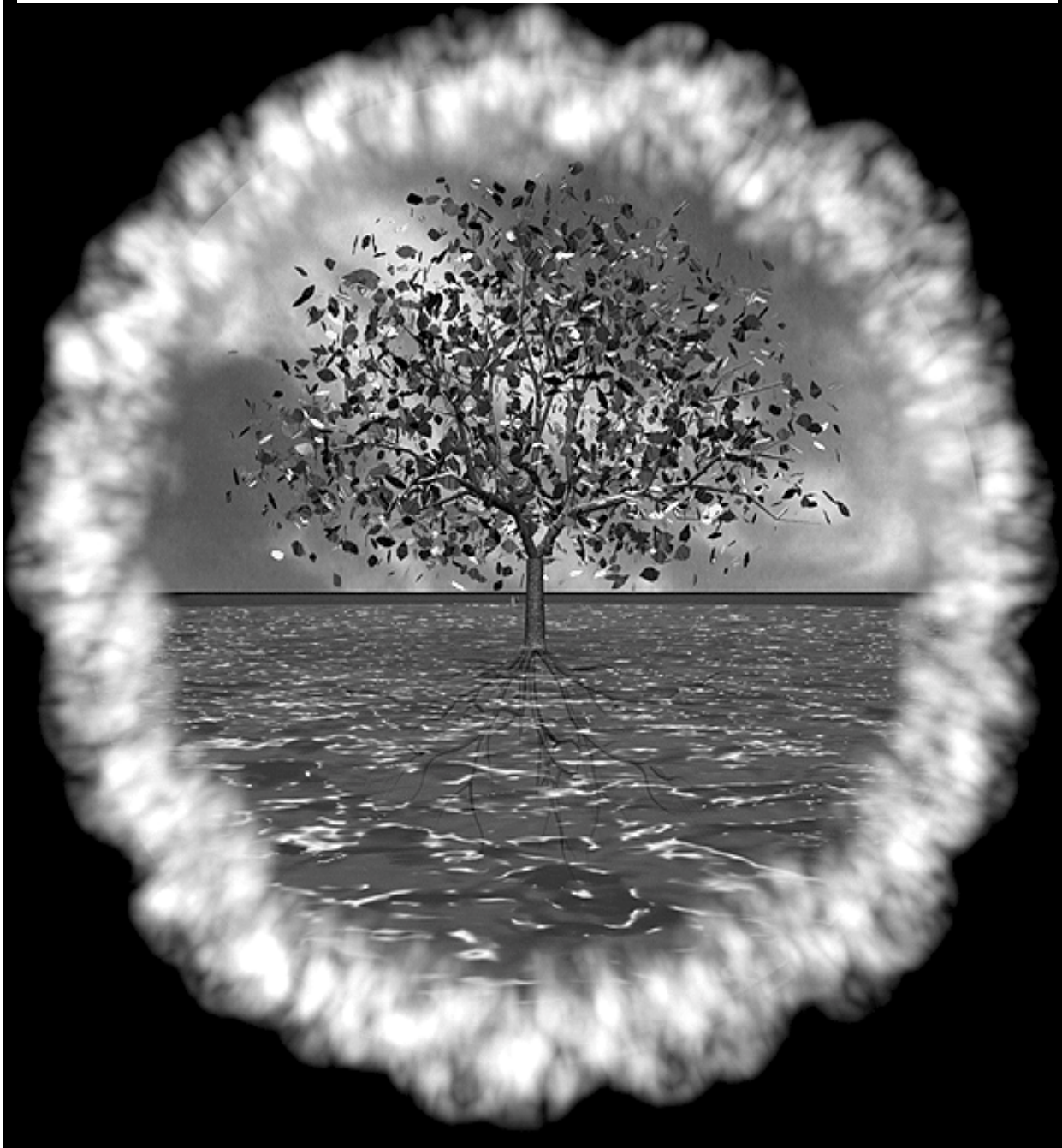


OAK LEAVES

The Quarterly Journal of Ar nDraiocht Fein: A Druid Fellowship

Issue 19

Autumn 2002



Oak Leaves Issue 19

Notes from the Archdruid

The past year has been a very busy one for me. In 2001, I've traveled to 13 festivals and driven a total of 15,734 miles to represent ADF. I've had a chance to meet many of ADF's solitary members and visit with many of our groves and proto-groves. Full reports on the festivals and my West Coast trip, including pictures can be found at www.dragonskeepfarm.com.

At the festivals I've attended and during my West Coast trip, I've presented 22 workshops, mainly about ADF, participated in or led 16 rituals and sold \$2,851.25 worth of ADF regalia. I've also created a web site, address above, where people can 'attend' any of my workshops online if they can't make it to one of the festivals I'm at in person. This has given many people a chance to learn about our religion and organization. In my opinion, this is one of, if not THE most important job of the Archdruid (AD).

An important job of the AD is to run the organization. In this respect, I've been involved in all the ADF lists and have been working with our many volunteers to make sure that everything is progressing smoothly. It isn't always easy to get things to happen on a timely basis, but from what I can see, we are progressing in getting applications and renewals processed quicker, the Study Plan (SP) is coming along nicely and Oak Leaves is coming back on track.

The AD is to act as the spiritual head of our religion. I've been working actively with the Clergy Council to establish bylaws for this group and to further the work that has been done on the Priest/ess track of the SP. Hopefully in the near future we will be accepting students in this track.

In closing, I'd like to thank all the many volunteers that keep things running smoothly, from the people that keep the groves and proto-groves running, the 'Elves' that make the office run, including a very dedicated office manager, the people working on the guilds and finally to the other members on the Mother Grove that make this organization strong, thank you all!

Bright Blessings;
Rev. Skip Ellison

OAK LEAVES

The Quarterly Journal of
Ar nDraiocht Fein
Issue 19

Oak Leaves is the quarterly journal of Ar nDraiocht Fein: A Druid Fellowship, Inc. It is intended to be both a newsletter informing members and the Neopagan community of ADF's activities, as well as a forum for our scholarly and artistic explorations.

STAFF

Chronicler: Jenni Hunt
Senior Editor: Athanasios
Proofreader: Pandora

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Oak Leaves is free to regular members of ADF. A membership application can be found at the end of this issue. Non-member subscriptions had be obtained for \$20.00. Details in the back of this issue.

OWNERSHIP & POLICY

The content of all submitted material remains the property of the author/artist. Copyrights should be honored and respected, and nothing should be reprinted without the express permission from the author. All opinions expressed in Oak Leaves are those of the authors, and not necessarily of ADF.

For information on submission guidelines and advertising rates contact the editor,
Athanasios at:

athanasiosofspfd@aol.com

COVER DESIGN
Christopher Alan Persbacker

INTERIOR ARTWORK
Heather S. Koerner

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| <u>Editorials</u> | By Robyn Richardson.....Page 20 |
| Notes from the Archdruid By Rev. Skip Ellison.....Page 2 | <u>Fiction</u> |
| Editorial... By Athanasios.....Page 3 | The Tale of the Babbling Trees By Wry Welwood.....Page 12 |
| <u>Articles</u> | Book Reviews |
| Major Holidays of Rome — October By Jenni HuntPage 4 | The Druid's Bookshelf By John Michael Greer.....Page 22 |
| The Growing Oak By Epona.....Page 8 | ADF Organizational Material |
| Making Your Own Pagan Prayer Flags By Robyn Gonzalez Mercurio.....Page 18 | 2002 Annual Meeting Minutes Wellspring May 2002.....Page 26 |
| The Art and Science of the 21st Century Bard By Jamie L. Longstreth.....Page 21 | Mother Grove meeting at Wellspring 2002.....Page 32 |
| The Garden of our Nemeton By Inish.....Page 25 | ADF Directory..... Page 36 |
| <u>Poetry</u> | |
| Haiku High Day By Dragynphyre.....Page 7 | |
| Enigma By Inish.....Page 11 | |
| Poems | |

Editorial...

The changing of the seasons give us a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the seasons within ourselves. As we continue through Autumn, and eventually transition into Winter, I try to take inventory of the changes in my life during the past year. The seasons change, and the seasons are change. They are mirrors into our own complex nature, and offer us insight into ourselves. The shedding of things unwanted during Autumn, cold contemplation during Winter, renewal and rejuvenation during Spring, and the warmth of new challenges during Summer, are all part of the complex patterns of the seasons within. It is how we internalize these changes that lead to spiritual growth, and understanding of ourselves, and of our Gods.



(Continued of Page 35)

Major Holidays of Rome October (Mensis October)

By Jenni Hunt

This article is the sixth of a series of articles outlining the basics of a Roman focus of worship and practice, and the third in a series about the Roman festival calendar, the first two covering the months of April through September. Future topics will probably include the remainder of the Roman festival calendar, early Roman Gods and Goddesses, and Roman divination (and any other topics that may be inspired or requested). In this article, I will discuss the holidays and festivals of October, along with a bit of the lore attached to each.

October marks the end of the campaign season, and so there are related festivals in honor of *Mars*, the October Horse, and the purification of the army. In the early days when campaigning occurred only during the summer months, it was important that the warriors be purified before leaving the city to go on campaign, but also upon returning so that they could then be fit inhabitants of the city again. Once the soldiers were allowed to enter the pomerium (the sacred boundary around the city), they would join the farmers in cleaning, sharpening, and purifying their tools and weapons, to be put away for the winter.

The agricultural season in northern Mediterranean climates comes to a close in October – at least for the most important of crop in Rome: grapes. The College of Pontiffs of ancient Rome usually set the vintage for the wine harvest in October, although the Codex Theodosianus allows the time to be set anytime from August 23 to October 15.

Kalendris Octobris (Kalends of October - October 1) Fidei in Capitolio, Tigillo Sororio ad Compitum Acili, Juno Sororio, Janus Curiatius dies nefastus (no legal or political business could take place).

Fides is honored on this date in commemoration of the temple dedication on the Capitoline Hill to Her by Aulus Atilius Calatinus during his consulship in the mid-3rd century. Occasionally, the temple was used as a meeting place for the Senate or for the making of significant oaths, contracts or treaties, and copies of Rome's international treaties hung on its walls.

Fides is the personification of good faith, and therefore verbal contracts and treaties. Worship of Fides was established by King Numa in the regal era by instituting its flamens, or priests, in the state religion. While idea of *fides* was probably first seen as an attitude

of the gods toward men, rather than human loyalty to any deities, it really has more to do with the reliability of the gods and reinforces the concept of *Do ut Des*, the Roman religious contractual formula, "I give so that you may give."

Fides is portrayed as a goddess with Her right hand bound or gloved by white cloth. From the times of King Numa, on the first of October, Her *flamens* were conveyed to her shrine in a covered, two-horse carriage, their hands wrapped in white as a symbol of good faith, "as a sign that faith must be kept, and that even in men's clasped hands her seat is sacred" (Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita*, 1.21.4). Sacrifices made to Fides must be offered with the right hand covered by a white cloth or wearing a white glove.

Also on the Kalends of October, sacrifices were made to Tigillo Sororio, Juno Sororio, and Janus Curiatius, all of which seem to be somewhat related, at least in lore. *Tigillo Sororio* literally means the "sister beam." Originally, it was a horizontal beam placed on two uprights under which one could pass beneath for purification. Livy accounts a heroic tale in which a young man, Horatius was acquitted of his sister's murder, but in order to purge himself of the blood guilt, he was made to pass with covered head under a *tigillum* (beam) across the street erected by his father, which accounts for the etymology of the "sister's beam." Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Roman Antiquities*, 3.22) added that before Horatius passed under this yoke, King Tullus Hostilius ordered the Pontifices to erect two altars and sacrifice upon them, one to Juno Sororia and another to Janus Curiatius. Juno Sororio is associated with the puberty of girls, while Janus Curiatius has to do with the passage of boys into manhood, each to be honored in this legend with respect to the murdered sister and Horatius, and each being associated with adolescent rites of passage.

As the existence of the *tigillum* actually predates the

time of Horatius, it is likely that it at one time marked an ancient gateway into the city, under which soldiers returning to the city from their campaigning must first pass in order to release their warlike passions and resume their roles as *Quirites* (people of Rome).

Ante Diem IV Nonas Octobras (four days before the Nones of October - October 4) Ieiunium Cereris (Fast of Ceres) dies comitalis (citizens may vote on political or criminal matters).

In 191 BCE, a series of prodigies, or odd events thought to be worthy of attention, occurred. In Carinae, someone noted a couple of oxen climbing up the stairs on to the flat roof of a building, odd behavior indeed. The unfortunate bovines were ordered by the consulting haruspices to be burnt alive and their ashes thrown into the Tiber, but there were other strange portents that apparently occurred simultaneously throughout the lands, including several showers of stones reported from Terracina and Ameriternum, the temple of Jupiter at Menturnae being struck by lightning, and two ships in the mouth of the river at Volturnus being similarly struck and burned.

As a result of this accumulation of strange portents, the Senate ordered the *Decenviri* to consult the Sibylline books. The *Decenviri* then ordained that every five years a fast day in honor of Ceres would be observed. By the time of Augustus the fast had come to be celebrated annually and its date fixed on October 4th.

Ante Diem III Nonas Octobras (three days before the Nones of October - October 5) Mundus Patet (The Mundus is opened) dies comitalis (but with a caveat).

This is one of the three times a year (the other two dates being August 24 and November 8) when the *mundus*, the gate to the underworld, is opened so that the dead may communicate with the living, when, according to Varro, "it is as if the door of the grim, infernal deities were open." Although the calendars indicates that the day technically is a *dies comitalis*, no public business could be performed, no battles could be fought, no ships could set sail, and no marriages could take on days when the *mundus* was opened; all

the underworld spirits could roam the land, and therefore any actions undertaken on such a day would be inauspicious.

Nonas Octobras (the Nones of October - October 7) Iovi Fulgarii (Jove/Jupiter Fulgar), Iononi Quiriti (Juno Curriti or Quiriti) dies fastus (legal action is permitted).

Iove Fulgaris is the appellation of Jupiter who hurls the thunderbolts during the daytime (as opposed to Summanus, who hurls thunderbolts during the night and is honored on June 20). On this date, a shrine – probably open to the sky, as logic would dictate – was dedicated to Iovi Fulgar in the Campus Martius.

October marks the end of the campaign season, and so there are related festivals in honor of Mars, the October Horse, and the purification of the army.

Also on this date, Juno Curriti was brought from the town of Falerii in 241 BCE (or possible before even then) by the rite of *evocatio*. One of the early Romans' more creative means of bringing their Italian neighbors under Roman rule was to lure away their gods by tempting them with promises of temples and continuing worship far exceeding that which they were accustomed in the towns of their patronage. Some-

times also referred to as "Juno, Protectress of Spear-men" Juno Curriti is the only deity whose cult is known to have been universal throughout all the curiae (tribes) of Rome. To her are offered first fruits of the harvest, spelt and barley cakes, and wine.

Ante Diem VI Idus Octobres (six days before the Ides of October - October 10) Iunoni Monetae (Juno the Warner) dies comitalis.

This date marks the rededication of the temple to Juno Moneta on the Arx of the Capitoline Hill, originally dedicated on June 1. The temple was erected in gratitude for that appellation of Juno who caused the geese to give warning by their hissing of attacking Gauls in 390 BCE. Unlike the city's dogs, who were reviled thereafter as the for not giving any such warning, a flock of sacred geese was kept by the temple priests for their part in preventing a total rout that day.

Ante Diem V Idus Octobres (five days before the Ides of October -October 11) Meditrinalia nefastus publicus (public festival day).

