



Sons of Norway
HERITAGE PROGRAMS



IdeaBank#5

HOW TO PLAN A CULTURAL FEST

Prepared by: Gertie Mork
Lyngblomsten 5-454
Milwaukee, WI 53204
Ethel Olsen
Morgensolen 3-545
Andover, MA 01810
Clifford Sjursen
Noreg 3-466
Fanwood, NJ 07023
Bergara Medhaug
North Star 3-510
Fairhaven, MA 02719

A Heritage Festival

SUGGESTED HANDOUTS:

About the Folk Costumes of Norway (Information Bank #3);
Hardangersøm (Information Bank #5);
Woodcarving (Information Bank #6);
Rosemaling (Information Bank #7) and
How to Plan a Heritage Dinner (Idea Bank #37).

PURPOSE:

- Celebrate Norwegian culture and heritage
- Provide information on and create interest for Norwegian culture and heritage among the general public
- Increase the membership
- Fund raising

A Cultural Fest is a fine event, and a lodge that organizes such a project has every reason to be proud of its accomplishments.

There is a lot of work involved; however, the chances for making it a thundering success are absolutely there, if the lodge observes the following:

- Thorough planning and good administration
- Cooperation and communication
- Securing the involvement of resource people within the lodge—and perhaps other resource people in the area
- Working to get the best publicity possible

DEMONSTRATIONS AND/OR DISPLAYS

All crafts: Members demonstrate *rosemaling*, Hardanger embroidery and other Norwegian stitchery, like crewel work and cross-stitch, weaving, knitting or woodcarving.

Food: *Lefse*, *rosettes* and other Norwegian cookies, open-face sandwiches, meatballs, flat bread with Norwegian cheese. (Geitost and Jarlsberg are available in some areas of the U.S.)

The demonstrations offer a good opportunity for joint participation of children/adults: i.e., rolling out lefse and other suitable activities.

It will depend on the resources of your lodge whether you will only display/sell things, or perform demonstrations of food-making and crafts. In most cases, the lodges will have a few demonstrations—for instance, a rosemaler or lefse-baker at work—and displays/sales for the rest. You might wish to charge an exhibitor's fee to offset expenses for the fair.

Some lodges prefer to have their cultural fest on their home turf—their lodge halls. Others move out to reach the general public in city/town centers, parks, and shopping malls. Different lodges have different resources—and will consequently have different cultural fests. Some of you might wish to join forces with another/other lodge(s) to share resources. Small lodges and/or lodges that are isolated from the rest of “the Norwegian America” might work with non-Norwegian groups on a joint venture, and still be able to present Norwegian culture in an authentic way. Some exposure to the public is better than no exposure—you might even attain some new members.

The following material is based on the experience of a number of lodges (see title page). Everything listed has been tried out, and your lodge can pick and choose from the compiled material.

Recipes and brochures for food and crafts are included in the Idea Bank package. The two pages of printed recipes can be copied and used for handouts. They can also be copied on thicker paper, cut to recipe card format, and strung together, like the enclosed recipe “book.” These might be sold as fund-raisers. You may also want to add tested recipes from your own membership.

INFORMATION MATERIAL:

Sons of Norway map brochure

Foundation brochures

Lodge brochures

Viking Magazines

Other material/information on Sons of Norway and/or Norway and Norwegian culture; application forms for membership.

PERFORMANCES/SHOWS:

Folk-dance groups; singers and musicians (soloists and groups) performing Norwegian music; choruses; brass bands; Norwegian folk costume (*bunad*) show; films; slide shows; lectures; story/fairy-tale telling; drill teams.

Your lodge might wish to put on a “stage performance” with various elements from what is listed here. If your lodge has a folk-dance group, it might be convenient to have a **BUNAD SHOW** in connection with their performance, explaining about the bunads shown, how they

are made, and what areas of Norway they come from. The bunad show can, however, also be a separate event.

Strolling musicians and singers are always a colorful element in any fest.

LUNCHES/DINNERS:

Some lodges serve special meals in connection with their cultural fest, and listed here are Norwegian types of meals that lodges have served successfully in the past:

Hot and cold *smørgåsbord*
Open-face sandwiches
Poached torsk dinner
lapskaus (meat stew)
Lutefisk dinner
Meatball dinner
Fish chowder
Seafood dinner
Risengrynsgrøt (rice porridge)
Rømmegrøt
Far i kål

PARADES:

Many lodges organize parades in connection with their *Syttende Mai* celebration, which in many cases is turned into a grand cultural fest—floats and marching units, bands, and drill teams—whatever resources the area can provide.

