

AN ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF SCANDINAVIAN HERITAGE, CULTURE, & FOOD



PROGRAM \$5

JULY 23-25, 2026 🍷 Decorah, Iowa

WWW.NORDICFEST.COM

#NordicFest

| #NordicFestDecorah

| #VisitDecorah



CELEBRATE NORDIC FEST WITH DECORAH BANK



TAKE A PHOTO WITH HANS & HILDA!

Find Decorah Bank's
trolls downtown at the
corner of Water Street
& North State Street.

BANK EASY DURING NORDIC FEST ATM LOCATIONS

 **DECORAH BANK & TRUST CO.**
202 E. Water St
Decorah, IA 52101
(1 walk-up ATM + 2
drive-thru ATM/ITMs)

 **ONEOTA FOOD CO-OP**
312 W Water St
Decorah, IA 52101

 **SOUTH DECORAH - DRIVE-THRU**
1006 Division St
Decorah, IA 52101

 **CASEY'S GENERAL STORE**
401 College Dr
Decorah, IA 52101

 **CASEY'S GENERAL STORE**
1807 Old Stage Rd
Decorah, IA 52101

 **LUTHER COLLEGE**
Dahl Centennial Union
Riverview Dr
Decorah, IA 52101

 **WINNEMED**
901 Montgomery St
Decorah, IA 52101

SCAN QR CODE
TO LOCATE ALL
OF OUR ATMS:



Decorah Bank
& TRUST CO.

563-382-9661
www.decorah.bank

Member
FDIC

Helpful Fest Information



MAIN INFORMATION CENTER AT THE DECORAH VISITOR CENTER

507 W Water Street

(563) 382-3990

OPEN THURSDAY - SATURDAY, 8 AM - 9 PM

FIRE/AMBULANCE/POLICE - CALL 911

RESOURCES

- **DOWNTOWN DECORAH MAP** / See back cover. This map details Nordic Fest grounds and utilized locations.
- **BEVERAGE GARDEN AND CANOPY 1** / Located on the 500 Block of West Water Street. Ample seating, family-friendly environment, easy access to the Visitor Center and Vesterheim Campus.
- **PUBLIC RESTROOMS** / Indoor options located at the Decorah Visitor Center Thursday - Saturday. Portable units and washing stations at various locations around the Nordic Fest grounds.
- **FIRST AID** / For emergencies, call 911. Basic supplies are available at the main information center, 563-382-3990.
- **HANDICAP PARKING** / Located on Court Street and Winnebago Street.
- **LOST & FOUND** / At the Decorah Police Station at City Hall, 563-382-3667.

NORDIC FEST POLICIES

Help us keep Nordic Fest the best!

- **TRANSPORTATION RESTRICTIONS** / The use of bicycles, skateboards, scooters, roller skates & roller blades are prohibited on Fest grounds. All golf carts/ATVs/UTVs must be licensed as official Nordic Fest vehicles.
- **DOGS & OTHER PETS** / Must be leashed. Decorah's Animal Waste Ordinance will be enforced.
- **"NO PARKING" RESTRICTIONS** / Cars must be parked outside of the Nordic Fest grounds Thursday - Saturday, as well as outside of the entire parade route Saturday. See map on back cover. Strictly enforced.
- **OPEN CONTAINERS** / Public consumption of alcoholic beverages and open containers are only allowed in designated areas, like the Nordic Fest Beverage Garden, per city ordinance. Strictly enforced.
- **SEVERE WEATHER** / The community siren will run for at least three minutes if severe weather arises; please take shelter at the closest available building. Consult a member of the NF Board for additional assistance and direction.

CAMPUS/COMMUNITY SHUTTLE

Getting to Nordic Fest is BUTTER than ever!

Free off-site parking and convenient shuttle service make arriving at the festival easy, so you can spend less time searching for a spot and more time enjoying festivities. Park for free at Luther College and enjoy easy access to the heart of the Fest. Sponsored by Luther College.

• SHUTTLE RUNS CONTINUOUSLY

- FRIDAY 9AM - 10PM
- SATURDAY 8 AM - 10 PM

• PICK-UP & DROP-OFF:

- AT LUTHER COLLEGE
 - Dahl Centennial Union
 - Gerdin Fieldhouse Lot
- DOWNTOWN
 - City Parking Lot on corner of Water Street and Mechanic Street

LUTHER
COLLEGE

CAMPUS MAP



NEW IN 2026

DECORAH ROTARY "TOE TRUCK" FOR SENIORS & DISABLED VISITORS

Everything's BUTTER when everyone can join the fun. New this year, a complimentary on-site transportation service is available for seniors and visitors with disabilities. The "Toe Truck" will travel between select locations throughout the Nordic Fest grounds, making it easier to enjoy your favorite events and activities.

• THE "TOE TRUCK" RUNS A REPEATING LOOP

- FRIDAY 9AM - 10PM
- SATURDAY 8 AM - 11:45 PM

• "TOE TRUCK" ROUTE & APPROXIMATE TIMES:

- :00 Decorah Public Library / 202 Winnebago St.
- :15 Luther College Shuttle Site
- :25 Behind Canopy #3 / Water & State St.
- :30 Decorah Public Library / 202 Winnebago St.
- :45 Luther College Shuttle Site
- :55 Behind Canopy #2 / Main & Court St.

The route repeats every hour. Times may vary slightly based on traffic and passenger needs. Sponsored by Decorah Rotary.

Purchase official Nordic Fest Merchandise at the Decorah Visitor Center!

Nordic Fest merchandise is great for the whole family: 2026 theme t-shirts, 2026 theme buttons, Nordic Fest non-dated t-shirts and onesies, sunglasses, embroidered ball caps, koozies, Grizzly mugs, stickers, water bottles, cooling towels, Christmas ornaments, and more.



Nordic Fest 2026 Honorees



2026 Nordic Fest Skål Recipient -

Brian Solberg



The Nordic Fest Skål Recipient is an individual or individuals who have demonstrated exceptional and continuing support of the Fest.

If you've spent much time around Nordic Fest over the last several decades, chances are you've crossed paths with Brian Solberg—likely with a Pepsi in hand.

A lifelong Decorah resident, many of Brian's earliest memories are tied to Nordic Fest. As a child, he marched in the parade, explored the exhibits, enjoyed the festival food, and helped his mother demonstrate the art of making kranskekake, or "wreath cake". He also remembers Nordic Fest as a

time when family gathered from near and far, creating traditions that continue today.

Brian's official involvement with Nordic Fest began with the Elveløpet 5K & 15K Race and eventually grew into 17 years of service on the Nordic Fest Board. Today, he oversees Physical Management and assists with sporting events. He has also served as Board President, Vice President, Past President, and Elveløpet Race Director.

His commitment to service extends far beyond the festival. A Decorah High School and Luther College graduate, Brian returned to Decorah after graduate school and has spent 36 years serving students and athletes at Luther College as an athletic trainer, educator, and coach. He has also served in leadership roles with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, the American Heart Association, and other campus and community committees and organizations. For Brian, volunteering has always been about giving back to a community that has given so much to him.

"It's an opportunity to give back to something that has been a part of your life," he says. "My work with the Nordic Fest Board is fulfilling. It's an opportunity to engage with the community, to celebrate our heritage, and to help create something for others to enjoy."

Over the years, Brian has watched Nordic Fest evolve through new technology, expanded marketing, and changing traditions while remaining true to its roots. His favorite festival foods, however, are still distinctly Norwegian—krumkake, lefse, and rømmegrøt. "It just feels like the festival," he says.

And for Brian, Nordic Fest still isn't complete without his family's longstanding traditions — including gathering together to watch the Saturday night fireworks.

2026 Nordic Fest Grand Marshal -

Lorraine Borowski



Nordic Fest Grand Marshal is an individual or individuals who have provided outstanding services to the Decorah Community.

Since graduating from Luther College in 1970, Lorraine Borowski has called Decorah home. Over more than five decades, she has devoted her career and countless volunteer hours to helping the community grow and thrive.

Lorraine spent 27 years at the Decorah Public Library, including the last 14 as Library Director, where she helped lead the library through its expansion and fostered it as a welcoming gathering place for the community. Her passion for public service later led her to City Hall, where she served two

terms as Mayor of Decorah from 2018 to 2026.

"It was a good fit for me," Lorraine says. "I'd been attending City Council meetings for years as Library Director, and I really enjoyed being involved."

