

C.Φ.R.D. Biquarterly

Connexus Of Reformed Druids

An RDNA Publication

Leaf: Scarlet Oak — *Quercus coccinea*

November 1, 2020

1 Geimredh, 58 Y.R.

Volume 1

Issue 2

John the Verbose, editor

MNdruids@gmail.com

Samhain



Photo: Druid's Circle, Carleton College Cowling Arboretum, Northfield, MN by John the Verbose

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News of the Groves

Overview

Groves and Protogroves of the RDNA & NRDNA, we cordially invite you to report in!

News From Carleton College Grove (Editor Conveying)

There's one new druid of the Third Order! Congratulations to Sam Anderson on your entry to the priesthood of the Reformed Druids of North America and entering the Council of Dalon Ap Landu! (Fellow councilors contact the editor if you need to log any ordination codes; there have been five RDNA ordinations since the last *Druid Inquirer* was published). Thank you to Carleton Grove for keeping the tradition alive in the birthplace of Reformed Druidry!

—*John the Verbose*

News From Missionary Order of the Celtic Cross, by Thomas Lee Harris, Jr. (aka Myrddin a Maeglin)

The MOCC has been doing fine over the last several years. We have become rather accustomed to solitary rituals and a few group rites here and there. Our groves have been focusing more on tribal relations between our groves and other groups both within and outside of the RDNA. The move toward this gained heavy impetus back in 2009, and has only gotten stronger over the intervening years. That era saw a lot of groups fall in the northeastern Oklahoma area in the Neo-Pagan community. The MOCC was fortunate to survive that time period, but we did so by switching focus from group gatherings that would otherwise have conflicted with social media, and we focused more upon interpersonal relationships within our groves. Whereas many groups disbanded, ours remained somewhat cohesive. We had taken a new look at the Brehon Laws, and paid special attention to the tribal and clan holdings as they used to be. That they touched on everything from a communal holdings to community interactions, and not so much the details of ritual, made it possible for us to reimagine the local Grove as a village rather than a solely a temple.

Covid-19 has proven to be a very interesting challenge to what we have become accustomed to over the last 30 some odd years. We had not expected quarantining to be part of modern group dynamics, but apparently it has become such. We have been masters of social distancing. This is meant that we have not been focusing on group gatherings quite as much as we have in past years. It means that we have not hosted our Beltane gathering, and it also means that we have not had our end of school tea or our beginning of school reception, but in the name of safety we believe that it is a good trade-off, and does not really affect the functioning of the groves and tribe.

One of the things that makes the MOCC distinct from many other groups is our attachment to the land. Since 1996, one of the lesser known facts about the MOCC is that we have "claimed" adopted areas on Antarctica for activism. Greenpeace has done much the same, not too far from where we also have

our adopted lands, although the base camp that they had is no longer there. We are honored to have sponsored land in the area of Ross Island, rather tongue and cheek, in the area of Turks Head. No, we don't reside there, it is an honorary thing. Over the last year with the breaking off of numerous ice sheets, and the discovery of mummified penguins, it is safe to say that we are seeing challenges with the Antarctic area that we hold near and dear to our hearts as regards climate change. We are working with other small groups, most of which are called micronations, in the hopes of raising awareness and educating the public concerning these things, and how they affect landmasses far away from the Antarctic continent, and how they affect human culture as a whole.

As we near Samhain, we are led to prepare for our annual Memorial for the Dead, with the lighting of incense and the reading of our ancestors' names. It is one of the more solemn ceremonies that we partake in every year. This year it is likely to be done online through either a Facebook Room or through a Zoom meeting. It is going to be a very different dynamic than it has been in past years. The MOCC is generally hesitant about using electronic media for ritual purposes. The quarantining that is currently going on is forcing us to change slowly. I expect us to see new awareness as to what are gatherings can be as a result of this.



This declare above all: Healing and Light and Peace

—Brother Thomas

News from Oakdale Grove

Snow has fallen over much of Minnesota in the last week, and the temperatures have plummeted to a few degrees below freezing. It was bad enough that the city deployed snow plows to clear the roads, which is unusual because they are typically pretty lazy about that sort of thing under normal conditions. I guess we shouldn't be too surprised since the climatologists say this is going to be a *La Niña* winter. Part of me blames myself for running over a woolly bear before I had a chance to swerve a few weeks ago. Didn't even have a chance to stop and look at the fur pattern to make my own predictions for winter. Despite the much-too-early snowfall I still had the opportunity to harvest two *bouquets garnis* worth of wild sagebrush. It grows in abundance in the Anoka Sand Plain and I had been eyeing a few patches of it all summer long.

If you're ever struggling to identify a plant, I recommend the smartphone app "PictureThis." It is a free app that uses your camera to identify plants from just about any part, whether leaves, flowers, needles, drupes, branches, or bark. If you have a fair enough image it is usually accurate, but I always cross-reference the results with an old fashioned Google search afterward, just to make sure it was reasonably identified. Every now and then, the plant ID is way off and you just gotta take a better photo. Despite being free, the app constantly tries to get you to upgrade for \$30/year but there's a tiny

X in the corner to dismiss the upgrade screen. Allegedly there's a daily plant ID limit for the free version, though I've never reached that limit and I think I've ID'd about 7-10 plants & trees on a single day at most.

