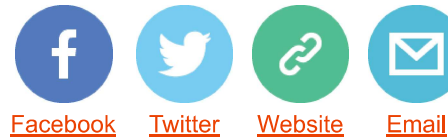


Asatru Folk Assembly's The Voice



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.

Donate to the AFA



A Few Words from Steve

Something new is always happening around here â€” but the rate of progress is about to accelerate like a rocket!

The first real breakthroughs started a couple of weeks ago, when we rolled out a plan for AFA Folkbuilders to hold monthly conference calls for members within their respective regions. Each of you will get an opportunity to take part in these. In fact, many of you have

be vastly improved communications between the average AFA member and his or her Folkbuilders. This is how we build community!

At just about the same time, another months-in-the-making plan came to fruition. Our tech-and-project-management guy Stew Williams, supported by Matt Flavel and Clifford Erickson, has radically revised the membership application system here at the AFA. It is now much more automated...faster...with better feedback to applicants. One huge advantage of this: It frees Sheila from minor clerical work, so she can focus on giving that motherly, personal touch that she does so well. We've had the system in place for a couple of weeks now, and are progressively working the glitches out of the system. The results? A better, more efficient, applicant-friendly Asatru Folk Assembly.

These are just the first two of four "REALLY BIG THINGS" happening over the next thirty to sixty days. The third one represents a quantum leap in our ability to communicate the AFA message. It will become apparent in the week or two. The fourth one is nothing less than spectacular. It is...well, I will save that for a surprise!

This is an exciting time to be in the AFA! Do you have friends who are former members, but have let their membership lapse? Let them know this is the time to get back on board. There are big changes headed our way in the days and weeks to come, and they will NOT want to miss the excitement!

Hail the Gods!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!

Ostara In the South

OSTARA IN THE SOUTH: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW!

Last year's event was a great success, and we're following up this year with a high-powered lineup. Steve and Sheila will be there, and you'll get "face time" with most of the AFA national officers as well. The program will be lively and informative, and the rituals will be second-to-none.

Here are the essentials -

First of all, note that the last day for registration is March 13th!

Dates:

Beginning on Friday March 20th, 4:00 p.m., and ending on Sunday, March 22nd, 12:00 p.m.

Where: Fortson 4-H center - 999 Fortson Rd, Hampton, GA 30228

Bring: Bedding and towels. Donations of auction items are earnestly solicited!

The event page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/748910728498265>

The registration page: <http://ostarasouth15.eventzilla.net/web/event?eventid=2139046045>

Though the registration deadline is March 13, your prompt registration will help us in our event planning.

See you there!

Communication - To You, From You!

With all the options for communicating, we need to know the best way to reach you. If you

Membership account??

You can access yours at www.member.asatrufolkassembly.org where you™ll log in with your email address of record or your login name. You can also set up or change your membership level and payment plan. That, alone, is extremely helpful to us. Updating your mailing address, phone number, and email are all things you can do yourself.

If you joined under a family membership, we need to have both spouses complete a membership application. This will ensure that both get access to all member-benefits such as Forums, newsletters, etc. There is no additional cost for the second person. You may want to have your spouse officially sign up with his/her own account. Minor children have no membership status but fall under their parents™ membership.

If you have problems with technical issues, write to tech@runestone.org and Stew or Clifford will help you out. For other questions, write to your Folkbuilder or Sheila at afa@runestone.org.

Matt Flavel and Sheila are now working together processing applications and membership renewals. We appreciate your patience during this time of transition.

If you didn™t receive your lapel pin and membership card, let us know. If it was due to a bad address, that needs to be corrected before they™re sent out again.

Entrepreneur Corner

LET THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION HELP YOU BECOME AN ENTREPRENEUR!

Thinking about starting a business? The SBA can help.

works! You can open an account that will let you plan your business step-by-step and save your work for later - a really invaluable tool. And of course, it's all free (more accurately, paid for courtesy of the taxpayers - you paid for it, so you might as well use it!).

Just go to <http://www.sba.gov> to get started!

AFA Family Safety Program: The Word Prepper

What is the difference between preppers and survivalists? They are interchangeable terms, which are similar but have small differences between them.

Either way, the preppers and survivalists are preparing for situations that may arise from natural or man-made disasters.

Preppers are people who prepare for the long haul and go beyond just surviving a short-term or long-term interval. These people are preparing to be self-reliant or go "off the grid" (self-sustaining) in order to live as normal a life as possible.

