

Asatru Folk Assembly's The Voice

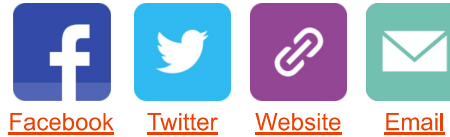
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In this edition of *The Voice*, we have an update from AFA programs, past events that happened in January and February around the country, Membership news and upcoming events. Your input is needed to make *The Voice* a publication filled with events, photos and news. Please feel free to submit any events, news or photos to thevoice@runestone.org.

Hail the AFA!
Channcie Bean

Donate to the AFA



The next *Voice* will be published on April 15th and we will cover what has happened in March of 2013. When celebrating Ostara this month please take pictures and submit a write to *The Voice*. In future edition we plan to have a section on "Getting to know your Leadership". Please submit any events, news and photos of happenings in your area no matter how big or small. Deadline for the following *Voice* is

Updates with the AFA

New Web Talent for the AFA Site -

The AFA now has a “dynamic duo” keeping our web site and related functions up and running! Alan Sawyer, who many of you may have met at Winter Nights in the Poconos last October, volunteered when Hugh Long stepped down to devote full time to writing. He was joined more recently by Geoff Scott, an AFA member in the Deep South Region. Between the two of them they've solved vicious email problems and been quick to respond to our needs. Thanks for stepping forward, Alan and Geoff!

AFA Family Safety Program -

Our *AFA Family Safety Program* was hardly more than a concept when Hurricane Sandy hit the Northeastern USA. Bill Shelbrick did heroic work managing that crisis for us, ensuring that AFA members throughout the area were accounted for and secure. But Bill had to deal with other pressing issues, and has turned the reins over to Stewart Williams. Stewart is hard-working, bright, and eager to help this function of the AFA succeed to its highest potential. He's hit the ground running and you'll be hearing more from him in the future as he bends his efforts to ensure that we take care of all AFA members in time of emergency.

Folkbuilder Program -

New Apprentice Folkbuilders Announced!

Taylor-Hicks, who in addition to Folkbuilding duties is Chief of Operations for the AFA. She's already assuming the lion's share of the Folkbuilding role as Brad works side-by-side with the Alsherjargothi.

Almost the same day, Aaron Savage was chosen as Apprentice Folkbuilder for the Four Corners Region. Aaron is a recently-separated veteran of the USAF and lives in the Denver area.

On February 21, Karissa Shaw was announced as Apprentice Folkbuilder for the Northwest Region. She's been an AFA member for a number of years, and moved from the San Francisco Bay Area to the Portland vicinity some while back. Karissa steps in to take over from Juleigh and Dave Hobson, who needed some time to deal with other aspects of their lives.

All three of these talented volunteers are off to a great start and we're proud to have them on board!



Member Exclusive!
Limited Number Available!
Just \$5!
Show your pride in our AFA Military kinfolk with these 3",
Velcro backed Morale patches.
The Asatru Military Project has been sending these patches, along with copies of 'In Harm's Way: An Asatru Book of Faith' to our military members overseas. Now, we have a small number left of this first run to offer our civilian members. The cost is just \$5 per patch and shipping is \$3 no matter how many you order, but

more information or to place an order,
email brad@runestone.org

In the subject heading put 'Priority-patches' tell us how many you want and give us your shipping address and we'll send a PayPal invoice via email to you.

Membership News

Membership grows and grows

In spite of the lingering recession, the AFA continues to grow with nearly one application a day last month. It's gratifying to hear from so many people for whom the AFA has been their guiding light. Another comment we're hearing more is that the AFA holds to high standards they don't see in the other organizations. We're reaching more people everyday who applaud what we're doing (Our AFA Facebook page now has over 4,000 "likes") but they remain on the edges. What we need is a nudge from you, saying why they should join the the AFA. If you're in touch with people who should be part of our community, send them our way – by all means!

January Expirations – time is running out

AFA members runs on a quarterly basis, and we now finishing up renewals for members who expired at the end of January. We will be removing people from the database by March 20th, so if you simply need more time, please get in touch with Sheila at afa@runestone.org right-away. Adding you back in at a later date can be confusing for all concerned and takes a lot of extra time. Remember that you can make low monthly payments if that will help. Go to afa@runestone.org and click on RENEW for all of your options.

