



## VASA ORDER OF AMERICA

A Swedish-American Fraternal Organization since 1896

Vol. 17, No. 10

December 1993



ur December 3rd *julkalas* will begin at 6:30 pm at Wisteria Hall. There will be a short officers' meeting to take care of necessary business while the committee is preparing for the party. Herb Johnson would like some members to come early and learn how to make *glögg* to help carry on the tradition. Call him at 489-1160 for the time. We had only hot dishes left over from the *Smörgåsbord*, so please bring something for refreshments. We need dips, cheese, crackers, bread, ryekrisp, fruit, open-face sandwiches and, of course, cookies and coffee breads for dessert. Be sure to put your name on your dish.

As with all our functions, we need help with preparations and clean-up. Please call Myrtle or Herb to volunteer your services. Come early to help prepare, stay late to help clean up!

We also would like to know if someone has a *julgran* to lend us for the party. The lodge has Christmas decorations. Please call cultural leader Eivor Pfannkuch at 673-5917.

Our Valley Viking Singers will perform and lead us in a sing-a-long. And, of course, we will have a visit from *Tomten*! If you would like to participate in the gift exchange, bring a \$3 gift with the word "Woman" or "Man" written on the tag and

your name. It's a lot of fun to see the pretty and interesting gifts exchanged.

At this time of the year, we like to make a special occasion for members who are not able to attend many meetings. Some do not drive, others are physically unable to come. While you are baking cookies, make a few extra and bring to the *julfest*. Or bring a poinsettia plant for those restricted in their diet. There will be a separate table at the meeting for these items. The *Nål och Tråd* members will deliver them. If you would like to deliver to someone in your area, contact Elizabeth Johnson, 452-2470.

The Friendship Committee has been discussing sending cards to members who live out of town or who cannot attend meetings because of work or other obligations. We will have a list at the December 3rd meeting, if you would like to send greetings.



Wasn't it nice to have Faye Powell present at our November meeting and also at the *Smörgåsbord*? It has been several years since she moved to San Jose and she was delighted to see her Monitor friends again.

### Chairman's Message

The holiday season began with our annual delicious *Smörgåsbord*. It was a big success with many new people attending. This shows that spreading the word brings more people to come and enjoy this Swedish meal. The lodge thanks Margaret and Peggy Carlson for all the preparations, Ken Carlson for being bartender, and all the other members who helped put this event together.

In this holiday season, we remember everything we have done this year, family, friends, and everything else in our lives that we are thankful for. During the past year, Monitor has participated in many activities and added new members, including young families with children, which will help Monitor to continue to grow.

It's been a good year and I want to thank everyone for supporting the officers and your lodge. **GOD JUL!**

— In Truth and Unity,  
Myrtle Widmark  
481-4056

## IN REMEMBRANCE

As 1993 draws to a close, we want to remember the members who passed on this year.

**Hildur Benson**, mother of Ruth Volkoff, left us in January at the ripe old age of 95. She was a native of Sweden. Hildur left four children, 17 grandchildren, 23 great grandchildren, and 2 great great grandchildren.

**Ellarie Campbell**, wife of Charles Campbell, passed away in August at the age of 69. She had retired a few years ago from the California Regional Center where she counseled retarded children. Her parents were both from Sweden. Ellarie played tennis as a youth in Chino, travelled extensively (including two trips to Sweden with her daughter), enjoyed camping out and fishing at Bodega Bay, was active in the lodge, and served as a District officer for a year.

We extend sympathy to Monitor members Russ Ellis and Don Carlson on the loss of a parent this past year.

## Updates on Past Members

The daughters of Monitor member Jean Barney, and granddaughters of Esther Biehler, have accomplished much this year.

Kersten Barney graduated last spring from UC at Santa Barbara, where she majored in French. She is currently employed at Santa Barbara but plans to go to France to continue her studies and work.

Meghan Barney married a navy man, Kevin Nielsen, and is living in Jacksonville, Florida. She is expecting Jean Barney's first grandchild.

Both girls have been active in Monitor Lodge in the past, serving as Santa Lucia and Maids for both the Camellia Festival and the Scandinavian Festival. Kersten also received a Monitor scholarship.