As Mayor, Lorraine guided Decorah through an extraordinary period that included the COVID-19 pandemic, major community development projects, leadership transitions, and continued growth. Yet when she reflects on those years, it isn't the headlines she remembers most.

"I loved the connections," she says. "People were so kind. Whether it was someone stopping to visit on the street or a child excited to recognize 'the mayor,' those conversations made the job special."

Her commitment to Decorah extends well beyond her professional roles. Lorraine has served as President of the Decorah Area Chamber of Commerce Board, President of Decorah Rotary, and has long championed partnerships among local government, schools, businesses, tourism, and community organizations.

"Those partnerships are what make Decorah successful," she says. "This community has so much to offer, whether you're raising a family or enjoying a new season of life."

Now retired from public office, Lorraine is enjoying what she calls "a different season" of life, discovering new ways to spend her time while continuing to appreciate the people, places, and traditions Decorah has to offer.

Lorraine's favorite places in Decorah are the community's natural areas—especially anywhere there's water, from the campground to Dunning's Spring—and she rarely misses an opportunity to enjoy live music. During Nordic Fest, she looks forward to the festival's celebratory spirit, reconnecting with friends and family, enjoying lefse and rømmegrøt, and soaking in the music found throughout town.

2026 NORDIC FEST BOARD



The Nordic Fest Board is a group of volunteers who love Nordic Fest and look forward to bringing this event to our community and thousands of visitors each year.

President Sarah Brandt	Luren Singers Liaison Chris Hick
Vice President Christopher Fassbender	Membership Cole Steffen Cole Phillips
Past President Cole Steffen	Nordic Dancers Marcie Dodd
Treasurer Cole Phillips	Parade Dave Anderson
Arts and Crafts Chris Hick Linda Wolfs	Physical Management Brian Solberg Phil Royer Rex Nelson
Beverage Garden Christopher Fassbender Michael Thompson	Sons of Norway Liaison Ivy Riggs
Entertainment Simon Cropp	Sporting Events Erin Shaw Shana Meyer Andi Hemesath Brian Solberg Sam Boeke
Food Steve Wilke	Vesterheim Liaison Chivonne Marlow
Kids' Activities Chelcie Busch	Decorah City Liaison Tricia Thein
Lefse Ivy Riggs Martha Griesheimer	

Administrative support is provided year-round by:

Alyssa Ritter, Northeast Iowa RC&D
Jessica Rilling, Decorah Area Chamber of Commerce
Amanda Streeper, Decorah Area Chamber of Commerce
Hannah Tulgren, Decorah Area Chamber of Commerce
Meg Storkamp, Decorah Area Chamber of Commerce



CARRY THE TRADITION FORWARD Join the Nordic Fest Board

The best traditions don't happen by chance—they're made together. Since 1967, Nordic Fest has been built by volunteers who share their time and talents. As longtime board members pass the torch, new leaders are needed to help ensure Nordic Fest remains the celebration we all cherish for generations to come.

Interested? Reach out to a current NF Board member or email nordicfestia@gmail.com.



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2026 Nordic Fest Shield Level Sponsors

GOLD SHIELD -GULLSKJOLD LEVEL



SILVER SHIELD SOLVSKJOLD LEVEL



BRONZE SHIELD BRONSKJOLD LEVEL



2026 THEME: BUTTER

2026 Schedule



THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2026

	CANOPY 1	CANOPY 2	CANOPY 3	OTHER LOCATIONS	COURTHOUSE SQUARE
	Beverage Garden Area / 500 W Water Street Block	Water & Court	Water & Washington	Various Locations	Main Street, between Court and Winnebago Streets
				5 - 9 PM Food Booths Open, subject to availability	
5:00 PM					
5:30 PM					
6:00 PM					
6:30 PM					
7:00 PM					
7:30 PM					
8:00 PM					
8:30 PM					
9:00 PM					
9:30 PM					
10:00 PM					
10:30 PM					

FRIDAY, JULY 24, 2026

[illegible]



	SATURDAY, JULY 25, 2026															
	Canopy 1	Canopy 2	Canopy 3	Courthouse Square	Vesterheim				Other Locations				Sporting Events			
	Beverage Garden Area	Water & Court	Water & Washington	Main Street <i>Between Court & Winnebago</i>	520 W Water Street				Various Locations				Various Locations			
					9 AM - 5 PM Main building open, demonstrations, kids activities and more!				10 AM - 9 PM Food Booths OPEN <i>Subject to Availability</i>				7:30 - 10 AM Elveløpet			
									9 AM - 4 PM Arts & Crafts Center Open / VFW							
									8:30 - 10 AM, Post Parade - 6 PM Troll's Trolley (Pokey Pete)							
									ALL DAY - Gnomes in the Park, "Faces of Nordic Fest" Interactive Booth							
10:00 AM																
10:30 AM	GRAND PARADE Starts at Winneshiek County Fairgrounds, continues onto Water Street, turns right onto Mill Street, and concludes at corner of Mill & Heivly Streets.															
11:00 AM																
11:30 AM																
12:00 PM																
12:30 PM	Norwegian Bachelor Farmers	Ezra Harman-Wood				Hands-On Butter Making <i>Patio Behind Hanson Commons</i>					The Jolly Pops Winnebago Street		Prairie Lakes Church Family Care Tent / 200 Block of West Water Street	The Hygge Hut / Decorah Covenant Church - Covered Parking Area	1 - 3 PM Nordic Rock Throw	
1:00 PM					A Short History of Kroting, Rebecca Hanna <i>Hanson Commons</i>	Kulokk: Norwegian Cow Calling - Peggy Larson <i>Heritage Park</i>	Stories on Strings: The Hardanger Fiddle's Folklore, Eden Ehm Bethania Church									
1:30 PM		Crater City String Band														
2:00 PM	Too Old Cat				Butter Mold Carving Demo, Josh Torkelson <i>Hanson Commons</i>											
2:30 PM		Helen Johnson				Hands-On Butter Making <i>Patio Behind Hanson Commons</i>			Viking Battle Demo	Bunad Show Hotel Winneshiek	Mr. Taylor Sings Winnebago Street	Go Fish with Chrysalis Children's Center Outside of 219 W Water Street				
3:00 PM						Rosemaling Pairing on Large Panels with Music, Tara Austin <i>Hanson Commons</i>	Kulokk: Norwegian Cow Calling - Peggy Larson <i>Heritage Park</i>	Scandinavian Instruments, Jeanette Dragvold Bethania Church	Hardanger Fiddle Demo, Eden Ehm <i>Heritage Park</i>							
3:30 PM																
4:00 PM	Ponyfolk															
4:30 PM																
5:00 PM																
5:30 PM		Beth & Brandon														
6:00 PM	Maria & The Coins															
6:30 PM																
7:00 PM																
7:30 PM																
8:00 PM		Jayr Brink Band														
8:30 PM																
9:00 PM	A Little Too Short to be Stormtroopers															
9:30 PM																
10:00 PM	FIREWORKS															
10:30 PM	A Little Too Short to be Stormtroopers															
11:00 PM																
11:30 PM																

2026 Theme



GOT BUTTER? Nordic Fest 2026 does!



This year's theme—BUTTER—is a playful and deliciously nostalgic nod to Scandinavian heritage, farm traditions, and the everyday foods that connect generations.

Across Scandinavia, butter has long been a staple of both daily life and celebration. Shaped by strong dairy traditions, it appears in everything from simple meals to festive baking, bringing richness and familiarity to the table. From smør spread on fresh bread to beloved holiday treats, butter continues to play a central role in Nordic cooking and community gatherings. At Nordic Fest, it's the finishing touch on warm lufse, an essential ingredient in creamy rømmegrøt, and a welcome companion to lutefisk.

This year, spread the fun as you explore butter-themed experiences throughout the festival. Watch traditional butter-making demonstrations, discover the artistry of butter mold carving, browse butter-inspired merchandise, and keep an eye out for buttery touches woven throughout exhibits, activities, and special events. Whether you're here for the history, the artistry, the agriculture, or simply the food, there's plenty to churn up your curiosity.

Join Nordic Fest in celebrating the lighter side of heritage—where food, farming, storytelling, and tradition come together. This is a golden opportunity to experience traditions that have stood the test of time. After all, life is just a little butter when it's shared with family, friends, and a community that knows how to celebrate.

"Butter is simple, familiar, and deeply tied to our **shared history**. This theme allows us to celebrate heritage in a way that feels joyful, approachable, and fun—while still honoring the traditions that connect us to our past."

