



SONS OF NORWAY

FJELL-LJOM.. (MOUNTAIN ECHOES).. BLÅ FJELL LODGE 3-646
Sep 2020 Newsletter
NOTE TIME CHANGE OF SEPT 26 GALA!!!

President: Sharon Rohrback 540-774-0006
Vice President: Joann Barfield 540-380-2926
Secretary: Kathy Clark 540-977-2349
Treasurer: Cheri Johnson 540-989-6330
Editor: vacant (Sharon Rohrback, acting)

Blå Fjell's website: sonsofnorwayblafjell.org
 Facebook group: <http://www.facebook.com/SonsOfNorwayBlaFjell>

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Sons of Norway is to preserve and cherish a lasting appreciation of the heritage and culture of Norway and the other Nordic countries.

Regularly scheduled meetings:

Fourth Saturday of each month, 1:00 PM,
 College Lutheran Church, 210 South College Avenue, Salem
 (Except for special events)

SEPTEMBER 26, 2020, 2-4 PM -- see pp 2-3 for detail
SON 125th Anniversary Gala ---RSVP BY SEPTEMBER 12!!
Specify Montano's boxed meal choice when you RSVP.

at St. John Lutheran Church,
 4608 Brambleton Avenue, SW Roanoke, in the Youth Lounge
BRING NICE NORDIC ITEMS TO BE SOLD
SUNSHINE CARDS: Marilyn Barrier
 Bring your stamps for Tubfrim. And canned goods for Salem Food Pantry.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

SEP 26, 2020 NOTE TIME CHANGE TO 2-4 PM at St. St. John Lutheran Church.
SON 125th Anniversary GALA and Nordic sale of fine Nordic items (this is not an auction).

Montano's boxed meal. Event chair: Cheri

Oct 9, Faith Christian School (Leif Eriksson Day pgm by Cheri only)

Oct 24, 2020 Meeting 1-3pm at CLC. Business: Finalize officer nominees for Nov vote.

Program: Heritage Day. Event chair: Joann

Nov 6, Viking Day at Faith Christian School (pgm by Cheri and 6 other members)

Nov 21, 2020 Meeting 1-3pm at CLC. Business: Vote for officers for 2021-2022.

Program: Make and take ornament craft. Event chair: Kathy

Dec 11, 2020 St. Lucia Concert at St. Andrew Catholic Church

Dec 12, 2020 Julefest 1-3pm at CLC. Julefest Koffee Klatch and St. Lucia. Event chair: Sharon.



125 th ANNIVERSARY FOR SONS OF NORWAY 1895 - 2020 BLA FJELL GALA

Sons of Norway Blå Fjell Lodge #346  **RSVP TO CHERI JOHNSON BY SEPT 12.**

Saturday, September 26, 2020

2-4 pm with dinner at 2:30 

St. John Lutheran Church at 4608 Brambleton Ave. Roanoke, Va. 

Don't forget we are placing a donation box at our September Gala, proceeds to be given the Alzheimers Fund.

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FREE Box Lunch from MONTANOS  **CHOOSE FROM MENU BELOW AND SPECIFY YOUR CHOICE WHEN YOU RSVP.**

Norwegian Bingo with prizes 

2 Art Coloring Contests with prizes 

Norwegian Social Distance Dancing 

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NORDIC SALE - all donated items prices are firm 

Music - Edward Grieg, Sissel, Mari Boine (Sami music), Norwegian Folk Songs 

Dress in your favorite outfit, Festdrakt, Bunad, SON Apron, Nordic Sweater 

ONLY COME IF YOU WANT TO HAVE FUN !!! 

See Menu Choices below: specify an option

MONTANO'S 125th ANNIVERSARY MENU SELECTION
Specify your selection when you RSVP to Cheri Johnson by September 12.

