

# FUNDRAISING COMMUNITY EVENTS CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

How to get the best  
kept secret “Sons of  
Norway” out of our  
Lodges and into our  
Community!

Have fun and share it  
with your friends and  
neighbours!

**Date: 2010**



*Introduction*

FUNDRAISING  
COMMUNITY EVENTS  
CULTURAL ACTIVITIES.....

**A**re all important items for any social or fraternal group. You need money to survive, you need events to make people aware that you exist and what you do, and you need cultural activities to keep your members interested and involved.

The following is a collection of events and lectures that I have utilized over the past as well as some helpful suggestions collected at Sons of Norway International Conventions. I hope you will find it useful in your Lodge. It is not meant to script your events and activities but to provide some ideas that will help generate your own ideas. All things do not work in all areas so select the bits that might be helpful.

If you have questions or need more information, I would be happy to speak with you at any time.

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## COMMUNITY DAY CELEBRATION:

Like many organizations, Sons of Norway finds the median age getting higher, the membership numbers getting lower. We keep talking about “JUST ASK”. Well for some of us, we have asked just about everyone we know and we have signed up two or three generations of family members so where do we go next? Rondane Lodge decided to go with a ‘Community Day’ – invite the people of the city to come see what Sons of Norway was about. I will provide a guideline on what we did and how we did it. You can use it, adapt it, or see what ideas might come from thinking about it. Above all else, make it FUN – for the helpers and the guests!

Began with a **proposal** to the Lodge members that gives a general outline of what was going to happen and what is needed for financial support (see Appendix A – Rondane Lodge Community Day) . Typically, the **budget** will include: Printing (posters/ads), catering, facilities rental, decorations (maybe a raffle item or two). The proposal should also have a **timeline** attached so that everyone is able to commit to doing the project in the time designated (see last pages and photocopy as needed – **Checklist for Event Planning**). Some of the items on the Checklist for Event Planning will not be used in your specific event so just delete those and use what is applicable for this type of event. The checklist is most useful to get you thinking about some of the issues needed to plan the event and a guideline to ensure all items are completed in a timely manner and not left for the last minute which will result in much stress and possibly the breakdown of a success.

Following the approval of the Lodge membership and a commitment of volunteers to assist with the project, you just move through the timeline on the Checklist ensuring the person responsible for that particular item has completed the task. A big challenge for some leaders is to assign a task and then allow the person to complete the task. However, it is surprising how much you can get done with only a few organizational members but a commitment from those willing to assist with the actual day. In Rondane Lodge, I only had a committee of three planning the event – myself to plan and implement things like advertising and overseeing production, someone to book the facility and someone to assist with items such as food service licensing and other assorted legwork I was unable to attend to during the work day. I had a fantastic commitment from most of the general membership



to demonstrate food items, to bring Nordic items, to assist with setting up the displays and acting as greeters.

Without this commitment, the event would not have been very successful so spend a little time with the members getting them to list what they can bring and do that day. This will also ensure a well rounded assortment – you don't need 30 Norwegian sweaters and nothing else! We had sparks, skis, many types of handwork, photos and pictures, carvings, bunads, dishes and utensils, toys, lots of promotional items such as our Lodge brochure and International Sons of Norway pieces, and the big one – applications for membership! (Order your supplies from International Office early to ensure they are shipped in lots of time.)

Our Lodge did not buy newspapers ads as the 'Press Releases' were so successful we redirected the funds to printing posters to splash around town. Approximately six weeks before the event, I prepared a press release and a list of local radio, TV, and newspapers (see Appendix B – For Immediate Release) . Many have email addresses for community events or social sections plus I asked friends who to direct these releases to. Each media outlet received the press release and a copy of the poster (see Appendix C). The poster was in color and I used part of the Lodge brochure which I had designed a couple years ago, trying to keep the branding similar so if people had seen our brochure, the poster would immediately be identified with Sons of Norway. Make the press release look professional – use this format or one you know has worked in the past – and make sure they have enough information as they will often use your material and come up with their own 'bits' on radio. I had several follow-ups asking for more information on Sons of Norway but it was easy as I had given them phone numbers as well as email. Of course, our food is always a big attraction so I think most of the questions were about that ---- and the fact we were not charging a fee!! In future, we might put out a donation pot or charge a nominal fee for the food samples as people came around several times to fill up their plates!

Everyone was asked to have their display items at the facility a couple hours before the start of the event. You do not want to be setting up with guests arriving. Some open-faced sandwich preparation began an hour prior to start time so we had some on hand and then prepared more once the guests arrived and could watch. The plan was to have the 'sampling' begin an hour after opening our doors but as the crowds grew, we announced that people could begin tasting and it

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kept our cooks busy cooking and talking. Next time we will have someone at each station dispensing the food rather than allowing the guests to help themselves. As noted in our planning, we were unsure of the numbers who might come and treated it like our annual 'Spring Tea' where people *politely* serve themselves sandwiches and cookies.