## Memo to Members

When sending get-well cards to hospitalized Monitor members, please give your phone number on the cards. If the member in the hospital is able and wishes to call you, they probably don't have your number with them in the hospital.

— Betty Jane Schoepf  
Chaplain

## Smörgåsbord Report

The Smörgåsbord was a BIG HIT. Thanks to everyone's great help and the good food you all brought, this was another successful event. It was a long, hard day for some of us. But we got a lot of compliments and that makes it all worth while.

People came from as far away as Redding, the Bay Area, Stockton, and the Los Angeles area. There was also a lot of new people from here and several of them expressed an interest in joining our Lodge. So I'm sure we will have a busy year!

TUSEN, TUSEN TACK to all of you. A more detailed report will be made later.

— Smörgåsbord Committee  
Margaret, Dede, Peggy



## January Installation

Monitor Lodge has invited the Sierra Kronan Lodge for a joint installation of officers at Wisteria Hall at the Friday, January 7, meeting. District Master Barbara Lantz will be here to conduct the installation. The January newsletter will have more information, and we will be asking for help with decorations and refreshments. If you have any ideas, please let our lodge officers know.

## Nål och Tråd

Tisdagen den 14 december, kl.  
19.00, hos:

Louise Sims  
2486 Larkspur Lane, #189  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
Tel.: 489-7331

Use the Timberlake entrance on Fulton Avenue and call Louise for entrance and exit codes.

We will have just this one meeting in December. We plan to package cookies for distribution to some of our members.

— Karin Bodelson

## Member of the Month

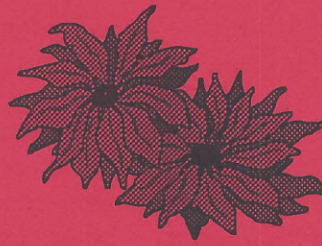
Special member this month is Jean Anderson. She is very active in all our lodge functions. For several years, Jean has also been taking and typing up the meeting minutes, a demanding and absolutely essential task. It means that she never misses a meeting! Here is Jean's story:

I am a California Swede, born right here in Sacramento. My parents both came from Arvika in the Province of Värmland. They knew each other in Sweden but didn't get married until coming to America. My father came over in the early 1900s and settled in the Sacramento area where he had relatives. My mother followed a few years later. Father was a farmer. He eventually bought his own little place in Elk Grove, where I grew up and went to school.

After graduating from Elk Grove High School, I started working for the State as a clerk-typist and stayed for 41 years! I worked in several departments and retired from the State Architect's Office in 1987 when I was offered the "Golden Handshake." I still work for the State part time as a "retired annuitant."

I enjoy travelling, gardening, baking, and attending *Nål och Tråd*. I have been a member of Monitor Lodge for almost 20 years and enjoy the many activities and friendships.

I finally had a chance to travel to the Scandinavian countries in 1989 and it was great to visit the land of my ancestors. I especially enjoyed Värmland, seeing where my parents grew up and the places I had heard so much about. I hope I can go back some day and see some of the things I missed the first time.



## December Birthdays

12/03 - Marjorie Skicklig  
 12/04 - Kerstin Hakansson  
 12/07 - Ellen Harrod  
 12/11 - John Loken  
 12/12 - Margaret Carlson  
 12/15 - Jean Barney  
 12/15 - Lynn Lundberg  
 12/18 - David Swanson  
 12/20 - Janice Woodruff  
 12/24 - Evelyn Anderson  
 12/24 - Sophia Swanson  
 12/26 - Dorothy Erickson  
 12/27 - Kay Heringer

HJÄRTLIGA GRATULATIONER!

## An Experiment

Perhaps you have noticed a number in the upper right corner of your mailing label. It represents the month you joined the lodge (for example, 01 is January) and is a reminder of the month in which your dues are payable. If you find that the number does not agree with your records, please notify Gail Nemy or Karin Bodelson.

