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Baldrshof
Third Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly

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Donate to the AFA

Words from the Alsherjargothi



SIGRHEIM IS OURS!

I am proud to announce that as of this article, Sigrheim is ours. Right now, it is raw land and a dream, in the coming months, years, and decades it will become the thriving home of the Asatru Folk Assembly. This would not have been possible without the amazing generosity of our AFA family, thank you all so much. This was also made possible by the special effort of Daniel Mason and his wife Kira and by the constant effort of Gothi Daniel Young, these are the heroes that made this happen. Hail the Æsir! Hail Týr! Hail Victory!

I have been focused on Sigrheim these last few weeks, but November was a great month for us generally. Our AFA family continues to grow by leaps and bounds. We have record member numbers and now members in The Netherlands and in France! 2022 has been a year of victory and growth, and we have much to celebrate this Yule. I wish you all a warm and joyous Yule, surrounded by family and friends.

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!



Matthew D. Flavel

Alsherjargothi, Asatru Folk Assembly

mattflavel@runestone.org

Words from Our Witan

The Banishment of Alienation



The Asatru Folk Assembly's [Declaration of Purpose](#) contains something I would like to talk about in this run-up to Yuletide and the start of a new year.

IV. The restoration of community, the banishment of alienation, and the establishment of natural and just relations among our Folk

Our ancestors had religious and social folkways that gave them a feeling of continuity and community while jealously preserving individual rights; we can and will reestablish this natural order among our Folk. Asatru encourages sound, traditional families while providing an extended family or tribe to support the basic family unit. We help each other materially, socially, and religiously while respecting the privacy of individuals and families. Society would work better if families and communities cared for each other, rather than relying on coercive, intrusive "help" from outside sources such as the government.

We help each other materially, socially, and religiously while respecting the privacy of individuals and families.

We have all seen the various collections for our Folk in need via the [Folk Services Fund](#), but I think a lot of our members might not be aware of how much occurs behind the scenes because the AFA can't "boast" about some of our activities while also respecting the privacy as we have promised to do. In my position as an AFA Witan and Gothi, I see it all the time, when an AFA member mentions to a Folkbuilder or our clergy that life dealt something unexpected and every time the AFA offers help.

Since I cannot brag about how the AFA had helped others, I will brag about a time the AFA offered to help me personally. My privacy is my business after all!

Years ago, I used to drive a 1987 Jeep YJ Jeep Wrangler that was affectionately and jokingly called the "Jurassic Jeep" among AFA members and a few leaders because it

was the same as the Jeeps in Jurassic Park and because it had a logo on the doors for "Paragon Park" which was a rock climbing park that used to own the Jeep. This Jeep was a real clunker, but like all Jeeps, it would always go even if there were a trail of smoke and people on the highway suggesting I pull over. "No, it's fine. It's a Jeep" was always my reply.

In 2013 or 2014 I drove this Jeep down I-95 from Pennsylvania to Georgia with our Gythia and Gothar program coordinator Rebecca as a passenger, and the then "AFA East horn" (the sister horn to the one currently at Óðinshof) that was in my care from Gythia Pat Hall. We were on an overnight mission to get our Gythia Rebecca down to Ostara in the South for a presentation, and then she was returning to Pennsylvania by train the same day. I was going to stay the night Saturday, and then would be going home on Sunday.

The trip down was uneventful, the presentation was well-received, and the "AFA East horn" was present for this great event, and it was very much appreciated by the Folk that it was brought down. I stayed up late enjoying the short time I had with my Folk and when it was time to drive home the next morning, I was very tired.

I started to doze off in North Carolina, so I decided to exit the highway and find a place to take a nap. As I was turning into a truck stop, I cut off a Ford Mustang which then t-boned the Jeep. I was very lucky that I bounced off of a curb and didn't roll because I most likely wouldn't have survived if the Jeep rolled. The Jeep was totaled and the AFA East horn had a large crack near its mouth. As soon as I had contacted someone, I received calls from numerous Folkbuilders, Gythia, and Mrs. McNallen. I was astonished by a few things.

1. No one cared that the horn was cracked
2. They were all concerned that I was okay and had somewhere to spend the night
3. Mrs. McNallen knew how much this Jeep meant to me and offered a loan from the AFA to help replace it.

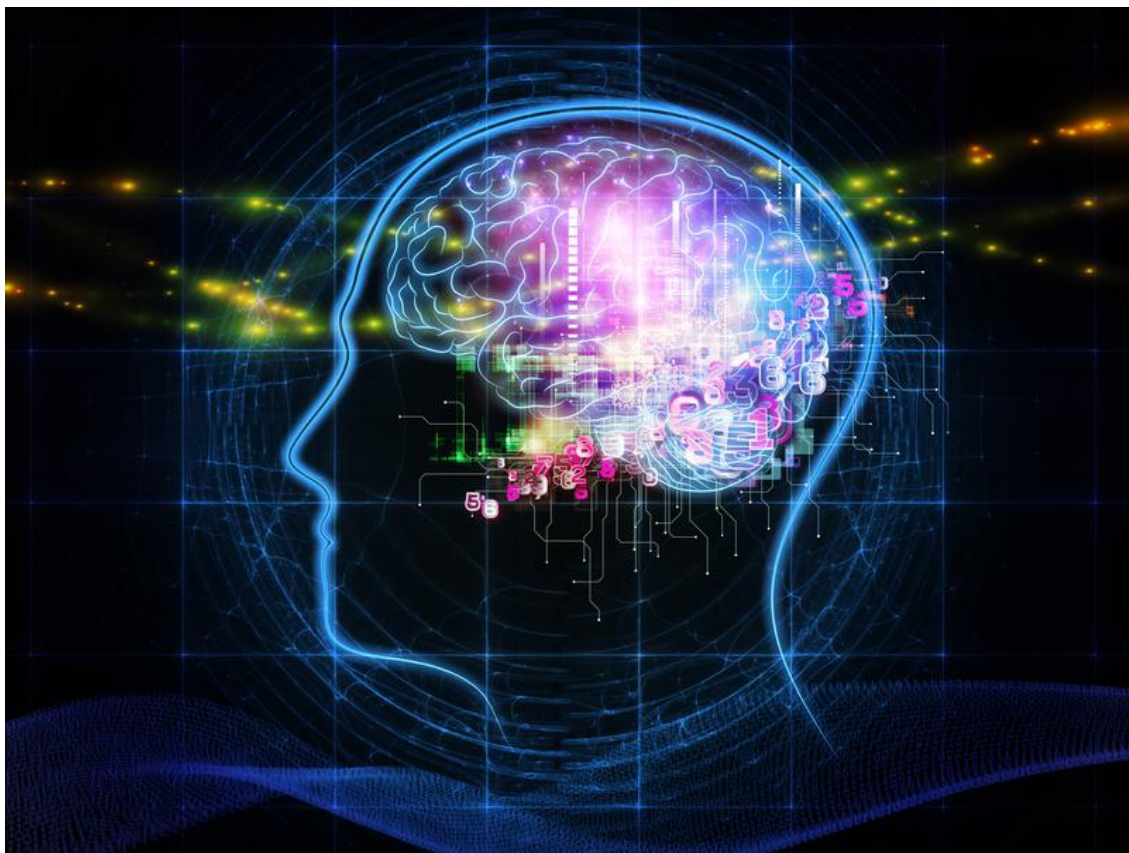
I had always heard about how the AFA cares for its members and had been a witness to the AFA's hospitality, but this was the first time I was able to witness in a very personal way that the AFA **means it** when we say, "we help each other." I was fortunate that I didn't need to take that loan since I was a single young man and had the resources to take care of things. If this happened to me today as a husband and father, I would probably accept the loan. The horn was repaired, although sadly it was stolen years after this. (that is another story!)

Please, never be afraid or embarrassed to ask for help. The AFA takes care of our family, and that means you.



Witan Clifford Erickson
cerickson@runestone.org

Lawspeaker's Challenge - Memory



Yule is a time for remembrance – remembrance of the simpler times of our childhood as well as the good memories of our families and ancestors. Along with those direct family memories we are taken to recall the memories of the Folksoul, which after all surround us this time of year: Yule trees, holly, garland, mistletoe, and the giving and receiving of presents.

Many of us have extra time off during the Yule season, so this is a good time to work on one of the components of our souls – memory. Memory, along with thought, form, will, and other parts, form the whole (same root word as “holy”) person. So while we have some extra free time we should work to strengthen and expand this part of our soul.

So, this month's challenge: memorize something challenging. Memorize several stanzas of the Havamal (or the whole thing!). Memorize a long poem that you have always liked. Memorize your grandparents' and great-grandparents' names back three or four generations. Memorize all 108 names of Wotan. These exercises make you stronger and healthier mentally, and expand and strengthen your soul complex. Be strong, and acquit yourselves well.

