



**Þórshof**  
Second Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly

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## Words from the Alsherjargothi

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



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



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

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



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

*Welcome 2024*



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Witan Brandy Callahan  
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*The Folk Remember*



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

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

The Folk Remember.



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



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



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



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

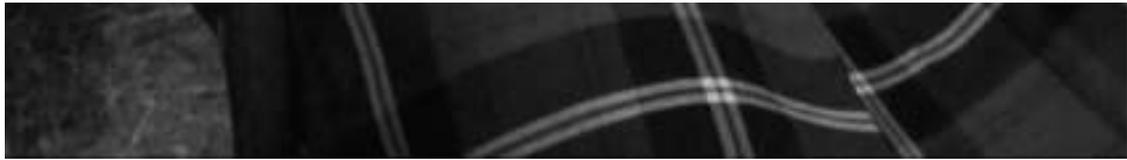


† Michael Lee Vaughn 12/5/1986 - 7/17/2023 †



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





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



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



**Christopher Chambless**  
**Y10/3/1981-12/11/2023**

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

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

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

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

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

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



Witan Daniel Young  
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*Devotion Works*



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

That will be all the proof that you need.



Witan Clifford Erickson  
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## Words from our Gothar

*Odin, Vili, Vé: A Closer Look*



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

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

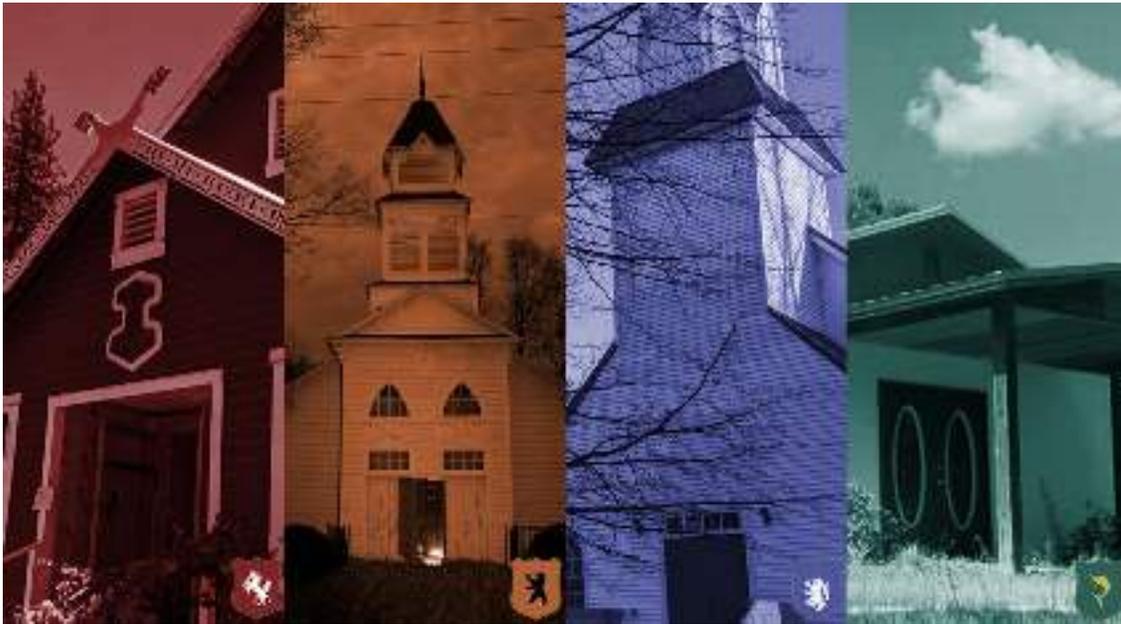


As with many things, including the deeper lessons in our faith, language and etymology is one of our best tools. Let's take a look at some meanings found in the names of these Gods.

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

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

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



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

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

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

Piety. Intent. Furious ambition.

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



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*Pagan vs Neo-Pagan; A Response*



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

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

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

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

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

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

— Havamal 120



Gothi Thorgrun Odden  
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*Wyrð*



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

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

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

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

Gothi Nathan Erlandson

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## The AFA in 2023



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

## The Quest for Freyshof

*“Njördr in Nóatún begot afterward two children: the son was called Freyr, and the daughter Freyja; they were fair of face and mighty. Freyr is the most renowned of the Æsir; he rules over the rain and the shining of the sun, and therewithal the fruit of the earth; and it is good to call on him for fruitful seasons and peace. He governs also the prosperity of men.”*

– Gylfaginning



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

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

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

1. We need to pay off Njörðshof.
  - The first of 2 loans have been paid off!
  - We now owe \$99,346.87 on our remaining loan.
2. We need to raise our monthly donation average by 9.2%.
  - This is membership donations/Hoftollar plus other donations.
3. We need to locate a suitable property.
4. We need to find lenders and build a war chest.

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

Hail Freyr!

Matthew D. Flavel  
Alsherjargothi, Asatru Folk Assembly  
[mattflavel@runestone.org](mailto:mattflavel@runestone.org)



## **Sigrheim: Home of Victory**

*A New View Gracing the Grounds of Sigrheim*



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

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

*Support the Home of Victory*



Help Sigrheim get stocked  
and ready for our Folk!

Donate Supplies  
from our

wishlist ✨ ✨ ✨  
**amazon**



Thank You!

[CLICK HERE](#)

*Upcoming Events*

**Þorrablót  
at  
Sigrheim**

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

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

**Charming of  
the Plow  
at Sigrheim**

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



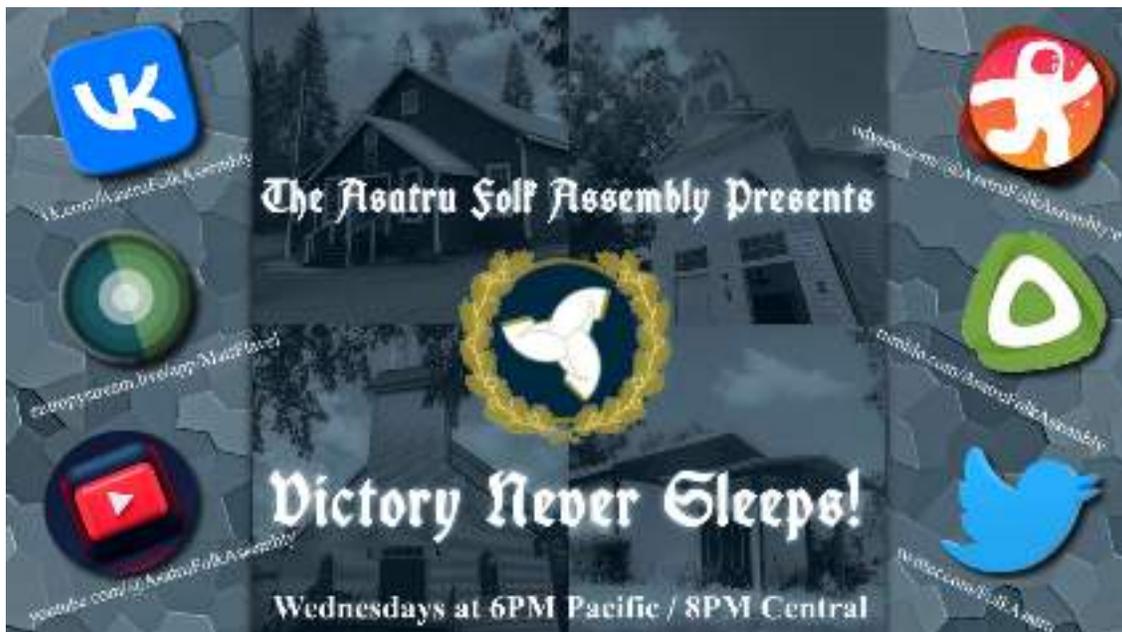
**RSVP w/  
Folkbuilder  
Nick Rice  
via nrice@  
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Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice

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## Victory Never Sleeps



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

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

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

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

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



Matthew D. Flavel  
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## AFA Asatru Academy



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

*Academy Storytime*



Grimm Brothers

Mother Goose

Aesop

Give a Mouse a Cookie

Thor is Our Friend

and many more...

