



Dawson Creek President, Randy Carlstad, acknowledging Shirley Grayston for her years of service.



Viking Lodge member's enjoying Norwegian Sweater Day!



Gunther Mielke, (alias Erik the Red), with Gerry Jensen at Viking's Christmas Party



Delores Jansen of Hardanger Lodge has her turn with Santa, aka, Lloyd Coltman



Penelope & Connor Schilbach try out Santa's big chair at the Varden Christmas party.

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Editor's Message

Happy New Year everyone! There is 10 pages this time as we now have 7 more lodges from Alberta & Saskatchewan. There were 2 new lodges last month but they fit into the usual 8 pages as not all of our regular lodges sent one. There will probably be extra pages when lodges from Alberta and Saskatchewan get more involved. This time Karen Larson, District General Director, sent me an article re: Aspeland Lodge and other Organizations in the new Provinces.

Don't forget your Valentine!

Check out: Sons of Norway www.sofn7.ca on District 7 webpage Facebook "Sons of Norway District 7" and "Official Sons of Norway Facebook Group"

Unni Hadden, Editor

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President's Message

GODT NYTT ÅR

As we ring in a new year, I want to acknowledge our members and friends who do so much for Sons of Norway.

We begin with a clean slate on which we prepare our plans for the year ahead. Dream big, look at your strengths and how you might make some positive changes. The possibilities are endless. By doing a little each day, goals will be achieved. I wish you all success and contentment for 2026!

In Sons of Norway, many of our members are aging and we know we must encourage younger people to get involved in our Nordic culture and heritage. The manner of generating interest in our organization has changed over the years – how many lodges sponsor a child/teen's sport team, dance group, activity events? Unless we are offering things that make us more visible in our community and are geared to young children/teens or young families, we cannot expect to see them getting involved. We know that offering cooking classes like lefse making is often a draw for children but there are also opportunities to offer a ski outing with some ski lessons from a knowledgeable member, or a day in the park with a number of Norwegian children's games (search online for Norwegian games). Often local recreation centres will allow posters to advertise events. Offer Nordic "prizes" as well as handouts for future events and information on your lodge. Maybe a picnic in the park with various games for adults and games for children will bring families out. The picnic may be a family basket or a sharable potluck with the lodge offering cold drinks or treats. Orienteering is a good way to get teens and adults involved with a weekend event – and a wonderful way to get people to explore various areas of your community. Also, ASK teens and young families what they might attend or provide a list of events and get feedback on their willingness to participate, thereby ensuring you will have participants. Utilize the crafters in your lodge to hold sessions to learn things like wood carving, stitching, painting, or knitting. These events can be used to encourage members to prepare and submit items for the Cultural Competition at the District Lodge and Convention Meeting.

District 7 has a membership contest which ends prior to the upcoming May Convention so make sure your



The Sons of Norway Foundation in Canada accept tax deductible donations from Sons of Norway members and others living in Canada.

Please check out our new website: www.sonfic.ca for more information including donation and application forms for bursaries and grants.

Please make cheques payable out to:

SONS OF NORWAY FOUNDATION IN CANADA

and mail to: 40 Brazeau Crescent SW, Calgary, AB T2W 072 or see online donation info for e-transfers

lodge secretary has information on new members you have recruited in 2025 and 2026 and have them submitted to VP Randy Carlstad.

Welcome to all the new Lodge Board members; thank you for taking on a leadership role in your Lodge. There are resources available to help you achieve success in your new job. On sofn7.com, you will find a section on 'Resources' and the By-Laws document includes job descriptions for some roles that might be helpful. Members on your Board are often a wealth of information, so ask them questions. Also, check out your Lodge By-Laws and Policies & Procedures. The District Board members may also be a good resource if you have not found answers to your question and the international Sons of Norway Constitution and Policies and Procedures will give you a complete overview of the objectives, policies and guidelines for Sons of Norway ,(sofn7)

Hilsen, Gloria

Lodge Updates

Sleipner Lodge 8

Vancouver, B.C.

Hi everyone. Happy New Year to all of you!

