

C.Φ.R.D. Biquarterly

Connexus Of Reformed Druids

A publication for the Reformed Druids of North America – RDNA

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Vernal Equinox

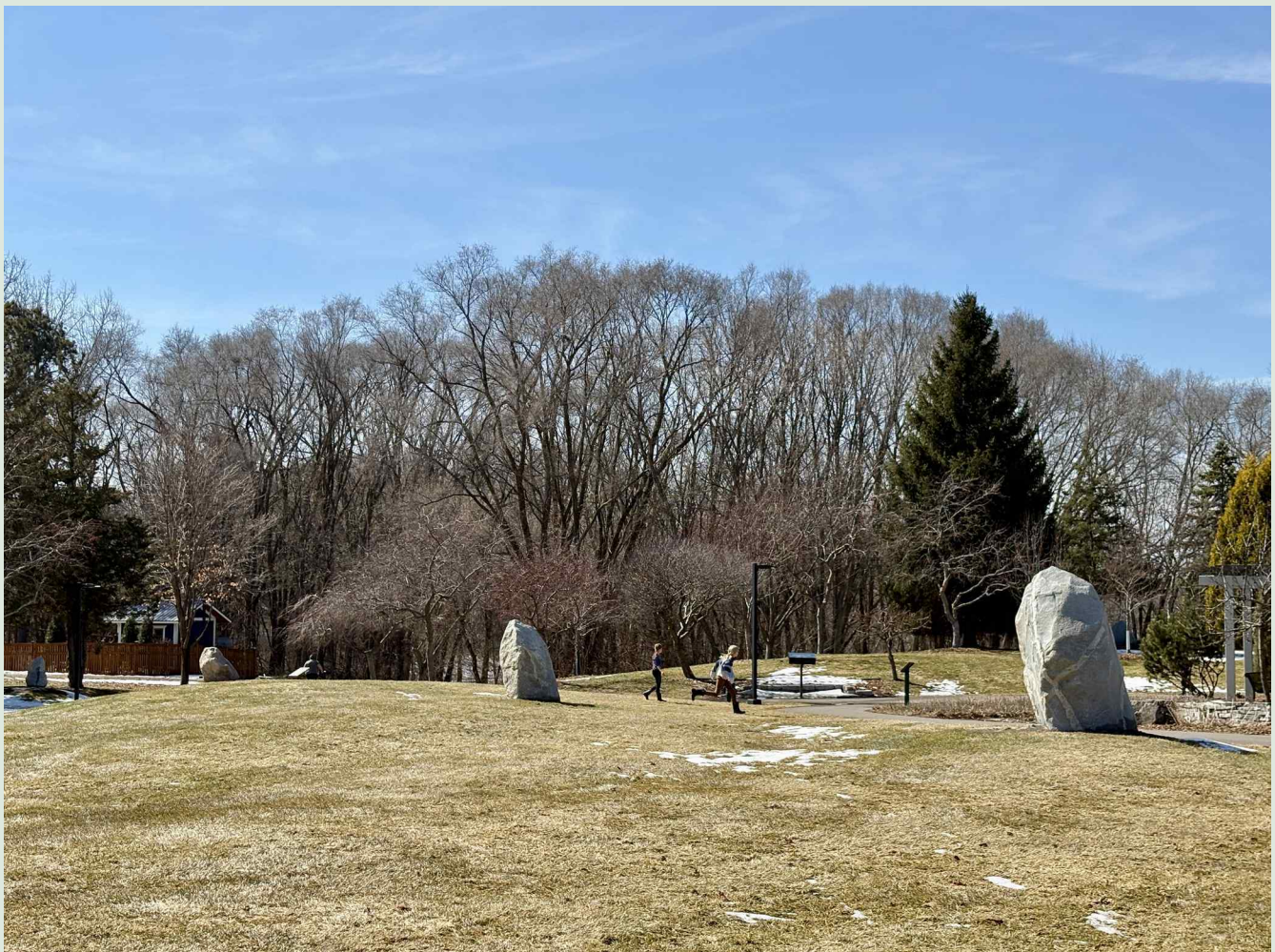


Photo: Standing stones at Muriel Sahlin Arboretum at Roseville Central Park, Roseville, Minnesota.

Contents

News of the Groves.....	3
Bardic Column.....	5
Campfire Colloquy.....	6
Mwfydnfud is Coming.....	8
Seeker's Corkboard.....	9
Videos of Interest.....	10
Augur's Intuition.....	11
Other Blogs & Social Media Links.....	12
Reformed Druid Resources.....	13
Newsletter Info.....	15
Contribute Content to the Next Issue!	16
The <i>Thank You</i> Photo!	17

Click on a line to jump to that page.

