

VIKING HALL 349-1613 www.sofnalaska.com

November 2017 november



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Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge - President's Message

Svane Sang

Before 2002 I often used to pass by Viking Hall while driving on the New Seward Highway. When I would see the large blue letters spelling out "Viking Hall" I was filled with dread. Why you might ask? Because I once had the misfortune of being a board member of the Scandinavian Club of Santa Fe, New Mexico. The club was founded by a crazy Norwegian artist. A Finn and two Swedish women also joined the board along with one or two others I have forgotten. One of our first projects was to sponsor a St. Hans Day celebration complete with a picnic and a traditional Danish witch burning in a huge bonfire (not a real witch, just an image of a witch). When we advertised the event we got complaints from a real nation-wide organization of self-proclaimed witches who cursed us and said they would use their power to send rain and storm to ruin our event. And lo and behold it came to pass! Before we could light the fire a huge lightening and rain storm came out of nowhere and put a quick end to both the witch burning and the picnic. Through various sources I learned the "witches" were very pleased with the success of their curse.

The Scandinavian Club then turned its attention away from burning witches and thought it would be a good idea to host a Scandinavian Film Festival in Santa Fe. But it was too late, as you will see, the curse was still in effect. After "careful" deliberation it was decided it would be best to hold the film festival from 9:00 AM to 12:00 because theatre rental was cheaper in the morning rather than later in the day. The Finn and I objected but the two Swedish women bullies and the crazy Norwegian artist, the President, prevailed. To top it off they decided to commission a "Hammer of Thor Award" made of iron to give to the "winning" film. As it turned out the "winner" was a Norwegian film maker and it was actually awarded by an unwitting real Norwegian to a dumbfounded director at a major Norwegian film festival that was held in Bergen, Norway, I should mention that I never went to the festival on that Saturday morning nor did hardly anybody else. The President of the Scandinavian Club and the two Swedish ladies had decided that advertising the event was too expensive. So, nobody knew about the festival but the members of the club. Furthermore, both the Finn and I refused to attend a lame two-hour film festival that started at 9:00 AM in the morning. The Finn and I also resigned as board members and soon thereafter the club fizzled into non-existence. But my experience with this dysfunctional club made me deeply wary of Scandinavian organizations for vears; I imagined they too were also led by crazy Norwegians or bullying Swedish women, or both. In 2002 after being in Anchorage for some 17 years I screwed up the courage to attend a musical

event featuring Norwegian music at Viking Hall. I snuck in and sat quietly and enjoyed the music. But before I could escape out the door I was greeted by a couple who asked if I would like to become a member of Sons of Norway. At first I was hesitant and filled with dread. But they seem like such nice people and so welcoming that I decided to overcome my fears and give it a try. That couple was Kjell and Marit Kristiansen and I discovered over time that they were typical of the members of Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge — good people for the most part, though I suspect there is a crazy one or two hiding behind a facade of normalcy.

President's Message continues on Page 2

Lutefisk and Lefse Dinner

(and those tasty Meatballs too!)

ONE NIGHT ONLY!

Saturday, November 11th - Two Seatings

4:00 to 6:30 - First seating 7:00 to 10:00 - Second seating

Be sure to make reservations for the dinnertime of your choice before the seats are all taken!

DINNER PRICES: Adults \$25 (non-members \$30) • Ages: 12 - 16 \$12 • 5 - 11 \$6 • 4 & under FREE

Make your reservation today by calling Viking Hall at 349-1613



Five Great Years

President's Message continues from Page 1

Over the years I got drawn in as a volunteer; especially for lefse making and soon my capture by Sons of Norway was complete. Eventually, I was recruited to be a Trustee, and then Cultural Director, Late in 2012 Mickey Andrew and Anna Decker roped me into running for President of Sons of Norway, a position I now have held for five years. The Board and the members have been very supportive during my time as President and I have enjoyed the job. I especially enjoyed hosting King Harald and Ambassador Kåre Aas. That was the highlight of my Presidency.

But five years is enough. It is time to step down before I become too stale or begin to smell like old lutefisk. It is now time someone else to take up the gavel and provide fresh leadership to Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge. I know there is at least one excellent candidate waiting in the wings who will make a great President of Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge.

