

The Runestone: Voice of the Asatru Folk Assembly
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Óðinshof

First Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly

www.odinshof.org

February 2024

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Words from the Alsherjargothi



2024 is the 30th year of our Asatru Folk Assembly and we are off to a great start! It's great to see the year start with so many gatherings and so many smiling faces. We have a big year ahead of us and much to accomplish. I want to start out by bringing your attention to a few things in case you are not already aware or engaged.

Victory Never Sleeps is live at 6 Pacific every week on YouTube. Currently Witan Svan Herul and I are in the midst of a verse-by-verse lore study of the Hávamál. We encourage questions from anyone about anything people want to know more on. These shows are also available on Spotify as podcasts every Friday.

Also, Folkbuilder Lydia Phelps in revamping our websites to make them beautiful and loaded with functionality. Stop by and check them out if you haven't already:

www.odinshof.org | www.thorshof.com | www.njordshof.org

The Baldrshof District site and the Runestone website are under construction as we speak.

Also, there is still time to register and make plans to attend Charming of the Plow at Njörðshof in White Springs Florida, I look forward to seeing you all there.



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

Words From Our Witan

Reject the Black Pill



We exist in a world of ruin. The whole system is aligned against you. Your very existence is under threat. Triple parentheses and all that. It's over, we are done. We can't win. Our children are to be sacrificed to the monster that has consumed us.

If this is the language of "influencers" you watch, read, pay, subscribe to, I have one word for you. Stop. That's my advice. Stop.

We may view this age through a fearful lens, we may view it as something to lament. I choose to view it as opportunity. This whole world is rotten to its core. We are indeed in the Wolf Age. The Age of Iron. All of this is true.

I often hear people say, "You all just live in a bubble." Well, yeah....i suppose we do. Because we aren't looking fearfully at the ruin of modernity. What we are doing is planting the seeds for a golden age. Politics, people chopping off their reproductive organs, the public school system.... All of this madness might as well be happening in another time, another place. Because inside this "bubble" we are thriving. Couples come into being, children are being born, we have our own homeschooling curriculum, along with 4 Temples dedicated to our Gods. We have 70 acres of raw land dedicated to Tyr. One day some of us will live there, it'll be the ecclesiastical center of Asatru. While the world is tearing down statues of heroes, we're erecting statues of heroes.

This is what we are doing to prepare for “the end.”

In fact, we aren't preparing for the end, no.... We are preparing for the beginning. The beginning of a new world. The beginning of the Golden Age. We're on the ground floor of this, this beautiful existence. A world that celebrates beauty, strength, that celebrates traditions reaching back to the dawn of our people. We are gathering every week across the country, and in others. We have responded to the beacon of light, by lighting our own! We are lighting a signal fire within that never goes out.

It's easy to get sucked in by doom porn, “influencers” on whatever platform they spew their fear-based stream of madness. One thing that I'll challenge them all on ... they want to “wake people up.” Well, what happens after this awakening? Not one of these influencers has an answer for that.

That is why I came home to the Asatru Folk Assembly. We are DOING THINGS. Rather than waiting for something to happen. Come, join me in this age of victory. Be in the same bubble with us. Grow, be strong, be confident, be normal.

If you are reading this, and you haven't joined AFA, I ask you why not? When will be a good time? If not you, then who? Be a part of the solution rather than standing on the sidelines. We have Folkbuilders waiting for your application. We have Clergy, ready to answer your questions. Across Midgard we are shouting into the sky, Hailing our Gods. Be one of many voices in that circle.

Go to www.runestone.org, click on the Join link. Be a part of something special. Now that you are “awakened”, what will you do?

I know what you should do.

Hail The Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail! Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!

Witan Daniel Young

dyoung@runestone.org



Words From Our Gothar

Ancient Europeans before the Viking Age



Our ancient traditions are many times older than the Viking Age. There is certainly a cultural continuity back to at least the Bronze Age, and most likely to our hunter-gatherers of the Eurasian Steppe or the "Great Steppe", a vast eco-region of temperate grasslands and shrubs. Our far-fairing people came from the Taiga, or boreal forests, which is an area characterized by coniferous trees. It spans from Karelia to the Pacific, from Alaska to Labrador Canada and from parts of the northern U.S. to Estonia, Sweden, Norway, and to the Scottish Highlands.

Our Folk built the first large structures, longhouses, 7,000 years ago, and Kurgan, or better known as burial mounds, found also in western Europe.

Our Folk have a culture that predates the Middle East. Our stories are not recorded with hieroglyphs or cuneiform writing but are found now through the sciences of DNA and archeology.

Our culture/religion is ancient. We have been challenged before. Be it climate upheavals, tyrants, or fools, we are resilient! Let us be like the pine tree of the Taiga, strong, be of rough bark.

I'm all of Rough Bark, a poem by Ivan Kharabarov

I'm all of rough bark
I'm all of pine branch.

I have come
to spread over this land,
to preserve it from sickness and ailment.

I have come from the Taiga,
my hands are heavy and dark,
my roots are tough, my branches resilient.
and to a stranger's eyes,
my tears
are scalding and hot,

On my pine resin shoulders
black sables drowse.

I shall bring Spring time
to these sparse
and stunted forests;

I shall bring back coolness'

to these
warm , turbid rivers.

I shall do no harm,
I am merely
a green tree,
do not cut me down,
love me instead.



Gothi Thorgrun Odden
todden@runestone.org

Fate



When we talk about Wyrd, or fate, often ideas of karma, or maybe an old Vikings movie or even a Greek mythology movie might be conjured up. But how many of us

really understand this concept? Fate is an interesting conundrum. For Americans, we are taught from a young age things like manifest destiny, and it was our fate to conquer from coast to coast, to be world leader, etc. yet we are also taught the ever popular "no fate but what we make." So, what is it? Are we driven inexorably towards a pre-ordained destination? Or do we forge our own path and destination? The answer is complex.

Many people are drawn to think of Wyrð as karma. Perhaps the Aryan concept of karma is easily digestible because it has been so mainstream and popular. But Wyrð is much more complex than pop Hinduism, karma itself is a much deeper concept than mainstream popular culture would have you believe. But let's dive into Wyrð. Wyrð as we know is a web of cause and effect. Fate drives us, not because an outcome was decided at birth and no matter what, that is the destination. Fate is, what must be, what should be, and what could be. All of our decisions paint the picture that is our lives, all lead to a direction. We can change that direction, by good decisions and bad ones. Some may be tempted to excuse bad behavior, bad action, by "well, that's fate baby. I don't have a choice in it." This is pure folly. Fate lights a path for us to lead to the correct destination, it is up to us to see the light and take the path. We can struggle and fight and go down a different path. That is free will. But ultimately, recognizing the Tru lit path, will make our lives more full, more rich, and more authentic to our purpose.

Many struggles and seemingly devastating occurrences in my own life, that felt terrible at the time, have led me down the correct path. Every heartache, every struggle, has led me to where I am today.

What does this mean in practical application? Well, the struggles we face, the hardship, the heartache, the pain, we lament at the time, but often steer us in the direction we are meant to go. So, when you struggle, when something happens that seems devastating, try to remember this is happening for a reason, trust in fate. Following the path that fate has lit up for me has caused temporary struggle but has always steered me in a direction that ultimately was much better and made me happier.

Trust in fate, the Nornir know what they are doing. Follow that lit path and love every minute in Miðgarð.

Gothi Rob Stamm

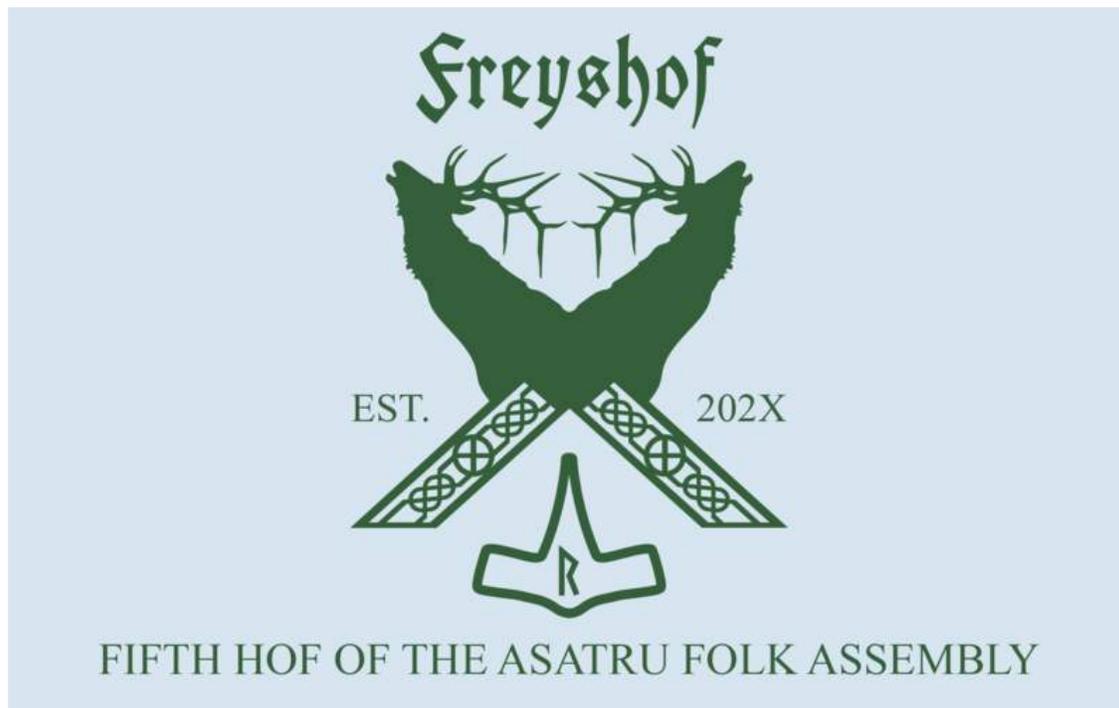
rstamm@runestone.org



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 \(runestone.org\)](https://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 \$98,651.87 on our remaining loan.
2. We need to raise our monthly donation average by 15.3%.
 - This is membership dues/Hoftollar plus other donations.
3. We need to locate a suitable property.
4. We need to find lenders and build a war chest.

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



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

Sigrheim: Home of Victory

In Thanks for the McNallen Statues



Gythia Sheila McNallen
sheila@runestone.org

Þorrablót at Sigrheim



January was an awesome month around these parts, as we had some far-travelling guests come up for Þorrablót. Thank you so much to Mike and Emily Cosgrove for making the long drive up from Florida to weather the cold with us! We had a wonderful time, filled with good food, a somewhat warm fire, great conversations, and a solid Blót to Þorr that was accompanied by hammer-blessings and a special rune set blessing.

We can't wait for the next evens coming up. Check out the flyers below and keep your eyes on the calendar over at [Thorshof.com](https://www.thorshof.com) for all the latest scheduling at Sigrheim and the surround Central Tennessee area!

Support the Home of Victory



Help Sigrheim get stocked
and ready for our Folk!

Donate Supplies
from our
wishlist ✨
amazon

Thank You!

