



Birka732.com

Birka Banner

Birka Lodge, Vasa Order of America

November - December 2019

Message from the Chair

Greetings to all Birka members. It is the time again when Birka's biggest fund raising event is soon here. The Lodge needs the help and support of all members to make the Jul Fair as successful as it always has been. If you have not signed up yet to help at the Fair, the sign-up sheet will be available at the **November 22nd** meeting or you can call me. We also need help **setting up** and decorating the Community House on **Friday evening, November 29 beginning at 5:00 p.m.** The tables are always quite busy when the Fair first opens and more help is appreciated. We are also requesting contributions for the **Grabs Table: new items valued at \$5.00 or more. Please wrap in holiday paper without a price.** We need gifts for children—boys and girls—and also for men and women. **Please mark** each package as to gender and for children, include the appropriate age. Home baked goods are also requested for the **Bake Table** and should be priced and labeled beforehand.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a flyer. Please copy, post and distribute to family, friends, colleagues, etc. Many of our Lodge members and table chairs have worked hard preparing for the Fair. We have imported gift items, linens, jewelry, books, calendars, dala horses, candles, candleholders, and a variety of foods from Sweden for your Christmas and Holiday table. **The Lucia procession will take place at 12 noon.** Please come and support your Lodge. I look forward to seeing many of you there. It would be great if you have a folk costume or Scandinavian sweater to wear!

At the **September 27th** meeting, the Refreshment Committee, chaired by Denise Esperson and her committee, provided delicious refreshments. Gus Blomgren, Judy Tanzer and Kristin Seashore gave the Delegates Report of the District Convention that was held in Rockport in September. The meeting ended with our annual Harvest Auction. The Lodge raised \$163. Thank you to all who participated.

The **October 25** Halloween Potluck Supper was enjoyed by all. Delicious casseroles, salads and desserts were prepared by the Lodge's great cooks. Thank you to Janet Muller and her committee for coordinating and setting up the hall. No one went home hungry! We had several members who dressed in costumes. Thank you to all who participated. Ann-Marie Breuer provided the prizes, Roz and Gus Blomgren provided a Halloween Raffle, and Bob Landoni provided the music. Thanks to all!

The Activities Committee met on **October 19** at the home of Linda Boylan. Thank you, Linda. We discussed the Jul Fair and coming events. The next Activities Committee meeting will be held on **February 16, 2020, at 2:30 p.m. at Marlys Mahajan's home in Hamilton.** **The Auditors will also meet to audit the Lodge's financial books.**

Lodge Dues – Annual dues for **2020** of **\$25** per person are due in January. Please consider this your first dues notice. Lodge dues should be paid by the end of April. Please make checks payable to: **Birka Lodge No. 732** and mail to the Financial Secretary, Linda Boylan at 12 Upton Lane, Boxford, MA 01921.

The **November 22 meeting** will be the final meeting for the year. Kajsa Woodger, daughter of Lodge member Tina Rawson will tell us about her experiences at Swedish Language Camp this summer on a Vasa scholarship. Please come.

Thank you to Andrea and Mike Swanson and their committee, who will provide the refreshments for the meeting. Refreshments will begin at **7:00 p.m.** and will continue with desserts following the meeting, which begins at **7:30 p.m.** Nomination and election of officers for the 2020 term will be held. Please contact Mike Bagnulo if you do not plan on remaining in your current office. Thank you. The Lodge needs your participation.

The **Lucia Rehearsal** will be held on **Saturday, November 23, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Community House**. Please note day and time change. Lucia this year is Anna Carlson of Natick. New children are welcome. Please contact me if you are interested.

The first event for 2020 is our annual **Children's Tree Plundering Party**, which will be held **Sunday, January 12 at 3:00 p.m. at the Community House**. Music, storytelling, dancing around the Christmas tree, gifts, refreshments, and a visit from Tomten are planned. More information and cost will be mailed out in early December. There will be a sign up sheet at the **November 22** Lodge meeting. Flyers will also be available at the Fair.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the **November 22 meeting and at set up on Friday, November 29** as well as at the **Christmas Fair on Saturday, November 30**. And at the **January 12, 2020 Tree Plundering Party**.

Your presence is requested to support and encourage your Lodge and its officers. Best wishes for a peaceful and joyful holiday season. God Jul och Gott Nytt Ar!

In truth and unity,

Linda Christianson, PDM, Chairman



Reminders . . .

- Dues that are paid before December 31 are eligible to win **FREE DUES** for 2020. Pay your dues early and you could be the lucky winner!

Table Chairs and Workers: Please refrain from taking down your displays before the Fair ends at 2 p.m., no matter how much traffic we have. Last minute shoppers find it distracting if we are closing down the displays rather than serving our customers. Thank you.

