



**SONS of  
NORWAY**

March 2019

# Norsemen of the Lakes

## Lodge 5/650

Walworth County, Wisconsin

### Fra Presidenten

Greetings, fellow Norwegian Americans:

What a crazy winter we have had. I'm sure you are looking forward to spring as much as I am. I am sorry I was not in touch early in Feb. I was in Arizona for four weeks with my parents. But fortunately I was able to return for the training February 16th. Marra Andreas and I attended the training for new officers in Madison. We learned quite a lot and hope we can put all the good information to work for our lodge. I plan to have a training for lodge officers in the next couple of months.

Our next meeting will be at Sherwood Lodge in Williams Bay March 12th where we will enjoy a potluck dinner and watch a movie in their very comfortable theatre. The movie will be The Stavig Letters. This is a recounting of the letters between two brothers, one who stayed in Norway and one who immigrated to Sisseton, SD during the great immigration. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did. I know we will all have a great time.

Corlene Bartels

### FINDING YOUR SCANDINAVIAN ROOTS

Norsk Høstfest is held annually in the fall at the N.D. State Fair Center on the North Dakota State Fairgrounds in Minot, N.D. This year it will be held Sept. 25-28. The festival features world-class entertainment, authentic Scandinavian cuisine, Scandinavian culture on display, handcrafted Norsk merchandise, plus a fine dining establishment lead by guest chefs.

Norsk Høstfest celebrates Scandinavian culture and heritage of the five Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. Each nation is represented in one of the halls in which (cont. on page 5).



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Bill Kaul	2/18
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### KALENDAR

- March. 12 meeting at 6 p.m. at Sherwood Lodge- pot luck and movie: The Stavig Letters
- April 9th meeting at Advia Credit Union, Elkhorn
- June 15th Heg Memorial Park: Lodge & Zone 4 Meeting
- Aug.18th outing to Stoughton for Coffee Break Festival, Livsreise and tour of notable sites.



Book Review: 1222, by Anne Holt

This is the eighth edition of Holt's series featuring Norwegian Police Inspector Hanne Wilhelmsen, but was the first to be translated into English. When I first read *1222*, I felt it was a difficult introduction to Wilhelmsen's character. It comes at the end of her career when she is confined to a wheelchair after a shootout. There's lots of nods to her back-story, but with just enough explanation to keep the newbie reader on board.

So, a locked-room mystery set on a train? Not quite. In the opening scene of the book, Wilhelmsen is jolted awake as the train comes off the rails during a freak snowstorm. Wilhelmsen and her fellow passengers are rescued and taken in to the nearby Finse 1222 hotel, but as the storm continues the hotel is soon cut off from the outside world. We learn about the other passengers through Wilhelmsen's point of view, which is limited to the lower floors due to her disability.

She tries to keep herself to herself, but after a nighttime murder and rumors of a top-secret passenger being kept under armed guard in the hotel, she is soon drawn right into the center of the mystery whether she likes it or not.

By the end of the book you'll feel as if you know the hotel intimately and there's plenty of nice touches such as the rivalry between Valerenga and Brann supporters that gives the story a believable tone.

A lot happens within the walls of the hotel, yet the pace is slow, perhaps too slow for some. It's a thinking person's book, especially suitable for fans of Agatha Christie. If that's your bag, you'll really enjoy *1222*.

Probably best you don't read it on the train, though...

## FAREWELL TO THE NATIONAL GALLERY

An over 130-year-old museum thanks its old home. Now 100,000 works of art will be moved from the venerable National Gallery building in Oslo to its new building at Aker Brygge.

Since 1882, the state has shown art in that building, which is now to be emptied.

"A total of over 100,000 works of art will be moved. It's a bit of a job. There is talk of fragile paperwork, paintings, glass and heavy sculptures that weigh several tons. So this won't be a normal relocation where you pack clothes and books into cardboard boxes and drive off," the National Museum's Communications Director Eirik Kydland tells NTB.

