

Birka Banner

Birka Lodge 732, Vasa Order of America

March-April, 2013

Chairperson's Message

Greetings to all Birka members! Daylight saving time has arrived with an extra hour of sunlight each evening. Spring is not far behind and hopefully, we have seen our last major snowstorm! Our January and February meetings were well attended and enjoyed by all. Thank you to the two Refreshment Committees for the delicious food we enjoyed. Thank you to Ann-Marie for providing the cultural programs. Thank you also to all who participated in the surprise baby shower for Sharon Mikutel after the February meeting. Sharon and her husband had a daughter born on March 8.

The **March meeting will be our annual Påsk (Easter celebration)**. The Kitchen Committee, chaired by Ann-Marie Breuer, will provide refreshments. An **Easter bonnet /hat contest** for all members – women, men, and children – will be part of this meeting. Let's surprise one another with our creativity! Looking forward to seeing your best creations! Please plan on attending to support your lodge and officers. Cultural Leader, Ann-Marie Breuer, is planning a program for the evening. We will have prizes for the most creative hats and a raffle provided by Gus and Roz Blomgren.

The **April meeting** will be the Installation of Officers. Grand Lodge Deputy/District Deputy Dawn Briggs and her team from Nordic Lodge in Worcester will conduct the installation. Other guests from the District Executive Board will also join us. Please plan on attending to support your lodge officers and to welcome guests from the District. Come and enjoy Vasa fellowship and refreshments.

We need refreshments following the installation in April and help to set up the hall. If you did not sign the Refreshment List at the February meeting, please give me a call at 781-933-4949. The sign up sheet will be available at the March meeting. Food donations – sandwiches, sweets, etc. – are welcome. Thank you. Your help is appreciated!

The Activities Committee met on February 3 and planned the upcoming Lodge events for 2013-2014. The new program booklets will be distributed at the April installation. Thank you to Marlys Mahajan for hosting the meeting. The next Activities Committee meeting will be held April 14 at 3pm Gus and Roz Blomgren's Home in Methuen, MA.

Reminder: Sick Benefit Fund

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

Annual dues of \$25 for 2013 are now due. Please mail your dues to: Financial Secretary, Linda Boylan, 12 Upton Lane, Boxford, MA 01921. Make checks payable to: Birka Lodge No. 732. **Please consider this your dues notice for 2013. Dues are due January.** It would be great if all dues were paid by April 1.

I look forward to seeing you at the **March 22nd Easter meeting and the April 26th meeting and Installation of Officers**. Please mark the dates on your calendars! Your presence is requested to encourage your officers and make more secure the future of our Order.

In truth and unity,

Linda Christianson, PDM, Chairman

Hearty Birka Birthday Wishes

To these members . . .

. . . in March

1 Ethel Johnson	14 Ellen Sandberg
2 Robert Sandborn	15 James Jensen
4 Ellen Denis	19 Mathz Olsson
7 Linda Flanagan	22 Kristine DiPillo
10 Carol Landoni	27 Marilyn Kelly
11 Miriam Lane	30 Diane Forsstrom
13 Karole Johns	31 Daniel Guidara

. . . in April

2 Patrick Olsson	15 Carin Liu
10 Danika Ashness	15 Helen Riddle
12 Sheila Sunman	17 Michael Bagnulo
13 Christine Lovgren	28 Helen Pestana
14 Janet Lundstrom	29 Norbert Pestana

REFRESHMENT COMMITTEES

Påsk (Easter celebration)

March 22

Ann-Marie Breuer, chair
Sue and Mike Bagnulo
Diane Forsstrom
Matilda Halloran
Carol and Bob Landoni
Chris Lovgren
Inga-Lill Olsson
Helen Riddle

Installation of Officers

April 26

Everyone's on the Committee for April! Call Linda Christianson (781-933-4949) to let her know what you're bringing. Come early to help set up table and chairs, or stay late to help with clean up. Or better yet, help with both!

. . . 'round the Lodge

Congratulations to **Sharon Mikutel and husband Chris** on the birth of their daughter Corinne Lilyann. Corinne chose to arrive on March 8 during one of our many snowstorms this year. She weighed in at 6 pounds 10 ounces and was 19 inches tall. Mother and baby are both doing well. Sharon is the sister of Kari Ashness and the niece of Ann DeLacey. She's a beauty, as the photo shows! (And she's even lovelier in her pink outfit, so check the web newsletter to see her in full color!)



Congratulations to **Greg Blomgren** for being nominated to Junior National Honor Society. Greg is in the seventh grade at the Marsh Middle School in Methuen. He is the son of Gus and Roz Blomgren. Way to go, Greg!

Stockholm, Sweden

Vasa Museum

The Vasa Museum in Stockholm is the most popular museum in Scandinavia. It was built around the recovered remain of the 17th century war ship *Vasa*. The ship, built in 1626–1628, was the pride of the Swedish Navy when she was built, but perished less than one mile from port on her maiden voyage. As a 64-gun warship, she was top heavy, and sank when the first strong wind hit the sails.

