



Sons of Norway Fagernes Lodge 5-616

April May June 2026

Newsletter



We meet the fourth Saturday each month unless otherwise noted.



Fagernes Lodge meeting location is at Blair Lutheran Church, 126 S Peterson Ave, Blair, unless otherwise noted.

Upcoming Events

April 18, 9:00 -12:00

Frokost and Bake Sale,

April 25, 1:00, Russia and the Vikings by Program Committee. Servers: Rowekamp and Trim

May 15, 11:30, Meal at Rise and Shine; **2:00** Program at Grand View

May 24, Parade in Arcadia

June 17, Fyrbal in Blair Park



Long-time member of Fagernes Lodge, Charlotte Dahl, celebrated her 90th birthday in February. There was a party at her home in Blair. She is pictured with 2 of her sisters. Many lodge members attended her party.

Stamps for the Wounded can use our cancelled stamps. Please trim them yourself to a 1/4 inch border all around. Give to Fran Instenes at one of our meetings.



On March 21, 2026, we bid farewell to Shirley Stanford at a service at Blair Lutheran Church. Several lodge members attended the service.

We sorely miss Shirley's enthusiasm and bright smile. She was always so kind and treated everyone with respect and grace. We were honored to have her as a part of our lodge. See her obituary on page 3.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY! Due to privacy concerns, only the month is listed

April Peter Fetsch, Rafael Hanson, Gavin Instenes, Jescey Thompson, Eileen Trim, Nettie Weihrouch

May Marilyn Bjorge, Shawn Chance, Audiah Christiansen, Fran Instenes, Weston Rowekamp, Leland Wier

June Russell Glomstad, Krista Rowekamp

From our President Leland Wier

What a roller coaster we've had with the weather this first quarter of the year. Especially March....blizzard one weekend...70 degrees the next!

I recently found out more information about my grandfather's family, going back to the 1700's. What a tremendous effort it takes to follow the line back, as the children took their father's first name and added son or datter. Kudos to the person who did an amazing amount of research. Genealogy is a fascinating search.

We remember with sadness the loss of 5 lodge members in the last year: Shirley Stanford, Don and Virginia Ronning, Verle Austad, and Lynn Thompson. It takes a lot of effort nowadays to attract new members to the lodge. We must keep trying.

Parade season starts soon, and we hope to have a very successful Frokost and Bake Sale. Then, we celebrate with our cousins overseas on Syttende Mai!

Fra presidenten din, Leland Wier



Leland Wier

New Forest Finn Museum in Grue

The Norwegian Forest Finn Museum of southeastern Norway hosted its opening ceremony in October 2025. The ethnic group is a minority in southeastern Norway, with the name skogfinnene—Forest Finns—referring to the descendants of Finns who first immigrated to Sweden in the 16th century and then migrated to Norway in the 1640s.

The museum has been 25 years in the making and was a joint effort by four institutions of cultural preservation. Opening events featured tours, speeches and the typical Forest Finnish dish motti, roasted oat porridge served with fried pork, pork fat and lingonberries.

Her Majesty Queen Sonja opened the new building that lies in Finnskogen (The Finnish Forest). Along with the leader of Young Forest Finns, Marikken Bruvold, she cut a rope covered with birch bark.

The Queen called Forest Finn culture part of Norway's history, which needs to be preserved and said that the museum "is like a cathedral, with pillars that give the impression that you are out in the forest."

COMING UP AT FAGERNES 5-616

APRIL - Our Big Event, The **Frokost and Bake Sale**, will be on **April 18th, from 9:00 - 12:00**. Workers needed for the kitchen and sale floor, and discussion will happen at the March meeting for who will bring what supplies. Get those ovens baking!!

April 25 - Our regular meeting, with a program about Russia and the Vikings will be brought to us by members of the Program Committee

MAY 15 - We will eat the Syttende Mai meal at Rise and Shine Restaurant in Blair at 11:30. Grand View setting for our Syttende Mai program at 2:00, which will be led by Todd Fetsch. Our first parade of the season will be the Broiler Days Parade in Arcadia on **May 24th**.

June 17th at 6:00 is the Fyrbal at Blair Park. It is a potluck meal, so bring something yummy. The Osseo Lodge, Trygvason, will be our guests.