- Sarah Brandt,
2026 Nordic Fest President

NEW IN 2026

CROWD FAVORITE PARADE FLOAT CONTEST

As the floats roll by during the Nordic Fest Grand Parade on Saturday, keep an eye out for your favorite! After the parade, cast your vote for the **Nordic Fest Crowd Favorite Parade Float** by scanning the QR code below. The winning float will earn bragging rights + a prize. Your vote also helps recognize the creativity, craftsmanship, and community spirit that make the Nordic Fest Grand Parade so special.

Whether a float made you laugh, showcased incredible creativity, celebrated this year's BUTTER theme, or simply captured the spirit of Nordic Fest, we'd love to hear your pick.

Voting is open through Sunday, July 26 at NOON.
The winning crowd favorite float will be announced on Facebook (@NordicFest) and at nordicfest.com.



SPECIAL BUTTER ADDITIONS

BUTTER MAKING WITH DAIRY ROYALTY

FRIDAY 11 AM - 1 PM

SATURDAY 4 PM - 7 PM

NEAR EDWARD JONES, 201 W WATER STREET

Discover the magic of butter making with the Dairy Princesses! Try your hand at churning fresh butter, learn how this dairy staple is made, and celebrate Nordic Fest's buttery theme in this fun, interactive experience. Perfect for all ages! This activity will be hosted by Kelsey Timp, the 72nd Iowa Dairy Princess, and the Winneshiek County Dairy Royalty.



IOWA BUTTER SCULPTOR SARAH PRATT

LIMITED SPACE CLASS OFFERINGS

SATURDAY 1 PM & 2 PM

REGISTRATION REQUIRED — Look for registration information announcement @NordicFest on Facebook and at nordicfest.com. Each session will hold 30 guests.
FARM BUREAU FINANCIAL SERVICES, 214 WINNEBAGO STREET

Get your hands on this year's Nordic Fest theme with a fun and unique butter sculpting class led by renowned butter sculptor Sarah Pratt, best known as the artist behind the iconic Iowa State Fair Butter Cow and the fair's annual featured butter sculpture, Sarah will share the techniques and creativity behind this one-of-a-kind art form.

Whether you're an experienced artist or trying something new, this interactive class is a chance to learn from one of the country's premier butter sculptors and create your own buttery masterpiece. Don't miss this unforgettable Nordic Fest experience! Hosted by the Iowa Dairy Promoters.



Norwegian National Anthem

Ja, vi elsker dette landet (Yes, we love this country)



Ja, vi elsker dette landet
som det stiger frem,
furet, vaerbitt, over vannet,
med de tusen hjem.
Elsker, elsker det og tenker
på vår far og mor
og den saganatt som senker
drømme på vår jord.
og den saganatt som senker
drømme på vår jord.

Yes, we love this country
as it rises forth,
rugged, weathered, above the sea,
with the thousands of homes.
Love, love it and think
of our father and mother
and the saga night that sends
dreams to our earth.
and the saga night that sends dreams
to our earth.

Food & Demonstrations



It wouldn't be Nordic Fest without food! Find affordable sweet treats, savory snacks, and meal options from the many Nordic Fest official food vendors throughout the weekend. All Nordic Fest food vendors are Decorah Area non-profit organizations, who utilize proceeds to support operations and outreach initiatives throughout the year. **Food is subject to availability. Listing number next to each offering corresponds to the map on the back cover.

WATER STREET FOOD BOOTHS

*Vendors 1 - 14 serving Thursday 5-9 PM,
Friday & Saturday 10 AM-9 PM*

1. POPCORN & COTTON CANDY

Located near corner of Washington and Water Streets. Sponsored by Decorah Lions Club.

2. CHEESE CURDS, BOTTLED WATER

Located near Agora Arts, 102 W. Water St. Sponsored by Decorah High School Girl's Basketball.

3. LINGONBERRY ICE CREAM

Located near Verizon Be Mobile, 110 W. Water St. Sponsored by Kinderhaus.

4. VARME PØLSE, SODA, BOTTLED WATER

Located near The Country Garden, 113 W. Water St. Sponsored by First Lutheran Church.

5. KRINGLA (SOFT BUTTERMILK COOKIES)

Located near Gallery of Tops, 114 W. Water St. Sponsored by Glenwood Lutheran Church.

6. KRUMKAKE

Demonstrations in BMO Lobby.

Located near BMO, 120 W. Water St. Samples, recipes, and gluten-free available. Made with *Butter* and love! Sponsored by Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

7. ROSETTES, KRINGLE, SANDBAKKELS, KRUMKAKE, ICED TEA, BOTTLED WATER

Located near Rubaiyat, 117 W. Water St. Sponsored by Nordic Dancers.

8. KJØTTBOLLER (NORWEGIAN MEATBALLS), MEATBALL SUBS, BEVERAGES AND BOTTLED WATER.

Located near Koreana, 207 W. Water St. Sponsored by Decorah High School Cross Country.

9. ROSETTES & RØMMEGRØT

Times for demonstrations will be posted at booth.

Located near Holistic Pathways, 302 W. Water St. Sponsored by Canoe Ridge Lutheran Church.

10. GRILLED PORK CHOP, POP, WATER

Located near Viking State Bank, 321 W. Water St. Sponsored by Decorah Rotary.

11. LEFSE, WATER

Times for demonstrations will be posted at booth.

Located in front of the Oneota Community Food Co-op Kitchen Classroom, 310 W. Water St. Sponsored by the Nordic Fest Board.

12. MOO-MOBILE SHAKES, WATER

Located near the Oneota Community Food Co-op, 312 W. Water St. Sponsored by Decorah FFA and Boosters.

13. KARBONADER - NORWEGIAN BUTTER BURGER WITH CARMELIZED ONIONS, JARLSBERG CHEESE, LINGONBERRY AIOLI ON A BRIOCHE BUN, BEVERAGES

Located near The Dress by Morgan Lynn, 411 W. Water St. Sponsored by Luther College.

14. NORDIC KNOTS (GIANT PRETZELS) + DIPS AND SITRONADE (LEMONADE)

Located in front of 418 W. Water St, near Sugar Bowl. Sponsored by Northeast Iowa Montessori School.

15. THE NORDIC FEST BEVERAGE GARDEN - ALCOHOLIC AND NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Located in front of the Decorah Visitor Center, 507 W. Water St. Sponsored by the Nordic Fest Board.

OTHER FOOD LOCATIONS

Specific times listed with each offering.

16. FREDEGSTACO - TACO/TACO SALAD BUFFET *Thursday 4-7PM, Friday/Saturday 11AM-7PM*

Inspired by taco nights in Norway! Build your own taco/taco salad buffet. Adults \$12, Children 6-12 \$5, 5 and under free! Food allergy friendly. Located at St. Benedict Parish Hall - Corner of Main & Court Streets. Sponsored by Decorah UMC/UCC Sister Parish and the LC Decorah Troll Trotters Granny Basketball Team.

17. LUTHER CAF NORWEGIAN MEATBALL SUPPER *Friday 4PM-7PM*

Enjoy Norwegian meatballs with nutmeg gravy, mashed potatoes, green beans and carrots, rømmegrøt bars, and more! Tickets at luthercollege.vbottickets.com and walk-in purchases available. Located at Luther College - Dahl Centennial Union CAF. Sponsored by Luther College.



18. PANNEKAKE (PANCAKE) BREAKFAST *Saturday 6:30-9:30AM*

All you can eat pancakes with sausage and beverage. Free will donation. Located at 400 Claiborne Dr., Fire Department, City Hall. Sponsored by Decorah Fire Department.

19. VFW BREAKFAST *Sunday 8AM-12PM*

Serving pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, ham, hash browns, toast, and beverages. Free will donation. Located at Decorah VFW, 104 State St. Sponsored by VFW Post 1977.



Try one of the many unique restaurants in the Decorah area too!

For a complete listing of local eateries visit www.visitdecorah.com or stop by the Decorah Visitor Center for a print listing.

Vesterheim Campus



Vesterheim, the National Norwegian-American Museum and Folk Art School, welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds to engage in the conversation of the American immigrant journey through the lens of the Norwegian-American experience. Founded in 1877, it houses over 33,000 artifacts, a Heritage Park of 12 historic buildings, and a renowned Folk Art School.

Vesterheim offers innovative and interactive exhibits, classes, and programs, both at the dynamic campus and park in Decorah and online at vesterheim.org and Vesterheim social media.

