

Collection Name:

Ski for Light records, 1975-2022

Collection Number:

P1722

Extent:

8.9 cubic feet (6 record cartons, 1 archives box, and 3 oversized flat boxes)

History/Biography:

Ski for Light, a nonprofit volunteer organization founded in 1975, provides opportunities for visually impaired and mobility-impaired people to experience skiing. They offer cross-country skiing programs and pair each person with an experienced, sighted cross-country skier. The organization's motto, inspired by Erling Stordahl, is "If I can do this, I can do anything!"

The group's annual event takes place at different locations across the United States and, like the Birkebeiner in Wisconsin, it builds on a ski event that was first held in Norway. Erling Stordahl, a blind Norwegian musician, is credited with the idea of giving blind people assistance to ski. His efforts led to the creation in 1964 of the Ridderrennet, or "Knights' Race," which is held at Beitostølen in the Valdres region of Norway.

In 1975, Olav Pedersen, a ski instructor at the Breckenridge Ski Resort, and Barne Eikevik, the International President of Sons of Norway, launched Ski for Light, which was inspired by the Ridderrennet. Olav Pedersen knew Erling Stordahl in Norway and went to him to get advice on how to launch a similar organization in the US.

The name, Ski for Light, came from Erling Stordahl from a metaphor in Peer Gynt. In Peer Gynt, a Norwegian Knight (part of the ridderrenn) needed to escape. He came to an abyss, and without knowing if he would safely make it, leaped with faith and succeeded. After the first event in Frisco (Colorado), the name changed from Race for Light to Ski for Light to emphasize the recreational nature of the program and deemphasize the racing aspects. To this day, Ski for Light is headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, at the Sons of Norway Headquarters.

Scope and Content:

This collection contains the organizational materials from the corporation as well as photographs, memorabilia, clippings, public relations information, and other material related to the organization and its events.

Access Rights:

This collection is open to research.

Bibliographic Citation:

[Indicate the cited item here]. Ski for Light Records. Norwegian American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.

Box	Folder	Description
1	1-5	Newsletters, 1977-2017
1	6-12	Annual reports, 1975-2016
1	13	Booklets and miscellaneous, 2003-2018
2	5-8	Miscellaneous, 1985-1990
2	1	Healthsport/Skiathon: Applications, advertising, policies, undated
2	2-3	Healthsport/Skiathon: Miscellaneous, undated
2	4	Regional book (2 or 4), undated
2	5	Miscellaneous, 1985-1988
2	6	Miscellaneous, 1988-1990
2	7-8	Miscellaneous, undated
2	9-10	Individual participant clippings, undated
2	11	Newspaper article, undated
3	1	Photographs, Traverse City, Michigan, 1987
3	2-9	Photographs, 1983-2005 Includes some negatives and is noted with the names Leslee Lane and Marion Elmquist.
3	10-11	Photographs, undated Photographs taken in Saratoga Springs, New York; Cable, Wisconsin; Duluth, Minnesota; Fairlee, Vermont; Arlington, Virginia; Bozeman, Montana.
3	12-13	Scrapbook and other materials, \1993
4		Audio and visual materials, undated- Cassette tapes, as well as reels of film and VHS tapes.
5	1-10	Minutes, 197- 2008
5	11	Board of Directors handbook, undated
5	12	Mission statement and financial reports, undated
5	13	Donors and finance (HSC/SFL), undated
6	1	Gift plaque, undated
6	2	"If I Can Do This... The Saga of Ski For Light" publication, 1984-1985
6	3	Testimonials, 1987
6	4	Photographs (some undated), 1984
6	5	Marketing and public relations material, 1977-2004
6	6-9	News clippings, 1977-2004
6	10	Patches, 1978-2006
7		Videos, undated
8		Medals and pins, 1975-2017
9		"Rings in the Snow: Norway-Oslo-Ridderrennet-Race for Light- SKI FOR LIGHT" scrapbook, undated

10	1	Annual report, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021
10	2	Bulletin, 2017-2022
10	3	Pamphlets, 2017, 2019 Pamphlets for Grandby, CO (2017) and Snow Mountain Ranch (2019).
10	4	Clippings, 2001-2020