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January / February / March **WINTER**

2026

VINTER januar / februar / mars

Greetings to Lodge Members from Incoming President Amanda Saxton!

Velkommen!

This January your elected officers continue to herald an excellent calendar forward for 2026. For instance, volunteers at the Wooden Ski Classic (held at Kincaid park) serve traditional risgrøt for attendees at this annual event!

We look forward to seeing folks wear their favorite Norwegian clothing. Check out the lodge calendar and keep a lookout for a couple of upcoming special speakers, hikes, cultural dinners, kid activities, knitting, sewing, rosemaling and more.

Our youth and adults may be interested in local lodge scholarships for college or crafts schools. We have Facebook, E-Blast, and the newsletter that will help keep you updated.

As a member of this lodge for over 10 years, I am proud to be your lodge president and look forward to hearing from you. Remember, we still have 'Hygge Time' at our meetings! Happy New Year and I look forward to seeing you soon!



*Med Vennlig Hilsen,
 Amanda Saxton, President
 Sons of Norway, Bernt Balchen Lodge*

Lucia Celebration Photos are now featured in a special end of year edition. (There were way to many to include in this issue!) Professional photographer Portia Hall with Aurora Promises Weddings captured the celebration with images of the performers, volunteers, guests and families.

Special Lucia Edition Link ⇒ <https://www.sofnalaska.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Special-Lucia-Pictorial-2025.pdf>



Only 11 books – 55 tickets - left!

\$25 each or 5 for \$100

This is a Scholarship Fundraiser

To purchase tickets please leave a phone message at 907-349-1613 or email sonacak@gmail.com and we will arrange getting tickets to you.

You can also contact John at 907-748-0704. Thank you.

SONS OF NORWAY SUPER BOWL PARTY

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH @ VIKING HALL!

WATCH THE GAME ON BIG SCREEN TV

DOORS OPEN @ 2 PM

RAFFLE DRAWING HELD DURING GAME

ONLY 300 TICKETS SOLD - 20 WINNERS!

TOP PRIZE OF \$1,000!!

Come and Enjoy Snacks, Liquid Refreshment and Good Company

VIKING HALL 907-349-1613 8141 Briarwood Street • Anchorage, AK 99518



Website: <https://www.sofnalaska.com>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BerntBalchen

Instagram: [@sonsofnorwayanchorage](https://www.instagram.com/sonsofnorwayanchorage)

Sons of Norway International: <https://www.sofn.com>

Submit Articles:

newsletter@sofnalaska.com Attn: The Flyer

Submission deadline for our April/May 2026 issue is March 15th

A Special Message to Lodge Members, from Linda Bustamante

What a great year we just finished up! All of the lodge's big events were huge successes thanks to you and many volunteers. The year ended with our very special Lucia Family Christmas Party. It's heartwarming and brings back many fond memories seeing so many families and kids enjoying this storied event.

The enclosed calendar, which can also be found on the website, lists the many activities that occur throughout the year. These events are communicated through Eblasts, social media and an occasional mailer.

At this month's board and membership meeting new lodge officers were installed.

Please join me in congratulating Amanda Saxton, your new lodge president.

Amanda joins an energetic board that keeps our lodge healthy and vibrant all while taking care of business. It has been an honor and privilege to serve as president for the last five years and I look forward to continuing to serve the lodge as foundation director.

Here's to another great year for Bernt Balchen Lodge!

Med Vennlig Hilsen

Former President Linda Bustamante



"Gratulerer med dagen!"



SUNSHINE REPORT



"Happy Birthday!"

Greetings are sent to our members celebrating a birthday who are at least 75 years young!

JANUARY

- David H Gardner
Shirley A Moe
Joseph H Hegna
David P Pederson
Marit M Kristiansen
Ken Privratsky
Judith Lervaag
Evelyn C Rush
Peter Mjos
Karen E Ruud
Susan F Soby

FEBRUARY

- Edward Barrington
Gayle A Bjorn-Roli
Per Bjorn-Roli
Marcia L Hegna
Edward Swearingen III

MARCH

- Leslie M Hageland
Phillip J Ramstad
Louann A Peterson
William Sobolesky
Gordon J Severson
Gabrielle R Ledoux
Christina L J Lovett



If you know someone who needs a little sunshine
Contact Anna Bryant at: anna_bryant@hotmail.com



STRIKKEKAFÉ



To all our fellow knitters and makers out there, we are looking forward to seeing you. Strikkekafe is going strong!

