



Óðinshof
First Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly

September 2025

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Words from our Allsherjargoði



Big thank you to all the amazing Folk at Baldrshof! We all had a fantastic Freyfaxi. This year, I had the honor of ordaining Gyðja Sara Ault as a priestess of the Æsir. We are all tremendously proud of Sara and excited to have her serving in her new capacity.

Starting at Freyfaxi, we have seen a surge of member applications and new apprentices; Joshua Bailey and Jacob Rutledge in Indiana, Taylor Traficanti in Virginia, Jared Davison in Ontario, Brandon Larsen in New York, and Austin Merwald in Wisconsin. There is a palpable momentum that we are experiencing and we have exciting developments to tell you about when the time is right.

Welcome to all our new and returning students as we begin the 4th year of our AFA Ásatrú Academy!

Fall is here and as the air chills and we turn inward, this is a great time to celebrate hearth, home, and family. The veil is thinning and the ancestors are drawing closer. Let us all take full advantage of this special time to share family traditions and to build new

ones. As you make time for family, always remember to make time for your AFA family as well. Our families and our Folk are best when we invite the Æsir into all that we do and celebrate WITH them.

Hail the Æsir!

Hail the Folk!

Hail the AFA!

Announcements, News, & Noteworthy

8/19 - Leland Volsung Wiley Sutherland was named before his gods and Folk.

8/23 - Gyðja Sara Ault was ordained as priestess of the holy Æsir.



Matthew D. Flavel

Allsherjargoði, Asatru Folk Assembly

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Words from our Witan

“No Battles Won in Bed”



Wake early if you want
another man's life or land;
No lamb for the lazy wolf,
no battles won in bed
— *Hávamál* 58

This stanza has become a common saying in the East family over the last few years, particularly the last line. It is a mantra at this point, one that is used as a reminder of any duties, no matter how mundane or grand. We even say it to our infant son, on occasion.

We use this line often as a sort of bulwark against the soul sickness that our Folk find themselves plagued with. Laziness, obesity, and other afflictions would be cured nearly in an instant if our Folk reminded themselves of Stanza 58 more often.



The heroic, and thus Aryan, ideal is to reach upward towards the North Star even if our feet may never leave the ground. We do not simply lie down and let the world wash over us when we are knocked down; we stand back up and we push back against the tide. We snatch victory from the jaws of defeat, rather than sitting back and watching the world burn.

We keep in mind who we are fighting for, and we continue to fight.





Everyone reading this, I urge you to ask yourselves and perhaps others around you: what do you fight for? Who do you fight for? Who will you let down if you give up and sleep your life away?

Once you answer this, take up that mantra: “no battles won in bed.” Remind yourself that, as we often say, Victory never sleeps. This phrase obviously paints a martial picture, one of physical strength, and that’s certainly part of it, but it encompasses so much more than that. There is ALWAYS work to do, there is ALWAYS progress to be made, there is ALWAYS Victory to be won—for yourself, for your kin, and for the glory of the Æsir.



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Words from our Gođar

Your Destiny



It is easy in the present to take the easy road, but it destroys the future. A life of ease only turns into a desert of the soul, an endless nowhere. You can exist there forever, until you decide to face the possibility of moving forward. The blood, sweat, and tears become the river that carries you into your destiny. What's a little hardship when compared to the potential of greatness and your name being remembered?

Hail the Folk!



Gyðja Anna Plourde

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Sacrifice: It's Not Just for Blót



When we enter into the gifting cycle with the Æsir through Blót, it is a powerful and enriching act of devotion. It is said “Victory is won in the Blót.” As a member of the AFA, you know Victory Never Sleeps. So, how do we bring this act into our daily routine? What better way to give thanks for the gifts of Óðinn, Vili, and Vé than to use those gifts to become the best representation of their creation we can.

Mannaz (M) teaches us man is the ordinary presence of the divine in Miðgarðr. It is the stave of the “perfected man” – the complete human being; an initiate in Ásatrú. It is

called raunabót: “the true or real bettering.” There are many things we can do in our daily life—or more accurately—there are many things we do every day, that we can do better... that we can do with the divine in mind. Some are small, some are large with far reaching ramifications and consequences. Can they be things that benefit you? Of course they can, but intent matters. If your intent is to be more pious in your daily life and to be an extra-ordinary presence of the divine here in Miðgarðr, you are making your routine a ritual.

Big or small, what they all have in common is their impact on your Ørlög. Adding layer after layer to the Well of Urð, increasing your Hamingja to either wield in this life or pass on to your children. This is pleasing to our Holy Æsir and Ásynjur. Making Miðgarðr a better place by making ourselves better Ásatrúar is how we honor the Æsir every day. This is Living Ásatrú.

Be extraordinary!



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The Folkmother, Else Christensen



Many years ago, as we were preparing to honor Else Christensen, I had been noticing how much of what people write about her is based on the Wiki article. Over the last couple of years, the Wiki article has been edited many times with less than favorable tales and false accusations. It seems futile to take on the task of editing it with facts and sources when another round of children will come through to add the lies that they believe. So, I became determined to help with spreading knowledge. I will be sharing what I know of our Folkmother. My information comes from her own voice in interviews, her words in her publication, *The Odinist*, her close friends that are still with us, and the many prisoners who have shared her written letters with me.

Else Christensen was born in Esbjerg, Denmark in 1913. Although she was baptized Lutheran as a child, she never felt a connection to Christianity. She even went as far as petitioning the government to declare her a non-Christian. She married Alex Aage Christensen in 1937. He was a woodcarver by trade. She worked as a handweaver until she injured her back and then moved on to teaching children and adults with dyslexia.



Alex introduced her to Anachro-Syndicalism, which is centered on the idea that power corrupts and any hierarchy that cannot be ethically justified must be dismantled. This caused her to join the Strasserite National Bolshevik faction of the Danish National Socialist Party. To explain this further, basically she agreed with all the ideals of National Socialism except economics and governing. For the most part during the German occupation, they lived very well due to Alex's woodworking. Since few had his talent, his services were in high demand by the wealthy. With the cash coming in, they could buy whatever they wanted on the black-market, including guns and ammo. However, their allegiance to the Strasserite faction caused them to be under heavy scrutiny, which is why they had several visits by the German police. Since citizens owning weapons was outlawed, this included a visit due to a tip that they had pistols. She cooperated with them and handed over the pistols they asked for so they would not search the house and find other weapons, including a belt-fed machine gun.

Near the end of the war, Else and her husband were called in for questioning due to their political beliefs. She was held for less than 10 hours, and Alex was sent to a concentration camp for six months. The Germans had zero tolerance for any communistic ideals including those in the Strasserite faction of the Danish National Socialist Party. National Socialism was all encompassing and had no room for Bolshevik ideas on governing.

After the war, they bought a large sailboat and had intended to sail to Canada, but the weather did not permit it. They ended up migrating to Canada in 1951. Living in Toronto, she worked as a waitress and struggled to learn the language. Eventually, she worked as an X-ray technician and assistant to the head of the hospital until she retired.



Else recalled being introduced to the writings of Australian Odinist Alexander Rud Mills. She started writing to Alexander Rud Mills until his passing and continued to correspond with his wife, Evelyn Price, until her passing. Else was heavily influenced by his ideas about reviving the worship of the ancient Norse deities. In 1968, Else and her husband started the Odinist Study Group with meetings in their home. A year later, they would form the Odinist Foundation and moved to Crystal River, Florida. She began touring North America to promote Odinism. Then in 1970, the Odinist Fellowship was born. She started reaching out to three prisons in Florida. She recalled that the study groups were small. She was the first to have Odinism recognized by any prison system. While working in the prison, she never had any misconceptions about her purpose. She recognized that most of the prisoners were rotten apples, but she held onto the fact that a small handful would come out and do great things.

She said of her prison work:

No packed rooms in the prison; 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.

In 1971, the year Alex would pass away, is the same year the first publication of *The Odinist* was released. This publication took off like wildfire, especially within the prison system. She continued her building of Odinism and published *The Odinist* up until her death on May 4th, 2005.

On Odinism she said:

To understand my approach to Odinism, one simply has to realize that only when one knows all aspects of an ideology, can one choose wisely; if you only know half of it, you're out of balance.



She also wrote:

Odinism, to the consternation of many people, Odinists as well as non-Odinists, is not dogmatic. We will have to agree upon and tolerate several main interpretations of Asatru/Odinism. Eventually I believe it will all come together. Although I at present do not deal with rituals and rune lore, I'm certainly aware of both and agree that they are part of our ancient religion. I'm simply not able to deal with them, so I leave them be until somebody appears who can do so in an way I can accept as the closest to 'the real thing' when my instincts tell me they are.

Else Christensen was bestowed with the title Folkmother due to her devotion to rebirthing Ásatrú after picking up the torch from Alexander Rud Mills. Most of those who have since come to their re-awakening probably would have not done so had it not been for her. Her dedication to bringing people back to their ancestral roots, especially those in prison, is something that should inspire us all.

One of my favorite quotes from Else is from 1992:

We're all more or less caught up in the speed trap of modern society. We have just witnessed the Olympics where a fraction of a second makes the difference between a win or a loss. But in life you're not in competition with anybody but yourself, you're not out to win medals; you're here as a member of your Folk, and your efforts are not counted in seconds in competition with other people, but rather in the quiet and continuous influence you have in the overall future in the life of our Folk.



The Asatru Folk Assembly holds a Day of Remembrance for the Folkmother on her birthday, September 12th.

There is a memorial altar dedicated to her at Baldrshof, the third Hof of the AFA.

Hail the Folkmother!



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My Haustblót



<https://youtu.be/ryw0LtY3p7Q>

The ancient calendar only recognized two seasons. There was summer, and there was winter. Just as Sumarmál was their first day of Summer, Haustblót was their first day of winter. The temperature slowly begins to fall, the days get shorter. Those who grow their food begin preparations for the final harvests. The larders are growing full with

the fruit of earlier efforts. Now it's time to begin the hunt, to kill enough game to finish winter's preparations.



For me, preparations for this time started late last winter. Once the sun started growing stronger and the days once again were getting longer, I started planning out my harvest season. Haustblót for me is the start of archery hunting season for white tail deer in Minnesota. While there is still snow and the ground is still frozen, I begin by walking through the woods and marsh land on family property, scouting for well used game trails in relation to current tree stand locations. I will set up cameras to monitor

movement, making adjustments as needed until the ground completely thaws. As deer patterns largely remain the same, they do vary only slightly unless something throws them off, such as predators, downed trees, or food supply. Once the frost is released from the Earth and new growth is beginning, it is time to plant some nutrient rich crops in small areas that will be left to grow basically wild. I plant perennial chicory, rapeseed, and a variety of clover which I will monitor with camera overwatch.

As the Earth greens and you see the young fawns out exploring for the first time, it is a welcome and grounding sight to see those that survived the cold dark winter with their young out soaking up Sól's warmth. Harvesting from nature is about balance and having a positive relationship with the Vætrr of the land and so I also give thanks to those spirits and the Goddess Austrá.



Over the next few months, I am observing movement patterns and start clearing the best likely areas to hunt from. That means clearing a few trails, moving cameras accordingly (which happens a few times), putting down mineral for early nutrition, and maintenance of areas. Once Freyfaxi is upon us I have spent countless hours refining and making adjustments, only to be out of time and what is set will be the way it is for the upcoming harvest season tree stands are in place. Here to the hunt, it will be checking my equipment and gear, resighting my bow, checking weather forecast, getting tags, and the tension begins and builds. Until that opportunity where all of the preparation

pays off and tension is released as the smell of blood in the air is noticed just after hearing the sound of my arrow passing through the deer and knowing by the sound that my aim was true and I hit in just the right spot.

My Haustblót, I engage in the gift cycle with Ullr and the land Vættir, and with luck, I will be gifted with a freezer full of food for to help sustain my family during the cold and dark months that surely will test us again.



Take some time and think about what your Haustblót looks like. What do you reap this time of year that was planted or started in the Spring? What projects have come to

completion? What do you do to prepare for the coming colder months in your area? Whether you hunt, farm, or otherwise, this is a time of year where seasonal plans and projects come to an end, and we start turning inward to persevere with our kin through the change in season from warm and sunny to cold and dark. This is where we find out if our preparations were enough and we make adjustments for the survival of our family and Folk.



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The Runestone - A Throwback

Ullr's Gifts to Hunter

by WulthuthewaR, *The Runestone*, Fall-Winter 1999



Read by Folkbuilder Nick Rice
<https://youtu.be/cofmBz0Qxv4>

Long ago, in the days before man received the gift of iron or runes, he hunted. During the long, cold winters, it was the heart of the tribe. Long after the plants were gone, hunting provided food. Long after Sunna's warmth had gone, it provided furs for warmth.

The whole tribe hunted together as the whole tribe ate together. With nets they captured the large game, with rocks and sticks they killed the small. All was well.

Until the year the tribe almost died.

It was a harsh winter. Cold enough that a sapling bent to set a snare would snap. Cold enough that the people had to go far out on the ice to break through for water. Cold enough that a child grew deathly ill.

The child's sickness swept through the tribe, making everyone too weak to hunt, save one. He was called Hunter, for he was the best at killing a rabbit with a thrown rock or stick.

He tended his tribe, waiting for the sickness to pass. None died, but none regained their strength. Then the stored food was gone, and the fever did not pass.

Hunter gathered his rabbit sticks and went out. The snow was deep, and Hunter had to force his way through it. The hares and rabbits, who walk on the crust of the snow, heard him, and stayed out of his range. Hunter wished that he too could walk on the snow, but he was not a rabbit and had to return home at the end of the day without food.

And his tribe grew weaker, and his daughter no longer answered when he talked to her.

The next day he took the tribe's nets out to the trails the larger animals left in the snow. He found two trees close on either side of the trail and placed the net across it. Hunter then circled far around and, with his flint tipped spear, waited beside the trail. Deer rushed down the trail towards his net but stopped in front of it. Hunter rushed towards them, yelling, and hoping to scare them into the net, but they ran around it. Hunter threw his spear, but even at his closest, he was far out of range.

Without others to cast the net, the deer could not be caught.

Again, Hunter returned home unsuccessful. And now many of his tribe no longer spoke, and all were close to death.

The next day Hunter brought all of the tribe's nets. Hunter skillfully created a trap from them, so that no matter which way the deer ran they would be ensnared. Hunter again circled far around and, with his flint tipped spear, Hunter waited.

A bull moose ran down the path and, being poor of sight. into the net. Angered, it began tearing the precious nets to pieces. In horror, Hunter jumped forward and thrust the spear into the moose. But a spear thrust will not kill a moose, and Hunter had to climb a tree for his life.

As Hunter sat in the tree, he felt a new type of cold, this one starting from his heart and flowing out. Hunter had failed. He could not provide food for his tribe, and without food all would die. Hunter wept for his people.

A movement in the snow caught Hunter's attention. He watched in amazement at a tall man walking across the top of the deep snow carrying a bent stave. Hunter had never seen a man such as this before. who seemed to shine brighter than the snow. He looked at his feet and saw that he walked on nets stretched between sticks. The man stopped before Hunter and reached up, touched his tears.

"My people," said Hunter "they die. They are starving and I cannot feed them."

