

The Runestone: Voice of the Asatru Folk Assembly  
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## Óðinshof

### First Hof of the Asatru Folk Assembly

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March 2024

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## Words from the Alsherjargothi



Thank you to the amazing Folk at Njörðshof! Charming of the Plow was a wonderful event and I am certain you all will read more about it in this issue.

Ostara is coming up this month and I hope to see each and every one of you there... better yet bring friends and family!

Spring is here and life will soon be in bloom all around us! Now is the time to get active. We are the folk who build. One of the hallmarks of the AFA is that we are building the future we want, every day, and through hard work. This is a call to everyone reading this to go out, get involved, and build our AFA! I encourage you all, go to the nearest moot, even if it is a little bit of a drive, make the effort and see the results. Go to your district hof and worship our Gods there, in their temples. The Hof's are a great distance from many of you but actively attending and supporting them is exactly what will make a hof happen closer to you. We all have friends and family who should be part of our AFA Family.... have you invited them to join us? If there are not moots near you and you want more activity in your area, are you willing to host something? Better yet, are you interested in becoming an apprentice Folkbuilder and making this that we all love to succeed at a higher level?

What future do you want?

What are you willing to do to BUILD that future?

If you are interested in Folkbuilding, please contact Folkbuilder Coordinator, Gothi Nathan Erlandson [nerlandson@runestone.org](mailto:nerlandson@runestone.org)

Let's build our dreams together... for our Folk, for our Gods, for our children!



Matthew D. Flavel  
Alsherjargothi, Asatru Folk Assembly  
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## Words From Our Gothar

*Embracing the Fight*

Witan Young recently wrote a great article, "Rejecting the Black Pill." I highly recommend reading it if you have not already. In case you haven't read it, I'll give a brief summary.

The world our ancestors knew has been twisted and corrupted, but we are still standing. Our ancestors live here through us, and our noble Gods see our good deeds. Not all is lost, but spending all of your time wallowing in doom and gloom will certainly push your mind, body, and spirit to feel the effects of that negativity. Our world is not a fairytale, but it is OUR world, and it is beautiful. Our Folk can still be industrious, and courageous, and strong, and free.



Witan Young's message is not that life is perfect and that we should completely close ourselves off from reality, but rather that we should go gladly into this reality and use our will to shape it in a way that will provide for our Folk and honor our Gods.

As expected from any Goði or Gythia of the Asatru Folk Assembly, Witan Young's words convey one of the most important messages found in the Havamal:

"The noble man is thoughtful, silent and bold in battle. But every man should be cheerful and happy until the day of his death." — Stanza 15

We absolutely should be aware of the various dangers and issues of our world, and we should be ever-ready to stand against chaos when it threatens our Gods and our Folk. We should train to be strong, we should practice courage, we should teach our children to be steadfast in every endeavor.

All of that being said, we do ourselves a profound disservice when we live this life by ourselves in an echo chamber of negativity. There are "battles" to be fought, yes, but there is no reason to fight them sad and alone.



To borrow from Witan Young again, our Folk have a community to be a part of, with four Hofs and another 70 acres of land. There has never been a better time to be Asatru in the last thousand years, as the AFA is making unprecedented strides in building a world for ourselves and our descendants. We should be rejoicing at the realization of this, no matter the state of the outside world.

Let's take stock- of our blessings, our victories, our strength as a united Folk- and go forth gladly into this world. We will continue to bring glory to our Gods, with smiles on our faces and courage in our hearts.

Hail the AFA!



Gothi Trent East

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### *From Preparation into Action*



If you were at Charming of the Plow at Njörðshof, then you heard me say during the Freyr Blot that now was the time of the year to prepare for what lies ahead. I reminded you all that preparation is the hallmark of success, and that laying the proper foundation for Victory is stacking the deck in your favor. So now what?

Now, we're moving into the time of the year where the rubber meets the road, when we have to begin implementing those plans and putting in the work in order to reap the success and glory that we are honor-bound to always seek. As Aryan men and women, that internal drive to work our will on this 'middle enclosure' is strong and when honed and aimed properly it is unstoppable. So how do we do that?

As always, when confronted with such a question, my first thought is "what did my

ancestors do?" They did all the things that I implored all of you to do at Charming of the Plow: they devised a plan, they gathered all they needed to carry out the plan, and then they worked the plan. They also turned to their folk when there were setbacks, when the plan seemed in danger of failing, or when it was plainly obvious that they needed help. How can we be more like them?



We can best emulate our ancestors by looking back on their best practices and incorporating them into our own daily lives. Best practices like discipline, consistency, and courage. The best among them never sat around and waited for the world to come to them or for things to be handed to them, they put in the work and reaped the reward. They didn't wait for a Golden Age to come along due to someone else's toil and struggle, just so they could set back and enjoy the fruits of another's labor, and neither should we. So how do we do all of this?

It takes courage to get off the couch, to commit to making yourself better. It takes discipline to do the right thing or the thing that needs to be done, which if done often enough, becomes consistency. As Witan Young reminds us, we are on the precipice of our Golden Age, and it will take all of us being courageous, disciplined and consistent to usher it in. WE are in control of this, no one else.

So, as we move from the time of preparation for the year into the time of action, let us all look towards the dawning of our Golden Age. Let us all rise to the occasion, whatever that may be in our lives, just as Ostara, Goddess of the Dawn, raises her warming light upon the world every Spring. Let us all have the courage to return fully

to the Folk, the discipline to do the work necessary no matter what obstacles may come, and the consistency needed for each of us to do our part for our future.

Hail Ostara!

Hail Victory!

Hail the AFA!



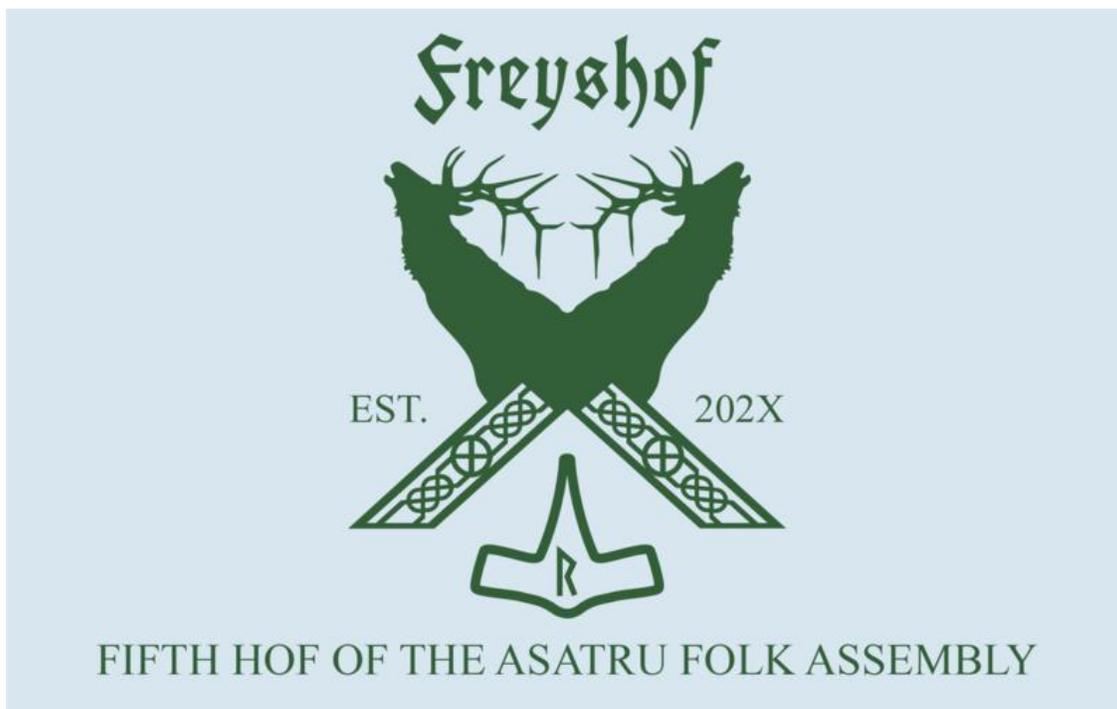
Gothi Bodi Mayo

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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 \(runestone.org\)](https://runestone.org)

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

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

1. We need to pay off Njörðshof.
  - The first of 2 loans have been paid off!
  - We now owe \$92,935.77 on our remaining loan.
2. We need to raise our monthly donation average by 14.48%.
  - This is membership dues/Hoftollar plus other donations.
3. We need to locate a suitable property.
4. We need to find lenders and build a war chest.

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

Hail Freyr!

Matthew D. Flavel  
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## Sigrheim: Home of Victory

### *Hard Work Pays Off*



February marked Charming of the Plow and a month to get some work done. We didn't have any land needing plowed, but what we did have was a shed needing built. Over the last year, we've acquired a number of tools, supplies, and the like to aid the work at Sigrheim, and it was time a couple weren't enough to keep everything tidy. I went and bought us a shed for the AFA to use while we need it, and we set to work putting it together.



Here's a tip: don't schedule things around the completion timeline listed on the instructions. It took us about 3x that amount, but with a perseverance and a few weekends of work, we got it up, and we got the supplies moved in out of the weather. It's a tiny thing, but it's cute, and it'll serve its job.

Come on out and see us for Ostara. It's gonna be good.

*Support the Home of Victory*



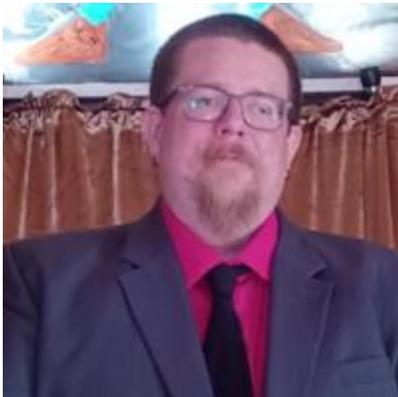
Help Sigrheim get stocked  
and ready for our Folk!

Donate Supplies  
from our  
wishlist ✨ ✨ ✨  
**amazon**

Thank You!

[CLICK HERE](#)

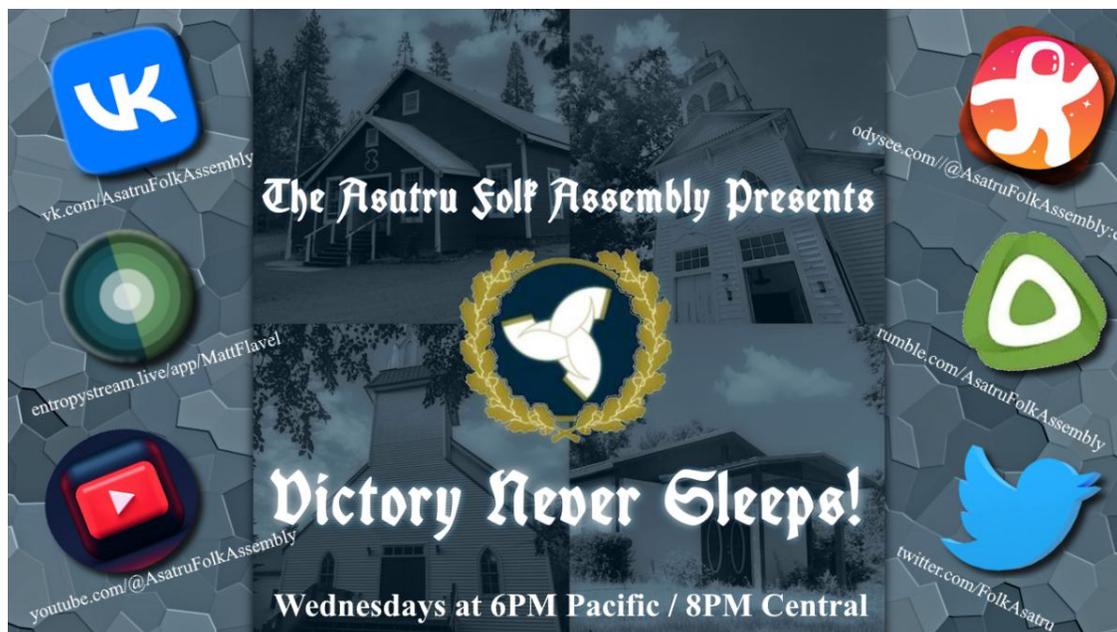
*Upcoming Events*



Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice

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## Victory Never Sleeps



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

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

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

Catch us LIVE with new episodes on Wednesdays at 8pm Central / 6pm Pacific on YouTube, Twitter, Entropy, Odysee, VK, Rumble, and Twitch. Audio versions drop on Spotify the Friday after the new episodes air.

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

Matthew D. Flavel



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## AFA Asatru Academy



Check out the Asatru Academy at [AsatruAcademy.org](http://AsatruAcademy.org)

### *Entering Spring with the Asatru Academy*



Our AFA Asatru Academy is humming right along and looking forward to the spring season! Currently we have 33 students attending our academy, and we look forward to adding even more students as we prepare to offer K-6th grade this fall. When we began

the academy last year, we made a commitment that we would always have the next grade ready, so we could follow our students as they progress and they would always have the next grade level ready for them. I'm very proud that the Academy staff has worked very hard to not just meet this commitment, but far exceed it. For the next school year, we will have kindergarten through 6th grade ready for students! We are very proud of all our students and families, and we are very proud of all your successes! We celebrate victory together!

