



Mission Statement: The mission of Sons of Norway is 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 its members.



Fra Presidenten

Greetings. It is early February, and winter is still in full force. I took down my outside Christmas lights during the warm spell in January, just before the weather turned bitter cold. Winter is beginning to drag on us, but the days are getting longer. This is time for inside activities, including the Scandinavian cultural activities that we cherish. I am reading a history of the Vikings, and I also got out the coin collection from my childhood.



Our January lodge meeting went well. We installed our officers – what a handsome group they are, and we had our white elephant gift exchange. I enjoyed the different soups at our potluck. We tried out an early schedule for our meeting (eat at 12:00 noon, rather than 1:00 p.m.), so people could get home before dark. We will do this again at our February 14 meeting, and we will then decide whether to adopt this new time schedule for the entire year or only for the months with short daylight.

Our February meeting is a family ethnic recipe potluck. We don't have food assignments based on the alphabet – simply bring your family's ethnic dish to the potluck (bring both the food and multiple photocopies of the recipe).

(Fra Presidenten continued on page 3)

February Lodge Meeting

February 14, 11am - 3:30pm

**Baughner Center opens at
11:00am**

Lunch served at 12:00pm

Hosts: Dennis & Sidsel Lindborg

**Meal: Please bring an ethnic
family dish to share.**

**Program: Share the story of this
dish and a copy of the recipe to
share.**

**See page 9 for the 2026
meeting calendar.**



Getting down to business - January 12 Board Meeting Minutes

Respectfully submitted by Darlene Henderson, Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President, David Hirschey at 1:23PM. Present were boardmembers Sue Strohkirch, Darlene Henderson, Mark Zimmerman, James Nelson, Kathryn Rowbergand Sidsel Lindborg.

Sue gave a treasury report noting our bank balance. No bills to be paid this month.

David will check that the library received our lodge gift at Christmas that was sent thru the mail.

Sue has yet to receive a response from the home office regarding our grant requests for postage and Thor costs.

David expressed gratitude to Hugh, James and Michael Leland for helping with the Christmas celebration decorations and music program.

David discussed the January lodge meeting agenda. He will only be installing the members who have been voted on to new offices. Those who are retaining their past office will not need to be installed.

Irene Nelson will be asked to take a picture of the newly installed officers.

A White Elephant program will take place after the installations. Everyone wanting to participate, will be given a numbered raffle ticket., When their number is called they will choose one of the wrapped gifts on the table. They may keep that gift unless they want to trade it privately with another member's gift.

David will ask the lodge members if they want to change our meeting hours in the winter only or keep the winter hours for the entire year. (Eat at noon instead of 1pm in the winter months to accommodate members having difficulty with night driving.) Majority votes will win.

Details for our February program were discussed. It will be a Family Favorite Recipe Potluck. Members will be asked to bring a family favorite dish from their family ethnic heritage that may have been passed down to them, and to bring copies of their recipe to share with other members. The usual food assignments will not be used. Whatever members bring is what we will enjoy. It will also be interesting to hear from members why it is a family favorite.

In March, Mark will Introduce us to our Scandiana Facebook page overview as well as teaching us more about Facebook's uses and features available.

June and July alternatives will be finalized when more details are known.

A monthly list of programs will be available to members once dates, programs and such are confirmed.

The SON Convention is in August this year in Stoughton, Wisconsin. Details are forthcoming.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:45PM.

2

February Board Meeting

The February Board meeting will be held at **1:00PM on February 9th** in the Westchester Public Library's Berthe Wood Room 100 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton, IN 46304

Getting down to business - January 24 Lodge Meeting Minutes

Respectfully submitted by Darlene Henderson, Secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 1:10pm by President David Hirschey. 21 members were present. No guests were introduced. Members sang both the US and Norwegian national anthems.

