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Carl Rasmussen

### Trustee (2017-2019)

Kress Williamson

### Trustee (2018-2020)

Mark Hansen, Jr.

**Vennligfolk Lodge  
meets the second  
Sunday evening, 7:00 pm  
September thru May  
at Saint Paul's  
United Methodist Church  
600 Wilshire Blvd**

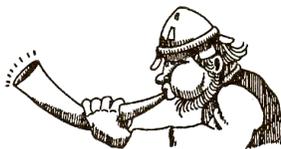
# Vennligblad

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, Wisconsin

VOLUME 25 ISSUE 1

JANUAR OG FEBRUAR 2018

## Fra presidenten:



## SONS OF NORWAY

**H**appy New Year! Many of us use this time of year to reflect on the past and to make changes and goals in our personal life for the New Year. I've been doing this not only in my personal life but also in the "life" of our **Vennligfolk Lodge**.



As I reflect on **Vennligfolk's** year of 2017, I am so pleased with the many positive things that have happened in our lodge. Here are just a few of them:

1. We increased our membership with six new members and the return of four previous members. A big welcome to our newest members: Patti Rous, Dawn Vertein, and Nick Vertein.

2. We had three Road Trips in 2017: The Palmquist Farm for a gathering with our Finnish friends in June, a tour of the District 5 Masse Moro Youth Camp in July, and the Hidden Studios Tour in October.

3. Our Lodge's participation in the Portage County Cultural Festival in May was very successful. This is our biggest fundraiser for **Vennligfolk Lodge**.

4. Lincoln Center asked **Vennligfolk** to do a Norwegian Culture display in May. So many members displayed their personal Norwegian items so beautifully in the several showcases at Lincoln Center.

5. We again enjoyed perfect weather for our Midtsommer Picnic on the beautiful grounds of South New Hope Church.

6. It was another year of excellent programs! Tusen Takk to the following lodge members who did presentations in 2017: Carl Rasmussen, Arno Morton, Karen Trzebiatowski, and Judy Pesanka.

7. Arno and I were privileged to attend the first ever District 5 Leadership Conference in Salem, WI in October. We learned so much and gleaned many new ideas for our lodge from the presentations and the other SON leaders at the conference.

8. Several members braved the November weather to have **Vennligfolk Lodge** participate in the annual Stevens Point Holiday Parade.

9. **Viking Magazine** featured **Vennligfolk Lodge** two times in the picture section last year.

10. Our **Julefest** gathering was a splendid evening with festive, Scandinavian décor, elegant table settings, delicious food, and musical entertainment from Dekorra Band.

Now, here it is a new year. Let me share a few new ideas and upcoming events that are happening in 2018.

Cont'd on page 4

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Gratulerer  
med  
dagen

January

Lynn Rasmussen - 7  
Lois Hagen - 16  
Susan Morton - 31

February

Conrad Favor - 2



## What's Happening at Vennligfolk???

### January 14, 2018 (Sunday): *"Fast Track to Norwegian Heritage"*

- This meeting will mark the first experiment of having a light supper preceding the program. **Please be available at 5:00 pm.** Following the meal, **Rich Sommer** will share a portion of a recent adventure to Norway with **Vennligfolk**. He and members of his family spent several weeks in Norway this past summer. Read more about this fascinating trip on page 3

Servers: Hagens and Rasmussens

Table: Susan Morton

### February 11, 2018 (Sunday): *"Norwegian WWII Double Agent"*

Lodge member **Arno Morton** will be the featured speaker presenting the exciting story of WWII double agent through images and narration. This is the story of one young Norwegian farmer, who in the summer of 1940, shortly after the German occupation, became a Double Agent against the Nazis to help the British SIS and the Norwegian Resistance in his home town of Flekkefjord, Norway. This true story of Gunvald Tomstad explains how this young Pacifist joined the Nazi Party and became an outcast in his own community so that he might be a Double Agent for his beloved Norway! Again, this **Vennligfolk meeting will begin at 5:00 pm with a light meal.**



Servers: Henslers & Harpsteads

Table: Charolette Hensler

### March 11, 2018 (Sunday): *"Iceland is Hot "* -

Lodge members Carl & Lynn Rasmussen declare "Iceland is hot!" But not because of its geysers, volcanoes, geothermal heat, Gulf-stream influenced climate, 24-hour summer sun, or hardy Nordic stock inhabitants! No, Iceland is hot because it has become one of the top tourist destinations in the world. Hear why as our speakers share their 10-day 2017 trip to this unique island nation.