1. 1/2 BBQ RIBS with potato salad and slaw
2. CHICKEN CORLEONE.....sauteed tenders with rice
3. PASTA PRIMAVERAfresh vegetables in Alfredo sauce
4. Authentic PHILLY CHEESE STEAK
5. MEATBALL HOAGIE.....5 meatballs with sauce and mozzarella cheese
6. SOUTHERN FRIED SALAD (with chicken, cheddar cheese, & ham) on a salad
7. WHITE ALBACORE TUNA SALAD plate
8. GOURMET CHEESE BURGER with wedge cut fries
9. ROANOKE'S BEST CHICKEN SALAD plate

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MEMBER NEWS

September Birthdays: Dorrit Grina 9/1 (100 years old!)
Janice Quick 9/10 Larry Norman 9/12 Lars Hagen 9/24

Prayers of Joy on Dorrey Grina's 100th birthday. For her ZOOM celebration, her Norwegian relatives were all dressed in native outfits and sang songs, etc. She got 160 cards..one from the King of Norway!!!

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LODGE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Sharon Rohrback, President

See below article from District 3 Foundation Director; the District 3 Foundation is extremely important. Notice his emphasis and fundraising ideas.

Dirk Hansen, as Zone 7 lodge Director mentioned to me that Blå FJell Lodge is the only one in Zone 7 meeting at this time. Thank you to St. John Lutheran for giving us space, to Cheri for arranging setup/cleanup of that space, to all wearing their masks, and to snack providers bringing "hands-off" Snacks. At our August meeting, Cheri gave a program on the history of SONS of Norway. These books were shared. Cheri Johnson shared three "Heidi"books, each geared to different ages. Joann shared children's book "Love You Forever", which was introduced to her at the time of the birth of her FIRST grandson and has been given as gifts to family and friends many times since. Joann also shared "**The Bedford Boys**" by Alex Kershaw, a well-researched book on the 19 young men from Bedford killed in the D-Day Invasion in 1944, the largest per capita loss of any town in America, which compelling story led to the establishment last year of the "**Bedford Boys Tribute Center**" located in Green's Drug Store in Bedford (the location of the teletype machine which brought the news of these losses to the Bedford community). **For anyone needing a refresher on the tremendous sacrifices of WWII, this book and this Center are well worth your time!**

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VICE-PRESIDENT/MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR MESSAGE:

WOW! Hope you read the Cultural Article from Hampton Roads! It features St. Olav's Way in Gudbrandahlen, Norway, where both of my grandparents came from, and the largest stav church in Norway, the Ringebu Stavkirke, in which my grandfather was both baptized and confirmed! Hugh and I had the pleasure of attending the Sunday service at the Ringebu Stavkirke on our first visit to Norway, an awesome experience; the service was in Norsk, of course, but it followed the international lectionary and our liturgy, so we had an idea of what it was about! (Later, in Trondheim, we visited the spectacular Nidaros Cathedral and paid our respects to St. Olav himself! In fact, our hotel was on the city's central square, where we could **sit in the bathroom and gaze out the window at the St. Olav statue!**)

How wonderful to have such great memories to **give us joy** during this continuing period of social isolation! Be sure to read Third District President Kathy Dollymore's comments on this subject, which will bring you *joy and contentment!*

Our 125th Anniversary GALA in September looks to be a Super Good Time that we hope all of our membership will enjoy. Again, a good time to bring prospective members along, so that they can get an idea of what Sons of Norway is all about!

Joann Barfield, Vice President/Membership Director

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AUGUST 2020 MEETING MINUTES

The August 22, 2020 meeting was held at St. John Lutheran Church. Pres. Sharon opened the meeting by welcoming 10 members and 2 guests. The 3 National Anthems of Norway, Canada and America were spoken rather than singing them. Cheri gave her second SON-provided presentation about the history of SON. Our next event will be the SON 125th Anniversary Dinner of the founding of Sons of Norway that was established in Mpls, MN by 18 Norwegian immigrants. The dinner is being paid from by a Sons of Norway Foundation grant. Our lodge had received a grant from them, but we were unable to use it for Local Colors due to the Corona19 virus. Montano's Restaurant will be providing the dinner prepared for each person in a special box. A menu was passed around where we could choose our meal. The treasurer's report was given by Cheri. Each month we collect money for a needy family or person to be given at Christmas. The yard sale held at Cheri's home raised \$247.25. Our goal was \$150.00 so we exceeded the goal. The Nominating Team is working on the Elections of Officers to be held in Nov and installed in Jan 2021. This year we are forming teams of 2 or more to work together on the responsibilities. Joann and Helene were presented with Recruitment Awards for new members.

