



SONS OF NORWAY

FJELL-LJOM.. (MOUNTAIN ECHOES).. BLÅ FJELL LODGE 3-646

June, 2025

BLÅ FJELL LODGE SUPPORTS A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY SOCIETY

Publication date: two weeks prior to monthly meeting date; input due three days prior to publication.

Administrative officers:

President: Cheri Johnson

Vice President / Membership Director: Joann Barfield

Secretary: Trish Morris

Assistant Secretary/Recording: Becky Burnett

Treasurer: JoAnn Stephens-Forrest

Editor: Joann Barfield

Co-Editor: Scott Rice

Cultural Director: Lucy Hochstein

Co-Cultural Director: JoAnn Stephens-Forrest

Social Director: Helen De Vries

Co-Social Director: Gail Ofthe Atha

Webmaster: Annmarie Drake

Childrens' Activity Director: Cheri Johnson

Foundation Director: Annita Nelson

Historian: Karen Rice

=====

Blå Fjell's website: sonsofnorwayblafjell.org

Facebook group: <http://www.facebook.com/SonsOfNorwayBlaFjell>

=====

MISSION

The mission of Bla Fjell Lodge is the preservation of the heritage and culture of Norway and the other Nordic countries (Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Iceland)

=====

**Regular scheduled meetings: fourth Saturday of each month (except for special occasions),
College Lutheran Church, 120 South Main Street, Salem**

=====

NEXT MEETING -- SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 1-3 PM - NOTE DATE CHANGE!

(one week early due to the schedule of SOUTHERN CAMP!)

COLLEGE LUTHERAN CHURCH, 210 SOUTH COLLEGE AVENUE, SALEM:

PROGRAM: Gathering; Business; Dementia Awareness, Cheri Johnson; SON Foundation, Annita Nelson;

Modern Norway, Jo Stephens-Forrest;

REFRESHMENTS: Snax - Kathy -- Drinx - Joann

Remember to bring your canned goods for the Food Pantry and your canceled postage stamps for Tubfrim!

=====

CALENDAR - BALANCE OF 2025

June 21 – General Meeting - SON Foundation – Culture, Alzheimer's, Dance

June 26-29 – Southern Camp at Isle of Palms, South Carolina

July 19-27 – Youth Camp – Highland Lake, NY – Koinonia

July 26 – Summertime Picnic - home of Larry Norman

August – No Meeting – Vacation!

September 27 – General Meeting - Nordic Auction

October 25 – Anniversary Dinner #29 (restaurant TBA)

November 22 – General Meeting - Culture, Dancing

December 13 – Julefest, St. Lucia Day

unless otherwise noted, all meetings are at College Lutheran Church

=====

Please attend for love of Norway!



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear friends of Bla Fjell Lodge, I am so grateful to all of you who contributed money, your "give aways" from home, and your talents to our annual yard sale and **Local Colors** fundraising event. We can not give to other organizations if we do not raise money.

Our last yard sale was a sad event. 6 workers gave of their time to price items, set up tables, sell the items, and take down all the tables and chairs. It was hard work, and we only made \$205, even though it was a pretty day. We just didn't have enough customers. It was a unanimous decision not to do it next year. Trish had some awesome ideas for fundraising that did not entail so much work from so many people. I decided she should be our fundraising chairman, and she agreed to take on this task.

Our next event was **Local Colors**! Many of you contributed baked goods, the gnome team made lots of gnomes, **Katie Brink** came to help us with lots of breads, cookies, and extra items to contribute and sell. The Vikings were there at 8am to help **Don** and **Becky** set up the tent and took it down. The day was beautiful, we had lots of customers, children and adults came to the Children's table, and we sold a lot of our merchandise. **Joann** was out front, encouraging people to consider the Sons of Norway, and she got a lot of names on her list. It was a total success. Our goal was **\$700**, and we made **\$747**. There is better news, because **Karen Helmold**, our 3D Secretary, and **Katie Brink**, our newest lodge member, made a donation of \$100! I can't wait to hear the Treasurer's report at our next meeting! We will definitely be doing this activity next year! We will be bringing cookies, gnomes, and t-shirts to our next meeting to sell to all who did not have a chance to contribute to this profitable event. Thank you for your hard work and contributions to this event, and that includes **Karen Helmold** and **Katie**! A special thank you to a friend of Jo's who just wanted to come and help us. He spent the whole day and helped **Larry** while he was there.