Strikkekafe means 'knitting cafe' and is popular all over Norway for all who enjoy handcrafts, it's not just for knitters! This is a time to gather with your projects and enjoy the company of others. It is a great way to meet other members, get inspiration, share your skills, or get a little help.

Strikkekafe meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month.

Check the E-BLAST for notifications or contact:
Christie 602-0673 or Anita 301-4215.



Norwegian Conversation Group

Saturdays from 10 - 11 am via Zoom

All levels welcome

Contact Christie Ericson to register

Christieak@gmail.com

Rosemaling Lessons

The lodge is offering a Rosemaling class the same evenings as Strikkekafe at the Lodge (every other Wednesday).

Amanda Saxton will be teaching this class.

If interested, email the lodge at sonancak@gmail.com and then Amanda will reach out with more information.



TREASURER'S REPORT

The lodge held most of the traditional events in 2025. These included the Super Bowl Party, Norwegian Fish Dinner, Mother's Day Brunch, Syttende Mai Parade and Celebration, Fish Boil, Faar-i-Kaal and Lutefisk Dinners, and ending the year with the Lucia Family Christmas Party. The fall indoor/outdoor Nordic Market featured vendors, a café, bake sale, and silent auction. In total, these events netted just over \$29,000. The lodge portion of membership dues brought in \$3,645.

Along with awarding a \$1,000 scholarship; a \$200 donation was made to Ski for Light. The \$200 donation was matched by a member. Ski for Light is an all-volunteer Sons of Norway outreach program whose mission is to enhance the quality of life and independence of visually or mobility-impaired adults through a program of cross-country skiing.

Viking Hall Inc. is a building association formed to manage and maintain the lodge building. The operating expenses for 2025 were \$34,370. The big ticket items for the year were \$17,100 for utilities and snow removal/sanding, \$9,468 for building and liability insurance, and \$3,750 for lower parking lot improvements. To help cover these expenses the lodge contributes \$12,000 annually with rental income funding the remainder. The lodge is fortunate to have a long-term tenant renting a portion of the downstairs.

Bernt Balchen Lodge and Viking Hall Inc. were both able to add to their reserve funds at year-end.

Thank you to all lodge members who helped make this possible as we look forward to 2026!

Cynthia Olnes, Treasurer

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Don't miss out on this opportunity! The Scholarship Application is Due by April 30, 2026

Bernt Balchen Lodge 2-046 awards Language and Heritage, and Higher Education Scholarships of up to \$1,000. The **Language and Heritage Scholarship** is available for persons of any age who are interested in attending or participating in Norwegian language or heritage programs.

The **Higher Education Scholarship** is available for persons entering a school of learning beyond the high school level.

Please note: There are specific requirements when applying for our Lodge scholarships. For example, recipient must be a member, or child or grandchild of a member. When choosing a scholarship applicant, the committee looks at involvement in lodge events as a plus!

TO REQUEST A SCHOLARSHIP PACKET

Send an email to sonancak@gmail.com – Attn: Scholarship Committee or, call: 907-349-1613, and leave a message.



Please follow the Link below to learn about all the scholarships that Sons of Norway International has to offer! **Some have an early 2026 Deadline so don't delay!**

www.sofn.com/foundation/scholarships/

Scholarship List

Dynamic District Two Scholarships

Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska
Bernt Balchen Lodge is part of District 2,
Sons of Norway

Follow the link to see what's up!

www.sonsofnorway2.com/scholarships/

SOFIE/OLSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Deadline to apply: April 15, 2026

CARL M SALTVEIT SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Deadline to apply: February 15, 2026