Each guest was asked to print their name & phone number on a numbered line page. This line also asked if they would like to be contacted by a Sons of Norway member following the event. We used this registry's numbers to draw for a couple door prizes. The persons greeting our guests at the door felt it was a little congested so next time we will use two tables and have a registry with line numbers 1 to 200 at one table and another registry with 200 and over at another. This would have kept the lineup a little shorter. If you ask if the guests would like someone to call them, make sure you follow up. It can become daunting as I had about 40 people to call – it took a couple weeks' evenings to chat with each of these people! But remember, it is a great way to get more information out to people who might want to consider membership. We also had 'greeters' throughout the facility to talk with our guests and to ask if they might be interested in joining Sons of Norway – and had the membership applications available for immediate sign-up. A final report (see Appendix D) was produced for the debriefing session plus I also collected evaluations from a number of key volunteers on: what worked? what didn't work? and how to improve the next Community Day?

It was well worth the effort and I know other Lodges will begin with this concept and produce other great options. Share them with District 7 so we can help each other grow our community event planners.



## APPENDIX A

### RONDANE LODGE COMMUNITY DAY

**Where:** Moose Hall, Prince George  
**When:** November 7, 2009  
**Time:** Noon to 5 pm

In celebration of 55 years in the community of Prince George, Rondane Lodge is hosting an open house to let people know who Sons of Norway is, what we have to offer our members, and an invitation to join Sons of Norway.

The hall will be set up with a number of displays. We have acquired a large assortment of recruitment pieces for Headquarters – dvd's, recruitment packages, sports medal packages, a few give-aways – as well as the local Lodge's brochure and a large number of application forms. During the event, we will have the dvd looping on a computer and Norwegian background music. A number of Norwegian artifacts will be displayed: trolls, rosemaling pieces, carvings, sweaters, bunads, hardangersom, books, stitching, etc.

The day will begin at noon with a demo of open-face sandwich making and demos of krumkaker and waffle making. At 1 pm, we will provide a 'taste of Norway' with sample plates of open-face sandwiches and a krumkaker and waffle. Of course, there will be lots of hot coffee! We have requested that our membership provide a variety of Norwegian baking that will be available with coffee/juice throughout the day.

Beginning at 2 pm, we are holding a series of demonstrations: hardangersom, rosemal painting, stitching, carving, crocheting, roller skiing, to name a few. We have talented people who are willing to share their expertise!

The ladies will wear their bunads and the men will dress in their finest 'Viking' apparel – that could be a horned helmet or it may be a sweater and toque! Just prior to the 'sample lunch' we will have a brief "Welcome to Sons of Norway" to let the people know who we are and what we do. Throughout the day, a number of people will act as 'greeters' and will share with the guests various bits about our Lodge and encourage them to check us out. We will have a registration table and each guest will be contacted later by a current member to invite them to our dinner meeting or ladies auxiliary meeting.

A press release has been provided to all the media outlets – radio, TV, cablevision – which describes the day briefly and invites the community to come out. Posters will be placed around the city during the first week of October. Two weeks prior to the event, paid ads will be placed in the two local newspapers. We are utilizing the community events sections in the newspapers to keep a running announcement.

We have established a budget of \$1000 to help cover the hall rental, advertising, and food costs.

Following the days activities, the members will have a potluck dinner at the hall. It will be a great time to share stories and suggestions of the day's activities.

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## APPENDIX B

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Sons of Norway Rondane Lodge's Anniversary Event:  
"NORDIC CULTURE IN PRINCE GEORGE"**

**NOVEMBER 7, 2009 AT MOOSE HALL, 663 DOUGLAS STREET  
EVENT MARKS THE BEGINNING OF THE 55<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY IN PRINCE GEORGE OF SONS OF NORWAY**

From:  
Sons of Norway Rondane Lodge  
Prince George, BC  
250-562-7320

Primary Contact:  
Gloria Benazic  
250-562-7320 (home) 960-6319 (day)  
calbenazic@shaw.ca or [gloria@unbc.ca](mailto:gloria@unbc.ca) (during the day)

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Time: 12 noon to 5 pm  
Open invitation to all.

**About Sons of Norway Rondane Lodge:**

Prince George-based Sons of Norway Rondane Lodge was founded in 1955. Many longtime residents of Prince George will remember the annual fish dinners and social events at the beautiful log hall at Tabor (Six Mile) Lake. Unfortunately, the lodge did not meet land use standards and was sold several years ago. As an all-volunteer, non-profit fraternal organization with over 100 members, Rondane Lodge is dedicated to cultural, educational and humanitarian pursuits connected with Norwegian heritage. The Lodge currently supports annual financial contributions to a variety of charitable groups. Ongoing cultural activities include Norwegian crafts and language classes, an annual Garden Tea and a small library which houses a number of Norwegian books in Norwegian and English. Rondane Lodge is a BC chapter of International Sons of Norway, which was founded in 1895 and has 63,000 members worldwide. [www.sofn.com](http://www.sofn.com). New members of Norwegian heritage or those with an interest in Norway are always welcome to join our Lodge.

For anyone with an interest in Norwegian culture or roots from the Nordic lands, our members are offering the community an opportunity to see, taste and hear some of the traditions we carry from generation to generation. You might even see one or two trolls – those shaggy giants of the Norwegian mountains!

