

# SynNor Brevet

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Synnøve-Nordkap  
Lodge #1-008



December 2007

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Voice Messages: 651-762-7872

<http://home.comcast.net/~synnove1> or <http://clik.to/synnove1>



*Gledelig Jul*



You won't want to miss our December Julebord and program with Rose Arrowsmith DeCoux. Rose is a professional storyteller, and will bring us the story of the nisse, the julebuck, and other Norwegian Christmas traditions. Bring your children and grandchildren for a fun evening!

See <http://rosearrowsmith.com/> for more information.

# Scandinavian Culture and News

## Christmas in Norway

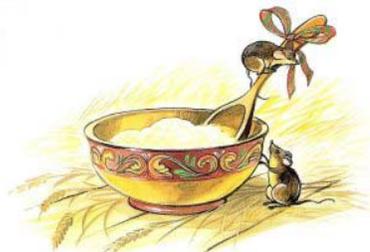
Christmas is filled with traditions, rituals and customs based in part on a number of old superstitions that continue to live on to this day. Old and young, friends and family draw close together through several weeks of festivities. One becomes more reflective and caring.

In ancient times, Christmas was a mid-winter sacrificial feast - a festival of lights marking the transition from the dark winter to spring and summer. Christmas was a time for celebrating the harvest, fertility, birth and death. In the 900s King Haakon I decided that the heathen custom of drinking *Jul* (Yule) was to be moved to December 25th, in honor of the birth of Jesus Christ. Gradually, the pagan feast was Christianized. The name *Jul* was retained, but the holiday was dedicated to Jesus Christ, the babe in the manger.

Christmas is thus a mixture of ancient heathen and Christian traditions. Today, Christmas is the most popular celebration of the year in the Christian church, and for families and friends.

## The Norwegian Christmas Buffet

The Norwegian Christmas buffet features numerous dishes and is beautifully decorated. In the weeks before Christmas, it is a tradition for employers to invite their customers and employees to a Christmas buffet dinner in appreciation of their cooperation and work during the year. They eat, drink and socialize and wish each other, "God Jul." The real Christmas buffet, however, is served on Christmas Day on December 25th. After church the immediate family and friends gather for a big Christmas brunch buffet. Based on old traditions, the rich assortment includes ribs, pork patties, cold meats, lutefisk, herring. Trout and salmon, cheese and fruit, cloudberry cream, flat bread and cakes. Beer and Norwegian aquavit are served and the food remains out on the table for the better part of the day. Competitions and games involving all the generations are popular activities.



## Christmas Tree

During the midwinter feast in Norway, evergreen branches, mistletoe and holly were used long before the Christmas tree became a tradition. Not until the first half of the 1800s did this German tradition come to Norway. Today the Christmas tree has a central place in the celebration of Christmas in Norway.

The tree, a spruce or pine, is usually bought in town or chopped from one's own forest. It must be fresh and green and fragrant, with a good shape and thick branches. Outdoor Christmas trees put up on squares, in parks and other places where people walk, are lit the first Sunday in Advent, but the tree in the home is not lit until Christmas Eve. Year after year the tree is decorated with homemade and purchased ornaments. Norwegian children proudly present the decorations they have made at school and these are hung on the tree. All kinds of lights are sold, but nothing is more beautiful than tiny candles on a tree. They create a special atmosphere, but must always be used with caution.

## Making Candles

Christmas is a festival of lights and candle-making was one of the annual and necessary steps in the preparations for Christmas. The job was often turned over to the oldest people on the farm. All fat from the slaughtering was saved. The tallow was melted and strained. Tallow from small animals made the finest candles. Wicks were made of linen or hemp. Airing out was forbidden to prevent bubbles or crooks from forming in the candles. The candles would turn out better if the weather was good. The first batch of candles was the whitest and most beautiful and was saved for holidays and parties. The way the candles burned on Christmas night presaged what would happen in the coming year. If a light went out, it meant death for the person to whom the candle belonged. Even today making candles for the Advent wreath is a cherished tradition enjoyed by many.