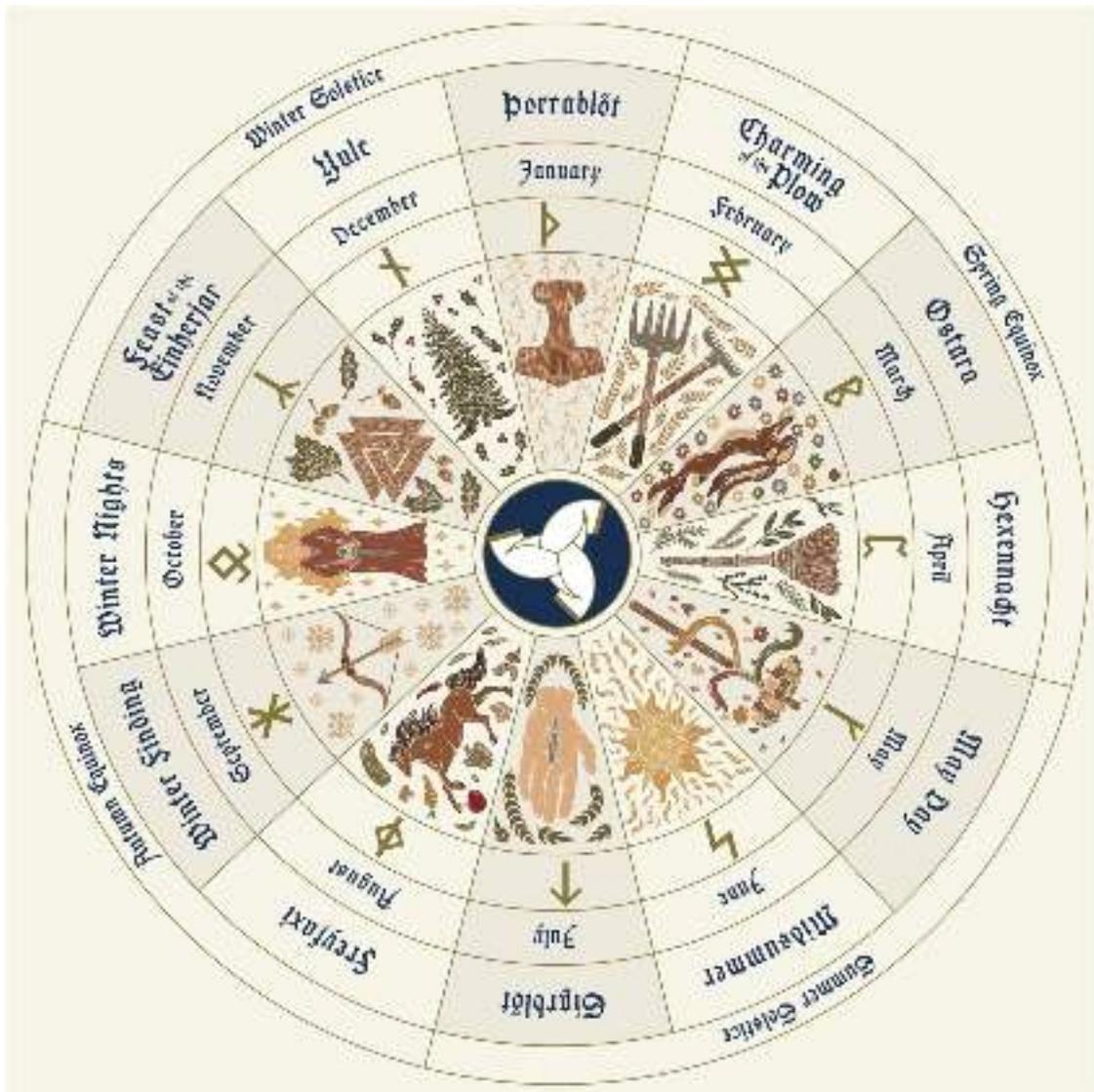
We've been so thrilled with all the solid volunteers taking time out to record wholesome stories for our kids in the Academy that we knew we had to share them with all of you! If you haven't checked it out already, there's a [playlist](#) over on the AFA's YouTube channel!

Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice



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

## Remembrance & Holy Days



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

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

# January



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

## Day of Remembrance

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

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



Around the year 1000, the zealous Norwegian King, Olaf Trygvason, 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 Trygvason's chase.

It was all for naught, however.

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

So, what can we learn from this story?

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

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

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

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

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

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



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# Holiday

*Þorrablót | January 20th*



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

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

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

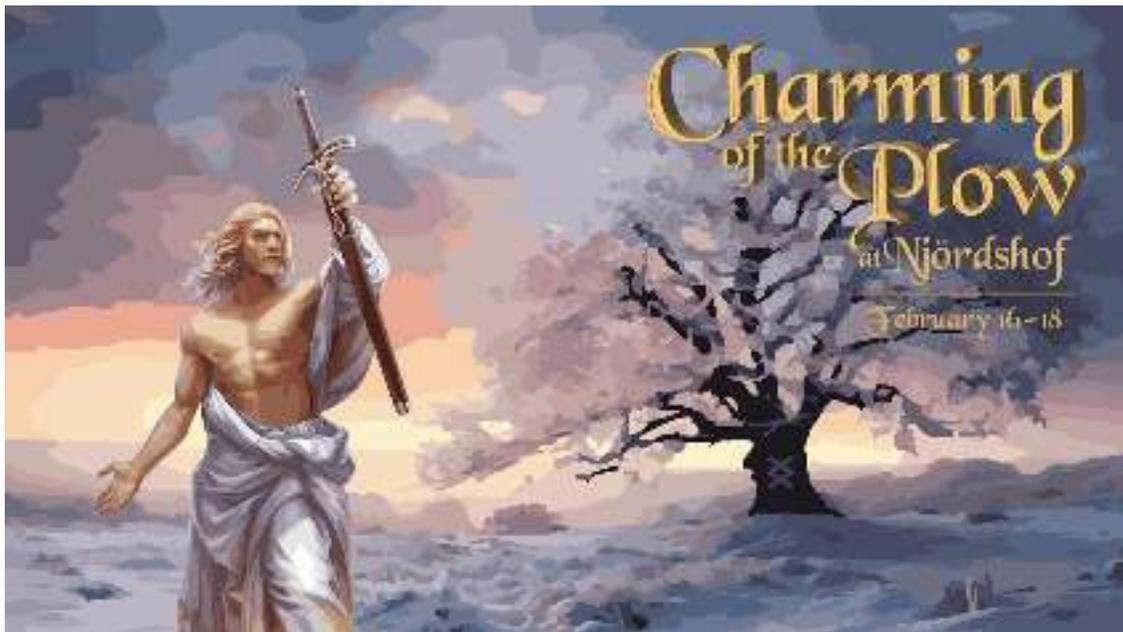
Called by some as the cabin fever holiday Þorrablót is a great way to liven up the doldrums of mid-winter. So, take some time to light a fire and make merry. Have the folk tell stories or recite poems about Thor. Eat, drink, and enjoy the company of folk and family.



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## Upcoming National Event

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



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

Get your tickets [HERE](#)



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

## Baby Blanket Project

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

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

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



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

## Folk Services



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

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

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

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

Thanks in advance!

## Photo Donations

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



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

## Eir's Blessings



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

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

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

our community who need our help!

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

## Last Will and Testament

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



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

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

Please make your will **today**.

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

Allen Turnage  
PO Box 16027  
Tallahassee FL, 32317



Witan Allen Turnage  
[aturnage@runestone.org](mailto:aturnage@runestone.org)

## AFA Prison Ministry



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

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

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

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

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



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



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

## **Artisans of the AFA Support Our Folk**

*The Children from Frostmo Mountain*

# The Children from Frostmo Mountain

Laura Fitinghoff



Translated by Laura Lugnet

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

## On Sale January 15th

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

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



Book Release January 15th:

*The Children from Frostmo Mountain* by Laura Fitinghoff,

Translated by AFA Member Laura Lugnet

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

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

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

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

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

Hail Laura Fitinghoff!

