



Óðinshof

First Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly

www.odinshof.org

January 2025

 Runestone.org

 Email the Witan

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Words from the Allsherjargoði



With overwhelming pride, I announce that the Asatru Folk Assembly is 30 years old! It is truly astounding to see the progress we have made over the last 30 years. It is also immensely inspiring to see the amazing possibilities in the next 30! I was reminded recently by Witan Erickson that *Ásatrú* is a living religion and that is something very special in our world. We all know this, but I don't think we stop to realize the implications of it. *Ásatrú* is the story of us, as individuals, and us, as a people, and our relationship with the *Æsir*. This is an active, LIVING, relationship. We are currently building reputation in the halls of our ancestors AND in the halls of *Ásgarðr*. Our Gods are watching us and sharing with us in this amazing journey we are on. We have an exhilarating and profound task before us—to bring our Folk home and to build the religion of *Ásatrú* to its maximum glory. We do this through action. We do this through devotion. We do this together. This is the time when heroes rise, and legacy is made. Now is the age of Victory.

May the Æsir see into our hearts!
May they hear our words!
May they know our deeds!
May they find us worthy!
May we always make them proud!

Hail the Æsir!
Hail the Folk!
Hail the AFA!



One amazing thing about the growth we have had over the years is how much we can accomplish when we work together. We have members with every different passion and every different skillset you can imagine. What's more, many passionate and skilled members want to help the AFA and don't know how. I want to work hard to get these amazing people mobilized!

- We need Folk with social media and digital marketing skills. We need folks who know about search engine optimization. We need folks who know how to work algorithms to get the AFA in front of as many eyes as possible. The biggest reason we are not bigger is that such a schooling number of our folk don't know about us!
- We need CAD/construction/engineering/architect folks to help us build a solid and real plan for our construction of Týrshof. The sooner we get a detailed plan, the better off we are.
- We need history/library/writers to help with the history projects that are a big priority for us.

- We need judges/lawyers/paralegal folks to build a staff for our Lawspeaker to make sure we get the very best from utilizing the system we are in.
- We need grant writers to....find and write grants.

We can do so much when we are working together! Anyone who wants to volunteer for the above activities or for anything else, please email me at mattflavel@runestone.org

Announcements, News, & Noteworthy

- 12/21/24 - Frank Walter Nelson was named before his Gods and Folk.



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Words from our Witan

Hamr, The Projected Self



In this month's edition of The Runestone we will discuss the Hamr, The Projected Self.

The word itself translates to "shape" or "skin." It also the root word of Hamingja.

Many tie the idea of Hamr to shape shifting. But what does that mean? I think this more layered than that and will warrant much more discussion.

The Hamr will also travel in dreams, or during sleep. It can take the shape of an animal; it can take the appearance of the self also. It is also connected to “ghosts.” The Hamr can sometimes remain after death, and will sometimes be seen by us, in the physical realm, often after the Lík has experienced trauma. The sixth sense or second sight can perceive the Hamr. (Check out [Victory Never Sleeps, Episode 43, “The Soul”](#)) Allsherjargothi Flavel refers to the Hamr as “the non-corporeal projection of self.” I have a story to share regarding the Hamr.

Some of you may have heard this story, I shared this on VNS last year. On July 30, 2023, I suffered a massive heart attack. I had been flown by helicopter to the biggest heart hospital in South Carolina. While on that helicopter I prayed. Prayed to Óðinn, Heimdallr, Þórr, Frigg, and my ancestors. Once I arrived at the cath lab, and the procedure was underway, my dear friend Svan appeared at my bedside. I was overcome with emotions when I saw him. I was telling him about how I got there, all the symptoms I had, the flight over. He sat with his arms crossed on my hospital bed, and I could see his tattoos on his forearms. He was just nodding while i was talking.

I asked him if I was going to die, and he simply said “no”, put his hand on my shoulder and squeezed it. He walked out of the room. After the procedure was over, I saw my family, and I told my mother something to the effect of “don’t worry, Svan said I wasn’t going to die.” When my mom told my wife what I had said, Heather thought I had my phone. I did not.

Svan was at home in Virginia Beach while all this was happening. He had been sleeping in after the trip to Þórshof the previous day. Once I had left surgery, he awakened and called Heather immediately. He has no recollection of his astral visit to my side.

Later, Svan and I spoke. I asked what he thought about his appearance at my bedside, and he began to explain the Hamr to me. It’s my opinion that his Hamr had traveled to be at my side during a traumatic event and bring comfort. I was and I remain eternally grateful for this moment in time that will be burned into my memory forever. I’m often overwhelmed with emotion when I see Svan at AFA events.

The mechanics of the Hamr remain mysterious to me. But I have seen the Hamr work in other ways as well. Sometimes it shows up in a more mundane way. Sometimes not.

What we know as “ghosts” are often a reflection of the Hamr. Ghost comes from the word *guist* which translates to guest, visitor. Often, we tell stories about ghosts in a scary way, we treat them as something to be feared. This should not be the case in most

circumstances. If I were to see the “ghost” of my grandfather, I would not be afraid. It would be a privilege to spend a moment with him in whatever state he may appear. Stories of ghosts at battlefields abound across the world. It’s as if the trauma of these deaths is imprinted upon the land. This is the remnant of the Hamr left behind in the mundane world.

Examples of the layers of Hamr are as thus—there is the astral, the part that travels during the dream state, there is the ghost upon the field, an imprint of the Hamr left in Miðgarðr, and there is the projection of the Wode Self (that which you are trying to become). This is the side of the self you want others to see, what you want to people to perceive. How we relate through body language is an example. This is something we also perceive in others. We men use posture to convey a message to each other and the opposite sex. Women of course do the same thing. A change in posture, gait, or facial expressions are a way of signaling to our fellow man. This is maybe the most mundane expression of Hamr.

Maybe you have been in a strange place, maybe a drinking establishment. A large man is standing nearby. He isn’t “showing out” like cursing or making verbal threats. But his posture is aggressive, he “gets taller” around other men, perhaps has his chest puffed out, signaling he is here to make trouble. This is also Hamr, and when we pick up on these signals, they are hard to describe. “How did you know he was going to act out?” Because I was picking up his signaling. Being able to perceive the Hamr, the skin another person is wearing has saved lives, has prevented trouble more time than we can count.

The berserker is a historical example of the Hamr. Berserker means “wearing bear skin” and men in the Viking Age did in fact wear the skin of a bear or wolf (Ulfheðnar). But it means so much more than that. They became the bear, became the wolf. They had borne an ecstatic frenzy, swing wildly and skillfully and tearing the enemy apart as they became something else. Enemies who watched on were stricken with fear and often retreated as a result.

In *Heimskringla*, we read that King Harald had sent a “troll wise man” to Iceland to see what he could tell him about the land. He (the troll wise man) went in the shape of a whale, and when he arrived, he could see the land wights of Iceland. This is yet another example of Hamr from our ancient past. He projected himself through the astral in the shape of an animal, and in that state, he could see the Landvættir of the island.

How do we use Hamr in our spiritual practice? One way is being deliberate in the way you present yourself. Are you presenting the person you are? The person you want to

become? How many times have we heard the phrase dress for the job you want, not the job you have? This also a mundane version of Hamr. Picture yourself in the highest form in your Wode Self (this is also part of the Soul Complex and will be discussed in a later article). What does that look like? Now carry that on the outside, wearing that skin as it were, to project it to the world.


Meditation. In some meditation practice you are picturing yourself in a setting in your mind. What you “see” as yourself is the Hamr. How you move in and out of places in this state, this is exercise for the Hamr when it travels in the dream state. As for the astral travel, again, keep a dream journal, write down experiences in the dream state, as they are hints of different parts of the soul, including the Hamr.

Join me in the next Runestone as we discuss Sál, The Shade Self.



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Strengthening Your Asatru Practice in 2025



January 2025

January 1st
Óðinn

January 8th
Frigg

January 15th
Freyja

January 22nd
Sága

January 29th
Ancestors

Happy New Year to all of our Folk of the Asatru Folk Assembly!

If you have spent any amount of time with me (in person or on calls), you know that I feel that helping the Folk create and maintain a personal relationship with our Holy Ása, as well as giving our Folk ways to worship individually and as a family in their own homes, is a duty that I hold near and dear to my heart.

This year I invite our Folk to join me in a year of celebration and dedication to the Æsir, Ásynjur, and their kin.



February 2025

February 5th
Þórr

February 12th
Sif

February 19th
Jörð

February 26th
Ancestors

My family and I dedicate Wednesdays as a day of intentional spiritual practice and devotion, with each one dedicated to someone different, helping us to connect with them as a whole and individually. Your family (or individual) celebration could be as simple as an offering by yourself in the morning or as complex as a full feast and lore reading with your family in the evening.

I invite each of you to share your thoughts, experiences, pictures and memories of these devotional Wednesdays with us in the Spiritual Excellence Group on MeWe. If you choose to do so, I will share those each month here in the Runestone!

Here is to a victorious 2025, full of all the best for our Folk and our Church!



Witan Brandy Fassett
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Words from Our Goðar

Planting Seeds



As 2025, and the 31st year of the Asatru Folk Assembly, comes riding in from the east, we should take a moment to both reflect on our past and plan our future. This article will be a bit shorter than my usual work but carries a more important message.

Many of the great endeavors of our forebears were for the purpose of “planting

trees,” so to speak- trees whose shade they would not enjoy themselves, but that their descendants could sit in and create yet another generation of artistic and industrious innovation for more descendants. Our ancestors won these victories not for themselves, but for their tribe, or often for the Folk in general.

In 2015, Allsherjargoði Stephen McNallen accomplished the unthinkable by acquiring and dedicating Óðinshof, the first Hof to one of the Æsir in 1000 years. He did this not for himself, but for the Folk.



In 2020 through 2022, Allsherjargoði Matthew Flavel honored the mandate of the All-Father and established three more temples to mighty Þórr, bright Baldr, and joyous Njörðr. He did this not for himself, but for the Folk.

In December 2022, then-Goði-now-Witan Daniel Young did the groundwork to acquire Sigrheim, a parcel of land symbolic of the AFA's larger success, a promise of our bright future in troth to the holy Æsir. He did this not for himself, but for the Folk.



As we head into 2025, keep these in mind. Remember that we do this for our people—past, present, and future—so that they may continue to survive and thrive and be honored by future deeds. What seeds will you plant with your deeds? What trees will grow from your victories? What fruits will your Folk harvest? The best time to answer these questions is now!



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Declaration of Purpose III



III. Issuing a call to all our brothers and sisters of the Ethnic European Folk to return to this, their native religion and way of life



We call our kin to rejoin the great family of men and women who honor the sacred ways of our holy Gods and Ancestors. Ásafoik are not always eager to proselytize; however, we know that our brothers and sisters will all be healthier and happier once they have returned to the religion that expresses their unique cultural and genetic heritage, a heritage that is a part of them as surely as blood and bone. The restoration of our ancient ways, and the building of a secure future for our religion and our people, is our call and our destiny. Let us have an “Ingathering of the Folk!”



This is how we regain the strength of our culture and heritage. This unified heritage we share from our Aryan ancestry cannot be lost to the annals of history. Look at it like an Ash tree. You can cut branches over and over again and the tree will remain. To cut the roots would be to destroy the tree. It is the same with the folk. To cut our roots away would be the end of our people, the end of the very foundation our ancestors fought and battled to ensure over millennia, which ensured a future for you.



Every white man, woman, and child belongs with the Gods of their ancestors, belongs with their Folk. To return our Folk after a millennia and more of deception, guilt, and shame is no easy task.



The feeling of being with one's cultural tribe cannot be replaced with a foreign people's beliefs and gods. This runs through our veins, is incorporated into every aspect of who we are, and we owe it to ourselves to come home, regain our ancestral might and meign growing stronger as more of us come home. It is up to each and every one of us to work towards that end, now so in the current state of our society more than ever.



