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## **Words from the Alsherjargothi**



Winter Nights in Ohio was a huge success! Thank you to the Ericksons for hosting an amazing event and special thanks to Cole Distel and his family for all their hard work at the event! These yearly events are natural times to take stock of how far we have come from previous years. At this year's Winter Nights, I had the pleasure and honor of performing 3 Baby Naming Ceremonies. A huge advance in the AFA has been the massive increase in healthy and thriving families. I am so proud to see all the AFA babies being born. And for the first time, this year, we have a homeschooling program in place to educate these new children in a healthy and safe way with truth and good character.

Another thing of note from Winter Nights is just how much the AFA membership has grown, overall, and East of the Mississippi specifically. Once upon a time, the AFA was heavily weighted in California and on the West Coast. For a long time that West Coast perception was dominant. In the 11 years since the first Winter Nights in the Poconos, the AFA has spread thickly across the country, and we have members now in 14 countries!

We are winning! We are blessed by our amazing Gods!

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!



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

*Lawspeaker's Challenge: Stay Hungry*



Before I set up this month's challenge, a brief word about the origin of this series. As I see it, the purpose of any spiritual practice is self-improvement. Moralistic practices seek this goal with proscriptions, a list of "thou-shalt-nots," which, if followed closely, can be a guide for simple behavioral improvements.

Our faith is more subtle and complex, and we must look to the examples of our elders – the Gods and ancestors – as instructive. This "middle path" of right discernment is difficult, requiring constant analysis and self-critique. "Wotan expects me to man up," as one phrasing has it.

Thus, the challenge to stay hungry. Certainly, a part of this idea is to stay hungry in the spiritual sense, to constantly read, learn, and grow in understanding and camaraderie, but the challenge this month is strictly in the mundane sense of physical hunger.

Most of us (not you, Witan Callahan!) could stand to lose a few pounds, and yes leaving some food on the plate occasionally can further that goal, but my intent here is not to encourage us to lose weight but to maintain more situational awareness. Satiety – that feeling of a full stomach that most of us carry all day every day– dulls the senses and general awareness. Yale University researchers found that mice that were induced to feel hunger not only had sharper physical senses but increased memory and learning capacity as well.

Stay sharp; stay hungry.



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## Words from our Gothar

*Creation (Creatio Ex Materia or Creatio ex Nihilo)*



All peoples have a creation myth.

Whether it's the African bush people who believed their people and animals lived together underground until Kaang dug a hole for them to climb out of to live on in the world he created for them; the Indios of the Americas that emerged from their sacred caves, or lived on a great island that floated in the ocean attached to four thick ropes from the sky; The Chinese Hundun and Hawaiian Kumulipo whose cosmogonic myths describe creation from chaos with the dismembered corpse of a primordial being (Pangu and Mesopotamian Tiamat), world parent siblings (Fuxi and Nuwa and Japanese Izanagi and Izanami) or the Zoroastrian Ahura Mazda, they believed the basic element was qi ("breath; air; life force"); while other cultures like Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece believed a primeval water was the single element that existed in the beginning.

That brings us to the Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. They all believe in the beginning Yaweh created heaven and earth. The only exception being the Mormons who believe the world was created from existing matter. But this can be attributed to the exception the proves the rule, and it can also speak to the ancestral

memory of the European descendants who broke from Christian doctrine.

There are many differences between the native faiths of the former, many of which will have a familiar ring to anyone who has studied Indo-European religions, and the latter Abrahamic faiths. The most obvious is polytheism vs monotheism. Then there is the idea of redemption for past dishonorable acts with noble deeds to improve our wyrd vs individual salvation from an external omnipotent being for the asking. But it all starts with the irreconcilable polarity found in their respective ideas of Creation.

Creatio ex materia or ex nihilo?

In Latin creatio ex materia means "creation out of preexisting material". All Pre-Abrahamic creation stories share this idea, including Asatru, that the universe was created from preexisting matter by their divine powers. Only the Abrahamic faiths, teach the idea of creatio ex nihilo, or "creation out of nothing".

Why is this important?

Our creation stories are central to who we are as a people. Our worldview is rooted in creation. For us, the act of creation, of beating back chaos and bringing order to the world is replayed in every blot. Do we start from a world-accepting belief, that we exist within and are a part of the world, or from a soteriological and eschatological one that is world-rejecting? Not only is this difference important, but we see how creatio ex materia is healthier and more instinctual for our Folk.

After all, Indo-Europeans held the value of Truth above all others.



Since this topic centers around what happened in the beginning, let's begin there with our own creation story and the similarities to those above. Before anything, there was the great abyss Ginungagap, and Fimbultyr moved upon the face of the deep that flowed from Niflhem (the primeval waters; laguz) freezing them before meeting the flames of Muspelheim. The melted drops of vapor formed the giant Ymir (the primordial being), the father of the race of giants that were Chaos. To the Proto-Indo-Europeans in the beginning EVERYTHING was water. And EVERYTHING was Chaos, beyond understanding.

Óðinn and his brothers, the sons of Bor, slayed Ymir and from his body, they made the universe. They created order. Then the Gods formed Ask and Embla with Óðinn giving them önd or the breath of life, Vili giving them óðr or wit/spirit/soul, and Vé giving them goodly hue or their form and senses ("breath; air; life force" above). For the PIE there were Yemos and Mannus (the twins) who also brought order to the world with Yemos' sacrifice.

What all these creation stories have in common is that the world was formed out of matter that already existed. Because matter cannot be destroyed, it must have always existed. If the water boils away, it still exists in the form of vapor. If a tree burns, the heat, smoke, and ash are carried away by the winds. Rain falls, the plants grow, and animals eat the plants and grow in turn. The matter is transformed (kenaz), but it is not gone. This is the natural reasoning for creatio ex materia. It is a demonstrable truth. Our ancestors possessed this knowledge and it had to be wrested from them by the

imposition of the wholly foreign idea that something can come from nothing. This is the faulty foundation on which the idea of salvation is built. That paradise can be bestowed just for the asking. Our ancestors understood the need to make deposits into the well of urðr to earn your ørlög. Our deeds are the material from which our fate is created, it does not come from nothing any more than the cosmos could.

Furthermore, the native faiths of not only our people, but all people, bound them to this world. We live in the world, not upon it. Ours is a world-accepting religion. It is a symbiotic existence, aligned with the cosmos; what to our PIE ancestors would form the Xartus. To live in right action (raido) in accordance with the cosmos, allows our spirit to resonate. This is how our people, and all people, can live a healthy life. The dissonance we experience from living in discord with the Xartus, ignoring the primal laws, harms the spirit and it spreads through the soul complex manifesting in mental as well as physical illnesses.

With creatio ex nihilo we are disconnected from the act of creation. It is handed to us, with no effort, no sacrifice. Just like the idea of an individual mentioned earlier, it is an ørlög unearned. That is not how we interact with the world around us, so a dissonance is created in the spirit of our people that is growing hard to ignore. Many of our Folk cannot identify what that uneasy feeling they have deep inside of them is, but they know it is there. It's like playing piano that is out of tune. No matter how skilled you are, it will not make beautiful music until it is in tune.

Asatru is our tuning fork.

## **Sigrheim: Home of the Asatru Folk Assembly**



Progress has moved swiftly on this amazing dream. We have scouted property in Tennessee. We are ready to make our purchase. Thus far, we have raised 9.8% of the down payment! Please help us make this dream a reality. As always, donations of \$500 and over get a nameplate on the donor plaque that will go up in the hall. Thank you all for your generosity.

<https://www.runestone.org/product/sigrheim/>



#### [Sigrheim Fund – Asatru Folk Assembly](#)

Sigrheim will be our AFA home and capital. Sigrheim will be an intentional community with AFA members living on site, a glorious hof to Týr, a grand hall, lodging for guests and so much more.

[www.runestone.org](http://www.runestone.org)



Matthew D. Flavel

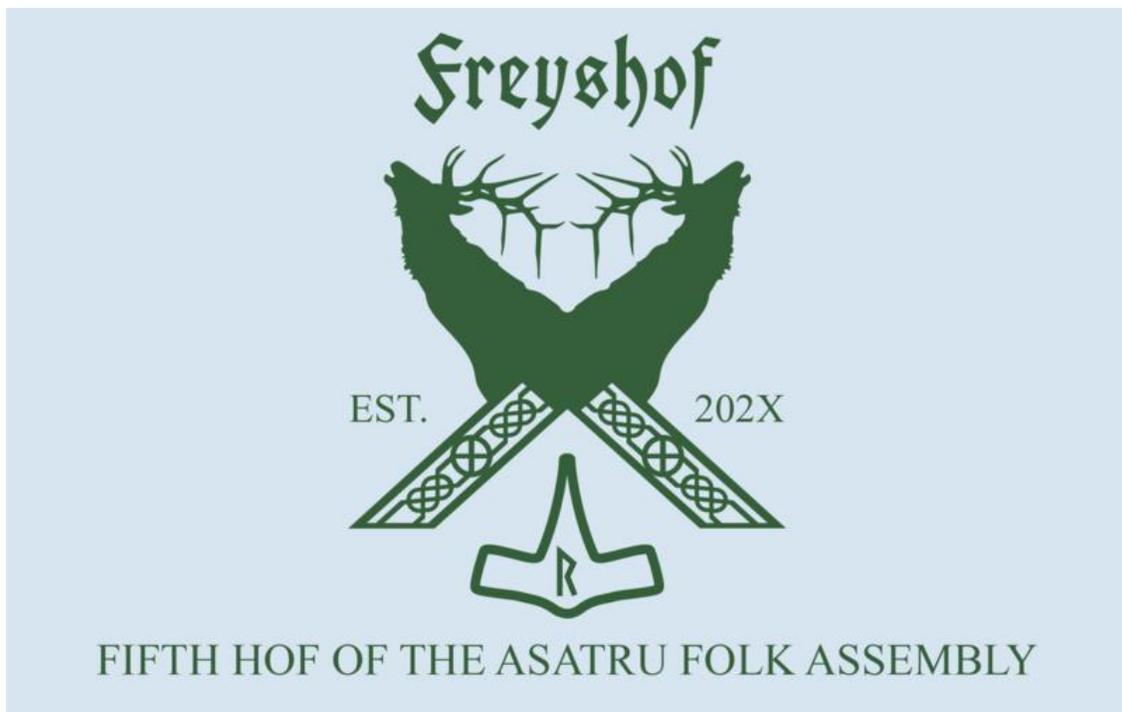
Alsherjargothi, Asatru Folk Assembly

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

## The Quest For Freyshof

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

– Gylfaginning



[Freyshof Fund – Asatru Folk Assembly \(runestone.org\)](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. (We have paid off 40.2% so far)
2. We need to raise our monthly donation average by 15%. (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!