Here is some more good news. Our next meeting will be June 21 from 1-3pm. We will have our gathering and a short business meeting. 3 people will share information. I will go first and share the last segment of **Dementia Awareness**. Then **Annita** will focus on the SON Foundation, and **Jo** will present information on **Modern Norway** to us. I have to leave early at 3 for a church function, so we will try to stay on time.

Please try to join us, as we have important things to share. On **June 25**, Katie and I will be heading South to **Isle of Palms** for our cultural camp called "**Coastal Retreat**." The next day, Ann Marie, Joann, and Jo will be headed down to attend the retreat. We will share our adventures in the next newsletter. Thanks again for all your help and support!

Cheri Johnson, President

=====

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We continue to WORK at **Prospective Member Recruitment**! In addition to the first large listing of people who have Sons of Norway insurance, provided to us by New Associate Member **Katie Brink**, (to which we sent out 77 letters), Katie provided us another listing of some 36 names of folks in either the Roanoke or Charlottesville areas, who have received letters (plus the 7 to which we sent e-mail messages); thus far, unfortunately, little response .. but we're trying!

Our sign-up sheet from **Local Colors** produced about a dozen names, several of whom expressed genuine interest, as we spoke personally with them; we are following up with these good prospects .. "Onward ever, backward never!" We continue to receive members to the Charlottesville satellite .. **WELCOME to ROBERT B. BERG!**

Thanks to Katie, we finally have the proper submission form for photos to the Viking magazine, so be watching for us!

Joann Barfield,

Vice President/Membership Director

Blå Fjell at Local Colors



*Cheri and Lisa
Spencer, the head of
Local Colors*



*The front of the Bla Fjell tent!
Gnomes and Goodies!!*



*Jeff Rigdon and the
Vikings of the Valley!
They helped us put up
the tent!*



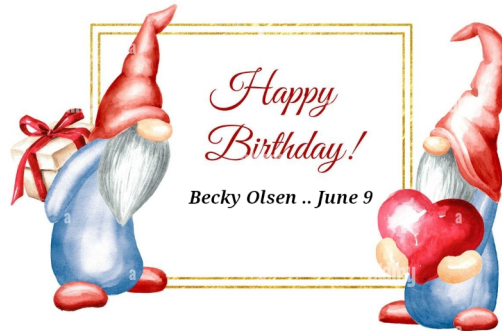
*The photo with us holding
the flags (for four of the
five countries represented
in Sons of Norway) at the
international Parade of
Nations at Local Colors in
Roanoke VA is me (Katie
Brink), Treasurer Jo
Stephens-Forrest,
VP/Membership Director
Joann Barfield, and
Webmaster AnnMarie
Carlson.*



*Child drawing a Viking
symbol of protection!*

MEMBER NEWS

MEMBER BIRTHDAYS --



MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

CHARTER MEMBERS: Jan Helga Bohn - 6-22-96 -- Kathy H. Clark - 6-22-96 -- Lars B. Hagen - 6-22-96
CONGRATULATIONS ON 29 YEARS WITH BLA FJELL LODGE!!

Helene De Vries - 6-25-05 -- Annmarie Drake - 6-01-22 -- JoAnn Stephens-Forrest - 6-25-16 --
Annita P. Nelson - 6-26-04 -- Lawrence P. Norman - 6-26-99 -- Carolyn Marie Sandberg - 6-24-17 --
Walter Andre Sandberg - 6-24-17

=====

Downsizing the Royal Houses of Scandinavia *Presented by Lucy Edwards Hochstein* *April 26, 2025*

In the 2000's dramatic changes have taken place in the Royal families of Sweden, Denmark, and Norway. These changes have been made by the kings and queen in power, not by political or parliamentary forces. European monarchies are struggling to ensure they endure by managing succession and the role of heirs who will never be kings or queens. Those removed are no longer funded by their governments and must now support themselves.

