



2021 Officers

President Susan 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
mrmorocks@yahoo.com

Secretary Tom Johnson
(715)630-1070
T2johnso@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 Patricia Serio

Publicity Kathy Clucas

Sunshine Coordinator
Bea Berg

Lodge Musician
Louise Lang

Lodge Librarian
Jane Gjevre

Lodge Historian
Lois Hagen

Language Specialist
Jan Flatoff

Cultural Skills Coord.
Karen Trzebiatowski

Trustee (2021-2023)
Ron Hensler.

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Tom Johnson

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Vennligfolk Lodge
meets the second
Sunday evening, 5:00 pm
September thru May
at St. Paul's
United Methodist Church
600 Wilshire Blvd Stevens
Point, WI

Vennligblad

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

Volume 28 Issue 2

MARS OG APRIL 2021

FAMILY TIES By Tom Johnson



Tom & Rita Johnson

As we all have struggled this past spring and summer with "The Great Wait", followed by "The Autumn of Animosity", and moving right into the "Long, Dark Winter", I'm hoping that

all of you are still doing well, and hopeful for Spring. We have endured nearly a year of restriction, sickness, and political turmoil that has probably left many of our nerves a little frayed.

I myself have felt some of those very feelings, along with the new stress of changing part-time jobs this past fall. My university job ended due to the pandemic, but I was very fortunate to take on a new job, one that I really love. I was hired as a custodian for the Tomorrow River Lutheran Parish, working at Peace Lutheran in Amherst, as well as Nelsonville Lutheran church.

One of the bonuses of the job is learning more about my family history in the area. I knew that I had relatives in the area from my father's side of the family, but because of families moving away over the years, we became separated and lost track of the connections. I've found it exciting to dig into these newfound family ties, even if Covid can make it difficult to actually meet some of them. It seems like I'm related in some way to half the people in the area.

In delving into family history, I'm reminded of a favorite quote by Forrest Gump. He said "Mama always said life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're going to get". And that certainly seems true in the exploration of my family history over the years. Like many of you,

if we go back far enough, we can find connections to various royals from many countries. It was exciting to read about being distantly related to various kings and dukes from countries such as Norway, Denmark, England, and Ireland. There was even a surprise

Polish Queen, going way back.

And in more recent genealogy, there were ancestors who fought for the Union in the Civil War, going on to prominent positions in their local communities. There were some who were very involved in organizing local churches in their newly forming towns, serving as lay ministers until churches could be built and pastors called. And there were some who had successful businesses and strong marriages that lasted many years. One set of great grandparents had a 50th wedding anniversary party in their town of 200, and 400 people attended.

Yet, as in most families, there were also ancestors who were not notable or prosperous, such as my 4x great-grandfather, who was listed in the 1800 Norwegian census as "earthless and a beggar". Some had various character flaws and addictions that prevented them from being as successful in work and family life as they could have been. One account I read of one family member's misfortune was at least a little humorous. It seems that he moved to Florida and met up with a widow, followed by a whirlwind romance. They soon married, but the marriage only lasted a few months. The writer of the account stated that "They each thought the other had money".

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Gratulerer med dagen

Congratulations on the day!

Mars

- Phillip Peterson -10
- Cathy Williamson- 14
- Diane Beversdorf - 14
- Patti Rous - 17
- Jerry Trzebiatowski - 21
- Adam Johnson – 25

March						
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			

April

- Don Johnson - 1
- Martin Lieber – 2
- Charolene Lieber - 7
- Jane Gjevre - 10
- Tracy Johnson - 12
- Daniel Walvig - 12
- Charlotte Hensler - 15
- Gary Anderson - 27
- Mark Hansen - 29

April						
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	

What's Happening at Vennligfolk???



"Vennligfolk Summer 2021 Outdoor Gatherings" June, July, and August. Similar to last year's Midsommer event held at the Rasmussen's, let's get together outdoors and catch-up with early evening pie and desert socials. The first gathering will be at the Rasmussen's. Check the next Vennligblad edition for dates, locations, and rain dates. Consider offering a place for our July and August gatherings.



Regular monthly meetings to begin again!!! Your Lodge officers have decided to start holding regular monthly meetings and programs beginning Sunday September 12 at 5 p.m. at St. Pauls United Methodist Church, Stevens Point. Check future Vennligblad newsletters for program topics and speaker details. Consider presenting a program yourself this upcoming year. Discuss your idea with Char Hensler.

