

# Fjalla Blað



## 2019 ICA Parade Grand Marshal: Rosa Thorfinnson



Rosa Kristjanson Thorfinnson, a longtime resident of Mountain was selected Grand Marshal for the annual 'Deuce of August' celebration this year. She is honored, to say the least!

Rosa grew up in Thingvalla Township in a home where Icelandic was fluently spoken by her parents Kristbjorg Jonsdottir Arnason and Sigurbjorn 'Barney' Kristjanson. Rosa attended Mayville State Teachers college and taught at Eyford West School, North Star (both schools), Gardar and later Mountain. She married Richard Thorfinnson, another Icelander from Mountain, and they raised 5 children in Mountain. When they needed some privacy from their children, their conversations often resorted to the Icelandic language! She had the challenge, or rather the joy, of teaching two of her children in grade school in Mountain. For several years, as Dick served as mayor of Mountain, Rosa served as his 'personal secretary' but she admitted the pay wasn't that good!

She is a lifelong member of the Vikur Lutheran Church and also participated in the Mountain Vikur LCW for many years. Rosa was one of the founding members of the Mountain Chalet Café. In 1976, her efforts to secure government grants helped to fund the conversion of the former Mountain schoolhouse into a café and helped launch the community café we enjoy so much today. Today, that café is located in the new Mountain Community Center and is the hub of the community.

Now, a soon-to-be 93 year old, Rosa resides in Parkwood Assisted Living in Grand Forks, ND.



Kris, Barry, Rosa, Loretta, Roxane and Craig

## Honorary Parade Marshals: Sigrún and Baldur Sigurdson



Sigrun and Baldur Sigurdson were lifelong residents of Pembina county. They were quiet and kind people, always ready to lend a hand when there were family or friends in need.

Sigrun was the 12<sup>th</sup> child of Geirmundur B. and Thordis Davíðsdóttir Olgeirson who came from Iceland as children. She and her twin brother Bjorn (#13) were born at home (now known as the Big Yellow House) with the assistance of the local nurse/midwife Gunna Olgeirson. She grew up with her brothers Einar, Barney, Robert, Dave and of course Bjorn (the girls Anna, Betty, Aurora, Gudrun, Sigurbjorg, Jona and Lilja were all older and some were grown and married by the time Sigrun and Bjorn came along), so she learned how to hunt squirrels with a .22 with her brothers, picked prairie flowers, learned to bake bread when she was 12, raked hay with a team of horses as a teenager and helped deliver a neighbor's baby (Carol Jonasson) when she was in her early 20's. She played piano for dances at the Eyford Hall to accompany The Cow Killers, a band made up of local would be musicians. She often sang with her brother Bjorn at community events.

Baldur's parents were Halgrímur 'Grimsi' and Olóf Kristjánsdóttir Halldorson Sigurdson; his grandparents Sigurður and Kristin Thorsteinsdóttir Kraksson came from Iceland and homesteaded the family farm in 1889. An only child, Baldur grew up with cousins Sam Sigurdson and Christine Sigurdson who came to live at the farm after their mother passed away. He walked to high school in Mountain and graduated from Mountain High in 1933. He worked for Tommy Jordan Construction doing bridge work in Minnesota, then was drafted into the US Army in July 1941. He landed at Utah Beach, D-day +9 or +10 and marched across Europe during World War II, eventually taking part in the Battle of the Bulge. He earned a Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster for maintaining radio communications during a difficult battle. He was discharged September 1945.

Sigrun and Baldur were married at the parsonage in Mountain in November, 1945. They started life together in a little 15'x15' house that Baldur and his uncle Kjartan moved down from the hills up west. They raised 3 daughters Judith, Kathleen, and Susan. They were members of Thingvalla Lutheran Church where they sang in the choir, then later attended Vikur Lutheran Church. Sigrun was a charter member of the Borg Auxiliary and spent many hours volunteering in the beauty shop and baking for the Borg Bazaar. Baldur was on the school board of the Mountain School and a 50+year member of the Bjornson-Sigfusson American Legion Post. He drove school bus for the Edinburg School district for 10 years. They loved having family gatherings and especially enjoyed watching their grandchildren grow up.

The 'kids' and grandkids of this beloved 'Amma & Afi' are so proud that they are being honored in this way. Takk fyrir....

