



2024 Officers

President Susan K. Morton
(715) 341-7248
skaymorton@hotmail.com

Vice Pres. Lois Hagen
(715) 344-7460
hagenozzl@gmail.com

Treasurer Judy Pesanka
(715) 344-0719
msbrewer2@charter.net

Financial Secretary
Arno Morton
(715) 341-7248
mrmorocks500@gmail.com

Secretary Tom Johnson
(715) 630-1070
tomj21658@gmail.com

Program Director
Charlotte Hensler
(715) 592-4916
chensler@wi-net.com

Newsletter Editor
Carl Rasmussen
(715) 341-7494
vennligblad@gmail.com

Newsletter Distributor
Lynn Rasmussen

Webmaster Kathy Clucas

Publicity Kathy Clucas

Sunshine Coordinator
Bea Berg
(715) 252-8853
beaberg96@gmail.com

Lodge Musician
Louise Lang

Lodge Librarian
Jane Gjevne

Lodge Historian
Lois Hagen

Language Specialist
Jan Flatoff

Cultural Skills Coord.
Patti Rous

Trustee (2024-2026)

Karen Trzebiatowski

Trustee (2023-2025)

Kress Williamson

Trustee (2022-2024)

Carl Rasmussen

Vennligfolk Lodge
meets the second

Sunday evening, 5:00 pm

Sept thru Dec & April-May;

and, meets the second Sunday

Jan through March at 1PM

at St. Paul's

United Methodist Church

600 Wilshire Blvd Stevens

Point, WI



Vennligblad



Friendly pages for the 'friendly people' of Vennligfolk and friends
Sons of Norway Lodge #5-627 for Central Wisconsin
Stevens Point, Whiting, and Plover

Volume 31 Issue 6

DISTRICT 5, ZONE 2

NOVEMBER OG DESEMBER 2024

Fra presidenten:



"Velkommen" to our newest **Lodge** member, Julie Sheppelman! Julie lives in Bloomington, Illinois but also

has a home in this area that she frequents almost every month. I am delighted that Julie decided to join our group of "friendly folk."

A few weeks ago, I was thinking about a family Christmas story that took place in Sweden almost 150 years ago. I dug out that story from the bin in the back of a closet and read it to my nine-year-old grandson. Deacon *loved* the story and wanted his own copy of "Louisa's Christmas Errand." He even helped me make a new cover picture for the story and suggested we send a copy to his California cousins. That made me realize how important it is for us to "hand down" treasured family stories to our children and grandchildren.

Arno and I would regularly read stories to our children at bedtime when they were young, but often they would ask us to *tell* them a story about when we were little. In that bin from the closet, I *do* have family stories that my parents, grandparents, great-aunts, and cousins wrote down. I even have a tape that Arno's parents made for our children where they recorded stories from when they were young and when Arno and his brother were growing up. The tape was enjoyed for years by our children. Even some neighbor children would ask to hear the tape of "Morton Memories."

In this newsletter is the story "Louisa's Christmas Errand." Louisa would be my great-great-aunt.

The little sister, Emma, is my great-grandmother. My grandma's cousin, Alphild Johnson, wrote this recollection of the story her mother, Elin, often shared with her and gave copies of it to our family for Christmas in 1975

Within every successful Sons of Norway lodge is a group of dedicated officers. **Vennligfolk Lodge** has certainly been blessed with such officers! I have been privileged to lead this lodge for ten years, and I could not have done this without the backing of such excellent, hardworking people at my side. I remember how overwhelmed and inadequate I felt when I first took over the role of president. But . . . the other officers I served with just kindly and gently guided me. At our November lodge meeting, we will be having our election of officers for 2025. You will find a listing of the members who have agreed to have their names on the ballot in this newsletter. If you do not have your name on the ballot, please be thinking about the possibility of serving next year.

Plans are in full swing for this year's Julefest on Sunday, December 8th. Kathy Clucas, Lois Hagen, and Charlotte Hensler have joined me on the Julefest Committee to plan a beautiful Scandinavian Christmas evening. In the past, many members have told me that Julefest was the highlight of their holiday season, and I feel that this year's Julefest will be another "highlight."

