***Newsletter Service***

**Sept/Oct 2020**

**SEPTEMBER ISSUE:**

**Voss: An Outdoor Sports Hub With History**

Nestled in the mountains between Oslo and Bergen is a haven for outdoor sports enthusiasts and history buffs alike: the town of Vossenvagen, more commonly known simply as Voss.

This town of roughly 7,000 people hosts an annual Extreme Sports Week, which is one of the largest events of its type in the world. Fittingly, the area also is home to Norway’s largest skydiving club, complete with a skydiving simulation windtunnel for those who wish to experience the thrill of freefall without the altitude.

The area also draws more casual visitors of all skill levels to enjoy the area’s excellent year-round outdoor offerings: whitewater rafting and kayaking in the spring, hiking the summer and fall (including a trail along the escape route taken by Sverre Sigurdsson in 1177), and skiing—both nordic and downhill—in the winter.

Voss also offers a range of attractions for those less athletically inclined, including a 13th century medieval stone church, a preserved farmstead dating back to the 1500s, and a cable car up the mountainside that offers stunning views of the town in the valley.

**Who Did Queen Elizabeth See on Her First Royal Visit?**

Just over 65 years ago, in June 1955, the newly enthroned Queen Elizabeth made her very first State Visit. Her destination on that historic journey? The Kingdom of Norway.

The reason for the visit was twofold: Officially, the Queen’s visit reinforced the already strong diplomatic and military ties between the two countries. Norway and the United Kingdom have had robust trade relations since the 1700s, and the Queen’s visit helped secure favorable trade agreements between the countries. Additionally, the two nations were important allies during World War II.

On a more personal level, the royal families of Norway and England have shared a strong and enduring friendship over several generations—and perhaps not coincidentally, they also share a number of family ties. Most prominently, Queen Elizabeth is a second cousin to King Harald V of Norway, who was still Prince Harald at the time of her 1955 visit and did not take the throne until 1991. In 1955, Norway was ruled by Harald’s grandfather, King Haakon VII.

**Potato Peels Improve Shelf Life Naturally**

Potato peels aren’t usually something we stop to consider. But Professor of biotechnology at Høgskolen i Innlandet [Innlandet University College] Knut Olav Strætkvern has been conducting research on potatoes for 25 years, and he believes that the peels have potential beyond composting or animal feed. “I do not cease to marvel at all the interesting things that can be derived from the potato,” Strætkvern told NRK, the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation.

The humble potato peel may soon be getting an image upgrade, thanks to Strætkvern and his team. The biotechnologists discovered a way to extract antioxidants from peels and use them to prolong the life of other foods, such as cooking oil, without the use of artificial stabilizers. Strætkvern hopes that this technology will provide health, economic and environmental benefits.

These methods will be tested, patented and scaled to create a business model. Knut Olav Strætskvern says that Innlandet county alone generates around 3000 tons of potato peels annually, and that the project will also reclaim other “waste foods” to see if they can be turned into value.

[TRANSLATION]

**The World’s First Duo to Row Across the Atlantic**  
  
In 1896, two Norwegian fishermen were the first in the world to cross the Atlantic in a rowboat. Captain George Harbo and first mate Frank Samuelson launched the 18-foot-long wooden boat, "Fox," in New York on June 6, 1896. 55 days later, they reached England and became the first to row across the Atlantic.  
  
“The two accomplished a feat that can never be repeated. It stands in a very special light, and it will remain forever,” says Kåre Rudjord, author of the book Atlanterhavroerne [The Atlantic Rowers].  
  
With the technology and equipment of the time, Rudfjord, who has written a book about the rowing odyssey, thinks their feat is incredible.  
  
“They didn't know what they were getting into. Imagine rowing that distance in a wooden boat without GPS, a water machine, rudder or sail,” he says.  
  
When Harbo and Samuelson arrived in Cornwall, they had some incredibly tough weeks behind them. They rowed for 18 hours every day. At night they usually slept in shifts, five hours each.   
  
They were surrounded by whales, the skin on their hands cracked and they had large blisters on their wrists. They had also capsized on several occasions, so large parts of both their food and water provisions had been lost.  
  
After arriving in Cornwall, the Norwegian-Americans they continued for a week before reaching their final destination, Le Havre in France. Here they were met by a jubilant press.   
  