Taken from: *The Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Synnøve-Nordkap Lodge normally meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM At First Lutheran Church  
463 Maria Avenue (at 8th Street East, 2 Blocks North of Metro State University)  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55106 Voice messages: 651-762-7872 (See back cover for officers)  
Web Page: <<http://home.comcast.net/~synnove1>> or <<http://klik.to/synnove1>>  
Sons of Norway International: <<http://www.sofn.com>>

# Lodge News

## *Fra presidenten*

Dear Members,

**This will be my last letter to you as President. Three years passed quickly. I have learned a lot about Norway and the Sons of Norway, and I have truly enjoyed getting to know many of you. Thank you especially to the Board, but also to the many members who have been so willing to help in so many ways.**

**The new Board has talented and dedicated people. Please help them, share ideas with them, and support them. They are not here to serve you; we are all members together.**

God Jul og Godt Nytt år,

**-Mary Beth**

**PS: No one has yet come forward to fill the position of President!**

Our sympathy to the family and friends of the two recently deceased members:

Vaughn Tidemand, a member since 1980, passed away unexpectedly on November 16. His funeral was November 21, 2007.

Mildred Sander, a golden member, joined Sons of Norway in 1969. She died peacefully at home on November 17. Her funeral was Saturday, November 24, 2007.

May they rest in peace.

Congratulations to new member Edna Reasoner. Her picture appeared in the Minneapolis Star-Tribune on Monday, November 19. She is a tour guide at the Landmark Center and had led a Gangster tour group on Destination Landmark Day. Edna is Cathie Reasoner's mother-in-law.

We will be at North Heights Christian Academy on Monday morning, December 17, working with first and second graders, telling stories, and doing a craft project. Several people are still needed to help with crafts. Please contact Ruth Gibson at 651-429-5572 with questions and also to volunteer. Plan to arrive at the school by 8:45 AM. We should finish up by 10:30 AM.

### **Norwegian Sweater Raffle:**

Ruth Gibson has donated a small adult hand knit sweater to be raffled off at our Julebord. Tickets will be \$1.00 each.

### **Correction to October Board Minutes:**

Ruth Gibson was inadvertently identified as "Ruth Gilbertson".

# Lodge News

## Synnøve-Nordkap Lodge 1-008 Board Meeting Minutes

### Board Meeting Minutes, November 6, 2007

Attendees: Mary Beth and David Mutchler, Sharon Amann, Ruth Gibson, Rod Hale, Sue Halvorson, Sharon Kalmes, Trudi Johnson-Richards, Clayton Lance, LaRee and Loren Opdahl

#### Old Business

The Torsk and Meatball dinner was reviewed. We fed less people and cost was greater than last year. Suggestions were made to increase attendance by a possible time and date change and streamline food preparation as it has become more difficult to have enough volunteer helpers. The lodge needs to have everyone involved in supporting lodge activities not just the same few people all the time. The agenda for the November meeting was refined. There are still three open board positions – president, cultural director and social director. Gary Hanson from Norway House will be making a presentation. Sign up sheets for the Julebord will be available.

#### New Business

The agenda for the December meeting program was discussed. Membership pins and sports medals will be handed out. Ruth Gibson shared the plans for the Adopt-A-School activity in December. A sign-up sheet will be available for bell ringing for the Salvation Army at the meeting. Gifts will be given to shut-ins and older members. Volunteer hour sheets have been revised to reflect activities for the current year. Leadership Training will be at the SON Headquarters on Saturday, January 19 2008 at 9 AM. Possible lodge programs for 2008 were discussed. The January board meeting has been changed to Wednesday, January 2, 2008.

Submitted by Sue Halvorsen, Assistant Secretary

NOTE: The next board of directors meeting will be held at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, December 4 at the Maplewood Library, 3025 Southlawn Dr., Maplewood (on the East side of Maplewood Mall, slightly north of center).

## Synnøve-Nordkap Lodge 1-008 Lodge Meeting Minutes

### Lodge Meeting Minutes, November 13, 2007

Mary Beth opened the meeting at 7 PM. Mary Beth greeted the three visitors, Virginia Hough, Wendy van Hagen, and Iola Meyer.