Kathy Clark, Secretary

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CULTURAL DIRECTOR MESSAGE

Hi Everyone! We had a lot of fun at our last meeting in August at St. John Lutheran Church on Brambleton Ave.

Hope you can join us for the "Gala" on Sept. 26 from 2-4pm. We have a catered box lunch from Montanos that has been preselected and preordered. We plan on playing Bingo, winning some prizes, dancing a few steps, and buying some Nordic items from the sale table! Make sure to wear something

pretty, wear your mask, stay 6 ft . away, bring your coloring pictures, and happy smile! 😊

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GETTING TO KNOW YOU VERNON FERGUSON

(Vernon is Blå Fjell's website guru)

My name is Vernon Neil Ferguson Growing up we knew my maternal grandmother had been born in Sweden and my grandfather was Dutch, but that was about all we knew.

My Mom was born in New Jersey, which is where both families had settled when they immigrated. My grandfather was transferred to Roanoke in 1956 and my Swedish great grandmother came with them, but she was already declining in health and died within the first year they were here. My grandfather was strict, "You're in America, speak English!" So, we grew up pretty ignorant of our heritage and culture. My paternal grandparents both knew extensive information about their families and had genealogy books on their families. They were mostly English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh with some families traced back to Jamestown. My Dad was born in Bassett, Virginia. His father was from Ferrum and his mother from Oxford in Granville County, North Carolina.

I was involved with Local Colors for many years and since there was no Vasa lodge or Swedish Club, I became a member of the Sons of Norway.

I took an early interest in genealogy on both sides of my family. I drew family trees as early as junior high school. My parents would try to get as much info as they could but other than the "American" side there was not much information. In 1989 or 1990 I bought my first computer and one of the first programs I purchased was a genealogy program. I entered each and every person from the family books, Bibles, and other documents I could find. Luckily this particular program was made to export the data in what had already become the standard format. I started with barely 1,800 people in my tree and now have over 35,000.

We noticed early on that when my grandfather wasn't around my mormor would talk to us about her friends in Sweden, the school, her family, the lake, the trees, the flowers. But never about her home. She never talked about her room or cooking in the kitchen. It was strange.

In 1994 my mormor died. I was 25 and still had so many unanswered questions. I found a minor clue that year when I discovered a postcard that listed the village where she was born. With the advent of the internet I was able to get more info but did not know how to research in the Swedish archives. I found the contact info for a cousin in Sweden and she was able to help me purchase a print copy of the parish records. Luckily my grandmother's province was the only one in all of Sweden which printed their church records and sold them. I began to trace the family back to the 1600s and earlier, but it was just names and dates. I didn't know the stories.

In 2011 I saw an advertisement on Facebook about a TV program that would help Swedish-Americans trace their roots. I was skeptical and did not tell my Mom or my husband about the program, even when I applied. Only after they asked for the first interview did I tell William. I went through applications, Skype interviews, telephone interviews, and then I was selected for a casting call in New York City. Two weeks later I got the call which changed my life: I was officially a contestant on the TV program Allt för Sverige. I spent a month in Sweden and while I was eventually eliminated (this was a reality TV program) I feel like I won. I finally learned the answers to most of our questions. My mormor never talked about her home because she was born in a factory dormitory. She shared a bedroom with all the family. Their apartment was only two rooms with the kitchen and living space being one room. And the work that her parents had to do at the factory in order to survive was dangerous and paid very little.

In 2012 I also made the decision to go to college. This was a dream that I thought I'd never see come true. But I earned my AA at Virginia Western, then transferred to Virginia Tech where I earned my BA in International Studies, and while there I was accepted into an accelerated masters program and now have my MA in Political Science. I graduated with my MA in 2017 and within five months retired from Kroger after 26 years. I am now an academic advisor at Virginia Tech.

I have met so many cousins during my four trips to Sweden that I finally feel like what I enter into my software is no longer just dates and names. One of the things I like to do now is help other people trace their families and make those connections as well.