The brilliant man pointed across the field toward several deer, who were poking their heads deep into snow to graze.

"I have tried." Hunter said, "but they are too wary for me to net alone, too wary for me to approach in this snow."

The man lifted his bow. He pulled an arrow from his quiver and fitted it to the string. How strange thought Hunter, yet his heart raced with excitement. With a snap, the bow sent an arrow across the field, dropping a deer.

Something else snapped in Hunter's mind, and he fell from the low branch. Suddenly he understood the bow, and how it sent the arrow further and faster than he could throw it. Suddenly he understood the snowshoes, and how they trapped the snow like a hunting net.

He got to his feet and looked around. The man was gone, but his belongings remained. "Who are you?" breathed Hunter. A voice inside his head told him "You will hear my name in the howl of the wolves," and he shivered.

Hunter picked up the snowshoes and looked at them. "We can make these!" he said, and tied them to his feet.

Hunter picked up the quiver of arrows and examined one. "We can make these!" he said, and tied the wolf hide belt around his waist.

Hunter picked up the bow and drew the string. "We can make this!" he said, and slung it across his chest.

Hunter then hurried to the deer, for he had many to feed in the coming days. As he dragged it home, he heard wolves in the distance. He listened to them calling to him who is first among them.

“Uuuuulllll” they called.

"Ull" Hunter replied.

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!



Matthew D. Flavel

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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 is making great progress! The generosity has been amazing, as always!

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

1. NJÖRÐSHOF IS NOW COMPLETELY PAID OFF!
2. CURRENT AVERAGE MONTHLY DONATIONS LOOK GOOD!
3. We need to fully secure a suitable property (The Ericksons have scouted 4 properties).
4. WE HAVE A LENDER.



FREYSHOF FUNDRAISER

The quest for Freyshof continues!

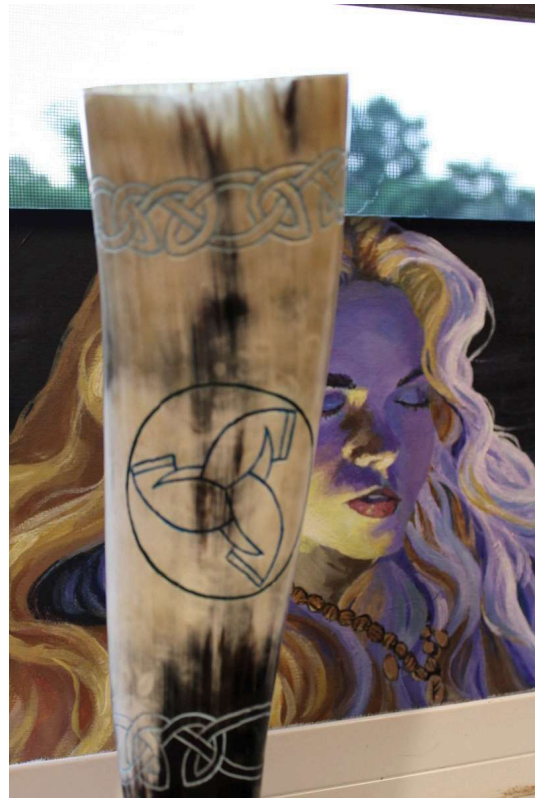
Donation Level- Karl
\$500 or more

Get your name on the donor plaque, displayed in the Hall of Freyr. You will also be gifted a one-time only Freyshof drinking horn, hand carved by Gyöja Erickson, and sealed with Beeswax.

Donation Level- Jarl
\$1000 or more

Get a special, one time only wooded Asatru Folk Assembly card that grants the member, in good standing, free admission to 3 Freyshof National Events. You will also receive the Freyshof horn, and your name on our Plaque.

[Donate Today](#)



This is not a "quick" process so stay patient and resolute. Exciting things ahead, stay tuned!



As on now, we have \$13,710 set aside for our down payment.

Hail Freyr!

Matthew D. Flavel
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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

WORK DAYS

EVERY WEEKEND
FROM SUMMER
THROUGH FALL
(PENDING WEATHER)

RSVP w/ hrice@runestone.org



Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice
nrice@runestone.org

Victory Never Sleeps



Victory Never Sleeps is a weekly podcast airing Wednesdays at 8pm Central. It is produced by the Asatru Folk Assembly, hosted by Allsherjargoði Matthew Flavel, and features weekly special guests speaking on spiritual topics pertaining to our Folk. 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 Ásatrú Folk.

Æsir. Virtues. Runes. Beliefs.

Doctrine. Cosmology. Literature.

Holidays. Heroes. 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, Odysee, VK, Rumble, and Twitch. Audio versions drop on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, iHeart Radio, and Amazon Music no later than the Friday after the live show.

Check out the full playlist of 150+ shows with 100's of hours of previous recordings on our [YouTube](#).



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AFA Ásatrú Academy



Check out the Ásatrú Academy at AsatruAcademy.org

Healthy Homeschooling



The school year has begun! There is a feeling of excitement and trepidation, the slow days of summer have started to lag with boredom and families are anxious to get some structure again, to embark on this year's educational endeavor. There is also often a

nervousness about getting it right. Do not worry! There is balance to be kept and a few easy guidelines to help you along. In her publication *Gracious Space*, Julie Bogart, the creator of "BraveWriter," presents the 'Four Principles of a Healthy Homeschool':

1. Provide meaning-rich materials for the essential subjects (Three Rs + history/science)

Not just drill... but materials that help make connections between what is being learned and how it fits into this glorious time and space we inhabit.

2. Follow inspiration whenever and wherever she leads (she is not a lengthy visitor)

If you follow inspiration when it hits... You will bring joy and freedom into your homeschool. If you ignore inspired ideas in favor of "the schedule," the surprise and sparkle of learning will fade.

3. Create a predictable, pleasant routine for when inspiration flags (most of your days)

Keep it steady, vary it with context... Let your days begin the same way each day.

4. Expose your children to a wide variety of experiences, subject matter, life skills, and places.

Meet people, learn to bake or sculpt, see a ballet, visit all kinds of places!

It is that simple - use this as a framework. Give yourselves the tools and routine but be open to the serendipitous opportunities that present themselves. Connect with other parents, create communities. You and your families will THRIVE! Happy Homeschooling!



Rachel Kinsler
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Welcome to the New School Year!



The staff and myself are excited to welcome you to the new school year here at the AFA Asatru Academy! We held an orientation/welcome call this past weekend. If you were unable to attend, please watch the recording that we emailed you.

Some new things this year: we have officially made the switch over to using Google Classrooms instead of QuickSchools. We know you are going to love the new platform! Google Classrooms is much more user friendly and easier to navigate for our parents, students, and staff. This does require a Gmail account. If you don't have one yet, please get a free Google account as soon as possible or you won't have access to Academy materials. If you have any questions, please reach out to staff ASAP!

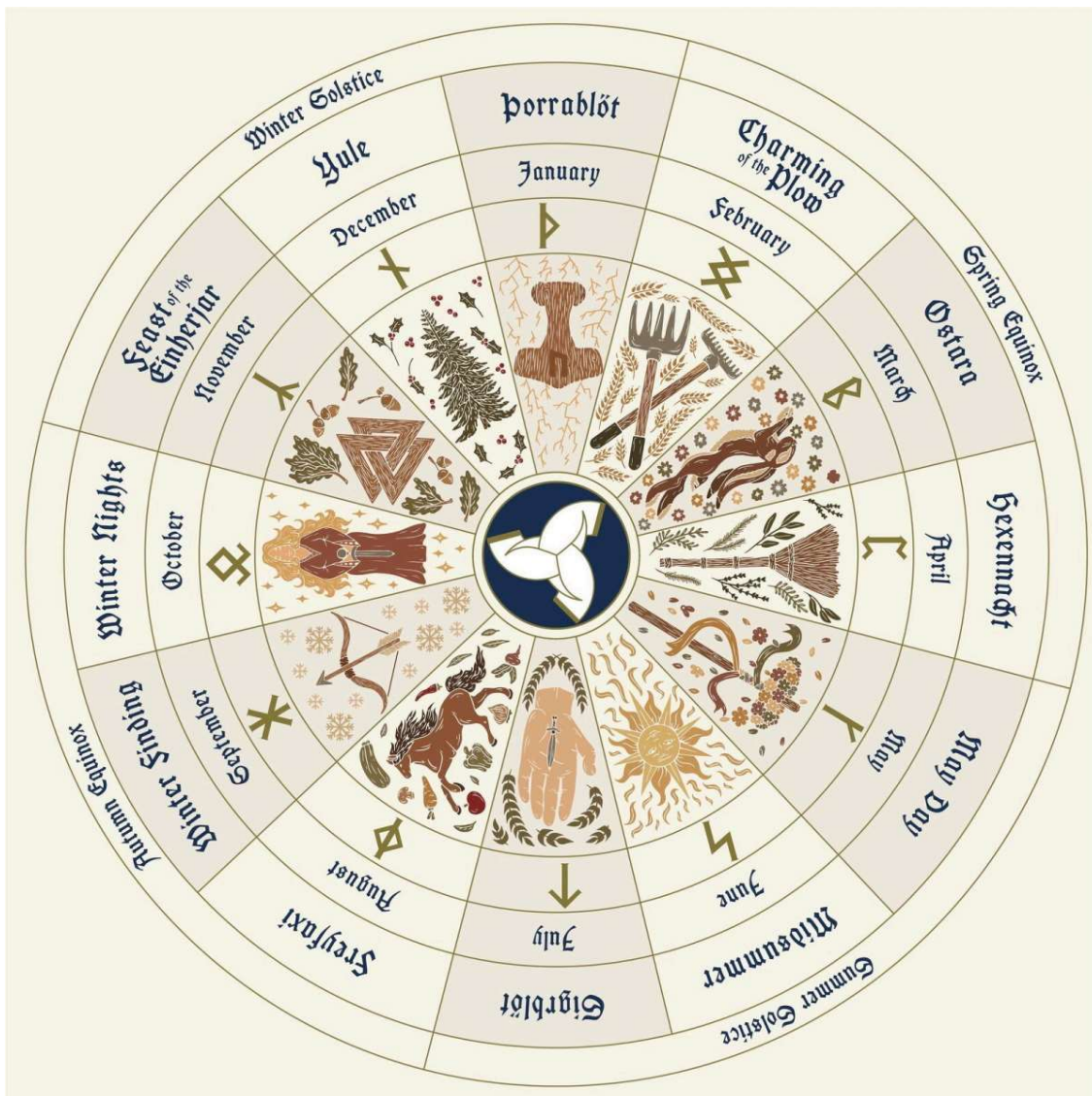
For our 6th and 7th graders, this year I will be teaching classes directly on European history, Aryan history, and religion. I'm very much looking forward to interacting with you all and sharing my knowledge on these important subjects.

We at the Academy are so proud of all our students and are very proud of the Academy program! Please always remember we are here to ensure your success! If you have any questions, need advice or help, or just want to talk, please reach out to me or staff. We are dedicated to making your homeschool journey a success! As always, hail Victory!

Goði Rob Stamm
Dean, Ásatrú Academy
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Remembrance & Holy Days



[Holy Days | Asatru Folk Assembly](#)

- > January 9 - Raud the Strong <
- > January 18 - King Blót-Sveinn of Sweden <
 - > January 18 - Þorablót <
- > 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 9 - Járnskeggja <
 - > May 22 - John Gibbs-Bailey "Hoskuld" <
- > June 9 - King Athanaric of the Visigoths <
 - > June 13 - Erik Klasson <
- > 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 <
 - > October 23 - King Aoric <
 - > October 27 - Ragnvald Odiakarl <
- > 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) <

September



<https://youtu.be/TFXHISP0OBA>

Days of Remembrance

Prince Hermann of the Cherusci | September 9th



Υ 18 BCE - 21 CE Ἀ

Hermann (18 BCE - 21 CE), known as Arminius to the Romans, was the heir to the chieftom of the Cherusci tribe. The Cherusci were a Germanic tribe that was generally friendly to the Roman Empire but were required to pay tribute in order to maintain peace. Part of this tribute was the sons of local noble families, as was often the case in early European politics. Hermann's father, Segimer, gave up his two sons — Hermann and his brother — to Roman statesman Publius Quinctillius Varus to be raised in the Roman fashion.

Hermann was given the name Arminius, learned Latin, and was taught the Roman martial discipline that had conquered much of Europe by that point. He was a bright student, a disciplined warrior, and a brilliant leader. His skills were so useful to Rome that they granted him official citizenship, as well as the rank of eques — the equivalent of a knight in the Roman military. He earned this by serving with distinction in the Great Illyrian Revolt. Following this, he was sent home to Germany to aid Governor Varus in conquering the Germanic tribes east of the Rhine.

Arminius, or Hermann, returned to the land of the Cherusci in northern Germany. His people were still there, still practicing Ásatrú, their loyalty to the Æsir stronger than steel.

We do not know exactly why Hermann decided to side with his own people and fight the Romans. Perhaps he had wanted this since he was taken from his father, or perhaps seeing his Folk again stirred something in his soul — we may never know.

What we do know for certain, however, is that Hermann chose to stand with his Folk against encroaching tyranny and globalism. He immediately began plotting a way to unite the various tribes of the area in a bid to push Rome and her legions out of Germany forever.

When an emergency broke out in the Balkans, Governor Varus had to send eight of eleven legions east, leaving Germany with only three to keep the peace. Hermann saw this as a grand opportunity, and likely recognized it as a blessing from the Æsir themselves. He managed to unite many of the local tribes, a seemingly impossible task since they historically had bickered and warred with each other for generations.

In the autumn of 9 CE, Hermann tricked Varus into going to Kalkriese to put down a fake rebellion. When Varus arrived with his three legions, they were quickly swept away and annihilated by the might of Prince Hermann and five Germanic tribes in what is remembered as the Battle of Teutoburg Forest. They united as one people, and became essentially unstoppable. Blessed by the Æsir once again, the Germans had won

a victory that would change human history. This battle is seen as Rome's greatest defeat, as it paved the way for Rome to pull out of Germany permanently. This defeat was so great that Emperor Augustus himself was driven nearly to madness. It is said that he paced around his palace, yelling "Varus, give me back my legions!"

After the battle, Prince Hermann's army proceeded to eliminate every trace of Roman influence east of the Rhine. He even tried to invade Gaul to free our Celtic cousins from the Empire, but was blocked on the Rhine by Tiberius.

Prince Hermann led the Cherusci for only 12 years after his great victory. He married Germanic princess Thusnelda, who was later kidnapped by pro-Roman Germans and never saw Hermann again. She gave birth to Hermann's son Thumelicus, who sadly grew up in Roman captivity.

This chain of events eventually led to the breaking of Prince Hermann's great Germanic alliance, and his murder. He was killed by men of his own tribe, as they believed he was becoming too powerful and that Germany was becoming too unified. While his previous victories had ensured that Germany would remain free, the petty treachery of some of his Folk fractured Germany in a way that it would not recover from.

As we draw inspiration and awe from Prince Hermann's victories, let us also reflect and learn from his murder. Even 1000 years ago, our Folk had the same weakness that we have today: when times are good, we seek conflict within and tear ourselves apart. Rome knew this, as Tacitus mentioned it in his work, *Germania*.

