



**Njörðshof**  
**Fourth Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly**

<http://www.njordshof.org/>

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## Words from the Alsherjargothi

*The 30th Year of the Asatru Folk Assembly has Begun!*



We have an exciting year ahead of us! In recent months we have seen loads of new interest from folks that have just now discovered the AFA and our amazing family. To all our new members, welcome! In a lot of ways 2023 was a refining process that has produced a healthier and more noble group of folks to build our future with. I am excited to see all the things we can accomplish together in the coming year. We have much we want to do, including continued work at Sigrheim as well as moving ever closer to making Freyshof a reality. Let's hit the ground running!



Make sure to check your District websites, we have event Calendars there that are updated constantly with activities to get our AFA Family connected and participating in the real world. If you are already actively participating, we are excited to see you. If you have yet to participate or haven't participated enough in the past, this year is the year and today is the day, go out and get involved, it is always worth the effort.

I look forward to seeing all of you this year as I travel to our amazing events at each of our 4 Hofs!



Matthew D. Flavel  
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## Words from our Witan

*Welcome 2024*



Happy New Year and 2024 to all our brothers and sisters, friends and family in the Asatru Folk Assembly.

2023 closes a chapter of our lives and our history. Another year of solid troth with the Æsir and Frith amongst the Folk. As we step into another bright year of Victory, I wanted to remind each of you that your family is here.

Anyone who has stood in a Wayfarer Blot with me, knows that the closing of the Blot

ends with the “Binding of the Folk”. We acknowledge the beauty and worth of our women. We acknowledge the strength and courage of our men. We recognize in each other the web that ties us all together. We are reminded that we are a strong and noble Folk. The words “These are your brothers and sisters. When you succeed, we win with you. When you fall or fail, our hands will reach down to pull you back up” are true and spoken with intent.

We are more than just white Folk we see each other every now and then, who meet in a temple to worship once a month, or who share common belief in our Gods. Your Folk are the solid foundation beneath your feet. We are here in your Victory and we are here in your turmoil.

Isolation in the worst of times may seem necessary, it may seem easier. You may not want to “burden” anyone. You may be embarrassed about needing help or support. But, your Folk are here to support you, to guide you, to help you when you need it. Being a member of the AFA is more than just being a member of a church. Being a member of the AFA means that you are never alone.

Should you ever find yourself in need, our leadership and your Folk are here. Please reach out to any of us, at any time.



Witan Brandy Callahan  
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*The Folk Remember*



At Þórshof, during our Yule celebration, we have established a tradition of remembering those we have lost during the past year.

It's solemn and sad. It's also necessary. In our tradition, we light a candle for each of our AFA family we have lost. This year it was 7. As each candle was lit, we hailed the person by name. We kept those candles lit throughout the weekend. We remember each of them for the way they touched our lives. We keep their names alive at Sumbel. We keep them in our hearts.

The Folk Remember.



Y Allison Melillo 11/18/1970 - 2/7/2023 ♪



Y Mitch Loveless 7/16/1988 - 2/10/2023 ♪



Y Janet Lea Flavel 7/26/1948 - 4/4/2023 ♪



Y Daniel Franklin 5/19/1983 - 5/1/2023 ♪

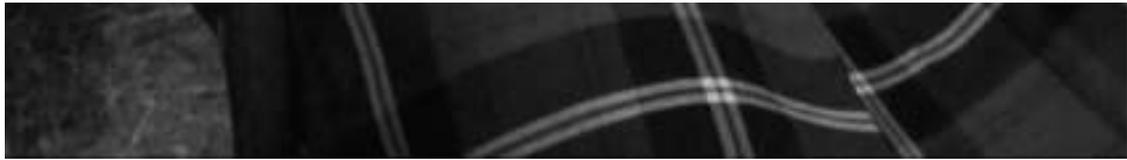


† Michael Lee Vaughn 12/5/1986 - 7/17/2023 †



Y Alan Wittenberg 7/2/1949 - 10/28/2023 ♪





Y Kamden Musser 9/25/1996 - 11/10/2023 ɹ



Also of important note, we give honor to a member whom we recently learned of his passing. Hail Christopher Chambless!



## **Christopher Chambless**

**Y10/3/1981-12/11/2023** †

Christopher graduated from Ouachita Parish High School in 2000. Christopher enlisted in the United States Marine Corps after high school. He then enlisted in the Army National Guard. Christopher enjoyed riding motorcycles, spending time with friends and family, but more importantly spending time with his children. He was a gun enthusiast. Christopher was a Pittsburg Steelers fan, #12 Bradshaw. He was known for his laugh and always making folks laugh. Christopher always had a smile on his face.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Jamie Leigh Chambless; brother, Michael Chambless; grandparents, Marvin and Lilly Bell Chambless; and uncle, Russell Fox, Jr.

Survivors include his five children, Chloe Chambless, Gage Chambless, Marcus Chambless, Ava Chambless, and Audrey Chambless; stepdaughter, Aubrey Garner; mother, Patsy

Magee and her husband, Chief Master Sergeant Wayne Magee, USAF, Retired; father, Perry Chambless and wife Jackie; sister, Sherry Acree and husband Eric; brother, Todd Chambless and wife Sarah; cousin, Benny Fox; as well as numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and many special friends.

Pallbearers will be Kevin "Bomber" Webb, Ronnie "Dozer" Holcomb, Randy "Gunner" Franks, Gale "Loner" Rogers, Brandon "Spark" Seamans, and Joey "SlowPoke" Mulrhead. Honorary Pallbearers will be Jerry "Rooster" McCoy, and Ron "HellRaiser" Long.

A trust fund has been set up for his children, memorial donations may be made to Ouachita Valley Federal Credit Union.



Witan Daniel Young  
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*Devotion Works*



I don't remember having a singular moment of revelation where I suddenly knew the Gods were real.

I was initially skeptical of Ásatrú because I didn't believe in the supernatural and my faith was science or secular humanism. Time did its thing and I found myself wanting more than that selfish worldview could ever provide. I wanted a community with deeper roots.

So, I went back to the Catholic Church of my upbringing. I had a true crisis of faith, rebelled against Yahweh and had held an anger at "God" for years. But in the decade that I had been away from it, that church had dramatically failed. The old folks wouldn't touch each other during the sign of peace because they were afraid of swine flu or avian flu- whichever fad flu it was. There were no young people. The Irish parish was full of Asians...

I was also becoming racially aware at this time. I was growing frustrated with the erosion of traditional roles and status that I had been raised to expect and of the broader cultures' rejection of natural order. I became interested in political movements, but ultimately was underwhelmed by the quality of the people involved compared with the ideals.

Along the way, I was introduced to "Norse paganism" and binged around various groups. Some were universalist (even though in practice it was all white people), some were "tribal" whereby the importance was on being adopted into the tribe, and some were Folkish with a focus on the kinship between the Aesir and the Folk.

One of those Folkish groups was the Asatru Folk Assembly which was relatively small in Pennsylvania at the time. I was very much a tire kicker. I hung around but didn't join any. Our local AFA Folkbuilder at the time, Pat Hall, managed to arrange for the McNallens and senior leadership (which included Alaska Folkbuilder Matt Flavel) to come to an event called Winter Nights in the Poconos. This was the first time I was able to participate in Blot and Sumbel with Folk who truly believed in our Gods, rather than using them for various political and social reasons. I still wasn't there. But I did make up my mind to choose to "believe in believing in the Gods". I still didn't join the AFA for almost another year. I began a practice of devotion to the Gods, with much guidance from Folkbuilder Hall. I learned about the runes and ways to use them. I read the Elder and Younger Eddas, various retellings of the Eddic stories that were easier to understand, and the Völsung Saga. I didn't read much contemporary material, which I think benefited me. Steven McNallen hadn't published "Ásatrú" yet.

I began meditating and I began a gift cycle first with my ancestors- after all, even as a skeptical person I knew for a fact that my ancestors were real once. I started to become more confident in myself in ways not related to religion or politics. I then chose to assume that this was my ancestors blessing me, and if this were true that I would also assume that other spirits were real such as Vættir and the Æsir.

I joined the AFA, and by the time I had done this I had enough real proof in my life that devotion my ancestors, that honor to the wights and that worship if the Gods made a real and positive difference in my life that they must be real.

I decided to become a Folkbuilder. I met my wife in the AFA. All my closest non-blood friends I know because of the AFA. My children were born into the AFA. I have the great privilege to serve our Folk in a way so much more important than politics. I share in the chance to really change the course of our history for the better in a permanent way.

It's now over 25 years since I had a crisis of faith with Roman Catholicism. I was a snobby, know-it-all atheist for ten of those years. I thought the universe was there for me to observe. I'd have loved simulation theory if it were more mature at the time.

It's been 15 years since I was first aware of Ásatrú as a modern religion, and 10 years since I made a gamble of a choice to treat it as real even if I was intellectually resistant to such things.

And that has made all the difference in my life. I know some people have a moment of revelation. But for those who have not, you should know that it is okay and quite

normal. Devotion will yield a slow “drip, drip, drip” of blessings that make you stronger and more confident. It will win your fame. It will win you the girl. It will build your wealth. Things will happen when and in such a way so as to make it undeniable that your devotion is working. That energy builds up in a way I have trouble describing.

That will be all the proof that you need.



Witan Clifford Erickson  
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## Words from our Gothar

*Odin, Vili, Vé: A Closer Look*



Odin, Vili, & Vé are typically viewed as the first of the Æsir. They took action to create our world as we know it, ordered in a way that our Folk were able to thrive. They each gave us a gift to make us who we are, setting in motion the countless victories and immeasurable glory that our ancestors attained. Our mind, our body, and our spirit are all owed to these first three among the Æsir.

The gifts of mind, body, and spirit are not all we were given at the dawn of our world. These tangible boons are priceless, of course, but we've also been given something more abstract: a roadmap to success in any endeavor.



As with many things, including the deeper lessons in our faith, language and etymology is one of our best tools. Let's take a look at some meanings found in the names of these Gods.

Odin means "inspiration", roughly. "Vili" means "will". Vé means "sacred".

Before we go further, I want to make clear that I am not suggesting that the Gods are mere archetypes or symbols. The Gods are real, and powerful, and beyond worthy of our devotion.

That being said, the recipe for success is found in this tale.



The “sacred” found in the name Vé can fairly be interpreted as piety and devotion.

The “will” found in the name Vili can be viewed as conscious intent.

And, of course, the “inspiration” found in the All-Father’s name is that relentless drive and ambition that has always made our people stand out in the annals of history!

Piety. Intent. Furious ambition.

These are the three tools needed for Victory in any serious endeavor, and these are the very same tools that the AFA carries on our march to glory in the name of the Gods.



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*Pagan vs Neo-Pagan; A Response*



Lately or the latest shrill accusations from the armchair historians, that really only expound their bias about the past of northern Europe, especially about the Christian Conversion a millennium past, has made me want to add my research.

I have found some research that confirms my view and that is, the Conversion was a very messy and unfinished business to say the least. For one, the work of Dr. Russell, PhD and his book, "The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity", shows that Christianity was not the same desert theology after centuries of influence from, our Ancient Religion of Germanic Europe. It was tempered through years of turmoil and displacement. It was not adaptable to Europe but was tempered with the concept of the individuality of Person. A comparison today would be moving millions into Europe from another religion from the desert and expecting a peaceful joining of religion/culture to make a united culture.