Servers: Polsons & Bea Berg

Table: Elaine Anderson

### April 8, 2018 (Sunday): *"Seneca Seasons"* -

Retired middle school science teacher, **Larry Scheckel**, takes us back to his boyhood days, growing up with eight siblings on the Crawford County 238 acre farm 2 miles from Seneca, Wisconsin, in the 1940s and 1950s in the hill country of southwestern Wisconsin. With both humor and grace, he shares his memories of seasonal farm life and the one-room country school out on Oak Grove Ridge, which was the social heart of the community, from the basket social to the Christmas program and the end-of-the-year school picnic. Join Scheckel on his nostalgic and evocative journey back to a simpler time when life revolved around family, farm, Church, and seasons. Larry and his wife, Ann, will use a PowerPoint® program as a catalyst to a discussion of rural life in the middle 1900s.

Servers: Langs & D. Johnsons

Table: Joyce & Francis Polson

### May 6, 2018 (Sunday): *"TBA"* -

Servers: Karen T. & Elaine Anderson

Table: TBA

### May 12, 2018 (Saturday): *"Portage County Cultural Festival"*

**Vennligfolk** has been a contributor and participant in this event each of the twenty-plus years of its existence. Plan now to be a part of the most popular event in all of Portage County!

**REMEMBER: Vennligfolk Lodge** meets the second Sunday evening, 7:00 pm September through December, 5:00 pm January thru March and 7:00 pm April thru May at Saint Paul's United Methodist Church, 600 Wilshire Blvd, Stevens Point, Wisconsin

### Three Generations from the USA meet four generations in Norway and *The Fast Track to Norwegian Heritage*



Ian, Ela, Lonnie, Shawn, Lia, Carolyn, and Rich Sommer overlooking the North Sea.

**Rich Sommer** writes, “I have lived with a 99%+ (23andMe) Norwegian and have visited the family farms on the prairie in North Dakota. **Carolyn** has established and has maintained a close connection with three cousins of her generation on the islands (1,000) of Bomlo south of Bergen. There were no bridges when we first visited 19 years ago. The generations spanned 8/9 year old Ela, with a birthday in Norway, to 90 year old Signa. Part of what made this special is Signa read aloud a letter in Norwegian from Bomlo to North Dakota, a long time ago, and returned to Bomlo by Carolyn recently. We were spectacularly hosted in gracious Norwegian style. We stayed in one cousin’s “rorbu” on an island in the North Sea Norwegian food was always set in front of us. It was an extension of the ten year old cod we have hanging in our garage. A highlight for me was attending a service in the seldom used *Moster Kirke*, the oldest church in Norway. The service was commemorating the death of St. Olaf, who likely had a part in establishing the church. This visit could possibly end up in the Bygdabok for Vik I Sogn.

Now for **Rich’s** story “The Fast Track to Norwegian Heritage.” My mother was Mildred Nelson, my grandfather was Ole Nelson, my great grandfather was Ole Nelson, and my great, great grandfather was Niels Olson Dahle, who landed, with his family, on the schooner *Deitrich* in

1850 in New York. That would make me one quarter Scandinavian, as confirmed by the “23andMe” genetic test. I really knew none of this a few years ago, other than I knew my grandfather who lived on the family farm in Boone county in northern Illinois. There was one letter from my mother of a reunion on the family farm in 1939. Apparently there was no family historian on this side or that side of the ocean. There are over 100 Nelson names in the Belvedere, Ill phone book, but scant connection.

