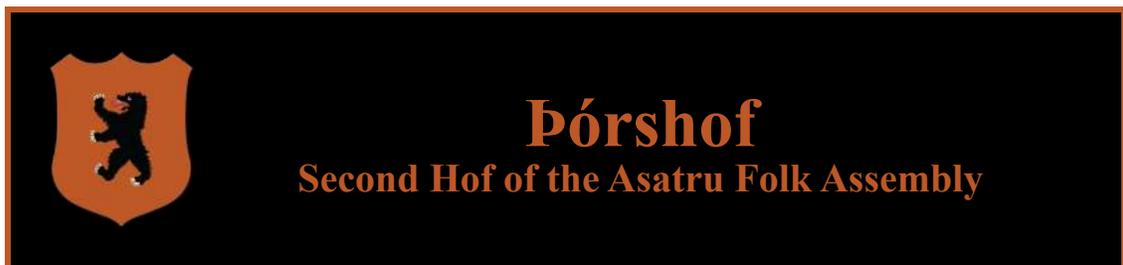
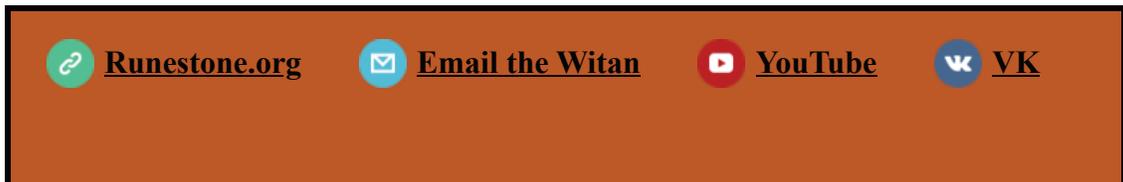


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Words from the Alsherjargothi



The 29th year of the Asatru Folk Assembly begins!

I am so proud of all we have accomplished together in 2022. During the summer, we dedicated the first Hof to Njörðr in over 1,000 years. In the fall, we enrolled our first class of students into the AFA Asatru Academy. In December, we purchased Sigrheim and began the long-dreamed of AFA community. Throughout 2022, there were 49 beautiful babies born to AFA families. During the course of 2022, our membership grew by an astonishing 20%.

We have amazing momentum coming into this new year and we have much to

accomplish. For our families, for our Folk, for our Gods, let's make 2023 the greatest year yet!



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Lawspeaker's Challenge

Frugality



One major change that has occurred over the last hundred years or so is the amount of debt that Americans carry. At the turn of the Twentieth Century, most Americans had almost no debt, and many or most owned their homes or lived in the family home. Now, just 120 years later, the average American is NINETY THOUSAND DOLLARS in debt. While this figure includes mortgages, it demonstrates that our lives are out of balance.

As many of you know I practice bankruptcy law, so I see every day what happens when spending exceeds income. Other than a house or MAYBE a car there is no reason to go

into debt. Too many of us are all just in the habit of swiping that credit or debit card, and there is no immediate difference between swiping ten dollars or a hundred dollars. I am constantly amazed at the people I work with who have no idea how much their utility bills are, their insurance, and sometimes even car payments, as they have it all set up on direct withdrawal and live on auto-pilot.

So, this month's challenge: make a budget, and stick to it. Make coffee at home, skip the Starbucks (or even the convenience store). Cook more, eat out less. Pack a lunch occasionally. Pay down your debt; save more, spend less. There are many tips and techniques out there for budgeting, but ignoring the math and just 'living paycheck to paycheck' will never put you in the mindset to improve the situation.

Don't get me wrong, though. I am not saying that we should live like misers, or never indulge ourselves at all. Just be mindful of your budget, and live below your means. Your grandchildren will thank you.



Witan Allen Turnage
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Words from the Gothar

We are Not Vikings, We are Aryans!



Many of our Folk who have come home to Asatru tend to identify with a very small portion of our Germanic ancestors' past: the Viking Age. There are many reasons for this: the Vikings were all white, they were tough, they were cunning, they were warriors, they were adventurous, and most importantly, they were Asatru. These are all great things to be, and all things to be proud of!

However, this obsession with Scandinavian pirates does have its detriments. The Vikings, even if they were our kin or direct ancestors, are not the example par excellence for Asatruar or our Folk at large. While many of them surely were pious and devoted to the Gods, the majority of them were focused on simply being pirates: pillaging, burning, raping. The average Scandinavian/German/Aryan would not have seen this as a pious or noble or spiritually-driven life. Going a-viking was typically a last resort effort to make one's own fortune and glory. That concept is still alive in us today, as well as in all of our ancestors and cousins between the Viking Age and the present. In the following paragraphs, I'd like to present an alternate group of our ancestors who possessed most of the positive traits of the Vikings, but also managed to cultivate devotion to nobility so well that they became known for their (unfortunately Catholic) piety!



If you are of British, Irish, French, Belgian, Dutch, or Sicilian descent, then these pious adventuring warriors were likely part of your ancestry or culture: the Normans, which is Frankish for “Northmen”.

The Normans were a pan-Aryan mixture of Franks, Saxons, Gauls, and Danes. Their bloodline was formed when Rollo, a Viking leader, was offered land in northwestern France so that he and his men would stop raiding the Christian Frankish kingdom. Rollo and his descendants, unfortunately, converted to Catholicism, but also learned of chivalry and piety, even if it was piety towards a foreign deity. Even as devout Catholics, though, they kept their adventurous nature, their cunning minds, their martial bearing, and their conqueror spirit!



The Normans famously conquered and ruled England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Sicily, the Netherlands, much of France, and some parts of the Middle East. When they conquered these lands, they did it for glory, just as their pagan Viking forebears did, but also because it was often the will of the Pope and, in turn, their god.

To paraphrase something our Alsherjargothi said: we need less “berserkers” and more “knights”!

When we look to one of our ancestral cultures to take inspiration from, let us make it the Normans! Pious, wise, horse-riding, adventurous, conquering Northmen who became knights, priests, and kings! Let us replace their foreign Christ-god with our own high and holy Æsir and Vanir, and march forward with both strength and nobility! Let us conquer life’s obstacles proudly and for the glory of the Gods!



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Time and Lore



It was June this past year, and I had the distinct honor to preside over the Midsummer Blot at Odinshof. I was walking the ritual circle ahead of time, chatting with our Alsherjargothi about what I had in mind. I was also getting used to the ground so I wouldn't trip. A question popped into my mind with regard to what direction I should focus my gaze, should I look up to the heavens when addressing Baldr, or look toward the ground (the underworld)? What the Alsherjargothi had to say was vitally important. We tend to view our Lore as strictly past tense, rather than in a cyclical fashion. Baldr is in Helgard, he is also returning from Helgard, and he has already risen victoriously... all at the same time. That really resonated with me. I already knew that our Ancestors

viewed time as cyclical, but it had never occurred to me to view our Lore the same way. I'll give some examples below.

The sons of Bor were once walking along the seashore and found two trees. They lifted the logs and from them created people. The first son gave them breath and life; the second, intelligence and movement; the third, form, speech hearing and sight.... the man was called Ask, and the woman, Embla. From them came mankind... (Gyfaganning, The Prose Edda)

*To the coast then came, kind and mighty
from the gathered gods three great Aesir
on the land they found, of little strength
Ask and Embla, unfated yet. (Voluspa 17.)*

Do we believe that humankind literally came from two pieces of driftwood? No. But it is my belief that the symbolism indicates that they washed up from the sea of humanity, or the turbulent seas of chaos, unfated...rootless even. It is also my belief, that Ask and Embla represent a generation, rather than the first humans. Perhaps they were the first generation to be conscious of our gods. (Odin gave breath..can be also be interpreted as consciousness.) With that in mind, how would we view this story through the lens of cyclical time? Another generation made aware of our Gods, is the likes of A Rudd Mills, Guido von List, Else Christensen....Stephen McNallen. an Ask and Embla generation right in front of us.

Our Ancestors lost their way after and during the conversion of Europe, perhaps a Ragnarok level of disconnection between our Gods and our people. They became rootless. They were unfated yet again, until a generation of men and women became aware, or conscious of the Gods. Did Odin give the gift of consciousness again to his people? That is my belief.

In the next Runestone, we will take a look at the slaying of Ymir, and how we can see the stories unfold in a cyclical way.

That which was, is, and that which is, is yet to occur.

Hail the Gods, Hail the Folk, and Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!



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Inner Conqueror



It is a new year and a fresh start as the Sun Wheel continues to turn. Time stands for no man, and it is finite. Even if we live in politically turbulent times, creating a Wolf Age for our Folk. Midgard on a meta-level is in an information age. Our values and virtues are timeless, and the spirit of Folk is unchanging. We are what we are. This is often why considering our fullest potential; it has been stated our Folk suffers from a soul-sickness. As the Asatru Folk Assembly is on the precipice of founding its fifth temple, and private community for our Folk, we no longer have the luxury of clinging or skulking in said illness. As a Folk, we have achieved too great a Victory for securing the future of our ways, strong relationships with our gods, and the mending of our folk soul, to identify as "victim", "oppressed", "hunted", or "shamed". Our ancestors were pioneers, innovators, and conquerors. Quite often excelling at each, with very little beyond a will to power, and a heartful of wonder. In the Bronze Age, we likely traveled

far out of Europe and across North America, In the Iron Ages, we built wooden boats that traversed seas in which steel ships vanished or sank. In the Dark Ages, we managed to hold off & greatly influenced the Christian church into something barely recognizable to ancient Christianity. The lore is overflowing with heroic tales of men who mastered and conquered the frontiers of their time. So where are heroes in the information age? We invented the means and paved the way for it. Where are our champions? Where are our conquerors in the 21st Century?! We have the power simmering in our blood to do so. Wotan has blessed us with knowledge at our fingertips, and the capacity to will our desires into reality. Fostering the wealth of the Fehu rune is now a matter of Discipline (a Noble Virtue), rather than grueling work, and a daily struggle between life & death. Businesses are now systems founded on Hospitality, Honor, & Frith (again Noble Virtues), and streams of wealth can be made from simply sharing thoughts in a book or a single song that speaks to the soul. We live in good times when strong-willed men can ascend to unimaginable heights in society if they stay focused. So why are we "slumming it" arguing with weak men on internet forums who have no ambition other than to put down and keep down anyone who happens to pass by? Especially when they're as easy to escape as the press of a button or the closing of a laptop screen. The possibilities are so many, it is easy to be overwhelmed by the possibilities. However, there is no need to hide. Instead, we need to take the time to become laser-focused, and like a magnifying glass under the sun, set the world on fire. Sculpted and molded to best serve the needs of our Folk, our families, and ourselves. Take time to assess yourself this year. Meditation is a great tool, as well as journaling. Ask yourself what you truly need vs. what makes you comfortable. Then strike a compromise between the two, and cast your ship off. Look into ways to create the life you desire for your family or how you can generate the success and tools to build up your Folk. After all, wealth and power is worthless without friends & family to share it with. Set goals, make plans, and stick to them! Start out small and compound on them a little more each day. Turn the need fire into a wildfire, to clear your way towards Victory. With four Hof's dedicated to the Asa, we are now champions and a light in the dark for folk. As such we now have a responsibility to become successful as individuals and seize Victory at every corner in the frontiers of the information age, so we can come home and be excessively generous, in deeds & wisdom.