Shirley M. Stanford Obituary

We bid farewell to Shirley M. Stanford of Blair, Wisconsin, whose journey of life gracefully concluded on February 13, 2026 at the age of 93. Shirley touched countless lives with warmth and kindness, leaving behind cherished memories that will forever echo in hearts. Family and friends are welcome to leave their condolences on this memorial page and share them with the family.

In the quiet moments of reflection, let us honor Shirley's memory by embracing the beauty of each fleeting moment, knowing that her spirit resides in the eternal tapestry of existence, forever woven into the fabric of our hearts.

She was predeceased by: her parents, Clifford Hvass and Mildred Hvass; her husband Donald Stanford; her sister Marlys Hammer; and her great grandchild Millie Simonson. She is survived by: her daughters, Sheryl Johnson (Allyn), Tammy Simonson (Kent) and Karen Thompson (James); and her sister Carol Weber. She is also survived by seven grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren.

Visitation was held on Saturday, March 21st 2026 from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the Blair Lutheran Church West (126 S Peterson Ave, Blair, WI 54616). A memorial service was held on Saturday, March 21st 2026 at 12:00 PM

What Is Syttende Mai and Why Celebrate?

Syttende Mai, or Constitution Day, is Norway's National Day celebrated on May 17th each year, marking the signing of the Norwegian Constitution in 1814. The day is characterized by parades, traditional costumes, and various festivities, emphasizing national pride and community spirit.

Overview of Syttende Mai

Syttende Mai, also known as Norwegian Constitution Day, is celebrated on May 17 each year. It commemorates the signing of the Norwegian Constitution in 1814, marking Norway's independence from Denmark. This day is a significant national holiday in Norway, symbolizing unity, independence, and national pride.

Celebrations and Traditions

Parades and Activities

Children's Parades: Central to the celebrations, these parades feature children dressed in traditional costumes called bunads, waving flags, and marching with school bands.

Community Events: Activities include speeches, games, and various festivities that bring families and communities together.

Food and Drink

Traditional foods enjoyed during Syttende Mai include:

Hot dogs wrapped in lefse

Ice cream

Kransekake (a traditional cake)

Krokaner (caramelized almond candy)

Significance

Syttende Mai is not just a celebration of Norway's history; it also represents the values of democracy and equality. The parades, especially those involving children, symbolize hope for the future and the importance of preserving Norwegian culture.

This day is celebrated not only in Norway but also in Norwegian communities worldwide, showcasing the global reach of Norwegian heritage.

(This article is the result of the question, "What is Syttende Mai"? and was generated by Artificial Intelligence.)

LaVonne Wier, Fagernes Secretary & District 5 Representative

I've had a busy first part of the year with Sons of Norway. I had to reacquaint myself with how to do a newsletter and put it together. I was at the Barnebirke in Hayward on February 19th. The location of our Cookie Table in the Expo Center was perfect! I was able to talk to many families about Masse Moro and generate interest in going to camp. The poster with the QR code was great, as people could click on it and look at the information later. I hope at least some of those families will be sending a camper to Masse Moro this year. We also gave away hundreds of dozens of cookies. The Cookie Tent was in Cable due to the lack of snow in Hayward. I didn't get up there to see the race. By the way, Masse Moro could use more volunteers. Go to www.massemoro.org to read about the camp. Oh, yes, and thanks for the cookies you donated!

I introduced the Adopt-A-School Reading Program to the 2nd - 5th graders at Etrick Elementary at the end of February. There was a lot of interest in participating! The program will run from March - April, and awards will be given out in May.

On March 13-14, I was at a District 5 Board Meeting in Rockford, IL. A big item discussed was the convention in Stoughton in August. We have our delegates and alternates chosen. It sounds like a really fun time. Non-delegates can attend for a small fee, and take in the classes and trips that are planned. I told the board about the business card to hand out and the poster recently made that use "old and new school" methods to advertise the lodge. Publicity of any kind is better than none at all! By the way, I hope some of you are actually handing out the new business card to people who might be interested in being part of our lodge. Remember to invite them to a meeting when you give them the card.

