

Hvite Fjell Nyheter

Volume 17 Number 12

December

November 25, 2008

Lodge Calender

December 2

6:00 Board Meeting

There is no General Meeting in December.



December 7 Christmas Party

The Christmas Party is on December 7th at the Senior Center on Sutro and East Ninth Street. Members may bring guests.

If you are bringing a child you should bring a gift (about \$10) for that child with their name written on the gift. Santa Claus will arrive at 4:30 so plan to be there by that time.

The setup of table and chairs will began at 3:00. You should think about volunteering for set up and take down. Let Perralina (972-5741) know if you can help. All members and guests should plan on being there by 4:30. Hors d'oeuvres and gløgg will be served at 5:00 and the dinner begins at 5:30. Everyone should bring their own place setting with utensils.

All members should bring a dish for 15-20 people. Feel free to sign up for more than one. Call Perralina (972-5741) and let her know what your dish will be. Also let her know how many are in your party.

There will be lutefisk, lefse, meatballs, salads, hot dishes, etc.

Lodge Calender Continued

Christmas Party Craft Table

I am asking members of the lodge if they can make a few small pieces of Norwegian craft to sell at the Christmas Party as a fund raiser for the lodge. Rosemaling, woodwork, knitting or any stitch craft, bake goods etc. Please price your donation and all sales go to the lodge. Bring them the day of the party. Thank you for your help.

Valia Hylin
Santa's
helper.



January 6, 2009

6:00 Board Meeting

7:00 General Meeting
We will began the general meeting and move almost right away into the installation of the officers for 2009. Our Zone Director, Carl Ingvaldstad will perform the installation. All elected officers for 2009 should attend so we can complete their installation. Those not attending will need to be installed at a later meeting.

With the completion of the installation we will finish the remainder of the general meeting. With the completion of the general meeting we will have a social time with refreshments. **All attending members are asked to bring some cookies.** Our host and hostess will be Andy and Connie Anderson.

God Bedring - Get Well Soon

Ellen Hoel
Alf Stousland
Ruth Stousland

Make Love, Not Lutefisk

By Dave Fox

Hear that gagging sound? It's Norwegian-Americans attempting to connect with their heritage. It happens every year at this time; thousands of people choke down an infamous concoction called lutefisk. What people in America don't know is that most Norwegians came to their senses decades ago and quit eating the stuff. To make lutefisk, catch yourself a cod. Take out the bones, skin it, salt it, and hang it out to dry for several weeks until it hardens and smells like a dumpster. Then, bring it inside and soak it in lye for several days.

Yes, lye — a substance defined by dictionary as "a strong caustic alkaline solution of potassium salts, obtained by leaching wood ashes. It is much used in making soap, etc."

Et cetera indeed. When you use it to make fish, you get a gelatinous blob that slithers down your throat and makes you wish you had cooked a turkey for Christmas dinner like a normal American.



Per sniffs the lutefisk between shots of akvavit.

Norwegians didn't invent lutefisk because they thought it was tasty. A long time ago, in the pre-refrigeration epoch, salting and drying fish was an efficient way to preserve it. They soaked it in lye afterward to pull the salt out and — believe it or not — make it more

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palatable. A century ago, lutefisk really was a staple in the Norwegian diet. Also a century ago, a lot of Norwegians fled the country.

To the lutefisk eating Norwegian-Americans out there who are trying to keep in touch with your roots, here are some facts to bring you to your senses:

Refrigerators have arrived in the Old World, as has the electricity needed to power them. They now have more pleasant ways to keep food fresh.

Today, more lutefisk is consumed in Wisconsin than in Norway.

Norwegians buy more frozen pizzas per capita than any other nationality. They consume 13,000 tons of frozen pizza annually — an average of more than five and a half pounds of cheesy goodness for every man, woman, and screaming toddler.

Yes, frozen pizza is a Norwegian staple food today. Why not get in touch with the 21st century and start a new holiday tradition?

I am a proud Norwegian-American, as is my mother, who every year at Christmas bakes about 74 pounds of traditional Norwegian Christmas cookies and other edible things. She never made me eat lutefisk when I was a child. This is because she loves me.

