

C.Φ.R.D. Biquarterly

Connexus Of Reformed Druids

An RDNA Publication
Leaf: White Oak – *Quercus alba*

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Midsummer Solstice



Photo: Stone Circle, Oak Savannah Park, Elk River, MN

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News of the 60th Anniversary Midsummer Solstice Gathering

The weather for the Carleton College annual alumni reunion was warm, mostly sunny, and dry. Upon my arrival to the college campus, I immediately noticed the wide selection of great parking. This was my first visit to the campus during an alumni reunion since before the pandemic, and I was still a bit surprised to see such a quiet turnout for the reunion itself. The golf cart public transit system was hardly being used. There were no large groups of people wandering the campus with name tags. People were certainly around, and there were alumni grouped together catching up on bygone times, but it still felt very much a ghost town.



Oakdale Grove even had a lot of members report that they could not attend, but we were joined by Edward again, a Carleton Grove alumnus, so this was still effectively a multi-grove gathering. We held a history lesson at Monument Hill and processed to the Hill of Three Oaks for our 60th anniversary Midsummer celebration. Despite a smaller turnout, the ceremony still felt particularly invigorating with the sun shining above us, the overall mood of the good company upon the hilltop, and a rather lengthy open forum after the libation of the Waters-of-Life.

This Midsummer Solstice gathering will mark the final major multi-grove reunion type gatherings for the year, but nevertheless it is still going to be the 60th anniversary through next Vernal Equinox 2024! Anyone who celebrates the RDNA's 60th anniversary *anywhere* is still technically celebrating 60 years of Reformed Druidism until next Beltane, when *Year of the Reform* 62 begins. (Reminder that the RDNA started counting at "Y.R. 1," not at zero, meaning this is Y.R. 61.) Also, for anyone who would like to plan a sacred pilgrimage to Carleton College, Oakdale Grove will gladly help be your tour guide any time with enough advance planning!



News of the Groves

News from Tucson Protogrove (Arizona)

[Editor's note: I meant for this to be in the "Beltane part II" newsletter but I forgot to include it – my apologies!]

Report on Tucson Protogrove Beltane 2023

Tucson Protogrove, RDNA met for Beltane on Sunday, May 14th. Three Protogrove members were present. The reason that our Beltane was held late is that Gracie and I were in Northfield, MN for the Reformed Druids of North America 60th Anniversary (and it was an AMAZING weekend!!).

This was my first time leading the Protogrove as a Third Order Priest, and I was fairly nervous, but it went ok. We used the full Order of Common Worship (summer), including consecrating the Waters of Life. We also celebrated the 3rd Anniversary of Tucson Protogrove... we held our first "official" ritual on Beltane, 2020.

There was some discussion of becoming a full grove (the different officers, what orders they need to be, writing a constitution, etc.). In the upcoming days, we will be writing and (hopefully) ratifying a constitution, holding elections, and doing all the other things we need to do to become a grove. Hopefully, all of this will be done by Midsummer.



Yours in the Earth Mother,
Adam Grose, ODAL
Tucson Protogrove

News from Tucson Grove (Arizona)

Report on Tucson Grove's Midsummer Ritual

Tucson Grove celebrated Midsummer on Saturday, June 17th at Reid Park here in Tucson. All four of the Grove's members were present (this usually doesn't happen). We used the Oakdale Grove Midsummer Ritual, slightly rewritten to fit our local situation, and consecrated one person to the First Order, and one person to the Second Order (and there was MUCH rejoicing!). We also celebrated Tucson Grove becoming a full RDNA Grove (including ritually changing to a new sign!). We took quite a few pictures this time (thanks to Ian for taking several of these!!!!).



Adam Grose, ODAL
Archdruid, Tucson Grove

News from Oakdale Grove (Minnesota)

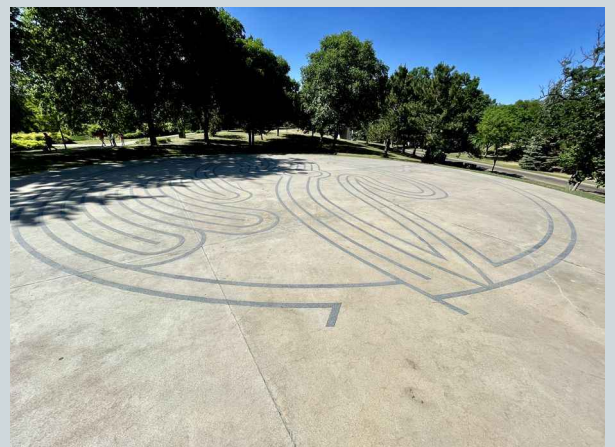
Oakdale Grove is now on Instagram! Find us [@MNdruids](#)! I can't say this is something I'm excited about because each time I've ever considered signing up for an Instagram account, synchronistically someone else on other social media platforms would post a complaint about the thing that irritates them the most about Instagram. It was always something different, too. Each time I thought to myself *maybe it's better to just stay off of Instagram entirely*. I still feel the same way about TikTok. As of now I say that I'll never join TikTok because it is way to spastic and the UI is obnoxious. I've even blocked TikTok in my browser so that any accidental link clicks won't even load. (Stay tuned for the Lughnasadh newsletter in which I might just announce a new TikTok profile, haha!)



