

THE AMERICAN DRUID MONITOR

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World Cups

Girls Topless Beach Volleyball

by Druid Tim, Monitor Volley Reporter

Venice Beach -- The "World Cups of Girls Topless Beach Volleyball" will be held this weekend on Venice Beach. Although you would hardly expect it from the name this is a Poetry Festival, sponsored by the wee American Reformed* Irish Druids (AR*ID) sect.

One of the event's organizers, Bard Shamus of the AR*ID sect, was asked about the wildly deceptive name. He explained "We have tried to put on poetry festivals before and the turn outs were abysmal. So we thought we would try using a name that would draw crowds."

Shamus is something of a poet, writing under the delightfully androgynous pen name of James Joyce Kilmer.

They tried to have a poetry festival once on World Poetry Day, according to AR*ID archivist, Art Kifst. It was held in the parking lot of a Grateful Dead show. "Maybe we shouldn't have set up next to the drum circle" Art lamented.

Another time they tried to hold one on William Butler Yeats' birthday, which is in June. Yeats is, of course, the greatest Irish poet of all time, and the ceremonial godfather of the wee, lyrical AR*ID sect.

Unfortunately the weather on the beach in Southern California in June is notoriously nice, and the only event that drew much of a crowd was the bathing suit contest.



Venice, Poetry capital of Calif.

The lads did look good, and Shamus, who is also a surfer, won the "Mr. Poetry" crown, not for his verse, but for his baggys.

Good weather should not be a problem for this poetry festival. The druids have promised cold, clouds, and rain all weekend.

The first week of February is the Irish druidic holiday of Imbolc, 1 of the 4 major holidays of the year. It celebrates the triple Faery Bright who is, among other things, the patroness of poets and poetry. Traditionally it is spent at home, reciting poetry, with maybe a wee drop of the spirits.

Weather

Cold, clouds, and rain all weekend. Did we not already cover this?

***No human sacrifices!**

Daughter Born to Druid

Newgrange -- The Dagda, the "Good God," had a daughter at the crack of Dawn on this morning, a few years back. The Dagda is the sometimes king and sometimes druid of the mythic Tribe of Danu, the Faeries that make up most of the Irish druidic pantheon.

The baby rose straight up into the Sky and received her brilliance directly from the Sun.

Her name is Bright, she is a triple goddess in Irish mythology, and the beginning of February is her holiday, called Imbolc.

We are always getting questions about the mythic "triple goddesses." This is tough. Sometimes they are triplet sisters; sometimes the same person as maiden, matron, and crone; and sometimes they just seem to be three different goddesses with related interests.

Frankly, we will worry about it more when all those pesky Christian folk can explain their "trinity" so it makes sense.

3 things are important about Bright for this holiday -- She is the goddess of poets and poetry. Also, although she is an Irish druidic mythic creature, she can show up wherever Irish folk happen to live, and we have heard tell that she really likes Venice Beach. (But then who doesn't?) Finally, she is the goddess of Peace*.

Bright's holiday falls when the weather is often cold and damp, like this weekend, and Irish farmer folk of old could gather around a warm hearth and share long loved poetic tales, or perhaps newly make one, maybe about girls topless volleyball games on the beach.



Groundhog Day

The druids of Iron Age Ireland were seers, diviners, and the meteorologists of their day, and one of their duties during the holy holidays of Imbolc was to figure out how much longer Winter was going to last.

As everyone knows, the foul weather of Winter is brought by the old hag, Cailleach Beara. This is when she goes out to collect firewood if she is planning on much more Winter, but if she has an early Spring in mind she just sleeps in. That is why good weather means 6 more weeks of Winter, and bad weather today means an early Sprint.

In Ireland, of old, badgers or bears served as the National Weather Service, but Americans use groundhogs instead. Look for an early Spring. (-:

***No human sacrifices!**

Poetry Supplement

Winds of May

Winds of May, that dance on the sea,
Dancing in a ring-around in glee
From furrow to furrow, while overhead
The foam flies up to be garlanded
In silvery arches spanning the air,
Saw you my true love anywhere?
Welladay! Welladay!
For the winds of May!
Love is unhappy when love is away!

