



SONS OF NORWAY

FJELL-LJOM.. (MOUNTAIN ECHOES).. BLÅ FJELL LODGE 3-646

April, 2025

BLÅ FJELL LODGE SUPPORTS A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY SOCIETY

Publication date: two weeks prior to monthly meeting date; input due three days prior to publication.

Administrative officers:

President: Cheri Johnson

Vice President / Membership Director: Joann Barfield

Secretary: Trish Morris

Assistant Secretary/Recording: Becky Burnett

Treasurer: JoAnn Stephens-Forrest

Editor: Joann Barfield

Co-Editor: Scott Rice

Cultural Director: Lucy Hochstein

Co-Cultural Director: JoAnn Stephens-Forrest

Social Director: Helen De Vries

Webmaster: Annmarie Drake

Childrens' Activity Director: Cheri Johnson

Foundation Director: Annita Nelson

Historian: Karen Rice

=====

Blå Fjell's website: sonsofnorwayblafjell.org

Facebook group: <http://www.facebook.com/SonsOfNorwayBlaFjell>

=====

**Regular scheduled meetings: fourth Saturday of each month (except for special occasions), College Lutheran Church,
120 South Main Street, Salem**

=====

MISSION

**The mission of Bla Fjell Lodge is the preservation of the heritage and culture of Norway and the other Nordic countries
(Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Iceland)**

=====

NEXT MEETING -- SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 11 AM - 1 PM - **NOTE TIME CHANGE!**

COLLEGE LUTHERAN CHURCH, 210 SOUTH COLLEGE AVENUE, SALEM:

PROGRAM: Gathering, Modern Norway, Dementia, Dancing with Annmarie!

REFRESHMENTS: Snax - Larry -- Drinx - Caris

Remember to bring your canned goods for the Food Pantry and your canceled postage stamps for Tubfrim!

=====

Sharon Rohrback's Celebration of Life

Saturday, April 26, 2025 2pm

St. John Lutheran Church 4608 Brambleton Ave. Roanoke, Va. 24018 .. Reception afterwards

=====

CALENDAR OF EVENTS .. BALANCE OF 2025

May 3 – Annual Yard Sale - home of Cheri Johnson || May 17 – Local Colors - Downtown Roanoke

June 21 – SON Foundation – Culture, Alzheimer's, Dance || June 26-29 – Southern Camp at Isle of Palms, SC

July 19-27 – Youth Camp – Highland Lake, NY – Koinonia || July 26 – Summertime Picnic at home of Larry Norman

August – No Meeting || September 27 – General Meeting - Nordic Auction

October 25 – Anniversary Dinner #29 (restaurant TBA) || November 22 – Dancing, Culture

December 13 – Julefest, St. Lucia Day

unless otherwise noted, all meeting are at College Lutheran Church

=====

Please attend for love of Norway!



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Sweet April showers do spring May flowers"

FROM Jobe Florist

=====

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy Easter, Friends! Easter to you may be the wonderful message of Salvation from the Easter Story, a chance to see the "**Chosen**" movie at the theaters, a special dinner at the dining room table, an Easter egg hunt, Easter decorations around the house, new chicks or ducklings to raise, a favorite hike up a nearby mountain, or maybe just a relaxing day fishing at the pond. Easter in Norway is a time of renewing, as the light returns from the long, cold, cozy, dark winter. Homes are filled with birch twigs in a vase with Easter eggs hanging from them. Tulips, daffodils, and yellow candles are used to decorate. The people love to gather and watch "crime movies" on TV. For the Sami, they have a huge festival in the northern town of Kautokeins, Norway, with world famous reindeer racing. On the Thursday before Easter, Norwegians have their national cleaning day in preparation for Easter. Easter Sunday is called Easter Eve, and the traditional lamb dinner is served, along with sweet oranges from Europe.