*The AFA Academy is so Much More Than Just Story Times*

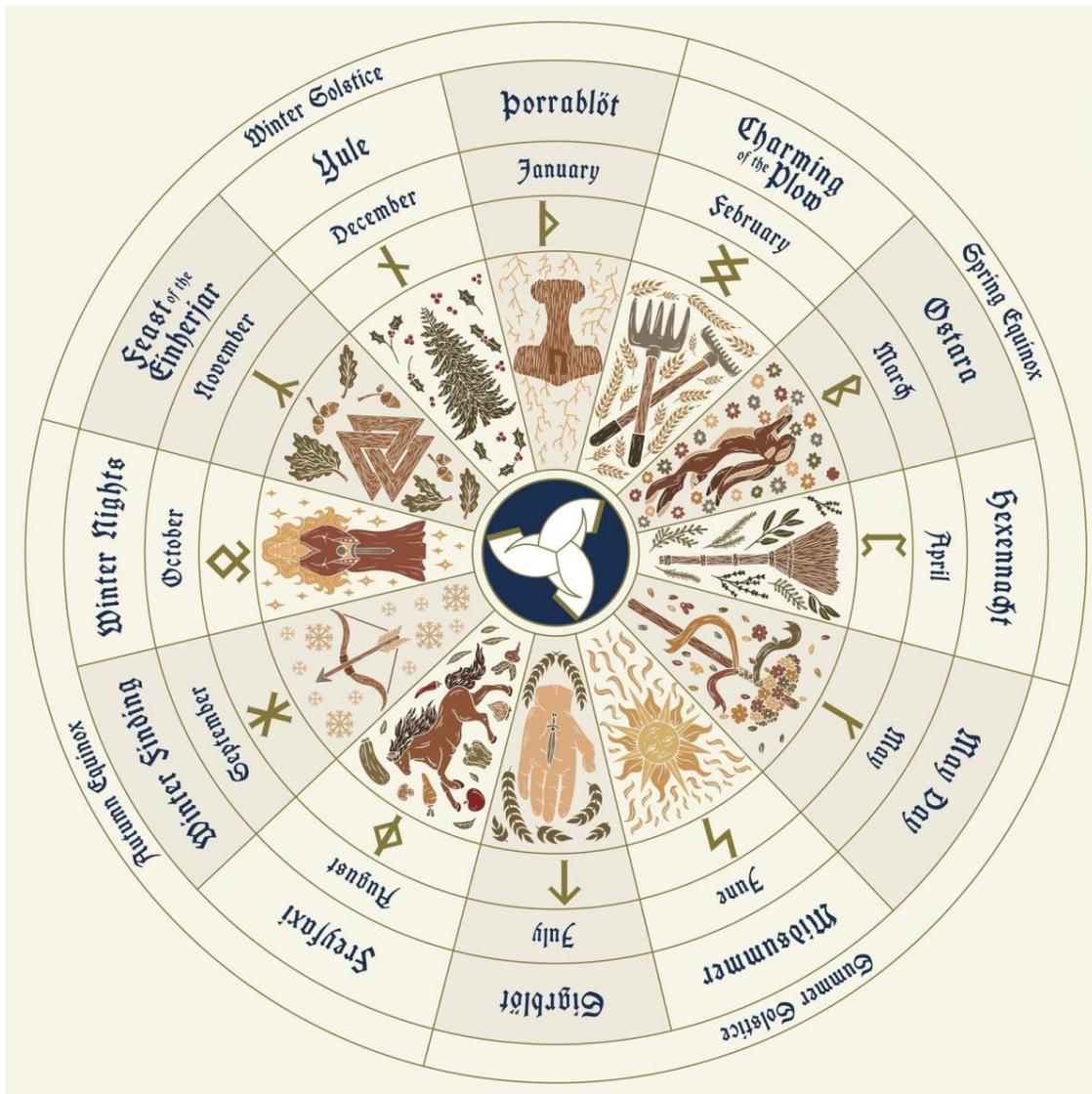


Many of our parents and students enjoy our story times and recorded lore lessons, etc. and you should! They are a wonderful part of our program. But I really want to bring your attention to the rest of our program. We provide everything you need to successfully home school. We chose as our academic anchor a tried-and-true method and material called Waldorf. Normally Waldorf material would cost you hundreds of dollars, it is free to our students in our program. Waldorf is a traditional schooling program, developmentally based, and has been around a long time. Many cities even have regular private Waldorf schools. You really should be taking advantage of this exceptional service we offer to our students, at no cost. All our Waldorf material is accessible to you by logging into quick schools. We really hope you'll take advantage of our full program. And please join us on our parents' and students' meetings that happen twice a month! We often have guest readers, and story tellers, as well as academy staff to answer questions. and the kids get to interact with each other. We hope to see you!



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## Remembrance & Holy Days



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

2024

<b>Date</b>	<b>Observance</b>
January 9	Day of Remembrance for Raud the Strong
January 20	Þorrablót
February 9	Day of Remembrance for Eyvind Kinnrifi
February 17	Charming of the Plow
March 9	Day of Remembrance for Olvir of Egg
March 19 (observed on 16th)	Ostara
April 9	Day of Remembrance for Jarl Haakon
April 10	Day of Remembrance for John Yeowell "Stubba"
April 30 (observed on 20th)	Hexennacht
May 9	Day of Remembrance for Else Christensen
May 1 (observed on 18th)	May Day
June 9	Day of Remembrance for King Athanaric of the Goths
June 20 (observed on 15th)	Midsummer
July 4	Day of Remembrance for Sveinbjorn Beinteinsson
July 9	Day of Remembrance for Alexander Rud Mills
July 20	Sigrblót
August 9	Day of Remembrance for King Radbod of Frisia
August 17	Freyfaxi
September 9	Day of Remembrance for Prince Hermann of the Cherusci
September 22 (observed on 21st)	Winter Finding
October 1	Day of Remembrance for John Gibbs-Bailey "Hoskuld"
October 9	Day of Remembrance for Meister Guido von List
October 15	Birthday of Founder Stephen McNallen
October 19	Winter Nights
November 9	Day of Remembrance for Queen Sigríð of Sweden
November 11 (observed on 16th)	Feast of the Einherjar
December 9	Day of Remembrance for Egill Skallagrímsson
December 20	Mother's Night
December 20-31 (observed on 21st)	Yuletide

# March



Asatru Holidays - March 2024 - Olvir of Egg | Ostara

## Day of Remembrance

*Olvir of Egg | March 9th*



Sometime between 1020 and 1021 CE, the Christianization of Pagan Europe was well underway. King Olaf II was ensconced on the throne of Norway. Much of the country had been baptized under threat of torture and death. Such things, however, were not enough to deter the faithful, and eventually, word reached the ears of King Olaf II of gatherings in and around Trondheim of a very pagan nature.

Olvir of Egg, a leader and a Gothi of his people, was elected by his people to speak to the King on their behalf and to defend their religious activities. An intelligent man, Olvir was called before the King on two separate occasions to defend the stories of Pagan festivals and feasts. On both occasions, Olvir of Egg humbly described not Pagan gatherings, but communal gatherings, in which neighbors drank and feasted as friends.

Both times Olvir left behind an unconvinced King and when spies told him a third time of an Eostre festival being arranged for the people, Olaf decided that he had heard enough. Five ships and over three hundred men were gathered and set out to ambush Olvir and the men and women who worshipped with him. Arriving under the cover of darkness, Olaf's men ambushed Olvir and his pagan community. Olvir was killed and many of his people were tortured, mutilated, or killed. Once a great stronghold of the Pagan faith, Trondheim had been taken.

And what can we learn from this story?

Many of these stories are not happy stories. On the surface, they are stories of death and defeat, but we have to look past the surface of all of these stories. Here, with Olvir, we see a man who loved his Gods and, despite all of the pressures of his ancient world, did his best to worship them. Not only did he do his best for himself, but he also did the best he could for his people. In the face of adversity, Olvir did his best to provide and protect his people from the angry, outside force that was the King.

Our world is not the same world that Olvir lived in. We have the right to choose our faith, but there will always be obstacles. In these times, when our native faith is still so small, and our heritage is being challenged by the multicultural whirlwind, remember Olvir. Provide a safe place for your folk to be away from the harm of the "societal norm". Remember that sometimes smart words are required instead of rash ones.

Be there for your folk. Provide for your folk.

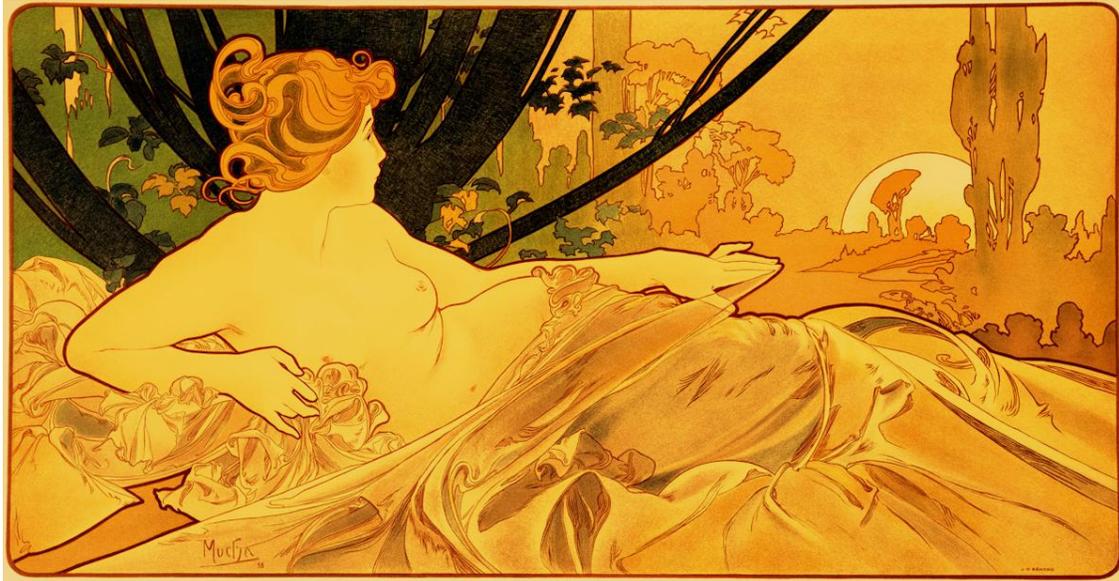
The Gods and the Ancestors are watching.



Gythia Catie Erickson  
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## Holiday

*Ostara | March 19 (Observed March 16)*



Hail Ostara, conquering Goddess of the Dawn, radiant Lady of Spring! You ride boldly out of the east, conquering all before you! May your light chase away the darkness! May your warmth banish the cold!

Ostara is the celebration marking the beginning of Spring. The cold, dreary days of winter are finally coming to an end. The sun is warming the frozen soil. Life is once stirring from the depths. Ostara is a celebration in every way. Our ancestors celebrated life and the survival of another long winter. They celebrated the birth of lambs, calves, and horses. They celebrated the blossoming fertility of the world around them.

In today's fast and hectic world now is a good time to stop and take a deep breath. Let the sun warm your face and take the time to thank the Gods and the Ancestors for seeing you through another cold winter. Shake off the influences of the winter blues. Now is the time to get your hands dirty.

The small plot of the garden that you planned for during the Charming of the Plow is almost ready for planting. Keep that soil turned and soft. Keep fertilizing it. It is too cold to plant seeds directly into the ground, but this is a good time to begin your seeds inside. Plant them and keep them warm. Set yourself up for success. If you are not working on a garden, then you should be moving from the planning stages of your

Charming of the Plow project into the beginning of the active stages. The winter months are stationary by nature, but winter is over. Now it is time to leave the introspection in favor of action. With industriousness, we can change the world. Start small and move always onward.



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## Upcoming National Events

*Ostara at Þórshof | March 22nd - 24th*



It's that time again! Pretty soon, the grass in Dixie will awaken from its slumber, bees will be buzzing, flowers will begin to bud again. Our national event at Þórshof, Ostara. Folks are coming from all over the country to celebrate the Dawn, the Spring. Ostara

has been among my favorite events since I joined AFA in 2018. Join us to worship, to fellowship, to give birth to the community and to the Gods and Folk.

We will have VIPs such as Alsherjargothi Matthew Flavel, and the AFA Witan, along with Gothar from all over the country! Expect Blót, Sumbl, games, and talks on various Asatru subjects.

# Ostara at Þórshof



Ostara at Þórshof, an Asatru Folk Assembly national event, is scheduled for March 22 - 24 at our very own Þórshof in Linden, North Carolina! [Click here for Tickets](#)

Registration is already underway, please make sure to include children's tickets (even though they are free) so we can have an accurate headcount to plan meals.

Also, if you have items for our auction, whether it's handmade Asatru items, or homemade jam, whatever you wish to donate, it's greatly appreciated.

## Thorshof Shirts Available at Ostara



**Hoodies \$45**



**Event Tees \$25**



**Hof Tees \$15**

We'll have a merch table at Ostara featuring flags, pins, books, and more. We'll have some awesome event shirts up for sale, as well as last year's Hof shirts (at a discount) and Þórshof hoodies.

Contact your local Folkbuilder for details.

Get your tickets [HERE](#)



Witan Daniel Young  
[dyoung@runestone.org](mailto:dyoung@runestone.org)

## Charming of the Plow 2024



Charming of the Plow at Njörðshof 2024

## Gothar Spotlight

*Gothi Nathan Erlandson | Minnesota*



AFA Folkbuilder Coordinator  
Gothar Class of 2023  
Ordained August 19, 2023  
Mentored by Witan Daniel Young

Nathan Erlandson is a powerhouse of a man. A force of nature. It has been my pleasure getting to know him over the past few years. I was first introduced to Nathan at Winter Nights 2020, at the insistence of Witan Brandy Callahan. I had just been ordained, and he had just started his own journey into the Gothar Program. He and I hit it off immediately.

It wasn't long after that Gythia Catie Erickson asked if I would mentor him in the

Program, to which I said yes. We started off a little rough, but over the following months we began to crack the ice, so to speak. Once we had broken through a few barriers, Nathan began to open up, and for that, I am grateful. Along the way he and I became friends. I am glad to say that he is one of my closest friends. He learned quickly, and what was most enjoyable was that I got to learn from him as well.

Nathan is a leader. He was almost born with it. What separates Nathan is that he leads from the front. Not one to shy away from work, he is often the first one to volunteer and put in the dirty work. From major repairs at Baldrshof, to cutting lawn, to preparing for and planning events at the Hof.

Nathan felt the calling to the Aesir in 2013 and committed to it 2017. Despite being raised Catholic, Nathan had always felt a calling to something more. He served in the US Army from 1998 to 2005, first as a firefighter than as an infantryman. This tells you a lot about what motivates him in life. His willingness to put himself out front to protect and guide those he holds dear.



Nathan joined the Asatru Folk Assembly in 2020, while he was searching for a community to further his own practice, and like most of us, to find fellowship with like-minded Folk. Nearly immediately, he volunteered to Folkbuild for the AFA. At Odinshof in June of 2021, Nathan took his Folkbuilder Oath at Midsummer, and was immediately accepted in the Gothar Program.

At his ordination at Baldrshof during Freyfaxi, Nathan took his Gothar Oath before performing the Freyfaxi Blot. I was unable to be there, but thanks to Witan Brandy I got to see it all through video call. Nathan is also responsible for hosting the AFA's annual

Feast of the Einherjar, which he has for the past 3 years.

Recently, he was named the Folkbuilder Coordinator for the AFA. When the idea of naming a coordinator came up, Nathan's name was the only one that came up. We have many amazing Folkbuilders in the AFA, however Nathan was the clear choice. The AFA is better with Nathan in it.



“Gothi Erlandson has been a driving force in Baldrshof District and in the Asatru Folk Assembly. His passion, diligence, and steadfastness are an anchor for his friends, his family, his Folk, and his Church. Thank you, Nathan for all you do to protect and support the people and Folk that you love.”

– Witan Brandy Callahan

“Gothi Nathan Erlandson is a great example of many of our Asatru Virtues. He’s certainly hard-working and industrious, forthright and perseverant. He’s the embodiment of self-reliance—and quite literally such, he was the selected by his peers to be the chosen guest on Victory Never Sleeps on the episode all about it. Gothi

Erlandson is a catalyst for right action and forward progress, helping to lead the AFA's team of Folkbuilders. He's a strong man, a proud man, and I'm proud to be able to work with him daily."