We received word that Thorgrun Odden and his wife Kathleen Thompson lost two family members this past week. Thorgrun's dad, LaVerne "Tommy" Thompson, born April 20, 1920, passed away in Santa Cruz at the age of 92. On March 8, Katie got word that her younger brother, James "Jimmy" Fuhs died unexpectedly at his home near Chico from an apparent heart attack. We're saddened by the passing of these two, beloved men and know that all of you are with us in wishing Thorgrun and Katie strength and comfort at this time. Thorgrun will be posting memorials to both men in the next issue of *The Voice*.

Keep Marc McLeod in Your Mind and Heart!

Marc, whom all you met at Midsummer 2012 where he led the games, continues to struggle with cancer. Despite his illness, he has done his best to keep up his Folkbuilder duties and his courage inspires us all. Mark's a fighter; send him your healing might!

Note from Brad Taylor-Hicks, Chief Operating Officer: Hail AFA Kin,

A couple of weeks ago, I received a letter from my kinsman, Calen Smith, in boot camp, lamenting that while he had a copy of the AFA's 'In Harm's Way: An Asatru Book of Faith', he had no Edda to read. I put the call out on my facebook page, and the response was overwhelming. Over 30 AFA members and friends offered to copy sections from the Edda and send them to him. I quickly created a list of lays and poems to be sent, with no-one writing a lay that had already been submitted. Already, I have 17 confirmations of mailed lays, with the rest to come in the next couple of weeks.

After stepping back to examine what had occurred in those whirlwind couple of days, I started to see benefits outside of one young soldier feeling the sense of community and spirituality. There were secondary benefits also many of the pledged lays were hand written, and it was commented to me numerous times that actually sitting and penning the verses made a stronger connection to them those copying them. They made more sense, than just giving them a quick reading. I noticed this myself, with "The lay of Erik"

facebook was a way to connect AFA members across America and Canada for a singular purpose of building community. We achieved something in cyberspace that manifested in the physical world. Some might call that magic.

The Asatru Military Project is a program near and dear to our hearts as a AFA Kin. Along with Bodi Mayo, our Military Folkbuilder, I hope to help create an Edda that can be carried into boot camps as a solace to our young soldiers.

This is an idea that we can use for other AFA-Kin in the Military. The mail call is all important to our Military here and overseas.

Now, the Poetic Edda (and a few heroic poems) are all covered, but if anyone else wants to join in the fun and send Pvt. Smith a few words of encouragement, zip me an email (brad@runestone.org or message me on facebook) and I'll pass on his contact info.

Thanks for everyone who has participated in this so far. I'll post Calen's response soon.

Brad Taylor-Hicks
Chief Operating Officer

Past Events

Winternights in Poconos -

Video: Winter Nights in the Poconos

Winter Nights in the Poconos 2012 was a ground-breaking event - and you can get a feel for it with this slideshow, set to two of songs by Changes (Worth the visit all in themselves)!

For people wondering what AFA gatherings are like, this is a good introduction to what we do and how we do it.

the Poconos. I don't really know how the last event could be much better, but we'll definitely be trying to make it even more outstanding!

Video in finer resolution - <http://tinyurl.com/c7yywe6>

Video with less resolution, better for mobiles - <http://tinyurl.com/cbhvmdt>

News and updates from Members across the Nation:



Pat Hall from Philadelphia area reports:

