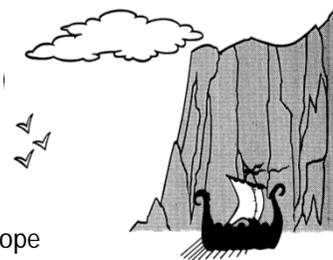




# Nordkape

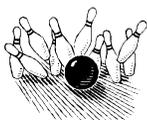
**NORDKAP LODGE 5-378  
SONS OF NORWAY**

The North Cape 71° 10'21" North Latitude The Top of Europe  
A Congenial Society of Sons, Daughters and Friends of Norway  
Organized 10 August 1929 - The First Lodge in Michigan  
<http://www.detroitnorwegians.com>



March 2014

Volume 84 Issue 2



## **"Bowling for Scholarships" Success**

(group photo on page 5)

Our March "Bowling for Scholarships" meeting was a great success! We raised \$310 from forty-four attendees, including thirteen "Viking Cheerleaders" who gathered on March 16, 2014 to both enjoy the sport of bowling and further the goals and mission of our District Scholarship program.. We must be doing something right, because this annual event grows bigger every year. Last year we contributed \$160 to the fund.

Top bowlers in the three categories are:

Adult Male: Mike Jehle	451
Adult Female: Stacy Torgerson	425
Youth 11 and Under: Zoe Hekneby	275
Youth 12 to 18: Daniel Rutkowski	289

## **Masse Moro Norwegian Heritage Camp**

Sunday, July 20 through Saturday, August 2

**Applications must be received on or  
before May 17th in order for your  
camper to qualify for matching funds  
through District Five.**

Visit: [www.MasseMoro.org](http://www.MasseMoro.org) and  
[www.SonsOfNorway5](http://www.SonsOfNorway5)

For important camp application information  
(608) 837-8335 E-mail: [MJBenn4@gmail.com](mailto:MJBenn4@gmail.com)

### **This and That**

Did you know we now have activities planned for small children so parents enjoy the meeting and program while their children are having a good time In an adjoining room?

## **Sunday, April 27, 2014**

**Swedish Club – 4:00 PM  
22398 Ruth Street  
Farmington Hills  
248-478-2563**



**Join us for the  
induction of new members,  
tasty Norwegian food and a  
review of events before and  
after the signing of the 1814  
Norwegian Constitution**

### **Sunshine Reports:**

Karen Herche continues her recovery and rehab from the knee replacement surgery she had in February.

"Torgie" Torgeson is continuing medical procedures to treat melanoma and has had a number of surgeries as part of this effort.

Finn Roed continues his recovery and rehab from the broken hip he suffered in a fall on the ice this month.

## In Remembrance - Rigmor Cuolahan

April 13, 1926 - February 7, 2014

The license plate on her Honda Civic read simply, “Rigmor.” Her son Erik called her “my hero.” But Rigmor Cuolahan, a native Norwegian and a member of Nordkap Lodge since 1969, was so much more to so many people.

- As a strong-willed teenage girl when Germany invaded Norway in World War II, she was a staunch defender of her country. Along with other Norwegians, she pointedly turned her back on occupying German soldiers and, when refusing to sit with them, she was thrown off a train by a gun-wielding German officer.
- With her father, she hand-delivered secret messages for the Norwegian resistance.
- When neighboring Finland was invaded by Russia before the war, she attended rallies to gather food and clothing for Finland, and she knit mittens with holes for the trigger fingers for Finnish soldiers and resistance fighters.
- After the war, as an English-major graduate of the University of Oslo, she was executive secretary to the president of the famed Freia chocolate company, taking dictation in five languages—English, Norwegian, Swedish, French, and German.
- Later as a young wife and mother in her adopted America, she began a half-century of volunteerism and leadership in local ethnic organizations that in 1996 won her the Spirit of Detroit Award from the Detroit City Council and induction into the International Institute Heritage Hall of Fame —along with such Detroit giants as David DiChiera (founder of the Michigan Opera Theatre) and Peter Karmanos (founder of Compuware).

Son Erik sums it up this way: “She was a mother, a humanitarian, and a saint.”

Born Rigmor Syversen in an expansive 200-year-old house overlooking the Oslofjord in Drøbak, Norway, in 1926, she was the granddaughter of a Norwegian ship captain and the daughter of electrical engineer Rolf Emanuel Syversen, head of the electrical engineering department at Oslo’s landmark City Hall, and his wife Ella.

