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**Baldrshof**  
Third Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly

[www.baldrshof.org](http://www.baldrshof.org)

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[Donate to the AFA](#)

## Words from the Alsherjargothi





Winter Nights in Ohio was a huge success! Thank you to the Ericksons for hosting an amazing event and special thanks to Cole Distel and his family for all their hard work at the event! These yearly events are natural times to take stock of how far we have come from previous years. At this year's Winter Nights, I had the pleasure and honor of performing 3 Baby Naming Ceremonies. I huge advance in the AFA has been the massive increase in healthy and thriving families. I am so proud to see all the AFA babies being born. And for the first time, this year, we have a homeschooling program in place to educate these new children in a healthy and safe way with truth and good character.

Another thing of note from Winter Nights is just how much the AFA membership has grown, overall, and East of the Mississippi specifically. Once upon a time, the AFA was heavily weighted in California and on the West Coast. For a long time that West Coast perception was dominant. In the 11 years since the first Winter Nights in the Poconos, the AFA has spread thickly across the country, and we have members now in 14 countries!

We are winning! We are blessed by our amazing Gods!

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

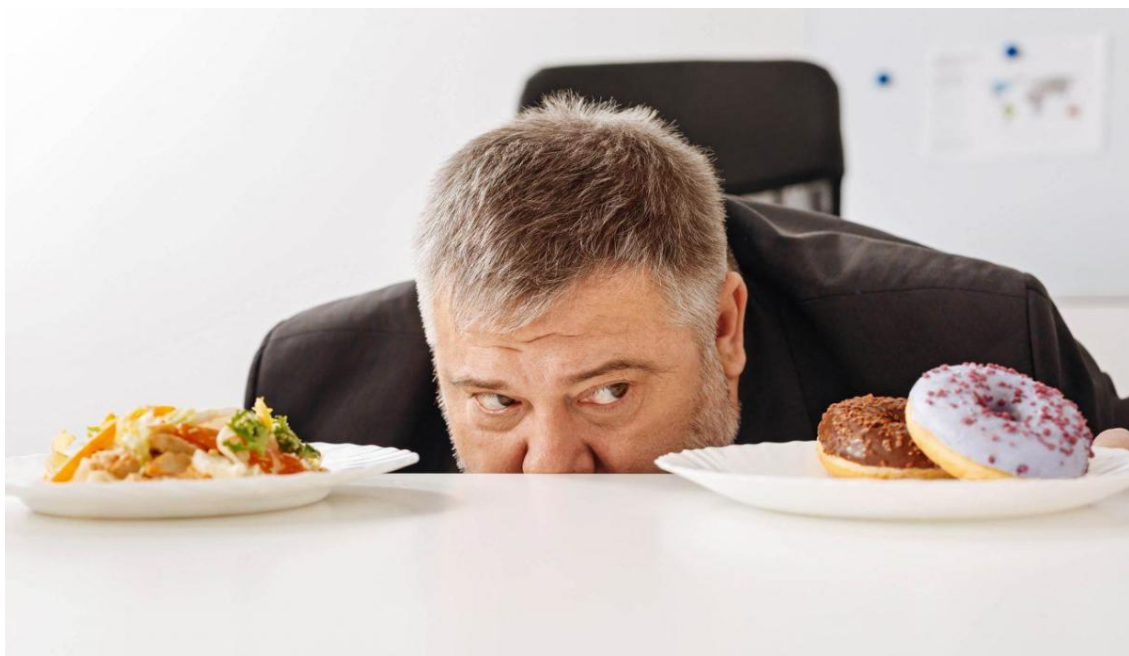
Hail the AFA!



Matthew D. Flavel  
Alsherjargothi, Asatru Folk Assembly  
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## Words from Our Witan

*Lawspeaker's Challenge: Stay Hungry*





Before I set up this month's challenge, a brief word about the origin of this series. As I see it, the purpose of any spiritual practice is self-improvement. Moralistic practices seek this goal with proscriptions, a list of "thou-shalt-nots," which, if followed closely, can be a guide for simple behavioral improvements.

Our faith is more subtle and complex, and we must look to the examples of our elders – the Gods and ancestors – as instructive. This "middle path" of right discernment is difficult, requiring constant analysis and self-critique. "Wotan expects me to man up," as one phrasing has it.

Thus, the challenge to stay hungry. Certainly, a part of this idea is to stay hungry in the spiritual sense, to constantly read, learn, and grow in understanding and camaraderie, but the challenge this month is strictly in the mundane sense of physical hunger.

Most of us (not you, Witan Callahan!) could stand to lose a few pounds, and yes leaving some food on the plate occasionally can further that goal, but my intent here is not to encourage us to lose weight but to maintain more situational awareness. Satiety – that feeling of a full stomach that most of us carry all day every day– dulls the senses and general awareness. Yale University researchers found that mice that were induced to feel hunger not only had sharper physical senses but increased memory and learning capacity as well.

Stay sharp; stay hungry.



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## Words from Our Gothar

*Creation (Creatio Ex Materia or Creatio ex Nihilo)*



All peoples have a creation myth.

Whether it's the African bush people who believed their people and animals lived together underground until Kaang dug a hole for them to climb out of to live on in the world he created for them; the Indios of the Americas that emerged from their sacred caves, or lived on a great island that floated in the ocean attached to four thick ropes from the sky; The Chinese Hundun and Hawaiian Kumulipo whose cosmogonic myths describe creation from chaos with the dismembered corpse of a primordial being (Pangu and Mesopotamian Tiamat), world parent siblings (Fuxi and Nuwa and Japanese Izanagi and Izanami) or the Zoroastrian Ahura Mazda, they believed the basic element was qi ("breath; air; life force"); while other cultures like Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece believed a primeval water was the single element that existed in the beginning.

That brings us to the Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. They all believe in the beginning Yaweh created heaven and earth. The only exception being the Mormons who believe the world was created from existing matter. But this can be



attributed to the exception the proves the rule, and it can also speak to the ancestral memory of the European descendants who broke from Christian doctrine.

There are many differences between the native faiths of the former, many of which will have a familiar ring to anyone who has studied Indo-European religions, and the latter Abrahamic faiths. The most obvious is polytheism vs monotheism. Then there is the idea of redemption for past dishonorable acts with noble deeds to improve our wyrd vs individual salvation from an external omnipotent being for the asking. But it all starts with the irreconcilable polarity found in their respective ideas of Creation.

Creatio ex materia or ex nihilo?

In Latin creatio ex materia means "creation out of preexisting material". All Pre-Abrahamic creation stories share this idea, including Asatru, that the universe was created from preexisting matter by their divine powers. Only the Abrahamic faiths, teach the idea of creatio ex nihilo, or "creation out of nothing".

Why is this important?



Since this topic centers around what happened in the beginning, let's begin there with our own creation story and the similarities to those above. Before anything there was the great abyss Ginungagap, and Fimbultyr moved upon the face of the deep that flowed from Niflhem (the primeval waters; laguz) freezing them before meeting the

flames of Muspelheim. The melted drops of vapor formed the giant Ymir (the primordial being), the father of the race of giants that were Chaos. To the Proto-Indo-Europeans in the beginning EVERYTHING was water. And EVERYTHING was Chaos, beyond understanding.

Óðinn and his brothers, the sons of Bor, slayed Ymir and from his body, they made the universe. They created order. Then the Gods formed Ask and Embla with Óðinn giving them önd or the breath of life, Vili giving them óðr or wit/spirit/soul, and Vé giving them goodly hue or their form and senses ("breath; air; life force" above). For the PIE there were Yemos and Mannus (the twins) who also brought order to the world with Yemos' sacrifice.

What all these creation stories have in common is that the world was formed out of matter that already existed. Because matter cannot be destroyed, it must have always existed. If the water boils away, it still exists in the form of vapor. If a tree burns, the heat, smoke, and ash are carried away by the winds. Rain falls, the plants grow, and animals eat the plants and grow in turn. The matter is transformed (kenaz), but it is not gone. This is the natural reasoning for creatio ex materia. It is a demonstrable truth.

Our ancestors possessed this knowledge and it had to be wrested from them by the imposition of the wholly foreign idea that something can come from nothing. This is the faulty foundation on which the idea of salvation is built. That paradise can be bestowed just for the asking. Our ancestors understood the need to make deposits into the well of urðr to earn your ørlög. Our deeds are the material from which our fate is created, it does not come from nothing any more than the cosmos could.

Furthermore, the native faiths of not only our people, but all people, bound them to this world. We live in the world, not upon it. Ours is a world-accepting religion. It is a symbiotic existence, aligned with the cosmos; what to our PIE ancestors would form the Xartus. To live in right action (raido) in accordance with the cosmos, allows our spirit to resonate. This is how our people, and all people, can live a healthy life. The dissonance we experience from living in discord with the Xartus, ignoring the primal laws, harms the spirit and it spreads through the soul complex manifesting in mental as well as physical illnesses.

With creatio ex nihilo we are disconnected from the act of creation. It is handed to us, with no effort, no sacrifice. Just like the idea of an individual mentioned earlier, it is an ørlög unearned. That is not how we interact with the world around us, so a dissonance is created in the spirit of our people that is growing hard to ignore. Many of our Folk cannot identify what that uneasy feeling they have deep inside of them is, but they know it is there. It's like playing piano that is out of tune. No matter how skilled you are, it will not make beautiful music until it is in tune.