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Woes of Winter



WOES OF WINTER A Time for Thorrablot

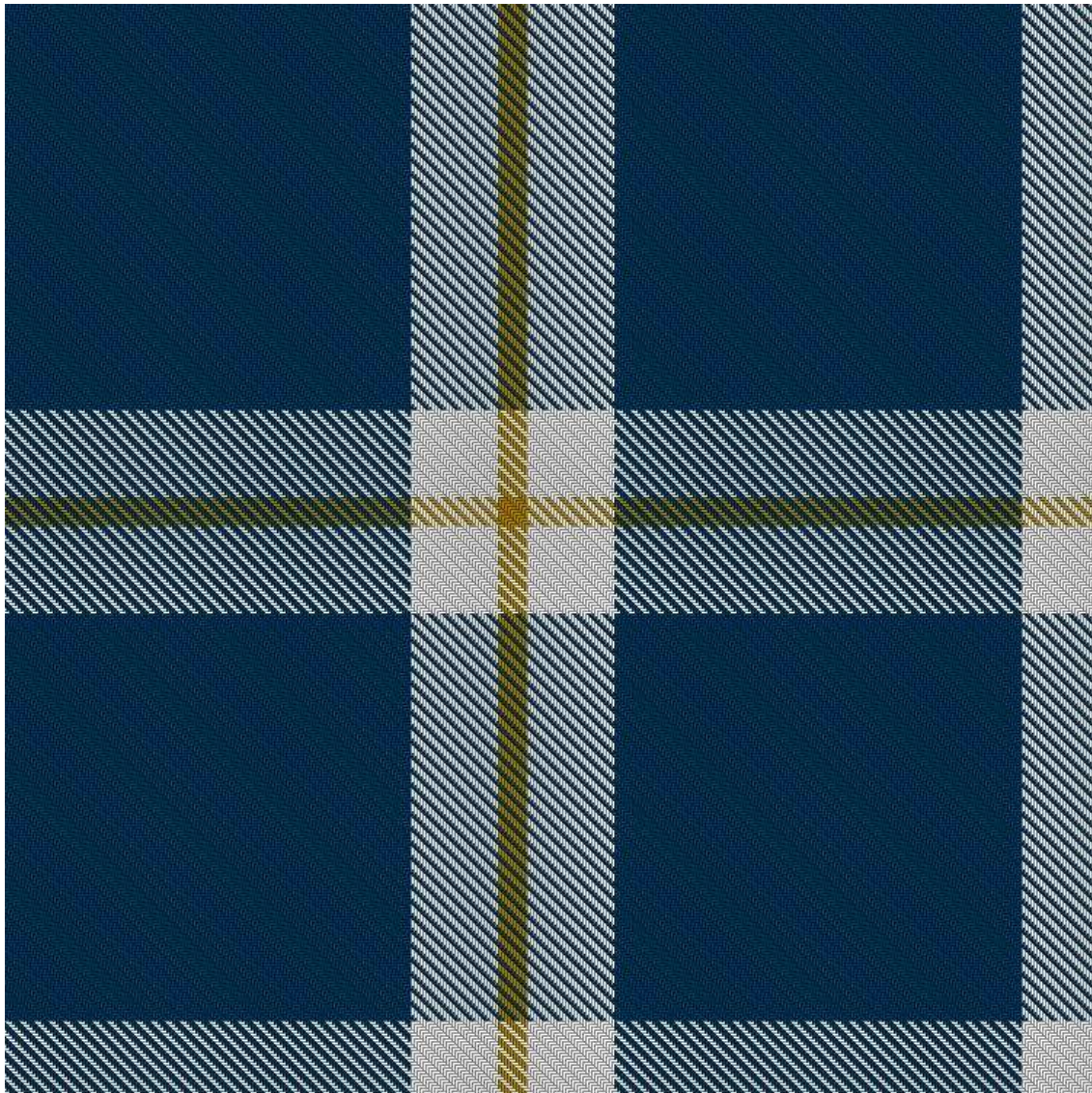
When I learned about Ásatrú in the early 1990's, every other guy was named Eric or Erik, and Thor was the god that most called upon. My husband would lead a small group of us into an old apple orchard for Blót. Warm days found us outdoors until long after sundown, toasting the Gods in Sumbel. Allfather Óðinn was always there in the shadows, but hearty Þórr was the model for most men. Our gatherings took place when the weather was warm and predictable, except for Yule. It was THE winter event in the early days of the AFA.

I reflect on this today as we put together the annual calendar for each Hof. For every month, events and holy days are clearly marked for all to see. In January, there is always Þorrablót, making a perfect topic for our December District Meeting here in Óðinshof District. Our guest speakers, Lawspeaker Turnage and Goðar Mayo and East, shared their knowledge of this celebration. Though it's often assumed to be named after the god, Þórr, it is not! "Thorri" means frost, so "Frost-Blót" is the correct translation. But further discussion brought forth an interesting correlation. When one considers that the Hammer-wielder fights his foes, the Frost-Giants, it's totally appropriate to honor Þórr at this time.

Everyone who has known malaise that comes with dark, dreary winter months may

assume that our far-northern ancestors felt this as well. Living with conditions of dwindling food supplies while the outside world remained frozen amidst never-ending gray twilight, the best antidote for depression was to come together and find joy in fellow man. And so we do that today.

Porrablót is our time to put the past year behind and make this a day of social interaction with games, dancing, stories – and anything that lifts the hearts of the Folk. I see this as a time we draw on our various European cultures and traditions, touching the souls of those who came before. At Óðinshof, ethnic dishes to add to meals are encouraged. We'll be offering a genealogy workshop, digging deeply into our personal roots and sharing lineages by showing off Scottish-tartans, coats-of-arms, and family crests. Our greater AFA family includes all those ancestors back into the mists of time. If you're disappointed to find no DNA link to the Scots, know that the Asatru Folk Assembly has its very own official tartan.



For those of you unable to come to Þorrablót, find some ways to honor Þórr and your ancestors who overcame the obstacles of winter weather. First of all, Blót to Þórr and make offerings to the Dísir and Álfar. Spend one day working on your family tree. Give attention to your family altar. Take on a new craft or hobby. Reach out to long-lost relatives and friends. Teach someone a game or read a book aloud. Prepare an unusual recipe. Take a winter walk and note the starkness of the season. Reach out to someone who needs a warm “hello.” Don’t let January be a time of inaction. Put the Might of Þórr into your efforts, making this a month of value; of personal accomplishment.



Gyðja Sheila McNallen
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Ásatrú Trúlögmál



Ásatrú Trúlögmál: The fundamental beliefs of the Asatru Folk Assembly.

You can find it on our website at <https://www.runestone.org/asatru-trulogmal>.

We have known for a long time that a clear expression of the fundamental beliefs of the AFA was needed and recently, we took the first steps in presenting that in a clear and straight forward way. Please know this is the first step and is by no means all-encompassing. The intention here is to express the very fundamentals of our religion in one place, in a way that is easy for our AFA family to reference as well as a document to explain our religion to those who ask: "What is it that you guys believe?"

Hail the Heroes of Ásatrú that paved the way!

Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!

Hail the Æsir!



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The Quest for Freyshof

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

– Gylfaginning



[Freyshof Fund – Asatru Folk Assembly \(runestone.org\)](http://runestone.org)

This sacred quest has had a great start so far! The generosity has been amazing, as always!

This is the list of things that need to happen before we can make Freyshof a reality:

- We need to pay off Njörðshof.
 - The first of 2 loans have been paid off!
 - We now owe \$60,370 on our remaining loan.
- We need to raise our monthly donation average by 10%.
 - This is membership dues/Hoftollr plus other donations.
- We need to locate a suitable property.
- We need to find lenders and build a war chest.

This is not a "quick" process so stay patient and resolute. As we progress, I will keep you all updated on our progress!

Hail Freyr!



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Sigrheim: Home of Victory

Support the Home of Victory



Help Sigrheim get stocked
and ready for our Folk!

Donate Supplies
from our
wishlist ✨ ✨ ✨
amazon

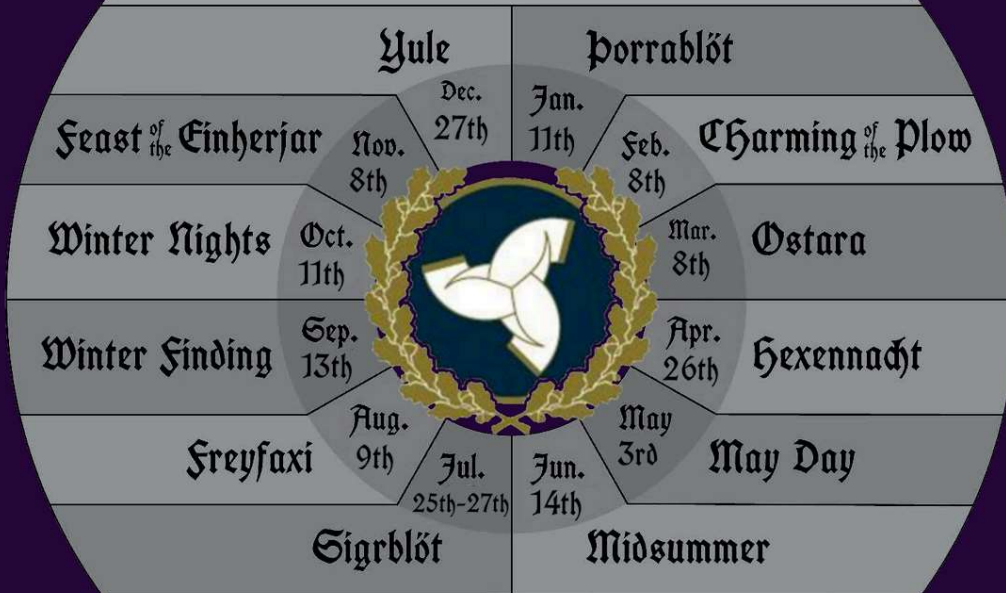


Thank You!

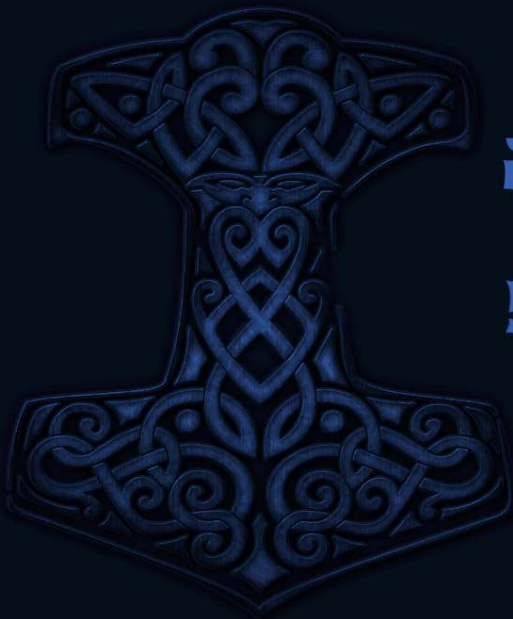
[click here](#)

Upcoming Events

Sigrheim



2025



Þorrablót at Sigrheim

Sat., January 11th
230pm

RSVP to
nrice@runestone.org



Sigrheim
Shed Raisin'
Work Day

January 25th | 10am



Charming of
the Plow
at Sigrheim

February
8th

RSVP to nrice@runestone.org

Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice

nrice@runestone.org



Victory Never Sleeps

The Asatru Folk Assembly Presents

Victory Never Sleeps!

Wednesdays at 6PM Pacific / 8PM Central

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Victory Never Sleeps, a weekly podcast produced by the Asatru Folk Assembly, hosted by Alsherjargoði Matthew Flavel alongside weekly guests. The show doesn't stop until the questions stop rolling in. Come listen and learn about a variety of topics and truths relevant to our modern Asatru Folk.

Aesir. Virtues. Heroes. Doctrine. Beliefs. Cosmology. Runes. Holidays. Literature. Lore.

Help [support](#) the stream and keep the cameras rolling!

Catch us LIVE with new episodes on Wednesdays at 8pm Central / 6pm Pacific on YouTube, Twitter, Odyssee, VK, Rumble, and Twitch. Audio versions drop on Spotify, Apple Podcast, iHeartRadio, and Amazon Podcasts on the Friday after the new episodes air.

Check out the full playlist with 100's of hours of previous recordings on our [YouTube](#).



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AFA Ásatrú Academy



Check out the ÁsatrúAcademy at AsatruAcademy.org



Happy New Year from the Ásatrú Academy!

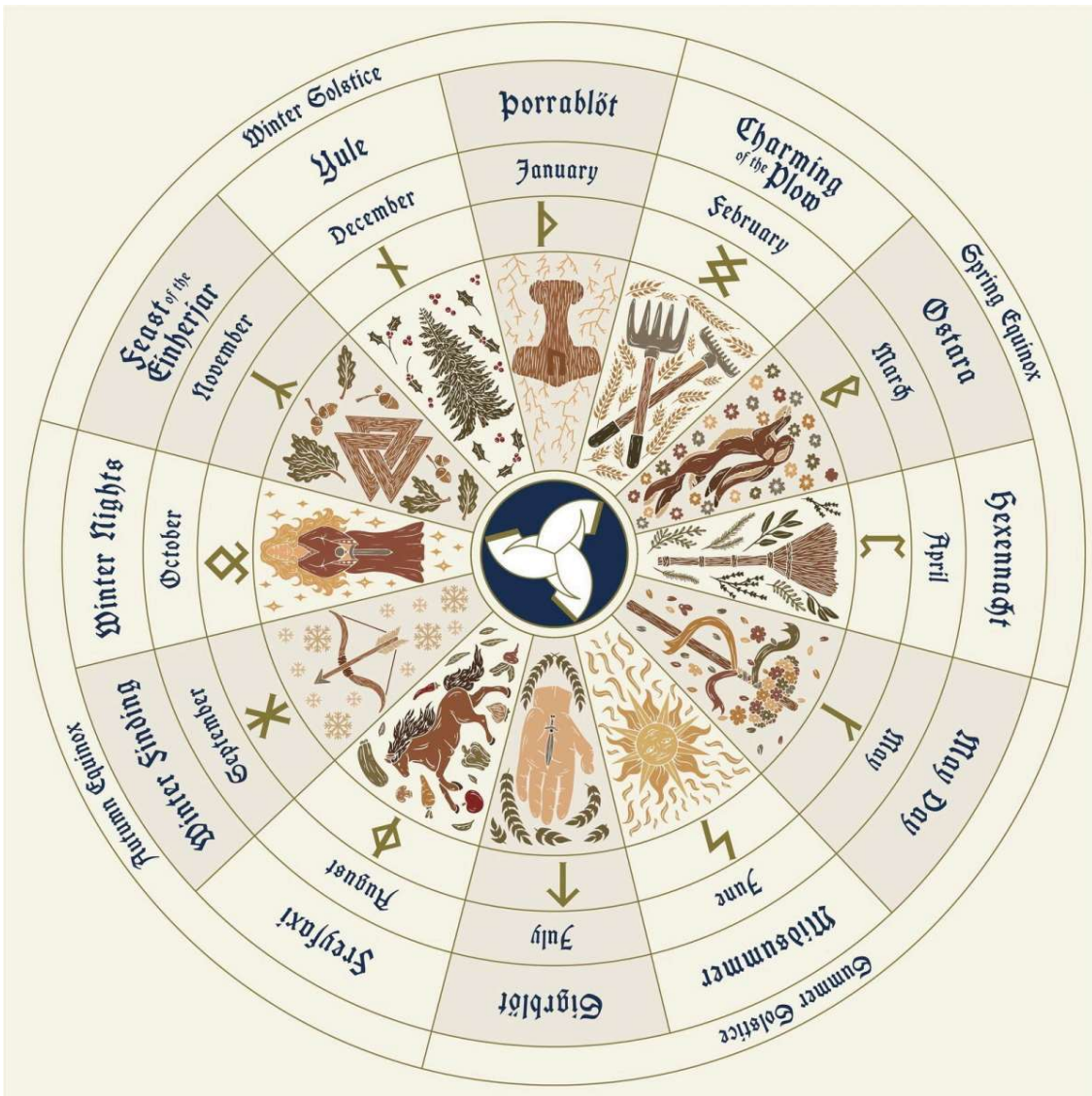


Here's to another semester of stories, projects, learning, fun, ... and COOKIES!

Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice
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Remembrance & Holy Days



- > January 9 - Raud the Strong <
- > January 18 - King Blót-Sveinn of Sweden <
 - > January 18 - Þorrablót <
- > February 1 - King Eanfrith of Bernicia <
 - > February 9 - Eyvind Kinnrifi <
- > February 15 - Charming of the Plow <
 - > March 9 - Olvir of Egg <
- > March 20 - Ostara (observed on March 15) <
 - > April 9 - Jarl Hákon Sigurðarson <
 - > April 10 - John Yeowell "Stubba" <
- > April 30 - Hexennacht (observed on April 19) <
 - > May 1 - May Day (observed on May 17) <
 - > May 22 - John Gibbs-Bailey "Hoskuld" <
 - > June 9 - King Athanaric of the Visigoths <
- > June 20 - Midsummer (observed on June 21) <
 - > July 4 - Sveinbjörn Beinteinsson <
 - > July 15 - Alexander Rud Mills <
 - > July 19 - Sigrblót <
 - > August 1 - King Osric of Deira <
 - > August 9 - King Radbod of Frisia <
 - > August 16 - Freyfaxi <
- > September 9 - Prince Hermann of the Cherusci <
 - > September 12 - Else Christensen <
- > September 22 - Winter Finding (observed on September 20) <
 - > October 4 - Goði Þorsteinn Guðjónsson <
 - > October 5 - Meister Guido von List <
- > October 15 - Birthday of Founder Stephen McNallen <
 - > October 18 - Winter Nights <
 - > November 9 - Queen Sigríðr of Sweden <
- > November 11 - Feast of the Einherjar (observed on November 15) <
 - > December 9 - Egill Skallagrímsson <
- > December 20-31 - Yule (observed on December 20) <

January



Asatru Holidays - January 2025 - Raud | King Blót-Sveinn | Þorrablót
<https://youtu.be/4lcMOWZ09Oc>

Day of Remembrance

Raud the Strong | January 9th



999 ʁ

<https://www.runestone.org/raud-the-strong>

In January, during the time of Þórrablót, we honor Raud the Strong, whose shrine is at Njörðshof. His story takes place during the last decade of the 10th century, when

Christianity was finally sinking its claws into Scandinavia.

Raud was a Norwegian warrior, landowner, seafarer, wizard, and Goði during the reign of King Olaf Tryggvason, who is infamous for his relentless subjugation of his own Folk in the name of the foreign Christ. Olaf spent his reign (995-1000 CE) traveling through Norway, torturing and killing brave Europeans who would not forsake their troth with the Æsir.

Eventually, Olaf the snake made his way to Raud's part of Norway, and he engaged in a sea battle with Raud's vessel, which was larger than any in Olaf's fleet. His fleet defeated Raud in the naval battle, but Raud's reputation as a wizard proved to be true, as he was able to escape to safety by sailing against the wind, which was largely unheard of in this part of Europe at that time.

Although Raud managed to escape to one of his settlements in the Godøy Isles, Olaf tracked him down under the cover of darkness and stole him from his bed. Once he and Raud were face to face, he tried to bribe Raud by letting him keep all of his lands and offered to be his best friend, so long as he would renounce the Æsir and embrace Christ. Raud immediately refused, dauntless even in the face of doom, mocking Christ and Christianity and Olaf himself.

Olaf became angry and would hear no more. He ordered the brave Goði to die a horrible death, and so a snake was forced down Raud's throat, eventually gnawing its way out through his side and killing him. Olaf then seized Raud's wealth, lands, and famous ship for himself. The rest of Raud's men were either baptized or killed in a similarly disgusting fashion.

Raud the Strong was dedicated to the Æsir from his first breath until his last, facing down death with his loyalty to his Gods and Folk unbroken.

May we ALL strive to remain loyal to the Æsir, even when surrounded by serpents!
May Raud's name and glory burn like a torch through the darkness of doubt!

Hail Raud the Strong!

Hail the Æsir!

Hail the Ásatrú Folk Assembly!

King Blót-Sveinn of Sweden | January 18th





1087 †

<https://www.runestone.org/king-blot-sveinn>

Blót-Sveinn's story starts with the rule of his sister's husband, King Inge of Sweden. These events take place in the mid-to-late-11th century, when Christianity had spread its influence over nearly all of our Folk, including the Scandinavians.

According to our main source, the Icelandic Hervavar's Saga, King Inge was a Christian, but his people were still Ásatrú. When Inge took the throne, his people hoped that he would renounce the foreign Christ and give Blót to the Æsir at the temple of Uppsala, on behalf of the Swedish kingdom. Inge refused to do so and was then rightfully deposed by his people who wanted to keep their troth with the mighty Æsir.

His brother-in-law, who we now know as Blót-Sveinn, told the Folk of Sweden that he would take up the throne and give Blót to the Æsir for the sake of the Swedish people. The people joyfully proclaimed him King of Sweden, and thus returned to being an Ásatrú nation. However this glorious moment was short-lived, a few years later Inge returned to Sweden with a small retinue of men and lit King Blót-Sveinn's home on fire, killing him. Although Ásatrú was once again suppressed in Sweden by force, King Blót-Sveinn's courage is something to be remembered and celebrated.

What can we learn from this story?

As modern day Ásatrúar, we can take much inspiration from the King's example. He managed to be both an aristocrat, as well as someone who could relate to his people and give them what they wanted and needed. He fearlessly stood in the way of rampaging Christianity, even publicly giving Blót to the Æsir at Uppsala on behalf of his Folk. He did not let sociopolitical pressure or greed for the Christians' coin stop him; rather, he pressed forward with both piety and strength. Had he not been felled by the underhanded work of Inge, he would certainly have been a mighty leader of a mighty Ásatrú Sweden for many prosperous years!

Let us all reflect on this and take courage into our modern lives, just like King Blót-Sveinn!

Hail King Blót-Sveinn!

Hail the Æsir!

Hail the AFA!

Holiday

Þorrablót | January 18th



<https://www.runestone.org/thorrablot>

Þorrablót is an Icelandic midwinter festival dedicated to, as the name describes, Þórr. Þorrablót is named after the Icelandic month of Þorri from the historic-calendar and ran from mid-January to mid-February. Though Þorrablót is a relatively modern social

celebration in Iceland, there is a reference in the Flateyjarbók that states that the Kvens offered a yearly sacrifice to Þorri at mid-winter. Typically, Þorrablót is celebrated by gathering together and eating many of Iceland's traditional foods and by singing, reciting poems, and telling stories.

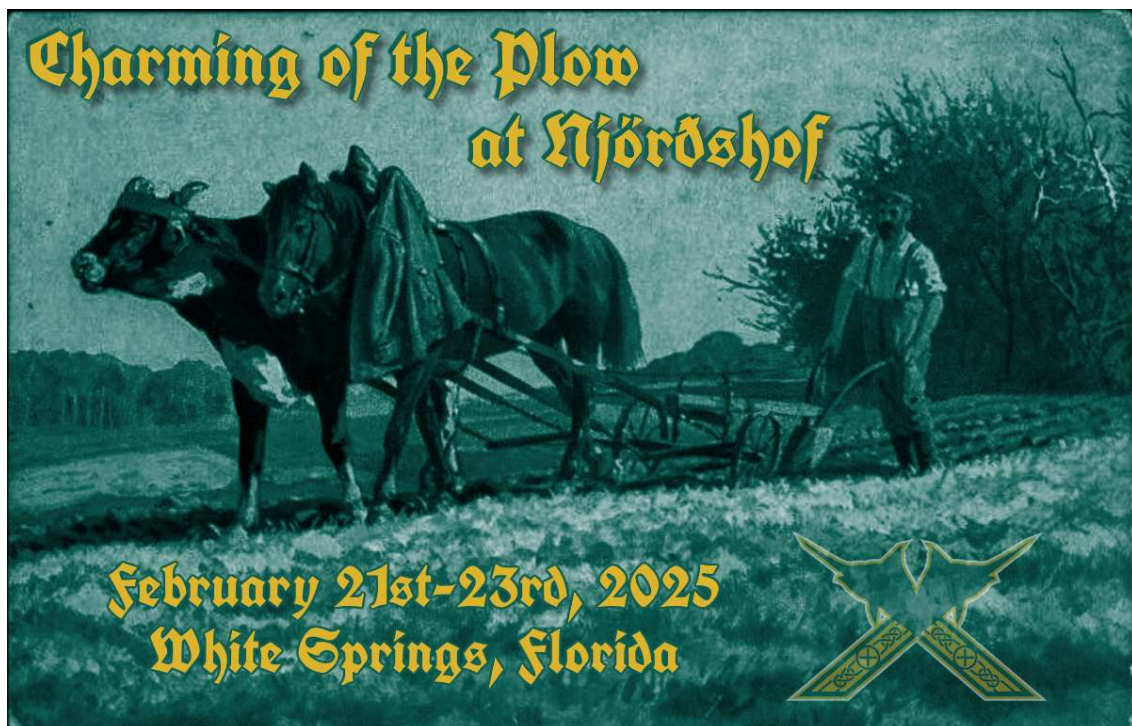
Some good ways to celebrate Þorrablót include eating traditional Icelandic foods, such as Hákarl (putrefied shark), Blóðmör (blood suet, filled sausage/black pudding), Hrútsprungur (ram's scrotum with testicles), Lundabaggi (sheep's fat), or Svið (burnt sheep's head).

Don't worry! If these are unavailable, or simply not to your taste, eating goat and goat products such as goat cheese or goat milk are also appropriate options.

Called by some as the cabin fever holiday Þorrablót is a great way to liven up the doldrums of mid-winter. So take some time to light a fire and make merry. Have the Folk tell stories or recite poems about Þorr. Eat, drink, and enjoy the company of Folk and family.

Upcoming National Events

Charming of the Plow | February 21st - 23rd



Come join the Folk at Njörðshof for our third annual Charming of the Plow, being held February 21st-23rd! This is our Hof's national event, so we will have great food, multiple rituals, auction, and more!

Get your tickets at <https://store.runestone.org/product/charming-of-the-plow-at-njordshof/>!



Goði Trent East
teast@runestone.org

Ostara at Þórshof | March 21st – 23rd



Ostara at Þórshof, an Asatru Folk Assembly national event, is scheduled for March 21-23 at our very own Þórshof in Linden, North Carolina!

There will be fun and games for the children, classes for the adults, and good memories to be made. We have an assortment of different activities for people of all ages in attendance. Classes to be held will cover a wide range of topics. Meals are included in the ticket!

As always, we will be having an auction of unique and one-of-a-kind Asatru-related items. All auction proceeds go to help fund these amazing events. We ask anyone who would like to donate to this great cause to please donate an item to the auction or bring your cash to bid! Anyone wanting to set up a vendor table at this event please feel free, all we ask is a donation of a commensurate item to the auction.

Get your tickets at <https://store.runestone.org/product/ostara/>!



Witan Daniel Young
dyoung@runestone.org

A Folk Services Campaign

We Won't Let Winter Blues Keep Our Member Down



Ohio member Brittney Haas has fallen on difficult times. Her electricity has been cut off, and she is having trouble catching up. During the winter, we all know this can be a big problem. Any help would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Feel free to donate to help Brittney out at <https://store.runestone.org/product/we-wont-let-winter-blues-keep-our-member-down/>.

AFA Prison Ministry



The importance of this AFA Prison Ministry is so much more than just for those who are actually incarcerated, it benefits not only them as followers of Asatru but their

families and loved ones on the outside as they will see the noticeable change in their demeanor and demand that our faith commands for them to lead a noble life. We all are future ancestors and will help them be examples of our faith and not be a burden or a product of recidivism.

We are compiling letters from prisoners that are Educational, Empowering, and Encouraging along with special spiritual writings from our Gothar to create a quarterly newsletter to be distributed to inmates, institutions, and jails. Our mission is not about providing free books or literature to bored prisoners who simply want free stuff. We intend on making real-world change for the better of our folk.

""No packed rooms in the prisons; in each institution I have only a few people; occasionally about a dozen, but 5-6 is more common. I certainly do not want the Fellowship to be a club for cons, or ex-cons; the advantage is that when in prison the inmates have time to discuss and digest what they read, a point that often is lost to people on the outside in the hubbub of daily concerns" - Else Christensen

By the example of our Folkmother, Else Christensen, we will also be going into prisons as we are able to. Some of our Gothar and other leadership, will be going into the prisons to hold study groups, lead blot, and encourage continued growth in the folk inside.

If you have a loved one who is incarcerated or know of someone who is Folkish and will benefit from this ministry, please contact us at prisonministry@runestone.org.





For custom designs created by you to be engraved or placed on clothing, email us at folkartengraving@gmail.com. Check out our Facebook page by searching for Folk Art Engraving, products can also be found on the AFA Marketplace chat. Feel free to also message me on MeWe or send me an email.





Home-based crafters in Northern Iowa.

Hail the Æsir! Hail the Folk! Hail the AFA!

