



# the ASKELADDEN news

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

February 2022

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

2-22

[facebook.com/AskeladdenLodge](https://facebook.com/AskeladdenLodge)

**Meetings:** *In-person cancelled until further notice due to the pandemic. Monthly meetings will be conducted virtually online.*

Sept - April: 2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays, 2 p.m.  
May only: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday, 2 p.m.

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## Joint Meeting with Askeladden, Sonja Henie, & Sognefjord Lodges Sunday, February 13 2 p.m. (online)

(Yup, Super Bowl Sunday, but the game isn't until 6:30 p.m.)

# Norway and the Super Bowl

Lest we forget, Norway figured prominently in the Super Bowl last year! Norway has had some fun with that, and, given that our February meeting is on Super Bowl Sunday, we'll watch not only the ad that started it all but some of those videos from Norway. We'll be celebrating not only the Super Bowl but some accomplishments of our beloved ancestral homeland.

The videos are short, which will leave us some time for getting better acquainted. We have some questions about what you are doing this winter (might even ask who will be watching the SB) and about other things that help reveal who we are. And you can suggest a question if you would like; send it to [SofNLansingMI@gmail.com](mailto:SofNLansingMI@gmail.com) and we'll add it to the list.

Askeladden will have a business meeting following the program. Gail Thompson-Hadley will begin it with an explanation of the Sons of Norway cultural skills program, and anyone interested is welcome to stay on.

Askeladden members are requested to stay online after that for our business meeting. Alice Kraatz will share a public service announcement she recently recorded about the June 18, 2022, Honor Flight for Viet Nam veterans which she raised more than \$100,000 to support.

Askeladden also needs to elect delegates to the District 5 Convention near Madison, Wisconsin, Thursday, June 16 to Saturday, June 18. Please consider whether you might want to attend to represent our lodge. Askeladden will reimburse conference fees, travel and lodging expenses.

Time: February 13, 2022 2 p.m. Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join our meeting:

**The link for the meeting will be emailed to you the evening before the event.**

Meeting ID: 843 4856 6153

Passcode: 021322200

Dial by your location (only if using phone for audio)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)



The 2nd Sunday in February is Mother's Day in Norway. **Happy Mother's Day** to all the mothers out there. Photo from [bakersbrigade.com](http://bakersbrigade.com)

# ASKELADDEN NEWS

## Sons of Norway Foundation Scholarships

*Curtis Cleveland, Foundation Director*

One of the major benefits for Sons of Norway members are the many college scholarships available to the members and to the children and grandchildren of the members. At Askeladden Lodge, our own scholarship program which started in 2000, has awarded \$53,000 in scholarships to college students.

In addition to our lodge scholarships, members of Askeladden Lodge are eligible for the many scholarships offered by the Sons of Norway Foundation in Minneapolis. In 2020, the Foundation awarded \$106,000 in scholarships to 25 students. The Sons of Norway Foundation scholarships can run as high as \$4,000 per award and are given to students at both colleges and vocational/trade schools. The October 2021 issue of the *Viking* magazine has an article featuring the recipients of the 2021 Sons of Norway Foundation Scholarships.

As of January 28, the Sons of Norway Foundation website lists the 14 scholarships that have a March 1 deadline for applications. Applications include, but are not limited to, a 500-word essay and two references. For more information, visit <https://www.sofn.com/Foundation/Scholarships>

## Askeladden Lodge 2022 scholarships

*Joyce Hare, Scholarship Chairperson*

If you have children or grandchildren starting college next year or continuing as an undergraduate student, they can be considered for a scholarship awarded by Askeladden Lodge. The 2022 budget allows for up to three \$1,000 scholarships.

Applications and required documents for the 2022 Askeladden Myrtle Beinhauer Scholarships are due to Joyce Hare by March 15, 2022. The online application form with guidelines can be downloaded in one document here: <http://bit.ly/3rAZ6uT>

Contact Joyce Hare at (269) 327-5824 with any inquiries.

## Sons of Norway Hockey Team Schedule

*Curtis Cleveland*

Fri, Feb 11, 2022, 9:30 PM, at Wings West

Sat, Feb 19, 2022, 9 p.m., at Wings West

Fri, Feb 25, 2022, 7:25 p.m., at Wings West

Fri, March 11, 2022, 6 p.m., at Wings West

Fri, March 25, 2022, 6 p.m., at Wings West

Fri, Apr 1, 2022, Time and location: TBA

Fri, Apr 8, 2022, 8:40 p.m., Wings West

The games of the Sons of Norway Hockey Team, lasting one hour, and free to the public, are played at one of the following venues: Wings West, north of exit 72, off I-94; and Wings Event Center, south of exit 80, off I-94.

## Michigan Nordic Fire Festival

Did you know? Askeladden Lodge is one of the sponsors of the annual Michigan Nordic Fire Festival in Charlotte that takes place annually the last weekend of February.

Lasting the entire weekend, the Festival has expanded with many new events since it first began. Visit the website to get event information, ticket information and volunteer opportunities.

