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I. INTRODUCTION

Velkommen! As cultural director of your lodge, you will play an exciting and influential role in Sons of Norway's most important work – developing a lasting appreciation for the culture of Norway. The activities that you plan will have a significant impact on the level of enjoyment and the sense of commitment felt by your lodge members, while showing your community an active and lasting image of what Sons of Norway is all about.

The sections that follow will take you through the important steps of your new position. You will learn about:

- Your general responsibilities
- How to incorporate cultural programming into your lodge
- Program ideas and resources

III. INCORPORATING CULTURAL PROGRAMMING IN YOUR LODGE

No two lodges plan their activities and meetings the same way. However, to help you get started, there are four patterns outlined below, which are quite common and may give you some ideas for your own lodge.

A. COMBINED BUSINESS AND CULTURAL/SOCIAL MEETINGS

Many lodges have one regularly scheduled meeting a month. Although there is usually some business to conduct, there should also be at least one short cultural program or presentation of some kind. Incorporating cultural programming or presentations will make the lodge meeting more engaging for members who aren't interested in the business-side of the lodge. If done with consistency, don't be surprised to see an increase in lodge meeting attendance.

Cultural presentations may include videos with a Norwegian theme, guest speakers, Norwegian theme nights, travel slide presentations and holiday celebrations. Detailed lists of possible program ideas and other resources available to you for planning purposes can be found in the Cultural/Social Reference section of the Guide for Leadership. Plan some activities in which the members can participate and some where they can relax and be entertained.

When planning programs as a component of the regular monthly meetings, you should coordinate your efforts with the social director, who is in charge of refreshments and other logistical matters. There will also be occasions where the social director has program ideas for the business meetings or will share the responsibility of being in charge of the program.

For a combined business and cultural/social meeting, the following time frame has been successfully used by many lodges and can be a guideline for your lodge meetings:

Business	10–20 minutes
Social/Cultural Program	40–45 minutes
Refreshments/Socializing	45–60 minutes

B. SEPARATE CULTURAL/SOCIAL LODGE MEETINGS

Another option is to organize two separate meetings: one exclusively for lodge business and a second devoted to cultural/social programming. There are a number of advantages to this arrangement. A full business meeting will give leaders and committee members the time they need to address important business issues, while the cultural/social meeting will allow members to spend their time doing what they enjoy most – socializing with fellow members and celebrating Norwegian culture.

C. SPECIAL LODGE EVENTS AND PROGRAMS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Don't let your lodge be the best-kept secret in town! One characteristic of a thriving, growing lodge is that it interacts with the community by offering events and programs that are open to lodge members' family and friends and the general public. These programs are a great way to share your love of Norwegian culture and heritage while showcasing the best Sons of Norway has to offer. Your lodge can recruit new members, enhance the standing of Sons of Norway in your community and have a fantastic time simultaneously.

Each of these special events should have its own committee made up of dedicated members with related skills and expertise. The chair or co-chairs of the committees can be drawn from the members of your own appointed cultural committee or from the social director's committee.

To help make these special events and programs successful, it is highly recommended that you form an event committee or partner with other lodge officers, such as the social director. This is especially important if you plan an event that involves a large number of workers. If the event has the potential to attract new members, involving the vice president and/or membership secretary in planning is critical. Including the publicity director from the beginning to help promote the event and generate interest will do a lot to increase attendance.

If this format sounds like it would work well for your lodge, the Cultural/Social Reference section of this manual offers a multitude of suggestions for program themes and steps in planning.

D. SPECIAL GROUPS, CLUBS AND CLASSES

Every lodge is made up of a diverse group of people with an equally diverse pool of special interests. Some compete in lodge sports programs, others are fascinated with genealogy, while others might be experts in folk art. Take the time to determine the interests and expertise of your lodge members. Having such information will prove immensely valuable when you plan cultural programs.

Once you've determined members' interests and expertise, you should tap into them by setting up a class or discussion group. For example, if you have a rosemaling expert or a fluent Norwegian speaker in your lodge, why not recruit them to share their expertise with the other members? Sons of Norway Fraternal Department's Idea Bank #9 (*available from www.sonsofnorway.com or by calling Sons of Norway Headquarters*) deals with the specifics on how to organize such classes and how to promote them within your lodge.

Also, you may find many members are interested in discussing and learning about cultural topics, such as folk art or the Norwegian language. You could organize small interest groups to focus on these specific subjects, providing good fellowship for interested members and fertile training grounds for future lodge cultural instructors.

IV. PROGRAM IDEAS AND RESOURCES

There are nearly as many program ideas as there are Sons of Norway members. Picking a new one for each lodge event can be challenging. Fortunately, there are numerous resources available within your lodge, from Sons of Norway Headquarters and on www.sonsofnorway.com to help generate ideas.

A. IDEA BANK

One of the most extensive resources available to you is the Sons of Norway Idea Bank. It is a library of brochures and informational packets filled with great ideas for lodge activities. It can help you with any number of programs, from starting a heritage day camp to preparing a press release to publicize your event. To see a complete list of offerings, or to download items from the Idea Bank, go to the members section of the Sons of Norway website. Idea Bank materials are also available from Sons of Norway Headquarters.

B. INFORMATION BANK

Another great resource for cultural directors is the Sons of Norway Information Bank. Similar to the Idea Bank, the Information Bank is a library of easy-to-use reference materials on Norwegian culture and Sons of Norway. If you'd like to learn about the history of Syttende Mai or need some tips for genealogical research, the Information Bank is a great place to start. To see a complete list of covered topics or to download items from the Information Bank, go to go to the members section of the Sons of Norway website. Information Bank items are also available from Sons of Norway Headquarters.

C. CULTURAL SKILLS PROGRAM

A third excellent resource at your disposal is the Cultural Skills Program, which consists of 14 units on topics ranging from needlework to genealogy. Each topic is subdivided into three achievement levels and each unit guides members through the process of learning their desired craft. The program units do vary in that some units provide step-by-step instructions, while others recommend resources and give the participant a framework for judging the

work.

One of the great things about the Cultural Skills Program is that it allows members to work through the units individually or with other lodge members, perhaps as part of a special group or club that you organized. Members who successfully complete the program can earn pins for their accomplishments at successive levels. The units can also be utilized as the basis for cultural programming for lodge meetings as well.

An explanation of the program and some of the Cultural Skills units are available online at www.sonsofnorway.com. All of the units can be requested from Sons of Norway Headquarters.

V. CONCLUSION

As cultural director your programming contributes greatly to the success of your lodge and ultimately Sons of Norway as a whole. By making sure that your lodge members have an enjoyable and memorable experience with Sons of Norway, you have an enormous effect on how your members and community see our organization. Interesting cultural programming can make a valuable contribution to your lodge by helping to retain existing members, as well as providing an incentive for prospective members to join.