In other news, Oakdale Grove is hosting one last public outdoor event for 2020 at Silverwood Park just northeast of Minneapolis at 1 PM on Saturday October 31st. See the calendar of events section further on in this newsletter for more info. Aside from that, a lot of time has gone into curating this newsletter and working on the RDNA druid training program workbook. As the Season of Sleep settles in, I'll be dedicating more of my free time to working on the latter with nothing better to do as the global pandemic intensifies. I miss being able to just hang out with fellow druids in person: carefree, passing a chalice of the Waters-of-Life, and sharing a potluck feast. Hopefully Carleton will be able to have a reunion next summer.

Fellow Third Order Druids, build a good fire; it's Samhain.



Five "Thirds" Fire Gazing at Carleton Grove Druid's Den, Samhain 2014:
Earl the Seeker, Paul the Bard, David the Chronicler, and Mike the Fool.
John the Verbose, photographer

Here's to an optimistic & Happy Celtic New Year!

—*John the Verbose*

Bardic Column

Overview

Poetry tends to shape itself into columns of elegance, and this is the spot just for that!

What's in a name?

There once lived a man of labors
Notable in his work and his life
Though he was a lonely man
For he lacked a pretty wife
In his dreams he had ascended
To a land of vibrant light
And three times he was asked to dance
All throughout the night
The first courter asked him
When their dance had just begun
"What is your name?" he asked
Who would not be the only one
"You do not want my name"
He said, careful with his tongue
"It is one of many labors"
And after, he was gone
The second courter asked him
When their dance was in the middle
"What is your name?" They asked
Politely, to not belittle
"You do not want my name"
He said, not to come off smart
"It is one of little importance"
To survive here is an art
"What is your name?"
The third had asked
When the dance ended
To take it they were tasked
For hearts must be mended
"You do not want my name"
He said, all things wearing thin
His patience, heart, and resilience
Looking made of tin
"But i do, i do!" The courter said



Satyr at a Vigil
by John the Verbose

Not to be undone
"To have a name is to know you!"
Her game, nearly won
"You do not wish to know me
As so many others do"
He turned to leave, his face a skull
"But i will return for you"
—Brad S.

A Light in the Darkness

Darkness slowly descends, trying to engulf from all around
Held back by a roaring fire atop the mound

The community has prepared a feast, from the most to the least
All have sacrificed, from the farmer's meat to the baker's yeast

Brought together in a liminal time, a solemn celebration.
From near and far, people and spirits make it a destination

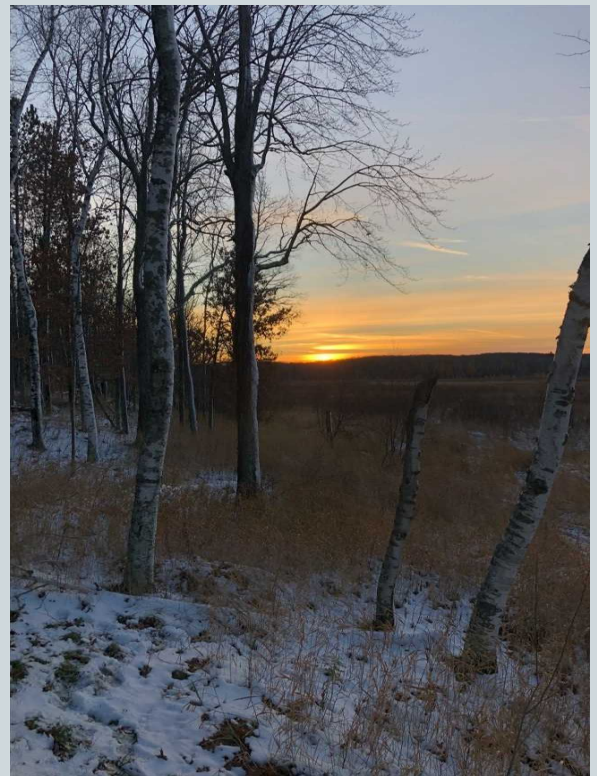
As the fire roars, prayers are said and rituals completed
While memories of ancestors past are remembered and féted

Offerings: a plate of food, a favorite toy, or a libation of spirit
Stories told of the past, spirits, and ancestors, for all to hear it

As darkness surrounds the mound and the fire wanes,
Spirits gather to listen to the celebration echoing across the plains

Our memories, like the fire, are want to dim
But like the flame, will often rise on a whim

The sudden flame, keeps our hearts lighter in solace
A light in the darkness
—Johayan Sycamore Bear



Sunset at Mille Lacs Kathio State Park
by Johayan Sycamore Bear

Untitled Haiku

Lake Superior,
We had a ritual here,
at Gitchigumi.

—*John the Verbose*

The Admonished Warrior

The harp strings hummed as Conn sang forth,
Entrancing village folk, a bard of renown was he,
Words eloquent and accurate of battles in the north,
His voice pure gold – like Lughnasadh honey.