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/freyshof-fund)

This sacred quest has had a great start so far! The generosity has been amazing, as always!

This is the list of things that need to happen before we can make Freyshof a reality:

1. We need to pay off Njörðshof. (We have paid off 40.83% so far)
2. We need to raise our monthly donation average by 9%. (This is membership dues/hoftollar plus other donations)
3. We need to locate a suitable property.
4. We need to find lenders and build a war chest.

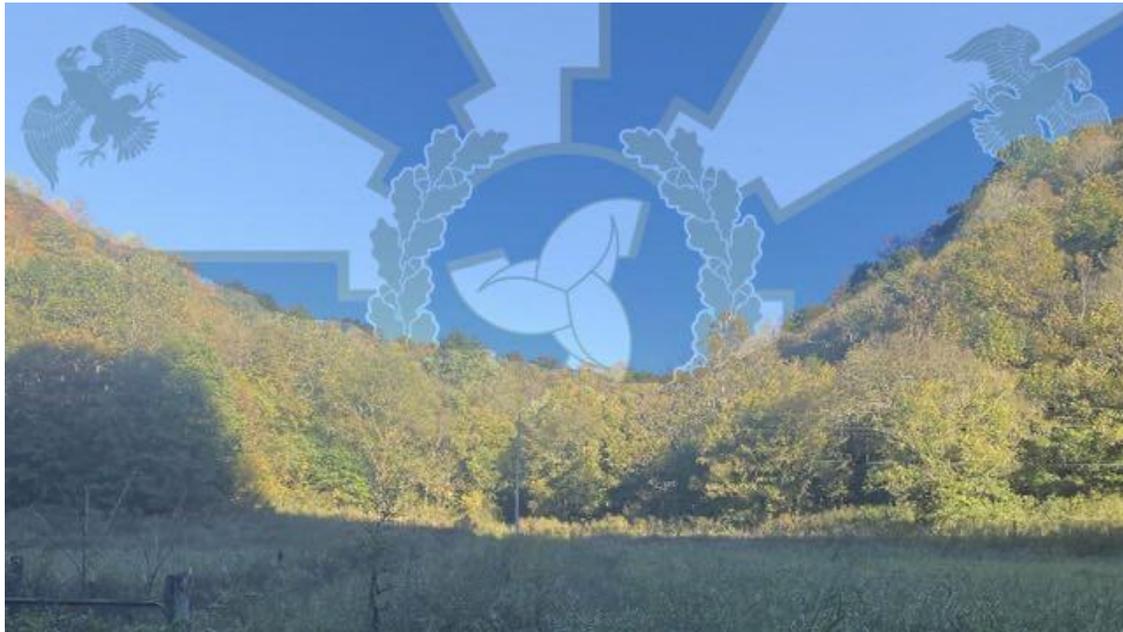
This is not a "quick" process so stay the patient and resolute. As we progress, I will keep you all updated on our progress!

Hail Freyr!



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Sigrheim - Home of Victory



We have big plans and big dreams! I am proud to announce our first moot at Sigrheim. This will be a chance to explore our land and plan and plot the shape that our dreams will take in the coming years.



Picnic & Exploration

at



Sigrheim

January 14th



Tennessee



If you would like to join us, please contact Melisa Mills at mmills@runestone.org, or me at mattflavel@runestone.org.



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Alsherjargothi, Asatru Folk Assembly
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Victory Never Sleeps

The Asatru Folk Assembly Presents

Victory Never Sleeps!

Wednesdays at 6pm PST / 8pm EST

vk.com/asatrufolkassembly

entropystream.live/app/MattFlavel

odysee.com/@AsatruFolkAssembly:e

youtube.com/c/AsatruFolkAssembly

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AFA Homeschool Program

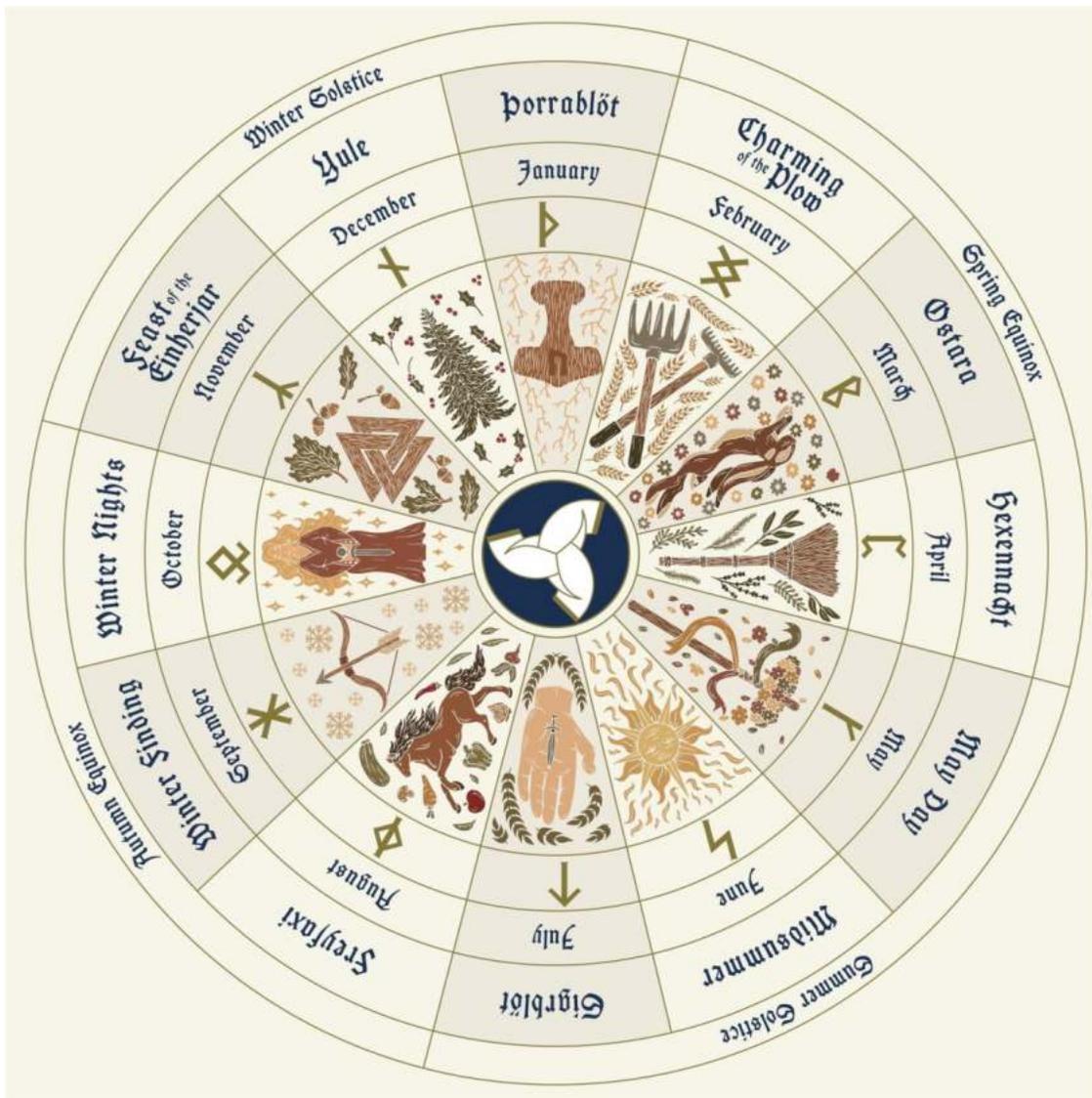


Check out the Asatru Academy at AsatruAcademy.org



Gothi Robert Stamm
Dean of AFA Academy
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Remembrance and Holy Days



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

2023

Date	Observance
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 28 (observed on 15th)	Hexennacht
May 9	Day of Remembrance for Else Christensen

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

Day of Remembrance



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

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

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

It was all for naught, however.

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

So, what can we learn from this story?

Some might make the argument that it is better to fight and die rather than retreat in

“shame.” In some cases, this might be true. For every one of us sitting here reading this, however, one of our ancestors made a different choice. The choice to convert saved our lives.

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

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

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

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

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



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Holiday



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

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

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

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



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Upcoming National Events

Charming of the Plow at Njörðshof



Order your tickets at

[Charming of the Plow at Njörðshof – Asatru Folk Assembly \(runestone.org\)](https://runestone.org/charming-of-the-plow-at-njordshof)

The Charming of the Plow is an ancient custom of our Folk that will be the National

Event at Njörðshof for the first time in 2023, held the first weekend in February. The celebration can be tied to the Gylfaginning, where Gefjon, one of the Disir in service to Frigga, went to visit King Gylfi of Sweden to ask for land of her own.

To our ancestors "luck" meant preparation. This was the time to prepare for the new year, to make plans and set goals that will allow us the prosperity we seek. Njörðr is our god of prosperity, and it is at his temple the AFA will gather to make ready the earth to accept the seed of our plans for the coming year. Whether it's preparing the actual soil for planting, sharpening the plow, taking a class that will let you advance at work, or even changing careers; to work our will in this world our implements must be sharp if they are to be effective.

This is why we ask that you join us at Njörðshof for our first Charming of the Plow starting Friday, February 3rd, and running through Sunday, February 5th.

In addition to the blots and sumbel, there will be great food (ask anyone that attended our dedication), activities for the kids, discussions with our Goðar, an auction, and more. Build Frith with your folk in Florida, so get out of the cold for a great time in the sunshine state at Njörðshof.

Tickets are available at

[Charming of the Plow at Njörðshof – Asatru Folk Assembly \(runestone.org\)](https://runestone.org/charming-of-the-plow-at-njordshof-asatru-folk-assembly)

Ostara at Þórshof



Order your tickets at

[Ostara at Þórshof – Asatru Folk Assembly \(runestone.org\)](https://runestone.org/ostara-at-thorshof-asatru-folk-assembly)

Ostara at Þórshof, an Asatru Folk Assembly national event, is scheduled for March 10 – 12 at our very own Þórshof!

There will be fun and games for the children, classes for the adults, and good memories to be made. We have an assortment of different activities for people of all ages in attendance. Classes to be held will cover a wide range of topics.

As always we will be having an auction of unique and one-of-a-kind Asatru-related items. All auction proceeds go to help fund these amazing events. We ask anyone who would like to donate to this great cause to please donate an item to the auction, or bring your cash to bid! Anyone wanting to set up a vendor table at this event please feel free, all we ask is a donation of a substantial item to the auction.

