

TeleNews



**News for Descendants of Emigrants
from the Telemark region in Norway**

Volume XV, Number 2
September 2009

Published by
Telelaget of America

Inside this issue:

Greeting from the President	1
Hoberg and Veisselman Elected to BOD-	2
7-Lag Stevne Rated Highly	2
New Members	2
Anne Sladky is New Telelaget Webmaster	3
Telelaget Members Invited to Høstfest	3
Telelaget is a 501(3)(c) Organization	3
New Brochures Available to Members	3
Membership Renewal Reminder	3
Pictures of 2009 7 Lag-Stevne	4
Pictures of 2009 7 Lag-Stevne	5
Minutes of 2009 Telelaget Annual Meeting	6
New Telelaget Publications	7
Telelaget Officers	8

Greetings from the President

As a young boy, my grandmother would remind me that Norwegians did not brag or boast. At a recent Norwegian-American event, Walter Mondale told the audience that as a boy his Norwegian parents would punish him if he was boastful. At the risk of ignoring my grandmother's advice and/or being punished, I would like to make some positive comments about the successful 7-Lag Stevne that Telelaget hosted in June at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

As shown on the charts on the next page, all aspects of the *stevne* (General Sessions, Classes, Entertainment, Genealogy, Banquet, Costs and Fees, and Facilities) were highly rated by attendees. Overall, it had the largest attendance of any recent *stevne*. (Pictures from the *stevne* are shown on pages 4 and 5.)

Several factors contributed to its success. First and foremost, we had a dedicated, hands-on *Stevne* Planning Committee consisting of Lorna Anderson, Jan Frye, Rachel Gorka, Darrel Johnson, Mary Kay Keenan, Alice Kirn, Elaine Nordlie, and Joran Olson. Each of them had an area of responsibility which they organized very well.

We also tried several innovations. The days of the week were changed in order that younger people and students could attend sessions on Saturday. We conducted a wide variety of high quality classes taught by knowledgeable instructors. Classes on Norwegian cultural skills such as folk dancing, rosemaling, Norwegian language, and lefse making were especially popular. Prominent Norwegian musicians were featured. Telemark folk singer Tone Tveito and Hardanger fiddler Torgeir Straand, two young national prize winning musicians were very popular. The tours, especially Sunday's Historic Church Tour to Mindekirken and the Old Muskego Church, were also very well received

All in all, it was a very meaningful experience for those of us who organized the event and those who attended. The theme of the *stevne*, "Bridging the Generations" was achieved. Hopefully, future *stevner*, hosted by other *lags*, will incorporate some of our successful concepts.

Mange hilsner,
John Haugo
President of Telelaget



Telelaget members who attended the 7-Lag Stevne at University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

Telelaget's Web site:
www.telelaget.com

Hoberg and Viesselman Elected to Board

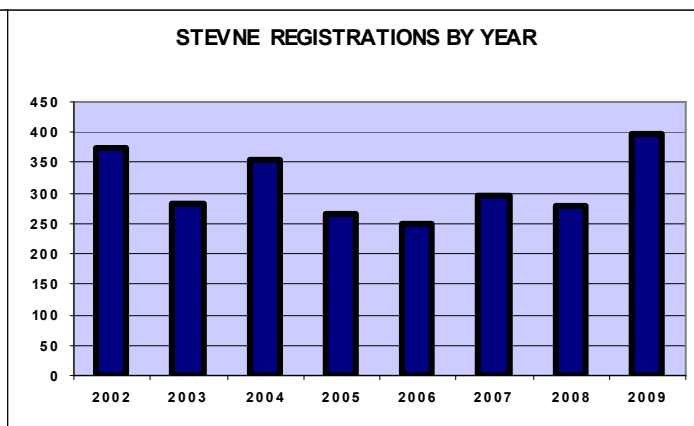
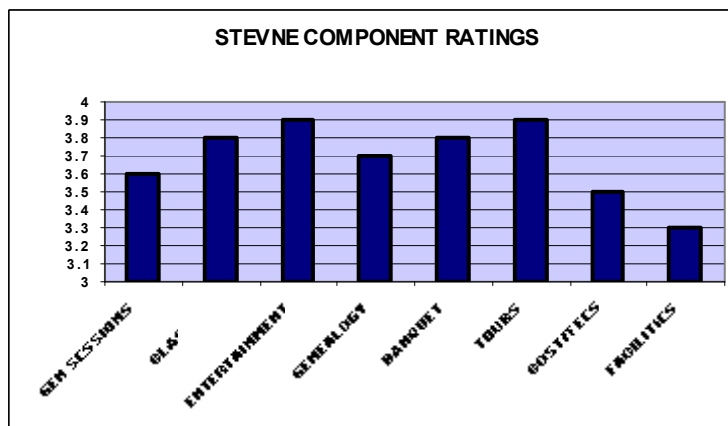


