



# SONS of NORWAY



Dec. 2022

Walworth County, WI

## Norsemen of the Lakes 5-650

I am sending the December newsletter out early so we all know the updates about our Christmas banquet. We didn't seem to have many people interested in Hawk's View, perhaps because of the price. Anyway, we have decided to have a potluck at the Community Center at Advia Credit Union, our usual meeting location. We will still have it on Dec. 4th at 1 p.m. so everyone will be able to make it home before it gets dark.

For our celebration, wear your Nordic sweaters or bunads if you have one. Also, we will have music around a Christmas tree and a \$10 game-gift exchange as well (optional).

The dinner will be a potluck, and an email has been sent out to sign up for a few items to make sure we have a rounded-out menu. I hope we will have a great attendance. I'm sure it will be a merry time.

Call me if you have any questions at all. Corlene



## Sons of Norway Book Club

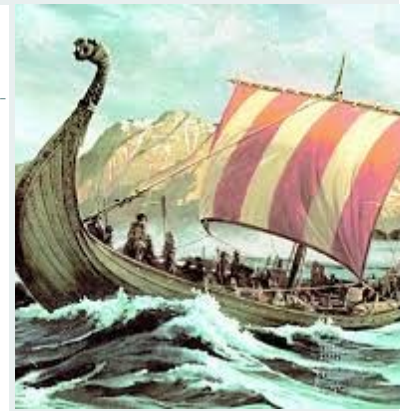
Open to all members!

All Sons of Norway members are invited to join this virtual book club, regardless of where they live. The popular book club is rapidly growing and in most months, we've added an additional meeting time so more members can take part.

On Dec. 12th, a author interview will be presented on *Fiddling with Fate* a Chloe Ellefson Mystery #10 by Kathleen Ernst. These novels are set in Wisconsin.

Dec. 29th will be a meeting discussing *For the Love of God* by Eric Dregni and a Harry Hole episode of *The Redbreast* by Jo Nesboe.

For information on the Sons of Norway Book Club and the meeting link, send an e-mail to Bill Browning at [SonsofNorwayBookClub@gmail.com](mailto:SonsofNorwayBookClub@gmail.com).



### Gratulerer med dagen

#### December Birthdays

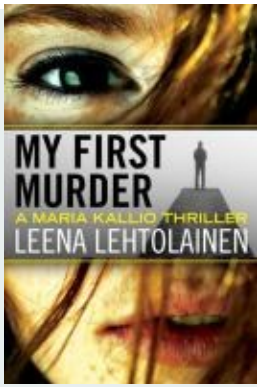
Emily Henderson	5th
Valerie Wick	8th
Haley Hansen	26th
Doris Wild	29th

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#### CALENDAR

**Next meeting:**  
Christmas Potluck  
Sunday, Dec. 4th  
at 1 p.m.  
Advia Credit  
Union  
837 No. Wisconsin  
St. Elkhorn, WI



Maria Kallio has just been assigned her first murder investigation. To prove to herself and her squad that she has what it takes to be a detective, she'll have to solve the death of Tommi Peltonen. Found floating facedown at the water's edge of his Helsinki villa, Tommi had invited his choir group to spend a weekend at his retreat. But beneath the choir's seemingly tight-knit bonds seethed bitter passion and jealousy. As Maria sets out to determine the difference between friends and foes, she uncovers the victim's unsavory past—and motives for all seven suspects. Now it's up to her to untangle a complex set of clues before the killer strikes again.

Available in the Wisconsin Library System.

## 'Exceptional' Viking Silver Discovery in Central

**A treasure trove of silver fragments from the Viking Age emerged from the soil in Stjørdal, near Trondheim. The find has caused a stir among archaeologists.**

The unusual discovery of 46 silver objects believed to date from the Viking Age was found just a few centimeters below the ground. It consists of two finger rings together with fragments of coins and other jewelry. The find consists of a total of 46 objects in silver. Photo: Birgit Maixner, NTNU Science Museum.



Unlike some [Viking discoveries](#) that are made in connection with construction work, this find was made purely by chance.

### Found with a metal detector

Pawel Bednarski made the discovery just before Christmas last year. He took advantage of a period of good weather to go out into a field with his metal detector. The find took place on a plain in Stjørdal, which is close to Trondheim Airport in central Norway.

"The first thing I found was a small ring, which at first glance did not look particularly interesting. Then another ring appeared. And then a piece of a bangle," Bednarski told [Gemini.no](#), which first reported the case.

