

◆ VESTLANDET ◆

Volume 121 Hardangerlag ◊ Møre og Romsdalslag ◊ Nordhordland/Sunnhordlandslag ◊ Rogalandslag ◊ Sognalag ◊ Vosselag Spring 2009

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Vestlandslag Stevne & Vosselag Centennial Celebration Albert Lea, MN, June 18-20

Many of the Norwegian heritage groups called lags were organized about 100 years ago. Last year, Sognalag, one of the member lags of Vestlandslag, celebrated its centennial. This year, we meet at Albert Lea where Vosselag first met at the Freeborn County Court House and the Albert Hotel on June 24, 1909.

Vestlandslag, organized in 1979 consists of:

- Sognalag organized November 28, 1908 at Albert Lea, Minnesota.
- Vosselag organized June 24, 1909 at Albert Lea, Minnesota.
- Møre og Romsdalslag: Sunnmøre organized June 25, 1910 at Moorhead, Minnesota.
- Romsdalslag organized June 14, 1913 at Min-

(Continued on page 2)



*Remodeled Freeborn County Court House
Vosselag First Met in the Old Court House
June 24, 1909*

From the President

Cynics will quickly tell us that it's individuals, not committees, who make progress.

One person, acting alone, acting efficiently and with wisdom, will leave an indelible mark on history but nothing meaningful comes out of a committee.



While there are certainly many individuals who would qualify for this praise, I wouldn't agree that nothing meaningful can come out of a committee.

The recent Vestlandslag board meeting in March was very productive. What a great group of decision makers! All contributed, all expressed opinions and all agreed on the matters at hand. Thank you, everyone!

Perhaps we come by this naturally. Norwegians have acquired a reputation for being great negotiators, relentless planners, skillful arbitrators-people solving people's problems. Through consensus we move forward.

(Continued on page 5)

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(Vestlandslaget Stevne, Continued from page 1)

neapolis, Minnesota. Merged June 20, 1928 at Minot, North Dakota. Joined by Nordmørslag (organized June 6, 1925 at St. Paul, Minnesota) in 1931.

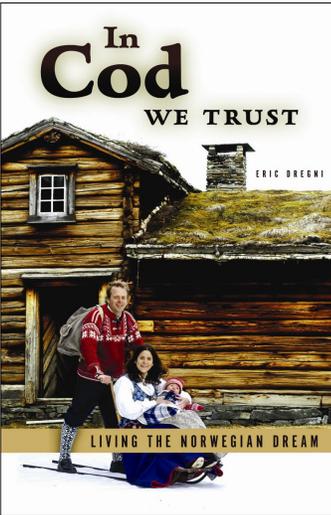
- Hardangerlag organized August 15, 1911 at Sioux Falls, South Dakota.
- Rogalandslag organized September 8, 1911, Story City, IA.
- Sunnhordlandslag organized July 18, 1912.
- Nordhordlandslag organized September 3, 1913 at Minneapolis, Minnesota.

2009 Stevne Program Highlights

(alphabetically—subject to change)

Anders Davidson, Director of Business and Innovation with the Minneapolis Royal Norwegian Consulate, will be the banquet speaker and bring greetings from King Harald of Norway. His great-grandfather, S. L. Davidson (Gulbraa), from Emmons, Minnesota, was an original member of Vosselag in 1909. Anders' father, Ken Davidson, is coming from California and some of his grandchildren may also attend.

Eric Dregni, author of *In Cod We Trust*, will tell about his book and living in Norway.



**F
C
H
M**

On Saturday at 1:00 p.m. a catered meal and tour of the **Freeborn County Historical Museum** is available. Pre-registration is needed.

Traditional Norwegian fiddle music will be played by **Full Circle**.

Dean and Ann Urness Gesme, two of the



founders of the umbrella organization, will speak about Vestlandslag on its 30th anniversary.

A presentation on the Belmont Massacre, a confrontation in 1862 between the Indians and white settlers near Jackson, Minnesota, will be given by **Deb Nelson Gourley**.

Twelve of the thirteen persons who died were from Voss/Evanger. On Sunday the Voss bus tour will visit the monument near Jackson.



