The publication of our newest volume -- *From America to Norway* -- is an important step for your organization, and a good time for each of us to read and reflect on why we are passionate about telling the story of the Norwegian-American experience. I opened the book and immediately saw letters from people in my home congregation sent some 160 years ago, and read of trials and tribulations people faced as they began life anew in a distant land. Each of us should marvel at the sacrifice our ancestors made in leaving Norway and finding a home in the new world. Reading the letters reminds us of how significant that sacrifice was and how challenging their experiences.

NAHA’s role in saving the documents of the past and opening those documents for our exploration today is vitally important. Thank you for your support in keeping our organization strong and active.

In addition to the newest publication for our members, the third in three years, we’ve successfully concluded our biennial meeting which featured educational opportunities including a tour of our archives. We have elected a strong Board of Directors, with five new members bringing diverse strengths, and a continuation of many talented ongoing Board members and your officers for two more years.

We have our challenges, but NAHA is moving forward. I appreciate your support of our efforts, and hope you will use our many resources to help you better understand your own history and your understanding of the past.

Brian Rude
President
Norwegian-American Historical Association
Hovdesven’s description of the 1873 blizzard, recounted 60 years later in 1933, offers an insightful account that clearly left an indelible impression on a then 9-year-old.

Three days later at dusk the family arrived at its homestead, a dugout on the hillside with “a window on either side, sod roof and a door facing west.” In the years that followed, the family built a framed house and experienced the hardships of the prairie, including the grasshopper plagues and prairie fires.

Pioneer recollections found in the NAHA archives include many stories of the memorable blizzards of 1873, 1880 and 1888. In his papers Thomas Thomason from Stevens County, Minn., for instance, wrote of the 1873 blizzard: “It was in every respect an event in nature that cannot be easily forgotten, but, to the contrary, has become a red-letter day for most of those who were residing here at that time or who survived it.” Hovdesven’s description of the 1873 blizzard, recounted 60 years later in 1933,

A photo of Emilie sitting in her favorite spot -- the dining room of her Crookston home, by the desk, lamp, radiator, and big windows. 
Photo supplied by Carolyn and Duane Eklun
In later life I’ve had occasion to admire her dauntless courage. I didn’t realize then, but in a few weeks another boy, Otto, was to be born. What worries these pioneer mothers had! Finally, towards evening, we were aware of a different sound. Mother eagerly opened the door and called. What a relief it must have been to hear his [Father’s] answering voice. She donned overalls and helped him get the oxen under cover. It seemed a long time to us. They admitted having a difficult time finding their way back to the house.

Father told us of the struggle against the storm. The last mile the men had walked in front of the oxen to remove the ice which formed over their eyes. We were all so thankful he was safely home. Later we heard that two men in our neighborhood froze to death that night. Others had saved their lives by digging themselves into the snow. Some of our neighbors were short of fuel, so had to cut up their furniture. One family had to sacrifice its beloved organ.

The storm lasted three days. On the fourth day Morton Hanson came with a large bundle on his back. He was bringing clothes for his children in hopes they were with us. Every mound of snow made him fear that it might uncover the bodies of his children, but he kept doggedly on. It was a bitterly cold morning, still and bright. How happy and thankful he was when he saw his children safe with friends.”

This excerpt is from the typescript memoir of Emilie Hovdesven. With an introduction by daughter Myrtle Hovdesven Wilson, the manuscript touches on prairie fires, epidemics, blizzards, Christmas and Julebukking in Chippewa County, Minnesota. Thanks to Carolyn and Duane Eklun for sharing her story.
When word reached Norwegian communities in the upper Midwest areas and elsewhere about virgin land in Alabama with a warmer climate (presumably healthier), cheap land prices and a longer growing season, it didn’t take long for interest to follow.

It became a combination of Northern capitalists gathering “colonies” of immigrants to promote various types of farming and subsidiary businesses in the post Reconstruction South. Northern European immigrants were known as thrifty and hardworking. The prospect would make them exceptional “settlers”.

In Alabama, Norwegian settlers were found in places like Thorosby and Fruithurst, Alabama in the north and east central part of the state while Silver Hill and St. Elmo settlements were near the Gulf Coast to the south. These settlements were not uniformly Swedish, Norwegian or Danish. A mix always seems to be present. But Swedes were the larger of numbers.

