

2019 Donor Impact Report

VESTERHEIM MISSION

Vesterheim celebrates the living heritage of Norwegian immigrants to America and shares this cultural legacy for the inspiration and enrichment of people of all backgrounds.

VESTERHEIM VISION

As a cultural organization tied to Norwegian-American immigrant experiences, Vesterheim strives to be inclusive and accessible as it shares stories, explores identity, fosters empathy and engagement, and builds community with increasingly diverse audiences.

Vesterheim will seek to achieve this vision in four key ways:

1. Vesterheim will deliver the highest-quality facilities, staffing, programs, collections exhibitions, and outreach in a financially secure and stable way.
2. Vesterheim will actively promote discovery and sharing of knowledge to an international audience through authentic and engaging educational programs, exhibitions, collaborations, and outreach.
3. Vesterheim's programs, exhibitions, and outreach will always be based on its collections and other well-documented sources of information.
4. Vesterheim will look at not only what it meant to be a Norwegian American in the past, but also what it means to be a Norwegian American today, and how the story of Norwegian-Americans is relevant to society as a whole.

VESTERHEIM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM MISSION

We intentionally build and nurture a growing network of friends that financially support Vesterheim's mission as the National Norwegian-American Museum and Folk Art School.

VESTERHEIM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOUR KEY VALUES:

- Integrity
- Donor-centered and mission-focused
- Goal-oriented
- Focused on professional best practice



Connor Freeman and his wife, Caroline, center, tour *Favorite Things*, with Vesterheim staff Diane Brondyke, Laurann Gilbertson and Zach Row-Heyveld. Connor and Caroline were among the sponsors for this exhibition dedicated to Connor's mother.

A Message from Chris Johnson, President/CEO

Dear Friends,

There are times when a thank-you is not merely enough, but please let me try.

It is with sincere appreciation and humble gratitude that we thank all our donors, members, sponsors, volunteers, teachers, students, tour participants, Museum Store customers, board of trustees, and staff who helped to make 2019 an extraordinary year. As you look through the following pages, please know that your support has made all these amazing accomplishments possible.

When I reflect on the year ahead, I know that it is a formidable time in the history of our world. No one would have anticipated the challenges we are facing in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. But, as a history buff, I recognize that these challenges are not totally unprecedented, and the way people have surmounted them in the past is by pulling together.

Vesterheim's Folk Art School will not be holding on-site classes in 2020, and safety requires that much of our other programming be limited even after we re-open. Therefore we have shifted to creating online and social media alternatives to keep bringing you the kind of things you love. This shift has necessitated a swift learning curve for our staff and a considerable financial investment at a time when revenues from visitation, folk-art classes, tours to Norway, and Museum Store sales are down. In addition, our first priority needs to be making our campus a safe place for visitors and staff when we do finally re-open. Our friends have stepped up in this regard so that we can, in turn, step up to serve you.

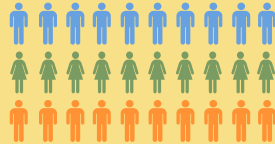
Though the demands are new, we are pulling together, just as those who have faced struggles in the past have done. For this, for everything you did for Vesterheim in 2019, and for everything you will do this year and every year, you have our most heartfelt thanks.

Sincerely,

2019 IMPACT AT A GLANCE

14,197

VISITORS



580 visitors came to the museum on Free First Thursdays
17,555 transactions in the Vesterheim Museum Store

PIECES IN THE COLLECTION



33,000

78 objects from the collection on loan to 7 other institutions in 4 states (Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Washington)

5

NEW EXHIBITIONS



2 Traveling Exhibitions - "Rocks and Hard Places: Emigration through the Lens of Knud Knudsen"
"In Trunks, Hearts, and Hands: What Immigrants Brought to Iowa"

FOLK ART CLASSES



84

678 students
109 entries in the National Folk Art Exhibition
6 Youth Programs - 992 students

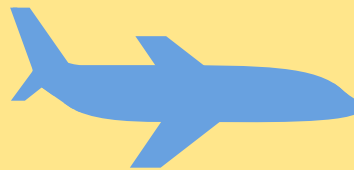
278

VOLUNTEERS



providing 1,710 hours of service
290 inquiries made to Vesterheim curatorial staff

TOURS TO NORWAY



2

69 participants
25 outreach presentations by museum staff reaching 1,240 people across the United States

5,100

MEMBERS



555 people attended 8 events for Vesterheim Friends held around the country

WEBSITE VISITS



183,714

7,682 households receive Vesterheim's E-Newsletter
13,373 people follow Vesterheim on social media

1,151

PEOPLE FINANCIALLY SUPPORTED VESTERHEIM
Giving a total of 1,912 gifts (46 states and the District of Columbia)

AND WITH THE ONGOING SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIP OF FRIENDS LIKE YOU, WE CAN DO EVEN MORE!

