

# C.Φ.R.D. Biquarterly

## Connexus Of Reformed Druids

An RDNA Publication

Leaf: Northern Pin Oak – *Quercus ellipsoidalis*

March 20, 2021

48 Earrach, 58 Y.R.

Volume 1

Issue 5

John the Verbose, editor

MNdruids@gmail.com

# Vernal Equinox



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

## Contents

News of the Groves.....	3
Bardic Column.....	4
Bonfire Banter.....	6
The Seeker's Corkboard.....	8
Vivid Visions Gallery.....	9
Videos of Interest.....	11
Mememes of the Month.....	12
The Right Rites For Rampant Ritualists.....	13
Augur's Intuition.....	14
Calendar of Events.....	15
Blogs & Social Media Links.....	16
Artisan Promo Page.....	17
Reformed Druid Resources.....	18
Newsletter Info.....	19
Contribute Content to the Next Issue! .....	20

Click on a line to jump to that page.

Note: Click-navigation only works if you download the PDF.

# News of the Groves

## News from Oakdale Grove

After a long hiatus since the public Samhain ritual, members of Oakdale Grove met outside with friends of *I Talk To The Trees* and Ross who are interested in learning more about druidry and possibly joining the RDNA & Grove. It was a casual gathering observing social distancing guidelines, and we discussed the praxis of Reformed Druidism. Ross got a bonfire going; he's our longstanding flamekeeper and has no rivals – while *I Talk To The Trees* set up an altar with her chalices.

*I Talk To The Trees* had the opportunity to practice explaining the RDNA to the seekers (I don't know if they'd want me using their names, so we'll call them the seekers). Normally people tend to defer to me when it comes to describing the Reformed Druid movement, but I think that is a skill that all Reformed Druids should have that are Second Order and above. Knowing the history and customs of one's spiritual movement is important, and *I Talk To The Trees* has the added experience from being a member of the Toastmasters, which helps you develop oratory skills and improve public speaking techniques. She is one of Oakdale Grove's Third Order Druids, and wants to prepare to enter the higher orders of the priesthood soon.

After an in-depth Q&A about Reformed Druidism and how it compares and contrasts with other druid groups, we held a brief ritual using the oldest known ritual script but added the NRDNA's Vernal Equinox chant just to spice things up. The winds were very talkative on this occasion, so oops, whiskey just happened to fall into the chalices. The Earth-Mother wakes up long before Beltane anyway, and the robins, red winged blackbirds, and grackles have already begun arriving in the northern lands. I also got to meet Mr. Giggles, a three story tall cedar tree with a three-forked top. And he does giggle, it's uncanny.



## Cabbage Patch Savage – by TheMageiboLine

Brothers against brothers,  
Sisters against sisters,  
Fathers beating daughters,  
As brothers rape sisters,  
Humanity is the bane of humanity,  
That is the terrible truth that we see,  
When we swallow the red pill of reason,  
Plant its seed, and kill the dream that we're free.  
To the powers that be,  
The world around is a game,  
And we are losing fast,  
We have to act,  
Unless you want MADMAX,  
You think this shit is fun,  
But when you watch your mother die,  
You'll wanna have none.  
Children turn into gremlins,  
Survival of the fittest is survival of the meanest,  
The maddest, the baddest,  
Cabbage Patch Savage,  
As the world turns madder than Alice.  
This is the future that we see,  
And the weight that we carry,  
If we don't learn to just leave them be,  
To love thy neighbor and love thy earth,  
To look into the woods, and the mountains,  
And the seas and skies, and see something of worth,  
Something more than fuel to our greed,  
And see that we're drowning in ourselves,  
As we eat away at the earth to stock our shelves.  
Nothing ever lasts forever,  
And soon we'll run out of our black tar drugs,  
And where will we be without our fix?  
Dropping bodies in the ditch,



Grasping Hand Sculpture Found Along Rum River by John the Verbose

As we gather torches and picks,  
Machine guns and dirty explosive tricks,  
As the world unravels and morality twists.  
So what are you gonna do?  
Sit on your couch and snooze?  
But what are you gonna do,  
When the shit hits the fan and you can't just hit snooze,  
What are you gonna do, when they come for you?

