



ADF Annual Report 2023-2024

Compiled by Rev. Jan Avende

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Message from the Archdruid

Welcome to the ADF Annual Report for 2024. The ADF Annual Report is presented at Wellspring, slated for May this year at Tredara, in Madison, Ohio. The Annual Report will be presented during a Saturday afternoon timeslot, EDT. This is a new timeslot designed to allow the maximum number of people worldwide to attend at a reasonable time in their respective time zones.

This our 41st year and we continue to move forward with the Vision of ADF, our Virtues, and our Practice. ADF continues to do the work not only here in North America, but elsewhere in the world.

You are now looking at our Seventh Annual Report in this new format: one that you can view on an electronic device and one that can be held in one's hand. I want to thank Vice Archdruid Rev. Jan Avende for their hard work in putting this report together.

After converting the report into an electronic document six years ago, I am pleased at how it has continued to evolve into the quality product you see in front of you. It is one of my proudest achievements. We continue to find ways to improve its presentation for you. We wish it to be not only informative for our membership, but appealing to others that may wish to join *Ár nDraíocht Féin*.

This year, we are seeing the return of many festivals, some of which have been missing since COVID days. Both Trillium and Eight Winds are returning this year after an absence of several years. Other ADF-related festivals are still going strong, such as Wellspring, Three Rivers, Summerlands, and Harvest Nights. Other long-time pan-pagan festivals are also ongoing, such as ConVocation, Paganicon, Mystic South, Sunken Lake Pagan Retreat, Pan Pagan, and others.

Wellspring, where the 2024 Annual Meeting will be held, will have a hybrid link on Saturday for our members. I really appreciate the hybrid capability, especially for those who cannot be on site due to distance or circumstance. I like to believe that hybrid festivals are part of that new normal and it is a wonderful way to have a broad diversity of attendees enjoy genuinely great festivals. Many Groves and Protogroves continue holding hybrid rites, which allows not only local people to attend virtually, but people from around the world. I believe that the presence of hybrid rites will stay with us, hopefully permanently. Virtual rites and virtual activities broaden access to not only the work that we do, but to a view into our practices. The new virtual world brings us closer together. I can attend a rite on three continents all in the same day.

We have members on six continents, and groves and protogroves on three of them, Australia, Europe, and North America. We continue to strive for an orthopraxic approach to Our Own Druidry that accentuates what we do, as with the Core Order of Ritual, as opposed to an orthodoxic approach that focuses on what one believes.

I want to acknowledge our new Mother Grove members. I welcome Lisa Gentry as our new Member's Advocate, stepping into the position formerly held by Rev. Gaarik Hamr. Aimee Brannon is our newest non-Officer Director, replacing long-time Mother Grove member Art Shipkowski. Jeffrey Keefer returns as non-Officer Director, as does Rev. Missy Ashton. Rev. Jan Avende continues in their role as Vice Archdruid, as does Rev. Carrion Mann as ADF Secretary. The Chief of the Council of Regional Druids is Shaz Cairns and Chief of the Council of Senior Druids is Brian Larter.

I am always pleased and proud of all our Mother Grove members. We meet every two weeks, and the Mother Grove works best when the primary focus is supporting the organization. Everyone pitches in.

One of the goals we are working on this year is the creation of our first International ADF entity, an effort headed by members in Germany. While the details are still being worked out, this will be the first of hopefully many ADF International entities.

One of our other goals is to change our reporting structure from reporting on Cross Quarter days (Imbolc, Beltaine, Lughnasadh, and Samhain), and moving to more standard quarterly reporting dates. This is one of our goals and will happen within this quarter.

Benjamin Babb continues to excel as our social media Director, and I am ecstatic to have Benjamin serving in this position. Most of our internal and external exposure is through social media and a proper presence is vital to our well-being. ADF continues to produce high-quality Social Media posts that highlight the best in our member creations and put a positive view into the life of ADF Druids everywhere. One of our goals this year is to increase our visibility and presence, and Benjamin is a big part of that, along with Rev. Jan Avende's weekly video discoveries. Thank you all for creating beautiful content, and for sharing Our Own Druidry with each other.

While we implemented a new website last year, we have yet to see the transition from the old website fully onto the new platform. The Mother Grove is keeping a close eye on progress and is monitoring not only the progress but the direction for the new website, as well as a learning management system. We look forward to the emergence of the new ADF website in the coming months, and it is one of our firm goals for the year. We have all been waiting a long time for the new website and the Mother Grove will continue to keep the membership informed monthly on this progress.

We made changes in our election methodology, and the results of the most recent election were met with mostly positive comments. We moved the elections off our antiquated, home-grown voting system, and onto a platform hosted by eBallot.com. Not only will the international elections use this method, but subgroups will use it as well. I am incredibly pleased with the results. We are looking to appoint an Election Officer that will hold the position for three election cycles.

The second book in the "Transitions" series "Endings," is currently awaiting processing at ADF Publishing. The next book in the series should be ready for publishing by the end of

third quarter 2024. This will be the third entitled “Unions.” This will be followed early next year by the final book, “Dissolutions.” This effort is a product of various individuals on the ADF Clergy Council. Proceeds from the sales of these books go to the ADF General Fund.

As your Archdruid, I am welcome to your ideas, your comments, and your suggestions in the spirit of hospitality and excellence that has propelled us through four decades and beyond. We open, as always our homes, our hearths, and our hearts to the Kindreds and to each other. As you do your daily devotionals, let us remember that the Earth is our mother, and we are her children. As we gather, regardless of where that may be, be welcome and be thankful.

Blessings,
Rev. Jean (Drum) Pagano
Archdruid, ADF

ADF Statement of Inclusion

Ár nDraíocht Féin is committed to upholding all members in a warm and welcoming environment. We are dedicated to providing a safe space for all of our members no matter their race, sex, gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality, or experiences. ADF seeks to build a community that encourages, understands, appreciates, and accepts diversity. We will work proactively to cultivate an environment where differences are embraced and the diversity of human expression is valued. ADF believes that our community is stronger when all members have a voice and are encouraged to contribute.

We ask the Kindreds to grant us the wisdom to know what actions to take, and the perseverance to continue when the work is difficult. Allow us the vision to see the positive pieces of our community and the courage to work to improve the negativities. Let us show hospitality through our inclusion and appreciation of diversity. May our unified piety bring us together as a community, as we find balance through moderation. We choose to maintain our integrity by upholding these virtues as we stand beside our membership.

ADF's Mission, Vision, & Values

Our Mission

Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship (ADF) is a pagan church based on ancient Indo-European traditions that practices, promotes, and develops Neopagan Druidry through public worship, study, and fellowship.

Although our name is Irish we incorporate practices from ancient and modern Indo-European cultures including the various Celtic and Norse cultures, Slavic, Baltic, Greek, Roman, Persian, Vedic, and other traditions. Our modern practices include elements from historical texts, discoveries, and studies along with modern components to create a practice that works today while respecting and honoring the past. Together, we are creating a non-sexist, anti-racist, inclusive, publicly available religion for this, and future, generations.

Our Vision

We see a world where the Gods and Spirits are served in the modern world through:

- Public temple worship with a skilled priesthood
- Accessible religious training for all
- A spiritual relationship with the Earth
- Sustainable Pagan institutions
- A flourishing family and community Pagan culture

Our Values

- Openness to people of all ethnicities and backgrounds
- The commonality of polytheistic ritual practice
- Honoring the Earth Mother
- Scholarship and research
- Reciprocity with the Gods and Spirits
- Respect for others through living our virtues
- Service to the community, land, and the Gods and Spirits

Our Practice & Training

- Flexible ritual practices for all members
- Hearth Keepers Way for solitary and small group practice
- You choose your depth of study
- Advanced training and ordination for those who want to go deeper

A Celebration of 40 Years!

40th Anniversary Message

ADF was founded on Samhain, 1983, by group of Druids, many from New York, and mainly from the New Reformed Druids of North America (NRDNA). I was the 8th person to join on 10 March 1984. I became aware of ADF through my interest in NRDNA, and well, the rest is history.

When I first joined, the common thread that linked many, if not all, of the members was an infrequent publication entitled “Druid’s Progress”. The first copies, like so many RDNA documents, were mimeographed. I still have my copies in their original envelopes.

Today, we are blessed to have Oak Leaves as one of ADF’s most recognizable products, and one of the premier Pagan publications. We have moved past a group of East Coast Druids to the second largest Druidic group in the world, with members on six continents.

To commemorate our 40th anniversary, I reached out to members to produce works of art and other works in the bardic tradition. Here are the results so far.

“Who Cares” from the Bard Laureate

by Nathan Large, April 2024

We care for older words and ways,
The works of those long past the grave.
The Gods they honored in their days.
We care, we recall, we preserve, we repay.

We care for newer ways and words,
Wisdoms born as more is learned,
Better methods, more included.
We care, we adapt, we extend, we observe.

We care for ancient, growing Earth,
Our world that is each day rebirthed,
The land, for those to come, preserved.
We care, we protect, we replant, we conserve.

We care for skill of every kind,
The arts of body, soul, and mind,
The basic, labored, and refined.
We care, we create, we inspire, we design.

We care for those who live here now,
Their stories heard, their troubles found,

Relieving needs with works and vows.
We care, we advise, we support, we surround.

We care for right relationships,
With every creature, flesh or spirit,
With trust and peace through traded gifts.
We care, we converse, we exchange, we transmit.

We care at core of all our work,
In gratitude for all of worth,
For gifts received, our gifts returned.
We care, we invite, we instruct, we relearn.

Artwork Winner

by Rev. Bryan Perrin



Short Story Winner: The Stone Harp

penned by William Hartman.

In the Harz Mountains of Germany there lies a hidden dell, up in those mist-shrouded trees. A place that cannot be found by those who know it exists (Which no doubt annoys the reader as it did me when I first heard of it). It is a place made by the dwarves in that mountain vast, carved with tools of wind and rain within a grotto of artistry from deposits of the most beautiful stones and crystals in this world.

Graceful, singing swans of amber and nymphs of rose quartz perch over waterfalls of silver streaming into beds of amethyst and emerald, lit by the sun. These are among those wonders; with the area itself dappled in rainbows of dew within that sylvan paradise (the beauty of which I have barely touched upon here) The great jewel of that place is a dark thing polished by the weather and carved by time from the dark granite of the mountains.

An immense harp strung in crystal and played by the few soft breezes of the place with a music to make the Gods weep. To be played by hands of flesh and bone, the person must be pure of body and soul, or such a storm will come into the hearts of mankind that only the blood of the many will quench the vengeance of the so-tainted chords of the mountains. (some have said the great wars that have changed mankind for better or worse were caused by the indiscriminate strummings of unworthy travelers lost in these mountains, but none knows their fates or if this is true).

The dell is within a maze of runes older than man, which leads to this grotto, some say it is Wuotan who favors this place when he needs time away from his many cares of kingship, and others that it is frequented by the goddesses when they need time away from their male counterparts. Only the gods themselves and the spirits of that place know the truth of it all...

Prayer Winner: Lass los (Gebet für einen Sterbenden)

by Birgit Reinartz, from Germany.

"Lass los (Gebet für einen Sterbenden)"

Lass los
Lass alles gehen, was dich an diesen Ort bindet:
deine Sorgen und Schmerzen,
deine Erinnerungen und Pläne,
deine Pflichten und dein Verantwortungsgefühl.
Lass los,
ohne Furcht vor dem, was kommen mag:
Es ist deine Wahl, wohin du gehst!
Ob übers Meer in die Anderswelt,
ob über den Regenbogen oder durch die Schleier,

ob in den Himmel oder ins Reich der Hel.
Wir lassen dich gehen,
doch unsere Liebe begleitet dich
wie ein Boot, das dich trägt
wie ein Mantel, der dich einhüllt
wie ein Licht, das dir den Weg weist.
Und sei dir gewiss, dass du am anderen Ende des Weges
mit offenen Armen erwartet wirst:
Dort wirst du Ruhe finden.
Dort wirst du Erholung finden.
Dort wirst du Freiheit finden.
Und vielleicht sehen wir uns eines Tages wieder,
hier oder dort,
wie es der Kreis des Lebens will.
Doch jetzt: Lass los!

“Let go (Prayer for a dying person)”

Let go
Let go of everything that binds you to this place:
your worries and pain,
your memories and plans,
your duties and your sense of responsibility.
Let go,
without fear of what may come:
It is your choice where you go!
Whether across the sea to the other world,
over the rainbow or through the veils,
to heaven or to the realm of Hel.
We will let you go,
but our love accompanies you
like a boat that carries you
like a cloak that envelops you
like a light that shows you the way.
And rest assured that you will be awaited at the other end of the path
with open arms:
There you will find rest.
There you will find rest.
There you will find freedom.
And perhaps we will meet again one day,
here or there,
as the circle of life will have it.
But now: let go!

Poem Winner

by Eikthyrnir Odinson, from Brittany.

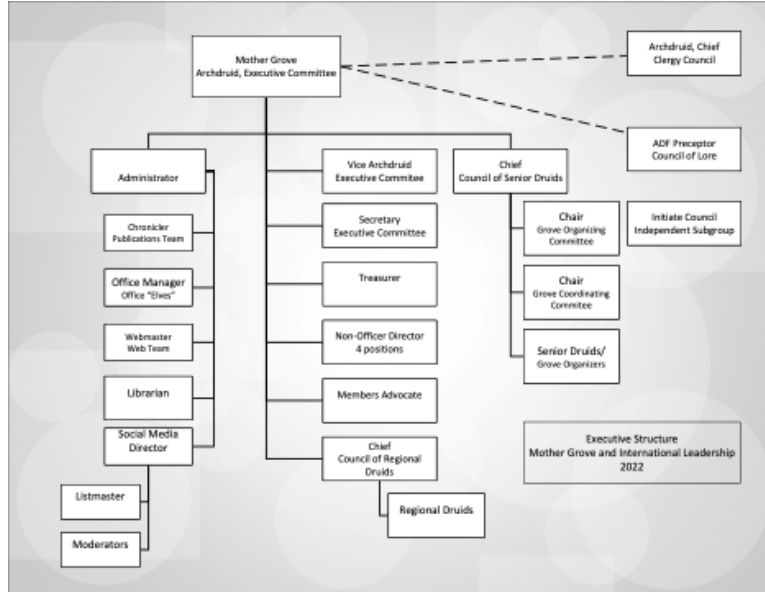
Bardit du dragon sur la colline grise:
Le vent se dresse avec grâce. Fraicheur et pureté...
Vent de la mer qui s'élève vers les montagnes.
La tempête fait des ravages.
Quand la nuit est froide et que le sable sur les rivages est blanc.
Dans le claire-obscur...
Dans l'aurore de toute chose...
Dans un rêve qui prend fin...
Dans le souvenir d'anciens cauchemars...
Dans l'espoir de retrouver avec nous les espoirs perdus et l'esprit du
printemps...
Le cœur de l'homme, comme la terre retrouve sa jeunesse.
Avec la rose et le chêne.
Avec la lune et le soleil.
Avec le jour et la nuit.
La brise et la tempête.
Sur les rivages les grandes vagues se brisent sur les grosses pierres grises.
J'entends de forts gémissements.
Quand se réveille le dragon gris, celui des collines et de la côte endiablée...
Il est dit dans d'anciennes chansons bretonnes que déranger un dragon, c'est
déranger la terre entière, ainsi que le ciel et l'océan.
A l'aurore et dans le claire-obscur.
Le chant et le cri, des mouettes et du dragon sur la colline...
Comme il est beau le vol du serpent des mers au dessus du rivage.
Alors que je m'en retourne vers d'autres mirages.
Ceux contenue dans le miroir que les hommes me tendent...

Future 40th Anniversary Contests

There will be more contests to produce content for the 40th Anniversary throughout the rest of the year. Stay tuned as we celebrate forty years and move onwards into the future of Druidry.

