

# Vikingskip

www.vesterdalen.org



mars 2026

Vesterdalen Lodge No. 2-131 • Sons of Norway • Auburn/Kent, WA • Chartered October 23, 1983

Vol. XLIII No. 3

## HILSEN FRA PRESIDENTEN



Happy spring, fellow Lodge Members!

Just as gardeners choose what to plant, communities choose what to cultivate. As spring inches closer, it provides us with the opportunity to move forward with intention. This month I want to consider what we can learn from friluftsliv.

Friluftsliv, or open-air living, is an essential part of life in Norway. It isn't about extreme adventure or athletic performance but spending time together outdoors. Outdoor gatherings are

especially powerful because they lower barriers: being outside tends to make conversation easier, participation more relaxed, and newcomers more comfortable. A leisurely walk on a sunny day, volunteering together, or a casual fika meet-up can create the kind of welcoming environment that helps communities grow organically. When people spend time together outdoors, whether on forest paths or neighborhood sidewalks, they build familiarity without pressure and, over time, those small interactions take root, growing trust that blossoms into meaningful time together. Our social time, cultural presentations, and shared values act as seeds - small, intentional offerings - that invite people to gather and engage. As we continue to shift shared expectations and support one another, what matters most is not the scale of our efforts but the care and intent behind them.

Spring also reminds us that renewal isn't about immediate results. It is about steady beginnings, creating space for growth, and tending that growth together. The simple act of gathering outdoors for friluftsliv signals openness: we're here, we're present, and there's room for others to join. We have some great events coming up in the next few months. Bli med, be present.

Med vennlig hilsen,

*Amanda*

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 celebrate our relationship with other Nordic countries.

### A Little Humor

*Ole and Sven had a moving business and were struggling with a big crate in a doorway. They pushed and tugged until they were exhausted but it wouldn't move. Finally, Ole (on the outside) said, "We'd better give up. We'll never get this in."*

*Sven (on the inside) said, "What do you mean get it in? I thought we were trying to get it out."*

## Upcoming Meeting

**Monday, March 16, 2026**

Messiah Lutheran Church

410 "H" Street NE • Auburn, WA 98002

**6:30 Special Dessert**

Hosted by Sande Nelson

**7:00 Lodge Program - Carol Mitchell**

**The Greater Tacoma Peace Prize**



Carol Mitchell, the Greater Tacoma Peace Prize Laureate for 2025, will be our speaker at our March 16 meeting.

Carol has worked to foster peace through social justice, defense of civil and human rights and the advancement of racial equality.

She will be joined by our **Tom Heavey**, who was instrumental in founding the greater Tacoma Peace Prize in 2005.

They will share pictures and the story of their trip to Norway and to the awarding of the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo. We look forward to seeing you at our meeting and celebrating with a St. Patrick's Day dessert. Remember our meeting will start at 6:30 and the program will begin at 7 PM. See you there.

## Vesterdalen Torsk Dinner on May 16, 2026 at 4:00 PM

Please join us for a Torsk Dinner on Saturday, May 16 starting at 4:00. Also consider inviting friends and neighbors. We have room for about 100 people. One serving time.

Reservations are required for the dinner. We will have an initial price of \$25 per person until April 20, when the cost will rise to \$30 per person (6 and under are free). This is our primary fundraiser for the year. You can buy "tickets" (with cash, check or charge) at the March 16 and April 21 meetings or by calling Dotty Erickson at 206-356-1858, where you need to use your credit card to make your reservation. A list will be kept, and you won't receive a physical ticket. We will need your reservation by Wednesday, May 13.

Nancy Sommerfield will manage desserts. Please let her know if you can provide a dessert (Nancy: 206-612-6389)

We will need help to set up, decorate, serve or clean up, so please contact Amanda Reding (509-881-7639) or Vernene Scheurer (253-221-7059). We will also have signup sheets at the meetings so please help where you can.

We will also have a silent auction and will start the auction with an online event. We will have some items available only online and some items available only at the event. More information about this will be coming soon.

At this time, we will not have a meeting in May, so this will be our Sytennde Mai celebration event. Please join us for this celebration and fundraising event.

