

# Birka Banner

Birka Lodge 732, Vasa Order of America

March/April, 2015

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## Chairman's Message

Greetings to all Birka Members. Daylight saving time has arrived with an extra hour of sunlight each evening, for which we are all grateful especially with the February snowstorms we have all experienced!! Many sore backs and broken snowblowers! Spring is not far behind, and hopefully we have seen our last major snowstorm, but it is anyone's guess with this winter! Our January and February meetings were well attended and enjoyed by all. Thank you to the Refreshment Committees for January and February for the delicious food we enjoyed.

The **March 27th meeting will be our annual Pask (Easter celebration)**. The Kitchen Committee, chaired by Ann-Marie Breuer, will provide refreshments. There will be a cultural program. Please plan on attending to support your lodge and officers. We will have a raffle provided by Gus and Roz Blomgren.

We are in need of refreshments following the Installation of Officers 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. The sign up sheet will be available at the March meeting. Donations of food – sandwiches, sweets, etc. – are welcome. My phone number is: **781-933-4949**. Thank you in advance. Your help is appreciated.

The **April 24th meeting** will be Installation of Officers. District Deputy Dawn Briggs and her team from Nordic Lodge in Worcester will conduct the installation ceremonies. There will also be other guests from the District Executive Board. Please plan on attending to support your lodge officers and to welcome guests from the District. We will be having a special District raffle to help support the District Convention in September. Please come and enjoy Vasa fellowship and refreshments.

The Activities Committee met on **February 22**, following two cancellations (due to the February snowstorms) and began planning the upcoming lodge events for **2015/2016**. 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 on **March 22 at 2:30 p.m.** at the home of Linda Boylan in Boxford.

Thank you to Ann-Marie Breuer for providing the cultural programs for the January and February meetings.

**Annual dues of \$25 for 2015 is now due.** Please mail your dues to: Financial Secretary, Linda Boylan, 12 Upton Lane, Boxford, MA 01921, payable to: **Birka Lodge No. 732. Reminder: Please consider this your dues notice for 2015. Dues are now due.** It would be great if all dues were paid by **April, 2015**.

I look forward to seeing you at the **March 27** Easter meeting and the **April 24** 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	15 James Jensen
7 Linda Flanagan	19 Mathz Olsson
10 Carol Landoni	22 Kristine DiPillo
2 Robert Sanborn	27 Marilyn Kelly
13 Karole Johns	30 Diane Forsstrom
14 Ellen Sandberg	31 Daniel Guidera

### . . . in April

2 Pathrik Olsson	14 Janet Lundstrom
10 DanikaAshness	15 Carin Liu
12 Sheila Sunman	15 Helen Riddle
13 Christine Lovgren	17 Michael Bagnulo

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## REFRESHMENT COMMITTEES

Pask (Easter Celebration), **March 27**

**Installation of Officers, April 24**

Ann-Marie Breuer, chair 978-468-0108

*{Everyone is also on the committee.}*

Sue and Mike Bagnulo

Diane Forsstrom

Matilda Halloran

Carol and Bob Landoni

Chris Lovgren

Inga-Lill Olsson

Helen Riddle

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## . . . 'round the Lodge

Congratulations to Janet Muller for winning a free 2016 membership for paying her 2015 dues in December. Each year members who pay in December are eligible for this raffle.

We would like to wish Audrey DePillo, Denise Esperson, Carol Landoni, and Sheila Sunman well after their medical issues. We would also like to extend best wishes to our friends Lief and Siw Kristiansson of Nordic Lodge as they recover from medical issues.



**CALLING ALL HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE MEMBERS!** Now is the time to get your application for the District scholarships ready. Scholarships are available to students who have been a member since September 15, 2014, and intend to be enrolled full time in a college, university, or post-secondary vocational school next fall. Applications can be obtained from and returned to Linda Boylan, 12 Upton Lane, Boxford, MA 01921. Applications are due in mid-April.



We encourage you to visit our website, [www.birka732.com](http://www.birka732.com), maintained by Richard Lilja. To contact Richard about additions or corrections to the website, write to him at the new Birka Lodge email address: [birkalodge732@gmail.com](mailto:birkalodge732@gmail.com) which also by the way is the name of our Google+ website.

