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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.

Words from the Alsherjargothi



In 2021 we celebrated Fallfest for the very first time at Baldrshof! This was the 6th annual Fallfest and it was a testament to victory. Fallfest was born in adversity. 6 years ago, the forces of chaos and Cultural Marxism bombarded a local camp with lies, fear, and threats. The result being, 3 days before our event, we were rejected from Camp "Courage". Leaders jumped on this quickly and resolved to carry on with Fallfest no matter what. With diligence and providence, we found a large house to hold our event. This region had recently taken off as an active and vibrant AFA community and the persecution solidified it into a steadfast AFA stronghold. Through hard work and loyalty, Fallfest has been a success each and every year. We have rented retreats and campsites, always gathering on someone else's land that is, until 2021. This year, the long years of devotion paid off, we hosted Fallfest in a beautiful hof dedicated to shining Baldr. Our Gods, our event, on our holy ground. Thank you to all who made this dream a reality.



Matthew D. Flavel
Alsherjargothi, Asatru Folk Assembly
mattflavel@runestone.org

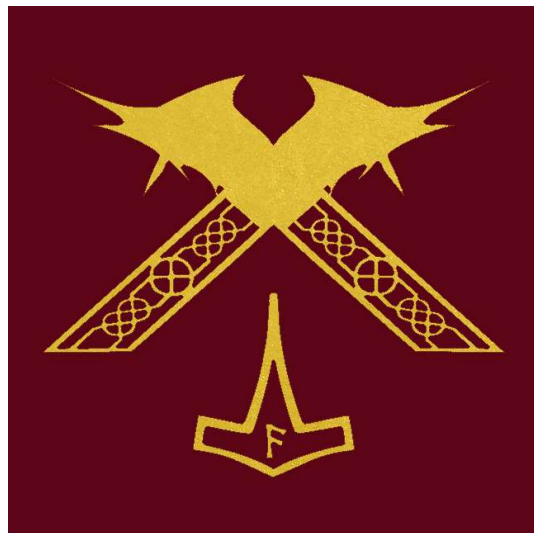
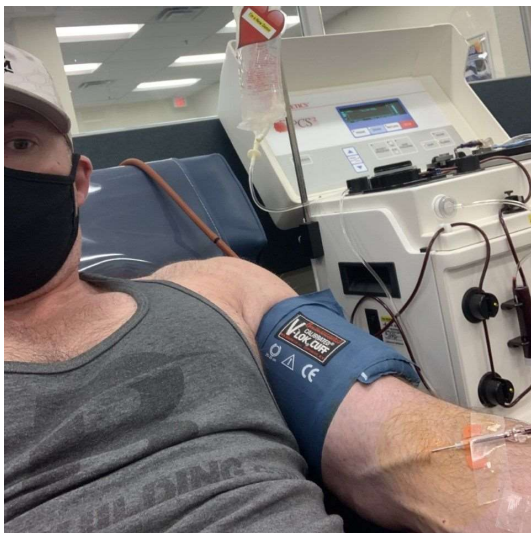
The Mission to Establish Njörðshof

"The third among the Æsir is he that is called Njörðr: he dwells in heaven, in the abode called Nóatún. He rules the course of the wind, and stills sea and fire; on him shall men call for voyages and for hunting. He is so prosperous and abounding in wealth, that he may give them great plenty of lands or of gear; and him shall men invoke for such things."



[Njörðshof Fundraiser – Asatru Folk Assembly \(runestone.org\)](https://runestone.org)

Blood for the Blood-Priest



"Odin placed Njord and Frey as priests of the sacrifices, and they became Diar of the Asaland people." - Ynglinga Saga

The glorious God Njörðr was known for great wealth, he was also known as a patron priest of the blood sacrifice, or Blót.

I have been asking us all to find ways to raise money for a hof worthy of Njörðr's magnificence. The first such hof in a thousand years! I have embarked on a sacred process, a blood pact, if you will. I am donating plasma every week (hopefully twice a week) until Njörðr has his hof and we have it paid off. This is a very special, and spiritual process for me and one I am joyful to be able to do. Some of our AFA brothers in Florida have vowed to join this pact with me. I would invite anyone who is interested in joining in this special pact to contact me. So far it is my honor to have raised \$425 for this endeavor by donating just 4 times!

I appreciate all of you who have donated to help give this amazing gift to Njörðr. A great many have given of themselves in their own ways and all are profoundly appreciated. Together, we shall make Njörðshof a reality!

Hail Njörðr!



Matthew D. Flavel
Alsherjargothi, Asatru Folk Assembly
mattflavel@runestone.org

Winter Nights in the Poconos X

[Winter Nights X – Asatru Folk Assembly \(runestone.org\)](http://runestone.org)

**THE
ASATRU FOLK ASSEMBLY
INVITES YOU TO THE**



**10TH ANNUAL
WINTER NIGHTS
IN THE POCONOS**

The Tenth Annual Winter Nights in the Poconos will be held in Milford, Pennsylvania from October 15- 17!

Since 2012, this long-running AFA festival has been dedicated to our ancestral mothers, the Disir. When the harvest is in, the summer plants have died off, and the winter is

quickly approaching the veil between the living and dead is said to be at its thinnest. Again, we will gather to worship our Gods, our Goddesses, and our Ancestral Mothers in the crisp air of mountains as winter sets in. We build upon the success of the Asatru Folk Assembly here in the Northeast by making new friends and renewing old friendships. We look forward to seeing members and friends!

Your registration fee includes all workshops, lectures, meals, cabin lodging, and of course our holy rituals. Only AFA members and vouched-for-guests will be admitted to this event. If you are not an AFA Member you should confirm with the member who is vouching for you that they will do so when asked about your registration.

Things to know:

- Children 17 and under attend for free!
- The cabins have bunks. You will need to bring your own bedding and it can get quite chilly at night, so plan accordingly.
- Tenting is permitted in the main field.
- Dogs are welcome but must be leashed at all times and are not permitted in common indoor areas such as the dining hall.
- The camp location will be provided upon registration.
- If you have any questions or concerns please email cerickson@runestone.org

Vendors are allowed at Winter Nights. The only thing we ask is that you give a donation or item to the church. For example, the item could be what you plan to sell at the event and will be put into the auction we have scheduled. At the auction, if you have any item that you would be willing to put into it, it would be much appreciated.

Items donated are generally Asatru related but please bring what you have or contact a Folkbuilder to ask if it would be acceptable. Lastly, parents please don't forget to bring your children's Halloween costumes. Many things are planned for them as well.

Adult Schedule

Children's Schedule

Friday

Friday

12:00 PM Arrival/Lunch

7:00 PM Storytime around the campfire
with Witan Svan Herul

3:00 PM Welcoming of the Gods

4:00 PM Odin, Vili, Ve Ritual led by
Folkbuilders Robert Stamm, Trent East,
and Daniel Young

5:00 PM Dinner

6:00 PM Question and Answer with
Alsherjargothi Matthew Flavel

8:00 PM Odin Blot led by Alsherjargothi
Matthew Flavel

9:00 PM October Ballroom Dance

Saturday

8:30 AM Breakfast

10:00 AM Men's and Women's Groups

12:00 PM Lunch

1:00 PM Food Canning Presentation led
by Member Jessica Keller

2:00 Auction

3:30 PM Oaths

5:00 PM Dinner

7:30 PM Disir Blot led by Gythia Catie
Erickson

9:00 PM Sumbel

Sunday

8:30 AM Breakfast

11:00 AM Wayfarers Blot led by Witan
Clifford Erickson

Saturday

11:00 AM Kids Yoga and Hike

2:00 PM Kids Halloween Party. Dress
Up!!!!!!!

6:00 PM Kids Craft Corner

Sunday

9:30 AM Kids Ancestral Offering Ritual
lead by Folkbuilder Adam Hudak

AFA Victory Shirts Available at Winter Nights!



Shirts are available in sizes S to 4XL for \$30. Support and represent the AFA!



Witan Clifford Erickson
cerickson@runestone.org



Day of Remembrance



Born in October of 1848 in Vienna, Guido Karl Anton List was the son of a prosperous middle-class family who traded and worked in the Leather goods industry. Raised a Roman Catholic, List found his love of mythology and history early in life, often acknowledging that his belief in the Germanic Gods, and Wotan in particular, developed during these young years. A scholar, painter, and writer, his big ambition were to live his life doing the things he loved. His father, however, pressured him strongly into taking over the family business.

In his spare time, he continued to write and paint. He also took part in several leisure sports clubs, such as rowing and mountaineering. During one of his many trips List purportedly left his group to spend a solitary midsummer atop Geiselberg hillfort. Here, it is said, he reaffirmed his belief in Wotan. Upon the death of his father in 1877 List abandoned his family business in favor of pursuing his writing passion.

Despite being an avid believer of Wotan, he married his second wife in a Protestant ceremony in 1899. This didn't hamper his writing or his influence, however, and by 1902 when his writings took on a different direction, he was a prolific and well-known

voice in the nationalist and volkish movements.

It was in 1902 that von List had his great epiphany. After a cataract surgery left him blind for eleven months, List was left with much time for reflection and meditation. During this time he discovered the Armanen runes. He called this set of runes the Proto-language of the Aryan race. It was through these runes that von Lists occult ideas and writings evolved.

The popularity of his ideas exploded amongst the wealthy, middle class of Austria and Germany at the time and the Guido-von-Gesellschaft was born. The von-List society further evolved and in Midsummer of 1911, the inner group called the High Armanist Order was created. While the main group focused on his occult and political ideologies, the inner group was dedicated to the worship of Wotan through his writings and sacred pilgrimages.

With food shortages after the war and old-age creeping up on him, von List's health deteriorated and in May of 1919 he passed away at the age of 71. His body was cremated and buried in an urn in the Vienna central cemetery, Zentralfriedhof.

Among his many novels, plays, and political manuscripts it was his first dedicated occult manuscript, "Das Geheimnis der Runen" or "The Secret of the Runes," that really sets Guido von List up as a forefather of modern Asatru, influencing many including the Asatru Folk Assembly's hero Alexander Rud Mills.

What can we learn from this story?

We can never anticipate when the spark of inspiration will lead to the flame of an idea. It's easy to look at that inspiration and say that it isn't real, or it's just the imagination going crazy. With faith, however, our limitations can be cast off. Have faith in our Gods. Have faith in our Ancestors and in our Folk soul. Most importantly, have faith in yourself. We can, of us, accomplish great things if we work hard enough and maintain our faith.

Gythia Catie Erickson

cm.erickson@runestone.org



Remembrance & Holy Days



[Calendar – Asatru Folk Assembly \(runestone.org\)](http://runestone.org)

Date	Observance
January 9	Day of Remembrance for Raud the Strong
January 23	Þorrablót
February 9	Day of Remembrance for Eyvind Kinnrifi
February 20	Charming of the Plow
March 9	Day of Remembrance for Olvir of Egg
March 20	Ostara
April 9	Day of Remembrance for Jarl Haakon
April 17	Hexennacht
May 9	Day of Remembrance for Else Christensen
May 22	May Day
June 9	Day of Remembrance for King Athanaric of the Goths
June 20	Midsummer
July 9	Day of Remembrance for Alexander Rud Mills
July 17	Sigrblót
August 9	Day of Remembrance for King Radbod of Frisia
August 21	Freyfaxi
September 9	Day of Remembrance for Prince Hermann of the Cherusci
September 22	Winter Finding
October 9	Day of Remembrance for Meister Guido von List
October 15	Birthday of Founder Stephen McNallen
October 16	Winter Nights
November 9	Day of Remembrance for Queen Sigríð of Sweden
November 11	Feast of the Einherjar
December 9	Day of Remembrance for Egill Skallagrímsson
December 20	Mother's Night
December 21-31	Yuletide

Upcoming National Events

Please contact your favorite Folkbuilder or Gothar if you are interested in attending the events below. The way to get the most out of your membership in the Asatru Folk Assembly is in person with your Folk!

Winter Nights in the Poconos

October 15 - 17

Pennsylvania

[Winter Nights X – Asatru Folk Assembly](#)
[\(runestone.org\)](http://runestone.org)



Feast of the Einherjar at Baldrshof

November 11 - 14

Minnesota

[Baldrshof Feast of the Einherjar – Asatru Folk Assembly](#)
[\(runestone.org\)](http://runestone.org)



Witan Clifford Erickson
cerickson@runestone.org

Folkbuilder Spotlight



This month, the Asatru Folk Assembly would like to shine the Folkbuilder Spotlight on Folkbuilder Adam Hudak of Pennsylvania. Adam's dedication to his church and our members is astounding! Thank you, Adam, for all you do!

Learn more about Folkbuilder Adam Hudak below. If you are located in the northeastern United States and have any questions about events in that area or Asatru in general, please contact him at ahudak@runestone.org.

How did you discover Asatru and what drew you to this religion?

Through a good portion of my life like many of us, I chased the things that I was told would bring me happiness. Mostly things material in nature. I found that no matter

how hard I tried to fill myself with these "things" I was never satisfied. Many times I even felt worse. In my early 30's I knew there had to be a greater meaning to life, who I was as a person, and my true place in the world. I always enjoyed history, was always proud of who I was racially, and had a sense of the Aryan virtues in me. A chance encounter with an Odinist put me on the path that we all find ourselves now.

Everything made sense quite quickly as I learned more about Asatru or as I like to say "I found myself again". This was the missing piece that I had yearned for and not just in this lifetime but many others.

How long have you been a member of the AFA and why did you choose to join?

I have been a member since August 3rd, 2018. My membership card still stays on my Altar. A day that my life path was shown to me and I remember it well. It was a day of no turning back and a solemn oath was made to myself.

I chose to join the AFA because I was following my heart. I decided no longer to listen to what others had to say. I listened to my inner voice instead. The whisper at that point that came was no longer muffled like in years past. It could be heard quite well at that point. I knew that joining the AFA was not only the healthiest choice but also the right one. I would be among the few but the few who carried what was good and beautiful into our world. I am still honored to be among all of you.

What is your favorite part of Folkbuilding?

My favorite part is to help others. I enjoy seeing folks come into the AFA and a period of time later become better forms of what they were prior. Things that used to leave them stressed no longer do. They now overcome the little and the big things in life with ease. They have a smile and a spark now in their eyes that wasn't there before. If I have played a part in any of the above, even if only slightly I feel I have fulfilled my purpose.

What is the most memorable AFA event that you have attended and why?

This is actually somewhat of a difficult question. There are many memorable and life-changing experiences but I would have to choose the Thorshof Dedication. The dedication ritual itself was perhaps the most powerful one for me to date. The North Carolina hot summer air was thick that day. We all assembled outside and it began. Alsherjargothi Flavel then led us around the property into the temple itself. Once inside we welcomed the Strong One to his new home with an intensity that shook the ground just as he does. We made Midgard just a little bit hotter too with the fire that came out

of us. I know he was proud of his children that day.

Who has been the biggest inspiration in the AFA and also in Asatru?

There are two men who I think very highly of. One being our very own Alsherjargothi, Matthew Flavel. Not only has he led the AFA to heights we never thought would be attainable a short time ago but watching his calm, controlled demeanor is something I strive for in my own life. Second, it would be our founder Stephen McNallen. Without him, nothing we see would be here so we owe him much but to add his vitality at his age is quite impressive. He never seems to tire. Woden lives in both these great men. They know their mission and continue to do what is right for their people. Valhalla's King certainly knows their names.

Be a Doer



We need you to volunteer for the AFA!

Yes, you. We have work to do and need folk who are artists, editors, writers, accountants, lawyers, publicists, reputation managers, professionals of all manner, technical support, web developers, system admins, tradesmen, craftswomen, and more. See the list of amazing projects we have below. We will find a way for you to help our Folk.

Please email volunteer@runestone.org to help us make a difference in our world.

Baby Blanket Project

The Women of the AFA are proud to be continuing this fine and noble work we call the Baby Blanket Project! We're committed to ensuring all new babies born within the AFA are gifted a handmade — knit, crocheted, or woven — baby blanket! It's just our little way of celebrating each new addition to our folk!

This project has been going strong for nearly a year now, and has been a rousing success! The Ladies of the AFA have knitted, crocheted, and sewn beautiful baby blankets for over 20 of our littlest folk, with more on the way. They've been delivered

everywhere from Alaska to Florida, California to Sweden!

If you are a member of the AFA who is expecting a baby, please let your Folkbuilder know so we can get a blanket to you. If you would like to contribute, either financially or by volunteering as a baby blanket crafter, let your Folkbuilder know about that as well, so he can get you in touch with the right people. It's so rewarding to see your handicraft being loved by our little heathens!



Would you like a blanket for your newborn, or to donate and help with yarn costs (yarn is expensive!)? Please email babyblanket@runestone.org today!

Youth Program



The AFA Youth Program is now halfway through a very successful year! We had high hopes when this program started in January and the kids have surpassed all of our expectations and goals. Our youth have been working on monthly assignments and fun projects centered around Lore, Days of Remembrance, Holidays, AFA Culture, and monthly themes based on the Nine Noble Virtues.