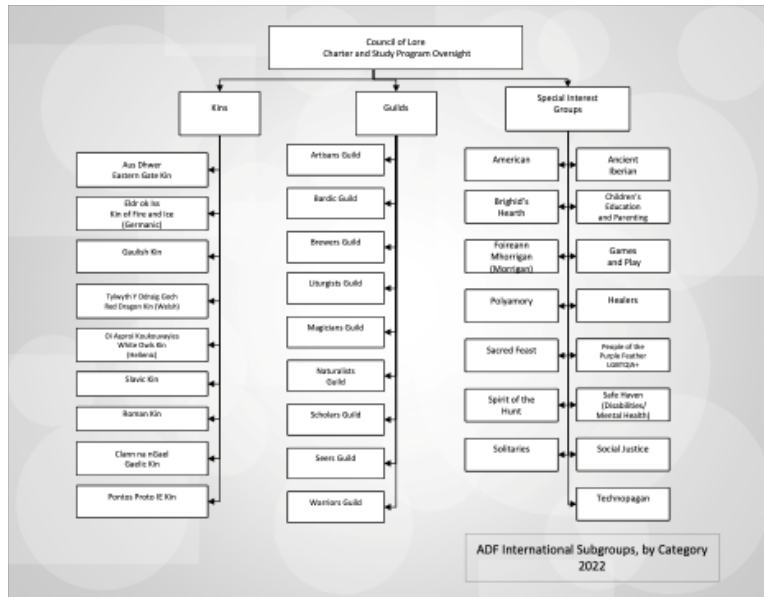
Blessings,
Rev. Jean (Drum) Pagano
Archdruid, ADF

ADF Organization Framework



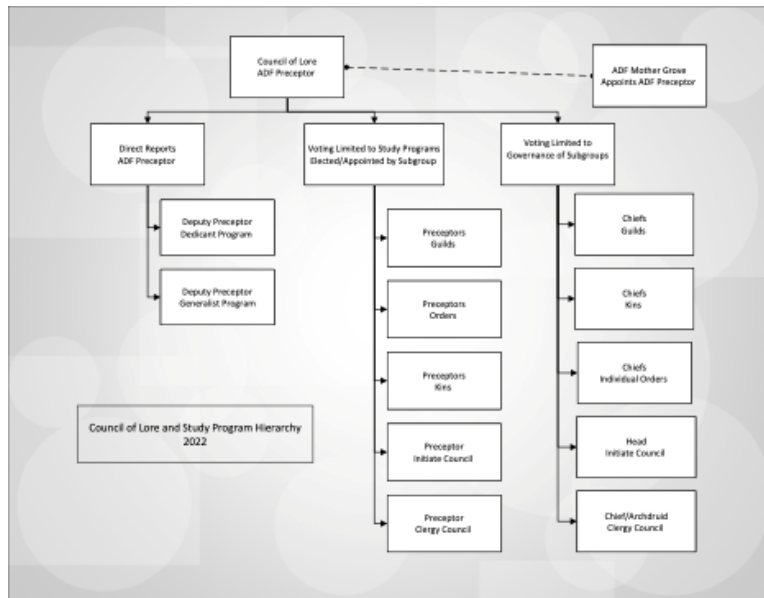
Executive Structure: Mother Grove and International Leadership

The executive structure of ADF is governed by the Mother Grove, the Archdruid, and the Executive Committee. The Mother Grove is made up of nine voting members: the Archdruid, Vice Archdruid, Secretary, four Non-Officer Directors, the Chief of the Council of Regional Druids, the Chief of the Council of Senior Druids. Also on the Mother Grove as non-voting members are the Members Advocate, Treasurer, and Administrator. In addition to the Mother Grove Structure there are some other aspects to the executive structure. The Archdruid is the Chief of the Clergy Council and oversees the ADF Preceptor and Council of Lore. The Administrator oversees the Chronicer and Publications Team, the Officer Manager and “Office Elves”, the Webmaster and Webteam, the Librarian, and the Social Media Manager. The Social Media Manager also oversees the Listmaster and other Moderators. The Chief of the Council of Regional Druids oversees all the Regional Druids. The Chief of the Council of Senior Druids oversees the Senior Druids and Grove Organizers, the Grove Coordinating Committee, and the Grove Organizing Committee. Additionally, the Initiate Council is an independent subgroup.



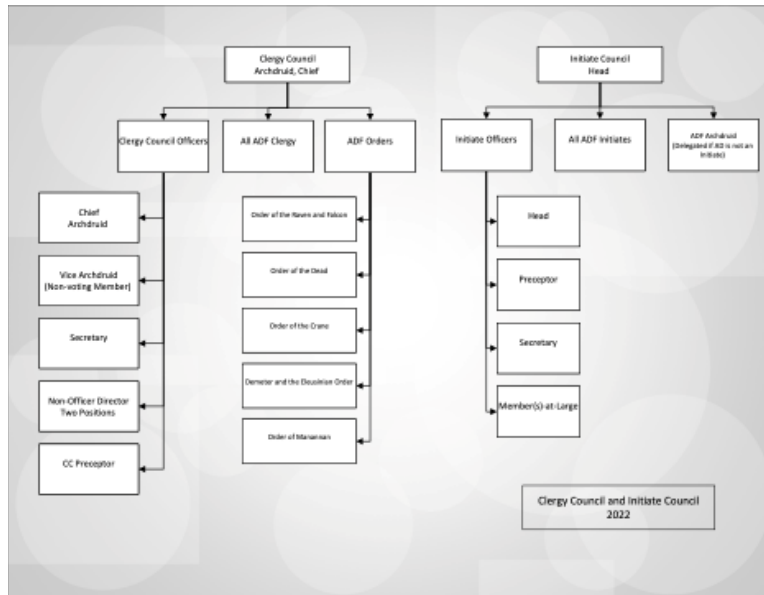
ADF International Subgroups, by Category

The Council of Lore oversees the Kins, Guilds, and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) within ADF in regards to their Charters and Study Programs. As of 2023 the Kins are: Aus Dhwer (Eastern Gate) Kin, Eld ok Iss (Kin of Fire and Ice), Gaulish Kin, Tylwyth Y Ddraig Gosh (Red Dragon Welsh Kin), Oi Asproi Koukouwayies (White Owls Hellenic Kin), Slavic Kin, Clann na nGael (Gaelic Kin), Pontos Porto IE Kin. As of 2023 the Guilds are: Artisans, Bardic, Brewers, Liturgists, Magicians, Naturalists, Scholars, Seers, Warriors. As of 2023 the Special Interest Groups are: American, Ancient Iberian, Brigid's Hearth, Children's Education and Parent, Foireann Mhorrigan (Morrigan), Games and Play, Polyamory, Healers, Sacred Feast, People of the Purple Feather LGBTQIA+, Spirit of the Hunt, Safe Haven (disabilities/mental health), Solitaries, Social Justice, Technopagan.



Council of Lore & Study Program Hierarchy

Leaders on the Council of Lore are also arranged in a report structure. The ADF Mother Grove appoints the ADF Preceptor who oversees the Council of Lore. The Deputy Preceptors for the Dedicant and Generalist Study Programs report directly to the ADF Preceptor. The Preceptors of the various Guilds, Orders, Kins, as well as the Initiate Preceptor and the Clergy Preceptor report to the ADF Preceptor and vote on motions related to Study Programs. The Chiefs of the various Guilds, Orders, Kins, as well as the Head of the Initiate Council and Chief of the Clergy Council (Archdruid) report to the ADF Preceptor and vote on motions related to Governance of Subgroups.



Clergy Council & Initiate Council

The Clergy Council is led by the Archdruid. The Clergy Council officers consist of the Archdruid, Vice Archdruid (non-voting), Secretary, two Non-Officer Directors, and the Clergy Council Preceptor. The Clergy Council also oversees all ADF Clergy as well as ADF Orders. As of 2023 the ADF Orders are: Order of the Raven and Falcon, Order of the Dead, Order of the Crane, Demeter and Eleusinian Order, Order of Manannán.

The Initiate Council is led by the Head of the Initiate Council. The Initiate Officers consist of the Head, Preceptor, Secretary, and Member(s)-at-Large. The Initiate Council oversees all ADF Initiates, and contains the ADF Archdruid (or delegate if AD is not an Initiate)

ADF Members

As of April 30, 2024 we have 980 current members, and 111 lapsed members, for a total of 1091 members. This is down from 1083 current members at the time of the 2023 Annual Report. Additionally, we have members in the following countries:

Australia	Ireland	Spain
Belgium	Italy	Sri Lanka
Brazil	Laos	Switzerland
Bulgaria	Mexico	Taiwan
Canada	Netherlands	United States
Czech Republic	New Zealand	Wales
England	Poland	
France	Portugal	
Germany	Scotland	

Board of Directors 2023-2024

Position	Officer	Grove Affiliation (if any)
Archdruid	Rev. Jean Pagano	Solitary
Vice Archdruid	Rev. Jan Avende	Three Cranes Grove
Secretary	Rev. Carrion Mann	Whispering Lake Grove
Non Officer Director	Arthur Shipkowski (outgoing)	Hemlock Vales Protogrove
Non Officer Director	Aimee Brannon (incoming)	Chokecherry Grove
Non Officer Director	Tami Olsen	Solitary
Non Officer Director	Rev. Melissa Ashton	Mountain Ancestors Grove
Non Officer Director	Jeffrey Keefer	Virtual Fire Protogrove
Chief of the CoRD	Shaz Cairns	Silver Birch Grove
Chief of the CoSD	Brian Larter	Grove of Nova Scotia Druids
Members Advocate	Rev. Jason Sprick (outgoing)	Spirit Valley Protogrove
Members Advocate	Lisa Gentry (incoming)	Raven's Cry Grove
Administrator	Jane Wayson	Solitary
Treasurer	Michael van den Hoek	Grove of Nova Scotia Druids



Mother Grove Members, from left to right around the table: Rev. Jan Avende, Jeffrey Keefer, Rev. Jean Drum Pagano, Shaz Cairns, Jane Wayson, Rev. Melissa Ashton, Art Shipkowski, Tami Olsen. (not pictured: Rev. Carrion Mann, Brian Larter, Rev. Gaarik Hamr, Michael van den Hoek)

Additional Appointed Organizational Positions

These positions are appointed by either the ADF administrator, Mother Grove, or Clergy Council based on need. They are vital to keeping our organization running. The Mother Grove would like to express many thanks for their service!

Position	Point of Contact
ADF Memorial Library	Tami Olsen
ADF Newsletter	Member #12072
ADF Preceptor	Rev. Kirk Thomas
Chaplain Support Services	Rev. Kirk Thomas
Chronicler	Member #3159
Dedicant Path Deputy Preceptor	Rev. Kathleen Peza
Election Officer (2024)	Rev. Sean Harbaugh
Hearth Keepers Way Coordinator	[open]
Human Services Specialist	Member #9464
List Master	Rae Mac Lugh
Oak Leaves Editor	GR Grove
Officer Manager	Rev. Skip Ellison
Public Relations	Benjamin Babb
Social Media Manager	Benjamin Babb
Volunteer Coordinator	Jeffrey Keefer
Webmaster & Info Manager	Arthur Shipkowski

Listing of Current Organizational Committees

The Mother Grove and other Leadership Councils occasionally create standing committees in order to focus on specific needs of the organization. The Archdruid is an observing member of all committees. These committees are a way for members to offer their specific skillsets to the organization, and the Mother Grove would like to express our sincere thanks for their contributions.

Committee Name	Committee Chair
Fundraising Committee	Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano
Grove Coordinating Committee	Rev. Rob Henderson
Grove Organizing Committee	Michael Tavola
Library Selection Committee	Tami Olsen
Organizational Review Committee	Rev. Carrion Mann
Public Relations Committee	Benjamin Babb
Reporting Review Committee	Shaz Cairns
Risk Management Committee	Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano

Listing of Current Councils

The Councils of ADF oversee various aspects of our organization and it's day to day operations.

Council	Point of Contact
Clergy Council	Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano
Initiate Council	Rev. Amber Ferrebee
Council of Lore	Rev. Kirk Thomas
Council of Senior Druids	Brian Larter
Council of Regional Druids	Shaz Cairns

ADF Financial Report

Officer name: Michael van den Hoek

Officer Email: adf-treasurer@adf.org

Report to follow at a later date in an addendum to this Annual Report.

Mother Grove Officer Reports

Archdruid Annual Report

Officer name: Rev. Jean “Drum” Pagano
Contact information: archdruid@adf.org

Activities performed in the previous year:

The Mother Grove Goals for 2023 were:

Goal 1: Launch New Website.

A searchable and revised website, including all information from the previous website, will be completed and available for individual and organizational use by November 1, 2023.

Point of contact: Art Shipkowski, Web Team.

Goal 2: Implement Learning Management System (LMS)

A new Learning Management System (LMS) will be implemented by November 1st.

Additional improvement to the study program system, including a template for courses, a course catalog, and revised pre-requisite process will be implemented by March 1, 2024.

Points of contact: Rev. Carrion Mann, Organizational Review Committee.

Goal 3: Update Elections Process

We will create a revised elections process to promote clarity, equity, and transparency by January 1, 2024. Point of Contact: Rev. Carrion Mann, Organizational Review Committee and Brian Larter.

The website has been a priority for the Mother Grove and its completion has been promised for some time. It is our intent, with the help of the web team, to deliver this website. It will be delivered in stages, beginning in the 3rd Quarter 2023. These goals were met, but the full transition to the new website and full functionality for the Learning Management System have yet to be realised.

We have continued to accept new Dedicant Program work through our temporary Dedicant Path solution, and it has seen a lot of use. When I first proposed this change, I had a feeling that members would be excited to see some progress as they moved through the Dedicant Program. This has caused a lot of work for Deputy Preceptor Rev. Kathleen Peza, but the results have been excellent, and the submissions have been many.

Regular submission of course material through the legacy SP Tracker is still working and being used by students in a variety of programs. We look forward to a robust Learning Management System in the months ahead.

The Mother Grove has established our goals for 2024

They are:

- The creation of ADF International, wherein a national ADF is set up in a country other than the United States
- Aligning Organization reporting along calendar quarters instead of cross-quarters days. New reporting dates will be January, April, July, and October, as opposed to Imbolc, Beltaine, Lughnasadh, and Samhain.
- Raise ADF's profile by using technology tools and better advertising what it is we do and how we do it well.

It is my expectation that will all be achieved by year end.

We have launched our new website, with a full cutover coming in the second quarter of 2024. We are keeping a close eye on the progress of the website if we need to change direction with some or all the components. We have implemented our first course through the Learning Management System. We have teamed up with eBallot to host our elections in 2024.

I am a member of the Organizational Review Committee, and this committee has been meeting bi-weekly to work through all the documents and documentation within the ADF organisation. This is a permanent, standing committee, and it will continue to meet regularly to continue this important work.

I am also a member of the Risk Management Committee and we have recently enlisted the help of a new Human Services Specialist, Member # 9464. We welcome them to this important position. The committee is currently meeting quarterly, setting policy, and investigating issues as they arise.

Additionally, I am on the Public Relations Committee. I have asked our social media Director, Benjamin Babb, to chair this important committee. One of our goals for 2024 is to enhance the image of ADF, and this committee will be instrumental in making that happen. We are reviving the Fund-Raising Committee. We were fortunate in 2023 to be the recipients of several generous bequests from former members and these gifts are instrumental in strengthening ADF's financial wellbeing. We will be looking for strategies on engaging members who wish to make financial contributions to their church.

Our Mother Grove continues to reflect the international character of our membership. ADF is an international organization, and our Mother Grove reflects it: We have 7 American officers, 1 Canadian officers, and 1 Australian officer. The Mother Grove looks a lot like our membership which was one of my goals as Archdruid: to create a vibrant, international Druid organization. ADF Druidry is not just a North American phenomenon. Our European and Asia-Pacific membership numbers continue to grow, and I am very encouraged by this. Background checks have now been performed for all Senior Druids, Grove Organizers, Regional Druids, Clergy, and Mother Grove members. We are working to ensure that when Senior Druids or Grove Organizers change, a background check is performed *before* the transition of leadership. This allocation of resources is fully intended to keep the membership and our organization safe.

Each new Senior Druid or Grove Organizer pays \$30 towards the background checks and the Mother Grove will pay the remainder. It is a small price to pay for security. The background checks will be reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Mother Grove. It is critically important that when Senior Druids change, the new Senior Druid must get a background check before taking up the position.

The Mother Grove minutes and logs, along with the ADF Newsletter, continue to provide timely review of Mother Grove matters presented in a succinct and objective manner. I have had many people comment on the high quality not only of the presentation of the newsletter but the content. The ADF newsletter, released near High Days, continues to highlight some of the activities and practices of ADF. We are hoping for a broader distribution of this newsletter in the community at large. In addition, we will offer this newsletter in French and in German in 2024.

I want to thank our social media Director, Benjamin Babb. Social media has become our face to the outside world, and our offerings, on various platforms, have been professional, timely, and beautiful. Benjamin has also been a key member of our Public Relations Committee and is a wealth of recommendations and suggestions for increasing our web visibility, which the Mother Grove sees as a key goal.

Weekly ADF rituals continue to draw interest, thanks to the work of our liturgist members and hosted by our first Virtual Protogrove, Virtual Fire Protogrove, led by Grove Organizer, Jeffrey Keefer. The offerings have been insightful, creative, and inspirational. The community created by these offerings is vibrant and engaged. Rites are regularly attended by members all over the world. I highly recommend these rites to all members and non-members alike. We recently had a member offer to post a link to Virtual Fire's ritual to their 4600 followers – this is great exposure for ADF. Members of the Mother Grove have led several of these rites over the past year.

