

The Runestone: Voice of the Asatru Folk Assembly
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Óðinshof
First Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly

www.odinshof.org

May 2024

 Runestone.org

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Words from the Alsherjargothi



May is an exciting time! I hope everyone has had or will have an amazing May Day! We are in the prime of the year, activity and great things are going on all around us. I seem to say this every month but that is because it is so important, get out there and participate!

In today's world, we all spend a lot of time on social media. That is a great tool to maintain connections over distance. Unfortunately, social media tends to amplify anxiety and promote wallowing in the *doom spiral* as well. Life is good, share it with your AFA family. I would like everyone who reads this to make a point of attending a meet-up in your area. Better yet, make the trek to your Hof! Hof attendance and real-world participation is what builds the community that we all need. Participation is essential to Asatru—it is not a theory or a philosophy, it is actively worshipping the Æsir and engaging with your AFA family.

I am excited! We have some great things coming up this summer, and I look forward to sharing all of it with all of you.

Now is the time to make things happen!

Hail the Æsir!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!



Matthew D. Flavel

Alsherjargothi, Asatru Folk Assembly

mattflavel@runestone.org

The Folk Remember



The Asatru Folk Assembly is saddened by the passing of Nyx Olavi Hostvet Levang of Hartville Ohio. Nyx departed Midgard on April 28, 2024, at the age of 31. She leaves behind her father Arnold, and her fiancé Joseph Drotos. She is predeceased by her mother Lisa (2023) and her brother Leif (2021). Nyx had a fiery passion for her Folk.

She often gave of herself without hesitation to assist our folk in need, even those she didn't know. Ms. Levang grew up in Anchorage, Alaska, earned her Bachelor's in Health Science, and worked as a model.

A service in her honor will be held on May 9, 2024. Please contact Folkbuilder Michael Melillo for details.

The Asatru Folk Assembly sends heartfelt prayers to those who called her a sister, daughter and life partner.

The Folk Remember

Words From Our Gothar

Faith in the Dark



Every religion has its fair-weather practitioners, and Asatru is no exception- especially in the Wolf Age.

All of us have seen it: a pious and devout member of the AFA, attending every event and donating their time or hard-earned money to every cause, suddenly goes through a hard time. Perhaps they lost a parent or a pregnancy, a job or a car, or are simply not

feeling that connection to the Folk that they used to take such pride in. They go through any of these tribulations, and slowly drift away from the Folk and, ultimately, away from the Æsir. They often decide to leave the AFA, and they often say it's just "for a little while", but many do not return. They allow their struggles to outweigh their reverence for the Æsir, and so return to the atheistic malaise that is life without Asatru.

This problem is one that must ultimately be confronted by whoever is going through these trials, but the rest of us CAN help get their mind in the right place. We can remind them that their AFA family is here for them no matter what, that the Æsir exist no matter what, and that their ancestors care for them no matter what.



As you read this, think back to your grandparents or even your parents. Many times, when they faced hardship, they kept their faith in a foreign god and a foreign church. They took strength from that community, and the promises of that foreign god. If they can take strength from that, we should all be able to take so much more strength and comfort from OUR Gods and OUR church.

Now, think even farther back, beyond the desert faith's hold over the Folk. Imagine the Norse, or the Saxons, or the Rus, or whichever Aryan tribe your blood comes from. Even in the darkest of winters, in the bloodiest of battles, they kept their troth with the Æsir. It sounds so simple, but believe me when I say that it takes real strength and devotion. Not only did they keep their own loyalty to our Gods, they kept their kinsmen's loyalty strong, as well. They would not allow their kin-fence to suffer a withered post.

As was the case with our forebears, both Asatru and Christian, we must learn to keep our faith strong in the face of adversity! The Æsir have blessed us so abundantly, and it is only right that we maintain that troth even in the darkest of days.

If you ever find yourself struggling with this, or with anything, email your Gothar at gothar@runestone.org, because we are here for you and your family.



Gothi Trent East
teast@runestone.org

Jera and the Cycle of Ceremonies



Six months ago, we entered our ritual circle to a drumbeat that pulsed like a heartbeat. It was Winter Nights, and there was a chill to the air. The pine trees were stark silhouettes surrounding us. The bonfire was blazing – and Freya and the Disir were called through the quivering veil. Gifts exchanged and runes taken.

For Hexennacht, those same holy women were on my mind all day. In my morning workshop on “Hex Art & Magic,” we reviewed the Elder Futhark and imagery that is seen, and sometimes “unseen,” in hex art. We know these designs are inspired by our Folk-soul, even when painted by ardent Christians.

Our Ladies’ Chat had the added pleasure of a baby shower hosted by our own Óðinshof group, Daughters of Frigg. Fertility of the season was personified in the gifting to Caitlin’s new arrival, due in late May.

During that time, I spoke on the background of this day of celebration, and our particular role in it. We are not women of the 10th, 14th, or 18th centuries, but of the 21st. As such, our interpretation and expression of this day is “just right” for us.

Contrary to the darkness of Winter Nights, this ritual took place in the glorious late afternoon. The turning of the seasons was evident in the new growth and emergence of spring flowers. Though we would again invoke the blessings of our Lady of the Vanir and our Mothers, this time it was with dynamic energy of the returning sun to further our own goals and needs, to bring forth the fertility of the body, mind, and spirit. Remember in March when felt the change as Ostara opened the window to the bright and healing nature of Springtime?

Leading up to this day, Folkbuilder Olivia Sutherland and I had discussed the need to gather herbs to generate a cleansing smoke during the traditional ritual based on the old English “Nine Herbs Charm.” Olivia came through for us with our own variety of herbs cut fresh from her garden. Foot-long sprigs of rosemary, lavender, thyme and lemon-thyme were placed in a basket and carried to each person during the ritual. With hands cradling the basket, each inhaled deeply the pungent aroma as I asked them to recall a time they had experienced those smells in the distant past.

Then, with a sudden toss, the herbs were thrown into the fire. Crackling and smoking, I invited all to step forward to receive the blessings of that smoke. I stepped within the close circle and made many sweeps around the firepit, pushing the smoke over the assembled folk with my handmade wooden broom. I came away thinking that this was a rite I had for the Folk done long, long ago. It felt so natural.

Remembrances of our Mothers, and offerings to Freya, each person set a personal intention during the ceremony. Freya’s blessings were asperged to the Folk, and holy mead sprinkled over the open box of runes. That would be our “seiðwork” for the day. She, who exchanged her knowledge of other-world mysteries with Óðinn would surely be able to bless our runes.

May all learn from the runes they drew, and use them in right accordance to their needs.
As the yearly cycle continues, the rede of the rune should manifest.



Gythia Sheila McNallen

sheila@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 \(runestone.org\)](#)

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 \$90,320 on our remaining loan.
2. We need to raise our monthly donation average by 17.6%.
 - 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

Support the Home of Victory



Help Sigrheim get stocked
and ready for our Folk!

Donate Supplies
from our
wishlist ✨ ✨ ✨
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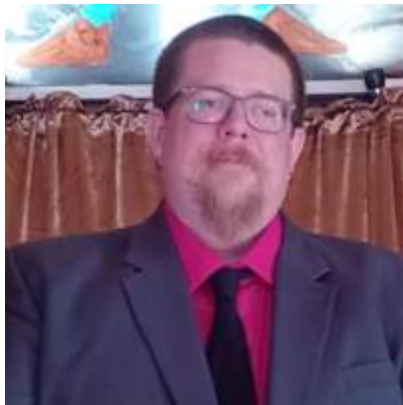
Thank You!

CLICK HERE

Upcoming Events







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, VK, Rumble, and Twitch. Audio versions drop on Spotify, Apple Podcast, iHeartRadio, and Amazon Podcasts on 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



Hello Folks! My name is Amber Cameron, and I'm thrilled to join the staff of the Asatru Folk Assembly's Academy. As a parent of soon to be three children and a devout follower of our Gods, I believe deeply in the intertwined importance of faith and education. A background in child-rearing with my own family has given me a passion

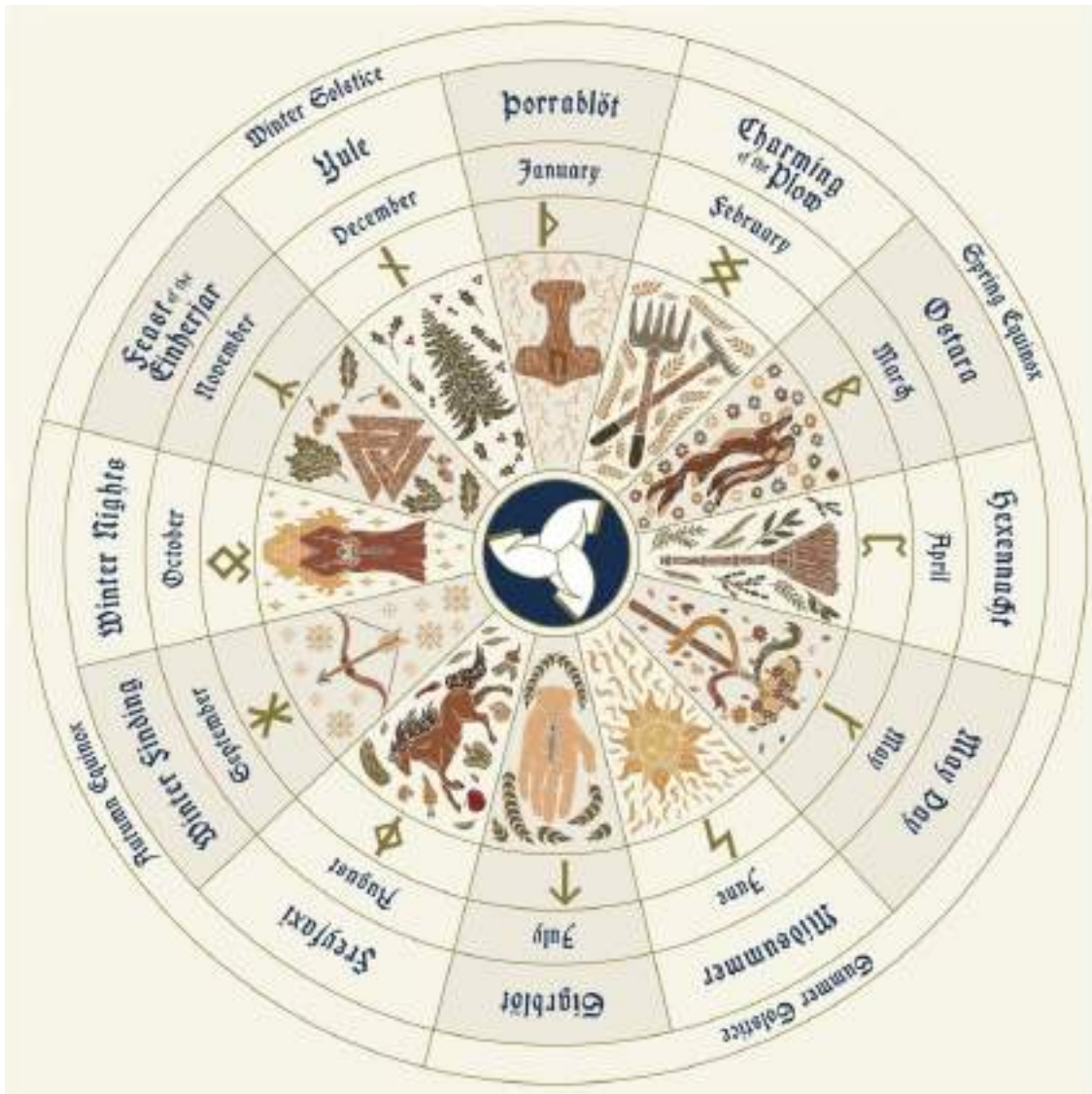
for fostering engaging learning environments, that children want to be a part of. With this I'm excited to contribute to the growth and development of our ever-growing number of students. Our faith as Asatru is not just a belief system it's a guiding principle in how we approach our life and our learning.

