

Hardanger Nyheter

SONS OF NORWAY

HARDANGER LODGE 7 #109, KELOWNA BC



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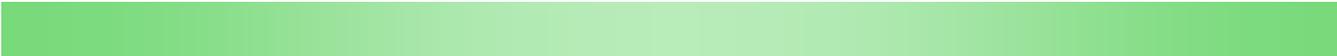
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Newly elected Board of Directors for Hardanger Lodge 7, 109 for the up coming term. From left to right are; Lloyd Coltman- Past President, Gary Goplin-Treasurer, Beverley Akerlund– Secretary, Wenche Gransjoen– Culture Director, Gloria Benazic– President, Dale Acott– Social Director, Darlene Osterlin– Vice President & Foundation Director, Wilf Akerlund, Editor

Hardanger Lodge #109. Kelowna, BC.

Email; wilfandbev@shaw.ca

President—Gloria Benazic 1-250-613-9234

Vice President— Darlene Osterlin 250-470-1850

Secretary– Bev Akerlund 778-478-6764

Treasurer– Gary Goplen 250-212-5560

Social Director– Dale Acott 778-484-5747

**Cultural Director– Wenche Gransjoen 250-763
8191**

Foundation Director–

Darlene Osterlin 250-470-1850

President's Report

God Dag! It seems like we have not had much of a winter but we are headed toward official 'Spring!' I know the garlic is out for some time now and the fields are getting greener. Enjoy the new season, new life, and maybe some new ideas on how to improve our lives through more activities with family and friends or beginning a new project. Please remember to check out the International Sons of Norway site at www.sofn.com – make sure your login is current information – and you will find many things to access: subscribe to E-Post (monthly info post), Blog, Recipes, Learn Norwegian Language. Under your profile, you can find your renewal information and ability to download your membership card. Under Member Resources, you can access Cultural resources, Genealogy, and Membership Discounts. Under Lodge Leadership, go to Lodge Programs to see Idea Bank, Mini Presentations, History etc. Remember there are Sports Medals you can work on to achieve different levels and Cultural Skills Medals in a variety of areas. Maybe a medal in some category is a good goal to set for 2026.

Another option: the Sons of Norway District 7 Facebook page contains current Norwegian stories and videos from Norway. Resources for District 7 can be found at www.sofn7.com as well as newsletters from a number of District 7 lodges and others within Sons of Norway. Now that District 7 includes lodges in Alberta and Saskatchewan, there is a great introduction piece for each AB and SK lodge. Check it out. Remember, if you are travelling in Western Canada and you will be in a community that is hosting a Sons of Norway meeting or event, as a Sons of Norway member, you are welcome to drop by.

We are looking forward to the District 7 Convention at the end of May 2026 and if you are interested in more information or would like to attend as a delegate, get in touch with me immediately as we are close to deadline time for submitting delegates. If you will be on Vancouver Island at the end of May and want to just join in as a guest to the meeting on Saturday, 30 May, I encourage you to do that. (Note, meals and events are cost recovery so you need to purchase the non-delegate package. Meeting is free.)

I look forward to seeing you at the March 18th meeting. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at gloriabenazic@gmail.com



Gloria Benazic, President

King Harald Opens Sámi Parliament

The 10th Sámi Parliament, held October 15, 2025, in Karasjok, Norway was opened by a special guest. The King of Norway, His Majesty King Harald, was present to perform the ceremonial opening. Also in attendance was His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon.

There was an extensive crowd gathered to see the King and Crown Prince enter the Sámi Parliament. Many students from Troms also traveled to the event to see the King and other Sámi institutions.



In his speech, the King spoke of the reconciliation work that is going on with the Sámi people. He highlighted the importance of feeling proud of one's origins and encouraged all to add to the public conversation.

The Sámi Parliament functions as a central voice for the interests of Sámi people with the Norwegian government and the Storting. It was established to help safeguard the traditions, culture and language of Sámi people. The Parliament's elections event occurs every four years and is where they vote on representatives. Silje Karine Muotka, President of the Sámi Parliament, felt very grateful for the King's presence and knows it means so much to the entire Sámi population.