Registration for the Youth Program is open year-round and open to youth ages 6 to 18. Our program is currently e-mail based. Parents receive their assignments through e-mail on the first of each month. The Youth Program is free and open to all of our AFA families!

If you are interested in registering your child for the AFA Youth Program, send an e-mail to youth@runestone.org to get started.

Folk Services



For some, it may be a natural disaster. For others an unexpected change in health, and for some just an unforeseen chain of events. Whatever the case may be sometimes we find ourselves in a sticky situation, and although we try and to work and do our best to pull ourselves out, sometimes we may need the help of our Folk community to give us a hand up...

That's when our folks Services Program comes in. We give one-time monetary grants to those members in need. These folks are so grateful and we know that once they get back on track they will contribute to this fund. For those that are able, we are in need of funds so we can be prepared for when these situations arise in our community. If you're able please place a donation today. Even a small donation adds up in the grand scheme of things and even \$5 or \$10 can help if enough people pitch in. If even a fraction of the folks who like the page did that each month, imagine the possibilities!

AFA Folk Services is intended to provide modest, one-time monetary grants to AFA members in dire need of basic services. It is also to be a source for referrals and information to help members get help beyond what the AFA can directly provide. For more information, please email folkservices@runestone.org.

Your contributions are earnestly solicited and of course, are tax-deductible! Please donate to Folk Services or one of our other AFA Fundraisers at <http://www.runestone.org/donate/>.

Thanks in advance!

Photo Donations

We have a real need for hi-res photographs of our members' gathering, being active in their kindreds, and showing what it means to live Asatru!

If you are willing to donate some hi-res photos for



use in promotions such as the AFA Calendar, the AFA website, our publications, and more please email them to the AFA at photos@runestone.org. The larger the resolution the better, so please email them from the device where the photo was taken.

Eir's Blessings



Everybody needs a little extra help sometimes. Women, being the frithy creatures that we are, are uniquely suited to the task of manipulating energy for the purpose of healing. Magic, you could say.

Do you have a health concern and need a little extra energy? Are you battling with a mental illness like depression or PTSD? Is your baby having a hard time with teething? If you've answered yes at all, reach out to us. Once a month women of the AFA will get together to perform healing rituals all across the globe. If you would like to be included, please send a message to let us know!

At the same time, Women of the AFA! If you are interested in helping to create a frithful, healing magic, let us know! It's easy, but it makes a huge difference to those in our community who need our help!

You can reach us at EirsBlessings@runestone.org

Last Will and Testament

Recently, several members of our AFA family have passed beyond the veil. One was an old man in ill health, two were young men in the prime of life... all died with no legal will on record. Sadly, in two of these cases, our dead AFA members did not have their wishes respected regarding their funerals nor the final resting places of their remains.



We never know when tragedy will strike. We have a responsibility to our loved ones, we have a responsibility to our own legacies, to plan for our passing, and to make our wishes known. Planning for and contemplating our death is uncomfortable. Hopefully, we all have plenty of time for that down the road, but we can't count on that. Maybe we worry about expenses or hiring a lawyer. We all have excuses to put things off until later, unfortunately, sometimes the clock runs out before "later" happens.

We have found an amazing resource for our U.S. members to make legally binding wills in minutes online for **free**. This site also has resources to make Advanced Medical Directives and Powers of Attorney. It takes only **minutes** at <https://www.doyourownwill.com/>.

Please make your will **today**.

The AFA would like to collect signed original copies of wills for all our members and store them. We want to ensure that when members of our AFA family die, their wishes are honored. Please send these to:

Allen Turnage
PO Box 16027
Tallahassee FL, 32317

Introducing the newest AFA Kindreds



Please join me in welcoming Under Ash + Oak Kindred of Ohio, as the newest Official

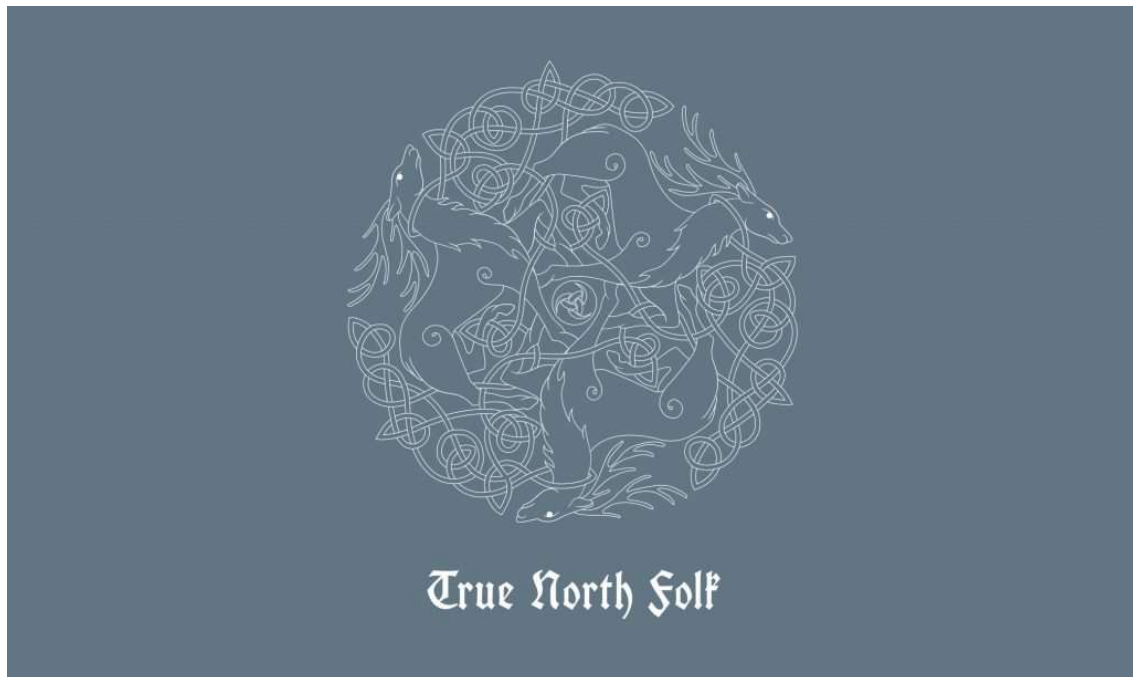
Kindred of the Asatru Folk Assembly. This is one of the most active groups of AFA members that we have in Midgard. They come together several times a month hosting moots, hikes, and field trips to cultural places. The list goes on! Led by Apprentice Folkbuilder Timothy Dumas, Under Ash + Oak is one of the many families that make up the Kindreds of the AFA. These members and families have stepped up to represent our Church and welcome our Folk home.

Gaining Kindred recognition is not an easy thing, it takes dedication, loyalty, and willingness to stand with the AFA at all costs. These Kindreds go through a six-month probationary period before joining our family as an official Kindred. Thank you Under Ash + Oak for taking on this responsibility and stepping up to represent us.

Hail The Under Ash And Oak Kindred!

Hail the Kindreds of the AFA!

Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!!!



It is my honor today to announce the True North Folk Kindred of North Dakota as an official Kindred of the Asatru Folk Assembly. Led by Witan Brandy Callahan, this Kindred has been instrumental in helping to get Baldrshof open for our folk and doing lots of the legwork at events and the big ones like Fallfest. They were announced at Fallfest and took their Kindred Oaths in front of their folk gathered there.

Gaining Kindred recognition is not an easy thing, it takes dedication and willingness to stand with our Church and Family. Thank you True North Folk for stepping up and for all that you do!

Hail the True North Folk!
Hail the Kindreds of the AFA!
Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!!!



Folkbuilder Jason Gallagher
jgallagher@runestone.org

**The Artians of the AFA
Support Our Folk**





<https://www.woodsiderwanderer.com/>

If you would like to advertise your business please contact me !!!



Jessica Lambert
Apprentice Folkbuilder
jlambert@runestone.org



Óðinshof
First Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly

Alaska

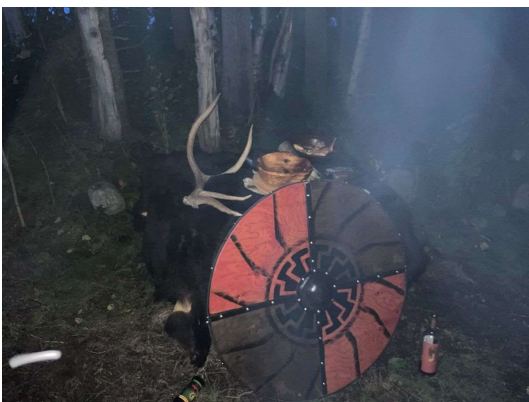
Remembering King Radbod of Frisia



At the end of the month, we all met at everyone's favorite German Restaurant in Anchorage, West Berlin. We had gathered to remember the first German King, King Hermann of the Cherusci as well as to celebrate the German festival Oktoberfest. It was a Hermantoberfest.

The beginning of the month saw Der Volkstamm Auf dem Nordliche Bar and Alaskan AFA members gather for our annual Freyfaxi celebration and day of remembrance for King Radbod of Frisia. This event was held at the home of Gothi Steven Morrell.

Honoring the Gods and Ancestors of Old



After a delicious German meal to a solid Polka soundtrack, we met up at the home of Folkbuilder Eric Whisman and held Blot to Odin and Freya and honored King Hermann

of the Cherusci and the German Tribes.



Folkbuilder Eric Whisman
ewhisman@runestone.org



Gothi Steven Morrell
smorrell@runestone.org

Arizona

Growing Family of Folk



I am more than pleased to be a part of such a great group here in Arizona. Really more of an honor to me. I look forward to growing and building our community.

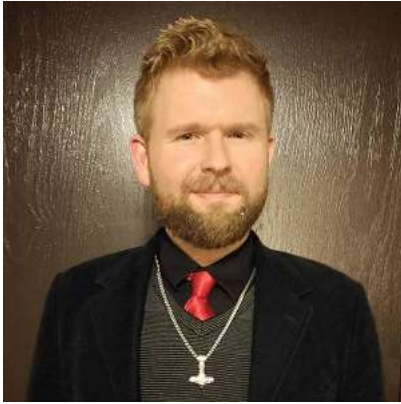
Hail the AFA!



Samuel Ramsey
Apprentice Folkbuilder
sramsey@runestone.org

California

Connor Norris



Apprentice Folkbuilder
cnorris@runestone.org

Welcoming a New Apprentice Folkbuilder

Please join me in welcoming Victor Podbreger of California as the newest apprentice Folkbuilder for the Óðinshof District. Victor and his wife Krystal have been a huge force in making Óðinshof the consistent success that it is. We are excited to have Victor's help and to see the great things he accomplishes in the coming months and years.

Hail Victor Podbreger!

Hail the AFA!

Hail Óðinn!



Victor Podbreger
Apprentice Folkbuilder
vpodbreger@runestone.org

Winter Finding at Odinshof



What a wonderful Winter Finding we had! First, we started with a very successful food pantry serving over 18 local families! We were able to spend time getting to know our local community.



We had a gold panning and archery demonstration. Next, Alsherjagothi Matt Flavel led our wonderful Greeting to the Gods. Followed by Blot to Ullr guided by Elder McNallen.



As we honored The God of The Hunt, Ullr, and welcomed winter, a breeze swept through with light rain. The rain carried through the night, showing we really have "found winter." Symbolically we had Brother Wolf and Brother Reindeer adorning our sacred rock as we honored Ullr and explained the importance of both predator and prey.



After attempting to do sumbel outdoors but being blessed with the rain we decided to head inside, allowing for a more ambient mood which was fitting for the evening and a wonderful way to close out our gathering.

Sierra Chapman



Apprentice Folkbuilder
schapman@runestone.org



Jim Secola
Apprentice Folkbuilder
jsecola@runestone.org

Volunteers Needed at Odinhof



As summer comes to a close and the air begins to clear of smoke we are entering into our big holiday season. Many events are being planned including community outreach, Hof events, and a work weekend. There are important improvements that need to be done at the Hof before winter comes and these things can not happen without volunteers. If you would like to volunteer for any events coming up and especially if you have handyman, carpenter, or plumbing skills please reach out to Sheila, Victor, or myself.

Also as a reminder, we are no longer doing potluck for events. If you'd like to bring a dish or dessert you are more than welcome but generally, we are now just asking for small donations to go towards the food fund if you can. See you all soon!



Folkbuilder Krystal Bailey

kbailey@runestone.org



Gothi Thorgrun Odden

todden@runestone.org

Southern California Moot

SoCal AFA Moot



Oct 10th, 1PM

Email klong@runestone.org for location details!

The poster features a background image of a golf course with trees. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, stylized font. The AFA logo is a circular emblem with a blue background and a white, stylized leaf or flame design.

SoCal AFA will be hosting a park moot and Blot on October 10th, 2021. For information on the event location and time reach out to klong@runestone.org. We look forward to getting our members together and getting this area flourishing again!



Gothi Kevin Long
klong@runestone.org

Hof Brau Meetup in Sacramento



Considering the short notice, we had a huge turnout at Sam's Hof Brau on September 12th for our first Sacramento meetup since March 2020. Sam's lends itself to light-hearted events in their whimsical meeting room with ribald bierhaus murals. People kept pouring into the room until we had 15 adults and 13 children. What a group!

Besides many of our regular attendees at Odinshof, we had three locals who had never been to any of our events. We began with introductions and a version of “Greeting to the Gods” that went over very well. Sheila gave a thorough overview of our “Odinshof basics” plus a look at where we've been, what we've done, and what the future holds. Steve McNallen finished with an impassioned talk from the heart that showed why he has led the way for our Folk for so many decades.

We missed taking a formal photo of the group, but still managed to catch some moments from seriousness to silliness. The monthly meetup has returned!

Three food charities, and growing!



Though Odinshof has hosted a food charity for nearly three years, it's exciting to see them now established at our other Hof's. The availability of food and supplies varies across our country. How we advertise and to whom we serve is always a challenge, so the experience is quite different from place to place. In the end, we all serve families who fill their shelves with food to last them through hungry times. Alsherjargothi Matt Flavel has dubbed us the Charming Champions of Charity. Our payoff is the joy we experience as we feed families in these uncertain times, so our nickname is utterly appropriate!

Yuletide 2021 – How it's changed!





Six years ago, we hosted our first Yuletide at Odinhof. The tree was small but stately, the food marvelous as always, and the six or so children who gathered were tickled with the presents they unwrapped. We see how things have changed at Odinhof. Last year we had twenty-nine children, ranging from newborns to teens with us! What do I expect for this Yuletide? Even more families and more kids. This means we have to streamline our procedures for everything, from creating graham cracker cottages and serving our meals, to the distribution of gifts. We can do this. What a wonderful challenge to have!



Winter Nights

As the years go by, many of us have commented on how important our autumnal Winter Nights celebration has become. Regardless of who we are, or our status in life, the attention of our Mothers is something we sorely wish for. Winter Nights, no matter with whom and where you celebrate, is our opportunity to reach out to those noble ancestors, the Disir, who make up our family line. Seek out at least one lady from the past to stand with you, to be with you, and to whisper good tidings to carry you through the turbulent, perilous times, and the frustrating doldrums of life as well. The veil is now thin. Who stands behind the one before your eyes?

Odinshof community Harvest Faire – a time for kids!

Every year, Winter Nights at Odinshof includes typical Halloween activities for our children. Dressing up, playing games, carving pumpkins, bobbing for apples, collecting bags of candy. Does that sound familiar? This year, we're celebrating with our Hof family on October 23rd.

We've decided to duplicate these activities on Sunday, the 24th, by creating a festival atmosphere for the larger Brownsville community. There are half a dozen unincorporated towns within an hour of Odishof so cultural events like this are few, especially since the Covid scare. This is one more way to demonstrate our value to the larger community. Our ultimate goal is to seek grants to help us with costly renovations, so these works of charity contribute to our good name and help us build an even greater reputation locally.

MacLeod Wedding





Behold the newly married couple, Marc and Deedy MacLeod, who were wed at Odinhof on October 2, 2021.



The private ceremony was conducted by Alsherjagothi Matt Flavel, and witnessed by family and close friends of the bride and groom. In true Scottish style, a bagpiper played traditional aires as the wedding ensemble entered the ritual circle. Their attendants included two of their daughters, Deedys' son, and Marc's closest friend. AFA Founder Stephen McNallen had the paternal honor of “giving the bride away.” The wedding rites were steeped in Asatru lore and customs, complete with ritual gifts of weapons and house keys to the groom and bride, respectively.



Gythia Sheila McNallen

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Montana

Taking Care of Our Own



September has been relatively quiet here in Montana. No events, or gatherings to speak of. I personally reached out and attempted to call all of our neighboring members in Idaho to set up a Montana members email group. Suggestions for future events are being tossed around, as well as ideas for those who might be unable to make gatherings or events, as well as things we can start sharing with our greater AFA family.