Prince Hermann had done the impossible and saved his Folk from slavery and ensured that their troth with the holy Æsir would not be broken by later Roman Christianity, but his own Folk sought conflict where there need not be any, weakening Germany for centuries to come. Had this betrayal not happened, our faith could perhaps have stood unbroken against the scourge of monotheism. If we can learn from this story, if we can take the blessings of the Æsir and keep them, we will continue to stand dauntless against whatever chaos stands to divide us!

Hail Prince Hermann!

Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!

Else Christensen | September 12th



☧ September 12, 1913 - May 4, 2005 ☯

Born Else Ochsner on the 12th of September 1913, in Denmark, she was destined to be one of the leading figures in the reforging of Ásatrú.

Although born in the small town of Esbjerg, she moved to the capital city of Copenhagen as a young woman. During this time of political polarization before the Second World War, she found herself joining the Danish Workers' Party. Here she met her husband, Aage Alex Christensen. When the Germans invaded Denmark during World War II, they were both imprisoned due to their involvement with the Danish Workers' Party.

Once released from prison, they emigrated to Canada. When they arrived, they almost immediately began working to secure a future for their people. Else began networking with other like-minded people across North America, first discovering Ásatrú (what many called Odinism at the time) in a pamphlet entitled "Call of Our Ancient Nordic Religion" — penned by AFA Hero, Alexander Rud Mills, who she kept as a pen pal until his death in 1964.

This began Else's journey into building a relationship between Aryan and Æsir, immediately understanding that Ásatrú is the ethnic faith of the Aryan people. She founded the Odinist Fellowship in 1969, and continued this work until her death even though her husband passed away in 1971. She relocated to the United States shortly before his passing, and began a publication called The Odinist. This is what earned her the moniker of "Folkmother," as she was instrumental in bringing so many of our people Home to Ásatrú in her time.

In 1993, she was taken advantage of and unknowingly used as a drug mule. She was arrested, tried, and convicted, then sentenced to five years and four months in prison. Before going to prison, however, she gave the Odinist Fellowship's member list to Stephen McNallen, who would soon found the Asatru Folk Assembly!

After serving her time in prison, she was deported back to Canada, where she attempted to revive the Odinist Fellowship. She began another publication, Midgard Page, in 1998.

She passed away on the 4th of May, 2005, in Vancouver Island, Canada.



Else was one of a few key beacons for Ásatrú, working the will of the Æsir in lighting the torch that would bring so many of our Folk Home. Inspired by fellow AFA Hero,

Alexander Rud Mills, she would later go on to pass the torch to the Herald of Óðinn, Stephen McNallen himself. She played an integral part in the reforging of our native faith, and she will be honored, now and forever more.

Else Christensen is the dedicated hero of Baldrshof. For more information and a deeper dive into the life and acts of our Folkmother, check out Baldrshof.org.

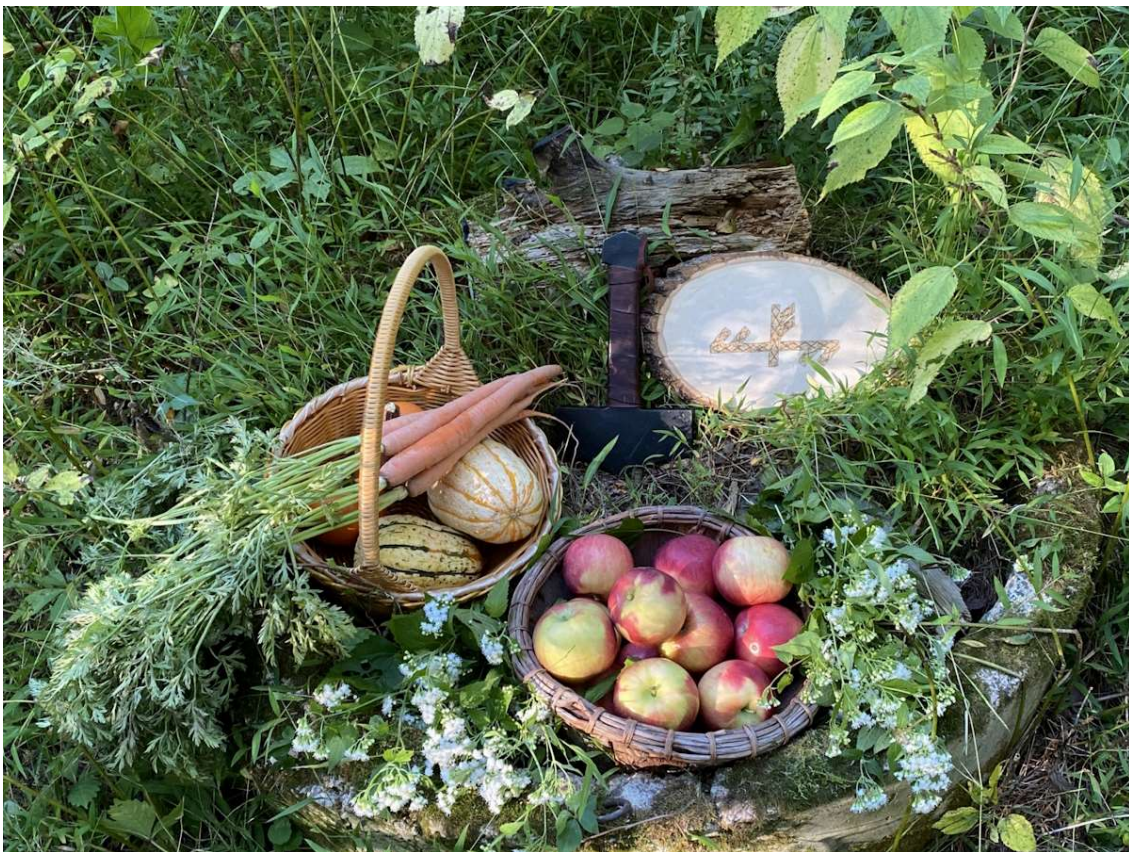
Hail the Folkmother!

Hail Else Christiansen!

Hail the Asatru Folk Assembly!

Holiday

Haustblót | September 22nd (observed September 20th)



The ancient calendar only recognized two seasons. There was summer, and there was winter. Just as Sumarmál was their first day of Summer, Haustblót was their first day of winter. The temperature slowly begins to fall, the days get shorter. Those who grow their food begin preparations for the final harvests. The larders are growing full with

the fruit of earlier efforts. Now it's time to begin the hunt, to kill enough game to finish winter's preparations.

Today, many of us don't have the same connection to the need for food and preparation that our Ancestors experienced. Food has become easy to access, and therefore not so vitally important. Those who hunt, usually do it for sport not because without it they don't have the food to survive the Winter. This doesn't mean, however, that we cannot take the time to think and reflect. Thus begins the Winter season. Thus begins the death of the "world" too dark and cold. We can all see and feel the change in the world around us. Our days are shorter, the nights grow colder. The leaves change and begin to fall.

Get outside and find someplace to sit and feel the changes. Make a hearty meal to share with your family and with the Gods. If you hunt dedicate, your first kill to the Gods and Ancestors, to Ullr. Share a choice cut with them. Now is time to begin the "closing in." Everyone begins to gather closer to home, sticking close to push away the wintry drear. Take time to remember what's important.

Upcoming National Events

Winter Nights XIV | October 10th – 12th



Get your tickets [HERE](#)

This long-running AFA festival is dedicated to our ancestral mothers, the Disir. Started in 2012, the Asatru Folk Assembly's Winter Nights festival was hosted at a beloved camp in Pennsylvania for its first decade. This year, for the second time, Winter Nights will be held in Cheshire County, New Hampshire, from October 10th–12th. We build upon the success of the Asatru Folk Assembly by making new friends and renewing old friendships. We look forward to seeing members and friends!

Autumn has officially started. The days are noticeably shorter. The nights are noticeably cooler. The trees are ablaze with the colors of Fall and the crunching of the fallen leaves underfoot has begun. All around us the world is dying. This was a time of drawing in close, of hearth and home and family. For our ancestors, this was not an Autumn festival, but a quiet Winter rite in which the female spirits were honored in a rite called Disirblót.

Today, Winter Nights is often seen as a death of the physical world, the world we can see, and the reawakening of the intangible. It is the world of high energy, of spirits. It is that deeper feeling and connection to the things we know to be there. This is the time we honor our Disir—our female ancestors. We remember that without our ancient mothers we could not be. They cared for the home and the hearth fires. They cared for their families. Our ancient mothers, with strength and determination, raised the next generation against odds we cannot really begin to fathom.

With the harvests finished, there is a quiet lull before we turn our minds to the hectic holiday season. Now is a good time to turn inward in introspection, and to self-improvement. It is also the time to meditate on things of a more spiritual nature. Connect to the energy that is always there.

Your registration fee includes all workshops, lectures, meals, tent sites, and of course our holy rites. Only AFA members and vouched-for guests will be admitted to this event. If you are not an AFA Member, you should confirm with the member who is vouching for you that they will do so when asked about your registration.

Things to know:

- Children 17 and under attend for free!
- Meals are included with all passes.
- You will need to bring your own bedding, and it can get COLD at night, so plan accordingly.
- Accommodations are on-site tent camping. Bring your tent!
- Please contact Witan Clifford Erickson if you will attend.
- Guests, please include the name of the AFA member who is vouching for you.

Member Family – Weekend: \$135

Member – Weekend: \$90

Member – Day pass: \$45

Guest – Weekend: \$120

Guest – Day pass: \$60

Child – Weekend: Free

Child – Day pass: Free

Check out these videos from past events and about the Winter Nights holytide—Playlist of previous events > <https://tinyurl.com/AFAWinterNights>

If you have any questions or concerns, please email cerickson@runestone.org.

Get your tickets [HERE](#)

Hail the Disir!
Hail the Alfar!



Witan Clifford Erickson
cerickson@runestone.org

Freyfaxi 2025, a Recap



<https://youtu.be/EkSDsohOZyl>

Freyfaxi 2025 was an amazing event!

Folk joined us at the Hof beginning Thursday night for final event and food preparations. We were grateful the Bethea family and crew who were able to spend Thursday evening and Friday morning with us. Showing Folk the beautiful temple to Baldr for the first time is always a heart-warming experience. Member Kaleb from Pennsylvania was also able to join us on Thursday night and proved himself to be calm

and steady set of hands while cooking hundreds of pounds of food for the Folk! Thank you to the Bethea family, Kaleb, and Drake for helping out the Baldrshof leadership!



Friday morning, our event started with breakfast, followed by the morning dedication and Litany of the Æsir. Our Friday continued with Welcoming of the Gods by Witan Fassett and lunch. The Allsherjargoði conducted a powerful and moving Baldr Blót.



Saturday morning brought more spiritual work in the morning after breakfast and a discussion and class on the AFA's pan-Aryan belief led by Goði Stamm. Gyðja Sara Ault led a beautiful Nanna Blót on Saturday morning, followed by lunch. Goði Erlandson led our Freyfaxi Blót with the Allsherjargoði presiding over the bread horse sacrifice and offering. Our auction was amazing, and the generosity of the Folk is deeply appreciated! Our Sumbl concluded our Saturday evening, with moving toasts and emotional memories.



Congratulations to Gyðja Sara Ault on her ordination!

Sunday morning our Folk said their goodbyes and were blessed for safe travel during Goði Stamm's Wayfarer Blót.

We would like to thank all the Folk who came Thursday, but couldn't stay! We thank the Folk who could only make it Friday. All those who joined us on Saturday, and

especially to those who joined us for Sunday. Thank you to all the Baldrshof Leadership and all the Folk who made our event a success this year!



Witan Brandy Fassett

bfassett@runestone.org

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 Ásatrú 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 Goðar 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.



Or if you'd like to donate to this ministry, there's a donation earmark set up on our site [here](#). The donations will be used to get small ritual items and books into the prisons and the hands of our Folk inside.

Ancestral Food and Culture

Mustikkapiirakka

Finnish Blueberry Tart



This is a quick, easy blueberry treat for late summer. It's not too sweet and can be served right out of the oven, or chilled.

Crust

- 1/4 cup + 3 tablespoons butter at room temperature
- 1/3 cup + 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 large egg
- 2/3 cup rye flour
- 2/3 cup white flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch of cardamom

1. Cream the butter and sugar till fluffy. Add the egg.
2. Stir in dry ingredients until the dough can form a pliable ball.
3. Use your hands to press into a pie pan or onto a cookie sheet. You want to press it thinner than you think. It will rise a little as it bakes and you don't want it too thick.
4. Poke the bottom all over with a fork and bake for 10 minutes at 375°F.
5. Does not need to cool before adding the filling.

Filling

- 1 heaping cup fresh blueberries
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 egg
- 1/4 teaspoon cardamom
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 tablespoons sugar

1. Whisk the sour cream, egg, sugar, vanilla, and cardamom until it is thin and pourable.
2. Spread the blueberries over the crust leaving an edge if you use a cookie sheet. Carefully pour the filling over the blueberries and gently spread with a spatula.
3. Return to the oven and bake 20-30 minutes until the edges are golden and the filling around the edges is set. The center should not be too dry or firm, or too liquid.
4. Let cool. Serve right away or chilled.



Annika Peterson
Apprentice Folkbuilder
apeterson@runestone.org

Online Events and Meetings

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**

AFA Eldri

Moots on Teams

Tuesdays:

September 16 & 30

5:00 PT, 6:00 MT, 7:00 CT, 8:00 ET

*A social group for
members
age 50 and above.*

Gyöja Sheila McNallen
sheila@runestone.org





AFA Ladies Book Study

MEAD CUP MONDAYS!