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

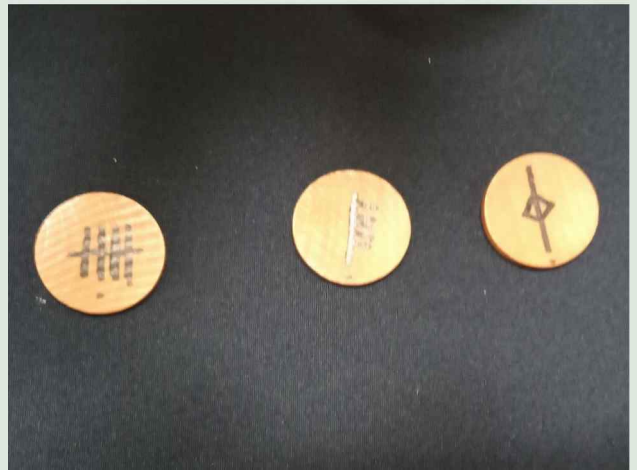
News of the Groves

News from Tucson Grove (AZ)

On Friday night, March 20th, Tucson Grove was honored to present an RDNA Spring Equinox ritual for the Southern Arizona Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (SAZCUUPS). This took place at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tucson. We had 22 in attendance, which was an all-time high for Tucson Grove, and very high for SAZCUUPS. We are grateful to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tucson for their hospitality, and for allowing us to host this ritual.



On Saturday, March 21st, the Grove held their normal Spring Equinox Ritual, this time using the Isle of Wight Order of Druids Liturgy. There were 3 in attendance, bringing the total for the weekend to 25. Overall a great (but tiring) weekend for Tucson Grove. Best wishes to all for a blessed Equinox and spring season.

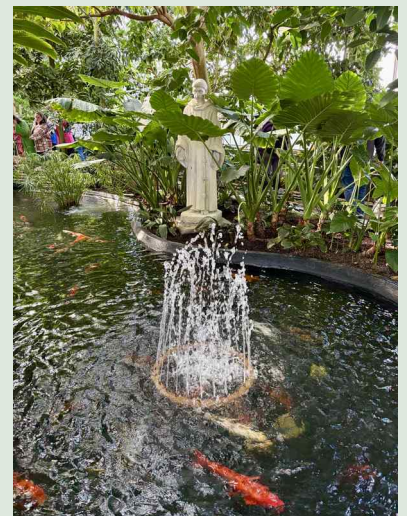


Meirneal
Grove Preceptor

News from Oakdale Grove (MN)

In early March, we held our monthly casual hangout in the meeting room of a Caribou Coffee that used to be a Hardee's. Sometimes our casual hangouts have no agenda, but over the past year, I think a majority of them have actually had a topic. Ideally the casual meetups are for open-ended discussions, but we've been featuring more guided programming taken right out of the *Order of Bradán Feasa* (OBF) Druidry training program's book three (the Clergy Prep Course & Grove Governance Guide or GGG). In the Oimelc issue of *C.O.R.D. Biquarterly*, we had mentioned our January meetup consisted of a comparison of five ritual outlines from five different Druid orders (well, six if you count looking at the differences in an NRDNA ritual, too).

In February we had our annual stroll through the Como Park Conservatory, where we were immersed in tropical plants enjoying a year-round season of life. If only the conservatory allowed outside beverages to be brought into the



3 [Back to Contents](#)

building, we'd wear our red ribbons and consecrate the Waters-of-Life in there to celebrate the continual and unsleeping flow and renewal of life amid the green trees, vibrant flowers, and lush shrubberies and mosses while the ground is frozen outside. My favorite room is always the North Garden. It features plants that have been used for medicinal purposes, tools and textiles, and those which bear edible fruits.

Our March hangout was again at the Caribou Coffee with the conference rooms, where we had a presentation on *The Druidic Obsession With Chalices*. The slideshow began with covering which modern Druid orders incorporate chalices into their rituals, and which ones generally do not. Then we took a deep dive into sacred and magical vessels in folklore and mythology: from Bronze Age finds through the Holy Grail, and into the concept of communion in Christianity, which is highly likely the direct origin of partaking of the Waters-of-Life in Reformed Druidism.



