



# SONS OF NORWAY

## Newsletter Service

November, December 2012



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Dear Lodge/District Editors:

Once again Sons of Norway is pleased to present you with the latest edition of the Newsletter Service. This complimentary service is printed six times each year and provides a variety of information that may be used as a supplement to your lodge newsletter.

We are now making the Newsletter Service primarily available online from the Sons of Norway website, which can be found at [www.sonsofnorway.com](http://www.sonsofnorway.com). However, if you wish to receive a printed hardcopy version, please contact us and ask to be added to the hardcopy recipient list.

We hope you enjoy this issue and find its content to be beneficial. If you have any suggestions on how we can improve the Newsletter Service, please e-mail Erik Evans at [eevans@sofn.com](mailto:eevans@sofn.com).

Fraternally,

Linda Pederson  
Fraternal Director  
Sons of Norway



### November • november



#### **New International President Marit Kristiansen**

Earlier this year at the 2012 International Convention, delegates elected Marit Kristiansen as the new International President for the next biennium. To help members get to know Marit a little better, this month's Newsletter Service conducted a brief interview with the new Sons of Norway President.

#### **What's your favorite part of being a Sons of Norway member?**

*My favorite part is the common bond we share, a feeling of belonging whenever and wherever I attend a Sons of Norway event. And I also enjoy attending meetings.*

#### **What's your favorite member benefit?**

*The Viking Magazine. The monthly publication just gets better & better. There are a variety of interesting topics – travel, design, music, history, culture – a focus on Norway today, yet not forgetting the old.*

#### **What do you look forward to most as the new International President?**

*I look forward to meeting lodge members throughout our Order, working with the newly elected International Board of Directors and our outstanding home office staff.*

#### **What do you feel is the most important issue Sons of Norway will face in the future?**

*One of the most important issues is governance – whether to change from a convention model to Board model. Of course, maintaining our solid financial standing is always important. That is the backbone of Sons of Norway, assisting our members with the best insurance and financial products.*

#### **What do you hope to accomplish over the next biennium?**

*One of the Board goals has been increasing membership and decreasing the number of members who do not renew their membership – leaving voluntarily. I would hope to see a reversal in the downward trend in membership numbers. That is not only a challenge at the International level, but at every level – local and District.*

If you'd like to know more about Marit, be sure to read her monthly Velkommen letter in *Viking* magazine!

### November • november

- Winter Days Inside
- Sons of Norway Limited Edition Ornament
- Norway's Northern Lights

### December • desember

- The Viking Looks for a Permanent Home in Chicago
- Lutefisk - a Christmas Delicacy
- Bluetooth's Viking Roots
- Christmas in Norway

### Matlyst Monthly

- Turkey Soup with Norwegian Dumplings
- Roast Ribs of Mutton
- Christmas Ginger Cookies (pepperkaker)



November • *november*

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### Winter Days Inside

Winter is a long, cold, dark season especially for those in the northern hemisphere. Sure it's great to get the skis and snowshoes out of the garage, but a lot of time is spent indoors and sometimes it's hard to fill the time. On those short days of winter it is important to keep busy even when the sky turns dark at four in the afternoon. Get a fire in the fireplace going, put a pair of slippers on and cozy up inside with these fun Norwegian activities.



#### Knitting:

The knitting process is simply pulling loops through loops through loops with needles. Well yes, it is much more complex than that, but it can ultimately become a relaxing activity on those long winter days inside. In Norway it is extremely common to get together in knitting groups and share new styles or techniques while enjoying friendly conversation. The knit style in Norway is very unique. Most people can point out a Norwegian sweater from afar and even recognize a nice pair of homemade mittens.

Learn to knit (<http://tinyurl.com/9w4pe6b>) by starting with the basics. All you need are two knitting needles and your choice of yarn. Be patient and remember that once you get the hang of it, it's a great way to pass the time on those cozy winter days inside.

If people are going to be coming to the house for knitting groups, it's important to provide them with some baked goodies. Norway's pepper cookie is popular around Christmas time and is also quite easy to make. Add the *pepperkaker* (<http://tinyurl.com/8q9ucb5>) recipe to your list for winter baking days. Make a strong pot of coffee and you are ready to enjoy. Visit <http://tinyurl.com/9j7ug8c> for a few other signature Norwegian dessert recipes to tackle during the holiday season.

