



Third District Today

Quarterly Newsletter

4th Quarter 2025



The mission of Sons of Norway is to promote and to preserve the heritage and culture of Norway, to celebrate our relationship with other Nordic countries, and to provide quality insurance and financial products to our members.

President Stephen Helmold's Fall 2025 Message



A big hello everyone. It has been a while since my last president's message, so I wanted to bring you up to date on what is happening in the district.

I have just returned from the wake for Audun Gythfeldt, past Sons of Norway International Secretary and Third District President. It was nice to see so many turn out from all over the district to pay their respects for Audun and participate in the Sons of Norway Funeral Service. It was a fitting tribute for him, for his many years of service to our order. For me, Audun was a good friend and advisor as he was for many of us, he will be very sadly missed, it is a great loss for Sons of Norway and the Third district.

With Summer almost over and fall just around the corner there are just two more events left to hold. One is the district picnic at Nansen lodge on Staten Island on August 23rd which the district board hopes will be a big success, if not it may not happen next year. The other event is a district membership drive at Scanfest, in Budd Lake, NJ to get new members. The district will have a table with lots of information to hand out and hopes to sign up many new members that day. Earlier this summer, the district cultural camp in South Carolina and the district youth camp were both a great success. The cultural camp had a great turnout with members from all over the district that were interested in learning about cultural activities. Those that attended would like to see it happen again next year, so the district board voted to investigate having another cultural camp in North Carolina about mid-September of 2026.

The district youth camp had more children attending this year over last year. The children enjoyed camp so much that they asked if they could attend next year. So, the district board voted to have it next again from July 26th to August 1st. This is the best gift that we as Sons of Norway members can give our children. So, if you have children, grandchildren or great grandchildren of camp age 8-17 years old, please, highly consider sending them to youth camp next year.

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President Helmold's Message (continued)

The success of both of these camps is due to the hard work of our Cultural Director Cheri Johson and our newly appointed Vice President Katie Brink. These ladies along with their volunteer committees went above and beyond to make everyone happy.

Also happening next year is the Third District Convention, Thursday June 4th to Sunday June 7th at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center, Virginia Beach, Virginia and will be cohosted by Hampton Roads lodge and the Third District Board. I encourage you to come to the convention as a delegate, non-delegate or guest, where you can meet other members from other lodges in the district, hear from them what their lodges are doing and learn what the District is all about. I am sure you won't be disappointed, and for all past delegates I hope you will return as delegate again.

The District Lodge Revitalization Committee has been very busy working on ways to help lodges. One thing they have been working on is contacting the Spirit New Century 3-999 Lodge members with a personalize snail mail letter and information about Sons of Norway lodges in the third district. They are Sons of Norway members, just not in any lodge. It is the hope of the committee that these members will transfer to a lodge in the district, which will help those lodges. The District Board also approved reimbursing lodges for the purchase of a banner to be used for recruitment. Information regarding the ordering of these banners has been sent to all lodge presidents.

At this time, I want to wish you all a happy fall. Look for my next message in December.

Fraternally,
Stephen Helmold

2026 Dates to Remember

Norway Day Parade

May 17, 2026
Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, NY

District Three 2026 Convention

June 4 - 7, 2026 for all delegates
Virginia Beach, VA

District 3 Cultural Camp

September 16 - 20, 2026
Isle of Palms, SC

2026 Dates to Remember

District Three Youth Camp

July 28 – August 1, 2026
Camp Koinonia, Highland Lake, NY

Scan Fest

September 6, 2026 (tentative date)
Vasa Park, Bud Lakes, NJ

**Check the D3 website regularly for
updated information and news.**



38th Scandinavian Fest 2025 Photos

Bud Lake, NJ

Sunday, August 31, 2025



D3 President Stephen Helmold &
D3 Secretary Karen Olsen-Helmold



Inside the D3 Tent at ScanFest
Left to Right, Front to Back:
Diana Syvertsen, Leif Easterson
Mary Andersen, Katie Brink



Nor-Bu Lodge Members with Lodge Tent
happily setting up for the day



Bondelandet Lodge Member Karen
Zimmerman Serving Delicious
Swedish Pancakes



Vice-President Katie Brink's End of Year 2025 Message

Greetings to all Third District Members,

I am honored to serve as the District 3 Vice President for the current term. There are many things going on at the District level that are geared towards helping lodges succeed. The District recently purchased banners for lodges that ordered them, and many lodges took advantage of this offer. Many District Officers, including myself, held a membership drive at ScanFest in New Jersey and we successfully signed up new members. We printed many membership flyers and have sent some to lodges. Our revitalization committee is planning leadership training early next year for lodge Presidents, Vice Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers. We are here to help you find new members and retain the wonderful members you currently have.