Last year was going great until near the end of the year we lost two of our long term members. Sue Engeseth and Borghild Tyssedal. Two of my favorite people. Every time that I've met them I have been met with a smile and a feeling of my day being better because of them. I am sure that those who knew them would agree. I extend condolences from Sleipner Lodge to their families. Many of us share in their grief.

That being said,

2025 was a very successful year for our lodge. First of all we did a lot of improvements to the park at Hatzic then had a wonderful Summer at the park. In the Fall we jointly hosted Seterskveld. Us and the Norwegian House Society. We then held Welcome to Noway. Both at the Scandinavian Community Center (SCC) in Burnaby.

To cap the year off we held our annual Christmas dinner at the SCC. As with recent years, there was Lutefisk involved. There was a very good turnout. Gary Carr led the cooking staff. They did a wonderful job. We had a challenging Quiz after dinner and squeezed in a pin ceremony as



Hey Kids!

it's time to draw your Masterpiece!

Attention to all kids interested in drawing. District 7 is again holding a contest for anyone under the age of eighteen who is a member, or a child, or grandchild of a District 7 member. We want a color drawing of no more than 8x11 inches. The picture should have a Norwegian theme; whether it's trolls, Loki, Leif Erikson, Lefse or Heritage camp, or anything else that has to do with Sons of Norway.

When your drawing is ready, would you either e-mail me ksolie36@infonet.net or snail mail me at **403-425 Carnarvon St., New Westminster BC, V3L 1C3** to submit the drawing. Give me such information as your name and age, which lodge you belong to and who you are related to in District 7. Also I need a way to contact you, either your home or e-mail address and the subject of your drawing. If you can send me this by April 15th, 2026 we can use the winning drawing for the cover of the June issue of the Leiflette



Sleipner Lodge members all enjoyed Christmas dinner.

well. It's funny. Gary did a survey before the dinner in order to find out how many people wanted to eat Lutefisk. Well, Lutefisk does have a bit of a bad reputation. Totally unearned I will add. I believe that Gary got, maybe, three replies from people who said yes. Well, it looked, to me that most people that showed up not just tried the Lutefisk, but showed no hesitation. Why? Easily explained. LDS. Lutefisk Distraction Syndrome.

There was actually some leftover Lutefisk. I was thinking. Lutefisk sandwich after?



The Pin Ceremony took place at Sleipner's Christmas dinner

It looks like our park at Hatzic is being well looked after. Thank you to our new caretakers.

BC Hydro recently removed much of a large cedar by Seuz Road that was threatening their power lines.

The lodge has had a board and a lodge meeting in January.

Yours. truly. Larry.

Varden Lodge 8

New Westminster, B.C

Hello! I hope you had a wonderful Holiday Season.
We, at Varden Lodge, along with Norwegian House Society,



Above, Shauna Britt, Varden Lodge Secretary & her daughter, Jayden, (former lodge & border queen)

Left, Lodge members dancing around the Christmas tree

Charlotte Marander, 3 left & Penelope Scilbach (4), show off their Norwegian bunads & face painting art at Varden Lodge's Christmas party.

kicked off the season by having a Christmas party on Dec. 14th. There was a mixture of all ages. The little ones enjoyed the face painting, (cobwebs seemed especially popular) while the adults enjoyed socializing and watching the children. Everyone enjoyed the treats. Lefse disappeared within a few minutes. But, of course, it was singing round the Christmas tree and then seeing Santa that was the highlight of the party. Santa, along with his partner our Lodge Queen, Kristie Lind, gave all the children presents. All in all people had a lot of fun.

Our next fun event is Varden's Meatball dinner on January 23rd. We are going to have a fantastic time. This year we are bringing back the wonderful singer we had last year---Danny Balen. Plus we are going to have a silent auction with many wonderful gifts. But, of course, you are really coming for the those delicious meatballs. And there is more than just meatballs, think of the potatoes, salad bar and dessert. If you are thirsty there is plenty of coffee



or if you want something stronger there is a cash bar. Tickets are \$35.00 and the doors open at 6pm at the Scandinavian Community Centre. We are also going to announce the winner of our Lodge's Drawing Contest. Hopefully the winner will be there.

I am writing this in early January and this will be published in early February, so I realize the Meatball Dinner will be over by the time you read this. However, I hope you attended the event.

Our next Lodge meetings will be on January 13th and February 10th.