### **My Bleeding Heart – by TheMageiboLine**

This bleeding heart has soaked the page,  
As the clouds consume my brain,  
Its rain pours out a tearful rage,  
Still lost in a tempest, can I stay sane?  
As the world goes irate...

### **Untiled Haiku**

Balanced with darkness,  
respite for the living things,  
sun will rise again.  
—*John the Verbose*



Cassiopeia Through Cirrostratus Clouds  
With Light Pollution 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 TheMageiboLine On Justice, US History, and Amazon

Across various druidic or otherwise neopagan traditions, sometimes explicitly stated, sometimes tacitly implied, there is a common understanding of the virtue to justice – Justice for our planet, for our fellow human beings, and for all life as we know it. This kind of ties into possibly the most universal guiding code of ethics throughout human cultures, the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would want done to you. Throughout nearly every culture and religion, some variation of this maxim is found.

So that brings me to a topic very close and important to me – both to my heart and geographically. I'm talking about the attempts of the Amazon fulfillment center in Bessemer in my home state to unionize. The Amazon corporation has become rather infamous over the past several years for the terrible working conditions present in their warehouses, so much so in fact they earned themselves a South Park episode dedicated entirely to satirizing how miserable of a company to work for they can be. I highly suggest anyone reading this who's a fan of South Park's type of humor to go watch it, even if you're not usually a fan of South Park because it's a very solid episode all around. If you're a podcast listener there's an Alabama radio show called the Valley Labor Report that uploads their segments online on 11 different podcasting platforms including Spotify. From what I've heard from them they've done good coverage of the Bessemer union drive and interviewed several people involved, and does a pretty good job covering what unionization under the RWDSU means for the workers and alleviating concerns and fallacies about the topic.

The truth is none of this is new. In fact even some of the worst abuses of today (well, bearing in mind much worse still takes place by or at the behest of large US-based megacorporations on foreign soil where they can get away with it) often pale in comparison to some of the abuses of the late 1800's to early 1900's US. This again, was nothing new or unique to the US, and every country has gone through similarly oppressive and bloody conflict in their labor history to ours, which all too often is basically swept under the rug and ignored in our history classes. Let's have a quick spill on a still all too little known conflict in West Virginia – the Battle of Blair Mountain of 1921. This August will make for the centennial anniversary of the battle.

It would not be an exaggeration to call this conflict a localized civil war that is never talked about. In short, company towns – already infamous enough for their tyrannical proclivities – ruled in West

Virginia as brutally as the worst modern dictatorships you can think of, and attempts by the workers to unionize would result in organizers being found in a ditch shot dead by the company's hired guns. The company wouldn't stop at anything to suppress dissent and the spread of ideas that threatened their profits and at the time the US government was entirely complacent in letting it happen. As a result the push for unionization evolved into a campaign of irregular warfare of sabotage and ambushes in an attempt by the working citizens to secure their rights and finally a massive battle of 6,000-8,000 armed union men on one side and 1,000-2,000 hired guns of the company and deputized men on the other. This is also the first time in US history bombs were dropped on US soil – by a private plane on the union men in defense of the company. This might be the most extreme example of conflict in US labor history but it isn't entirely an isolated incident either. Many other battles and skirmishes took place as well, not just in West Virginia but in other parts of the US, known collectively as the Coal Wars.

Yet these "Coal Wars" are seldom even acknowledged in a US history class in public schools even in West Virginia, in part for fears it might make the coal industry "look bad." When they are mentioned, it's often as a brief paragraph mention and nothing more.

I've made this spill on US history for a few reasons. For one, it is a reminder of how far we've come, and second, it's a reminder of how bad conditions can become if in our always tempting human penchant for apathy we allow it. It's also a rather shocking example of how our country has a way of whitewashing history when it's uncomfortable or inconvenient to acknowledge, and as the saying goes – those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it. For those of you looking for more information on the conflict I highly recommend the Behind the Bastards podcast episodes The Second American Civil War You Never Learned About, parts one and two. From what I can tell the host Robert Evans has done a pretty good job covering it.