FAMILY TIES *Continued from pg. 1*

But in the end, like all of our relatives, good or bad, they are all still family. We like them all, we just like some more than others. It's what binds us together and gives us a sense of community, a sense of belonging. It's like going to a lutefisk supper. When I enter the doorway and breathe in the aromas, and take in the sight of all the Norwegian sweaters, I may not recognize a lot of the faces, but I know that I am among family, even if we may be very distantly related.

And perhaps this is a way to look at others in the challenging time we live in today. A time of impatience, anxiety and downright anger over everything from illness to mask wearing to politics. Remembering that we are all related if we go back far enough. Remembering that we are all one big family, and we should try liking each other. And it's all right to like some less than others, as long as we like them.

Maybe life, and our relationship with others really is like a box of chocolates. We may not like some of the pieces as much as others, but in the end, it's all still chocolate. And who doesn't like chocolate?

Queen of Norway?

When Princess Märtha Louise of Norway was born in 1971, women were barred from ascending the throne of Norway. Her brother, Crown Prince Haakon, was born 2 years later and would eventually become next in line to the throne. Eventually, in 1990, the law was changed so that women could become queen. But it only applies to those born after the law was put into place.



Princess Märtha Louise

The Princess recently shared that she was given the option to change the law. "When I was 15, the Prime Minister was a woman, and she suddenly came up with the idea that the law was wrong. I remember she came home to us, with granddad, King Olav V, and we had a discussion about whether we should change the whole system and I should be queen."

"They said, 'What do you want, Märtha?' And I'm like, 'I'm 15, I don't know about these things,'" she added. Ultimately, the laws remained unchanged for a few years, but it started the discussion about updating the rules.

Now, Norway is set to have a female monarch in the future. Crown Prince Haakon's first-born child is Princess Ingrid Alexandra, and is second in line to the throne.

2020 in Photos – The Year We Stayed Gnome!

Though we did not get together as much in 2020, there were still some memorable moments for the Lodge



Pam Fleishauer, March 8 meeting



Jan 12 -Our Grandparents' Norwegian Emigration



Midsommer 2020



Lodge Sound System Upgrade Completed



Milo Harpstead Honored with 90th Birthday Parade



Lodge Facebook group created!



Diana and Past Pres. Doug Strommen sent greetings



Kalsarikännit!



Char & Ron Hensler turn lefse



No-Bake Bake Sale



Susan Morton preps Julekaka



Arno enjoys!



Lynn R makes Kringlers

Fra presidenten:



There is a light at the end of this long, dark tunnel! At our last officers' meeting we again discussed resuming

our lodge meetings. Here's what we came up with. Starting this June, we will have another outdoor "Pie & Ice Cream" gathering in Carl & Lynn Rasmussen's beautiful backyard like we had last August. Plans are in the making for having two more outside gatherings in July and August. If you would like to host one of these outside gatherings, please let me know. Then in September we will start having regular **Vennligfolk Lodge** meetings at St. Paul's United Methodist Church at 5:00 PM on the 2nd Sunday evening of each month. By that time, many of us will have had vaccinations for Covid, and perhaps the "herd immunity" will have kicked in.

Tusen takk to all of our **Vennligfolk** members! You have been faithful in renewing your memberships even though we were not able to meet for over a year. It will be wonderful to finally get together and fellowship. I've missed all of you!

Vennlig hilsen, Susan Morton



Rogaland Rosemaling

Did you know??

IKEA introduced the world to a host of Swedish words as names for their products. Reading strange sounding Swedish words is part of the fun of shopping there writes Design Reporter, Ann Quito of Quartz (qz.com).



The naming system is even cooler than simply assigning random Swedish words to products. Each product category is assigned a specific name type. For example, outdoor furniture is named after Scandinavian islands.

Bathroom items: Swedish lakes and bodies of water; Linens: Flowers and plants; Bedroom and Living Room Furniture: Norwegian places; Bowls and Vases: Swedish place names, spices, fruits, & berries; Pictures and Wall Decorations: Swedish slang expressions and place names; Children's Products: Mammals, birds, adjectives; Fabrics and Curtains: Scandinavian girl names; Desks and Chairs: Scandinavian boy names; Kitchen Accessories: Fish, mushrooms and adjectives.

The company denies there was any cultural snub with naming things you walk on such as doormats and rugs for the names of places in Denmark!

IKEA's name? Not a Swedish word at all, but an acronym made from the first letters of its founder's name: **Ingvar Kamprad**, his family's farm **Elmtaryd** and the village of **Agunnaryd** where he grew up. Now you know.

