

# The Runestone, December 2019

[Campaign Preview](#)

[HTML Source](#)

[Plain-Text Email](#)

[Details](#)

The Runestone: Voice of the Asatru Folk Assembly

[View this email in your browser](#)



Your input is needed to make *The Runestone* a publication filled with events, photos and news. Please feel free to submit any events, news or photos (plain text with attachments) to [therunestone@runestone.org](mailto:therunestone@runestone.org).

[Donate to the AFA](#)



Facebook



Twitter



Website



Email

## WORDS FROM THE ALSHERJARGOTHI





December is here already! 2019 went by so fast. This has been a great year for our AFA family. It is very special to be able to watch how the AFA grows and develops. As we grow and build, the quality of our people continues to refine and advance. This year has seen a new high as far as babies born into our AFA family, these children get to be raised in our church, with our Gods and Folk, something that most of our generation never had. We are truly building immortality with each of these children and all that we do to help them move what we are into the future.

I started by mentioning how fast the year seemed to pass. As I get older, I notice that time passes so very quickly, weeks and months go by in the blink of an eye. As we enter the "holiday season" as we celebrate the 12 days of Yule, I would urge everyone to make a special point to cherish the moments. Holidays are a time of tradition, of family and celebration. It is very easy to be distracted, more so now that we have so much connectivity in the palms of our hands with our cellphones. Productivity and efficiency are very important, staying on top of things and maximizing your ability to do more and achieve greater is admirable. That said, finding and enforcing that balance so that you can be present for things is just as important and requires discipline and perseverance. Take time to cherish moments this Yule, time with family and friends. Take time to feel the Ancestors and the Gods as they join in our holiday cheer.

I want to wish you all the happiest and best Yule yet. Get recharged, full of joy and might. ready to hit the ground running in 2020!

Hail the Gods!  
Hail the Folk!  
Hail the AFA!



Matthew D. Flavel



Alsherjargothi  
[mattflavel@runestone.org](mailto:mattflavel@runestone.org)

## FEAST OF THE EINHERJAR



Feast of the Einherjar at Odinshof was a superbly planned and inspiring end-of-the-year event. Gothi Michael Hunter gathered us in our circle at noon to “Greet the Gods” and to prepare our minds and hearts to help us focus on Tyr, and the concepts of self-sacrifice, strength, and overcoming. He gathered the men for a period of self-analysis and reflection, looking inward, focusing on personal challenges, accepting oneself, and transformation.

We had military veterans among us, and the discussion quickly became intense, emotional, leading to thoughts on how we can use pain and duty to transform, to transcend, to rise as Einherjar, to be the best that is within us. The effect was exceedingly strong for the men with their personal stories of crises and overcoming. Many present felt that this was the most intense, and rewarding, discussion of its kind that we have had at Odinshof.





Gothi Hunter later led us all in the Tyr Blot by bonfire and torchlight, connecting us to the Holy Aesir and Vanir and our noble god, Tyr, as we gave our gifts to the One Handed God and accepted his blessings in return.



Sheila organized a women's session where we had a presentation by Milena Robbins, who has used health and fitness as a form of personal transformation and emotional healing. She gave us tips on creating effective diets and exercise programs, and setting realistic goals to help us achieve what we individually desire. Everyone took away new insights for future goals.





In our spiritual quest for greater connection with our Ancestors, Steve Ingle established the AFA's Genealogy group on Facebook early this year. He is well-known as an avid and accomplished genealogist who is generous in the sharing of knowledge. For those of us ready to delve deeper into family research, Steve explained the merits of various computer apps to help us find just which of our fellow AFA members are, unbeknown to us, also our actual cousins! (And YES! MANY of us have cousins within the AFA. If you'd like to find out more, write to Sheila McNallen: [sheila@runestone.org](mailto:sheila@runestone.org).)

As traditional at our Feast of the Einherjar, we held a Viking-style competition. Whether they were wearing tee-shirts or ties, many of our men stepped up to do these challenges which were a delight to all who watched. The finale was a tug-a-war with people of all ages and sizes participating. What a fun few minutes! And then the feast... Turkey, potatoes, stuffing, salads and assorted pies for dessert. The food was plentiful and the hall filled with good cheer. Afterwards, many of us said early farewells as we had long ways to go before arriving home. Those who stayed ended the night with Sumbel around the fire, as is our tradition.