The members met today at noon for a soup and sandwich potluck luncheon instead of the usual 1pm. The library gave us a choice to meet an hour earlier during the winter months only or keep the earlier luncheon for the rest of the year. This was mainly to accommodate members who were not comfortable driving home in the dark after our meeting. David suggested members decide and vote next meeting what they would prefer.

Date of the June Midsummer program is to be determined before definite plans can be made.

David thanked member Mark Zimmerman for the rack to properly hang our lodge banner. Hugh Hopkins told members of the death and funeral for our longtime friend Robert Arndt. He was well known as Banjo Bob. He shared his Norske songs and Ole and Lena jokes with us when he entertained our lodge members.

Dave received a call from a lady who asked if anyone knew of a chef who could cater a Norwegian meal for a large group. It was suggested she contact Linda in the Vasse Lodge.

David said our February luncheon would not follow the usual food assignments, but rather he suggested we all bring a family favorite dish to share, along with a copy of the recipe for members to have. They can also relate why theirs is a family favorite, how it was passed down and such.

There was no old or new business to discuss.

David proceeded to install the 2026 lodge officers, after which a white elephant program was held.

The business meeting ended at 1:30pm.

3

(Fra Presidenten, continued from page 1) Our program will be the food and recipes themselves – explain your family's dish, and get the recipes of other families' dishes. Note that your ethnic dish need not be Scandinavian – for example, I plan to bring a Minnesota dish.

Note that our lodge meeting is on February 14 (the second Saturday of the month), because the library has a conflict on the third Saturday. [In addition, our executive committee meeting will be on February 9.]

The 2026 Winter Olympic games are held this month in Italy. The Scandinavian countries have won many Winter Olympic medals. In the overall medal count, Norway leads all countries with 405 medals, including 148 gold medals. Sweden ranks seventh with 176 medals, and Finland ranks eighth with 175 medals. [The USA ranks second with 330 medals, and France has only 138 medals.]

We received good news that the Indiana Dunes National Park will again hold its Midsummer Celebration at Chellberg Farm in June. Our lodge has participated at this celebration for many years. Our members Marily Arvidson and Andy Johnsen have had important roles in the celebrations, and our musical members Jim Nelson and Marti Pizzini have likewise participated.

Again, I hope you can attend our lodge meeting on **February 14!**

Takk for alt !! - David Carlson Hirschey

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350°F / 175°C. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

Combine oats, almonds, pepitas, cinnamon, cardamom, ginger and salt in a large bowl.

Stir well, ensuring that the salt and spices are evenly distributed throughout the mixture. Add oil, syrup and extracts. Using a rubber spatula, stir well to combine.

Transfer granola to prepared pan. Pat down with a rubber spatula to distribute the mixture in an even layer. Bake for 15 minutes.

Remove granola from the oven and stir with a metal spatula to redistribute on the baking sheet. Firmly press down on the mixture using the back of your spatula, creating an even and tight layer of granola. Bake for an additional 12-15 minutes or until granola is toasty and golden brown.

Remove from the oven and allow to cool completely on the baking sheet.

Use a spatula to transfer the granola to glass containers for storage (or freezer bags, if freezing). Granola keeps for about two weeks at room temperature or several months in the freezer.

Notes:

Let the granola cool completely before removing from the pan. If the granola is still warm when you package it, you run the risk of soggy granola.

Freeze for long-term storage. For longer storage, freeze in Ziploc freezer bags.

Homemade Cardamom Granola with Almonds

Recipe from True North Kitchens

Ingredients

4 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
1 cup sliced almonds
1/2 cup raw pepitas (pumpkin seeds)
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp ground cardamom
1/2 tsp ground ginger
1 tsp fine salt
1/2 cup canola oil
1/2 cup real maple syrup
1 tsp vanilla extract
1/2 tsp almond extract

4



From the Sons of Norway Newsletter Service

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.

5

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.