Self-reliance is the name of the game for preppers. They will do whatever it takes to make sure they and their families survive no matter how long it takes, no matter what the situation. A lot of preppers begin by making sure they can survive in their homes. Everything they do and store is for survival or self-containment.

Preppers make sure they can provide food and water for themselves and family and also have a way to protect those assets. They usually have a minimum of three days' worth of food but also have taken the time to learn how to garden and grow their own food.

If a prepper lives on a farm or piece of land, he or she will also make sure they have livestock such as a cow, goats, pigs, chickens (maybe one rooster) and honeybees. If they have room for sheep they will most likely purchase a couple of those as well. A horse can also come in handy for transportation and some of the harder labor items.

into cheese. Honeybees can provide the sweet honey you might be craving for food you are preparing and are also used for pollination. And sheep can provide wool.

This sounds like going back to the old days, doesn't it, where everything was accomplished by hand? Well, this is exactly what will happen if a large disaster occurs. The modern day life as we know it will probably go away and it may not return in your lifetime so it is better to be prepared (prepper) ahead of time.

Preppers not only grow the food but they also find resourceful ways to store it. Do you have a basement? How about an old tornado shelter? Can you dig a deep hole? These are all excellent places to store food long term. Preppers think along the lines of how their ancestors used to live. The self-reliant way of life was a long time ago but those people relied on themselves and good old-fashioned hard work. Their kids were a part of this equation as well.

A survivalist is someone who is preparing for the short-term only. They make sure in the event a disaster hits their town they are prepared to survive until normal resources are put back on line. A short disaster could last weeks or a couple of months.

Preparing to "bug out" is something a survivalist is prepared to do. A survivalist will have "bug-out bags" ready to go for himself and each member of his family. The bug-out bag will have everything you will need to survive in case you have to hike out of your current area and survive for a few days.

The bug-out bag will have things like food, water, clothing, sleeping equipment, and first-aid or safety items. The survivalist will make an escape route on a map and designate a safe place for everyone to meet in the event of disaster.

The line becomes blurred in figuring out what the difference is between a prepper and a survivalist, but the name of the game is to survive disasters!



the Maximum

<-- Sara says, "Learn a new skill weekly!"

AFA Clergy

Greetings from the Clergy desk... and welcome to March! This month, we in the Northern Hemisphere are looking forward to Spring now: song birds, family picnics, egg hunting... and all the Scotch eggs that we can eat! At this time of year we see many babies born, and many new couples planning their weddings. Many have come recently for spiritual counsel, and even simple conversation. Whatever your need, we are here if you, and proud to be in your service. If you, or an AFA member you know, needs to get in touch with clergy for any reason, please contact us at Clergy@Runestone.org. Happy Spring... And Merry Ostara!

Reflections from a Folkbuilder by Nick Ferreri



As a Folkbuilder, or in my case apprentice Folkbuilder, one has many duties. It's not just introducing ourselves to the newest members of the AFA, it is also tending to the needs of our local communities. On February 7th, 2015, I was afforded an opportunity to do just that.

A few weeks before the 20th wedding anniversary of Patrick and Melissa McAleer, Patrick contacted me to find out if I knew anyone that could perform an Asatru wedding vow renewal. Well it just so happens that I do know such a person: not only a member of the AFA clergy but the head of the clergy program.

I put Patrick in contact with Rebecca Radcliff, and the rest is history. Rebecca made the arrangements with Patrick, and on February 7th, 2015, it all came together.

Patrick, Melissa, and a few of their close family "including their motorcycle and Asatru family" celebrated 20 years of wedded bliss. The first part of the ceremony was Patrick's renunciation of his Catholic past, then there was the main event. Rebecca did a beautifully worded and well executed ceremony in which everyone in attendance took part.

For my part, introducing a few new people to the AFA and Asatru was one thing, having Rebecca and family at my home was amazing, but the most important part of this was