Eventually, he had unearthed a whole pile of small silver objects between two and seven centimeters below the ground.

Stjørdal is home to Trondheim Airport.

"The objects were covered in clay, so it was not so easy to see what they looked like. It was only when I got home and rinsed one of the bangle pieces in water that I realized that this was an exciting find," he added.

### Archaeologists confirmed the find



As is required, Bednarski submitted the find to county archaeologists. They confirmed that the find was of interest and likely [from the Viking Age](#), but it was only when NTNU Science Museum became involved that the scale of the find became clear.

"This is a rather exceptional find," said NTNU Science Museum researcher and archaeologist

Birgit Maixner. "It has been many years since such a large treasure find from the Viking Age has been made in Norway."

### The Viking silver find in detail

So, what's in the find? There were 46 objects in silver. Apart from two finger rings, there were fragments of other things including coins, a necklace, bracelets, and chains.

Two silver finger rings from the find. Photo: Birgit Maixner / NTNU Science Museum.

The fact that most of the pieces were broken into fragments can be explained by what we know about the [economy of the Vikings](#), according to Maixner.

“This find is from a time when silver pieces that were weighed were used as a means of payment. This system is called the weight economy and was in use in the transition between the barter economy and the coin economy,” she said.

While coins had been in use elsewhere in Europe much earlier, [coins were only minted in Norway](#) towards the end of the Viking Age. The finger rings discovered are often part of similar finds, but rarely found in Viking Age grave. According to Maixner, this suggests they were used for payment rather than jewelry.

### Arab coins among the collection

Arabic coins were the biggest source of silver in the Viking Age and were among the find in Stjørdal. The fur trade was one of the main reasons they came to Scandinavia.

Arabic coins were among the Stjørdal Viking silver find. Photo: Birgit Maixner / NTNU Science Museum.



Only four out of seven coins from this find have been dated, but these date from the 8th century. That's older than most of the other Arab coins that have been discovered in Norway.

“The relatively old age of the Islamic coins, style of bracelets and the large degree of fragmentation of most of the objects is more typical of treasure finds from Denmark than from Norway. These features also make it likely to assume that the treasure is from around 900 AD,” explained Maixner.

### A place of trade during the Viking Age

Findings of silver and Viking Age coins on the plain indicate that trading activities took place in this area. Previously, a Viking Age grave was discovered at the nearby farm Moksnes. Among other things, this contained a bowl scale used to weight silver.

Why this silver was buried remains a mystery. “Perhaps the owner of the silver treasure found the trading post unsafe and hid their valuables in the entrance area to the plain. Here it remained for about 1,100 years,” said Maixner.

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## Problematic Seagulls in Tromsø

An interesting problem has left the city of Tromsø, Norway, searching for solutions. This issue has been compared to the rat infestation in Paris, but these “rats” in Tromsø can fly, and are known as seagulls.

A shortage of nesting areas for seagulls in the area has caused downtown Tromsø to be flooded with seagulls. It has become problematic in recent years and has left business owners and citizens very frustrated. Not only do the seagulls leave the city landscape covered in droppings, they also are quite noisy and have a habit of stealing people’s food. Political editor of Nordlys news, Skjalg Fjellheim, believes the city looks like a bird mountain and says it is [“self-harm for Tromsø’s reputation.”](#) In a recent study, 42.6% of respondents agreed that the birds are a “very big problem.” Furthermore, 70% of those questioned think there needs to be measures implemented to reduce the number of seagulls in the city.

Although the majority agree that the seagull population in the city center needs to be reduced, it is not that simple. A couple different ideas have been tested to reduce the disturbance of seagulls. For example, a few bird hotels have been constructed outside of the city to allow the seagulls to nest elsewhere. Additionally, some business owners have tried putting spikes on the facades of their building to deter seagulls from nesting. However, these solutions don’t seem to be helping quite enough, so more research and brainstorming will be done. An [added layer of complexity](#) is that the seagulls who breed in Tromsø are threatened species so one must be mindful with how they are handled.

The mayor of Tromsø is interested in setting up a group to make some short and long-term decisions regarding the seagulls. Although they sound like a nuisance to the city, it seems many are hopeful that they can learn to coexist peacefully.



# Norway's Espen Jørstad Wins World Series of Poker

July 20, 2022 by [David Nikel](#)

**Jørstad is the first Norwegian to win the ultimate poker prize. He takes home \$10 million from his victory at the Las Vegas event.**

On an enthralling final day in Vegas, Espen Uhlen Jørstad came out on top of a field of 8,663 participants in the World Series of Poker (WSOP).

