



# SONS of NORWAY



April 2020  
Walworth County, WI

## Norsemen of the Lakes 5-650

Finally, the weather is looking better and the tulips and daffodils are blooming. I haven't seen any hummingbirds at my feeder yet, but I am hoping to in the next few days.

As we continue to stay safe, snug in our homes, I hope all of you and yours have been in good health. I am pretty tired of hearing about nothing but Covid this and Covid that, so I'm not going to go on about it here. I'm sure you are as tired of it as I am. Nevertheless, we are not going to change our social distancing habits just yet.

Fortunately, we are able to "meet" virtually. If you have a computer or smart phone, you can "meet" with us for our May meeting Tues. the 12<sup>th</sup>. Luckily our meeting night is the same as the Nordic News night hosted by Mike Palecek. He has graciously allowed us to hold a virtual meeting right after his Nordic New Radio program. All you have to do is tune into his program and hang on after the program for our meeting.

Topics of discussion will include

- Matching Donations to Walworth County Food & Diaper Bank
- June meeting/picnic
- District 5 photo contest
- Banner contest
- Membership drive
- Anything else ???

You can do this on the phone for a real "radio like" experience, or you can log on via your computer or smart phone app to see it.

The upcoming schedule includes:

Tuesday, May 5: Norwegian-Americans in Michigan (by Norkap lodge in Detroit MI)

Tuesday, May 12: "Project Hermott/Thams Pavillion" (by Cheryl Wille-Schlesser)

Meeting start times are 6:20 PM (CT). The session opens 10 minutes early, to give you time to connect and will be finished about 40 minutes later.

You can participate by: computer at: <https://gotomeet.me/SofN-D5> or telephone at: 646-749-3112 (access code: 509-077-557).

If you want to use an iPad, iPhone, or Android smartphone or tablet, go to the appropriate app store and download the GoToMeeting app. The session name is SofN-D5.

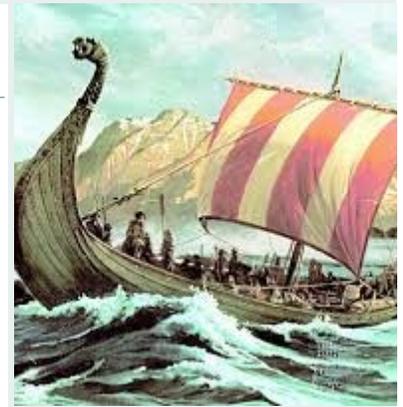
If you have a suggestion for a presentation on a Nordic or Nordic-American topic which should be featured on the Nordic News "radio show," please contact Mike Palecek at [mikep@sonsofnorwayracine.com](mailto:mikep@sonsofnorwayracine.com). There is a list of Glenn Borreson's presentations on the District 5 website at [http://sonsofnorway5.com/programs/speakers\\_bureau.php](http://sonsofnorway5.com/programs/speakers_bureau.php). The best way to initially contact Glenn is via email: [borresong@yahoo.com](mailto:borresong@yahoo.com).

If you missed the Nordic News April 28 presentation, you can view a recording of it at:

<https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#/s/7ab13de6a5248410f73d372de1aa754c9bf19b9c22a748f3b14894d96caadf49>

That's all I can think of for now. I hope you all consider attending the Nordic News and our meeting as well. As the new salutation goes, stay safe.

Corlene Bartels



### Gratulare Med Dagen

Barb Ogne	9th
Linda David	19th
Kathleen Henderson	26th
Paul Johnsen	30th

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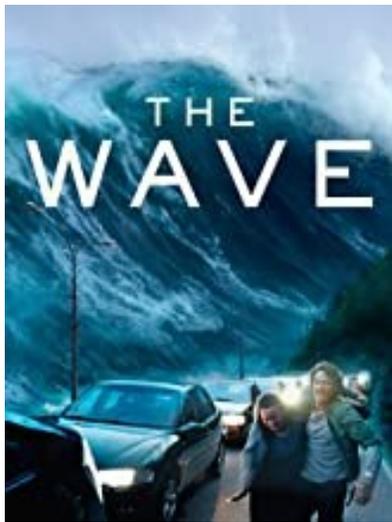
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### KALENDAR

- April 14th event cancelled
- May 12th virtual meeting.

### See instructions at left

- Tentative—June 6th is picnic month. Join us at Babe Mann Park @ 960 Proctor Dr. in Elkhorn for potluck.
- Traditionally, we have not had meetings in July & Aug., but this year may be different. Stay tuned for further information as things progress.



