



VIRGINIA VIKING

SONS OF NORWAY HAMPTON ROADS LODGE NO. 3-522

President: Mike Solhaug Vice President: Jerry Blau Secretary: Katie Brink Treasurer: Ragnhild Zingler

The President's Corner

Dear SON Lodge members, **Bazaars!** The two Bazaars in Virginia Beach and Williamsburg were tremendously successful, with 2,000 in attendance (800 at Virginia Beach, 1200 at Williamsburg), with happy customers and vendors. As usual, the Bakery goods were the most popular, completely selling out. Kudos to the Bazaar Czars, Bob Longworth in Virginia Beach, and Melody Loftheim in Williamsburg. A special thanks goes to Marth Blau who, on short notice, organized and ran the Scandinavian Food Products Table. And a big thanks to all the lodge members who contributed to these great events.

December is the month of Christmas Dinners!

HR Lodge Julebord Christmas Party, Sunday, December 7; 5:30 cocktails 6:30 dinner at Holiday Inn Virginia Beach-Norfolk 5655 Greenwich Rd, Virginia Beach, VA 23462. The festive event will again feature Norwegian Christmas songs and of course the traditional Norwegian Christmas celebration dancing around the Christmas tree.

Norge Norsemen Julebord Monday December 8, 5:00, King of Glory Lutheran Church 4897 Longhill Rd, Williamsburg, VA 23188 will feature an amazing display of Christmas goodies,

God Jul, Godt nytt år, Mike

EVENTS

December 1, at 7:00 p.m.

Norge Norsemen Zoom Board Meeting

December 7, at 5:30 p.m.

Hampton Roads Lodge Christmas Party at the Holiday Inn
on 5655 Greenwich Road, Virginia Beach.

December 8, at 5:00 p.m.

Norge Norsemen Julebord at King of the Glory Lutheran Church at
4897 Longhill Road, Williamsburg.

December 11, at 7:00 p.m.

HR Board Meeting (ZOOM)

A Big Welcome to the following new members:

Peter Arntzen, Louis Bock, Barbara Cody, Julie Christensen, Inga Johansson Kiersten Johansson, Patricia McGrath, and Weston Tilley



Winter 2025/2026 Third District President's Message

Here we are in November, and the holidays are right around the corner with a new year right after that. Where has the time gone? It seems like the year has just started and now it is almost over, and we are getting ready for a new one.

We accomplished a lot this year with activities. We had the

Third District Picnic which unfortunately had a poor turnout of members for the second year in a row even though it was a great event with lots of food and fun for everyone. But due to the poor turnout, the Third District Board will be eliminating it for 2026, It is very sad to do that, but it had to be done.

Youth Camp was held this past July and was a huge success and will be back for July of 2026. If you have children or grandchildren, I highly urge you to send them to Youth Camp, where they can learn about the Norwegian heritage and culture and make friends with the other children at the camp. It is the best gift you can give your children.

Weekend Cultural Camp was held this past June and was so successful that not only will it be back in September of 2026, but we will be adding a day to the event, If you are interested in going to the Cultural Camp or have children interested in the Youth Camp, please contact Third District Cultural Director Cheri Johnson or Third District Vice President Katie Brink for more information.

The Third District 2026 Convention, which is being cohosted by the Third District and Hampton Roads Lodge, will be from Thursday June 4th to Sunday June 7th, at the Holiday Inn and Convention Center Virginia Beach, Virginia. I encourage you to send your lodge's full delegation to the convention so your lodge will be fully represented.

Since the Fraternal Funds program has been eliminated by the home office starting January 2026, the Third District Board has come up with a Lodge Assistance Program that will start in January of 2026. We hope to help offset some of the loss of not getting Fraternal Funds from the home office, but it will cover less things than were previously supported. The district's projected income is less due to the drop in membership (dues) and the drop of interest rates, but the Third District will do what we can to continue to support our lodges.

Until Spring, Fraternally, *Stephen Helmold*

Sons of Norway Whole Life Insurance

Products provide coverage for your entire life,
with single or level premiums and guaranteed level death benefit.

These permanent life insurance plans can provide you and your family with financial security no matter how long you live

Gratulerer Med Dagen (Happy Birthday) To the Following Members in December!

