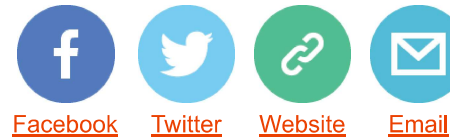


Asatru Folk Assembly's The Voice



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

As you all know, we have officers called Folkbuilders whose job it is to introduce people to the AFA, answer questions, and sponsor events. Their task is to "put a local face on a national organization." This builds the Folk...hence the title "Folkbuilders."

But actually, we should all be Folkbuilders. You, me, all of us are "local faces of a national organization." That doesn't mean we aggressively bother people, but each of us should

Our role is to pique interest, be open, and accept the rewards that will come.

But why build the Folk at all? The AFA is, so far as I know, unique among modern Germanic religious groups in that we have a Declaration of Purpose. We have a vision of the world we want. To bring that world into being we are actively and organically forging a sort of meta-tribe scattered across the length and breadth of the land and around the world, constructing an alternative to the produce-and-consume, soulless, rootless monstrosity in which we live. One AFA member links to another, and a local community of AFA-folk is born. They grow, strengthen the bonds that tie them together, and reach out to similar AFA communities elsewhere. We become ever more capable of aiding each other, more dedicated in our allegiance to each other, more involved with each other. Concentric circles of duty and devotion expand outward, bound by the Declaration of Purpose and the Law of the Hall.

Is this working? Yes! Compare the number of major AFA events each year. Three years ago we met annually in California for Midsummer; now we have four comparable events, one in each corner of the USA. And even more significant is the explosion of activity sponsored locally by our AFA Folkbuilders peppered across the continent as well as in Europe. We are thriving.

Step by step, we build the world in which we choose to live. Reach out to other AFAers in your area...or create some! Your (official!) Folkbuilder will give you help and advice. Meet for coffee. Get to know each other. Honor the Gods and Goddesses. Grow the Folk.

Welcome to the adventure and the challenge of building a new world!

**Music Line-Up for Winter Nights in the Poconos
October 17 - 19**

We always have good music at Winter Nights. Our frequent guests are of course Michael

decades of friendship many of us share with them.

Knotwork will be back this year, including the talented guitarist Robert Ferbrache along with Michael and Annabel. Knotwork recently returned from an extensive European tour and no doubt will have fascinating stories to tell about what's happening on our mother continent. Robert and Nicholas of Changes are returning, too, and we know we can expect their special mix of music and anecdote, with memorable "even astounding!" conversations to follow around the fire.

Last year we also had the Italian band Tears of Othila. Their charming personalities warmed us on the chilly nights. They won't be with us, but we do have a new treat: Blood and Sun. This band is relatively new, having got their start in 2011. Heathen Harvest says of them that "Blood and Sun have really set the bar high for a new generation neofolk" which "will be hard to top." This should be a real treat! We are really looking forward to giving Blood and Sun a good welcome and getting to know them.

As usual, the AFA brings you the best of the old and the new. You want to be there with us!



But Wait! There's (Much) More at Winter Nights!

with our third annual WVN celebration almost upon us, we want to remind you of some of the things you'll miss out on if you don't attend this year – like being able to spend time with Steve and Sheila McNallen, Brad Taylor-Hicks and Gili, Matt Flavel, Rebecca Radcliff, Pat Hall, Bryan Wilton, Nick Ferri, plus lots of other people who you've heard about for years.

Besides the world-class musicians who will be performing, here are some of the presentations: a herb/incense workshop with Rebecca Radcliff, Guido Von List by Annabel Moynihan, galder workshop with Brad Taylor-Hicks, ritualized workout with Calen Smith, a lecture by Steve McNallen, update on AFA Denmark by Danish Folkbuilder Lars Irenesson, Nornir talk by Patricia Hall, kombucha workshop by Gili Lochner.