## Message from Curtis Olafson, ICA President:

Greetings to all of our friends and supporters! We are marking an incredible milestone this year, not only for the Icelandic Communities Association, but for our communities and our region. We will be celebrating the **120<sup>th</sup> Annual Deuce of August Celebration!** Our event has been known by more than one name over the years including “2<sup>nd</sup> of August Celebration” and “August the Deuce” and the events scheduled have evolved over time and continue to evolve, but the Icelandic communities in our region have always been steadfast in continuing this great event. **Mark your calendars now for this year’s edition of “The Deuce“ which will be held August 1st through the 4th!**

We are proud to announce our Parade Marshal for this year is Rosa Thorfinnson and our Honorary Parade Marshals are Baldur and Sigrun Sigurdson. They are all very deserving of being honored!

We are also proud to announce that we will be honored to welcome Iceland’s Minister of Education, Science and Culture, Lilja D. Alfreðsdóttir, to our 120th Celebration. Prior to assuming her current position in the Cabinet, she was the former Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade, and is also a member of Parliament. It has been very humbling to have had our annual event be a destination point for so many high level officials of the government of Iceland over the years.

We will be planning a schedule similar to previous years, but as always, we try to bring in some new and exciting “stuff“ to pique your interest. Some *new additions* this year include (see schedule)

- A Viking encampment complete with a simulated Viking battle.*
- Moore Icelandic Goodies will be serving Icelandic foods, after many years of devoted service by the Akra Snack Shack.*
- A highly acclaimed Native American Dance group from Arizona-the Yellow Bird Dancers at the Heritage Program*
- About a dozen more very high powered pullers for our Tractor Pull which will make this by far our biggest and most exciting show ever.*



It is always a great honor to welcome our friends from Iceland who attend the Celebration every year, and this year will be no exception. We have a tour group of about 53 guests coming from Iceland, led by a great friend of the ICA, Jónas Þór, who just visited our area in June leading a youth choir. I would encourage all of “the locals” attending the Celebration to make an effort to personally welcome our guests and show them some good old fashioned North Dakota hospitality. There will be many opportunities to do that, especially during the Saturday afternoon Heritage Program and the Saturday evening Icelandic Communities International Fellowship Supper, with both events held in the comfort of the fabulous Mountain Community Center.

Take advantage of a unique opportunity to research your roots at the Genealogy Center, sponsored by Icelandic Roots, <https://www.icelandicroots.com/> The Center will be open on Thursday through Saturday in the Mountain Community Center, with some special presentations planned during the weekend. In addition to the events celebrating our rich Icelandic heritage, history and culture, many other events are scheduled that will appeal to one and all, old and young. There will be a very popular Fish Fry on Friday night sponsored by the Mountain American Legion, and a new event-a “Free Stage” on Main Street for folks who would like to showcase their talent. Saturday begins with the most popular and well-attended event of all-the Big Parade, and the day wraps up with a Street Dance featuring the very popular band, “The Front Fenders” with a huge fireworks show after dark. Sunday’s highlights are a Sunday morning worship service, followed by the North Dakota State Tractor and Pickup Pull. It’s going to be our biggest and best show ever!

For updates and more information, keep an eye on the August the Deuce Facebook page and on our website at <http://thedeuce.org/>

# 120<sup>th</sup> Annual Deuce of August Icelandic Celebration

## Árið tvö þúsund og nítján (2019)

### Mountain, North Dakota

*“Hvað er svo glatt  
sem góðra vina fundur?”*



*“What is as joyful as a  
gathering of good friends?”*

#### Thursday, August 1st

1:00 PM **Genealogy Center-Mountain Community Center 1-4 PM**-Sponsored by Icelandic Roots  
<https://www.icelandicroots.com/>  
1-1:30 PM Genealogy Tips 1:30-4 PM Free access to IR database (bring wi-fi phone, tablet, or laptop)

#### Friday, August 2nd

1:00 PM **Genealogy Center-Mountain Community Center 1-4 PM**  
4:30 PM **Special presentation on emigration travels by Cathy Josephson, East Iceland Emigration Center-MCC**  
5:00 PM **Mountain Legion Fish Fry-Main Street**  
7:00 PM **Free stage 7-9 PM** Check out the August the Deuce Facebook page for details