Vernene Scheurer

## SUNSHINE REPORT

### March Birthdays

- 3 Wilma Hansen, Tim McGuire
- 8 Karen Nugent, Cindy Olson
- 12 Kaitlyn Petersen
- 13 Erin Iverson, Jane Eidsaune
- 16 Paige Winsor
- 18 Brandon Sroka
- 21 Diane Fatland
- 22 Nils Ladderud
- 23 Theresa Sroka
- 25 Dorothy Hartley, Mari Lysne
- 26 Colleen Milner
- 28 Keith Ladderud

There is 1 milestone birthday in March. Please call or email when you know of a member who needs some Vesterdalen Sunshine. Your help is needed to reach everyone. Thank you very much.

*Diane Fatland, Sunshine Committee  
206-947-8776 dianefatland@gmail.com*



## SONS OF NORWAY FOUNDATION

If you had been impacted by severe illness/injury or by a natural disaster, please note; the SON Foundation may be able to help you!

The Sons of Norway Foundation is very important as one of the "three P's" underpinning SON: Philanthropy. The Foundation enables us to assist members and their families as well as make the wider community a better place to live.

I am honored to be your Vesterdalen Foundation lodge director and to be following such a great Director with such hands-on experience in philanthropy through his founding and leadership of the Greater Tacoma Peace Prize organization: Tom Heavey.

In 2025, the Foundation distributed over \$273,000 in awards: \$148,000 In Scholarships, \$110,000 In Grants, and \$15,000 In Camperships.

Because of the work of Jim and Carol Larson and others with the Auburn Little League team, Vesterdalen is fortunate to have received grants from the Foundation to help fund the team. Our financial support has enabled wider participation in Little League by local families.

While the annual deadlines for Foundation scholarships and grants are several months in the future, there are two kinds of grants to members (Humanitarian Fund Helping Hands to Members) – Disaster Relief Grants and Medical Relief Grants — that allow applications to be made on an ongoing basis. These grants are up to \$5,000.

Disaster Relief Grants are offered to "provide assistance to current Sons of Norway members whose homes are significantly damaged and are deemed unlivable for a period of time due to a natural disaster. Such disasters include floods, wildfires, hurricanes, tornados and other catastrophes."

Medical Relief Grants are offered to "provide assistance to current Sons of Norway members experiencing severe financial hardship from extreme medical illness or personal injury. The Foundation may provide aid for expenses not fully reimbursed by insurance or other organizations, such as personal fundraising events, government and other charitable organizations, etc. With both these grants, there are further requirements that must be met.

If you think you qualify for either of these two grants, the lodge is here to help you apply.

Thank you!  
*Karen T.*

## KULTUR REPORT

### A Taste of Norway

I trace my Norwegian traditions through my grandmothers.

My maternal grandmother was Anna Otto Johnson. She was born in Hafslø, Norway, in 1884 and came to Bird Island, Minnesota in 1890. She married my grandpa, Gust Johnson, and they had a farm on the east Hill of Kent.

My paternal grandmother, Adelia (Della) Sneve Whitley, was born in Brookings, South Dakota in 1890. Her father was a Lutheran pastor so the family moved around a lot, with their final destination Kent Lutheran Church. Her father came to Wisconsin in 1874 from Oppdal, but her mother's family arrived in Wisconsin (from Nannestad) in 1852 and onto Brookings, South Dakota.

I found a recipe for Rice Pudding that came from Della's family.

#### Rice pudding

- 1/2 cup uncooked rice
- 3 eggs
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 3 1/2 cups of milk
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg (or less)

Cook rice according to package directions. In a 2-quart casserole, beat the eggs, stir in sugar, vanilla, and raisins. Stir milk into rice; stir rice mixture into the egg mixture. Sprinkle with nutmeg. Set the casserole in a pan of hot water in the oven. Bake one hour 25 minutes in at 300°. Stir once after a half an hour in the oven. *Recipe from Della Sneve Whitley.*

We always had rice pudding on Christmas Eve when we were growing up, and it had a hidden almond which was the prize. That meant you would be the first one to get married. Well, I guess my sister Suzi got the almond more times than the rest of us because she got married first.

*Carol Whitley Larson.*



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**March 7 --10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Heritage Day, Bothell Sons of Norway Lodge**

**March 14 - Nordic Heritage Festival, 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM - Free Admission, Musical Entertainment, Craft Demonstrations, Vendors and Norwegian Café.**

Treat yourself to pea soup, rømmegrøt, breads, cookies & more. No ATM on campus, so bring cash for food items. The Scandinavian Cultural Center will be open downstairs for exhibits!