A parade like this can be a part of your cultural fest, but you can also have a parade that is more simple and easy to organize: a children's parade, where children march waving Norwegian flags. It might be a good idea to invite children from the general public to participate. The parade can be led by a band, folk musician(s), or simply by someone carrying a large Norwegian flag.

A cultural fest is a true celebration of culture and heritage, and certainly a challenge to your lodge and the members involved. Staging an event like this, you are taking on a heavy responsibility, not only for the execution of the program, but for presenting Norwegian culture and heritage to the general public in an authentic manner. Being a Norwegian-American or Norwegian-Canadian, you are part of a multi-cultural society, where people from all over the world seek to preserve their own heritage. But it is also a society of people who have left the old country and its cultural environment, and now are creating a culture of their own in the new world. Under such circumstances, it is sometimes difficult to separate between what is Norwegian, what is Norwegian-American/Canadian, and what is influenced by other cultures.

A good way to ensure that what you present is authentic is to collect as much information

as possible. The Heritage Department will be happy to serve your lodge by providing the information needed.

The goal of this festival was to share our heritage with the public and attract new members. Programming, advertising, and organization were done with this objective in mind.

This report will be broken down alphabetically by areas of organization as viewed by the event coordinator. The ideas and opinions are mainly those of the author. However, an analysis committee and polling of the general membership was taken to get a less biased outlook on aspects of the event activities and coordination.

A list format of suggestions is used to facilitate quick, reference-style reading.

ADVERTISING:

1. Advertising is the crux of a successful event. Without people, your event is not a success.
2. Contact all media five (5) months in advance with a prospectus and general release about the event.
3. Plan meetings with the governor, mayor, or representatives for a high profile.
4. Contact food editors for possible ethnic food story.
5. Make appeals on as many possible levels as exist.
6. Corporations donate to non-profit organizations supporting health causes. Consider giving a portion or all of the profits to a local organization supporting the handicapped and blind.
7. TV has the widest response appeal, then newspapers and radio.
8. The businesses that have donated to your event want your success, so they are usually willing to promote the event through posters and telling customers—involve them.
9. Begin to make public service announcements three weeks prior to event and be sure the announcements continue until the day thereof.
10. Have posters/flyers made.
11. Hand out flyers to all potential attendees (the Visitor's Bureau, the Girl Scouts, the Cub Scouts, nursing homes, churches, etc.)
12. Invite the Consular Corps specifically.

BAND:

1. Music draws most everyone's attention.
2. Have band begin playing 15 minutes before the opening ceremony.
3. Give band a break by playing recorded music for fifteen minutes every hour.
4. Set band up in a shaded area.
5. Provide refreshments often and amply to band members.
6. Thank and recognize band every 15–30-minute intervals.
7. Live music is important.

BANNER & OUTDOOR SIGNS:

1. Ideally, these should be in place the day before the event so exhibitors will know where to set up their displays. Otherwise, banners/signs should be set up early on the morning the event is to begin.
2. The banner should hang in a very prominent location so that it can be seen from a distance.
3. Outdoor signs should have large lettering and be colorful to hold interest.
4. A "direction pole" may draw better attention to available activities than a map.
5. Coordinate numbers/maps at the entrance of the festival and on people's programs.

CRAFT BOOTHS:

1. Each craft should have a separate booth.
2. There should be someone demonstrating the crafts at all times (suggested one-hour shifts). This would be a means of not leaving any craft items unattended, and giving exhibitor a chance to look around too.
3. One person should demonstrate and another explain and answer questions (to be switched every hour).
4. Possibly the group could buy craft items to sell wholesale and mark them up a small percentage.
5. Craft stalls should be covered to protect them from the sun and/or rain.

6. Craft people should have a short history and business cards to pass out to interested visitors.
7. All items for sale should be clearly marked in “money ticket” and cash amounts.
8. Literature about each craft would be helpful, but not necessary.
9. All handiwork that could be soiled should be wrapped in plastic.