Asatru is our tuning fork.



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

## Sigrheim: Home of the Asatru Folk Assembly



Progress has moved swiftly on this amazing dream. We have scouted property in Tennessee. We are ready to make our purchase. Thus far, we have raised 9.8% of the down payment! Please help us make this dream a reality. As always, donations of \$500 and over get a nameplate on the donor plaque that will go up in the hall. Thank you all for your generosity.

<https://www.runestone.org/product/sigrheim/>



### [Sigrheim Fund – Asatru Folk Assembly](#)

Sigrheim will be our AFA home and capital. Sigrheim will be an intentional community with AFA members living on site, a glorious hof to Týr, a grand hall, lodging for guests and so much more.

[www.runestone.org](http://www.runestone.org)



Matthew D. Flavel

Alsherjargothi, Asatru Folk Assembly

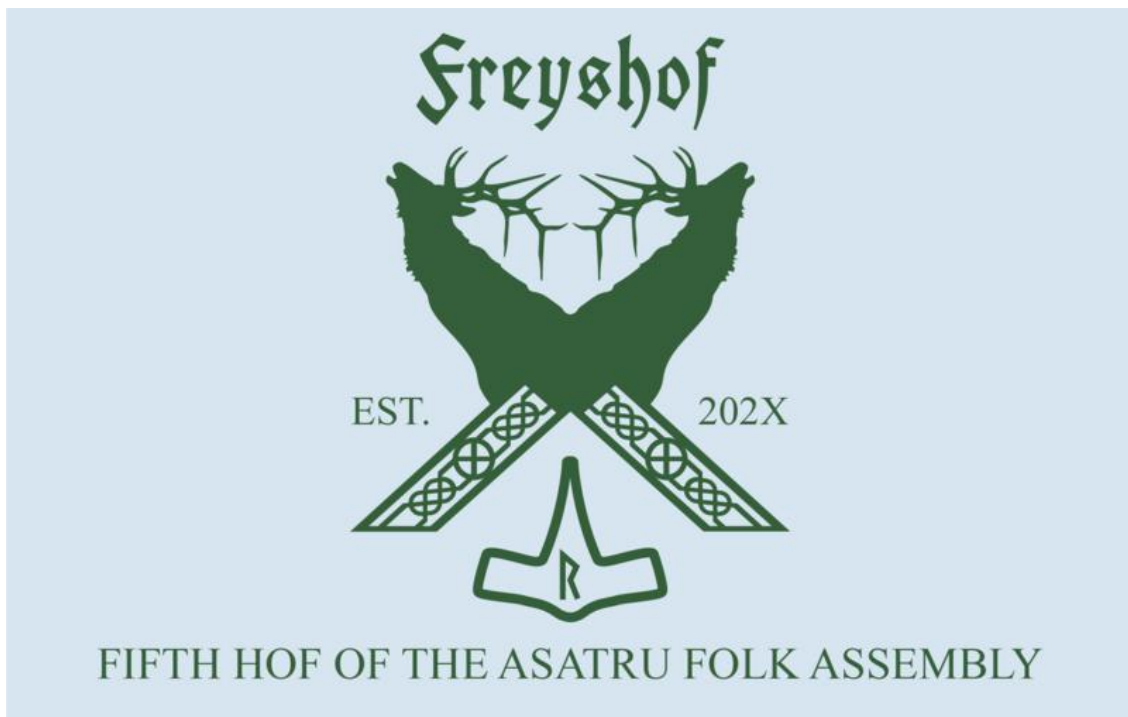
[mattflavel@runestone.org](mailto:mattflavel@runestone.org)

## 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 40.2% so far)
2. We need to raise our monthly donation average by 15%. (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 the patient and resolute. As we progress, I will keep you all updated on our progress!

Hail Freyr!



Matthew D. Flavel

## AFA Homeschool Program



[AsatruAcademy.org](http://AsatruAcademy.org)

Greetings AFA Academy families!

We hope everyone had a wonderful winter nights. It warmed my heart to see so many smiling children at winter nights in Ohio!

Now that winter nights have passed, the wild hunt begins! As we get ever closer to yule. In the month of December, much of our concentration will be on the yuletide festivities, and I'll write some great wild hunt ideas and yuletide traditions from Europe that can be used as part of our school time.

As we gear up, let's not forget about Thanksgiving! Many of our gods and kindreds will

be celebrating a folks giving. We would love to see your pictures and your artwork!

Please submit to [rstamm@runestone.org](mailto:rstamm@runestone.org) or any of our academy staff.



Gothi Rob Stamm  
Dean of AFA Academy  
[rstamm@runestone.org](mailto:rstamm@runestone.org)

## Day of Remembrance

### Queen Sigríð of Sweden



Though little information about Sigrid, Queen of Sweden, exists in a historical text, the stories abound. Born a Swedish noblewoman Sigrid married Erik the Victorious and together they had one son. She became the Regent after the king's death, and it wasn't long before her vast wealth drew out all of the suitors, one of whom was her foster brother.

Tired of the constant suitors, and very aware of poor manners, it is said that Sigrid invited her foster brother and another suitor to a feast only to light the building on fire and lock them inside. This didn't scare away the Christian Tyrant, Olaf Tryggvason. She might have entertained his proposal, but when he demanded that she convert to



Christianity to wed him, Sigrid immediately turned him away. This enraged Tryggvason so much that he first insulted her age and beauty, and then slapped her. The story says she then told him that his behavior very well might lead to his death.

It was not long before Sigrid united Sweden with Denmark by marrying King Sweyn Forkbeard. Already feuding with Olaf, it didn't take much for Sigrid to convince her new husband to go to war. This led to one of the largest ancient maritime battles, the Battle of Swold, in which Olaf Tryggvason was killed.

What can we learn from this story?

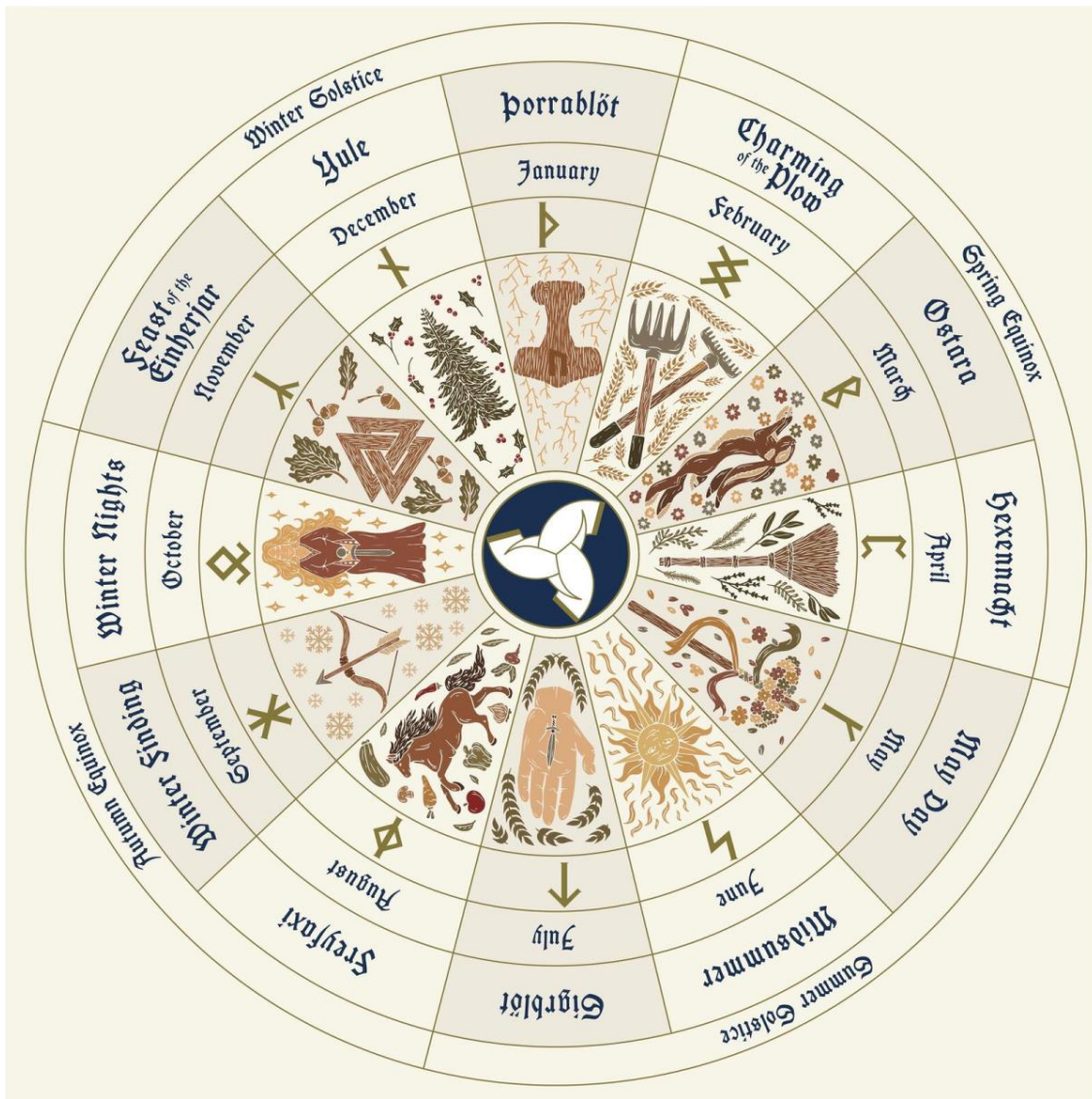
While we can't run around burning to death the people that annoy us, we can take a stand for ourselves and our Folk. We have the right to defend ourselves and our dignity from those who would try to diminish us. And when we all work together as a cohesive group, much can be done to defend and raise our Folk up.

