



**Spring Equinox Issue  
Year of the Reform “LII”  
March 21, 2015 c.e.  
Volume 32, Issue 2**

### Editor’s Note:

Blessings of the Spring on you. I hope you enjoyed the solar eclipse and have survived the late winter storms in the north-east.

Deadline for Beltane submissions is April 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Send to [mikerdna@hotmail.com](mailto:mikerdna@hotmail.com)

We invite you to join our Facebook groups such as:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2455316244/> RDNA  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/reformed.druids/> RDG

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# NEWS OF THE GROVES



## Oakdale Grove: News from Minnesota

I'm starting to create a few more stone sigil pendants in preparation for Beltane at Carleton. Not sure if anyone is planning on making the pilgrimage for vigiling, but it's good to prepare.



I set up my most elaborate work altar ever on my desk now that my department has settled in at the headquarters building. The Schefflera tree pot is the mini sacred grove, yellow quartz "standing stone" at its center was a gift from my meditation seminars I'm enrolled in here at work, the plate makes a convenient coaster for my tea mug (effectively a chalice).

The "altar" is the jar of water from Lake Superior which was collected after my grove consecrated the lake itself last October. I have a stone pendant with the Druid Sigil engraved. It is attached via leather cord to a spoon holder since this was originally a loose leaf tea container. The stone can be set upon the jar lid and serve as the altar stone.

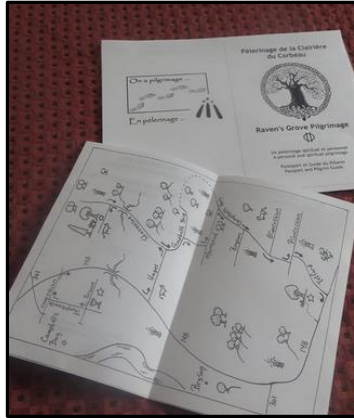
John M.

## Papyrus Grove: News from Egypt

I went to visit Luxor (ancient city Thebes) to spend time at Karnak temple, the largest complex in the world apparently. The big stones were nice, but actually I had much more fun at the sacred pond next to it where the priests had once bathed. A nearby book seller had two cats, and I learned that he fished daily in the pond, so I joined him for an hour and we stuffed the cats full of little finger sized fish. St. Patrick's day was but a few drinks at some bars, and a close-call with a fire in my apartment took away any appetite for pyromania festivals.

Mike the Fool

## Raven's Grove: News from Quebec



Well, I have looked at the pilgrimage root. It would take approximately 7 hours to walk. But if you add a stop at Karen's altar it could be an 8 hour walk. That is without taking time for meditation and prayers. Raven's Grove pilgrimage root will start at my altar and go up to Old Gnarly. The pilgrimage root is totally rural, calm and scenic. Root info would only be accessible to Grove members only.



I hope to consecrate the altar ensemble the next time the Schefflera trees need water, though I may need to modify the RDNA altar consecration ritual to make it a more innocuous ceremony for a work environment.



## **From MOCC Grove in Blowlegs OK**

From our Grove in Bowlegs, Oklahoma

The Blessing of the Fields, Ostara 2015

O yez! O yez! All ye kindred, pray attend:

In all good Grace and benevolence, with these words we do Bless the Fields, so that, good seed planted may be good harvest grown.

With these words, we do bless the fields, with goodwill and hearty hearts, we do bless the Cycles of Nature and the Weather Wild... with good intent may they be our teachers in right paths of action, and nurture with placid hand the seed we do plant in our lives and in our fields.

With these words, we do bless the fields, with goodwill and hearty hearts, we do bless those who govern in this and every land... with good intent that they should be wise, merciful and full of virtue.

With these words, we do bless the fields, with goodwill and hearty hearts, we do bless those who protect and serve, particularly our police and our soldiers... with good intent that they should do good works, behave nobly, and be ministers of the common good.

With these words, we do bless the fields, with goodwill and hearty hearts, we do bless the economy... with good intent that it should be healed, careers be founded and brought to maturity with good return, and a restoration of financial integrity be manifest in our Realms.

With these words, we do bless the fields, with goodwill and hearty hearts, we do bless entrepreneurs and craftsmen, workers and artists throughout the lands... with good intent that they should do works blessed with vision, creativity, and sustainability, and contribute to the common culture so that all may be enriched by their working.

With these words we do bless the fields, with goodwill and hearty hearts, we do bless all students and teachers, and all institutions of learning... with good intent that they should rightly bestow knowledge, and develop knowledge, and develop a love of understanding and wisdom.

With these words we do bless the fields, with goodwill and hearty hearts, we do bless our farms, fisheries, orchards and vineyards... with good intent that they should produce sustenance and victuals in abundance that all persons may be full, and not hunger nor thirst.

With these words we do bless the fields, with goodwill and hearty hearts, we do bless our families near and our families dear, and all our kin, wherever or whenever they may be, and all conditions of humankind, and of all creatures that the Almighty hath put in our charge to protect, nurture, and love....

With these words, may we bless you, that you may bless us in kind.

This declare above all: Healing and Light and Peace.

So mote it be.