I hosted the Mother Grove Retreat at my home in December and it was remarkable to have all the members together in person, although some of the members joined virtually. With the conclusion of the ADF Elections, I am pleased to welcome back Vice Archdruid Rev. Jan Avende, along with returning non-officer Director Jeffrey Keefer. Both Art Shipkowski and Rev. Gaarik Hamr decided not to try for the Mother Grove in this most recent election, and I am thankful to Art for his long tenure on the Mother Grove. Your fairness and memory of past events was of great value to the Mother Grove in general and to me specifically. I am also sorry to see Rev. Gaarik Hamr leave the Mother Grove. Your compassion, professionalism, and fairness were a tremendous asset to both the Mother Grove and ADF in general.

We welcome new non-officer Director Aimee Brennan to the Mother Grove for the first time and to new Member's Advocate Lisa Gentry. We look forward to your presence and your insights in the months ahead.

We are blessed with all these things and thankful.

The spiritual state of the organization, spiritual activities, and growth in the previous year:

The continued offering of in-person and hybrid rituals ensures that all members have access to the Core Order of Ritual. It is important for our members to see and understand our rites. My goal, for the coming year, is to help people understand more about how we do Druidry in general. I look forward to more ways to reach out to members through the virtual community. I see social media as key to accomplishing this task. Recent videos by myself and others, hosted through social media, are helping us move towards this better understanding.

We encourage both new and established members to explore our Hearthkeepers material. This program is an excellent introduction to not only ADF practice, but to the liturgy and cosmology that we employ.

Copies of Hearthkeepers Way are available for our prisoner members. A print-on-demand version will be available in the future for those that do not have access to the internet or who wish to obtain a bound edition. I expect this to happen with the Second Edition. In my own correspondences with new members, I do provide a link to Hearthkeepers. For external members who are seeking a Compassionate Membership, we are pointing them to Hearthkeepers first so that they can learn about our Druidry. It is available to anyone free of charge.

I am ecstatic about the continuing wealth of material that I see coming out of Europe relating to Our Own Druidry. I am very excited by this outpouring of Inspiration and thank all our members for the work they do, regardless of language. This important work broadens our organization. I continue to work closely with several members in Europe through work on their practice.

The Dedicant Program is available in both French and German and submissions of the Dedicant Path can be done in either French or German. We wish to make the Dedicant Program appeal to those that speak other languages. I am hoping to find volunteers to translate the Dedicant path into Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Foreign language submissions have now been reviewed in the Bardic Guild Study Program, the Pre-CTP program, and the Clergy Training Program. I review many French submissions, and I am excited that we have broadened our programs to include other languages. We have our first French member in the CTP program and their submissions are submitted in French and graded by French speaking Clergy Council reviewers.

The ADF Memorial Library, powered by a subscription to Over Drive, allows members to check out eBooks that may be used in the DP and other Study Programs. What started as an attempt to get books on three or four continents turned into the reality of Over Drive, which will benefit members internationally. This purchase was made possible through a

kind and generous bequest to ADF. The number of books available on Over Drive will increase every year. This service is available to all our members. It is called the ADF Memorial Library and Non-Officer Director Tami Olsen is the Head Librarian.

Using social media outlets like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube have provided new ways for offering ADF materials that can be shared with Druids and interested parties everywhere. It is important for our members and others to not only read what we do but see what they do so that they may be able to do the same thing, something similar, or something different to help enhance our practice as Druids. Our collection of Druidic YouTube videos continues to grow.

Our weekly chats continue to reach out to members and interested parties with questions about the DP and with questions in general about ADF. Chats hosted by various Guilds, SIGs, and Kins are now expanding using IRC, Zoom, or Discord or other clients to allow people to share and discuss topics relevant to Our Own Druidry.

We continue to accept the submission of the Dedicant Program in individual sections, as well as an option to turn in the entire DP. We will continue to employ this methodology for new submissions to the Dedicant Program until it is fully available in a future Learning Management System. I have reviewed many, many submissions using this method. Our members have been looking for this for a very long time. This provides encouragement for those who wish to move forward but do not have all the work done. This task is extremely important to me – I believe that it will tremendously help all our members.

Members in France and Germany are working to make more material accessible in their native languages. Workshops that have been offered in the past are now being recorded and offered to the public via our You Tube channel. We teach by example, and we hope that others learn from those examples. The internet, social media, and recorded venues and presentations allow people to see and experience Our Own Druidry in repeatable and varied ways.

Prayers, devotionals, and videos continued to be offered to members and the public alike through the hash tag #adfdruidry I am ecstatic of the exceptional quality of material that is presented by and through ADF members.

The Clergy Council has begun recording workshops and panel discussions for members that were not able to attend and for members that are yet to join. We are building a collection of virtual presentations that will be available on demand. It is important for the Clergy Council to have a library of materials that can be readily accessed. Professional Helping Skills 1 & 2 was the first of the course offerings, followed by Ethics 1 & 2, Critical Thinking, and Liturgical Writing 2. I am committed to expanding our on-demand offerings. The Clergy Council will offer a ritual dedicated to the Moon, packaged as a Dark Moon Rite. This rite will be presented in early May. There have been several Dark Moon rites over the past year. Please be sure to join us for our next one!

If there are spiritual activities that you would like us to do and we are not doing them, please reach out and let us know. We want to grow your devotion and worship through practice. Leadership is available to help with spiritual matters and we want to hear from you: we want to help. If people do not want to reach out on social media, please contact us directly.

We honour and recognize that our membership continues to be involved in vital activities across the Globe. The Core Order of Ritual is broad enough to allow people of various faiths and beliefs to be comfortable practicing with us in our rites. I encourage our membership to be open to other Druids and other neo-pagans as well as extending the welcoming hand of friendship to people of other paths.

Interfaith work helps others to see what we do and to get to know us better. I firmly believe in the Global Community of Druidry. Let us celebrate the Family of Druidry by being good hosts and good guests, in the Spirit of *ghosti.

I previously proposed a series of books of prayer for Beginnings, Endings, Unions, and Dissolutions to the Clergy Council so that our membership and others may have access to prayers for these various occasions. The first volume, Beginnings, has been published and very well received. Endings is now in the publisher's hands. This will be followed by Unions and Dissolutions.

With members on six continents, Our Own Druidry has the possibility of doing good works in many places throughout the world. In our training, there is something for everyone. We continue to grow, and we continue to contact not only our Kindreds but deepen our workings with the Earth Mother.

I continue to look for submissions for a Book of Devotionals for Manannan mac Lir. If you are interested, please submit your work for review. I would like to make this book available to ADF Publishing and have the proceeds go to benefit the ADF General Fund.

Whereas the Hearthkeepers program uses the New Moon for workings, and the Clergy Council works on the sixth night of the Moon, Healing activities are still held for full Moon work as well through the Healers' Guild. Being aware of the cycles in our lives helps to anchor our practices with expectation and anticipation.

I have begun to offer 3rd Quarter of the Moon rites honouring the Ancestors and our members in need. I will open this up to all our members beginning in the coming months. I continue to focus on Daily Devotionals as an ongoing spiritual practice to enhance and expand the Ritual practices that people perform not only for a High Day, but every day. Doing daily work helps to build relationships with a wide variety of spirits, allies, and entities that are part of Our Druidry. I will continue to talk about and encourage these practices via chats, blogs, festivals, and direct conversations. I have found in my meetings with people, either face-to-face or otherwise, that many people DO daily work, they just may not recognize it as such. Giving it a name gives it power. I encourage people to do

devotional work whenever it is possible. Even an offering of coffee to the Ancestors in the morning is an act of Devotion.

The Organization Review Committee continues to meet by-weekly to sort through the many organizational documents and make recommendations for improvement for eventual Mother Grove review. This work is on-going.

Where ADF is in terms of its long-term Vision:

Public temple worship with a skilled priesthood, Accessible religious training for all, A spiritual relationship with the Earth, Sustainable Pagan institutions, and A flourishing family and community Pagan culture.

We rely on the wonders of the Internet and social media to make our workings available to members and non-members everywhere.

Zoom continues to be our go-to tool not only for online rituals, but for business meetings, Mother Grove meetings, and any ADF-related business that may have been presented in person previously. The Clergy Council Officers and the Clergy Council have monthly meetings and it has been very effective in working together in a virtual environment. There is a different quality to communication when we can see one another. Our Clergy Council Retreat was once again a hybrid retreat this year.

Our membership continues to produce material that is available to many people in many formats and make it possible for ADF Druidry to reach out to anyone in the world who has an interest, if they have access to the internet.

We encourage our members to look at all our Study Programs to help them advance, including the Dedicant Program. The Hearthkeepers program is a wonderful and accessible way to introduce new and existing members to ADF Druidry by presenting it to both members and non-members. With this, we look forward to a broader degree of exposure for our ways and our practices.

We have found, in terms of our vision, that where we once envisioned locations and activities taking place in different cities across the planet, we now see the reality of this coming into fruition via the internet and multimedia. Our rituals can be seen anywhere and everywhere, and live streaming rituals, workshops, and presentations are becoming an accepted reality. We are expanding our reach and vision through technology.

We work hard to maintain the continuity of the work we have done over the years while celebrating the new and exciting ways that technology has presented us to share our works and practices. Many of the changes that we have implemented have been prompted by feedback and encouragement from our membership. We thank and celebrate all those who practice their Druidry, whether it be as a solitary practitioner or with a Grove, Protogrove,

or Prison Worship Group. We enhance the safety of our organization by now requiring new Groves and Protogroves to get background checks for their leaders.

Regardless of whether a member is part of a Grove, Protogrove, Study Group, or Prison Worship Group, we are all solitary members in our own homes. We will begin to focus content on our members as solitaires, so that all may benefit from a similar approach to our members.

We strive to create a religious community that is welcoming, nurturing, and safe for everyone. Our commitment to Consent Culture is specifically to raise awareness of these topics and to make ADF a safe place to live, to worship, and practice. Our Consent Culture Course was the first offerings available in the new Learning Management System. We must remember that consent culture traverses technology lines as well. We must be aware of our actions, whether they be in person or online. The course is available to everyone in ADF. This is the first in a series of on-demand courses that will be available for ADF members. Finally, members of the Mother Grove recently presented a weekly ritual through Virtual Fire Protogrove's weekly on-line rites. This allows members of the Mother Grove to give something back to the members, in ritual fashion. Please look for this again in the coming months. Thank you to those members that participated.

Planned activities for the next year:

- The Mother Grove will continue to work on the goals that we established at the Mother Grove Retreat. Some of these involve members in foreign countries. Others require a change in the reporting calendar for ADF. Others require a fully functioning website that represents ADF in the best possible light.
- I will continue to mentor members in different programs and reach out to those who have questions or needs as they arise.
- I am currently reviewing French and English language submissions to our Study Programs.
- I highly recommend the weekly online rituals for innovative presentation and high-quality content.
- Eight Winds and Wellspring festivals will be held next quarter. The ADF Annual Meeting will fall on Saturday of Wellspring this year to maximize international participation.

Other comments/information, personal summary of events, etc.:

- I continue to chair monthly Clergy Council Officers meetings on the first Saturday of each month, along with the subsequent full council meetings the next week.
- I continue to attend Kristoffer Hughes online study program for the Anglesey Druid Order. This is being attended by one additional ADF Priest.
- I will Paganicon in March and offer an Equinox rite. I will offer a workshop, via Zoom, at the Rocky Mountain Divination Presentation. The workshop is entitled

“Using the Ogham as a Moon Oracle.” This is an excellent venue which I look forward to each year.

- I am pleased that Nature Awareness III will be sent to the Council of Lore for approval soon.
- I intend to visit members in Idaho and California in 2024, and other states as the opportunity arises.
- I will be attending Eight Winds and Wellspring, both in May 2024, along with Sunken Lake Pagan Retreat in August, as well as Pan Pagan in August. The Clergy Retreat will be held in October of this year, and the Mother Grove Retreat will fall on the first weekend of December.
- I will be completing my MS in Cybersecurity (Information Awareness) in March / April 2024.
- I have become active with the weekly online rituals, and I am hoping that other Clergy members also decide to participate in this activity.
- Endings is complete and has been sent to ADF Publishing for production.
- I am now looking for submissions of prayers and rituals for Unions and Dissolutions. Unions is scheduled to go to the publishers in June 2024.
- I am continuing to work on courses in the Fire and Ice Kin Study program, as well as Brewers Guild, Naturalist Guild, Scholars Guild, and Warriors Guild study programs, albeit slowly. I hope to finish the Scholar’s Guild Study Program this coming quarter.
- I continue to feel blessed by the outpouring of good works from our members, our Grove and Protogroves, and our leadership. It is heartening to see our Church continuing to pull together and working in harmony.
- I have returned to traveling and visiting the membership. If you would like a visit, please let me know. I continue to attend meetings, rituals, Druid Moons, festivals, and all kinds of get-togethers through the wonders of Zoom.
- As I have done previously, I am looking for submissions to a Book of Prayers and Workings for Manannan mac Lir and further submissions for Unions and Dissolutions. "Beginnings" was published in December 2022, and has been well received. "Endings" has been sent to ADF Publishing for processing. I expect a first quarter release.
- I am continually pleased with the many, varied, and beautiful submissions that are presented to ADF and the world via Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and the ADF Blog, as well as the ongoing weekly IRC chats.
- The weekly solitary rituals continue to present high quality devotional and practical material, and the ADF Newsletter is beautiful and informative. I hope to see the newsletter continue on High Days and would like to see the return of divinations to the newsletter.
- I am hoping to see my newest course creation, Nature Awareness III, presented to the Council of Lore in the first quarter of 2024. It has been accepted as a course for the Clergy Training Program.
- I am hoping to see the return of Critical Thinking to the CTP as well. I encourage everyone to get involved in the Programs of Study of *Ár nDraíocht Féin*. Professional Helping Skills I and II, Ethics I and II, Critical Thinking, and Liturgical Writing 2 have

been presented and recorded and will be part of our on-demand courses in the Clergy Training Program.

Thank you for your continued support and if there is any way I can, help, please feel free to reach out to me.

Vice Archdruid Report

Officer name: Rev. Jan Avende (they/them)

Contact information: Rev.Jan.Avende@gmail.com OR vice-archdruid@adf.org

My biggest accomplishments for this year were getting a job in chaplaincy, helping to get the ADF Blog up and running, and begin embedding myself more strongly in our local pagan community. I am also extremely proud of the team building work I helped lead at the Mother Grove Retreat in December. You can get more detailed information about what all I did as priest this year in my Annual Clergy Report, found here: [Rev. Avende's Annual Clergy Report, 2023](#)

Liturgical & Pastoral Work of a Priest:

In 2023 I was involved in 6 Rites of Passage, 7 High Days with my Grove, 3 High Days as a Prison Chaplain, and 10 Druid Moons with my Grove. I do Clergy Mound Journeys most months, which includes a short ritual, offerings, a trance journey, and a write-up/reflection, as well as personal altar work roughly 4x/week, which includes prayers, divination, and offerings.

I continue to participate in the bardic work our Grove does, as well as the community service project we undertake, such as clean-up hikes, volunteering at community gardens and farms, and working as needed with our partnered UU church.

Additionally, outside of my prison chaplaincy work, I average 4-6 pastoral appointments a month. Within the prison I typically have 3-4 pastoral appointments each week. This was also a heavy year for making hospital visits as a priest. Pastoral work is something that is heavy, but also deeply fulfilling for me.

Outreach & Education:

I am consistently looking to provide materials to aid others in practicing their spirituality. To that end, here is some of the materials that I've put out this year:

- 24 episodes of the "Druids in Cars, Going to Festivals" podcast with Rev. Dangler
- I've created a local Garden Share relationship with my neighbors and community, which has helped not only improve community interconnectedness, but also made sure that food surplus from our collective gardens doesn't go to waste, and gotten fresh food into the mouths of people who need it.

- The #PrayerADay Project continues. I had surgery at the beginning of November this year, so many thanks are owed to Revs. M Ashton, Dangler, and Mart for their work in keeping the project going when I was less able.
- I have a regular column in “Oak Leaves” and have written 4 articles for that this year
- I attended several festivals over the past year, including Wellspring, Appalachian Summer Solstice, Summerland, and Harvest Nights, and across those and some local offerings attended 19 workshops or lectures this year.
- I taught 7 workshops this year, most of which can be found either on my Patreon or my blog. I’ve also started teaching monthly workshops at The Magical Druid, a local pagan shop.
- I continued to write for my personal blog, HellenicDruid.com, and published 4 new articles there this year. It continues to be a valuable resource that I am able to reference and send content to people as they ask questions I’ve previously answered.
- New for me this year is my involvement in prison chaplaincy. I’ve took a job this past autumn as a contracted chaplain for a local women’s prison, serving primarily the needs of the pagan inmate population, but also others on an as needed basis. (My caseload averages 250-300 people). My typical duties include:
 - Teaching a weekly beginner class. I am using Rev. Dangler’s “Dedicant Path Through the Wheel of the Year” to guide these classes. These classes have roughly 40-60 people each week.
 - Teaching a weekly advanced class. Topics for this class vary based on interest, but we’ve covered an intro to divination (including ethics around divination), writing prayers, and are moving into sigil crafting and related magical work. These classes have roughly 5-10 people each week.
 - Leading a weekly blessing rite. These follow the COoR, and include set prayers and songs, and an opportunity for the inmates to make offerings. These services have roughly 40-60 people attend each week.
 - Leading High Day services. I’ve been slowly teaching the advanced class to write and speak high day liturgy. We have celebrated Autumn Equinox, Samhain, and Yule together so far. These High Days have roughly 50-80 people.
 - Providing Pastoral Care both as needed, and by appointment, every week.
 - Overseeing the Pagan Choir I helped the inmates form, and providing them with music and guidance.

