

June 2012

Dear Lag officers and members:

In May the Fellesraad announced a 2016 celebration of two days to mark its own centennial. The board is presently looking at the third week of July. The site will need to be chosen soon and the board would like some general indication of interest from members of your lag.

Four years of planning gave us a memorable, but hot, 3-day festival in 1999 at Decorah. **Plans were made for 500 people, but it drew 1100 participants!** That is why the national council is looking for some guesses of interest from your lag this early.

Please mail your feedback within a week or two following your stevne, along with: the number of attendees, any written suggestions, and names of about two volunteers listing what skills they may contribute, plus their e-mail/phone info, to Fellesraad secretary, **Sonia Rache, 10736 Toledo Court, Bloomington, MN 55437**

Yes, it will differ from concepts of the 1999 Decorah festival when Valdres Samband's 100 years were celebrated and, with it, the beginning of *the bygdelag movement in America*. Each lag is encouraged to hold its own stevne in 2016.

During the two days in 2016, lags will be invited to showcase/exhibit their own best achievements, publications, personalities, gifts, and histories. The second and last day would focus on activities involving families and other suggestions that could produce benefits for your next generation of lag members. Your brainstorming for this day could be on things to do during that day. In the evening there is likely to be a grand banquet.

In the 1970s the bygdelag were not expected to survive. What changed? For one thing, the Fellesraad reimbursed expenses of the late Morgan Olson, who, in the course of his travels as a salesman, would make time to speak to Norwegian Americans about their roots and about a revival of the lag they once attended. Over time, the results were **new beginnings of more than 15 of the 26 presently active bygdelag meeting this year!** For many, that new interest was in researching family history.

This year the Fellesraad will present a gift to the 21st lag to reach the centennial designation: that is Sunnfjord Lag, celebrating this June at La Crosse, WI.

Congratulations on the collective membership of the lags. We are holding steady and have about 7,000 individual members and about 700 family groups in three lag that do not enumerate separately. We await a count from one lag yet. Have a good stevne and a good summer!

Hilsen fra Fellesraad styret,

Marilyn D. Somdahl, president