Though Varro theorized that the Meditrinalia comes from *mederi* (“to heal”), in fact it more likely derives from a non-Indo-European word for “wine press,” which would explain etymologically why this date marks a wine tasting festival. The grape harvest is complete, and so an offering of wines of new and old vintages is made in order to be healed of all manner of illness. It is an old festival, important to early agricultural Rome, but not well understood, as it was more of a pastoral festival, rather than urban.

Ante Diem III Idus Octobres (three days before the Ides of October - October 13) FONTINALIA nefastus publicus.

Fons is the God of springs, the son-in-law of Voltumnus, husband of Juturna. On this day garlands are hung at the springs and wells throughout Rome. The custom of dropping coins into wells and fountains had been well established in even ancient Roman times, as all sources of water are especially venerated by those who rely upon them.

Idus Octobres (Ides of October - October 15) Feria Iuvi (Feast of Jupiter), Equus October (October Horse), Ludi Capitolini (Capitoline Games) nefastus publicus.

The Ides of each month are sacred to Jupiter, but the ides of October are something special, indeed, and the events dedicated to Mars on this day seem to have superceded any attention to Jupiter. On this day, chariot races in honor of Mars were held on the Campus Martius. The right horse of the winning pair was sacrificed by the *flamen Martialis* on an altar to Mars in the Campus Martius. Before being sacrificed, the horse’s head was adorned with loaves of bread, meant to acknowledge and thank Mars for protecting the harvest, recalling that Mars was first and foremost an agricultural protector god, rather than merely a warrior god. After the horse was sacrificed, its head was cut off and decorated with cakes, while residents of the Via Sacra and the Subura, two neighborhoods of Rome, in a friendly rivalry vied for possession of the head; if the folks from the Via Sacra got it, they nailed it to the wall of the Regia; if the folks of the Subura got it, they nailed it to the Turris Mamilia, a tradition that unfortunately died out by the first century BCE.

Meanwhile priests collected the tail, (and possibly genitals) of the sacrificed horse, while it was still dripping blood, and rushed it to the Regia (the king’s house) to bleed on the sacred hearth. The Vestal Virgins then collected and retained the congealed blood and ashes for distribution at Parilia, on April 21.

Also on this date, the Capitoline games are celebrated. These games are probably quite ancient, since their institution was attributed to either Romulus for saving the Capitoline Hill from being captured by the Gauls or Camillus for the conquest of the Veii – it’s very unclear which or both, and most Romans could probably care less about the origins of games, as long as they continued each year. It was a time to take off work and enjoy the pageantry and colorfulness of the festival time, much as we Buckeye fans enjoy the pageantry and excitement of football Saturdays here in Columbus.

“The custom of dropping coins into wells and fountains had been well established in even ancient Roman times, as all sources of water are especially venerated by those who rely upon them.”

October 19 ARMILUSTRIUM (Cleansing of the implements of war) - See also March 19 nefastus publicus.

A bunch of blood-thirsty, gritty warriors with nothing to do during the winter months would be a very bad thing. In order to prevent the city and its people from becoming infected by contact with bloodshed and foreigners, the Sallian priests (priests of Mars) dance and sing in the streets hymns to Mars. The *Armilustrum* is actually the tail end of the Sallii’s dance. In a great *lustratio*, or purification rite, on the Aventine Hill, the *tubae*, the sacred war trumpets, are sounded one last time, as the *arma* and *ancilla* (other sacred implements of war) are purified and put away until next year, all accompanied by sacrifices, songs, and dancing in honor of Mars.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Adkins, Lesley and Roy A. Adkins. *Dictionary of Roman Religion*. New York: Facts on File, 1996.

Grant, Michael. *Roman Myths*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1971.

Livy (Titius Livius). *History of Rome: Books III-IV*. B.O. Foster, trans. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1922.

Macrobius (Macrobius Ambrosius Theodosius). *Saturnalia*. Percival Vaughn Davies, trans. New

York: Columbia University Press, 1969.

Scullard, H.H. *A History of the Roman World 753 to 146 BC*. London: Routledge, 1980.

Turcan, Robert. *The Gods of Ancient Rome: Religion in Everyday Life from Archaic to Imperial Times*. Antonia Nevell, trans. New York: Routledge, 2000.



Haiku High Day

By Dragynphyre of Grove of the
Midnight Sun

Samhain – Cross Quarter

The dead walk about
Freedom from the Otherworld
For just one more night

Yule – Winter Solstice

Friends gather and sing
Alban Arthan—Yule’s dark night
We stay up ‘til dawn

Disting – Cross Quarter

Tools for the garden
We ask for Freya’s blessing
For a good season

Ostara – Vernal Equinox

Awaiting the Dawn
Chilly morning by the Sea
“Ostara!” we cried

Beltaine – Cross Quarter

Fertility god s
Fertility goddesses
Snuggle together

Midsummer – Summer Solstice

Baldur and Nanna
Longest day and shortest night
Harvest is coming

Lammas – Cross Quarter

Breaking of the loaves
Sharing of bread and friendship
Harvest is begun

Fallfest – Autumnal Equinox

Harvest ongoing
Good friends and total strangers
Gather together

The Growing Oak

As the Wheel Turns with Children

By Epona (Carlynnne Deaver)

NOTE – *The opinions expressed in this column are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of ADF. The activities should be done at ones' own risk and neither ADF nor the author assume any liability.*

As the wheel turns and the days grow longer and warmer our thoughts turn to our children and summer activities. Many of us look for ways to integrate our faith with our daily lives and also to share our views on spirituality with our children. Summer offers us the perfect opportunity to either begin, or continue, that sharing.

Most of us will be spending more time outdoors with the Earth, often participating in “hands on” time as we work in our gardens, or sit with the trees at a picnic or even as we squat in the grass at the kids’ soccer match. This can be a perfect time to point out those little things that children can often take for granted and help them to see how special and important each and every object can be in our universe. Everywhere we look we see signs of the wheel of life – of the old becoming new again and of the new aging and returning to the Earth. We see the trees and flowers budding and blooming with leaves and blossoms. We can show our children how the seeds from a plant grow and become mature, much like they are growing into adults. We see the animals coming forth with their young – birds learning to fly, deer or maybe rabbits leaving their parents and learning to live among man, perhaps even a young snake sunning itself on a warm rock. We can watch other animals, the older ones, even our cats and dogs, as they bask in the warmth of the sun, resting and relaxing in their maturity. We see everything following the same natural wheel of life. It is a wonderful chance to get our children thinking about how all things are connected to one another.

All around us we see signs of balance in nature. Even the rocks and stones are an important part of that balance. They often provide homes for

insects, reptiles and amphibians. We can show our children how each action we take has a reaction that we can’t always predict. For instance, if we go out to a natural spot, whether in our own backyards, or the local city park, we can probably find a small to moderate sized rock that has been sitting in the same spot for a long time. If we carefully lift the rock and turn it over, we are likely to find some living creature sharing the dark damp place beneath it. Ask your children to stop and think about what changes might occur if we didn’t put the rock back. What do they think the animals/insects living under it would do? Would they stay there? Would they go someplace else? What about the spot where the rock would get put down? Are there plants where we would put it down? What happens to them? What about any animals living in those plants? Has the rock been moved into the middle of a path, where it could cause someone to trip and perhaps be injured? All of these are starting questions, to help your child understand how everything is connected. Carefully put the rock back where it was and have your child look around and see what other things are connected. What other actions are taken, or could be, that might have consequences that we may not expect if we don’t stop and think about them?

We can begin exploring the balance in ourselves, even with young children, with examples from everyday life. A great example of this is when we are experiencing more stress than normal and that stress causes us to act in ways that are counter to our normal behavior. For example, perhaps we’ve had a bad day at work and have finally come home hoping to relax and have a pleasant evening with the kids, but when we finally get home, we find that the house is in chaos, the dog ate the dinner and the kids are running around screaming at the top of their lungs. What do you suppose your reaction is going to be? Probably

not a pleasant one, or the one that would occur had the rest of the day gone well. It isn't anyone's fault that things happened the way they did, nor can the past be changed. So what can we do to bring ourselves back into balance? Can we include the kids? Certainly! A wonderful way to start is to teach our kids how to ground themselves. This is something that they will be able to use all their lives when things are out of control, as well as when they get a little older (depending on what age they are starting at) and start participating in ritual and/or doing magic through ritual.

There are many ways to help children learn to ground themselves and each child will have unique needs that may need to be addressed when choosing a method. Only you know what your child will respond positively to and how they learn best. Here is one method that has worked well for most children and can be easily adapted to fit your child's age from preschool through teens. As with all things, it will become easier and more effective the more often it is practiced.

First try to find a quiet spot, either indoors or outdoors, but preferably a place that is not going to be disturbed for a short time. Sometimes it is best to try doing this as a family so that everyone is together and interruptions are less likely. Young children will often respond better if this is portrayed as a game with their parents and siblings participating also. Find a comfortable position that will allow your body to relax, but not so comfortable that sleep will result. Sitting cross-legged on floor works for most children, but adults may find it more comfortable to be kneeling or in a meditative position. Start out with having your child picture a tree in their heads.

Tell them to close their eyes and imagine the tree as clear as they can. For those that are old enough, have them imagine themselves as the tree. For younger children, have them imagine that the tree is around them – that the tree has magically grown around them and they are sitting in the middle of the trunk. Use a calm and somewhat monotone voice as you guide and help their

visualization by talking about what the tree feels like, how the branches reach way up into the sky towards the sun and how the roots sink deep into the dirt, silently sinking deeper to anchor the tree to the earth. Have them picture themselves as growing roots that go down into the earth, how silent the dark can be, and how welcoming the feel of the warm dirt around their roots. Have them say silently (or out loud for younger ones), "I am a tree. I stand tall upon the ground. My roots sink deep into the soil. I am anchored and grounded in the Earth." They should slowly repeat this several times to reinforce the visualization.

Tell them to relax and imagine they are slowly breathing the air around them while their roots are sinking deeper into the earth. This should bring about slow, even breathing and relaxed muscles. Depending on the age of your child, and how far along the exercises have come, this part can be shortened or lengthened as needed. For very young children, getting 5 minutes of their quiet attention should be considered successful. For most school age children starting out, the visualization should last about 15 minutes and progressively increase as they become more proficient at the technique.

"All around us we see signs of balance in nature. Even the rocks and stones are an important part of that balance."

After they have relaxed and "become" the tree, tell them to imagine all their worries and problems sinking out through their roots into the earth and away from them. All of their excess energy, anger and frustration can just flow out through the roots and be welcomed by the earth, taking them farther and farther away from your child until they are all gone.

Now that they are grounded and have released the energy or stress/anger/frustration have them say a positive affirmation about themselves. Depending on your child and their circumstances, it can be anything from a generic "I am calm and relaxed. I am happy." to a more specific affirmation that applies to their unique needs, for example, "I am super at math. Subtraction comes easily to me." You and/or your child, if old enough,

should work out in advance what to say as an affirmation if it is going to be very specific. Again, have them repeat the affirmation a few times to allow it to sink into their subconscious.

Have them slowly imagine the roots absorbing the nutrients and richness of the soil and feel the tree bringing that richness up through the roots, into the trunk above the ground. Have them feel their branches reaching up towards the sun and sky above them. Tell them they feel the sun warming their branches and the wind gently blowing through their leaves. Slowly have them imagine themselves as separate from the tree – perhaps sitting in a branch of the tree or on the ground at the base of the trunk. They feel the sun on their skin and the wind through their hair. Have them picture that they are no longer sitting in the tree; instead they are back where they started. They should open their eyes slowly and stretch out their arms and legs. This exercise is a great beginning in learning to ground and visualize.

“Your child will pick up on any stress or pressure that you may be feeling and that will defeat the whole exercise. Remember, this is an opportunity to share a special time together; a time that should be enjoyable for everyone.”

Remember, as with all things, practice will improve the results. Expect that there will be distractions and that minds will wander. When that happens, just calmly and gently bring your child’s attention back to the image in their head and eventually the distractions will disappear. The important thing is to relax and project calm confidence. Your child will pick up on any stress or pressure that you may be feeling and that will defeat the whole exercise. Remember, this is an opportunity to share a special time together; a time that should be enjoyable for everyone.

Craft Corner

Each edition I hope to showcase a couple of the crafts from the collection that I have gathered over the years. Most of these crafts are from unknown sources and do not have an author attributed to them. I do not take the credit for any of them and if someone knows the author of any of these, I’d be happy to give them credit. I welcome feedback and suggestions. You can reach me via email at epona@emagichappens.com or through the OL editor.

Nature Crafts

Buggy Bungalow – Requires adult supervision and assistance.

Materials: Oatmeal container, poster paint, paintbrushes, sharpie or other thin point marker, craft knife, 2 feet of screening (window screen from a hardware store), plastic bottle cap (or other mini container for water) and food for your bugs.

1. Using poster paint, decorate the outside of the oatmeal container. Be sure to paint shutters where windows will go and a door making sure that the bottom edge of the door is at least ½ inch above the floor inside the container. Use the sharpie to make a list of rules for your buggy guests. (Examples – No long term stays, no parties, etc.)
2. Have an adult cut out the windows, using a sideways H shape so that the windows will open horizontally outward between the shutters.

Then have an adult cut out the door.

3. Roll the screening around the inside of the oatmeal container making sure that it fits snugly. Trim the top edge so that it fits beneath the lid and leave a 1 inch overlap where the sides meet. Go out and find some insects that you would like to observe and carefully transfer them into the bungalow. Make sure that you put in some of the food that they were eating when you found them and add water in the bottle cap. Sit back and enjoy your bugs for a few hours, and then let them go back to where you found them.

Seeds On A String – Requires adult supervision for young children

Materials: Small screw eye, small clear plastic jar with cap (like the kind that hold cake decorations), 3 one yard lengths of colorful string, 3 cotton balls, 3 or 4 dried beans (kidney, pinto and lima work best)

1. Carefully twist the screw eye into the center

of the jar lid. (Use a pushpin to start the hole if necessary.)

2. Braid the colored string then thread it through the screw eye and tie the ends. Make sure that the resulting loop will fit over your head.

3. Moisten the cotton balls and place them inside the jar. (They should be wet, but not dripping.)

4. Press the beans down between the cotton balls and the wall of the jar making sure they are clearly visible from the outside. Screw on the cap.

5. Wear your necklace during the day, keeping it out of direct sunlight to avoid overheating. Keep it

in a warm place overnight.

6. Check the cotton periodically to make sure it does not dry out. (It shouldn't.) Add small amounts of water if necessary.

7. After about 5 days, the beans should begin to sprout. When they start crowding the jar, transplant them to a flowerpot or garden patch and start a new batch of sprouts.



Enigma

By Inish

Moonlight and marvelous fare
No one told me to beware
Mother help me be strong!
In this world that beckons
To the fire in my eyes
Begging them to flame brighter
And illuminate my world
For all to see

Like an actor dazzling the silver screen
I put life into their hungry hearts
Yearning for more and more
And more dreams to comfort them
They who have fallen out of love
But I fear my openness
Lest my spirit wander too far
Enchanted by the shimmer of glamour

Where is the magic breath?
That once enlivened the world
Where the pilgrims of faith?
The meadows are overgrown
And too little trod
By the barefoot soles of dreamers
And lovers rustling in the green

But I am here as always
Chasing mysteries
And I pray, I pray all find their joy
Yearning they discover the soul of life
The enigma that flickers within the eyes
Like dancing firelight

The Tale of the Babbling Trees

By Wry Welwood

(Odors of wood smoke, yeast, venison and clean sweat mingled in the warmth of the mead hall. Benches and stools had been pulled near the hearth, where a lean, white bearded man stood, wearing a knee length saffron shirt gathered at the belt, and a dark green mantle fastened with a golden brooch.