#### Saturday, August 3rd

10:30 AM **Parade-Main Street-Parade will be broadcast live on KXPO AM 1340**  
**Souvenir Sales-On Main Street Moore Icelandic Goodies--on Main Street**  
11:00 AM **Vikur Salad Luncheon-Vikur Church basement**  
11:00 AM **Genealogy Center-Mountain Community Center-11:00 AM-4 PM**  
12 Noon **Storm Wolves Vikings-East side of Mountain Community Center 12 Noon-4 PM**  
12 Noon **Car Show and Shine-Main Street**  
12 Noon **Kid's Inflatable Games-North end of Main Street from 12:00 Noon-4 PM**  
12:30 PM **Pedal Tractor Pull for Kids-Main Street**  
2:00 PM **Heritage Program-Mountain Community Center-Keynote Speaker-Iceland Minister of Education, Science and Culture, Lilja D. Alfreðsdóttir**  
Entertainment by “Yellow Bird Dancers” Arizona Native Dance Group  
5:30 PM **Icelandic Communities International Fellowship Supper-Mountain Community Center**  
9:00 PM **Street Dance- “Front Fenders” Main Street of Mountain. Huge fireworks show after dark**

#### Sunday, August 4th

11:00 AM **Worship Service-Vikur Church-Catered Brunch to follow-Mountain Chalét Café**  
1:00 PM **North Dakota State Tractor & Pickup Pulling Contest-West of Mountain Community Center**  
12 Additional high horsepower pullers have been added-our biggest and best show ever!  
2:00 PM **125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service-Fjalla Lutheran Church**

Moore Icelandic Goodies will be available during the Saturday morning events and will fry fresh Kleinurs on Saturday night. The Souvenir Booth will also be selling Icelandic hard fish and Raffle Tickets for the cash raffle-prizes of \$1,000 and \$500 will be awarded at the Tractor Pull on Sunday, August 4th.

**Parade Marshal: Rosa Thorfinnson**

**Honorary Parade Marshals: Baldur & Sigrún Sigurdson**



Follow us on Facebook at “August the Deuce” for instant updates! Visit our website at: [www.thedeuce.org](http://www.thedeuce.org)



## The Vikings are coming!!!: The Storm Wolves

There will be a new event at the celebration this year—a small Viking encampment featuring a regional Viking group called the Storm Wolves. Their purpose is to demonstrate Viking combat and to give the audience a look at what a real Viking would have worn and been equipped with, at least in the western raids. They will also demonstrate 3 simple games of the era : a tug of war with a leather pelt, a spear toss and catch, and maybe jumping off a board set on a log (a test of balance and concentration). The fight demonstrations will consist of a demo of each weapon. They will also do a couple competitive fights and shield walls.



## Youth Choir from Iceland Perform Concert At Vikur Church



The Graduale Futuri Youth Choir, conducted by Rósa Jóhannesdóttir performed a concert at the Vikur Church on Saturday, June 15th. The group performed both choral and instrumental pieces that were enjoyed by the audience. The group was bound for Winnipeg, where they also performed at the Jon Sigurdsson Day celebrations on June 17th. The group was a part of a tour coordinated by Jónas Þór.

## Homemade Icelandic Treats are Back!!! Moore Icelandic Goodies!

If you've been dreaming of some of your favorite Icelandic goodies, your dream is about to come true! This year we will have the Tom & Rose Moore family (kids, grandkids, in-laws, outlaws, etc) serving up **Moore Icelandic Goodies** on Saturday morning in the area where the Snack Shack has been. And, I've heard it from a very good source (Rose) that they are planning on making kleinur on Saturday night during the dance. How's that for good news????!!!!!!



## Mountain's Börnum Park Makes More Progress



The Mountain Börnum Park has moved ahead by leaps and bounds since last year's Deuce. The park committee is thrilled to announce that in fall of 2018, the main structures of the park were purchased and erected. This spring the city of Mountain and the park received 40+ trees to border the south line of the Community Center and west side of the park. In the works for completion of the park are ground leveling, border work, and protective ground cover. The park has been awarded the 2019 Farmer's Grow Communities Grant, courtesy of Loretta Bernhoft, to install benches, tables, and waste receptacles. A full press release will take place in the coming months, so stay tuned to the park's Facebook page and website!

## Curtis Olafson Awarded INL of NA Lifetime Membership



Curtis Olafson was awarded an Icelandic National League of North America Lifetime membership at the most recent INL of NA convention in Winnipeg.