Dr. Tom Hanson, a professor at the University of Minnesota, will address the group with his perspectives on Norwegian/American relationships.

(Continued on page 3)

(Program Highlights, Continued from page 2)

Blaine Hedberg, Executive Director, Norwegian American Genealogical Center & Naeseth Library, Madison, Wisconsin, will speak on the center's databases and publications. Blaine will be in attendance for the entire stevne, and he and his laptop will be available for questions and information.



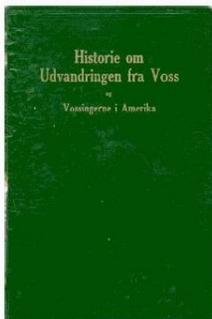
Eirik Helleve from Voss will share research on historical aspects of Voss/American relations.

Genealogists will enjoy the presentation on researching in newspapers and probate records given by **Roger Lonning**, retired high school librarian, Albert Lea.

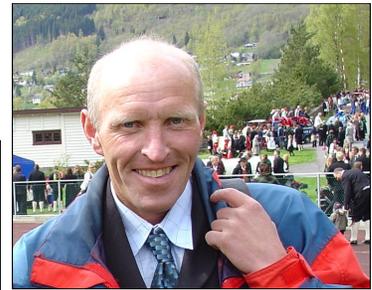


Luke Markve, son of Arthur Markve who was president of Vosselag for several years in the 1920s, will bring greetings. His son, Steve, has spent several months living with Voss cousins and may share his experiences.

Dr. Stanley Nuland, president of Vosselag in the late 1970s, will welcome the Vossings.



“Voss Now” photos by **Svein Ulvund** will be shown.



Vivian Gullickson White and others have been working for almost a year researching the 100+ original members of Vosselag from 1909-1910. This information will be shared and, where possible, she has contacted descendants of the original members and invited them to attend the stevne.



When the **Vossings** arrive in Albert Lea on Thursday, there will be a brief tour of the city, including a visit to the Freeborn County Court House where the first Vosselag meeting was held June 24, 1909. Early Vossings were involved in the design and construction of some of the city's churches and other buildings. These will be included in the tour, which will conclude with a catered meal and a guided tour of the Freeborn County Historical Museum.

The about 40 Vossings in attendance will be bringing a special atmosphere to the stevne, including songs which will be sung enthusiastically by all stevne attendees!

The *1925 Norse-American Centennial* video will be running nearly continuously. It is the original footage filmed (silent) at the event which was attended by some 200,000 Norwegians at the Minnesota State Fair Grounds. The Norse-American Centennial Celebration that was held in Saint Paul in 1925 to commemorate the 1825 arrival of the Norwegian immigrant ship *Restauration* helped provide the impetus for building a new Norwegian language memorial church, named Mindekirken. It was dedicated on May 4, 1930.

**What An
Exciting Lineup!**

Andersonville National Historic Site

On Sunday, May 24, 2009 there will be a program in memory of the nearly 100 Norwegian soldiers who died in Andersonville Prisoner of War Camp during the Civil War, 1864-1865. Andersonville, Georgia is located just off Georgia Highway 49 between Americus and Oglethorpe, 21 miles northeast of Plains.

At 11 am there will be a program for visitors interested in the Norwegian soldiers who were POWs. Torbjørn Greipsland, author of the bilingual book *Nordmenn i dødsleirene. Tusen norske soldater døde i den amerikanske borgerkrigen (Norwegians in the POW Camps. Thousand Norwegian Soldiers died during the American Civil War)*, will be the speaker.

There will also be greetings by Colonel Ole Martin Hojem, from the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Washington, and he will lay a wreath in memory of the Norwegian soldiers.

Jens Hanson (Eggen)



Andersonville Mass Graves



Newspaper Report of 1909

(from the Albert Lea Tribune, June 25, 1909)

THE VOSSINGS ARE ORGANIZED

More Than One Hundred and Fifty of the Natives of Voss Get Together and Form the Vosselaget Association

SEVERAL MEN OF NOTE HERE FROM A DISTANCE

A Banquet Was Held in the Hotel Albert Which Was a Most Splendid Success in Every Particular

Thursday afternoon in the court house some 200 Vossings, natives of Voss province in Norway, met for the purpose of organizing an association to govern the annual reunions similar to those held by the natives of Sogn, here recently. This meeting was a most successful one, officers being elected and everything done to establish a permanent organization.

