

# Return of A Native Son

By Raymond Aasen

This winter I had the pleasure to visit Norway where I grew-up as a youngster. For me it was a real skiing vacation with plenty of snow and cold weather. Skiing is very big there, and you meet people of all ages from toddlers to real oldsters out on the slopes. I also met and had the chance to talk and visit with many old friends and new friends and family.

There are so many changes since I was a youngster. The country seems so peaceful, prosperous and modern. Of course, after the oil discovery in the North Sea, I am sure opportunity brought a lot of wealth to Norway. The young people I met are taking out loans and building their homes and future, thinking that this wave of prosperity is going to last forever. There is, however, a lot of talk about heating taxes and social benefits, but as a whole, it doesn't seem like the Norwegians would go back to the "old days." They are really accepting of their strong social security system, including universal medical care, pensions for all their citizens. They all seem to believe that all Norwegians, young and old deserve a good life, including the most conservative citizens among them.

Well, may be it's easy for them to say that now when year after year, they produce a positive national budget.

Both spouses usually work in the average Norwegian family. They have very nice houses or apartments with all the very modern conveniences and appliances. The young children all attend day care centers where there are ample times or opportunities for both play and learning.

The Norwegians seem to have grown closer to America. At least 50% speak English, and a lot of their music is American. Their public transit system is excellent and modern, but every year there are more cars on the road. Most of the songs on the radio are American, but I think that's a mistake, as I would like to hear the Norwegian music and songs when I am over there.

The passion of the people of Norway is definitively of the great outdoors. They love the mountains, the sea and the forest. In their free time, they bike, jog, swim, hike and do other sports like soccer, and of course ski. On a typical week-end you meet old and young on the ski slopes or in the summer hiking the mountains or sailing the seas. I am certain, because I spent my childhood in Norway I have learned to love the Great Outdoors and also the outside sports.

Ray Aasen, his children and grandchildren have made their lives in Lansing.



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## Swim/Walk-A-Thon May 17 To Raise \$\$ To Build A Handicap Access Pool Ramp

A portable step ramp to ease access to the swimming pool for those with mobility problems, may soon become a reality thanks to a SWIM/WALK-A-THON being held this Saturday from 9-noon at Lansing High.

Designed earlier this year by Lansing High School art and technology students, the step ramp will make it easier for senior citizens and those with physical handicaps to make use of the pool for therapeutic and recreational use.

Participants will get sponsor pledges

and swim for up to 80 laps or walk for up to 10 miles to transform the pledges into donations. Additional support is coming from the Town of Lansing Recreation Dept and the Healthy Heart Program of Tompkins County.

### Motorcycles on Display

Local members of the Gold Wing Road Riders Association will be on hand on Sunday, May 18th at Pyramid Mall, Lansing to display their motorcycles and discuss motorcycle touring as a family activity.

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