

Volume 174 Hardangerlag & Møre og Romsdalslag & Nordhordland/Sunnhordlandslag & Rogalandslag & Sognalag & Sunnfjordlag&Vosselag Winter 2024

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From your President

I hope you all had a Blessed and Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year. Some of the family had COVID so one of my gatherings was delayed till mid-January. I love to put puzzles together. I made time to put three together at home and another two, visiting my daughter, Laura, and some cousins in Cannon Falls.

My goodness It's been cold outside. I hope we get relief in a week or two. With the cold weather, I will have time to make quilts and do some genealogy.

Since moving to the Wanamingo area, there are many people to meet and get to know. I grew up going to Cannon Falls schools and Urland church so there are a lot of new people to meet. I made plat maps of the cemeteries and did genealogy for the people buried there at Emmanual Lutheran at



President Ann Romo

Aspelund and Wanamingo Lutheran when they had their 150h anniversary. I have several friends from Wanamingo Lutheran in my Friday Bible study. By doing the genealogy, I am getting to know a lot of family lines of the people that lived in these areas.

It's too bad that COVID caused many churches to stop serving lutefisk dinners. Some have started up again, but a couple serve take-out only. But I like my lutefisk hot so would rather not have take-out. Some churches limit the number they can serve and ask for preregistration and payment, so you need to decide early and register before they fill up. In Rochester, Whistle Binkies on the Lake (south end of town) serve lutefisk to the public, usually the first Wednesday in December, and at Whistle Binkies Olde World Pub the next Wednesday (north end of town). They do a wonderful job, but I think you get more lutefisk if you get individual plates, not served family style. I went with friends the first week to the south restaurant and with my two daughters, the second week to the north one. My husband Lars and I used to go to 4-6 dinners a year, to Kenyon, Kasson, Blooming Prairie, Preston, Zumbrota, even to Nelson, Wisconsin. The

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fish was always good. Some served corn instead of rutabagas, some served pie instead of Norwegian bakings, etc but we loved them all.

We still tie quilts at church for our WMF (Women's Missionary Federation). I have so much fabric, I will try to make 20+ quilts, some twin, full, throw and baby quilts. I have four ready and ten tops done. I need to iron them, find backs for them and then layer them to get ready for our two days of tying them at church. I made twelve throws before Christmas, with Christmas or winter designs, some for gifts and sold a few to friends for gifts to grandkids. I hope my sewing machines hold up. I have a great repairman in Cannon Falls to take to them to. My serger machines get out of tension and then I need to take them in sometimes.

I have been working on arranging things for the stevne. I met with the church council at Urland Lutheran Church where our stevne will be held. They sounded very positive about the meeting. I hope we can get a few new members. Urland's roots are from Aurland in Sognefjord, Norway, the middle of Vestlandslag area

Hilsen Ann Romo



Fellesraad Update January 2024

We continue in weekly meetings with Norway House regarding the design and content for the new Haugo Bibliotek. Research materials, including bygdebøker, that have been donated by individuals and also shared by Lags, will all be cataloged and placed in the special collections area of the Haugo Bibliotek. They will be tightly monitored!

Sharing Bygdelag materials with Norway House will bring visibility to our individual Lags. That is

needed to sustain and foster the growth of our organization. So, it is the long-range vision that we are looking at - for both Bygdelag and Norway House. Do you have bygdebøker which you no longer use or need? Or do you have duplicates that could either be donated or shared with the Haugo Bibliotek? We want your Lag represented. Shared Lag items can be taken out for use at your Stevne, as you retain ownership of them. This is intended to be a mutually beneficial agreement for both the Bygdelag and Norway House, and our way to share our knowledge and passion for our Norwegian ancestors!

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Urland Church Cannon Falls, MN

The 2024 stevne will be held at the Urland Church in Cannon Falls, MN. It is an area and a church with a strong Norwegian heritage. Make plans to attend. We are planning 2 days of lectures and other activities and a morning (Saturday) where the individual bygdelag meet. The newsletter will have the schedule, the bios, and other information in this issue, and the spring issue planned for early April.