The day will begin with demonstrations of open-faced sandwiches, a popular item on most smorgasbords. Did you know Norwegians usually pack open-face sandwiches in their lunch packs even today? These sandwiches are most often eaten for a fork and knife, not held in the hand. Members of Rondane Lodge will also provide information on many of the yearly activities which include demos in Rosemaling – a floral and scroll type of painting used to decorate household items; krumkaker baking – a rolled cone that can eaten as is or filled with whipped cream and maybe a few berries; hardangersom – a type of embroidery that is also cutwork and is used on clothing, table clothes and other items of décor; displays of Norwegian artifacts.

Please drop by. Food demos begin at 12 noon and a 'taste of Norway' will be available at 1 pm. The coffee pot will be hot!

Please contact: Cultural Director, Elsa Aase at 250-963-7145 or President, Gloria Benazic at 250-562-7320 or email [calbenazic@shaw.ca](mailto:calbenazic@shaw.ca) for more information.

**End**

# Sons of Norway



Rondane Lodge  
7-071  
Prince George, BC

Where: Moose Hall at 663  
Douglas Street

When: 7 November, 2009

Time: 12 noon to 5 pm

The public is invited to join the Sons of Norway in a day of Nordic food, crafts and culture. We will have demonstrations of rosemal painting, hardanger stitching, open-face sandwich making, lefse and krumkaker making, as well as displays of many Norwegian artifacts and other information. Demos begin at 12 noon and continue through the afternoon. Come sample a taste of Norway at 1 pm. The coffee pot is on!

Contact: Elsa @250.963.7145  
Gloria @ 250.562.7320



## APPENDIX D

### Community Day

Rondane Lodge determined that we would host a “Community Day” to share the best kept secret in town – our Sons of Norway organization!!

We determined a budget of	\$1,000:
Printing and Ads	\$300
Decorations	\$ 50
Catering	\$250
Facilities	\$325 Plus \$200 deposit
Miscellaneous	\$ 75

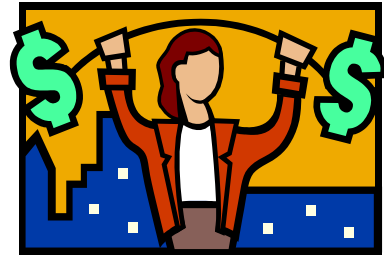
We asked our members to participate with artifacts, demonstrations, working at the event. We had about 20 people working the entire time with the addition of a few others working for shorter periods of time. We had a table of paper materials and displays for Sons of Norway information, computer, applications. There were 5 long tables for displays as well as utilizing the stage and the area in front of the stage and one corner to set up displays such as the bunads on the garment rack, skis, sparks, Nordic kings and Nordic gods charts, chest, several large dolls. One small table held samples of books from our library and a couple of old photo albums. Along one wall, we had three or four long tables for the demos – rosemaling, hardangersom, crocheting, stitching and knitting. In this area, we set up a couple laundry racks with completed pieces of hardangersom, crocheting, stitching and knitting. On the walls, we displayed hand worked pictures, bell pulls, candleholders, etc. There were lots of things to see and it was pretty packed with display items. There were many comments about how many different things we had available to see. At the front door, we had greeters and a sign in registry. The lines in the registry were numbered and we used those numbers for two door prizes donated by the President – a crocheted doily and two round hardangersom hangers.

We were hopeful that we would have at least 50 people come out. When you open it to the community, you don't know if you will get 5 or 500. We were so pleased with the turnout. We kept a registry and the final count was around 230 people. We felt it was a terrific success. In the follow up phone calls to those who indicated they wanted to hear from us (a space on the sign in sheet), the responses are so positive and much amazement has been expressed about the free food, the great food, the wonderful artifacts.

We will hold a review meeting. I have asked some of the members to provide written feedback – what worked, what did not work, what suggestions for a future event. If you get comments immediately following the event, you usually get some useful suggestions. I will combine the suggestions and we will prepare a brief on those.

I have just under 40 call-backs to make. At this time, it may not result in new memberships but I do know of one new membership so far. (update: two new members with three more pending at this time)

WHAT A WONDERFUL SUCCESS!!! The membership should be truly pleased with their efforts.



## FUNDRAISING WORKSHOP

My name is Gloria Benazic and I raised scholarship and bursary funds for UNBC from 1992 until 2002, working with communities and associations throughout the northern  $\frac{3}{4}$  of our province. I was also the events co-ordinator which included planning many firsts such as: the first Convocation Ceremony, the official opening of UNBC with Queen Elizabeth II in attendance, and several other major events for politicians, donors and 'friends' of the University. I have prepared this document in hopes it might assist you in raising funds.