[CLICK HERE](#)

Upcoming Events



Charming of the Plow at Sigrheim

Saturday, February ~~17th~~ ^{10th}



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

Ostara at Sigrheim March 16th



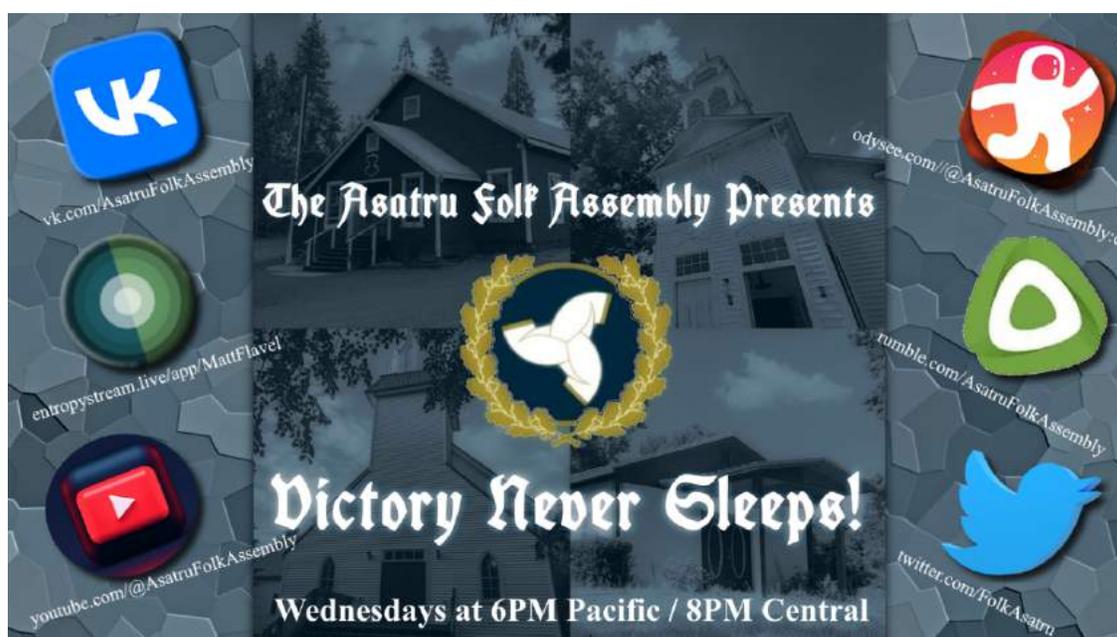
RSVP to nrice@runestone.org



Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice

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, 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
mattflavel@runestone.org

AFA Asatru Academy

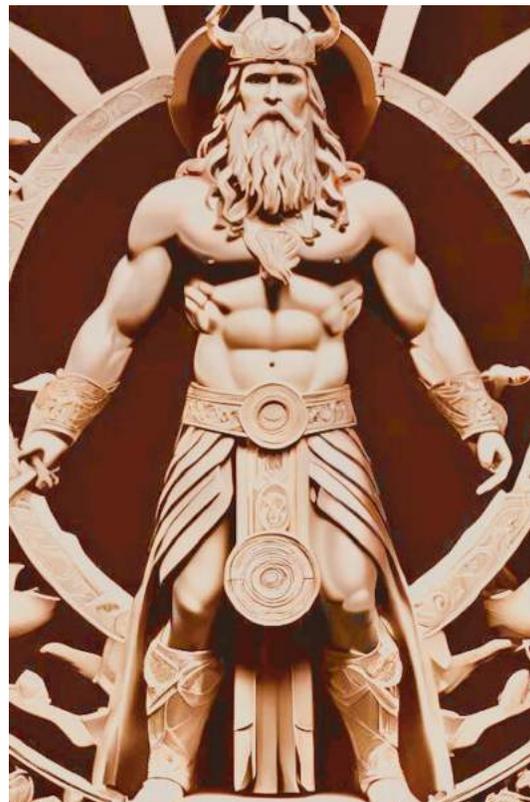


Check out the Asatru Academy at AsatruAcademy.org

Baldr & Nanna

Baldr is the son of Odin and Frigga. He is the favorite among the Gods and the most beautiful. Baldr shines with not only beauty of appearance but also of character. His death was foretold and will bring about Ragnarok. After the final battle and the Gods have died, he will emerge from Helheim and help start the cycle of life again. His life and death remind us that even in the darkest hour the light will return.

Nanna is Baldr's wife and mother of Foresetti. She is considered by some to be the Goddess of devotional love. She has unwavering love and loyalty to Baldr joining him in life, death, and rebirth. When he is killed, she dies of a broken heart and is placed on his funeral pyre.



Greetings Families,

We truly hope you are enjoying the Winter in your part of the world. The Academy has been busy with preparing new curriculum for the next school year. We are truly hoping to be able to add 4th-6th grade, and maybe even a preschool program, to our current K-3rd grade as soon as we can. Amazing things are in the works.

For our current K-3rd graders, we have revamped our Parent/Student meetings. Now taking place twice a month. One will include a storyteller for the children and the other a lesson from the curriculum taught by one of our awesome staff! Watch the parent group on MeWe and your emails for updates.

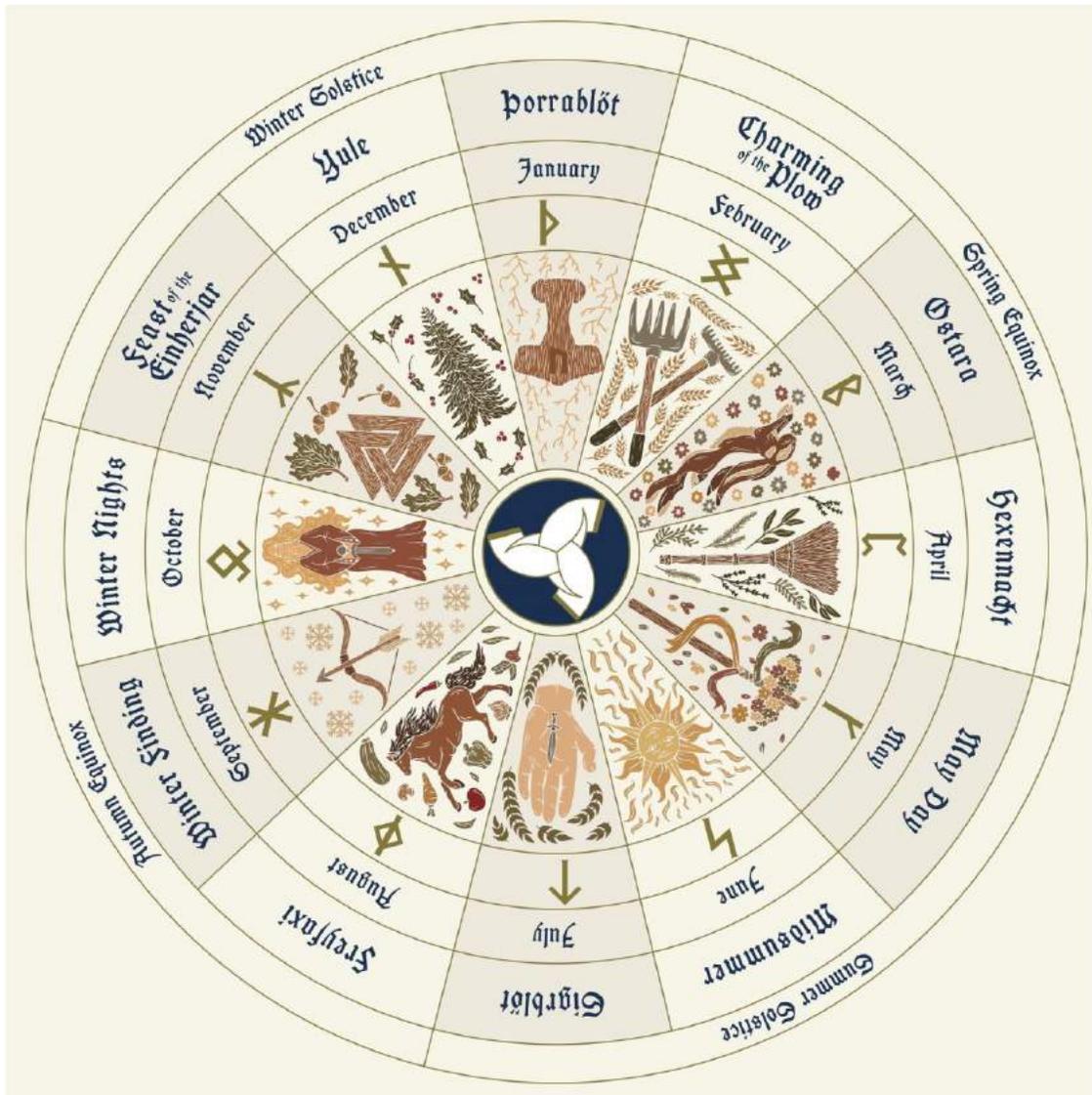
For parents of current students, our doors are always open for you. If you have any questions about the lessons or tech issues, please reach out to any member of the staff or use the chat in the MeWe Academy Parent Group. Also, please share with us what your children are working on. Anything from math assignments, science projects, writing, or drawing, post them in the group or email them to us. We want to be able to show how our students are doing.

As always, if you are interested in finding out more about our Academy program, you can reach out to us at school@runestone.org. -



Folkbuilder Sara Ault
Asst. Dean of Admissions
sault@runestone.org

Remembrance & Holy Days



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

2024

Date	Observance
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

Date	Observance
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

February



Asatru Holidays - February 2024 - Eyvind Kinnrifi | Charming of the Plow

Day of Remembrance

Eyvind Kinnrifi | February 9th



Near to what could be considered the beginning of the Christian conversion of Norway, under King Olaf Tryggvason, there was a farmer of Noble stock who stood against the

king and his attempts at conversion.

Eyvind (Pronounced Ivin) Kinnrifi was called to make plans against the upcoming invasion by his friend Harek of Thjotta, who had very recently returned home after himself refusing conversion to Christianity. Eyvind answered the call, and for the sake of haste, he traveled with only a small retinue of men. He was well welcomed by Harek, but shortly after his arrival Eyvind was ambushed.

Unbeknownst to Harek, he had been followed by some of Olaf Tryggvason's men. They forced Eyvind to Thronhjem, where Olaf attempted to convert Eyvind, first with offers of land and gold, and then with threats of torture and death. Unwilling to turn his back on his faith, Eyvind was eventually killed.

So, what can we learn from this story?

On the 9th of February, as we stop to remember Eyvind Kinnrifi and his unwavering faith despite the consequences, take a moment to consider what in your own life is important to you. Have there ever been times in which you had to choose between keeping your faith and losing something else? A Job? A friend? Family?

Even in these times, when we are living with unparalleled freedom of choice, it can be difficult to choose faith over all else. It is sometimes easier to hide behind the idea of a pseudonym or to keep your faith hidden from those in our lives that should matter. Remember, when you think of Eyvind, what truly matters. Stand strong with and take pride in your Folk.

Hail, Eyvind Kinnrifi!



Gythia Catie Erickson
cm.erickson@runestone.org

Holiday

Charming of the Plow | February 17th



Charming of the Plow is a ritual that takes place at the early beginning of the planting season. As the name implies the plow, or other tools used, are blessed and offerings are made to the Gods for a productive growing season. Traditionally, after blessing the plow, a ceremonial furrow was dug and then filled with cakes and other offerings. For our ancestors, this was a crucial time of year. Poor preparation often led to a poor harvest and a poor harvest led to starvation.

Asatru is the modern celebration of our ancestral heritage. Charming of the Plow symbolizes our willful penetration of the unyielding soil. It is with our own industriousness, our own will, that we create, that we change, that we provide. In the Asatru Folk Assembly, we often celebrate the Charming of the Plow by planting a tree.

Inflict your will on your world. As Asatruar, this is a time to “charm” the implements of your own productivity. Entreating the divine to bless your tools and your plans for the year is essential to starting things off right. Inviting the divine into our plans and intentions is a great way of making us aware of the sacrality that should be a part of all you do. The AFA encourages all Asatruar to be industrious in all that we do. Dream grand dreams. Make solid plans. DO big things. And after hard work, reap a bountiful harvest.

And what can you do to celebrate Charming of the Plow? Though most of us do not rely on growing our own food to survive, now is a good time to consider starting a small garden, or even just growing some herbs on the patio. Make a plan. Choose a small patch of yard and map out your garden beds. Bless the shovels and spades. Dig up the soil and begin fertilizing it with eggshells and coffee grinds. Prepare. If you

cannot plant a small garden begin planning some project. Sew a quilt, built a chair, take an idea and make a plan, and then put that plan into action.

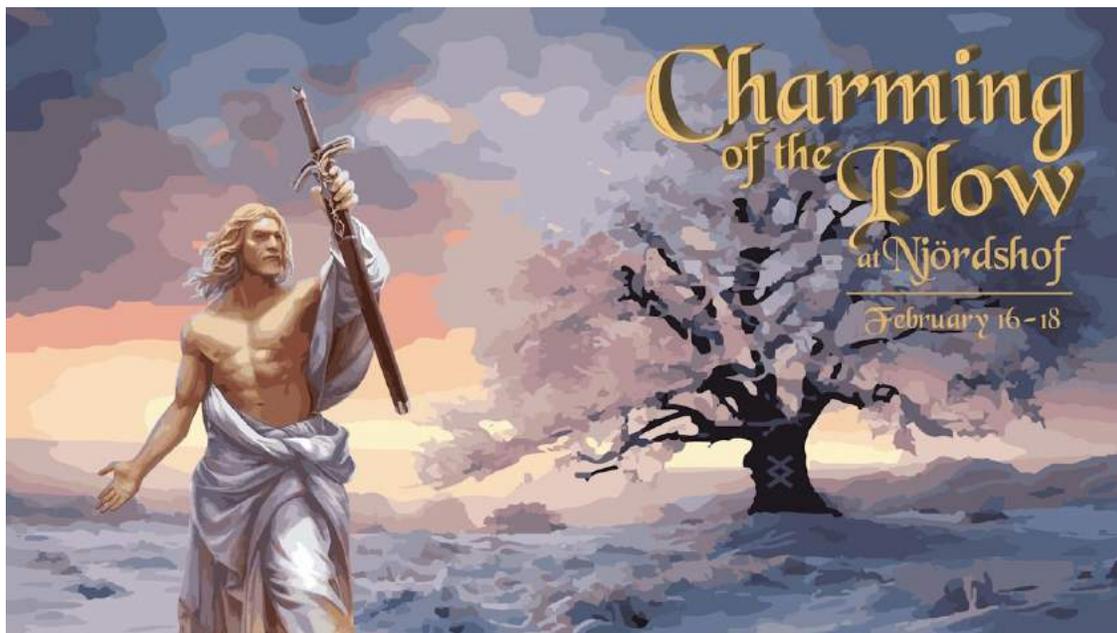
Inflict your will on your world.



