



NEWS FOR DESCENDANTS OF EMIGRANTS FROM THE TELEMAR REGION IN NORWAY  
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The mission of Telelaget of America is to enable members to learn about and gain an appreciation of the history, culture, and customs of their ancestors from the Telemark region of Norway.

Telelaget of America is the host for the 2017 7-Lag Stevne. Plans are underway to bring entertaining musicians and educational speakers to Luther College, Decorah IA.

We are excited that singer Tone Jorunn Tveito and Hardanger fiddle player Torgeir Straand will be joining us from Norway. Also coming from Norway will be speakers Per Lykke of the Hardangarvidda National Park, genealogist Johannas Risnes, Alastair Brown from the Lands Museum, and a visit from one of our Telemark liaisons, Ingjerd Stulen. Anette Holm Bratsberg of "Vita Veritas" will teach a three-day sequential class on writing our stories.

The talented Luren singers and the Decorah Nordic Dancers will also provide entertainment. Classes will be taught by staff from Vesterheim and Luther College on topics including identifying, caring for and preserving your heirlooms, documents and ephemera. John Storlie will teach about DNA, Telelaget members Jeff Huset and John Haugo will speak, and Betty Knutson will teach Hardangar. We'll have an emphasis on Herbjørn Gausta, who lived and is buried in Harmony, MN, including a special class and display of his art work at Luther College. Additional speakers are still being confirmed.

Shuttle tours to the Vesterheim Museum will be available with



Let us live up to the legacy that was left for us, and leave a legacy that is worthy of our children and of future generations. Christine Gregoire

**2017 7-Lag Stevne**  
Thursday, July 20 -- Sunday, July 23  
Luther College Campus, Decorah IA

Decorah's trolley. A longer tour will include a visit at the History Center, Greenfield Church and Cemetery in Harmony, and then continue to see the Bily Clocks, the Dvorak Exhibit and the St. Wenceslaus Church in Spillville. Several options for "on-your-own tours" of area attractions include Amish tours, Seed Savers Exchange, Ice Cave, Fish Hatchery, Phelps Park, the Winneshiek Hotel and area shops.

The Saturday evening banquet promises to be an enjoyable time with musical entertainment and last season's *Alt for Norge* winner, David Engan.

The stevne is offering free registration for first-timers on Thursday evening. Anyone can come to see what a *stevne* is all about and to visit our genealogy room. Friday and Saturday will include children's programming for 7 - 16 year olds.

The 7-Lag Stevne webpage and Facebook page will continue to be updated as plans are finalized. Visit [www.7lagstevne.com](http://www.7lagstevne.com) or like us on Facebook for the latest information. Check inside this issue for our webmaster's instructions on how to be notified each time an update is posted.

The *stevne's* success is dependent upon a network of volunteers. Please consider how you can share your talents and time to help ensure that success.

We need volunteers in the following categories: Registration, Speakers, Entertainment, Housing, Genealogy, Advertising/Promotion, Tours, Banquet, Youth Programs and Recreation, *Stevne* Brochure, Hospitality/Snacks. **Please consider volunteering in some capacity.** If you have questions, or want to serve on a committee, please contact Jim Oftelie, *Stevne* Chairperson, Elaine Nordlie or Lila Burmeister.

You can also help by making a monetary donation toward *stevne* expenses. Send your tax deductible donation to treasurer Deanna Zentgraf.

## New Telemark Liaison



Telelaget has three liaisons in Telemark: Ingjerd Stulen in Skien, Anne Haugen Wagn in Notodden, and Harald Omnes in Lunde. These liaisons have assisted us with research, translations, and arranging farm visits and entertainment on our tours. This summer during our 2016 Tour we met Elin Helene Normann from Dalen, who volunteered to take three tour members to their ancestral farms in Western Telemark. We asked Elin if she would help us in the future as our fourth liaison. We were very pleased that she immediately responded to the positive.