What a rush! The Wave gives audiences everything they hope for when encountering a natural disaster! Thrill, suspense, fear, terror! Norwegian director Roar Uthaug did an excellent job setting the tone of the film, somewhat of a 'calm before the storm' feel which is exactly what this type of film needs! The film follows a Norwegian geologist, played by Kristoffer Joner, and his family as they fight for survival as their hometown encounters a massive landslide that causes a 250-foot tidal wave. Roar Uthaug did an incredible job creating emotions in the characters, the fear, the pain. The audience goes on a journey with the characters and feel as if they are in a dire situation also. The cinematography and the sound make you feel as if you are actually there, with the world crumbling around you. Incredible writing, directing and special effects. If you love films that take you along for the ride, this is the film to see! Available on Amazon with English subtitles.

## My Top 5 Fjord Picks

By David Nikel

Consistently voted as one of the world's top travel destinations, the fjords of Norway are high on the bucket list of almost everyone who travels here. And with very good reason!

### Where are the Norwegian fjords?

Unlike many other must-see destinations, the best fjords of Norway are spread all over the country. This makes deciding exactly where to go a bit of a challenge, to say the least. Just take a look at the jagged coastline on a map! The length of Norway's coastline is estimated at 18,000 miles, but if you exclude fjords that number suddenly drops to just 1,550 miles!

### What is a fjord?

Of course, the Norwegian definition of *fjord* is broader than it is in English. In Norwegian, fjord refers to any narrow inlet of water from the ocean. In English, fjord is more specific, requiring steep sides and deep water. I'll cover both in this list, although I'll be leaning toward the latter. In an attempt to inspire your travel planning, and for a bit of fun, here are my picks for the very best fjords in Norway. Plenty of people will take issue with these rankings and that's absolutely fine. Please don't take offence if your favorite fjord isn't on the list, or behind several others. This is merely a personal preference.

### 5: Trollfjord

The amazingly narrow Trollfjord is a 1.5-mile long fjord that juts off from the narrow Raftsund near the Lofoten islands. With its narrow entrance and steep mountain sides, the Trollfjord is one of Norway's most spectacular fjords, yet lesser known by tourists because of its awkward location.

During the summer months the Hurtigruten ships often make a detour into the fjord, and for many it is the absolute highlight of the northern leg of the journey.

On approaching the fjord's narrow entrance, many visitors are shocked that such a large ship can make it in and safely turn around at the other end! The Trollfjord is also a great place to spot wild sea eagles swooping overhead.

On my winter voyage, we floated outside the entrance as it's too dangerous to enter without daylight. The ship put its spotlights on the entrance though, so we were able to get a glimpse!

If you're not taking a Hurtigruten voyage, several guided tour boats run from Svolvær.

**4. Lysefjord** Heading to the south of the fjord region, the Lysefjord is known for two main reasons: its proximity to Stavanger and the immense Preikestolen cliff, known in English as the Pulpit Rock. The views of the fjord from this famous clifftop are hard to beat:

The English translation of the 26 mile-long Lysefjord is "light fjord", a name said to be derived from the light granite cliffs. Unlike some other famous fjords on this list, the Lysefjord is home to just two villages because of the tough mountain terrain.



Flørli is known for Flørlitrappane, a challenging hike with a difference! The Flørli Steps, as it's known in English, contains an astonishing 4,444 wooden steps from fjord to mountain top.

The village of Lysebotn lies at the fjord's easternmost end. This is the starting point for the difficult hike to the Kjeragbolten boulder. Despite its isolation with access by just one road or boat, the village receives tens of thousands of annual visitors by cruise ship.

By the way, the one road into the village is a spectacular drive. Take the opportunity if you can! The 29km-long road to Sirdal climbs over 900 meters up a very steep cliff by way of an amazing 27 hairpin bend. One of them is even inside a 1km-long tunnel!

### 3: Aurlandsfjord

My top three picks are actually all branches of much bigger fjords. Together, they make up the West Norwegian fjords, which is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Over-tourism is an increasing problem for these fjords. The Norwegian government is taking steps to tackle cruise ship emissions and the impact of so many day visitors on small communities.

A narrow branch of the epic Sognefjord, the stunning Aurlandsfjord is one of Norway's most photographed fjords. That's largely because of the tourist village of Flåm, visited by countless tourists every day. There's also the epic view from the Stegastein viewpoint, pictured above, open year-round.

