

SOVEREIGNTY HORSE RITE
For a New Female Senior Druid
Sonoran Sunrise Grove, ADF
By Rev. Kirk Thomas

This rite is to be performed prior to the Cernunnia ritual at the Grove's Annual Meeting for the installation of the newly elected Senior Druid.

Celebrants:

Orator (or Liturgist if Orator is Senior Druid) – to accompany the Woman and lead the procession.

Man – either the partner of the Senior Druid, or some other comely person.

Bards – to sing the chants

Seer – to purify the Senior Druid

Items needed:

Horse - (mare for a male Senior Druid or a stallion or gelding for a female Senior Druid). The horse is to be tied to a tree near the Circle before the rite.

Carrot and Apple on an altar near the tree.

Water from the Well on the altar near the tree.

Incense stick on the altar near the tree.

At the beginning of the rite, there is a procession led by the Orator, including the Seer, Bard, the Man and the new Senior Druid.

All sing:

Great God Varuna

Great God Varuna, Your Power is Great!
Lord of Order we offer to You!
Giver of Kingship and Giver of Gifts,
Protection and Justice we now ask of You!¹
(repeat until the horse is reached)

¹ Loosely taken from the *Asvamedha*

The Orator and the Man stand on one side of the horse. The Senior Druid stands on the other side, by the altar. The Bards and Seer go to the altar.

All sing "Great God Varuna" until they are in position, flanking the horse. The Seer stands by the Well water on the altar

The Man says:

_____ name of Senior Druid _____, you have been elected as Senior Druid of this Grove. Come and join with the God of Order. Be wed to the Cosmos that justice and truth shall reign in the Grove!

The Senior Druid takes the carrot and apple from the altar and goes to the horse, standing on the other side of its head from the Man.

While the following actions take place, the Bards sing:

Victorious King

Victorious Stallion, return from the Sea
Like fire that burns in the depths.
You are the King, for both good and ill
We honor Your power and strength!²
(repeat until Senior Druid is finished)

While the singing is going on, the Senior Druid feeds a carrot to the horse. After this is eaten, she shares an apple with the horse, eating one part while the horse eats the other.

The Bards stop singing when the horse has eaten.

The Seer says:

Senior Druid! You are wed to the God of Order. Come and be cleansed!

The Senior Druid goes to the altar.

² Loosely taken from the *Asvamedha*

**As the Senior Druid approaches the altar,
The Bards sing:**

Oh Water, Be Quickening
(Adapted from the Asvamedha)

Oh water, be quickening,
Bring us fresh power,
Great joy shall be known by us all!

Your goodness is flowing,
Now let us partake
Like the loving, divine Deities!

Approach you, we do,
In the name of He
To whose dwelling you speeding will go!

Oh waters, now bless us,
Oh waters, we pray:
Oh waters, now give us your strength!

While the Bards are singing, the Seer pours water over the Senior Druid's hands and she uses the water to wash her face.

All process to the Circle for the Oaths of Office.

Orator says:

_____ *name* _____, Senior Druid of the Sonoran Sunrise Grove, ADF!
Take your place upon the Lia Fal!

The Senior Druid stands upon the Lia Fal. He repeats the oath as given to him. This same oath is later administered by the Senior Druid to the other newly elected officers.

Orator says:

I, _____ *name* _____, **(pause)**
now swear to perform the office of _____ *office* _____ **(pause)**
of the Sonoran Sunrise Grove, Ár nDráiocht Féin **(pause)**
To the best of my ability. **(pause)**

To uphold the worship of the Powers (*pause*)
And to bring justice and spirit to us all. (*pause*)
If I should fail in my oath (*pause*)
May the ground open up beneath me (*pause*)
May the sea rise up against me (*pause*)
And may the sky fall upon me. (*pause*)

So be it!

Senior Druid goes to the Main Altar and says:

All you who have been selected for offices in the Grove at our last election, please go to the Lia Fal!

First the Scribe, then the Pursewarden, then the two Non-officer Directors take their turns on the Lia Fal, speaking their oaths.

When all are finished, Orator says:

All hail the officers of the Grove! Hurrah!

The People say:

Hurrah!