Gythia Catie Erickson
cm.erickson@runestone.org

Upcoming National Events

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



As we continue our journey through 2024, as well as the AFA's 30th year, I urge you all to take stock of both your victories and defeats.

Many of you may have done this during Yule, or at the start of January, but I find it useful to do it once more right after Þorrablót, right before we begin planting seeds at Charming of the Plow.

Yule is the darkest time of year, where we draw inward and share in each other's company to make it through the long discontent. When January comes around, we celebrate with Asa-Þórr and rejoice in the fact that we made it through another winter.

For Charming of the Plow, we count our blessings and acknowledge our shortcomings over the previous year. We come together to make the choice to not rest on the laurels from previous victories, and to make the choice to not be buried under any mistakes we made. It's also a great time to take a look at our trajectory for the current year and make decisions on what we can do to keep or improve that trajectory.

Please join us at Njörðshof and celebrate this powerful holy tide with your Folk!

Get your tickets [HERE](#)



Gothi Trent East
teast@runestone.org

Ostara at Þorshof | March 22nd - 24th



It's that time again! Pretty soon, the grass in Dixie will awaken from its slumber, bees will be buzzing, flowers will begin to bud again. Our national event at Þórshof, Ostara. Folks are coming from all over the country to celebrate the Dawn, the Spring. Ostara has been among my favorite events since I joined AFA in 2018. Join us to worship, to fellowship, to give birth to the community and to the Gods and Folk.

We will have VIPs such as Alsherjargothi Matthew Flavel, and the AFA Witan, along with Gothar from all over the country! Expect Blót, Sumbl, games, and talks on various Asatru subjects.

Ostara at Þórshof



Ostara at Þórshof, an Asatru Folk Assembly national event, is scheduled for March 22 - 24 at our very own Þórshof in Linden, North Carolina! [Click here for Tickets](#)

Registration is already underway, please make sure to include children's tickets (even though they are free) so we can have an accurate headcount to plan meals.

Also, if you have items for our auction, whether it's handmade Asatru items, or homemade jam, whatever you wish to donate, it's greatly appreciated.

Contact your local Folkbuilder for details.

Get your tickets [HERE](#)



Witan Daniel Young
dyoung@runestone.org

Gothar Spotlight

Svan Herul, Witan, Virginia



Ordained March 14, 2020

Mentored by Alsherjargothi Matthew Flavel

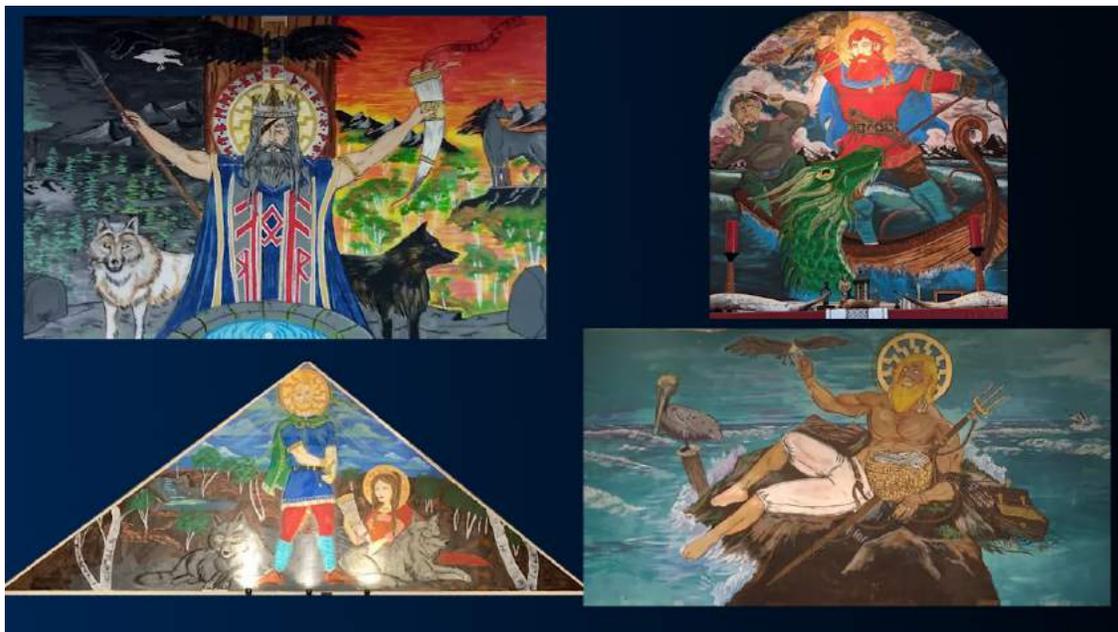
Svan is a native-born Icelander whose family immigrated to the US when he was 5 years old. Svan found his way to his ancestral faith in 1994 when he was a young teenager.

He joined the Asatru Folk Assembly in 2016. During that time, he founded Irongard Kindred, and began apprentice Folkbuilding. He brought with him a pious spirit, his knowledge of the Runes, and of our Sacred Lore that he continues to share with our priesthood and our Folk.

In 2019 and 2020 Svan was absolutely critical to the founding of Þórshof in North Carolina. I was present for much of the process. I can remember being there when he took his Gothar Ordination at Ostara in the South 2020. So impressed with his presentation and his overall presence, I decided to put my name in the hat for the Gothar Program.



Beginning in 2020, Svan began the pious task of painting murals for each of our Hofs, starting with Borr in NC, for which I personally was present. He would go on to reverently put together all of our Hof murals.



Later in 2021 at Midsummer, Gothi Herul was appointed to the AFA Witan, a counsel of Gothar that advise the Alsherjagothi and disseminate his policies to the Gothar and Folkbuilders.



I was accepted to the Gothar Program the year Svan was ordained, alongside Trent East, Rob Stamm, Brandy Callahan, Clifford Erickson and others. Myself, Trent, and Rob fell under Svan's influence and his tutelage for much of the journey to being ordained. All of us have been influenced to a degree by Svan and his wisdom, but the 3 of us, myself, Trent, and Rob were directly impacted by him.

Much of the success we have experienced at Þórshof is directly the result of his hard work, and the dedication of Svan and his family. We each owe him a debt of gratitude for that hard work and piety.

In May of 2022, my wife Heather and I renewed our vows to commemorate our 25th wedding anniversary, and we could think of no one we'd rather preside than Witan Herul.



If I could build a Gothi, Svan would be the model for what that Gothi would be. Witan Svan is a close friend. He's one of the most influential and respected of our Gothar. I'm glad he's my friend, my mentor and my priest.

Hail Witan Svan!



Witan Daniel Young
dyoung@runestone.org

Folkbuilder Spotlight

Sara Ault, Folkbuilder, Wisconsin



Folkbuilder Sara Ault is one of our most instrumental women in the AFA. Most likely are unaware of just how much she does for our Folk. Nearly every one of us has crossed paths with Sara whether we know it or not. A lot of us unknowingly reap the work Sara puts in daily and may never know just how much. Sara has her hands on so many aspects of AFA functionality that a lot of our Victories would not be what they are without her. She is directly involved in with the Asatru Academy, Runestone Press, Social Media, Websites, Lore Study, and Women's Book Study just to list a few. Her daily sacrifice of time and energy for the Folk is beyond what most do in a month, or

even a year. Sara Ault directly impacts every one of us in one form or another.

Sara was amongst the first volunteers for the AFA Academy and is still there putting the work in where others have fallen off. She is always eager to help in any way she can and has taken on more and more of the responsibilities that are needed for our children and our Church to be successful. Sara is the first point of contact for interested parents in the Asatru Academy and knows the program inside and out, she interacts regularly with parents, and contributes personally to the academic and spiritual material.

If you have children in the Academy, read the Runestone, join in lore, or book study, etc. you know the work Sara puts in. If you do not know her personally, she would be happy to make your acquaintance. If you do know her, you know just how much of a positive impact she has for our folk. Either way, reach out to her and thank her for all she does. She is humble, wise, and caring. Sara is one of our most dedicated leaders of our Church.

Thank you, Sara, for all that you do, it does not go unnoticed.

“As our Goddesses have their handmaidens, Sara Ault is our safety net for AFA leadership. Whether it’s Asatru Academy, the needs of Hof Districts, assisting with teams meetings, or various book studies; she communicates clearly, swiftly, and quietly. She is always behind the scenes with her magic touch for management. Meanwhile, her nature is calm and caring so all who know her feel they are with family” – Gythia
Sheila McNallen

“Sara is the first to help in all her areas of contribution. She is a solid force for the AFA, and Baldrshof District” – Folkbuilder Nick Rice

“Sara has been absolutely instrumental in the success of the AFA Academy; we are proud lucky to have her as the assistant dean” - Gothi Rob Stamm



Gothi Nathan Erlandson
nerlandson@runestone.org

A Thank You to Folk Services



I'm writing to give my heartfelt thanks and to let other AFA members know what a blessing our Folk Services are for our Folk. On January 4th, I was heading out with my children and our new puppy to pick up some extra work via Door Dash, something we had done many times before. We stopped for gas, and within a mile or two of the gas station, a large deer ran out from the opposite side of the road. The deer made it between two cars before impacting mine, giving me zero time to react. I was left completely caught off guard facing a hefty deductible if repairs were possible, rental car costs...etc. My Folk kindly set up a Folk Services fundraiser on my behalf, what a blessing it has been for my family. The money raised helped pay for my many accrued

expenses during this unexpected hardship and taken some weight off my shoulders. We in Asatru Folk Assembly are blessed to have such services available to our Folk. It has been immensely uplifting to feel the love and support of my Folk in my time of need.

Hard situations in life can happen to anyone of us at any time and none of us are exempt from hardship. With the support from our Folk, we are able to overcome and prevail when situations beyond our control present themselves. I'd like to thank the Asatru Folk Assembly and all my Folk who donated.

With sincerest regards,



Danielle Risso
Apprentice Folkbuilder
drisso@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.



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



Cooking for our Folk



Calling all Chefs

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

cookbook@runestone.org

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

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

To this day, I still believe that number one is the most important; but two is the most valuable lesson. So, for example: why would you add flour to the mix when are you making Fried Potato balls? It doesn't add anything to the dish overall and in fact, it takes away flavor and disrupts texture. The reason is that what flour takes away: is moisture. It adds to the binder and liquid consumption.

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

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

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



Folkbuilder Mike Joyner
mjoyner@runestone.org

Ancestral Food and Culture

Rodeo Salad



Rodeo salad is a recipe that my mom made growing up. It's one of my favorites. It's a home-cooked comfort meal. It is also very easy to make and budget-friendly. Also, a meal that your children or family will love.