My current research has concentrated on the two northern settlements of Fruithurst and Thorosby. Both areas were promoted as fruit growing acreages.

One of the ambitions of Fruithurst was to become a premier grape growing and wine producing center. It sprang to life in 1895 after an aggressive ad campaign and encouraging excursions to the site from centers like Chicago, New York and Minneapolis.

It didn’t hurt that the company Alabama Fruit Growing and Winery Association built a fashionable hotel capable of accommodating 85 visitors at a time, with all the amenities that could be asked for. And it was by no accident the railroad provided the needed transportation for those traveling to see the acreages available and for settlers sending out their products for sale. By 1899 the 20,000 acre community site was nearing 1000 in population where it had housed only a couple of families just months before.

A church was a part of the city planning. Provisions had been laid out for its construction and for soliciting an on-site pastor. The character of the church was Swedish (Swedish Emanuel Lutheran), although visiting Norwegian pastors were always welcome to preach. Records indicate a number of Norwegian and Swedish pastors who became “absentee landlords” with the company willing to provide information for and workers on their properties in a profit sharing arrangement. (1)

But company problems, untreatable crop diseases, unseasonable weather situations plus the looming Prohibition issue all but doomed the enterprise. By the 1930’s the church population had faded from the scene. The only full time pastor lasted less than two years (1896-97) and the congregation became a preaching station served by either Thorosby or Silverhill.

Thorsby's beginning was a few months earlier with the same elements involved: a nearby railroad line, ample acreage, promise of good crops and profitability if one worked hard. The guiding entity here was the Concordia Land and Improvement Association made up of Theodore Thorson, John Peterson, Rev. John Hedberg and Norwegian Kaspar Gulbrandson Faegre.

From Thorsby came the development of what became three congregations; St. Olaf and St. John-Norwegian and Concordia-Swedish. The Norwegian Church was designed by Olaf Lefstead and built by local carpenters in 1897. The group had met previously in a local vacant store.

The Norwegian entities had a relatively short span of time before they disbanded. St. Olaf (1897-1911) was served by four pastors: Martin

Present day view of Thorsby's Norwegian Church, now used as a museum.
Engen (1897) of the Eilesen Synod; Hagbarth Engh (1899-04) and Carl K. Helland (1904-07) of the United Norwegian Church in America and Iver Tellefsen (1907-11) with the Hauge Synod. (2)

Rev. H. Engh of the St. Olaf group visited the Birmingham, Alabama vicinity (42 miles north) as a preaching station during the years 1901-02, though the stats are meager (one baptism, three sermons preached in 1901 with two sermons preached in 1902).

St. John’s organization was 1902 and shows a common thread of Norwegian Synod clergy- Jorgen Norby (1902), Olaf S. Skattebol (1902-03) and John Christian Tordenskjold Moses (1903-08). However, by 1909 it had voted to merge with Concordia. (3)

The two Norwegian entities represented different streams of Pietistic and formal church worship. St. Olaf numbered 89 souls at its peak in 1903, while St. John numbered 36. (4)

The quick decline appears be the result of congregants moving elsewhere for unstated reasons. It also didn’t help to have the small population separated into two worship entities.

What has remained is a wood building that has endured over 115 years and various circumstances. Thus far, no records of either St. Olaf or St. John’s Lutheran congregations have been found.

Since Swedish Concordia had already built their church in 1896, there was little reason to worship in two facilities. So the facility which hosted both the St. Olaf and St. John communities was sold to a Congregational Church and held by them for the next 50 years. In turn, it was sold to a Masonic group. When the latter wanted to dispose of the property, it was donated to the city of Thorsby and became an auxiliary practice facility for the High School nearby.

At present, the former Norwegian church building (now called the Helen Jenkins Chapel) houses a small Thorsby museum while being funded and renovated by private donations and the City of Thorsby for public meetings, weddings, showers, etc. It stands as the only “Norwegian” church building in North Alabama. Its recognition is long overdue. (5)

As to Swedish Concordia in Thorsby, it first functioned as an extension of the Augustana Synod mission as did Fruithurst. This lasted till the mid 1930’s. It managed to survive as a Sunday School during a hiatus of 17 years.