Rituals will include the Opening Ceremony – Greeting to the Gods by Steve, Disablot by Rebecca and Patricia, Odin Blot by Steve, and Wayfarer's Blot by Bryan Wilton. There will also be a clergy ordination and an evening wedding.

For our families, the – Haunted Forest – will be returning Saturday night to give the children squeals of delight. Storytelling and craft activities will take place, too.

For the first time ever at Winter Nights, we'll have tee shirts made up for the event, and AFA members will get a sizable discount. Expect to see a large assortment of vendors this year, to include Josh Buckley from Ultra Publishing who will have **TYR 4**, fresh off the press, for sale.

And who could forget the auction, led by Bradley Taylor-Hicks? Please be generous with your donations of both items and cash. As you can tell, these events cost more than we make from registrations, so your help is greatly appreciated. And all donations are tax-deductible.

IMPORTANT – REGISTER BY OCTOBER 10TH!

There is a slight discount if you prepay your registration, which is accessed through the AFA website: www.runestone.org. However, we do need an RSVP from everyone who

last day for registrations.

The AFA Family Safety Program

Knives and "Jim's Law"

by Steve McNallen

Jim, an AFA member, is well-known for his superb outdoor skills and shooting ability. He's given presentations on disaster preparedness at several of our annual events, and they're always memorable. For example, here's a quote: "Three is the minimum, not the maximum, number of knives you must have. If you have one knife, you have no knife. If you have two knives, you only have one. You must have three â€" as a minimum." I call these words of wisdom "Jim's Law."

What Jim means, of course, is that you can easily lose or break a single knife. Having two increases your chance of actually having one that functions, but it's still no guarantee â€" life could hit you with a double whammy. If you own three, your chances improve even more.

So where do you keep all these knives? Distribute them. Put one in your pocket and another in your vehicle. Keep a third one in your emergency "bug-out bag" at home.

But it's not just about knives: "Jim's Law" applies to all sorts of things, like flashlights, guns, basic first aid supplies, and bottle openers. It's easy to dismiss this as obvious, but don't underestimate it. You need to incorporate it into your family preparedness plan. Redundancy can literally save your life, or those of your spouse and children, so don't just blow it off.

If you've been following these little essays for the last few months, you know you've been urged (1) to set aside a few days' of emergency food, (2) to put first aid kits in your family's vehicles, and (3) to post your Folkbuilder's contact information by your telephone (and of

The Voice.

This month, I want you to put Jim's Law into practice by purchasing three knives and putting them where you can reach them in an emergency.

When you join the AFA, you commit to us, and we commit to you. That means helping you in the case of fire, flood, civil disorder, hurricane, or tornado. Remember to immediately notify your Folkbuilder in the case of any of these “ and if you take the steps we outline in each issue of The Voice, you can drastically increase your family's preparedness in even a few months.

We're in this together!

Vintage Video of Steve McNallen on the Gods, Asatru, and More!

We announced this one online a few days ago, but it's a classic so share it with your friends. Despite its age, this is a good introduction for people who are new to the practice of our faith.

This video was made for Ostara 1993 and includes Steve McNallen talking about Asatru in general and the early years of the revival in the United States in particular. Steve gives a basic introduction to the Gods and Goddesses and the personal values that underlie our spirituality. He continues with a description of the kind of world we want to see and how we will bring it into being. It includes lots of personal anecdotes about the founding of Asatru in America and its formative years. The presentation is unique in that it dates to the period between the expiration of the Asatru Free Assembly and the founding of its successor, the present-day Asatru Folk Assembly. Check it out at “

<http://tinyurl.com/lobf3sk>

AFA Membership Services Portal Up and Running

With the new AFA Member Services Portal, you can change your membership subscription, see a record of your payments, edit your profile, and read archived back issues of The Voice! Thank you, Stew, for setting up this neat system! (And for the ongoing improvements in the membership system, which are making a big difference in this growing organization's administrative function!)