To be awarded this honor, the nominee must have served 10 years as a member of an INL of NA organization, and must have demonstrated one or more of the following: 1) outstanding service to INLNA through involvement in a member organization. 2: involvement through understanding and promotion of Icelandic Culture and Heritage and/or 3) involvement in community activities. Curtis has all three of the criteria covered—and then some! Congratulations, Curtis!

## 2019 Þorrablót



The pungent aroma of hardfish was in the air and the assorted ‘Vikings’ at the Þorrablót must have been overcome by it— and had some goofy fun at the Viking Photo Booth. The evening was filled with lots of visiting and laughter, a delicious dinner was served, two Heritage Grants were awarded and a Snorri Scholarship was given. There were over one hundred Icelandic/Nordic related items available at both the silent and live auctions for people to bid on. Money raised from the silent and live auctions fund the Heritage Grants and Snorri Scholarship as well as supporting Icelandic Communities Association activities.

## Thingvalla Cemetery Projects Continue



Thanks to the volunteer efforts of Richard Geir along with Leslie Geir and Curtis Olafson, the wrought iron gate and the small gate/fence posts at the cemetery got a facelift. The gate and fence were removed, the iron gate sandblasted and painted, the fence posts were sanded and painted and the fence put up again. In the planning stages: new fence for the north side of the cemetery and lifting and leveling of the monuments that have sunken over time. Last fall the river bank on the north side was fortified to prevent further erosion. Contact Curtis Olafson if you are interested in helping with these projects.

## Restored Gardar Township Hall Hosts Inaugural Event



Kudos to the determined bunch of locals who have been faithfully working on the Gardar Township Hall for the past few years! They took a building that looked like it was destined for a meeting with a bulldozer and restored it to a beautiful township hall. The first official event to be held there was a 90th birthday party for Rosemarie Myrdal. The photo on the right shows the view from the stage as hundreds of people came to celebrate with Rosemarie. The project isn't done, either. Next the group will start working



on an addition that will house a kitchen (the Eldhús), a meeting room, and handicap accessible bathrooms. Amazing!!

## Fjalla Church celebrates 125th Anniversary



The earliest settlers came to the Fjalla community (rural Milton, ND) in the late 1800's. They met in homes or the school building until they got enough money and then decided to build a church. The construction of Fjalla began and the first service was held in the present structure in June of 1894, with Séra Fredrick Bergman as pastor. Many funerals, baptisms, confirmations and a few weddings have been held there. In the summer of 1967 a farewell service was held in the church. A yearly service is held on the first Sunday of August. This year, **Fjalla Lutheran Church will be celebrating their 125th anniversary on August 4,**

**2019 at 2 PM rural Milton, ND** Everyone welcome. Friends of Fjallakirka has a Facebook page. Check it out!

## ICA Heritage Grants 2019

Three Heritage Sites Grants were awarded at the recent Þorrablót in February, at the Mountain Community Center. A grant of \$500 each was given to the Akra Hall at the Heritage Center at Icelandic State Park, Hallson Church at the Heritage Center at Icelandic State Park, and Svold Community Hall.

The Hallson Church at the Icelandic State Park Heritage Center has tentatively received a grant of \$15,000 from Partners for Sacred Places to restore the windows in the church. To receive the grant, matching funds must be raised. The \$500 Heritage Sites Grant will help them in achieving that goal.



**Hallson Church**



**Akra Hall**

The Akra Hall at the Heritage Center of Icelandic State Park has continuing needs for upkeep and repair. The windows are in need of repair and the \$500 grant will help them make needed repairs. All of the buildings at the Heritage Center receive no government funds for upkeep and repair so funds must be raised from private sources and grants. The Northeast North Dakota Heritage Association oversees the buildings at the Heritage Center.

The Svold Community Hall Association has been working to install indoor bathrooms that will also be handicap accessible. The project will cost about \$30,000 with the addition of volunteer work from a contractor and community members to help. They have raised half of the funding, and the \$500 Heritage Sites Grant will help them to achieve their goal.