*Norway's Espen Jørstad wins World Series of Poker. Photo: Poker GO.*

He beat the Australian Adrian Attenborough heads-up in the \$10,000 buy-in No-limit Hold'em World Championship to take home the \$10 million first prize. That's about 100 million Norwegian kroner. Attenborough won't be too disappointed however, as he took \$6 million for placing second. Third place Michael Duek won \$4 million.

The final will be remembered for Jørstad's trance-like state as he twice waited for Attenborough to make a decision. The Norwegian sat motionless, with his eyes closed behind his sunglasses, giving nothing away to his opponent.

## CELEBRATING WITH HIS MOTHER

The first thing the 34-year-old did after his victory? Call his mother back in Norway. "She cried and struggled to speak. She's my biggest fan, so there was a lot of emotion. It feels really good," Jørstad told reporters.

As for the \$10 million prize, Jørstad has already made some plans for using the money. "My goal has been to reach into the High Roller scene and play more \$25,000 tournaments and stuff like that. I've dipped my toes, but now I have a bigger bankroll to take some shots in those tournaments," said Jørstad.

But he will take some time to prepare. "I need to get in the lab and make sure I'm good enough to play them," he said, adding that he would also "make some very sensible investments. Cryptocurrencies and tech stocks, probably."

## WHO IS ESPEN UHLEN JØRSTAD?

The 34-year-old poker professional comes from Steinkjer in Trøndelag, but lives in London. Most Norwegian poker players live outside Norway because of the country's **relatively harsh laws and tax treatment** on poker compared with other nations.

The win comes just a few months after Jørstad lost what he describes as "a big chunk" of his net worth in the rapid crash of the Terra (LUNA) cryptocurrency. "As a result, my net worth is now significantly lower, and I think it's important for me to not let my ego tell me that I (belong) at these higher stakes tournaments, just because I was playing them a month ago," he said in an **Instagram post**.

President of Norsk Pokerforbund (the Norwegian Poker Association) Sigurd Eskeland told **Dagbladet** that Jørstad's win was no accident: "He is at the very top of the world. He is methodical and works hard with his game to develop. He has been serious for many years about investing and getting where he is."

**TV2's** poker expert Sverre Krogh Sundbø was very impressed, but not surprised, by Jørstad's efforts in Las Vegas. "We are dealing with one of the sharpest poker players in the world," said Sundbø.



# Norway Spruce: A Classic Norwegian Christmas Tree

December 15, 2019 by David Nikel

**The Norway spruce is a large, fast-growing ever-green coniferous tree found throughout the forests of southern and eastern Norway.**

I'm sure you saw the recent negative media coverage of the Norwegian tree gifted to London. The tree in question was a Norway spruce. It's the most dominant tree in Norwegian forests, although it hasn't gained a foothold in the west.

## Introducing the Norway spruce

The tree we are talking about is known as gran in Norwegian and *picea abies* to give it its scientific name.

The tree—part of the pine family—is common in northern Europe and certainly not unique to Norway. When the English got to know the wood as a building material after the Great Fire of London in 1666, it became known in English as *Norway spruce*.

As I've just hinted at there, the tree is used as a building material, and also for paper and furniture. It's also one of the most popular Christmas trees in Europe.

## What does a Norwegian spruce look like?

The Norway spruce can grow up to 165 feet tall. They can grow fast when young. In fact, in the first 25 years under good conditions, it can grow up to 3 feet per year. Once the tree reaches around 65 feet, its growth-rate slows.

Spruces are known for their distinctive look. They have a narrowly tapered crown and branches that often hang and sway. The bark is either pure brown or a grayish-brown, with orange-brown hairless shoots. The leaves are dark green with a slight shine to them.

The seed cones are the largest of any spruce. Typically measuring 3.5 inches to 6 inches long, the cones have blunt-to-sharp triangular pointed scale tips. They mature around 5-7 months after pollination.

A fascinating fact about the Norway spruce is that although it can live for hundreds of years, its roots last even longer. The flat root doesn't normally go into the ground for more than a 3 feet, but it's capable of lasting for tens of thousands of years and giving birth to new genetically identical trees.

This is one of the reasons the tree has survived highly-changeable climatic conditions. During cold periods, spruce roots produce low bushes, while in times of milder temperature they become tall, slender trees.

