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Trustee (2014-2016)

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Trustee (2015-2017)

Martin Lieber

Vennligfolk Lodge

meets the second

Sunday evening, 7:00 pm

September thru May
at Saint Paul's

United Methodist Church
600 Wilshire Blvd
Stevens Point Wisconsin

Vennligblad

Friendly pages for the 'friendly people' of Vennligfolk and their friends
Sons of Norway Lodge #5-627 for Central Wisconsin,
Stevens Point, Whiting and Plover, Wisconsin

VOLUME 22 ISSUE 3

M A I O G J U N I 2 0 1 5

Fra
presidenten:



SONS OF
NORWAY



I must start this letter with a big "thank you" to our members! The positive encouragement I have received from so many, your willingness to help in countless ways, the sharing of your time and talents, the new ideas for **Vennligfolk** many of you have generated, your faithfulness to our Lodge, and your patience with me has made my new job as president a lot easier.

Are you learning a lot about Norwegians and the Norwegian culture? I certainly am! The recent programs on early Norwegian academies by Al Solomonson and Scandinavian energy policies by Camille Overson-Hensler Kadoch have been so informative and very interesting. The Cultural Skills classes that are in full swing or the cooking class that will soon be starting offer even more avenues to increase your knowledge and enjoyment of Norwegian culture. I must also mention the two "road trips" to Waupaca and most recently to Westby, Wisconsin. Those of us who were able to take part in the road trips have enjoyed them immensely.

Another big "mange takk" goes to all of you who have signed up to help in the annual Portage County Cultural Festival at SPASH on Saturday, May 9th. We could not be involved in this event without you. If you didn't get a chance to sign up to bring food or a money donation and to work at our **Vennligfolk** table on the 9th, do not despair! There is still time to help out. We certainly do welcome your involvement in this event as it takes a lot of us to make it successful. Our table will be in the South Commons area,

which is a great location for us. Please contact me if you still want to sign up for food or working at the festival.

Our lodge continues to grow! A big "welcome" to **Tracy Johnson**, and a big "welcome back" to **Bob & Birdie Granum** who have recently become members of **Vennligfolk**.

At our May 10th meeting my brother, **Peter Johnson**, from Nashville, TN will be presenting a program on "WWII Memorabilia and Memories." Peter is formerly from Stevens Point and is now teaching history at a college in the Nashville area. He is a collector of not only WWII memorabilia, but he is a collector of stories from that era. You definitely will enjoy his stories and the many tables of displays that he will have set up. Bring your questions and bring any of your friends who might have an interest in WWII to our May 10th meeting.

We will also have two very special WWII veterans attending our meeting - **Will Lehner** and **John Regnier**. Will was on the USS Ward at the start of WWII on December 7, 1942. His ship sunk the small sub that was trying to sneak into Pearl Harbor just before the bombing began. *National Geographic* has had Will featured on some of their shows about that fateful day in our country's history. John was a medic in the European theatre during 1944 -1945. He witnessed firsthand the first slave labor camp that the Americans liberated. He was also in Germany on "VE Day" - - Victory in Europe - - which was 70 years ago on this May 8th. John recently wrote a book about his experiences in WWII called *Denying the Deniers*. I read this

Continued on page 2

In This Issue ...

p.2 "What's Happening at Vennligfolk"
p.3 WWII, Book Nook & Recipes
p.4 Terry Anderson

p.5 Stave Churches and Midtsommer
p.6 Little in English/Litt på Norsk
p.7 Recipe and "Women in Norway"
p.8 From the Editor's Desk



Gratulerer

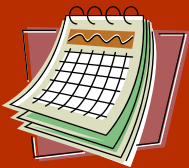
med
dagen

May

Ozz Hagen - 4
Helene Anderson - 12
Cress Williamson - 14

June

Louise Lang - 24



What's Happening at Vennligfolk???