*Gledelig Jul og Godt Nytt År,
Susan Morton*

In this Issue...

Pg.2 What's Happening at Vennligfolk?

Pg.3 Recent Vennligfolk Photos

Pgs.4-5 Louisa's Christmas Errand

Pg.6 Chica Nica Doll Dresses

Pg.7 Lodge Election Slate for 2025

A Little in English & litt på norsk

Pg.8 SOFN Christmas Ornament 2024



Gratulerer med dagen

Congratulations on the day!

November

Farsdag (Norway) - 10
John Clifford - 18
Cindy Larson Kluck 26
Donald Romundson 27

November						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Desember

Charmian Fournier- 3
Sally Prideaux -10
Judy Pesanka - 15
Elaine Anderson – 17
Andrea Brown - 17
Lori Johnson - 18
Carl Rasmussen – 23
Christmas Day -25
Carolyn Sommer – 28
New Year's Eve - 31

December						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Be sure to check page 7 for more info about Norwegian birthday wishes!

VENNLIGBLAD

What's Happening at Vennligfolk???



Nov 10 at 5PM Christmas in Norway by Patti Rous "Family, Food, and Fun in the snow! Sharing my adventures of 4 visits with family in Norway for Juletid! **Refreshments:** Lois Hagen, Charlotte Hensler, Cindy Kluck; **Table Display:** Cindy Kluck; **Marshall:** Tom Johnson

Julefest Setup Saturday Morning December 7 - Helping hands needed. Please plan to join this annual fun activity. Many hands make light the work!

Julefest 2024 Sunday December 8 at Fletcher Hall, St Pauls UMC. Social hour starts at 4:30 PM with dinner starting at 5:30 PM-ish. Extra help is always welcome and expect sign-up sheets for bringing food.



Jan. 12 – Hiking Wisconsin's Ice Age Trail – Tales of Thousand Milers

Lynn Larson and Ruth Sommers present about the 1200-mile unique hiking trail especially the segments in the Portage and Waupaca Counties. They will share tales/photos of their adventures along the way and their continuing work to make the trail even better for future hikers. **Refreshments:** Jen Haas, Bea Berg, **Table Display:** Susan Morton **Marshalls:** Jane Gjevne



Feb. 9 - Entering New York City: Then & Now What did our ancestors who entered New York through Ellis Island see? What do present-day travelers see as they arrive in New York City? Jan Flatoff will share the most common sights: – the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, Grand Central Station, Central Park, and Times Square – seen on her 2023 trip there with husband Ernie. **Refreshments:** TBD **Table Display:** TBD **Marshalls:** Bea Berg



March 9 - Scandinavian Art Show (Act 2) Members will again display their best artwork and cultural treasure. **Refreshments:** Lynn Rasmussen **Table Display:** NA **Marshalls:** Jen Haas



April 13 - Our Door County Lighthouse Adventure – Lynn & Carl Rasmussen share their one-week serving as live-in docents at the Baileys Harbor Range Light and Ridges Sanctuary. **Refreshments:** TBD; **Table Display:** TBD **Marshalls:** TBD

St Pauls UMC Annual Holiday Fest - November 9th 9 AM to 3PM

Plan to attend the 28th annual Arts & Crafts Holiday Fest! Come, enjoy lunch, and lose yourself in the vast array of arts & crafts from a wide number of artists. Our Holiday Fest Cafe will run from 11am – 1:30pm, featuring soup, garden salad, and more! \$2 admission benefits our community holiday baskets. St Pauls UMC, 600 Wilshire Blvd, Stvn's Pt



Scandinavian Boutique November 23rd 9AM to 4 PM at: Trinity Lutheran Church, 206 E Badger St. Waupaca, WI. Rosemaling, Handwoven baskets, Mittens, Nisses, gnomes & Vikings, Cement leaves & pots, Wall décor, Ornaments, Needle Felting, Wood carvings & cutouts, Turned bowls, Norwegian knits, Lefse & krumkake demo, Baked goods