-Thomas

# DRUID POEMS

## Schrödinger's Cat

The Strings bind the tides of Time.  
Allowing our Souls to create the Rhyme  
Schrödinger's Cat was not Blind.  
Nor the Druids lost in Time  
And Summerland is just of of Phase..  
So know you Well. the gods you Praise.  
TDK 01-12-2015

## TRUTH BY CHOICE

In times when I feel broken, when life binds my will,  
the answers I seek are tokens, if I'd only just sit still.  
Choices are a fact, that direct the way I think,  
like the ties on a track, that bring me to the brink.  
I use to blindly follow, the direction of this mark,  
but now I do not wallow, in this question of the heart.  
An active stance I take, with open mind and eyes,  
to never flounder in the wake, but learn from this new rise.  
Sometimes the choice is wrong, sometimes the choice is right,  
like working in the sun, and sleeping in the night.  
I simply can't exist, and cast my life to chance,  
I have to chose my partner, and learn the steps to dance.  
Control is not my destiny, nor, submission be my role,  
balance I strive for intensely, the truth is in my soul.  
Life's another lesson, a journey with no map,  
as mysterious as AWEN, a feather in my cap.  
I will actively persue, the dreams that come to stay,  
the truth becomes my glue, in the life I live today.  
j-anglehart 2012

## THE QUEST

As above, and so below,  
I walk the middle plane.  
As those before, and thise ahead,  
I search for knowledge gained.  
My fingers touch the earth upon,  
my eyes gaze to the skies.  
My feelings are but whispered words,  
as I ask a thousand why's?  
This search is but a lifelong query,  
my quest is narry straight.  
I am the pilgrim on this journey,  
and the answers are worth the wait...  
~j.anglehart 2013~

## NEW DAY

Sitting at my altar,  
morning sun on my back,  
the bird's song does not falter,  
I pray to stay on track.  
Smoke wafting from my cauldron,  
as my intents begin to rise,  
about , not in abandon,  
for myself is energized.  
Eyes closed to the sight,  
ears open to the sound,  
my spirit begins its flight,  
my feet firmly on the ground.  
Inhaling long deep breath,  
my soul opens wide,  
adding another step,  
to cross the great divide.  
The natural world around me,  
the universe in my hand,  
like waves upon the ocean,  
settling on the sand.  
A smile born to my lips,  
as reality rushes back,  
t'was a wondrous short trip,  
I enjoyed and thats a fact!  
J.anglehart 2012

## A MOMENT

I am walking, I am listening, I am sensing.  
My footsteps are like a drumbeat in the background,  
while the chorus chimes with noises of the living  
forest.  
Feeling the vibrations of the green world resonating  
around me.  
Smelling the organic essence filling my nose, I stop,  
and let the wonders unfold me in a blanket of peace.  
Listening to the breeze rustling through your  
outreaching arms,  
my ears hear the subtle words of your living song.  
Touching the leaves, the bark and the soil,  
soaking up your living spirit and filling me with your  
energies.  
The sunlight, the moonlight filter down to your roots,  
bathing the creatures with heat, light and cover.  
Around me, within me, above and below me,

surrounded by your enigmatic beauty, I smile and  
awe.

THANK YOU, living forest for this glimpse into you  
very living soul.

j.anglehart-2012

BEAUTIFUL BRIGHID  
EARTH STARTS HER AWAKENING ON THIS  
IMBOLC.  
YOUR EVER GROWING FIRE SLOWLY  
WARMS THE GROUND  
AND THE QUICKENING OF ALL WOMBS  
BRINGFORTH A MOTHER'S MILK.  
YOUR YOUTHFUL POWER PURSUADE THE  
IDES TO MARCH,  
YOUR TENDER CARE PUSH THE SEEDS TO  
SPROUT,  
YOUR UNCONDITIONAL LOVE BARE WITNESS  
TO NEW LIFE.  
BEAUTIFUL BRIGHID,  
WITHIN YOUR FIRE THERE IS HEAT,  
IN YOUR WARMTH THERE IS LIFE,  
FROM THIS LIFE FLOWS MILK,  
WITH THIS MILK YOU FEED THE YOUNG,  
THE YOUNG BRING LOVE AND GROWTH,  
THIS GROWTH IS A BLESSING ON YOUR  
HEART.  
a BLESSED PROTECTION TO ALL MOTHERS.  
BRIGHID,  
YOUR STRENGTH WILL THAW THE FROZEN.  
YOUR POWER WILL IGNITE THE FIRES.  
YOUR BLESSINGS WILL FEED ALL YOUR  
CHILDREN.  
YOUR LOVE WILL BRING FRESH HEALINGS.  
BRIGHID,  
I GIVE YOU THANKS, FOR ALL YOUR TENDER  
BLESSINGS.  
FOR YOU TENDER LADY ARE THE  
INSPIRATION THAT BEGINS ALL.  
FROM LIGHT, TO LOVE, TO WISDOM, TO  
HEALING AND TO NEW LIFE.  
YOUR ETERNAL CIRCLE, I AM....  
~J.ANGLEHART 2015~

"A living planet is a much more complex metaphor for  
deity than just a bigger father with a bigger fist. If an  
omniscient, all-powerful Dad ignores your prayers, it's  
taken personally. Hear only silence long enough, and  
you start wondering about his power. His fairness. His  
very existence. But if a world mother doesn't reply,  
Her excuse is simple. She never claimed conceited  
omnipotence. She has countless others clinging to her  
apron strings, including myriad species unable to  
speak for themselves. To Her elder offspring She says  
- go raid the fridge. Go play outside. Go get a job. Or,  
better yet, lend me a hand. I have no time for idle  
whining."

~~ David Brin

Recommended by our Jenny

"Stand still. The trees ahead and bushes beside you  
Are not lost. Wherever you are is called Here,  
And you must treat it as a powerful stranger,  
Must ask permission to know it and be known.  
The forest breathes. Listen. It answers,  
I have made this place around you.  
If you leave it, you may come back again, saying  
Here.

No two trees are the same to Raven.

No two branches are the same to Wren.

If what a tree or a bush does is lost on you,  
You are surely lost. Stand still. The forest knows  
Where you are. You must let it find you."

by David Wagoner

Recommended by Willa

## DRUID BLOGS

Helgaleena writes about the solar eclipse & equinox, urban landscaping and skin shedding.  
<https://helgaleena.wordpress.com/>

MOCC Free Voice is a new publication with Thomas' help  
<https://www.facebook.com/moccfreevoice1>

Ellen blogs about snow storms in New England and announces upcoming workshops  
<http://elleneverthopman.com/?p=912>

OBOD's Druid Pod cast #94 <https://soundcloud.com/damhthebard/druidcast-a-druid-podcast-episode-94> with an exciting interview with Druidess author Joanna van der Hoeven - [joannavanderhoeven.com](http://joannavanderhoeven.com)

OBOD's American **Druid** Magazine <http://druidmagazine.com/> Welcome to the new OBOD publication for the Americas, which will launch its inaugural issue on Beltane. Druid Magazine will feature articles and opinion pieces from around the world as well as facilitate discussion on topics of interest to our American Druid community. Submission deadline for the first issue is March 30, 2015.