MUSEUM BUILDING

**OPEN DAILY 9 AM - 5 PM / ADMISSION: FREE
DURING NORDIC FEST, THURSDAY - SUNDAY!**

Featuring woodworking; rosemaling (decorative painting); *bunader* (national costumes); the 25-ft. ship TradeWind; silver; fine art; furniture; press gallery; church gallery; military gallery; and more.

Vesterheim's Nordic Fest activities are supported by Decorah Bank & Trust. Free admission during Nordic Fest supported by Marvin Bruha. Programming in Hanson Vesterheim Commons supported by Jon and Mary Hart.

SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS:

National Norwegian-American Folk Art Exhibition

A collection of amazing knifemaking, metalworking, rosemaling, weaving, and woodworking entered by contemporary artists from all over the county. Some pieces are for sale, come and vote for a People's Choice Award, selected by popular vote from exhibit visitors.

Lars Fletre: Resistance, Resilience, Artistry

Known for his wide-range of artistry in sculpture, woodcarving, painting, and class, the work of Norwegian-American Lars Fletre reflects themes of migration, labor, and social realism, blending Norwegian tradition with American experience.

Emigrating to America (in Hanson Vesterheim Commons)

Play this interactive game that leads visitors through a series of decisions as they pretend to immigrate to the U.S. from Norway. Visitors can discover who they are when they leave Norway and what happens along their travels to a new home.

HERITAGE PARK

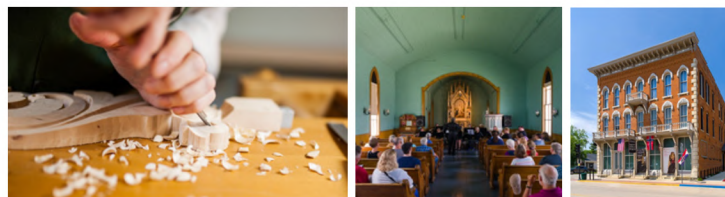
OUTSIDE PARK OPEN DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS

Select historic buildings with museum guides will be open on Friday and Saturday, 12-4 PM, to tour on your own, no admission. Guided tours of Heritage Park on Thursday (free) at 1:30 p.m.

VESTERHEIM MUSEUM STORE

OPEN 9 AM - 5 PM DAILY

Sweaters, jewelry, folk art, cooking supplies, books, and more.



DEMONSTRATIONS, DISPLAYS, & SALES

**FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, 9 AM - 5 PM UNLESS
OTHERWISE STATED**

FOLK-ART AND LIVING HERITAGE DEMONSTRATIONS:

AROUND VESTERHEIM CAMPUS

Woodcarving, ale bowl turning, apring pole lathe, Greenwood carving, flat plane figure carving, *kolrosing* (incised design on wood), dragon carving, bentwood box construction, chip carving, shrink boxes, pottery, flax processing, dry needle felting, Hardanger embroidery, rigid heddle band loom weaving, band weaving, cooking, knifemaking, blacksmithing, tin smithing, leather craft, rosemaling, Swedish dalmalning, and Scandinavian instruments. Made possible in part by a grant by the Madison Torske Clubbed Foundation.

VESTERHEIM MUSEUM STORE POP UP SHOP:

IN THE VESTERHEIM MUSEUM STORE

Stock up on gently used folk art woodenware, instructional and art books, painting supplies, and wood working items, all recycled from other folk artists and ready for you to take home – at bargain prices!

COUNTRY GALLERY ANTIQUES:

418 W. WATER STREET

Specializing in selling Scandinavian vintage & antique textiles, *bunad* accessories, jewelry, decorative wooden ware, sewing tools, books, knives, prints, and postcards.

ONEOTA WEAVERS & SPINNERS GUILD SHOP:

THIRD FLOOR, WESTBY-TORGERSON EDUCATION CENTER

Hand-felted Santas and Christmas ornaments and figures, hand-woven rugs, scarves/shawls, table runners, and more.

NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN GENEALOGICAL CENTER AND NAESETH LIBRARY:

HANSON VESTERHEIM COMMONS

Representatives from the center, located in Madison, WI, will be on hand to offer genealogical research advice.

DISTRICT 1 SONS OF NORWAY:

HANSON VESTERHEIM COMMONS

This district covers Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, and Texas. Meet representatives and find out more about the international Sons of Norway organization.

Vesterheim Campus



ENTERTAINERS

KATHLEEN ALMELIEN

FRIDAY 10:30 - 11:30 AM HANSON VESTERHEIM COMMONS

Norwegian bandweaving creates durable, decorative bands with bold geometric designs. Historically used to secure clothing, tie bundles, swaddle babies, and braid hair, the craft is now recognized on UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Kathleen, an experienced artist and educator, has shared Norwegian bandweaving for the past 10 years.

TARA AUSTIN

SATURDAY 3:15 - 5 PM HANSON VESTERHEIM COMMONS

Stop by for two informal 45-minute rosemaling sessions set to music—almost like a dance! Rosemaling is a traditional Norwegian decorative painting style that emphasizes floral designs and swooping scales. Tara, the 2026 Folk Artist-in-Residence at the Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures, is a practicing artist and instructor whose work draws inspiration from the natural beauty of the Upper Midwest.

LIZ BUCHEIT

FRIDAY 1:30 - 2:30 PM HANSON VESTERHEIM COMMONS

In Norway, there are magical stories of silver jewelry, including treasures hoarded by the mythical *huldfolk* or hidden folk. Watch Liz spin amazing filigree pieces while she shares these legends. A goldsmith for over 30 years, Liz is inspired by her own ancestry and holds a master's degree in metalworking and jewelry. She owns and operates Crown Trout Jewelers in Lanesboro, MN.

THE CAMP SISTERS

FRIDAY 12 - 12:30 PM HANSON V. COMMONS & 4 - 4:30 PM BETHANIA CHURCH

SATURDAY 4:15 - 4:45 PM BETHANIA CHURCH

Anna Claire Camp and Ellie Camp-Shogren will share fun music songs and games! These sisters learned from their mom, grandma, and aunt who shared children's music with teachers throughout Tennessee. Ellie now lives in Decorah and works at Vesterheim.

JANETTE DRAGVOLD

FRIDAY 10 AM - 12:30 PM BETHANIA CHURCH

SATURDAY 3 - 4 PM BETHANIA CHURCH

A musician from Minnesota, Janette will share her love of traditional instruments with a presentation and demonstration of traditional Scandinavian music on multiple instruments. As a multi-instrumentalist she loves introducing people to traditional Nordic instruments and spreading the joys of Nordic music.

EDEN EHM

FRIDAY

- 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM HERITAGE PARK / Demonstration
- 1 PM - 2 PM BETHANIA CHURCH / Presentation

SATURDAY

- 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM BETHANIA CHURCH / Presentation
- 3 - 4 PM HERITAGE PARK / Demonstration

Hardanger fiddler from Decorah will speak with guests in Heritage Park while playing traditional Norwegian tunes. Eden will also give full presentations about the Hardanger fiddle including playing demonstrations and Q&A. Supported by Dawn Svenson Holland and Josh Holland, dedicated in memory of Gary and DiAnn Svenson.

DARLENE FOSSUM-MARTIN

FRIDAY 3:30 - 4:30 PM HANSON VESTERHEIM COMMONS

Find out everything about butter! Darlene has worked and volunteered at Vesterheim for the past 30 years. With a background in Home Economics, Darlene teaches classes in traditional Norwegian baking and cooking. She says her best instructors were her mom, the women in her family, and her Norwegian community in the Midwest and Norway.

REBECCA HANNA

SATURDAY 1 - 2 PM HANSON VESTERHEIM COMMONS

Kroting designs are carved or incised into a piece of wood that has already been painted or stained. Rebecca is an expert carver and teacher from Decorah and she'll share the history and technique of this traditional decoration.

HYMN SING

FRIDAY 2:30 - 3:30 PM BETHANIA CHURCH

Led by Rev. Rolf Svanoe and Kimberly Svanoe, everyone is invited to gather and sing favorite Scandinavian hymns!

SCOTT JOHNSON

FRIDAY 2:30 - 3:30 PM HANSON VESTERHEIM COMMONS

Scott Johnson discovered *kolrosing* at a 2016 Vesterheim class. With instruction and encouragement, kolrosing became a true passion. He is a Vesterheim Gold Medalist in Woodworking and in Knifemaking. He loves sharing the art with others and seeing their smiles when they discover the magic.