As humans I hope we all can agree regardless of our religious or political creeds that the abuses of corporations in the past enabled by a government glad to overlook them are horrific. We should also be careful not to allow ourselves to fall into the complacent thinking that just because things were worse and now they're better – even if we're regressing and normalizing increasingly worse conditions – we should just be glad we're not in the 1920's and suck it up. That is defeatist and demoralizing to those most marginalized and gets us nowhere. And as neo-druids, pagans, or other spiritual people who believe in the virtue of justice and dream of helping to better the world for all, it is my firm belief we have moral duty to stay vigilant and support those in their struggle for better lives.

# 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 John the Verbose



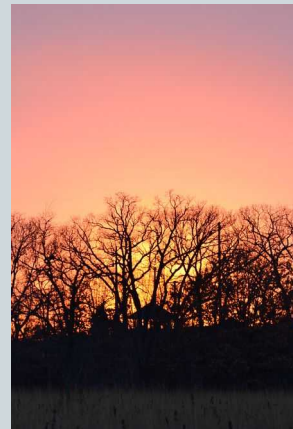
Red Bellied Woodpecker, Carleton Arboretum



Moon phase (day 6) for gathering mistletoe



Deer on a ridge, Carleton Arboretum



Equinox Sunset behind oaks, Ramsey, MN



Mississippi River, Ramsey, MN



Hill of Three Oaks, Carleton Arboretum





Nerstrand Big Woods State Park, MN



Wild River State Park, MN



Winding trail, Cloquet Park, Dayton, MN



Mississippi River, Cloquet Park, Dayton, MN



Tiny coat, Oak Grove Park, Champlin, MN



Tiny coat back, Oak Grove Park, Champlin, MN

## Videos of Interest

### Overview

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

### Judi Dench – My Passion For Trees



### Pete Kelly – The Entire History of Orkney



### Blume – Stress Relief Beautiful Ambient Music Mix



# 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.





# The Right Rites For Rampant Ritualists

## Overview

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

### An NRDNA Equinox Chant

PR: And the God of the Sun did arise from His tomb in the South; and once more did He fare forth to His children in the Northern lands.

(Pause) O Belenos, O Thou unchanging God of many names, but one Face,  
We, Thy children, welcome Thee back to our lands.

Chorus: O Lord of Light, we welcome Thee.

PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, long have we awaited Thy return,  
that the coldness of the Night might be taken from our lands.

Chorus: O God of Sun, We welcome Thee.

PR: The nights were long, the trees had shed,

Chorus: The night had conquered day.

PR: The days were short, and life had fled.

Chorus: The night had conquered day.

PR: The winds were cold, the land seemed dead,

Chorus: The night had conquered day.

PR: But the Sun returns from the Southern lands.

Chorus: Balanced now are we.

PR: Plants spring up on every hand,

Chorus: Balanced now are we.

PR: "Let Life return!" is the Sun's command.

Chorus: Balanced now are we.

PR: The Sun grows stronger every day.

Chorus: The day will conquer night.

PR: The world grows lush and Life holds sway,

Chorus: The day will conquer night.

PR: So let us praise Him in all ways.

Chorus: The day will conquer the night.

PR: O Belenos, O Sun, we praise Thee at Thy return to our midst.

Welcome art Thou among us.

Chorus: Bless with thy presence, O Lord of Light.

PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, bless us with Thy warmth and light,  
that we may rejoice in Thy sight.

Chorus: Bless us and light our way, O God of the Sun.

# 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.

## Submission by John the Verbose

### Methodology

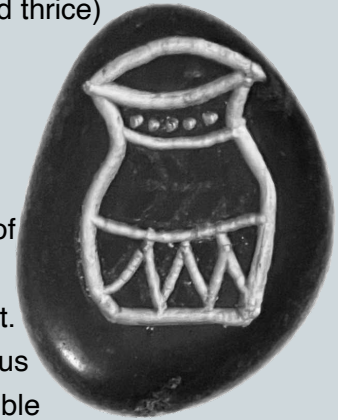
Rock Art Runes (whole set cast repeatedly until only one faced up, repeated thrice)

### Meanings

The Ancient Vessel, Flowing Water, and the Flower: The **Ancient Vessel** represents the primordial chalice, or cooking pot or container for storage of goods for when the time is right. The **Flowing Water** represents the rivers of life, for routes of travel and natural boundaries, or a flood of feelings. The **Flower** represents the beauty of paradise and is based on Neolithic rock art. It could represent the sun, but may just as well be flowers because numerous ones are sometimes carved on a single stone with other shapes that resemble leaves. These carvings are usually found in tombs and may be depictions of a lush and beautiful afterlife or an ideal paradise.

