



Chicago Sons of Norway *Torske Klub*

Organized 1960



February 8, 2003 Meeting Notice Celebrating St. Patrick's Day

Dear Torske Klub Member,

Our January Torske Klub meeting will be held on March 8, 2003 at the Des Plaines Elks Club, 495 Lee Street, Des Plaines, IL (847-824-1556). Cocktail hour begins at Noon; Dinner starts promptly at 1:00 P.M. when, according to our tradition, our BOSS, Robert Alsaker, rings the bell.

We are honored to have our board member, Dick Fjeldheim, as our speaker for the month. Dick is the Chairman of the Board of the Norwood Park Home on the northwest side of Chicago. This will be his topic.

Our Torskemaster is our good member and new board member, Ron Bentsen. Remember to bring a "clean" story or joke.

► **Reservation Phone Number**

Call **630-443-6839** at any time day or night to leave a reservation. As usual, please leave your MEMBERSHIP NUMBER, NAME, and the TOTAL number of people in your party. The same information is required when you reserve for other members. Note that this new reservation phone is unattended since it is an answering system only. In the event of a failure of technology or the need to talk to a human, please call my office at 847-781-6820 during weekday business hours. If I am not there, leave a message at either phone and I'll get back to you. I may be out of town during this reservation period, so please be patient with my response.

For those with email, feel free to send me a note to larsonk@hp.com with the same information and the message title "Torske Klub Reservation". I will reply to that with a confirmation of receipt.

Currently, we have reservations from member numbers 3,6, 13C, 22, 43A, 44, 47, 51, 55, 64A, 73C, 78, 85, 98, 114, 126, 167 174A. **Reservations must be in by Wednesday at Noon, March 5, 2003.** Call 847-781-6820 if we need to discuss this further.

Bring a guest. We have had a number of people join us this way. Norwegian heritage is never a requirement for guests or members, of course.

continued other side

Torske Klub



Why is St. Patrick's Day Actually Celebrated?

The Irish actually celebrate March 17th in commemoration of St. Patrick's great and noble deed in driving the Norwegians out of Ireland.

It seems that centuries ago many Norwegians came to Ireland to escape the bitterness of the Norwegian winter. Ireland was having a famine at the time and food was scarce.

The Norwegians were eating almost all of the fish caught in the ocean, leaving the Irish with nothing but potatoes. St. Patrick, taking matters into his own hands, like most Irishmen, decided all the Norwegians had to go. Secretly he organized the IRATION (Irish Republican Army to Rid Ireland of Norwegians). Irish members of the IRATION sabotaged all the power plants in hopes the fish in Norwegian refrigerators would spoil, forcing the Norwegians to a cooler climate where their fish would keep. The fish spoiled all right, but the Norwegians, as everyone knows to this day, thrive on spoiled fish. Faced with failure, the Irishmen sneaked into the Norwegian fish storage caves in the dead of the night and sprinkled the rotten fish with lye, hoping to poison the Norwegian intruders, but as everybody knows, this is how lutefisk was introduced to the Norwegians, and how they thrived on the lye soaked smelly fish. Matters became even worse for the Irish when the Norwegians started taking over the Irish potato crop to make lufse. Poor St. Patrick was at his wits end. Finally, on March 17, he blew his top and told the Norwegians to "go to hell" -- and it worked, because all the Norwegians left Ireland and went to Minnesota. Uff da.



For Reservations Please Call (630) 443-6839

Ken Larson, Secretary • 3710 King George Lane St. Charles, IL 60174 • Email: larsonk@hp.com



continued

February 2003 Dinner with Svein Ludvigsen & Halvard Johansen

Last month's dinner was one of those very memorable Norwegian-American events. You'll recall that we hosted Svein Ludvigsen as our speaker and guest. Svein is currently the Minister of Fisheries as well as Governor of Troms fylke (county) in Norway. He was accompanied by Halvard Johansen, the Norwegian Fisheries Counselor, from the Norwegian Embassy in Washington D.C.

Our Boss was the person responsible for arranging this special guest and speaker. Our thanks to Rob for this and for serving as our Torskemaster last month. Dr. Ray Newgard and Wolfgang Gruener had taken some snapshots last month. We have added a collage of photos from this day as an attachment to the letter. You'll observe the handsome proliferation of Norwegian sweaters that month; we'll do that again in the future.

Dr. Ray Newgard made a contribution to our Klub in memory of his father, Alfred Newgard, who you recall passed away recently. This is intended to be used as "seed money" for new guests. We'll write more about that later. On behalf of the Klub, Tusen Takk!

Other Klub News

We received news last month of the long lingering illness of our good member Tom Amundsen. Tom was infected with West Nile virus last summer and struggled to survive much of last summer and fall. He is still undergoing therapy but we hope to see him back soon. To add to this, his wife Ruth was also hospitalized during this period for orthopedic problems. Our best wishes to both.

We also send our regards to Dave Cornwell, our secretary emeritus, who was hospitalized just before our last dinner meeting. Dave sends his regards and thanks for the gift that was presented to him in January for his past services (and whose thanks I omitted on his behalf in the last letter... sorry).

We are pleased to welcome a new member this month, Hal Oates. Hal hails from Evanston. Velkommen!



Future Event

For the future, remember that the Chicago Torske Klub has made arrangements to be the dinner guests of the Madison Torske Klub on October 4, 2003. The Klub intends to provide luxury bus transportation to the dinner from the Elk's Club in Des Plaines. Mark your calendars for this.

The Torske Klub Meeting in April will be father/son/daughter month and the Torske Klub 43rd Anniversary Dinner in May will be shared with our wives or girlfriends (either, not both).

Erin Go Bragh

Norwegian's have a special relationship with Ireland that goes back thousands of years. Vikings actually settled and founded Dublin and Waterford. Some say conquered, but it was likely both. My own Norwegian ancestor was Konge Ragnvald Ragnvaldsen of Waterford who died there in 1035. I guess that makes Art Fitzgerald some sort of distant cousin. Uff da.

Beste Hilsen,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ken".

Ken