As May progressed into June, the wildfires out west were ramping up some more. We hardly got any precipitation since the beginning of May. I think it's only noticeably rained twice since the Beltane celebration, and only briefly each time. We've had lots of cloudless days where they forecast called for sunny skies, but the sun looked orange, or the sky was ashen with smoke. There's no color filter or editing of any kind on the adjacent photo of the evening sun. It's just a dry smoky day with really poor air quality. This put a bit of a damper on our plans for Grove outings and casual hangouts.

We did have a nice day of respite for our June casual meetup on the lawn at Como Park in Saint Paul. One thing I hadn't anticipated was the parking lots that were packed full. The very first parallel spot was available as I entered the park. I saw that as a good sign that there would be plenty of other spots, but all the others were full, and I quickly realized the people who looked like they were leaving were actually circling the lots and side streets looking for an open spot to park. After circling around three times myself, getting into a few traffic jams in the big parking lots, I found an open spot much farther away, and had to walk over a bridge to get to the meetup location.

We sat in the grass for a few hours, talked about druidry, and met a new person who was a chthonic occultist who was interested in learning more about our group. We painted a few rocks to donate to the Anoka Kindness Rock Garden, I painted a concrete owl for my garden to keep rabbits and a few birds away, and neglected to get pictures of anything we painted. As I edit this newsletter I'm visiting family out of state, so we'll just have to imagine my painted owl for now. At the end, we went to the nearby Global Harmony meditation labyrinth, and walked contemplatively within the meandering lines.



News from Starved Rock Grove (Illinois) (also by John the Verbose)

A new Grove has been established along the Illinois River Valley! An older, oft overlooked tradition of the Reformed Druids of North America is for wandering Third Order Druids to establish a new or temporary Grove when traveling to help a new seeker join the RDNA. I drafted a Grove constitution in duplicate: one for the new candidate to keep, and the other for the International Druid Archive at Carleton College. We met at Starved Rock State Park on solstice day. The Sherbaks arrived, and I was able to reunite Chris with his chalice, which had been inadvertently left behind at the Beltane gathering in Minnesota back in May. Our ritual site was the Council Overhang under the sandstone bluffs. We promptly voted to enact the Grove constitution, and then held a second vote ("the second of which shall be the first to be held after the first" per *The Book of the Law 1:12*) to elect Grove officers.



Sunshine, the local Druid seeker, provided spring water gathered from the same park about a month prior, which we used in our ceremonial pitcher to add the Waters-of-Life to. I was cautious to use my carnyx at full volume underneath the seemingly precarious rock ledge, but the reverberation was an acoustic treat not to be passed up. The winds responded immediately when I called upon the Spirit of the North, and the wood thrushes and eastern peewees sang when I called upon the Spirit of the East. Sunshine and Janet entered the First Order of the Reformed Druids of North America, to much rejoicing of the attendees!

We also gifted a consecrated bottle of the Waters-of-Life to Sunshine so that he can consecrate another seeker to the First Order, using the old Carleton Grove loophole: "anyone of the First or Second Orders [is] able to ordain another person to their own orders in the absence of an existing priest" (ARDA, pp. 234, 386). My personal interpretive caveat would be that pre-consecrated Waters would technically still be required, hence the gift. I also consecrated the remainder of the gallon jug of spring water as the Waters-of-Sleep. At the end of the ceremony I was able (for *my* first time ever) to use the script of *Order of Investiture for Archdruids* (by Savitzky, 1969) to pass the Grove baton on to a *provisional* Arch-Druid. Of course in this case I had to adjust the wording for someone who is only First Order, and the Grove would thus revert to a Protogrove. But Sunshine is now the duly invested First Order *Provisional* Arch-Druid of Starved Rock Protogrove of the Reformed Druids of North America!