## Ditt och Datt from our Members

- ✓ Found at the Smörgåsbord: A set of four small (7" x 6") trays of different colors with animal pictures.
- ✓ If you ordered a Swedish 1994 calendar, it can now be

picked up. We have a few extra for sale for \$9 and also reprints of the *National Geographic* article about Sweden for \$3. See Marianne Ek.

- ✓ The Swedish language groups are taking a holiday recess until January. The students have enjoyed meeting weekly and feel it has helped them keep up their understanding of Swedish.
- ✓ John Wright tells us that you can also see the Swedish Channel 4 news on Sacramento cable Channel 21 Mondays through Fridays at 12:30-1:00 am.
- ✓ Louise Sims reminds us to be sure to see Swedish Christmas display at William Glen in Town & Country Village!

## December Dues Anniversaries

If you have already paid, please ignore this reminder and thank you for your promptness.

Eva Allred  
 Karin Bodelson  
 Viola Bodelson  
 Joyce Burns  
 Camilla Caldwell  
 Kenneth and Peggy Carlson  
 Martha Fredrickson  
 Ethel Hoffman  
 Ronny and Christie Kagstrom  
 Betty Schoepf  
 Audrey Ohlson-Smith

Dues are \$14 a year, and you may pay them at the December meeting or by mail to Gail Nemy, 4239 Daybreak Lane, Sacramento, CA 95821.

## For Your Roster

### Address changes:

Lisa Bleasdale  
2748 Green Bay Way  
Sacramento, CA 95826-2218  
Phone: 366-7313

Janice Woodruff  
7230 Rice Valley Road  
Oakland, OR 97462  
(Phone number unknown)

### New members:

Gertrude (Trudi) Kauffman  
1421 Sherwood Avenue  
Sacramento, CA 95822  
Phone: 451-3075

Michelle Kauffman  
1421 Sherwood Avenue  
Sacramento, CA 95822  
Phone: 451-3075

William & Helen Dyckman  
2042 Nicklaus Circle  
Roseville, CA 95678  
Phone: 783-3598

## Camellia Festival March 5-6

The Camellia parade will be held on Saturday, March 5, and the Children's Club has been asked to participate. The lodge has the cart that can be decorated and used for this occasion. Members who have worked on this project before would be a big help to our newcomers. There will be more information later about the exhibits and entertainment.

Monitor Lodge is looking for eligible male or female students, including children or grand-children of members, to represent our lodge at the Camellia Festival. A student can represent our lodge there even if he or she does not meet the criteria for student ambassador. The youngster selected as student ambassador will receive a \$1,000 scholarship and will represent the Sacramento Camellia Festival in our sister city Matsuyama in Japan. The scholarship can be used for a college or accredited vocational training institute of the student's choice.

The International Friendship Committee (IFC) has the following suggested criteria for the selection as Student Ambassador:

- High school senior, or Freshman or Sophomore in college, with a grade point average of 3.0 or above.
- Sponsored by IFC member ethnic group.
- Resident of Sacramento.
- Able to well represent his or her country.
- Must wear appropriate ethnic costume for designated activities (parade, luncheons, exhibits, etc.)

The IFC suggests that countries select a representative before 31 December. Interviews will be held in January and the selection of a student ambassador will be made by Sacramento Camellia Festival representatives by March 1.

## From the Editor

The deadline for the January issue of *The Monitor* is **Friday, December 16**. Please send your typed or hand printed input to Ingrid Kennedy, 10582 Apple Grove Way, Rancho Cordova. Or give her a call at 638-3212.

## Luciafest

This is one event you don't want to miss: the annual *Luciafest* organized by our Children's Club. It will be held at Wisteria Hall on Friday, December 10, 7 pm. Carly Caldwell will be this year's Lucia. *Tomten* will be there, so we need little gifts for him to give to the children, who have worked very hard to present this beautiful program. Our choir, the Valley Viking Singers, will also perform. Refreshments will follow. A plate of cookies to share would be nice.