Nineteen years ago, on our first trip, we had dinner in Oslo with Arne Brekke, the quintessential Scandinavian connector. I asked him where I could find the Dahle farm. The answer was, “Dahle means farm so it could be anywhere.” Well, that was kind of a dead end. I had a lot of help from people and resources and one day in my life to find my family roots in Norway. The one day culminated in coffee in the mountain farm house where my great, great grand mother lived as a child. I could have been the first communication and connection in 167 years. Vidar was our personal guide and he knew everybody and all the history of the Dale Valley. We had to get there first.

Some of the resources are a quickly sketched two hour family tree with 300 names, one conversation with cousin Carol, a lot of help from several people at the *Norway Heritage Hand Across the Sea* web site, Marv Lang and a trip to the *Norwegian American Genealogical Center* in Madison, Solveig Quinney from the *Center* who could read the bygdabok and told me “you have the right farm”, *Norwegian Immigrants to the United States-A* biographical Directory, 1825-1850, Red River Valley Genealogical Society, Rasmus from Balestrand - the key connection from Solveig to actually get to Dale, Karen Trzebiatowski for cash tips, Jostein who grew up next to the Dalhe farm, *Google Maps*, *Google Translate*, FINN kart, Dan, the distant cousin who called from Provo, UT and had visited Dale 20 years ago, Chris, a distant cousin who saw my post on *Norway Heritage*, Berit who sent us the link on the deadly avalanche in Arnafjord, and of course Carolyn who accompanied me on the one day heritage trip and hit it off great with Vidar and picked up a lot that I missed. One link in the chain missed could have scuttled the whole experience.

There was one disappointment, but the cup of coffee made it all better.

### Sons of Norway Headquarters is Packing Up!

A purchase agreement has been signed and plans are underway for the redevelopment of Sons of Norway’s Headquarters. The new multi-use building will be designed with a Nordic flair, and the property developers will welcome us back as an anchor tenant in approximately two years. In the meantime, headquarters will relocate to temporary offices. Mailing address and phone numbers will remain the same, but the physical location will be a few miles west from the current Uptown Minneapolis address. If you plan to visit, as of March 5, 2018, you will find SON at: 11100 Bren Road West, Minnetonka, MN 55343



Little Ole was getting into the smart aleck stage. Just before Christmas, the teacher gave the class a quiz. Little Ole turned in a blank sheet of paper across which he scrawled, "Only God knows the answers to all these questions. Merry Christmas." His teacher's reply, written across the top of the paper said, "God gets an A. You get an F. Happy New Year."

## Norwegian Scientist Advances Study of Grid Cells in Human Brains

May-Britt Moser may not be a household name, however, she is a Noble Prize award-winning scientist from Oslo, Norway, who holds a psychology degree and Ph.D. in Neurophysiology from the University of Oslo.

In 2014 Moser, along with the Edvard I. Moser and John O'Keefe, were awarded the Nobel Prize for the discovery of human grid cells, a population of neurons that enables us to understand where we are in space. For example, the nerve cell in our brain called the hippocampus activates when we occupy a certain spot in a room. Then, other nerves activate when we

move to another place in the room, forming a map of the environment in our brains.

With the identification of this grid, Moser and her scientific colleagues have set the bar for this field of study. Moser now continues to discover new information about human grid cells and hopes to ultimately map out how complex thoughts, such as memory, arise.

To learn more about May-Britt Moser's discoveries, visit <https://goo.gl/z9ueLp>.

"By discovering the grid cell network, we suddenly understood something fundamental about the mystery of the brain - how the brain generates a universal map of the environment."