Chillicothe Ohio for a Charming of the Plow Faining honoring Mother Nerthus and the stirrings of new life in the earth. Chillicothe was chosen because it is where Troy Wisehart, Gothi of Falcon Kindred, had landed with his traveling tree trimming team. The Faining was initially slated for Lima Ohio, then possibly Hillsboro, and then finally Chillicothe as we followed Troy's assignments. Attendees came from considerable distances to be a part of this and I thank them all. Attendees were: Troy Wisehart, Patricia Hall (AFA Folkbuilder), Dennis Boltenhouse (AFA Folkbuilder for Ohio and surrounds) and his wife Cynthia with their children Dennis III, Jacob, and Michaela, Jason and Camille Wright with their children, Aria and Galen, and Lonny Heft. We met at 10 a.m. in Yoctangee Park at a lovely gazebo by the water and were greeted by an extremely tall and well-fed swan. The swan stayed with us throughout the set-up of the altar and the gathering of the folk. Greens were gathered from a Norway Spruce for the blessing. The tree glistened with new sap, some of which Troy harvested for the recels. The ritual was led by Troy who was assisted by the Valkyrie Aria Wright (5 years old). Aria in turn was assisted, minimally, by Patricia. Garden implements, work tools and seed packs were placed on the altar for blessings. Troy blew the horn and sounded the drum to begin the rite. The Hammer Hallowing was performed and Nerthus was called upon and came. The horn was passed by the Valkyrie with her assistant standing behind her followed by the Gothi carrying the bowl and green for the blessing. The remains of the horn was poured into the bowl to be carried in procession back to the spruce along with the taken greens. All was returned to the spruce...a gift for a gift...poured into the ground. At the end of rite each person chose a single rune which were individually recorded and later tallied for the group as a whole. The individual pull was the energy for the person alone; the group tally was the overriding energy for all of us participating in this ritual together.. the rune of the tally was WUNJOAs Troy ended the rite, Patricia presented him with a gift of a limb of an oak tree that had been struck by lightning. The rite ended and lively conversation began as we packed up to leave the park and head to feast and sumble. We had a private room at the Old Canal Restaurant. The food was great ; the conversation priceless. It was rewarding and humbling to be able to share with such good solid Heathen folks! The sumble was formal and the traditional 3 rounds. The Valkyrie was Michaela Boltenhouse, a lovely young lady. Many strong and good words and heartfelt were poured into the well... And we managed to do all the while the restaurant was pumping Christian rock through its speakers! The folk, many unknown to each other before this day, were united in purpose and displayed a reverence that was palpable



Bryan D. Wilton Folkbuilder OK, AR, KS, MO

I usually open the doors to as many Asatruars as I can whenever there is a holiday or really for any reason a group of us can get together and raise a horn. This last Charming of the Plow I was overjoyed that Ryan Richter and his wife Julie, Kimberley Battersby, James Harmon, Eric Woodard, and Shawn Biggs all made the little trek up to the farm and spent a day with Stephanie, Scarlett and myself. Stephanie made us a fine meal, and I think everyone got a full belly. Ryan makes some of the best home brew I've ever had the chance to drink and Kimberley brought down some mead that simply out of this world. We took a little time and did some target shooting before dinner. Nothing fancy just having a

day in the company of heathens. After dinner we went down the well, invoked Frey's blessing, blessed some of the seed I have used in pasture for hay and planted some spring bulbs. As we passed the horn and believed in what we were doing, it was a special thing to encourage new life and look forward to the rewards we can all enjoy from our hard work. Anytime someone is traveling or wants to get away from it all and enjoy some of the peace that comes with nature and being free to enjoy Asatru please call and we would be happy to have you at our house as well.