The remains of the *Vasa* were located just outside Stockholm harbor in the late 1950's and then salvaged in 1961, because she was nearly intact. In 1981, the Swedish government decided to build a permanent museum for the ship. It opened to the public in 1991 and has been visited by over a million visitors a year since then.

The museum itself is a dry dock for the ship, and the area around it houses some of the hundreds of items found with the ship. These items gave scholars a look at how ordinary people lived in the early 17th century. To make these items come to life, carved, wooden sculptures of ordinary people – fishmongers, washer women, and others – are shown using these items. It is a wonderfully designed and inspired museum, as the photo below shows.



Calendar Summary

March

22 Påsk (Easter celebration), 7:30 p.m.

April

14 Activities Meeting 3:00pm
Gus and Roz Blomgren's Home –
Methuen, MA

26 Installation of Officers, 7:30 p.m.

REMINDERS . . .

Please notify Recording Secretary, Judy Tanzer, 3 Anthony Road, Hamilton, MA 01982 (Tel: 978-468-7407) of any address changes. We appreciate your help in keeping the membership roles up to date.

Please check Birka's website for more photos and copies of the Birka Banner. Its address is www.birka732.com and is maintained by Richard Lilja, our Web Master. Thank you, Richard.

. . . more 'round the Lodge

Judy Tanzer and husband Bill just returned from three weeks of sailing in the Caribbean, visiting several of the islands. Some people really know how to spend their New England Februaries!

Jay Mahajan, son of Marlys and Umakant Mahajan, was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Air Force on February 1. He and his family are currently station at Osan Air Base near Seole, Korea. As a fighter pilot of f-16s, his nonflying days are spent negotiating with the South Koreans over the air space that they share for training purposes. Amy Tanzer, daughter of Judy and Bill Tanzer, is having a winning season at her sport of choice: Roller Derby! She skates with the Maine team Calamity Janes and loves every bruising minute of it. She says that skating make her feel like she can "just jump up, catch a breeze, and fly!"

Baby Shower for Sharon Mikutel

Following the February meeting the Lodge gave a surprise baby shower for Sharon Mikutel. Family members Kari and Danika Ashness and Ann DeLacey made sure that Sharon arrived and kept the surprise from her. Thanks for the collusion, ladies!

Everyone had a great time as Sharon oohed and aahed over her baby gifts.



Birka Lodge 732
c/o Marlys Mahajan
26 Appaloosa Lane
S Hamilton, MA 01982

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

Lodge Chairperson: Linda Christianson
Editor: Marlys Mahajan
Web Master: Richard Lilja

EXTRAS...(Electronic version only!)

Ole and Sven

Ole and Sven were drinking buddies who worked as aircraft mechanics in Minneapolis and one day the airport was fogged in and they were stuck in the hangar with nothing to do.

Ole said, "I wish ve had somethin ta drink!"

Sven says, "Me too. Y'know, I hear ya can drink dat jet fuel and get a buzz. Ya vanna try it?"

So they pour themselves a couple of glasses of high octane hooch and got completely smashed.

Next morning Ole woke up and is surprised at how good he feels. In fact he feels GREAT! NO hangover! NO bad side effects. Nothing!

The phone rang. It was Sven who asks, "How iss you feelin dis mornin?"

Ole says, "I feel great. How bout you?"

Sven says, "I feel great, too. Ya don't have no hangover?"

Ole says, "No dat jet fuel iss great stuff -- no hangover, nothin. Ve oughta do dis more often."

Sven agreed. "Yeah, vell, but dere's yust vun ting."

Ole asked, "Vat's dat?" Sven questioned, "Haff you farted yet?"

Ole stopped to think..... "No ", he says.

"Vell, DON'T, 'cause I'm in Iowa!"

BAR RIDDLE

A Swede took a trip to Fargo, North Dakota. While in a bar, an Indian on the next stool spoke to him in a friendly manner ...

'Look,' he said, 'let's have a game if you answer it, I'll buy YOU a drink, if you can't, then you buy ME one, Okay?'

'Ya, dat sounds purty good,' said the Swede. The Indian said, 'My father and my mother had one child. It wasn't my brother. It wasn't my sister. Who was it?'

The Swede scratched his head and finally said, 'I give up. Who vas it?'

'It was ME,' chortled the Indian. So the Swede paid for the drinks.

Back in Sioux Falls the Swede went into a bar and spotted one of his cronies,

'Sven,' he said, 'I got a game. If you can answer a qestion, I buy you a drink.

If you can't, YOU have to buy ME vun. Fair enough?'

'Fair enough,' said Sven. Okay....my fadder and mudder had vun child. It wasn't

my brudder, It wasn't my sister, Who vas it?'

'Search me, ' said Sven. 'I give up. Who vas it?'

'It vas some Indian up in Fargo, Nort Dakota.'