*Krista Solie,
Director & Publicity*

North Star Lodge 63

Nanaimo, B.C.

Another year has drifted by. I must tell you about our Christmas party with the Danish Club. The party was held on 29 Nov. at the Nanaimo Yacht Club. The room was decorated for Christmas before we added the Scandinavian touch! It was a festive night with the twinkling lights and the 14 large round tables all decked out with flags (Danish and Norwegian), frosty pinecones, pines and candles. Dinner was catered to with strick instructions of serving Scandinavia foods! It was a delightful meal ending with risgrøt! We walked hand in hand around the Christmas tree singing Christmas carols. A dance band played an array of musical pieces. An old saying, "a good time was had by all" fit the ambiance of the evening. Throughout the night, draws were made for the raffle prizes. Bunads were worn as well as fancy party dresses. This joint celebration brought our clubs closer together which is a wonderful thing.



North Star President, Jim Tore Breivik, being installed by Liv Dahl

At our regular meeting in December, we ignited our "Team Norway" program again. This time, it was my turn. I spoke for 15 minutes on "Christmas Customs in Norway Past and Present". Along with the information, I had several Christmas props to compliment my stories. The second and third speakers, Einar and Randi, spoke about their experiences in celebrating a Norwegian Christmas on the northern coast of B.C. and in Norway. Each of the two speakers spoke for 5 minutes. I believe the members went home with new information about a Norwegian Christmas and it possibly sparked old memories from their past too. In January at our first meeting of 2026, we celebrated the installation of the new officers in our lodge. The slate did not change very much. Pictured below is our President, Jim Tore Breivik, being installed by Liv Dahl, one of our members. The celebration included a wonderful buffet of open faced sandwiches and cakes. I hope to get a picture of our entire lodge officers in the up-

coming newsletter.

I passed around the collection tin for our school we support, Fairview. The members were generous to fill the tin with coin and paper in an effort to curb the hunger that the children endure. The funds go to the school breakfast, lunch and snack program. There is a need! Check with schools in your area as this is a wonderful project that the Sons of Norway can get in-

volved in. Giving makes the heart feel good!

"No one can help everyone, but everyone can help someone" ("Ingen kan hjelpe alle, men alle kan hjelpe noen"). This reflects a community-oriented approach to kindness and sharing.

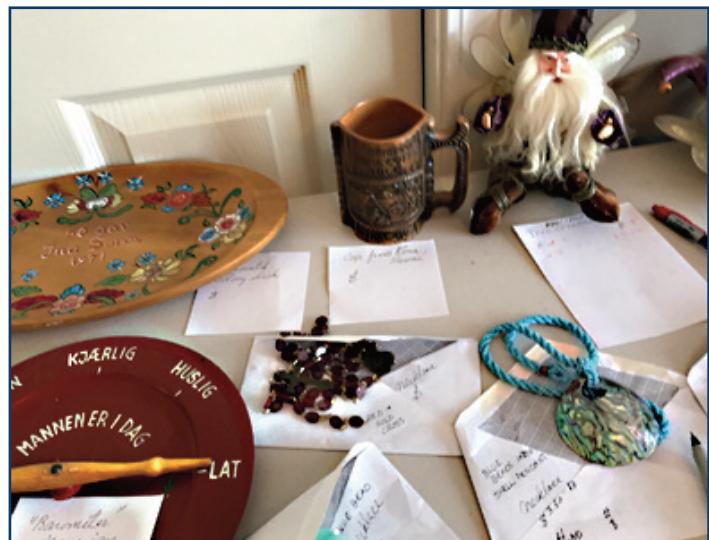
*Linda Harvey,
Social Director*

Rondane Lodge 71

Prince George, B.C.

The Women's Auxiliary's 2025 Christmas Meeting/Party, was held at the home of Christine Sullivan, with 13 members present. The annual sale of donated items, brought \$ 5.20 for the club. Winners from the parcels under the tree, were Synøve deDreu, Kirsten Brawn, Diane McLeod, Lynn Wilson & Elsa Aase. As usual, the table was full of all delicious foods, cakes, cookies the members had contributed to it. It was a very nice afternoon.

