

VESTERHEIM NEWS



Erik's Corner - Eriks Hjørne

Happy New Year, everyone!

It sure feels like a different 'winter' so far, with 68 degrees at the time of writing this. But the winter feeling is soon to change with the Winter Olympics just one month away! Fun fact: everyone assumes Norway takes the most medals per million people in the more recent winter olympics, but in 2018 Liechtenstein earned a bronze medal, rocketing them past Norway at almost 4x as many medals per million people. Let's cheer for both Norway and Liechtenstein (and Sweden!) as they compete in Milano Cortina, Italy this February.

And we cannot enter into 2026 without mentioning the World Cup. Seems like Norway can only qualify when it is being held in the United States. I still remember the games in 1994, coming off the high of the Lillehammer Olympics. Norway has only gotten better since, both in the Winter Olympics, and in football, so there will be lots to cheer for.

Always, I am super thankful for everyone how helps run the lodge. We will take a moment at an upcoming General Meeting to acknowledge everyone, just know that all your contributions are very much appreciated.

Godt nytt år, alle sammen!

Det føles virkelig som en annerledes «vinter» så langt, med 20 grader i skrivende stund. Men vinterfølelsen vil snart endre seg med vinter-OL bare en måned unna! Morsomt faktum: alle antar at Norge tar flest medaljer per million innbyggere i de nyere vinter-OL, men i 2018 vant Liechtenstein en bronsemedalje, og slo dem forbi Norge med nesten fire ganger så mange medaljer per million innbyggere. La oss heie på både Norge og Liechtenstein (og Sverige!) når de konkurrerer i Milano Cortina, Italia i februar.

Og vi kan ikke gå inn i 2026 uten å nevne VM. Det virker som om Norge bare kan kvalifisere seg når det arrangeres i USA. Jeg husker fortsatt VM i 1994, etter Lillehammer-OL på hjemmebane. Norge har bare blitt bedre siden, både i vinter-OL og i fotball, så det blir mye å heie på.

Som alltid er jeg super takknemlig for alle som hjelper til med å drive Lodge. Vi vil nevne dere alle på et kommende Lodge møte, bare vit at alle bidragene deres setter vi stor pris på.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January - February

Date		Scheduled Event
Jan 10	11:00 - 2:00 pm	Stein Fjell Lodge in Loveland will celebrate its 50th anniversary, at Sylvan Dale Ranch.
Jan 14	Wed 7:30 p.m.	Vesterheim Board Meeting - Contact Erik for Zoom link at eriksirnes@hotmail.com. Meeting is open to all members.
Jan 15	Thurs 1:30-3:30	Book Club (page 5)
Jan 24	Sat 2:00 - 4:00	General Meeting: Atonement Lutheran Church 685 Inca Pkwy, Boulder Movie & Popcorn Night: <i>Bell, Book, and Candle</i>
Feb 1-8	all day	Ski for Light 2026 Event Snow Mountain Ranch in Granby, Colorado
Feb 7	Sat 9:30-1:30	All Colorado Lodges Leadership and Members Conference at Trollheim Lodge in Lakewood
Feb 11	Wed 7:30 p.m.	Vesterheim Board Meeting - Contact Erik for Zoom link at eriksirnes@hotmail.com. Meeting is open to all members.
Feb 19	1:30-3:30	Book Club (page 5)
Feb 21	All day	Barnelopet - Free Children's Cross Country Ski Event Snow Mountain Ranch YMCA Granby, Colorado
Feb 21	2 - 4:00	General Meeting: Atonement Lutheran Church 685 Inca Pkwy, Boulder <i>Trivia Night</i> hosted by Erling

November Membership Meeting

Lodge member Bryan Johnson, a retired NOAA atmospheric scientist, gave an overview of his trips to Antarctica while working with the University of Wyoming and NOAA in Boulder. Amundsen/Scott South Pole Station is relatively easy for scientists and support crew to reach and live comfortably today while carrying out research projects approved by the National Science Foundation. Travel logistics, balloon-borne ozone hole measurements, and recreational activities at McMurdo Station, Antarctica, were discussed along with a little history during the 'heroic age' of the first explorers to arrive at the South Pole, for which the U.S. station is now named. (See page 6 for more)