Matthew D. Flavel

## AFA Homeschool Program



[AsatruAcademy.org](http://AsatruAcademy.org)

Greetings AFA Academy families!

We hope everyone had a wonderful winternights. It warmed my heart to see so many smiling children at winternights in Ohio!

Now that winternights is past, the wild hunt begins! As we get ever closer to yule. In the month of December, much of our concentration will be on the yuletide festivities, and I'll write some great wild hunt ideas and yuletide traditions from Europe that can be used as part of our school time.

As we gear up , let's not forget about Thanksgiving! Many of our gods and kindreds will

be celebrating a folks giving. We would love to see your pictures and your artwork!  
Please submit to [rstamm@runestone.org](mailto:rstamm@runestone.org) or any of our academy staff.



Gothi Robert Stamm  
Dean of AFA Academy  
[rstamm@runestone.org](mailto:rstamm@runestone.org)

## Feast of the Einherjar



One of the most recognizable motifs in Asatru is that of the Viking warrior. Helm, sword, beard, and blood: boys and girls have long been mesmerized by the stories of Valkyries and the eternal feasting and fighting of the Einherjar in Odin’s Hall, Valhalla. Pop culture has taken the Berserker and the Valkyrie and remade them hundreds of times.

Our ancestors lived in a different time when fighting wars and general “Viking” was necessary for survival. For a warrior, to die in battle was the greatest honor. Today, war is not necessary in the same way. Most people scoff at war and urge their children to “do better” or “be better”. For those of us who practice Asatru, however, we recognize the importance and the value of the warrior. More important still, is the importance and the value of those who have fallen, the Einherjar.

Once a year we set aside a day specifically to honor the Einherjar. We raise a horn to the fallen warriors to thank them for fighting for our people and our freedom. One way to celebrate is to set a place at the table for the Einherjar. Serve them the same food you are eating for dinner. Pour them a glass of wine or beer. When you are done, leave the plate outside under a special tree in the offering. Another way to celebrate would be to visit the graves of veterans at a local cemetery and help to clean them up. Leave some decorations or a small flag.

You don't have to have any veterans in your immediate family. It is a guarantee that somewhere down your ancestral lines you have family who fought in a war, and most likely, that some of them didn't return from the front lines. It is in your blood. So, raise that horn, and raise it high. Remember our fallen.

Hail the Einherjar!



Gythia Catie Erickson  
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## Day of Remembrance

Queen Sigríð of Sweden



Though little information about Sigrid, Queen of Sweden, exists in a historical text, the stories abound. Born a Swedish noblewoman Sigrid married Erik the Victorious and together they had one son. She became the Regent after the king's death, and it wasn't long before her vast wealth drew out all of the suitors, one of whom was her foster brother.

Tired of the constant suitors, and very aware of poor manners, it is said that Sigrid invited her foster brother and another suitor to a feast only to light the building on fire and lock them inside. This didn't scare away the Christian Tyrant, Olaf Tryggvason. She might have entertained his proposal, but when he demanded that she convert to Christianity to wed him, Sigrid immediately turned him away. This enraged Tryggvason so much that he first insulted her age and beauty, and then slapped her. The story says she then told him that his behavior very well might lead to his death.

It was not long before Sigrid united Sweden with Denmark by marrying King Sweyn Forkbeard. Already feuding with Olaf, it didn't take much for Sigrid to convince her new husband to go to war. This led to one of the largest ancient maritime battles, the Battle of Swold, in which Olaf Tryggvason was killed.

What can we learn from this story?

While we can't run around burning to death the people that annoy us, we can take a stand for ourselves and our Folk. We have the right to defend ourselves and our dignity from those who would try to diminish us. And when we all work together as a cohesive group, much can be done to defend and raise our Folk up.

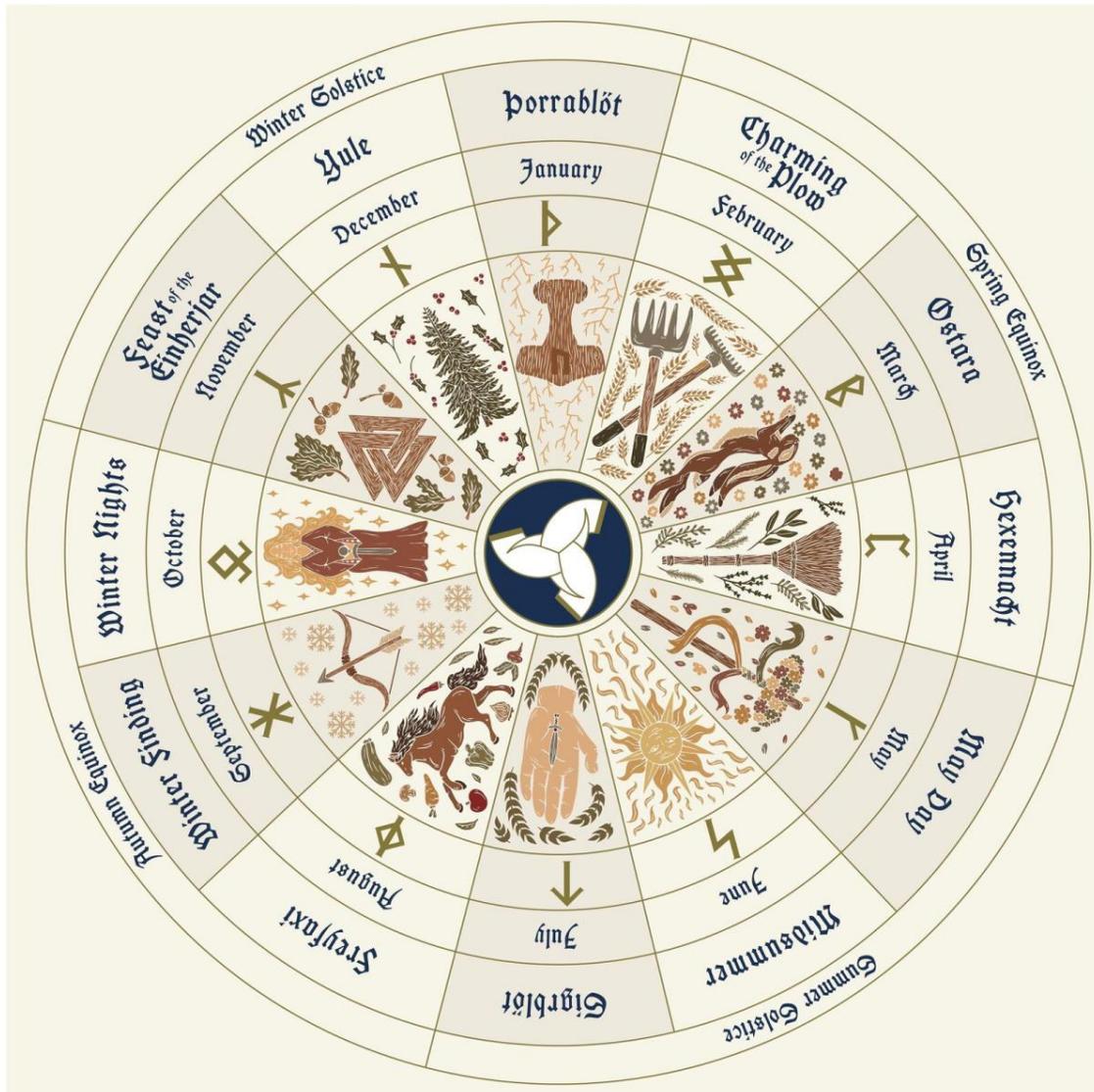
It is never in our best interest to play it nice just for the sake of being polite. Honesty

and hard truths are rarely looked at with fondness, but they are so important. Be honest, be truthful, defend and build your dignity. We are our deeds.



Gythia Catie Erickson  
[cm.erickson@runestone.org](mailto:cm.erickson@runestone.org)

## Remembrance and Holy Days



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

**Recap on Winter Nights XI in Ohio**



When I was informed this spring by Camp Netimus that the camp would not be doing group rentals going forward, I was disappointed and a bit uneasy. That place in the Poconos was home to AFA Winter Nights for as long as I had been an AFA member and it was difficult to imagine it being held anywhere else. I put the call out to our Folkbuilders to help find a place to make sure Winter Nights were held on schedule. Not long after Folkbuilder Timmy Dumas let me know that long-time AFA member Cole Distel, who in years past has himself put in some time as a Folkbuilder, had a family camp that might be suitable. The camp didn't have everything finished that we were used to, but Cole, his wife Tiff, and Cole's mom went out of their way to make everyone comfortable. A big thank you to the Distel family!

AFA Winter Nights 11 in Ohio was amazing. The Folk showed up in force, with more people attending, with more children attending, than any previous Winter Nights. We were blessed to witness three families present their babies to be named, and three of our best AFA leaders took their Oaths as AFA Folkbuilders. Congratulations to Christine Dumas, Joe Drotos, and Jon Rock, and Hail to the babies!