Our Academy's program, based on the principles of Waldorf education, emphasizes a holistic approach to learning that aligns perfectly with our values. I've found thus far, that we are committed to integrating our spiritual Lore into our children's educational journey, fostering a balanced approach that nurtures not only the spirit, but the mind and body as well. Together, I look forward to embarking on a journey of exploration, discovery, and academic excellence in partnership with our students and their families.



Amber Cameron
Staff, AFA Asatru Academy
acameron@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

May



Asatru Holidays - May 2024 - Else Christensen | May Day

Day of Remembrance

Else Christensen | May 9th



Originally born in Denmark, Else Christensen (nee Ochsner) was one of the leading figures in the modern Asatru movement. As a young woman, she left her hometown of Esbjerg in favor of Copenhagen. It was during her time in Copenhagen that Else awoke to the ideas of National Socialism in the midst of right-wing and left-wing radical struggles. She met and married Aage Alex Christensen, and together they were members of the Danish Workers Party.

Both she and her husband were imprisoned after the German invasion of Denmark in 1940 for their involvement with elements of the National Workers Party. After their release from prison, Else and her husband emigrated to Canada, via England.

Even from Canada, Else continued to nurture her desire to find a place for her own people. It was during this time, while she was reaching out to far-right activists across North America, that she first discovered Odinism in a pamphlet titled "Call of Our Ancient Nordic Religion," by Alexander Rud Mills. This was the beginning of Else's dedication to the revival of the worship of the Norse Gods. Her understanding of our relationship with the Gods was heavily influenced by the idea that the Gods were encoded in the collective unconscious of the Aryan race.

In 1969, Else Christensen founded the Odinist Fellowship. Until her death in 2005, Else worked tirelessly for her Folk, spreading the word of our faith and our Gods to all who would listen. She founded a prison outreach program that proved to be instrumental to many men. She wrote and published many publications. Her efforts saw her recognized as the Folk-Mother to Asatruar everywhere.



So, what can we learn from this story?

We don't always know where our stories end. We can't always see the ramifications of our thoughts when put into action. Else was just one single woman. She was a woman who believed in unpopular ideas in a time when those ideas were definitively unpopular. Despite being imprisoned for those beliefs, she did not give up.

Our current times are, in many ways, similar to the ones that Else dealt with. They are turbulent and wrought with anger on all sides. We stand at the precipice of a new world, but we have no way of knowing which way the tides will turn. Else didn't turn and run. She stood and faced the future. In doing so, she became one of the most important women in the Asatru movement to date.

When things are hard, when public opinion would have you conform, just remember: your story hasn't reached its end yet, and only you can control the direction the story takes.

Stand strong.

Stand with Else.

Else Christensen is the dedicated hero of Baldrshof. For more information and a deeper dive into the life and acts of our Folkmother, check out Baldrshof.org.



Gythia Catie Erickson
cm.erickson@runestone.org

Holiday

May Day | May 1st (Observed May 18th)



The Maypole (oil on canvas) by Peter Miller

On the heels of Hexennacht, when the cattle were blessed in the smoke of the fire before being sent to their summer fields, we celebrate May Day! Halfway between the spring and summer solstice, May Day is often considered to be the first day of Summer.

Warmer days are becoming normal. The Spring rains that helped to nourish the awakening fields have begun to taper off. The world around us is verdant again.

On May Day, sometimes called Sumermál, big celebrations were held both to celebrate the end of the harder days of winter and to bless themselves and their crops for a fertile and productive year. Men and women leapt over fires together or alone, wishing for fertility in the coming year. The Maypole was raised and around it, people danced and wove their ribbons. Women decorated their windows and doors with flowers and wove them into their hair.

May Day is the coming together of men and women to celebrate life. We use this time to celebrate all the good things that we have, all of the things that we have worked hard for. We have survived the harsh months when stagnation is so easy a thing to fall into. When the celebration is done, the real hard work begins. The plan that was set into motion at Charming of the Plow will now begin the active stage. Those seeds that you planted, or that project that you planned, at Ostara, will now need real tending. May Day marks the beginning. It marks the start of growth.

Where one has the will, all things can happen.



Gythia Catie Erickson
cm.erickson@runestone.org

Upcoming National Events

Midsummer at Óðinshof | June 21st-23rd



You're invited to Midsummer, Óðinshof's signature event of the year! Please join your Folk from across all the districts as we celebrate and honor our Gods and Goddesses at the very First Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly. This weekend will be a summer “spiritual retreat” for all our Folk coming from near and far. It will be filled with inspirational rituals, scrumptious and hearty meals, healing music, warm sunshine, laughter, motivating conversations, and fun activities for all ages!

- Camping onsite at Óðinshof is free and includes the use of outdoor hot showers.
 - Additional lodging options in the greater Brownsville area may also be available.
- Guests (non-members) must be approved prior to the event.
 - Please contact any of the Folkbuilders in advance to assist with this process.

Come home to the heart of the Asatru Folk Assembly for a Midsummer you won't forget!

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me or to Gythia Sheila McNallen.

See you there!

Register today and take advantage of our Early Bird Special! Get your tickets [HERE!](#)



Folkbuilder Olivia Sutherland
osutherland@runestone.org

Sigrblót at Sigrheim | July 19th-21st



The second Sigrblót at the Home of Victory!

And no other place is it more righteous to celebrate the Victory Sacrifice!

This is time we come together to honor both the summer and to make offering to the Æsir in hopes of their blessing for that which we are striving forth to conquer or acquire for us and our Folk! In times now passed, our Folk would be asking for the Æsir's blessings in battles and raids! And we ask now at this time for them to accept what we have to offer that he may lend his strength to see us victorious in our current endeavors!

Blóts! Feasting! Sumbel! An auction with one-of-a-kind items!

Camping is available on-site (bring your own tents and gear), and there are hotels within 20-30 mins of Sigrheim as well. Some AirB&B's in the area too. You are

welcome to come early, stay late, and spend as much time on the land as you'd like. It's open to any of our member Folk!

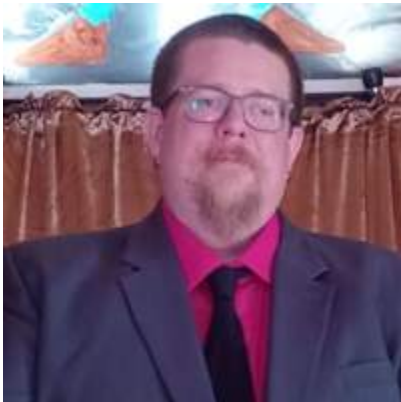
Notice: this is undeveloped land. We will have Port-a-potties and will make sure drinking water is readily available. However, it is imperative that you plan accordingly. There will be a couple large event tents to gather in. But no other public structures.

Please wear appropriate footwear and be prepared for a hike through the woods and up the ridge if you plan on participating in Blót. If you have any physical restrictions, this particular part of the weekend may cause a challenge or an inability to participate on that particular event. If you have off-road vehicles such as 4-runners, ATV's, etc., they would be a most welcome addition to the weekend and could mean the ability to get those who are otherwise restricted, up the ridge and safely back down again.

Bug spray, sunscreen, coolers, water, snacks, tents, blankets, appropriate clothing and footwear is advised.

If you have any questions about the land, area, or event, please reach out to Folkbuilder Nick Rice at nrice@runestone.org.

Get your tickets [HERE!](#)



Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice
nrice@runestone.org

Winter Nights XIII | October 11th-13th



Started in 2012, the Asatru Folk Assembly's Winter Nights festival was hosted at a beloved camp in Pennsylvania for its first decade. Winter Nights has since been hosted in Ohio and in Tennessee and this year Winter Nights XIII will be held from October 11th – 13th, in Cheshire County, New Hampshire!

This long-running AFA festival is dedicated to our ancestral mothers, the Disir. When the harvest is in, the summer plants have died off, and the winter is quickly approaching the veil between the living and dead is said to be at its thinnest. Again, we will gather to worship our Gods, Goddesses, and Ancestral Mothers. We build upon the success of the Asatru Folk Assembly by making new friends and renewing old friendships. We look forward to seeing members and friends!

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

Things to know:

- Children 17 and under attend for free!
- Meals are included with all passes.

- You will need to bring your own bedding and it can get COLD at night, so plan accordingly.
- Accommodations are on-site tent camping. Bring your tent!
- Please contact Witan Clifford Erickson if you will attend.
- Guests, please include the name of the AFA member who is vouching for you.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email cerickson@runestone.org

Get your tickets [HERE!](#)



Witan Clifford Erickson
cerickson@runestone.org

Folkbuilder Spotlight

Ashley McStocker | Folkbuilder | Minnesota



Ashley is one of the most driven of our Folkbuilders in the AFA. She is a mother of three, a dedicated partner, and working her way through nursing school. She is as hardworking as they come, continually having the Folk and her family at the forefront of her motivations and works tirelessly in AFA responsibilities. She is the driving force in building community relations at and around Baldrshof in delivering community building with the monthly food pantry, toy and clothing drives, back-to-school supplies, and other relationship building projects in the local community. This is just scratching

the surface as to her dedication to the Church and her family.

Folkbuilder Ashley McStocker has become a pillar of Baldrshof District while also working to grow Frith outside the district lines. Her tireless efforts have grown a relationship with our community through the monthly food pantry, school supply drive, obtaining holiday meals for those in need, and with the Yule toy drive. She can be found in the kitchen, with the children, assisting in Blot, or building relationships with members each and every month. She is a vital resource for the AFA and a driving force behind the Victory of Baldrshof. Thank you, Ashley, for your sacrifices, dedication, and hard work that contributes to the Folk every day!

-Witan Brandy Fassett-

Ashley McStocker is one of a sweetest ladies that we have in the AFA. She is an incredibly hardworking, strong, and proud woman. Her work with the Baldrshof Food Pantry, the Virtue Recovery group, and any of our members' needs are First-Class, but they're still out shadowed by her loyal dedication to her wonderful children and fiancé. I've been super proud to work alongside her since I stepped up, and I know she's going to keep doing things long into the future, just the same has she has for these last few years!