Tickets are available at

[Ostara at Þórshof – Asatru Folk Assembly \(runestone.org\)](https://runestone.org)



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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

Ladies' Mysteries Podcast

LADIES MYSTERIES PODCAST
JANUARY 15TH @ 1:30PM CST
CREATING A POSITIVE HOME SPACE

Witan Brandy Callahan

Clearing the clutter

Maintaining positive energy

Gythia Catie Erickson

Protection charms

Folkbuilder

Sara Ault

Hlin

Welcome weaving



Folkbuilder

Christine Dumas

Home cleansing

TEAMS call, contact cdumas@runestone.org
for more information



Folkbuilder Christine Dumas
cdumas@runestone.org

Ladies' Rune Study



Hey ladies! We are going to be back at our Rune study! We are going to be looking at Pertho this time, and I hope to see you all there. Like before, this study is at 8pm EST.

January 18th- Pertho

February 1st- Algiz



Gythia Anna Plourde
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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).



Mike Joyner
Apprentice Folkbuilder
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Ancestral Food and Culture

Kolaczki



8 oz cream cheese

2 sticks unsalted butter

3 cups flour

1 tsp salt

- Cream the butter and cream cheese together then add flour and salt. We used our hands to mix it.
- Refrigerate an hour or longer OR
- Freeze for 10 -15 mins for quicker results (to get to eating cookies faster lol)
- Roll the dough out to 1/8 inch or you can use a baking mat until u can start to see what's on the mat through the dough.
- Cut dough into (as best you can) square.

- Then cut out 2-inch by 2-inch squares to form a big square.
- Place a teaspoon of the preferred preserve.
- Dab water on opposite corners bring together and meld them somewhat together then fold them over.
- Freeze cookies for 10 mins before placing on oiled cookie sheet
- Bake at 350 for 15 mins or until edges look a lil browned.
- Place on cooling rack.
- Add powdered sugar and enjoy.



This is a traditional Polish cookie. Made for holidays or special occasions. For me, kolaczki represents my childhood with my moms, mom. When I'm making them I think

of her. It also reminds me of my ancestors who came from the hills of Poland. They're a testament to being able to make something great out of very little. They came here with little and these cookies are made with little ingredients. I'm proud to be Polish, and kolaczki are my way of saying thank you to those ancestors.

- Jaclynn Frazier-Duffy, member



Folkbuilder Timothy Dumas

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AFA Prison Ministry



Greetings kinsfolk,

I am very happy to report, that this past December 20th,2022, our Alsherjargothi Mathew Flavel had the opportunity to gather with a group of followers of Asatru who are incarcerated.

This was no small task to achieve, as there were countless interactions and paperwork and waiting involved. I would like to thank all that were involved with this process with a special thanks to Rodney, Clistie, Jolene, Chaplin Joseph, and Alsherjargothi Mathew Flavel.

Our Alsherjargothi has seen the need for this outreach for a long time and has followed in the footsteps of Haptaguð—Odin's name that is known in the Gylfaginning as (God

of the Prisoners)—as well, has rekindled the torch that was started first by our Folkmother Else Christensen in the 1970s in Florida.

Being able to share in Mother's Night with those kinsmen in prison, Blot and Sumbel and simple camaraderie, was the first time in the Asatru Folk Assembly's history that we have had our Alsherjargothi be able to share with our often forgotten folk.

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.

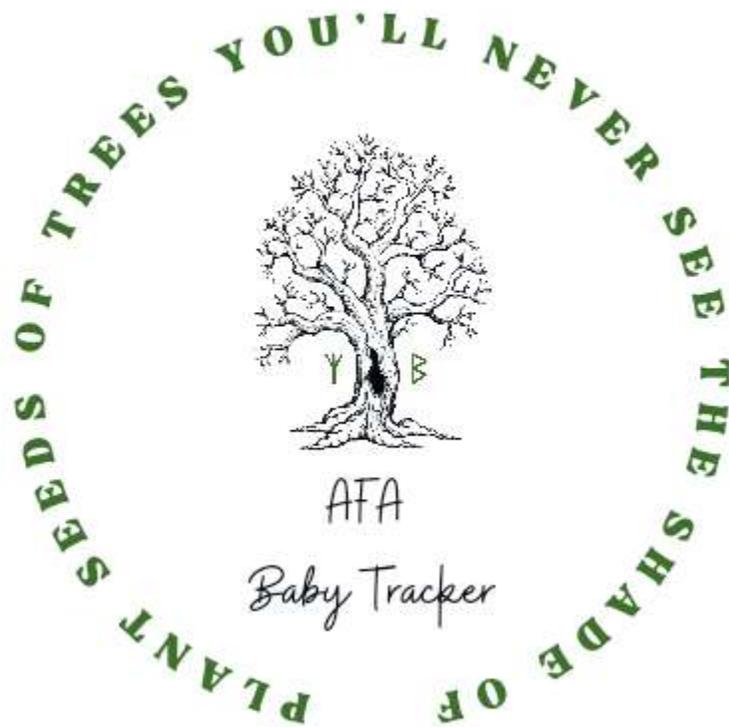
We intend on making real-world change for the better of our Folk.

If you have a loved one who is incarcerated or would like to help with this ministry, please contact me or donate to our general fund on the [Runestone website](#) with an earmark "AFA Prison Ministry" in the comments section.



Folkbuilder James Ault
jault@runestone.org

Baby Tracker



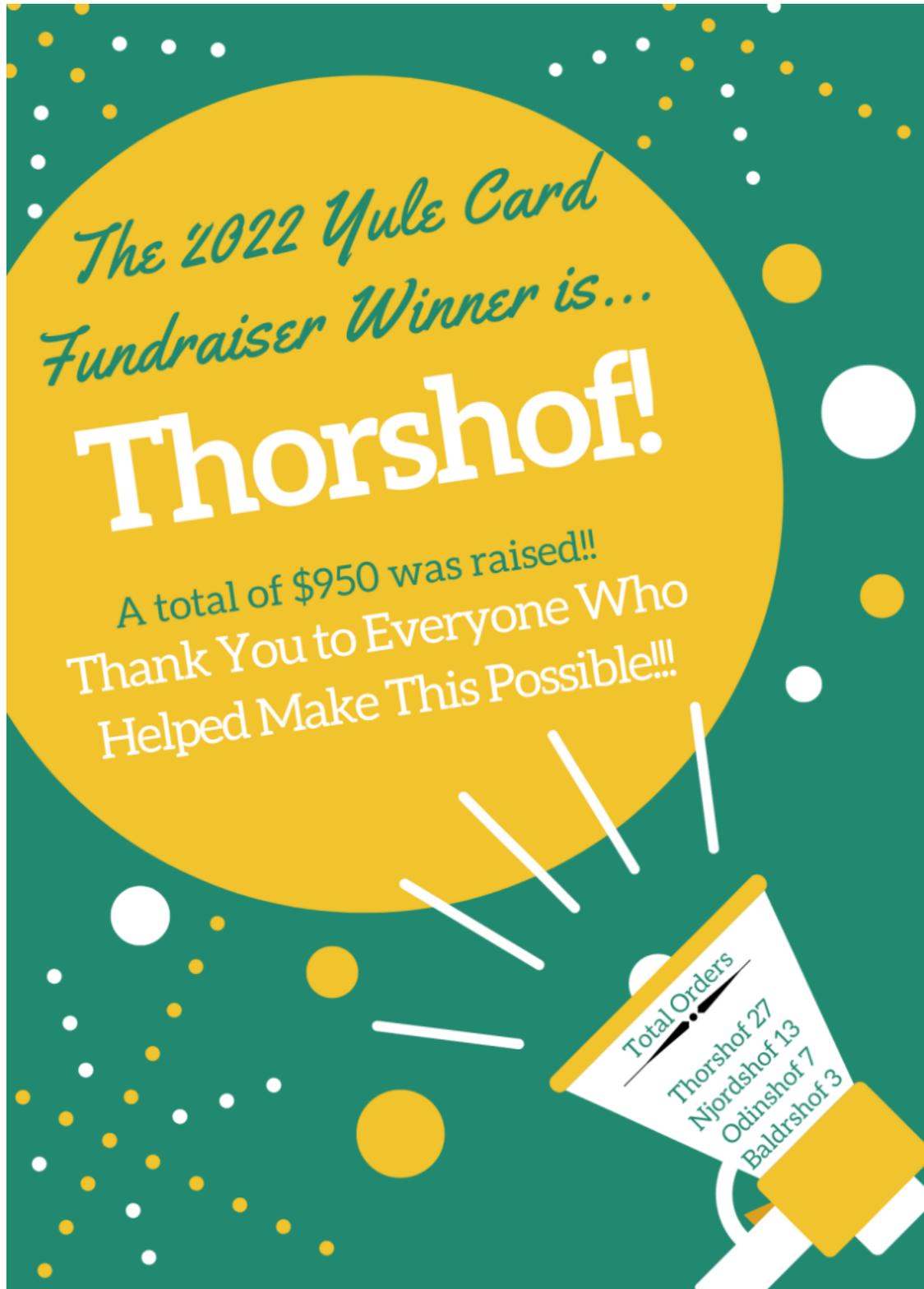
To show the growth of our folk we present to you an ongoing baby tracker. We will be keeping track of how many children have been and are born within the AFA from 2022 and forward. The ongoing tracking is proof that we are building something sustainable for the future of our folk, which is a place for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

Total babies born in 2022: 49



Jessica Keller
Apprentice Folkbuilder
jkeller@runestone.org

Yule Card Fundraiser Winnings



Last year we raised \$600, this year we raised \$950! Thank you again everyone who participated and helped make this project possible!



Jessica Keller
Apprentice Folkbuilder
jkeller@runestone.org

Saga's Literature Project



Saga needs your stories!

Do you have thoughts throughout your day or your studies that you ponder about our Gods, Goddesses, Heroes, or our Faith?

Do you and your family or Kindred have ways you like to venerate the Gods that are special to your own traditions?

How do you celebrate our Holidays or Days of Remembrance?

Do you have advice for those who have finally come home and wish you could have it handy to give to them?

Are you enrolled in Asatru Academy or partake in Lore Study or the Virtue Recovery Group?

The Asatru Folk Assembly wishes to create booklets, brochures, and pamphlets to have on hand in our Hofs and with membership Assembly-wide to give out to anyone with curiosity, whether they are a member or not.

This will be key in our studies as experienced practitioners and should serve as a more efficient way than directing those with questions to our websites alone.

Saga needs your help! Submit any ideas or write-ups you have on the topics listed above to me, Apprentice Folkbuilder Shane Duffy at sduffy@runestone.org!

Note: All submissions are subject to review from myself and up the chain of command to the Alsherjargothi himself.



Shane Duffy
Apprentice Folkbuilder
sduffy@runestone.org

Now Available in the AFA Store

The Usatru Folk Assembly



2023 Calendar

Calendars will be up for one last chance!

Ordering will begin January 7th and end January 20th. All calendars will be shipped at the end of the ordering time frame and will arrive around the end of January.