LADY

WITH A MEAD CUP

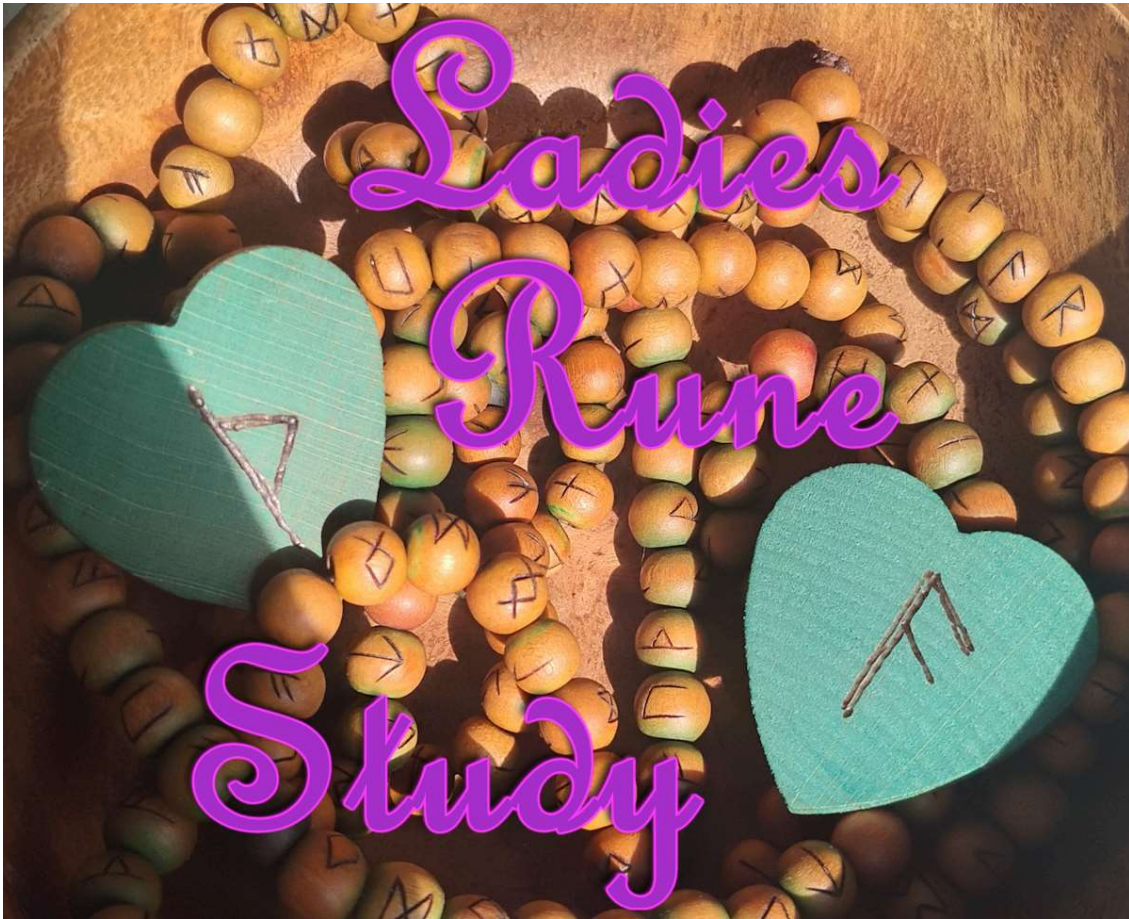
Every first Monday of the month
Starting June 2, 2025 5pm PT/8pm ET
PDF and Meeting Link available on MeWe
or by request
landerson@runestone.org

LADY WITH A MEAD CUP
RITUAL, PROPHECY AND LORDSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN WAR BAND FROM LA TÈNE TO THE VIKING AGE

Michael J. Enright

** Special date change, 2nd Monday of the month just for Sept. **

Mead Cup Mondays! Greetings ladies of the AFA, have you heard about our new book study group? We have just started reading *Lady with a Mead Cup* by Michael J. Enright! We are meeting virtually once a month, on every first Monday, to discuss what we have read during the previous month. If you would like to join us, please contact Gyðja Anderson at landerson@runestone.org to be sent a pdf of the book and the meeting link; these are also available in the AFA Ladies Group on MeWe. Have a wonderful month, and I hope to see you at our next Mead Cup Monday!



Ladies Rune Study

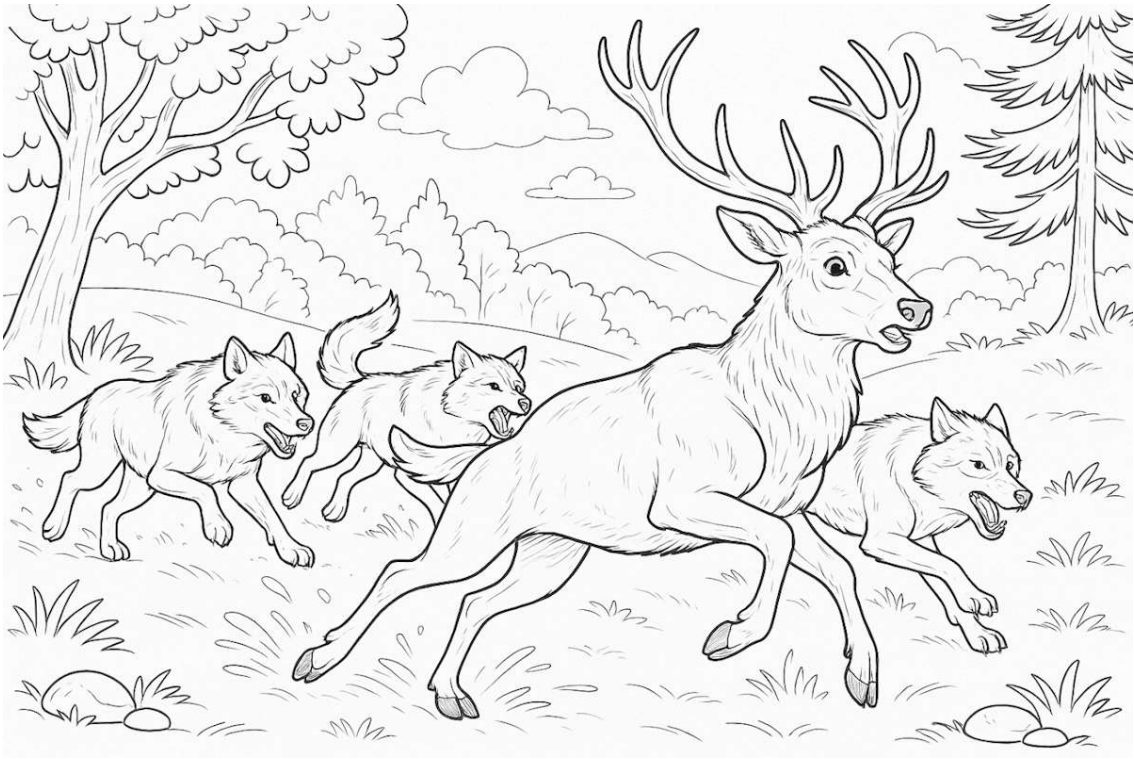
September 14th | 1pm EST

Our rune study continues this month with Thurisaz and Ansuz. Last month was a great time, and we're just getting started! This is great way to connect with other AFA women and learn together.

Please email Gythia Anna Plourde with any questions that you may have: aplourde@runestone.org

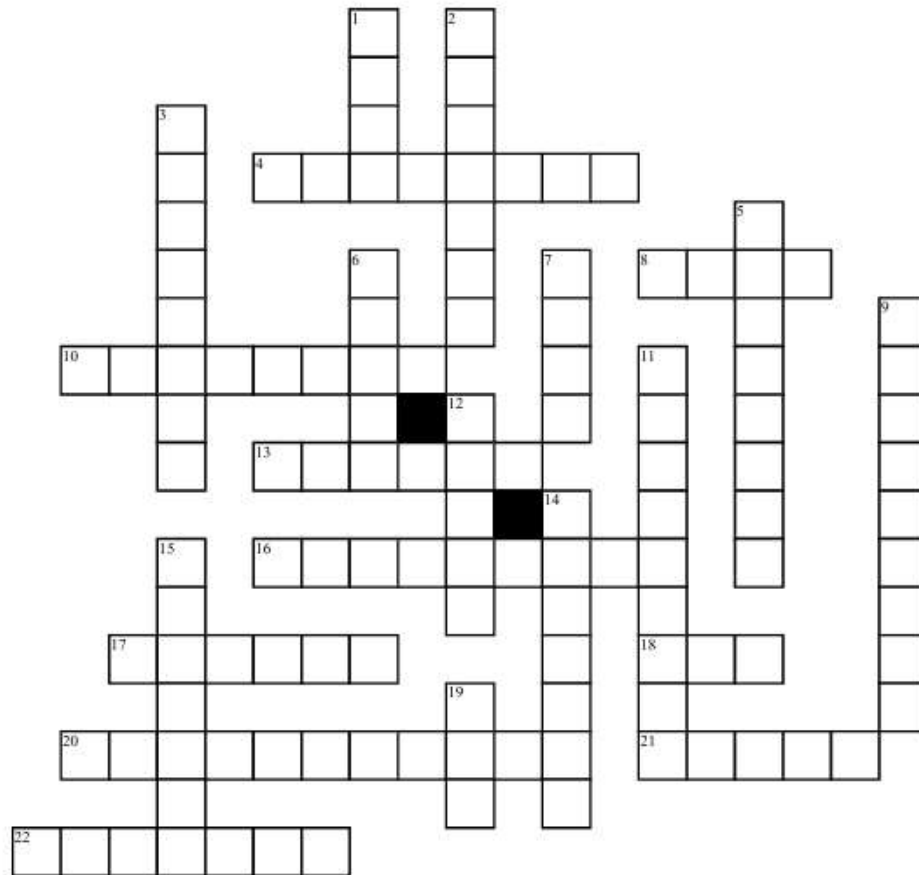
Hail the Folk!

Just for Fun



Blessed Haustblót to you all!

Haustblót and Winter Finding



Across

- 4.** Staying alive in harsh conditions
8. Predator of the northern forests
10. Slippery mode of travel across deep snow
13. When the leaves fall and the air turns crisp
16. Gathering and storing for later
17. Clue when hunting
18. Weapon for launching arrows

- 20.** Advanced planning to get things in order

- 21.** State of being when the stores are full and the blade is sharp

- 22.** Pursuit of wild game for food

Down

- 1.** God associated with archery and winter

- 2.** The celestial phenomena marking the holy day

- 3.** Something to prepare ahead of time for the seasonal bonfire

- 5.** Organizing and arranging for the future

- 6.** Early sign of winter

- 7.** Feeling of urgent want

- 9.** Holy day honoring Ullr, the hunt, and the harvest

- 11.** First month of autumn

- 12.** From herbs, fire, offerings rising to gods

- 14.** The act of looking or searching

- 15.** Gathering of food from fields

- 19.** Archer's precision

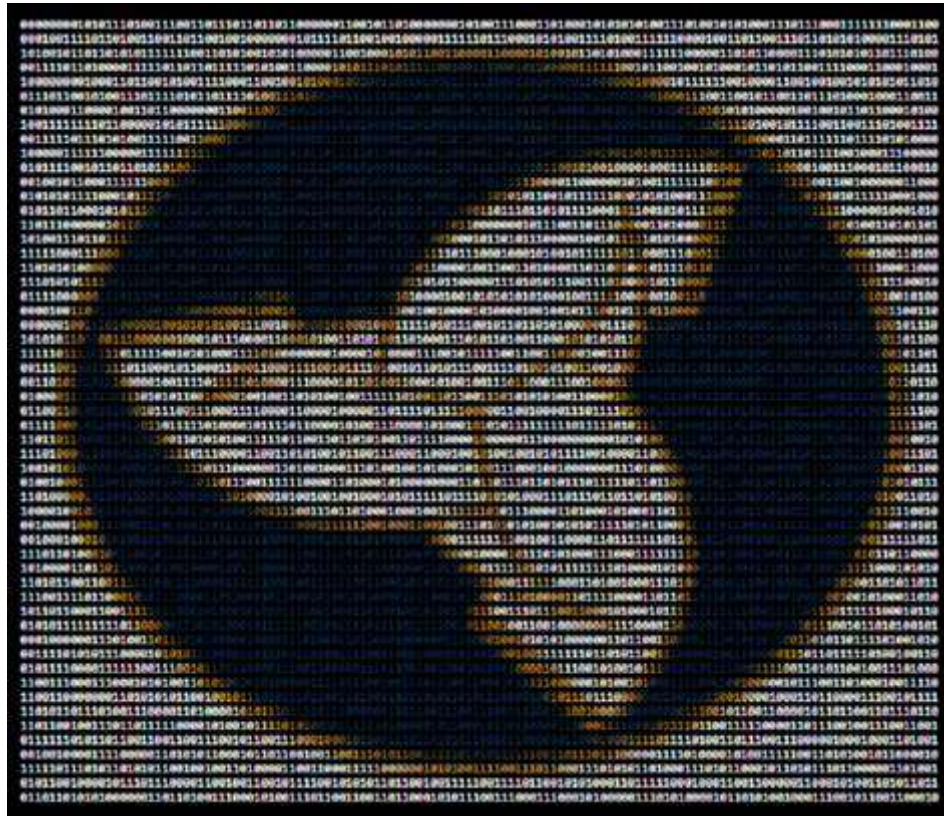
Feel free to send your colored creations or finished puzzle to press@runestone.org for a shout-out in the next issue!



Enjoy! Hail Ullr!

AFA STEMCELS

*Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
Community Education and Learning Service*



Have you ever considered a career in Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM)? STEM positions have great work-life balance, high compensation, job security, and can be done remotely.

The goal of STEMCELS is to help AFA members learn the skills needed for technical positions and help them find gainful employment using our professional network.

We currently have mentors in General Software Engineering, Data Engineering, and Embedded Engineering, including some with Silicon Valley experience. We are holding information sessions to help you decide if any of these disciplines are right for you. The sessions include:

- Possible career paths
- Necessary skills and mindset
- What a typical workday looks like

If this interests you or if you're interested in becoming a mentor, please send an email to stemcels@runestone.org.



Witan Clifford Erickson
cerickson@runestone.org

Ásatrú Principles and Space Exploration

*Honoring Víðarr, the Virtue Perseverance, and Astronaut Lovell:
Ásatrú Principles and Space Exploration, episode 5*



USN Captain and Astronaut James Arthur Lovell, Jr. standing in front of the Saturn V rocket on the launch pad. The Saturn V is the black-and-white column in the center between the two towers.

(Photo Credit: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA))

Perseverance is one of the Nine Noble Virtues. One of our Folk's great Heroes of early space exploration, Astronaut Jim Lovell, explained how the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) exemplified this virtue during the Space Race in the 1960's and 1970's. When asked about the Apollo program, Lovell explained (May 25, 1999 interview):

“New ideas. That was the whole idea of NASA. New ideas. What can we do differently? How can we do this? And there were a lot of mistakes. There were a lot of blind alleys we went up to. Perseverance, though, was . . . predominant in the program at the time. Let’s keep on trying.”

Óðinn’s son, Víðarr the Silent one, provides us with a critical example: preparing for, persevering during, and surviving, the battle of Ragnarök:

65. . . . The wolf swallows Odin [Óðinn], but at that instant Vidar [Víðarr] advances, and setting his foot on the monster’s lower jaw, seizes the other with his hand, and thus tears and rends him till he dies. Vidar is able to do this because he wears those shoes for which stuff has been gathering in all ages, namely, the shreds of leather which are cut off to form the toes and heels of shoes, and it is on this account that those who would render a service to the Æsir should take care to throw such shreds away.”

[The Younger Eddas of Sturleson, p. 325, in <https://library.runestone.org/the-elder-eddas-of-saemund-sigfusson-and-the-younger-eddas-of-snorre-sturleson-by-saemund-sigfusson-and-snorre-sturleson/>]

The Younger Eddas foretell that Víðarr will survive the battle, the flood, and Surtr’s fire, and will be one of the Gods remaining after the renovation of the universe. (Surur is the guardian of Múspell and wields a flaming falchion, i.e., a curved medieval sword. Surtr is foretold to kill Freyr during Ragnarök.)

Let us honor Víðarr and Astronaut Lovell. On Aug. 7, 2025, at age 97, one of our Folk’s Heroes, James Arthur Lovell, Jr. (“Jim”) (U.S. Navy Captain, naval aviator, Astronaut) died. Jim Lovell was known for his precision flying, leadership, perseverance, calmness, and courage. These traits came to the fore during the doomed Apollo 13 flight. He was also famous for his sense of humor. His nickname was “Smilin’ Joe.”

