



GRØNNVIK LODGE
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Grønnavik Lodge Meetings are usually the third Tues.
of the month at Trinity Lutheran, 330 S. Broadway, Green Bay.

Cherishing our Past, Embracing our Future

SEE YOU AT TRINITY ON MARCH 15
AND APRIL 19!!

Decoding the Primstav

These days we have calendars all around us—on our cell phones, integrated into our personal planners or embedded in our wristwatches. We presume they are highly accurate and never give it a second thought. However, our Nordic ancestors gave it a great deal of thought. While they had no printed calendars or clocks, their simple, effective and accurate calendar on a stick—the *primstav*—served them for seven centuries as a religious guide and farmer's almanac long before the invention of printing.

Norwegians began using the *primstav* in the 11th century, when the country converted to Christianity. "Originally it was a religious calendar to keep track of the saints' days," says Kathleen Stokker, professor of Norwegian at Luther College. "If you weren't in church on saints' days, you were fined, so it was important to know when they were."

Each day was represented with a notch on the stick

with a notch on the stick and the year divided into two halves. One side of the *primstav* represented the summer season, beginning April 15, and the other side represented winter, starting Oct. 15. Symbols were carved on the *primstav* as a reminder

of important dates. Saints' days were often represented by the circumstances of their martyrdom. For example, St. Olav's Day, July 29, was usually marked with an axe—a reminder of his death at the Battle of Stiklestad in 1030. St. Catherine, who in the 4th century was condemned to death on a spiked wheel, was remembered Nov. 25 with a wheel icon.

Over the years, especially after the veneration of saints was outlawed with the Lutheran Reformation in 1537, Norwegians began assigning other meanings to the *primstav*'s symbols, making it more relevant to

their daily lives. Many of these events were related to seasonal tasks. The axe of St. Olaf reminded farmers that it was time to cut the hay, while the spiked wheel of St. Catherine prompted women to begin spinning wool to make warm winter clothing for the cold months ahead. "Because Norway is such a long country, and the weather varied so much, most people carved their own *primstavs* to reflect local conditions," says Stokker.

In addition to keeping track of holy days and seasonal tasks, Norwegians relied on the *primstav* to help predict the weather. "At social gatherings those who knew its lore recited verses that related to upcoming red-letter days, called *merkedager*, or marked days," says Stokker in her book, "Marking Time: The *Primstav* Murals of Sigmund Aarseth." "Some of the *primstav*'s *merkedager* reminded people to take special note of the weather on particular days for its clues



to upcoming meteorological conditions. This information was vital to the preindustrial Norwegian farmers, foresters and fishermen whose livelihoods depended on the weather in a time before the sophisticated forecasting we now take for granted."

When the more accurate Julian calendar replaced the Gregorian calendar—the system upon which the *primstav*

was based—the year became 12 days shorter. Though no longer as accurate, *primstavs* were still used by Norwegians for another 200 years. The traditions marked by the *primstav* were too deeply entrenched in Norwegian folk life to be disregarded quickly. "Norwegians, in addition to respecting the church, had equal respect for the ways and beliefs of their forefathers," says Stokker.

(as featured in *Viking*, July 2011)

Med Vennlig Hilsen With Friendly Greetings

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Looking Ahead Grønnavik Meetings

April 12—board meeting at
Cavalry: all members welcome

May 17—Syttende Mai Celebration

Gratulerer med dagen! March Birthdays

Ron Jacobson, 1
Ken Eliason, 4
Tom Anderson, 9
Kelly Ann Trondson, 11
Elvi Ruotsala, 15
Kathy Braun, 23
Glenn Moen, 25
Karen Vedvik, 26
Marjorie Udvig, 27
Ann-Marie Bennfors, 28*
Emily Benson, 28*
Zachary Ruotsala, 28*

April Birthdays

Shirley Pennock, 4
Mary Swain, 7
Jacqueline Hendrickson, 10
Kali Vedvik, 11
Karen Hepp, 13



*Heritage member

15 Mars: Heirloom Night

Come one, come all to Heirloom Night! Each member should bring one or two cultural items that are important to you and/or your family. These items will be on display and please have a story and information prepared about your item/items.

We will have our traditional Norwegian Påske Treats baked and ready to share with you at this meeting to celebrate Easter. Another language lesson is in our midst as well; we will be tackling the Norwegian table prayer at our March meeting. We've all seen the prayer at our meetings and mumbled our way through it, but now we will actually be able to take it step by step and learn each word.

Get ready to have some fun on Heirloom Night!