No, I propose that there has been continuity The Folk, the People of the Land, be they called peasants or Lendsmen, (Odal Bonde, ON.) or Yeomen in the British Isles. The Folk held onto much that has not been recorded due to much of this lore being verbal such as stories like elves, fairy mounds and other land spirits and those that can sense the wonder of Nature/Creation when in a forest or the spray of the ocean surf and sun. Beauty is all around us, if one takes the time to sit quietly and listen to Her beating heart.

I want to add that my gr.grandfather Gulbrand Torgrimsen-Odden was a healer, a Bloodstopper to be exact. b.1844 Valdres, Norway, emigrated 1865 d,1923 Minnesota.

I counsel you Loddfafner;  
if you take my advice  
learn it, you'll profit if you remember it:

Get a good man to teach you the runes,  
and learn a healing spell while you live.

— Havamal 120



Gothi Thorgrun Odden  
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*Wyrð*



Wyrð is the etymological equivalent in Old English of Old Norse Urðr. The only modern definition of Wyrð is that it roughly translates to “fate”. That is not entirely accurate as Wyrð is centered around the significant deed, where one of the fundamental perceptions we have of Wyrð is the tendency of acts to ripple out in all directions from the point at which they take place, crating consequences far beyond what was intended at the time, perceived, or can be comprehended. Wyrð could be defined as fate if and only if we stopped acting indefinitely after an act or deed. Wyrð is much more than just fate. Wyrð is what we make our lives to be, moment by moment, deeds good and poor, woven together and built on the Orlog we inherited at birth.

Wyrð governs the working out of the past into the present and is nearly synonymous with the Norn Urth (that which is) as the activity of the Norns is also referred to as Wyrð as well. Wyrð is the interaction of the past and present as we look at it here—action and reaction—and is the weaving together of the sum total of past and present acts and their consequences. It is necessary to become a strong, self-reliant, and wise person with megin and luck through acting well and building off of right action to create a dominant and prosperous web of Wyrð woven in our lives that inevitably cross an indefinite number of other's paths and have effect on them and their Wyrð. The web we weave by our deeds extends well beyond the comprehension of our existence in the cosmos. Wyrð permeates throughout time and space and is stored in the well of Urth layer by layer becoming Orlog. When I refer to deeds, I am not simply talking about mundane, monotonous daily activities. It is the times that activities acquire a special significance that go beyond our limited perceptions. We must prepare and place our lives in accordance with prescribed codes of conduct received from the past and by doing so, creating positive Wyrð, we protect our reputation and insure good fame for ourselves and those close to us. Our actions will be governed by what we know, therefore the wise man seeks to discover all that he can and attempt to associate himself directly with all he knows to be good and wise. By doing so, he will put himself in the best position to die well. It is then that we will fully understand the nature of Wyrð itself.

Wyrð is a continual presence and influence in the rituals, the artifacts, and everyday activities we find ourselves engaging in. It is how actions are related to actions and how significance is to be discovered in the ordinary sequence of events in our lives. If we are to find evidence of the operation of Wyrð, its sustained power and its past, we will have to examine the literary remains of the Germanic peoples themselves; only they will be able to place events in what will be their proper order and to give them their proper significance.

In the coming year be of positive substance and lay down right action. When choosing a course, ask yourself; does this better my church, and am I building, or am I causing chaos. Think of your words to others and ask yourself how you want to be known, or remembered.



## The AFA in 2023



[https://youtu.be/\\_6pcoFdRQfU?feature=shared](https://youtu.be/_6pcoFdRQfU?feature=shared)

## 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.
  - The first of 2 loans have been paid off!
  - We now owe \$99,346.87 on our remaining loan.
2. We need to raise our monthly donation average by 9.2%.
  - This is membership donations/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  
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## Sigrheim: Home of Victory

*A New View Gracing the Grounds of Sigrheim*



<https://youtu.be/MAkd7PfyPQ?feature=shared>

My words can't begin to do justice to the awe and beauty of what we've accomplished in the last month at Sigrheim. Luckily, our wonderful Apprentice Lydia Phelps made this lovely video that does the talking for me.

*Support the Home of Victory*



Help Sigrheim get stocked  
and ready for our Folk!

Donate Supplies  
from our  
wishlist ✨  
**amazon**



Thank You!

[CLICK HERE](#)

*A Folksiving Dedicated to Victory*

**Þorrablót  
at  
Sigrheim**

**Sat., January 20th  
Whitleyville, TN**

**RSVP w/ Folkbuilder Nick Rice  
nrice@runestone.org**

**Charming of  
the Plow  
at Sigrheim**

**Saturday, February ~~17th~~<sup>10th</sup>**

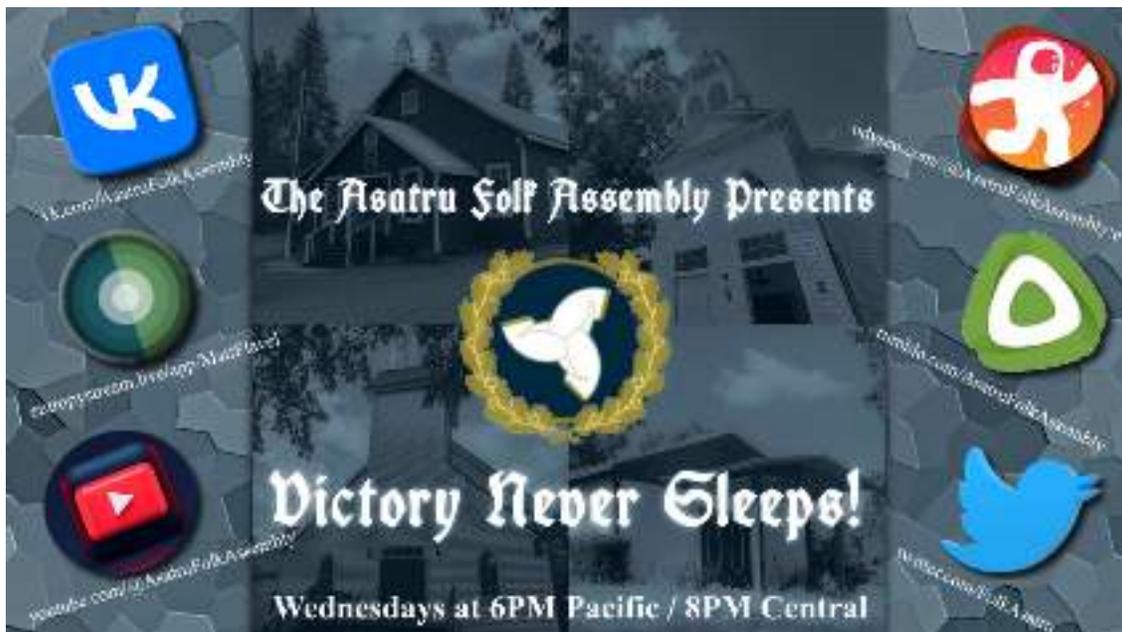


**RSVP w/  
Folkbuilder  
Nick Rice  
via nrice@  
runestone  
.net**



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

## Victory Never Sleeps



Victory Never Sleeps, a weekly podcast produced by the Asatru Folk Assembly, hosted by Alsherjargothi Matthew Flavel alongside weekly guests. The show doesn't stop until the questions stop rolling in. Come listen and learn about a variety of topics and truths relevant to our modern Asatru Folk.

Aesir. Virtues. Heroes. Doctrine. Beliefs. Cosmology. Runes. Holidays. Literature. Lore.

Help [support](#) the stream and keep the cameras rolling!

Catch us LIVE with new episodes on Wednesdays at 8pm Central / 6pm Pacific on YouTube, Twitter, Entropy, Odyssee, VK, Rumble, and Twitch. Audio versions drop on Spotify the Friday after the new episodes air.

Check out the full playlist with 100's of hours of previous recordings on our [YouTube](#).



Matthew D. Flavel  
Alsherjargothi, Asatru Folk Assembly  
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## AFA Asatru Academy



For More Info: [Welcome | Asatru Academy](#)

*Academy Storytime*



Grimm Brothers

Mother Goose

Aesop

Give a Mouse a Cookie

Thor is Our Friend

and many more...

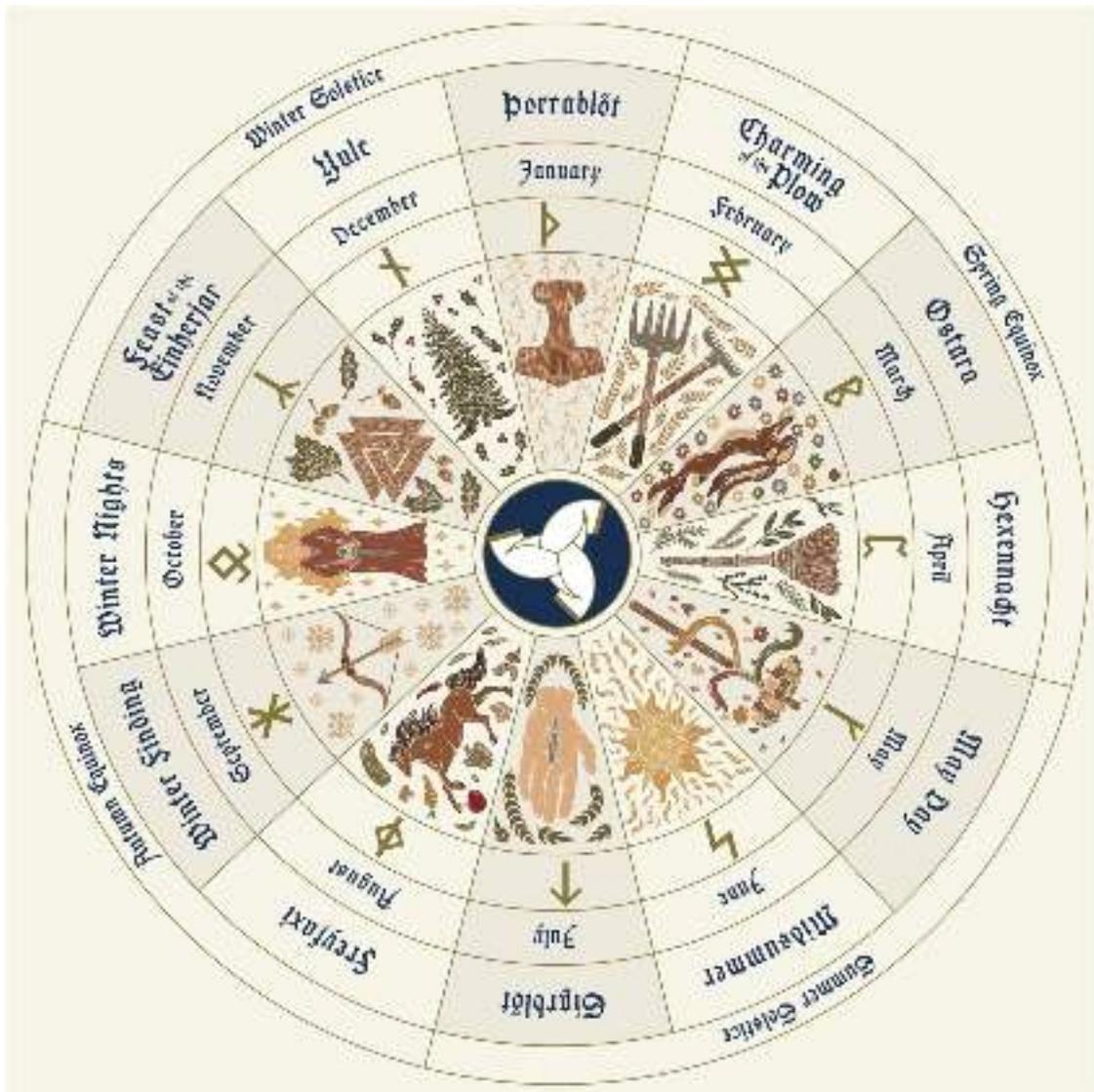
We've been so thrilled with all the solid volunteers taking time out to record wholesome stories for our kids in the Academy that we knew we had to share them with all of you! If you haven't checked it out already, there's a [playlist](#) over on the AFA's YouTube channel!

Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice



Academy Administrative Secretary  
[nrice@runestone.org](mailto:nrice@runestone.org)

## Remembrance & Holy Days



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

<b>Date</b>	<b>Observance</b>
January 9	Day of Remembrance for Raud the Strong
January 20	Þorrablót
February 9	Day of Remembrance for Eyvind Kinnrifi
February 17	Charming of the Plow
March 9	Day of Remembrance for Olvir of Egg
March 19 (observed on 16th)	Ostara
April 9	Day of Remembrance for Jarl Haakon
April 10	Day of Remembrance for John Yeowell "Stubba"
April 30 (observed on 20th)	Hexennacht
May 9	Day of Remembrance for Else Christensen
May 1 (observed on 18th)	May Day
June 9	Day of Remembrance for King Athanaric of the Goths
June 20 (observed on 15th)	Midsummer
July 4	Day of Remembrance for Sveinbjorn Beinteinsson
July 9	Day of Remembrance for Alexander Rud Mills
July 20	Sigrblót
August 9	Day of Remembrance for King Radbod of Frisia
August 17	Freyfaxi
September 9	Day of Remembrance for Prince Hermann of the Cherusci
September 22 (observed on 21st)	Winter Finding
October 1	Day of Remembrance for John Gibbs-Bailey "Hoskuld"
October 9	Day of Remembrance for Meister Guido von List
October 15	Birthday of Founder Stephen McNallen
October 19	Winter Nights
November 9	Day of Remembrance for Queen Sigríð of Sweden
November 11 (observed on 16th)	Feast of the Einherjar
December 9	Day of Remembrance for Egill Skallagrímsson
December 20	Mother's Night
December 20-31 (observed on 21st)	Yuletide

# January



<https://youtu.be/DIIZvPHVxZk?feature=shared>

## Day of Remembrance

### *Raud the Strong | January 9th*

So well-known was the hero, Raud the Strong, that his story comes to us from several Icelandic Saga's, the most common of which is the Heimskringla (The Chronicle of the Kings of Norway) by Snorri Sturluson. The story tells of a great seafaring warrior who had Thor and Seiðr on his side.



Around the year 1000, the zealous Norwegian King, Olaf Tryggvason, began an expedition to North Norway to continue his Christianization of the pagan people. Olaf found much success in his efforts, owing largely to his brutal methods of both torturing and killing those who refused, but not all were swayed.

In Godøy, near present-day Bodø, lived the man Raud the Strong. Raud was known to have a strong connection with the Sami people, and to own a remarkable longship that was larger than any that Olaf himself owned. With a gold-plated dragon head, it is what many suppose the popular Viking longship designs are based on.

Upon hearing that Olaf was heading his way Raud gathered as many men as he could and lead a great assault at sea. Despite everything, however, Raud found himself overwhelmed and had to retreat from the battle. Stories say that Raud was able to Seiðr to call on the winds to speed him home safely while also blocking Olaf Tryggvason's chase.

It was all for naught, however.

Though he made it home, Raud was eventually caught by Olaf Tryggvasson. Despite the King's efforts, however, Raud refused to turn his back on his gods despite torture. In the end, he was killed when a live snake was forced down his throat. Many of Raud's men, following his example, were also killed after refusing to convert.

So, what can we learn from this story?

Some might make the argument that it is better to fight and die rather than retreat in “shame.” In some cases, this might be true. For every one of us sitting here reading this, however, one of our ancestors made a different choice. The choice to convert saved our lives.

For many of our ancestors, death was the best option. Which of us ever chooses to be killed in a horrible, painful way? Was death the easier option? We have to believe that for some, it was. For Raud the Strong, friend of Thor, it was. To convert was to turn his back on his Heritage, to turn on his Honor, and to turn on his Courage and a warrior and leader.

Our ancestors lived in a very different time. They lived in a world in which men and women could be killed for choosing to remain loyal to their Gods. We are exceptionally lucky that we live in a society that allows us the freedom to worship our Gods.

That very same society that allows us to worship our Gods, however, does not do so without stipulations. That society, so unlike the sort of tribal society our ancestors lived in, would tell us how to worship our Gods. They would tell us who is allowed to worship our Gods. And that society would try to harm us for choosing to do it differently than they tell us we are allowed to do it.

We don't face the same torture and death as Raud the Strong for choosing to worship our Gods our way, but we do face the possibility of ostracization from society. People, even our families, can turn their backs on us for disagreeing with the “rules” they have given us. We are not free from the effects of the multi-cultural paradigm, but we don't have to bow to it.

Like Raud the Strong, we can stand tall and be proud of who and what we are. We are Asatruar. Like Raud the Strong, we can stand against those who would tell us to turn our backs on what we know to be Tru. We can live with Honesty, with Courage, and with Honor.



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# Holiday

*Þorrablót | January 20th*



Þorrablót is an Icelandic midwinter festival dedicated to, as the name describes, Þorr, or Thor. Þorrablót is named after the Icelandic month of Þorri from the historic-calendar and ran from mid-January to mid-February. Though Þorrablót is a relatively modern social celebration in Iceland, there is a reference in the Flateyjarbók that states that the Kvens offered a yearly sacrifice to Þorri at mid-winter. Typically, Þorrablót is celebrated by gathering together and eating many of Iceland's traditional foods and by singing, reciting poems, and telling stories.

Some good ways to celebrate Þorrablót include eating traditional Icelandic foods, such as Hákarl (putrefied shark), Blóðmör (blood suet, filled sausage/black pudding), Hrútsprungur (ram's scrotum with testicles), Lundabaggi (sheep's fat), or Svið (burnt sheep's head).

Don't worry! If these are unavailable, or simply not to your taste, eating goat and goat products such as goat cheese or goat milk are also appropriate options.

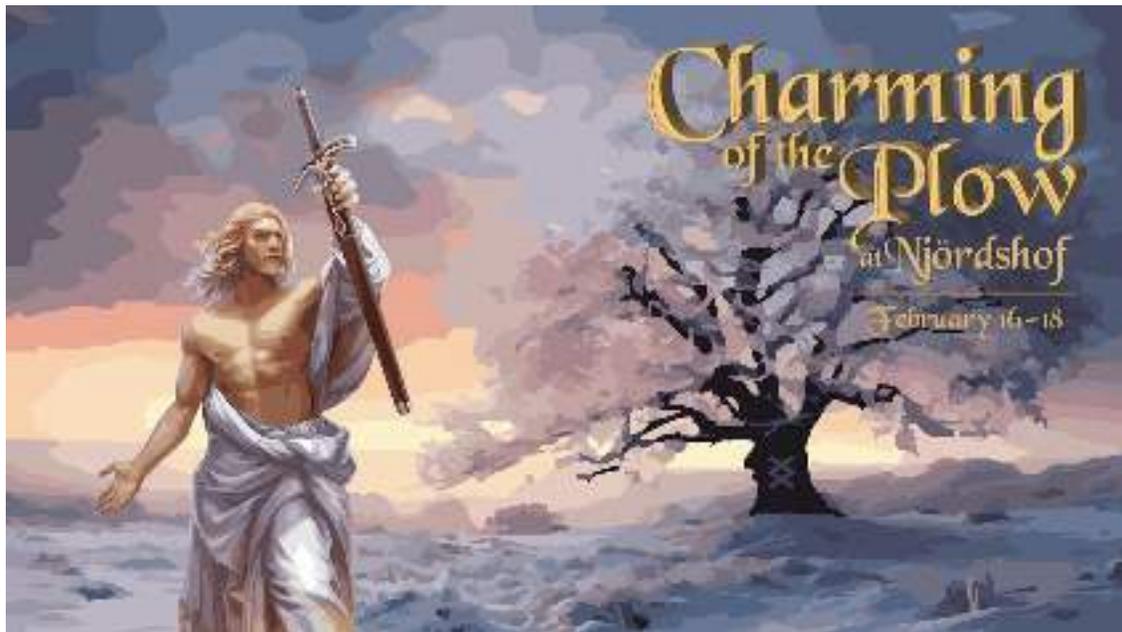
Called by some as the cabin fever holiday Þorrablót is a great way to liven up the doldrums of mid-winter. So, take some time to light a fire and make merry. Have the folk tell stories or recite poems about Thor. Eat, drink, and enjoy the company of folk and family.



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## Upcoming National Event

*Charming of the Plow at Njörðshof | February 16th-18th*



Come join the Folk at Njörðshof for our second annual Charming of the Plow, being held February 16th-18th! This is our Hof's national event, so we will have great food,

multiple rituals, auction, and more!

Get your tickets [HERE](#)



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

## AFA Prison Ministry



The importance of this AFA Prison Ministry is so much more than just for those who are actually incarcerated, it benefits not only them as followers of Asatru but their families and loved ones on the outside as they will see the noticeable change in their demeanor and demand that our faith commands for them to lead a noble life. We all are future ancestors and will help them be examples of our faith and not be a burden or a product of recidivism.

We are compiling letters from prisoners that are Educational, Empowering, and Encouraging along with special spiritual writings from our Gothar to create a quarterly newsletter to be distributed to inmates, institutions, and jails. Our mission is not about providing free books or literature to bored prisoners who simply want free stuff. We intend on making real-world change for the better of our folk.

""No packed rooms in the prisons; in each institution I have only a few people; occasionally about a dozen, but 5-6 is more common. I certainly do not want the Fellowship to be a club for cons, or ex-cons; the advantage is that when in prison the inmates have time to discuss and digest what they read, a point that often is lost to people on the outside in the hubbub of daily concerns" - Else Christensen

By the example of our Folkmother, Else Christensen, we will also be going into prisons as we are able to. Some of our Gothar and other leadership, will be going into the prisons to hold study groups, lead blot, and encourage continued growth in the folk inside.

If you have a loved one who is incarcerated or know of someone who is Folkish and will benefit from this ministry, please contact us at [prisonministry@runestone.org](mailto:prisonministry@runestone.org).



