

# Guess who's going to Norway, Ill.?

By Anne Keegan

**CHUCK BORCHSENIUS** painted the doors of his general store. Floyd Ness added a new porch. And Maynard Rabe mowed his lawn.

The women's society of the Old Lutheran church baked up some kringla, and Marian Hardy put roses on her shutters.

Norway, Ill. is cleaning up—a king is coming to town.

Only for a half hour on Friday; but still, this unincorporated village in the Fox River Valley has never seen such excitement.

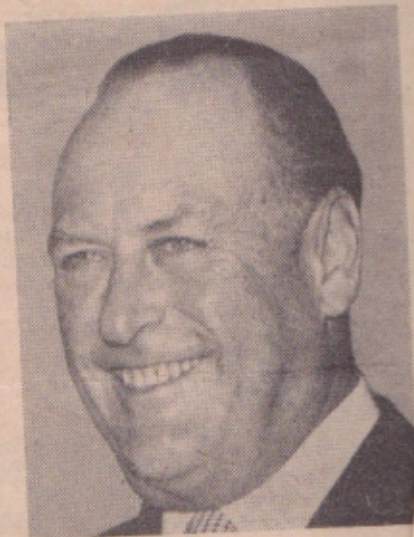
"We haven't gathered around the coffee pot long enough to figure out our population," said Wayne Borchsenius, a man of Danish extraction who has melded into the Norwegian air of the town.

"Everybody is doing what they were planning to do eventually but the king's coming made it all happen now," he said.

**"I'VE BEEN TRAVELING** around the counties with the highway department and that's all they are taking about—the king of Norway coming to this little town. It's on everybody's lips."

At the only lunch counter in town, Borchsenius' general store, where you can get your hair curled in back and order Norwegian herring in front, people are talking about "his majesty" from the time the place opens until it closes after dark.

**"WE ONLY WISH** the king would stay longer," said Borchsenius, who is the fifth generation of his family to run the 127-year-old general store.



King Olav V

"This is the first permanent settlement of Norwegians in America, and we'd like to have him take a look around."

Norway, which is in a frenzy of 11-hour tidying up, has been preparing two years for the visit of King Olav V of Norway. The 4½-acre park across from the general store was purchased from a farmer and named Clerf Peerson Park, after the man who led the first Norwegian settlers in 1848 to the Norway, Ill. site.

"All the schools from the village around have been closed for the day," said Wayne Borchsenius, "all except the schools for our kids."

"I don't understand it. But I think the administrator will find that there will be a lot of children from Norway playing hooky that day."