Campfire Colloquy

Overview

An open forum for news of solo druids, letters to the editor, druidic gossip, philosophical thoughts, etc.

Contribution from John the Verbose

This spring I started a backyard garden as a Gallo-Roman *hortus*. As I was hand-tilling the 8'x12' rectangle, I realized the topsoil is not more than two inches of dirt on top of glacial beach sand, meaning I'd need to bring some really good dirt. I made two inward paths leading to an aisle that ends at an *ara* style altar pillar. I also started working on a sundial for the garden. I'm not certain if the Gauls used sundials, but surely the stone circles from the Neolithic and Bronze Ages had been telling time fairly accurately for a few thousand years before the druids even existed.



Off and on in my exploration into the various pantheons of Celtic deities, I had searched fruitlessly for a distinct Celtic deity of *time*. I began to wonder if the Celtic nations and tribes historically just didn't place the same amount of emphasis on the passage of time (as it pertains to the divine) the way

Romans, Greeks, and other cultures did. Was time immaterial to them? Well, yes, time *is* immaterial and completely intangible. Some deities such as the Dagda get the aspect of time shoehorned into their associations, but that connection seemed tenuous at best.



Finally after thinking like a Roman and looking into *their* gods of time, I looked up the *Interpretatio Romana* of Saturn due to his associations with time and agriculture. I found a list that mentioned a Gaulish god: Arvalus. There are very few resources on Arvalus, but it is generally agreed that he was

an agricultural deity and also a god of time. Thus I made burnt offerings to Arvalus on my *ara* pillar and consecrated the garden to him.

The sundial is still a work in progress, but it is a marble cake plate with a brass rod gnomon and golden Roman numerals. I still need a few more AM and PM numerals since I only started with twelve, and the months between the Vernal and Autumnal equinoxes have more than 12 hours of sunlight each day.



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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 at least weekly. 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 we will use different characters (& and /) instead of @ and '.' to prevent or mitigate roving address harvester bots from scanning them for spam.

Standard Safety 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

USA: District of Columbia: Tyler Vanice on behalf of *Potomac Protogrove* in Washington DC. If interested, please reach out. Email tyler.vanice&gmail/com.

Vivid Visions Gallery

Contributions from John the Verbose



Watpa Wakan (Spirit River), Anoka, MN



"Duluth's Stonehenge," Old Main Park



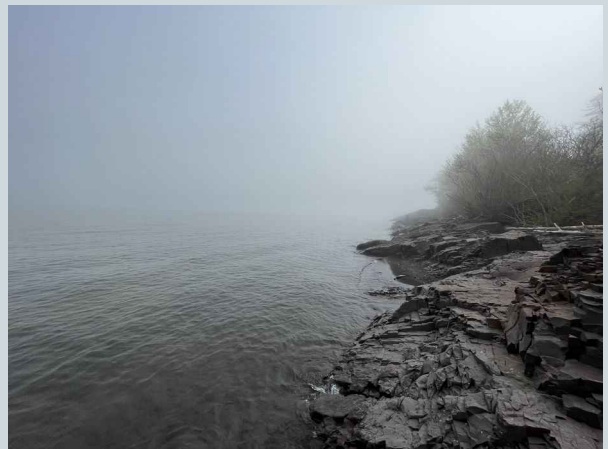
Lester River, Duluth, MN



Lake Superior in fog, Duluth, MN



Lake Superior in fog, Duluth, MN



Lake Superior in fog, Duluth, MN

Videos of Interest

Is Castle Dore King Arthur's Camelot?



Could this Cornish Iron-Age fort be a more plausible home of a tribal chieftain who might have come to be known as King Arthur?

Ice Age Footprints | Full Documentary | NOVA | PBS



Ancient footprints in New Mexico's White Sands National Park reveal new evidence of Ice Age humans that walked the land alongside enormous ground sloths and mammoths—thousands of years earlier than archaeologists thought people were in the Americas.

Augur's Intuition

Overview

Reader-submitted divinations, premonitions, soothsaying, prophecies, omens, etc.