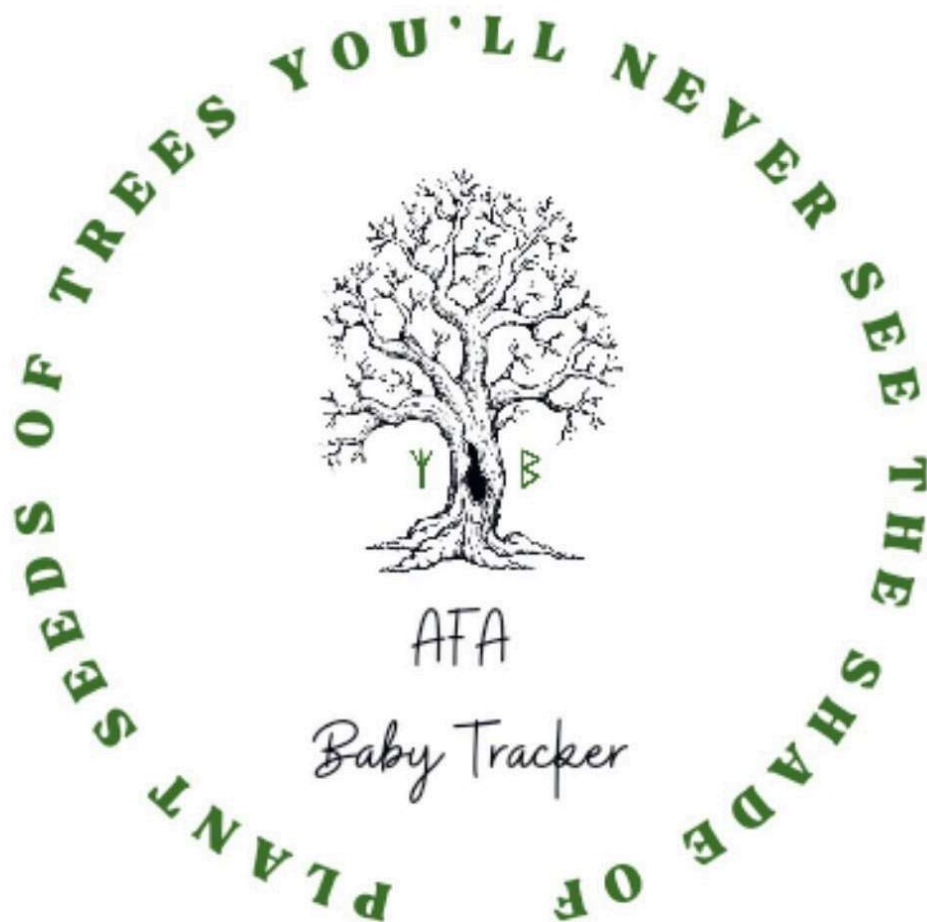
Hail Victory!!!



Folkbuilder Christopher McDowell

cmcdowell@runestone.org

Baby Tracker



To show the growth of our Folk we present to you an ongoing baby tracker. We have been keeping track of how many children have been and are born within the AFA from 2022 and onwards. The ongoing tracking is proof that we are building something sustainable for the future of our Folk, which is a place for these children to grow up within and a place where they can feel proud of who they are!

Total babies born in 2024: 27

Online Gatherings



Being our most virtuous selves is not always the easiest task. As a community, we are home to many that have or are currently, struggling with addiction. Many traditional 12 step meeting, though so very respected, do not fall in line with what we as a people

believe. Specifically, any step pertaining to the divine will or requesting the removal of any shortcomings. So, we run what we are calling the Virtue Recovery Meeting. Since we are an international organization, the best way for us to do this is online. We hold our meetings every Thursday at 7pm Central. Join us!! Feel free to reach out to Folkbuilder Ashley Erlandson with any and all questions! aerlandson@runestone.org

A graphic with a dark brown background. At the top, the words "SISTERS SUNDAY CHATS" are written in a light pink, rounded, sans-serif font, arched over the top. In the center, there is a botanical illustration of a strawberry plant with green leaves, white flowers, and several red strawberries. To the left of the strawberry plant is a white cat with orange and yellow stripes, curled up and sleeping. A small purple flower is next to the cat. At the bottom, the text "Second and fourth Sunday of the month", "10 am central", and "Contact Folkbuilder Ali Clausen" is written in a light pink, serif font.

SISTERS SUNDAY CHATS

Second and fourth Sunday of the month
10 am central
Contact Folkbuilder Ali Clausen



Our Ladies' Rune Study is just getting started! We meet on Teams every other Saturday.

Contact with any questions you might have — aplourde@runestone.org

I hope to see you there!

Lore Study with Gothi Jason Plourde

Join us every Tuesday night

at

6:00 pm EST

5:00 pm CST

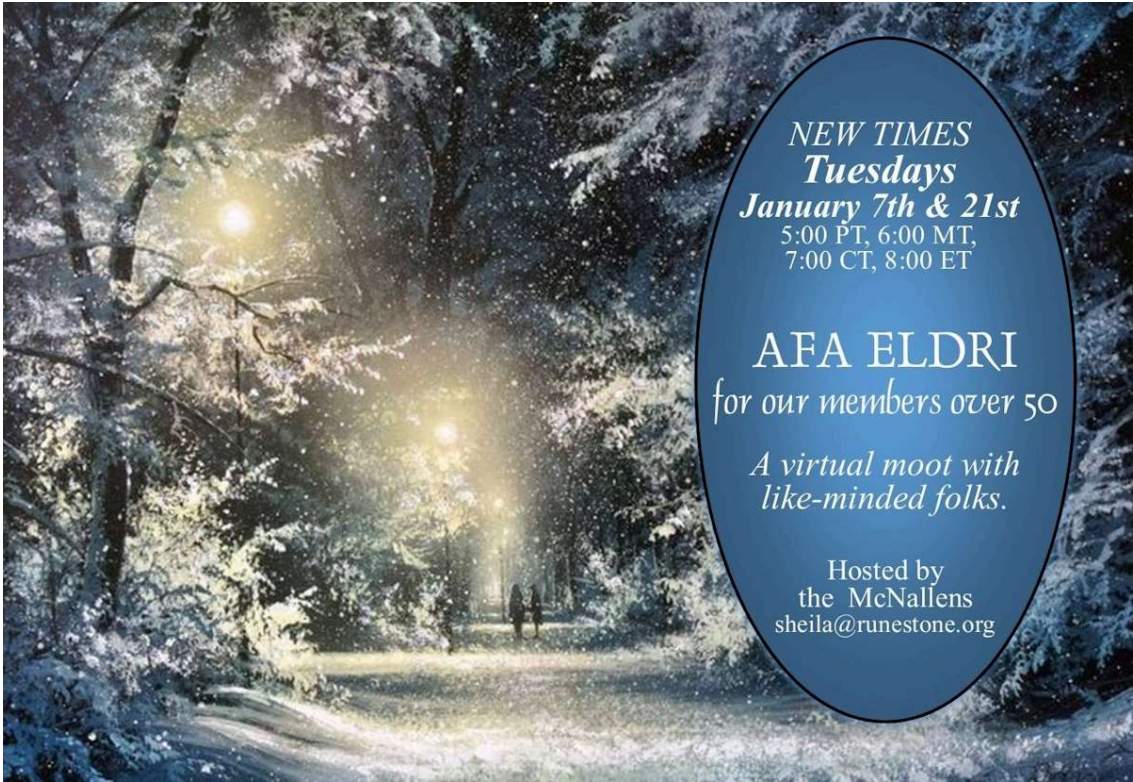
4:00 pm MST

3:00 pm PST

2:00 pm AKST

**The link can be found in the AFA
Spiritual Excellence Group on Mewe.**

**For more information
reach out to Gothi Plourde
jplourde@runestone.org**



NEW TIMES
Tuesdays
January 7th & 21st
5:00 PT, 6:00 MT,
7:00 CT, 8:00 ET

AFA ELDRI
for our members over 50

*A virtual moot with
like-minded folks.*

Hosted by
the McNallens
sheila@runestone.org



McNallens Pub

Saturday, January 25th
6:00 AKT 7:00 PT 8:00 MT

Purveyors of hearty horns
full of spiritual insights,
wisdom, and laughter



AFA MEN'S CALL
THE 3RD THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 2000 (8 PM CT)
HOSTED BY FOLKSWILDER CHRIS MCDOWELL

*Link can be found on MeWe in AFA Men and sent out via email

Just For Fun

Ása-Pórr

Á H V C T R F R E I Ð A R T Ý R Ö F N Ó X T N F
W X L Ó S A R H I A B G R Í Ð A R V Ö L R Ý Þ Í
O C Á T T I Ð W Ð T A N N G R I S N I R X Þ G Í
K A Ý S O N O T Ö G X H A P A K C O U R A G E S
R Á K T R S Ó V E U R R Ð P S X U J P Þ N W W T
N J Á S M I R P L G Ý J F H U A A C O S K X B A
P I Á N S L C G L L J Á Ý G L R Ó J H E G S U N
T Þ F R H C Ö Á I Ý Ö R V G L Ó C Ð Ý Ó V B O N
N R F I N Þ S Þ I Í Ð N G A D Ö R S I C Ö S P G
Ö Á H S M S L D F G Ö G R Ý I T P R B N N A R N
Ö L R K Ý A A T S P Ð R M T M Ó Ð I I E N R P J
I Í E H M X O X B I C E Í T M V Á Ý M Ð I J G Ó
K W I X F H Ö D A G L I G H T N I N G E I Ö D S
Ó H Ð P W M M E Ý M G P Í W W A I H N M U R S T
U Ö M B U D E I N F E R V A B M T F F R N Ð I R
D Ð A J V B A G Ð U E K X R K C W M R W O L F B
D G R R Ö Ð S U I G Ý K Ð D E V Ó U K A R J H F
Ð V R Ó O L Ð A N N A D S E J I X V O R Ö Ö G P
U M F Á O E N X X D G R J R Ö X M U M R Í M P B
X A V T N Ó L I P G V J Ð G T V G Ý V I O L M O
M G Ý U J S V B R U J K Ö R T J R Ö L O Þ Ð J Í
M N V Ó P J I G R P J C I R N B W C X R Í S K U
R I Í P F L P Á N Ó T X I V Ð J Ö T U N B A N E
L C K Þ R U Ð R A A T N Ó G E T H U N D E R G Þ

Courage
Gríðarvölr
Hlórriði
Hreiðmarr
Járgreipr
Járnsaxa
Jörð
Jötunbane
Lightning
Magni
Mekingjörð
Miðgarðr
Mjöltnir
Móði
Oak
Rains
Reiðartýr
Sif
Storms
Tanngnjóstr
Tanngrisnir
Thunder
Veurr
Warder
Warrior
Óðinn
Þruðr



Feel free to send completed puzzles to press@runestone.org for a shout-out in the next issue!

Calling All Folk Photographers

Took some awesome pics at a moot or event? Were you at the Hof recently?



We'd love to see 'em. Send to Photos@Runestone.org



Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice

nrice@runestone.org

Baby Blanket Project

The Women of the AFA are proud to be continuing this fine and noble work we call the Baby Blanket Project! We're committed to ensuring all new babies born within the AFA are gifted a handmade — knit, crocheted, or woven — baby blanket! It's just our little way of celebrating each new addition to our folk!

This project has been going strong since 2020 and has been a resounding success! The Ladies of the AFA have knitted, crocheted, and sewn beautiful baby blankets for over 120 of our littlest folk, with more on the way. They've been delivered everywhere from Alaska to Florida to California to Sweden!



If you are a member of the AFA who is expecting a baby, please let your Folkbuilder know so that we can get a blanket to you. If you would like to contribute, either financially or by volunteering as a baby blanket crafter, let your Folkbuilder know about that as well, and we will get you in touch with the right people. It's so rewarding

to see your handcraft being loved by our precious wee-Folk!

Would you like a blanket for your newborn, or to donate and help with yarn costs (yarn is expensive!)? Please email babyblanket@runestone.org today! Thank you!

Óðinshof

Food Pantry at Óðinshof



A Big Finish for 2024.

Every month, I send a follow-up report to the officers of the Interfaith Food Ministry which provides all the food we give away. A detailed spreadsheet is included with useful statistics for their fund-raising and grant-writing endeavors. No one has asked me for that, but I know it helps them and boosts Óðinshof's reputation as a worthy affiliate. I usually add a photo or two to personalize the AFA even more. This month I included the two composite images that show successful food panties at our four temples. It fills me with pride to show off how far we've come in just a few years.

For December, we also distribute toys for the needy families in surrounding areas, so it was busy month for our Óðinshof crew. Add in a couple of storms off the Pacific coast

just before our major work weekend, so some of our prep was delayed. But over the years, I've learned that the little things just don't matter.



These holiday months of November and December are always our best attended. We were lucky to have both ten-pound hams and cartons of eggs -- enough for every family. Word got out so cars weren't just lined up but were double-parked. The last family was "number 85" for the day, with the total being **242** individuals served.



Parents of young children were invited indoors to choose from assorted toys that covered the tables. The annual process of getting toys starts at Thanksgiving by setting-up a pick-up date from the Yuba County United Way Toys-for-Tots. During a stormy, December day, I loaded four giant bags into my van and finished by shopping for extra toys on my own -- just in case. We were ready for the families that had no way to get to town; and this time, there was plenty for all. The Óðinshof Toy Giveaway provided gifts for 85 children. The remaining toys were further distributed in remote areas of Yuba County, along with extra provisions of staple food and hams.

For December, we picked-up eighteen new families which points out the ever-present need for the services we provide the greater-Brownsville community. For our food distribution, 2024 was a very important year.



Gyðja Sheila McNallen

sheila@runestone.org

Yule at Óðinshof



This month we celebrated Yule at Óðinshof, while it was a great Yule, it was definitely one full of emotion. The day started bright and early at about 9 AM. We had a yummy breakfast made by Folkbuilder Ryan Skinner then clean up happened which led us right into Greeting to the Gods. Unfortunately, it was very rainy and wouldn't have been very successful to attempt this outside, so we did it in the Hall in front of the Óðinn Mural for the first time. Hails to the Gods and Goddesses echoed off the wall. Then came time for the ladies' and men's chats. Unfortunately, the plan of having men chop the wood during this time had to go by the wayside due to the inclement weather. The men stayed inside the hall while Folkbuilder Ryan Skinner gave a talk about "what makes a man"

while the ladies filed into the multi-use room. There were so many ladies we almost didn't fit! Then came lunch. A delicious chili & tater tot casserole with warm mac n cheese and a huge green salad filled our bellies as we moved on with the day.