Folkbuilder Melisa Mills
mmills@runestone.org

Þórshof

Toy and Coat Giveaway at Þórshof



It was a challenge set down by our Alsherjargothi. In the two and half years of its existence, Þórshof had not had a toy giveaway. We were determined to turn that around.

For the first time, Þórshof hosted Yule as a 3-day event. We didn't want to charge an admission fee, so we asked the attendees for donations of toys, jackets, or nonperishable food items.

Beginning Friday, December 16th, we began with our first-ever Toy Giveaway, led by Folkbuilder Heather Young. Heather had arranged toy donations through the Cumberland County Toys for Tots distributors weeks in advance, making the 3-hour drive from South Carolina to Fayetteville and then Linden two times in preceding weeks. We had toys on 4 tables. with more than enough to go around. Heather had made local contact with a few families ahead of the open event to help them make some children's holidays better. A final tally added up to 20 children and their families were provided for this holiday season.

Heather had also gathered coats to hand out at both our toy giveaway and our Food Pantry. We gave away 12 coats to the folks in Linden and the surrounding area.



It's a cliché but it's true. It is a holiday of giving. Giving thanks, giving with generosity. We at Þórshof wish you all a Blessed Yule and a prosperous and victorious New Year!



Gothi Daniel Young
dyoung@runestone.org

Food Pantry at Þórshof



As is usual for us, we had a good turnout for our Food Pantry. 12 families were fed. Special thanks to Apprentice Folkbuilder Matthew Bain and Folkbuilder Patrick Cook for their help at Yule!



Gothi Daniel Young
dyoung@runestone.org



Holiday at Þórshof



On Dec 17-18, we celebrated Yule at Þórshof in Linden, NC. This year was different from the previous years as we had a three-day event instead of a single day. The winter weather came to celebrate with us over the weekend, and although that didn't stop everyone from socializing and enjoying being outside, the children especially enjoyed it.

Friday started with a wildly successful toy drive, made possible by Folkbuilder Heather Young. Thanks to her hard work, we gave away a room full of toys to local families. Folkbuilder Heather Young also opened the day with the Welcoming of the Gods. The rest of the day was full of children chasing each other around the grounds and the adults greeting members as they arrived. We ended the night with Gothi Daniel Young giving

an incredibly powerful blot to Porr that left the room needing to sit down and decompress at its conclusion.



Saturday was a full day of events filled with meals, classes, and meeting new and returning members. That night, Gothi Rob Stamm led the Yule ritual as Witan Svan Herul hosted the auction of items AFA members had donated to raise funds for maintenance expenses of the Hof. The night concluded with Sumbel late into the evening.

Sunday, being a much shorter day of events, included Gothi Trent East giving the wayfarers blot and the farewells. Afterward, everyone said their goodbyes, exchanged hugs, and began their long journeys home. The event was a huge success and was a great way to end the year as we all look forward to warmer weather and much more time spent together.

Hail!



Robert Shotwell
Apprentice Folkbuilder
rshotwell@runestone.org



France



Je me présente à vous, mon nom est Stéphane Pompignac j'ai 55 ans et je suis Français. Mon épouse s'appelle Radegonde et nous sommes Asatruar, nous avons 4 enfants (Pierrick 30 ans, Gwennaëlle 27 ans, Morgane 21 ans et Mériadeck 15 ans). J'ai commencé à travaillé en tant que sergent chef de groupe commando dans l'armée Française, puis j'ai par la suite créé des entreprises, la dernière est Thor-Elec c'est une entreprise qui vend des alarmes périmétrique sur grillage ou dans le sol, j'ai aussi une agence de communication et un cabinet de magnétiseur, bref je suis un peu hyperactif... En ce qui concerne ma foi, cela à commencé très jeune avec une attirance particulière

pour les Druides et les Runes. Ce qui m'a amené à être formé dès l'âge de 21 ans par les Druides ensuite les Runes mon reliées à Odin et depuis je les étudies et j'étudie aussi l'Edda avec attention depuis beaucoup d'années, je pratique les rituels de façon régulière et je suis amené à célébrer des mariages et des cérémonies de passages en tant que Druides. Aujourd'hui j'ai rencontré à travers l'AFA la structure communautaire qui me manquais pour pouvoir léguer à mes enfants une spiritualité stable et structurée. En cela je béni l'AFA d'avoir croisée mon chemin, et je ferai tout ce qui est en mon pouvoir pour développer et pérenniser notre église.

Merci encore à vous d'exister,
Hail nos Dieux!
Hail notre Folk!
Hail l'AFA!



Stephane Pompignac
Apprentice Folkbuilder
spompignac@runestone.org

Indiana

Yule do what you're told.



Friends and Folk,

Like much of the rest of the country, we experienced a snap of bitterly cold weather here in the Hoosier State with wind chill bringing the outdoor temperature to -30 degrees Fahrenheit. When you heat your home with a wood stove, as I do, this sort of news fills you with both concern and comfort; comfort because you know that when your home eventually loses power (and we did) that you will not freeze to death in the night, a concern because you know that you did not split as much wood as you should have because you're a lazy jerk, and you are not entirely sure that you won't run out and freeze to death in the night. Fortunately, we knew the cold was coming and had a couple days of tolerable weather preceding Fimbulwinter 2022 in which to catch up. My son will exaggerate that I worked him "like a dog" in order to accomplish the necessary task, I would counter that I have it on pretty good authority that dogs in my household appear not to work all that hard.



Having staved off the distasteful necessity to split wood on an "as needed" basis during the inclement weather, we were able to shelter in the comfort of our home and begin preparations for our upcoming Yule celebration. Our year-end festivities were a modest affair, but I found that it didn't suffer for that. Having a lower-key affair allowed more time to socialize with those in attendance and strengthen our bonds. The children painted with watercolors and decorated gingerbread houses, and we adults reminisced and politely pretended to like the gifts that I gave.



There is something deeply spiritual about coming together in a place that is warm and safe and eating food together that harkens back to our primordial selves.



There is something less deeply spiritual about distracting the children with storybooks while we stole and devoured chunks of their painstakingly decorated gingerbread houses (*I didn't say we were perfect; I said that we were warm and safe.)



Folkbuilder Johnathan Rock

jrock@runestone.org

Maine

Northern New England Yule Party



When we got together for our Yule party, we had too much food and it was dangerously delicious, yet we somehow survived to party another day! It was a good time and we are all looking forward to doing it again next winter.

This month, we have decided to have a moot in southern Maine at the GFB Scottish Pub in Old Orchard Beach, Maine on January 14th. I haven't been there before but I am told by those who have that it's a really great place to enjoy some good food. Let's meet up at 3 pm which is when they open.

Upcoming Events





Daniel Mason
Apprentice Folkbuilder
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Maryland

Thorns



I went out to walk trails with my sons this past winter. Often we would find new views we sought to experience, and new places we wished to travel. Many times I walked from these outings covered in small cuts. I often contended with these thorns and bramble that were all but invisible until I had tread upon or through them.

My initial response was one of irritation. After all, I bore these plants no ill will and sought no harm to them, yet they blocked my way and threatened me with pain. Of course, I would have simply stomped them or ripped them completely out of the ground in my anger (catch a stray one across the ear and tell me you don't get a bit peeved), but

that would be senseless. These thorns were not meant for me, and they existed because nobody had trod the path before.

This winter I worked as a package deliverer. I encountered many thorns among people that I met. From having a woman angrily storm out of her home and suggest that her German Shepherds would eat me (they seemed of a quite friendly disposition from what I could tell) to a man choosing to sneak out of his garage to ambush me with a gun drawn when I had knocked on his front door.

Now I am a big bearded White man delivering gifts and things these people have ordered. I am practically Santa far as I was concerned and was more than annoyed to be greeted in such a less-than-amicable fashion. I come openly and in a friendly manner and THIS was how I was to be treated?!

But I know that their aggression, born of caution and fear, is warranted in the world today. The current culture has people atomized and isolated. It seems as though the world is filled with people that want to steal from you, or worse. Even as I met with these people and was polite and friendly, even downright jolly as a firearm has been drawn to greet me, I saw that they were taken aback. A friendly stranger is seemingly all but unheard of, even amongst the people who historically have been known to have laws of hospitality.

To put it simply, again, these thorns were not meant for me. There is a verse in the Havamal about traveling often to a friend's house, for thorns and brush grow on the path where no foot passes. The modern world encourages everyone to isolate and keep to themselves. Our people, our Folk, meeting and getting to know each other is actively dissuaded against, and any gathering of the Folk is viciously slandered as hateful. So a new friend coming upon your doorstep full of Frith is seemingly something for fairytales.

These thorns were not meant for me. But by meeting people I take the steps to remove them from the path between my home and theirs. By making sure to often keep in touch and meet the people I call my Folk, my foot upon these paths keeps those thorns from growing between us. That there shall be no impediment to the Frith we build amongst each other. And I encourage all of you to do the same. The “season of giving” is “over”, but now is the time to work on building that Frith amongst our people.

I'll meet you over a meal and toast to our health soon.

James Bethard

Apprentice Folkbuilder

jbethard@runestone.org

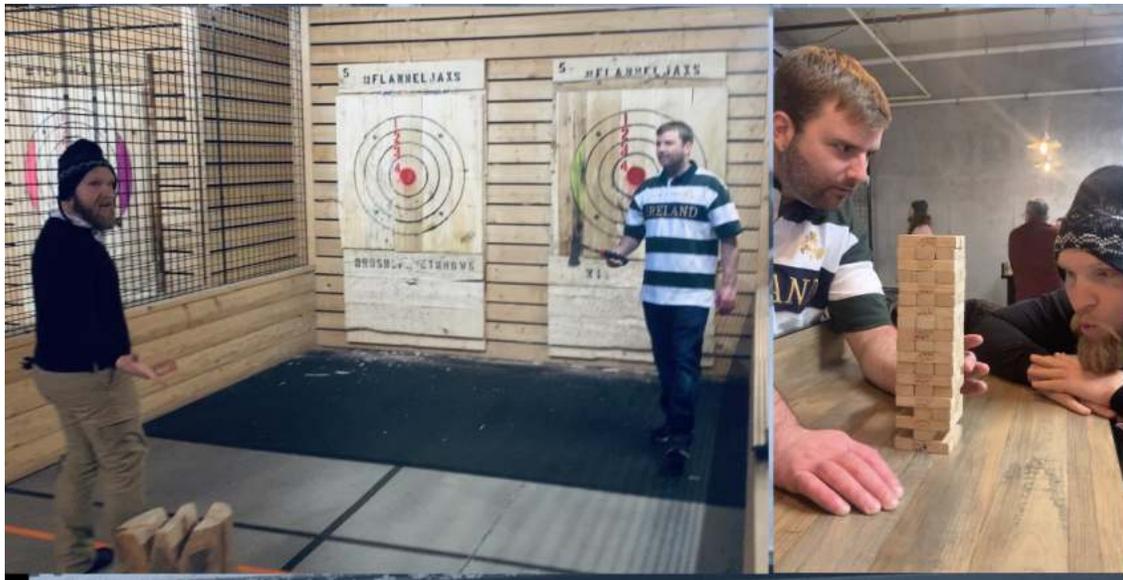


Michigan

Remember, Remember the Moots of December

Friends and Folk,

We held 2 moots in the month of December. It is more or less inevitable that our members engage in some form of axe-throwing moot at some point throughout the year. To fulfill this requirement we met in Grand Rapids to engage in the time-honored tradition of slinging hatchets and cheating at Jenga.



