



the ASKELADDEN news

Sons of Norway • Askeladden Lodge 5-610 • Kalamazoo, Michigan

A Congenial Society of Sons, Daughters, and Friends of Norway

facebook.com/AskeladdenLodge

Aug/Sep 2020

8/9-20

Meetings: cancelled until further notice due to State of Emergency

Sept - April: 2nd Sundays, 2 p.m.

May only: 3rd Sunday, 2 p.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church

504 S. Westnedge Ave

Kalamazoo, MI

Officers:

President: Gail Thompson-Hadley

(269) 845-2265

ghadley@iusb.edu

Secretary/Acting Membership

Secretary/Newsletter Publisher:

Judy Hande-Skutnick

(269) 903-8386

jhandeskutnick@gmail.com

Vice-President/Editor:

Joan O'Bryan

507 Clinton Avenue

Kalamazoo, MI 49001

(269) 383-6802

joan.obryan@wmich.edu

Treasurer: Curtis Cleveland

(269) 381-4531

cacleve82@att.net

Cultural Director:

Holly Jensen

1453 Spruce Drive

Kalamazoo MI 49008

(269) 385-3693

hollyjensen@yahoo.com

Affiliation:

Sons of Norway International

1455 West Lake St.

Minneapolis, MN 55408

Andy Johnsen, President,

Sons of Norway District 5;

Director, District 5 Zone 6

aijohnsen@att.net

Benefits Counselor:

Greg Ragan

1 (800) 442-4146

gregragan@aol.com

Lodge contact info:

Askeladden.Lodge@gmail.com

(269) 350-3330

We are invited to join Sonja Henie Sons of Norway Lodge Sunday, September 13 2 - 2:40 p.m. (via Zoom) Getting Acquainted

Our September meeting is our first since the global pandemic was declared. Sonja Henie will host a Zoom meeting for all of us to join. Sognefjord Lodge from Muskegon is also invited to join in. This will be a great opportunity to participate in a Zoom meeting and get to know each other all a little better. The speaker originally scheduled has canceled and will hopefully do her presentation in the future.

Don't let the technology scare you away. Anyone with a computer or smart phone can participate. Here is the information for joining the Zoom on Sept 13:

Join Zoom Meeting from any browser (use this if you are using a laptop or other device with access to your email):

[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75247442844?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75247442844?pwd=ZW0MzQ4ZEeLM3hhbVkyWGwzNjQyQT09)

[pwd=ZW0MzQ4ZEeLM3hhbVkyWGwzNjQyQT09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75247442844?pwd=ZW0MzQ4ZEeLM3hhbVkyWGwzNjQyQT09)

You may need this alternative info if joining by phone or other device with cell connection:

Meeting ID: 752 4744 2844

Passcode in case needed: **091320** (Note that it's the date of the event)

If you have any questions or need a lesson on using Zoom, contact Judy Olson at elansolson@gmail.com

Because Zoom meetings are limited to only 40 minutes, it is important to join the online meeting on time. The meeting will automatically end at 2:40 pm. Whether you use a computer, a smart phone, or a tablet, you will need to download the Zoom application if you don't have a Zoom account or have never used Zoom before. Please take time to do so now if needed. We look forward to having our distant members be able to join us for some Zoom meetings during this special time. These meetings count as qualifying events for Askeladden members to enter the Norway Trip drawing or the Senior option.

ASKELOADDEN NEWS

2019 Financial Statements of the Sons of Norway

Curtis Cleveland, Lodge Treasurer

The 2019 Financial Statements of the Sons of Norway were published in the June 2020 issue of the Viking, as part of the 2019 Annual Report. This issue had the “Candy Crush” cover story.

For the fiscal year ending December 31, 2019, the Sons of Norway had a net loss in its operations.

The Balance Sheet showed assets of \$350 Million as of December 2019. For the 12 months of operations ending December 31, 2019, the revenue was \$30 Million with a net loss of \$3 Million.

In 2017, the Sons of Norway had a net loss.

Obviously, a net loss is not good for any organization. Despite the net loss, CEO Christopher Pinkerton was optimistic for the future, citing the increase in the number of insurance agents hired in 2019, increasing from 83 to 473, an incredible increase.

All members of the Sons of Norway, including Askeladden Lodge, must be mindful that we are a fraternal benefit society, with both a business (insurance) element and a social element. Members should be aware of the financial products available, such as the life insurance and the annuities; and, if able, consider purchasing one of the products.

The 2019 Annual Report did not include a membership report, however, based on the most recent figures that I have seen, the Sons of Norway has about 50,000 members and about 360 local lodges.

Membership News Celebrating Margery Selden's Milestone Birthday

Margery Selden has always very been proud of her 100% Norwegian heritage. We are so fortunate to count her as a member of our lodge.

