



Fjalla Blað

Icelandic Communities Association
Of Northeastern North Dakota
December 2019



The 120th Annual 2nd of August “the Deuce” Celebration in Mountain is in the history books. It was a *very* successful weekend with great weather (especially if you like hot and humid) and great attendance. Here’s a re-cap of the big weekend:



Anyone visiting the quiet little village of Mountain during most of the year would have trouble imagining the bustle of activity that occurs leading up to and during the 2nd of August/the Deuce! Starting the week before, you can start seeing the activity of bringing in the bandstand and bleachers, along with assorted picnic tables, porta potties and equipment arriving in town, and tractors working on the tractor pull field. Things start reaching fever pitch about Thursday when the last minute details get taken care of. The Bjornson Sigfusson Legion post sets up canopies and starts hauling in picnic tables for their fish fry on Friday night. This year, with a new layout of the serving line on trial—two lines going at the same time—about 300 people were served in the first hour of the dinner, and another 100 plus people came through after one line was closed down. No long waits for anyone and no one went away hungry!!!. At the same time as the fish fry, over 50 people attended a program at the Mountain Community Center (MCC) by Cathy Josephson titled The Journey West: Sails, Rails, Rivers, and Trails about the various modes of transportation that were



used by our immigrant ancestors when they traveled west to America. This was Cathy’s fifth trip from Iceland to Mountain to volunteer at the Genealogy Center. After the fish fry, visitors had a chance to enjoy some good music presented on the open stage by Merlin Dalstad, Steve Crowston, and Penny Sheflo. One of the folks in the audience was Allen Johnson, sporting this great Afi t-shirt (left). It says: ‘Afi—a noun. Another term for grandfather, just much cooler. See also ‘handsome’ ‘exceptional’. Another fun t-shirt



for the weekend: “Remember me? I’m Karl Snider” (son of former Vikur minister Pr. Claude Snider. He took in the celebration activities and even volunteered for clean up duty on Sunday morning!!



Saturday morning temperatures started out warm and humid—a taste of how the day would develop. If you were in town early, you saw the Iceland and US flags going up around town and equipment moving around everywhere. By 9 a.m. the parade entries started to pour into town and started lining up west of the MCC. A bus filled with a tour group from Iceland arrived and filled the bleachers. The parade started promptly at 10:30



a.m. with the Bjornson-Sigfusson America Legion Post presenting the flags. Following close behind was Parade Grand Marshal Rosa Thorfinnson in a shiny red convertible. The Honorary Grand Marshals, Sigrun & Baldur Sigurdson, were represented by daughters, Judy and Kathy in a white convertible and Susan and the grandkids and great grand kids riding in Baldur’s trusty old red farm truck. Dignitaries from Iceland included Lilja D. Alfreðsdóttir, Iceland Minister of Education, Science, and Culture, Þórður Bjarni Guðjónsson, Consul General of Iceland and INL of Iceland current and past presidents, Hulda Karen Daníelsdóttir and Almar Grímsson. After the dignitaries, came a band of Vikings (not the Minnesota kind, but a group of Viking reenactors). (continued page 2)





From the ICA President:

Season's Greetings to all of our faithful friends of the Icelandic Communities Association! Once again we have had a very successful year thanks to all of you. Our Þorablót in February of this year was a great success and once again was sold out. The silent and live auctions are an important fundraiser for us, and we thank everyone who supported us and came out to enjoy the evening. The 120th Annual Deuce of August Celebration was also another big success and we are always so humbled by the support shown to us by the government and people of Iceland, as well as our local community members. We appreciate the honor and the privilege of hosting leaders from the highest levels of the government of Iceland every year. This year, we hosted the Minister of Education, Science and Culture, Lilja D. Alfreðsdóttir, along with dozens of other visitors from Iceland. We have now hosted 5 sitting Prime Ministers of Iceland and dozens of Ambassadors, Cabinet Ministers and other government and business leaders.

