



# THE VASA STAR

## VASASTJÄRNAN

Publication of The Vasa Order of America • Summer 2020



Summer season has been anything but normal. Above, Joe Harbor No. 534 members meet online via Zoom.

### MESSAGE FROM THE GRAND MASTER



DEAR VASA MEMBERS,  
Again, this year is tough for ALL. After events being canceled, we are all saddened and feeling deflated. Stand up and feel refreshed! We cannot let COVID-19 win. We all have to wake up our VASA ENTHUSIASM and charge ahead!

Look at the young members featured in this issue who are going forward in their lives with your assistance. Please continue your help and support.

We are starting to hear that lodges are meeting in gardens and parks and doing meetings via Zoom. That is GREAT. ALL lodges are encouraged

to send articles and pictures to the Vasa Star showing/explaining what you have done along with any comments to share from your meetings. Others want to know.

Nancy and I were planning to attend Iowa-Nebraska #17 and Rocky Moun-

/ continued on p4

#### National Archive News

The Swedish provincial coat of arms helped a creative Vasa member during a long illness. / p3

#### Grand Lodge News

One of our many scholars tells how Swedish music and folk dance has shaped her life. / p4

#### Local Lodge News

During the pandemic, we find ways to make the most of digital opportunities, even with scholarship experiences. / p12

#### Swedish News

Our Swedish brothers and sisters celebrate a most American holiday: Independence Day. / p16





## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

For seven years, the Vasa Star has been published in Nordstjernan. Both organizations are lucky to work together and benefit from each other's unique presence in Swedish America. Nordstjernan is coming up on its 148th birthday (the first issue went to print on Sept. 21, 1872), which makes it America's oldest, continuously published ethnic newspaper—of any immigrant group! Those Swedes—WE Swedes—have lived up to our reputation for being inventive and industrious, persistent and organized, steady and strong for as long as anyone can remember ... and with the Vasa Order of America, that continues.

Even during a pandemic that shut down the world, the VOA continues to make sense of our past, inform decisions for our present and enrich our future. I am impressed to see in this issue (p34-38) how many of VOA's more than 150 local lodges in the United States, Canada and Sweden are showing the integrity and ingenuity of the Swedish spirit by finding ways to "stay Swedish" as much as possible during the coronacoaster that's changed how we do things. Much of this issue shows how a virus might keep an American out of Sweden, but it can't keep the Swedish out of the American!

Popular culture says the children are our future, but the truth is the children

are our present. We are nourishing them NOW, teaching them NOW, instilling in them NOW an appreciation for a very deep and rich history. Case in point is another year's collection of impressive scholarship winners—our young people who are embracing and respecting their Swedish roots NOW. Read one example (p37) of how some managed to make the most of their Swedish scholarship experience, even when the pandemic kept them at home.

Another scholarship winner, whose story you'll learn in the coming months, says her life was changed by her Vasa scholarship; and the VOA is now welcoming her, Christa Svensson, to join the Vasa Star team as the new editor. Yes, that means I'm leaving this post, and I'll miss this particular conduit to my Swedish roots. I thank the kind, wonderful leaders and readers of the Vasa Star for this opportunity over the last number of years. I'll still be here in Swedish America, but it's time to offer this unique opportunity to another eager Swedophile. Christa will bring a lot of love and energy to this position!

As I sign off for the last time, I want to add a huge thanks and virtual hug to the Vasa Star's managing editor, Liza Ekstrand (who will continue in her role and work with Christa). Tack så mycket, Liza! And thanks to all of you in Vasa land – you're wonderful and I wish you all the best!

BÄSTA HÄLSNINGAR,  
AMANDA ÖLSON ROBISON

## ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS



Birthdays - Dorothy Anderson (94!) and Carrie Aldrich. Music by Dani Keiko. / p14



A previous year's SVEA Lodge Valborgsmässoafton celebration (pre-pandemic). / p12



Göteborg No. 452 celebrates the Fourth of July with coffee and cake. / p16



Tucson No. 691 celebrated graduations at the Nordeen's farm. Grad Emma Enos, and the yummy strawberry and caps cake. / p14

## THE VASA STAR

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For our next issue:

**By November 5**

### Christmas Greetings

Staying near while keeping distance is more important than ever: Send your lodge or personal Christmas greetings to  
vasaeditor@gmail.com

### Vasa Star

PO Box 510632  
New Berlin WI 53151-0632

One inch greeting - \$10 Larger greetings - \$25  
**Submit your greeting no later than Nov. 1**

### Vasa Star address change!

Vasa Star's mailing address has changed to:

**Vasa Star**  
**P.O. Box 510632**  
**New Berlin, WI 53151-0632**

Please use this address if you cannot email material (always preferred) or for checks.

## DONATE to the Education & Scholarship Funds

Send your donations to: Vasa Order of America, Joan Graham, Grand Secretary  
5838 San Jose Ave., Richmond, CA 94804

## ARCHIVES NEWS

### A message from the president of Vasa National Archives

DEAR FELLOW VASA MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE VASA ORDER,

Bishop Hill has been impacted by the coronavirus as have all historic sites and non-profit organizations. The Vasa National Archives is taking all the appropriate safety measures but eagerly awaits a time when visitors will return to the village and our building. Many events and activities in the village were canceled or drastically modified in the past several months so there are few visitors to the area.

The successful Heritage Fundraiser demonstrates that our membership remains supportive and continues to donate toward future programs and projects at the Archives. Thank you all. Bishop Hill has endured pandemics in the past. A devastating cholera pandemic came in 1849. Dozens of lives were lost. There are markers in the Bishop Hill area that stand as reminders that people want to preserve the past. Similarly, the Vasa National Archives works to preserve the past and the history of

the Vasa Order of America. When the time comes that we may get back to normal, whatever “normal” will be, please come back to Bishop Hill and visit the Archives. In the meantime, continue taking advantage of the VNA virtually. Recently Vasa National Archives Board Member Emeritus, Sten Hult’s wife, Nancy died following a brief illness. Past District Master Nancy was a devoted Vasa member who along with Sten loved the Archives and all things Swedish. She was often seen greeting visitors

at the Archives and visiting throughout the village. She will be sadly missed by Sten and all of us who loved her.



SINCERELY,  
BILL LUNDQUIST  
PGM, PRESIDENT VASA NATIONAL ARCHIVES

### Treasures from the Archive

GREETINGS VASA SISTERS AND BROTHERS, With the slower pace the summer has brought us, the Vasa National Archive staff gets to spend more time with collections. This month we’d like to share with you the Swedish provincial coat of arms rugs designed by Sigfrid Erickson. Our records state he was a well-known Vasa member with dual membership in

Runeberg No. 137 in Minneapolis and Skandia No. 576 in Chicago.

While recovering from a serious illness and surgery that required a year of hospitalization, Brother Sigfrid designed and made 24 rugs (“rya”) each one showing one of the Swedish provincial coat of arms. This work kept him busy and entertained during

his long recovery. Each rug measures “16x24.” We display the rugs on a circular clothing rack so visitors can easily look at each of them.

This is just one of several collections at the Vasa National Archive featuring the handwork of Vasa members. If you have any questions about our collections, please contact us at 309-927-3898 or VasaArchivist@gmail.com.

KATHY CUFF, MANAGER-ARCHIVIST



Treasures from the Archive: “Rya” rugs design by Sigfrid Erickson.

## GRAND LODGE NEWS

### Updated Instruction Manual

**Have you been elected to an office in your lodge or district and wonder: “Okay, what do I do now? What are the duties of this job?”**

The Vasa Handbook is a handy guide that lays it all out for you, with quotes from the constitution along with helpful hints and additional suggestions; it has been updated with changes made at the past four Grand Lodge conventions and approved by the Grand Lodge Executive Board. Of special interest will be the “How To Do It” section—for example: how to transfer a member from one lodge to another; how to elect delegates; or, how to maintain your Vasa Star mailing list and submit articles to the Vasa Star. This is the final section for the Vasa Handbook that has been updated.

The Vasa Handbook is available to all members but is especially helpful for officers. New members should receive a copy when they are initiated into their lodge. The three main sections include the updated constitution, updated Local Lodge Ritual, and updated Instruction Manual, and are contained in a small white binder/loose-leaf notebook. The handbook, also referred to as the “white book,” is available from Vice Grand Secretary Marlene Patient for \$14, including postage. If you already have the “white book,” each updated section is available for \$3 each. Individual members may order Vasa Handbook material, or the secretary may order multiple copies. Send your order with a check, payable to Vasa Order, to Marlene Patient at 377 River St., Leicester, MA 01524.

