



\* Supporting A Dementia Friendly Society \*

# NORDEN STAR

Happy

New Year!

NORDEN LODGE #407 HUNTINGTON



Volume 55, Issue # 1



Celebrating Our 84<sup>th</sup> Year

January, 2023

Meeting normally each 4th Sunday of the month at Saint Peter's Lutheran Church, Huntington Station, NY

Phone (516) 791-3983 [NordenLodge407@Gmail.com](mailto:NordenLodge407@Gmail.com) -Next Meeting **Sunday Jan 22th, 2 PM**

On Facebook at: **NordenLodge3-407 Sons of Norway** - On the WEB at **NordenLodge3-407.org**

**Deadline for Items for the Febuary, 2023 Newsletter PERIODICAL is January 29, 2022**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

First I want to wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year. Together we will make 2023 a great year. We have many items on our schedule and would like everyone to participate and celebrate with us. Besides our meetings in the afternoon we will have our installation during our February 26th meeting. I do not know who will install us yet, but I will ask for that decision in January. Remember in February, we have the Bowling for Fun with Henrik Ibsen Lodge – let Kristin and Chuck know you want to attend and some of you may even bowl. In March you can join those in the parade committee at the Salty Dog in Brooklyn. It is their fundraiser to keep the parade marching. Then in April we have our Atlantic City trip. You need to think about that and begin to pay Kristin for the trip. We are opening it up to the Zone 1 Lodges and Nansen lodge, so if you want to go you **MUST** make the decision early. May, will be the parade and all the events that happen that weekend. June, will be our celebration of our Zone 1 scholarship winners (if we have any applicants). It has not been decided when and where, so we may have something for our winners at our lodge. So as you can see we have a busy activity list for the first half of our year. Of course you can always join the other lodges at their meetings so you should never be bored with nothing to do and no one to see.



It is with deep sadness that I want to share, especially with the Garborgians, Bobby "Boobala" Carlsen passed to Lodge Eternal on Monday, Jan. 5th. His Memorial was held on Thursday in Brooklyn. Barbara and I have known Bobby for over 50 years, when we joined Garborg Lodge back in 1977. He transferred in his later years to Lodge Brooklyn when he struggled to get to Valley Stream. You will remember him from our "Ole & Lena" events. His dressing as Tessie and his love for singing and dancing. He had a love and a great support for Land of the Vikings. He was involved in many of the Scandinavian groups in Brooklyn. He has always been a bundle of fun and always ready to entertain us and he loved to work with the children both in the neighborhood and or when assisting out at events. His laughter, his crazy costumes, his silly jokes, and his silly antics just to lighten everyone's day. He will truly be missed by us all.

For those who wish to donate you may wish to remember and honor Bobby, please do so to: S/N Zone One Scholarship Fund, c/o Peter Johansen, 168 Spruce Street, West Hempstead, NY 11714 or the: 3D Charitable Trust, c/o Lloyd Ritter, 31 E. Lake Drive, Annapolis, Maryland 21403.

We received a note from Ellen "Meatball" to say her schedule is booking up, so we will need to make decisions on when she can come and share her "squeezing box" with us. Think it over and we will decide during our meeting in January. Last year we enjoyed her music at 4 different events, it brought out more people, so let's continue that trend, as long as you all agree with me.

Hope to see many of you in January. We have decisions to make for the year. I am sure the Social Directors are planning a delicious meal.  
See you in January.

*Fraternally, Roy*

If you hear of anyone who is not feeling well, or needs some cheering up, please contact our **SunShine Lady**, Karen Olsen-Helmold (516) 935-0751, so we can respond & get the word out.

### PLEASE WEAR YOUR NAME TAGS TO EVERY MEETING.

As voted, a \$1.00 reminder fee for a temporary name rental will be charged each time you forget. This could be fun! Only excellent above reproach excuses will be exempted by Vote on the floor. **See Les Johannessen for your Tag**

**NORDEN ALWAYS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS AND GUESTS**



\*\*\* NORDEN OFFICERS FOR 2021 \*\*\*

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**November 2022 Meeting Minutes Summary –**

President Roy opened the meeting at 2pm. We could not zoom today because Chuck and Kristin had a Memorial for Chuck's mother Leeanna. Welcome to our new member Barbara Carlson. Pledge of allegiance and President Roy asked all to remain standing for a moment of silence for our dearly departed member Lee Walendorf.

