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## SONS OF NORWAY BERNT BALCHEN LODGE – PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

### And Then There Was One.....

When the first Norwegian immigrants arrived in the United States prior to the Civil War they encountered a nation which was awash in newspapers. Newspapers were everywhere, and often very opinionated, if not openly strident in their political views. The Norwegians, being quick learners, decided to publish their own newspapers. Many of these Norwegian-American newspapers also became opinion-mongers in their own right. Some, like the *Skandinaven*, published out of Chicago, took the side of the “low church”, the Haugeans; others, like the *Emigranten* favored the views of the “high church” or the Lutheran Church’s official Norwegian Synod. Soon, both small and large Norwegian communities in the United States wanted to hear their own voices in their very own newspapers. Some of these Norwegian-language newspapers had hundreds of subscribers; others thousands. A number were simply founded for spite to rail against the opinions of other Norwegian-Americans. The Norwegians who came to America were not always a unified bunch amongst their own.



Over time up to 400 Norwegian-language newspapers were founded and published in the United States. Many of these lasted barely six months before they folded, but quite a number flourished and survived well into the twentieth century. The smaller papers concentrated on local news, gossip, and public announcements. They also offered advertisements for Norwegian foodstuffs like pickled herring, fish balls, and goat cheese. The bigger papers offered a wider world view and carried news items from both Norway and the United States. For many immigrants who were new to America these larger newspapers helped them to better understand the “New Land” while at the same time connecting them to the “Old Country”. The *Skandinaven* cleverly gave away free papers to new immigrants, knowing that many would eventually buy subscriptions.

The three largest papers to emerge in the Norwegian-American world were the *Skandinaven*, the *Decorah-Posten*, and the *Minneapolis Tidende*. At their prime, these newspapers boasted 54,000, 45,000, and 33,000 subscribers, respectively. These larger papers targeted Norwegian-Americans across the country. As the noted Norwegian-American historian Odd Lovoll has said in his book, *The Promise of America: A History of the Norwegian-American People*, these papers “carried the local news from a large area. By binding the individual groups of Norwegians, the Norwegian-American newspapers gave meaning to the concept of a Norwegian America.”

And Norwegian-language newspapers were not confined to the Midwest. The *Nordiske Tidende* was started in late-nineteenth century Brooklyn by Emil Nielsen from Horten, Norway. That paper rose to 8,000 subscribers among the Norwegian denizens of “Lapskaus Avenue”. Also, as Norwegians made their way to the west coast, they too thought they should have their own press outlets. The *California-Posten* was founded as early as 1876 in San Francisco and soon *Tacoma-Tidende* followed along with *Washington-Tidende* (later to become *Western Viking*) in Seattle.

Partly due to the overt xenophobia that swept the United States in the early twentieth century Norwegian-language newspapers began to dwindle in the teens and twenties as did the number of subscribers. Another major reason for this twentieth-century reduction in numbers of newspapers and readers was that many second and third generation Norwegian-Americans were no longer fluent in Norwegian. Also, their social and cultural ties to Norway were not as strong as it had been among their parents and grandparents.

**President’s Message continues on Page 2**

## FRA BIBLIOTEKET:

Jo Nesbø is arguably Norway's hottest crime fiction writer today. His Detective Harry Hole series has sold millions of copies worldwide and he has won numerous awards. A few years ago I started with what I thought at the time was his first Harry Hole novel, *The Redbreast*, and I was hooked. His storyline is fast-paced, intricate and full of surprises around every corner. And Harry is no perfect detective as he scrapes and fights his way through various situations. I was on my fifth Harry Hole novel when I realized that there were in fact two novels even before the *Redbreast* that I had not read – the start of the whole series! I have now completed my read of *The Bat and Cockroaches*, the first and second novels in the series of what is now up to ten novels to date.