— Laura Lugnet, member, Sweden

**Cooking for our Folk**



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

## Ancestral Food and Culture

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



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

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

predominant composition of goetta recipes today.

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

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

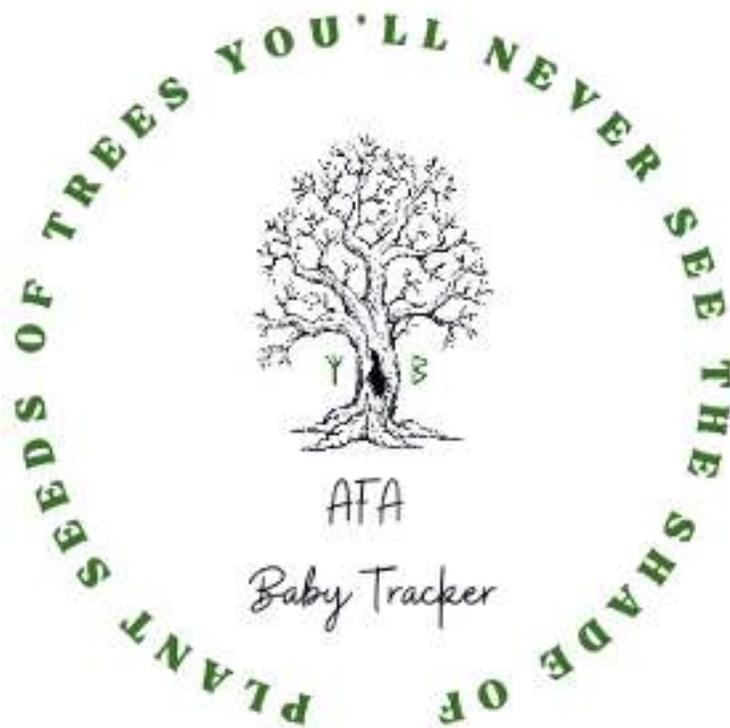
You are going to be making essentially sausage loafs out of your mixture, preferably refrigerated for one day then cut into thick pieces for cooking up quickly.

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



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

**Baby Tracker**



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

Total babies born in 2023, year-end count: 37

**Just for Fun**



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

Here's January's Word Hunt:

## January Word Hunt

mbwri	xeegp	myoyj	qh dum	
ksdav	onsqq	ldxpz	xeirb	
nugxq	kmorz	oidex	rkaku	
ruzrn	dwpiw	lvomj	iefcy	
phcre	erewt	gniae	ywqae	
	taxmk	cgwlc	mechw	khjdy
	angmd	eeuvo	ljgev	ztfaz
	miizv	dmtat	panlo	krgyi
	twzwy	ibcos	sqa zi	cswja
	ibzod	ettfr	mytda	xmisy
gxide	isbmh	pvayf	uwgvu	
wpupb	xmvkh	blmq s	ldhqh	
lqbhh	utkgg	qkvvv	ucjlm	
imwix	xloc s	ea itq	ipyqh	
kl npq	eysku	gri in	acvuj	
	nmmah	yfrdt	tjaup	gimnx
	yqmdf	bwaa	aszrl	bjbvi
	wykco	wmlyu	rjiet	mrtmj
	dnssu	bcmml	mceeh	beqpq
	htrpb	quxma	ilpoq	iraud
xgmjc	tqnc l	mavtt	svqcb	
melkx	jhdmw	fcryn	uuhak	
muams	mkkaw	tuiot	jcrgg	
hvyup	hoxvp	yuuru	zrjvz	
ntfkj	qc zxs	vkigv	ajuvi	
	lpleq	tasun	vglwh	vdkpc
	evx zq	prykh	ppstf	hacge
	smeqq	ozemm	qhtmq	gmlxx
	ohwci	hgdnx	xwpc c	xwdbv
	fmhan	mqwug	flyyy	hkuuo
cxzzc	tjdkm	tcpqu	tqyvm	
ystug	ywcej	mh dai	rqdoi	
qmebl	oorjo	kr gvw	aypgk	
qfxyy	qsajy	bunni	nma jw	
fnqny	obvci	limki	kovmy	
	ncium	xcqrm	tmprf	tiidc
	dkkdx	uyakt	osckx	ymyvr
	yigmu	hbubk	okaaf	qs dus
	pxocd	eevqw	dweeq	ifjhb
	mrcih	kbewe	nwwvf	xcuts