“What the two did was a tremendous achievement, it is incredible that it went so well. One can well say that it was madness,” says Kåre Rudjord.

**Disse to var de første i verden som rodde over Atlanteren**

I 1896 krysset to norske fiskere Atlanteren i en robåt som de første i verden.

Kaptein George Harbo og styrmann Frank Samuelson sjøsatte den 18 fot lange trebåten «Fox» i New York 6. juni 1896. 55 dager senere nådde de England og ble de første som rodde over Atlanterhavet.

– Det to gjorde en bragd som aldri kan gjentas. Den står i et helt spesielt lys, og det vil den for alltid gjøre, sier Kåre Rudjord, forfatteren av boka «Atlanterhavsroerne».

Med den tidenes teknologi og utstyr synes Rudfjord, som har skrevet bok om roturen, at prestasjonen er utrolig.

– De visste ikke hva de bega seg ut på. Tenk å ro den distansen i en trebåt uten GPS, vannmaskin, ror eller seil, sier han.

Da Harbo og Samuelson ankom Cornwall hadde de lagt bak seg noen utrolig tøffe uker. De rodde 18 timer hver dag. Om natten sov de normalt på tur, fem timer hver.

De ble omringet av hvaler, huden på hendene sprakk og de hadde store blemmer på håndleddene. De gikk også rundt ved flere anledninger slik at store deler av både mat- og vannprovianten forsvant.

Etter ankomst i Cornwall, fortsatte norskamerikanerne en uke før de nådde det endelig målet, Le Havre i Frankrike. Her ble de møtt en av jublende presse.

– Det de to gjorde var en voldsomt stor prestasjon, det er utrolig at det gikk bra. Man kan godt si at det var galmannsverk, sier Kåre Rudjord.

**Potetsuppe (Creamy Potato Soup)**  
  
**Ingredients**

For the soup:s

* 1 Tbsp. olive oil or vegan butter
* 1 medium Vidalia onion or 3-4 shallots, peeled chopped
* 3 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
* 1 small leek, white part only, chopped
* 5 large Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled & diced
* 3 large Yukon Gold potatoes, baked\*
* 2 1/2 cups vegetable broth, more as needed
* juice from 1/2 lemon
* Kosher or sea salt & freshly ground black pepper to taste
* cashew cream\*\* to drizzle for garnish (optional)
* finely chopped chives for garnish

\*\*For the cashew cream:

* 1/2 cup raw cashews, soaked in water for at least 2 hours
* 1/2 cup water
* pinch of salt

**Instructions**

1. \*To bake potatoes, peel them, season with a little sea salt, and wrap in foil. Bake in the oven for 45 minutes to 1 hour until soft. Set aside until ready to use.
2. In a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven, heat the oil, and add the onion or shallots, garlic, and leeks with a large pinch of salt and sweat them on medium heat (do not brown), for 5-10 minutes until soft and translucent.
3. Add in the raw chopped potatoes and vegetable broth (the broth should cover the potatoes by about 2 in.), bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook until potatoes are soft, about 20 minutes. Add the baked potatoes and stir to combine.
4. Using an immersion blender, purée the soup until creamy. Be sure you have enough liquid in the soup, or else it will be gummy.
5. Season with lemon juice, salt, and pepper and serve drizzled with a little cashew cream and chopped chives (optional).
6. \*\*To make cashew cream, purée the soaked cashews, water and salt in a high-speed blender until creamy. Adjust consistency with additional water if necessary

**Notes**

\*My secret trick is to add in some pre-baked potatoes, which I find adds an extra depth of flavor.

You can stir in some cashew cream or drizzle it on top to make it pretty, but it’s not needed to achieve a rich and creamy soup.

Source: Arcticgrub.com

**Celebrate World Gratitude Day on September 21**

Thank you for your membership in our lodge. This holiday is all about gratitude and expressing appreciation of others. It’s a fantastic excuse to thank your friends, family, neighbors or fellow lodge members for any kindness they’ve shown you and for the actions that have had a positive impact on your life.