A pet project of mine for some time now has been to acquire medical equipment for each of our Hofs. Myself being involved in Fire for over 20 years and as a qualified EMT, I've noticed the need to have more than just a basic first aid kit on hand. Odínshof especially is in a very rural community, and emergency services can often have extended response times. With that in mind, I set about putting together a Trauma Kit for Odínshof a few years back. Since then, it has been needed multiple times.

Being prepared to take care of ourselves or even members of our local communities that attends our food distributions, is something that isn't a "what if?", it's a "when". Recently, I was able to acquire some additional supplies in the form of emergency oxygen equipment. I am also working on securing a grant that might get us an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) for each Hof. My hope is that each of our Hof's is not only equipped to handle an on-site emergency but that we have members trained to handle it WHEN it occurs. We are far from reaching this goal, but we are now one step closer!!

I sincerely recommend that our folk become versed in at least basic First Aid and CPR, for obvious reasons. Of course, going beyond that would be wonderful, but it isn't for everyone. If becoming an EMR (Emergency Medical Responder) EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) or Paramedic is something you have considered, it could literally be a benefit to your folk one day! If you already have medical training, and you frequent your local Hof, or events, make sure that it's known! Having others know who to turn to should an emergency occur is crucial, as is knowing where to find the necessary equipment. Having the ability to start First Aid, or Basic Life Support immediately, increases the chances of survival, and the person needing to be saved may end up being one of our own.



Folkbuilder Ryan Harlan
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Nevada

Hermann Remembrance Dinner



September was a fantastic month all around! Mandy and I were proud to have our AFA family gather once again around our table for a Hermann Remembrance Dinner. We had Jägerschnitzel and caramel apple martinis, delicious beans, scalloped potatoes and bratwursts. Good times with great Folk!

For all who are interested, October 9th will be the Meister Von List dinner at the Flavel house. I will be making Sûrkoal mei banana, Pumpkin bread with cream cheese swirl, and chai white Russians. Guests are encouraged to bring delicious things to share.

3rd Quarter South African Donations



Great News, with the help of persistent Folkbuilders, we have been able to make contact with the fine folks at the South African Family Relief Project. Times are very hard for our people in South Africa, the COVID measures have made these times even harder. One thing they are particularly in need of lately is food so your donations for the 3rd quarter of 2021 went directly towards groceries for 35 hungry White South Africans. We received sincere thanks and appreciation for helping these folks, especially now.



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Oceania

Ostara in Australia

This recently past Equinox brought in the start of spring for the southern hemisphere and our members here in the Oceania region. Although unable to gather as we would

wish, many of our members still made the best by celebrating the Equinox and Ostara at our homes with our families.



At our home, the Rudd family children enjoyed learning about the stories and traditions of Ostara. They woke early to collect eggs from our ducks, which they had fun painting in bright colors and placing around the garden. As the sunset on the last day of winter, we lit a fire and gave offerings. We first gave an offering to the Aesir and Vanir, then following with offerings to the land vaettir, the Alfar, and Disir. Later with the sunrise, I gave an offering to Sol, for the longer warmer days ahead.



As the plants and trees begin to blossom and flower, nature springs forward new life. A time of such rebirth, growth, and renewal. A good representation of the spirit and strength of our folk during recent times and the transition we will begin to make moving forward. Our progress towards growth and new beginnings within our own personal lives & within our communities.

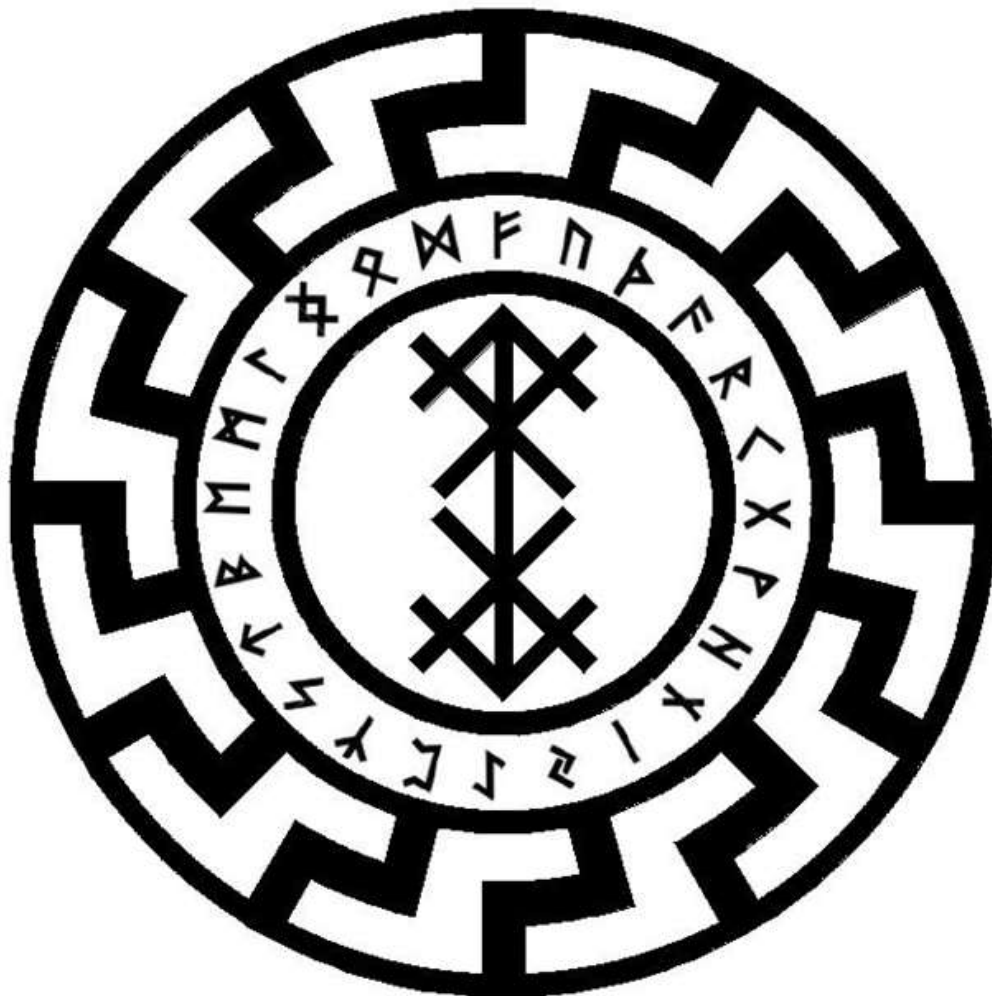
Hail our Gods
Hail our Ancestors
Hail the AFA



Tj Rudd
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Oregon

Step-by Step Guide to Morning Ritual of Greeting Sunna



Last month I wrote about how we can take control of our lives starting with what we do

when we first wake up in the morning. This month I want to elaborate on that subject by speaking about the energy in our bodies and the morning ritual of greeting Sunna, the Sun.

I have throughout my life have heard about the “energy” in our bodies and “power” centers called Chakras and didn’t give it a second thought until my awakening in the summer of 2017. I have been quite satisfied living in the material world and believed that Yoga and Chakras were just some new-age nonsense. I was also an atheist from the age of 16 when I had decided that Christianity made no sense whatsoever at all, so spirituality and the metaphysical were the furthest things from my mind. Although I had a quite comfortable life there was always a feeling that something was lacking, I felt incomplete. During the beginning of 2016, I decided I wanted to see if I could diet down to see my abdominals just for vanities sake and began counting calories. It took me 3 months to get down to 8% body fat, and while doing this my forehead began to crawl. It was very noticeable, and I would rub it to try and get rid of that sensation, not thinking that it was anything terrible. Looking back, I believe I know what had happened was that my Pineal gland began to decalcify, and the energy center located at the center of my forehead began to activate, my “Third eye” opened.

This experience was the first indication to me of the energy in our bodies. In the years since then, I have found that energy can be moved and that the “Power centers” are very real things. You may ask “How will this help me and what good is it?” Ultimately this knowledge and ability will lead to your enlightenment, which is the understanding of the true nature of the Cosmos, the world called Midgard in which we live, and your purpose here. You will be able to manipulate Midgard according to your will and desire and if you are able to “work with your fate and not against it” as the great Runemaster Guido von List said, you will have a fulfilling passionate life. In all actuality, we are spiritual beings in material reality and must use our time here wisely. Our Lore as written in the Eddas and Sagas contains the keys to unlocking these secrets and your personal gnosis will be different than mine but it may be similar. It is my hope that sharing with you some of my experiences will help you on this path.

Body awareness I believe is the simplest way to learn how to move energy in the body. Our goal is to awaken your Third eye (which has the power of the rune Ansuz) and connect with the Wotanic folk-soul, and your Fetch (true self) by raising Vrill (kundalini/Chi) energy.

Preparation: Find a place where you will not be disturbed and plan on about 15 minutes to this complete exercise. Get some headphones and listen to rain sounds on a loop. Try tracks with and without binaural beats and there are many meditation tracks

on YouTube you can utilize. The Binaural beats work well in the beginning as they are different frequencies of sound in each ear which help change brain waves into a different state. Try to find tracks that will induce a Theta wave state, which is good for meditation.

I personally lie on the floor during meditation as it is uncomfortable enough to keep me from completely passing out, however you may sit in a chair or a recliner. If you find yourself constantly falling asleep sit in a hard-backed chair, if you are limber enough to get into the yoga lotus position go for it. The purpose of that position is to keep you from falling asleep during meditation. Find a Tabata timer app on your phone (used for HIIT training) or set a kitchen timer to go off every 5 minutes. This will also keep you from falling asleep and let you know when to advance to the next exercise during this session.

Relaxation (5 minutes): Unfortunately, one cannot rush meditation, you must be very relaxed.

Lower body- From your meditation position stretch back all toes and tense both feet and calves together. Hold for about 5-10 seconds and relax for 5 seconds. Now curl your toes downward and repeat tensing both feet and calves, hold for 5- 10 seconds and then relax for 5 seconds. Now tense both thighs and hold for 5 to 10 seconds, relax for 5 and repeat.

Stomach and lower back- Push out your stomach and tense up all lower back and stomach muscles. Hold for 5-10 seconds, relax then suck in your stomach and tense your lower back for 5-10 seconds. Repeat

Chest and upper back- Arch your shoulders forward and exhale, caving in your chest. Tense all the upper back muscles for 5-10 seconds and relax. Pull your shoulders back, push out your chest and take a deep breath, hold for 5-10 relax and repeat.

Neck and jaw- Arch your neck forward and touch your chest, hold for 30 seconds. Arch your neck rearward and hold for 30 seconds. Grit your teeth and tense all your muscles around your neck and skull for 10 seconds and relax.

Full body stretch- Push out your arms and legs with your head back, stretch, and tens as much of your body as possible. Then relax and adjust your meditation position and get comfortable.

Mindfulness breathing (5 minutes): Observe your natural breathing for 5 minutes. Your mind will be flooded with thoughts, just cast them aside and return to observing your breathing. Each time you return to concentrating on your breath you are building your will, do not be discouraged, you must practice and learn.

Body awareness: (5 minutes): This is the first step in energy work, you must be able to center your concentration on different parts of the body.

Lightly scratch or rub your right big thumb long enough to cause it to tingle. Close your eyes and focus on the area just being scratched. Hold this attention for 15 to 30 seconds.

Move your attention to the left thumb and concentrate on it for 15 to 30 seconds. You may scratch it to induce the tingling sensations again. Now move your attention to other parts of your body, anywhere. Scratch or rub these areas until you can focus on them immediately. Trace a pathway from the tip of your right thumb onto your right shoulder along the inside sensitive part of your arm. Concentrate on the sensation of tracing, imagine someone tracing that path again and again. Now reverse directions and feel your awareness going from the shoulder to the tip of your thumb. Trace a pathway from your big toe, across your shin, over your knee to your hip. Now use your mind to duplicate this sensation, going up and down, over and over. Do these exercises with other parts of your body, you will at some point be able to direct your awareness at any part of your body and trace its movement. This is moving energy; it is the energy of your nervous system. This is the beginning of awakening your power centers and third eye. It is an amazing thing to look at your hand and feel the energy pulsing and moving up and down each finger. Do these exercises for the month of October and in November we will start activating the power centers. It's best to do these exercises with an empty stomach, but I have done it just after eating and it's worked just as well. However, when in a completely fasted state it is much easier especially after 24hours or so. Fasting is the quickest way to get energy moving that I have found.

Greeting the Sun



I neglected to add greeting the sun in my last month's article as one of the morning rituals to begin our day with. Our ancestors knew our sun as the Goddess Sunna. Asatru' is an animistic spirituality, stating that all things are alive, trees, rivers, mountains, and well planets and stars as well. The Sun has a spiritual essence and

maybe consciousness about the other planets or stars. A massive part of my awakening as to the nature of Midgard was due to a Biologist named Rupert Sheldrake. He has written a paper on the consciousness of the Sun, and I highly suggest you search it out and give it a read. Even though the Sun is a massive being and I am a minuscule being compared to her, I believe the Sun appreciates it when you take time to greet her in the morning, for without her we wouldn't have this life as we know it.

So here is how I greet the sun and if possible, this is done during the first 30 minutes of sunrise. During this time and at the last 30 minutes of Sundown you may stare directly into the sun. Any other time during the day besides these two windows you will hurt your eyes due to the UV rays. This action of Sungazing has also been said to aid the awakening of your "Third eye".

Stare at the Sun, hold your arms in the Elhaz position (arms outstretched towards the heavens), and say the following and mean it, like you are speaking to an actual conscious being:

Hail Sunna, light of heaven newly risen.

The one who shined on our ancestors shines on us now and will shine on those yet unborn.

Share with me this day some of thy light and might,

that I may better fight in the fray and gain my goals!

Good luck on raising energy, if you have any questions about energy raising, greeting the Sun, or just in general don't hesitate to contact me.



Gothi Joe Rozanek
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Washington

Baby Naming and Wedding Celebration



September has been a month full of big change and forwards momentum. Early on in the month, we had a wedding followed by a baby naming, officially welcoming our newest member of the kindred Arya Sunna on her 9th day of life. Many of our local folk were in attendance to participate, feast, and share Frith.



Our regular Iron Club where we weight train, socialize gaining in physical prowess and strengthen our relationship with the mighty Thunar was put on hold most of the month. However, we did return with full momentum creating a huge turnout the last Tuesday of the month, and will continue per usual moving forward. We received a few new applicants here in WA and look forward to arranging meet and greets at their earliest convenience to welcome them into the fold of our local activities. As the month progressed personal projects emerged for a few local members and it gives me great pride to know AFA members for all occasions stepped up forming work parties and making light work of what otherwise would have been overwhelming.



To close things up for this month we have continued aiding the amazing Coeur d'Alene Area folk in further organizing and meeting more frequently. This month one of our Kinsman Heinlein hosted a blot to Njord and what follows is his recounting of the event:

"Friday night Idaho members gathered together to share food, stories, and kinship at a camp on Lake Coeur d'Alene. Many stories and jokes were shared over the homemade pies and other delicious foods that were brought by our various families. We ended the night with a reading of the tale of Njord and Skadi's marriage.

The following morning, we gathered together again and had breakfast and good company. After spending a day together and the arrival of those who couldn't make it the night prior, it was time to honor Njord.

There was some apprehension about going into the water due to the low outside air temperature as well as the earlier temperature test revealing the waters to be frigid. As the wonderful women of the Kindred had blessed the offering horn, the wind picked up and the rain came pouring down. We stood on the lakeshore making our final preparations to enter the water, the general thought our people seemed to have was singular: This was going to be very cold.

Hammer in hand and leading the blot, I took up the hammer and strode off into the water. We marched into waist-deep water but had been given a surprising gift. The water was balmy and the sand was warm on our feet. Njord had already extended his blessing.

After hallowing our circle in the water, the hammer sitting on the watery bed, we gave offerings of wine to Njord. Thanking him for his protection during our travels and for his guidance on this new kindred's journey. His presence was felt throughout the blot and continued as we went to sumbel. Hailing gods and goddesses, our ancestors who proceed us in death, and our folk both alive and dead who deserved recognition. The mead horn went round solar-wise as the rain continued. A final offering of wine and goodwill was given to the wights. Reaching into the bottom of the lake, I pulled the hammer from the watery bed and hoisted it high towards the skies hailing the gods and the folk.