Treasurer Judy Pesanka reports: on Oct 9th our lodge showed a balance of \$3991



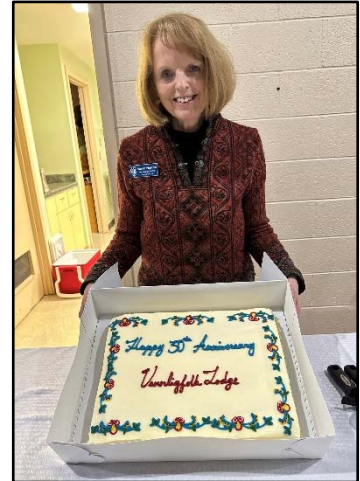
Vennligfolk in Photos



Oct 13 -Member Don Romundson presents the "Doctrinal Split of Norwegian Churches – 1880s"



The Lodge celebrated "30 years of Vennlig" with a light meal and everyone's favorite: cake & ice cream!



The Marvelous Monarch Butterflies
Kathy & Pat McGrath Presented - Sept 8



Elaine Anderson & Rita Johnson experience the release of a "super-Monarch" for its 1800-mile migration to Mexico



Northland Lutheran Church
Scandinavian Meal - Oct 19

Ten Vennligfolk members enjoyed the meal together



“Louisa’s Christmas Errand”

by Alphild Johnson submitted by Susan Morton

It was a crisp, cold day when fifteen-year-old Louisa Berggren pulled her sled along a narrow, country road in Sweden. She was hurrying along through the shivery pre-dawn stillness on her way to the post office at Granna. The waxed wooden sled runners glided easily on the frosty ground which would remain frozen all day, for the sun’s warm rays never reached that far north in late December.



Louisa was in a happy mood. She was thinking of the good news in Papa’s letter. A kind neighbor had brought it yesterday on his way home from Granna. The good news filled her with tingling anticipation.

But there was also some sad news in the letter, for Papa and Augusta would not be coming home for Christmas this year. Her father had welcomed the employment at his brother’s wholesale business in Jonkoping in the autumn, for the crops on the little farm had failed due to the rainy summer. Now his brother needed him and his daughter, Augusta, to stay on and help throughout the busy holiday season.

The good news in the letter was “Send Louisa to the post office to fetch the package I have sent. Take the sled for it is a big heavy box.”

Louisa was glad she could cross the frozen lake. It shortened the journey by several miles. This was a long, narrow lake a mile from home. She had often walked through the fragment summer woods to the lake to fish by the pier. She had rowed her father’s boat across the lake several times. It seemed a friendly lake. But it could become treacherous in a sudden summer storm or in winter when, due to strong undercurrents, the ice could suddenly crack and break up into huge chunks.

Nevertheless, this morning it seemed very pleasant and safe as exuberant Louisa skipped over the thick, dark ice. She thought of the joyful time they would have - the six little sisters and baby brother - when she would arrive home in the evening with the Christmas gifts.

By noon Louisa had reached her destination, and there was that big heavy package wrapped in thick brown paper and bound with strong cord. The considerate lady at the post office helped her tie it securely onto the sled.

At the post office, Louisa ate her sandwich she had kept warm inside her bodice under her homespun coat. Then she fastened her woolen scarf, buttoned her coat snugly, and started her long trek home. It would be dark even before she could reach the lake.

All day the little girls in the small red cottage talked about what might be in that big box. Elin whispered to Amanda as they washed the dishes from the noon meal, “Will there be something for each one of us?”

“Of course,” said wise Amanda, “Papa will have something for everyone, even for Baby Emil. I suppose Auntie has sent some good things from the store.”

“Surely raisins for our rice pudding,” added Alphild from across the room where she rocked Emil’s cradle with her foot as she busily plied her knitting needles.

Little Lisa was contentedly playing with her big rag dolls near the glazed-tile stove in the corner while Emma was helping Mama at the noisy loom.

Suddenly Mama stopped the loom and listened. What was that noise? Quickly she threw her shawl over her shoulders and stepped outside. There was no mistaking that rumbling sound. The ice on the lake was breaking up - large chunks of ice crunching and pounding against each other! Soon there would be a gap through the center of the lake.