Or if you'd like to donate to this ministry, there's a donation earmark set up on our site [here](#). The donations will be used to get small ritual items and books into the prisons and the hands of our Folk inside.



James Ault  
Prison Ministry Director  
[jault@runestone.org](mailto:jault@runestone.org)

## Artisans of the AFA Support Our Folk

*The Children from Frostmo Mountain*

# The Children from Frostmo Mountain

Laura Fitinghoff



Translated by Laura Lugnet

This classic Swedish children's novel tells the story of seven destitute orphans and their goat who, one bitter cold winter day during the Swedish famine of the 1860's, set out on a harrowing journey in the hopes of a fate more noble than living in the poorhouse.

## On Sale January 15th

While the book will be available through Amazon, Kindle, and most eBook platforms, please consider supporting your local bookstore or Scandinavian gift shop by asking them to order a copy for you. You can even check if your local library will order it for you.

Contact [laura.lugnet@gmail.com](mailto:laura.lugnet@gmail.com) with any questions.



Book Release January 15th:

*The Children from Frostmo Mountain* by Laura Fitinghoff,

Translated by AFA Member Laura Lugnet

For just over a year, I have been working to translate “Barnen ifrån Frostmo Fjället,” a Swedish literary gem, into English in the hopes of sharing it with a wider audience.

Throughout the process, I have developed such a personal connection to the novel, and I am proud and excited to finally be able to share it.

In the final stages of preparing the book for publication, I noticed that January 15th was the name day for “Laura” here in Sweden. It seemed most fitting for me, then, to release my translation on the name day that I share with the book's author, Laura Fitinghoff. I hope to honor her with my translation and to increase her renown by sharing her wonderful work with a new audience.

Christianity features prominently in the novel, but upon reading it I found that many of its themes resonated with me as an Asatruar. The workings of Wyrð are apparent throughout the story. The children feel their mother watching over them from beyond the grave. The idea of luck being passed from generation to generation in families is also portrayed. A love of and connection to nature is found throughout the book. The protagonists embody many of our virtues including honor, nobility, industriousness, self-reliance, courage, piety, and living joyfully even in the face of hardship. I think our folk will also appreciate the vivid portrayal of Swedish culture.

I hope those of you who chose to read the book enjoy it, and I would love to hear what other connections to Asatru our folk can make.

Hail Laura Fitinghoff!

— Laura Lugnet, member, Sweden

**Cooking for our Folk**



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 you are 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 simple, 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](mailto:cookbook@runestone.org) with details of when and where it was served (Hof/moot).



Folkbuilder Mike Joyner  
[mjoyner@runestone.org](mailto:mjoyner@runestone.org)

## Ancestral Food and Culture

*Goetta the Store and the Get the Stuff to Make This*



Cincinnati is not only a monument to human advancement, but also a historic landmark for German American settlement and culture. Working a blue-collar job and hitting the gym after, this Cincinnati man is always on the hunt for a good source of protein and fuel for my body. Luckily being here in this rich city, I've always had a quick and easy go-to meal for such a purpose... Cincinnati goetta. Here's a simple ingredients list to get you started on the path of a strong Ohio Man.

Meat: Our recipe uses only ground meat, in part because pork hearts and skins are not only polarizing, but hard to come by. Earlier versions of goetta used, as the saying goes, “everything but the oink,” and were made not with ground meat, but tougher cuts of pork and pork variety meats that were simmered until fall-apart tender. You still see this variation in some homemade goetta recipes today, but most use ground meat. The pork skin in particular helps make a goetta that’s firmer, whereas goetta made with ground meat only is slightly crumbly. You can use all pork, as the original did, but a 50:50 mix of ground beef and ground pork lends a robust flavor. A pork and beef mix is the

predominant composition of goetta recipes today.

Oats: Pinhead oats are the historic precedent in Cincinnati. The once-preferred brand was from Dorsel's, a regional mill. There was even a goetta recipe on the back of the bag. Pinhead oats are remarkably similar to steel-cut oats, so if you don't want to special order hard-to-find Dorsel's pinhead oats, use steel-cut.

Seasonings: Bay leaves and onions are nearly required. So is pepper. Dried herbs such as sage show up in nearly every version. Some goetta recipes are quite light on the seasoning, while others go big. I took inspiration from the spice mixes used in traditional German bratwurst recipes and amped it all up for a robust, crave-able flavor.

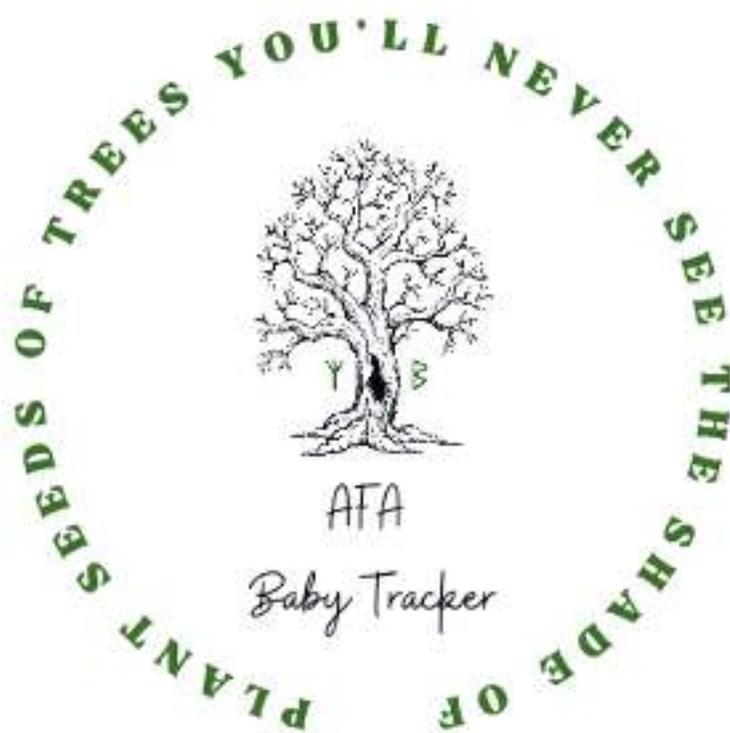
You are going to be making essentially sausage loafs out of your mixture, preferably refrigerated for one day then cut into thick pieces for cooking up quickly.

If you have any further interest on recipes or the history, you will have no problem finding the Goetta Fandom online!



Dan Borden  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[dborden@runestone.org](mailto:dborden@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 2023, year-end count: 37

**Just for Fun**



Congratulations to **Rachel Cameron** for being the first member to solve December's puzzle! It was definitely a competitive month with multiple submissions from some of the districts-- thank you to everyone who participated.

Here's January's Word Hunt:

## January Word Hunt

mbwri	xeegp	myoyj	qh dum	
ksdav	onsqq	ldxpz	xeirb	
nugxq	kmorz	oidex	rkaku	
ruzrn	dwpiw	lvomj	iefcy	
phcre	erewt	gniae	ywqae	
	taxmk	cgwlc	mechw	khjdy
	angmd	eeuvo	ljgev	ztfaz
	miizv	dmtat	panlo	krgyi
	twzwy	ibcos	sqozi	cswja
	ibzod	ettfr	mytda	xmisy
gxide	isbmh	pvayf	uwgvu	
wpupb	xmvkh	blmqz	ldhgh	
lqbhh	utkkg	qkvvv	ucjlm	
imwix	xlocz	eahtq	ipyqh	
klmpq	eysku	griin	acvuj	
	nmmah	yfrdt	tjaup	gimnx
	yqmdf	bwaaa	aszrl	bjbvi
	wykco	wmlyu	rji et	mrtmj
	dnssu	bcmml	mceeh	beapp
	htrpb	quxma	ilpoq	iraud
xgmjc	tqnci	mavtt	svqcb	
melkx	jhdmw	fcryn	uuhak	
muams	mkkaw	tuiot	jcrgg	
hvyup	hoxvp	yuuru	zrjvz	
ntfkj	qczzs	vkigv	ajuvi	
	lpleq	tasun	vglwh	vdkpc
	evxzz	prykh	ppstf	hacgo
	smeqq	ozemm	qhtmq	gmlxx
	ohwci	hgdnx	xwpcz	xwdbv
	fmhan	mawug	flyyy	hkuuo
cxzzc	tjdkm	tcpqu	tqyvm	
ystug	ywcej	mh dai	rqdoi	
qmebl	oorjo	krgvw	aypgk	
qfxyy	qsajy	bwnli	nma jw	
fnqny	obvci	limki	kovmy	
	ncium	xcqrm	tmprf	tiidc
	dkkdx	uyakt	osckx	ymyvr
	yigmu	hbubk	okaaf	qs dus
	pxocd	eevqw	dweeq	ifjhb
	mrcih	kbewe	nwwvf	xcuts

THORRABLOT  
APRICITY  
PROTECTION

MIDWINTER  
RAUD  
NEWYEAR

FEASTING  
STRENGTH  
SURVIVAL

As always, the first member to solve it and send proof to [Press@Runestone.org](mailto:Press@Runestone.org) will get a shout-out in next month's Runestone! Happy Word Hunting!

Thank you Hope, Gabby, & Kara of Illinois for your coloring submissions! All are beautiful, and I love Kara's addition of dialogue with other animals. How fun!



For the youth (and youthful) this month, I have a fun maze and cursive activity. Did you know that writing in cursive positively affects our brains, improving both cognition and memory?