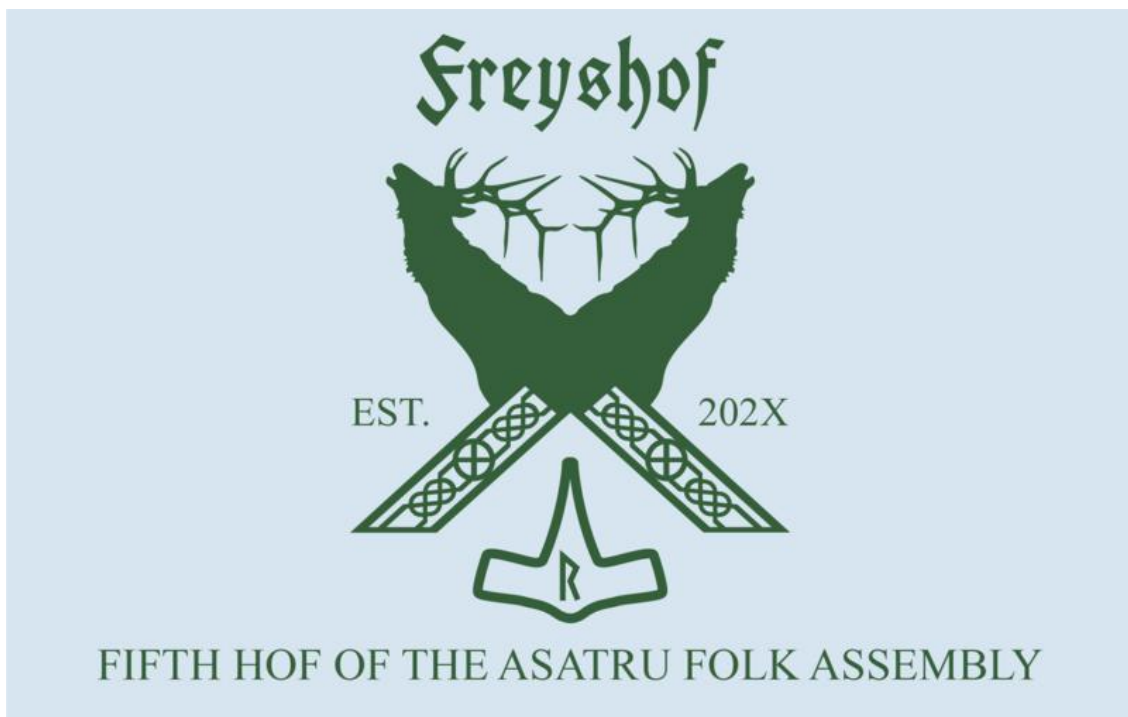


Witan Allen Turnage
aturnage@runestone.org

The Quest for Freyshof

“Njördr in Nóatún begot afterward two children: the son was called Freyr, and the daughter Freyja; they were fair of face and mighty. Freyr is the most renowned of the Æsir; he rules over the rain and the shining of the sun, and therewithal the fruit of the earth; and it is good to call on him for fruitful seasons and peace. He governs also the prosperity of men.”

– Gylfaginning



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

This sacred quest has had a great start so far! The generosity has been amazing, as always!

This is the list of things that need to happen before we can make Freyshof a reality:

1. We need to pay off Njörðshof. (We have paid off 41.25% so far)
2. We need to raise our monthly donation average by 12%. (This is membership dues/Hoftollar plus other donations)
3. We need to locate a suitable property.
4. We need to find lenders and build a war chest.

This is not a "quick" process so stay patient and resolute. As we progress, I will keep you all updated on our progress!

Hail Freyr!



Matthew D. Flavel

Victory Nevers Sleeps

The Asatru Folk Assembly Presents

Victory Nevers Sleeps!

Wednesdays at 6pm PST / 8pm EST

vk.com/asatrufolkassembly

entropystream.live/app/MattFlavel

youtube.com/c/AsatruFolkAssembly

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

AFA Homeschool Program



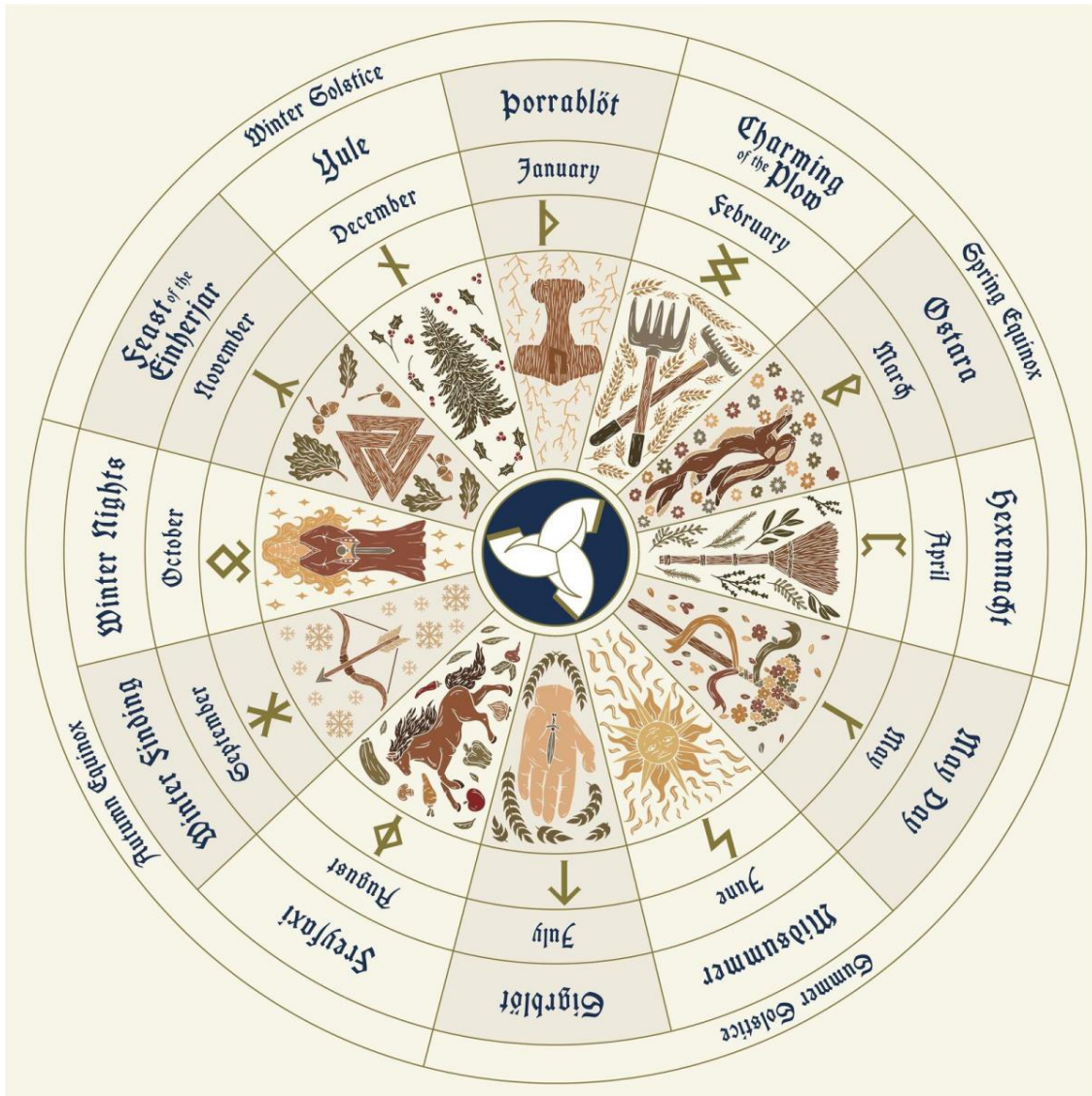
Check out the Asatru Academy at AsatruAcademy.org

Greetings parents and students! Happy Yuletide to you all! This month we will focus heavily on our Yule traditions. Be on the lookout for new Yule stories and content to be posted on Quickschools. A very special story time and other great lessons! We hope your Yule is wonderful. We can't believe the first half of the school year has gone by so fast! If you need anything, don't hesitate to reach out to any of [our dedicated school staff](#).



Gothi Rob Stamm
Dean of AFA Academy
rstamm@runestone.org

Remembrance and Holy Days



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

2022

Date	Observance
January 9	Day of Remembrance for Raud the Strong
January 15	Porrablót
February 9	Day of Remembrance for Eyvind Kinnrifi
February 19	Charming of the Plow
March 9	Day of Remembrance for Olvir of Egg
March 20 (observed on 21st)	Ostara
April 9	Day of Remembrance for Jarl Haakon

Date	Observance
April 31 (observed on 16th)	Hexennacht
May 9	Day of Remembrance for Else Christensen
May 1 (observed on 21st)	May Day
June 9	Day of Remembrance for King Athanaric of the Goths
June 21 (observed on 18th)	Midsummer
July 9	Day of Remembrance for Alexander Rud Mills
July 16	Sigrblót
August 9	Day of Remembrance for King Radbod of Frisia
August 20	Freyfaxi
September 9	Day of Remembrance for Prince Hermann of the Cherusci
September 21 (observed on 17th)	Winter Finding
October 9	Day of Remembrance for Meister Guido von List
October 15	Birthday of Founder Stephen McNallen
October 15	Winter Nights
November 9	Day of Remembrance for Queen Sigríð of Sweden
November 19	Feast of the Einherjar
December 9	Day of Remembrance for Egill Skallagrímsson
December 20	Mother's Night
December 20-31	Yuletide

Day of Remembrance

Egill Skallagrímsson



“Here I am at the hearth
Of my host, Yngvar
The Generous, who grants
Gold to heroic men;
Free-handed fosterer,
You’ll find no three-year
Babe among bards
More brilliant than me.”

So “penned” the three-year-old Egill Skallagrímsson after stealing a horse from this father to attend his grandfather’s feast. That small poem was just a precursor for the man who would become known as one of the best poets of the Viking age. Planting an ax in the skull of the boy who cheated him at a game at seven years old would similarly set the tone for a man who would become known as a fierce warrior prone to berserker rages.