A special thank you to **Robin Rohrbach**, Sharon's daughter, for coming to our meeting in March. It was very special to see her in person, listen to her stories about Ukraine and the work she is doing there, and share stories about our leader for many years. We wanted to express our gratitude to her for her mom keeping our lodge alive. She made a long trip, and we were happy we could do this with her.

Our next meeting will be the Saturday after Easter, April 26. We hope to have a nice crowd, as Lucy will be sharing another Modern Norway presentation. We really enjoyed her presentation on **Svalbard Global Seed Bank** in Norway. It was very interesting, informative, and factual. "Hats off" to Asbjorn in New York for telling us to start talking about Norway Today. It is challenging to research new topics, and we appreciate the effort made to do this.

As you might have known, I left for Long Island with Katie Brink on March 27 for 5 days. We attended the 3rd District Annual Board Meeting with all the members of the Board and 7 Zone Directors. Katie and I came early and stayed a day longer, so we could see the sights. The NY city traffic was crazy, but **Syosset** was in the middle of Long Island and very much like areas of VA, just no mountains. We were able to see **Oheka Castle**, **Oyster Bay**, a quaint coastal town, eating in a diner, and walking on the sands of the Atlantic Ocean Beach called **Jones Beach**. I even found some wampam shells collected by the **Lenape Indians** 400 years ago. These shells were made into jewelry and traded to other people for their treasures. Our own **Powhatan Indians** did the same along the coast in Va.



Oheka Castle, Oyster Bay

Our meetings were long, and everyone gave presentations, which were all very informative. Katie and I presented our "**Cultural Camp**" in SC and our "**Youth Camp**" in NY. At this meeting, we got a chance to learn about each other. Karen and Steve were great hosts. It was very professional and fun.

Soon we will be having our annual yard sale, May 3, at my house. So we need everyone to be cleaning out your closets and contributing items for our first fund raiser!

We will have our 4th session on **Dementia** at our next meeting. We will learn 3 techniques to use with Dementia friends and family. I shared my papers on Dementia and Lucy's paper on the Seed Vault with other board members, and they were taking it back to their lodges to share with members.

Local Colors is coming soon, May 17th. I hope some of you can come and be in the parade and others of you can help make baked goods. We plan to sell gnomes, t-shirts, and baked goods. We always sell all of our baked goods, so please step up to help or make a donation.

A big "**shout out**" to **Trish Morris**, our Secretary, for the wonderful directories. It is so handy and colorful. That was a lot of work that Trish did after her ankle surgery. **Thank you, Trish!!!** This is something many members wanted for several years.

I wish you all a Happy Easter and hope to see you at the end of April at College Lutheran Church from 1-3 pm!

Love being your President, Cheri Johnson

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS: BLA FJELL LODGE: DON JOHNSON .. SATELLITE LODGE:
HALVOR G. AASLESTAD, THOR P. JONDAHL, PHILIP TONNESSON, and MAGNAR J. RINGDAL!!**

WOW! What GOOD MEMBERSHIP NEWS! AND, a lot of "good stuff" coming up .. the most important, best fund-raising, and best publicity events of our year! Make sure that you're a part of each and every one of them! This is a prime time, too, to invite your prospective members to see what Sons of Norway is all about!

Joann Barfield, Vice President/Membership Director

=====

MINUTES - MARCH 22, 2025

- *Gathering time 1-1:30. Snacks provided by Becky Burnett and drinks by Lucy Hochstein. Special guest for the meeting was Robin Rohrback, Sharon Rohrback's daughter. Special memories of Sharon were shared by the members and Robin: from memories of Sharon's childhood, her love of choir and The Roanoke Baroque, her love of flowers, her church, volunteering, her generosity, kindness to others, and her tireless work with Sons of Norway as President and Editor. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later time. An obituary can be viewed at "Parrot and Wood" funeral home in Iowa.
- *Robin shared about her mission in Ukraine, "Ukrainefrontline.org".
- *The anthems were sung.
- *Thanks to Trish, Joann, and Kathy for tabulating the volunteer hours.
- *Jo and Cheri completed the D17.
- *Jo and Cheri will do the 990 by May 15th.