May 9, 2015 (Saturday): **"Portage County Cultural Festival"**

As announced at Vennligfolk's April meeting, the Lodge is again a registered participant in the major community event. Please look at the information on page 3 and see where you fit in. Remember, this event is Vennligfolk's major fund raising event for 2015.

May 10, 2015 (Sunday): **"WWII Memorabilia and Memories"**

Peter Johnson, Professor of American History at Volunteer State Community College, Tennessee will present a tribute to the "greatest generation" through interviews of veterans and a display of items unique to this era in US history. The materials being displayed are considerable in number. Thus, doors to the meeting room will be opened early (6:00 pm) with the program starting at the usual time of 7:00 pm. Plan to **"come early and stay late"** in order to converse with Professor Johnson and view this remarkable exhibit. (See page 3 for a more complete description of the presentation.)



Marshall: Carl Rasmussen

Servers: Lynn & Carl Rasmussen and

Ron & Charlotte Hensler

June, 23, 2015 (Tuesday): **"Midtsommer Fest"**

Vennligfolk members and friends are welcome to **Midtsommer @ Hagen's Manor**, located at 910 Wilshire Drive, Stevens Point on Tuesday, June 23rd beginning at 5:30 p.m. We will enjoy a potluck meal, outdoor bonfire (weather permitting), and great Norsk fellowship. A meat dish will be provided by the Lodge so please bring either a dessert or salad or rolls with a RSVP to Lois Hagen @715-344-7460 no later than Friday, June 19th. Coordination of the "potluck" is essential.

Looking ahead ...

September 13, 2015 (Sunday) - **Anne-Grethe Cook** of Marshfield will speak about medieval calendars and how the ancient Vikings recorded seasons and times.

October 11, 2015 (Sunday) - Vennligfolk's own **Don & Lori Johnson** will present a program about *"Sailing Around Lake Superior."*

November 8, 2015 (Sunday): A program entitled *"Nisse"* will be present by Vennligfolk's Cultural Skills Director, **Karen Trzebiatowski**.

December 13, 2015 (Sunday): *Julefest* will be celebrated that evening with perhaps another Cultural Skills class preparing the food; plans are being considered.

Continued from page 1

book, and I highly recommend it! If you would like to purchase John's book, there will be a table at our meeting where you can purchase a copy.

Now, with about 8 tables of WWII memorabilia to look at, we decided to have some time to "browse" before our meeting starts at 7 pm. Peter will have his displays set up and the doors to the church will be open by 6 pm on May 10th. We also are planning on having Will Lehner and John Regnier there a bit early too. These WWII heroes love to tell the stories about their experience during the war. Plan on coming early that night to get it all in.

With every season there comes change. Very soon, one of our charter members will be changing his address from Stevens Point to Waunakee, Wisconsin. Terry Anderson, we wish you the very best as you make this move. I know you will enjoy being closer to your family, but Vennligfolk is going to miss you! You have been a faithful Vennligfolk member for over 20 years. If you are ever in town on the 2nd Sunday night of the month, you know where you can find a group of friendly folk who will be glad to see you.

*Vennlig hilsen,
Susan Morton*

WWII Memorabilia and Memories

A Presentation by Peter Johnson

On December 7, 1941 the United States was abruptly brought into a world war that many citizens wanted to avoid. The aerial assault by forces of the Imperial Japanese military on Pearl Harbor ushered America into a global conflict that would last almost four years and cost over 400,000 American lives. Men and women who lived through the Great Depression now answered the Nation's call to arms to defeat the axis Powers of Japan, Germany and Italy and defend liberty and freedom loving people across the seas. Soon America would receive a world geography lesson peering at names of places their sons were fighting: Normandy, Anzio, Corregidor, Okinawa, Iwo Jima, Hurtgen Forest and many others. Our fighting forces flew in the skies over enemy territory, sailed oceans infested with German submarines in the Atlantic and Japanese military ships and planes in the Pacific. There were far too many telegrams delivered met with tearful eyes telling of loved ones killed, missing or captured.

