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April / May

SPRING

2026

VÅR

april / mai

### Greetings Lodge Members



Spring is definitely in the air, and this newsletter highlights several events that enrich our lives. Moreover, you as members create a community at Bernt Balchen Lodge bringing people together. Hikes and bird watching have been offered and well attended. Keep an eye on the E-blast for such added activities as we look at getting outdoors.

Upcoming events listed on our calendar include Scholarship application deadline - April 30th; April 18th Fish Dinner; May 10th Mother's Day Brunch; May 17th Syttende Mai Parade (Delaney Parkstrip); and, our second and fourth Wednesday evenings each month where we enjoy Strikkekafe/Rosemaling (and coffee and tea).

Our lodge is grateful to you, our members and volunteers. Tusen Takk! You make a difference!

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

# CLASSIFIEDS FOR VIKINGS



**AD SIZE:**  
 2 x 3.5 inches  
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Email a scan or digital image of your business card;  
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**Attention:**  
 Classifieds for Vikings

**AFFORDABLE  
 MEDICAL COVERAGE**

Individual or Business  
 HealthShare or  
 ERISA programs  
HealthShare or ERISA programs  
 lower cost than COBRA

**Lower cost than COBRA**

[www.kincaidconsult.net](http://www.kincaidconsult.net)  
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[CL-Kitty.Kincaid@outlook.com](mailto:CL-Kitty.Kincaid@outlook.com)  
CL-Kitty.Kincaid@outlook.com

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



**Website:** <https://www.sofnalaska.com>  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/BerntBalchen](http://www.facebook.com/BerntBalchen)  
**Instagram:** [@sonsofnorwayanchorage](https://www.instagram.com/sonsofnorwayanchorage)  
**Sons of Norway International:** <https://www.sofn.com>

**Submit Articles:**  
[newsletter@sofnalaska.com](mailto:newsletter@sofnalaska.com) Attn: The Flyer

**Submission deadline for our  
 September/October 2026 issue is August 10th**

"Gratulerer med dagen!"



# SUNSHINE REPORT



"Happy Birthday!"

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

**APRIL**

Loretta Hodson  
Ruta Cukurs  
Delores A Lambert  
Craig O Ronning  
James H Larsen  
Richard Dunning  
Lillian Marvin  
Janice G Finlay



**MAY**

Phyllis Begun  
Darrell E Korman  
Gordon D Homme  
Judith A Bagley  
David W Haugen  
Donna L Libal  
Joan W Nunn  
John Randall  
Eric Johnson  
James S Strandberg  
Sonja Ann Arduser  
Martin John Hansen  
Robert Herrett  
Cheryl D Barstad

**JUNE**

Wayne C Johnson  
Sandra L Johnson  
Sigrun C Robertson  
Andrea L Monsen  
Camille I Curry  
Terje G Birkedal  
Michael E Ellingboe  
Kathy Privratsky  
Timothy D Martinson

**JULY**

Shirley Marie Luedke  
Alice L Sears  
Marilyn B Lee  
Sigrid S Bryant  
Carol Ericson  
David G Hanson  
Hal Courtice  
Robert Watkins  
Phyllis A Billingsley

**AUGUST**

Eunice Vrem  
Joan Hatley  
Diane Thomas  
Diane R Pederson  
Kathryn A Morgenthaler  
Cynthia J Olnes



*Do you know someone who needs a little sunshine?*

**Contact Anna Bryant at:**  
**[anna\\_bryant@hotmail.com](mailto:anna_bryant@hotmail.com)**



## STRIKKEKAFÉ



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

Strikkekafé means 'knitting café' 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.

**Strikkekafé 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

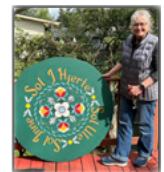
All levels welcome

Contact Christie Ericson to register

[Christieak@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:sonancak@gmail.com) and then Amanda will reach out with more information.



SCHOLARSHIP FUND SUPER BOWL PARTY & RAFFLE 2026



An enthusiastic crowd was on hand for the Sons of Norway Super Bowl Party on Sunday, February 8. Anita Persson and crew made the Lapskaus which was enjoyed by all, along with other snacks and beverages.