DANCE DEMONSTRATION:

1. Have dancers assemble one hour before the event near the stage of performance.
2. Possibly two dance troupes should be arranged so that they can alternate performances.
3. Dancers and band attired in costume appear distinguished and colorful.
4. Provide refreshments often and amply for dancers.
5. Provide a runner to carry messages between dancers, band, and event coordinator.
6. Make sure the emcee recognizes the dancers every 15–30 minutes.
7. Have more time for public dancing to draw people.

DINNER:

1. Have ticket or registration one-half hour before the cocktail hour is to begin.
2. Have typed-out, alphabetized lists of people who have paid for dinner tickets so that the check-in people can quickly identify the people and lines don't form which are too long.
3. Have the dinner the evening before the daytime activities to kick off the ceremonies.
4. The cocktail hour should have some music, as well as background music during the dinner hours.
5. Pre-paid table reservations will help to avoid a mad scrambling for seats.
6. One person should be in charge of dinner registration and that person should report to the dinner coordinator.

7. Paid bar attendants are worth the extra money to relieve group volunteers for other duties.
8. Make sure enough alcohol is ordered ahead of time.
9. Make sure the dining hall doors are opened on time.
10. The table-decorations-people should have their expenses priced out one week in advance of the dinner and present a budget to the dinner coordinator at that time.
11. Dinner reservation lines A-L and M-Z should be set up to speed check-in as well as a separate line for drink tickets.
12. For a group over 200, buffet service works very well and a caterer is a definite must.
13. Table decorations should be set down in the morning and ready to go by noon so the area is ready for the caterers.
14. Need an easy-going emcee who can be entertaining, spontaneous, and informative.
15. Introductions of head people need to be made before the meal.
16. Prayers and anthems should be accompanied by music.
17. An entertaining keynote speaker is needed—one who is easy to understand and has a good delivery.
18. Avoid too many speeches (by every lodge president, for example).
19. Have an organization banner on stage as backdrop for head table.
20. Make sure there is a working microphone on the podium.
21. Avoid any personal stories or the singling out of certain individuals.
22. Even though the caterer is provided with recipes—have a taste session first to go over problem areas at least three weeks in advance.
23. Finalize menu four weeks in advance so it can go to the printer.
24. Have liquor delivered two days in advance of the event.
25. Ask caterer to set up one and one-half hours before time to serve.
26. Consider full bar.

DONATION DRAWING:

1. There should be one person in charge of solicitation of donation drawing prizes five–eight months in advance of the event.
2. The donation solicitor should have a prospectus of the proposed event activities and a list of proposed key personnel involved (ones who attract media) in print.
3. The donation solicitor should have a tentative news release to pass to donation contributors and a “hoped-for” attendance population.
4. The major donation drawing gifts should be committed by contributors and acknowledged in writing eight weeks in advance of the event date.
5. Donation drawing prizes should be advertised among lodge members in the lodge newsletters eight weeks in advance of the event. (Checks should be made payable to the organization.)
6. Donation drawing tickets are cheaper to buy than to make if a large quantity is required—and cost differential is not worth the extra manpower effort.
7. Donation drawing tickets should be sent out to all members (whether in good standing or not) and all people on the prospects list.
8. Donation drawing tickets should be sent to all members seven weeks in advance of the event—with a deadline of tickets to be sent in two weeks in advance of the event.
9. Another person, not the donation solicitor, should have her/his name on all advertisements as the person to send all money to.
10. The person receiving the money should record the name, address, ticket numbers, check number—and all monies should be deposited in a separate event account, not in the general organization funds.
11. The person receiving the money should then send the money to a co-chair for deposit. As an internal control, the division of duties is important.
12. On the day of the event, the person in charge of ticket sales should have two lists compiled—one in alphabetical order (preferably typed) and one in numerical order. The ticket sales person should have one copy of the lists and the people making cash sales on the day of the event should have copies.
13. The donation drawing prizes should be displayed in an appealing manner on the day of the event in a secure place.

14. Two people should be selling tickets at all times and ideally should alternate at half-hour intervals. Money and/or “money tickets” should be accepted for donation drawing tickets.

EXHIBITS:

1. Headings should be large and attractive.
2. The exhibit should be colorful and fun, showing what the organization does, who they are, how to get involved.
3. The exhibit should be in place the day before the event so it doesn't deplete manpower on the day.