As a group, the first step:

### **Define "WHO ARE WE AND WHAT DO WE DO?"**

Private support plays a vital role in providing resources outside the normal general operating budget. Fundraising projects are usually the link to that support but remember that fundraising is also 'FRIEND-RAISING'. Everything you do while fundraising will determine if you are building a friend, or not, so planning is critical to ensure everyone is telling the same story and offering the same returns. Just asking for money will not produce the same results you would receive if you have a cause or a project. Think of why you give money. If I asked you for \$20 with no clarification of why I want the \$20, what would be your response? If I asked you for \$20 to help purchase school supplies for a family that just had their home burn down, what would be your response? The family lives next door to you and you know them well. If I offer to add your name to the list of donors that will be presented to the family, would you give because you want the family to know you care? Maybe I can also offer, for a donation of \$100, a certificate you can display in your office; would that encourage you to become one of the 'elite or upper-level' donors to this worthy cause?

Do people already understand who you are and what you do as an organization? People are unlikely to give to you if they don't know. They might support your group if your project is to supply playground equipment for a shelter but you won't sell them on a donation if they are wondering if you are going to have a party for your group.





## FUNDRAISING FUNDMENTALS.

Who is responsible for fundraising? The entire group is, so, what can you do to help fundraise? Do you understand your role in this organization? Why are you here? Look at your strengths which will help your organization grow. Everyone has an area that they are good at so share with the Board and your fellow members what it is that you can do. To succeed, every group needs a diverse membership. Maybe your strengths are not in the planning of a fundraiser but you are great at advertising so that would be your role in the project.

Is your group working from a strong volunteer program – utilizing the 3 R's of Volunteers? 1. *Recruitment* 2. *Retention* 3. *Recognition* As a group, do you give thanks freely and often to others who are working hard for the group? It is important that the Board gives thanks, recognition and recruits new members, but are YOU doing your part to practice the 3 R's with your fellow members?

Are you contributing financially to your fundraising projects? If you don't believe enough in the project or cause to commit your own money, how will you ever excite or sell people outside your organization to get excited and support it financially? Give what you can. It will give you the right to speak of supporting this project from a personal perspective.

## WHAT DO YOU WANT TO FUNDRAISE FOR? WHAT TYPE OF FUNDRAISING DO YOU HAVE THE MANPOWER TO BE SUCCESSFUL?

Be innovative in your planning. Often the most creative plans will catch the attention of more people. There are large projects and there are small projects so look seriously at the manpower and commitment of a few to see if you can pull the event together successfully. There is no point in trying to raise \$100,000 if you have 5 committed people. You would be better off having a successful event that these 5 people can accomplish and maybe they raise \$10,000 instead. With a successful event, the 5 workers and the donors will be more likely to help out next time. If the project is geared to \$100,000 and the 5 workers can only do part of the job resulting in raising \$10,000, that is great but it will be looked at as a failure by the workers and the donors. No one wants to do another event that will probably be a 'failure' too.



Maybe your sights are an even lower dollar value but lots of fun for your membership. Is there something that most members would like? Your members strongly support research in Parkinson's Disease and are keen on the work that Michael J Fox is doing. The chair of fundraising secures a photo signed by Michael J Fox and auctions it at the next group meeting. Ask your members to bring their loonies (\$1) to the meeting. It will take strategy but not necessarily the most loonies to get the item. Each member has an opportunity to place her/his loonies into the "loonie pot" or 'loonie bin" and the last loonie in the pot gets the prize. To keep it moving, your 'auctioneer' begins counting to 5 or 10 from the second hand of a watch and if no one drops another loonie in the pot on '10', the last loonie's owner gets the prize. Dimes, quarters, toonies or bills are not accepted so people must spend their loonies wisely but timely. The 'auctioneer's floor spotter' is the judge of whether the loonie made the pot before the auctioneer said 10 (or 5).

Good fundraising uses items that have some importance or real connection to those who you wish to receive support from whether it is an event or direct appeal for money. Your list of prospective donors/attendees should include companies that can expect some business in return. Who else can you make linkages to? Is there a local business that has a past history of support to your charity or to your group? Are there members who have connections to businesses that they can encourage to buy a table at a fundraiser or sell tickets to a raffle?

**Nothing succeeds like careful, realistic planning.**

*Action Desired:* Quantitative goals are easier to focus on so clearly set out what you want to accomplish and that will give you the criteria to decide if the job was well done. Look at the timing of an event and note what other commitments people may have around this time. What else is happening in the community? Do not try to compete with a successful event of another organization or sporting event in the community.

*People Involved:* Who do you wish to include and why would they want to support or come to your event? If it is to raise funds, how many people do you need at what price to break even? To make money? To reach your desired goal?

*Time Required:* Will you need volunteers to work 5 hours or 5 weeks? Be realistic when recruiting helpers.

*Progress Checks:* Set up a schedule and monitor it to be sure you are meeting all the target dates and no big surprise arises hours prior to the event. You will have enough to do the day of the event.



*Deadlines:* Give a couple days grace in planning deadlines to allow for unforeseen delays. You will not panic if you know you need the invitations or advertising out by a specific date but you have set the deadline a couple days before the “last possible day” and the invitations/posters cannot be available until “tomorrow”.

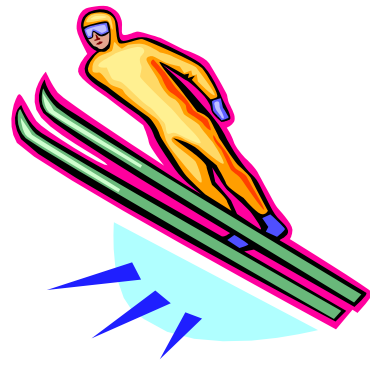
*Resources Required:* Will you have to spend money to get the event done? Prepare a budget that everyone must adhere to. What is the people-power requirements? Do you have money to cover any upfront costs?