We are no longer holding the stevne in a hotel, but accommodations can be found within 8-16 miles of the Urland Church. See the list of available hotels in this issue and the distance to the stevne location.

The board is working on lining up speakers and entertainment for Thursday and Friday.

Storyteller Pati Kachel of the Parable Fund

For Thursday evening's entertainment we have asked Pati Kachel to come tell stories. She tells a variety of stories, and we have asked her to share the story she has titled

"Ya Sure, I'm a Norvegin Luteran"

In this program, Pati shares captivating stories honoring her heritage as a Norwegian Lutheran. With songs, humor and historical information, she tells

(Continued from page 2)

tales of her pioneer ancestor's immigration from Norway to their Minnesota homestead near Paynesville. She has performed this show at The Mindekirken, numerous Sons of Norway lodges and countless Lutheran churches around the Midwest. Pati is a charter member of the Pauline Fjelde Daughters of Norway Lodge #51 of Minneapolis. She was honored to be a featured presenter at their National Convention. Do even Norwegian bachelor farmers enjoy this show? *Ya sure, you betcha!*



About Pati:
Pati Kachel loves
God, His people
and His Holy
Word... and she
loves to tell stories
about all of them!

Pati inspires listeners through stories and programs about the abundant life found in Jesus Christ. She entertains audiences in churches, retreat centers, conference centers, schools,

libraries, living rooms, homeschool co-ops, camps, senior residences, hospitals, universities, prisons, coffeehouses, tea rooms and bookstores. Pati has traveled extensively, having presented story programs and songs from Pittsburgh to Seattle and throughout the Midwest. Internationally, she has performed in Canada, the Netherlands and Germany.

Memorable and meaningful, Pati's stories are humorous, heartwarming and above all, Christ-focused. She simply shares heart-to-heart through storytelling, singing, teaching and testimony. She creatively incorporates an appreciation for music, literature, poetry and travel into these programs. Pati carefully weaves words and imagery to draw listeners into her stories. With a few simple stage props, colorful hats and costumes, she keeps spectators fully engaged. Audiences easily receive her gentle voice and joyful spirit.

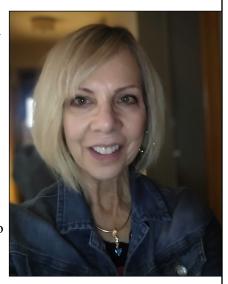
For over 3 decades, this nationally known performer has belonged to *Salt of the Earth Storytellers*, an ecumenical fellowship of Biblical storytellers. She is also a founding member of the Twin Cities based *Story Arts of Minnesota*, which promotes the craft of storytelling and supports performers to develop as creative artists.

Sandra Bestland

SPEDALSKHED: Leprosy in 19th-Century Norway

Sandra is 86percent Nordic and lives in the Twin Cities. She earned her BA in English literature at Hamline University, and an MBA at the University of St. Thomas.

She left her career in industrial manufacturing to join a dance company. A dance highlight was per-



forming solo at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco. She enjoys adventure travel. She marked the historic event of Henry Morton Stanley "finding" Dr. Livingstone by hiking two months along an arduous route through Tanzania. Prior to that, she spent six months hiking and backpacking out West, ending up in Alaska via the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. In 2001, she married a Brit named Bill. Together they traveled to Costa Rica, the Caribbean, Iceland, and all five countries in the UK. During the pandemic, she and her cat-loving husband acquired a farm rescue cat named Kong. (Kong means King in Norwegian.) Kong is Sandra's first pet.

Sandra is proud of her Norwegian heritage and enjoys researching any and all things related to Norwegian culture. Her Norwegian great-great-grandparents, Even and Gurie, arrived in America in 1844. Gurie was the daughter of an Eidsvollmann. Even served in the American Civil War and marched with Sherman to the sea. Sandra began researching the high incidence of leprosy in 19th-century Norway after discovering a handwritten graph on digitalarkivet. In May 2023, Sandra toured Norway for the first time. Her first stop was Eidsvoll 1814 where her ancestor signed the Norwegian Constitution. Her last stop was the lepramuseet (the leprosy museum) in Bergen.

