

From: Dr. Donald Mott

To: the Greater Tacoma Peace Prize Committee, Consul Kim Nesselquist

December 15, 2011

Barrie and I want to express our sincere thanks for your making our visit to Oslo a truly once-in-a-lifetime experience!!! Soon after our arrival Turid Johanessen called to make sure we arrived and that all was well at the Continental Hotel which was a great location, central to everything.

#### Friday, December 9

We visited the Signo Foundation which was founded by a priest in late 1800's and works with deaf and deaf-blind in Norway and other parts of the world. Like all our hosts, Knut and Inger were very gracious and told us about their work and showed us their facility. I would suggest that anyone who is in non-profit world would benefit from visiting this amazing organization in the future.

Turid met us at our hotel and we went on to the Norse Federation where Lasse Espelid and his staff hosted us to great lunch and told us about their work. Maria Vang Ormhaug presented us with the official invitation and tickets to the Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony and the CNN interview, as well as tickets to the Christmas concert at the Oslo Cathedral.

Then we were off to the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights, where we were hosted by Mr. Kjell Bondevik (former Prime Minister of Norway). Also at the meeting was John Bjørnebye, who was a former member of Parliament and Ambassador to Belgium. This organization does great work to promote peace and encourage democratic societies.

That evening we met with Anne Cecilie Kjelling and presented her with the gift from the Greater Tacoma Peace Prize Committee. She recently retired after 41 years as the Head Librarian of the Nobel Institute.

#### Saturday, December 10 (the Nobel Peace Prize is always on this date, Alfred Nobel's Death)

It is very difficult to accurately describe the feeling of awe and excitement you feel as you enter the City Hall to attend the ceremony!! The video on the web site is impressive, but to be there is truly amazing, and thanks to you we were there. There is a program on your assigned seat with a souvenir copy of each laureate's diploma as well as headsets to listen in English, Norwegian, or Arabic. The introductions, music, and lectures of each of the Laureates were truly awesome. The Ceremony ended about 3:00 PM, so Barrie and I walked across the Plaza to a local pub.

Then we went back to the City Hall at 4:30 to attend the CNN live interviews with the three Nobel Laureates, which were very interesting, and we learned more about them and their work. Barrie and I walked to Grand Hotel and joined the crowd that was gathering to see the Laureates wave from the balconies.

#### Sunday, December 11

We traveled by train to Lillehammer, and we were met by Steinar Bryn and his wife Vesna, who took us to the 1994 Olympic sites, the village of Lillehammer and to the Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue, where Steinar is the Senior Advisor. As Steinar was explaining how he brings groups with opposing ideas together for dialogue and resolution, I asked if maybe he would consider working with the US congress to see if they could get something accomplished!!

We were then hosted for lunch at their home, and Vesna (who is a pediatrician) recalled that when she visited Steinar while he was on sabbatical at Pacific Lutheran University, I hosted her at the Children's Therapy Unit at Good Samaritan Hospital. She brought out her copy of the "Possibilities Poem" we had given her. She also said she attended the annual fashion show for CTU!

After we returned to Oslo, Barrie went to the Christmas Concert at the Oslo Cathedral, which she greatly enjoyed.

### Monday, December 12

I visited offices of Norfund and Norad, both governmental agencies that fund international projects. Then Turid met us at our hotel and walked with us to the Norwegian Nobel Institute where Bjørn Helge Vangen (Head Librarian) told us all about the workings of the Nobel Peace Prize committee while we sat in the boardroom surrounded by copies of the diplomas of the various laureates, and where the next Nobel Laureate will be chosen!! Turid had chosen a great favorite Asian spot for dinner.

Throughout the visit I asked if other cities had a similar program like the GTPP and was told that there are none, and the reason given was it takes a tremendous effort of a committed group to make this possible, and at this point only Tacoma has such a group!! We were truly blessed by this opportunity and the dedicated group that made it possible!

Our Sincere Thanks!

Don and Barrie Mott