[www.michigannordicfirefestival.com](http://www.michigannordicfirefestival.com)

## Members Requested to Report Service Hours

Each year, Sons of Norway lodges are required to report the total community and fraternal service hours of their members to help maintain our status as a non-profit organization by March 15.

**Community Support:** If you served on an Askeladden committee or helped with an Askeladden project that served the local community, please report those events and hours. Examples are service to the Scholarship Committee and attendance at our lodge sponsored Ice Hockey Team games or Kalamazoo Ice Skating Association competitions.

**Fraternal Support:** If you helped plan a program or event for the lodge members, or if you provided other services to the lodge such as preparing reports, contributing to the newsletter, contacting members, or other services, please list those activities and hours.

Please submit your events and hours in the 2 categories for 2021 to our 2020 & 2021 Secretary, Judy Hande-Skutnick at [jhandeskutnick@gmail.com](mailto:jhandeskutnick@gmail.com) or text or call her at (269) 903-8386.

## St. Patrick's Day Parade returns

After being cancelled the past two years due to the pandemic, the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade is back on for Saturday morning, March 12. We provide the costumes as long as you sign up in advance, making it easy for you to show up and participate. The parade route is only 6 blocks long, but you need to include the trip to and from your car, which may be parked a ways away for this popular parade. You can sign up at the February meeting or contact Joan O'Bryan.

## January meeting recap: *The Way North*

*Joan O'Bryan, Acting Membership Secretary*

At our January event we were joined by 25 Askeladden members, and guests, members of Sonja Henie and Sognefjord Lodges, as well as Nortun Lodge in Duluth, MN, for a total of 43 people! We watched *The Way North* documentary. See *Fra Presidenten* on page 3 (or January newsletter page 1) for more information on this film. It was suggested that some people may want to view it again in order to pause and read the captions.

*January 2022 Askeladden Member attendance: Diane Andert, Jeff Andert, Curtis Cleveland, Karn Erlandson, Betsy Fish, Catherine Hande, Joyce Hare, Karen Hare, Barbara Heffner, Arden Hetletvedt, Holly Jensen, Alice Kraatz, Elizabeth Kraatz, James Kraatz, Karen Kunze, Gwen Meredith, Joan O'Bryan, Curt Osborn, Helen Spence, Kris Spence, Marilyn Stewawt, Inger Thoen, Gail Thompson-Hadley, Crystal Walvoord, and Astrid Willis. Guests: Barb Anderson, Kaaren and Kerry DeWitt, Gordon Hare, Ruth Hetletvedt, Phil Kunze, Melissa Raddatz. Visitors: Vee Bjornson, Cheryl & David Bulbolz, Dean Hanson, Merle Hanson, Amy Hayes, Alberta and Steve Munkvold, Lori and Eric Nisja, Judy Olson. Contact Joan O'Bryan with any attendance corrections.*

## Askeladden Lodge Library

[www.librarything.com/catalog/Sonsofnorway](http://www.librarything.com/catalog/Sonsofnorway)

Contact Curtis Cleveland with questions or to reserve resources.

# ASKELADDEN NEWS

## Fra Presidenten

### More on *The Way North*, the Birkie, and Snow!

Our program for January was the documentary, *The Way North*, provided by Sons of Norway for free to its members in January through February 7. The film was produced by the grandchildren of Norwegian-American Norm Midthun and traces his grand tour around Norway as the pilot for Crown Prince Olav at the end of WWII. I did some research to learn more about the inspiring life of pilot Midthun and wanted to share with you some of what I learned.

Norm Midthun worked for 39 years for Northwest Airlines, starting as a local mail truck driver to earning his place as #1 in seniority as a 747 pilot. The linked newsletter describes how he studied the Norwegian language from his Norwegian-born teacher and early mentor, Ben Eggan, at Roosevelt High in Minneapolis. Midthun tried to join the US Navy, stating he wanted to be a pilot, but he was turned down for being too young at age 17. He then went to the Norwegian Consulate in Minneapolis where he told them he was 19 and volunteered for the Norwegian Royal Air Force.

“Aviator and RCAF airman Bernt Balchen [who held dual US/Norwegian citizenship] negotiated with the Canadian government to organize the training facility for escaped Norwegian pilots and Norwegian expatriates in Toronto. For Norm, training was a tough seven months.” He followed the advice of the Norwegian doctor who gave him his physical to stay on base and learn all he could since he didn’t know the language well. “I didn’t leave the base, not once in all that time. All the instruction was in Norwegian. You can guess that my understanding of the language was rudimentary. At first, to study, I had to translate everything. I spent as much time on the language as I did learning to fly. Eventually I was thinking in Norwegian and then speaking it.” Midthun became the first American to earn Norwegian Air Force wings during WWII. <http://northwestairlineshistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/1412-newsletter.pdf> The Northwest Airlines newsletter link here also describes the awesome accomplishments of Bernt Balchen, legendary Norwegian explorer, aviator, and mentor for young airman Norm Midthun.

