



Home ◀

Purpose ◀

Board of Directors ◀

By-laws ◀

Meeting Schedules ◀

Luncheon Registration ◀

Members ◀

Foundation ◀

Message Board ◀

Links ◀

Contact Us ◀

## Meeting Schedule for 2008/2009

[Return to the current Meeting Schedule](#)

**October 4, 2008 - NOTE: This luncheon will start 15 minutes early at 11:45 a.m.**



**Speaker:** *Tora Aasland, Norwegian Minister of Research and Higher Education*

Minister Aasland was born in Skien, but now resides in Oslo, Norway. She is a member of the Socialist Left political party and was appointed as the Minister of Research and Higher Education on October 18, 2007.

Minister Aasland previously served as a member of the Norwegian parliament, Storting, as Vice President of the Legislative Assembly, and as a deputy member of the executive committee of the Nesodden Municipal Council. She graduated from the University of Oslo with a Master's degree in sociology and has previously worked as a researcher and manager at the Institute of Social Research, at the University of Oslo, and as a Regional State Governor.

### Nordic News Calendar

[Click here to check it out...](#)

**November 1, 2008**



**Speakers:** *Midge McCloy, composer, Phebe Hanson, poet, Melissa Culloton, soprano and Jim Reilly, pianist*

**Topic:** *Why Still Dance? A Song Cycle by Midge McCloy, composer and Phebe Hanson, poet. Performed by Melissa Culloton, soprano and Jim Reilly, piano*

#### **Program Note, by Midge McCloy**

This song cycle was written on the luminous, exultant autobiographical poems of Phebe Hanson, from her book, *Why Still Dance: 75 Poems for 75 Years*. It was originally written for mezzo-soprano Janis Hardy who premiered it and later recorded it with pianist Sonja Thompson. I am delighted to have it brought to life again through the talents of Melissa Culloton and Jim Reilly! Phebe and I will share comments on our collaborative

process in developing this work at the start of this program for Lakselaget.

**Phebe Hanson**, a life-long Minnesotan, has been writing poems since her late forties, after raising three children and a series of foster children. Her teaching experience spans forty years, many years of teaching high school English, and ending with fifteen years at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, from which she retired as Associate Professor Emeritus. She has received a Bush Foundation Literary Fellowship and a Jerome Minnesota Center for Book Arts grant. Her poems have been widely published in anthologies and workshops throughout the country. Phebe's father was born in Norway and came to Minneapolis in 1921 to attend Augsburg Seminary. Phebe's mother was born in Sweden and came to Duluth with her parents and brother in 1908 when she was four years old. In the summer of 2007 Garrison Keillor invited Phebe to be poet-in-residence on the Prairie Home Companion cruise along the coast of Norway.

Composer **Midge McCloy** enjoys the intimacy of music performed by small ensembles, and loves composing for singers and chamber groups. She received her training from the University of Minnesota and has had a long and active career as a piano instructor and music therapist in addition to her work as a composer. She has studied with Minneapolis-based composers Laura Caviani, Libby Larsen and Carol Barnett and her works have been performed extensively around the Midwest. "Why Still Dance?" was premiered by Janis Hardy with pianist Ann Buran in May 2006 and was later chosen for performance in Sound Check, a concert series sponsored by the American Composers Forum and The Southern Theater, Minneapolis.

**Jim Reilly** performs as both a tenor and pianist. He founded the Nordvendt Concert Series in the Fall of 1997 when he was Director of Music at Mindeskirken in Minneapolis (Minnesota's only surviving Norwegian language congregation). He continues to administer this series, which has presented over thirty local and visiting artists in Nordic repertoire. He has accompanied many Twin Cities area performers and visiting singers including Norwegians Marit Osnes Aambø, Elisabeth Tandberg, and Birgitte Christiansen, and he has himself sung the first American performances of works by Norwegian

composers Bjarne Sløgedal and Wolfgang Plagge. He has not only performed in Minnesota and a dozen other states, but has also sung for the Nordland Musikkfestuke in Bodø, Norway, and accompanied recitals in Holland. He has presented solo piano recitals of Nordic repertoire in Chicago (Fall 2007) and San Diego (April 2008), and recently sang Icelandic art songs at the annual Icelandic Samkoma dinner in the Twin Cities. [Read Jim Reilly's full bio...](#)