It is never in our best interest to play it nice just for the sake of being polite. Honesty and hard truths are rarely looked at with fondness, but they are so important. Be honest, be truthful, defend and build your dignity. We are our deeds.



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## Remembrance and Holy Days



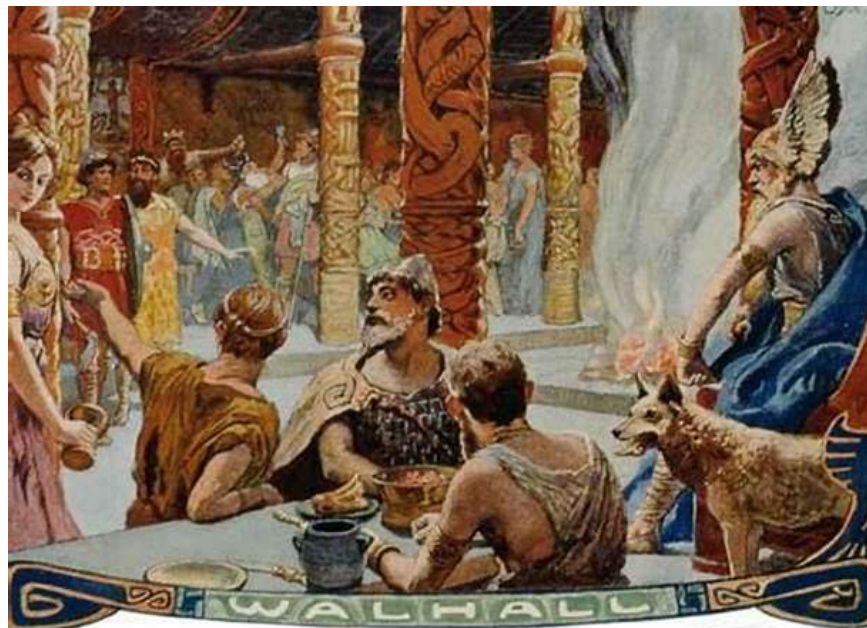
[Calendar – Asatru Folk Assembly \(runestone.org\)](http://runestone.org)

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
April 31 (observed on 16th)	Hexennacht
May 9	Day of Remembrance for Else Christensen

<b>Date</b>	<b>Observance</b>
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

## Feast of the Einherjar





One of the most recognizable motifs in Asatru is that of the Viking warrior. Helm, sword, beard, and blood: boys and girls have long been mesmerized by the stories of Valkyries and the eternal feasting and fighting of the Einherjar in Odin's hall, Valhalla. Pop culture has taken the Berserker and the Valkyrie and remade them hundreds of times.

Our ancestors lived in a different time when fighting wars and general "viking" was necessary for survival. For a warrior, to die in battle was the greatest honor. Today, war is not necessary for the same way. Most people scoff at war, and urge their children to "do better" or "be better". For those of us who practice Asatru, however, we recognize the importance and the value of the warrior. More important still, is the importance and the value of those who have fallen, the Einherjar.

Once a year we set aside a day specifically to honor the Einherjar. We raise a horn to the fallen warriors to thank them for fighting for our people and our freedom. One way to celebrate is to set a place at the table for the Einherjar. Serve them the same food you are eating for dinner. Pour them a glass of wine or beer. When you are done, leave the plate outside under a special tree in offering. Another way to celebrate would be to visit the graves of veterans at a local cemetery and help to clean them up. Leave some decorations or a small flag.

You don't have to have any veterans in your immediate family. It is a guarantee that somewhere down your ancestral lines you have family who fought in a war, and most likely, that some of them didn't return from the front lines. It is in your blood. So raise that horn, and raise it high. Remember our fallen.

Hail the Einherjar!



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**Recap of Winter Nights XI in Ohio**



When I was informed this spring by Camp Netimus that the camp would not be doing group rentals going forward, I was disappointed and a bit uneasy. That place in the Poconos was home AFA Winter Nights for as long as I had been an AFA member and it was difficult to imagine it being held anywhere else. I put the call out to our Folkbuilders to help find a place to make sure Winter Nights was held on schedule. Not long after Folkbuilder Timmy Dumas let me know that long-time AFA member Cole Distel, who in years past has himself put in some time as a Folkbuilder, had a family camp that might be suitable. The camp didn't have everything finished that we were



used to, but Cole, his wife Tiff, and Cole's mom went out of their way to make everyone comfortable. A big thank you to the Distel family!



AFA Winter Nights 11 in Ohio was amazing. The Folk showed up in force, with more people attending, with more children attending, than any previous Winter Nights.



We were blessed to witness three families present their babies to be named, and three of our best AFA leaders took their Oaths as AFA Folkbuilders. Congratulations to Christine Dumas, Joe Drotos, and Jon Rock and Hail to the babies!





Our lovely Jessicas helped the children with crafts including a paper Yggdrasil tree. Apprentice Jonathan Montgomery did a great job as our auctioneer, and with the help of those who donated items to the auction and those who bid on these items the AFA raised almost \$4000 for the AFA Hof fundraiser.



Witan Svan shared with the children the story of how the world came to be, and of the theft and recovery of Thor's hammer. I had the honor of sitting as Thule during the



High Sumbel and I am grateful to our Folk who spoke nobly and rightly. Gythia Erickson led our Folk in communing with our Disir. Alsherjargothi Flavel led the Folk in a powerful Odin blot.



And so much more...

So many AFA families have started at Winter Nights, including my own, and I hope that this year lifelong bonds were forged again.



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## Upcoming National Events

**Feast of the Einherjar 2022 Nov. 10th-13th**



Honor the fallen  
with your folk  
in Oklahoma  
Nov 10-13

With Special  
guests Stephen  
and Sheila  
McNallen, and  
Alsherjargothi  
Matt Flavel

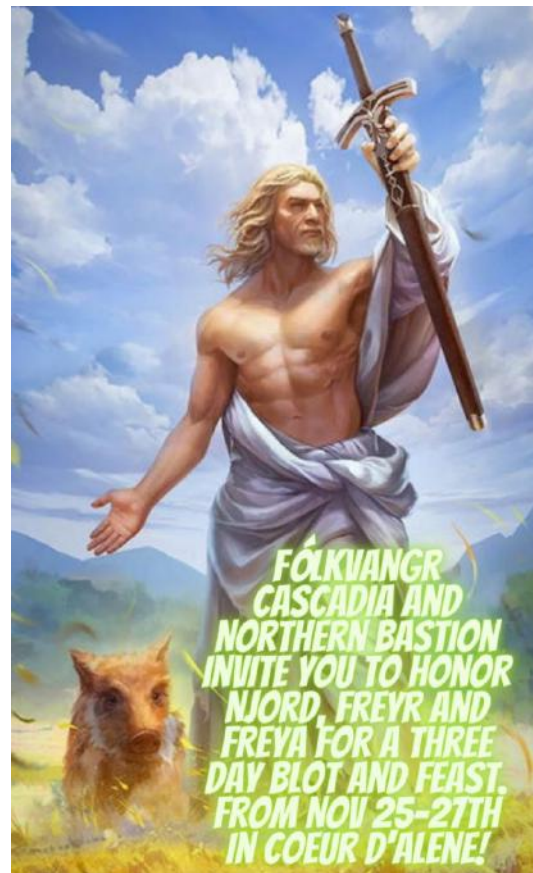
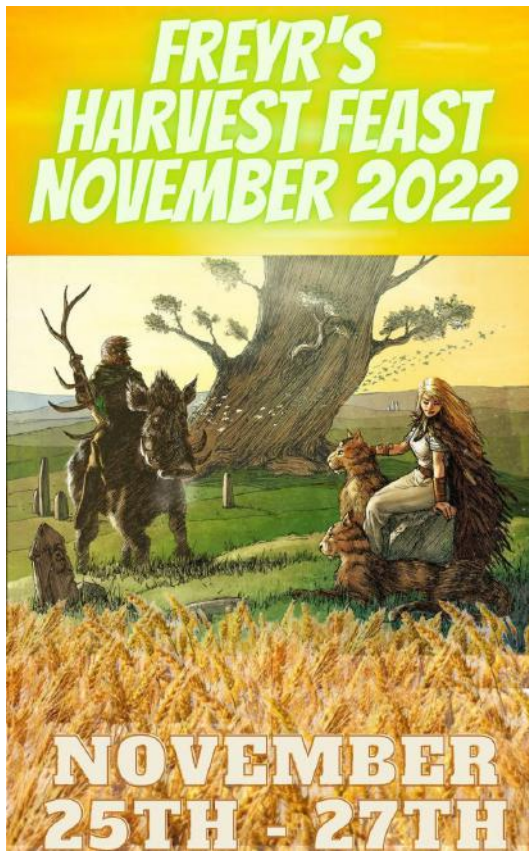
# Feast of the Einherjar 2022

[Register Here](#)

Come and join your Folk for a weekend-long celebration as we Honor the Einherjar.  
Presentations, Games, feasting, and Blots!