OBOD's European Druid Magazine **Touchstone** is only available to members

April Fool's jokes that went wrong <http://www.strangehistory.net/2015/03/21/death-by-joke/>

Druid Dawn released its Spring issue of Aontacht magazine with articles on ritual, a book review on witch tales, a clever fox story, and 2 recipees and an article on herbs in ritual.  
<http://www.druidicdawn.org/files/Aontacht%20-%20Volume%207%20Issue%202.pdf>

AREN newsletter has articles on Alison Lilly interview, Brythonic gods, being a black witch, ,  
Heathern Seidr Prayers: <http://aren.org/newsletter/2015-ostara/index.html>

John Bennet blogs on hospitality, a snowy conference of Druids, UPG, a solitary Ostara ritual, the power of convenience, fighting evil, helping activists and other matters over last 6 weeks.  
<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/johnbeckett/author/johnbeckett>

Nimue blogs on finances, writing about spirituality, narcissism vs selfawareness, shopping, Druid Camp, Mother Goose symbolism, PC Paganism, the economy, what's wrong with people, what is psychic?, the unpleasant side of paganism and who does a Druid serve?  
<https://druidlife.wordpress.com/>

<http://oldeuropeanculture.blogspot.ie/> articles on unpleasant Irish words, and the distribution of Odin in Northern European lands, and wandering guest-gods in Europe.

ADF Songbook for sale <https://www.adf.org/store/catalog/3>

Jean Pagano released a book of poems "Arise from the Vapours"  
<https://www.adf.org/store/node/311>

Rua's calendar is on sale <https://www.etsy.com/ca/listing/204972965/pandion-globus-kalendar-a-nature-based>

Melanie recommends an article about Botanical gardens being the Cathedrals of our time, especially in the winter <http://www.newstatesman.com/culture/2015/02/botanical-gardens-are-cathedrals-our-times>

Stacey recommends a DIY project to make a foraging bag <http://www.amuletmagazine.com/2015/02/02/diy-imbolc-foraging-pouch-by-jennette-nielsen/>

Stacey recommends an article on listening to trees. This is aligned with what we do and is a good teaching. <http://www.rebellsociety.com/2015/02/02/listening-to-trees/>

Helgaleena recommends a history of Imbolc in Gaelic culture <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/imbolc-festival-short-history-gaelic-celebration-dating-back-10200-bc-1485913>

Betty recommends an article of food waste <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2015/01/150122-food-waste-climate-change-hunger/>

Druid College in UK <http://witchesandpagans.com/sagewoman-blogs/druid-heart/big-news-druid-college-uk-is-born.html>

Mike T recommend "The Wakeful World: Animism, Mind and the Self in Nature" by Emma Restall Orr of Britain. "Providing deep green ethics with a wholly rational metaphysical foundation, The Wakeful World is a compelling view of the nature of existence and the experience of reality, giving solid ground for the now necessary journey to a sustainable world." [http://www.amazon.com/Wakeful-World-Animism-M.../ref=sr\\_1\\_1...](http://www.amazon.com/Wakeful-World-Animism-M.../ref=sr_1_1...)

Lynn recommends "30 Reasons you should never visit Wales" <http://www.buzzfeed.com/jamiejones/reasons-you-should-never-visit-wales#.qeVBKyq2N>

Geert recommends "Forest Bathing" <http://thehealist.com/forest-bathing-increases-immunity/>

Ellen has a new book contract: Dear all: I have another book being considered by a British publisher just now (John Hunt Publishing). It's an old book of interviews with Druid leaders including Philip Carr Gomm, Emma Restal Orr, Tony Taylor, Isaac Bonewits, Searles O'Dubhain and Olivia Robertson (and many more). Philip has agreed to write the foreword. I am looking for persons with magazines and well established blogs who can review the book. If interested I need a snail mail and an e:mail for the reviewer. If you can you do this please message me privately and do you know of anyone else I should query?

Joanna recommends a 2014 interview with Emma Restall Orr <http://downtheforestpath.com/2015/01/23/interview-with-emma-restall-orr-march-2014/>



## Druid Videos



A story of Selkies “Song of the Sea”, From the Maker’s of the Secret of Kells.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgbXWt8kM5Q>



The Little Prince 2015 movie  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eV7ebVaeN4>



Time-lapse video acorn to 8 month sapling in 3 minutes, with piano music.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZK4LjURtaDw>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IQWC-rZcfE>  
The third episode in Crash Course's Astronomy course talks about how the odd tilt of the earth brings earth its seasons, discusses our orbit, how planets move about in our sky, how the sun appears to move through the 12 astrological constellations, and pole-star shift. All this with a sense of wonder, almost Druidic.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PRgua7xceDA>  
Now, you see it, now you don't! The science and beauty of solar and lunar eclipses from Crashcourse Astronomy #5. I remember when I told a friend that a solar eclipse was when the moon is between the earth and the sun. He asked me if a lunar eclipse was when the sun is between the earth and the moon. I said, no, that is known as "the Apoc-eclipse".



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQ5vty8f9Xc>

The Physics of Phases. The last video was about axial-tilt of the Earth making season as we orbit the sun. This video explain how the moon's rotation around the earth is the cause of different angled-views of the moon's reflection of the sun. It's interesting that a month=almost one moon orbit, and a week = one quarter of the moon's orbit.