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FOUNDERS COUNCIL MEMBERS

(2019)

Evy Alsaker, Winnetka, IL Robert
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Scott Ingstad, Muscatine, IA
Dennis Johnson, Morris, MN
Myrna E. Johnson, Northwood, ND
Heyn Kjerulf, Richmond, VA
Gail Larson, Bozeman, MT
Martha Ylvisaker Limburg, Longville, MN
Kurt Meyer, Saint Ansgar, IA
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Irene O'Connor Navarre,
Albuquerque, NM
Dr. David L. Nelson, Stoughton, WI
Dr. Eugene Nordby, Madison, WI
Liv Norderhaug, Eden Prairie, MN
Karen Owen-Tuzcu, Minneapolis, MN
Jerome Pederson, Bonita Spring, FL
Dr. Hamlet Peterson, Rochester, MN
Sonja Peterson, Battle Lake, MN
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Dr. Kristin Robbins, Denver, CO
Wayne A. Rohne, Arlington, TX
Lee Rokke, Apple Valley, MN
John Satrom, Dilworth, MN
Michael Schmidt, Longboat Key, FL
Dr. Rebecca Shaw, Des Moines, IA
Gary Smaby, Marcell, MN
Marilyn Sorenson, Arden Hills, MN
Louise C. Sundet, Naples, FL
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O. Jay Tomson, Mason City, IA
Harold Ulvestad, Shorewood, MN
Joann Voltmer, Decorah, IA
Mike Voltmer, Decorah, IA
William K. Wangensteen, Minneapolis, MN
Jeanne and David Wright, Jr., Decorah, IA
Signe Wrolstad-Forbes, Chagrin Falls, OH

Did you Know?



VESTERHEIM HAS DONORS AND MEMBERS IN ALL 50 STATES, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, AND 7 COUNTRIES

Norway, Canada, Japan, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Spain, and Sweden

57

PEOPLE RECEIVED TATTOOS IN THE GALLERY AS PART OF THE TATTOO: IDENTITY THROUGH INK EXHIBIT

On drop-in tattoo days



VESTERHEIM HAS AN ONLINE DATABASE CONTAINING INFORMATION ON THE LIVES AND SERVICE OF 11,027 CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS WHO WERE NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN

This data was compiled from research conducted between 1997 and 2003 by Jerry Rosholt, a journalist and later producer for NBC Nightly News. To view this extensive database, go to collections.vesterheim.org/civil-war-database/

757

OBJECTS FROM THE VESTERHEIM COLLECTION ARE FEATURED IN THE VIRTUAL GALLERY ON OUR WEBSITE

Check it out at collections.vesterheim.org/vesterheim-archives/virtual-galleries/



VESTERHEIM'S ONLINE GOLD MEDALIST PORTFOLIO HONORS ARTISTS WHO EARNED GOLD MEDALS IN VESTERHEIM'S ANNUAL NATIONAL NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN FOLK ART EXHIBITION.

