

# **Raven Wood Grove**

## **Bylaws**

### **Article 1. Grove Purpose**

Raven Wood Grove, ADF, is a nonprofit religious, educational, scholarly, artistic, and charitable association, organized to practice the full spectrum of legal activities appropriate for a religious congregation. As a local congregation of Ár nDraóicht Féin, a Druid Fellowship, Inc. (ADF), Raven Wood Grove, ADF, shall follow the ADF bylaws.

To serve the spiritual and educational needs of the Northern Illinois community, Raven Wood Grove, ADF, provides public Druidic ritual and worship, classes and discussion groups in Druidic arts and lore, opportunities to enhance and deepen the spiritual development of our membership, service to enhance and sustain our local communities and environments, and religious support of the community in the Druidic way, (e.g. counseling, blessings, advising, et al.).

As set forth by the ADF bylaws, Raven Wood Grove, ADF, shall provide open public worship at all of the High Days; a public service must also be completed each quarter.

### **Article 2. Non-Profit Nature**

Raven Wood Grove, ADF is organized exclusively for charitable religious, educational and scientific purposes including for such purposes the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code or a corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to, its members, directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article 1 of these bylaws.

No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation, and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these bylaws, this Corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes of this Corporation.

Upon the dissolution of this Corporation, the Leadership Council shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the Corporation, dispose of all the assets of the Corporation exclusively for the purposes of the Corporation in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for Neopagan religious, educational or charitable purposes as shall at that time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 as revised (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Leadership Council shall determine.

Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such Neopagan organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

## **Article 3. Calendar**

In the Druidic way we honor the eight High Days (quarter and cross-quarter days) as set up by the ADF bylaws, beginning with (in the Celtic tradition) Samhain. The dates of these High Days are set forth in Article 3:2 of the ADF bylaws.

In addition, Raven Wood Grove, ADF, may honor traditional ethnic holidays as agreed upon by a vote of the voting members.

## **Article 4. Categories of Membership**

Persons under the age of 18 must adhere to the ADF bylaws pertaining to them.

### **Full Grove Member**

A Full Grove Member is defined as a person who is both an ADF Member and a Local Grove Member. Full Grove Members have voting privileges in both the ADF and Grove elections, and are awarded one vote per year as a member. Full Grove members receive both Grove literature and ADF publications.

### **Local Grove Member**

A Local Grove Member is defined as a person who contributes a specific minimum monthly donation to the Grove (see Article 10, Donations and Allocations) and has been a participant from one High Day to another. Local Grove Members may participate in decision-making discussions, voice their opinions, and are welcome to all meetings and events, but have no voting rights in ADF or Local Grove matters. All Local Members receive Grove literature and events happenings.

### **ADF Member**

An ADF Member is defined as a person who is current with their ADF donations but not a Local Grove Member of Raven Wood Grove, ADF. ADF Members are welcome to all meetings and events but have no voting rights in Local Grove matters.

## **Article 5. Voting Members**

Voting members are those members of Raven Wood Grove, ADF, who are Full Grove Members; are current with their donations to both the ADF and Raven Wood Grove, ADF; and have not resigned from ADF or been expelled.

Each voting Grove member shall have one vote after they have been a Full Grove Member from one High Day to another (e.g., from Samhain to Winter Solstice, Oimelc to Spring Equinox, etc.) This shall be their one vote for that year. On the anniversary of receiving their first vote, each voting member shall receive one additional vote for each continuous year that they remain a voting member.

A gap of more than three months from the expiration of membership in Raven Wood Grove, ADF, to renewal shall constitute a discontinuity of membership and cause the loss of all accumulated votes and related privileges. Any discontinued member may petition the Raven Wood Grove, ADF, Executive Council for a reinstatement of their initial membership date and thus the recovery of accumulated votes and privileges, upon payment of donations in arrears.

Individuals who have been ADF members prior to becoming Full Grove Members of Raven Wood Grove, ADF, shall, only after becoming a Full Grove Member of Raven Wood Grove, ADF, receive two-thirds (2/3) of their accumulated votes accorded to ADF Members as calculated in Article 5:2 of the ADF bylaws. All vote calculations

shall be rounded up to the nearest whole number.