# Online Events and Meetings



Virtue recovery  
meeting

Thursdays at 7pm CST;  
5 pm PST; 6 pm MST;  
8 pm EST

With Ashley Mcstocker  
amcstocker@runestone.org

Saturdays at 9 am CST;  
7 am PST; 8 am MST;  
10 am EST



With Jaclynn Duffy  
jduffy@runestone.org

**VIA ZOOM**

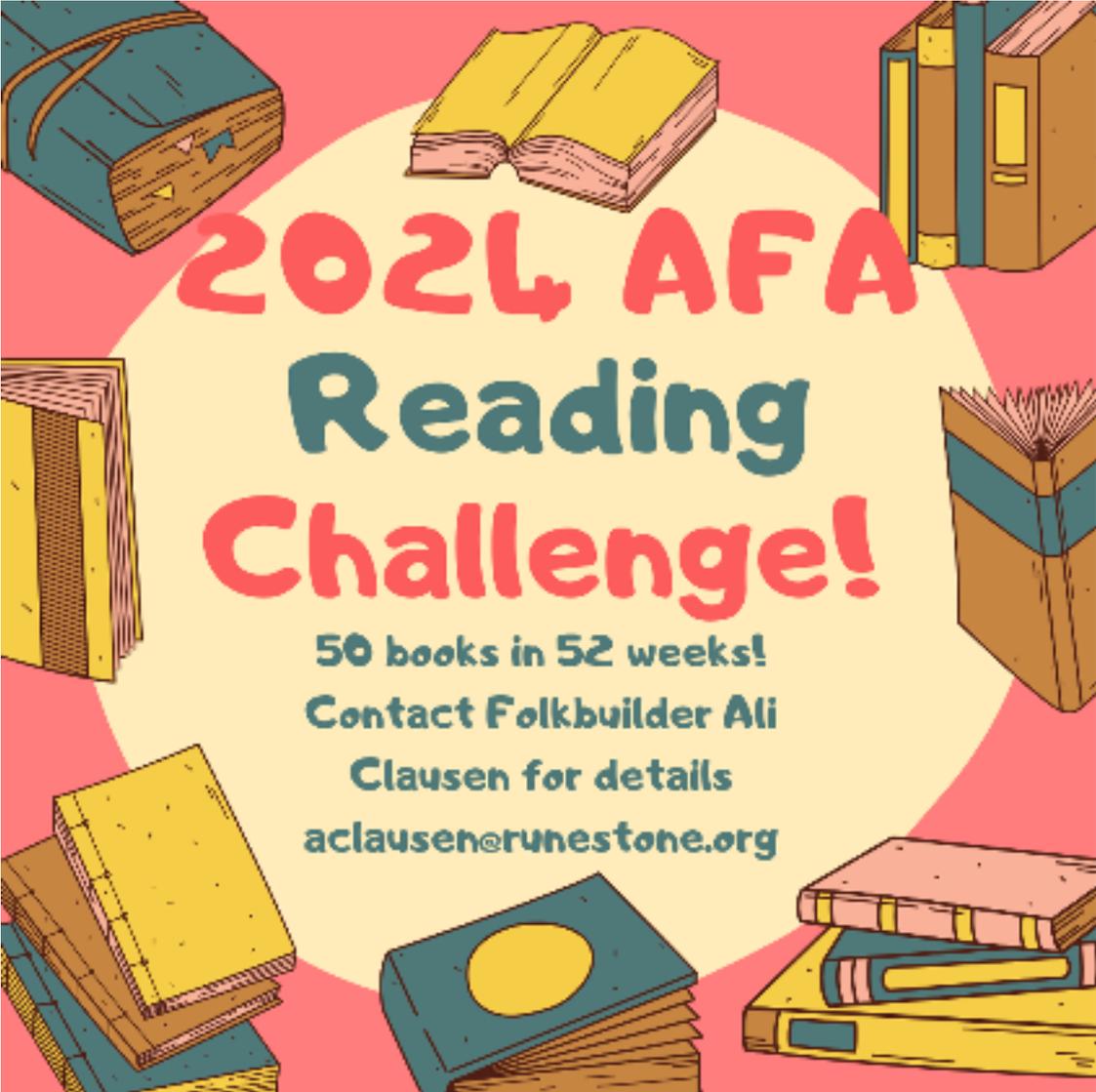
**MEETING ID: 885 2917 0746**

**PASSWORD: Virtue**

## PASSWORD: VIRTUE

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 meeting, 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 (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82489360035?pwd=QWM0SFZiakwvOUgyQVF4ZVZMUjVIZz09>). We hold our meetings every Thursday, at 7pm, CST. Join us!! Feel free to reach out to Folkbuilder Ashley McStocker with any and all questions! [AMcStocker@Runestone.org](mailto:AMcStocker@Runestone.org)





# 2024 AFA Reading Challenge!

50 books in 52 weeks!

Contact Folkbuilder Ali

Clausen for details

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

# AFA Reading Challenge Meetings



1/9/24	Link will be	7/9/24
2/13/24	posted on	8/13/24
3/12/24	MeWe the	9/10/24
4/9/24	weekend	10/8/24
5/14/24	before the	11/12/24
6/11/24	meeting	12/10/24

CONTACT FOLKBUILDER ALI CLAUSEN FOR DETAILS  
ACLAUSEN@RUNESTONE.ORG OR ON MEWE

These meetings are family friendly so please, no politics or overly mature topics

# Ladies Book Study

Thursday Nights at

7 pm CST

Returns January 11th

Revolt Against the Modern World

by Julius Evola

There will be a pdf for the book and a study guide

Link for Teams meeting will be posted in

the AFA Ladies group on Me We

For more information contact:

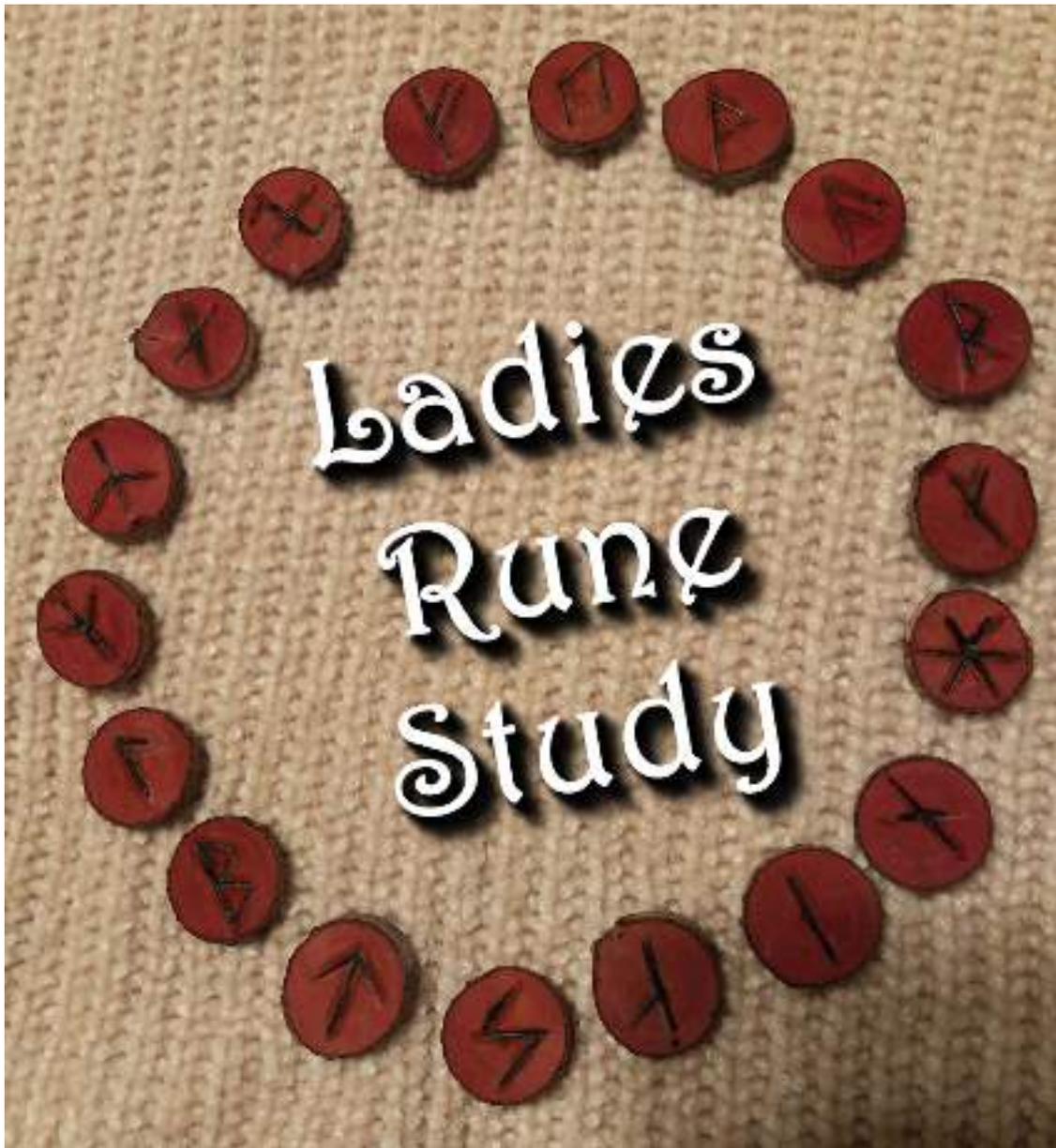
Witan Brandy Callahan

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

or

Folkbuilder Sara Ault

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



Starting February 3rd, at 1pm Eastern

If you are looking to expand your knowledge of the runes in the company of your AFA sisters, stay tuned. We will be discussing how to work the runes into our real lives, and how they relate to us in the modern world. This is open to all women of the AFA. Stay tuned to the ladies' chat for more details, or feel free to contact Gythia Anna Plourde at [aplourde@runestone.org](mailto:aplourde@runestone.org)

**Lore Study with  
Gothi Jason Plourde  
Returns January 8th!  
Join us every Monday night**

**at**

**8:00 pm EST**

**7:00 pm CST**

**6:00 pm MST**

**5:00 pm PST**

**4:00 pm AKST**

**Each study begins with trivia questions  
from VNS and the previous week's  
reading. A winner is announced monthly.**

**The link can be found in the AFA  
Spiritual Excellence Group on Mewe.**

**For more information  
reach out to Gothi Plourde  
[jplourde@runestone.org](mailto:jplourde@runestone.org)**

# Ladies Mysteries Podcast

## Seidr

Returns in February!

Look for dates, times, and topics posted soon!

Witan Brandy Callahan

Gythia Anna Plourde

Gythia Catie Erickson

Folkbuilder Heather Young

Folkbuilder Sara Ault

Folkbuilder Ali Clausen

Link will be emailed to all AFA Ladies the week before and posted in the AFA Ladies Group on Mewe

Hope to see you there!