Bill Hoberg was born and raised in Ortonville, MN. He graduated from South Dakota State University where he studied agriculture and was a member of the football team. Bill was a vocational agriculture instructor at Benson High School for four years. He then went into banking where he has been for 33 years. Presently, Bill is a vice president and loan officer for the State Bank of Danvers. His wife, Judy, is a nurse who works for the Benson Clinic. Bill and Judy have two sons. Their older son works as an electrical lineman and their younger son is an electrical engineer. They have two grandchildren. He and Judy participated in Telelaget's 2007 Telemark Tour, which they enjoyed immensely. Bill is currently working on a family history.



Shirley Viesselman and her husband Kane live in Hutchinson, MN. She currently is an accounts receivable specialist for Hutchinson Technology Incorporated. Shirley is the treasurer at Bethlehem United Methodist Church; is a member and past president of the Crow River Chapter of IAAP; and is a past board member of the Hutchinson Area United Way. Shirley has also been a girl scout leader and a Sunday school teacher. She loves reading, making cards and other paper crafts. Shirley became interested in family heritage in 8th grade when in a history class had to construct a family tree. She became interested in Telelaget because of her Aunt Alice Kim's involvement. Shirley enjoys learning about her heritage and her Telemark ancestors.

7-Lag Stevne Rated Highly by Attendees



All attendees at the 7-Lag Stevne were given an evaluation form. They were asked to rate, using a 4-point scale, and make comments on each component of the event. As shown on the graph, all aspects were rated very highly. The entertainment and the tours were rated the highest with an overall average rating of 3.9. The classes and banquet received a rating of 3.8.

The total attendance at 7-Lag Stevner for the past eight years are shown on this graph. It shows that this year's event had the highest attendance. Four hundred people including 10 students and 73 one-day participants attended. An additional 32 people attended the banquet only. Of the attendees, 167 were members of Telelaget and/or part of the Telemark tour group.

New Members

- | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Otto Aaland | Hatton, ND | Wayne and Wanda Hillman | Northwood, IA |
| Beth Anderson | Spicer, MN | Becky and Curtis Johnson | Badger, MN |
| Margit Bakke | Flom, MN | Ingar Leidal | Tinn, Austbygd, Norway |
| Sherman Benson | Kenyon, MN | Mariyn Leifgren | River Falls, WI |
| Bob and Helen Bergland | Roseau, MN | Robert and Louise Overland | Cottage Grove, MN |
| Family Search | Salt Lake City, UT | Ham and Suzanne Peterson | Rochester, MN |
| Kathy Botten | Belgrade, MN | Todd Saylor | Aberdeen, SD |
| Dennis A. Gimmestad | St. Louis Park, MN | Gregg Thompson | Bozeman, MT |
| Allan and Vicki Haugo | Waubun, MN | Sonja Thune | Sacred Heart, MN |
| JoEllen Haugo | Minneapolis, MN | Joyce Young | Minneapolis, MN |

Anne Sladky is New Telelaget Webmaster

Anne Sladky, Telelaget's new webmaster, grew up in the Telemark settlement on the Buffalo River northeast of Moorhead, Minnesota, where her great-great-grandfather was one of its early pioneers. In the early 1970's, Anne quit college, joined the Navy, and found herself in the computer field. Early in her career, she was able to learn several programming languages and become a specialist in operating system support and telecommunications.