Born in 1928 in Ohio, Jim Lovell’s father died when he was a boy. Lovell grew up poor, and as a teenager, lived in a one-room apartment with his mother. Growing up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Lovell made a rocket using gunpowder from fireworks. It successfully flew up a distance, but ultimately exploded. (Do not try this at home!) He wanted to be a rocket engineer.

Going into the U.S. Navy, he took two years of engineering school and flight training, followed by four years at the U.S. Naval Academy (in mechanical engineering). In

1954, he was deployed to an aircraft carrier to carry out difficult missions at night flying a Banshee high-altitude fighter jet. Furthermore, Jim Lovell was one of the rare men with the exceptional skills and sheer guts to become a test pilot. Then in 1962, he became an astronaut.

In Lovell's opinion, Apollo 8 was the high point in his space career. As described in my article in the December 2023 issue of *The Runestone* (Óðinshof version, PDF pp. 69-75), Apollo 8 was the first time men travelled to the Moon. It was the first time any human beings ventured beyond the relative safety of Earth orbit and its protective magnetosphere, which shields a spacecraft from charged particles from solar flares and from galactic cosmic rays. Add to that a greater vulnerability to meteoroids (particularly micrometeoroids, which are tiny grains or pebbles) puncturing the spacecraft. All the Apollo missions were just plain lucky not to be seriously damaged by meteoroids.

Previously, Lovell had flown the Gemini VII mission, which was the first U.S. mission to see if men could rendezvous safely (not dock) with another crewed spacecraft (Gemini VI-A). It was also a marathon medical test of the effects of nearly 14 days of zero gravity on men. Lovell also had commanded the last Gemini mission (XII). His precision flying allowed Astronaut Buzz Aldrin to test Aldrin's brilliant ideas about how to conduct spacewalks in zero gravity.



"In this photo from Dec. 15, 1965, the Gemini-VII spacecraft is seen from the Gemini-VI-A spacecraft during their rendezvous mission in space." "The two spacecraft are approximately 43 feet apart." (Quotes from NASA.)

Frank Borman and Jim Lovell are inside the Gemini VII.

(Photo Credit: NASA)

Lovell's final space mission was the extremely hazardous Apollo 13 trip in April 1970. For that mission, the Command Module was named Odyssey, and the Lunar Module was named Aquarius.



The Apollo 13 mission's Saturn V rocket, alongside umbilical tower.

(Photo Credit: NASA)

To better understand how the story unfolded, please look at the illustration below.



APOLLO Lunar Module/Command Module

Illustration of an Apollo Command Module (CM) and Service Module (SM) docked with a Lunar Module (LM) in the configuration for traveling from the Earth to the Moon. The CM is the conical shape in the middle, and is the only part of the combined spacecrafts that can survive reentry into the Earth's atmosphere. The SM and its large rocket engine appear towards the top of the diagram. They provide life support and the crucial rocket burns for leaving Earth, entering lunar orbit, and leaving the Moon. The LM (both its ascent stage and descent stage) appears towards the bottom of the diagram. The LM's descent engine bell is at the very bottom; it was used during Apollo 13 for the rocket burns. During the Apollo 13 mission, the crew moved from the CM to the ascent stage of the LM, which served as a lifeboat.

(Photo Credit: a NASA web page called "Apollo Lunar Surface Journal," "Apollo Drawings by James T. Burns." Image © year unknown (but 1989 or before) James T. Burns. Used here under the Fair Use Doctrine.)

As you may have seen in the outstanding and superbly accurate 1995 movie named after the mission, a routine stirring of a cryogenic oxygen tank resulted in a large bang, when the crew were about 205,000 miles from Earth.

In the Service Module (SM), a damaged coil and resulting spark caused oxygen tank #2 to explode. The explosion blew out part of the SM and damaged the remaining oxygen tank #1 or its lines, causing it to leak rapidly. The oxygen was used for breathing and for the three fuel cells. The fuel cells combined hydrogen and oxygen to make

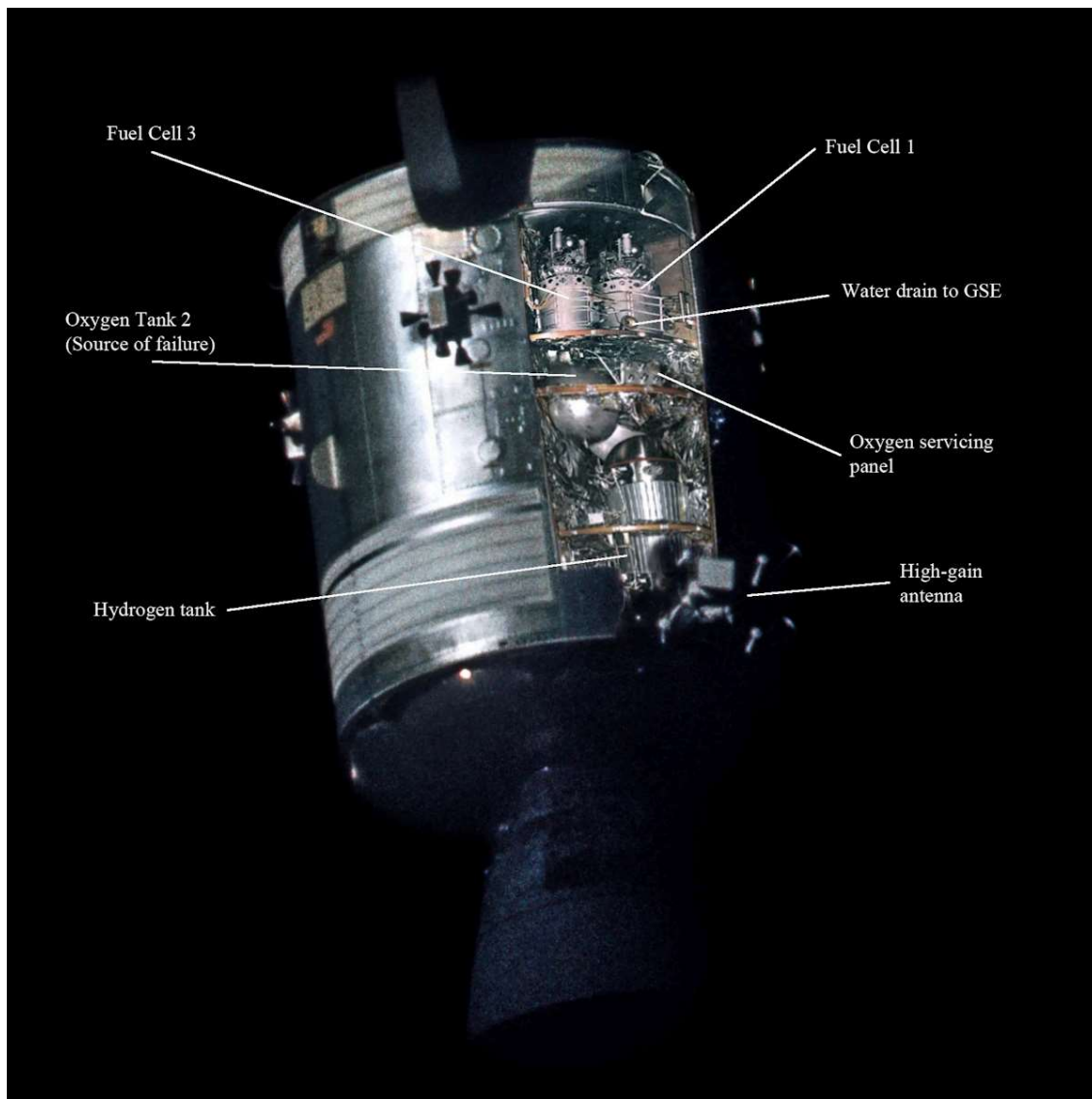
electricity and potable water. With little oxygen and electricity, the Command Module (CM) had to be “turned off,” and it quickly became a cold, dark spacecraft, with panels wet from condensation and water supplies turning to ice.

Before going on with the story, let us introduce and honor the other two Heroes of our Folk in the Apollo 13 crew. The Lunar Module Pilot was Fred Wallace Haise Jr. (Captain, U.S. Marine Corps; subsequently, Captain, U.S. Air Force; fighter pilot). He was an aeronautical engineer. The Command Module Pilot was John Leonard Swigert Jr. ("Jack") (USAF pilot; Captain, Air National Guard). He was a mechanical engineer and aerospace engineer. In addition to Lovell, Haise and Swigert had been test pilots.

Apollo 13 was Haise's and Swigert's first (and last) space mission. (Haise later flew dangerous Space Shuttle tests, but not in space.) During the mission, all three men demonstrated the finest qualities of bravery and professionalism, doing complex and unique engineering tasks and spaceship-flying to survive, while bearing up under constant mortal danger for days. Haise also endured severe illness and high fever.

It was Swigert who first said, “Okay, Houston, we’ve had a problem here,” which was then restated by Lovell. As the SM oxygen poured out into the vacuum of space, the three astronauts had to transfer to the Lunar Module (LM). The LM served as a “lifeboat” to survive. They did not have the rocket power to just reverse course. They used the Moon's gravity to “slingshot” the craft around the Moon back towards Earth.

But the LM only had oxygen, battery power, water, etc. for two astronauts for 45 hours. They had at least a 90- to 100-hour flight to get back to Earth. Further, they dared not use the engine on the SM, because the engine might be damaged and blow up. They had to rely on the LM's descent engine (shown at the bottom of the above illustration) for course corrections and to return to Earth.



The post-explosion Service Module showing key components within Bay 4. The crew took photos from the LM, after separating from the SM (pre-splashdown). Using images from the 1970 investigation, modern photo-processing technology was used to combine, overlay, and distort (to take account of perspective), resulting in this image.

(Photo Credits: NASA)

Problem after problem arose, many of them life-threatening. Here are four examples: There was too much carbon dioxide buildup (potentially lethal) in the LM and too few lithium hydroxide (LiOH) canisters to remove the CO₂. The CM's spare LiOH canisters were square, but the spaces for canisters in the LEM were round. The solution was to fit the square canisters with a contraption involving a wool sock, a hose, and duct tape. This and many other procedures were invented from scratch at NASA! No one had anticipated or simulated this type of extreme emergency.

The LM didn't have much battery power; therefore, most of the systems were turned

off. Without the heaters or electronics giving off heat, temperatures dropped to near freezing. Their spacesuits were made partly with Teflon because of the Apollo 1 fire; therefore, the suits were not even as warm as cotton would have been. To keep warmer, Lovell and Haise wore the boots they would have worn on the Moon, which reminds me of Víðarr with his “very thick shoes.”

The Command Module lacked sufficient power to use normal procedures to power it back up, and to restart its computer and systems for reentry. The parachutes might be frozen. The controls were wet. Restart had never been done in space. Through hours of grueling simulations, Astronaut Thomas Kenneth Mattingly II (“Ken”) and NASA engineers invented a new procedure.

Due to the scarce LM battery power, the crew had to make a manual burn using the LM descent engine and only visual references to the Earth and Sun -- no computer guidance! A substantial error would send them off into space forever. In their exhausted state, Lovell and Haise steered successfully toward home, and cut 10 hours off the return.

In sum, NASA and the astronauts worked day and night developing work-arounds (or just had good luck, such as the heat shield being intact). Commander Lovell’s calm leadership helped get them through the worst in-space crisis NASA had had so far.

The following quotes from Commander Jim Lovell exemplify perseverance (1999 interview):

Interviewer’s question: “. . . did you think at any time that you were going to be a perpetual monument to the space program, the three of you floating around out there forever?”

Lovell: “The thought crossed our mind that we were in deep trouble, . . . but we never dwelled on it. . . . We never . . . gave up . . . My thoughts were this: If everything failed, and we still had life support in the Lunar Module, but we couldn’t get back to the Earth, [because] . . . the heat shield was damaged, . . . or we just went past the Earth, because the orbit we were on would take us past the Earth . . . [by about 40,000 miles] . . . I said: We will send back information; we will keep on operating, as long as we can; and then, that’s the end of the deal. . . . That’s what I had planned to do . . .”

The heat shield withstood the 3,000°F re-entry temperatures. The parachutes worked. The crew safely made splashdown in the Pacific Ocean.



The Apollo 13 Command Module (showing burn scars from re-entry) floating in the Pacific Ocean. Astronauts waiting in the raft(s). Navy diver getting the rescue helicopter's net-cage ready for each astronaut to be hoisted up into the helicopter.

(Photo Credit: NASA)



Apollo 13 astronauts (left to right) Fred Haise, James Lovell, and Jack Swigert, descending the steps from the Navy rescue helicopter onto the recovery ship, the USS Iwo Jima, on April 17, 1970.

(Photo Credit: NASA)

I will never forget watching on television Apollo 8's thrilling voyage and the terror of the Apollo 13 nightmare. I honor Captain and Astronaut Jim Lovell for his courageous act of being one of the first human beings to leave Earth's orbit and for his outstanding leadership and perseverance during one of the most awful mishaps in space exploration. I honor Astronauts Haise and Swigert for their bravery, tenacity, and great skill.

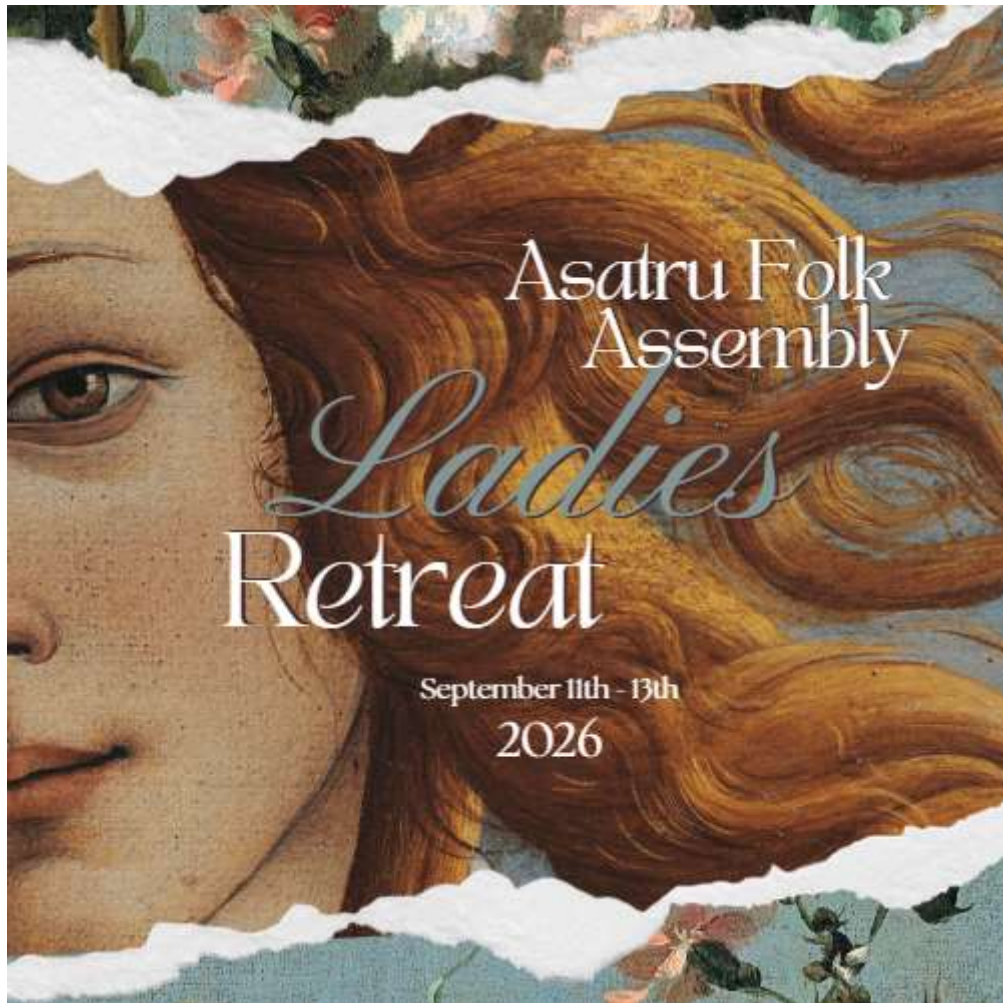
Hail Víðarr and the virtue Perseverance!