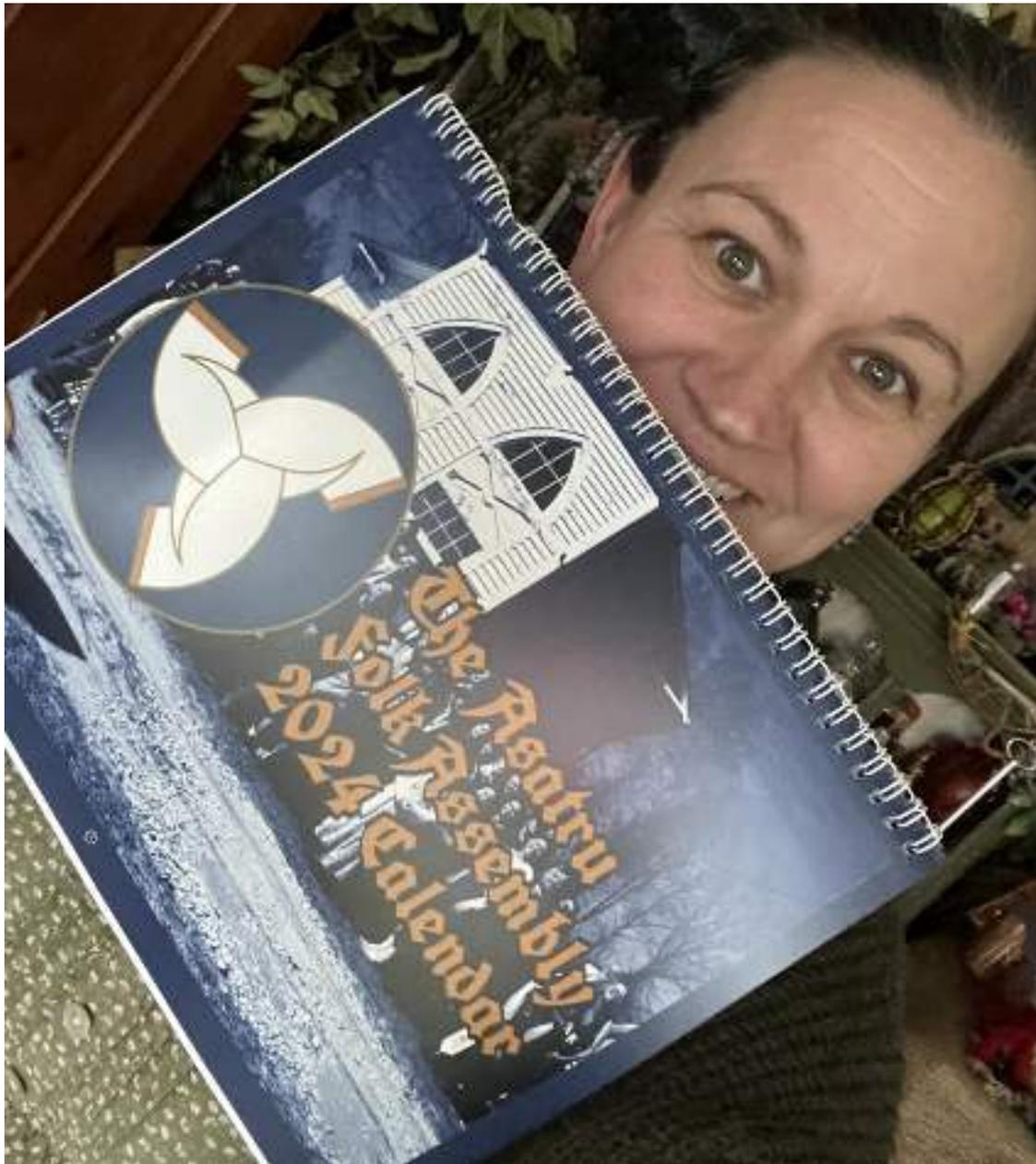
**Now Available in the AFA Store**



Show your Hof pride to all your guests with a flag! Spark conversation, maybe even interest, among those who find themselves in your Hall this Winter, and bring the Folk

home to Asatru!

[Check out the selection and fly your flag high!](#)



And it's not too late to get a copy of the 2024 calendar! There's still plenty of months left in the year to keep it up on the wall!

[Get your calendar ordered today!](#)



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

## Njörðshof

### Food Pantry at Njörðshof



As the folk gathered together on the Yuletide weekend to feast and enjoy the company and frith of the folk, many hands gathered to hand out the beginnings of feasts for the surrounding community. We fed 50 families that Saturday. More than 80 children were able to enjoy their yule with a new toy or two.



Many thanks to everyone that jumped in and rolled up their sleeves. A special thanks to the four Robert's boys stuffed all the bags with the food. Jordan Wells that made sure each car had a warm blanket to curl up with when we get our biannual cold front. Emily and Mike Cosgrove that keep the entire operation running. Thank you to everyone that pitched in and made this one of the most successful food pantries thus far.

Hail the Doers!



Folkbuilder Katie Joyner  
[kjoyner@runestone.org](mailto:kjoyner@runestone.org)

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**Yule at Njörðshof**



On December 16th, 2023, Njörðshof kicked off the Yule season with Bløt to our All-Father Odin. The first gifts were given from gods to man, breath, goodly hue, and consciousness. By which we are forever bound and indebted graciously to our gods through the gifting cycle, for the life they gave us. As we gave thanks to Odin for his good gifts. We celebrated each other's company, the fruits of our labors, and spoke on future plans and ambitions over many holiday treats, meats, and warm beverages fitting for the season. Lastly, we want to give our appreciation to those who were gracious hosts in helping decorate the hof, and preparing the food. As well as our folk holding stead fest to the wise one's words, yet another gift from Odin to us, and made it through the holiday season whole & healthy when so many excesses and so much abundance is around.



Gothi Jason Plourde  
[jplourde@runestone.org](mailto:jplourde@runestone.org)

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**Upcoming Events at Njörðshof**

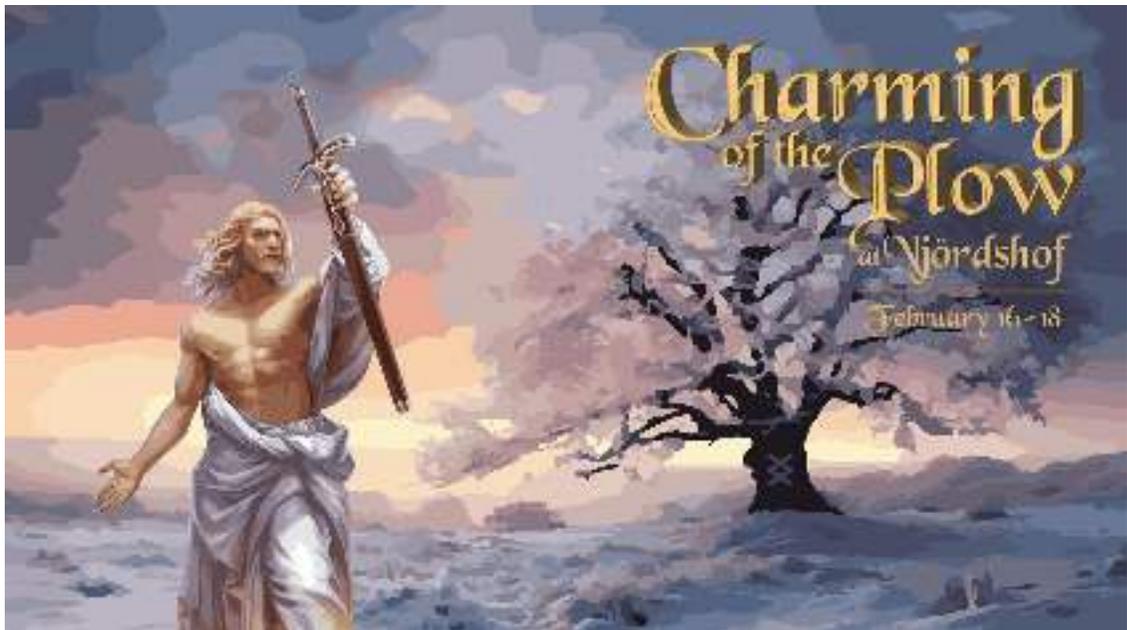
# Njörðshof 2024 Calendar



# Njörðshof Thorrablót

January 20, 2024

10 Food Pantry | 12 Lunch | 1 Blot | 2 Sumbel



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Alabama

*Yuletide in Alabama*



Our Alabama group had two great events in December. First, we attended the Christkindlmarkt in Cullman, Alabama. Cullman was settled by Germans in the 19th century and has maintained traditional German cultural events, including this beautiful German-style Christmas market.



It was very cold, but we enjoyed Frith, schnitzel, and dark German beers together underneath the holiday lights.



We also celebrated Yule together at the Morris family farm as we have for many years now. In addition to a powerful Odin blot, we enjoyed traditions like our Yule Boar (made from crusty European bread), copious amounts of smoked pork, and delicious homemade meads.

### *Upcoming Events*

# Thorvablot Moot

Oak Mountain Brewery  
Saturday, January 20th

6:00 p.m.

RSVP [lmorris@vinnestone.org](mailto:lmorris@vinnestone.org)





# Charming of the Plow Moot

Back Forty Brewing  
Birmingham, Al  
Saturday, Febraury 24th  
5:00 p.m.

RSVP [lmorris@runestone.org](mailto:lmorris@runestone.org)



[www.reallygreatsifa.com](http://www.reallygreatsifa.com)



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

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## Arkansas

### *Arkansas Lunch Moot*



We met up for lunch at Texas Roadhouse and then walked around downtown Hot Springs. We looked at the bathhouse exhibits and looked at the hot water springs.

*Yule Lights in Arkansas*



We went and met up at a pizza restaurant in Downtown Hot springs and then walked around to see the lights.



After seeing the lights outside we went over to the Arlington hotel and saw the big Gingerbread house. It had lots of cool stuff in it. There was a train going around the Gingerbread house. My children really enjoyed that. After that we headed back to where our cars where and then saw a candy shop. So, we went in and let our children pick out some candy. Then we parted ways and went home. We can't wait to have our annual Yule lights moot next year. It is such a blast and a family friendly get together.



Join our

# BONFIRE MOOT

January 20th 2024  
Amity Arkansas

For more information Text or Call  
Tabatha Owens at 8703458077 or email  
[Towens@runestone.org](mailto:Towens@runestone.org)





Tabitha Owens  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[towens@runestone.org](mailto:towens@runestone.org)

*Yule at Odinhof*



I got to travel to California and see the final Hof that I had yet to see. We had a great time spending Yule with the amazing people of Óðinshof.

*Moot Hosted in Louisiana*



Glen Campbell hosted a Moot in Louisiana. He has decided to take on getting things moving there. Good job Glen!

*Upcoming Events*



*Little Rock  
Arkansas Lunch  
Moot Friday  
January 12th*

Contact Folkbuilder  
Jesse Parton for  
details  
[JPARTON@RUNESTONE.ORG](mailto:JPARTON@RUNESTONE.ORG)



Folkbuilder Jesse Parton  
[jparton@runestone.org](mailto:jparton@runestone.org)

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## Florida

*Folkbuilding*



Apprentice Folkbuilders in the Asatru Folk Assembly strive towards the goal of becoming Oathed to the role of Folkbuilder. During their time as an apprentice, they will be tested through various types of training and development situations with the goal of gaining experience and progression towards becoming a leader in the AFA. During this time, they have the opportunity to truly understand the role of a Folkbuilder. In its simplest terms, a Folkbuilder is a relationship builder and their ability to create bonds and ties to the folk is one of the driving forces behind the success of the Asatru Folk Assembly. The successful Folkbuilder of the Asatru Folk Assembly

will foster this goal by achieving personal development milestones, building frith with the folk and supporting AFA goals.

As Asatruar, realistic goals and aspirations become the foundation of personal development. Setting goals and developing one's self has important implications on not only one's future but also relationships with others. An apprentice Folkbuilder in the AFA would wish to strive for personal improvement and become well rounded in their interests and skills in order to achieve what they are meant to become mentally, physically, spiritually and socially. As an apprentice Folkbuilder starts a personal quest towards improvement and refinement, folk are encouraged and optimistic. As one puts effort into their personal development they demonstrate the ability to be dedicated and unwavering in challenging situations. This process increases personal pride and confidence with certain proof progress is inevitable. One can prove their worth by successfully applying themselves and achieving their potential. This has profound implications as it relates to frith and the ability to form relationships with leadership of the AFA in addition to members.

Frith is the certainty of safety and the feeling of personal protection within the community. When it comes to a Folkbuilder in the AFA, the building of frith is a cumulative result of putting effort into relationships, a thoughtful introspective nature and ability to engage in meaningful discussions with various members of the folk. The beginning of this is the process of reaching out, putting your best foot forward and being someone that folk grow to appreciate and admire. As a Folkbuilder dedicates themselves to fostering their relationships with the AFA community, the folk begin to understand they see something important within that individual. Whether it is with other members of leadership, regular Hof attendees or new members, a Folkbuilder should understand their duty is in a supportive role. Offering your kindness and thoughtful regard for others or an act of compassion in order to build strong bonds with the AFA community are the foundation of the success of hof development.