TELL ME YOUR STORY - revised article title.

From Lodge Editor. You will notice I changed the below article title from "Member Memories", to "Tell Me Your Story". Someone suggested this phrase as "such a catchy, joyful phrase". You can share anything you wish: a favorite memory of your ancestors, your own family, a place you visited and enjoyed, a holiday event, what you discovered about your genealogy, etc, I appreciate articles from all our lodge members.

TELL ME YOUR STORY

From Gail Ofte-Atha about her brother Don Ofte

(note: Don Ofte passed away March 4, 2014 at the age of 84 in Easton, MD. Sharon has the full copy of each article mentioned in the notes below if anyone would like to read them).

Gail's hand-written note said "Don was the best brother a sister could ever have, and I miss him. Besides having a great sense of humor, he was caring and never allowed his integrity to be compromised. He was twelve+ years older than me, but despite the age difference we always had a close relationship. He and my dad loved science fiction and ancient history. Recently I've wondered if their interests led Don to pursue studying chemistry".

Excerpt from Gail's article about Don in the Spring 2014 Scandinavian Press magazine.
The first sentence of the article reads ""How did the only son of two Norwegian immigrants end up responsible for directing the U.S. Nuclear Weapons Program for research, development, production, and retirement of the nation's nuclear weapons?". Don was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY and attended Dana College in Nebraska, majoring in chemistry. After graduating, he was hired as research chemist at Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) in Iowa. He was in the Navy four years. He then resumed his "nuke" career as a senior research chemist at AEC's Mound Laboratory in Ohio.

Excerpt from Don Ofte's obituary. The article has a lot more detail about the work he did, the invention he has a patent on, the development of the heat source used to power the radioisotope thermocouple generators (RTGs) left on the moon by Apollo astronauts to power lunar experiments. He participated on the team negotiating the INF treaty with the then Soviet Union, and on the SALT II treaty. In 2011, he was one of five awardees at NASA's 50th Anniversary of a Half Century of Space Nuclear Flight; recognized as a pioneer for his contributions at AEC's Mound Laboratories.

CULTURAL ARTICLES

What It's Like to Hike Norway's St. Olav's Way.

From Hampton Roads Lodge Facebook Posting, article from AFAR magazine..

You may have heard of the Appalachian Trail and Pacific Crest trails but have you heard of St. Olav's Way? This often-forgotten pilgrimage awes visitors with ancient cathedrals, one of the largest stave churches, 700-year old farms, mountains and more! **Click on below hyperlink.**

<https://www.afar.com/magazine/the-worlds-northernmost-pilgrimage-route-is-in-norway-and-almost-no-ones-heard>

Finnish Settlements in Sweden

from member Kathy Clark, of Swedish heritage.

The Forest-Finns began their move to Sweden in the 1500-1600's. where forested land was available for settling: Finnskogen (available forests). The forests could be homesteaded because the King of Sweden needed people to live in the unpopulated forests, so the land was free, and they didn't have to pay taxes at first.

Even though Finland had been under Swedish rule for 500 years there was a cultural difference in the two countries. Eventually the Finns became part of the Swedish way of living. Language was very hard to understand between the two countries.

Proper land for farming was very important. The suitability of a site was done in various ways. In the autumn a birch-bark vessel was filled with water and left to stand in place. If the surface of the water froze very early, the site for cultivation was not suitable. The site also had to have a good supply of water.

They also had many beliefs in the "underground folk". A site was tested by lying down on the ground and listening. If sounds were heard, the underground folk were active, and the place was where they would settle. It was very important to have the permission of the "underground folk". Another test was to let a rooster walk around the site. If it crowed, it was a good site for building and settlement. Newcomers could camp at the site to see what kind of dreams would follow. If there were dreams of fields of grain, animals or people nodding approval, this was a good place to settle.

Stories have survived regarding the size of the area to be claimed. The farmyard would be the land the master of the household could throw a knife or axe, and this would be the homestead.

Next month, I will write about the importance of slash and burn practices with the Finnish settlers in Sweden and Norway. This is an ancient way of cultivation and finally stopped in the early 20th century.