Folk Art and More

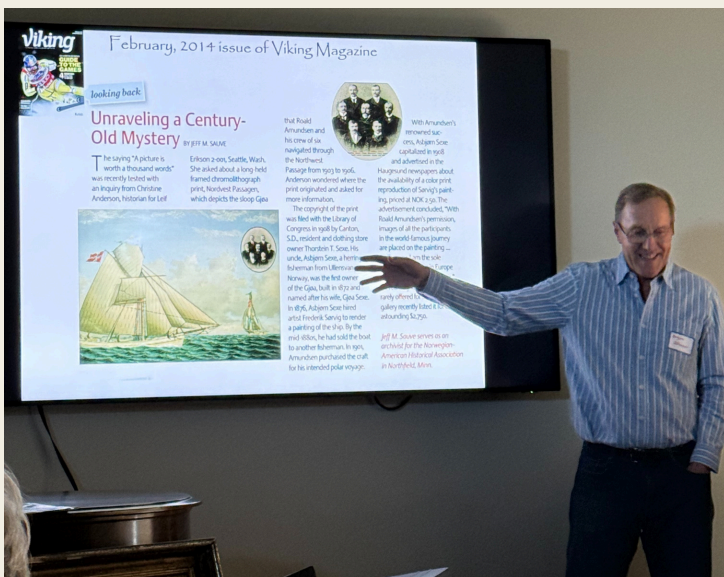
It's time to start working on projects for the 2026 Folk Art Exhibition at the biennial District Six Lodge Meeting & Convention in June, 2026. An 'Olaf' award will again be presented to a favorite digital/electronic program. So, start (or keep going) on your knitting, stitching, carving, weaving, painting, etc. or get creative with a digital program.

Bruce Fihe, Cultural Director for District Six will be sending out more information as it becomes available.

Norwegian Genealogy

There are two classes each month. Fjellalden Lodge meets by zoom on the first Saturday of each month 9:30-12:00. Trollheim Lodge meets in-person on the second Saturday of each month. With the Christmas Craft Fair on November 7-8, Genealogy will meet at 9:30am – Noon, in the library.

Join and learn about your ancestors.



VESTERHEIM LODGE 6-118 OFFICERS AND CHAIRPERSONS 2024

*President - Erik Sirnes
 *Vice Pres. - Erling Westgaard
 *Secretary - Cathy Allen
 *Asst. Sec - Esther Mills
 *Membership - Rhonda Fadum
 *Treasurer - Erik Sirnes
 Auditor Lori McLean
 *Counselor - Garry Gorsuch
 Cultural Dir. - OPEN
 *Editor - John Kennedy

Historian - John Kennedy
 Marshalls - OPEN
 Musician - Caryl Stalick
 Road Cleanup - Erik Peters
 Social Dir. - Lori McLean
 Sunshine - Cheryle Kapsak
 Trustee - OPEN
 Youth Sports - Erik Sirnes
 Website - Linda Sirnes

* Indicates Voting Board Members

Greeters - Addy Martinez
 - Ole Fadum
 - Joan Cleland

(Privacy Disclosure: This information is for official Sons of Norway business only. Use of this information for solicitation or commercial purposes is a violation of the Sons of Norway privacy policy and is strictly prohibited.)



Julefest with plenty of Julehygge



Addy and Tove checking if the *Julebord* is ready to go.



Ole begins to sample while Esther and Bryan share a story.



And the winner is - Unni's number was drawn for the grand prize.



The Brents show that their plates were cleaned.

Tusen takk to all who attended and contributed to making this a special event. Looking forward to seeing everyone in 2026.