Video: Celtic Spirituality | Watch Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly Online | PBS Video

When the pagan Celts of Ireland were converted to Christianity by St. Patrick in the 5th century, they...

Ceridwen's favorite's poet Donohue was interviewed by PBS before his 2008 death.

<http://video.pbs.org/viralplayer/2210747236/>



Sebastien recommend's Ian Corrigan's ritual video "Under the oak"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CgIq59NOxfM>



2007 Short film "An Cailleach Bheara"

<http://www.thisisirishfilm.ie/shorts/an-cailleach-bheara>



Mabinogi 2002 "Christmas Video"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C9qxrlopEc>

# Druid Pictures



Sebastien



Helgaleena



Julie



Sebastien's work

Botanical Gardens in Montreal



Sharyn



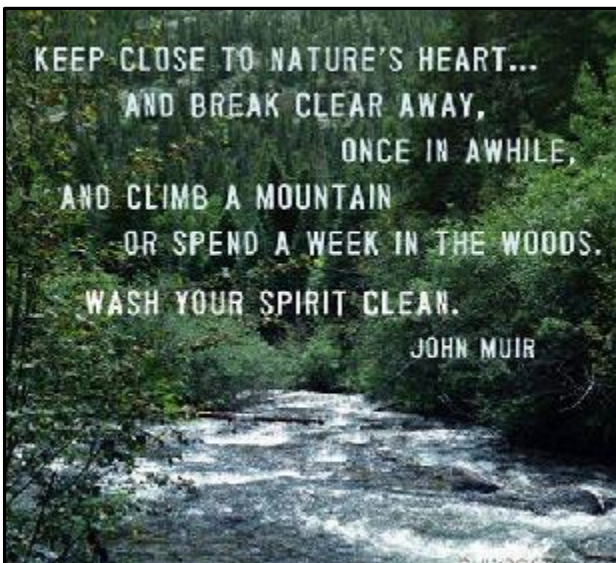
Julie's work on a Sheila na Gig



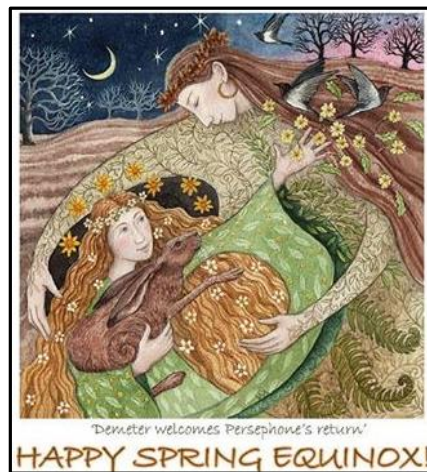
New symbol by Thomas



Julie's work on the Cailleach



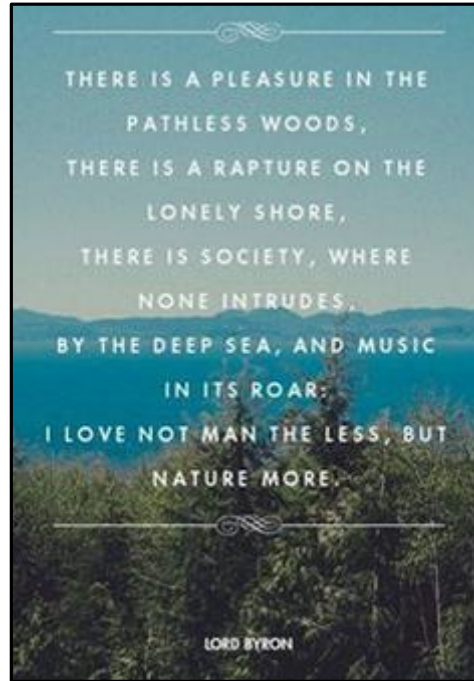
Ceridwen



Karen



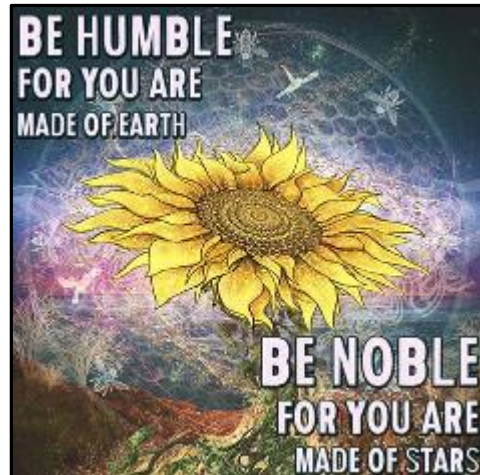
Helgaleena



Anna



Jamie



Sharyn

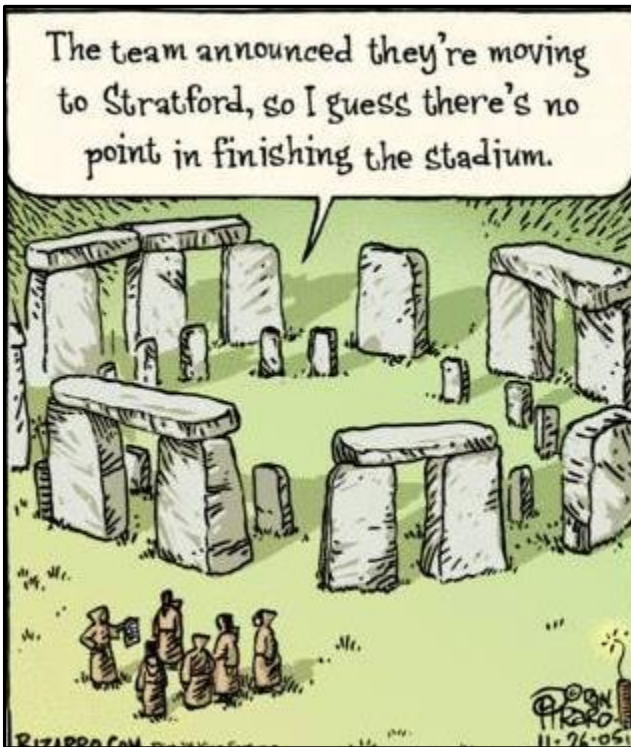


Ceridwen





William



Ellis



From Jamie, not quite waters of life.