COZY CONCEPTS IN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES

From Cheri Johnson

NORWAY KOSELIG (koosh - lee)

Coziness in Norway connects companionship with nature to improve your personal well being with no stress. You enjoy the fire pit or bonfires in cozy warm sweaters on long, dark winter nights. You embrace nature and feel good! There is warmth, happiness. and contentment with hot coffee, hotdogs, blankets, and candlelight.

DENMARK HYGGE (hoo - gah)

In Denmark, Hygge is a mood of coziness, contentment, wellness, relaxing, open fires, candles for light, and coffee with waffles. Hotdogs are served with cognac and dark beer is served .

SWEDEN FIKA (fee ka)

In Sweden, people dress for the cold and go outside! Coziness makes you feel joy! Swedes make porridge (oatmeal or rice pudding) and enjoy eating this together with friends and family. Coffee is important to friendship!

FINLAND SISU (SEE SUE)

In Finland, coziness is connected with "forest therapy" where taking walks in the forest in any weather and picking wild berries is important. Sisu helps people survive in hard times. Hot saunas, followed by plunges into cold water are common.

A cup of tea or a cold beer are important too. Happiness comes by living it.

ICELAND same as DENMARK

HUMOR

From Swedish Culture and Traditions Facebook posting.



UPDATE ON THIRD DISTRICT CHARITABLE GIVING

From Foundation director, Dirk Hansen.

We are all entering our local lodge fall season in a changing and unpredictable world but some things remain constant when it comes to Sons of Norway. The members of the 3rd District have historically been known for their generosity and charitable giving as exemplified by the 3rd District Charitable Trust, Alzheimer's/Dementia Awareness contributions and the Sons of Norway Foundation.

Firstly, as we close out 2020, our lodges will be reviewing their annual budgets or examining their financial status and we hope that all of you, as lodge members, will continue to support these extremely worthy and important giving opportunities through your lodges.

For the 125th Anniversary of Sons of Norway, your 3rd District chose to support the Alzheimers Association with a \$12,500.00 donation. We are on pace to perhaps achieve this goal, but we are not there yet. Here is the link to donate as a lodge or as an individual:

https://act.alz.org/site/TR/LongestDay2020/TheLongestDay?team_id=587928&pg=team&fr_id=13035

Secondly, looking ahead to 2021, we all will be developing next year's meeting programming. Don't forget charitable giving is a year-round opportunity so why not have some fun doing it.

Here are some ideas for you to consider or use your own imagination. Thanks to 3rd District Counselor Pete Hanson and Norumbega Lodge 3-506 for these fun suggestions.

Theme basket auction - Members were encouraged to create a theme basket of their choice (sports, romantic dinner, cultural etc.). They were auctioned off in a live auction and the bidding competition ended up being a lot of fun. All proceeds in this case went to the Charitable Trust in this case and we

raised almost \$800. The auctioneer is critical in promoting the bidding in a fun way. It was my first ever attempt at being a live auctioneer and I had a blast.

Tee shirt contest - Members were encouraged to wear their favorite or most outrageous tee shirt (non-offensive of course). Each member was then given a pin on number which corresponded to a bucket/cup in which they could vote for their favorite tee shirt with dollar bills or even checks. The winner was determined by who got the most money in their bucket. All proceeds went to the lodge scholarship fund in this case. This could also be done with hats.

Lego contest. - Similar to the tee shirt contest only members built something from their imagination out of Legos to bring to the meeting. Members then voted for their favorite creation in the same way as the tee shirt contest. I don't recall where the proceeds went for this one, but it raised some significant money. Part of the fun was there was no restriction on having family or children help with a creation which of course created some family fun as well. My grandchildren entered a piece that raised a few dollars.

Fraternally, Pete, Audun and Dirk

THIRD DISTRICT PRESIDENT'S SEPTEMBER 2020 MESSAGE

(From Sharon Rohrback: I added the paragraph indentations and underscoring)

Every single one of us is continuing to feel the impacts of our whole world crashing down around us. As our lodge meetings and events were put on hold, we sit and wait. We try to keep positive thoughts toward the new year of meetings. We are filled with so many questions, but there are no answers, and that is the hardest part for all of us. Everything went downhill so rapidly; it is still difficult to process. As we start to think about how we will begin our Fall Lodge Meetings the questions arise, are we meeting on Zoom or meeting in person? Is the building we meet at even open to us? Can we still have elections of new officers? How do we welcome new members? Are we going to be able to have a Juletfest?