Soprano **Melissa Culloton** is a native of Halden, Norway and is a 1998 graduate of St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota, where she graduated cum laude with a double major in vocal performance and music education. She holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts in vocal performance and pedagogy from the University of Minnesota. Melissa recently debuted for Thursday Musical and has also given guest recitals at Bemidji State University in Bemidji, MN and St. Olaf College, Northfield. She is a private voice instructor at Burnsville and Armstrong High Schools and is the soloist and section leader at Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Hopkins. Melissa is also a certified hatha yoga instructor. [Read Melissa Culloton's full bio...](#)

---

**December is our annual fundraising month.**  
**Please consider making a donation to our scholarship fund!**  
**To make this meeting more festive, consider wearing a bunad if you have one.**

---

**December 6, 2008**



Rev. Cecilie  
Jørgensen Strømmen

**Guest Speaker:** *Rev. Cecilie Jørgensen Strømmen*

**Topic:** *Women, Tradition, Religion and Change*

**Rev. Cecilie Jørgensen Strømmen** is a Lutheran pastor currently working on her doctorate at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. In the past she has served as Pastor for a Norwegian congregation in Switzerland, where she was ordained (in Geneva) in 1992. She served as Pastor in the parish of Skøyen and Bygdøy in Oslo from 1995 to 1997. She was the Ecumenical Officer in the Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations from 1997 to 1998. She was a Student Chaplain at the Norwegian Lutheran School of Theology in Oslo from 1998 to 2000. Strømmen has



Jorunn Høybråten

been married since 1987 to Ambassador Wegger Chr. Strømme who is now serving at Norway's Ambassador to the United States. She has two daughters. We are delighted to host Rev. Cecilie Jørgensen Strømme as our guest speaker.

**Special Guest:** *Jorunn Høybråten*

**Jorunn Høybråten** is a professor in nursing and a self-employed tradeswoman. She coaches and gives guidance/instruction directed primarily at leaders and other vocation groups. Jorunn is married to Dagfinn Høybråten, the leader of Kristelig Folkepartiet (the Christian Democratic Party). She is the mother of four children and will soon have two grandchildren.

---

**January 3, 2009**



**Speaker:** *Kermit Nash, Attorney at Fredrikson & Byron*

**Topic:** *His experience working with Norwegian businesses*

Kermit Nash is an attorney who practices corporate law at Fredrikson & Byron. He practices in the areas of business transactions, medical device technology, energy law, and mergers and acquisitions. Kermit serves as corporate counsel to numerous for-profit and non-profit organizations, and also represents the interests of a number of foreign and multi-national corporations in the United States and abroad. Kermit specializes in commercialization of business concepts and technology for clients.

Kermit was named a "Rising Star" by *Minnesota Law & Politics* in 2006 and has served on the 2007-08 Board of Directors for the Upper Midwest Chapter of the Norwegian-American Chamber of Commerce. Kermit has taught business law, ethics and international management at Northwestern College and is a frequent lecturer on international business and ethics.

Kermit draws his heritage exclusively from Norwegian roots with a large share of his family still residing in the Trondheim area of Norway.

---

**February 7, 2009**



**Speaker:** *Solveig Zempel, Professor of Norwegian at St. Olaf College*

**Topic:** *The Life and Work of O.E. Rølvaag: Author, Teacher, Immigrant.*

Rølvaag's lifelong work revolved around his idea of the necessity of preserving the best in one's ethnic heritage. Solveig will present these ideas through an illustrated talk about Rølvaag's background from Norway, his early life as an immigrant, his education, and his work as a teacher, author, and leader in the Norwegian-American community.

Solveig has translated Rølvaag's first novel (*The Third Life of Per Smevik*), a collection of his short stories (*When the Wind is in the South and Other Stories*), and a book of his essays (*Concerning Our Heritage*). She has also translated a collection of Norwegian-American letters (*In Their Own Words*). She has given a number of both scholarly and popular presentations on Rølvaag, as well as other Norwegian immigrant subjects.