Administration & Leadership

One of my personal goals for this year was to help grow new leaders, and to step down from roles that others should have an opportunity to serve in. Currently, I serve as the Vice Archdruid, Initiate Preceptor, and Blog Editor-in-Chief. I have recently stepped down as the interim Hearth Keeper’s Way Coordinator (that report is included elsewhere in this Annual Report), and due to the changing Sub Group organization, the Children & Parenting SIG Coordinator position will no longer exist. Some of my duties for each role are as follows:

ADF Vice Archdruid:

- Bi-weekly MG meetings via Zoom.
- Mother Grove Retreat in December. We discussed budgeting & financials, ADF International, goals, and did some team building
- “Meet the MG” for an open discussion with ADF Membership
- ADF Annual Meeting, and compiling the ADF Annual Report
- Keep the ADF Calendar up to date
- Calculate and send out Mound Journey dates for the Clergy Council

ADF Initiate Preceptor:

- Includes administrative tasks, mentoring, and occasional reviewing of courses

ADF Children & Parenting SIG Coordinator:

- Welcoming new members, maintaining the FB group, encouraging conversation, and compiling resources for parents (including kids book lists)

ADF Blog Editor-in-Chief

- Solicit, edit, and schedule relevant and timely posts to the new [ADF Blog](#)

Other Comments

It has been a pleasure to serve this past year, and I welcome feedback on how I can improve. I continue to encourage members to contact me if you have any questions or concerns relating to our practice of Druidry or how the MG is operating in general. I will do my best to either answer your questions or point you towards someone who can. I'm also happy to just chat generally about what is going on in your spiritual life. I love connecting over our common practices and interests. Please email me (vice-archdruid@adf.org or rev.Jan.avende@gmail.com) to ensure that your message reaches me and gets put into my workflow, rather than messaging me on other platforms where it may get lost or buried.

Secretary Report

Officer name: Rev. Kelly Kingston (Carrion Mann)

Officer Email: adf-secretary@adf.org

Mother Grove voting results from the previous quarterly meeting:

- 05/05:
 - Vote on the 4.27.23 meeting minutes, unanimous approval from all in attendance.
- 05/11:
 - Vote to approve the 5.4.23 minutes, all in attendance voted in favor of approving.
- 05/18:
 - Voted to approve the 5/11/23 minutes. 6 in favor, none opposed.
 - Voted to approve the Library Policy. 6 in favor, none opposed.
- 05/28
 - Vote to approve the 5/18/23 minutes. 4 in favor present at the meeting (Drum, Jan, Gaarik and Carrion) and 1 in favor through electronic media (Brian Larter)
- 06/08
 - Vote to approve the 5/28/23 minutes. 1 member abstained, 6 in favor of approval. Vote passed.
- 06/22
 - Vote to approve the 6/8/23 minutes. 8 in favor of approval. 0 opposed. Vote passed.
- 07/06
 - Vote to approve the 6/22/23 minutes. 6 in favor of approval, 0 opposed and 1 abstention. Vote passed.
 - Drum moved that Tami's choices for the Library Committee be approved and Jan seconded the motion. 7 in favor of approval, 0 opposed.
- 07/20
 - Vote to approve the 7/6/23 minutes. 8 in favor of approval, 0 opposed. Vote passed.

Significant communications ADF has sent/received in the previous quarter:

- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/05/05:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/18-may-2023>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/05/11:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/24-may-2023>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/05/18:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/3-june-2023>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/05/28:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/21-june-2023>

- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/06/08:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/7-july-2023>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/06/22:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/7-july-2023-0>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/07/06:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/2-november-2023>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/07/20:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/2-november-2023-0>

Mother Grove agenda items for the next quarterly meeting:

Meeting notes contain the agendas.

Other comments or information, personal summary of events, etc:

The Mother Grove meets every two weeks.

Mother Grove voting results from the previous quarterly meeting:

- 08/03
 - Vote to approve the 7/20/23 minutes. 7 in favor of approval, 0 opposed. Vote passed.
- 08/17
 - Vote to approve the 8/4/23 minutes. 7 in favor of approval, 0 opposed. Vote passed.
 - Vote- Drum moved to approve the move over date of 8/26/23 for the website and Carrion seconded the motion. 7 in favor of approval, 0 opposed. Vote passed.
- 09/14
 - No votes to approve the minutes were held at this meeting.
- 09/28
 - Vote to approve the 8/17/23 minutes. 5 in favor and 2 abstentions due to inability to attend the meeting. Vote passed.
 - Vote to approve the 9/14/23 minutes. 7 in favor of approval, 0 opposed. Vote passed.
- 10/12
 - Vote to approve the 9/28/23 minutes. 7 in favor of approval, 0 opposed. Vote passed.
 - Drum moved that Drupal be kept behind a wall after the launch of the new site for six months, and that its necessity be reviewed every 6 months thereafter. Tami seconded this motion. 7 in favor 0 opposed. Motion carries.
 - Brian moved to accept Eballot as our new election platform. Missy seconded the motion. 7 voted in favor 0 against. Motion carried.
- 10/26
 - Vote to approve the 10/12/23 minutes. 5 in favor of approval, 1 abstention, 0 opposed. Vote passed.

- Drum moved to grant Art oversight over personnel for webteam and contractors until the release date. Carrion seconded this motion. 5 in favor, 1 abstention and 0 opposed. Motion carried.
- 11/09
 - Vote to approve the 10/26/23 minutes: moved to the ADF MG List. Minutes Approved.
- No meeting on 11/23
- Meeting of 12/07
 - Drum moves that we invest \$200.000 in Certificates of Deposit, Art seconds. The motion was approved 7-0, with two absences.
 - Drum motions to accept the budget as presented, Jeffrey seconds. The motion was approved 7-0, with two absences.
- No meeting on 12/21
- Meeting of 01/18
 - Voting to approve the Short Story Contest winner began on the list. Drum motioned to approve, and Brian seconded the motion.
 - The vote was concluded at the meeting with 8 voting in favor, 0 abstaining, 0 against. Motion passed.

Significant communications ADF has sent/received in the previous quarter:

- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/08/03:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/2-november-2023-1>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/08/17:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/2-november-2023-2>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/09/14:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/2-november-2023-3>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/09/28:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/2-november-2023-4>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/10/12:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/2-november-2023-5>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/10/26:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/18-november-2023>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023.11.9:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/26-february-2024>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023/12/01:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/19-april-2024>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2023.12.07:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/1-february-2024-0>
- Mother Grove Meeting Notes 2024.01.18:
<https://www.adf.org/members/blogs/mg/1-february-2024>

Mother Grove agenda items for the next quarterly meeting:

Meeting notes contain the agendas.

Other comments or information, personal summary of events, etc:

The Mother Grove meets every two weeks.

Council of Regional Druids Chief Report

Officer name: Shaz Cairns

Officer Email: cord-chief@adf.org

The best part about the Council of Regional Druids is it's a truly international group.

Made up of Regional Druids from around the globe, members of the Council not only give their time to improve their own Region, but they are also able to make suggestions that reflect the needs of their individual members in their part of the world.

We did not meet in person this year, mostly due to scheduling. We were able to action via our list, a change to our bylaws as suggested by the Operational Review Committee. The bylaws now reflect that a Regional Druid must reside in the Region they are elected to. This makes perfect sense that living in the Region can ensure that you are close to your members and hopefully more attuned to any issues or concerns that may arise.

Membership is down in a number of Regions and it is difficult to address with only a few departing members providing feedback.

Moist Regional Druids have spent time attending many Pan Pagan and interfaith events outside of the ADF events they also attend. Our Regional Druids are some of our best ambassadors and I thank them for their representation.

In the coming year I would like to see the Council return to quarterly Zoom meetings and work on what we can do to showcase what ADF has to offer and how to make members feel more included. I feel that we need to better guide new members, Grove Organisers and Senior Druids as to what is available to support them in their path. As Regional Druids I believe that we can be offering more mentorship in this area.

People join for many different reasons, and I would like to try and engage members to tell us why they joined and how we can support them.

Members of the Council of Regional Druids:

Region	Regional Druid
Asia Pacific	Shaz Cairns (CoRD Chief)
Europe	Birgit Reinartz
Canada East	Hobbes Hickey
Canada West	David Carmichael
North East	Peter Knox
South East	Linda Kazalski (<i>incoming</i>); Rev. Zacchaeus Kimbrell (<i>outgoing</i>)
Heartland	Dave "Thexalon" Kleinschmidt (Deputy CoRD Chief)
Central	Rovena Windsor
Upper Midwest	Trevor Hanson (Trebomâros Auigani)
North West	Rev. Sean Harbaugh
South West	Susan Burns

Council of Senior Druids Chief Report

Officer name: Brian Larter

Officer Email: cosd-chief@adf.org

Another year, another year of accompaniments for the Senior Druid Council.

Due to people's availability, we have stepped away from quarterly Zoom meetings for SDs. The meetings were not well attended. I suggest we do these again on a six-month basis. I will speak to the council and see what they feel. It was enjoyable for those who did attend, though.

The Grove Organizing Committee continues progressing positively with Rev. Rob Henderson at its head. Mike Talvola remains in their role as Grove Coordinating Committee. These two committees are the unsung heroes of ADF, who are doing incredible work behind the scenes. I want to thank Chief Rev. Caryn MacLuan, who currently serves as our Preceptor and Deputy, Rovenia Windsor. Their dedication and intense productivity have made us where we are today. Work completed on the Grove Organizers Handbook will be published on the new website as a living document. This new platform will allow ADF to evolve rapidly, meeting the needs of its members with minimal interruptions. We are still waiting for this document to be implemented on the new website.

ADF has also implemented background checks for all Senior Druids and Grove Organizers. This process increases security and safety for all. As of April 11th, 2024, almost 85% of the current leadership within the council have completed their checks. This process has moved to the Grove Organizing committee and is implemented to form new Groves. This is being reviewed as Groves changes leadership and requires new background checks for new leaders. This task may move back to the CoSD directly to be tracked.

Work on the Leadership Study Program has begun and will be added to the new Learning Management System. This training will be available to all ADF members but will be required for those in leadership positions. Encompassed in this training will be information on Inclusive Hosting by Karen Larter. This project is still in development as we wait for the LMS to be implemented on the new website.

On a more personal level, my involvement with Mother Grove has been an excellent experience. Over the last few months, I have had to step back from various committees as my personal life has undergone some substantial but positive changes. With stability, I hope to resume those roles in the coming months. I want to thank the whole council for their dedication to their role in ADF and for making it a better and stronger organization.

Hail the Council,
Brian Larter,
Chief of the Senior Druid Council

Groves & Protogroves of *Ár nDraíocht Féin*

GROVES

Black Bear Grove, ADF
Cedarlight Grove, ADF
Charter Oak Grove, ADF
Chokecherry Grove, ADF
Cascadia Grove, ADF
Columbia Grove, ADF
Grove of the Other Gods, ADF
Grove of the Nova Scotia Druids, ADF
Grove of the Red Earth, ADF
Mountain Ancestors Grove, ADF
Nemos Ognios Grove, ADF
Northern Rivers Grove, ADF
Raven's Cry Grove, ADF
Red Maple Grove, ADF
Prairie Sky Grove, ADF
Stone Creed Grove, ADF
Sassafras Grove, ADF
Sierra Madrone Grove, ADF
Silver Branch Golden Horn Grove, ADF
Silver Birch Grove, ADF
Thornhaven Grove, ADF
Three Cranes Grove, ADF
Three Branch River Grove, ADF
Thistle Grove, ADF
Wild Onion Grove, ADF
Whispering Lake Grove, ADF

PROTOGROVES

Adrana ProtoHain, ADF
Clan of the Triple Horses Protogrove, ADF
Crimson Cauldron ProtoGrove
Grundsau Protogrove, ADF
Our Whole Protogrove, ADF
Paumanok Island Protogrove, ADF
Orange Blossom ProtoGrove
Hemlock Vales Protogrove
Holuntar-Hain Protogrove
Magnolia Protogrove
North Star Protogrove
Protogrove of the Gathering Waters
Spirit Valley Protogrove
Protogrove of the Celtic Flame
Protogrove of the Gathering Waters
Protogrove of the Osprey
Ravenswood Protogrove
Virtual Fire Protogrove

<https://www.adf.org/members/groves/by-founding.html>

Non-Officer Director Report (NOD 1)

Officer name: Arthur Shipkowski
Contact information: nod1@adf.org
(incoming officer: Aimee Brannon)

From 5/1/2023 to the composition of this report I have had 932 emails tagged "ADF-MG". If we assume a linear rate there will have been slightly less Mother Grove messaging this year than the last, but I don't think there will be any difference in how much was done.

Because I also serve as ADF's Information Manager, much of my specific areas of responsibility for the MG overlap and will be covered in that report. That stated, feel free to ask any questions you may have. The site move is still ongoing, and slower than I'd like; Fast As A Speeding Oak Tree is a difficult statement in the modern tech world. That said, significant effort is going into a site that is more maintainable and requires less help from specialists.

A major highlight this year is the introduction of an outside vendor for doing elections. So far this has just been used for the annual election, but there are plans to open it up to subgroup usage. This new system provides us with a vastly improved election experience, especially for mobile phone users, and enhances the security of our election process. This is a particular highlight after concerns raised last year.

This year's ADF Mother Grove retreat was quite productive. Done on a shoestring to keep costs low, the intimate environment offered a chance to not only get focused work done but also foster camaraderie among the members of the Mother Grove.

That said, as is obvious given my ballot absence as of this writing, I have decided to set down NOD duties for a while in favor of focusing on the website and, to be honest, rest. This is not a reflection on the rest of the Mother Grove or what we have taken on during this term! Had I realized what life had in store for me for 2022 I might not have run then.

As always, remember the MG is about tending the central fire of ADF. Innovation usually happens around the edges, and by ADF members with no particular hat in the organization.

Non-Officer Director Report (NOD 2)

Officer name: Jeffrey Keefer

Contact information: nod2@adf.org

I began this role in May of 2023, when the NOD 2 position on the Mother Grove (ADF's Board) opened up due to an unexpected vacancy, and, as the runner-up in the previous election, I was invited to join. It is my first time serving on our Mother Grove and has been an eye-opening and humbling experience. I can attest that ADF is filled with people who bring various skills and experiences to this work, and while no group of people would ever be expected to agree together on all things, there is an overall commitment to the good of our community and our religion.

I am happy to share that our Mission--*Ár nDraíocht Féin*: A Druid Fellowship (ADF) is a pagan church based on ancient Indo-European traditions that practices, promotes, and develops Neopagan Druidry through public worship, study, and fellowship--is alive and embraced amongst our organization's leadership.

I have practiced Druidry since 2009 and joined ADF in 2018 when I realized I wanted more structure in my beliefs and practices. I cherish the Core Order of Ritual (COoR), one of the central elements that connects us and has become the shared focus in my grove, Virtual

Fire Protogrove. I am the Grove Organizer of Virtual Fire, and I believe anything we can do to help connect Druids across our globe who need community support is a good thing.

I want to share a few highlights of how I helped serve ADF over the last year. As many know, Non-Officer Directors serve as needed, less with a set role that is already defined while serving as needs arise across the logistics of our religious institution. In this capacity, I took on the ADF Volunteer Coordinator role, where I have helped to standardize the language and approach we take with organizational needs and members who are able and willing to become more involved. This is in addition to the ongoing efforts I make on the Organizational Review Committee, where we are systematically reviewing and suggesting streamlined and clearer processes intended to improve our faith tradition's ongoing management to increase our capacity to serve. Having served as a Non-Officer Director here in ADF and on other nonprofit Boards of Directors, I recognize the serious commitment we have as a nonprofit religious organization, one that is bound by our commitment to ensuring we as an organization follow our Mission and Vision in ways consistent with our financial stewardship.

Two other highlights for this year are worthy of mentioning. Firstly, each of our ADF Mother Grove (MG) meetings has a standing agenda item updating us on our annual goals. The Mother Grove sets approximately three annual goals, as common amongst many organizations, yet goals do not complete themselves, so we started to have a standing goal check-in section at our meetings every other week. This has helped us monitor goal progress while keeping us all current on where we are. The final highlight for me was meeting many of our Mother Grove members at the MG Retreat, which allowed real face-time and presence with one another that helped enormously for our working together. While I professionally work remotely, few things have the power to establish and support community as does live presence with one another where we have the opportunity to be with one another. This was the first time I met many of my fellow Mother Grove members in person, and I have even more respect for the commitment we all bring to serving the Folk.