PEGGY LARSON

FRIDAY 1 - 1:20 PM & 3 - 3:20 PM HERITAGE PARK

SATURDAY 1:30 - 1:50 PM & 3 - 3:20 PM HERITAGE PARK

Hear the beautiful musical tradition of kulokk, Norwegian cow calling, which began with young farm girls in the mountains of Norway. Peggy has traveled through Norway interviewing singers and farmers to collect stories and melodies. Peggy is a singer and choir director.

SKJALDBORG VIKING ENCAMPMENT

BATTLE TECHNIQUE DEMONSTRATIONS

- FRIDAY 11 AM, 2 PM & 4 PM
- SATURDAY 2 PM & 4 PM

ENCAMPMENT IN HERITAGE PARK AMPHITHEATER

This group from Elk Horn, Iowa, presents their Viking encampment and entertains throughout the day with full Viking combat demonstrations. Skjaldborg means "fortress of shields." Supported by Viking State Bank & Trust.

JOSH TORKELSON

SATURDAY 2 - 3 PM HANSON VESTERHEIM COMMONS

Norwegians and Norwegian Americans used elaborately carved wooden molds to form their butter into beautiful shapes to decorate their tables. Josh is a woodworking teacher endlessly fascinated by the repeated patterns and the elaborate decoration of everyday objects in pre-industrial Scandinavia and Scandinavian America, and he'll share carving history while showing butter mold carving techniques.



Vesterheim Campus / Kids' Activities



ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH:

Youth activities at Vesterheim are supported by Pete and Kari Espinosa.

NILS THE GIANT NISSE & FRIENDS

FRIDAY 10:30 AM - 3 PM

SATURDAY 1:30 PM - 4 PM

PATIO BEHIND HANSON VESTERHEIM COMMONS

Take advantage of great photo ops with various nisse around campus.



BUTTER MAKING DEMONSTRATION

FRIDAY 10:30 AM & 1:30 PM

SATURDAY 12:30 PM & 2:30 PM

PATIO BEHIND HANSON VESTERHEIM COMMONS

Learn how to make butter with this hands-on activity!

CHILDREN'S SONGS & SINGING GAMES

FRIDAY 12 - 12:30 PM Hanson V. Commons &

4 - 4:30 PM Bethania Church

SATURDAY 4:15 - 4:45 PM Bethania Church

Join the fun with the Camp Sisters Living songs and music games!

HANDS-ON FOLK ART DEMONSTRATIONS

FRIDAY 10:10 AM - 12 PM & 1 - 3 PM HERITAGE PARK

SATURDAY 1 - 3 PM HERITAGE PARK

Work with folk artists Kitty Latane and Josh Torkelson to try your hand at tin smithing and kolrosing (incising decoration on wood).

HANDS-ON SCANDINAVIAN INSTRUMENTS

FRIDAY 10 AM - 12:30 PM

BETHANIA CHURCH

Musician Janette Dragvold will share how to play unique instruments and visitors can try them out!

NORWEGIAN HANDCRAFT & CULTURE KITS

SATURDAY *Following the Parade*

HERITAGE PARK

Vesterheim Folk Art School will offer a limited number of free kits and books for kids ages 8+ to explore Norwegian handcrafts and culture.



LITTLE VIKINGS, BIG ADVENTURES!

From crafts to games and everything in between, Nordic Fest offers fun for kids of all ages to learn, play, and celebrate Scandinavian heritage. Join the fun and make memories with hands-on activities, lively entertainment, and plenty of smiles all weekend long!

ON & AROUND WATER STREET

BALLOONS BY KEVIN

FRIDAY 4 - 9 PM / SATURDAY 4 - 9 PM

NEAR IMPACT COFFEE

Balloons by Kevin is the Midwest's premier balloon artist and is a Nordic Fest favorite! Choose from a wide variety of shapes, creatures, and colors for your balloon creation.

"FACES OF NORDIC FEST" INTERACTIVE BOOTH

THURSDAY 5 PM - 9 PM

FRIDAY 10 AM - 9 PM

SATURDAY 10 AM - 9 PM

200 BLOCK OF WEST WATER STREET

Step into a Nordic-themed backdrop, snap a photo, & become part of the living story of Nordic Fest! Hosted by DecorahNews.com.

JJW CARICATURES

FRIDAY 2-8 PM

400 BLOCK OF WEST WATER STREET

Get your own line drawing to commemorate your time at Nordic Fest! Jackie, who lives in Decorah, has been drawing caricatures in the Wisconsin Dells since summer 2021, completing 3000+ portraits of individuals and groups!

GO FISH WITH CHRYSALIS CHILDREN'S CENTER

FRIDAY 2-4 PM / SATURDAY 2-4 PM

OUTSIDE OF 219 W WATER STREET

Reel in the fun with Chrysalis Children's Center! Join for a fishing game, free popsicles, and learn how they support young minds.

THE HYGGE HUT

FRIDAY & SATURDAY NOON - 6 PM

DECORAH COVENANT CHURCH / 115 Washington St.

Take a break and enjoy some well-deserved hygge at the family-friendly Hygge Hut rest station! Shady rest area, free water & sunscreen, nearby restrooms, coloring activities, and free healthy snacks for kids. The Hygge Hut is a collaborative project hosted by Decorah Covenant Church, Decorah Lutheran Church, Decorah UCC, & Decorah Methodist Church.

HUMANE SOCIETY OF NORTHEAST IOWA

SATURDAY 3 - 6 PM

400 BLOCK OF WEST WATER STREET

Stop by to meet playful kittens and sweet dogs, give them a Norwegian themed treat, and get your picture with them. Pick out your cat or dog sticker and play animal themed games. Learn more about HSNEI's services too!

Kids' Activities



PRAIRIE LAKES CHURCH FAMILY CARE TENT

FRIDAY 10 AM - 4 PM

SATURDAY 12:30 PM - 4:30 PM

200 BLOCK OF WEST WATER STREET

Cool off with Prairie Lakes Church with a little shade and breeze. A family changing station will also be available.

TROLL'S TROLLEY (POKEY PETE)

THURSDAY 6:30 - 8 PM / FRIDAY 11 AM - 5:45 PM

SATURDAY 8:30 AM - 10 AM, POST PARADE - 6 PM

TICKETS SOLD @ CORNER OF WASHINGTON & WATER ST.

Hop on the train and ride around Water Street. Be sure to wave as you go by! Sponsored by the Lions Club.

AT MARY CHRISTOPHER PARK

DOG TALES

FRIDAY 10:30 - 11:30 AM

E. WATER STREET

Join Decorah Public Library's certified therapy dogs for Dog Tales! Read out loud to furry friends from a selection of books provided by the library.

WIGGLES & GIGGLES!

FRIDAY 10 - 10:30 AM

E. WATER STREET

A free movement session geared toward little ones and their families, led by DRiFT Strength + Yoga Center in partnership with Decorah Public Library. Come prepared to move freely and joyfully, and get some of those wiggles out in a playful and open environment.

OTHER LOCATIONS

GNOMES IN THE PARK!

ALL DAY FRIDAY - SATURDAY

AROUND DECORAH'S PARKS AND TRAILS

When the Nordic spirit is high, gnomes like to come out of hiding to enjoy the festivities. How many of these mischievous gnomes can you find? Pick-up a scavenger hunt guide at the Decorah Visitor Center. Prize drawing will take place at 2PM on Saturday. Sponsored by Decorah Parks & Recreation and Winneshiek County Conservation.

FRILUFTSLIV ("Outdoor Life") FAMILY HIKE

FRIDAY 10AM (Arrive early, hike starts promptly)

PHELPS PARK - PARK STREET

Join Winneshiek County Conservation at Phelps Park for a nature hike. Learn more at www.winneshiekwild.com/upcoming-events

KIDS' ENTERTAINMENT TENT ON WINNEBAGO STREET

NEXT GEN GAMERZ

FRIDAY 10 AM - 1 PM

KIDS' TENT ON WINNEBAGO STREET

This new mobile trailer out of Cresco will be parked at the tent! Come out and enjoy popular gaming consoles, video games, and five TVs that allow kids to play side by side.

ELSA FROM FROZEN MEET AND GREET

FRIDAY 1:30 - 3 PM

SATURDAY 5 - 7 PM

KIDS' TENT ON WINNEBAGO STREET

Come visit Elsa of Arendelle from Disney's Frozen! Take your picture with Elsa as she visits us for Nordic Fest.