### Continued from page 1

1. For our January, February, and March meetings, the starting time has been changed to 5:00 PM. We will start with a light supper at 5:00 followed by our program. This should get everyone home a bit earlier during the darkest and coldest days of our Wisconsin winter.
2. Two Road Trips are in the works. The first one, to an Ibsen play in Wisconsin Rapids in February, is featured in this issue of *Vennligblad* (p.7). We are also in the planning stages of a trip to Norskedalen in late summer or early fall. Your officers welcome ideas for future road trips.
3. In the near future, the minutes of our lodge meetings and the treasurer's report will be emailed to you instead of being read at our meetings. Those of you without email will receive a paper copy in the mail. (cf. p 8)
4. We have a committee looking into getting a better sound system for our lodge meetings. This is a very big need! We certainly want all of our members and guests to be able to hear well at our meetings.
5. Lynn Rasmussen is starting an online recipe exchange/cookbook. Some of the world's best cooks and bakers are members of **Vennligfolk Lodge**, and it will be fun to share these recipes. We will be hearing more about this in the coming months.

With the New Year, I always have to remind our members of the "homework" that is due. Yes, it is time to turn in your volunteer hours for the fraternal and community events that you participated in during 2017. If you have not kept track of your hours, please put on your thinking caps, and try to remember the different events you helped with. Fraternal hours would be anything you did for our **Vennligfolk Lodge** such as preparing food for our meetings, going on road trips, working on Cultural Skills, helping with the Lincoln Center display, etc. Community involvement hours would be your hours preparing food for & working at the Cultural Festival, and any work you did for the Holiday Parade. Please give our secretary, Bea Berg, two numbers: The total number of hours you have for Fraternal Events, and the total number of hours you have for Community Events. If you have any questions about this, I will try to clear this up for you at our January 14th lodge meeting. I will also be handing out new tracking sheets for 2018. It is important that we turn in these numbers as they are needed for Sons of Norway to keep its tax exempt status.

In closing, I just want to say how honored I am to begin my fourth year as **Vennligfolk Lodge** President. I think we have one of the best lodges in the country, and it has little to do with me, but it has everything to do with all of our members! There isn't room for me to list the countless ways you work and give of your time and talents to help **Vennligfolk Lodge** succeed. Thank you! Let's make 2018 our best year ever!

*Vennlig hilsen, Susan Morton*

# Vennligfolk's Julefest 2017



Ole and Sven were walking through the woods in northern Minnesota and came upon some tracks. Ole said; "Dese here haf to be bear tracks." Sven replied, "No, Ole, yew are wrong. Dese are deer tracks." They argued back and forth for a few minutes until the train hit them!

*a little in English...*

## Erna Solberg is one of the world's most powerful women

Angela Merkel tops the list of the world's most powerful women. But Erna Solberg is more powerful than Hillary Clinton.

Forbes magazine is known for creating lists. They write who earns most and has the most power. Recently a list came out of the world's most powerful women. Forbes mentions 100 women who they think are the most powerful.

Prime Minister Erna Solberg is 46th. She appears before Beyoncé Knowles (50th place) and politician Hillary Clinton (65th place).

"Norway's Angela Merkel," writes Forbes. At the top of the list is Germany's leader. 63-year-old Angela Merkel is number one for the seventh consecutive year. She retains the position despite losing power during the election this year. Forbes calls her the actual leader of the European Union (EU).

In second place is Theresa May. She is Prime Minister of the UK. Third place goes to Melinda Gates, the wife of Bill Gates, founder of the software company Microsoft. Melinda Gates runs a large charitable organization that helps people in poor countries.

There are many different women on the list. There are politicians from several countries, there are powerful leaders from big companies, and there are entertainers.

Here are a few examples:

8th place: Christine Lagarde, head of the International Monetary Fund

11th place: Indra Nooyi, head of the company PepsiCo.

15th place: Tsai Ing-wen, Taiwan's first female leader

19th place: Ivanka Trump, businesswoman, Donald Trump's daughter

21st place: Oprah Winfrey, media queen

33rd place: Aung San Suu Kyi, leader in Myanmar

45th place: Gina Rinehart, owner of Hancock mineral company in Australia

78th place: Kersti Kaljulaid, Estonia's first female president

85th place: artist Taylor Swift from the United States

*litt på norsk...*

## Erna Solberg er blant verdens mektigste kvinner

Angela Merkel topper lista over verdens mektigste kvinner. Men Erna Solberg er mektigere enn Hillary Clinton.