THORRABLOT  
APRICITY  
PROTECTION

MIDWINTER  
RAUD  
NEWYEAR

FEASTING  
STRENGTH  
SURVIVAL

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

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



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



# **Online Events and Meetings**



Virtue recovery  
meeting

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

With Ashley Mcstocker  
amcstocker@runestone.org

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



With Jaclynn Duffy  
jduffy@runestone.org

**VIA ZOOM**

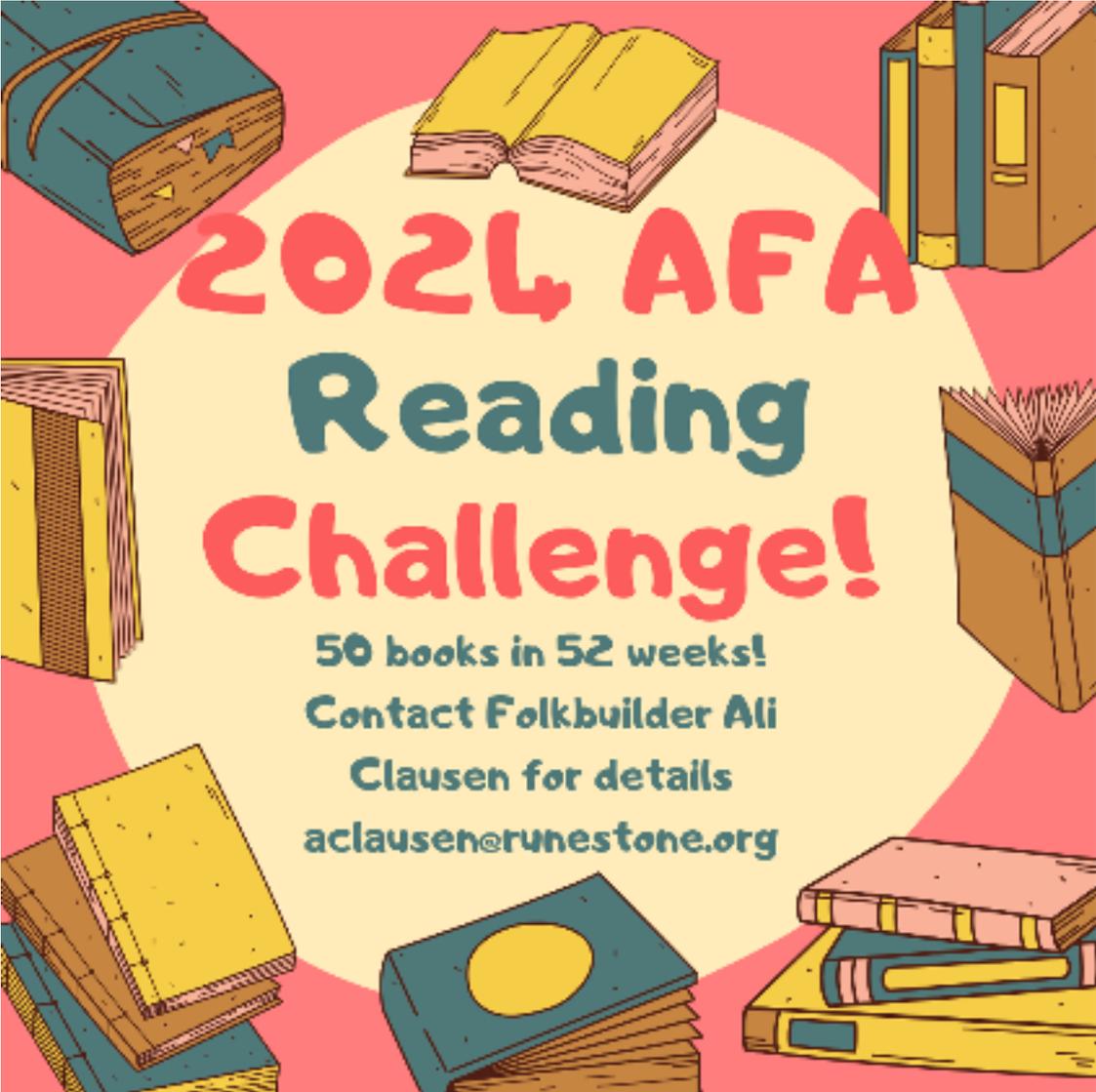
**MEETING ID: 885 2917 0746**

**PASSWORD: Virtue**

## PASSWORD: VIRTUE

Being our most virtuous selves is not always the easiest task. As a community, we are home to many that have or are currently, struggling with addiction. Many traditional 12 step meeting, though so very respected, do not fall in line with what we as a people believe. Specifically, any step pertaining to the divine will or requesting the removal of any shortcomings. So, we run what we are calling the Virtue Recovery Meeting. Since we are an international organization, the best way for us to do this is via Zoom (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82489360035?pwd=QWM0SFZiakwvOUgyQVF4ZVZMUjVlZz09>). We hold our meetings every Thursday, at 7pm, CST. Join us!! Feel free to reach out to Folkbuilder Ashley McStocker with any and all questions! [AMcStocker@Runestone.org](mailto:AMcStocker@Runestone.org)





# 2024 AFA Reading Challenge!

50 books in 52 weeks!

Contact Folkbuilder Ali

Clausen for details

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

# AFA Reading Challenge Meetings



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

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

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

# Ladies Book Study

Thursday Nights at

7 pm CST

Returns January 11th

Revolt Against the Modern World

by Julius Evola

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

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

For more information contact:

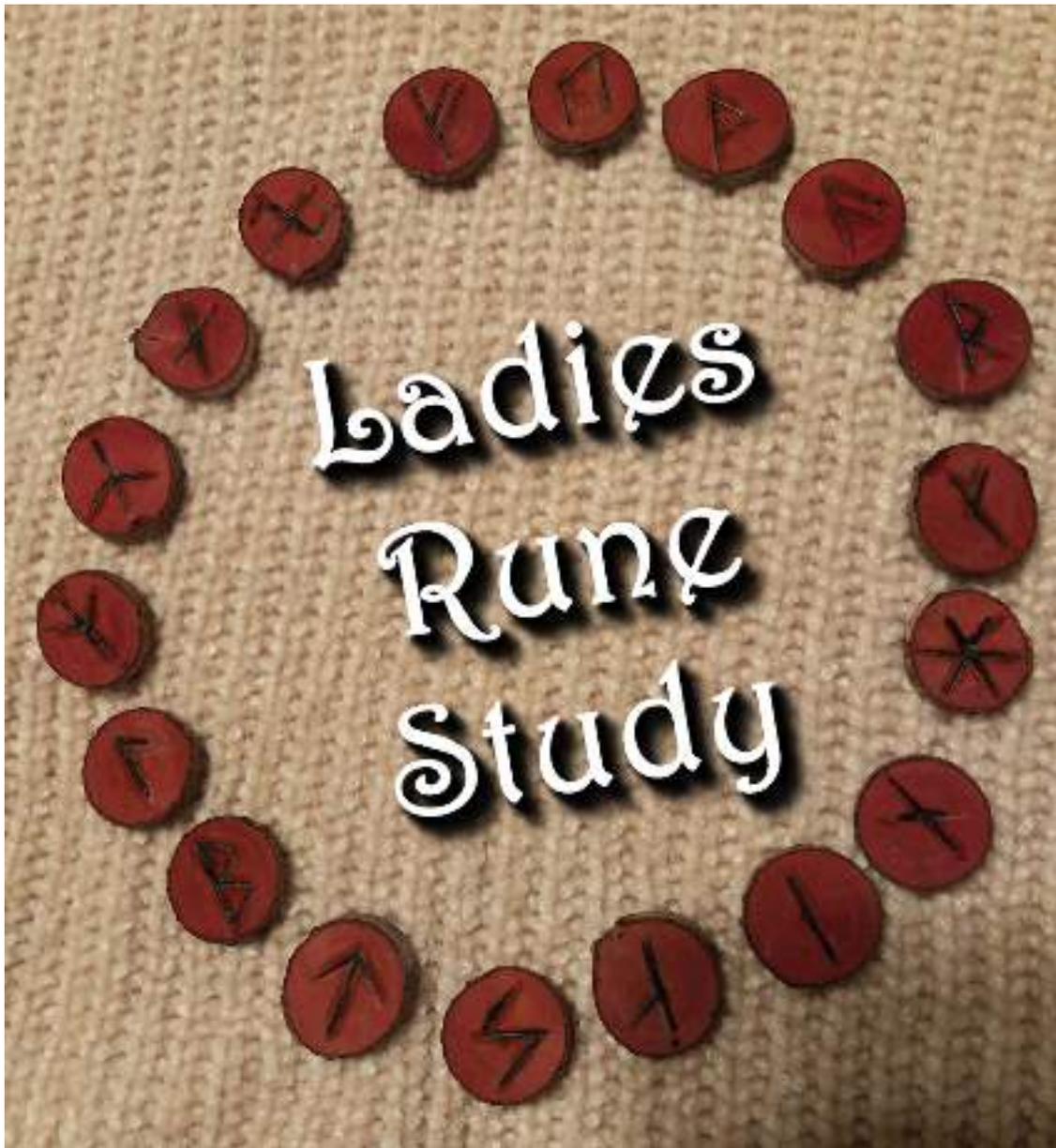
Witan Brandy Callahan

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

or

Folkbuilder Sara Ault

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



Starting February 3rd, at 1pm Eastern

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

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

**at**

**8:00 pm EST**

**7:00 pm CST**

**6:00 pm MST**

**5:00 pm PST**

**4:00 pm AKST**

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

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

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

# Ladies Mysteries Podcast

## Seidr

Returns in February!

Look for dates, times, and topics posted soon!

Witan Brandy Callahan

Gythia Anna Plourde

Gythia Catie Erickson

Folkbuilder Heather Young

Folkbuilder Sara Ault

Folkbuilder Ali Clausen

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

Hope to see you there!