FISHING:

1. The fish tank should be in place the day before to allow water temperature to adjust properly.
2. Make sure water is not chlorinated so fish don't die.
3. Bags in which to put sold fish need to be secured well in advance—as well as fishing nets to catch fish with.
4. The set-up of a small sailboat, fishermen dressed up, etc., should look vaguely authentic, or at least add appeal.

FOOD/BEVERAGE SALES:

1. Serve food in a very large area.
2. Food demonstration should be separated from food sales.
3. Many different lines should be formed; one or two for each food item sold.
4. There should be many servers so people can be helped quickly, efficiently, and without frustration.
5. Have places to sit and eat the food.
6. Drinks should be separated from other food sale items and should be near a potable water source.
7. Food should be arranged and ready to be sold two hours before the event.
8. Continuation of making food should be done in a less hectic place, away from

the food sale area, and then transported to the food area—to improve production.

9. Quantities of food should be arranged for six weeks in advance of the event by a “food procurer”—not the food booth coordinators.
10. The food booth coordinator should provide two people at each station and have enough people to shift personnel every half hour.
11. One person should be designated expressly to collect incoming donated baked goods. That person must accept the goods, make sure they are properly packaged and priced.
12. Then another person should take the baked goods to the sale area.
13. Drink tanks should be maintained at half-full at all times—to cool the drink (and set up near a water source).
14. Beverage cups should be filled and ready for the grabbing in exchange for money/tickets.
15. Consistent power and sufficient electrical outlets are a necessity.
16. Pre-sell food tickets to avoid congestion at food booths.
17. Separate hot and cold food sales.
18. Have individually-wrapped package sizes and also large take-home wrapped package sizes.
19. Emcee should acknowledge all food-workers (including cookie-bakers).
20. Cookie chair-people need to bake cookies ahead of the day at least three weeks in advance.
21. The sub-chair people calling for cookies need to be informed and enthusiastic about their cookie-baking so they can instill that enthusiasm in others.
22. Food area should be shaded.
23. Make sure there is a specific clean-up committee for the food area.
24. Have a pop booth available.
25. Food servers should wear plastic gloves for sanitation purposes.

SPECIFIC FOOD SUGGESTIONS FOR NORWEGIAN CELEBRATION:

1. Serve lots of hot coffee.
2. Have lefse wrapped in large take-home bags.
3. Have more cookies on hand even if you have to buy extra cookies to supplement the donated ones.
4. Have more fruit soup available.
5. Fish balls served in white sauce makes a nice touch.
6. Buy sausages and lefse wholesale and well in advance of the event to get the best price.
7. Don't serve food that is too expensive—the idea of the festival is for people to get a “taste” of your culture.

GATE:

1. Need clear tickets with numbers on them.
2. Need an alphabetized list of all tickets paid for at the gate before it opens to the public.
3. Need a numerical list of all tickets paid for at the gate before it opens to the public.
4. Need people at the gate to check numbers/names. Three people are needed for the first two hours. Then two people thereafter. It is a stressful job, so workers should alternate every half hour, if possible.
5. Young people passing out brochures, flyers, and giving directions offers a youthful image of the organization.

INFORMATION:

1. Information table should be set up very early (two hours before event) so that people will have a contact point with someone who can give them directions.
2. The information table should be set up with a colorful drop cloth and flag.
3. There should be a young person and an older person manning the information booth for a diversified image.
4. One-hour shifts are suggested for information booth volunteers.

5. Representatives of each organization involved should have a place in the booth.
6. Have many recommendation forms available—the information booth is the place to solicit new members (an important function of any festival). Colored brochures give an air of professionalism and make attractive reading.
7. Either specially-identified people or mascots should also serve as guides and promoters of different area activities. A whole crew is needed to be highly visible.