Sean, Stacey and Jon

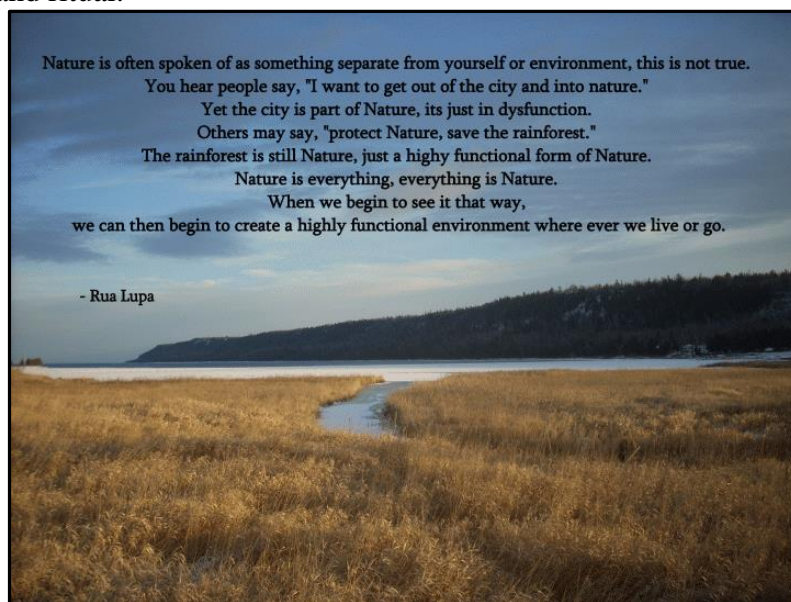


## Inoculative Libations to the Land

March 9, 2015 by [Rua Lupa](#)

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/pathsthroughtheforests/2015/03/09/inoculative-libations-to-the-land/>

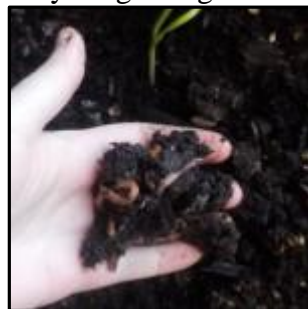
I'm a big fan of keeping my practices tangible so that I know what impacts I'm actually making in the world. I'm *personally* not interested in involving Deity-speak (my use of the word meaning including the mention or reference to deities as metaphors). I honestly feel hypocritical if I did do that as I personally don't believe in the existence of deities and so feel no need to incorporate them. I find leaving them out makes things less confusing in interpretation and is a way of respecting those who do believe in them. However, all the rituals and ceremonies I provide as a [Saegoah](#) is purely optional and can be freely redone by other Saegoahs who are believers to suit their needs. Any rituals and ceremonies provided by any Saegoah is seen as a potential guideline to build upon rather than a writ in stone ritual or ceremony for what Saegoahs do, unless of course its an official ceremony or ritual written by and is intended only for their specific group within the [Ehoah Path](#). We're very open to sharing and trying new things to help one another in our quest for Ehoah (complete harmony within Nature). Below is one such optional custom and ritual.



Nature is often spoken of as something separate from yourself or environment, this is not true.  
You hear people say, "I want to get out of the city and into nature."  
Yet the city is part of Nature, its just in dysfunction.  
Others may say, "protect Nature, save the rainforest."  
The rainforest is still Nature, just a highly functional form of Nature.  
Nature is everything, everything is Nature.  
When we begin to see it that way,  
we can then begin to create a highly functional environment where ever we live or go.

- Rua Lupa

Nature Is Everything. Image Credit: Rua Lupa



Vermicomposting. Image Credit: Rua Lupa

Whatever comes from Nature is of Nature, no matter its form or its location. Nothing is separate from Nature. In knowing this we as Saegoahs choose to [ensure our connections within Nature are harmonious and encourage life](#), instead of ignoring the workings of Nature and inadvertently cause disharmony. One such thing that can be done is vermicomposting (learn how you can do



that [here](#)) and from vermicomposting comes an inoculate – a liquid fertilizer chock full of micro-organisms that are beneficial to a soil ecosystem. We can take this vermicomposting resource and put it to good use by providing it to the land. Either feeding it to our own gardens that we directly reap the benefits from, or we can make it a libation – a sacrificial offering that we personally don't directly benefit from. This can be done by way of going to land that you don't personally own and pouring these libations there. Or, you can set aside land that within our societal legal system you do own, but have made it to be its own place – being sanctified as land that belongs to



Garden by the Stairs. Image Credit: Rua Lupa

itself. This can be of any size, be it a square meter (square yard) or hundreds of acres. This land grows in its own way, and it can be cared for in a way that benefits it further. It can be offered native seeds in compost and libations of inoculate to promote life. Such a place can be considered a sacred grove for ritual and ceremony that you, or your group, are dedicated to (to learn how you can establish a self-sustaining forest for this purpose go [here](#)).

