

The Runestone: Voice of the Asatru Folk Assembly





## Þorshof

Second Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly

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# **Words from the Alsherjargothi**



As 2023 comes to a close and we prepare to begin the 30<sup>th</sup> year of the AFA, it is time to take stock of where we are. It is time to take stock of the successes and failures of 2023 and how we can build upon those successes and correct the failures in 2024.

I am so proud and so happy to build my life and my family with my AFA brothers and sisters. We have something truly beautiful in our AFA. Those who come out and engage know this and it is absolutely life changing. Too many of our folk, some who are reading this, have not yet experienced the fullness of our church. We are real, we exist in the real world. I want to take this time to encourage all our Folk to come out and participate! Go to our Hofs. Go to the moots. Do Asatru in real life. This and every issue of the Runestone is packed with images of our amazing family getting together and building the life we want, together. If you are in these pictures, FANTASTIC! If you aren't, your folk want you to share this with us and we want to share it with you and your family.

We have amazing things ahead and I am very excited to share all 2024's blessings with our beautiful AFA family!

Happy Yule!



Matthew D. Flavel  
Alsherjargothi, Asatru Folk Assembly  
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## Words from our Gothar

*Asatru: More Than a Club*



“Asatru is so much more than just rollin’ with the homies!”  
 - Alsherjargothi Flavel, Midsummer 2023

\*Much of this piece was originally drafted a day or two after Midsummer at Óðinshof, which was in the middle of a small exodus of people who did not take Asatru or our Gods seriously. A few people left, and these few people were each followed by a few others whose loyalties were with their friends rather than the Æsir.\*

Some of our people who identify as Asatru seem to do so simply as a way to be different, as a path to a culture that is counter to the mainstreams of Christianity and atheism. As someone with very strong feelings on both Christianity and atheism, I can understand that aspect. However, these same people tend to treat our faith and our church as if they are nothing more than a club. It is nothing to them but another way to spend time with their buddies. This is the wrong way to look at Asatru, or any faith, for that matter.

The word Asatru means “loyal to the Æsir”, which translates to belief in our native Gods, as well as staying true to them. This is why the AFA has Hofs dedicated to the Æsir, rituals honoring and exchanging gifts with the Æsir, and ordained clergy to manage all of these things.

What we do here is not only real and serious, but will echo throughout the currents of time itself. Our ancestors are watching us from beyond the veil, raising cups or horns alongside us every time we hail our Gods and Folk. Our descendants are already being

born into a world with multiple Hofs. Our present Folk are returning to the Æsir in record numbers, never seen before and predicted only in the minds of optimistically pious.

Our Gods are with us- and by “us”, I will forever be speaking of the Asatru Folk Assembly.

This is not a club. This is not a hobby. This is real, because our Gods are real. This is who we are.



Gothi Trent East  
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*Call of the Wild: Kulning and Ladies' Chants in Modern Asatru*



Asatru is not just a living religion, but it allows for change in the 21st century. We're establishing customs and new traditions in the AFA that were previously unknown, as far as we know. Our fundamental beliefs include cycles of rebirth, as in Sunna at the Solstice and bright Baldr's return. We also see ourselves as our Ancestors reborn.

A practice that was initiated at Midsummer 2010 is the ladies preparing the horn before blot. AFA elder David Byron James (who has long-since passed-on) presided over the blot where he had the women step aside into a circle "to speak words over the horn."

That basic ritual now ends in three special - magical - words that have been repeated hundreds of times at this point. Hundreds of babies have been born into the AFA since then. Let those words speak for themselves. The women know. The women have always known.

Some of our changes have taken place quite recently; in fact, since our own Witan, Brandy Callahan, stepped forth to lead. Anyone who has worked with her sees a rare fearlessness that she encourages in others. She has us ladies develop our own voices and presence in a dynamic, yet feminine manner. This is contrary to the more passive voice that we as women often exhibit.

My husband describes the nature of those voices coming together in the darkness on a moonless night as "eerie and inviting". From beyond the Winter Night's bonfire, comes the shrill call of "Wunjo! Wu-un jo!" Goose bumps are felt by all. Out from the darkness; out from the past; deep in the primal psyche of our Folk, the men know this call.

We call this "kulning"-- the women calling the beasts of the field and farm home. Home the men come to us, to the fire and abode of the Gods. Could Witan Callahan do more for us? In fact, she has. She's gathered the women to ritualize our chants in blot, to call the folk home. We look for ways to communicate these words, with the added magical essence is that we say the words in Swedish: "Folk kom hem!"

One time should be enough, however, we ritualize this by chanting in a sequence of gradually rising voices. As each verse reverberates, the decibels rise until we are shouting those words out through the cosmos, calling the folk home.

Meanwhile the men have stepped back, letting us wild women do our thing. In an outer circle, the men methodically intone the rune Raido to those "folk without" to begin the journey back to us and our noble, native ways. The intensity of our words together is meant to bring change. Does it work?

In November of this year, Oðinshof gained eleven new members, far more than previous months. It's not likely that we'll continue at this rate, but... why not? We ask for the blessings and guidance of the Aesir and our Ancestors. Are we heard? I think so.

Know that you too can help "bring the folk home." Intoning runic galdr of Raido, Wunjo, Mannaz, or calling "Fok kom hem" may bring someone home to Asatru. The old AFA slogan still has it right. "The Way of the Ancestors Calling us Home."



Gythia Sheila McNallen  
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## We Remember You



**Kamden Musser**  
**Y 09/25/1996 – 11/10/2023 †**

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of Kamden Musser of Ohio. Called Kam by those who knew him, he was born in Indiana, Pennsylvania. Don't worry though, Ohio was still his most superior home!

Those who didn't know Kam well were still instantly aware of his friendly personality by his big, easy smile. He loved a good joke, a good beer, and the companionship of his friends. Kam's love of history was rivaled by his love of animals. If he wasn't reading a good political history, you might be able to find him volunteering at his local animal shelter.

One thing that you could always be sure of with Kam was his love for his folk. He was loyal to those he cared for to a fault- to the AFA, to his kindred, Under Ash and Oak in Ohio, and most importantly, to his wife, Mary Jane.

All those who knew and cared for Kam knew that he was selfless, funny, and passionate. He will be missed by many.

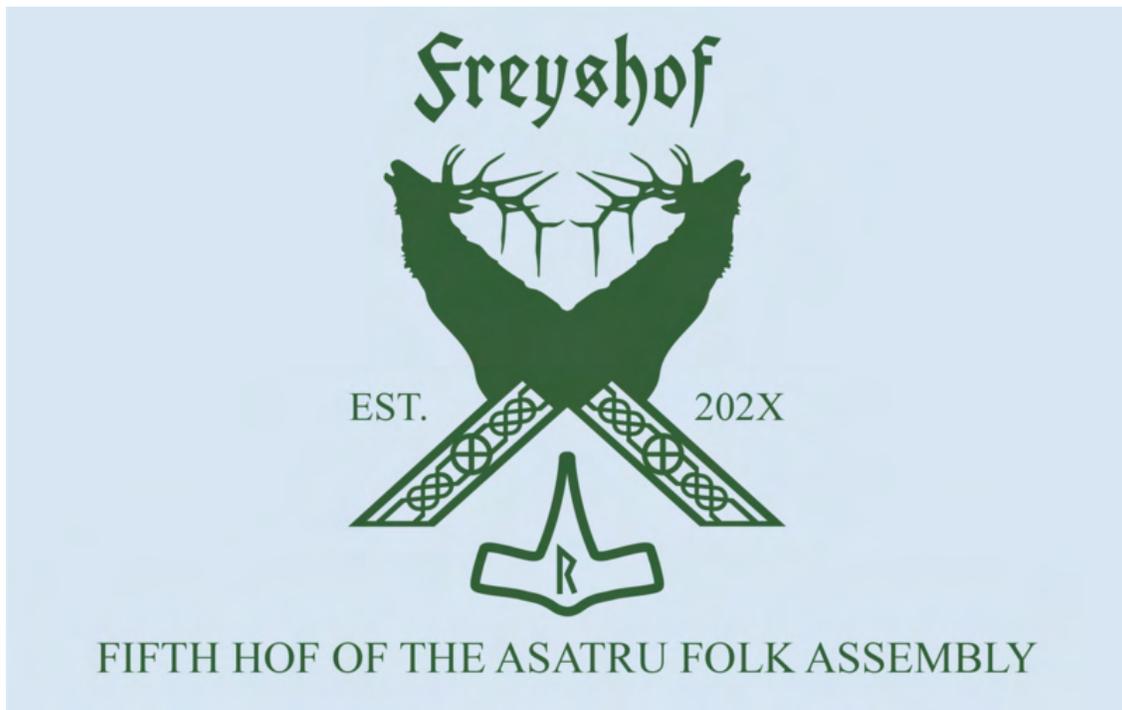
He will be remembered by many.

Hail Kamden Musser!

## 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 \$99,756.87 on our remaining loan.
2. We need to raise our monthly donation average by 7.6%.
  - 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

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## Sigrheim: Home of Victory

*A Folksgiving Dedicated to Victory*



This past month, the local Sigrheim Folk gathered for a Central Tennessee Folksgiving at a local Celtic pub. Being able to take the time to gather in Frith, bonded by our Loyalty to the Gods, and share in community over a good meal...this really is one of the small joys that our Church is all about. Please, if you're ever in the area, make sure to reach out. I'd love to have you over for dinner!

*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



RSVP w/  
Folkbuilder  
Nick Rice  
via [nrice@runestone.net](mailto:nrice@runestone.net)



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

**Victory Never Sleeps**

The Asatru Folk Assembly Presents

**Victory Never Sleeps!**

Wednesdays at 6PM Pacific / 8PM Central

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## AFA Asatru Academy

**Med vitani, vinna Sigr**

Check out the Asatru Academy at [AsatruAcademy.org](https://AsatruAcademy.org)

## *Ásatrú Academy and the Children's Blot*



Greetings parents and students! If you didn't know, our meetings every Friday are a great way to get connected and meet other parents and students. We have had some wonderful guest storytellers and have more scheduled that you are sure to enjoy! We hope to see you there!