MONEY TICKETS:

1. The idea of money tickets can be used to centralize the cash in a few locations. This helps the control of cash flow and avoids so many “change set-ups.”
2. It is very important that the money-to-ticket exchange be fast and expedient to avoid visitor frustration which may discourage them from coming back (resulting in a loss of sales). Also, people must be made aware of the system from the outset to avoid confusion.
3. This is a labor-intensive area, there should be at least three lines—in two locations—set up for money collection/ticket distribution at all times.
4. A bullhorn should be used to periodically call out the procedure to people.
5. Although this is a “sit-down job,” it is a stressful one, and as such, there should be relief people every half hour.
6. There should be plenty of tickets (double anticipated attendance suggested) so that tickets don’t need to be recycled. This way, the profitability of each center may be assessed later.
7. The earlier the ticket booth is set up, the sooner the organization can collect money.
8. Mailing “money tickets” to group members is suggested to help avoid congestion on the day.
9. An alternative to “money tickets” is to allow each activity center to collect money, but have a “bank set-up.” The bank would have two volunteers at all times. Each hour, one banker would collect cash in excess of \$50 from each activity center.
10. Make bank open to people for exchanging large bills.

OVERALL ADMINISTRATION:

1. Make a decision on event colors/logo early on so everything can be coordinated.
2. Have each separate activity in a separate booth.
3. Have a good PA system for paging people (to be used very discriminately).
4. The overall administrator should have 2–3 runners to run errands and carry messages to certain people—so that that person may stay centralized.
5. A person in costume and wearing a nametag should be at each and every official location.
6. Make sure there is a clear work schedule with time slots broken down into the appropriate length for each and every booth.
7. Make sure the announcer is good at “playing it by ear”—filling in idle time with interesting chatter that promotes the activities and acknowledging contributors—and good at flexing the program to fit the day’s glitches.
8. All booths need to be set up with good traffic flow with one entrance and one exit—room to browse and linger as well as pass by.
9. All workers should be protected from the elements (sun, rain).
10. Traffic flow of the whole event should be considered and mapped carefully.
11. Have a lost and found box established at the information booth.
12. At the end of the day, have a representative report census and monetary status of each station—as well as any problems or good things—to event coordinator.
13. Get helpful hints from other experienced festival coordinators (they’re often flattered).
14. Follow through with thank you’s to:
 - a. All media
 - b. All influential people
 - c. All event leaders (acknowledge as many as possible personally and in writing)
15. Maintain a tight budget policy

- a. Three estimates for all purchases.
 - b. No money disbursed without receipt.
 - c. No tax paid for on exempt organization.
 - d. All purchases over \$25 must be approved by event coordinator.
16. Pay all large bills as soon as possible.
 17. Encourage all bills to be submitted for budgetary scrutiny so that no one feels “put out“ because of having to pay out-of-pocket.
 18. A clean-up committee is required.
 19. Try to involve as many people as possible. Give a job to everyone.
 20. Have a central repository for records.
 21. Event coordinator needs a secretary.
 22. Set up a large organization committee early on.
 23. Consider attendants for parking.
 24. Plan on 800 hours administration time.

PARADE OF COSTUMES:

Special Note: Not all “bunads” are authentic. Encourage the use of the phrase “Norwegian Folk Costume” to avoid errors. Have announcer read Information Bank #3 well in advance of program.

1. Locations should be pointed out on a map, telling where each costume comes from.
2. The announcer should have a good command of the pronunciation of each costume name and where it is from, as well as the name of the model.
3. A short history of the origin and uniqueness of each costume should be written out on 5x7" cards and given to the announcer to read as the costume is displayed by model.
4. Costumes from the same area should be presented as a group.
5. Each model should walk around the stage as the costume is being described and then walk out as the next person arrives.

6. An assembly should take place beforehand at a point designated in the newsletter the month of the event, and at least 15 minutes before the event is to occur.
7. Acknowledgement of the organizer of the people should be done quite elaborately.
8. Calling of people to participate in the parade of costumes should begin eight weeks before the date, so that three weeks before the date the general structure is down and fairly well filled in with only a few gaps.
9. The entire parade of costumes should last 20–30 minutes, but not longer, because people lose attention and interest.
10. Have a powerful microphone/amplifier system so that everyone will be attracted and flock to see the show.

PHOTO PROP-UP:

1. Place prop-up in a confined area so people are not able to take pictures with their own cameras if there is to be a charge for picture-taking. And be sure there is a volunteer present at all times.
2. A catchy name should be used for the photo prop-up.
3. An indoor setting may be better for lighting, etc.
4. An alternative would be to let the prop stand free and let people “play” with it on their own.
5. Set it up in a highly visible space.