#### Inoculative Libations To The Land

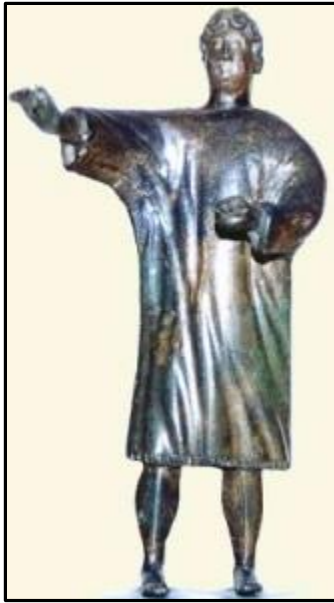


Chalice In The Trees. Image Credit: Rua Lupa

“In gathering what has been left from my toils in sustaining myself, and with the workings between species that share this land, this enriched liquid was cultivated. Instead of keeping this enriched liquid for my personal gain, I offer it here, to this land so that this land may itself be enriched for its own benefit, and through it may all others of this land prosper.

pro solterrestriale vitae\*”

("pro solterrestriale vitae" means, "for solar-earth life")



## Druid Debate 1: Non Celtic Druidism

**BETTY:** I wanna have a topic for discussion if it pleases the Court, lol.

Druidism! Does it HAVE to have English/Welsh/Iron Age/etc roots? While I love exploring my spirituality through nature, I really don't connect to their pantheon of gods in any way. I am aware of Shamanism, and I work some of that into my practice, but Shamanism is mostly an inward journey. I consider Druidism to be outward action ( walking through Nature, taking care of it, etc ) while Shamanism is the inward part ( reflecting, mediating, etc ). I've been thinking about this topic for abit, and would just like some feedback/anything you gotta say.

**Marie** I wouldn't say it has to have those roots, but then if it doesn't than is it still Druidism, or is it then Naturalistic Paganism? But then, we don't know exactly what the original Druids believed or practiced anyway, so I think it's up to neo-Druids to define neo-Druidism. I look forward to reading other viewpoints on this.

**Betty** Yeah, I've been having a hard time pinning down what "term" I want to use. My husband is researching/interested/being called to Voodoo, but instead of saying, " I'm blahbah and I'm into voodoo" he says "I'm blah blah and I'm into African diaspora religions".

**John S** The only reason I see that we gravitate to the British Druids, is that was the last strong hold of the class, the newest writings and so on. Just my thoughts. Good question!! This will be interesting, thank you!

**Thomas** I always like to paraphrase Iolo Morganwg on this one. A Druid has the freedom, by right, to cross borders peaceably. Crosslin once told me that many people go to the stomp grounds to find their spiritual path, but that all the tribes of man once had their own medicine lodges, and that people can reconnect easily there by reclaiming their own medicine path. No, you don't have to stay 'in the culture' to be Druid. I know plenty of us in the Reform that don't, and we deal with things just fine. We incorporate the elements of the cultures that we come into contact with... oddly enough; just as we see in the archeology of the ancient worship sites... and a great example of this is Mike TheFool . Yes, we have Celtic paradigms. But that Celtic paradigm exists over 3,000 years and across a goodly portion of the inhabitable land masses on planet Earth. Take your pick.

**Jeffrey** Betty, while I generally agree with what folks said already here, I am wondering why you are asking the question? What is behind this that gave it rise?

**Betty** I identify in almost every single way with what " Druidism" is. Except using Gaulish / Celtic / etc pantheons. Which I know isn't required, but it seems to be the "norm".

And it's kinda made me feel alone? to see a bunch of stuff about Druid + insert pantheon if that makes sense.

**Jeffrey** Oh, Betty, I would give you a hug if I saw you! Don't worry about "the norm." If you want that, there are plenty of fundamentalist groups out there just waiting to be able to tell you what to believe, how to do it, and then assess how fervent you are in the process. Druidry is not quite like that, and certainly RDNA is far from that rigidity. Some of us find the notion of any pantheon, including a Celtic one, to be oppressive (including the Christian druids!!). This is one of the things I always liked about OBOD (amongst other things that do not resonate for me)--do what you are comfortable with, and let the rest just pass by. After all, spirituality is not something that is readily mandated, at least if we are talking about wanting people to believe in and do what they think is right.

**Betty Williams** Oh I'm not worried about the norm at all. However, sometimes it's a bit lonely if that makes sense.

I love the RDG, but I also love reason and there were certain... Issues with their Facebook group that caused me to leave. I know I'm walking a fine line and that's the reason I'm not seeing a lot of others that have something like these beliefs.

**Caedmon** If an historic culture MUST be the container for a religion, then the religion is too small to be of real use to the world. Religion (or faith, or way, or philosophy, or...) that is bigger than you and me, a path that is strong enough to deal with all that is broken in this world, must be bigger than human culture.

All religion finds its expression within culture and we all find ourselves situated within particular cultures. Most ways blend present culture with an historic culture. The historic culture gives footing and identity, while the present culture makes it relevant and livable.

Celtic, et al, cultural frameworks can be great and its wonderful to seek our path through their influence if we desire to connect with the way in such a manner. But, reconstruction, in its formal and informal ways, is a vessel. Druidism is not the outward practices, but the inward orientation, the choice to seek the divine through nature.

Could we label this way with the labels others use for their practices? Of course. And it makes sense that there is overlap little defined boundary between these practices. We're all seeking the same thing.

**George** Hi Betty. Some Druids feel a much much older call of the Oak and Ley. Very very pre Iron age. Yet we have what we have to study of history. And even the old Un-Reformed Druids must dig through thd Iron Age bone pile.

**John** Specifically in the RDNA, most of our "pantheon," of archetypes/deities were borrowed from a mishmash of gods from various Celtic cultures, simply because it was convenient for our founders.

There are two archetypes in particular in the RDNA that you will not find in any other Celtic druid pantheon: there is Dalon Ap Landu, and there is the otherwise ubiquitous Earth-Mother. Yes there are Celtic deities with an Earth-Goddess aspect, but none simply named the Earth-Mother.

Dalon Ap Landu may have a Welsh name, but that doesn't make him culturally Welsh. Much of his mysticism is very open to diverse interpretation; that in itself celebrates the

spirit of the Reform. As for the Earth-Mother, she is the only archetype/deity mentioned in the core beliefs of a Reformed Druid. The Earth-Mother is mentioned in both of the Two Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism, and we are allowed to interpret all the other deities as aspects of the Earth-Mother, which is Nature, but that is not the only way.