I hope that many of you who are interested in ADF's ongoing success consider how you may serve our community. While we each bring our own skills and experiences, we need all of us together. Thank you for putting your faith and trust in my ability to serve ADF.

Non-Officer Director Report (NOD 3)

Officer name: Rev. Melissa Ashton

Contact information: nod3@adf.org

This is my first year back on the Mother Grove after a decade. My last role was that of Member's Advocate, and while many similarities exist, quite a few things have changed, notably the communication style. I held/hold other leadership positions including serving as the Southwest Regional Druid (2017-2019) and Secretary of the Clergy Council (current) as well as sitting on the Organizational Review Committee (current), so it was not long before I adjusted to meet the culture for communication in this space.

NOD is an interesting role in that most of what we do can be classified as “other duties as assigned.” Since the current Mother Grove has a collaborative style, quite a bit of our work is managed through consensus and teamwork with individuals taking point on various projects. While I was not given a project directly by the Mother Grove directly, my heavy role in the Organizational Review Committee kept me quite busy with work done on behalf of the folk. We have continued to transfer all the “tribal knowledge” we uncover into policies and procedures to ensure consistency in practice and clarity of processes for those who come after us. ADF had a leadership growth spurt in terms of International presence as well as heavy turnover through loss of members (and a few groves) with tenure, and then the pandemic hit. The pandemic took a toll on us all, and we are making solid progress on updating and revising so the International Org truly runs like a well-oiled machine in the background while the rest of ADF is busy with the work of Our Druidry. There is much left to do, and I look forward to whatever part I am to play. For more details, please see the Organizational Review Committee Report.

The Mother Grove retreat in December 2024 remains the most productive time for us as a board, and we are poised to finish the second set of goals we created for ourselves by the end of this year. I was able to take action items from these meetings to the Organizational Review Committee directly for completion, and I am maintaining an active to-do list for the next year of my term.

I was able to engage the folk in person by attending Wellspring 2023 (virtually as able), Untamed Festival 2023 (Colorado Pan-Pagan), and Summerland 2023. I’ve taught a few workshops and even hosted an Ordination at our Grove Retreat in February 2024. All in all, a great year of service with even more planned for the good of ADF in the year to come! As stated in my last quarterly report, I am grateful we've been able to admit that there are things we don't do well and actively begin process improvements. We are not perfect, but we are moving in directions that will benefit the folk of ADF as we continue to serve. Thank you for your trust in us. May we, through our actions, continue to earn it over and over again.

Non-Officer Director Report (NOD 4)

Officer name: Tami Olsen

Contact information: nod4@adf.org

In the last year I have been involved in various committees, including the Library Selection Committee, the Public Relations Committee, and the Risk Assessment Committee. I have attended MG meetings, including the MG retreat in December, and worked to be a voice for members and for the overall good of the organization. I have helped write various correspondence and policies using my wordsmithing skills. I have also been working as the Digital Librarian.

Throughout the next year I plan to be even more active in the committees I am part of, and to continue my work with words. I hope to be part of implementing processes that have been needed for a while now, and solidifying ones that need clarification.

has been a hard year for many members of the MG, me included. Some days the extra volunteer work we do on top of our chaotic lives can be overwhelming, but on others it makes me remember how good it feels to serve something greater than myself. I appreciate this opportunity, and will do my best to make sure what I give to the organization moves it forward in a way that's true to the needs of the membership as a whole, and is mindful of the needs of each individual. Thank you for the opportunity.

Members Advocate Report

Officer Name: Rev. Jason Sprick (Gaarik Hamr)
Contact information: adf-members-advocate@adf.org
(incoming officer: Lisa Gentry)

This year, we have had two major complaints, both are considered resolved.

We approved 5 compassionate memberships. Out of the over 20 requests, the majority of compassionate membership requests came from non-members or people looking to renew after their membership lapsed.

I appreciate being able to help the organization, and I look forward to the work our next Members Advocate will do. Thank you!

Other Leadership Reports

Regional Druid Reports

Region: Asia Pacific

Asia Pacific RD: Shaz Cairns
Contact Information: adf-asia-pacific-rd@adf.org

Total number of ADF members currently in your region:

16. This number includes 10 members in Australia, 3 in Brazil and 1 in New Zealand

Total # of groves and PG's currently in your region:

1. Silver Birch Grove. It is still my hope that I can encourage members to consider forming a Protogrove of their own in their area

What was the growth/decline in your region over the past year?

We are down six members as of this time last year.

Regional events you've attended or have occurred in your region in the past year?

Silver Birch Grove hosted rites for all of the High Days and it was wonderful to be a part of that. The attendance does ebb and flow, with an increase of ADF members attending the rites

Non-ADF centred events you've attended:

I attend a prison and offer outreach. Sometimes we hold ADF rituals and other times we may work together for rites of other Pagan paths. Their input is excellent and we continue to find ways to adapt to the setting.

Thankfully we have an advocate, James, who is the Spiritual Coordinator. His support has been unwavering, and we owe him many thanks

Special accomplishments by ADF members in your region:

Nothing I am aware of unfortunately.

Challenges or issues in your region during the last year:

Definitely the declining membership.

Region: Canada East

Canada East RD: Hobbes Hickey

Contact Information: adf-canada-east-rd@adf.org

No report received by deadline

Region: Canada West

Canada West RD: David Carmichael

Contact Information: adf-canada-west-rd@adf.org

Total number of ADF members currently in your region:

9 (I confirmed 1 with lapsed membership whom will be renewing on payday. One other is renewing tonight so I included him in the count.)

Total # of groves and PG's currently in your region:

What was the growth/decline in your region over the past year?

We declined by 5.

Regional events you've attended or have occurred in your region in the past year?

Due to the size and spread of our membership we have not held any regional events. The Garry oak Protogrove however has hosted high day rituals and made them available to the region via zoom.

Non-ADF centred events you've attended:

I attended and hosted a booth at the Vancouver Island Pagan Pride festival last summer, and Ian attended and represented ADF at the Vancouver Pagan Festival that same weekend.

Special accomplishments by ADF members in your region:

I run a Facebook community called Vancouver Island Druids along with Tommy (renewing his membership tonight) and a few other non-ADF druids are my moderators. We have grown rapidly over the last year and have climbed to over 400 members of druids and druid-curious people from across the island and some on the mainland. Starting January I have started to host monthly forest walk events for the group.

I was invited as a guest speaker at a workshop by Kyla Adrienne of Tarot Etc Metaphysical Events, a quite well-known expert of the occult, paranormal investigation, and tarot reader, to teach about the druids of ancient Celtic society and Druidry today.

I volunteer at a wildlife rehabilitation hospital and helped provide medical and orphan care for somewhere between 950-1050 animals. One particular case I assisted in raising an orphaned Raven abandoned due to visual impairment from birth who is now officially an educational ambassador. I have become one of her primary trainers and caregivers.

Challenges or issues in your region during the last year:

Biggest challenge is the geographical size of our region. We are very spread out with no one being close enough to gather in person. Without being able to gather in person we cannot host events and activities as ADF to attract and encourage new members. We have a thriving community of druids on Vancouver Island but many are solitary, unaffiliated to any group, or belong to other groups like OBOD. I do talk about ADF with them and we open our ADF zoom rituals to the whole community as well, but it has so far not seeded any new members. I do not wish to push it too hard and risk creating conflict within a rather harmonious community.

Region: Central Region

Central RD: Rovena Windsor

Contact Information: adf-central-rd@adf.org

Total number of ADF members currently in your region:

77

Total # of groves and PG's currently in your region:

1 Grove (Thistle Grove in Louisiana) and no protogroves

What was the growth/decline in your region over the past year?

Membership went from 89 to 77 and went from 2 groves to one.

Regional events you've attended or have occurred in your region in the past year?

No regional events were held in the Central Region

Non-ADF centred events you've attended:

I am not aware of any events held in my area.

Special accomplishments by ADF members in your region:

none

Challenges or issues in your region during the last year:

Membership in all religions are down and the conservative laws are making life difficult for many.

Region: Europe

Central RD: Birgit Reinartz

Contact Information: adf-europe-rd@adf.org

Total number of ADF members currently in your region:

52, most members are in the UK, Germany, France and Ireland, with members in 8 other countries

Total # of groves and PG's currently in your region:

2 PGs, 3 ADF Hearths

What was the growth/decline in your region over the past year?

We have grown from 43 in May 2023 to currently 52 in March 2024.

Regional events you've attended or have occurred in your region in the past year?

- Meeting of German members in May 2023 for a weekend
- new PG in Berlin: Holuntar Protohain
- both PG held regular high day rituals, Holuntar PG also offers a monthly "Stammtisch"
- ADF members were present at the Lange Nacht der Religionen (LndR) in Berlin in 2023
- I visited Adrana PG for the Autumn Equinox, had a personal meeting with a new member from the Netherlands and organised a new "Stammtisch" for all pagans in my local area which even made it into the newspaper.
- We had a European Zoom chat after Yule.
- There were some festivals all over Europe that are on a local level and I wouldn't know about.

Non-ADF centred events you've attended:

I attended several "Stammtische" of Eldaring e.V., an Asatru organization in Germany and presented a Midsummer ritual in ADF style for some of their members and also at Lughnasadh and Samhain for a smaller group.

Special accomplishments by ADF members in your region:

- The German members had a founding session for a local official association (e.V.), all this in close cooperation with the MG. Rev. Ellie Lazzarro, Cordula Trampnau and Matthias Dolgner-Trampnau have worked closely together to write up the bylaws to get this project going.
- UK has a new deputy, Jacco Versteeg alias Alwin.

Challenges or issues in your region during the last year:

- We have the Germany related issue that our abbreviation ADF is easily to be confused with AFD, a local party that's racist and has close ties with ultra-right wing right radicals. This causes even problems with some social media that refuse contributions due to a mix up with the others. We are working on it. This doesn't count for the rest of Europe.
- The common challenge is to connect people from 12 countries with different languages with each other.

Region: Heartland

Heartland RD: Dave "Thexalon" Kleinschmidt
Contact Information: adf-heartland-rd@adf.org

Deputy Regional Druid:

none

Total # of ADF members in region:

149

Total # of Groves:

10

Give a summary of the growth or decline in your region over the past year:

This last year, we had 27 members join, and 37 left, for a total decline of 10 members. This is less of a drop than the previous year, but still very much moving in the wrong direction. There was no non-renewing feedback, giving us a very limited window into why some members have left.

With regards to groves, Cairn and Crow Protogrove in South Bend, IN fizzled out, while Hemlock Vales Protogrove in State College, PA has formed recently. Crimson Cauldron Protogrove is currently officially located in Kent, OH but may be effectively moving its activities to the more populated Youngstown / Warren area of Ohio, giving them access to a potentially larger community of interest there.

Regional ADF events you've attended or have occurred in your region in the past year:

The Wellspring Gathering continues to be a mainstay of ADF druidry overall, and I'm not only present but heavily involved in hosting it.

The Summerland Festival continues to be organized by Three Cranes Grove, and while I haven't been able to attend by all accounts it has been a wonderful event that continues many of the traditions started by the now-dissolved 6th Night Grove. Unfortunately, I haven't been able to attend in recent years due to conflicts with other events.

Non-ADF centered events you've attended:

I was at the Sirius Rising Festival at the Brushwood facility in Sherman, NY in July. Leesa Kern, with my assistance, put on an ADF rite in the nemeton there that has mostly been built and maintained by ADF members over the now 40 years of an ADF presence at that location. Leesa and I intend to repeat this pattern for the coming year. Both of us also regularly work with Diana Paxson and our other friends at the Troth to help make their rituals and classes be successful as well.

I and much of the rest of Stone Creed Grove at Cleveland Pagan Pride, held August 19-20. Unfortunately, that coincided with the Summerland Festival, but ADF has been an important presence at that event, providing a large percentage of the rituals and teaching.

There has also been a regular participation in our booth from Crimson Cauldron Protogrove and Spirit Valley Protogrove.

I was not able to attend these events, but we should note that the Starwood Festival continues to have a large ADF presence, and Three Cranes Grove continues to present public druidry at Columbus' ComFest event and the Dublin Irish Fest.

Special accomplishments by ADF members in your region:

Rev. Jan Avende has begun prison chaplaincy work. Their efforts will help in raising the legitimacy of ADF as a religious organization, and may at some point in the future help with expanding our prison ministry.

C Oleg Wildridge deserves special mention: In the last year, he has completed his Dedicant's Program, and also led the organizing of the Hemlock Vales Protogrove.

Challenges or issues in your region during the last year:

Regional membership continues to decline. While we are successful enough at recruiting to get interested people at our events, there is a major problem in keeping them for long enough for them to really benefit from our program. I have attempted to drive some more engagement with personal communications with new members in particular, but that is plainly not enough on its own. Some of those dropping their membership have been members for many years and been involved in groves or other subgroups, so I cannot reasonably attribute this phenomenon to only a casual level of interest in what we're doing. There is also some reason to believe that financial hardship is at least part of some of the decisions to either not join or quit ADF, although it may also be that the tight budget combines with a feeling that ADF is not doing a good job of meeting their spiritual needs making it not something they feel is worth the annual fees.

The political situation, as I noted in my previous report, remains difficult for many of our members, particularly in the southern areas of our region. The fact is that many members have genuine cause to fear for their safety. This may be a factor in both suppressing membership in those areas, as well as preventing the formation of protogroves in that part of the world. While ADF cannot on its own effect major changes to the political environment, there would be value in looking into how we can support political efforts to allow both our organization and our members to freely exist.

Region: North East

North East RD: Peter Knox
Contact Information: adf-northeast-rd@adf.org

Total number of ADF members currently in your region:

52

Total # of groves and PG's currently in your region:

9

What was the growth/decline in your region over the past year?

Most groves/protogroves stayed fairly constant, but virtual fire protogrove added a few members, and a new protogrove, North Star PG in Maine, was created, with 3 members.

Regional events you've attended or have occurred in your region in the past year?

Virtual Fire Protogrove conducted weekly online rituals and also 2 online events during the year. Paumanok Island PG also conducted live events/rituals throughout the year.

Non-ADF centred events you've attended:

none

Special accomplishments by ADF members in your region:

members of Paumanok Island PG participated in an interfaith event.

Challenges or issues in your region during the last year:

As always, trying to grow membership. With the above-noted exceptions, fairly stagnant.

Region: South East

South East RD: Rev. Zaccheaus Kimbrell (outgoing); Linda Sager-Kazalski (incoming)

Contact Information: adf-southeast-rd@adf.org

Deputy RD:

Linda Sager-Kazalski

Total # of ADF members currently in your region:

158

Total # of groves and PG's currently in your region:

5 (Cedarlight Grove, Three Branch River Grove, Grove of the Red Earth, Magnolia PG, and PG of the Osprey)

What was the growth/decline in your region over the past year?

On my last report there were 143 members, so we have seen a good bit of growth.

Regional events you've attended or have occurred in your region in the past year?

Our groves and PG's in the region have hosted High Day rites as well as some hosting Moon rites. We also have seen the return of the Trillium Festival in our region.

Non-ADF-centered events with an ADF presence in your region in the past year?

I helped early on with getting things moving for the Trillium Festival, as well as continuing to network with local Pagans in my community. I personally didn't attend any festivals, but I have connected with many local Pagan-owned businesses and members of my local UU congregation. The Deputy RD, Linda and her grove, were involved with two ADF community rituals at Mystic Moon of Norfolk, and an ADF ritual at a regional summer solstice festival, Heathen Holiday Howl. Three Branch River Grove, ADF had a booth at the Hampton Roads Pagan Pride Day. Linda was also a member of the planning committee for her local (Norfolk) Interfaith Pride Celebration.

Special accomplishments by ADF members in your region.

None that I know of, but I know each individual grove has their own personal accomplishments like finding locations for rituals or improving their current locations. I am also very proud of all the work that went into bringing back the Trillium Festival!

Challenges or issues in your region during the last year.

No real "challenges" I can really think of. Getting the Trillium Festival up and running again was challenging, but it was lovely to watch folks work together to make it happen.

Region: North West

North West RD: Rev. Sean Harbaugh
Contact Information: adf-northwest-rd@adf.org

Total number of ADF members currently in your region:

133

Total # of groves and PG's currently in your region:

4

What was the growth/decline in your region over the past year?

Lost a Grove in Las Vegas, but they have reapplied.

Regional events you've attended or have occurred in your region in the past year?

2023 Eight Winds festival

Non-ADF centred events you've attended:

Local pagan events.