"Every story is three stories...." mused the man, gazing into the flames. "The story the seanchai means to tell, the one that is heard, and the story itself. The last is the one the Gods want told, for reasons of their own. Now the story I think I tell, that is only the meaning I put upon it. The story you think you hear is the meaning you put upon it. The story itself, is the story the Gods mean for certain ears, with a certain meaning for those ears only. I can't often tell which ears those are. Sometimes I see a person practically catch fire inside on hearing a tale, and I think "That's the person, those are the ears!" I can't be positive, though. Besides, some stories are meant for more than one set of ears. The only thing I can try to do is tell the stories enough times so that someday they get to the people they are supposed to." The man gazed into the flames, seeing a forest of shifting shapes coming together, dancing apart. "Perplexing if I think too much about it. Mine is a strange vocation, eh? Not a bad one, though."

The redheaded host ladled mead from a bucket into a wooden bowl, handed a bowl to the speaker, said something about story telling being dry work. The seanchai smiled thanks. Not too subtle a hint, he thought. No more putting it off, don't want them asleep before the tale's told. "Tonight I will tell you The Tale of the Babbling Trees."

Anyone who knows trees knows they don't babble. They are not talkative at all by human standards, though they can say an awesome amount to those who listen. Even the best listeners can't catch it all. What trees share, they share only in fullness of time, just as they feel seasons, migrations, the rise and fall of civilizations. Despite the differences in inflection between oak and willow, ash and birch, and so on, a tree's depth of experience is shared in a language common to all trees, so old no tongue of flesh can speak it. To the most ancient of these Rooted Ones, the span of a human life would pass in the blink of an eye, if they had eyes to blink. Yet incredibly, I once met trees who chattered like monkeys, babbled like humans. Their language was not even up to that of wildflowers, entirely lacking in the green dignity possessed by most members of the plant kingdom.

I'm not sure how or where it happened, that I came to see the babbling trees. Can't remember how I

got there or how I got back. At first I thought I had wandered into a sneak look at Tir na gOg; the blue skies and bright sun warming my face were that beautiful. The warmth was balanced by a gentle breeze, which carried the gentle scent of wildflowers, the blooms of which painted splashes of bright colors upon the greens of the meadow I was in the middle of. I didn't know it then, but this was to be the most pleasant part of my trip. It didn't last long.

As I wandered on, I met no ancestors, Gods, or even ordinary human beings. This was not Tir na gOg, it seemed. As I walked up to the forest edge, my calm started to chill away. The woods were silent. Not the quiet noise that some ears mistake for silence, not the pulse of nature spirits, plant life, or woodland creatures going about the business of living. No. This forest was truly silent, as though everything in it was afraid to breathe. My own breath caught, quickened, and became shallow, as I stepped past the meadow's edge, into dank shadow.

I could smell the clean, earthy, fungus-like odor of thickly forested land. Yet faintly, as though from a distance, there was a less pleasant odor. I found a deer trail and followed it, to find the faint smell becoming more and more like a stink. It was like a compost heap that has not been turned properly, the vegetable matter in it rotting, rank, nauseating.

From time to time I rested with my back against a tree. It was the calm connection I had known with trees in my own world, and perhaps some clues about what was going on here, that I was hoping for. No such thing. These trees kept to themselves. They guarded themselves against my human rhythm, as though it could somehow harm them. The fearless strength and openness of trees at home was absent. I would never take it for granted again.

I'm not sure just how long I walked. Long enough to feel thirst and hunger. There was a skin of water hanging by my side, but no food. The sunbeams occasionally filtering through the leaves changed their angles as though from morning to noon. Yet there was no guarantee that the length of a day here was the same as what I was used to. I looked forward to stepping back into full sunlight. It was dismaying to find out that as I approached the brightness of the meadow ahead, the atmosphere of the woods did not lighten, as I expected. It did not lighten, but it did change.

The deep empty silence of dread shifted to a

higher frequency of anxiety. No sounds as yet; still, the ground and air seemed to be thrumming. This reminded me of how once, as a child, I stuck a stick into a mysterious hole in the ground, to see how far down it went. The stick and earth vibrated and buzzed before a swarm of angry hornets poured out, after my blood. This nameless land felt very much like that, now. Agitated, angry, close to panic. At the forest's edge, I actually heard it, a sort of low-pitched buzzing, rising and falling, with a menacing rumble underneath it. Occasional sharp cracking noises, like the snaps of a big whip, served as punctuation. So ominous was the atmosphere that when I finally saw what there was to see I couldn't help but laugh! The scene was crazy, one I wouldn't have believed had I not seen it myself.

There were hundreds of branches, perhaps thousands, not acting like branches at all. From the shredded bark at their ends, it looked as though they had been ripped off living trees. Not so bizarre, that, but they were hopping about on their ends like hobby-horse sticks without children astride! Somehow they managed to bend themselves a bit like a bow, then straighten out with a snap and hiss of trailing leaves or needles, arcing upward and coming back down, to repeat the whole thing. The air was full of vaulting limbs, making the air hum, gathering in groups with mad intent. I could see where clumps of branches were gathering, frantically hopping into piles and haphazard scaffolds, each using other branches to elevate themselves. They actually managed to reach impressive heights that way, four times my height or more. Sooner or later one of the branches would make a wrong move, though, and all would collapse into a pile of thrashing sticks, a crazy game of jackstraws. Those that didn't fall apart by themselves got knocked apart by the great logs rolling back and forth in the meadow, flattening everything beneath them.

I'd seen rolling logs before, of course, but none like these. These hadn't been cleanly lopped, but looked as ragged as the branches, with torn semi-circular pits where branches used to be. Lacking the lean flexibility of the branches, they could not hop around. Some looked like they had been chewed upon, much of the bark torn off or hanging on by strips and fibers. With no roots to anchor them upright, no branches to reach upward, they rolled about frantically, trying to roll themselves upright to no avail. Sometimes in their crashing over other logs or boulders, they would tilt almost vertical, but gravity always reclaimed them. Branches leapt over and about the thundering trunks like hapless foresters trying to stay alive in a logjam gone insane, and not all were quick enough. Sharp pale splinters stuck out of the mucked up meadow like broken bones, while the explosive snapping sound of rupturing wood cut through the

rumble of rolling lumber. Some of the mangled branches put me in mind of roots, and I looked around to try and see what had become of that part of the trees.

All the commotion had churned the field quite muddy, and I chose my steps carefully, not wanting to lose my footing in front of an oncoming tree trunk. There were some close calls, both from logs and the stinging slash of branches, not all of which I could avoid. I got all the way to the other side of the meadow, too preoccupied with survival to look around for signs of roots as I had planned. My nose was bleeding, my feet brown with mud, and my curiosity, unsatisfied. At forest's edge I saw a huge old maple with twisted limbs, perfect for climbing. I approached and touched it, asking permission, and it gave no answer. I scraped the slimy mud off my feet as best I could, and hoisted myself up.

I was younger then, and able to climb up to the canopy quickly. I sat in the vee of a branch overhanging the meadow, and surveyed the field of battle, still in full progress. From there I could see what I had missed before. Here and there were large pits filled with what looked like writhing snakes. They seemed to be doing their best to burrow deeper and deeper, while in their efforts mixing up a great deal of mud, in which some of the branches were getting stuck. This mud was black and pudding like, presumably from a great deal of decayed vegetation. This was likely the source of the stink I had noticed earlier. The smell was worse now, part low tide and part midden heap. In one pit one of the smaller tree trunks was spinning furiously, throwing up gouts of muck and root-clumps in its efforts to free itself. As absurd as the scene was, the spinning trunk, the bounding branches and senselessly rolling trunks, the frantically burrowing roots...I could no longer laugh. This might look like broad comedy, but it wasn't very funny after all. There was no sense to it. How had this happened? What had torn apart these trees?

That was when I heard the babbling, like a dozen different voices squeaking, chirping, growling out at once. It wasn't Gaelic, or English, or any language I could recognize. I looked around for the source of the noise and found it was an oak tree not too far off. There were no birds roosting in it to account for the babbling; no bird would have dared. The tree was shaking, not from wind, but from conflict within itself. It shook as though with palsy, then harder and harder as though having an epileptic seizure. Roots broke up from the ground, thrashing and beating against each other, the trunk, and the dirt. Branches swung violently back and forth, striking and glancing against each other. The trunk itself seemed to

be trying to take both the roots and the branches into itself, its bark rippling and expanding as a snake does when it swallows a meal larger than its head, except the trunk was swelling at both ends at the same time, then rapidly shrinking as the roots and branches pulled themselves away from its influence. It was all this movement and friction that caused the babbling, creating short sibilant syllables from the fighting of the tree against itself. It was not tree language, but the opposite of that. Though I had never heard it before, I could tell there was something human about the impatience of it. Human enough for me to gather a sense of what was going on. The tree was divided against itself. The struggle was about status and power, direction and purpose of growth.

Roots argued that without roots there was no tree, for roots dig deep into the layers of earth rich with the ancient matter of past vegetation, anchoring the tree in history, giving it nourishment and purpose, drawing up the water and minerals without which it would perish. As a matter of fact, if more of the tree would devote itself to digging deep, the tree would be a deeper and more connected being.

Branches said that without the outreach it afforded, the mystic miracle of sugar production would not happen and the tree would starve. Only with its green leaves pushed up into the light, could the water provided by the roots be combined with air and sunlight, transformed into the food needed for energy and growth. Branches gave the tree scope and grace. If more of the tree could have the courage to branch out, swaying in the wind and sunlight, the tree would be even more beautiful.

Trunk grumbled that roots and branches forgot it was trunk that held everything together, provided the growth ring that transported mineral and water and sugar throughout. All very well for roots to dig and branches to reach, but it was trunk that made a tree a tree instead of a fragile weed. If everybody was smart, they would give back some of their substance to make the tree a more solid, thick, and beautifully cylindrical organism.

Given the chaotic wasteland of the meadow, it was all too easy to see where the argument was heading. It intensified from petulant to fretful to frenetic, until sure enough, with a snap one of the branches wrenched itself off the tree and fell to the ground, just as two of the roots separated with a rip and writhed off in search of fertile soil. More and more branches flew off into independence; root after root left the rest of the tree high and dry. Soon the trunk stood like a proud obelisk, but the effect was spoiled when it slowly tilted, then toppled in a crash, yet without the sounds of breaking branches that usually accompany the falling of a big tree. It remained still for a while, as

though dazed. Then it started rolling back and forth, like a cart being turned around in a tight space, until it rolled out onto the thundering plain. Soon after the rumble faded into the other noise in the distance, I heard a babbling noise start up again. Another tree, a birch this time.

I watched this one go, and another, and I heard many more echoing in the darkening forest. My curiosity was over-satisfied, and I felt nausea on top of hunger pangs. The sun was setting. Surely I was safer up here than trying to dodge the hazards below. It never occurred to me that the tree I was in might undergo self-destruction, oddly enough. I was barely thinking at all, and knew I would not be able to stay awake much longer. After taking a few sips of water, I shook out my mantle, wrapped and tied it around the branch and my middle to guard against falling. I put my face against the smooth bark of the thick branch, welcomed the clean smell. Before I could fall asleep, the sadness of what was happening all around me finally hit. The bark was wet with tears before I lost consciousness, falling into dreams as strange as the day I had been through.

(The storyteller paused, seemingly lost in thought. The only sounds in the meadhall were the faint snoring of a toddler napping in her father's arms, and the trickle of a bowl being refilled. No one asked what the man had dreamed; they knew they were about to find out, if they could be a little patient. All faces, young and old, looked at the man stroking his beard, his eyes fixed on things they could not see until he spoke. They all seemed rapt as children, save for one foreign looking stranger, who affected to yawn and was instantly shushed quiet. The seanchai came to himself with a start, looking a bit surprised to find himself surrounded by listeners. Then his gaze went distant again, and he spoke.)

Strange, strange dreams. I had no eyes, but I could see. No ears, but my hearing was sharper than it had ever been. There's no way to explain this, though of course I'll try. I didn't have five senses, but one. Sound, sight, feel, taste, smell, all were the same. I was tuned to every vibration around me, could perceive the vital energy of every living thing, animate and inanimate. Not only that, but I was not limited to see in any one direction. I didn't have to think in terms of behind, in front, one side or another side. I sensed everything around me at the same time. The vibration above me, that was light, air, giving me energy; the vibration below, that was earth, water, giving me substance. Everything between was flowing, energy and matter ebbing back and forth. Life.

There really are no words to express what that was like. I always end up translating it into human terms. I was dreaming of existence as a tree, of course,

the ancient tree I was sleeping in. The dream was of the past, and the maple was younger and smaller, though still quite old. Days and nights flickered past quickly amidst the high droning of small plants, and the animals moving in the forest moving so rapidly it was sometimes difficult to think of them as real. All of the life energies vibrating, coming, going, being born and dying, all so rapidly...it was a sort of music I was hearing with my whole self, all the while singing along, balancing the flurries of notes with the slow, deep, constant rhythm of my being, intertwined with that of the other trees.

The strangest of tones came from humans. Much of the time they sped around like the other animals, or even more rapidly, taking down trees and other things, putting things together, taking things apart, putting them back together in different ways...all within tiny little flickerings of time. Other times some of them would stay in one place for a bit, never even as long as a day, but still noticeable by contrast. Often these were the ones that would settle next to me or another tree, as though listening, trying to hear us. A little like a creature going into winter sleep, but staying awake. There were even a few humans who could slow down enough to consciously sing with us from time to time. Those were rare.

It was strange that humans would hack trees down every once in a while, sometimes asking, sometimes not. There were some other animals that could take us down, or kill us by eating the bark off, but humans were the only ones that took down the older, bigger trees. What was even stranger, though, was when they hacked each other down. Large groups of them would gather in the meadow, and in moments scores of humans had been taken down by others. Usually the fallen would be dragged off somewhere else by those who could walk. The last time the humans harvested themselves, though, the fallen outnumbered the walking by far, and so were left to return to the soil of the field. That was the harvest that started our troubles.

The tones of humans hacking each other had always been discordant, as though the normal vibrations of predator taking prey had been multiplied hundreds of times over into something monstrous. The only good thing about it was that it was so brief. Had it not been, it could have been enough to drive any balanced being insane. Incredibly, in the last human harvest there was one person whose tones were so insistently out of tune, so driven to stand out above all others in volume, that the humans near it would start to vibrate at the same frequencies, though not as loud. This too-big human took blow after blow and still

walked, hacking away at every being around him, felling anyone foolish enough to come near.

It was a smaller one that finally felled him, though, without coming near. It hurled a straight branch with a leaf of iron on one end, hurled it hard, and far too fast for trees to notice, had it not driven itself into the heartwood of an oak at the end of its flight. Before this, it passed through the big loud human. So it was, that along with itself, the branch drove a deadly measure of discordant human life-essence right into the deepest layers of the tree.

Usually, when a being goes back into earth, the music lighting its spirit goes off to another world. The harmonics of its substance melt back into the soil from which it came. This time, though, the jarring tune of the loud human had been driven from cambium to center of a being much longer-lived than any moving creature, to be incorporated into its very essence. The iron-tipped branch, partly in and partly out of the oak, continued shaking disharmony into the tree and the air with great force, long, long after all of the hacked down humans had become nourishment for scavengers and plants. For a hundred years, the forest with-

“It was strange that humans would hack trees down every once in a while, sometimes asking, sometimes not.”

stood the music of destruction, but then, some of us weakened, succumbed, tore ourselves apart. Realizing this, the oak gave up its long, brave struggle against the poison within it, let the madness take over its being, hoping that with its self-destruction the horrible discord would cease. It was too late.