OLD BUSINESS: \$25.00 was sent to the Charitable Trust in Memory of Sharon.

NEW BUSINESS:

- *Cheri will be going to the 3rd District meeting March 27-31 in New York.
- *Thanks to Trish for the beautiful directories that were passed out to members that were present.
- *February minutes were read by Becky Burnett. Minutes approved by Jo Stephens-Forrest and seconded by Amy Dandro. Motion carried by membership.
- *Treasurer's report by Jo Stephens-Forrest. She also reported we now have 2 debit cards and 2 "Squares", that will be helpful for people to charge purchases from our booth at Local Colors. She reported we have microphones, but still need an amplifier. The satellite lodge spent \$103.00 on their meeting, which will be reimbursed by our lodge.
- *Worthy cause purse passed, and Jo presented the possibility of sponsoring a scholarship for a child to go to SON youth camp which is July 20th this year. The price per child for the camp is \$550.00. Cheri made a motion for us to use the worthy cause money for this, and it was seconded by Marilyn Barrier; motion was carried. Cheri will bring our donation to the 3rd District meeting.
- *Membership: Joann is following up on the 67 letters sent out to prospective members (from the list of Sons of Norway insurance holders generated by Katie Brink); only two wrong address returns, no responses. Another mailing will be sent out from the 3rd District meeting in New York at the end of March. The Delafields, who visited last month, have chosen to wait to join.
- *A new Tri-fold will be forthcoming. The goal is to have a new one to be available by April 5.
- *Cheri again encouraged the membership to save items to donate to the Yard sale to be held on May 3rd,
- *Annmarie has been asked to be the dance instructor at the Hampton Roads Lodge.
- *Annmarie then led the membership in another dance lesson.
- *Lucy Hochstein gave a very interesting talk about the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, in keeping with the "Modern Norway" theme.
- *Cheri then gave her 3rd installment of her presentation on Dementia: How to help our brain and heart, with good tips on healthy living.
- *Next meeting April 26, 2025.

Respectfully submitted, Becky Burnett, Recording Secretary

Svalbard Global Seed Bank, Spitsbergen Island, on the remote Arctic Svalbard archipelago
Sons of Norway presentation March 22, 2025, by Lucy Edwards Hochstein

What it is:

Svalbard Global Seed Bank is a secure backup facility for the world's crop diversity. It provides long term storage of duplicates of seeds from around the world conserved in gene banks in other countries. The seed vault only stores duplicate seeds. Primary seed holdings are kept by the seed owners in their own facilities.

Seed Vault Foundation laws:

The Seed Vault is managed under terms of an agreement among the Norwegian government, the Global Crop Diversity Trust of Bonn, Germany, and the Nordic Genetic Resource Center, (NordGen), that is a cooperation among Nordic countries on genetic resource conservation.

Funding:

The Norwegian government entirely funded the 2008 \$8.8 million construction cost. Norway and the Global Crop Diversity Trust pay for operational costs of \$282,000 annually. Storing seeds in the vault is free.



Location:

Spitsbergen Island was considered ideal because there is no tectonic activity, and it has permafrost, which aids preservation if power is lost. It lies 430 feet above sea level, so it will stay dry even if ice caps melt. Locally mined coal powers refrigeration units that further cool the seeds to -0.4 degrees Fahrenheit. If power is lost, the facility will take several weeks to reach the temperature of the surrounding bedrock: 27 degrees Fahrenheit. It is estimated that it would take two centuries to warm to 32 degrees. It is believed that these temperatures will preserve most major food crop seeds for hundreds of years and some grain seeds for thousands of years.

Genetically modified seeds:

Norwegian law forbids the storage of any genetically modified seeds in the vault.