Our lovely Jessicas helped the children with crafts including a paper Yggdrasil tree. Apprentice Jonathan Montgomery did a great job as our auctioneer, and with the help of those who donated items to the auction and those who bid on these items the AFA raised almost \$4000 for the AFA Hof fundraiser. Witan Svan shared with the children the story of how the world came to be, and of the theft and recovery of Thor's hammer. I had the honor of sitting as Thule during the High Sumbel and I am grateful to our Folk who spoke nobly and rightly. Gythia Erickson led our Folk in communing with our Disir. Alsherjagothi Flavel led the Folk in a powerful Odin blot.

And so much more...

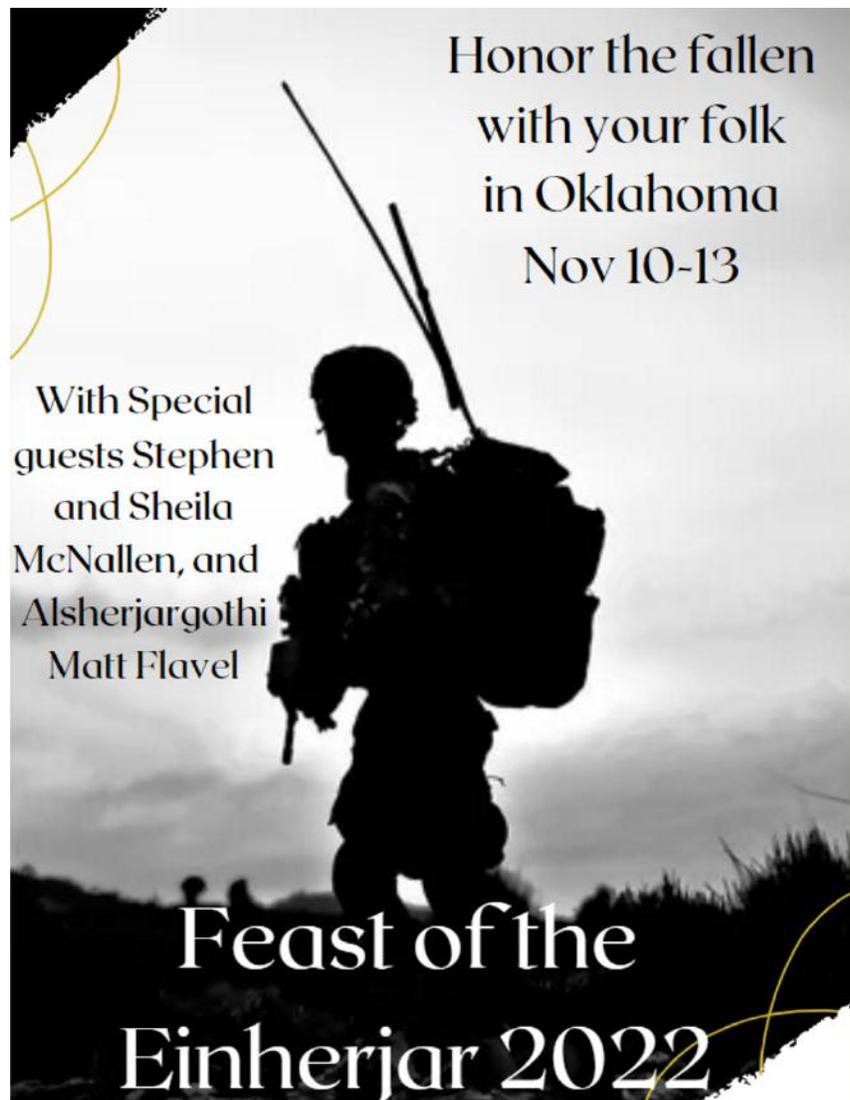
So many AFA families have started at Winter Nights, including my own, and I hope that this year lifelong bonds were forged again.



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## Upcoming National Events

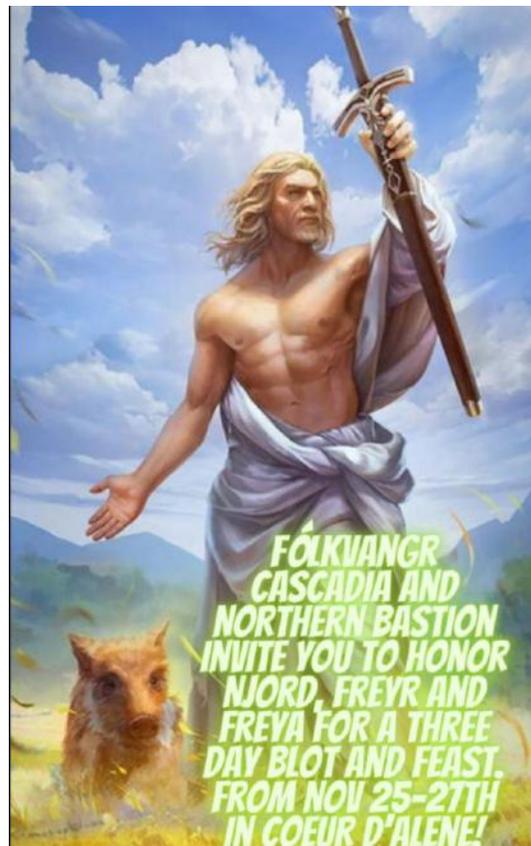
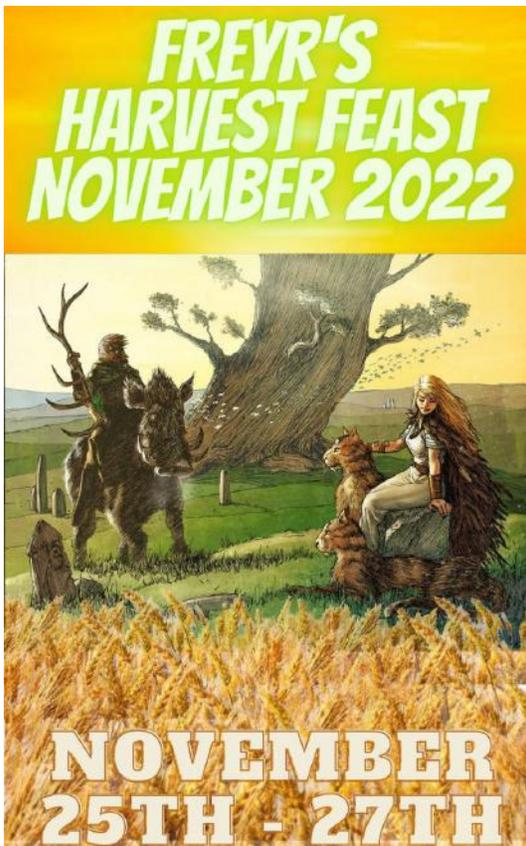
**Feast of the Einherjar 2022 Nov. 10th-13th**



[Register Here](#)

Come and join your Folk for a weekend-long celebration as we Honor the Einherjar. Presentations, Games, feasting, and Blots!

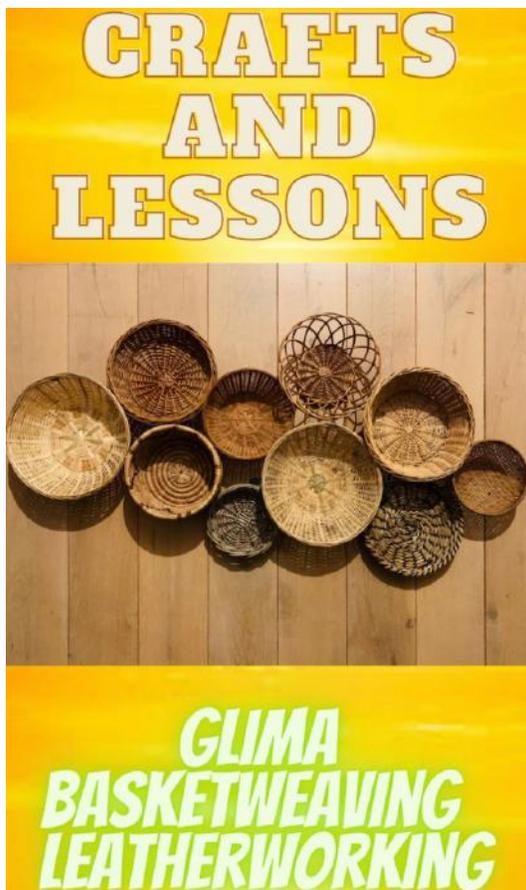
**Freyr's Harvest Feast in Idaho Nov. 25th-27th**



[Register Here](#)

We're still gearing up for Freyrs Harvest Feast and with just a few more weeks to go, it's more important than ever to get your tickets.

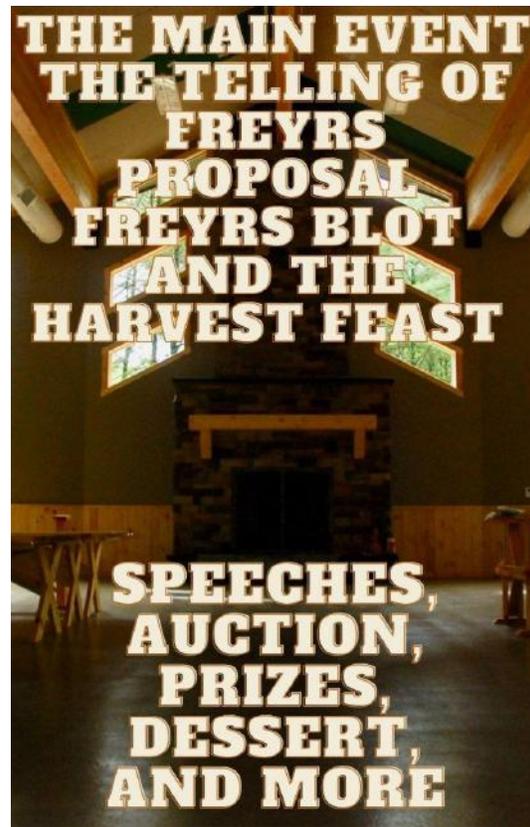
The event is a three-day gathering of our folk to celebrate the harvest season, our gods and goddesses, and the frith we share.