Submission by John the Verbose

Methodology: "Druid Sticks" with a Geomantic Mound

Meanings

Albus – White (the full chalice)

Conjunctio – Conjunction

Carcer – Prison

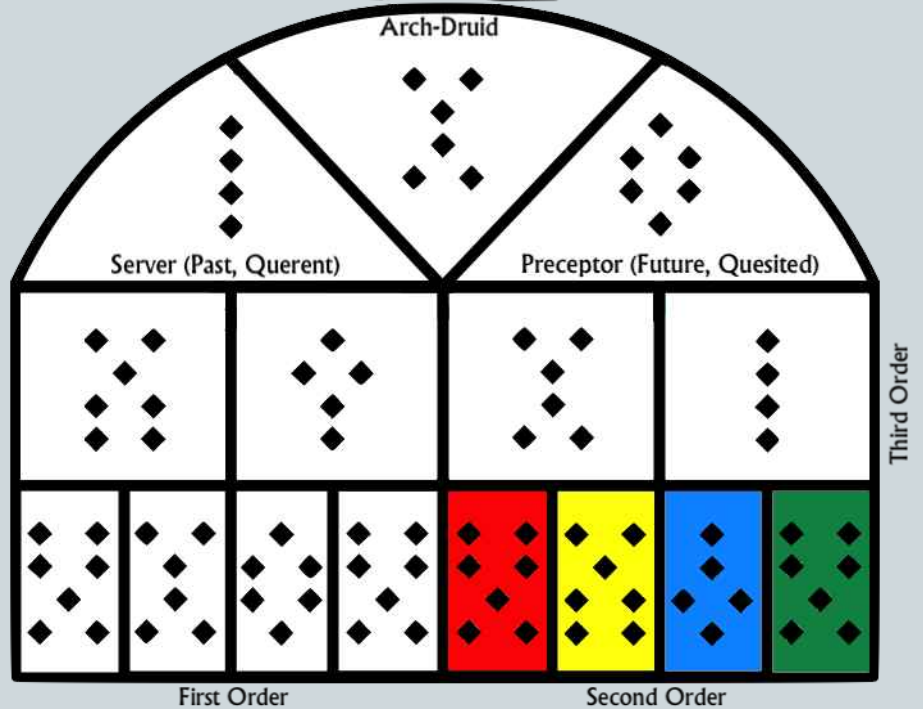
Albus – White

Interpretation

In a peaceful time of planning and new beginnings, this is a time for coming together in unity, though perhaps feeling stuck in the ruts of "tradition." The more things change, the more they stay the same. Don't feel like your new thoughts and ideas are going to waste though. Keep a level head and take the initiative, because you have all you need in order to move forward.

Your habits might re-teach you a lesson that you've already learned in the past, but you can overcome it with grace with collaborative efforts. Meeting with others will change the direction of your journey. Considering the journeys

of the past will provide the momentum needed to achieve stability, even if you find yourself returning to a continuity of tradition. After all that's what brings us together to celebrate what we have in common. In the end, the chalice is indeed emptied. If an empty chalice is an ending, be mindful that at that point, *all else is but beginning*.



Calendar of Events

Overview

Contributors may add any gatherings they wish to announce publicly. This is also an almanac of full and new moon dates, the next Wheel of the Year high day, and any applicable minor holidays of the Schismatic Druids of North America (SDNA).

High Days & Moon Phases

- 52 Samradh (June 21) Midsummer Solstice
- 64 Samradh (July 3) Full Moon
- 78 Samradh (July 17) New Moon
- 1 Foghamhar (August 1) Lughnasadh

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

- 62 Samradh (July 2) **Feast of Expectant Mothers** – Meditate upon the mysteries of conception and pregnancy. Bring some pickles and ice cream to a friend.
- 83 Samradh (July 22) **Summer Festival of Wine and Pleasure** – Time to hold a hedonistic outdoor feast.

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](#)
- White Rabbit Grove's [Facebook page](#)
- Oakdale Grove's [Instagram](#)

Artisan Promo Page

Overview

Each article of *C.O.R.D.* will contain up to two pages of featured artists, craftspersons, or small online storefronts that may be of interest to the druid community in some way. There is no cost involved; anyone can request that their content be promoted here on a first-come-first-served basis.

Hazel Oak and Yew Handcrafted Spiritual Goods

Hello and welcome to Hazel Oak and Yew, my space to share my love of witchcraft and my pagan practice with you all. Here I share my handcrafted goods for practicing along with sets of things for you to learn to practice on your own, in your own way. This Etsy shop offers altar supplies, handmade décor, divination tools, and grimoire materials. Custom orders are available!



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



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!



Book Reviews for Works by Author Ellen Evert Hopman

Once Around the Sun at [The Hearth & Hedge](#) and at [Pagan Pages](#)

Priestess of the Forest at [Portland Jones](#)

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 (yet), however there is something major in the works on an unofficial capacity. For now, here is a list of resources we *do* have.