**PLUS:** This may be the perfect day to invite a friend to learn how Sons of Norway membership can make a positive difference in their life. **Invite them to join today!**

**Show Your Nordic Pride This Foundation Month!**

October is Foundation Month, which is a great opportunity to show your Sons of Norway pride! Gifts to the Sons of Norway Foundation showcase our Nordic culture and humanitarian spirit through grants, and highlight our passion for education through scholarships.

Now more than ever, it’s important that we all be a part of something bigger. You can make a differences by giving to the Sons of Norway Foundation this fall. Learn more about the Foundation online at [sofn.com/foundation](http://www.sofn.com/foundation).

**Protecting Your Family’s Future in the Face of Uncertainty**

In very uncertain times, life insurance offers you comfort in knowing that your family and love ones are protected from unexpected financial difficulty. Permanent life insurance creates cash value that you can access in times of hardship, so you will always know they have those assets to count on.

Reach out to your Sons of Norway Insurance Professional to make sure your family is protected.

**OCTOBER ISSUE:**

**Not Everything Costs More in Norway**

As visitors to Norway are routinely cautioned, prices there tend to run high compared to markets in North America and many other parts of the world. But not everything in Norway comes with sticker shock, and some things even cost less than they do elsewhere. Here are a few examples.

**Fresh seafood**

Thanks to Norway’s robust fishing industry, fresh salmon is relatively inexpensive, as well as other kinds of seafood and sushi.

**Air travel**

Airline tickets from the US to Norway are often quite affordable compared to other international flights, and so is travel between Norway and other parts of Europe.

**Store brand food items**

Food and groceries are notoriously expensive in Norway, but most supermarkets offer very affordable store brand versions of common food staples.

**Diapers**

Due to a long-simmering price war between manufacturers, diapers in Norway are dramatically cheaper than they are in the US and many parts of Europe.

**Camping**

Camping is free and legal almost anywhere in Norway, making budget-friendly travel an option for those who are willing to rough it.

**As Norway’s Population Ages, Challenges Arise**

A new report highlights a growing concern in Norway: the population is aging at a rapid rate and the economic implications are serious.

According to projections, the country will have more deaths than births by 2050, and immigration to the country will begin declining in 2022. This means that a larger portion of the population will be reliant on a pension, even as a shrinking portion of the population is available to work, pay taxes, and fund those pensions.

The report laid out the issue clearly—in 1970, every 10 workers funded 1.9 people drawing a pension. In 2016, it was 10 workers for ever 2.3 people drawing a pension. By 2060, just as Norway’s population is expected to cross the 6 million mark, that number will be 10 workers funding 4 people drawing a pension.

What is the solution? The report suggests a few options: “an increase in tax, a decrease in pension payouts, or a later retirement age. Or, of course, a combination of all three.” As Norway’s population grows, and ages, over the next 100 years, it will take creativity and flexibility to solve the growing economic pressures.

**Celebrate Foundation Month This October**

October is Foundation Month! This is a time to celebrate the Sons of Norway Foundation and the value they bring to our membership and communities.

The Sons of Norway Foundation was founded in 1966 to support our members, and it now offers a wide range of scholarships and grants focused on promoting Norwegian heritage and culture, cross-cultural educational opportunities, and humanitarian aid. During Foundation Month we ask that you find a way to support the Foundation, whether it be through making a personal donation or by participating in fundraising efforts with your lodge.

The Sons of Norway Foundation gives out over $130,000 in grants and scholarships every year, but we need the support of members like you! Our scholarships and grants can be a lifeline for students, families and our lodges, and the economic impact of COVID-19 only increases the need for these vital opportunities.

Be a part of something bigger with the Sons of Norway Foundation—support our members and community by donating today! Donations are accepted online at <sofn.com/foundation>.

[TRANSLATION]

<https://ung.forskning.no/overtro/tror-du-spokelser-finnes-pa-ordentlig/1701082>   
  
**Tror du spøkelser finnes på ordentlig?**

Hva med prinsesse Elsa? Eller julenissen? Forskere har undersøkt hvem barn tror på. Og hvem de ikke tror på.

Skjønner barn forskjell på figurer som er virkelige og de som ikke er det?

Britiske forskerne fikk tak i 176 unger på mellom to og elleve år. En gruppe voksne var også med. Alle fikk se 13 forskjellige figurer.

Så fikk deltagerne en oppgave: Gi figurene poeng etter hvor virkelig du mener de er!