The game was shown on three big TV screens—one being the HDTV in the kitchen. Marit Kristiansen kept us on the up-and-up recording the “official record of drawing” along with announcing winners with the ringing of the cowbell. Jane Moe Newby handled the paperwork associated with notifying raffle winners. Thank you also to Christie Ericson, Hanna Persson, and Cynthia Olnes for helping with the drawing. Congratulations to the big winner—lodge sports director Martin Hansen!

#1 \$200 Sandra Johnson	#75 \$50 Randy Arduser	#165 \$25 Shirley Moe	#240 \$100 Anna Bryant
#7 \$50 Matthew Olnes	#90 \$100 Linda Sharp	#180 \$25 Brenda Bergsrud	#250 \$25 Lisa Heady
#13 \$100 Jane Moe Newby	#105 \$25 John Olnes	#195 \$100 Deb Wright	#270 \$50 Lisa Heady
#45 \$50 Gordon Severson	#121 \$50 Christie Ericson	#210 \$50 Ruth Kvernplassen	#299 \$250 Amanda Saxton
#66 \$25 Susan Golds	#150 \$200 Kiersten Russell	#225 \$25 Cynthia Olnes	#300 \$1,000 Martin Hansen

Thank you to raffle winners Randy Arduser and Linda Sharp for donating their winnings to the scholarship fund and to all those who purchased raffle tickets. 2026 scholarship recipients will be announced at the Syttende Mai celebration.

*Tusen Takk from the Raffle Committee - Jane, Sandra, Wayne and John*



*Photos courtesy of Anita Persson*

**BERNT BALCHEN LODGE SCHOLARSHIPS - APRIL 30 DEADLINE**

*Individual scholarships up to \$1,000 to be awarded to qualified applicants who are a member, child or grandchild of a member of Bernt Balchen Lodge 2-046.*

The 2026 scholarship applications are available for both the Language and Heritage Scholarship and the Higher Education Scholarship. Applications can also be requested by email to [sonancak@gmail.com](mailto:sonancak@gmail.com) Attn: Scholarship Committee

OR Click the link below to download the Instructions and Requirements; Language/Heritage, and Higher Education Applications.

*(It is very important to read the instructions and requirements before filling out the applications.)*

**[LINK - Instructions and Requirements, Language/Heritage Scholarship, and Higher Education Application\(s\)](#)**

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 college, vocational or trade school of learning beyond the high school level.

**Applications due by April 30th.** Scholarship recipients will be chosen by May 10th and announced at the 17th of May Celebration.

If you have any questions concerning the application process and procedures, feel free to contact our committee at 349-1613 or by email at [sonancak@gmail.com](mailto:sonancak@gmail.com).

Please make sure your completed application packet arrives via email or mail on or before the due date of April 30th.

Sons of Norway/Bernt Balchen Lodge • Attn: Scholarship Committee • 8141 Briarwood Street • Anchorage, AK 99518

Linda Bustamante, Foundation Director

**Meet us for the SYTTENDE MAI  
PARADE & CELEBRATION**

**Sunday, May 17 5:00 pm**

We will meet outdoors at Delaney Park in the open space west of "N" Street on the north side of the Rose Garden between 9th and 10th Avenues.



We encourage you to wear your bunads or Norwegian sweaters and red and blue ribbons as we carry Norwegian flags and the Bernt Balchen Lodge banner around the block. We will have flags on hand – or bring your own.

A short program will precede the parade and hot dogs and ice cream will follow.

**This event takes place rain or shine!**

*If you would like to help or have questions please contact John Olnes at 907-748-0704.*

**Mother's Day Brunch**

at  
**Viking Hall**

**Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup> 10:00 am to 1:30 pm**

**The menu includes:**

Walter's sourdough pancakes, Nuna's apple cinnamon syrup, ham, reindeer sausage, eggs, mixed fruit and beverages. *We hope you can join us!*

**Adults - \$20 • Ages 12 to 16 - \$10**

**Ages 5 to 11 - \$5 • Under 5 years FREE**

***Help Needed!***

The Mother's Day Brunch committee is hoping some of our Lodge Youth are available to help with serving between 10:00 am and 1:30 pm.

We are looking at 2-hour shifts, however even an hour would be greatly appreciated.