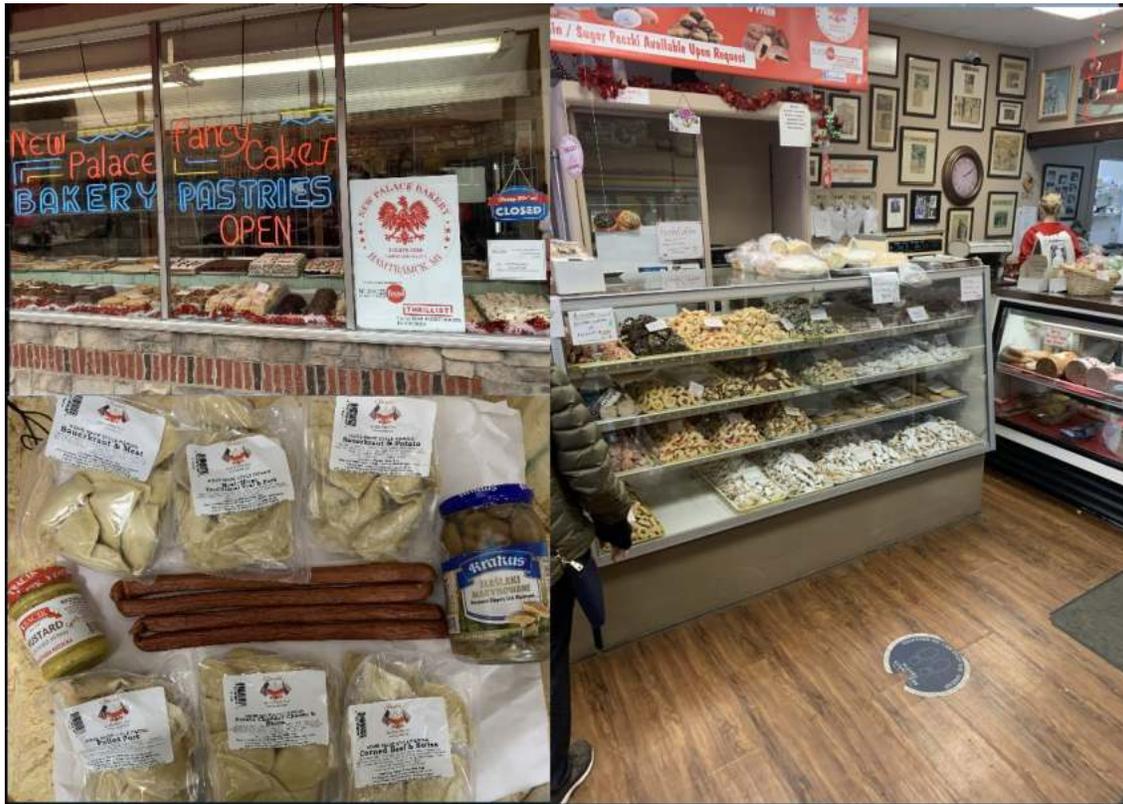
Speaking of time-honored traditions, it has become standard practice that even our most meager competitions lead to punitive pushups for the losers. If I had remembered that Grand Rapids was more or less located in Winterfell, where it randomly drops a foot of snow anytime between the months of July – May, I might have tried harder not to wind up in the losers' circle. As it was, I found myself outdoors, smashing through Hyperborean snow-pushups and leaving Han Solo-style impressions on the sidewalks of Grand Rapids like the veritable snow angel that we all know I am.



I would like to take this moment to impart upon you the importance of discretion when choosing a traveling companion. For instance, if you are anyone other than myself, you may wish to be cautious before booking a shared hotel room with the sort of man who brings a weighted mace with him while traveling. I have grown accustomed to the lifestyle of hearing my kinsman's alarm ring in the morning only to find him

precariously performing mace swings between our beds 10 minutes later while blasting Dokken's not-really-a-hit song "Dream Warriors" from the Nightmare on Elm Street III soundtrack.

I have prepared myself for this eventuality, this is the life that I have chosen.



After committing a series of acts at the complimentary hotel breakfast bar which could only honestly be described as "pillage" we were on our way to the traditionally Polish Hamtramck, Detroit. We rendezvoused with our Michigan operatives and quickly mobilized for the forceful annexation of numerous baked goods, meats and pierogi into my stomach, followed by the blitzkrieg of a nearby hipster coffee shop, ill-prepared for the ferocity of our assault (attentive students of war will notice from the picture that I wore my finest dad-shoes as a force multiplier to provide superior traction/arch support throughout the invasion).



So fast and hard was our campaign that we were able to secure victory, bid farewell to our faithful compatriots, loaded our vehicles with the spoils of our invasion, and beat a hasty retreat back to our home positions before the Winged Hussars of Hamtramck could even attempt a counteroffensive. They will have a future opportunity, because I am certain that we will someday return to battle anew.

Folkbuilder Johnathan Rock
jrock@runestone.org



North Carolina

Coming Home



The Asatru Folk Assembly is bigger than it has ever been. We are continually setting new standards for membership numbers, allowing us to do more than ever before. With four Hofos established and Sigrheim secured, there is no doubt we are living in exciting and unprecedented times. I cannot help but correlate our continued growth with that success, and I'd like to bring attention to one aspect of that growth - returning members.

For those of you who do not know me, I am a returning member. I have been gone for a few years and recently returned in September. In the time that I was gone, there was a steady decline in my Asatru life; I was connected to fewer of my Folk, had less opportunities to practice our faith with others, and was feeling adrift. I came to

understand that there was a void in my spiritual life that could only be filled by the AFA, but I thought I had lost my chance at being a part of this great family.

Any doubts that I had about coming home were put to rest by one of the most outstanding gentlemen I know, Gothi Daniel Young. Gothi Young never allowed me to drop out of contact - he would contact me every few months, asking about my family, work, and happiness. He showed me how much the AFA had grown, thrived, and prospered while I was away, which made me long to be back. Finally putting my doubts to rest, one day he told me, "Come back home, Tyler. This is where you belong." I put in my application that day and felt the weight fall off of my shoulders. I was finally home.

My story is not unique. There is a growing trend of former members coming back home, and this is largely due to the work that our dedicated

Folkbuilders and Gothar put in. I would encourage each of you to reach out to your friends that have left in the past and let them know that you remember them and that they have a home and a Folk that will embrace them. Sometimes, people will leave out of naivete and will come to realize their mistakes, not knowing if they will be welcomed back or not. Bring them home, and together we can achieve victory after victory.

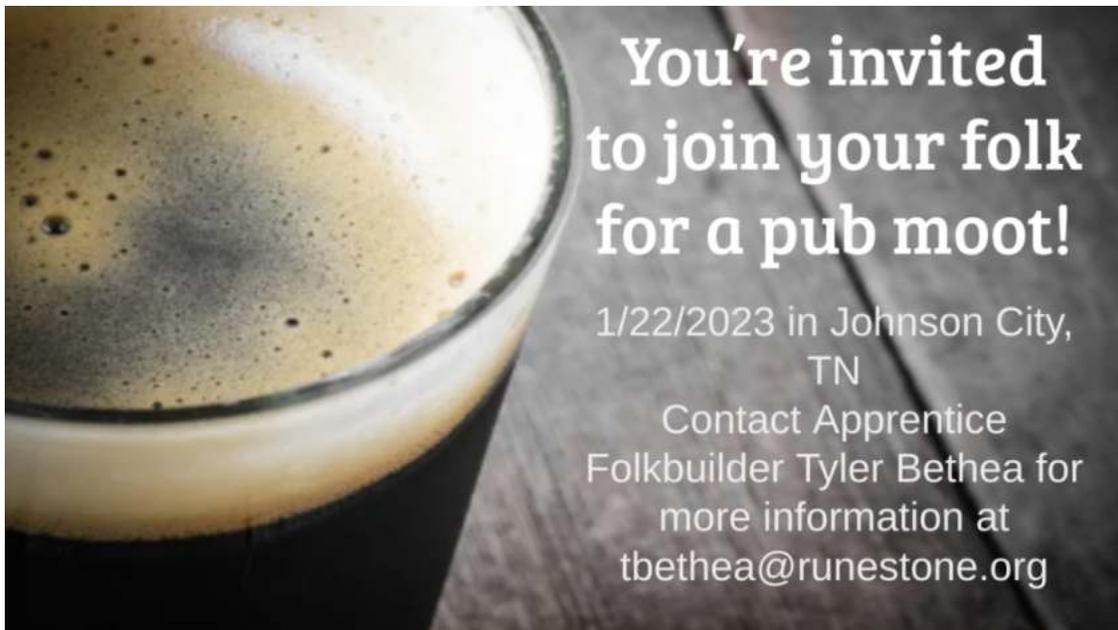
Coming home has proven to be one of the best decisions of my life. My relationships with family and friends have improved, my spiritual life has been vigorously revived, and I hold my head higher knowing that my Folk stand beside me and that I am never alone. May we all endeavor to take the energy and pride gleaned from belonging to such a body and focus it on ceaselessly growing and improving our church, stacking victories in the name of our Gods and Folk.

Hail the Doers!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!

Upcoming Events



You're invited
to join your folk
for a pub moot!

1/22/2023 in Johnson City,
TN

Contact Apprentice
Folkbuilder Tyler Bethea for
more information at
tbethea@runestone.org



Tyler Bethea
Apprentice Folkbuilder
tbethea@runestone.org

Ohio

Irish Pub Holiday Moot



As 2022 was winding down with all the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, we gathered in NE Ohio for some good ol' Pub & Grub.

Sometimes I find a pub setting can be beneficial, especially for newer folks to get to know one other in a more relaxed setting and our moot was no exception.

We dined on Irish Stew, Corned Beef and Cabbage, and Rueben Egg Rolls along with a Guinness or two as is the customary beverage.

All were in great spirits (pun intended) as we discussed the bright future of the AFA,

Freyshof, and upcoming events throughout 2023.

We gathered at 2 pm and the next thing that we knew 8 pm was upon us!

Frith was flowing, bonds were furthered, and everyone left with a sense of excitement for the coming year.

I look forward to meeting there again in the future with new members yet unknown along with many more that have already found their home, with us, where they have always belonged.

I would like to extend my wishes that all have had a very Happy New Year filled with promise, Frith and a mind on Victory!

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!