A couple of months ago, however, I tasted lutefisk for the first time — voluntarily. I did this for two reasons:

1) On every Scandinavia tour I lead, someone asks me about lutefisk. I tell them how horrible it is, which felt hypocritical since I had never even sniffed the stuff before.

2) I was intoxicated, and my judgment was impaired when I asked to try it. The way it happened was I had just arrived in Drøbak, the town where I once was an exchange student. Per, my Norwegian host father, handed me a beer and a shot of akvavit and said, "We're having something for dinner

tonight that you won't like. So we'll make you a pork chop." "What is it?" I asked, and drank my akvavit. "Lutefisk," he laughed, refilling my akvavit glass. "Are you serious?" I asked, drinking my second shot of akvavit. In the 15 years I have known Per, I had never seen him eat lutefisk before. But I sensed he was serious. The previous summer I had narrowly avoided home cooked whale by taking him out for Indian food. He didn't remember the whale steaks thawing in the fridge at home until our curry arrived at the table.

"Yes," Per answered, filling my glass again. "It's the first lutefisk of the year." This conversation and refilling continued for an hour or so while Per prepared the fish along with the traditional stewed peas and bacon drippings that are used to "enhance the flavor." At one point, Wibeke, my sister's girlfriend, knocked at the door.

"We're having lutefisk tonight," Per said gleefully. "Will you stay for dinner?" Wibeke ran, very fast, far, far away.

By the time dinner was served, I was on approximately my 93rd shot of akvavit, happily munching my pork chop, when I was seized with drunken bravado. "I really should try that," I said to Tordis, my Norwegian host mother. "Can I have a bite?" All other conversation ceased. "Are you sure?" Tordis asked. "Yeah."

As I held the fork up to my mouth, I got that same sickly feeling you get as you climb aboard a roller coaster, wondering if you are about to become violently nauseous. I wanted to back out but everyone was watching. A quivering glob of what looked like jellyfish dangled menacingly from my fork. Mind over matter, I thought, and shoved it in my mouth, intending to gulp it down so fast, it wouldn't register on my taste buds.

That's when disaster struck. There was a bone. One of those needle-like fish bones that pokes you in the tongue and gets caught between your teeth. I had to dislodge it from my mouth before I could swallow. The lutefisk sat there while I wrestled with the bone. It wrapped itself around my tongue like a lye-flavored python, attacking every taste bud. It might have been my only bite of lutefisk in my life, but it wasn't going down

without a fight.

Finally, my mouth was bone-free, and I gulped hard to get the fish down my throat.

I had done it! I could now speak



from experience when telling people how horrible lutefisk is. And it was.

To be completely honest though, it wasn't as bad as I had expected. It was surprisingly flavorless, with a texture somewhere between Jell-O and mashed potatoes. Nevertheless, I did not ask for a second bite.

There are worse culinary traditions in the world. In Athens, a friend once cajoled me into trying chilled sheep's brain. ("It's a Greek delicacy," she said.) In Iceland, specialties include sheep's testicles, and shark that is buried in the ground for several weeks until it's rotten. No lye is required. They just dig it up and wash it down with their local firewater, called Black Death. Scotland has haggis, made from a sheep's stomach lining. In America, we have egg salad sandwiches from vending machines that are kept warm by 40-watt light bulbs for an average of seven months before anyone eats them. (They taste fine as long as you swallow them whole without removing the plastic wrap).

So Norway is not the only nation with frightening cuisine. Nevertheless, it saddens me that lutefisk has become representative of my heritage when most Norwegians can't stand it.

An article in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer earlier this week reported

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that Seattle's Norwegian community is in mourning this holiday season because for the first time in decades, not a single Seattle restaurant will offer lutefisk. The article quoted Kathleen Knudsen, editor of the Western Viking newspaper, as saying, "The Norwegian community is in a state of shock." Speak for yourself Kathleen.

The holidays are stressful in many ways, and every year at this time, I see interviews with psychologists warning that not all holiday traditions are good for you. "Move on, and make your own traditions," they say.