SUBMITTED BY JOANIE GRAHAM, GRAND SECRETARY

### GL Culture Facebook Page

#### Vasa New?

That’s the title of a featured article that was born in the ’80s when I wrote a newsletter called “Dansa Me’ Mej!” It was for the Vasa Folkdancers of New York (70 years old this year) and extended family—250 “subscribers”—and it was all cut and paste, no computer, no internet! Oj Oj inte lätt!

The question is still relevant: “Vasa new with you?” A play on words, this is a reminder that there’s a Grand Lodge cultural Facebook page that every Facebook user is invited to check out. It’s where the Grand Lodge co-cultural leaders (Jeanne Eriksson and Kevin DeFeo) are posting ideas, stories, photos, and tips on cultural things to do for your meetings (if you need them)! Many of you have your own Facebook pages and post your own excellent cultural items—please share them with the Grand Lodge page! Please also designate someone in your lodge to be the social media rep to post and visit often the Grand Lodge official pages, cultural and general. They are like a “real time” newsletter. The Grand Lodge is also on Instagram and Twitter. Javisst—we’re with the new millennium! (Chad Widman is GL social media director—send him items to post, make sure they are “shareable.”)

And two more questions: How is everyone doing during the pandemic? Are you starting in-person meetings again? The main thing is to stay safe, be well, and wear your *MUNSKYDD!* Here is a link to visit. Välkomna!

[www.facebook.com/VasaOrderGL](http://www.facebook.com/VasaOrderGL)

SUBMITTED BY IT AND U - JEANNE ERIKSSON (WIDMAN ANDERSEN), GL CO-CULTURAL LEADER & DISTRICT MASTER - NEW YORK DISTRICT #4 "DL4NY



# GRAND LODGE NEWS

## The Grand Master's Message (continued from page 1/ Swedish on page 16)

tain #11 in October, but unfortunately that had to be canceled. Hoping for next year.

On a sad note our long-time editor Amanda has decided to move on. Our best wishes to her in her future endeavors. Good news is that we have hired Christa Svensson, a member of

Pacific Northwest #13, and she will start after this issue.

The GL Co-Cultural Leader, GL Social Media Director and DM & VDM of New York District #4 have a radio podcast called Scandinavian Echoes. One hour of music and stories have aired on the internet weekly. Go to

“Scandinavian Echoes” on Facebook, click LIKE and SHARE with members and friends. If one is not on Facebook, find “Scandinavian Echoes” shows at YouTube.com.

Health is one of the greatest of all treasures. Guard it! Protect it!

Remember the Order needs a **VI-BRANT, ENTHUSIASTIC MEMBERSHIP – GET THE WORD OUT! TV TV TV** (Talk Vasa) with **ENTHUSIASM!**

IN TRUTH AND UNITY,  
ART BJORKNER, GRAND MASTER

## Kinship Center, Sweden and Vasa: What happens now?

The non-profit Kinship Center was founded in 1960 as the Emigrant Register by Värmlands Hembygdsförbund and the Vasa Lodge Karlstad #632.

At the end of 2019, the municipality of Karlstad decided to no longer make a contribution to the center. This meant the business had to be closed; archives and libraries, however, will be at Värmlandsarkiv in Karlstad. In other words, it is saved, though some activities—including contacts with Swedish America—will cease. The Vasa Order’s archives that were at the Kinship Center have been transferred to the National Archives in Gothenburg.

The Karlstad Lodge of the Order of Vasa will continue the work with the Swedish-American of the Year. Here, of course, we wish continued support from our Vasa friends across the country!

The Kinship Center has hosted the Northern District archives. This means the material that lodges have submitted to the center has been scanned, mainly proto-

cols and letters. The scanned material is now available from the executive council.

Members of the Executive Council DL19 traveled to Karlstad in May to go through all Vasa material, to clean, sort and pack boxes. With the help of SLD Einar Savolainen Grön and MSLER Connie Grön, all boxes were shipped to the archive in Gothenburg, where it’s now stored.

Many of us will miss this special place. One stepped through the door with a sense of joy, usually welcomed by Gunnel Lunde and then by the wonderful hosts Erik and Elinor Gustavson—a big, warm thank you for everything you have arranged and done for us all these years.

Thank you also all Vasa friends who have supported the center!

Karlstad and Norrköping, Sweden 06.10.2020

ERIK GUSTAVSON, DH DL19/ O LL632 KARLSTAD MAGGIE AHLIN THELIN, DM DL19

## Vasa Star – Article & Picture Submission Guidelines

***Submit articles in a format that promotes FUTURE events.***

Please submit articles that promote future events. Your 150-200 word article should include information about events that will take place within 60 days after the issue’s deadline or within the next 90-180 days. There is nothing wrong with covering events more than once; big events such as milestone anniversaries and convention dates can be announced a year or more in advance.

***Submit pictures of successful PAST events, include names for captions.***

Submitted photos should be large, clear images that represent past events, with a caption describing the event, and naming the people in the picture. It is not necessary for readers to know the day or the week or exact date. Lodges typically submit 1-2 pictures (you can send more, and we will select the best ones, but we can never guarantee they will all be published). Please email them to vasaeditor@gmail.com in jpg-format for best quality.

### ***Memorials***

Small obituary, max. 40-45 words: **\$10.00**  
Large obituary, max. 50-120 words: **\$25.00**

Memorials or obituary formats will only be listed under the “Memoriam” segment. Submit obituaries in electronic format via email if possible and follow the guidelines to the left for size. It is easier to count words as opposed to guess how much text fits into an “inch” space. Do not include obituaries as part of your lodge news. No photos for this section will be accepted. Checks for payment can be sent to the P.O. Box.

### ***Deadlines***

Nov 15, 2020  
January 30, 2021  
April 30, 2021

Submitting photos in preferable electronic format (.jpg) and word documents have the deadlines listed here with their suggested timeframes for covering future events:  
The issue with deadline Nov. 15, 2020 promotes events from Dec. 1, 2020–March, 2021;  
The issue with deadline Jan. 30, 2021 promotes events from March 1, 2021–June, 2021 etc.

### ***Submit to:***

vasaeditor@gmail.com or  
Vasa Star, PO Box 510632  
New Berlin WI 53151-0632

Submit ALL information to the email or street address at left. Make checks or money orders payable to Vasa Star (when applicable) and mail to the P.O. Box. No cash please.

# WINNERS OF THE 2020 SCHOLARSHIPS

The Grand Lodge is pleased to announce the winners of this year's College or Vocational School Scholarship Awards



**Heidi Abrahamsen**  
*Olympic Lodge No. 235 /  
 DL New York No. 4*  
 Ellis Hilner Scholarship, \$1,000

Heidi is majoring in architecture at New York Institute of Technology. Heidi joined the Vasa Order at age 14 and has been very active in her local and district lodges. Heidi joined Barnklubben Elsa Rix at the age of 3 and has participated in many events including serving as Miss Sweden-Day (2017-18). Heidi is captain of the Cross Country and Track and Field Team and a member of the Student Athletic Advisory Board. In addition, she is a member of the National Society of Leadership and Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society.

Heidi is majoring in architecture at New York Institute of Technology. Heidi joined the Vasa Order at age 14 and has been very active in her local and district lodges. Heidi joined Barnklubben Elsa Rix at the age of 3 and has participated in many events including serving as Miss Sweden-Day (2017-18). Heidi is captain of the Cross Country and Track and Field Team and a member of the Student Athletic Advisory Board. In addition, she is a member of the National Society of Leadership and Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society.

**Max Garrett Andrews**  
*John Banner Lodge No. 36 /  
 DL Rhode Island No. 3*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Max graduated with high honors from Exeter-West Greenwich Regional High School and will begin his college studies this year. He hopes to attend the University of Rhode Island and focus on mechanical engineering. Max has been involved with the Vasa Order since birth. His great-grandparents, grandparents, parents and family members have a long history of involvement and hard work in John Banner and Little Rody Vasa Park in RI. Max shares close ties with his Swedish family in the Stockholm and Karlstad areas. He is a true ambassador of the Vasa Order of America.