Region: South West

South West RD: Susan Burns

Contact Information: adf-southwest-rd@adf.org

Total # of ADF members currently in your region:

103

Total # of groves and PG's currently in your region:

- 4 Groves (Raven's Cry Grove, Chokecherry Grove, Mountain Ancestors Grove, Silver Branch Golden Horn)
- 1 ProtoGrove (Orange Blossom ProtoGrove)

What was the growth/decline in your region over the past year?

There was a significant drop this year when comparing the numbers of this year vs last year - and then against the previous few years, where it was pretty constant:

- Regional Membership as of 3/12/24: 103
- Regional Membership as of 5/16/23: 129
- Regional Membership as of May 2022: 124
- Regional Membership as of May 2021: 125

26 is very significant. Of the "not renewing" feedback emails received, 1 cited the Bonewits situation, 1 cited the clergy/AD relationship (among other things), 1 decided to shift their Druidry practice to an in-person mentor, 3 decided this path wasn't for them, and 1 moved out of the region. In addition to these, I can also say that my own Grove lost several members this year due to a similar combination of moving out of the area, an inability to attend rituals, and choosing another path.

Regional events you've attended or have occurred in your region in the past year?

- Rocky Mountain Zoom Retreat - October 13-15, 2023. Chokecherry Grove hosted this virtual event, which I attended via Zoom.
- Chokecherry's Zoom Divination Day - March 16, 2024. I attended this event.
- Chokecherry has been holding their High Days via Zoom, with occasional in-person options. I attended their Imbolc ritual this year via Zoom.
- Mountain Ancestors Grove has held virtual and hybrid High Days and Moon Rites. I have attended two of their High Day rituals this year via Zoom.

- Silver Branch Golden Horn Grove has held in-person High Day rituals throughout this year. Their Lughnasadh ritual was held as part of 2023 Dragonfest of Colorado. I have not been able to attend any of their events.
- Raven's Cry Grove has been in-person with High Day rituals this year. I have attended all of these rituals, as I am a participating member of this grove.
- Orange Blossom ProtoGrove assisted Raven's Cry Grove co-led (alongside Raven's Cry Grove) a Summer Solstice ritual in Orange County and they led their own Autumn Equinox ritual. They also hosted my talk on Theatre in Ritual via Zoom, which was publicized on Facebook; and they hosted an information session/meet-up at a local Orange County restaurant. I attended all of OBPG's events.
- As of Imbolc 2024, I began hosting High Day virtual rituals via Zoom for the South West Region. The Imbolc ritual had 4 attendees, with an additional member asking for the video to watch a couple of days later. The Spring Equinox ritual is scheduled for March 23rd.

Non-ADF centered events you've attended:

- Pagan Pride Day LA/OC – October 8, 2023 - Raven's Cry Grove was a sponsor of this event and had an information booth and led the opening ritual. Elizabeth Walker of Orange Blossom ProtoGrove also manned the information booth. I attended this event and took part in the opening ritual.
- Phoenix Pagan Pride Day - November 4, 2023 - I hosted an ADF information booth at this event and was able to talk to many people interested in Druidry, as well as several people who were former ADF members.
- Pagan Community Retreat, Hemet California – April 19-21, 2024 – Raven's Cry Grove is a sponsor of this event and I am leading an ADF Earth Day Rite with a few other RCG members.

Challenges or issues in your region during the last year:

I've fallen short of the goals I had when I took this position in part because I failed to consider the fact that the Wheel of the Year dictates that most events will regularly fall on the same day or weekend as other events. This has meant that practically speaking, I haven't been able to cover as much ground as I assumed that I would.

I also have struggled with how to reach solitaries in a meaningful way. At the moment, I am trying to host the regional virtual High Day... but it is too soon to tell whether this is a meaningful addition when two other Groves in my region already provide virtual High Day rituals. I am contemplating sending a survey around to the solitaries in the region to hear from them what they want/need.

Region: Upper Midwest

Upper Midwest RD: Trevor Hanson

Contact Information: adf-upper-midwest-rd@adf.org

Deputy Regional Druid(s):

Donald Garcia-Dwyer

Total number of ADF members currently in your region:

104

Total number of Groves and Protogroves currently in your region:

4

What was the growth/decline in your region over the last year:

This year was interesting because even though we saw a decline in the amount of active Groves and Protogroves in the region, our overall membership increased. From what I have heard, this is something that is happening in various regions and not just within ADF. I have also had communications with various ADF members who are interested in increasing our community involvement within the region. I am hopeful that the increase in membership is a sign of future increased ADF activity throughout the Upper Midwest.

Regional Events you attended or have occurred in your region over the last year:

Our Groves and Protogroves continued their focus on virtual and in-person gatherings. We did have an increase in in-person events with certain Groves. I tried to virtually attend at least one event per holiday, trying to get around to the various Groves and Protogroves in the region who were hosting virtual rituals. Also, the regional membership has made it clear that they are finally ready to gather in larger groups and that they want to restart the Upper Midwest Regional Retreats, so we have been actively working on and planning said event since December of 2023 and are scheduled to host in early June of 2024.

Non-ADF-centered events with an ADF presence in the past year:

Outside of ADF, I have been going to various local Pagan get-togethers, talking about ADF and what it contributes to the larger Pagan community. I also attended Paganicon in the Twin Cities in March of 2024 to help promote ADF and advertise the Upper Midwest Regional Retreat.

Special accomplishments by ADF members in your region:

Various ADF members have been active within their local communities, but nothing specific regarding special awards or recognitions has been shared or advertised. I know that we do have members working through various study programs, including Mike Kaan, who is working through the ADF Clergy Training Program.

Challenges or Issues in your region over the last year:

As I stated above, this has been an odd year. The number of active Groves has decreased, but the membership is up and it is clear that the overall membership seems more engaged

this year than they have over the last few years because of COVID. We did have some groves leave ADF to do their own thing, indicating that they felt that they could serve their local pagan communities better by being independent, and some shut down due to grove leadership being busy with the demands of life and not having anyone else able to take up the administrative reins. But outside of that, the solitary membership is active and it is clear that new things are budding in various spots throughout the region. So we are focusing on what is in front of us and finding reasons to get together, despite the demands of active and sometimes conflicting schedules.

Clergy Council Report

Officer: Rev. Jean “Drum” Pagano

Contact Information: archdruid@adf.org

ADF Clergy Council Officers

Name	Position
Rev. Jean (Drum) Pagano	- Archdruid
Rev. Sue (Lia Fal) Parker-Wyndham	- Preceptor
Rev. Missy Ashton	- Secretary
Rev. Carrion Mann	- Non-Officer Director
Rev. Gaarik Hamr	- Non-Officer Director

Clergy Council members:

Senior Priests:

- Rev. Melissa S. Ashton (South West Region)
- Rev. Ayliah Cannon (North East Region)
- Rev. Michael J Dangler (Heartland Region)
- Rev. GR (Gwernin) Grove (South West Region)
- Rev. Kelly Kingston (Carrion Mann) (Heartland Region)
- Rev. Jean Pagano (Drum) (Heartland Region)
- Rev. Bryan Perrin (Skraeling) (North East Region)
- Rev. Christopher Temple (Heartland Region)
- Rev. Kirk Thomas (North West Region)
- Rev. Jeffrey Wyndham (Ian Corrigan) (Heartland Region)
- Member #5096

Consecrated Priests:

- Rev. Jan Avende (Heartland Region)
- Rev. Caryn MacLuan (South East Region)
- Rev. Kathleen Peza (North East Region)

Ordained Priests:

- Rev. William E. Ashton II (South West Region)
- Rev. Diane Cacciato (Y derwydd dawnsiog) (Europe Region)
- Rev. David Barron (Skymnos) (South East Region)
- Rev. Julie Desrosiers (Canada East Region)
- Rev. Amber Ferrebee (Heartland Region)
- Rev. Debra (Rowan) Grove (South West Region)
- Rev. Crystal Groves (Heartland Region)
- Rev. Sean Harbaugh (North West Region)
- Rev. Francesca Hedrick (South East Region)

- Rev. Robert Henderson (Upper Midwest Region)
- Rev. Zacchaeus Murphy (South East Region)
- Rev. Lauren Mart (Central Region)
- Rev. Susan Parker-Wyndham (Liafal) (Heartland Region)
- Rev. Ellie Lazzaro (Europe Region)
- Rev. Victoria Selnes (Leona Oigheag) (South West Region)
- Rev. Jason Sprick (Gaarik Hamr) (Heartland Region)
- Member #3508

Retired Priests:

- Rev. John "Fox" Adelman, Ret.
- Rev. Loretta Donlea, Ret.
- Rev. Robert (Skip) Ellison, Ret.
- Member #709

Administrative Business of the Clergy Council

Changes to ADF liturgical standards in the past year:

I have proposed re-adding Bardic Inspiration back into the Core Order of Ritual. This was offered to the Clergy Council list and discussed at several Clergy Council meetings, along with the Clergy Council Retreat. I will be writing to the membership to solicit their thoughts in the next quarter.

Requests for variances from the liturgical standards in past year:

There have been no requests for variances in the past quarter.

New and renewal Clergy credential applications and statuses in past year:

- Rev. Zacchaeus Murphy was Ordained on 3 February 2024. All current priests' credentials renewed for 2024.
- Benjamin Babb completed the Pre-CTP Program and applied for entrance into the CTP Program.
- Mike Kaan completed the Pre-CTP Program and applied for entrance into the CTP Program.
- Hervé Chauméton-Mahé completed the Pre-CTP Program and applied for entrance into the CTP Program.
- All active ADF Priests' credentials were certified for another year.

Inactive and revoked Clergy credentials in past quarter:

One former ADF Priest resigned, and their Clergy Council membership is revoked.

Students and activity in the Clergy Training Program in past quarter:

CTP-Prelim:

Complete - 38

Active - 9

Inactive - 21

Quit - 5

CTP:

Active - 6

Inactive - 42

Quit - 2

Other Clergy Council activity or news in the past year:

Clergy Council Office Hours is currently on hiatus, but I hope to see it returned in a more limited basis in 2024.

The Clergy Council offered the third Dark Moon rite, dedicated to the Cailleach. Once again, the rite was well-received. I want to thank the individual clergy members that participated. The Clergy Council will continue offering and recording High Day Rites for members and the public via Zoom. The next Dark Moon, scheduled for 7 May, will feature the Moon. Here is the list of Dark Moon rites and the honored deities:

- 1st - Earth Mother
- 2nd - Gatekeeper
- 3rd - Cailleach

Critical Thinking may be moving to the Pre-CTP. I feel that its removal from the CTP in the last round of CTP changes did a disservice to our Priests and our Community.

Nature Awareness III has been approved by the Clergy Council for inclusion into the 3rd Circle of the CTP as an elective. Next stop, the Council of Lore.

There is also talk of moving Nature Awareness I to the Pre-CTP. It makes sense for a Nature-Aware religion that this be a class taken early on.

Changes to Clergy Council By-Laws and SOPs were approved by the Clergy Council.

I have been holding 3rd Quarter of the Moon Healing Sessions honoring the Ancestors on a quasi-monthly basis. This will soon be open to all membership.

The Clergy Council Officers will be requiring the submission of one piece of Liturgy from each of the Orders, as is required. The various Orders are:

- The Demeter and Eleusinian Order
- The Order of the Crane

- The Order of the Dead
- The Order of Manannan
- The Order of Raven and Falcon

The 2023 Clergy Council Retreat was held on 6, 7, 8 October 2023. It was primarily a hybrid meeting, as it has been for the last several years. This allows for maximum participation without concern for travel or health-related restrictions. A video was created discussing in depth the Core Order of Ritual. It is currently being edited before release.

We will continue to hold Clergy Council Officer Zoom meetings on the first Saturday of the month and full Clergy Council meetings on the second Saturday of the month, or the second Sunday of each month, alternating.

Accomplishments of the Clergy Council this year:

The first Clergy Council Prayer and Ritual Book is published, part 1 of the Transitions series. The second Clergy Council Prayer and Ritual Book is completed and at the publisher. Entitled "Endings" it is part 2 of the Transitions series. I am now looking for submissions of prayers and rituals for Unions and Dissolutions, for the Transition series. Unions is scheduled to go to the publishers in June 2024.

Six on-demand classes have been produced and recorded, part of an initiative to provide free, on-demand course material for students in the Pre-CTP and the CTP. These courses are:

- Professional Helping Skills I
- Professional Helping Skills II
- Ethics I
- Ethics II
- Critical Thinking
- Liturgical Writing 2.

A Clergy Council Ritual for the passing of Rev. Barbara Wright was performed online for ADF Clergy Council members.

Other comments/information; personal summary of events from the Archdruid:

- I attended Wellspring and oversaw the Annual Meeting.
- I attended Three Rivers and offered two workshops on Moon Practices.
- I attended Pan Pagan in Decatur, Illinois and represented ADF.
- I attended the Rocky Mountain Retreat in Denver and offered a workshop on the Kindreds.
- I attended Paganicon in March and offered an Equinox rite. I also spoke to members in the Druid Suite and throughout the conference. Special thanks to Laurie Froberg

for organizing the Druid Suite. I did offer a workshop, via Zoom, at the Rocky Mountain Divination Presentation. My workshop was called Using the Ogham as a Moon Oracle.

- I was Ordained into the Order of Sirona and the Order of Belenos in RDNA at Paganicon.
- I will be attending Eight Winds and Wellspring, both in May 2024.
- I completed an MSc in Cybersecurity (Information Awareness) in March 2024.
- I intend to visit members in Minnesota, Idaho, and California this year, and other states as the opportunity arises.
- I have become active with the weekly online rituals, and I am hoping that other Clergy members also decide to participate in this activity.
- I produced a Power Point class of Liturgical Writing 2 and offered it to the Clergy Council as a recorded presentation and it will become an on-demand course for our Learning Management System.
- The call for the Annual Clergy Reports went out in January, with a due date of 1 February. Our Continuing Education requirement is about what people have done in the prior year to fulfill the need for Continuing Education.
- The 2024 Clergy Retreat will be held on 4, 5, and 6 October. This will once again be a hybrid meeting, as it has been for the last several years. This allows for maximum participation without concern for travel or health-related restrictions.
- I would like to see members of the Clergy Council undertake a project to raise the awareness of the Clergy Council while working together as a group. While the Dark Moon Rites accomplish this, I would like to include more Clergy Council members.
- I continue to chair monthly Clergy Council Officers meetings on the first Saturday of each month, along with the subsequent full council meetings the next week.
- I continue to attend Kristoffer Hughes online study program for the Anglesey Druid Order. This is being attended by one additional ADF Priest.
- As always, we look to our membership for ideas and suggestions for moving forward.

Initiate Council Report

Officer: Rev. Amber Ferrebee

Contact Information:

2023 was a slow year for the Initiate's Council. While we tried to have a few Zoom events we had little to no participation.

This year (2024) I will be scheduling at least one Zoom event (more if we get people to turn out for them) so that our current students can interact with current initiates, get to know them, and ask questions.

ADF Preceptor Report

Officer: Rev. Kirk S. Thomas

Contact Information: adf-preceptor@adf.org

This has been an interesting year. With the new website and rules for reports, we have gone from requiring reports from all subgroups, to now only requiring them from subgroups that have study programs or who handle money. This should cut back on the number of empty reports we receive.

Dedicant Path

- Individual DP Requirements Submitted - 164
- Individual DP Requirements Approved - 153
- Completed DP's - 9
- Other activity for the DP Preceptor included Mentor placements - 22

I would particularly like to commend Rev. Kathleen Peza for all her hard work administering the Dedicant Path. She notes that we received 183 DP submissions in 2023, excluding those that don't go through the online form, from over 40 different people, which all have to be matched up to determine who has completed all 11 requirements.

Generalist Study Program

- Number of courses submitted and approved - 5

Guild Study Programs

- Bardic Guild SP - Individual course completions approved - 27
- Brewers Guild SP - Individual course completions approved - 0
- Liturginists Guild SP - Individual course completions approved - 9
- Magicians Guild SP - Individual course completions approved - 13
- Naturalists Guild SP - Individual course completions approved - 9
- Scholars Guild SP - Individual course completions approved - 1
- Seers Guild SP - Individual course completions approved - 2
- Warriors Guild SP - Individual course completions approved - 0

Administrator Report

Administrator Overview

Administrator: Jane Wayson

Contact Information:

Administratively ADF is doing well

Annual operational dues have been paid to date. We haven't had any new appointments.

Financially ADF is doing very well

Income for past year is approximately:

- Gen. Funds \$74129.45,
- Membership \$13546.45,
- Publishing \$1775.30.
- Expenses Totals for the year \$1649.15.

Savings accounts totals are

- General \$66854.04
- Restricted \$76337.77

Office Manager Report

Office Manager: Rev. Skip Ellison

Contact Information: office-manager@adf.org

The change over to the new site is in progress, and Victoria is documenting all of the office procedures. It is being kept in a Google Doc called "Office Guidebook," which is available to the MG and office workers. Once the processing of payments is completed, and a final check of all the procedures required, it will be ready for testing.

