to Contribute

1. There is a [lite version of the same form](#) for those who don't have a Gmail account, which allows anyone to submit text-based contributions only.
2. Or simply copy and fill the form below when emailing contributions to my Gmail: **MNdruids**

Hello,
I would like to share the following/attached content for the next C.O.R.D. article.
I hereby consent and attest that I (the sender) hold the rights or permission to share it.
[Exception for memes, public YouTube video links, certain other content types.]

- I wish to be credited under the name: _____
 - Subscribe me to the newsletter mailing list? _____
 - Other comments/suggestions if applicable: _____
 - [Input your content you wish to share below the line, and/or attach files]
-

What Content Does C.O.R.D. Look For?

- News of the RDNA & NRDNA Groves & Protogroves
- News of the Solo Druids
- Poetry
- Short Stories
- Tutorials
- Druidic projects, arts, crafts you are making
- Personal milestones, editorials, druidic book or product reviews, critiques
- Seeker Bulletins like "Solo druid looking for other druids in _____"
- Your own photography
- Links to videos of druidic interest
- Links to your druid blogs or social media
- Divinations and their summaries
- Events you're willing to announce publicly

- Maybe a druidry-related meme (article will limit two)
- Healing Thoughts Requests
- Do you have a druid-oriented Etsy shop or similar online store? One page of the newsletter will be reserved for artisan promo space
- Propose a topic; you can help make this newsletter be a success