Norwegian Tongue Twister:

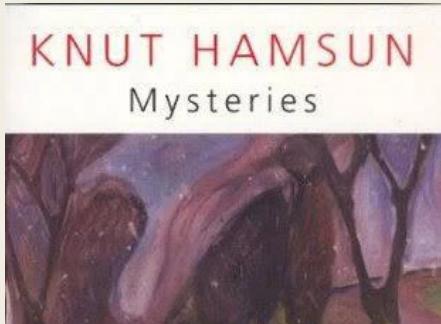
Det var nesten, sa presten, da hesten til presten tråkket på lesten til presten.

Translation: That was close, said the pastor, when the pastor's horse stepped on the pastor's heel.₄

Bok Klubb - Book Club

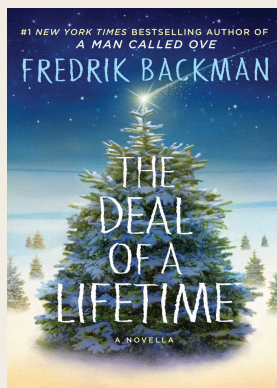
Venue: Grete Jansen's; 2610 Briarwood Drive. Please RSVP to Grete at 303-641-9544.

January is *Mysteries* by Knut Hamsun



Mysteries is a novel by Norwegian author Knut Hamsun about an enigmatic stranger, Johan Nilsen Nagel, who arrives in a small Norwegian coastal town, disrupting the community with his erratic behavior, philosophical critiques, and complex relationships with two women before disappearing as suddenly as he came. The book is a work of psychological fiction that explores the human psyche, societal hypocrisy, and the protagonist's internal turmoil, often compared to Hamsun's earlier novel *Hunger* for its focus on a man's emotional and mental state.

February is *The Deal of a Lifetime* by Fredrik Backman



The Deal of a Lifetime is a poignant short story (novella) by Swedish author Fredrik Backman, known for books like *A Man Called Ove*, exploring themes of life, death, regret, and legacy, centered around a failing father and a brave little girl facing cancer.

GRATULERER MED DAGEN



January:

Bryan Johnson	1/11
Joshua Botkin	1/12
Genevieve Jacobi	1/16
Linda Sirnes	1/19
John Kennedy	1/23
Jofrid Sodal	1/25

February:

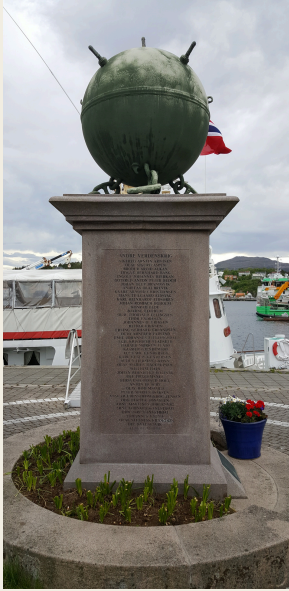
Ingvar Sodal	2/12
Kathleen Jakobsen	2/13
Siri Karpel	2/18
Stefan Magnusson	2/19
Tommy Ingulfsen	2/24
Mitch Utterback	2/24
Nicholas Dailey	2/25
Cheryle Kapsak	2/26

Other Important Dates

- Jan 19 (Mon): Martin Luther King Jr. Day
US Federal Holiday)
- Jan 27 (Tue): International Holocaust
Remembrance Day (UN observance).
- Feb 6-22: Winter Olympic Games (Italy)



Where's Tove Quiz



What is it? Why was it built? Where is it located?

Name That Artifact



I love taking pictures of statues. Who, what, and where are these located. Extra credit for deciphering the caption "90S 14 12 1911" which I have circled on the base of the statue.

Last Month's Answer



Your clean-shaven editor is standing at Grense Norway I 64 on the Norway-Russian border in a remote eastern point of Norway. In the background you can see the Russian fence marking their side. Their area is actively patrolled and monitored by sensors. On the Norwegian side, however, there are no physical barriers along most of the border, and the public can generally get close to the boundary line itself, except for specific restricted areas .

(See bottom of page 7 for the answer.)