In 1952 Concordia was welcomed into the Georgia/Alabama Synod, subsequently served by a number of ULCA pastors until 1962. The last service, owing to steadily declining numbers, was in May of 1969 and led by the son of the man who designed the Norwegian church building, Rev. Dr. Waldemar Lefstead. Afterward, the building was torn down to make way for a phone company office.

(1) Fruithurst Reporter (Newspaper) Vol. 1, no.3, January 14, 1895.


(3) O.M. Norlie, Norsk Lutherske Menigheter i Amerika 1843-1916, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1918, pps. 1124.


New Additions To The NAHA Archives
April 1-Sept. 30, 2012

The Archives continue to benefit from the generosity of members and friends who have made important donations. Although we aren't able to acknowledge all donations here, we do appreciate every donation, large and small. **We welcome additional donations of Norwegian-American letters, diaries, photographs, family histories, and community and congregational materials.** Families can be sure that their donations will remain open for consultation in the NAHA archives. They can also be certain that family treasures will not be discarded in a hasty move or by future generations who may have lost touch with their Norwegian-American heritage.

Additions to the manuscripts collection include:

**Bygdela**gene Papers. Collection P0465. Additions:

- **Agderlaget:** Timeline (1925-2000), membership rolls, meetings, miscellaneous press clippings, correspondence, and historic items. Donated by Rosa Tofteland Johnson.


Gary Krahnuhul Family Papers. Added to Collection P0539, Family Histories and Genealogies. Includes a booklet by Krahnuhul, *Traveling West in the Search for Gold in 1859; Hardanger Laget panorama (scanned image) held at Lee, Illinois, Sept. 1913; and thirty family letters from Lee County, Illinois to Norway (1881-1928, photocopied originals and English translations).*


Jeanne Ostnes and Eleanor Ostnes Vistaunet, *Ostnes Family History.* Added to Collection P0539, Family Histories and Genealogies. Four PDF files with extensive Ostnes family history in Norway and the US (Alaska, Texas). Donated by Jeanne Ostnes.

Additional memoirs and family and organizational histories:

**Church Histories.** Added to Collection P0537, Congregation Papers.

- Berwick Lutheran Church, Berwick, ND, 75th Anniversary.

- Bethany Lutheran Church, Rugby, ND, 75th (shared with Tunbridge Lutheran Church) & 100th Anniversaries.

- Christiania Lutheran Church, Lakeville, MN. Congregational Meeting Minutes, 1877-1938 (translated by Sandra Hendrickson, 2008). Donated by Sandra Hendrickson.

- St. Luke’s Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, MN, 50th & 75th Anniversaries.


Henderson, Rebecca J. *Ingrid’s Tales A Norwegian-American Quaker Farming Story* (2012). Added to
Gary De Krey, Archivist and
Jeff Sauve, Associate Archivist

Collection P0709: Quakers, Norway and America. Donated by author.


Added to Collection P1108, Lars Fletre Papers. Donated by author.


Films added to the Moving Image Collection:

“The Letter from America” (Svekon Film, Bergen Norway, DVD, 43 minutes, English version, 2012). “This film tells about the Norwegian immigrants to America in the period from 1825-1900. Through the letters they sent home to Norway they tell about hard work, sorrow and grief, but also about happiness and a good life.” Donated by filmmakers, Karin Sverre and Kristin Sandberg.

Norway to Russia travel film (untitled, black and white, silent, 40 minutes, unknown filmmaker, ca. 1936). Titled segments focus on Norwegian locations: Bergen, Aalesund, Norang Fjord, Norangdal, Geiranger Fjord, Svartisen Glacier, Tromso, Hammerfest, Trondheim, and Naerodal. Donated by Academic Film Archive of North America, San Jose, CA.
The 2012 Norwegian-American Historical Association Biennial Meeting was held on Saturday, October 20, 2012 on the campus of St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. Over 75 NAHA members and guests joined together for learning sessions, a brief business meeting, an educational and entertaining keynote presentation, capped off by the distribution of our new publication, *From America to Norway: Norwegian-American Immigrant Letters 1838-1914, Volume One 1838-1870*.

Highlights from the Business Meeting:

NAHA President Brian Rude reviewed some of the accomplishments of the association over the past two years including the distribution of three books to NAHA members, support for the NAHA-Norge “Migrant Journeys” seminar at Decorah, the Edina, Minnesota book launch for the *Norwegian-American Studies*, Vol. 36 in October 2011, and the gathering of NAHA members and friends at the home of the Norwegian Consul General in April 2012.