A long day? Yes, and every minute of it rewarding. Some stayed over the next day, basking in the afterglow and taking the time to make Odinshof sparkling clean for our next event there...and we want to thank each and every one of them for putting in the time and effort.



Maybe we will see YOU next time?



Sheila McNallen  
Folkbuilder "At Large"  
[sheila@runestone.org](mailto:sheila@runestone.org)

## ABOUT THE EINHERJAR

### **The Einherjar: Who They Were and Are.**

*So who were they exactly?*

The lore tells us they were the warriors who fell in battle, but it doesn't say ALL the slain become Einherjar and I think this shows that it was how that warrior LIVED that made him an Einherjar just as much as how he died.

*Let's backtrack a little shall we?*

Perhaps the best way to explain what the Einherjar and their Feast IS would be by explaining what this and they are NOT!

It is not a Romanization of death because we see that a lot today don't we, "Die in battle and go to Valhalla" "Victory or Valhalla" it's even a damn meme, catchy I'll admit but it makes traumatic death into some romantic notion.

Allow me to level with you all. Death, traumatic death is NOT romantic.

*It Is Horrific.*

Upon the setting in of irreversible hemorrhagic shock and due to damage to the internal organs many times a person will involuntarily defecate and urinate themselves in what I can tell you is the beginning of organ failure and many times all the while they are screaming in excruciating pain, begging you to save their life and keep them from that great beyond.

In the olden times the conflict was physically harder but more direct, together side by side upon the field of battle and we can still see this today in the desert, the street, and upon the Yard.

Because while the battlefield has changed and is different what's at stake hasn't and it could be said it is even greater than in that day because more of it stands to be lost.

What the Modern World has in store for us and all peoples is the death of Our Folk Soul.

Those whom died in the service of our Folk were once like you and me and we can be like them and it doesn't require us dying.

It requires us getting back up and keeping on so that when or if our Orlog leads us to a challenge that takes our life we were able to have and able to work our Wydr so that it is a death that cements us as Einherjar.

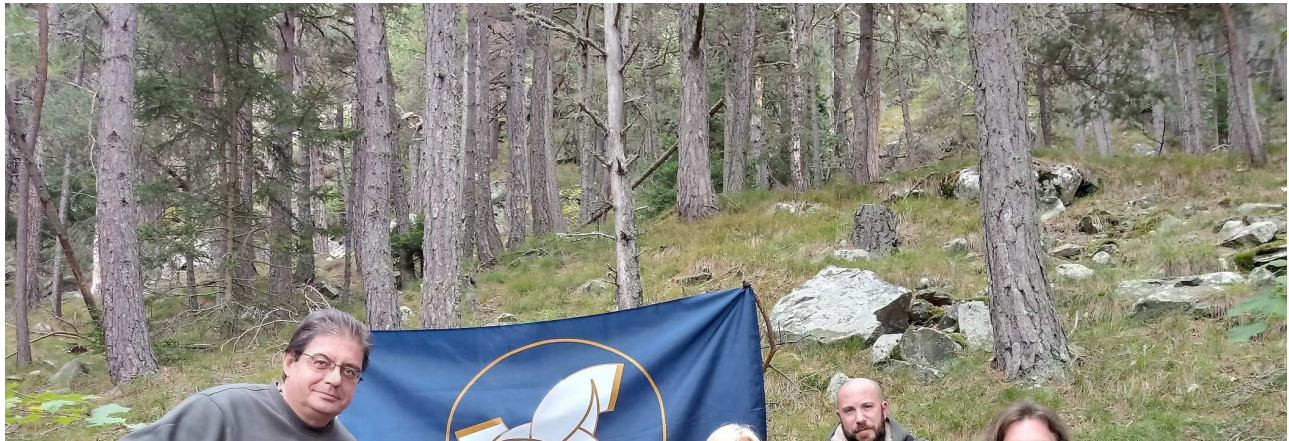
So my parting thought today is LIVE like an Einherjar and LIVE for our Folk!