There was a correction to the Board Meeting minutes as Ruth Gibson's last name was listed incorrectly. There were no corrections or additions to the Lodge Meeting minutes. Clayton Lance gave the treasurer's report.

Mary Beth stated that there was a recap meeting for the Torsk and Meatball Dinner. This year we fed 60 fewer people than last year but the profit was less because the expenses were more than last year's even though the price of a ticket was raised \$.50. The lodge needs to review whether to continue with this fundraiser or to have a different fundraiser. She also cited an example of the Northfield lodge fundraiser where the members must buy all the tickets themselves and then resell the tickets to others in order to get their money back.

Mary Beth presented the slate of officers for 2008. There were three open positions. No one has stepped forward to be lodge President for next year. Mary Beth will NOT be serving as president next year. Steve Roste stepped forward to fill the Cultural Director position and Shirley Brekke and Patty Carlson stepped forward to be Co-Social Directors. We thank them for their willingness to help.

Bell ringing for the Salvation Army will take place on Saturday December 1 at Byerly's on Suburban Avenue. All time slots have been filled.

In past years at the Julebord some items of food have run out before all members have gone through the serving line. There has been an overabundance of desserts and not enough of the main course items. The Julebord sign-up sheet was revised this year to reflect more accurately the quantity of food needed. Suggested quantities were listed for items as well as an increased number of slots for items. The sign-up sheet was circulated among the tables during the program.

Ruth Gibson had a sign-up sheet for volunteers for the Adopt a School program at North Heights Christian Academy on December 17 at 9 am. People are needed to work with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders on a craft project and as storytellers.

A volunteer hour sheet was included in the November newsletter. Please fill it out and turn it in by January.

Gary Hanson who is on the board of directors for Norway House and also a lodge member reviewed the Norway House mission and vision statements. He also recapped Norway House's search for a physical location. Brochures were passed out.

Greg Hovland gave a short presentation about giving a Viking 23 life insurance policy as a gift to a child for Christmas.

The November birthdays are: Ardyce Davies, Jan Hovland, Clayton Lance and Lois Wandmacher. Erna McGuire celebrated her anniversary. LaRee Opdahl won the \$5 door prize.

Remarks for the good of the order were made by Dave Mutchler and Sharon Amann. Dave spoke about the upcoming election of lodge officers and the importance of someone stepping forward to be lodge president next year. Sharon also encouraged lodge members to step forward to be president next year. She elaborated on the duties of the executive board. She also explained how other lodges have a collaboration of the president, vice president and counselor to oversee and coordinate lodge affairs and having committees of members to be in charge of the various lodge activities as is the practice in many of the other lodges.

A interesting program about the Christmas traditions in Norway, past and present, was given by Sorle Hovdenak. His wife May-Britt, who has a lovely voice, sang traditional Norwegian Christmas songs.

We thank our servers for the meeting refreshments: Gerri Arras, Kathy and Len Carlson, Penny and Ed Gilbertson, and Sue and Don Halvorson.

Submitted by Sue Halvorson, Assistant Secretary

# Calendar of Coming Events

<u>Saturday</u> December 1	<u>Salvation Army Bell Ringing</u> Byerly's at I94 & Suburban Two hour shifts from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM	
<u>Tuesday</u> December 4	<u>Synnøve-Nordkap Board Meeting</u> <u>NOTE CHANGE:</u> Maplewood Library 3025 Southlawn Dr. (E. side Maplewood Mall) In the Conference Room	7:00 PM to 8:45 PM
<u>Monday</u> December 17	<u>Adopt A School Participation</u> North Heights Christian Academy Rice Street & Co. Rd. C in Roseville Story telling and crafts with 1st & 2nd Graders. Call Ruth at 429-5572	9:00 AM to 10:30 AM
<u>Tuesday</u> December 11	<u>Synnøve-Nordkap Lodge &amp; Social Event</u> Annual Lodge Julebord and Juletreffest Bring Scandinavian dish to share - Program: "Christmas Legends" with Rose Arrowsmith. What are nisse & julebuk? Membership pins awarded	Hors d'oeuvres at 6:00 PM Dinner at 6:30 PM
<u>Saturday</u> December 13	<u>Junior Lodge Peer Gynt Dancers</u> At Our Savior's Lutheran Church 1616 W. Olive in Stillwater Susan Stow: 651-439-7255 New members are welcomed!	1:00 PM to 2:30 PM
<u>Wednesday</u> *January 2 *	<u>Synnøve-Nordkap Board Meeting</u> Roseville Library Corner of Co. Rd. B at Hamline	7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
<u>Tuesday</u> January 8	<u>Synnøve-Nordkap Lodge &amp; Social Event</u> Program: "Stress & Care of the Back" A program founded in Norway Presented by: Sharon Olson of Lifeback	7:00 PM