The fjord itself is so picturesque because of its deep, narrow characteristics. The still water is surrounded by mountains soaring well over 1,500 meters above sea level.



Stegastein. Photo: Robert Bye (Unsplash)

**2: Nærøfjord** Many people visit the Aurlandsfjord and Nærøfjord together on one of the classic Nutshell tours. A two-hour ferry trip from Flåm to Gudvangen includes both of these famous Norwegian fjords.

Kayaking along the Nærøfjord—and the Aurlandsfjord for that matter—is a popular recreational activity. It's also a rare opportunity to get some breathing space away from the tourist crowds in high season! Equipment hire or guided tours, if you prefer, are available from the village of Flåm.

The one downside of the Nærøfjord is that there's very few places to stay. This means most people pass through. However, those that do find somewhere to stay fall in love with the place!

### 1: Geirangerfjord

UNESCO-listed along with the Nærøfjord, the Geirangerfjord is arguably Norway's most famous fjord. Best seen from the car and passenger ferry that runs between the villages of Geiranger and Hellesylt, the fjord – a branch of the Storfjord – is known for its steep sides, ancient farmsteads and tumbling waterfalls.

The Seven Sisters waterfall, which contains seven separate streams of water tumbling from a height of more than 800ft, is a must-see. The fjord is also a photographer's dream, thanks to several lookout points on the mountain roads nearby, and others that can be reached by hiking or cycling.

The fjord was made even more famous around the world thanks to the 2015 disaster movie *Bølgen* (*The Wave*), which depicts a scenario whereby a nearby mountain collapses into the fjord causing a tidal wave that destroys Geiranger. The scary thing is, the film is based on real events and a very real possibility that it could happen again. (See movie review [The Wave](#) in this issue.)



### Will Regional Reforms Result in New Bunads?

As of January 2020, Norway's 19 previous *fylker* (counties) have merged into 11, following a 2017 decision by *Stortinget* (the Norwegian parliament). Now that this regional reform has taken effect, does it follow that *bunader* (region-specific Norwegian folk costumes) will undergo a transformation?

Rogaland, Møre og Romsdal, Nordland and Oslo have all retained their previous borders and names, so their regional identities and bunads are likely to remain intact. But will the newly-merged *fylker* inspire costume designers to create bunads to represent Vestland, Innlandet and other combined *fylker*? Perhaps Viken will eventually make a bunad mash-up consisting of an apron from Buskerud, a bodice à la Østfold, and a skirt from Akershus. Or a designer might commemorate this political regrouping with a modern departure, similar to the creation of the Oslo bunad in 1947.

If you ask Facebook users about the possibility of new bunads, the reply is a resounding “*Nei, takk!*” (No, thank you!) Commenters weighed in on NRK Buskerud's Facebook page at roughly 3 to 1 opposed to the idea of a Viken bunad. Of course, bunads are deeply linked to tradition, and people who have opinions about them might be more tradition-minded than most. A few commenters mentioned wanting to stick to their roots. One person, who was open to the idea, said that making a Viken *festdrakt* (a simpler, less expensive festive garment that is not tied to a region) would be fine, but that a bunad was a bridge too far.

Bunad experts are divided on the topic, with attitudes ranging from staunchly opposed to neutral to anything-goes. Production manager and bunad expert at Heimen Husflid, Ellen Øverland, told NRK “It is difficult to say what will happen in the future...It wouldn't surprise me if someone came up with a Viken bunad at some point.”

Synnøve Finnerud of Vestfold has been producing bunads for over a decade. In her opinion, it is more important to honor your roots than to wear whatever appeals to you. “To me it would be odd to wear a Telemark bunad when all of my roots are in Vestfold,” she remarks to NRK.

On the other hand, Bjørn Sverre Hol Haugen, deputy curator at the Anno Museum of Hedmark thinks that some bunads may see an uptick in popularity now that the mergers have taken place, adding that it is up to the individual to choose. “No one can arrest you or say that you are doing something wrong by changing bunads. This is a free choice,” Hol Haugen told NRK.

# Jobs in Norway: The Hard Truth

By David Smith

Since finding a job here a little over a year ago, I've done my best to share the transition process with other expats who are hoping to move to Norway (Trondheim, specifically, since that is where I have settled).

I've been lucky enough to trade emails and meet with many people searching for work in this city. Most come here chasing love, hoping to find a job so that they can stay with their significant other. Some have questions about coming here for school or because it's a beautiful place.