From Egill’s Saga, one of the great Icelandic family sagas written in the 13th Century by Snorri Sturluson, we learn about a man who was both an unforgiving warrior and a masterful poet. He spent a good half of his life as a very successful Viking chieftain whose violent tendencies took him through most of Northern Europe. From Norway to Latvia, from Sweden to Saxony, his exploits were prolific.

Egill was known to always strike out in revenge against those who wronged the ones he loved, even going so far as to rip out the throat of a man with his teeth in an honor duel. For all the man was known for his ferocity, Egill Skallagrímsson was also known for his love of his family. This is seen most clearly in his poetry. Many of his poems were composed as a result of the death of someone he loved. He wrote a poem for his brother, Thorold, and recited it in his poems. He also wrote a poem named

“Sonnatorrek” after the untimely death of both of his sons.

His skills don’t end there, however. Egill was considered a skilled runemaster, even going so far as to heal the daughter of a man with whom he was staying by carving runes into a stick and placing it under her pillow. Truly he seemed to be gifted by the Allfather.

Egill retired to a farm in his middle years and lived to be nearly 90 years old before dying of a sudden and quick-acting illness.

What can we learn from this story?

Egill represents the true duality of human nature.

Egill’s Saga is one of war and one of love. We watch the pagan chief battle his way across all of Northern Europe, and we watch him immortalize his love of his friends and families through masterful poems. His loyalty to those who were important to him was tantamount to the man he became.



Gythia Catie Erickson
cm.erickson@runestone.org

Yuletide



Yuletide is the 12-day period in December in which we hold our biggest celebrations. During the Yuletide, we celebrate our families and our tribes and the bonds that hold us strong. We celebrate our Ancestors. We celebrate our Gods and the Wild Hunt. We celebrate the bright fires of the hearth that keeps us warm, and we celebrate the rebirth of the sun. We have made it halfway through the harshest time of the year. The sun begins to stay in the sky a little longer each day, moving us closer and closer to the fruitful and warm summer.

We celebrate by gathering together to feast and sing songs. We put up our Yule trees and our wreaths. We bake cookies and give presents. We build strong bonds and traditions that our children remember and pass on. It is a joyous time of the year.

We begin the Yuletide on the 20th of December, called Mothersnight. During Mothersnight, we celebrate our ancient mothers, the Disir, who kept the hearth flames burning bright. One way to celebrate this is to extinguish all of the lights in the house. Light a candle to represent the hearth flame and, if you have children, give them pots and pans. Starting at the central part of your home, or the hearth (usually the kitchen and the stove, but can be a literal hearth if you have a fireplace), let the children “chase the ill-wights,” or the bad energy, from each room by running through the house and banging the pots and pans. As you go through each room, light a waiting candle. You are bringing the light of the hearth, of the Goddess Frigga, of the Disir, into each room to bless it. You can say something simple with each candle you light, like “The Goddess

Frigga bring love and light into this room” or “The Disir bless this home and all who live within it.”

Yuletide ends on December 31st, a time when people can make oaths for themselves for the coming year.

An AFA tradition started by our esteemed founder Steven McNallen, focuses on celebrating 12 Asatru virtues: Industriousness, Justice, Courage, Generosity, Hospitality, Moderation, Community, Individuality, Truth, Steadfastness, Loyalty, and Wisdom. Each night, we light a candle in honor of each of these virtues. Steven McNallen has videos for each of these days on our YouTube channel, and we recommend that everyone take some time to watch them.

Erickson Family Traditions



One of the things that my husband and I agonized over was how to make Yule something completely magical for our children, and completely separate from Christmas. We do not hate Christmas, but we want our children to be so in love with Yule and with Asatru that they do not consider any other way when they are old enough to choose for themselves. But how do we do this? All the real Yule traditions have been adopted and aren't strictly Asatru anymore.

We had such a hard time with it that it wasn't until our son was two and a half (his third yule) that we had any sort of traditions to start. Speaking with Witan Svan Herul was the turning point for me, and over the yuletide season, we honed our own family traditions.

As a Gythia helping find traditions for my family was important but finding traditions that all our children can grow up with is even more important. How wonderful would it be for our children to see each other at gatherings and be able to talk about Yule without having different experiences?

I know that many of us already have our traditions and even more of us have children who are old enough to “know what they know,” but I am sharing my traditions here in the hopes that it helps at least one family.



We begin with the Tree. Every year we chose a live tree. When we find a tree we like, Eoghan leaves a small offering of an apple or an orange. We then ask the Wight of the tree to come home with us. This is our Yule Wight. He is one of Santa's many helpers during Yule, and Santa is the biggest of the Yule Wights. This allows us to talk about Santa without it being Christmas-related. When we get the tree home, we build a little nest in the branches. We use a wool scarf. Every night before bed we leave a small offering in the nest. It can be a cookie, an orange, or some other small food thing. Every morning we wake up and go to see that the Yule Wight has eaten the offering!



On the 1st night of Yule, Mother's Night (December 20th), We light a candle to Frigga and the Disir. Today we decorate our Yule tree. The lights have been on since we brought it home, which was done the weekend before the 20th. That evening we turn off all the lights in the house. We light a candle, and this candle represents the hearth flame. The children have pots and pans, and they go from room to room banging the pots and pans to scare away all the bad things that might be in the darkness. When each room is "free" from bad things we light a waiting candle and call on Frigga and the Disir to keep our home safe and happy.

The last candle we light is on our dining room table. We have twelve candles surrounding our Yule Log or a piece of our Yule Tree from the year before. That candle we light in honor of Frigga. We leave an offering for the Yule Wight and the kiddos go to bed. When they check the tree in the morning, they will find that the Yule Wight has left two small gifts in return! We use this to teach the children the importance of gift-giving and the gift cycle.

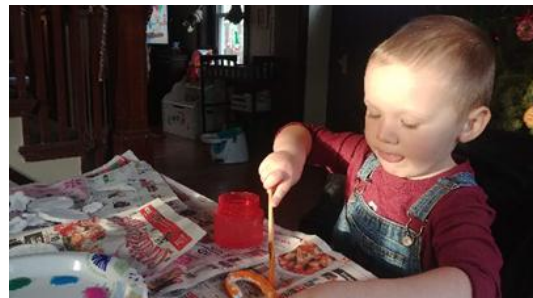
Every morning after this the Yule Wight will leave gifts.

Additionally, we take a plate of food from dinner outside every night and leave it as an offering to the God to whom we lit our candles that night.



On the 2nd day of Yule, we light a candle to Sunna. During the day we build a sun wheel out of materials we find in the yard, mostly pine boughs, and pinecones. That evening we build a fire (inside or outside, doesn't matter) and we honor Sunna and the sun before burning the sun wheel. We then light a candle and with it, we light our candle on our Yule wreath.

On the 3rd day of Yule, we light a candle to Nerthus. During the day we make dough ornaments and paint them, or we do other fun yuletide crafts. When we call on Nerthus we remember the Earth that we need so much.





On the 4th day of Yule, we light a candle to Mani. During the day we bake our cookies! That evening we decorate the cookies altogether. And we eat some too! When we light our candle to Mani, we remember the nighttime and the moon.



On the 5th day of Yule, we light the candle for the Ancestors. We don't have a particular daytime activity, but when we wake up, we find small, wrapped gifts either in our stockings or under the tree. One of my family's personal traditions is to have a special "tea" instead of dinner. I spend the day making all the different appetizers that my family ate as a child. Sometimes the kiddos help. That evening we make tea and serve the appetizers. Teatime is when we finally get to see the presents.

The Yule Wight made a special trip to the halls of our ancestors and brought back gifts from them. Each gift is something practical. A hand-knit wool sweater, or a pocket knife (in the case of an older child). When we hand out the gifts to each person, we tell everyone who the gift is from, and we take turns telling stories about that ancestor. This

is a great way to familiarize our children with their ancestors. It is to those ancestors we light our candle before bed.



On the 6th day of Yule, we light a candle to Tyr. To the rest of the world, this day is Christmas. This is the day that children go downstairs to find presents under the tree, delivered by the magical red man himself, Santa. To not get presents on this day would be bad for any child, but how do we separate Yule from Christmas, so that this is not the culmination of Yule for our children when there is so much more?

As yesterday was Ancestor's night, today is family night. We celebrated our dead and now we celebrate our living. When our children wake up today, they will find presents under the tree. These presents are the presents from grandmothers and grandfathers, aunts and uncles, and any of our living family who has given gifts. It is a day spent with our extended families. We have our big Yuletide feast and sing our Yuletide songs (though admittedly, there aren't too many of these right now). This is a day for everyone else. It makes our Christian family members feel better and it lets our children be a part of everything without being a part of it.

Before bed, we light our candle to Tyr to honor him for truth, and the maintenance of order in our lives.



On the 7th day of Yule, we light a candle for the Einherjar. Typically, this is the day we host our Kindred's Yule. We gather to celebrate and make merry. We light a candle to remember those who have fought hard to protect us and our rights to practice our faith.

On the 8th day of Yule, we light a candle to Odin. The following days don't have daytime activities yet. It's still a work in progress for us, but the candle we light to the wisdom God, to the Allfather, Odin. The children are still leaving gifts for the Yule Wight, and the Yule Wight is still leaving small gifts in his nest for the children.



On the 9th day of Yule, we light the candle to Ullr, the hunter. This marks the end of the hunting season for those who hunt and a good way to celebrate Ullr's day is to clean and bless all the hunting tools from the season before storing them away.