When these men and women came home after the last bomb was dropped and the last shell fired, they shaped America's destiny. They married, had babies, built homes, attended colleges, and worked industrial jobs putting the war behind them to build a better future for the Nation. Now, this generation is passing away before us.

As a tribute to this great generation, Peter Johnson has organized a presentation entitled "World War II—Memorabilia and Memories." A native of central Wisconsin and son of a World War II veteran, Peter has collected WWII memorabilia since a child. His collection includes American, German and Japanese military plus U.S. home front items. A professor of American History at Volunteer State Community College in Tennessee, Peter uses his extensive collection of WWII artifacts in his college classroom as well as presenting it at other schools, churches and social gatherings. His presentations not only includes display of these materials but stories from veterans he has interviewed. When you come to see this display, you will be immersed in the WWII era and will remember to honor those who fought for liberty at that tumultuous time.

Cultural Fest

Saturday, May 9, 2015

Worker Schedule

Helping with lefse preparation at Hagen's home

Saturday Morning:

Bea Berg, Cindy Kluck

Carl & Lynn Rasmussen,

Erin Rasmussen, Ozz & Lois Hagen

9:00 - 1:00 Marv Lang & Martin Lieber

10:00 - 1:00 Ron Hensler & Arno Morton

12:00 - 3:00 Ron Hensler, Jane Gjevre,
Joyce and Francis Polson

1:00 - 4:00 Birdie Granum, Bea Berg
Jerry Ugland

3:00 - 5:00 (incl. take down & clean up)
Lois Hagen, Jan Flatoff

Lefse "rollers"- Ozz Hagen, Carl Rasmussen,
Erin Rasmussen, Milo Harpstead.

Baked Goods

Rosettes: Karen Trzebiatowski

Krumkaka: Bea Berg

Kringla/Puff Pastry: Elaine Anderson
Arno & Susan Morton
Rosie Paulson

Sandbakkels: Tracy Johnson

Other items:

Svenska Kaffe Bröd - Louise Lang
- Charlotte Hensler

Premade lefse rounds: Rasmussen, Hensler,
Gjevre

Gjetost (goat cheese) & crackers: Harpstead

Cash Donation in lieu of baked goods:

George & Lois Alfsen	Jan Flatoff
Mark & Mary Hansen	Rachael Favor
Joyce & Francis Polson	Jerry Ugland
Bob & Birdie Granum	

Please bring baked goods to SPASH by 9:00 that morning or drop off at Morton's on Friday after 3:00 pm. [440 Cross Bow Drive - Plover; (715)341-7248] If you are unable to fulfill your commitment, please call Susan at the above number or (715)570-9002.

This activity is the Lodge's fundraiser for the year. Your help is necessary, needed and most appreciated.



Vennligfolk Sons of Norway has again been assigned to SOUTH COMMONS area - Parking will be available in West Lot of SPASH. Remember to wear a baseball cap or scarf.



The Book Nook ... Jan Flatoff, Librarian

To go along with the theme for this month's program, this is a reminder of the DVD and books in our library about WWII.

"Max Manus: Man of War" (DVD Norwegian w/ English subtitles)

"Assault in Norway: Sabotaging the Nazi Nuclear Program,"
by Thomas Gallagher

"Reckless Courage: The True Story of a Norwegian Boy Under Nazi Rule," by William Fuller with Jack Haines

"Report from #24," by Gunnar Sønsteby

"We Are Going to Pick Potatoes: Norway and the Holocaust, The Untold Story," by Irene Levin Berman

Little Ole went to church with his father one Sunday. "Papa, what is dat board up on da vall?" asked little Ole.
 "Dose are da names of all da military members of dis church dat died in da service," answered Papa.
 "Which vun," asked little Ole, "Da 8:30 or da 9:45?"