These first two novels help explain a few details behind Harry's character, but surprisingly neither of them is even set in Norway. *The Bat* takes place in Australia when Harry is sent to investigate the murder of a young Norwegian woman. He is drawn into a web of a series of murders and



as he discovers the murderer is not afraid to continue. Having completed his Australian assignment, Harry heads off to Thailand in *Cockroaches* to expedite the sensitive investigation into the Norwegian Ambassador's murder when his body is found in a brothel.

The Norwegian Foreign Office wants the case solved quickly and without any media headlines, but Harry soon finds that he is challenged to fulfill either of these expectations.

If you have not yet been introduced to Harry Hole, now is the time to start! And if like me you have read some of the other books first, returning to these first two novels is not disappointing in any way.

The lodge library now has books one through seven on the shelf and I am working to get books eight, nine and ten out there too once I have read them myself! Enjoy the start of 2017 with a new read.

Tom Falskow  
Lodge Librarian

## Norwegian American Newspaper

### President's Message continues from Page 1

By 1935, one of the biggest of the Norwegian-language newspapers, the *Minneapolis Tidende*, closed its doors. The *Decorah-Posten* struggled on until 1972. At one time it had had 45,000 subscribers. At its end the *Decorah-Posten* was down to only 4,000 subscribers.

Today there is only one newspaper devoted to the Norwegian-American audience left in the United States. Its direct ancestors are *Western Viking* and *Nordisk Tidende*. This newspaper is called *The Norwegian American* and it is published out of Seattle on a bi-weekly basis. The *Norwegian American* is not a Norwegian-language newspaper. It is for the most part an English language newspaper which has only one page exclusively devoted to news in Norwegian. However, it is focused on Norway and Norwegian-American stories. The newspaper covers politics, business, the arts, history, heritage, sports, travel, books, humor, food and much else – all with a Norwegian and Norwegian-American slant and flare. If you want to know what is going on in Norway and have an interest in things Norwegian this is the newspaper for you. It is a wonderful supplement to the *Viking Magazine*. Similar to the *Viking Magazine*, *The Norwegian American* has a modern layout and design and a fresh feel, but it is a bi-weekly newspaper, not a magazine. If you want to sit down with your coffee and *The Norwegian American* to learn what the King of Norway is up to, then "Google" their

website at [www.norwegianamerican.com](http://www.norwegianamerican.com) and sign up for a subscription. A hard-copy print subscription is \$70.00 per year; the digital-only subscription is only \$30.00 per year. Tom Falskow, our former President and currently our Membership Secretary and Librarian, introduced *The Norwegian American* to me, and now I am introducing it to you. *Vaer så god!*

Fraternally yours,  
Terje "Ted" Birkedal



## SUNSHINE REPORT



Greetings are sent to the following members celebrating a birthday who are at least 75 years young.

### JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Charles A. Brodahl  
Louis Carufel  
John Hall  
Shirley Moe  
David Pederson  
Betty Rockne



Evelyn Rush  
Susan Soby  
Alfred Augestad  
David Fauske  
Marilyn Martinson

If you know someone who needs a little sunshine,  
call 696-0725 (cell - 862-1143) or

"Happy  
Birthday!"

email Cindy McDowell:  
[ccmcd38@hotmail.com](mailto:ccmcd38@hotmail.com)

"Gratulerer  
med dagen!"



# BERNT BALCHEN LODGE 2016 – A YEAR IN PICTURES



*All Photos on the page attributed to Glenn Soby, Lise Falskow, Christie Ericson and Ruth Kvernplassen*



# Lucia Family

## *Thanks to the Lucia Committee*

*I would like to give my deep thanks to the Lucia Committee for 2016. The committee formed on short notice and did a great job. In particular I wish to thank Committee Co-Chairs Crystal Enkvist and Karin Childers for their leadership. In addition, the 2016 committee members have volunteered to do it all again for 2017, but this time they will have a much longer time for planning the event.*

<i>Committee Members:</i>	<i>Marty Margeson</i>	<i>Jennifer Robertson</i>
<i>Karin Childers, Co-Chair</i>	<i>Johanna Marvin</i>	<i>Season Terrell</i>
<i>Crystal Enkvist, Co-Chair</i>	<i>Cynthia Olnes</i>	