**Freyr's Harvest Feast in Idaho Nov. 25th-27th**

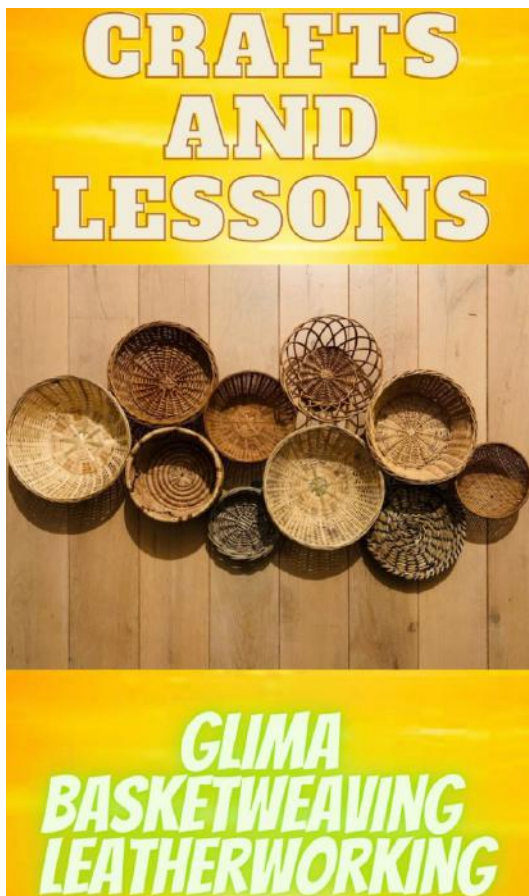




[Register Here](#)

We're still gearing up for Freyrs Harvest Feast and with just a few more weeks to go, it's more important than ever to get your tickets.

The event is a three-day gathering of our folk to celebrate the harvest season, our gods and goddesses, and the frith we share.

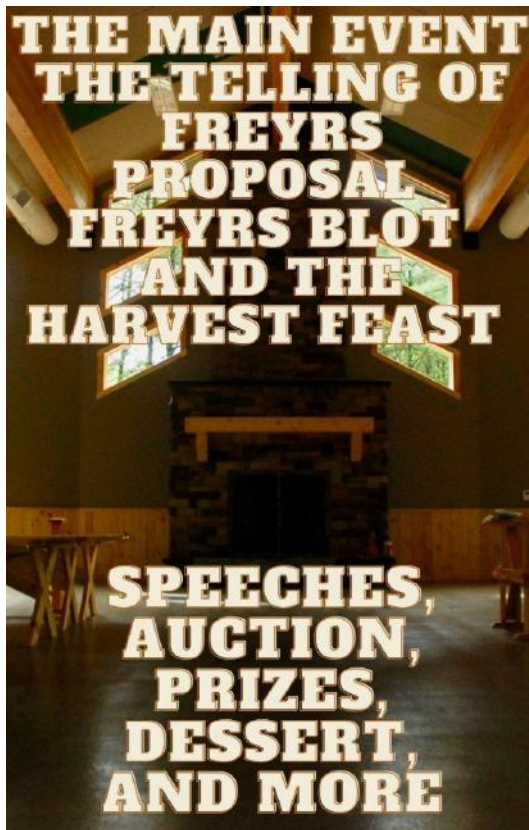


Each day is dedicated to a member of the Vanir. That Friday is dedicated to Njord who oversees our safe travel. Saturday is for Freyr and will have the viking games and harvest feast. Sunday wraps up our festivities as we learn about the runes and develop tighter family bonds dedicating the day to Freya.

I hope to see all of you there to participate in the various crafts and hear the speeches prepared.

It is the perfect opportunity to bring family who does not yet share in our faith out to be a part of the folkish community we cherish. With the added bonus of not doing Thanksgiving dishes there's no excuse. Looking forward to seeing you all there!





Fólkvangr Cascadia and Northern Bastion invite you to honor Njord, Freyr, and Freya for a three-day Blot and Feast on the banks of Lake Couer D'Alene where we will gather in frith enjoying good food and even better company. An AFA blacksmith will be working the forge for all to see and our instructors will teach Glima (historical Viking wrestling) leatherworking and basketweaving. Compete in events for prizes, see the telling of Freyr's Proposal on stage and give thanks to the gods. With events, speeches, a big auction, and vendor tables there's too much to do to be put into words and it's definitely something you don't want to miss.



**THANKSGIVING  
DISHES SUCK**



**SO INSTEAD HAVE US  
HANDLE IT AT  
FREYRS HARVEST  
FEAST**

Join us from Nov 25-27th in Coeur D'Alene greater area. The event kicks off Friday afternoon and ends Sunday. Lodgings include cabins, bunkhouses, auxiliary buildings, and campsites. The feast will be in the great hall and festivities range from the forge, throughout the site, and even on the stage. Email Folkbuilder Tyler Heinlein ([theinlein@runestone.org](mailto:theinlein@runestone.org)) for more details!

**Charming of the Plow at Njordshof**



We are excited to announce the 2023 National Event for Njörðshof will be Charming of the Plow!

More info coming soon.

See you there!



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[cerickson@runestone.org](mailto:cerickson@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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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 fruitful, 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](mailto: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](mailto:aturnage@runestone.org)

**Artisans of the AFA  
Support Our Folk**





Wyrd Weaver - I'm a fiber artist in Texas and a solitary AFA member.





I spin all my own wool yarns on my spinning wheel, then turn those yarns into woven and nålbinded garments.



My Facebook page is <https://m.facebook.com/wyrdweaversca>



Folkbuilder Jessica Lambert  
[jlambert@runestone.org](mailto:jlambert@runestone.org)

## Ancestral Food and Culture



My mother came to visit us last week and to celebrate she made a fun and tasty bread for us all to enjoy.

Barmbrack also known as báirín breac (speckled loaf in Irish Gaelic), is a tasty cake made with dried fruit and spices like cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves. The cake gets its name from its appearance, as the fruit is dotted throughout the loaf, and more scarce compared to other types of fruit loaves. It has a similar flavor to fruitcake or a fruit loaf but is less rich. With its warming baking spices, you can make barmbrack all year round, even if it is traditionally served on Halloween. This tradition would date back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain. This would coincide precisely with the harvest season when the fruits were collected and stored to make sweets during the Christmas



holidays.

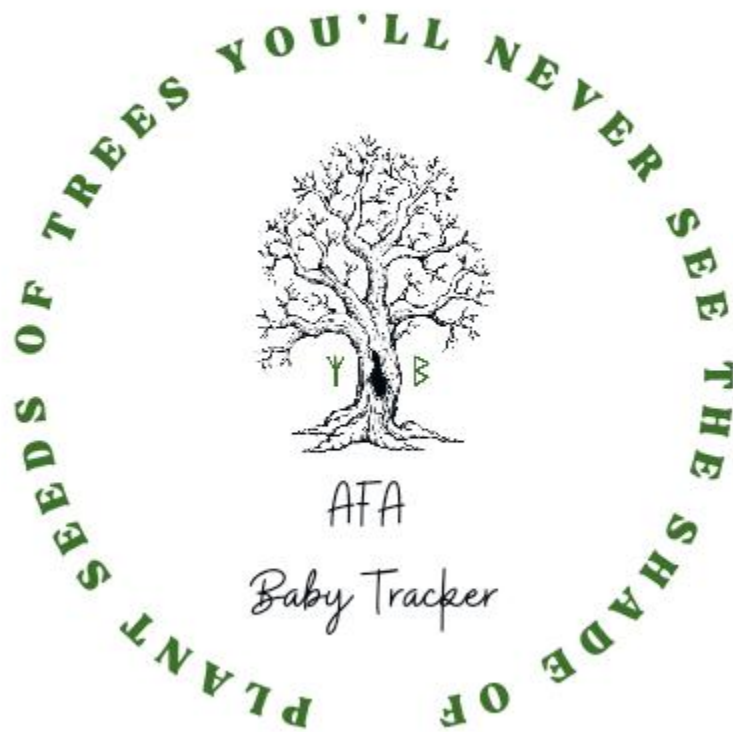
Mix the raisins, sultanas, lemon zest, orange zest, and sugar in a bowl. Whisk the hot tea into the sugar mixture, then cover it and leave it overnight so the flavors can meld together. The next day, combine the flour, baking powder, and spice mix in a large bowl. Add the raisin mixture and the eggs to the flour mixture, making sure to alternate between the two. Beat until the batter is well-combined. Bake the barmbrack for 1 hour 20 minutes to 1 ½ hours at 325°F. Let it cool for 20 minutes, then take the cake out of the pan and let it cool completely on a rack.