### **Quorum**

Except as explicitly stated otherwise within these bylaws, a quorum shall consist of those voting members representing 60 percent of the total number of votes available to be cast. Said quorum may consist of a mix of members present and members represented by proxies or absentee ballots. All votes referred to within these bylaws are quorum votes. No vote may be taken on any matter unless a quorum is present.

### **Proxy Statements and Absentee Ballots**

Voting Members who wish to receive Proxy Statement forms or Absentee Ballots must request them from the Scribe. Thirty (30) days prior to a scheduled election, the Scribe shall distribute Proxy Statements and Absentee Ballots to all voting members who request them for that election. To be considered valid for an election, an executed Proxy Statement or Absentee Ballot must be received by the Scribe no later than five (5) days prior to the election.

Proxy Statements are only valid for the election for which they are executed. Long-term or permanent Proxy Statements, covering multiple elections or votes in other Grove matters, shall not be accepted.

## **Article 6. Annual Meeting**

The annual meeting of Raven Wood Grove, ADF, shall be at the Celtic holiday of Lughnassadh or within a fortnight thereof as set forth in the Grove calendar of events.

The purpose of the annual meeting shall be the election of Officers and the State of the Grove presentation. The election of Officers shall be in accordance with Article 7 of these bylaws. The yearly State of the Grove presentation shall be presented by the Executive Council and shall consist of a summary of activities relevant to each Officer's position, followed by a discussion and critique of the State of the Grove by the members present.

## **Article 7. Election of Officers**

Elected Officers hold office for a period of three (3) years. The first election of Officers will occur prior to the incorporation of Raven Wood Grove, ADF. These Officers will serve until Samhain three (3) years hence.

To elect Officers, a slate of nominees shall be compiled by a nominating committee and shall be presented at Spring Equinox prior to the triennial election for the consideration of the Grove. All nominees shall be Full Grove Members at the time of nomination. The nominating committee shall consist of three (3) Full Grove Members nominated by the Senior Druid, and subject to Grove majority approval. This committee shall be chaired by the Preceptor.

Triennially, at the Annual Grove Meeting at Lughnassadh, Elected Officers shall be selected by a written ballot vote. In the event of a tie vote the nominating committee shall cast the deciding vote with one vote from each of the three (3) members.

Office of newly Elected Officers shall begin at the following Samhain with an oath-taking rite.

All Officers of the Executive Council are elected by a majority of the vote unless otherwise noted.

Non-Elected Officers shall be selected by a challenge system (explained in Article 8).

## **Article 8. Officers (in Hierarchical Order)**

### **Elected Officers**

The Elected Officers embody the Executive Council of the Grove.

### **Senior Druid**

The Senior Druid is the Administrative and Spiritual Leader. The Senior Druid calls meetings; sets agenda, provides leadership for the Grove, and is ex-officio a non-voting member of all committees. The Senior Druid shall appoint a replacement in the event of a vacant office; shall set liturgical and events calendars for the Grove; and shall be responsible for keeping Grove unity. The Senior Druid shall be responsible for Public Relations and the creation of Grove advertising and literature. The Senior Druid shall be responsible for compiling a quarterly report on the State of the Grove to be sent to the Archdruid and the ADF Scribe and is responsible for reviewing all other officer quarterly reports. The Senior Druid shall also fulfill all other obligations stated in these bylaws.

### **Preceptor**

The Preceptor shall exercise the functions of the Senior Druid in the Senior Druid's absence and shall replace the Senior Druid in the event of incapacitation or resignation. The Preceptor shall act as facilitator and ombudsman ensuring that all members have a voice and opportunity to participate in Grove matters. The Preceptor shall aid members with the study program, and, therefore, must be well versed in the study program requirements.

