



SONS OF NORWAY

Rib Fjell Lodge 496, District 5

Wausau and North Central Wisconsin

Sons, Daughters, and Friends of Norway Newsletter

May 2025

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May Meeting

Our next Lodge meeting will be a Potluck Dinner at **5:30 p.m., Thursday, May 15, 2025, at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Wausau.**

President's Message

Gråskjeggs Vandring: VÅREN HAR KOMMET (Spring has arrived)

Stepping outside in April and May, one can take pleasure in the warming temperatures, the smell of the earth, the greening of the grass, the trees budding out, and the appearance of spring flowers: daffodils (påskeliljer), tulips (tulipaner), hyacinths (hyasinter), bloodroot (blodrot), and trout lily (ørretlilje) to name a few. Also, neighborhoods and countryside are filled with birdsong. I remember my Aunt Karoline, on occasion, saying in her Coon Valley Norwegian, Rødfuglen synger. (Referring to the cardinal: The redbird is singing.) Get out and enjoy the changing season and the promise of summer to follow!

I appeal to members to consider becoming involved with Lodge activities and leadership roles. We will need to fill two officer positions this summer, those of Newsletter Editor and Treasurer. Your interest will be appreciated!

Fra presidenten, Brent
mai 2025

Book Club

The next book club meeting will be at 2510 on **Thursday, May 8th at 9:30 a.m.** We will discuss Michael Booth's book *The Almost Nearly Perfect People, Behind the Myth of the Scandinavian Utopia*. According to the book cover, Booth "explains who the Scandinavians are, how they differ and why, and what their quirks and foibles are, and he explores why these societies have become so successful and models for the world."

May Birthdays

1st – Vonnie Solomonson
24th – Pat Robert
29th – Kristine Edahl

Future Newsletters

Newsletters are published at the beginning of each month that we have a meeting. Please have all information that you would like placed in the newsletter to the editor, Kris Peterson (krisp3@msn.com), by the 25th of the previous month.

Need for Officers

For those who have not heard yet, I am going to resign my three positions, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, and Torsk dinner coordinator, as of July 1. I've had new demands put on me at school for this next school year in addition to the multiple other groups that I am a part of. I also work a second job and I'm trying to keep up with my 92- and 87-year-old parents.

As I have told Brent, I will happily help with the transition for each of my positions. All of our files are now digital, so that makes the paperwork easier.

I have truly enjoyed my time with this group and everyone involved! I wish the Lodge good fortune in the future!

Kris Peterson

From the Sons of Norway News Service

Host a Syttende Mai party

Syttende Mai, Norway's national holiday, is usually celebrated in public with massive parades of school kids, *russ* (high school seniors) wearing blue and red coveralls, adults donning *bunader* (folk costumes) and marching bands. It's a day for expressing cultural pride, excitement for spring and for appreciating the founding of an independent Norway. If there isn't a parade in your town, there are plenty of ways to have your own 17th of May celebration. Here are some elements that make for a festive get-together:

Décor

One thing that you see everywhere on *Grunnlovsdagen* or Constitution Day are Norwegian flags and red, white and blue decorations. Incorporate these colors into your party food, or if that's not possible, decorate with flag toothpicks and buy red, white and blue napkins.

Attire

Typical dress for all ages is a *bunad*, or national folk costume, but don't stress if you don't have one; people without costumes can dress nicely and pin red, white and blue ribbons onto their lapel, or wear the Norwegian colors in another way.

Music

Put on some Norwegian tunes or sing a few yourselves. The national anthem, [*Ja, Vi Elsker Dette Landet*](#) is a favorite, along with [*Norge I Rødt, Hvitt og Blått*](#). Look on YouTube for playlists of Norwegian music, traditional or modern.

Gratulerer med dagen!

A typical activity on Syttende Mai is congratulating one another on Norway's independence, expressed by saying "Gratulerer med dagen!" (Congratulations today!) or "Hurra for Syttende Mai!" (Hooray for the 17th of May!). Repeat this to everyone you see throughout the day.

Food

Syttende Mai is a banner day for kids in Norway, as they are usually allowed to consume as much soda, hot dogs and ice cream as they want. Some people will buy food along the parade route, or eat at home.