Clean, Quiet Construction Sites? In Oslo, Yes

In 2019, Oslo adopted a new "zero emission" policy to curb the pollution traditionally belched out by big construction machinery at the city's many work sites. Electric excavators, saws and other plug-in equipment are now on the job, alongside traditional machinery designed to use diesel but now refitted with batteries. Fossil-fueled equipment is allowed only when a low-emission alternative is not available. The initiative has inspired manufacturers to develop new designs, ensuring that an increasing variety of electric-based construction vehicles will be available in the future.



Previously, construction equipment created 30% of Oslo's traffic emissions. Officials say the new initiative saves 35,000 liters of diesel fuel and reduces greenhouse gasses by 99% per construction site. Because Norway generates nearly all its electricity from hydropower, even the electricity used to power the equipment comes from a 'green' source. The electric trucks and other equipment are much quieter than their diesel counterparts, reducing noise pollution and increasing the quality of life for anyone living or working nearby.

Currently, four kindergartens and two sports arenas are being built as "zero emission" work sites. Not all projects in Oslo must follow the new policy: the guidelines for private or state-owned sites are much less stringent, and only one in five construction projects is city owned. However, city leaders believe controlling emissions at those sites is an important step toward keeping their city, and the world, green.

Meet Birdie Granum



Hello, I'm Birdie Granum. My father was 100% Norwegian and I'm ½ Norge, ¼ German and ¼ English. Much like the "Little House" series, my story begins in a very small, very Norwegian village of Blair, Wisconsin. I lived in a small house beside a "crick" and a half block from the school.

My earliest memories include climbing trees and spending hours in the creeks wading and collecting clay from the creek banks to take home and mold into bowls, marbles, and figures to "bake in the sun and paint." In winter one could skate on the ice-covered creek.

In the 1930's one could feel safe and free anywhere in town and when I got a bicycle at age 9, the whole village became my playground. Mothers did not worry because watchful eyes of friends were everywhere. However, around age 11 or 12, my spirit of adventure led me to bike all the way to the next town 9 miles away to visit a friend and then back again the same afternoon. I do not think my mother ever knew.

At age 15 my father got a promotion and we moved to Owen, WI where I graduated High School. I attended college at UW-River Falls, where I met my husband to be, Robert Granum and we married in 1953. His first job took us to Chippewa Falls, WI where he was the 4H Club Agent for Chippewa County.

Eight years later (1961) Bob had the opportunity to take over the family farm because his father wanted to retire. I became a "farmer's wife." Never having live on a farm, that was a challenge. By then we already four children and two more were born after that.

You can imagine how busy I became. There was never a dull moment. Between activities and antics of the kids and unpredictable foibles of the farm animals it was never boring and often hectic: heifers in the corn fields, hogs breaking out in the middle of the night and horses running away provided many a wild chase. But life on the farm had its pluses as well.

The kids enjoyed their areas to play, their variety of pets and 4H projects, the value and necessity of hard work, the nature of birth and death and other life lessons. We worked together and played together. We went hiking, snowmobiling and camping. Always exploring our environment

After ten years on the farm, Bob made a career change once more, becoming executive director for the County Ag. Stabilization & Conservation Service, (ASCS). We moved again, lock, stock and horses to Marinette County. We were there for only 2½ years when we moved to Portage County horses and all. Bob would have the same title in a different county office. The central Wisconsin location was an asset to us.

We settled in Plover and our kids attended Roosevelt, Ben Franklin, and SPASH with our oldest at UW-LaCrosse. In 1987 we built a new home on Lake DuBay and took advantage of all the good things lakeside living had to offer.

Over the years in several communities, I have been active in several organizations such as PTA, Homemakers Club, Farm Bureau, church activities, Women's Club, Garden Club, Meals on Wheels, Lion/Lioness Clubs and a 4H leader and took on leadership roles in several of these organizations. My hobbies include crafts, gardening, stitchery and reading. I love to play bridge and other social games. When I was younger, I enjoyed participating in outdoor sports

Although I never had fulltime employment outside the home, I did several part-time and seasonal jobs. After the kids were in school, I worked pre-Census in 1979 as an area manager and followed up with a part-time position of data collecting for the US Dept. of Commerce. The experience led to another data collecting position with Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics. I worked there for 12 years interviewing farmers and Ag related businesses for information that was compiled into statistical information for the state and nation. I enjoyed the job for its contact with people, travel around the tri-county area, and all the learning experiences.

My affinity for travel and adventure led me on trips to New Zealand, Australia, Italy, Norway, Greece, China, Brazil, and Iceland. The beauty history, culture and foods were both educational and fun. The good ol' USA offered me the awesome wonders of Niagara Falls, the Grand Canyon, Carlsbad Caverns, deserts, mountains, sandy beaches Hawaii and Alaska. So many places, so much diversity, too much to put all down here.