Folkbuilder Timothy Dumas

[tdumas@runestone.org](mailto:tdumas@runestone.org)

## Baby Tracker



We are tracking the growth of our Folk by presenting 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 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!

Members, please be sure to let your local leadership know if you've given birth to a child recently to ensure that we get your new baby added to our baby tracker count, as well as getting you more information about other children-related programs and benefits that the AFA offers!

Total babies born in 2022: 40 (Up 5 from September!)

Jessica Keller  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[jkeller@runestone.org](mailto:jkeller@runestone.org)



## Yule Card Fundraiser





# AFA YULE CARD FUNDRAISER

*Let the Competition  
Begin!!!*



*Card Artwork created by Reign Kinsler*

Odinshof & Baldrshof Districts  
contact Ashley Stockton  
astockton@runestone.org

Thorshof & Njordshof Districts  
contact Jessica Keller  
@jkeller@runestone.org



\$20+ shipping  
Per pack of 10  
All proceeds go to the Hof  
with the most orders

Njordshof is in the lead currently! Who's going to win?



Jessica Keller  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[jkeller@runestone.org](mailto:jkeller@runestone.org)

Now Available in the AFA Store

## The Usatru Folk Assembly



## 2023 Calendar

**Now available! For a limited time only!**

Pre-order your Official AFA keepsake calendar now!





Order now through Dec 5th and your calendar will arrive in time for Yule!

[Order Here!](#)



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

## Baldrshof

**Ancestor Altar**

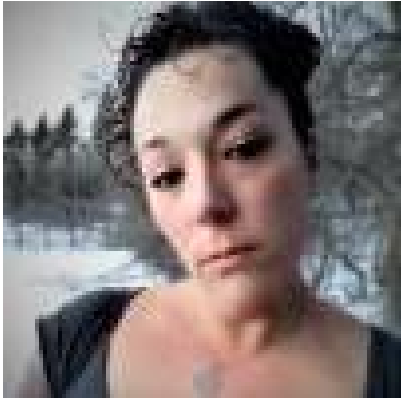




All folk are welcome to bring framed photos of their deceased loved ones to be placed on the ancestor altar at Baldrshof!

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](mailto:jshaffer@runestone.org)

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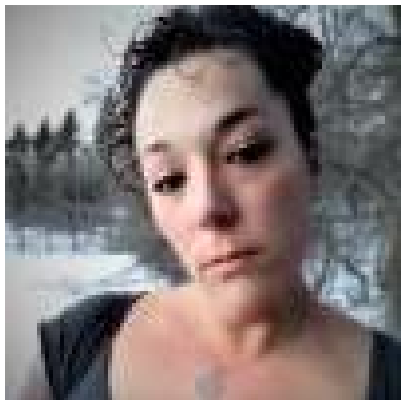
### Food Pantry at Baldrshof



October's Food Pantry was a great success that cleared out the pantry and both freezers in the Hof.



More and more from the surrounding community and Murdock look forward to and voice just how much we have made a difference in their lives and what it means to them that we are there. Hail the doers!



Folkbuilder Jessie Shaffer  
[jshaffer@runestone.org](mailto:jshaffer@runestone.org)

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## Winter Nights at Baldrshof





October is often seen as an auspicious time of the year; A time when the veil between worlds is at it's thinnest. For some, however, it is merely a time to eat candy. For us, it was a time to enjoy Frith and come together as Folk.

The coming of Fall brought with it a cooling of temperature and covered the ground at the Hof with leaves. The pleasant fall time atmosphere served as a wonderful background for Winternights, even with all the wind.

Fika started the morning off. New faces and old friends came together with good conversation. After that it was time for group activities. The men went outside where we enjoyed a game of Kubb atop the crunching leaves, which provided a new obstacle to challenge us. The blowing wind also made things interesting.

Lunch was later served and brought a delightful stew. Members contributed their own homemade dishes to accompany our meals for the day, adding diverse assortments of delicious items to the day's menu. Dinner featured delectable Hams which had been slowly cooked throughout the day.

Blót brought an emotional honoring of our sacred Disir. Roses were gifted to them upon our sacred tree at the conclusion of ritual.

Finally, Symbol and poetry marked the end of the day.

It was good to meet new friends, reunite with old ones during the day, and see the

bonds of community strengthen.

Our next monthly event will be The Feast of The Einherjar and Folksgiving at the Hof. There are also moots taking place during the month which will surely be great fun!



Folkbuilder Cormag Àlainn  
[calainn@runestone.org](mailto:calainn@runestone.org)

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### Halloween at Baldrshof



On Halloween this year, the SygTyr kindred gathered at Baldrshof for Halloween festivities. We live in such a fun little community with so many children! We raked some leaves, handed out candy bars, shared some dinner with the neighbors, and took the opportunity to hand out flyers for our upcoming November food shelf that includes all the fixings for a Thanksgiving dinner!!

After dinner, we went trick-or-treating around the neighborhood with 9 kids in tow! We were able to see the community out and about, and the kiddos had such a great time. As we loaded up and all began our drives home, we were delighted to have kids with sticky hands, sleepy eyes, and hearts full of love from folk and frith.



Folkbuilder Ashley Mcstocker  
[amcstocker@runestone.org](mailto:amcstocker@runestone.org)

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## 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



# *Feast of the Einherjar and Folksgiving at Baldrshof*

**Saturday, November 26th, 2022  
10 am to 6 pm**

Join our folk in celebration and remembrance  
of the Fallen Heroes!

Bring a side to share for our Folksgiving Feast!

Please join the Folk at Baldrshof for the Folksgiving Feast and to celebrate the Einherjar!

Saturday, November 26th — 10 am to 6 pm

Turkey will be provided! Please contact Witan Brandy Callahan or Apprentice Folkbuilder Christian Penner to bring a side dish and to RSVP!

Please bring pictures or other memorabilia of veteran family members.

For Blot, if you have them available, please bring axes, swords, shields, drums, bells, or any other noise-making percussion instrument or weapon excluding firearms.

8 AM (for those who come early): Set-up and Morning Dedications

10 AM Fika

11 AM Discussion with Witan Brandy Callahan on Honor

12 Noon Lunch

1 PM Veteran's Dedication

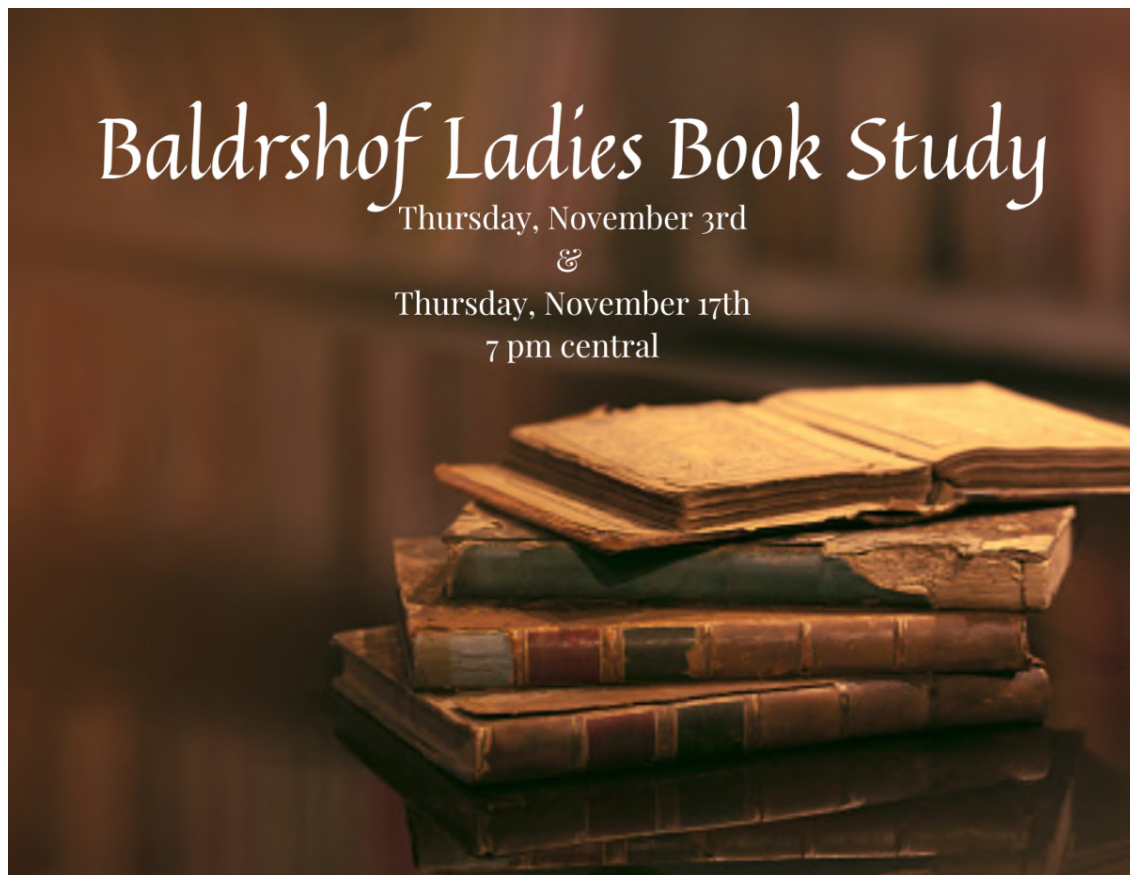
2 PM Blot

3 PM Sumbel

4 PM Folk Time

5 PM Dinner

6 PM Clean-up & Hof Closing



The Ladies of Baldrshof will be continuing their study of *Deep Ancestors* by Ceisiwr Serith on:

Thursdays, Nov 3rd & Thursday, Nov 17th

Book Study begins at 7 pm Central



Teams Meeting Link will be provided in the Baldrshof Folk MeWe group and is available by email upon request.