Check it out at collections.vesterheim.org/gold-medalist-portfolios



VESTERHEIM MUSEUM STORE CUSTOMERS LIVE IN 48 STATES AND CANADA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

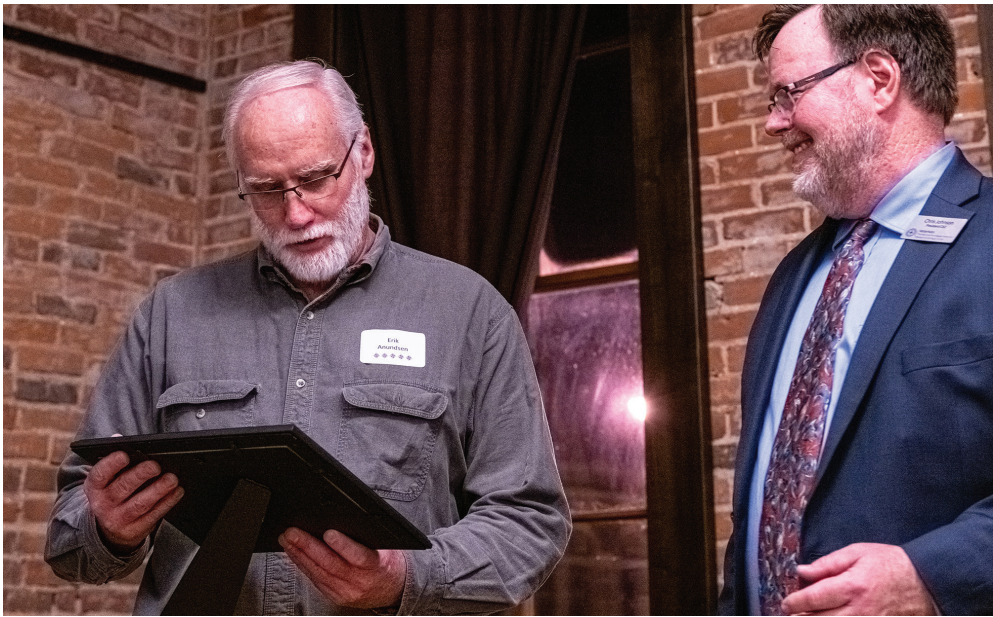
The proceeds of all sales in the Museum Store support Vesterheim

STAFF (2019)

Chris Johnson, President, CEO
Sandy Bishop, Store Sales Staff
Diane Brondyke, Director of Development
Aaron Burmeister, Folk Arts Education Program Assistant
Kathy Buzza, Guest Services
Jocelyn Clarine, Office Assistant
Martha Davis, Guest Services
Sharon Delvento, Guest Services
Sharon Drews, Receptionist
Sue Edison-Swift, Guest Services
Darlene Fossum-Martin, Education Specialist
Danette Franzen, Accounting Assistant
Linda Gebel, CFO
Laurann Gilbertson, Chief Curator
Martha Griesheimer, Coordinator of Volunteers
Betty Hanson, Receptionist
Debbie Hanson, Membership Assistant
Kirsten Roverud Heine, Major Gifts Officer
Shelley Hendricks, Museum Store Assistant Manager
Betty Hopperstad, Guest Services
Brent Hovden, Facilities Assistant
Becky Idstrom, Communications and Marketing Manager
Claudia Idstrom, Store Sales Staff
Bonnie Tunnicliff Johnson, Guest Services
Hallie Johnson, Guest Services
Katherine Johnson, Coordinator of Tours to Norway
Mary Klimesh, Guest Services
Ken Koop, Museum Store Manager
Jennifer Kovarik, Registrar
Charlie Langton, Communications and Marketing Director
Lea Donhowe Lovelace, Director of Folk Art Education
Marcia McKelvey, Director of Administration
Lizzie Nation, Social Media and Content Assistant
Jim Nelson, Facilities Manager
Zach Row-Heyveld, Exhibitions Manager
Anna Runestad, Development Event Coordinator
Peggy Sersland, Membership Manager
Kathy Wilbur, Accountant



The Viking re-enactment group Skjaldborg returned to Nordic Fest thanks to a sponsorship from Viking State Bank & Trust.



Erik Anundsen and Chris Johnson at the *Tusen Takk* event. On behalf of his parents, Jack and Ellie Anundsen, Erik accepted their *Bronze Kroneklubben* certificate, which was awarded posthumously for their generous lifetime giving to Vesterheim.



Marilyn and Jeff Roverud in their beloved Norway. The Roveruds have sponsored Vesterheim's Syttende Mai celebrations for the past 20 years!



Courtney and Nick Rowley, sponsors of *Tattoo: Identity Through Ink*, tour the exhibition.



The 2019 *Norwegian-American Folk Art Exhibition* was sponsored by Decorah Bank & Trust. This was the fifth year that Decorah Bank & Trust supported this annual exhibition.



