

Nordfjordlag E-News

Group photo at the Selja Monastery



List of Participants Nordfjord Tour 18. june - 27. june 2025

Nr.	Name	City
1	Djupedal, Knut	
2	Hoff, Kevin	BLAINE
3	Felde, Marcus Paul Bach	SOUTH BEND
4	Felde, Christine Susan	SOUTH BEND
5	Arenson, John Dean	SAN ANTONIO
6	Burnison, Joyce Deanna	HUMBOLDT
7	Felde, Eric	GRANGER
8	Felde, Sarah	GRANGER
9	Felde, Lucy	GRANGER
10	Felde, Kate	GRANGER
11	Denny, Linda Rae	JONESBORO
12	Denny, Mark Lee	JONESBORO
13	Lundebrek, Ryan	CHAMPLIN
14	Lien, Lynne Marie	MAPLE PLAIN
15	Hessevick, Connie	ST LOUIS PARK

Greetings

Wow what a year 2025 was, with the 200 Year Celebration of the first Norwegians that came to America.

Nordfjordlag i Amerika was invited by the Nordfjord History Association to become a part of this celebration with them in Norway during June of 2025. A group of fourteen



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2026 Stevne - September 13th

of us went to Nordfjord to join in this weeklong celebration which included sightseeing, traditional food, music and bunads in Innvik, Norway. I would like to thank the Nordfjord History Association, Fotefar Temareiser, (Footprint Tours), tour guide Knut Djupedal, tour company owner Rasmus Sunde and the people of Nordfjord for a once in a lifetime trip to Nordfjord.

I was interviewed by the Fjordabladet Newspaper in Nordfjordeid before we went to Nordfjord. As a result, Ryan Lundebrek and I meet a relative, Britt Gunnvor Endestad Svarstad, from Nordfjordeid, who's family line was from Andrew A Olson's Nedre Myklebust farm near Bryggja, Norway. We never would have met Britt without this article being in that Norwegian paper. Many group tour members who met family, were interviewed by local Norwegian newspapers and on local Norwegian radio. I'm already looking forward to going back to Nordfjord to visit places I have not yet seen.



Britt and Kevin

Here are a few photos from the trip



Nordfjord Sandane



Lovatnet



Hornelen Peak



Kjenndal Glacier



View from Gimmedstad

Some local news. Since 2003, the Nordfjordlag i Amerika stevne has been held at Green Lake Lutheran Ministries (Green Lake Bible Camp) in Spicer, Minnesota. Green Lake Lutheran Ministries has now changed its name to Water's Edge Ministries. Although the location name has changed, Nordfjordlag i Amerika will continue to hold its yearly stevne at the same location This year, on Sunday, September 13, 2026, now at Water's Edge Ministries in Spicer, Minnesota.

See you in September.

President: Kevin Hoff

Crown Prince Haakon - Visit to Norway House 7 Oct 2025

By Elaine Hasleton, Bygdelagenes Fellesraad, President

Crown Prince Haakon visited the Haugo Bibliotek in Norway House on Tuesday, October 7th. He cut the ribbon officially opening the Saga Center there.

John Haugo, for whom the Bibliotek is named and whose family history is illustrated in the Saga Center, shared his family story. John had discovered that he and the Crown Prince were seventh cousins. His Royal Highness was intrigued and pleased to take that information with him.

The Crown Prince visited each of the four stations in the Saga Center, including the Family History Station, where I was privileged to share information about three Norwegian-American case studies, including my husband's Finnskog ancestry. In the Bygdelag Special Collections Room Marilyn Sorensen shared information on the resources available there.

The Crown Prince was very cordial and interested in the many facets of Norwegian-America which were illustrated in the Haugo Bibliotek. It was a great experience for us as Bygdelag members to share our Norwegian-American legacy!



Touring the Haugo Bibliotek Special Collections Room:

HRH Prince Haakon with Marilyn Sorensen behind him, the gentleman with his back to the camera is John Haugo. A glimpse of the Bibliotek Library Shelves is at the left and behind in the photo.

Note:

The Special Collections Room is where lags can now store their research collections for reference to all patrons to use. Each lag can pack up their collection for transport to their stevner, but then return their collection to this location. Our lag will be scheduling transport of our own "moveable" collection soon.

The image below shows the Bygdelag Special Collections Room page on the Norway House website, and the link to that page is: <https://www.norwayhouse.org/bygdelag-special-collections-room>.



(Photo): This is a portion of a bronze wall plaque honoring Bygdelagenes Fellesraad President Elaine Hasleton and Vice President Marilyn Sorensen for their vision and leadership in advocating for the creation of the Bibliotek at Norway House.