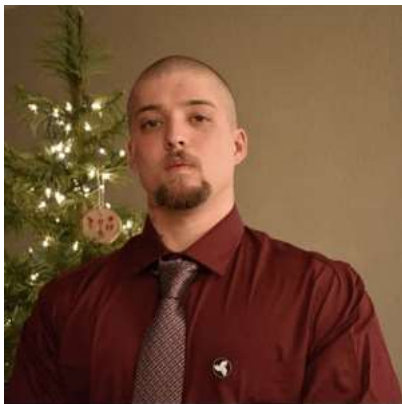
With the blot concluded we began the procession back to shore. The rains stopped and the wind cut completely when we touched shore. Njord had been with us. When we were dry and in fresh clothes, a fire was made. Steaks were cooked and we lifted both weights and drink, growing both physically stronger as individuals and stronger in our bonds together. It was an honor to share the memories with these fine men and women of our people. Hail the God's and hail the folk"

Heinlein is a great Kinsman dedicated to assisting in building strong AFA kindreds and communities. He will continue holding monthly Blots, events, and feasts for the foreseeable future. If you are in Coeur d'Alene or the surrounding area now is a great time to reach out and get more involved. We always love to meet more members and interested folks so come on out!

HAIL THE GODS!

HAIL THE ANCESTORS!

HAIL THE AFA!



Mason Johnson
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Welcoming a New Apprentice Folkbuilder

Welcome, Tyler Heinlein of Washington as our newest Apprentice for the Óðinshof

District. Tyler will be helping lead a vital and growing AFA region and we are extremely excited to watch his success in the coming months and years.

Hail Tyler Heinlein!

Hail the AFA!

Hail Óðinn!



Tyler Heinlein
Apprentice Folkbuilder
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Florida

Intracoastal Clean-Up



Our kindred started the month volunteering for the Intracoastal Clean-Up picking up trash along the waterways as an offering to our Divine Ship Captain, Njörðr.

Deep South Winter Finding Celebration



The Deep South celebrated Winter Finding in the panhandle again this year. We were honored to share this holy time with Witan Turnage, Folkbuilder East, and his lovely bride who drove down from Georgia. Attendees were welcomed with a fine selection of sausages by Mike and Katie. After setting up everyone's tents, we held blot to the Alföðr -Óðinn before the Thunderer brought his storms.



The children had a great time playing in the rain and the adults welcomed the cooler temperature.



Huddled under the group canopy we had one of the most moving sunbels I have ever

had the pleasure of attending. A recurring theme that touched everyone was the great love our men-folk have for their wives. The leadership of the AFA was hailed, and many spoke passionately of the deep bonds being built among our folk, not just in the Deep South but, across Midgard. The drawing for this event was a rune mala and Ann made hand towels commemorating the event.



We enjoyed the hospitality of Allen and Ann for dinner in their RV before retiring to our tents for the night. In the morning we feasted on an egg, ham, potato, and green chill hash. With full bellies and the campsite cleaned there was a morning prayer before the last of us hit the road for our journeys home.



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Lawspeaker Allen Turnage

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Georgia

The Hofiollar...What is it?



The Hoftollar is the AFA's newest membership contribution payment form and is already making a tremendous difference in how we pay for the things that make Asatru actually happen!

Among other things, this is how we pay off the current Hof's and acquire new ones. Many people pay the bare minimum of \$10/month, which is fine and is still no small amount as it adds up. However, the Hoftollar is great for the individual because it helps you contribute more, but affects your monthly finances with less of an impact because

it can be as little as 1% of your paycheck!

IN RESPONSE TO THE ARGUMENT THAT HOFTOLLAR IS A “CHRISTIAN THING”

Much like the word and concept of a church, the Hoftollar/“tithing” is a EUROPEAN concept utilized by our Christian ancestors to better their communities! When Christianity was all out Folk had, their churches meant a great deal to them, as that was where they went to try to connect with the Divine. Because of this, it was considered a very noble thing to contribute to the upkeep of those buildings!

We are now blessed enough to have this option, and we can use it to build more temples to OUR Gods for OUR people to worship!

AS A “META-RITUAL”...

When we participate in a blöt, we do the “heart to hand to horn”, where we focus our energy and our good intentions and our love of the Folk and the Holy Powers in our heart and transfer that energy to the horn, which will then be offered to whichever God or Goddess is being praised in that particular ritual.

This is similar, although much more mundane. With the Hoftollar, we are each putting a percentage of our hard-earned money into a combined effort to honor our Gods by building temples in their name!

HOW DO I SET IT UP?

Long story short: you can contact me or your local Folkbuilder!

Long story long: you will be sent a form with the AFA’s bank account and routing numbers so that you can give them to your payroll department and ask them to put a percentage of every paycheck into that account. It may sound awkward, but I promise that donating to your church is already a very common thing!

Please consider paying with Hoftollar, as even 1% will make more of a difference than the \$10/month option! It is TAX-DEDUCTIBLE!

And if you have any questions at all, reach out to me here on Facebook, or email me at teast@runestone.org!

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!



Folkbuilder Trent East

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Indiana

Welcoming a New Apprentice Folkbuilder

Please welcome Jonathan Rock of Indiana as our newest Apprentice Folkbuilder for the Þórshof District. Indiana has good momentum and is in one of the fastest-growing AFA regions in the world. We are excited to share in Jonathan's success in the coming months and years.

Hail Jonathan Rock!

Hail the AFA!

Hail Þórr



Johnathan Rock

Apprentice Folkbuilder

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Greetings From Indiana



This has been one busy month for me.. At the beginning of this month, my daughter and I rode up to Baldurshof for Fallfest with fellow Folkbuilder Parton. It was a long trip but worth it. We had so much fun. I did a presentation on Ancestral Veneration and enjoyed ALL of the festivities!

The following weekend my daughter and I went to visit with the newlyweds from Fallfest. A few other AFA members were present as well. We shared fire, frith, and food. It great seeing our children bond as we adults are. Long live the children of the AFA.



The rest of this month was spent moving into my new home. The home and property are bought and paid for. It's all mine! Due to the urgent need to move, Heimdall's Midgard Moot was pushed back a week. The first weekend of October will be a Land-

Taking ceremony with Heimdall's Midgard.

Although we didn't have our usual Moot at the end of the month we still had conference calls. At the moment we are covering the Study Havamal, along with short presentations by one member each week. Our regular moots will resume in October. As always if you would like to attend please feel free to reach out to me. Until next time...

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!



Folkbuilder Zach Cato

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Italy



Francesco Morese

Apprentice Folkbuilder

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New England

Calendar II at Woodstock



Labor Day weekend my family and I traveled to Vermont. We had heard of a stone circle and chamber in Woodstock and I looked it up on Google maps to find its exact location. It was incredible and the stones were very old. The location is off the beaten path but I would love to share it with you just send me an email.

White Mountains Meet Up



The next day we traveled over to the White Mountains in New Hampshire to meet with members from there and Maine. Some Folk from the Wandervögel group joined us as well and we had a great time, a great meal, and a great Frith. I look for to having Northern New England getting together more often.



Timothy Dumas
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The Journey Forward Begins Within

I've been here before. I've felt the wretchedness of defeat in my gut on many occasions. The cycle of return is real. I should've seen this coming. Nevertheless, I stand before myself once again. Sacrificing myself to my Self. In order to surrender to my enemy, me, the pain needs to be felt. It needs to be recognized; To be healed.

I am an Asatruar in recovery. A man of "honor" who has defiled his character too many times to count. What makes this time any different? Believe me, I've asked myself that question and can genuinely feel the difference. A stirring towards triumph.

I will seek out the darkness within and kill that which wants to destroy me. Today is the first day of the rest of my life.

You see, I've battled with addiction for the better part of my life. My addictions have cost me my freedom and removed me from the embrace of my family, caused me to lose the love of my life. My stubborn refusal to face my inner Fenrir has only allowed it to grow and fester; thereby lowering my resolve and the strength to resist my temptations. I have relinquished my birthright too many times to count.

Luckily for me, I've been blessed with the love and care from my family and my extended family; strong Folk who have lifted me up when I've been unable to do so myself.

I am eternally grateful for their love and support. Their shining examples.

I have begun to undertake a great endeavor. A task that entails the binding of the wolf within. I have made the mistake of not realizing my inherent powers before. The refusal to hold my head up at all times.

Ek Asatru!! I'm better than that!!

Today is different. Much different. I have begun the trek again, rising to my fight. Ascending once again, defending myself against the feral creature inside.

I hone my weapons with intellect and humorous wit. My honesty, sharpened, shreds the flesh of deceit. I venture to speak true words today for I must be true to others in order to be true to myself. I no longer want to succumb to the manipulation of Self. I want to live like a Viking; life flying in my face like a torrential thunderstorm.

To be or not to be...

No longer waiting for nature to take her course, I shall work my will from dawn to dusk
anew.

The unnamed one has found a chasm in my heart. I stand stalwart, compelled to drive it
out with an Odiان conviction. An Aesiric eviction!

Bye now, don't let the door hit ya where the mistletoe split ya!!

Beyond good and evil

I reject its machinations.

I raise a shield wall

in my soul

to thwart its vile persuasions.

This war has just begun.

- George Schindler

Ohio

Zinzinnati Oktoberfest



Saturday, September 18th we attended what was billed as the largest Oktoberfest in the United States. Unfortunately, it was more like the largest amount of vendors at one spot in the United States and not much to do with the cultural aspects of Oktoberfest. Well, you live and learn I suppose and we made the best out of it! As always we enjoyed each other's Frith and made many new plans for the future.

Under Ash + Oak Winter Finding at an Apple Orchard



Saturday, September 25th Under Ash + Oak Kindred, fellow AFA members, and a couple looking to join met at the beautiful Hidden Valley Orchard in Lebanon, Ohio for Winter Findings. Coincidentally they were having an Oktoberfest-style celebration and we enjoyed the brats, pretzels, cider, and hard cider available.



Next, we took a nice walk to the back of the Orchard to hold Blot away from the main crowd. We all brought offerings from our gardens and each had a delicious Macintosh apple from the orchard. The men gauldred while the women blessed the cider in the horn. My wife Christine then led the women over to the men and we all joined in gauldring Jera. After finishing she gave an excellent summary of what Winter Finding was about and gave thanks to Idunna, Ullr, and Freyr. We passed the horn and closed Blot feeling excited about the Frith created. We stayed together many hours enjoying

one another's company and the Oom Pa Pa band. Thank you to everyone that came out I look forward to our next gathering.



Timothy Dumas
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Honoring Traditions



Again we find ourselves at the end of another year. Holidays, parties, and time with those you hold dear are coming closer, which is the most important part of life are your family and friends. One thing I have noticed in today's world is that is something not held in the regard it should be. We've set it aside for less important matters why? Many answers can be given but regardless everyone reading this publication understands the importance. I think now more than ever we need to bring ourselves back to a time that revering the ancestors was commonplace. There was a time we would go into the very mounds where our predecessors were buried at the age of seven years and bring out the remains we believed belonged to us in a previous life to remember who we are. I think now more than any time in recent history we need to remember who we are. I'm not saying you should dig up your grandparents, but I am saying we need to understand the significance of tradition in today's fast-paced and shallow world. Find the things your family holds dear and celebrate them. If you have a fire and sing, do it, if you trade

recipes you gathered throughout the year, do it, if you can hunt with Uncle Jim, do it. Remember Hamingja and add to our collective energy and past deeds in a positive way. The sun when looked at or photographed gives off points of light, we are all points of light in our family's sun. Let us keep every point of light where it should be and never let the shining light of our people be extinguished or burnt out. Remember who you are, hold it in high regard, and make yourself and those around you a beacon of honor. Do it for your family and your extended family of European brothers and sisters. I wish you all a wonderful fall season.



Joe Drotos
Apprentice Folkbuilder
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Geneva State Park Beach Cleanup



On Sunday, September 19th we gathered at Geneva State Park in Geneva Ohio. We lead a cleanup effort through the Alliance for Great Lakes Adopt A Beach program. It is always a lovely walk along the beach. While the children battled the waves, we adults collected garbage. After 2 hours we got 5 pounds of garbage.



Afterward, we went to Apprentice Folkbuilder Jessica Lambert's house for a lovely meal and great conversation. A meal is always better when you have the company of great folk to break bread with.



Jessica Lambert
Apprentice Folkbuilder
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Upcoming Events in Ohio



Winter Finding

Blot and Potluck Dinner

Saturday October 9th 2pm
Hartville, Ohio



51st Annual
Ohio
Sauerkraut
Festival
Waynesville ~~2020~~ 2021

**Sunday October 10th 1pm
Downtown Waynesville, Ohio**

Saturday October 23-24

Hiking, biking, camping, live bands, the costume contest, the haunted campsite contest, the chili cook-off, the all all new HAUNTED TUNNEL, & food vendors of every kind!



**Admission
is \$45**

**Gory in the Quarry Campout
Nelson Ledges Quarry Park
Garrettsville, Ohio**

Pennsylvania

Winter Finding at McConnells Mill, PA



A group of local Pittsburgh and surrounding area members held a Blot ceremony at Cleland Point, located in McConnells Mill State Park. This beautiful rock overhang offers a view of the vista of the park that is unforgettable.



We honored Frey, Njord, and Idunna during our ceremony to thank them for our harvest, the harvest to come, and the strength to endure the harsh winter months ahead. Jera was traced in mead upon each member's forehead, even the wee ones as we began. We each placed offerings into the offering dish including apples, seeds, nuts, vegetables from our harvest, breast milk, and a runic carved pumpkin. During our blessing, each member was provided with craft leaves and asked to either write or envision their intentions for the Blot onto the leaves. They were then placed into the fire vessel and burned for the smoke would carry our intentions to the Gods. Each member was provided with a sachet of fertile soil which was blessed from the ground of this year's harvest and asked to keep it until the charming of the plow. Our intentions focused on breaking away from the consumer market and becoming more self-sufficient. "May the lesson of harvest teaches us that we are in no less danger of nature's threats unless we prepare."



Once the Blot was done, we made our way to the center of the park so we could set out on a hike along the river and moss-covered boulders. To our surprise as we approached the parking lot we learned that there was a heritage festival taking place. There were several folk style vendors, folk music, historical reenactments, including cannon demonstrations, and the grits mill was open to tour! We decided to trek on to our destination first and once we returned, we then got to explore the festival.



During our hike, we talked about different plants and tried to identify them along the way. We also got to know some new and prospective members. One participant felt so lifted during our Blot, she decided that she wanted to become family and join the AFA.

We are looking forward to growing and building our folk here in Pittsburgh and the surrounding area.

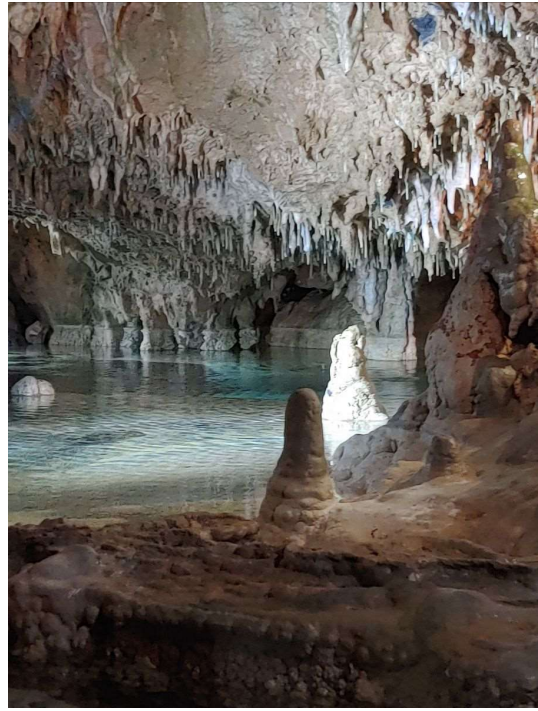
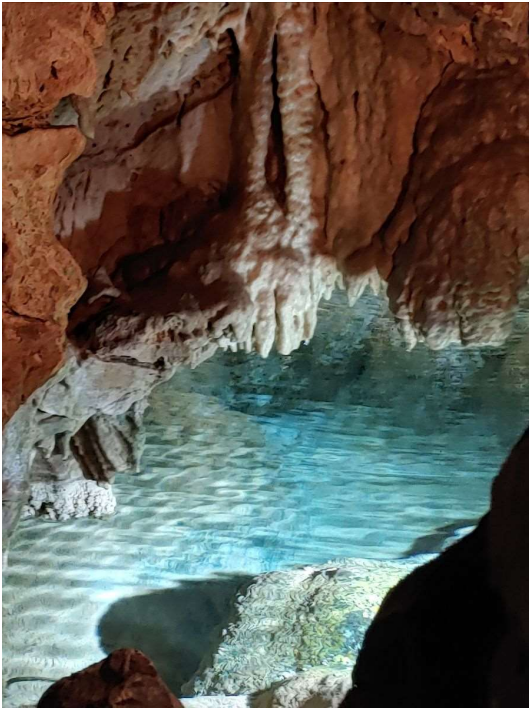
Jessica Keller

Upcoming Events in Western Pennsylvania



Exploring Echo Dell Caves





The second of October welcomed us with bright blue skies and the perfect 75-degree day in Central Pennsylvania. A group of us gathered at Echo Dell in Hummelstown where a fall festival was taking place! It was so lovely to see horse-drawn hayrides as they trotted past our group with their bells ringing. It reminded us of times since passed! We shared a picnic lunch and then went underground to explore the mysterious Indian Echo Caverns. Our tour guide told us tales of the "cave guardian," as well as showed us the cave's very own dragon! In quiet moments you could really feel the energy of the Landwights and the magic of the limestone cavern. After the cave exploration, we visited a petting zoo as well as the many craft vendors that set up shop here for the festival.