Each day is dedicated to a member of the Vanir. That Friday is dedicated to Njord who oversees our safe travel. Saturday is for Freyr and will have the viking games and harvest feast. Sunday wraps up our festivities as we learn about the runes and develop tighter family bonds dedicating the day to Freya.

I hope to see all of you there to participate in the various crafts and hear the speeches prepared.

It is the perfect opportunity to bring family who does not yet share in our faith out to be a part of the folkish community we cherish. With the added bonus of not doing Thanksgiving dishes there's no excuse. Looking forward to seeing you all there!



Fólkvangr Cascadia and Northern Bastion invite you to honor Njord, Freyr, and Freya for a three-day Blot and Feast on the banks of Lake Couer D'Alene where we will gather in frith enjoying good food and even better company. An AFA blacksmith will be working the forge for all to see and our instructors will teach Glima (historical Viking wrestling) leatherworking and basketweaving. Compete in events for prizes, see the telling of Freyr's Proposal on stage and give thanks to the gods. With events, speeches, a big auction, and vendor tables there's too much to do to be put into words and it's definitely something you don't want to miss.

**THANKSGIVING  
DISHES SUCK**



**SO INSTEAD HAVE US  
HANDLE IT AT  
FREYRS HARVEST  
FEAST**

Join us from Nov 25-27th in Coeur D'Alene greater area. The event kicks off Friday afternoon and ends Sunday. Lodgings include cabins, bunkhouses, auxiliary buildings, and campsites. The feast will be in the great hall and festivities range from the forge, throughout the site, and even on the stage. Email Folkbuilder Tyler Heinlein ([theinlein@runestone.org](mailto:theinlein@runestone.org)) for more details!

**Charming of the Plow at Njordshof**



We are excited to announce the 2023 National Event for Njörðshof will be Charming of the Plow!

More info coming soon.

See you there!



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

## Be A Doer



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

Yes, you. We have work to do and need folk who are artists, editors, writers, accountants, lawyers, publicists, reputation managers, professionals of all manners, 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' gatherings, 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)

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



Wyrd Weaver - I'm a fiber artist in Texas and a solitary AFA member.



I spin all my own wool yarns on my spinning wheel, then turn those yarns into woven and nålbinded garments.



My Facebook page is <https://m.facebook.com/wyrdweaversca>



Folkbuilder Jessica Lambert

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

## Ancestral Food and Culture



My mother came to visit us last week and to celebrate she made fun and tasty bread for us all to enjoy.

Barmbrack also known as báirín breac (speckled loaf in Irish Gaelic), is a tasty cake made with dried fruit and spices like cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves. The cake gets its name from its appearance, as the fruit is dotted throughout the loaf, and more scarce compared to other types of fruit loaves. It has a similar flavor to fruitcake or a fruit loaf but is less rich. With its warming baking spices, you can make barmbrack all year round, even if it is traditionally served on Halloween. This tradition would date back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain. This would coincide precisely with the harvest

season when the fruits were collected and stored to make sweets during the Christmas holidays.

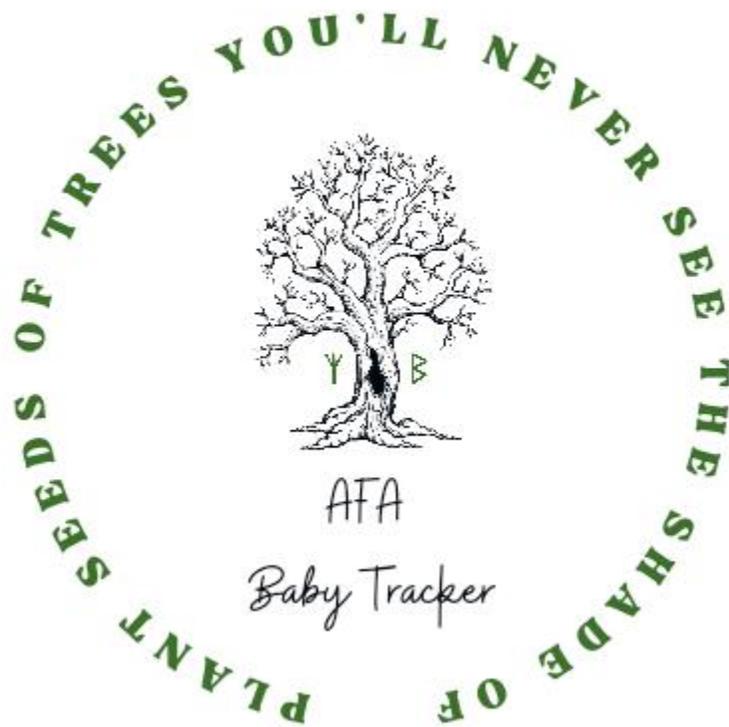
Mix the raisins, sultanas, lemon zest, orange zest, and sugar in a bowl. Whisk the hot tea into the sugar mixture, then cover it and leave it overnight so the flavors can meld together. The next day, combine the flour, baking powder, and spice mix in a large bowl. Add the raisin mixture and the eggs to the flour mixture, making sure to alternate between the two. Beat until the batter is well-combined. Bake the barmbrack for 1 hour 20 minutes to 1 ½ hours at 325°F. Let it cool for 20 minutes, then take the cake out of the pan and let it cool completely on a rack.



Folkbuilder Timothy Dumas

[tdumas@runestone.org](mailto:tdumas@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 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.

Members, please be sure to let your local leadership know if you've given birth to a child recently to ensure that we get your new baby added to our baby tracker count, as well as getting you more information about other children-related programs and benefits that the AFA offers!

Total babies born in 2022: 40 (up 5 since September!)

Jessica Keller  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[jkeller@runestone.org](mailto:jkeller@runestone.org)



## **Yule Card Fundraiser**



# AFA YULE CARD FUNDRAISER

*Let the Competition  
Begin!!!*



*Card Artwork created by Reign Kinsler*

Odinshof & Baldrshof Districts  
contact Ashley Stockton  
astockton@runestone.org

Thorshof & Njordshof Districts  
contact Jessica Keller  
@jkeller@runestone.org



\$20+ shipping  
Per pack of 10  
All proceeds go to the Hof  
with the most orders

Njordshof is in the lead currently! Who's going to win?



Jessica Keller  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[jkeller@runestone.org](mailto:jkeller@runestone.org)

**Now Available in the AFA Store**

## The Usatru Folk Assembly



## 2023 Calendar

**Now available! For a limited time only!**

Pre-order your Official 2023 keepsake AFA calendars now!



Order now through December 5th and your calendar will arrive in time for Yule!

[Order Here!](#)



Folkbuilder Melisa Mills  
[mmills@runestone.org](mailto:mmills@runestone.org)

# **Þórshof**

**Winter Nights at Þórshof**



On Saturday, October 29th, 2022, people from the eastern United States came together and celebrated Winter Nights at Thorshof, located in Linden, NC. It was a wonderful day filled with playing children, mask-making, a meal with the Folk, and a powerful blot to the ancestors as we all leave behind the summer and prepare for the dark winter ahead.

The day started with our monthly food drive, where we gave out food to the residents of Linden. This event has become highly anticipated, not just for the community members who use it but also for our Thorshof leaders. Later that evening, one of the people we see every month rode by and realized he had missed the drive earlier in the day. Gothi Trent East told the man it wasn't a problem and ran to provide the man with food. Moments like these are why our Hof's and leaders have an excellent reputation in the communities they reside.

After the food drive, Folkbuilder Cody Raynard gave a class on the Shield Mark program before we all sat down to eat. Our potluck dinners are always a great experience because members bring an assortment of dishes for everyone to enjoy. We had duck with stuffing, taco soup, bread, macaroni-and-cheese, and baked apple deserts, to name a few. The Folk gathered in Rumph Hall and ate as we sat, conversed, and enjoyed each other's company.

After the meal, we all entered through the doors of Thorshof and gathered in a large circle. We gilded the Othala rune before Gothi Trent East led a powerful blot to the

ancestors, and we hailed a loved Alfar or Disir as we passed the horn around the circle. Events like these are the epitome of Asatru to me. Sharing this experience with Folk beside you and the Gods around you is something you can never experience in a book, on the internet, or alone. As the ritual ended and we exited the Ve, the Battle Of The Land Spirits began.

The Battle Of The Land Spirits is a tradition that began long before Thorshof was established, going back to Witan Svan's earlier days of Asatru. This battle represents the conflict between the warm and light summer season and the cold and dark winter. Combatants representing each season wear masks of an animal or plant and don a limb from a tree that represents their respective side, coniferous for winter and deciduous for summer. The fighters clash their weapons, attempting to break their opponents, thus eliminating them from the battle until none are standing on a side. The winning side will determine if the winter will be mild in the case of summer winning or harsh in the case of a winter victory.

The battle this year did not bode well for us. The Bear, Gothi East himself, representing the dark, defeated the leader of the light, the Boar, with a single strike and went on to eliminate two more of the light's warriors. There was a long standstill with no sides gaining much until the dark removed all remaining light spirits, only losing one of their own. Regardless of the outcome, we need to gather as Folk and support one another in the future, whether it be the harshest winter or the calmest summer.

Hail!



Robert Shotwell  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[rshotwell@runestone.org](mailto:rshotwell@runestone.org)



After the Blot to the Disir, these hearty warriors donned the mask of the Landvættir to do the Battle of Winter.

The Light Side consisted of the Golden Boar, Eagle, Turtle, Morning Dove, and Spirit of Summer. The Dark Side consisted of the Black Bear, Fox, Pine Tree, Raccoon, and Owl. As the warriors pose with their weapons ready to do battle.

Each of the warriors embodied the spirit of their Landvættir to win for the side they fought for. Both sides fought with a ferocity worthy of honor. As the Battle raged, each side not giving an inch until finally, the Dark Side rose victorious in battle. In the end, laughter and cheering were heard from those that watched the battle and after the war, the masks and sticks were burned in the fire to thank the Landvættir for their helping hand.