A companion plaque lists all the Bygdelaag using the Special Collections Room and thanking them for their financial support.

Bygdelagenes Fellesraad Annual Meeting

May 1 & 2, 2026

By Elaine Hasleton, President

The Fellesraad Annual Meeting will be held Friday and Saturday, May 1 & 2nd. Friday's meeting will be on Zoom with all Lag members invited to attend. The Saturday meeting will be held in-person at Mindekirken in Minneapolis.

The Theme this year will be "Connecting our Future with our Past."

On Friday morning, May 1st, two FamilySearch specialists, Jeff Svare and Rob Kehrer, will teach classes on Saving Your Lag's Family Tree. It is important to save years of lag members' work. These classes will provide a method for doing that. The presenters will address not only the needs of lags, but also lag members who want to document and preserve their family history. Friday is a free virtual meeting, but you need to register to receive the link to it. There is a 100-person limit.

Each Lag should send two delegates to vote at the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday morning, May 2nd, at Mindekirken. It will be followed by a Norwegian lunch for \$30/person, if you register before April 18th. After that date, it is \$35/person.

More information and registration are on the Fellesraad.com website. We look forward to seeing you.



Green Lake Bible Camp Has Changed Its Name!

For decades, Green Lake Lutheran Ministries has provided meaningful faith experiences through camps, retreats, service opportunities, and community gatherings. As our ministry has grown and expanded, we recognized that our name needed to better reflect:

Clarity & Accessibility – Our previous name sometimes created confusion, as people associated it with only one location. The name “Green Lake Lutheran Ministries” can feel too tied to one location, even though our ministry spans multiple sites and nationwide programs like Serve Boldly.

A Name that Reflects Our Mission – “Water’s Edge” symbolizes the place where Jesus met, called, and transformed people—just as we do in our camps, retreats, and accompaniment programs.

A Unifying Identity – Our three camps--Green Lake Bible Camp, Shores of St. Andrew Bible Camp, and Camp House—will keep their names, but the new organizational name unites all we do under a clear, inspiring vision.

(Copied from the Water’s Edge web page –see

<https://www.gllm.org/waters-edge-ministries.html>)

Lag Web Page

If you haven’t visited our web page go to <http://www.nordfjordlag.com> where you can find photos, documents and more information on the history of the lag

Obituaries

The following lag members are known to have passed away since our last issue of Nordfjordlag E - News

Sanford Allen Olson (1943 - 2025)



Sanford Olson departed this life on May 10, 2025, at his home in Alexandria, MN, surrounded by family after a courageous battle with Pancreatic Cancer.

Sanford was born on October 9, 1943, in Starbuck, MN, to Chester and Esther (Pederson) Olson. He married Clara Mehrhoff of Long Prairie on July 24, 1964, at Little Sauk Lutheran Church.

Sanford worked as a gardener for Bachman's Floral in Minneapolis and Northside Floral in Alexandria, MN, before taking a factory job at 3M where he was employed for 33 years with perfect attendance. After retirement, he worked with Gardenville Cooperative for 11 years while running Sanford Olson Handyman Service (S.Oh.S.). Sanford was also a property manager and entrepreneur.

Sanford never wavered in his love for his family or his commitment to living life fully. He was a devoted husband to Clara for 60 years and a loving father of two children, a grandfather of five, and a great-grandfather of eight. He believed in the power of family and dedicated his life to creating a loving and supportive home. He was an inspiration to everyone he met.

Sanford served his community as a member of the 3M Kindness Club, the Lions Club, the Eagles Club, a Let's Go Fishing volunteer, a council member at Bethesda Lutheran Church, a Sunday School teacher and a mentor.

Sanford will be remembered for his kindness, selflessness and playful nature. His Polka dance moves were second to none and his dedication to family and friends touched so many. He never met a stranger.

A visitation will be held at Anderson Funeral Home on Sunday, June 8th, from 4-7 p.m. with a prayer service at 6:30 PM. The funeral service will be held on Monday, June 9, at 11 a.m. at Bethesda Lutheran Church in Alexandria, MN; family visitation will start one hour prior. The service will be live-streamed. A burial service will follow at East Zion Lutheran Church in Starbuck, MN, at 5 p.m.

Sanford is survived by his wife, Clara Olson, daughters, Lisa (Shane) Henrichs and Kerry (Jason) Brown; grandchildren Justin (Amy) Henrichs, Carley Kay (Henrichs), Jordan (Grace) Henrichs, AJ (Ashley) Brown and Sam Brown. Great grandchildren: Taylor (Titus Fuller), Ryland, Alyssa, Kendra, Tenley, Piper, Dawson and Sebreia; sisters Beverly Fischer, Sandy Hoff, Janet Lundebrek, Ruth (Don) Schwanke, Naomi (Fred) Anderson; brother Neil Olson; sister-in-law Terry (Olson) Gleason, LuAnn Olson and many beloved nieces, nephews, cousins and cherished lifelong friends.