From the Editor:

English is a rich language with many different expressions that often mean the same thing. Take, for instance, the term GOOD BYE. Does it imply "so long!", "farewell!" "see you later," "till we meet again" – or does it mean all of these? I hope "GOOD BYE" suggests all these meanings - and perhaps more - as we say it to **Vennligfolk's** charter member and long-time friend Terry Anderson. Over the months of May and June, Terry will be making arrangements to move to Waunakee, Wisconsin where he will take up residence in an assisted living facility and where he will be closer to his family. For the "newer" members of **Vennligfolk Lodge**, it should be mentioned that several years ago *Vennligblad* carried a series of articles called *Getting to Know You ...* that contained biographical sketches of the Lodge's membership. Reprinted below, is the sketch provided by Terry for the September-October issue (2010) – Volume 17.5 (page 3).

TERRY ANDERSON

Life began for me on August 14, 1940, when I was born at the Henke homestead on the banks of the Tomorrow River in the town of New Hope. I was the last of three generations to be born on the farm. Even though mother and dad met in Chicago they had ancestors who lived within 1/8th of a mile of each other in New Hope. My math tells me I am 68.75% Norwegian, 18.75% German and 1/8th French (I think). We moved to Nelsonville in 1941 to a house on the hill. This house was the only home I knew as a young person.

I attended a two room grade school in Nelsonville and was a 1958 graduate of Amherst high school where I played basketball, baseball and the coronet. Like many kids in the area I went to and graduated from Luther College in Decorah with a degree in Economics.

After a short stint in the US Army Reserve, I started my work career on 12-15-1963 as a bank examiner for the Wisconsin State Banking Department. I took my first bank job on 4-21-1969 in Madison and used the training and knowledge I learned as an examiner to advance my career. On 10-1-1990, my work life and birth life came full circle when I accepted the position of President of the F&M Bank-Amherst Junction, two miles from Nelsonville. My father was the bank cashier from 1951 to 1955. F&M acquired the Bank of Park Ridge in 1994 and it was merged with Amherst Junction and then built a new building on Hiway 10 East.

I retired from the bank in June, 2001. Being a Norwegian has been a focus in my life. I was an adult before I realized that Martin Luther was NOT a Norwegian. I am honored to be a charter member of Sons of Norway's **Vennligfolk Lodge**. My license plate is "UF DA2."

All of my ancestors came from Europe and settled here in central Wisconsin between 1850 and 1874. I am a 4 to 6 generation American. The last names of ancestors in my family tree are Stoltenberg, Henke, Helgeson, Voldengen, Anderson, Abrahamson, Tangen, Nerby and Hemsing. I have two children and four grandchildren who all live in Waunakee. I have season tickets to the Packers, Badger men's basketball, Badger football. I also follow Pointer men's basketball, Pointer women's basketball, Pointer baseball and Amherst football and basketball. Locally I have been on the boards of the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Humane Society, Community Foundation of Central Wisconsin, Jensen Center-Amherst, Rising Star Mill-Nelsonville, Tomorrow River Scholarship Foundation and have been a member of the Rotary.

Since the above article was written, Terry was named "2013 Person of the Year" by the editorial staff of *Community Spirit* - a newspaper serving several central Wisconsin communities. And so, as we prepare to bid Terry GOOD BYE, please know that he plans to maintain his Sons of Norway membership and will continue to be a member of **Vennligfolk** with all the rights and privileges pertaining thereto. We may not see him as often, but he has shared that we will be in his mind and prayers. Once his new address and contact information is available, it will be shared with the membership.



A Norwegian race car driver entered the Indianapolis 500. He had to make 75 pit stops ... 3 for gas and oil and tire changes, and 72 to ask directions!

Three Stave Churches Facing Possible Closure



Nora Stave Church

Stave churches are an iconic part of Norway's cultural identity. A surviving testament to Medieval European architecture, Norway's most popular stave churches receive thousands of visitors each year. Yet, three of the country's lesser-known churches may be facing closure or sale this year due to financial hardship.