### Interpretation

Spring has arrived on the face of the Earth-Mother, and her bountiful vessel pours forth a wealth of rising waters that swell with the wettest season of the year (at least in climates with all four seasons). These waters allow life to spring forth and we are given a resplendent slice of paradise after having to endure the dreary winter.



# 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

- 48 Earrach (March 20) Vernal Equinox
- 56 Earrach (March 28) Full Moon
- 60 Earrach (April 1) Mwfudnfud
- 71 Earrach (April 12) New Moon
- 86 Earrach (April 27) Full Moon
- 1 Samradh (May 1) Beltane

## Shared Open to Public events

Minnesota: Oakdale Grove public Beltane ritual: Saturday May 1 2021. Location details to follow. Inquire with C.O.R.D. editor. Please comply with all CDC pandemic guidelines.

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

- 60 Earrach (April 1) **Feast of the Spring Fool** – Do something silly just because it feels good, take the day off and go fishing, or sit on a hilltop and herd clouds.
- 64 Earrach (April 5) **Feast of Alexander Nevsky** – celebrate the Slavic viking who won a victory over the Teutonic knights, one of the rare victories for pagans of that time. Contemplate your pagan pride and hope for total freedom someday.
- 82 Earrach (April 23) **Feast of Oghma** – Spend the day learning and practicing the ogham alphabet.

## Long-term notice for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the RDNA

6 Samradh, 61 Y.R. (Saturday, May 6, 2023) is the day of the 60<sup>th</sup> 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 (accumulative each issue)

- Courtney's blog [Corey Adventures](#)
- Ellen Evert Hopman's blog [A Druid's Blog](#)
- John the Verbose's [Tumblr](#)
- TheMageiboLine's [Tumblr](#)

## 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](#)
- Oakdale Grove's [Twitter](#)
- Oakdale Grove's [Facebook page](#)
- Oakdale Grove's RDNA Druid Training Program Development [Facebook page](#)
- Tribe of the Oak Celtic Reconstructionist (non-RDNA) Druid Grove [website](#)



# Artisan Promo Page

## Overview

Each article of C.O.R.D. will contain a page or two 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.

## Reannag Teine Pottery

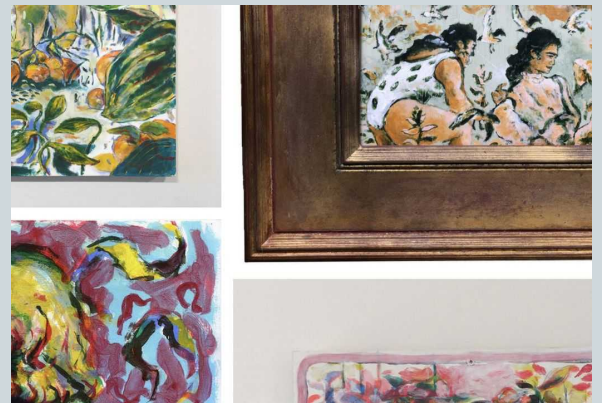
Historically Inspired Pottery: Islamic, Greek, or Italian Renaissance... skulls, squashed fairies, or Viking kitties, we are devoted to creating unique pieces of historically inspired ceramic art--a touch of the unique you can use all the time. Hand-thrown and hand-painted yet safe for food, dishwasher, microwave, and oven. Reannag Teine, Gaelic for "star fire," is a mother-daughter team with six degrees and a myriad of art awards between them... and a healthy amount of humor to bring it all together. Find us on Facebook, YouTube, Twitch, Instagram—and of course at [www.ReannagTeine.com](http://www.ReannagTeine.com)!



(707) 407-8488 • [Pottery@ReannagTeine.com](mailto:Pottery@ReannagTeine.com)

## 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 (2<sup>nd</sup> 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 58<sup>th</sup> 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 [MNdruids@gmail.com](mailto:MNdruids@gmail.com):

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