Elin was born (1963) and raised in northern Norway. After meeting her husband Rolf, she moved to West Telemark at the age of 26. They have two daughters, ages 21 and 23, who are students. Elin and Rolf live on the Berge farm, which is one of the oldest farms in Eidsborg. The oldest building on the farm was built before 1350. Elin works as a librarian at the Tokke Library in Dalen and loves her job. When she was 12 she read O.E. Rølvaag's books and since then has loved reading about the history of immigration to the USA. She recently finished reading Sverre Mørkhagen's latest book in his trilogy about immigration. She is excited to be of help to the members of Telelaget. Please see her contact information on the roster of Telelag board members on page 4 of the November issue of the *Telesoga*.

## New Telelaget Board of Directors Member



Jeff Huset is the newest member of the Board of Directors of Telelaget. Jeff will serve the remaining year of Randy Twito's term, who voluntarily stepped aside for personal reasons. Jeff was voted in at the September board meeting and per the Telelaget bylaws will be eligible for re-election next year to serve a three-year term.

Jeffrey has always been interested in family history, but has been actively pursuing his genealogical interests for ten years or so. His father's side of the family is entirely Norwegian, hailing from Holla in Telemark and from Aurdal in the Valdres valley of Oppland. Jeff lives in Minneapolis and works for a software company in Roseville as a technical writer. He has occasionally acted with local theaters and in TV commercials. Jeff holds a master's degree in technical communication from Mercer University and a certificate in genealogical research from Boston University.

The board would like to thank Jeff for stepping forward to serve, and we look forward to working with Jeff.

Re-elected at the annual meeting in July to serve a second three-year term as members of the Board of Directors were Judy Mathison, Carol Johnson and Neil Johnson.



Mitch Helle & Jessica Helle-Morrissey, St. Paul MN  
Sharen Storhoff, Mabel MN  
Douglas Dyrland, Jordan MN  
Sylvia Luppert, Seattle WA  
Gerry & Lorraine Rollefson, St. Michaels MD  
Mark Daley, (Online — address pending)  
Larry Olson, (Online — address pending)  
Wendi Storhoff, Minneapolis MN  
Luther Einung, (Online — address pending)

Telelaget of America currently has 447 individual members in 354 households.

Be among the first to find out about



upcoming events and new content on the Telelaget and *stevne* websites!

Would you like to receive an email whenever significant updates or additions are made to [telelaget.com](http://telelaget.com) or [7lagstevne.com](http://7lagstevne.com)? To sign up, click on "What's New?" on the homepage of [telelaget.com](http://telelaget.com). Then add your email to the blue box on the left side of the page. On the [7lagstevne.com](http://7lagstevne.com) home page, enter your email in the box in the center of the page and follow the prompts. You'll receive an email whenever new content is listed on these pages. Notice is sent by an automated service (Change Detection). Your email won't be shared or used for any other purpose.



The *Telesoga* and TeleNews are sent in printed format to all members of Telelag. We also send an email version of the TeleNews to members who provide us with their email address. Throughout the year, we often send other information to our members via email. If you have not provided us with your current address, please do so today!



• **Telelaget of America** -- news and pictures related to Telemark and Telelaget

• **International Telemark** -- news about contemporary Telemark

• **Telemark Heritage & Genealogy** -- information on our heritage and genealogy.

• **7-Lag Stevne** — up to the minute news on the 2017 *stevne* in Decorah.

You can access these sites by entering the name in the search field at the top of your Facebook page



Telelaget of America has a number of quality publications available.

**Telelaget to America:**

**Volume I – Emigration;**

**Volume II – Settlements;**

**Volume III – Settlements, Biographies, & Telemark Lore.**

\$20 each or \$50 for the series.

**A Year on Haugo Farm** tells of the life of a girl who lives on a Telemark farm during WWII. It is available for \$20.

**Telelaget, The First One**

**Hundred Years** is \$20 and is free for a limited time to new lifetime members!

You can purchase mugs, tote bags, and miniature *fane* (banner) on our website, or contact Shelley Jerviss.