A Norwegian volunteer association called the Society for the Preservation of Norwegian Ancient Monuments (Fortidsminneforeningen) operates the stave churches at Torpo, Nore and Uvdal—in addition to five others. The organization, which was founded in 1844 with the goal of preserving Norway's heritage, owns more than 40 properties and over the years has counted among the society's membership distinguished artists, historians and members of the monarchy such as painters

J.C. Dahl and Joachim Frich and HM Queen Sonja.

Although the care of eight churches is entrusted to the society, the churches themselves are privately owned and no public sector funding is given to the society to maintain them. In an interview with *Aftenposten* the society's Secretary General Ola H. Fjeldheim stressed the critical nature of the churches operations saying, "We need funds to operate reasonably and responsibly. Therefore we're evaluating the closure of Nore, Uvdal and Torpo stave churches this summer, all of them in Buskerud County. They're the churches that have operated with the biggest losses."



Uvdal Stave Church

Outfitted with some of the finest and well-preserved interiors, the Nore, Uvdal and Torpo churches lie some distance from the typical tourist destinations in Norway and visitation to the sites is significantly lower than that of their counterparts, Urnes, Borgund and Hopperstad stave churches. In addition, the churches have also required significant funds to protect them against fire.

While earlier attempts to secure additional support through the state's Ministry of Culture has been denied, members of Norway's Parliament have since pledged to investigate sources of state and local support for the churches over the course of the year. To learn more about the Society for the Preservation of Norwegian Ancient Monuments and the properties under their care or to learn more about the Torpo, Nore and Uvdal stave churches visit these online resources:

- <http://www.fortidsminneforeningen.no/>
- <http://www.stavechurch.com/en/>
- Torpo Stave Church <http://tinyurl.com/nqprymq>
- Nore and Uvdal Stave Church video <https://vimeo.com/14587563>
- Uvdal Stave Church Video <http://tinyurl.com/ncprfyf>



Torpo Stave Church

Midsummer in Norway - Historical Roots

St. John's Day or *Jonsok* is celebrated on June 24 and is a religious holiday commemorating the birth of St. John the Baptist. Prior to the introduction of Christianity to Norway, the date was used to celebrate of the summer solstice, the longest and brightest day of the year. Because of the dual history surrounding the date, the remaining Midsummer traditions are an amalgamation of both Pagan and Christian customs. Did you know?

- The practice of lighting bonfires during Midsummer comes from the belief that fire "awakens" the ground for the next growing season and gives renewed strength to the sun. It was also believed to scare away evil supernatural spirits and witches who were thought to roam more freely this time of year.
- According to folklore, medicinal plants and herbs were believed to be at their peak potency during the summer solstice, lending support to the belief that supernatural beings were scoured the countryside collecting ingredients for their potions..
- In the 19th century it was popular in western Norway for children to dress in bride and groom outfits and participate in mock weddings as a symbol of new life.
- According to Christian legends, the crucifix at Rødal stave church in Norway was believed to contain special powers. During Midsummer, the crucifix was said to sweat, giving off healing power to those who touched it. Devotees made annual pilgrimages to the church up until 1840.
- St. John's Day was observed as a public holy day in Norway until 1771.
- The most popular foods consumed on Midsummer's Eve are fire roasted items like hot dogs or pølse and picnic fare such as pickled herring, smoked salmon or open-faced sandwiches. Norwegian strawberries and rømmegrøt are also common treats.
- In celebration of Midsummer the Norwegian town of Ålesund constructed a massive bonfire of wooden palettes, topping out at 132.71 feet, in 2010.



Bjarne Høiseith tried to tell Ole how he happened to join the military. Bjarne explained: "It was for three reasons. First, I figured it was my patriotic duty to serve my country. Second, I knew it would help me physically. And, third, they came and got me!"

a little in English...

Summer Festivals in Norway

In recent years, the number of festivals in Norway has grown immensely. Crowds from local towns and all over Norway flock to rock, pop, hiphop, jazz, chamber music, beer, stand up, and cultural festivals... In the summer you don't need to travel far to find a good festival experience. Here you will find information about some of Norway's summer festivals.