The fun continues in 2020! Make plans to get your tickets early for the 2020 Þorablót scheduled for February 22nd in the Mountain Community Center. It will be another sellout! Also, mark your calendars and plan your trip back home for the 121st Annual Deuce of August Celebration, which will be held from July 30th to August 2nd, 2020. We hope to see you all there!

Curtis Olafson

2019 Celebration, continued

Parade entries from around the region followed. No one really knows how many entries will be in the parade until the day it happens, but it's always amazing turnout. The parade travels to the north end of town, then travels east to Main Street and then begins the trek south. The streets are lined with people all the way through town, including kids ready and waiting for the candy that will be thrown.



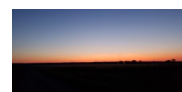
The parade swings through the Borg parking lot and around Borg so that the residents there can watch from the lawn. The parade is finished around noon and everyone scrambles around to get to lunch at the Vikur Salad Luncheon or at one of the vendors on Main street. Moore Icelandic Goodies was a welcome addition to the vendors this year and folks gobbled up lots of kleinur and vinarterta. After grabbing

some lunch, people had many options for things to do—there was a Car Show and Shine on the west side of Main, kids could go to the east side of Main for kids games and bounce house, or they could participate or watch the kids pedal pull in front of the bandstand. New this year was a Viking group demonstrating battles and Story Time at Amma's Garden where kids (of all ages) got to listen to a book read in both English (Carissa Thorlakson) and Icelandic (Kathy Thorlakson) where they learned about 'big' and 'little'. At 2 p.m the Heritage program started at MCC with Lilja D. Alfreðsdóttir, Iceland Minister of Education, Science, and Culture as keynote speaker. After the program, the Icelandic tour group traveled to the area historic sites. At 5 p.m a fellowship



dinner was served at the MCC. At 9 pm the street dance started with music by the Front Fenders, a band from Fargo that had everyone out there dancing. At the 10:30 break, there was a big fireworks display to light up the night sky. Dancers and socializers reveled in the streets until 1 a.m. Bright and early Sunday morning (6 a.m.) the street clean up crew was out picking up garbage and getting ready for the church service at Vikur and the North Dakota State Truck and Tractor

Pull. Ticket sales started around 11 a.m. and by 1 p.m. the MCC parking lot, the field south of the MCC and the streets were filled with cars and motorcycles. Over 1000 people attended the event that brought in pullers from around the region. Wow! That's a lot of activity for one weekend! Hope you had a great time! See you in 2020!





ICA joins Icelandic National League of the US

At the October and November ICA meetings, Sunna Furstenau reported on the newly formed INL US and outlined the efforts of the organization. After much discussion, the ICA voted to join the INL US as a founding heritage member to support the INL US mission. Here are the facts about the organization.: The Icelandic National League of the United States became a reality June 17, 2019 . There are now three INL sister organizations. The INLUS, the INLNA based in Canada, and the INL in Iceland. All three have the same mission to preserve and promote Icelandic heritage and culture throughout the three countries. The INLUS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a focus to grow this mission throughout the United States.

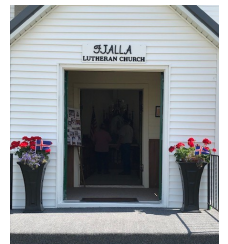
The INLUS is an all volunteer team. Through email, social media, and the website, there will be all things Icelandic promoted: events, communities, heritage projects, Icelandic language, authors, musicians, artists, organizations, and more. There will be scholarships, grants, and other philanthropic activities, too. The INLUS has started the first session of Icelandic language classes and more will be offered in the future. *November 19th* is the first webinar for the Iceland Writers and Readers Retreat with co-founders Iceland's First Lady, Eliza Reid (if her schedule allows) and Erica Green. *November 25th* will be an "Author's Corner" with two authors and their Yule Lad books. *December 11th* is a special webinar event with Svavar Knútur, Iceland's Troubadour bringing us his gift of music.