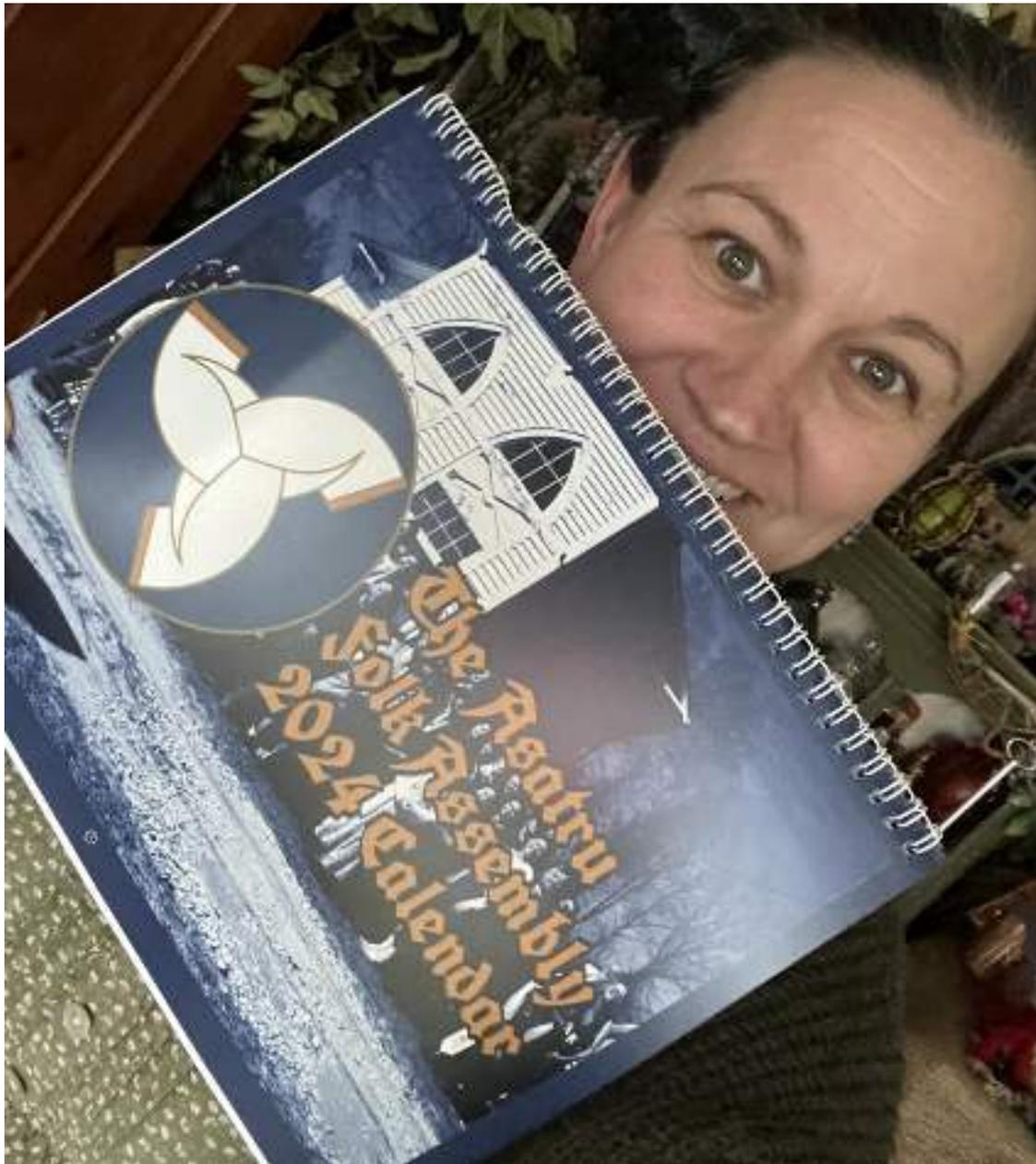
**Now Available in the AFA Store**



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

home to Asatru!

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



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

[Get your calendar ordered today!](#)



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

## Þórshof

### Food Pantry at Þórshof



The Yule season is a time of togetherness, frith, and merriment. The community came together for just that. Brightening everyone's Yuletide that came through for food was a wonderful experience, especially for those that needed a little more. The highlight of this particular time was in a 14-minute period 20 families had received their bags of groceries; they came so quickly the line was backed into the street. We hope they, and all of you, had a very merry and God Júl!



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

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### **Toy Drive at Þórshof**



At Þórshof's Yule celebration we held our second Toy Drive. We helped 15 families provide toys, books, board games, and jackets for their Winter Holidays. Our continued community involvement through charitable giving has increased our already strong reputation in the Linden area. A grandmother had stopped in for toys and a bag of groceries from our food pantry. Witan Young helped her load up her vehicle and they had a very nice conversation regarding our charity work. When we first arrived in Linden, people were unsure about our presence. The lady then told us we'd be hard pressed to find anyone with a negative thing to say, particularly if they have interacted with us. This fills our hearts with joy, and stories like this one continue to come up during our interfacing with locals.

We have had so much success with our charitable work in Linden, and volunteers have made that possible. Thank you to those that step up and give freely!



Folkbuilder Heather Young

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

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**Yule at Þórshof**



On December 15th, we gathered at Þórshof to kick off our annual Yule celebration. The day was spent in deep spiritual discussion as we prepared the Hof and Terry Rumph Hall for the weekend's celebration. As the Folk trickled in throughout the afternoon, we made ready the toy and coat donations for the charity work the next day, and distributed decorations where they were needed. We capped our day with a powerful Blot to Þórr by Witan Daniel Young and a delicious meal of chili, cornbread, and raw milk prepared by Witan Svan Herul.



Saturday began with a dumbbell workout with Folkbuilder Bethea, followed by a hearty meal of breakfast bowls from Witan Svan. Following breakfast, Folkbuilder Heather Young led the charge in preparing the coat, food, and toy drive. The Hall was buzzing with activity, and all hands pitched in to make it happen. Even the kids busied themselves in giving to the community. Once the kids had warmed up to each other and settled down a little bit, Gothi Rob Stamm marched the little platoon off to the Ve to conduct a children's Blot.



Following breakfast and the charitable work, we enjoyed some outstanding fellowship as more Folk arrived. After a special meal of Witan Daniel Young's beef and veggie soup, Witan Young held a class on prayer, taken from the Sigdrifumal. This was followed almost immediately by a class from Witan Svan Herul on how to properly conduct Blot. Witan Svan broke it down into manageable, easy to understand steps and explained each step in-depth. This was a great benefit to everyone present, but especially to one of our guests who was brand new to Asatru.



After the classes were finished up and darkness had fallen, we cleaned up the Hall and processed into the Ve for Yule Blot to the sound of ringing bells. As we entered the candle lit holy space, the air was thick with the presence of the Aesir. Our Gothar often speak of how, after Blot has been held in one location so many times, the presence of the Gods can be felt there stronger than in more mundane spaces. This is especially true in the home of Asa-Þórr. As Witan Svan began the ritual and sounded three horn blasts to call the Aesir to be among us, the very weight of the air changed.



Once the Aesir had been welcomed amongst us and the need fire was lit, Witan Young lit a candle for each of the members that we have lost in 2023, and the Folk said their names aloud. Some of these members were from our District, and we felt their absence and reflected together on their loss. We also approached the harrow individually and placed candles in the Yule Log for those that couldn't be there with us on that night.



After the rite concluded, we carried the Yule Log and the Yule Bok in solemn procession to the waiting fire behind the Hof where we again formed a circle.



After some words from Witan Svan, the Yule Log was placed into the fire, followed by the Yule Bok to shouts of “Happy Yule!”. Our ladies then headed into the Hall, where they prepared candles in anticipation of the sacred flame that our men would carry from the fire to light the first candles of the Yuletide. From this first candle, the Folk would light their candles to carry home with them.



Once we had gathered again in Rumph Hall, tables were cleared, and the clutter of the day was put away to prepare for Sumbel. Half of our present Folk had to depart and put children to bed, but the Folk that remained readied themselves to finish the night with