From the Editor: I hope you enjoy these Getting to Know articles. We've had good participation from both new and long-term members and hope to continue to carry this series. Lodge members can submit short introduction articles on their own or, kindly respond when asked.

Tusen Takk, Carl R. Editor

Fiskekaker med Brun Saus / Fish Cakes with Brown Gravy

Ingredients:

3 medium potatoes, peeled, sliced in quarters length-wise
 6 large rainbow carrots, peeled, cut into 2-inch pieces
 2 lbs. boneless skinless white fish fillets (haddock, cod, etc.)
 1 1/2 tsp. salt
 1 1/2 tsp. potato starch
 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
 2/3 cup whole milk
 1/4 cup chopped fresh chives
 2/3 cup all-purpose flour, divided
 6 Tbsp. vegetable or canola oil
 1/2 yellow onion, chopped
 3 cups beef stock, divided
 2 Tbsp. Kitchen Bouquet (or substitute) salt and pepper

Instructions:

Put the potatoes and carrots in a medium pot and cover with cold, salted water by 2 inches. Bring to a boil over medium heat and cook until fork tender, about 15 minutes. Drain and set aside.

Place large chunks of fish and salt in work bowl of food processor and, using S-blade, pulse until coarsely chopped. Add potato starch and nutmeg and pulse to combine. Slowly add the milk, pulsing just until combined, and then the chives. Form the fish cakes into 12 round patties. Put 1/3 cup flour on a plate and dip patties to coat.



Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Working in batches, fry on both sides until crisp and golden. Drain on paper towels and set aside.

Cook onions in remaining oil while fish cakes are draining. When the onions are soft and translucent, remove them from the pan and set aside.

Add 1 cup stock and scrape the pan until all the browned bits have become loose. Continue to cook for 2-3 minutes to allow stock to reduce.

Add remaining 1/3 cup flour and whisk to combine until there are no visible lumps. Cook another 1-2 minutes, whisking continuously, until the gravy thickens and becomes smooth. Gradually add the Kitchen Bouquet and the rest of the stock to the pan and whisk until smooth, cooking another 4-5 minutes, or until the gravy is slightly thicker but not quite at desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Reduce the heat to low. Add the onion, potatoes and carrots to the pan and stir into the gravy. Add the fish cakes to the pan and let simmer in brown gravy for 2-3 minutes, or until gravy has reached desired consistency. Serve fish cakes in the gravy with the vegetables.

<https://blog.hamiltonbeach.com/heritage-dish-norwegian-fish-cakes>

What's a Scandinavian?

The Scandinavian peninsula provides the geographical definition for Scandinavia. This includes Norway, Sweden and Denmark even though Denmark is not part of the peninsula. Got that?



Most Scandinavians would include Finland when talking about Scandinavia. Finns though don't always consider themselves to be in Scandinavia. Officially Finland is Nordic, not Scandinavian.

The Nordic Council was formed in 1952 to foster "cooperation between the main Nordic countries." The member countries are: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, the Faroe Islands, the Åland Islands, and Greenland.

Whether Nordic or Scandinavian they are all united by similarities in primary languages, Viking heritage, Norse mythology, a harsh northern climate but breathtaking landscape, forward thinking, and world ranked happiness.

(Excerpts from intro to the excellent "*little book of scandi living*" by Brontë Aurell published 2020 by White Lion Pub.)

Norwegian: Å leve på luft og kjærlighet

Translation: Living on air and love.

Meaning: Be so madly in love that you don't think about anything else.



Ole was making venison sausage and backed into his meat grinder. He wasn't hurt too bad but he did get a little behind in his work. Uff-dah!



[a little in English...Norwegians Are Like Coconuts](#)

[litt på norsk... nordmenn er som kokosnøtter](#)

It's Not Easy Being a Foreigner, Is It? At least not when Norwegians are like coconuts: soft inside, but hard on the outside—and almost impossible to open when you do not know how.



Det er ikke alltid så lett å være utlending, er det? I hvert fall ikke når nordmenn er som kokosnøtter: **myke inni, men harde på utsida** - og nesten umulig å åpne når du ikke vet hvordan.

You can learn a lot about yourself by moving to a new country. And one of the things I learned in Peru was that I was very Norwegian. Here are three examples of situations where I experienced a small cultural clash between myself and the locals:

1. Greeting new people When you meet friends of friends in Peru, you tend to kiss them on the cheek. This was strange to me and I always just gave them a hug in return. As a Norwegian, I think it's quite strange to kiss strangers. In Norway, it is most common to shake hands, and perhaps a hug in certain situations.