Rigmor didn’t wait long, though, to establish her own credentials. At the age of 3, she began weekly studies in a children’s craft workshop, learning knitting, embroidery, and weaving, and was soon recognized as a child prodigy. She continued with the workshop—in addition to her regular schooling—for five years, receiving a gold cross attendance award from the Queen of Norway for never missing a day at the school.

Her technical mastery of needlework grew and continued for more than 80 years, producing some legendary results. During the war, when all commodities in Norway were scarce and imports were stopped, Rigmor repaired women’s sheer stockings with hair from her own head. She made fine clothes out of a British parachute. Later, when a friend asked her to mend a sock with no heel and no toes that he had worn as a soldier, she repaired it so perfectly that he had it framed instead of wearing it. For her high school graduation, she made her own cap and jacket from a pair of her father’s wool pants. With her aunts, she made the elaborate hand-embroidered Norwegian bunad she wore at 17th of May celebrations.



*Rigmor Cuolahan attended Nordkap Lodge’s celebration of Norwegian Constitution Day in 2009 with her great-grandsons, Mason, center, and Gage, on the right. Rigmor made her hand-embroidered bunad dress with her aunts in Norway. The boys’ Norwegian bunad costumes were also hand-made by Rigmor. (Photo by Bob Giles)*



*The 200-year-old wooden home overlooking the Oslofjord in Drøbak, Norway, where Rigmor Syversen Cuolahan was born in 1926. (Photo courtesy of Erik Cuolahan)*

**Rigmor** *(continued from p. 2)*

In America, for many years Rigmor sold her hand-knit items at bazaars, including dolls wearing Norwegian sweaters and matching hats, plus full-size Scandinavian hats and mittens for children and adults.

As a young woman in Oslo, Rigmor relished the vibrant atmosphere of the capital city where her parents had moved the family—now including her younger brother, Hardon—from their Drøbak home on the fjord. They lived just a short walk from Frogner Park where she and her friends frequently encountered the artist Gustav Vigeland who worked there for more than 20 years, creating an amazing sculpture park.

With her Scandinavian good looks reminiscent of Ingrid Bergman, Rigmor developed friends at the National Theatre and was a welcome guest at parties along Embassy Row. She had many boyfriends. But it was a shipboard romance with a tall, dark American with a degree in metallurgy who had been a noseunner in a U.S. Navy Air Corps Liberator bomber that won her heart. She and Paul Cuolahan from Michigan met onboard a transatlantic ocean liner as Rigmor was returning to Oslo from visiting an uncle in Chicago. Their courtship continued for three years until Paul and Rigmor married in Lansing, Michigan, in 1953. The couple lived in a Livonia house for many years and later moved to a condominium in Northville. They had two sons, Erik and Tim, and eventually three grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

But before her sons were born, Rigmor returned to work, serving as executive secretary at a Detroit lumber firm. Following the birth of her children, it was volunteerism, first learned from her parents in Norway, that took Rigmor's attention. She began by volunteering at her son's school, lecturing about the history and culture of Norway and showing its crafts. Soon, other schools were asking her to speak. Erik recalls her appearing at several schools in the Detroit area and one in Windsor, Ontario—all in the same day.

Leadership in Detroit's ethnic community and the Detroit International Institute quickly followed. Rigmor served as board member of the International Institute and ran its gift shop. She was variously cultural director, social director, and vice president of Nordkap Lodge of the Sons of Norway. With her husband and son, she volunteered for many years at the Scandinavian Festivals on Detroit's riverfront. She was president of the Danish Sisterhood and was active in the Senior Danes, Finnish Center Association, Swedish Club, and Cosmopolitan Women's Club. For 10 years in the mid-1970s to mid-1980s, she hosted "The Norwegian Hour" on Detroit's WMUZ-FM radio, then called "the station of the nations." She was also a newspaper correspondent for the former "Nordic News" in Detroit and "Nordic Times" in New York. At the Danish Club and later the Swedish Club, she led an elementary schoolchildren's group called Jada where she taught the crafts, songs, dances, and games of Scandinavia for many years.

She also volunteered as an usher for the Scandinavian Symphony and the Fox Theater and had been a member of the Northville Women's Club and the Red Hat Society.

But with all these activities, Rigmor still put her family first. "She cooked every meal," Erik says, remembering lots of "torsk" (cod fish and salmon) at their table and the salmon mousse she made in the shape of a fish. And when Paul's health progressively declined with multiple sclerosis in later years, Rigmor was his devoted caregiver until his death in 1997. Rigmor passed away 17 years later on February 7, 2014

A memorial service in late April is tentatively planned, after which Erik hopes to take his mother's ashes home to Norway.