Membership Notes

AFA continues to grow, with September 2014 breaking all previous records. Our new database and member-services portal are now activated – which means a big transition for our Folkbuilders as we learn the new system. Thank you for your patience!

Because all AFA operations are done by volunteers with full-time jobs and other obligations, sometimes we're not as efficient as we'd like to be. Please be persistent in your communication with us. Many membership tasks are not automated so oversights sometimes happened. Just write to Sheila at afa@runestone.org if you haven't received something or want to communicate with the main office. (We often get returned mail from USPS, so keeping your address current saves us time and money.)

Many members are still struggling due to a lagging economy in parts of the country, but for some of you, your finances have made a big turn-around. Since your donations, including your membership dues, are tax-deductible, won't you consider increasing your membership contribution this year? Most of us will never notice a difference of \$5 or even \$10 a month, compared to \$2.50. Think about how easy it is to lose track of even \$25 over the course of a whole month. Imagine what that money would mean to the AFA.

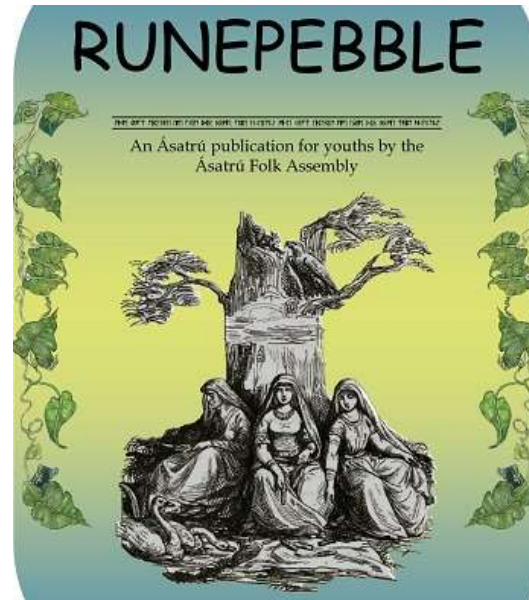
AFA Clergy Applications

We are now accepting applications for the 2015 Clergy Program! The AFA Clergy Program is a two-year program for those who wish to serve the Ásatrú community as ordained AFA clergy. Officially ordained Goár can provide services that require federal recognition in most regions (e.g., marriages), in addition to the other usual services clergy provides.

If you are interested in applying, please visit our website at:

<http://tinyurl.com/afaclergyprogram> to read more about the program and requirements. At the bottom of the page you will find a PDF application, which also contains all of the information you will need before applying. If you have any questions, please contact the Clergy Program Director at Clergy@Runestone.org.

Runepobble



Runepobble: An AFA e-publication for Ásatrú families!

it's already been a month since we released the last issue of Runepebble? This means that we are only one month away from the release of the next issue. The November/December issue will focus on "The Twelve Days of Yule." We are always on the look-out for folks who would like to contribute to this fantastic children's e-publication. If you are interested in adding submissions from your family, please contact our Runepebble editor, Rebecca Radcliff, at Runepebble@Runestone.org.

Mr. Potato, or Havamal Verse 35
by Joe Spencer

*A guest must depart again on his way,
nor stay in the same place ever;
if he bide too long on another's bench
the loved one soon becomes loathed.*
Havamal, 35

So, I have this friend, right? He needed a place to stay. He had just moved out of his mother's house (1st sign of trouble) and was moving down to North Carolina to live with his new girlfriend (2nd sign) that he met over the internet (3rd sign), but since she was still married (4th sign), he needed somewhere to stay for a few days (5th sign) until she could kick out her soon-to-be ex-husband (6th sign). Did I mention he was unemployed (7th sign), had no post-secondary education (8th sign), and was teaching himself to be a tattoo artist (9th, 10th, and 11th signs)? We will call this friend Potato.



Mr. Potato

So, being the nice guy (gullible, spineless) that I was prior to joining the military, I did the “right thing”™ and let him crash on my couch.