## Cultural Corner

As you read this, you have probably just finished the turkey leftovers from Thanksgiving and you are starting to think about Christmas. For me, as a Swede living in America, Thanksgiving was a new and wonderful holiday. It gave me the chance to be very thankful for this wonderful country that has provided me with opportunity for family, friendships, growth, and prosperity. I always felt Thanksgiving was a great prelude to the Christmas season. It gives us a taste of upcoming celebrations and eases us into the four weeks of Advent. It is always wonderful to know, as the turkey and stuffing are gone, that it is time to bring out the advent candle holder and the advent star.

Let me share some of the traditions I have brought with me from my home in Sweden to our home here in America. When I grew up, we always had a small advent tree with four candles which were lit one by one, one Sunday at a time, during Advent. We lived by the forest so it was easy for my father to go out and cut a small tree. However, we have kept up this tradition here in America with my American family, even though it means going to the Christmas tree lots to find a small tree. Why the advent tree, you might ask! Most of the customs associated with Christmas are old except for the customs of Advent. The first time we hear about the four advent candles in Sweden is from the home of Arch Bishop Nathan Söderblom at the turn of the century. The candles were placed on a juniper

bush in the house. Much later, the industrial manufacturing of advent candle holders got started. However, the little advent tree still remained in Sweden through the 40s and 50s, and the custom was brought to America by at least one Swede!

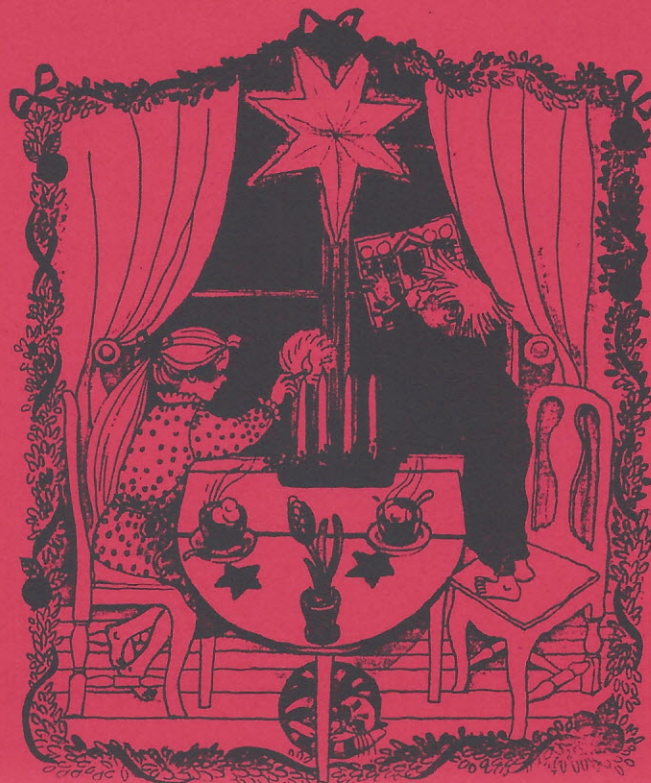
In our home here in California we also have an advent star which is lit and hung in the window for everyone to see on the first Sunday of Advent. The star was brought here from Sweden, but it is actually a custom of German origin. The idea to hang a lit star in the window during Advent got started in Herrnhut, Germany, around the year 1880. The star was originally made of paper. A few such stars made their way to Sweden, but they didn't become common until the mid 30s. Eventually, you would find the star in almost every home. Stars were also made of other materials, such as thin wood, glass, and straw.

Another custom Sweden got from Germany was the advent calendar. It was introduced in Sweden in 1934 by the Swedish Girl Scouts. Aina Stenberg Mas-Olle drew the first one and she did one every year until 1964. Now there are many different such calendars available, but the ones most commonly seen here in America are still the German calendars. It is an exciting tradition for kids (and maybe those of us who are still kids at heart) to open one door every day of December, finishing up by opening the last and biggest one on December 24.

I hope you all have some traditions to celebrate Advent. It is a very busy time for most of us, but it is also a wonderful time to stop for a moment, light a candle, and reflect over the true meaning of Christmas.

I know I will see all of you at our Glögg Party and at that time I will share some more of the Christmas traditions that are special to me and my family.

— Eivor Pfannkuch  
Cultural Leader



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