Ingredients:

Two cucumbers diced

One head of lettuce chopped

Can of black olives

Package of cherry tomatoes

A bag of Fritos

Shredded cheese

Hamburger meat cooked with taco seasoning

Can of black beans drained and rinsed

Catalina dressing

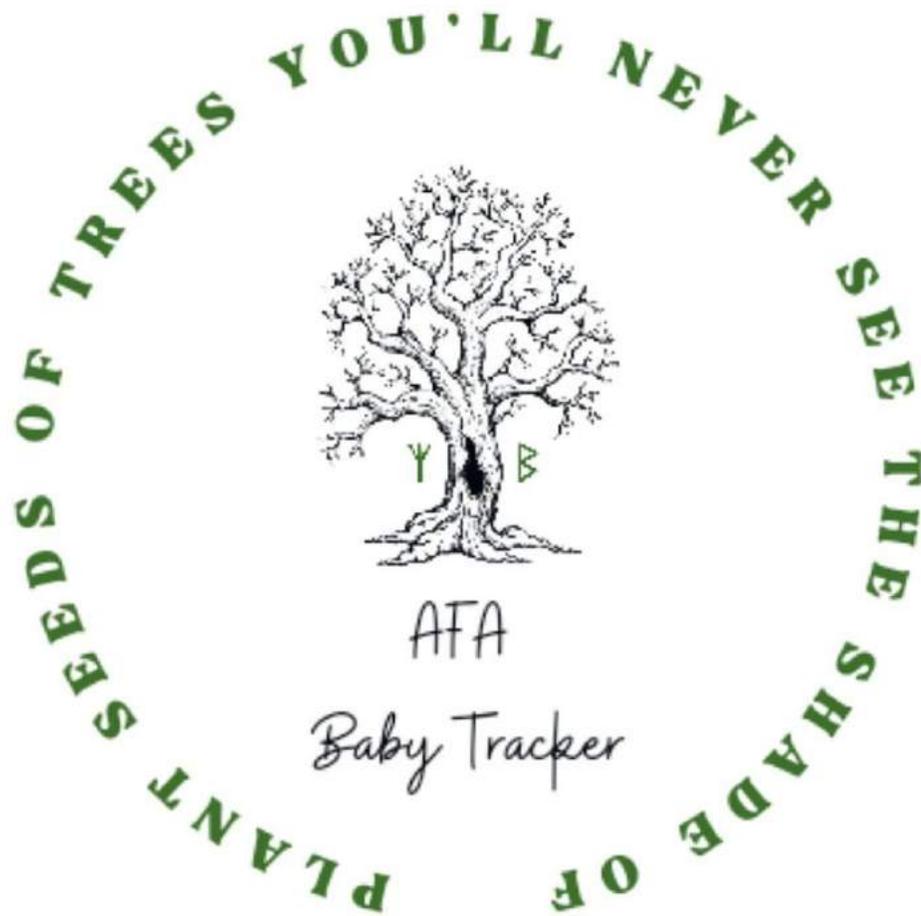
Directions:

Mix it all together and serve



Tabitha Owens
Apprentice Folkbuilder
towens@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 2024: 4

Virtue Recovery Group



VIRTUE RECOVERY MEETING

THURSDAY 7PM CST
(5PM PST, 8PM EST)

SATURDAY 9AM CST
(7AM PST, 10AM EST)

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 (<http://tinyurl.com/virtuerecoverymeeting>). We hold our meetings every Thursday at 7pm Central and every Saturday at 9am Central. Join us!! Feel free to reach out to

Folkbuilder Ashley McStocker with any and all questions!

AMcStocker@Runestone.org





AFA Reading Challenge Meetings



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

Revolt Against the Modern World

by Julius Evola

Dates:

7 pm CST

January 25th

February 8th

February 22nd

February 29th

March 7th

March 28th

April 4th

April 11th



For more information contact

Witan Brandy Callahan

Folkbuilder Sara Ault



Ladies Mysteries Podcast

Seidr

Returns in February!

Look for dates, times, and topics posted soon!

Witan Brandy Callahan

Gythia Anna Plourde

Gythia Catie Erickson

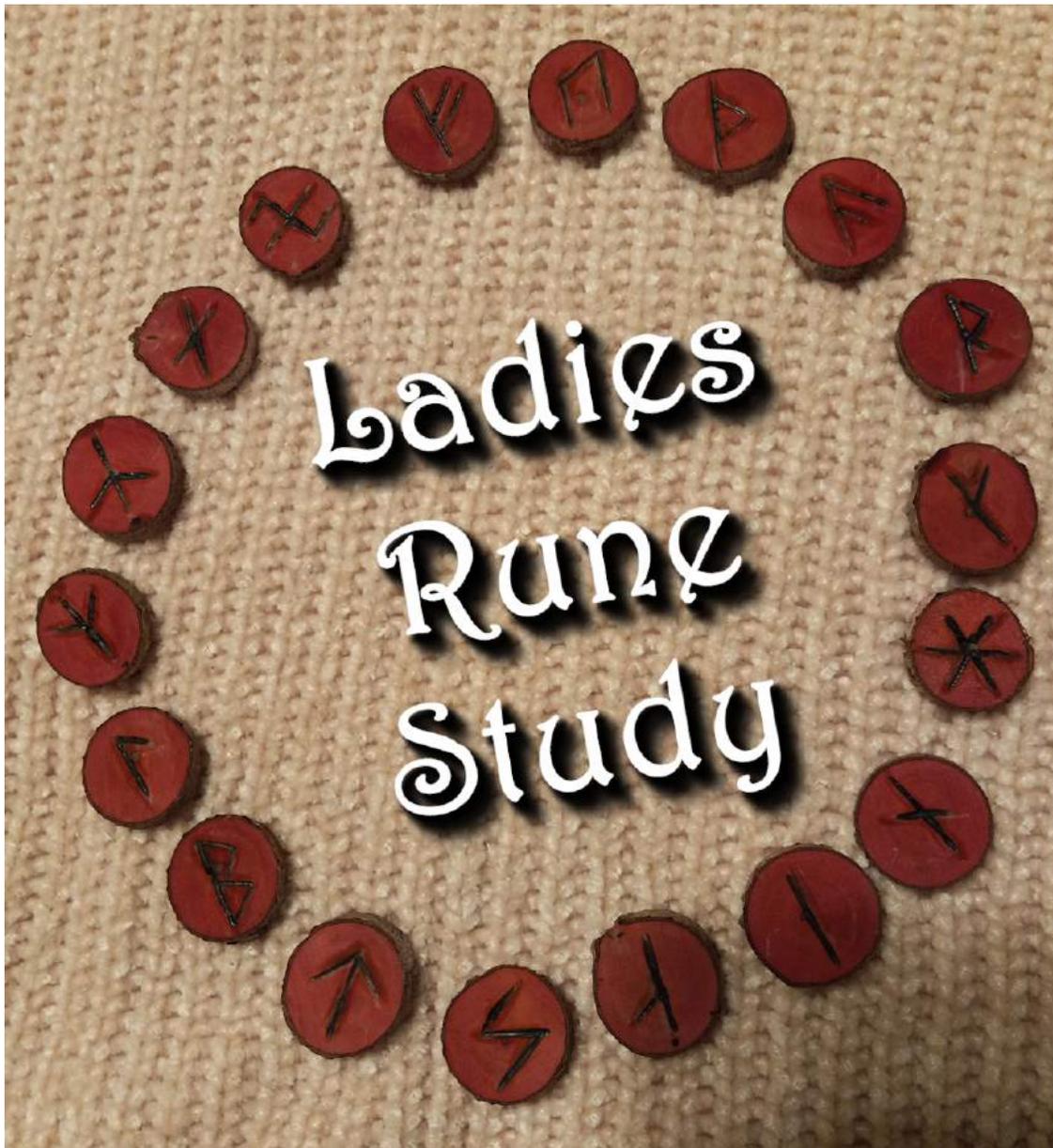
Folkbuilder Heather Young

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!



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

**Lore Study with
Gothi Jason Plourde**
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**

Ask to join our MeWe group called AFA Eldri

AFA Eldri Meetings

For our members born before 1975

A place to share memories, ideas, experiences, and the joys of life ~ in caring conversation.

New Dates and Times for 2024

Tuesday nights
5:30 PST, 6:30 MST, 7:30 CST, 8:30 EST

Friday afternoons
2:00 PST, 3:00 MST, 4:00 CST, 5:00 EST

February	March	April
Tuesday: 2/6, 2/20	Tuesday: 3/5, 3/19	Tuesday: 4/9, 4/23
Friday: 2/9, 2/23	Friday: 3/8, 3/22	Friday: 4/12, 4/26

Copy this link into a browser: <https://tinyurl.com/yc289cn8>
Hosted by *Gythia Sheila McNallen*



*February 2024
Sister's Fitness Challenge*

\$5 to join
Prize money goes to the champion!

Contact Folkbuilder Ali Clausen for details and to join on MeWe, by email
aclausen@runestone.org, or text 402-853-4246



January Sister's Fitness Winner



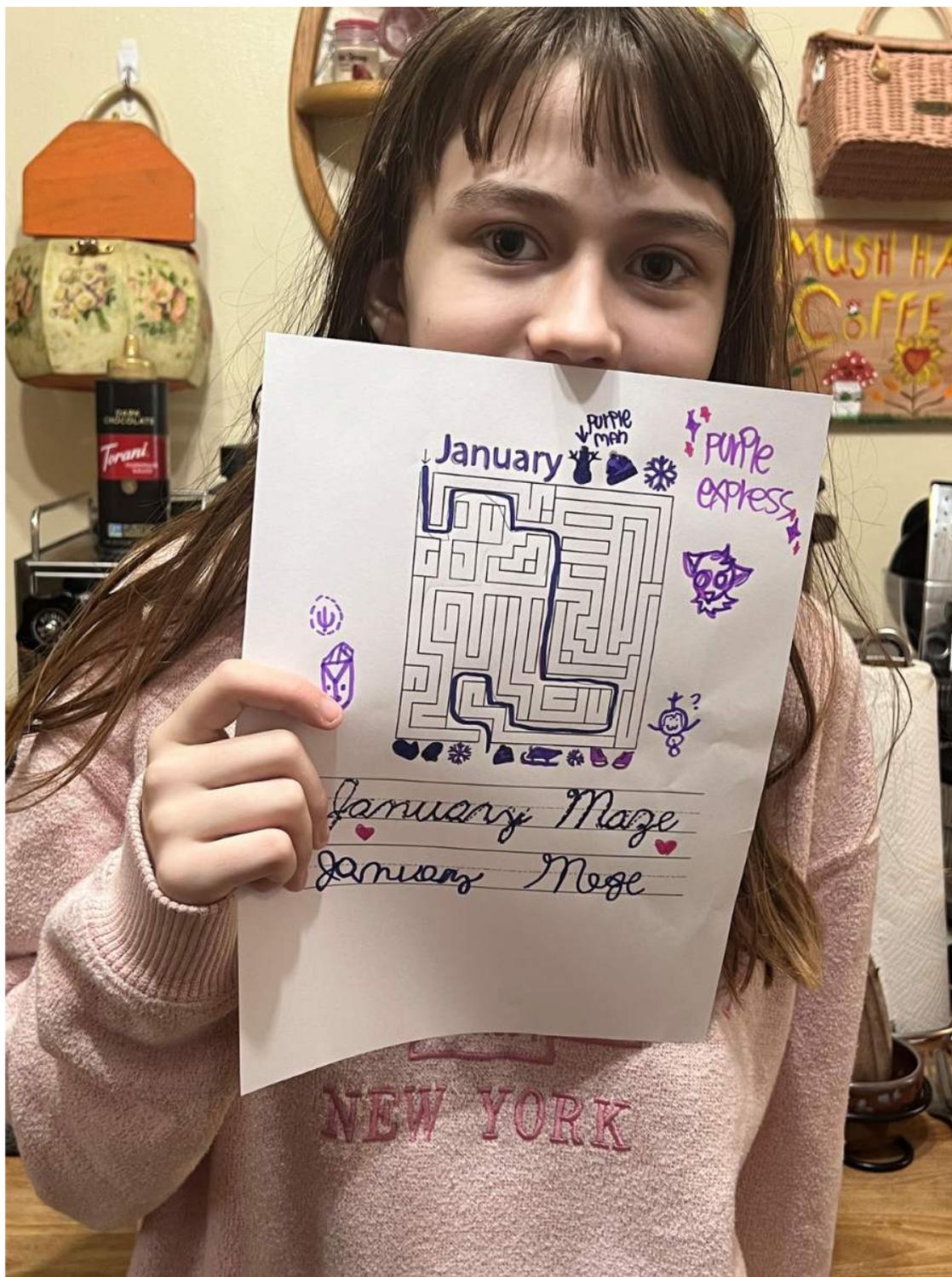
The winner of the Sisters Fitness challenge for the month of January is **Apprentice Folkbuilder Hope White** of the Baldrshof district. Hope has shown us her virtues of perseverance and victory by consistently working hard towards achieving her goals. Hope's continued participation in the group has been an inspiration. Congratulations Hope!

All ladies of the AFA are encouraged and welcomed to join in our ladies' fitness support group no matter her starting point. All goals are self-determined, and everyone's goals are different. Come build in frith while working on physical fitness!

— Corrie Proudfoot, member, Minnesota

Just For Fun

Kara, age 11, and Russell, age 3, solved January's maze and practiced a little cursive!



These are some beautiful writing samples. I love seeing the original characters and "purple express" drawn by Kara. I'm also delighted to see Russell's shapes recognition (he colored them green).



This month, our young (and young at heart) have another fun maze and opportunity to write their very own acrostic poems using the letters in LOVE. I can't wait to see the creative poems you come up with! Please feel free to use another sheet of paper for your poems if needed, and send them to Press@Runestone.org to share with the Folk!

LOVE Maze

Write a Valentine's Day Acrostic:

L _____

O _____

V _____

E _____

www.BrainyMaze.com

Images (c) Hidesy's Clipart & Little Red

Congratulations to **Rachel Cameron** of Njörðshof for being the first member to solve January's puzzle! Coming in a close second was Hope White of Baldrshof! Thank you to all who attempted the puzzle.

Here's the puzzle for February:

Genealogy enthusiasts!

We have cool things to offer you!

This show what our KINSHIP CHARTS look like when we compare our DNA.

How do you get added?