So for Norwegian-Americans suffering from lutefisk withdrawal, fret not. It's time to move into the modern age like the real Norwegians have. I have just returned from the grocery store. I am happy to report there are plenty of frozen pizzas to go around. culturally conservative male counterparts.

From: Lilie Hanson
Vikings of the Lake Lodge



November Board Minutes

President Ken opened the meeting at 6 pm with the following members present: Mel and Maxine Gullickson, Harriet Uren, Connie and Andy Anderson and Ken and Faith Johnson. The minutes of the last meeting were approved as printed in the Nyheter.

The Treasurers report was not available since Perralina Palm was out because of shoulder surgery.

Perralina did request that she needs some information for the Christmas Party on December 7th. Please call Perralina at (972-5741) to volunteer for setting up and taking down the tables and chairs that will be needed for the party. You should also call Perralina and tell her how many will be in your party and what food you will be bringing.

Valia will be selling items at the Christmas Party so if you have something please bring them when you come for the party. Be sure to price them with a tag or label before you bring them.

Tonight we celebrate the 17th anniversary of Hvite Fjell Lodge with a soup supper. Mel and Maxine Gullickson will be our host and hostess.

The Eric Jensen Concert is coming up the first part of February. Naomi has a place for him to stay and she will be getting a program from him. Naomi has more information and will pass that along later. The lodge is a sponsor of the event. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

Carl Ingvoldstad has been requested to install the officers of our lodge at the January meeting.

There are a number of good books in the lodge's

library. Ken mentioned that he would like to see some of the books checked out and a book a report given at a lodge meeting or as an article published in the Nyheter.

Four students were present at the last Norwegian Language Class which now meets from 7:00 to 8:30 pm every other Sunday. Out next meeting is November 16th at Trygve Lokens. If you have an interest in the class call Trygve at 746-1532. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Sunshine - remember Ruth Stousland, Alf Stousland, Ellen Hoel, Andy Anderson and Billie Watne.

Meeting adjourned. Respectfully submitted, Faith Johnson,
Acting Secretary

November General Meeting Minutes

President Ken welcomed all to the general meeting of the lodge. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and the three national anthems were sung.

Nine officers were present with some individuals having more than one office.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved as printed in the Nyheter. There was no Treasurers report.

There will be no cultural program in January due to the installation of officers ceremony. The cultural and social (vacant) directors should get together and plan the programs for 2009.

Ken won the \$5.00 door prize and the name drawn for the membership prize was not present.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 for dessert. The program was the making of "Julekurv" woven baskets. Respectfully submitted, Faith Johnson,
Acting Secretary

Gratulerer Med Dagen i december

Margaret Espinosa	december 11
Valia Hylin	december 12
Nancy Maiss	december 18

Hvite Fjell Nyheter

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The lodge meets at 7:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of every month except July, August and December.



Members attending the November meeting display the results of their companionable labor. The julekurv is a Norwegian Christmas basket which is usually made from straw or a flexible high-gloss paper. Norwegians hang these baskets filled with sweets on their Christmas trees.

HVITE FJELL OFFICERS

President - Ken Johnson
 Vice-President - Jim Bryn
 Secretary - Naomi Sande
 Assist. Secretary - Barbara Dimmitt
 Treasurer - Perralina Palm
 Financial Secretary - Trygve Loken
 Counselor - Perralina Palm
 Trustee 1 Year - Carlette Henderson
 Trustee 2 Years - Curt Tang
 Trustee 3 Years- Faith Johnson
 Marshall - Harriet Uren
 Assist. Marshall - Maxine Gullickson
 Cultural Director - Nancy Maiss
 Social Director - Carlette Henderson
 Musician - Eileen Bianchi
 Inner Guard - Andy Anderson
 Outer Guard - Mel Gullickson
 Norsk Lærer - Trygve Loken
 Historian - Faith Johnson
 Librarian - Connie Anderson.
 Publicity - Vacant
 Editor of the Nyheter - Ken Johnson
 Sunshine Director - Billie Watne
 Membership - Jim Bryn
 Foundation Director - Jim Bryn
 Youth Director - Jeni Root
 Sports Director - Brian Root
 Camp Norge Ambassadors -
 Brian/Jeni Root

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 (866) 834-1932 for information.**