*Evaluations:* Always do an evaluation of the progress and budget. Once the event is over, evaluate the people and money costs, and the final outcome. This will provide valuable information for future projects. If this was a recruitment event, the final cost may not be as important as the number of committed recruits for the longevity of your organization.

*Plan on Having a Crisis:* The art of great plans is anticipating a crisis and knowing how you will handle that scenario before it arises. An example: You are planning an outdoor picnic. What if it rains? Your plans go ahead outdoors no matter what so people should be advised beforehand that it is a “Rain or Shine” event OR if it looks like rain, there is an event tent available to have the picnic tables and food under cover.

Special events can be an effective tool to help you raise funds and to promote your group. To produce successful events, you must have realistic goals, budgets, volunteers and marketing plans. It is important to have control over all aspects or you could end up losing money.

Carefully control your money. Prepare a budget and make sure it is monitored on an ongoing basis. Make sure all incoming revenue is recorded and accounted for. Have as few people handling the money as possible and have two people responsible for signing all payment cheques. If you are selling tickets, record the numbers each member has in his/her possession as that is the dollar value they must return to you. Freebees must be decided before so everyone is clear on how they will be used and who will dispense them. Sponsors at a certain dollar level may be entitled to two free tickets but remember that is lost revenue to you as those two tickets may take away two possible revenue-making seats or will cost you \$20 each per plate for dinner. Record who received freebees and what kind so there are no surprises of shortage of seats, etc. However, do not forget to provide a thank you plan for any sponsors. This is very important and should be stated upfront when soliciting donations or services from sponsors.



Get signed contracts for everything. Do not accept verbal agreements. If the caterer agrees to provide pizza and beer for \$15 a person, get it in writing and be specific about your expectations. Do you expect one small 2-inch wedge of pizza and one 8-ounce paper cup of beer for \$15? Remember there is usually 15% gratuity plus GST so if you didn't include that in your budget, for 250 guests that would be an additional \$562.50 for gratuity and \$301.88 for GST and now your budget is out \$864.38 just for food!

Some ideas:

Murder Mystery Dinners – can be done with a small number of people, done in someone's home, low overhead. Can be done at a full catered dinner, themed with menu suited to murder mystery. Can be done with purchased theme/dialogue/ideas package.

Sporting Events – bowling, badminton tourney, cross country skiing. Usually requires some detailed planning and advertising.

Silent Auction – Get donated items. People write name and bid offer on corresponding bid sheets with the highest offer getting the item. Caution: set limit on raises of at least \$1 or \$.50 or you will get many 1 cent bid raises.

Dunk Tanks/Pie Toss/Karaoke – requires people-power, facility suited to event

BBQ – try something new. Maybe you want to offer a Lobster Roast, a Cajun Boil, Deep-fried Turkey or a Pig Roast. Hamburgers and hotdogs won't bring out too many but the faithful.

Annual Dinner – invite the people who would benefit from your group. Are your members students who will be looking for employment in the near future? Is part of the group finance students – invite accounting firms or are there people hoping to get into banking or financial advising – invite banks and financial planning businesses. Invite a business owner/president who has hired some of your members in the past to speak at the dinner about the benefits of your membership. – Not only did they get a terrific employee but they also hired someone who is bringing community awareness of the company by volunteering as a director of .....xyz....or led the business to join the .....ABC Walkathon and raised \$XXX for the homeless.

Try to get exposure for your group by working in the community on various projects that might not raise money but will let the community know you exist. The more people who know of you and of your good deeds, the easier it is to fundraise effectively. When your members are volunteering in the community, have them

Wear badges or funny hats or whatever that might identify your organization. It might be a monthly meal at the local soup kitchen or a couple days of ringing the bells for the Salvation Army Christmas kettles but do it as a group and be recognized as a group.

Remember: **Organize, Budget, Monitor, Minimize Financial Risk by Contractual Agreements, Rally the Volunteers and let them do their job, and Have Fun!**





## Fundraising Ideas from International Convention 2008

Members shared some of the ideas for fundraising that has worked in their Lodges.