**Secretary** – silent attendance was taken. The minutes were approved as distributed.

**Financial reports** – Shirley said the books are all in order and the bills are all paid.

**Correspondence:** Barbara received a thank you card from Barbara Forberg. She has flyers for the bowling and the Atlantic City trip on the desk.

**Committee reports:** Social director: Janet said she is looking for a park we can assist in clean-up as a community event. Barbara ordered our dinner. She thanked everyone for their help both in November and those who will help in December.

**Newsletter:** Les said he had about 7 newsletter returned by mail. They were smeared and he resent them out.

**Sports director:** Barbara announced for Chuck For Bowling for fun with Henrik Ibsen lodge flyer Will be held on February 12, \$25 per Adult, and children under 12 are free. East Islip Lanes.

Coffee and cake will be served. No food.

Atlantic city – the date is April 22nd and it will be first come first sit. Please take a flyer and pass the word around

**Zone:** Barbara & Les

1. Remember we have scheduled the bus for 2023 Scanfest

2. Our zone L.I. Memorial Service is on May 7th
3. Brooklyn Memorial Service will be April 23rd.
4. Zone 1 scholarship – held the meeting on Nov 12, there was a discussion on updating the application for 2024 applicants and a letter was sent to the Lodge Presidents, Secretaries, and Editors. There was an election of officers: Chair – Barbara Berntsen, Vice chair – Lois Hedland, Secretary – Barbara Brownworth, Asst. Secretary – Barbara Kristiansen, and Treasurer – Karen Olsen-Helmold

**Sunshine:** none at this time.

**Parade:** Barbara at the meeting in October where we decided on the theme and the pin. The pin is a gold oval with the paperclip centered. And the theme is “Remembering Norwegian Resistance.” { Info from the board meeting.

**Old business**

**Nominations** –Barbara read the slate of officers for 2023-2025.

**Election of officers** – President Roy read the slate of officers. They were elected all at once.

**New business**

Janet H. brought in many issues of the Norwegian American Newsletter. She made a motion to place an ad in the newsletter. Les second. Janet will submit one today.

**Good of the order**

1. Bob McKeever wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and gave a quick review on annuities.

**Counselor:** Les may peace and harmony prevail within our lodge.

Our next meeting, will be on Sunday December 4 – we will celebrate Julefest at 2-pm. We will again have a zoom meeting. - President Roy thanked everyone for coming today.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45pm.

**December Side note** – the Julefest went very well. Janet H. brought in many cute items on sticks and you saw all the pictures in the December issue of the Norden Star. President Roy wants to thank all those who helped to set up and clean up after. We had 25 let us know they were coming and we celebrated with 35 people. That was wonderful to see so many faces enjoying the music by Ellen “Meatball” and the singing around the tree, plus the good food. Everyone was fed and had a great time. President Roy hopes more will join us at the meetings for now on.

*Respectfully Submitted Barbara Berntsen Secretary*

**\*\*\*\* UP COMING EVENTS \*\*\*\***

**Atlantic City Bus Trip**

**April 22, 2023**

**Cost: \$70 per person**



*On the way down we will have breakfast and coffee, play a few games. On way back we will hand out some drinks/snacks and settle down for the movie chosen by all. The casino is providing something to get us started*



Leaving LIE Exit 49 Park & Ride at 8AM,  
 Stopping at Christopher Morley Park at 8:30AM  
 (500 Seasingtown Rd N, Roslyn),  
 Stopping at Brooklyn PC Richards parking lot at 9:15AM  
 (576-80 86<sup>th</sup> St., Brooklyn),  
 Next at Nansen Lodge Staten Island at 9:45AM  
 And Lastly Arriving at the Tropicana, Atlantic City.  
 Departing Atlantic City around 6 PM for Home

*\*\*\*Make sure to get to the bus pickup 15 minutes before the time stated for your stop. It is better for you to wait for the bus, because the bus will NOT wait for you!!!\*\*\**

RSVP by: March 3<sup>rd</sup> Call or E-mail Today!!!  
 Contact: Chuck: 516-512-9427  
 Kris: 516-521-3190  
 CGottilla@hotmail.com

**\*\*\*All reservations are first come first served\*\*\***  
 \*\*\*\*\*

**A Christmas Carol ??**

Christmas Day has past however there is one Christmas Carol that has always baffled me.