William L Peterson	Charles Ball
Harriet Lindenberg	Martha A. Blau
Jaboc K. Bunnicont	Mona J. Denton
Jeanne McDonald	Brook Lautenslager
Victoria M. Clanton	Bernt H. Larsen
Luther Hanson	Cynthia S. Sanoba
Michael Bailey	Susan Mason
Kathleen Stewart	Sandra Coffey
Lisa Mitchell	Ken E. Reynolds
Walker R. Douglas	Leta Sharkey-Laugle
Kathleen Stewart	

Norwegian Christmas traditions: A rich cultural heritage shaped by food, drink and nature

Christmas beer brewing Beer brewing has been an essential part of Norwegian Christmas traditions for over a thousand years. In pre-Christian times, it was mandatory to brew beer in honor of Odin and Thor - two of the most prominent gods in Norse mythology, as part of the winter celebration known as "jol." This tradition continued into the Christian era, but with a dedication to Jesus and Mary. Even today, Christmas beer remains a central part of the festive season, though fewer brew their own.

Christmas Eve meal: *ribbe*, *pinnekjøtt* and fish traditions

In Norway, Christmas dinner is eaten on the 24th of December and varies greatly by region. However, pork ribs (*ribbe*) and cured lamb ribs (*pinnekjøtt*) are the most popular dishes.

“Pork production did not become widespread in Norway until the potato was introduced in the 18th century. Pigs and humans largely compete for the same types of food, and before potatoes became established as a reliable and consistent crop, there wasn’t enough household waste to feed many pigs. As a result, pork ribs is a more recent traditional dish”, explains NIBIO researcher Eva Narten Høberg. “With *ribbe*, the meat is not preserved but prepared fresh. Before the advent of vacuum packaging and freezers, this dish needed to be consumed within a reasonable time after the pig was slaughtered. This dish is therefore associated with the spread of cast iron stoves, common from the early 20th century. Today pork ribs are typically served with meat patties (*medister*), sauerkraut and potatoes”.

“Sheep farming, on the other hand, was a less resource-intensive way to produce meat, as there were always grazing lands available that only livestock could utilise as food. In fact, the sheep was the first domesticated animal in Norway. *Pinnekjøtt* has roots in traditional outfield farming and preservation methods such as drying and salting. It was originally preserved through drying. As salt became cheaply available through import, it became common to salt the meat before hanging it to dry and cure”, says Narten Høberg.

“The salted and dried lamb ribs are typically steamed over birch branches, which imparts a distinctive flavour. It is usually served with potatoes, sauerkraut and a swede mash.”

“Traditionally, *ribbe* were more commonly eaten in Eastern Norway, while *pinnekjøtt* were favoured in Western Norway, the mountain valleys, and further north. Keeping grass-eating livestock was particularly resource-efficient in parts of the country where growing grain was not possible. This is still true today.”

The smell of *lutefisk*...

Fish dishes, such as cod and *lutefisk*, have a tradition rooted in Catholic fasting. Before the Reformation, eating meat was forbidden during Advent. While fish plays a smaller role on Christmas Eve today, it remains a common dish during the festive season.

“We exported stockfish during the Viking Age. Norway has always had abundant access to cod, and drying is the oldest preservation method we have”, says Narten Høberg

But as Christmas food, stockfish didn't become significant until it was made into *lutefisk*. Lutefisk is made from dried fish, typically cod, that has been rehydrated in a lye solution. The fish is then soaked in water to neutralize the lye before being cooked. The result is a gelatinous, mildly salty fish with a unique texture, often served with potatoes, peas, and bacon. It is infamous for its smell - often described as pungent and somewhat sour due to the lye used in its preparation.

Cloudberry: The Nordic Christmas dessert

Cloudberry (*molter*) are another important part of Norwegian Christmas tradition. From cloudberry cream to cloudberry jam, these berries are an exclusive ingredient often

reserved for the holiday season. They are so exclusive that we even find cloudbberries mentioned in Norwegian law.

“We have found detailed descriptions of how landowners were to organize the fair distribution of both cloudbberries and lingonberries according to the land register before 1841”, explains Narten Høberg.

“Back then, berries were an important part of the self-sufficient household. Today, cloudbberries are more of a taste of tradition and cultural heritage”, she says. But in Northern Norway, there are strict rules for picking cloudbberries, a legacy from the self-sufficient households of earlier times.