2. To enter a door As a Norwegian woman with functioning arms, I am used to opening doors all by myself. But even though I know that it is common for men to open doors for women in Peru, I forgot it in front of every door. Every time my boyfriend opened a door for me, I stood there and waited for him to enter first.

3. The need to be alone My in-laws in Peru are very nice, and I felt lucky to get to know them, especially my mother-in-law. Still, one day my boyfriend asked me, "Don't you like my family?" That was a surprising question because I actually liked them very much! So why would he ask about it?

Well. The question was a result of me often saying no to going to visit. Yes, I like to go to parties and dinner visits, but in small doses, and preferably not several times a week. My need to be alone or just with my boyfriend is often greater than the need to be social, and so it goes for many others, I think. Maybe especially for Norwegians.

But I know that it is not as easy to be a foreigner in Norway. I have often heard that Norwegians are "cold and rude," and I understand well that we can be perceived as such by foreigners!

By Ingjerd Hovde, norsklærer (Norwegian teacher)

Man kan lære mye om seg selv ved å flytte til et nytt land. Og en av de tingene jeg lærte i Peru, var at jeg var veldig norsk. Her er tre eksempler på situasjoner hvor jeg opplevde en liten kulturkrasj mellom meg selv og lokalbefolkningen:

1. Å hilse på nye mennesker Når man møter venner av venner i Peru, pleier man å kysse dem på kinnene. Dette var rart for meg, og jeg ga alltid bare en klem i retur. Som norsk synes jeg det er ganske rart å kysse fremmede. I Norge er det vanligst med et håndtrykk, og kanskje en klem i spesielle tilfeller.

2. Å gå inn en dør Som norsk kvinne med armer som fungerer, er jeg vant til å åpne alle dører selv. Men selv om jeg vet at det er vanlig at menn åpner dørene for kvinner i Peru, glemte jeg det foran hver dør. Hver gang kjæresten min åpnet en dør for meg, ble jeg stående og vente på at han skulle gå inn først.

3. Behov for å være alene Svigerfamilien min i Peru er veldig flott, og jeg følte meg heldig som fikk bli kjent med dem, særlig svigermor. Likevel spurte kjæresten min meg en dag: "Liker du ikke familien min?" Det var et overraskende spørsmål, for jeg likte dem faktisk veldig godt! Så hvordan kunne han spørre om det?

Vel. Spørsmålet var et resultat av at jeg ofte sa nei til å bli med på besøk. Joda, jeg liker å gå på fester og middagsbesøk, men i små doser, og helst ikke mange ganger i uka. Mitt behov for å være alene eller bare sammen med kjæresten er ofte større enn behovet for å være sosial, og slik er det for mange andre også, tror jeg. Kanskje særlig for nordmenn.

Men jeg vet at det ikke er like lett å være utlending i Norge. Jeg har ofte hørt at nordmenn er "kalde og uhøflige", og jeg forstår godt at vi kan bli oppfattet slik av en utlending!

From: www.norskforinnvandrere.no/blog/28849-nordmenn-er-som-kokosnoetter Provided by Sons of Norway Newsletter Service



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



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.



Ole was scheduled for surgery. To save money Ole insisted on closing up his own incision.

Doc Svenson said, "OK Ole, suture self."

Vennligblad, the official newsletter of Sons of Norway's 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 15th of the even-numbered months. You may send it to Carl Rasmussen at 3136 Dans Dr., Stevens Point, WI 54481 or by e-mail addressed to: Vennligblad@gmail.com

Mange Tusen Takk, Carl Rasmussen, Editor



Support Tubfrim. As you receive mail with unique stamps cut the postage off leaving a ¼ inch boarder of paper. Bring your stamps to the next Vennligfolk meeting.



Vennligfolk Cultural Skills

Pursue a Norwegian cooking, literature, knitting, language, or other skill project, document your work and earn a recognition pin! Cultural Skills coordinator Karen Trzebiatowski has all the details. Reach out to Karen at 715-824-7679 or send an email to: Karentrzeb@gmail.com. The Sons of Norway website (sofn.com) also has information and in some cases, links to helpful YouTube videos.



Keep our Sons of Norway Family Growing in 2021

How? By welcoming more family, friends and neighbors to join us, either virtually or in person! One member described membership as an "amazing way to connect to Nordic heritage, tradition, and community."

Who wouldn't want to be part of an amazing organization like Sons of Norway?!

Thank you for being a Sons of Norway member!