– Folkbuilder Nick Rice

"Goði Erlandsson has always been an inspirational person to me, the conduct of his character and strength of his resolve is absolutely something to aspire to. His dedication and steadfast commitment to the AFA is truly remarkable, and the faith he displays in the Aesir marks him as a true leader. The example he sets at Baldrshof makes all of our leadership team very proud to meet the high standards of excellence that he has set for us. Not only is he a great leader, he is also someone who cares deeply about our folk, providing exceptional counsel and advice for those in need. He is organized, coordinated and extremely professional and exemplary Goði."

– Folkbuilder Stian Penner

"Goði Nate Erlandson is someone who steps into a position 110%, and I can say this because I have personally witnessed it on multiple occasions- helping revive Baldrshof, Folkbuilding, becoming a Goði, being the Folkbuilder Coordinator- just to name a few. As a former US Army Infantryman, he chases his goals with the spirit of a warrior and a dogged determination that reminds us how our Folk shaped the world so many times in our history."

– Gothi Trent East



Witan Daniel Young  
[dyoung@runestone.org](mailto:dyoung@runestone.org)

## Folkbuilder Spotlight

*Folkbuilder Heather Young | South Carolina*



For those of you that don't know Heather Young, she is a shining beacon for our Folk. She is who one thinks of when someone says Folkbuilder or Frithweaver for our Church. Heather is directly involved with the management of Thorshof which includes the beautification project, National Event planning and execution for Ostara, she works seamlessly across the AFA as a whole bringing our Folk community, local community work such as a food pantry, coat drives, and toy drives. As if her days weren't filled already, Heather is also studying to become a Gythia for the Church.

"Folkbuilder Young is an outstanding example of a Frithweaver. She spends countless hours reaching out to our folk to help them with their needs, large and small. She is an

outstanding Folkbuilder, amazing woman, and one of my dearest friends. Thank you, Heather for all you do!”

– Witan Brandy Callahan

“Heather is one of the most caring and industrious people I know, both traits that certainly make her an awesome Folkbuilder. She is hard-working, always willing to lend a helping hand, and more than happy to lend an ear as well. She works very hard in a variety of areas with the Church, acting to maintain Thorshof and its leadership.”

– Folkbuilder Nick Rice

“Working with Folkbuilder Heather Young is always a joy. She attacks any problem thrown at her head-on and with a smile. The passion she has for our Church and the love she has for our folk shines through in every interaction. Whether she is spearheading the food pantry, serving meals to our folk, or weaving frith amongst our membership, no task is too great or too small. Her grace and piety bring a light that we couldn’t do without. She is a role model for our women and our Folkbuilders.”

– Folkbuilder Tyler Bethea

“Heather Young exemplifies the ideal Folkbuilder, demonstrating unwavering dedication and commitment to both the folk and her spiritual beliefs in the Gods. She always works to ensure that everyone enjoys themselves, and she spares no effort in supporting the folk in any way she can, from planning events and cooking meals, to outreach amongst AFA members around the country. Heather’s genuine kindness and compassion shine through in every interaction, making her one of the most pleasant individuals I’ve had the pleasure of knowing.”

– Folkbuilder Robert Shotwell

As the above folks have stated, Heather Young is one of the most prized members of AFA leadership. She exemplifies everything it means to be a leader of our Folk and is without question the tip of the spear for our members. Thank you, Heather, for all that you do for the Gods, The Church, and our Folk.

Hail Folkbuilder Heather Young!

Gothi Nathan Erlandson

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## AFA Prison Ministry



The importance of this AFA Prison Ministry is so much more than just for those who are actually incarcerated, it benefits not only them as followers of Asatru but their families and loved ones on the outside as they will see the noticeable change in their demeanor and demand that our faith commands for them to lead a noble life. We all are future ancestors and will help them be examples of our faith and not be a burden or a product of recidivism.

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

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

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

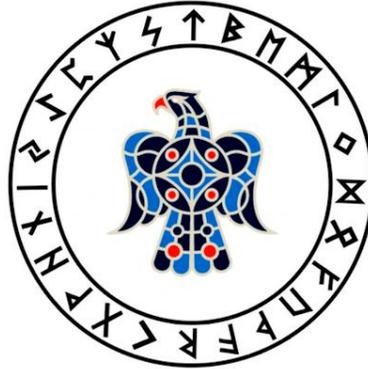
If you have a loved one who is incarcerated or know of someone who is Folkish and will benefit from this ministry, please contact us at [prisonministry@runestone.org](mailto:prisonministry@runestone.org).



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.

The Artisans of the AFA  
Support Our Folk

# GOTHIC RUNES



FRITZ MAES

## GOTHIC RUNES

Energy Elements Ethnicity

Fritz Maes

Final Revised Glorious Edition 03 March 2024

"Fritz Maes' latest book, Gothic Runes, is a precious jewel. In a genre saturated with every other kind of runes - Younger, Elder, Anglo-Saxon, Frisian, whatever - it is a delight to find a competent volume on the runic lore of the much-neglected Goths.

Maes' book breaks new ground, and is illuminated by his knowledge of, and passion for, the mythic and somewhat mysterious Goths. Already known for his works on medieval German weaponry and fighting traditions, he applies a scholar's mind with a refreshing passion to breathe life into the runic tradition of the Goths. Well done!"

— Stephen McNallen

Please consider purchasing your copy of my book from Lulu:

<https://www.lulu.com/shop/fritz-maes/gothic-runes/ebook/product-yv7vgyw.html>

BTW: Anyone who has previously bought my book may email me to verify that and request free copy of latest edition + FM

[fritzmaes@yandex.com](mailto:fritzmaes@yandex.com)

\*\*\*\*\*

Best Regards,

Fritz

## Cooking for our Folk



Cooking from the Heart. One of the first chefs I worked for told me that there are two main rules to cooking.

1. ALWAYS cook from the heart!
2. You must know the why of the rule before you can think about breaking it.

To this day, I still believe that number one is the most important; but two is the most valuable lesson. So, for example: why would you add flour to the mix when are you making Fried Potato balls? It doesn't add anything to the dish overall and in fact, it takes away flavor and disrupts texture. The reason is that what flour takes away: is moisture. It adds to the binder and liquid consumption.

So, what does this mean for the folk? Plan and simply don't take shortcuts. Whenever I pick up the knife and began cooking for the folk, I think of it as channeling the ancestors. Cooking reminds me of that age-old musing "I don't measure seasoning; I wait for the tap on the shoulder from the ancestors to tell me that's enough."

When you cook from the heart, people can tell. Don't cook out of spite or obligation. Cook for the folk because you want to! Find new recipes. Test them. Make them better. And when your heart tells you it is right...time to serve. If you have never made cookies from scratch...make them. Why not? Use the best ingredients you can afford (don't take out a second mortgage for this) but be proud to feed the folk.

When the recipe is right and you feed the folk, please send the recipe to [cookbook@runestone.org](mailto:cookbook@runestone.org) with details of when and where it was served (Hof/moot).



Folkbuilder Mike Joyner  
[mjoyner@runestone.org](mailto:mjoyner@runestone.org)

## Ancestral Food and Culture

### *German Sweet Milk Rolls*



### Ingredients

- \* 450 g all-purpose flour (use weight, not cups for accuracy)
- \* 250 ml milk, lukewarm
- \* 1 pouch dry yeast (7 g or 0.25 oz)
- \* 2 Tbsp vanilla sugar <<https://amzn.to/3PGIAZ6>>
- \* 2 Tbsp sugar
- \* 1 Tbsp honey
- \* 1 egg

- \* ½ tsp salt
- \* ½ stick butter, cut in slices (=56g) at room temperature



#### Instructions

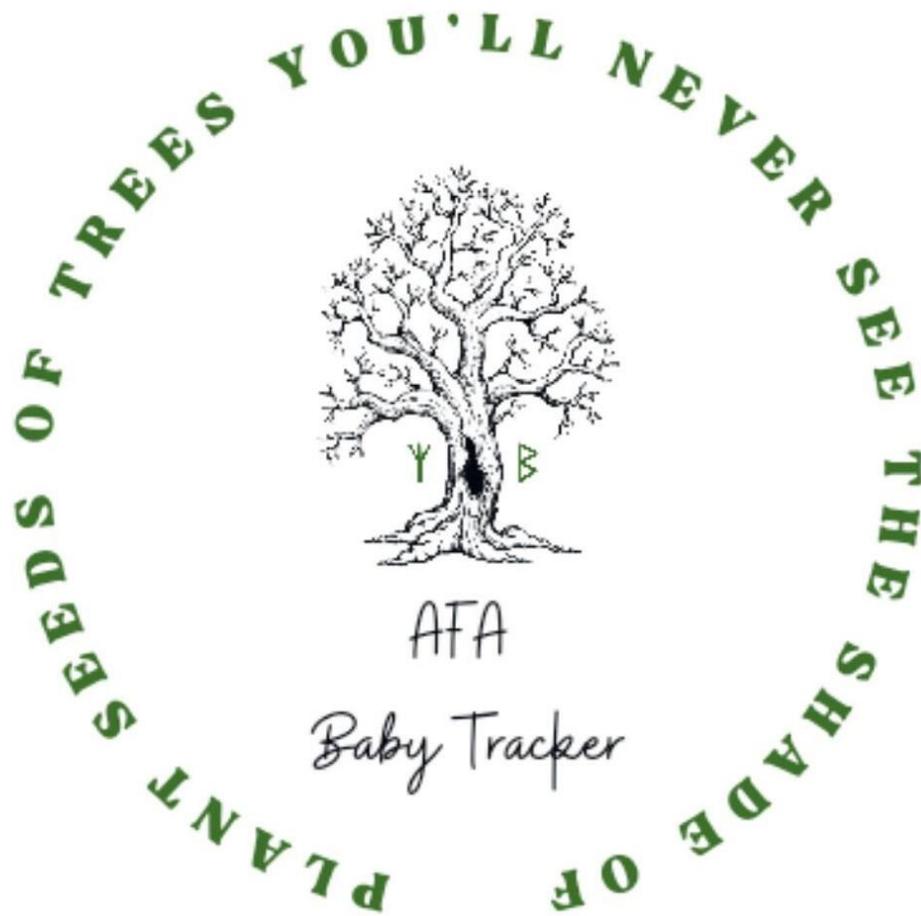
- \* Use some of the warm milk to dilute the yeast in a small bowl.
- \* Add the flour to a large mixing bowl.
- \* Add the yeast milk mix to the flour, cover and let stand for 10 minutes.

- \* After 10 minutes add the sugar, vanilla sugar, honey, salt and the egg.
- \* Give it a quick mix until the ingredients are mixed well, then add the butter.
- \* Mix the dough for 10 minutes.
- \* After 10 minutes mixing, cover the bowl with a damp towel and let the dough proof for 2 hours.
- \* After 2 hours the dough should be significant larger.
- \* Give it a quick knead and if you have time, let it rest for a few minutes.
- \* Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- \* Divide the dough into 9 parts of equal size.
- \* Each dough part gets shaped into a sphere by moving it with a hollow hand in a circle on the table.
- \* Grease a baking sheet or a casserole with butter and place the rolls there.
- \* You can either place them close to each other, so they grow together, or apart so they bake separate.
- \* Bake at 350°F for about 20 minutes (more or less, depending on the oven and size of the rolls).
- \* Remove the rolls from the oven, let cool. Best enjoyed warm and fresh.



Folkbuilder Sara Ault  
[sault@runestone.org](mailto:sault@runestone.org)

## Baby Tracker



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

Total babies born in 2024: 5

## Virtue Recovery Group



# VIRTUE RECOVERY MEETING

THURSDAY 7PM CST  
(5PM PST, 8PM EST)

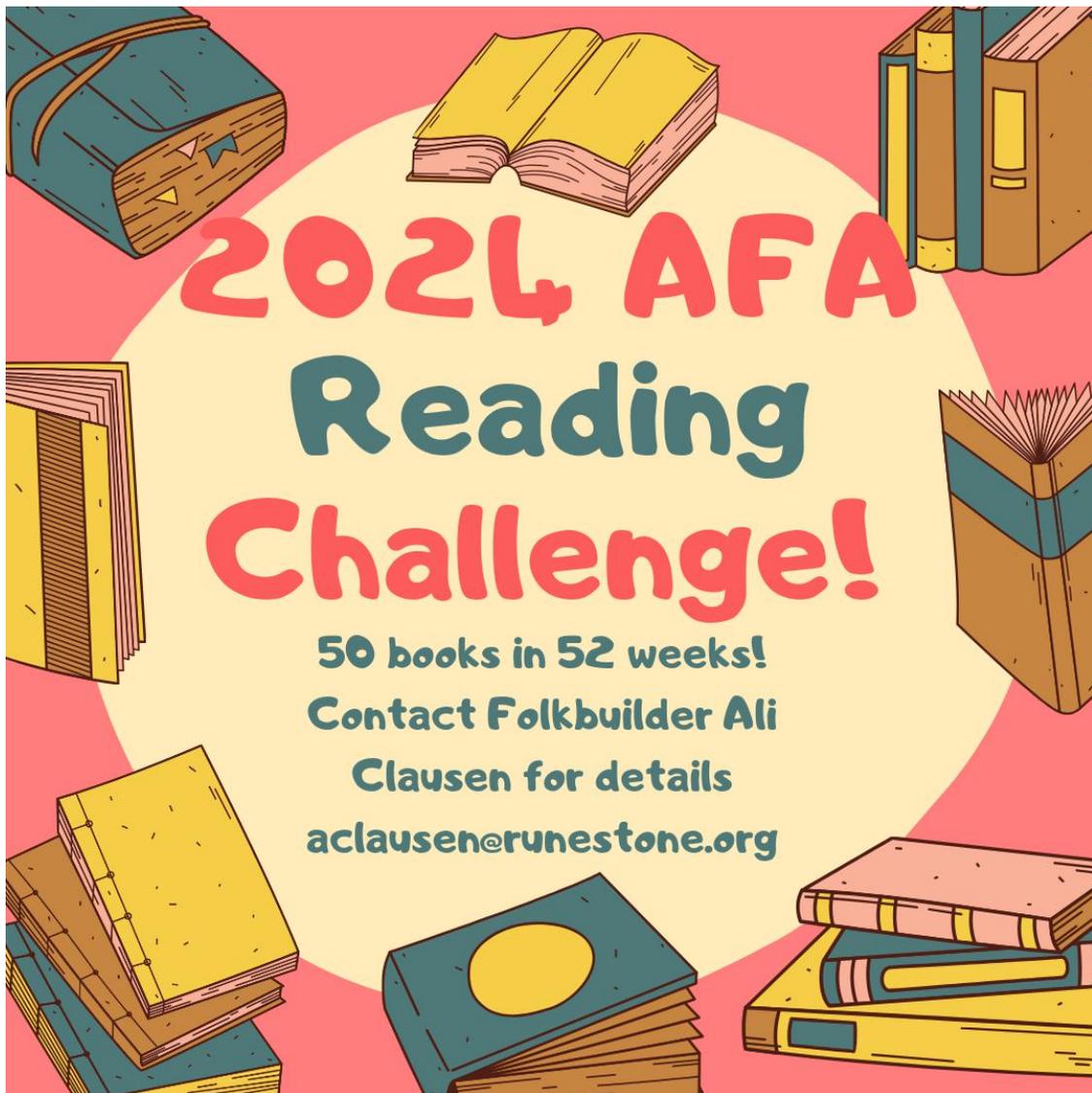
SATURDAY 9AM CST  
(7AM PST, 10AM EST)

Being our most virtuous selves is not always the easiest task. As a community, we are home to many that have or are currently, struggling with addiction. Many traditional 12 step meeting, though so very respected, do not fall in line with what we as a people believe. Specifically, any step pertaining to the divine will or requesting the removal of any shortcomings. So, we run what we are calling the Virtue Recovery Meeting. Since we are an international organization, the best way for us to do this is via Zoom (<http://tinyurl.com/virtuerecoverymeeting>). We hold our meetings every Thursday at 7pm Central and every Saturday at 9am Central. Join us!! Feel free to reach out to

Folkbuilder Ashley McStocker with any and all questions!