THE JOLLY POPS

FRIDAY 3 - 4 PM & 5 - 6 PM

SATURDAY 12:30 - 1:30 PM

KIDS' TENT ON WINNEBAGO STREET

The Jolly Pops (Chanhausen, MN)

combine upbeat, original music with a host of children's standards for a concert that is sure to please kids and adults alike. Take a fun ride with the Happy Dads and their puppet friends as they sing about alligator dancing, popsicles, trains, pet dinosaurs...and everything in between!



MR. TAYLOR SINGS

SATURDAY 2 - 3 PM & 4 - 5 PM

KIDS' TENT ON WINNEBAGO STREET

Mr. Taylor is a children's performer, songwriter, musician, and children's librarian who brings stories to life through song, dance, and imagination. With catchy melodies and clever lyrics, he inspires kids to explore the world creatively, connect through books, and share their adventures with friends. *This show will include an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter.*



Official Nordic Fest Lefse

Support Nordic Fest with this delicious Norwegian treat and bottled water sold in front of the Oneota Community Co-op Kitchen Classroom.

Lefse is a traditional soft Norwegian flatbread, typically made from potatoes, flour, butter, and cream. It's rolled very thin and cooked on a large, flat griddle. Toppings include BUTTER, white sugar, brown sugar, and cinnamon.



Nordic Fest Cherished Traditions



NORDIC DANCERS

THURSDAY 6:45 PM / OPENING CEREMONIES

FRIDAY 11 AM - 12 PM, 7 - 8 PM

SATURDAY 7 - 8:30 PM

ALWAYS AT COURTHOUSE SQUARE

The Nordic Dancers - A Beloved Fest Tradition! Since the very first Nordic Fest in 1967, the Nordic Dancers have been at the heart of the celebration—sharing the rich tradition of Scandinavian folk dance with audiences near and far.

It all began when Phyllis Leseth invited Luther College student and Norwegian native Sebjorn Rogne to teach dances to local students and has since grown into one of Decorah's most cherished traditions. After Rogne returned to Norway, local teacher Betty Hacker stepped in to continue the group's leadership, and her legacy still inspires the program today.

The Nordic Dancers now include three groups of Decorah-area students: the Junior Nordic Dancers, the Senior Nordic Dancers, and the Nordic Dancers Orchestra. Every five years, third-grade students audition for a coveted spot and commit to a decade of dancing and community pride. Since its founding, nearly 500 young dancers and musicians have participated—performing not only at Nordic Fest, but also at festivals and cultural events across the country and around the world.

Their performances are more than entertainment—they are a joyful, living expression of cultural heritage, camaraderie, and dedication. Whether you're a first-time visitor or a lifelong fan, the Nordic Dancers are a must-see part of the Fest experience. Special thanks to founding director Betty Hacker for starting this treasured tradition!

See the 2026 group rosters at
nordicfest.com/nordic-dancers.



STOP BY THE NORDIC DANCERS BOOTH

ON WATER STREET, NEAR THE CORNER OF WINNEBAGO STREET

Support the Nordic Dancers through merchandise and raffle sales!

Shop for Viking helmets, swords, hair accessories, noise makers, cups & bottles, flags, and more.

Buy \$10 raffle tickets (or 3 for \$25) for a chance to win snowshoes, a kayak, a Decorah Getaway, a Vesterheim membership, a lefse starter kit, a Grizzly cooler, a cozy home bundle, a handheld steamer, a garden-inspired pack, and a Decorah Nordic basket (plus additional items in each raffle prize!). Raffle drawing takes place Saturday evening.

Proceeds go towards the Senior Dancers' trip to Norway in 2027. Departing the day after Nordic Fest, the group will spend nine days exploring the beauty, culture, and traditions of Norway, with stops in Bergen, Voss, Fagernes, Lillehammer, and Oslo. The Dancers will proudly showcase their talents on this once-in-a-lifetime trip.



2026 SENIOR NORDIC DANCERS



2026 JUNIOR NORDIC DANCERS



2026 NORDIC DANCERS ORCHESTRA

Nordic Fest Cherished Traditions



LUREN SINGERS

THURSDAY 6:45 PM / OPENING CEREMONIES

FRIDAY 6 - 6:30 PM

ALWAYS AT COURTHOUSE SQUARE

Founded in 1868, The Luren Singing Society, based in Decorah, is the nation's oldest Norwegian-American male chorus in continuous existence in the United States. For more than 150 years, they have performed traditional and contemporary Scandinavian music. A cornerstone of Nordic Fest and host of past Sangerfests, the Luren Singers have toured Norway multiple times, sung for Norwegian royalty, and remain cherished ambassadors of cultural heritage.



BUNAD SHOW

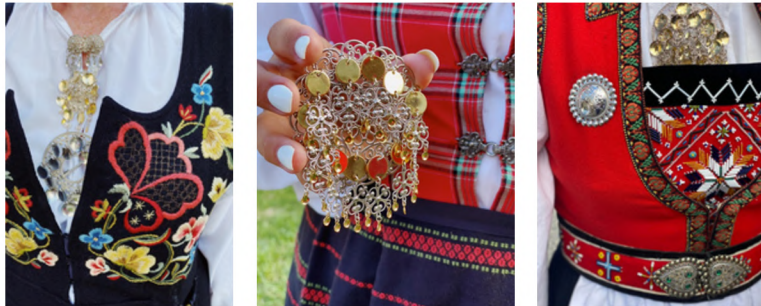
SATURDAY 2 PM

STEYER OPERA HOUSE, HOTEL WINNESHIEK ON WATER ST

A beloved Saturday tradition since 1973— the Nordic Fest Bunad Show provides a unique opportunity to admire the intricate artistry of Norwegian folk costumes known as bunads. Each outfit reflects its region's history and identity, often adorned with hand-stitched embroidery, silver brooches, aprons, shawls, and distinctive headgear.

With over 450 regional styles in Norway, bunads are crafted to last generations and are worn at weddings, confirmations, and national celebrations. Volunteer models bring this cultural heritage to life, offering Fest-goers a vibrant showcase of tradition, craftsmanship, and community pride.

Free to attend, in an air conditioned space at the historic Hotel Winneshiek Steyer Opera House.



NORDIC FEST ARTS & CRAFTS CENTER

FRIDAY & SATURDAY 9 AM-4 PM

VFW POST 1977 - 104 STATE STREET

Take a break from the heat at this great indoor stop! A main event of Nordic Fest since 1974, the Arts & Craft Center is bustling with activity, featuring artisans from the region and their handcrafted items. Here you'll find Scandinavian-inspired needlework, rosemaling, basket weaving, Hardanger embroidery, handcrafted dollies, angels and bookmarks, beautiful handcrafted jewelry and jewelry wrapping in stones and gems, ceramic gnomes, handcrafted wooden toys — including shields, swords, kubb sets — Christmas ornaments, fine art photography prints from Nordic Countries and the Viking world, wood working, knitwear and other crafts with the Nordic design.

COMMEMORATING CROSSINGS

Velkommen til Decorah!!



DECO has been a vital part of the Decorah community since 1960, helping shape many of its landmarks.



Oneota Co-op Gazebo



Dunning Springs Bridge



Trout Run Trail Bridge



Come grow with us!
www.decoprod.com/jobs

Sporting Events



Friendly competition has long been part of Nordic Fest. From endurance and strength to skill—and even a little culinary courage—there's an event for everyone. Compete in one or several events, or try to earn the title of Ultimate Norse by completing the Elveløpet, Nordic Rock Throw, and Lutefisk Eating Contest.

FRIDAY

KANOLØPET — 6:30 PM

COST: \$30/person includes canoe or kayak rental & life jackets OR \$20/person if providing own canoe or kayak. Register at Nordic Fest Headquarters/Decorah Visitor Center by 5 PM on Friday, July 25.

WILL BAKER PARK

Paddle the Upper Iowa River in the Kanoløpet, a race from Pulpit Rock Campground to the Twin Bridges on 5th Street. Canoe teams (up to two paddlers) compete in youth (combined age 35 and under) or adult (combined age 36 and older) divisions, with a separate kayak division. A limited number of rental boats are available. ***The event may be canceled if river water levels are too high or too low. Check the Decorah Visitor Center for event status.*



FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

BAGS TOURNAMENT

COST: \$10 entry fee/team - cash only. Register on site.

DECORAH MIDDLE SCHOOL FIELD

Double elimination. Cash prizes for the first, second and third place winners.