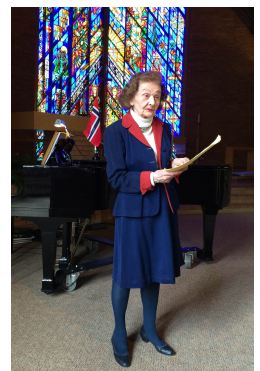
Margery has spent countless hours leading us with her music in sing-alongs before lodge events, playing the anthems for our meetings and the Norwegian table prayer for our regular shared meals throughout the years. She has educated us on many subjects – not just the musicians Ole Bull and Grieg. She has performed many, many special concerts for us. For all of that, and her many other lodge responsibilities, we are forever grateful.

We will miss being able to include her beautiful hymn in our program this month, as has become our September tradition, but look forward to the next time.

As hard as it is to believe, Margery turned 95 this month. The entire lodge wishes this classy lady a **Very Happy Birthday!** We can't wait until we get to be with you again in person, Margery.



Margery Selden honored at Askeladden 25th Anniversary celebration



Margery presents the program for the 2014 Bicentennial Syttende Mai celebration

Membership News Welcome New Members!

We extend a warm welcome to our newest members. **Gwen Meredith** is the sister of Lodge President Gail Thompson-Hadley. Gwen and her husband Brian have enjoyed hosting a Norwegian high school exchange student with whom they remain in touch. They hope to visit her and her young family in Norway in the future.

Astrid Willis recently transferred to our lodge after she moved to Marshall from California. Astrid was born in Norway and immigrated here in 1959. She had been an exchange student. Astrid still speaks fluent Norwegian and she and her family have been back many times to visit Norway – her oldest son was born in Norway. We wish you a very special birthday, Astrid. We look forward to meeting both Gwen and Astrid!

Jean Willinger celebrated her 95th birthday in May. She is pictured here (left) at our Ole & Lena program in 2014. Jean celebrated Norway's special Bicentennial Syttende Mai with us in May 2014 (right).

Curtis Cleveland and Astrid Willis are celebrating their 80th birthdays in August and September, respectively. 2020 is a banner year for milestone birthdays!



Gratulerer med dagen August Birthdays

Jean Darling	Daniel Renoos
Joyce Allworth	Abigail Renoos
Curtis A Cleveland	David Code
Svein Thoen	Joyce Hare
Kate Phillips	Catherine Hande

Gratulerer med dagen September Birthdays

Evelyn Iversen	Elizabeth Sherman	Mai Elise Code
Lucie Darling	Elaine Erickson	Astrid Code
Margery Selden	Richard Wesenberg	Earnie Best
Holly Jensen	Luke O'Bryan	Beverly Osborn
Gwen Meredith	Larry Skutnick	Astrid Willis

ASKELADDEN NEWS

Fra Presidenten

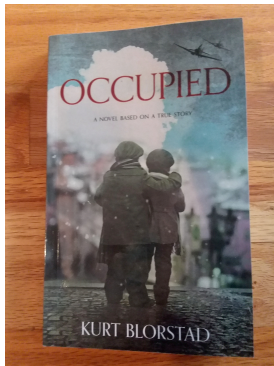
WWII German Ships and Outboard Motors

As the Covid-19 pandemic continues, I don't expect our Sons of Norway lodge to meet in person anytime soon, but we can be thankful for alternate means of communication from simple telephone calls to our print and email newsletter to Sonja Henie's upcoming Zoom program we have been invited to join September 13th at 2 p.m.

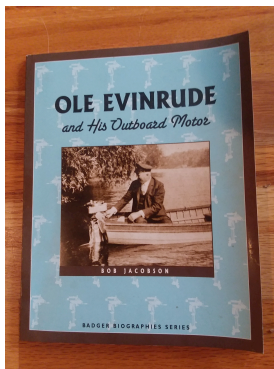
My family time this summer was spent Norwegian-style in the outdoors. Our three children and their families live too far from SW Michigan to stop by for an afternoon backyard BBQ but they did manage a safe visit home for a week in July from Wisconsin, Ohio, and Pennsylvania by renting RV's to camp out in my driveway. We ate our meals on the front deck, the six young grandchildren had fun playing together outside and swimming at Warren Dunes, and we all remained free from the virus.

I found two Norwegian books to read this summer during my abundant home alone time. *Occupied* by Kurt Blorstad is based on the author's journals his father kept as a young boy in Norway from 1936 to 1945. Young Trygve Blorstad spends most of the German occupation of Norway with his 2 brothers, sister, mother and grandmother, Bestemor. His grandfather, Bestefar, had died young of last century's pandemic, the Spanish flu.