In the evening, we continued our fellowship at a local brewery where we shared dinner. After this, Gythia Catie Erickson led a beautiful house-taking ceremony for my husband and I's new home. We had a lovely day with friends that truly feel like family.

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Ancestors!

Hail the AFA!

Jane Malseed



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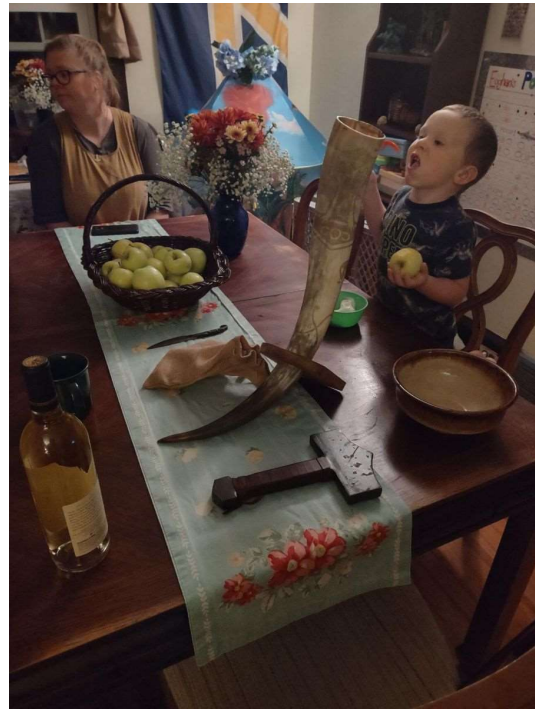
Honoring the Polish Ancestors



First up in the Northeast was the Polish American Festival in Doylestown PA. The rain held off just long enough for us to have a great time. We all enjoyed the ethnic food, the music, and looking at the different things for sale. For the children, there were many amusement park rides too. They all certainly slept well that night. I know mine

did. One thing that we all very much liked and perhaps was the highlight of the day was the cemetery. There were many monuments dedicated to Polish soldiers who were murdered by Communists in World War Two. Something that we don't see in America too much and certainly not included in our history books that often. All in all, we all felt that our Aryan culture is alive and well. Perhaps the Gods may not be the same for everyone we saw that day but the blood is. We saw proud people just like us. Deep down we are the same. Let's make sure we all do our best to bring them all the way home.

Winter Finding with Lansdale Tru Folk Kindred





The second was Winter Finding in Lansdale. This particular time it was just the Kindred members getting together. Much is going to change with how our kindred will look going forward so we had a lot to discuss. Some of us are moving and some already have. It was a productive day and we came up with some ideas. The Lansdale Tru Folk is one of the oldest Kindreds in the AFA. This is something that we are all proud of and will do whatever it takes to make things work. The rest of the night consisted of a Blot to our Goddess Idunn led by Witan Erickson. We walked away from it feeling peace and rejuvenation within. Also, a very special dinner was prepared by Gythia Erickson and we finished out the night saying good words over the horn during Sumbel.



Coming Up: Winter Nights in the Poconos
October 15th-17th in Milford PA

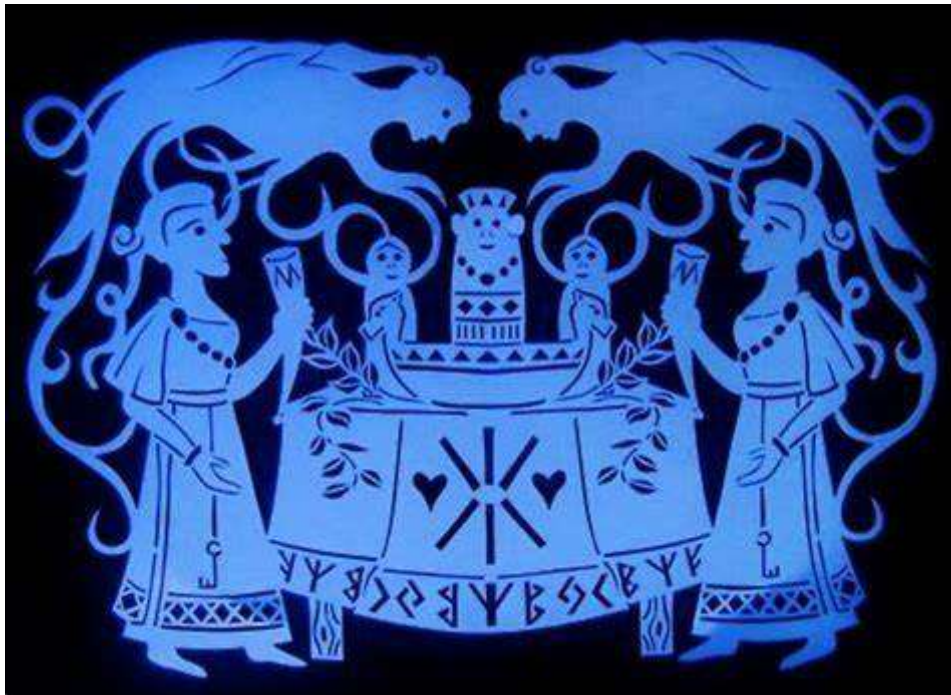
This is our big event of the year if you are in Thorshof District. No one walks away from it the same. It's a deeply spiritual experience and also a great bonding time with your AFA family. I hope to see all of you there. To add, I am always available for any questions you may have regarding it. Please reach out anytime.



Folkbuilder Adam Hudak

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Honoring Our Female Ancestors During Winternights



Autumn has officially started. The days are noticeably shorter. The nights are noticeably cooler. The trees are ablaze with the colors of fall and the crunching of the fallen leaves underfoot has begun. All around us the world is dying. This was a time of drawing in close, of hearth and home and family. For our ancestors, this was not an Autumn festival, but a quiet winter rite in which the female spirits were honored in a rite called Disirblot.

Today, Winternights is often seen as a death of the physical world, the world we can

see, and the reawakening of the intangible. It is the world of high energy, of spirits. It is that deeper feeling and connection to the things we know to be there. This is the time we honor our Disir or female ancestors. We remember that without our ancient mothers we could not be. They cared for the home and the hearth fires. They cared for their families. Our ancient mothers, with strength and determination, raised the next generation against odds we cannot really begin to fathom.

With the harvests finished there is a quiet lull before we turn our minds to the hectic holiday season. Now is a good time to turn inward in introspection, and to self-improvement. It is also the time to meditate on things of a more spiritual nature. Connect to the energy that is always there.



Gythia Catie Erickson
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Abide No Strife and Build Bright Fame



Everyone who joins the Asatru Folk Assembly agrees to the [Declaration of Purpose](#), the [Statement of Ethics](#), and the [Law of the Hall](#). From my own personal experience and from speaking with so many fellow AFA members through the years I know that the Declaration of Purpose is what inspires folk and that the Statement of Ethics is our foundation. These differentiate us from the outside world; they define what makes us Asatru.

But we don't talk about the Law of the Hall often enough. This document is not primarily about how we deal with the outside world or what sets us apart from it, even in positive terms. It is primarily about how we deal with one another. In fact, it is an ethical demand of what we OWE to one another as members of an Innangard.

Abide no strife in the hall or between kin. One must be able to speak one's mind candidly, but disagreements must never exceed the bounds of respect or courtesy. All within the hall are brothers and sisters and are to be treated appropriately.

Build bright fame, not dark disdain, for those who dwell in the hall. Our deeds and words must be such that the reputation of the Asatru Folk Assembly, and of Asatru as a whole, grows more glorious because of our presence. Do good to your kin, grow in your might and main...and when we disagree among ourselves, let it be done out of the sight of others.

We can all do better at these. They seem obvious but are tremendously difficult. Social media is socially flawed. It doesn't matter what platform, or whether is it public or private. Social media is inherently anti-social because it doesn't communicate nuance or feelings. Let's all commit to being very careful with it. When we get angry or offended by something on social media, reach out directly to the person and remember they are kin, a brother or sister.



Witan Clifford Erickson
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South Carolina

November Food Pantry at Thorshof



Part of the fun at the food pantry is building our friendships with the folk that regularly volunteer. Seeing Eldred, Witan Svan Herul's youngest son helping load the bags, Colin Raynard running the bags out to the table, and conversations with Trent East. Ravenna, the Heruls' daughter drew a handmade sign to hold up for passersby to see. We are all bonded over the work we put into the food drive and our Hof.



Ten families were fed in all. Each made it a point to thank us for the effort we are putting into forming a relationship in Linden. We had a lady thank us for just being there and is glad that we are helping those in need. Another gentleman came to gather and deliver food to some elderly folks who couldn't otherwise get around.

Thank you to the volunteers that help make this happen every month, our shared sense of generosity is making a difference in Linden, and building our friendships in the process.

Hail the doers!



Heather Young
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Winter Finding Celebration at Þórshof



Dörshof celebrated Winter Finding on September 25. Beginning with our monthly Food Pantry where ten families were served. Our volunteers were excited at the progress we've made. We are working on establishing stronger relationships with local families in need and the increase of our fame. Thank you to our volunteers who make it early every month to help those in need in Linden.



Most holidays start off with a class before we exchange gifts with our Holy Gods. This month, we tried something a little different. As some of our members are relatively new to Asatru and the AFA. We began with a class on the fundamentals of Asatru. Folkbuilder Daniel Young lead a thirty-minute class on frith and how it influences our own AFA Laws of the Hall. We then began class on Winter Finding and why we give blot to Ullr, which was lead by Witan Svan Herul. We learned about the rune Eiwaz. We reflected on how it connects to Ullr during the hunting season and incorporates the bow. We then feasted on venison and all the fixings. Afterward, we processed into our holy Ve. We exchanged gifts with Ullr in hopes he would help us maintain our true aim.



We are also proud to announce that Joseph, son of Folkbuilder Daniel and Apprentice Folkbuilder Heather Young joined our frithgard and the Asatru Folk Assembly. Multigenerational Asatru is the way to go, and we are pleased to have Joseph with us. May you all have a blessed Winter Finding and May your aim remain true.

Hail Ullr!

Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!

Folkbuilder Daniel Young

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Sweden

Thorsblot with Hroptatyr Kindred - a Swedish and Texan Affair



Autumn in West Sweden. The days get shorter, the air crisper and the leaves turn to beautiful hues of orange, red, and yellow. As the autumnal equinox drew closer we planned our Thorsblot. We decided to once again gather in the Åbrott stone circle in Tanumshede. It is one of our most frequently used rings and the energy therein is welcoming and friendly.



This Thorsblot was special. This year we had a guest by the name of Eric. An Asatru Folk Assembly member who had come all the way from Texas. We gathered in our circle at dusk and brought forth our offerings of nuts, apples from our own trees, a special blueberry mead, and of course pork. The large wooden statue of Thor was put upon the altar for him to possess during our Blot, surrounded by our smaller personal statues. We hung our hammer necklaces on the statue to be blessed, closed the circle, lit the fire, and began. We invoked Thor, asked him to join us and take possession of his statue. Thanks were given for this year's harvest, the life-giving rains, and Thor's protection. We poured mead on the statues, put pork on the fire, and as darkness slowly

fell we stood around the fire and made our toasts with the wind whispering and creaking in the tall trees around the circle.



All in all, this was one of the friendliest and most pleasant Blots I can recall having. The energy was relaxed and warm within the circle and the land seemed to welcome our blot. It was a pleasure having Eric as a guest and a wonderful reminder of what a great brotherhood and sisterhood the Asatru Folk Assembly holds for us. People from all over the world can join each other in a unified purpose of praising our gods and celebrating together in unity. We decided to give Eric a gift to bring home. A handmade Odin statue that our member Anders Nilsson makes and instructions on how to perform an Odin Blot. We are looking forward to friend Eric joining us for Odin World Prayer Day at 9 pm on the 9th of every month. From Sweden to Texas we stand united in praise of our gods.

Hail Thor!

Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!

Hail the unity of our folk!

Johan Källfelt

Njord Blot with Hroptatyr kindred and Eric the Texas Viking



A couple of days after the Thorsblot, Hroptatyr Kindred and our guest Eric were having a boat ride around Gothenburg's southern archipelago. Eric hadn't been out on the ocean for a while so we decided to head out in a member's boat. The islands of the southern archipelago are mentioned in the Eddas as Brännöarna. The islands are an interesting place with the earliest settlements dating around 7 000 years back. In the Viking Age, the islands were a hot spot for trading and through the millennia they have been home to everything from hard-working farmers and fishers to pirates and religious sects. Today the islands are car-free idyllic places that you can only reach by ferries or boat. They are inhabited by people who by and large commute to and work in Gothenburg. Our kindred currently has two members on the islands who keep the old faith alive.

We had planned to perform a Njord Blot but the weather seemed to have other plans. The day before had been quite windy but it had died down by the morning. But in the afternoon when we were heading out it started to pick up again. We had a nice boat ride in and between the islands but we had in mind to head out to the lighthouse island of Vinga for our Blot, far outside the islands. Finally, we made the decision to give it a try but to head back if the waves and the wind proved to be too heavy. We have to acknowledge Eric's Viking DNA. Though he is not a regular seafarer he handled the waves like he had done it all his life. The trip was slow and turbulent with the wind right in our bow but we eventually made it out into the harbor at Vinga. On the island, we headed down to the main bay Gattulven and found a nice place with some

protection from the wind to perform our blot. We closed the circle and lit a fire. We invoked Njord, Aegir, and Ran, contemplated the bounties and wonders of the ocean, and read a poem to Njord. Mead was poured into a pan in which we had placed a Laguz rune made of driftwood and we asked Njord to bless the mead. We pledged to treat the ocean with respect and asked for fair weather and protection at sea. We drank of the holy mead and made toasts. Mead was offered to Njord that we poured into the fire and into the ocean, beer to Aegir and Ran, and a large filet of saithe was left on the rocks for the animals of Njord's kingdom.



After the Blot, we climbed the stairs to the top of the lighthouse. It is 95 feet tall and we really felt the full force of the winds on the platform at the top. It was a magnificent view of the sea with the waves crashing against the shore. Imagine that our forefathers crossed the ocean of Kattegatt in open vessels. The skill, determination, and

fearlessness are truly an inspiration. Our own boat ride back was easier than the way out, with the wind in our stern and the waves rolling us from behind. As the sunset, we were back in port after a blot well done and a renewed flow of Laguz in our veins.

Hail Njord!

Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!

Hail our forefathers!

Johan Källfelt

Upcoming Events

Disablot

Join us as we honor our Disir up in Norrbotten. We will blot on the 21st of October.

Alvablot

Join us as we honor our ancestors up in Norrbotten. We will blot on the 8th of November.

The Saturday Call

Every Saturday we have a call over teams for the Swedish AFA members. Calls will vary in topic, but the idea is to get to know each other better, and hopefully serve as a first step in eventually meeting up in the real world.

Invitations are sent out over email so make sure to check yours if you want to join.

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!



Erik Lugnet

Apprentice Folkbuilder

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Tennessee

Celtic Festival



I went to the Celtic Festival, where there was Irish dancing, live music, strength competitions, booths of artwork, and live birds.



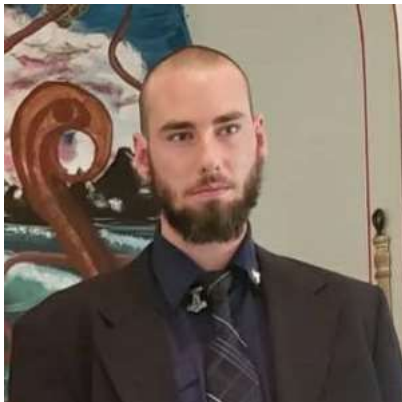
After which I visited Sleet and his wife, and spent the day engrossed in conversations.

Stone River National Battlefield



Visiting the Battlefield where many stood and gave their lives for what they believed in for this country, but life in a different perspective. Germs were not known about, so those who received Medic care died of gangrene. They were essentially tortured. As they stood in that weed-filled field, I can only imagine the thoughts that must have crossed their minds. I die today, I perish into oblivion, for the convictions which grab me by the soul. My only hope is that the posterity that comes afterward, will think of this day, and when duty calls, not hesitate to defend that which they love and hold dear. I gave everything as a nameless soldier so that they might at least have the choice.

Their sacrifice emboldens me, that if they could give that, then can I not at least stand in safety for the convictions I possess and for the people I love?



Jesse Parton
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Virginia

Autumn, Idunn, and Apples



I, for one, am not upset over the end of Summer. I've been ready for 'pumpkin spice and everything nice' since July. At the first taste of a cool crisp morning, I've been covering my home and alters in various shades of burgundy and gold, while making various spiced bread for the family and house wights to enjoy.