## How to find a job in Trondheim

While Trondheim is indeed a wonderful place to live, it's also very difficult to find work here.

**NOTE:** Before you continue to read this article, there is something you should know: Life in Trondheim is absolutely amazing and it is, in my opinion, the nicest city in the world.

The nature is incredible, the atmosphere is friendly, there is a booming tech sector, education is incredible, healthcare is great, crime is extremely low, and it is a wonderful place to raise a family.

That being said, if anyone who wanted to move to Trondheim could easily make it happen, Trondheim would cease to be the small city that we know and love, so there is a beautiful silver lining to the otherwise hard truths of finding work in Trondheim.

Now, I'm not going to sugar-coat this: finding a job in Trondheim is not easy. In fact, it may be the most difficult place to find work that I have ever lived in. Here are a few things you should know.

## Highly Educated Population

Trondheim is home to NTNU, Norway's technical university and therefore is teeming with highly educated job seekers. According to [OECD](#), 82% of the adult population has at least a bachelor's degree and 38% a master's degree. In addition, most of these degrees are in sciences, technologies, and business.

## Nationalistic

Norwegians will pretend that they are not nationalistic, but in my opinion, this is untrue. Norwegians prefer to hire other Norwegians for a myriad of reasons. One of them being language proficiency, but there are others. People hire people that they can relate to and get along with.

Commonly, Norwegians stick together. As a society, they take care of one another. There is nothing wrong with this and in my opinion, it is a good thing, but it does make the job search hard on expats.

In fact, I would say that Trønders are even so nationalistic as to prefer hiring a fellow Trønder over someone from Oslo, Bergen, etc. and likewise for those cities.

## Small City

Here in Trondheim, it seems like everyone knows each other. With a population of 180,000, Trondheim is still a small city.

People grew up together, went to school together, their families know each other, reputations are built and it's relatively easy to fill an open job slot with such a tight connection. As a foreigner, this is another obstacle that you will need to overcome.

I highly suggest volunteering as much as possible, meeting people at every opportunity and networking until you are ready to collapse.

The reputation that you build for yourself starts from the day you arrive here... and for many of you, the clock is ticking. Dress sharp, be active, and show how much you want to live here.

## Norwegians Hire for Life

This one is sort of unspoken but generally true. In Norway, it is almost impossible to fire someone. Therefore, when companies hire, they are looking for a perfect match. They want to believe that you don't just see them as a stepping stone to a visa or work permit.

You have to be the perfect candidate, so you had better do your research and be on your A-game. Prove to them that you will stick around so that they feel less scared about hiring you. (cont. page 6)



# May 1: Labor Day in Norway

by [David Nikel](#) — May 1, 2020

**As with much of the world, Norway celebrates Labor Day on May 1st. Here's what you can expect if you find yourself downtown on the day.**

Norway's Labor Day will look very different this year under the country's coronavirus restrictions. Record numbers of people are unemployed or temporarily laid off, outside of wartime. Parades and other events are cancelled, although speeches are still taking place online. Still, this morning I took a look outside and saw the Norwegian flag flying high from most houses on our street.

## **A day for the workers**

The first of May is a day used to celebrate the ordinary worker in many countries of the world. The celebration occurs every year on May Day (1 May), which is a European spring festival stretching back to ancient times.

According to Wikipedia, the date was chosen by socialist and communist political parties to commemorate the 1886 Haymarket affair in Chicago, where a bomb disrupted a labor demonstration. In Norway, it's a public holiday, so most workers receive a day off – as long as the day falls on a weekday! Parades and speeches are organized by trade unions and left-leaning political parties – usually.

Back in 2012 I published my experience of a Labor Day down in Oslo. I'm republishing that below so you can get a feel for what things are usually like on 1 May in Norway.

## **A look back**

The run of public holidays at this time of year continued today with the traditional 1st May celebration, **Labor Day**.

To kick the morning off, I took a meandering walk around Sognsvann at the very top of Oslo. I was joined by families, dogs, even ponies! The sun was out, dogs splashed around in the water and I just about resisted the temptation to take one home.

Back downtown, the annual Labor Day parade kicked off along Karl Johans gate at 1pm. The only two parades I'd seen before today were for Constitution Day and Gay Pride, both very different in style, the former very formal and the latter very extravagant!

One word to sum up today's parade would be **political**. Well, political mixed with some awesome marching bands.