**Jeremy Braneke-Hite**  
*Mayflower Lodge No. 445 /  
 DL Pacific Southwest No. 15*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Jeremy attends Santa Monica College and is studying computer science. Jeremy has volunteered hundreds of hours at Destination Science Camp where he has a very high recommendation from the site director. Jeremy's strong family ties have enabled him to spend a great deal of time in Sweden. He finds the Vasa Order reminds him of his roots and makes him feel more connected to his heritage—he attends local lodge meetings where he always volunteers his help. He also frequents Vasa Park in Agoura Hills, volunteering his time and resources. Jeremy's future plans include building a business, raising a family and continuing to help grow and develop Vasa youth programs and community.



Matthew attends the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA where he is studying history with a concentration on peace and conflict resolution. Matthew has been named on the Dean's List with first and second honors. Matthew is president of Holy Cross History Club and chief editor for "The Spire" student newspaper. He also does volunteer work with St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church. Matthew shares any available time in his busy schedule to attend meetings at Nordic 611.



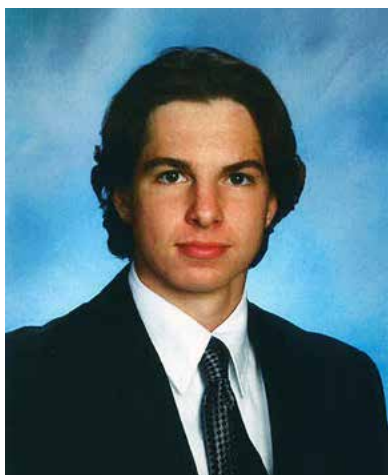
**Matthew James Anderson**  
*Nordic Lodge No. 611 /  
 DL Massachusetts No. 2*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

**Alexandra Bjorkner**  
*Sveaborg Lodge No. 446 /  
 DL New Jersey No. 6*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Alexandra attends the University of Alabama, majoring in occupational therapy. She is on the Dean's List and is certified in sensory training for special needs. Alexandra has spent many summers with her grandparents Art and Nancy Bjorkner at their home in New Jersey and Vasa Park where she volunteers her time and resources. Alexandra is a member of the UAB Golden Girls Dance Team. She also volunteers at Canterbury United Methodist Church, working in the nursery. Alexandra's future plans include obtaining a PhD in occupational therapy and specializing in the field of children's needs.



Owen attends Manhattan College in Riverdale, NY where he received the Chancellor Award as well as grants; he is studying mechanical engineering and is a member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers club. Owen received awards in academic excellence for four consecutive years during his high school education. He volunteers time with the local firefighters as well his church. Owen's family has a long and devoted history in the Vasa Order of America. He has volunteered many hours with his family at Vasa Park in Mount Olive, NJ, including reconstruction of the pool and helping his grandmother in the kitchen. His future plans include property management in a New York City real estate corporation.



**Owen Brooks**  
*Frithiof Lodge No. 63 /  
 DL New Jersey No. 6*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000



**Bryan Casado**

*Nordic Lodge No. 660 /  
DL Pacific Southwest No. 15*  
Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Bryan is attending California Polytechnic University, Pomona where he has earned academic excellence and is majoring in criminal justice and administration of justice. Bryan also serves in the United States Navy Reserve and works with the Veterans Resource Center in Whittier. Bryan has been involved with The Vasa Order since childhood and is recognized for his hard work by his local and district lodge members. He has helped with lodge activities, including setting up, dishwashing, cooking and preparing food for the pancake breakfast and lutefisk dinners, and volunteers his time and resources at Vasa Park in Agoura, CA. Bryan's future plans include getting a Master's degree in public policy and pursuing a career in law enforcement.



**Emma Rose Chiarelli**

*Golden Valley Lodge No. 616 /  
DL Pacific Southwest No. 15*  
Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Emma begins her college education at the University of South Florida, Tampa, where she will study to be a physician's assistant. Emma graduated from F.W. Buchholz High School in Gainesville, FL where she was on the honor roll and National Honor Society. Emma volunteers her spare time to Abiding Savior Lutheran Church, UF Health Rehabilitation Hospital, coaching girls' gymnastics at the YMCA and as an assistant elementary school teacher. She is an accomplished competitive gymnast, having started competition at age 7 and rising through the ranks and placing 2nd in floor and 5th in vault during the Eastern National Team Competitions. Her plans for the future are to work in the medical field.



**Matthew Cleveland**

*Viljan Lodge No. 349 /  
DL Lake Michigan No.8*  
Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Matthew will begin his college studies at the University of North Dakota where he will major in commercial aviation and unmanned aircraft systems. Matthew has earned the high rank of Eagle Scout and was named Rotary Student of the Month in Illinois. He has also received honors from Delta Airlines National Flight Academy, is an ISAE State Scholar and received a Congressional Recognition certificate. Matthew's family has a long-standing history of involvement with the Vasa Order—he has been attending local lodge meetings since he was a young child and continues to volunteer his time to Lodge Viljan. Matthew's future plans include getting a degree in commercial aviation and to become a commercial airline pilot.



Elizabeth is majoring in international and comparative politics and minoring in international law at the American University of Paris. She is on the Provost



List for academic excellence. Elizabeth's future plans include pursuing a Master's degree in the field of human rights and development. She has been a member of the Vasa Order since age 14, has served as a delegate to her district lodge and has attended national conventions as a guest.

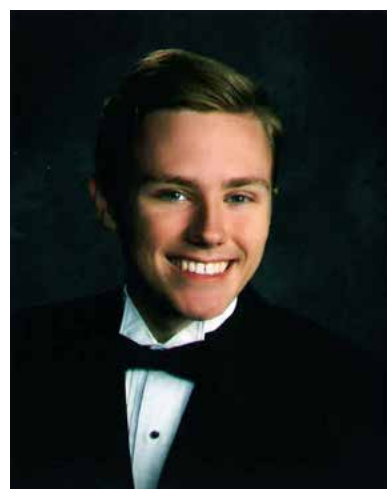
**Elizabeth Cleveland**  
*Viljan Lodge No. 349 /  
DL Lake Michigan No.8*  
Grand Lodge  
Scholarship \$1,000



**Amelia Colafati**

*Tegner Lodge No. 109 /  
DL New York No.4*  
Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Amelia will be pursuing an education in global affairs and astrophysics. Amelia is a member of the top level Empire State Youth Orchestra (violin); she has studied violin since 2006, piano since 2005 and is vice president of the Tri-M Music Honor Society. Amelia has served as president to the Mock Trial Club in high school, and president of the Model UN clubs well as the robotics team. She also volunteers her time playing her violin at her church. Amelia has attended Sjolunden Language Camp, Nobel Conference and Gustavus Academy for Faith, Science and Ethics where she was a Senior Fellow 2019.



**Erik Jacobson**

*Drott Lodge No. 168 /  
DL Pennsylvania No.9*  
Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Erik will begin college at University of Virginia and plans on studying urban planning and sustainable development. Erik graduated T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, VA where he was an AP Scholar with distinction in the National Honor Society. He was awarded the Louis Armstrong Jazz Award for his excellence in the All Virginia Jazz Band and District Band. Erik has served on the Student Conservation Association, Bee Club, Track and Field and has volunteered his time as a famine relief worker. He is regularly involved with his local lodge Christmas Bazaar and volunteers during Midsummer celebrations. He has been a steadfast Vasa member.



# Grand Lodge Scholarship Essay

by **Kaelin Den Hartog**



## How has traditional Swedish music and folk dance influenced your involvement with the Vasa Order?

Traditional Swedish music and folk dance has influenced my involvement with the Vasa Order because it was one of the first aspects of Vasa that I was introduced to. I became a member of the Children's Club at 6 years old, which is where I began learning about Swedish traditions, heavily focusing on music. Vasa Park has always been a place that embodies the culture and traditions of the Swedish culture especially through traditional Swedish music and folk dance. Every Lucia Day pageant I was in was followed by a series of Swedish folk dances. Performing them year after year was something I looked forward to.

I have been exposed to traditional Swedish music and folk dance since I was a very young girl. At the age of 6, I was a part of my very first Lucia Day pageant and I continued on with the celebration until I was crowned as Lucia at the age of 16. Since then, my family and I have continued to attend the Lucia Day celebration and it has become a part of our holiday traditions. The songs we would sing during the celebration have become a part of the Christmas carols we listen to during the holiday season. These songs hold a special place in all of our hearts because it reminds us of the great times we have when attending the festival. After the Lucia pageant, everyone gathers around the Julgran and begins the traditional folk dances. Some of my favorite childhood memories are composed of these dances and the good times that my family, and the other families that were attending, would have. The smiles and laughs that were let out during the folk dances are memories that always bring a smile to my face when I reflect back on those times because of the fun we would be having.