## Where does the Norway spruce grow?

The Norway spruce grows in the forests of southern, eastern and parts of central Norway. But it also grows all across Scandinavia and parts of northern Europe. Norway spruce distribution map (QGIC geographic information system)

As you can see from the above distribution map, the tree also grows in the Baltic states and parts of central Europe. This range is roughly southwest to the western end of the Alps, and southeast in the Carpathians and Balkans to the far north of Greece.

## The Norway spruce as a Christmas tree

I mentioned earlier Norway's Christmas gift to London. Well, that's actually one of the reasons the Norway spruce is planted so much. Added to its use as a building material, the species is one of the most popular to use as Christmas trees. A Norway Spruce Christmas tree stands in London's Trafalgar Square every December

Reasons for its popularity include its dark green color, conical shape and evergreen nature. In fact, so popular is the spruce that most artificial trees are made to resemble it! The main downside of using a Norway spruce as a Christmas tree is that it sheds its leaves fairly quickly in a warm environment. This is a hardy northern species, after all!



# 13 Fun Facts About Iceland

October 18, 2020 by David Nickel



Continuing our tour of **Scandinavia** and the **Nordic region**, it's time to look at Iceland. The volcanic island in the north Atlantic is known around the world for its hot springs and dramatic scenery.

If you've never been to Iceland, I highly recommend a trip. I have only been once and just for a few days, but that was enough to see that the natural landscapes certainly rival Norway for beauty!

Here are some fun facts you may or may not know about this fascinating Nordic country. Enjoy!

## **1. Iceland's population is smaller than Arlington, Texas**

Statistics Iceland releases population data once per year. According to the latest data released on 1 January, 2020, the population of Iceland is 364,134. Yes, that's all!

As of January 2020, there were 55,354 immigrants living in Iceland, amounting to 15.2% of the population. People born in Poland made up the largest single immigrant group.

## **2. More than 60% of Iceland's residents live in Reykjavík**

More specifically, 233,000 people live in Iceland's "capital region". This comprises the city itself together with the six neighbouring municipalities, which make up by far the biggest urban area in the country.

After Reykjavík, the most populous cities in Iceland are Kópavogur and Hafnarfjörður, both of which are included in the capital region.

## **3. People have lived on Iceland for about 1,200 years**

Iceland was **settled by Viking explorers** sometime in the 9th century. Archaeological evidence suggests earlier temporary settlement, perhaps from Gaelic monks.

## **4. Iceland still uses a patronymic naming system**

There are no family names in Iceland. A patronymic naming system used to be the norm throughout the Nordic region, but now only Iceland adopts it.

Patronymic means that a person's name is based on the name of their parents. This why an Icelander's name will almost always end in -son (son of) or -dóttir (daughter of).

## **5. Your name must be approved**

Iceland has a naming committee that maintains a list of approved given names (first names) along with a list of **banned names**. If you want to name your child with a name that's not on the approved list, you must get permission from this committee.

## **6. The country has more than 100 volcanoes!**

Most people know of Iceland's volcanic activity thanks to the 2010 eruption of Eyjafjallajökull that grounded much of Europe's air traffic for several days.

But the country actually has more than 100 volcanoes, several of which are active. Because of this constant volcanic activity, much of Iceland is covered in lava fields.





## 7. 11% of Iceland consists of glaciers

So with all the volcanic activity, how can the country be called the land of fire and ice? It's simple! Around 11% of the country is covered by glaciers.

The glaciers of Iceland are stunning on their own. But combined with the lava fields and waterfalls, they make up truly stunning landscapes that you won't find anywhere else.

## 8. Iceland has its own fjords

The fjords **aren't just for Norway!** More than 100 fjords pierce Iceland's coastline, clustered into two main groups.

One is in the north-west and the other along the east coast. Both are clearly visible on maps! I visited the **Iceland westfjords** a few years ago and took plenty of photos.

## 9. Europe's first parliament

The country's Þingvellir National Park is home to the first parliament grounds in Europe. Around the year 930, the first parliament met in an area that is now a UNESCO **World Heritage site**.

Over two weeks each year, the Althing open-air assembly set laws and settled disputes. It continued to meet until 1798.

## 10. Iceland isn't an EU member, but...

...as with Norway, it is closely linked to the EU through the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and European Economic Area (EEA) agreement. Iceland is also a member of the **Schengen Area**.

Iceland's participation in these mechanisms allows free movement of people between Iceland and the rest of the Schengen Area. Thousands of Icelandic citizens travel to work or study in the EU each year. Of the foreigners in Iceland, a large majority come from the EU.