The banquet at the Albert Hotel in the evening was the most enjoyable event of its kind ever held in Albert Lea. County Treasurer S. S. Tveit acted as toastmaster and following the singing of "America" by the "Nordkaps" he made a speech in which he welcomed the visitors. This was responded to by the newly elected president of the association, Knut Henderson of Cambridge, Minn. There was then very appropriate speeches by Vice-President Ole Skutle of Lake Mills, Secretary Ringheim of Northwood and Treasurer Horvey of Lake Mills. The "Nordkaps" then sang again, after which John Anderson, editor of the "Scandinaven" addressed the gathering, as also did O. O. Lund of Northwood. Dr. Nannestad brought greetings from the Sognings and the "Nordkaps" sang several more of the old folk songs, which they used entirely through the evening's program.

Mr. Rygg from Joice, Iowa, entertained the audience by playing some old time dances on the violin and Miss Kloster of Lake Mills gave a splendid reading. Helge Opland of Sioux Falls, S. D., John Sime of this city and Lars Hauge of Forest City gave some toasts: Mssers. Takle and Helle rendered their famous musical dialogue and then the program was brought to a close by the singing of the Norwegian national song.

The feast was one of those sumptuous and bounteous ones, which is only possible through the management of such a one as Proprietor Jorgensen and last evening's good cheer was but the forerunner of many others to come. The next meeting place will be decided upon by the executive committee.

100 Years

(President's Message, continued from page 1)

Stevne plans have been finalized and we can look forward to getting together in June. It's exciting that a group of Vossings from Norway will be here to help celebrate the founding of Vosselag in 1909. Efforts have been made to find descendants of the original Vosselag members and invite them to join us at the stevne. Special thanks to Dick Flisrand and Vivian Gullickson White for their work in this process.

We also look forward to celebrating the 30th anniversary of Vestlandslag. Four small groups first joined to form Vestlandslag and now we are seven. This year is special in that Sunnfjordlag will be joining us at the stevne and will vote whether or not to join Vestlandslag. I am very hopeful they will choose to become one of our group.

Complimentary copies of *Norway.com Magazine* have been received. This issue includes news of the *Restoration* replica due to sail this summer, news of Norway's electric car scheduled to come to America during 2009 and news of wind power projects in Norway as it endeavors to eradicate greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. I will quote part of the "Welcome" from publisher Jake Moe:

"In this issue of *Norway.com Magazine*, we introduce you to the past, the present and the future of Norway. With the publication of this issue of *Norway.com Magazine*, we also launch a newly redesigned *Norway.com* website. We invite you to explore the website companion to this printed issue to get a complete picture of what modern Norway is all about.

"In addition to the *Norway.com Magazine* and the *Norway.com* website, we also publish the *Norwegian American Weekly* newspaper. The *Weekly* is America's oldest and now the only newspaper for the Norwegian American community in the United States. With over 7 million people of Norwegian heritage in America, the *Weekly* is an important link to what is happening both here and back in Norway.