A playful jab at Cuchulain,
Conn laid bare the brash and stubborn lad,
Leathcheann, a warrior present fumed,
The bardic satire had made him mad.

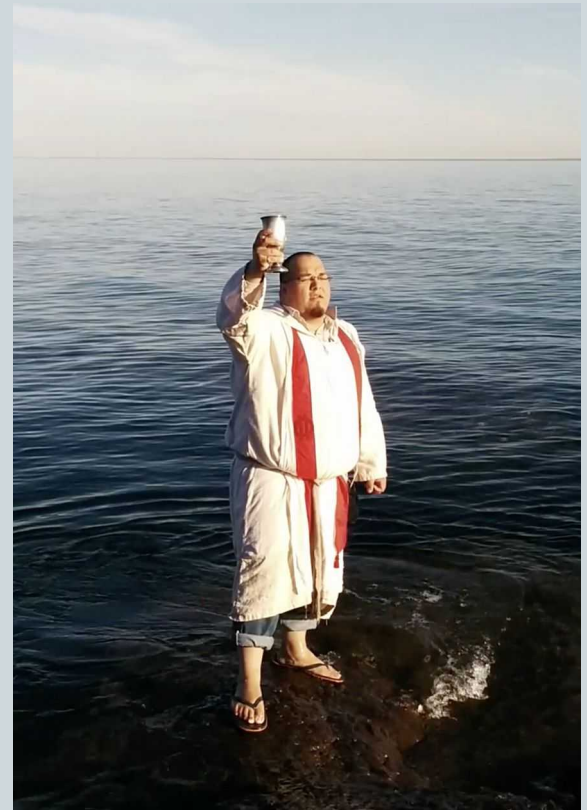
You mock our warrior culture, barked Leathcheann,
O bard, you disgrace our way of life,
I judge ye as a waste of man,
Now face me as you meet my knife!

At Conn sprang the warrior, enraged,
A portly druid stepped in between
The confrontation ceased: assuaged,
How fortunate that he intervene.

The druid spoke, Warriors are sacred and revered,
For protecting the sovereignty of the land,
but to our laws must you also be adhered
Against a bard, must you never raise a hand.

Badb Catha with a coarse shriek swooped down,
The Battle Crow alighted on the threshold,
Entered, now a woman in ragged ebon gown,
Swiftly grasped Leathcheann in stranglehold.

If ever by you this bard stops his breath,



Oakdale Grove ritual at Lake Superior
by John the Verbose

By no actions, no deeds can you be saved,
Your soul be bound from Magh Meall in death,
You would lose your honor, your name – depraved.

Listen well my little warrior, with poise and noble grace,
This bard can sing of what is true,
Or from history, your life he could erase,
Aye, or smear your name right through.

From Leathceann's shoulder a dusky crow leapt,
Flew off and out to worlds between,
Quickly Conn burst into song, so adept,
And sang the praises of the Phantom Queen.
—*John the Verbose*

A Song For Samhain

The souls of those we've lost drift fast,
Like summers breeze in winter's grasp,
The wild hunt rides and comes for them,
As we collect earth's fruits from stem.
We set our table, we plan our feast,
We feed ourselves and our deceased.
A plate for me and all I've been,
A plate for all this soul has seen,
A plate for all the loved ones lost,
And the fullest plate that spared no cost,
That's the plate for the wild hunt who rides,
Who covers lands, mountains and tides.
And all those souls will now soon,
Ride and go down to Annwn.
—*Rye L Evans*



Full Moon in October
by John the Verbose

[*Editor's note: see also the video version linked on the Social Media page!*]

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 The Carleton College *Carletonian* Archives – Lore of the first RDNA Samhain

‘FEARFUL INTONATIONS TOO MUCH’

Druid Service Chills Observer, Is Huge Success for Faithful

By Gary Carr

I had more excitement than I had bargained for when I joined the Reformed Druids for a service in the Carleton Arb.

The eerie night itself was enough to test any man's nerve, but when the Druid priests arrived I was really shaken. The chilling wind ruffled through the priests' robes as they stepped to the altar and confronted the several dozen assembled worshippers.

I could make out four forms in the moonlight: Arch-Druid David Fisher, clad in black robe; Preceptor Norman Nelson, in white robe; David Frangquist, in white robe; and Howard Cherniack in conventional business suit. Howard needed no robe. The blazing torch in his hand made him look foreboding enough.

“Terrifying Phantasmagoria”

Howard lighted two other torches and the ceremony was under way. These flaming brands cast weird shadows on the robed ones, sending a terrifying phantasmagoria before my eyes.

Halfway through the ceremony one of the torches fell



REFORM DRUIDS AT SACRED OAK GROVE
‘This is the Night of Samhain . . . ’

over, catching the dry grass alight. Howard made a monstrous leap from the altar—a leap which seemed to penetrate all time and space—and applied his feet to stamping out the blaze.

As I tried to get a grip on my fractured nerves, I asked myself why I had dared to come. Before I could answer,

Norman, bearing a sacred chalice of The Waters of Sleep, confronted me. Without questioning, I took the cup — I could feel reason slipping from my grasp—and drank a deep draught. The Waters tasted like — cold water.