Before *The Way North* was ever filmed, Norm Midthun provided six and a half hours of interviews for the Greatest Generation Minnesota oral history project with fascinating descriptions of his early life in Minnesota. He talks about the rigorous basic training he barely survived in the Norwegian Royal Air Force in northern Ontario in minus 30 degree temperatures skiing through the woods when he had never done skiing. He fell a lot, and every time he fell, his rifle kicked him in the head.

Midthun observed that Crown Prince Olav was warm-hearted and beloved by the people they met during the month he spent flying him to 23 stops around Norway after the war. He also had many stories about his CO and later friend, Bernt Belchin, who he says was actually the first to fly over both the North and South Poles. If you love history, adventures, and airplanes, I highly recommend the 84-page transcript of his interviews. Minnesota’s Greatest Generation Oral History Project: Part II: Interview with Norman Midthun can be found here:

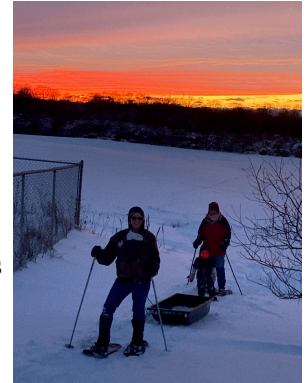
<http://collections.mnhs.org/cms/display.php?irn=10803180>

At age 90 in 2014, Midthun was still enjoying an active life including games of tennis three times a week. He died in July 2021 at the age of 96 and his obituary describes pearls of wisdom to be

gleaned from him: “to know your heading, altitude, and airspeed at all times; to be humble and always strive for excellence; to pray; to be frugal to yourself and lavish those you love; to admire your children and their children for their every breath; to be a gracious neighbor; to drive a car with a little rust that gets you there just as well; to know that dogs are people too.”

And speaking of dogs, I’m traveling to northern Wisconsin the end of February to watch the Barkie Birkie Skijor of dogs pulling skiers along with the children’s Barnebirkie. According to *Outside* magazine, “With temperatures below zero, more than 4,500 feet of climbing, and 9,400 competitors, Wisconsin’s American Birkebeiner is the largest and one of the toughest cross-country ski races in the United States. Crossing the finish line is nothing short of a lifetime achievement.” [www.birkie.com/ski/events/barkie-birkie/](http://www.birkie.com/ski/events/barkie-birkie/)

With all the snow we’ve had the past several weeks in SW Michigan, I’ve been out with my family on snowshoes and cross country skis enjoying glorious bountiful snow!



Lodge members Gail and Christine with 2 grandkids on snowshoes at sunset over the apple orchard.

Gail Thompson-Hadley

## Member Spotlight

### Alice and James Kraatz featured in *Viking!*

Did you spot two of our Askeladden members in your February *Viking*? Following in the steps of their grandmother, Sandra Santos, who has recently been featured twice in the *Viking*, Askeladden members Alice and James Kraatz were featured in a full-page article in the February 2022 *Viking!*



Askeladden members Alice and James make lefse under the watchful eye of their grandmother, Sandra, also an Askeladden member.



Alice and James being interviewed for the *Viking* article in early November.

An introduction to two articles is at the top of page 34, with the next page devoted to the activities and accomplishments of Alice and James.

Alice recently recorded a PSA about an Honor Flight that she promoted around the state. She plans to discuss the Honor Flight at our meeting on Sunday.

[https://archive.org/details/PMNMSCAR\\_Yellow\\_Ribbon\\_Honor\\_Flight](https://archive.org/details/PMNMSCAR_Yellow_Ribbon_Honor_Flight)



# SONS of NORWAY

February  
2022

## Askeladden Lodge 5-610

507 Clinton Ave  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

## FEBRUAR KALENDER

- Februar 6 - *Samefolkets dag* - Sámi People's Day or Sámi National Day
- Februar 12 - HH Princess Astrid, 1932
- Februar 13 - **Askeladden Lodge Meeting 2 p.m. online**
- Februar 13 - *Morsdag* - Mother's Day in Norway
- Februar 14 - Valentine's Day ♡
- Februar 15 - National Flag Day of Canada
- Februar 21 - President's Day, United States
- Februar 21 - H.M. King Harald V 1937
- Februar 24 - **Barnebirkie & Barkie Birkie**, Hayward, WI
- Februar 25-27 - **Michigan Nordic Fire Festival** - Charlotte, MI
- Februar 26 - American Birkebeiner, Hayward, WI [www.birkie.com](http://www.birkie.com)
- Februar 27 - *Fastelavn* - Norwegian Mardi Gras
- Februar 28 - Last day to submit *Askeladden News* articles

### Gratulerer med dagen!

*Fødselsdag Hilsener*

### February Birthdays

Gail Thompson-Hadley

Barbara Heffner

Elizabeth Kraatz

Karen Kunze

Brent Roble

Crystal Walvoord

**NOTICE:** All Askeladden **in-person** events are cancelled until further notice.



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.