There has also been controversy in the Scandinavian countries over members of their royal families. Some royalty who will never ascend the thrones have behaved in embarrassing ways, and have used their positions and titles in unethical and even illegal ways.

Scandinavian royal families are supported by taxpayers. Some people who aren't fans of monarchy consider the expense of supporting their royals too great a burden on their countries. Thus, removing some royal family members from public support is seen as a response to these critics and a way to maintain the monarchies.

SWEDEN

In 2019 **King Carl XVI Gustav** of Sweden, who has 8 grandchildren, announced that only the children of the crown princess, **Victoria**, would be referred to as *royal highness*. The King's other child, grandchildren, and their children have kept their titles of *prince* or *princess* and are still members of the royal family and retain their place in the Royal line of succession. However, they no longer receive funding from the royal finances. The Swedish king and his family are supported through an annual grant from Parliament. In 2021 this was \$7.2 million. The King must report to Parliament how this is spent. The princes and princesses who are no longer supported by parliament do not have to abide by the rules for the members of the Royal House, such as being educated and living in Sweden and performing official duties. This change was welcomed by the Swedish people as in step with the King's motto, "**for Sweden in line with the times.**" **King Carl XVI Gustav** caused controversy when he said it was unfair that the change in the law of succession that said the eldest child was the direct heir to the throne, regardless of gender, removed his son **Prince Carl Philip** as direct heir before his first birthday and made his older sister direct heir to the throne. The king said little about his actual heir, **Crown Princess Victoria**. The king was later forced to issue a statement in support for Victoria. In 2019 the Swedish monarchy was supported by \$7.5 million in public money. This covered the cost of the king's official duties, including travel, staff and other expenditures, including the Royal Stables.

DENMARK

On January 1, 2023, **Queen Margrethe II** stripped some of her grandchildren of their Prince and Princess of Denmark titles without telling them of the change ahead of the announcement. From then on they would be greeted as *Excellencies*, not *Royal Highnesses*. Therefore, the four children of the queen's second son, Prince Joachim, would no longer be *princes* or *princess*, but *counts* and *countess* of **Monpezat**. Only the children of her elder son, **Crown Prince Frederick**, would be called *prince* and *princess*. Reports say that **Prince Joachim**, his wife, and his family of three boys and a girl were shocked and confused by the surprise decision. The Queen publicly acknowledged the hurt her son had felt from this move, but held her ground, stating this change is in the best interest of the monarchy, and the children to no longer be princes and princess. Prince Joachim's children were never expected to hold an official role within the royal family, and the Queen believed this change would allow them to lead normal lives. She stated she acted "to create a framework for the four grandchildren, to a much greater degree, to be able to shape their own existence without being limited by the special considerations and obligations that formal affiliation with the Royal House as an institution implies." Prince Joachim and his family no longer receive government support except through his work. Prince Joachim serves as military attaché at the Danish embassies in France and the United States. He is fifth in line to the Danish throne after the four children of his brother, King Frederick X, and Joachim's children retain their place in the line of succession to the throne.

On January 14, 2024, **Queen Margrethe II** abdicated her throne on the 52nd anniversary of her reign, and her son **King Frederick X** ascended the throne in her place. Even with downsizing, in 2018 \$12.2 million in taxes went to support the Danish royal family. This covers all expenses including maintenance of royal residences.

NORWAY

In 2002 **King Harald V** of Norway removed the title of royal highness of family and members further removed from the throne, limiting who is officially a member of the **Royal House of Norway**. Currently, the title *royal highness* is held only by the king, the queen, the crown prince, the spouse of the crown prince, and the eldest child of the crown prince. Thus, **Princess Ingrid Alexandra**, the first born child of the Crown Prince, is addressed as *her royal highness*, but her brother, **Sverre Magnus**, is greeted as *his highness*, as are other family members who are no longer considered part of the Royal House. Members of the royal family who are not part of the Royal House do not receive annuities from the Norwegian state. Norwegian royals receiving public moneys are **King Harald V**, **Queen Sonja**, **Crown Prince Haakon** and his family, and the King's sister, **Princess Astrid**.