Edit: added the following:

The Founders intended these archetypes to be so open ended, that you could really let the Earth-Mother symbolize whichever deity or entity you wanted it to if it seemed compatible with your own spiritual path. This has allowed the RDNA to be very inclusive and interfaith friendly, especially given the fact that David Fisher is himself a Christian, and there are many other Christian Druids still in the RDNA as well. I've also observed a bunch of Reformed Druids who follow non-Celtic pantheons; Norse seems to be second most popular. And lets not forget our earliest allies in the Reform, Shintoists!

**Jeffrey**...and there are even a number of druids here and there who do not follow any pantheon at all, instead celebrating the earth energies present in stone, tree, fire, and wind (amongst others!).

**Betty** Such a great discussion guys!

I'm still turning this over in my head, and thinking, but after speaking to a few people and reading what you wonderful people had to say I think I will start to kinda.. combine what I like into my own practice. I will ad...See More

**Caedmon** Unless "fire" is code for "sauna." sending widows (and widowers?) to the spa sounds like a wonderful idea.

**Jeffrey** At the end of the day, Betty, spirituality is a private exercise. Sure, it may be easier when gathered with others, but something so personal is not always readily shared . . .

**Tamara** I would like to share that I have strong Druid leanings but do not necessarily use that as a label for my beliefs. Labels can be constructive and destructive. This is not a scholarly opinion or view but for me it is a call of the land, the spirits of t...See More

**Russell** The Celts were neighbors to the Etruscans...you might want to check that Culture out.

**Mike TheFool** If Reformed Druidism means seeking awareness through the cycles of seasons, asking honest questions to friends, acknowledging the wisdom that does exist in many traditions, and appreciating life and leading a good life..... Does it matter which channel or window dressing of culture most inspires you? Reformed Druidism lightly encourages a smattering of Celtic names/deities/elements, but it doesn't proscribe the elevation of other varieties or emphases. We've had Norse, Japanese, Aethistic, and Jewish themed groves that were quite happy for a time.



## Druid Debate 2: Wilting Groves

**Jenny:** The birth-death-rebirth cycle affects everything, even Groves. The Grove I attend is withering away - it's still alive, sort of, and will probably go on as a shadow of its former self, but attending fills me with sadness and frustration anymore, so I've stopped going. I guess what I'm feeling is a kind of grief and a sense of being adrift. Has anyone here lived through a similar thing? What advice do you have for me?

**Stacey** Yes I have. I sought out other venues though it's not the same. i found other nature and spiritually-related things such as shamanism and earth medicine. There is an ADF grove about 90s miles away that I try to attend but don't get up there very often. Find other connections and people and like-minded folks (like us here) to chat with or be able to see in person. Try to have some spiritual practice on your own. It can be a full druid service or it can be a simple sacred altar or hearth practice. Get outside and spend time in nature. Those things have helped me.

**Jenny** Thanks, Stacey. I do have a solitary practice of sorts, and that's great and helpful as you say, and/but I miss getting together with others in the healing circle and having the Waters of Life administered to me.

**Stacey** Is there an ADF grove near you? They have the Waters of Life and you will see many of our influences. I get my "fix" that way. Also you could do the RDNA Protogrove service. It's written for several people but I rewrote it for one. Again, it's not the same as being in a grove with others and the sense of community, but it's something you can do in the meantime. I go to wild flower walks in the state and regional parks. They are often free. i recently signed up for a plant spirit journey class where we will learn the ethnobotany and also journey to meet the plant and learn its spiritual properties as well. These will at least keep you busy so you don't miss your grove too much and get stuck.

**Jenny** Great suggestions. Thank you!

**Thomas** It's a fact, groups rise and fall, it's all through the RDNA history, and in all the groups that have spun off of her. But those that persevere often work out the issues and come back, sometimes better than before. If I were there, I'd ask some serious questions, all of which would begin with the newspaper questions. "Who, What, How, When, Where, and Why". Give yourself time to heal a bit, then start asking those questions. Keep a notebook (not a computer file) of ideas and the answers you get. Then, even if it means doing solitary work for a while, implement them. Each person, each group, answers those questions differently than anyone else. Each grove develops it's own customs and culture differently. The biggie: What are the best things about the grove that you would like to see continue? Rebuild from there.

**Thomas** I should also like to note that not all groups do ritual all the time. There is also the salon-type discussion group, the book study, and the less formal clan or tribe-style group. Change things up. If it's becoming simply attending and doing things by rote, try something that is new. If it is group politics, take a page from the MOCC: Leave the bs at the door, this is a sanctuary for the spirit. We do business meetings twice a year, if that's not enough for someone, they can start a new group. In Druidism, there is over 3,000 years of history and a planet of

expanse that you can use as source material for Celtic lore and culture alone. There is something in there that will resonate with people's spirits.

**James** start your own grove

**Jenny** That thought has crossed my mind, James. I'm not ruling it out, and there are a lot of obstacles I'd have to overcome to make it work the way I'd want it to. Partly it's that I'm pretty introverted, and it's tough for me to just go out and find like-minded people.

