



the ASKELADDEN news

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

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

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December 2019

12-19

Meetings:

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

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

Trinity Lutheran Church

504 S. Westnedge Ave

Kalamazoo, MI

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Join us for a Sankta Lucia Festival

with music by

Laura Betinis Healy and Anthony Healy

Saturday, December 14, 2019 at 3:00 pm



Trinity Lutheran Church
504 South Westnedge Avenue
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Presented by the
VASA Swedish-American Lodge
and the
Sons of Norway Lodge

ASKELOADDEN NEWS

Sankta Lucia Festival details

Curtis Cleveland, Cultural Director and Holly Jensen, Vasa Liaison

Askeladden Lodge members are invited to join with the members of the Swedish Vasa Lodge as both groups celebrate the Sankta Lucia Festival on Saturday, December 14, 3 p.m., at the Trinity Lutheran Church, downtown Kalamazoo.

Luciadagen marks the beginning of the Christmas holidays in Sweden and Norway. As always, the program stars our local cast of children as Lucia and her attendants. This year's program of traditional and contemporary carols will feature local vocalist, Laura Betinis Healy, and her pianist and husband, Anthony Healy. Following the program enjoy glögg and a smörgåsbord of Nordic treats.

The Santa Lucia Festival begins at 3 p.m. in the Sanctuary of the church. Following the pageant, which will last 45 minutes, members will assemble in Fellowship Hall (basement) for the Christmas party. Refreshments will be served.

Members are encouraged to bring Christmas foods (cookies, cakes, fruit, breads or rolls) to share.

Norwegian foods (lefse, Julekake, Kransekake, Kringle, and Rosettes) would be appreciated.

Please invite your friends, neighbors, and family to attend.

If you ordered 2020 Norwegian Calendars from Inger Thoen, be sure to bring exact cash or a check for her. She will bring the calendars. The Splendor of Norway calendars are \$10.15 and the Rosemale (Viking Verse) are \$8.50.

No business session is scheduled for this meeting.

Food Drive and Food Bank Campaign

Curtis Cleveland

At the November meeting we held a Food Drive and a Food Bank Campaign. We did very well with the Food Drive, not so well with the Food Bank Campaign.

Members donated 72 items/83 pounds of nonperishable food which was given to the Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes. About ten members donated a grocery bag of nonperishable food for this Food Drive. Thank you to all who participated.

Four members contributed a total \$80 to the Food Bank Campaign. This money was distributed as follows: \$55 to the Kalamazoo

Loaves & Fishes and \$25 to the Food Bank of South Central Michigan. This amount was lower than the amounts raised in previous drives. However, thanks to all who participated.

Recap of the November Lodge Meeting

Curtis Cleveland, Cultural Director

At the November Lodge meeting, we had a large turnout, no doubt so members could attend the Remembrance Service for Roger Drong who died unexpectedly.

The meeting started with the cultural program, a 45-minute lecture by Dave Nordin, a Trustee of the Friends of the Viking Ship (FOVS) of the greater Chicago area. Mr. Nordin spoke about a Viking ship called the "Viking."

After the cultural program, members enjoyed a lunch featuring several cheeses, fruits, crackers, and cookies.

The Remembrance Service for Roger Drong, arranged by Holly Jensen, lasted 30 minutes. About ten persons spoke about their relationships with Roger. Interestingly, many of persons who spoke talked about how Roger helped them with their genealogy. At the end of the Remembrance Service, Roger's sister and nephew from Minnesota spoke to the group. Both said Roger cared much about his family.

At the business session, led by Lodge President Curt Osborn, the lodge elected the 2020 officers and directors and approved the 2020 budget.

The 2020 Board of Directors will consist of Gail Hadley as president, Joan O'Bryan as vice president, Judy Hande-Skutnick as membership secretary, Curtis Cleveland as treasurer, and Holly Jensen as cultural director. The position of secretary remains vacant. The complete list of the 2020 officers and directors will be printed in the January 2020 issue of the newsletter.

After discussion, the lodge voted to attend the Vasa Sankta Lucia Festival on Saturday, December 14, for the December lodge meeting instead of the planned meeting on the second Sunday.

After the Lodge meeting, the Board of Directors met. The board passed no motions.

The following members were present at this meeting: Earnie Best, Esther Ann Brown, Curtis Cleveland, Dennis and Jean Darling, Judy Hande-Skutnick, Joyce Hare, Barb Heffner, Arden Hetletvedt, Holly Jensen, Teri Koretsky, Elizabeth, James, and Alice Kraatz, Karen Kunze, Curt Osborn, Margery Selden, Gail Hadley, and Jean Willinger.

This was a joint meeting with the Swedish Vasa Lodge, organized by Vasa. The lecture on the "1893 Viking Ship" was open to the public. About 75 people were present for the lecture.



Askeladden Lodge at the November 16 Holiday Parade
photo courtesy of Holly Jensen

Gratulerer med dagen!

Fødselsdag Hilsener

December Birthdays

Tore Ramstad

Sandra J. Santas

Askeladden Lodge Library

www.librarything.com/catalog/SonsofNorway

Contact Curtis Cleveland with questions or to reserve resources.