Seed storage:

Seeds are stored in air-tight three-ply aluminum foil packages, then placed in plastic tote containers on metal shelves. Each foil package contains about 500 seeds, depending on the size of the seeds.

Seed Vault Staff:

The Seed Vault has no staff. Personnel come at prearranged times to receive seed deposits. The seed vault does no research, so it has no labs, no seed multiplication, or investigation activities and does no seed distribution.

Who can access the seed deposits:

Only seed depositors may access their own seed deposits. Researchers, plant breeders, and others may not access any seeds in the vault. They must request samples from the depositing genebanks.

How the Seed Vault works:

The Seed Vault functions like a bank safety deposit box. Norway owns the seed vault, and the depositors own the seeds they send. There is not a legal transfer of genetic resources. No depositor has access to any other depositors' seeds.

Number of deposits:

As of May 2024 there were 1,280,677 seed sample deposits. These represent 13,000 years of agricultural history. The Seed Vault has the capacity to store 4.5 million seed samples. When the current building is full, there are plans to build another nearby.

Who are the depositors:

Depositors include international genebanks and national and regional gene banks. Deposits are not limited to genebanks.

1. Seed saving organizations can make deposits.

2. Some indigenous communities have also deposited seeds. In 2020 the United States Cherokee Nation deposited nine samples of their heirloom crops that predate European colonization.

Seed Vault art work and structure:

The art work above the entrance is called *Perpetual Repercussion* by Norwegian artist **Dyveke Sanne**. It also runs the length of the roof. Norway requires that public buildings costing over a certain amount incorporate original artwork. The roof and entrance are filled with highly reflective stainless steel, mirrors, and prisms to reflect the polar light in the summer.



Seed Vault mission:

The Seed Vault's mission is to provide backup against accidental loss of diversity in traditional genebanks throughout the world. Although available for major regional or global catastrophe, it has most often been accessed when genebanks lose samples due to mismanagement, accident, equipment failures, funding cuts, and natural disasters.

Examples of use of the Seed Vault:

1. in 2015, due to civil war in Syria, the International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas couldn't maintain its genebank in Syria, so it withdrew some of its seeds from the Seed Vault, so it could regenerate those seeds.
2. African countries have lately been making deposits of their traditional crops for fear that climate change will destroy their traditional food crops.
3. This month Sudan made its first deposit amid its country's ongoing civil war. 2,000 seeds samples were rescued from Sudan's national gene bank, along with 1,200 other seed samples from 22 other Sudanese seed banks. These were not duplicates but allowed to be the primary deposits of their seeds due to the civil war. The Sudan samples contain essential varieties of sorghum and pearl millet that had nearly been destroyed in the fighting. Sorghum has been grown for thousands of years in Sudan. Sudan's genebanks were raided and looted by militants who destroyed their freezers and scattered the seeds. The few saved are now in the Seed Vault.
3. Mexico has been depositing corn seeds that have not been contaminated by genetically modified corn. 10,000 years ago Mexico was the origin of corn and is striving to maintain gene diversity in their corn crops, so they can maintain native corn varieties, which are at risk from American genetically modified corn.

Virtual tour and more stories: seedvault.no

SATELLITE MINUTES

March 15, 2025 Meeting

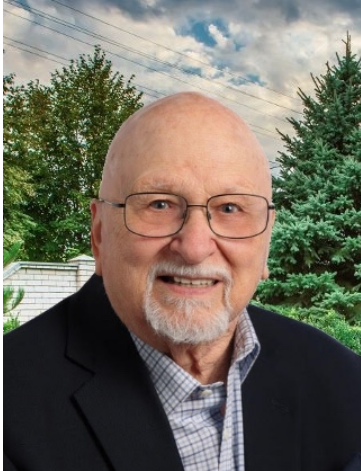
Second meeting held at Jefferson-Madison Regional Library on Gordon Avenue in Charlottesville from 2:00-4:00 PM in Century Room (lower level) with 9 participants. These individuals came from Staunton, Fishersville, Waynesboro, and Charlottesville.