Brunch before the parade is popular, with a cold buffet that may include smoked salmon, trout, cured meats, scrambled eggs, porridge, salads and champagne. Later in the day there will be coffee and *bløtkake*, a layered cream cake with fresh fruit- often using blueberries and strawberries to make a flag on top. Heart-shaped waffles and *kransekake* (a tiered



almond ring cake made of ground almonds, sugar and egg whites) may be decorated with Norwegian flag toothpicks. The beauty of the *koldtbord* (smorgasbord) is that everything can be made in advance, regardless of the time of day. Combine any of your favorite Norwegian foods and encourage your guests to try new things!

Activities

If there's no parade for you to walk in, at some point, get outside or at least get moving. Once you've stuffed yourself on party food, go for a hike, play lawn games, or dance! Hurra for Syttende Mai!

Library Investment



In 2021, an International Reading Literacy Study was conducted with 65 countries participating around the world. When the results were published last year, it found that Norwegian youth's reading levels declined from the previous measurements in 2016 and ranked 18th overall. Of the more than 7,000 students tested, it was 10-year-olds that had the largest decline of all the Nordic countries. The survey found that of those children tested, one in five fell at or below reading mastery levels for their age.

The results of the survey have led the Norwegian government to get involved. To turn this concerning trend around, they are investing 25 million kroner (\$2.36 million US Dollars) into school libraries. In particular, they are focusing on libraries in areas with poorer living conditions. The funds will help increase library hours, give children access to more books, and encourage reading for pleasure. The initiative will also promote libraries as safe and inclusive social gathering spots for youth.

Researchers are unsure what has led to the drop in scores. They theorize that the drastic increase in streaming and electronics plays a role and that possibly, the Covid pandemic and the push to digital learning played a part as well. This library investment is part of the Norwegian government's larger reading strategy initiative to set a better reading culture across the country.

Source:

<https://www.courthousenews.com/norway-allocates-millions-to-counter-decline-in-kids-reading-ability/>

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Sosekjøtt & Spring Mashed Potatoes

As winter fades into spring, temperatures start to rise, and outdoor activity increases, try this delicious, hearty dish that is sure to fill you up.

Recipe source: <https://northwildkitchen.com/sosekjott-spring-mashed-potatoes/>

(Serves 4-6)

Ingredients

For the sosekjøtt:

- 2.2 pounds (1 kg) chuck steak or shoulder steak (høyrugg/bog)
- 3 Tbsp. butter, for frying
- 1 large onion, cut into thin wedges
- 6 Tbsp. butter
- 5 Tbsp. flour
- 4 cups (1 liter) beef stock
- 1 bay leaf
- Salt and pepper

For the spring mashed potatoes:

- 1 1/2 pounds (about 700 g) starchy potatoes, peeled and cut in half
- 3 Tbsp. lightly salted butter
- 1 cup (240 ml) milk
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 cup (150 g) green peas
- 1 bunch dill, chopped
- 2 spring onions, chopped



Directions:

To make the stew, start by cutting the meat into large chunks, about 1 1/2 inches (4 cm). Season well with salt and pepper.

In a large, heavy-bottomed pot or Dutch oven, heat 1 tablespoon of butter over medium-high heat, until hot and bubbling. Brown the meat in 3 batches (to avoid overcrowding), turning with tongs, for about 3-5 minutes per batch; add one tablespoon more butter with each batch (adding more if necessary). Transfer the meat to a large plate and set aside.

In the same pot, add the 6 tablespoons of butter and melt over medium-high heat. Add in the flour, whisking to combine. Cook for about 5 minutes or until the mixture has turned dark brown, whisking often to ensure it doesn't begin to burn. The darker the color, the darker the stew will be. Slowly pour in the beef stock, whisking until blended.

Add in the browned meat, onion wedges, and bay leaf. Bring to a simmer. Lower the heat and cover with a lid, cooking for 2 hours until the meat is tender. Remove the lid, return the stew to a gentle simmer, and cook for 30 minutes more until thickened slightly. Remove from the heat.

While the stew is cooking for the remaining 30 minutes, prepare the spring mashed potatoes. In a large pot, cover the potatoes with cold salted water and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 15 minutes or until the potatoes are barely tender when pierced with a knife. Drain the potatoes and return them to the pot. Add the 3 tablespoons butter, along with the milk, and mash until creamy. Season with salt and pepper. Gently stir in the green peas, dill, and spring onions.

Serve the spring mashed potatoes immediately with the warm sosekjøtt.