Contact Witan Brandy Callahan or Folkbuilder Sara Ault



*Join your Folk for a 3 day celebration of Yule!*

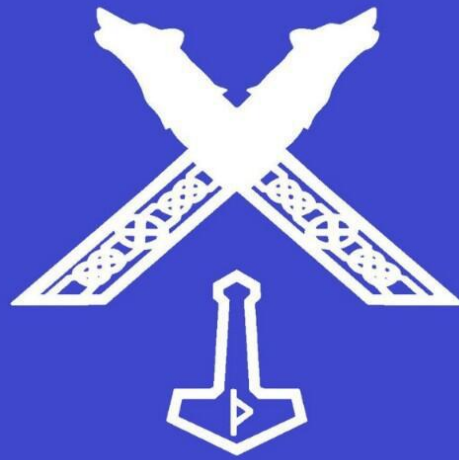
*4 Blots \* Sumbel \* Feasting \* Gift Giving  
Tree Lighting \* Yule crafts for kids & adults  
Educational Discussions \* Frith with the Folk*

*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



## Illinois

### *Stepping Up for Central Illinois*



There are a lot of big states, and Illinois is one of them. We had Jim and Shane in the North and Nick in the South, but being 6-hrs apart, it did sometimes make for some rough travels and long drives. I'm happy to have been able to step up to the plate and help the Folk in our area and the AFA at large. We're going to do some amazing things!

### *Upcoming Events*



CENTRAL ILLINOIS

# ITALIAN DINNER MOOT

## JOIN YOUR FOLK

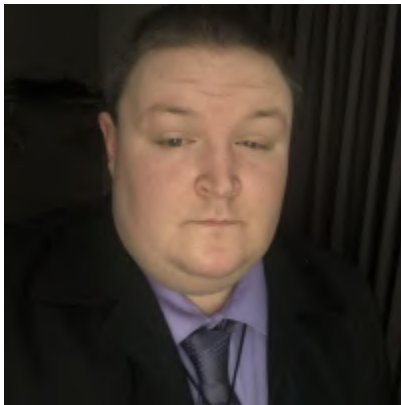
Event Date 11/25/2022

- ✓ Authentic Italian
- ✓ Galinas Restaurant
- ✓ Riverton, Illinois 62561



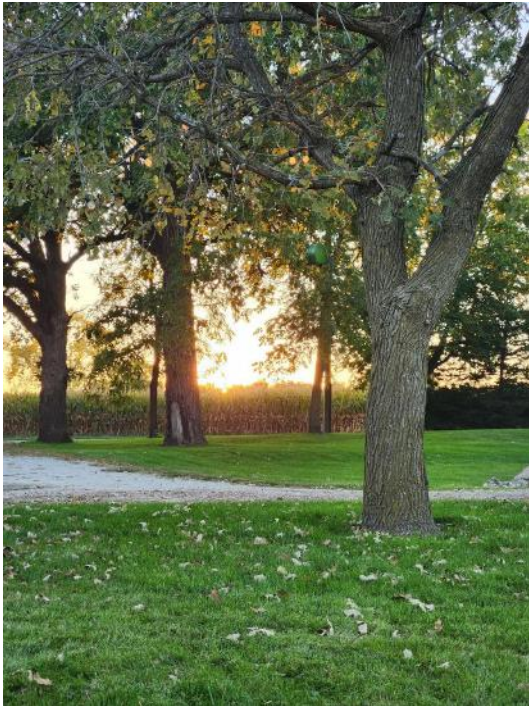
**QUESTIONS AND RSVP TO:**

✉ [vpalazzolo@runestone.org](mailto:vpalazzolo@runestone.org)



Victor Palazzolo  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[vpalazzolo@runestone.org](mailto:vpalazzolo@runestone.org)

*Hail from Illinois!*



October was slammed with activity for our members generally as well as myself and my wife. I can feel the energy building that this year has gifted us with. And this shows in how we kicked off the month.





Folkbuilder Jim along with the Aults and another state member joined us and as dusk drew forth, we carried out the Land - Taking Blòt beginning with the invocation of the Hearth God and Goddess, who in turn helped ignite the pyre whose ashes helped warm and purify the property. We lit a beacon so high and bright that night, we indeed called the Gods forth!!







After the Blót and purifying all the elements and food offerings, they were combined in a bolli and the Folk led by Garth and myself walked the property to bless all corners

and the exterior of the home itself, in hopes the family, the Gods, and Landwtr can live in harmony.

The following weekend was our Hrafnagud Kindred's Winter Nights celebration which proved extremely fruitful, but I will give Folkbuilder Jim the floor on that.







Jaclynn and I then made our way to Winter Nights in Ohio where we reunited with old friends not seen in years, and made new friends with frith to weave yet!

We now await November's Coming Fire!

Hail!

*Saga's Literature Project*





Do you ponder our Gods and Goddesses and wish to put pen to paper to express your thoughts on their meaning in your life?

Do you have special ways you practice Holidays and Days of Remembrance personally, with family, or with your Kindred?

Are there times you want to give newer members and practitioners advice on approaching Asatru?

Saga wishes to hear your thoughts and add them to the story of our Living Faith!

The Asatru Folk Assembly is engaging in a Church-wide project to collect writings and artwork from our members, regardless of standing or rank. The purpose is to develop

brochures, pamphlets, booklets, and general hand-outs to have at our Hofs as well as for people to distribute themselves. We mean to have quick and easy physical literature on hand intended for those curious about coming home to the Faith of their Ancestors, as well as any and all membership to keep for their own studies.



All writings and artwork are subject to review by top leadership, but can still be submitted to our project and kept for future reference regardless of the outcome. Please submit anything you feel is noteworthy about the following subjects:

- Gods & Goddesses
- Heroes

- Lore, Myth, & Sagas
- Ancestor worship
- Holiday celebration and history
- Personal, family, or Kindred of said Holidays
- Days of Remembrance
- Customs and conduct at your Hof
- Hof mottos
- Nine Noble Virtues
- AFA programs like Asatru Academy or Virtue Recovery
- Anything and everything Asatru you feel is appropriate for this project!

Help our Assembly and our Faith lend to the tales of Saga and how we carved our Gods and our Will back into living history!

Please email all submissions to me at [sduffy@runestone.org](mailto:sduffy@runestone.org)



Shane Duffy  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[sduffy@runestone.org](mailto:sduffy@runestone.org)

### *Winter Nights in Illinois*





On Saturday, October 8, we celebrated Winter Nights in Illinois. AFA members from Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana came together to enjoy camaraderie and a feast featuring seasonal pumpkin and beef stew (sounds unusual, but it's good). Our newest Illinois member joined us and was welcomed to the fold. The evening culminated in a Blot honoring Frey, the Disir, and all our ancestors.

In November, our get-together will be in the southwestern part of the state, in Belleville on Saturday, November 19, for our first of many annual "Folks-Give-Thing" festivities.



Folkbuilder James Cummings  
[jcummings@runestone.org](mailto:jcumings@runestone.org)

### *We've Gotta Alotta Websites*

**AFA Video Walk-Thru**  
<https://runestone.org/>  
<http://odinshof.org/> | <http://thorshof.com/> | <http://baldrshof.org/> | <http://njordshof.org/>  
<http://asatruacademy.org/>

### *Upcoming Events*



Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice  
[nrice@runestone.org](mailto:nrice@runestone.org)

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## Minnesota

### *Fulfillment in October*







The changing of the seasons and the thinning of the veil was in full force, no doubt. Helping with the food shelf and seeing & feeling people's appreciation made everything worthwhile. October and Winternights at Baldrshof was a spectacular weekend. I had the liberty of hosting the event with 2 outstanding Folkbuilders while Gythia Brandy Callahan lead the beautiful Disir blot and sumble. Sara Ault and Jaime Alainn helped wrangle games, conversations, fika, and meals in-between folk and frith; building bonds stronger.

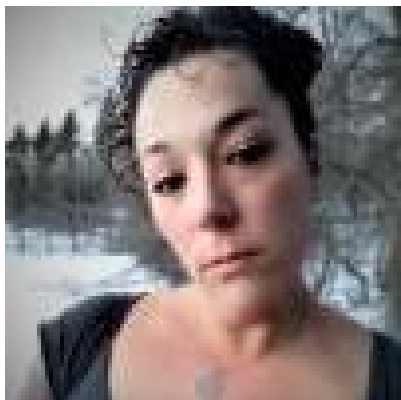






Winternights at the Hof was filled with laughter and joy. The children played, ate, painted pumpkins, and added to the day's events. Folk came from near and far to enjoy in the event. I took my oath alongside with the Proudfoot family to Sig Tyr Kindred during Winternights. Having the folk as your family is one of the greatest things one could ask for. Having a kindred to depend on and to depend upon you is the next level and I look forward to the years to come and am so excited to see our children grow up together! Hailsa!!