Mama gasped and reached for the porch rail to steady herself. Fearful thoughts sped through her mind. “It is getting dark! Both the ice and the water will look black! Louisa will not see the open water! Oh, dear God, what shall I do?”

She rushed back into the house. “Children,” she called, “Louisa is in great danger! The ice is breaking up! She won’t know it until she comes too close. We must ask our Heavenly Father for help.”

Together the little girls knelt beside their mother on the wooden floor as she prayed:

“Dear Father in Heaven, You know where Louisa is. You know that the ice is breaking up. You know we cannot get help to her in time. Please save her. Send help so she will not fall into the gap. Guide her. Protect her.”

Louisa's Christmas Errand - continued. . .

And the tearful little girls around her pleaded just as earnestly with their trembling hearts the prayers they could not express in words.

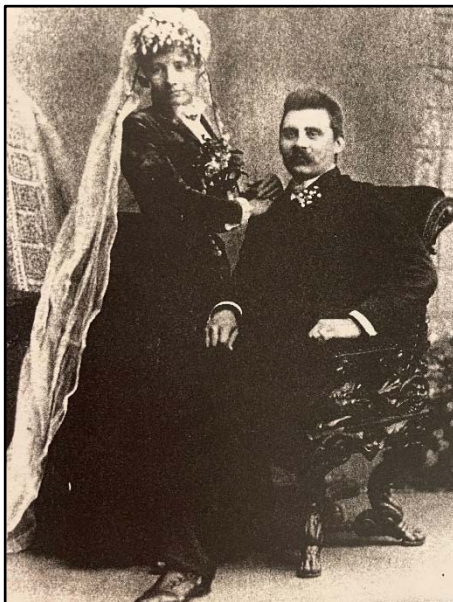
Darkness was settling close around the cottage, but inside there was an air of prayerful hope.

Again, Mama wrapped her shawl around her. As she opened the door and stepped outside, she looked with awe at the scene. Big soft snowflakes swirled around her. Already the ground was white. *"Thank you, Father,"* she whispered through the white silence. As she came inside, the children saw a joyful glow on her face.

"Come, girls," she said tenderly. "God has answered our prayer. We must kneel again and thank Him. He sent the snow and made the ice white so Louisa will see the dark water."

Louisa, trudging homeward with her heavy load, was not pleased with the sudden snowstorm. The big flakes clung to her eyelashes, and her feet felt damp and cold.

Her fingers grew numb with dampness as they clung to the wet sled rope. But no matter what, she would soon be home. She had already reached the lake shore.



Louisa and husband, Axel Peterson, on their wedding day, November 8, 1888 (10 years after the story takes place)

Louisa braced her cumbersome sled as she descended the steep slope to the lake. Quickly she walked out onto the snow-covered ice. She was nearing the center of the lake when she stopped abruptly. What was that dark streak a few paces ahead? She listened and could hear the gushing sound of the swift current.

Cautiously she turned the sled around and hurried back to the shore. The bank seemed steeper as she tugged her precious burden back up to the road. Now she must walk several miles through the dark woods around the lake.

She rested a moment on her sled. Then she continued her journey. How ominous that road ahead through the spruce woods seemed! But how strange! The snow had stopped, and the clouds were scattering. Pale stars shone down to guide her on her way.

What a happy reunion in the little red cottage that evening as the grateful family gathered around Louisa and the wonderful Christmas box.

"Mama," said Louisa, "the ice had broken up, but I could see it because of the snow on the ice."

"Yes, I know," said Mama, snuggling her daughter close to her heart. "God sent the snow to help you. Let us forever remember God is always ready and able to help us. We can be sure He will protect us for He loves us."

Elin Berggren, Alphild Johnson's mother, told this story many times during her 95 years. She remembered it vividly although she was only five years old that Christmas of 1878. The memory of it brought comfort to her and strengthened her faith and trust in her Heavenly Father. She usually concluded her telling of this event with the 46th Psalm:

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

Celebrate Lille Julaften

Christmastime is one of the high points of the year in Norway with many rituals leading up to the big day of julaften—Christmas Eve. Weeks of preparation include cookie baking, Christmas market visits and gift-buying, lending a festive atmosphere in every town. The anticipation is almost too much to bear! Thus, Norwegians get a head start on the merriment, celebrating **lille julaften** "Little Christmas Eve," on December 23rd (your Editor's birthday BTW).