I will not fade entirely away like an old soldier. I am planning to run for the new post of Co-Social Director together with Merlin Hamre. And I will continue in my role as Co-Lefse Chair, bartender, and all-around clean-up guy. Also, if the Editor of the Flyer allows I will write piece or two on things Norwegian every now and again. - Editor's Note: Of course!

Bernt Balchen Lodge in May 2015. Unfortunately, other than lefse-making, I will sadly miss the remaining lodge events in November and December. I will be out of the state visiting my daughters and grandchildren for the next three months, but Linda Bustamante, my Vice President, will preside in my absence and the new President will take over in January.

Thanks to all of you for your solid support for the past five years. If I was successful it was because of the hard work of the board members and members of Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge.

> Fraternally yours, Terje "Ted" Birkedal President, Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge



Ambassador Kåre Aas with his Magesty, King Harald and Terje "Ted" Birkedal at

Photo courtesy of Paul Hansen.

2018 Slate of Lodge Officers - Bernt Balchen Lodge

President - Tom Falskow

Vice President & Membership

Secretary - Linda Bustamante

Treasurer - Carol Carlson

Counselor - Martha Andrew

Secretary - Anita Persson

Marshal - James Greeley

Marshal - Ryan Garner

Trustee - Amanda Saxton

Auditor - Patrick McCormick

Auditor - Sarah Sandbak

Co-Social Director - Ted Birkedal

Co-Social Director - Merlin Hamre

Cultural Director - Christie Ericson

Foundation Director - Marit Kristiansen

Sports Director - Martin Hansen

Sunshine Chair - Cindy McDowell

Newsletter Chair - Ruth Kvernplassen

Co-Publicity Chair - Charlotte MacCay

Co-Publicity Chair - Melinda Hansen

Librarian - Christie Ericson

Viking Hall board members at large:

Cynthia Olnes

Martin Hansen

Anyone wishing to fill vacant roles or run against any of the listed candidates please contact a member of the nominating committee, Linda Bustamante, Tom Falskow or Marit Kristiansen.

Elections will be held at the November meeting, Thursday, November 9th at 7:00 pm.



Meet Martin Hansen, Our Sports Director!

I moved to Alaska in 1975 and went immediately to Seward where I worked on a halibut longliner and as tug boat mechanic. Eventually, I ended up at the Department of the Interior, retiring two years ago from the National Park Service as a Land Manager.

My Alaska athletic background includes many running races from the Tuesday night Bonnie Sosa series, 10k, half marathons and a couple of marathons and the first half of the Mentasta to McKinley Wilderness Race. I've done some mountain running including the 1984, 1985, 1987 Crow Pass. I've bike raced for years back in the 1980's and 1990's. Recently I did the Kluane Klondike International Bike Relay. I've completed more Iditaski's from 1982 to 1995 than anyone else (it helps that the race isn't run anymore). I've done many adult Sunday and Tuesday night race series and many of the summer orienteering races. I've skied the Denali highway in the winter. Hiking is probably my



favorite "sport" and I've done many long trips from three weeks in the Brooks Range to parts of the Pacific Crest Trail.

When our son David was in middle school he wanted to build a boat so we bought plans and built an eight foot sailing dingy for Westchester Lagoon. My family humors my fly tying and fly fishing. I enjoy bird watching. Living close to Westchester Lagoon, we see many waterfowl in spring and summer.

My wife and I now enjoy long distance walking and have completed the 500 mile Camino Frances, 200 mile Offa's Dyke in Wales, the Coast to Coast walk across England and the middle part of the SouthWest Coast walk in Devon and Cornwall in England. We are planning to do the Annapurna Circuit in Nepal next.

For coaching, I've coached Boy and Girls Club soccer back in the 1990's and started coaching Junior Nordic in 1997 and still do. I've helped coach West High Cross Country ski team and volunteer at the Junior High races as help with ski waxing for different events. Programs that I've done with the SONS include -

Bike repair clinics, ski waxing ski lesson for both classic and skate skiing. I'm thinking about doing one on hiking gear.