The yearly family Christmas Party was held at the Masonic Hall, with over 60 people attending. Everyone enjoyed holding hands, making circles around the big, lovely tree, while singing, first the tradi-



A few items on display for the silent auction held at Rondane Ladies Aux. Christmas Party Dec 5.



Joan Lemsky, Anna Mytting & Llynn wilson
at Ladies Auxillary Meeting.



President Randy Carlstad presenting a cheque for \$1140.
to Dena at the St. Mark's Food Bank & Soup Kitchen in
Dawson Creek



Christine Sullivan received a door prize at Ladies Aux
Meeting at home of Carol Schulte

tional Carols, and then doing the fun filled Norwegian songs, that require a lot of participation from everyone, with clapping hands, stomping feet, also pretending to wash, rinse and hang up laundry, and more. The kids all like that part, and they use up some energy before lunch was served. The food table was almost groaning with the load of all the delicacies! Haakon Sullivan was again the popular Santa Claus, giving all the kids their presents.

A big Thank You to Christine Sullivan and her team,

who all helped with the planning, preparation, as well as the cleaning up after.

*Wishing you all a very happy
New Year*

Elsa Aase, Publicity

Dawson Creek Lodge 79

Dawson Creek, B.C.

We ushered out an old year and ushered in a new one as well as celebrating Christmas. This is always a busy time for most everyone and I believe we all enjoy it.

We hope all enjoyed a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Our Lodge is always busy and are still enjoying our afternoon meetings. We do not have a big membership, but we manage to do all the things we should be doing.

At our November meeting we made final plans for Christmas and our annual Christmas party. Our party turned out well. Over 70 of our members and guests were treated to a

delicious turkey dinner. We held our usual silent auction, 50/50, Santa visit, and as in previous years the junior hockey players came and helped and enjoyed the turkey supper. This year we were treated to a Norwegian Quiz prepared by our member, Karen. It was fun. We had agreed at our last meeting that the proceeds from the silent auction would be donated to our local St. Mark's food bank and soup kitchen. We are



President Randy Carlstad acknowledging Donna Porada
for her years of service



Our photo center was made by one of our members. It was a hit at the Dawson Creek party

happy to announce we donated \$1140 to St. Mark's Food Bank and Soup Kitchen. They were so pleased to accept the cheque from Randy Carlstad, our President. Dena gave Randy a tour of the operation. Randy was very pleased to see the organization. His comment was , it truly warmed his heart.

At our party, President Randy Carlstad, acknowledged and thanked two of our long time members who have decided to retire from their years long positions, Shirley Grayston and Donna Porada. They will still remain members, but have given up their working positions.

We are experiencing a winter we haven't seen in many years. We have major snowfall and huge snow banks. It has also been cold. Going out has been limited because of the weather.

We are all looking forward to the new year, and the year's plans for our Lodge.

Best Wishes from our Lodge to All of Yours.
Until next time!

Loretta Pratt--Publicity

Viking Lodge 81

Surrey, B.C.

Hello and Happy New Year to all of the Lodges within District 7!

Looking back at 2025, the most significant thing, in my opinion, which occurred was the granting to our Lodge of another Helping Hands Grant by SON Foundation. This enabled us to make a further donation to our Adopt-A-School, Hjorth Road Elementary which has been used for their Fine Arts Program and sports equipment for those students who needed help in this regard.

Due to health issues of members and other factors, we did not hold as many meetings in 2025. But, it was also decided that we would hold a

Xmas Party at Tynehead Hall and although the turnout of members was less than hoped for, we managed to hold a Silent Auction to which those members in attendance generously contributed, as well as our former and longtime members, Kris and Darlene Frostad who also generously contributed items for the Silent Auction and thanks to John Kaland's daughter, Kathy, who brought them to us

for the Frostads. We also held a 50/50 draw and there were a number of door prizes as well. I hope you enjoy some of the photos from that event which are included with this Leiflette issue.

Along with a wonderful potluck "hot" Xmas meal, we had the pleasure of entertainment by Ed Wahl and his side-kick, Ray, who sang and played guitar for us. In addition, Ed won the 50/50 draw



Entertainers, Ed & Ray at Christmas Party of Viking Lodge



Viking Lodge members, Gordon & Ruth Lande's grandsons, help Grandpa lay wreath on Remembrance Day.