On the 10th day of Yule, we light a candle for Thor. Friend of man, and arguably one of the Gods best known to us, today is a good day to spend time outside playing. And eating!



On the 11th day of Yule, we light a candle for the Land Wights. Though never really seen, our land wights are always there. They can help us or hinder us as easily as the rain can fall or the sun can shine. Today we spend the day cleaning. It doesn't have to be a deep clean, but to honor them, dust and mop the floors. We go outside and clean up fallen branches or twigs from the yard and sweep the front stoops. When we leave our nightly offerings, we make sure they include bread, cream, and honey, some of their favorites.



On the 12th day of Yule, we light a candle to Freyr. Now we begin the decline of winter. Days will get longer and colder. Freyr will soon be seen in the growing things again and so we honor him and all the things he will bring us. Tonight is the last night that the children leave an offering for the Yule Wight.

When we wake up on the morning of the first there will be more presents under the tree. These will be our presents to the children. We chose to do this for several reasons. The first, and maybe most important reason, was to make sure that the anticipation of Yule didn't end on "Christmas". They had MORE to look forward to. It was also a nice way to be able to end Yule with a lazy just-the-family day.



We spent a great deal of time worrying about making Yule perfect for our children in a way that will stay with them forever and really emphasize our faith above all else. Santa is a Yule Wight. The Boss if you will. We have a Yule Wight in our home who helps Santa. The Santa's in the mall are Yule Wights who help the Bossman. They get presents on Christmas without it being Christmas. I hope that some of our traditions can help the new parents out there marry existing Christmas traditions with new, authentic Asatru Yule Traditions.



Special thank you to Witan Svan Herul, whose 12 nights I fell in love with and sort of adapted to fit our family.

A Merry Yule to every one of the Asatru Folk Assembly.



Gythia Catie Erickson
cm.erickson@runestone.org

Upcoming National Events



Order your tickets at

[Charming of the Plow at Njörðshof – Asatru Folk Assembly \(runestone.org\)](https://runestone.org/Charming-of-the-Plow-at-Njorðshof)

The Charming of the Plow is an ancient custom of our Folk that will be the National Event at Njörðshof for the first time in 2023, held the first weekend in February. The celebration can be tied to the Gylfaginning, where Gefjon, one of the Disir in service to Frigga, went to visit King Gylfi of Sweden to ask for land of her own.

To our ancestors "luck" meant preparation. This was the time to prepare for the new year, to make plans and set goals that will allow us the prosperity we seek. Njörðr is our god of prosperity, and it is at his temple the AFA will gather to make ready the earth to accept the seed of our plans for the coming year. Whether it's preparing the actual soil for planting, or sharpening the plow, taking a class that will let you advance at work, or even changing careers; to work our will in this world our implements must be sharp if they are to be effective.

This is why we ask that you join us at Njörðshof for our first Charming of the Plow starting Friday, February 3rd and running through Sunday, February 5th.

In addition to the blots and sumbel, there will be great food (ask anyone that attended our dedication), activities for the kids, discussions with our Goðar, an auction, and more. Build Frith with your folk in Florida, so get out of the cold for a great time in the sunshine state at Njörðshof.

Tickets are available at

[Charming of the Plow at Njörðshof – Asatru Folk Assembly \(runestone.org\)](https://runestone.org/Charming-of-the-Plow-at-Njorðshof)



Witan Clifford Erickson
cerickson@runestone.org

Feast of the Einherjar 2022



Feast of the Einherjar 2022 | Video by Shade McCurdy





Folkbuilder Nathan Erlandson
nerlandson@runestone.org

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!



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

Witan Allen Turnage
aturnage@runestone.org



Cooking for our Folk



Calling all Chefs

We are looking for recipes for a cookbook. We ask that the recipes were served to the folk at a Hof or moot. Please include where and when it was served.

cookbook@runestone.org

Cooking from the Heart. One of the first chefs I worked for told me that there are two main rules to cooking.

1. ALWAYS cook from the heart!
2. You must know the why of the rule before you can think about breaking it.

To this day, I still believe that number one is the most important; but two is the most valuable lesson. So, for example: why would you add flour to the mix when are you

making Fried Potato balls? It doesn't add anything to the dish overall and in fact, it takes away flavor and disrupts texture. The reason is that what flour takes away: is moisture. It adds to the binder and liquid consumption.

So, what does this mean for the folk? Plan and simply don't take shortcuts. Whenever I pick up the knife and began cooking for the folk, I think of it as channeling the ancestors. Cooking reminds me of that age-old musing "I don't measure seasoning; I wait for the tap on the shoulder from the ancestors to tell me that's enough."

When you cook from the heart, people can tell. Don't cook out of spite or obligation. Cook for the folk because you want to! Find new recipes. Test them. Make them better. And when your heart tells you it is right...time to serve. If you have never made cookies from scratch...make them. Why not? Use the best ingredients you can afford (don't take out a second mortgage for this) but be proud to feed the folk.

When the recipe is right and you feed the folk, please send the recipe to cookbook@runestone.org with details of when and where it was served (Hof/moot).



Mike Joyner
Apprentice Folkbuilder
mjoyner@runestone.org

Ancestral Food and Culture



Nikkaluokta soppa. From my wife's cookbook, 'The Nordic Cookbook' by Magnus Nilsson, comes one of our favorite recipes for winter. It is a hearty soup that warms both body and soul. Just what you need for the cold nights in both winter and autumn.

**CABBAGE AND MINCED MEAT SOUP
FROM NIKKALUOKTA**

Nikkaluokta soppa (Sweden)

Nikkaluokta is a small village in the very northern part of Sweden. This soup is one of my best school canteen memories from growing up. It is usually flavoured with a bit of tomato purée and a bit of mustard, but most of the flavour comes from the cabbage and minced (ground) meat itself.

Serve it with some sourdough rye crispbread with butter and cheese.

Preparation and cooking time: 35 minutes
Serves: 4, generously

½ cabbage (about 400 g/14 oz)
25 g/1 oz (1¾ tablespoons) butter
1 leek, finely sliced
400g/14 oz minced (ground) beef

2 tablespoons strong mustard
2 tablespoons tomato purée
1 litre/34 fl oz (4¼ cups) Beef Stock
(page 650)
2 bay leaves
splash of Chinese mushroom soy sauce
salt and white pepper, to taste
1 handful parsley, chopped

Use a mandoline to slice the cabbage finely.

Heat the butter in a pot over a medium heat. Add the cabbage, leek and beef and brown until it is all quite dark. Let it take its time.

Stir in the mustard and tomato purée, followed by the beef stock. Add the bay leaves and a splash of soy sauce. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 10–15 minutes, or until the cabbage is soft. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Sprinkle with parsley and serve straight away.

As our family does not herd reindeer; we substitute the reindeer meat with moose meat and that works just fine for us. Feel free to try out whatever minced meat you are able

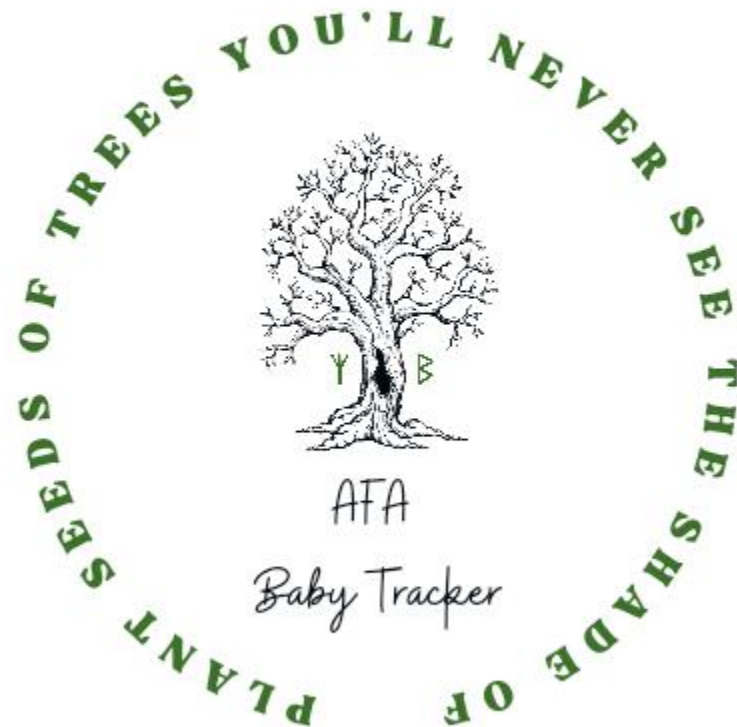
to procure. Enjoy!

- Apprentice Folkbuilder Erik Lugnet, Sweden, Thorshof District



Folkbuilder Timothy Dumas
tdumas@runestone.org

Baby Tracker



To show the growth of our folk we present to you an ongoing baby tracker. We will be keeping track of how many children have been and are born within the AFA from 2022

and forward. The ongoing tracking is proof that we are building something sustainable for the future of our folk, which is a place for these children to grow up within and a place where they can feel proud of who they are!

Total babies born in 2022: 42



Jessica Keller
Apprentice Folkbuilder
jkeller@runestone.org

Óðinshof Restoration Project



ÓÐINSHOF RESTORATION PROJECT

Óðinshof Restoration is a project I created in October to help raise funds for the upkeep and repair of the first Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly. Óðinshof was an older building when we purchased it and as the years go on there are things we continually need to mend and replace to keep this building running for many years to come.