Part of my devotion to Autumn has been to deepen my relationship with deities I feel embody the spirit of the season. Idunn has been the goddess that I have had the most connection with recently. I am not an expert in lore or a Gythia, so my experience is just based on my own understanding and interactions. I first encountered Idunn in a dream where she was picking fruit while rough green snakes were trying to burrow beneath the roots of the trees for winter. Many of the dream details blurred from there, but I woke with a sense that I needed to know more. I only know of two stories about Idunn in the lore. In one, we discover she is married to Bragi. The story of her kidnapping is the one that highlights her importance. From that story, we know that she is beautiful and youthful. She tends an orchard and gives apples or fruits/seeds of youth and immortality to the Gods. Her gifts were coveted and the usual trouble maker in the lore assisted a giant in abducting her. After receiving backlash for his actions, Loki borrowed Freya's cloak and brought Idunn back in the form of a nut or seed. This, of course, is the abridged version. This is why I have always associated Idunn with Autumn. Many seeds and nuts, specifically in the regions of our ancestors, did not ripen until Autumn. Many fruits and nuts would be put into cold storage to provide life-giving winter sustenance. It isn't revealed in the lore, but to me, she always had the feel of Vanic energy. Her abduction indicates a dark winter while her return as a seed is the cycle of Spring beginning anew. Like most else in the lore, the fruits that she provides the gods can be interpreted as a number of things. I tend to associate the effects of her fruits with Kundalini energy. The runes that I most associate with her are Gebo and Ing, although the effects of her fruit evoke feelings of Sowilo. My most recent ponderance

of her is her relationship with Bragi. While Idunn provides youth and immortality to the gods, her husband, through the use of sagas and song offers us a way to also experience a touch of immortality. I am of the belief that we reincarnate through bloodlines. It is through the tales and stories of our ancestors that we can then recognize their return to Midgard. I think many of our ancestral memories are blurred due to our failure in storytelling. So this autumn I plan on nibbling on the fruits I've been offered and writing out tales of those that have come before me.

And then there are apples! Most of us think of apples when we think of Idunn although technically we don't know for sure if she gave out apples or some other fruit.

Personally, I will continue to associate apples with her. Apples and Europeans have had a very strong affinity for one another. We have actively worked to cultivate numerous strains that have allowed them to easily grow where ever we need them. It was even listed in the Lacnunga, which is the poem highlighting the nine sacred herbs of Woden.

"This is a plant which is called Crab-apple
A seal sent this forth across the sea's back
As a cure for another poison
A worm came crawling, he tore a man apart,
Then Woden took up nine glory –rods,
Struck the adder then so it flew apart into nine
Their apple ended it and poison
So that it would never bend into a house"

Beyond the obvious nourishment, the fruit of apples provides, it is medicinal. The energetics of the apple is cooling and soothing. The more bitter the fruit, the more potent the medicine. Sweet and tasty apples are best utilized as food. However, it still holds medicinal properties. Let us start with the flowers.

Apple blossoms are cooling and soothing. They can be enjoyed in a delightful tea. This same tea can be brewed strong to relieve hot gut conditions like heartburn and ulcers. This same strong brew can be used as a wash for hot dry skin conditions. Used on the face as a wash will give one a youthful appearance. The same flowers can be infused in oil for the same purposes.

Next, we move to the bark, the inner bark can be used as a tincture (best in brandy), as a decoction, or in a syrup. Its energetics are cool and dry. I feel it is similar to peach. It eases upset stomachs, reduces stomach acid for those dealing with heartburn, and helps with other "hot" gut conditions. The decoction can be used topically for hot moist skin conditions. Because of its astringency and anti-inflammatory nature, it eases diarrhea. It

would also benefit one with a hiatal hernia because it will tighten and tone the tissue. It works well for headaches and fevers as a result of the flu. Preps and harvest of bark should be done in the spring.

The leaves are what I personally use the most. Their medicine is a milder form of the bark but is easier to process and collect. They also make a tasty addition to tea and can be used as a fresh spit poultice for various bug bites. I sometimes also add smoke blends to add depth and body to the smoke.

Last and final note on the medicinal uses, it is said that eating three fresh crab apples will dispel worms from the gut. Crab apples are a combination of bitter and sour so I can easily understand how this would work. Eating crab apples would also cause a bout of diarrhea so if you try it, be forewarned.



Apple Cake Recipe

Now on to my current use of apples! It is that time of year where apples are everywhere. I managed to get a large bag of Macintosh apples to use in an apple cake. Hope your autumn is filled with plenty of apples, cinnamon, and that touch of joy as we move through another season.

3 C flour
1 tsp baking soda
2 tsp cinnamon
½ tsp salt
1 c butter
1 c sugar
½ c brown sugar
3 eggs
2 tsp vanilla
3 large apples grated
1 c of chopped nuts (this is optional, we always used black walnuts or pecans, but English walnuts would be tasty as well)

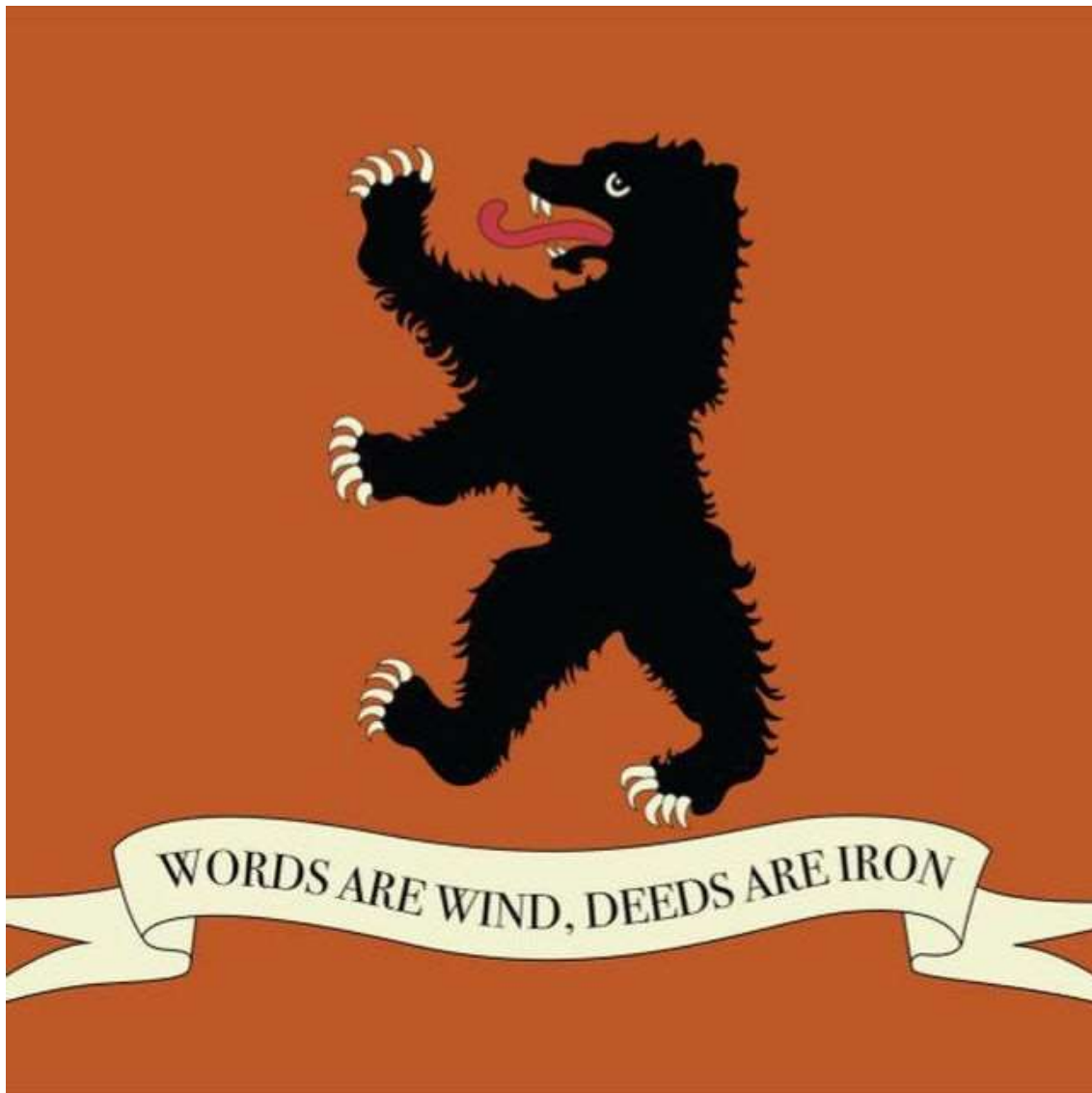
Preheat the oven to 325 and grease a bundt pan

Cream butter and sugar in a bowl and slowly add eggs and vanilla. Sift in the flour and other dry ingredients and mix well. Last, fold in apples and nuts. Pour into a well-greased bundt pan and bake for a little over an hour. A simple glaze or caramel sauce can be added once it is cool. I personally prefer a simple glaze made of melted butter, 10x sugar, vanilla, and some cream. Enjoy!



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Words are Wind, Deeds are Iron



“Words are Wind.” To me, this means that the spoken word, no matter how low or high the voice, still holds sway of intent. Our words hold immense power, whether it be a gentle breeze or a raging hurricane. The sound that comes out of our mouths is carried into the wind. Heard by Heimdall, who watches over us from the Bifrost Bridge. Our words are heard by Hugin and Munnin, who take our utterances to the ears of Woden. In continuance, the rune Ansuz means the spoken word or breath. Our declarations made over the Well of Wyrd tie into our Wyrd, creating a bond with the Gods and Ancestors. So, in essence, our message can greatly affect our purpose, our connection with the Gods, our Wyrd, and our Folk.

With the last part, “Deeds are Iron.” This statement has great significance to me. The deeds we do whether seen or unseen, reflect upon our honor. Like iron, our actions are forged by tempering and hammering out the impurities. This dedication creates long-lasting beautiful steel. With our steadfast effort and commitment, we can forge an everlasting community within our Folk that we will pass on to the next generation. Our positive actions speak louder than words, therefore there is a need to continue to share

our good deeds and show our Folk how to lead by example. Like iron, our deeds can change our personal relationship within ourselves, our community, our Folk, and our future Folk.

When you put these two phrases together, you get the slogan “Words are Wind, Deeds are Iron”, which is our slogan/statement we strive to live by here at Thorshof. When we speak words to our Kinfolk, our deeds show commitment to those words.



Cody Raynard
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Honoring Our Ancestors During October



Greetings all! We are fast approaching the wild hunt times, the veil is thinner this time of year as the lord of frenzy leads his furious host across the countryside. This time of year is the perfect time of year to focus on our ancestors.

Let's talk about our ancestors for a moment. We often talk of ancestors in an almost abstract way, "the ancestors", and the Hofs have a special table for pictures of our most recent ancestors to be remembered. This is all a good practice, but what does it mean to really commune with our ancestors? What does it mean to live according to their example? We often remember grandpa, how nice he was to us, maybe he helped you learn to fix a car or catch a fish. However, we forget that during the great war he may have dove on a grenade to save his friends. His loyalty to his friends and country was that great. Or further back in time, loyalty to church and king was such that men went off to foreign lands to fight for coreligionists that they had never met because their religious leader told them it was important. Even further back. Hermann gave up a life of Roman nobility and luxury, to fight for his own tribe. His loyalty to his people was beyond wealth and comfort. There is a theme throughout history, a lesson our ancestors teach us. That lesson is loyalty. Loyalty to the tribe, to folk, to each other. Without loyalty, and hierarchy, we are uncivilized, and lose the innate nobility of our Folk.

Now in the age, we live in, we largely choose our own tribes. We have all chosen to come home to the Gods and to join this great tribe we call the Asatru Folk Assembly. Just because we chose this tribe, does not mean we can ignore the great lessons of nobility and loyalty our ancestors have taught us. Our oaths mean no less than our ancestors' oaths. In fact, our oaths may indeed mean more. Most of us were not born to this, we came here, and promised to be Tru to our church and Folk of our own choosing. It is easy to swear an oath of loyalty to your cousin or your wider kin network. To swear an oath to Folk you may not have a close familial connection, that means something.

So this time of year, as the veil grows thin. Remember your great ancestors, remember the example they set. The lessons of our people that have passed down the ages from the beginning. Love your Folk, love your Gods, love your ancestors. And remember, maintain frith and loyalty.

I hope to see you all at Winternights in the Poconos!

Folkbuilder Rob Stamm

rstamm@runestone.org



Óðinn Mural



This past weekend, Witan Svan Herul traveled across the country, from Virginia to Óðinshof, and painted the breathtaking mural of the Victory Father at Óðinshof. Svan's murals of our Gods are profound works of piety and devotion. There is truly magic in each of these pieces. When Svan completes a mural, he invites the very essence of that God into his hof and that presence is felt in a powerfully tangible way. We all owe Witan Svan a massive amount of thanks for these amazing gifts.

Hail Witan Svan Herul!

Hail Óðinn!



Witan Svan Herul
sherul@runestone.org

West Virginia

Winter Finding - for the Folk and the Ancestors of the Folk.



This turning of the Autumnal Equinox found Stonewall Kindred ready and eager, to deepen the bonds of real, tribal identity that we all know to be alive, though they may lie dormant among the Folk. We can boil this milestone of the turning year into a formula that is so easy to understand that we need not try - we can't help but act upon it, for we feel it in our blood! Instinct, as old as memory itself, compels us to formally mark this turning of the tide, which we recognize with three simple statements:

1. Summer is over.
2. Winter is coming.

3. The veil is thinning.

Thus, we began the afternoon with a horn of homemade mead - peach flavored, in commemoration of the bright, sundry summer season soon to end. Each of us poured into it our victories, our disappointments, our fears, and our trials from across this long and historically unique summer tide. This rite being complete, in the sight of the Gods, in the sight of the Folk, and in the sight of the noble wights of the land, we formally declared the summer season to be at an end.



After the ritual closing of summer and before the formal opening of the ancestral winter season, we took advantage of the liminal space created by our afternoon-long ritual by preparing - symbolically and practically - for winter with the collective making of apple preserves led by Folkbuilder Heather Bedford who provided the recipe, the tools and most of the know-how for the canning process of our fresh-picked apples from the local eastern West Virginia orchard. Thus, in the depths of winter, when things look as bleak

as can be, each of us can now look upon the shelf and grab a jar of sweet apple pie - a morale boost made specifically for the lowest points of the year ahead.



Finally, with the day's activity coming to a close, we set out a portion of our meal, along with an assortment of ancestral relics to sit out in each other's company, as we called upon the spirits of our ancestral dead to join us, to be with us and to lend us their wisdom in the waning weeks ahead. Each, in turn, had a chance to call - out loud! - the names of our ancestors and draw them into our circle, not just to our individual bloodlines, but to the total ancestry of the tribe to be.

Now, we can each look to one another's ancestors as a little bit more our own - and we can each share our ancestral might, our Hammingja, with one another in likewise.

Hail the Gids, hail the Folk, hail Victory, and Hail to the noble Ghosts standing watch over the Stonewall Kindred!



Patrick Cook
Apprentice Folkbuilder
pcook@runestone.org





Baldrshof Third Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly

Arkansas

Upcoming Events

October 16th at Culvers in Springfield Mississippi at 12 pm.

Also, members in Arkansas Missouri, and Louisiana have been getting together for weekly zooms talking about our Gods Goddesses and the runes.

For information on these calls and future events please email towens@runestone.org.



Join your folk for an Time Yule in Oklahoma! Dec. 4th and 5th

Help haul in the Yule tree to the great hall. Go a wassailing! Indulge in the treats of the season! Help put together the Old Time Yule in Oklahoma cook book. Join in the making of decorations, decorate the tree. And gather around the fire as the stories of Yule are told.

This is cabin accomodations \$ 70.00 per person, 130.00 per couple.
register now!

Registration for the Yule event can be done at the link below:

<https://letsgoaviking.ticketspice.com/an-old-time-yule-in-oklahoma>



Apprentice Folkbuilder
towens@runestone.org

Celebrating Folkbuilder's Oath at Baldrshof





We have been planning two more multi-state events to finish out the year. This month was huge for me personally as I took my Folkbuilder Oath! Asatru has had such a positive impact on my life and the AFA has helped me facilitate that. It is with great honor and excitement I take on this role and plan on doing my part to help our version of a church do great things!



Michael Sessumes
Folkbuilder
mssesumes@runestone.org

Illinois

Raising Hrafnagud flag at Baldrshof



September was a great month for the AFA in Illinois, as well as for Hrafnagud Kindred. Several new members applied and were accepted into the AFA in our state, and we also participated in a number of events, some quite meaningful, and others for fun and frith.

Illinois was well represented at the Baldurshof Fall Fest. While there, we were honored to participate in the raising of the Hrafnagud flag at the Hof.