NAHA Treasurer Karen Davidson reviewed the financial status of the organization. Expenses and revenues were up in 2011 vs. 2010 in large part because of the publication of two books and the hiring of a full-time administrative director. Cash reserves built up in 2010 were partially used to offset the increased expenses. Donations to the organization also increased during that time. Our net assets were down in 2011 when compared with 2010, due in part to increased life-member liability reserves we are required to carry to meet our ongoing commitment of publications to Lifetime members. Other factors included transitioning from part-time to full-time staff, and costs related to the production and distribution of two publications in 2011. In addition, the performance of our investment portfolio between December 2010 and December 2011 was essentially flat.

The Finance Committee took several actions to better manage our investment portfolio and provide for a planful use of invested funds. Those actions include setting a spending policy of 5% of a rolling three year average of the value of our invested funds to supplement revenue received from dues and donations.

NAHA also reallocated its investment portfolio to reflect a ratio of 40% fixed income and cash to 60% equities. This ratio allows us to pursue growth in our investments while managing risk during times of market fluctuations. Finally, with advice from our portfolio manager, the Finance Committee authorized the rebalancing of equity holdings to minimize investment expenses and diversify equities among a broader range of fund classes.

Øyvind Gulliksen represented the NAHA-Norge members and gave thanks to NAHA for supporting the “Migrant Journeys” Seminar in Decorah. NAHA-Norge is planning to hold their next seminar in Fagernes in the Valdres region in 2014. In addition they hope to participate in an international seminar to be held in Clifton, Texas in 2015 on the 150th anniversary of the pathfinder of Norwegian emigration, Cleng Peerson.

Jackie Henry, Administrative Director, shared the membership trends over the past three years, which held even. She reviewed the efforts being used to help increase membership numbers and market the value of the organization to new and current members, including an improved newsletter format and content, the use of social networking tools, implementation of donor/membership software to better manage the renewal process, increased collaboration with other Norwegian-American organizations and increasing the frequency of speaking engagements to larger audiences including stevne meetings, Sons of Norway, Mindekirken and Bygdelagenes Fellesraad. Over the next biennium, she plans to focus her efforts on highlighting the contents of the NAHA archives through newsletter and special online content, continuing efforts to increase membership and awareness of the organization among those interested in their Norwegian-American heritage, and in particular raising
Recap

the visibility of NAHA archive holdings and membership benefits among the academic community.

Gary DeKrey, NAHA archivist, shared highlights from the new acquisitions received over the past two years, in particular the collection of over 100 glass plate negatives from Chicago, and another collection of glass negatives from the Alfred C. Jesness family. Gary also shared statistics about the usage of the NAHA archives with over 110 visitors in 2010-2011 and more than 1500 visitors monthly to the NAHA archives web page. Gary also shared some of the major projects taken on, including the pilot scanning project for the Rowberg obituaries, scanning the Norwegian language newspapers and the online index to the Lutheran Herald created by NAHA volunteer Dale Haaland. Discussions with the College about climate control and expansion of the joint college/NAHA archive spaces is ongoing and grant applications are being prepared to seek funding for the project.

Todd Nichol, NAHA editor, briefly discussed the publications issued in 2011 and 2012, and reviewed the publication schedule for Volumes Two and Three of the From America to Norway series (scheduled for 2014 and 2016, respectively). Todd also pointed out the need to recognize the increasing costs associated with publications and asked the membership to thoughtfully consider donations over and above membership dues to ensure we have the resources to continue an every-other-year publication schedule.

NAHA governance committee member Karin Holt assisted in the election of board members to renewing terms and new board members. Those renewing their terms were Karen Davidson, Karen Annexstad Humphrey, Liv Hustvedt, Brian Rude and Solveig Zempel. New board members are:

Claudia Berguson - Associate Professor of Norwegian and Scandinavian Area Studies at Pacific Lutheran University.

Dennis Gimmestad - Dennis is a historian in the Minnesota Department of Transportation's Cultural Resources Unit.

Dave Holt - Retired businessman from Hudson, Wisconsin.