Gyðja McNallen took the kids aside to make Yule ornaments to decorate our tree with while our newest tradition was busy getting ready to welcome the children— "Opa Yule."



This was the first year we did not have "Papa Yule" with us since Goði Thorgrun Odden's passing earlier this year. Many stories and tears and laughter were shared when talking about him. But that is okay, because we now have "Opa Yule" and "Yulian the Yule Elf." I got on stage and explained to those new and old about our prior traditions with Papa Yule and while it may be sad, and no one can ever take his place, we carry on the tradition with Jim Erickson being Opa Yule and Jake Kragh being Yulian the Yule Elf. When I stepped off the stage and saw Opa Yule sitting there in his garb, it brought tears to my eyes. There is no more fitting a man to take on this new tradition by a mile! The children all filed in and collected their ornaments placing them on the tree and ringing their bells while Opa and Yulian handed out the Yule gifts from the ancestors.



This led us right into our Óðinn Blót where the rain lightly drizzled upon our heads, but our spirits were not broken. Hail Óðinns, Hail Throgruns, Hailings of each God and their counterparts echoed the mountain as the Sunwheel was lit and burned bright bringing a close to this year and lighting a flame to blaze the way for the next. I always joke that you can tell what kind of year we're going to have based on how the Sunwheel burns, and this year, in spite of the rain, the wheel lit perfectly and burned brightly. Once Blót concluded, we filed inside and hailed Óðinn at his mural, as we do with each closing of the Blótar, and Olivia had the table already set for us! Dinner was had—a great ham dinner with lots of yummy sides. We did a "white elephant," and the few stragglers that's stayed behind had a Sumbl. This was one of our largest Yule celebrations to date with a whopping 92 people! Please join us next month for Þorrablót. Keep an eye on your email for the invite link!



Folkbuilder Sierra Chapman
schapman@runestone.org

Upcoming Events at Odinshof



UPCOMING EVENTS





THORR ABLOT!

January 18th

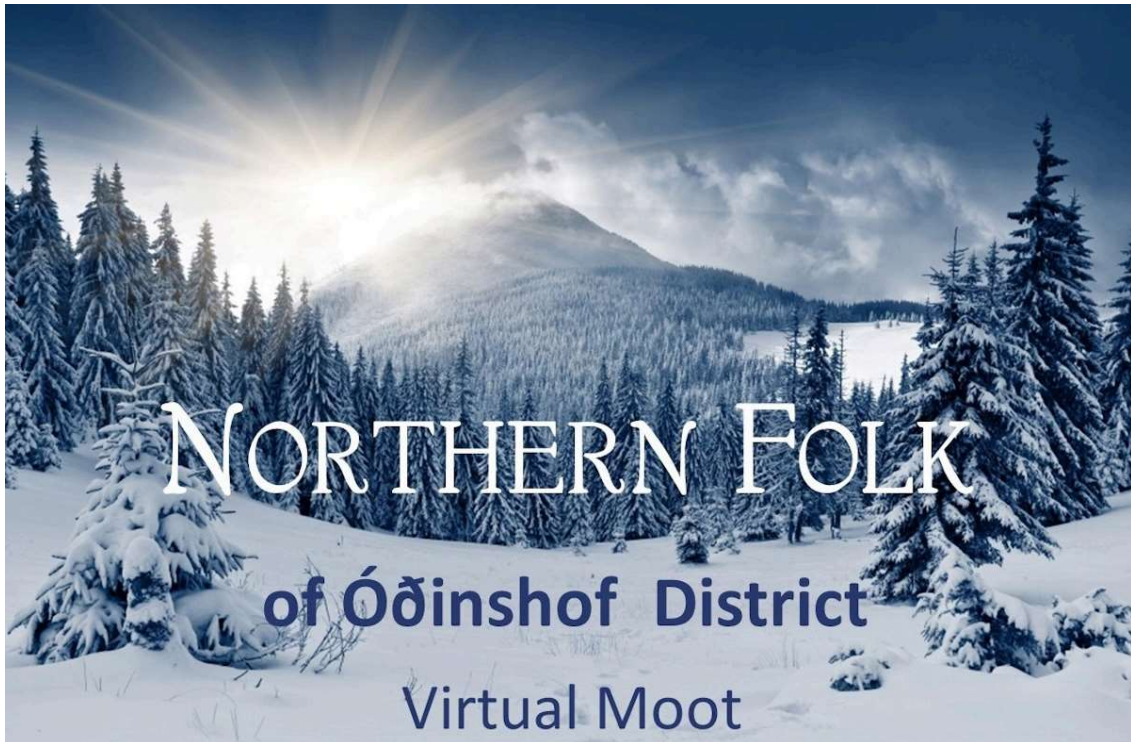
Join us in our feasting hall to honor our collective Ancestors, celebrate Þórr 's hearty ways, and drive out mid-winter blues!

MEALS, MUSIC, MERRIMENT!

RSVP, please! FOOD PANTRY will be Sunday morning.

Gythia McNallen: sheila@runestone.org, 5305758692

Sierra Chapman: schapman@runestone.org, 9162259490



NORTHERN FOLK
of Óðinshof District
Virtual Moot

Monday, January 13th
5:00 AkT, 6:00 PT, 7:00 MT
Contact: sheila@runestone.org

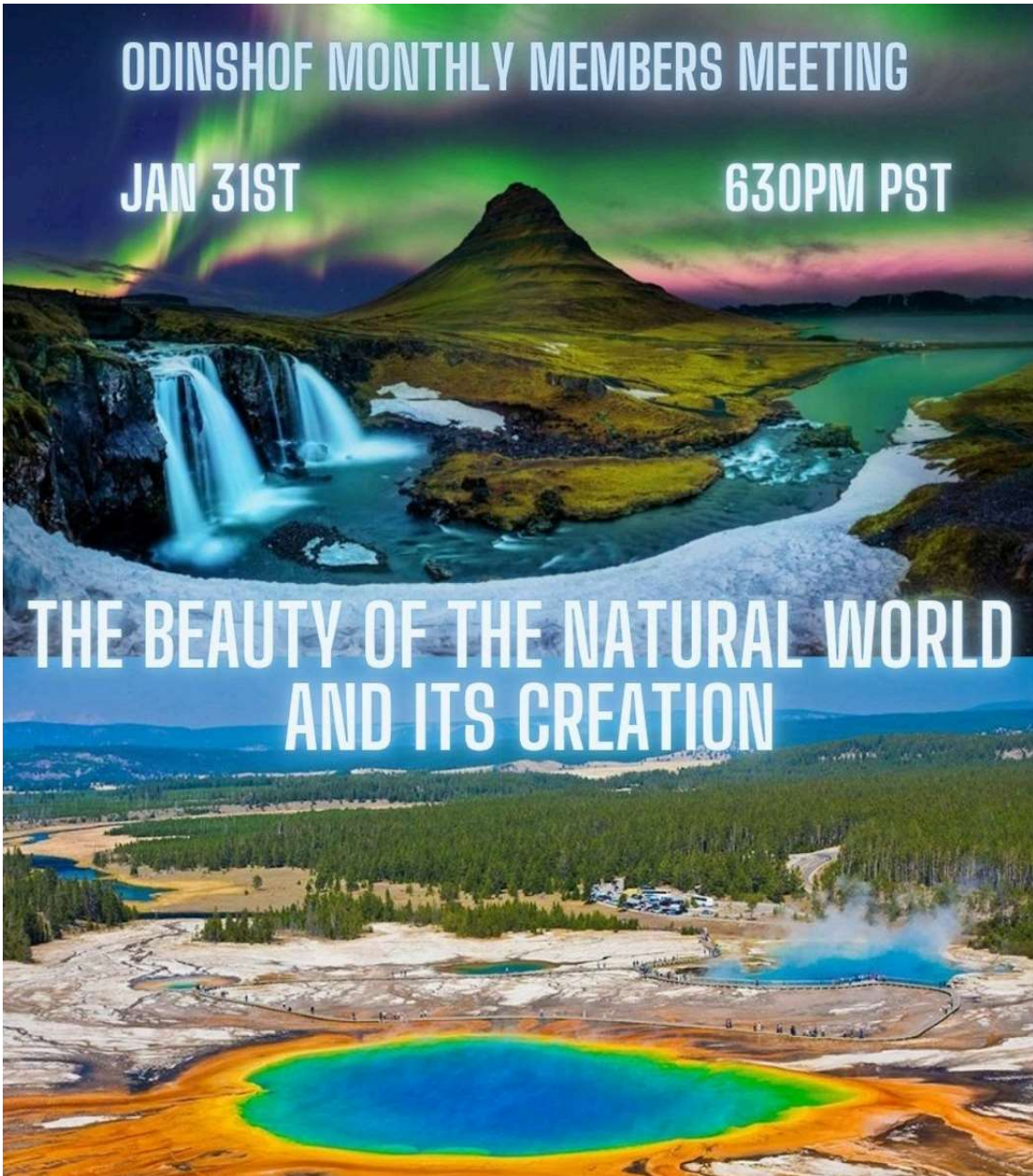
Monthly Members' Meeting

ODINSHOF MONTHLY MEMBERS MEETING

JAN 31ST

630PM PST

**THE BEAUTY OF THE NATURAL WORLD
AND ITS CREATION**



Óðinshof Wish List



Óðinshof Member Ritual Requests

Member Ritual Requests



Baby Namings (Ausa Vatni), Coming of Age Rites, Wedding Ceremonies, Vow Renewals, and Óðinshof Cemetery Funerals are special rituals that our members may request to have conducted at Óðinshof!

How to Submit a Request?

Please email all relevant information (your name(s), ritual type, requested Gothar, proposed date for ritual, etc.) to Folkbuilder Olivia Sutherland osutherland@runestone.org.

Each request will be evaluated, and we will follow up with you about accommodating your request.

Thank You,

Olivia

Olivia Sutherland

Folkbuilder

osutherland@runestone.org



Óðinshof Leaders

GOTHAR

Alsherjargothi Matt Flavel
Witan Brandy Fassett
Gythia Sheila McNallen
Gothi Nathan Erlandson

mattflavel@runestone.org
bfassett@runestone.org
sheila@runestone.org
nerlandson@runestone.org

FOLKBUILDERS

Lou Nickerson (AZ)
Olivia Sutherland (CA)
Ryan Skinner (CA)
Sierra Chapman (CA)
Kyle Reader (ID)
Ryan Harlan (MT)
Tyler Heinlein (MT)

lnickerson@runestone.org
osutherland@runestone.org
rskinner@runestone.org
schapman@runestone.org
kreader@runestone.org
rharlan@runestone.org
theinlein@runestone.org

APPRENTICE FOLKBUILDERS

Daniel Odom (CA)
Nick Gunn (WA)
Erin Harrison (CO)

dodom@runestone.org
ngunn@runestone.org
eharrison@runestone.org



Arizona

Additional Arizona Events

GERMAN LUNCH MOOT



**1st Sundays
at 12pm**

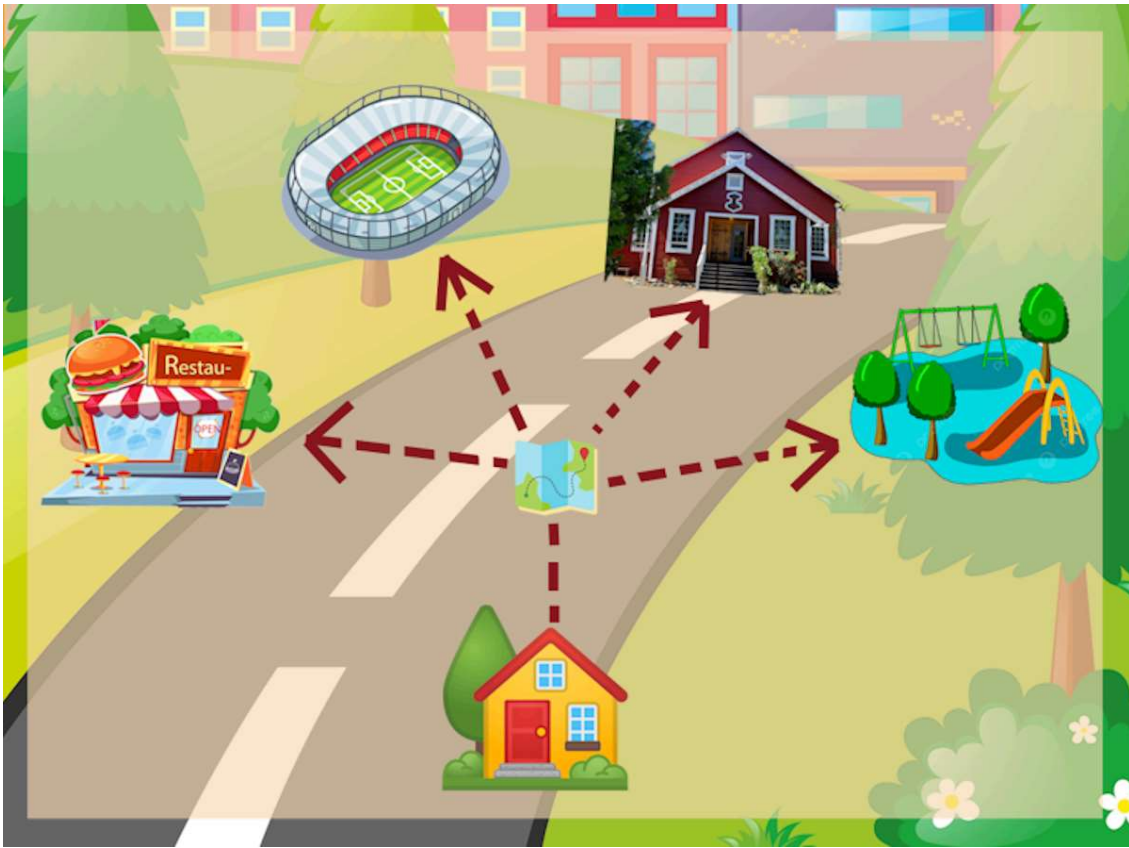
PHOENIX, AZ

CONTACT: OSUTHERLAND@RUNESTONE.ORG

Note: Shake-up to February, the Lunch Moot will be on 2/9, but we'll return to the regular 1st Sundays again in March. Thanks!