Jul Marknad (Christmas Marketplace)

YOU CAN HELP BY

- **LENDING A HAND AT SET-UP TIME, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27, AT 5 P.M.**
- **CONTRIBUTING ONE TO FOUR \$5 GIFT GRABS, LABELED FOR MEN, WOMEN, BOYS, OR GIRLS. INCLUDE APPROPRIATE AGES FOR CHILDREN'S GRABS**
- **DONATING BAKED GOODS FOR THE BAKE TABLE. INCLUDE PRICE AND LIST OF INGREDIENTS ON PACKAGE**
- **SIGNING UP TO HELP AT ONE OF THE TABLES ON SATURDAY MORNING.**

Calendar of Events

November

- 23 Refreshments at 7 p.m. Lodge meeting, Travel night, 7:30 p.m.
Desert and coffee served after the meeting.
- 23 Lucia Practice, 11:30 a.m to 1:30 p.m.
- 29 Setup for Jul Fair, 5 p.m.
- 30 Jul Fair, 9 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

December

God Jul!

January, 2020

- 12 Tree Plundering, 3 p.m.
- 25 Lodge meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Hearty Birka Birthday wishes to these members:

. . . in November

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 4 Linda Boylan | 19 Sonja Prior |
| 8 Andrea Holmgren | 24 Ron Holmgren |
| 13 Bob Carlson | 25 Jane Atherton |

. . . in December

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Bob Landoni | 10 Richard Johnson |
| 3 Marilyn Seaberg | 11 Alison Landoni |
| 5 Gus Blomgren | 17 Cynthia Olsen |
| 9 Mary Anne Hawkes | 19 Kari DeLacey |
| 9 Sharon Guidara | 19 Andrea Swanson |

REFRESHMENT COMMITTEES

Travel Night

November 17

Andrea and Mike Swanson,
co-chair

Karin Caves

Sharon and June Guidara

Sheila and Richard Sunman

Marcia Sunman

Sarah Williams

January 7

Marlys Mahajan, chair

Gus, Eric, Greg Blomgren

Denise Esperson,

Mary Anne Hawkes

Mike and Andrea Swanson

Kristen Seashore



... 'round the lodge

New time for Birka gatherings In order for our meetings to end at a more reasonable time, we will be serving refreshments at 7 p.m. Meetings will still start at 7:30, and desserts and coffee will be served after the meeting. If you don't get here before 7:30, you will miss out on the meatballs! So come early! The April meeting will stay at the old 7:30 time, since we have many guests who travel from the western part of the state.

For college age and soon-to-be college age members The Grand lodge, Vasa Order of America, gives out eight \$1,000 scholarships each year. **The deadline for applications is February 15, 2020.** Check the Vasa website for details about the application process.

Jul Fair Flyer Please post the enclosed flyer in a public place to help publicize our Jul Fair. Publicity is a key ingredient to sales!

Website Remember to check Birka Lodge's website. The web address is found below. The website is maintained by Richard Lilja. He has recently done a great job in updating it! Thank you, Richard.

Sick Benefit Fund If you have been a Vasa member for five years or more and have paid your dues, you are entitled to receive assistance with medical expenses from the Grand Lodge. Each member is entitled to receive up to \$3,000. If you would like an application, please contact Recording Secretary, Judy Tanzer.

Change of Address Please notify Recording Secretary, Judy Tanzer, of any address changes, either in writing at 3 Anthony Road, Hamilton, MA 01982, or by phoning her at 978-468-7407. Thank you.

Holiday Treat

For a colorful addition to your holiday table, try these easy-to-make cookies.

Thumbprint Cookies

½ c. butter, softened

¼ c. brown sugar

1 egg yolk

½ tsp vanilla

1 c. white flour

Colorful jams, such as seedless raspberry and apricot

Mix thoroughly butter, brown sugar, egg yolk, and vanilla. Work the flour into the mixture until it holds together. Shape 1-inch balls out of about one teaspoon of dough. Place balls about 1 inch apart on a baking sheet. Then press your thumb deeply into the center of each ball.

Bake in 350° oven for 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove from baking sheet and fill thumbprints with jam.

For a nutty version of this cookie, use ¾ c. finely chopped nuts and the remaining egg white, beaten slightly. Before placing the balls of dough on the baking sheet, dip the top of the balls first in egg white and then chopped nuts. Finish by placing the balls on the baking sheet and pressing your thumb into each one.

Ole Computer Terms

Log On: Making da wood stove hotter

Log Off: Don't add no more wood

Monitor: Keepin an eye on da wood

Download: Getting da wood off da truck

Megahertz: Ven yer not careful getting da firewood

Floppy Disk: Vat yew get from trying tew carry tew much wood

Ram: Dat ting dat splits da wood



Hard Drive: Getting home in da winter time in the snow

Prompt: Vat da mail ain't in da winter time

Windows: Vat yew shut when it's cold outside

Screen: Vat yew shut vens it's black fly season

Byte: Vat dem dang black flies do

Chip: Munchies fer da TV

Microchip: Vats in da bottom of da munchies bag

Modem: Vat yew did tew da hay fields

Keyboard: Where yew hang da keys

Software: Dem dang plastic forks and knives

Mouse: Vat eats da grain in da barn

Mainframe: Holds up da barn roof

Port: Fancy wine

Random Access Memory: Ven yew can't remember vat yew paid fer da rifle, ven yer wife asks

Swedes more often put fish on their plates than before. But every fifth Swede only eats fish two or three times a month, which is much less than the recommendations by Livsmedelsverket (the National Food Agency).