He points out that security levels are also high, as many of

the works are worth hundreds of millions of kroner. The best known is perhaps the National Gallery's version of Edvard Munch's "Scream," but the museum also houses a number of other Munch works, paintings by well-known international artists, and Norwegian national treasures such as "The Bride in Hardanger" and "Winter night in Rondane."

During 2019, work begins on moving the paintings into the new building at Vestbanehallen near Aker Brygge. The building, which opens in 2020, will have almost 140,000 square feet of exhibition space. The last day at the former National Gallery was Jan. 13.

## THE BEST NORWEGIAN MOVIES

Norwegian cinema's star is on the rise of late, thanks to a number of critically acclaimed titles finding an audience outside of Scandinavia.

Here, we take a look at some of the best-loved films of Norway from the 21<sup>st</sup> century, alongside a couple of gems from back in the day.

Many of these are available on Netflix or other streaming services. As the line-up of these vary by region and country, it's not possible for us to track what's on and where. But a simple search on your streaming service of choice will reveal all.

Ready? Check out this website for recommendations and grab some popcorn.

<https://www.lifeinnorway.net/best-norwegian-movies/>

## AQUAVITT: THE SCANDINAVIAN SPIRIT

New Nordic cuisine has taken the trendy restaurants of the world by storm in recent years, so more and more people are being introduced to the Scandinavian spirit. The name is derived from the Latin *aqua vitae*, or water of life.

Aquavit is a flavored spirit that has been produced in the Nordic countries since the 15th century.

Aquavit's distinctive flavor comes from the spices and herbs, which can vary, but the main flavoring must be from caraway or dill in order to be termed aquavit, according to European Union rules.

Aquavit is actually made just like gin, but with caraway instead of juniper berries. So it's essentially just a heavily spiced vodka. The best word to sum up its taste is savory, but the flavor can vary significantly depending on whether it is aged (more on that later) and whether it is served chilled or at room temperature.

While often compared to gin, the spirit has a more immediate flavor profile because of the simplicity of the caraway/dill, meaning it's a drink that you can easily detect when mixed with others.

Much like vodka, aquavit is a distilled spirit made from either grain or potatoes. Typically Norwegian aquavit is made from potatoes, while the Swedish and Danish varieties are distilled from grain.

After the distillation process, it is flavored with herbs and spices, in the same way that gin is flavored with juniper. Common additions are caraway, dill, cardamom, cumin, anise, fennel, and lemon or orange peel.

The precise recipes and flavors differ between brands, but caraway is the dominant flavor. Most bottles of aquavit have a yellow/golden color, which can vary significantly between brands.

Typically, a darker color suggests an older age or the use of young casks, though artificial caramel coloring is used in some brands.

While Danish and Swedish brands are typically light in color, some even clear, most Norwegian brands are matured in oak casks.

This process lasts for at least a year and for some even as long as twelve years, which gives Norwegian aquavit its distinctive golden hue.

Norwegians will tell you that their variety has the most distinctive character and strongest flavor. It's up to you to determine if you think that's a good thing or not!



### VALKYRIES

A stirring rendition of Wagner's Ride of the Valkyries has adorned many a film to good effect but what are the Valkyries?

They're Odin's female helping spirits who are depicted as elegant maidens ferrying the slain to Valhalla. A good story but, as always, it's not quite that simple!

It's certainly true that the Valkyries carried the slain to battle but their name – Choosers of the Slain – hints at their more sinister side. They don't simply choose who gets in to Valhalla, they also choose who lives and dies in battle!



### DRAUGR

What mythology is complete without some kind of zombie story? In Norse mythology these are the Draugr.

Draugr are undead beings, with superhuman strength and the stench of decay. They can also increase their size at will and shape-shift into other creatures.

Perhaps most importantly, they can swim through solid rock, which perhaps explains how they exit their tombs.