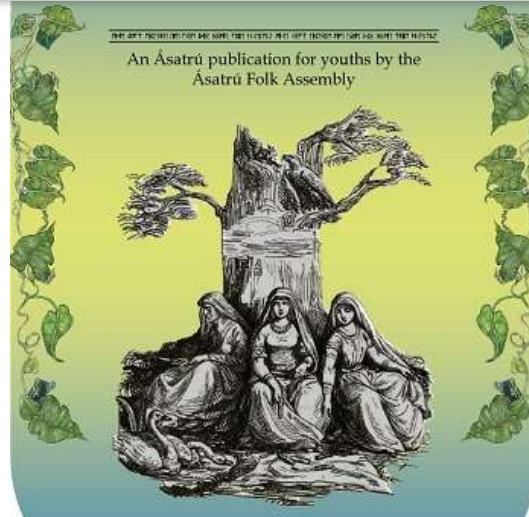
Rebecca adds: It was truly an honor to be a part of the marriage between Patrick and Melissa. I enjoyed working with them both as we prepared the ritual steps and details. Asatru marriage ceremonies form a unique bond between husband and wife because of the emotional and intimate nature of the ritual itself—as well as bonding the whole community, for with each woven thread our community spirit gains strength and spirit, ever-growing. My deepest thanks for the honor of officiating your special event, and congratulations to the (re)wedded couple, Patrick and Melissa!

Circle of Eir - A Call to Healing

AFA Circle of Eir is up and working. A core group performs a monthly healing ritual, calling on Eir and naming those AFA members and families in need of healing. If you would like to be in the AFA Circle of Eir Facebook group or if you would just like to submit the name of someone who needs healing, please let me know at patriciahall@runestone.org. The next healing ritual, which is jointly done by AFA members from both the States and Europe the first Thursday of each month, will be under the full moon on Thursday, March 5, at midnight EST/USA.

Runepobble

Runepobble: An AFA e-publication for
Asatru families!



The next issue of Runepebble will be available on May 1st, and we are looking for contributors. The theme will be "Summer Fruits." In this issue we will indulge in fruits that our ancestors enjoyed, and take a look at where the fruits that we enjoy today have come from, how they were used, and why some were sacred to the gods. As always, we accept submissions, relevant or not, to the theme, including: articles, pictures and art you have made, stories, crafts, and recipes. Send your submissions, questions, and even suggestions to Rebecca at Runepebble@Runestone.org. All submissions for that issue are due no later than April 29th.

Remember: though this is a publication for children, we always encourage any adults to get involved... parents or not! Children are our future... and so we must work together as a community to see to it that their future is a bright one, one with deep and strong foundations!

Alfrothul Report
from David Wolfheart



Alfrothul held blot to Thor on a mountain near Barcelona. Food and drink offerings to the god of the true folk were made; a meal was held, with talks about the organization of new events and projects for Alfrothul and the AFA.



Alfrothul Vali and Odin Blot

AFA Alfrothul & Southern Europe held blot to Vali and Odin on a mountain near Barcelona. Offerings and libations to Allfather, including an offering of a loaf of bread depicting the face of Odin, were made. A libation and an offering of a handmade arrow were made to Vali.

Membership pins were delivered to AFA members. A meal was held, with talks on the organization of an Ostara celebration,

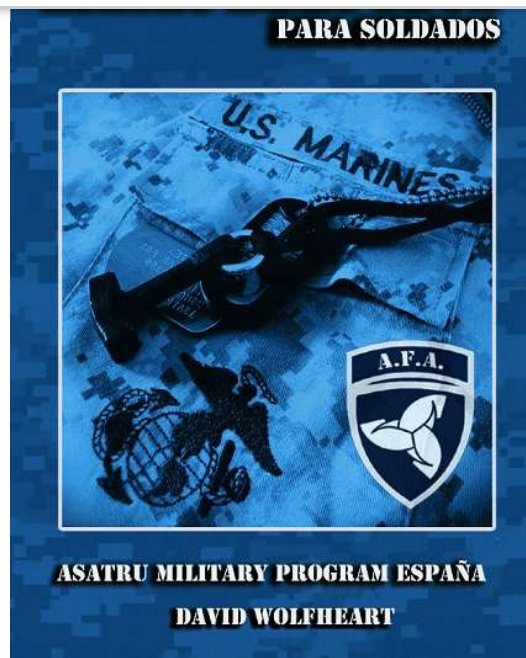
Wolfheart.





Asatru Book of Faith for Soldiers

News from Spain: There is a new Spanish-language book called *Asatru*



Asatru Military Program of Spain and the brothers and sisters in Spain.

Doings in the Northern Plains by Blaine Qualls, Apprentice Folkbuilder

February was a bit slower paced for us here in the North, at least outwardly. Inwardly and behind the scenes much was happening. We worked out the logistics for tele-conferences and had our trial run the evening of the 22nd: everything went very smoothly and the hope is to begin doing these on a monthly basis and get all of the regional membership involved.