What in the world do leaping lords, French hens, swimming swans, and especially the partridge who won't come out of the pear tree have to do with Christmas? This week, I found out.

From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics.

It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of their church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a religious reality which the children could remember.

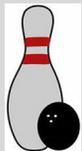
- The partridge in a pear tree was Jesus Christ.
- Two turtle doves were the Old and New Testaments.
- Three French hens stood for faith, hope and love.
- The four calling birds were the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John.
- The five golden rings recalled the Torah or Law, the first five books of the Old Testament.
- The six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation.
- Seven swans a-swimming represented the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit--Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership, and Mercy.
- The eight maids a-milking were the eight beatitudes.
- Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit --Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control.
- The ten lords a-leaping were the ten commandments.
- The eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful disciples.
- The twelve drummers drumming symbolized the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed.

So there is your history for today. This knowledge was shared with me and I found it interesting and enlightening and now I know how that strange song became a Christmas Carol...so pass it on if you wish.'

Merry (Twelve Days of) Christmas Everyone - and, remember, the Twelve Days of Christmas are the 12 days following December 25th. The Christmas Season runs until Epiphany, January 6.

**January 6<sup>th</sup> also know as Little Christmas**

**Henrik Ibsen Lodge Bowling for Fun!**



**Sunday February 12, 2023**  
**1:00 PM - 4:00 PM**  
**East Islip Lanes**

**117 E Main Street, East Islip**  
**\$25 Adult/ \$22 child under 12**  
**(Includes Shoes)**

**4 - 6 Players per Team / 3 Games**  
**Cake & Coffee Provided**

Please submit names by 2/1/23 to:  
**CrystalNifong**  
**[cnifong11@live.com](mailto:cnifong11@live.com)**  
**(631) 260-8011**  
**1498 Brightshore Blvd**  
**Bayshore, NY 11706**



# FROM THE 3<sup>RD</sup> DISTRICT



**Fra President 3D, Steve Helmold. January, 2023** - Christmas and New Years are behind us and I hope everyone had an enjoyable Holiday season. With 2023 ahead of us, January is the month that some Lodges install their officers, while other lodges shut down for the cold winter months.

- At a December zoom meeting, the Third District Board approved a vendor for the new Third District website which will be more user friendly and easier to navigate. As soon as it is up and running the old website will be discontinued (shut down), but we are told this may take a few months at least.

- I am excited to announce that the Third District Youth Camp will be held in July from Sunday the 16<sup>th</sup> to Saturday the 22<sup>nd</sup>, so if you have children or grandchildren of camp age; 8 to 16 years old, I encourage you to sign them up and send them to camp. They will learn about their Norwegian heritage and Norwegian culture: Norwegian language, Rosemaling, and play Kubb along with other sports. More information on camp was included in the District Secretary's letter that was sent out to all District Secretaries in late December.

- I have been attending the meetings of lodge presidents and vice presidents arranged by their zone directors so we can find out how the lodges are doing and hear firsthand their concerns. This is ongoing and will be done on a quarterly basis. I found it very interesting and informative in what so many of our local lodge officers had to say. Their concerns were heard, and the Lodge Revitalization Committee headed by Third District Vice President Diana Syvertsen is working on addressing them. The committee is coming up with Programs that the lodges can use at their meetings as well as working on having Leadership Training for all lodges so officers will learn more of about their duties and members will learn more about Sons of Norway.

- This month I am happy to spotlight your Third District Vice President, Diana Syvertsen. Diana is new to the Third District Board, but certainly not new to Sons of Norway. Here is a letter from Diana to you in which Diana tells a little bit about herself. I am proud to work with her.

My name is Diana Syvertsen and I am a 45 year member of Sons of Norway. My grandfather was a founding member of Nansen Lodge and my parents and I joined Noreg Lodge in 1977. I have served as Treasurer and President of Noreg for 4 terms each and in Space Coast Lodge as well.