Get a Gedmatch Kit Number after doing your DNA test. (We can tell you how.)

Send that number to Sheila McNallen: sheila@runestone.org

Also, make a free family tree at familysearch.org. Then login to site: relativefinder.org to find your common ancestors with other members!

JOIN the AFA Genealogy group on MeWe!

McNallen, Sheila	McNallen, Steve	McPhee, Ceilid	Minshall, Mary	Nickerson, Em	Nickerson, Lou	Odden, Thorgr
11.6	7.8	None	None	6.4	13.5	6.5
4.6	None	5	4.1	14.2	9.4	8.6
8.9	None	8.2	9.5	4	5.4	7.5
8.2	18.2	4.9	8.1	9.1	None	6.2
None	None	9.3	9.9	8.2	None	9.6
8.4	9.2	4.4	10.2	None	None	10.9
None	None	None	None	14.4	None	10.5
4.5	None	5.9	20.6	None	11.9	13
6.1	None	None	4.2	4.1	None	None
None	None	None	None	9	None	10.8
26.2	8.3	4.4	4.2	None	None	5.1
None	4.6	18.7	6.9	4.3	7.2	4.3
None	16.3	15.3	None	4.2	10.7	None
None	None	None	None	None	9.8	16.9
None	6.2	12.3	20.4	None	13.2	11.2
11.3	5.5	6	10.3	8.8	None	4.1

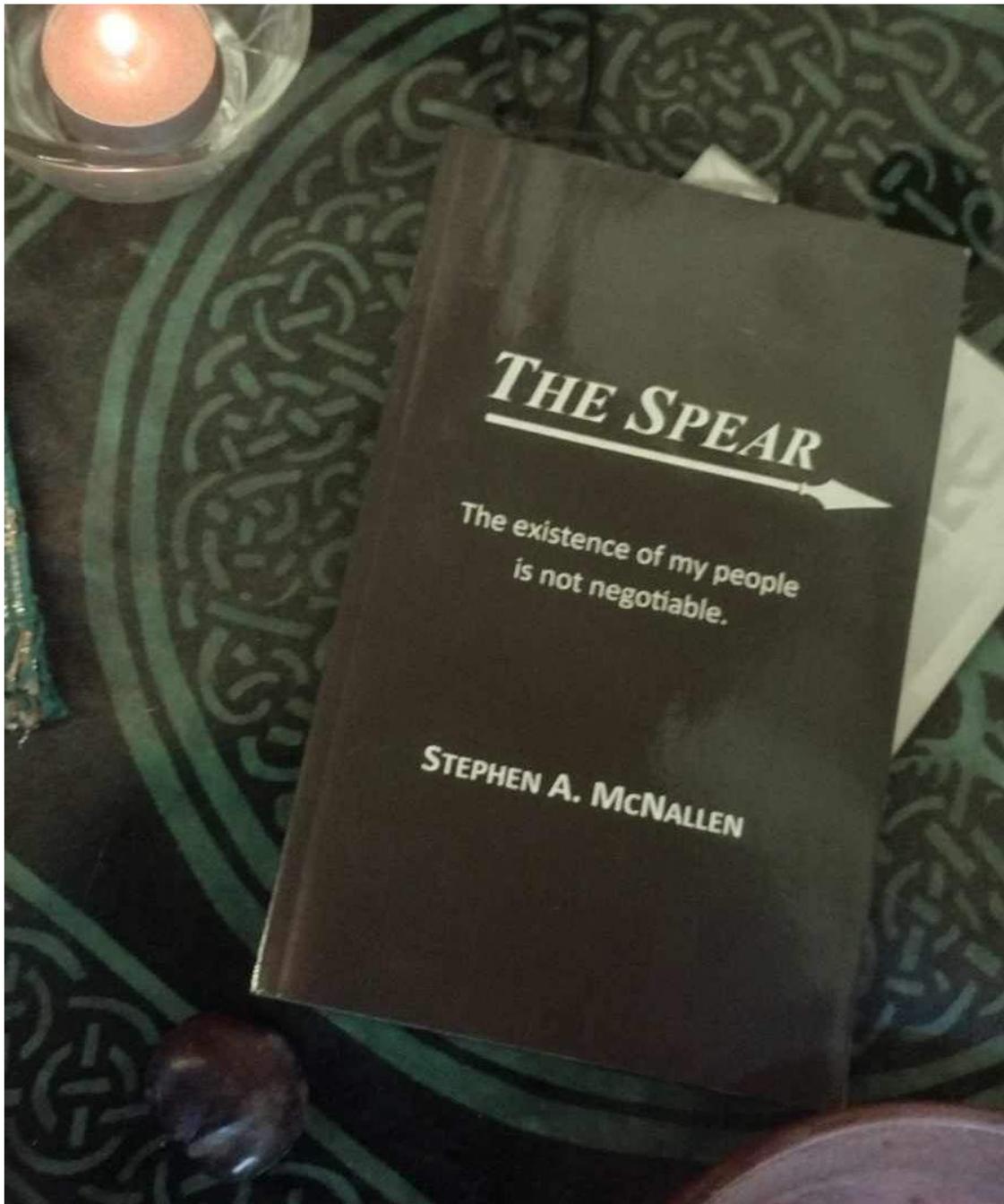


Gythia Sheila McNallen

sheila@runestone.org

Now Available in the AFA Store

Back in Stock



Backed by popular demand, we've got *The Spear* by Stephen McNallen back in stock (if they're not up on the website yet, check back soon, as its very imminent). They sold fast last time, and may not be around for long, so make sure to head on over and get your copy ASAP!

Get over to the [store](#) now!

Folkbuilder Ali Clausen
aclausen@runestone.org



Óðinshof

Food Pantry at Óðinshof



The holidays behind us, we had to make a prediction about how many families would turn out for January's Óðinshof Food Pantry. Both November and December had been record-breaking months for us, so we were completely out of extra food.

On our Thursday pickup day, we packed our SUV to the gunnels, and like a boat, it swayed with the weight all the way down to hill, and up hill, to Brownsville. Friday,

we picked up our 60 dozen eggs, ground turkey, and mac 'n cheese, making our way back for "Game Night" at Óðinshof.



The rain hit that night. It was a mire in the morning when the cars began arriving at 9:00. A blue popup was set-up by the side door which was our staging area for our dedicated volunteers. Did we stay dry? No. Did we have a good time and happily greet everyone as normal? Yes!



The deluge that morning kept many locals away, so we served only 28 families, representing 70 individuals. But we were able to be extra-generous, handing out most of our filled bags. For February, we have flats of canned-goods stored behind the stage -- ready to go!

Gythia Sheila McNallen

sheila@runestone.org



Þorrlát at Óðinshof



Þorrlát at Óðinshof started on Friday evening as members worked diligently to get the Food Pantry supplies organized and ready for the next morning. After a wonderfully prepared dinner of Shepherd's Pie, made by our very own Gythia Sheila McNallen, the folk enjoyed board games and card games, and the children worked on their musical skills.



The following morning began with the Food Pantry. The children entertained themselves by playing with LEGOs and decorating snowmen.



Even in the pouring rain, we were still able to assist families with food. Lunch included grilled cheese and delicious soups prepared by Diane: Minestrone and Split Pea. After the meal, we had a wonderful and very intimate Greeting to the Gods inside the hof, right before the altar of the Allfather. The rain fell from the sky all day, which meant everyone pretty much spent all their time indoors. There was a special sense of closeness between the Folk present. Bonds grew and expanded with the intimate setting. After Greeting to the Gods, the McNallens performed a beautiful Baby Naming Ceremony for the last of the Stone boys. Brandon and I held our son before the members, joining him to the Folk.



After the ceremony, the men and women separated to have their private talks. The women spoke of our goals for the new year and other ways that us as women can call the Folk home. Hopefully in the coming months, we will be able to bring more Folk home.



Stephen McNallen, Founder of the AFA, held a very intense blot to honor Þorr. The power and emotion that Stephen puts into his ceremonies is unlike any other. We were told to hold our hammers, the mighty Mjölhnir, and raise our right hand into a fist. We hailed Þorr in this way many times over and over again. The power and might in the room filled our hearts. It was such an honor to be part of something so strong.



When the show had ended, the entertainment did not. Our very own Madilene from the Sutherland family wrote a song about bringing the Folk home. Madilene, Ellie, and Trinity sang the song together in front of everyone. It was a beautiful performance by three very talented young ladies.



Dinner was blessed by Gothi Thorgrun Odden, and a special plate was made first for the ancestors. Then, women and children were allowed to serve themselves. The meal was delicious with many dishes prepared by members of the Folk for a potluck-style dinner.



It was a fantastic event, surrounded by such wonderful members. May all the Folk have a blessed and honorable new year!

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!



Angelina Stone
Apprentice Folkbuilder
astone@runestone.org

Baby Naming of Charles James Stone



On the 29th of December 2023, Charles James Stone was brought into the world at exactly 1900, by way of cesarean, to Brandon and Angelina Stone. The Stones have a daughter named Ellie and two sons named Orion and Keegan. Keegan was the only other member of the Stone family to have a baby naming ceremony, which was performed by Gythia Sheila McNallen in September of 2022.



So now, it was Charlie's turn. Before the ceremony, the officiant pulled three Runes to represent our baby's life: past, present, and future. The three Runes that Founder Stephen McNallen pulled for Charles were: Hagalaz, Gebo, and Sowilo.

May Charles be blessed, and may he continue to grow in our traditions, our religion, and be an honorable man for the Gods.



Angelina Stone
Apprentice Folkbuilder
astone@runestone.org

Upcoming Events at Odinshof

2024 Events at Oðinshof

January 20	<i>Thorrablót</i>
February 17	<i>Charming of the Plow</i>
March 16	<i>Ostara</i>
April 20	<i>Hexennacht</i>
May 18	<i>May Day</i>
June 22	<i>Midsummer</i>
July 20	<i>Sigrblót</i>
August 17	<i>Freyfaxi</i>
September 21	<i>Winter Finding</i>
October 19	<i>Winter Nights</i>
November 16	<i>Feast of the Einherjar</i>
December 21	<i>Yuletide</i>

RSVPs are required. All guests must be preapproved.

On event weekends, Oðinshof is usually open from Friday through Sunday. Those events include a Saturday morning food pantry distribution and community outreach on Sundays. We invite you to stay for the whole weekend.

All proposed events are on the third weekend, except for MIDSUMMER which is the premier event for the Odinshof district. It's been moved to the fourth weekend to allow the food pantry to proceed as normal.



Charming of the Plow at Odinshof

We invite you to join your Folk in celebrating the preparations and planning for an abundant Spring!

Saturday,
February 17, 2024

Freyr Blot

Blessing of the Tools

Ritual Planting

Music, Merriment, & More!

~Please bring a dish for our
potluck dinner.

~RSVP to help us prepare.

See you soon!

ODINSHOF MEMBER MEETING

WELCOME
HOF UPDATE
UPCOMING EVENTS
OSTARA - WITAN CALLAHAN
OLVIR OF EGG - WITAN YOUNG
COURAGE - GOTHI EAST
MONTHLY CHALLENGE
AND MORE!

**FEB 23RD LINK ON MEWE
SEE YOU THEN!**

Óðinshof Wish List



(Clickable link above!) Thank you all for sending something "extra special" off the Wish List to Óðinshof!

Óðinshof Leadership

Óðinshof Leadership

<p>GOTHAR</p> <p>Matt Flavel mattflavel@runestone.org</p> <p>Brandy Callahan bcallahan@runestone.org</p> <p>Sheila McNallen sheila@runestone.org</p> <p>Thorgrun Odden todden@runestone.org</p>	<p>FOLKBUILDERS</p> <p>Ryan Harlan (MT) rharlan@runestone.org</p> <p>Lou Nickerson (AZ) lnickerson@runestone.org</p> <p>Sierra Chapman (CA) schapman@runestone.org</p> <p>Tyler Heinlein (MT) theinlein@runestone.org</p> <p>Olivia Sutherland (CA) osutherland@runestone.org</p>	<p>APPRENTICE FOLKBUILDERS</p> <p>Angelina Stone (CA) astone@runestone.org</p> <p>Kyle Reader (ID) kreader@runestone.org</p> <p>Aaron Simbeck (WA) asimbeck@runestone.org</p> <p>HOF STEWARD Daniel Odom dodom@runestone.org</p>
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Arizona

Courage Is Better Than Cowardice



Thor contemplating what it means to have courage.

For the remainder of this winter, I want to focus on one of the Nine Noble Virtues, which is most often listed as the first of the virtues: Courage. Without the ability to be brave, stagnation sets in, and we tend to freeze in place and cut ourselves off from doing anything new, often because of the fear of failure, of conflict, etc.

