

AFA UPDATE

A PROJECT OF THE ASATRU FOLK ASSEMBLY

Issue 62

Odin's Day, March 2, 2005

Contact email: info@runestone.com

Please tell your friends about *AFA Update* and suggest they subscribe! They can do so by going to AFA_Bearclaw-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

DOING SOMETHING RIGHT...

Today we're sending out our sixty-second AFA Update, a number that doesn't include our many special notices sent out from time to time! These bulletins have gone out to a growing list of men and women for about three years now. As of this morning, there were just under seven hundred people subscribed - making it one of the biggest Asatru lists around (Maybe the biggest; I haven't looked to compare it with any of the others).

That's great...for starters. But do remember to let your friends know about AFA Updates, so they can join the swelling number of folks getting these messages!

EOSTRE COMING UP!

We'd like to invite our readers to the next major AFA event in Sacramento:

On Saturday, March 19th, we will celebrate the return of life to the world with the waning of winter as we honor the Saxon Goddess of the dawn and of springtime, Ostara (or Eostre, or...Easter!).

This will also be the first publicly-announced performance of the new ritual format we tested last month, at Charming of the Plow. This rite gives the public a sense of what we do, without compromising the special nature of the blessings we conduct among ourselves.

Our new ceremonial structure centers around the offering of three horns - one to the Holy Powers, one to the Ancestors, and one to the Folk. There is plenty of call-and-response, and we start and end with songs. Into this basic format we interject material specific to the holy day in question; for example, last month we blessed gardening tools and buried a specially-baked loaf of bread in the earth.

We will have plenty of activities for the children, of course, as well as thought-provoking presentations for adults. I'll be speaking on the topic of "Rebirth on a Personal and Folk Level."

Anyone living within driving distance of Sacramento who would like to attend these events can contact us at afa@lanset.com to receive more information.

RUNE AND LORE CLASS

Our next open class focusing on the Havamal and on the runes will be held on Friday, March 11th, in Sacramento. We are working our way through the Elder Futhark, and last time experimented with the Rite of Engagement used in preparation for stathagaldr, as well as with the ALU runic formula. This time, we will also stuff Eostre eggs and do some of the mundane preparations for the event on the 19th.

These sessions last about two or three hours. Any interested person in the Sacramento area is invited to contact us for more information.

INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES, ANYONE?

The question of intentional communities for those of us following the Germanic Way is always bubbling away in the background of the Asatru movement. A useful tool for anyone considering such a venture is *Intentional Communities: How to Start Them, and Why* by J. Donald Walters. Mr. Walters founded Ananda, one of the most successful communities (not a commune!) in the United States some thirty years ago.

We have a limited number of copies of this book for sale, though it is not listed on our web site. Mr. Walters addresses the questions of getting started, raising funds, and setting essential rules. He also discusses the balance of privacy and community, of great concern to Asatruar.

The AFA is selling these books for \$10, postage included, to readers of AFA Updates.

NORSE CEMETARY UNCOVERED ON ORKNEY

Recent storms uncovered a Christian, twelfth-century Norse burial ground on Orkney. Around twenty skeletons were exposed on a beach, and archeologists are racing to excavate them before they are washed away by the sea.

For a full article complete with links to documents and media clips, see http://northtonight.grampiantv.co.uk/content/default.asp?page=s1_1_1&newsid=6029

and <http://www.theherald.co.uk/news/34068.html>

IRISH VIKING SETTLEMENT SAVED FOR FUTURE EXCAVATION?

It appears that the Viking settlement discovered in the process of constructing a major motorway near Waterford, south of Dublin, will be spared. Though no official announcement has been made, Minister for the Environment Dick Roche has publicly stated that he intends to issue a preservation order to keep the site from being disturbed by the proposed motorway. A formal announcement is expected soon.

Let's keep our fingers crossed! AFA Updates is proud to have played a part, even if only a small one in cooperation with many other individuals and organizations, in bringing about this happy conclusion. Pat yourself on the back - activism pays!

You can find more information at

<http://www.waterford-today.ie/index.php?id=13458&what=1&issue=240>

and at <http://breakingnews.iol.ie/news/story.asp?j=111183680&p=yyyy84z6x> . This latter article is only a few hours old as these words are being written, and mentions the Tara-Skryne situation.

DONATIONS!

The Asatru Folk Assembly is a 501 c (3) religious organization, and donations to it are tax-deductible.

ODIN LIVES!

The groundbreaking radio program Odin Lives! is broadcast every Thursday night at 8 PM Eastern Time on a frequency of 7.415 MHz. This broadcast is repeated the next Tuesday morning at 12:15 AM on the same frequency. You can learn more by going to their web site at <http://www.odinlives.org>.

IMPORTANT DATES

March 9 - Day of Remembrance for Olvir. Olvir was a Norwegian who organized sacrifices to the Gods in defiance of King Olaf Tryggvason. When Olaf caught him planning rites for the coming of spring, he killed him. Olaf's co-conspirators were murdered, mutilated, exiled, or fined, depending on their degree of complicity. Honor this Asatru martyr by welcoming the Goddess of Spring on Ostara, thus proving that Olaf did not, in the long run, succeed.

March 21 - Ostara, or Easter (Or Eostre, etc.) - These are names of a Germanic Goddess whose name was carried over into the Christian calendar. Praise her on this day for the springtime and the dawn, and revel in the rebirth of life at winter's end. Celebrate her day with bunnies, eggs, and the other pre-Christian symbols that characterize this day. Greet her at a sunrise service with outstretched arms.

Hail the AFA!

Stephen A. McNallen
Asatru Folk Assembly

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND WHO SHOULD BE GETTING THESE UPDATES?
Please refer him or her to AFA_Bearclaw-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE at <http://www.runestone.org>.