Gordon & Ruth Lande & family taken at the Remembrance Day service where a wreath was laid on behalf of Viking Lodge .

and donated it back to the lodge. So all in all it was a success and the funds earned will help with operating expenses and keep the Lodge going going this year.

Andy Anderson, one of our members, met with an accident and sustained a fractured hip which required his hospitalization for several weeks. I understand that he, and Berit, are planning, or may have already moved to Hope to be near their daughter and her family. We will miss you both at our meetings and gatherings and wish you all the best. best.

*Ha det bra,
Dolores Fossum, Publicity*

Hardanger Lodge 109 Kelowna, B.C.

Our November meeting was held at our new meeting place- the community room at the residence of new member, Erna Johnston. Election of officers was held and the board of directors stays pretty much the same as it has been in the past two years with the addition of Darlene Osterlin as vice-president. President Gloria shared the news that Home Office has of-

ficially allowed an all-Canadian lodge. Lodges in Alberta and Saskatchewan, formerly part of District 4, are now part of District 7. As president of Sons of Norway Foundation in Canada Gloria presented a \$1000 bursary to her granddaughter, Eva Benazic. Eva plans to take paramedic training at the Columbia Paramedic

Academy in Kelowna in July of 2026. Following the meeting coffee and goodies were enjoyed as members played two rounds of Left, Right and Centre.

On Remembrance Day Lloyd Coltman laid a wreath at the Rutland cenotaph on behalf of Hardanger Lodge. Lloyd has done this for the past eleven years. Lodge members and



Santa, aka, Lloyd Coltman, was excited to receive lefse as his gift.



Wilf Akerlund took his turn to sit on Santa's knee

guests gathered for the Christmas celebration at 1450 Bertram Street. A roast turkey, stuffing and gravy were prepared by Gloria and Cal Benazic while vegetables, salads and desserts were provided by attending members. Following the delicious dinner we had our photos taken with Santa as Lloyd Coltman had arrived dressed as Santa. His wife, Agnes was dressed as Mrs. Claus and helped Santa distribute gifts to all attendees.

As lodge editor, Wilf Akerlund prepares a monthly Hardanger Nyheter which is sent electronically to lodge members. For the December issue this year he asked members to submit stories telling about their childhood Christmases. He received several delightful stories which were included in the newsletter and enjoyed by his readers.

*Bev Akerlund,
Publicity*



Karen Larson
Zone 5 Director
Aspelund 5-571

Our Lodges

Solglyt 7-143

Edmonton, Alberta

Valhalla 7-341

Calgary, Alberta

Northern Lights 7-493

Grande Prairie,
Alberta

Ronning 7-504

Camrose, Alberta

Nisse 7-567

North Battleford,
Saskatchewan

Aspelund 7-571

Red Deer, Alberta

Solsyd 7-603

Lethbridge,

An introduction to District 7 from Zone 5 Director

On September 30, the SON announcement was shared that the All Canadian District would be realized, effective November 1, 2025. This was a pursuit of mine since 2019. I so appreciated the DIV Board members supporting me in this initiative. I am pleased that the Canadian prairie lodges, seven in all, have joined the thirteen BC lodges for a total of twenty lodges in the new All Canadian District. I have been appointed as interim Zone 5 Director for District 7. Director nominations take place at the AGM during the District 7 convention in May.

Aspelund was pleased to host the Sports Weekend / Scan Culture Weekend for 3 days in June 2025. It was well attended with 63 delegates for the weekend and served 103 for the banquet dinner. A few of the highlights were the Norwegian Laft Hus Annual Festival, Fanatullen Dancers, a bus tour along the Scandinavian Trail in Central Alberta and the folk band, the Traveling Mabels, as the banquet entertainment. A big shout out to our sponsors who made the event a possibility: Torske Klubben Calgary \$5K, SON Foundation Canada \$750, District IV \$500 and SON HQ \$500.

We also hosted a two-day casino in March 2025 which provided gaming funds for us to use on preapproved programs and initiatives. Our pride is sponsoring kids to the Trollhaugen Language & Culture Camp each year. This past summer we provided 17 camperships to kids who might not otherwise be able to attend. We also had our annual giving campaign in the fall giving to local, regional and national charities.