Upcoming Events



Mike Melillo
Apprentice Folkbuilder
mmelillo@runestone.org

End of the Year Thoughts



Another year has ended. For some a quite trying year but we made it through. Sitting by my fire and ruminating I was brought to a thought. So many of us have found a phenomenal family in the AFA, a community that is liberating and brings us to where we once were. This is a great thing though it must be remembered that many of us have kin not cut of the same spiritual cloth. Some are Christian, Catholic, and maybe even Buddhist. With this in mind, we must find a way to coexist in a balanced fashion with our blood kin. Personally, I am open with my family about my belief in our ancient Gods and ancestors. It has worked just fine for me but I have been made to understand some aren't so easygoing. What I have to say is quite simple. In a world where so many of our folk have been compromised by not only Abrahamic poison but of other less-than-savory spiritual assaults, it is important to remember they are our people regardless. In every way, we can I think it's very important to include them in who you are and how you see the world. In many cases, this can mitigate the damage done to us. I've seen the Gods touch lives that forgot of their existence and bring us back to an even playing field. If possible make them understand that Thor is not merely a comic character. That what we worship is not someone's subject matter for degenerative storylines. That the ancestors deserve our respect and reverence. It's up to all of us to demand respect for our Gods and ancestors. How we do this will look different to

everyone but it's very important work in my opinion. We all love our families so if possible let's bring them home, at the very least let's carve out a respectable place at the table for our ideals. Do not shirk relatives for the poison administered to them let us be the antidote. Or at the very least a guiding light to any who can see. We in the AFA are achieving unheard-of feats and I look forward to a resurgence of our ways and a Hof on every corner. I wish all of you wonderful folk a lovely and fruitful new year. Take care of yourself and take care of your kin to the best of your ability. Until next month Hail the Gods hail the folk and hail the AFA.



Folkbuilder Joe Drotos
jdrotos@runestone.org

Our 12 Days of Yule



On Mother's Night, we gave thanks to Mother Frigga and our Disir. Since the other Goddesses are our ancient ancestors, I incorporated them into our ritual. We shared our

meal with them as we spoke great words.

Hail Mother Frigga!

Hail the Disir!





On December 21st, we honored Sunna and Ostara on the longest night of the year. I gathered vines from our property to make a sunwheel. Tim made a fire and we placed the Yule log from last year upon it. We shared our meal of steak, potatoes and Brussel sprouts. The entire family participated in Blot. We are truly blessed by the Gods.

Hail Sunna!



On the third day of Yule we honored Nerthus, the Goddess of the Earth, mother to Frey and Freya, I gathered representations of her within the earth and sea.

We made salt dough ornaments and sugar cookies. I made pan seared lamp, rice and asparagus, giving a gracious serving to our Earth Mother.

We hail to you, Nerthus on the third day of Yule. May you teach us peace and prosperity.



The next day, we honored our Ancestors. I set the table in front of our altar with our closest Ancestors early in the morning, so they could see us and we could remember them as we pass by. We placed their favorite desserts in front of their photos. I found myself speaking to my grandmothers throughout the day. Later that night, we lit the candles and shared with our children each individual family member we had pictured.

Next year, we will have presents from the ancestors, as the kids are so small.

Hail the Ancestors!



On the 6th day of Yule, we praised Tyr, the one-armed God. In the spirit of Tyr, we practice moderation and in the truest form, self-sacrifice. We took time to reflect on the obstacles we've overcome this year and what changes manifested due to our perseverance.

We offered him our weapons to be blessed by his courage. We gave him a meal paired with a frothy beer. Most importantly, we gave him our loyalty, as we will continue to fight towards VICTORY!

Hail Tyr, the Sky God!



The next day of Yule, we remember the Einherjar, the warriors with no name.

Each Einherjar died in battle and were chosen by a Valkyrie and carried to Valhalla. We remember you, fallen heroes, as you cross Heimdall's rainbow bridge. You make your home on Asgard, until it's time to unite and fight in Ragnarok.

We read the tale of Beowulf. Then lite the candles in remembrance of the chosen slain, with offerings of ham, sides and ale.

Hail the Einherjar!



Then on the 8th day of Yule, we honor the All Father, Wotan.

My husband, my son and I all drew a rune, in the name of the Raven God. My husband pulled Kenaz, my son Thurisaz and myself Uruz. We spent time discussing the meaning of these runes individually and intertwined.

We lit the 8th candle in the Wanderer's name. We offered him mead and a cookie shaped like Slepnir, which will in turn be given to his wolves, Geri and Freki. We left out apples for Slepnir. We also set out our runic divinations for the Wise One to bless.

We give praise to the One Eyed God as we fight with valor on our path towards Victory.

Hail Wotan!





The following day we celebrated Ullr, the great archer and prominent skier. Since we have not hunted this season, I gathered jaw bones of different species to pay homage to the circle of life. I made Tim's family recipe of meat pie using beef and lamb. In addition to the meat pie, we offered Ullr potatoes and sautéed carrots with a glass of mead. We thanked Ullr for our bountiful harvest.

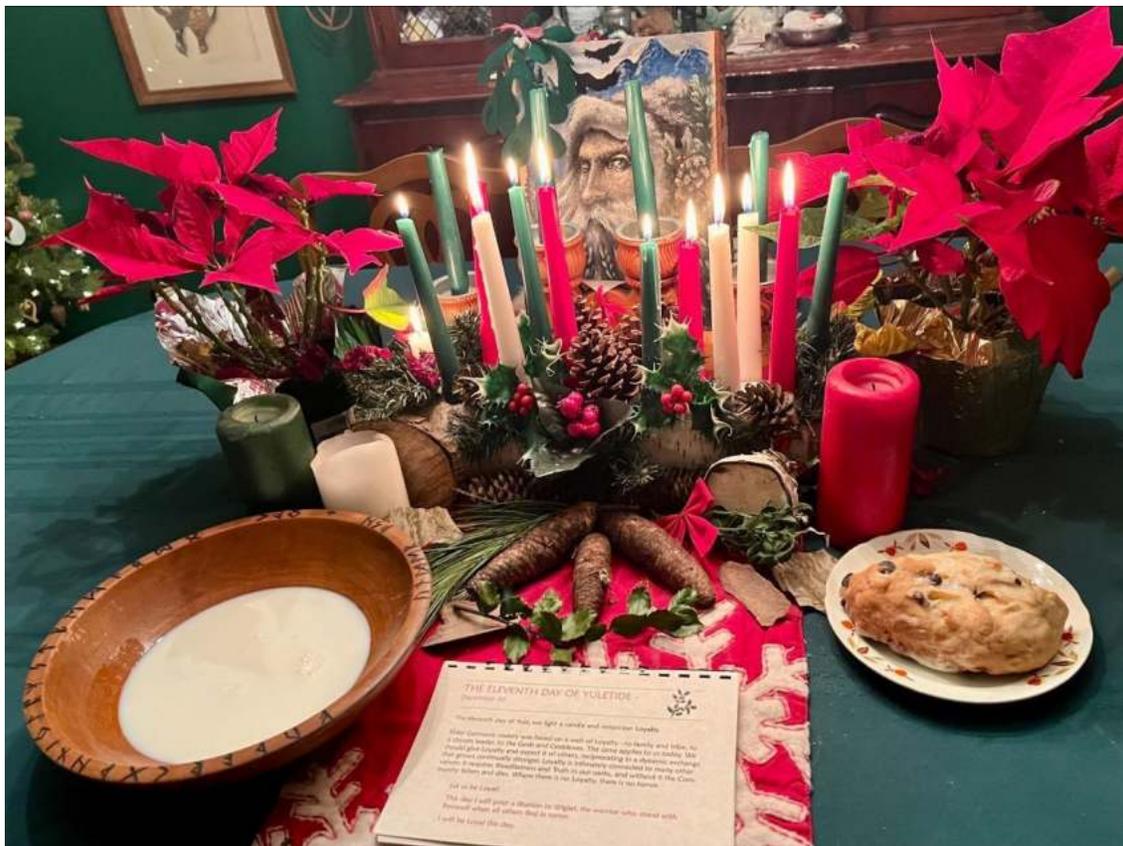
Hail the Great Hunter, Ullr!



On ThursDay we celebrated Thor on the 10th day of Yule. We spent time outside honoring The Thunderer and enjoying exploring while the weather was warm. We spent the day in good spirits, laughing with the family. We poured a pint of ale for Thor with a plate filled with a variety of foods, including a Thor cookie with Thurisaz in the center. We called on Thor, as ten bright candles blazed as bold as his beard. We thanked him for his protection and asked for his strength as we enter a new year.

Hail Thor, the Defender!





On the 11th day of Yule, we paid respect to our house wights and land wights. We spent time in our backyard talking to our trees and land wights amongst our property. We cleaned our altar, our ritual fire pit, and our additional sacred spaces outside. We placed our wreath from inside to outside, inside our antlers. We hung pine cones with peanut butter along our birdhouses. We gave offerings to our gnomes that safeguard our gardens and added extra seeds to our bird feeders. We gathered pine cones and pine needles to decorate our Yule log. We opened our home, as the house was cleaned. We burned incense and gave offerings of milk and honey.

Hail to the land wights and home wights!

Respect the boundaries we have set in place.



On the last day of Yule, all twelve candles were lit as we celebrated Ingvi-Frey. We discussed our goals for the new year while feasting on ham, mashed potatoes, and carrots. As we offered him his plate, we praised his abundance and fertility. We strive for a prosperous new year with growth and peace. We thanked him for all his blessings. We look forward to hailing, Ingvi-Frey in your Hof on Midgard.

Hail Ingvi-Frey, the Harvest King!

Yule in Southern Ohio



In early December, Tim and I had the pleasure of opening our home to our Folk to celebrate Yule.



Our morning started out with the help of our Folk, setting up our ritual space, putting out extra tables and chairs, and setting out the food.



As Folk arrived and got settled in, I welcomed the women and children to participate in a mistletoe craft. We discussed the lore of Baldur and the significance of mistletoe during Yule.



As families continued to be welcomed into our home for cheerful conversation and celebration, I invited the women to a ladies' group. We discussed Mother Frigga's role during Yule and the impact she has made on our lives. We then engaged in our runic bracelet ritual. We completed a full year of creating our runic ritual bracelets. The women came together to bless Jessica Keller and provide her with positivity, love, and strength for the upcoming birth of her child.



While Tim and some of the men tended to the ritual fire. I invited all of the adults to join in on a guided meditation. The focus of the meditation was the past year and envisioning their goals for the upcoming year.



Directly after meditation, we processed outside for Blot. During Blot, the Folk were given the opportunity to physically let go of the past year, by placing their gifts or written overview of the year into the fire. As the black sun offering burned, so did our deeds of the year. Under Ash + Oak Kindred oathed in three new members. We are proud of our growing Kindred



With the help of the women, the spread of delicious food was ready for consumption. After the meal was blessed, we filled ourselves with ham, sauerbraten, spaetzle, potatoes, Mac n cheese, fresh bread, sauerkraut, and an array of desserts.



As the ritual fire continued to roar, folk gathered in conversation and created everlasting memories. We had over thirty adults and almost fifteen children. A jolly event, indeed.