Sacred Oak Grove

I was in a stupor for the rest of the ceremony. I faintly remember following the assemblage to the Sacred Oak Grove. Here we sat in a circle around a fire. Arch Druid Fisher told us that now was the time for us to give vent to the thoughts which stirred in the very depths of our souls.

"This is the night of Samhain" he murmured. "Is there anyone here who would speak?"

After a brief silence, strange utterances swelled from the throats of those about me. But when my turn came, I could not speak. The flickering shapes and fearful intonations were too much for me. I was in a trance.

At last, after what seemed an eternity, I regained my senses and returned to Goodhue. There I joined some friends in their favorite drink—and mine—Carletonian Clob.

(Another adventure in one of the 87 lands where Carletonian Clob is "The Best in the House.")

From *The Carletonian*, Volume 83, Issue 10, November 6, 1963, Creative Commons [License](#)

This article was reconstructed here to appear like the original newspaper article scan, rather than taking a screenshot of the grainy original – though the photo is a screenshot. This was also the occasion that an ominous prediction was foretold as is recorded in *Latter Chronicles 5:12...*

...“Someone is dead...I see a great many people...and a large circular room there...but they need not be afraid...everything is going to be all right.”

Then 16 days after the above *Carletonian* article was written, John F. Kennedy was shot. For two days his casket lay in state in the capitol rotunda (see also the famous George F. Mobley photo, [Kennedy In State](#) at National Geographic). It really spooked the attendees of the druid rituals thinking they had participated in some sort of real black magic, and the RDNA nearly fell apart because of it. A few core members remained and they toned down their methodology to survive as a druid order.

Contribution from Johayan Sycamore Bear

The wheel of time spins on and so Samhain approaches again. As the sun sets on the 31st of October, the veil between all the worlds is at its thinnest. The Ancestors walk among us, visible to some and heard by others.

As the Ancestors walk amongst us on Samhain, offerings of food and drink are left outside for them. The souls of the dead are thought to revisit their homes seeking hospitality. Feasts were had, at which the souls of dead kin were beckoned to attend and a place set at the table for them.

In historical times, Samhain was a time in which livestock were called home and slaughtered to prepare for the upcoming winter and while some of the livestock were served at the feast, most was stored away.

In our ‘modern civilized’ world, we still see some of the traditions faintly echoed from the past.

Trick-or-treating? Why yes, it was an ancient tradition of disguising oneself from the Spirits who had crossed the veil with purpose unknown. The “treating” part was not for the children to get candy, rather people would travel door to door to collect items meant for the feast.

Bobbing for apples: Divination rituals and games were also a big part of the festival and often involved nuts and apples.

Many times, a large bonfire was set and divinations were done from the flames and some jumped the fire for good luck. People doused their hearth fires on Samhain night. Each family then solemnly re-lit its hearth from the communal bonfire, thus bonding the community together. Other traditions include having two fires, people and livestock would pass between them to be cleansed and purified for the coming year.

This year, 2020, trick or treating will likely not happen. Bobbing for apples, roasting hazelnuts by the fire to find a mate’s suitability, and other food based traditions—not happening. Even the bonfire will likely be toned down this year as people can’t congregate around them and concerns over air quality for those with COVID.

How does this affect you and I in today’s world?

My brothers and sisters, Druids respect Nature and do their best to protect Her. However, with COVID, group gatherings are difficult to do in person and virtual gatherings, while good for fellowship aren’t so great for raising energy and doing work.

We can still step outside, light a candle and say a prayer for our Ancestors who have given us knowledge, the Shining Ones who give us inspiration and protection, and the Nature Spirits who are soon to sleep to reawaken in the Spring.

As Samhain marks the beginning of the Celtic New Year, it would be an excellent time to start a new path of learning, build a stronger connection to the Earth Mother, or to re-affirm your connections to your grove/patron spirits/ancestors.

Johayan Sycamore Bear
2nd Order Bard of the Oakdale Grove of the RDNA
Grove Organizer—Banded Iron Protogrove, ADF

Contribution from *I Talk to the Trees*

Why did the fish blush at the ocean? Cause it saw its bottom.

Tales of Mad Sweeney's Daughter

Stacey Weinberger, ODaL
Poison Oak Grove, Canyon, CA

Samhain. A time of honoring the dead. We set a place at our Samhain table to honor them. We prepare their favorite foods. Some of us might even hold a dumb supper. At the Zen Buddhist Abbey where my mentor Emmon Bodfish is buried they celebrate the Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts ceremony. Typically held in July in Japan, at the Shasta Abbey it is held on Halloween. Food is placed on the great Buddha altar. Afterwards a potluck is had where the monks and guests partake of the food "to help bring peace to all those in need." Each year I send a care package to the Abbey of foods Emmon was able to eat (he had a special diet) and a little pumpkin. Being an outlier I don't think Samhain is the only time to honor the dead. Let me tell you how I got my house...