---

**March 7, 2009**



**Speakers:** *Justice Lorie Skjerven Gildea, Minnesota Supreme Court*

**Topic:** *Judicial Selection in Minnesota: Where we've been and where we may be going.*

Justice Gildea was appointed as an Associate Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court by Governor Tim Pawlenty on January 11, 2006. She was recently elected in November of 2008 and her current term on the Minnesota Supreme Court expires in January 2015. Prior to being appointed to the Supreme Court, Gildea served as a judge in the Fourth Judicial District, Hennepin County. Before being appointed to the bench in September 2005, Gildea was a prosecutor in the Hennepin County Attorney's Office (2004-2005), Associate General Counsel at the University of Minnesota (1993-2004) and in private litigation practice at Arent Fox in Washington, D.C. (1986-1993).

Justice Gildea is an active member in the

community, having served on the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission, the Board of Directors for the YWCA of Minneapolis, and the Advisory Board for MINNCORR Industries. She has been an active member in the Minnesota State Bar Association and Hennepin County Bar Association and currently chairs the Minnesota Supreme Court Gender Fairness Implementation Committee.

---

**April 4, 2009**



**Speaker:** *Julie Thorsheim, President and Consultant, KST Associates, Northfield, Minnesota*

**Topic:** The *Kvebæk* Sculpture Tool: A Norwegian invention for assessment and treatment of relationship issues that is making an impact in the U.S. and globally.



Julie Thorsheim discovered the Kvebæk Sculpture Tool and Technique during a professional leave in Oslo in 1991 from her position as a family therapist at Fairview-University Medical Center in Minneapolis. Upon returning to the U.S. she conducted a literature review that substantiated the research and practice value of this unique figure placement technique, and subsequently introduced it in her own clinical practice. In January 1995, David Kvebæk of Lillestrøm, Norway, the inventor of the “Kvebæk Family Sculpture Test” granted Ms. Thorsheim all rights to further develop the KST in the English-speaking world, to instruct others in this method and to manufacture and sell the equipment. Julie has written the English-language User’s Guide to applying this technique in direct clinical work, supervision, teaching and research.

Thorsheim’s main professional focus is now in providing consultation and training in using the Kvebæk sculpture tool to mental health professionals and agencies both in the U.S. and internationally. In 2006, as a delegate to the first U.S. – China Social Work conference in Beijing, she presented on the Kvebaek Sculpture Technique as an assessment and treatment resource with families and children. This presentation resulted in a second invitation to present to social workers and a pediatrician at Children’s Hope International, the Beijing office. In June, 2009, Thorsheim will also

present at an international conference at St. Olaf College on "Family Sculpture: An International Tool for Brief Assessment and Intervention."

Julie Thorsheim's presentation will illustrate how this original Norwegian invention and therapy technique is being applied with very positive results on the American scene and has captivated the interest of professionals globally.

**Julie Loken Thorsheim**, a Minnesota-born clinical social worker, whose grandparents or great-grandparents were all born in Norway, and her husband Howard live in Northfield, where he is a St. Olaf College professor. They have four adult children and two grandchildren. To find out more about this Norwegian invention now spreading in the U.S. and globally visit: [www.HealthyHumanSystems.com](http://www.HealthyHumanSystems.com).

---

**May 2, 2009**



**Speaker:** *Tracy Domish, Director of Marketing at Larkin Hoffman Daly & Lindgren*

**Topic:** *Creating Conversations: Live and Virtual*

Join us for an interactive presentation on how to maximize networking opportunities, including step by step guides to starting and maintaining relationships and sample conversation starting tips in the "live" and virtual worlds. You'll come away from this meeting with some new ideas and perspectives on how to connect with friends and new contacts. After the program, we'll do a speed networking exercise to get to know each other a bit better!

Tracy Domish is the Director of Marketing at Larkin Hoffman Daly & Lindgren, a full-service law firm that provides legal guidance in more than 20 areas of law to clients ranging from individuals to emerging companies and Fortune 500 corporations. Tracy has over ten years of experience helping individuals within services organizations build strategic relationships through opportunity analysis and market penetration. She has worked for a variety of organizations, including KPMG a Big Four

accounting firm, and several law firms. Tracy earned a J.D. from William Mitchell College of Law, and a B.A. from the College of St. Benedict.

---

**June 6, 2009**

Member's Only Picnic