March 15
Heirloom Night
6:30pm



April 19
Calendar Stick
Making
6:30pm

Trinity Lutheran
330 S. Broadway

19 April: Primstav (Calendar Stick)

Our April meeting will feature a lovely craft: the *Primstav*. The calendar stick was a method of keeping track of the days created by our Norwegian ancestors. Read all about it on the back page of the newsletter and come prepared for a night of crafting.

We will have another Norwegian language lesson. Snacks and kaffe will make a great addition to this fun event. Please feel free to bring some tasty finger-food-type treats to share with those in attendance at the meeting.





F r a F o r m a n n

Hallo (Hello),

At our February meeting guests, visitors, and members enjoyed suppe, brød, kaker og kaffe. Tusen takk to all who made soup and brought the bread and cookies. It was very enjoyable meal.

Also tusen takk to all who baked and donated cookies for the "Barne" and to Shirley Pennock for coordinating the packing and delivery of them.

Our meeting continued with a Norwegian language lesson. A vocabulary list of greeting or salutations in Norwegian were handed out and Karen Vedvik and I gave a lesson by rote. We repeated these phrases over a few times. Members were asked to review the words and use them and use them when possible during the coming month.

We also had a Hershey Kiss raffle. I provided a large jar filled with Hershey kisses; for \$1, attendees could guess how many kisses were in the jar. One of our guests for the evening was the lucky guesser and went home with over 200 kisses!

Our program for the evening was "Getting to Know Your Neighbor". Attendees numbered off 1 through 4 and then went to their respective tables. Each table had a moderator who had a list of questions. As a

question was read, each group member shared answers that told things about themselves. Everybody got to know their fellow members a little bit better. Some of the new officers were installed at our January meeting. The remainder were installed at our February meeting. Mange takk to Marlene Bergum for leading the installments. Also tusen takk to Peggy Schroeder for the kid's project of troll planters. Very cute!

Our March meeting's program will be a family heirloom show and tell. Please bring an heirloom if you can or something that is cherished by you. Your items will be displayed and then each member will share the story behind their item. Our language lesson will be the Norwegian table prayer. Karen Vedvik and I will be making Påske treats to go with the kaffe next month.

Our April meeting will be a craft night where each of us will make a calendar stick. Please bring snacks to share.

Ha det bra,
Mollie Bergsbaken

Good Morning	God Morgen
Good Evening	God Kveld
Good Night	God natt
Goodbye	Ha det bra
Welcome	Volkommen
Please	Vær så snill
Thank you	Takk
Thousand Thanks	Tusen Takk
Thank You Very Much	Magne Takk
Excuse Me	Unnskyld Meg

This Year's Meetings:



Mark Your Calendar!

March 15: Regular Meeting

April 12: Board Meeting

April 19: Regular Meeting

May 17: Regular Meeting

June 7: Board Meeting

June 21: Regular Meeting

July 19: Regular Meeting

August 16: Regular Meeting

September 6: Board Meeting

September 10: Regular Meeting

October 18: Regular Meeting

November 15: Regular Meeting

December 13: Regular Meeting



Food Pantry at Trinity

A very big tusen takk to all who contributed to the Trinity food pantry at our lodge meetings in 2015. We donated approximately \$250 worth of food to this cause. Please remember that this is an ongoing plea. We will accept donations each time we meet at Trinity.

Pat Jacobs
Treasurer

From the Sports Director



Now that it is starting to get nice outside, you might think of working on a sports medal. All you have to do is start walking (gangmerke), skiing (skimerke), biking (sykkelmerke) or do a combination of sports and fitness (idrettsmerke).

I will not be attending the March meeting because I have to work. You can call me at 920-338-9309. If I don't answer, leave a message and I will call you back or you can give me your contact information, I can send you the appropriate form.

Judy Beernutsen, Sports director

Cookies for the Birkie

A big thank you to the people who brought cookies for the Barnebirkie Race in Hayward, WI. 44 1/2 dozen



cookies were collected. Those who baked were: Rita R., Pat J., Shirley P., Marlene B., Elvi R., Mollie B., Mary S., Ramona E., Pat L., Linda S., Carl D., Darlene G., Janet B., and Karen H. Also, thank you to Don & Diane Overby from H.R. Holand Lodge for delivering the cookies. This is their 20th year for working at the Barnebirkie.

Submitted by:
Shirley Pennock

Thinking Ahead: Jul Exchange

We will be doing some sort of gift exchange in December to celebrate Jul this year.

Be on the lookout for a Norwegian themed treasure to wrap up to put under the tre (tree).

It can be homemade or purchased, but please make sure it is something you think others will treasure and enjoy.