Friday registration 1:30-1:50pm; Play 2:00-4:00pm.

Saturday registration 1:30-1:50pm; Play 2:00-4:00pm.

SATURDAY

THE ULTIMATE NORDIC TRIATHLON

Festers who participate in the three Saturday events of the Elveløpet 5K or 15K run, the Rock Throw and the famed Lutefisk eating contest will have their results combined to face off with other Ultimate Norse. Register for free at packet pick up for the Elveløpet.

ELVELØPET 5K AND 15K — 7:30 AM

5K RUN/WALK: Ages 13 & under/\$8, 13+/\$32

15K RUN: \$42

Fees increase after July 15. Register at nordicfest.com/elvelopet

DECORAH CITY HALL, 400 CLAIBORNE STREET

Decorah's "River Run" race course along the Upper Iowa River and surrounding area highlights the natural beauty that Northeast Iowa has to offer. The race begins and ends at Decorah's City Hall. Hydration stations are provided along the course with more available at the finish line. Look for packet pickup dates and times online at nordicfest.com and via @NordicFest social media channels.



NORDIC ROCK THROW — 1:00 PM

COST: \$2 - cash only. Register on site.

****DECORAH MIDDLE SCHOOL FIELD (Location change due to construction)**

Show off your strength by tossing a rock! There are three weight classes for men (50 lb. rock for up to 160 lbs.; 75 lb. rock for 161-210 lbs.; 100 lb. rock for over 210 lbs.) and one weight class for women (50 lb. rock for all weights). Must be at least 18 years of age.

LUTEFISK EATING CONTEST — 3:30 PM

COURTHOUSE SQUARE

Put your lutefisk eating skills to the test in this competition. No registration or fee, just show up ready to down that lutefisk!



GLACIERS MISSED US.
BE SURE YOU DON'T.

Welcome to Decorah and the Driftless region! Looking for more fun for the whole family? Find more adventure, attractions to experience, restaurants to enjoy, and parks to visit at WWW.VISITDECORAH.COM

Explore Decorah

Drift less.
VISIT MORE.

Canopy 1, 2, and 3 Entertainers



Free performances all weekend long on Water Street! Take a seat on a Nordic Fest bench or bring your own chair to enjoy hearing talent from near and far. *Schedule is subject to change.* Nordic Fest Headquarters, at the Decorah Visitor Center, will post any changes.

BAD DOG 20/20

FRIDAY 8:30 - 11 PM CANOPY 2

Playing the favorites that you love to dance to from Adele to ZZ Top and everything in between! Band members include Tiffany Malanaphy, David Kirkeby, Jill Wilson, Willy J, Ted Wilson, and Mason Lightfoot.



BETH AND BRANDON

SATURDAY 5 - 7 PM CANOPY 2

Forged in the creative fire of the Rural Grit Happy Hour in Kansas City, Beth and Brandon's chemistry is defined by tight vocal harmonies and multi-instrument mastery, bringing a seasoned perspective to the Midwest folk tradition.



CASS MAGPIE

FRIDAY 6 - 7:30 PM CANOPY 3

Cass Magpie — indie folk / pop — is the primary creative project of songwriter, multi-instrumentalist Cassie Brady. The Magpie sound is warm and sweet. Brady's voice gently glides over plucked strings and Ingrid Ogren's violin adds beautiful, melodic texture - optimistic, almost as if to say, "everything is going to be okay."



CLAYTON RYAN & ZANDER

FRIDAY 4:30 - 6 PM CANOPY 1

Minnesota musicians Clayton Ryan and ZANDER deliver an energetic mix of country, rock, and Americana. Drawing on years of touring and thousands of performances, the duo combines strong songwriting, skilled musicianship, and engaging stage presence to create a crowd-pleasing show featuring original music and familiar favorites.



CRATER CITY STRING BAND

SATURDAY 1 - 2:30 PM CANOPY 3

Crater City String Band is a trio of stringers blending the regional tunes of yesteryear and scratching out new folk music for dancing in the streets or sitting back to a ballad. The trio is Brennan Henry, Pat Carey, and Rob Hervey.



DRIFTLESS JAZZ ENSEMBLE

FRIDAY 8 - 10 PM CANOPY 3

A Decorah favorite, the DJE is a collection of Luther College students, alumni, & friends sharing their passion for jazz and improvisation. Expect timeless jazz standard, modern fusion, pop, R&B, funk, and even disco.



EZRA HARMAN-WOOD

SATURDAY 12:30 - 2 PM CANOPY 2

A Decorah local, Ezra has a passion for music. He graduated from Decorah High School this spring and plans to pursue music at Luther College in the fall. Ezra is excited to be back at Nordic Fest!



ENTHEOS ENCLAVE

FRIDAY 3 - 5 PM CANOPY 3

Duluth's own Entheos Enclave blends Nordic-inspired indie, crossover prog, and world music. Featuring complex melodies and cathartic messaging, they create a powerful musical language of its own with Inga's heartfelt vocal style & Richard's classically-influenced guitar.



FOOT-NOTES

FRIDAY 8:30 - 10:30 PM COURTHOUSE SQUARE

SATURDAY 8 - 10 PM CANOPY 3

Decorah's dance band playing music drawn from Norwegian and Scandinavian traditions, filtered through the immigrant American experience. Fiddlers Beth Hoven Rotto and Sophia Rog, guitarist Jon Rotto, mandolin player Erik Sessions, and bassist Nina Sessions play old-time waltz, schottische, polka and two-step songs.. For participants and listeners of all ages!



THE GRASSRUN BLUEGRASS BAND

FRIDAY 12:30 - 2:30 PM CANOPY 3

From La Crosse, WI and Calmar, IA, these friends bring various musical experiences, mutual respect, and creative admiration for one-another on stage, and off. They share vocals and 12 traditional acoustic instruments.



THE NORDIC FEST BEVERAGE GARDEN AND CANOPY 1

Find entertainers highlighted with a blue background at this location on the 500 Block of West Water Street! Ample seating, **family friendly** environment, beverage sales, and easy access to Nordic Fest Headquarters and the Vesterheim Campus. The extra red dashed outline means they are an evening headliner!

Canopy 1, 2, and 3 Entertainers



HELEN JOHNSON

SATURDAY 2:30 - 4:30 PM CANOPY 2

Helen is an emerging singer-songwriter currently based in Minneapolis, MN, and native to Decorah. Her music features modern pop production and elements of rock and is characterized by confessional lyricism and storytelling traditions rooted in country and Americana.



KISMET RENDEZVOUS

SATURDAY 3 - 5 PM CANOPY 3

A coming together of Lonesome Dan Kase and Dawn Tanner, bringing a rich and deep background steeped in country blues, folk, ragtime and Americana. Their music and original songs reflect many influences, their own path, and instrument combinations.



HÜTENNÄNY

SATURDAY 5:30 - 7 PM CANOPY 3

Formed in 2007 in Northfield, MN, this group is always looking to the North for their inspiration. They primarily play old-time dance music from the Nordic countries, but might also throw in a tune from the British Isles, the Shetlands, Canada, or the American Midwest.



A LITTLE TOO SHORT TO BE STORMTROOPERS

SATURDAY 9 - 11:30 PM CANOPY 1

Playing your favorite songs from every genre in the galaxy! Since 2017 this collective of professionals from the Twin Cities has been entertaining crowds with themed shows, live band karaoke, tribute nights, and more. They come to you with a weird name, and a fun time for the whole family.



JACK KLATT TRIO

FRIDAY 6:30 - 8 PM CANOPY 1

Part balladeer and part bluesman, Jack Klatt is a dedicated songwriter and finger-style guitarist based in Minneapolis, MN. His unique sound defies genre with influences that pull from a wide range of American music.



MARIA & THE COINS

SATURDAY 6 - 7:30 PM CANOPY 1

Mixing high energy indie pop and early 2000s-inspired style to bring their listeners big-picture pop anthems, soulful ballads, and driving-with-the-windows-down-belt-your-heart-out bangers. The Minneapolis fivesome have opened for Christina Perri, Papa Roach, Jukebox the Ghost and will soon tour the US with a new EP.



JAMES TUTSON & THE ROLLBACK

FRIDAY 9 - 11:30 PM CANOPY 1

Singer-songwriter James Tutson blends soul, gospel and rock music recounting stories of his life's journey. Raised singing Southern gospel every Sunday, the Iowa musician's emotive vocals have taken him as far as NBC's The Voice.