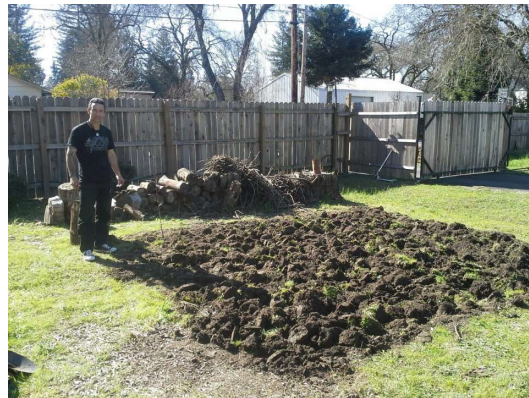
Charming of the Plow - NORTH BAY 2013

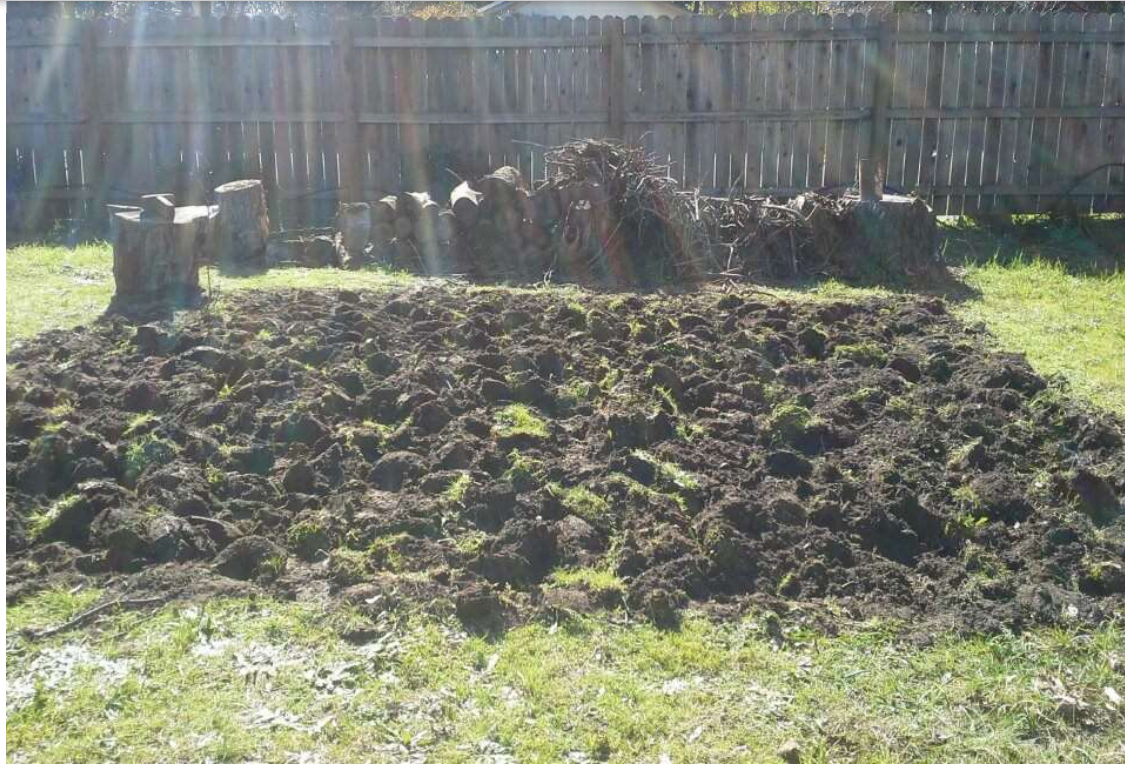
In Santa Rosa California went great. We had a good size turn out with new folk and old .Ted and Mike hosted and did a great job at it . we feasted talked planted a fruit tree of are vice & virtue Mike led us in blot and Steve led us in symbol .We ended later than planned like always and some stayed by the fireALL IN ALL IT WAS GREAT ...with more to come the next north bay AFA gathering will be in early April for Ostara held at Muir Beach.

See the wonderful pictures below!











AFA day trip to Muir Beach



Daniel Updike, Canada -

We have been fairly laid back January and February. Yule was an intense time for us, with a feast and evening blot & Symbel. We did hold Charming the Plow on the 23rd of February, with a good turnout of members along with some qualified guests that were brought. Our next blot will be at the end of April, and we will be (if all things work right) taking some pictures and having something along those lines to share with you. From Yule until now, our focus has been internal, and in the process of solidifying what we have gained from the previous year.



Alaska Yule 2012

Matt Flavel, Alaska

In January, Alaskan AFA members and friends gathered to celebrate the Icelandic holiday of Thorrablot. It was a fun filled day of merriment and fellowship kicked off by a blot to Thor. As a part of our feast we each brought a can of soup of our choosing and mixed it in one large pot (something I remembered fondly from my cub scout days) the result was...interesting. A good time was had by all and we grew as a community. In February we again gathered for the Charming of the Plow. Up here the ground is still hard frozen and under a healthy layer of snow so we focused our observance on industriousness and labor for the work year just begun. We held blot to Freyr and the Vanir and followed it up with a blessing of the tools of our trades and our hobbies. Of the items blessed there were drums and paint brushes, body armor and gloves, keys and dogtags. Our younger men in

followed by feast and sumble well into the night.





Upcoming 2013 Events

Deep South Region Picnic Moot

Jacksonville, Florida is the location for the Deep South Region Picnic Moot! Organized by new Apprentice Folkbuilder Charlotte Hoxie, this event will happen on March 23 in a beautiful park. All AFA members within driving distance are invited to attend! For more information, contact choxie@runestone.org.