I'm looking forward to attending the Feast of the Einherjar in Oklahoma and to Folks giving at Baldrshof this November amongst the other festivities this time of year brings!



Folkbuilder Jessie Shaffer  
[jshaffer@runestone.org](mailto:jshaffer@runestone.org)

*Virtue Recovery Meeting*

# Virtue Recovery Meeting



Being our most virtuous selves is not always the easiest task. As a community, we are home to many that have or are currently, struggling with addiction. Many traditional 12-step meetings, though so very respected, do not fall in line with what we as a people believe. Specifically, any step pertaining to the divine will or requesting the removal of any shortcomings. So we run what we are calling the Virtue Recovery Meeting. Since we are an international organization, the best way for us to do this is via Zoom. We hold our meetings every Thursday, at 7 pm, CST and Saturday, at 9 am, CST. Join us!! Feel free to reach out to me with any and all questions!



Folkbuilder Ashley Mcstocker  
[amcstocker@runestone.org](mailto:amcstocker@runestone.org)

*Grith*



Grith by definition by Merriam-Webster states that it is a state of peace, security, or sanctuary imposed under special conditions or for people in certain circumstances for a limited time.

So that would be for example at an All Thing where many kindreds and people attend that may not be on good terms with each other but for the sake of the event happening a temporary peace is guaranteed for the event by a ranking person overseeing the gathering. It does not however mean that somebody wouldn't get what is coming to them on the road to or from said gathering by someone looking to exact a toll from them believed to be owed from a previous action between them.

This was an imposed security common in medieval Europe and before that has more or less disappeared from many languages and practices.

Today we can see this at our national event and as a Folkbuilder working between people with-in and with-out our beliefs and organization. When we host moots we guarantee a Grith for the meet for those that members may not know or who are unsure of what we do and who we are, and, for our folk members that attend. The same goes for any type of community event or outreach we orchestrate. It is unsaid but happens for example during our food shelf days where many may show up for assistance who are definitely not part of the tribe but can feel comfortable interacting with us on a personal level.

From my own personal experience, in a prison setting, there are a variety of separate allegiances amongst Asatru members to outside groups, gangs, or neither that have differing outlooks in life but put those differences aside for the common good of gathering for our beliefs in honoring our gods, folk, and family. This is probably the



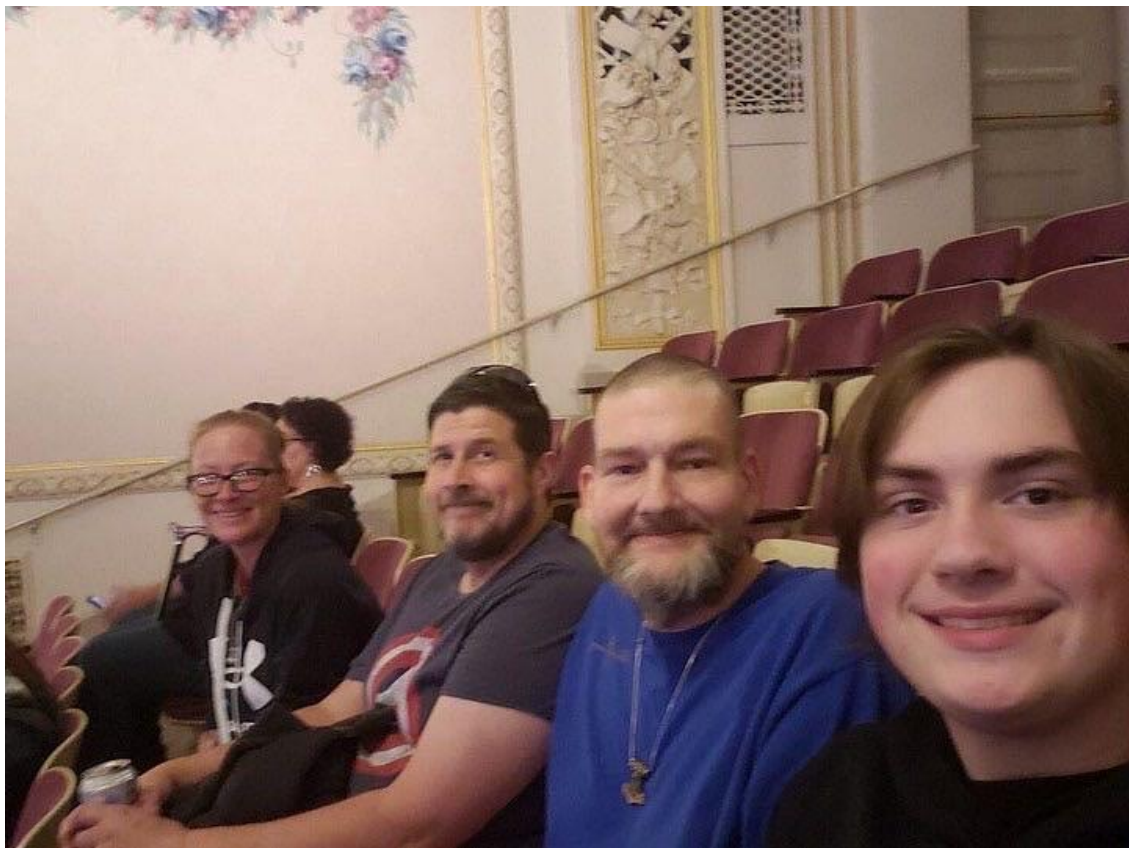
closest direct practice of implementing grith amongst people that may not see eye to eye or get along with one another except for the importance of our faith and practicing our beliefs together.

Similarly to above, during my time as an infantry soldier there were quite a few people from time to time even in a platoon that didn't necessarily like each other but for the greater good of the mission would take a bullet for a man they didn't like during peacetime. That is because it is known that we stood together as brothers with a common goal and for it not to be that way would certainly end up in unimaginable catastrophe for likely many, well beyond our immediate reach that said individuals did care for.



Folkbuilder Nathan Erlandson  
[nerlandson@runestone.org](mailto:nerlandson@runestone.org)

### *Northern Blood*



Things are starting to pick up for us again in Minnesota. Now we are heading into the Holiday season and my favorite time of the year.

I want to thank my dear friend Witan Brandy Callahan for inviting me to the Wardruna concert with your family. Had a great time and always enjoy spending time with your sons and husband. You are always thinking about me and watching out for me. Thank you for all you do!

Hail Brandy Callahan!!!



The next day Northern Blood Kindred hosted our Folkish Family pizza moot. I really missed these type of events. We are going back to our roots and will be hosting crafting days again.





We celebrated Winter Nights at Baldrshof, there was a great turn out. Met lots of new folks and I feel recharged from spending time with the folk.

Yule at Baldrshof is only a month away. Really looking forward to this event. Last year was amazing and the lighting of the Kindred trees shined bright in the Temple of the Shining One. Join us for three days December 9-11th. Please RSVP with Witan Brandy Callahan or myself—[bcallahan@runestone.org](mailto:bcallahan@runestone.org) or [jgallagher@runestone.org](mailto:jgallagher@runestone.org).

If you are interested in forming an AFA Kindred please email me or the Kindred program at [kindred@runestone.org](mailto:kindred@runestone.org).

### *Upcoming Events*





**FOLKISH FAMILY  
PIZZAMOOT WITH  
NORTHERN BLOOD  
KINDRED**

**11/20/22**

**3-5**

**Richfield, MN**

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

**Folkish Family Hike  
With Northern Blood  
Kindred at  
Minnehaha Falls  
12/4/22  
10am-1pm**

**Contact Folkbuilder  
Jason Gallagher for  
more info  
[jgallagher @  
runestone.org](mailto:jgallagher@runestone.org)**



Folkbuilder Jason Gallagher  
[jgallagher@runestone.org](mailto:jgallagher@runestone.org)



## Missouri

### *Thinning of the Veil*



With the veil thinning and our ancestors getting closer than they are the rest of the year, how are we welcoming and remembering them?

We talk about honoring our Gods and we set our altars with seasonal pieces, bringing in the magic of the season.

How are your ancestors represented? Have you set their photos or a piece of jewelry or something that represents them on your altar? Have you set a cup of your father's favorite coffee on the altar for him?

Our ancestors are never really gone. As long as we remember them. As long as we speak their names and talk to them in the quiet moments, they stay right here. Right by our sides. To guide us when we are listening. But what of those whose names have faded into the echos of time?

It's not just about the pictures or the offerings. It's also about how we saw our father love our mother like she was his everything because she was. And how he learned to



treat a woman like that from his father. It's grama who knew the power of a calm demeanor and a quiet voice, even when she was upset. Because her grandmother learned that from her grandmother. It's in the memory of an uncle who never had his own children but learned the magic trick to make his nieces and nephews laugh.

The memories are not just pictures or clips from the past, they are the guides and lessons they taught us through their deeds. Your inheritance and mine.