To join as an individual member or join the volunteer team, go to www.INLUS.org or contact Sunna at 701-200-1694 or sunna@inlus.org

Fjalla Lutheran Church Celebrates 125 years

On August 4th, 2019 Fjalla Lutheran Church held its annual 2PM service. This was very special, as we celebrated the 125th year of the founding of the Fjalla Church; there were over 100 people in attendance. Pastor Tim Faust lead our worship service. Special music was provided by Diane Fossum, Sue Jacobson, Mike Thompson and Allison Borchardt and organist Carol Goodman.

Following the service a program was held with Greg Goodman as MC. He also read the history of the church. Kristine Koehmstedt read a greeting from the President of Iceland. She told about a special dress that belonged to her Mother and it was modeled by her daughter, Cindy Restad. Trisha Sunderland read a poem called "Come Gather All". The program ended with the Icelandic National Anthem, sung by Sue Jacobson.



'It was a beautiful day, filled with great friends and many memories of years ago '

Following the program a baptism was held in the Church for Evelyn Ann Kershaw, daughter of Shelby Finnson and Jacob Kershaw. This was special as there hasn't been a baptism for many years.

Lunch and fellowship followed with Icelandic goodies and many sweets. It was a beautiful day, filled with great friends and many memories of years ago. This all couldn't have happened without the help of so many people.





Updates from around the Icelandic Communities:

Börnum Park: Kids have been playing at the playground and loving it! The border walls were installed and wood chips are in place. Trees have been planted on the perimeter for future shade. One family calls it Amma Park (because the kids think the park belongs to their Amma.)



Gardar Township Hall: Folks in Gardar said that this week was really exciting because the walls of the Eldhus are going up beside the Gardar Township Hall. The Eldhus will house bathrooms, kitchen, storage, and a small township office. They hosted a delicious salad luncheon on October 26 followed by a 'mostly true' telling of tales from Dr. Bob Geston. He started with a brief history of Iceland, the trek to reach Gardar, ND, and stories from the early days the Gardar School basketball team. It was a fun and successful day! This past week, letters were mailed asking for donations to help support the cost of building the Eldhus. The level of support for this project has been amazing according to Sharon Laxdal! They already have one booking for the use of the building in May and are looking forward to having many more events taking place in Gardar.



Svold Hall: The folks from Svold reported that the Hunter's Breakfast went great!! They figure they fed about 550 people during the breakfast. Even with the challenging farm/harvest season (the project is done largely by local volunteers), the shell of the Svold Hall addition is done and shingled and they hope to have the electrical wiring done soon. The addition will provide a kitchen, storage room and bathroom facilities for events at the hall. They have obtained a 7 year loan from the Red River Council/JDA that has made this project move ahead. They will continue to raise funds through their Fall ATV ride and June ride, as well as the Hunter's Breakfast to pay off the loan and to install a handicap ramp.



Vidalin Cemetery Association: In 2019, Vidalin Lutheran Church was the recipient of a matching grant from Partners for Sacred Places in association with the Margaret A Cargill Trust and restoration projects were identified and begun. One major project was repair of the original church windows. When the work began, it was discovered that there was much more internal damage and the windows would need to be replaced with a reproduction window rather than repaired. Other projects were put on hold since this greatly increased the

cost of the window project. A ramp to make the church handicapped accessible and hardanger paraments had already been started so those were finished and the projects were dedicated at the fall church service in September. In addition, an engraved stone bearing the names of those pioneers buried without markers outside the cemetery boundaries was installed and dedicated this year. Projects planned, but unable to be completed at this time, include a case for preservation of the military honor rolls and signage identifying

the church with information about it for visitors. The Vidalin Cemetery Association Board of directors is very grateful to all those who generously donated to allow us to qualify for the grant and to work on preservation projects these past few years. Work will continue as funds become available. Any questions can be directed to Carol Beard at cbeard@polarcomm.com





Bits & Pieces

Sunna has ordered copies of 'Hymns of the Passion' by Hallgrímur Pétursson (1614-1674) in a new English format. These fifty meditations have touched the hearts of people by their spiritual depth and are admired regardless of religious outlooks. Get your own copy or give one for a gift.