The Sami Parliament building



February's Translation Practice

Provided by the Sons of Norway Newsletter Service, excerpted from snl.no

På norsk

Forskere: Derfor er strikketøy nøkkelen til indre ro

En svensk studie viser at strikking er bra for mer enn bare garderoben. Det gir mentale fordeler som er av stor verdi.

Tradisjonelt sett har det vært en hyggelig og rolig aktivitet som leder tankene mot bestemødre og gamle tanter. Men moderne og internasjonalt anerkjente strikkekoryféeer som Lærke Bagger har gitt strikking en funky vri, noe som har gjort det til en superpopulær hobby for alle aldre.

Lettere å håndtere livet

En studie fra Göteborgs universitet viser at personer med psykiske problemer kan bruke strikking som en form for medisin.

6

Forskerne undersøkte hva personer med psykiske problemer selv har å si om hvordan strikking påvirker deres situasjon. Til sammen ble det samlet inn 600 uttalelser fra Ravelry, et gratis, engelskspråklig sosialt nettverk dedikert til strikking, hekling, veving, toving og garnproduksjon.

De innsamlede utsagnene ble deretter analysert ved hjelp av anerkjente kvalitative analysemetoder.

Tre positive effekter

Resultatene av analysen avdekket tre måter strikking er helsebringende på. Det hjelper folk til å roe ned og slappe av. Som hobby gir det også folk en identitet som strikker i en uformell setting. Til slutt bidrar strikking til å strukturere tilværelsen og har en gunstig innvirkning på den psykiske helsen.

Alt i alt opplevde strikkerne som deltok i studien at hobbyen deres var en høyt verdsatt aktivitet som hadde en gunstig effekt på helsen, både på kort og lang sikt. Noen av strikkerne hadde også observert en endring i sin mentale prosess, og forklarte at det var lettere for dem å tenke klart og styre tankene når de strikket.

«Ergoterapeuters jobb er å få folks liv til å fungere. Det ligger åpenbart et potensial i strikkepinner og garn som helsevesenet absolutt ikke bør undervurdere», skriver de.

Den svenske studien er ikke alene. En studie fra Harvard Medical School fra 2007 viste for eksempel at strikking stimulerer kroppens naturlige avspenning og senker hjerterefrekvensen med gjennomsnittlig 11 slag i minuttet – noe som senker blodtrykket.

February's Translation Practice

Provided by the Sons of Norway Newsletter Service

På engelsk

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 aunties. 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.

7

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.

Who to watch at the Milano-Cortina Winter Olympics

The Olympics open February 4, 2028 in Italy. Watch your favorite Scandinavians!

Norway

Norway is the most successful nation in Winter Olympic history, having won a record 148 gold medals.

Norway's Best Prospects (2026–2028):

Johannes Høsflot Klæbo: Already a five-time Olympic champion, he is the dominant force in cross-country skiing and is expected to be the star of the next cycles.

Johannes Thingnes Bø: The current face of world biathlon, he set a record with his 15th career Norwegian gold in 2022 and remains a multi-medal threat.

Jens Lurås Oftebro: A rising star in Nordic Combined, positioned to lead the team following the retirements of legends like Jarl Magnus Riiber.

Norway's Most Successful Events:

Cross-country Skiing: Norway's strongest discipline with 52 all-time golds.

Speed Skating: Historically significant with 28 golds.

Biathlon: A modern powerhouse with 22 golds.

Nordic Combined & Ski Jumping: Traditional areas of dominance.

8

Sweden

Sweden ranks among the top 10 all-time Winter Olympic nations, recently leaping into 7th place with 65 gold medals.

Sweden's Best Prospects (2026–2028):

Edvin Anger: A 23-year-old rising star in cross-country skiing, already a multi-medalist at the World Championships and former Youth Olympic champion.

Linn Svahn & Jonna Sundling: Leading a powerful women's cross-country team that is consistently favored for sprint and relay gold.

Men's Ice Hockey Team: Featuring elite NHL talent like Rasmus Dahlin, Victor Hedman, and William Nylander, Sweden is a perennial gold medal favorite in hockey.

