



the ASKELADDEN news

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

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

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January 2024

01-24

Meetings:

Sept - April: 2nd Sundays, 2 p.m.

May only: 3rd Sunday, 2 p.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church

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Joint Meeting with Askeladden, Sonja Henie, & Sognefjord Lodges Sunday, January 14, 2 p.m. (online) Exploring Your Norwegian Roots Dana M. Kelly, Executive Director, Norwegian American Genealogical Center & Naeseth Library

Whether your family has maintained connections with your Norwegian family, or whether you've just discovered *Alt for Norge* (the genealogy fueled Norwegian hit reality show), chances are you've wondered if there isn't something more out there for you to discover about your ancestry.

Maybe you've even subscribed to one of the genealogy websites, such as Ancestry or Family Tree. Such sites can be a storehouse of information, if you are very careful that you are connecting the right dots. But Scandinavian genealogy is full of quirks and twists that can make tracing your lineage a very challenging quest. And, when you add the extra layers of immigration and Americanization to the puzzle, it can become that much more challenging.

On January 14, we'll have the chance to learn directly from Dana Kelly, the Executive Director of the Norwegian American Genealogical Center and Naeseth Library (<https://www.nagcnl.org/>) in Madison, Wisconsin. Dana will tell us about the Center's resources (including genealogists-for-hire!) and share wisdom gathered over more than 20 years of experience assisting Norwegian Americans in digging for their Scandinavian roots.

Bring your questions and your family tree diagrams with you to the Zoom screen!

Note: After Dana's presentation, Askeladden Lodge will conduct a brief business meeting to install our 2024 officers.

The link to our **online** presentation and meeting will be emailed the evening before the event to Lodge members who receive the newsletter by email. There will be no Lodge activities at the church this month.

ASKELOADDEN NEWS

December event recap: Sankta Lucia

Twenty Askeladden members and their guests joined the Vasa Lodge for a beautiful Jul event organized by Holly Jensen in celebration of Sankta Lucia in the Trinity Lutheran Church sanctuary. Lucia Williams portrayed Lucia. She was attended by Edith Wright (Vasa) and Askeladden Heritage member Abigail Renoos. All three girls were veterans, having previously participated in Lucia Pageants at Trinity. The reception that followed featured amazing food from our members - much of it Norwegian - and two kinds of delicious gløgg - made by Holly, of course. Gail wore her beautiful new bunad.



Lucia Williams as the 2023 Lucia (center), with Edith Wright (left) and Abby Renoos (right)

December 2023 Askeladden Member attendance: Diane Andert, Jeff Andert, Esther Ann Brown, Curtis Cleveland, Jean Darling, Kaaren DeWitt, Kerry DeWitt, Karn Erlandson, Joyce Hare, Karen Hare, Holly Jensen, Elizabeth Kraatz, Joan O'Bryan, Abigail Renoos, Daniel Renoos, Kris Spence, Jamie Stafne, Laurie Swanson, Robert Swanson, Gail Thompson-Hadley
Guests: Sandy Wiseman, Coy Scheetz

Annual Lutefisk Luncheon

Curtis A. Cleveland

Last month, December 2nd, I attended the annual lutefisk lunch of the Nordic Fellows, an association of Scandinavian men in the Detroit area. The lunch was at The Swedish Club in Farmington Hills. This was the third year that I have attended this event.

At the first luncheon which I attended, 10 years ago, about 100 people attended, most of whom were of retirement age. The late Gene Steensma was the master of ceremonies.

This year, about 50 people attended. Among the attendees were several young men (under age 40) from Norway, who work in the Detroit area, providing youthful optimism. Dennis Flessland was the master of ceremonies.

The meal consisted of lutefisk, Swedish meatballs, potatoes, peas, carrots, beets, hardtack, limpa, coffee, and aquavit. The lutefisk was supplied by Olsen Fish Company of Minneapolis. With the exception of the aquavit, you could eat as much as you wanted.

After the luncheon, I visited Ikea, the Swedish retail store in Canton, 10 miles South of The Swedish Club.