The first fundraiser got us approximately \$700! This will get us a new door in the kitchen, repaired window, and paint. Our second fundraiser will be over on Dec 10th, so if you would like to participate, please reach out to me (astockton@runestone.org) or my fiancé Michael Sessumes (mssesses@runestone.org) and we can get you all the details needed.



We will need so much more to fix the roof, walls, floors, kitchen, and back property, so every little bit counts.

Different ways to contribute are by donating your time or money, participating in raffles, donating something beautifully handcrafted, or simply spreading the word to people you know.

Also, it is worth noting that donations of over \$500 get you on the donor's board inside Óðinshof and all donations are tax-deductible.

Óðinshof is a beacon lighting the way home for our folk and a place that belongs to Óðin and us. It is important that we make Óðin proud, and keep this hall beautiful and sacred as it is a place where so many folk souls reawaken. Óðinshof is always a place where we can gather in good company around a fire and more often than not a hot meal. Let's work together as I know we can and make Óðinshof as grand as possible!



Saga's Literature Project



Saga needs your stories!

Do you have thoughts throughout your day or your studies that you ponder about our Gods, Goddesses, Heroes, or our Faith?

Do you and your family or Kindred have ways you like to venerate the Gods that are special to your own traditions?

How do you celebrate our Holidays or Days of Remembrance?

Do you have advice for those who have finally come home and wish you could have it handy to give to them?

Are you enrolled in Asatru Academy or partake in Lore Study or the Virtue Recovery Group?

The Asatru Folk Assembly wishes to create booklets, brochures, and pamphlets to have on hand in our Hof's and with membership Assembly-wide to give out to anyone with curiosity, whether they are a member or not.

This will be key in our studies as experienced practitioners, and should serve as a more efficient way than directing those with questions to our websites alone.

Saga needs your help! Submit any ideas or write-ups you have on the topics listed above to me, Apprentice Folkbuilder Shane Duffy at sduffy@runestone.org!

Note: All submissions are subject to review from myself and up the chain of command to the Alsherjargothi himself.



Shane Duffy
Apprentice Folkbuilder
sduffy@runestone.org

Now Available in the AFA Store

Scarfs are in the store! There is a limited number left so order fast if you would like to get yourself one!



[Order Yours Now!](#)



Folkbuilder Melisa Mills

mmills@runestone.org

Baldrshof

Ancestor Altar



All folk are welcome to bring framed photos of their deceased loved ones to be placed on the ancestor altar at Baldrshof!

If you are unable to bring the photo, you are welcome to email a digital copy which will be printed, framed, and hung on the ancestor wall. We also ask that you provide your name, the name of your ancestors, birth and death dates if they are available, as well as a memory, story, or dedication about them. This information will be printed and placed into our book of ancestors kept next to the ancestor altar. Of course, the ancestor can

remain anonymous, but remember that our immortality is in our names and stories being spoken by the folk!

Please contact Folkbuilder Jessie Shaffer for more info or to submit your ancestor pictures and information.



Folkbuilder Jessie Shaffer
jshaffer@runestone.org

Food Pantry at Baldrshof



We had an AMAZING turnout we had for the November food shelf at Baldrshof!! For the very first time ever, we started with a line waiting for us to open.



We were able to help 28 families with their thanksgiving dinners in just the first 45 minutes! Each thanksgiving pack included a turkey, biscuit mix, stuffing, sweet potatoes, green beans, cream of mushroom soup, French fried onions, cranberry sauce, pie crust, and pumpkin purée!!



Even had people just stop through to say thank you and give us donation funds toward the toy drive!! We're really doing it! Thank you so so much to the Proudfoot family,

Daniel Vornbrock my redheaded folktoddlers, and Folkbuilder Jaime Àlainn for all your help!! Hail the doers!



Folkbuilder Ashley Mcstocker
amcstocker@runestone.org

Feast of the Einherjar at Baldrshof



In November Baldrshof celebrated two things: The Feast of the Einherjar and Folksgiving.

The day carried with it an air of gratitude as merrymaking and feasting filled the Hof. Blot was held in honour of the Einherjar, while Sumbel brought remembrance of our Ancestors. Those who have fought for their Folk, and who fight on in the next world, held a special place of honour as we gave thanks for their sacrifices.

Feasting took place downstairs as we were all treated to turkey, ham, various delicious sides, and a diverse assortment of desserts. The feast also brought an impromptu competition for the best Bread Pudding. The kitchen was filled with a good atmosphere

as the cooks performed their craft, employing great skill and care to provide the best meal they could. They sure did deliver!

The next event at the Hof will be Yule in December and that is not one to miss!



Folkbuilder Cormag Àlainn
calainn@runestone.org

Upcoming Events at Baldrshof



Baldershof Calendar 2022

- 1/15 - Food Shelf
- 1/22 - Thorrablot
- 2/19 - Charming of the Plow / Food Shelf
- 3/18 - 3/20 - Ostara
- 3/19 - Food Shelf
- 4/16 - Food Shelf
- 4/30 - May Day
- 5/21 - Food Shelf
- 6/18 - Food Shelf
- 6/24 - 6/26 - Midsummer
- 7/16 - Food Shelf
- 7/23 - Sigrblot
- 8/19 - 8/21 - Fallfest
- 9/17 - Food Shelf / Winter Finding
- 10/15 - Food Shelf
- 10/29 - Winternights
- 11/19 - Food Shelf
- 11/26 - Folksgiving & Feast of the Einherjar
- 12/9 - 12/11 - Yule
- 12/17 - Food Shelf



Yule at Baldrshof

Friday December 9 thru
Sunday December 11

Join your Folk for a 3 day celebration of Yule!

4 Blots * Sumbel * Feasting * Gift Giving
Tree Lighting * Yule crafts for kids & adults
Educational Discussions * Frith with the Folk

Contact Witan Brandy Callahan or

Folkbuilder Jason Gallagher to RSVP

bcallahan@runestone.org

jgallagher@runestone.org



Baldrshof Calendar

2023

January 21st
Thorrablot

May 20th
May Day

September 16th
Winter Finding

February 18th
Charming of
the Plow

June 16th - 18th
Midsummer

October 21st
Winternights

March 17th - 19th
Ostara

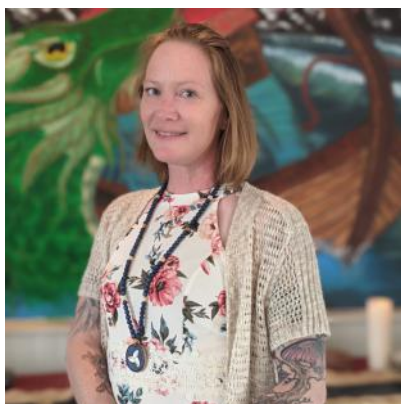
July 15th
Sigrblot

November 18th
Folksgiving &
Feast of the Einherjar

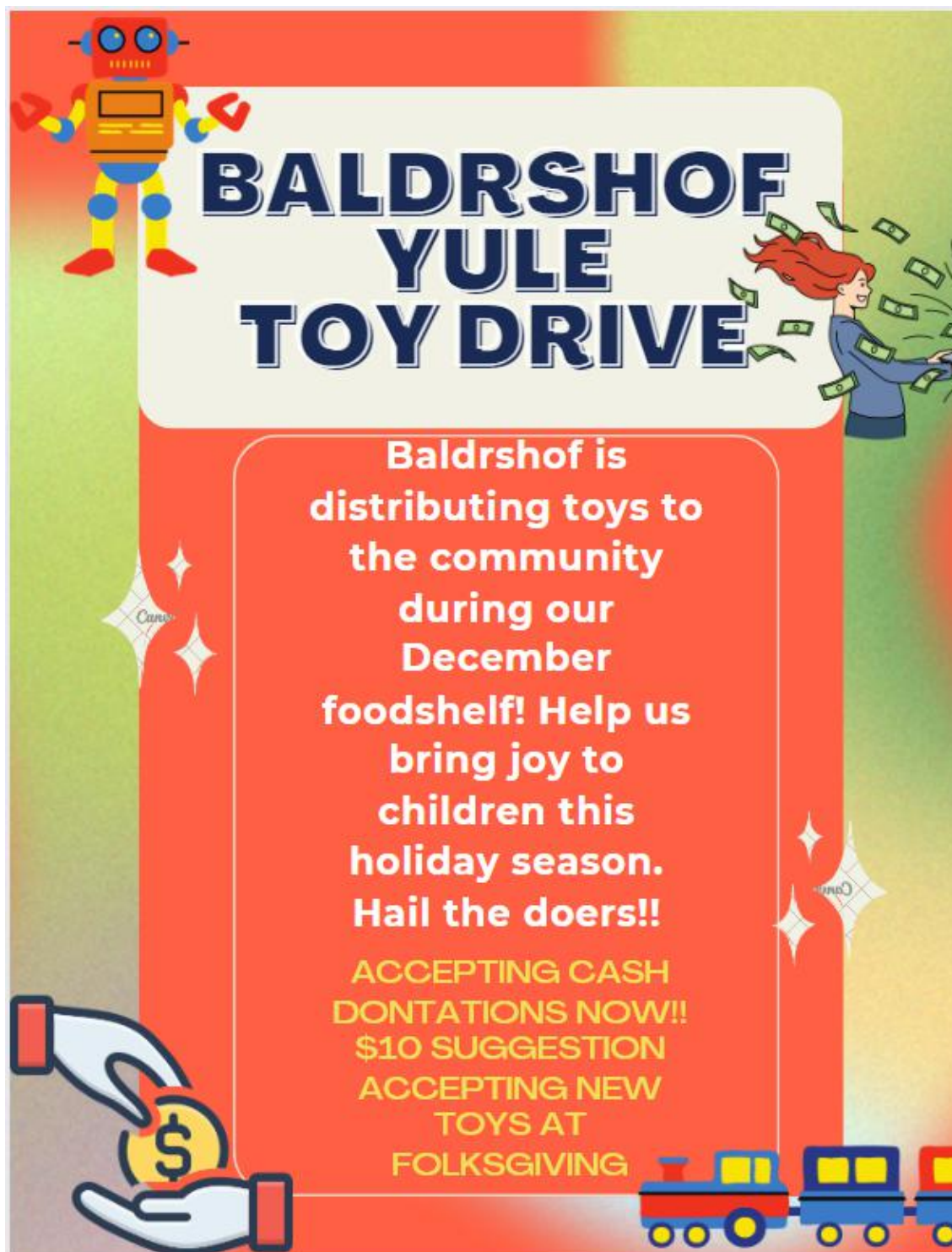
April 15th
Hexennacht

August 18th - 20th
Freyfaxi

December 15th - 17th
Yule



Baldrshof Yule Toy Drive



**BALDRSHOF
YULE
TOY DRIVE**

**Baldrshof is
distributing toys to
the community
during our
December
foodshelf! Help us
bring joy to
children this
holiday season.
Hail the doers!!**