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## Calendar Raffle

Put a little fun in your April! The District Lodge is sponsoring a Calendar Raffle for the month to defray the set-up costs of the District meeting in September. Tickets are \$10 each or six for \$50. On every odd numbered day of April, a \$25 winner will be randomly selected, and a \$250 winner will be selected on April 30.



## Swedish Songs

At each meeting we sing two Swedish songs: the *National Anthem of Sweden*, and the *Birthday Song*. For those who mumble through the words, we have printed both songs below. Why not bring your newsletter to our meeting, so that you too can sing out with gusto!

### National Anthem of Sweden

Du gamla, du fria, du fjällhöga Nord,  
Du tysta, du glädjerikasköna!  
Jag hälsar dig vänaste land uppå jord,  
Din sol, din himmel, dina ängder gröna,  
Din sol, sin himmel, dina ängder gröna.

Du tronarpåminnen från fornstoradar.  
Då ärat ditt namn flög över jorden.  
Jag vet att du äroch förblir vad du var.  
Ja, jag vill leva, jag vill dö i Norden!  
Ja, jag vill leva, jag vill dö i Norden!

### Birthday Song

Ja, mådomleva; ja, mådomleva,  
Ja, mådomlevauti hundra år,  
Ja, visstskadomleva; ja, visstskadomleva,  
Ja, visstskadomlevauti hundra år!  
Dom skaleva, dom skaleva,  
Dom skaleva till domdö!  
Rah! Rah! Rah!

### English Translation

You ancient, free, and mountainous North,  
Of quiet, joyful beauty,  
I greet you, loveliest land on earth.  
Your sun, your sky, your green meadows.  
Your sun, your sky, your green meadows.

You are throned on memories of olden days  
When the honor of your name spread over the earth.  
I know that you are and will remain like this.  
Oh, may I live, may die in the Nordic North!  
Oh, may I live, may die in the Nordic North!

### English Translation

Yes, may they live, yes, may they live,  
Yes, may they live for a hundred years.  
Oh, sure they will live, Oh, sure they will live  
Oh, sure they will live for a hundred years!

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Birthday Song Notes:

Use *dom* for more than one person.

Use *han* when celebrating one male.

Use *hon* when celebrating one female

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## IRISH AND NORWEGIANS

We celebrate March 17th in commemoration of St. Patrick's great and noble deed in driving the Norwegians out of Ireland.

It seems that centuries ago many Norwegians came to Ireland to escape the bitterness of the Norwegian winter. Ireland was having a famine at the time and food was scarce.

The Norwegians were eating almost all of the fish caught in the ocean, leaving the Irish with nothing but potatoes.

St. Patrick, taking matters into onto his own hands, like most Irishman, decided all the Norwegians had to go. Secretly he organized the IRATION (Irish Republican Army to Rid Ireland of Norwegians). Irish members of the IRATION sabotaged all the power plants in hopes the fish in Norwegian refrigerators would spoil, forcing the Norwegians to a cooler climate where their fish would keep. The fish spoiled all right, but the Norwegians, as everyone knows to this day, thrive on spoiled fish. Faced with failure, the Irishmen sneaked into the Norwegian fish storage caves in the dead of the night and sprinkled the rotten fish with lye, hoping to poison the Norwegian intruders, but as everybody knows, this is how lutefisk was introduced to the Norwegians, and how they thrived on the lye soaked smelly fish.

Matters became even worse for the Irish when the Norwegians started taking over the Irish potato crop to make lefse. Poor St. Patrick was at his wits end. Finally, on March 17, he blew his top and told the Norwegians to "go to hell" -- and it worked, because all the Norwegians left Ireland and went to Minnesota.

OLE WAS driving a wagonload of wheat to town when a wheel was caught in the ditch and overturned. Sven saw it and came out to inspect a little.

"Hey, Ole," he called out. "I'll help you turn the wagon back over and fill it up again. But I'm about to eat dinner. Why don't you come and have dinner with me? Then we'll go to work."

"Thank you, Sven," Ole answered, "but I don't think Lena would like me to."