My goal as Athletic director is to get more people outside and comfortable with whatever sport they are doing. I would like to continue offering free ski less for Sons of Norway families, waxing clinics, and hands on bike tuneup clinics. In the next issue of the Flyer will provide dates for ski waxing skate skiing and classic skiing this winter.

Please email me with suggestions for activities you would like to see going forward.

Martin Hansen - bikeskifish@gmail.com

KEEP Rolling! Life on the LEFSE Trail and Learning to Get a Round

This is your last, last chance to make lefse this year!

Thanks to all the great volunteers who made the second lefse session at the end of September a great success.

We finished early both Saturday and Sunday due to your help!

Now Cynthia Olnes and I, as Co-Chairs, need your help a third time for the lefse making for the Lutefisk and Lefse Dinner, the Nordic Christmas Brunch and the Lucia Family Christmas Party.

Please volunteer, you really make a difference!

Friday, November 3:

Preparing the dough - 3:00 to 6:00 pm

Saturday, November 4th:

Rolling/Packing/Clean-up - 9:00 am to 6:00 pm

Sunday, November 5th:

Rolling/Packing/Clean-up - 9:00 am to 6:00 pm

Even a couple of hours of your time helps make the day fly by.

Please contact Lefse Co-Chair Ted Birkedal at 351-6095 or tedbirkedal@gmail.com, to let him know when you wish to help, and for how long. Our honorary "Lefse Queen", Anna Decker, will also be happy take your calls at (694-2051).

As always, you may leave a message at 349-1613 (Viking Hall)

You can also Volunteer for the Lutefisk and Lefse Dinner!

Please consider helping out with the <u>Lutefisk and Lefse</u>
<u>Dinner</u> this year. It is a great way to not only show support for the lodge, but also to get to know other members and friends and find out just how much fun we have behind the scenes in making events like this possible.

The dinner itself this year is on Saturday November 11th

Two seatings: 4:00 - 6:00 pm or 7:00 -10:00 pm.

In terms of helping out, there are various days and times where we could use your assistance:

Friday, November 3rd - Sunday, November 5th LEFSE!

Sunday, November 5th – Meatball rolling: 1:00 - 4:00 pm Friday, November 10th – Preparation for the dinner (veggies, sauces, dinning room, etc) starting at 10 am until done (usually around 8:00 pm)

Saturday, November 11th - THE BIG EVENT

Help with first seating from 3:00 - 6:00 pm, or second seating from 6:00 - 9:00 pm, or cleanup from 9:00 pm onward.

Let me know by e-mail at lise@gci.net if you are willing to assist with any of the above areas, or give me a call at 222-5320 if you have questions.

Tusen takk! Tom Falskow, Co-chair Lutefisk Dinner 2017

A Dream Come True: Six Weeks in Norway at the International Summer School

Amazing! A word I must have said a million times during my six weeks in Norway this summer. From the intensive Norwegian language course I took, to the excursions around the country and the family members I met, everything about Norway was just simply amazing!

As many of you know, this was my first trip to Norway, and I was very excited. Although I've been participating in the language courses at Bernt Balchen Lodge for the past five years, and I've learned a lot, I was ready to take my language skills to the next level. I enrolled in the Intensive Intermediate Norwegian course at the University of Oslo's International Summer School (ISS). The thought of spending three hours a day immersed in learning Norwegian for six weeks was my idea of heaven.



Blindern Studenterhjem, my home for 6 weeks.

Established in 1947, the ISS offers undergraduate and graduate courses in a variety of subjects, most of which are taught in English, as well as four levels of Norwegian language courses. This summer over 500 students from 85 different countries attended the ISS, ranging in age from 17 to 80. Upon my arrival I got settled in to Blindern Studenterhjem, the student residence next to the university campus. After a weekend of orientations to dorm and campus life, including a tour around the city of Oslo, I was excited to start my class.

On the first day of class, however, that excitement quickly dwindled. I could barely understand anything the instructor said, I couldn't complete the written exercises, and I even messed up on my class introduction. All I could think was: I'VE MADE A TERRIBLE MISTAKE! The next day was a little easier though, and I soon realized that I was doing just as well as everyone else. Of the 15 students in the class, only two of us were from the U.S. The others were from all over the world – Russia, Australia, Nepal, Brazil, Austria, England, Japan, and Pakistan.