Gray Wilson  
AFA Member

## KINDRED SPOTLIGHT



In this month's Kindred spotlight, the AFA would like to honor the Asa-Odhinn Kindred of Italy. These folks are always busy hosting events like Blót for the Holy Days and other events. Thank you for being a shining representative of our church. AFA Kindreds are the local congregations who represent and host events in the name of the Asatru Folk Assembly.







All across Midgard, our members are getting together in the real world face to face. Asa-Odhinn, thank you for all your hard work everything you do!



Jason Gallagher  
AFA Kindred Coordinator  
[kindred@runestone.org](mailto:kindred@runestone.org)

## FOLKBUILDER UPDATES

by Folkbuilder Coordinator Marc MacLeod

As Yule gets closer and nights get longer, this time of year is the time of gratitude, reflection, and projection for the new cycle. National events wind down for the year and everyone starts to prepare for Yule, staying closer to home, maybe attack some personal goals, or take some extra time for family. It's usually the time of year to make a honest assessment of the things that worked and the things that didn't, but more importantly what you want to carry into next year and what needs to be left behind.

This year was good for the AFA, but we've had some challenges to overcome. Hats off to everyone that powered through behind the scenes. On a better note we have planted a lot of seeds for our future in 2019. We are positioned to have a amazing 2020 and beyond.



I hope everyone has a wonderful and fulfilling Yule season. If you don't have a Yule celebration near you, now is a great time to step up and contact your Folkbuilder about having one. Yule is one of my favorite celebrations and one of our best attended events here at Odinshof. If anyone is on the west coast, you are more than welcome to join us!! I wish you and your families all the best.



Marc MacLeod  
Folkbuilder Coordinator & Witan  
[mmacleod@runestone.org](mailto:mmacleod@runestone.org)

# Óðinshof

## ODINSHOF - A PLACE FOR THE GODS, AND FOR US

This is a year to reflect on how far we've come...In one powerful word: ODINSHOF!



Twenty years after the humble beginnings of the Asatru Folk Assembly with a series of ambitious “Hof and land fund” promotions, this amazing building became ours — when we were ready, and not before. We must never take this sacred place for granted! Our Gods and Ancestors reside within its walls! Everything that takes place on this sacred land is now a part of our collective orlog. We grow, we explore, we overcome, we celebrate. It's all here, in this very unique place that we have created with our sweat, and toil, and love.

Odinshof — bought, owned, and paid for entirely by the AFA — is arguably our greatest achievement thus far. There is literally nothing in Midgard to compare with it! During our November gathering, Allsherjargothi Matt Flavel pointed out that each of us has a duty to help the AFA flourish by supporting the upkeep of this holy place. Sean Saindon, Hof Manager, has spoken of the challenges we've experienced at Odins Hof the past six months, including a series of power outages and having to replace our aged propane range to make our facility more fire-safe.

But we're not done; we need major roof repairs as soon as we can manage it. We are learning to adapt and to anticipate needs so we can keep costs down, but we need the continued support of our members to help maintain this sacred place.

It will soon be five years since we (literally!) made history by purchasing this Hof, which has

become the pride of the AFA. Your donations to help us carry it forward in the coming year are deeply and sincerely appreciated! [You can donate here](#) -- click the link and scroll down to Odinshof to make a one-time contribution.



Sheila McNallen  
Folkbuilder "At Large"  
[sheila@runestone.org](mailto:sheila@runestone.org)

## DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR EGIL SKALLAGRIMSSON

Egil Skallagrimsson was born in 904CE in Iceland to Skalla-Grimr Kveldulfsson and Bera Yngvarsdottir. He was a renowned poet, warrior, and simple farmer, forever immortalized within the words of Egil's Saga, a narration of his ancestors all the way to his descendants. From a young age, he exhibited talents for poetry and violence. Egil wrote his first poem at the age of three. He was prone to anger and violence, leading to claims of berserker behavior. This is evident when at the age of seven, Egil, having been cheated at a game, took an ax and split the skull of the boy who had cheated him.