King Harald Opens Sámi Parliament

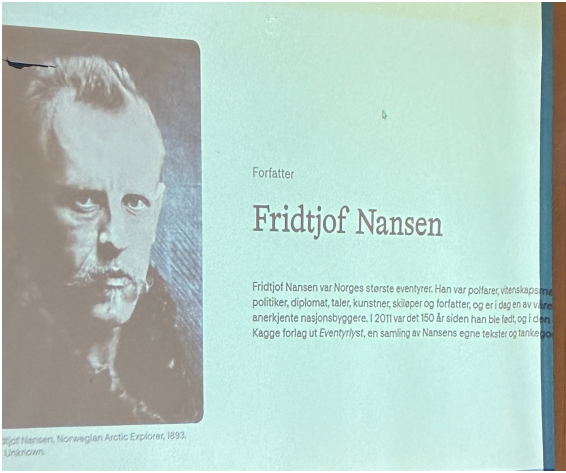
The 10th Sámi Parliament, held October 15, 2025, in Karasjok, Norway was opened by a special guest. The King of Norway, His Majesty King Harald, was present to perform the ceremonial opening. Also in attendance was His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon.

There was an extensive crowd gathered to see the King and Crown Prince enter the Sámi Parliament. Many students from Troms also traveled to the event to see the King and other Sámi institutions.

In his speech, the King spoke of the reconciliation work that is going on with the Sámi people. He highlighted the importance of feeling proud of one's origins and encouraged all to add to the public conversation.

The Sámi Parliament functions as a central voice for the interests of Sámi people with the Norwegian government and the Storting. It was established to help safeguard the traditions, culture and language of Sámi people. The Parliament's elections event occurs every four years and is where they vote on representatives. Silje Karine Muotka, President of the Sámi Parliament, felt very grateful for the King's presence and knows it means so much to the entire Sámi population.

From Around the Lodge



Todd Fetsch told us about Fridtjof Nansen, a fascinating Norwegian who did a multitude of adventures. He was a Nobel Prize winner, and accomplished so many things, including exploring the Arctic.



Lamoine Jacobs shared his experiences about ski jumping during the January 2026 program on Sonja Henje, which was presented by Todd Fetsch.

The Reading Program at Etrick Elementary has 49 books for the children to read and make a book report. A good portion were signed out by the first of four groups of children. With a two-month program, they should all have the opportunity to choose the books they wish to read.



Scientists: Why knitting is the key to inner peace

A Swedish study shows that knitting is good for more than just your wardrobe. It offers mental benefits that are of great value.

Traditionally, knitting has been a pleasant and calming activity that makes us think of grandmothers and older aunts. But modern and internationally renowned knitting luminaries like Lærke Bagger have given knitting a funky twist, making it a super popular hobby for all ages.

Easier to handle life

A study from the University of Gothenburg shows that people with mental health problems can use knitting as a form of medicine.

The researchers investigated what people with mental health problems themselves have to say about how knitting affects their situation. A total of 600 statements were collected from Ravelry, a free, English-language social network dedicated to knitting, crocheting, weaving, felting and yarn production. The collected statements were then analyzed using recognized qualitative analysis methods.

Three positive effects

The results of the analysis revealed three ways in which knitting is beneficial to health. It helps people to calm down and relax. As a hobby, it also gives people an identity as knitters in an informal setting. Finally, knitting helps to structure life and has a beneficial impact on mental health.

Overall, the knitters who participated in the study experienced their hobby as a highly valued activity that had a beneficial effect on their health, both in the short and long term. Some of the knitters had also observed a change in their mental processes, explaining that it was easier for them to think clearly and control their thoughts when they were knitting.

“Occupational therapists’ job is to make people’s lives work. There is clearly a potential in knitting needles and yarn that healthcare should absolutely not underestimate,” they write. The Swedish study is not alone. A 2007 Harvard Medical School study, for example, showed that knitting stimulates the body’s natural relaxation and lowers the heart rate by an average of 11 beats per minute—which lowers overall blood pressure.

GOT CULTURAL SKILLS? Knitting is Unit 6 in Cultural Skills on the www.sofn.com website.

If you knit, you could earn a cultural skills award!



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Easter Delight – Rakfisk

This Norwegian delicacy is a traditional Easter supper eaten throughout much of Norway. Rakfisk is fermented fish, commonly made from fresh trout.



Ingredients:

Filet of rakfisk*, cut into small pieces

Lefse

Sour cream

1 red onion, sliced very thinly

Directions:

Spread the rakfisk over a piece of lefse. Top it with a dollop of sour cream and slices of the red onion. Roll up the lefse, cut it, and enjoy!