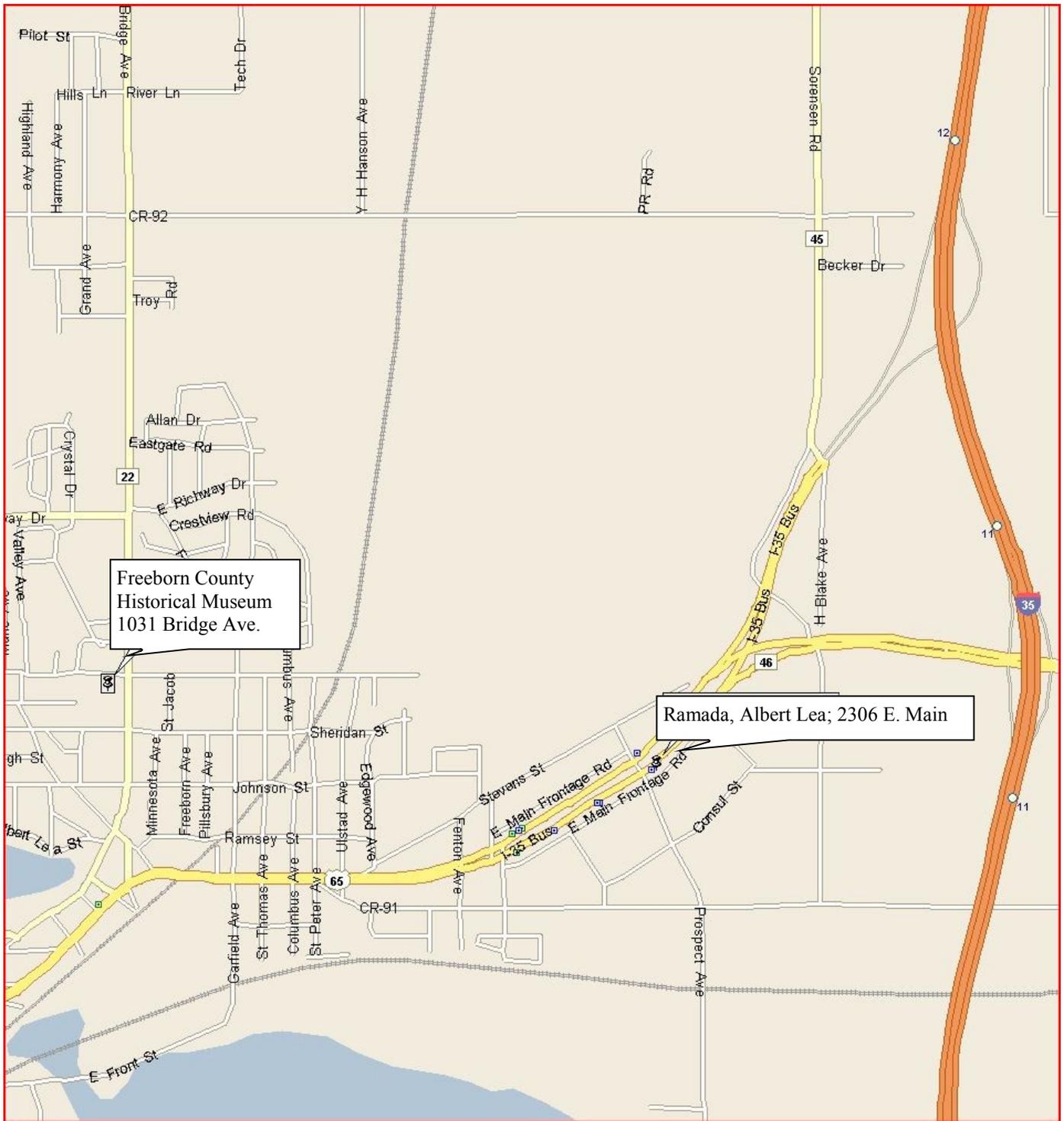
"There are tremendous opportunities to get connected to Norwegian industry in so many places across the United States. With the emergence of Norway's commitment to Green technology, options are expanding for U.S. citizens' involvement in Norway's effort to deliver quality products and solutions for the global economy. Decades ago, the options were limited to fish and farming but now Norway successfully produces everything from biotechnology, to energy, to fashion. This is an exciting time to be involved with Norway."

I have extra copies of this magazine for anyone who would like to see it.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at stevne.

Marilyn

Check out norway.com



Freeborn County
Historical Museum
1031 Bridge Ave.

Ramada, Albert Lea; 2306 E. Main

(Convention Center)
Ramada, Albert Lea

2306 E. Main St.
507-373-6471

www.ramadaalbertlea.com

Please note

- Lodging at the RAMADA should be reserved directly with the hotel.
- The rooms reserved at RAMADA are only held until May 18th. Special rates will still apply, but rooms may no longer be available.