- | | |
|---|---|
| Astrid G. Cates Vocational School Scholarship | Nancy Lorraine Jensen Memorial Scholarship |
| Bernt Anker Scholarship | Nordkap Lodge 3-215 Scholarship |
| Dan and Betty Rude Scholarship | Orel & Marie Winjum Memorial Scholarship |
| Desert Fjord Lodge/Agnes Stieler Education Fund | The Sissel and Roger Espeland Memorial Scholarship |
| District Four Scholarship | International Scholarships |
| District Six Scholarship | Douglas Warne – Rolf & Wenche Eng Scholarship |
| Elaine Nelson Scholarship | Helen Tronvold Norwegian Folk High School Scholarship |
| King Olav V Norwegian-American Heritage Scholarship | Lund Fund Scholarship |
| Myrtle Beinbauer Scholarship | |

CULTURAL CORNER



February Program: Colonel Bernt Balchen, Polar Aviator & Arctic Innovator

February 12, 2026 5:30 pm Waffle Social 6-7 pm Presentation

Join us for an enlightening evening and learn more about our lodge namesake, Colonel Bernt Balchen, a pioneer polar aviator, navigator, aircraft mechanical engineer, military leader, and the first person to fly over both of the poles. Kristi Swain, Research Analyst at the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies, will give a presentation about this fascinating Norwegian-American and his Alaska connection.

Kristine L. Swain is a Research Analyst at the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies at JBER. Prior to coming to the center, Swain served as a cultural resource technician for the Pacific Regional Support Center at JBER, a research assistant at UAF, and an adjunct professor at UAA and the U.S. Air Force Academy. Before that, she served 21 years as an intelligence and political/military affairs officer in the U.S. Air Force. Her career duties included Assistant Professor of History at USAFA, Policy Advisor to the U.S. Ambassador to NATO and Chief Strategic Analysis at the headquarters of North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command.



Swain holds a M.A. degree in Russian and East European Studies and is currently a Ph.D. student pursuing an interdisciplinary degree in Arctic and Northern Studies from UAF. Her research focuses on the history of Canadian American military cooperation in Alaska and the environmental, economic, societal and political impact of military operations in Alaska.

Photo Credits

Bernt Balchen
Photo Credit: Public Domain
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bernt_Balchen.jpg

Kristine L. Swain
Photo Credit: Ted Stevens Center
<https://tedstevensarcticcenter.org/staff-members/>

LUTEFISK DINNER



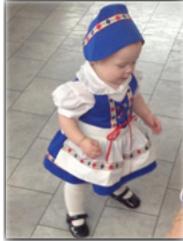
Tusen Takk to all the volunteers who made this annual event fun and delicious!

Photos courtesy of Anita Persson

Sons of Norway Lucia 2025



Early Days*



2025 Lucia
Alice Haugen



Past
Bernt Balchen
Lodge Lucias

Photo Credits:

Portia Hall for Aurora Promises Weddings except Alice Haugen *Early Days; provided by her family.



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Upcoming Friluftsliv Events

2026

Come for fresh air and good company, and explore the outdoors in Anchorage and beyond. Held rain, snow or shine. There is never bad weather, just bad gear. Keep your eye on Social Media and eblasts for reminders and more details. Brought to you by your adventure loving Friluftsliv Committee: **Annette Iverson, Heidi Hill, Martin Hansen and Marti Pausback.**

NEW Way to CONTACT us: Please RSVP to anchorage.friluftsliv@gmail.com

JANUARY

What: Wooden Ski Classic

Where: Kincaid Park

When: Sunday January 25

How: Go to the NSAA website

<https://anchoragenordicski.com/races/amh-anchorage-cup/>

Register under AMH race number 3

Volunteers needed: sign up to help out with the race

- Make Rice Porridge • Troll Patrol • Pine Tar Wooden Skis

Sign up Genius on NSAA Website under AMH Cup #3 or go to following link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050F4FABAB2AA2FC1-59735510-kincaid#/>

Tell your friends to come ski and celebrate Wool, Wood and Nordic skiing, and show off your beautiful Nordic knits and knickers!



FEBRUARY

What: Ski For Women

Where: Kincaid Park

When: Sunday February 1

How: To register go to NSAA Website or click on the link below.

https://events.com/r/en_US/registration/alaska-ski-for-women-2026-anch

Our team name is Viking Skiing Mothers and Daughters

Help raise funds for women and children in Alaska who are experiencing domestic violence and have fun skiing at the same time! Men can sign up too (virtual ski on Saturday).