Take advantage of Sons of Norway's Cultural Skills program this winter – check out the newly revised Tradition Norwegian Cooking and Knitting units on the Sons of Norway website.

Enjoy and stay warm this winter!



November • *november*



### Sons of Norway Limited Edition Christmas Ornament

Show some Norwegian pride this holiday season by adding the 2012 Sons of Norway ornament to your Christmas decorations! From its rosemaling inspired outer frame to the beautiful American-Rogaland design, this elegantly styled ornament is sure to be a welcome addition to your holiday traditions. Packaged in a

silver-stamped gift box, containing a Christmas greeting from Sons of Norway and an informative description of Rogaland rosemaling, this ornament can also be a unique gift for someone who enjoys the holiday season as much as you do.

This year's ornament is a limited edition and will only be available for a short time, so order yours now! This special keepsake is only \$14.99 plus tax and shipping & handling. To order yours today, call (800) 945-8851.

### Turkey Soup with Norwegian Dumplings

- Turkey bones, skin and scraps (for stock)
- Water
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cups chopped celery, including tops
- Salt and pepper
- Norwegian dumplings
- ½ cups chopped fresh parsley

Place turkey bones and scraps in a soup kettle and cover with water. Leave uncovered and heat to a boil, then slowly simmer for 45 minutes. Add water as needed to keep the bones covered. Strain. Add celery and onion to broth and cook for 15 minutes until tender. Add salt and pepper to taste.

**Dumplings:** Add one at a time to the stock. Cook uncovered for 20 minutes. Add parsley just before serving.

#### Dumplings:

- 2 cups milk
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- ½ tsp. nutmeg
- 1¼-1½ cups flour

In medium pan, combine butter, milk, sugar, and nutmeg and simmer, stirring until sugar dissolves and butter melts. Decrease heat to low and mix in flour. Remove pan from heat and whisk until smooth. Shape into walnut sized dumplings.



### November • november

*a little in English...*

#### Norway's Northern Lights

As Christmas draws near in Norway, nature ensures that the sky above is decorated with the fantastic northern lights.

In Norway it is possible to see the Northern Lights between October and February. The polar lights in the northern hemisphere are called aurora borealis or northern lights, while the polar lights in the southern hemisphere are called aurora australis or southern lights. You can see the northern lights in southern Norway, but the lights are much stronger and more frequent in the north. Although there is no guarantee you will see them, it is all dependent on meteorological conditions.

Aurora Polaris (refers to both aurora borealis and australis) is a physical phenomenon. The northern lights appear when southern winds are stronger than normal and combine with large electrically charged particles that are then drawn towards the earth. The particles of electrons and protons form light when they collide with the gases in earth's atmosphere.

Polar lights show themselves as waves of light that vary in both shape, color and strength from dark blue in green and yellow, to red and orange. The colors of the polar lights are dependent on how high the phenomenon occurs in the atmosphere. Not surprisingly, the northern lights have been a subject for discussion in stories and legends as long as there have been people to listen to them. When the northern lights blaze across the sky on a winter night, onlookers experience a truly magical feeling.

#### Activities under the northern lights:

- Go on a winter trip with Hurtigruten and see the northern lights in the night sky.
- See the northern lights together with two exciting activities: dogsledding and reindeer sled driving.
- At the Polar Light Center in Lofoten Laukvik you can attend presentations, seminars, and exhibitions about the northern lights.

*litt på norsk...*

#### Nordlysene i Norge

Når julen nærmer seg i Norge, sørger naturen for at himmelen er pyntet med fantastiske nordlys.

I Norge er det mulig å se nordlyset mellom oktober og februar. Polarlys på den nordlige halvkule kalles aurora borealis eller nordlys, mens polarlys på den sørlige halvkule kalles aurora australis eller sørlys. Du kan se nordlys lenger sør i Norge, men lyset er sterkere og hyppigere i nord. Men noen garanti har man ikke, for dette avhenger av spesielle meteorologiske forhold.

Aurora polaris er et fysisk fenomen. Nordlysene forekommer når solvinden er kraftigere enn normalt, med store elektriske utladninger som slynger elektrisk ladete partikler mot Jorden. Partiklene er elektroner og protoner som danner lys når de kolliderer med gassene i jordas atmosfære.