His fury and skill in battle only grew with age. When severely insulted and nearly poisoned by Queen Gunnhildr's kin, Bardr, he killed the man. This angered King Eirik and Queen Gunnhildr, who ordered Egil to be killed. But Egil bested his assassins and set up a nidpole against King Eirik and Queen Gunnhildr, vowing that the people of their land would not know peace until the King and Queen had been expunged from the land. Egil was also a renowned poet. When shipwrecked in Northumbria, he found that King Eirik and



Queen Gunnhildr had fled there and been installed as the monarchs of the land. Imprisoned by the King, Egil wrote a poem (called a drapa) overnight that so moved the King, he offered Egil his freedom.

But Egil was not just known for his fighting prowess and skill with words. He was also skilled in rune magic. When Bardr had attempted to poison him, Egil carved a rune into the horn, causing the horn to shatter, proving his suspicions that it was an attempt on his life. But he also used the runes to heal others. When love runes had been written wrong, causing a woman to fall terribly ill, Egil burned the offending runes and carved new ones for healing. The woman immediately recovered and Egil warned not to use runes if you could not read them properly.

Egil was a skilled man in many areas of life, and always strived to seek justice and do good for others. During this coming Yule season, we should all strive to improve ourselves for the good of others and to seek out ways to help our kin and folk. One does not need renowned battle prowess to seek justice nor mighty rune magic to heal others. We should all focus on the love and support we can give to our folk, to be the person our ancestors hope for us and the one our descendants will speak of one day. We are our deeds!



Gothi Blaine Qualls Jr.  
AFA Gothar Coordinator  
[bqualls@runestone.org](mailto:bqualls@runestone.org)

## Alaska and Far North



On the birthday of my beloved marine corps this year, AFA Kindred Der Volkstamm auf dem Nordliche Bar, AFA members and other folkish asatruar met to celebrate the Feast of the Einherjer. With a heavy



Veteran presence in the Kindred and our membership, as well as strong military service in almost every members family, this holiday has always been something special to us here.

Blot was let by our Gothi Steven Morrell, himself quite the glorious vet with a medal and ribbon stack that would make any serviceman jealous.

For our feast, everyone brought something bacon related in Alaskan tradition of this holiday and to venerate the boar of Valhalla.



We had a great turnout with many children there.





Eric Whisman  
AFA Folkbuilder  
[ewhisman@runestone.org](mailto:ewhisman@runestone.org)

## CENTRAL CORRIDOR



It's been a busy year for all of our members in the growing Central Corridor Region! November saw us at five events any members could have the chance to get to and meet up with our Folk.

A huge thank you to Fawn and Charlie Evans of Joplin, MO for inviting the Folk to feast, Blot, Sumble, and to take part in your daughter's Funeral Fire. It is wonderful to be able to be there in the good times, but it is also important to be there for each other when life is less than ideal. Thank you for allowing us all to be there for you in whatever way we could, and thank you to Gothi Wilton for presiding over our rituals and the



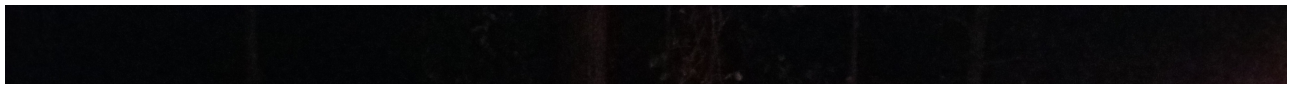
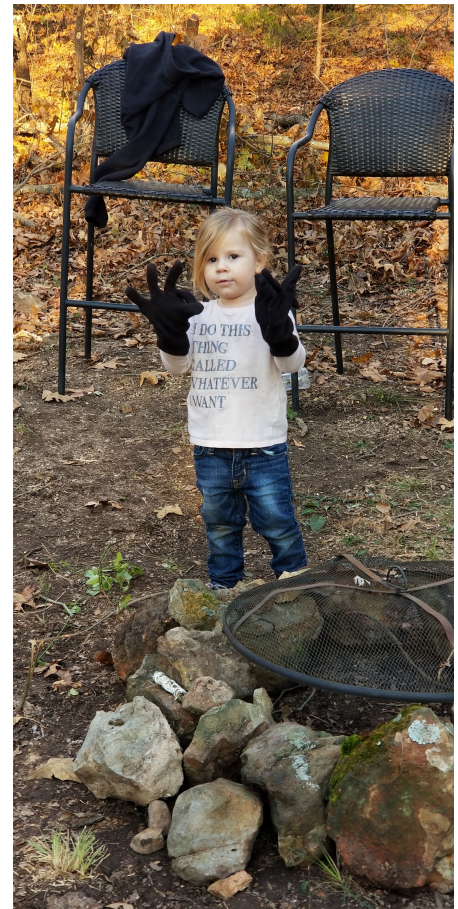
to both which for presiding over our trials and the Funeral Fire for Marissa. It was a beautiful tribute to a young lady gone to soon.