Courage does not mean the absence of fear. Fear is a normal part of our everyday experience. Someone who feels fear isn't a coward; rather, the man or woman who cowers in a corner and gives in to inaction rather than meeting fear head on would be considered a coward. In the ancient world, a coward was considered one of the worst things for someone to be, and someone who acquired a reputation as a coward would universally be met with scorn.

Hávamál stanza 15 reminds us of the importance of bravery and also the nobility of a brave man:

15. The son of a king | shall be silent and wise,
And bold in battle as well;

Bravely and gladly | a man shall go,
Till the day of his death is come.

Many of our heroes in the AFA are the men and women who had the courage to brave the potential consequences and declare their allegiance to our Gods and our Folk even when threatened with death. For example, Raud the Strong, a masterful seaman and chieftain of central Norway during the reign of Olaf Tryggvason, was tortured to death in the 990s by King Olaf because he would not abandon his faith. The AFA hero for February, Eyvind Kinnrifi, was a valiant chieftain of northern Norway who was similarly captured by Olaf and tortured in an attempt to make him renounce Asatru and embrace a foreign religion. Ultimately, as a brazier of hot coals was being prepared to be lowered on Eyvind, which would bring about his certain death in agonizing fashion, Eyvind still refused to submit and renounce the Gods of his Folk. Luckily, we don't have to face certain death simply for going out and practicing our faith, so in honor of the sacrifices of those who came before us, we should come together and give thanks to our Gods!

As the Hávamál passage reminds us, bravery and the joy of living go hand in hand. There is something both serene and bold in the act of striding forward, despite your fear, and smiling at whatever life throws at you. This can apply to us in many things, such as a career change that would make us more money but would require either a temporary or a permanent move, or it can be something as simple as the courage to walk out of the front door and go to an AFA event or moot as a new member who hasn't personally met anyone (and it's especially easy to talk ourselves out of doing this if it involves a long drive!). We've all been that person at one time or another.

Getting involved in the AFA was one of the best and most fulfilling experiences I've ever had. If you're reading this and are considering joining the AFA, or, if you've joined but haven't made it to anything yet, I highly recommend coming out to a moot or event, especially at one of our AFA Hofs. Have the courage to take that step forward! You won't regret it. And, as someone who lives about 15 hours away from the closest Hof (and that's without stopping, which is impossible), I understand the struggle of travel. While this is a challenge, it just makes it that much more fulfilling once you finally do show up at the front door! I hope to see you all very soon.

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

Irish Pub Moot



We had a great time exploring historic Florence, Arizona (which isn't far from Phoenix) and visiting a local Irish pub. It was great to see so many buildings from the 1870s, since most structures from the Southwest are far newer than that.



We talked about future plans and past successes (including one of our members helping put in new graves for Civil War veterans just down the street from our moot).



To all of you who came, thank you very much! It was great to see you.

Upcoming Events



We'll be meeting in Tucson in February for an Asatru-themed trivia night. It should be a lot of fun--hope to see you there!



Folkbuilder Lou Nickerson
lnickerson@runestone.org

California

Another Work Weekend for the History Books!



Again, the Sons of the High One put their shoulders to the grindstone. The Yuletide has passed and there were many-a-box o' decorations to be moved, a tree to be trimmed, and plenty more fun tasks to be completed. There wasn't an idle hand amongst the lads at this work party...No, Sir! Daniel Odom shone especially bright having replaced the lighting in the office and adding lights behind the stage (a much-needed addition). After that, Dan and I put some finishing touches on the sturdily built handcrafted cabinets straddling the stove in the kitchen.



A few of the lads--including Wildman Paul Stevens, Zack, and James--restored the heavily used black tables of the hall to their former satin-finished glory. But the slinging of paint was not simply relegated to tables. The doors and stage all received a healthy dose of black satin as well.



Outside in the rain between the chainsaws, splitting mauls, and axes, I believe everyone had a hand at splitting firewood, and certainly all had a hand in moving it. Over the clang of sledgehammers and splitting mauls and the loud roar of chainsaws, chants of “Hail Porr!” could be heard as James and Kenny spilt the knotty pine logs into useable firewood. I for one was impressed to see how motivated and persistent they were spending hours splitting wood and not stopping until the entire pile had been split.



At the conclusion of this weekend, we had an intimate and profound Sumbel held by the men who had worked together to raise beautiful Óðinshof to even greater heights. Horns were raised to our Gods, our loved ancestors, and our exceptional Folk.

If you would like to join our work parties, please do so! Check MeWe for flyers or check with your local Folkbuilder for more information. There are always tasks for Folk of all skill levels, and good times to be had by all. And, if you are unable to join our merry crew, then I implore you to please consider becoming a Hoftollar to help propel the AFA forward!



Brodie Sutherland
Member

Spring Comes Early to Those Who Will It



February is a hopeful time. While it is still cold, we begin to dream of and plan for Spring. For most of us, the time to start a spring garden is still a ways off, regardless of what Punxsutawney Phil decides. Today, I wanted to share a little activity that anyone can do to have beautiful blooms throughout the winter months.

Step 1: Find a glass jar or other container.

Step 2: Fill 1/3 of the glass with small rocks.

Step 3: Place a bulb on top of the rocks.

Step 4: Add water until it just barely reaches the bulb (not soaking it).

Step 5: Mark the date and your name in Sharpie somewhere on the glass (see who's bulb blooms first!)

Step 6: Set jars in a window that get some sun during the day.

Step 7: Add in a little more water when needed as the water evaporates.

Step 8: Now you wait approximately 2 weeks for beautiful spring flowers. That's it!



In my home, we started 5 bulbs on January 9th using this method. By our will and our tender care sprinkled with apricity, we had spring blooms midwinter! Each family member used a different sized glass jar. My one-year-old daughter's jar was the smallest, and my older kids were amazed when her bulb bloomed first. It was fun making predictions and observing the daily changes. With glass jars, we could clearly see the growth of the roots up close! We used white narcissus and yellow daffodil bulbs, and the white narcissus definitely triumphed over the daffodils.



Have a beautiful February, Folk! No matter the weather, go ahead and plant some bulbs and begin to shift to a spring state of mind. Will something beautiful into existence.

May all your plans and your planting endeavors be blessed!

S'mores & Sumbel

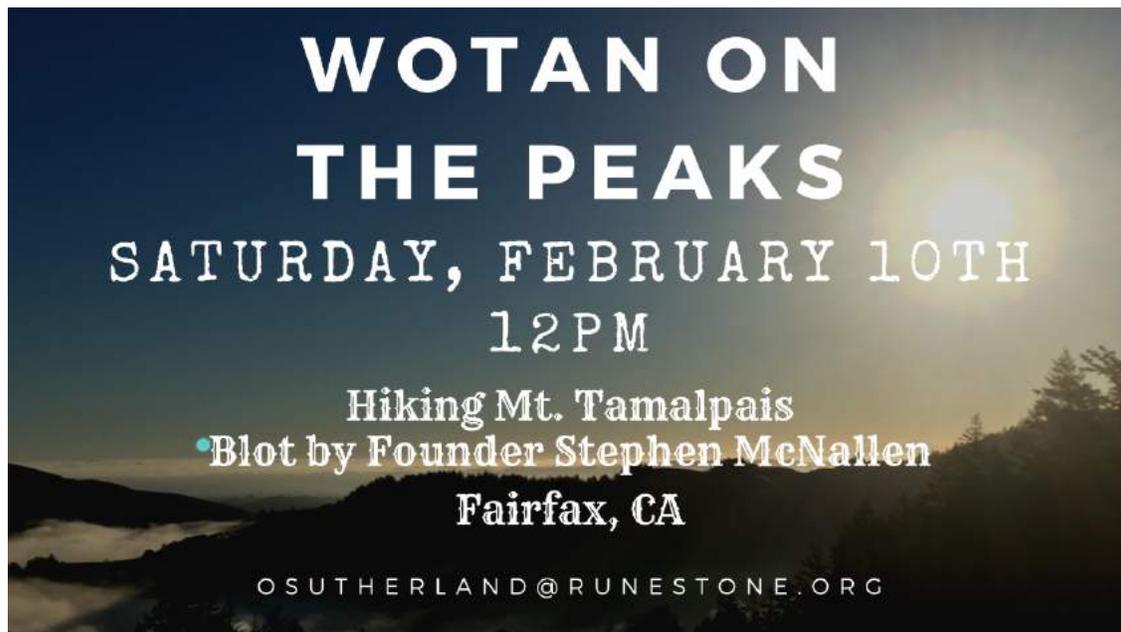


Who doesn't love roasting marshmallows over a toasty bonfire in the middle of winter? On a Thursday night, I invited members to join our family for a dinner, s'mores, and Sumbel moot. After coming in from the cold, rainy weather outside, our guests enjoyed warming up with a bowl of my homemade chicken noodle soup. One member, George, made himself right at home in our kitchen concocting an apple cider that was sweetened with raw sugar cane. It was delicious! After dinner, we made a bonfire in the backyard and roasted marshmallows for our s'mores. The winter rain held perfectly for us. Once everyone got their sweet-fix, we had a heartfelt Sumbel where my oldest daughter took her role as the Horn-Bearer very seriously. The night wouldn't have been complete without a slice of the cheesecake Taylor brought to share with us! It was a very nourishing and wonderful time spent together.

Upcoming Events



Please join Daughters of Frigg for a Virtual Tea on the first Fridays of the month at 5pm. Check your email or our Daughters of Frigg MeWe page for the link to join.



On February 10th, we will be enjoying a relaxed hike up Mt. Tamalpais. Blot will be performed by Founder Stephen McNallen!

HOSTED BY DAUGHTERS OF FRIGG & SONS OF THE HIGH ONE



RIVER RETREAT

March 29-30, 2024

SISKIYOU COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

RELAXING SPIRITUAL WEEKEND FOR MEN,
WOMEN, & CHILDREN
~HIKING, FISHING, EXPLORING, FRITH, FUN!

RSVP osutherland@runestone.org

I'm also excited to announce our River Retreat at the end of March! Please reach out and RSVP for more details. See you soon.



Folkbuilder Olivia Sutherland
osutherland@runestone.org

Bridgeport Covered Bridge Moot



Our change of plans from a “meadery moot” to this location was the best decision ever. On the most perfect spring-like day, the warmest since October, seven AFA members gathered at a state park on the South Yuba River. There was something quite magnificent waiting there.



Built in 1862, it's known as "Bridgeport Covered Bridge", and it is the longest clear single span of its type – in the world! This breathtaking structure is not just long, but it's built with curved wooden arches and massive timbers. To cross it is like entering a wooden cave with a rich, warm smell of cedar.

We left this historic structure for a meandering, rough trail along the river. We walked in single file, grabbing at tree roots when necessary until we descended to a rocky beach. At the river's edge, Caitlin and I blessed the mead for the Wotan Blot. Gifts to

the High One were given and received. The horn was again refilled for Sumbel. For three rounds, the Folk spoke - and remembered - and honored. Our love of Óðinshof and our Folk was felt in our words, binding us all closer than ever.

The sun was setting. We climbed back up to the main trail above the oaks and cottonwoods. Eventually, the shingled bridge came back into view. We all agreed that this hidden gem of California made an outstanding day trip, and that hot summer days are NOT too far away.