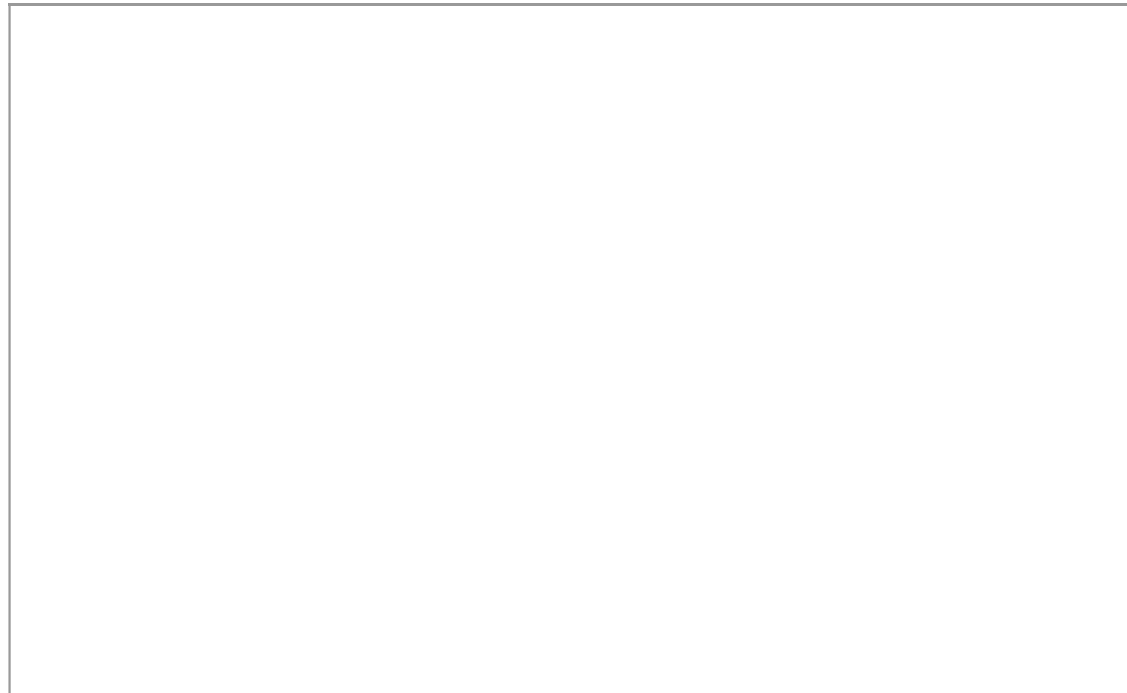
Elizabeth Salix from the Olympic Peninsula -

Saturday, March 23rd at 13:00, we're having an Ostara Blót up here on the Olympic Peninsula of Washington State, and any Folk in the area are welcome to attend! The event will be at Harper Park, 3500 Southworth Drive, Southworth WA. We will have food afterward, potluck style, please email me what foods you want to bring so we don't end up with 16 packages of bratwurst again. I plan to make a Scottish mince pie and

Events in Northern California


Local AFA members have been active since Yule, beginning with the Nevada County Toy Run where we ran a food and an information booth; Twelfth Night Picnic at Muir Beach in Marin County, culminating with dinner at the historic English pub, Pelican Inn; a “Charming of the Plow” gathering at a private home in Sonoma County, and dinner and picnics with blots at two regional parks. We're blessed to have two exceptional Folkbuilders, Marc MacLeod and Sean Saindon, who work well together maintaining contact with our local members.

On Sunday, March 24th, all AFA members are invited to attend an Eostre (Ostara) Celebration at the McNallen home in rural Nevada County. A traditional feast, blot, activities for the kinder-folk, and inspirational words from Steve will recharge us for all the demands of putting on our biggest west-coast gathering of the year – the *Mother of All Moots*.



Napa, California
May 10 - 12, 2013

The
MOTHER
of all
MOOTS



runestone.org

Mother of all Moots - "MoM," for short - is set for May 10-12 in a camp near Napa, California. This is the biggest AFA West Coast event for the year, and people are

out” to expand beyond our present parameters.

MoM will feature our traditional menu of live music. John Weed and Stuart Mason, both members of Celtic powerhouse *Molly's Revenge*, will use fiddle, guitar, mandolin and banjo to explore the musical connections between Ireland and America, with detours through Scotland and Canada.

Rituals? Of course! We will tap the numinous inside each of us as we commune with the Gods and Goddesses. AFA events do rituals like none other and you won't be disappointed this year, either!

Obeing Mother's Day, our mothers will be given lots of attention Sunday morning with a special brunch, blot, and even a Maypole dance. Those who are with us in spirit will be remembered, too.

Look for presentations by various AFA leaders, and a special workshop on the practical aspects of personal evolution by Steve McNallen.

Expect to come away motivated, educated, and inspired!

You'll find MoM's event page on Facebook - [Click Here](#) where you can follow all the latest news, see a slideshow of Enchanted Hills Camp, and tell everyone you're coming! If you're not on Facebook, contact Steve and Sheila at afa@runestone.org. Write to us if you need a registration form.

IMPORTANT: You must confirm your registration by April 25, although payment can come in later.

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