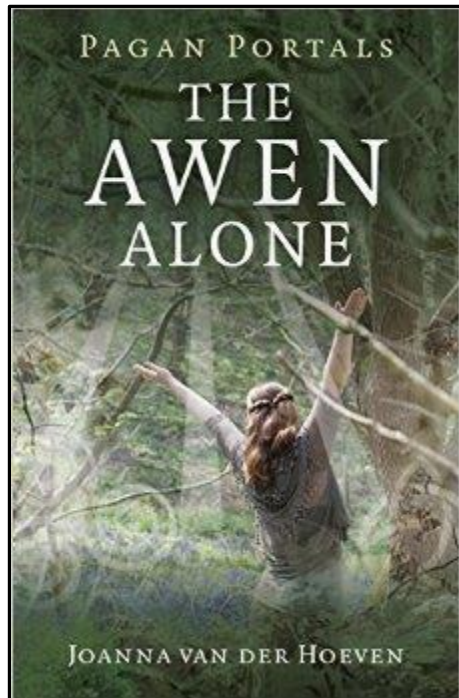
**Brenda** Lively Here's a list of ADF groves and protogroves in the Washington area. Not sure how close any of them are to you, though. <https://www.adf.org/groups/groves/us/wa.html>  
Groves in Washington | ADF  
Cascadia Protogrove, ADFGrove Organizer: Karen LaFePO Box 9731 Covington, WA 98042-0077 Local to: WA, OR, ID Phone: (425) 272-5366 E-mail: [cascadiaadfgmail.com](mailto:cascadiaadfgmail.com) Cultural focus(es): Pan I-E Mailing list: ADF-Seattle Yahoo Group Web site: [adfcascadia.org](http://adfcascadia.org)  
ADF.ORG

**Jenny** Thank you, Brenda!

**Mike TheFool** As the others said, groves come and go, just like a close personal relationship some need some tinkering and may perservere longer, but sometimes the right thing is to make closure and a fresh start. Today is the first day of spring and regrowth. In our spiritual lives there are periods of group and "solitary" practice (we are never really alone, unless we think we are alone) whether due to geography, moving, hardships, or other factors. When the stars align, enjoy those moments together. When you have few around to grove with, enjoy that time to focus on yourself. As many a burnt-out organizer realizes later, that period to recharge one's batteries is a "pause that refreshes". 95% of most Druids time is spent between ritual-meet-ups or facebooking, with "ordinary people" in the world around them, try to see if there are wellsprings of wisdom and possibilities of fruitful interaction with "non-Druids" too. Best wishes.

**Jenny** Thank you, Mike A blessed Ostara to all!

## BOOK REVIEW



### **Pagan Portals – The Awen Alone : Walking the Path of the Solitary Druid**

Written by Joanna Van der Hoeven

November 2014

[Amazon link](#)

#### **Amazon description:**

Druidry is a wonderful, spiritually fulfilling life path. Through the magic that is Druidry, we build deep and abiding relationships with the natural world around us, and through our connection to the natural environment we walk a path of truth, honour and service. We aim to immerse ourselves in the present moment, in the present environment, in order to share in the blessing that is the cycle of life. Throughout the ages, people have withdrawn from the world in order to connect more fully with it. This book is an introductory guide for those who wish to walk the Druid path alone, for however long a time. It is about

exploration and connection with the natural world, and finding our place within it. It covers the basics of Druidry and how, when applied to the everyday life, enriches it with a sense of beauty, magic and mystery. This book is for those people who feel called to seek their own path, to use their wit and intelligence, compassion and honour to create their own tradition within Druidry.

#### **Review**

This little book lays out about as idealistic a vision of Druidism as one can hope for. According to tradition, the ancient Druids spent at least twenty years in study before claiming that title, and there are many excellent books and teachers in the world who can provide the Druid initiate with the knowledge of the ancient laws and teachings. But this is not a book about Celtic scholarship or the historical Celts, rather it is a guide to how to BE a modern Druid in the world today. The author teaches aspiring Druids to be ecologically conscious, wise persons who act with reverence towards all life, because after all we are all related; plants, trees, animals, people, and spiritual beings. How much healthier would the Earth be today if we had retained our ancient reverence for the sacred Land and its creatures? - Ellen Evert Hopman, author of *A Druid's Herbal of Sacred Tree Medicine*, *Priestess of the Forest*, *The Druid Isle*, *Priestess of the Fire Temple*, and other volumes. [elleneverthopman.com](http://elleneverthopman.com)

#### **From the Inside Flap**

What people are saying about *The Awen Alone*:

Becoming Druid is a commitment to a lifelong and complex journey. *The Awen Alone: Walking the Path of the Solitary Druid* offers a down to earth guide to setting out. It is enthusiastic, based in good practice, and allows the reader to start with sound and gentle steps. I heartily recommend it. Graeme K Talboys, author of *Way of the Druid: Rebirth of an Ancient Religion* and *The Druid Way Made Easy*

Joanna's voice carries the impact and knowledge of the ancestors, combined with the wisdom of contemporary understanding. ~ *Cat Treadwell*, author of *A Druid's Tale* and *Facing the Darkness*

Joanna's language is delightful, it lights up the heart with joy, enchanting you... ~ *Elen Sentier*, author of *Elen of the Ways*, *The Celtic Chakras* and *Trees of the Goddess*

### **About the Author**

Joanna van der Hoeven was born in Quebec, Canada. She moved to the UK in 1998, where she now lives with her husband in a small village in Suffolk, near the coast of the North Sea. She works as a Druid Priestess for her community.

Joanna is a former Trustee of The Druid Network. She has studied with Emma Restall Orr and the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids. She has a BA Hons English Language and Literature degree. She is currently the Media Co-Ordinator for The Druid Network and is the author of several books on Paganism and Druidry.

She is regularly involved with charities and other work for her local community.

## **DRUID INQUIRER INFO**

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Submissions Policy: Give it to me! If you have news about your grove, written a little essay, like to write up a book or move, have a poem, saw an interesting news article in the paper, or have a cartoon, send it in to [mikerdna@hotmail.com](mailto:mikerdna@hotmail.com) or send by Facebook message to [mike.thefool](https://www.facebook.com/mike.thefool). I'll try to give credit to whoever the original author is, and they retain the copyright to their works, and we'll reprint it one day in a future binding also. Nasty works will not be published. Although my standards are not skyhigh, incomplete works will be nurtured towards a publish-able form, so send those earlier for assistance. Submissions are accepted from other publications and organizations, so you need not be a formal member of the RDNA to have your items published.

**Deadline for Beltane April 22, 2015**