In 2019 \$48.7 million in public moneys supported these seven royals. Of that, \$1.4 million went directly to the King and Queen and \$1.1 million went to the Crown Prince and Princess. **Princess Martha Louise**, older sister of the king, who was born before succession to the throne was changed to be gender neutral, will never be queen. She has created a great deal of controversy with her spiritualism and now marriage to an American who calls himself a shaman and is considered a con man. Also, there was negative public opinion against the current wife of the Crown Prince, as she had a child out of wedlock with a criminal before the Crown Prince met her. This child, **Marius Hoiby**, has been in a great deal of legal trouble, accused of illegal drug use and sexual assault. Thus, this negative publicity has contributed to a decline in the popularity of the Norwegian Royal Family.

THIRD DISTRICT PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope everyone celebrated the **17th of Mai** with lots of food, fun, and fraternalism. Karen and I had the pleasure of celebrating the day with the officers and members of **North Carolina Vikings Lodge** in **Raleigh, NC**. It was great to meet their new officers and spend time getting to know some of their members. We followed that with a visit to **Norge Norsemen**, the satellite lodge of **Hampton Roads**. We completed our trip with a meeting of the 2026 convention committee. The planning is coming along very well. Lodges should start to plan now to send delegates to this great event.

I regret to have to inform you that our Vice President, **Robert Johnson**, had to resign from the position for personal reasons. I want to thank Bob for all he did as Vice President. I am pleased to announce that **Kathleen Brink** has been appointed and approved to take over as Vice President for the remainder of this term. I know Katie will do an excellent job. However, that leaves a vacancy for the position of assistant secretary. The only mandatory task is to take minutes at our board meetings. If anyone is interested, they should contact me.

Summer is here, and most lodges are off for two months with no meetings, but with picnics and other events. The **Third District** is having three major events this summer also: **Youth camp** at **Camp Koinonia** in Highland Lake, New York, is from Sunday, July 20th, to Saturday, July 26 h. It is not too late to get your children and grandchildren to attend. Just contact **Katie Brink** at uyakkm27@outlook.com. **Cultural camp** at **Isle of the Palms, South Carolina**, is from Thursday, June 26th, to Sunday, June 29th, including a tour of **Fort Moultrie** for those that are interested. There are still a few rooms available, so contact **Katie Brink** at uyakkm27@outlook.com.

The **Third District Picnic** will be on **Saturday August 23rd**, at **Nansen Lodge, Staten Island, New York**, from 10 am to 4 pm, with food, games, and live music. Last year's picnic was a great event, and this year's looks to be even better. For more information contact **Paul Kornbrekke** at longship50@aol.com.

The Third District will have a booth at **Scanfest** in **Budd Lake, New Jersey**, this year to help recruit new members. We are looking for volunteers to help man the booth. If you are willing, please contact **Diana Syvertsen** at shaw13nee@gmail.com.

The **District Revitalization Committee** has sent out a questionnaire to all lodges to answer questions about their lodges. Please answer it and return it to **Christine Taylor** as soon as possible, so the district can help your lodge recruit and retain members.

And now, as I have done in previous messages about new district board members, I would like to highlight **Linda Hestvik**, the new **Zone 6 Director**. Please read her information here in her own words. Zone 6 Director Linda Hestvik has been a member of SON for 38 years. My Grandfather, **Carl W. Refsland**, was a **3D Trustee** in 1936-1938. My father was from Bodo, Norway, and my mother was from Stavanger - both SON members. Linda is currently **VP** and **Membership Chair** of the **Washington Lodge 3-428**, located in the Washington DC area. Linda is also participating in a leadership development program for International SON. She has worked as a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner in a private practice for 34 years. Linda has completed 38 marathons including 5 Ironman races. She lives in Northern Virginia with her partner Tim. **Thank you, Linda.**

At this time Karen and I would like to wish you all a very happy summer, until my next message in the fall.

Fraternally, **Stephen Helmold**,
Third District President

=====

NORSK IMMIGRATION

In October 1825, a 54-foot sloop called the **Restauration** sailed into New York Harbor. It arrived after a grueling 14-week journey from Stavanger, Norway. This small ship had set sail on July 4, 1825, jammed with 52 passengers.