But this is no recent addition- **lille julaften** has been celebrated as early as the 12th century in Norway and other Nordic countries. Tradition dictates that this day is for cleaning the house to make way for the juletre, the Christmas tree: everything had to be tidy

and the whole family bathed, to ensure no evil spirits could invade and spoil Christmas. Today Norwegians might buy their tree on the 23rd, without first having to banish the dark forces. Next comes tree decorating with popular ornaments such as Norwegian flags, candles, white lights, tinsel and red and white woven heart baskets.

For supper, it is common to enjoy creamy risgrøt (rice pudding) with a dash of cinnamon and sugar on top. Then it is time to settle in for some favorite shows: trivia quizzes like Julenøtter [Christmas stumpers], some favorite cartoons and Christmas films, the list of which grows longer every year!

Chica Nica International Doll Dresses

As a term of endearment, Chica Nica translates as "Nicaraguan Girl" and the doll dresses associated with it are certainly all of that! Through an initiative of the Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners (W/N P) headquartered in Stevens Point, the Chica Nica Project came about as a way for Nicaraguan women to use their fine sewing and embroidery skills and earn an income. The project has thrived for over 25 years and the excellent embroidery, design skills, and enthusiasm of the Nicaraguan women most definitely set these beautiful doll dresses apart from others. They are designed to fit all 18-inch dolls. Each dress has a unique story. Vennligfolk member and W/NP volunteer, Patti Rous graciously shares how the "Norwegian-2" doll dress came to be:



Norwegian 1 & 2 dresses

"The following summer, Sarah and Anders renewed their vows in a lovely little mountain church in Norway surrounded by family and friends. Note the many styles of bunads worn by other family members. Bunads can be worn for weddings and other special occasions throughout a lifetime. I think the Norwegian 1 and 2 dresses capture the style of bunads worn traditionally and continuing today in Norway."

"I will be bringing these dresses for display at our November 10 meeting. Purchase can be arranged and it will make an excellent gift for that special person this Christmas holiday. There is also a lovely Swedish dress as well!"

Chica Nica doll dresses can be ordered directly through the Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners web page at: wisnic.org/shop. The Norwegian & Swedish dresses are on page 3. Also thru Etsy

Former Vennligfolk President Milo Harpstead was a lifelong supporter of WNP. Consider a donation or purchase in his honor.



Sarah and Anders

"In June 2018, my daughter Sarah and Anders, her Norwegian husband, were married in my backyard wearing traditional Norwegian "bunads." I greatly admired the talents of the Nicaraguan women who sewed the Chica Nica Dresses in various national styles. There was already a "Norwegian 1" dress and I suggested a second style of dress. Photos were sent to Nicaragua and Petronila Solis Blanco, a local Nicaraguan seamstress, designed a new dress capturing the style of Sarah's embroidered bunad. It is now referred to as "Norwegian 2."



Petronila Solis Blanco



Swedish dress

Vennligfolk 2025 Officers Slate

Each year **Vennligfolk** selects officers and various leaders at the regularly scheduled November meeting. Terms begin at our January meeting. For 2024, the following slate will be presented to the Lodge at our November 12th meeting.



2025 Vennligfolk Nominations

President:	Susan Morton
Vice -President:	Lois Hagen
Secretary:	Tom Johnson
Treasurer:	Judy Pesanka
Financial Secretary:	Arno Morton
Program Director:	Charlotte Hensler
Social Director:	Jen Haas
Newsletter Editor	Carl Rasmussen
Newsletter Distributor:	Lynn Rasmussen

Vennligfolk Nominations – continued. . .