Free to Ski

Learning to ski at a young age has its benefits. While many Norwegians are “born with skis on their feet,” many others might come to learn the sport a little later in life. No matter when you've learned to ski, it can be a lifelong sport and hobby.

Many ski resorts in the US recognize this too and are offering free daily lift passes for skiers of a certain age. The savings add up quickly, being that a daily pass can be anywhere from \$100-\$200+ dollars a day. The tradition is said to have started when Norwegian American ski champion Alf Engen founded Alf Engen Ski School at a resort in Utah. He believed that skiers of all ages should be welcomed on the slopes.

While age requirements for a free pass vary, it is clear that these incentives are widely used by older skiers. When one writer hit the slopes to see how many seniors are out there, he was pleasantly surprised to find a thriving group of senior skiers ranging anywhere from 55 to 100 years old. Junior Bounous, at over 100 years old, is still on the slopes and teaching others his passion, proving you're never too old to ski (for free).



New Forest Finn Museum in Grue

The Norwegian Forest Finn Museum of south-eastern Norway hosted its opening ceremony in October 2025. The ethnic group is a minority in southeastern Norway, with the name skogfinnene—Forest Finns—referring to the descendants of Finns who first immigrated to Sweden in the 16th century and then migrated to Norway in the 1640s.

The museum has been 25 years in the making and was a joint effort by four institutions of cultural preservation. Opening events featured tours, speeches and the typical Forest Finnish dish motti, roasted oat porridge served with fried pork, pork fat and lingonberries.

Her Majesty Queen Sonja opened the new building that lies in Finnskogen (The Finnish Forest). Along with the leader of Young Forest Finns, Marikken Bruvold, she cut a rope covered with birch bark.

The Queen called Forest Finn culture part of Norway's history, which needs to be preserved and said that the museum “is like a cathedral, with pillars that give the impression that you are out in the forest.”

The Norwegian Forest Finnish Museum is located in Svullrya in Grue municipality within Innlandet County.

Sons of Norway District 7 includes 21 active Lodges within the Provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan Canada. Sons of Norway is the largest Norwegian organization outside of Norway with more than 57,000 members in over 400 lodges in the United States, Canada, and Norway. Sons of Norway and its members are dedicated to preserve and promote the Norwegian heritage, culture and tradition. Today, as for over 130 years, the International Headquarters www.sofn.com works to meet the cultural, heritage, and financial needs of our members.

Comeback Story

The Olympics are rich with moving tales of overcoming the odds, and setbacks that make athletes better in the end.

You may recall the loud pants that the Norwegian men's curling team rolled out at the Vancouver Olympics in 2010. The story goes that the official Team Norway pants had not arrived in time, so one of the curlers ran out and bought red, white and blue pants, to match their jerseys.

That year, Team Norway landed an Olympic silver medal.

Spectators took note, and the wacky pants even inspired a fan site on Facebook. As long as the team was together under team skip Thomas Ulsrud, they donned all kinds of wild patterns- zig-zags, Norwegian flags, argyle, hearts and more.

In 2019, Team Ulsrud disbanded at the end of the season, and the pants tradition went with them. The president of the World Curling Federation called the team "huge ambassadors for the sport," thanks to the visibility the players brought to curling.

Shortly after the 2022 Beijing Olympics, Ulsrud passed away from cancer. At the 2026 Games in Milan, the Norwegian men's curling team broke out the funky pants for one more game, to pay tribute to Thomas Ulsrud's legacy.

Compliments to Bjarte Hetland, via Wikimedia Commons



A New Stave Church



During the Middle Ages, while builders across Europe were creating cathedrals made of stone and glass, in Norway arose a different type of church. Stave churches were built with wood and named after the post and lintel construction that was used to make them.

It is believed that at one point, there were anywhere from 1,000 – 2,000 of these structures around Norway. Today, fewer than 30 survive. However, one more will be added to the roster by 2030, if all goes to plan. What makes this project unique is that the plan is to create a new stave church using only the tools and methods that would have been originally used. No cranes or power tools, just pure craftsmanship and hard work. This labor of love has a team of over 1,000 people lending their time and talents to bring this vision to life.

The building site is in Setesdal, a valley in Southern Norway. While the area used to have the Hylestad stave church, it was destroyed in 1664. The new stave church will be built near that original site, using the Borgund stave church in Lærdal as its blueprint.