Folkbuilder Cody Raynard

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

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## Food Pantry at Þórshof



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## Upcoming Events at Þórshof



## **2022 at Þórshof**

**Nov. 12 - Work Day**

**Nov. 19 - Feast of Einherjar**

**Dec. 10 - Work Day**

**Dec. 16-18 - Yule**

**Food Pantries are held on the Saturday  
of each holiday weekend.**

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Indiana

*Winter Fights*



Friends and Folk,

Let it be known that in the month of October, in the year two thousand twenty-two; savages from the wilds of Hoosierborea and Michigannungagap did, with malice of forethought and in defiance of cultural norms, invade the lands of their Ohioan neighbors during the hallowed and holy celebration of Winter Nights. These marauding aliens were quick to plant their flag and incite violence among the local populace, falling into brutality against Ohioan giants, one another, and a man who may or may not have had a skeleton made of adamantium.





\*Not pictured: mercy for enemies

Once the dust had settled and the warring cousins had retreated to their respective corners to lick their wounds, the belligerents began (as their forefathers before them) to integrate and adapt to one another's ways.

The Hoosi-Gandrs taught "the dance of our people" with a squat workshop, both barbell, and goblet; and shared their insights into modern plundering and treasure acquisition via a primer on basic budgeting and finance.





Likewise, the cultured celebrants of the festival brought religion to their barbarous kinsmen and the invaders found themselves awed and humbled before the Gods of their fathers.



I myself, proud delegate of the Men of Lake and Corn, overcome with religious fervor and feelings of warm regard toward our far-flung brethren, bound myself with an oath of fealty and allegiance to that holiest of theological empires, the Asatru Folk Assembly; may my word, and too our Folk, never falter.



... also, I have a new dog; his name is Kurt Russell because the superiority of the moniker "Doggie James Dio" was lost on my children.



"Derp." - Kurt Russell

We are always glad to welcome newcomers home for the honor of our Gods and Folk. If you are in the Indiana or Michigan area, reach out to me at [jrock@runestone.org](mailto:jrock@runestone.org) and attend one of our many events.

*Upcoming Events*

KINDRED FOLC IRMINSUL - FEAST OF THE EINHERJAR  
NOV. 12. FORTVILLE, IN  
14:00 - FOREVER

I

In Memorium of the Honored Fallen  
[JRock@Runestone.org](mailto:JRock@Runestone.org) for info



Folkbuilder Johnathan Rock

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

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Maine

*Coming Home*



When my wife and I first joined the AFA, we were told that we were “coming home” and that we are all family. That sort of sentiment is often expressed as baseless platitudes by various groups throughout our lives. Similar things are said by our blood relatives, friends, and even employers. But is it really true? Among any of the people who have said similar things to you in your life, how many of them could you call at 4 am when you are in real trouble and they would immediately show up and help you without ever expecting anything in return and without ever complaining about it? Sometimes it's when things go horribly wrong that we find out who our true friends and family are.

When my wife and I decided to drive our RV from Maine to Winter Nights in Ohio, we found out the answer to this question the hard way. Our RV broke down in the middle of rural Pennsylvania. The engine was fine, but it was a computer issue. The issue started years ago when a bunch of engineers were sitting around a boardroom table and one of them must have said, “I know! Let's make it so that when the computer detects that the fuel pressure is slightly off-nominal, it just shuts the engine down while the owner is driving it at 70 miles an hour down the interstate!” And instead of throwing pens at him, the rest of the engineers said, “hmm... Good idea!”. This decision left us stranded and to make matters worse, absolutely NO mechanic would touch it. I spent hours calling two dozen of them. They all said “No. I can't work on those. I don't have the tools or the proprietary computer diagnostic software to even see what errors the computer is throwing”. Our only options were to either have it hauled back to Maine on a big rig or just abandon it and walk away.

We called a friend and fellow member who was coming to the event as well, to tell him what happened and that we wouldn't make it. But immediately he said that he could drive hours out of his way to pick us and our stuff up and get us to the event. It's sad but I hadn't even thought to ask if he could do that. He just did it. He got us to the event and we had an awesome time!

While we were at Winter Nights we got to meet so many folks that previously, we had only met online, including the Alsherjargothi. Upon meeting him, he asked us how our trip went. We told him what happened and that our only option was to get the RV hauled on a big rig. He asked us if we were going to do that and I said that we would like to but we don't quite have all the money on hand to cover it. Without hesitation, he reached into his wallet and said, "Call up the hauling company, and here use this card." Again, I never thought of asking such a thing of anyone. Like so many out there, we aren't used to being helped like that. I was just stunned! The Alsherjargothi just looked at me and said, "I don't know why you didn't ask me for help sooner. We're family. I would do the same for anyone here". This almost brought me to tears. This all happened within 15 minutes of meeting him face to face. Just to be clear, we are paying him back now. But we realized in that moment, that when he says that we are all family and "welcome home", he absolutely means it.

But the lesson for us wasn't over. My wife had to get back home immediately for work after the event. Our friend who gave us a ride from the broken RV to the event drove my wife and our little dog who was with us back to Maine. I had to stay to load the RV onto the truck on the Tuesday after the event. But I had no way to get home after that. When I tried to find a rental car to drive myself and my stuff back home, all rental car companies wouldn't allow it. They had local rentals only but no one-ways. I was stuck.

While at the event, Witan Cliff Erickson and his wife Gythia Catie said that they heard about what happened with us and that I would be stranded in Pennsylvania and that they live near there. So they asked me if I would like to stay at their place until I could find a way home. Again, I still hadn't learned my lesson. I didn't think to ask. They came to me and offered to help. I ended up staying with the Ericksons for almost a week, until the next weekend. We had a great time getting to know each other. They made sure I felt right at home and it ended up being a fun time! We shared good food and had good conversations. But how did I get home? More help of course.

The same member and friend of ours who picked us up from our broken RV and got us to the event and then took my wife home after the event apparently wasn't done helping us. Again, I still didn't ask him for any more help. But when he asked me over the phone while I was at the Erickson's house how I was going to get home and I told him that I wasn't able to find a rental car anywhere, he just said, "Well I have to work all week, so I'll come back and get you this weekend". Yep. He drove over 600 miles each way to come to get me and bring me home to Maine without me asking him to and without complaining.

We went to Winter Nights with a feeling that something special was going to happen. It did. I don't even care that my RV is now sitting in my driveway, unfixable and that every mechanic I've talked to here has also said that they won't touch it. It was worth it. We experienced what seemed like a firehose of kindness and generosity from our Folk which we didn't previously believe existed until we found out the hard way. I have learned my lesson.

If any of you reading this are going through any trouble, we should be who you reach out to first. Other people in your life may have not been there for you when you needed them. They may have let you down, but that's NOT what we do! If you have money trouble, relationship trouble, car trouble, trouble finding housing, or anything else at all, reach out to AFA leadership. We are your church, and we are your family. We are here for you.



Daniel Mason  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[dmason@runestone.org](mailto:dmason@runestone.org)

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## Maryland

*Coming Home*



A little over a year ago, I heard Alsherjagothi Matt Flavel speak on the podcast Full Haus. I liked what I had heard and made the decision to reach out to join the AFA soon after. Soon after I went to my first event, being Winter Nights 10. My only regret was that I did not bring my wife and children at the time. It was extremely uplifting to find our Folk so numerous and happy. Many children running and playing. Our Gothar and Alsherjagothi sitting, drinking and speaking with the rest of us as Folk, with no hint of superiority and absolute willingness to teach and guide as needed.

Making more regular visits to Thorshof and going to moots and blot have solidified in my heart that this is the correct place to be. Thorrablot in particular was a fun experience, wrestling in the snow and going into the freezing cold river. I would be

remiss to not at least mention the baby naming of my third son at Thorshof earlier this year as well.

As I continue to develop my relationship and understanding of our Gods, I feel that what is needed is for our Folk to be found and brought home. For me, what is most important is for our Folk to get to know each other and meet in person on a regular basis. We are not simply “members of a church” but an ever-expanding circle of friends and extended family. A family that, should I get my wish, shall bring into this world so many happy and beautiful children. I often say that I would like to see seventh son of seventh son size big families amongst our Folk and I do mean it.



From all that shall come to the society, we wish for our children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great great grandchildren, and further on for our posterity, which is the posterity of the Gods.

Hail the Gods.

Hail the Folk.

Hail the AFA.

I'm home.



James Bethard  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[jbethard@runestone.org](mailto:jbethard@runestone.org)

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## Ohio

### *Renfest*



I was honored to meet with Folk at the Ohio Renfest and watch our very own fight in the ring to represent our people. Gathering like this made me think if a subject that has weighed heavily on me for quite some time.

When I was young, like so many other men my age, I looked up to and was inspired by many of the action heroes I witnessed on the big screen and wanted to be just like them one day. It's no wonder, our people have always been inspired by and aspired to be like the heroes of our culture just as in the days of Yore.

The call to adventure is one that grips many an Aryan lad and I followed it all across the world, from the discipline and rigors of military life in the Corps to the cavalier and more self-reliant life of a gun for hire in the sand pits. Gunfights and car chases, fast bikes, and helicopter trips into Kabul, all in my time as one of many young men who answered that call to adventure. I've seen and done things that I only thought existed in

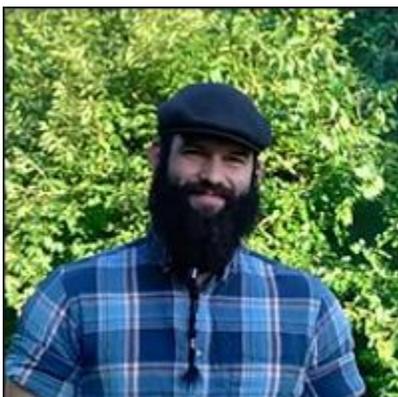
the movies; many of which I will not or cannot name here. A life of action and adventure just like I saw in the movies as a young man. The experience of having lived out so many of the dreams that most men fail to even attempt, however fulfilling and inspiring, left me wanting.