Supporting hof development is one of the cornerstones of achieving the goals set forth by the AFA. Leadership of the AFA work in collaboration with each other and take on different responsibilities striving for the future of the folk. The combination of individual efforts, communication and teamwork are essential to the meeting goals set forth by the AFA. A Folkbuilder's role in this being reliable and completing specific tasks effectively, and should look to support each other as needed, for a team is only as good as its weakest link.

A Folkbuilder will experience so much over the course of their lifetime. When one opens themselves up to relationships, responsibilities, personal aspirations and

community development the impact of it is immeasurable. The result of which is the profound impact on one's self, one's community, and the AFA at large throughout time. What being a Folkbuilder means to me, Being an apprentice Folkbuilder to me means, being the middle man between like-minded individuals and the AFA, it means putting your boots on and bringing your folk, your family, home to where they belong, it means dedication through the greater cause of what the AFA has in store, it also means holding yourself to a higher standard for yourself, for our folk and for our Gods, Being a small portion of the “face” of the Asatru Folk Assembly, to me Folkbuilding is more than just a “job” or a “title” it’s the first step on a long and very worthwhile road, watching faces light up like mine did when I first stepped into Njordshof, it brings a very welcoming feeling within knowing that you played a role in their membership, it’s about bringing our folk and people closer together through individual and group relationships that we all build, Together as a unstoppable unit, It means striving to be better than who you were yesterday, Furthermore Folkbuilding to me is reaching out and trying to ensure that everyone in our district is happy and at least content, and if they aren’t, it’s being a listening ear, or much needed laugh, it’s a very small roll but also a large one, being someone, some members possibly look up to, Folkbuilding also means putting your People first before yourself, it’s a very rewarding roll that some of us play in the AFA

### *The Move to Titusville*



January has been a cold month even down here in Titusville, my moot this much took place at Playalinda Brewing Company. The food was absolutely fantastic—I had Irish nachos and Tracy had the "adult grilled;" don't really know what makes it adult though. Our server was a pretty nice dude, and the whole atmosphere of the restaurant was just wonderful. Once again, I only had one other member join me, but we won't give up. It was such an amazing time...you all really missed a good one, but it's ok, I hope to see you at my next one.



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*Upcoming Events*

An advertisement for a "Basket Weaving & Craft Moot" event. The background is a photograph of several different styles of woven baskets, including large round ones, smaller round ones, and a flat one. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**BASKET WEAVING  
& CRAFT MOOT**

**Tuesday, February 6th  
6-9 PM**

**Tallahassee, Florida**  
RSVP [kjoyner@runestone.org](mailto:kjoyner@runestone.org)



Folkbuilder Katie Joyner  
[kjoyner@runestone.org](mailto:kjoyner@runestone.org)

### *Raud the Strong*



The Heimskringla (The Chronicle of the Kings of Norway) tells of a famed Warrior and Blot Priest name Raud the Strong. Not only was Raud a Blot Priest, but he was also a seafaring warrior. Raud was known for having the largest and fastest ship of the time. It was also said when he sailed the Gods granted him favored winds.

It is unclear on Raud's date of birth however we do know he most likely died around 1000 CE. Known as a large landowner Raud lived in Gylling and Haering which are part of the Godey Islys near present day Bodo, Norway. Raud was also known to have a

strong connection to the Sami People. The Sami are indigenous people of the northernmost parts of Sweden, Finland, Norway, and the Kola Peninsula of Russia.

Olaf Tryggvason was King of Norway from 995 to 1000 CE. Olaf was known for his brutality and demanded that his citizens were baptized, even if it was by force. The poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in the poem Tales of Wayside Inn described Olaf Tryggvason's reign as he "Preached the Gospel with the Sword." Those who refused to baptism were tortured and/or killed.

Once Raud heard that Olaf was headed his direction he boarded his ship Ormurinn (the Serpent) and sail out to face him on the water. It is interesting to note that Ormurinn was said to be the largest ship of its time, bigger than any of Olaf's ships, and the dragon head was gold plated. Once he engaged in battle with Olaf on the sea he was overwhelmed. Raud retreated using various sailing techniques allowing him to sail against the wind. He was able to escape, and it is believed that his escape was aided by Thor.

Raud made it home and was ambushed by Olaf and his men under the cover of darkness. Olaf proceeded to torture Raud trying to get him to agree to be baptized. Raud took the torture and was said to be mocking and hurling insults at Olaf and his beliefs until Olaf forced a snake down Raud's mouth killing him. Some accounts say the snake ate its way out of Raud's side, other accounts say that a horn had to be placed over the snake for it to go down. Olaf ended up stealing Ormurinn

Main take aways:

The Saga of the Volsungs has a reoccurring theme of "you can not cheat your death day." The Saga of Raud the Strong is a great example of this. He may have died in the end, but he never betrayed the Gods. He went out as a proud man. All the way to the end Raud stood up for the Gods and honored them. In life you are never going to win all your battles, you should go down fighting.

We honor Raud as a folk hero for his Steadfastness, his courage for facing down the enemies, and for his devotedness to the Gods.

### ***Raud Ritual***

Location: near a body of water. Lake or river or pond or gulf

Items needed: Hammer, Bowl, Horn, Candle, Lighter, Mead, Bottle opener, Pens, Paper, Smudge with shell, Small table set up near the water, Piece of drift wood

Prep work: instruct those attending to write on a piece of paper a challenge that you need help with the courage and/or steadfastness to face head on to achieve victory.  
Then fold the paper into a boat (see attached instructions).

### *Hallowing*

Have the ladies bless the mead, while the men wait to proceed in on the signal.

Progress in clockwise hailing the hero in front of the altar.

Once everyone has circled up 1. Have the lady who you have chosen to cleanse the ritual space, circle it once with the lite smudge 2. grab the hammer, hold it up and say  
"I hallow this land in the name of Thor. May all that seek to bring ill will and chaos here flee at the sign of the hammer!" (Make the sign of the hammer.)

### *Blot*

Call the Gods and invite them to the ritual "Gods! Goddess! We invite you here today to honor a hero of the Folk Raud the Strong. Please join the folk that honor you the way Raud did."

Ask a member to light the Folk flame and say "we are lighting this flame here today to bind use, to elevate us. As we take a moment to look at the dancing light, remember we are one folk, we are our strongest together. We have won and we will continue to win. As Raud faced Olaf, we as a folk shall face those forces that seek to do harm to OUR folk."

[Moment of silence]

Have a member prepared and read:

*"Far North in the Salted Fjord,  
By rapine, fire, and sword,  
Lives the Viking, Raud the Strong;  
All the Godoe Isles belong  
To him and his heathen horde.*

*A warlock, a wizard is he,  
and lord of the wind and the sea;  
And whichever way he sails,  
He has ever favoring gales,  
By his craft in sorcery.*

*With rites that we both abhor,  
He worships Odin and Thor;  
So it cannot yet be said,  
That all the old Gods are dead,  
And the warlocks are no more."*

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow  
Tales of the Wayfares Inn

“We gather here to honor the Sea King Raud the strong. Raud became a folk hero by standing up for the Gods in the face death by refusing to be baptized. His courage, steadfastness, and devotion to the Gods serves as a beacon of light along the Asatru path. As a folk we need the kind of courage Raud had to face the naysayers, those who seek to do ill, and those who seek to separate our folk. As a folk we need Raud’s steadfastness not just in strife but in the victories, we seek as well. As a folk we need Raud’s level of devotion to the Gods, far to long has Asatru been an ember. Now is the time it ignites into a full Roaring Fire.

HAIL THE GODS

HAIL THE GODS

HAIL RAUD THE STRONG

“Please place your hand over your heart. As the horn comes around, please place your hand on the horn giving your energy and your eagerness for victory to the Gods as a sacrifice.

Pour horn into bowl.

“Think about what it took to call your army up man your boats and sail off to fight the invaders. Everyday we must fight. Every day we must win. Tomorrow is not guaranteed so we must win today. I had asked you write down on a piece of paper need something you needed help with for courage and/or steadfastness to face head on to achieve victory, then fold that paper into a boat. Now is the time to ask Njordr for that strength by releasing your boats on the water. Please set them on the water, draw a deep breath and as Raud sails were filled in his time of need please blow your boat and request out to sea.

“As we are releasing our fleet, please galder Sowilo for victory and Laguz for water.

Refill horn

Once complete

“Gods! Goddess! Njordr! Thor! Please listen to the calls for strength. As a gift goes seeking a gift please bless those here. Please join me in galdering Uruz for strength.

Take driftwood and draw Uruz on the foreheads of the assembled.

Once done pour the horn into the bowl.

“This rite has ended. Please circle clockwise as you leave. And Continue on with the strength of the folk.

*Upcoming Events*

A poster for the 'Battle of Natural Bridge Moot'. The background is a photograph of a forest with several men in historical military uniforms (grey tunics and hats) standing around a large wooden cart. The text is overlaid on the image.

# **Battle of Natural Bridge Moot**

**Tallahassee FL  
March 2nd  
at 0930**  
mjoyner@runestone.org  
to RSVP



Folkbuilder Mike Joyner  
[mjoyner@runestone.org](mailto:mjoyner@runestone.org)

*Space Coast Supper Moot*



Florida members gathered on December 29th to enjoy a burger and each other's company. The moot had previously been planned around a rocket launch; however, the launch had been bumped a day ahead. Time spent with good Folk proved to be just as grand as any launch, and we look forward to many more in this region over the course of the New Year!



Gythia Anna Plourde  
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## Georgia

*The Yule-Alf's Ornament Exchange*





This past weekend at Njordshof, we held an ornament exchange game with everyone for Yule. Each person brought a unique ornament to swap, and everyone really enjoyed the game. Shortly before we started, I wrote a story to go along with the game's rules, and I hope you consider playing this the next time you have a gathering of the folk for Yule!

Rules:

- Each person gets one ornament
- Sit in a circle with your ornaments
- Someone reads the story for the group
- Every "LEFT" or "RIGHT" you hear in the story, pass your ornament to that direction
- The ornament you receive at the end of the story is now yours!

The Story:

The Yule-Alf has a problem! He's lost his present sack and can't remember where he LEFT it. This is no ordinary sack. On Ancestor's Night, the Yule-Alf sets the sack RIGHT at the entrance to the hall of the ancestors to collect the RIGHT gifts for us. Every time he visits a family, the presents come out of the sack RIGHT on time for him to deliver them. Because of his sack, he's never LEFT a gift from the ancestors behind.

"Yule-Alf!" the Allfather beckons. "You are my RIGHT hand man on this, it's time to go RIGHT now!" The Yule-Alf replies, "But Odhinn, I don't know where I've LEFT the sack with all the gifts!"

"Where did you leave it?" Odhinn asked

"RIGHT here by the gate!" the Yule-Alf exclaimed

The Allfather sighed. "We'll it's not here anymore, you must have LEFT it somewhere else. We must find it RIGHT away!"