-Folkbuilder Nick Rice-



So much of what happens at Baldrshof happens because of the tenacity, motivation and drive of Folkbuilder Ashley McStocker. She organizes the food shelf and does the most important job of finding donors. She organizes the school supply giveaway in the fall and toy drive at Yule time. Ashley is the reason our Hof is such an asset to the community of Murdock, MN. She also goes above and beyond in organizing Hof events from planning and cooking meals to thinking up and implementing children's crafts. In addition to all that she runs a Virtue Recovery Meeting once weekly, throws really fun Moots, and is the sweetest friend. I am so grateful to have Ashley in my life and as my kindred sister. Thank you, Ashley, for all you do!

-Corrie Proudfoot, member-

Ashley is very devoted to helping her Folk. She is also very willing to help with anything you may need help with no district lines to hold her back. She is a hard worker and reliable. She can be counted on. She is never too busy to talk. She is a good friend.

-Folkbuilder Heather Young-



She smiles, and without a word, you know that you have a friend and ally. Her demeanor is one of optimism, of handling whatever comes in the most noble and gracious way. She has the energy of youth and the understanding of an elder. Compared to those who are more intense, Ashley brings balance and heart to AFA leadership... both are qualities that are always needed. Steve and I have felt Ashley's warmth since the moment we met her.

-Gythia Sheila McNallen-

I have had the distinct privilege of working with Ashley McStocker over the last few years, whether she is training new Folkbuilders in our district or helping find food donors for our food charities. She is always helpful because she wants to help, not because she feels like she has to. She attacks tasks with unmatched enthusiasm and high energy, and she is a real team player. Ashley is among the very best of our Folkbuilders and she is a pleasure to work with.

-Witan Daniel Young-



It's hard to hail Ashley McStocker because there are so many things she does, and I don't know where to begin.... She is the most caring and sincere mother, a funny and reliable sister, devoted Folkbuilder & beacon for our Folk, and one hell of a friend!

Seeing her in action is a work of art, and she has a genuine heart of gold! Her compassion shows through her deeds and devotion to her family, our Folk, and the Baldrshof community. The bonds she has built with businesses and individuals through the food shelf, school drive, and countless other avenues is beyond belief and priceless. The reminders and tech help are always appreciated too. She finds the time to help me through my phone/laptop smashing mode, and never complains...

From her “dunzo bernardos,” to her awesome crafts and egg bakes, we are all lucky to have her in our corner, working hard for us!

Hail Ashley McStocker, McRockstar, McMurdock, soon to be Erlandson!!!!
-Folkbuilder Jesse Shaffer-

Folkbuilder Ashley McStocker is so much more than a Folkbuilder for her Church. She is someone no one can question that her heart lays with the Folk, her Family, and her Gods. She makes those around her better and does so selflessly. If you don't know Ashley, get to know her, she'd be happy to know you.

Hail Folkbuilder Ashley McStocker!



Gothi Nathan Erlandson
nerlandson@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.

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 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

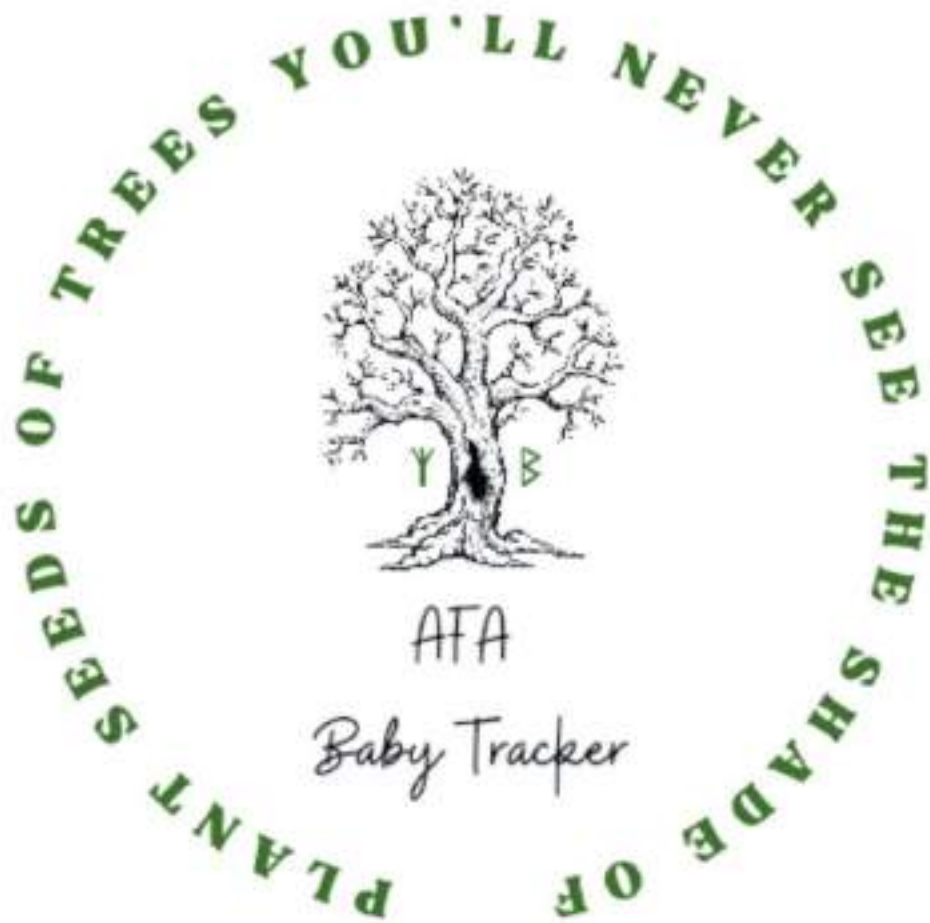
cookies from scratch...make them. Why not? Use the best ingredients you can afford (don't take out a second mortgage for this) but be proud to feed the folk.

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

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: 9

Online Events and Meetings



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







The graphic features the title "AFA Reading Challenge Meetings" in a large, grey, serif font, arched over a central illustration of three stacked books. The top book is red with "GODFATHER" on the spine, the middle is yellow with "Into the woods" on the spine, and the bottom is green. Below the books is a table of dates and a central text block.

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

April 11th

April 25th

May 2nd

May 9th

May 30th

June 6th

June 20th



For more information contact

Witan Brandy Fassett

Folkbuilder Sara Ault





Our Ladies' Rune Study is just getting started! We meet on Teams every other Saturday at 1pm Eastern. Contact me with any questions you might have. —

aplourde@runestone.org.

I hope to see you there!

**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**

A graphic for AFA Eldri Meetings for May. It features a green background with a cluster of purple and white flowers on the left. The text is in purple and green. The title is 'AFA Eldri Meetings for May'. Below it is a quote: 'A place for members aged 50 and older to share memories, ideas, experiences, and the joys of life ~'. The meeting schedule is listed for Tuesdays (5/7 & 5/21) and Fridays (5/10 & 5/24) with times for PT, MT, CT, and ET. A regular link is provided at the bottom left, and the host is listed as Gythia McNallen at the bottom right.

**AFA Eldri Meetings
for May**

*A place for members aged 50 and
older to share memories, ideas,
experiences, and the joys of life ~*

Tuesdays 5/7 & 5/21
5:30 PT, 6:30 MT, 7:30 CT, 8:30 ET

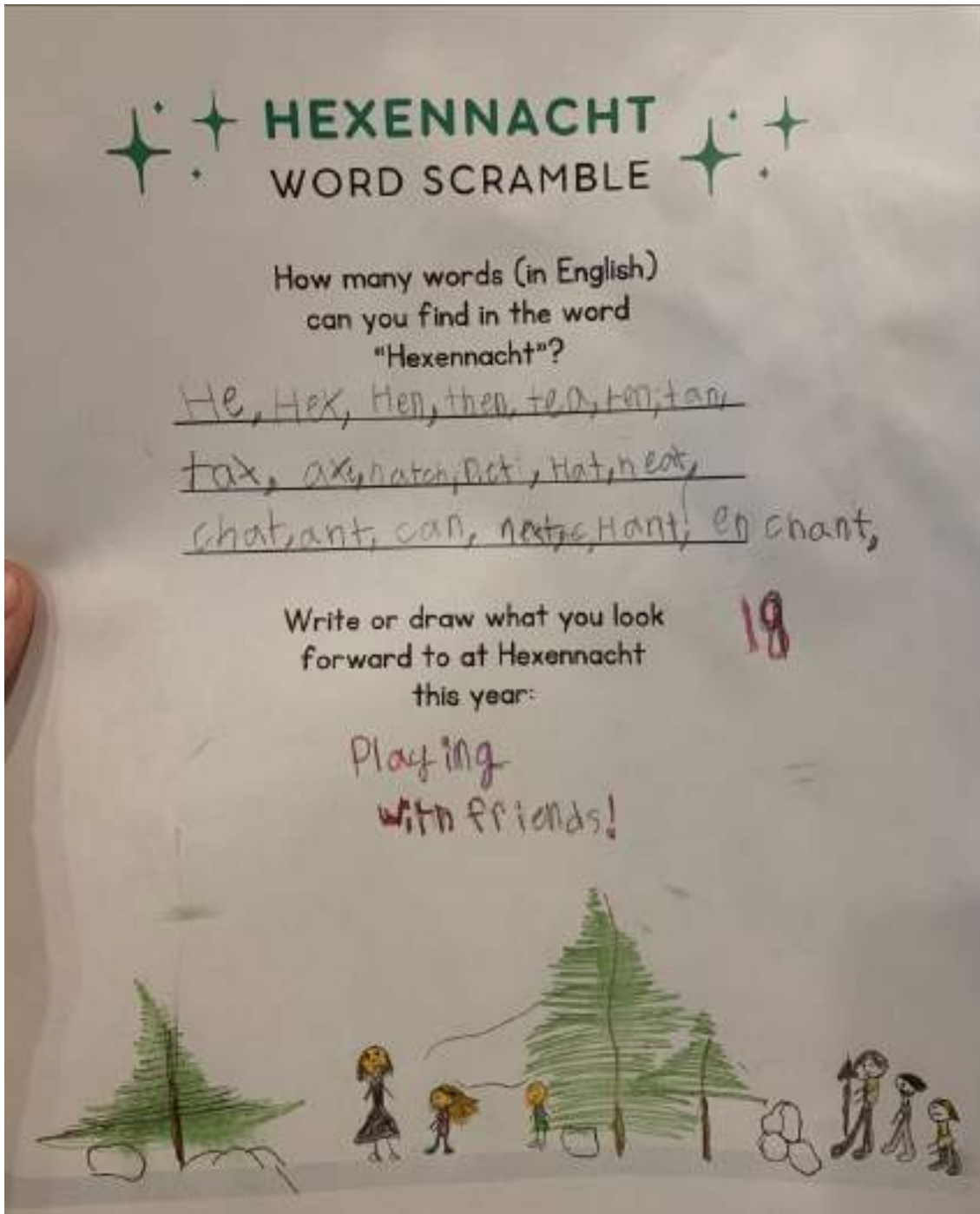
Fridays 5/10 & 5/24
2:00 PT, 3:00 MT, 4:00 CT, 5:00 ET