Once a few trees had been infected, the human tune of conflict stayed in the air and hummed in the earth, reproducing itself with every tree it perverted. The contagion had started to spread. It was almost time for me to awake from dreaming...

There was another dream before I awoke, one in which I was human. I was at the battle again, this time with five familiar senses. From forest's edge, I heard the screech and clang of metal on metal, the guttural shouts, screams, thuds, snaps and ripping noises made when heavy iron meets flesh and bone. The stink of human sweat tainted with rage and terror within miasma of blood and shit, brought acid bitterness of bile up to the back of my mouth. Contrary to the last dream, time slowed the longer the dream went on, showing me the transformations of war in detail: warrior scowls into contortions of pain; the arc of sword descending to junction of neck and shoulder, the gout and spray of red springing forth as though in answer; the loops of intestine gracefully falling out of a torn abdomen, the gutted man's futile efforts to catch them. One face stood out above all, joyfully smiling in transcendent ecstasy with every impact of his huge ax, and despite his great size, spinning gracefully as

though in dance to face foe after foe. Retreat from this giant of a berserker would not disgrace any man, yet one man held his place against approaching death.

Slowly, the smaller man drew the spear back for launching. Shoulder muscles bunched, arm and body sprang forth to put all weight behind the spear. I saw the spear fly to the berserker as though to nest, entry denied to my vision but not the exit, the gory point emerging from the kidney near the small of the back, continuing its mighty passage without pause, as though it had not just penetrated and destroyed a man. Slow but sure, the spear flew on inexorably through a spray of hot blood toward my chest. I made as though to run but couldn't move, tried to duck but my back would not bend. I looked downward to see I had no feet. Two legs joined together, and where there should have been ankles, nothing but a trunk terminating in a tangle of roots, entering the soil. I looked back up to see the unstoppable shaft coming at me, its point centered on the hollow where rib meets rib.

It may have been the panicked pounding of my heart that woke me up. After such dreams, it was a bit disorienting to wake up tied to a branch with my face pressed against the bark. I opened my eyes to look down upon the field, where the fragmented trees were still carrying on with a vengeance in the morning light. That reminded me where I was and how I came to be there. Just why, was still a mystery. The trouble of these trees touched my heart, but there was nothing I could do. I was ready to find my way home, though that might take some doing. For some reason my hunger pangs were gone, but I knew they would return, and there seemed to be no game in this cursed forest. Before I could climb down, I would need to get the blood in my legs moving again; they seemed to have fallen asleep. I untied the mantle, folding and draping it over the tree limb in front of me. When I tried to push myself up from the branch, however, it was as though I was still tied to it. Yet the mantle was in front of me, plain to see. I reached back to see if anything else could be holding me down. Where I should have felt my legs and my rear, I felt only bark!

Only bark. I craned my neck around to look down the branch. The shape of my lower body was still there, but covered with bark, joined seamlessly with the limb. When I ordered my legs to move, there was not the faintest response, not even a muscle twitch. I tried to grab my thigh and get it free, but there was no give or warmth to it. I grasped the branch in front of me and strained to pull myself free, but a stabbing pain through my gut and up my spine warned

me against trying further. There was nothing left to do but scream.

Scream I did. For hours I screamed and wailed, flailed and beat upon the tree until my fists were bloody. I begged and prayed and cursed until my throat was raw. When I ran out of breath I stopped just long enough to be able to breathe, and started all over again. It was no good. Stuck there like some deformity, a bizarre wart or goiter growing out of the tree. I started to laugh, tried to stop when I heard how crazy I sounded, yet was unable to stop laughing until weeping took over. I was beaten. I didn't know what to do. Why was this happening? What did this damn tree want? Over and over again I posed this question to my wooden hearted captor. An answer wasn't really expected. One was given, anyway.

The answer didn't come all at once. The first part of it was the rising knowledge that I really needed to calm down. In my panic and despair, I had forgotten what it takes to commune with trees. Once I allowed my breathing and my heart to slow down, my

“Yes, it became clear. Only one thing caused or could have caused the catastrophic curse upon this forest.”

fear to settle out like the must in a pitcher of cider, the calmness of the tree surrounded me, entering far more easily and thoroughly than ever experienced before. Of course... of course. The tree had grown into me, my self into tree. Slowing down was so easy, natural. We were joined. Why was this? There must be a reason. No harm was meant me. My presence was needed for a while, my help requested. What could this great being need of me? Something

for the forest. The other trees, all the life here. Remember the dream, the dream that was memory. The humans hacking down humans. The wounding of the oak, the sacrifice to no avail. The oak that became part human. Not just any human. Berserker bound for glory everlasting. From time out of mind trees and humans had lived together. Humans lived in peace or made war, and trees lived on as always. Lived without such disaster, such self-destructive chaos taking root within the Rooted Ones. Yes, it became clear. Only one thing caused or could have caused the catastrophic curse upon this forest. A tree made partly human, transformed against its will...

...and only one thing could lift the curse, bring back the natural blessing of balanced life. A human made partly tree, transformed against his will. If it weren't for the maple's calm certainty, this realization would have been too much for me, would have been rejected. As it was, it took some time to absorb. To absorb, and continue asking and listening. How? How could this small human-partly-tree bring about healing on such a large scale? The spear was smaller than me,

yet it had wounded an entire forest. Sticking in an oak trunk and vibrating. Singing, if one could call it that. Pitches of human blood and vanity, resonating out of tune. Any bard knows that when one's instrument is out of tune, one tunes it. If it was singing cursed the forest, singing could restore it. What song? None I knew. One to be born, composed of ancient notes in new combinations, words human and non-human, profane and divine. One I could sing, but not alone. First, I must listen.

I closed my eyes to see as trees see. Fell into the ancient mind of a being so vast it extended deep and wide into earth and sky, sensing the patterns of all beings around it. Think of a pond with a scattered handful of pebbles thrown into it, hundreds of concentric circles spreading, intersecting with each other. Imagine hearing each circle as notes of different pitch, length, timbre. Each is also color, texture, scent, and the surface of the pond actually a sphere, with you at the center, calmly extending tendrils, interweaving with the substance of the cosmos. I wondered if this was how gods saw the world, and felt a deep rumbling of amusement in response. Patterns of present and patterns of past juxtaposed, allowing perception of what had changed, and why. Wavelets of time displayed their directions, the possible combinations of future patterns. For a human-partly-tree, comprehension of these interactions was natural, as easy as breathing. So I let the breathing happen as it needed too, air flowing in thorough nostrils into lungs, pushed out between quivering vocal cords, resonating in the chamber of the mouth, entering the chorus of the world.

I suppose I sang a very long time. I don't know. Hunger and thirst were no problem; the maple sustained my body throughout. Its branches and roots echoed and reinforced my voice. When encountered, the sour melodies of self-destruction felt like rocks in otherwise soft soil. Like roots the new song entered the flaws in their stone and expanded, breaking apart the wrongness into smaller and smaller pieces, and finally into soil, reabsorbed into the great song of Being. A huge praise song it was, of roots and branches and trunks and life, loud enough for all the forest to hear, and louder still the ending, praising the miracle of trees in their completeness. It sounds easy, eh? Yet I know for certain I will never be able to sing like that again, not in this world, perhaps not any.

When I finally opened my eyes, it was light enough to see the field. It was still a mess, strewn with broken branches, half-sunk roots, and battered trunks. None of them were moving, though, more than the cool breeze could account for. I felt the breeze stirring the hair on my legs, pushed myself up to have a look at them with new gratitude. Deep in the forest, I heard the song of a thrush.

(There was silence in the hall for quite some time. The hall owner refilled bowls and horns all around at no charge, asking all to drink to the health of Cedar, best storyteller in the land. A young woman in blue linen gave the seanchai a kiss on the forehead, and whispered in his ear. The two of them stepped away from the hearth to pull up a bench, sitting across from the foreign-looking young man, who did not fail to notice how well the eyes of the miss matched her linen.

"You were slow to lift your horn in my honor tonight," said the older man. "Was there something wrong with the s t o r y ?"

"It was a fine story for children," said the traveler, "but where I come from storytellers speak of gods and heroes, kings and warriors, not themselves. They tell us history, not fables."

The girls blue eyes turned anxiously to her father's face, which had reddened somewhat. She turned back to face the upstart, her eyes several shades darker than before. "And where you come from, do they teach striplings to insult their elders? To contradict them as though the years of living carry no weight at all?! Do not pull the beard of your better, or you'll come to regret it!"

Now it was the young man's face that reddened right through his dark complexion, as he tried to gather enough wits to reply. "I spoke rashly, miss. And sir, please pardon my ignorance; I should keep silent until I have learned the customs of a new place..."

The storyteller burst out in laughter and clapped the young man on the shoulder, leaving his hand there, to say "Indeed you spoke rashly, but I had asked your opinion, after all. It is my daughter you should fear, not me! Order a round for everyone here, drink to the health of the trees, and everything is settled between us. Now it is time for me to seek a night's sleep, for they do not always come easy. And because you have adventures to seek before you settle down, and I am in no hurry to be a grandfather, I'll take my little girl with me."

The pair walked away slowly, as though they expected something to happen. A few yards away, they turned around when the young man issued several screams and curses, having noticed the old man's hand and forearm still hanging on his shoulder, without its owner. The hand skittered up the back of his neck to a more secure grip on the dark ringlets of his hair. When the youth grabbed the rock-hard forearm to tug the thing off, it only tightened its grip.

"That won't work, lad...let Madb get it." said the old man, amidst the laughter in the hall. He looked to his daughter.

"Yes, Da" she said, and walked up to lift the hand gently. It immediately loosened its grip and let the young woman cradle it in her arms, cooing to and petting it the way some ladies do with cats. She sniffed the air and said "I like this one, Da. He didn't soil himself!" Before she left she gave the young man a quick kiss on the lips, and a gaze that would smolder in his memory for the rest of his life, even years after he returned from his wanderings to marry her.)

Making Your Own Pagan Prayer Flags

By Robyn Gonzalez Mercurio

Often seen in photos or films of Tibet and Nepal, prayer flags have become an icon for spiritual enlightenment and the homey brand of Buddhism native to Central Asia. Block-printed with the images and words of ancient prayers, these flags can be seen strung under the eaves of houses, between obliging tree branches or on purposefully erected poles. Each time the wind blows, Tibetans believe that their prayers are sent to the ears of their Gods to ask for help in overcoming obstacles and in bringing peace, health and happiness for all beings.

Westerners have become so smitten with the picturesque images of these waving prayers, that you can now purchase prayer flags in many Asian shops in this country. These colorful little flags have traditional prayers printed on them with Asian lettering and are made of sheer cotton in the primary colors of yellow (Earth), green (Water), red (Fire), white (Cloud), and blue (Sky). Whether as a hip ethnic decoration or as a genuine spiritual connection to the winds, you can now find these little flags fluttering in back yards all over the country.

My own interest in prayer flags was piqued last summer when my husband and I watched with envy as a neighbor built the Rolls-Royce of roof decks atop their three story urban townhouse. After 2 weeks of hammering and sawing, our neighbor's first move was to "consecrate" his new aerie by stringing a store-bought strand of these little Tibetan prayer flags from two posts high atop his home. I loved watching these little flags as they danced atop his roof and, like the good neo-pagan that I am, I decided that this was a tradition worth "borrowing".

Prayer Flag Traditions

Prayer flags seem to be nearly universal in their appeal. The symbolism of having a simple piece of cloth that can carry one's prayers to the Gods is a powerful one that can be found in places far removed from the Ancient East. The Lakota of North and South Dakota tie flags in the 4 primary colors of the Native American worldview (red, yellow, black and white) to bushes and trees on their reservation. The flags serve as messages to the spirits and as encouragement for tribe members in their continuing struggle against the U.S. Government. Breast cancer survivors have adopted the tradi-

tion and have carried flags with the names of those who have died to the top of Mt. McKinley and Mt. Fuji, and to the top of Mt. Aconcagua in the Andes. And all over Ireland and Scotland, people still follow their own ancient, parallel tradition of sending healing prayers to the spirits by tying bits of cloth to bushes near sacred wells and springs known as *Clootie wells*. Around the world, prayer flags have been adopted or have evolved independently, to help humankind better commune with the Gods.

Two kinds of flags are commonly seen in Tibet. The first are small flags that can be attached to the eaves of a home or to a line of string hung between tree branches or between two poles. The second type of flag is a single large flag, attached along one side to a vertical pole. Both kinds are usually pre-printed with prayers and images of Buddha, Tara, or other important beings. They are often customized by writing a person's name or an important date upon them. As they flap in the breeze, the prayers "ride the winds" to ears of the Gods and to the benefit of all living beings.

Tibetan prayer flags are believed to pre-date the advent of Buddhism and are generally believe to have evolved to help supplicants harness the power of *windhorse*. If you're feeling ill for no reason or you feel like your mind is Swiss cheese or if things are just generally not going your way, you may be suffering from what Khenpo Konchog Gyaltsen Rinpoche calls *low windhorse*. Tibetans sometimes fly prayer flags to help them overcome these obstacles and to restore their balance with the world.

More often, prayer flags are raised to mark a special occasion, such as the Tibetan New Year, which falls in mid to late February. Traditionally, the Tibetan Calendar is consulted before flags are hung to determine which days are the most "auspicious" for the purposes for which they are intended. As they begin their eventual decay in the winds, they release their powerful prayers. Some Tibetans will burn the old flags to release their final prayers to the Gods. Others will mount their new string of flags next to the old, allowing the elements to finally disintegrate the last of the prayers.

Deciding on Flag Imagery

Prayer flags are relatively simple to make and can be customized to suit almost any religious persuasion. The key is in the images and words chosen.

You may want to give some thought to what images have meaning for you and will serve your purposes. Think about obstacles you may be facing or prayers you may wish to have answered. You could try illustrating the 9 *ADF* virtues or decide to honor your sense of community by inviting friends and family over to each decorate a flag of their own. Or you may decide to give free reign to your inner child and create a hodgepodge of spiritual sayings, images and symbols on your flags to inspire you throughout the year. Deciding what symbols you want in advance can help you as you shop for rubber stamps, stencils or other traceable designs.

In our case, my husband and I chose to put a creative spin on our “prayers” and use images and symbols that we felt would bring peace and joy into our home. Some of the flags included quotes from philosophers and religious thinkers; others used pagan symbolism and lines from our favorite pagan songs. We created flags for each of the sacred elements (Earth, Air, Fire, Water) and we drew images representing the concepts of Peace, Love, and Joy. Most of the images we chose were fairly easy to draw – some were downright crude. But hanging next to one another, the sentiments expressed more than made up for our lack of graphic talent!

Prayer flags can be as fancy or as coarse as you’d like. Our flags were made with the express desire to see them gradually decay in the winds outside our home. If you live in an apartment or you want to have a more permanent set of flags, you may want to be a little more deliberate in the choice of your materials and how “finished” you’d like them to be. You can choose better fabrics or finish them by hemming the edges of the flags. And you can use stencils, rubber stamps, and traceable designs to help make your images look more “professional”.