Being part of Sons of Norway has enriched my life in many ways. I have met so many great people who have shared their talents with Noreg. I like being part of an organization that focuses on taking care of each other and helping others with our Foundation, Charitable Trust and scholarships. As a kid who was shy and didn't have much confidence, it has taught me how to speak up for myself, take risks like running for lodge and district offices and how to be a leader by watching so many great leaders in this organization. This has helped me in my everyday life, church, and career.

And that is why I agreed to become 3rd District Vice President this year. I would like to keep Sons of Norway going and growing so that others will be able to have their own great experiences.

Working with the Lodge Revitalization Committee including Bill Browning, Dirk Hansen, Harriet McHenry, Karen Olsen-Helmold, and Christine Taylor in conjunction with the other committees on the 3rd District Board, goals we have decided to work on are:

1) Identify lodges that need and would be willing to accept help from the district. Something that everyone can help with.

We have a great team on the District Board, and I look forward to working on and implementing some of the great ideas we have discussed. We will keep everyone up to date as we move forward in the new year.

Respectfully submitted, Diana Syvertsen

- As I hope you can tell, Diana is a keeper. I have a fabulous board with whom I am excited to work to make our Third District the best District in Sons of Norway.

I wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Fraternally, Stephen Helmold, Third District President

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**TUBFRIM Update** Last month it was reported that TUBFRIM was no longer accepting donations of post marked stamps. It have since been learned that **TUBFRIM will accept stamps through early spring**. If you have stamps to donate, you have some choices:

• To directly donate to TUBFRIM, mail your stamps to: Kjell Kittilsen, 871 70th Street, Brooklyn, NY 1128 by **March 15, 2023**

- Bring to our Lodge meetings during January and February

- Get all collected Stamps to one of the Lodges Officers before March.

- Any Questions call Les Johannessen 631-421-9482



## LODGE SAVE THE DATE 2023

- Jan 22 – Lodge Meeting (St Peters) Sunday 2PM
- Feb ?? – Lodge Meeting (St Peters) Officers Installed 2 PM
- Mar 26 - Lodge Meeting (St Peters) Sunday 2PM
- Apr 23 - Lodge Meeting (St Peters) Sunday 2 PM
- May 19\* - Lodge Meeting (St Peters) **Friday** 7 PM
- Jun 25 - Lodge Meeting (St Peters) Sunday 2 PM

\* Notes Change of planned meeting date.

### Other Activities In Our Zone!!!

- Feb 12 - Ibsen Lodge Bowling for Fun – See Flyer Pg 3
- There Will Be More coming !!!!

### \*\*\* BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS \*\*\*

#### Month's Birthdays – Gratulerer Med Dagen!

Name	Day	Name	Day
Gladys A Sollitto	7	E Clifton Hotvedt	21
Jean A Tremel	7	Arthur Jensen	22
Ronald F Price	8	Peggy Geoghan	27
Joseph L Accordinio	11	Barbara L Johnsen	27
Elizabeth Patalano Mrs	13	Thore Omholt	27
Kathleen Johannessen	16		

### Over 5 Yr+ Membership Milestones Congratulations:

- Margaret Berntsen – 59 Years Kym Van Wicklen – 39 Years
- Kathy Johannessen - 39 Years Les Johannessen – 39 Years
- Eric Ottedal – 6 Years Jacqueline Ottedal – 6 Years
- Linda Hoerberlein – 6 Years William Jensen – 6 Years

**NOTE – A few members have brought some errors to our attention. Please let us know so we can inform the home office**

## MEMBERSHIP CORNER

A new year begins and we get to reassess where we are as a Lodge and where we are going! Plan on attending our January meeting as we make plans for the year. There are many of you who would like to see some changes, or not. I know this because I hear people talking outside of the Lodge. What I mean by that is: if you like to see something different it is your right to speak up and have it discussed on the floor during our meetings. If you talk among yourself your wishes may not be known and you might find that you are not the only one that has your point of view. Let's make sure we are all on the same page and we pull together.