### **Pursewarden/Registrar**

In capacity as Pursewarden, The Pursewarden/Registrar shall sign all checks, drafts, and other instruments for the Grove; shall have custody of all monies of the Grove; shall deposit all monies and valuables in the name of and to the credit of the Grove in such financial institutions as designated by the Executive Council; shall maintain an inventory of Grove property; shall be responsible for keeping the Grove's financial records; shall receive and disburse Grove funds; and shall be responsible for the organization and supervision of Grove fund-raising. In capacity as Registrar, the Pursewarden/Registrar shall keep records of each member's membership status, voting tally, and subscriptions; and shall maintain the membership list in strict confidentiality. The Pursewarden/Registrar shall have accounting skills and record-keeping skills necessary for the functions of the office. The Pursewarden/Registrar is responsible for compiling a quarterly report of financial records, fund-raising activities, and membership to be submitted to the Senior Druid for review and submission to the ADF Office Manager.

### **Scribe**

The Scribe shall keep minutes of the proceedings of all business meetings of the Grove and shall make said minutes available to all members prior to the next following business meeting; shall distribute Proxy Statements and Absentee Ballots; shall collect executed Proxy Statements and Absentee Ballots; shall receive all incoming correspondence and distribute it to the appropriate Officers for reply; and shall maintain Grove files of meeting minutes and correspondences. All correspondences received shall be brought to the attention of the Grove at the next business meeting. Communications will be entrusted to the appropriate Officer who shall respond and provide the Scribe a copy of the response for the Grove record. The Scribe is responsible for submitting a quarterly report of rituals and minutes to the Senior Druid for review and submission to the ADF Office Manager. Candidates for the office of Scribe shall have the ability to take minutes and typing skills.

### **Non-Elected Officers**

These are the spiritual organizers of the Grove; as such they are peers, so the following list is not in hierarchical order. Along with the Senior Druid they function as the source of guidance and oversee the creation of the Grove public rituals. Each Non-Elected Officer shall actively seek and train an apprentice who shall stand-in in the absence of, and eventually replace, the Non-Elected Officer; each Non-Elected Officer is required to provide for at least one workshop per quarter. Non-Elected Officer terms of office are indefinite and may last until the office is vacated.

### Grove Liturgist

The Grove Liturgist shall coordinate the development of existing and new rituals, rites of passage, handfasting, requiems, and other ceremonial proceedings within the parameters of ADF's history, policies, polytheology, etc.; shall serve as a resource for other Grove members seeking liturgical information; and shall assist the Senior Druid in construction of a Liturgical Calendar. The Grove Liturgist must have a thorough understanding and practice in liturgical design; must have demonstrated competency in language skills, excellent English and familiarity in at least one liturgical pantheon including their Myths and Lore; and must have a relative acquaintance with the Myths and Lore of other pantheons.

### Grove Bard

The Grove Bard is responsible for coordinating all musical/poetic/theatrical elements of ritual, including chants, praise offerings, movement, etc.; shall be able to provide original music and/or poetry; shall be familiar with musical styles of different cultures and how they could be allied within ritual; and shall be more than welcome to create modern myths and recalling of stories for entertainment and general history purposes.

### Grove Diviner

The Grove Diviner is responsible for coordinating/executing divination at rituals, for counseling, advice for Grove matters/decisions; must be highly skilled in the divining arts; must have thorough knowledge and practice of at least one set, established, and recognized system of divination. The Grove Diviner shall be familiar with divination systems and methods of different cultures; shall serve as a resource for Grove members on information involving divination. Shall also be responsible for keeping a Grove Book of Omens.

Additional Non-Elected Officer positions may be added as determined by the Executive Council.

## **Article 9. Financial Records**

All members of Raven Wood Grove, ADF, and ADF are entitled to see the accounting records. The Pursewarden shall make these available for a nominal fee for reproduction and mailing. A financial report consisting of starting balances in all accounts, all income, expense, profit and loss entries since the last report, and the current balances in all accounts shall be submitted for the record by the Pursewarden at each Grove business meeting. The current financial report shall be published in the minutes of each Grove business meeting.