Last year we were Skiing Lucias. *This year we will be Skiing Vikings!*

We will meet in the Kincaid Chalet and then all ski together in the party wave in our Viking helmets and with our Norwegian flags!

We plan to schedule a time to make cardboard and duct tape Viking helmets (like the one in the photo above) for our costumes.



MARCH

What:

Jaysen Mathiesen Memorial Kubb Tournament

When:

Sunday March 29

2:00 - 4:00 pm

Where:

Service High School Stadium



APRIL

Picking Up Trash in a Local Park

Date and Location TBA



MAY

Bird Watching

Date and Location TBA



FRA BIBLIOTEKET

Tusen takk to everyone who has donated books to the Bernt Balchen Lodge Viking Library! You can browse or search the catalog online to see what titles we have: <https://www.librarything.com/catalog/VikingLibrary>

Library Hours

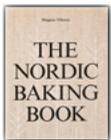
The Library will be open the same nights as our Strikkekafé and Rosemaling groups – the 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of the month, from 7-9pm. (Check calendar for holiday closures: <https://www.sofnalaska.com/calendar/>) The Library is also generally open during lodge events or by appointment. Lodge members are welcome to check out Library materials.

Book Donations

We are still taking donations of new or gently-used books. Any donations that we can't use will be sold in our book sale at the annual Nordic Market, with the funds raised going to purchase more books for the library. You can also donate trade credit to the Lodge Library at Title Wave—just tell them you would like the credit to go to “Sons of Norway.”

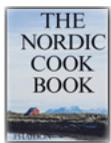
Contact Librarian Christie Ericson at 907-602-0673 or christieak@gmail.com for further information.

Recently Added Titles:



The Nordic Baking Book (2018) and *The Nordic Cookbook* (2015) by Magnus Nilsson

On cold winter nights nothing beats the cozy warmth of an oven or the aroma of freshly baked goods. If you are working on your Cultural Skills pin for Cooking and need some ideas, these two hefty tomes (at 576 pages and 786 pages respectively) will keep you busy until breakup!



Author Nilsson, formerly head chef of Fäviken Magasinet restaurant in Sweden, has traveled extensively throughout the Nordic region (Denmark, Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden) collecting recipes, documenting the landscape, and providing insights into the cultural significance of Nordic dishes. Nilsson has also been featured in the PBS series *The Mind of a Chef* and the Netflix docuseries *Chef's Table*.



Slush Mountain by Bjørn Rune Lie (2016)

With the Wooden Ski Classic and the Ski for Women races coming up, this picture book by award-winning Norwegian illustrator Bjørn Rune Lie is a fun story to get skiers of all ages motivated to hit the slopes! Originally published as *Slapsefjell* in Norway and translated into English by John Coakley, *Slush Mountain* follows a day in the life of the various quirky creatures who live in a remote mountain village.

In Remembrance

Arne Link November 3, 1925 to April 10, 2025

From his wife Norma:

Arne was born in Menomonee, Wisconsin in an old farm house. He lived in a tent that he made, in Anchorage's original "Tent City". He owned L&H Electric, celebrated 60 years in business from 1957 - 2017 and helped with the first traffic light in Anchorage. He owned land where the Loussac Library is now. His Abbott Road house won 4 years in a row for holiday lighting.

Sigmund Restad 1928 to November 24th, 2025

On November 24th, 2025, Sigmund Restad, loving husband, father, grandfather, and great grandfather passed away at the age of 97 in Palmer, Alaska, surrounded by his devoted family.

The Restad family has donated potatoes, carrots, and cabbage for lodge fall events for many years. Mostly the vegetables are delivered right to the door! On occasion, a lodge member made the drive to Palmer to pick them up and enjoyed a wonderful visit with Sig at his home on Farm Loop.

A funeral service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on January 24th, 2026 at the Sacred Heart Church, 1201 E. Bogard Road, Wasilla, Alaska, reception following in the parish hall.

See his full obituary go to <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/name/sigmund-restad-obituary?pid=210419977>