After leaving the Navy, Anne was hired by a subsidiary of Univac, and went on to spend most of the next 30 years designing, supporting, and managing operating and application systems both on the East Coast and in the Twin Cities. In 2000, she moved to a home outside Walker, Minnesota, and embarked on a second 'career' as a volunteer webmaster for a variety of non-profit organizations – including three other

bygdelag, the Minnesota Territorial Pioneers, her church and her graduating class.

Anne has two grown children: a daughter who is a financial analyst in St. Paul and a son who was a project supervisor for a wind energy company. Anne's ancestors were all Norwegians. Her maternal ancestors were from Hadeland and her paternal ancestors were from the Buskerud, Oppland and Telemark Counties. She also is descended from the well-known Mandt and Fjågesund families in Telemark.



Anne Sladky

Telelaget Members Invited to Participate in Høstfest

Each year Telemark Heritage, an organization that promotes today's Telemark and its culture, has a large exhibit at the annual Norsk Høstfest held in Minot, ND. They have invited us to help maintain their booth in exchange for exhibit space and a chance to promote Telelaget by distributing brochures, etc.

This year's Høstfest is being held from September 30 to October 3. Individuals who participate would get free admission and tickets for concerts and the official dinner. If you plan to attend and would be available to assist with the exhibit, please contact John Haugo (see contact info on back page).

Telelaget of America is a 501(c)(3) Organization

Telelaget of America is registered in Minnesota as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. Your membership dues and contributions help us to maintain our www.telelaget.com Web site, to produce our publications, and to provide genealogical assistance.

To donate money mail a check to Telelaget of America to: **Shelley Jerviss, P.O. Box 292, Houston, MN 55943**. A tax-exempt form recognizing your contribution will be mailed to you. Thanks for your support.

Brochures Available to Members

A new colored brochure, which includes basic information about Telelaget, pictures from Telemark, and a membership application form is available for prospective members. Current members may obtain them for distribution at family gatherings, at Norwegian-American conferences or exhibits, etc.

An electronic copy of the brochure is also available. If you wish to receive either printed or electronic copies please contact: Joran Olson, 7601 West Boulder Creek Plaza #4, Sioux Falls, SD 57106, or by email at: joranlho42@sio.midco.net.

A Reminder to Renew Your Membership

If the label on this issue of *TeleNews* has a highlighted 2009 on it, this means that your Telelaget membership is expiring and that this is your last mailing of our newsletter. To ensure that your membership will continue, please renew your membership soon. The one-year membership for a U.S. address is \$12 and a 4-year membership is \$42. Annual membership fees for those outside of the U.S. are \$14 and 4-year membership is \$50; for Norwegian addresses annual membership is NOK 85 and a 4-year membership is NOK 340.

Mail you membership payment to: **Shelley Jerviss, P.O. Box 292, Houston, MN 55943**. Norwegian members should deposit your *knoner* in the Telelag Account at Hjordal og Gransherad Sparebank – account number 2699.07.11754. Renewal notices will be sent in January to those who have forgotten to renew on their own.

**Over a Century of Celebrating our
Telemark Heritage**



Lag Banners at 7-Lag Stevne



John Haugo and Elaine Nordlie interviewed on KARE 11.



Tone Tveito and Torgeir Strand perform on KARE 11.



Tone's Lur call to begin Stevne session.



Telemark attendees at the 7-Lag Stevne as part of their MN/WI tour.



LeRoy Larson and his Scandinavian Ensemble.