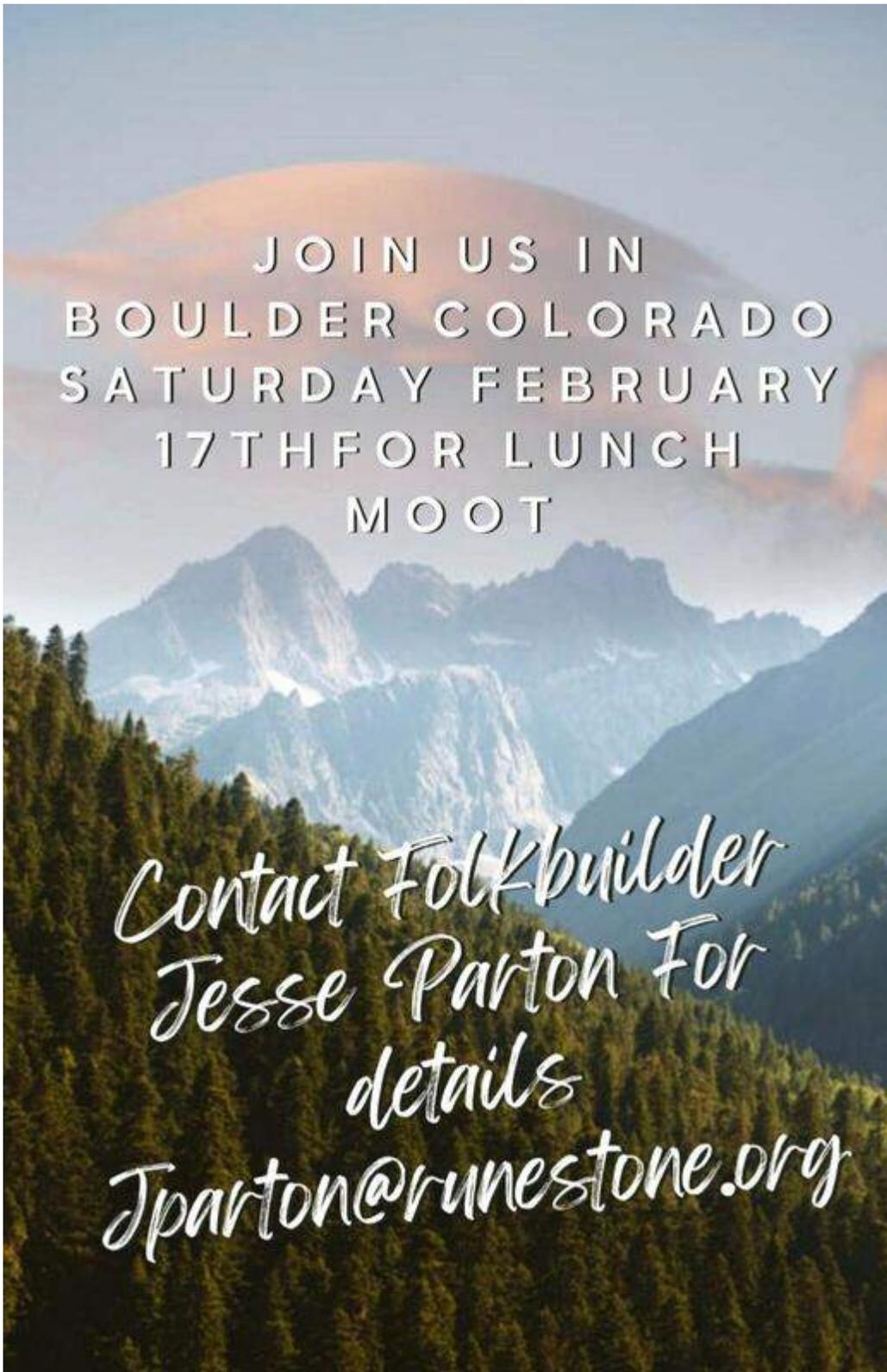


Gythia Sheila McNallen

sheila@runestone.org

Colorado

Upcoming Events



Idaho

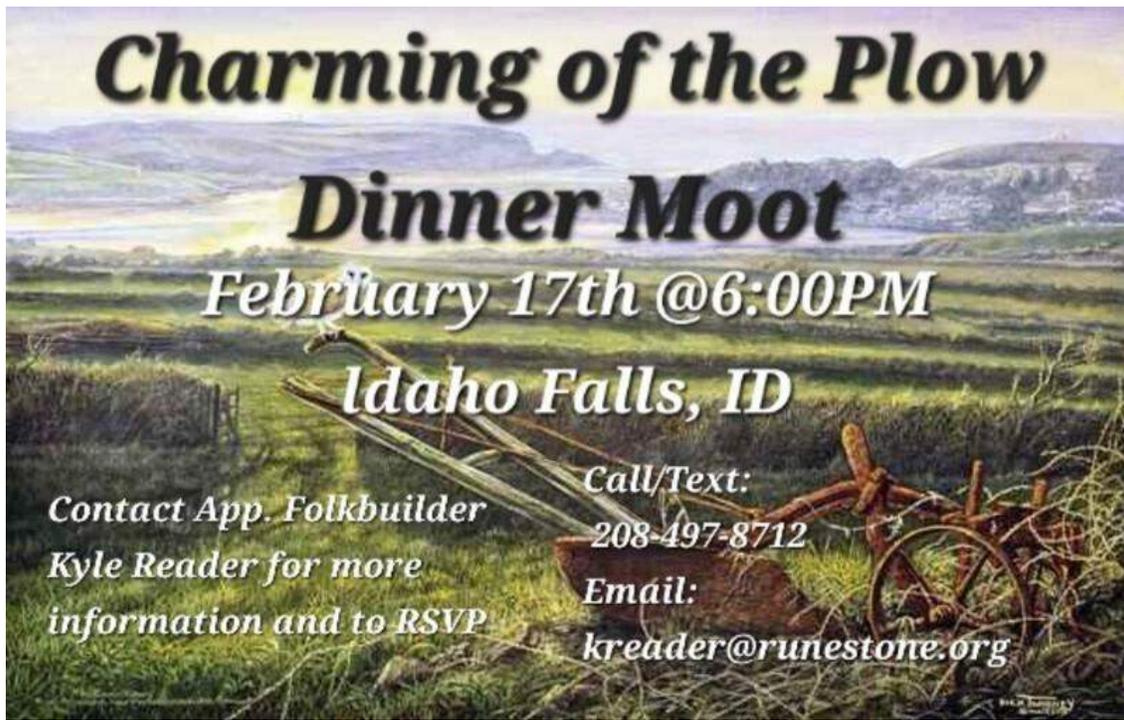
Hello from Idaho



As January ends and February begins, I'm taking time to really evaluate the goals I've made for the new year. I consider whether I am doing what needs to be done to accomplish those goals and if I need to change some things to make sure I am successful. Honest self-evaluation is the key to change and success!

In January, we held our Þorrablót moot. Due to weather making travel difficult, it ended up being just my little family. We made the best of it. We ate some amazing food, played board games, held blot to Thor, and then read stories of the Gods.

Upcoming Events



We will be holding our Charming of the Plow Moot on February 17th, and our Ostara moot on March 16th.



I would love to see all the Folk in the area, and even Folk who are not. Please come out and join us! We will have food, drinks, and great company. As always, my home is

welcome to all who need to stay the night. Please don't let a couple hours' drive stop you from coming out.



Kyle Reader
Apprentice Folkbuilder
kreader@runestone.org

Upcoming Events with Northern Bastion Kindred

You are invited to a

NORTHERN BASTION DINNER MOOT



Saturday, February 10th
18:00 PST
Saint Marie's, ID

Contact Folkbuilder Heinlein for
details

On February 10th, there will be a dinner moot hosted by the Reis Family in Saint Maries, Idaho.



On February 10th, downtown Coer d'Alene, Idaho has a Chocolate Affair event. Come enjoy the fun with Northern Bastion Kindred.

Montana

The New Year's Upcoming Rebirth



This new year of 2024 marks some notable improvements to the way several Kindreds are running things in the Pacific Northwest. We have doubled our moots in western Washington, northern Idaho, and eastern Montana--which means our Folk are getting together far more often. These three areas now have a minimum of two moots planned each month through the end of the year, and I'm pleased to say this newfound level of organization in the region is here to stay. We have carefully planned out the moots to reflect the climate, character, and ability of the PNW. We have already seen successful events hosted under this new plan.

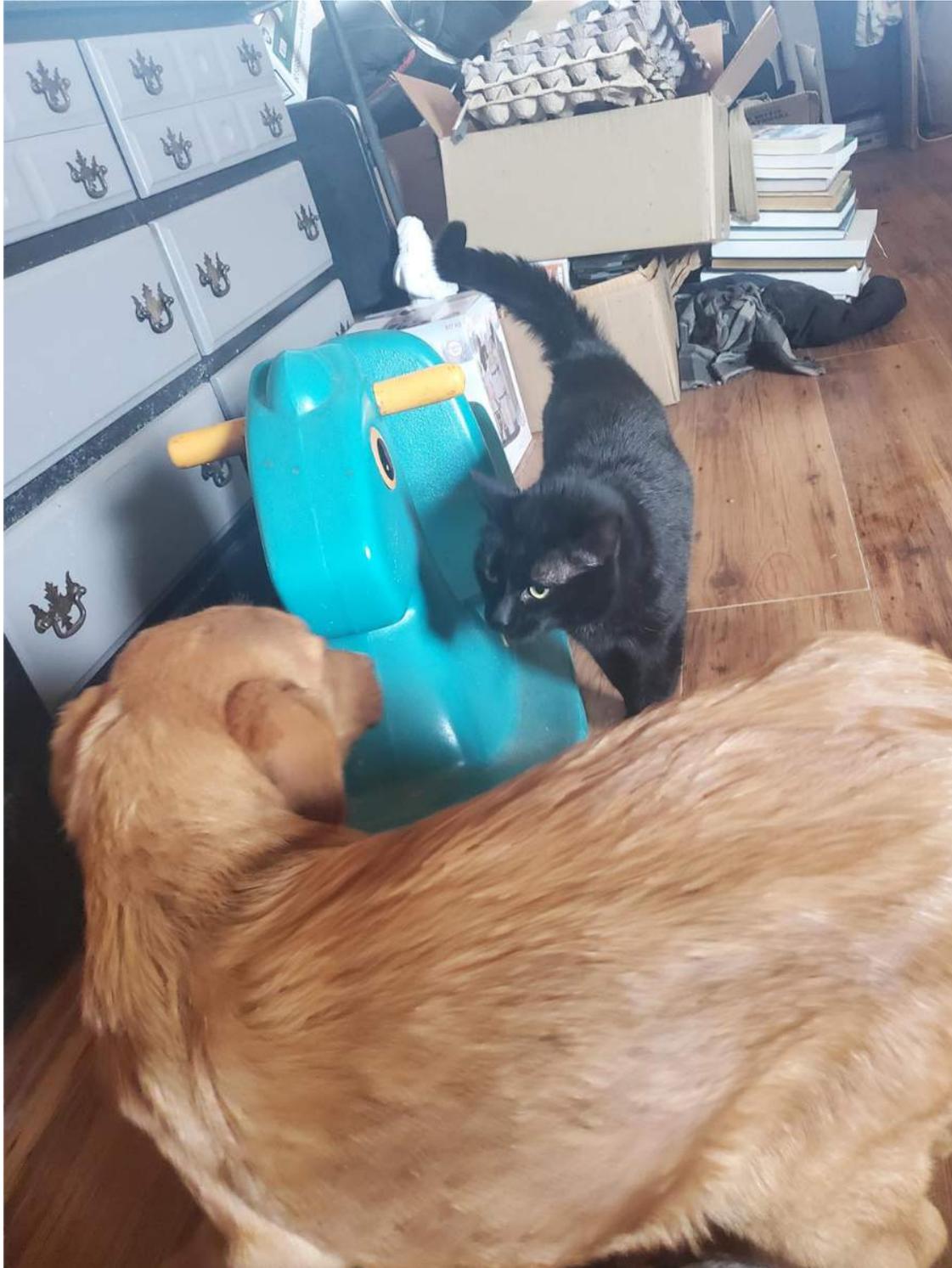
But, of course, the best laid plans can fail to come into fruition when circumstances extend beyond what was expected. The fiercer than normal storms we experienced throughout this nation are a prime example of this.



We had intended to get Folk together for a snowshoe hike up in the hills, but, when the winter storm blew through our valley, we instead had a month of as much snowshoeing as we could possibly ask for. We received snow in waves of stormy weather and had several whiteouts. It reached -52 degrees at its coldest and stayed below -40

consistently.

What we found was that our cabin held up against the cold, the snow, and the biting wind. We and our animals weathered just fine. Our sheep and goats foraged beneath the snow drifts. Our dogs played wildly. We bundled up and took care of our animals' needs and found it to be quite comfortable. Even with the harsh weather, our clotheslines performed.



Through it all, we cleaned up outbuildings, planned Folkvangr's next endeavors, read books, taught my daughter the runes, and engaged in one of the best Tabletop Campaigns we've done in a long time hosted by Northern Bastion Kindred out of Coeur D'Alene, Idaho.

The campaign was every Saturday night, and we all would hop on a call together transcending the issue of geographical isolation (much like our Unity Calls that take place at 6pm PST every Sunday). Set in the grim dark world of Warhammer 40000, our heroes engaged in heroic deeds against Alien horrors. As the DM, I had the interesting job of running what is known as a meat grinder campaign. It's a high mortality game that forces its players to make swift decisions and face the consequences of their characters' actions. Most importantly, it is a way to tell stories together. We intend to host this annually, whether or not the coming winters are as harsh as this year.



All in all, the month was enjoyable, and while this may surprise many of you, the best part was when we lost power for a week. While it did mean no phone, internet, or running water, it also meant we were forced to slow down. The slower pace allowed us to refocus our efforts and reminded us of what winter is for. Winter is the time of rest, recuperation, and planning. It is a time to heal our bodies from the summer labors and grow our skills for the next. We took the time to get more organized for this new year, and we took the time to enjoy the current moment. There is a great satisfaction that comes from pulling water from the river, heating my home from the logs I cut, burning

in the fireplace that I installed a year ago, and reading books to my family by candlelight when the sun sets so early.