Webmaster:	Kathy Clucas
Publicity:	Kathy Clucas
Librarian:	Jane Gjevne
Musician:	Louise Lang
Sunshine Coordinator:	Bea Berg
Historian:	Lois Hagen
Language Specialist:	Jan Flatoff
Cultural Skills:	Patti Rous
Trustee (2025-2027):	Lynn Rasmussen

Continuing Trustees

Trustee (2024-2026):	Karen Trzebiatowski
Trustee (2023-2025):	Kress Williamson

Write-in Nominations will also be accepted with the agreement of the individual to serve.



a little in English...Hooray for your birthday

litt på norsk... Hurra for deg



Norway's equivalent to "Happy Birthday" hands down is Margrethe Aabel Munthe's "**Hurra for deg.**" Written in 1907 and first printed in 1911, the song is set to a lively Norwegian folk tune and together with its interactive motions became Norway's birthday song of choice. Well-wishers surround the birthday boy or girl and march, bow, curtsy, nod, and spin around before ending with a resounding, "Gratulere!" / Happy Birthday! Though there are two verses, most often only the first verse is sung.

Source: www.sofn.com/blog

Hooray for your birthday!
 Yes, we congratulate you!
 We all stand around you in a ring,
 And look, now we will march.
 Bow, nod, curtsy, turn around,
 Dance for you with
 jumps and bounces and leaps.
 Wishing you from the bottom of my heart
 all good things!
 So, tell me, what more do you want?
 Happy Birthday!

Hurra for deg som fyller ditt år!
Ja, deg vil vi gratulere!
Alle i ring omkring deg vi står,
og se, nå vil vi marsjere.
Bukke, nikke, neie, snu oss omkring,
danse for deg med
hopp og sprett og spring.
Ønske deg av hjertet
alle gode ting!
Og si meg så, hva vil du mere?
Gratulere!



Vennligfolk Lodge #5-627
Carl Rasmussen, Editor
3136 Dans Ave
Stevens Point, WI 54481



Christmas in Norway
by Patti Rous
Sunday Nov 10 at 5PM

Julefest 2024
Sunday December 8 at 4:30 PM



Help Spread the Sunshine! Our Lodge Sunshine



Coordinator Bea Berg, asks if you hear of a member who has been ill, had surgery, a family circumstance, or something to celebrate, phone Bea at: [715-252-8853](tel:715-252-8853) or email to: beaberg96@gmail.com.

Takk and stay sunny!

Do you have an interesting program about Norway or Scandinavia? Know of a speaker with a great general interest topic? Please contact our lodge Program Director, Charlotte Hensler at: chensler@wi-net.com.

Tusen takk



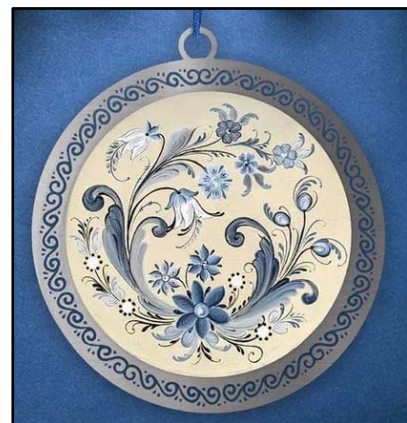
SOFN Christmas Ornament 2024

Show your Norwegian pride this holiday season by adding the 2024 Sons of Norway commemorative ornament to your Christmas traditions. With its Old Rogaland-style design, this elegant ornament will be a

treasured addition to your holiday decor. Packaged in a silver-stamped gift box containing a Christmas greeting from Sons of Norway and an informative description of the Old Rogaland style of rosemaling, this ornament is a unique gift for someone who enjoys their Norwegian heritage as much as you do.

Order at <https://www.sofn.com/>

Find it under the "SHOP" dropdown menu



The mission of Sons of Norway is to promote and preserve the heritage and culture of Norway and to provide quality insurance and financial products to its members.

Vennligblad, the official newsletter of Sons of Norway Vennligfolk Lodge (#5-627), is published at the beginning of the odd-numbered months of the year. If you have an item of interest to Vennligfolk members, please submit it to the Editor by the 10th of the even-numbered months. Send it to Carl Rasmussen at 3136 Dans Dr., Stevens Point, WI 54481 or by e-mail addressed to: Vennligblad@gmail.com; Takk Carl Rasmussen, Editor