

VASA ORDER OF AMERICA

A Swedish-American Fraternal Organization

LOCAL LODGE SVEA #296

Instituted May 20, 1914

Erie, Pennsylvania

March 2023 News and Notes

Hälsningar!

It is March already! We are that much closer to Spring. There's no better way to welcome the new season than being able to go outside and smell the dirt. 6 more weeks of winter? Phooey on Punxsytawney Phil - what does he know?

The new website is marvelous. For those who weren't sure of the what, where, when, why, or how of it, a brief demonstration of the website was shown at the meeting. I hope everyone who is on the internet takes advantage of this VERY COOL opportunity. If you're still unsure of how to maneuver through the web, Brian and Lisa Davis are more than willing to help you navigate - they will even come to you so that you can use your own computer.

Human Trafficking of children - a terribly dark subject. However, Human Trafficking is a very real problem, it is a \$150 billion a year criminal industry that plagues our nation. The average age of children introduced to trafficking is between 12-14. At our February meeting we spent time labeling small hotel soaps with the Human Trafficking Hotline number. These soaps, part of the SOAP Project, Saving Our Adolescents from Prostitution, will be distributed to local hotels and

public restrooms along interstates, highways, convenience stores, airports, and bus stations. To read more about this project, read our Benevolence below!

Keep checking our website for frequent updates and news about Svea Lodge and our activities.

Check out our new website by clicking here:

[Check out our new Svea website](#)

In addition, if you click and sign-up below, and you don't already, you will receive the regular Svea Newsletter.

[Sign-up for the Svea Newsletter](#)

WHAT'S IN THIS MONTHS NEWSLETTER?

- Mark Your Calendar
- Things to do in NWPA - Scandinavian and otherwise
- Our meeting in a nut shell
- News from our Sister Lodges and PA District Lodge #9
- Benevolence - The SOAP Project - Saving Our Adolescents from Prostitution
- Think Spring - photos from Sweden, compliments of Arne and Eva Dunhem

Our new website will be continuously updated to show these events and activities, so make sure that you check out our website regularly.

All current members in Svea will automatically receive our email Newsletters, as long as you have provided a current email address. Those who do not use the internet are sent a USPS copy.

Upcoming events:

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

- Butch's Restaurant, West 26th Street

- 11:30 AM

March 17, 2023 - There is a St. Patrick's Day parade in Sweden sponsored by the Swedish Irish Society and the Irish Embassy in Sweden.

March 19, 2023 – Svea General Meeting 1:00 Luther Memorial Church

- We will be making Easter trees with birch branches and feathers.
- We will initiate our newest member, Pat Gilbert and vote on the newest application from Ellie Supinski. Welcome Ladies!
- Bring in items for the Erie Humane Society; paper towels, cleaners, bleach, old towels/bedding, toys, prescription bottles with your information removed. Read below Our Benevolence for more information.

Other Things to do in NWPA with your Svea friends:

Mercyhurst Institute for Arts and Culture - March 28th - Christopher Stephen Botti is an American trumpeter and composer. In 2013, Botti won the Grammy Award in the Best Pop Instrumental Album category, for the album Impressions. 7:30PM at the Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center. For more information visit miac.mercyhurst.edu or call 814-824-3000.

Jamestown Cultural Day on the first Saturday of the month – October – May. Food, wood carving, Hardanger embroidery, weaving, dancing are available from 9:45-noon at Jamestown Community College, Hamilton Collegiate Center.

Business News from our 2/19/23 Meeting:

At our meeting on Sunday, we accomplished a lot of business:

- We voted to accept Pat Gilbert into membership of Svea Lodge #296. She will be initiated in March. Welcome Pat! We are so happy to have you with us.
- We received an application for membership from Ellie Supinski. She will be voted on at the March meeting. Thank you for joining us today and we hope to see a lot of you.
- The membership decided that we would be more proactive with our finances. Lorraine will investigate certificate interest rates and is authorized to transfer \$10,000 from our savings account that is earning minimal, to something in the 4-5% rate.
- Our Charter document which will be 109 years old this May is presently framed without any glass. It is an accident waiting to happen. To keep it safe for 109 more years, Nancy will take it to U Frame it and get their

opinion on how to best preserve it. To view this historic document, go to our website svea-erielodge.org and look under the News tab. Once you locate the picture, see if you can count the number of swords, axes, javelins and clobbering tools. Those inner and outer guards took their positions seriously!

- The auditor, Brian Davis, reported that the financial records are in excellent order, finding no discrepancies.
- The membership decided to support the Erie Humane Society as they work to rehabilitate 130 cats just rescued from an Erie home.

News from our Sister Lodges and PA District Lodge #9

Drott Lodge: In February, their Lodge watched the film "A Man Called Ove". March 12 will be their Pea Soup and Plättar dinner with a cultural program on Swedish National Parks from Karin Weedin, the recipient of the District's Adult Scholarship. Drott Lodge celebrates Walpurgis in April.

Nobel Monitor: Their next meeting will be March 12 and their Vasa Club annual dinner will be April 16th at the Manakiki Country Club. Nobel-Monitor has a breakfast Club also - they meet at Bob Evans for breakfast at 8:30 AM on Tuesday mornings in Mayfield Heights.

PA DL #9: The Restart & Rebuild Committee will meet via Zoom at 6:30 on March 20, 2023 to discuss our new action plan to revitalize our 3 District 9 Lodges. The new websites for the lodges and District are the result of the forward thinking of the officers! On March 22, the District Board will meet to discuss the outcome of our new initiative. It won't be too early to start thinking about the District Convention that will be Fall 2024 in the Cleveland area.

Our Benevolence:

We are a Benevolent Society, making monetary contributions to valuable organizations, as well as, collecting tangible donations for local social service agencies.

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.

At our January meeting, we assembled 40 dinner bags for the folks taking shelter at St. John the Baptist overflow shelter. We received a lovely thank you note from Mary Ellen letting us know how much their guests appreciated having a choice of a sandwich. Sometimes we think that because someone is needy, that they should just accept what's given to

them. However, there is an amount of dignity when people have some choice. The dinner bags allow for a more comfortable rest.

In February, we labeled 300 small bars of soap with the Human Trafficking Hot Line # for the SOAP Project, Saving Our Adolescents from Prostitution, a national initiative to combat human trafficking. There is a team in NWPA that visits area hotels, sharing information about how hotels can protect their clients and their properties from Human Trafficking. The team has visited over 50 hotels in NWPA, sometimes twice. Over 15,000 bars of soap labeled with the Human Trafficking hot line number have been distributed to hotels and public spaces in the past 5 years throughout NWPA. It's hard to tell how many bars of soap have reached a child in desperate straits but if it reaches just 1, it will have been worth it. If it helps for a parent to know there is an avenue of help, it will have been worth it. Thank you to our compassionate hearts in Svea for helping to bring information and hope to the community.



The Erie Humane Society recently took in 130 cats from one residence. Many are sick and diseased and will need lots of care. The membership decided that March, April, and May would be our collection of items for them: paper towels, bleach, cleaners, old towels, toys. In addition, used medication containers, with your personal information removed, can be used to help dispense medicine to the animals. Please bring any of these items to the meetings with you. We'll be taking them intermittently to the Humane Society.

Valsborgsmässoafton

Welcome Spring-Goodbye Winter



Ädelmod, Sanning och Enighet
Generosity, Truth and Unity