- Held on Labour Day weekend, an **ethnic fair** runs for the weekend. Solbakken Lodge sold Norwegian beer but this year it was Belgian beer as Norwegian was unavailable. At the “Viking” booth, they sell rosettes, Norwegian art, crafts and ‘horned hats’. They also have a membership booth and gather about 70 – 100 names which the membership committee contacts within the year. The fair takes about 100 people to run successfully and they enlist children, grandkids and friends of members. When selling beer, you will have to have a liquor license and sell food; you need to pass the Health Board regulations.
- District 5 sells **cook books**. Each Lodge was solicited for recipes (Norwegian and NAmerican) and ended up using about 5 recipes from each Lodge. They included drawings, rosemaling and photos. The cost of the book was \$6 and were sold for \$12 each. The book cost could be reduced but although the photos and illustration increase the cost they may contribute to selling the product. The District also sells runescape jewelry.
- A Lodge is in the 15<sup>th</sup> printing of their **cook book** (2000 per run) and they cost \$2.30 per book and sell for \$10. Shipping is \$2.
- An annual **lutefisk dinner weekend** has been running for over 40 years and makes the Lodge about \$10000 each year. They sell about 1500 pounds of lutefisk and 900 pounds of meatballs, served with other Norwegian food. The early bird price for dinner is \$12 for non-members and a \$2 discount for members. The Saturday night dinner also has a dance so the price is higher.
- District 5 holds a **harvest dance** each October with a live band. Tickets are sold and it has become an annual event.
- District 2 holds an **annual Christmas Bazaar** which has been a successful fundraiser for 10 years. The profit is about \$10,000 a year. They sell Norwegian items such as Lefse from Minnesota (in Canada, there is an outlet in





Camrose, Alberta that might be able to supply lefse), Norwegian sweaters are a big seller, merchandise from a gift mart in the Twin Cities, and members provide baked goods.

- Oslo Lodge hosts a **scholarship night** each April. Members are mailed tickets and they also donate some of the prizes. The event raises \$2000. October is Foundation month so they do a **silent auction**—selling only Norwegian cookies.
- District 4 makes cookies, frosts them, then one member rosemals them and sales are very strong.
- Minot Lodge holds a **bazaar** and **bake sale** and **Høstfest** is a major fundraiser. Their fold dance group sells root beer floats at \$2.50 at a 50's dance. Only ten people work the dance and they make \$400 towards a workshop.
- District 6 Lodge approaches SAS for **donated tickets** and seeks donated certificates from local restaurants. Other donations make great prizes and cost the Lodge nothing.
- District 7 group puts on **Viking Night** serving authentic food, drink and decorations. The cost is by donation but they receive up to \$500 a person.
- If you have Lodge property, you might check out the **rental of some space** on the property to cell phone towers. One Lodge in District 6 has a contract for \$1000 per month for 30 years.
- District 2 holds a **“How do Norwegians Eat?”** event where they train people to make Norwegian food and then host a virtual trip to Norway. Participants get a passport, go through control, meet a hostess who takes them “home” to a table of 12. Ingredients are brought out one at a time and the “visitors” make their own food, course by course. They are taught to eat properly with knife and fork. They receive four sandwiches and then a buffet of meatballs, potatoes and gravy, the last course is rhubarb. After the meal, they dance with flags and songs, and then take a trip back to the real world. They charge \$17 and make approximately \$4000 to \$5000 for the night. (My note—this might be something to think about for Syttende Mai)

- District 2 Lodge sold **raffle** tickets on a **bunad** and made \$4000 net.
- A small Lodge in District 6 has a **heritage and cultural night** each month. They make a Scandinavian meal—Finn, Dane, etc, and present researched culture on that community. They don't charge much but make enough to pay the annual rental fees for the Lodge plus send the delegates to conventions.
- A **'Viking' auction** where they get donations from families, sell tickets which bidders put in baskets in front of the prizes. Coffee and cake are sold. This nets the Lodge about \$800 for the night.
- District 6 has a Norwegian **vaffler and champagne breakfast**. It is an annual event and nets about \$500.
- District 1 serves a **meal of waffles, sandwiches and smoked salmon** held the first Saturday in December each year (two hours length). They sell about 400 tickets and net \$3000.
- District 2, Leif Erikson own their building so they hold a **daily kaffeestua** run by volunteers and open every day. They serve coffee and open face sandwiches. To attend, you must be a Sons of Norway member. Members 'donate' \$3 to attend and they are always full and net about \$1500-\$2000 a month.





## CULTURAL IDEAS FOR LODGE PROGRAMMING AND EVENTS

Lodges shared ideas for meetings and events that have been successful for them.

- Trollheim Lodge has the traditional events such as dinners for Anniversary, 17 mai Smorgasbord, Lutefisk and Walleye. They also include Damesklubben, Historie Gruppe, Choir, Geneology and Craft Group, Family Jul Party, and 17 mai Parade. They host a food booth at the Midsummer Scandinavian Festival along with other lodges, and in November all the zone Lodges participate in Trollhelms Christmas Fair featuring Norwegian art, crafts and food. The Fjellborg Living History Viking Group members work to present several programs and the Viking Dinner. Members are encouraged to participate in cooking classes, donate cookies to the Lutefisk dinner and Christmas Fair. The Damesklubben prints a cookbook and hosts a Scholarship/Foundation Tea.
- Lodge President read two Norwegian folktales, *Smørbuk*, a story about a very chubby little boy and a troll hag and *The Squire's Bride*, a story of an old Norwegian farmer who tried to get a poor cottar to give him his daughter in exchange for the debt the poor man owed. The transparencies of the illustrations did not cost much. The program was so successful, they were asked to do it for a local church group.
- The local university has an exchange program with Trondheim, Norway for medical students. As one of the members is a retired physician who works with the program, the students are invited to the Lodge meeting to present slides of their country and families.
- Members are invited to tell about their trips to Norway.
- An author about Norwegian immigrants came to the Lodge to read and act out the characters in her story.
- A local travel agent who books tours to Norway comes to the Lodge to speak about the travels, runestones, Norwegian topics.