Upcoming Events

JANUARY 28, 2023

UNDER ASH

+OAK

KINDRED

HOSTS

THORRABLOT

IN CENTRAL OHIO

CONTACT CHRISTINE DUMAS

CDUMAS@RUNESTONE.ORG



Folkbuilder Christine Dumas

cdumas@runestone.org

Pennsylvania

Western PA Heritage Food and Frith Moot



At the beginning of December, we held a moot at our home where we celebrated the tradition of cooking and food specifically from our individual heritage. Originally, we were to bake treats and dishes together as a group while talking about our traced ancestry, but due to the number of children and folk planned to attend, we opted to make dishes ahead of time. Once the dining commenced, we each took turns speaking about our family lineage, notable memories from holiday gatherings, and traditions from within. It was beautiful to hear how much each person had to say about their family's history along with the pre hand effort that these folks put into researching what they didn't already know to make for a better presentation to the group.



The one thing that was a common theme among the group none of us had a family recipe or tradition that was ancestrally appropriate or at least that we could remember. Although we all had memories of our family gatherings and food that we would have eaten, we came to realize that it was all Americanized recipes common for holidays. Everyone made a serious effort to research and prepare a dish that would have specifically been made by their ancestors. Without coordinating the spread of food, we ended up with such a beautiful balance between meats, grains/carbs, vegetables, and sweets.



This gathering was really inspiring for many reasons. One being, that as I mentioned before, the fact that we had no family or food traditions passed on directly to us, it invoked a necessity to write these types of things down in order to continue to share them within our folk and so that they can be passed onto our own children. It was decided afterwards that we will be continuing to document recipes shared during the moots and holy days in order to collect traditions and recipes that were lived out in real life.



The other thing that was inspiring was the number of children in attendance. We had 10 children present, and 2 unborn in utero. I'll never get sick of saying this, especially the more our community grows, how deeply warm my heart feels seeing in real life other children that my children can build relationships and bonds with.



The last thing that I want to share is more of a personal reflection that I came to know after this moot. During sumbel that night, many of our guests spoke about how they didn't think upon relocating, that they would find such a community this quickly where they felt safe and at home within. Why do I bring this up you may be wondering, when it is a common theme among the folk to feel the "coming home" aspect of Asatru once they come out and experience it in real life. I bring this up because as an apprentice

Folkbuilder, I was met with times this year where I wanted to step down and walk away from Folk building for various reasons, one of which being the frustration of planning and hosting that came with having little to no attendance for the greater half of the events I hosted this year. Month after month doing our duty as a Folkbuilder to plan, advertise and host events in our local areas in order to bring folk together may not seem like a big task but putting effort into what you're doing and taking time out of your personal responsibilities beyond Folkbuilding to have the lack of attendance time after time it can become discouraging. Wondering if what your hosting is exciting enough to draw others in, or if am I creating the right type of environment where people want to be. What's the point of what I am doing if no one shows up?

This was the last moot that I had planned for the year as I near the birth of my second child, and I was so close to canceling it because I had not heard back from others in certainty as to whether or not they would be attending until the very last minute. I am so grateful that I remained in steadfast because this moot was a clear reminder of why we do what we do as Folkbuilders. We are providing a place for people to feel safe within, to grow within among and besides other Folk. A place where folk can bring their families and feel a sense of coming home, knowing there are others like them, and to actually know the group dynamic of Asatru in real life.

As I reflected during the 12 days of Yule, I looked upon the photos from this past year. There was always at least one other person outside of my direct family in attendance. It was a reminder that it is not about numbers, although it may feel like that at times, it is about true community, and seeing this in retrospect gave me a renewed perspective on why I am here.



To me, this creates a sense of hope that I wanted to share with others who may be reading this possibly feeling similar to how I did throughout this year. If you are feeling discouraged at times by what you're doing here within the Asatru Folk Assembly, leadership and members alike, remember, it is not for us, it is for them, for our future generations to come and for our gods and to not give up, for one day, the day you feel

like giving up, maybe the day someone else is waking up and coming home. If you give up then and there, who will that person then turn to? Sure it could be someone else, but why couldn't it be you? Be there for them, be there for the future of our folk, be there to pass on culture and traditions, be there to be a sense of support or a point of contact, be there to guide and inspire. All of which you remain steadfast within, will have far greater impacts that are felt generations from now. The existence of our people is nonnegotiable, and we can not attain this statement without continuous hope for hope brings us to a path of living deed.

Upcoming Events



CHARMING OF THE PLOW

LAUGARDAGR, FEBRUARY, 18TH @ 1PM
(Saturday)

PITTSBURGH, PA

• POTLUCK • BABY NAMING CEREMONY • BLOT • SUMBEL •

RSVP ONLY EVENT

• CHILDRENS ACTIVITIES • COMPETITIONS • FRITH WEAVING •

CONTACT JESSICA KELLER,
ADAM HUDAK, PAT COOK,
SPENCER KERNS

THORSHOF MID-ATLANTIC TEAM



Jessica Keller
Apprentice Folkbuilder
jkeller@runestone.org

Yule in Pennsylvania



In Pennsylvania, this month we held an early Yule at my home. I was truly honored to have some of the finest people I know there that day. We truly have become a team over here. Everyone in some way pitched in and made that special day happen. To those of you I am speaking of, I am so thankful for all that you do. There is no AFA without you.



The bonds between us only strengthened, laughter was heard, children played, and good food was eaten. A child was named in front of the Gods, the Ancestors, and the Folk. A Mother's blessing took place for those beings of light that are about to make their triumphant return. And of course, a Rite to the High One for guidance in our transformation as we headed into the Winter Solstice.



I am truly blessed to be a part of all of this. I often ask myself "where would I be without the AFA and all of you?" It brings me much joy knowing that I don't know another reality.

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!



Folkbuilder Adam Hudak

ahudak@runestone.org

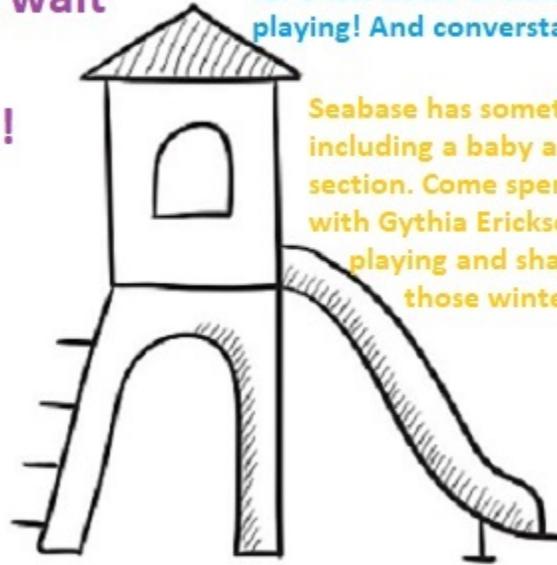
Upcoming events

Toddler Moot!

And moms, too.

We can't wait
to play
with you!

Join us at Seabase Family Fun center
for a few hours of climbing and
playing! And conversation, too.



Seabase has something for all ages,
including a baby and toddler
section. Come spend a few hours
with Gythia Erickson and her kids
playing and shaking out some of
those winter wiggles.

Thursday February 16th, at 11 am till whenever. No outside food
is allowed, but they do have a cafeteria. Contact Gythia Erickson
with any questions and to rsvp!

Visit seabasefun.com for venue details, located in Greensburg PA



Smorgasbord Moot!

Join the Keystone Tru Folk for an afternoon
of feasting and fun at Shady Maple
Smorgasbord in Lancaster PA.

Saturday, January 28th at 2pm

Contact Witan Erickson or Gythia Erickson for
details!



Gythia Catie Erickson
cm.erickson@runestone.org

Yuleblót with Fallen Timbers Kindred



I had the great pleasure of joining Fallen Timbers Kindred in northern Ohio on the Twelfth Night of Yule. The kindred took oaths from new members and everyone shared

homemade dishes and drinks at the feast.



After, I held Yuleblót for the gathered folk. We recalled the victories of the past year and committed our minds to the dawn of the new year. The kids excitedly beat the drums while we chanted galdr of the Norse and Anglo-Saxon runes of victory and day.



We shared in an intimate sumbel and rang in the new year together with hope and joy.

Sowilo Dagaz!

Sigel Dæg!



Witan Clifford Erickson
cerickson@runestone.org

South Carolina

Greetings Folk



My name is William Roberts and I am your new apprenticing Folkbuilder from the great state of South Carolina. I was raised with a strong work ethic ever since I could remember, but it was those long days that made me the man I am today. My family owned a residential/ commercial painting company that gave me the foundations for a fruitful life by working with my hands and learning the elements of skill. Those skills were widened as I grew and my knowledge of work became what I grew to appreciate in a working-class family. For 7 generations my bloodline has worked in everything from farmers to brick masons to carpenters to painters and even mechanics. Working with my hands is in my blood, it's in my heart and my sons will continue this and so forth.