When I wasn't in class, I had plenty of time to go exploring. I could jump on the T-bane and visit a museum or go for a hike and be back in time for dinner and homework. The ISS also provided many social and cultural activities, including Norwegian Cultural Night, International Cultural Night, and guided tours around the city. One weekend excursion was also



2017 Carl Saltveit Scholarship winners: Robyn Emery, Christie Ericson, Karin Plagens in Bergen.

offered free of charge to all students. It was difficult to choose from the five excursions offered, but ultimately I chose to go on the Oslo Fjord trip, as we would be visiting the area that my family came from. I was also able to take an optional five-day excursion to Bergen, which was offered for an additional fee. As Cultural Director of Bernt Balchen Lodge, I tried to see and do as much as I could while I was in Norway so that I could share this knowledge with other members upon my return.

As if the language course and the sightseeing weren't enough, the highlight of my trip had to be meeting my Norwegian relatives for the first time. The only information I had about my relatives was three names and mailing addresses, which I received several days before I left Alaska. So I mailed three letters as soon as I got to Norway and hoped for the best. Imagine my surprise to get emails from all three families just a few days later, with invitations to come stay with them for a weekend. Luckily, everyone's schedules worked out, and I was



My great-grandfather's house on the island of Herføl

able to go visit all three families. I can't describe the feeling of seeing photos of my great-grandparents for the first time or of stepping on to the island where they came from (Herføl, Hvaler, south of Fredrikstad) and seeing the houses where they were born.

I'm sure many of you can relate. It has been so wonderful to stay in contact with my relatives since I've returned, and they continue to help me practice my Norwegian via Facebook.

See International Summer School on Page 5

CARL M. SALTVEIT SCHOLARSHIP

For study at the International Summer School 2018 University of Oslo – Oslo, Norway

The Carl M Saltveit Scholarship Fund will provide tuition, room and board to one qualified applicant to attend the International Summer School at the University of Oslo. This permanently endowed fund provides one scholarship annually to encourage and facilitate attendance at the International Summer School and pays for Basic Tuition and the cost of room and board in the university dormitory. Extra classes, optional trips and airfare are the responsibility of the recipient. The Scholarship is named for Carl M. Saltveit Sr. in honor and remembrance of his contributions to the Norwegian community through Grieg Lodge #15 in Portland, Oregon, his work in Norwegian war relief, educational exchange and services to immigrants and visitors from Norway. He also served as an International Director of the Sons of Norway.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Applicants must:

Have met the entrance requirements and applied to attend the International Summer School at the University of Oslo (award of scholarship contingent on acceptance to ISS); and

Be a current member of District Two, or a child or grandchild of one; and

Have completed one year of college.

Special Presentation - RE-SCHEDULED

November 9th, 6:00 pm at Viking Hall



Cultural Director
Christie Ericson will
give a presentation on
her experience at the
International Summer School
in Oslo, Norway this past
summer. A recipient of the
2017 Sons of Norway District
2 Carl M. Saltveit scholarship,
as well as a Bernt Balchen
Lodge scholarship, Christie

spent 6 weeks studying Intermediate Norwegian at the University of Oslo. Come hear about the highlights of her trip, including traveling around the country, meeting Norwegian relatives for the first time, and seeing some familiar faces from Alaska!

HOW DO I APPLY?

Applicants must submit:

- Completed and signed application Two essays
- Three letters of recommendation Official grade transcript

HOW IS THE RECIPIENT SELECTED?

The District Two Scholarship Committee will choose and forward all applications and recommendations, to the Sons of Norway Foundation. The Foundation will administer the scholarship.

WHERE DO I SUBMIT MY APPLICATION?

Applications (including all supporting documents) must be postmarked no later than January 15th, 2018 and mailed to:

Sons of Norway-District Two Scholarship Committee c/o David Champion,111 NE 11th Avenue Portland, OR 97232

Faxed copies will not be accepted.

QUESTIONS?

About the Carl Saltveit Scholarship, Contact David Champion, District 2 Scholarship Chair, 971-284-4175 or norseherodotus@hotmail.com.