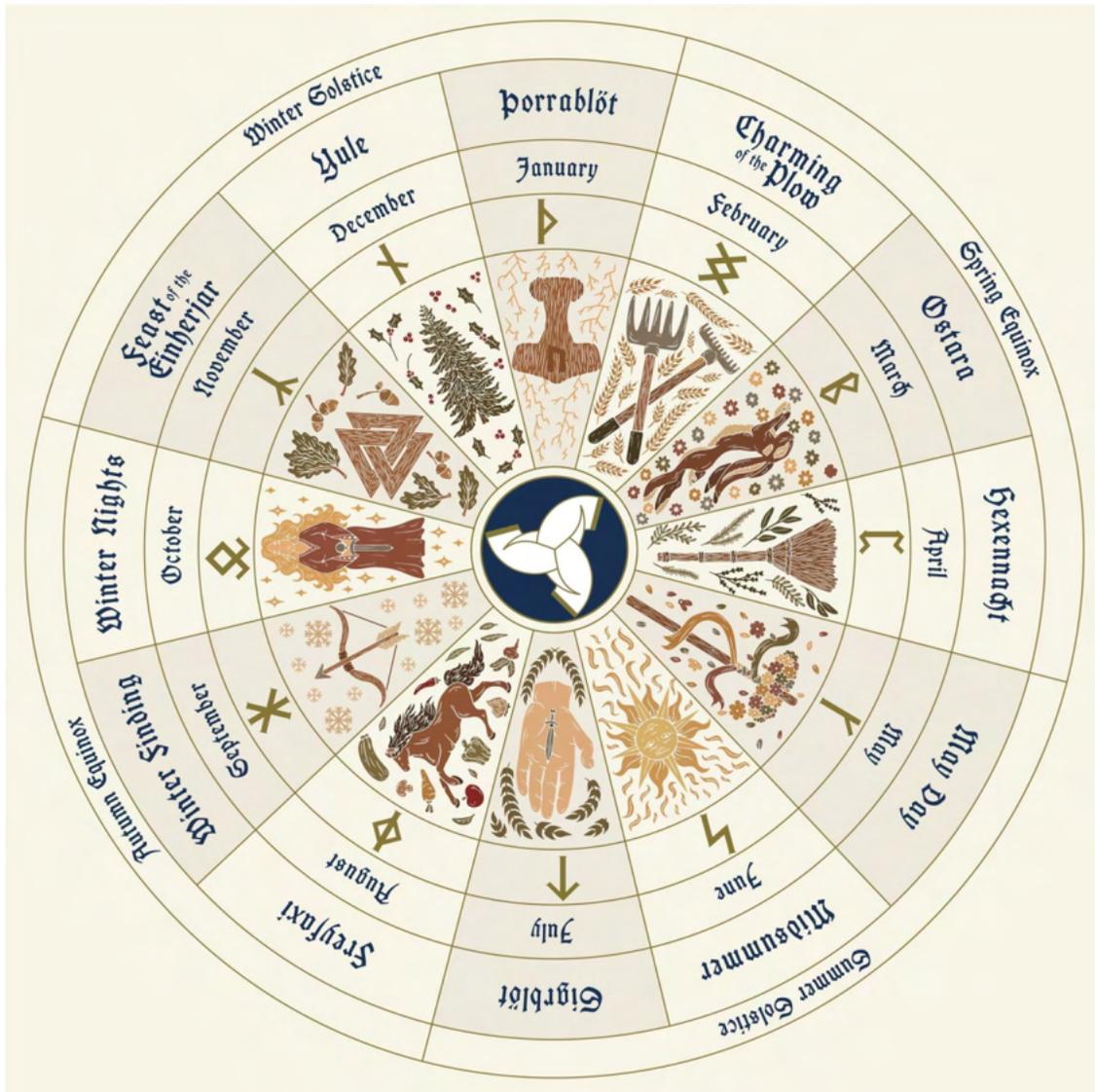
This past weekend at Thorshof, I had the honor of leading the children in a children's blot. The kids learned about the einherjar, and then we participated in a special kids-only blot. The children really did great! And had a lot of fun and learned about our faith. I encourage kindred's and Hofs alike to make time for special children's blots. Gythia Sheila McNallen who is on our staff, does some wonderful children's ritual at Odinhof, I encourage you to attend if you are in the area.

We thank all our parents and kids for their hard work this semester. With the coming of Yuletide, we just posted some brand-new Yule specific activities and stories for you. I hope you enjoy! This is such a special time of year; we look forward to seeing all our smiling kids and their projects! We'd love any and all pictures of your kids doing Academy work, or of their projects so that we can showcase them here in the runestone.

Gothi Rob Stamm  
Dean of AFA Academy  
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# Remembrance & Holy Days



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

**2023**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Observance</b>
January 9	Day of Remembrance for Raud the Strong
January 21	Þorrablót
February 9	Day of Remembrance for Eyvind Kinnrifi
February 18	Charming of the Plow
March 9	Day of Remembrance for Olvir of Egg
March 21 (observed on 18th)	Ostara
April 9	Day of Remembrance for Jarl Haakon
April 10	Day of Remembrance for John Yeowell "Stubba"
April 28 (observed on 15th)	Hexennacht
May 9	Day of Remembrance for Else Christensen
May 1 (observed on 20th)	May Day
June 9	Day of Remembrance for King Athanaric of the Goths
June 21 (observed on 17th)	Midsummer
July 4	Day of Remembrance for Sveinbjorn Beinteinsson
July 9	Day of Remembrance for Alexander Rud Mills
July 15	Sigrblót
August 9	Day of Remembrance for King Radbod of Frisia
August 19	Freyfaxi
September 9	Day of Remembrance for Prince Hermann of the Cherusci
September 22 (observed on 16th)	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 21	Winter Nights
November 9	Day of Remembrance for Queen Sigríð of Sweden
November 11 (observed on 18th)	Feast of the Einherjar
December 9	Day of Remembrance for Egill Skallagrímsson
December 20	Mother's Night

Date	Observance
December 20-31 (observed on 16th)	Yuletide

## Day of Remembrance

*Egill Skallagrímsson | December 9th*



“Here I am at the hearth  
Of my host, Yngvar  
The Generous, who grants  
Gold to heroic men;  
Free-handed fosterer,  
You’ll find no three-year

Babe among bards  
More brilliant than me.”

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

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

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

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

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

What can we learn from this story?

Egill represents the true duality of human nature.

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



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## Holiday

*Yuletide | December 20th-31st*



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

begins to stay in the sky a little longer each day, moving us closer and closer to the fruitful and warm summer.

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

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

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

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



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## Feast of the Einherjar 2023: A Look Back



This year's Feast of the Einherjar was held in South Dakota bringing together new members of the AFA with long-time members to the event from previous years. There were well over a dozen children playing and having fun with each other, and all of this couldn't have been done without my fiancé, Folkbuilder Ashley McStocker, with the commitment and work she put in. In an exquisite location, the weather couldn't have been better for the time of year in a northern climate, sandwiched by the weeks leading up to the event of freezing temps and the week following by freezing temperatures. The location put us on the cliffs above the Missouri River with an Einherjar Blot at the edge of the water. This event was a collaboration of Baldrshof District leadership with everyone involved from planning to execution ensuring a successful event for our Folk to experience. Honored guests again included Founders Elder Stephen and Gythia Sheila McNallen, Alsherjargothi Matthew Flavel, and Witan Gythia Brandy Callahan.

The event started with Gothar student Folkbuilder Stian Penner welcoming the Gods, a first time Freyja/Odin Blot synchronized together by AFA Founders Elder Stephen and Gythia Sheila McNallen, Einherjar Blot by firelight at dusk culminating with a ship lighting and sending off, and Wayfarers blot by Gothar student Folkbuilder Allison Clausen. The Alsherjargothi led a powerful and at times emotional Sumbel that connected the attending Folk. Elder McNallen and Gythia Sheila McNallen conducted a Baby Naming for a couple of long-time members. There were talks, activities, and a Witan-inspired (directed) dance allowing the Folk an opportunity to cut loose. The Folk in attendance had the opportunity to witness apprentice Folkbuilder Bruce Perron being

offered and taking his Oath as a Folkbuilder for the AFA. Hail Folkbuilder Bruce Perron!



If one is not completely familiar with just what the Feast of the Einherjar entails, it is the time to gather together with our Folk in ritual and celebration to honor those who have passed, specifically those who have gone, by way of combat, living lives of honor, and examples of courage in fighting one way or another for our Gods, Folk, Family, and Community. Einherjar means “those who fight alone” and have specifically been chosen to join Odin in Valhall, to continue their fight beyond this life. In fighting alone, meaning, one that fights in a manner that elevates them above the typical and mundane masses around them in their focus and selfless, right, and controlled actions. One does not get to choose themselves to join this elite group that will fight alongside Odin at Ragnarok. Live courageously and in service of our Gods and Folk, build bright fame, and be a beacon for the Folk to without to find their ways home.



“Many brave warriors sit in Valhall, and many more are yet to come. And yet, it will still be too few when the wolf comes”



Gothi Nathan Erlandson  
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## Help Member Rebuild After Fire



On the evening of December 1<sup>st</sup>, there was a catastrophic fire in the apartment building in which one of our New York members, Sara, lived. News sources have stated that the fire is a total loss, and Sara concurs. She was allowed entrance after the fire was extinguished; however, she was unable to salvage anything, and was given a mere few minutes to even look around, due to the unsafe structure of the building. She has lost everything! She even lost her beloved pet hedgehog. Per our conversation, Sara is in need of Clothing, Essentials, Household goods...etc. She is currently away from the vicinity staying with friends. She may have found a possible apartment for rent that would be available on December 15<sup>th</sup>.

Please [help](#) in any way you can to help one of our members as she goes through the arduous process of rebuilding everything that she knew and had.

## Be a Doer



**We need you to volunteer for the AFA!**

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

Please email [volunteer@runestone.org](mailto:volunteer@runestone.org) to help us make a difference in our world.

## Baby Blanket Project

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

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



If you are a member of the AFA who is expecting a baby, please let your Folkbuilder know so we can get a blanket to you. If you would like to contribute, either financially

or by volunteering as a baby blanket crafter, let your Folkbuilder know about that as well, so he can get you in touch with the right people. It's so rewarding to see your handicraft being loved by our little heathens!

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

## Folk Services



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

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

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

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

Thanks in advance!

## Photo Donations

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



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

## Eir's Blessings



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

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

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

You can reach us at [EirsBlessings@runestone.org](mailto:EirsBlessings@runestone.org)

## Last Will and Testament

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



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

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

Please make your will **today**.

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

Allen Turnage  
PO Box 16027  
Tallahassee FL, 32317



Witan Allen Turnage

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

## Introducing the Newest AFA Kindreds

### *Deep Well Kindred*



It is my honor to announce Deep Well Kindred of Florida as the newest official Kindred of the Asatru Folk Assembly.