After attendees were informed that a secretary and financial secretary will be needed as we proceed forward, **Halvor Aaslestad** volunteered to serve as financial secretary. Also, when mentioned that a name for the lodge is required Mr. Aaslestad suggested **Harald Hardrada**, which was approved unanimously. Since **Bla Fjell** (host lodge) representatives were not able to attend, **Katie Brink** filled in and gave a discussion of the function of the host lodge and its interaction with the satellite lodge. Ms. Brink also mentioned the *Norwegian Lady Ceremony* will take place on Sunday April 27, at 11:00 AM, held in Virginia Beach, with the **Norwegian Kings Guard** from Norway participating in the event. Carpooling from Charlottesville for this event was suggested. Mr. Aaslestad also offered to establish a carpooling group coming from west of Charlottesville.

Each attendee was then asked to give a little thumb-nail sketch of their heritage. It was suggested that, at a future meeting, people bring pieces of Scandinavian or Nordic art work and discuss their item(s). Copies of the Bla Fjell December 2024 and February 2025 were available for review and/or taking, together with copies of SON applications. Meeting portion adjourned at 3:25 PM and, lastly, conversation, together with coffee, herring and cheese snacks ensued. Next meeting will take place in mid-May, possibly at another time and location, in order to accommodate an anticipated larger attendance. Hope is also to have an established program in place to drive an increase in attendance.

Faithfully Submitted,
Thor Jondahl, Acting Chairperson

GETTING TO KNOW YOU .. HALVOR AASLESTAD



It's a pleasure to write to the members of the "Bla Fjell Lodge" of the Sons of Norway (SON) and provide a short introduction of myself. Thank you for welcoming me and supporting the satellite lodge currently forming in Charlottesville....Hadrada Lodge.

I am the oldest son of Knut and Geraldine Aaslestad, a first generation Norwegian-American, raised in New Orleans, Louisiana. My father was from Arendal, Norway, a naturalized US citizen who was a life- long ship's captain and did indeed sail the world's oceans. He was the only one of his large family, mostly located in Oslo, to immigrate to the US and I have enjoyed many visits to Norway to see my uncles, aunts and many cousins. Way back, my family came from a farmstead in Telemark and we have treasured records of the origin of our name. When I was a highschooler, I sailed in steam ships, both on deck and in the engine room.....as a "deck boy and wiper". I have one brother (no longer living), a sister, Barbara and my dear wife Peggy. My first wife Barbara (now deceased) and I are proud of our four children, plus ten grandchildren. I live in Waynesboro, Virginia, and would love to travel down to Salem one day to visit with you.

Professionally, I have enjoyed working in various fields. I am trained as a virologist and spent a decade or more in teaching and carrying out research at east-coast universities. Another decade and a half flew away while I was an official at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, and I retired from Yale University School of Medicine as Associate Dean of Research after my last decade or so as a scientist. I achieved my PhD at the Louisiana State University studying the biochemistry of a special enzyme and spent a few post-doctoral years learning the tricks of growing animal cells in culture and trying to understand viruses that infect humans.

I am pleased to have been able to keep busy since retirement, enjoying hobbies and new endeavors. I have traveled, taught myself figurative sculpture, owned some sailboats (for racing and mostly cruising), participated in a life-long learning program (OLLI@UVA) as an instructor, been an active Rotarian with international travel to Egypt, Mexico and New Zealand, and I presently struggle to find the discipline and skill to become a writer. I enjoy my collections of Norwegian art, and I have tried to find bits of rosemaling as I travel around.

Thanks again for welcoming me, and I hope I will be able to be a strong SON and get to know you and many other SON members around the world.

WELCOME, HAL!