Anderson University Center at Pacific Lutheran University, 12180 Park Ave S., Tacoma.



## SOCIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

### At the Last Meeting

There were 26 members and five guests at the lodge meeting on Monday, February 16. There was no raffle drawing.

### Upcoming Meeting

Our next meeting will be March 16 starting with a special dessert at 6:30 p.m. hosted by Sande Nelson. There will be no dinner served, just dessert. Come and enjoy Vesterdalen fellowship!



Vesterdalen members enjoying a lutfisk dinner in Poulsbo

### The Scandinavian Hour

with Seth Tuffeland is on KKNW 1150 AM  
on Saturdays, 9:00 - 10:00 AM

Listen anytime at:

<https://www.thescandinavianhour.org>



**SATURDAY**  
**MARCH 28**



at Fika  
coffeeshop,  
part of the Farm 12 restaurant complex in  
Puyallup: 1:00 PM.

It is flat and very accessible for  
walkers and wheelchairs.

The Kaffe Stuas we've had thus far  
at Fika have been really fun and well-  
attended!

Fika is the café near the main restaurant.  
3303 8th Ave. SE, Puyallup, WA 98372  
(253) 697-9486

Carol Larson for the Cultural Committee

## SPORTS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Norway is Number One in the 2026 Olympics Medal Count! Wow! Norway is re-establishing itself as the most thriving, competitive and toughest country in the world with its run away performance in the 2026 Winter Olympics.

As of this writing, Norway has a dramatic lead in both total medals (34) and gold medals (16)! In second place, the U.S. has nine gold medals (and 27 total). Italy is a close third, with 26 total medals.

Norway's spectacular Olympics performance is even more impressive when considering its size and population relative to other countries: Out of 197 countries of the world, Norway ranks 119th in population, and 61st in total surface area.

What was your favorite race of the Olympics?

Sports Medals: An Overview

Let's get started earning some sports medals! At the very successful Julefest in December, Dave Eidsaune wore several of the sports medals he has earned. They were really nice!

The sports medal program was designed to emphasize the importance of fitness, exercise, and outdoor sports as part of the Norwegian ethos.

Earning medals is fun and healthy. While there are specific medals earned for cycling, swimming, skiing and walking, there is also a "sports and fitness" category which can encompass many other forms of physical activity or sport, such as fitness classes or workouts at a gym, gardening, or kayaking. All one has to do is keep track of one's miles or time. There are cards for this purpose; but the easiest thing is to print out a card from the links below; or, until you can obtain a card, just reproduce the same columns on a piece of notebook paper and keep track that way. When one has earned a medal, please give card(s) to Karen T. and she will order the medal.

Once one earns one medal, one starts all over to earn the next.

In 2020 the Sports Hero Medal ("Idrettselt") was added as a fifth medal to the existing bronze, silver, gold, and enamel medals. One is eligible to work towards a sports hero medal once one has earned the bronze, silver, gold, and enamel medals in a given category.

Important Legalese: (Please. note that you should consult with your doctor before engaging in any kind of exercise regimen and that SON/Vesterdalen is not responsible for any mishaps/illness etc. that may result.)

Below, find links to print the cards to get started. Please note that to access them one needs to be signed in to the SON member website: you will need your email address and password. If you aren't able or don't wish to sign in to the website; basically, for walking, biking, swimming or skiing you need to keep track of the date, the place, and the distance (in miles); and for general fitness, the dates, activity, time, and points. Please initial each entry on the cards.

Depending on your age, there are different distance/time requirements to earn medals. For the general fitness category, the card lists a number of sports, but if yours isn't there we can figure out which is closest to your activity

Links to download the cards:

(walking):[https://www.sofn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Gangemerke\\_Card.pdf](https://www.sofn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Gangemerke_Card.pdf)

(biking):[https://www.sofn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Sykklemerke\\_Card.pdf](https://www.sofn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Sykklemerke_Card.pdf)

(swimming):[https://www.sofn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Svømmemerke\\_Card.pdf](https://www.sofn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Svømmemerke_Card.pdf)

(skiing)[https://www.sofn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Skimerke\\_Card.pdf](https://www.sofn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Skimerke_Card.pdf)

(general fitness)[https://www.sofn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Idrettsmerke\\_Card.pdf](https://www.sofn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Idrettsmerke_Card.pdf)

(for the sports hero medal)<https://www.sofn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/idrettselt.pdf>

Karen T.