A Christmas Cake Recipe

1. Sample the Johnnie Walker to check quality.
2. Take a large bowl, check the whisky again. To be sure it is the highest quality, pour one level cup and drink.
3. Repeat.
4. Turn on the electric mixer. Beat one cup of butter in a large fluffy bowl.
5. Add one teaspoon of sugar. Beat again.
6. Make sure the whisky is still OK. Try another cup.
7. Turn off the mixerer.
8. Break 2 legs and add to the bowl and chuck in the cup of dried fruit.
9. Mix on the turner.
10. If the fried druit gets stuck in the beaterers pry it loose with a drewscriver.
11. Sample the whisky to check for tonsisticity.
12. Next, sift two cups of salt. Or something.
13. Check the whisky. Now sift the lemon juice and strain your nuts.
14. Add one table.
15. Add a spoon of sugar, or something. Whatever you can find.
16. Greash the oven.
17. Turn the cake tin 350 defrees.
18. Don't forget to beat off the turner.
19. Throw the bowl out of the bleeping window.
20. Check the whisky again and go to bed.

Traditional Christmas in Sweden

Traditional Christmas Greeting: "Glad Jul"

Location: Scandinavia

Tree Type: Traditional

Decorations:

- The heart shaped baskets are woven and maybe made from straw. These baskets are filled with candy for January 13th St Knut's Day.
- The straw ornaments (Juldocka) are handmade figures. They represent children and animals, and date back to a time when the only material available for ornaments was straw.
- The wooden heart symbolizes the belief that everyone is lovable at Christmas time.
- The tissue and cardboard ornaments (Julgrans Karamellar) contain small gifts inside. They are made especially for the children.

Traditions:

Advent begins the holiday season in Sweden four Sundays before Christmas.

Swedish Christians light one candle each week as they await Christmas Eve.

On the 13th of December, towns and families celebrate Santa Lucia Day in honor of the fourth century girl who was martyred for her Christian beliefs. To commemorate her sacrifice, one girl in each family dresses in a long white gown and places a wreath of evergreen branches with four lit candles (sometimes electric today) in her hair. Her siblings dress in white and accompany her while she brings her parents coffee, buns, and cookies in bed. This tradition is sometimes repeated in schools or town squares.

Christmas trees in Sweden are usually not decorated until a day or two before Christmas. Families get together the evening of the 22nd or 23rd to cover them with straw snowflakes, stars and sunbursts, candy, flags, and small gnomes wearing red hats. When candles are lit or lights illuminated on Christmas Eve, the tree is truly a beautiful sight during the dark winter.

The 24th brings to Sweden the lavish Christmas Eve meal often called the smorgasborg. Herring, lutfisk, or salmon usually provide seafood to go with the julskinka, or Christmas ham, that has been boiled, marinated, and baked over the previous several days. In addition, people in Sweden feast on Kottbullar (meatballs), leverpastej (liver and anchovy paste), potatoes, beet salad, and revbenspjal (oven-roasted pork ribs). For dessert, they have mandelmusslor (almond cream tarts), pepparkakor (heart or goat shaped gingerbread), and a creamy rice pudding called risgrynsgröt. There is always just one almond in the pudding, and it is said that whoever finds the almond will be married during the next year.



Valkommen to;
Vasa Order of America's
Birka Lodge #732
A Swedish-American Fraternal Organization

Hamilton -Wenham
Community House (on Rt 1A)
South Hamilton, Massachusetts

Visit or Email us at:
Website: Birka732.com
Email: BIRKALODGE732@GMAIL.COM

The Birka Banner is a bi-monthly newsletter, published by Birka Lodge 732, Vasa Order of America, and on the web as www.birka732.com

Linda Christianson, Chairperson

Marlys Mahajan, Editor

Richard Lilja, Webmaster

SWEDISH YULE FAIR

(Traditional Jul Marknad)

Saturday, November 30th

9:00am-2:00pm



Hamilton/Wenham Community House

(Bay Road Route 1-A)

FREE ADMISSION

Lucia (Bride of Light) 12:00 noon

Scandinavian & American HOLIDAY MUSIC (all day)

LUNCH AT NOON: Assorted, Open-Face Sandwiches

Coffee & Coffee Bread, Glögg & Pepparkakor (all day)

Gifts, Handcrafts, Imported Linens, Ornaments, Jewelry

Cards, Wrapping Paper, Candles, Candle Holders & Rings

Dala Horses, Straw Goats, Jul Tomtes (gnomes) etc

VALKOMMEN!

BIRKA LODGE NO. 732 OF HAMILTON, MASSACHUSETTS

VASA ORDER OF AMERICA

Non-Profit Fraternal Benefit Association

WWW.Birka732.com