[AMcStocker@Runestone.org](mailto:AMcStocker@Runestone.org)





# AFA Reading Challenge Meetings



1/9/24	Link will be	7/9/24
2/13/24	posted on	8/13/24
3/12/24	MeWe the	9/10/24
4/9/24	weekend	10/8/24
5/14/24	before the	11/12/24
6/11/24	meeting	12/10/24

CONTACT FOLKBUILDER ALI CLAUSEN FOR DETAILS  
 ACLAUSEN@RUNESTONE.ORG OR ON MEWE

These meetings are family friendly so please, no politics or overly mature topics

# *Ladies Book Study*

## **Revolt Against the Modern World**

**by Julius Evola**

**Dates:**

**7 pm CST**

**January 25th**

**February 8th**

**February 22nd**

**February 29th**

**March 7th**

**March 28th**

**April 4th**

**April 11th**

**Free PDF  
and meeting link  
in Mewe Ladies Group**

**For more information contact  
Witan Brandy Callahan  
Folkbuilder Sara Ault**

# Ladies Mysteries Podcast

Seidr

March 10th

3 pm PST, 4 pm MST, 5 pm CST, 6 pm EST

Witan Brandy Callahan

Gythia Anna Plourde

Gythia Catie Erickson

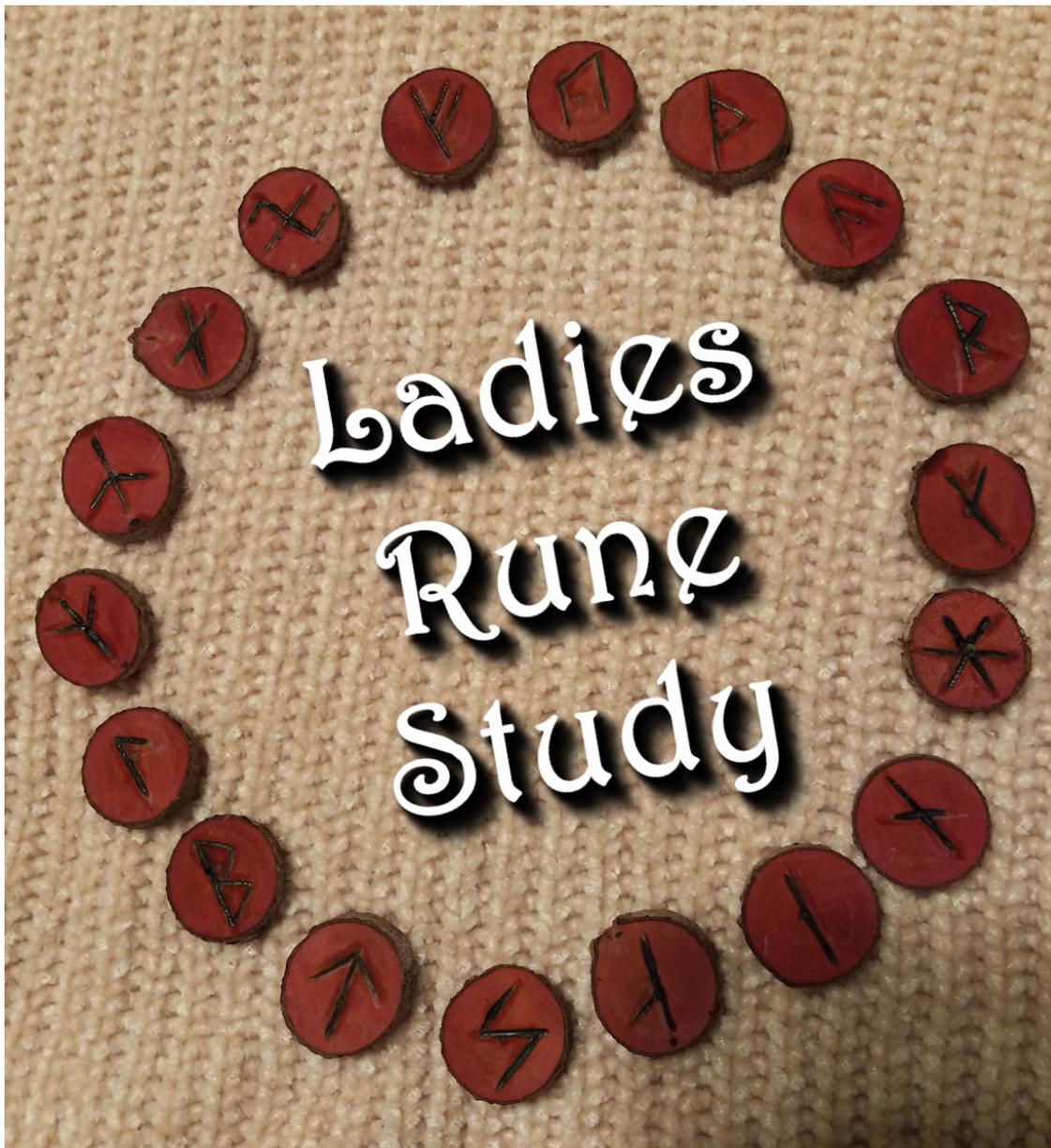
Folkbuilder Heather Young

Folkbuilder Sara Ault

Folkbuilder Ali Clausen

Link will be emailed to all AFA  
Ladies the week before and posted in  
the AFA Ladies Group on Mewe

Hope to see you there!



Starting February 3rd, at 1pm Eastern

If you are looking to expand your knowledge of the runes in the company of your AFA sisters, stay tuned. We will be discussing how to work the runes into our real lives, and how they relate to us in the modern world. This is open to all women of the AFA. Stay tuned to the ladies' chat for more details, or feel free to contact Gythia Anna Plourde at [aplourde@runestone.org](mailto:aplourde@runestone.org)

**Lore Study with  
Gothi Jason Plourde**  
**Join us every Monday night**

**at**

**8:00 pm EST**

**7:00 pm CST**

**6:00 pm MST**

**5:00 pm PST**

**4:00 pm AKST**

**Each study begins with trivia questions  
from VNS and the previous week's  
reading. A winner is announced monthly.**

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

**For more information  
reach out to Gothi Plourde  
[jplourde@runestone.org](mailto:jplourde@runestone.org)**



*For our AFA Folk who are 50 and over*

# Eldri

## Teams Meetings

**TUESDAY EVENINGS:**

**March 5th & 19th**

5:30 PT 6:30 MT 7:30 CT 8:30 ET

**FRIDAY AFTERNOONS:**

**March 8th & 22nd**

2:00 PT 3:00 MT 4:00 CT 5:00 ET

*Join us for animated conversation where we share wisdom  
& reflections while building bonds of friendship.*

Copy this link into a browser: <https://tinyurl.com/yc289cn8>

Hosted by Gythia Sheila McNallen

## February Sister's Fitness Winner



The winner of the February Sisters Fitness challenge is Ceilidh McPhee of New Zealand!

Ceilidh has been consistently working hard in our group and is so deserving of this victory. Every month she has made reasonable goals, continually building off her previous goals.

She has shown true perseverance and despite any setbacks she always continues to the end.

Congratulations Ceilidh!

All women of the AFA are welcomed and encouraged to join our AFA sisters' fitness group. Everyone's goals are self-determined and whoever is most consistent wins!

— Corrie Proudfoot, member, Minnesota

## Just For Fun



Apprentice Folkbuilder **Hope White** took 1st place in completing February's word search. Hooray! It was definitely a fun one, and a couple of ladies at Óðinshof raced each other to complete it at Charming of the Plow.



Courtney and Caitlin finished the puzzle with smiles on their faces, worthy of honorable mentions.



Thank you to all who participated!

A huge shout-out also goes to our youth participants, **Kara, Russell, and Madilene** for their efforts in completing the kid's maze and creating a "LOVE" acrostic poem this month!

LOVE Maze

Write a Valentine's Day Acrostic:

L ove  
O ptimistic  
V aluable  
E xciting

www.BrainyMaze.com

Images (c) Hidesy's Clipart & Little Red

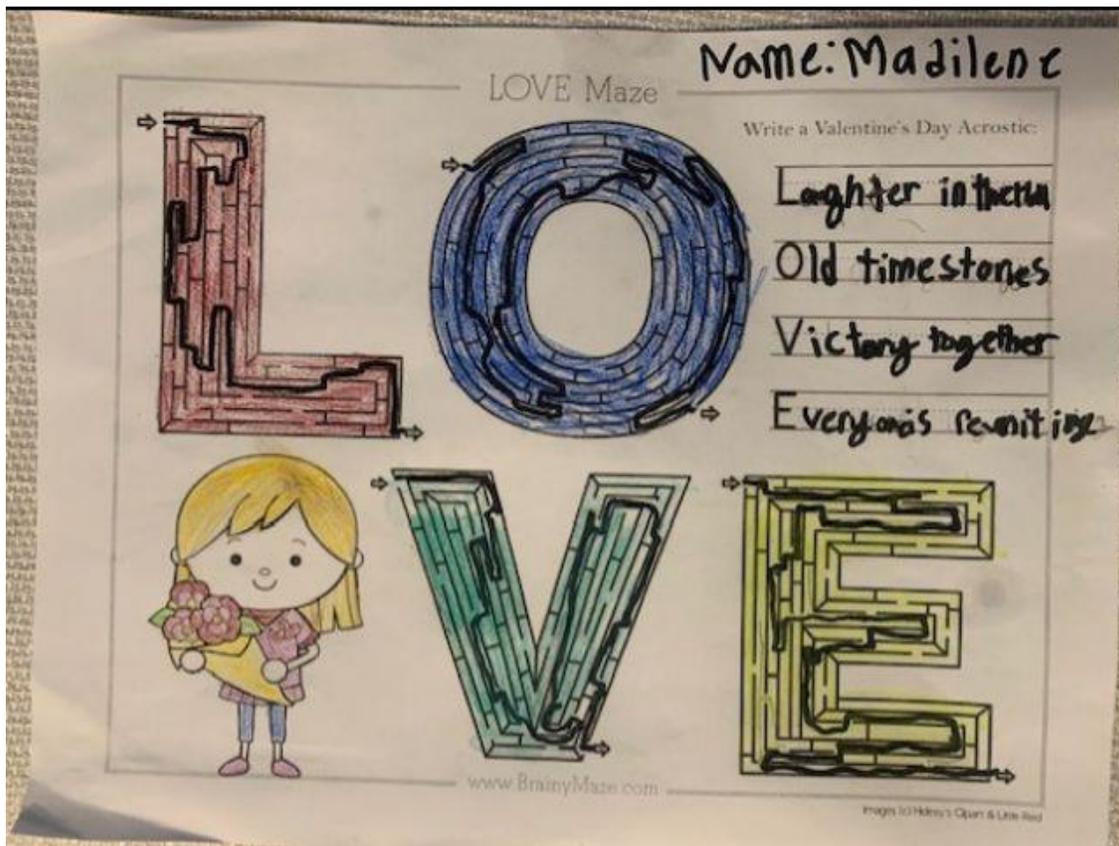
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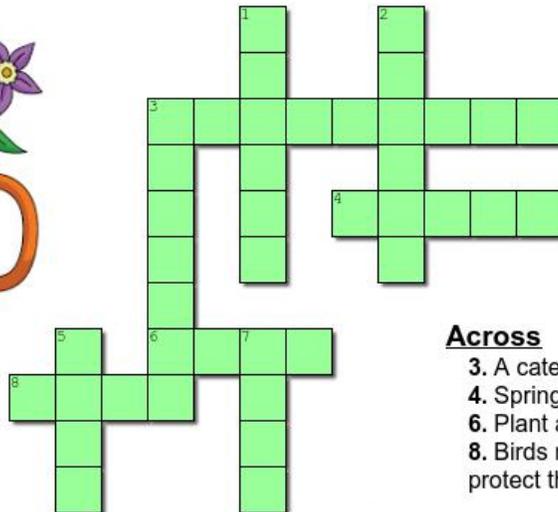
Images (c) Hidesy's Clipart & Little Red



As we welcome the return of Spring, I invite both members and youth to participate in a fun crossword puzzle and to enter the contest for the best AFA Ostara egg design!

### March Crossword

You're invited to complete and send proof to [press@runestone.org](mailto:press@runestone.org)!