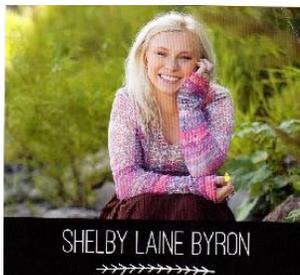
**Svold Community Hall**

The ICA was able to provide these grants through the money raised at the auctions at the previous year's Þorrablót. The support of those that donate items for the auctions and those that bid on the live and silent auction items, and our auctioneer extraordinaire, Dennis Biliske is much appreciated! We look forward to giving grants again at the Þorrablót in February 2020 after the successful auctions at this year's Þorrablót.

**Triple O Project:** Not as big or newsworthy as some projects (some might question it entirely), but this project is much appreciated when there are events held at Gardar Pioneer Church: a new outhouse. Shirley Olgeirson instigated the project and Ernie Olson built the outhouse.



## ICA Snorri Grant Recipient: Shelby Byron



SHELBY LAINE BYRON

Shelby Byron received a \$1000 scholarship from the Icelandic Communities Association to participate in the Snorri program this summer. Shelby stated she was interested in going to Iceland to learn more about her ancestors and the Icelandic culture.

Shelby grew up in the Icelandic community of Mountain. She said that influenced her desire to be part of the Snorri Program. "I have grown up hearing stories of my ancestors at Borg programs, the Deuce programs, and even at church. I have been surrounded by people who are proud of their (Icelandic) culture my entire life and it has definitely rubbed off on me."

The money to support Shelby was made possible through the funds raised at the silent and live auctions at the February Þorrablót in Mountain. The ICA appreciates all those that support the auctions so that the scholarship can be given.

## Icelandic Communities Association Membership

**The 2019 Membership Drive is underway! (and 2020 will be here before we know it!)**

Dues are \$15/person for the calendar year,  
January through December.

(2019 memberships were due by January 1, 2019!)

NOTE: Membership dues are not tax deductible, but any contributions over and above that are tax deductible.  
ICA has 501 c 3 (tax-exempt non-profit) status from the Internal Revenue Service.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(This is a new address \_\_\_)

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Memorial \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (in addition to membership fee) in remembrance of \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*Mail this form (with check payable to I.C.A.; indicate the year/s that you are paying dues for) to:

I.C.A., P. O. Box 63, Mountain, ND 58262-0063

- ♦ **Please send this form with your dues. It will help us update our membership list and e-mail addresses Thanks, in advance!**
- ♦ **Check your preference:** Newsletter by mail \_\_\_\_\_ By E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Membership Year : \_\_\_\_\_ 2019 \_\_\_\_\_ 2020 \_\_\_\_\_ 2021 \_\_\_\_\_ 2022

**Just so you know:** The ICA meets at 10 a.m. on the 2nd Saturday of every month at the Mountain Community Center. The folks that gather are a dedicated bunch that plan and execute the 2nd of August Celebration, the Þorra-blót, and an occasional movie or speaker. Like all small groups, it would welcome more volunteers with open arms. The volunteer options are varied: helping with convention details, selling raffle tickets, setup of tables and chairs, putting up/taking down flags daily, souvenir sales, working the gates at the kid's games, dances and tractor pull, and everyone's favorite—garbage pick up after the dance. Please consider giving a few hours of your time to help out. Contact Susan Sigurdson (tpowerssig@cableone.net) for more information.

## Mountain Memories

Coffee scoop from the  
Mountain Cash Store



A photo labeled "The Halldorson's"



*Left to Right:* Olla (Valdi) Halldorson, Gunnell (Fred) Halldorson, Olla (Grimsi) Sigurdson in back, Maria (Kristjan) Halldorson (in front of her), Margaret Weber in dark dress, Malla Johnson in back of her, Malla (Laki) Steinolfson in back, Freda Halldorson beside her, Runna (Mundi) Benjaminson, Jerry Gudmundson. In front: Judy Sigurdson, Patty Nason, each with their own kitten.

Photo is taken at the H.B. Sigurdson farm sometime in the early 1950's



**ICELANDIC  
COMMUNITIES  
ASSOCIATION**

P.O Box 63  
Mountain, ND 58262-0063

*Við erum fjölskylda. We are family.*



**The Storm Wolves  
are coming !!!!!**



**120<sup>th</sup> Annual  
2nd of August Icelandic Celebration**

**„The Deuce“**



**August 1, 2, 3, & 4, 2019**

**North Dakota State  
Truck & Tractor Pull  
August 4, 2019**

**2020 Celebration Dates: July 31, August 1 & 2**