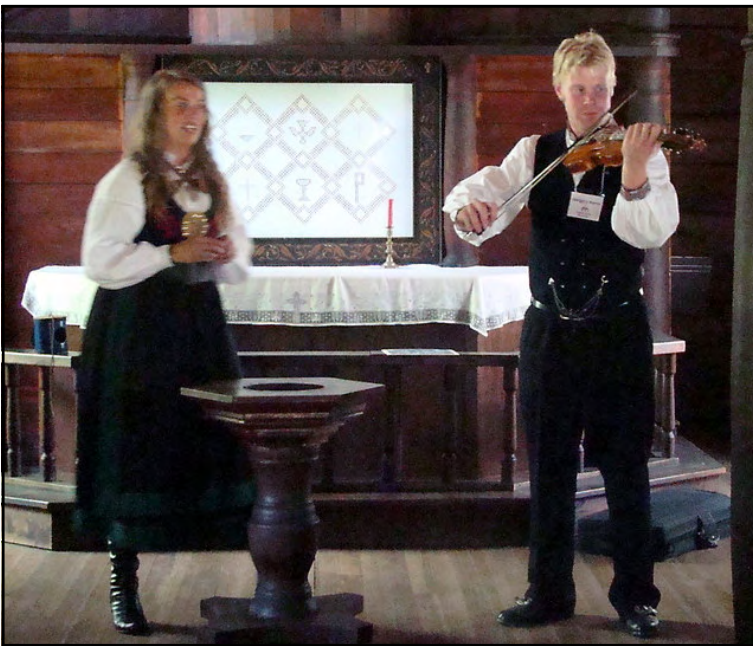
Torgeir introduced at Mindekirken.



Harald Omnes leads Bunad parade.



Bunad parade participants at Stevne banquet.



Tone and Torgeir perform at Old Muskego Church



Stan Oftelie enjoying banquet and program.



Kane Viesselman teaching popular class on lefse-making.



Roger Magnuson, director of the Norway Project.



Telelaget genealogists, Darrel Johnson and Jan Frye, available to assist members.

Minutes of 2009 Telelaget Annual Meeting

President John Haugo welcomed members to the Telelaget Annual Meeting held on June 26, 2009 at the Kinnickinnic River Theater in University of Wisconsin-River Falls' University Center. He called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. John introduced former Telelaget Presidents: Elaine Nordlie, Jan Frye, and Arnie Ness as well as former President Glenn Nelson's wife, Carol. He then introduced current board members: Elaine, Shelley Jerviss, Darrel Johnson, Alice Kirn, Joran Olson, Jim Skree, and Helen Steele, and Telemark Directors: Anne Haugen Wagn and Harald Omnes, who were in attendance. John introduced and thanked *Stevne Planning Committee* members: Elaine-Telemark Tour Group Coordinator, Jan and Darrel-Genealogy Room, Lorna Anderson-Vendors and Exhibitors, Joran-Ticketing, Rachel Gorka-Bus Tours, Mary Kay Keenan-Banquet and Meals, and Alice-Publicity.

Secretary's Report: Jim read the minutes of the July 19, 2008 Annual Meeting which was held in Stevens Point, WI. Elaine moved to approve the minutes as read. Carol Nelson seconded. Passed.

Treasurer's Report: Shelley reported that our current Checking Account balance is \$14,001.05, Savings Account I balance is \$7,076.22, Savings Account II balance is \$2,207.96 and our Norwegian Account balance is NOK 11,500.11. The CD has a current value of \$10,160.40. Lois Johnson moved to accept the report as presented. Gerry Steele seconded. Passed.

Membership Report: Shelley reported that we currently have 428 paid members with 27 from Norway and five from Canada. She reported that we have received 35 new members since *Stevne* 2008.

Genealogy Report: Johnson reported that more "Coming Home" forms had come in and thanked Jan and Joran for their assistance in the Genealogy Room.

Webmaster: New Webmaster Anne Sladky stated that the Web site content is basically done and she is now working on the cosmetics. The developmental Web site is available at www.mnwebsteps.com/telelaget.

TeleNews: John reported that *TeleNews* has a new look with better quality print and color, and cheaper postage through bulk mailing.