Emmon was murdered late June 1999. He had moved away in 1993 for health reasons. Until then we met for Druid services on the Sundays closest to the New and Full Moons, and of course on High Days. After he moved away I stopped doing Druid things because I thought you needed a grove to do that. His death brought it all back, and old members of our grove came back to form a new one. We got permission from Emmon's executor to hold services again on our old grove site on Emmon's land.

I set about restoring the old grove site to its former glory. The drip line system was still in place and I got the water line up the hill working again. I replaced grove trees that had died and tended the ones that were still there. (Emmon had researched trees for each of the eight High Days and they were placed in each direction: N, NE, E, SE, S, SW, W, NW.) I tended the grove site on a weekly basis, using Emmon's little cabin at the bottom of the hill as a home base. It was a small two-room cabin with only electricity, a wood stove, and a hose for running water outside.

Since there was no family left, his friends were the ones to go through Emmon's papers and effects. We went through everything carefully and respectfully, setting aside papers the lawyer might need or any writings that were important. We were able to have a window into his life that he rarely showed being a private person, but one I think he wanted us to see. Once taking care of the estate was done, I focused on the grove site and tended it for five years.

In the meantime my mother passed away and with the sale of her house I had enough for a down payment on a house. Those of you who are familiar with the San Francisco Bay Area know how expensive it is. Even with a down payment the monthly mortgage leaves no room for food or utility bills. I despaired living in a house in a crowded area with concrete all around and a chain link fence. Living in the woods was a dream but those kinds of places were far away and expensive.

Then a day came where I passed by a realty store by the name of Red Oak (and it was taken to be a

sign). In the window was a house listed as “cabin-like setting in the woods.” Not only that, it wasn’t far, located in a tiny community not many people knew about. It was a Saturday. I called the real estate agent immediately. The house was indeed in an oak and bay forest across a canyon from redwoods. We saw the house on Wednesday, put the bid in on Thursday, got the house on Friday. This is unheard of in the Bay Area. Plus the house had been on the market for three months! It was like a larger version of the cabin, also with a wood stove. And was one exit before the one to Emmon’s house...

About this time one of the neighbors in Emmon’s community said he didn’t want me renting Emmon’s cabin any more or tending the grove site, claiming remembering him was not in Emmon’s will. We might have lost the grove site BUT there was enough space behind the new house to make a new grove site. The timing was uncanny.

I’d like to think that by tending to Emmon’s land and things somehow made it able for me to have this house. It felt like a gift. I had no expectation of “getting” anything from what I did. Does tending to the dead have an effect on the rest of your life? This is something I’m still trying to figure out.

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.



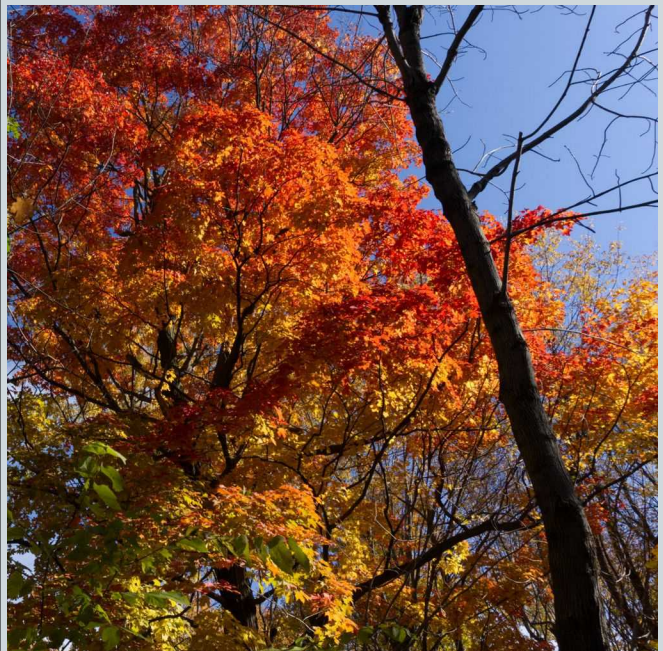
Montreal, Quebec, Canada



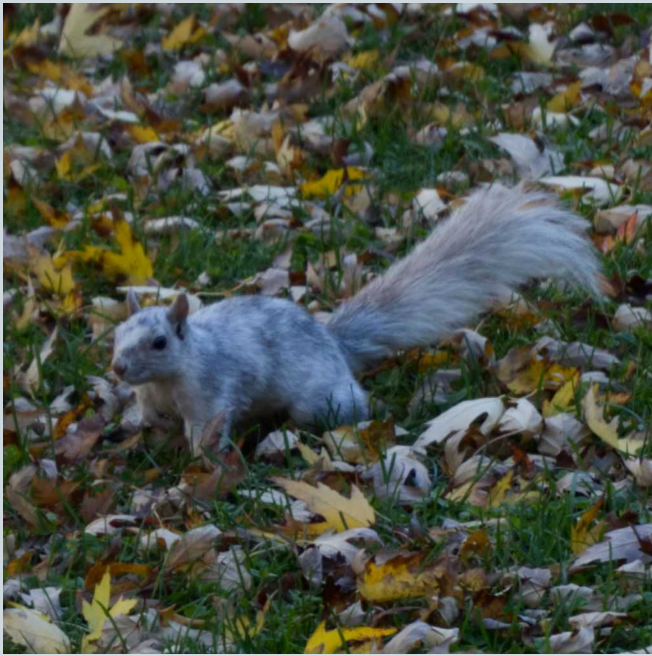
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Montreal, Quebec, Canada



