

AFA BEARCLAW...

A PROJECT OF THE ASATRU FOLK ASSEMBLY

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AFA AT SACRAMENTO PAGAN PRIDE

The Asatru Folk Assembly made its presence felt at the 2003 Sacramento Pagan Pride Harvest Festival, thanks largely to the energy and dedication of supporter Ed Broneske.

We shared a booth with Hammers of the Gods, a company run by our friend Thom Staser (<http://www.hammersofthegods.org>). I think Thom was pleased by the interest people showed in his solid gold and silver Thor's hammers as well as his other items, and I was certainly satisfied with the brisk interest in Asatru and the AFA. Many more people signed up for AFA information than we had anticipated, and the quality of men and women expressing an interest in our ancestral Way was far above average.

Ed spoke on the fundamentals of Asatru on Saturday afternoon, and again on Sunday. Sheila elaborated on some of Ed's themes and expanded on the role of women and the Goddesses in Asatru. I talked about our responsibilities to others and to ourselves, relating these duties to right conduct and to the Nine Noble Virtues.

Adding energy and delight to the entire proceedings was Joan Broneske. Her "gourdesses" - Goddesses made by painting figures on gourds - were a hit. She also built a yurt from scratch (!) and used it to house a collection of altar displays from various pagan traditions. She and Ed make a very dynamic team, as anyone who has met them can testify.

In short, we met a lot of good people, renewed friendships from the past, and spread our message to scores or even hundreds of people. When we finally got home on Sunday evening, we were tired - but elated that we had accomplished such good work for the Holy Powers and for our ancestral heritage.

ANGLO-SAXON "WARRIOR QUEEN" UNEARTHED

A 1,500 year-old Anglo-Saxon “warrior queen” has been found a mere two feet under the soil of a field in Lincolnshire, England.

She was an imposing woman in life; at a height of six feet, she would have towered over many of her contemporaries. In her hand were the remains of a wooden shield, and a dagger lay at her side. Her feet were tied together (Perhaps to keep the dead from walking?) and she wore a fine amber necklace, reminding us of the legendary Brisingamen worn by Freya, Goddess of love and fertility.

A male companion was buried with his hand extended over a beaker in the grave.

British television’s Channel Four sponsored the excavation under the auspices of its “Time Team” program, and a broadcast is due next spring.

If we had known of this remarkable woman’s grave last weekend, Sheila might have referred to her when telling us about women in Asatru. Here was an obviously strong woman, buried with respect and with a necklace reminiscent of a correspondingly strong Goddess, our own beloved Freya.

Here is a link to the complete story:

[Http://www.thisislincolnshire.co.uk/displayNode.jsp?nodeId=57711&command=displayContent&sourceNode=57238&contentPK=7109460](http://www.thisislincolnshire.co.uk/displayNode.jsp?nodeId=57711&command=displayContent&sourceNode=57238&contentPK=7109460)

LIVING THE RIGHT WAY: DUTIES AND BLESSINGS

Here’s a quick summary of my presentation at Pagan Pride...

In our rather narcissistic popular culture, we are not encouraged to remember that we have responsibilities to others - and that, in fact, much of “right conduct” revolves around meeting those responsibilities.

We owe certain things to the Holy Powers, who expect to be remembered and honored. They also expect us to evolve, to become more like them (What they don’t need is our slavish submission).

We also owe remembrance and honor to the ancestors. What’s more, it is our duty to continue the bloodline and to preserve the honor of the family name.

Our living kin, ranging from our immediate family to, ultimately, all men and women of European heritage (our “Greater Family”), claim our loyalty.

Those who come after us deserve a chance to know life in this wonderful world, and to bear a family name of good repute.

Finally, there are things we owe ourselves: Eternally expanding wisdom, might, pleasure and joy!

When we meet these responsibilities, good things happen to us...not because someone "Up There" is rewarding us for "being nice" but because of laws of cause and effect. Doing our duty brings us blessings.

NINE NOBLE VIRTUES

Just as a reminder...these traits will help you meet your responsibilities, reap the benefits, and work your way up the ladder of spiritual evolution -

Courage

Truth

Honor

Fidelity

Discipline

Hospitality

Industriousness

Self-reliance

Perseverance

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND WHO SHOULD BE GETTING THESE UPDATES? HE OR SHE CAN SUBSCRIBE AT AFA_Bearclaw-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

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

NEXT UPDATE: OCTOBER 1

That's all for now -

Hail the Holy Powers and the Ancestors!

Stephen A. McNallen
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