Telesoga: Alice announced that the next issue would be coming out in November. She stated that she always appreciates the submitted articles and looks for more. They tend to lead to connections for Telelaget.

Board of Directors Nominating Committee: Joran, representing the committee which also included Alice and Elaine, stated that Gene Estensen is leaving the Board. Darrel and Jim have agreed to be renominated and

Shirley Viesselman and Bill Hoberg have agreed to be nominated. Shelley moved for a unanimous ballot for the slate of candidates: Johnson, Skree, Viesselman, and Hoberg for 3-year terms. Jan seconded. Passed.

2009 Goals: John provided an in-depth overview of our 10 Goals via a Power Point presentation. He noted that excellent progress had been made on the goals.

Publication Goals: A new look for *Telesoga*, *TeleNews*, our brochure and the Web site, all of which now share basic design elements, has been accomplished. The May 2009 *Telesoga* featured Bob Bergland, former U.S. Congressman and Secretary of Agriculture, who is of Telemark descent, as the cover story.

Telemark to America, Volume II-Settlements: Elaine explained that all the articles are taken from Torkel Oftelie's stories. Five hundred copies of Volume II were originally published in 1992, and they were all sold by 2008. Elaine was very pleased and excited to announce that 200 copies of a revised edition of Volume II are now available for sale. She thanked the many people who had been involved in the various aspects of the revision of the document including her husband, Kjell; Harald; Alice; Kermit and Jan Frye; and Jim.

Rannei Aamundsdatter Norheim Plaque Dedication: John showed some slides from the dedication ceremony at Norway Lutheran Church in Denbigh, N.D. on Sept. 30, 2008, which was attended by Elaine, Alice, and him. He also showed a *Budstikke* presented to Telelaget by Tarjei Gjelstad, director of the Norsk Skieventyr.

Andersonville Cemetery Memorial Day Service: Darrel attended the service on May 24, 2009 along with Gene Estensen, Torbjørn Greipsland and many others. Darrel stated that it was an honor to attend the service.

Carol Nelson thanked Kjell and Elaine for entertaining the visiting group of *Telemarkings* at their home in Dassel. Likewise thanks were given to Beverly and Keith Webster; Dale and Audrey Overland; and Arnie and Edna Ness for hosting the 42 Telemark visitors.

John reported that 143 people registered with Telelaget for the *Stevne* and 64 people signed the attendance sheet at the Telelaget Annual Meeting. The next 7-Lag *Stevne* will be at Winona State University, Winona, MN in mid-July 2010.

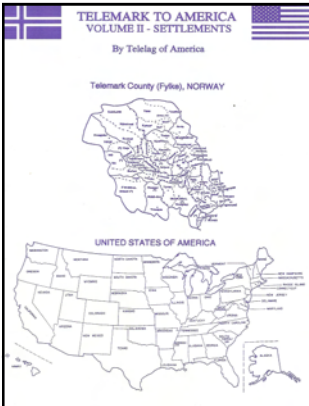
Meeting adjourned at 12 noon, after which box lunches were enjoyed by all who had ordered them.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Skree
Secretary
Telelaget of America

New Telelaget Publications

Telemark to America, Volume II—Settlements (Revised Edition)



In 1992, Telelaget printed 500 copies of *Telemark to America Volume II-Settlements*. Last year we sold our last copy. This volume is rich with settlement history from Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota. This 179-page book has an index including over 5,500 names and places. All the chapters are translations from the early *Telesoga* written by Torkel Oftelie. Torkel visited most of the Telemark settlements in the above mentioned states between the years of 1907 to 1926. The first issue of *Telesoga*, published in 1909, contained the first settlement history. Torkel documented not only names of those living in these settlements, but also the stories of their ancestors - the first settlers in these areas. Volume II has been revised and 200 more copies have been printed. Revisions in the book included adding twenty-four more pictures, making numerous translation and grammatical corrections, explaining location of many place names, and making it more user friendly for younger generations by translating slang terms.