Magasinet Forbes er kjent for å lage lister. De skriver hvem som tjener mest og har mest makt. Nylig kom lista over verdens mektigste kvinner. Forbes nevner 100 kvinner som de mener er mektigst.

Statsminister Erna Solberg er på 46. plass. Hun kommer før artisten Beyoncé Knowles (50. plass) og politikeren Hillary Clinton (65. plass).

«Norges Angela Merkel» skriver Forbes. Øverst på lista er Tysklands leder. 63 år gamle Angela Merkel er nummer 1 for sjuende år på rad. Hun beholder plassen til tross for at hun mistet makt ved valget i år. Forbes kaller henne den egentlige lederen av Den europeiske union (EU).

På andreplass er Theresa May. Hun er statsminister i Storbritannia. Tredjeplassen går til Melinda Gates. Hun er kona til Bill Gates. Han grunnla dataselskapet Microsoft. Melinda Gates driver en stor hjelpe-organisasjon. De hjelper folk i fattige land.

Det er mange ulike kvinner på lista. Det er politikere fra flere land, det er mektige ledere for store selskaper, og det er folk som driver med underholdning.

Her er noen eksempler:

8. plass: Christine Lagarde, leder for det internasjonale pengefondet.

11. plass: Indra Nooyi, leder for selskapet PepsiCo.

15. plass: Tsai Ing-wen, Taiwans første kvinnelige leder

19. plass: Ivanka Trump, forretningskvinne, Donald Trumps datter

21. plass: Oprah Winfrey, mediedronning

33. plass: Aung San Suu Kyi, leder i Myanmar

45. plass: Gina Rinehart, eier av mineralselskapet Hancock i Australia

78. plass: Kersti Kaljulaid, Estlands første kvinnelige president

85. plass: artisten Taylor Swift fra USA.

## Valentine's Day in Scandinavia



Scandinavia also celebrates Valentine's Day. Although the truth behind the Valentine's Day legends is mysterious, the countless stories about Valentine certainly emphasize his appeal as romantic figure. It's no surprise that Valentine was one of the most popular saints in Europe. What is happening nowadays in Scandinavia on Valentine's Day, February 14?

**Norway:** In Norway, Valentine's Day has become a very important part in the social calendar for many, especially younger folks. Some Norwegians like to remind us that Valentine's Day celebrations are imported from other countries. According to the legends, the sight of birds mating being a sure sign of spring, love and spring and Valentine's Day celebrations have become interlinked over the years. In Norway's big cities like Oslo on February 14 you can see stores displaying red hearts and other Valentine goodies.

**Denmark:** After cautiously warming to the trend, Denmark has begun to embrace Valentine's Day traditions. One of the popular Valentine's Day customs in Denmark is sending of white flowers called 'Snowdrops'. Also on this day, young couples write and swap poems, love notes or funny poems known as 'gaekkebrev'. The sender of 'gaekkebrev' writes a rhyme for his beloved, though he signs the message with dots, not a name. If the recipient guesses the name correctly, she receives an egg at Easter! Various Valentine's Day events are held, e.g. live concerts and flower displays.

**Sweden:** Valentine's Day in Sweden is celebrated by Swedish couples in a variety of ways - by visiting a nice restaurant, going to a club with live music, or watching the sunset from the beach. Back in the 1960s, flower-sellers in Sweden – inspired by their American counterparts – began to promote Valentine's Day. Today, huge amounts of roses, jelly hearts and pastries are sold and exchanged by lovers. The young Swedes in particular have adopted the custom. Sweden's idea behind Valentine's Day is to show your love and appreciation of another.