This book retails for \$35 USD. Contact Sunna for payment details. 701-200-1694 or sun-na@IcelandicRoots.com

Support your local charitable organizations through Amazon Smile

Do you know about Amazon Smile? This is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization. If you shop on Amazon already, instead, go to smile.amazon.com and use your same login and account. On your first visit, you need to select a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization. Then, every eligible purchase you make will result in a donation. You can change your charity as many times as you like and at any time. Donations made by Amazon Smile are not tax deductible by you but your purchases help out the nonprofits who make a difference in our communities. These local organizations have 501c3 status: Icelandic Communities Association, Icelandic Roots, INL US, Svold Community Hall Association, Vidalin Cemetery Association, Gardar Township Hall Restoration Fund, Icelandic State Park, Mountain Community Center (there might be more)

Contributions of items to be used for the silent and live auctions at the Þorablot on February 22, 2020 are welcome and appreciated. Please bring them to the Mountain Community Center on February 21 or 22. Photo shows Judy Geir and Nancy Boe displaying a quilt that will be on the live auction. (The quilt was made by Judy, Nancy, Joanne Watson and Marilyn Hall). The back of the quilt is minke fabric. Funds raised at this event are used for Heritage Grants, Snorri scholarships and for the support of ICA events throughout the year.



ICA Offers Heritage Grants

The Icelandic Communities Association continues to offer two grants: the Heritage Sites Grant and the Snorri Scholarship. The *Heritage Sites Grant* was started to help to the ICA communities of north eastern North Dakota to maintain the historic churches, meeting halls, cemeteries and other historic sites that were established by the Icelandic families that first settled in this area. These buildings and sites are important to the Icelandic cultural heritage as they all have a story to teach the next generation about their Icelandic heritage. Many of these buildings are difficult to maintain with dwindling resources. The ICA offers a grant of \$500 to help maintain these buildings/cemeteries and sites. Applications for the 2019 Heritage Sites Grant are available now with a deadline of January 1, 2020. Announcement of the recipient will be made Feb. 1st. Information about the grant and applications may be obtained by emailing Kathleen Johnson at kathleen@utma.com.

The *Snorri Scholarship* is given to an individual who has been accepted into the Snorri Program. A youth of Icelandic descent between the ages of 18-28 and living in Canada or the US may apply for the program. Participants will spend 6 weeks in Iceland discovering their roots and touring Iceland. To help with the expenses of the Snorri experience, the ICA offers a scholarship of \$1000. Applicants for the scholarship must (a.) live in one of the north eastern North Dakota Icelandic communities, (b.) have parents or grandparents who live in one of these communities or (c.) have parents/grandparents that have ties to the Icelandic communities and support the ICA by membership, contributing financially and/or by being active volunteers of ICA sponsored events. Application and guidelines for the ICA Snorri Scholarship may be obtained by emailing Kathleen Johnson at kathleen@utma.com.



Mmmm...the wonderful scents of Christmas—evergreen trees, cardamom scented vínarterta, cookies baking in the oven.....but *nothing* can compare to the smell of harðfiskur (hard fish) to make you really get that Christmas spirit! Once again, the ICA has hard fish available for sale. INL calendars are also available. Contact Curtis Olafson at colafson@polarcomm.com



ICA Members (as of November 2019; *indicates paid for 2020)