Deep Well Kindred is one of several AFA Kindreds that help support Florida and Njörðshof. Without these Kindreds and dedicated members, it would not be possible to maintain and operate our Hofs and districts.

I want to say thank you to all the members of the AFA that help out and contribute to this amazing church.

Face to face is how you build solid bonds with other folk, not behind a keyboard at home. These bonds grow into communities of families and relationships are built and Kindreds are born of these local congregations.

Gaining Kindred recognition is not an easy thing. It takes dedication and loyalty, and

willingness to stand with the AFA at all costs. All new Kindreds go through a six-month probationary period before joining our family as an official Kindred.

If you are interested in forming an AFA Kindred in your area or would like more information.

Please contact the Kindred program email at [kindred@runestone.org](mailto:kindred@runestone.org).

Hail Deep Well!

Hail the Kindreds of the AFA!!

Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!!!



Folkbuilder Jason Gallagher

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

## AFA Prison Ministry



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

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

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

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

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



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

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



## Artisans of the AFA Support Our Folk



Wyrd Woman custom laser engraving, cutting or etching. Wood keychains, magnets, altar cards and more.



Contact Cody or Ali Clausen for details and inquiries or email [wyrdwomanllc@gmail.com](mailto:wyrdwomanllc@gmail.com)



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

## Cooking for our Folk



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

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

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

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

When you cook from the heart, people can tell. Don't cook out of spite or obligation. Cook for the folk because you want to! Find new recipes. Test them. Make them better. And when your heart tells you it is right...time to serve. If you have never made

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

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



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

## Ancestral Food and Culture

### *A Pasta Making Adventure*



What happens when you mix flour, eggs, water and the folk? Pasta! On December 7th, the folk gathered at the Joyner's house to help preserve the box of 90 eggs that Gythia Catie Erickson gifted the hof. As it is on most occasions, the kitchen was the center of attention. Everyone took turns kneading the pasta dough (and getting an amazing arm workout!) around the center island. Even the littles took part in playing in the flour. We

feasted on fantastic fresh pasta and Mike's homemade alfredo and Bolognese sauces. Flour was as plentiful as the laughter and smiles.



Egg Pasta:

347 grams flour

185 grams of wet ingredients – 2 whole eggs, 3 yolks, and add water until proper weight



Create well with the flour on the counter, place wet ingredients in the well. Whisk with fork while incorporating small amounts of flour until the consistency is no longer runny. Using your hands, start mixing in the rest of the flour. Knead until smooth. Pat with flour and wrap in plastic wrap for 30 minutes to rest. Take out in sections. Roll out to desired thickness and shape as you please. Boil in salty water until done (only a few minutes as fresh pasta cooks much quicker!). Enjoy with your favorite sauce.



Folkbuilder Katie Joyner

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

## New Year; Old Roots: A Folk's Collective Genealogical Journey



“Where do we come from?”

When posed by a child, the decision is really yours how far exactly to delve in answering this question. For my maternal grandfather, well, he took the simple route.

“From your mom and dad, of course!”

He didn’t expect that as an eighth grader, I wanted more than just an overly simplistic answer – that I was actually interested in substance. I’d been assigned a project at school that required me to create a poster highlighting the culture of whichever ethnicity I chose from the myriad possessed by my forefathers. It was a convenient tool and justification for “pestering” my parents and the precious few remaining elders in my family for answers I’d wanted for a long time. Who are we as a people? Who are we as a family? My inquiries had been brushed off in the past – probably due to my age – but since my parents were adamant about striving for straight A’s and being as successful as possible in school, chances were high I would finally get what I had long since been yearning for: a straight answer. Who am I? Where did I come from? Where do I belong? Who am I descended from? Who are we as a family, and as a people?

I was met with a wide range of reactions from each side of my family. My maternal grandfather viewed it as a humorous endeavor, though he did indulge my curiosity by accompanying my mother and me to a nearby cemetery and walking me to where his grandparents were interred.

My maternal grandmother supplied me with information which turned out to be incorrect entirely – things ranging from her mother’s cause of death to which ethnicities she was.

My paternal grandfather had passed, but his wife (my grandmother), was all too happy to use this assignment as a bonding experience between the two of us. We exchanged phone calls frequently, and during those, she would try to be as helpful as possible about both her and my grandfather’s backgrounds. She phoned cousins of mine a few states away whom I’d never met, and they were happy to oblige in sending the little research they had done on our family. It still is some of the best mail I’ve ever received. “The Rigginses didn’t have two nickels to rub together when they came over,” I remember her saying. “And my side, well, we’re just Polish.” Polish would eventually change to Yugoslavian, which in turn changed to Czech. There was no one alive who could quite nail down where her folk were from, though she did know that her maiden name of Baricak was pronounced differently in the old country. It wasn’t until later on that I found out that the Baricaks are from a village in northern Slovakia called Vysoká nad Kysucou, which today is still relatively small, with a population of less than 3,000. After my grandmother had passed some years later and I leaned on her younger sister – my great aunt – for answers, her attitude turned sour, and she’d shut me down and change the topic of conversation completely. I later found out why, but that’s a story for another article...maybe.

I was grateful to my teacher, though, for assigning us such a task. Ultimately, I ended up choosing Scotland for my project as an homage to my paternal grandfather, who was primarily of Scots-Irish descent. It was just one assignment, and one that most of my classmates probably slapped together the night before it was due, but for me, it was the first step in a profound journey – one that I’m still on today and that I would love to share with others if they’d like to take the first step.

At 33 years old, I can say that I’ve been researching my family and heritage for over half of my life, and it brings me great joy both to make personal discoveries and help others make theirs. Many equate genealogy with Ancestry.com and paywalls; this is not necessarily the case. I’ve made tremendous discoveries for myself and others using other websites and other resources that cost nothing. I’ve been in County Clerk’s offices at courthouses, in cemeteries battling weeds, briars, and yellow jackets, in State Archives so quiet and rigid that you could hear a pin drop, and in cozy historical societies run by some of the sweetest and most passionate volunteers and elders I’ve ever encountered – I say all this not as some sort of a strange boast, but as a reassurance that in today’s technological age, you don’t need to be tech-savvy (though it may come

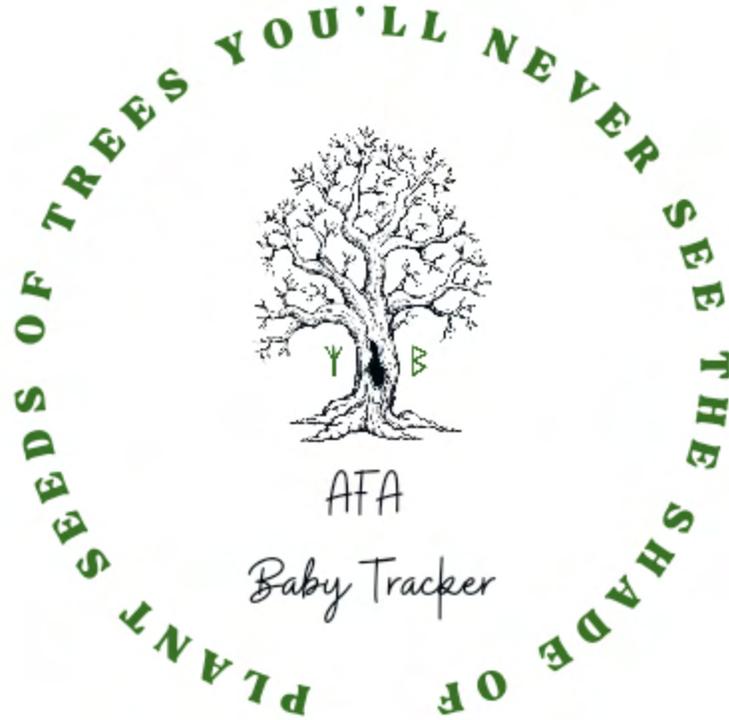
in handy from time to time) and you don't have to sign up for anything with a recurring monthly charge that competes with your bills to find out incredible things about your family. Despite popular marketing claims, no single website has everything you need in one click (or a thousand).

If your eyes glaze over at the thousands of search results that come up when you're looking up terms like "ancestry," "family history," or the like, if you find yourself yawning while looking at family histories posted by others online because you can only read "born, married, died on (this date) and at (this location)" so many times, and if you want to put meat on the bones of your ancestors and resurrect their stories, learn from their shortcomings and rejoice in their triumphs, then I invite you to read what I envision to be a monthly column in The Runestone on how to get your start in finding your roots – hopefully in a way that's not overwhelming for absolute beginners and still interesting for researchers who have much more experience than I do.

Next month's objective to kick off the new year will be to cover the topic of the federal census records – perhaps the most beginner-friendly and widely accessible record for genealogists – and what information you can glean from them as well as the information that you can't.

- Samantha Riggins, Member, North Carolina

## **Baby Tracker**



To show the growth of our folk we present to you an ongoing baby tracker. We will be keeping track of how many children have been and are born within the AFA from 2022 and forward. The ongoing tracking is proof that we are building something sustainable for the future of our folk, which is a place for these children to grow up within and a place where they can feel proud of who they are!

Total babies born in 2023: 33

**Just for Fun**



Thank you all who participated last month! Awesome job, Tracy Adler, for being the first member to solve it! Baldrshof, where are your puzzle people?

Here's a new puzzle of Yule words:

## Yule Word Search

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

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YULE	MODRANICHT	SOLSTICE
INDUSTRIOUSNESS	JUSTICE	COURAGE
GENEROSITY	HOSPITALITY	MODERATION
COMMUNITY	INDIVIDUALITY	TRUTH
STEADFASTNESS	WISDOM	LOYALTY
WILDHUNT	KITH	KIN
GIFTS		

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

And here's a coloring page for the youngsters to get involved in the season as well!



We'd love to see their finished creations, so feel free to send those to [Press@Runestone.org](mailto:Press@Runestone.org). (And yes, parents, we know you like coloring too. That's okay!)



Olivia Sutherland  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[osutherland@runestone.org](mailto:osutherland@runestone.org)

## Online Events and Meetings



Virtue recovery  
meeting

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

With Ashley Mcstocker  
amcstocker@runestone.org

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

With Jaclynn Duffy  
jduffy@runestone.org

**VIA ZOOM**

**MEETING ID: 885 2917 0746**

**PASSWORD: Virtue**

# PASSWORD: VIRTUE



*Sisters Sunday Chats*

Every Sunday, 10am central

For more info contact  
Folkbuilder Ali Clausen  
[aclausen@runestone.org](mailto:aclausen@runestone.org)  
or  
Folkbuilder Katie Joyner  
[kjoyner@runestone.org](mailto:kjoyner@runestone.org)



# Ladies Book Study

## Thursday Nights at 7 pm CST

No book study in Decemember but...