**Happy Birthdays!****March**

- 02 Lilje Gronstad**
- 08 Sonja Gronstad**
- 14 Louise Harrison**

**April**

- 03 Clarence Myrold**
- 04 Kenneth Hildre**
- 09 Wade Tornquist**
- 11 Thad Aardal**
- 12 Howard Skovlund**
- 12 Karen Eggers**
- 20 Erik Sorensen**
- 23 Ian Sorensen**
- 25 Eunice Turnbull**

--By Louise Giles

## New Member Initiates

Velkommen! If you have not been initiated yet, we urge you to come to the meeting on April 27th. You'll sign our membership logbook which has been used since the 1930's.

Randy Aardal  
 Gerald Bayer  
 Peter Blom  
 Arne Borgnes  
 Myrtle Ebert  
 Karen Eggers  
 Natalie Flessland-Vaal  
 Jeff Hatteberg  
 Maureen Hatteberg  
 Øystein Gjertsen Hekneby  
 Lori Grønstad  
 Judy Hildre  
 Kenneth Hildre  
 Greydon Hyde  
 Elsa Jorgensen  
 Michael Lindemann  
 Sylvia Lindemann  
 Roy Marvel  
 Maxine Paul  
 Annele Richards  
 Gail Ritchie  
 Judith Rutkowski  
 Adrienne Shepard  
 Kristi Smythe  
 Christine Sommer  
 Linda Stinson  
 Lori Renee Tavtigan  
 Eunice Turnbull

Please join us at the April 27th meeting to welcome these new members!  
 If your name was inadvertently omitted from the above list, contact Carol Jehle, our Membership Chairperson and let her know that you are coming. Her phone number is:  
 (248) 626-2148.



## Nordkap 2014 Scholarship

### Applications

**Due June 30, 2014**

Scholarship applications are available. If you have any questions or need an application, please contact Natalie Vaal at

[nordkap.scholarships@gmail.com](mailto:nordkap.scholarships@gmail.com) or see Natalie at a lodge meeting.

To be considered for this scholarship, applicants must

- Be a lodge member or child/grandchild of a member for minimum 1 year prior to scholarship
- Be 17-23 years of age
- Be working towards a bachelor's or associate's degree from an accredited educational institution
- Be in good standing at school, have a GPA of 2.0 or better
- Please note you may qualify up to 4 tin

## 2014 Nordkap Events



April 27	Regular lodge meeting
May 10	Tigers Game
May 14	Norwegian Dinner at the Lark
May 17	200th Celebration Syttende Mai
June 23	St. Hans Day Picnic
July 19	Farmington Founder's Day Parade
September 7	Steak and Corn Roast
September 13	Youth Day
October 26	Nordkap Lodge Meeting
November 15	Christmas Bazaar, Finnish Center
November 23	Nordkap Lodge Meeting
December 14	Christmas Party

After our ° meeting, it will be 17 days until we celebrate the bicentennial of Norway's Constitution!



## Fra Presidenten - Happy 2014!

While most of you are wishing "Let It Go" to the *Frozen* beginning of 2014, it has been a season to remember, including so many golden moments at the Winter Olympics, even though the Norwegian ski wax team could not quite resolve the salted snow challenges.

The Nordkap Lodge is also getting ready for a great spring season. First up was the annual bowling event on March 16. Detroit is the Bowling capital of the world and the last few years, our lodge has had the highest share of participants in Sons of Norway's District 5.

Our April meeting on April 27 will be devoted to the induction of new members and to remembering the events in 1814, before and after the signing of the Norwegian Constitution. This will be a great introduction to our activities in the month of May.

On May 10, we will be at Comerica Park cheering on the Tigers vs. those Twins from Minnesota. Please alert Bob Giles so we can get seats together close to home plate. Attire: Obnoxious Norwegian – including flags.

On May 14, we will have a unique Norwegian dinner at the Lark. Seating is very limited so let Carol Jehle know ASAP with the payment to reserve your spot

On May 17, the celebrations will start early and last long at the Swedish Club. Bring the family, neighbors and friends to the most important day for Norwegians.

The language class is about to enter its third session. Almost 20 students are participating and it is amazing how the group has evolved from learning how to introduce themselves to now how to ask for help at a grocery store. Session 3 starts on Wednesday March 26 at the Swedish Club. Feel free to stop by.

Vi håper at mange av dere kan være med på vårens aktiviteter.

Med vennlig hilsen,

Geir Gronstad



Bob Giles Photo