Worst. Idea. Ever.

The first night was pretty cool, we caught up and talked, had some laughs, and drank the beer I had in the fridge. We laughed about a lot of “remember when”™ moments in our lives, and generally had a good time. We fell asleep, and I went to work the next day with a bit of a hangover, but overall not too concerned. I mean, it’s™s just a few days, right?

Day two should have tipped me off. He had eaten just about everything I had in the fridge, the beer was gone, and the place was a mess. He had spent the day on my PC, talking with his “girlfriend,”™ and didn’t™t even bother to straighten up. His first words upon my return were to ask me what I was making/buying for dinner.

Fast forward to the end of the week, and Potato and I were no longer on speaking terms. When I asked him for help/money, he looked at me incredulously, as if my hospitality should extend indefinitely. I asked him to leave, immediately. Potato and I have not spoken in over 15 years. Honestly, I couldn’t™t even tell you where he is, or what he does. After he walked out that door, he ceased to exist in my world.

view of hospitality and honor, having a bad reputation as a guest will quickly get you shunned. Furthermore, being known as an enabler of the lazy will mark you as a fool.

That isn't to say we should not help our folk in need, but we must do so with prudence and wisdom.

Overstaying one's welcome destroys friendships and damages your name.

Use caution when accepting the hospitality of others, as their goodwill is in your hands.



Day of Paganism

David Wolfheart (Alfrothul Kindred and AFA folkbuilder for southern Europe) took part in the Day of Paganism in Barcelona, Spain, September 20-21. This was a weekend event including lectures, debates, and workshops on Saturday and Sunday, in a program from ten in the morning until eight at night. It provided an opportunity to meet people from various pagan groups. David went as a folkish Asatrur, representing and defending the vision of native religion and folkish Asatru, and sharing with others the work and vision of Alfrothul and the AFA.





California News



Freyfaxi and Harvest Celebration

Back in August, AFA members were treated to an exceptional harvest celebration on a horse ranch in Northern California. Wily goats, horses of all types, and even Norwegian Fjord ponies added to our enjoyment. The children were led on pony rides by horse-trainer Jean Terry. After a huge feast, Gothi Thorgrun Odden conducted the Frey Blot by firelight amid overflowing baskets of fruits and veggies (and cookies!).

We continue to host many events in the Sacramento area. Sam's Hof Brau is a gathering point at least once a month. Members also attend cultural events like the Fiddler's Jam in Fiddletown and the Draft Horse Classic & Harvest Fair in Grass Valley. The upcoming Oktoberfest at the Turn Verein Hall on October 10th and 11th will give us all a chance to talk with Diane and Jim Erickson, who will have just returned from a trip to Nepal with Rotary International.

We encourage members throughout the state to join us in beautiful Mariposa, just outside Yosemite Park. AFA members Tonia and Wyatt are preparing a camping area on their six acres where we'll gather for rituals, feasting, and fun. Our hosts will also be also be renewing their marriage vows, with Steve McNallen officiating.

Fun, yes, but Winter Nights is also when we gratefully honor our female ancestors for their deeds and gifts, and for passing on life itself. Good harvest and connection with our clans will be a continual theme throughout the weekend.

For those who prefer not to camp, there are hotels and motels nearby. After breakfast and camp cleanup Sunday, we'll depart for a day in Yosemite â€“ which should be an amazing experience. Imagine doing blot in such a breathtaking location!

Please RSVP so we can plan meals. This is a family-friendly event so bring the kids! Contact Sheila at afa@runestone.org or Marc at 916-549-8688.

Doings in Texas



Labor Day Meet and Greet with the McNallens in Grapevine, Texas

We wanted to make the most out of a trip to see family in Texas, so before heading home from DFW, we invited all of the AFA members in that area to meet us at a restaurant in the town of Grapevine. The day was a scorcher, and we didn't know if anyone would turn out. By mid-afternoon, we had about 18 people in the meeting room of a seafood restaurant. Great conversation ensued, along with the passing of a mead horn for toasts. What an amazing day it was.