We return with a new book on  
January 4th!!!!

Link for Teams meeting will be posted in  
the AFA Ladies group on MeWe

For more information contact:

Witan Brandy Callahan

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

or

Folkbuilder Sara Ault

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

# **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](mailto:jplourde@runestone.org)**



**Now Available in the AFA Store**



Now in pre-order! The Asatru Folk Assembly 2024 calendar. Featuring a beautiful photo of our Folk for each month, our Holy Days and Days of Remembrance. Perfect for keeping track of our many important celebrations and your own important dates.

Get your order in ASAP to ensure it arrives by the New Year!

This item is in pre-order and will not ship immediately. Shipping confirmation will be sent when the time comes.

<https://runestone.org/product/2024-afa-calendar/>



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

## Þórshof

**Food Pantry at Þórshof**



The day of Feast of Einherjar at Thorshof was again a great blessing for many in the community. Cars were lined up at the Hof awaiting the aid of the Thorshof district. Families from all around the area have made this a reliable stop, knowing that their family will have a little more. Especially with the cold coming, and several frosts have already turned the mornings white, food and energy are exactly what these fathers, mothers, and children need. As we see monthly faces, and new ones as word spreads, they see ours. Building a rapport, and knowing we, not only can, but do make a difference and favourable impression on those around us.

Zach Clary



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

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## Holiday at Þórshof



On Saturday, November 25th, several families of Thorshof gathered to celebrate Feast of the Einherjar



While Witan Svan gave religious instruction to the adults, Gothi Stamm performed a children's Blot, and taught the kids about the holiday. The children did great! And enjoyed a special Blot just for them. The Folk then attended a beautiful ritual in the temple by Witan Svan. After ritual, the Folk gathered in the hall for a delicious meal that attendants had all cooked for the occasion.



During the meal, we all wrote down the name and information about a hero of our Folk. After the meal, each member told the gathered Folk about the hero, then placed the paper into the ship. After all the Folk had told the stories of our great heroes, we

processed outside, where the ship was set fire. Witan Svan said a beautiful and moving prayer and reminded the Folk to follow the example of the heroes we celebrated today. Hail the Einherjar!



Gothi Rob Stamm  
[rstamm@runestone.org](mailto:rstamm@runestone.org)

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## Upcoming Events at Þórshof

# 2023 events at Þórshof



*Weekend of Yule at the Hof*

**Þórshof Coat and Can Drive**

*December 15th-17th*

*Donations of Coats and Non-Perishable Goods Much Appreciated!*

*Email Heather for more info*

*Heather@Runestone.org*

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## Upcoming Events at Þórshof



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## Members' Poetry Corner

*My Ode to Tyr*



*Just when I think, I can't take anymore,  
 I break through the threshold and walk through the door.  
 An echo of words, ring through my mind.  
 With a tone that is stern, firm and yet kind.  
 He told me two words, that both seemed to flow.  
 He grabbed my whole being, he told me, "I know."  
 At first, I thought, he was comparing our pain.  
 Then upon introspection, something else remained.  
 It was not the wound but how it was sent.  
 Into the maw of the wolf, we both willingly went  
 We did what was right, no matter the cost.  
 We both followed our heart, and for that, we both lost.  
 Yet, if given a choice, the same I would make.  
 For in order to give, the Gods must first take.  
 Take all that is poison and holding me back.  
 Take all of my weakness and all that I lack.  
 Take all that I am and all I will be.  
 Take all that I am, until I'm just me.*

— Adam, member, New York

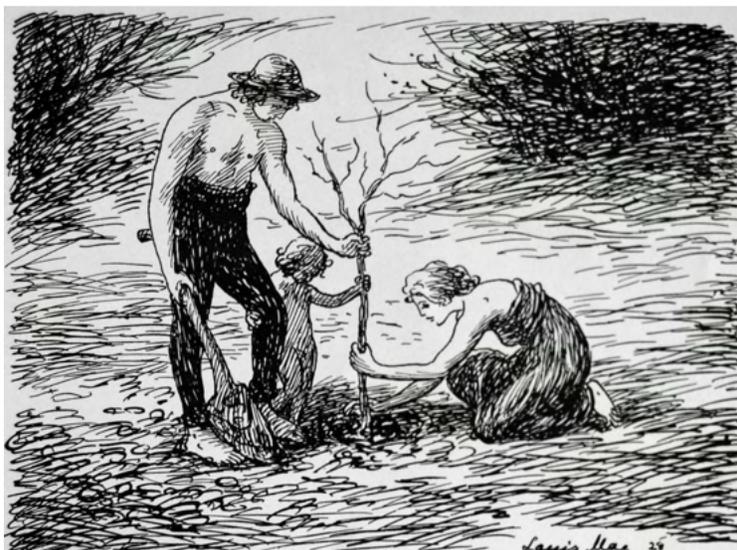
### *Lif and Lifthrasir*



*Through eons of pain, we stand here suppressed.  
 Ripping and tearing, with ancient regret.  
 Clinging to echos, we search for a tune.  
 Grasping at shadows that always elude.  
 Searching and searching, our Hope turns to rage,  
 Endlessly reaching, for a way from this cage.*



*Yet alas, there is light, like Baldr shone bright.  
 A beacon to lead us to power and might.  
 Not the might that comes from power  
 And rage but the might that comes from turning a page.  
 The power that comes from walking with truth.  
 The power that comes from waking your roots.  
 Connection can come if we but know our place.  
 Connection will come, from our folk and our race.*



*So take not hate, but love from my words,  
 And know that the wolf age has now been unfurled.*

*But be not afraid, for at the base of the tree,  
I will be waiting, upon Frigga's knee.  
Your blood, it beckons, it's calling you home.  
I implore you, come join me and be not alone.*

— Adam, member, New York

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## Indiana

### *The Sweet Science of November*



Friends and Folk,

From our very inception enemies both within and without have sought ways to destroy our AFA. From the time of our inception these enemies have failed. The AFA is today stronger than we have ever been, marching (sometimes shuffling, sometimes sprinting) always toward ultimate victory. I know that nothing our enemies can throw against us will sway us from our course and that we will continue to stack victory atop victory until the very end. I know this because, in the month of November, I tried to destroy the AFA once and for all.

As I sat, cackling maniacally in my subterranean lair, plotting the downfall of the foolish do-gooders of the AFA (who had been so naïve as to count me among their

ranks) I devised a plot so insidious, so brilliant, that I had no doubt that I would soon be celebrating their downfall as I retired to a Mediterranean island somewhere after collecting on the sizable \$176.00 insurance policy that I have recently taken out on The Church of the Aesir. Having previously found the AFA theology, frith, structure and kinship to be rather impenetrable I would sow division via the greatest subversion tactic at my disposal... Democracy.



As number of the local Folk had gathered at my home (lambs to the slaughter) one foolishly shared with me his recent breakthrough in snacking-technology. Upon being

shown the evidence that pork rinds (not pita, chips nor paltry carrot sticks) were the undisputed superior humus-eating device, I snuck away and filed a patent on the discovery under the pretense of “using the bathroom.”

The time was right, I looked at those around me and I said to them... “this is really good, sort of makes me wonder... what is the best root beer? We should vote on it.”

The room went silent, a chill air blew, eyes were darting back and forth in a futile attempt to read the faces around them, some of them slowly reaching toward their weapons. I could feel the tensions rising to a crescendo... this was it, my long-awaited triumph over the Folk... I waited with bated breath for the inevitable. Then... a quiet voice from the back of the room; “a blind taste test seems like the only reasonable way to solve this.” My heart sank, my eyes clouded over, I had flown so close to the Sun that I could feel the heat and now my plans plunged to sink into the bottomless ocean. I cursed myself for failing to contend with the inherent Aryan love of science and order that has for so long plagued the enemies of the children of the Aesir. I sat back and took the first blind sample offered to me, I would regroup and try again some other day, now was the time to cut my losses.



If you are going to do a thing, do it well. Hoosier scientists running test for aroma and bouquet; pictured alongside a celery palette cleanser (one of the only known acceptable uses of a vegetable.)



With total disregard for prohibitions on animal testing, this dog joined the experiment by devouring a paper towel used to clean a spill.



Once the dust had settled and the numerous disparaging comments and personal attacks had (regrettably) died down, we were left with only cold, hard facts. For better or worse, we had followed the science, and “the science” loves Sprecher’s and sort of hates Virgil’s.

Our (utterly indisputable) results discovered the following:

Hank’s is the best of those tested, with Sprecher’s a close second (and a bit of a sleeper). Virgil’s was utter trash, with 80% of respondents thinking that it was “Great Value” brand. “Great Value” actually is a great value, being among the least expensive and yet finishing 4th overall (defeating several higher-end brands). IBC came in 3rd.

The bottom of the root-barrel choices were: Big K and Mug (fizzy garbage water) with

A&W, Boylan's, Barq's and Dad's finishing in the "at least we aren't Big K or Mug" tier of beverages.



I consoled myself that at least my failure to rend asunder the kin-fences of the AFA had served the purpose of finally determining once-and-for-all the greatest root beer in existence. I picked myself up, dusted myself off, and went with the rest of my party to eat at a nearby restaurant. In a show of inherent Hoosier-born resilience one of the guys opted to "keep the party going" by ordering a root beer with his meal... a Stewart's... which was not among those tested. I broke out into a cold sweat waiting to hear the words that I knew were coming... "Huh, this is pretty good actually... yaknow, I think I may like this better than Hank's."



I let existential horror wash over my body and quietly swore that “someday, I will finally have my vengeance” the wheels of science rolling indifferently on before my eyes.

### *Upcoming Events*

**Sunday Dinner Pitch-In**

**Fortville, IN**  
**Sunday, January 28th @3pm**  
**Jrock@Runestone.org to RSVP**

**Fortville, IN**  
**Sunday, February 25th @3pm**  
**Jrock@Runestone.org to RSVP**

**Food • Games • Blót**



Folkbuilder Jonathan Rock  
[jrock@runestone.org](mailto:jrock@runestone.org)

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### New Hampshire

*Hero's Never Die*



The New Hampshire Folk gathered in Concord to share a meal and honor the Einherjar. With those who fought alone welcomed to join us, we had an outstanding meal and conversation amongst the folk. Remembering and commemorating the deeds of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice was the least we could do. The restaurant's atmosphere was very cozy and reminiscent of a hall, setting the tone for a fun but appropriate veneration of the Einherjar.