Sweden's Most Successful Events:

Cross-country Skiing: Sweden's most decorated discipline, having produced legends like Charlotte Kalla.

Ice Hockey: Consistently ranked among the world's best, with multiple Olympic medals.

Biathlon & Alpine Skiing: Areas of high historical success and modern competitiveness.

Denmark

Denmark's Winter Olympic presence is modest compared to its neighbors, as the country lacks the mountainous terrain for traditional alpine sports.

Denmark's Best Prospects (2026–2028):

Men's Ice Hockey Team: Denmark is currently experiencing a "golden generation" of talent. Key prospects include NHL veterans Nikolaj Ehlers, Oliver Bjorkstrand, and goaltender Frederik Andersen.

Curling Teams: Denmark historically focuses its competitive funding on curling, which remains their most realistic path to a podium.

Denmark's Most Successful Events:

Curling: This is the only sport in which Denmark has won a Winter Olympic medal (a silver for the women's team in 1998).

Ice Hockey: While yet to medal, Denmark has recently become a regular qualifier and competitive threat.

2026 Scandiana Lodge Meetings

The remaining details will be shared when plans are confirmed.

9

Date/Time	Location	Host(s)	Food Assigned	Program
January 17, 12 - 4:30pm	Baughner Center	Kathy Rowberg	Soup K -N Sandwiches O-Z Dessert A-J	Installation of Officers White elephant gift exchange; gifts \$15-\$20
February 14, 12 - 4:30pm	Baughner Center	Dennis & Sidsel Lindborg	Bring an ethnic family dish and recipe for it	Talk about the food you brought and/or copies of its recipe
March 21, 12 - 4:30pm	Baughner Center	Darlene Henderson & Kathy Hays	Main dish A-J Side dish K-N Dessert O-Z	Mark Zimmerman - Facebook
April 25, 12 - 4:30pm	Baughner Center	Marilyn Arvidson	Main dish K-N Side dish O-Z Dessert A-J	Speaker from District 5
May 16, 12 - 4:30pm	Baughner Center	Mel & LaVerne Sorenson	Main dish O-Z Side dish A-J Dessert K-N	Distribute membership pins. Celebrate Syttende Mai!
June 20, TBD	Indiana Dunes Nat'l Park		No meal served	Mid-Summer Festival
July	No meeting			
August 15, 12 - TBD	Friendship Gardens		Main dish-A-J Side dish K-N Dessert-O-Z	
September 19, 12 - 4:30pm	Baughner Center	Dave Hirschey & Sue Strohkirch	Main dish-K-N Side dish O-Z Dessert-A-J	Selena Ard – Swedish women emigrees
October 17, 12 - 4:30pm	Baughner Center	Jim & Irene Nelson	Main dish-O-Z Side dish A-J Dessert K-N	Foundation Auction
November 21, 12 - 4:30pm	Baughner Center		Main dish- A-J Side dish- K-N Dessert- O-Z	Christmas cookie exchange
December 12, 12 - 4:30pm	Baughner Center	Gloria & Mark Zimmerman	Main dish- K-N Side dish- O-Z Dessert- A-J	Christmas Party

Sights from our January 2026 meeting

right: Suzanne Keldsen
with her white elephant
gift from the gift exchange

below: Newly-installed
lodge officers



10





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."

The Norwegian Forest Finnish Museum is located in Svullrya in Grue municipality within Innlandet County.