## Synnøve-Nordkap Norwegian Language Classes:

1. "Norwegian in Five Minutes a Month" series - class 6:30-7:00 PM on Tuesdays before Lodge meetings. (None in December) Schedule begins in January 2008. No meeting if meal is scheduled.
2. "Norsk, Nordmenn og Norge" class on Thursday, 6:30 - 8:00 PM Sun-Ray Library, 2105 Wilson Ave. near McKnight & Ruth Sts. Meet twice a month - Dec. 13. Beginning in 2008 - Jan. 17 & 24; Feb. 21 & 28; Mar. 20 & 27; Apr. 17 & 24; May 22 & 29  
For information, contact class co-facilitators:  
Sheryl Hove 651-738-4908 or Crystal Bloecher 651-774-8545  
New participants are invited to join the classes.

## Scandinavian Holiday Elva Kaffe

Saturday, December 1

10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Augustana Lutheran Church

1400 So. Robert St., W.St. Paul

Features rosemaling, woodcarving, tatting and weaving demonstrations, vocal, instrumental and dance performances.

Continuous coffee hour is free.

For information, call

651-457-3373 or see

[www.augustana.com](http://www.augustana.com)

## Mindekirken Upcoming Events:

924 E 21st St., Minneapolis

Saturday, December 1 - Christmas Cookie & Bake Sale with Rommegrot Cafeteria. 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Sunday, December 9 - 11:00 service Celebration of Santa Lucia

Winter term for Lanuage Classes

Begins Saturday, January 5, 2008

Check: [norsk@mindekirken.org](mailto:norsk@mindekirken.org)

Call (612) 874-0716 for more information. Or check: [mindekirken.org](http://mindekirken.org).

## Events at the Swedish Institute:

2600 Park Ave., Mpls.

A Nordic Christmas - "A Season of Light" -- Nov. 3 through January 13, 2008. Rooms, trees and tables representing Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland and Finland.

"The Legend of Sankta Lucia"

November 3 - January 13, 2008.

Call: (612)871-4907 for info.

## "Peer Gynt" at the Guthrie Theater

January 18 - March 2

Tickets are \$69 - \$24

Mark Rylance stars in the Guthrie's new adaptation of "Peer Gynt", created by author, Robert Bly

For more information, call:

(612) 377-2224 or online at

[Guthrietheater.org](http://Guthrietheater.org).

# Upcoming Lodge Activities and Events

The following people have consented to serve as officers for 2008. Nominations were taken from the floor in November. Voting will take place at our December meeting. We still need a president!

## Give a Gift That Lasts

If you're looking for a special gift for Christmas, consider giving a gift membership to Sons of Norway. It's a gift of culture and heritage that can help loved ones to connect with their past.

Gift memberships can be purchased by credit card over the phone by calling 1-800-945-8851 or by visiting the Sons of Norway site at <http://www.sonsofnorway.com>. Within two weeks the new member will receive a personalized certificate and their new membership card.

## Skogfjorden Language Camp scholarships

are due January 24. Contact Leif Erikson before January 1, or Clay Keller after that date for more information.

## Plan ahead for the District 1 Convention

It's in Mankato, MN on June 12-14.

As usual, there will be a folk art exhibit with prizes to the best in each category. The categories are Rosemaling, Fiber Arts, Woodworking (with hand tools), Genealogy, and Optional Categories which includes Photography, Knife Making, and Lolrosing.