I am eternally grateful to be surrounded by such amazing people. It is beyond a blessing to have my children brought up in an environment where our folk gather and share such important moments.



My family and I set out the weekend after thanksgiving to procure our Yule tree. A brisk yet sunny day accompanied us on our journey. We found a quaint local farm just outside of town. Kids bundled up, saw in hand, we trekked through the field of trees. After much consideration and debate we all got a shock of intuition. A lone tree caught our eyes, almost glowing in the sun. At that moment we knew we found our holy bush that will be our companion through the cold winter. I proceeded to harvest our beautiful bush. After it was felled, I carved an Odal Rune into the stump. The magical ability of trees to grow as soon as they enter your home should not be overlooked.



My daughter had a blast throughout the whole process despite the frigid temperatures. Snow was on the menu, and she couldn't have been happier.

### *Upcoming Events*





Tyler Sagert  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[tsagert@runestone.org](mailto:tsagert@runestone.org)

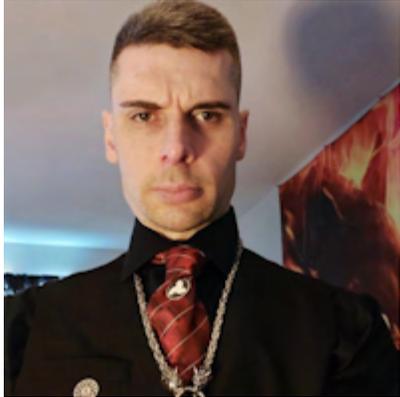
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## New York

### *NY Walk in the Park Moot*



This Moot was on Saturday, the 18th of November. I was alone, but being at this park was a great experience. The fresh open air, the trees changing colors, and the serenity of nature itself. I did do a Blot to honor the Aesir and Vanir Gods... especially to Odin and asked for blessings on my Moot. I also had an 8-to-10-mile hike and had a 40lbs backpack to make it even more of a difficulty on this hike, which had significance to show my dutifulness, to my conviction to my Norse Gods and to prove my physical endurance, going beyond my limits, if I had them!



Daniel Tomkiel  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[dtomkiell@runestone.org](mailto:dtomkiell@runestone.org)

### *A New York November Moot*



Hello my folk,

Saturday November 25th, a few New York Folk gathered in the Northeast part of the state at a fun Mexican restaurant for a wonderful dinner! Myself, my significant other, and 2 of my daughters enjoyed 2 hours of conversation, laughter and of course amazing food. We talked about faith, Folk, family and how important it is to get together to relax and have a nice time with our kinfolk. It was a great evening to which we look forward to many more to come!

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!

### *Upcoming Events*

**JOIN US**

*Schenectady New York festival of trees moot. Over 100 decorated trees on display. Take a stroll through and vote for your favorite tree.*

**DECEMBER**

**SATURDAY | 16 | At 2:00 pm**

**RSVP WITH APPRENTICE FOLK BUILDER DANIELLE RISSO AT [DRISSO@RUNESTONE.ORG](mailto:DRISSO@RUNESTONE.ORG)**



Danielle Risso  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[drisso@runestone.org](mailto:drisso@runestone.org)

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## North Carolina

### *Focus on Family*



This November moot was not as hoped, BUT.... It was a beautiful day for the family. We had our 11-month-old son out in the sunshine and fresh air. We, too, enjoyed it all.

Winter decorations were being set up in Union Square in Hickory, NC. Autumn was in the fresh air; Winter was in view.

This may have been a small gathering, but that is no reason to feel downtrodden. It was a great time for family togetherness. It is nothing that each of us should not do. Many of us have friends, many of us have many friends. What this moot has impressed upon me is that, even though we are all family, sometimes time with your household or immediate family is necessary. Get out of the house, stop thinking about work, and focus on those you love. Do something you have been wanting to do; do something different than usual.

This wonderful time was a near-meditative state where one could realise that family is everything. Just because you may be an outgoing individual, does not mean that you have to be going out with friends every time you go out. Sure, friends are great to have. In time, friends can become family. Each one of you is a brother or sister in blood. Don't get me wrong, I want each one of you to participate in moots near you, but this time I thank you for aiding in my realisation on the importance of family. Some of us are in rough times, or even dire straits however, we have all had less than perfect times. This time, though not as expected, was one of those perfect times.

Here's to the impending winter!

### *Upcoming Events*



Yule is coming next! If you're a last-minute shopper and in the area, join us Dec 9 in Lincolnton, NC to support local stores and artisans followed by a local, farm to table, lunch.

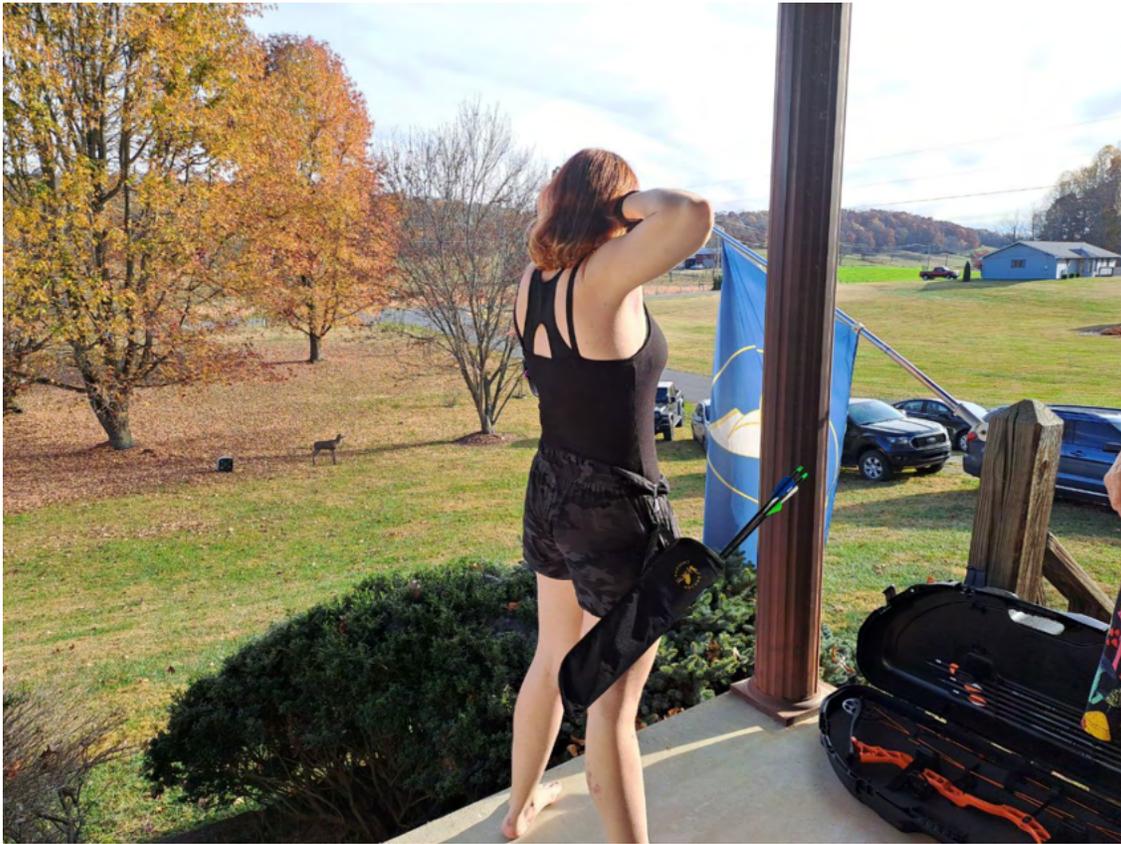


Zach Clary  
 Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[zclary@runestone.org](mailto:zclary@runestone.org)

*Appalachian Happenings: Feast of the Einherjar*



On Veteran's Day, members from Indiana, Ohio, Tennessee, and North Carolina converged on Jonesborough, Tennessee to celebrate the Feast of the Einherjar. We started off the day with great conversation, appetizers, and a sampling of some homemade ciders and meads. After a few hours, we separated into men's and women's groups for a while.



While the ladies were practicing their archery, the men engaged in an Appalachian classic: backyard Highland Games. A proper stone was selected (we all agreed it was about 35 lbs) for stone throwing, and a semi-straight 4x4 post was selected for a makeshift caber toss. Apprentice Folkbuilder Dan Borden of Ohio was victorious in the stone toss, while several men were in the running for first place on the caber toss.



It's really difficult to judge a caber toss, so we decided to settle it with a few rounds of boxing. We strapped on our gloves, secured our mouth guards and proceeded to pummel each other in the front yard, taking care not to further injure the already wounded deer decoy that the ladies had ventilated. After we had worked ourselves up with a few matches, we did some group push-ups to round out our PT session and headed inside to prepare for Blot.



As we prepared the ritual site, building up the fire and lighting torches, the mood grew somber as we contemplated the reasons we were all gathered together on this day. There were discussions on weapons and different wars throughout the storied past of our people, tales of heroism and fond recollections of the fallen. As darkness fell, we lined up and processed into the ritual space singing the Herjarfather song. Apprentice Folkbuilder Mary Jane of Ohio led the procession as our horn bearer and made sure everyone was properly circled and distanced, and the rite began. We called out to and gave gifts to the Einherjar, thanking them for their sacrifice and for their examples of courage and honor. We thanked the Asynjur for their many gifts to our women, for endowing them with the ability to inspire our men to fight and to have the hearth warm and ready for our return. We honored the Ancestors for their unfathomable strength in carving out a home for us on this land. We called out to Odin and praised him for his courage and foresight in assembling such a host to prepare for that ultimate battle.



Before closing the Blot, we galdred the rune Sowilo and came up to the fire individually to pour libations for the Einherjar. We had carried these libations with us throughout the Blot, focusing on our chosen hero or group of heroes. I heard the names of warriors being called out, and regiments of slain soldiers from battles fought long ago. We honored warriors from the Teutoburg forest all the way through men who fought in Afghanistan and Iraq.



After taking a moment of silence around the fire, we processed back into the house to settle into a lavish feast prepared by our hostess. We had pork and mead, sauerkraut, butternut squash and colcannon, followed by a delicious dessert of strawberry and rhubarb crumble. It bears mentioning that most of the vegetables and fruit used in the meal were grown by those in attendance, making the meal that much more significant.