"I still have no idea where I could have LEFT it..."

With his broad wisdom, Odhinn spoke, "WRITE down everywhere you've been today, I'll instruct the ancestors to help us RIGHT away."

The ancestors gathered to help the head Yule-Alf. He told them to check the feasting tables.

"RIGHT!" they all replied, but asked "where is the feasting area again?"

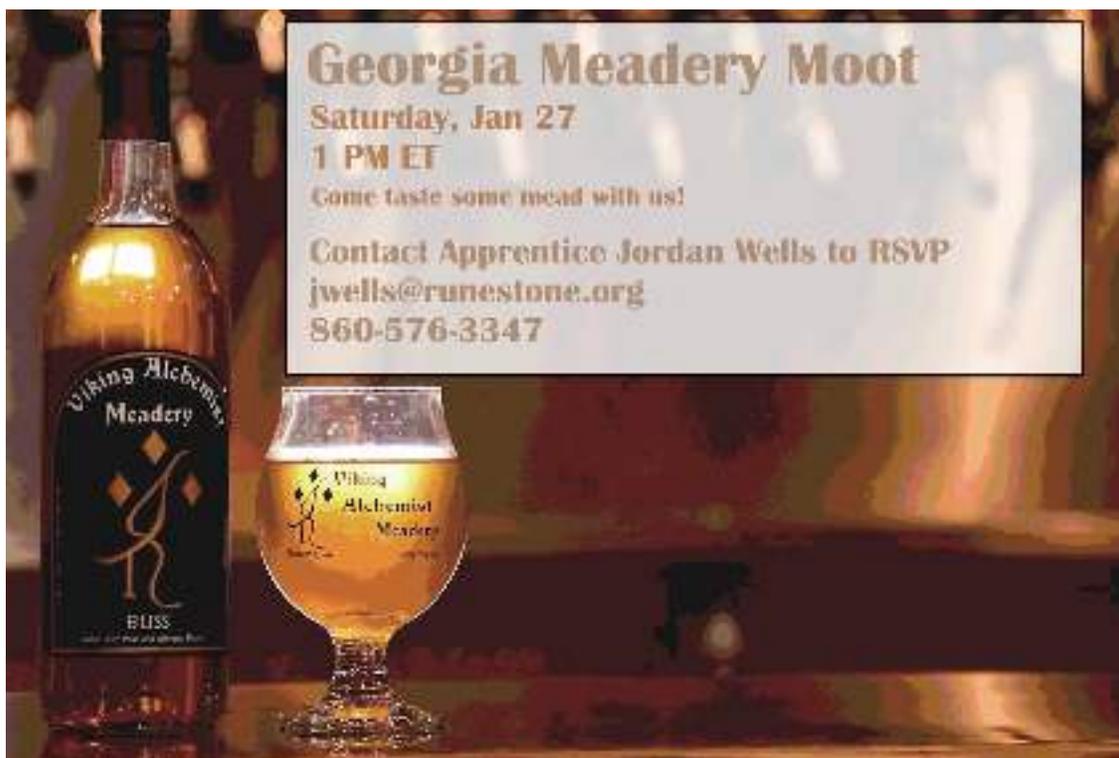
The Yule-Alf replied, "It's down the main hall, LEFT, then RIGHT there on your RIGHT."

After a short while searching, our noble ancestors found the gift-sack, laying RIGHT to the LEFT of the head table. The Yule-Alf had LEFT it there while preparing for Ancestor's Night festivities.

"Hail to you, ancestors and Yule-Alf!" said Odhinn, "Ancestors Night has been saved!"

Happy Yule!

### *Upcoming Events*



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## *A Five Arrows Yule*



On December 21st, The Five Arrows Kindred hosted our seasonal Yule moot. Thirteen smiling folks arrived to celebrate the return of our goddess Sunna. We were honored that for many this was their first AFA experience! Once everyone had arrived, Gothi East blessed our meal and we began our feast. I would like to give a special thanks to our kindred members, Drac and Rachel Cameron, for spear heading the food, it was fantastic! Once satiated, we meandered to the firepit where Gothi East performed a powerful Yule blot that emotionally moved all in attendance. The rest of the mead was given to the Landwights. Thanking them.

Thank you to Paul Therrien who crafted a beautiful Sunwheel to be burned as offering to the Gods. Gothi East held it as he spoke on how the fire will burn away all of our sorrows from this past year and we should look forward to what the future brings us. The Sunwheel was placed in the flame, transporting it from our plane to our Gods and Goddesses.

The significance of hospitality in Asatru, as shown within the AFA, has been and is of the utmost importance for our people. As Founder McNallen, says for the fifth day of the Yuletide, he mentions that to build trust and good will that we must open our doors

to our guest.

May you all have taken from Yule what I was reminded of. That there is nothing more important in our lives than the moments we share with friends, family and Folk. These are the great moments to cherish, that make the ultimate gift of life precious. Hail the Gods, Hail the Folk and Hail the AFA.



Amber Cameron  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
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## Texas

*Fríðr Folk Kindred's Third Annual Yule Celebration in Dallas, Texas*



On Saturday, December 2nd, 2023, we held our third annual Yule celebration! We started the day with food and drink at an Irish bar and grill, then we headed to our campsite to start the main festivities. Our campsite had a beautiful view of the hills of southwestern Fort Worth, and after setting up our tents we held a discussion on the subject of frith, and read selections from *Culture of the Teutons* by Wilhelm Grönbech that highlighted various historical references to how the Germanic peoples viewed this cornerstone of our faith. Lore study can work up a big appetite! So afterwards we cooked ourselves up a nice big dinner of chili and meatballs with all the fixins.



Once our hunger had been satisfied, we turned to our most important event of the evening: our blot to Baldr. We gathered around the fire and burned a very special Yule log, the very same log that we had hammered many nails into during our many rounds of playing Hammerschlagen at Harvestfest last August. We burned handwritten notes along with it that described our wishes for the coming year, things we wanted to let go of, and messages we wanted to communicate with the divine powers. As we burned these things, we gave thanks to Baldr for giving us such a great example of how to be a beacon of shining light when times are at their darkest and celebrated his return to our

world with the new year! We followed this up with a friendly Sumbel, making hot s'mores, and sleeping under the stars.

*German Restaurant Moot*



On Friday, December 22nd, 2023, members of Fríðr Folk Kindred Texas met for a fun evening of beer and bratwurst at a very authentic German restaurant in Dallas, Texas! We enjoyed great food, delicious beer, and live music as we made great memories together. Looking forward to having more casual moots like this in the near future!

### *Upcoming Events*



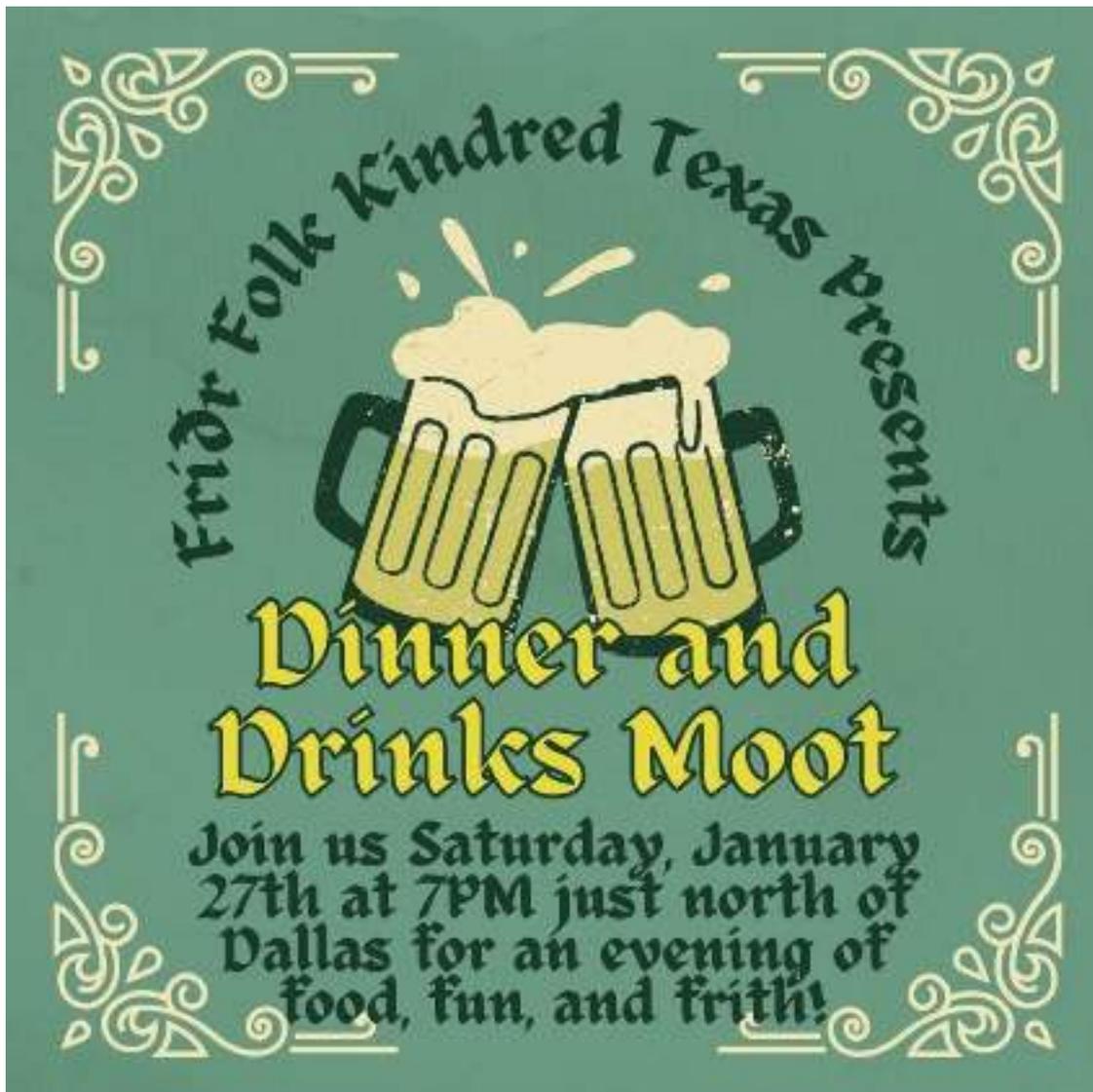
**Fríðr Folk Kindred Texas Presents**  
**our 4th Annual Thorrablot!**

- \*We will start with lunch at a traditional European restaurant, then head to our campsite for a lore study, dinner, blot, and sumbel!**
- \*Test yourself in games of strength in honor of the mighty thunder god!**
- \*Enjoy s'mores around the fire as we bond with our folk!**
- \*Bring a tent or hammock and sleep under the stars!**

**January 6th just north of Austin, Texas**

**Adults: \$30**  
**Couples: \$50**  
**Kids and Vouched for Guests: Free!**

Join Fríðr Folk Kindred for Thorrablot in Austin, Texas in January, as well as Charming of the Plow in Houston, Texas in February! Hail the gods, hail the ancestors, hail the folk, and hail the AFA!



Folkbuilder Justin Day  
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