Hail Captain Lovell, Captain Haise, and Captain Swigert!

[Besides the Apollo 8 article mentioned above, you may be interested in episodes 2, 3, and 4 of the series “Ásatrú Principles and Space Exploration” in *The Runestone*: issues June 2024, PDF pp. 96-104; July 2024, PDF pp. 79-88; and August 2024, PDF pp. 102-109 (Óðinshof versions).]

— Bill, member, California

2026 Ladies' Retreat





ASATRU FOLK ASSEMBLY
LADIES RETREAT

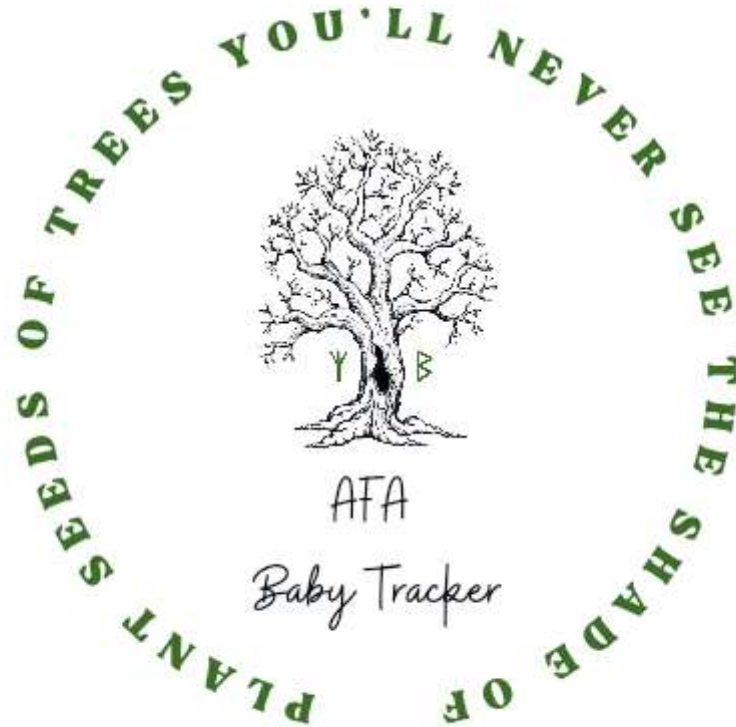
SEPTEMBER 11TH - 13TH 2026

@ ÓÐINSHOF

MEDITATIVE WORKSHOPS,
FEMININE LADIES EMPOWERMENT
FRITH WEAVING

*CHILD FREE EVENT.
MATURE YOUNG LADIES 13+
WHO WILL ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE
ENCOURAGED TO JOIN

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 2025: 16

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 handicraft 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



Other food charities have reported that they experience their smallest numbers during summer. Would that trend continue? At the end of July, we had plenty of provisions put away for the August distribution due to our very low turn-out. We chose to pick up staple goods for 48 families this month, down 1/3 from July.



That made Saturday night “bagging” quite simple with a smaller team on hand. Our pace felt slower due to the mellow summer day. One little helper who delighted in lugging bags from one table to another was young Olivia. She’s definitely one of our rising stars!



Sunday morning, our food pantry helpers met in the kitchen to enjoy conversation and a leisurely meal. Outdoors, the cars started appearing more slowly than usual. We had bags ready for about fifty families, hoping that would be enough. Slowly but steadily, they arrived throughout the morning - far more than we had expected. In the end, we used up all of the food-on-hand and were down to digging into our kitchen cupboards. The official number was 71 households fed.



Freyfaxi and now Haustblót – We feel the changing season in our bones, and we'll be ready for whatever comes. We want to make our ancestors proud.



Hofgyðja Sheila McNallen
sheila@runestone.org

Freyfaxi at Óðinshof



Our gathering at Óðinshof this year for Freyfaxi was a joyous one, a day of Frith, feasting, and many blessings of our holy Æsir. Our morning was full of fellowship as Folk arrived and made preparations for the day ahead.

In the afternoon, after we enjoyed lunch together, we gathered outside to witness the rite of Ausa Vatni, in celebration of the newest arrival to the Sutherland family. Founder McNallen and Hofgyðja Sheila officiated this sacred ceremony, and welcomed Brodie and Olivia's beautiful baby boy into the Folk. He has a bright future ahead of him, may our Æsir always bless his path! Hail Leland Volsung Wiley Sutherland, you are so loved!



Afternoon activities for adults included the Women's tea and Men's group discussion. At the Women's tea, I led the ladies in a guided meditation for Freyfaxi, that included a

runic meditation on Fehu and an encounter with Freyr. Led by Hofgyðja Sheila, the children had many activities to enjoy throughout the day, including story time, constructing bundles of seasonal wheat-like grasses to offer in our Freyr Blót, and gathering outside to break open a Freyfaxi horse effigy full of candy! This was a delightful addition to the festivities, handmade by our sister Courtney Cloud. Folkbuilder Ryan Skinner brought his 3D printer to make Dala horse-shaped cookie cutters for the children, and they turned out great! Lots of fun was had by all.



Later, the Folk were led by Allsherjargoði Flavel in a wonderful Blót to Freyr, where the customary Freyfaxi offering of a bread horse was made. We lifted our voices in devotion to our holy Æsir, and honored the Ancestors and the Landvættir. A beautiful Blót on a beautiful day!

As we all returned back inside, we hailed Lord Óðinn one by one as we re-entered his temple, and we started preparation for dinner.



Before dinner, we had a special surprise in store from Chris DeHuff, who proposed to Courtney Cloud! They are a beautiful couple, and truly the best of Folk. We are so

blessed they are a part of our AFA family, and we wish them all the happiness in Miðgarðr. Hail Courtney and Chris, may Freyr fill your life together with joy, peace, and prosperity!

So many wonderful things are happening in Óðinshof district! Thank you so much to all our brothers and sisters who assisted in making Freyfaxi the success it was, we love and appreciate you all very much. Come join us next at Haustblót, we look forward to seeing you there!

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

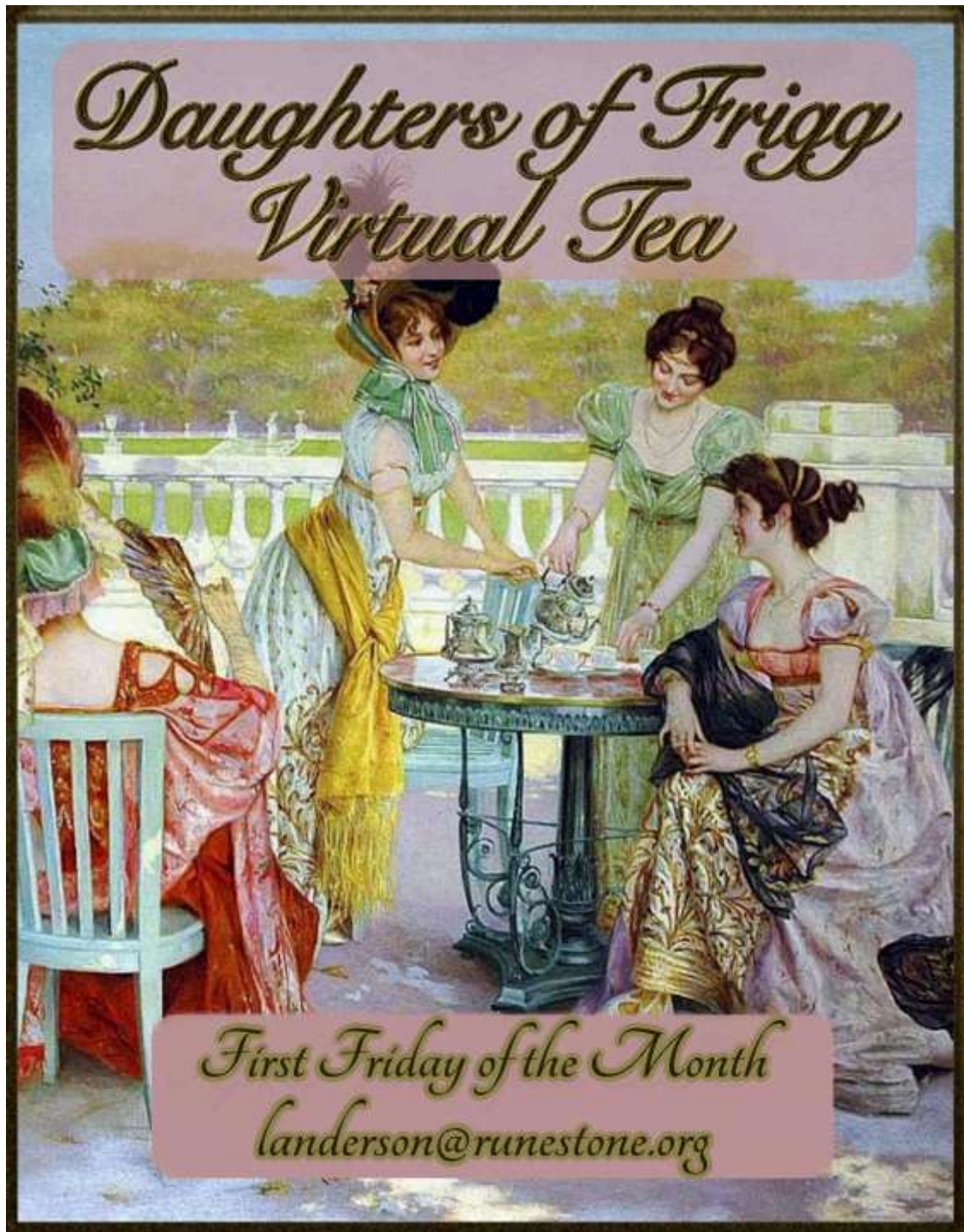


Gyðja Lauren Anderson
landerson@runestone.org

Upcoming Events at Odinshof



Monthly Virtual Members' Meetings



We're saving a chair for you!

Odinsfolk Chat

Friday, September 12th 7:00 PT, 8:00 MT

"FAVORITE ~ Writers & Poets"



Gythia Sheila McNallen; sheila@runestone.org

Monthly Members' Meeting

Óðinshof

Monthly Members' Meeting

Last Friday of the Month at 7pm Pacific



Links Emailed and Posted to MeWe
Contact Any Folkbuilder for Assistance

Special Date for October: 10/24/25 at 7pm



Folkbuilder Sierra Chapman
schapman@runestone.org



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 Goðar, proposed date for ritual, etc.) to Gyðja Lauren Anderson landerson@runestone.org. Each request will be evaluated, and we will follow up with you about accommodating your request.

Members and Moots



Training Opportunity



Interested in a career change?
Have you ever wanted to run a tractor?
Looking to be your own boss?
All reasons are welcomed.

If you can make the drive to Northern CA (Vacaville area), and have an interest in operating heavy equipment, come learn to grade, dig, and rig with a 5ton mini excavator and a D3B dozer.

Dirt, equipment, and lessons available free to our Folk. Basic operation, loading and transportation, maintenance, operational techniques, and more.

Reach out to Odinshof@Runestone.org to get connected for more information.



Arizona

Additional Arizona Events

GERMAN LUNCH MOOT



Phoenix, AZ

For more info: schapman@runestone.org

Australia

Upcoming Events



AFA Australia Hike Moot

Gold Coast
14th September



Chris McDonald
Apprentice Folkbuilder
cmcdonald@runestone.org

California

A New Face in Chico



Hello! My name is Caitlin. I am thrilled to be a part of the AFA ranks. It's something I've been wanting for a long time but wasn't in the right position to take on until now. It is my pleasure to help the Folk with anything they may need. I'm already out there hosting Moots and I am assisting in maintaining the Óðinshof website by updating the blog and calendar.

It was a series of serendipitous events or maybe synchronicities that lead me towards Ásatrú. I stumbled upon Ásatrú on Bitchute. Prior to this I had already been searching

for where I fit in with what I believed. I found the video with our founder, “Asatru - A Native European Religion.” Just like that, I knew this was what I wanted. This was what I needed.

My blood called out and I listened.

A short time later, I’d be on the interstate riding passenger and happened to look up at the right time to see a Adopt-a-Highway sign, “Asatru Folk Assembly.” I googled in excitement, come to find out Óðinshof wasn’t far from me at all! A short time later, after talking with Folkbuilder Nick Rice on the then AFA Discord, I filled out the online request to join. I joined the winter of 2022 and my first event was the Yule celebration. I am very happy with my decision; I’ve made solid friends who have helped me in dire times and were there for me when I found it hard to be there for myself. We’ve celebrated some incredible milestones together as well. Above all, I am worshipping the only Gods worthy of worship, the Æsir.

I encourage others to try apprenticing if you are able. It has been extremely rewarding and fulfilling getting to help and be hands on.

Hail Óðinn!

Hail the AFA!

Upcoming Events

A promotional poster for a 'Pie Making Moot' event. The background is a photograph of two round berry pies with lattice crusts on a white surface, surrounded by fresh strawberries and blackberries. Overlaid on the image is red text. At the top, 'PIE MAKING MOOT' is written in a large, serif font. Below it, 'BAKE PIES WITH US!' is in a slightly smaller serif font. To the right, 'AT ÓÐINSHOF' is written in a curved, stylized font above a line drawing of a rolling pin and a whisk crossed. Below that, 'SEPTEMBER 13' and '10 AM' are written in a bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom, 'CONTACT CAITLIN COVINGTON' and 'CCOVINGTON@RUNESTONE.ORG' are written in a bold, sans-serif font.

PIE MAKING MOOT
BAKE PIES WITH US!
AT ÓÐINSHOF
SEPTEMBER 13
10 AM
CONTACT CAITLIN COVINGTON
CCOVINGTON@RUNESTONE.ORG



Caitlin Covington
Apprentice Folkbuilder
ccovington@runestone.org

Upcoming Events

You Are Invited

Sep 19 7pm

Dinner & Sumpul

Contact for location and menu

RSVP Required

530 854 3244

Apr. Folkbuilder Daniel Odom



Daniel Odom

Apprentice Folkbuilder

dodom@runestone.org

Lost Coast Trail, Part 2



The coastline shifted constantly beneath our feet. Slick rock. Gravel. Wet sand. Then boulders. Then more sand. Every turn brought a new challenge, but every view brought a new reward. We barely spoke. The rhythm of our breathing and the crash of the waves filled the space between us.