**ACCEPTING CASH
DONTATIONS NOW!!
\$10 SUGGESTION
ACCEPTING NEW
TOYS AT
FOLKSGIVING**

[Donate Here](#)

Please put "TOYDRIVE" in the order notes. Contact Folkbuilders Ashley McStocker or Jessie Schaffer with any questions! AMcStocker@Runestone.org or

Illinois

Greetings AFA Family



Allow me to properly introduce myself as one of the newer Apprentice Folkbuilders for the Baldrshof district. My name is Victor Palazzolo and I'm from central Illinois. I have been with the Asatru Folk Assembly for a little over a year now and have developed a very close relationship with the members in my area. All the way to the north in the Chicago area and all the way to the south of Illinois. Some of you will probably wonder "what exactly brought me into Asatru?" well, allow me to clear that up for you.!!

I came to Asatru in search of that critical spiritual piece that every human desires and needs to live a complete and fulfilled life. Like many of you, I was also raised in a Christian home with very Conservative parents. I found myself going through some pretty hard and dark times in my life and like a “Good Christian,” I turned to prayer to attempt to solve my problems. I found that the more that I would pray to the tyrant, the more difficult my life and obstacles would become.

I felt abandoned and forsaken by my God. It’s almost as if YHWH was laughing at my struggles and enjoyed seeing me suffer. It was then that I decided I was going to turn my back on the foreign doctrine of Christianity and go another way. Soon after, I met a local individual who suggested that I reach out and try to connect with the Gods of my ancestors.

It was then that I heard about the AFA and what they stand for. I figured, they seem to have the same values and mindset as myself and I figured I would reach out. Ever since I started reaching out and connecting, I have made that personal and spiritual connection I have been longing for. I have developed a close affinity for Forseti and a strong liking for Thor.

I’ve met many people in this short year that I now consider family. And that’s never happened to me before as I don’t usually clique with people that quickly and am very guarded and cautious of new people that I meet. Since I’ve come home to my ancestral faith, I have not had these issues of needing to hide my thoughts or emotions around other people. Having the ability to openly worship the Aesir with like-minded people is truly one of the most liberating and joyous things one of the European Ancestral bloodlines can experience.

I would highly recommend all of you who know someone who is in the state of mind that I was in to “reach out and spread the word”. Coming home has been the most liberating thing I’ve experienced in my life and because of that, I have no regrets.

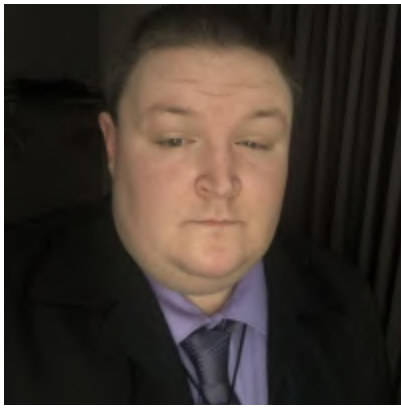
Be with the Aesir and may they also walk with you.

Spaghetti Moot



This past month, I was happy to be able to get with some of my best friends of the AFA for a moot at one of my favorite local Italian restaurants. Hours of good food and good conversation, it can't get any better!

I look forward to getting together again with these folks, and hopefully many more later on this month for a Yuletide meal at a local pub, but you'll get to see the details for that a little further below.



Victor Palazzolo
Apprentice Folkbuilder
vpalazzolo@runestone.org

Glad Nights Yule

A festive poster for 'Glad Nights Yule' featuring a still life with lit green candles, a floral arrangement, and a dining table set with a bowl of soup and a cup. The text is overlaid on the image in a stylized green font.

THE DUFFY-FRAZIER
FAMILY'S
Glad Nights
of
Yule
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22ND
&
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23RD
RSVP which night works best

A warm and welcoming celebration over 2 nights with Blót, potluck feasts, games, reading lore, movies, and sharing Frith and glad tidings. Folk are welcome for either or both days.

Potluck!: Prepare and supply food and fixins from the heart!

2 pm on Thursday until Saturday morning.



Shane Duffy
Apprentice Folkbuilder
sduffy@runestone.org

Folksgiving in Illinois



AFA members from across Illinois, along with some new faces (one of whom became a member shortly thereafter) gathered for a German feast in Belleville. This was our first

statewide Folksgiving.



After eating, we went to a local member's home and celebrated a Blot honoring the Einherjar led by Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice.



Folkbuilder James Cummings
jcumings@runestone.org

What's Your Altar Space Like?



I'd quite imagine that altars are a lot like snowflakes—no two are alike. We craft and sculpt our spaces to fit us...our spirituality, our personalities, our lives, our selves.

I know I personally love seeing how others do their set-up and I know there's certainly something to be learned from each other...about the person individually and about the faith as a whole.

Here's a tour of mine. What'd you learn?

Upcoming Events

the **DUBLIN**
PUB

Come for the Blarney. Stay for the Food!

Yuletide Dinner Moot

Saturday, 12/17 @ 6pm in Springfield, IL

RSVP w/

Folkbuilder Nick Rice
nrice@runestone.org

Apprentice Victor Palazzolo
vpalazzolo@runestone.org



Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice
nrice@runestone.org

Minnesota

MN Northern Blood Monthly Update



Yule is my favorite time of the year! And celebrating it at a Hof is amazing! I'm looking forward to Yule at Baldershof December 9-11. Northern Blood Kindred celebrated our seventh Annual Folkish Family Yule on December 3rd, a little earlier than usual.



It was an amazing time and it's always special spending time with the ones you hold dear. I am beyond grateful for my Folk and Kindred. There are more events in the making and looking forward to 2023 and all the great things our church will accomplish next year.

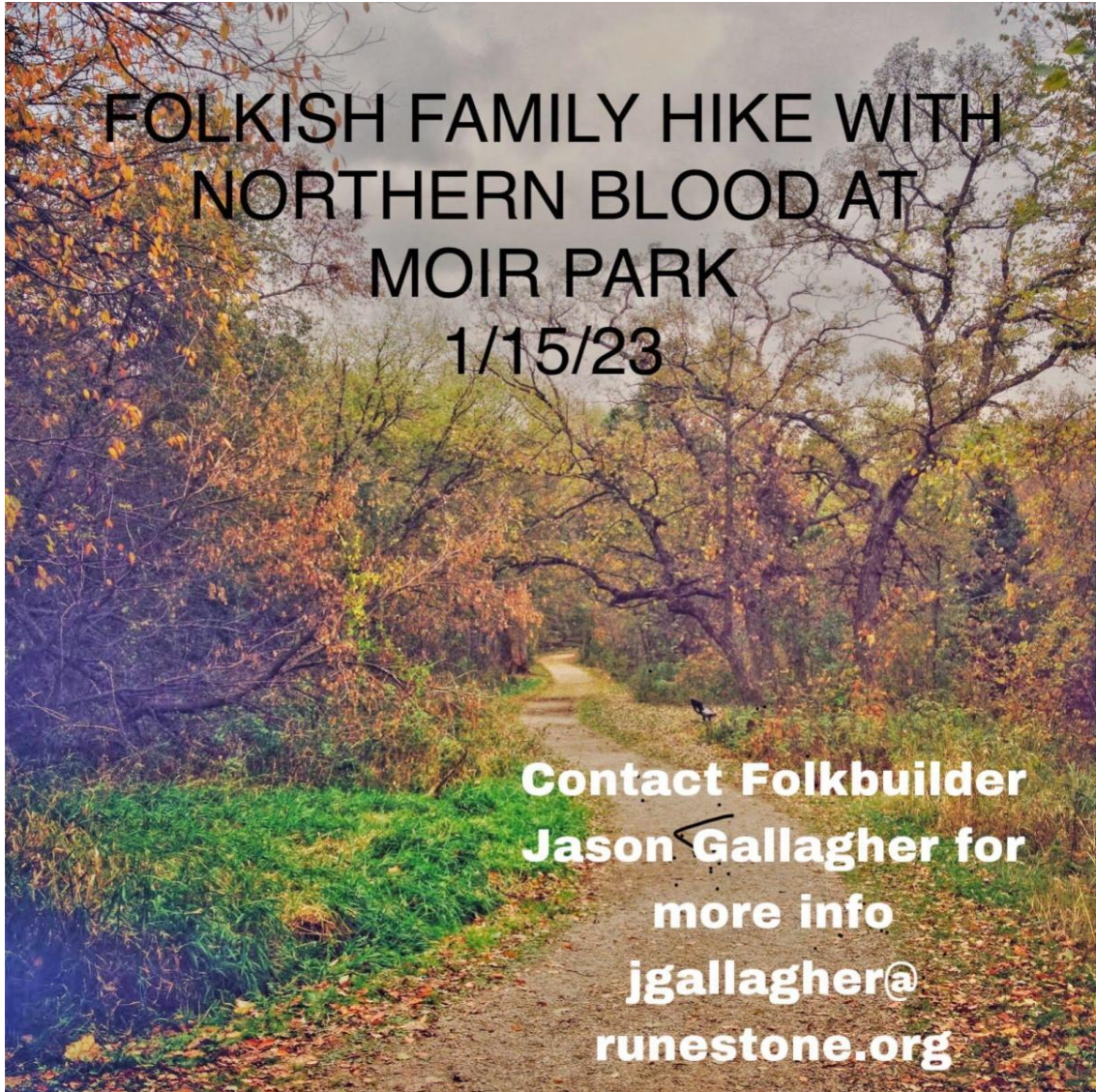
Remember: If you are interested in forming an AFA Kindred, please email kindred@runestone.org and jgallagher@runestone.org.