California

Time for Another



Good Yule to all. I sincerely hope you and your families were brought closer together this winter season.

In the last year, Óðinshof District has made great strides in renovations, standardization of events, and in bringing people together. One thing that stands out, are not only the new faces, but the faces that are becoming more and more reliable as time moves forward. Participation on work weekends remains strong, and folks that we would see once a year, are becoming regulars. The addition of several new families is also worth mentioning, as our children are our future. Young minds are growing up in a world where Ásatrú is growing, and becoming more and more of a reality for the next generation. For our kids, Ásatrú is not just a thing their family does; but it is a physical place that they can go, it is a people that come together. Ásatrú is a face they see once or twice a month, or perhaps more. Ásatrú is a tribe they are surrounded by, and the AFA and Óðinshof, are a foundation that those children can build on. May the Gods bless all of you, may their presence and teachings find a place in the hearts and minds of our youth. As this year comes to a close, that is one year closer to my boys stepping out the door onto their own path. I will continue to rely on the AFA, and our community of Ásatrú Folk to help reinforce our ways, our values, and to keep our tribe close. Thank you to all the volunteers, thank you to our donors, and to those of you who drive for hours, multiple times per month, in service to our people. Lastly, I will say, continue to gather. Come together for the simplest of things. Go grocery shopping with a local member. Go to a dog park, open your home, go for a drive to nowhere. Spending time

with members is the most authentic way to build a relationship. Like now, 2025 will have its turn, and will eventually come to an end. How many times will you reach out to the people around you? You never know what small impact you have on the Folk with a small act of gratitude, or a quick "hey how are you" phone call. Again, blessings to you all, have a great new year, and we'll see you around.



Daniel Odom
Apprentice Folkbuilder
dodom@runestone.org

Indy



As a tiny child under the bright San Jose sun, gazing across the fence at a yellow lab named Indy Blue. She had been won in a contest by our neighbor, someone who assumed that merely owning a dog was the same as caring for one. In Indy's first couple of years, she was alternately yelled at and forgotten, as if her only mistake was being a living creature in need of love. Yet in her dark, fearful eyes, I glimpsed a spark of hope, silently pleading that someone would finally treat her well.

That someone turned out to be my father. One day, he saw Indy cowering in the

neighbor's yard and calmly but firmly insisted she come home with us. I don't know if he was trying to preserve some small measure of innocence or simply doing what seemed right. All I knew was that, as a young child, I saw him as a hero. He was someone who recognized that you can't treat life, any life, as a casual afterthought.

Bringing Indy home was like watching her draw breath for the first time. She followed me everywhere, a living testament to how loyalty grows only when you repeatedly show up and care. Soon after, my family moved north, swapping our tidy neighborhood for a land of towering pines. I promised myself that I would be there for Indy, always. In my child's mind, promises were things made unbreakable simply by saying them out loud.



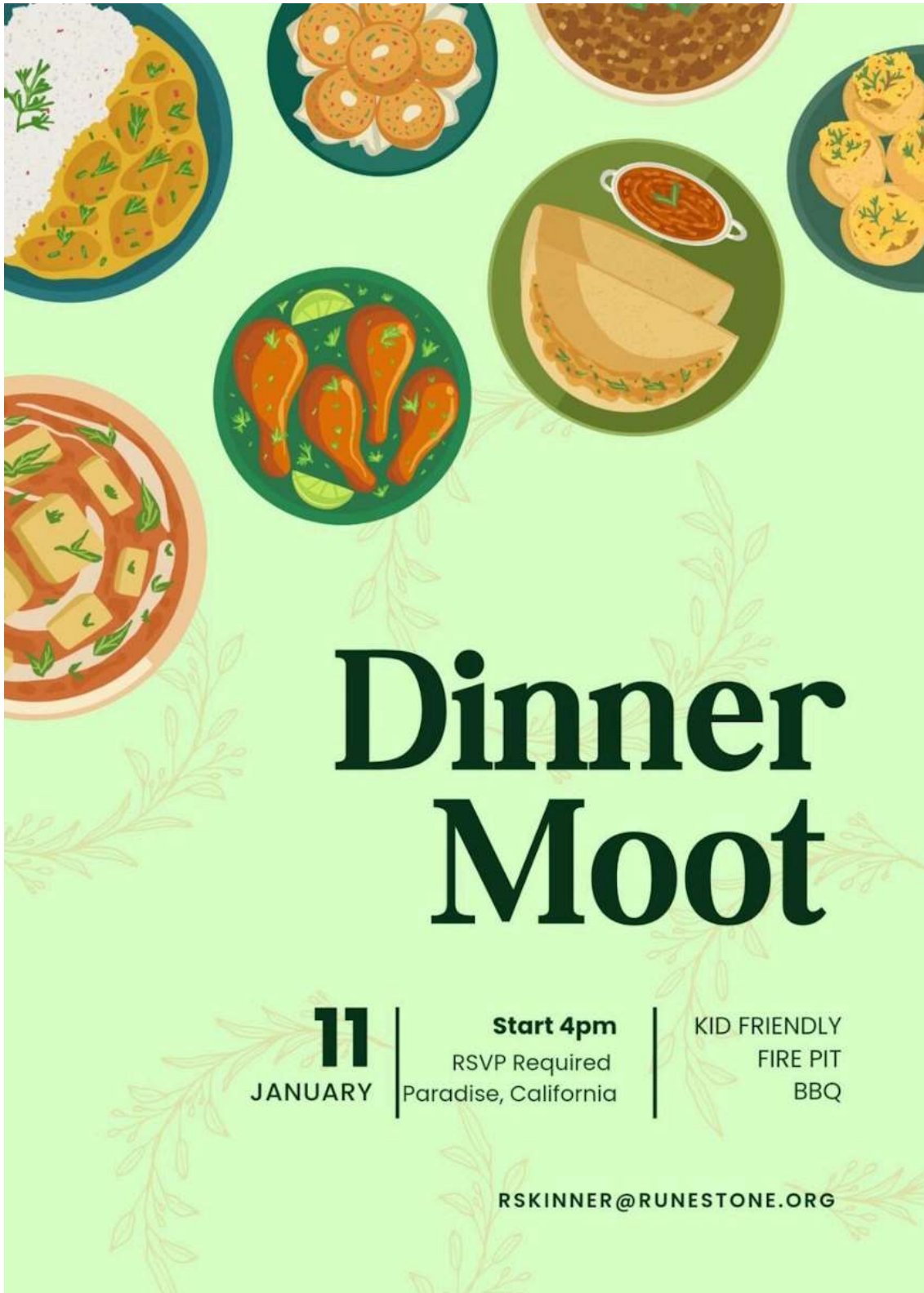
But one scorching summer day, I left Indy in the garage, intending to come right back. Hours drifted by as I lost myself in play with friends, not once remembering that she might be waiting for me. When I finally did remember, I found only an empty silence. In those searing seconds, my promise shattered, leaving behind an ache that I still feel whenever I recall that day. I understood then how easily carelessness could unravel what I once believed was invincible.

Now, decades later, I find myself revisiting those moments. The recollections are clear, and so is the lesson: a promise carries both comfort and weight. It's comforting to have something that roots you in accountability, yet it becomes a burden when it demands

you follow through, even when no one else is paying attention. What I say and do in those small, private moments reflects who I really am. Although I can't rewrite the past, I can honor the wisdom it left me.

Indy's story is now my story, a testament that true responsibility requires no perfect conditions or ideal timing. It simply requires follow-through. In that quiet, urgent call to keep my word, I find the moral of my childhood mistake: promises should never be taken for granted, because doing so risks losing what we most deeply value, even our very sense of self.

Upcoming Events



Dinner Moot

11
JANUARY

Start 4pm
RSVP Required
Paradise, California

KID FRIENDLY
FIRE PIT
BBQ

RSKINNER@RUNESTONE.ORG

Folkbuilder Ryan Skinner
rskinner@runestone.org



Colorado

Colorado Yule Blót



We had an amazing Yule Blót, feast, & Sumbl high up in the Rocky Mountains in Colorado at 9K feet elevation. Our beautiful Blót to Frigg was outdoors in the perfect weather. We had seven Folk attend this Blót. Our feast was delicious with many hands making yummy dishes. The host, who is a mead maker, displayed many wonderful

varieties and flavors of mead, such as Emerald, Maple, Chai Spice, Blackberry, and Rye or Die! All were delicious!



We hailed the Gods, Goddesses, and Ancestors with the Sumbi after dinner. It was a great day and evening. Great friendships are being made. Here's to more Moots and gatherings in the Rockies!

Upcoming Events

January Mead Moot

Saturday, January 25th, 2025

1-3 pm.

Bring your own food/snacks



Castle Rock, Colorado

eharrison@runestone.org



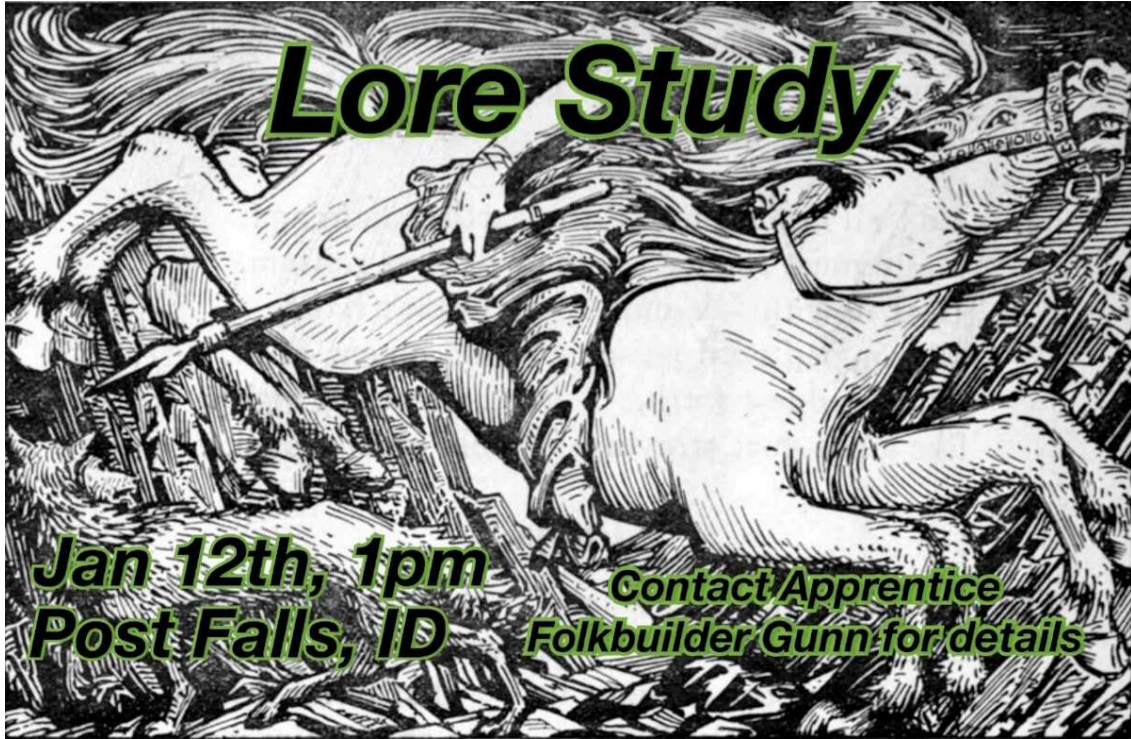
Erin Harrison

Apprentice Folkbuilder

eharrison@runestone.org

Idaho

Upcoming Events



North Idaho Thorrablot



Jan. 18th Contact Apprentice
Folkbuilder Gunn for details
Post Falls, ID



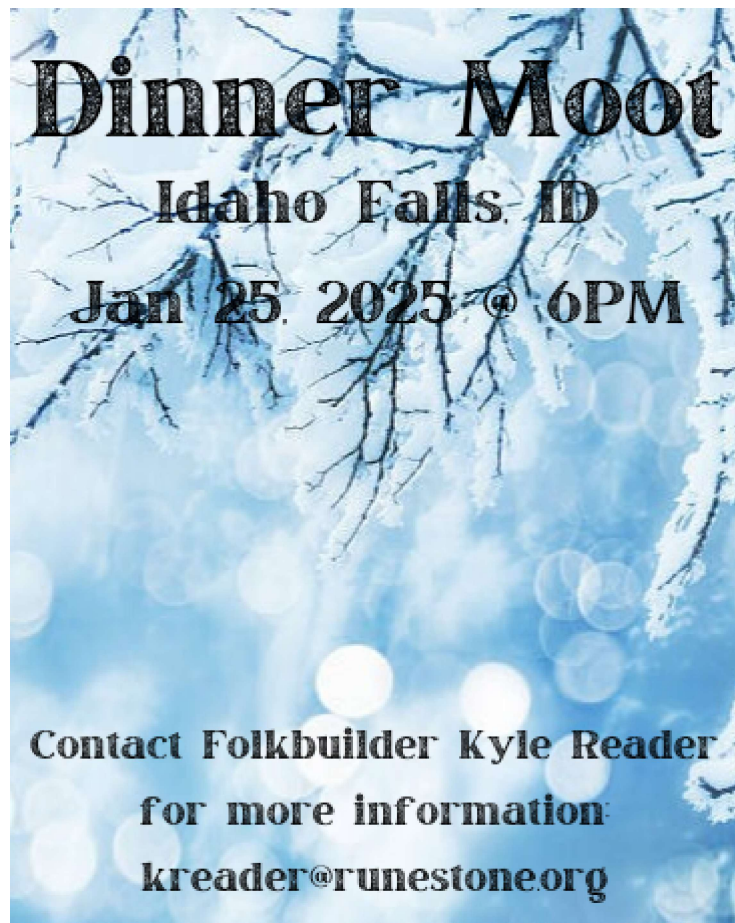
Nick Gunn
Apprentice Folkbuilder
ngunn@runestone.org

South East Idaho Yule



We had a great turnout for Yule. Local members and even one from 3 hours away made the trip to celebrate with us. We held Blót to Óðinn, enjoyed a wonderful week of smoked ham, stuffing, mashed potatoes with gravy, and rolls. One of the Folk brought a drink called Glögg, that I had never heard of until then, which is a rather tasty warm winter drink.