We are placing our members welfare first, despite the type of meeting, events, and experiences that had been planned for years. It seems a bit strange at times to be planning gatherings in the midst of a pandemic where we must keep 6 feet apart and cover our smiles with a mask but I am filled with anticipation and hope for the future. **Hopefully, we find a normal way to enjoy each other's company with as much social distancing as necessary. (Now isn't that the oxymoron of the century)**

But, maybe trying to find "normal" right now isn't what needs to be done. Maybe it's about finding joy from day to day. Look around you right now. What gives you joy? Is it a picture of your family from last year's vacation? How about a piece of art that takes your breath away? Perhaps a book that you've read that's sitting on your shelf puts a smile on your face every time you look at it. Maybe it's the way your partner smiles at you across the dinner table, or the call you get from your kids. Perhaps it's a song that you haven't heard in years, or a movie you could watch over & over again. Joy is different for us all, but there are some things that universally create joy. And, those things bind us together & remind us of our humanity. Bubbles, bright colors, geometric shapes, etc. Yes, there is still a deadly pandemic we need to take seriously. But more importantly, there are still things & moments of joy that we can find that'll get us through the day. I hope you find at least one joyful thing today! For me, while I write this, the smell of the homemade brownies coming out of the oven is putting a BIG smile on my face. If you have taken pictures of your adventures during this time send them so we can get them in the Viking Magazine, and you can share your joy. Stay safe, stay well and take care of each other.

Kathy Dollymore, 3D President

LINKS TO:

THIRD DISTRICT, 3D ZONE7 LODGES and INTERNATIONAL NEWS:

For 3D President's letter, see the Third District Events Calendar:
www.3dsofn.org/newsletter/index.html

For District 3 events: www.3dsofn.org/calendar

For Sons of Norway E-Post: sonsofnorway@sofn.com

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3D (Third District) ZONE 7 LODGES

Blå Fjell Lodge 3-646 meets in Salem, VA: Website www.sonsofnorwayblafjell.org
or Facebook www.facebook.com/SonsOfNorwayBlafjell

Hampton Roads Lodge 3-522 meets in Virginia Beach, VA: Website www.hrson.org
or Facebook www.Facebook.com/hrsons

Norsk Carolina Lodge 3-679 meets in Charlotte, NC: Website www.norskcarolina.org
or Facebook www.Facebook.com/NorskCarolina

Norskevenner Lodge 3-678 meets in Roswell, GA: email sofnvennekretsen@gmail.com
or Facebook www.facebook.com/Sons-of-Norway-Roswell-Georgia-NorskeVenner-Lodge-3-678

North Carolina Vikings Lodge 3-675 meets in Raleigh, NC:
Website www.northcarolinavikings.org. There is no Facebook site.

Southern Star Lodge 3-360 meets in Myrtle Beach, SC: Facebook:
//http://scandinaviancelebrationmb/

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS links:

For Royal Norwegian Embassy in Washington: emb.washington@mfa.no

For Nordic News from the Icelandic Embassy: http://www.iceland.is/us

For NEWEST NEWS: New newspaper ... Welcome to Norway Today: www.norwaytoday.info

For FULL LISTING OF EVENTS around the U.S.: www.norway.org/calendar

TRAVEL INFORMATION FOR NORDIC COUNTRIES: (until about three years ago, we used to be able to contact a country's embassy and would receive a few free travel informational packets to hand out at Local Colors festival. Now the information is online. Thank you, Larry, for the link names.

I verified I could successfully open the below links. Once open, each link had its own method to get at the various information. Sharon Rohrback

www.visitdenmark.com

www.visitfinland.com

www.inspiredbyiceland.com

www.visitnorway.com

www.visitsweden.com

PLAN TO ATTEND EACH AND EVERY LODGE MEETING AND ACTIVITY!

For the Love of Norway!!