As many of you know, the 2026 District 3 Convention will be June 4-7 in Virginia Beach, Virginia and is co-hosted by District 3 and Hampton Roads Lodge. Hampton Roads is hard at work planning a fun and busy convention and we are looking forward to welcoming many of you as delegates. Please encourage your lodge members to attend. We would like full representation from many of our lodges in the District. More information about the Convention will be forthcoming.

We have 2 other major District events happening next year. Our Youth Camp will be July 26-August 1 in Highland Lake, NY. (ages 8-17). Kids participate in a variety of activities including Rosemaling, Kubb, Hardanger, Archery, and more. Please consider sending your child or grandchild. Our Cultural Weekend will be September 16-20 in Isle of Palms, SC. We will offer classes in Rosemaling, Hardanger fiddle, Norwegian literature, Scandinavian dancing, and more. More information about both events will be sent out in the next few months.

I have been busy traveling around the District visiting as many lodges as I can. In November and December, I am excited to visit Bondelandet and Restauration lodges. If you would like for me to visit your lodge, please let me know.

If you have any questions about any of our upcoming District events or if there is anything I can do for you, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I look forward to seeing many of you at our next Convention! Happy Thanksgiving!

Sons of Norway Book Club Quote of the Quarter

"I demolish my bridges behind me - then there is no choice but forward."

-Fridtjof Nansen

Norwegian explorer, polymath and Nobel Peace Prize laureate

SonsofNorwayBookClub@gmail.com

A Little Something (Norwegian) to Eat?

Jarlsberg Filled Peppers

(from Recipe Box on the Sons of Norway website)



Ingredients

4 Large peppers, red or green
2 Tsp coarse salt
1 Lb. ground meat, low fat
1/2 Tsp Tabasco
1/2 Tsp garlic salt
1/2 Tsp pepper, coarsely ground
1 Lemon, juice of
2/3 Cup French Bread Crumbs
1 1/4 Cup Jarlsberg, diced
3 1/2 Tbsp butter
Garlic salt

Method

Step 1

Divide peppers in two, remove stem and seeds.

Step 2

Sprinkle the coarse salt on baking pan.

Step 3

Mix meat, Tabasco, garlic salt, pepper, lemon juice, crumbs, and half of Jarlsberg cheese. Divide evenly between the peppers.

Step 4

Top the peppers with remainder of the cheese. Melt butter, add garlic salt, and brush over the peppers. Place on top of coarse salt on baking sheet, and bake in 350-F (175-C) oven about 35 minutes.



Third District Inaugural Cultural Camp Photos Isle of Palms, SC

Thursday - Sunday, June 26 - 29, 2025



Leaders and Participants at Cultural Weekend



L to R: Katie Brink, Gail Perron, Jo Stephens Forest, Joanne Barfield, Deb MacConaughy, Cindy Kirk, Liz Schupp, Doug Kirk, Cheri Johnson, Ruth Campbell.



Bruce Emery Playing Mandolin



Chuck Hamilton demonstrating Norwegian Baking



Deb MacConaughy Giving a Presentation on Bunads



Youth Camp Photos

Camp Koinonia

Highland Lake, NY

Thursday - Sunday, July 20 - 26, 2025



Lodge Revitalization Committee Report

by Christine Taylor

The 3D Lodge Revitalization Committee has focused its efforts on supporting lodges within the Third District. The committee aims to foster growth, engagement, and operational improvement among its lodges.

One of the committee's efforts was to reach out to the At-Large membership. We sent personalized invitations to each At-Large member, encouraging them to join a local lodge. Along with these invitations, a directory of lodges was provided to help members find a suitable match. This, of course, is a win-win situation. The members can have a lodge 'home' at no additional cost, and the lodge has new members on the rolls. This initiative has seen partial success, due in large part to the cooperation of the lodges, which actively supplied the necessary information. Thank you all.

Recognizing the importance of effective leadership, the committee developed training materials tailored for lodge officers. These resources are regularly updated to ensure they remain relevant and useful. The process is ongoing, as the Sons of Norway transitions to fully digital services. The committee remains committed to supporting lodge officers throughout this transition, providing up-to-date guidance as needed.

Membership issues are a recurring issue with most organizations. The committee is looking at ways to support the efforts of the lodges in keeping current members and recruiting younger members. We continue to look at ways to support our lodges and encourage input from all.



Fall 2025 Third District Foundation Report - Karen Olsen-Helmold

The deadlines for the annual Sons of Norway Foundation-provided grants and scholarships have been modified. Applications for grants and scholarships launched Oct. 1 with grant applications due Dec. 15 and scholarship applications due Jan. 15. If you are a parent or grandparent of a college age student, please direct them to the guidelines for applying for scholarships. Sons of Norway awarded over \$148,000 in scholarships last year. Lodges can apply for grants in various categories such as cultural and heritage, lodge vitality, Helping Hands for Children, and several humanitarian awards. Last year the Sons of Norway Foundation awarded \$110,000 in grants. To learn more about the grants and scholarships, please access this website: <https://www.sofn.com/foundation/>.