As the plates were cleared away, we transitioned into Sumbel around the fire. I've participated in many Sumbels, each one special and significant in its own way, but this time there wasn't a dry eye. We honored and told stories of our personal heroes and mourned their losses together. We honored one of our Folk who had passed through the veil just the day before, supporting his widow as much as we could.



Immediately following Sumbel, the Appalachian Hearth Kindred Oathed its first 4 members on an oath ring gifted to the Kindred by Apprentice Dan Borden. We celebrated long into the night with songs and stories around the fire and in the hot tub, enjoying each other's company and strengthening bonds, already planning for next year's feast.

Hail the Einherjar!

### *Appalachian Happenings: Folksiving with the Betheas*



On November 24th, members from both North and South Carolina joined the Bethea family for our first Folksiving feast. Throughout the years, whenever I have had to work on Thanksgiving, the Folk have opened their homes to me so that I could enjoy a

family meal for the holiday. This year I decided to return the favor. We sat down to a delicious meal, with 3 different pies for dessert. After the table was cleared, we busted out Huntopoly, a hunting-themed version of Monopoly. As one can imagine, the game lasted for upwards of six hours, with the ultimate victor being 8-year-old Tristan with a total of \$25,001! We look forward to continuing this tradition next year, and can't wait to see each other again (and you, too!) at Thorshof for Yule!

### *Upcoming Events*



#### Men's Backpacking Moot

North Georgia

January 20-21, 2024

Join the men of Thorshof and Njordshof districts for a weekend of backpacking on the Appalachian Trail in North Georgia! Contact Apprentice Jace Cameron ([jcameron@runestone.org](mailto:jcameron@runestone.org)) or Folkbuilder Tyler Bethea ([tbethea@runestone.org](mailto:tbethea@runestone.org)) for more information. I hope to see you there!



Board (Bored?) Games Moot

Come gather at the Bethea house and stave off the winter blues with some board games, hot chocolate, coffee and dinner. I don't know about you guys, but by the time February rolls around I've about had enough of the cold and wet of winter. Let's hang out inside and play some games! We've got a decent selection, but feel free to bring your own if you'd like to. Reach out to Folkbuilder Tyler Bethea for more information and to RSVP.



Folkbuilder Tyler Bethea  
[tbethea@runestone.org](mailto:tbethea@runestone.org)

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**Ohio**

*Ohio Feast of the Einherjar*



In Southern Ohio, our folk gathered to honor and give tribute to our people's greatest heroes.

Many brought with them pictures of family members who have served and some who had even given their lives for us. Upon a wooden sword we wrote the names of the heroes we would like to personally thank. During Blot everyone had the chance to hold the sword. As symbol of commitment to honoring their sacrifice, we hailed their names proudly into the sky.

With good Frith and food, we gathered together to honor our ancestors. A special thanks To Corey and Beth for hosting in their beautiful home! Bonds were strengthened and the future was talked about with great excitement!

### *Upcoming Events*





shop and Coffee moot  
Columbus Ohio  
February 3  
Contact Apprentice Folk Builder  
Dan Borden [dborden@runestone.org](mailto:dborden@runestone.org)



Dan Borden  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[dborden@runestone.org](mailto:dborden@runestone.org)

*A Case of Pride*



With Yuletide fast approaching, I find this a time of reflection over the events of the past year. It is certainly not a surprise to anyone that 2023 had its share of challenges for many our folk, from loss of employment, loss of their home and for others, loss of loved ones.

When I think upon the “loss”, I cannot help but to also speak of gain, growth and triumph. While that may seem counterintuitive on the surface, I can assure you for many it is something that is spot on.

Loss is often seen as notion that we are lessened as people due to it. When others have expressed to me their desire to isolate themselves, curl up in a ball and wallow in the grief, I have encouraged them to do the exact opposite. In times of our greatest struggles in life, it is the very people whom we love that we should run to, lean on and take strength from. I am fortunate to have taken my own advice this past year for I too have experienced great personal “loss”.

Our Alsherjargothi has often reminded us all that it’s easy to stand at someone else’s side when they are winning and triumphing over the challenges of life, yet difficult to

do so in kind when they are struggling, experiencing great uncertainty about their futures, when all may seem hopeless and lost. Both are true. As Aryans, we are folk who thrive in the face of adversity, facing the obstacles in life, smashing the barricades down and pressing ever forward because we know that life is good, life is right.

Our folk are the truly “best medicine” in times of strife. The same folk that you have shared the horn with, spoke of deeds done and loves won are the very people that hold the key to keeping you propped up when you are about to fall, give up or walk away and through them, you will gain, grow and triumph over all!

I am proud to both serve and be welcomed by all with the Asatru Folk Assembly. Many of the most important people that I have had in my life are amongst our membership.

When you find yourself in a dark place as all of will at one point or another, never forget the living community that you have chosen to be a part of and has chosen to be a part of you will be there for you.

We should not share only in the belief in the love our Gods and our ancestors, but also in our folk.

Take stock of your blessings this Yule month, lend your support to those in need and strengthen your bonds among one other.

Home is where the heart is and I am not the first and certainly will not be the last to say...

Welcome Home.



Folkbuilder Michael Melillo

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

*Ohio Science Moot*

Ohio has some wonderful folk, and I was recently graced with the presence of a few this past month at the Great Lakes Science Center. To be honest the company was far superior to the attraction. Not much was explained and some of what was there is broken. I found more information and interesting facts from the company in attendance with me. Aside from the lack luster science center I found that to be a testament to the quality of our folk. And I learn from all of you more and more all the time. All that really matters are the bonds we form and the future we create for the next in line. I thank you all for helping us create this no matter what we find ourselves doing. A good conversation, a simple phone call, or even a simple shared meal can create a bustling and substantial community. That day was still wonderful to me despite the short comings of the science attraction. All because of folk like you. You are what matters. You help create the future we want to see even if your just an ear to bend for the

afternoon you are a creator of a brighter future for us. I thank you all for this and look forward to many more shared meals and great conversations. Until next time, Hail the Folk, Hail the Gods, and Hail the AFA!

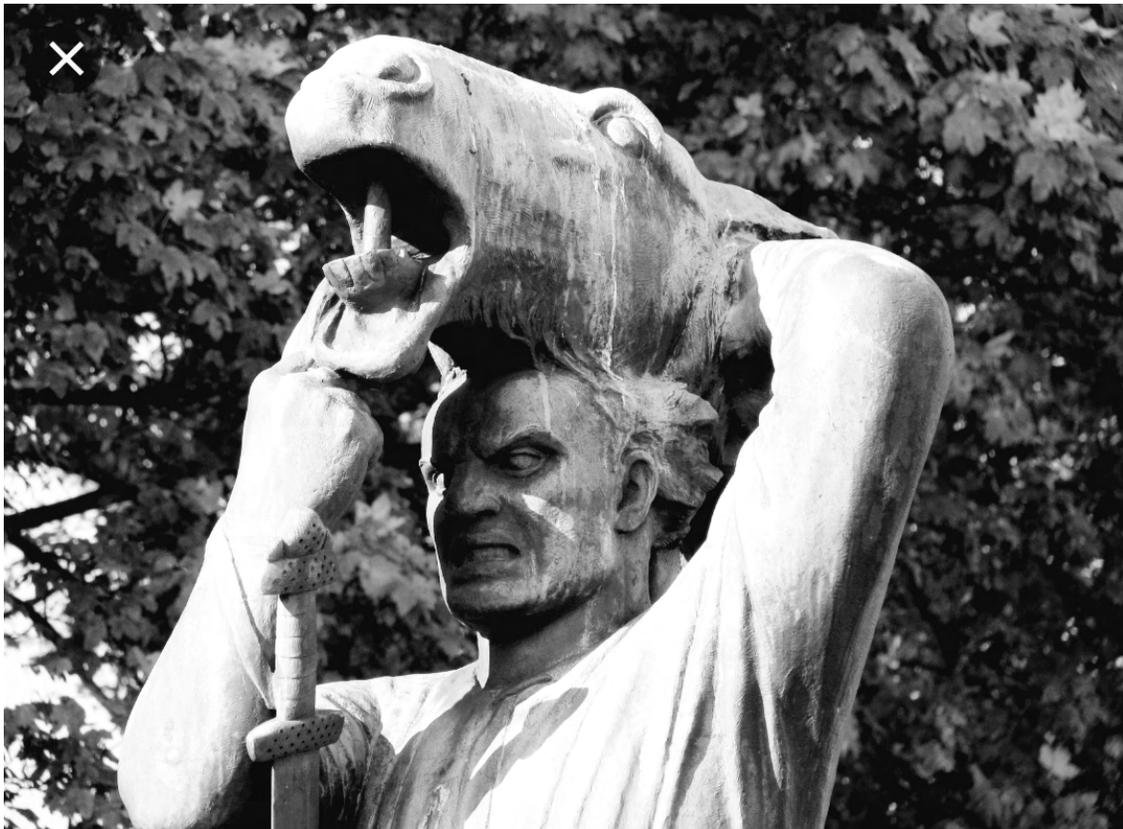


Folkbuilder Joe Drotos  
[jdrotos@runestone.org](mailto:jdrotos@runestone.org)

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## Pennsylvania

*I Experienced a Moment*



Egil Skalligrimson's Day of Remembrance approaches, this Saga has had such an impact on my journey within the AFA.

I heard a story that led me to think about my life and where I started. I was brought back to the time I knew this life; this religion was my home.

I experienced a moment....

You know the one that tells us, better yet shows us our path, and gives us the warm fuzzy feeling that this is where I'm supposed to be.

I was a flight a C-17 crossing over the North Atlantic, destination Helsinki Finland. The Air Force was conducting a training exercise with this country in hopes to better the flying capabilities of American Fighter Pilots. Yes, that could be a story of its own, but let me get back on track.

While flying over the great blue sea, sitting in my lap was a book my father gave me to read. My father has always been a member of the AFA and if it weren't for his guidance in my 20's I'm unsure if I would have found my place in this world. My father knew where I was going and decided to hand me the Saga of Egil Skallagrimsson. While on the flight and on the ground in Finland for the month I was abroad I took the time to read this story. I didn't just like it, I loved it!