=====

MEMBER NEWS

BLA FJELL BIRTHDAYS

Gail Atha - April 12 -- Karen Rice - April 13 -- Becky Burnett - April 18 -- Inga Solberg - April 26

Member Anniversaries of joining Sons of Norway - no April anniversaries

THIRD DISTRICT PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy Spring! With spring here and winter over, a lot of lodges will be gearing up for Easter and 17th of May celebrations. The District is having several great events this year. In June there will be a long weekend cultural camp at Isle of Palms, South Carolina, from Thursday, June 26th to Sunday, June 29th . It promises to be a fantastic event, not to be missed, so if you are interested in going, sign up as soon as you can, as rooms are filling up fast.

Another great event is the Third District Youth Camp at Camp Koinonia in Highland Lake, New York, from Sunday, July 20th to Saturday, July 26th . This is an event at which the children enjoy learning about Norwegian culture and heritage and make friends with children from other parts of the Third District. So, if you have children or grandchildren ages 8 to 17, I urge you to send them to this great camp, the children will be happy you did.

The Third District Picnic is being held at Nansen Lodge on Staten Island, New York, on Saturday, August 23rd . Last year the picnic was a great success, and looks like it will be even better this year.

The District President's Advisory Council, which is comprised of the president from each of our 8 districts, met on March 1st with the CEO of Sons of Norway, Dan Seyfried, and Chairman of the Sons of Norway International Board, Luella Grangaard, to discuss issues of importance to the 8 districts and district lodges. The main issues were communications from both the International Board and the home office staff, fraternal problems, and the dues increase, causing membership losses. Dan and Luella agreed to have more open communications, stress the importance of the fraternal aspect of Sons of Norway, and were sorry that there was a loss of members because of the dues increase. I hope they were sincere with what they said, but we can only hope. As I am the chairman of the District Presidents Advisory Council, I will be having Dan, Luella, and some home office staff on future meetings with the District Presidents.

To get the members of the district to get to know more about the 4 new Third District board members who were elected at our last convention. I will be including in my messages a little bit about them in their own words. In this message I want to introduce you to Katie Brink, the new Assistant District Secretary. Please read about what Katie had to say about herself.

Assistant Secretary Katie Brink has been a member of Sons of Norway since 2017. She is currently the Secretary for Hampton Roads Lodge, located in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Katie is involved in coordinating the District's Cultural and Youth camps. She has extensive experience as a teacher, collaborating with others and currently lives in the Richmond, Virginia, area with her husband Drew.

Karen and I are very pleased to have the opportunity to work with Katie. She has been a tremendous help already, always willing to step up to the plate and lend a hand.

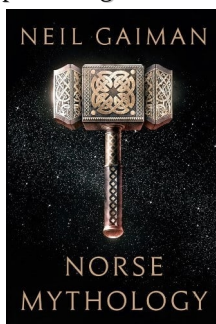
Until my summer message, Karen and I would like to wish you all a very Happy Easter and a great 17th of May.
Faternally, Stephen Helmold

=====

SONS OF NORWAY BOOK CLUB **Norse Mythology by Neil Gaiman**

Synopsis: Neil Gaiman has long been inspired by ancient mythology in creating the fantastical realms of his fiction. Now he turns his attention back to the source, presenting a bravura rendition of the great northern tales. In Norse Mythology,

Gaiman stays true to the myths in envisioning the major Norse pantheon: Odin, the highest of the high, wise, daring, and cunning; Thor, Odin's son, incredibly strong yet not the wisest of gods; and Loki—son of a giant—blood brother to Odin and a trickster and unsurpassable manipulator.



Zoom Sign-on Information, Thursday, April 24, 2025, 7:00 PM Eastern Time
All books are available from: Amazon or Barnes and Noble

FROM THE EMBASSY

President of Norwegian Parliament Visits D.C. March 2025



This week, Ambassador **Anniken Huitfeldt** accompanied the President of the Norwegian Parliament (Storting) **Masud Gharahkhani** and his delegation (**Ingvild Kjerkol**, **Nikolai Astrup**, **Marius Arion Nilsen**, **Åslaug Sem-Jacobsen**) to meetings on the Hill.