## **Article 10. Donations and Allocations**

An amount specified by the Executive Council shall serve as the monthly minimum donation to the Raven Wood Grove, ADF, thus entitling members to Grove privileges. The executive Council shall specify a percentage of the donation to be set aside toward the initiation or renewal of an individual's ADF Membership. After one year of Local Grove Membership, or before if the required ADF donation is fulfilled, each Local Grove Member must be an ADF Member. A percentage of the monthly donations, at the discretion of the Executive Council, may be given as a donation to the support of the Mother Grove. The amount of monthly donations, and the disbursement thereof, shall be reviewed at the annual meeting. The suggested minimum donation may be revised by the Executive Council at the annual meeting. All amounts received and disbursed shall be made Grove knowledge. The Executive Council shall allocate funds for Grove events. The Pursewarden shall disburse these funds.

## **Article 11. Creation of Study Groups and/or Guilds, Committees, and Other Subgroups**

Grove members are encouraged to form study groups with the approval of the Executive Council. Closed groups

shall consist of no more than one half of the Grove membership. Appropriate topics for these study groups shall fall under the beliefs within the Preamble of the Ár nDraóicht Féin bylaws.

### **Study Groups and other Subgroups**

May be formed at any time but must have a purpose and a result; therefore, at least two persons must be in a Study Group. Study Groups and Subgroups may be closed groups and are not required to submit a report. However, these groups must adhere to all Raven Wood Grove, ADF, and ADF bylaws.

### **Guilds**

Proposals for the formation of any Guild shall be brought to the Executive Council for review prior to formation of the Guild. Each Guild shall be headed by a Guildmaster or Guildmistress who shall be responsible to the Executive Council for the operation of the Guild. All Guilds shall file quarterly reports on the State of the Guild with the Executive Council and the ADF Office Manager. All Guilds shall honor the spirit of the Preamble of Ár nDraóicht Féin bylaws and the ADF Study Guide.

### **Committees**

May be formed during any business meeting but must have a purpose and a result; therefore, at least three persons must be on a committee and a written or verbal report on progress must be submitted at every business meeting for inclusion in the business meeting minutes. The Senior Druid is ex-officio a non-voting member of all committees.

## **Article 12. Discrimination**

Membership and rank in Raven Wood Grove, ADF, attendance at public or semipublic Raven Wood Grove, ADF, activities, and participation in any Druidic study program shall not be denied to any person on the basis of race, ancestry, color, physical disability (except as mentioned elsewhere in this article), age, gender, or affectional orientation, but may be denied to individuals practicing creeds inimical to Neopagan Druidism.

Membership within Raven Wood Grove, ADF, positions of office and clergy, and other such positions of responsibility and trust as the Grove may determine shall be granted only by practicing Neopagans who are not simultaneously practicing a creed inimical to Neopagan Druidism. As used herein, "inimical creeds" shall include varieties of Conservative Monotheism, Atheism, Demonism, Racism, or other such creeds, as identified in the ADF bylaws.

Proven communication or behavior of a virulently racist, sexist, homophobic, heterophobic, anti-Semitic, or otherwise bigoted manner shall be grounds for expulsion from Raven Wood Grove, ADF, and subsequent expulsion/suspension from ADF, as described in Article 13 of these bylaws. This does not include strong verbal statements about the theology, history, or psychological characteristics of other religions.

All organizers of public and semipublic Raven Wood Grove, ADF, activities shall make strenuous efforts to facilitate the participation of differently abled individuals. Nonetheless, all aspirants to any given rank or position must be able to meet all the relevant qualifications previously determined for said rank or position, unless the Executive Council shall rule otherwise in a particular instance.

## **Article 13. Expulsion, Suspension, Resignation, or Impeachment of Members and Officers**

Raven Wood Grove, ADF, may, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, suspend or expel any member confessing to or found guilty of committing felony crimes-with-victims, as defined by criminal and civil law and current criminological opinion, or for proven and documented disruptive or abusive conduct which works directly against the aims, activities, or welfare of Raven Wood Grove, ADF, or its members.

If a member under consideration for suspension or expulsion is an Officer, said member may be suspended or expelled only by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the remaining Officers, and only after review by the Mother Grove.