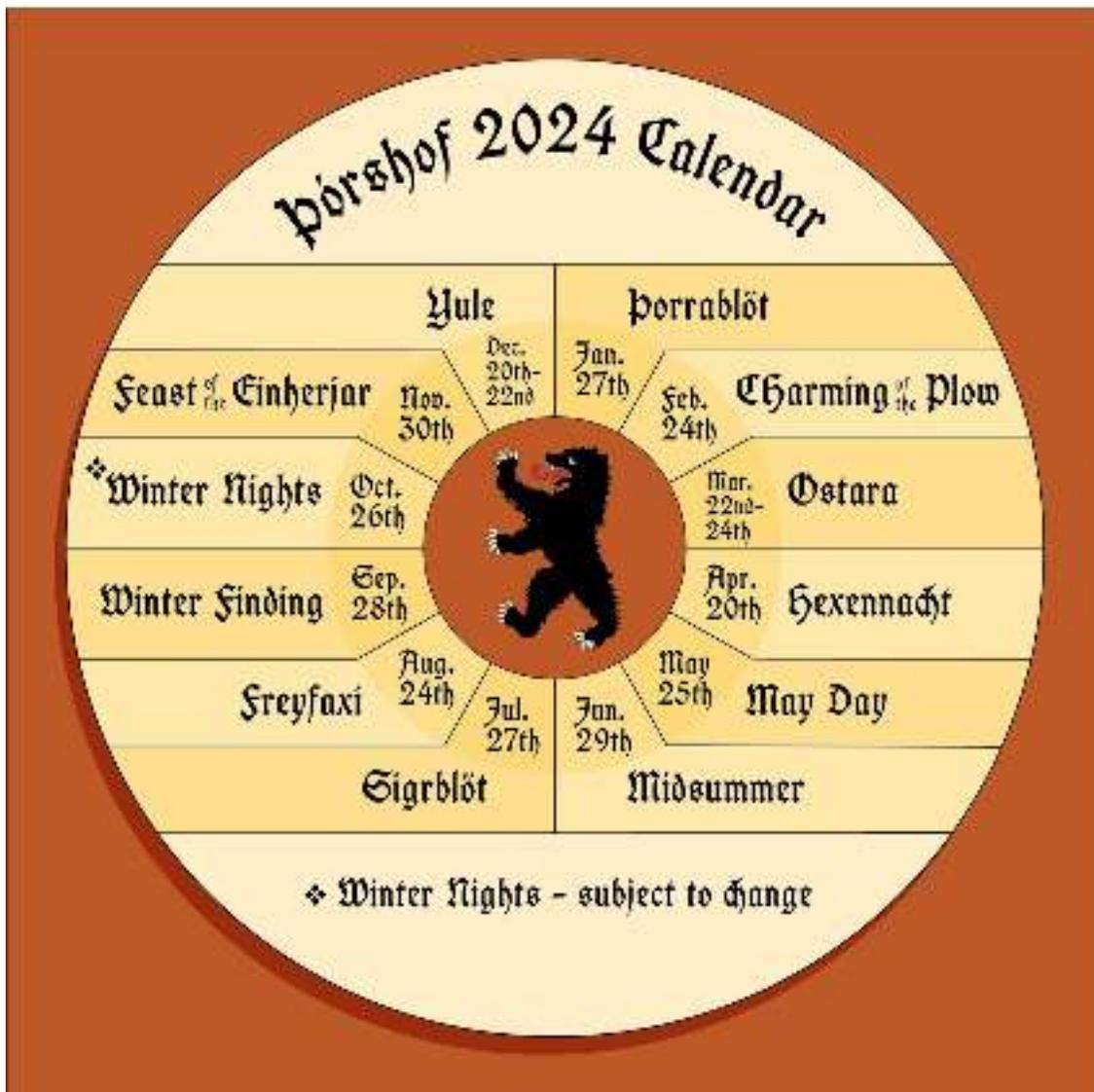
my favorite ritual. Witan Svan gave a quick class on the purpose and proper conduct of Sumbel for the benefit of the gathered Folk, and then Sumbel commenced. Mothers were remembered, heroes were honored, tears were shed, boasts were made, and a sacred Oath was taken. It's been said many times that these smaller Sumbels are the most intimate, and this night was no exception.



Sunday had a slower start due to how late we were up on Saturday, but we enjoyed a delicious breakfast of German toast (yes, that's the correct name) and coffee provided by Witan Svan while we enjoyed each other's company and cleaned up the Hall. Several Folk were present that were unable to be there the previous two days, and we had a lot of fellowship to make up for. We finished the day with a Wayfarer's Blot conducted by Witan Young, receiving the power of the Raido rune to give us safe journeys home in the winter storm. Though it's always hard to say goodbye, we made our plans to see each other again at Ostara and departed in all four directions.



### Upcoming Events at Þórshof





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**Support Þórshof**



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**The District Poetry Corner**

*A Poem about Thor*



*The churning sea  
Hides a scaly beast  
Striking fear into hearts  
Of mortal men*

*Oh Striker, Thunder god  
The serpent hides in murky water  
Its power vast, yet no match for you  
Its death foretold, by your hand*

*Friend of Mankind  
Defender of Asgard  
As your heart beats  
Evil giants quiver*

*See now, the forces of ill  
Step out from the shadows  
Armies of envy and evil  
Marching to the turn of the wheel*

*The spawn of Loki slithers among them  
Emboldened, filled with venomous envy  
It comes for you, son of Odin  
Prepare your hammer arm*

*The enemies of good  
Swell from the beach of Nidhögg  
They clash with you  
Holy Gods of Asgard*

*See now, the dragon has come  
See how venom drools from its maw  
Oh Thor, wielder of righteous fury  
Grab evil by its vile tongue!*

*The fangs of Jörmungandr  
Bite deep in Godly flesh  
A sting that kills  
Head of the snake crushed*

*Oh Striker, your work is done  
Oh son of Earth  
Nine final paces you take  
Holy vengeance destroyed the snake*

*Hail Thor!*



Erik Lugnet  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[elugnet@runestone.org](mailto:elugnet@runestone.org)

*To a Joyous Þorrablót*



*In the hall of thunder, where Mjølfnir roars,  
Thor, the Protector, guards Midgard's shores.  
With lightning in his veins and a hammer in hand,  
He defends our realm, a steadfast, mighty stand.*

*Oh, Thunderer, with your red beard aglow,  
Your strength and courage in every storm flow.*

*Midgard's shield, defender in the night,  
In your presence, darkness takes its flight.*

*Amidst the chill of midwinter's night,  
Thor's laughter echoes, a joyous delight.  
In the heart of frost, a warmth he imparts,  
A celebration of joy, from our hearths to our hearts.*

*As the Yule fires flicker, and the cold winds gust,  
Thor's embrace brings comfort, to knock off the rust.  
Mirth and revelry weave through the frosty air,  
Midwinter's bliss, a moment so rare.*

*Yet, in the midst of the winter's embrace,  
We look ahead to the sun's warming grace.  
Thor, the harbinger of the burgeoning light,  
Promises summer, a season so bright.*

*Through the cold, long nights, we find hope,  
In Thor's protection, we learn to cope.  
With joy in our hearts, we greet the dawn,  
Knowing that soon, the warmth will be drawn.*

*So, let the storms rage, and the winter winds blow,  
In Thor's shelter, we stand, strong and aglow.  
Midgard's guardian, with laughter and might,  
Guiding us through the darkness of winter nights.*



Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice

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

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## Indiana

### *Tales of Ultima Yule*



Friends and Folk,

Here in Indiana, we celebrated the holy tide of Yule with a party and Blót to the Allfather. It is true that a Yule party is a rather common thing to do. In fact, I have no doubt that many (if not most) of the entries in this month's newsletter will describe a Yule party of some sort. Yule parties are ubiquitous to our celebration of the season because they so perfectly encapsulate all of the simple joys that make this the favorite holiday of so many of our Folk worldwide:



We gather together inside, sheltering ourselves from the grow old and darkness without, breaking bread with our friends and loved ones, telling our stories and exchanging our gifts (both commercial and those of simple good will). We made new friends, we swore oaths of friendship and solidarity to one another, we paid tribute to the Father of our Folk and Gods for watching over us as we gathered in his sight.



We will have many celebrations in the coming year, many triumphs to rejoice and setbacks to ponder, holy holidays and tributes paid to the glory of our Folk and Gods. However, I am certain that for many of us, no matter how glorious the moment, that there will be a small piece of us hiding in the back of the mind, waiting anxiously even



# Sunday Dinner Pitch-In

Fortville, IN

Sunday, January 28th @3pm

[Jrock@Runestone.org](mailto:Jrock@Runestone.org) to RSVP



Fortville, IN

Sunday, February 25th @3pm

[Jrock@Runestone.org](mailto:Jrock@Runestone.org) to RSVP

**Food • Games • Blót**



February 17, 2024  
Fortville, IN

[JRock@Runestone.org](mailto:JRock@Runestone.org)  
for details



Folkbuilder Jonathan Rock

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

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## New Hampshire

*Tis the Season: A NH Yule*



Many New Hampshire folk gathered to celebrate Yule together. As the sun set and the fire was started, we trekked into the woods to find a tree for our hosts. A humble green bush was found and felled. We stood around the fire and reminisced about the great year we all had and our hopes for the next. Such a special time of year to be surrounded by such great folk.



We wandered back to the house as the sun left us. A feast of masterfully cooked bear, brisket and many other goodies was had. After dinner we played some goofy card games and had tons of laughs. Thank you again to our wonderful hosts! I couldn't have imagined a more hospitable and warm home to celebrate Yule in, with the best of Folk to boot.



From the Sagert family to yours, I hope you had an awesome Yule and I look forward to seeing all of us prosper in the new Year!



On New Years Eve...Eve, we welcomed some folk over for dinner. On the menu was my wife's amazing chili as well as some superb Swedish meatballs from our guests. We concluded the night with some tasty dessert and card games! We had a great time and a brilliant way to cap off 2023.

### *Upcoming Events*



Please join us this month for a Sporting event! Please contact me for details.



Please join us in February for a magical moot! Please contact me for details.