NEWS FROM NORWAY

What's New About Norway Travel In 2025

From tax hikes to public transit disruption, anyone planning Norway travel in 2025 should be prepared. Here's what you need to know before setting off for Scandinavia.

The ongoing peak time for northern lights viewing seems set to bring many more travelers to Norway in 2025. With growing interest in the Northern Lights and ongoing interest in 'coolcations,' Norway travel is poised for yet another record-breaking year in 2025. However, upcoming taxes and potential travel disruptions mean savvy travelers should plan carefully to make the most of their trip.

Two Trends To Dominate

In 2024, two major travel trends took center stage in Norway, with every indication they will continue to shape the tourism landscape in 2025. The allure of the Northern Lights has always been a draw for Norway, but 2024 saw unprecedented interest, fueled by the solar maximum—an 11-year peak in solar activity that intensifies aurora displays. This led to a surge in Northern Lights cruises and travel packages, with sensational displays reported across the country. While the exact duration of the solar maximum is uncertain, experts anticipate it will continue into 2025, keeping Norway at the top of winter travel wish lists.

Meanwhile, the 'coolcation' trend emerged strongly in 2024 as European travelers increasingly opted for cooler, northern destinations like Norway over traditional Mediterranean summer spots. This shift reflects growing concerns about climate change, with travelers seeking relief from extreme heatwaves and prioritizing sustainable, nature-focused experiences. From fjord hikes to coastal road trips, Norway's pristine landscapes offer a refreshing alternative. If these trends persist, travelers should brace for high demand, particularly during peak times for Northern Lights viewing and summer vacations. Accommodation in popular destinations is expected to fill up quickly, and prices are likely to reflect the growing interest. Planning well in advance, being flexible with dates, and considering off-the-beaten-path destinations will be key strategies for travelers hoping to secure the best experiences.

Tourist Tax

Norway finally plans to introduce its long discussed framework for local tourist taxes by summer 2025. This would allow local municipalities to charge up to 5% on accommodation costs, including hotels, campsites, Airbnb rentals, and cruise ships. Rural areas with popular hiking trails but few local residents, such as the municipalities in the Lofoten Islands, have

long called for such a tax to help them pay for improvements. Any revenue raised by the tourist tax, managed by local authorities, must fund tourism-related infrastructure and services like hiking trails, public restrooms, and environmental conservation. While aimed at addressing tourism impacts, some local authorities question its effectiveness, citing issues caused by day visitors rather than overnight guests. As the proposal is under consultation until January 2025, it may be revised before a parliamentary vote.

Norway Travel Disruption In 2025

To the disappointment of many international road trippers, Norway's iconic Trollstigen mountain pass was closed at short-notice for all but two weeks during the 2024 season. The famous road known for its 11 hairpin turns is unlikely to reopen before mid-July 2025. Travelers planning road trips should consider scheduling visits a few weeks after this tentative date to account for potential delays.

Meanwhile, visitors to Oslo in 2025 should prepare for significant metro disruptions, particularly on lines passing through the west of the city. These disruptions may also complicate travel to popular tourist attractions and the national stadium during major events, with replacement buses in operation on affected routes.

Higher Costs For Flights

Norway's government plans to raise the taxes airlines pay to Avinor, its state-owned airport operator, to address financial challenges. Avinor operates most major airports in Norway, including Oslo and Bergen. Airlines warn this could lead to higher ticket prices, fewer routes, and reduced travel options. Major airlines Norwegian and SAS have expressed concerns about cutting routes, potentially making travel to and from Norway more expensive. Although the government will slightly reduce the air passenger tax, this is unlikely to offset rising costs. The Ministry of Transport will decide on the tax increase by the end of 2024.