JAYR BRINK BAND

SATURDAY 8 - 10 PM CANOPY 2

A Driftless Northeast Iowa alt country and folk band, covering everything from John Prine and Stealers Wheel to John Pardi and Matchbox 20.



KATIE & THE HONKY TONKS

THURSDAY 8 - 10:30 PM CANOPY 1

A four-piece original honky tonk band owing its sound to 1960s Nashville. Their songs lean heavy on real stories, catchy hooks, and rhythms built for crowded dance floors. They were named 2025 Iowa Music Awards Country Artist of the Year, and were considered for a Grammy after releasing their debut album, Ain't No Shame. Proof that honky tonk is still here and very much alive.



MARITZA

FRIDAY 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM CANOPY 1

Based in Decorah, Maritza began presenting Balkan, E. European and traditional Jewish Klezmer music in 1997. Their ensemble sings out with violin, accordion, acoustic bass, mandolin, and vocals. Haunting melodies and catchy dance rhythms are Maritza's signature.



MICHAEL MCELRATH

FRIDAY 4 - 5 PM CANOPY 2

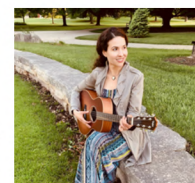
A lifelong singer-songwriter, Michael performs solo as well as with bands and folk groups. He is grateful to continue sharing live music throughout the area and enjoys every minute of it.



MICHELLE PTACEK

FRIDAY 2 - 3:30 PM CANOPY 2

Exploring the history of creativity through storytelling, biography, and original folk music. She transforms true stories from the past into engaging songs, classes, and articles focused on innovators, artists, explorers, and entrepreneurs. Michelle also owns an online education business serving curious, passionate learners. www.michelleptacek.com



Canopy 1, 2, and 3 Entertainers



NORWEGIAN BACHELOR FARMERS

FRIDAY 11:30AM - 1:30 PM CANOPY 2

SATURDAY 12:30 - 1:30 PM CANOPY 1

Kyle and Dave have been entertaining audiences for more than two decades with their eclectic blend of Scandinavian music, humor and storytelling. bit.ly/nbfarmers



PLUM ST JAM

THURSDAY 8 - 10 PM CANOPY 2

Hailing from NE Iowa, this three piece band plays a wide variety of music — including Americana and some really good original tunes, with inspiration from the 60's and 70's.



PONYFOLK

FRIDAY 2:30 - 4 PM CANOPY 1

SATURDAY 4 - 5:30 PM CANOPY 1

Formed in 2014, Ponyfolk is a Minnesota folk collective known for rich harmonies, layered strings, guitars, and synthesizers that create expansive, emotionally evocative soundscapes. Rooted in Americana and Nordic folk traditions, their music blends acoustic intimacy with adventurous textures.



SLIM WHIMSY

FRIDAY 5:30 - 7:30 PM CANOPY 2

Known for their upbeat and conversational sets, Slim Whimsy is a popular local acoustic folk band that frequently plays at venues around Decorah.



TOO OLD CAT

SATURDAY 2 - 3:30 PM CANOPY 1

Too Old Cat plays charming, original folk music that blends traditional and progressive elements. Their tunes for banjo, cello, accordion, and vocals explore themes of friendship, dream space, and how we move through and connect to the world.



Flags at Nordic Fest



NORWAY



SWEDEN



ICELAND



FINLAND



DENMARK



SÁPMI

The Sámi are Northern Europe's only Indigenous people, whose traditional homeland—Sápmi—spans northern Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. Their flag, adopted in 1986, features colors inspired by traditional Sámi clothing and a circle representing the sun and moon.

FUTURE DATES

Nordic Fest always takes place the last full weekend of July!
(July has to continue to Sunday to qualify)

July 22-24, 2027

July 27-29, 2028

July 26-28, 2029

July 25-27, 2030

July 24-26, 2031



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& Co., CPAs



Strength in
numbers with a
personal touch



Nordic Fest 2026 Sponsors & Members



Event Sponsors \$500

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Trial Lawyers for Justice
Viking State Bank & Trust



CANOPY 1

Gallery of Tops
JB Holland Construction
WinnMed



CANOPY 2

Collins Aerospace
Decorah Rental Inc



CANOPY 3

BMO
Decorah Electric, Inc



KIDS ACTIVITIES

Prairie Lakes Church
SERVPRO of Decorah
Vesterheim Norwegian Museum



BAGS TOURNAMENT

Black Hills Energy
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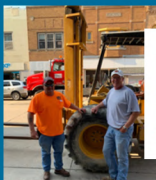
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BECOME A MEMBER OF NORDIC FEST!

Throughout the year, the Nordic Fest Board works to preserve cherished traditions while introducing new entertainment, experiences, and opportunities for all ages. Your membership helps make this possible, ensuring Nordic Fest remains a vibrant celebration for our entire community. Join us in keeping the tradition strong!

Fill out the form online at
www.nordicfest.com
or print it off and mail it to:

Nordic Fest
507 W Water Street, Decorah, IA 52101



Did you know? Nearly one-quarter of Nordic Fest's annual budget is made possible through membership support. Mange takk (many thanks!) to all 2026 members!

Additional Special Events



LUTHER COLLEGE CAMPUS EXHIBIT

PICTURING LUTHER: REMEMBERING PLACE, SPACE, AND THE PASSAGE OF TIME

OPEN DAILY 8 AM - 10 PM

LUTHER COLLEGE DAHL UNION GALLERY

The Luther College campus has long been known for its scenic landscape, historic character, and strong sense of community. This gallery exhibit highlights artworks from the Luther College Fine Arts Collection that depict iconic campus spaces and explore their significance over time, featuring artworks by faculty and alumni, including Norwegian-American artist H. Gausta, O. Running, C. Homestad, and recently acquired Doseff watercolors from the 1920s. The exhibit will also feature archival photographs of student life from different eras, illustrating how these spaces have been used to foster connection, learning, and community across generations.

OUTDOOR TRIVIA

THURSDAY @ 8 PM

IMPACT COFFEE / 101 W WATER STREET

Kick off Nordic Fest with one of Decorah's favorite summer traditions! Join Impact Coffee on Thursday evening for outdoor trivia on Washington Street. Gather your team, test your knowledge, and compete for prizes while enjoying the festive atmosphere downtown.

QUILTS OF VALOR PRESENTATIONS

SATURDAY 2 PM

DECORAH MIDDLE SCHOOL GYMNASIUM / 405 WINNEBAGO ST.

Quilts of Valor is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to cover Service Members and Veterans touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor.

POPSICLES WITH THE PRESIDENT

SATURDAY 4 - 5:30 PM

LUTHER COLLEGE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE, 711 RIDGE ROAD

Join Brad and Julie Chamberlain for popsicles at the President's house! Cool off with a sweet treat, enjoy the company of fellow Nordic Fest goers, and enjoy time with the president. All are welcome!

**Love the Fest?
Help make it the best!
Become a Nordic Fest Volunteer!**

Find opportunities at the 2026 Fest



Yard and Garden Tours

Sponsored by the Decorah Town & Country Garden Club.
Friday: 9AM - Noon. Saturday: 2 - 4 PM. Freewill offering.

ERIN & STORM BAILEY

802 5TH AVENUE, DECORAH

After living in Nottingham, Erin was inspired to create her own English garden in Decorah. She began the project in 2013 and stresses, "It's still a work in progress." They were on the tour in 2017. Come and see the progress that has been made.

LANCE LONEY & SARA AMUNDSON

108 RIVERVIEW DRIVE, DECORAH

After purchasing their home in 2023, Lance and Sara began creating a new back yard garden designed to provide both beauty and functionality. The garden features a mix of perennials, seasonal annuals, and a variety of fruits and vegetables that continue to expand each year. A new patio was installed to create a comfortable outdoor space where the garden can be enjoyed and appreciated throughout the seasons.

NAN & STEVE ST. CLAIR

700 WEST BROADWAY, DECORAH

The St. Clair's 1853 stick house is the backdrop for the crazy quilt garden of color, foliage, hopes, dreams, and experiments. The goal is to have a garden provide blooms all seasons of the year. Whether the garden succeeds or not is always in the eye of the beholder and in the will of the local deer who consider it a place to stop for lunch.

NORDIC FEST IN KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

Nordic Fest gratefully acknowledges individuals, businesses, & organizations that support the Fest through contributions of supplies & services.

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Special thanks to the 900+ volunteers (of all ages!) who give their time, talent, and energy to the Fest!



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