Sanford was preceded in death by parents Chester Olson and Esther (Pederson) Olson; brothers Robert Olson, Charles Olson, and David Olson; niece Kristi (Hoff) Krause, nephew Richard Lundebrek; in-laws Fred and Helen (Fischer) Mehrhoff, Bradley Loken, Kenny Fischer, Lois Olson, Kenny Hoff, and Richard Lundebrek Sr.

Eileen Helmstetter (1941 – 2025)



Eileen Helmstetter, 84 of New London, died at her home Friday, October 10, 2025. Memorial services will be 11:00 a.m. Friday, October 17, 2025, at Hope Presbyterian Church in Spicer. Visitation will be from 5-7 pm. Thursday at the Johnson Funeral Home in New London and for one hour prior to the service at church. Burial will be in Grace East Cemetery in Belgrade. A livestream of the service can be found [here](#).

Eileen Bernice Helmstetter was born on July 2, 1941 in Benson, the daughter of Chester and Olga (Thompson) Anderson. She was baptized and confirmed at St. Pauli Lutheran Church near Swift Falls. She grew up on four different farms in the northeast part of Swift County. She attended country grade school in Dist. #14 and Benson Elementary and High School graduating in 1959. She continued her education at Concordia College in Moorhead graduating in 1967. On August 19, 1961, Eileen was united in marriage to David Helmstetter at St. Pauli Lutheran Church. They made their home in Newport, MN, Tallahassee, FL, Hastings from 1965 to 1991, Sioux Center, IA from 1991 to 2002 before retiring to New London.

Eileen worked as a schoolteacher for three years before becoming a full-time homemaker. She was also an active member of Hope Presbyterian Church and all the churches she had attended. Through the years she taught Sunday school, vacation bible school and served as a bible study leader. She also belonged to ladies' aid and circle.

Eileen enjoyed photography, family history, hiking, reading her bible, traveling and extensive note writing. She will always be loved and remembered for her faith, kindness, personal ministry to many friends and family – and her eagerness to brighten anyone's day by sharing laughter or a friendly greeting.

She is survived by her husband, David of 64 years; children, Lori (Judy) Helmstetter and Craig (Mona) Helmstetter; 8 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild. She was preceded in death by her parents and her brothers, Dean and Gene. Soli Deo gloria.

Mads O. Andenas (1948 - 2024)



Mads Andenas Obituary Mads Ole Andenas, 76, of Howard, SD, passed away peacefully on Saturday, November 9th, 2024, at his home. Celebration of Life will be 10:30 AM, Saturday, November 16, 2024, at Bethany Lutheran church in Howard. Inurnment will be held in the spring at Belleview Lutheran cemetery.

Mads was born on June 22, 1948, in Lake Preston, SD to his Norwegian immigrant parents, Sigurd and Rigmor (Irgens) Andenas. He attended the Grafton 22 country school through the 8th grade. Mads then attended grades 9-12 in the old Howard High School building, graduating with his beloved classmates in 1966. While he was in high school, he ran hurdles in track and played football. He was honored to be homecoming king his senior year. He attended and graduated from School of Mines with a Civil Engineering degree. He made many lifetime friendships there.

Mads worked at the water plant for 3 years in Rapid City, before going to Alaska for five years where he worked for the Alaska Pipeline. In 1976, Mads received a letter from his father stating that Amanda Mortenson wanted to sell her farm to him, if interested. He had a month to think it over. At first, he didn't think he would, but at the last minute, when he had his next R and R, he changed his ticket from a trip to

Norway to South Dakota and bought Amanda's farm.

Mads married Paula Underwood in 1978. From this union, a daughter, Kirsten, was born. Mads married Chloe Moore, whom he often called "the love of his life," on June 9, 1989, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Madison, SD. They celebrated their 35th anniversary this past summer. Mads crop farmed with his brother, Norman, until they retired in 2017. It was a great partnership, and they genuinely enjoyed working together. Mads also did various civil engineering projects for the county, including bridges, roads, and designing and doing specs for the fire houses in Winfred and Canova. He sold farm, home, and auto insurance for DeSmet Farm Mutual for many years and loved getting to know his many clients.