Cloudbberries are also known as "the orange of the North" due to their high vitamin C content.

The nisse and Christmas folklore

The *nisse*, a small grey-clad figure with a red hat and a long beard, has been part of Norwegian folklore since the Middle Ages. The *nisse* was very strong and helped with farm work if he was treated well. If he wasn't treated well, he became mischievous and could harm people and animals.

The tradition is to give the *nisse* a bowl of Christmas porridge (*risengrynsgrøt*) on Christmas eve. This is a traditional dish made from rice, milk, and sugar, often served with a sprinkle of cinnamon and a dollop of butter. It is commonly eaten on Christmas Eve, with a single whole almond hidden inside. The person who finds the almond is said to have good luck in the coming year. The porridge was also traditionally offered to the *nisse* to ensure his goodwill.

If the porridge was forgotten, the *nisse* could cause mischief and trouble. While today the farm *nisse* is mostly a part of tales and Christmas decorations, the tradition of caring for farm animals during Christmas is still very much alive.

Hazelnuts: A staple in Norwegian Christmas traditions

Hazelnuts have long been a part of Norwegian Christmas traditions. It was once believed that the kernel of a nut could predict the future; a dried-out kernel was seen as a bad omen, while two kernels allowed you to play the game "filipine."

The Norwegian Centre for Genetic Resources (NIBIO) is working to preserve old hazel varieties, both as cultural heritage and for their potential in breeding new, climate-suitable varieties. Hazelnuts were historically used for tools, wickerwork, and barrel hoops, and "wish branches" at Christmas were often made from hazel.

Hazel trees grow across southern Norway up to 600 meters above sea level, and the largest continuous hazel forest in Northern Europe is located in Eikesdal, Møre og Romsdal. Hazelnuts were spread by animals and likely carried by humans during their migrations, with hazelnut shells found in archaeological sites dating back to the Mesolithic period.

Norway's Christmas bird is the Eurasian bullfinch

The Eurasian bullfinch (*dompap*) is perhaps Norway's most iconic Christmas bird. Traditionally depicted on old Christmas cards perched on sheaves of grain, in reality, it prefers sunflower seeds. In many northern countries, birds with red breasts are associated with Christmas, and in Norway, the bullfinch is commonly seen on Christmas decorations and wrapping paper, often set against a snowy backdrop with golden sheaves of grain.

Unlike insect-eating birds, the bullfinch thrives during the winter. It is hardy and can even burrow into the snow to sleep in extreme cold. Most people see it in winter, as it lives a reclusive life deep in coniferous forests during the summer. The bullfinch's nest is well-hidden, typically in dense spruce plantations. Norway's population is estimated between 100,000 and 500,000 pairs, with numbers fluctuating in relation to seed yields from spruce and birch trees.

NIBIO and the Norwegian food culture

Norwegian food culture is closely linked to the country's nature and climate, from mountain pastures to fish-rich waters. As NIBIO's social researcher Bjørn Egil Flø emphasizes, "If these traditions disappear, much of the flavor of Christmas will disappear too."

Whether it's Christmas beer, *pinnekjøtt*, or cloudberry cream, Norwegian Christmas traditions celebrate the country's history, natural resources, and love of food. NIBIO also does work documenting and further developing these traditions ensuring that they remain a living part of our culture for generations to come.



SONS OF NORWAY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Each year Sons of Norway award scholarship and grants to promote the heritage and culture of Norway and provides assistance to our members, lodges and their communities. You may email questions on any of these scholarships to foundation@sofn.com prior to submission. ALL SCHOLARSHIPS ARE OPEN FOR APPLICATION FROM OCTOBER 1 – MARCH 1

THE ASTRID G. GATES SCHOLARSHIP

Applicants must have a certificate of completion from high school and be enrolled in post -secondary training or education (college, vocational or trade school) and be a current member of SON or children or grandchildren of a current member of districts 1-6. Applicants must have strong financial need and be between the ages of 17 and 22. Applications must be postmarked no later than March 1st. (Please mail all required items in one envelope. Incomplete applications will not be accepted).