After I finished the book, I continued to enjoy this new land I was visiting until the venture's sad end. We packed up and started lining up to jump back on our C-17 back to the States. When the line to load came down to the last ten or twelve of us, we were asked if we would like to ride the C-135. This was the plane that refuels the jets midair on their way home. A friend of mine and I really wanted to lay down in the back of this aircraft to watch them refuel, but mostly we wanted to look out the window that had the fuel boom. You could look straight down to the ground below. It was an awesome experience.

I awoke to a broadcast that we were landing in Iceland. One of our jets had a malfunction, repairs were going to have to be made. We touched down late at night, the land seemed flat, barren, and rocky. It wasn't until the next morning when I saw Iceland and felt its magnificence. Due to Iceland having its own security, we were able to explore for 24hrs. I was rolling all around Reykjavik trying to soak in as much as possible.

Then it happened, my moment. I rolled up on the Skallagrimsson Brewery, it is said the

brewery is placed where his Hof used to stand. My journey started with words on paper and ended with a location and something tangible. My mind circled the events surrounding this trip, I always say the fates weave my day. The Fates, my Father, the Gods all paved a path that was more than just coincidence. It was RITE.

I have never felt doubt about my faith, never will.

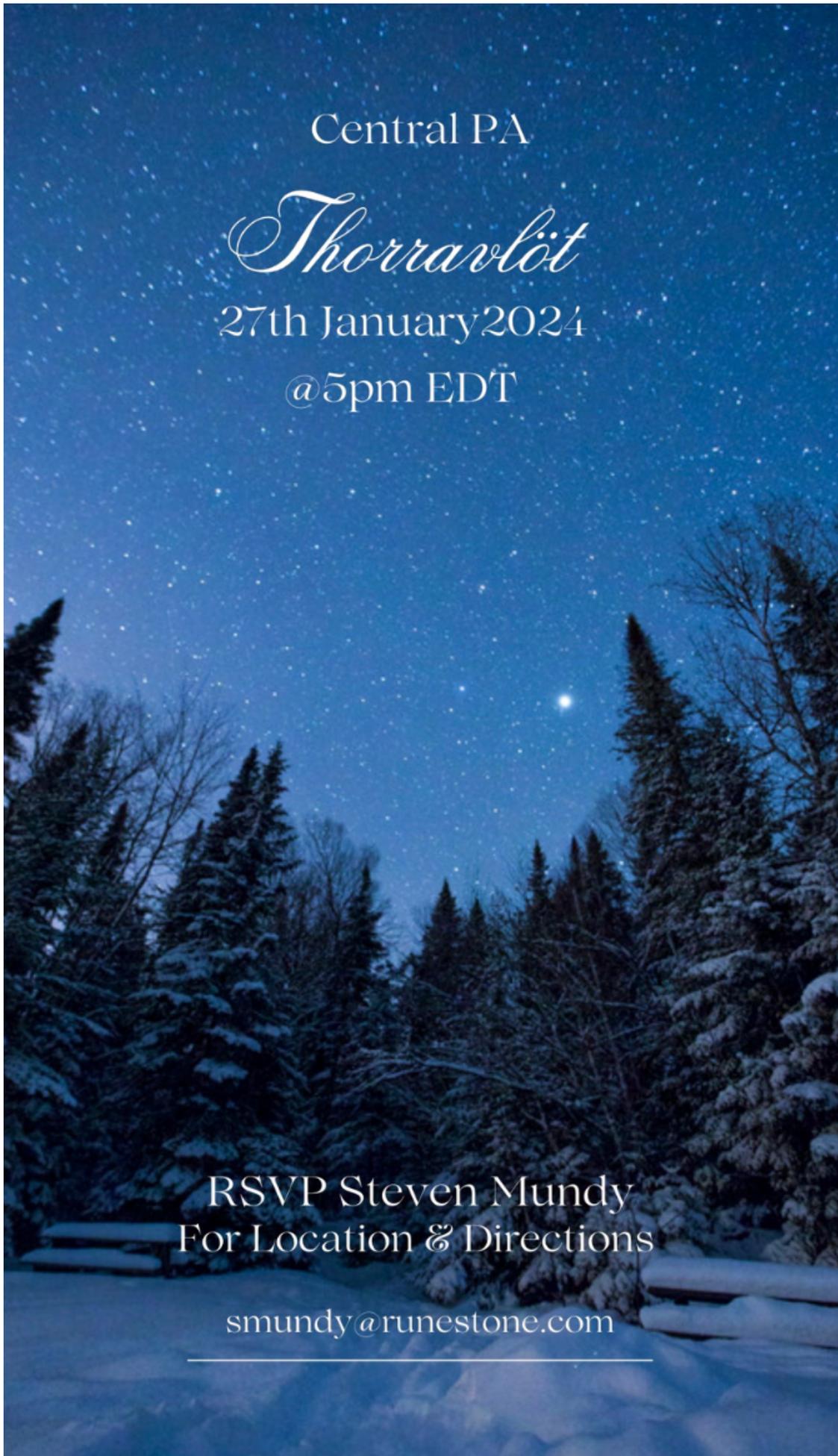
Did you have your moment?? Think about it for bit....

### *Upcoming Moots*



**Yule Moot  
Central P.A.**

December 16th @5:30pm  
RSVP-smundy@runestone.org



Central PA

*Thorrvlöt*

27th January 2024

@5pm EDT

RSVP Steven Mundy  
For Location & Directions

[smundy@runestone.com](mailto:smundy@runestone.com)

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Folkbuilder Steven Mundy  
[smundy@runestone.org](mailto:smundy@runestone.org)

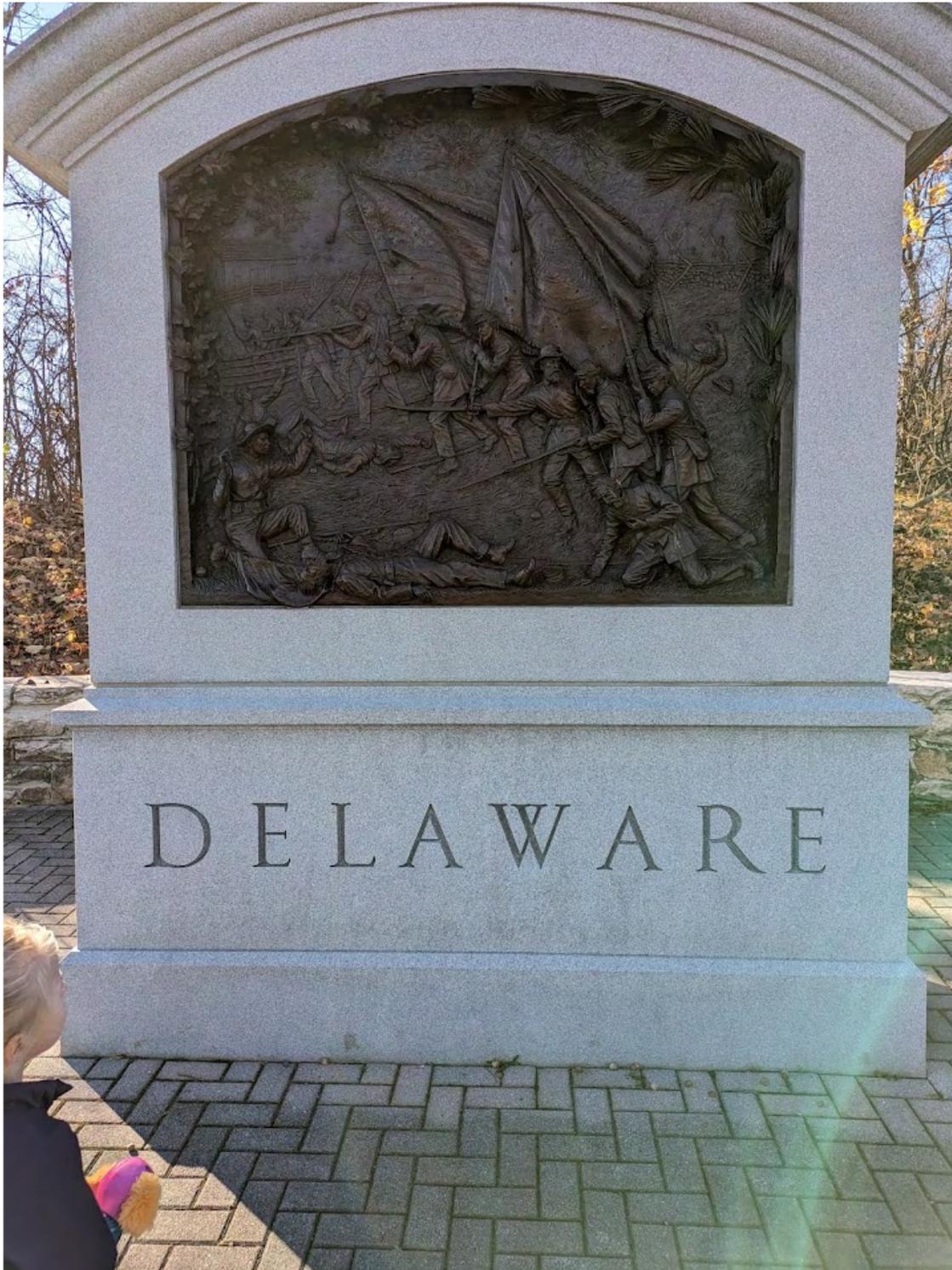
*Gettysburg Battlefield Feast of the Einherjar*



On November 18th, AFA members representing Pennsylvania, New York, West Virginia, and New Jersey honored the fallen warriors at the Battlefield of Gettysburg.



We were fortunate to have chosen a day when there was a commemorative parade representing the Union and Confederate armies without popular modern apologies. We explored Devil's Den, Cemetery Ridge, and the Wheatfield where Gythia Catie led a Blot to the Einherjar.



The Battlefield and Cemetery at Gettysburg always remind me of the great sacrifices our heroic ancestors have made to defend their way of life, their convictions, and their countries. It also reminds me that we must resist that fatal trait of our Folk to war with our own kind. No more brother wars. Hail the Einherjar!



Witan Clifford Erickson  
[cerickson@runestone.org](mailto:cerickson@runestone.org)

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## Poland

### *Fall Fortunes*



Alongside with our Slavic brothers of Gromada Białożar, we took our moot to the Celebration of Doli.



There we celebrated the last days of Autumn as well as engaged in the ancient Polish style of fortune telling. There we interpreted what fate wrote for us in the form of candle wax poured through a key hole into a watery basin.