How to Make the Flags

Materials (no-sew method):

One old white sheet or other lightweight cotton fabric
Flat cotton tape or string – (at least 11 ft. long, no

more than 1 inch in width)
“Stitch Witchery” Polyamide Fusible Webbing (ironable stitching tape)
Sharpies or other Indelible markers
Brightly colored fabric paints
Inexpensive Artists’ Paint Brushes
Paper Plates
Plenty of Newspaper to cover your working surface

Optional Materials:

Various colors of cotton sheeting
Large Rubber Stamps
Paint Stencils
Carbon Paper or other tracing supplies
Photocopies of line drawings or other designs for tracing

“Often seen in photos or films of Tibet and Nepal, prayer flags have become an icon for spiritual enlightenment and the homey brand of Buddhism native to Central Asia.”

Begin the process by cutting up your sheet into 9 rectangles that are slightly taller than they are wide (9 inches by 11 inches is a good size). Don’t worry if the edges look a little tattered. After a week in the wind, even the most neatly trimmed edges will be tattered and fuzzy.

Next, prepare your work area by laying down plenty of newspaper to catch any dropped paint or bleed-through. Use your paper plates as palates. Squeeze out a little bit of each of the colors of fabric paint you purchased. You can use your brushes to paint directly onto the material, or, if you bought rubber stamps, you can use them to dab a layer of paint onto the stamps before placing them on the flags. Use your markers to write any quotes, poems or other words you’d like onto the flags. When creating your design, be sure that you leave about 2 to 3 inches at the top of each flag unpainted so you will have room to attach the flag to the string.

Once your flags are dry and you’ve decided what order you’d like to put them in, you’ll need to fire up your iron. Lay the painted side of your “last” flag face down on your ironing board. Measure about 18 inches in from the end of the string and lay it down across the top of the flag. Fold the top inch and a half of the flag down to cover the string. Iron it to make a good crease. Then measure out a piece of the Stitch Witchery that is the width of the flag and place it on top of the string, in the middle of the fold you’ve made. Follow the directions for ironing the Stitch Witchery in

place.

Your flag should now be attached to the string. Move the flag and string off to your left and attached the next flag in the same manner, about one-half inch from the previous flag. Once you have all 9 flags attached you are ready to carry your string outside and tie them up.

Hangin' Your Flags

To find out which days are auspicious to hang prayer flags, you can consult a Tibetan Calendar. Generally Monday and Friday are good days for hanging flags. But as you adapt the flags to your own purposes, you may wish to consult astrological charts, go by the phase of the moon, or use other divinatory methods to determine when is the best time to create and hang your own. Of course, if you're like me, you'll want them up right away.

Trusting that the Gods valued effort above exacting science, we hung our flags as soon as they were done. They were strung across our yard where they fluttered joyfully for a year and a day. By the time the next summer rolled around, the flags were tattered and faded beyond readability – but given the multitude of abundance we had experienced in the past year, we knew the Gods and spirits appreciated our efforts and had answered our prayers. When we took them down, we offered the flags to our hearth fire along with our praise offerings and thanks to the Gods for listening to our prayers on the wind.

With very simple materials and a little imagination, you too can put the power of the wind to work for you!

Bright fluttery blessings and best of luck!

Robyn Gonzalez Mercurio is a member of Mugwort Grove.
anarcachic@yahoo.com

To find out more about Prayer Flags, visit:

http://www.karunaarts.com/God_dessesPennants.html
A site with Goddess inspired prayer flags for sale.

<http://www.westwindprayerflags.com/history.php>
Westwind sells ready made Buddhist prayer flags. Their site has an excellent page about the history of

prayer flags.

<http://www.sunray.org/Buddhist/Windhorse/windhorse.html>
An article by Khenpo Konchog Gyaltsen Rinpoche on Windhorse.

http://www.khandro.net/practice_prayer_flags.htm
Includes a link to a Tibetan Calendar which indicates auspicious days for hanging prayer flags.

I thought I was a child of water
its feel and sound calms my soul
but then...
I thought I was a child of wind
its currents make me fly
but then...
I thought I was a child of stone
its smooth and rough surface fascinates me
but then...
I thought I was a child of wood
in its green and brown world, I once was safe
but then...
I thought I was a child of fire
its dancing light entrances me
but now....
I am fire
I am wind
I am wood, water and stone
I am encompassed by them
and I'm finally home.

By Robyn Richardson

The light shines through the trees
fascinating me with the colors
of the leaves
I want to dive in.
Swoop up to the top
Watch a river meander by
Stretch my wings
and fly

By Robyn Richardson

The Art and Science of the 21st Century Bard

By Jamie L. Longstreth

As modern Druids, we yearn to recreate the Druidic arts of past days; even knowing as little as we do of what our ancestors practiced day by day in their chosen facet of Druidry. We can surmise that the Ovates cast runes and augured the signs brought them by nature and their own making. We can imagine with some confidence the priestly practices of the Druids, counseling the folk and advising the leaders, and keeping all and sundry in the good graces of the Deities, Spirits, and Ancestors. The ritual format that we as ADF Druids, Dedicants and Grove members utilize is comfortable, respectful, and reverent of our re-visioned heritage. But what of the Bard in today's Druidic world?

Who among us has not been enchanted with the image of the wise teller of tales, seated with honor in the feasting hall or at a prominent place around the fire, regaling his audience with tales of their ancestors, their heroes, their legends? Most modern Bards could imagine themselves in such a place, rapt faces gazing in fascination as they conveyed their wisdom, humor, and knowledge to the assembled folk. But, in our modern world, where do we as Bards find the opportunity to practice our art? We have ample written communication and knowledge, which is easily accessible to all. We belong to e-mail lists, we can access a wealth of information at any local library, we have bookstores, mail order, and the Internet. What place does the Bard have in the 21st century? Could it be that the Bard has become obsolete?

In fact, the modern Bard is still needed and desired, and has an important place in today's Druidry. The forum has changed in many respects, but the Bards among us can take advantage of different opportunities than the Bards of old. The barriers have crumbled. The borders grow thin. The distance between places is shorter than ever. Yes, we still crave the platitudes of a successful turn in Bardic Circle. However, we have ever more opportunities to practice our art, and endless resources to polish it into a more finely crafted instrument. We need but watch, listen, and learn.

We may begin with our home Grove. There are always wonderful opportunities for story telling before, during, or after Ritual. New seekers to the path may look to the grove's Bards as resources. Teaching op-

portunities abound, as Neo-Paganism continues its rapid growth. We no longer sit at the hearths of kings, telling legend for royal favor, but the admiration and appreciation for a well-told tale is still with us. Rapt faces still gaze in wonder around the fire. The songs of old hold new fascination for the singers and the audience. The modern Bard should feel encouraged to share her gift and knowledge with grove members, ritualists, and those seekers having their first taste of Bardic arts. If the Bard grows tired of the same old stories, the same old songs, there is a world at the fingertips of music, tales, legends, and myth, new and old, available through the Internet. One can learn in a few months what ancient Bards most likely had to travel hundreds of miles and study for years to learn. Now that we have taken full advantage of written word communication, technology, and ancient knowledge from cultures often held in mystery or ignorance, we can expand our repertoire to nearly infinite lengths with relative ease.

Our world of communication is expanding exponentially, and the modern Bard may utilize the ease with which we communicate to perform his Bardic duties for people he may never meet in person. Many e-mail lists and websites exist for Neo-Druids and many more for Neo-Pagans in general. The Bard may use his extensive study and resource base to inform, educate, and entertain Pagans throughout the world over the Internet. Bardic websites abound. A casual search yields hundreds of results, even after sifting through the role-playing sites. Large pagan sites such as Witch-Vox are always seeking well-informed essay material. E-mail lists are generally grateful for those who are informed and are willing to educate their members. Humorous stories and songs meet with appreciation. Lore, legend, and myth find new audiences daily on the World Wide Web. The modern Bard can expand his horizons like never before, and introduce hundreds, even thousands of people to the fruits of his labors, clearing away misconceptions as well as opening his world to the seeker.

The Bard shall never grow obsolete, so long as there are tales to be told, songs to be sung, and music to be played. The opportunities and conveyances change, but the joy of the Bardic art remains, for her stories will always be appreciated, and her harp will always be welcomed.

The Druid's Bookshelf

By John Michael Greer

Eavesdropping at Emain Macha

Christian-J. Guyonvarc'h, The Making of a Druid: Hidden Teachings from the Colloquy of Two Sages (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2002); ISBN 0-89281-874-3, hardback, in print at \$19.95.

The relationship between a modern Druid path and ancient Celtic literature is a complex one. Everything that has survived to the present has passed through the hands of medieval monks, who revised and re-shaped all of it according to their own beliefs, or through the process of oral transmission, with its slow drift of meanings and cultural assumptions. Thus interpretation is always crucial, and those scholars who are willing to tackle the difficult job of translating and interpreting surviving texts deserve the thanks of every student of Druid teachings.

The Making of a Druid is a case in point. Immacallam in da Thuarad, the Colloquy of Two Sages, is a text in Middle Irish dating from sometime before the year 1150. A dialogue with an extended introduction, it claims to record a dispute between Nede and Ferchertne, two master-poets, for the rank of presiding poet at the royal court of Connaught. The account connects at its edges with the great Ulster Cycle, since Bricriu, the great troublemaker of those tales, is the one responsible for setting the two poets at odds with each other. Still, the Colloquy is not simply another Ulster legend. Apparently unique in Middle Irish literature, it is a complex riddling dialogue full of obscure references to mythic lore, deriving from ancient Irish traditions of bardic instruction, with roots that may go back to the Druidic schools mentioned by Greek and Roman writers.

C.-J. Guyonvarc'h, who has translated and commented on this fascinating text, is well equipped for the task. A former professor of Irish studies at the University of Rennes, he has contributed several important works to the French literature on Druids and Celtic magical traditions. He provides an extended introduction discussing the history of the Colloquy

and its relation to Irish bardic lore, a complete translation of the Colloquy, and extensive notes, including the Middle Irish glosses on the original text. The translation by Claire Marie Frock is capably handled and easy to read.

The most controversial element of this scholarly work is Guyonvarc'h's claim that some of the material in the Colloquy dates back to Irish Druid lore. In particular, he suggests that the methods of instruction suggested by the dialogue may be descended from those of the old Druidic schools, and that the apocalyptic prophecy announced by Ferchertne at the end, despite some Christian elements, represents the remnant of an Irish equivalent of the ancient Germanic ideas of Ragnarok, the final battle that ends the cosmos. While his arguments are suggestive rather than conclusive, they are at least plausible, and those whose interest in Celtic religion focuses on its modern reconstruction may well find this material a useful source.

Reinventing Tradition

Nigel Pennick, Practical Magic in the Northern Tradition (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1989); ISBN 0-85030-757-0, paperback, currently out of print.

Nigel Pennick has been a major figure in the British Pagan and earth mysteries scene for three decades now, and this classic is one of his best books, an attempt to set out the folk traditions and surviving Pagan lore of northern Europe as something approaching a single coherent tradition. It's an interesting project, clearly motivated by the similar (and much older) attempts in Hermetic circles to hammer together the wild diversity of European high magic into a single, more or less unified Western Tradition; Pennick even draws a distinction in so many words between the Western Tradition and his Northern Tradition.

This is something of a problematic approach, but the result is still of great use to those interested in the traditional Pagan magic and spirituality of various parts of northern Europe. Pennick draws freely on a

range of cultural and historical sources - primarily English, Celtic, and Scandinavian folklore and Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse writings, with a noticeable admixture of concepts (such as the eight sabbats) that are entirely products of the modern Pagan movement. Alfred Watkins of Old Straight Track fame and the Three Circles of Existence out of Iolo Morganwg's Druidry put in an appearance, as reminders that Pennick's Northern Tradition may be a little more eclectic than he makes it out to be.

The range of topics Pennick covers in passing is vast: traditional ways of conceiving of space and time, meditative practices such as Utisetá ("Out-sitting"), trance-work such as seidhr, martial arts traditions of the sort used by the Viking berserkers, runic lore, number lore, traditional mensuration, magical garments and equipment, images of the gods and goddesses, methods of purification and consecration, protective rites for buildings and land, and a variety of traditional and quasi-traditional lore surrounding the eight sabbats and other holy days of the Pagan year. The book closes with a glossary, a collection of useful tables, and the usual end matter.

Perhaps the most striking thing about the entire volume is that, for a book with the words "practical magic" in its title, it contains very little about what most modern occultists or Pagans would consider practical magic at all. Readers wanting to put methods of the Northern Tradition to use in dealing magically with situations in their daily lives will have to either look elsewhere or use a lot of imagination to extrapolate from what Pennick gives. (Admittedly he may not have had anything to do with the title, publishers being what they are.) What it is, in many ways, is the best attempt I've seen to provide a fundamental overview of the experiential world of modern Nordic Paganism, in a context that includes and draws on some elements of other traditions from northern and western Europe.

What makes this problematic, as suggested above, is the claim that the worldview being presented is that of ancient, pre-Christian Northern Paganism, and the implication that this worldview belonged to a single, unified entity - a coherent Northern Tradition in the full sense of the word, rather than a broad array of local traditions with some features more or less in common due to shared ancestry and a certain amount of borrowing between tribes. This latter was almost certainly closer to the actual situation, to judge by historical data and anthropological parallels. It's at least

arguable that Pennick has fallen into the trap of creating the thing he is attempting to study; his coherent, international, and rather self-conscious Northern Tradition has all the hallmarks of a modern Pagan tradition created out of old materials.

This does not limit its current usefulness, of course; a tradition does not have to be ancient to be valid. Pennick's book has a lot to offer to practitioners of modern Nordic Pagan paths, and more broadly to anyone interested in entering into Pagan ways of approaching the world.

In A Photographic Grove

Jane Gifford, The Wisdom of Trees: Mysteries, Magic, and Medicine (New York: Sterling 2000); ISBN 0-8069-2785-2, hardback, in print at \$24.95.

"The relationship between a modern Druid path and ancient Celtic literature is a complex one."

Whatever the original meaning and purpose of the Old Irish Ogham alphabet might have been -- a question that will probably never be adequately answered at this point -- the Ogham letters, the trees connected with them, and the calendar system added onto them by English poet Robert Graves, have become an important part of the traditional lore in many modern Druid circles, and indeed throughout the Pagan revival. Historical and scholarly issues have taken a back seat to the emotional appeal and magical effectiveness of a system that interweaves trees with the cycle of time in a web of correspondences that allows for almost unlimited expansion.

It is in this modern tradition that Jane Gifford's lavishly illustrated book on the trees of the Ogham calendar finds its place. Those whose interest in Ogham focuses on original sources and well-footnoted scholarly analysis will find plenty to irritate them in this book, which veers fairly often from historical fact and provides no references at all for the legends and lore it assembles. Still, those whose interest is more practical, more poetic, or more casual will find things of interest here. Gifford has assembled material on the natural history, magical and spiritual dimension, and herbal healing uses of the twenty principal trees of the Ogham alphabet, and includes a set of correspondences for each tree, including colors, planets, stones, deities, and key concepts. While not complete in itself, this material makes a good starting point for the stu-

dent of modern Pagan treelore.

But the best thing by far about *The Wisdom of Trees* is the color photographs illustrating each section. Gifford is an extraordinarily skilled photographer, and her images catch the trees of the Ogham alphabet in their many moods and seasons. Even those modern Druids who would prefer to ignore the text may find the book valuable as a collection of stunning photo essays on some of the most important trees and plants in Celtic folklore. Taken on this level, it may well count as the first Druid coffee table book -- a detail that all by itself makes an interesting comment on the evolution of modern Pagan culture.