In addition, two members of our Kindred had their Handfasting performed by Gythia Brandy Callahan, assisted by Folkbuilder James Ault. The Handfasting was a touching and meaningful service. Congratulations to Shane and Jackie, and may their bond and their family flourish!

Chicagoland "Bowling Moot"



Later in the month, we hosted a “bowling moot” in the Chicagoland area. A good time was had by all who attended.



James Cummings
Apprentice Folkbuilder
jcumings@runestone.org

Minnesota

Virtue Recovery Meeting

The topic of addiction can be foreign to some, but for many, including our folk, addiction is a very prevalent issue. Since March of 2020, fatal overdose rates have shot up 18% from an already record-breaking number. There have traditionally been mostly 12-step based options for anyone seeking refuge and though these programs have done

great things for many people, some of the specific steps do not go hand in hand with Asatru beliefs. Mainly, asking a God to remove your shortcomings and turning your will and your lives over to God as you understand him. This has left a great many Asatruar left with 2 options; face working a program where you are going through the motions and work steps that can be spiritually harmful or to bitterly feel that you have no help.

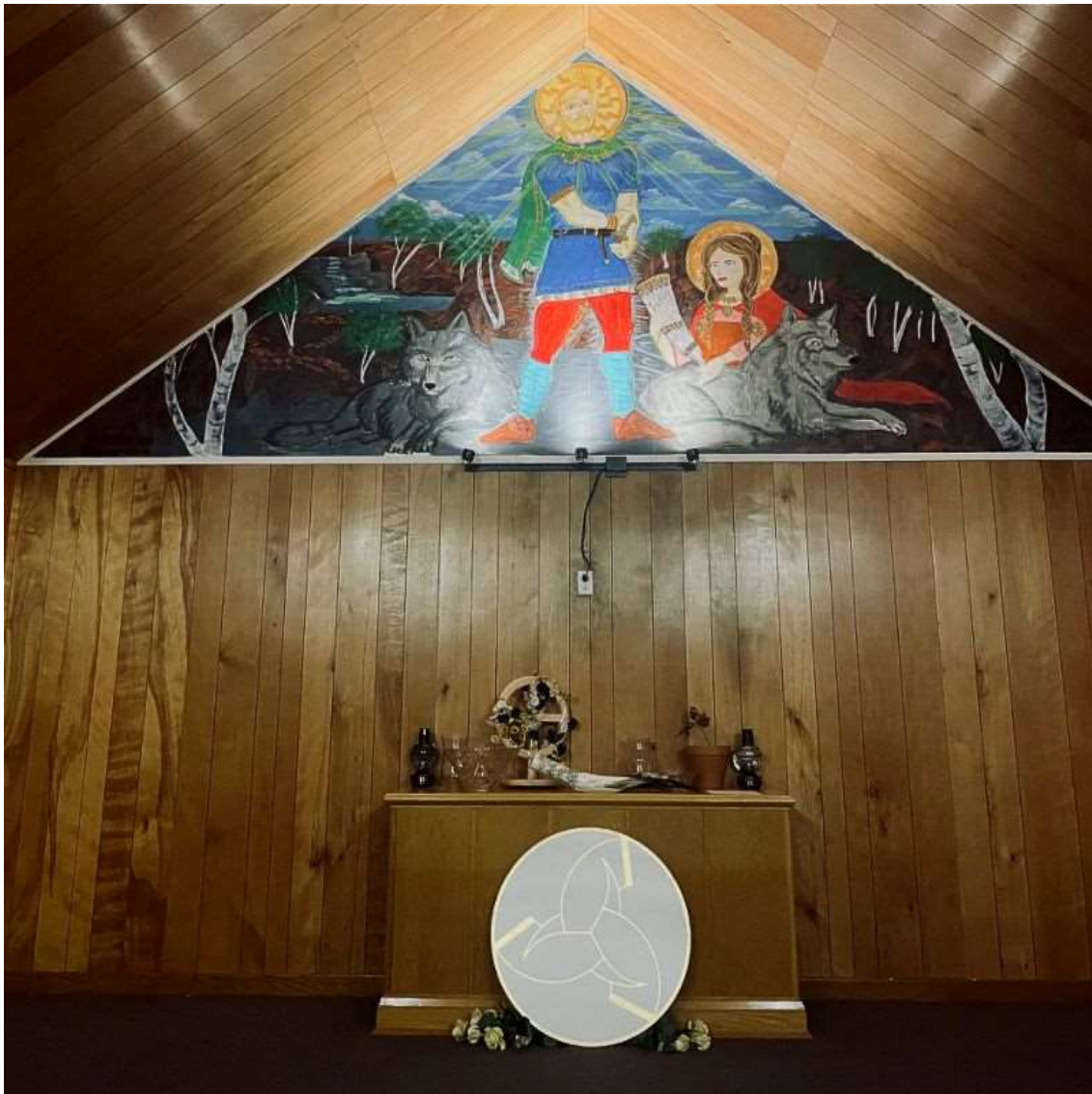
In early April, member Josh Hemmingson had brought forward the idea of doing a (what we now call) Virtue Recovery Meeting. Like NA or AA but based on the 9 noble virtues instead of the traditional 12 steps. Being in Recovery myself I felt compelled to support him in any way. We are in the very early stages of having a structure that can easily be chained in any arena, but we have a great start.

We are currently meeting weekly, at the local library, and also are utilizing zoom meetings as a way for anyone to join in. We plan to have a rotating topic of a step (virtue) each week and save our readings as we go to build a template for others. This is the start of something wonderful that is going to do great things for our folk.



Ashley Mcstocker
Apprentice Folkbuilder
amcstocker@runestone.org

Happenings with Baldrshof



With the colder months approaching and the continued workforce problems, the steeple repairs will be placed on hold until spring. The next workday will be October 16th for Fall cleanup. The one and only, Folkbuilder coordinator Jason Gallagher will be on site. The food shelf will start that day and a hike with Northern Blood Kindred will wrap up the day. Continuing projects include installing a drain line on the kitchen floor. Next, we would like to work on the aesthetic: touch-up paint, embossing walls with the Wolf rampant and AFA Bindrune and getting ready for Minnesota winter.

Hail the Ancestors!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!



Folkbuilder Nathan Erlandson
nerlandson@runestone.org

Fallfest 6 at Baldrshof



Fallfest 6 at Baldrshof was the biggest and best Fallfest ever! We had a record number of eighty-four attendees. A total of sixty adults and twenty-four children. It was a magnificent sight to all the children running around the Hof and playing in the yard. We welcomed new families and folk from twelve different states.



I want to thank everyone who helped make this event such a success. Hail those who cooked, slaved away in the kitchen, and made all the delicious meals. Thank you to all our leadership, Kindreds, and members that planned this event and helped it run smoothly. After nearly a year of construction, hard work, and dedication our Hof is ready to continue to hold memorable events. I know Baldr was shining down on all his folk that was in his Temple.



Join us next year for Fallfest 7 at Baldrshof September 2nd-4th Labor Day weekend. Be sure to mark these dates in your calendar!

Upcoming Events:

10/17 Baldrshof Food Distribution and Workday 9 am -6 pm

10/17 Hike and Dinner with Northern Blood Kindred 6-8 PM

Please RSVP with me at jgallagher@runestone.org

10/29-10-31 Winter Nights weekend at Baldrshof starting Friday with a Disirblót.

Saturday wedding ceremony For Gothi Jason Plourde and Gythia Anna Szczepanski at Baldrshof. Sunday will be Halloween at Baldrshof. We are handing out candy to the children in the town of Murdock. There will be cookies, hot cider, and pumpkin carving. Bring your costumes folks!



Folkbuilder Jason Gallagher

jgallagher@runestone.org



Gothi Jason Plourde

jplourde@runestone.org

Winter Finding at Baldrshof



As September drew to a close, we gathered to reflect on the changing season. We discussed what the change of season means for us in the modern age and how it relates to our lives as modern people. We offered a horn to Idunna and reflected on the treasures found in our lives that keep us going throughout the cycle of the year. After the ritual, we shared a meal that we had prepared that morning.



Since we are currently unable to have a fire at Baldrshof to offer up to our gods and ancestors, we have had to get a little more creative. Our usual method of offering goes into the earth, either by pouring the horn by a tree that we had picked out or burying them. After the meal, we went to the usual tree and buried apples. As we returned the apples to the earth, we spoke over them the hopes and wishes that we had for this upcoming season.

Join us next month for Winternights on October 29th, as we celebrate and honor our

female ancestors!

Hail Baldr!



Gythia Anna Szczepanski

aszczepanski@runestone.org

Fallfest 6



Over Labor Day Weekend, Folk gathered together from all corners of the AFA to celebrate FallFest 6 at Baldrshof. This was the largest FallFest event to date with over 80 people in attendance.

Our weekend started on Friday afternoon with check-in. Folkbuilder James Ault presented a talk about our Modern Folk Hero Else Christensen. His knowledge of her life and legacy never ceases to astonish those who hear him for the first time. This was a topic we wanted to cover at this year's FallFest, as our Hero Altar at Baldrshof was

raised in her honor. The evening meal was prepared by Joel Eastman. He prepared his famous Hungarian goulash which received hails and praise in abundance! Thank you, Folkbuilder Ault and Mr. Eastman for your contributions to such a successful first evening! Our Alsherjargothi, Matthew Flavel, led his people in a powerful blot to Baldr late in the evening. Our voices raised and echoed throughout the hof as we paid honor and gave gifts to the brightest of the Aesir in his house.



Saturday morning, the Folk started out with a delicious breakfast provided by the True North Folk Kindred of North Dakota. Gothi Jason Plourde presented a wonderful presentation on the Land Wights and Gythia Anna Szczepanski shared her knowledge of the Armanen runes with her Folk. Founder Stephen McNallen presented his legendary presentation on The Cauldrons which left his Folk inspired!

Lunch was served to the Folk and provided by the Northern Blood Kindred of Minnesota with a variety of baked goods donated by Gythia Szczepanski (these are always a crowd favorite!). Apprentice Folkbuilder Ashley McStocker and Sara Ault kept the young ones entertained with salt dough runes and rock painting while the men and women gathered in their groups. Our menfolk participated in a spirited gathering for Shane Duffy in preparation for his upcoming wedding vows and our women surrounded his bride Jackie in frith and sisterhood with a beautiful bridal blot to Frigga.

The day's blot, to Frey and Freya, was conducted by Gothi Plourde and Gythia Szczepanski. Oaths and ceremonies of the Folk followed the day's blot. The True North Kindred of North Dakota was oathed and officially announced as an AFA Kindred. Their oath focused on frith, nobility, and service to the AFA. Their oath was given by Kindred Coordinator Jason Gallagher. Michael Sessumes took his oath as a Folkbuilder and Witan Clifford Erickson took his oath as a gothi. The halls echoed the hails of each of these men for their continued and unwavering service and dedication to their church.

Dinner that evening was served by the leadership of Baldrshof District to their Folk. Folkbuilder Ault led an excellent auction which raised funds for the future steeple work for Baldrshof. Folk returned to the campsite and continued their celebration and sharing of frith late into the evening.



Sunday morning, following a healthy breakfast, Folkbuilder Zach Cato presented his talk on genealogy and ancestor worship. Apprentice Folkbuilder McStocker and Josh Hemmingson gave an informational presentation on the sobriety meetings centered around the 9 Noble Virtues and how those ideals support recovery.

Wayfarer Blot was lead by Witan Brandy Callahan and Folkbuilders Nathan Erlandson and James Ault and was followed by a powerful and emotional morning sumbel.

The highlight of Sunday was the wedding of Shane and Jacqueline Duffy. The bride looked absolutely beautiful in her white dress and floral headdress! Tears flowed from the eyes of many when Shane recited his written vows to his bride and ended with a vow to their children as well. The wedding feast, cake, and dancing followed the ceremony into the early evening.

Thank you to the many who made this FallFest the most successful to date!

Baldrshof Saturday, November 27, 2021



Join the gathered Folk at Baldrshof for our
very first "Folksgiving"!

Potluck Thanksgiving meal with deep fried turkey!!
Spend the day with good food and good Folk!
10 am - 6 pm



Yule at Baldrshof

FRIDAY, DEC 17 – SUNDAY DEC 19

Spend 3 days and 2 nights with your Folk in celebration of the Yule season!
Yule crafts, holiday movies, tree lighting, gift giving, multiple feasts and blots!

RSVP to Folkbuilder Jason Gallagher



Witan Brandy Callahan
bcallahan@runestone.org

Missouri

Newborns, Birthdays and Holidays

The leaves are changing, the nights are cooler but the hospitality from the heart of the

country is still warm and cozy! And lots going on in the last month!

The AFA has grown by 4 feet down here in the last month! And we want to extend congratulations and warmest wishes to new parents Dalton and Karen Woodward and Chris and Emma Avinesion! We look forward to meeting your little guys soon!



Happy Birthday to Lutisha Wilson! We spent a great weekend celebrating another year with us here in Midgard. A small group of folk celebrated by hitting a concert together. Shopping at the European market and lots of laughs!



A few of us traveled up to celebrate Fallfest the 1st weekend in September. It was a great time spent with many familiar faces and some new ones we were happy to Greet and get a chance to sit and talk with for a while.

While at Fallfest one of our own, Michael Sessumes, stood before the folk and took his Folbuilder Oath! We are blessed to have him as a great example of leadership in the

AFA. Thank you for your dedication, Michael. We are all honored to have you take your place. Hail Michael!

BTW, those MN folk did a fantastic job bringing everyone together! We thank them for their hospitality.

If you haven't gotten to Baldrshof yet, I highly recommend it. Seeing the 1st temple to Baldr in probably more than 1000 years is awe-inspiring. And will give you a sense of all that we are accomplishing in our church. The legacy we are leaving for our future generations. We are going up for Yule, if you want to tag along or caravan on up please reach out! We would love to have you with us!

In mid-September Ryan and Brook McCormick of northern MO put together a wonderful gathering of Missouri and Kansas folk where they enjoyed the park and shared a meal together. Thank you Brook and Ryan for putting together that event! The feedback was awesome! Keep it up!

If you haven't made it out recently to any of our gatherings in the area, or you are going to be traveling through, please reach out so we can get you together with your folk! We would love to see you!

From all of us in the heart of the country to you, keep cozy, enjoy the joys of the season and come and see us all soon!

Upcoming Events

Join your Folk in the Ozarks for a

Winter Nights Celebration!

Saturday October 16

3pm

Springfield MO

**traveling guests are welcome to
stay the night. Please RSVP to**

307-640-5657

**You are cordially invited to join you folk
For Feast Of The Einherjar Nov 11-14
in northern Missouri
as we gather to Honor the fallen
and
celebrate the life and opportunities
their sacrifices have afforded us with.**

The weekend will include:

Blot to Wotan

Blot to Freya

Blot to the Einherjar

Blot to Tyr

a celebration of life with a wedding

3 feasts

Sumble

a test of skills

a presentations on Odin and Freya

a talk on attaining V.A. benefits

Learning Utisetá

Registration is on the runestone.org site click on the
event picture to register.

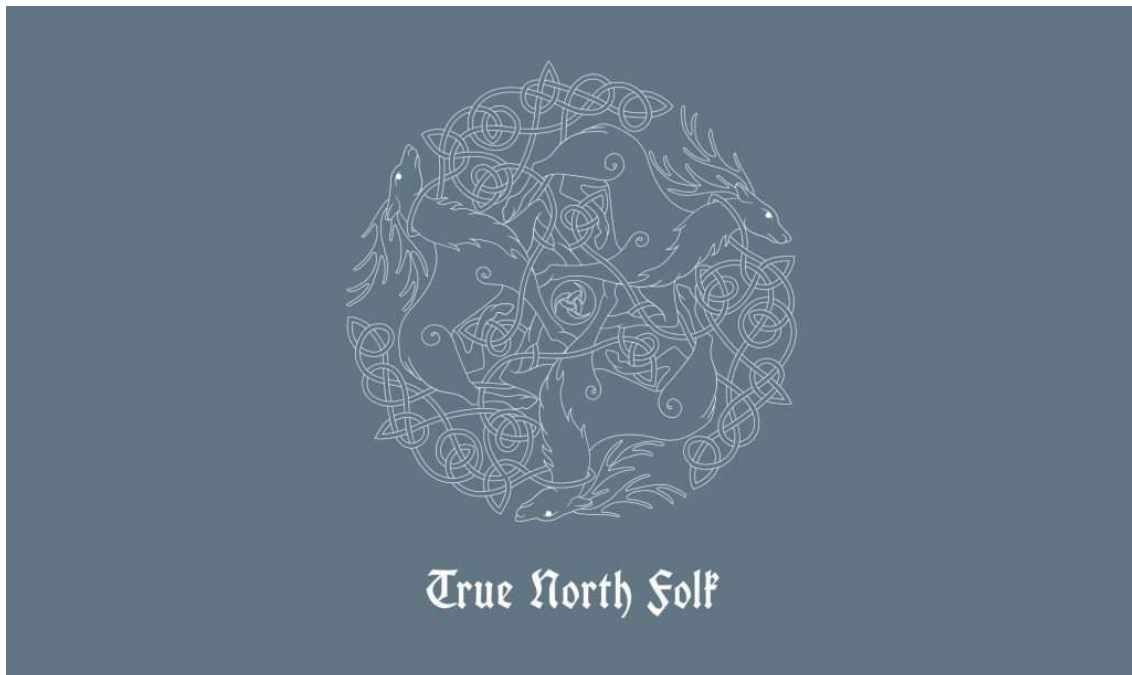
Folkbuilder Melisa Mills

mmills@runestone.org



North Dakota

Activity within True North Folk Kindred



“Here, before the Gods and the Folk, I (name) make this oath:

That I shall seek to be the best I am able to be. Through courage, strength, and honesty I will hold myself to the highest standard of integrity and nobility.