Registration forms may be obtained from the Sons of Norway web site or from David Susag, District #1 Social/Cultural Director, 507-467-0100 or [lutefisk@acegroup.cc](mailto:lutefisk@acegroup.cc).



Position	2007	2008
<b>President</b>	Mary Beth Mutchler	[OPEN]
<b>Vice President</b>	LaRee Opdahl	Sharon Amann
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Bev Dougherty Sue Halvorson	Sue Halvorson
<b>Membership Sectry.</b>	Trudi Johnson-Richards	Trudi Johnson-Richards
<b>Treasurer</b>	Clayton Lance	Clayton Lance
<b>Cultural Director</b>	Sharon Amann	Steven Roste
<b>Social Director</b>	Sharon Kalmes	Patti Carlson & Shirley Brekke
<b>Counselor</b>	Ruth Gibson	M.B. Mutchler
<b>Trustees</b>	Linda Bjornsonn (3) JoAnn Ronning (2) Taffy Storck (1)	JoAnn Ronning (3) Taffy Storck (2) Meredith Berg (1)
<b>Marshall</b>	Curt Hogenson	Curt Hogenson
<b>Asst. Marshall</b>	Kathy Kaluza	Ron Kvaas
<b>Sports Director</b>	Rod Hale	Rod Hale
<b>Historian</b>	Lenore Jesness	Lenore Jesness
<b>Musician</b>	Dona Peterson	Dona Peterson
<b>Greeters</b>	Bev Dougherty Jack Dougherty	Bev Dougherty Jack Dougherty
<b>Publicity</b>	Leif Erickson	Leif Erickson
<b>Foundation/Scholarship</b>	Leif Erickson	Ron Stow Clay Keller
<b>Junior Lodge</b>	Susan Stow	Susan Stow
<b>Adopt-A-School Coord.</b>	Ruth Gibson	Ruth Gibson
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	Dave Mutchler	Dave Mutchler
<b>Asst. Newsltr. Ed.</b>	Karen Vinnes	Karen Vinnes
<b>Mailer</b>	Beryl Boe	Beryl Boe
<b>Norsk Classes</b>	Sheryl Hove Crystal Bloecher	Sheryl Hove Crystal Bloecher
<b>Auditors</b>	Bob Smith Ed Gilbertson Linda Holmstrom	Bob Smith Ed Gilbertson Linda Holmstrom
<b>Sunshine</b>	Judy Cullen	Judy Cullen
<b>Librarian</b>	Trudi Johnson-Richards	Trudi Johnson-Richards
<b>Genealogy</b>	Cathie Reasoner	Cathie Reasoner Fred Matson
<b>Webmaster</b>	Dave Mutchler	Dave Mutchler

# Lodge Activities

Our November program featured the Norwegian soprano May-Britt Forsberg Hovdenak and her husband Sorle. Sorle spoke about both modern and traditional Norwegian Christmas traditions. May-Britt sang traditional Norwegian Christmas songs. Their delightful program was very well received.





# This and That

## The Corner Library

by Ruth Gibson

It was great to read Trudi's review of **The Strange American Way** in the last issue of **Brevet**. I first heard about this book while sitting in the kitchen of the Wiota Lutheran Church parsonage in Wiota, Wisconsin, and eating fresh baked cookies out of the oven. When I was there in September 1997, the owners and residents were the historians who knew "everything" about this church. I had been directed to them by the lady pastor of the Wiota Lutheran Church—the new one in "town." The Wiota Lutheran Church holds services on the third Sunday of the month and is the oldest Norsk Church in the U.S. currently holding services.

I began searching for this out of print book, **The Strange American Way**, and found a copy at Luther Seminary which I promptly purchased. This was especially interesting to me as my great grandfather's brother had a son-in-law, Reverend Carl C. Aus, who pastored this church in the 1870's. In 1997, I visited the county seat and received a copy of Reverend Carl Aus's death certificate which listed "alcoholism" as the cause of his untimely death at age 55. I mentioned the cause of death to the lady pastor who said "Oh, him too, I only heard about two others, but they were in the 1900's."

The foundation of the original parsonage is located on a spacious lawn and near a meandering creek which is mentioned as being "abundant with fish." But there are no fish now. The deep woods with loads of wild game are now all gone and it is graced with beautiful cows as this is the county with more cows than residents.