## KALENDAR

The entire calendar will always appear at [www.versterdalen.org](http://www.versterdalen.org)  
mars

- 2 Board Meeting via Zoom ..... 6:30 PM
- 16 Social ..... 6:30 PM
- Lodge Meeting in person and via Zoom ..... 7:00 PM
- 28 Kaffe Stua at Fika Café ..... 1:00 PM

**april**

- 6 Board Meeting via Zoom ..... 6:30 PM
- 20 Social ..... 6:00 PM
- Lodge Meeting in person and via Zoom ..... 7:00 PM
- 25 Kaffe Stua at Fika Café ..... 1:00 PM

**mai**

- 4 Board Meeting via Zoom ..... 6:30 PM
- 16 Torsk Dinner ..... 4:00 PM
- 30 Kaffe Stua at Fika Café ..... 1:00 PM



### The True Story of St. Patrick's Day

Centuries ago, many Norwegians came to Ireland to escape the bitter Norwegian winters.

A famine gripped Ireland at the time and food was scarce, fish and potatoes being just about all there was. To make matters worse, the Norwegians were eating all the fish, leaving the Irish with nothing to eat but potatoes.

Then the Norwegians started taking over the potato crop and making lefse. This was too much for the Irish and they decided the Norwegians had to go.

They organized a secret organization called IRATION (Irish Republican Army to Rid Ireland of Norwegians).

The army members sabotaged all power plants so the fish in the Norwegian refrigerators would spoil and force them to move some place else. The fish spoiled, alright, but as everyone knows, the Norwegians thrive on spoiled fish.

The Irishmen then tried a new tactic-they sneaked into the fish storage houses in the dead of the night and sprinkled the rotten fish with lye, hoping to poison the intruders.

This didn't work either, because what resulted was the Norwegian delicacy, LUTEFISK, and the Norwegians thrived on that too.

The poor, poor Irish! They were desperate!

But Saint Patrick came to the rescue. On March 17th, he blew his top and told all the Norwegians to go to "Hel\*" - so they all went to Minnesota and South Dakota. To this day they eat Lutefisk and lefse at church dinners.

\*Hel is the ancient Viking name for the underworld.

## 2026 VESTERDALEN OFFICERS

- Co-Presidents: ..... Amanda Reding, Vernene Scheurer
- Vice President..... Don Olson
- Secretary ..... Nancy Sommerfield
- Treasurer ..... Kathleen Olson
- Financial Secretary..... Dotty Erickson
- Sunshine..... Diane Fatland
- Publicity ..... Vernene Scheurer
- Cultural ..... Carol Larson
- Social ..... OPEN
- Foundation ..... Karen Tofte
- Sports & Recreation..... Karen Tofte
- Volunteer Coordinator: ..... OPEN
- Historian..... OPEN
- Sunshine:..... Diane Fatland
- Trustees:..... Marv Bartlemay, Don Jensen, Jim Larson
- Youth ..... Judy Isaksen

Appointed by incoming Co-Presidents:

- Marshal
- Assistant Marshal
- Webmaster
- Newsletter Editor
- Greeter
- Vocal Musician
- Assistant Secretary

Rose Stevens 1-800-210-0240  
Sons of Norway Financial Benefits Counselor

**Gnome Trail walk: Saturday  
May 2, 2026 11:00 AM  
Maple Valley**

Dotty suggested what sounds like a fun walk! Several gnomes are hidden along the easy-moderate trail. There is some elevation gain in a few areas, but the trail is less than a mile.

As an added bonus, the trail shares a parking lot with the Maple Valley Farmer's Market, and we will be there for the season opening day. The Market runs until 2 p.m. to allow time for shopping after.



**Vesterdalen Field Trip**

Sometime in the latter part of the Summer the lodge will be taking a **bus trip to Poulsbo** — and perhaps to view a giant art troll on Bainbridge Island. This is a great opportunity for those who want to relax and let someone else do the driving. Any favorite places in Poulsbo or Bainbridge? Let us know!

**Vesterdalen goes to Symphony . . . .**

We have some great regional symphonies: Auburn Symphony as well as Rainier Symphony. Tickets are reasonably priced. Please let me know if you are interested in a trip to the symphony with other lodge members.

Suggestions for activities? Please let me know!

Thank you!  
Karen T.