**Iceland:** Valentine's Day in Iceland, compared to many other countries is pretty austere. Iceland sees a generous use of flowers. Sending flowers to the beloved is a very common custom and several types of bouquets are available. Glorious rose bouquets are available all over the country, starting from neighborhood shops to specialist florist shops. Another noticeable feature of Valentine's Day in Iceland is the festive food. Remember, in Iceland's dark winter (Polar Nights), you can have both dinner **and** breakfast by candlelight!

## Sour Cream Porridge (Rømmegrøt)

- 4 dl (1 2/3 cups) 35% fat sour cream
- About 3 dl (1¼ cups) flour
- About 1¼ liters (5 cups) full fat milk
- ¾ tsp salt



Sour cream porridge must be made from high fat (35%) natural sour cream, with no stabilizers or gelatin added. For the best results, use homemade sour cream. Heat 2 1/2 dl (1 cup) whipping cream to 35° C (95° F), almost body temperature, then whisk in 2 tablespoons buttermilk. Let stand at room temperature at least 8 hours, until thickened.

Simmer sour cream, covered, about 15 minutes.

Sift over 1/3 of the flour. Simmer until the butterfat begins to separate out.

Skim off the fat.

Sift over the remaining flour and bring to a boil. Bring the milk to a boil and thin the porridge to desired consistency. Whisk until smooth. Simmer about 10 minutes, and season with salt. Serve with the skimmed butterfat, sugar and cinnamon.

## Wisconsin Rapids Community Theatre

The Wisconsin Rapids Community Theatre (WRCT) will be presenting Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen's "*A Doll House*" in February 2018. This classic play concerns keeping up appearances in 19<sup>th</sup> century Norwegian society. Performances are scheduled for Friday and Saturday, February 9-10; Thursday - Sunday, February 15-18, 2018. Performances begin at 7:30 pm except for Sunday which begins at 2:00 pm; all tickets are \$15.

WRCT is located in the east end of the Rapids Mall, 220 3rd Ave. So. Tickets can be ordered on the web at ...

[www.wrctheatre.org](http://www.wrctheatre.org)

Visit this site for more information and perhaps arrange to attend with friends from **Vennligfolk**.



Vennligfolk Lodge #5-627  
 Marv Lang, *Editor*  
 3015 Cherry Street  
 Stevens Point, WI 54481 U.S.A.

**Sunday, January 14, 2018**  
**“Fast Track to Norwegian Heritage”**  
 by Rich Sommer

**Sunday, February 11, 2018**  
**“Norwegian WWII Double Agent”**  
 by Arno Morton



*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 Marv Lang at 3015 Cherry Street, Stevens Point, WI 54481 or by e-mail to [cmlang@charter.net](mailto:cmlang@charter.net).

*Mange Tusen Takk*

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.



This is the season of the year when we get many colorful postage stamps. Recall Sons of Norway’s *Tubfrim* project ... cut the postage off the envelope leaving an ¼ inch boarder. Bring your stamps to the January '18 Vennligfolk meeting.

**Norwegian Language Class**

The Norwegian class is ‘starting over’ with vocabulary and grammar on January 9th. This would be a good time for anyone interested in learning Norwegian to join the class. You can learn at your level and pace while we review, starting with the basics (“Hello, how are you?” Etc.). We meet in the Purple Room at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on Tuesdays from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. Anyone is welcome to come. This is an informal class. You can come late, leave early, or miss class sometimes. (Homework – and answers – are either emailed or in your text.) If you are interested or have questions, please contact Jan Flatoff at 344-7935 or [ernaj@charter.net](mailto:ernaj@charter.net)

Submitted by  
*Jan Flatoff*

**"Buzzin's from Bea "**

At the Officers' Planning Meeting, Dec.5, 2017, it was decided to send the Secretary's Report by email after each meeting. Thus, I will not be reading the previous months minutes at future meetings, beginning in January 2018. This procedure has been adopted by many lodges in order to save time for other business.



Periodically, the minutes of the Officers' Meetings will also be sent to the membership.

Submitted by  
*Bea Berg, Secretary*