**Fire grupper**

Det viste seg at de fleste barna delte figurene inn i fire grupper:

• Virkelige figurer: Popgruppa og dinosaurer.

• Nesten virkelige figurer: Julenissen og tannfeen.

• Muligens virkelige figurer: Romvesener, drager, enhjørninger og spøkelser.

• Ikke virkelige figurer: prinsesse Elsa, Peter Pan og Svampebob.

**De minste barna trodde på nesten alt**

Det var likevel forskjell mellom barna. De aller minste trodde temmelig mye på alle figurene. De fleste 10-11-åringene var derimot temmelig sikre på at Elsa, Svampebob og drager ikke var virkelige.

**Ganske mange voksne trodde på spøkelser**

De voksne som hadde vært med i undersøkelsen, svarte ganske forskjellig fra barna.  
De voksne trodde verken på drager eller enhjørninger. Men når det gjaldt spøkelser og romvesener, var de ikke like sikre. Voksne trodde nesten like mye på spøkelser som barna. Det syntes forskerne var litt overraskende. De skriver at de ikke vet hvorfor det er slik. Og de håper andre forskere vil undersøke det nærmere.

**Do you believe ghosts are real?**   
  
What about Princess Elsa? Or Santa Claus? Researchers have investigated who children believe in. And who they do not believe in.   
  
Do children understand the difference between characters who are real and those who are not?   
  
British researchers contacted 176 youths between the ages of two and eleven. A group of adults was also included. Everyone viewed 13 different characters.   
  
Then participants were given a task: give the characters points according to how real you think they are!   
  
**Four groups**   
  
It turned out that most of the children divided the figures into four groups:

* Real characters: Pop groups and dinosaurs.
* Almost real characters: Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy.
* Possibly real figures: Aliens, dragons, unicorns and ghosts.
* Not real characters: Princess Elsa, Peter Pan and Sponge Bob.

**The youngest children believed in almost everything**  
  
There was still a difference between the children. The very youngest believed quite a lot in all the characters. Most 10-to-11-year-olds, on the other hand, were pretty sure that Elsa, Sponge Bob and dragons were not real.   
  
**Quite a few adults believed in ghosts**  
  
The adults who had taken part in the survey responded quite differently from the children. The adults did not believe in dragons or unicorns. But when it came to ghosts and aliens, they were not so sure. Adults believed in ghosts almost as much as children. The researchers thought this was a bit surprising. They write that they do not know why this is so. And they hope other researchers will investigate it further.

**Wear Your 2020 Recruiter Pin With Pride!**

Hundreds of members have earned a limited-edition Recruiter Pin in 2020. It’s not too late for you to get a gorgeous pin for yourself. Just recruit one or more new adult members and make sure they include your member number when they sign up online or join using a paper form.

**Norwegian Sweet Soup**

Member Shelia Kershek from Fosselyngen Lodge 5-082 sent this recipe that is perfect for cooler fall weather. Shelia said: *This is a recipe that my Grandma Vaughn (nee Halvorsen) used to make. My Dad makes a bunch of it every Christmas and gives me a nice container of it. I love it!*

(Notes: The red sugar gives the soup a rosy color, and can be omitted. You can serve this warm or cold. A drizzle of heavy cream on top is extra tasty.)

• 6 cups water

• 1 cup raisins

• 1 cup prunes

• 1 cup white sugar

• 1 tablespoon red sugar

• 1/2 cup tapioca

• 1 teaspoon cinnamon or 2 cinnamon sticks

• 1/4 teaspoon salt

• 1 tablespoon vinegar or lemon juice (we use lemon juice)

\*\*\*Place all the ingredients into a kettle and boil until tapioca is clear and the raisins and prunes are cooked (about 8 minutes). The mixture will thicken and then can be thinned by adding a little water.

*>>>Do you have a Norwegian or Nordic-inspired recipe to share with fellow members? Please contact membership@sofn.com.*

**Peace of Mind in Volatile Times**

In times like these, it may feel like nothing is certain, and that volatility is just a way of life for your finances. Give yourself the peace of mind of a fixed rate of return and rest easy knowing that a portion of your assets are protected. Reach out to your Sons of Norway Insurance Professional to see if putting some of your assets in a fixed annuity is right for you and your family.