## 11. Iceland has its own currency

Iceland does not use the Euro. It has the Icelandic króna. This makes it the second smallest country (by population) after the Seychelles to have its own currency and monetary policy.

## 12. Iceland has no standing army

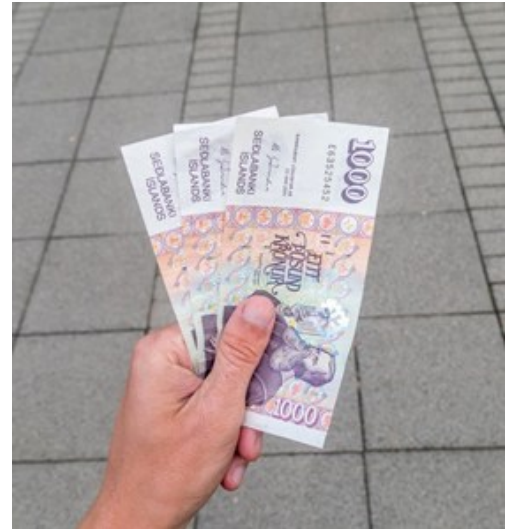
Despite the popularity of **Nordic noir**, violent crime in Iceland is famously low. Iceland is the only NATO country not to have a standing army, air force or navy.

There is a national coastguard, air defence system and crisis response unit (ICRU). The ICRU is a peacekeeping force made up of about 200 staff. However, these employees don't carry arms.

## 13. The country celebrates beer day

Thanks to a 1908 referendum, beer was banned in Iceland from 1915 to 1989. Now it's the most popular alcoholic drink in the country! So much so that on the first of March every year, the country celebrates Beer Day.

Craft beer is crazy popular in Iceland. One brewery uses purely geothermal energy to power its brewing process, while another uses bilberries in a refreshing summer ale. Cheers!



# Watch: Trailer for New Netflix Monster Movie 'Troll'

November 7, 2022 by David Nickel

**The latest movie from Norwegian director Roar Uthaug will have you looking at the mountains a little more closely on your next hike. Watch the trailer for 'Troll'.**



Part of the movie poster for *Troll*. Photo: Netflix.

Are you a fan of monster movies? If you are, I'd wager this upcoming movie might still surprise you. Coming straight to streaming platform Netflix on 1 December, *Troll* is set to make a worldwide splash.

Not to be confused with the 1986 American horror comedy film *Troll* or the terrible *Troll 2* and *Troll 3*, the new *Troll* movie is full on monster action.

Perfect for fans of **Norwegian mythology** and monster movies, *Troll* depicts a scenario in which the fabled Norwegian **mountain Trolls** are real and wake up after a thousand years.

"Deep in the Dovre mountain, something gigantic wakes up after a thousand years in captivity. The creature destroys everything in its path and quickly approaches Oslo. A ragtag group of heroes must come together to try and stop it from wreaking deadly havoc."

## Director of *Troll*

If it reminds you of **Bølgen/The Wave**, known as Norway's "first disaster movie", there's a good reason for that. **Roar Uthaug**, who co-wrote and directed *Troll*, also directed *The Wave*. The 49-year-old graduated from the Norwegian Film School in 2002. Uthaug directed the *Tomb Raider* reboot, released in 2018.

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## Foundation Scholarships Available

*By Emily Stark & Jon Tehven*

High school seniors and current college students- it's time to start thinking about 2023!

If you are a member of Sons of Norway or have a parent or grandparent who is a member, you can apply for a scholarship from the Sons of Norway Foundation.

There are a variety of scholarships available for college, trade schools, and study abroad, from \$1,500 to \$20,000+.

Go to the Sons of Norway Foundation website at <https://www.sofn.com/foundation/scholarships/> to find out if you are eligible to apply. When you find one or more for which you qualify, read the Overview, Who Can Apply, and View Guidelines.

Here are a few suggestions for your scholarship application:

- Treat the application as if it is a job application. Be thorough in completing all of the requirements. Make a list of all the application requirements and check them off when completed. Then, double-check before submitting to be sure that it is complete.
- Read and study the Criteria section of the application. In your essay, you are asked to address six key points. Use specific, experiential examples when answering these key points, especially your connection to Sons of Norway.
- How did you find out about the Sons of Norway Foundation scholarship and/or what do you know about the Sons of Norway Foundation? Demonstrate that you've done research beyond a simple Google search.
- Emphasize your involvement in community or school volunteer work.