To some this may seem miserable and primitive, but I assure those who think this way that choosing self-sufficiency and embracing traditions does not negate from your joy, it compiles it. To reject older means and methods for the sake of ease, comfort, and the worship of new technology is to reject our ancestors as simpletons who knew very little. The most prevalent sources of illness and sorrow do not come from ancient sources but the man-made horrors of today. Many of the older traditions prevent these

illnesses and ward us against the soul sickness we see ravaging its way through our people.



I encourage you all to be conscious of your decisions and the reasons behind them. There is nothing wrong with using inventions, tools and technology that make your life better so long as you do so with the knowledge of your alternatives. There is nothing wrong with using new methodologies of today so long as you are not chasing so-called progress for the sake of progress. I do not call on you to reject all comfort and convenience, becoming luddites, but I do call on you to take personal responsibility for

your family's well-being. Embrace self-sufficiency, and you will not let yourself down when storms roll in, whatever their form.

Upcoming Events

FOLKVANGER
GAME NIGHT

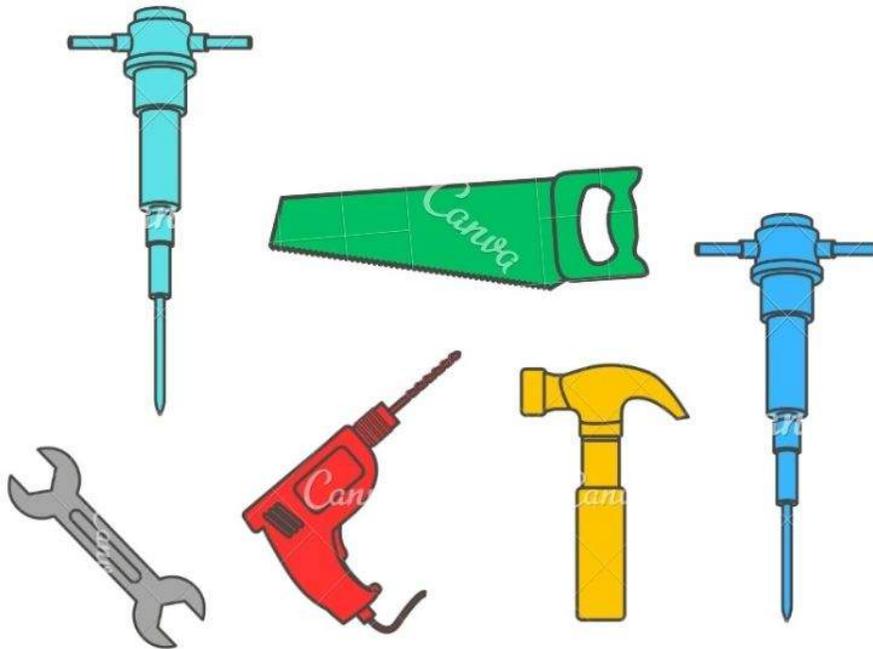
February 15th at 7:00 PM	THE HEINLEIN'S HOMESTEAD
	GAMES, SNACKS, AND MORE

On February 15th, please join us for games, food, and more in eastern Montana.

FOLKVANGR REQUESTS YOU AID IN

A MEADERY CONSTRUCTION WORK PARTY

Help paint the brand new meadery in eastern Montana
February 17th all day



On Feb 17th, there will be a construction and painting moot in eastern Montana for the new meadery.

Folkbuilder Tyler Heinlein
theinlein@runestone.org



Montana þorrablót



We rang in the new year in western Montana with a fun night at the local ski resort--welcoming in our newest members, having a torchlight ski run down the hill, fireworks, and a Blót atop the Continental Divide. On the 9th of the month, we gathered at the Greaney residence for Óðinn World Prayer Day, an Óðinn Blót, and an early birthday celebration for my wife Rachel. On January 27th, we held our þorrablót.



The entire kindred threw down the gauntlet and competed in a game of skill, cunning, and strength. Yes. We went bowling. Most of us hadn't bowled in years, but it was great fun to play a few frames and introduce the kids to it. After some intense competition (can you feel the sarcasm?), a champion was declared. I won with a score of 153.....So, I think it's safe to say I won't be making the pro-circuit anytime soon.

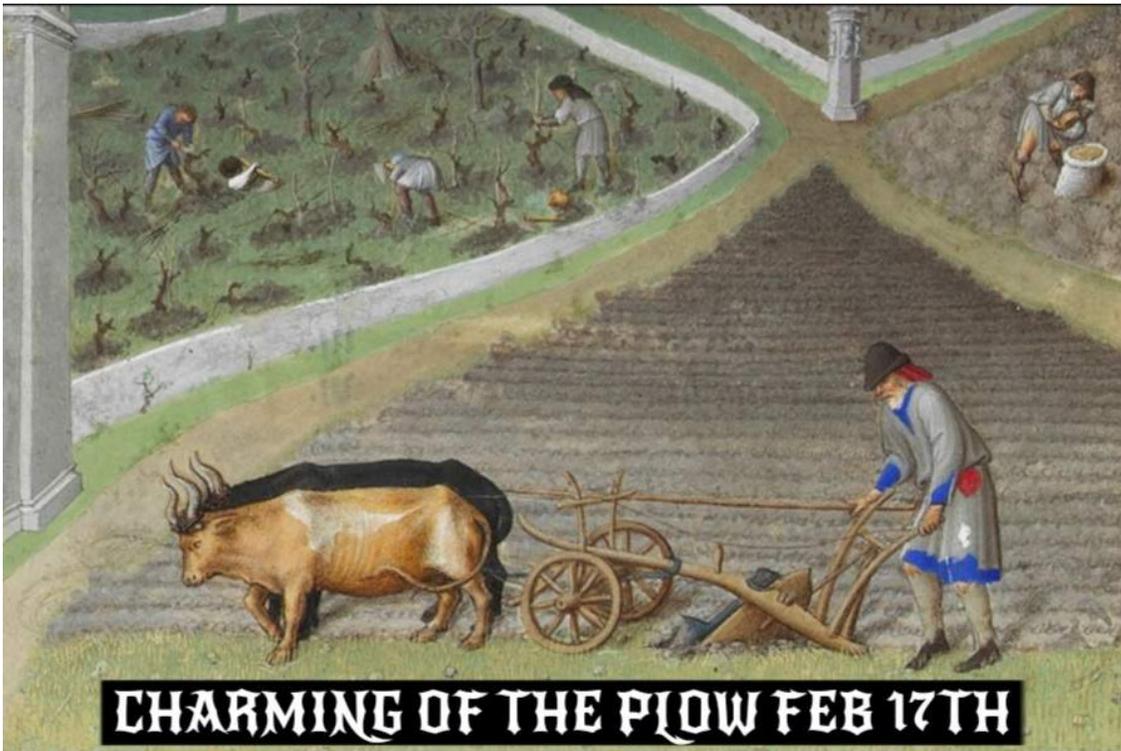


Afterwards, we all met up at one of our amazing local breweries, and, again, celebrated a pair of birthdays, ate some great food, drank a few beers, and played a bit of Tafl.



Happy birthday to James Greaney and Jesse Kreutzer!

Upcoming Events



On February 17th, we will celebrate Charming of the Plow.



On March 29th-31st, we will celebrate Ostara at Elkhorn Hot Springs. Join us as we welcome the return of Spring, and enjoy a soak in the hot springs!

Please contact me for additional information on events.



Folkbuilder Ryan Harlan
rharlan@runestone.org

Nevada

Alsherjargothic Dinner



Thank you to folks who came to our monthly potluck dinner. We appreciate your company and your delicious contributions.

Upcoming Events

RENO, NV
2/24/24

ALSHERJARGOTHIC DINNER

BRING STUFF

DRINKS AT 1
DINNER AT 3



Looking forward to seeing you all on 2/24 for our next dinner!

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



Utah

Upcoming Events

A scenic view of a mountain range with snow-capped peaks and a valley below, under a clear sky. The text is overlaid on this image.

JOIN US IN
HEBER UTAH
SUNDAY FEBRUARY
18TH FOR A LUNCH
MOOT

CONTACT FOLKBUILDER JESSE
PARTON FOR DETAILS
JPARTON@RUNESTONE.ORG

Washington

Water Fowl Hunting Tips



My haul from my first duck hunt.

Howdy Folks!

I've been somewhat successful hunting duck and goose this season here in Washington, and I wanted to share some of my knowledge with those of you who would like to get into hunting.

I'll start with how to identify geese, brants, and swans, and how to tell if they've been in a particular spot recently. I'm assuming that you've never hunted before, and I'll cover the most basic things in addition to the more obscure tips and observations I have to share.

The types of geese and relative species in the US include: Canada Goose, Snow Goose, Swan Goose, Emperor Goose, Cackling Goose or "Cacklers," Bar-headed Goose, and the Greater White Fronted Goose (more commonly known as Speckled Geese or "Specks"), Trumpeter Swan, Tundra Swan, and Mute Swan. There are also the Atlantic Brants (separated into light-bellied and dark-bellied) and Black Brants. There are other subspecies, but these are the more common and root-species for all the others in Northern America.

Swans are essentially large and exclusively white feathered geese. Brants or Brents are small, mostly dark-feathered geese that are almost as small as the largest ducks.



Me with my first Snow Goose.

All of the species I listed before are migratory birds meaning they travel on North-South paths during the winter and the inverse in the spring. The most common species are Trumpeter Swans, Snow Geese and Canada Geese. The most common type of Brant depends on what side of the country you're on. Black Brants are more exclusive to the western half of the continent, while the Atlantic Brant is obviously the most common in the east, with the light-bellied Brant being more common than the dark-bellied.

However, one thing that separates these species from ducks and songbirds, is that there is little size and very little pattern and color difference between the male and female birds. The two sexes are very close in size, with males being a tad larger and having identical colorations and patterns to one another. Most ducks and many songbirds have completely different colorations and are noticeably different in size but will share distinguishing features. Most ducks will share portions of their patterns on their heads, tails, and wings. One thing that is very constant between all migratory birds, though there are a few exceptions, is that both male and female will have the same style of feet and beaks. Although color can differ, it is sometimes the same.

Goose footprints are webbed with three toes and in soft dirt, sand, or mud, and there will be a rear toe print. They often look like curved tridents, as the webbing doesn't always leave a mark, often only a thin line between the toes. Most geese have black or orange feet.

The easiest type of birds to mix up would be Snow Geese and swans. Snow Geese have orange beaks and feet with black tips to their wings. Swans, much like most of their cousins, will have black feet and either yellow-orange or black bills. Other than behavior, the two easiest ways to distinguish between the two is the pure white pattern of swans and the difference in calls and behavior. I will address the calls and behaviors later on when I go over how to hunt and attract swans, geese, and brants.



My first Cackler, which is pretty much just a small Canada Goose--a bit larger than the biggest duck I shot this year.

Goose feces are very easy to identify, they look like rat poison pellets. They are green and tubular, from $\frac{1}{4}$ inch to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter and like other bird droppings they start to turn white after a couple days.

That's the basics of identifying different types of geese and the signs of their presence. I'll talk next week about where to find them and their common behaviors.

I know that for most states, waterfowl season closes soon or already has, but I hope this will help those of you with a spring season and the rest of you next year.

Happy Hunting and Good Luck!

Dinner Moot



The Washington dinner moot went well. We had great burgers and milkshakes, and I got to meet one of the local members. While the turnout was small, it's a promising start to resurgence in the area, as there are two moots planned every month.

Upcoming Events



We'll also be trekking around the district to visit folks all throughout the year. We'll be driving through Oregon on our way to Utah to meet people in both states, in addition to moots in Eastern Washington bimonthly with excursions into Montana. And most exciting of all, we'll be joining the Grand Pacific Northwest Caravan to attend Midsummer at Óðinshof in June. There's plenty going on, so be sure you don't miss out!



Aaron Simbeck
Apprentice Folkbuilder
asimbeck@runestone.org

Be a Doer



We need you to volunteer for the AFA!

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

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

Baby Blanket Project

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

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

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



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

Folk Services



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

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

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

more information, please email folkservices@runestone.org.

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

Thanks in advance!

Photo Donations

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



If you are willing to donate some hi-res photos for use in promotions such as the AFA Calendar, the AFA website, our publications, and more please email them to the AFA at photos@runestone.org. The larger the resolution the better, so please email them from the device where the photo was taken.

Eir's Blessings



Everybody needs a little extra help sometimes.

Women, being the frithy creatures that we are, are uniquely suited to the task of manipulating energy for the purpose of healing. Magic, you could say.

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

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

You can reach us at EirsBlessings@runestone.org

Last Will and Testament

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



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

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

Please make your will **today**.

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

Allen Turnage
PO Box 16027
Tallahassee FL, 32317



Witan Allen Turnage

aturnage@runestone.org



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