Upcoming Events



Our first Moot of 2025 will be an amazing dinner at my home on January 25th. I know we are spread pretty far in this area but don't let that stop you from making the trip here, I promise you won't regret it. My home is also open to all those who need to stay the night due to the longer distances traveled and I make some amazing breakfast burritos for a little more incentive.



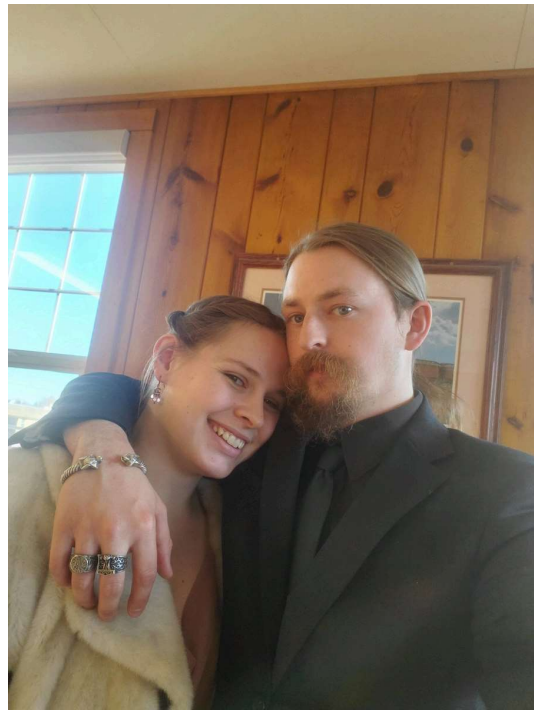
Folkbuilder Kyle Reader
kreader@runestone.org

Montana



Often, I write about productivity and expectations of growth. I write about our need to become exceptional in all that we do and about our limited time. It's easy for people to squander their ability and waste decades producing a life that's quality is miniscule compared to their capacity. This is a life of inaction.

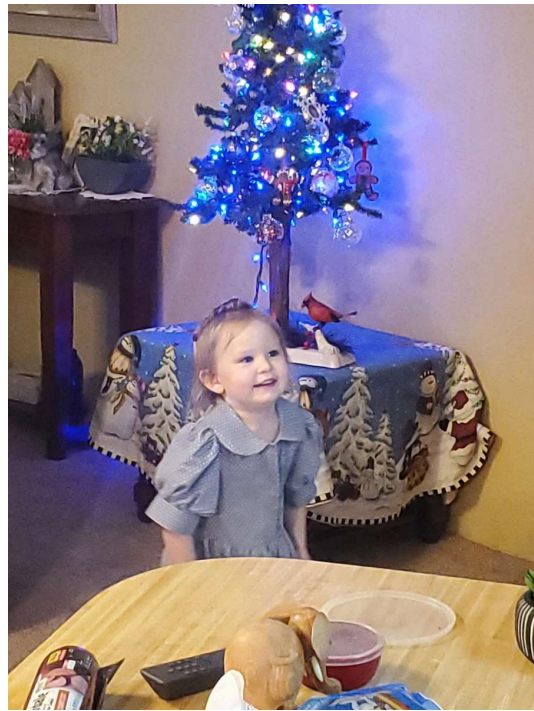
But a life of action itself isn't enough. A very insidious thing occurs when we pursue the idea of productivity as the end goal itself. Chasing milestones and banknotes alone isn't enough.



We pursue milestones of physicality not because a new PR is vital but because a new PR is a demonstration of our devotion to building ourselves up. To have strength and beauty etched into ourselves both inside and out is the end result we seek. The steps along the way are vital to reach the end goal but not the goal itself.

The same is true in all that we do. There is a higher goal. We cannot become consumed by mere appetites nor become automatons of procedure. We are here to live, experience and create. We emulate the Aesir when we put order to our lives and the world around us but do not forget that the Gods also made time for each other and for recreation.

I'd like to share with you a story of my latest travels to demonstrate how the concepts of unending productivity and the joy of recreation can be married in our lives.



As a homesteader and owner of multiple small businesses my time is fairly restrained. There are animals to take care of, construction projects, inventory to manage, products to produce, and mountains of paperwork. When the winter arrives, there is no true reprieve as we are not developed enough out here to stop any of our projects just yet. My tasks do not go away just because the temperature drops and the snow falls.

As such, I was not enthusiastic about having to attend a winter wedding out of state. Now this isn't to say I wasn't happy for my sister-in-law and her groom nor is it to paint me out as some sort of wedding-hating grinch. I love a good wedding; it was merely the timing that was unfortunate.

So having received an invitation, I had to establish a plan. How were we going to travel there? Where would we stay and for how long? What would we do outside of the two-day wedding?



The most expedient route would be to fly in the morning of and fly out the evening after. It would limit the total trip to about forty-eight hours, and we could go back to making dimensional lumber in the snow. But that didn't address the why of the goal.

I wasn't taking my family to the wedding to check off a box. We had a prime opportunity to see relatives we normally didn't have good opportunities to see. We could visit western Washington and visit old haunts. We could spend time together traveling. These things require time and the ability to allow oneself to slow down to enjoy them. With the why being kept in my mind I made the decision to travel by train.

On December 25th, we set out to the town of Malta to catch a train westbound. With a population of 1800 people, it wasn't much of a surprise to find ourselves alone at the station. While we were waiting, the girls came up with wacky games and Alia and I got to sit back and watch them play together. The small moments like these require no explanation to parents and cannot be adequately explained to those without kids. It was a joy.



When the train did arrive, we were ushered on. Our bags were stowed for us, and we were shown to our room. I had elected to provide my family a sleeping car as opposed to coach tickets to afford more security and privacy.

Spacious isn't really a term one could utilize on a train, but comfort had definitely been achieved. As we settled in, we watched the beautiful winter landscape streak by. Snowy plains with pronghorns roaming, powdered forests glistening in the late light, and towering mountains alternated as we made our westward journey chasing the sun.

The girls had great fun and Briar, my two-year-old, remarked that "dis train is pretty fancy" in perfect toddler dialect. Watching other trains go by and playing with toys kept the girls quite content.



When the sun began to set, I took my little entourage with me to the dining car. We enjoyed a three-course meal under the twinkling of fairy lights. We even enjoyed some conversation with the adjacent party, allowing me the opportunity to educate them on our faith and dispelling the myth that Europeans couldn't farm. The later I found quite humorous as the train went past mass agriculture directly descended from the farming traditions brought to the area by European men in the late 1600s to an area previously devoid.

Retiring to the room we were graced with an easy bedtime routine for the girls who were now quite worn out from such a fun day. Seeing as they had gone to bed on time and without fussing, we naturally squandered the opportunity to get a proper night's sleep, so my wife and I stayed up talking until sunrise. We spent the night watching moon lit landscapes pass by chattering away about anything and everything.

Upon arrival, we disembarked in Everett Station. While it's by no means the largest station on the line it was "pretty fancy" as Briar put it. She was quite pleased with how many trains there were. My little brother picked us up and off we went. There were hands to shake and babies to kiss.

Our first stop brought us to my Grandparents' house. Éowyn got to meet her great

grandma for the first time. It had been over a year since Briar had gotten to see her. A lot had changed, and I was able to lay out a charcuterie board which half of its contents we had produced. It was nice to be able to treat my Grandmother with all her favorite meats and cheeses. She had done so much for me when I was growing up and had taken me into her home in my early teenage years before I left on the road in high school.

Éowyn had warmed up to her right away which was fitting since her middle name was in honor of her Great Grandma Linda. It was time well spent and given their late age it may be the last. Time is a limited commodity and there's no guarantee of a next time.



Throughout the travels leading up to the wedding, we met with friends and family on both sides. My girls got to meet Aunts and Uncles, Grandparents and Cousins. It's a conservative estimate to say they met over one hundred relations. Weddings do have a way of gathering folks.

Finally came the wedding. It was a two-day affair. The oaths were taken on day one along with a photoshoot for the bride and groom. It had rained that morning, and more than a few high heels sank into the grassy hill. With a large wedding train, the bride was no exception. As such, the photo shoot became a muddy mess quite quickly. Fear not dear reader, for I was able to apply the heroics of a dad who came prepared. I had anticipated this possibility and had brought a pack of wipes for this very reason in addition to the well-stocked diaper bag. Swiftly wipes were handed out to bridesmaids

and order was restored. From that point on, the photography session went well for the most part.

Unfortunately for the groom, his groomsmen were absent, disorganized, and had lost the best man more than once. As such, I had the unique experience of being a fill in for his entourage. With how needy his family was and how much he wanted to avoid their needy demands, it brought me back to my private security days.



That night, we enjoyed the company of Alia's family and exchanged Yule gifts. Her little brothers, 12 and 14, received boxing gloves and a story about how their own great grandfather was the Golden Glove featherweight champion back in his day. Martial training and ancestral veneration is a gift I'm proud to give young Aryans.

On the second day of the wedding, things went smoother. The ring ceremony and the reception were pleasant. The first dance and daddy-daughter dance were sweet as expected. All and all a beautiful ceremony.

Tearing down the reception afterwards afforded me an opportunity to work alongside my in-laws. Clambering up a ladder to take down tension wire is relatively easy enough and not a big deal, but it did afford good bonding opportunities.

The day after the wedding was my extended family's "Christmas party" and we joined them for that. My girls were doted on, and I reprised my role as "guy who fixes all the small things around the house that should have been done already." It was a decent time all and all.



The following day we packed our things, said goodbye to everyone and headed out on the road. Aaron handed his keys over and hopped in the passenger seat buried under his dogs. The interior was cramped due to all of our newest resident's belongings. A train brought us here, but we'd be moving Aaron into our outbuilding on the return trip.

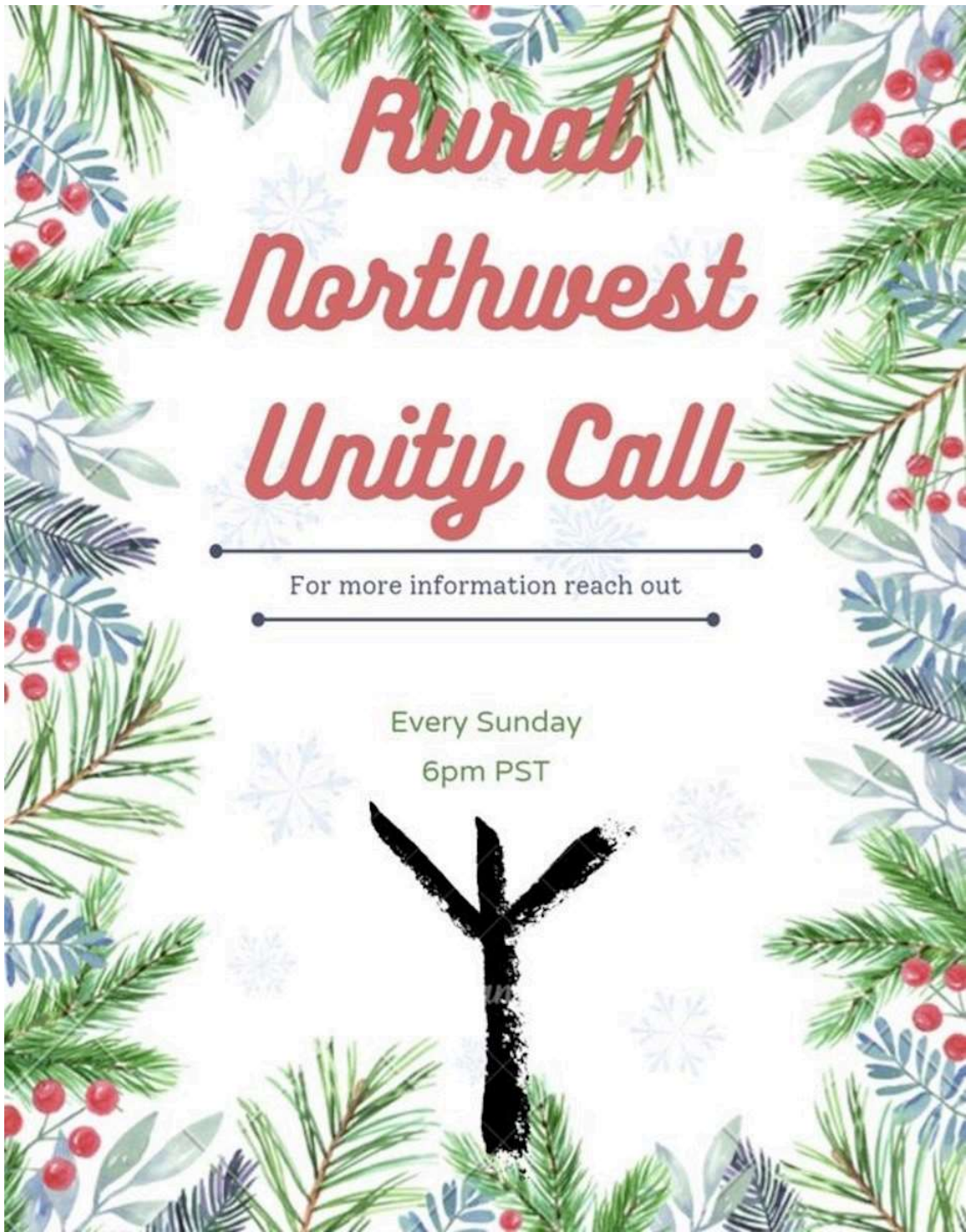
Along the way, we stopped at a few members' houses, including Apprentice Folkbuilder Nick Gunn's. One stop was in the Bavarian village of Leavenworth. We explored the pedestrian streets and themed shops. We got to lament on the changes that had occurred since my youth and revel in what remained. The lights strung up for the yuletide were beautiful and we got to see a live Alphorn Troop. Briar loved their music. The journey continued with us eventually returning home to healthy and happy livestock.