Dan Alsaker at the opening of Vesterheim's exhibition *Rocks and Hard Places: Emigration Through the Lens of Knud Knudsen*. Dan is one of the sponsors for the traveling version of this exhibit, which went on view at Livsreise in Stoughton, WI, in 2019 and is scheduled to be shown at the German American Heritage Center later this year.

EXCITING EXHIBITIONS IN 2019

The Museum Lab

Sponsored by David and Brenda Carlson, Decorah, Iowa.

Rocks and Hard Places: Emigration Through the Lens of Knud Knudsen

This traveling exhibit is sponsored by Lars and Martha Alsaker on behalf of Dan Alsaker and his sister Pam (Alsaker) Hemingway; Alsaker Corporation; John K. and Luise V. Hanson Foundation; Mary Jo Hanson Boman; Rob and Janet Coe; and Greg Boman.

Tattoo: Identity Through Ink

Sponsored by Nick and Courtney Rowley with community partners Toppling Goliath Brewing Co. and Brock's Valhalla Tattoo.

National Norwegian-American Folk Art Exhibition

Sponsored by Decorah Bank & Trust and supported in part by the Iowa Arts Council, a division of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs; and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Favorite Things—A Community Curated Exhibit of Vesterheim's Collections

In Memory of Alison Dwyer with gifts from Philip Freeman, Cathy MacLeod, Connor Freeman, Caroline Freeman, Mackenzie Freeman, Stuart Dwyer, and Julie Dwyer.



Brenda Carlson strikes the pose of a thoughtful researcher at the opening of Vesterheim's *Museum Lab* exhibit. The exhibit was sponsored by Brenda and her husband David.

Vesterheim



John Thompson of Madison's Thompson Investment Management, Inc. enjoying the Madison Friends event. The firm that John founded has sponsored this issue of *Vesterheim* magazine.



Fun and games at Vesterheim's Twin Cities Friends event.



Guests at the Chicago Friends event. *Sitting*, Don Hoganson. *Standing, left to right*, Trustee Liz Platou; Diane Brondyke, Director of Development; Trustee Mette Bowen.



Kate Martinson chatting with Sherry Trudo at the La Crosse Friends event.



Walter and Louise Hanson graciously hosted a Vesterheim event in their beautiful home in Rochester, Minnesota.



Unni Hoel, Ambassador Kåre Aas, and Sonja Perkins at the Vesterheim Embassy event hosted by the Ambassador at the Norwegian Embassy in Washington, DC, on May 2, 2019.



Jon and Mary Hart receive their *Silver Kroneklubben* Award from President/CEO Chris Johnson at the Decorah *Tusen Takk* event.



The Ladies of the Fjord—Karen Rebholz and Carlyce Skjervem—performed music from the Hardanger region at Nordic Fest. The concert was sponsored in memory of Gary D. Svenson (1939-2005) by his family.



Dennis Barnaal delights the children as the *julenisse* during the *juletefest* at Vesterheim's Norwegian Christmas celebration, sponsored by Duane Bruening, children and family, in memory of Eileen.

EVENTS

Madison Friends Event

Twin Cities Friends Events

Chicago Friends Event

La Crosse Friends Event

Rochester House Party

Embassy Event

Decorah *Tusen Takk* Event

Syttende Mai

Nordic Fest

Norwegian Christmas

PROGRAMMING

Barnetimen (Children's Hour)

Sponsored by David and Brenda Carlson, Amy and Keith Bruening, Greg and Karen Bruening, and Norwegian Mutual Insurance Association.

Fourth Grade Pioneer Immersion Program

Sponsored by Barbara & Rich Amundson, Joann Voltmer, Sons of Norway Decorah Valdres Lodge #503, Voltmer Electric, and Ruth Ann Schultz.

Third Grade WOW

(Window on the World) Program

Sponsored by Gundersen Health System.

Barneløpet

Sponsored by Jon and Mary Hart of Decorah in memory of Kjell Arne Berntsen, and three Sons of Norway Lodges—Valdres #503, Decorah, IA, Heimbygda #376 in Lanesboro, MN, and Valheim #364 in Spring Grove, MN.



Sponsor Amy Bruening and Karen Bruening and children pose for a photo during *Barnetimen*, sponsored by David and Brenda Carlson, Amy and Keith Bruening, Greg and Karen Bruening, and Norwegian Mutual Insurance Association.