At Spanish Flat, we paused. It was one of the few places on the trail with a glimpse of reception. We used it to check in on our children, who were home with Nana, Papa, and dear friends. Hearing their voices, bright, familiar, innocent, gave us peace. For the first time in days, we remembered that life outside the trail was still waiting. That gave us the strength to move forward.

We had intended to spend our second night at Big Flat, where water access is easier and the terrain is friendlier. But when we arrived, it was crowded. Tents lined the best spots, and the flat ground was already claimed. After a brief discussion, we turned around and backtracked nearly a mile to Miller Flat.



That decision turned out to be one of the best we made. There, among the wind-bleached driftwood and weathered stones, we found a quiet space where the sea sang us to sleep. The logs around us blocked the wind and ocean spray. We made dinner. We laughed about the bear. We talked about the kids. And then we rested.

The final day began in the dark again. By 4:30 AM, we were breaking camp, our hands working by feel, our bodies sore but resolved. This stretch would be the most grueling. The trail vanished in places. Boulder fields stretched for miles, forcing us to climb, scramble, and stumble over rocks slick with mist and seaweed. We crossed creeks that soaked our boots. Our dry socks became currency, valuable, rare, and quickly spent.

The terrain shifted every five minutes. There was no consistency. No rhythm to find. Only progress. Our legs burned. Our backs ached. We grew quiet again, each step a silent vow to reach the end.

And then, we saw it.



Black Sands Beach.

It rolled out before us, dark and endless, the volcanic sand swallowing our feet with every step. The cliffs rose to our left like watchmen. The sea boiled to our right, indifferent but magnificent. We knew the trail was almost done. But we did not rush.

Just before the beach ended and the trail turned uphill toward the Shelter Cove parking lot, we stopped.

We faced the ocean. My wife and I made a quiet offering to Lord Njörðr, god of the sea and the wind and the safe return. We gave thanks, not just for safe passage, but for strength. For beauty. For the kind of struggle that binds two people together tighter than words ever could.

We returned home changed. The wilderness had shown us what truly mattered: resilience, trust, and love that endures through challenge. Though we left the Lost Coast behind, its lessons stayed with us, reshaping our lives, binding us even closer, and reminding us always that the edge of the world is not a place but a state of mind.



Folkbuilder Ryan Skinner

rskinner@runestone.org

Another Awesome Ausa Vatni



This year's Freyfaxi was especially memorable for our family as, along with honoring Freyr, we held the Ausa Vatni for the newest member of our family. Our friend, the founder and former Allsherjargoði, Stephen McNallen led this important ritual accompanied by the beautiful Gyðja Sheila McNallen.

Our second son and fourth child was born just 3 weeks prior, a blessing bestowed upon our family by the Gods and our tickled Ancestors. His name was carefully chosen. His first name is for his grandfather, the hardworking patriarch of the Sutherland clan who loves his family more than anything. His second name is after the mighty King Volsung, the grandson of Óðinn and grandfather of Siegfried, who was born in a similarly urgent fashion as our son. His third name is after his maternal great-

grandfather, our ancestor who appeared in a prenatal dream to check up on us. His last name is for our clan. With a cuddly 7lbs 6oz and 19in, we lovingly announce the arrival of our healthy baby boy — Leland Volsung Wiley Sutherland!

We are grateful to Steve for his intentionality and thoughtful presentation of Leland at his Ausa Vatni. The runes pulled already carry meaning for us, and we continue to contemplate their significance as we get to know Leland a little better each day. We thank the McNallens, the Nornir, our Ancestors, and our Gods for their roles at the beginning our little man's amazing journey and look forward to all that's ahead in his "bright future."



Folkbuilder Olivia Sutherland
osutherland@runestone.org

Where in the World is Folkbuilder Sierra?



August is always a busy month for me, this year was no exception. First, I got into an accident and my lovely car "Ruby Red" as I had named her, got into a wreck on my way up to the Hof. Luckily the damage seemed minimal, I was able to drive away and no one was hurt, just shaken up. But upon further inspection, Ruby Red was totaled. I was and still am heart broken over this as she was my dream car and she was tough as all get out.



Next, I got a promotion at work! I am so excited to embark on that new adventure! It's bound to be somewhere I thrive and can grow and will open new doors for me and my family. Although I was set to start the week of my vacation, which posed an interesting conflict. I could either miss an entire week of training or spend my entire vacation on zoom calls training for this new position. After much deliberation, my boss let me take a knowledge test instead which I passed with flying colors, giving me the ability to enjoy my vacation worry-free.



Finally, I went on our yearly family vacation. Spent a couple days in Cabo, where I got a new tattoo I've been wanting for years, and took a pedi-cab tour of the city. A hurricane had hit the week before effectively rendering the beach unusable and making it unbearably hot and humid. Then we went to Ensenada, and I spent a total of one hour off the ship and went right on back. Mexico is NOT a destination for me. On the cruise ship though, I spent a lot of time in the casino winning big most nights then giving it on back! For six days of casino play I only really spent 200\$ which isn't bad, it was more for the fun of making friends and getting excited when the three other friends I made would show up each night. We all had an unspoken rule at the table which helped us all skyrocket our wins but then someone else would come along and ruin our mojo. In fact we were doing so well, we all got three free rounds of drinks, which is unheard of. The guys had to do pushups to earn them though.



I came back and couldn't be happier to get back into the swing of things. Vacations are fun but when the Asatru Folk Assembly is such a big part of your life, being gone for an extended period feels like part of you is missing. I'm back now and won't be gone again until next August! There is lots to look forward to this month, so keep your eyes open!

Upcoming Events

BIERGARTEN MOOT



SEPT 24TH 2PM

HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA

*Daughters of Frigg
Petal Party*

*Sept 27th 1PM
Sacramento*

*Bring 2 bunches flowers
& your own vase*



JOIN US FOR

SWAP MEET

EVERY FIRST SUNDAY
11 AM SACRAMENTO
MAY-OCTOBER
WEATHER PERMITTING



Farmers Market
Antiquing
Bargaining

[SCHAPMAN@RUNESTONE.ORG](mailto:schapman@runestone.org)



Folkbuilder Sierra Chapman

schapman@runestone.org

Colorado

Colorado Freyfaxi



High up in the Rocky Mountains just outside Black Hawk, Colorado, nine of our Folk came together to celebrate Freyfaxi. Our hosts were amazing and their land is so beautiful full of Aspen trees.



We decorated the altar with fresh flowers, a wooden horse (Freyfaxi), the Mjolnir, runes, and much more. The story of Hrafnkell and his horse, Freyfaxi, was told to all.

Our Blót to Freyr was beautiful. Each participant drew a rune in the Blót and we sang Galdr to our individual runes.

Everyone brought homemade food such as a broccoli cheese stuffed pork roast, home made bread, delicious pasta salads, and more.



We ended the evening with a campfire and we put the wooden Freyfaxi horse upon the fire as sacrifice. During the campfire, we held our Sumbl with delicious meads made from our own Mead Master Dan. Dan also introduced a new flavor, Black Forest. It was so delicious!

Upcoming Events

Colorado Haustblót

Bailey, Colorado

September 27, 12pm

Rsvp -

eharrison@runestone.org

Potluck, Blót, Sumbel, Lore



Erin Harrison

Apprentice Folkbuilder

eharrison@runestone.org



Idaho

Upcoming Events



Folkbuilder Nick Gunn
ngunn@runestone.org

Montana

Arriving at Fólkvangr



Well, we have finally arrived at Fólkvangr after a long and trying week. We have overcome many obstacles just to get here, but that makes it that much sweeter, and the great stops along the way absolutely balanced out the hardship. For starters, it took us an entire day longer than anticipated to pull out of North Carolina, but that meant we got to spend the night with our lifelong friends in South Carolina and then proceed to Tennessee where we got to see our dear friend Russ Henderson. The next day saw us to Illinois, which is an incredibly beautiful state.



Our delay in leaving meant we got to experience Baldrshof finally! Arriving Thursday night in the town of Murdock, we got to spend time with the Allsherjargoði, Witan Fassett, Goði Erlandson, and other local Folk. I can't describe the feeling of walking into that Vé for the first time and seeing the mural of the Shining One. You simply must experience it for yourself! On Friday morning, we lingered a while so that we could kick off Freyfaxi at Baldrshof. It was really hard to tear ourselves away and get back on the road, but we had a goal to get through North Dakota and stay the night in Circle, Montana.



After our goodbyes, we braved the high winds of North Dakota which is NO joke! We lost a lot of time with the box truck, expertly driven by Drac Cameron, but that allowed us to stop in Jamestown, ND for a while to see the frontier town there. It's an incredibly preserved old prairie town, and we were able to procure a half dozen Buffalo horns to utilize at Freyr's Harvest Feast.

Between Jamestown and the Montana line, adversity struck again. The equivalent of the old pioneers breaking a wheel, we lost a fuel injector on the box truck, slowing us down to an agonizing 40 mph until we reached our AirBnB well after midnight. We were able to secure another night in our AirBnB, and Penske sent another truck and movers to transfer our belongings late the next night. The silver lining that seemed to follow us on the trip gave my boys the experience of the high school rodeo in Circle though, where they got to watch goat-tying and team roping, in turn making my boys obsessed with being cowboys. I assured them that there would be ample opportunities for them to lean into that lifestyle in the coming months and years. It also provided my wife the opportunity to experience her first Montana sunset, where she also saw huge mule deer bucks and made a prairie bouquet of sage and sunflowers.



The next day saw us safely to Folkvangr, after having lunch with the Cameron clan in Winnett. Since arriving here, we have settled into the Dairy cabin and life on the farm. We have been shoring up fence while also getting into the routine of caring for 5 cows, dozens of sheep and goats, a flock of 50+ chickens, ducks, and geese, and a large pack of herding dogs. Construction on our house gets added in the coming days, as well as Freyr's Harvest Feast preparations.



Life has gotten busier and our living space has gotten smaller, but there is immense peace out here and our little family of six continues to grow closer as we live, love, and work together, and there are a million stars in the night sky to remind us of just how small our problems are in comparison to this wide universe.



Folkbuilder Tyler Bethea
tbethea@runestone.org

How You Do Anything, Is How You Do Everything



In life we are faced with many altering and defining choices. Each one represents an opportunity to create the next rendition of ourselves, to shape who we will be and mold our legacy. The largest choices rear their heads boldly and as such when we are presented this juncture it is easy for us to recognize the chance for change. From job changes to large moral conundrums, we can face them as timid or as bold as we have built ourselves up to be. The great and awe inspiring choices of marriage, career, relocation, and grand moral decisions might have better entertainment value but they are but singular life altering choices and they pale in comparison of the daily choice of: who am I? The answer is simple; we are the sum of our deeds and words, and I have found a maxim that has helped shape who I am becoming and has helped kill the weaker version of myself. Its simple but worth an exploration. That maxim is: *How you do anything is how you do everything.*

Lets explore this together, dear reader. On the surface, the quote seems remarkably simple. How we do anything adds to the total sum of our work. Does this mean that if we lazily drink a caffeinated beverage to get through a hard day, then suddenly we will slog through our fifty-year wedding anniversary in the same bleary-eyed and dragging manner? Of course not, unless we make a fifty year habit out of caffeine addiction and late nights. Indeed, such a choice may mean that our fifty year wedding anniversary has our participation relegated to a picture frame on the other side of dining room table while our soulmate wonders why she drew the short straw and got such a wonderful man who refused to take care of himself and by extension her. There's no fooling our wives in regards to our true potential. That is one of their gifts after all, seeing the value and potential value in us and, in that regard, our choices either bring us closer to that potential value being realized or farther. So perhaps that coffee and sluggish Monday morning does have a greater impact than we'd like when glancing at the macro.



Where might we find this concept of the sum coming from the whole being more beautifully exemplified than our own faces? Orwell himself famously said that "by fifty, everyone has the face they deserve." Our nature, temperament, and dedication to ourselves is etched into our very frame. The life we live is a million iterations of smiles and frowns each adding to the lines we will bear into our old age. In the end, we cannot hide the nature of our life as it is seen clearly by all who know they are looking at more than just our faces. The eyes similarly harden when our hearts do as well. In today's world, kind eyes are striking for their rarity.

Beyond the facial physiognomy, the more practical example is our physical form reflecting the self-discipline of our fitness. To love oneself, one must care for oneself. Every day we eat, we move our bodies, and we rest. The degree and the manner vary and how we do so inevitably forges the body we possess. Overweight silhouettes do not reveal slim figures under lamp light, they are in existence no matter the lighting and are a direct result in how we live our most basic life. The daily grind will keep us more bright and youthful than expected of our age or age us dramatically in a short time. With each meal, we chose our form. With each workout or lack thereof, we chose who we will be. We are the sum of our smallest choices, and as such, we must recognize that our choices have lasting impacts.

While every choice adds to the macro, it is important to recognize that we are not supermen full of unending energy or unyielding resolve that is never tested. Naturally, we will have our failings, but if we apply the maxim to our failures, we can cross over the abyss of mediocrity and harness our weaknesses to build us into greater men and

women. If every time we fail, we assess why and shore up those weaknesses, than even our failures become how we do everything.

We are not the animalistic beasts of impulse, where whim rules with a dopamine-laced fist. We are not the sofa generation, the TV educated, the microwaved dinner slave. We are not the animal unless we choose to be, and that choice is not one of clarity or dramatics, but rather, it is the culmination of how we do anything.

It is precisely the dedication to self transformation and discipline that turns every decision into a positive effort in crossing from animal to our highest self and in doing so we prepare ourselves for the great choices before us. As we sculpt our new form from the existing material we are ready for the defining choices, and I think its time to explore a few of the larger choices and how they do indeed tie into our maxim once again.

For instance, the largest choice anyone can make is entirely defined by the total sum of who we are. That choice is whom we marry. I say to you, that the person we choose to marry is indeed our biggest choice, as it shapes the remainder of our life every day even if our spouse passes through the veil before us. A good spouse will build us up. A terrible one will bring out the most bitter and foul creature from the darkest corner of our hearts. Prudent financial decisions matter naught if the person by our side shapes our actions to be dishonorable. For what is wealth and material success compared to the woes of deceit or oath-breaking? What is a home if there is no comfort and only strife within its walls? What is companionship if it becomes transactional? To my eye, dear reader, the value of material success, the home, the companionship would turn to ash if it was accompanied by the rotten fruits of ill-gained labor and dishonor. It would be for naught if the sum of the smaller interactions were overwhelmingly negative and it brings us to a moment of understanding. We can just as easily become the bad spouse if we are of the low quality that erodes a marriage as we just discussed.

In how we do anything we are presented an opportunity to shape the sum of our actions everything. If we take time to provide moments of support or seize chances to nag, we shape the condition of the home. If we chose to pour ourselves into our work, this can support our home financially, but at what point do our extra hours steal ourselves from our family? Is this not why any job away from home requires rotating back to our families so that we do not impoverish them from our absence? Less dramatic, but surely more prevalent, is the job that damages our health. Long hours sitting in front of a computer screen sallowing our skin and adding to the waist line can be just as damaging as breathing in carcinogens and metal shavings all day. Our health is our family's health but its not simply the matter of how we earn our wages but also in the

time we pour into it.

Men, when was the last time you brought home flowers just because she is yours? When did you take the time to hear about her book or her hobby? Do you still date your wife?