- A charity project from the Lodge is to provide gifts to the local Mission. The gifts are wrapped and marked with man/woman/either. The Director of the Mission comes to speak to the Lodge each year.
- Invite the local Rosemalers to come speak about rosemaling and encourage participation in classes.
- The librarian from the local University gave a talk on genealogy materials available.
- A Junior Lodge director helped the young members make berry syrup in the fall and they sold it at the fall bake sale and used the money for a field trip.
- Lodge holds Norwegian language lesson every winter. They apply for a cultural grant from the District and the Lodge supports some through their cultural fund. In order to receive a pin for Norwegian language cultural skills, you must have more than 6 weeks of language lessons.
- The Lodge hosts Open House three times a year. For Syttende Mai, they have a Norwegian meal with lefse and flotegrøt they make at the Lodge a few days before. They have live Scandinavian music which adds to the festivities. In November or December, they hold their bake sale where the members pitch in to make lefse and other treats. In the fall, there is the local football ‘Potato Bowl’ at the university and the Lodge serves a potato pancake breakfast.
- In May, the Scan Fest, a celebration of Norwegian/Nordic heritage includes members in native costumes, many Nordic artifacts are displayed and various Norwegian/Nordic foods are prepared as demonstrations as well as selling (lefse, aebleskivers, krumkake, meatballs with mashed potatoes).
- An annual salmon/meatball dinner holds a “pound auction”. Each donation is some item that weighs a pound and is disguised in creative wrapping. People bid on the item and someone could pay \$15 for a can of tomatoes! They are trying it this year with more Scandinavian significant items.



- One Lodge celebrates the annual anniversary dinner on a yacht. A buffet lunch is held on board and they do a cruise down the river. They have about 60 people attend.
- One Lodge holds an annual “New Members Brunch and Welcome Ceremony”. New members as well as seasoned members attend and they encourage the golden members to attend if possible. They talk about SoN and their heritage as well as Lodge activities.
- The Lodge librarian established a lending library where books in Norwegian as well as English are available for lending and purchase.
- Establish an eight-week Conversational Norwegian course.
- Once a quarter, about 10 to 15 members volunteer four hours to help stock shelves at the Food Bank. Members also usually make donations.
- Plan a bus trip to a special restaurant or to the popular IKEA store.
- Hold a Family Movie Night – this might be split into a showing for kids in one room and downstairs a showing for the adults. Popcorn, ice cream, beverages and pizza are always favorites.
- Halloween Family Fun Night: dinner is eyeballs and spaghetti, fried worms, grubs and maggot salad, tarantula cookies. An oriental trading company was a good place to find inexpensive prizes and favors. Recipes and games were found on the Internet. Little boys liked fishing for prizes in a deep pot of cold spaghetti! A fish pond, cakewalk, and photo booth were popular attractions. A haunted house was created by the teens.
- The Lucia Family Christmas Party Talent Show – children only – help keep the Lodge family centered. They serve open face sandwiches and cookies and have caroling around the Christmas tree.
- Some of the cooking classes include kransekake, klubb, krumkaker. This also encourages some of the inactive members to come and share their skills. Teaching lefse a few times a year has brought out many people and it is more enjoyable to do the work with people to socialize with.



- Have a Lekegruppe meeting once a month for pre-school playgroup. The Barnas Norsk Klubb is great for elementary aged children. Some of the crafts made at Barnas Norsk Klubb were displayed at their convention. The kaffeslabberas worked great for the seniors. They serve lunch one day a month – soup, open face sandwiches, desserts and beverage are included at a nominal price.
- The Lodge holds a Strong Women exercise program twice a week for half an hour in the morning.
- The Lodge has taken on cleaning a street and two city bus stops.
- We invite any Norwegian guest of our members to come and speak to us. This summer we had a cousin of one of our members who told us about her work in Norway as a teacher and a tour guide. She is also a musician and she played some Grieg tunes for us. We have had other guests of members who shared many interesting things about life in Norway.
- Our members are invited to tell about their trips to Norway.
- An author of a book about Norwegian immigrants came to the Lodge and acted out one of the characters in her book. She was selling her book so she didn't ask for anything but a little gas money.
- Our local travel agent who books tours to Norway has been very helpful in our programming. He has spoken to the Lodge about Norwegian names, the runestones, and other Norwegian topics. He was born and grew up in Norway and goes there several times a year.
- A biochemist from the USDA Human Nutrition Laboratory spoke to the Lodge about the value of consuming fish oils which contain omega 3 fatty acids. It seems an appropriate topic related to the dietary habits of Norwegians.
- Almost every month one member writes a column in the Hilsen, Lodge newsletter, pertaining to some aspect of local Norwegian American history. It generates lots of comments and gets people interested in family history.



Material is found at the local public library, UND Special Collections Department and from older people in the community.