For as long as I can remember, my family and I have been making day trips to Vasa Park in Agoura Hills, California. When we make the trip up to Vasa Park, especially during the Midsummer celebrations, all of the attendees would gather around the maypole and begin traditional folk dances. These folk dances that are performed are a way to incorporate everyone into the celebration. As you look around, you see generations of families dancing together and laughing. You can see older generations teaching the young, keeping family traditions alive or even starting new ones! Music and dance have the ability to bring people together in a new way.

I also attended the first-ever children's Vasa summer camp, Viking Village, in 2006 and again in 2008. Although we went to a normal camp during the day, at night we would learn about our Swedish heritage. All of the kids came from different lodges and we all knew different folk dances and we would teach them to each other. While learning new folk dances from the other kids, we all grew closer. That was the first night of camp that I made so many friends and it was because the folk dancing brought us together.

When I was 16 in the summer of 2015, I went to the Concordia Language Camp, Sjölund, in Bemidji, Minnesota. There, I was submerged in the Swedish language and culture. I learned so much more than I was expecting about the traditions of the Nordic people and their ways of life. When I first arrived, I was very overwhelmed and timid because I had never been in that type of situation before. While being there, I was exposed to so much Swedish music that I had never heard, the music made me feel so much more comfortable. While listening, I would begin to focus on the music and rather than feeling overwhelmed, I became very comfortable at the camp. Music has the ability to change your whole mood and outlook on the current situation that you are in. We would be woken up every morning to the sound of Swedish music filling the cabins. When I left the camp, I downloaded some of my favorite songs to my phone and when they appear on my shuffle I am always brought back to the great times I had at Sjölund. During my time at Sjölund, for my extra activity, I joined the choir group where we would sit and sing and learn traditional Swedish folk music. The classes were always so fun and upbeat and the songs would encourage us to look up words that we did not know and expand our vocabulary. The Swedish music and folk dance that we learned there has had a positive impact on my life. Music has the ability to attach memories with the songs you were listening to at a certain point in your life. With the Swedish music that I have been exposed to, I have nothing but positive memories attached to them!

While growing up, traditional Swedish music and folk dance have been something that my family and I have valued. I became involved in the Lucia pageant at a young age where the songs and pageant have become a part of our holiday traditions. We have visited VASA Park and participated in the folk dances with the entire park and finally, when I was at Sjölund music played a very important role throughout my time there. Traditional Swedish and folk dances bring me back to the great times that I have had with the Vasa Order and brings a smile to my face. The songs remind me of why Vasa is important and encourages me to become more involved in the organization. I look forward to learning more about my Swedish culture and am excited to pass it down to the next generation.

*Kaelin Den Hartog*



**Kaelin Den Hartog**  
*Evening Star Lodge No. 426 /  
 DL Pacific Southwest No. 15*  
 Bo & Sigrid Bjorling  
 Scholarship \$1,000

Kaelin is attending Michigan State University where she is studying business in the field of hospitality. Kaelin has also received honors for her minor in Spanish. Kaelin is a very active member in her lodge and as volunteer at Vasa Park in California. She takes part in Midsummer celebrations and was a member of the Morning Star Children's Club for 10 years, serving as Lucia in 2012. Kaelin's plans for the future include becoming the general manager of a hotel.





**Grace Johnson**  
*Bishop Hill Lodge No. 683 /  
 DL Lake Michigan No.8*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Grace attends Butler University, Indianapolis, IN where she is majoring in psychology with a minor in criminology. She is a member of Alpha Phi Omega and volunteers her time planting trees in the local neighborhood, working in a food pantry and in the local library to send letters to troops overseas. She is also a member of Bulldogs into the Streets, a volunteer team that cleans up parks and neighborhoods. Grace's family has a very long history in Bishop Hill Lodge, where she served as Lucia, helps with the pea soup and pancake dinners and is very highly regarded by her fellow lodge members. Grace even attends Vasa meetings with Svea Lodge 253 in Indianapolis while she is away at school.



**Benjamin Kramer**  
*Linde Lodge No. 492 /  
 DL Lake Michigan No. 8*  
 District Lodge No. 8  
 Scholarship \$1,000

Ben is studying at Yale University in New Haven, CT where he is a member of the Scandinavian Society and plays the clarinet in the Yale Concert Band. His plans for the future include grad school and eventually working as an educator of music and language. Ben has worked as a language teacher and counselor at Sjolunden, Concordia Language Village immersion program. He has also worked as a volunteer course contributor and forum moderator for the popular language education platform Duolingo where his work has directly impacted 1.2 million people learning Swedish through this platform. Ben is an active member in his local Vasa lodge where he has served as a leader of children's activities. He is dedicated to his work in preserving and promoting Swedish culture and heritage.

**Catherine Johnson**  
*Viljan Lodge No. 349 /  
 DL Lake Michigan No. 8*  
 Edith Gauch Trust  
 "Klinglof Scholarship" \$1,000



Catherine is attending Illinois State University where she is studying education. Catherine has been a Vasa member since 2017 and participated in the children's club since age 7. She has been involved with the club's "cultural corner," teaching others about language, cooking, clothing and traditional culture of the Scandinavian countries. Catherine volunteers her time and resources to church groups, serves meals to the homeless, and has spent countless hours each summer on mission trips helping with home repairs, river clean-up, building ADA ramps and working with troubled children. Her future plans include completing her degree and working in school systems with underprivileged children.

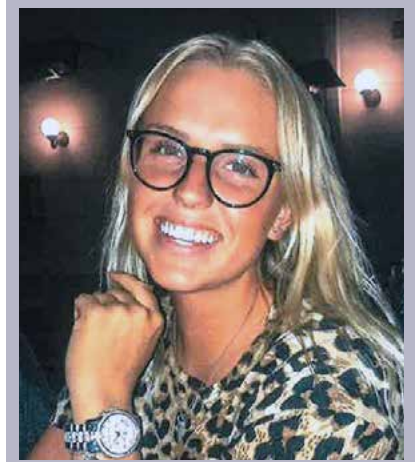


**Edén Ladouceur**  
*Pioneer Lodge No. 506 /  
 DL Rhode Island No. 3*  
 Oscar and Mildred Larson  
 Scholarship \$1,000

Edén is attending Roger Williams University in Bristol, RI where she is studying forensic science. Edén made the Dean's List in her fall semester and held honor roll status every quarter during her high school education. Edén has been appointed by Pioneer Lodge to serve as a representative at Little Rhody Vasa Park and has contributed many hours of service to her local and district lodges. Edén's mother (Robyn) is currently District Master and her father (Jim) is a PDM and current DL Secretary. Edén's plans for the future are to obtain a degree in forensic science and then apply to medical school and complete training (a 15-year commitment) to become a medical examiner.

**Elina Linner**  
*Desert Viking No. 682 /  
 DL Pacific Southwest No. 15*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Elina is studying at San Diego State University where she is majoring in economics. Her plans for the future are to work in the luxury real estate market. Born in Malmö, Sweden, Elina went to school in Alstorp and Löddeköpinge through her sophomore year in high school. She was chosen to be Lucia in 2017 and had the honor of including several close friends from school. In California, Elina has contributed community service as a volunteer at Ronald Regan Elementary School where she helped a young Swedish girl who had just moved to the U.S. with understanding English and assignments as well as helping her make new friends and become part of her class. Elina has been an active member of Desert Viking Lodge.



Anna is double majoring in sociology and art history at Portland State University. Her future plans include completing grad school and finding her vocation in an art gallery or museum. Anna is fluent in three languages (English, Norwegian and German), having lived and attended schools in both Norway and Germany. She graduated from an international school with honors and has displayed her artwork at their annual art show. Anna is interning at Tempo Gallery and is a member of First Lutheran Church in Astoria where she serves as communion assistant, choir member and youth group volunteer.

**Anna Kienberger**  
*Nobel Lodge No. 184 /  
 DL Pacific Northwest No. 13*  
 Gladys & Russell Birtwistle  
 Scholarship \$1,000







**Elsa Lorieul**  
*Olympic Lodge No. 235 /  
 DL New York No.4*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Elsa will attend the University of Louisville where she will be studying equine business and management. Elsa has received Silver and Bronze Awards with the Girl Scouts of America, National Honor Society business and science, as well as Honor Society leadership in physical education. Elsa has a vast working knowledge in thoroughbred horse racing. She has spent

significant time in this industry and has become an expert photographer in it. She also immersed herself in training and other aspects of the industry and plans to pursue equine and business management as a career. Elsa has been a member of Elsa Rix #1 folkdance group since age 6, became a member of the Vasa Order at age 14 and served as Lucia in 2018. Elsa has contributed an enormous amount of work and resources to the Vasa Order and is an accomplished folk dancer, has participated in countless Swedish events in the metropolitan NY area and has also served on a District Lodge level as an installing team officer.