Bergen International Festival (May 27– June 10) Bergen International Festival is a music and theater festival arranged in Bergen and is Norway's largest of its genre. It contains a variety of music, theater, dance and visual arts at a high national and international level.

Norwegian Wood – Frogner Park in Oslo (June 10-13) Norwegian Wood was first held in 1992. The initiators were three friends who wanted a festival for the bands and the music they liked. Over 20 years later Norwegian Wood is one of Norway's leading and longest running rock festivals, and several of rock's biggest stars have visited the legendary sight in Frogner Park.

Bukta – Tromsø Open Air Festival (July 16-18) Bukta is an annual rock festival held in Tromsø, Norway. An important part of the Bukta Festival is to promote and develop the North Norwegian rock scene and every year they have nearly 40% of the bands/ artists from the region.

Country Festival – Seljord (July 22-26) Seljord Country Festival is Norway's largest country music festival. Through its 17 years, the festival has accommodated over 50,000 caravans, tents and campers, been visited by nearly 500,000 people and 213 artists including some of the world's biggest country stars.

Sommerdagen in Meløy (July 28-August 2) Sommerdagen in Meløy is a music and activity festival that focuses on outdoor experiences. Experience some of the best Meløy has to offer with hiking trips, glacier climbing in the midnight sun, kayaking among small islands and white beaches, and ice climbing on the beautiful Engen Glacier. The evenings are spent in the company of festive crowds and a selection of Norway's best performers on stage.

Olavfestdagene – Trondheim (July 28-August 2) Every year around Midsummer Olavfestdagene fills Trondheim with a festive party, diverse quality concerts, lectures, pilgrimages, worship services and free events – experiences that will move you. Olavfestdagene offers a variety of rich programming for both children and adults.

Oslo Jazz Festival (August 10) Oslo Jazz Festival is held over six days in August each year. For nearly 30 years the festival has offered a wide range of jazz experiences. The festival overview is representative of the flora of jazz and related music, from gospel and blues to Latin jazz and electronica.

litt på norsk...

Sommer Festivaler i Norge

Antall festivaler i Norge har de siste årene vært i sterk vekst. Publikum strømmer til festivalene både fra lokalmiljøet og landet forøvrig: rock, pop, hiphop, jazz, kammermusikk, øl, stand up, og flerkultur... I sommer trenger du ikke å dra langt etter de gode festivalopplevelsene. Her finner du informasjon om sommerens festivaler i Norge.

Festspillene i Bergen (27. mai – 10. juni) Festspillene i Bergen er en musikk- og teaterfestival som blir arrangert og er Norges største i sin sjanger. Det rommer en mengde arrangementer innen musikk, teater, dans og billedkunst på høyt nasjonalt og internasjonalt nivå. De første Festspillene ble arrangert i 1953.

Norwegian Wood – Frognerparken i Oslo (10. – 13. juni) Norwegian Wood ble arrangert for første gang i 1992. Initiativtakerne var tre kamerater som ønsket seg en festival for de bandene og den musikken de likte. Over tjue år senere er Norwegian Wood en av Norges ledende og lengstlevende rockefestivaler, og flere av rockens største stjerner har gjestet den legendariske scenen i Frognerparken.

Bukta – Tromsø Open Air Festival (16. – 18. juli) Bukta er en årlig rockfestival som arrangeres i Tromsø, Norge. En viktig del av Buktafestivalens formål er å ivareta og videreutvikle det nordnorske rockemiljøet, og de har hvert år bortimot 40 % band/artister fra landsdelen.

Countryfestivalen - Seljord (22. – 26. juli) Countryfestivalen Seljord er Norges største countryfestival. Gjennom sine 17 år har festivalen plassert over 50 000 campingvogner, telt og bobiler, hatt besøk av nesten 500 000 publikum og hele 213 artister deriblant noen av verdens største countrystjerner.