- At Rondane, they asked a different member each meeting to speak for 15-20 minutes on why they (or their family) immigrated, where they came from in Norway, where and how they got here, tales of life as a new Canadian, etc. A person was dedicated to video taping the presentation (and artifacts if they brought some) and now they have the videos as part of the Lodge library. Many of the immigrant members are getting older and several have passed away since they began this project so they now have a record.

Other suggestions that cost a little money:

- A teacher that comes to teach Norwegian lessons at the Lodge every winter for a period of six weeks to two months. They apply for a cultural grant from the District and usually receive about \$150 for this and then add to it from their own cultural fund. This is a very successful program and usually have between 25 and 30 people who sign up for the classes. They are planning to try to get something going with the Norwegian language department at UND so that they can have a longer period of Norwegian language lessons. If anyone is going to get a pin for Norwegian language cultural skills they will need more than six weeks of language lessons.
- They invited some groups who are planning to come to the USA to come and perform. They hear from both the local travel agencies about these groups coming. They use local facilities for this and have charged admission. This has to be highly publicized in the community to make a success of it. Usually there is a group of musicians that come in Sept or Oct for Høstfest in Minot and they have been able to get some of these people to come and perform for the Lodge for a fee. They rarely lose money on this if it is publicized properly. They also have had some American performers of Scandinavian music come and perform right at the Lodge and this too was successful as long as they made sure that their members were aware of it.
- Open house at the Lodge occurs three times a year. They celebrate Syttende Mai with a meal of Norwegian foods complete with lefse and fløtegrøt made at the Lodge. Many members come and help make lefse and other treats a



few days before the celebration. They usually have some live Scandinavian music which helps to make the occasion festive. They also have a bake sale in the fall in either November or December. Again, the members pitch in and make lefse and other treats. In the fall there is a Potato Bowl played at the University and the Lodge serves a potato pancake breakfast. These three events are always successful.

- The Lodge rents two buses and travel to Høstfest in the fall. This is the second year and it has been a good success. They allow non-members to come along if there is space on the buses.
- A four-day ethnic festival attracts about 85,000 people includes the Sons of Norway providing a menu of Norwegian meatballs, mashed potatoes and red cabbage; lingonberry mousse; cinnamon lefse roll ups. They demonstrate abelskivers and krumkaker and rosettes. In 2007 they had two reindeer on display as well as showed movies, a traveling Sami exhibit, a rosemaling demonstration with products for sale, and other Norwegian merchandise. The children loved the four Lundehunds and they encourage the Heritage members to dress in costume and participate in the opening ceremony. On the Saturday night, they had an accordion player of Norwegian tunes. It was a great recruitment tool for new memberships. They have about 5,000 to 8,000 at the Norway Exhibit each year and it takes about 100 members, friends and family to cover the four-day event.
- Scan Fest celebrates Norwegian/Nordic heritage in May where members dress in their national costumes, display artifacts, various foods are provided or demonstrated (lefse, aebleskivers, krumkaker, meatballs, etc.)





## **Checklist for Event Planning**

1. Organize Committee
  - Guest List
  - Registration
  - Adjunct activities
  - Hospitality
  - Physical facilities
2. Obtain office requirements
  - Invitations
  - Letterhead & envelopes
3. Decide on style, tone and magnitude of event
4. Clear the date with President, Guest Speaker, etc
5. Schedule pre and post events
  - Meetings
  - Tours
6. Determine Budget
  - Printing
  - Mailing
  - Decorations
  - Catering
  - Facilities
  - Photographs
  - Music
7. Formulate mailing list
8. Review and approve guest list
9. Reserve facility sites
10. Design program
11. Arrange for props, banners, promotional materials

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12. Secure music, electronic equipment, lighting

13. Determine media coverage

**Eight to Ten weeks ahead:**

1. Confirm major speakers

2. Print invitations and program draft

3. Design posters, directional signage

4. Prepare briefing materials

5. Arrange for parking for guests

6. Confirm reservations of facilities

7. Secure contract with musicians

8. Prepare menu & finalize costs

9. Prepare thank you gifts

10. Plan for alternative arrangements if using outdoor venue in the event of poor weather and assign people to carry out the plan such as moving materials and equipment. Prepare an advance list of people to call if the rain plan is necessary.

11. Arrange for microphones, flags, etc

12. Confirm tour sites or other sites external to event site that you may include in your overall event.

**Three to Six Weeks Ahead:**

1. Prepare an alphabetical list of people attending based on RSVP's
2. Confirm menu and other details for food service
3. Do press release and paid advertisements in local press
4. Prepare floor plan and confirm with the facilities on equipment
5. Determine table centres and decorations
6. Recruit people for registration desk
7. Prepare nametags

**One Week Ahead:**

- 1, Meet with key personnel to review agenda
2. Last briefing with participants – speakers, platform or head table guests, etc.
3. Check that the set up of equipment, tables, decorations is on line
4. Check with food services – review expectations
5. Confirm flower delivery, musicians, flags
6. Set up registration table  
Check nametags against RSVP

**After Event:**

1. Send thank you notes
2. Confirm billings and payments
3. Hold a debriefing session and finalize a permanent file of event
4. Get copies of photos and letters out to key speakers, etc.