Growth is the Life's Blood of Our Organization!

In 2026, think about bringing a friend and get them interested in the Sons of Norway. Let's make membership Job No. 1 in 2026.

Heritage membership offers current Sons of Norway members an easy and free way to share their love of Norwegian traditions and culture with young family members. New Heritage members receive a Welcome Kit and Sons of Norway ID card, along with ideas for celebrating Nordic heritage. Heritage members must be related to the sponsoring Sons of Norway member – most often a parent or grandparent – but they are not required to be part of the same household. At age 16, Heritage members have the option of joining Sons of Norway as an adult Individual member or as part of a Family membership, if one exists at their home address. Heritage Member Enrollment Forms are available from any of our lodge officers or <https://tinyurl.com/ydywenur>.



*Vesterheimen Lodge's
Den Norske Kokebok
(The Norwegian Cookbook)*



*Fødselsdagskringle – Birthday Kringle
(taken from Sons of Norway)*

Ingredients

For the Dough

- 1 pkg. active dry yeast
- 1 Tbsp. water, lukewarm
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 2 1/8 cups (300 g) flour
- 1/3 cup (50 g) sugar
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. ground cardamom (preferably fresh)
- 7 oz. (200 g) unsalted room temperature butter

For the Filling

- 5 Tbsp. (75 g) butter
- 1/3 cup (50 g) sugar
- 1/2 cup (50 g) raisins
- 1/2 cup (50 g) citron, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup (50 g) almonds, chopped

Recipe

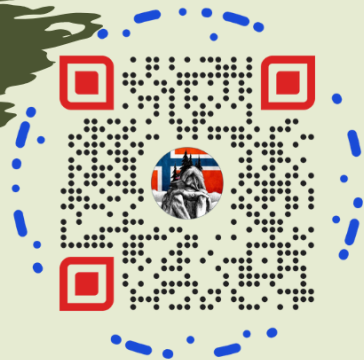
1. Combine yeast and warm water in a small bowl. Let rest until the yeast dissolves and begins to foam (about 10 min). Gently beat in the eggs.
2. Sift together the flour, sugar, salt and cardamom. Once well combined cut in the butter until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Mix in the eggs and work until you have a smooth elastic dough. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled.
3. Before working with your dough prepare your filling. Whip together the butter and sugar until light and creamy. Cover and set aside in a cool space.
4. Punch the dough down and turn it out onto a floured board. Knead dough, adding flour as needed to prevent sticking, until dough is soft and elastic. Roll out into a 6 x 34-inch (15 x 86 cm) ribbon.
5. Spread the filling over the dough. Sprinkle with raisins, citron and almonds. Fold the long sides toward the center with the edges overlapping slightly.
6. Form the dough into a kringle (or ring) shape on a large cookie sheet covered with parchment paper. Cover and let rise until doubled.
7. Brush the surface with egg and sprinkle with sugar and sliced almonds.
8. Bake in a 375°F (190° C) oven for 25 – 30 minutes, or until golden brown.

Name that Artifact (Answer)

"90° S (90 Degrees South) 14 12 1911 (14 Dec 1911)" refers to the place and date that Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen and his team became the first humans to reach the South Pole on December 14, 1911. The life-sized statues are located outside the Fram Museum in Oslo and depict Roald Amundsen and his team: Helmer Hanssen, Oscar Wisting, Olav Bjaaland, and Sverre Hassel.



CAMP Trollfjell & Folkehøgskule



NORWEGIAN LANGUAGE & HERITAGE KIDS CAMPS

Trollfjell Folkehøgskule (ages 14-17)

• June 28-July 11

Camp Trollfjell (ages 8-13)

• July 12-25

**REGISTRATION
JAN 1 - MAY 31**

**Early Bird Discount
Register by April 1st**



Camp Norge in Alta, CA



<https://sofn6.org/arv/camp-trollfjell/>



[Trollfjell](#)

Camp Trollfjell & Folkehøgskule:

Sons of Norway District Six will offer Camp Trollfjell & Folkehøgskule in summer 2026 at Camp Norge, located near Alta, California in the Sierra Nevada mountains. These Norwegian Language & Heritage Kids Camps provide young people with an opportunity to learn about Norwegian culture while participating in traditional summer camp activities.