Abrahamson, Andrea
Abrahamson, Eric
Abrahamson, Jana
Abrahamson, Jonathan
Abrahamson, Karen
Abrahamson, Karie
Abrahamson, Karl
Anderson, Emilia & Duane K.*
Andvik, Macey
Askew, Curt
Atwood, Susan & Gary
Baldwin, Jill Bernhoft
Barrett, Tom & Cindy
Benjaminson, George*
Benjaminson, Jim
Bernhoft, Neil & Melanie
Bernhoft, Ryan & Stacie*
Bernhoft, Wayne & Loretta
Biliske, Dennis & Sue
Biliske, Eleanor*
Bjornson, Brent & Linda
Bjornson, June*
Bjornson, Matt & Lori
Bjornson, Richard & Janyce
Bjornson, Roger & Margaret*
Bjornstad, Dr. Jeanette
Boe, Nancy*
Bohn, Monica
Bowles, Helen Heigaard
Briese, Gloria
Brown, Diane
Byron, Andy & Gwennie*
Byron, Dwight & Elaine*
Byron, Dr. Eugene B.*
Byron, Tyrone*
Cameron, Lori A.
Carson, Jeanne
Christianson, Gerald
Davidson, Ronald
Dunbar, Vivian Laxdal
Einarson, Einar
Einarson, Harold P.
Fafnis, Reynis*
Flanagan, Lynn & Celeste*
Fleming, Joanne Halldorson
Flesher, Tudy Snyder
Franch, Cheryl
Frey, Tom & Linda Nielson
Furstenau, Cody
Furstenau, Jeff & Sunna*
Geiger, Joeann M.
Geir, L. Duane & Caroline
Geir, Leslie
Geir, Richard & Judy
Gratton, Kelly G.
Graveline, Bob*
Gudmundson, Keith*

Gudmundson, Mindy
Gudmundson, Shirley
Gunderson, Barb
Hall, Alfred
Hall, Greg & Ruth
Hall, Warren & Marilyn
Hall-den Boer, Julie
Halldorson, Barney*
Halldorson, Dennis*
Halldorson, John
Halldorson, Kenneth & Karen
Halldorson, Mike *
Hardy, James & Charlotte
Heck, Dori Kate
Heck, Scott
Helgisdottir, Am Anita M.
Helgo, Lee & Viola *
Helt, Dennis & Pat*
Herzog, Douglas*
Hillman, David
Hillman, Lyle & Diane
Hillman, Robert
Hughes, Christine Bjornson
Johannesson, C.M. Clancy
Johannesson, Cory
Johnson, James & Marilyn
Johnson, John E. & Kathleen
Johnson, John H.
Johnson, Lyle & Margie*
Johnson, Verna
Jonasson, Duane
Josephson, Cathy Ann
Karel, Penny*
Kidd, Sharon*
Knutson, Arvid & Darlene
Koehmstedt, Kristine
Kortes, Erika
Kristjanson, Emily
Kristjanson, Kristjan
Laxdal, Edward & Elaine*
Lorenzen, Margaret
Machacek, Asta*
Majerus, Phyllis
Marcil, Michael*
Marston, Doreen Kristjanson
Morrell, Jan Myrdal*
Morrison, Charles & Jan
Morrison, Dennis & Pat
Morrison, John & Irene*
Muldoon, William & Janet*
Myrdal Rosemarie*
Ness, Kim Byron*
Noble, Mary Beth *
Northfield, Amy
Olafson, Anne*
Olafson, Betty*
Olafson, Curtis & Bjork Eriksdottir