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

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## New York

*Folkbuilding; In My Own Words*



I have been with the Asatru Folk Assembly for the last three and half years and been an Apprentice Folkbuilder for a few months since being involved with the Asatru Church. Being a Folkbuilder has deep personal meaning to me; a feeling of spiritual bonds within our AFA community.

I feel like I'm doing a great service, both to my ancestral Folk and the Norse Gods of the Aesir and Vanir. I help build a strong Folk community, which gives me a lot of pride. It's part of the duty I actively participate in by talking with others interested in joining the AFA, but it takes a lot of work to keep up with the many members. I listen with our Folk on issues they may have in their lives or to organize Moots so we can meet up to make friendships. I think that it's meaningful to our Folk that every Folkbuilder invests their time and efforts to include all members in kindred spirit and enjoy each other's company throughout the years.

Being a Folkbuilder is important to engage the public and make our Asatru Church relevant and in the public view as a legitimate religion and spiritual community. I promote and represent the AFA Asatru Church and my duty as a leader that brings like-minded and spiritual Folk together to honor and worship our Asatru Gods. Community is important and I will do my duty to raise awareness of our religion and commit to our Folk.

What do I see myself in the future or want to see happen as I apprentice and when I become an Oathed Folkbuilder within the AFA? I want to build up my state to the level that I can create a Kindred group with fellow AFA members that will meet every week at our own Hof. I do want to be more involved in the spiritual teachings of Asatru ceremonies and Blots. I would like to become a Gothar so I will be knowledgeable in practicing Asatru so that I can lead the congregation in worship of our Gods. Spiritual Folk traditions are important in my life; knowing my spiritual path on a greater level has significance in acquiring wisdom that one day I can pass on to the future generations.

Each Folkbuilder works together to build the Church throughout the United States and other countries that the AFA has gained a strong foothold in. Our Mission is to make Asatru more relevant and public; we are aware of the struggle of such a duty we have in our lives to spread our Folk based spiritual religion throughout the Western World as a significant Church for our Folk. We are here to help our people find a new spiritual path that leads to strong friendships and families. We are guided by our desire to communicate with our Gods and gain wisdom from our ancestors. Our Asatru Church gives new life to ancient Norse religion traditions. Asatru is a living, breathing practice of our Folk; incorporated principles that we live by every day.

My duty as a Folkbuilder is important, as a leader, I serve the Folk, Asatru spiritual Church and culture. Our work is never finished; we do our part to make a strong folk community.

*Upcoming Events*



All are invited on Jan 13th for Bowling Night  
Hosted by App. Folkbuilder Daniel Tomkiell  
contact for time and location at  
[dtomkiell@runestone.org](mailto:dtomkiell@runestone.org)

# PUB MOOT ON SATURDAY JAN 20TH



ALL ARE WELCOME TO A SPORTS BAR PUB MOOT!  
ON JAN 20TH, HOSTED BY AEA APP  
FOLKBUILDER DANIEL TOMKIELL. FOR TIMES AND  
LOCATION PLEASE CONTACT  
DTOMKIELL@RUNESTONE.ORG



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

*Electric City New York Moot*



On December 16th, my 2 daughters and I ventured out to the Schenectady NY historical society for the festival of trees. This was a beautiful display of over 100 decorated trees from several different local organizations and historical societies. We truly enjoyed being able to take our time and appreciate the time and effort put into each decoration.



The building was beautifully lit up for the season. We spent a good hour or so just taking in the sights and the girls enjoyed being able to vote for their favorite tree. All in all it was a wonderful time that we hope to partake in again next season with our folk.

### *Upcoming Events*

JOIN US JANUARY 27TH  
@7PM IN COLONIE NY

HAVE FUN AND UNLEASH  
YOUR ENERGY @  
SKYZONES TRAMPOLINE  
PARK'S GLOW JUMP!!!!

PLEASE RSVP WITH  
APPRENTICE FOLKBUILDER  
DANIELLE RISSO  
@DRISSO@RUNESTONE.ORG

JOIN US FEBRUARY 23RD  
@3PM @ SCHENECTADY NEW  
YORK MUSEUM OF SCIENCE  
AND INNOVATION



*Fun Planetarium and science  
moot!*

RSVP WITH APPRENTICE FOLK  
BUILDER DANIELLE RISSO  
[@DRISSO@RUNESTONE.ORG](mailto:drisso@runestone.org)



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

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## North Carolina

### *Hails from Jaeger!*



Hails! My name is Jaeger Croft. Born initially in rural Nebraska to a military family, I am quite the nomad, having moved from place to place during my early life, across state to state. Due to strong roots in the South, most of my family upbringing was done in places like Georgia, Florida, and eventually settling in Western North Carolina, which became my first real home base. I also, by direct way of my maternal grandmother being from England and having a strong affinity for my mainly Germanic roots from southern Germany and the British Isles with secondary Celtic roots, I became a bilingual speaker of both the English and German languages. I had additionally lived briefly in Baden-Württemberg, Germany, the origin place of my first ancestor bearing my last name who moved to the States in the 1600's. Combined with the nomadic early life, I've developed a pretty unique accent speech pattern that isn't easy to pin down.

I am a typically chill well-mannered individual who enjoys the outdoors, camping, hiking, and other such activities, as well as occasional home projects such as beer or mead brewing, map-making, or other small crafts. I can also be into games and also enjoy hang outs with family and friends, whether at the arcade, bar, or at home. I enjoy history and philosophical studies, having briefly gone to school and worked as a Social

Studies teacher prior to Covid-19. Now I work more hands on, improving my skills in my new job as Utility, as well as operating heavy equipment.

I always had an interesting religious upbringing, as my parents were not solidly one thing, so there was plenty of flowing between different concepts and ideas, everything from having a largely Southern Baptist family, as well as influences from my parents being into (at different stages in life) Native American beliefs, ancient Summerian religions even as far as “aliens building the pyramids” narratives, minor stuff like Buddhism sprinkles in at some point, back to Christianity, etc. As such, you could say I never grew up with a sense of spiritual grounding in a solid singular tradition, but it did allow for me to be open to the concept of multiple paths for different peoples.

Combined with my natural affinity to be attached to my specific heritage, and a belief that every people had their own unique spiritual reality, I began looking into the question of “if everyone has their own Gods and beliefs, who are my people’s Gods?” Naturally this led to me becoming essentially Asatru, before even knowing the term itself, often simply calling it Heathen or Germanic Religion, but also was for a time “dual-religious”, sitting in between Christianity and Germanic religion as a sorta “Christo-Pagan/Heathen-Christian”, believing it more historically accurate to Western Civilization than the current “Judeo-Christian” one.

I found myself more and more simply just Asatru, however, and after about five years of solitary practice, I found the AFA and joined, hesitant and cautious at first, not knowing what exactly I was getting into, but quickly learned I was where I needed to be and am grateful that I made that decision. Now, after a time of being a regular practitioner, being involved as much as I can in the maintenance of Hof functions and events, I decided to make it a little more official by becoming an Apprentice Folkbuilder, hoping only that I am able to live up to the task and do my duty. Hail the Gods! Hail the Folk! Hail the AFA!



Jager Croft  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[jcroft@runestone.org](mailto:jcroft@runestone.org)

*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  
[tbetha@runestone.org](mailto:tbetha@runestone.org)

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## Ohio

### *Upcoming Events*

**MUSEUM MOOT  
DAYTON OHIO**

**FREE ADMISSION , WARM , KID FRIENDLY!!!  
CONTACT APPRENTICE FOLK BUILDER DAN BORDEN**

January 14th  
dborden@runestone.org





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)

*Upcoming Events*

**THORRABLOT**  
**Central OH**  
**2PM, January 27**

Blót,  
potluck,  
sumbel

Contact  
[mjwilburn@runestone.org](mailto:mjwilburn@runestone.org)



Mary Jane Wilburn  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[mjwilburn@runestone.org](mailto:mjwilburn@runestone.org)

*Ohio Yule*



Yule is the time of year where family and close friends would gather indoors and share each other's close company, the results of the years bountiful or paltry harvest, and the struggles that were had as well.