In the first Fast and Furious film, Dom says that he lived his life a quarter mile at a time. To him, nothing else mattered. I've always attempted to find my quarter mile, that action or event that I live for, the thing in which I strive for perfection in every day. Wars end, contracts die out, and physical acts not given to a worthy cause will fade into the background of history and be forgotten, so what remains?

Our Folk.

What could be greater in worth? What experience? What goal? What legacy or dream could a single man achieve that could be greater than service to his own people? As a Great man once said: "the most precious possession you have in this world is your own people!" And what a truth he gave us, the knowledge that service to others and not self-service is the highest honor any man can achieve. Who else does what Our Asatru Folk Assembly does? Who else, in service to our Folk has brought so many together? Who else has created a safe environment and cultivated not just a space for existing Families but encouraged the growth of so many more? Who else honors Masculinity and recognizes the Divine purpose our wonderful and beautiful Women Folk hold?

So, to whom can we offer our service to if we are to serve our Folk? The answer to that question is of course: Who else?



Jonathan Montgomery  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
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*Oathing*



October 2022 is a month of my life I will never forget. I am always here to serve my people and after some time and hard work, I was honored to take my oath as a folk builder in our glorious organization. I want to thank everyone here for being a part of changing my life. The AFA and all of you have given me a new purpose that modern society has destroyed in us. I cannot thank you all enough and I want you to know I'm at your service until I'm called to the other side. I must also report that winter nights this year were a delight. So many of you graced us with your presence and created something beautiful. From Odin's Blot to Wayfarer's blot something of our people's natural mode of being was recaptured and lived as it should be. I had the honor of giving a small talk and some martial arts pointers which I truly hope enriched some of the men. The great conversation into the wee hours, the laughter of children, and the spiritual energy are visceral and palpable at a national event, and I encourage anyone who hasn't made it to one to consider doing so someday. There are auctions, games, and fun for children, men's groups, women's groups, and a host of other great things to take part in. Above all the company of you, great AFA folk is the best. I have some fun things planned for the folks in Ohio coming up soon and I hope to see anyone who can make it. If you're interested in the rest of Ohio's October, I encourage you all to find articles by Jessica Lambert and Timmy and Christine Dumas. We are all here for anything you need. I wish you all a happy and prosperous holiday season. Until next month Hail the Gods, the folk, and the AFA.



Folkbuilder Joe Drotos

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

### *Halloween Bash*



On October 29th the folk gathered at my residence for a fun night of costumes, drinks, and food. Oh, and candy, of course, there was candy. I was very pleased to see the creative sides of people with their costumes. Mary Jane came as the Queen of Kraut, which I thought was so inventive!! The children played happily while the adults spent the evening having fun. We also were able to share a very lovely Sumbel before the evening ended. The party raged on into the wee hours of the morning and became an impromptu slumber party! It is always fun to wake up in the morning, with my folk slumbering away in the rooms throughout my house. We had a blast!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!



Folkbuilder Jessica Lambert

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

### *Winter Nights*



The first weekend in October started out with the marriage of Under Ash + Oak Kindred mates, Kam and Mary Jane. Many AFA members gather to celebrate the love of this dynamic couple. The beautiful ceremony was officiated by Gythia Catie Erickson.



This year Winternights was hosted in Ohio. We were happy to see so many Ohio members gather at the largest Winternights event. It was wholesome to watch all the children laugh and play. I am grateful for having the opportunity to meet so many new AFA members.



During the three-day national event, I was fortunate to be present for the baby naming ceremony for Osrick, a child of Christan and Elisabeth, Under Ash + Oak Kindred.



Tim and I were blessed to have our daughter, Corva Rose's baby naming ceremony as well. We are honored to have her recognized by our Gods and our Folk. We are fortunate to have our children grow with the AFA.



During Winternights, I was privileged to take my oath as a Folkbuilder, alongside Jon Rock and Joe Drotos. The moment was magical and will remain strong in my memory, as I continue to unify our Folk.



The Great Serpent Mound is a 1,348-foot-long, three-foot-high prehistoric effigy mound in Peebles, Ohio. The mound itself winds back and forth for more than eight hundred feet, with a triple-coiled tail. The open-mouth head of the serpent wraps around east facing with a hollow oval, possibly representing the sun. The area of the serpent is aligned with the summer solstice sunset. The mound's lack of physical artifacts has led archaeologists to an inconclusive decision as to who created the effigy, as there are similar mounds in Scotland and Ontario.



We meet up midweek to scout out, the world's largest effigy. Tim officiated Blot to Thor, as it was fitting while visiting this world serpent on ThursDay.



We walked the grounds, enjoying the sight of this massive mound while sharing our thoughts on how and who constructed this monument.



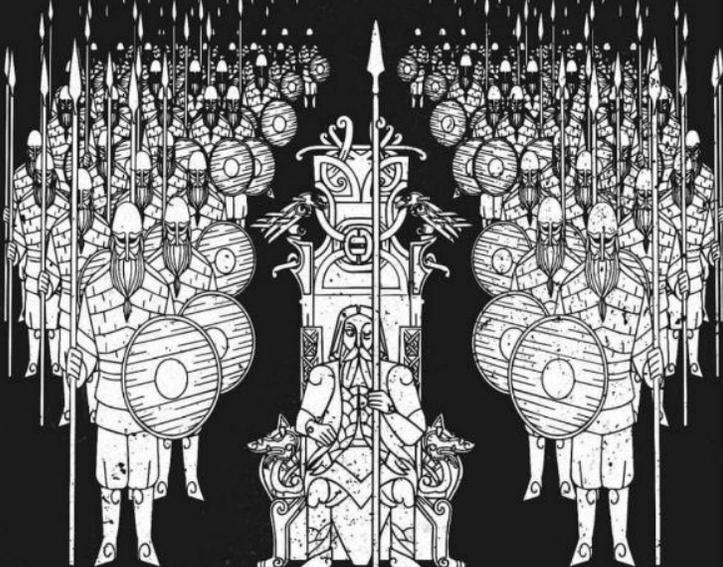
Later in the month, fellow AFA member and Wandervogel, Cody organized a picnic at our local beach. In the warm weather, we enjoyed a variety of cheeses, meats, and fruit,

paired with delicious wine. We enjoyed each other's conversation as the children played. We discussed plans for our upcoming events.

*Upcoming Events*

UNDER ASH + OAK KINDRED HOSTS

**FEAST OF THE EINHERJAR**

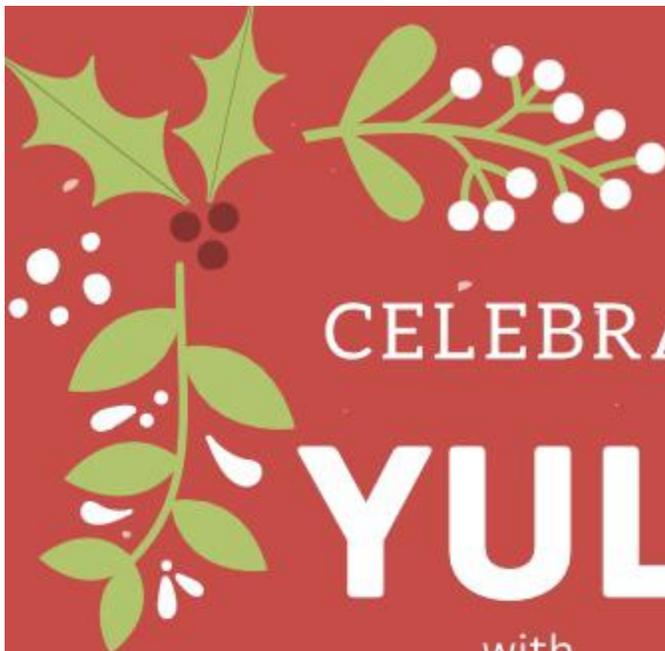


NOVEMBER 12TH AT 2 PM

CELEBRATE OUR FALLEN  
WARRIORS WITH YOUR FOLK

BLOT  
POTLUCK

CONTACT CHRISTINE DUMAS  
CDUMAS@RUNESTONE.ORG



CELEBRATE

**YULE**

with

**UNDER ASH**

**+ OAK**

**KINDRED**

December 10th, 1 pm

Potluck • Crafts • Blot •  
Sumbel • Gift Exchange

**CONTACT**

**CHRISTINE DUMAS**

**CDUMAS@RUNESTONE.ORG**

SUNDAY

JANUARY  
1ST

2:30-3:45  
PM



## The 83rd Annual Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival

318 East 4th Street,  
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Contact Christine Dumas  
[cdumas@runestone.org](mailto:cdumas@runestone.org)  
for more information



BUY TICKETS ONLINE

[HTTPS://CINCINNATICATHEDRAL.COM/BOARS-HEAD](https://cincinnatiathedral.com/boars-head)



Folkbuilder Christine Dumas  
[cdumas@runestone.org](mailto:cdumas@runestone.org)



It is said that every man has a Valkyrie inside them, a sort of feminine version of their soul, the counterpart to your own masculine self. This Valkyrie is perhaps the “light” version of your unconscious shadow. The Valkyrie is there to guide, to heal, and in the end just as in the lore, deliver you to ascension.

I have learned many things in my life. Spiritually I’ve exploded this last year and what I’m discovering is that not only does that Valkyrie exist, but I married her. My wife has not only provided me a home, the comforts within, a companion, and so much more. She has provided me with two beautiful children of my own and a stepson that has taught me patience. She has also given me the AFA, through which none of my personal growth could be possible. The AFA is my car I’m driving to where I want to go so to speak, and my wife is my GPS.

After watching her take her oath with both my children attached to her, I couldn't bear to bring any other words than how selfless she was at that moment, but now I'm able to put thoughts into action.