The slideshow then went in-depth on starting a chalice collection, and how having *just one* chalice often only exists as a temporary phenomenon. It compared the ups and downs of various materials

that chalices are made from, how to collect them on a budget, and how to safely transport them to and from a ritual. We had two visitors among the Grove members in attendance, one a blogger that is interested in learning more about Nature-based spirituality for LGBTQ+ individuals, and another who was a local student with an assignment to learn about another social group.



Our Vernal Equinox ritual had a turnout of 13 people on a glorious spring day with unusually high temperatures in the mid 70s (low-mid 20s C). Only a few days before, we had temperatures dipping to 7° F (-14° C) during our blizzard. The snow had mostly melted by the day of our ritual, with "secret snow" only lurking in a few places like north-facing shaded areas or remnants of where car parks and sidewalks were plowed out. The fire pit area was still muddy, so we left our portable altar mounted on the luggage cart so that we'd only get mud in the wheels. Despite the warm weather, the omen still whispered of a lingering Season of Sleep. Our fellowship is certainly looking forward to Beltane though, as we've got a few First Order initiations planned!



Bardic Column

Season of the Mother Grove: Winter of Snowy Pawprints by Edward Wellspring

Winter swept in on a salvo of snow, with more snow swirling and settling every day. Stiff winds drew out shapely drifts, and then the clouds conspired again, bringing snow on snow. The winds spoke up at Yule, freezing over the ritual chalice even before it could be consecrated. Deep in the longest night, shrouded stars peered from cloaks of dark nebulae. Thenafter pale luminosity reigned in the night, as cover-clouds conversed with the covered earth. Indeed, there was little silence this winter. A burst of warmth laughed with trickling tongues, even as critters made their first forays out of slumber. Then the winds dominated, with a screaming blizzard freezing every branch and road before weaving drifts concealed the ground with a sea of shifting ice crystals.

Yet the worst that winter brought could not repress relentless rodentia. Amid the harshest blizzard winds, a vole crossed open highway before me. In the deepest cold, a mouse was detected scurrying about my feet. And as January eased into soft gray days of snow, each fresh fall was perforated with the prints of restless rabbits. In the Mother Grove, tracks concentrated and concatenated in chains and patterns that painted the forest floor. The record recounts revels and explorations, but all this activity attracted avid attention. Frequently patrolling raptors cut the skies or sat hungrily hunting overhead, cresting roofs, their piercing presence perched in trees and lining the roads. Unwilling to be left behind, other creatures frolicked this winter and my path crossed with deer, muskrat, raccoon, and squirrel. Some squirrels had even left behind their feast tables, acorn caps covering excavations ringed by communal circles of snowy pawprints. Everywhere at hand this winter, signs of life abounded!

Warmth came early, and dancing cold reeled with bursts of heat. Each sought to outdo the other, freezing harder or lingering longer. Rain cut through to mud before river top froze solid again. Stretching afternoons of soothing sun bounded days of intense cold and wind. Richly chromatic clouds framed vibrant dawns and 'april' came early amid soft sunny skies. Drilling drops and probing woodpeckers reprised the sounds of trickling spring. Planets blazed brighter than the stars and pierced thin clouds clinging about the Earth like her last layer of blanket kept on before waking. As if to reassert the season, February closed with the return of snow.

Campfire Colloquy

Overview

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

"What Was to be a Critique on Marcus Aurelius' Meditations, but Became a Critique on Unnecessary Offshoots of Reformed Druidism" by John the Verbose

For the past couple years I had been meaning to look into a small offshoot of Reformed Druidism called *order of druids minor* (o.d.m.) which is intentionally all lowercase, I *think* as an expression of humility. This is not an order of the priesthood the way the *Order of Belenos* is, but rather is technically a whole offshoot of Reformed Druidism, the way the Schismatic Druids and New Reformed Druids are.

The *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius are the primary inspiration for the order of druids minor. The *Meditations* highlight stoicism in this particular brand of Druidism, and places an emphasis on the *goodness* of Nature. It also borrows inspiration from Pelagius in the realm of self-reliance, and the humility and non-materialism of St. Francis of Assisi.

I finally got around to reading Marcus' *Meditations* in recent weeks, and I was quickly starting to feel put off by some of the content. While some of it was relatable despite being almost 2000 years old, some of it definitely felt dated. In applying a modicum of critical thinking, it occurred to me that the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius tends to be ableist in some places, but extremely classist in others. Marcus Aurelius was the emperor of the *entire* Roman Empire at the time of his writings. He had *every* privilege, and I could see his naïvety, in how he revealed his ignorance of the realities of the lower-class in his empire. Basically he states (paraphrased) that if he can do something, *they* can too, or that suffering only happens because people let it happen to themselves.