Mads was baptized and confirmed at Bellevue Lutheran Church, where his Norwegian grandfather had been the first called pastor in 1889. As an adult, Mads served Bellevue Church as a deacon, treasurer, secretary, president and Sunday school teacher. He also served as sexton of the cemetery until his passing. When Bellevue closed in 2016, Mads and Chloe became members of Bethany Lutheran Church in Howard. It is rumored that the old pew from Bellevue's balcony, now in front of the Bethany office, may have his initials carved into the seat. As a member, Mads was active in men's suppers, Bible studies, and was a reader.

Mads was a member of Sons of Norway in Madison for many years, a member of the Howard Legion and a member of the Miner County Historical Society. He was also a 20 + year member of the monthly Gourmet Book Club - Food for the Mind - where delicious and book-related potlucks were held before the book discussion often in the Andenas home. It was a book club for both men and women, which made it quite unique. He was a member of the MCCR which strived to make Miner County a better place to live. The Children's Care Corner and the duplexes east of whispering winds are just a few examples of these efforts.

Mads was a lifelong learner. He loved reading, especially books relating to history. He loved camping, going on cruises, and traveling, especially to Norway where he visited his many cousins and their families. He loved spending hours in museums, going to plays, movies, and in later years, spending parts of the winter in Apache Junction, Arizona. He loved playing daily cribbage games with Chloe and weekly pinochle games with friends, Sandy and Rod Ulrich. He loved trying new restaurants, especially ethnic ones. He loved watching Ken Burns specials and other educational programs and news on PBS. He enjoyed attending five-year reunions at Mines to see his friends. He had a deep love for his family. He loved talking about his Norwegian roots and his legacy of having great parents. He was a loving husband, father, and grandfather.

Mads is preceded in death by his parents, Sigurd and Rigmor Andenas, and his mother-in-law, Myrna Moore. Mads is survived by his wife, Chloe, his daughter, Kirsten (Reggie Aligada), two granddaughters, Ruby and Zadie, one brother, Norman (Cecelia Wittmayer), two sisters, Ingrid (Gus) Chamales, and Signe (Bruce) Bobbitt, father-in-law, Howard Moore, sister-in-law, Cheryl (Roger) Schmit, and two brothers-in-law, Jerry (Pam) Moore, and Roger (Judy) Moore. He also leaves many beloved nephews, nieces, and godchildren, all who held special places in his heart. Memorials may be directed to the Miner Co. Historical Society or Bellevue Lutheran Cemetery. www.willoughbyfh.com

Current Officers

<u>Position</u>	<u>Person</u>	<u>1st Elected in</u>
President	Kevin Hoff	2021
Vice President / Webmaster / Librarian	Gene Rodi	1995
Secretary	Sonia Rache	1997
Genealogist	Kevin Hoff	2019
Treasurer	Marjorie Anderson	2023
Director	Beverly Anderson	2000
Director	Gail Holm	2012
Director	Darlene Durgan	2023
Director	Tim Peterson	2023



2025 Group Photo

Editor's Note: In this issue I have switched the formatting of these pages from columns to page width. Since the vast majority of our readers are now online, I felt that this layout would be easier to read on a screen. If you have comments on this, please feel free to send them to me at the email address below.

webmaster@nordfjordlag.com.

If there are members that have died since our last meeting, please forward that information so that it can be included in the next issue.

Currently, we do not have a schedule set for publishing a newsletter. Some lags publish several each year. Depending on the feedback from our readers we could publish two or three times a year.

We can send the newsletter to you as an attachment to an Email as is being done with this issue. And/or the copy could be stored on our web page and an Email notice sent that includes a link to the web address. The cost of printing and mailing is estimated to be almost \$4.00 per copy per issue along with significantly more work. Preferences please!

Take care. Gene Rodi, V.P.

Janet Lundebrek & Stephanie



Kevin reporting on Trip



Stevne Information

September 13, 2026

We meet again this year at Water's Edge Ministries on the shore of Green Lake.

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|--------------|---|
| 9:00 - 10:30 | Registration & Morning coffee hour |
| 11:00 | Worship service at the Stave Church |
| | The pastor for this years' service is Tim Peterson. |
| 12:00 | Procession: Hardingfele music by Stephanie Hendrickson. |
| | Bridal couple: Irene and Robert Shervey |
| | Banquet, catered (the Lag provides the lefse) |
| 1:00 | Business meeting and election of officers. |
| 1:30 | Sunburg Community Fiddlers |
| 2:15 | Genealogy Information |

Afternoon visits with coffee/cookies

All meals/snacks will be catered. The meal cost is \$50 for members and guests, which covers the entire day (no reduction for missed events). We request that the reservation form (or cancellations) be received no later than Friday September 4, 2025.