**Julia McGowan**  
*Desert Viking Lodge No. 682 /  
 DL Pacific Southwest No.15*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Julia will begin her college education this year and plans to study psychology and physical therapy. She graduated Xavier College Preparatory High School – she was in the National Honor Society as an AP Scholar with honors, she earned the Open Growth Award, was most improved varsity dance team member and rookie of the year in varsity dance. Julia has been a member of the Girl Scouts of America since kindergarten and volunteers her time to Coachella rescue mission, the Narrow Door Food Pantry, and traveled to Appalachia, West Virginia to volunteer on a small farm. Julia’s family has deep roots in the Vasa Order, and she has participated as Lucia and various events since age 5. She has embraced her heritage through her family, travels to Sweden and consistently shares her cultural experiences with those around her. She has attended summer camp at Vasa Park in Agoura Hills and volunteers there, too. Julia’s future plans include a career in physical therapy.

**Emily McGowan**  
*Desert Viking Lodge No. 682 / DL  
 Pacific Southwest No.15*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Emily attends Ohio State University where she is currently majoring in health sciences; she made the Dean’s List this past fall. Emily was salutatorian at Xavier High School when she graduated and received the Committee to Justice Award and The Palms to Pines Rotary Club Award. Emily has joined the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority, flying doctors and is interning at Eisenhower Health during the summer. She has volunteered considerable time to the medical care of migrant workers and aiding nurse practitioners to translate and provide care and resources. Emily and her family travel to Sweden to celebrate their cultural heritage and are very devoted to the Vasa Order. She has served on several occasions as Lucia, worked with her local and district lodges since age 5 and has an exceptional appreciation for her cultural upbringing and involvement in our organization. Emily’s future plans include completing a medical degree to become a dermatologist and open her own practice



**Sara Melendez**  
*Karl XII Lodge No. 103 /  
 DL Connecticut No. 1*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Sara is studying at Loyola University where she is majoring in neuroscience. She has been named to the Dean’s List and is a member of the Loyola University, Chicago Honors Program. Sara has done research with the University of Chicago on diffusing large B cell lymphoma and has been working rounds with doctors in hospitals and during clinic hours. Sara volunteers as a homework helper in Chicago area schools and is a hard-working Vasa member who has great interest in her studies of Scandinavian culture and history. She has attended Midsummer Dag at Vasa Park in Meridan, CT. Her plans for the future are to attend medical school and specialize in neonatology or obstetrics/gynecology.

**Sophia Martinez**

*Phoenix Lodge No. 677 /  
 DL Arizona No. 21*  
 Irma and Knute Carlson  
 Scholarship \$1,000



Sophie is studying at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN. She has focused on her passion for language and global studies. Sophie studied violin for 9 years and got involved with the Vasa Order beginning at age 4 when she was a member of Tucson Lodge 691’s Barn Ringen Children’s Dance Group. She performed every year at the Tucson Meet Yourself Fair and Nordic Fest. She has participated in Lucia since her earliest recollections for both Phoenix Lodge 677 and Tucson Lodge 691 and was crowned Lucia of Tucson 691 in 2017. Sophie has attended Sjolunden Language camp for nine summers with the last four as high school credits. She hopes to become a counselor at Sjolunden. Her future plans include Scandinavian studies and working with people with special needs, helping animals and learning more about global culture.

**Keely McMacken**

*Desert Viking Lodge No. 682 / DL  
 Pacific Southwest No. 15*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000



Keely is studying at Graceland University in Lamoni, IA where she is majoring in elementary education. She is an academic honors student and earned the President’s Award, House Council and Scholar Athlete awards. Keely is actively involved with peer mentoring, house student council leadership and

women’s soccer, and volunteers at the Valley Restart Homeless Shelter and is a youth soccer coach. Keely has been involved with Swedish programs for many years and serves her district as Young Adult Liaison. Her plans include pursuing a Master’s degree while teaching elementary school.



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**Jon Erik Moyles**  
*Glen T Seaborg Lodge No.719 /  
 DL Pacific Southwest No.15*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Jon Erik attends Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa, CA and is majoring in business administration with a concentration on marketing. He has received honors recognition at Orange Coast, the AP Scholar Award and the student government Director of the Semester Award. Jon Erik is an Eagle Scout and served as a mentor

for the Boy Scouts after earning his eagle rank. As a young boy and long before becoming a member of the Vasa Order, Jon Erik regularly attended meetings and events with his local lodge and at Vasa Park in Agoura, including Viking Summer Camp, Midsummer and Lucia Festivals where he recalls starting out as a star boy. He is very highly regarded by his fellow lodge members and is described as having great kindness and appreciation for others. Jon Erik has devoted significant time and resources to grow our organization.

**Amy Renne**  
*Arlington Lodge No.62 /  
 DL New Jersey No.6*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000



Amy attends Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, NJ where she is majoring in physics and mathematics. She has received Deans List honors every semester. Amy is an accomplished athlete and is the president and founder of Stevens Barbell Team, a collegiate power lifting team, and will compete in USAPL College Nationals. Amy volunteers with Habitat for Humanity and a great deal of time with Emergence Church where she is the main keyboardist. Amy has grown up in Vasa Park, Mount Olive, NJ and has spent countless hours volunteering and attending lodge and park events. She worked as a lifeguard and assisted in a very substantial rebuilding of the swimming pool. Amy's future plans include earning a PhD in astrophysics and electrical engineering and hopes to work for NASA, DOE or space energy research company.



**Melissa Pearson**  
*Nordikfolk Lodge No. 761 /  
 DL Lake Michigan No. 8*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Melissa is attending Purdue University Northwest. Her involvement in the Vasa Order of America is a very central part of her life, Swedish traditional music and folk dance have been part of Melissa's life for as long as she can remember. Melissa has been a steadfast member of Nordikfolk 761, participating in almost every aspect and event. Her love of her Scandinavian heritage and Scandinavian art is very impressive. Melissa's future plans include becoming an elementary school teacher.

**Robert Prasso**  
*Olympic Lodge No. 235 /  
 DL New York No. 4*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Robert is attending Loyola University New Orleans where he is majoring in international business. He is on the Dean's List and in Kappa Alpha Pi professional business fraternity. Robert has been very involved in the Vasa Order of America where he unofficially joined Barnklubben Elsa Rix#1 at age 11 months; he officially joined at age 3 and has performed continuously and took on the role of youth organizational leader as a teenager. Robert helps the leaders during performances, practices and district conventions, and has been a strong and positive role model for the younger members. Robert is very proud of his Swedish heritage and has served as Cultural Ambassador to Olympic Lodge 235. Roberts's future plans include working for an international based company.



**Danielle Rizzuto**  
*Stenland Lodge No.727 /  
 DL New York No.4*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Danielle is studying cyber security and hopes to eventually work for the FBI in the cyber security field. She volunteers as a teacher's assistant and participates in theater, volleyball, bowling and horseback riding. Danielle began attending children's group Lucia programs at the age of 2 and has stayed involved her whole life. She began as a tomte and has served as Lucia, she has assisted the Lucia program director with teaching and helping younger members and taken on many roles of responsibility. She has also been a reader for several years, educating the audience about Nordic culture and history. She feels that Vasa youth can play a role in holding office, which will allow them to feel closer to the organization and compelled to talk about Vasa with others. She believes the work ethic of holding an office can help one grow as a role model and this behavior will continue throughout life.



**Brendon Tomky**  
*Nordik Folk Lodge No.761 /  
 DL Lake Michigan No.8*  
 Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

Brendon attends Purdue University Northwest and is studying mechanical engineering. He has enrolled in new advanced programs resulting in increased class time and enabling him to have additional hands-on opportunities. Brendon's professors write of his eagerness to go above and beyond. He is an Eagle Scout and has served the highest youth leadership position of Senior Patrol Leader with the Boy Scouts of America. In addition, Brendon devotes time to Immanuel Presbyterian Church where he constructed a new audio-visual center as part of his eagle project. Brandon's future plans are to pursue a career in the engineering automotive industry.