While absorbing the aspects of stoic philosophy in the *Meditations*, I started to think that perhaps the order of druids minor might be unnecessary. In Reformed Druidism we already come from varied religious or philosophical backgrounds. *We come together* under Reformed Druidism to learn from each others' viewpoints and experiences. O.d.m. seeks to pool the humble independent stoics together into Groves of their own echo chambers. They wouldn't learn the diversity of wisdom that a broad-spectrum RDNA Grove could offer its fellowship.

The order of druids minor has a *rule of adherence* to the Two Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism. Although it sounds like the Tenets are an "iron fist" requirement, so far that's just regular Reformed Druidism. They have two apparent ranks: novice and full member. Novices must wait a year before they can take their three vows and become a member. Their first vow is that of *Humility*. Ok, so far humility is also in the RDNA, right in the liturgy where we say "O lord, overlook these three shortcomings that are due to our human limitations."

The second vow of o.d.m. is *Humanity*. "Knowing that we are all together, even those opposed to us." Well that's very much in line with Reformed Druidism as well. The opposition is partially in the orbit of the Second Tenet regarding our vague *struggle through life*. When Reformed Druidism was founded, even the Anti-Druids were initially members of the Grove. Everyone gets a chance. The third vow in o.d.m. is that of *Observance*. They are Druids not just during ritual, but beyond that in life as well. Here it's important to reiterate I should hope that *no* Reformed Druid goes home from ritual and stops being a Druid 'til next high day! It's still *Reformed Druidism*, just with some additional personal philosophies.

And that's the rub. In all, o.d.m. is great as a *personal* philosophy. It is *good* that there are o.d.m. Druids out there just as much as there are neopagan Druids, Christian Druids, Buddhist Druids, Zen Druids, as well as agnostic or atheist Druids out there and more. What's more important though, is that we don't become tribalistic islands of just one philosophy or religious denomination of Reformed Druid. That's why we come together, *just* as Reformed Druids, bringing our differences with us and sharing our philosophies with each other, while celebrating what we have in common: Nature. Our personal interpretations of Druidry are still preserved in our individual practices outside of our Grove settings.

Similar discussions to this one had cropped up during the *Isaac Affair* in the 1970s and early 1980s. Isaac Bonewits created the Schismatic Druids of North America, which deliberately *excluded* non-pagan Druids. He created the **New** Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA), which was (among other things) basically the RDNA that had a *duotheistic* feel to it, and vaguely hybridized a few concepts from Wicca. Technically the NRDNA also excluded a number of monotheist Reformed Druids or anyone not comfortable with the way the NRDNA interpreted the divine.

The NRDNA has been in gradual decline in recent decades. The SDNA has been defunct for even longer. It seems new fellowships of Reformed Druidism are all being set up as *classic* RDNA Groves and Protogroves. There aren't any o.d.m. Groves at all. The *de facto* consensus looks like we're already homing in on *classic* Reformed Druidism organically. We don't need to have all these offshoots on a *Grove* scale; we all have our own personal interpretations of the divine and our own philosophical viewpoints. The RDNA is our spiritual home where we can be contented or even dysfunctional together, whether we're neopagan Druids, atheist Druids, pantheist Druids, or monotheist Druids. Coming together despite our differences is a very effective method of striving for *Awareness* by not clustering together into isolated sub-denominations of Reformed Druidism.

RDNA classic is all we need.

Mwfydnfud is Coming...

The Ancient Celtic Holiday of Mwfydnfud

Between this issue and Beltane's release, there is a special edition coming up to celebrate the ancient festival of Mwfydnfud. Between now and midnight (your timezone) on March 31, we'd like your content but with a slightly different theme. For the Mwfydnfud issue we'd like any content *you create* that is contrived, irreverent, satirical, humorous, nonsensical, or off-beat. The special edition of *C.O.R.D.* will be released on March 32nd.

If you'd like to see examples of what we're looking for in the Mwfydnfud editions, check out our back-issues at Oakdale Grove's [C.O.R.D. webpage](#). There are five back-issues for Mwfydnfud for your reading pleasure. Plus, there are one or two running themes in the "News of the Groves" sections.

Seeker's Corkboard

Overview

Here you can state that you are seeking others to form a protogrove. Long has it been said, "*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! These bulletins will be in each newsletter until you ask otherwise.