Those working on this passion project soon found out their enthusiasm was contagious, and interest was sparked both in and outside of Norway. The team believes this will ultimately lead to other business opportunities for the area and be an asset to the community.

At first glance, these flags look similar — but behind them lies over 800 years of shared Nordic history. The iconic Nordic Cross design began with Denmark's Dannebrog, the oldest continuously used national flag in the world. From there, the symbol spread across the North, shaping the identities of Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland, and even regions like Åland and Scania.

Each flag carries its own colors, stories, and struggles — yet all are connected by the same cross, representing heritage, unity, faith, and Nordic values. This design became a symbol of brotherhood across borders, proving that nations can be different yet deeply linked.

From frozen Arctic lands to coastal kingdoms, these flags tell a story of shared roots, independence, and pride.



Niels, Margit and their five children lived under a rock for two years

At first, Norwegian immigrants often had a tough time in the United States. A family of seven emigrated from Norway in 1853. They left Rollag in Numedal in Buskerud. Margit was 48 years old, Niels was 40, and the children were between 3 and 17 years old. It was already autumn when they arrived in the small valley south of Spring Grove, Minnesota.

Two winters before they moved into a house. On the Kjome family's new property there was a small rock with a ledge that provided shelter. The family lived under this rock for the first two winters.

A stream was the only source of water. The forest provided timber, and the soil was fertile. The foundation of the first house is still standing.

Emigrated from Norway 900,000 Norwegians emigrated to the United States between 1825 and 1930.

Most of them just showed up. Today they would be considered undocumented immigrants. The vast majority were farmers who settled in the Midwest, in states such as Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, North and South Dakota.

"Many Norwegian immigrants had little money when they arrived. They were tenant farmers and could barely afford the trip across," says Caitlin Sackrison, a historian at St. Olaf College in Minnesota. The Norwegians traveled from

one Norwegian agricultural community to another. And they settled very closely together.

Everyone was related. The Kjome family did well. They built a larger house. Margit became a midwife. Niels became known for having a good team of animals and worked as a veterinarian in the area.

Margit and Niels' children and grandchildren settled in the area. They married other Norwegian descendants. Some of them bought their own farms.

It's in the soul. Today, a descendant of Niels and Margit, Nels Solum, runs the farm, which has been in the family's ownership since the years under the rock.

It's not easy, but Solum wants to continue running the farm.

"I feel like I've taken over from the old immigrants who lived under the rock. It's in the soul," says Solum.



Image credit to: Johanne Torheim, NIKU, ption \

Scientists: Why knitting is the key to inner peace

A Swedish study shows that knitting is good for more than just your wardrobe. It offers mental benefits that are of great value.

Traditionally, knitting has been a pleasant and calming activity that makes us think of grandmothers and older aunties. But modern and internationally renowned knitting luminaries like Lærke Bagger have given knitting a funky twist, making it a super popular hobby for all ages.

Easier to handle life

A study from the University of Gothenburg shows that people with mental health problems can use knitting as a form of medicine.

The researchers investigated what people with mental health problems themselves have to say about how knitting affects their situation. A total of 600 statements were collected from Ravelry, a free, English-language social network dedicated to knitting, crocheting, weaving, felting and yarn production.

The collected statements were then analyzed using recognized qualitative analysis methods.

Three positive effects

The results of the analysis revealed three ways in which knitting is beneficial to health. It helps people to calm down and relax. As a hobby, it also gives people an identity as knitters in an informal setting. Finally, knitting helps to structure life and has a beneficial impact on mental health.

Overall, the knitters who participated in the study experienced their hobby as a highly valued activity that had a beneficial effect on their health, both in the short and long term. Some of the knitters had also observed a change in their mental processes, explaining that it was easier for them to think clearly and control their thoughts when they were knitting.

“Occupational therapists’ job is to make people’s lives work. There is clearly a potential in knitting needles and yarn that healthcare should absolutely not underestimate,” they write.

The Swedish study is not alone. A 2007 Harvard Medical School study, for example, showed that knitting stimulates the body’s natural relaxation and lowers the heart rate by an average of 11 beats per minute—which lowers overall blood pressure.