For those of you in Texas, please keep up the momentum!

Somerville State Park, Somerville, TX on October 25th - A Winter Nights celebration will be hosted by Terry and Sandra Unger. Please RSVP by 10/22 to Terry at

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

LANSDALE PA HIKEMOOT and PUBMOOT - MONTHLY

Our own Cliff Erickson hosts a monthly pubmoot at Molly McGuire's in Lansdale, PA. The next one is scheduled for Sunday, October 26, from 2 to 5 p.m. Cliff has also started a pre-pub hikemoot on the same day from 11 to 1:30 for those who need to build an appetite before feasting. Watch for postings about this in the AFA Moots and Meetups Facebook site. 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

In May, a rune study group made 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! 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.

REGIONAL CONFERENCE CALLS

The Northeast and Upper South folks are embarking on a new communications project to pull ourselves closer together as a community. It is a monthly conference call to learn what's going on, ask questions, voice concerns, and get to know each other a bit better. Our pilot call using Skype happened in June and was NOT successful. However, we now have an 800 conference call number and our first call on August 19 was a success. A conference call recap email went out to all Northeast and Upper South members the next day. Our next call is scheduled for Tuesday, October 7, at 8 p.m. Conference call number and participant code were included in the recap email. The call is optional. If anyone did not receive the conference call recap email, please let me know.

ULV HAMRE KINDRED " APPALACHIAN ASATRU PARKMOOT

On Sunday, September 14, Cliff Erickson and I were graciously hosted by Ulv Hamre , a

as other area heathens for shared food and conversation. For Cliff and me it was 17 hours of driving roundtrip from southeastern PA for a 5-hour moot, but it was well worth it for the folk and we would do it again! Hail the Folk! Hail Ulv Hamre! And Hail Appalachian Asatru! Here are some of the folk. Unfortunately several had already gone before we took this picture.



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. The ritual is done jointly by AFA members from both the States and Europe the first Thursday of each month. 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

Doings in the Northwest

Ancestor Blá³t At Kelso

On Saturday, September 13th, AFA members and friends gathered for a Blá³t to our ancestors during the Kelso Highlander Festival, at Tam O'Shanter Park in Kelso, WA. We were joined in frith by a local kindred, and as friends we hailed our Gods and Ancestors, and gave thanks for the might they have given us in past and present, and sent out our good intentions for the bounty of the future. We got to meet some of our new members, and look forward to seeing them at more events in the future.



Hikemoot at Hoyt Arboretum

On Saturday, September 20th, Northwest AFA members gathered for a hikemoot at Hoyt

the lore, and the runes. Part of the hike was through the arboretum's collection of oak trees — the oak being sacred to Thor. Afterward, we ventured to the local Kells Brew Pub and were joined by a friend of the AFA, and we all enjoyed food, drink, and merriment among the Folk at one of their outdoor tables. This event was very successful, and Karl assures us there will be more in the future!





Upcoming!

Our next set of events will be for WinterNights; dates are tentatively set for October 18th in Centralia, and October 25th in Spokane.

For information about these or other Northwest events, please send email to esalix@runestone.org.