We offered our gifts for prosperity and success to the ancestors and Gods and feasted in their honor. It's a great enjoyment to be in the peaceful solitude and healthy chill of

the outdoors at such a celebration as well as catching up with faces not long seen.



Now quickly comes upon us the great Yule or Szczodry Gody, as the Polish call it in their native tradition. On the 15th, it all begins! Yule tidings be on its way!



Aspir Befreier  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[abefreier@runestone.org](mailto:abefreier@runestone.org)

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## South Carolina

### *Chili Moot*



We hosted a chili moot at our house in South Carolina. We had kindred members come from North Carolina to join us for some chili, and much needed Folk Time.

The guys enjoyed a few adult beverages, while we ladies talked gardening, and held a

small ladies ritual.

It had been too long since we had seen our friends and kinsmen. Way too long. We'd like to thank Craig and Jennifer and Jasmine for joining us for some food, a few cold beers and all the frith we shared.



Folkbuilder Heather Young  
[hyoung@runestone.org](mailto:hyoung@runestone.org)

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## Sweden

*Reject the Blackpill*



Let me tell you why you should reject the concept of the "blackpill".

You have been gifted a divine instrument by the Gods. Your voice carries great power. Your intention, your spoken word, carries power.

Now, when you take that power, expressing it, you shape reality. You literally create something new.

When you take something horrific happening in the world, something unjust, something degenerate, and intentionally speak it into existence as a "blackpill", you are letting loose a curse on the world. A poison of the mind, that you then inflict on yourself and those around you.

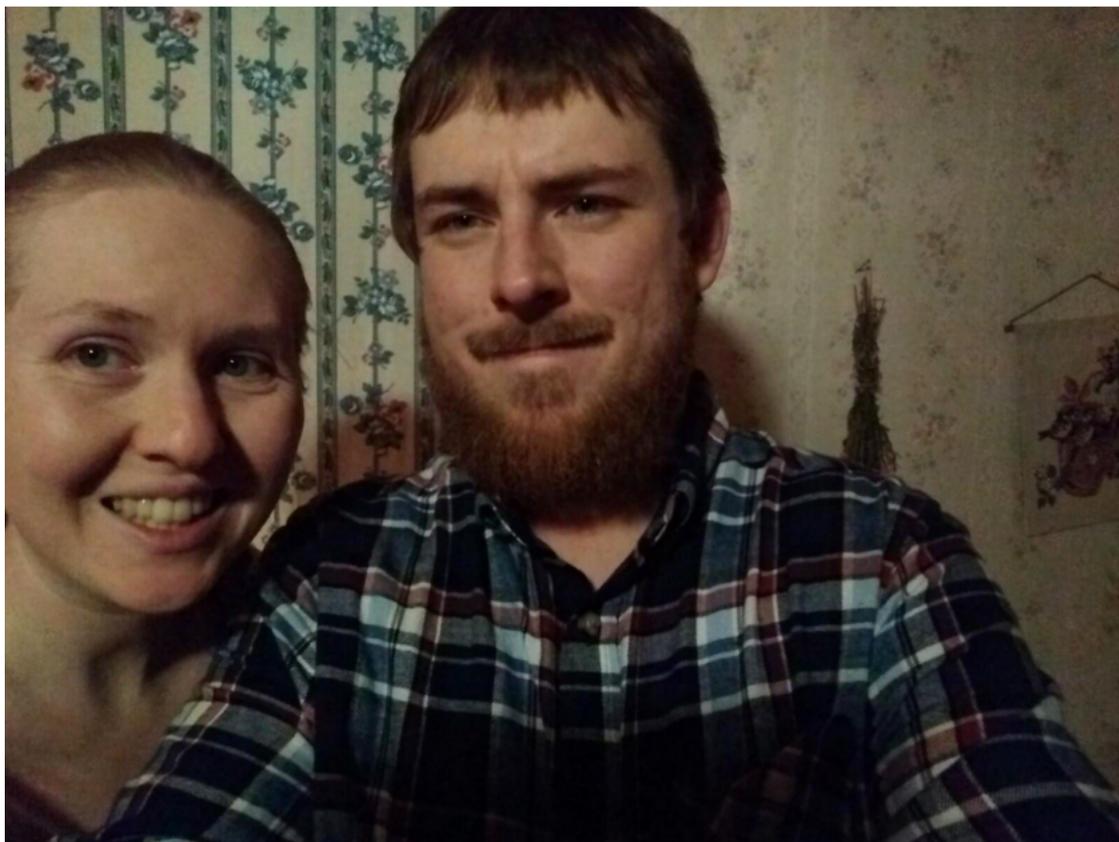
A blackpill is something that brings you down. It is a vile alchemical concoction that inflicts depressive thoughts in those that "take it", those that imbibe it. It demoralizes people.

Ask yourself, when we use this term, when we speak it into existence, who does it serve? Not us certainly. I am sure those that HATE us, LOVE it, when we do it.

We can acknowledge the horrible, unjust and tough things in the world without

transmuting them with our divine gift into poison. Use your intention, and word wisely, in the service of yourself, and the Folk. Let your willful voice be one of greatness and joy.

### *Enhärjar Fest*



Our Enhärjar Fest was a fantastic time! A great fest was had together, the coziness factor through the roof with white snow outside and the dark of winter.

To combat the cold and clean ourselves before the feast and blot to the Enhärjar and Oden, we had a relaxing time inside our woodburning sauna.



This was again a ritual where our daughter was very excited to contribute a gift of her own. This time she gave a ticka (a shelf fungi, a type of fungi that grows on trees) that she liked very much.

Engage your children in ritual as much as you can. You are doing them one of the greatest services doing so.

Hail the Enhärjar!

Hail Oden!

### *Upcoming Events*



Fika Friday

15th of December

26th of January

16th of February

Come and have a warm cup of coffee with the Lugnets!



Jul 16th of December Jul up North! RSVP [elugnet@runestone.org](mailto:elugnet@runestone.org)



Tor Blot

27th of January

Join us in northern Sweden as we give blot to Thor!

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



Charming of the Plow

17th of February

Join us in northern Sweden as we celebrate Charming of the Plow!

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



Erik Lugnet

Apprentice Folkbuilder

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

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## Tennessee

### *Gathered Now We are for Yule*



*Gathered now we are for Yule!  
Just as did the elders according to traditions rule.*

*Honoring heritage true,  
That has been passed down the lineages through.*

*A sunwheel built by craftsman's hands,  
For the cycle of the year it stands.*

*Most gracious Hosts opened their home to all,  
And together we headed our Cultural Call.*

*Delicious meals were shared by each,  
As carols and customs to one another we did teach.*

*Poems, stories, hails, and songs;  
Were shared to be carried all the year long.*

*Round fire a sacrifice offered to strengthen Volk,  
As burned bright did the fellowship of our Folk.*

*Bless Yule to all the Folk,  
May peace and joy within you the season invoke!*

- poem from the 2021 AFA Yule greeting cards

### *Upcoming Events*



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

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## **Virginia**

### *Drawing In To Family and Folk*



In the middle of November, I ventured north to see my family up in southwest Virginia. It turned into a wonderful opportunity to meet new Folk there while I was in the area. Myself and 4 others gathered at a nice Southern comfort food restaurant in Roanoke, VA. We spent a couple hours of quality time together and brought some folk closer who hadn't met in that area yet.



With good food and good company, this season should reinforce the importance of drawing closer to your loved ones, your folk, and our ancestral ways as the days darken. The mountains were also a welcome break from the dense cityscape of Atlanta, where I visited from.



Jordan Wells  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[jwells@runestone.org](mailto:jwells@runestone.org)

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## West Virginia

*Upcoming Events*



**ODIN WORLD PRAYER DAY**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9TH**  
**HARPERS FERRY, WV**

Hike + Odin Blót  
Mead/Hot Sauce tasting in Martinsburg afterwards

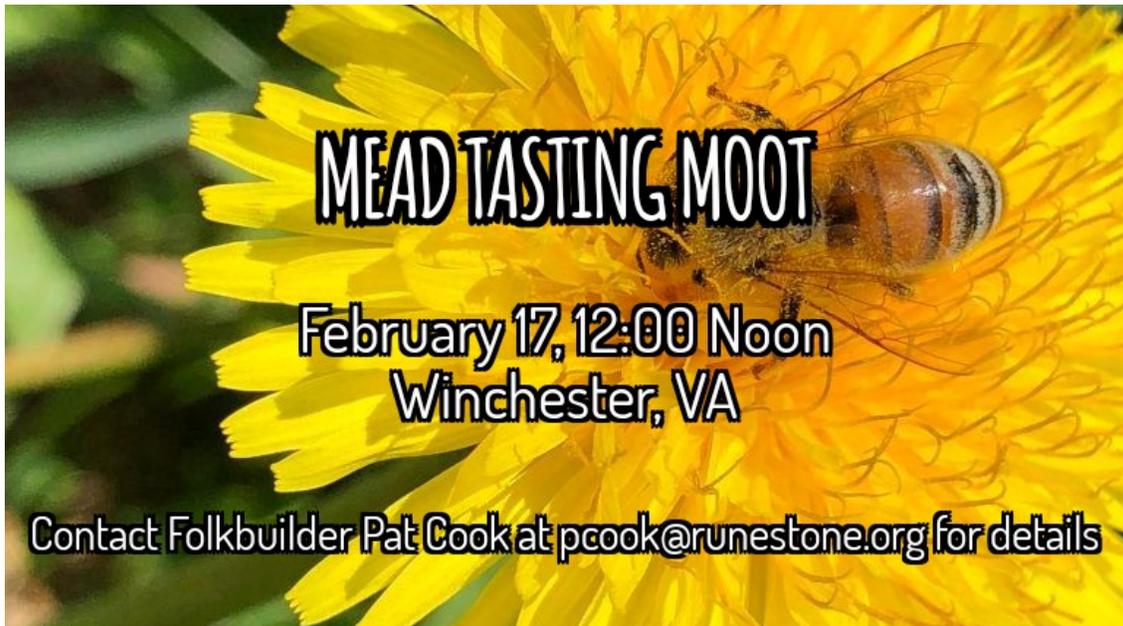
Contact Folkbuilder Pat Cook for details: [pcook@runestone.org](mailto:pcook@runestone.org)



**German Dinner Moot**

Shepherdstown, WV  
Jan. 13, 5pm

Contact Folkbuilder Pat Cook at  
[pcook@runestone.org](mailto:pcook@runestone.org) for details.



Folkbuilder Patrick Cook  
[pcook@runestone.org](mailto:pcook@runestone.org)



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