Most Norwegians immigrated to America for economic opportunity, but these were religious dissenters. The Restauration's arrival in New York was the first in a huge wave of Norwegian immigration. Within a century, more than 800,000 Norwegians followed these "Sloopers" to the United States. Of all European countries, only Ireland saw more of its population immigrate to America.

From **Life in Norway**

AN EXCITING FUTURE EVENT !!!



Welcoming Back the Restauration

Though the first Norwegians arrived in North America 500 years before Columbus, the story of organized Norwegian immigration to the U.S. begins with the 53 immigrants who left Norway aboard a ship called the Restauration. They arrived in New York City on October 9, 1825.

This year, exactly 200 years later, Norwegians and Americans will come together in New York City for a gathering featuring speeches and cultural programming. Around noon on October 9, we will proudly welcome a replica of the Restauration as it completes its retracing of the historic journey from Stavanger to New York.

We warmly invite friends, collaborators, and the Norwegian-American community to join us for this special occasion. The event is free, though it will require registration. For now, click [here](#) to express interest. Please note that this does not guarantee access to the event, but gives the organizers an overview of the estimated participation. More information, as well as a detailed program and a registration link, will follow closer to the date.

Photo: Restauration Venneforening

Recipe

BANANA BREAD

Cream:

1/2 cup shortening

1 cup sugar

Add:

2 eggs, one at a time, beat well

3 mashed bananas

Blend in sifted dry ingredients:

2 cups flour

1 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. soda

1 tsp. baking powder

Fold in: 1/2 cup nuts



Pour into greased pans. Bake 350 degrees 60-70 minutes. Cool well, enjoy -- especially with coffee!!

from *The Best in Cooking in Upham, North Dakota*

HUMOR

(an oldie but a goodie!)

Despite being laid up in bed, very sick, Ole could not resist the delicious aromas coming from downstairs; he got out of his sickbed, tiptoed quietly down the stairs to the kitchen. About to snatch a few of Lena's wonderful cookies from the table, he heard Lena's loud command: **OLE! Don't you be gettin' into dem cookies! Dey're for da funeral tomorrow!**

Don't you just love Ole and Lena?? Ja, sure, ya betcha!



**SONS of
NORWAY**
FOUNDATION



**CHARITABLE
TRUST**

The 3rd District

Taking Care of Our Own!



DEMENTIA AWARENESS

Information to help others to be
compassionate, understanding,
mindful and to “kill them with kindness!”



Let's grow in our learning with love.

*Forget-me-nots
symbolize love,
respect, and a promise
of remembering.*



Does this
sound like
you?

I am having trouble remembering some things, like all the things I'm supposed to buy at the grocery store. Sometimes I forget a couple of items from my list.

My friends seem to be having the same type of problems...I think my memory problems are pretty much on par with other people my own age.

Sometimes my loved one tells me something two things at once, and I forget one of the things. It only happens occasionally, but it's frustrating when it does.

I am constantly losing things like my keys, my cell phone, my wallet. I spend a lot of time almost every day looking for these things... it's so frustrating!

I am starting to have a hard time keeping up with things. I forget about appointments a lot, and I keep forgetting to take my medication and to pay my bills.

Or does
this sound
like you?

I'm having so much trouble remembering the right word to say all the time. The words are right there on the tip of my tongue, but I can't quite get them out. I feel embarrassed about it, because it happens a lot!

So...Is this normal or not??

Normal Aging Process

- Slowing of cognitive processes:
 - You may think a little more slowly
 - Can be increased with chronic illness.
 - Can influence communication between younger and older adults.
 - Smaller capacity of working memory in later life can impact conversation, reading.

Possible Memory Disorder

- Significant decline in one or more cognitive domains (including attention, executive function, learning and memory, language, or social cognition).
- Cognitive problems interfere with independence in everyday activities (i.e., at minimum, requiring assistance with complex instrumental activities of daily living, such as paying bills or managing medications).

What should I do if I think I
have a memory disorder?

- Ask your primary care team to give you a memory screening test.
 - At the VA, we have a team of mental health providers integrated into primary care clinics. We call them "Primary Care Mental Health Integration" (PC-MHI). A member of their team can give you a short memory screening test that takes about 10 minutes.