Olafson, Darren
Olafson, Drew & Samantha
Olafson, Eugene*
Olafson, Kristi
Olafson, Roger
Olgeirson, Robert*
Olgeirson, Shirley*
Otto, Austin
Paulson, Gary & Catherine*
Pedersen, Jane
Peterson, Sandy
Powers, Tim & Susan Sigurdson
Readel, Ross & Myrna
Rollin, Mae
Selzer, Greg & Renata Olafson
Sherry, Pauline Johnson
Sigurdson, Paul & Ina
Smith, Linda Stephanson*
Snider, Karl
Stanford, Dave & Cheri
Steinolfson, Curtis & Gloria
Steinolfson, Doris
Steinolfson, Marino Gene*
Strand, Candice
Sturlaugson, Nadine
Thompson, Charles & Ann
Thorfinnson, Rosa*
Thorlacius, Ethel Byron*
Thorlakson, Kathy
Tiedeman, George Valdimar
Tiffany, Norma
Timian, Carol
Tongen, Joan
Trenbeth, Connie
Troftgruben, Marilyn*
Vatsdal, Judy
Vaux, Vicki*
Vidalin Cemetery Association*
Vivatson, Robert D. & Susan
Volrath, Lon & Diane
Vork, Marina
Warmoth, Beatrice Snyder*
Watson, JoAnn
Wild, Lillian
Wild, Richard & Mary*
Wild, Shirley
Williamson, Marvel
Wilson, Elisabet*
Wright, Sandra & George
Woolever, Robert & Krislyn
Yost, Susan

Your membership in the ICA helps support the work of the ICA in presenting programs and events that preserve our unique Icelandic heritage. Thank you for being a part of the Icelandic Communities Association!

*Birthday photo mystery: Margaret and Marilyn Steinolfson celebrating Judy Sigurdson's birthday. Cake made by Amma Olof Sigurdson.



Icelandic Communities Association Membership Form

The 2020 Membership Drive is underway!

Dues are \$15 for the calendar year, January through December.

(2020 memberships are due by January 1, 2020!)

NOTE: Membership dues are not tax deductible, but any contributions over and above that are tax deductible.
ICA has 501 c 3 (tax-exempt non-profit) status from the Internal Revenue Service.

Name: _____

Address: _____

(This is a new address _____)

E-Mail: _____

Additional Memorial in remembrance of: _____ \$ _____

***Mail this form (with check payable to I.C.A.; indicate the year/s that you are paying dues for) to:

I.C. A., P. O. Box 63, Mountain, ND 58262-0063

♦ **Please send this form with your dues. It helps us update our membership list and e-mail addresses. Thanks, in advance!**

♦ **Check your preference:** Newsletter by mail _____ By E-mail _____

Membership Year (circle one) : 2020 2021 2022 2023

Just so you know: The ICA meets at 10 a.m. on the 2nd Saturday of every month at the Mountain Community Center. The folks that gather are a dedicated bunch that plan and execute the 2nd of August Celebration, the Þorablót, and an occasional movie or speaker. Like all small groups, it would welcome more volunteers with open arms. The volunteer options are varied: helping with convention details, selling raffle tickets, setup of tables and chairs, putting up/taking down flags daily, souvenir sales, working the gates at the kid's games, dances and tractor pull, and everyone's favorite—garbage pick up after the dances. Please consider giving a few hours of your time to help out. Contact Susan Sigurdson (tpowerssig@cableone.net) for more information.

ICA Memories



A birthday greeting sent from the Gardar Ladies Aid to Thordis Olgeirson (mother of Sigrun Sigurdson and Bjorn Olgeirson) in honor of her birthday on February 2, 1944. The art work is watercolor; note the Icelandic and US flags flying. There no indication on the card as to the artist or calligrapher.



Commemorative cup owned by Loretta Bernhoft. Year unknown.



Anyone recognize these youngsters at a birthday party??*





**ICELANDIC
COMMUNITIES
ASSOCIATION**

P.O Box 63
Mountain, ND 58262-0063

Við erum fjölskylda. We are family.

ÞORRABLÓT A MIDWINTER ICELANDIC FEAST

FEBRUARY 22, 2020
MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY CENTER

Program & Buffet Supper:

Cod or Chicken with side dishes

**\$25 per person. Tickets on sale
mid-December; contact Kathie J.**

kathleen@utma.com

**Enjoy traditional old Icelandic
cuisine:** Fermented Shark , Brennevín,
Harðfiskur, Rúllupylsa, Hangikjót,
Hrútspungar, Pickled Herríng, Smoked
Salmon and many baked delicacies