About the International Summer School, registration and dates: www.uio.no/english/studies/summerschool

International Summer School

Continued from Page 4

I highly recommend the International Summer School program. It is very well organized and is suitable for people of all ages and interests. As members of Sons of Norway District 2, we also have the opportunity to apply for the Carl Saltveit Scholarship, which covers the entire program cost. I am very grateful for the financial support and encouragement of both District 2 and Bernt Balchen Lodge which made this trip of a lifetime possible for me.

Christie Ericson



Final day of class

All photos courtesy of Christie Ericson

Bernt Balchen Lodge, Lucia 2017

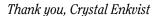
Emma Katherine Clark, daughter of Nancy and Bret Clark and granddaughter of Mickey Andrew, was born in Anchorage, Alaska. She is 14 years old and currently in the ninth grade at East High School's School Within a School program.

Emma has been involved with Bernt Balchen Lodge since she was a toddler, and has participated in Lekegruppe, Barnas Norsk, language classes, Lucia and other activities. She is also a fixture



at the Mother's Day Brunch each year, waiting tables and cleaning up.

Emma's hobbies and extracurricular activities have included music (guitar, violin and choir), cross-country running and track and field, cosplay, reading, and writing fiction. She currently plans to attend Trinity College, Dublin in Ireland after graduation, majoring in English, and wants to open a bookstore/cafe and write.



UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER:

Lucia Rehearsal #1- Sunday, November 19, 2017 1:30 - 2:30 pm

Lucia Rehearsal #2 - Sunday, December 3, 2017 4:00 - 5:00 pm

<u>Lucia Christmas Celebration - Sunday, December 10, 2017</u> 3:00 - 6:00 pm

VOLUNTEERING:

We are seeking volunteers to help during the Christmas program. Making sandwiches, pouring glogg, cutting spruce boughs; there are many opportunities for supporting this fun family-focused event. For more information, contact Crystal Enkvist at 907-245-0495 or crystal_enkvist@hotmail.com. Takk for hjelpen!

This event has become a tradition in many local Scandinavian families, and we hope that you will make time on your calendar this year, too.

Karin Childers and Crystal Enkvist Lucia Committee Acting Co-Chairs

Another Successful Scandinavian Bazaar! Thanks to all, the helpers, vendors and visitors!



All Photos by Glenn Soby!

















SUPERBOWL Raffle TICKET

Super Bowl Raffle 2018 Scholarship Fundraiser

It's that time of year again!

Ticket sales for the Sons of Norway 2018 Super Bowl Raffle are now underway.

The raffle is the primary source of funds for the Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge No. 2-046 Language/Heritage/Higher Education Scholarships.

The Raffle will again have 20 winners with a top prize of \$1,000. Only 300 tickets are sold so the chance to win is very generous, one in fifteen. Tickets are selling for \$25 each or a special deal of 5-for-\$100. Your ticket also entitles you to a free Lapskaus (Norwegian stew) dinner during the showing of the Super Bowl 51 game on **TWO big-screen TVs** at Viking Hall on Sunday, February 4, 2018.

Contact a committee member to purchase raffle tickets

John Olnes (562-2794) Sandra Hanson (243-2132) Wayne Johnson (248-3030) Jane Moe (274-1357)

Tickets will also be available during upcoming lodge events and at the Viking Hall office.



Consul's Corner

Information and Opportunities for Norwegian Alaskans



Ambassador Kåre Aas Returns to Alaska to Present the Prestigious St. Olav's Medal to Three Alaskans!

Approximately 75 people gathered at the Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge for what they believed was going to be a special



Left to right: Mayor Ethan Berkowitz, Marit Kristiansen, Steinar Hansen and Ambassador Kåre Aas at the medal presentation.

Photo courtesy of Lise Kristiansen Falskow

reception hosted by the Norwegian Ambassador to the U.S. filled with some good food, beverages including Norwegian beer, and some words about "Norway's Priority in the Arctic." What a shock it was when Ambassador Aas finished his talk by saying, "His majesty King Harald V has told me to come here," "When his majesty wants to honor a person or persons he gives them the Medal of St. Olav." Ambassador Aas had come all the way from Washington D.C. to Alaska to surprise three people, Marit Kristiansen and Steinar Hansen in Anchorage and Glo Wollen in Petersburg with this distinguished medal and honor.