- Why should I do that?
 - Hopefully, it will bring you peace of mind!
 - If indicated, your primary care doctor may talk to you about next steps.

What is Dementia?

Dementia refers to a significant loss in the ability to think and remember. Over time, it can begin to affect a person's ability to perform basic tasks of daily life. Dementia is not the name of a particular disease but rather describes a set of symptoms. These days, doctors often use the term 'neurocognitive disorder' instead of dementia. Most types of dementia are chronic and irreversible.

There are approximately 100 billion nerve cells, known as neurons in an adult brain. Each of these nerve cells has branches that are connected to other branches at more than 100 trillion points. As a result, this cell network resembles a dense forest. The signals that travel through this dense forest are the basis of our thoughts, feelings, and memories. Dementia leads to the loss of neurons in the brain.

Due to this loss, the remaining brain cells also face challenges in transmitting signals. As a result, the patient's memory, behavior, mood, and personality may all be affected. For instance, the loss of neurons in the hippocampus, the region of the brain for memory and learning, leads to memory loss. Since this is often the first region to be affected by dementia, memory loss is often one of the first symptoms you observe in the patient.

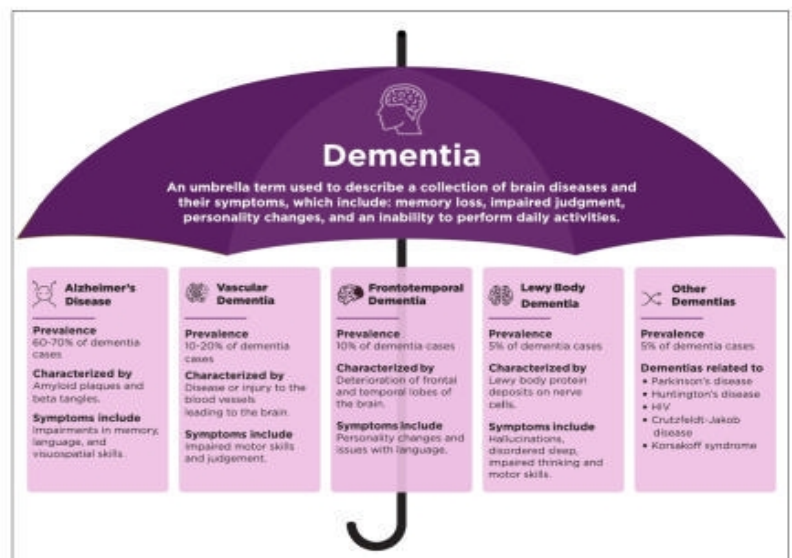
With time, dementia causes the patient's brain to shrink dramatically. This loss of cells and tissue throughout the brain affects all of its functions, including thinking, speaking, problem solving, decision making, and movement abilities (such as walking, writing and coordination).

Dementia is caused by a variety of diseases that can affect the brain. Dementia is like an umbrella that defines different symptoms associated with a decline in the ability to remember, think, and do things—It is classified as dementia when these difficulties interfere with daily functioning.

Types of Dementia

Alzheimer's disease is the most common one.

Vascular dementia is the second most common type of dementia. It is caused by a blockage of or damage to the blood vessels, leading to stroke, or bleeding in the brain.



LINKS

TO SON International,

THIRD DISTRICT, 3D ZONE7 LODGE's and INTERNATIONAL NEWS:

****For Sons of Norway International news: sonsofnorway@sofn.com (sofn.com)

****Third District President message: www.3dsofn.org

Third District Today news: www.3dsofn.org for all the news.

Third District Lite news: expect this from e-mail message

Third District Events Calendar: www.3dsofn.org/newsletter/index.html

*editor's note: This goes to a page of
newsletter links*

Third District Events: www.3dsofn.org/calendar

=====

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

editor's note: the website URL is owned but the pages haven't been written yet.

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://http://scandinaviancelebrationmb/>

editor's note: this URL is badly mangled. I'll put in the correct one when someone sends it to me.

=====

INTERNATIONAL NEWS links:

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

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

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 : (for free travel information,)

www.visitdenmark.com

www.visitfinland.com

www.inspiredbyiceland.com

www.visitnorway.com

www.visitsweden.com