Sandra is a member of Agderlag, Numedalslågen Lag, Norway House, Synnove-Nordkap Lodge, and

Vesterheim. She is currently the editor of *Agderlag Avisen*. Most Tuesday mornings you will find her enjoying the company of other Norwegian-Americans at Mindekirken Tuesday Open House.

Grace Eddy A year at Sunnhordland Folkehøgskule



Grace received the Vestlandslag language scholarship (see page 9) last year and will share about her experience at Sunnhordland Folkehøgskule. Grace lives in Lakeville, MN, and graduated from Lakeville North High School in 2023. She has been spending a gap year at a

school in Norway this school year studying art.

Hakon Torjesen

A Norwegian Refugee from China

Hakon was born in Kristiansand, Norway to missionary parents. When he was 4 months old the fam-



ily returned to China where he grew up. He and several family members spent 3 years in a Japanese prison camp from 1942 to 1945. In late 1945 the family came to the US. Hakon attended Trinity Bible School and the University of Minnesota. He served three years in the US Army. Following this, he was an announcer for WCCO. Then he entered the US diplomatic service and spent time in Laos, Kenya and Washington, D.C. In the late 80s he became the Executive Director of the Center for International Health at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. He retired in 1993 and has been organic farming near Kenyon, Minnesota since then. He was a co-founder of Minnesota International Health Volunteers (now Well Share) and of Health Frontiers. He is a member of the Kenyon American Legion, Kenyon Color Guard, and Kenyon Sons of Norway.

Karla Brown

Travel Back in Time to Norway in 1908

Karla Brown has lived in Decorah since 2016 after a career teaching English, first in high schools and then 32 years at Hawkeye Community College in Waterloo.

While working at Vesterheim Museum, Karla gained more interest in her Norwegian heritage, particularly because of growing up in what had been the house of her great-great-aunt, Elise Sandager Hoiness.



In 1908, Elise and her husband Andrew Hoiness took a 2 ½ month trip to Norway to visit his parents; Karla has letters from that trip that Elise wrote to her sister Emma in Calmar, Iowa, as well as postcards sent to Emma and other family. Using the visuals from the postcards and the content of the letters, this talk takes attendees on a trip back in time to experience that 1908 trip.

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Denny Kalvig

Denny Kalvig will give a lecture on genealogy research. The title is still TBD.



Denny retired from Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT) as Senior IT Manager nearly ten years ago and is now living in Richfield, MN. He volunteers as treasurer of the Minnesota Genealogical Society. Denny has just become treas-

urer of Vestlandslag and holds offices in four other bygdelags (president of Rogalandslag, vicepresident of Sunnhordland/Nordhordland and genealogist of Sognalag). With all ancestral lines coming from Norway, that is his main area of research. He enjoys helping people get started on their Norway research.

Gamle-Johannes på Prærien

By Anders Ohnstad From the book "Aurland Mellom Fjell og Fjord"

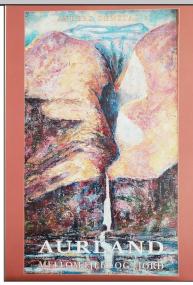
Old-Johannes on the prairie had a large family in America.

A family story spanning 250 years

Inger Arnesdotter Ohnstad and the oldest son, Johannes, encountered great difficulties when the man of the farm lost his life in 1826 in an accident, and the wife was left behind with eight children. It helped that the oldest boy Johannes was 20 years old when the father, Ole Jonsen, fell off Langeskoradn and lost his life. Inger had lost her father, Arne Jonsen, in 1823. He came from the bailiff's farm and was the son of Jon Rognaldsen, who was married to Gunhild Hallsteinsgard from Hol in Hallingdal.

In my youth, there were several older neighbors at Onstad with good memories and could tell stories of their parents, and then we were able to go back all the way to 1784 when Inger Arnesdotter was born. As a small girl during the 1790s, Inger had experienced the Inn during its best years. It looked well in 1803 when she married Ole Jonsen. She had heard of terrible wars in Europe, where Napoleon was the big name.

But soon Norway would also experience that our country was



pulled into the big war. Inger and Ole's oldest son was born in 1806, just before the arrival of war with deprivation and hunger in 1807 through 1814, the period was frequently called "the years of need," when people experienced bark bread (They ground the finest of the elm bark and mixed it with the flour).

