

VASA ORDER OF AMERICA

A Swedish-American Fraternal Organization

LOCAL LODGE SVEA #296

Instituted May 20, 1914

Erie, Pennsylvania



November 2023 News and Notes

Hälsningar!

Fall is the start of a very busy holiday season. There are lots of activities coming up: voting and installation of officers, membership renewals, and of course, Lucia! Normally, we would have our Memorial Service in November. But, I'm happy to say everyone has stayed healthy and above ground! Let's keep it that way.

November 19th is our next meeting and it will be jam packed with things to do: First and foremost we have to do some renovating of our Lucia costumes. Judy and Pat G have said they will help make some new skirts for the Swedish girls. On the 19th, Lynnette would like some help fitting the costumes to the participants - please - if you have some free time an hour or so before the meeting, would you be willing to help her out? In addition, the costumes are not going to be sent home with the kiddos so we will need help making sure they are cleaned and pressed for the pageant itself.

We have several aprons that would fit adult women. It would be cool if all of our members had something Swedish on - even if it is just one of those aprons.

Be thinking about who in your family might benefit from the scholarship programs - adult or youth. 2024 Applications and information will be available on the website soon or see one of the officers at our meetings.

WHAT'S IN THIS MONTHS NEWSLETTER?

- Mark Your Calendar
- Things to do in NWPA - Scandinavian and otherwise
- Our meeting in a nutshell
- Bokklubb - Stolen and Astrid & Veronica
- News from our Sister Lodges and PA District Lodge #9
- Benevolence - Holy Trinity Center needs shampoo and body wash, all sizes

Upcoming events:

November 6, 2023 – VASA Lunch (formerly known as VASA Breakfast).

- Butch's Restaurant, West 26th Street
- 11:30 AM

November 19, 2023 - General Meeting. We are grateful that there is no one to honor at our annual Memorial Service. Everyone has remained hearty and well! We will be making runic decorations for the Waterford Christmas tree. Also on the agenda will be voting for our 2024-25 Svea Officers.

Other Things to do in NWPA with your Svea friends:

November 15, 5:30-7:30 - Live Music at the Flagship City Food Hall, 22 North Park Row

November 17, 6:30 - A Canterbury Feast, Station Dinner Theatre, 4940 Peach Street

November 24-26, 9AM-8PM - Erie Festival of the Trees, Bayfront Convention Center
Check out the Erie Otters Schedule!

At our October 15th meeting:

- We initiated our newest member, Rev. David Hills. Welcome! That makes 47 members.
- Pat, Martha and Michael will make their family recipe for Swedish Glogg and Cheryl will make her famous pickled herring to share at the Torch Club meeting in December. Gary needed a few Svea members join him in a Scandinavian presentation to the Club. This sounds like a great way to promote our Lodge.
- Our Benevolence for the next two months will be shampoo and body wash for Holy Trinity Center. Trial and regular sized bottles are needed for their shower program designed to help those who are homeless.
- All Hands On Deck for Lucia this year. Lynnette is asking more members to help out learning how the Lucia Pageant comes together! She needs people to help on

November 19th before our meeting to get the costumes matched to the kids - attendants, baker boys, Swedish boys and girls.

- In keeping with the Halloween theme, Linda gave some background information on how much Swedes love their candy!

Book Club - Bokklubb -

FINALLY - 6 of us gathered at Karen's for Bokklubb! We discussed *Stolen* by Ann-Helen Laestadius. This is a story of Elsa, from the time she was a young girl into young adulthood. Elsa is a member of the Sami, Indigenous People of Lappland and was the victim of local prejudice against her culture. Her favorite reindeer, Nastegallu, was brutally killed while she witnessed the event and was threatened into silence. Our discussion included the ever increasing xenophobia throughout our world - whether it be in the US, Middle East, or Sweden! What was *Stolen* was not only Elsa's beloved pet but also friendships, innocence, trust. Our next book, *Astrid & Veronica*, by Linda Olsson, will be discussed in January. (We're all crazy busy during the holiday!)

News from our Sister Lodges and PA District Lodge #9

Drott Lodge: Genealogy Conference - Join VASA Drott Lodge #168 on Saturday, November 11, 2023 for a day of research at its Virtual Swedish Genealogy Conference. Four presenters are all experts in the field of Swedish genealogy. More information is on their website. The Grand Lodge has supplied grant money so that any Vasa member may participate at the \$35 rate.

Nobel Monitor: A great time was had by all at the Leif Erickson celebration in Cleveland October 9th. They as well will be having their Lucia celebration December 10th. They do a collaborative program with other Scandinavian groups in the Cleveland area.

PA DL #9: The Working Group is putting together ideas that the 3 lodges can do together. One idea is a Zoom program on Lucky Strike; the WWII initiative that put American soldiers in Swedish war camps. It's not what you might think! Arne and Eva recently returned from their trip to Spain the El Camino pilgrimage. It was a fascinating journey that they will share on Zoom with any Vasa member. The Working Group's next Zoom is tentatively 11/22/23.

It won't be too early to start thinking about the District Convention that will be September 27-29, 2024 in the Cleveland area. The District Board is considering Geneva Conference Center in Geneva, Ohio. It is a lovely setting. Hopefully, the committee will be able to negotiate a reasonably priced weekend. So be thinking about being a delegate for Svea. Based on our membership numbers, we are entitled to 4 delegates.

Svea's By-Laws have been presented to the District Board. Rolf Bergman and Bruce Elfvin reviewed them to make sure that we have followed Grand Lodge guidelines. There are a few tweaks that need to be made but we're getting closer to having them adopted.

Our Benevolence:

At our September meeting we decided that our next benevolence project would be Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. They are opening up a free laundromat and shower facilities for their neighborhood. Appointments will be necessary. Neighbors who do not have a home or stable living situation may use the showers and will be given clean clothing to change into. Holy Trinity is asking for shampoo and body wash, in trial or regular sizes. We will be collecting those 2 items for the next couple of meetings. A Thrivent grant will supply the detergent, laundry baskets, towels and washcloths.

We strive to honor our aged members with cards and phone calls to let them know we value them. Let Cheryl know if anyone needs a card or call.

Lisa Davis supplied Swedish birthday cards. Members have volunteered to send the cards during the month to those celebrating another year around the sun!

Ädelmod, Sanning och Enighet
Generosity, Truth and Unity