

NORWEGIAN AMERICANS RING IN NEW YEAR WITH KRANSEKAKES

Local Norwegian Americans rang in the New Year Sunday, Jan. 5, with homemade Kransekakes, traditional Norwegian cookie-tower cakes.

The cakes--usually eaten on special occasions such as weddings, baptisms and Christmas--highlighted the January meeting of Polar Star Lodge 5-472, Sons of Norway, at St. Olaf Lutheran Church in Montgomery.

Barb Johnson of Yorkville, lodge culture director, taught a Kransekake-baking class at the church Jan. 4. During the free, three-hour class, eight students combined sugar, almond flour and egg whites to prepare two cakes of nine cookie layers each.



On Jan. 5, students layered the cake rings, stuck them together with icing and decorated them with mini Norwegian flags. Then the cakes were served at the lodge's monthly potluck luncheon.



Students were Larry and Carol Baker, Batavia; Vi Skogen, Montgomery; Karen Oswald, Diana Raimond and Ed Hatteberg, Naperville; and Kelly Weilin, Wheaton.

According to Johnson, the baking class will earn students some of the requirements for a traditional Norwegian cooking medal from Sons of Norway.

Johnson added the original tower cake used at weddings is called overflødighedshorn (horn of plenty). It is shaped like a cornucopia and filled with chocolates, cookies and other small treats.

Sometimes a bottle of wine or Akvavit is placed in the center, and the cake is decorated with ornaments such as crackers and flags. The origin of the Kransekage dates to the 18th century.

PHOTO (top): Karen Oswald of Naperville, adds a cookie to a Kransekake, Norwegian tower cake, at St. Olaf Lutheran Church in Montgomery Sunday, Jan. 5. Oswald was among eight Sons of Norway Polar Star Lodge 5-472 members who baked two nine-tier cakes at a Jan. 4 class at the church. Students assembled the cakes Jan. 5 for a lodge luncheon. (Al Benson photo)

PHOTO (bottom): Ed Hatteberg of Naperville, adds a mini Norwegian flag to a kransekake, Norwegian tower cake, at St. Olaf Lutheran Church in Montgomery Sunday, Jan. 5. Hatteberg was among eight Sons of Norway Polar Star Lodge 5-472

members who baked two nine-tier cakes at a Jan. 4 class. Students assembled the cakes for a lodge luncheon Jan. 5. (Al Benson photo)