They spend their days protecting the treasures in their graves and crushing people who attempt to rob them, or who wronged them in their lives.

## MYTHOLOGY AND LEGENDS OF THE NORWEGIAN FOREST CAT

Legends are stories, with an element of truth embedded in them, passed down from generation to generation that tell of long ago traditions, events, and beliefs. Myths, on the other hand, are fictitious accounts of people, places, or events with no basis in truth, but they do give us insight into superstitions, and beliefs of people who lived in a much different world. The mystical Norwegian Forest Cat found a place in Viking legends and Norse mythology.



The Norwegian Forest Cat (NFC or Wegie) originated in the forests of Norway around 4,000 years ago, and is considered one of the oldest cat breeds. In their native land, they are called Norsk Skogkatt, which means “forest cat.” The Wegie was named the official cat of Norway by King Olaf I. **These lynx-like cats evolved on their own through natural selection**, adapting to the harsh Scandinavian climate by developing a long thick double coat, water resistant outer coat, lion-like mane, long bushy tail, and tufted ears to protect them from the wind, snow, and cold. Large snowshoe-like round feet with heavy hair between her toes, a layer of fur on the bottom of her feet, long claws, and hind legs longer than the front legs helped her navigate uneven terrain, climb trees and scale rocky inclines. The Wegie is the only cat breed capable of climbing down a tree head-first because of her muscular legs. Mother Nature knew what she was doing when she created the Norsk Skogkatt.

According to legend, enchanted felines roamed the **Scandinavian** forests for centuries, disappearing and re-emerging at will. Some people thought NFC were feminine spirits that belonged to the forest. Eventually, the cats came out of the forests to live with farmers, and were highly prized for their mouse catching and hunting abilities. Viking ships sailed with Forest cats on board, including the great Norse explorer, **Leif Ericksson**, who is acknowledged as the first European to land in North America long before Christopher Columbus was born. It's believed some of his cats jumped ship and found a home with the feral cat population in North America. It's possible the **Maine Coon** Cat owes her existence to these Viking cats who bred with the locals.

In Nordic folklore the NFC held extraordinary powers as a mystical fairy cat. Viking gods, according to **Norse mythology**, were divided into two tribes. The Aesir waged war as gods of the dark, and the Vanir were gods that blessed the harvest. They were wise with mystical powers. It was believed Freya, goddess of love, beauty, fertility, and the home, traveled across the sky in a fiery golden chariot with two huge cats pulling it. Their long flowing tails trailing behind them as they race across the heavens. They ferried her chariot into battle with the Aesir, and guided it across the land as Freya spread love and provided protection for the home. One cat was black and the other one white to represent both sides of the night that brought evolution, and renewed nature. One was male, one female, because both genders were needed for life to continue. It was Freya who controlled the sunshine and rain. She caused seeds to sprout and grow as she rode her chariot across the land. Farmers who sat out bowls of milk for stray cats were blessed and rewarded for their kindness with bountiful harvests.

Because Freya was associated with the home, the goddess was depicted with NFC playing at her feet. Couples wanting to exchange wedding vows asked for her blessings. Friday is the day dedicated to Freya, and was considered the most favorable day of the week to marry. Scandinavian superstitions guided couples to not tempt fate when it came to cats.

1. Gifting a black cat to newlyweds would bring them good luck.
2. The bride who fed a cat before going to her wedding

would have a happy marriage.

3. Girls who valued and loved cats would receive a marriage proposal.
4. If someone stepped on the tail of a cat, it would be at least a year before that person would wed.
5. A well fed cat would guarantee sunshine on the day of the wedding ceremony.
6. If a cat was seen at a wedding, it was a good omen, and meant the couple's wedding was blessed with good tidings.
7. When the newlyweds were ready to move into their new home, they put out fresh milk. If the cat drank it right away, it meant a good spirit occupied the house.