Please contact John Olnes (907-748-0704) to find out more, or leave a message at the Viking Hall office (907-349-1613) to let the committee know what times you are available to help; or email [sonancak@gmail.com](mailto:sonancak@gmail.com) to let us know the time you are available to help. This is an excellent opportunity for Lodge youth to be part of a Lodge event.



# SONS OF NORWAY NORWEGIAN FISH DINNER



April 18, 2026

Appetizers 5:30 pm    Dinner 6:00 pm

8141 Briarwood Street, Anchorage, AK 99518

## Menu\*

### Appetizers

Brunost Cheese  
Cheese Mousse  
Gravlax  
Marinated Anchovies  
Pickled Eggs  
Rum Soaked Cherry & Pistachio Pork Pate

Salmon Roe with Crème Fraiche on Blinis  
Stuffed Mushrooms with Blue Cheese  
& Scallions  
Smoked Fish-Wurst  
Assorted Breads  
Assorted Pickles

### Soup

Oyster Stew

### Palate Cleanser

Aquavit Sorbet

### Main Course

Asparagus with Lemon-Herbal Dressing  
Boiled potatoes with dill, butter and salt  
Butter-Roasted Carrots with Hazelnut Crumble  
and Goat Cheese  
Cod with Green Pea Pesto Crust & Tomato Relish  
Cucumber Salad

Drayton Harbor Crab Cakes with a Butternut  
Bourbon Shooter  
Fermented Beets  
Potato Rolls  
Potato Sausage Braised in Aromatics & Grilled

### Desserts

Buttermilk-Vanilla Panna Cotta with Berries  
& Honey  
Cappuccino/Cinnamon Brownie Bites

Lime Tartlets  
Mazarin Cake  
Swedish Creme with Lingonberry Sauce

### After Dinner Coffee

Church Basement Coffee

Chocolate Covered Aquavit Balls

Chocolate Covered Marzipan

\*Menu may change due to whims and availabilities.

**Seating Limited    Make reservations by phone or email by April 16th**

**Provide:** Name, Contact Phone and number of Adults and Children

**Phone message:** 907-349-1613    **Email:** sonancak@gmail.com

Adults: \$35.00    Ages 13-17: \$18.00    Ages 6-12: \$12.00    Ages 5 & under: free

CULTURAL CORNER

BRIDGE BUILDERS MEET THE WORLD



On February 28th, Bernt Balchen Lodge participated in the Bridge Builders “Meet the World” event, which was held at the Egan Center in downtown Anchorage during Fur Rondy. This annual event showcases Anchorage’s diverse community and highlights the cultures and contributions of immigrants in Alaska. The Sons of Norway has been actively involved in this event for many years, and after the event’s five year hiatus due to the pandemic, we were excited to be involved again.

Anita Persson and Christie Ericson set up a display to educate the community about Norway, as well as recruit new Sons of Norway members. Anita, in her beautiful Sunnmøre bunad, represented Norway in the Parade of Nations at the kickoff of the event. We received many compliments on our display, as well as many congratulations to Norway for their success in this year’s Winter Olympics. (Heia Norge!) Mange tusen takk to Lloyd Persson for helping transport our booth materials!

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NORGE FLIGHT

In 1926, Roald Amundsen, Lincoln Ellsworth, and Umberto Nobile flew with 13 others in the airship Norge from Ny-Ålesund at Svalbard over the North Pole to Teller in Alaska.

The goal of “The Amundsen-Ellsworth-Nobile Transpolar Flight,” as the expedition was known, was to fly over the entire Arctic Ocean and the North Pole for the first time. Italian Umberto Nobile constructed the N1 airship (later renamed Norge) and served as the pilot on the flight. American Lincoln Ellsworth was a major sponsor, as well as navigator, and Norwegian Roald Amundsen served as the expedition leader.

The Norge departed Ny-Ålesund on May 11th at 9:55 am. 16 men were on board, and one dog--Nobile took along his little fox terrier, Titina. The expedition succeeded in crossing the North Pole at 1:25 am Greenwich time on May 12th. The Norwegian, American, and Italian flags were dropped on to the ice below, and the flight continued on towards Alaska. Over Alaska, strong storm winds forced them to land, even though they weren’t exactly sure where they were. They ended up landing near Teller, northwest of Nome, on May 14th. The expedition was a success and the men (and dog) returned to their own countries as heroes.