Use our regular link:
<https://tinyurl.com/yc289cn8>

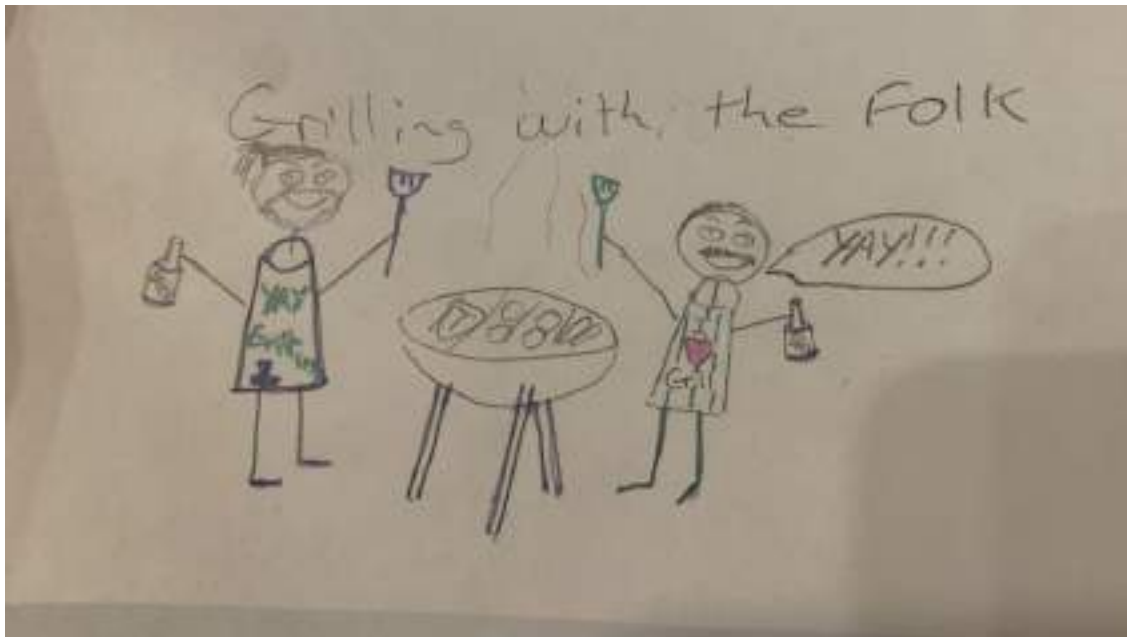
Hosted by Gythia McNallen

Just For Fun

Last month, I invited our members to see how many unique words they could find in the word "Hexennacht." **Hope White** from Baldrshof District found the most--with a total of 28 words!



As for our youth, **Madilene** from Óðinshof District found 19 words!



Additionally, some Folk submitted their words and drawings about what they were looking forward to at Hexennacht. These are really great--thank you all for contributing!



This month, I invite everyone to participate in a May Day Word Search! Who will be the first member from each Hof district to find all nine words and send proof to press@runestone.org?



May Day Word Hunt

When you've found all the words, please submit to press@runestone.org

L N C
 F A B X O D Z H X
 C I U B K H S X F R S Q G
 K O X L U H G O A E J A J W X L G
 O O D N K E C F Y E R L R N B C U Q U
 J A W O G R T L Z W Y V P O R C G A S E A
 Q M O U M S Z D N G Z D O A K H L G I N B
 P G Y K F Y C B D E Q W Q U N Z V T I F L J W
 U A M N M M E Q Z A F H Y T I L I T R E F L N
 I M M L O X A I D L N N N S X Q V B P S L J Q T M
 Q W U V Z F R E Y R U W C L Y N I C S I G U V P L
 C G Z X K P Y L Q P A U G I O Z J I Z X D H S D J
 W M P U L X B Y C N V F B M U N D N O I H S C F E Z I
 C P M H Q S E K O A A Q E W O O G B N V V U D X B H U
 G K E A W Y Y I S R M I A M Z S E M I V G P I G R W T
 J A H K D Y R O Z B B R R L Q C Y U X C L X E B R
 C Z S S O Z L H V A O V I N V D K J N F S D M N W
 Y X H S A F H I J G O F S A X G X U F P F V P L S
 V T C U R F O H P B J N H V I E P S U J U T T
 O X P O I H F B T S G O T J G U W E G T M Z I
 Z L D Z K T E X C G B B R T Y B M J A T Q
 G I P A T A J Q X C B J W A L Y O V C F E
 P B S J M V E T O I V U B W V H Z B P
 X R A O W E D E R A K S P F U O O
 J N L T L W V I X B P L U
 I P N J A Z Z T Y
 N Q H

BLESSINGS
FERTILITY
HARPA

DANCING
FLORA
MAY

FAUNA
FREYR
RIBBONS

And here's a May Day coloring page! :)



Have a Marvelous May!



Folkbuilder Olivia Sutherland
osutherland@runestone.org

Genealogy and Kinship Charts



Come on, AFA family!

- 1) *The AFA Genealogy MeWe group has added “chat”. We can now share tips, discoveries, resources and all the goodies of family tree research.*
- 2) *Create a Gedmatch.com account to obtain a “kit number” to find your DNA matches with other AFA members.*

Send your Gematch Kit # to
Sheila@runestone.org
for inclusion on our next AFA KINSHIP CHART

See how closely you’re related to other AFA members. 72 people so far, and counting!



Gythia Sheila McNallen
sheila@runestone.org

Calling All Folk Photographers



Took some awesome pics at a moot or event? Were you at the Hof recently?

We'd love to see 'em. Send to Photos@Runestone.org



Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice
nrice@runestone.org

Store Spotlight

GO TO [HTTPS://WWW.RUNESTONE.ORG/STORE/](https://www.runestone.org/store/) OR CLICK HERE

New in Store!

TEES! MUGS! HATS!

TEES, TANKS, SWEATERS!
MUGS! HATS! STICKERS!

Óðinshof

Food Pantry at Óðinshof



We've just begun the fourth year of our independent Óðinshof Food Pantry. Prior to that, we were allied with the USDA program through the Yuba-Sutter Food Bank. However, Covid disruptions, extensive paperwork, and the change to a Friday morning distribution for OUR volunteers ended our relationship with the YSFB. We took it on ourselves to provide food for our neighbors – and have never looked back

As of April, we've served 490 different households in this rural area bordering Yuba and Butte counties.



A few changes took place this month that will prove beneficial going forward. Steve and I changed vehicles and now have a Chrysler Town & Country with a huge amount of cargo space. Our Hof Steward installed a large promotional banner for all to see as they enter town. We also changed the giveaway to Sunday morning to give us more time for Hof celebrations on Saturday.



Thursday continues to be the pickup day, but food gets stored on the stage until Saturday night. Then, all-hands-on-deck begin bagging two per family and prep tables for morning setup. It was a delight for me to step back and watch the room transform into an army of brown bags.

It all went exceedingly well Sunday morning. We were done by 11:00, having given food to 54 families representing 183 individuals. To all the people who helped on Saturday and Sunday – you make this a successful team effort. Well done, Folks!



Gythia Sheila McNallen
sheila@runestone.org

Hexennacht at Óðinshof



A Blessed Folk at Hexennacht. Like a myriad of flowers, we had a great number of activities to involve the Folk at Hexennacht. The Hall was set up and ready to receive guests early Saturday morning. Folk began arriving, and soon, we had two areas of focus.



The women began the “Hex Art & Magic” workshop with Sheila McNallen while the men gathered in the Hall to discuss “Warrior Ethos and Spirituality,” led by Stephen McNallen, who shared some books written specifically on that topic. Others who

helped lead the men's discussion were Jim Erickson and Daniel Odom who have both been on the battlefield as Army soldiers.

Folkbuilder Olivia Sutherland then called the men and women together for the “Greeting to the Gods” and Ancestors’ recognition inside the cemetery. This ceremony was especially poignant and heartfelt as she connected us with our own Mothers. Our bouquet of flowers was placed on the grave of the lone spirit in the cemetery– Rebekah, daughter of Thorgrun and Katie. After tears and hugs, Olivia enlisted everyone’s help to beautify the cemetery by planting a variety of flowering plants.



Following a delicious lunch of BBQ hamburgers and venison chili, children and parents gathered indoors to celebrate Aubrey Flavel’s 4th birthday.



Mandy made cupcakes for all, with yellow icing and sprinkles galore, and lots of party treats for the little ones. With her birthday crown and fancy dress, Aubrey was clearly the Princess of the Hof.



The ladies also had a celebration to welcome Cailtin's baby boy who is due in late May. She left for home, well equipped for this little one with diapers and charming little outfits, plus a combination jogging-stroller and car seat, a gift from "Daughters of Frigg" and "Sons of the High-One."



Preparation for May Day was also part of our day as the ladies worked together cutting lengths of grosgrain ribbon for the Maypole next month. One of each color was bundled into a fifteen-foot length. That colorful bundle, carried by the ladies and two little girls, snaked its way around the men in the ritual circle. It is now endowed with Hexennacht blessings for the Maypole ceremony that will take place next month.



We blissfully enjoyed our dinner of homemade lasagna and Knute's pork ribs while our resident musician, Paul Stevens, played a variety of folk tunes. For all who come to Midsummer, you'll enjoy the repertoire of Paul's music, including lots of sing-alongs.

But the day wasn't over. It ended with another bustle of activity as cases of food were brought out for the filling of the Food Pantry bags. Eight people can accomplish a lot in an hour.



In the end, it was a very complete day. Old friends were back. Children played well together, building their friendships. There's no doubt that Óðinshof was filled with Freya's love and bounty.



Gythia Sheila McNallen
sheila@runestone.org

Upcoming Events at Odinhof

2024 Events at Oðinshof

January 20	<i>Thorrablot</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>Sigrblot</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 Oðinshof district. It's been moved to the fourth weekend to allow the food pantry to proceed as normal.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Do Right and Fear No One

AT
Oðinshof



Please RSVP to a Folkbuilder!



August 2 - 4, 2024 Family Camp at Oðinshof



OUR FOCUS:

Parents as teachers: traditional values

3 days of learning and fun for all ages

A spiritual adventure for all

Camping & meals together

For more information contact Sheila or Olivia:
sheila@runestone.org; osutherland@runestone.org

Oðinshof Wish List



Óðinshof Leadership

Oðinshof Leaders
May 2024

Goðar

Alsherjargothi Matt Flavel	mattflavel@runestone.org	907-350-8252
Witan Brandy Fassett	bcaillahan@runestone.org	701-260-6979
Gythia Sheila McNallen	sheila@runestone.org	530-575-8692
Gothi Nathan Erlandson	nerlandson@runestone.org	320-250-3933

Folkbuilders

Lou Nickerson (AZ)	nickerson@runestone.org	323-333-7784
Olivia Sutherland (CA)	osutherland@runestone.org	925-532-5298
Sierra Chapman (CA)	schapman@runestone.org	916-225-9490
Tyler Heinlein (MT)	theinlein@runestone.org	425-280-8979

Apprentice Folkbuilders

Ryan Skinner (CA)	rskinner@runestone.org	907-750-9647
Kyle Reader (ID)	kreader@runestone.org	208-497-8712
Nick Gunn (WA)	ngunn@runestone.org	206-619-3145
Aaron Simbeck (WA)	asimbeck@runestone.org	425-309-1936

Hof Steward

Daniel Odom	dodom@runestone.org	530-854-3244
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Arizona

Additional Arizona Events

GERMAN LUNCH MOOT



**1st Sundays
at 12pm**

PHOENIX, AZ

CONTACT: OSUTHERLAND@RUNESTONE.ORG

California

Friends, Comrades, Asatruar! Lend Me Your Ears!