Montreal, Quebec, Canada



Montreal, Quebec, Canada



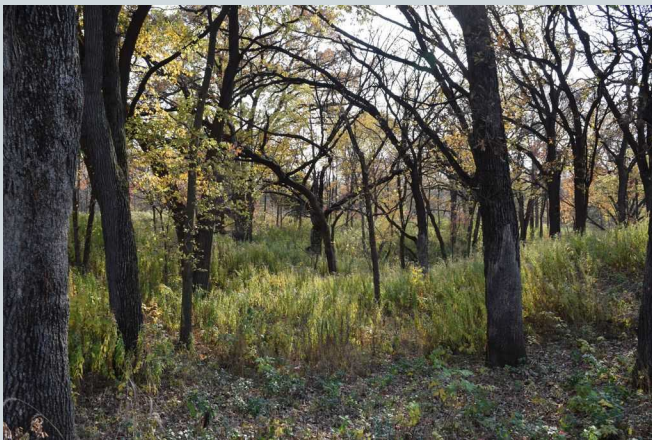
Contributions from Johayan Sycamore Bear



The mighty oak prepares for sleep



The shapely maple's colors herald the end of fall



Nature's invitation to forest bathe



The Earth-Mother in preparation for slumber

The mighty oaks



Contributions from John the Verbose



Sugar maple and northern red oaks



The Earth-Mother's palette, Carleton Arboretum



Bumblebee delighting in a New England Aster



Autumnal trail, Carleton College Arboretum



Old house on Ghostley Street in Champlin, MN



Self portrait at my favorite clifftop in Duluth, MN

Contributions from Sam Anderson



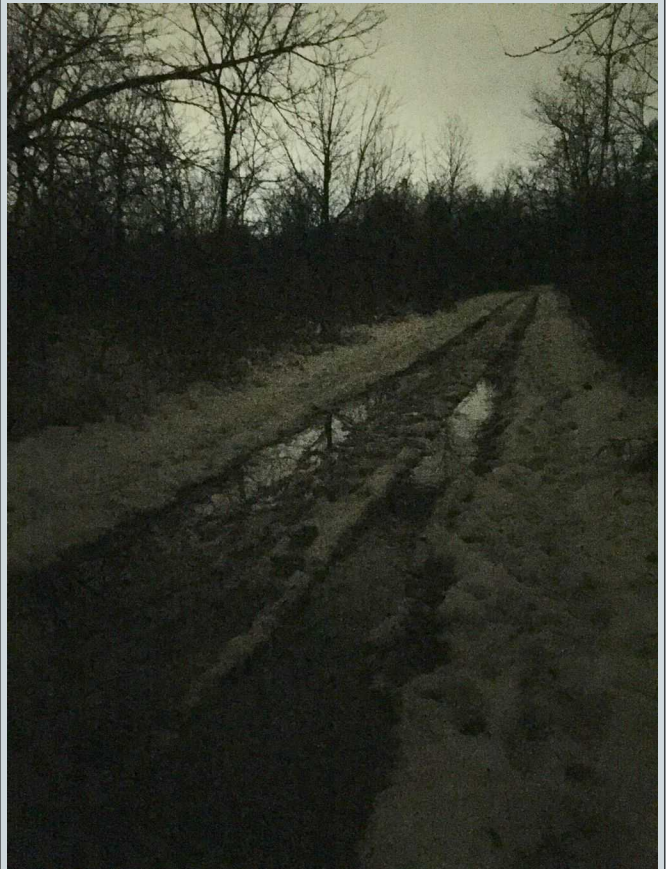
Visions of the Carleton Arboretum- Three by Day
and One by Night!



Visions of the Carleton Arboretum- Three by Day
and One by Night!



Visions of the Carleton Arboretum- Three by Day
and One by Night!



Visions of the Carleton Arboretum- Three by Day
and One by Night!

Videos of Interest

Overview

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

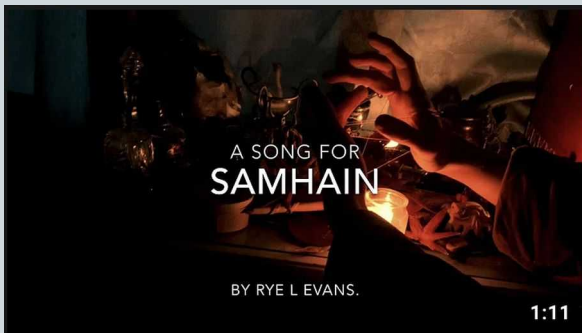
Meditation to connect to the three realms, by Victoria S.

Reconnect to the worlds with this short meditation taking you through Fire, Well, and Tree.