The main themes were a continued opposition to the EU & EEA (EØS in Norwegian), a campaign to save the Aker Hospital (La Aker Leve!) and a general "jobs for all" message. The red flags were out in force. The general anti-EU feeling was interesting to see given the simultaneous Labor Day marches going on in Greece, Spain and France.

There wasn't really much attention given to proceedings at the courthouse, although the scenes in Bergen were somewhat different. Bergen was the home base of many of the young politicians killed on Utøya last year, so Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg and other Labor party officials headed there to rally their party and Norwegians in general.

But in Oslo, I get the feeling people are saving themselves for the national celebrations on 17th May. It's going to be quite an emotional day this year.

As the day drew to a close, attention turned to football and the first round of the Norwegian Cup. The draw had turned up a pearler of an Oslo derby, Vålerenga playing "away" at old city rivals Lyn.

For those unaware of the history, Lyn went bankrupt a few years ago and play in the lower leagues of Norwegian football at Bislett Stadion, where Vålerenga used to play.

The game was featured live on NRK and thankfully, despite a late Lyn rally, Vålerenga clinched a 2-1 win.



## **Pulpit Rock: the Stavanger Region's Biggest Tourist Attraction**

### **Getting there**

Getting there from Stavanger really could not have been easier. I made a quick visit to Stavanger Tourist Information Centre on Domkirkeplassen, which is open 9am-8pm daily throughout the summer season, to book a return combination ticket for \$29 that includes both ferry and bus travel.

The location of the port for the Ferry to Tau was just a short walk from the center of Stavanger. From Domkirke Cathedral take a left and follow Klubbgata to the roundabout, turn right and the ferry departure point is located at the next roundabout.

Both the ferry and bus journeys were experiences in themselves and the scenic views on both are well worth the price alone. Once the ferry had arrived in Tau, we boarded the bus at the stop situated right next to the dock.

### **The hike**

What I would say here before I start, is that you do need a degree of physical fitness if you are planning to do this hike for yourself. I did the hike with a friend in his mid 40s. He had little physical fitness and, unfortunately, he had to give up two-thirds of the way.

The hike takes many forms of difficulty and has varying underfoot conditions, but along the way you will witness some of Norway's finest wild and beautiful surroundings.

There are plenty of opportunities for scenic photos en route to the ledge. One place in particular that stood out was a stunning plateau that opened up about 20 minutes before the end of the hike. It had a number of open lakes and many areas just to sit and relax or picnic, as many chose to do.

### **On the rock**

After a hike of around two hours, nothing could have prepared me as Preikestolen came into sight. At 604 meters above sea level, with views over

Lysefjord and down to the almost toy like cruise ferries on the water below, it really was quite something to behold.

The rock itself was fairly crowded with tourists, and many children sat fearlessly with their legs dangling over the edge, as they gazed into the vast fjord below. I was not brave enough to attempt this myself, however.

On the decent back down, it is courteous to give way to those making their way up, this can slow you down somewhat. It is also a little more difficult going back down, especially if the underfoot conditions are wet.

This is a once in a lifetime experience, and I highly recommend it, especially if you are planning a visit to Norway anytime soon.



(cont. from page 4)

### **Limited Jobs in Trondheim**

Even for Trønders looking to find or switch jobs, the options are limited. This results from a couple of the things already mentioned, such as this being a small city and that hiring for life results in lower turnover rates. In addition, there are only a few of each type of company here and jumping from competitor to competitor would probably be frowned upon.

One of the biggest factors, however, is economy. With the current oil crisis and many skilled workers being laid-off, Norway is seeing the highest jobless rate in a decade. This, of course, means that those skilled workers are now competing for available jobs as well. Again, competition goes up.

### **Immigration Requirements**

As skilled workers, you must meet strict immigration requirements. If you are not from an EU member country, you will only have 6 months to find employment (3 month tourist visa plus 3 month extension for job seekers).

Be sure you apply for this job seeker extension as soon as possible and note that you will need to meet living and income requirements. Even after you have received a job offer, you must meet specific salary requirements.

The companies must pay a minimum salary of NOK 412,600 (about \$40k) if you have a Masters and NOK 382,900 (about \$37k) if you have a Bachelors degree. This is to ensure that all immigrants receive equal pay for equal work on the same level as all Norwegians.

However, this can be a huge obstacle since many people may only receive their first job offers from smaller companies or startups.

Those salaries are pretty competitive, and an employer would need a darn good reason to hire you at that wage over a Norwegian.

### **Summary**

The bottom line is that finding a job in Norway is very competitive and if you are not Norwegian, the deck is stacked against you