And so a son learns to treat his wife like a treasure. And a granddaughter learns that a quiet voice and dignity are the graceful power of a woman. And a niece learns that she is loved and how to connect with her niece through laughter. And magic tricks of her own.

And then, that generation passes those things on to the next. And the next. And the next...

It is most likely that 300 years from now our descendants may not know our names. But you will still be with them. When you pass on through your deeds, the best parts of who you are. And give them a Legacy so strong, each generation passes it down long after your name is just a carving on a dusty wind-worn headstone.

What deeds will your descendants inherit from you? What behavior will they learn to model that will be passed down and carry you with the line of your people into the future? And what legacies have your ancestors gifted down to you?

This year when the veil is thin, be aware that they are right there, your ancestors. Looking on. What part of themselves will they see alive in you? What of them will you pass on to the next generation? They are questions worth knowing the answers to. And I hope you find them this holiday season as the veil is the thinnest.

***Upcoming Events***

SECOND ANNUAL

# AN OLD TIME YULE IN OKLAHOMA



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

Dec. 1-4, 2022 located near Heavner  
Runestone

**Registration available SOON!**



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**Yule Trivia . Fun .Talk with your folk**

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## **MOTHERS NIGHT DEC 20TH**

**7pm CST, 8pm eastern, 6pm mountain 5pm pacific  
VIRTUAL MEET UP VIA ZOOM**



.....  
**PLEASE CONTACT FOLKBUILDER MELISA MILLS FOR MORE  
DETAILS**



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



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## Nebraska

*Proud to Represent the Folk in the Heartland*



My name is Ali Clausen, I'm a stay-at-home mother of two. I live in Central Nebraska with my children and husband Cody.

I've been Asatru since 2015, but I've been a pagan all my life. At the time I met Cody, I was searching for a faith that felt correct and even resorted to looking alphabetically through Wikipedia at the different types of paganism and pantheons. One of the first

things he told me was that he was Asatru and asked me to look it up before I passed judgment on it. As soon as I started researching I felt the pull to the Gods and was absolutely amazed.

We looked into the AFA on and off since we were married in 2016 but it was the first episode of Victory Never Sleeps that really sealed it for us. I listened a few more weeks and decided that it was right for us, and for our children. The welcome we received when we joined was incredible and now as apprentice folkbuilders we're excited to share that feeling of homecoming with more folk.

### *Upcoming Events*



Allison Clausen  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[aclausen@runestone.org](mailto:aclausen@runestone.org)



*Hail from Nebraska*





My name is Cody Clausen. I was born and raised in Nebraska and grew up in a devout evangelical Protestant family. After years of trying, I realized Christianity wasn't right for me. So I started looking into other types of religion outside of Christianity. I researched Greek and Roman paganism, but they never interested me in school, so I decided to research the Gods of my ancestors and found Asatru.

I've been Asatru since 2015, and finally made the decision to join the AFA this past Summer. Since becoming a dad, community has become more important to me and finding a good place to raise children in today's world is a top priority. I hope to bring more families home to the AFA.

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



Cody Clausen  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[cclausen@runestone.org](mailto:cclausen@runestone.org)

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## North Dakota

*There's More to Fargo than a TV Show*





Hail from Fargo! This month, myself and Folkbuilder Mr. Álainn with True North folk Kindred hosted a sporting moot in Fargo, ND. It was my first time organizing since I started Apprentice Folkbuilding. We enjoyed a sporting event followed by some Deutsch cuisine with a few beers. Members and nonmembers in attendance, we had a great time and good fellowship! The friendship and Frith within our church is like none other. Next month, we will be doing Axe throwing and having some fantastic pizza! It is always such a specialty time for me to spend time with our folk and members of our church. Also, we had a wonderful time meeting again at an awesome Winter Nights at Baldrshof.



Hail the Gods! Ancestors! And the AFA!



Christian Spencer  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
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## Wisconsin

*Falling for the Vatnafolk!*



This month, a few of us fellas were blessed with beautiful weather for a camping trip to the giant Governor Dodge State Park.



Our mission was to keep camp, cook outside for ourselves (Dutch oven beef stew that the Mrs. prepared for us), and spend Saturday finding our connection with Ullr among the trees.





A brisk 3-mile hike led us to what we all agreed was the perfect spot, overlooking the lake, to honor Ullr and ask his blessings. 6-miles in total, we made it back to roast bratwurst over the open fire. I had a great time with our Kinsmen Joel and Justin!





Next, we met up with Joel and the Wagner family here at our home for an informal Samhain celebration to honor the Ancestors in all that they were and all they have given to us! Pumpkins were carved by the kiddos and adults, and we had homemade spaghetti dinner, salad, and the perfect homemade apple pie which Kirsten made us—all of which shared as we asked the Ancestors to be our honored guests!



It was a wonderful month, and I am forever grateful to have these wonderful people around! Hail the Folk! Hail Kirsten Rapin, who keeps us going and organized as a Kindred! Hail Joel Eastman for his neverending steadfastness and willingness to always throw in and support his folk! Hail to Justin Borg for being well-read; your bright and intriguing candor is always a joy! Hail to the Wagner family for being some of the warmest people you could ever hope to meet and proud parents of two wonderful tiny humans. It's good for the heart to see such a solid AFA family, and you are definitely doing it right!





That's all I've got this month, until then you can find me at [jrapin@runestone.org](mailto:jrapin@runestone.org), and please visit [Baldrshof.org](http://Baldrshof.org) or contact a local Folkbuilder to keep up with all that's going on in this busy district!

### *Upcoming Events*



*You're invited Nov. 13th  
2pm for Vatnafólk Kindred's  
Holiday PotLuck  
please reach out to Folkbuilder  
Josh Rapin for details  
920-288-9710 or  
[jrapin@runestone.org](mailto:jrapin@runestone.org)*



Folkbuilder Josh Rapin  
[jrapin@runestone.org](mailto:jrapin@runestone.org)

*Ladies' Frithweaving*



Frith is something you extend to those you consider your family. It's a peaceful, welcoming, and comforting feeling. Women are a huge part of it in the AFA, just as they build and strengthen their families and friends.... the bonds they build with other women in the AFA strengthen the AFA as folk and family.... building these bonds is Frithweaving.

One of the things our Alsherjargothi, Matt Flavel, has said about the women of the AFA is:

“One of the things that women have always done well, and our ladies in the AFA really excel at, is networking with other women in the AFA to build those connections and build that web of families that know each other and share with each other. One of the nicest things I can hear from a member is they felt like they came home when they joined the AFA.”

We as women of the AFA have a vital role in the growth of the AFA. The more we bond with each other, the more we strengthen each other to learn, to become closer to our Gods, to raise our children with our traditions and to keep moving forward with a focus on the future of our Folk.

There is a story told about a village where all the women washed clothes together down by the river. When they all got washing machines, there was a sudden outbreak of depression, and no one could figure out why.

It wasn't the washing machines in and of themselves. It was the absence of time spent doing things together. It was the absence of community.

As women, we are told to be independent.....to say we are fine when we aren't. We could be depressed, overwhelmed, lonely, or hurting and we will still say we are fine and function through life instead of living to our potential.

We tend to isolate ourselves and become very untrusting of new people. With the current culture we live in, it is understandable. Building an actual friendship is a lot of work and with everything else we have going on in our own lives, it may seem like an unnecessary effort to put forth. Unfortunately, sometimes we just don't feel the need to put forth that effort however important it is not only to our community but for each of us.

There is a special kind of energy when women come together, and share ideas, stories, and struggles. This is how we as women build.

I encourage you to step out of your comfort zone. Go to events, moots, and gatherings near to you. Smile more. Be welcoming of others. If you look around at any event, you will see others who are new and unsure of what to do or say. Don't be afraid to introduce yourself, and strike up a conversation with small talk.

Join an online study group. We currently have ones for lore study, rune study, or ladies' book studies. Ask questions, and interact. Notice the ones that come to each study and if you find them interesting, "friend" them outside the study and strike up a casual conversation. Keep things light and positive, as you get to know them.... remember that not everyone will mesh with everyone else and that is okay... you will eventually bond with others that share your hobbies, experiences, and goals.

The AFA often needs volunteers for the various programs it has. Volunteer in whatever capacity you have to offer. If you have a talent, offer it. At the larger events, especially at the Hofs, there is always some help needed in the kitchen. Offer to help cook or help with dishes. I personally have formed some of the best friendships I have in the AFA over sinks at Baldrshof.

Although ideally, we want everyone to come to things in the real world, with us being so spread out at the moment, online is a useful tool for getting to know others. The easiest way is being active in the online ladies' group, striking up conversations, and sending friends requests. Notice the things going on around you online. One of the easiest ways of showing Frith and bonding with other women is just noticing them. If they express, they are having a bad day, follow up with them later and see how they are. It may seem like a small thing, but it makes a difference to know you are seen and remembered. A lady may speak on concerns about their child not progressing the way they think they should or a procedure they have coming up. Remember these things and follow up with them. This becomes especially important when someone losses a loved one. Knowing that someone cares not just when it happens but down the road a-ways, matters a lot! Strive to become a woman who thinks beyond herself to her folk.



*If you find a friend, you fully trust  
And wish for his good-will,  
exchange thoughts,  
exchange gifts,  
Go often to his house  
— Hávamál 44*



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