Women, when was the last time you told your man you were proud of the efforts he puts in for your family? When was the last time you encouraged him to do something for himself?

If the answers are lacking or poor, so to shall your marriage be once these choices cumulate into the whole, because these smaller choices build into the macro. Dr. John Gottman, famous for his work on destructive communication styles within relationships, produced the golden ration of marital viability. The rationale posits that to maintain a ratio of approximately five positive interactions for every one negative interaction is optimal for a healthy marriage. This ratio provides enough goodwill to help a couple recover from inevitable disagreements. However, most couples heading for a divorce have a positive/negative interaction ratio of about point eight positive interactions for every one negative. These ratios are the sum of the interactions married couples are having and are only derived from the experiences that come from our actions. Every choice we make in the micro will inevitably carry through to our marital experience. Remember, how you do anything is how you do everything.

Similarly, another major decision worth examining against this maxim is what we apply our labors to in order to make our wage. Beyond a shadow of a doubt, this choice shapes who we are. Sometimes our labor can be quite fruitful, other times we find ourselves just getting by. There are those that find swift material success in fields that strip their morals and their health away just as rapidly as the numbers in their bank accounts grow. The funds might be plentiful but its woes come like the hydra's head.

Usury, sexual labors, and the corrupt echelons of finance or media have dramatic impacts on our spiritual and physical health, each in their own respective ways. Conversely, it is widely known that there are men who are revitalized by their work. In their trade they find confidence, craftsmanship, artistry, even mastery. Whatever they apply their talents to, it is a victory because they have found joy in labor, struggle, and in victory.



The bold brush strokes of our efforts in terms of labor are easy enough to understand of course. But the finest details matter more than the job itself. The average working man spends an entire third of his life working. When we work, no matter the industry, we have the opportunity to go the extra mile or cut corners. I'll give a recent example on the 1930's renovation we just did. We had the opportunity to simply put a piece of plywood behind a window frame that the owner couldn't afford to replace. We could have cut corners and just screwed it in and walked away. It would have been acceptable for the client agreement we were under, but we didn't cut that corner. Instead we painted it the same color as the house so that it would blend nicely and look like a choice and not as if a recent vandal had taken his frustration out on the singular glass pane. That is doing the right thing but it isn't going the extra mile, so I added a small red painting of a bird on it. Now, it is intentional and care was put into the work. There is character to match the rest of the home. However, its not about the job itself that caused us to go the extra mile. Its about how habits are formed. If you spend a third of your life doing the bare minimum, shirking responsibility or cutting corners, then the rest of your life will see that bleed through. Conversely, if we are responsible, quick to rise to the occasion and pour ourselves into what we do, it too will bleed through. Chose what you do carefully as it will become how you do everything.

Even in our recreations can we find this principle rearing its head. Do our activities promote good character or do they diminish us into the living dead? Watching a show with friends or family and engaging in discussions about it is certainly superior to mindlessly channel surfing till falling asleep with a beer in hand. Choosing to engage our mind or our soul in things that bring us joy instead of simply quick dopamine matters. Will the high score in your pay to play game matter in the end? Of course not, and days of your life shouldn't be lost to digital nothingness. This isn't to say we must police fun, rather it is to be cognizant of why we are chasing the recreation we do. It is to say that we can find art, friendship and beauty in our recreation. We can pursue the simple joys of the world and maintain some level of childhood wonder at the universe without diving into the technocratic void. Recreation doesn't mean losing all self to escape from our reality. If we do the latter in our recreation, how long before we hide from our other responsibilities? It is here that we see that our actions do not occur in a vacuum and that the total sum of our actions matters more than just one choice.

No matter where we turn, we see over and over that our individual actions shape us into who we will be. Our choices shape events and form habits which in turn shapes us. Bostonian Irishman William Monahan wrote for the character Costello a striking line. "I don't want to be a product of my environment; I want my environment to be a product of me." The notion is not that one isn't shaped by their environment, as that is ludicrous, but rather that the accountability that we can shape our environment and that

environment shapes us once again makes us a driving hand in the loop of determination and creation. It is our agency that separates us from the animal, if applied to the adherence of the rules of life. Discipline, agency, and self-determination must be intentionally applied to our every action. For if you seek to be something, only actionability and will power will get you there. Be actionable in how you do anything, because it will be how you do everything.



Folkbuilder Tyler Heinlein

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Celtic Goodness!



August has been a busy month for us here in Western Montana, especially for myself. With fire season being in full swing, much of my time is occupied with work but we've still been able to squeeze in plenty of activities, most of which were Celtic.



The month began with the third anniversary of our Kindred's founding. While we weren't able to celebrate immediately, we did plan one out for later in the month. On the 9th, we gathered in Butte for a celebration of Irish culture. Butte, Montana is known for its Irish history and is officially recognized by Ireland as an Irish enclave in the states. At one point in its early days, Butte was home to such a large Irish population, that it rivaled places like Boston and Chicago. Drawn by the lure of riches, prosperity, and the opportunity to settle in an area which didn't look down upon them, they helped to grow the area and have left their mark on "The richest hill on Earth."







My family showed up early, as three out of the four Harlan girls are in Irish dance and were performing with their class that day. Three Montana dance troops performed that day, Tiernan schools from both Helena and Butte, a school from Missoula, as well as being treated to a performance by champion dancers from Chicago. There was music, vendors, Gaelic language workshops, history discussions, and plenty of ways to engage in everything Irish. After leaving the festival, we regrouped at a local pub for our remembrance dinner for King Radbod of Frisia. Over good food, good beer, and in better company, we celebrated the good King whose stalwart dedication to his Ancestors and our Gods we recognize to this day.







During the weekend of August 16-17, we traveled up to the Bitterroot Highland Games to support our Kindred members, Chad MacDonald and Connor Greaney, both of whom were competing in separate divisions, as well as my older daughters who got to compete in the kids' games. We enjoy a weekend filled with more Celtic goodness! The first day of the games began with the athletes showing up early and jumping into the competition. Of course the food, music, and vendors were in full swing, but were punctuated by the opening ceremony, a parade of Clans, pipe band, and recognition of the Celtic Nations. A tradition at these games is to have children carry the flags of the countries of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Brittany, Cornwall, and the Isle of Man, which comprise the Celtic Nations. Heidi got to carry the Flag of Brittany, and Ida carried the Flag of Cornwall behind the color guards. I mentioned earlier that we made time to celebrate our Kindred anniversary. While watching the caber toss, we broke out a cake and cheered on the Athletes. Plenty of Scotch pies, bangars and mash, sausage rolls, and many other foods were enjoyed (along with a Scotch ale or two). Musical acts like Celtica, The Harp and Wolfgang Twins, and Seamus Kennedy entertained well throughout the day, along with Scotch tastings, a Bonney Knees competition, and tours of the Daly Mansion which dominates the grounds. At the end of day one, we were well prepared for rest, and I'm proud to announce that our very own Chad MacDonald took third place overall in his division of the Men's competition. Day two saw us cheering for the children as they competed in different age groups. Doing all the events that the adults do, with the exception of the Sheaf Toss, the kids were a blast to watch! The absolute joy and concentration on their faces made all of it worthwhile. Having two children in different age groups was a bit of a chore, so we took turns running about between them. While just getting them into the games, experiencing another side of

their ancestry, and seeing them compete was enough, my Ida took first place in her age group, and Heidi placed very well amongst more than a few boys who were much bigger than her. Proud parents indeed! The Kindred finished up our weekend at the games and departed for home.



On August 31st, we closed out the month with a work party. We gathered at Chad and Scott MacDonald's place to help catch up on some deck maintenance, but of course it's not all about work. A potluck dinner, cold beverages, and comradery were had in plenty. We also discussed upcoming events, and plans for a Kindred camping trip before the

colder temperatures of fall and winter return. The summer can be short here in the north, so of course we try and fill it with as much as possible.

Upcoming Events

Day of Remembrance
Gathering | Montana
September
9th



Rsvp to Ryan at
rharlan@runestone.org



Ullrblót

Sept. 14th

Montana

RSVP to
rharlan@runestone.org

Kindred Campout September 19-21



RSVP to Ryan at
rharlan@runestone.org



Nevada

Las Vegas Moot – A Balancing Act



It had been nearly 20 years since we last enjoyed a meal with Mary Minshall. Back in the 90's, she helped set up the desktop-publishing and database management of the new Asatru Folk Assembly. She came to some of our events from her home in the San Francisco Bay Area, but Mary was mostly an online personality as a dedicated volunteer.



In time, the better political climate of Nevada drew Mary and her daughter to a Sun City community on the edge of Las Vegas. The trips to AFA events ended, but Mary's commitment to the AFA never wavered. To this day, she remains active on our online meetings, especially AFA Eldri.



Too much time had passed since anyone *raised a horn* with Mary Minshall, so I decided to take a meetup to her. My husband and I arranged a package deal for a mid-week, thirty-six-hour Las Vegas trip to meet with Mary and our other members there.

First on our list was taking Mary to lunch at her favorite restaurant, McMullans Irish Pub. Stepping from a dingy parking lot on a side-street through heavy pub-doors transformed the experience. This was Ireland! Dark tones, old photographs on the walls, and a table reserved for us in a small dining room felt like the old-country. Our

waitress was a Dubliner who embellished the menu with her accent. Each of our traditional meals was perfect. Our hour in the pub was delicious in all respects.



Back outside, we were again in Las Vegas. After the trip back to Mary's sand-colored neighborhood, against sand-colored hills, we made contact with two other local members. Plans to meet at our hotel changed to a garish, red and white Five Guys burger joint. It was bright, casual, and loads of fun. Conversation with our two young friends went all over the map, with lots of cool insights and travel stories. This evening interlude with Dawson and Nick capped the social part of our trip.

You might ask if we took-in the Las Vegas strip nightlife. No, but the next day we chose two attractions that we'd highly recommend to other visitors. The first is the Atomic Museum that has amazing visual displays explaining the nature of matter and energy at the sub-atomic level. Nevada became a testing site for nuclear weapons in the second half of the 20th century, with films and photos showing the deadly outcome of those inventions. If you're into science, this is your museum.



From there, we shifted to pure fantasy in the AI created ARTE Museum. It was all color, shape, movement and flowing sounds -- just the opposite of the black/white, reality of life vs. death as shown at the Atomic Museum.

What could have been an easy trip simply wasn't. We even woke up to a message that our home in California was being threatened by wildfire on the backside of our property. As helpless as we felt with that news, there was little we could do. Fire crews did their magic though and kept the damage to less than an acre.

The many contrasts of this Las Vegas experience gave depth and meaning we hadn't expected. Spending even a short time with our three members left us with gratitude for our personal moments together. In Mary's own words, "Las Vegas is not a place for habitation." However, we found it to be a great place for visitation.



Gyðja Sheila McNallen

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Allsherjargoðic Dinner



Thank you to everyone who came out to our August dinner. It was AMAZING to have so many of you in our home and Aubrey loved having so many kids to play with. It was definitely one of the best yet!

Please join us for the next Allsherjargöðic Dinner on 9/13, we look forward to sharing a meal with you!

Upcoming Events

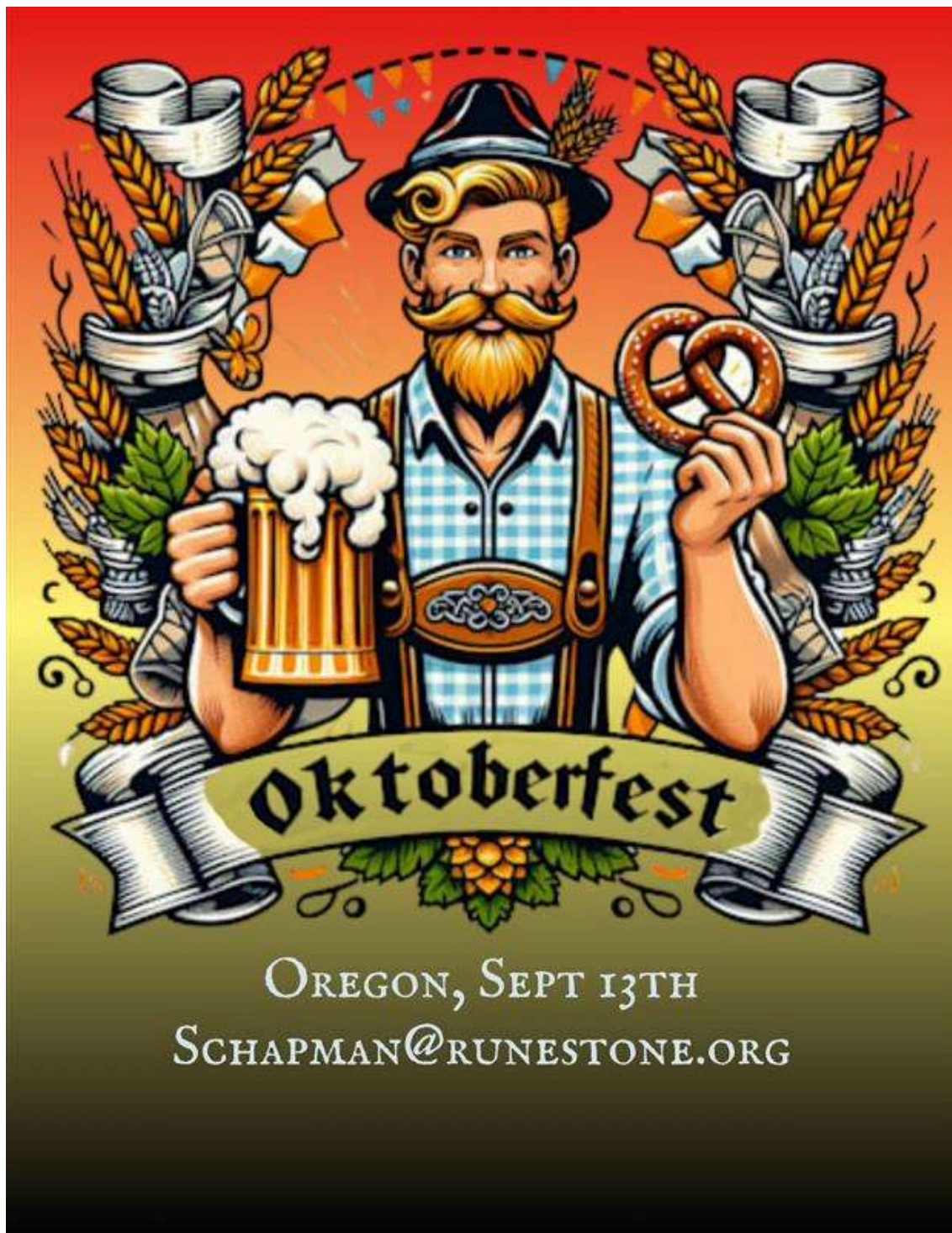




Matthew D. Flavel
Allsherjargoði , Asatru Folk Assembly
mattflavel@runestone.org

Oregon

Upcoming Events



Folkbuilder Sierra Chapman
schapman@runestone.org

Washington

Upcoming Events



Folkbuilder Nick Gunn
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

Calling all Folk Photographers



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 Ásatrú!

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



Lawspeaker Allen Turnage
aturnage@runestone.org





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