Airship Norge landing in Teller, Alaska, 1926 (Public Domain) [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Airship\\_NORGE\\_landing in Teller, Alaska, 1926 \(AL%2BCA\\_2538\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Airship_NORGE_landing_in_Teller,_Alaska,_1926_(AL%2BCA_2538).jpg)

In commemoration of the anniversary, a number of events are being planned in Italy, Norway, and Alaska.

The Kickoff Event will be at Viking Hall, April 30th from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. There will also be a kid and adult friendly movie showing on May 2nd, tentatively at 2:00 pm. Watch for more information in upcoming eblasts.

Christie Ericson, Cultural Director/Librarian

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION - BERNT BALCHEN**

**Colonel Bernt Balchen: Polar Aviator & Arctic Innovator**

At our February meeting, we were treated to a riveting presentation on Colonel Bernt Balchen by speaker Kristi Swain. Approximately 50 people attended the talk about our lodge namesake, and nearly everyone said they learned something new about Balchen that they hadn't known before.

Swain, an Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Student with UAF's Arctic and Northern Studies Department, provided an extensive overview of this fascinating Norwegian-American and his Alaskan connection. Born in Norway, Bernt Balchen (1899-1973) led an exciting life, to say the least! In addition to being a pioneer polar aviator, navigator, aircraft mechanical engineer, and military leader, he was also an artist. (We have several of his paintings in Viking Hall.) He was the first pilot to fly over both the North Pole and the South Pole, and after WWII he also spent time in Alaska as the commander of the 10th Rescue Squadron at Elmendorf.

Swain's background and expertise provided engaging insight into the impact of Balchen's work. A retired US Air Force Officer with twenty-one years of experience in intelligence analysis and defense policy, Swain currently serves as a Defense Research Analyst in Arctic Security. Her Ph.D. focus is on the history of Canadian-American military cooperation in Alaska through the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). Swain's research interests include history of Canadian-American military relations in Alaska, US and Canadian Arctic security strategy and policy, environmental, economic, societal and political impact of military operations in Alaska, Cold War History, and Russian and Soviet History. We look forward to seeing the results of her research.

Prior to the presentation, attendees enjoyed some social time, along with fresh Norwegian waffles made by Linda Bustamante. (Tusen takk, Linda!) Several attendees were also inspired to learn more about Balchen's history and checked out materials from the Lodge Library book display after the event.

**For further information, read Kristi Swain's article on Balchen:** [Colonel Bernt Balchen: Polar Aviator, Arctic Innovator](#)

**Or check out books about Balchen from our Lodge Library:** <https://tinyurl.com/BalchenBooks>

*Christie Ericson, Cultural Director/Librarian*



Photos Courtesy of Anita Persson

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](mailto:anchorage.friluftsliv@gmail.com)**

APRIL

**What: Picking Up Trash**  
**Where: Jewel Lake Park**  
**When: Sunday April 26th**  
2:00-4:00 pm



MAY

**What: Bird Watching**  
**Where: Westchester Lagoon**  
**When: Saturday May 23rd**  
12:00 pm



Fun Photos From Our Adventures

January Friluftsliv *Wooden Ski Classic*



Linda Bustamante Photo



Marti Pausback Photo

February Friluftsliv *The Alaska Ski For Women*



Marti Pausback Photo

March Friluftsliv *Jaysen Mathiesen Memorial Kubb Tournament*



Anita Persson Photo



Marti Pausback Photo

FRA BIBLIOTEKET

One of the advantages of having a robust library collection is being able to share resources and information about topics of interest with our members and the community. In February, I put together book displays for two events, the Bridge Builders Meet the World event downtown and a presentation on Colonel Bernt Balchen [see elsewhere in this issue for further details]. The selected books piqued interest in Norwegian culture and history.



While we receive numerous book donations from generous members as well as the general public, I've identified gaps in our collection, particularly when it comes to cultural skills materials. In December 2025, we applied for a Lodge Culture & Heritage Grant from the Sons of Norway

Foundation, and I am pleased to announce that we were awarded \$950 towards the purchase of book titles to enhance our lodge library. In the upcoming months we will be ordering these titles to support our Cultural Skills programs, so stay tuned.

