



SONS of NORWAY



April 2021

Walworth County, WI

Norsemen of the Lakes 5-650

Greetings, Norsemen: Wow! Is it ever hot here in AZ. Temps have been in the 90s for the last few days. Thank goodness for night temps in the 60s as my father's air conditioner isn't working.

I imagine quite a few of us have received vaccinations now and have been getting out a little more with the improving weather. Now that things are opening up a little, I think it is time to attempt another get together to become reacquainted and attempt to meet again. It seems to me our annual picnic is the perfect time to attempt it. So let's "Come one, Come all" and bring our own meals to the picnic shelter at the Williams Bay park June 8th at 6 p.m. I can't wait to see all of you, Corlene

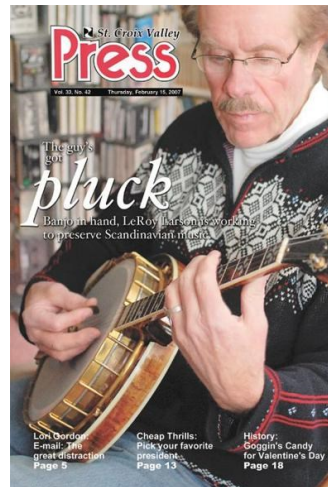


Gratulerer med dagen

April Birthdays

Diane Olson	2nd
Elaine Lundgren	19th
Anne Harrington Hope	30th

Obituary: LeRoy Larson (81) of the Minnesota Scandinavian Ensemble passed away Dec. 25, 2020. The United States has lost one of the most famous Scandinavian musicians of the Upper Midwest. Youtube Video from some friends celebrate the musical legacy of LeRoy Larson and why his work was so important for future musicians. You can watch it by clicking on [this link](#).



Enjoy a profile of Larson written by Jared Schmidt shortly after the 2018 World Records Symposium and posted on the *Sustaining Scandinavian Folk Arts in the Upper Midwest* [site here](#).

There is also a great article about his record collection: Remembering LeRoy Larson. Wisconsin was thrilled when he chose to donate his trove of Scandinavian folk music and related materials—including photographs, interviews, field recordings, and hundreds of 78 rpm records—in establishing the LeRoy Larson Collection. [Saturday Night Old Time -- LeRoy Larson and the Minnesota Scandinavian Ensemble](#).

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Greetings1
- Obituary1
- Book review2
- Arrival of Easter2
- Young Danes Party3
- Roundabout4
- Golf Courses.....5
- Norwegian Surnames6
- Alcohol Sales Smashed ..6

KALENDAR

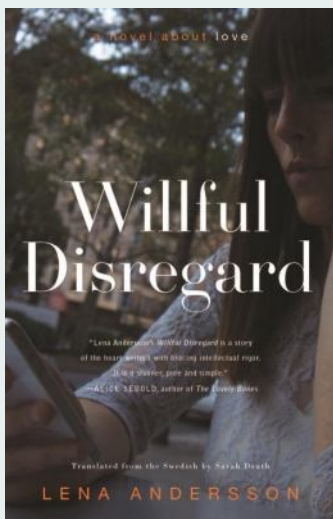
Picnic at Williams Bay park by the Lake, 6 p.m. June 8th.

The Arrival of Spring Has Been Celebrated

Since Ancient Times

PUBLISHED MARCH 30, 2021

The Norwegian American



Winner of the August Prize, Sweden's most prestigious literary award: a novel about a perfectly reasonable woman's descent into the delusions of unrequited love. Ester Nilsson is a sensible person in a sensible relationship. Until the day she is asked to give a lecture on famous artist Hugo Rask. The man himself is in the audience, intrigued and clearly delighted by her fascination with him. When the two meet afterward, she is spellbound.

Ester's life is then intrinsically linked to this meeting and the chain of events that unfolds. She leaves her boyfriend and throws herself into an imaginary relationship with Hugo. She falls deeply in love, and he consumes her thoughts. Indeed, in her own mind she's sure that she and Hugo are a couple.

Slowly and painfully Ester comes to realize that her perception of the relationship is different from his. She's a woman who prides herself on having a rational and analytical mind, but in the face of her overpowering feelings for Hugo, she is too clever and too honest for her own good.

Bitingly funny and darkly fascinating, *Willful Disregard* is a story about total and desperate devotion, and how willingly we betray ourselves in the pursuit of love.

Available at the local library.



Photo: swedennewyork / Flickr
In Sweden, children, both boys and girls, still dress up as påskkäringar or witches the Thursday before Easter. According to legend, witches were the most active in the springtime, right

In Scandinavia, Easter is the time for religious observance, colored eggs, Easter bunnies, and in Sweden, kids dressing up as witches on Maundy Thursday. Witches? This is a clue that there's more behind the word "Easter" than the celebration around the resurrection of Christ.