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

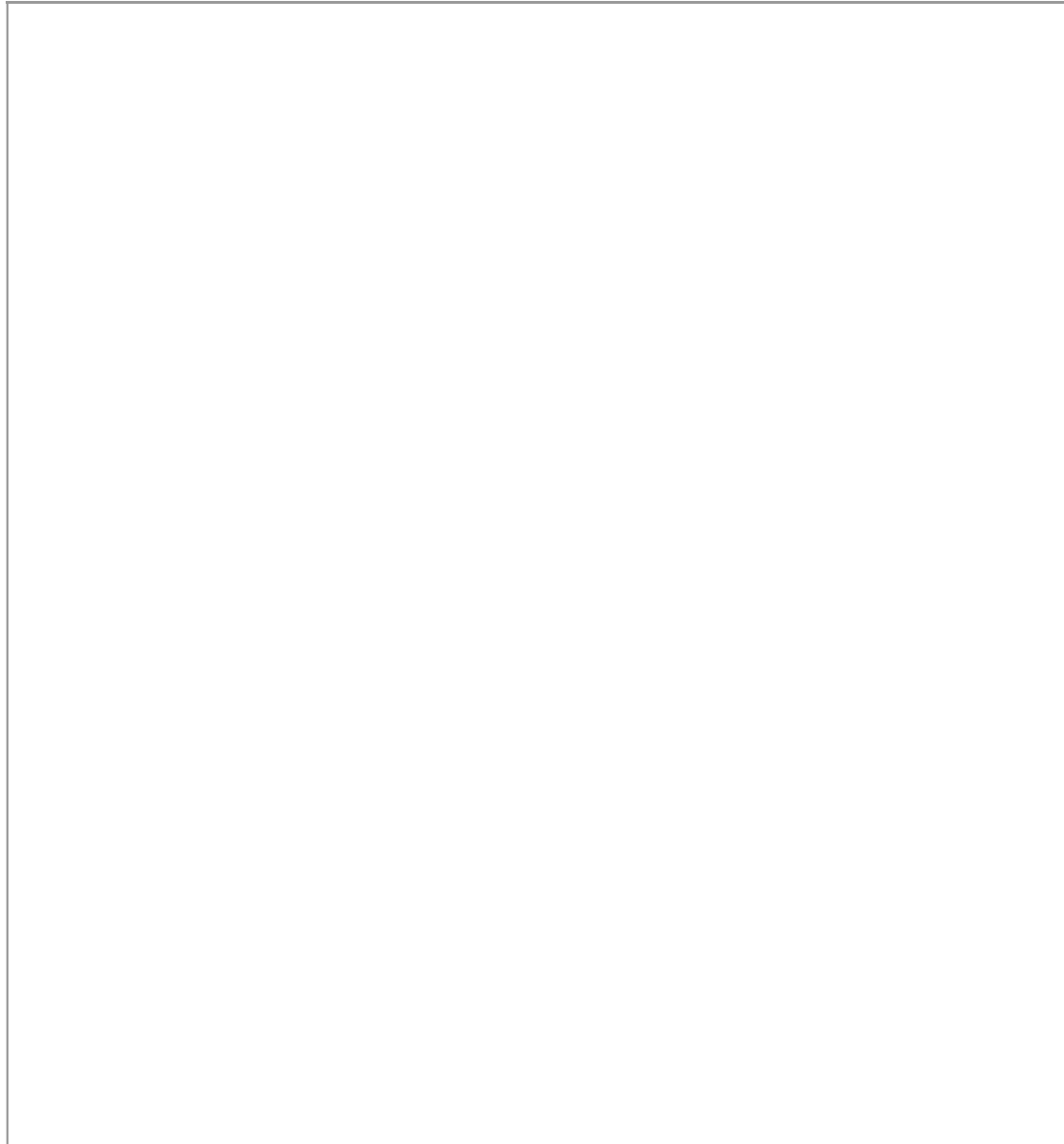
Prayers and Blessings Needed

Asatru elder David Byron James, of Santa Fe, NM, has suffered some health set-backs recently and is currently in a nursing home. His spirits are good, however, and he's looking forward to officiating at his daughter's wedding as an ordained member of our clergy.

Dan Hosfeldt, one of our Washington state members, has suffered complications from leg surgery that took place right after the Great Northwest Freyfaxi. He's been readmitted to the hospital for infections at the surgery site.

Please remember these two men for strength and healing in your prayers. If you would like to send a note of encouragement to either of them, David's address is 1516 Luisa

Member Photo





Joe Spencer, new member from Houston, TX, proudly displays his AFA pin on his duty weapon bag.

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