Any great things I have accomplished here and inside myself have all been because Christine brought the AFA into my life. Through this I will find what I'm looking for, I will ascend, thanks to her.

Hail my wife, Hail my Valkyrie



Folkbuilder Timothy Dumas  
[tdumas@runestone.org](mailto:tdumas@runestone.org)

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## **Pennsylvania**

*Western PA Pumpkin Patch Moot*



One of the best things that I've come to enjoy about the AFA is the children and families that my son gets to grow up around. I'm so grateful that a new family has moved close enough to us recently to make impromptu moots and playdates possible for our kiddos.



We intended to have an evening pumpkin carving moot, but the pumpkin patch timing ended up working out better for the kids as well as the inviting warm weather and beautiful sun rays that Sunna graced us with, just made an opportunity well worth the change.





The kids got to jump around in hay piles and in a giant bounce house, play in a corn pit, dance to live music, pet some farm animals, got their faces painted, were able to enjoy a hay ride, and of course, we ended our day exploring the pumpkin patch! There was so much to do, and was such a wonderful to end the October season!

### *Upcoming Events*



Holiday Heritage Baking  
&  
Family Tree Mapping

Saturday  
December 3rd, 2022  
11am  
Pittsburgh, PA

Contact Jessica Keller  
[Jkeller@runestone.org](mailto:Jkeller@runestone.org)



Jessica Keller  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[jkeller@runestone.org](mailto:jkeller@runestone.org)

*Find the Dog, Not the Wolf*



Some of what is contained here are not of my own making, but I feel can be adapted and expresses a path in a simple way for us. Also, these concepts fit well by being 3 stages of life. Keep in mind the different aspects of ourselves (body, mind, emotions, spirit, etc.) as we go along represented by an animal. Essentially the final stage is the Hagal Rune personified, and this IS what we want to be.

#### The Fox Stage:

This is where most people are today. They are like a leaf in the wind. They have no control over themselves, nor do they ever think of it. It's never been considered. Something happens to them, and they react with no afterthought. In doing so, the sly fox has snuck in, undetected again, and stolen their power. The "Will" is inexistent here.

#### The Wolf Stage:

This is where a much smaller part of us finds ourselves. If you are reading these words, you may fall here. This is where a realization takes place, a need. We start to notice that the untamable beast is lurking in the shadows and interfering in our lives. So, we take action. Walls are put up and we try to keep him at bay at the night. Sometimes we win and others we lose. This is often a long process but our "Will" begins to develop. We begin to notice that maybe being in full control of our inner and outer world is possible. Maybe the wolf can be turned into a dog. Maybe we can make him our friend.

#### The Dog Stage:

Only a select few will ever find themselves here. Why not be like a wolf some may ask? "I'm a wolf of Wotan!!! He told me so!!!" I'm sure we have all heard these words. It is my opinion that HE would approve of the dog and here's why. What is the difference between a dog and a wolf? A dog can still be ferocious just as much as a wolf. The main difference is a dog is loyal and tamable. It listens to its master. This master is the center pole, the magical Will, the unmoved mover that directs every aspect of himself. Every aspect has become a dog. Simultaneously they have also become one... Hagal. Ironically, a dog spelled backward is God. Here we find the God-Man. We are not Gods like HE but have become the perfect representation here, in this world so others may follow. We have brought Myth from above and made it alive here.

Consider where you may find yourself with the above. There is no better time to begin your upward path and purpose....and that time is now. Find the dog, he leads you to God.

***Which will you be?***



This is something I touched on briefly at Winter Nights, but I felt it wasn't marked into existence the way I would have liked. I feel it is very important and would like to bring it up again.

I have been lucky enough to have dealt with many people in my life. I work in an industry that allows me to do just that. Generally, I try to watch and learn from them.

One thing that is very apparent in many is the continuous reliving of wrongs or negative things in their lives whether they did it or it was done to them. "This is bad, or I can't believe that happened to me or I shouldn't have done that!" etc. Each time they say these words even though it happened long ago or even earlier in the day, they are emotionally remaking it. Bringing it to life again and again. Pulling them back into this negative state of being. A place that is not now but before. The sad part is they don't even know it. Remember whether it's a thought or an action, good or bad, it has been created. We create our reality.

From the above, what can we do when we experience or do the same things? First, learn to catch. Catch yourself in the act and redirect. This takes practice but I promise over time it will become easier and easier. Two, think of all the good you have in your life and this world vs negative. Emotional baggage is a huge killer to our life force. I cannot stress that enough. Plus, there is still much beauty here, all around us and we must make it so, within and without. And three, when a challenge arises, recognize it, deal with it, and talk to a friend or someone in leadership but once a solution has come.....move on. It's the healthy way. Only you can release your chains &. Part of this is forgiveness. Forgiving what has happened to you or what you have done. Cleaning up your side of the street, not for them but for you.

So as stated at the beginning of this short write-up, more words needed to be said. Something felt unfinished. Yet it is complete now.... it's been done. Time to look ahead. As it's been said, and I quote "only the fool mourns over decay. The wise live for evolution." Which will you be?

### *Winter Nights in Ohio!*



I have never been to Ohio before. As I arrived the land certainly felt different. It moved another way. I knew I wasn't home. But one thing that remained the same.....was the

Folk. Unchanged as always.

I witnessed much magic taking place. Friendships formed, young ones welcomed into our community, a new generation of leaders taking their next step, and those from beyond the veil, just on the other side of our senses, making themselves known again.

On a personal note, some of you said or did some very special things for me. I will keep that for eternity. Knowing that I did something right in this round.

Hail the Disir and Aesir!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!



Folkbuilder Adam Hudak

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

### *Battlefield Blot*



Come join the Keystone Tru Folk for a tour of the historical Gettysburg battlefield with a powerful blot held by Gythia Catie Erickson. We will honor our fallen folk as likely never done before on this hallowed ground. There will also be a very special Baby Naming!

# Gettysburg

## Feast of the Einherjar

Hosted by the Keystone Tru Folk



November 12th, 11:30.

Meet at the Gettysburg Battlefield Visitors Center

Blot by Gythia Catie Erickson

Bring your own picnic lunch

contact Jane, Adam, or Catie for details

We will meet at the visitor's center on November 12 at 11:30 am. We'll then set out in our vehicles to tour this historical place. Bring snacks but prepare for dinner at General Pickett's Buffet at 4:00! Be sure to wear warm layers and comfortable walking shoes. Please contact Jane Malseed, Adam Hudak, or Catie Erickson for details.



Gythia Catie Erickson

[cm.erickson@runestone.org](mailto:cm.erickson@runestone.org)



Canada is finally OPEN, which means we can host a moot in Ontario!

Please join Witan Clifford Erickson and Gythia Catie Erickson at Niagara Falls, Ontario on November 19th. We will also be on the American side at Niagara Falls, New York on November 20th!

We will post more details soon, or you can request them by emailing [cerickson@runestone.org](mailto:cerickson@runestone.org) (Clifford) or [cm.erickson@runestone.org](mailto:cm.erickson@runestone.org) (Catie).



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

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**South Carolina**

*Hierarchy Today Versus Ancient Times*



Something I find extremely important is the hierarchy as it exists in Modern Asatru. We may read on hierarchy as it pertains to the past, but as our Folk has evolved, so has the structure of the Folk Assembly. Knowledge of the past informs our present, but not to the detriment of our spiritual growth.

In the past, many priestly positions were filled by democratic means, from Gothar to Lawspeaker, even Alsherjargothi. That process is different now, as those positions are filled selectively and from the top down, rather than from the Assembly up. Gothar of yesterday was responsible for settling disputes, both secular and spiritual. It is similar today, as Modern Gothar can help resolve disputes between folk. In current times, the disputing parties should approach their folkbuilder to ask for mediation, and that will be passed from the folkbuilder to the clergy.

In ancient times the gothar were overseers of a godord which is the equivalent of the modern Hof District. They also charged a temple tax, known as hofollr, which is still known by the same name today. This has not changed much in modern Asatru, just some of the language is different. Our Gothar oversee Hofs and Hof Districts under the guidance of the Witan. The Witan serves as a council to the High Priest, the Alsherjargothi. The Witan also manages the modern Gothar who fall under their stewardship.

In the tribal assembly of the past, much was decided by democratic means. Even changing Iceland to a Christian country. This nearly ended our ancestral faith permanently. That is why in today's Asatru we do not vote on matters of the church or its hierarchy. We operate in a "top-down" manner. The Alsherjargothi decides, and we put it into action.

The democratic means that nearly destroyed our ancestral faith is an example of why we don't follow an "it was done this way in the past so we must also do it that way" stance. We have learned, and we have evolved. We don't lose our way.



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

*What is Sumbel?*



*Sumbel, What is it?*

It's a ritual toasting hosted by Asatruar for centuries. In modern Asatru, we do Sumbel in 3 rounds. The priest will bless the horn by galdering the ALU formula. Ansuz, Laguz, and Uruz.

The role of horn bearer is filled by a Gythia or a lady of high status in our Folk Community. This is a tradition that dates back hundreds, if not thousands of years. The horn bearer is the keeper of frith, and her feminine magic cleanses the horn each time it's passed. Being selected to bear the sacred horn is a tremendous honor.

There should also be a man or woman of a high-status present that maintains order in Sumbel. For example, if someone were out of line, he or she would help them stay on

track.

### *The Sumbel Structure*

The first round is to the Gods of order. We in the Asatru Folk Assembly do not honor the forces of chaos in any way during Sumbel or Blot. When toasting one of our gods feel free to use kennings to describe them, for example, one of Thor's kennings is Ve-Ur (temple strong). Speak poetically and noble, and with a joyful heart!

The second round is to the ancestors. This one can be very personal and emotional and is somber in tone very often. Things to remember during this round are, that we are toasting someone who has passed away, not a living relative. And when you do, make sure you say their name over the horn, because hailing "Granny" is ambiguous. Hailing "Ethel Smith" carries more weight and will be heard by the ancestors on the other side of the veil.

The third round is to the heroes. This round is kind of an open round. Toasts to living folk or boasts of a personal accomplishment, reciting poetry, or singing a song is all acceptable.

Most often in the heroes round, folks will toast a living person that you'd like to honor.

### *Sumbel Etiquette*

If a person were toasting forces of chaos during Sumbel or raised a horn to people alive or dead that are not of our European folk, Sumbel would be stopped. The offending person would be asked to return the horn to the horn bearer and asked to leave. The horn bearer would likely pour out the horn, refill it and begin the round again. Words spoken over the horn must be noble, spoken to Gods of order and folk of our heritage. These aren't just faux pas, they are seriously egregious.

Something to note, it's considered rude to "add on" to another person's toast. Maintain decorum and frith while others are holding the horn. Also and lastly, please refrain from using profanity during Sumbel. Toasting your grandmother and swearing at the same time is ridiculous. My grandmother would be highly embarrassed and disappointed if I used foul language in her presence. And she is present during Sumbel.

I hope you find this helpful and use this to guide you when you are participating in Sumbel.

Gothi Daniel Young

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## Sweden

### *Hroptatyr Kindred's Odin Blot on Winter Nights*



Hroptatyr Kindred once again gathered at Åbrott stone circle where we have gathered many times before. This time the ninth happened on the first October full moon. The

first day of winter as it's known.

We enjoyed the company of German guests in the celebration of the summer solstice and this evening we were joined by a French woman. This has become a tradition in itself, the core member of Hroptatyr welcoming both Swedes and non-Swedes of our folk to share our ring. Even though the guests vary the blots and sumbels always stay powerful.

Gifts were given ritualistically to the high one as always and many toasts were made. Bearing great news, remembering ancestors, and much more as always until every horn was dry. Runes were pulled amounting to interesting discussions and the place, and the spirits were surely pleased.

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Ancestors!

Hail the AFA!

-Jörgen Kaiser

### *Ancient Mothers*



We call out to you, mothers of yesteryear. You who bore our future.

We remember you, an untold number of faces. An untold number of wives, daughters,

and mothers. Maidens and crones. Foremothers. Hear us remembering you.

You who stirred the stews. You who churned the butter. You who cared for the little ones. You who spoke ancient wisdom. You who kept the home warm for the return of your weary menfolk.

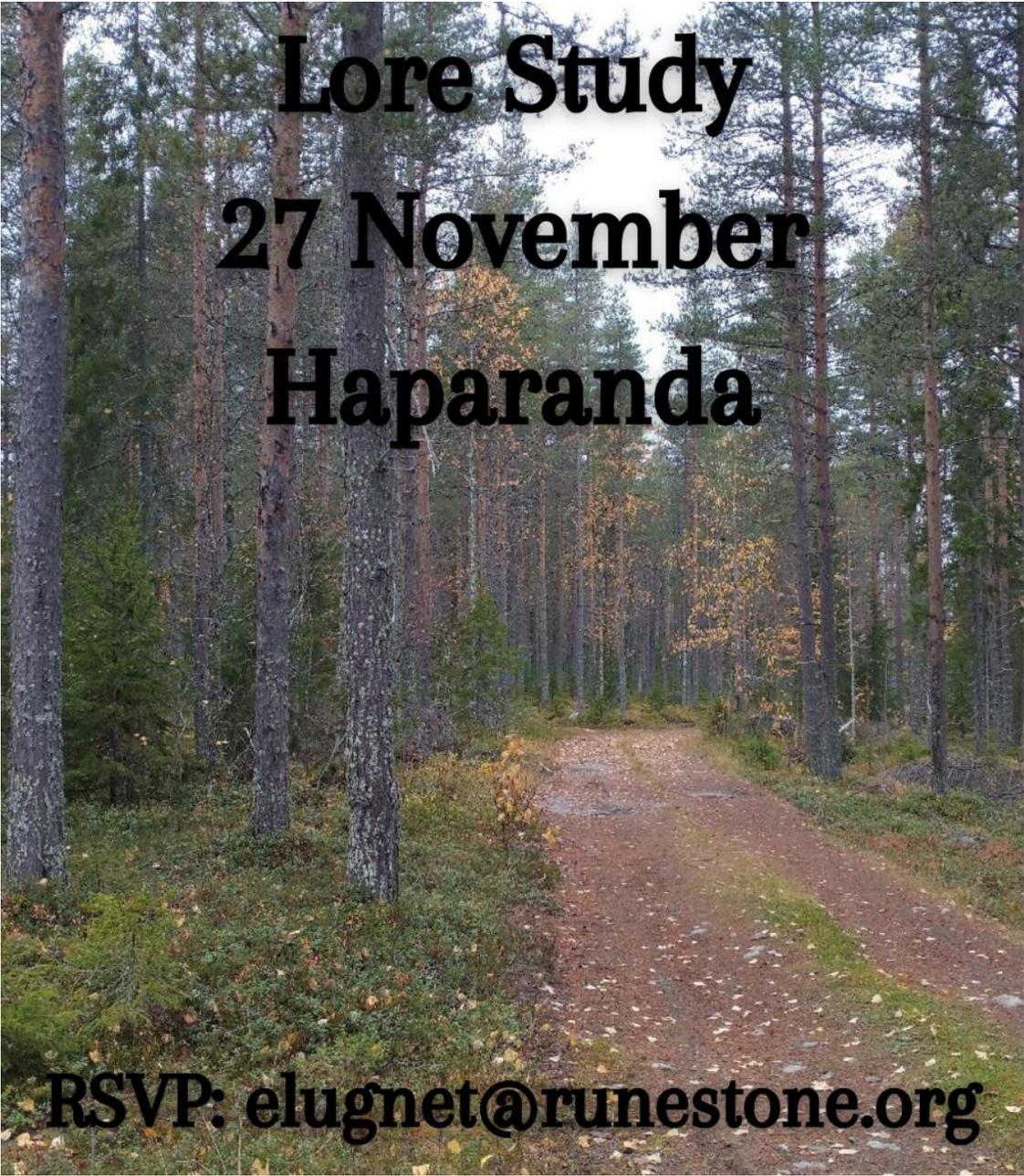
Hear now, women of the past. Your children remember you. Your children speak your names. Your children reach out to you through the thin veil. We will never be truly apart, for we know you live within us, and remain all around us.

Take part in our sacrifice to you. May your wisdom be whispered to all your granddaughters, in the quiet places of life.

Hail the womenfolk, of yesteryear.

Hail the Disir.

*Upcoming Events*



**Lore Study**  
**27 November**  
**Haparanda**

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

# **Einhärjarblot**

**26 November i Haparanda**

**Gör oss sällskap i att hedra och minnas de som fört  
kamp för vårt Folk**

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



**Teams call for European and  
South African AFA membership**

**First Sunday of every  
month**

**20:00 SAST**

**19:00 CET**

**18:00 GMT**

**Hosted by Apprentice Folkbuilder Erik Lugnet and  
Apprentice Folkbuilder Michael Coetzee**

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

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

Erik Lugnet

Apprentice Folkbuilder

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



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## Tennessee

### *Kindred Moot*



The Ingvi Freyr kindred held a moot in East Tennessee was a success! The moot consisted of three families meeting together for the first time. Two of the families had never been to an AFA event in person, and it was the first time to come together with the Folk. They met at a local park, and the children played hide and seek while the adults got to know each other and shared our stories of how we joined the AFA. One member brought a drink and a horn to have an impromptu Disir Blot, which, as it turned out to be, was the first of its kind for the other attendee. Even the children participated in honoring their female ancestors, burning incense at the base of a lovely tree. Our Kindred enjoyed great Frith and a burning wish to continue the relationships into the future. They were all exhilarated to know we had members so close at hand!

This victory was due to the hard work of the Folk and Folkbuilder of Tennessee. Many more such moots will come more commonplace in the coming days!

Hail the Folk  
Hail Ingvi Freyr  
Hail the AFA



Russell Brown  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
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## West Virginia

*Memorial*



When a man-shaped, red-eyed, flying creature with a 20-foot wingspan starts chasing your car down a country road late at night, telling you something terrible is about to happen...well, I for one would tend to take that seriously and avoid the area for a while.

From November 15, 1966, to November 15, 1967, the mysterious winged creature the press dubbed "Mothman" made several appearances in and around Point Pleasant, WV.

The creature was anecdotally associated with an old munitions plant from World War II and had a fondness for chasing cars. The sightings culminated in the sudden collapse of the Silver Bridge over the Ohio River on December 15, 1967, killing 46 people. After the bridge collapsed, the sightings ceased. The 2002 movie "The Mothman Prophecies" summarizes and, somewhat embellishes, these true events.

Was the Mothman a being with a gift of prophecy, trying to warn people of the coming disaster as the local legend holds? Or was this a more sinister case, of a malevolent being causing seemingly random destruction? The world may never know. But we did know one thing this October: it was on the way back from Winter Nights, a quick 45 minutes away from our gathering place!

We couldn't pass up the chance to add a little extra time to our national event by checking out the campy tourist attraction the Mothman has become amid the time-worn Appalachian wilderness. We even had to cross the Ohio River to get there... a good thing we were safe across before we came face to face with the legendary cryptid, via his statue in the center of town.

Maybe it was just in time for Halloween, but we saw a steady stream of people - nearly all Folk - coming to visit the statue (curiously cult-like, in a spooky, Lovecraftian sort of way) and to check out the museum devoted to the strange events of 1966-67.

What's not so tongue-in-cheek, is the fact that 46 people died on that fateful day 55 years ago. A memorial to the dead exists in the town but doesn't receive nearly as much publicity. Next year, a visit to the memorial of those tragic dead shall accompany our pilgrimage through Point Pleasant.

Already, the plan is to make this a new tradition: on the way back from Winter Nights XII next year, if you are traveling east, please consider coming with us for the "second annual Mothman moot!"



Folkbuilder Patrick Cook

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