Polarlys viser seg som et bølgende lys som varierer både i form, farge og styrke, fra mørkeblå inntil grønn og gul, til rød og oransje. Fargen på polarlyset avhenger av hvor høyt i atmosfæren fenomenet oppstår. Ikke så overraskende har nordlyset vært gjenstand for historier og legender så lenge det har vært mennesker til å lytte til dem. Når nordlyset flammer over himmelen en vinternatt, opplever man en helt spesiell og trolsk stemning.

#### Aktiviteter under nordlyset:

- Dra på vintertur med Hurtigruten og se etter nordlys på nattehimmelen.
- Se nordlyset sammen med to spennende aktiviteter: hundsledekjøring og reinsledekjøring.
- På Polarlight Center i Laukvik i Lofoten kan du delta på presentasjoner, kurs og utstillinger om nordlyset.



December • *desember*

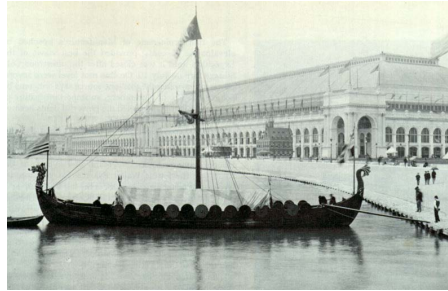
### The Viking Looks for a Permanent Home in Chicago

Believed to be one of most endangered historic sites in Illinois and one of the largest remaining artifacts of the Chicago World's fair, the Viking is looking for permanent home. Constructed in 1892 and 1893, the ship—a replica of the Gokstad—was sailed by a crew of 12 from Norway to Chicago, via the Erie Canal and Great Lakes for the Chicago World's Fair of 1893.

At the close of the Fair, the Viking made it's way to New Orleans, and was later moved next to the Field Columbian Museum, a predecessor of the Museum of Science and Industry. In 1920 the ship was relocated to Lincoln Park Zoo and care of the ship transferred to the Commissioners of Lincoln Park, which later became the Chicago Park District. To make room for the Lincoln Park Zoo expansion in 1993 the ship's care was transferred to the Scandinavian-American Council and it eventually was moved to a fabric shelter in Good Templar Park in Geneva, Ill. After several attempts to secure a more permanent home for the Viking, the Scandinavian-American Council dissolved in 2001.

Since then Friends of the Viking Ship, a non-profit group established in 2008, is working toward the preservation, public display & creation of a permanent home for the ship. First conducting an assessment in 2007, then securing a \$52,000 grant from American Express & the National Trust for Historic Preservation for stabilization and preservation of the Viking ship and improvements to the ship's shelter. In September a key step in the nonprofit's mission came to fruition—obtaining trusteeship of the ship from the Chicago Park District. While the ship currently remains in Geneva, Ill., and preservation efforts continue, it is the goal of Friends of the Viking Ship to see the restored ship returned to a permanent, climate controlled home in Chicago.

To learn more about the preservation of the Viking, or to plan a visit, go to [www.vikingship.us/about.htm](http://www.vikingship.us/about.htm).



The Viking at the world fair in Chicago, 1893.  
*Wikipedia*



Inside view of the Viking ship in Good Templar Park shelter. *Photo by Wikimedia Commons user Kyleaschmitt*

### Roast Ribs of Mutton

Serves 5  
*The Norwegian Kitchen*

- 2 - 2½ kg dried mutton ribs
- birch twigs
- 1 large rutabaga, peeled and sliced

Cut the meat between the ribs into serving pieces. Soak in cold water overnight.

Peel the bark off the birch twigs and arrange in the bottom of a pot, or use a rack. Arrange the meat on the twigs. Add water to just under the meat. Cover and steam about 2 hours. After 1 hour, add the rutabaga and cook until tender.

Preheat the oven to 500°F (250°C). Grill the meat in a hot oven until crispy. Mash the rutabaga. Serve with boiled potatoes, boiled rutabagas or rutabaga puree, and pan juices.



### December • desember

#### Lutefisk – A Christmas Delicacy

Lutefisk has often been the brunt of many jokes, possibly due to the fact that its name literally translates to lye fish, derived from the process it goes through when soaking in lye, a corrosive substance that is also used to cure foods. But, along with its well-liked partner in crime, lefse, it has stood the test of time and scrutiny. However, today lutefisk is a Norwegian delicacy and a traditional Christmas meal.

In order to better understand and appreciate this delicacy, we have decided to test you with a few lutefisk trivia questions. Lykke til!