Sommerdagen i Meløy (28. Juli – 2. august) Sommerdagen i Meløy er en musikk- og aktivitetsfestival med fokus på opplevelser i friluft. Opplev noe av det beste Meløy har å by på med toppurer, brevandring i midnattsol, kajakk blant små øyer og hvite strender, og isklattring på vakre Engenbreen. Kveldene tilbringes i selskap med et feststemt festivalpublikum og med et utvalg av Norges beste artister på scenen.

Olavfestdagene – Trondheim (28. juli – 2. august) Hvert år rundt Olsok fyller Olavfestdagene Trondheim med fest og folkeliv, kvalitetskonserter, foredrag, pilgrimsvandring, gudstjenester og gratisarrangementer – rørende opplevelser. Olavfestdagene byr på et variert og rikt program både for barn og voksne.

Oslo Jazz Festival (10. august) Oslo Jazzfestival arrangeres over seks dager i august hvert år. Gjennom snart 30 år har festivalen bydd på et bredt spekter av jazzopplevelser. Festivalprogrammet representerer hele floraen av jazz og beslektet musikk, fra gospel og blues til latinjazz og elektronika.



Sugar Cookie Dessert Pizza

adapted from *allrecipes.com*, yields 10-12 servings

- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp cream of tartar
- ¼ tsp salt
- 2 tsps vanilla extract
- 8 oz whipped topping, thawed
- assortment of favorite fruits
- ½ cup sugar
- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 package of cream cheese
- ¼ cup confectioners' sugar

Tips: Arrange your favorite red and blue berries on top of the pizza to make a festive flag design for *Syttende Mai!* Pressed for time? Instead of making the cookie crust from scratch, substitute prepackaged sugar cookie dough.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Cream together butter and ½ cup sugar in a large bowl until smooth. Add egg and mix. In a separate bowl combine flour, cream of tartar, baking soda and salt and add to creamed mixture until well blended. Press cookie dough into an ungreased pizza pan*. Bake for roughly 8 to 10 minutes or until lightly browned. While the crust cools, beat cream cheese, whipped topping and ¼ cup confectioners' sugar and vanilla until light and fluffy. Spread on cooled cookie crust. Cut crust into desired serving portions. Add fresh fruit to the top of the crust, making sure excess liquid is removed from fruit beforehand. Chill until ready to serve.

*Double crust to make a 9"x13" dessert pizza.

Norway's Compulsory Military Service Becomes Gender Neutral

Norway is preparing for a major change to its mandatory Armed Forces conscription policy. For the first time ever Norway is now requiring military service for women, which will see its first female recruits entering into service in 2016.

This stems from an historic bill that was passed by the Storting in late 2014 that extended mandatory military service to women. The bill, which passed with a majority of 96 votes, is part of a nation-wide plan to promote gender equality. This means Commander Per-Thomas Bøe of the Norwegian Armed Services will now be sending out conscription letters to all 17-year-old women in Norway and then navigating all the logistical challenges of welcoming this new population into mandatory service.

In other cases, it would probably be helpful if Norway could look to other countries and learn from their experiences, but this will be a first - not just for Norway, but for Europe and NATO as well. "The Scandinavian countries are very good at leading in gender equality, so it's no surprise that Norway should pioneer female conscription," says Joanne Machowski, a researcher at the London military think tank RUSI, who specializes in gender issues.

This move effectively doubles the pool of military conscripts from 32,000 to 63,000 and Norway looks at this as an opportunity to increase the overall competence of its military. But don't expect to see these new recruits fighting on the front lines anytime soon - Machowski notes, "we'll be waiting a while to see firstly how women and society respond to the changed policy, and secondly how many women make it from training out into combat," she adds. Even if Norway participated in an international military mission, new conscripts would not be deployed.