Alt for Norge Casting Call

Elizabeth Kraatz

After a COVID-imposed hiatus, *Alt for Norge* is casting Season 11! If you are of Norwegian descent and have not visited Norway since you were 15, you are eligible to throw your hat in the ring for this reality show! Extremely popular in Norway (and available for viewing with English subtitles on YouTube), *Alt for Norge* is not your typical reality show. Contestants face team and individual challenges each week to show how "Norwegian" they are - for example, hiking on a glacier, fishing in the North Sea, preparing lefse... The last one standing gets to meet their Norwegian relatives. The application deadline is February 2, so act fast!

<https://oconnorcasting.tv/2023/12/20/alt-for-norge-season-11/>

Askeladden 2024 Officers & Committees

President:	Gail Thompson-Hadley
Vice President:	Joan O'Bryan
Secretary:	Karen Hare
Membership Sec.:	Joan O'Bryan (Acting)
Treasurer:	Curtis Cleveland
Cultural Director:	Elizabeth Kraatz
Co-Social Directors:	Jeff & Diane Andert
Sports & Recreation Director:	Kaaren DeWitt
Publicity Director:	Kris Spence
Foundation Director:	Curtis Cleveland
Newsletter Editor:	Joan O'Bryan
Publisher:	Judy Hande-Skutnick

Support Officers:

Norwegian Language:	Astrid Willis
Counselor:	Elizabeth Kraatz
Historian:	Curtis Cleveland
Librarian:	Curtis Cleveland
Webmaster:	Karn Erlandson
Sunshine:	Arden Hetletvedt

Askeladden 2024 Committees:

Cultural:	Elizabeth Kraatz, Chair
Social:	Jeff and Diane Andert, Co-Chairs
Membership:	Joan O'Bryan, Chair
Publicity:	Kris Spence, Chair
Sports and Recreation:	Kaaren DeWitt, Chair
Scholarship:	Holly Jensen, Chair
Finance:	Curtis Cleveland, Chair
Audit:	Judy Hande-Skutnick, Chair
Members:	Holly Jensen, Diane Andert
Norway Trip:	

Committee members are yet to be announced.
Some committees are in need of volunteers.

Reminder to RSVP: Special Invitation to Norwegian language class/luncheon

Invitation:

You are invited to the Norwegian Language class at the home of Joanna Stelloh Phelps, 58 Sycamore Avenue in Battle Creek on Wednesday, January 17, class at 10:30 - 11:30 a.m, followed by a luncheon. This is an open invitation to class members as well as any other Lodge members who would like to attend. Please RSVP attendance only or contact me if you have any questions at (269) 986-5173. Please, there is no need to bring anything - food and beverages will be provided.

ASKELOADDEN NEWS

Fra Presidenten

Norwegian Resolutions for 2024

The New Year is traditionally a time when many of us establish goals to make improvements in our lives. I believe physical, mental and spiritual health are interdependent and the Norwegian concept of *friluftsliv* encompasses those connections. Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen coined the term in the 1850's as a way to explain the benefits of spending time outdoors for spiritual and physical well-being.

The following excerpt from a September 12th, 2020, *National Geographic* article describes the Norwegian value of *friluftsliv* or outdoor living.

A way of life

"Friluftsliv is more than just an activity, it's a kind of lifestyle," says Lasse Heimdal, secretary general of [Norsk Friluftsliv](#), an organization representing 5,000 outdoors groups in Norway. "It's very tied to our culture and what it means to be a Norwegian."

Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen is generally credited with inventing the term in the 1859 poem "On the Heights," which recounts a farmer's yearlong trek through the wilderness. By the end of the poem, the protagonist ditches civilization for good.

*But Heimdal says friluftsliv isn't just for hard-core athletes and intrepid explorers. Friluftsliv can also mean long strolls with friends, picnics, a leisurely afternoon bike ride, or walking the dog on a chilly morning. There's even a special word, *utepils*, for drinking a beer outdoors.*

"Most people think it's healthy, it's social," Heimdal says. "You get kind of a time-out from cell phones and computers ... being outdoors and in nature, it's one of the best places to relax." [What is 'friluftsliv'? How an idea of outdoor living could help us this winter | National Geographic](#)

While it's fairly easy to set goals, actual behavior change is more challenging. It may be helpful to write a description of what the aimed for behavior looks like with specific times and locations identified. For example, if I want to increase my time outside enjoying the benefits of exercise and fresh air, I might commit to taking a 30-minute walk around the local fields and orchard on 3 mornings every week after my grandkids have left for pre-school. I will keep track of my accomplishments by putting a green "happy face" sticker on my weekly pocket calendar on the days I do my nature walks. For accountability, I'll share my *friluftsliv* behaviors with my family and with Askeladden friends at our next meeting.