**LET'S START RIGHT NOW TO AFFIRM OUR WANTS AND NEEDS !!**



### 2020 Norden Star Boosters Updated 10/26/22

Berntsen, Barbara & Roy 5/24	Meusel, Helen 6/27
Berntsen, Margret 5/23	Ohsberg, Norma 3/20
Berntsen, Roy Jr 5/23	Olsen, Magda 5/20
Carlson, Craig & Christine 11/22	Rucci, Hector & Nancy 7/25
Christensen, Ann & Norm 10/20	Sandberg, Mildred 4/23
Colasonno, Else 4/21	Seals, Nancy 5/23
Erland, Shirly 9/23	Sorg, Mabel 6/26
Fidje, Jorgen & Ester 10/21	Tonon, Anna 5/22
Frey, Norma 2/23	Torkelsen, Lars & Astri 3/20
Hansen, Elsa 6/23	

#### IN MEMORY OF

#### COMMEMORATORS

<i>Green, Ruth Ann 1/20</i>	<i>Sister Karen Carella</i>
<i>Erland, Endre &amp; Sigrid 9/23</i>	<i>Daughter Shirley Erland</i>
<i>Frey, Judith 2/23</i>	<i>Daughter Norma Frey</i>
<i>Johansen, Lars, Sigrid &amp; Art 10/23</i>	<i>Family</i>
<i>Jacobsen, Edward 4/24</i>	<i>Brother John &amp; Wife Carol</i>
<i>Larssen, Tryggve &amp; Signe 3/23</i>	<i>Daughter Greta &amp; George Brown</i>
<i>Olsen, Dennis 3/21</i>	<i>Wife Magda Olsen</i>
<i>Stuckman, Erik 12/22</i>	<i>Mother Barbara</i>
<i>Skauvold, Harry &amp; Kate 12/22</i>	<i>Daughter Christine Carlson</i>

Room for more members that would like to join us. The \$5/Yr helps mailing costs. The dates following the names denote the end of the annual support. Please make checks payable to Norden Lodge 407

### WE THANK ALL OUR BOOSTERS HELPING TO GET THE NEWSLETTER OUT

### A More Generous Man Would Be Hard to Find



#### ROBERT CARLSEN

PASSED JANUARY 2, 2023

In lieu of flowers, Donations can be made to  
SONS of Norway Zone One Scholarship Fund

C/O Peter Johansen

168 Spruce Street

West Hempstead, NY 11714

Or

3D Charitable Trust

c/o Lloyd Ritter

31 E Lake Drive

Annapolis, Maryland 21403

## Some Cultural Items for the Month

**Cultural Corner:** **Polar bears in Norway: All you need to know (pt 2)** <https://norwaytoday.info/everyday/polar-bears-in-norway-all-you-need-to-know/#:~:text=The%20oldest%20polar%20bear%20kept,the%20species%20is%20largely%20solitary>  
**Polar bear habitat: Where the kings make their thrones:** If you've ever wondered "Where do polar bears live?" or even "Are there bears in Norway?", we're here to unravel Norwegian *Ursidae*.

The polar bears' habitat is the Arctic, around the North Pole, where they live under the northern light and midnight sun cycles year-round. They aren't found in Antarctica. When it comes to habitats for polar bears, Norway, or more specifically, Svalbard, is one of the best locations. Polar bears are, as we've seen, physically and instinctively adapted to the icy Arctic climate. Further south, they'd get too hot and wouldn't find their unique adaptations as applicable. Other than polar bears, Norway has a small brown bear population as well, on the mainland. Polar bears in Norway are found on Svalbard – and Svalbard only. So, let's dive a bit deeper into this Arctic archipelago.

**Polar bears in Svalbard, Norway:** Svalbard, Norway sits between the 74th and 81st latitudes north and it's made up of nine main islands plus islets and fjords aplenty. Ice sheets surrounding Svalbard are plentiful; which is perfect for polar bears who heavily rely on them to travel from place to place between swims.



← Svalbard, Norway. Source: Thomas Lipke / Unsplash

Svalbard is home to the world's northernmost city; Longyearbyen, with a population of around 2,100.