The View from a Distant Shore

Philip Carr-Gomm, ed., In the Grove of the Druids: The Druid Teachings of Ross Nichols (London: Watkins, 2002); ISBN 1-84293-032-X, paperback, in print at \$16.95.

Of the rifts that divide the modern Druid movement, one of the most significant is that between Neopagan Druid organizations such as ADF and older traditions rooted in the Druid revival of the eighteenth century. While there are broad themes common to both -- reverence for the living Earth, interest in what survives of pre-Christian Celtic myth and spirituality, and a general alignment with the values and mores of the post-1960s counterculture, among others -- the differences are vast.

Traditional Druidry draws on three centuries worth of a complicated heritage that includes, just for starters, Freemasonry, Hermetic occultism, a dozen different varieties of heretical Christianity, Celtic nationalism, opposition to Celtic nationalism, Romanticism, nudism, and forgotten rivals of the Boy Scouts. Legacies from these and other sources have defined Druidry in ways that make little sense from the perspective of ADF, which started out on the basis of a self-conscious rejection of existing traditions in favor of approaches based on current historical, archeological and linguistic scholarship. Yet there is a point to listening to what other forms of Druidry have to say.

In *The Grove of the Druids*, a newly published collection of essays by Ross Nichols, is a useful resource for those seeking an understanding of this sort. Nichols was the founder of the Order of Bards Ovates and

Druids (OBOD), currently the largest of the world's Druid organizations, and in its present form a complicated mix of traditional Druidry and Neopagan innovations. Nichols himself, however, was a product of the British occult scene of the mid-twentieth century: a close friend of Gerald Gardner, a recipient of holy orders in a Celtic Christian church, and a member of the Martinist Order, he approached the Druid traditions of his time with the full mental equipment of the adept occultist.

His writings are powerfully shaped by this background. Concepts from the Cabala, esoteric Christianity, Theosophy, and Buddhism rub elbows with material from ancient Celtic literature and the Arthurian legends. The idea, pervasive in the occultism of his time, that all religions and spiritual paths are talking about the same thing under different symbolisms is a dominant theme in his work. Thus for readers more familiar and more comfortable with modern scholarly literature on the Druids, plunging into a Nichols essay is like finding oneself suddenly on another planet.

Yet for those willing to approach the material on a poetic and mythic level, there is much of value here. Whether he is reshaping the Cabalistic Tree of Life to fit the deep structure of the Arthurian legends, discussing the symbolism of temples from varying perspectives, or tackling the nature and purpose of mythology itself in the book's longest and most intriguing essay, "An Examination of Creative Myth," Nichols is always original and often entertaining. A more than capable writer and a deep student of myth, he offers an intensely personal synthesis drawn from the complex heritage of traditional Druidry.

The Druid's Bookshelf reviews new and classic books of interest to members of ADF and other modern Druid traditions. Suggestions and submissions of books for review are always welcome! Please contact me via ordinary mail at P.O. Box 95674, Seattle, WA 98145, or via email at: threeynx@earthlink.net

The Garden of our Nemeton

By Inish

What does a garden consist of? Trees for shade, shrubs and mosses for ground cover, mulch for protection against the cold, fertilizer to help it all grow. Flowers for color and fragrance, vines that support other tendrils, plants with thorns, weeds, bugs and caretakers themselves.

All of these things are necessary for the health and proper balance of a garden, both for its own survival and for the growth of the persons who tend it, care for it, love it. Everyone knows what it is like to be scratched by thorns or the spikes of a thistle. Why are they there – to make our lives miserable? Nay. They are there to protect the plants that have them, they are there to say to us "You may harvest me, but there is a price. You may rip me from my place of repose, but I will draw blood. You may sacrifice me, but I demand respect. You may try to avoid me, but I am ready to scratch when stepped on".

Gardens require constant attention. There are times when the caretakers may sit back, relax and enjoy the beauty they have so carefully grown. But they know that soon it will be necessary to get back in there and pull out the weeds, protect from pests and acquire a few more scratches.

And after awhile, something begins to happen to the caretakers. Some get tired of constantly having to weed and guard against bugs and blights. They grow to resent the things that constantly demand their time and resources, and they stop tending the garden, which is soon overtaken by the forces of nature and chaos. What was once beautiful becomes, in their eyes, an enemy, ugly and unfriendly.

But some begin to deepen in their love for the beauty around them. They come to realize that the garden needs them, and they understand that without the weeds, bugs, blights and scratches they would not have to work so hard to maintain and grow a healthy garden; and they would not appreciate it as much. They come into a kind of symbiosis with the green world around them, and a naturalizing of spirituality occurs when they begin to stop shaking their fists at the things they don't like but will always be there in the garden. When instead they accept their garden will always need tending, always need weeding, always need care and understand *that* itself is part of the joy.

Aye, gardens will grow on their own. But it will no longer be a garden. It will be fallow land, overgrown land, reclaimed by the wildness of the Other. And to say that we, the Folk, do not belong in that Other, is not entirely in error. Each thing unto this world has its own sphere and niche of habitation. It is up to us to tend ours, weed ours, fertilize ours in harmony with the life around us. It is up to us to accept that which has been given us and allow as much beauty as we can to bloom.

And when the day is done, then we would have earned a respite from our toils. Then we may rest, then we may be content, then we may gaze upon the world and sigh with wonder at the myriad of life in the garden of our nemeton that we, ourselves, belong to.

2002 Annual Meeting Minutes

Wellspring

May 2002

The meeting was called to order by Archdruid, Skip Ellison.

Archdruid Emeritus Isaac Bonewits asked to say a few words: He wanted to remind us that his original intent for ADF was to be neo-pagan with good scholarship and not neo-historical. It was his intent that ADF should be providing clergy for the entire neo-pagan community and not just ADF. To that end, he feels that serving the needs of the greater neo-pagan community should supercede adherence to good scholarship.

Old Business

Matt Ducar read all the motions voted on by the Mother Grove over the past year. Details are available in the ADF-ANNOUNCE archives or may be requested by sending e-mail to adf-scribe@adf.org.

Officer Reports

I've included the full text of any reports that were e-mailed to me, all others are either summaries of what the officer reported at Wellspring or of the written reports handed to me.

Archdruid (Skip Ellison):

I believe that one of the primary jobs for the Archdruid is to travel around and meet with the members, both within groves and that are solitaires. By doing so, our members get a chance to know that the organization is strong and that people care enough about the members to come and visit with them.

One good way of doing this is by attending festivals. Since last May, I have been to 12 festivals. In addition to those festivals, I've traveled around the perimeter of the US and into Canada to visit members. In that time, I've driven a total of 15,834 miles for ADF and met with hundreds of members. It's a good thing I'm

retired and like to travel! In these travels, I've also had a chance to take ADF regalia with me to sell. Until we got the web site active this spring, it was the only way that regalia items were being sold. In that time period I sold about \$3200 worth of regalia for ADF. Now I hope to see more people visit the web site at www.adf.org/regalia, and buy our regalia items there.

Another important job for the organization is to be aware of things that are happening on our email lists. I'm subscribed to and read every one of the ADF lists and most of the grove and other ADF related lists on Yahoo and other servers that I've found. I may not involve myself in the daily discussions, but I am there to answer any questions that come up.

And finally, I believe that the Archdruid should be very involved working with our Clergy and our Study Program. As head of the Clergy Council, I have been working with our clergy to develop the Clergy section of the Study Program. With the recent addition of people into the Clergy, I believe that the Clergy section of the Study Program will be up and accepting students shortly.

Vice-Archdruid (Sue Parker / Liafal):

During this year I attended several local ADF festivals including Shining Lakes' Lughfest, Summerland Gathering, and Red Oak's Harvestfest. At each festival I took part in rituals, conversed with members and non-members about our organization and tried to help strengthen the ADF community. During the winter, Amber and Azrael Arynne K's book about Candlemas was published. In this book, my article about the goddess Brigit was cited several times. The source they used was the National ADF web site where the article appears. Hopefully some of those that read the book will check out our web site.

Ian and I were asked to prepare a presentation about Druidism for a UU church in Yellow Springs, Ohio. We sang at a local coffeehouse the night before and

were very well received at the church the next day. The members used one of our chants, written by Ian, the 'Portal Song', as their opening hymn. They asked thoughtful questions and were favorably impressed by the presentation.

I've been running the most current elections, collecting ballots for the special Member's Advocate election, and sending the ballots out for the Advocate/Annual Meeting/Regional Representatives election and collecting the results.

Ian and I presented a rather techno version of a rite based on the ADF ritual format at Winterstar, an event in Ohio. Many of the participants reporting having interesting and powerful experiences during the rite. Orren and Pam from 4 Quarters farm, who attended the rite, have asked us to take part in their Stones Rising festival this fall.

Scribe (Matt Ducar):

Last year I promised a complete review of the ADF bylaws during my term. This hasn't been done largely because a lack of cohesive vision in the Mother Grove of where we are going. Over the past 5 years, there hasn't been a unified movement in one direction and the current state of the bylaws reflects that. The Mother Grove retreat has restored that sense of unified vision and over the next year I will be putting a group together to complete a full bylaws review.

Administrator (none):

Effective at this meeting Todd Covert resigns as ADF Administrator. Skip announced proposed

changes to the Administrator, Chronicler, Office Manager, and Purswarden to make them direct appointments of the Mother Grove and not require changeover every two years.

Purswarden:

Todd Covert submitted a financial report:

ADF Financial Report
(since consolidation of checking accts.)

Prepared by: Todd Covert, Administrator Dec 13, '01 - May 29, '02

Income (include. Undeposited & Receivable)

Donations
Restricted

Compass. Memb. 47.00

Land Fund 71.00

Publishing 37.00

Total Restricted 155.00

Unrestricted 1,371.30

Total Donations 1,526.30

Membership

New member 3,660.00

Renewal 2,820.00

Total Membership 6,480.00

Other Inc 173.00

Publications

Oak Leaves Subscriptions 3.00

Total Publications 3.00

Regalia

Apparel 409.00

Misc. 37.00

Publications 308.50

Shipping & Handling 60.22

Statuary 191.00

Tapes 100.00

Total Regalia 1,105.72

Reimbursement 86.22

Total Income 9,374.24

Expense (incl. Invoices Payable)

Admin

Corporate Fees 162.00

Elections 949.57

Events

MG Retreat 1,049.25

Total Events 1,049.25

Total Admin 2,160.82

Bank Charge 5.00

Cash 56.22

Copying+Prntng

Membership 525.08

Total Copying+Prntng 525.08

Credit Crd Proc

Chargeback 363.03

Deposit-Refundable 500.00

Credit Crd Proc - Other 834.96

Total Credit Crd Proc 1,697.99

Office Expense

Staff 2,080.02

Supplies 58.05

Total Office Expense 2,138.07

Postage

Membership 275.46

Postage - Other 15.00

Total Postage 290.52

Publications Costs 138.44

Regalia Costs

Inventory Costs

Apparel 4,555.60

Statuary 516.81

Total Inventory Costs 5,072.41

Other Exp. 12.45

Shipping 28.35

Total Regalia Costs 5,113.21

Rent

Storage 60.00

Total Rent 60.00

Telephone 11.70

Total Expense 12,197.05

Net Income -2,822.81

ASSETS

Balance of Checking Account

(5/29/02) 25,076.66

Undeposited Check

136.57

Receivables

414.00

TOTAL

25,627.23

LIABILITIES

Invoices Payable

258.26

TOTAL

258.26

NET WORTH

25,368.97

Preceptor (Rob Barton):

A new system is now in place for reviewing Dedicant Program submissions. We are now current with all applications – no backlog. If you have submitted DP materials and have not heard back, contact him. All guilds now have Preceptors elected & on the Council of Lore – a first in several years. The Council of Lore is focusing on getting the Clergy training up and running as its first priority.

Rob has been appointing Assistant Preceptors for administration, archive searching, and for interfacing with Guild Preceptors.

New e-mail lists will be set up for the Preceptors of each of the functions to facilitate work on the functional specifics.

Information packets on ADF theology were put together & made available to any member that requested one. There has been significant interest from Senior Druids and solitary members.

Non-Officer Director (Seabhac Fionn):

Has no specific duties and has not been very active this past year as he was in his previous term. Wants to become more active in specific projects over the next year.

Chief of the Council of Senior Druids (Amergin)

Has made many accomplishments in the past year. The include:

Simplified & consolidated the Grove reporting system – we now have 4/5ths of all Groves filing their quarterly reports, this is up from less than the 1/4th that filed before he was elected.

At this time we have 21 Provisionally Chartered Groves and 11 Protogroves, though 3 Provisional and 7 Protogroves are behind in their reporting and will soon be made inactive

Rob Henderson was elected to be the chair of the revised Grove Organizing Committee responsible for reviewing applications for Protogroves and Provisional Charters.

Has sent Grove Charter or Protogrove certificate to every one of our groves.

Worked with the Mother Grove to empower the Council of Senior Druids to award Grove Charters and set minimum requirements for Groves. The Council was also empowered to suspend/revoke charters of Groves that don't meet these requirements.

The Council of Senior Druids bylaws were extensively overhauled – the first revisions done in over 5 years.

Once the bylaws were revised, he appointed Caryn MacLuan as chair of the Grove Coordinating Committee and Todd Covert as Deputy Chief of the Council. These appointments were approved by the Council.

To end his report, Amergin submitted his resignation as Chief of the Council of Senior Druids. He sited a disagreement with the current direction of the Mother Grove is heading. He also stated that he felt purposefully left out of the loop on much of the Mother Grove retreat discussion (that he was unable to attend due to his job) especially concerning questions around Grove Organizing policy. Per the Council's bylaws, Todd Covert is now the Chief of the Council of Senior Druids until the next scheduled election in 2003.

ADF Guild Master Report (Gwynne Green):

I am currently subscribed to all Guild lists as an observer to assist where ever the Guilds request me to so do and where it seems appropriate.

An alphabetical synopsis of the Guilds and Guilds' Lists activity is as follows:

Artisans' Guild

AG list has had threads on: Guild Specialty work,



including requirements and recommended readings, possible guild retreat and future workshops.

Guild Preceptor (Jimmy) presented a workshop on making scrying mirrors at Trillium, ADF Spring Gathering 4/6/02.

Planned Guild activities for the next quarter:

Discussion on Guild Specialty work, concerning exit standards, reading list and get approval for implementation. Work on list of potential AG workshops at upcoming gatherings. They are also working on their guild webpage

Bardic Guild

This quarter the Bardic Guild continued to conduct its public correspondence electronically. Over the quarter, many have been sharing their work; Wry Welwood wrote of the publication of his poem WRINKLES in Clean Sheets magazine, and shares the availability of that venue, also posts regarding a communication he had with the new editor of Oak Leaves and encourages Bards to submit their work to Athanasios; Discussion of "All Snakes Day" and ancient poetry possible connecting Brighid with snakes; important message was posted by the Chief Bard that the Guild Officers and Faculty have unanimously approved a temporary change in how we do the Bardic Appointments for our Guild members who are actively in training with us; post about a place to learn Gaelic music on line; Jeremy Mallory asks for source readings on Brehon law; Robert Barton recommends 'A Guide to Early Irish Law'-Fergus Kelly & if interested in the subject should join this Guild and opt for that concentration.

Clergy Council

Guild activity in the previous quarter unrelated to the ADF Study Program:

There were a few changes in the Clergy Council this quarter. The Bylaws and Policy & Procedure Manual both failed in the beginning of the quarter because not enough people voted to reach quorum. There were also a couple of requests to change the wording slightly.