A Song For Samhain, by Rye L. Evans

A sung version of Rye's poem in the Bardic Column!



Samhain: The Rekindling of the Fire

The aspect of fire in Samhain rituals is ancient, but what is it about?



Music Video: *The Skeleton Dance* (1929) synchronized to the song “Ritüel” by She Past Away

Do you like Post Punk or Darkwave music? She Past Away is a contemporary Turkish band that



sounds like they were plucked right out of the 1980s. The song *Ritüel* (Turkish for *ritual*) begins with retro sounding synth and drum machine, and a classic Post Punk guitar reverb. Nearly the first two minutes are instrumental, but then Volkan’s deep vocals begin and it just sounds as if he’s reading from an ancient grimoire. Actually most of She Past Away’s songs are otherworldly like that. So go ahead, light those candles

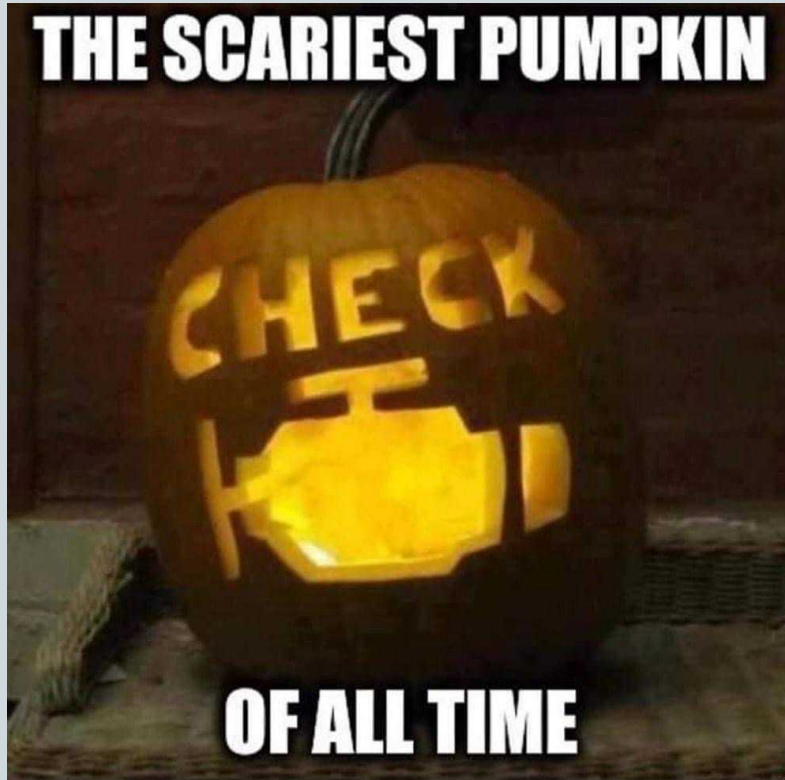
and incense, have a freeform ritual in near-darkness, and dance to the words of the occult. The translation of the lyrics aren’t that far off anyway...

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.

Sent in by Johayan Sycamore Bear



The Right Rites For Rampant Ritualists

Overview

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

An RDNA Meal Blessing

As we celebrate the third harvest and upcoming holidays of gratitude, consider using a druidic meal blessing. There is (for the most part) no wrong way to bless a meal. Since not all Reformed Druids have the same base-religion it was tricky to formulate something that could be used by almost any druid. Granted it would allow for either literal or metaphorical interpretation when the gods are mentioned by name, just like any other RDNA rite. If you don't like mentioning the gods, you can always omit them and just give thanks directly to the Earth, the waters, and the sunlight.

An important function of a meal blessing is to remind us that food isn't just for satisfying our hunger. It is consecrated to us as something special: to raise our spirits as well as nourish us. At the very least we ought to extend our gratitude for the food, how it came to us, and who we may be sharing it with. If in the unfortunate event the food is underwhelming, the blessing is by contrast all the more potent.

In the *Roots of Gratitude Blessing*, we start by blessing the food itself, then branch out (pun intended) one sequential step back, blessing those who prepared the food for us. Then we take more steps back to retrace the entire journey of our sustenance, extending our gratitude for the once-living food, back to the Earth-Mother, back to the water and the sunlight that made life possible, and back to Be'al for our Awareness. Lastly, like the *Tree of Life* whose branches connect back to the roots, we bring the blessing full circle, extended to those we are sharing the meal with. This last step can be omitted for those who are solo and it still works just fine. Like I said, there's really no wrong way to bless your meal in a druidic fashion. This is one method among many.

Roots of Gratitude Blessing

So that we may bless and consecrate this sustenance to our life force,

We give thanks to those who have prepared this meal for us.

We give thanks to the laborers who have worked hard so that we may bring provisions to our table.

We give thanks to the plants and the animals who have died so that we may live.

We give thanks to the Earth-Mother, the source of all nourishment.

We give thanks to Grannos, to Sirona, and to Danu, whose waters flow with the essence that sustains life within, on, and above the Earth-Mother.

We give thanks to Belenos whose light and warmth allow life and water to exist upon the Earth-Mother.