Other, smaller settlements of Svalbard are Barentsburg (a mining community home to about 450 people), Pyramiden (a Russian community home to around ten people), Ny-Ålesund (an international scientific base), and Hornsund (a Polish scientific base). All who exit the settled areas of Svalbard must be armed due to the threat of polar bears. In Svalbard, but rarely anywhere else on Earth, you might see a mother pushing a stroller with a rifle on her back.

A signpost in Svalbard, Norway. Photo: Joffi2017 / Pixabay →



Polar bears might be a draw to humans, but we must remember that they're lethal predators – and they're not generally afraid of us.

Though they don't usually feed on humans, polar bears can be very aggressive and quick to attack.

So, if you're visiting an area known to be home to polar bears – don't head out without an expert guide.

**Polar bear population: A need for protection:** The total population of polar bears worldwide is estimated to number between 25,000 and 30,000.

The Svalbard polar bear population is among the largest and most stable. 3,000 polar bears are believed to reside in and around Svalbard and the Barents Sea – which is more than the region's human population!



As many as 19 polar bear subpopulations exist – and among these, one is increasing, five are stable, and four are decreasing. For the remaining estimated nine, there is insufficient data to determine population statistics.

**Did you know that polar bear-grizzly bear hybrids exist?:** Around 2006, genetic tests officially confirmed the existence of this unique hybrid, which is also known as the "pizzly bear" or "grolar bear".

Pizzly bears usually resemble a mix of the two species but are most often raised and behave like polar bears. Because they're most commonly the cubs of a grizzly bear father and polar bear mother, the mother raises them the polar bear way.

Barbara

**History Article: Myths & Legends About the Northern Lights (pt 1)**

**David Nikel** Senior Contributor *Travel and lifestyle in Europe with a focus on Norway & Scandinavia.* Mar 28, 2022, 06:45am EDT

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidnikel/2022/03/28/myths-and-legends-about-the-northern-lights/?sh=3a84407a13fd>

The northern lights have a certain magical quality, so it's no surprise there are many myths and ... Thanks to scientific research, we now know what causes the northern lights. But long before we had the ability to study the skies, people inevitably assigned meaning to the aurora. Long before we understood that the lights were caused by electrically-charged particles from the Sun hitting our atmosphere, the lights were worshipped, loved and feared in equal measure. Many of the myths and legends are based in northern countries where people [would have seen the lights regularly](#). Yet some of these bizarre and entertaining stories come from places much farther south, where an aurora display would have been a much rarer occurrence. Of course, knowing which of these stories were genuine belief and which were simply stories—perhaps even more modern interpretations—is hard to pin down. But even so, they serve to show the broad range of human imagination at work about a phenomenon that even though we understand, still feels magical today.



**The Sami of northern Scandinavia:** For the indigenous Sami of northern Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, the lights were feared and respected. Perhaps that's due to the regularity that they would have seen them, most nights during the long, northern winter. Sami people believed the lights represented the souls of the dead and it was improper to discuss them. Waving at them was frowned upon too as if you caught their attention, the Sami believed the lights would reach down and carry you away. Green and purple colored aurora borealis in Northern Finland. Even today, some Sami people choose not to look directly at an aurora display.



**The fire foxes of Finland:** The northern lights are referred to in Finnish as *revontulet*, which literally translates as *fox fire*. According to [Finnish folklore](#), Arctic foxes would run so quickly that their furry tails created sparks when coming into contact with the mountains. An interesting point about this myth is that there is some truth to it, as an Arctic fox's fur can actually create tiny sparks of static electricity in the very dry air of northern Finland.

Barbara



## King Harald: 'We need one another' in a troubled new year

Jan 1  
Norway's 85-year-old monarch defied illness and a recent hospitalization to

once again address the nation on New Year's Eve, during what he repeatedly referred to as "troubled times." He used his annual New Year's speech to urge Norwegians (and anyone else listening) to "acknowledge that we need one another, both in the world and in everyday life," and to ask those they encounter: "What can I do for you?"