One thing I especially found in the book was the eliteness of the clergy of Norway. This young pastor's wife had no idea of the struggles of the Norwegian settlers in this wilderness. It appeared that she did not know her neighbors or visit their homes nearby.

One incident was when a neighbor woman came over to borrow silverware and invited them to come and eat later. The pastor's wife thought there had to be some special occasion—and it would have to be her husband's birthday which was that day. The pastor, his young wife and their small daughter wore their best clothes. When they arrived at the neighbor's home for dinner, they were embarrassed as the other families were dressed in dirty work clothes. The young pastor's wife told her mother in a letter that they left and went home as soon as they could. It so happened that it was a threshing bee and the farm did not have enough silverware for all the workers.

The delightful residents of this parsonage graciously urged me to spend the night as lodging was some miles away. There were five bedrooms and I accepted their invitation. I heard more stories of the area and long gone residents. The master bedroom had an etching in the window pane. It was dated 1901 and it was surmised that it was probably the birthdate of one of Pastor Aus's children born to some other woman besides his wife. His reputation was such and had endured for almost 100 years. Pastor Aus died in 1898.

Oh, the joy of genealogy, not the least of which are the skeletons that fall out of the closet.

## Computers in Minnesota

- BYTE: how Lena stops Ole's advances  
LOG ON: dats how ya make da wood stove hotter  
LOG OFF: vhat Sven was trying to do when he burnt his hands terrible  
MEGAHERTZ: ven a big log drops on yer foot  
COMPACT DISK: vhat ya get from lifting logs dat's too heavy  
FLOPPY DISK: vhat da lefse looks like when it's cooked yust right  
RAM: da hydraulic ting dat makes da voodsplitter vork  
DRIVE: how ya get home ven da snow's not too deep  
HARD DRIVE: dat's when you're going to Dalute when the show's deep  
WINDOWS: vhat ya shut when it gets to 10 below outside  
CHIP: vhat ya munch on during the Vikings game  
MICROCHIP: what's left in da bottom of da bag when da big ones are gone  
LAPTOP: where da grandkids sit  
KEYBOARD: where ya suppose to put da keys so da Missus can find em  
SOFTWARE: da plastic picnic utensils  
HARDWARE: vhen da missus starches da under vare

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**Greg Hovland**  
*Field Staff Representative*  
MN Lic. #46818

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VICE PRESIDENT / MEMBERSHIP	LaRee Opdahl	738-6072
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CO-SECRETARY	Sue Halvorson	489-1952
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Trudi Johnson-Richards	482-0096
TREASURER	Clayton Lance	730-5567
SOCIAL DIRECTOR	Sharon Kalmes	771-0851
CULTURAL DIRECTOR	Sharon Amann	631-0399
COUNSELOR	Ruth Gibson	429-5572
TRUSTEES	Joanne Ronning	488-2182
	Taffy Storck	222-2857
	Meredith Berg	715-386-6680
MARSHALL	Curt Hogenson	698-5783
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SPORTS DIRECTOR	Rod Hale	636-4284
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JUNIOR LODGE / PEER GYNT DANCERS	Susan Stow	439-7255
AUDITORS	Bob Smith	222-6888 / Ed Gilbertson 732-2356 /
	Linda Holmstrom	770-8989
TARGET GROUP 30-55	Eivind Heiberg	(763) 541-9122

(All area codes are 651 unless otherwise specified).

**SYNNØVE-NORDKAP**  
**SONS OF NORWAY**  
**LODGE #1-008**  
**First Lutheran Church**  
**463 Maria Ave.**  
**St. Paul, MN 55106**  
**651-762-7872**



**Upcoming Activities**

**Annual Julebord - Tues. 12/11**  
**Stress & Care of the Back - Tues. Jan. 8**

**More Info Inside**

The Mission of Synnøve-Nordkap is to promote, preserve and cherish a lasting appreciation of the heritage and culture of Norway and other Nordic countries while growing soundly as a fraternal benefit society and offering maximum benefits to its members. Visitors and new members are always welcomed.