Grove Finder

Everyone wants to know: is there an RDNA or NRDNA Grove in _____? Well, the most current source of truth is the [Grove Listings](#) on Oakdale Grove's website. It's been updated *en masse* in January 2019 & 2020, but it can be updated any time on an ad-hoc basis. It tracks Reformed Druid, New Reformed Druid, and Reformed Druidic Wicca (MOCC) Groves & Protogroves.

RDNA Year Conversion Chart & Calendar

The RDNA Calendar began at Year of the Reform 1 on Beltane (May 1) 1963. It's unapologetically half a year off from the Celtic New Year. As of Beltane 2021, the 59th Year of the Reform (Y.R.) began.

- [RDNA Gregorian/Year of the Reform Conversion spreadsheet](#) can be a helpful tool.
- [RDNA calendar \(FREE PDF\)](#) current through April 30, 2024 can help you learn what day of the four seasons it is, because you'll see the RDNA calendar system is all over this publication.

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.

Books From the Reformed Druids of North America

- [A Reformed Druid Anthology](#), 2nd ed (also known as ARDA-2) – this is a monumental collection (almost a thousand pages long), and it comes in various forms and formats due to its sheer size. **The PDF versions are always FREE**, but hardcover prints are available from Lulu Print-On-Demand.
 - [ARDA-2](#) complete (**FREE PDF**) (Volumes 0-10, excluding vol 6)
 - [ARDA-2](#) complete ePub format from Lulu (99¢)
 - [ARDA-2 Volumes 0, 1, & 2](#) in one tome (hardcover purchase from Lulu)
 - [ARDA-2 Volume 3](#) in one tome (hardcover purchase from Lulu)
 - [ARDA-2 Volumes 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, & 10](#) in one tome (hardcover purchase from Lulu)
 - [ARDA-2 Volume 6: Green Books of Meditation \(FREE PDF\)](#) – this alone is almost a thousand pages long and intentionally set apart from the other volumes. The Green Books are only available in PDF and contain inspirational writings from all religions.

ARDA Derivative, Condensed, or Adapted Works

- [Unofficial Welcome Pamphlet \(FREE PDF\)](#) is the original 22 pages of the main written works plus introductory info on the RDNA and how to start your own protogrove
- [Black Book of Liturgy \(FREE PDF\)](#) is Oakdale Grove's recommended readings from [ARDA-2](#) plus many scripts of RDNA ritual variations and rites of passage)
 - [Black Book of Liturgy](#) (hardcover purchase from Lulu)

Top recommended books by authors in other druid orders

- [The Druidry Handbook: Spiritual Practice Rooted in the Living Earth](#) by John Michael Greer (Ancient Order of Druids in America – AODA)
- [The Rebirth of Druidry](#) by Philip Carr-Gomm (Order of Bards, Ovates, & Druids – OBOD)
- [A Legacy of Druids: Conversations With Druid Leaders Of Britain, The USA And Canada, Past And Present](#) by Ellen Evert Hopman (Tribe of the Oak)

Books on ancient druids (scholarly quality)

- [Druids: A Very Short Introduction](#) by Barry Cunliffe
- [The Druids](#) by Stuart Piggott
- [The Druids](#) by Peter Berresford Ellis
- [The World of the Druids](#) by Miranda J. Green

Books to Avoid

- [The 21 Lessons of Merlyn: A Study in Druid Magic and Lore](#) by Douglas Monroe (fraudulent sources, numerous inaccuracies passed off as historical facts, and other junk wrapped in a shiny literary bowtie)
- Just everything from Douglas Monroe, really.

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

Past Articles

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

Meet the Editor

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

I am absolutely committed to my oath of Service and wish to help others explore Reformed Druidry by a diverse array of means. That includes assembling and issuing these newsletters. Anything in this publication that doesn't have an attribution and is written in the first person is pretty much me sharing my opinions and experiences. That's where your help and contributions are 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.

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

We have a [convenient form](#) that allows Gmail users to enter text-based contribs as well as attach files or photos! A Google account is only required for sending attachments through the form.

Non-Gmail Users Have Two Ways to Contribute

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.

What Does C.O.R.D. Look For? Content that is PG-13 or tamer in the following categories:

- News of Reformed Druidry Groves, Protogroves, & Solo Druids
- Poetry and Short Stories
- Druidic projects, tutorials, 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 (need not be your own) or druidry-related memes
- Links to your druid blogs or social media
- Divinations and their summaries
- Events you're willing to announce publicly
- 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!

Thank You!

A very special *thank you* photograph dedicated to everyone who contributed to this article!



Ottawa Canyon, Starved Rock State Park, Oglesby, IL