FROM **FORBES** AND **Life in Norway**

NORWEGIAN TRADITIONS

Have you wondered where the tradition of CRIME NOVELS in Norway came from? The tradition of reading crime novels around Easter time in Norway dates back more than a hundred years. It originated when a clever book advertisement was mistaken for a news story about a train robbery, captivating the nation. The tradition of going to the hytte (cabin) during Easter also reinforces the habit, since the cabin is a perfect setting to indulge in reading, away from the distractions of modern life.

OR, *PERHAPS*, A publishing house paid for ads on the front page of several newspapers for their latest crime novel "The Bergen train robbed last night!" and some mistook the ad for actual news and quite worried they contacted the newspapers for more news as they had friends and relatives on the Bergen train. And from that Easter on every publishing house has launched their new crime novels before Easter and the Norwegian "**påskekrim**" (Easter crime novel) phenomenon was born. It has been a marketing thing every Easter since.

from **Life in Norway**

RECIPE

RECIPE .. IN HONOR OF ROBIN UKRAINIAN OLIVIA (POTATO SALAD)

2-3 carrots	2-4 red potatoes
3-6 hard boiled eggs	8 oz. can of peas
1/4 - 3/4 lb. bologna	1/2 cup Hellman's mayonnaise
4 marinated cucumbers	
2 dill pickles	

Boil carrots and potatoes; drain, then cut into small rectangular pieces.
Boil eggs and then chop into small pieces.
Cut up pickles and bologna into small pieces.
Add carrots, potatoes, eggs, peas, pickles and bologna; mix gently.
Add mayonnaise, salt/pepper to taste.
Enjoy!



LINKS

TO SON International,

THIRD DISTRICT, 3D ZONE7 LODGE's and INTERNATIONAL NEWS:

****For Sons of Norway International news: sonsofnorway@sofn.com (sofn.com)

****Third District President message: www.3dsofn.org

Third District Today news: www.3dsofn.org for all the news.

Third District Lite news: expect this from e-mail message

Third District Events Calendar: www.3dsofn.org/newsletter/index.html *editor's note: This goes to a page of newsletter links*

Third District Events: www.3dsofn.org/calendar

=====

3D (Third District) ZONE 7 LODGES:

Blå Fjell Lodge 3-646 meets in Salem, VA: Website

www.sonsofnorwayblafjell.org or Facebook;

www.facebook.com/SonsOfNorwayBlaFjell

Hampton Roads Lodge 3-522 meets in Virginia Beach, VA: Website www.hrson.org or Facebook

www.facebook.com/hrsons

Norsk Carolina Lodge 3-679 meets in Charlotte, NC: Website www.norskcarolina.org or Facebook

www.facebook.com/NorskCarolina

editor's note: the website URL is owned but the pages haven't been written yet.

Norskevenner Lodge 3-678 meets in Roswell, GA: email sofnvennekretsen@gmail.com or Facebook:

www.facebook.com/Sons-of-Norway-Roswell-Georgia-NorskeVenner-Lodge-3-678

North Carolina Vikings Lodge 3-675 meets in Raleigh, NC: Website www.northcarolinavikings.org.

There is no Facebook site.

Southern Star Lodge 3-360 meets in Myrtle Beach, SC: Facebook: <http://http://scandinaviancelebrationmb/>

editor's note: this URL is badly mangled. I'll put in the correct one when someone sends it to me.

=====

INTERNATIONAL NEWS links:

For Royal Norwegian Embassy in Washington: emb.washington@mfa.no

For Nordic News from the Icelandic Embassy: <http://www.iceland.is>

For NEWEST NEWS: New newspaper ... Welcome to Norway Today: www.norwaytoday.info

For FULL LISTING OF EVENTS around the U.S: www.norway.org/calendar

=====

TRAVEL INFORMATION FOR NORDIC COUNTRIES : (for free travel information,)

www.visitdenmark.com

www.visitfinland.com

www.inspiredbyiceland.com

www.visitnorway.com

www.visitsweden.com