Olivia attends the University of California, Davis where she is studying design and is on the Dean's List. Olivia received an A+ in the very difficult course of structural fashion design. Her professor Gozde Goncu-Berk, PhD at UC Davis writes



**Olivia Siobhan Simms**  
Tegner Lodge No.149 /  
DL Golden Gate No.12  
Grand Lodge Scholarship \$1,000

of her outstanding achievements and commitments to learning. Olivia's extra-curricular activities could fill a long page and includes working as a note taker for USD Student Disability, Dougherty Valley National Honor Society, California Scholarship Federation, Tony LaRussa Animal Rescue, Blackhawk Swim Team, Girls Scouts of America Ambassador Silver and Bronze, and high school choir council. Olivia has participated in Tegner Lodge as Lucia, the tri-annual picnic, Maid of Honor at Midsummer at Svedal, Tegner anniversary and was awarded the Muriel Beroza Writing Award at Midsummer. Her future plans include earning a master's degree in New York and working in the fashion industry.

## The Grand Lodge 2021 Scholarship and Essay Contest

*The Grand Lodge of the Vasa Order of America offers the following to students attending or planning to attend institutions of higher education.*

***Applicants for the above scholarships must have become a Vasa member prior to February 15, 2020. Applications are available at the Vasa website until January 15, 2021.***

***To be eligible, the following items must be postmarked no later than February 15, 2021 to be considered.***

1. Completed application with enclosures MUST be postmarked no later than 15 February 2021.
2. Complete "OFFICIAL" transcripts of grades through the first half of the senior year for high school students or fall semester of current academic year for college students.
3. Current photo headshot (at least 4"x6") or email a digital headshot photo to [vgm@vasaorder.org](mailto:vgm@vasaorder.org).
4. A letter of recommendation from applicant's Local Lodge with date of initiation.
5. Letters of recommendation from two personal references dated within last six months.
6. A letter of reference from your Dean, Principal, Teacher or Counselor, dated within last six months.
7. An original, typed essay, not to exceed 1,000 words. Cannot have been submitted in prior years.

**Please put in one envelope if possible. Choose an essay subject from the following list:**

1. What do you consider to be a role youth can and should play in Vasa?
2. If you have visited a Nordic Country, what was the most impressive element of your visit and why?
3. How has traditional Swedish music and folkdance influenced your involvement with the Vasa Order?
4. What is your favorite Scandinavian Holiday and how has it been passed through your family?
5. Describe your Local Vasa Lodge and how it has played a role in your life.
6. Within the Nordic countries, choose a popular tourist attraction and provide your thoughts on its appeal.
7. What Nordic invention appeals to you as being most important to mankind and why?

**AWARDS ARE PAYABLE TO** the institution in which the student is enrolled or accepted for enrollment. To qualify for the College or Vocational School Scholarship, a student needs to be enrolled in an accredited vocational school or institution of higher learning, taking no less than six (6) credits per semester or eight (8) credits per quarter in the academic year immediately following the award. In extraordinary circumstances, on petition to the Grand Lodge Scholarship Committee, payment may be postponed for a period not to exceed two years.

**John Hanright, Vice Grand Master**  
47 Scandia Rd.  
Hackettstown, NJ 07840

**Phone: (973) 262-2412**  
**E-mail: [vgm@vasaorder.org](mailto:vgm@vasaorder.org)**

## DISTRICT LODGE NEWS

### District Lodge New Jersey No 6

Greetings. I'm writing this just after Midsommar. I hope all Vasa members and families are healthy and safe from COVID-19. Our state, like many, was hit hard by the pandemic, especially our seniors and veterans in long-term care facilities. My condolences to those who have lost loved ones to this terrible virus.

The restrictions on gatherings caused us to cancel our memorial service to honor members who died last year. We had a low-key celebration of Midsommar and cancelled our Golden Colony Luncheon recognizing 50-year members and those celebrating 50th wedding anniversaries. Our Friday Night Dinners were carry-outs to keep our members safe. Covid has also dealt a financial blow to our beautiful Vasa Park. Events bringing revenue have been canceled. We also cancelled our wonderful Labor Day weekend Scanfest; this event can bring 5,000 people to taste Scandinavian delicacies, enjoy traditional dances and music by well-know artists, cheer on Viking games and shop for imports. We are looking forward to Scanfest 2021!

Because of the pandemic, our annual convention in Cape May was cancelled; district officers and Vasa Park Board members will extend their terms another year until 2021. Luckily June 22 brought a relaxation of restrictions, allowing 100-people gatherings with social distancing. Our pool and patio bar are now open, and our amazing pool committee is keeping everyone safe within guidelines. Friday Dinners are served on our patio.

NJ District is also home to GM Art Bjorkner and VGM and Park President Jack Hanright. At our Board of Trustee meeting Jack reminded us that our dedication and sweat equity will keep us going. Because of our Viking spirit Vasa Park will thrive as will our Grand, District and Local lodges despite COVID-19.

Stay safe, stay healthy everyone!

SUBMITTED BY BEVERLY BLAKE



*Vasa Park Pool Director Dawna Renne, with mask at the ready, insuring pool goers are safe and within CDC guidelines.*



# LOCAL LODGE NEWS

## Thule No. 127

JAMESTOWN-FALCONER, NY / The first meeting of the year wasn't until July, due to the world health situation. The meeting was held at the Falcon's Nest in Falconer, with social distancing and masks. Three new members were welcomed by Vice Chairman Sipos, who administered the Lodge Oath and welcomed the members. A corn roast (with social distancing) was planned for late August. Tom Eckberg is the lodge chairman and Susan W. Sipos is the vice chairman; Diane Shaw is the lodge chaplain, Loretta Smith is the treasurer and Bernice Veights is the event organizer. Thule Lodge encourages everyone to stay healthy in these uncertain times. "God dag" to all.



Welcome to new members Norman Carlson (left), Nancy Jones and David Erickson.

SUBMITTED BY JOHN SIPOS

## Tegner No. 149

OAKLAND, CA / We have been having Zoom meetings on our regular meeting night, the third Thursday of each month. In April, Susan Weissenborn gave a presentation on the differences in raising children in Sweden vs the United States. In May, Richard Orlando gave a presentation on the wildflowers of Sweden, and at another meeting the history of the lawn game, kubb. During a summer program, everyone shared special Midsummer memories. In each Zoom meeting, everyone has the chance to tell how they are coping with quarantine, whether they are healthy and getting food and other necessary items, and how they are spending their days. We have shared updates on the availability of Sveadal, the Swedish resort in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and have been looking forward to August's Crawfest, sponsored by Nordic House.

SUBMITTED BY KEN WEISSENBORN



SVEA Lodge on a museum trip early in 2020 before the COVID-19 lockdown.

## Svea No. 348

SAN JOSE, CA / Precluded from having face-to-face meetings due to the COVID-19 social distancing orders, SVEA, under the direction of Chairperson Victoria Fedor Thurman, met in May via Zoom. We even included the business aspect but mostly we really enjoyed "seeing" each other. In April we had a "get together" via Zoom for Valborgsmassoafton—it was "practice" for the May meeting that was actually on Valborg, April 30th. Members discussed how they celebrated Valborg in Sweden. Unfortunately we were not able to have a fire though some of us did enjoy a cocktail while we visited with one another!

SUBMITTED BY JACK KNUTSON



Above: Svea Lodge No. 348 enjoys seeing each other during May 2020's scheduled Zoom meeting.



Left: A previous year's traditional Valborgsmässoafton fire celebration.

**Vasa questions?**  
 You're welcome to send your questions about anything Vasa to [vasajlg@aol.com](mailto:vasajlg@aol.com)



## Gothiod No. 486

BUDD LAKE, NJ / Gothiod Lodge hopes you and your families have fared well and stayed healthy during the pandemic. Dot Pierson and her daughter, fellow Gothiod member Chris Pierson, became great-great and great-grandmothers with the birth of Chris' daughter Kirsten's son, Kevion, in February. Kirsten is joining Three Crowns Lodge, making four generations of Vasa members in one family.

Members of Elve DeFeo's family have been on the frontlines: Her sister, Kirsten Roth of Arlington Lodge, is the ER nurse manager at St. Michael's Medical Center in Newark; Cindy Lawlor Pierson is an ER nurse at Hackensack Medical Center. Singer-songwriter Kevin DeFeo has been busy online during the shutdown, with frequent performances of his music on Facebook Live helping to raise money for "Music Therapy Fundraiser." John Hester was recently asked to take over the duties of social media director for District 6. He takes over from his Gothiod brother Kevin DeFeo. District Master Kris Orlandi has done a great job over the past year and will be extending her tenure for another year.