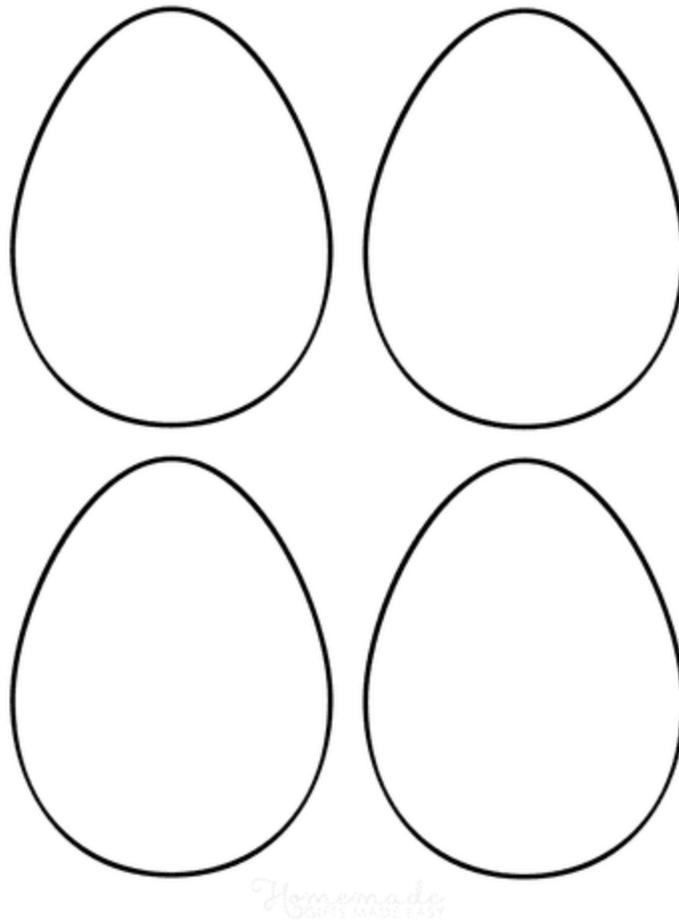
**Across**

- 3. A caterpillar turns into a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4. Spring starts during this month.
- 6. Plant a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8. Birds make a \_\_\_\_\_ to lay and protect their eggs.

**Down**

- 1. goddess we call upon this month
- 2. The first day of Spring lands on the \_\_\_\_\_ equinox in the northern hemisphere.
- 3. colorful arc in the sky after rain, guarded by Heimdall
- 5. Ice and snow \_\_\_\_\_ when they warm up.
- 7. We dye, decorate, and hunt for these.

The best AFA eggs in the "Member" and "Youth" categories will be featured next month! Please send your design entries to [press@runestone.org](mailto:press@runestone.org).

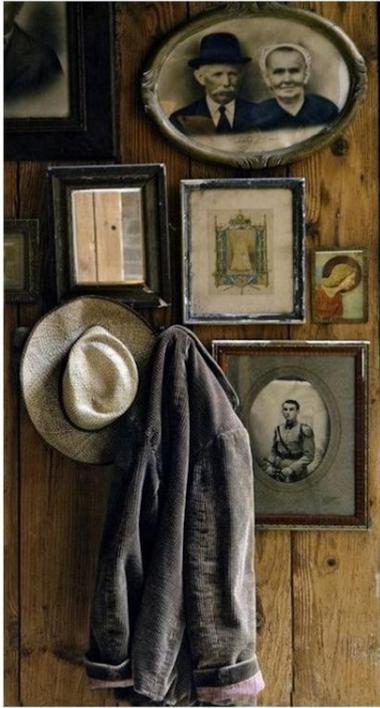


Have a Fun and Magical March!



Folkbuilder Olivia Sutherland  
[osutherland@runestone.org](mailto:osutherland@runestone.org)

## Genealogy and Kinship Charts



**Come on, AFA family!**

**1) The AFA Genealogy MeWe group has added “chat”. We can now share tips, discoveries, resources and all the goodies of family tree research.**

**2) Create a Gedmatch.com account to obtain a “kit number” to find your DNA matches with other AFA members.**

Send your Gematch Kit # to  
**Sheila@runestone.org**

for inclusion on our next AFA KINSHIP CHART

See how closely you’re related to other AFA members. 72 people so far, and counting!



Gythia Sheila McNallen

[sheila@runestone.org](mailto:sheila@runestone.org)

## Submit Now to the Runestone

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



**We'd love to see 'em. Send to [Photos@Runestone.org](mailto:Photos@Runestone.org)**

Folkbuilder Nicholas Rice



Editor, *The Runestone*

[nrice@runestone.org](mailto:nrice@runestone.org)

## Óðinshof

### Food Pantry at Óðinshof



At February's Óðinshof Food Pantry, we had planned and prepared bags with enough food for 48 families. Saturday morning's weather was nearly perfect when compared to the month before, as there was no rain! The Skinner Family came to help, and while Ryan toted bags to cars, his two teenaged daughters filled extra bags. We received so many "thank you's" and lots of small donations in our donation jar.

In all, we gave food to 55 families--representing 135 individuals! The total for all four Hofs this month was 160 families served!

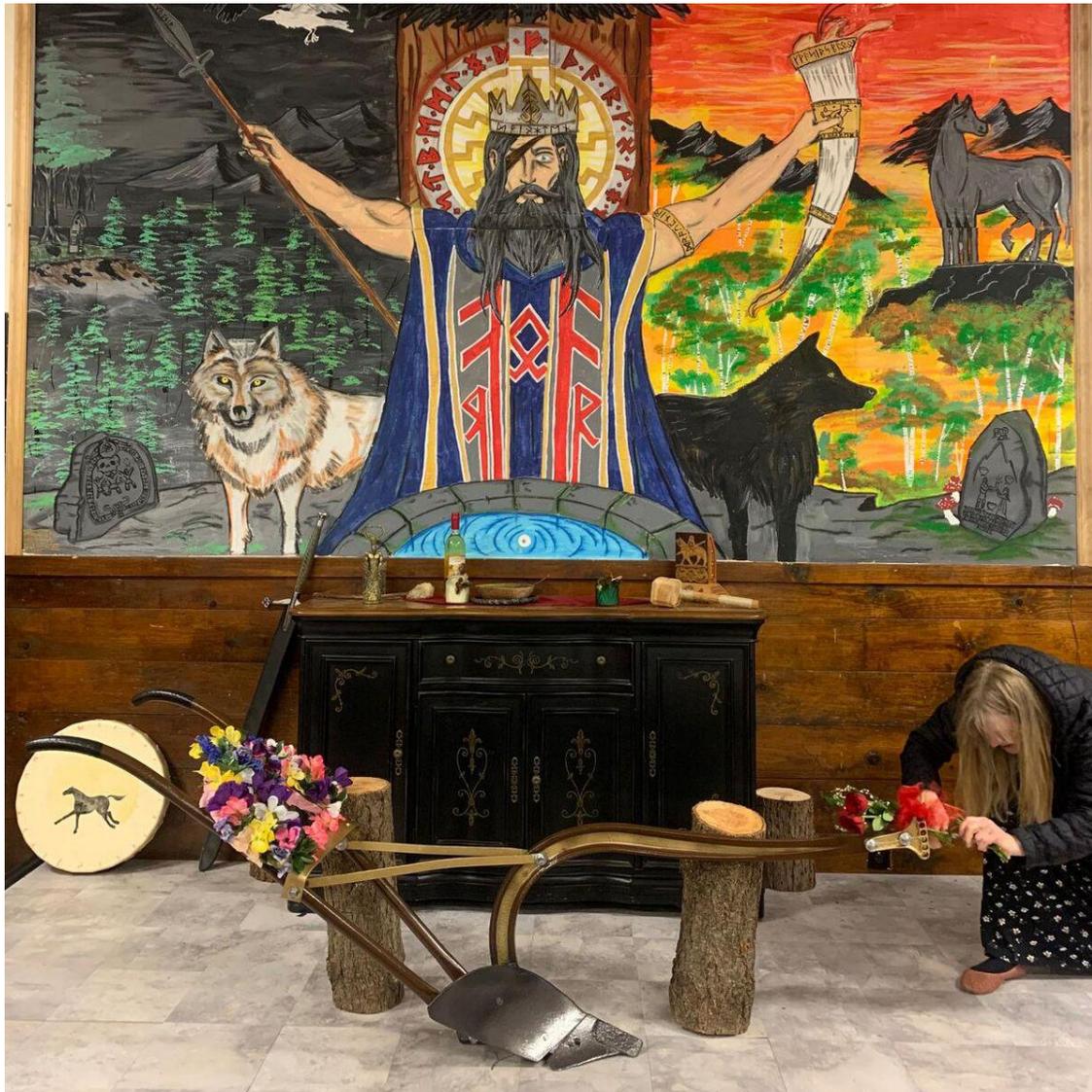


Gythia Sheila McNallen  
[sheila@runestone.org](mailto:sheila@runestone.org)

### Charming of the Plow at Óðinshof



'Tis the Season for Plowing! The antique Óðinshof plow was brought out for this event, but it was far from the relic we acquired last year. Over the past two months, Hof Steward Daniel Odom worked on it at his home, completely sanding and painting it a rich brown with metallic gold accents. Daniel prominently placed it on the dais of Odin's altar, for all to see when they arrived for Charming the Plow. This tool from our ancestral past would help guide the day.



We enjoyed a fine lunch of hot soup and grilled cheese sandwiches prepared with love by Diane and Courtney.



Then, we gathered outdoors for Greeting to the Gods. As we filed into the ritual circle, the predicted rainstorm hit. Those first drops descended, but the power of the Gods, Ancestors, and Landvaettr prevailed. Founder Stephen McNallen led us in this traditional ceremony of welcome and unity.



I led the Folk from the circle back into the Hall where we gave personal tribute to Allfather in front of his altar and mural. A group photo then took place on the front steps, a future reminder to all who made the journey this day.

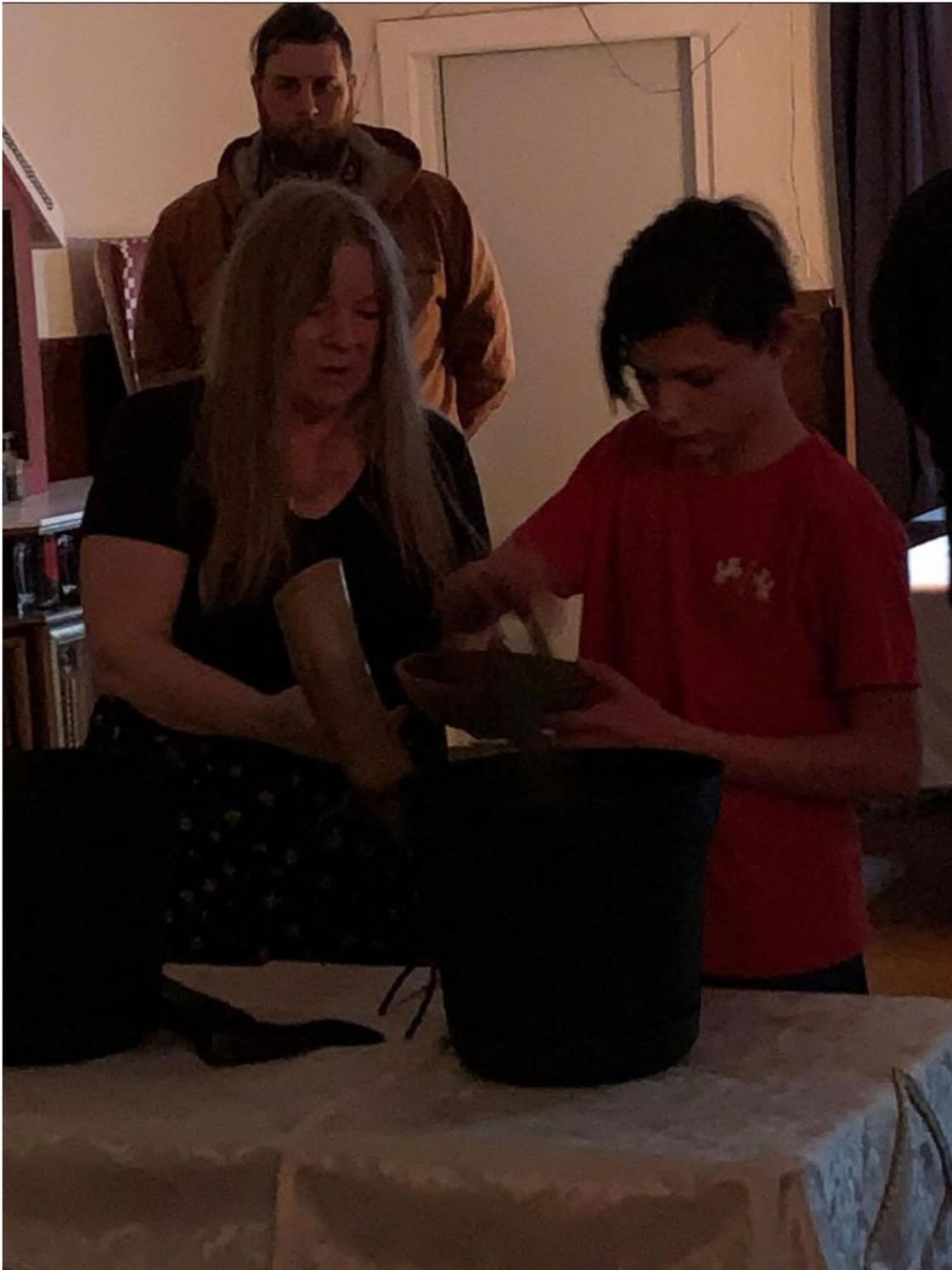
Our main ritual of the day was led by Gothi Thorgrun Odden, in his role as a Freysgothi. The nature of the fertility god, Freyr, is integral to the initial plowing of the soil to prepare for sowing of seeds. Due to the storm, we opened drapes for the gray, ambient light it provided and then used candles for illumination.



Gothi Thorgrun called on Freyr using nine of his names. The Folk answered each with, "Freyr, give good gifts!" We gave gifts of loyalty and love into the horn. As worthy Folk, we received gifts in return as the blessed horn was passed to each for a sip and a "thank you" to Freyr for his gifts.



Bringing forth both masculine and feminine elements is especially powerful during Vanic rituals. The Goddess Gefjon has always spoken to me this time of year, so I again called on her, as the Folk remained encircled around Odin's altar. A table had been set up in the center. Two large flower-pots were half filled with soil, and a large ax was placed between for the ritual of tool-blessing. For personal offerings, each person took a disk of flat bread and placed their intentions within, to be rid of the past and to ultimately help nurture the future. Using a cedar sprig and mead, the blessings of Freyr and Gefjon were sprinkled on the bread disks, the ax, and the plow with its flowers.



Gefjon's story about her exchange with King Gylfi of Denmark was told. For the delight she provided, she was offered a chunk of his land. With the help of her four "oxen" sons she cut away a chunk of land known as Zealand. To this day, she is considered the patroness of Denmark. In her honor, I wrote the following old-style verse, and read it during blot.

### **Gefjon's Tale**

*King Gylfi garnered carnal love,*

*Gefjon did comply*

*Land was given for this lust,  
lightly made the offer*

*Gefjon's cunning to get back,  
great sons she yoked to plow*

*Oxen four a furrow cut,  
future land of Danes did make*

The day was very full, indeed. So many activities took place. In our customary way, the ladies and men separated into their own discussion groups. For ladies, the topics were Frithweaving, the importance of positive communication, and acknowledging sacrifices and achievements of our folk. Words of encouragement, a hug or smile, or simply checking in with an email or text can all make a huge difference during dark times. The ladies also heard the "whoosh - whoosh" heartbeat, via a fetal doppler, of Caitlin's tiny baby who will be born in May. She was gifted some baby items, the first of many to come. The men also talked about giving mutual support which helps build the foundation of the Folk by encouraging strength in others.