*Also, deserving of my great thanks is Anne Adasiak-Andrew who served admirably again as Rehearsal Coach for Lucia.*

*And I must congratulate our 2016 Lucia, Beth Margeson. She was a beautiful Lucia who performed like the role was made for her. Also, thanks to all the other young people who made Lucia happen this year as Lucia's companions. You were all enthusiastic and great.*

*Finally, thanks to all the kitchen and set-up help and to our able DJ, Loren Leman.*

*To all my sincere thanks for a successful Lucia,*

*Terje "Ted" Birkedal  
President, Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge*



Beth with her sister, Annie, who also served as Lucia for Bernt Balchen Lodge





## Christmas Celebration



*All photos courtesy of Ruth Kvernplassen*

## DITT og DATT!

### **Free Cross Country Ski Lessons and Wax Clinic**

#### **Ski Lessons:**

January 14th or 28th (skate) 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm

February 4 or 18 (diagonal) 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm

Kincaid Park for all lessons - *specific location TBD*

#### **Wax Clinic:**

January 11th - 7:00 pm Bernt Balchen Lodge

If you're interested in x-country ski lessons and/or the wax clinic please RSVP to Martin Hansen, Sports Director.

**Text** to (907) 980-5333 or **Email:** [bikeskifish@gmail.com](mailto:bikeskifish@gmail.com)

Classes are subject to change depending on RSVP's.

#### **Did you know.....**

To "ring in Christmas" is a beloved Norwegian tradition. The bells in most of the churches all over the country merrily chime, ringing "julen inn," from 5 pm to 6 pm, on Christmas Eve. In case you don't live close to a church, the largest radio station in Norway, NRK P1, airs the program, "Kim alle klokker" (chime all bells), for the entire hour. During the program, church bells from each of the 20 counties as well as from Oslo and Bergen are

featured. Last Christmas Eve, over a half million people tuned in to listen and enjoy this solemn hour when the arrival of Christmas is loudly proclaimed throughout the land. Norwegians living abroad are also able to listen to NRK and take part in this merry tradition. Here in Alaska, you can enjoy the ringing in of Christmas from 6 am – 7 am on Christmas Eve morning by tuning into NRK Radio P1, either on line or via the NRK Radio app. Gledelig jul, alle sammen!

#### **If you can stand the heat, come to the kitchen!**

Just a reminder that Viking Hall Kitchen is rockin' on Sundays with amazing cooking classes, and you get to take your creation home! Watch for reminders on the webpage and in the newsletter!

#### **Flyers and Facebook and Webpage - Oh My!**

There are many ways to find out what's happening at our Lodge.

**Our Website:** <http://www.sofnalaska.com>

(You can also see our Flyer in "living color" by clicking on the Newsletter page)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/BerntBalchen](http://www.facebook.com/BerntBalchen)



## Are You Ready For Some Football?!

**Join us Sunday, February 5, 2017, at Viking Hall for the Sons of Norway Super Bowl Party!**

**Doors Open @ 2:00 pm**



Festivities include the showing of Super Bowl LI on a big-screen TV along with great food featuring Wayne Johnson's Lapskaus (Norwegian stew). The cowbell will be ringing as the 20 winning raffle tickets are drawn and announced to an enthusiastic crowd. Only 300 tickets are sold so your chances of winning are huge!

The Super Bowl Raffle is the primary source of funds for the Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge No. 2-046 Language/ Heritage/Higher Education Scholarships awarded each year at the Syttende Mai celebration.