THE KING OLAV V. NORWEGIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE FUND

Any North American, 18 years or older, who has demonstrated a keen and sincere interest in the Norwegian heritage and/or any Norwegian who has demonstrated an interest in American heritage and who desires to further the study of these heritages at a recognized educational institute is eligible to apply. Deadline for application is March 1.

NANCY LORRAINE JENSEN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Applicants must be female American citizens between 17 and 35 years old on the date the application is submitted. The applicant must be a full-time undergraduate who has completed at least one term, majoring in chemistry or physics, or in chemical, electrical or mechanical engineering. They must also be SON members or children or grandchildren of members (employment at the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland may be substituted in lieu of belonging to SON).

DAN AND BETTY RUDE SCHOLARSHIP

American citizens who are enrolled in an accredited four-year, post-secondary institution and majoring in elementary education and between the ages of 17-26 and sustained at least one year of post-secondary credit, as well as a grade point average of 2.5 or higher.

OREL AND MARIE WINJUM MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

This Fund was created to assist with college tuition costs for American citizens of Norwegian and or German heritage who have applied to or are enrolled in an accredited four-year college or university or two-year community college in the United States. Applicants must have a grade point average of 2.5 or higher and have a certificate of completion from high school or about to graduate.

BERNT ANKER SCHOLARSHIP

American citizens who have applied to and enrolled in a four-year post-secondary institution or a two-year community college with the intent of continuing toward an undergraduate degree in the US. Applicants must be between the ages of 17-25 and have a certificate of completion from high school or are about to graduate from high school. Preference will be given to students without parents, students with legal guardians or to students raised by single parents.

MYRTLE BEINHAUER FUND

Three scholarships will be awarded from this fund annually for undergraduate studies in any major. Those who have a certificate of completion from high school and are enrolled in an accredited college or university in the United States may apply.

SISSEL AND ROGER ESPELAND MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

This fund creates an opportunity for qualified applicants to receive scholarships for post-secondary education at accredited four-year institutions or training at accredited vocational/trade schools located in the US. Applicants must be American citizens and between the ages of 17-26.

ELAINE NELSON SCHOLARSHIP

Students enrolled in an accredited four-year post-secondary institution, majoring in Education, Business or Agriculture and between the ages of 17-26 may apply. Applicant must be a citizen of the United States, Canada or Norway.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

DOUGLAS WARNE – ROLF & WENCHE ENG SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship creates an opportunity for qualified applicants to attend education institutions in Norway and assists with the cost of tuition, room and board. Any current American or Canadian member of the Sons of Norway or Rotary, as well as their children or grandchildren and of any age who have completed one full year of college level work. Applicants who have been accepted by an educational post-secondary institution in Norway including but not limited to craft, folk, music theatre or technical school, Oslo International Summer School or undergraduate college/university in Norway.

LUND FUND SCHOLARSHIP

This fund is for study abroad through accredited, post high school, educational institutions. No preference shall be given based on the country selected for the study abroad experience. Special consideration shall be given to military veterans.

HELEN TRONVOLD NORWEGIAN FOLK HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP

This provides cross-cultural experiences for youth. Eligibility are for applicants between the ages of 17-26 and with proof of enrollment in a folk high school in Norway and those who need tuition assistance.

OSLO INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP

Award decisions are based upon academic potential, benefits to SON or the larger Norwegian community, involvement in school and community activities, financial need and other, e.g., work experience, Deadline is March 1st.

THE SONS OF NORWAY FOUNDATION HERITAGE AND CULTURAL FUNDS

This is an endowment fund from which only interest will be spent. Two types of grants are available:

THE SONS FOUNDATION/LOCAL LODGE PARTNERSHIP GRANTS. These are small matching grants awarded to lodges. A maximum of \$500 may be given. Deadline is May 1 of each year.

THE GENERAL HERITAGE AND CULTURE GRANT – These may be awarded to individuals, groups or organizations. Up to \$3000 may be received. Deadline January 15th of each year. Submitted by Deanna Rumney



Editor's Note: You can now get Freia Melkerull and Smil Chocolate at IKEA for \$5 apiece. Expensive, but cheaper than Amazon.

Also, you can buy Norwegian Brown Cheese for \$5.99 at Trader Joe's as oppose to double that at Harris Teeter.



Virginia Viking

Mona Denton
3020 Watergate Lane
Virginia Beach, VA 23452