It is an appropriate time for reflection of the year that came before and tales of triumph and stories of woe are in the air, and that is good and right.

The folk in Ohio have like many others seen our share of glory and that of great loss in 2023, yet we united, as one to celebrate life and those bonds that we share with each other as well as with our Gods and ancestors.

I was fortunate in being able to host Yule at my home in 2023 and being surrounded by those who I hold dear was heartfelt.

We enjoyed each other's food and company and welcomed the Gods and those who have passed beyond the veil to join us.

We were also visited by Krampus (much to the surprise of the children)!

Yule is meant to be comforting, joyous and full of enthusiasm for the year that has yet to come and while 2023 was trying for many, myself included, I believe that we all parted ways with a sense of inner strength and courage in the knowledge that we are not alone and will overcome the challenges that we will face in the coming time.

We have the Gods above, our ancestors behind us and our folk at our side.



Folkbuilder Michael Melillo  
[mmelillo@runestone.org](mailto:mmelillo@runestone.org)

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## Poland

### *A New Solar Year*



The time of the winter solstice is one of a great many things time of celebrating our bounty at the end of the year. Giving thanks to Sol for all that has been provided, anticipating the arrival of Odin and the Wild Hunt, and spending quality time indoors making our home an even more welcoming space for the Gods and our ancestors.



The first ritual of Yule is performed in honor of the rising sun. The old passes away and the new is reborn, the sun ends its journey and begins to grow again.



With the new sun, the earth will soon awaken with new strength, life and power. With Baldr's rebirth imminent the time is filled with magic and so we celebrate life as its own rebirth.



We celebrated with ritual at home and abroad, in addition to the usual liturgy of offerings, we also experienced fortune telling, caroling and a plentiful feast full of enjoyment!

*Upcoming Moots*

ASATRU FOLK  
ASSEMBLY

# WELES PUB

## MOOT

Meet for a roundup of  
the old year and share  
about the new year!  
See you at Weles  
Pub!



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

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## Sweden

*To a Bright 2024*



Another year comes to an end. What a fantastic year we've had as a church and as a Folk!

I want to send out a thank you to all the good people that make the AFA the wonderful church it is.

Thank you for all the positive kind interactions. Thank you all for all the work you've put into your Folk and Church.

May we all invite more joy and love into our lives this year. May we all sing more this year. May we all cherish one another more this year.

May we all go into this next year with purpose. May we strive for Nobility and Brightness in 2024.

*Upcoming Events*



Fika Friday

26th of January

16th of February

22th of March

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



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)



Ostara

23th of March

Come and let us celebrate the Lady of Spring!



Erik Lugnet  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[elugnet@runestone.org](mailto:elugnet@runestone.org)

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## Tennessee

### *Upcoming Events*





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

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## Virginia

*What Does it Mean to Be a Member of the Asatru Folk Assembly?*



What does it mean to be a member of the AFA? As described in our mission statement: “It’s about roots. it’s about connection. it’s about coming home.” Yet some of our Folk are still sitting on the fence and wonder whether the hype lives up to the reality. Well, I come to you bearing wonderful news:

It does.

My first national event was Winter Nights at Sigheim. I brought a man with me whom I had met in an AFA Men’s Video chat. My journey to the Home of Tyr with a man I had never met ended up being one of the most profound experiences of my life. I was overwhelmed by the warm welcome, and by the solid men and women of our folk in attendance. Also, the chance to meet and talk to the Leadership, the doers, and the givers among our beautiful Folk and the many beautiful children, running and playing in this sacred space that the AFA has manifested was completely Inspiring. I was home. Finally home.

After Wayfarer's Blot, I asked one of our Witan to take up the position of Apprentice Folkbuilder. I was given the position, and here we are. The responsibility of this position cannot be understated. I sometimes fear I’m derelict in my duties. I work 60+ hours a week at my “day” job, and I’m in the middle of a vicious legal custody battle for my daughter. Life is not easy at the moment, by any definition. But I have found solace and strength in our gods, our folk, and the AFA.

I’m now a member of Stonewall Kindred. Last month, I met with Pat and Thomas for a hike up a mountain at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. I had met with one for the AFA Eldri, Thomas, beforehand. I found him incredibly knowledgeable, and we’ve become

fast friends. It was my first time meeting Pat, who took the Folkbuilder's Oath a while ago. He was also an amazing man to interact with as we hiked up the ancient hills above the Potomac River. I found Pat to be a solid, knowledgeable man. The conversation flowed easily between us as we made our way along the mountain trail.

We reached the peak and unpacked for our Blót. We toasted to the ancestors, the gods, and the heroes of our folk. As we commenced the Blót, curious hikers stopped to observe for a while before moving on. A few of them complimented Pat on his horn — the Ceremonial Horn of Stonewall Kindred. Pat thanked them for the compliments and wished them well on their respective paths.

As always, Blót with the Folk was an empowering and moving experience. After a period of meditation, we packed up and began to hike back down the mountain. While we slowly, and reluctantly, returned to the mundane world, we spoke to each other about the lives of our heroic folk of old. Those lost in Harper's Ferry during the Civil War on both sides of that conflict, and why there should be no more "Brother Wars" between our people. Never again. Never, ever again.

We eventually got back to town and found a local restaurant. We were escorted to a quiet, corner table by a waitress, and proceeded to continue our multi-layered conversation covering many topics for what seemed like hours.

But eventually, the setting sun called our attention to the world that awaited our return. So, reluctantly, we had to say our goodbyes and parted company. But I was not yet done with Harper's Ferry.

I work a high-stress job just outside of Washington, DC, and get very few days off. So, I used the occasion to return to the mountain trail and camp out for the night high above the Potomac River where three states — Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland — come together. A badly needed time of solitude and self-reflection. A time to commune with the Gods and connect with the spirits that inhabit the land. A needed escape from the noise and chaos of the city that's essential for my mental and spiritual health.

I hiked about five miles on the Appalachian Trail as darkness fell and gradually became the deep dark of night as I reflected on the day. A feeling of gratitude slowly bubbled up within me. Gratitude for connecting with the Gods of my Ancestors, all those generations that came before me, and, of course, the AFA. It was an indescribable feeling, as are all truly spiritual moments.

Eventually, I found an idyllic location, made camp, ate, and fell asleep as soon as I got

into my sleeping bag. Just the trees, the night sky, and my dreams for companionship. And it was good.

My journey, so far, in the AFA has been amazing. The knowledge that I'm not alone, that I have the folk and our gods to lean on, and the reality that no matter where I may wander, climb, run, walk, crawl, or stumble, there will be folk willing to share home and hearth with me. And knowing that brings me peace.

The AFA has changed my life in more ways than a single article can adequately explain. The more involved I become, the more of our Folk I meet, the more I recognize that I'm home, truly home.



Dave Rother  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[drother@runestone.org](mailto:drother@runestone.org)

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## West Virginia

*OWPD - Harpers Ferry, MD*



Getting a head start on our New Year's resolutions this season and taking advantage of the fact that the 9th of the month fell on a Saturday, we observed December's Odin World Prayer Day in the historic town of Harpers Ferry, WV. The steep climb up the Maryland Heights Loop was strenuous enough, even without the heavy millstone we carried (pictured), which Stonewall Kindred has been using as an altar stone for four years.

The challenge of the extra weight was important. It was part of the ritual. The Horn is raised, and the Mead is poured in offering to Wotan - but the true Gift, that which our Rune Master desires most, is our devotion, which we express through the physical exertion we put ourselves through.



Our Blót to the High One was given at the site of the Union naval artillery battery on the Maryland Heights Loop, a hasty fighting position that was active during Stonewall Jackson's campaign there in 1862. While we drew the interest of many passers-by on the trail, our fellow travelers recognized the sacred nature of our Rite and respectfully kept their distance.



Odin World Prayer Day is observed on the Ninth of every month. I encourage our Folk around the world to join us in this holy undertaking of concentrated spiritual Will.

The existence of our People is not negotiable!

*Upcoming Events*



# German Dinner Moot

Shepherdstown, WV

Jan. 13, 5pm

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



# MEAD TASTING MOOT

February 17, 12:00 Noon  
Winchester, VA

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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