*I'd particularly like to thank members Gayle Mathiesen and Anita Persson for providing letters of support for the grant.*

*And tusen takk to the Sons of Norway Foundation and donors like yourselves for making grant opportunities like this possible.*

**LIBRARY HOURS**

The Library will be open the same nights as our Strikkekafé and Rosemaling groups – the 2nd and 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.

**You can browse or search the catalog online to see what titles we have:**

**<https://www.librarything.com/catalog/VikingLibrary>**

**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](mailto:christieak@gmail.com) for further information.**



## In Remembrance

**Roberta M. Storo** February 11, 1931 to February 6, 2026

Roberta was born in Seattle, Washington, to Norman and Katherine Henderson. A graduate of Ballard High School, she began her career at First National Bank in Seattle, where she later met her husband, Bjarne Storo of Klæbu, Norway. The couple married in 1958.

Roberta enjoyed traveling, cooking, and real estate. Together with Bjarne, she co-founded Royal Homes in Anchorage, Alaska. They designed and built numerous homes, duplexes, and apartment complexes that remain a lasting part of the Anchorage community.

Roberta and Bjarne moved their family to Norway, first in 1966 and then again in 1975. However, they both missed Alaska and returned home to their beloved state. Roberta immersed herself in Norwegian culture by learning conversational Norwegian and preparing many of her husband Bjarne favorite Norwegian dishes such as Lapskaus, Fiskerboller and his favorite Norwegian Gjetost and Nøkkelost cheese.

Active in her community, Roberta was a longtime member of the Sons of Norway. In 1981, she and Bjarne were among the original volunteers who helped build Viking Hall at the Bernt Balchen Lodge in Anchorage.

Roberta passed away on February 6, 2026, in Prineville, Oregon where she resided. She was preceded in death by her husband in September 2000. She is survived by her two sons, Steven Storo of Prineville, Oregon, and Bradley Storo of Sacramento, California; her grandsons, Neil and Erik Storo of Redmond, Oregon; and her great-grandchildren, Lainey Storo (8) and Hudson Storo (8 months) of Redmond, Oregon.

She will be deeply missed by her family and friends, with her always saying to everyone ~

Mange Takk, Vær så god and Jeg Elsker Dag.



**Shirley Ann Wineberg Moe** January 20, 1932 to February 23, 2026



Shirley, born on Jan. 20, 1932, in Minnesota, passed away peacefully on Feb. 23, 2026, in Anchorage, Alaska, at the age of 94.

On Nov. 27, 1952, Shirley married Gene Axel Moe in Minnesota. After earning her teaching degree from Mankato University, Minnesota, she joined Gene in Anchorage in May 1953. It was a decision that marked the beginning of a life devoted to building — building a family, a business, a church and a lasting foundation in Alaska. She instantly fell in love with Alaska and its breathtaking beauty and abundant wildlife.

Shirley began her professional career teaching at Lake Otis Elementary School before founding M & M Contractors with Gene in 1959. She was a disciplined and determined businesswoman, a true partner in building something that would endure. She believed in hard work. She did not seek attention, but she expected strength — from herself and from those around her.

Her love was fierce, though often quiet. It was expressed not in grand displays, but in steadfast loyalty, protective care and unwavering commitment. She stood firm for what she believed in and for those she loved.

Shirley was deeply grounded in her Christian faith and was instrumental in the founding of Baxter Road Bible Church. She also devoted significant time and leadership to Sons of Norway and the building of Viking Hall. She helped lay foundations that would continue long after her — foundations of faith, heritage and conviction.

Shirley and Gene raised four children: Karl (Vicki) Moe, Jane Moe Newby, Heidi (Tony) Coop and Eric Moe. She also leaves behind her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

She taught by example that faith is lived, not merely spoken. That strength is quiet but immovable. That love is proven through loyalty and endurance.

A celebration of life will be held at Son's of Norway Viking Hall in Anchorage at 4 p.m., on April 24, 2026.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Sons of Norway Youth Scholarship or Young Lives of Anchorage.

*You never truly lose someone you carry in your heart.*