Women in Norway Have 3rd Best Ranking in World

In 2014, Norway fared well in the rankings for the Global Gender Gap Report as determined by the World Economic Forum in Geneva, taking third place out of 142 countries. Scoring is based on five categories: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment. In the category of educational attainment, Norwegian females were rated as having total equality at primary, secondary and tertiary education levels. Earned income, literacy and life expectancy rates were also deemed equal to that of men or better.

Norway's high ranking is a result of grassroots campaigns, government initiatives and quota systems. In 1978, Eva Kolstad was appointed the world's first Gender Equality Ombud in Norway, whose responsibility was to work toward equality between women and men, specifically in regard to hiring.

Another tactic was to increase the presence of women in positions of power by making it a requirement as of 2006 for all publicly-held companies to have a minimum of 40% women on their board of directors, or face closure. State-owned firms were already required to have at least 45% female board representation. Norwegian equality minister at the time, Karita Bekkemellem, said that "More than half of the people who have a business education today are women. It is wrong for companies not to use them. They should be represented." She added that she didn't want to wait 20 or 30 years for society to catch up. Currently state panels, committees and boards have only 38 percent female representation. Norway's largest company, Statoil, meets the 40% requirement. Six European countries have followed Norway's example and the European Union's parliament plans to require a 40% quota by 2020.



Vennligfolk Lodge #5-627
 Marv Lang, *Editor*
 3015 Cherry Street
 Stevens Point, WI 54481 U.S.A.



Sunday, May 10, 2015
**“WWII
 Memorabilia and Memories”**
 with Peter Johnson

Tuesday, June 23, 2015
“Midtsommer Fest”
 at the home of Lois & Ozz Hagen

Vennligblad, the official newsletter of Sons of Norway’s Vennligfolk Lodge (#5-627), is published at the beginning of the odd-numbered months of the year. If you have an item of interest to Vennligfolk members, please submit it to the Editor by the 15th of the even-numbered months. You may send it to Marv Lang at 3015 Cherry Street, Stevens Point, WI 54481 or by e-mail to cmlang@charter.net.



The Lodge is blessed with several new and returning members. Thus the Directory recently distributed is woefully outdated and needs to be up-dated. Thus, please let me or one of the Officers know of any changes that need to be made. If yours is an addition, please send me an e-mail with the ordinary contact information.

Mange Tusen Takk
 Marv Lang, *Editor*

Grilled Cheese Sandwich with Jarlsberg Fondue, Ham and Tomato

Adapted from *cookinacanuck.com*, makes 4 sandwiches

Jarlsberg mixture:

- ½ lb Jarlsberg cheese, cut into 1-inch pieces
- ¼ cup plus 2 tbs dry white wine
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ground black pepper

Combine Jarlsberg ingredients with a food processor. Mix until smooth.

Sandwich:

- 8 slices crusty bread
- ½ cup olive oil
- ½ lb black forest ham, cut into ¼-inch slices
- 2 medium tomatoes, sliced
- 1 cup (packed) arugula leaves



Assemble the sandwich by spreading 1 tablespoon of Jarlsberg mixture onto a piece of bread. Top with ham, tomato and arugula leaves. Spread additional tablespoon of Jarlsberg mixture onto the top slice of bread and set atop. Brush the top and bottom of sandwich with olive oil. Toast in a large skillet over medium to medium-high heat until cheese melts and bread turns golden brown. Repeat with remaining ingredients.

2015 - A Year of Remembrances

40th Anniversary of the fall of Saigon - 1975
 50th Anniversary of Medicare - 1965
 60th Anniversary since the '55 Chevy
 65 years since the “Korean Conflict” began
 70 years since VE Day, the A-bomb, and VJ Day
 80th Anniversary of Social Security - 1935
 95th Anniversary of Women’s Suffrage - 1920
 and 110th Anniversary of the dissolution of the Union
 between Sweden and Norway - 1905

The mission of Sons of Norway is to promote and preserve the heritage and culture of Norway and to provide quality insurance and financial products to its members.