SUBMITTED BY JOHN HESTER

## Nordic No. 611

WORCHESTER, MA / From June 4-7, 2020, the Swedish flag was flown in front of Worcester's City Hall. Although we were not allowed to gather and meet under it due to coronavirus concerns, it was wonderful to see it on the Swedish National Day, June 6. The Swedish National Federation, of which Nordic Lodge is a part, held Midsummer for the 117th time, but it was the first time as a virtual event. We had about 400 watching live as a small group decorated, carried, and set up the majstang! We are fortunate to have some excellent musicians who led the dancers in the traditional ring dances. You can see the posts from June 27-28 on Facebook — at Vasa Order of America MA District Lodge No. 2. The pandemic has sure changed our daily routines but hopefully we will be meeting again in September with much enthusiasm!

SUBMITTED BY ÅKE JANSSON



Nordic No. 611 Midsommar as a virtual event in 2020.

## Linde No. 492

MILWAUKEE, WI / Our lodge has of course suffered the same consequences as every Vasa lodge with the "stay-at-home" orders. We've had a few online business meetings; and for the membership, we have continued our monthly newsletters, concentrating on everyone's well-being, memories, and making sure we acknowledge members' birthdays and send "krya på dig" (get well) wishes to anyone in need. We know of two members who contracted the COVID virus, both have fortunately recovered.

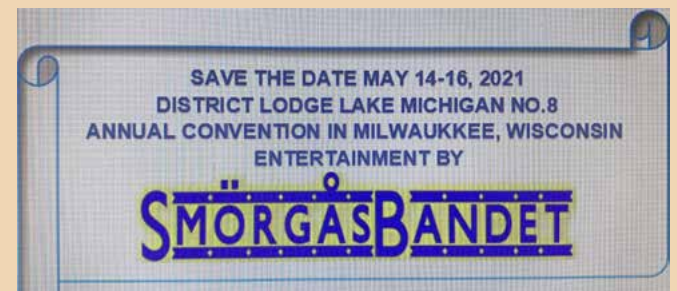
Having a virtual fika just does not cut it! And we miss the chatting, hugging and laughter during such events. Face masks are another issue but so important just now. Linde was lucky to have sewing talent in our own Ashley LeBlanc, who offered any of our members a couple masks for free. There were many who took advantage of this offer. Tack så mycket, Ash!

Things that have benefitted from the pandemic are family time, gardens (and big crops this year), and home improvement projects. Linde is hoping the next DL8 Convention will take place May 14-16, 2021 — save the dates and come for a lot of fun, including SmörgåsBandet (we call it the Vasa Band)!

SUBMITTED BY LIZA EKSTRAND



Ashley LeBlanc at the peak of her facemask project.



Save the date: May 14-16, 2021 DL 8 Convention

## Joe Harbor No. 534

ST. JOSEPH, MI / We turned to online technology in April, May and June. Using Zoom, members logged in from Michigan, Colorado and Florida. Chairman Alan Wenstrand opened the meetings with the Pledge of Allegiance, Secretary Irma Gorman called the roll of officers, Chaplain Colleen Lundgren read the opening message and we were off and running! A highlight of the April meeting was the induction of Lorelei Gorman, our newest member. Lorelei was Joe Harbor's Lucia in 2019. Each month we sang "Ja må hon leva" to celebrate birthdays, and in May, we expressed good wishes to Bill and Janet Oleson for their move to Colorado. Chris Petzke conducted several language lessons, and Cultural Chair Nancy Wenstrand included Swedish songs and a book review of "Augusta's Daughter" by Judit Martin, facts and stories about the Swedish flag, and a program on the Swedish royal family.

The online meetings were successful as we con-



Lorelei Gorman is Joe Harbor Lodge's newest member.

nected as a community of Vasa brothers and sisters. Since we were all online, we practiced BYOF (Bring Your Own Fika)!

SUBMITTED BY DENNIS LUNDGREN



## Sierra Kronan No. 737

ROSEVILLE, CA / Our members are keeping busy during these unusual times. Keith Leafdale is re-watching some of his collection of Swedish movies on DVDs; he also has many classic Swedish language novels and mysteries by popular contemporary authors. If you like murder mysteries, Darin Freeland suggests a television series called The Valhalla Murders, produced in Iceland and released on Netflix this year (he warns of adult subject matter). While cleaning house and organizing drawers, Loie Rhodes found precious memorabilia and pictures of her parents and relatives from Sweden. Elissa Silveira reads to her young son in Swedish, and as our newsletter editor, she challenged us with a Swedish crossword puzzle. Craft group members worked on Swedish-themed projects at home and others brushed up on their baking and cooking skills by checking out an on-line Swedish recipes group. Bästa hälsningar from Sierra Kronan—until we meet again.

SUBMITTED BY CAROL NESEWICH

## Tucson No. 691

TUCSON, AZ / We celebrated some graduations on May 17 at Norden's spacious farm. Everyone who attended is well. It was too late for Valborg, but we found lots of other things to celebrate. Since it was on Syttonde Mai, Norway's national day, a special Norwegian flag was present, and Norwegian music was played by Dani. May birthdays were celebrated, more Scandinavian music was played and Swedish meatballs were eaten on the picnic style lawn. We honored our four graduates with an adorable strawberry cake then sang around the campfire. It might be said a good time was had by all.

SUBMITTED BY GAYLE ANDERSON



Hosts Susan and Dennis lead off in a waltz, or was it a hambo? Dennis must be thinking of Christmas with that glögg shirt!

## Norden No. 684



The Hess family members are part of Norden Local Lodge #684. They live in the Swedish community of Kingsburg, CA where June Hess (center) has a Swedish gift shop. Her grandchildren Dmitriy (left) and Anastasiya were Swedish language camp scholarship recipients. SUBMITTED BY DAREN HESS



Grads Kelsey and Hannah Ingerson, with musician Dani Keiko.



Right: Family of grads Kaye Aldrich (grandmom), Emma Enos, Carrie Aldrich (mother), and Emma's sister Elena Enos.



# Sjölunden Virtual Camp 2020: *Hej, jag heter Jesper ...*



Hej, my name is Willem Lent. I'm 16 years old and have been a member of Skandia Lodge No. 247 in Pasadena, California (PSW15) for a little over two years. When I first received the news that I was able to attend Sjölunden Virtual Camp this summer I was excited, and then I was nervous. Aside from it being a different experience than I had anticipated due to the pandemic, I also knew a grand total of about 10 Swedish words (not including those from IKEA which I do not think count)

before attending. Despite my parents' reassurances, I was inexperienced and thought I would feel out of place among people that had previously attended Sjölunden. I also worried that without the in-person activities, a virtual camp might be too much like summer school.

It only took 20 minutes of my first day to realize that none of this would be the case.

My counselors were Björne, Bia, and Jennie. The camp name I chose was "Jesper." We were all greeted every morning with songs and a fun daily theme like Hat Day and Pippi Longstocking Day. We also had animal groups where we would discuss a "this or that" question, like pasta vs pizza and ninjas vs pirates. I was part of the fladdermus group with Björne and Bia, and though I didn't always understand the conversation, the counselors made sure to be inclusive and entertaining. By Day 2, I felt like I was getting the gist of what was being said.

Our språk groups opened each day, and I was in the beginner class with Jennie. After five days of fun activities like Simon Säger and a choose-your-own-adventure video game set up by our teacher, I feel confident in my basic knowledge of phrases, in-

troductions, and pronunciation. I also appreciated the practical nature of the Swedish language and that you don't have to conjugate verbs as you do with romance languages like Spanish. At home, we have two puppies and it was fun to address each of them in Swedish. They wagged their tails and seemed to enjoy it.

Every day we got to choose from a variety of activities after the lunch break, and initially I wondered if I would find things I would like to do; however, I found something new and exciting each day of camp. For example, I drew, learned teckenspråk, wrote my name in runes, and even played a Dungeons and Dragons session in Swedish, which I was not

expecting at all.

We closed each day with a meetup of everyone at camp and a closing meeting with our animal groups. We all shared our favorite things about the day, and on the last day of camp I found that my favorite thing about Sjölunden was being able to experience it, even if it was through a screen. Even though I'm still a beginner, coming to Sjölunden again for another week of great experiences is something on my hope-to-do list.

Tack så mycket to Concordia, Vasa Order of America, District Lodge PSW15 and my home lodge of Skandia for making this experience possible. I am so glad I had this opportunity.