Rogalandslag Banner Search

In 2011 Rogalandslag will celebrate its centennial. The predecessor lag, Stavanger Amt Lag, held its first stevne September 8, 1911 in Story City, Iowa. Often thereafter it would hold dual stevner to accommodate everybody. According to Odd Lovoll's *A Folk Epic: The Bygdelag in America*, there were 35 sub-lags of the National Stavanger Amt Laget (SAL), including the Northwest SAL, the Twin City SAL, the Southern California SAL, and the Rogaland og Vest Agderlaget paa Vestkysten SAL.

Rogalandslag is looking for newspaper clippings, photos and, particularly, banners from these groups to be put into a digital history. Here are the meeting places and dates for the first eleven years:

- September 8, 1911 Story City, Iowa
- June 28, 1912 Forest City, Iowa
- June 25, 1913 Canton, South Dakota
- 1914 in Norway
- June 23, 1915 Willmar, Minnesota and September 8, 1915 Eagle Grove, Iowa
- June 21, 1916 Fergus Falls, Minnesota
- June 19, 1917 Valley City, North Dakota and September 12, 1917 Ottawa, Illinois
- 1918 no stevne
- July 9, 1919 Minot, North Dakota and September 3, 1919 Canton, South Dakota
- September 1, 1920 Marshalltown, Iowa
- August 24, 1921 Eau Claire, Wisconsin

If someone with access to your State Archives or a newspaper archive would be willing to look up that state's stevner, the dates and places can be provided. Family scrapbooks may have photos or newspaper clippings that could be scanned and added to this digital archive.

Thanks for any help in this treasure hunt. Send any material to: Evelyn Oftedahl, Rogalandslag Historian, 713 - 8th Ave. S.E., Rochester, MN 55904.

*Lawrence L. Thompson
President, Rogalandslag*

Book News

Kirsten Jacobson Stasney has written a novel, *Thy Father's Will*, based on her ancestor Joseph Marvick's life between 1907 and 1918. Joseph's parents immigrated from Jelsa, Rogaland, Norway in 1854 and lived in Nettle Creek, Grundy County, Illinois and Story City, Story County, Iowa. Joseph and his family primarily resided in the Story City area. He and his sister visited Norway in 1908.

The book is available through Kirk House Publishers (<http://kirkhouse.com/>) in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Motels and Campgrounds Albert Lea Area

(Convention Center)

Ramada, Albert Lea

2306 E. Main St.

507-373-6471

www.ramadaalbertlea.com

Country Inn & Suites

2214 E. Main St.

507-373-5513

www.countryinns.com/albertleamn

Albert Lea Inn

2301 E. Main St.

507-373-8291

Countryside Motel

2102 E. Main St.

507-373-2446

Super 8 Motel

2019 E. Main St.

507-377-0591

AmericInn Motel of Albert Lea

811 Plaza St.

507-373-4324

Holiday Inn Express

821 Plaza St.

507-373-4000

KOA Kampground

County Road 46 & I-90

507-373-5170

Hickory Hills Campground

15694 – 717th Ave.

507-852-4555

Myre-Big Island State Park

County Road 46

507-379-3403

Thursday - June 18

All Events at Ramada, Albert Lea

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Registration & Hospitality

8:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Genealogy (wireless Internet available)

10:00 a.m."Researching Newspapers/Probate Records"
by Roger Lonning**11:30 a.m.**

Vestlandslag Board Meeting

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Lunch on your own/Set up Lag Banners

1:30 p.m."5 Volume Immigrant Directory Project"
By Blaine Hedberg**5:00 - 7:00 p.m.**

Social time/Dinner on your own

7:00 p.m."Norwegian-American Genealogical Center"
by Blaine Hedberg**8:30 p.m.**

Visit with friends & Voss guests

Friday - June 19**8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

Registration & Hospitality

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Genealogy (wireless Internet available)

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Opening Ceremonies

Dr. Stanley Nuland, Welcome

10:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

Coffee Break

10:20 a.m. - 10:40 a.m.

Greetings by Luke & Steve Markve

10:40 a.m. - 11:45 a.m."Perspectives on Norwegian-American
Relationships"

by Dr. Tom Hanson

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Lunch on your own

1:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m."Norwegian/Voss-American Viewpoints"
By Eirik Helleve of Voss**1:45 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.**"The Belmont Massacre of 1862"
By Deb Nelson-Gourley**2:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.**

Coffee Break

2:45 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

"Voss Now" pictures by Svein Ulvund

3:30 p.m.