This past year at Trollhaugen we were Host Lodge providing volunteer services for registration, morning & afternoon snacks for the youngest two groups, arranging night patrol and fitting 30+ kids in Bunads.

For the lodge Christmas Party we did it differently by inviting the Fanatullen Folk Society and The Norwegian Laft Hus Society members to join us for a turkey dinner at a subsidized rate. The Pioneer Lodge was a cozy environment and fit 50 attendees perfectly. Raspberry Patch catering provided a very tasty traditional Christmas dinner. Those interested could try games of chance.

Aspelund Lodge has had a recent influx in membership and we are forever grateful. In 2026, we look forward to sending delegates to the District 7 convention. Next on the calendar is the Norwegian Laft Hus Annual Festival, June 13 and we will continue to support it by hosting a booth, volunteering and encouraging others to attend the festival. This August will continue to sponsor children to camp who have a connection to our lodge.

TorskeKlubben Calgary Alberta

What we have here is a very generous klubb that financially supports Norwegian culture in a very big way in southern and Central Alberta. Their casino dates fell in July at the same time as the Calgary Stampede which made for a very busy casino. I had the fortune of working a double shift as Cashier and my window brought in \$300K in chips which

meant it was a big loss for the house. All the activity made the time go quickly. However, volunteer casino shifts are long and late so they aren't for the faint of heart!

TorskeKlubben Edmonton Alberta

Torskeklubben Edmonton hosts a variety of monthly dinners and SON member are welcome to partake.

Trollhaugen Language, Arts & Culture Camp

The 2025 culture camp was a success at 103 campers registered. Beginning on Sunday it runs for a week with a finale on Saturday. Trollhaugen camp is open to all SON members, family and friends. It is located in Central Alberta near the town of Alix. Trollhaugen rents the Deer Valley Mead-



Fanatullen performing Canada Day July 1, 2025

ows church campground for the week.

The 2026 dates for Trollhaugen are August 9 to 15. The theme is the Olympics. There are advantages to registering early. The 2027 theme is the Sami.

For inquiries or to share ideas about camp please contact Heidi Mapstone.

heidi@trollhaugenalberta.com

Norwegian Laft Hus Museum

This is a society managed by a small group of volunteers and part-time staff. It used to be known as the best kept secret in Red Deer but recently we have been on the radio, television, blogs and getting better exposure on social media. It is common for out of town visitors to stop in.

The Syttende Mai – May 17 was celebrated by hosting a Bunad parade, a heart felting project, meatball soup and a variety of cakes.

The Laft Hus Annual Festival 2025 in June had

record attendance, sometimes three deep on the boardwalk around Heritage Park. This year it was partnered with Sons of Norway Aspelund Lodge to coincide with the three day Scan Culture Weekend, whose main venue was a block away.

There are many programs offered throughout the year including musical acts like Dr. Joan Paddock who demonstrated the Lur. Magnus Wiik serenaded us for an enchanted evening in the park. Classes offered include face painting, felting, Sami bracelets, spoon carving, and Christmas traditions.

Over the past several weeks, baking has been taking place at the Laft Hus. I volunteered to make lefse, flat bread, lace cookies and rosettes. This is in preparation for the 2 day bake sale November 22 & 23, which is the major fundraiser of the year.

If you are ever passing through Red Deer on the

Queen Elizabeth #2 Highway plan to stop in for an artifact and gift shop visit. Call ahead to ensure it will be open at your required time.

403.347.2055.

Fanatullen Folk Society

The folk dancers group had been invited to dance at several events and locations. Annually they perform at the Laft Hus Annual Festival on the outdoor wooden platform.

Heritage Square in June. On Canada Day they dance at Bower Ponds. The local instructors, Carroll and Tami, share their skills at Trollhaugen Camp each year and teach classes to the campers to prepare them to dance in the Saturday program.

The Danish community in Central Alberta cele-



Matching Bunads at Laft Hus Festival 2025)

brated a 40 year celebration this summer. The Canadian Danish Museum and the Dickson Store Museum have been in place for 40 years. A Banquet was planned and the Fanatullen Dances performed Danish dances as part of their program.

*Karen Larson,
Zone 5 Director*