At the MG retreat, it was decided that it was time to honour some of the long-term ADF members that have been filling the role of clergy without the title. MG voted to give full ordination to Isaac Bonewits, Skip Ellison, Rob Barton, Jeff Wyndham (Ian Corrigan), Bryan Perrin and Eric Canali (Earrach of Pittsburgh).

MG also voted to give Lay Clergy credentials to John Harrison (Amergin Aryson), Barbara Wright, Bob Knox (Nathair Bheag), Chris Sherbak, David GoWell (Bardd Dafydd), David Kling (Athanasios), Walter Minning (Duir), Carlynne Deaver (Epona), Venus Clark (Hekata), Matt Ducar, Norma Hoffman, Linda Demissy (Paradox), Shawn Miller, Todd Covert (Raven bard) and Will Pierson.

* Planned Guild activities for the next quarter:

Skip Ellison will be bringing the Bylaws and Policy & Procedure Manual back up for a vote after making the changes that were requested. With the new clergy members added, work should speed up on the courses for the Clergy Track section of the Study Plan.

Healers' Guild

HG completed election process. Shawn Miller, Acting HG Scribe did an admirable job running the election. As of Sun, 31 Mar 2002, the new Officers for the Healers Guild are: Chief: Rodney Cox Preceptor: Bill Elston Archivist : Selene Tawny No Pursewarden was nominated.

Liturgists' Guild

On the Liturgists list this quarter there have been various threads:

Robert Barton wrote and forwarded to the list a paper entitled, "Concept and Expression in Liturgy"; there have been discussions about the direction of the Guild; about possible liturgical publications or a cd of rituals.

Magicians' Guild

On the list this quarter a rite of Equinox was posted by Moishe Ben-shir, Magicians' Guild Preceptor; a note about the archives was posted by Duir Art ap Mona, Magicians Guild Archivist; a ritual of purification for ritual tools was requested.

Naturalists' Guild

Guild activity in the previous quarter:

A few small discussions on the spiritual aspects of nature. Several attempts to get the Guild moving forward towards more active participation by both Officers and Members. The resignation of the Guild Pursewarden/Registrar. The appointment of Francesca to an Assistant Preceptor position, focusing on the mystical side of the Naturalist's Study Program. The announcement that the current Preceptor intends to submit his resignation effective as soon as another can be elected, or Samhain, whichever comes first.

* Planned Guild activities for the next quarter

An election to replace the Registrar/Pursewarden and the Preceptor. Forward progress on the Guild Study Program. Updated web page for the Guild and updating all documents and membership rosters to reflect the current status of the Guild.

Scholars' Guild

Topics discussed included: a code of ethics, a reading lists, a guild database-DRUID, guild governance, interim appointment of John Michael Greer to the office of Guild Archivist, the SG SP format.

A Guild Archivist election was held after the resignation of S. Schluntz.

Seers' Guild

The Seers Guild has had no significant activity outside the study plan this period.

Warriors' Guild

The annual Warriors' Guild Meeting and Championship Games were held at the Trilium Festival in Virginia, April 5 -7. None of the Council of Honour members were able to attend. The official results of the Championship Games have not been made available to me yet. The list has been relatively quiet this quarter.

My thanks to all the Guild Officers who submitted copies of their reports to me thus enabling me to give a more complete picture of the ADF Guilds from the past quarter.

Pacific Regional Director (Epona):

The Pacific Region is quite large and composed mostly of Solitary members. She is making an active effort to be as available as possible to all members in her region. Feedback from her region on the study materials recently offered by the Clergy Council has been highly favorable.

Ohio River Regional Director (Duir):

Duir has been very active this year – he has set up a regional e-mail list that now has 82 members on it. A

ORR regional meeting was held at Summerland Gathering '01 – at that time there were 3 Provisional Groves and 3 Proto-Groves. Now there are 5 Provisional Groves and 3 Proto-Groves. He has started holding quarterly regional leadership workshops. The region is collecting funds to buy land in the region. It has been a tough year with several obstacles, but the region is working through the issues that have come up.

Great Lakes Regional Director

(Rob Henderson):

Needed to create a new e-mail list for members of his region – currently only have a few subscribers, but once more people join he plans to use the list to plan a regional retreat. He is happy to announce that we have a new Grove in Toronto.



Old Business:

There was no old business on the table.

The discussion from the Mother Grove Retreat was briefly summarized & discussed (full details of the retreat were posted to ADF-Announce on 5/27/02 and not included here for brevity).

New Business:

Skip announced there would be a Mother Grove meeting the next day Ian requested that the Mother Grove consider revising the Dedicant's Program by combining the two sections on meditation, adding a Nature Awareness section, and refocusing step 9 to become "Building your Hearth Religion". The Mother Grove will discuss it during the meeting tomorrow

– all present liked the initial idea, has some questions about implementation.

There was some question on the status of the theft repayment. Error! Bookmark not defined. presented a brief history of exactly what happened & the steps that had been taken through his term as Administrator. The current status of payments was not known.

Gwynne Green announced a Bardic Audition would

be taking place and encouraged all to attend.

Election Results

(submitted by Sue Parker):

Pacific RD

Carlynnne Deaver 43 votes (26 people voted)

Central RR

Daniel Flores 41 votes (15 people)

Southeastern RR

Charles Hicks 10 votes (4 people)

Northeast RR (66 people)

Joseph Murphy 49

Francesca Hendrick 236

Great Lakes R (126 people)

N/A

Ohio River R (12 people)

N/A

Far North R (1 person)

N/A

Members Advocate

Texas Red 25 votes

Sean Schluntz 64 votes

Michael Immonen 98 votes

Venus Clark 343 votes

2002 Annual Meeting

Summerland 86 votes

Shining Lakes Lughnasadh 96 votes

Muin Mound Madness 143 votes

Wellspring 206 votes

Total of 250 people voted

11 ballots were expired (not counted in the total voters)

Skip offered a final prayer to close the meeting.

WANTED

Oak Leaves is in need of original material for publication. The material that we are actively looking for is material that would be of interested to members of ADF, and the general Pagan Community.

Such material would include, but is not limited to, articles of a general Indo-European nature, Divination, Bardic work (including Poetry, and even short fiction of a Pagan nature), and special events from ADF Groves, Regions, and members (including life transitions). Artwork is also in high demand.

E-mail is the preferred format of submissions. Please send to:

athanasiosofspfd@aol.com

Mother Grove meeting at Wellspring 2002

Mother Grove Members

Present:

Rob Barton
Gwynne Green
Duir
Seabhac Fionn
Rob Henderson
Epona
Sue Parker
Francesca
Skip Ellison
Matt Ducar

Absent:

Todd Covert
Jenni Hunt
Hekatatia

Meeting opened with a prayer by Sue.

MOTION by Skip:

...move that Article 12:8 which reads:

8) The Administrator shall have responsibility for provision of membership services and the overall fiscal operation of the Corporation. The Administrator will chair the Administration Committee which shall be staffed by appointment (as approved by the Mother Grove) with officers such as the Pursewarden, Chronicler, Office Manager, etc. Candidates for the office of Administrator will have organizational management skills and shall have access to a computer and E-mail with which to perform their duties.

Be removed.

And that Article 12:9 and 10 be renumbered to 8 & 9.

And that a new section 10 be added which reads:

10) The Administrator shall have responsibility for provision of membership services and the overall fiscal operation of the Corporation. The Administrator will chair the Administration Committee which shall be staffed by the officers holding the following positions: Pursewarden, Chronicler, Office Manager, and Regalia Manager. Candidates for

the office of Administrator will have organizational management skills and shall have access to a computer and E-mail with which to perform their duties. The position of Administrator will be filled and vacated by appointment of the the Mother Grove.

And that Article 12:11 which reads:

11) The Pursewarden shall supervise, but not directly sign for, the disbursement of funds for the corporation; shall have responsibility for all monies of the Corporation received or disbursed; shall supervise the deposit of all monies and valuables in the name of and to the credit of A.D.F. in such banks or other financial institutions as the Mother Grove shall designate. All checks or other financial instruments involving sums greater than (US) \$5,000 shall require the signatures of both the Administrator and the Archdruid. The Pursewarden shall be responsible for keeping the corporation's financial records according to generally accepted accounting principles for nonprofit corporations; will generate quarterly financial reports for the Mother Grove; and may perform all those other duties that would otherwise be performed by a corporate Treasurer. This position shall be filled and vacated by appointment of the Administrator with approval from the Mother Grove.

Be changed to:

11) The Pursewarden shall supervise, but not directly sign for, the disbursement of funds for the corporation; shall have responsibility for all monies of the Corporation received or disbursed; shall supervise the deposit of all monies and valuables in the name of and to the credit of A.D.F. in such banks or other financial institutions as the Mother Grove shall designate. All checks or other financial instruments involving sums greater than (US) \$5,000 shall require the signatures of both the Administrator and the Archdruid. The Pursewarden shall be responsible for keeping the corporation's financial records according to generally accepted accounting principles for nonprofit corporations; will generate quarterly financial reports for the Mother Grove; and may perform all those other duties that would otherwise be performed by a corporate Treasurer. This position shall be filled and vacated by appointment of the Mother Grove.

And that Article 12:12 which reads:

12) The Office Manager shall supervise the processing of all incoming mail, shall keep all membership and subscription records, shall have general responsibility for maintaining the database thereof; shall generate reports and mailing labels for the Mother Grove and other designated agents of A.D.F.; and shall assist grove organizers and other members with specialized mailings. She or he shall maintain strict confidentiality of the membership list according to guidelines established by the Mother Grove. The Office Manager shall directly sign for all disbursement of funds for the Corporation, except for sums greater than (US) \$5,000, which shall require the signatures of both the Administrator and the Archdruid. This position shall be filled and vacated by appointment of the Administrator with approval from the Mother Grove.

Be changed to:

12) The Office Manager shall supervise the processing of all incoming mail, shall keep all membership and subscription records, shall have general responsibility for maintaining the database thereof; shall generate reports and mailing labels for the Mother Grove and other designated agents of A.D.F.; and shall assist grove organizers and other members with specialized mailings. She or he shall maintain strict confidentiality of the membership list according to guidelines established by the Mother Grove. The Office Manager shall directly sign for all disbursement of funds for the Corporation, except for sums greater than (US) \$5,000, which shall require the signatures of both the Administrator and the Archdruid. This position shall be filled and vacated by appointment of the Mother Grove.



And that Article 12:13 which reads:

13) The Chronicler shall have responsibility for newsletters, journals, directories, and other publications to be issued by the Mother Grove, as determined by the Directors. He or she shall function as Editor in Chief of all Mother Grove publications; shall keep track of advertising (paid, exchange, and donated); and shall supervise physical production

and distribution. This position shall be filled and vacated by appointment of the Administrator with approval from the Mother Grove.

Be changed to:

13) The Chronicler shall have responsibility for newsletters, journals, directories, and other publications to be issued by the Mother Grove, as determined by the Directors. He or she shall function as Editor in Chief of all Mother Grove publications; shall keep track of advertising (paid, exchange, and donated); and shall supervise physical production and distribution. This position shall be filled and vacated by appointment of the Mother Grove.

And that a new section, Article 12:15 be added which reads:

15) The Regalia Manager shall have overall responsibility for sales of all ADF Regalia. He or she shall function as manager of the ADF storefront, either electronically or at festivals; shall be responsible for keeping the inventory current and for submitting a yearly Regalia Budget to the Administrator. This position shall be filled and vacated by appointment of the Mother Grove.

RESULTS: unanimous approval

MOTION by Skip:
...move that Todd Covert be

appointed Pursewarden.

RESULTS:

Motion Carried. 8 Approved (Epona, Sue, Francesca, Skip, Matt, Rob H, Seabhac, Duir), 2 Opposed (Rob B, Gwynne)

MOTION by Skip:

...move that Jenni Hunt be appointed Chronicler.

RESULTS:

Motion Carried. 9 Approved (Epona, Sue, Francesca, Skip, Matt, Rob H, Seabhac, Duir, Rob B), 1 Abstain (Gwynne)

MOTION by Skip:

...move that the Mother Grove make Don Davis the Office Manager.

RESULTS:

Motion Carried -- unanimous approval

MOTION by Skip:

...move that the Mother Grove offer Don Davis a contract for providing office services under the same terms offered to Todd Covert. The contract will be for two years and will be reviewed every six months.

RESULTS:

Motion Carried – unanimous approval

MOTION by Skip:

...move that Francesca be appointed Regalia Manager.

RESULTS:

Motion Carried: 9 Approved (Epona, Sue, Gwynne, Skip, Matt, Rob H, Seabhac, Duir, Rob B), 1 Abstain (Francesca)

MOTION by Epona:

1) That upon passage of this motion, All references to Regional Director and Regional Representative shall be changed to Regional Druid in the By-laws and Mother Grove Policy and Procedural Manual.

2) That upon passage this section shall replace Article 12 section 9 of the ADF National By-laws:

The Regional Druids will act as liaisons between the membership in their geographic region and the Mother Grove. Duties of the Regional Druids may include, but are not limited to coordinating regional activities, where possible establishing regional councils and calling regional meetings, subscribing to all regional E-lists and periodic publications established by and for Groves and Proto-Groves. The Regional Druids shall be the voice of the organization in the Region and as such may mediate disputes in the region and work with the Proto-Groves and Groves on spiritual and leadership development. The Regional Druid shall promote the organization in the Region, they should actively encourage the formation of new Proto-Groves and Groves in the region, assist Proto-Groves in the region in achieving the status of Provisional Grove, assist Provisional Groves in the Region in attaining the status of Chartered Groves. The Regional Druids will sit on the Grove Organizing Committee in order to provide input about applications from their Region, they also shall be able to vote on applications from their Region. Regional Druids shall be elected by a plurality by the residents of the represented region as defined by the Mother Grove. Candidates for the office of Regional Druid must have access to a computer and an E-mail account. All Regions shall be represented on the Mother Grove by a Regional Druid. All Re-

gional Druids shall have a vote on the Mother Grove.

3) That upon passage this section shall be added to Article 12 section 9

of the National ADF By-laws:

Regional Druids shall have the ability to appoint a deputy to assist with the duties of office. In case of a vacancy the Deputy Regional Druid, with Mother Grove approval, shall assume the position until the next yearly election. If the Mother Grove does not approve the deputy or a deputy was not appointed the Regional Druid position the Mother Grove shall appoint a replacement until the next ADF Annual Meeting.

4) That a proposal to redefine the existing regions (specifically to split the Pacific & Central Regions into 4 smaller regions and to move the boundary between the NorthEastern and SouthEastern regions), will be proposed by Lughnasadh.

RESULTS:

Motion Carried – unanimous approval

Discussion was held on Ian's proposal to modify the Dedicant's Program. He proposed combining the two sections on meditation, adding a Nature Awareness section, and refocusing step 9 to become "Building your Hearth Religion".

All present were in favor of the proposed changes. It was decided that if changes were made, we would continue to accept Dedicant Program submissions under the old requirements until the '03 Annual Meeting. Rob Barton would work with Ian to propose the exact wording required to make the changes.

The meeting was then opened up to questions from the membership.

The only pressing question from the members was the status of Oak Leaves. I informed them of the pending motion to split Oak Leaves subscriptions from membership dues, but that it wasn't brought to a vote at the Mother Grove meeting to give the Chronicler & publication group time to consider suggestions for making up for the missed issues.

The meeting was closed with a prayer by Gwynne.