**Question #1:** What type of fish is used to make lutefisk?

- A: Salmon
- B: Cod
- C: Trout
- D: Herring

**Question #2:** Where is the largest lutefisk producer in the world located?

**Question #3:** True or False – Lutefisk is ready to cook right after it's dried and soaked in lye?

#### Answer #1

The answer is cod. Dry cod or stockfish is as rich in its history as it is in flavor. Norwegians began the tradition of lutefisk making by setting cod out to dry on wooden drying racks in cold temperatures. The cod would dry for preservation but become inedible. In order to ready the fish for Christmas dinner, Norwegians soaked the dried cod in lye made from birch ashes and water which softened it to make it ready for eating. This soaking process turned the fish into the soft, gelatinous texture that we recognize today as lutefisk.

#### Answer #2

The answer is Minneapolis, Minnesota. Olsen Fish Company, located in Minneapolis, Minnesota was founded in 1910 by Olaf Frederick Olsen and John W. Norberg. Their fresh cod comes mainly from the beautiful west coast city of Ålesund, Norway. Once the cod is ready it is packaged and shipped to lutefisk dinners all over North America, the company processes approximately 650,000 lbs. annually, that's a lot of lutefisk! Try tackling their fish and lefse recipes or give their 'Lutefisk Hotline' a call and order yours today.

#### Answer #3

FALSE – DO NOT eat lutefisk directly after soaking it in lye. The sequence of treatments is very particular and one misstep can ruin the final dish. First, the dried cod must soak in cold water for five days. Be sure to change the water daily.

Next, the fish is soaked in a combination of lye and water for two days. At this point the fish will start to enlarge and create a jelly like consistency. In order to make the fish edible, it must be soaked again in cold water for five days. Don't forget to remove the scales after this! Lye can be a harmful or fatal substance if used improperly, so it is highly recommended to purchase ready to cook lutefisk directly from a fish company or store. After the soaking process it is ready to cook. Lutefisk can be cooked several different ways: steam cooked, parboiled, microwaved, or boiled and more. When it's hot and ready to eat, pour some melted butter or a tasty white sauce over top. Serve with boiled potatoes and lefse and enjoy.

The lutefisk tradition has become nearly a thing of the past in Norway. Today more lutefisk is sold and eaten in the United States than in Norway. The tradition has grown in the United States, and the world famous delicacy is commonly associated with Lutheran church suppers, Christmas dinners, and Sons of Norway lutefisk dinners. Keep up the great work Sons of Norway members, and be sure to share the tradition with others! Post your next lutefisk dinner on the Sons of Norway Events page. Vær så god!



December • *desember*

### Bluetooth's Viking Roots



Ever find yourself wondering where Bluetooth—the unusual moniker for the secure means of exchanging wireless data among different devices—came from?

Bluetooth owes its name to its Scandinavian roots at Swedish telecommunications company, Ericsson. Inspired by the Danish Viking King Harald Blåtand, (c. 910-987) who according to lore is credited with peacefully uniting warring tribes within Denmark and Norway, creators adopted the literal English translation of "Blåtand." In fact, Bluetooth's logo incorporates the runic symbols for Harald's name, "H" and "B".

Just how did Harald Blåtand or Harald I of Denmark receive the Danish equivalent of the name "Bluetooth"? While lore includes such colorful suggestions as Harald having an affinity for blueberries in such a quantity that they stained his teeth, it is more likely believed that it was for his dark complexion which would have been unique among Vikings.

### Christmas Ginger Cookies (*pepperkaker*)

*Makes 8 dozen cookies*

*The Great Scandinavian Baking Book by Beatrice Ojakangas*

*Gingersnaps are by far the favorite Scandinavian cookie, and at Christmastime they are cut into fanciful shapes and elaborately decorated. Hearts, stars, angels, grandmas and grandpas, boys and girls, horses, roosters, pigs, cats and manger animal cut-outs are the favorites.*

- 1 cup softened butter
- 1 egg
- 2 Tbsp. dark corn syrup
- 3¼ cups all purpose flour
- 2 tsp. cinnamon
- ½ tsp. cloves
- 1½ cups sugar
- 1½ Tbsp. grated orange peel
- 1 Tbsp. water
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. ginger

#### Icing for Decoration

- 1 egg white
- 3 to 4 cups powdered sugar
- 1 tsp. almond extract

In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugar together. Add the egg and beat until light and lemon colored. Stir in the orange peel, syrup, and water. Combine the flour with the soda, cinnamon, ginger, and cloves. Stir into the creamed mixture until a dough forms. Gather into a ball and chill several hours or overnight.