*If you have not purchased your tickets yet please contact –*

*John Olnes (562-2794), Wayne Johnson (248-3030), Jane Moe (274-1357)  
or the Viking Hall office (349-1613).*

*Tickets are selling for \$25 each or a book-of-5 for \$100.*







## Consul's Corner

*Information and Opportunities for Norwegian Alaskans*



### Special Opportunity for Norwegian Citizens!

#### ***Special Passport Renewal Opportunity for Norwegian Citizens - Date Has Been Set!***

#### **Norwegian Passports can be renewed in Anchorage for one day only on January 19, 2017.**

Due to biometric data requirements, all Norwegian Passports for citizens over the age of 12 normally need to be renewed where a biometric machine is located: in San Francisco, Houston, New York, Washington DC, or Norway. For one day only on January 19, the biometric machine will be in Anchorage. Please call Honorary Consul Lise Falskow at (907) 440-5473 to schedule an appointment if you are interested in renewing your passport during this special opportunity.

All citizens under the age of 12 do not require biometric screening and can therefore have their passports issued or renewed with me at anytime.

*Lise Kristiansen Falskow*

*Royal Norwegian Honorary Consul, Alaska*

*Telephone: +1 (907) 440-5473*

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*I am honored to have been asked to serve as the Norwegian Honorary Consul in Alaska. When information and opportunities come across my desk, I will let Norwegians in our community know about them in a regular Consul's Corner section of the Flyer.*

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## Passages

Wayne M. "Rock" Rockne, 90, husband and father, passed into God's arms on December 21, 2016, while at Providence Extended Care. He was born in Pierce, Nebraska, on March 10, 1926, to Ole and Iva Rockne. In June of that year, his parents returned to Mission Hill, South Dakota where he spent his first 17 years. After graduation from high school, he served in the Marine Corps during World War II in the Pacific Theater. He was involved in the invasion of Okinawa and the following surrender of Japan. Upon returning after the war, he became reacquainted with his soon to be wife Betty (Spear) and they were married in Yankton, South Dakota on June 12, 1948. Together they raised five children.

A memorial service will be held at Saint Mark Lutheran Church at 3220 Lake Otis Parkway at 2:00 pm with the Rev. Carol George officiating. He wishes memorials to be made to Shriner's Children Hospital, 2900 N. Rocky Point Drive, Tampa FL 33609; or Sons of Norway Scholarship Fund, Bernt Balchen Lodge #2-46, 8141 Briarwood Street, Anchorage Alaska 99518.


*Thank you to the team at Providence Extended Care Campus for their support.*

*Please take time to reach out to the friends and family of those who have passed.*



**Sons of Norway**  
8141 Briarwood St.  
Anchorage, AK 99518  
907-349-1613

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EVENTS FOR JANUARY!	FOOD BANK DONATIONS	INTRODUCING....
<p><b>3</b> <u>Tuesday</u> 10:00 am Needle Crafts &amp; Rosemaling Class</p> <p><b>12</b> <u>Thursday</u> 7:00 pm Officer Installation &amp; Dessert Reception</p> <p><b>17</b> <u>Tuesday</u> 10:00 am Needle Crafts &amp; Rosemaling Class</p> <p><b>28</b> <u>Saturday</u> 7:00 pm Cultural &amp; Heritage Night</p>	<p>Our lodge continues to donate canned goods, non-perishable foods and money to the local food bank. Please bring your food or monetary donation in to <b>Viking Hall</b>.</p> <p><i>Please consider helping those who are less fortunate.</i></p> 	<p><b>DITT og DATT!</b></p> <p>Do you have any news of interest to the lodge?</p> <p>Perhaps a question on Norway, or our lodge, that we can answer?</p> <p>Are you looking for a traditional recipe, or do you have one to share?</p> <p>Maybe you want to tell us your best Lena and Ole joke?</p> <p>Ditt og Datt (this and that) is the column for you.</p> <p>To submit items to Ditt og Datt send an email to:</p> <p>sonancak@gmail.com</p> <p>Subject Line: The Flyer/DittDatt</p>

**All events take place at Viking Hall, 8141 Briarwood St., unless otherwise noted.**

Please send articles or event information  
for the next Newsletter by January 15th to: [sonancak@gmail.com](mailto:sonancak@gmail.com) Attention - **Ruth** Subject Line - **The Flyer**