Some of the day was spent with the men playing board games while children gave their attention to Valentine crafts. Because this was the first day in our agrarian cycle, some

prepared pots with soil for planting. Others worked in the kitchen doing all the prep for our homestyle dinner. Even with the afternoon rain, some folks gathered outside around the fire. Come March, landscaping will commence outdoors as we spruce it up for Midsummer.



It was another gathering that “felt like family.” There's no place like Óðinshof!



Gythia Sheila McNallen

[sheila@runestone.org](mailto:sheila@runestone.org)

### Upcoming Events at Odínshof

#### 2024 Events at Oðinshof

January 20	<i>Thorrablót</i>
February 17	<i>Charming of the Plow</i>
March 16	<i>Ostara</i>
April 20	<i>Hexennacht</i>
May 18	<i>May Day</i>
June 22	<i>Midsummer</i>
July 20	<i>Sigrblót</i>
August 17	<i>Freyfaxi</i>
September 21	<i>Winter Finding</i>
October 19	<i>Winter Nights</i>
November 16	<i>Feast of the Einherjar</i>
December 21	<i>Yuletide</i>

RSVPs are required. All guests must be preapproved.

On event weekends, Oðinshof is usually open from Friday through Sunday. Those events include a Saturday morning food pantry distribution and community outreach on Sundays. We invite you to stay for the whole weekend.

All proposed events are on the third weekend, except for MIDSUMMER which is the premier event for the Odínshof district. It's been moved to the fourth weekend to allow the food pantry to proceed as normal.



**ODINSHOF MEMBER MEETING**

WELCOME  
HOF UPDATE  
UPCOMING EVENTS  
HEXENNACHT - GYTHIA YOUNG  
JARL HAAKON - AP. FOLKBUILDER SIMBECK  
DISCIPLINE - GOTHIE ASHBY  
MONTHLY CHALLENGE  
AND  
MORE!

**MAR 22TH LINK ON MEWE  
SEE YOU THEN!**

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**Óðinshof Wish List**



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## Óðinshof Leadership



**Welcoming New Life to Midgard!**



Happy March All! As many of you know, on February 4th, my beautiful daughter was born. I wanted to take this month's article to reflect upon how I prepared spiritually for her arrival and how it translated into my delivery.

I spent two weeks thinking about which goddess I would want by my side in this delivery, and honestly it came down to two, Frigga or Freyja. Both have amendable qualities that would have been appropriate during this time. While Freyja is often associated with fertility, Frigga is the "All Mother" and it felt more appropriate to me to

call upon Frigga at this time.

I pulled runes the week leading up to my induction, thinking about how I could use these to meditate upon while in labor. On Monday, I pulled Berkano--the familial rune. Tuesday was Kenaz, Wednesday was Hagalaz, Thursday was Uruz, and Friday was Laguz. Finally, on Saturday morning before I headed in to be induced, I pulled Sowilo. All these runes have intense meaning, but I felt it particularly symbolic to start the week of meditation with Berkano and end with Sowilo.

Labor went on for a grueling 27 hours. I was induced, and at first the pain was tolerable. I focused on my breathing and meditating on my runes. As the contractions got more intense, I was losing grip on my meditation and began having a panic attack worrying that I would not be able to do this. This was ironic because I had to do it whether I wanted to or not; that baby was coming!





As I started to get on the verge of tears, I felt a warmth go through my body and a sense of calmness. I could feel Frigga with me. I closed my eyes and focused on my breathing. Suddenly, I was standing on a hill watching a raven. As each contraction began, the raven began its ascent up the mountain and its wings beat loudly with each twinge of pain I felt until he reached the peak of the mountain while I reached the peak of my contraction. As my contraction subsided, the raven descended down the mountain and landed at my feet. This continued in the same pattern until I felt a pain indescribable to what I was feeling previously.

I turned to the nurse and said the baby was coming. They told me there was no way as they just checked, and I was only dilated to an 8. I told her she needs to get the doc now because, "The baby is coming, I can feel it!" She told me to give a little push to see if it relieves any pressure. I told her if I begin to push this baby will be here NOW. She looked and could see my baby's head, and, within a matter of seconds, I had every doctor and nurse who needed to be in my room. I listened to my body and drowned out the noise of everyone else in the room. In 10 minutes and 3 pushes, my baby girl was with us. Within two hours, I was up and walking. By the time I was discharged and home, I felt better than I did before I got pregnant.

Since having my girl, I have felt refreshed and renewed. I could not have asked for a better birth experience nor could I have asked for a better group of folk cheering me on from the sidelines.

Her Baby Naming Ceremony will be held at Ostara, and I cannot wait for the folk to meet her!



Folkbuilder Sierra Chapman  
[schapman@runestone.org](mailto:schapman@runestone.org)

## Arizona

### *Trivia Night Moot*



Last month, I went out to Norse Mythology trivia night with one of our local AFA members, and we had a great time. The questions challenged us on the lore, but between the two of us we did really well. It helped knowing the Heimskringla and that Heimdall cannot stand Loki! One of the only questions we missed dealt with the comic book version of Thor, which we didn't really care about anyway.

One thing that I've really been spending a lot of time on recently is [familysearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org). Like Steve McNallen once said, "Ancestry is better than rootlessness." What does this mean? To me, it means that we aren't alone in anything we do. Our ancestors that have passed beyond the veil are there behind us, hoping that we succeed, rejoicing at our successes, and sharing in the bitter taste of our defeats. I recently just found myself wishing that my grandparents were still with me, and I felt sad that they never got to meet my children, but then I stopped myself, and realized that they somehow knew

about my children, even if they never got to meet them while they were alive. And someday, we will all be reunited, and many more stories will be passed back and forth once we get to that point. My grandparents are no longer on Midgard, but I did the next best thing and called my parents and shared with them some of the things that I had found on the Family Search website, ancestors I didn't know I had, including a few from Germany and France, as well as more recent relatives I found in the Los Angeles County area, where my parents still live.

My father shared with me stories that he remembered from his ancestors, and we had fun piecing together who was who, and we talked about the neighborhood that my great-grandfather moved to when he moved down from Washington (he was originally from British Columbia), and also my great-grandmother's large family, and one of her aunts that moved to the Los Angeles area from Canada. One of the other great things about familysearch.org is that they have an affiliated service called Relative Finder, which can connect you to famous people throughout history, and also other people in your community. Thanks to Bob, we now have an AFA Relative Finder group, where many of us can see how we are related to other AFA members. It was really unexpected and interesting to know that I have ancestors in common with Gythia Sheila McNallen, Founder Steve McNallen, and many others in the AFA.

## Stephen McNallen

**12th Cousin 3 times removed**

[View Relationship](#)

**Ancestor:**

**William Booth**

[View Relationship](#)

Modern society tries to make us all rootless, and to forget the power that is inherent within us, that is passed down to us and is countless thousands of years old. The current framework that we live in for the moment in the world at large can only continue if we continue to forget as a Folk that we are descended from the Gods, and we in the AFA are reviving the collective memory within our Folk of our ancient ancestors, and our Gods, who both live within us here on Midgard. Once enough of us do such a simple act as remembering this and abandoning the rootless "individualism" or egoism, and

once they can see the legion of their ancestors standing behind them every step of the way, Victory will be inevitable.

Hail the Gods, Hail the Folk, Hail the AFA  
Hail Victory

*Upcoming Events*



**OSTARA IN THE PARK  
SAHUARITA, AZ  
3/24/24 13:00/1 PM**

On March 24th, we are meeting at a park and celebrating Ostara with our Folk. Hope you can come!



Folkbuilder Lou Nickerson

[lnickerson@runestone.org](mailto:lnickerson@runestone.org)

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## California

### *Lacy's Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free Carrot Cake*



A delicious and healthy dessert served at Charming of the Plow at Óðinshof, made with homegrown garden carrots.

Carrot Cake:

- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup granulated sugar (110 grams)
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste (5 ml)
- ½ cup sunflower oil (100ml)
- ½ cup almond milk (100 ml)
- 2 large carrots, grated (170 grams)
- 1 + ⅓ cup all-purpose gluten free flour (180 grams)
- 2 ½ teaspoons baking powder (make sure it's not expired\*) (11 grams)
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon (5 grams)
- ⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg (optional)
- ½ to 1 cup whole walnuts, crushed (Optional)

#### Cream Cheese Icing:

- ½ cup kite hill plant based cream cheese, softened to room temp, (4 oz)
- ¼ cup miyokos plant butter, softened to room temp, (60g)
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup powdered sugar, (120g)

#### How to make:

##### Cake -

- Preheat the oven to 350F. Spray a loaf pan with cooking spray and line with parchment paper.
- In a large bowl, add the eggs, sugar, and vanilla. Whisk until combined.
- Add the oil and milk and whisk again. Stir in the grated carrots using a silicone or rubber spatula.
- Add the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, and nutmeg and stir until you have a thick pourable batter. Fold in the crushed walnuts, if using.
- Pour the batter into the prepared loaf pan. Give it a tap or gently shake to distribute the batter evenly. Bake for about 50 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out of the center of the loaf clean. Let the loaf cool completely before icing.

##### Icing -

- In a bowl, combine the softened cream cheese and butter. Using a hand-held electric mixer or a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream together the cream cheese and butter until smooth. Add the vanilla and mix again. Add the powdered sugar and combine, using a silicone or rubber spatula. (I switch to a spatula here because the electric mixer will send the powdered sugar flying all over the kitchen.) Mix until silky smooth.

- If the icing is too soft, put it in the fridge for 10 to 30 minutes to firm up, before adding it onto the cake.
- Evenly spread the icing onto the cake, slice, and enjoy!

— Lacy, member

*Freya's Gifts, A Sonnet*



*He long in tooth and weary, striving, armed;  
Still deeply held were duty, honor, will;  
to guard the clients, Folk, and Earth from harm;  
but empty were his stocks of hope, deep chill.*

*Queen Monster sent by Giants sought his death.  
He fought, Forsetti close in heart and mind;  
Against her arrows made of lies and threats.  
The evil Queen still sat amongst her kind.*

*Shieldmaiden Rose helped block the daggers, spears.  
Annalise, with Lanie, Michelle, Beatrice sang.*

*With gracious priestess; filled heart, pleased ears.  
Then Skadi skied, and slew the Queen; bells rang.*

*In time, his soul uplift'd, perceived the sight  
of Freya's gifts, such beauty, artful might.*

— Bill, member

***A Birthday I'll Never Forget***



I've had many birthdays in my time...33 to be exact. My thoughts on them have changed over the years starting with pure joy at the thought of being older and having a sweet birthday party complete with a jump house or cotton candy machine all the way to celebrating my 19th in Marine Corps Boot Camp making silent prayers that my drill instructors wouldn't find out. Nowadays, I'm basically indifferent to my own birthdays as my children's are far more important to me, but this year my birthday presented me

with something I never thought I'd experience on that day--the passing of my Grandmother Fern Elaine Sutherland.



Growing up, I knew my grandmother loved to garden. In fact, I have full photo albums of her beautiful garden. She and Grandpa loved to make the world around them beautiful. Grandpa would work in his woodshop making wooden figures and projects, and grandma would paint them. Their yard art had made the local paper and was a known local landmark. I was always proud of being able to tell people “that’s my grandparents' house”...it’s still kind of funny to me.

In past months, while she was a more whole being and still retained her memory, she talked at some length with us about growing up on a farm in Alamo, living at their home on Pleasant Hill Road near “the phone” (the only phone in the area, and as a girl running to neighbor's houses to alert them they had a phone call!), being a chemist at Dow Chemical, and countless stories about my father as a youth. Fascinating tales from the past. It was a beautiful time being able to listen to her, and I encourage others to spend as much quality time with their loved ones before they pass as possible.



January 21st was Grandmas 94th birthday. Fortunately, she was able to celebrate her birthday surrounded by her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. Unfortunately, she was in hospice and understood that her time her on Midgard was nearing its end. We made it a point to regularly visit Grandma as a family so that she knew she was loved and so that our children could know their Great Grandmother and spend time with her.

As I said before, I'm basically indifferent when it comes to my own birthdays, but now

it isn't just another day on the calendar. Now I have something more to celebrate and remember that day, someone very special--my grandmother.

Hail Fern Elaine Sutherland!



Brodie Sutherland  
Member

### *Ásatrú Fables: The Missing Pups*



The following short story is intended to be one of several short stories. Each tale is about a group of friends, young animals from all walks of life - a wolf, a bear, a moose, a lynx, a fox, and an otter. With each adventure the friends find themselves in, they learn a valuable lesson with the assistance of a God or Goddess. I started to write this story and others a few years ago, when I joined the faith. This lesson brings in Freya, as she was the Goddess I felt closest to. Brandon Stone and I planned for them to be published, and he will be making the illustrations. I hope you enjoy this story about Freya, as much as I enjoyed writing it!

*Six young puppies are finally old enough to play.  
They have been waiting for this very special day.*

*Today they get to explore the meadow with their big sister and her friends.*

*Six puppies and six friends.  
The young animals frolic together.*

*Fox bounces, Moose trips.  
Bear rolls, Otter dips.  
Lynx hops, and Wolf skips.*

*Giggles can be heard for miles,  
followed by so many animal smiles.*

*The friends start to race,  
forgetting about the babies in the first place!*

*Finally, Wolf realizes her mistake,  
as she ponders her parents' heartbreak.*

*"Hurry! We must find them fast!"  
Wolf runs to her friends, "who saw them last?"*

*The animals spread out,  
and they all begin to shout!*

*Their cries can be heard,  
but none come to help - they think it's absurd.*

*But help soon arrives,  
in the form of a bear, fresh from the bee hives.*

*"Fear not, little creatures of the forest,  
we will find those pups - for they are the purest!"*

*Together they moved - much like a pack,  
hoping to find the puppies before being under attack.*

*Deep in the meadow, where the wild flowers grow,  
The puppies are chasing each other - to and fro.*

*So filled with glee,*

*They are just happy to be free!*

*“Family is important, you see?”*

*I am glad they are safe and finally found. No need to thank me.”*

*Before Wolf could turn around and thank the bear;*

*She was gone! Poof! Out of thin air.*

*The young animals looked to each other;*

*Surely Wolf couldn't tell her mother!*

*“You have to,” Bear said. “If you don't, that is bad!”*

*“If they found out the truth, it will make your parents sad!”*

*Wolf agreed with her friend.*

*After all, Bear was right in the end.*

*When Wolf came home with her siblings, father greeted them, “how was your day?”*

*As scared as she was, Wolf told her parents she allowed the puppies to stray.*

*Even telling the truth was scary.*

*The consequences for losing her siblings could vary.*

*She told them the story about calling and being scared.*

*And only one bear seemed to care.*

*It was possible that Wolf could have lied.*

*But instead, she told the truth and it filled her with pride.*

*“The bear was large and beautiful, more so than most.*

*And when the puppies were found - she disappeared like a ghost!”*

*Then mother and father did the thing,*

*They looked at each other, sitting and smiling.*

*“Don't worry, little Pup,” said mother with a coo.*

*“She is a friend to me, father, your siblings, and you!”*

*“She comes to us when we are in danger.”*

*Father cut in, “she is no stranger.”*

*From this day, Wolf swore,  
She would want to see the disappearing bear some more!*



Angelina Stone  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[astone@runestone.org](mailto:astone@runestone.org)

*From Messy to Magical*



It's March now, and it's important we recognize the seasonal shift--the rebirth of Spring. With it, there is a renewed call to work our will in this world and clean house. Literally, I'm talking about Spring Cleaning (A.K.A. getting rid of household clutter!). It's time to remove the muck, discard the unnecessary baggage, declutter the drawers, and organize the chaos of the closets.