(Editorial... Continued from page 3)

I have changed greatly this past year, experiencing new and exciting things, and experiencing loss as well. I have seen those around me, friends and family, undergo tremendous change in their lives too. I try to reflect on the events of the past year, and put everything into order. Once, when I was feeling depressed over something I can no longer recall, a friend told me to meditate on the word perspective. Ever since that day, several years ago, I have meditated on just what perspective means to me. The problems of yesterday seem much smaller today than they did initially, and the successes of yesterday are not as glorified today. I try to keep things in perspective, as I think about the events of the past year. How will I utilize the positive events of the past year, and integrate the experience into my life? Additionally, how will I correct those bad habits that I have allowed to creep into my day to day activities? These are some of the questions I ask when I take stock of the past year.

As members of the Pagan Community, and of ADF, each one of us can take inventory of our involvement within the Community and with ADF as a whole. We can ask ourselves tough questions. Did I make a positive impact on those around me? Did I devote enough time and effort to making the community, and my grove, a better place for both myself and for others as well? Each person is involved with ADF, and with the Pagan Community, for different reasons. Some to become closer to the Gods, others to interact with people with similar interests. There are many reasons why a person joins any organization, or becomes involved with any spiritual tradition, but while you are involved, make the best of it. I have heard people use the excuse that they are too new to get involved. As long as a person has dedication, they are never too new to make a difference, and to have lasting impact. This doesn't mean that everyone has to have the same degree of involvement. Each person has their own talents, and gifts that they can offer. Part of evaluating oneself is understanding your strengths and weaknesses. It takes all sorts of people to make any organization successful.

I would encourage everyone to take some time and meditate on the past year. Take inventory of your

life, and put into perspective those things that are important to you, and even those things that are not. ADF is only as strong as the membership, if you were not as active in 2002 as you would have liked then make a difference in 2003. I look forward to seeing you there!

On a different note, I would like to address the issue of Oak Leaves. As the new editor of Oak Leaves I am going to strive to maintain the quarterly schedule, and get us back on track as far as issues are concerned. I know that the tardiness of Oak Leaves has been a point of contention for several of our membership, and I can only say that Jenni Hunt, the ADF Chronicler, and I are making every effort to get us back on a sound schedule.

Oak Leaves is the official forum for ADF, and is the sounding board for our membership. I encourage

people to send in letters and let us know how you feel. I also would like to encourage people to send in your essays, poems, and artwork. Submissions are crucial to getting Oak Leaves out on time, and is vital to the publication.

The coming year, 2003, has the potential of being a very dynamic year for ADF. The Study Program is slowly but surely

being finished by the Council of Lore, Oak Leaves is starting to gain momentum, and several Guild projects are in the works. I am really excited to be a part of an organization like ADF, because of the diversity and quality of its membership.



Your Letters of Comment are encouraged. Please send your letters to the editorial staff at:

Athanasiosofspfd@aol.com

ADF Directory

Below is the current listing of ADF Groves and Protogroves. SD for Senior Druid, and GO for Grove Organizer.

List of Groves Central Region

Awenwyrđ Protogrove GO: Bannura
PO Box 112, Colfax, IL 61728
(309) 723-2251 awenwyrđ@mchsi.com
Midgard Hearth Protogrove GO: Bjorn Patsson
c/o D. Flores P.O. Box 630134, Houston, TX 77263
(832) 265-7596 bjornpatsson@hotmail.com
Raven Wood Grove SD: Patrick Donlea
PO Box 1635, Colfax, IL 60039-1635
(815) 356-9844 ravenwood@joltmail.com
River of Fire Grove SD: Hekataia
PO Box 2282, La Crosse, WI 54602-2282
riveroffire@mac.com
Sun Raven Grove SD: Suil Bhran
PO Box 8212, Madison, WI 53708
suibhne@jvlnet.com
Wild Onion Grove SD: Barbara Wright
PO Box 1606, Oak Park, IL 60304
(708) 386-7388 ceorua@aol.com

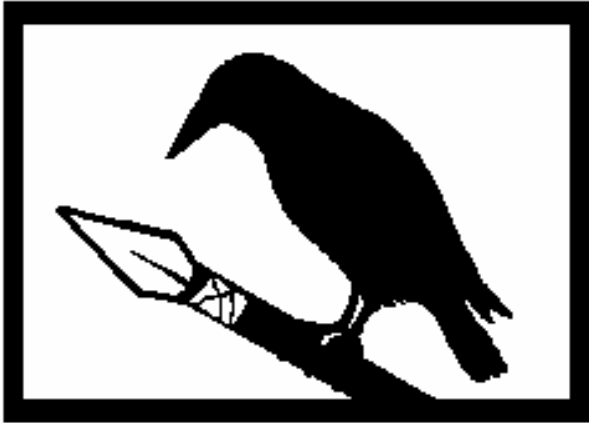
Great Lakes Region

Dancing Lights Protogrove GO: Rod MacPherson
1550 Kingston Rd. Ste.1037, Pickering, ON L1V
6W9 Canada
(905) 579-3121 adfToronto@powergate.ca
Red Maple Protogrove GO: Puck
RR#3 Pakenham, ON K0A 2X0 Canada
info@redmaplegrove.org
Shining Lakes Grove SD: Robert Henderson
PO Box 1732, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1732
(734) 487-4931 robh@cyberspace.org
Stone Creed Grove SD: Shawn T. Miller
PO Box 18007 Cleveland Heights, OH 44118
(216) 288-6174 seniordruid@stonecreed.org

Willow Marsh Protogrove GO: Erryn Shanahan
PO Box 447, St. Clair Shores, MI 48080-0447
(313) 881-4578 Willowmars@aol.com

Northeastern Region

Cedar Light Grove SD: Caryn MacLuan
PO Box 21723, Baltimore, MD 21222
highland@netrax.net
Gooseberry Protogrove GO: Cynndra Morgna
PO Box 5491, Richmond, VA 23220
(266) 266-7464 Waywont@cs.com
Grove of the Other Gods SD: Norma Hoffman
PO Box 1483, Highland Park, NJ 08904
eternalansw@earthlink.net
Hearth Fire Grove SD: Jan Curran
PO Box 1138, Billerica, MA 01821
(978) 439-5515 hfg@hearthfire.org
Little Acorn Grove SD: Sylvan
15372 Inlet Place, Montclair, VA 22026
(703) 897-5397 sylvan-adf@comcast.net
Grove of the Midnight Sun SD: Flip
1494 Sussex Tpke., Randolph, NJ 07869
(973) 252-0668 info@grovemidnightsun.com
Mugwort Grove SD: Cenn Ruadh
PO Box 835, Greenbelt, MD 20768-0835
(410) 536-4909 motheral@ix.netcom.com
Muin Mound Grove SD: Lady Heather
7188 Minoa Bridgeport Rd., E. Syracuse, NY 13057
(315) 656-8681 sellison@twcny.rr.com
Nemos Ognios Protogrove SD: Ceisiwr Serith
Box 198, Rockland, MA 02370
ceiserith@aol.com
Red Oak Grove SD: Bardd Dafydd
9 Cooks Mill Ct., Mount Laurel, NJ 08054
(856) 439-1610 dafydd@bardd.com
Grove of the Sacred Crows SD: Gwynne Green
PO Box 388, East Bridgewater, MA 02333-0388
(781) 769-5563 ardbard@attbi.com
Protogrove of the Seven Hills GO: Nancy McAndrew
3650 Fort Ave. Box #5, Lynchburg, VA 24501
(434) 845-8282 sevenhillsadf@yahoo.com
Tear of the Cloud Protogrove GO: Illious
PO Box 109, Guilderland, NY 12084
(518) 361-3236 illious@nycap.rr.com
Three Songs Protogrove GO: Wolf
1190 Park Ave #302, Rochester, NY 14610
(585) 263-3577 wolf@paendrag.org
World Tree Grove SD: Paul Maurice
PO Box 10036, Cranston, RI 02910
(401) 785-9605 pmaurice@adf.org



Ohio River Region

Ancient Path Grove SD: Krystal Wolf
PO Box 296, Bethel, OH 45106
(937) 444-0235 info@ancientpathgrove.org

Earth Dragon Protogrove GO: Talyn
PO Box 23237, Lexington, KY 40523-3237
(859) 272-0205 talyn@druidslife.net

Sassafras Grove SD: Earrach of Pittsburgh
PO Box 100091, Pittsburgh, PA 15233
(412) 563-3324 sassafrasadf@yahoo.com

Stone Forest Protogrove GO: Duir
C/o Walt Minning, 206 Dorsey St., Cincinnati, OH 45219
(513) 348-1072 wminning@yahoo.com

The 6th Night Grove SD: Amergin Aryson
PO Box 1521, Dayton, OH 45410
(937) 228-7866 6thnight.org

Thistle Dew Protogrove GO: Gaiason
PO Box 4093, Louisville, KY 40204
(502) 366-5987 thistledewadf@yahoo.com

Three Cranes Protogrove GO: Michael Dangler
PO Box 3264, Columbus, OH 43210
(614) 784-0774 dangler.8@osu.edu

Triskele Rivers Grove SD: Kashaga Frogg
2245 Pleasant Ave. #3, Hamilton, OH 45015
(513) 893-0391 garranabhainntriskele@yahoo.com

Grove of the Twilight Owl SD: Athanasios
PO Box 2793, Springfield, OH 45501
(937) 525-0525 athanasiosofspfd@aol.com

Whispering Lake Protogrove GO: Sharon Smith Hurlburt
PO Box 561, Erie, PA 16512-0561
(814) 456-7171 medhbh@surferie.net

Pacific Region

Cascade Dragonsong Grove SD: Epona
PO Box 963, Olalla, WA 98359
(253) 853-6489 info@cascadedragonsong.org

Otter Bay Protogrove GO: Alison Aubrey
138 Kittoe Dr. #a, Mountainview, CA 94043
(650) 964-6574 morrigan@zarpf.cncdsl.com

Raven's Cry Grove SD: Todd Covert
859 N. Hollywood Way, Box 368, Burbank, CA 91505
RavensCryADF@aol.com

Raven's Mist Protogrove GO: Ceirseach
CobbleStone Creek, 4200 Paradise Rd. #2029
Las Vegas, NV 89109
(702) 212-3820 freebird9@earthlink.net

Rogue River Protogrove GO: Aigeann
Box 135B, 3431 S.Pac. Hwy., Medford, OR 97501
(541) 535-4524 aigeann@earthlink.net

Sonoran Sunrise Grove SD: David Foster
PO Box 17874, Tuscon, AZ 85731
(520) 298-0694 seniordruid@ssg-adg.org

Southeastern Region

DogWood Protogrove GO: Gwyndewin
4320 Old Spanish Trail NW Apt #8, Roanoke, VA 24017
(510) 345-4388 gwyndewin@aol.com

Misty Oaks Protogrove GO: Gealtinne
1464 Garner Station Blvd, PMB #115, Raleigh, NC 27603-3524
(919) 662-0177 Gealtinne1@aol.com

Peachtree Grove SD: Aine nic an Fhilidh
81 Cleburne Ave, Marietta, GA 30064
(404) 395-6224 northcut@mindspring.com

Stone Glen Protogrove GO: Atemlos
622 Atlantic Avenue, Bremen, GA 30110
atemlos@ivillage.com

Mother Grove

Archdruid: Skip Ellison
adf-archdruid@adf.org

Vice-Archdruid: Liafal
adf-vice-archdruid@adf.org

Preceptor: Robert Barton
adf-preceptor@adf.org

Scribe: Matt Ducar
adf-scribe@adf.org

Members Advocate: Vacant

Guild Master: Gwynne Green
ardbard@attbi.com

Chief of Council of Senior Druids: Vacant

Non-Officer Director: Jennifer Hunt
ohturtle@aol.com

Prisoner Relations Committee Chair: Camille Grant

Regional Representatives

Great Lakes Regional Druid: Robert Henderson
robh@cyberspace.com

Northeastern Regional Druid: Francesca
ladybythesea@yahoo.com

Ohio River Regional Druid: Duir
wrrunning@yahoo.com

Pacific Regional Druid: Epona
epona@cascadedragonsong.org

Central Regional Druid: Bjorn Patsson
bjornpatsson@hotmail.com

Southeastern Regional Druid: Atemlos
atemlos@ivillage.com

Other Leadership Positions

Archdruid Emeritus: Isaac Bonewits
Bonewits@warwick.net

Archdruid Emeritus: Ian Corrigan
iredara@ncweb.com

Archdruid Emeritus: Fox
foxadf@mindspring.com

Chronicler: Jennifer Hunt
ohturtle@aol.com

Information Manager: Anthony Thompson
athomps@adf.org

Listmaster and Moderator:
adf-listmester@adf.org

Office Manager: Donald Davis
dondadruid@aol.com

Purswarden: Todd Covert
ravenbard@aol.com

Webmaster: Shawn T. Miller
adf-webmaster@adf.org

Committees

Grove Coordinating Committee Chair: Caryn Macluan
carynmacluan@earthlink.net

Grove Organizing Committee Chair: Rob Henderson
robh@cyberspace.com

Outreach Committee Chair: Anthony Thompson
athomps@adf.org

Guilds

Artisans Guild Chief: Francesca
ladybythesea@yahoo.com

Bardic Guild Chief: Gwynne Green
ardbard@attbi.com

Healers Guild Chief: Rodney Cox
uberrod@aol.com

Liturgists Guild Chief: Earrach of Pittsburgh
sassafrasadf@yahoo.com

Magicians Guild Chief: Ian Corrigan
iredara@ncweb.com

Naturalists Guild Chief: Epona
epona@cascadedragonsong.org

Scholars Guild Chief: Athanasios
athanasiosofspfd@aol.com

Seers Guild Chief: Lisa Kamp
liskamp@buckeye-express.com

Warriors Guild Chief: Robert Henderson
robh@cyberspace.com

Special Interest Groups

Brewing SIG Coordinator: Collin White
collin-w@attbi.com

Children's Education SIG Coordinator: Peter Gold
peter_gold@worldnet.att.net

Fire and Ice Kindred Coordinator: Paul Maurice
pmaurice@adf.org

Solitaires SIG Coordinator: Christopher Sherbak
sherbak@attglobal.net

TechnoDruids SIG Coordinator: Londubh
gadruid@bellsouth.net

The Order of the Purple Feather Coordinator: Phourest Silverwolf
lgermann@eesus.jnj.com

Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, Inc.

P.O. Box 17874

Tucson, AZ 85731-7874

Membership and Subscription Form

One form per person, please.

Legal Name: _____ P S C
Religious Name: _____ P S C
Address: _____ P S C
City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip/Post Code: _____
Country: _____ Phone: _____ Birth Date: ___/___/___ (mm/dd/yy)
Email Address: _____ P S C

In which ADF Grove do you intend to participate, if any? _____

Beside your name, address, phone, and email address, please indicate whether the information is: Publishable (P), meaning it can be printed in ADF publications and we can give it out freely to people who wish to contact you; Sharable (S), meaning we can give it out to ADF members who request it; or Confidential (C), meaning that only the Mother Grove and ADF office staff will have access to it.

The information on this form represents a:

New Membership Renewal Revival of Expired Membership
 Information Update (if name/address changed, indicate previous: _____)
If this is a new membership, where did you hear about us? _____

ADF Membership Rates

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Regular Membership | _____ years @ \$15/year = \$ _____ |
| Prisoner Membership (includes Oak Leaves) | _____ years @ \$20/year = \$ _____ |
| Subscription to Oak Leaves—Members | _____ years @ \$15/year = \$ _____ |
| Subscription to Oak Leaves—Non-Members | _____ years @ \$20/year = \$ _____ |

Your Membership will officially begin on the postmark date of this form.