Another shout out to Tabitha Owens and her husband Matt for putting together a Meet and Greet in Arkansas. It's the first one in at least a year, and we are so proud of you folks who, though being members for barely a month, rolled up your sleeves and got to work at making things happen! We look forward to seeing all the good things to come!

To all our members who get in the car and drive 2.5 hours, 4 hours, or longer, our hats off to you for putting in the effort to be there and to take part in real-world interactions. That is where all the good stuff really happens, and sometimes putting in that drive time is necessary to be a part of something bigger than yourself. You make me proud to know you all!

We hope all who are able and willing will join us for Yule on Saturday, December 28-29th in Springfield, MO. Central Corridor members, look for your Yule cards with the details for our Yule celebration this year!

I want to take a moment to send a thank you out to Gothi Bryan Wilton of Oklahoma. He takes time out every Sunday to go live with a presentation on the lore and sticks around afterwards to answer questions and give a place for our Folk from near and far to have time to talk to each other through a live video conference. I am sure there is a good amount of work involved in the preparation and a commitment of time to make sure he is there every Sunday without fail. He doesn't have to do it, but he makes the time, and we sure do appreciate him giving us all a place to learn, discuss and come together. A very heartfelt "thank you!" from all of the people of your region. We are so proud to call you one of our own. Keep up the good work. As long as you keep making it happen, we will continue to show up! Thank you!







If you would like more information on upcoming events in the Central Corridor Region, please reach out to Melisa Mills at [mmills@runestone.org](mailto:mmills@runestone.org). If you would like to get access to Bryan's live Foundations of Faith series every Sunday at 7:30pm CST, please reach out to Bryan Wilton.

Happy Holidays to everyone from the Heart of the country! Stay warm, enjoy good long conversations with those you love, and celebrate the season together!



Melisa Mills



Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[mmills@runestone.org](mailto:mmills@runestone.org)

## Deep South

There was a nice gathering on the Gulf Coast for our Florida Folk to celebrate the Feast of the Einherjar and raise a toast to those who have defended our folk throughout the ages. As we honour those who have served we look to the future to see how we can be of service to our Faith.

Wassail the Warriors!



Planning for our Yuletide Celebration in Florida December 21st and 22nd is progressing and we have secured a whole hog to roast over the fire pit. For details and ticket information contact [lashby@runestone.org](mailto:lashby@runestone.org). For information on Yule in Dixie being held in Alabama December 28th contact [teast@runestone.org](mailto:teast@runestone.org).

A member of our Deep South family, Andrea Gilbreath, lost her mother on November 4th. She was 86 years old when she joined her ancestors and Andrea said she was touched by our prayers in her final days. We keep Andrea and her family in our thoughts.

Hail the Ancestors!

We also had three new members come home to the AFA in the Deep South this month.

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!



Lane Ashby  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[lashby@runestone.org](mailto:lashby@runestone.org)

This month, the Deep South region has been full of Veteran’s Day/Feast of the Einherjar celebrations, as well as feasts in remembrance of Queen Sigrid! We are eternally grateful for the veterans and fallen warriors of our Folk, as well as for heroes like Her Majesty Queen Sigrid.

While this month has had quite a few small events, we are gearing up for two big Yule events! One in Alabama, and one in Florida! Keep an eye on your regional AFA groups for local and national events!

Happy Thanksgiving!



Trent East  
AFA Folkbuilder  
[teast@runestone.org](mailto:teast@runestone.org)

## Europe / Sweden



On November 3rd, Hroptatyr's Kindred held a forefathers' blot. This blot is very close to my heart. We all have someone that has passed, someone that we miss and think about. In everyday life we