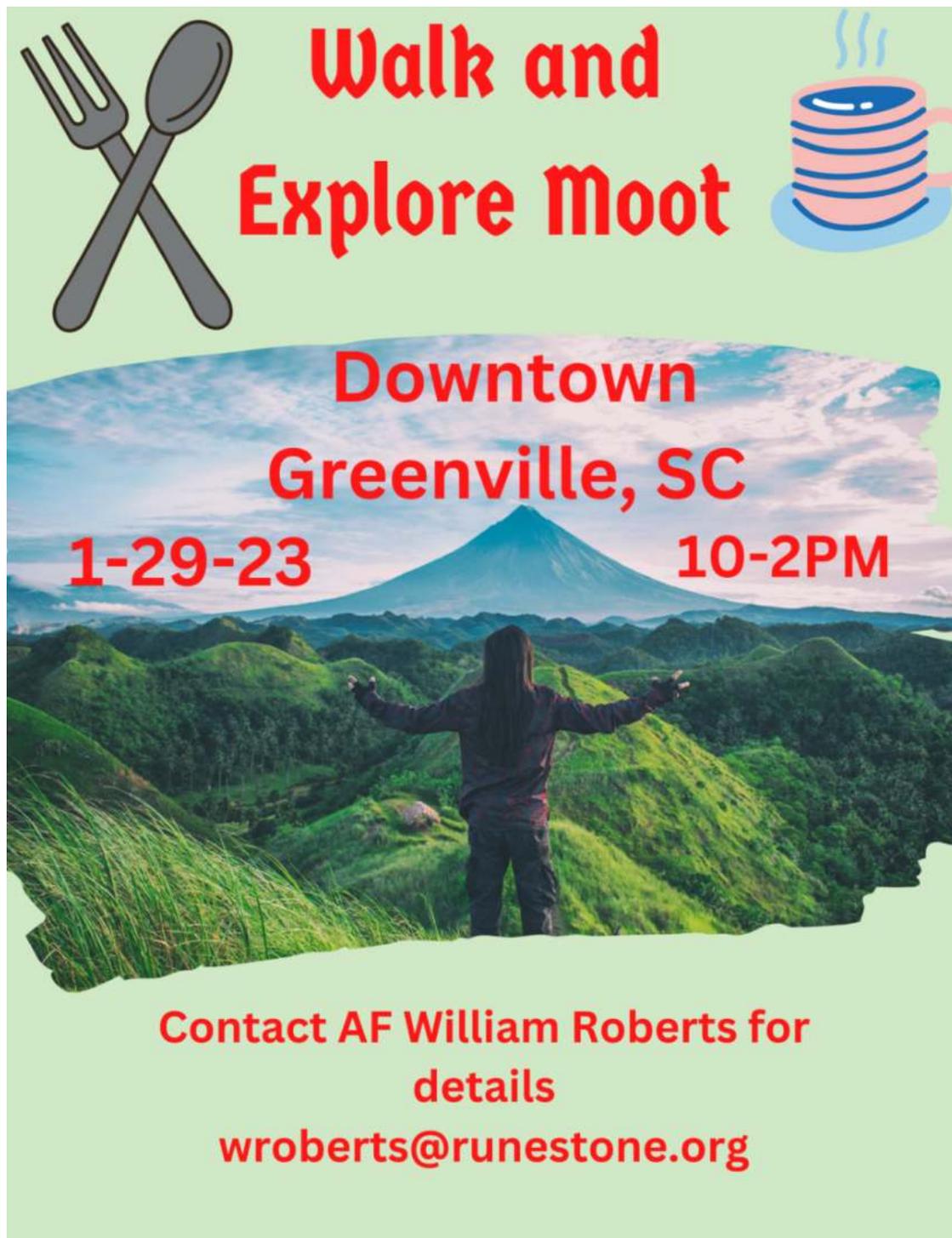
Becoming Asatru was like becoming a hard worker from childhood for me, it was always meant to be; it has always been a part of me. What was once suppressed from our ancestors has now sparked what will become a great fire that will burn so bright that our Gods and ancestors will see for millennia to come. Asatru is not just a right for our folk, Asatru is the soul of our people and our connection to our Gods that guides us through the lives that we live every day. By the grace of the Gods and the love of my family and folk, I am ever so grateful. Asatru is my home, Asatru is our home. Our Gods and Goddesses live within us, just as they did our ancestors. As your new apprentice Folkbuilder I am proud to be a part of what is more than tradition, Asatru is our destiny.

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!

Upcoming Events

A promotional poster for a 'Walk and Explore Moot' event. The background is a light green gradient. At the top left, there is a grey icon of a fork and spoon crossed. At the top right, there is a pink and blue icon of a steaming mug. The main title 'Walk and Explore Moot' is written in large, bold, red letters. Below the title, the location 'Downtown Greenville, SC' is written in red. The date '1-29-23' is on the left and the time '10-2PM' is on the right, both in red. The central image shows a person in a dark hoodie standing on a grassy hill, looking out over a landscape of rolling green hills and a large mountain peak in the distance under a cloudy sky. At the bottom, the text 'Contact AF William Roberts for details' and the email address 'wroberts@runestone.org' are written in red.

Walk and Explore Moot

Downtown Greenville, SC

1-29-23 10-2PM

Contact AF William Roberts for details
wroberts@runestone.org

William Roberts
Apprentice Folkbuilder
wroberts@runestone.org



Sweden

Yule in Sweden



For us up in northern Sweden, it was a white Yule with snow, cold, and the Northern Lights.

This Yule, we took time to really let gratitude for the year of 2022 sink in. The AFA has scored such great victories, the acquisition of Sigrheim being one of the greatest! These two last months of the year have also brought wonderful gifts for the European and South African membership. It was November and December that saw members of Europe and South Africa "find" one another. Now, we talk to one another at least once a week, sometimes two times a week. We play Dungeons & Dragons together and have such a good time. We share of ourselves, we share joy and laughter, and the struggles we face. And while it is all digital for now, already there are talks of traveling to one another's parts of the world to meet up. To shake hands and give hugs, to have a fika, and perhaps play Dungeons & Dragons around an actual table.



Yes, we are grateful for all the great, grand victories this year, as well as the smaller, quiet, cozy ones we have had the great fortune of experiencing. Here is to a 2023 filled with opportunity, struggle, and eventual victory.

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!

DnD with Friends



Previously, on *DnD with Friends*...

Since the last Runestone, the party has been quite busy! Having survived their encounter in the sewers, they have now been forcibly recruited as agents for the Crown. Their first task is to travel to a farmstead-turned-lumbermill. Reports coming from there have stated that operations have ceased due to something or someone sabotaging the wood-cutting.

Our band of heroes travels to the Jackson Lumbermill, formerly the Jackson Farmstead. The owner Jack Jackson explains that something has been chasing the woodcutters out of the forest, and they refuse to go back.



Meeting Lord Amanita

It turns out that a troll named Gunvald is responsible for scaring off the woodcutters. Gunvald surprises the party by being open to discussing how to solve the situation without violence. They are brought by Gunvald before Lord Amanita, an ancient mushroom who rules the forest. They are told that a pack of Pig-men have made a camp in the forest, and have been stealing cattle from the Jacksons, forcing them to convert the farmstead into a lumber mill.

The party quickly travels through the forest and destroys the Pig-men, although several party members come very close to dying in the process. Looting the corpses, the party finds that the Pig-men were carrying coins that must have been minted just recently. This seemed quite strange to the party. Where did they get those coins from?



The party returns to the farmstead and is able (with the help of Grandpa Harald) to convince Jack to go back to raising livestock. The party has done great good, but are informed by their Taskmaster who arrived with a trio of inquisitors that they have not seen to bringing the lumbermill back into production, and are thus not eligible for any salary.

As the party rest at the Farmstead for some two weeks, healing from their fight with the Pig-men, they help the boy Timmy save his sister from an old watchtower on the edge of the forest. They fight sadistic little fey creatures called Redcaps. The party succeeds, although it was a close call for several party members again.

Everyone in the party returns to the farmstead injured. A band of mercenaries has arrived and seems to be looking for trouble. The party attempts to de-escalate the situation. That is when someone cries out "fire!". Cultists of Surtr have come across the

farmstead and are intent on burning it all to the ground.



Both fires and battle raged throughout the night, but the party was victorious. Now, two cultists have been left wounded but alive, to be questioned by the inquisitors that need to be summoned. In the aftermath, only the house of the Jacksons remained, all else burnt to the ground.

Despite this fact, everyone was able to enjoy some barrels of ale that survived the flames. And they were also treated to an epic song sung (yes, Roger actually sang the song for us) and composed by the Bard Bragvald, telling of how the cultist Dermlin wielding a giant flaming club was brought low by the party and the mercenary leader Idof.

The Jackson Farmstead is in ruins. Although no lives were lost, and Bragvald's incredible singing raised the spirits of everyone there, the question remains how the Jacksons are going to recover from this?

Will the party be able to give a helping hand? What will their next task be? And why did both the Pig-men and the cultists carry newly produced coins? Find out in the next episode of *DnD with Friends...*

Upcoming Events

Þorrablót

January 21th

Haparanda, Sweden

**Let us Blot to the thunderer
together!**

contact:

elugnet@runestone.org

Lore Study with the Lugnets

January 22th

Haparanda, Sweden

contact: elugnet@runestone.org

Erik Lugnet

Apprentice Folkbuilder

elugnet@runestone.org



Midwinter Offering



Most of us, at least here in Scandinavia, celebrate Midsummer as the main solar day, the day when we give praise to the sun. Well, that's not that strange because on Midsummer we have almost no night in the southern parts and no darkness whatsoever in the northern parts. What we don't realize is that on Midsummer the sun is actually dying and fading. Sunna is going to the underworld. This journey has been depicted on the Bronze Age razor knives and on many thousands of petroglyphs. So, for me personally, I celebrate Sunna on her revival of the Midwinter solstice. This year we did a little special offering. An offer that would not end soon. An offer that might stay for thousands of years. I planted a Bronze statue of Odin and gave him plenty of nourishment. May he stand firm in Frigga's warm hands and may he grow so strong, so big that no one can misunderstand that the old ones are back and they are not leaving. Let his might be the light that draws our Folk in. Let this circle close. Later in the night when the darkness was complete we did a fire ritual and gave our offerings and prayers to Frej for prosperity and growth during the coming year. That was my midwinter offering.

Hail Wodanaz
Hail our Folk

Hail the AFA

— Anders Nilsson

Tennessee

Columbia Moot



In the middle of December, Tennessee held a Pubmoot in Colombia! I hoped to toast the good health of the Folk and the promising future that lies before us! The moot was good, and one of our Folk came out to share a meal and mirth. Josh and Maggie were delighted to share stories and good company to spend a winter evening enjoying the festive time. While the road to the sunrise of our future gleams brightly over the horizon, we still have a ways to go.

Tennessee is on the rise; I can feel it, and, Gods willing, it will be swift and vast!



Russell Brown
Apprentice Folkbuilder
rbrown@runestone.org

West Virginia

Thorshof Mid-Atlantic Events

The "Thorshof Mid Atlantic Team" unofficially began back in July when I teamed up with Folkbuilders Adam Hudak and Jessica Keller to hold a Sigrblót event in Bedford, PA. I had long thought of PA as a "different region," being primarily concerned with Maryland, eastern WV, and Northern Virginia, but realizing the PA event was less than two hours away, I felt I should join in and help. That gathering turned out to be a smashing success, and the three of us found that we worked very well as a team.

So we decided not to mess with success, and collaborate on another blót, Freyfaxi in the following month, at which time Apprentice Folkbuilder Spencer Kerns joined in on the team.

We held separate events in our respective locales for Winter Finding in September, then all reunited again at Winter Nights. We brought our people out in a strong show of support for Gythia Erickson's Feast of the Einherjar at Gettysburg.

After that came the progression of the holidays, at which time we became heavily engaged with family matters - including two of our team members bringing new additions to their families. Congratulations to both the Keller and Kerns families for

bringing two healthy babies into the world!

January and February will be a great time for the Mid-Atlantic region, when our various kindreds will team up once again for Þórrablót on January 21st and Charming of the Plow on February 18th. That brings us to the month of March, at which time we look forward to supporting Ostara at Þórshof with a coordinated transportation effort.

We hope you are able to join us as we continue to strengthen our AFA presence in the region. As always, AFA members and families are cordially invited (and highly encouraged!) to attend our upcoming gatherings. Please RSVP to Folkbuilders Pat Cook, Adam Hudak, Jessica Keller or Spencer Kerns if you are interested in attending our January or February, events.

Upcoming events

PLEASE JOIN US THIS JANUARY.

ATHRE ATHLETIC CLOTHING

Þórrablót

January 21, 2023: 1:00 pm
Oak Grove Community Center, Montgomery, PA

CONTACT FOLKBUILDERS
SPENCER KERNS, PAT
COOK OR ADAM HUDAK
FOR DETAILS.

PRESENTED BY THE THORSHOF MID-ATLANTIC TEAM.



Folkbuilder Patrick Cook

pcook@runestone.org



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