While the journey was longer and we spent more time than we could have, slowing down proved more productive. My children got to meet so many relatives and

Fólkvangr grew by one more soul. My wife's father and his family have determined that I'm worthy of the paternal blessing which means a great deal to me. We had the opportunity to rest and heal, celebrate and socialize while still launching our endeavors forward. To my highly productive readers, please make sure you take time to exist. Don't let the steps of the plan become more important than the goal. For my unproductive readers, refer to my earlier articles then come back to this one in six months. No matter what, dear reader, seek Victory in all things.

Hail Victory.

Upcoming Events



Folkbuilder Tyler Heinlein
theinlein@runestone.org

Memories Made in December in Montana



The month of December is a hectic one for most, and no exception for us. Office parties, prepping for family celebrations, Kindred celebrations, Hof celebrations... It can take a toll. The hectic nature of the Yuletide season is definitely my least favorite part of the year, but spending time with family and loved ones makes up for it! I have always loved the traditions, decorations, and overall feel of Yule. Here in Western Montana, we started off the month with our Day of Remembrance for Egill Skallagrímsson and an Óðinn Blót on the 9th. It was a smaller group than normal, but we still had a great time! Our Remembrance celebrations are an easy way for Folk to get together, and I highly recommend that folks do as we have done. It takes very little planning, and it's easy to do by one's self. Getting together for snacks or a meal at someone's house or getting together at a pub or restaurant and recounting the deeds of the respective person we are remembering is quite doable for most people. If you're up for it, you can take it a step further and include a Blót to the Allfather, include a Rune study, etc. If you're looking to get more involved in our faith and history as a Folk, this really is a great way to get going.





Following our gathering on the 9th, my family went out to the forest and selected our tree. Sure, one can purchase a pre-cut tree, but going out as a family, tromping through the snow and finding the right one, is so much better. It becomes an adventure and a ritual in itself. After we found our tree, we gave thanks to it and proceeded to cut it down. Hiking back to our vehicle, dragging the tree through the snow, the girls talked about how best to decorate it. I wouldn't be participating in the decorating, however. Instead, I made way over to the new home purchased by the MacDonald brothers, to congratulate them on the purchase of their first home, and to help them in a lan-taking and blessing ceremony. A rousing and nail-biting series of competitions (mostly Chess and Hnefatafl) ensued to see which brother got the master suite. Congratulations to Scott and Chad on the purchase of your new home!



We had our own Yule celebrations as a family on the 25th. And our Kindred Yule took place on the 28th. The day prior, the children and ladies of the Kindred got together to decorate cookies and do those special things that ladies do. The night of our Yule was kept small and intimate. Feasting, board games, and a gift exchange for both kids and adults took place. The kids were far better at not "stealing" gifts from each other... More than a gift or two was stolen during the adult round, but with so many awesome contributions, it was difficult not to.

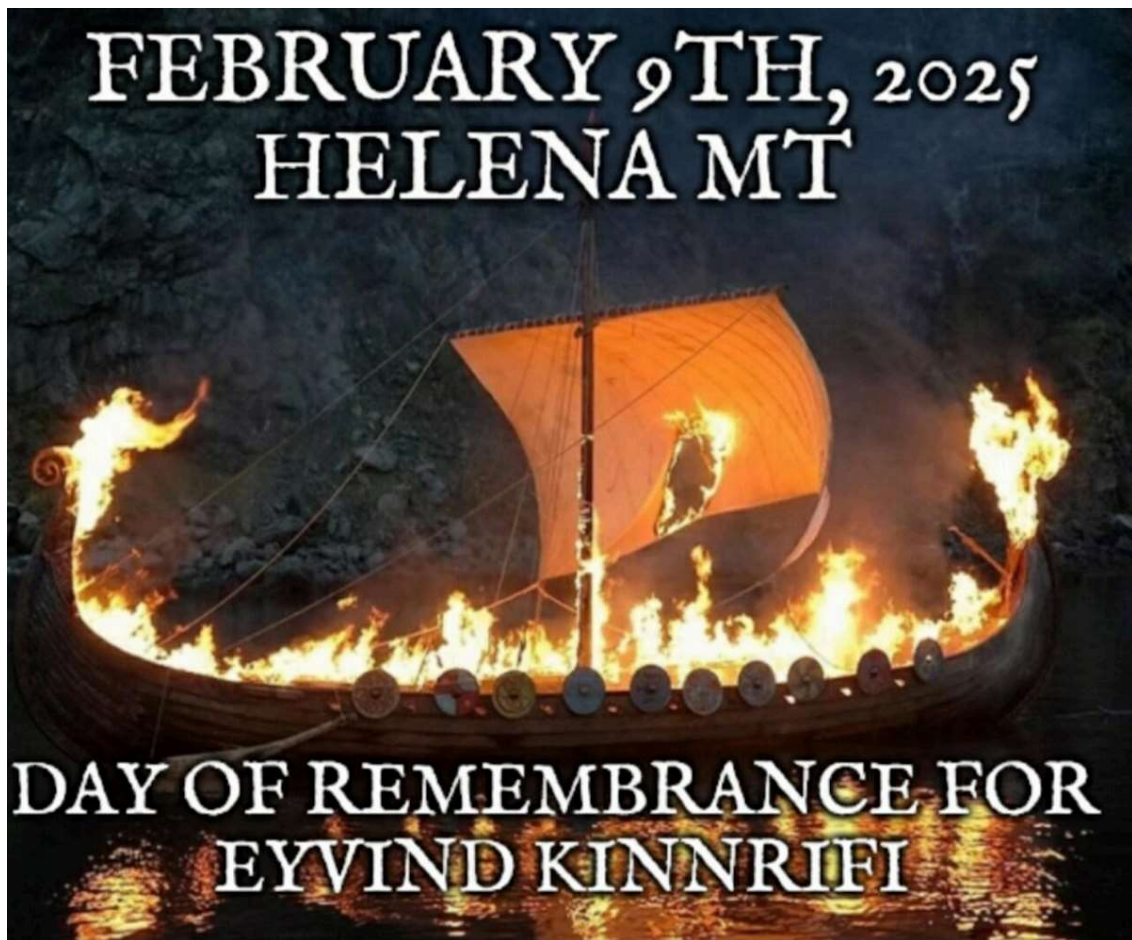


We ended the month and the year together on the evening of the 31st. From atop the Continental Divide, we watched a torchlight ski procession down the mountain, with fireworks overhead. This year's event was much more pleasant than in years past (it was

only 19 degrees instead of -20 or worse), and although the crowd was smaller, that made for better viewing. After the show, we gathered up at the base of the ski hill, and held our final Blót of the year, giving thanks for all the awesome things in our lives, and leaving all the bad things behind us. I toasted Ullr for our Kindred, and we all gave thanks to the Gods. Each of us pulled a Rune to meditate on for the coming year. Something that each of us should focus on or work on. Runes pulled, and goodbyes said, we each departed and headed home. Back at our home near the fire, our girls grabbed tin cups and spoons, banging and clanging to chase any bad within the house out the door. A great end to 2024, and a great entry into 2025. From all of us here in Western Montana, we hope your Yuletide was amazing, and many blessings upon you and all of our Folk for 2025!

Upcoming Events





Folkbuilder Ryan Harlan
rharlan@runestone.org

Nevada

Allsherjagoðic Dinner



Thank you to our amazing friends who joined us for our monthly dinner and celebration of the 9th day of Yule! We had a great meal and warm fellowship. We hope any of you who can will come out and join us on the 25th and bring something delicious to share for our monthly dinner!

Upcoming Events



Matthew D. Flavel
Allsherjargoði , Asatru Folk Assembly
mattflavel@runestone.org

Washington

The Power of Small Steps



Every new year brings a fresh start, a blank page in the story of our lives to a certain extent. For most of us, it's a time of renewal, a chance to reflect on everything that's transpired over the previous year, our accomplishments therein, and to set bold intentions for what could be. For what we will it to be. New Year's resolutions are oaths we make to ourselves to become better, healthier, more successful, and more fulfilled versions of who we are. Yet, as the days pass, the enthusiasm that once fueled our resolve can fade, leaving us questioning our ability to stick with our goals. That fire that fuels you gradually dies out as you get complacent and settle back into old habits. It's natural for all things to trend towards entropy. But here's the truth: following through on your New Year's resolutions is not just about the destination; it's about the process of becoming. It's about constantly building onto the store of willpower that empowers you to keep going, no matter the obstacles. It's extremely easy to set all sorts of seemingly grandiose goals for yourself all at once and then get overwhelmed and fall off when you hit a roadblock. It gets daunting and it's easy to get discouraged, but victory is achieved through consistent right action and persistence. Any large goal can and should be broken down into constituent steps and incrementally chipped away at on a daily basis. Expecting perfection from day one is ridiculous, not to say that you shouldn't aim high but don't beat yourself up over an off day. It always pulls me out of my funk to remind myself that my people need me to be the best that I can be, and that every ancestor in my bloodline sacrificed everything so that I could have the opportunity. I want to wish each and every one of you a happy New Year and sincerely hope you achieve whatever goals you set for yourself. Don't ever give up. Hail Victory!



Nick Gunn
Apprentice Folkbuilder
ngunn@runestone.org

Be a Doer



We need you to volunteer for the AFA!

Yes, you. We have work to do and need folk who are artists, editors, writers, accountants, lawyers, publicists, reputation managers, professionals of all manner, technical support, web developers, system admins, tradesmen, craftswomen, and more. See the list of amazing projects we have below. We will find a way for you to help our Folk.

Please email volunteer@runestone.org to help us make a difference in our world.

Eir's Blessings



Everybody needs a little extra help sometimes. Women, being the frithy creatures that we are, are uniquely suited to the task of manipulating energy for the purpose of healing. Magic, you could say. Do you have a health concern and need a little extra energy? Are you battling with a depression or PTSD? Is your baby having a hard time with teething? Please reach out to us about these important concerns!

Once a month, women of the AFA get together to perform healing rituals all across the globe. If you would like to be included, please send a message to let us know!

At the same time, Women of the AFA! If you are interested in helping to create a frithful, healing magic, please let us know! It's easy, but it makes a huge difference to those in our community who need our help!

You can reach us at EirsBlessings@runestone.org

Photo Donations

We have a real need for hi-res photographs of our members' gathering, being active in their kindreds, and showing what it means to live Asatru!



If you are willing to donate some hi-res photos for use in promotions such as the AFA Calendar, the AFA website, our publications, and more please email them to the AFA at photos@runestone.org. The larger the resolution the better, so please email them from the device where the photo was taken.

Folk Services



For some, it may be a natural disaster. For others an unexpected change in health, and for some just an unforeseen chain of events. Whatever the case may be sometimes we find ourselves in a sticky situation, and although we try and to work and do our best to pull ourselves out, sometimes we may need the help of our Folk community to give us a hand...

That's when our folks Services Program comes in. We give one-time monetary grants to those members in need. These folks are so grateful and we know that once they get back on track they will contribute to this fund. For those that are able, we are in need of funds so we can be prepared for when these

situations arise in our community. If you're able please place a donation today. Even a small donation adds up in the grand scheme of things and even \$5 or \$10 can help if enough people pitch in. If even a fraction of the folks who like the page did that each month, imagine the possibilities!

AFA Folk Services is intended to provide modest, one-time monetary grants to AFA members in dire need of basic services. It is also to be a source for referrals and information to help members get help beyond what the AFA can directly provide. For more information, please email folkservices@runestone.org.

Your contributions are earnestly solicited and of course, are tax-deductible! Please donate to Folk Services or one of our other AFA Fundraisers at <http://www.runestone.org/donate/>.

Thanks in advance!

Last Will and Testament

Recently, several members of our AFA family have passed beyond the veil. One was an old man in ill health, two were young men in the prime of life... all died with no legal will on record. Sadly, in two of these cases, our dead AFA members did not have their wishes respected regarding their funerals nor the final resting places of their remains.



We never know when tragedy will strike. We have a responsibility to our loved ones, we have a responsibility to our own legacies, to plan for our passing, and to make our wishes known. Planning for and contemplating our death is uncomfortable. Hopefully, we all have plenty of time for that down the road, but we can't count on that. Maybe we worry about expenses or hiring a lawyer. We all have excuses to put things off until later, unfortunately, sometimes the clock runs out before "later" happens.

We have found an amazing resource for our U.S. members to make legally binding wills in minutes online for **free**. This site also has resources to make Advanced Medical Directives and Powers of Attorney. It takes only **minutes** at <https://www.doyourownwill.com/>.

Please make your will **today**.

The AFA would like to collect signed original copies of wills for all our members and store them. We want to ensure that when members of our AFA family die, their wishes are honored. Please send these to:

Allen Turnage
PO Box 16027
Tallahassee FL, 32317



Witan Allen Turnage
aturnage@runestone.org



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