Disruptive or abusive conduct does not include the temperate expression of disagreement, such as public or private written or verbal criticism of Raven Wood Grove, ADF, or its leadership; vigorous debate over matters of scholarship, art, spirituality, or politics; the circulation of petitions to the Executive Council; the organizing of other members into voting blocs; nor mere rudeness, thoughtlessness, or lack of social skills.

Disruptive or abusive conduct does include the spreading of slander or libel against Raven Wood Grove, ADF, or its leadership; bigoted communication or behavior; or active efforts to persuade members to quit or dissuade non-members from joining Raven Wood Grove, ADF.

In the case of a person who was declared temporarily or permanently incapacitated at the time of said person's resignation or removal from a position of responsibility, the Executive Council shall require a reevaluation of said person's competency similar to the process which has declared incapacity, before said person may seek election or appointment.

Members may resign from membership at any time for personal reasons, and will be eligible to rejoin Raven Wood Grove, ADF, at a later date. Any member whose donations lapse for a period of three months or more shall be deemed to have resigned and will no longer receive Grove literature. If a resigned member should decide to rejoin at a later date, said person's votes shall be calculated according to their ADF standing.

Suspended, expelled, or resigned members may not hold office or act in any way as representatives of Raven Wood Grove, ADF. Expelled or resigned members have no right to receive any publications, and may not continue to participate in Druidic study programs by Raven Wood Grove, ADF.

Members who have been suspended or expelled may, as stated in Article 19:8 of the ADF bylaws, be banned permanently or temporarily from attending Raven Wood Grove, ADF, activities, including public worship. Such bans shall be published immediately in Grove publications. They may be published elsewhere in the case of very serious crimes.

## **Article 14. Amendments and Replacement of Bylaws**

Amendments to these bylaws may be made at any annual or special meeting or referendum by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire voting membership. Amendments shall be incorporated into the bylaws at the annual meeting and revised copies of the bylaws shall be sent to all Grove members and the Mother Grove.

Every nine years, from the year of incorporation, at the Grove annual meeting, the voting members of Raven Wood Grove, ADF, shall decide by two-thirds (2/3) vote whether to retain the current set of bylaws. Said decisions shall be made after all other Electoral matters have been settled. Should the results be negative, a Bylaws Revision Committee shall be formed. The members of said committee shall include the Preceptor, who, as Members' Advocate, shall head the committee, the Senior Druid, two (2) other Officers of Raven Wood Grove, ADF, either Elected or Non-Elected, and two (2) voting members of Raven Wood Grove, ADF, who do not hold office. The annual meeting may not end without these six being selected and approved by majority vote of the voting members participating in body or proxy.

The Bylaws Revision Committee shall have one year to produce a proposed new set of bylaws, during which time the old bylaws shall be in effect. Halfway through that year an early draft shall be presented at the monthly business meeting for inclusion in the published minutes of that meeting for comment by the membership.

At least six weeks prior to the following annual meeting, the Bylaws Revision Committee shall publish and distribute to the voting members a proposed new set of bylaws. At that Grove annual meeting, alterations to the proposal shall be debated and passed by a majority vote of those participating in body or proxy. The final set of

proposed new bylaws shall then be voted upon as a whole, with a three-quarters (3/4) vote of the entire Raven Wood Grove, ADF, voting membership necessary for passage. The quorum for this vote shall therefore be 75 percent of votes available for cast.

Should a quorum not be available or should the new Bylaws not be passed, the old Bylaws shall continue in effect for the next nine (9) years.

Upon the passing of the new bylaws, they shall come into effect upon the following Samhain, completely replacing the previous set of bylaws at that time. It shall be the duty of the existing Executive Council to notify the Mother Grove and all appropriate civil authorities and to arrange any required elections for new Officers, etc., in keeping with the spirit as well as the letter of the new bylaws.

All new sets of bylaws must contain an article equivalent to this one, allowing for their complete replacement every nine (9) years at the will of the membership.

The preceding by-laws were originally adopted by Raven Wood Grove, ADF, on August 20, 2001 c.e. This edition has been amended and corrected on September 2, 2001 c.e.