Planning for our Ostara event in North Dakota is going full steam. This looks to be a very well attended event, with upwards of 40 Tru men and women gathering to honor the coming spring. As of now we have run out of available bed space, but should any of you plan to be up this way, get in touch with me and I will find you a place.

Before I close I just want to mention a member who is trying to really grow the AFA in Minnesota: Jason Gallagher. He is really fired up to see us grow there; he is beginning to

should look him up.

Hope everyone has a great Ostara and a great month. Hail the AFA!

Northern California Charming of the Plow from Marc Macleod, Folkbuilder





On Sunday, February 22nd, we gathered for Charming of the Plow. It was a beautiful day at Jack London Historical Park, and a great mix of about 45 attendees. Steve McNallen started things off with a greeting to the Gods, followed by a worthy feast. After our meal, Mike Hunter started a powerful blot to honor Frey. Last but not least we nurtured the oak tree that we planted there last year. All and all a great day.





News from the Northeast and Upper South from Patricia Hall, Folkbuilder

REGIONAL CONFERENCE CALL

We had a great, informative, and enthusiastic February conference call with Steve McNallen! There was much good discussion about moving the AFA forward and serving the needs of our community. Steve was energized and impressed with everyone on this call and as a result, he has requested all of our Folkbuilders to initiate conference calls within their own regions. So a huge THANKS to all those who attended. YOU ROCK!

Our next Northeast/Upper South conference call will be at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10. We normally have the call the first Tuesday of the month; however, because of a conflict in schedules on that night, the call is moved out one week for this month. Come have a chat, ask a question, express any concerns, and talk about your good ideas for the advancement of the AFA and our folk! The call is optional. Hope to hear you there! Toll free number is: 866-730-7514 Participant Code is: 757055

LANSDALE PA HIKEMOOT and PUBMOOT - MONTHLY

Our own Cliff Erickson hosts a monthly pubmoot at The Lansdale Tavern in Lansdale, PA. The next one will be held on Saturday, March 14, from 2 to 5 p.m. Cliff also hosts a pre-pub hikemoot on the same day from 11 to 1:30 for those who need to build an appetite

directly at cerickson@runetone.org If you would like tips as to the logistics of setting up a pub- or hikemoot in your area, please feel free to contact me at patriciahall@runestone.org

RUNE STUDY

Last May, a rune study group made of up of AFA and non-AFA folk was formed and is meeting at members'™ homes in the eastern PA area on a monthly basis. We are still going strong and growing, though we unfortunately took a few-month hit when I had to have knee surgery! But I am coming back! We have gone from 5 members to 15. If anyone would like help with logistics and materials to start their own rune or lore study group, please contact me at patriciahall@runestone.org.

NORTHWESTERN NEW JERSEY - Moots and Rituals

And this in from AFA member Joseph Bloch! Skylands Asatru Fellowship (<http://www.skylandsasatru.org>) is in the process of forming in northwestern New Jersey and is hosting the following recurring events:

Bimonthly pubmoot in Denville, NJ, with this month's™ event at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 7th: An informal get-together to enjoy good food, good drink, and good conversation.

New Moon Offering to the Land-wights in Byram, NJ, at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, March 20th. Join us as we make a traditional offering of cakes and ale to the local land-spirits in thanks for luck and prosperity in the coming month.

Details can be found on our website (<http://www.skylandsasatru.org>). Hope to see you there!

OSTARA

And please, east coasters, do not forget Ostara in March in Georgia! I have registered and would love to meet as many of you as possible in person! Hail the Northeast! Hail the

News from the Northwest

RAPTOR ROAD TRIP



On Saturday, February 7th, four Northwest AFA members journeyed to Sauvie Island, Oregon, for Raptor Road Trip, an event put on by the Audubon Society of Portland. We drove down to Portland, picked up Brian and Karl, and drove along the Columbia River to Sauvie Island. We paid for our parking pass, received our map, and equipped with binoculars, set out on our birdwatching adventure. At the three different wildlife viewing stations, we had the opportunity to view several species of birds of prey, including adult and juvenile bald eagles, red tailed hawks, kestrels, and harriers, as they return Northward on their spring migration. We also got to see snow geese, tundra swans, kingfishers, egrets, herons, Canada geese, and various species of ducks that inhabit the wetlands.

Thanks Brian and Karl for hosting this excellent adventure! Stay tuned for more Portland area events!

CHARMING OF THE PLOW



On Sunday, February 22nd, Northwest AFA members and friends gathered for a Charming of the Plow celebration in Centralia, Washington. The Folk arrived from near and far, most arriving early for socializing and set-up; we met eight new Folk, big and small. Karl taught some of the wee Folk how to play Hnefatafl, while Rachael led some in a paper craft.