ASKELOADDEN NEWS

Roger Francis Drong April 22, 1939 - October 31, 2019

Roger F. Drong, 80, passed away in Kalamazoo on October 31 from an apparent heart attack, while recovering from pneumonia.

Born on April 22, 1939, in Hibbing, Minnesota, he was the son of the late Frank P. and Edith Cecile (*Rosenquist*) Drong. Roger is survived by his sister and brother-in-law Shirley and Orvin Melaas, of Lindström, Minnesota and four nieces and nephews.

Roger was an active and key member of Askeladden Lodge since 2005, serving in various positions, but always on the Cultural Committee, which he chaired several years. Roger was a devoted and spirited member of the local Vasa Swedish-American lodge since 1995. He acted as a de facto liaison between Vasa and Sons of Norway year after year, bringing us details of the Swedish Midsommarfest and coordinating our participation in the Fish Boil. Each summer, he enjoyed the joint Vasa/Sons of Norway Ice Cream Socials. Roger was a friend to many in both local groups. In addition, he was a long-time member of the Finnish-American Society of West Central Michigan in Coopersville (an affiliate of Finlandia Foundation National) and he also belonged to a private local Scandinavian Club.

Roger was our “Scandinavian Genealogy” expert. No lesser description would be accurate. He led multiple workshops for our lodge over the years. Once, we nearly missed the opportunity of his tutelage when we arrived at the Portage Senior Center, only to find it locked up tight. The near-disaster was averted when we were able to shift the workshop to an open classroom at the Portage Public Library next door. Over the years, Roger generously used his expert knowledge to assist individual members of the lodge in tracking their personal family history.

Roger was an extremely reliable team member. He always showed up early and never missed a meeting unless he was out of town on a genealogy/cultural trip or volunteering for his passion, The Gilmore Keyboard Festival. In addition to volunteering, Roger donated to the Gilmore for more than 20 years. Roger was routinely the first person on site after we moved our meetings to Trinity Lutheran Church. As our Lodge Librarian, he would move over 200 Nordic books out on display before every event and then collect and put them all away afterward.

Roger was known for providing his “spiked” glögg at Vasa holidays — or glögg, as it’s known at Norwegian holidays. He was also our expert Æbleskiver maker. He was a master of all things Nordic, be it Finnish, Swedish, Danish or Norwegian, especially if the topic involved any form of

art. The cultural programs he researched and presented were always fascinating.

There was a heart-felt Remembrance for Roger at the Viking Ship Restoration Program on November 10 at Trinity Lutheran Church. There were so many testimonials from all the people whose lives Roger had touched, that the ceremony went on for quite a while. Roger’s sister and nephew were here from Minnesota to witness all the heart-felt stories about her older brother, many of which came from people grateful for Roger’s help with their journeys into tracking their genealogy. The various groups that Roger regularly



Roger at the Ice Cream Social at the Jensen residence in August 2017.

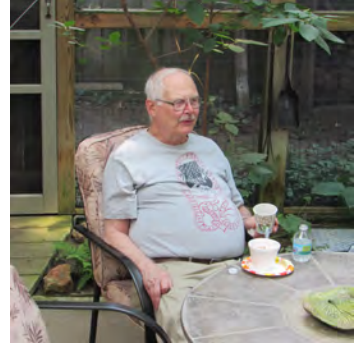
participated in were well-represented with members who came to the November program just for Roger’s memorial ceremony. The Fellowship Hall was filled with about 75 people in attendance.

Roger earned a BS in Chemistry from Michigan Technological University, Houghton, MI in 1961. He later earned an M.S. in Biochemistry, at the University of Minnesota, in St. Paul, MN in 1976. Roger joined the Upjohn Company in September 1963 and again in 1995. He retired from the Pfizer Corp. in 2005 as a Research Biochemist (Level III) in Central Nervous System Genomics Research.

Askeladden Lodge is making a donation to the District 5 Masse Moro Norwegian Heritage Camp in Roger’s memory.

It goes without saying that Roger is missed by so many. We have a huge hole in our hearts, remembering this gentle soul.

Remembering Roger Drong





5749 Stadium Drive # 245
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

DECEMBER KALENDER

Mark your calendars:

~~ Our Christmas event will be celebrated on SATURDAY, December 14 ~~



- desember 6 - Finland Independence Day - celebrating Finland's independence from the Russian Republic in 1917
- desember 10 - Nobel Peace Prize awarded in Oslo
Live stream available on YouTube. www.nobelprize.org
- desember 13 - Luciadagen - St. Lucia Day
- **desember 14** - **Askeladden Lodge joins VASA for St. Lucia Festival 3 p.m.** in the main sanctuary of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church 504 S. Westnedge
- desember 23 - Lille julaften - Little Christmas Eve
- desember 24 - Julaften - Christmas Eve
- desember 25 - Juledag - Christmas Day
- desember 31 - Nyttårsaften - New Year's Eve
- desember 31 - last day to submit *Askeladden News* articles, earlier is appreciated.



God Jul!



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.