Leslee Lane Hoyum - Independent communications and public relations consultant and Midwest contributing editor for the Norwegian-American Weekly.

Frankie Shackelford - Professor of Norwegian and Chair, Department of Languages and Cross-cultural Studies, Augsburg College

The membership approved the slate of new and renewing board members on a voice vote. Brian Rude also recognize outgoing board member Karin Holt and thanked Karin for her valuable contributions to the work of the NAHA board.

Following the biennial meeting, the board of directors met to elect officers for the 2013-2014 biennium. Upon recommendation of the Governance Committee, the board approved renewing the terms of the 2011-2012 officers.

They are:
President - Brian Rude
Vice President - Karen Annexstad Humphrey
Treasurer - Karen Davidson
Secretary - Liv Hustvedt
At-Large - Ruth Crane

Thanks to our new and continuing NAHA board members, as well as past NAHA board members. Your leadership and guidance have and will continue to sustain the organization as it evolves to meet the changing needs of its membership.
The Canadian Interlude

“Toward the end of the 1840s most Norwegian immigrants landed in New York. A radical change occurred in the following decade. In 1850, the first 250 Norwegian immigrants landed in Quebec. The shift in destination came about during the following years 1851-1853, when 7,570 went directly from Norway to Quebec, while 4,660 sailed directly from a Norwegian port city to New York and another 600 left from a different European port. From then on the balance shifted complete. The increased traffic lowered fares, convincing more and more immigrants to cross the Atlantic on a Norwegian sailing ship headed for Quebec. In the course of the years 1854-65 as many as 44,100 Norwegian immigrants landed in Quebec; only 520 landed in New York directly and 2,280 chose the indirect route via a different port city. From the middle of the 1860s there was a change in the emigration traffic as steamships replaced sailing ships. New York once again became the main receiving port.”

- Excerpt from the research proposal for The Canadian Interlude, by Dr. Odd Lovoll.

Professor Odd Lovoll is embarking on an ambitious project to explore the period penned by Theodore C. Blegen as the “Canadian Interlude”, covering 1850 to 1865. Engaging in comprehensive research of existing sources in Norway, Canada and the United States, Dr. Lovoll hopes to explore and record the human side of how the individual emigrant experienced the long voyage, their motivations, origination, social composition and gender composition. Dr. Lovoll plans to approach the topic from both a macro level by analyzing the official statistics of this era as well as the micro level using personal documents that cast light on the motives and experiences of the individual emigrant.

In addition to his own research, Dr. Lovoll has had the opportunity to draw upon research by NAHA member Dr. Lars Erik Larson, emeriti faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, who shared his materials on Norwegian Emigration to Canada from 1850 to 1874 with Dr. Lovoll.

Dr. Lovoll traveled to Quebec City in September 2012 to conduct preliminary research on the immigration and quarantine quarters on Grosse Ile and in Quebec proper.

Dr. Lovoll’s research is being funded by the Fritt Ord Foundation and the Nygaard Foundation. In February he travels to Norway for a month’s stay with research scheduled for Oslo, Bergen and Stavanger. Dr. Lovoll anticipates that the project will be completed in three years, culminating in a published manuscript in the United States and Norway.

Share your family stories of Quebec immigration

If you are descended from Norwegian immigrants who traveled through Quebec to either the United States or Canada, and have stories from your family about their journey, Dr. Lovoll would like to interview you for his book. You can contact him by email at canadianinterlude@gmail.com. If you prefer to speak to him directly, simply call our office and we can put him in touch with you. Our phone number is 507-786-3221.
Deciding to write a 215 page book of memories of Mom and Pop, our family and relatives at the age of 79 in 2005 made me wonder why it took me so long to really appreciate them for who they were and what they meant to us four boys.

Mom and Pop “mentored” us perhaps without our realizing it until later in life. Our childhood, adolescence and manhood years were strongly affected by traditional Norwegian values based on love for God and family, hard work, honesty in all dealings, and love for our own country with respect for our Norwegian heritage.

As a child I must admit to some confusion. How to sort out my parents remembrances of “Norge” as opposed to “vi har det godt i Amerika” (we have it good in America). Apparently not all remembrances were fond however, some of which reminded both Mom and her sister why they immigrated to America, separately and alone, during their teen years to escape working with their father in his tailor shop. Mom, Blenda Marie Svenson, left at the age of 15 in 1909, and her sister Svanhild Alfrida Svenson, at the age of 15 in 1911. Both found work as servants in homes of the wealthy in Manhattan.