The year 1812 was the worst year, and in 1813 a great monetary crash took place. Arne's brother, Jens, was a merchant with a lot of money, now without value, and with no farm. He became totally broke. What saved him was that he was married at Anfinset in Hol.

There are still legends and stories about these years, when fishing in rivers and the fjord was a help along with what they caught in the mountains. In this way people here in the area were somewhat better situated than people in the east of Norway when the grain froze, and the North Sea was closed by the English. It was not easy to be on your own with so many children as Inger had in 1826.

Her oldest boy, Johannes (b. 1806) had to take over the farm. He married as soon as 1828, and it helped that he got a good wife in Marta Guttormsdotter Otternes (1802-1870). She was a little older than Johannes and came from a good family. The people at Guttormgarden were capable and did well, probably of good help for the widow Inger with her large family, and for Marta and Johannes who now ran the farm.

It looks like they did well and had the farm for a little over 30 years. Marta died in 1870. Johannes had both a sister and two daughters who had emigrated to America. They wrote to Johannes and said: "Do not sit there at home in poverty. Come to us, then

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you will get a farm which is bigger than the whole of Onstad." Inger died in 1864, and when Marta also passed away in 1870, Johannes accepted the offer from America and went across the ocean in a sailboat.

On the boat they had a goat, so the two youngest had access to fresh milk.

The relatives of Johannes had settled in the Red River Valley and Johannes was well received there. The sister, Kristian, was married to Skaffar-Mons in 1850. We have a good picture of those two. There are many, both in America and in Aurland, who can trace their roots back to Johannes (Old Joans on the Prairie) and his parents, Inger and Ole.

Translated by Brit Eddy and reprinted with permission. The story can be found on page 22 of the book. Anders Ohnstad (1911-2007) was a Norwegian historian and author, who grew up on a farm in Aurland, Sogn. His books are mainly about local history and genealogy in Indre Sogn.

Welcome to New Members:

Vosselag:

Bonnie Larson, Bothell WA

Sognalag:

Kathryn Vanney, St Paul MN Jennifer Nathem, Sisseton SD Ann Grandy, Glenwood MN Carol Spencer, St George, UT Linda Stromberg - Toronto, ON Karla Brown, Decorah, IA

Møre og Romsdalslag:

Kathryn Vanney, St Paul MN Jeri Johnson, Bethel MN Linda Stromberg - Toronto, ON

Nordhordlandslag:

Jennifer Nathem, Sisseton SD Sheri Volbrecht, Sioux Falls SD Linda Stromberg - Toronto, ON

Sunnhordland:

Betsy Malcom Crumley, Anderson SC Linda Stromberg - Toronto, ON

Rogalandslag:

Jeri Johnson, Bethel MN Jill Hanson, Melrose MN Daniel Clifford Olson, Golden CO Betsy Malcom Crumley - Anderson SC Joyce Burnison, Humboldt NE Carol Clark, Greenfield, MA

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319.351.7717 ruth-christ@uiowa.edu;

Jean Marthaler (above)

Hardangerlag Officer Update:

The contact information for the Hardangerlag treasurer has been missing:

Kyle Monson:

Email: krmony5@gmail.com

Phone: 608-807-6548

New Vestlandslag Treasurer:

After 7 1/2 years as the Vestlandslag Treasurer, Don Teigen retired in January this year. Don took on the office of treasurer in the summer of 2015. Thank you, Don, for your many years of service.

We welcome Dennis Kalvig on the Vestlandslag board as the new treasurer.

Hotels for the Stevne 2024

Hotels w/stevne deals:

Caravan Motel Cannon Falls, MN 31913 64th Ave, Cannon Falls, MN 507-263-4777—8 miles \$120/ night,

Only 3 rooms held till March 1st!

America's Best Value Inn- Zumbrota 1435 Northstar Dr, Zumbrota 507-732-7852—13 miles 1 queen \$70/night or 2 queens \$88/night Held till day used Continental breakfast available

Coratel Inn & Suites By Jasper 1420 Riverview Dr, Northfield, MN 55057 507-663-0371—16 miles Double or King \$80/night Held till 4/12/2024 Continental breakfast available

To get the above stevne deals, mention that your are with the Vestlandslag.