Two two-week sessions are planned. Trollfjell Folkehøgskule for ages 14–17 will be held June 28–July 11. Camp Trollfjell for ages 8–13 will follow from July 12–25. Each program is designed to be age-appropriate and to encourage learning, participation, and connection among campers.

Daily activities include Norwegian language instruction, folk dancing, rosemaling, hikes, campfires, games, and other group activities. Time is also built into the schedule for recreation and social interaction in a supervised camp setting.

Registration will be open from January 1 through May 31, with an early bird discount available for registrations received by April 1.

Camp Trollfjell & Folkehøgskule information tree: linktr.ee/trollfjell

Register for Camp Trollfjell at: sofn6.org/arv/camper-registration/

Register for Trollfjell Folkehøgskule at: sofn6.org/arv/folkehogskule-registration/

Denmark Postal Service to Stop Delivering Letters

Denmark's state-run postal service, PostNord, is to end all letter deliveries at the end of 2025, citing a 90% decline in letter volumes since the start of the century. The decision brings to an end 400 years of the company's letter service.

Denmark's 1,500 post boxes will start to disappear from the start of June.

Transport Minister Thomas Danielsen sought to reassure Danes, saying letters would still be sent and received as "there is a free market for both letters and parcels". Postal services across Europe are grappling with the decline in letter volumes. Germany's Deutsche Post said on Thursday it was axing 8,000 jobs, in what it called a "socially responsible manner".

Denmark had a universal postal service for 400 years until the end of 2023, but as digital mail services have taken hold, the use of letters has fallen dramatically. There's an app for almost everything: few people use cash, and Danes even carry drivers' licenses and health cards on their smartphones. Bank statements, bills, and correspondence from local authorities are all sent electronically.

The introduction of a new Postal Act in 2024 opened up the letter market to competition from private firms, resulting in higher postage costs. "When a letter costs 29 Danish kroner (£3.35; \$4.20) there will be fewer letters," PostNord Denmark's Managing Director, Kim Pedersen, told local media. He said Danes had become increasingly digital and the decline in letter volumes had become so pronounced that it had fallen by as much as 30% in the past year alone.



Benefits of Knitting

A Swedish study from the University of Gothenburg highlights that knitting is important for mental well-being, acting as a therapeutic tool that reduces stress and anxiety, provides a sense of purpose and identity, and brings structure and calm by helping people focus and unwind, even improving cognitive function and offering a positive, productive outlet for those with mental health challenges. Far beyond being a hobby for creating garments, it is widely recognized for its therapeutic and cognitive benefits.

Mental and Emotional Health

- **Stress and Anxiety Reduction:** The rhythmic, repetitive motions can lower heart rates and reduce cortisol;
- **Mindfulness and Focus:** Knitting requires concentration on patterns and stitches;
- **Combats Depression:** Provides a sense of accomplishment and purpose;

Physical Benefits

- **Brain Health:** Complex cognitive tasks of knitting (pattern recognition, spatial awareness, and mental math) can increase brain connectivity and may reduce the risk of cognitive decline;
- **Dexterity and Mobility:** Helps maintain joint mobility, which is particularly beneficial for managing arthritis or improving fine motor skills.
- **Pain Management:** Individuals with chronic pain may experience a reduction in their perception of pain by focusing intensely on an intricate project,

Social and Practical Importance

- **Community Building:** Knitting circles reduce isolation and foster a sense of belonging.
- **Sustainability and Tradition:** Promotes use of natural fibers reducing environmental impact.



THE 50-ØRE'S JOURNEY FROM A MEAL TO HALF A PLASTIC BAG

(Editor's note:) In my travels I have always returned with coins to mark my visit. When I read this story dated 2012, I was interested in whether I could find each of the coins mentioned in the article. As you see, they were in my collection.