"Vosselag Charter Member Project"

By Vivian Gullickson White & Friends

6:15 p.m.

Bunad Parade

6:30 p.m.

Bunad Banquet

7:30 p.m.

Let's Sing!

Vestlandslag 30th Anniversary, Ann & Dean Gesme

NAGC Greetings, Blaine Hedberg

FULL CIRCLE, Ole Hanson Family Fiddles

Vosselag Centennial, Marilyn D. Somdahl

Anders Davidson, Dir. Of Business & Innovation,

Minneapolis Royal Norwegian Consulate

Saturday - June 20**8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.**

Registration

Lag Meetings**8:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.**

Individual Lag meetings (Session A)

Hardanger-Rogaland-Sunnfjord-Voss

9:15 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Individual Lag meetings (Session B)

Møre og Romsdal-Sogn-Sunn/Nordhordland-Voss

10:30 - 10:45

Coffee Break

10:45 a.m. 11:10 a.m.

Annual Meeting

11:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

"In Cod We Trust"

By Eric Dregni

11:50 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Vestlandslag Closing

1:00 p.m. (Optional: Pre-register, \$15, meal & guided tour)

Freeborn County Historical Museum

1031 Bridge Ave; (507) 373-8003

Vendors (subject to change)**Julie Olson Backus**

Woodville, WI; Scandinavian gifts

Roger R. Hellesvig

Minneapolis, MN; wheat straw ornaments

Diane C. Hoven

Baldwin, WI; Hardanger

Adrian & Eleanor Johnson

Faribault, MN; rosemaling

Helga Kennedy

Story City, IA; rosemaling

Deb Nelson Gourley

Waukon, IA; books

June Nyberg

Superior, WI; rosemaling and folk art

Anne M. Strootman

Maple Grove, MN; Scandinavian dolls

Jack R. Twet

Beaver Dam, WI; Norwegian theme bird houses/feeders

Vestlandslag Stevne Registration Form

June 18, 19, 20 - 2009

Ramada, Albert Lea, MN

NAME(1) _____ LAG NAME(s) _____

Name(2) _____ Lag Name(s) _____

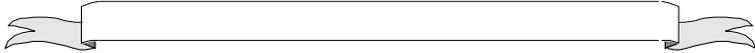
ADDRESS _____ E-MAIL _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____ PHONE _____

Registration Rates

Thursday, Friday, or Saturday, Jun 18-19-20	\$17.00	x _____ = \$ _____
Thursday, June 18 AND Friday, June 19	\$22.00	x _____ = \$ _____
Friday, June 19 AND Saturday, June 20	\$22.00	x _____ = \$ _____
Thursday, June 18 THRU Saturday, June 20	\$35.00	x _____ = \$ _____
Early bird discount 3-day registration, June 18-20 (if paid by May 29th)	\$30.00	x _____ = \$ _____
Saturday Freeborn Co. Historical Museum Tour	\$15.00	x _____ = \$ _____
Bunad Banquet, Friday, June 19	\$20.00	x _____ = \$ _____ (adults)
Bunad Banquet, Friday, June 19, Child	\$10.00	x _____ = \$ _____ (children 12 & under)
Total Registration		\$ _____

Please
Return by
May 29



Stevne Convention Center
Ramada, Albert Lea, MN
 2306 East Main
 Albert Lea, MN 56007
 (507) 373-6471
 www.ramadaalbertlea.com

Ramada Convention Room Rates

1 King Bed \$59/night
 2 Double Beds \$69/night
 Free Wireless Internet & TV

Please note

- Lodging at the RAMADA should be reserved directly with the hotel.
- The rooms reserved at RAMADA are only held until May 18th. Special rates will still apply, but rooms may no longer be available.