Óðinshof had another successful work weekend! Most of the usual lads were present including Apprentice Folkbuilder Ryan Skinner, Hof Steward Dan the Man Odom, Master Chef Matt, the Legend Tristan, Zac, and Yours Truly. Our merry band of dedicated religious handymen made further strides in making the Hof of our High God, All-Father Óðinn, a temple worthy of his greatness.

Dan really showed his support for dishes and plates with his fantastic shelves. Handcrafting the beauties out of his most favored material, wood. Ooh, those babies are sweet, I'll tell ya!



Zac-Attack and Apprentice Folkbuilder Ryan Skinner took on the task of installing kick plates on the swinging doors between the hall and the multi-use room. The doors look very nice with their protective plates boys-- Well done!



While my comrades valiantly tackled the projects set before them, I was banished to the attic on a quest to install a light to illuminate the vey, so that Lord Óðinn will be shown in a light more fitting of his stature as Chief God of our Folk. This was no small task. Well, honestly, it's not that hard, though maneuvering in a hot, stuffy, dark attic wasn't easy, but I'm very proud that I had the opportunity to contribute to our Hof and Lord Óðinn.



The next task of our talented troop of tradesmen was a death defying, high-stakes, scaffold climbing, barge rafter installation. The crafty carpenters amongst us really earned their salt on this one. After erecting multiple stories of scaffolding and a catwalk with 4x4s, Tristan the Legend, Master Chef Matt, and Daniel the Manual installed half of the barge rafter. Why half? Well, because there are only so many hours in a day, and you can't rush art. Also, because we're going to be working around the power line coming into the building and figured it's best not to rush it and get fried.

Do you ever think to your self, "Man, I sure wish I could do something to help the Hof with a bunch of cool Folks?" Well, hot dog! Look no further friend. Think of this article as an invitation. Join the men and women of Óðinshof at one of our fun-filled work weekends. There's work for all skill levels and good times to be had by all. Please contact your local Folkbuilder or the Hof Steward for more details!



Brodie Sutherland
Member

Overcoming



My Personal Journey of Transformation and Healing

In the quest for personal growth and well-being, the journey of self-improvement often presents challenges that require courage, determination, and a strong moral compass. My journey led me to overcome alcohol addiction, significant obesity, type 2 diabetes, and diagnosis of congestive heart failure and cardiomyopathy.

The Choice: A Triumph of Willpower and Determination

Facing the devastating diagnosis of congestive heart failure and cardiomyopathy was daunting and required nothing less than abrupt and drastic changes to my life. Quitting alcohol, moving my family and myself to a more hospitable climate, embracing regular exercise, and adopting a balanced diet became essential components of my healing journey. These changes are far from easy, but they were life-saving.

At one point, my ejection fraction—the measurement of how much my heart squeezes with each beat—was a dangerously low 15%. Through unwavering commitment and dedication to my health, my ejection fraction has improved dramatically and is now above 45% and climbing. As of March 2024, after being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes for over 7 years and requiring insulin and other medications to manage my blood sugar, I was informed by my doctors that I am no longer considered a type 2 diabetic due to the choice to reclaim my life. This reversal of my heart condition and diabetes is a testament to the resilience of the human body and the transformative power of choice and willpower.

Discipline: A Path to Physical and Mental Strength

Pushing myself physically and mentally played a pivotal role in my recovery. Beyond merely the benefits of weight loss, increased strength, and enhanced cardiovascular health, exercise became a source of mental resilience and emotional well-being. It cultivates perseverance and confidence—traits that resonate deeply with the values of Thor, the god of strength, courage, and protection.

Consume: Nourishing Body and Mind

Managing my eating habits is crucial in my healing journey. I aim for a balanced diet with fresh, unprocessed ingredients rich in proteins, healthy fats, and nutrients to support my body's recovery and vitality. I've learned that feeling hungry isn't negative. Aligning my diet with our faith's principles strengthens my connection to nature's bounty and promotes a healthy relationship with food that respects both body and mind. This connection reflects the values of Freyr, the god of fertility, prosperity, and abundance, who is often associated with the blessings of the land and nature's bounty.

Faith: Guiding Principle for the Balanced Life of Folkish Ásatrú

Our faith serves as a pillar of morality and guiding principles that continues to inspire me to cultivate moral integrity, personal responsibility, and a deep reverence for life. I embrace the Noble virtues—Courage, Truth, Honor, Fidelity, Discipline, Hospitality, Industriousness, Self-Reliance, and Perseverance—Empowers me to navigate life's challenges with adroitness and wisdom. I believe this reflects the aspects of Odin, the Allfather, who embodies knowledge, wisdom, and the pursuit of truth.

Honoring Values

The physical and spiritual principles of the A.F.A. are helping me heal and grow. I hope my continued journey can help inspire others to explore their own paths of healing.

We all have the strength within us to overcome.

Upcoming Events



Ryan Skinner
Apprentice Folkbuilder
rskinner@runestone.org



A Beautiful Place for our Ancestors



At Óðinshof, we are fortunate to have our very own cemetery, a peaceful fenced-in plot of sacred land for our loved ones to be remembered. Our family has wandered in there at times over the years to calm children. However, I've often wondered why we couldn't be doing more to help Folk connect with their Ancestors in this space.

After sharing my ideas for an ancestor ritual and intentional time for cemetery beautification, Gythia McNallen invited me to lead this—my first ritual in the Óðinshof Cemetery at Hexennacht!



We began with a Greeting to the Gods and then transitioned to honoring our Ancestors. The love in our hearts filled the cemetery! I then called our Folk to honor the Ancestors further by taking action. We all picked up garden tools and started digging, raking, and pulling out the weeds. It was a gorgeous and warm spring day for this, without a cloud in the sky.



We had a fun time planting fragrant roses and jasmine. With the help of our new sprinkler and the ongoing loving care from our Folk, the beautiful flowers we planted will be enjoyed for generations to come!

Thank you everyone who helped with these efforts.

Hail the Ancestors!

A History of Flower Crowns



One of my favorite AFA summertime activities is that of making flower crowns at the Hof. These beautiful hair accessories add so much vibrant color and joy to wearers! Aside from being fashionable and fun to make with your Folk, they are traditional symbols of love and fertility that have truly stood the test of time.

While today we might use fake flowers from the dollar store, in ancient agrarian times, our Ancestors made flower crowns from native plant materials. The crowns were representative of the land and its abundance.



One of the most well-documented Aryan societies to wear flower crowns were the Ancient Greeks. Men and women both would wear crowns to honor their Gods. Often European art and literature depicts Gods and Goddesses wearing crowns made of plants and flowers.



In Rome, a celebration around this time took place called Floralia, and it was held in honor of the Goddess Flora, associated with fertility and beauty. In Norse tradition, I find that both goddesses Ostara and Freya are often depicted with floral hair pieces, and we also associate them with beauty and the fertility of the land.



In the Latin poem *Metamorphoses*, the god Apollo wears a crown of laurel as a symbol of his love for the nymph Daphne. Apollo cuts off a branch of the laurel tree, which she has magically transformed into, and says that even though she cannot be his wife, he will wear her on his head forever.



While some crowns are quite simple, others are highly detailed. At Midsummer festivals in Scandinavia, the floral crowns are traditionally made with nine different types of flowers! Even more elaborate are the flower crowns of Ukraine which include not only flowers and foliage, but also feathers, shells, threads, beads, foil, wax, and painted sawdust for sparkles.



There is one summer solstice tradition where women place their crowns in a river while thinking of a romantic relationship. The water's flow and movement (or lack of movement) of the crown is said to determine the fate of the relationship. Sometimes the hair wreaths are then rescued by the enchanted men who jump in to catch them!

During the Medieval Times, there was a decline in floral crown wearing due to the spread of Christianity. Christians did not like the association of floral crowns with the pagan gods and goddesses, and it was thought that wearing such crowns was a symbol of witchcraft.

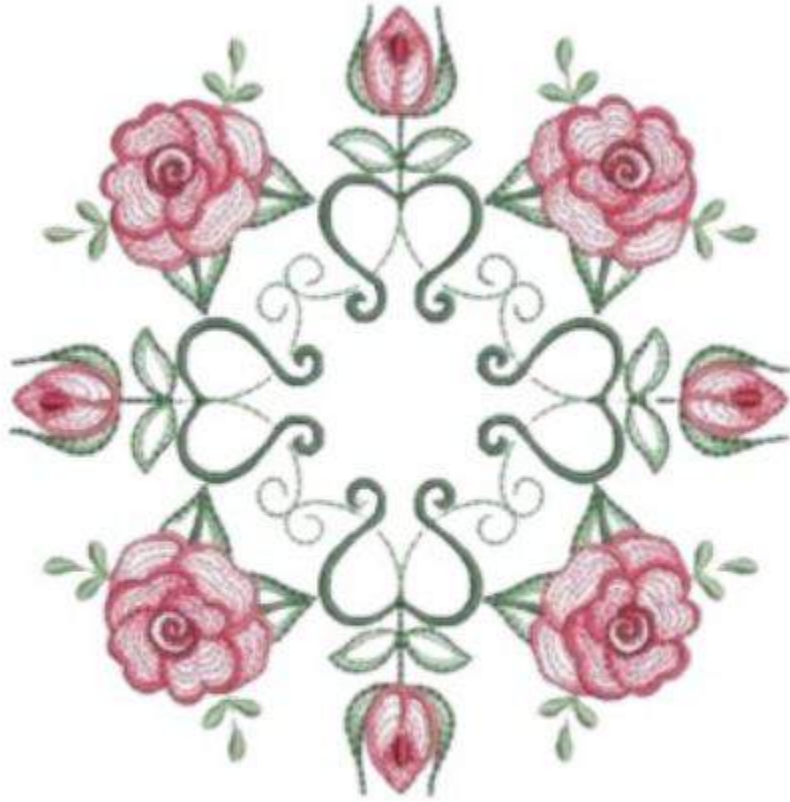


We can thank Queen Victoria for bringing the flower crown back into favorability and fashion. On her wedding day in 1840, she wore a crown of orange blossoms.



Flower crowns have seen some amazing times, and they continue to be an accessory made and worn ritualistically, especially during this time of year. Today, our flower crowns are intentionally made and proudly worn by women at AFA May Day and Midsummer events as we welcome the warmer months and this beautiful, blooming season!