There are those who maintain that Easter is a pagan festival. This statement is probably more intended to bait Christians into a hot debate rather than engender a discussion about the origins of Easter. There are actually many things that humans have celebrated around Eastertime, some with roots in ancient celebrations.

Springtime, specifically March 19–21, is the time of the vernal equinox in the northern hemisphere, when the sun shines directly down upon the equator. The length of daylight is equal to the length of night.

In the Nordic countries, spring is the time when snow starts to recede, flowers like blåvis (liverleaf) start to bloom, leaves are bursting from their buds, and daylength is getting longer after the dark days of winter. Springtime is a time of rebirth, the resurgence of plants, the return of migratory birds, the increase in the wildlife population (yes, including rabbits), and food becomes more plentiful. Humans can finally start coming out of their homes without wearing heavy coats and mittens.

We know the spring equinox has long been a special time to celebrate. Ancient structures, such as Stonehenge, appear to have portals or towers aligned with the sun's position at the spring equinox. Stonehenge, on Salisbury Plain in England was built over time starting around 3,100 B.C.

The Anglo-Saxon goddess Eostre or Ostara, honored as the bringer of dawn and fertility, is associated with springtime. That's according to a monk named Bede, who lived in northern England (Northumbria) in A.D. 672. While it's possible Bede invented the goddess Eostre, Wilhelm Grimm, the younger brother of the Brothers Grimm, insisted that she was indeed part of folklore. He suggests that an old Norse word, *Austra*, may refer to the goddess. At any rate, there is some evidence that the word Easter evolved from Eostre.

Another special day that occurs around springtime is Passover, when people of the Jewish faith celebrate the exodus of the Jews from Egyptian slavery. The Hebrew word for Passover is Pesach or Pasah. The Nordic word for Easter, påske, is thought to have evolved from the word for Passover.

In the period between 1600 and the early 1800s, the pagan practice of witchcraft attracted the attention of the Christian church and was condemned as being associated with the devil. The spring season was the time that witches were assumed to be the most active, greasing their broomsticks with an ointment that enabled them to ride them through the air. Alleged witches were persecuted, if not outright burned at the stake, the punishment for witchcraft according to Swedish law in the late 1600s.

After the dark days of the witch craze, which occurred outside of Sweden as well, the belief in magic and witchcraft faded, but dressing up as a påskekäring (Swedish for “Easter witch”) became a way to frighten people. This then became more of a joke, and then a tradition. Dressing up as a witch (both boys and

girls) in springtime became associated with the Thursday before Easter.

*Image: Johannes Gehrts / Wikimedia Commons
The Anglo-Saxon goddess Eostre or Ostara was honored as the bringer of dawn and fertility.*

What about Easter eggs? Easter eggs, also called Paschal eggs, are dyed bright colors and become the subject of egg rolling contests, egg hunts, and

gifts. Eggs are a traditional symbol of fertility and rebirth. It's thought that for early Christians, the egg was a symbol of the empty tomb of Jesus. Some sources trace Easter eggs back to Ostara as a symbol of rebirth, and the hare her sacred companion. Originated among German Lutherans, the Easter bunny circulated the community and judged whether children were naughty or nice (similar to Santa Claus).

So we have many traditions surrounding Easter, which are practiced by Christians and non-Christians, both here and in Scandinavia. Whether it's the Easter bunny delivering a basket of eggs, going to church, planting flower bulbs, or celebrating the lengthening days by the spring equinox—it's all part of the human experience.

Confirmations and 'nonfirmations' mean parties for young Danes | April–June

Between the ages of 14–17, most young Christian Danes go through the ritual process of a church confirmation. In the run-up, children begin group classes in the autumn prior to learning the lessons of the church. After the confirmation ceremony, in which girls wear all white and boys dress smartly, each family hosts a huge party. Here, confirmation gifts, which are usually large sums of money, are offered to the confirmer.

Many non-religious families also choose to hold their own 'nonfirmations', a secular coming of age celebration complete with a party. The Monday following these celebrations is known as *Blå Mandag*, or Blue Monday, where the teens spend their new-found windfalls.

2021 Furniture Designer is Yuki Abe
22 February 2021

The Finnish Association of Interior Architects, SIO, has elected **Yuki Abe** as the 2021 Furniture Designer. Yuki Abe (b. 1974) graduated from the University of Art and Design, UIAH (Helsinki), as an interior architect and furniture designer in 2005 and had studied before that at the Lahti Institute of Design as well as the Musashino Art University in Tokyo.