We give thanks to Be'al, the source of our Awareness of these blessings.

And we give thanks to present company for sharing this feast in pleasant fellowship.

So be it.

Augur's Intuition

Overview

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

Contribution by John the Verbose

Methodology

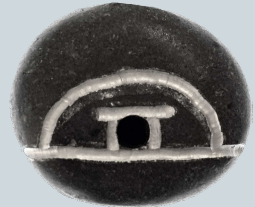
Rock Art Runes (whole set cast repeatedly until only one faced up, repeated thrice)

Meanings

The **Hand of Authority**, the Burial Mound, and the Stalk of Grain – The hand with palm out says to stop what you're doing, go no further, or adhere to authority. The **Mound** is the entrance to the otherworld, it is the ossuary chamber of the ancestors. It is a tomb; it is a womb for the rebirth of the honored dead. It represents a place of transition, of solemnity, liminal space and time. The **Stalk of Grain** represents a bounty, a harvest, or assets that serve as a means to an end. It represents the abundance necessary to survive, and the culmination of hard work, good fortune, and a lot of invested patience.

Interpretation

Stop what you're doing in this time-between-times and take a moment to reflect on the honored dead, on the ancestors we have known, on the deep ancestors who did the best they could to ensure the survival of their children. Think of those we have lost since the last turn of the wheel. Then celebrate the third harvest with a feast of commemoration, with a blessing of gratitude that we can continue forward in the here-and-now.



Helping Healing Hearth

Overview

This section is for prayer, healing energy, and meditation requests. Standard disclaimer: C.O.R.D. Biquarterly always advises seeking conventional medical or other applicable assistance prior to supplemental healing energy requests.

Requests

A prayer for those in need:

May the Ancestors continue to impart their knowledge, May the Nature Spirits continue to inspire our minds, and May the Shining Ones continue to guide us and to protect us.

Go in peace my brothers and sisters. May you stand tall and lead the way.

—*Johayan Sycamore Bear*

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. 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

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

1 Geimredh (November 1) Samhain

15 Geimredh (November 15) New Moon

30 Geimredh (November 30) Full Moon

44 Geimredh (December 14) New Moon

51 Geimredh (December 21) Midwinter

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 (mask strongly recommended). Bring your own chalice and your own sacramental liquid to put in it.



Upcoming minor holidays of the SDNA (non-canonical) calendar

- 10-11 Geimredh (November 10-11) **Druid Thanksgiving** – honor the gods of the hunt, harvest, and bounty. Have a feast with your Grove or local spiritual community
- 22 Geimredh (November 22) **Feast of Oberon** – celebrate your Grove’s bard
- 30 Geimredh (November 30) **Crossroads Feast** – dedicated to beings who guard the path between this world and the otherworld
- Geimredh 38-39 (December 8-9) **Earth-Mother Conception Festival** – Meditate on the immaculate conception of primordial life over 3 billion years ago. Sculpt a clay figure of the Mother out of clay or stone.
- Geimredh 43 (December 13) **Feast of Belisama** – celebrate the goddess of light and wisdom

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, & Contacts

Overview

This section is for sharing your druidry-related blogs, social media links, and email addresses. These will accumulate over each issue until you send a stop-request for any reason.

Blogs

- Courtney's blog [Corey Adventures](#)
- Ellen Evert Hopman's blog <http://elleneverthopman.com/a-druids-web-log/>

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 [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](#)
- White Rabbit Grove's [Facebook page](#)
- Rye L. Evans' [YouTube Channel](#)

Email Addresses

- Johayan Sycamore Bear: [adf.johayan & gmail/com](mailto:adf.johayan@gmail.com)

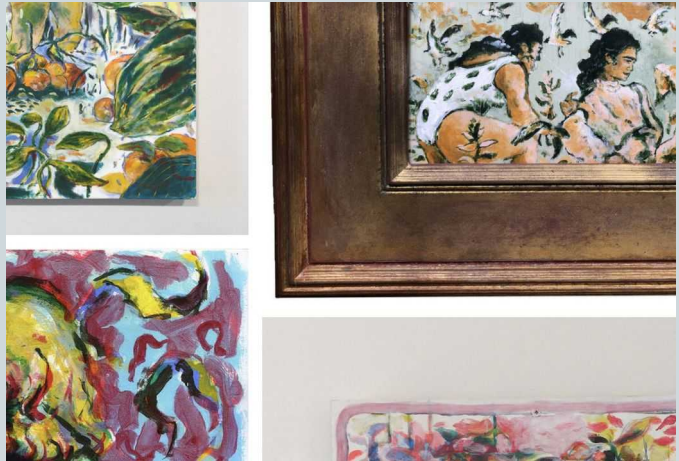
Artisan Promo Page

Overview

Each article of *C.O.R.D.* will contain **one** or two pages of featured artists, craftspersons, or small online storefronts of interest to the druid community. This is free promo space; anyone can request that their content be promoted here on a first-come-first-served basis. New requests get prioritized and rotated in. Promos will otherwise remain until space runs out or if the artisan sends a stop-request.

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.

Newsletter Info

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 it's 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