Prices: \$20.00 + \$3.00 S&H = \$23.00 or NOK 125 + NOK 102 S&H = NOK 227

"A year at Haugo farm" by Ingebjørg Draugedal



Recently, Telelaget of America entered into a distribution agreement with Vest-Telemark Museum, the publisher of the English version of the book entitled, "A year at Haugo farm". Under the terms of the agreement, Telelaget will sell and mail copies of the book in the United States and Canada. Author Ingebjørg Draugedal - who now lives in Kviteseid, Telemark, Norway - tells of her life as a girl in 1945, growing up under Nazi occupation on a farm in Telemark that was still as self-sufficient as those our emigrant ancestors left in the 1800's. How did people back then provide for nearly everything they needed themselves? In the book Ingebjørg recounts how they shared the work, the hardships and the pleasures of living on a close-knit family farm. The book describes in detail the practical work that was done on the farm, but it also tells about the relationships between the family members and within the local community, and about the intimate interaction with the surrounding landscape. Ingebjørg's vivid reminiscences breathe life into what is now a bygone era for most of us.

Price: \$40.00 + \$2.50 S&H = \$42.50

Order Form (May be photocopied.)

___ Copies of Telemark to America, Volume II-Settlements

@ \$20.00 + \$3.00 S&H = \$23.00 or NOK 125 + NOK 102 S&H = NOK 227 _____

___ Copies of A year at Haugo farm:

@ \$40.00 + \$2.50 S&H = \$42.50 _____

___ Copies of Telelaget – The First One Hundred Years

@ \$20.00 + \$3.00 S&H = \$23.00 or NOK 125 + NOK 102 S&H = NOK 227 _____

___ Copies of Telemark to America, Volume I—Emigration

@ \$20.00 + \$3.00 S&H = \$23.00 or NOK 125 + NOK 102 S&H = NOK 227 _____

Name _____

Mail Order to : **Shelley Jerviss**
P.O. Box 292
Houston, MN 55944

Address _____

Note: These publications, Telesoga CDs, and various Telelaget 100th Anniversary Commemorative items may also be ordered through our Web site, www.telelaget.com. Commemorative items include a tote bag, a cap, a mug, and a fana (minature Telemark banner).

Telelaget of America Officers

President & TeleNews Editor

John Haugo
1407 Croix Crest Dr.
Hudson, WI 54016
(715) 381-1430
john.haugo@gmail.com

Vice President

Elaine Nordlie
620 Maple St.
Dassel, MN 55325
(320) 275-2286
enordlie@embarqmail.com

Genealogist

Darrel Johnson
25216 N. Pine Drive
Sebeka, MN 56477
(218) 472-3264
dejohnso@wcta.net

Secretary

Jim Skree
15279 Skree Drive
Caledonia, MN 55921
(507) 896-3709
shelley.jerviss@houston.k12.mn.us

Treasurer

Shelley Jerviss
P. O. Box 292
Houston, MN 55943
(507) 896-2088
shelley.jerviss@houston.k12.mn.us

Director

Bill Hoberg
503 17th Street North
Benson, MN 56215
(320) 843-3988
jbhoberg@charter.net

Director

Shirley Viesselman
1015 Jefferson Street SE
Hutchinson, MN 55350
(320) 587-4692
kwsav@hutchtel.net

Membership

Joran Olson
7601 West Boulder Place
Sioux Falls, SD 57106
(605) 271-9328
joranlho42@sio.midco.net

Telesoga Editor

Alice Stangeland Kirn
2147 Alpine Drive
Helena, MT 59601
(406) 422-5539
alicekirn@bresnan.net

Telemark Director

Anne Haugen Wagn
Solskinnsvegen 8
3684 Notodden, Norway
awagn@online.no

Telemark Director

Harald Omnes 3825
3825 Lunde, Norway
harald.omnes@c2i.net

Webmaster

Anne Sladky
6938 State Highway #2
LaPorte, MN 56461
(218) 547-1156
anne@mnwebsteps.com