Gratulerer med dagen

February Birthdays

- 2 Richard Johnson
- 9 Marlene Kissman
- 20 Cheryl Dawn Short



Lodge Contacts:

David Carlson Hirschey, President

By phone: (312) 925-5371

By email: david.hirschey@outlook.com

Darlene Henderson, Secretary

By phone: (219) 221-6641

By email: carvindar@comcast.net

Ann Thorvik, Editor

By email: athorvik@gmail.com

By text: (815) 505-3288

By USPS: Ann Thorvik, 23251 Hamlin St.,
West Hills, CA 91307

SON Financial Services Contact:

Greg Ragan

Sons of Norway Agent

Insurance / Investment Broker

By phone: (815) 623-8817 (Office)

or (815) 988-5975 (Mobile)

By email: gragan51@gmail.com

Yes, Norway celebrates Valentine's Day, though it is a relatively new tradition that gained popularity in the 1990s. Locally known as **Valentinsdagen** or **Alle Hjerters Dag** ("All Hearts Day"), it is observed

Norwegian approach has some unique characteristics:

Low-Key and Practical: Compared to the U.S., celebrations are often more casual. Many couples prefer a romantic walk in the snow or a home-cooked meal—often featuring heart-shaped waffles—over flashy, expensive gifts.

Emphasis on Experiences: Norwegians often prioritize shared outings in nature, such as fjord tours, scenic hikes, or staying in cozy cabins, over material goods.

A "Balanced" Calendar: Valentine's Day shares the month with **Morsdag (Mother's Day)**, which is celebrated on the second Sunday of February. For many Norwegian families, Morsdag holds equal or even stronger importance than Valentine's Day.

Inclusivity: The day is not just for romantic couples; it is increasingly common for friends and family members to exchange "friendship Valentines" or small tokens of appreciation.

Johnson's Journal 2025

Greetings as we celebrate Christ's Birth, the New Year 2026, and our country's Semi-sesquicentennial – America 250. As County Historian, I arranged to have two lanterns placed in the La Porte County Courthouse tower in remembrance of the famous invasion on April 19, 1775. We had a ceremony to remember the midnight ride to warn the settlers in Lexington and Concord that the British were coming by land that started the American Revolution!



Large Nativity scene on my garage door!



Singing in The Music Man Feb. 2025

I continue to be busy as La Porte County Historian doing research, writing articles, giving tours, and presenting programs on local and state topics. I still serve on the County Pioneer Cemetery Committee, LaPorte Historic Preservation Commission, Memorial Bridge Committee, Community Concert Association, Genealogical Society, Indiana Lincoln Highway, La Porte County Historical Society, and the La Porte Little Theatre.

The La Porte Little Theater celebrated their 100th Season having started in 1925! I have been a performing member for 53 years! The first show this year was "The Music Man" which was my 43rd show! It was a thrill to sing Lida Rose in the quartet again! In August at Fox Park, the La Porte City Band played the "world premiere" of a medley of the music I composed for "The Guinness Mystery" documentary. It was a another thrilling musical experience!



Monte Carlo, Monaco

During the year, I attended conferences for the Indiana Lincoln Highway Association in Ligonier and Warsaw, Indiana and the annual conference for Indiana County Historians in Indianapolis. The annual conference for Indiana Landmarks was held in Fort Wayne this year. I was the pioneer teacher again at the La Porte County Fair Pioneer Village, and it was the 31st year of the Door Village Harvest Festival in which I again told local history on the wagon pulled by beautiful Belgian horses.



View of beautiful Messina, Sicily



Interior of the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona

In November, I had the privilege of participating in the La Porte County Symphony's performance of "Ellis Island". I read the emotional story of a Hungarian refugee who emigrated to America during WWII. It was a very emotional experience. In December, I was the tour guide at Carmel Chapel for the Annual Candlelight Tour of local historic homes and churches.

In October, I flew to Rome to explore the Vatican, Sistine Chapel, and Vatican Museum. Then, I boarded a ship to go to explore sights in Sicily, Malta, Tunisia, Monaco, Marseilles, Mallorca and finally landed in Barcelona. It was another amazing experience seeing ancient ruins in Carthage, Mt. Vesuvius in Sicily, the Casino at Monte Carlo, and many magnificent cathedrals including the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona. I'm most fortunate to have now explored 135 countries.



An Evening at The Vatican in Rome