Put simply, we live in a world with too much stuff. This is a blessing and a curse.

Materialism has invaded our homes, and if we can't detach ourselves from all the useless clutter, we may drown in our own trash.

For a little inspiration, look no further than our Allmother, Frigg. "How the Queen of the Sky Gave Gifts to Men" by EM Wilmot-Buxton is a tale that describes Frigg's tidy Hall of Mists and how she favors women keeping a tidy home. In the story, Frigg bestows gifts to a poor shepherd and his wife after observing her good housekeeping. The gifts of blue flax flowers and seeds help them to thrive as the seeds soon become a field of flax.

As a mother of three, I know that keeping a tidy home is no easy feat, as plastic and useless items creep into my home somehow (ahem, grandparents!) all the time. Additionally, my kids have growth spurts, and often there's clothes that they've outgrown including some they've never even worn. Time to clear it away!

Spring cleaning involves an understanding of what things make you happy, and letting go of what does not. Items you love and items you need, you should definitely keep. Things that do not make you happy have to go. If it's just been sitting around taking up space, it's a goner! Whether you throw it in the trash, donate it, or sell it is up to you. But now is the time to face this clutter and kiss it goodbye.

One of greatest feelings for me is being able to give away gently used items that my home no longer needs to someone who would benefit from having them. As you evaluate your own home this Spring, be generous. Is there something you need to get rid of that another member may need? Perhaps extra tools or other items Óðinshof could use (please check before donating)?

Once you throw away and give away your unwanted items, intentionally organize what you want to keep! When your home is only filled with what makes you happy, you will magically feel good too.

Happy Spring Cleaning!

*Wotan on the Peaks*



In February, California was met with a ton of rain. Fortunately, on the day of our hiking moot, we hit a break, and the skies were clear! It was warm and bright for our cheerful hike up Mt. Tamalpais for a Blot to the Allfather. The trail was only a little muddy, but the area all around was green and bravely singing the tune of an early Spring.

We first met up for a picnic lunch and held Sumbel.



The horn was passed around the picnic table in frith, and good words were spoken over it. My daughter helped Sheila with horn bearing. After Sumbel, some of us parted ways while the rest headed for the mountain.

As we climbed, we saw two ravens perched on large rocks. They watched us for a moment, and then flew off before we could get too close. At the top, we stood in awe of the expansive views with the water beneath and the peaks surrounding us. Founder McNallen gave a powerful Blot to Odin as we stood in a circle united in devotion to the Allfather.

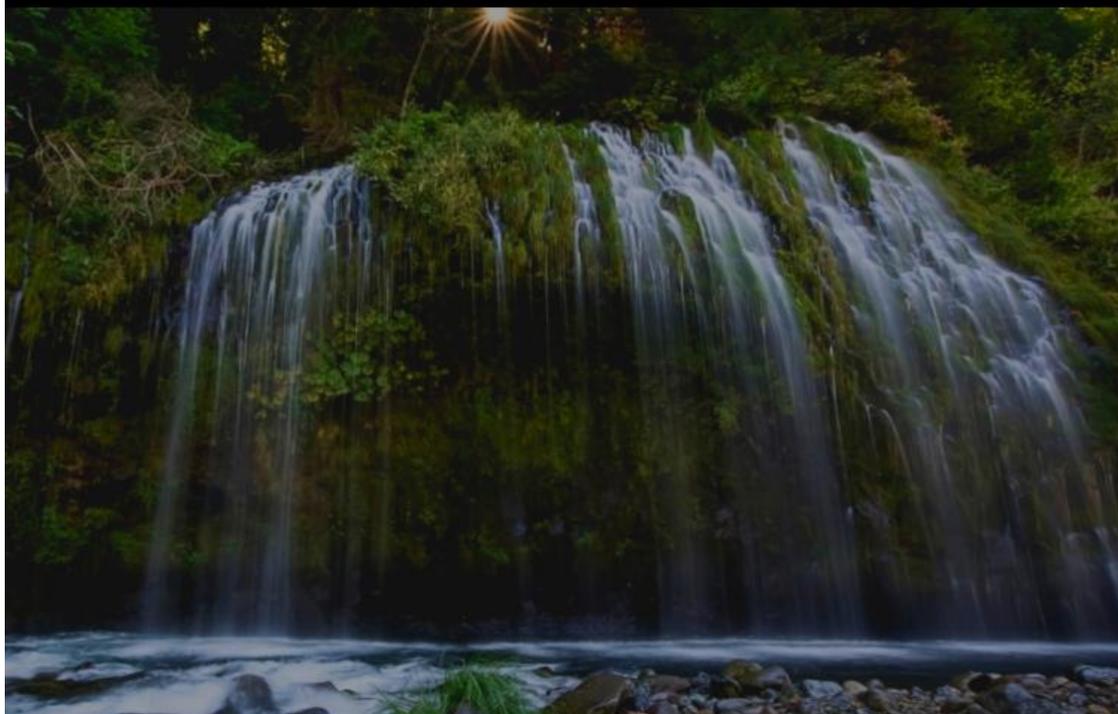


As we invited the blessings of Odin, we felt a strong breeze blow through our circle. After the Blot, we all stood for a while conversing while the children explored the mountain.

When we walked back to where we parked, it seemed no one wanted to leave. One of our dear members who took part in Sumbel but not the hike awaited us at the parking area. We all took time to enjoy one another's company and soak in a little more of this Spring-like day before parting our ways to drive home.

### *Upcoming Events*

HOSTED BY DAUGHTERS OF FRIGG & SONS OF THE HIGH ONE



# RIVER RETREAT

*March 29-30, 2024*

SISKIYOU COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

RELAXING SPIRITUAL WEEKEND FOR MEN,  
WOMEN, & CHILDREN  
~HIKING, FISHING, EXPLORING, FRITH, FUN!

*RSVP [osutherland@runestone.org](mailto:osutherland@runestone.org)*

We will be having a River Retreat at the end of March! Please reach out and RSVP for more details. See you soon!



Daughters of Frigg virtual meetings are on the first Fridays of the month at 5pm. Please check out the Daughters of Frigg MeWe page for the link to join.



Folkbuilder Olivia Sutherland  
[osutherland@runestone.org](mailto:osutherland@runestone.org)

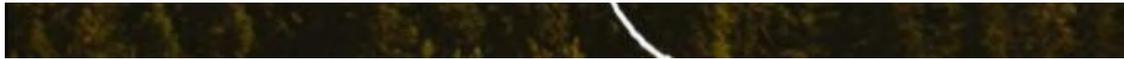
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## Colorado

JOIN US IN  
BOULDER COLORADO  
SATURDAY MARCH  
16TH FOR LUNCH  
MOOT

Contact Folkbuilder  
Jesse Parton For  
details  
[Jparton@runestone.org](mailto:Jparton@runestone.org)

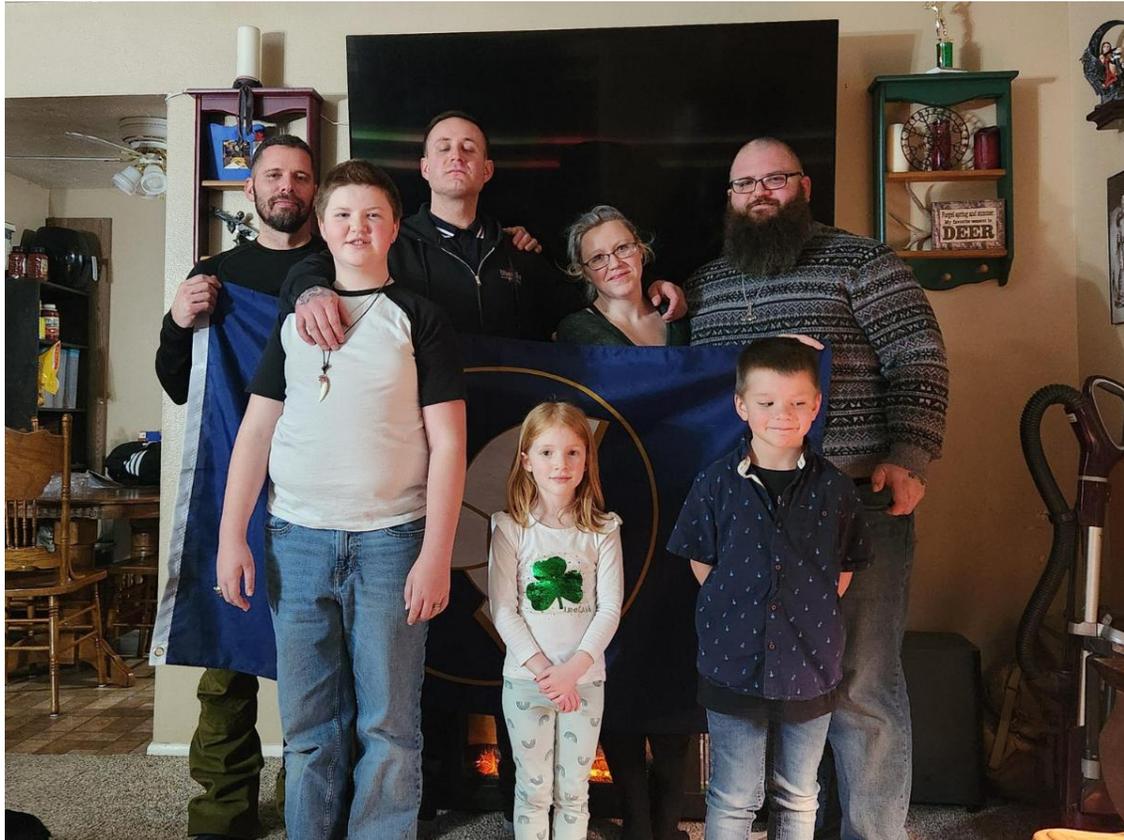




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## Idaho

### *Hello from Idaho*



February was an amazing month for us in Southern Idaho. We had one of our biggest turnouts yet for our Charming of the Plow Moot. We held blot to Gefion, ate some amazing smoked pork and homemade mac and cheese, enjoyed great conversation about how we can apply the meanings of Charming of the Plow in modern day living and what we all could do to be more industrious in our day-to-day life.

### *Upcoming Events*



We will be holding our Ostara Moot on March 16th. I would love to see all the folk in the area, and even those who are not. If you want to make the trip, come out and join us. We will have food, drink, and great company. As always, my home is welcome to all who need to stay the night due to long travel, so don't let a couple hours' drive stop you from coming out. I make an amazing breakfast.



Kyle Reader  
Apprentice Folkbuilder  
[kreader@runestone.org](mailto:kreader@runestone.org)

*Additional Idaho Events*

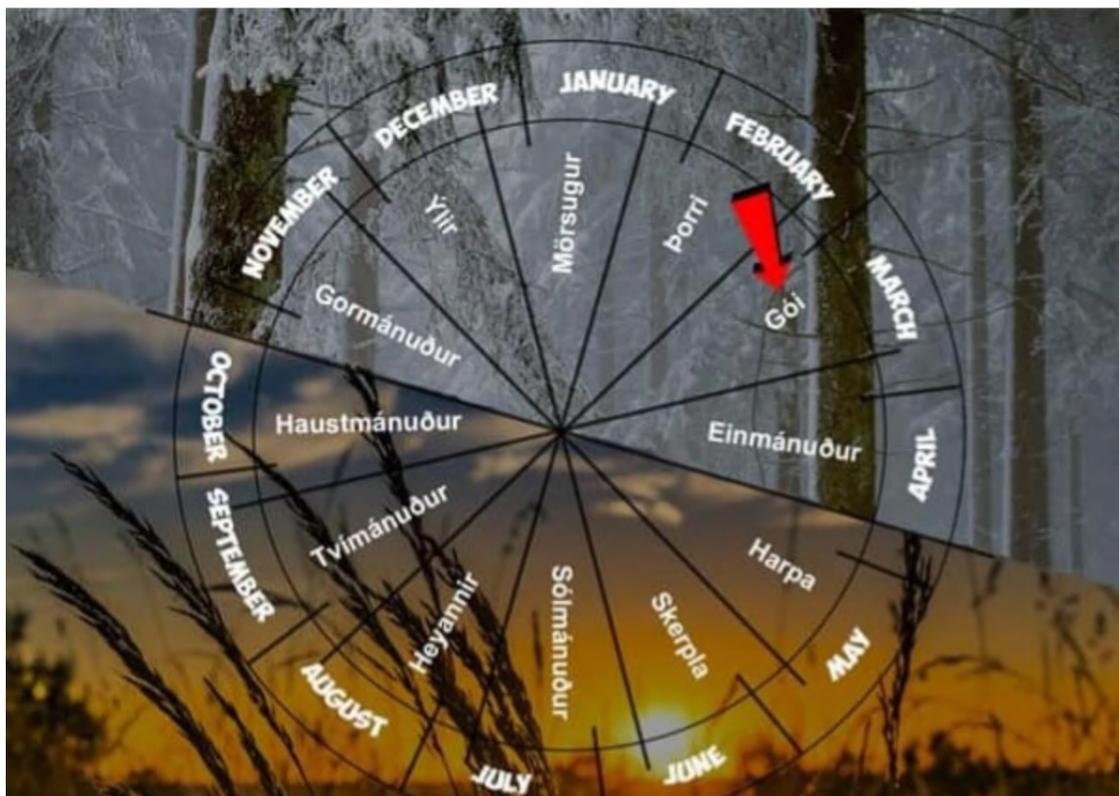




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**Montana**

*Gói and Our Women*



One of the highlights of our Unity Calls has been diving deep into the old calendar, commonly referred to as the "Old Norse Calendar", which is still in use today, and learning about the very practical names of our months.