Prisoner ballots have been mailed out and they are coming back now. 71 prisoner ballots were sent out.

Everything else with the office is going well.

Social Media Manager

Social Media Manager: Benjamin Babb

Contact Information: benxgenx@gmail.com

Summary

Accounts Managed: Facebook Page, FB Members-Only Group, FB Solitaires Group, Instagram, X, and Discord.

- Engagement with ADF's public FB page and Instagram profile have increased over the past few months, as the new blog has provided more content to share and posts have become more frequent as a result.
- My focus has been primarily on managing ADF's public-facing social media and two member's only FB groups. Other members have more involvement in day-to-day operations with Discord. I have posted on X less frequently, but will aim to improve that moving forward.
- There have been no notable incidents that fall outside the normal range of comment moderation.

- Upon a member’s request, a link tree was added to the ADF homepage and Instagram profiles to make it easier for members and new users to access content.
- New member requests to the ADF Members-Only Group have been handled typically within 2 or 3 days of receiving the request. Member removal due to lapsing ADF membership have been executed after sending a FB Messenger reminder about their expired membership.
- My recommendations for improving ADF’s performance in organic search and raising the organization’s public profile have been shared. No actions have been taken and most will be most effective after the website migration is complete and teams have bandwidth for additional optimizations.
- I am grateful for the additional effort on behalf of Crystal, Art, and Jan, who have also spent time on social media activities over the past year.

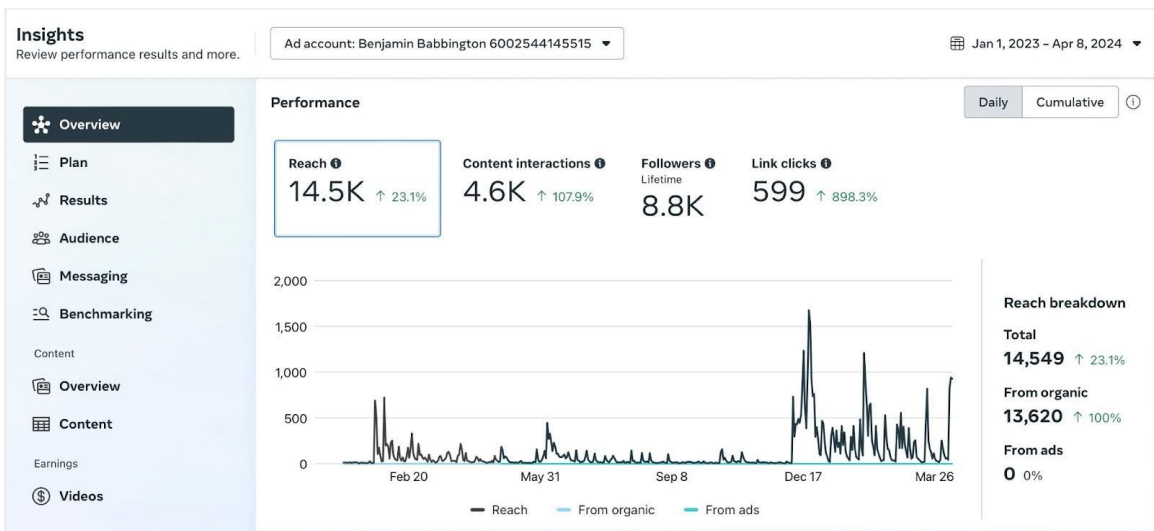
Frequency

The launch of the new blog has been extremely helpful for our social media efforts, especially on Facebook and Instagram. Since November, new posts promoting blog content have been released on a weekly basis, typically at least two per week, though some weeks vary depending on my availability. In addition to sharing our blog content, I have created and shared original social media posts for each ADF High Day and other seasonal events, as well as for special occasions such as life transitions or announcements from the Mother Grove.

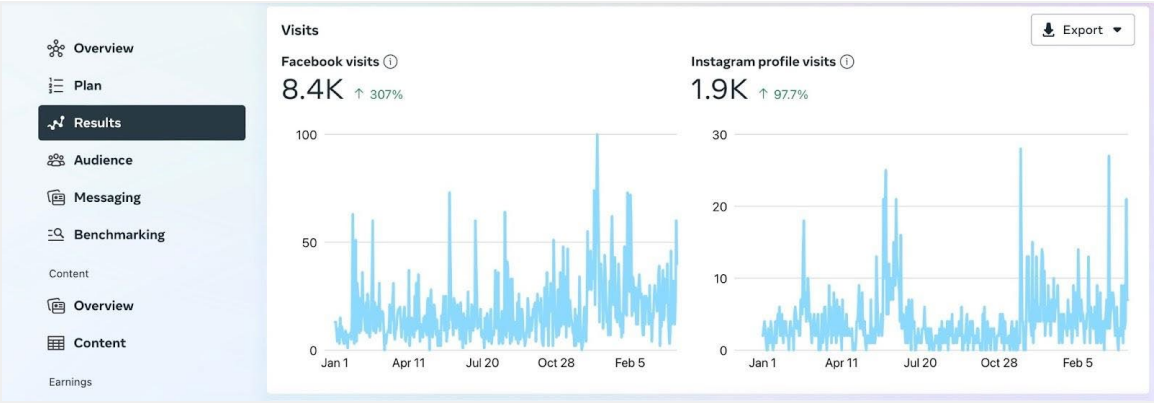
In addition to having a steady stream of content to promote, the new blog has provided an opportunity to direct members and non-members to a single source of information where they can also learn about ADF and apply for membership if they are so inclined.

Impact

ADF’s reach on Facebook has grown significantly in the past few months, as we have more content to share and social media posts have become more regular and frequent.



We have also seen engagement with Facebook and Instagram accounts increase MoM, with the most significant growth occurring around November, when the new blog went live.



SEO, PR, and Next Steps

ADF’s social media has two primary audiences: current members and new users who are unfamiliar with ADF. We need unique strategies and content in place for both audiences.

For new users, social media and PR efforts are often the point of first contact with ADF. This is where their user journey with ADF begins, but the final destination is typically a page on the ADF website such as a blog post, public resource, or announcement.

For members, the website is the primary hub for staying informed, participating in the online community, and making contributions of their own.

I have made recommendations for optimizing the user experience (UX) on the ADF website. These recommendations include adding more photos to the website, customizing blog posts, and making ADF more “human” by identifying our leadership and telling members’ stories. I have also suggested some technical changes to the new website which will improve our organic search performance.

The next steps for expanding social media and PR efforts is to create a temporary committee who can clarify the goals of these efforts, set priorities, and assign ownership of specific tasks.

While I can assist with much of this work, some items will fall outside my technical abilities or current capacity.

Appendix: Most Engaged posts

During the period from Jan 1, 2023 to April 8, 2024, here are some highlights regarding content engagement:

Most Link clicks	#
Blog - Hymn to Inanna	51
Blog - 40th Anniversary Announcement	30
Blog - Saving Seeds with the Cailleach	26
Blog - Magic for Priests - Introduction	24
Blog - Magic for Priests - #1	22

Most commented	#
Announcement - Barbara Wright	16
Seasonal - Calan Gwanwyn	7
Seasonal - Pride Month	6
Hymn to Inanna	5
Blog - What Does it Mean to Be A Druid of This Place?	5

Most Shares	#
Seasonal - Pride Month	43
Seasonal - Solstice Blessings	27
Seasonal - Equinox Blessings	26
Seasonal - Imbolc Blessings	21
Blog - Embracing the Solstice Night	18

Webmaster & Information Manager Report

Webmaster: Arthur Shipkowski

Contact Information: adf-webmaster@adf.org

Last year, when I wrote the Information Manager's report, I talked about Drupal 7's official end of support being in November 1st, 2023. Not long after I wrote that, it was extended to January 5th, 2025. That said, while we're still making some use of the Drupal site, we have a goal to get off of it by the 1st of May. It is my hope that when the membership reads this we will indeed be off of Drupal.

The other item is examinations of new hosting. This has still been ongoing.

One thing I want to mention is the particular support from Rev. Victoria Selnes and Kenneth Kitchen for doing a huge amount of work for the website, mostly focused on the upgrade but also focused on looking ahead for hosting. Without them things would not have progressed this year.

As always, feel free to reach out with any questions!

Chronicler Report

Chronicler: Member # 3159

Contact Information: chronicleradf@gmail.com

During the last year, ADF was able to publish Beginnings: A Book of Rituals and Prayers Selected Works from the ADF Clergy and The Book of Cernunnos edited by John Beckett and Jason Mankey. We are currently about to publish a fourth book, Why Do We Practice: Fundamental Questions in Contemporary Pagan Theology, by Wayne Keysor for publication this year. The text is undergoing final editing. As mentioned in the last report, The Hearthkeepers text was modified for distribution in incarceration facilities in late 2021 and required minor modification subsequently and again last year.

The publication team continues to face a significant shortage of staff. Currently, there’s only one person handling book creation. Despite Rev. G.R. Grove’s heroic efforts in assembling Oak Leaves, the task largely falls on one individual to coordinate all the components. Moreover, crucial roles such as Archivist, Advertisement Director, and News Director remain unfilled at present. We’re fortunate to have a stellar team of proofreaders led by Chief Copy Editor Brenda Nix Lively and Rev. D. Rowen Grove, who, along with myself, provide support to our Editor-in-Chief. Dave “Thexalon” Kleinschmidt serves as our Music editor, and all submissions come from our valued members.

In general, ADF Publishing’s stability is uncertain due to its heavy reliance on just two individuals and a volunteer team contributing over 60 hours per month, along with donated artwork. I would recommend that The Mother Grove carefully assess the importance, funding, and long-term viability of ADF Publishing within the organization.

Organizational Committee Reports

Committee Name	Committee Chair
Fundraising Committee	Rev. Jean “Drum” Pagano
Grove Coordinating Committee	Rev. Rob Henderson
Grove Organizing Committee	Michael Tavola
Library Selection Committee	Tami Olsen
Organizational Review Committee	Rev. Carrion Mann
Public Relations Committee	Benjamin Babb
Reporting Review Committee	Shaz Cairns
Risk Management Committee	Rev. Jean “Drum” Pagano

Fundraising Committee

Committee Chair: Rev. Jean “Drum” Pagano
Contact Information: jeanpagano@yahoo.fr

The Fundraising Committee was reformed late in 2023. The purpose of the committee is to fundraise for ADF, and to come up with ideas to raise funds not only from our members, but from members of the public as well.

Most of the Fundraising in 2023 came to us in the form of bequests. We received \$64,328.89 from 2 bequests from former members to ADF. We will continue to encourage members to remember ADF in their estate plans. I have made a provision in mine for ADF as well. It is best to lead by example.

We will ensure that access to information concerning bequests is readily available on the new ADF website. We will also investigate ways of offering innovative rewards for member contributions.

Grove Coordinating Committee & Grove Organizing Committee

Details about these committees are contained with the Chief of the Council of Senior Druids report.

Library Selection Committee

Details about this committee are contained within the Librarian’s report.

Organizational Review Committee

Committee Chair: Rev. Carrion Mann
Contact Information: carrionmann@gmail.com
Committee Members: Rev. Carrion Mann, Rev. Jean Pagano, Rev. Melissa Ashton, Jeffrey Keefer, Brian Larter
Report prepared by: Rev. Melissa Ashton

In the fiscal year, May 1, 2023-May 1, 2024, we have accomplished much in the Organizational Review Committee (ORC). We have undertaken the revision and creation of new job descriptions for all ADF International positions, including Administrator and Assistant, Blog Editor, Elections Officers 1&2, Chronicler, Graphic Artist, Human Service Resource, Information Manager, Librarian, Office Elf, Office Manager, Hearth Keepers Way Coordinator, and Public Relations Director. Additional Job Descriptions will be added as they are created in partnership with the individuals who currently hold those offices. We created a course template for the new LMS to make it easier to courses to be migrated as well as to create a catalogue of courses similar to what one would see when perusing a

collegiate catalogue. This has not been fully realized as the website has been delayed and courses have not been migrated.

We reviewed and revised the Library Policy and sent to the Mother Grove for approval. This will enable us to acquire and provide the most useful titles to our members. Kudos to Tami for her hard work in this area. We appreciate you!

We created a revised Mission Statement for the organization, which was unanimously approved by the Mother Grove. Much of this wording was derived from the statement of purpose in the organizing documents for ADF Germany.

We created a new policy for the elections process, including vetting third-party vendors for elections, and are currently working on a new job aid in layman's terms for the elections officers to follow. This process has been overly complicated in the past and controlled by folks with a known conflict of interest. We invested in a third-party vendor to help us remove bias and regain trust in the elections process for 2024. We learned much from this maiden voyage into elections via vendor, and we look forward to the next election cycle. We reviewed a Conflict of Interest and Nondisclosure policy which were sent to the Mother Grove for review. We also created an in-kind services receipt for folks who give of their talent to ADF that they may be compensated for their work on behalf of the organization. We created a proposal process for large changes such as website updates, which will help us to be ahead of any downtime or issues that arise due to this important work.

We are currently revising the Mother Grove Handbook and putting together onboarding material for the new officers post-2024 elections. We are also working on hiving off ADF Publications, due to the amount of profit we are earning as well as the royalties we wish to pay to the authors.

There is much continued work to be done, including ensuring the updated documents are added to the ADF Website. I look forward to working with these innovative and dedicated members in the year to come!

Many blessings,
Rev Melissa S Ashton

Public Relations Committee

Committee Chair: Benjamin Babb
Contact Information: benxgenx@gmail.com

This is a new committee and initiative. We held an initial meeting in March, organized by Drum. At that time, we began discussing goals for the committee. The committee is still in the organization phase. The need behind this committee is to raise ADF's public profile and increase general awareness of and interest in ADF. Here are the recommendations and insights we discussed:

- PR strategies are most effective when they use multiple tactics such as website, social media, in-person events including presenting at non-ADF festivals, targeted media placements, and hosting online events, webinars, and roundtables.
- One area where we can improve is making the ADF website more personable. Currently, there are few member stories, almost no photos of members or leaders, and a reliance on stock photos.
- Improving the SEO performance of our site (how frequently and where ADF pages appear for relevant search terms)
- One benchmark that was suggested was the Troth website. It includes profiles for their leadership, and a frequent cadence of online event hosting.

So far the committee has not defined any specific goals. These could include:

- Hosting X number of public online events
- Increasing membership by X%
- Ranking in search for specific target keywords

Future PR efforts will require collaboration and input from the ADF members. PR efforts should be considered a long-term strategy. Defined goals are essential for building a strategy and measuring success.

Reporting Review Committee

Committee Chair: Shaz Cairns

Contact Information: shacairns@gmail.com

The ultimate goal of the Reporting Committee is to have reports that make completing them easier and that they clearly represent what we would like to know about ADF activities as a whole. We feel that reporting should be a place where we can celebrate our achievements and to consider our challenges.

The Reporting committee has not gained much traction, due partially to a lack of volunteers and our current members having other conflicting priorities.

We will endeavour to meet on a more regular basis in the coming year and attempt to remove any outdated or contradictory wordage in the current reports.

Following that, we would like to engage with those that receive reports to work through any improvements that can be made

Risk Assessment Committee

Committee Chair: Rev. Jean “Drum” Pagano

Contact Information: jeanpagano@yahoo.fr

The Risk Assessment Committee was reconvened in 2023. Here are the highlights from the meetings of that committee, which are held quarterly.

The greatest task to date for the Risk Assessment Committee has been the review of Background Checks. The Archdruid reviews background checks and if there is an issue uncovered, the entire Executive Committee is engaged.

- There were no issues encountered in 2023.

The Mother Grove approved a per-incident stipend for the ADF Human Services Specialist. The Risk Assessment Committee was reconvened in November 2023. Here are the highlights from the meetings of that committee.

- Member #9464 has been approved by the Mother Grove as Human Services Specialist.

Agenda Items:

1. The Risk Assessment Committee is tasked with measuring, understanding, and mitigating risk to *Ár nDraíocht Féin*.
2. Factors for mitigating risk:
 - a. The Mother Grove needs to approve the Non-Disclosure Agreement at its earliest convenience. This will be brought up for a vote on 2/29/2024.
 - b. The Mother Grove needs to approve the Recusal Policy, although the policy, as it stands, may need further enhancements.
 - c. The requirement for Groves to remain current with Background Checks needs to be taken care of immediately. Change of Senior Druids requires a background check first before the new Senior Druid is installed. Requests for clarification of background checks MUST be answered, or the Grove Organizer / Senior Druid will be ruled ineligible. The Council of Senior Druids needs to review changes to Senior Druids on a quarterly basis to determine compliance. This could also be a task for the Risk Assessment Committee.
 - d. The immediate transition from Prisoner to Full Member upon release from prison must be discontinued. Access to membership data shall be restricted from members that present a risk (SOR) to other members.