Abe works in Mottowasabi Oy founded by him. He is also a partner and a design director at Luomo Oy. Yuki Abe has mainly designed furniture for the Finnish furniture company Vivero, which is known for its high-quality Finnish furniture for public spaces, although he has also designed tables for Selka-line and acoustic partitions for Barrisol.

According to the jury, furniture designed by Yuki Abe is sympathetic and playful with an emphasis on polished details and usability. Abe's designs are distinctive and inventive, and the final products combine Japanese and Finnish minimalistic ethics beautifully. Abe is productive and has gained success in a challenging field; Finnish furniture design needs talents like him and high-quality products with a twist.

This year, the decision based on the suggestions and applications was made by the interior architect (SIO) **Tiina Närkki** from the 2020 Interior Architecture Agency; the interior architect (SIO) **Ari Kanerva**, the previous Furniture Designer of the Year; the interior architect (SIO) **Petra Lassenius**, and the architect (SAFA) **Eero Lundén**. SIO's secretary-general, **Minna Borg**, acted as the secretary of the board.

Inside the Faroe Islands’ “Revolutionary” Underwater Roundabout



image credit: ESTUNLAR.FO

Living on an island nation has its challenges, not the least of which is transportation. In the year 2000, the government of the Faroe Islands approved construction of the country’s first underwater commuter tunnel. A boon to air travel, the tunnel made it easy to drive between the airport on Vagar Island and the capital city of Tórshavn on Streymoy, the largest of the islands. Building on that success, in 2014 the Faroese Parliament started planning an even more ambitious underwater endeavor.

After three years of construction, the new “Eysturoyartunnilin” tunnel system was opened for commuters in December of 2020. At the heart of this unusual road network is the world’s first underwater roundabout.

Part sculpture, part thoroughfare

Glowing like a primordial jellyfish near the eastern end of the concourse, the massive traffic circle—like the rest of the nearly 7 mile tunnel—features walls that appear to be rough-hewn out of the sea bed itself. Eerie shapes are illuminated by washes of yellow, green and blue light, reminiscent of an underground aurora. A metal sculpture created by renowned Faroese artist Tróndur Patursson wraps around the core of the roundabout, featuring human silhouettes performing a traditional circle dance.

While beautiful, the tunnel is, of course, also practical. It has reduced travel time between the capital city to the busy seaport of Runavík from 74 minutes to only 16 minutes, offering a great convenience for residents and tourists alike. Entering the tunnel costs a toll of about \$12 one way, but locals can sign up for a yearly pass to reduce the expense.

The Faroe Islands now features a total of 19 traffic tunnels connecting its 18 major islands. A 20th tunnel is under construction and will connect Sandoy and Streymoy.

Norway’s neighbor to the west

The rugged Faroe Islands rise from the frigid north Atlantic about halfway between Iceland and Norway, and only 200 miles northwest of the Shetland Islands of Scotland. After wresting control from the Irish monks who first inhabited the islands, the Vikings made themselves at home starting around 400 to 600 AD. Medieval visitors referred to the islands as a paradise of birds, and were impressed by the vast crowds of sheep that roamed freely in the green, rocky and treeless landscapes. The archipelago became a part of the Kingdom of Norway in 1035, but was taken over by the Danes in the late 1300s.

Now home to about 53,000 people, the Faroe Islands is a self-governing archipelago of 18 islands, though it is still officially part of the Kingdom of Denmark. The primary language is Faroese, whose closest linguistic cousins are Icelandic and Old Norse. Scandinavian culture and heritage persist in the Faroes, as do the sheep, which now number in the 70,000s.

Iceland's Most Beautiful Golf Courses

Iceland may seem like an unlikely place to get in an amazing round of golf, but don't be fooled! This unique and [beautiful country](#) is packed with golf courses, many of which provide spectacular views and challenging gameplay. If you're going to be in the area, don't miss your chance to tick one of these off your bucket list. Even better if you can manage to get in the midnight round! Here are just a few of Iceland's most beautiful golf courses.

[Geysir Golf Club](#)

Golfers will find this course demanding, as you'll have to navigate your way over two rivers while watching **geothermal hot springs** shoot boiling water up into the sky at regular intervals (and trying not to be distracted). Each hole on this 9-hole, par-37 course is named after the [hot springs](#) that run alongside the course. Shaped by the natural terrain, each hole is a challenge.

It's advisable to take extra golf balls with you when playing this course. Between the rivers and the shrub-laden roughs, you'll likely lose a few!

[Akureyri Golf Club](#)

This golf course should be on your bucket list. The 18-hole, par-71 course is the most northerly course in the world. Breathtaking views can be seen from the 4th and 5th golf tees, especially if you're lucky enough to catch the sunrise over Eyjafjörður Bay. If you're up for a challenge, enter [The Arctic Open Golf Championship](#), where you'll be playing golf at midnight while the sun is still shining.