Daughters of Frigg



Daughters of Frigg

Our Óðinshof Ladies' Group, Daughters of Frigg, now has an official logo! Thank you to all the ladies who gave input on coming up with a fitting design at Hexennacht. It was really wonderful visiting with you all that morning, exploring the runes and hex art together with Gythia McNallen. The baby shower for Caitlin was a great success, thanks to the generosity of our lovely ladies and our menfolk too!

Hope to see you at the next Virtual Tea, on a Work Weekend, at the May Member's Meeting, and/or at May Day!

Upcoming Events



Vitual Tea is a time for our ladies across the district get to know each other, laugh, share stories, and strengthen friendships. Please check the Daughters of Frigg MeWe page for the link to join.



You're all invited to a brunch of champions on May 11th! I moved the date so it does not conflict with the work weekend. See you there!



Folkbuilder Olivia Sutherland
osutherland@runestone.org

Idaho

Powerlifting



For anyone who has seen my posts on MeWe or has had a chance to talk with me, you will know I am obsessed with strength training and competing in powerlifting. One question I get asked often is, “What is powerlifting?”

Powerlifting is a competition of strength using the squat, bench press, and deadlift. We are given 3 attempts at each lift to successfully perform with the most weight we can, and the highest weight of each lift is added together to make your total. Your total in a sense is your score and helps determine where you place in the competition. If we are unsuccessful in completing at least 1 of our 3 attempts at any given lift, we “bomb out” or are disqualified from the meet.

On April 27th, I stepped back on the platform after being away from competing for 2 years. I successfully completed a 760 lb squat, 507 lb bench press, and a 545 lb deadlift giving me a total of 1,812 lb. My next competition is on August 31st where I want to get an 800 lb squat, 560 lb bench, and a 600 lb deadlift.

I will be posting all of my training for this competition on MeWe in our AFA Physical Excellence Group. If you're not on MeWe yet, there is no better time to join than now. We have so many great AFA groups on MeWe like Spiritual Excellence, Genealogy,

Outdoors, and so many others--not to mention it is the best place to network with everyone in the AFA no matter where you are!

Upcoming Events



On May 18th, we will be holding our May Day moot at my home. I'll be smoking up some amazing BBQ! Also, that night our local radio station is putting on a "Second Chance Prom" which my wife and I have gone to for the last 2 years. It is a ton of fun, and we invite you all to join us after the BBQ to dance the night away. As always, my home is welcome to all who need to stay the night due to long travel, so don't let a couple hours' drive stop you from coming out.



Kyle Reader
Apprentice Folkbuilder
kreader@runestone.org

Additional Idaho Events

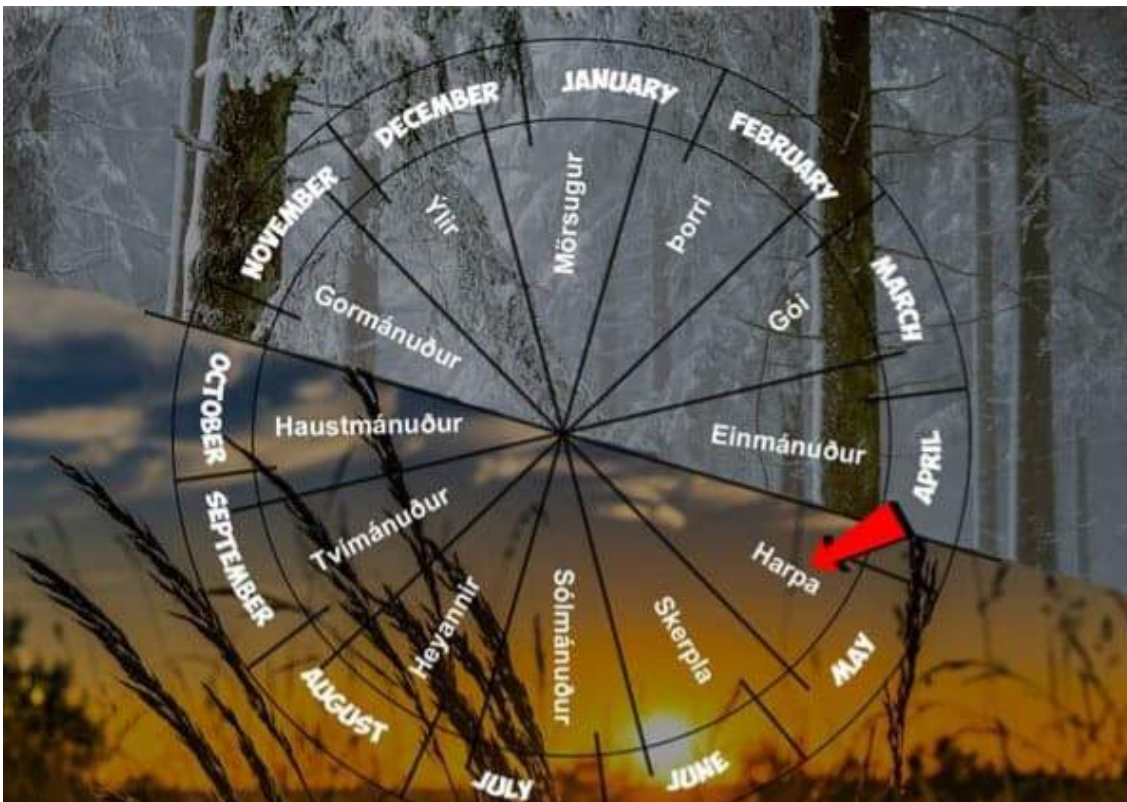


Montana

Harpa



As we enter a new month full of opportunity for growth and Frith, I take time to examine what traditions have been passed down for this time of year. In doing so, I start with examining the Old Norse calendar. We've discussed this calendar in previous months, and I intend to continue this exploration with this month known as Harpa.



Harpa is a fairly easy etymological leap. Harpa is harp or, more accurately, the month of the harp and the harp's moon. It is a time for using singing and music to rejoice at the return of summer.



We celebrate, with song and dance, this return of life. We see it blossom in meadows, spring forth in the fields, bound through the trees and glitter in the brooks. From the end of the last month's thaw, we open our eyes and are met with tiny flowers popping up here and there. This change happens suddenly and is so small we might miss it if we don't stop to hear the songs of the birds who've returned and fill our ears and hearts with their nectar sweet melodies.



The month of Harpa was also known as Gaukmánuður for the bird gauk or, as we know them, the cuckoo, which migrates back this time of year to signal a very clear shift in all the animals' lives and our own. Lambing and calving are almost over with only a few strays being born. Now our fields have young ones running through them, and we can see spotted fawn peeking through brush. The time for the late births is here including that of our own people.



As such, Harpa is dedicated to our girls. Our sons were celebrated last month, and now our girls are celebrated in this one. As in *Völuspá* where Elm followed Ash, so too did the calendar have Harpa follow Einmánuður. Our girls, so full of life and joy, certainly fit the warmth of Spring and the softness of the sun more than the energetic thaw. Recognizing these differences is where we can find true happiness. Our girls are special, and recognizing that, like the seeds being planted this month, the care we put into their growth and development will ultimately dictate the quality of their outcome.

Giving our girls the chance to be feminine and play is just as overlooked as teaching them skills to serve them well for when they have a hearth of their own one day. For my family, we have our girls cook with us and play with us every day. The gift my daughter most loves is her little broom set, and she helps me sweep the house every morning. Often do people get so wrapped up in the feminist notion of women being able "to do anything a man can do" that they stop letting our girls do anything traditionally feminine. Is it truly any wonder why we as a people have so many unhappy girls and women?



As a man I can do a great many things, but I cannot birth new life into Midgard, I am not most suited at weaving Frith or bearing cups, I cannot fill the female roll at Blót, and much more. But I do not want to, for that is the very special role reserved for our women. Instead of envy, I choose to celebrate our women when they fill this role much

in the same way I expect the same in return. So, fathers and mothers, raise your girls to be girls, and let them not try to be men. I invite you to reject the notion that there is anything wrong with embracing the beauty of femininity and allow your girls to blossom into womanhood with the joy that comes from our traditions and customs.

This month also celebrates the Landvaettir and the very land itself, and our girls can play a very important role in this celebration by gathering and preparing flowers for offering, lighting candles for our Goddesses, and singing. I cannot stress how important singing is during this time of year-- let our lands know that summer has arrived with our voices, and enjoy the gift of voice that was given to us by the Gods!



Our girls should also be given the opportunity to bear the horn for guests this month so that they can prepare for their role as mead bringers upon becoming women in the future. Food, drink, story, and once again song should be shared around an outdoor fire when guests come knocking this month with our girls there to assist in the hosting.

Our women and girls play a pivotal role in this month's May Day celebrations as well, but the details I will leave for others' articles as this is a full subject on its own.



Harpa is also the time for sowing. The land has been prepared, and now the weather is agreeable for planting and for traveling. It is this time that we plant our gardens or reseed our farms. We can sprinkle our fields with ash from our Yule log to bolster the fertility of the soil as well. The ground is now fit for travel and, as our ancestors were more familiar with the ground, it was also fit for warfare. Harpa's traditions take this

into account by being a month for an Óðinsblót. The blot asks for safe travels and victory in the battlefields, as needed, and this was followed by a big feast.



One last ritual, for those fortunate enough to have horses, was to ride with the sunrise holding a sunwheel in one hand and the reins in the other to celebrate the return of Sunna. It's unclear if this was a weekly event during Harpa, but the day of the week Sunnudagr and its connection to Sunna and the first month of summer would suggest that it was customary and may have carried on every Sunnadagr until Midsummer.



Certainly, the month of Harpa is a month filled with celebrations and activities that we can engage in as we take time to be better connected with the seasons. Take the time to truly live and use this first month of summer to breathe life into your household. Celebrate our girls and find joy in all the wonderful things they do.

Hail Harpa!

Hail Our Girls!

Upcoming Events



Folkbuilder Tyler Heinlein

theinlein@runestone.org

Montana News



Hexennacht was held here in Western Montana on April 27th. We were joined by the Valentine family who made the trek all the way from up by the Canadian border, and we were overjoyed to have their company!! The first part of the day found the men and women of our kindred doing different things.



Our men gathered together for a bit of camaraderie and axe throwing, while the women engaged in their own activities, like bundling herbs and other feminine magic.



Late in the afternoon, everyone regrouped for a feast of smoked pork, bacon, stuffed bread rolls (and a conversation about their various origins and regional variations), potatoes, and many other lovely appetizers, followed by a bonfire.



The herb bundles made by our ladies earlier in the day were offered up to Freya in the flames of the fire, and a Sumbel followed well into the night.

At the time of writing this, the Harlan family is waiting the imminent arrival of the newest addition to our family. Baby number four should have joined us here in Midgard by the time you read these words. We're past our due date, so look forward to hearing all about it in our next issue! (Editor's Note: Born on May Day, May 1st, she is a beautiful and healthy baby girl!)