I would like to share what I've learned concerning the month of March. The traditional name of this month is Góí (goh-eye), and it was the month dedicated to our women folk. Following the month of Þorri, dedicated to the final push to survive winter and exalt masculinity, we see stark contrast as now it is time to prepare for the summer that starts in May. While we still are very much in winter, we see a shift in focus from rugged survival to preparations for new life. This was a time when the weaving was done, sewing commenced for new garments, implements were blessed at Charming of the Plow, and fields were marked for sowing.

It is also the beginning of the traditional baby boom season which is why the next two months are dedicated to boys and girls since they'll be arriving throughout this block. Surely, we can see the logic of honoring our women and the children they're about to birth at this time of year. Women have the magic to form life, and that deserves recognition.



But it isn't just about the womb either. Fertility of the earth may not be visible just yet, but the seeds are germinating, the soil is stretching from its sleep, and new life is readying itself to spring forth.

The entire season we call spring is in reality the death of winter and the birth of summer. It's the time to honor our women for what makes them truly feminine. Our women nurture, they create new life, they keep our homes from becoming houses, they stand side by side with their men, and they honor each other in their respective roles.

The greatest gift this season gives my family is the opportunity to acknowledge what true femininity is. The way we honor women this month ignores modern perversions and embraces true femininity. We honor mothers, sisters, and daughters for the way they add warmth and light to our world and for how they bring purity and joy to our lives. Because of this, my daughters will not grow up trying to outdo men and face a silly gender war as they are taught to love who they are and the beauty our women create. There is no antagonism between the sexes when both are allowed to fill the natural roles that breed healthy and happy lives.



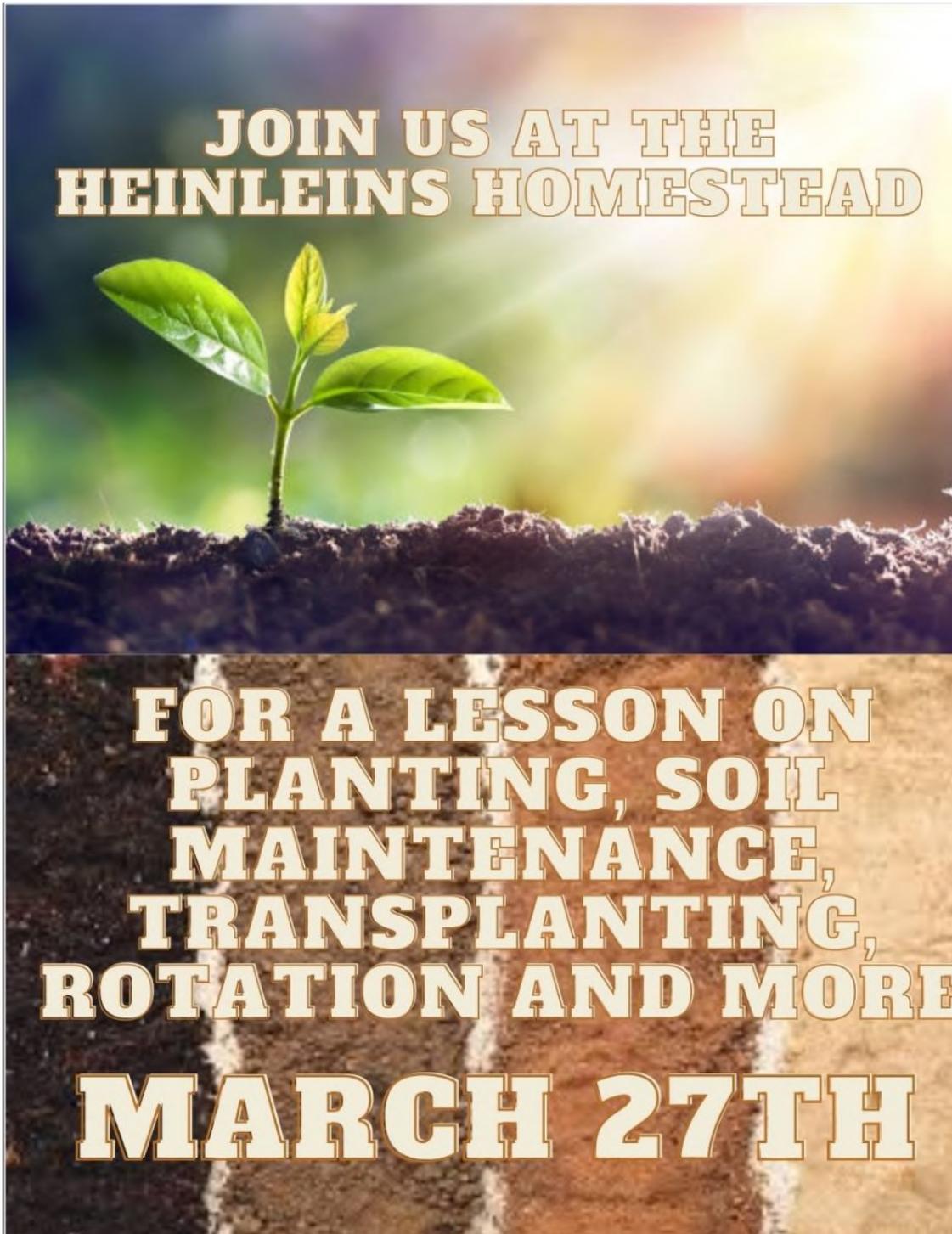
Women, take the time this month to reflect on this and know that you are valued. Men, take the time to make sure you fully grasp the value of your wives and girlfriends. Together we will build a bright future where men can be men and women can be women, working side by side to complement each other's differences.

The beauty of our women folk is irreplaceable and worthy of our appreciation, so take the time to remember that Ash and Elm, while vastly different, were brought into being together and that nothing is more beautiful than our men and women living healthy, happy lives in their natural roles. Let us build our women up this month.

Hail our Women!

*Upcoming Events*





Folkbuilder Tyler Heinlein  
[theinlein@runestone.org](mailto:theinlein@runestone.org)

*Montana's Charming of the Plow*



On February 17th, we held our Charming of the Plow in Helena MT. We gathered together at the Greaney residence to celebrate the coming planting season.



Among the many conversations and children playing, we hailed Gefjun, talked about the meaning of the season, and the kids planted seeds in small pots to germinate and plant after the threat of freezing subsides.

### *Upcoming Events*



On March 29th-31st, we will celebrate Ostara at Elkhorn Hot Springs. Join us as we welcome the return of Spring, and enjoy a soak in the hot springs!

Please contact me for additional information on events.



Folkbuilder Ryan Harlan  
[rharlan@runestone.org](mailto:rharlan@runestone.org)

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## Nevada

### *February Dinner*



We had a great dinner in February! We were joined by the McNallens which is always such a special treat.

### *Upcoming Events*



In March, Dan and his wife will be hosting at their house on the 9th. Please contact Sierra Chapman for details [schapman@runestone.org](mailto:schapman@runestone.org) if you are interested in attending!



Matthew D. Flavel  
 Alsherjargothi, Asatru Folk Assembly  
[mattflavel@runestone.org](mailto:mattflavel@runestone.org)

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## Washington

### *Turkey Identification*



Identification, tracks, and other signs of the turkey's presence for hunting or bird watching purposes:

There are five breeds of wild turkey that can be found in the US and Canada. They are the Merriam's, Eastern, Gould's, Osceola and the Rio Grande. However, only two of these breeds are found in the northern states, the Merriam's and the Eastern.

Turkey feathers are mostly brown with white and black accents and have red-blue

heads. Female turkeys are called hens and can be easily distinguished from the males. The male turkeys are called jakes until they are fully grown and developed for a year, after which they are called toms. Their heads are a brighter red and blue than the hens and their tails are much larger when fanned. They also grow beards. Yes, occasionally a hen can grow a beard, but the males almost always have one. Sometimes they even have two or three! The hens will have more dark feathers on their heads than toms.

The Merriam's Turkey is what most people picture when they think of a turkey, with snow white tips to their tail feathers, with a black bar just under the white tips, and then a brown and black striped pattern under the bar all the way to the quill. Their shoulders and back have a shiny aspect to them where, at the right angle, they can appear to be red, light green, and most commonly blue. They generally have more white and less black on their wings than the other subspecies. They also have the shortest beards and spurs compared to the rest of their cousins. These turkeys can be found in the northern states and into Canada from the pacific coast to North Dakota and into Minnesota.

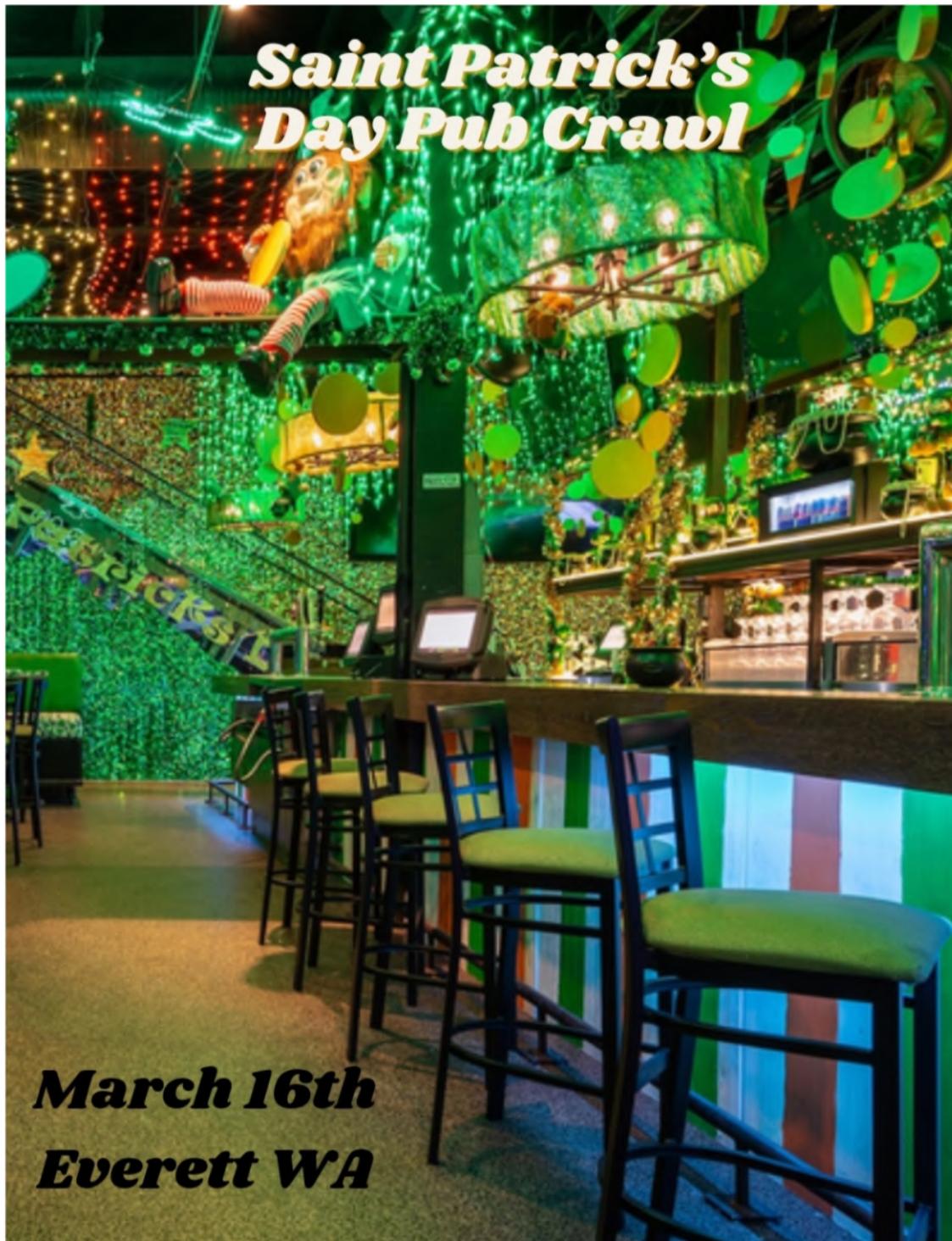
The Eastern Turkey have the darkest coloring in the turkey family. They have chestnut brown on the tips of their tail feathers and almost no white, save for the small bars on their wings. Their tail feathers do have the black bar near the tip and dark brown and black stripes underneath the bar. While they also have a sheen to their feathers, the colors are not as bright as the Rio Grande and vary a little more in color than the Merriam's. They have a lot more red color in their heads than most other turkeys. They have very strong and loud gobbles and the longest beards of all the breeds. The Eastern Turkey can be found in 38 states and in most provinces of Canada. They are most common east of the Mississippi and in New England.

Turkeys leave three pronged tracks, where the toeprints on the left and right are almost perpendicular to the central print. You can often make out the pad of the foot where the three toes meet, though sometimes it blends in. Turkey tracks are hard to spot unless they are in mud, snow, sand, or fine loose dirt. Turkey scat is straight with a curl on the end and is normally brown. They are generally white on the curly end and roughly the size of your thumb. Hens can sometimes leave different shaped droppings than toms that are more round and wet than the longer, dryer male droppings.

Turkey season opens between mid-March and late April and generally goes to the end of May. I will be posting in MeWe every week about turkeys, including my tips and tricks that can help you get a turkey this season. Be sure to get on MeWe if you're not so you don't miss out on this and much more.

Happy Hunting!

*Upcoming Events*



Please join us for a St. Patrick's Day Pub Crawl on March 16th.

# Kettle Falls Day Hike



At the end of March, we'll be going to eastern Washington for a day hike with the Northern Bastion Kindred in the middle of turkey country. This will be a great opportunity to meet up with good Folk and to scout for a spring turkey spot, so be sure to come on out!

Aaron Simbeck



Apprentice Folkbuilder

[asimbeck@runestone.org](mailto:asimbeck@runestone.org)

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## 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](mailto:volunteer@runestone.org) to help us make a difference in our world.

## 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 for nearly a year now, and has been a rousing success! The Ladies of the AFA have knitted, crocheted, and sewn beautiful baby blankets for over 20 of our littlest folk, with more on the way. They've been delivered everywhere from Alaska to Florida, California to Sweden!

If you are a member of the AFA who is expecting a baby, please let your Folkbuilder know so 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, so he can get you in touch with the right people. It's so rewarding to see your handicraft being loved by our little heathens!



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

## 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](mailto: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!

## Photo Donations

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



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

## 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 mental illness like depression or PTSD? Is your baby having a hard time with teething? If you've answered yes at all, reach out to us. Once a month women of the AFA will 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, 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](mailto:EirsBlessings@runestone.org)

## Last Will and Testament

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



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

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

Please make your will **today**.

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

Allen Turnage  
PO Box 16027  
Tallahassee FL, 32317



Witan Allen Turnage  
[aturnage@runestone.org](mailto:aturnage@runestone.org)



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