To submit a Seeker's Corkboard request, email the editor with **your preferred name, location, and email address** that you check at least weekly. Any information you submit to this section becomes public. Your email address in the newsletter will have characters swapped: & and / instead of @ and '.' to prevent roving address harvester/spam bots from mining them.

Standard Safety Disclaimer

We 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 (alphabetically by country, state/province/region, then by town name)

Germany: Bavaria: Munich: from Clelia-Maria

I'm a First Order Druid looking for like-minded folks around Munich, Germany. I'm solo and I also haven't been practicing for too long, but I think it'd be great to meet up with others and study and just enjoy Nature together. I know the chances are pretty low, but it's worth a shot, right? Email dobre029&umn/edu

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

USA: Georgia: Savannah: Hey this is a PSA from the editor. There are Druids in your area seeking other Druids (like, at least three, and I don't think it's the same person), we just don't have names or contact info. I can't even remember where I've been seeing references to this (probably somewhere on Discord). Email the editor if you wanna put in a bulletin here!

USA: Massachusetts: Central MA: from Avery Vreeland

Looking for others interested in establishing a RDNA/General Reformed Druidism study group in the central Massachusetts/Wider New England area, with eventual aspirations of forming a Grove. Please reach out to gremilkin&proton/me.

USA: North Carolina: Boone: from Maddox Main: I am in the early stages of forming a proto-grove to serve this area. I have name ideas, but I would prefer it be a group consensus. Fellow Druids or anyone interested, please get in touch with me at RDNA_Maddox&proton/me.

Videos of Interest

The Magic of Spring with Ellen Evert Hopman



The Magic of Spring, and a discussion of kids' books from March 4, 2026

Other Blogs & Social Media Links

Blogs Curated By Druids (accumulative each issue)

- Jax K's [Tumblr Blog](#)
- *I Talk To The Trees*'s blog [Corey Adventures](#)
- Ellen Evert Hopman's blog [A Druid's Blog](#)
- John the Verbose's [Tumblr](#) (not updated as much, but still a repository of druidic content)
- TheMageiboLine's [Tumblr](#)

Social Media and Links

- RDNA on [Discord](#)
- The *Order of Bradán Feasa* (OBF) RDNA [Druid Training Program workbook](#)
- Oakdale Grove's [BlueSky](#)
- Oakdale Grove's [Facebook page](#)
- Tucson Grove's [website](#)
- Tribe of the Oak Celtic Reconstructionist (non-RDNA) Druid Grove [website](#)
- White Rabbit Grove's [Facebook page](#)
- Oakdale Grove's [Instagram](#)
- Ron Stonemage's [Instagram](#)

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, but 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 Listing](#) on Oakdale Grove's website. 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 2024, the 62nd Year of the Reform (Y.R.) began on the first day of Samradh, which is one day after the 90th day of Earrach. It simply counts the days of each season as well.

- [RDNA Gregorian/Year of the Reform Conversion spreadsheet](#) can be a helpful tool.

Oakdale Grove's RDNA Druid Training Program

We've created a [free training program](#) for the RDNA, and for those who complete the program, an honor society within the RDNA called the *Order of Bradán Feasa* (pronounced *bra-DON FOSS-ah*), named after the Salmon of Knowledge in Irish mythology.

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

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 it was difficult to communicate with the Council 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 developing the new RDNA style Druid training program, and established an honor society for those who complete it called the Order of Bradán Feasa.

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.



Photo courtesy of I Talk To The Trees.

Peace, peace, peace! ☪

15 [Back to Contents](#)

Contribute Content to the Next Issue!

Submission Process

Issues will be released on the day 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.

Send your content to the Gmail account "MNdruids" and include **CORD** in the subject bar. Separate the content you want in the newsletter with a line as a string of underscores (if there are parts of your email you don't want to share). Please especially include the name you wish to be credited with, or your first name will be used from the email address (or "Anonymous" if your name isn't in the address).

Example:

From: sender@snailmail.com

To: MNdruids@gmail.com

Subject: Submission for **CORD**

Hi, this is my submission to the newsletter. **Credit me as** Jitterix the Caffeinated.

_____ [use a string of underscores to separate unwanted content]

"A Cosmic Haiku"

Sun shines on all things,

Yet some things still can't be seen,

Dark matter floats by.

PS: See also my attached photos for the Vivid Visions gallery.

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
- Propose a topic; you can help make this newsletter be a success!

The *Thank You* Photo!

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



Minnesota's last original covered bridge, built 1869, Zumbro River, Zumbrota, MN