James Joyce

Trees

I THINK that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the sweet earth's flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has laid;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

Joyce Kilmer

***No human sacrifices!**

Poetry Supplement

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Expostulation and Reply

"WHY, William, on that old grey stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?

"Where are your books?--that light bequeathed
To Beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply:

"The eye--it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.

"Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?

"--Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old grey stone,
And dream my time away,"

William Wordsworth
AD 1798

***No human sacrifices!**

Books Banned in Venice

Venice Beach -- Books will be banned at the Girls Topless Beach Volleyball Poetry Festival this weekend. All the poetry has to be delivered orally, from memory, and not read. But slips and errors and goofs to fend, prompters are allowed, for those lapses all dread.

Ireland, of course, has a grand, glorious, and oft boastfully recounted oral tradition, dating back before the days when her mortal sons even came to live with the Faery Folk on the Emerald Isle. That is why poetry is spoken from the head, and not from a book read.

Saucy rhymes will be about:

"Thar's a fine lass from Venice
By Summer she plays nude tennis
But in seasons more Wintry
She writes fine poetry
And bouncy limericks to menace"

Druids master history, myth,
and family trees, and even law
in rhyme and verse, until it
flows like a gentle breeze,
while their words play in
blessing, charm or curse.

Bards are poet masters too,
whose songs make you laugh or
cry or sleep. Their words mean
to bemuse you, with songs that
are light or sweet or deep.

There will be much to do and
see and hear at this weekend's
Poetry Fest: Old odes, ballads
and songs most dear, and fine,
fresh poets proudly parading
their best.

Venice polyglot Erin is on
the list, she'll enthrall with
couplets and verse in True Irish.
"Is fearr Gaeilge briste, na
Bearla cliste" becomes "Broken
Irish is better than clever
English."

There will be music and danc-
ing and drinking, of course, and
the very popular bathing suit
contest. Bard Shamus brags, in
metric discourse, his torso will
take the Topless Girls Poetry
Fest.



Stick an acorn  in your ear.



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The true names of our officers, editors, and staff are withheld on the advice of our Public Defender.

***No human sacrifices!**

Mog Roith Turns

Venice Beach -- Irish-American pagans are looking forward to an early Spring this year in California thanks to the groundhog's forecast, based on today's cold, cloudy and rainy weather. The season is about to turn.

From California the Sun, Moon, other planets, stars and such rise in the East, arc across the Southern Sky, and set in the West. But at the higher latitudes of Ireland the Night Sky turns, like a great wheel, around the North Star, "An Gaelin" in oldest Irish. The Sun and Moon are attached to the same great Sky wheel. On that wheel the seasons turn.

Mog Roith is a fascinating character from ancient Irish mythology. His name identifies him as the 'Master of the Wheel,' or maybe its servant. He is from a more antiquarian tradition, predating the arrival of Celtic culture in Ireland. In legend he is usually placed with the Fir Bolg people. Mog Roith makes the seasons turn.

Sometimes he is a Sun god, but more often a Sky god, driving a chariot. He can magically transform into a bird. In some legends he is a druid of extraordinary longevity, living through the reigns of 19 kings and countless seasons' turn.

The tales of Mog Roith and the Wheel of the Sky are not consistent. The beauty of AR*ID paganism is that folks can enjoy the myths for their beauty, poetic imagery, and timeless roots in their own ancestral tree. Unlike religions requiring followers to accept their myths as literal truth, AR*ID pagans get to enjoy "myth for myth's sake." Or, as they would say at MGM in Culver City, "Ars Gratia Artis." Like the reels of a movie, the seasons turn.

The Wheel

by William Butler Yeats

Through winter-time we call on spring,
And through the spring on summer call,
And when abounding hedges ring
Declare that winter's best of all;
And after that there's nothing good
Because the spring-time has not come --
Nor know what disturbs our blood
Is but its longing for the tomb.

Almanac

Twilight began at 6:25 this morning, with the Sun peeking over the Eastern horizon at 6:51. He will set at 5:24 this Evening with twilight fading to dark by 5:50. A nearly full Moon set at

4:33 this morning, and will rise again at 3:12 this afternoon.

Venus is the bright Evening Star. She is practically on top of a much fainter Saturn in Aquarius during twilight.

***No human sacrifices!**