Sawing logs the hard way teaches teamwork during the Fourth Grade Pioneer Immersion Program, sponsored by Barbara & Rich Amundson, Joann Voltmer, and Sons of Norway Decorah Valdres Lodge #503, Voltmer Electric, and Ruth Ann Schultz.



Youth educator Jennifer Kovarik captivates children during *Barnetimen*, sponsored by David and Brenda Carlson, Amy and Keith Bruening, Greg and Karen Bruening, and Norwegian Mutual Insurance Association.



Shelling corn during the Third Grade Window on the World (WOW) program, sponsored by Gundersen Health System.



Barneløpet, sponsored by Jon and Mary Hart of Decorah in memory of Kjell Arne Berntsen, and three Sons of Norway Lodges—Valdres #503 in Decorah, Iowa, Heimbygda #376 in Lanesboro, Minnesota, and Valheim #364 in Spring Grove, Minnesota.



Pulpit Rock used artwork from a Vesterheim artifact for the label of its special Scandinavian brew, *Taarteøl*.



Toppling Goliath created a special edition beer, *Valkyrie Strike*, in conjunction with Vesterheim's exhibition *Tattoo: Identity Through Ink*.



The flowers that grace Vesterheim's planters are thanks to Decorah's Town and Country Garden Club through the generous support of FreedomBank of Decorah, formerly Farmers and Merchants Bank. Pictured here, *seated left to right*: Roger Buhr and LaVonne Monson, volunteers of the Decorah Town and Country Garden Club. *Standing left to right*: Chris Johnson, Vesterheim CEO, Maureen Duncklee, FreedomBank VP and Branch Manager, Diane Brondyke, Vesterheim Director of Development, Karen Henning and Rachel Gannon FreedomBank Decorah Branch staff.



Brock Swenson, of Brock's Valhalla Tattoo, demonstrates the art of tattooing during the exhibition *Tattoo: Identity Through Ink*.



Luther College students from Harley Refsal's "Scandinavian Fine Handcraft" class hosted an evening of folk-art demonstrations in the museum.



Magpie Coffeehouse, Decorah, IA, conducted a "12 Days of Christmas" fundraiser for various nonprofits groups, one of which was Vesterheim. Here Kelsey Vanney, *center*, presents a check to Vesterheim President/CEO Chris Johnson, *left*, and Development Director Diane Brondyke, *right*.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Pulpit Rock

Pulpit Rock partnered with Vesterheim both with a beer release and an event in conjunction with the exhibition *Rocks and Hard Places*.

Toppling Goliath

Toppling Goliath created a special beer and hosted a special event in conjunction with Vesterheim's *Tattoo* exhibition.

FreedomBank

Helped beautify our campus by sponsoring the outdoor flowers.

Brock's Valhalla Tattoo

Much of the dynamic quality of our *Tattoo* exhibit is thanks to Brock's Valhalla Tattoo, who gave live tattoo demonstrations in the exhibition, allowed Vesterheim to use their tattoo art to promote the exhibit, and created the dramatic label for Valkyrie Stout, the special beer Toppling Goliath created in conjunction with the exhibit.

Luther College

Luther College students enjoyed J-term class visits to Vesterheim and Harley Refsal's "Scandinavian Fine Handcraft" class hosted an evening of folk-art demonstrations in the museum.

Magpie Coffee House

This popular Decorah destination conducted a "12 Days of Christmas" fundraiser for various nonprofits groups, one of which was Vesterheim.

A DONOR BILL OF RIGHTS

DEVELOPED BY:



Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP)



Association for Healthcare Philanthropy (AHP)



Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE)



Giving Institute: Leading Consultants to Non-Profits

PHILANTHROPY is based on voluntary action for the common good. It is a tradition of giving and sharing that is primary to the quality of life. To assure that philanthropy merits the respect and trust of the general public, and that donors and prospective donors can have full confidence in the not-for-profit organizations and causes they are asked to support, we declare that all donors have these rights:

I

To be informed of the organization's mission, of the way the organization intends to use donated resources, and of its capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes.

II

To be informed of the identity of those serving on the organization's governing board, and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities.

III

To have access to the organization's most recent financial statements.

IV

To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given.

V

To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition.

VI

To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by law.

VII

To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature.

VIII

To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organization or hired solicitors.

IX

To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share.

X

To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.