PRINTING:

1. Should be typeset professionally.
2. All artwork needs to be approved by the event director.
3. All printing should be completed 10 days in advance of the event.
4. Colors should be coordinated.

PROGRAM:

1. Syttende Mai should have a children’s parade.

2. There should be some solid cultural exhibit/performance to represent a more sophisticated side of the country; i.e., a nationally-known photo exhibit, a Norwegian choir.
3. Make sure there are plenty of things to buy (food and crafts).
4. Make sure there are plenty of things to buy for each age group to enjoy.
5. A “museum” exhibit may be of interest in the future.
6. A sample of the program used follows. In an expanded version, revisions would be made for enjoyment by a greater number of people.
 - a. Play music loudly for ten minutes before opening ceremonies.
 - b. Assign three or four people just for showing dignitaries or media people around.
 - c. Have a long general dancing period.
 - d. Have a donation drawing at the end, just before the closing ceremony.
7. Have the kick-off dinner and the daytime activities on separate days.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

- 1:30 Kick-off speech and welcome to Royal Consul General, given by _____.
- 1:45 Dancing by _____, accompanied by _____.
- 2:10 General Dancing for the public.
- 3:00 Parade of Costumes with _____ of _____ as emcee.
- 3:30 Dance Demonstration by _____, accompanied by _____.
- 4:00 Donation Drawing.
- 4:20 General Dancing.
- 4:40 Closing Ceremonies by _____.

CRAFT DEMONSTRATIONS (ONGOING):

Rosemaling-floral design painting on wood

Woodcarving

Weaving

Knitting

Hardanger-Norwegian counted thread embroidery

Baking of *lefse* and *krumkaker*

ACTIVITIES (ONGOING):

Fishing for goldfish

Trolls selling balloons

Group exhibits

Donation drawing ticket sales

TROLLS SELLING BALLOONS; GIVING DIRECTIONS:

1. Helium tanks for balloons should be ordered one month in advance of the event day.
2. Artwork for the balloons should be submitted to the balloon company at the date the helium tanks are ordered—one month in advance of the event—also to avoid a rush charge.
3. One person should be in charge of filling the balloons with helium. That person should pick up the helium tanks—and return them after the event is over.
4. Filling balloons with helium should start two hours before the event so that the trolls can keep up with the demand—and balloons should be filled continuously.
5. Balloon-filling is a rather tiring job, so there should be replacement volunteers every half hour.
6. Trolls should be abundant and enjoy talking to people. The trolls are meant to give directions to people. So they need to circulate around the area. Maybe 12 trolls would be in order. The trolls will also be selling balloons.
7. Trolls should not be scary-looking or unapproachable, but jolly, inviting, and friendly.
8. Trolls should be people-movers and guides.

CONCLUSION:

1. In a non-profit organization with limited manpower such as the Sons of Norway, we will consider such a festival on an every-third-year basis.
2. The botanic gardens, though a beautiful setting and with many assets, had the drawback of slow gate admission and not ample covered areas outdoors for expansion, in addition to the high (25%) required commission on goods sold. The gardens were not in bloom on May 17th as hoped for.
3. Possible other locations to consider—a county fair ground, a church parking lot, local park.
4. In order to make appreciable money, commercial booths with a commission must be charged and baked goods and food must be bought commercially.
5. A location allowing the serving of alcoholic beverages would enhance profits greatly.
6. Our first event was a success. Despite high costs and high reservation, we were able to make a contribution to our outreach organization, supporting the handicapped and blind.

SAMPLE BUDGET:

Rough Budget Center:

Caterer	\$3,404.00
Alcohol.....	359.90
Rent on Room	200.00
Dancers	75.00
Band	250.00
Dance Floor	200.00
Postage, Copying, Printing	654.18
Gardens: Gate & Personnel	500.00
Gratuities to Guests	126.78
Outdoor Graphics	198.70
Table Decorations	366.46
 Total Rough Budget:	 \$6,274.12

Estimated Cost of Each Activity

Food.....	\$300.51
Photo Prop	45.69
Fishing	42.65
Exhibit Board.....	2.86
Parade of Costumes	-0-
Weaving	-0-
Hardanger	-0-
Knitting.....	-0-
Carving	-0-
Rosemaling	-0-
Balloons.....	198.00
 Total Estimated Cost:.....	 \$589.71