Other Service Positions

Chaplaincy Support Services

Contact Person: Rev. Kirk Thomas

Contact Information: prisoner-relations@adf.org

For incarcerated individuals:

Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, Inc.

Chaplaincy Support Services

1147 Brook Forest Ave #355,

Shorewood, IL 60404

Recap & Overview

As this is the first annual report for this committee, I will do a bit of a recap of the last few years, at least as far as services are concerned:

During the pandemic, I made a number of videos to send to chaplains for their inmates. I only sent these packages of 14 videos to those that requested them. These were one video for each of the 8 High Days, plus one video on making Brigit Crosses out of paper. There were also five videos on Cosmology and Religion based on my book, "Sacred Gifts: Reciprocity and the Gods". Part way through these mailings, I also added two videos of interviews with Wiccan authors sent me from Moon Books, as well as two videos on the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. I had them, and folks requested them, so I just included these four videos as well. Probably starting in 2022.

Video Mailings to Chaplains

- 2021: sent out 33 packages to prisons.
- 2022: 9 packages went out.
- 2023: 10 packages
- 2024 so far: I've sent out 3.

Prison Chaplains continue to request these mailings.

Prison Volunteers

A few folks involved in ADF's prison ministry have been visiting prisons for the High Days, at least. Most of my visits were to the Coyote Ridge Corrections Center in Connell, WA. Other than myself, Shane Coineandubh has been going in to the Stafford Creek Corrections Center in Aberdeen, WA, and Rev. Jan Avende has been going into a prison in Ohio. We may have other members visiting prisons, but I'm not aware of them.

Letter Writing

We also have folks answering letters, which are usually sent to the ADF Office where Office Manager Skip Ellison scans them and then uploads them to a program called Asana. There we can access them and answer them. Thanks to my workshop at Wellspring last year, we now have a team of three folks plus myself doing letters. We got many, many letters over the course of a month, and I'm afraid I have to report that we are backlogged at the moment. We are always delighted to welcome new volunteers onboard.

Prison Worship Groups of *Ár nDraíocht Féin*

Prison Worship Groups are overseen by the Chaplaincy Support Services (a part of the Clergy Council)

- Frog Stone Circle - Coyote Ridge Correction Center
- Fellowship of the Eternal Spring - Green Rock Correctional Center
- Cosmic Oaks - Coffee Creek Correctional Facility
- Corvus Harborsted - Stafford Creek Corrections Center
- Squirrel Holler Circle - Monroe Correctional Complex

Listmaster Report

Listmaster: Rae mac Lugh

Contact Information: rae.maclugh@gmail.com

There were no significant incidents or issues to report in FY23.

Librarian Report

Librarian: Tami Olsen

Contact Information: keilantra.codex@gmail.com

Over the last year the Library has grown a little bit. We now have 40 titles available for members. We've had 128 total checkouts in the last year. 22 new users have registered this year.

Much of the time of the Librarians has been devoted to creating and populating the lists of study program books and a list of potential/requested books. Each book on the list must be manually searched for to see if it's available for purchase yet, and that takes a lot of time!

As we go into the next year, we'd like to see some of the requested books get put on the digital shelves through the new Library Selection Committee. We'd also like to create some library related pages on the website once it's live to make it easier to know what's available at our digital library and where else you can look for books that aren't available.

We'd like to find better ways to get the word out about the library inside the organization, and interact with the membership. And of course we will keep working our way through our book list, watching for books to become available.

Visit our Memorial Library at <https://adf.overdrive.com/>

Hearth Keepers Way

Coordinator: [open] report filed by Rev. Jan Avende

Contact Information: hearthkeeper@adf.org

There are currently 241 Hearths of ADF, participating in the work of ADF Hearthkeeping and Druidry.

We are currently seeking a Hearth Keepers Way Coordinator who will be Responsible for coordinating all aspects of the Hearthkeeper's Way, including answering questions, coordinating applications, sending certificates, and maintaining all records related to

this method of worship for the folk of Our Druidry. The volunteer job posting can be found here: <https://www.adf.org/members/org/volunteers.html>

ADF Blog

Editor in Chief: Rev. Jan Avende

Contact Information: blog@adf.org

The ADF Blog went live this past year, and so far has been a great success. It has helped to increase our reach across social media, provide a source of information about ADF that isn't behind a paywall, and allowed an outlet for our members to share their vast knowledge.

We have been posting regularly on Wednesdays, and posting educational series on Mondays. The plan is for the regular Wednesday postings to continue, and for the Monday educational series to come and go based on when we have them. The Wednesday blog entries are a mixed collection of columns.

- “Many Voices, One Fire” is our general member-submitted content column
- “From the Archives” are posts that highlight old Oak Leaves articles, which often haven't made it out of pdf format, so this offers the additional value of bringing them back into a searchable format
- “Druidic Discussions” highlights conversations that are happening within our social media and elists
- “Lessons from the Wood” is the Monday educational series column

We are always looking for new content to share. Everyone is an expert in something, and everyone has valuable insight to share. Submissions can be previously posted content from your own blog, as the ADF Blog will link back to the original. Additionally, submissions can be multimedia. We welcome traditional blog style essays, YouTube videos, podcast audio and transcripts, art, stories, poetry, etc.

For submission guidelines: <https://ng.adf.org/members-area/create-website-content/adf-blog-submission-guidelines/>

- To submit via the website: <https://ng.adf.org/members-area/contribute-to-the-website/submit-a-blog-post/>
- To submit via email: blog@adf.org

Also, we are currently seeking an additional blog editor, who will assist in identifying, editing, and preparing weekly blog posts for ADF's public blog. They'll work collaboratively with the Blog Editor-in-Chief and Social Media Team to communicate ADF to our internal community and external public. The volunteer job posting can be found here:

<https://www.adf.org/members/org/volunteers.html>

Goals for the Organization

Report on Last Year's Goals

Below are the goals the Mother Grove set for themselves & the Organization, and under each goal some ways that we achieved or made progress in that area.

Goal 1: Launch new website

A searchable and revised website, including all information from the previous website, will be completed and available for individual and organizational use by November 1, 2023.

Point of Contact: Art Shipkowski

Progress/Completion: A searchable and revised website, including all information from the previous website, will be completed and available for individual and organizational use by November 1, 2023.

Goal 2: Implement Learning Management System (LMS)

A new Learning Management System (LMS) will be implemented by November 1, 2023. Additional improvement to the study program system, including a template for courses, a course catalogue, and revised pre-requisite process will be implemented by March 1, 2024.

Points of Contact: Rev. Carrion Mann; Rev. Kirk Thomas

Progress/Completion: the full transition to the new website and full functionality for the Learning Management System have yet to be realised.

Goal 3: Update elections process

We will create a revised elections process to promote clarity, equity, and transparency by January 1, 2024.

Point of Contact: Rev. Carrion Mann

Progress/Completion: ADF use of eBallot will allow us to have our next International Election and subsequent elections held on the eBallot website, instead of our own.

Goals for 2024

Below are our goals for the 2024 fiscal year. We've selected our top three priorities for this coming year, and formatted them according to non-profit best practices.

Goal 1: ADF International

Create a process for ADF branches in non-US countries to be recognized as legal entities by their local governments, and how the international branches of ADF will relate to each other. ADF Germany will serve as a pilot.

Point of Contact: Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano

Goal 2: Enhanced Annual Reporting

Stage 1: Revise Annual Reporting process and documentation for release to the general public with information about organizational performance in public-facing areas. Annual General Meeting content would cover the officer year (May-May) and supplement the annual reporting.

Stage 2: Once we align the annual report to the calendar year, we will supplement the annual meeting officer reporting to reflect January to May.

Point of Contact: Rev. Jan Avende & Shaz Cairns

Goal 3: Raising ADF's Profile

Create a committee to work on the various aspects of raising the ADF profile online (includes SEO and PR). We will seek a volunteer from within and if unsuccessful in finding a candidate, we will engage outside expertise.

Point of Contact: Rev. Jean "Drum" Pagano & Benjamin Babb

Volunteer Opportunities

The collective experiences of our ADF members represent the latent power to build our personal practices, strengthen our organization, and support the broader Pagan community. Volunteerism builds trust among members, as it fosters teamwork, creativity, intrinsic self-esteem, group buy-in, and direct involvement in helping our religion advance and strengthen.

The current ADF Volunteer Coordinator (VC) is Jeffrey Keefer, who can be reached via email at jeffrey@fulbert-avebury.com or nod2@adf.org. Please feel free to email Jeffrey with any questions or a statement of intent and evidence of experience or ability to learn. We thank you in advance for considering these areas of service.

If you want to get more involved in ADF and are looking for a way to serve while working collaboratively with a fantastic group of volunteers, one of these volunteer roles may be an opportunity to consider!

Open Positions

ADF currently has the following volunteer positions:

ADF Blog Editor

Assist in identifying, editing, and preparing weekly blog posts for ADF's public blog. Works collaboratively with the Blog Editor-in-Chief and Social Media Team to communicate ADF to our internal community and external public. We welcome statements of interest or questions!

ADF Annual Awards

Good Fire Award

Recognizes exceptional liturgical contributions to ADF & the pagan community

Awarded to: Skeggi H. Katrinssonr

Skeggi H. Katrinssonr has written a complete book of rituals in the Northern Tradition following the Core Order of Ritual. He is the current leader of the Frog Stone Circle Worship Group at the Coyote Ridge Corrections Center in Connell, WA. You can download the complete pdf at <https://ng.adf.org/members-area/member-contribution-complete-book-of-rituals/>

Nature Awareness Award

Recognizes excellence in the areas of nature awareness and/or conservation efforts.

Awarded to: Thornhaven Grove, ADF

Thornhaven Grove has been hard at work improving their land to be more in tune with the local ecosystem. They are a great example of how honoring the land can start in your own backyard, using the landscape as it already exists to create sacred spaces.

Excellence in Service Award

Recognizes exceptional public service work supporting local and/or world communities

Awarded to: Mountain Ancestors Grove, ADF

While this has been a quiet year for many groves and individuals across our organization, this year I'd like to recognize Mountain Ancestors Grove for the tireless work they have done over the past decade, and for being an example for what activism can look like for our religious communities. They have attended protests to support indigenous people, as well as other marginalized people. They've stood in the line of fire on those protest lines. They've also delivered food, clothes, medicine, and tools (not to mention the expert hands to help those resources be used) in the wake of disaster and conflict to support effected communities.

Vision Award

Recognizes demonstrable commitment to the Vision and Mission of ADF

Awarded to: Virtual Fire Protogrove

Virtual Fire Protogrove has continued to offer consistent and excellent rituals, discussion groups, workshops, and fellowship to the online community.

Appreciation Awards

Recognizes members who have gone above and beyond expectations in their efforts for ADF.

This year, as I've read the reports, I have noticed that there are many groves and individuals putting effort into interfaith work. I (Rev. Jan Avende) have been heavily involved in this for many years, from giving talks at universities, to joining panel discussions, to joint community service work, and now into prison chaplaincy. This is so important in our current geo-political climate, because only through understanding can we build empathy and community. One of the antidotes to intolerance is information. So, I'd like to recognize the following groups and individuals for the contributions they've made toward this cause.

Shaz Cairns, for her work with advocate and spiritual coordinator James to bring a deeper understanding of paganism into prisons in Australia

- ADF Germany Members, for their participation in the Long Night of Religion in Berlin
 - Mitglieder des ADF Deutschland für ihre Teilnahme an die Lange Nacht der Religionen in Berlin
- Paumanok Island Protogrove, for their work at the Gathering of Light Interspiritual Fellowship
- Linda Kazalski, for her work planning and participating in the Norfolk Interfaith Pride Event
- Rev. Lauren Mart, for her work promoting a vision of Druidry that is something people of any faith can find meaning from, and teaching that in UU spaces
- Rev. Ayliah Cannon, for her spiritual support and counseling to a multifaith community, and her work with UU churches to teach about paganism
- Rev. Kirk Thomas, for his prison ministry work at Coyote Ridge Corrections Center, and his work as a member of the Mount Adams Ministerial Association.
- Shane Coineandubh, for his prison ministry work at Stafford Creek Correctional Center
- Jeffrey Keefer, for his work with the Spiritual Paths Institute
- Rory Bowman, for his work advocating for neopagan offerings in ritual to the WADOC's Religious Advisory Council

Volunteer of the Year

The Archdruid recognizes an individual who has had a positive impact and/or done exceptional work for ADF

Awarded to: Rev. Kathleen Peza

When I became clergy in ADF, as part of my oath, I swore to “further dedicate myself to continue my endeavors to the program of study of *Ár nDraíocht Féin*”. This is an oath I have taken seriously, and I have taken courses in every study program in ADF.

The Dedicant Program is the gateway to our Study Programs. Over the many years, I became aware that many people did not complete the Dedicant Program because of a) the High Day requirements; and b) the Book reports. When people work hard on the Dedicant Program *or any study program* and must drop, they despair.

When I became Archdruid, I made High Day videos readily available so that people who could not attend High Day rites could watch them nonetheless and have them count towards their DP. Yet, since the entirety of the Dedicant Program needed to be turned in at one time, the number of completions for the Dedicant Program were still quite low.

I approached the Mother Grove a number of years ago to break the submission of the Dedicant Program into 11 pieces, one for each of the sections and, after some initial resistance, this dream of mine was able to come true in the last few years.

Since the submission of these courses is not through our regular SP Tracker program on our website, we needed a methodology to make this possible. Rev. Jan Avende put together a Google form to allow for the submission of these course.

The real onus of working the Dedicant Submissions has fallen onto the Deputy Preceptor for the Dedicant Program, Rev. Kathleen Peza, and she must take each submission, log it, send it to a reviewer, look for approval, correction, and finally course completions. This is a tireless job, and she has done it exceptionally well. In 2023, Kathleen handled over two hundred individual course submissions. She has taken a temporary solution and made it a workable solution, which benefits many of our members.

For this Herculean effort, in ensuring that no student despairs and that everyone who wishes to progress through the Dedicant program can do so at their own pace, it is my pleasure to name Rev. Kathleen Peza as the 2023 ADF Volunteer of the Year.

Omen for the Upcoming Year

As we look to the year ahead, Rev. Jean 'Drum' Pagano drew an Omen using the ogham, which is his divination tool of choice. The exercise, as always, is a look to the past, a view of the present, and an expectation for the future. Here is what he sees:



Ogham set courtesy of Rhiannon's Apothecary

The Ancestors – Saille – the Willow

The willow is a resilient, water-seeking tree. Due to the watery nature of Saille, we can feel a connection to the Ancestors. These Ancestors are not only our personal Ancestors, but the Ancestors of ADF.

The willow bends, but doesn't break, and the Ancestors remind us that they are always there for us, offering wisdom, guidance, and presence, whenever it is needed. When we open the Gates through the Well, we find ourselves with a direct conduit to the Ancestors of Family, of Heart and Hearth, and those of the Bone. The Ancestors of the Bone are the deep ancestors buried in the ground beneath our feet. In some way, and after many years, they seemingly become one with the ground upon which we stand. When you call to the spirits of place, remember to call out to those distant ancestors as well. To understand the land, it is sometimes important to become the land.

The Nature Spirits – Gort – the Ivy

Ivy is resourceful. It seeks a path inside and will find nooks and crannies where it can enter and journey within. The journey within is a journey within us, but also a journey to the heart of this Middle Realm. We are Druids, live in the middle realm with the Nature Spirits. One of the advantages of looking within, for accomplishing this introspection, is to discover that are not outside of the Nature Spirits looking in, but in fact, are within the realm of the Nature Spirits looking around. When we look within ourselves to the true center, we find that we and the forest are one. We look to the Nature Spirits for an understanding of the cycles in our lives, be they annual, or of longer duration, and we understand that we are a

part of those cycles. This ogham reminds us to regularly seek and acknowledge that connection.

The Shining One – Nuin – the Ash

The ash is the world tree, with roots deep in the Earth Mother, with branches reaching high into the sky, and with its trunk spanning the world of the Ancestors, the Nature Spirits, and the Shining Ones.

There is a well at the base of the world tree. In our cosmology, this well is the well of the Ancestors. This well of memory is the collective memories of all that have gone before and who are a part of the path that we follow. The cool waters of potential feed the well of the Ancestors. The branches, high at the top of the world tree, seek the fires in the heavens, which bring nourishment and life to the tree. The Shining Ones, living in the heavens, shine down their blessings and their magic on the world tree, and on us. There is a continuity that runs across the branches of the world tree, so that what happens at the base influences what happens at the crown.

Taken Together:

We remain resilient, fueled by the wisdom and guidance of the Ancestors. We look within, to gain a broader understanding and to recognize and realise our places among the Spirits of Nature. We understand that the world tree connects all of the realms and that they are all connected and furthermore, that what we do here affects the entire length and breadth of the world tree.

This is what I see, as we move forward into our 41st year.

Blessings,
Jean (Drum) Pagano
Archdruid, ADF

NOTE TAKING PAGE: