

SUMMER 1995 NUMBER 12

THE RUNESTONE is a journal of the ancient Northern European religion known as Asatru. It is dedicated to our Gods and Goddesses, to the people of the North, and to the values of courage, freedom, and individuality within the context of kinship.

THE RUNESTONE is published four times a year by the Asatru Folk Assembly, at the equinoxes and solstices. Subscriptions are \$10 per year in the U.S. and \$15 per year overseas mail, payable to Stephen A. McNallen.

The opinions in this publication, unless otherwise noted, are those of the editor. We read all correspondence carefully, but the press of other commitments may prevent replies. For our mailing address, please see back cover.

Submissions of articles and artwork are invited. Deadlines are as follows:

Spring - January 15	Summer - April 15
Fall - July 15	Winter - October 15

Cover Art: Thanks to N. Ford

CALENDAR

June 8 - LINDISFARNE DAY. In the year 793, three Norwegian dragon ships raided the monastery at Lindisfarne, officially starting the Viking Age. Toast them with your favorite beverage and leaf through a good book about our wolf ancestors.

June 9 - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR SIGURD THE VOLSUNG. No Teutonic hero outshines Sigmund's noble son. His courage and nobility won him fame shining through the centuries. Recall his glory by listening to Wagner's operas, or by doing something generous, in imitation of Sigurd's goodness of heart.

UP FRONT

Summer has come and the days are long. It is a good time to look back on the year that has passed. With its own challenges and triumphs, it has been a year of growth and change. The world around us has been in flux, and we have all felt the effects of these changes in our lives. It is a time to reflect on what we have accomplished and what we have learned. It is also a time to look forward to the future with hope and optimism. The year ahead promises to be a year of continued growth and progress. We must only have the courage to face the challenges that lie ahead.

In the days of our youth, we were full of hope and optimism. We believed that the future was bright and that we would achieve all our dreams. But as we grew older, we became more realistic. We learned that the world is not always kind to us and that our dreams are often deferred. We learned that we must work hard to achieve our goals and that we must be prepared to face setbacks and failures. We learned that life is a journey and that we must enjoy the journey as much as we enjoy the destination.

The year ahead promises to be a year of continued growth and progress. We must only have the courage to face the challenges that lie ahead. We must have the faith to believe in ourselves and in our dreams. We must have the strength to persevere through the darkest of times. We must have the wisdom to know when to stop and when to move forward. We must have the love to care for ourselves and for those we love. We must have the hope to believe that a better future is within our grasp.

UP FRONT

Summer has come to the Sierras, after a rainy interlude that made us wonder if we'd ever see the sun again. With it comes the beginning of a period of frantic activity. So what's new about that? Nothing, really - it's always busy here, as you know. I just want to explain, once again, that answering your mail is going to take a while - and some letters just may not get a reply. So please don't feel you're being slighted. Remember, this is a part-time venture, squeezed around working for a living, family commitments, and all the rest. We'd like to change that, and when there are enough Asafolk, we will. But in the meantime, we struggle along and do our duty as best we can.

Immediately after this issue hits the mail, I'm off for two weeks in Hawaii - not a vacation; I'll be training with the National Guard. Then it's on the road: first, to the Summer Solstice Celebration with Wotan's Kindred, then over to the Althing of the Asatru Alliance. When we get back, it's time to start up my new business (Oh, I forgot to mention that I quit teaching...). I hope your summer is a little more relaxed than mine is going to be!

This issue has a real activist flavor to it, reflecting the energy revolving around the AFA. In be-

tween the actual articles you'll find a dozen ways to get involved in what we're doing. But we still have the more "thought oriented" pieces - a nice article on standing stones by a man who's erected a circle of them on his land, and my own writing on the topic of ecology and what it means to us Asatruar. And if you've got kids in school, Steffanie's reflections are some you'll want to share.

Think about us while you're lounging by the pool drinking that Margarita (Just the right concession to multiculturalism...)!

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How YOU Can Help Change the World!

The Asatru Folk Assembly is all about *participation*. Without you, it's just a name on the letterhead. So, you may reasonably ask, just how can you take part? What can you do to help further the cause of the Gods and Goddesses, even if only to a small extent?

Ask no longer! Here is a list of specific things you can do that will aid Asatru in general, and the AFA in particular:

- **Spread word of The Runestone to prospective readers.** Word-of-mouth advertising is the best kind, and you probably have sympathetic friends just waiting to hear about us!
- **Write an article for us.** Don't be bashful. We can't guarantee we'll print everything we get, but your chances are pretty good. How about a book review? Do your best, and let the editor take care of the rest!
- **Draw us a picture.** We are in constant need of artwork.
- **Send a photo.** Simple Asatru related photos, not too cluttered, either color or black-and-white, work best. Let's show our readers that there are real people out there, doing real things!
- **Support the Computer Guild.** The CG needs volunteers to post Asatru articles, or simply to word process material and send it to them on a disc so the Guild can post it. No experience required, just a computer and a floppy. This is an important facet of our outreach, so your help will be especially effective here!
- **Join one of the other guilds.** Check out the list, tucked away in these pages.
- **Enter a song in the AFA's song contest.** There's more on this elsewhere in this issue.

See? There's a lot you can do. Why be a passive spectator? Grab an oar, and let's get this longship moving even faster!

SIGRBLOT in the

From the Asatru Leadership Conference Honored the Gods

by Steve McNallen

The weather had been warm and springlike all week - so, naturally, as the day before the Asatru Leadership Conference dawned, the sun fled and the temperatures dropped. We began to discuss alternative plans. When would we meet? It rained? Would the sun wet outside for all the people who intended to camp? How many people would stay away from the fire on account of the water?

Early the next morning, two cups of coffee, Sheila and I sat and watched and planned. David Wayne were already on hand, having arrived the previous night after a long journey. Finally, a decision was made to start the meeting outside, on the chairs and tables Larry had so generously loaned to collect the night before, and we saw the weather develop.

Only a bit after our decision starting time of 9 AM, we gathered in a circle and called on



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Early the next morning, over cups of coffee, Sheila and I waited and watched and planned. Lon and Wayne were already on hand, having arrived the previous night after a long journey. Finally, the decision was made to start the sessions outside, on the chairs and tables Larry had so generously helped us collect the night before, and see how the weather developed.

Only a bit after our declared starting time of 9 AM, we gathered in a circle and called on

the Gods and Goddesses to be with us, and to give us their gifts of inspiration, luck, and joy. We drank a toast to them, and emptied our assorted horns and cups on the ground in honor of the land spirits.

So began the (first?) Asatru Leadership Conference. Somewhat more modest than the name implies, it was a meeting of about twenty adults - and another ten kids! - from the California-Nevada area. All were interested in helping the new AFA begin its work, and although few were "leaders" in the sense of being luminaries in the Asatru firmament, all were leaders in terms of their willingness to participate and to be in on the ground floor of a major undertaking. Some had come from as far as Oregon, or Las Vegas, or the far reaches of southern California to give their hands and their minds to the tasks before us. Our numbers included everyone from Wayne the bush pilot and Bill the stock broker - to Baby Vidar, the infant.

This was a different kind of Asatru/Odinist gathering. Not a single axe was thrown. No one "played viking." Kids were running all over the place. Drinking was quite moderate, and was done

after dinner. Oh, we know there's a time and a place for the rowdier event - but we were here to work, to think, and incidently to draw out families that might have been turned away by a "viking wannabee" atmosphere.

Work and think we did! We talked about goals, and about the target audience we had to reach if we were to break the old paradigms and take Asatru out of the "cult" stage. We brainstormed ways of taking our message to the ordinary dissatisfied European-American. In one exercise, we sought ways that Asafolk could help each other, rather than having to rely on the systems outside us. When time came for the sacrifice to Odin for victory, the *sigrblot*, all were ready to cease the endless discussion and honor the One Eyed God.

The *horg* or altar stood in a small, even cozy, clearing hemmed in by ancient fruit trees and younger brush. Taller trees loomed around it, emphasizing the sky overhead. We filed in, stood in a circle, and began the rite. Within moments after calling to Odin, drops of rain began to fall from a sky that had been only mildly threatening a few minutes before. As the invocation rose to its climax, cold rain turned to ice, and white crystals danced on the blue cloth covering the *horg*. Our concentration was unbroken; unflinching, we accepted the might

of Odin. Mead was passed around the circle as thunder echoed across the stormy sky. Truly, the blessing of Odin was on us!

The evening saw good food and good conversation. Guilds were discussed, duties assigned, and the evening finally wrapped up.

The next day, after a morning breakfast, we resumed. First, a survey to see what recommendations each of us had on how to make **The Runestone** a better publication. Then, more on guilds - the Warrior Guild and the Aerospace Technology Guild, for starters. A discussion on the Computer Guild revealed a list of ambitious projects to serve the Folk. Ways to increase the participation of women in the AFA were brainstormed, and an introduction to the Organic Gardening Guild turned into a lively exchange, led by Larry, on horticultural matters. Finally, after assigning a feasibility study on a major public relations project or two, it was time for the closing ceremony.

What had we accomplished between the opening meal and the one that concluded our gathering the next day? A great deal! Truly, the Gods had given us good gifts. In the months and years to come, it is our duty to share those gifts with you, and with all who will receive them.

VIDEOS! VIDEOS!

The AFA is offering **THREE** new videos for your enjoyment! Here's what we have:

STEVE McNALLEN ON ASATRU

Steve gave a one and a half hour talk at Wotan's Kindred. This is an overview of the religion, and is full of anecdotes and stories of the Asatru Free Assembly. Steve is a coat and tie!

WARRIOR RUNES

Steve gave this overview of runes, and how they can be used to enhance the lives of those who follow the warrior's path. Steve is a coat and tie!

THE SAMI SHAMAN

Steve interviewed a shaman from Wotan's Kindred about the Sami shamanism. It's an insight into shamanism in general. Steve is a coat and tie!

Videos are \$15 each.

...and an AUDIO TAPE

We took the text of **THINGS** and added some more material to make it a complete audio cassette. We put it on a 60-minute audio cassette for your inspiration while battling your way through life for \$7.

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VIDEOS! VIDEOS! VIDEOS!

The AFA is offering **THREE** new videos for your education and enjoyment! Here's what we have for you:

STEVE McNALLEN ON ASATRU - At Ostara, 1993, Steve gave a one and a half hour talk on Asatru before an audience at Wotan's Kindred. This is an excellent introduction to our religion, and is full of anecdotes relating to the founding and early days of the Asatru Free Assembly. It's also a rare chance to see Steve in a coat and tie!

WARRIOR RUNES - At the summer solstice in 1994, Steve gave this overview of runes, and described how nine specific runes can be used to enhance the spirituality and the effectiveness of those who follow the warrior's path. Length is about an hour and a half.

THE SAMI SHAMAN - Reinhold Clinton and Ron McVan of Wotan's Kindred interview a shaman of the Sami people, who inhabit the bleak wastes of Scandinavia. This video is invaluable for its insight into shamanism in general, and for its applicability to Asatru.

Videos are \$15 each.

...and an AUDIO TAPE, too!

We took the text of **THUNDER FROM THE NORTH**, added some more material to make it inclusive of the Celtic tribes, and put it on a 60-minute audio cassette. Now you can get warrior inspiration while battling your way through traffic! We'll sell you one for \$7.

Make checks payable to : Steve McNallen



STONE CIRCLES

The North Enshrined

by Reinhold Messner



Standing stones. They abide. "Abide" is a fitting verb, I believe, that describes the sense of eternity these grey giant sentinels convey to us. Who has not experienced a feeling of timelessness when gazing at one of Western Europe's standing stone circles?

All of life is a projection. When we see an object, whether it is a pineapple or a 747, some component of our psyche responds, and projects itself onto that object. The intensity and quality of the impact to our ego and other inner layers depends on the stimulus.

With large stones, the eternal in us, or soul if you will, is being mirrored when it projects onto them. Our ancestors must have been moved by this same phenomenon in part, when building the over one thousand standing stone circles found throughout Western Europe, dating between 5000 and 500 B.C.E.

For those, like myself, who always thought stone circles consisted mainly of Stonehenge, the abundance of these monuments comes naturally as a shock. While stone circles occur in scattered numbers in areas of the world other than Western Europe, their greatest concentration by far is located in the North. They are uniquely ours.

Many of these structures predate the pyramids by a millennium. Modern research has confirmed that our ancestors, including those of the viking period, used stone circles as sacred areas to stage their dramatic rites and ceremonies celebrating the change of the seasons and victory in battle, while also serving as sophisticated astronomical observatories.

In the Fall of 1995, I commissioned...
 excavations we had recently purchased...
 eight "monoliths were extracted" from...
 mountainside, the stones averaged 10-12...
 diameter, 6 to 8 feet in width, and...
 height.

The site we selected on the property...
 was appreciated. The structure...
 access. The 180-degree view encompassed...
 of three snow-capped mountain ranges...

Our circle, like many of the region's...
 has a stone positioned in one of the...
 pointing a magnetic north. It...
 great memory or two, watching the...
 circles. For the record, I can truthfully...

In addition to the circle walls, creating...
 new gateway, and an underworld passage...

Since completing all the construction...
 with a straight, while walking my dog...
 because working on my consciousness...
 the wind, or a faint note played...
 accompanied by bees? Perhaps that...
 was it as an ancestral memory...
 consequently strengthened. The...
 sensual becoming. Standing stones...
 they...

Join us at the...

SUMMIT

June 2002

Summit

15 minutes from Portland, Oregon...
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In the Fall of 1995, I commissioned the construction of a standing stone circle, after discovering an abundance of extremely large boulders on the homesite we had recently purchased. During the clearing of the land, eight behemoths were extracted from their ice age womb. As to their relative size, the stones averaged 10-15 tons and ranged from 6 1/2 to 81/2 feet in height, 6 to 8 feet in width, and 4 to 6 feet in thickness.

The site we selected on the property was one our ancestors would have appreciated. The structure rests on an elevated plain 1400 feet above sea level. The 180 - degree view encompasses towering fir forests, three different snow-capped mountain ranges, and a flower-filled meadow.

Our circle, like many of the originals, has a cardinal orientation. Each stone is positioned in one of the eight directions of the compass according to magnetic north. It stirred the blood and maybe jogged a genetic memory or two, watching the T-Rex bulldozer push each colossus into place. For the record, I can truthfully state it was a moving experience.

In addition to the circle we also constructed a nearby gigantic two-stone gateway, and an underworld passage cave.

Since completing all the construction, I have found excuses - mostly at night, while walking my dog - to pass by this sacred area and feel the stones working on my consciousness. A sound echoes in my mind. Is it the wind, or a faint note plucked on a harp by a long-dead bard, surrounded by heroes? Perhaps that is what the stones ultimately can mean to us: an ancestral memory so deep that the link with our past is immeasurably strengthened. The past and present then merge into an eternal becoming. Standing stones...they abide, and so can we.

Join us at the...

- Self-defense seminars
- Bench press competition
- Swordmaking/woodcarving
- Herbalism
- Country dancing
- AFA booth
- Folk drama
- Children's activities
- Viking ship burning

EUROPEAN SUMMER SOLSTICE Festival

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Sponsored by WOTAN'S KINDRED

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ASATRU and the

by Stephen A. McNallen

As I look up from the word *Asatru*, I see a landscape covered with green - emerald-colored grass and trees, vines and bushes, all blanketed with a thin mist from the wet clouds that swirl overhead, connecting one patch of land with the rest of a living planet. From a couple of hundred miles up, the globe of which my mini-environment is a part appears as a blue-green ball, an achingly beautiful and magnificent hanging in the emptiness of space.

The whole subject of ecology has become so politicized, so full of one-sidedness with social agendas, so laden with unscientific assumptions and non-sensibilities that it is hard for many of us to take it as seriously as it deserves. Clones are, some of you are now reading this and thinking that I've slipped into New Age fuzzy thinking, and will be expelling the usual liberal-left nonsense in the next paragraph.

There is an environmental problem facing human life on Earth. Beware all the exaggeration and rhetoric in a real crisis that we, as Asatru, cannot ignore. Here are some reasons why the matter of ecology should concern us all:

* *We follow a nature religion.* Asatru is a "nature religion" insofar as it sees its truths from the natural world around us, rather than from the cerebral constructions so popular with the monotheistic religions. From the earliest days, Asatru was connected - as was our



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RUNE NAME: *Fehu*

KEY CONCEPTS: *Fehu* stands for primordial, mobile power. Represented in ancient times by cattle and later by money (hence the word "fee"), it suggests fertility and wealth. It is the underlying energy which drives the great cycle of creation, change, and destruction in the universe.

AFFIRMATION: I am on fire with energy and power. My vigor propels me forward.

ASATRU and the



by Stephen A. McNallen

As I look up from the word processor, I see a landscape covered with green - emerald-colored grass and trees, vines and bushes, all blanketed with a thin mist from the wet clouds that swirl overhead, connecting my back yard with the rest of a living planet. From a couple of hundred miles up, the globe of which my mini-environment is a part appears as a blue-green ball, an achingly beautiful and fragile sight hanging in the emptiness of space.

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* *We follow a nature religion.* Asatru is a "nature religion" insofar as it takes its truths from the natural world around us, rather than from the cerebral abstractions so popular with the monotheistic religions. From the earliest days, Asatru was connected - as was our

entire native culture - with the skies, the seas, the forest, and all the things that lived there. If that natural world is altered beyond recognition, our religious life is undermined.

* *We value wildness.* Wildness is found, reasonably enough, in the wilderness. When the wilderness is gone, the world will be a tamer place, and we will be tamer people. I cannot logically explain the connection between the depths of the forest and the depths of our hearts, but I know it is real. Perhaps the very knowledge that there are hidden and inaccessible places is enough to remind us of our own wild origins. When the last wolf dies, when the last stand of forest is bisected by a road, something will have died inside us.

* *Wilderness is a refuge from government.* The pagans, or *pagani*, were the rural dwellers who couldn't be reached by the powers of the state. Similarly, the heathens lived on the heath, where they could practice Asatru and our ancient folkways without disturbance. "Urban paganism" is an oxymoron. From the time of the Christian conquest onward, our religion became even more associated with nature, the countryside, and wilderness than it had previously been, since this was the only place we could practice without repression.

This link between undomesticated land and liberty is one that has survived down to our present day.

Edward Abbey, noted environmentalist philosopher and writer, believed that one reason for preserving wilderness was that we might need to flee the urban, "civilized" areas and set up guerrilla movements in the countryside!

* *Environmental pressures will result in more regulation and regimentation.* Any belief system, whether religious or secular, that is fundamentally opposed to authoritarian controls will suffer as the environmental crisis worsens. The politicians will respond to the challenge by passing more laws and lessening everyone's freedom. Government has an innate tendency to grow larger and more powerful, and the ecological crisis provides a perfect excuse. We need to find solutions that do not depend on the state, but rather on individuals and on groups of individuals cooperating in a non-coercive manner.

* *Projected climatic changes are particularly harmful to European-descended peoples.* For a long time, it was possible to withhold judgement on claims of impending global warming and holes in the ozone layer. Within the last year or so, however, evidence for these long-term environmental effects has accumulated to the point that we cannot dismiss them as the alarmist fantasy of radical ecologists. Sea temperatures, satellite photographs, shifting habitats of trees and of marine life, an unprecedented fissure in the Antarctic ice shelf - all these combine to tell us that changes are on the way. They portend tough times for everyone, but especially for European-descended peoples.

Ozone depletion means more - *much* more - ultraviolet (UV) radiation reaching the Earth's surface. This means more skin cancer. And what group is most vulnerable to skin cancer? We low-

melanin types, of course. Skin cancer has always been a particular health problem of ours, but ozone depletion places us at even greater risk than before. All those who are of European ancestry will sharply limit our exposure to UV rays, now.



Global warming, of course, presents us with a world that is less like the one in which we evolved. It may not matter much - we can turn inside and turn on the air conditioner. But there is another aspect of global warming that is a much greater threat to our survival: migrating populations.

The Chinese government is predicting the displacement of tens of millions of its people over the next decades as the rising sea encroaches on low-lying cities in that country. The same thing can be expected in other parts of the world. Can you imagine what will happen in South and Central America if the sea is undated by the ocean? That is a very serious refugee problem, a nothing compared to the drifting migrations of the mid-21st century. As the competition for resources intensifies, intercommunal wars will mean even less than they do now. Areas of the world now occupied by Europeans and their kin will be under political and moral pressure to accept their unfortunates. It will be very hard to maintain cultural or ethnic identity in such conditions; anyone living in a ghetto knows how hard it is to do so. Add those additional strains of the world,

As we can see, there are plenty of reasons for us to be concerned about the future of the planet. So what do we do about it?

Although the situation is serious, it is not hopeless. Much good is being done by groups and individuals who are attacking these problems. As usual, there are two major traps to avoid. First, we must be wary of any demagogues to use the environmental crisis as an excuse to increase the power of government. Secondly, we must be wary of a mindless anti-technological backlash.

There are people in the ecology movement who would like to literally see the world ruled only by small bands of wise sages. At the moment, they are a fringe element - and we want to stay that way. Such a wholesale rejection of Western culture would be a disaster because technology is something we do very well indeed. For us, technology is our strongest asset, and we must use it as a people, and a disaster to everyone else on the planet as well.

Technology is nothing more than intelligence applied in the material world to solve problems. When faced with challenges like the ones that await us, it doesn't make sense to discard the tools of overcoming them. We don't reject technology, we need *better* technology - and even more than that, we need spiritual insight and noble character to use that technology.

Above all, we must not turn our technology into a special form of technology that captures the European spirit with its arrogance - space travel. Not to suppress the restless striving and the urge of our people, but the use of space may be save this

As we can see, there are plenty of reasons for us to be concerned about the state of the planet. So what do we need to do about it?

Although the situation is serious, it is not hopeless. Much good is being done by groups and individuals who are attacking these problems. As Asafolk, there are two major traps to avoid: First, we must be wary of any attempt by demagogues to use the environmental crisis as an excuse to increase the power of government. Secondly, we must not be tempted into a mindless anti-technological backlash.

There are people in the ecology movement who would like to literally see Earth populated only by small bands of hunter-gatherers. At the moment, they are a tiny fringe element - and we want them to stay that way. Such a wholesale rejection of Western culture would be a mistake, because technology is something we Eurofolk do very well indeed. For us to throw away our strongest asset would be suicide for us as a people, and a disaster for everyone else on the planet as well.

Technology is nothing more than intelligence applied in the material world to solve problems. When faced with challenges like the ones that await us, it doesn't make sense to discard the means of overcoming them. We don't need *less* technology, we need *better* technology - and even more than that, we need people of spiritual insight and noble values to devise and use that technology.

Above all, we must not turn our back on one special form of technology that captures the European spirit with particular elegance - space travel. Not only does it express the restless striving and exploring urge of our people, but proper use of space may be save this

planet's environment. Consider, for example, the vast mineral resources awaiting us among the asteroids, or the 24-hours-a-day solar energy available in geosynchronous orbit. Today's fantasies can be tomorrow's reality, if we have the courage and will to make it so.

In the final analysis, the problems before us are spiritual ones rather than technological ones. What if the stockholders of General Motors voted to develop pollutionless transportation, despite the investment required to bring about such an innovation? What if we forced the politicians to intensify the search for workable fusion power? What if millions of us as individuals decided to carpool, convert to solar power where practical, and work from our homes via computer rather than driving to work?

The point is, we *have* answers, and we can get more. Humans - despite what some religionists tell us - are capable of solving their problems without divine intervention and without regimentating our society. What is needed are spiritual values, coupled with will, and still more good ideas. *Asatru can meet these needs!*

We are intelligent people with fresh ideas, or we wouldn't be following our religion. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the thinkers and doers who will pull our Earth out of this mess arise from the ranks of Asatruar? One thing is certain. If we do not come up with solutions, solutions will be forced on us by circumstance. We Asafolk must take charge of our destiny. Let's get going!





Bekkhild Ellsworth

Bekkhild is a "behind the scenes" person whose impact far outweighs her fame. The fact that you've never seen her name in **The Runestone** before now really confirms the idea behind this "Profiles" page, namely, that there are some truly exceptional Asafolk out there who deserve a hearty salute.

Consider Bekkhild. She spends hours at her keyboard, fighting the good fight with the AFA's Computer Guild. Sometimes we tear her away from her home in the Bay Area and lure her up here, to the mountains, where she and other faithfuls provide a solid core to all our various meetings and gatherings. As if that wasn't enough to keep her busy, she's one of the key people working on the Prop 187/illegal immigration issues in northern California (She'll deny that, because she's modest, but it's true).

So how did the Gods end up with this fighter in their ranks? Life started off normally enough for Bekkhild. Born in 1958 to an ordinarily Christian family in Sacramento, she soon lost interest in religion - after all, to her "religion" meant Christianity. In high school, however, a class on Greek mythology changed her world, and then a similar course in college inspired her to read ancient Greek literature on her own time. Bekkhild found more than good reading; she found a new definition of herself as a pagan.

But how about Asatru? "A roommate asked me why I didn't read Norse material, as that would be closer to my own ethnic background. I began doing so and found it to be even more appealing." But still, she didn't approach the AFA or the other Norse/Germanic groups at the time, choosing instead to work with local Wiccans. When she *did* write to the old AFA, we were in the process of dissolving.

Bekkhild did discover Vor Tru, and found a lot there that she liked. "Reading several pieces that explained how Asatru was, and must be, another religion helped me to escape my liberalism," she adds. Eventually, Vor Tru referred her to us, and here we are!

Throughout her heavy involvement in the immigration reform movement, Bekkhild has been "semi-open" about her religious beliefs, with no problems to speak of. (You can reach the group with which she's affiliated by writing to U.C.I.C., P.O. Box 2661, Cupertino, CA 95015.)

the Internet]. Typing the stuff takes the most time... on the Internet, but to type stuff you just need to be able to type suitable material in ASCII on a 3.5 floppy disk. If you need help. Macintosh or PC formatted disks are available.

You can contact Bekkhild at P.O. Box 3043, Santa Clara, CA 95051. You can also meet a real live Asaperson...and a real live Asafolk.

AFA Guild News

The **Warrior Guild** has published the latest issue of **Warrior**, featuring articles on Gods for the Guild, physical fitness, and more. In addition, the Guild has a new page which members can test their mettle, and there's a new page for the Warrior Guild.

Guildmaster Steve McNallen had another issue of **Warrior** of Fortune. This latest piece is a result of his work with the mercenary scene in Angkor Wat, and deals with the mercenary scene in Angkor Wat, and deals with the mercenary scene in Angkor Wat.

The **Aerospace Technology Guild** will be celebrating its "Silver Jubilee Celebration" with a rocket launching. The Guild will have a table set up to explain the ATG to the public. The Guild's newsletter, **ATG**, will be ready by the time you read this. Write to the Aerospace Technology Guild.

Earthways is the name of the **Seith Guild**'s newsletter. The first issue is, appropriately, beginnings! You will see the first issue in the near future. For those of you new to the Seith Guild, strongly connected with the Goddess Freya, write to the Guildmaster, drop him a letter at P.O. Box 2366, Lowell, MA 01854. He is interested in starting a Teaching Guild, to deal with the Seith Guild in particular.)

Here's a message from Cathy Clinton of the **Wicca Guild**. "I know the earth Goddess Nerthus, mother of all things, Freya's cooling rains and Sunna's life-giving warmth are what we enjoy... There's a part of each of us that knows that the truest chord has been sounded, and in that moment, the world is ours." Write her at 8709 NE Winters Road, Corvallis, OR 97331.

The **Computer Guild**, as mentioned elsewhere, is a group of Asafolk like you. They are interested in computer communication, data entry, email, network administration, programming, word processing, and the acquisition of hardware and software. Write to Bekkhild Ellsworth, P.O. Box 3043, Santa Clara, CA 95051.

the Internet]. Typing the stuff takes the most time...To post articles you need to be on the Internet, but to type stuff you just need to be able to use ASCII. If people would type suitable material in ASCII on a 3.5 inch disc and send it to me, it would be a big help. Macintosh or PC formatted discs are both okay."

You can contact Bekkchild at P.O. Box 3043, Santa Clara, CA 95955. Here's a chance to meet a real live Asaperson...and a remarkable individual!

AFA Guild News

The **Warrior Guild** has published the first issue of its newsletter, Wolf Age, featuring articles on Gods for the Guild, physical fitness, a WG survey, a review of a book by Jeff Cooper, and more. In addition, the Guild has developed four "skill levels" against which members can test their mettle, and these were briefly discussed in this issue.

Guildmaster Steve McNallen had another article published in the May issue of Soldier of Fortune. This latest piece is a result of Steve's wanderings in southern Africa, and deals with the mercenary scene in Angola. Contact the Warrior Guild by writing to Steve.

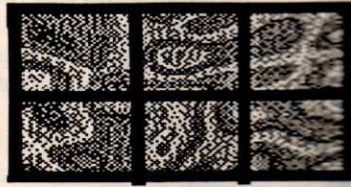
The **Aerospace Technology Guild** will kick off Wotan Kindred's "Summer Solstice Celebration" with a rocket launching (See the ad elsewhere in this issue), and will have a table set up to explain the ATG to the public. The first issue of Sleipnir, the Guild's newsletter, will be ready by the time you read these words. Steve is contact person for the Aerospace Technology Guild.

Earthways is the name of the **Seith Guild's** new publication. The theme of the first issue is, appropriately, beginnings! Your editor has promised to write a piece for it in the near future. For those of you new to Asatru, seith is a sort of Germanic shamanism, strongly connected with the Goddess Freya. Ragnar Schuett is the Guildmaster; drop him a letter at P.O. Box 2366, Loveland, CO 80539. (Ragnar is also interested in starting a Teaching Guild, to deal with education in general and home schooling in particular.)

Here's a message from Cathy Clinton of the **Organic Gardening Guild**: "Get to know the earth Goddess Nerthus, mother of us all. Know too how Thor's bright lightning, Frey's cooling rains and Sunna's life-giving rays all contribute to the fruitfulness we enjoy...There's a part of each of us that, when digging in the earth, knows that the truest chord has been sounded, and in that moment everything is right with our world." Write her at 8709 NE Winters Road, Camas, WA 98607 for details.

The **Computer Guild**, as mentioned elsewhere in this issue, is looking for volunteer labor from Asafolk like you. They are interested in archiving, BBS operation, business, computer communication, data entry, email correspondence, Internet activities, network administration, programming, security, synthetic intelligence, writing, and the acquisition of hardware and software. Contact them by writing to Bekkchild Ellsworth, P.O. Box 3043, Santa Clara, CA 95055-3043.

Reflections



in an inner city school window

By Steffanie Snyder

In my children's eyes I see hope. I see a hope turned toward me, as a teacher and protector of my daughter and son. And even though I am alone in this task, as a single Asatru mother I rely on our Gods and Goddesses to give me the gifts of guidance in each encounter of life's adventures.

As an Asatru mother I want to teach my children our ancestral ways, as Northern European Americans. I want to teach them their right to belong in our society, and their duty of upholding who and what we are as Asatruar in America. Within this framework, I believe that I must describe to my children their philosophical options. I hope to endorse the "mind set" that all people have a natural right, no matter what their ancestral heritage, to group survival. I try to help them understand that it is not wrong to carry our noble genes, and to take part in our tribal solidarity. Herein lies my challenge!

In the inner city public schools my children have been attending, they are indoctrinated with monocultural universalism, or in their words, "the rainbow of peaceable colors." Peace is fine - but their ideal of across-the-board ethnic acceptance is an observable non-reality in schools like ours. My kids, and others, gravitate to their own ethnic nucleus on campus. They mouth the words of the educational socialization that has been rained down upon their minds, but when it comes down to it they end up grouping with those of similar background because, as they say, they are more comfortable with companions like themselves. This leaves the idea of automatic multicultural acceptance a fantasy of those who are afraid of being politically incorrect.

So, my challenge is to expand their outlook by letting them know that admitting to racial differences is all right, as long as it does not become negative or antagonistic. The social, political, and religious

options that are available to my children, from monoculturalism, into a true diversity, and a strong identity. The identity that I hope they will live a life of remembrance, of honoring their ancestry, of being grateful to those from whom we have learned about our ancestors, and how they have shaped the now - modern Northern European American. I am proud of our ethnic heritage.

With that, I urge my children to do as well as they can. My children do dashing well! - and as the caterpillar asked in Alice in Wonderland:

Editor's note: Steffanie has wrestled with the issue of the ethnic identity they need and deserve. What part of the state - or try home schooling? or the Teacher's Guild?

A TIP OF THE HORN

A TIP OF THE HORN TO...the Odinist Prison Project, inmate Darin Webster, and all those who contributed to the Federal Bureau of Prisons recognizing Odinism/Asatru as a legitimate religion deserving of full privileges everywhere in the Federal system. Way to go! Now if some of the state penitentiaries will get the idea!

AND, THE OTHER TIP OF THE HORN - - -



options that are available to my children if they can see past monoculturalism, into a true diversity, leaves them with a sense of strong identity. The identity that I hope they will choose is...Asatru, the living of a life of remembrance, of celebration of our history and ancestry, of being grateful to those from whom we came. It involves learning about our ancestors, and how they bring us to where we are now - modern Northern European Americans who are not afraid to be proud of our ethnic heritage.

With that, I urge my children to "Think of yourself!" - Which children do dashingly well! - and as they do, to remember what the caterpillar asked in Alice in Wonderland - "Who are you?".

Editor's note: Steffanie has wrestled with the issue of how to give her children the ethnic identity they need and deserve. We have suggested she relocate to our part of the state - or try home schooling! Maybe she should contact the Teacher's Guild?

A TIP OF THE HORN ---

A TIP OF THE HORN TO...the Odinist Prison Project, inmate Darin Webster, and all those who contributed to the Federal Bureau of Prisons recognizing Odinism/Asatru as a legitimate religion deserving of full privileges everywhere in the Federal system. Way to go! Now if some of the state penitentiaries will get the idea!



AND, THE OTHER TIP OF THE HORN ---



AND THE OTHER TIP OF THE HORN TO...certain Catholic clerics who, in an upwelling love of all things Christian and Third World, opined that the United States should become "more like Catholic Brazil" in terms of both religion and ethnic flavor.

BITS & PIECES

Astrobiology and Dreams are the Key to the Cosmos, by Icelandic Asaman Thorsteinn Gudjonsson, are now available in this country. Many of the Icelandic Asatruar believe that the Gods are physical beings living in remote parts of this universe, and that they communicate with humans through telepathy and dreams. There's a lot more to it than that; ultimately reincarnation, life, death, UFOs and the Crab Nebula all get involved in the story. Check it out for yourself. These volumes are available from Evan McCallum, 630 N. Tustin, Suite 211, Orange, CA 92667. Each one is \$19.95.

Last issue we mentioned Harry Harrison's **The Hammer and the Cross**. Well, Volume II, titled **One King's Way**, is on the stands, but only in hardback. If you don't want to wait for the paperback, you can get it for \$23.95 from Tor books. Shef, co-king of England, gets involved in Norwegian intrigue and undergoes all sorts of adventures, as you'd expect. In the meantime, Christians in Germany seek a powerful holy relic behind which to unite the tribes and renew Charlemagne's Holy Roman Empire.

Has life gotten more difficult for you lately? Do you worry

more about finances? Do you fear for your safety and that of your family? Are your dreams receding further each year? Then maybe you're ripe for the **Folkhaven Community** (not a commune) being formed in Alaska. If you're interested, write to Meadow Lakes Folkhaven Community, P.O. Box 878791, Wasilla, AK 99687.

Folkvang Horg is a journal seeking to restore a balance between the Gods and the Goddesses in our religion. Articles investigate the Goddesses, herbal lore, Earth mysteries, and magic as well as topics of a more general Asatru interest. We think this is a worthy endeavor which can do much good for Asatru. You can inquire to John Thornborrow; 322a Rochdale Road; Royton, Oldham; Lancashire OL2 6UF; England.

Frey was a vital God to our ancestors, and so he remains to us today. For information on the **revived worship of Frey** as practiced in Sweden today, write to Freymund Ansheille, Freysgodi, at Freyslunda Worldhouse, P.O. Box 8241, S - 163 08 Spanga, Sweden. Freymund responded to our letter with one of his own, plus some of his literature.

Celtic Folkworks is a family owned business that sells 6 different Thor's hammers. A customer told us that their work is inexpensive, well made, and quickly delivered. They have a Gaia pendant and other things, too. Their address is RD4 Box 210, Willow Grove Road, Newfield, NJ 08344.

Here's another publication with which we just established an exchange, titled **Berserkrangr**. As you might expect, it carries articles on the Germanic battle fury, as a modern-day phenomenon. Many of the people who write letters and articles in this publication actually seem to undergo the berserker experience. Interesting! A subscription is \$10 a year from RCE, 331 West Thomson Avenue, Sonoma, CA 95476. Make checks payable to Erin Lale.

ANNOUNCING... **THE AFA SONG**

Religion goes better with music. The AFA has inspired some great songs through the ages. Now the AFA is sponsoring a competition for folk songs which has not previously appeared.

You can set new words to traditional folk songs? March?...or start from scratch.

The prize will be a year's membership (or an extension of your current subscription) and a new audio tape of Thunder from the Teutonic Warrior, plus, of course, a copy of this publication!

Rules are simple. The winning song becomes the property of the Asatru Folk as a whole. Songs must be in good form and postmarked no later than August 31, 1988.

This is a chance to help our history of Asatru in the process. Now begin!

Here's another publication with which we just established an exchange, titled **Berserkrangr**. As you might expect, it carries articles on the Germanic battle fury, as a modern-day phenomenon. Many of the people who write letters and articles in this publication actually seem to undergo the berserker experience. Interesting! A subscription is \$10 a year from RCE, 331 West Thomson Avenue, Sonoma, CA 95476. Make checks payable to Erin Lale.

And to top it off - **Bifrost!** It's brand new, published by Weyland Lee (You'll remember him for his article on Loki in **Runestone** #10). It has a free forum called "Nidhing Post," a contact list, and a feature on the runes. Weyland's a bright guy and he writes well. You can subscribe by sending \$15 to Bifrost, P.O. Box 73511, Davis, CA 95617.

ANNOUNCING... **THE AFA SONG CONTEST!**

Religion goes better with music! And while Asatru has inspired some great songs through the years, we need more of them to enrich our musical treasure trove! For this reason, the AFA is sponsoring a competition for the best Asatru song which has not previously appeared in any publication.

You can set new words to an old tune (Irish rebel song? Folk song? March?)...or start from scratch with original music.

The prize will be a year's subscription to *The Runestone* (or an extension of your current subscription), plus our brand-new audio tape of *Thunder from the North: The Way of the Teutonic Warrior*, plus, of course, immortal fame in the pages of this publication!

Rules are simple. The work must be yours. The song becomes the property of the Asatru Folk Assembly and the Folk as a whole. Songs must be in good taste. Entries must be postmarked no later than August 1st, 1995.

This is a chance to help out, and to win a place in the history of Asatru in the process! Invoke the bardic spirit...and begin!

MOOT POINT

Dear Steve,

Thanks for the latest **Runestone**, as always very good. The Declaration of Purpose is excellent and we really need an organization where single persons can become members, people who are too far from an organized kindred or who for various reasons don't want to join one but still need to have a sense of belonging.

As for the guilds - I wish we somehow could encourage a return to the trades - get some of our young men to take up cabinet making and such. In Europe in the old days when I grew up - and maybe it is still so - there were no bricklayers. A mason did not only lay bricks, he could also make the blueprints for a house, including electrical installation, water, ventilation, estimate work hours, cash, and general outlay. If a cabinet maker made a dresser, the drawers would fit and slide in and out noiselessly. College boys today are 24 to the dozen with some computer whizzes and brain surgeons thrown in...

The queen of the Iceni [*This is in reference to our article on the Celtic queen, Boudicca . - Editor*] was quite a woman; I think we had many such women. As a child I remember one who handled a small farm by herself - a couple of horses, some cows, some crops - enough for herself, an old father and a child. No nonsense - her handshake on a deal stood...

We organized the first Earth Day in this place - planted a live oak and got it [Earth Day] established as a yearly event. Everything here is just fine. Be good!

Folk, Faith, Future!

Else

Good to hear from you, Else! For any of our readers who are new to the Asatru scene, let me interject for their sake that you are the honored founder of the Odinist Fellowship, and the "Folkmother" of the movement here in America. You are much remembered and much loved by all those who have benefitted from your spiritual leadership!

Steve

Hailsa, Folks!

I know the blots call for meat, but a kindred meeting is a good excuse for me to die anyway, what better way than to die with experience in this, so if there is any interest in sacrificial slaughtering, my contribution is...

Also, I like the guild idea. However, there isn't enough in Asatru which appeals to me, which, I'm a single guy, and took up the idea of a guild (I think this makes me a "sissy" might get me up as a notch in my battle-axe!) My workshop is on my jeans. If that turns out well, I have some challenging projects. I almost said "more" more "inspiring" than Odin's own...

Thank you for reminding us of the value of our older, 20th century adaptations of old crafts! If anybody out there wants to contribute in favor of it!

Hailsa Stephen!

I noticed you mentioned the (Folkmother, Giver), and thought you might find it interesting in working with Her, along with Her, a friend escape from an abusive relationship, recognize. I incorporated the ritual and used as a "battery" someone who had been sympathetic to the abuser. This gave me more energy than I myself could put out. With her lived upstairs from his victim, and her own student, and could survive on her own some distance away. The victim of the...

Hailsa, Folks!

I know the blots call for mead, not blood, but I was thinking...a kindred meeting is a good excuse for a pig-roast. And since the pig has to die anyway, what better way than dedicated to the Gods? I have some experience in this, so if there is any interest, I could write up some rituals of sacrificial slaughtering, my contribution to the folk.

Also, I like the guild idea. How about a needlecrafters' guild? There isn't enough in Asatru which appeals to our sister-folk. Besides which, I'm a single guy, and took up the art out of necessity. (Anyone who thinks this makes me a "sissy" might get challenged to a holmgang, and end up as a notch in my battle-axe!) My winter project is to embroider the Runes on my jeans. If that turns out well, I might go on to more...artistically challenging projects. I almost said "more inspiring," but what could be more "inspiring" than Odin's own hard-won Runes?

Keep the Faith!

Chaz

Thank you for reminding us of the archaic and powerful customs that underlie our newer, 20th century adaptations - and for your new ways of applying old crafts! If anybody out there wants to sponsor a Needlecrafters' Guild, we're all in favor of it!

Steve

Hailsa Stephen!

I noticed you mentioned the Frisian Goddess Friagabi (= Freedom-Giver), and thought you might find interesting my own personal experiences in working with Her, along with Frigga as a Mother-Goddess, to help a friend escape from an abusive relationship she wasn't yet ready to recognize. I incorporated the ritual into your excellent Frigga-blot, and used as a "battery" someone who had good reason to hate the abuser, and was sympathetic to the abusee. This gave the ritual more raw emotional energy than I myself could put out. Within three weeks, the abuser, who lived upstairs from his victim, told her she was no longer his (magickal) student, and could survive on her own now. He took a better apartment some distance away. The victim of this notorious psychic vampire, who by

the way knew nothing about my work on her behalf, also complained about PEOPLE RIDING THROUGH HER APARTMENT, which brings me to another important point. There has been some speculation that "minor Goddesses" such as Friagabi should be seen as equivalent to Valkyries. This report of "people riding" may be supportive of this hypothesis.

Since "a gift looks aye for a gift," I made offerings to both Frigga and Friagabi once the results of my working with them became known. I cast nine pennies for each of them, on separate occasions, into a stream which runs by my house. I composed a brief poem for Friagabi, which I recited as I gave Her Her offering.

Friagabi,
Freedom-giver,
Gladly give I
Glittering coins nine.
Going downward,
Into glistening water,
Show they their giver
Ever-grateful.

Delighted by the success of this work, I asked for further help for my friend. The answer I got back was that she had received all the freedom she needed to begin to change her situation, and would receive more only when she began to help herself.

Wassail!

P.L.B.

Your letter makes it clear that we still make our own fate, despite a little nudge from the Goddesses in our lives. Your friend had laid the good orlog ("fate") of making you a friend - and you were able to come to her aid. You "paid" for the assistance by your gifts. Now it's up to her. There's no free ride in Asatru, no crutches, and no excuses. But it's darned nice having Goddesses and Gods for friends...

Steve



June 21 — MIDSUMMER. This is the sun's moment of greatest glory, and the time of longest daylight. After today, the sun's decline begins. Decorate your house with sunwheels (), and burn a candle in her honor.

July 9 - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR UNN THE DEEP MINDED. Unn was a strong-willed matriarch who established dynasties in the Orkneys, Faroes, and Iceland. Do something to make your family line stronger and more permanent. Recall the deep-minded women in your own clan today.

August 9 - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR KING RADBOD. This Frisian king ejected Christian missionaries and upheld Asatru in his country against great pressure. Pour a libation to the ancient Frisian Goddess Friagabi, "Giver of Freedom." Like Radbod, you can renounce the alien faith. Here are some words reversing the Christian oath the Saxons were made to swear: "I forsake the Christian God, and I forsake all worship of him, and I renounce all his works! I take up the words and work and worship of our Gods and Goddesses, of Thor and Odin and Tyr and all who are their companions!"

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

I've heard Asatru described as a "Nature religion." What does that mean?

We treasure the spiritual awe, the feeling of "connecting" with the Gods and Goddesses, which can come from experiencing the beauty and majesty of Nature. Our deities work in and through natural law, and by working in harmony with Nature we can become co-workers with the Gods. This attitude removes the opposition between "natural" and "supernatural," and the supposed conflict between religion and science.