The author provides vivid descriptions of their daily life in rural Norway with the strong family connections, hard work, hardships, and very real dangers from the Nazi soldiers. When one of the local coast watchers disappears, young Trygve is secretly recruited as a replacement. He uses a telescope hidden high on the mountainside to observe German boats, ships, and even a submarine which he reports to a local underground contact. At age 70 on a return trip to Norway, he finally reveals his wartime secret work to his son, the book's author. Find more information at Kurtblorstad.com.



Those of us who grew up on Michigan lakes take outboard motors for granted but it was Norwegian immigrant, Ole Evinrude, who imagined how much faster he could travel in a boat with a motor powering it rather than his arms on oars. The 67-page biography, *Ole Evinrude and His Outboard Motor*, reports that 5-year-old Ole spent most of his time crossing the Atlantic from Oslo in 1882 in the ship's engine room. On their Wisconsin farm, Ole was more interested in tinkering with tools than farming. He learned about math, engineering, and mechanics from magazines, and built his first boat at age 15. The story, true or maybe not, is that he was motivated to build his first boat motor to get 2½ miles across the lake with ice cream before it melted for his future wife and business partner, Bess. Ole apprenticed as a machinist and went on to design and manufacture boat motors. His business was initially boosted by contracts for Scandinavian fishing boats. He continued to innovate with lighter weight aluminum motors and was a major entrepreneur.



Gail Thompson Hadley

Remembering Iona Robbins

An Askeladden Charter member, Iona Robbins maintained her Sons of Norway membership faithfully for over 30 years. Although unable to attend meetings in recent times, she did keep up through our newsletter. And recently, she struck up some conversations with Jean Darling who was diligently working on our 30th Anniversary Celebration in the summer of 2018. Jean thoroughly enjoyed their conversations and she was excited to get to know such a special lady as Iona.

Last year Iona surprised our lodge with an extremely generous gift. We were in discussions about possible special cultural programs we would now be able to afford when the global pandemic interrupted our plans. The talks are on hold for the moment, but we look forward to a time when we can truly honor Iona's memory with a special cultural program that will positively impact our community.

Iona passed away on August 30, 2020, at the age of 96. There were many kind words said about Iona from people in her community. A real-life Rosie the Riveter during the war, Iona had been involved in many charitable works after she settled in Colon. Our hearts go out to Iona's daughters, Jackie and Vicki. Our lodge has made a donation in Iona's name to the Colon Community Historical Society. Iona's family wrote a beautiful tribute to their mother. It is well worth reading. You can find it posted here:

<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/name/iona-robbins-obituary?pid=196728928>



District 5 News

Mike Palecek, District 5 Treasurer

Joan O'Bryan – Nordic-American Photographer

In the 2020 District 5 Scandinavian Photo Contest, Joan O'Bryan was picked as a top photographer throughout Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Tennessee for submitting an excellent view of Nordic life. Joan's winning photo "Vette and Sunniva" will be included in a playing card deck from Sons of Norway District 5.

This is what Joan's playing card will look like.

You can view all 331 photos entered in the contest here:

<http://www.sonsofnorway5.com/galleries/details/27-District-5-Scandinavian-Photo-Contest>

You can order the Scandinavian Photo Contest playing cards here (or contact Joan O'Bryan):

http://www.sonsofnorway5.com/financial/district_5_merchandise.php






SONS of NORWAY

Celebrating **125** Years

Askeladden Lodge
507 Clinton Ave
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

JUNI/JULI 2020 KALENDER

Norway Trip Drawing Deadline Reminder: Under our lodge's Norway trip drawing rules, if you want to be considered for the October 2020 drawing, you must submit your request in writing (or e-mail) to the Membership Secretary by the September meeting. Amongst other membership requirements, you must have attended and signed in to at least three Lodge meetings or other qualifying events in the previous year to be eligible for the drawing (up to and including the September meeting.) Acting Membership Secretary Judy Hande-Skutnick's complete contact info is found on page 1 of every newsletter.

-  • august 19 - HRH Crown Princess Mette-Marit birthday (1973)
- september 7 - Labor Day
- **september 13 - Askeladden Monthly Meeting. Joint event with Sonja Henie Lodge 2 p.m. via Zoom**
- september 22 - Princess Märtha Louise, 1971 (no longer a flag day in Norway)
- september 30 - last day to submit *Askeladden News* articles.

NOTICE: All Askeladden in-person local events are cancelled until further notice.

Askeladden Lodge Library

www.librarything.com/catalog/Sonsofnorway

Contact Curtis Cleveland with questions or to reserve resources.



The mission of Sons of Norway is to promote and to preserve the heritage and culture of Norway, to celebrate our relationship with other Nordic Countries, and to provide quality insurance and financial products to our members.