That I will honor my ancestors, my name, and my folk. I will worship the gods and goddesses, and not forsake them. I will endeavor to uphold the highest Frith with my Folk and will strive to do them no wrong but to honor them as I do myself.

I pledge to always seek the True North. I will serve the Asatru Folk Assembly to the best of my ability and bring it bright fame with words and deeds.”



Originating in North Dakota, our Kindred has spread into nearby Minnesota as well. Our leader, Brandy, has tirelessly served her folk. Rising from Folkbuilder to Gythia, and then joining the Witan, Brandy has consistently gone above and beyond the call of duty to do the best for her folk. The positive influence she brings to the table stretches far beyond our Kindred into the furthest reaches of the AFA where she has become universally recognized for her dedication to her people. Bri has also worked very hard to serve her people. It is safe to say that since she joined the AFA there have been few events she has been present for at Baldrshof, even just a workday, that hasn't seen Bri in the kitchen working hard to make sure her folk are fed and happy. Aside from the kitchen she has never once strayed from hard physical labor and has contributed greatly to the growth and reconstruction of our Hof. She even designed our Kindred Flag by hand. Jaime has accepted a position as Apprentice Folkbuilder as well as Hof Historian for Baldrshof. In the True North Folk Kindred, we take service to our Folk very seriously.



FallFest 6, which took place at Baldrshof, was a very special event for those of us in the True North Folk Kindred. It represented not just an event spanning a weekend but in actuality an event month in the making. Through cooperation with other members in our region, the True North Folk had been working to prepare for FallFest for months. Since then it has been our pleasure to put as much work into the Hof as we possibly could. We were pleased to be asked to prepare meals for the Folk who had assembled including breakfast, lunch, and dinner. At any point during the event, it would have been very easy to find at least one of us in the kitchen. We were also all very excited to be present for the very first wedding taking place in Baldrshof, which was, in part, officiated by our leader. Congratulations to the Newlyweds! We also had the great honor of officially being oathed in as a Kindred in the Asatru Folk Assembly during the event. There's no feeling quite like standing in front of your folk and your Gods to take your oath after months of preparation and hard work. To stand amongst the number of official kindreds in the AFA is an honor and a privilege that we're very glad to share.

The True North Folk looks forward to being involved in many more events at Baldrshof and continuing to serve our Folk to the best of our ability.

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



Cormag Àlainn
Apprentice Folkbuilder
calainn@runestone.org

Oklahoma

Bringing in the Harvest



This month of Winter Finding and Summer ending has finally brought Oklahoma a much-needed drink and cool down, but with it, mixed feelings while realizing less warmth and light will be replaced with more cold and darkness.

Our focus changes from gardening, outdoor activities on lakes, rivers, and beaches to hunting, kitchens, and the hearth. Cold weather inspires me to heat up the house by cooking food on the stove or baking in the oven.

I'm not complaining about the free air conditioning we've been craving, but I get a shiver up my spine thinking of last winter and the record ice and low temps that crippled many in my state. Those memories of how we worked together light a fire under me to chop, haul, and stack wood to fuel my furnace.

Making moves towards preparedness, alleviates anxiety and answers "what if?" questions.

These activities mean so much more when we do them with and for one another. Gaining ground on our goals gives others a great example of what's possible with persistent effort and practical forethought.

Completing seasonal tasks, same as our forebears, builds our Hamingja through deeds proven by our continued existence. May we celebrate our overcompensation through sharing feasts through the season and sumbel when we thaw out on the other side of winter.

Gathering together for music, brisk hikes or comforting meals are among the best-shared experiences we can offer our loved ones. Let's work towards that free time we get to look forward to, while the momentum of our deeds leaves nothing better to do but celebrate this wonderful life together.

Hail the Folk!

Upcoming Events



Coming up this weekend is the Runestone Festival at the Heavener Runestone, October 9-10.

Contact me for upcoming Oklahoma events



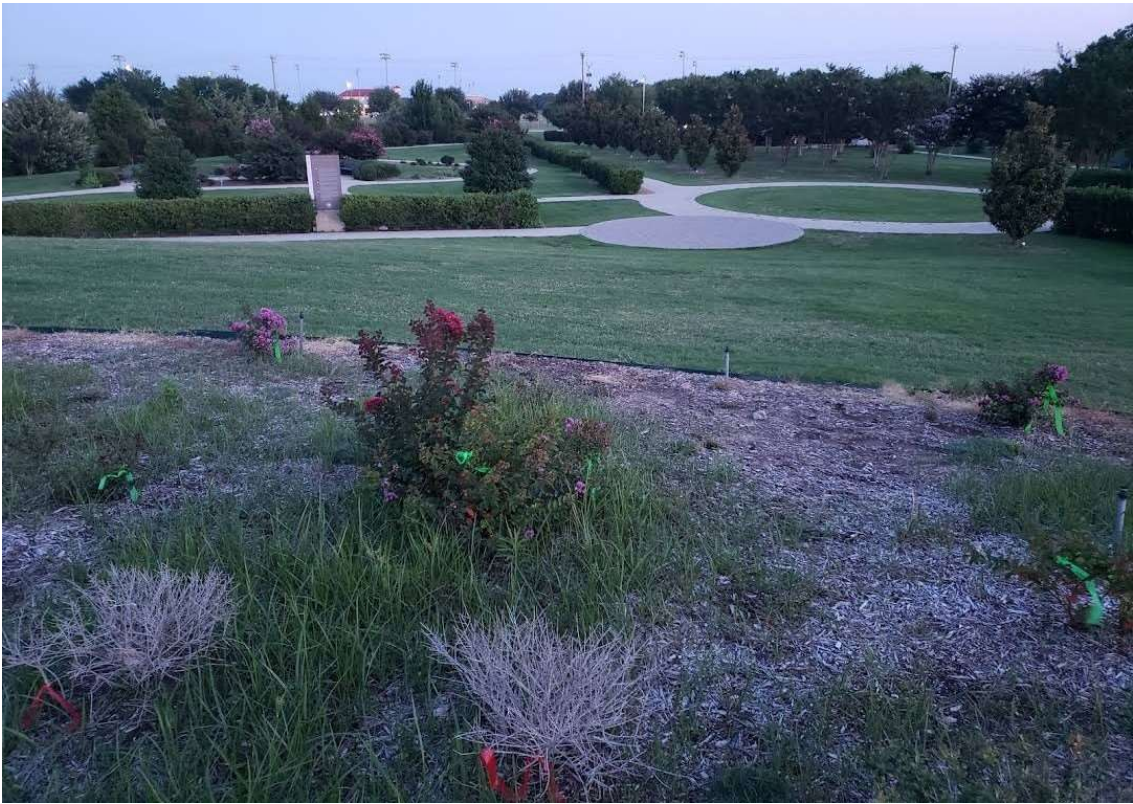
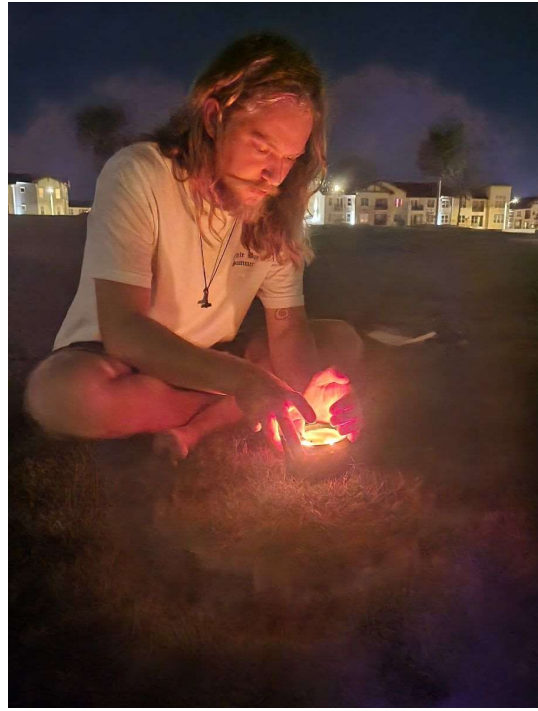
Shea McCurdy
Apprentice Folkbuilder
smccurdy@runestone.org

Texas



Thomas Gleason
Apprentice Folkbuilder
tgleason@runestone.org

Galdr for Mental Health



I would like to extend a special thank you to Apprentice Folkbuilder Jesse Parton, for teaching me about many of the subjects discussed below, as well as for being an outstanding example of an Asatruar...ready to set sail for distant shores at the drop of a hat to gather our Folk.

I would also like to thank Apprentice Folkbuilder Thomas "Isaac" Gleason for his unswerving dedication to both the AFA and Fridr Folk Kindred. Your enthusiasm, hard work, and tenacity inspire me to put my nose to the grindstone (or should I say

Runestone) to better both myself and those around me.

What is mental health? It isn't such an obvious thing anymore. In an age where 1 in 6 Americans is prescribed psychotropic medications like antidepressants, anxiolytics (anti-anxiety medication), sleeping pills, and stimulants, it can be difficult to even get a baseline idea of what the average person's mental health looks like. Demographic differences can affect this statistic as well, with the percentage of people using psychotropic drugs rising to 21% or over 1 in 5 for both self-described Whites/Caucasians as well as for women of all ethnicities, and as high as 25% of people aged 60-85 (LiveScience 2016).

With as many people taking psych meds as there are, you would think we would be living in an age of unprecedented contentment and happiness. However, 8.1% of Americans reported symptoms of major depression in a given two-week period, with women being twice as likely to report this as men (Center for Disease Control 2018). While our ability to treat the physical and mental symptoms of mental illness may be increasing, these statistics indicate that there may be a deeper problem.

Religious and social trends in the United States may correlate with this statement. As mental health issues have been on the rise, religion has been on the decline. According to Pew Research Center (2015), the percentage of Americans who are religiously unaffiliated has risen from 16.1% to 22.8% from 2007 to 2014.

This means that people are missing out on all the mental health benefits that religion has to offer. According to Luna Greenstein from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (2016), "Religion...can have a large positive impact on mental health—research suggests that religiosity reduces suicide rates, alcoholism, and drug use". As exciting as these findings may be, there is new research that may indicate that religious practices can influence us all the way down to the genetic level.

Several months ago I had the pleasure of getting to sit down and talk to Apprentice Folkbuilder Jesse Parton at length where we discussed Elizabeth Blackburn and Elissa Epel's book *The Telomere Effect: A Revolutionary Approach to Living Younger, Healthier, Longer* (2017). Here they consider some of the groundbreaking new research that proves scientifically many of the things religious practitioners have known for millennia. Their randomized controlled studies have shown that mantra meditation, where one repeats a word, phrase, or affirmation related to religion or spirituality similar to the Galdr meditation that many Asatruar engages in has shown to have positive effects ranging from more positive mood, lower stress levels, and the lengthening of telomeres: the ends of the human chromosome whose shortening with

age is associated with aging as well as poor physical and mental health.

Since having this discussion with Jesse I have gone on to become an Apprentice Folkbuilder myself and have been holding weekly Galdr sessions with local Asatruar in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. I have also begun galdring on my own under a tree for twenty to thirty minutes every day, chanting the name of a Rune that I have been studying, or whose power I wish to embody, or whose wisdom I seek to get through a particular struggle I may be going through. It has been hands down one of the most beautiful journeys I have ever undertaken. Not only have I experienced lower levels of stress and anxiety, but also an increase in self-confidence, my sense of purpose, my physical energy levels, my ability to focus, and my overall feeling of spiritual power. During many of these sessions, I have achieved intense spiritual visions akin to lucid dreaming or astral projection, had powerful epiphanies about problems I have been wrestling with, and even achieved contact with parts of myself that were previously mysterious or unknown to me, such as both the animal and humanoid form of my Fylgja (sometimes referred to in pop culture or other nature-based paths like ours as a spirit guide, spirit animal, or totem). Others who have participated in our weekly Galdr sessions had this to say:

“The biggest benefit has been creating a deeper connection with the runes and what you will learn about yourself and the word when you immerse yourself in one. This is especially true of runes I don’t know as much about.” -Bjorn

“It’s much more effective for me than simply focusing on breathing when it comes to ‘decluttering’ my mind for meditation. I always let the runes and my understanding of them take the visions in my mind’s eye wherever they want to go...” -Eric

"It helps me clear my mind and focus. Throughout my life, I have had trouble focusing my attention and driving myself nuts from thinking too much. From the very first I did galdr my body and soul was like "hey I recognize that!". I was immediately sucked into it and was able to ground myself. Furthermore, it gives me a chance to focus my attention on the ancient wisdom of my ancestors, make connections between different parts of life, and speak intentions into the universe that are grounded with primitive truths. Recently my favorite part of it all has been connecting with you guys. Throughout covid, my world became very small and dark. You guys brought spiritual light into my life and I appreciate that." - Michael

It is my personal belief that due to our ancestors' much closer ties to nature they were able to discover intuitively many of the things that modern physicists are only now beginning to understand about energy. Polytheistic thinkers as far back as Ancient

Egypt like Hermes Trismegistus have theorized that the entire universe is made of energy, a view that modern material scientists are beginning to embrace, and that by manipulating energy through the power of the mind and through vibration such as chanting it was possible to achieve different states of consciousness and even change the physical world around you. This untapped mental power has been observed by medical researchers as “The Placebo Effect”, where a sick patient is tricked into thinking they are taking a particular drug for their illness and the brain cures the body through their own force of mind. The runes allow us to focus our willpower and as Odin aepandum nam (crying out ripped them) from the roots of the World Tree Yggdrasil, it is up to each of us to do the same and unleash our untapped spiritual and mental potential.

Since I became Apprentice Folkbuilder I have helped organize not only Galdr meditation sessions but camping trips where we go out into nature to honor the gods and ancestors with Blot and Sumbel, and outings to various European cultural festivals in Texas and the surrounding states. If what you just read resonates with you, reach out to me by email at Jday@runestone.org for more information and to get involved.



Justin Day
Apprentice Folkbuilder
jday@runestone.org

Wisconsin

Amazing Time of Frith at Fallfest



Many members from Wisconsin journeyed to Minnesota for the first AFA Fallfest held at Baldrshof. Joel Eastman made a Hungarian Goulash on Friday night for everyone. It was a recipe from his Mom that he remembered fondly from his youth. Everyone thought it was delicious. Thank you to Joel for sharing the dish and his memory with us all. Various members of the Vedrfolnir Clan jumped in to help keep the kitchen running smoothly. Sara Ault directed the children with the painting of rocks and salt dough runes for crafts. Also assisting Witan Brandy Callahan with the children's Blot. Between the campgrounds, which most of the members stayed at, and the Hof an amazing time was had by all. Huge congratulations to the leadership of Baldrshof for their dedication and hard work at making Fallfest such a successful event!

AFA Highway Cleanup



On September 26th, AFA members from all over Wisconsin gathered for the second

time this year to clean up a section of highway. In under two hours, we collected eight bags of trash from our two-mile section. This is a part of Wisconsin Adopt a Highway program. The purpose of the program is to help keep the areas along the highways clean with the use of volunteers. You are assigned a two or three-mile section of highway that you are required to clean up trash from at least two times a year. In exchange, the Highway commission puts up a sign with your organization's name on it. The AFA strives to be a positive force within our communities. We love being part of keeping our communities clean and are thankful to all the volunteers that come out to help with this project. This is truly something to be proud of.

Our next moot will be a fun family time at a pumpkin farm complete with maze and wagon rides. Members can watch for emails, calls, and texts for all the details. Looking forward to seeing everyone's happy faces.

As always if you have any questions, I can be contacted at: jault@runestone.org.

We are our future Ancestors!

Hail the Folk

Hail the AFA



Folkbuilder James Ault

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Welcoming a New Apprentice Folkbuilder

Please join me in welcoming Connor Alexander of Wisconsin as the newest Apprentice Folkbuilder for the Baldrshof District. Connor comes with a lot of enthusiasm and a zeal for helping our Folk. We look forward to Connor's success in the coming months and years.

Hail Connor Alexander!

Hail the AFA!

Hail Baldr!



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