Upcoming Events



**FOLKISH FAMILY
PIZZAMOOT WITH
NORTHERN BLOOD
KINDRED
12/18/22
Lakeville, MN**

**Contact Folkbuilder
Jason Gallagher for
more info
jgallagher@
runestone.org**



**FOLKISH FAMILY HIKE WITH
NORTHERN BLOOD AT
MOIR PARK
1/15/23**

**Contact Folkbuilder
Jason Gallagher for
more info
jgallagher@
runestone.org**



Folkbuilder Jason Gallagher
jgallagher@runestone.org

Missouri

Oklahoma's Feast of the Einherjar 2022



Last month the members of SigTyr Kindred, Mid-Hearth Kindred, Friðr Folk Kindred, and Sonnenwald Kindred came together and held a very beautiful tribute to our fallen warriors at the Feast of the Einherjar in Oklahoma.

I have been a part of a lot of events over the years both big and small. And this one ran so smoothly that there was not an ounce of stress from the tasks involved. All of our kindred members came together to make what was needed for games or brought them. (A HUGE shout out to Tony Merola for making a big part of those. You are one of the most capable and industrious people I know.) Everyone helped make sure all our guests had a chance to engage and enjoy their community.

Nate Erlandson created a worthy tribute in our Einherjar blot to our fallen. And miss Brandy made sure the women were prepared and instructed who would be doing what amongst the women.

All of the preparation and time and reverence that went into its undertaking was apparent and we were rewarded by some spectacular sightings during the ritual. Nathan, the responsibilities you have taken on this last year are sitting well upon those shoulders and it is an honor to work with you on a holiday so close to our hearts for different reasons. Thank you.

Brandy, thank you for teaching our women that power is more important than beauty. And how to use that power to shake the foundation of the nine worlds!

Mr. McNallen, honored us all with an Odin Blot that we all looked forward to. And he did not disappoint! Some people spark emotion in others, but Stephen knows how to light a bonfire in others! One that can not fail to be seen by the wonderer, the spear-wielder, the God of wisdom and steely might! We can not thank you enough for the life we all get to lead and the extended family we all call home because you first lit the fire that showed the way back to our roots. With boundless gratitude thank you.

Freya is to me, an exemplary female. With aspects of herself mirroring some of Odin's in a feminine form. Her steel is tempered in love and she offers the opportunity of transformation for those who are ready. Our honored Gythia Sheila McNallen showed us the might and beauty of Freya when she led us to call her unto the folk. It is such a blessing to have been there for that experience. Your grace and ability to nurture and help guide our folk have many of the same qualities as our beloved Freya. It is no wonder that her energy was felt so powerfully at our Freya Blot. Thank you, dear lady.

Michael Sessumes, your Wayfarers Blot reminded us all that leaving and going in separate geographical locations has no effect on the bonds we hold dearest. Goodbye may be hard but I am always with you is what was felt. None of us are ever further away than a phone call. Thank you for reminding us of that connection.

Ashley, our ray of sunshine! Always engaging and lending a hand, a smile, and some love where it is needed to keep the folk together and working at a common goal. And your organizational skills are pretty stellar! thank you for bringing your warmth, hard work, and love to the festivities. You are valued and appreciated.

Lutisha Wilson, you ran that kitchen like a well-oiled hinge. Because of your hard work we all feasted like royalty!

It is easy to see that feeding your folk is a labor of love. Gratitude my sister.

Shea McCurdy, you guided our young men to do all the work and preparation needed to pull off the event and I can not thank him enough nor quite list all the ways in which his love of folk and industrious nature helped make our ideas realities.



Shade McCurdy, the builder of our beautiful and most worthy vessel to carry our words and offerings to the Einherjar, a huge debt of gratitude sir. And for the moving and stunning video tribute you put together afterward, a very hearty well done!

Thomas Gleason, you take on every task with a pure heart. You don't look for a benefit to self, you look at how can it be of assistance to your community. We are quite fortunate to count you amongst us!

Matt Flavel, thank you for being the leader you are to our people. And there is no time

it shines more than when we get to be a part of a baby naming that you perform. Thank you for making sure our children and families KNOW they are loved, cared for, and important. In a way that only you know how. It was a beautiful ceremony. And you also made sure our Sumbel was one to remember. We thank you for your dedication to your folk and the dignity and grace you show while carrying the heavy weight of your responsibilities. We see you and you are appreciated.

To Jacob Haley, Jessie Schaffer, Jr Wilson, Justin Day, Zoey Mills, and Bobby Fears thanks for all the help!

It's hard to be specific, as you all jumped in where needed often when not even asked. You saw the need and filled it.



Please don't feel slighted if you were not mentioned by name. When our people come together, there is never a shortage of hands when there are tasks to be done. Thank you to everyone who pitched in. And thank you to all of you who drove long distances and short distances to be there with us. You are appreciated. And we are grateful.

I could not have asked for better people to spend a few days with.

Words are not enough here. Thank you.



I also want to send congratulations out to Terry and Bekah Clark! Congratulations on your marriage!



And congratulations also goes out to Chuck and Sarah Kindrick on the birth of their beautiful daughter!

Upcoming Events

SECOND ANNUAL

AN OLD TIME YULE IN OKLAHOMA



***The season's most awaited event!
save the date!***

December 15-18
Located near the Heavener Runestone
Follow the link to register!

We hope to see you soon!

- Hauling in the live tree to the main hall together!
- Story telling!
- A visit from the Yule Father!
- Gift exchange!
- Yule crafting!
- Decorating and lighting the Yule Log!
- Feasting!
- And so much more!

[Registration Link](#). If you have any questions, please reach out!

Happy Holidays!



Folkbuilder Melisa Mills
mmills@runestone.org

Nebraska

Omaha Donut Moot



On Sunday, November 27th, 2022, we hosted the first ever Clausen moot in Omaha. It was a small affair, but the size of the gathering did not hinder the enjoyment we all felt.

It truly felt like an afternoon of donuts and coffee with old friends. The donuts were also incredible, everyone enjoyed them thoroughly.



Gathering the folk in the Heartland can be quite the task with the distance between and wicked weather that would see us isolated for most of the winter but the enthusiasm our Nebraska folk have for the Gods, for the AFA, and for each other is unmatched. Hail the Nebraska folk!

Upcoming Events



Chinese
restaurant
moot

12/25/2022
1pm
Lincoln, Nebraska

Contact apprentice folk
builders Ali and Cody
Clausen for details

Ali: 402 853 4246
aclausen
@runestone.org

Cody: 402 853 3457
cclausen
@runestone.org



Cody and Allison Clausen
Apprentice Folkbuilders
cclausen@runestone.org
aclausen@runestone.org

North Dakota

Hello from Fargo/Baldrshof district!



We had a wonderful Folksgiving at Baldrshof with our gathered Folk. I had the pleasure of cooking ham, a beautiful spatchcocked turkey with compound butter, as well as the awesome sides that my fellow Folkbuilders brought and helped me with.



We had a gorgeous meal, a powerful blot, and a great Sumbel. The desserts our folk brought were absolutely fantastic. I particularly enjoyed the apple pie the Proudfoot Family brought, and was honored to give them one of the horns I made.



Blessings to all; in Honor.