Å stå/sitter med skjegget i postkassa

Translation: To stand / sit with your beard in the post box.

Meaning: To have ended up in a stupid situation, that you may have cheated your way into.

Man skal ikke skue hunden på hårene

Translation: You shouldn’t judge the dog on its hairs.

Reduce stress with half an hour in nature

20 to 30 minutes in contact with nature is the most effective length of time to lower stress hormones in the body, a new study shows.

If you go for a walk or sit in a place that makes you feel connected to nature for 20 minutes, it will make you less stressed. This is what researchers write in a new study in which they claim to have found the most effective length of time to reduce stress. The researchers go so far as to call it a "nature pill."

"We have known that time in nature reduces stress, but until now it has been unclear how much is needed, how often and what kind of nature experiences provide these benefits," says the lead researcher of the study, Mary-Carol Hunder at the University of Michigan, in a press release.

The study shows that 20-30 minutes in nature lowers stress hormones in the body most effectively. Urbanization, sitting indoors and watching screens can have negative health effects for many in today's society. The 20-30 minutes could be a budget-friendly and achievable solution to improve these, according to the researchers.

Timeout from everyday life

"The new study is interesting, but not very surprising," says Thomas Hansen, researcher

at the Welfare Research Institute NOVA and OsloMet, to forskning.no.

There are several things that can contribute to more people being less stressed when they encounter nature.

"It provides a completely different presence where you can clear your mind, forget about time and place and be in tune with nature. It can feel like a timeout from everyday problems," says Hansen.

He also believes that it may be due to a natural need to be in contact with nature.

"From a historical and evolutionary perspective, nature has always been central to humans. Living in line with our evolutionary heritage can be thought of as not only strengthening the positive aspects of well-being but also helping to reduce mental discomfort and ill health."



Medieval Ring Discovered



A shiny gold ring with a blue gemstone was recently unearthed in Norway's oldest city of Tønsberg. Archeologist Linda Åsheim from the Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage was on a dig in the southeastern Norwegian town, which dates back to 871 C.E.

On the day that Åsheim dug up the ring, she happened to be the lone archaeologist on site, so there was no one to compare notes with. She told *Popular Science* "I was a bit uncertain if it was a genuine medieval ring, but the more I looked at it, the more certain I became."

The ring is in such great shape, it could have been created in modern times. The setting includes filigree ornamentation and a blue gemstone which has not yet been determined to be sapphire or blue glass.

Åsheim found the jewelry right below another layer of artifacts, which were carbon dated back to 1150-1250. This would place the ring in the medieval period, at about 800 years old.

A single piece of jewelry can reveal a lot about local society and history. A small ring made of lavish materials may have been worn by a woman of considerable wealth. It also tells us that Tønsberg, a town of tradesfolk, may have been more worldly than previously thought and could have had broader connections to Europe.

Johanne Torheim, NIKU, via popsci.com

The Yokes on U

Skiing in Norway? Snow problem!

Bergen? Rain joke city

Santa comes from Norway? Snow kidding

What happens when the stupidest Norwegian moves to Sweden?

The average IQ of both countries increase.

An Irishman and a Norwegian apply for the same job.

The job they're applying for is at an engineering firm in Dublin.

Both the Irishman and the Norwegian do so well in the interview the boss can't decide who to hire, so he sets up a small aptitude test.

Both men again score the same. 19/20 correct.

After some waiting the boss comes through and says to the Irishman: "I'm sorry but on this occasion we've decided to hire the Norwegian"

The Irishman angered by this says "Surely, me being Irish would mean you would give the job to me instead of a foreigner". He went on a rant about looking after the locals etc.

When he was done the boss replied. He said:

"Well it's like this. We didnt make the decision based on how many answers you got right but more on the answers you got wrong"

So the Irishman still angry says, "but we both got one wrong answer"

Again the boss replies calmly saying, "it's not how many wrong answers you got but the answer you gave. On question 7 the Norwegian wrote 'I don't know' as his answer. Your answer was 'Neither do I'".

HARDANGER LODGE MARCH EVENT

Wednesday, March 18th 6:00 PM

Carmel Court 1450 Bertram St.

Activity night

St. Patrick's Day theme

Wear green!

Irish Stew and Biscuits.



Anybody going to Oslo ?