I encourage each of you to ponder ways you might incorporate more *friluftsliv* into your daily life. Here's to a healthier and more robustly Norwegian 2024!

Please join us online on Sunday, January 14th, at 2 p.m. for a program on Norwegian genealogy. Askeladden members are asked to stay online after the program for a brief business meeting so we can install our officers for 2024.

Gail Thompson-Hadley

2024 Askeladden Scholarship Opportunities

If you have children or grandchildren starting college next year or continuing as an undergraduate student, they may be considered for a scholarship awarded by Askeladden Lodge. The 2024 budget allows for up to three \$1,000 scholarships.

Applications and required documents for the 2024 Askeladden Myrtle Beinhauer Scholarships are due by March 15, 2024. The online application form with guidelines can be downloaded here and then edited:

<http://bit.ly/3rAZ6uT>

Being awarded a Lodge scholarship one year neither precludes a student from winning or guarantees that student will win it in subsequent years.

The application process is not complicated, but it does require a little planning to gather the required information – such as letters of recommendation and transcripts – so have your eligible student begin the process today. And verify your Sons of Norway dues are up to date.

Myrtle Beinhauer Scholarship Recipients

Elizabeth Kraatz

Dr. Myrtle Beinhauer was a founding member of the Askeladden Lodge. As an educator who valued the transformative power of learning, she would be heartened to know that our Lodge provides generous scholarship support to young people associated with Askeladden. It is because of Myrtle's benevolence to our Lodge that we are able to offer students an opportunity to receive a scholarship in her name. She herself left a generous bequest to the Sons of Norway Foundation to support the studies of Sons of Norway members throughout the US. The four winners of the 2023 Myrtle Beinhauer Scholarship from the Foundation were announced on page 23 of the Sept/Oct *Viking* magazine: Luke Bothun (Wheaton College), Scott Glueckert (California State University - East Bay), Lilia Johnson (Bucknell University), and Milo Johnson (Oregon State University). The Askeladden Lodge wishes each of them a successful academic year!

Combatting the Long Winter

As winter approaches and the days get darker, it is common for moods to do the same. In fact, many people suffer from seasonal affective disorder during this time of year. With this knowledge, how can we be proactive in combating the effects of a long winter? Perhaps we take notes from residents in Tromsø, Norway. During the winter months in Tromsø, there are only two to three hours of indirect sunlight, however its inhabitants don't seem to be as affected by seasonal sadness as one might think.

A study done at the University of Tromsø found that sleep was slightly disturbed but there was "no increase in mental distress during the winter." Health psychologist, Kari Leibowitz, concluded that one's mindset was the vital factor in determining how they would be affected by the winter. A positive mindset toward stressful events, such as a dark wintertime, not only enhanced moods but also influenced physiological responses. Amazingly enough, she also found that attitudes increased with latitude showing that positive thoughts were present where they were most needed.






SONS of NORWAY

January
2024

Askeladden Lodge 5-610

507 Clinton Ave
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

JANUAR KALENDER

-  • Januar 1 - Nyttårsdag - New Year's Day
- Januar 6 - Helligtrekongersdag - Epiphany
- **Januar 14** - **Askeladden Lodge ONLINE meeting 2 p.m.**
-  • Januar 15 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Januar 16 - Sønner av Norge - Sons of Norway founded, 1895
-  • Januar 21 - H.R.H. Princess Ingrid Alexandra 2004
- Februar 2 - last day to submit *Askeladden News* articles.

Gratulerer med dagen!

Fødselsdag Hilsener

January Birthdays

Scott Erickson	Karn Erlandson
Brett Jensen	Yael Astrid Lilly
Aric Nesbitt	Magnus Selden

NOTICE: January's meeting is an **online** event only. Join us from your computer, tablet, or smart phone.

Askeladden Lodge Library

www.librarything.com/catalog/Sonsofnorway

Contact Curtis Cleveland with questions or to reserve resources.



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.