[Brautarholt Golf Course](#)

Brautarholt features magnificent views of the sea, undulating hills, and fairways that follow the natural contours of the coastline. This golf course has 12 holes, and you can choose from playing the first 9 twice, par-70, or you can play 21 holes —12+9. The elevated first hole features a spectacular green sitting on top of a cliff, with a sheer drop into the ocean to your right. You'll find each hole a beautiful challenge.

[Westman Islands Golf Course](#)

Is there anything more adventurous than playing a round of golf in an old volcano? This championship course will have you teeing off with volcanic walls as your backdrop, while winds from the Atlantic ocean will make tracking the course more of a challenge. You have lush greens, fantastic views of the volcano on the one side, the Atlantic ocean on the other, and an array of wildlife. These things make this short but open golf course one of the best and most challenging in the world on which to play.

[Borgarnes Golf Course](#)

You could consider Borgarnes to be a parkland golf course, and you'll find the fairways lined with trees, rocky hills, and water hazards. You'll have spectacular views of the mountains and the bay from each hole on this 18-hole, par-71 course. The 8th hole is a short par -3 with an island green, and with some luck, the wind will be in your favor! You'll find this championship golf course to be just as challenging as it is spectacular.



From the Westman Islands Golf Course.
Photo/GSÍ Jordan Fuller jordan@golfinfluence.net

Most Popular Norwegian Surnames

In a recent survey published by [Statistics Norway](#), 22.4% of Norway's population had a name ending "-sen". But new children born in the same year only 18.4% of them had "-sen" as a suffix.

There are rarely sudden shifts in the lists compiled, generally then fluctuate steadily. The 20 most common surnames in that list from 2015, are mostly ending in "-sen", patronymic names. Only the toponymic names Berg, Dahl, Haugen and Haugen, derived from the landscape, buck the trend.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Hansen (53,011) | 11. Johnsen (20,650) |
| 2. Johansen (50,088) | 12. Pettersen (20,101) |
| 3. Olsen (49,303) | 13. Eriksen (19,136) |
| 4. Larsen (37,869) | 14. Berg (18,080) |
| 5. Andersen (37,025) | 15. Haugen (14 346) |
| 6. Pedersen (35,145) | 16. Hagen (14,073) |
| 7. Nilsen (34,734) | 17. Johannessen (13,286) |
| 8. Kristiansen (23,397) | 18. Andreassen (12,100) |
| 9. Jensen (22,879) | 19. Jacobsen (11,906) |
| 10. Karlsen (21,234) | 20. Dahl (11,503) |

Norway's Alcohol Sales Record Smashed in 2020

March 6, 2021 by David Nikel

Purchases of alcohol within Norway jumped by 20% last year. But Norwegians weren't necessarily drinking more.

The global health crisis has led to serious economic impact in Norway and around the world. Now, some of the more curious economic impacts on 2020 start to be revealed. New data from Statistics Norway (SSB) shows more alcohol was bought in Norway last year than ever before.

Norway alcohol stats in 2020

During the year of lockdowns and travel restrictions, Norwegians bought 14 million liters of spirits. Norway's population of 5.3 million also shelled out for 105.2 million liters of wine and 278.2 million liters of beer. That corresponds to 32.1 million liters of pure alcohol and is 5.5 million liters more than was sold in 2019.

The average adult in Norway bought 3.2 liters of spirits, 23.7 liters of wine and 62.7 liters of beer. Wine sales were especially high in Norway in 2020.

But did Norwegians drink more in 2020?

These figures might seem alarming, as they signify that many Norwegians turned to the bottle during the lockdowns. But is that really true? As with most Norway stats, dig a little deeper and you'll find the story behind the numbers.

Norway's alcohol sales are relatively easy to track because of the single sales point—the state-run off license Vinmonopolet—for all drinks above 4.7% ABV. But because of high taxes and duties on alcohol in Norway, many Norwegians get much or all of their alcohol from elsewhere, where sales are not as easily tracked.

Closed borders change shopping habits

International travel restrictions have led to far fewer people stocking up on spirits and wines from the duty-free stores. Meanwhile, the Swedish border closure led to a collapse in cross-border shopping trips. Duty free shopping plummeted in 2020. Known colloquially as a harrytur, cross-border shopping trips to Sweden have long been popular with Norwegians wanting to stock up on (relatively) cheap meat, alcohol and sweets.

But the border closure for several periods in 2020 meant the only option for Norwegians looking for alcohol was to shop at home. This means sales at Vinmonopolet skyrocketed.

SSB consultant Lars Jacob Dale told NRK that there could be other factors behind the numbers. However, the border closures are "clearly the dominant factor," he said.