Since the first 50-øre coin (then made of silver) was minted in 1877, hundreds of millions of such coins have circulated in Norwegian homes and shops. But 135 years later (in 2012), this stopped. The 50-øre coin, which had existed in 10 different versions, was deprecated and no longer to be used as legal tender for payment.

Since May 1, 2011, the 1-krone has been the least valued legal tender in Norway.

Filled up on 50 øre

People who have lived a little may remember that they could get quite a lot of candy for 50 øre a few decades ago. However, in the early 20th century people could make themselves a whole meal for fifty øre — which was probably fine, since many had an hourly wage that did not exceed 50 øre.

No longer in circulation

Trond Eklund, Director of Cash Payments at Norges Bank, explains why the 50-øre coin, which was produced at Kongsberg, will soon die. “The reason is that it is no longer in circulation. We issue 15 to 20 million 50-øre coins each year. The shop returns the change, but the customers put them aside or put them in a jelly jar,” he says.

In recent years, 50-øre coins worth up to 10 million kroner have been issued by Norges Bank, but that is no longer the case. Inflation is the reason why the coins are slowly but surely dying out. So now the 50-øre coin will suffer the same fate as the 25-øre (1982), 10-øre (1991), 5-øre (1982), 2-øre (1973) and 1-øre (1973).

This is what you could buy for 50 øre:

1900: 3 liters of milk

1930: Three tram tickets in Oslo

1948: The first Donald [Duck] comic

1968: Half a kilo of potatoes

1990s: A piece of Bugg chewing gum

2012: Nothing (half a plastic bag)



Top row: 1-øre, 2-øre, 5-øre; Bottom row: 10-øre, 25-øre, and two styles of 50-øre.

News from Norway and the Norwegian Embassy

Getting Ready for the FIFA World Cup 2026



Enthusiasm continues to build around Norway's participation in the FIFA World Cup 2026 (FWC26)!

[Ambassador Anniken Huitfeldt attended the FWC26 draw day](#), where Norway was placed in Group I. After the draw, the Norwegian Football Federation (Norges Fotballforbund) and the Norwegian Men's National Football Team (Herrelandslaget) visited the Embassy to meet young fans and participate in interviews.

Here's Norway's Group I match schedule:

June 16 – vs TBD in Boston

June 22 – vs Senegal in New York/New Jersey

June 26 – vs France in Boston



SONS OF NORWAY MISSION STATEMENT



The mission of Sons of Norway is to provide quality insurance and financial products to our members, promote and preserve the heritage and culture of Norway, and to celebrate our relationship with other Nordic Countries.

DISTRICT SIX MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of District Six Board of Directors is to inspire the preservation of Norwegian heritage; provide information on the Financial Fraternal, and Foundation programs of Sons of Norway, and to support District Six lodges and members through communications programs resources and opportunities.

New Year's Speeches in Norway

King Haakon VII of Norway began the tradition of giving a New Year's Eve speech in 1940. It was the first new year after Norway was occupied by Germany during WWII, and the Royal Family was living abroad. These radio addresses were a way for the King to speak directly to the Norwegian people. Although few had radios at the time (because they had been confiscated by the Nazis), word of what the King said quickly spread throughout the nation. During his exile in London, King Haakon VII made several radio broadcasts to the American people via the BBC, expressing gratitude for the United States' support and steadfast friendship. One such address was on New Year's Day in 1943 when King Haakon gave a speech to the American people thanking them for their support during the war.

Here's a link to that speech:

<https://tinyurl.com/43dden7r> (cut and paste into your browser)

Fifty-one years ago, in 1975, a memorial was unveiled at Vestre Gravlund in Oslo to honor the American soldiers who died in Norway during WWII, a gesture from Norwegian veterans ensuring their sacrifice would not be forgotten. Each year, the U.S. Embassy in Oslo lays a wreath in remembrance of their sacrifice.





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