Folkbuilder Ryan Harlan
rharlan@runestone.org



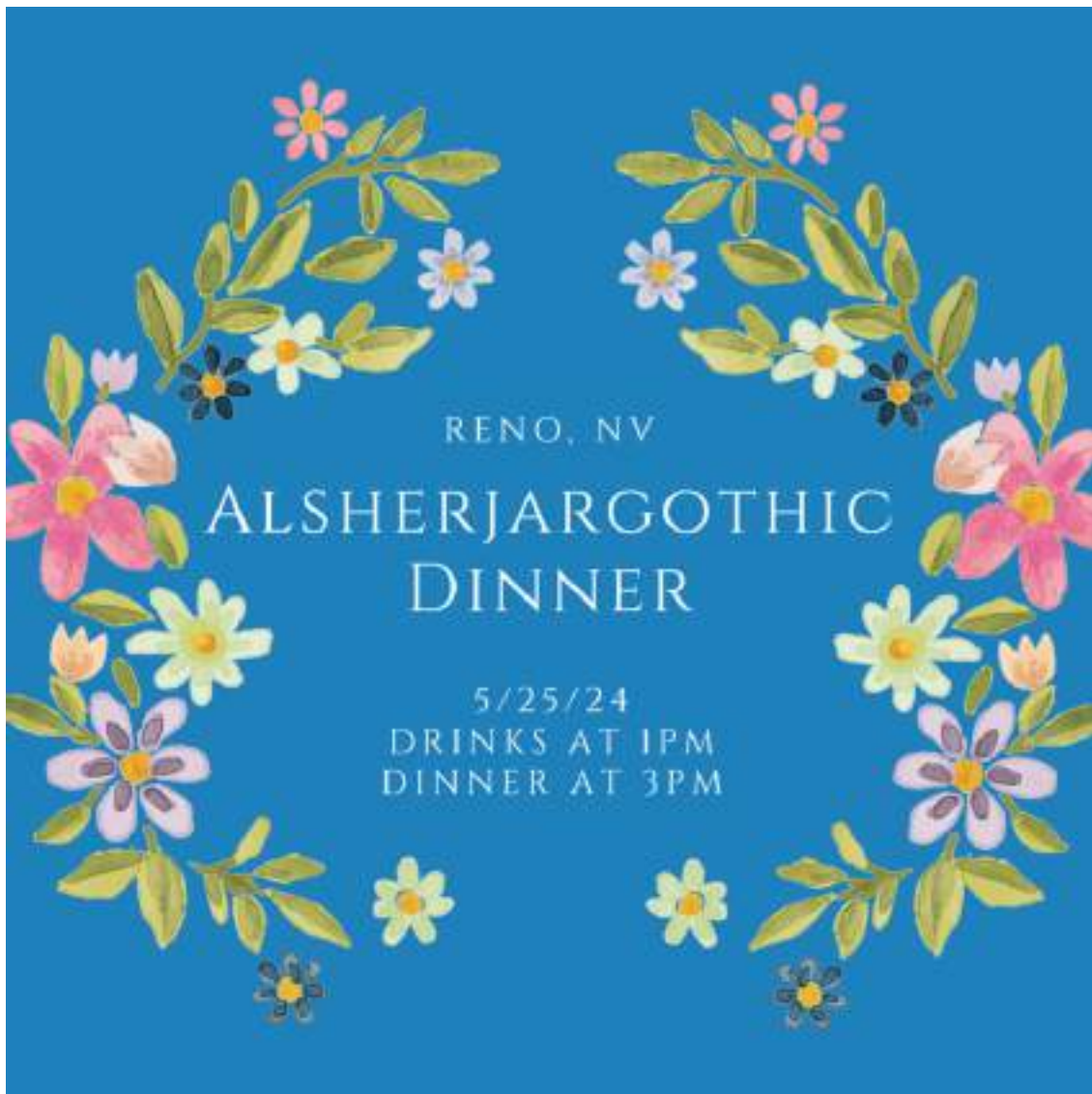
Nevada

Alsherjargothic Dinner



We had a great dinner this month with some amazing fried pickle dip that we are definitely going to make again. We look forward to seeing all who can make it at our dinner on Saturday the 25th.

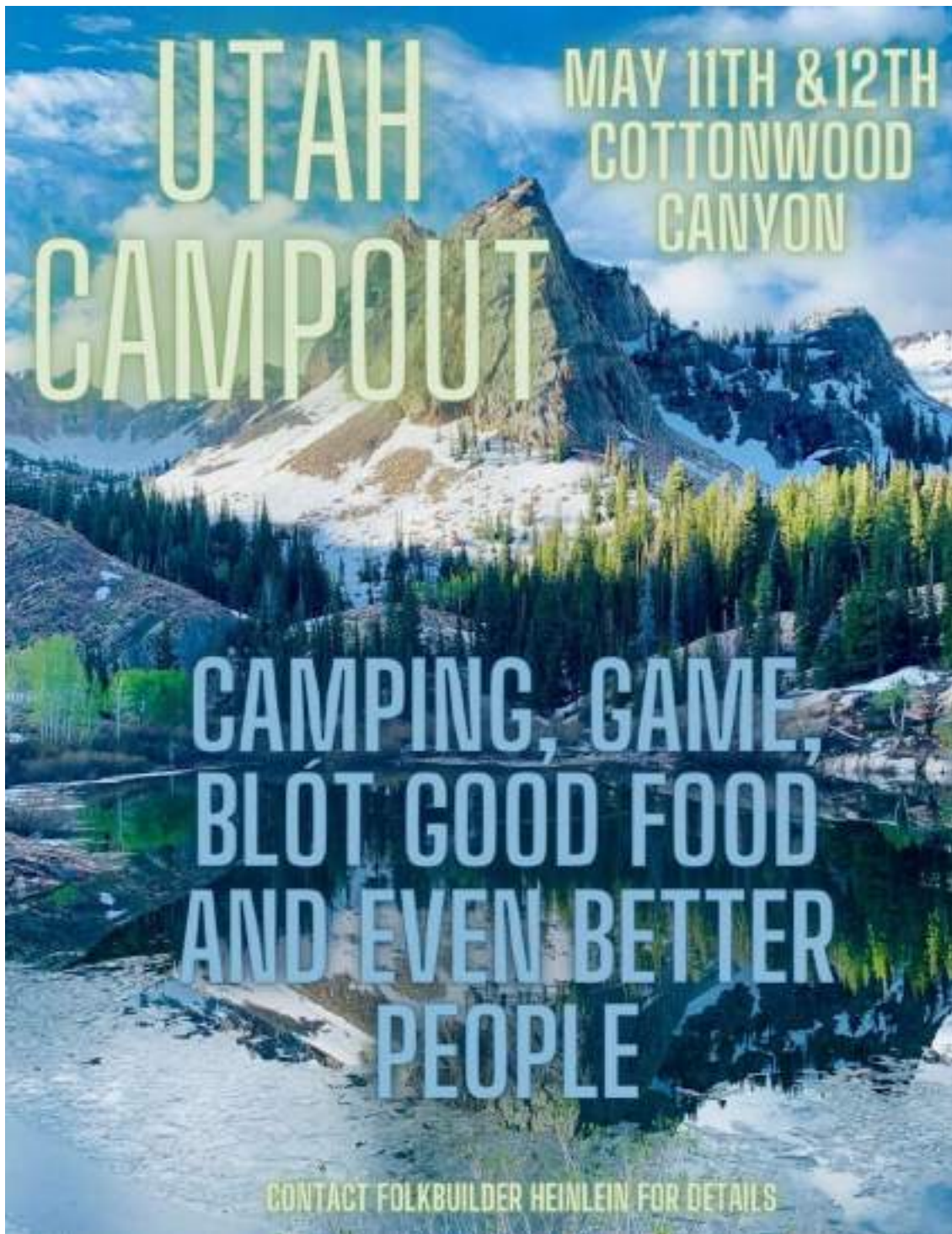
Upcoming Events



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

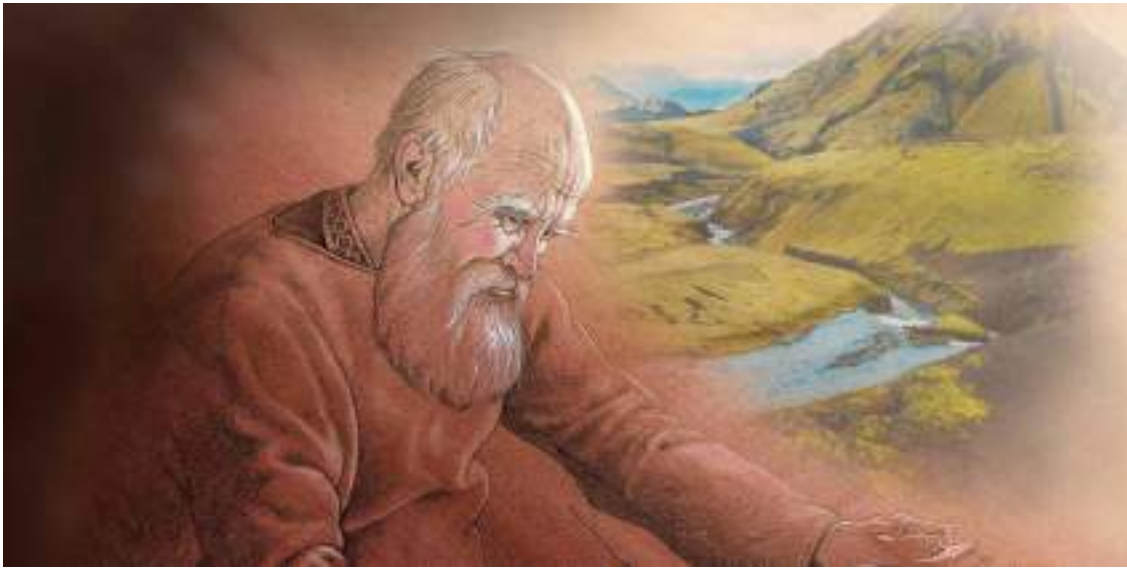
Utah

Upcoming Events



Washington

In Celebration of the Prose Edda



I like the Prose Edda. Its translations are smooth, and it resembles something closest to a systematic theology that we have on record from the Middle Ages. The fornyrdislag of the Poetic Edda is often hard for me to read as a modern English reader, so I appreciate Snorri's general overview of our Norse theology using sentence structures that seem closer to home in my mind. This article is a celebration of the Prose Edda, its relevance, and, of course, its inseparable rise to cultural power along with the Codex Regius' Poetic Edda.

The Prose Edda was re-discovered in 1643, right before the end of the thirty years' war, by Bishop Brynjolf Sveinsson. The peace treaty after these Christian wars was called the "Peace of Westphalia" and it began the Enlightenment. This Norse book remained absent during the Renaissance. Consequently, many of the Renaissance artists who became overwhelmingly Dutch, Danish, and German, if they did do pagan art, it was in the context of Greece and Rome. About 100 years after the Peace of Westphalia, the Romantic Movement (ironically named) started. First in Germany, bringing with it the rebirth of a paganism that was neither Greek nor Roman, but Germanic. The Romantic Period—as defined by the reactionary philosophers of Kant, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche; and by musicians and story-writers like Wagner and the Grimm Brothers—repelled universalism in favor of "Volkstum"—a unified language, people, and culture that cannot be outfitted universally but can be universally praised as coming from a particular national soul. Objectivism, as a moral goal, fell to existentialism.