Your story is unique. If it isn't written down, it will disappear. The most valuable thing we can give to our family and those who come after us, is a first-hand account of our lives.

Vita Veritas was founded in 2005 with the goal of helping people document their life stories so that they can be handed down from generation to generation. Founder, Anette Holt Bratsberg has more than 15 years of experience in the field of writing and documenting family stories. Anette lives in Skien in the county of Telemark, Norway.

Many people are interested in writing their life stories, but find it difficult to get started or challenging to figure out how to structure such an extensive and important project. Others may find it hard to complete the writing process, add photos, and get their story printed.

At *stevne*, Anette will offer a mini-3 afternoon class patterned after Vita Veritas' six-day course. You will be guided through the process of writing your own family story. Together with other course participants and Anette, you will learn techniques for putting the important memories and stories down on paper to keep them alive for generations to come.

Anette will help you develop an outline for your book, and then help you fill in the content. She will share writing tips and her experiences helping people document their life stories. You'll receive a simple introduction to layout of photos and other important documents.

This course will be a combination of instruction, writing, discussion and exchange of experiences.

If you are interested in the full six-day course, please contact Anette [anette@vitaveritas.no](mailto:anette@vitaveritas.no) or Lila Burmeister [lilajs@gmail.com](mailto:lilajs@gmail.com). If there is enough interest, Anette will offer the class in either Decorah or Minneapolis during the week following the *stevne*.



- Telelaget of America is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. A bequest is a simple way to support Telelaget of America and ensure that the *lag* can continue to celebrate our Telemark Norwegian heritage.
- Consider gifting a membership in Telelaget of America this Christmas (or any time) as a way to introduce a friend or family member to our *lag*.
- Thrivent Choice Dollars can be directed to Telelaget of America! If you're an eligible Thrivent Financial member and have Choice Dollars available to direct, call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" or go to [www.thrivent.com](http://www.thrivent.com) and click on "Making a Difference" for more information or to direct Choice Dollars, cx
- Support Telelag when you shop on Amazon. Start your shopping at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com). and select Telelag. Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to Telelag. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.

**Norwegian Genealogy Lag Research Trip to Salt Lake City, Utah**

Roots Tech is February 8-11, 2017  
Norwegian Lag Week  
is February 12-18, 2017

RootsTech is a family history and technology conference and trade show held annually in Salt Lake City.

Norwegian Lag Week is a time when persons interested in Norwegian genealogy meet in Salt Lake City to research and learn together.

More information on RootsTech is available at [www.rootstech.org](http://www.rootstech.org), and on Norwegian Lag week at [www.fellesraad.com](http://www.fellesraad.com)



The 2016 7-Lag Stevne was held at the Austin Conference Center and Holiday Inn in Austin, Minnesota. The stevne included classes, genealogy, bus tours, a talent show, and the *bunad* parade and banquet. On Saturday, twenty-two Teletaget members visited the Six-Mile Grove Lutheran Church near Lyle, Minnesota. Organized in 1859, the church is one of the first Scandinavian Lutheran churches in Mower County. We then went to the Mower County Fairgrounds for a catered lunch and our annual meeting.

Pictured above: Left Column—An alpaca farm was one of the stops on the tour; Deanna Zentgraf talked to the group about her family's history at the 6-mile grove church; Banquet attendees clockwise from top left are Neil & Carol Johnson, Judy Mathison, Rachel Gorka, Darrel Johnson (back to camera), and Edith Syftestad. Right Column—Eileen & Julian Ronning at the banquet, Our genealogists, Elaine Nordlie, Darrel Johnson, Joran Olson, Carol Johnson; Deanna Zentgraf & Mary Cross at 6-mile Grove Church; Elaine Nordlie, Lila Burmeister, Jim Oftelie & Shelley Jerviss ready for the banquet.