Other hotels in area:

Grand Stay Cannon Falls 507-479-2834 Available only Wednesday /Thursday \$135+/night AAA, AMAC, AARP may have discounts

Americinn by Wyndham 1320 Bollenbacher Dr, Northfield 507-645-7767 \$130 - \$175/night AAA, AMAC, AARP may have discounts

Country Inn & Suites by Radisson 300 Hwy 3 South, Northfield 507-645-2286 \$160 - \$250/night AAA, AMAC, AARP may have discounts

Update from Sunnhordland Folkehøgskule

By Brit Eddy, editor, & Grace Eddy

My granddaughter, Grace Eddy, is still at Sunnhord-land Folkehøgskule. For Christmas, her mother, Ann Margrith Eddy, flew over to Norway to spend Christmas with her. She first joined Grace at the school, and then the two of them headed to Trøndelag to celebrate Christmas with family. I am sharing a few photos my daughter took during the days she was at the school.



The school has a statue of Knut Markhus (1878-1963). He was the headmaster or principal when the school was started in 1914. During WWII, he was fired by the Nazis from his office as the Hordaland Education Director, but they begrudgingly "allowed" him to become headmaster of the folkehøgskule as they badly needed someone to fill this position. The previous headmaster had become ill.

The surrounding area offers interesting hikes. You can hike to "Verdens Ende" (The end of the world)., visit old viking graves and cloister ruins. Since the island is located quite far out towards the ocean, there is not much snow and any that comes, does not stay long, so it was



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a treat for Grace to be able to go skiing during Christmas in Trøndelag.



Viking graves



The school put on exhibits and programs for the families of the students before they left for the Christmas vacation. The international students, eight in all, sang a Norwegian Christmas song which my daughter shared with me as a video. They did a good



job with the language and pronounciation. They are clearly learning to pronounce the Norwegian words. For the month of January, the school takes a break from the regular classes and have the students focus on four bigger projects.

Grace writes:

In early December the teachers presented the four projects: a theater group to put on the show "Kompani Orheim," a virtual reality game called Koi Punch, a street art project called Frivo Box, and a documentary of the other three projects. I chose the documentary project. We have two different teachers; a guest teacher who is knowledgeable in the use of cameras and could help push us in the right direction when we get stuck. She comes once a week. There are five of us in the group and one person is the dedicated editor. He takes all the videos and pictures that we take throughout the week and creates a video that goes on our YouTube Channel.

I chose the documentary group because I wanted to try something with filming and something new to me. It has been fun. My day is very low key. I start my day with a morning assembly where they just ask if anyone is sick and then we all meet up in our classroom. When we get to the classroom, we wait about 10 minutes for all the other classes to start and then go out to take videos and pictures, continuing after lunch. Once dinner comes along, I download all the photos on my computer and convert the images to PNG and the videos to MP4 for our editor. Converting the images and videos takes close to an hour and half to two hours and then I create a post for Instagram with a quick description about the day.

The three groups that we are documenting are going on a tour at the end of the project. The acting group is going to another school to put on their performance of Kompani Orheim, Koi Punch will be showing their game outside of Bergen, and the Frivo Box street art group will be traveling to Bergen to put up their art. Each group will have at least one person from the documentary group along to take pictures. We will be putting the photos on Instagram.

When all the tours are done the school will go back to a normal schedule. I go back to my art class to work on an exhibition of our own work. In February each art student is making their own artwork that they are passionate about and has no prompt or over lying theme. We will have an exhibit of the artwork in mid-February. February will end with a school trip to Berlin, Germany and a two week long winter holiday.

ordland

roms

New Counties / Fylkeskommuner January 1, 2024

Trøndelag

Innlandet

kershus

Østfold

Buskerud

Telemark

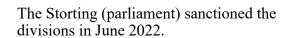
Agder

In 2018 Sør-Trøndelag and Nord-Trøndelag merged into one fylke or fylkeskommune, Trøndelag. In 2020, several other fylkeskommuner (counties) followed suit, reducing the number of counties to 11. Some of these changes had been forced upon the people by the government. The result was a few huge counties with large distances from one end to the other.