One legend tells the tale of an old farmer who entertained **trolls** in his home each Christmas Eve. On one occasion, a traveler and his pet bear was passing by. The farmer invited the stranger to stay for supper. One of the trolls, believing the bear was the farmer's cat, offered the sleeping animal food. Unfortunately, the bear had been dreaming and was angry the troll woke him. A fierce growl rattled through the house. Trolls hated thunder and was scared of it. When the bear roared, it sounded so much like thunder, the trolls raced out of the farmhouse in a panic. Since they thought the bear was a feline, all trolls were forever terrified of cats.

The real history of the Norwegian Forest Cat is unknown. Most likely, they are the descendants of shorthaired cats brought back to Norway on Viking ships, and longhaired cats that journeyed with **Crusaders**. The Wegie is athletic, enjoys playing in water, is even-tempered, adaptable, people friendly, and gets along well with other pets and kids. It takes three to five years for her to fully mature physically, and males can weigh up to 17 pounds. Legends, superstitions, folklore, and mythology honor a cat created with no human intervention, and believed to have mystical powers. A gift to humans from the forests of Norway.



(Norsk Hostfest cont. from page 1) the festival takes place, and each named after their country's capital city. The individual styles of each country's entertainment, food, clothes, art, and jewelry can be found throughout Norsk Høstfest and also in the Scandinavian Heritage Park, the only park in the world representing all five Nordic countries.



## *Why attend Norsk Høstfest?*

- Routinely named Top 100 Event by ABA
- Largest Scandinavian Festival in North America
- All events are held under one roof
- Many free stages of entertainment at the festival and world-class performances in the Great Hall of the Vikings
- Viking Village re-enactments
- Wide array of Scandinavian foods or Dine in style at En To Tre Fine Dining, headed by chefs from Norway
- Hundreds of shopping booths with Scandinavian merchandise
- Concert tickets include free festival admission! Come enjoy the day!

### **DINING**

Sons of Norway is proud to present En To Tre, a taste of Scandinavia. This one-of-a-kind fine dining restaurant is headed by world-class chefs from Norway. Each day, En To Tre will serve a daily Norwegian menu at 11 am and 12:30 p.m. featuring Scandinavian entrees and dessert.

For a more stylish evening, try the 6-course Fine Dining at 5 p.m. Featuring a limited seating arrangement when you can indulge in a 6-course culinary adventure that includes Nordic delicacies such as smoked salmon, honey/sesame sautéed duck and other Scandinavian delights that will tickle your taste buds.

Don't miss your chance to take part in the finest and most exclusive Norwegian dining experience this side of the Atlantic Ocean. Bring your appetite and you will leave satisfied, guaranteed!

If you want to get in on a group tour, Wisconsin's Home Spun Tours, Rice Lake, 715-234-9025, or go to <http://www.homespuntours.com/home>.



### **ENTERTAINMENT**

Chicago, Clint Black, The Texas Tenors, and Chicks With Hits featuring Terri Clark, Pam Tillis and Suzy Bogguss will be among this year's lineup. These three shows join ventriloquist and celebrity impressionist Terry Fator, and international Irish entertainer Daniel O'Donnell.

In addition to Great Hall of the Vikings concert lineup, Høstfest typically features more than 100 free-stage daily concerts and shows throughout the festival. Free Stage entertainment will be announced on the [hostfest.com](http://hostfest.com) website as entertainment is booked.

Tickets for the next three shows go on sale 9 a.m., CDT, Wednesday, January 23. However, 2019 Friends of Høstfest — a membership program — can buy tickets early and will experience many other perks at the festival from discounts to special access. Guests can learn more about this program by visiting [www.hostfest.com/membership](http://www.hostfest.com/membership). To sign up to receive Norsk Høstfest emails, visit [www.hostfest.com/newsletter](http://www.hostfest.com/newsletter). Tickets can be ordered online at [hostfest.com](http://hostfest.com), by calling (701) 852-2368, or in person at 1020 S. Broadway, Minot ND 58701.