The Ellis Island experience after a long steerage-class trip across the sea and very real language problems, together with what we now call “culture shock”, could have easily sent them scurrying for home on the next ship. Like hundreds of thousands of others before and after them they stuck it out but returned to Norway for short visits, working there until his retirement.

During the war Pop and his father traveled from Brooklyn to work in a shipyard on Staten Island building wooden submarine chasers. After the war Pop found work in the carpenter shop of R.H. Macy’s Department store on 34th Street in Manhattan. He eventually became foreman of the shop, working there until his retirement.

In 1958 Mom, Pop and Svanhild (Porter) visited Norway for the last time, traveling by plane for the first time.

There were four boys in our family, Birger Henrik, Arne Johan, Carl Gerhard and Roy Herbert, in that order. As I write this I am reminded that at age 86 I am the last living member of our family.

We boys never met any of our grandparents, something that was not uncommon in those days. Both of our grandmothers, Anna Hanse (Svenson) and Ingrid Marie Pettersdatter (Nilsen) were born in Norway. Grandfather Anders Johan Svensson was born in Sweden and Jen Peder Neilsen in Denmark.

The 17th of May (Syttehe Mai), Norwegian Independence day from 400 years of rule by Denmark, was always observed by Norwegian communities in America. June 5th was another holiday that marked the dissolution of Norway’s union with Sweden in 1905. Both dates were duly noted by our parents.

Thru all their experiences love for their homeland did not change. As children we were told of the good and beautiful things, and not too many of the unhappy times. Norway was always spoken of reverently, quietly, and referred to as “home in Norway”.

Our social life in the 1930’s was generally focused around Norwegian language churches. Preaching was in Norwegian, with a few hymns sung in English, “for the young people”. That changed in the late 1930’s and early 1940’s to all (almost all) English, thankfully. Fractured pronunciations and severe grammatical errors caused many smirks among us kids. Our parents however, were determined to learn the language and speak it properly, hopefully without accent, but which we thought never happened.

American ways and customs were adopted slowly but surely as our elders worked towards the day when we young people would ultimately take over. Takeover we did, but not at the expense of the values and virtues based for the most part on those original Norwegian and Christian principles and traditions. Those virtues and values were in turn primarily based on the Norsk bibelen (Norwegian Bible) that always explained the Word of God more clearly than any English translation, or so we were told.

These roots no doubt affected our personal lifestyles for our whole lives, so this then is our heritage. Pop, Roy, Mom, Birger and Arne went to be with the Lord and each other in that order, while I remain here as of this writing in 2012 at the age 86. In 2005 I wrote a history of the family that includes some of the above in more detail, but even that effort is far from sufficient to capture the legacy Mom & Pop and other family and friends left us.

I have to smile to myself sometimes as I remember Norwegian words and phrases from my youth, and occasionally share them with my family who are kind enough to just smile with an understanding look.
Help NAHA Finish the Year Strong!

We have had an outstanding year at NAHA. Our latest publication of Norwegian-American immigrant letters has drawn a great amount of interest, resulting in increased memberships and renewals. We continue to attract historically significant collections for inclusion in the archives and our historical resources are becoming more well known in the scholarly and genealogical research community. The Oral History Project is already generating interest about collecting information on our more contemporary Norwegian-American immigrant populations.

The NAHA archives contain a treasure trove of information and we are making a special effort in the coming year to uncover and bring to light little known collections, some of which may not have been touched since their accession into the archives years ago. Through increasing use of digital technology, we can highlight those collections on our website so members and others worldwide can experience the sense of discovery we have on finding these unique stories and images.

Your investment in NAHA, through your membership dollars and through individual donations will help keep the Norwegian-American Historical Association strong and relevant while supporting our efforts to fulfill the mission of NAHA - to locate, collect, preserve and interpret the Norwegian-American experience with accuracy, integrity and liveliness.

The production costs involved in printing and distributing books and newsletters are our greatest expense after salaries. In the next few weeks, you’ll be receiving a letter asking for your support before year end. Please help us expand our efforts to share the unique story of our immigrant forefathers by donating generously. Thank you!