Background to the finding of the text: King Frederick III came to power almost at the same time as the ending of the Thirty Year's War. The war, which was started by Christian dogmatists, made Europe start to wane in their blood-thirst for Orthodox doctrine. Frederick, the future king of Denmark and Norway, was educated at [Sorø](#)

[Academy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sor%C3%B8_Academy) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sor%C3%B8_Academy> and studied in the Netherlands and France. As a young man, he demonstrated an interest in theology, natural sciences, and Scandinavian history.

On 1 October 1643 Frederick wed [Sophie Amalie](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sophie_Amalie_of_Brunswick-L%C3%BCneburg) of the Germanic Brunswick-Lüneburg <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sophie_Amalie_of_Brunswick-L%C3%BCneburg> realm, the daughter of [George, Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George,_Duke_of_Brunswick-L%C3%BCneburg) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George,_Duke_of_Brunswick-L%C3%BCneburg>, which gave him his initial political power. Within his first year, he ordered a gathering of old texts special to the Danish people. As he collected these books, his collection became the foundation for the [Copenhagen Royal Library](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Library,_Copenhagen) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Library,_Copenhagen>. .

In 1643, Bishop Brynjolfr Sveinsson, under the orders of king Frederick the III of Denmark, retrieved the Prose Edda from a monastery. That text is the only comprehensive account of Norse paganism from the Middle Ages.

Snorri's motives for writing the Prose Edda are varied as he himself professed to being Christian. It may have been a noble desire to salvage a knowledge that was quickly fading into obscurity. Or, as an homage to the king of Norway who eventually had him killed anyway. Nonetheless, Sturluson was a well-educated aristocrat with an exalted political position who preserved the culture of pre-Christian Scandinavia. While he was eventually assassinated by an agent of the Norwegian king, his legacy endures centuries after his death as a cultural bearer and poet.

We also don't know where the word "Edda" comes from, but we have some theories. One is that Edda is a town (a town later renamed Oddi where Snorri was educated at), and others say Edda is Latin for "I write." A newer theory is that Edda is an Old Norse name for "great-grandmother." Edda appears in the poem Rígsþula for a great-grandmother. The word also has been related to the Sanskrit term [veda](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/veda#Sanskrit) (meaning "knowledge") <<https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/veda#Sanskrit>>.

The collection of texts, consists of a Euhemerization Prologue which is a "historical theory" of the creation of the Norse pantheon from Greco-Roman people of the past. The main content of the Edda is the Gylfaginning which translates as the "Beguiling of Gylfi." In other words, it's a dialogue between the god Odin and the legendary Swedish King Gylfi, recounting divine events. The Skáldskaparmál is the third section and is another dialogue; this time between the god Bragi and Ægir. The final, smaller section

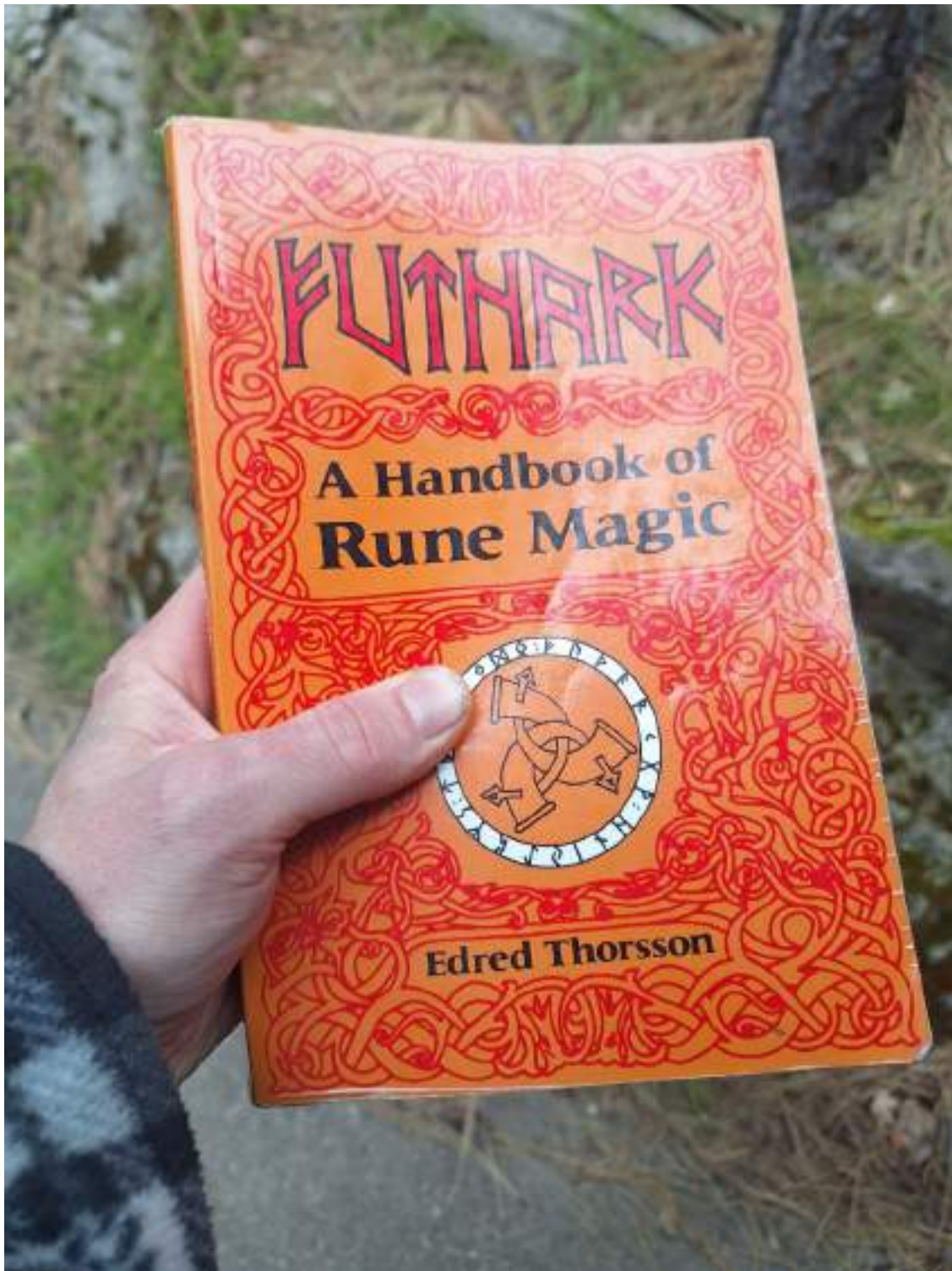
is the 'Háttatal' which consists of three songs of praise about the Norwegian King Hákon and his father-in-law.

Religiously, there was no single authoritative version of a particular lore, and even the gods varied in demeanor from place to place, depending on the people. I'm just guessing here: the Norwegian Odin may have been more aggressive than the Frisian Woden who was often depicted as Woden "Oski" giver of gifts, as maybe Father-Christmas would look; the Swedish version may have been more Shamanic, sharing common culture with the Finns. The Finns, in my opinion, are just Eastern Swedes. Furthermore, the Germanic Wotan may have been more of a storm-god of the sky. And finally, the proto-Germanic Wodanaz, may have been more a god of reincarnation and the underworld. What can be said is there is a mutability principle to the immutable, reincarnating Odin, and all should be celebrated. In other words, Odin shows up to a people in ways that are most needed and least expected.

I think Odin showed up to Snorri, and, even as a Christian, I'm positive he experienced a lot of Odinic enjoyment writing down his Prose Edda. Snorri's Prose Edda lores of Odin-Gangleri "the Wanderer" stays true to that long-held, experiential tradition. Bathe in the words from the poet Snorri, and let them be your guide and guard to experience Odin in fresh and relatable ways!

— Jak Kessler, Member

An Introduction



Hails, Everyone!

I'm Nick Gunn. I was born and raised in the shadow of Mount Rainier on the rainy side of Washington State. That ever-present backdrop of pine-covered mountains blanketed by mist stirred something deep within me from a young age--call it ancestral blood memory if you'd like. It was my longstanding love of the outdoors that was the first step on my home to Gods, albeit indirectly. I know there's got to be a few of you that can relate. The household I grew up in wasn't a religious one by any stretch of the

imagination, and I spent much of my adolescence and early adulthood in search of a proper spiritual path. Most rung hollow for me, and that wasn't to say my attempts were insincere, but nothing 'stuck' in the way Asatru did.

My first encounter with our faith was finding a copy of Futhark by Edred Thorsson at a garage sale when I was fourteen years old and being completely spellbound by it. At the time, I wasn't aware of the runes being attached to any organized religion that people practiced in the present day. I just thought that they represented a metaphysical understanding of the cosmos passed down from our ancestors, in addition to being cool symbols I would doodle in notebooks almost pathologically. After fifteen years and move after move, I still have that book. After well over a decade of soul-searching, a few potent synchronicities and decent amount of research, I finally renounced the off-brand Christianity I tried forcing upon myself and came home to the Aesir and the religion of my ancestors. It was worth it.

I haven't been with the AFA very long in the scheme of things, but, after all this community of amazing people has done for me in that time, I felt it necessary to give back in whatever ways I can. I am proud to serve you all as an Apprentice Folkbuilder and look forward to meeting more of you in the future!

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!



Nick Gunn
Apprentice Folkbuilder
ngunn@runestone.org

Happy Hunting!



On April 26th and 27th, we went out hunting for turkey. Other than two toms roosting and a solitary jake on Saturday morning, we didn't find any other turkeys. We set up in a few spots and called, but we only had a few responses. On Friday night, we found a spot where two toms were roosted and had been fighting. We called to them and had them calling back for at least a half hour before we had to call it a night. In the morning, we put out a couple decoys and set up our blind, but they were on to us and ran away, and that's just how it goes sometimes.



Although we didn't harvest any turkeys, we got the opportunity to drive through beautiful countryside. We enjoyed being in nature and listening to the songbirds in the forest and ended up having a great time. I'll be going out a few more times this month to find where they're all hiding. With turkeys, it's quite easy to scare them away. They have good eyesight, so, if you move too much, they'll see you. They're not terribly smart, but, if you call too much, they can spook, and, if you call too little, they'll lose interest and waddle away.



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 up...

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

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

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

Thanks in advance!

Photo Donations

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



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

Eir's Blessings



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

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

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

You can reach us at EirsBlessings@runestone.org

Last Will and Testament

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



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

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

Please make your will **today**.

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

Allen Turnage
PO Box 16027
Tallahassee FL, 32317

Witan Allen Turnage
aturnage@runestone.org



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