King Harald V's nationally televised address was getting rave reviews on New Year's Day, and hundreds of messages of gratitude on social media. "A fine New Year's speech in difficult times," wrote John-Tore Rudborg on Facebook, for example, while Astrid Alsaker noted that the king "never lets us down." He was [released from hospital just days before Christmas](#), after treatment for an infection that required intravenous antibiotics. It remained unclear during the Christmas holidays whether he'd be able to tape his annual New Year's speech that traditionally gathers Norwegians around televisions and radios nationwide at 7:30pm on New Year's Eve, and often kicks off celebrations. King Harald, dressed in a tuxedo for the occasion and seated at a table in the Royal Palace in Oslo, launched straight into his text without even an opening salutation. "We human beings need to feel that can do something so that life can be as good as possible, both for ourselves and for those we love," he said. That's especially important, he stressed, "in troubled times, when we face challenges that are difficult for us to do anything about. We can easily feel powerless."

"But that's exactly when we must raise our gaze and look ahead to gain perspective, and acknowledge that we need one another. That reminds us that we are not alone, That strengthens us, and gives us hope."

*The King was in fact referring to the present day war situation. While the royals try to stay away from the politics, he felt that it has cast a new sense of seriousness on Norwegians daily lives. Because of the politics I will not include the full article here. If there is personal interest the article can be found at:*

<https://www.newsenglish.no/2023/01/01/king-harald-we-need-one-another/>

## Electric car owners' costs jump

Norwegian politicians have offered lots of electric car incentives over the years but they're quickly disappearing, even as Norway urgently needs to cut carbon emissions. The latest electric car shock came just last week, when the City of Oslo nearly tripled the cost of recharging at city-owned charging posts, before being forced to shift into reverse.

## Tears and a standing ovation for Nobel Peace Prize winners

All three hard-pressed representatives of human rights organizations in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine were standing tall in Norway on Saturday, after accepting their joint Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo's City Hall. The roughly 1,000 people in the audience were soon standing, too, in a lengthy ovation for the prize-winners' bravery and efforts to promote freedom and ultimately peace in their authoritarian and war-torn homelands.

## Outrage grows over railroad fiasco

Officials at Norway's state-owned and much criticized train system are facing more public outrage in the New Year, after they had to shut down their long-awaited, expensive and brand-new rail line *Follobanen*. No one knows when the line, formally opened by King Harald just before the Christmas holidays, can reopen.



"Closing Follobanen [just a few days after it opened](#) is one of the worst things that could happen," admits Stine Undrum, one of several directors of *Bane NOR*, the state agency in charge of railroad infrastructure in Norway. They haven't been able to figure out the source of overheating and smoke in a technical facility at the station in Ski, south of Oslo.

Newspaper *Aftenposten* reported Monday that there now appears to have been a construction error that's left the line's electrical system unable to service full, high-speed operation of the trains running on it. The first overheating occurred on December 19 and a second on December 23, prompting the shutdown. Bane NOR has acknowledged that the problem is more serious than first expected, and that it didn't arise during test-runs of the system.

## Norway's chess champ now 'the

**greatest'** Norwegian chess star Magnus Carlsen was being hailed once again this week, after a dramatic year that ended with new World Championship titles in both rapid and blitz chess. That leaves him with a total of 15 World Championships so far, adding to his already legendary status. "He's the greatest chess player of all time," declared Torstein Bae, chess commentator for Norwegian Broadcasting (NRK). "It's not possible to say anything else."

Carlsen, a [chess prodigy as a child from suburban Oslo](#) who [won his first classic World Championship in 2013](#), was characteristically playing down all the hype after his latest triumphs in Almaty, Kazakhstan. "It was nerve-wracking," he told NRK, "but I'm satisfied." He later added "extremely" satisfied. Asked whether he thinks he's the world's greatest chess player, Carlsen smiled and told NRK "I don't know," while adding that making a case for such lofty status "hasn't gotten any worse after these days here." He now holds five world championship titles in classic chess, four in rapid chess and six in blitz chess.

<https://www.newsenglish.no/2023/01/02/norways-chess-champ-now-the-greatest/>

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*Gott Nytt År*

**January the start of the New Year and hopefully a renewal of our ability to join with each other to enjoy the need for human bonding. The last two years have been hard and the present “tridemic” presents yet another test for our resolve. Our meetings have not resulted in any ill effects, let’s continue to draw our strength from each other. Join us! Next Meeting January 22, 2023**



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**See Pg 4 for Update**

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