The St. Olav's Medals are silver with a Royal Crown on top and hang from a red, white, and blue ribbon. On the front is the portrait of the reigning King with his name and motto. On the backside is the St. Olav's cross.

After the surprise presentation, Mayor Berkowitz gave his sincere congratulations to the recipients and said some words about the strength of our community because of immigrants like Marit and Steinar.

Pleased with the medal presentation and time with

Sons of Norway members in Anchorage, Ambassador Aas continued on to Petersburg for one more surprise presentation for Glo Wollen who is a driving force in her community.



Ambassador Kåre Aas with St. Olav Medal honorees, Marit Kristiansen and Steiner Hansen. Photo courtesy of Glenn Soby

Gratulære and congratulations to these impressive and deserving honorees.



Ambassador Kåre Aas speaking at the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce. Photo courtesy of Lise Kristiansen Falskow

Ambassador Aas Speaks to the Chamber

While in Anchorage, Ambassador Aas went to the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce to speak to a group of folks from Anchorage Chamber of Commerce and Alaska World Affairs Council about, "Norway Creating Jobs." Here we learned about the economic impact Norway has in the U.S. and Alaska due to direct and indirect investments (primarily from Norway's 1 Trillion dollar sovereign wealth fund.)

We also learned that in addition to Ambassador Aas' regular Twitter posts (@kareraas), he is now blogging on Huffington Post. You can read the Ambassador's past blogs about, "Economic Growth in Norway's Arctic: Report From An Embedded Ambassador," A Low Carbon Future Is A Good

Future," Transatlantic Security A #1 Priority For Norway," "The Oceans - A Challenged Resource" and other articles at https://www.huffingtonpost.com/author/kare-r-aas.



Elections in Norway - Dynamic Female Leadership!

Elections were held in Norway with the Conservative Party, lead by Prime Minister Erna Solberg, holding control of the parliament. New for this term is a dynamic all female trio with the appointment of Ine Marie Eriksen Søreide as the new Minister of Foreign Affairs. This means Norway is now led by a female Prime Minister, a female Finance Minister, and a female Foreign Minister.

I am honored to have been asked to serve as the Norwegian Honorary Consul in Alaska. When information and opportunities come across my desk, I will let Norwegians in our community know about them in a regular Consul's Corner section of the Flyer.

Lise Kristiansen Falskow Telephone: +1 (907) 440-5473



Non-Profit Organization **US Postage PAID** Anchorage, Alaska **PERMIT 505**



Our lodge continues to donate canned goods, non-perishable foods and money to the local food bank. Please bring your food or monetary donation in to Viking Hall.

Please consider helping those who are less fortunate.

EVENTS FOR NOVEMBER

3rd, 4th, 5th

Friday 3:00 - 6:00 pm

Saturday, Sunday

9:00 am - 6:00 pm

Lefse Making for Lutefisk & Lefse Dinner

7th

Tuesday

10:00 am

Needle Crafts and Rosemaling

9th

Thursday

7:00 pm

Board/Membership Meeting

Election of Officers

Announcement of 2017 Lucia

11th

Saturday

4:00 pm & 7:00 pm

Lutefisk and Lefse Dinner

18th

Saturday

10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Cookie Bake and Exchange

19th

Sunday

1:30 pm

1st Lucia Practice

21st

Tuesday

10:00 am

Needle Crafts and Rosemaling

Welcome New Members!

Erik Jones

Land Hayward

Erica Viens

Karen Atherton

Liv Froholm

Amy Nicolaisen

Mary Girard

Hal Ingalls

Richard Kullberg

Kristine Vangstad

Marcus Biastock

Melvin Johanson

Johanna G Marvin

Kristin Klingenstein

Linda Courtice

Ruth Courtice

All events take place at Viking Hall, 8141 Briarwood St., unless otherwise noted.

Please send articles or event information

for the next Newsletter by November 20th to: sonancak@gmail.com Attention - Ruth Subject Line - The Flyer