Total To Vestlandslag \$ _____

Registration and a check payable to Vestlandslag should be sent **on or before May 29** to:

Robert Hanson

13569 Riverview Drive

Elk River, MN 55330

<H4414463@juno.com>

(763) 441-4463; (651) 470-0236, cell

Special Needs _____

Individual Lag Officers

The Norwegian-American Bygdelagenes Fellesraad Web Site • www.fellesraad.com

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Alternate to Bygdelag Fellesraad Lee Brown (above)

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Web Site www.rogalandslag.org

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Genealogist Gerald Sime, (above)

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VOSSELAG

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News Reporter Open

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Director Richard Flisrand (above)

Delegates Richard Flisrand (above), Ruth Christ (above)

Web Site www.vosselag.org

VESTLANDSLAGET - MEMBERSHIP FORM

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Type of Membership (check as appropriate) New Renewal Change of Address

How did you learn about Vestlandslag? Personal Contact Webpage Brochure Other
 We do not share or sell our mailing list.

Norwegian district(s) of interest: Hardanger* Nordhordland Rogaland Møre og Romsdal
 Sogn Sunnhordland Voss

Membership Fee Schedule:	3 years for an individual	\$24.00	_____
	3 years for a couple	\$30.00	_____
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	1 year for a couple	\$12.00	_____
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	1 year Norway	\$15.00	_____

Annual dues run from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31. New members joining at a stevne will receive 1½ years first-time membership.

Make checks payable to **VESTLANDSLAG** and send to:

Robert Hanson
13569 Riverview Dr.
Elk River, MN 55330
(e-mail H4414463@juno.com)

* Hardangerlag members can receive a special newsletter, *Hardanger Hilsen*, by sending \$8.00 to Hardanger genealogist.

Lake Mills Graphic

VOL. 35 NO. 2
 Wednesday, June 30, 1909

VOSELAGET MEET

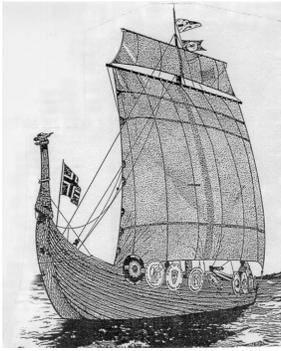
The City of Albert Lea Was Host to a
 Large and Enthusiastic Gathering

Vosselaget held at Albert Lea Minn., on Thursday, June 24th, was a success beyond expectations. About 250 assembled to organize and about thirty "Vosser" from Lake Mills and vicinity helped to make that number.

An impromptu program was quickly arranged and everything went off as smoothly as though it had been planned for two months ahead.

The organization is to be a national one, and with such men as Knut Henderson of Cambridge, Wis., secretary of the National Norwegian Pioneers Association, for president, O. O. Skuttle, vice-president, Oscar Horvei, treasurer; and Hon. L. W. Boe of Forest City, John Anderson, publisher of Skandinavian at Chicago, Helge Opland of Sioux Falls Posten, and J. A. Rockne, speaker of the House of Representatives of Minnesota, as director, there is not a doubt but what this association will become a genuine success.

The place for the next meeting was not decided but will be given out later. A general good time was had and all the attending Vosser returned feeling well pleased with their efforts at organizing a "Vosselaget."



VESTLANDET
811 22nd Street NW
Austin MN
55912-1133

Vestlandslag

Albert Lea, MN

Stevne

June 18, 19, 20; 2009

Membership Due?

Membership Reminder: If your membership ends in 2008, please renew now.

New Members

Lynn Reynolds

Duluth, MN
(Voss)

Beverly Enfield

Wyoming, MN
(Voss)

Denise Eha

Ramsey, MN
(Sogn)

Janice M. Tommerdahl

Hendrum, MN
(Rogaland)

Astrid Hancock

Corvallis, OR
(Nordhordland)

Torleif Sorenson

St. Paul, MN
(Rogaland)

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News From

StarTribune.com

April 8, 2009

Lois Quam, the former senior UnitedHealth Group executive who joined Piper Jaffray & Co. as its alternative investments chief, has left the investment bank after less than two years on the job.

Quam is launching Tysvar, a business incubator that will help develop start-ups in health care and clean energy and strengthen technology transfer between Minnesota and Norway. The company is named after her grandfather's hometown in Norway.

News Submissions

News submissions should be sent to Jean Legried at the address listed on the front page. Deadlines for submissions are:

January 15

April 1

July 15

October 15