As of the fall of 2021, the fylkeskommuner who were forced to merge were given permission to separate. Three fylkeskommuner sought permission to separate or divorce (Troms of Finnmark, Viken, and Vestfold og Telemark).

Møre og Romsdal

Rogaland



innmark

Changing the configuration of a fylkeskommune is a big and costly undertaking. The government has provided compensation totaling 795 million NOK. The result is that Troms og Finnmark are reverting to two fylker by their original names. Viken reverts to Buskerud, Akershus, and Østfold. Vestfold and Telemark becomes Vestfold and Telemark again. There are now 15 counties in Norway.

A fylkeskommune is made up of kommuner, the next smaller municipal unit. Ten large kommuner were created through enforced merging in 2020. One of these kommuner, Ålesund, was split in 2024, with Haram leaving Ålesund. Ålesund and Haram are located in Møre og Romsdal fylkeskommune. The big commune, Ålesund, was created by the merging of five kommuner: Ålesund, Skodie, Ørskog, Sandøy, and Haram. Haram was forced to merge with Ålesund commune. The remaining four merged voluntarily. As with splitting a fylkeskommune, the cost is high for a commune also and Ålesund is asking for monetary assistance from the government to offset the cost. Haram elected new commune representatives in a 2023 elec-

Vestland fylkeskommune remains unchanged.

Sources: regjeringen.no and nrk.no

Oslo

Vestfold

Language Camp Scholarship

To promote and preserve Norwegian culture in present and future generations, Vestlandslag offers a scholarship to help a student attend a Norwegian language camp.

Two scholarships will be awarded for 2024. The student must be between 10 and 18 years of age and have a parent, grandparent, or great-grandparent who is a member in good standing in Vestlandslag. (Membership valid through 2024)

The scholarship offered will pay up to half the fee of the camp, but not to exceed \$200.

The student should describe their personal interest in Norwegian culture, tell what they hope to learn at camp and describe any previous Norwegian language camp experience via a short essay.

The choice of camp may be resident or day camp as long as Norwegian language and culture are the main focus. Established camps: Masse Moro , Fall Creek, WI (https://www.massemoro.org), Skogfjorden near Bemidji, MN

(http://www.concordialanguagevillages.org), and Norwegian Ridge Language and Culture Camp in Spring Grove, MN (http://norwegianridge.org), are examples of such camps.

After attending Norwegian language camp, the student is asked to share their camp experience with Vestlandslag with an essay or an interview for an article with photo in the newsletter. The student is also welcome to give a personal appearance or video at the stevne (if timing is appropriate).

Questions? Contact Judy Ghastin @ 920.450.3584 or judy62ghastin@gmail.com.

Middleton, WI 53562

Applicant Name			Date of Birth/					
Street								
City				Zip				
Phone	e-mail							
Parents Name								
Street								
City								
Phone	e-mail							
Name of Sponsor								
Street								
City				Zip				
Phone	e-mail							
Sponsor's lag membership:		lag □Nordhordlar □Sunnfjordla						
Language Camp:			Dat	es//	2024—	/	_/202	
Contact								
Street								
City								
Phone	e-mail							
Cost: \$								
On a separate sheet of paper tel	ll us about your in	terest in Norwegia	an language a	and culture. V	Vhat expe	rience ł	nave y	

From the Editor

It is that time again where the planning for the stevne is happening. Hopefully, you are also planning your year and marking the stevne dates on your calendar, along with making plans to attend.

Next on my calendar is a trip to Norway in mid-February. Grace (see article on Sunnhordland folkehøgskule) turns 19 and I promised to come celebrate with her. It will be a few days after the day, but that is fine with her. I need to go when she has her winter holiday. The breaks are longer than she used to have in the US; two weeks for winter break and then a long Easter holiday a month later.

Keep sharing articles with me. The email address and the snail mail address can be found on both the front page and the last page.

Beste hilsen Brit Eddy

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January 15

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Stevne

June 13-15, 2024 Urland Church 6940 County 9 Blvd Cannon Falls, MN