When everyone had arrived, we processed down to the middle of the field for our Charming of the Plow blot, which included a ritual seed planting â€“ now officially a Northwest tradition. The Gods were hailed, each person was given a peat pod, and as the bowl of seeds went around, they were given the blessing of the bounty of Freyr as they were planted. As the horn of water (drawn from our well) went around, each person placed a hand on it and put their blessings into the water of the land. The horn went around a second time, and each pod was watered with the bounty of Freyja and the blessings of Vali. The remaining water was returned to the earth, and the Folk returned inside for a "breakFeast" of Swedish pancakes with homemade jam, sausage, eggs, and bacon. The

UPCOMING EVENTS

Our next Northwest event will be for Ostara. As none of us are able to make it down to Ostara in the South, we intend to hold a campout the weekend of March 20-22 at a Washington state park. Send email to esalix@runestone.org for details!

Great Northwest Freyfaxi is less than 6 months away! This year's dates will be August 14-16 (possibly 17), at a beautiful camp in Ocean Park, WA. Rates will be quite affordable, now is the time to start making plans! Nearby airports are Portland (PDX) and SeaTac (SEA). Last year we had Folk attend from all over the West, with one person driving all the way from Texas! This year's event is expected to be bigger and better than last year's, and is definitely an experience not to be missed!

For more information, please send email to esalix@runestone.org.

Hail the Gods!
Hail the Folk!
Hail the Ancestors!
Hail the Land!
Hail the AFA!

-E. Salix
Northwest Folkbuilder

**Deep South Charming of the Plow
from Matt Flavel, Folkbuilder Coordinator**



On Sunday the 22nd, members of the AFA™s Deep South region gathered for a Charming of the Plow. Amid a grove of live oak and magnolia, we gave blot to Frey and received his blessings upon our persons and our tools. We shared a delicious BBQ potluck meal and spoke of Asatruar far away. The event was concluded with an intimate

Texas Charming of the Plow from Terry Unger



Fourteen of the Folk gathered on February 7th at Joe and Klyie Spencer's house to celebrate the Charming of the Plow. And celebrate we did, with blot and sumbel around a roaring fire. Once again, the Texas food was outstanding and creatively accented with Clyde Hay's hand-made mead! Two lectures, the first by Terry Unger and the second by Joe Spencer, focused on the need to reach out to our people and tell them about the good things of Asatru. During the third round of sumbel, Unger talked about the personal

hugely felt, charming the plow for future gatherings.

Upcoming Texas Gathering

Date: Sunday March 8th, 2015

Time: 1:00 PM

Greetings!

Kylie and I will be hosting a Heathen Mixer....basically, weather permitting, we'll be holding a small BBQ at the house. No specific talk, no topic or agenda, just a get-together to BBQ and meet the local folk. It will be pot luck, and I'll be doing hot dogs, hamburgers, and BBQ chicken on the grill. This is our attempt to host an event that reaches out to local heathens and give them a chance to make some contacts locally (in the greater Houston area). I'm sure at some point we will pass the horn and do a bit of toasting and boasting, but this isn't an official holiday event....just folk getting together and sharing food and drink. Our last gathering (early February) saw 14 heathens sharing good times at our home. We are hoping to make this a monthly occurrence.

My home is in Tomball, TX, which is in NW Harris County. I will post the address as we get a bit closer to the date. I do love to share our home and hospitality with our folk, and look forward to meeting some of you!

Oh, we will be playing Kubb, as well...finally getting a chance to break out the best Viking lawn game ever!

Please feel free to contact me for specifics.

Joe Spencer

spencer79@att.net

MAKING VACATIONS PLANS FOR 2015?

The following large gatherings are scheduled, with the camps already reserved:

OSTARA, Fortson 4-H Center, Hampton, GA, March 20 – 22

Registration is now up at Ostarasouth15.eventzilla.net.

For more information, contact Folkbuilder Charlotte Hoxie, choxie@runestone.org!

WEST COAST MIDSUMMER, CYO Camp, Occidental, CA, June 5 – 7

GREAT NORTHWEST FREYFAXI, Ocean Park, WA, August 14 – 16 (or 17)

WINTER NIGHTS IN THE POCONOS, Camp Netimus, Milford, PA, October 16 – 18

We urge all members to come experience at least one major gathering this year. You'll find it's life-changing!

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