Cover baking sheets with parchment paper or lightly grease them. Preheat oven to 325°F.

Turn dough out onto a lightly floured board and roll out to about ⅛ inch thickness. Cut into shapes using cookie cutters. Place on prepared baking sheets and bake for 8 to 10 minutes until cookies are set, but not overly browned. Cool.

Mix the egg white with the powdered sugar and almond extract to make a thin icing. Turn into a pastry bag with writing tip and press icing onto cookies to decorate.





### December • desember

*a little in English...*

#### Christmas in Norway

Christmas time is a cozy celebration full of food, gifts and many traditions. Today Norway's Christmas traditions are a combination of hundreds of different customs from all over Europe. Here are some that are well known.

**Christmas Food** - Christmas foods are something very special. When someone says Christmas, food is almost immediately the next thought. For many of us the feeling of Christmas is tied directly to eating plenty of good holiday foods.

On Christmas Eve lutefisk and Christmas ribs or pinnekjøtt are eaten. Rice cream and caramel pudding are eaten for dessert. On Christmas day sweet treats like pepperkaker (ginger snaps), syrup snipper (crisp diamond cookies), Christmas knekk (flat bread), krumkaker (cardamom cone-shaped wafers) and marzipan are consumed.

**Christmas Decorations** - Decorating a Christmas tree with Christmas candles has been a tradition since trees have been put in living rooms for Christmas. This dates back to the 1600's. The candle symbolizes life and happiness in a dark time and is a perfect holiday decoration – as long as one is cautious of not starting a fire.

Many other types of Christmas decorations became widespread in the 1800's. It was very special to decorate the Christmas tree, while some decorations were also made into heart baskets that could hold sweet treats, cakes, raisins and fruits.

**Christmas songs** - Among some of the most popular Christmas songs are "I am so Glad Each Christmas Night", "A Child is Born in Bethlehem", and "In the Barn sits the Nisse with his Christmas Porridge." Norwegians know these songs so well they can sing them in their sleep – or at least while they walk around the Christmas tree.

**Santa Claus (Julenisse)** - The Nisse was found in almost every farmer's barn in the old days. They are pretty small and wear a red hat on their head. The Christmas Nisse want the farmers to be pleased with them, in return for their work they require Christmas porridge. One must not forget to leave out their porridge, because something can always go wrong on the farm as a payback.

Merry Christmas!

*litt på norsk...*

#### Jul i Norge

Julen er en høytid fylt med kos, mye mat, gaver og masse juletradisjoner. I dag er de norske juletradisjoner en blanding av mange hundre forskjellige juletradisjoner fra hele Europa. Her er noe som er vel kjent.

**Julemat** - Julemat er noe helt spesielt. Når man sier jul, sier man nesten julemat i samme åndedrag. For mange av oss henger julekosen sammen med at vi får spise mye god julemat.

Julaften spises lutefisk, juleribbe eller pinnekjøtt. Det spises riskrem, multekrem eller karamellpudding til dessert. På juledagene spises det søte saker i form av pepperkaker, sirupsnipper, juleknekk, krumkaker, og marsipan.

**Julepynt** - Å pynte juletreet med julelys er kjent helt fra den første tiden som juletreet fikk plass i stuen. Det kan spores tilbake til 1600-tallet. Lyset symboliserer liv og glede i en mørk tid og er perfekt til julepynt – så lenge man tenker på brannfaren.

På 1800-tallet ble mye annen julepynt utbredt. Det var spesielt julepynt til juletreet, men også julepynt formet som kurver og hjerter som kunne inneholde søte saker som nøtter, kaker, rosiner og frukt.

**Julesanger** - Blandt de mest populære julesanger er Jeg er så Glad Hver Julekveld, Et Barn er Født i Bethlehem og På Låven Sitter Nissen med sin Julegrøt. De sangene kan nordmenn synge i søvne - eller i hvertfall samtidig som de går rundt juletreet!

**Julenissen** - Nisser var å finne på nesten hver bondegård i gamle dager. De er ganske små og har på en rød topplue. Julenisser vil at husbonden skal være fornøyd med dem, og de krever bare julegrøt for arbeidet. Men til gjengjeld må man ikke glemme å sette ut grøten, for da kan alt gå galt på gården!

God Jul!

<http://www.julinorge.no/>