Getting with Friends that Really are Family

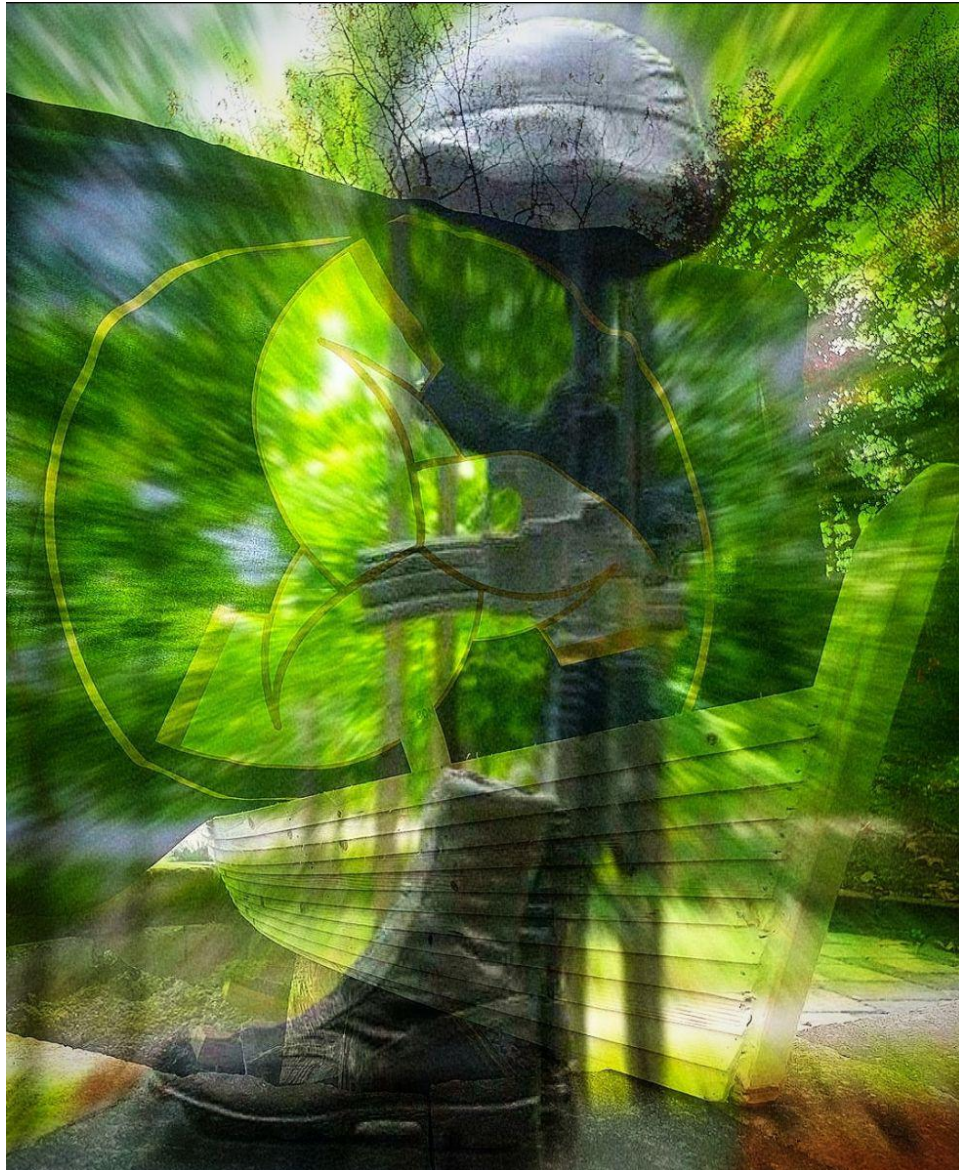


Some of the best times that one can have is those simple moments, getting together with those closest, even if it's for a simple meal. Times are right, and these times are priceless.



Christian Spencer
Apprentice Folkbuilder
cspencer@runestone.org

Fall Frith and Special Times in Wisconsin



November has had its chilly days in Wisconsin, but it's had beautiful warm ones as well.



Remembering the Einherjar, potluck dinners, hockey games, and Folksiving Frith kept us busy and together, even locally. It has also been a good month to reflect on the great and many sacrifices of our fallen warriors and all that we have to be so grateful for in our Folk and Families.

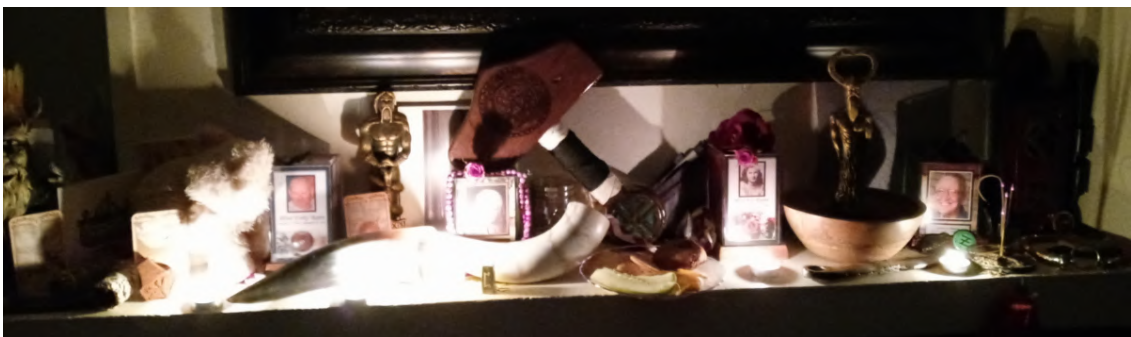




An Early Yule Celebration



As we look forward, I wish you all a Blessed Yuletide in all it's wonder and excitement.



Asenheil! Hail the Gods, Hail the Folk, Hail the AFA!



Folkbuilder Josh Rapin

jrapin@runestone.org

AFA Prison Outreach



Hello, I'd like to talk with you about a subject that often comes up, "Does the AFA have a Prison Outreach"? The answer is "Yes".

Yes, because this fills a longstanding need in Asatru and is in line with one of the many names of Odin—Haptagud (God of Prisoners)—found in the Gylfaginning.

We work with Prison chaplains and Community Relations Personnel to bring about spiritual growth and help with making their path of becoming pillars of our communities once they transition back into society.

We also have some of our leadership who have taken the steps to go into the prisons to share encouraging, educational, and empowering messages for their spiritual growth as well as leadership who speak with local law enforcement and prison staff to help

educate them. Incarcerated individuals cannot apply for membership. Once they are released, they can apply and if they are accepted, we can welcome them.

There is great value in the reason for having a Prison Outreach: Having our people following the path of Asatru yields a better chance of our folk not being a part of the recidivism rate by instilling core values and honor that their ancestors can be proud of and make for themselves a noteworthy name.

Recently this past November, we sponsored a Feast of the Einherjar at a Prison for 36 men who follow our path. It was a first and was coordinated by many people inside and outside of the Prison and we were very happy to be a part of such an encouraging and unifying endeavor. We are working on producing a newsletter that will be comprised of writings submitted by prisoners and leadership that will be based on encouragement, educational, spiritual, and empowering messages to be distributed to jails and prisons nationwide as well as producing some DVDs—so far, on the series from Elder Stephen McNallen on the 12 Days of Yule and our own Feast of the Einherjar—so that they can be encouraged to "Do Right"!

If you have a loved one who is currently incarcerated coast to coast, I encourage you to reach out to me and provide me their information and their facility so that we may reach out to them or any one of our other Prison Outreach team members

*Alsherjargothi Mathew Flavel, *Gythia Anna Plourde, *Apprentice Otto Refuse,
*Apprentice Tracy Adler.

We have Coorlinks, JPay, and GTL set up and are very active. Please don't let your loved ones fall by the wayside. We are here for them.



Folkbuilder James Ault
jault@runestone.org

Becoming Amma



Amma is the Icelandic word for Grandmother. In German, she is called, “Oma.” The role of Grandmother to our ancestors was a respected one. This was a woman, who had experienced all the earlier phases of life and had raised her children to adulthood. She is the one who quietly keeps everything going in the background. Her focus goes beyond that of her own family, but to the tribe. She knows what is going on in the life of everyone within the tribe through intuition, observation, and life experience. She is a sharer of knowledge. Sharing and preserving the traditions of those who came before her.

A woman who remembers and reclaims her ancestral wisdom is unstoppable. There is an inherent magic that she discovers within herself; a rootedness, substance, and strength that fills her with a sense of who she is and who she may become. She connects into an ancient wisdom that is a part of her yet is so much greater than her. Connecting her to the memory of her ancestors who walked the earth before her and walk with her still. When she speaks, she speaks with the power of the women who have gone before her.

In my own experience, becoming a grandmother has been one of the greatest joys in my life. Continuing the traditions and history of my family that my own Grandmother had shared with me, has made me feel a deeper connection to my line of female ancestors. I will continue to impart wisdom, knowledge, and a love for the past while embracing the future until I take my place among the Disir and my daughters take over my Grandmother role.

I recently added a grandmother chant to my morning ritual to help me connect on a deeper daily basis to that ancestral wisdom of my female ancestors. Here is an example

of the ritual.

After waking up, stretch and take a deep breath. As you light the candles on the altar, express thanks for waking up to another day of limitless possibilities. Quiet yourself in front of your altar. Place your hand over your heart and tap out the rhythm on your chest while remembering that your own heartbeat is just one in a long line of your ancestors that stand with you. As you do this concentrate on your female ancestors and say,

“Grandmothers lend me your hands.

Keep my ears sharp to hear your voices.

Fill me with your wisdom.

Guide me in teaching the next generation.

Bringing the Folk Home.”

I repeat that a few times. Usually, three or five. Depending on what I know of the day ahead, I ask for guidance. At that point, I stop tapping and listen with not only my head but my heart as well. I thank and hail them. Then I’ll pull a rune and set it on the altar and concentrate on it. I say the name of the rune out loud and repeat it over and over. Thinking about what I know about the rune, what it could mean to me at that moment. I take a deep breath and blow out the candles.

I am working on creating a deeper understanding of ancestral wisdom and passing that knowledge on to future generations. This is the role of Amma to me.



Folkbuilder Sara Ault
sault@runestone.org





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