WILLEM LENT



**"SCANDINAVIAN ECHOES"**  
**MUSIC SHOW & PODCAST**  
**"Live" on Sundays**  
**3 pm (ET)**  
**All shows also on YouTube**



[www.Facebook.com/ScandinavianEchoes](http://www.Facebook.com/ScandinavianEchoes)

## Moving?

Be sure to send address changes to:  
[circulationvasastar@gmail.com](mailto:circulationvasastar@gmail.com)

## IN MEMORIAM

Memorial notices should be mailed with check or money order to The Vasa Star, PO Box 510632, New Berlin, WI 53151-0632. Email: [vasaeditor@gmail.com](mailto:vasaeditor@gmail.com). The fee is \$10=40-45 words max, and \$25=longer obituaries of 50-120 words. All notices must be typed and in a format similar to what you see here. NO newspaper clippings.

If you submitted an obituary and it is not listed here, please resubmit to be included in the following issue.

### CALIFORNIA

INGA FRANCIS, our beloved District Master and North Star's chairman, died on June 9, 2020, in San Fernando Valley at the age of 70. Inga joined Golden Valley Lodge No. 616 in 2015 and North Star Lodge No. 106 in 2016. She was chairman

in Golden Valley as well. She sang in the Vasa Choir and was a folkdancer in the Swedish Folkdance Club of Los Angeles. Inga was born in Småland, Sweden. She was adopted at age 10 and moved to the USA with her adopted parents. She had no relatives in the U.S., but a few years ago she found her maternal siblings and their families in Sweden. She had planned to travel to Sweden to visit her family for the first time in 2021. All her friends in North Star Lodge and District 15 will miss her greatly.

MARIAN HALBERG died on April 29, 2020 at age 101-½. Marian and her husband joined Sierra Kronan No. 737 in 1996. She found her niche with the craft group, cherished friends, fellowship and good food. We will remember Marian for her energy, cheerfulness and great sense of humor.

ROY SAMPSON, 94, born in Manistee,

Michigan September 20, 1925, died in Lakewood, California on July 20, 2020. Member of Evening Star No. 426 since May 1972. He is survived by his dear wife Maj-Britt, son John (Jennifer), grandson Joshua, and son Bryan (Rosa), grandchildren Carl, Philip and Adam.

ALVA TUUL, 92, born in Forserum, Sweden July 6, 1927, died May 3, 2020 in Huntington Beach. Joined Evening Star No. 426 July 1972, and was an active member for 47 years. Survived by her daughter Linda (Les Tait), grandson Hunter and granddaughter Emelie.

### ILLINOIS

NANCY MAY (LINDMARK) HULT died August 3, 2020 at her home in Midlothian at the age of 85, following a brief illness. She was born May 27, 1935 in Chicago to Algot and Karin Lindmark. Nancy joined

Siljan-Mora-Tuna Lodge No. 134 in 1971 where she was currently serving as secretary. Nancy held many district officer positions including District Secretary and District Master in 2016 and 2017. Survivors include her beloved husband Sten, whom she married in 1983, brother Algot Lindmark, sister Dorothy Lundahl and several nieces and nephews. Nancy was predeceased by her parents, stepdaughter Susan and brother-in-law, Stewart.

### OHIO

ERNEST C SWEIGERT, 96, was born in Cleveland on August 30, 1923 and died June 23, 2020. He joined Nobel-Monitor No. 130 on February 8, 2009 and was a faithful member of the Breakfast Club.



## SWEDISH NEWS

### Göteborg No. 452

GÖTEBORG, SWEDEN / July 4 is the most important day to celebrate in the Vasa Order of America. Sweden's oldest Vasa lodge No 452 Göteborg honored America's independence day with a limited party in Slotsskogen, a mix between a nice park and natural forest. Of course we did respect the authorities' restrictions like social distancing and avoiding crowds. But we were all in good spirits! Our thoughts were also with Kerstin Toft, our honored member, who left us after more than 65 years of membership in our lodge. Kerstin was born the same year as LL452 Göteborg was initiated.

SUBMITTED BY TORSTEN OLSSON

*Fourth of July was celebrated with lodge member Gummel Svensson, DKL Charlotte Börjesson, VO Torsten Olsson and KL Monica Olsson at Gräfsnässtugan in Slotsskogen, Göteborg.*



### Knallen No. 745

BORÅS, SWEDEN / Innan coronapandemin tog över bedrevs verksamheten enligt planerna. I februari samlades logesyskonen för ett besök på Textilmuseet i Borås, som visade en av de stora modeskaparna i utställningen Gianni Versace Retrospektive. Han blev under 1980- och 90-talet en av världens mest betydelsefulla modeskapare. Han blandade friskt mode och konst, antikt och modernt, manligt och kvinnligt. Han ritade kläder till baletter och opera, till Elton Johns världsturné 1992 och till

kunligheter som prinsessan Diana. Logemötet i februari samlade 65 deltagare, inkl. DD Lilian Julin med make Leif Julin från Logen Kongahälla nr 702. Under mötet recipierades tre kandidater- se bild. FDO Åke Swahn förrättade utdelning av en rad utmärkelser: Distriktets förtjänsttecken till KL Leine Johansson, FDO-värdighet till BCM Bengt Wingborn och logens 10-årsmerke till Kjell Hedendahl, Ingall Hedlund och Mona von Schedvin. Efter en god måltid avslutades kvällen



*Recipierade (blå regalia) fr v: Ingemar Molander, Gunilla och Janne Borén tillsammans med (röd regalia) fr v CM Br Helge Karlsson, O Br Jan Elgquist och BCM Br Bengt Wingborn.*

## STORMÄSTARENS MEDDELANDE

KÄRA VASASYSKON,  
Som sagt tidigare, det här är ett slitsamt år för oss alla. När alla aktiviteter ställs in blir vi sorgsna och all energi försvinner. Res dig och känn dig vital igen! Vi kan inte låta covid-19 vinna. Vi behöver alla väcka upp vår **ENTUSIASM FÖR VASA** och se framåt!



Se på alla unga medlemmar i den här utgåvan som nu går framåt i livet med stöd från oss. Fortsätt hjälpa och ge stöd till alla lovande ungdomar bland våra medlemmar.

Vi hör om loger som numera möts i parker och trädgårdar eller arrangerar möten över Zoom. Det är **RIKTIGT BRA**. Jag vill uppmana **ALLA** loger

att sända in rapporter som visar och förklarar hur ni hanterar den tid vi lever i med kommentarer om möten. Andra medlemmar vill höra om era erfarenheter.

Nancy och jag planerade att vara med på Iowa-Nebraska No. 17 och Rocky Mountain No. 11 i oktober men bägge blev tyvärr inställda. Vi hoppas på bättre tur nästa år.

Tråkigt nog har vår långvarige redaktör på Vasastjärnan, Amanda, valt att söka sig vidare. Vi önskar henne allt gott i framtiden. Christa Svensson, mångårig medlem i Pacific Northwest No. 13 tar över redan i och med nästa utgåva,

En av Storlogens kulturledare och Storlogens ansvarige för sociala media och DM och VDM för New York Distrikt 4 har en podcast som heter

Scandinavian Echoes. En timmes underhållning och musik varje vecka. Sök efter "Scandinavian Echoes" på Facebook för att gilla och dela med andra medlemmar och vänner. Om du inte är Facebook-användare så finns Scandinavian Echoes program också på YouTube.

Hälsan är det viktigaste vi har. Var vaksam och rädd om den!

Och minns att vår Orden behöver ett **LEVANDE, ENTUSIASTISK MEDLEMSKAP - SPRID ORDET! TV TV TV** (Tala om Vasa) med **ENTUSIASM!!**

I SANNING OCH ENIGHET,  
ART BJORKNER, STORMÄSTARE

med underhållning av Sy Ann-Charlotte Blomqvist. Hon berättade om sin morfar, som deltog i en segling till Syd Orkney-öarna i Antarktis. Där stannade de och arbetade huvudsakligen med meteorologiska undersökningar tills han 1906 återkom till Göteborg. Sy Ann-Charlotte avslutade med ett potpurri av sommarmelodier på pianot. I mars genomfördes det årliga logemästerskapet i minigolf inne i Boråshallen. Det blev spännande spel ända fram till den avslutande gemensamma kaffestunden. Strax efter denna aktivitet slog coronaviruset till och inställde alla planerade aktiviteter för obestämd tid.

SUBMITTED BY BENGT OLSSON