"Oh, come on!" Sven insisted.

"OK," Ole finally agreed, "but Lena won't like it."

After a hearty dinner, Ole thanked his host. "I feel a lot better now, but I know Lena's going to be upset," he said.

"Don't worry so much," said Sven. "By the way, where is she?"

"Under the wagon," said Ole.

OLE AND Sven had been away from their wives for about a month while they were visiting some relatives in Norway. Now the two of them were on a flight from Oslo to Minneapolis when the captain spoke across the loudspeaker. He said that the number one engine went out and the arrival would be half an hour delayed.

"That's not so bad," said Ole.

A little later the captain spoke again and told the passengers that engine number two went out and there would be an hour's delay. Ole looked at Sven who was sitting next to him and said,

"Well, this is sort of unusual. I hope we don't get any other delays, Sven. Does the pilot know what he's doing?"

"Just lay back and relax, Ole," said Sven.

Ole managed to take a little snooze. He was awakened when the captain interrupted for a third time to tell everyone that engine number three had just gone out. They would be an hour and a half late now.

"Uff-da!" exclaimed Ole, "I hope that last engine doesn't go out, Sven, for if it does, we'll be up here all night!"

# Waffles for Our Lady

*End of March brings out the urge for waffles in Swedes, a sweet tradition created through, well, a mispronunciation.* If you are in Sweden on or around March 25, chances are you'd eat waffles! March 25 is the day for eating waffles, or våfflor, as they are called in Swedish. This tradition to eat waffles on Jungfru Marie bebådelsedag or Vårfrudagen (Lady Day or The Feast of the Annunciation of Our Most Holy Lady) came about when people lazily began to pronounce Vårfrudagen as våffeldagen — a mistake that has made many people happy as it means "våfflor med grädde och sylt" (waffles with whipped cream and jam) are being served almost anywhere you go.

Waffles is an old dish, dating back to the Middle Ages, when they were grilled over an open fire and the waffle irons were different than the ones used today. In those days, the irons had a scissor-like grip with two plates in the front, which made a square waffle, but already with the check pattern that Swedish waffles still have today. It wasn't until the late 19th century that the waffle iron that makes heart-shaped waffles was invented. Waffles used to be a food eaten everyday, dressed up or down depending on occasion. The ingredients varied. The simplest waffles contained only flour and water, but for festive affairs cream, sugar, butter and eggs were added. Eating waffles with cream and jam, like Swedes do today, became popular at the beginning of the 20th century. It was something most people enjoyed with their coffee after their Sunday walk. In those days there were several "våffelbruk" around Stockholm and other cities and towns where one would gather. Enjoy one of these waffle recipes! (If you're looking for the more basic Swedish waffle, see [Swedish waffles on Våffeldagen](#))

## Hallonvåfflor (raspberry waffles)

1 1/8 cups milk  
2 eggs  
4 ounces cornstarch  
8 ounces flour  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
3 Tablespoons raspberry jam or 4 ounces frozen raspberries  
2 Tablespoons sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
4 Tablespoons cooking oil



Mix all dry ingredients in a bowl and set aside.

Beat milk and eggs and stir in the jam (if you are not using frozen berries).

Add the dry mixture and the oil into the milk mixture and mix. If you are using frozen berries add them now.

Let the batter sit somewhere cool for 15-20 minutes before you bake them.

For something less dessert-like, try

## Våfflor med örter (waffles with herbs):

4 ounces freshly cut herbs, like dill, chives, basil and/or tarragon  
5 Tablespoons butter  
2 eggs  
3 cups milk  
2 cups flour  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 pressed garlic clove  
1 teaspoon baking powder

Melt the butter and let it cool.

Beat milk, flour, egg and baking powder to an even batter. Stir in the melted butter, herbs, salt and garlic.

Let cool for a bit before baking.

You will need a Swedish våffeljärn for these recipes.

Våffeljärn/waffle irons can be found at several Scandinavian specialty stores or at for instance JC Penney, Williams & Sonoma, Target and a variety of other stores. (Ask for a Belgian Waffle Iron - and yes, the Swedish waffle is only distantly related to the Belgian but, US retailers call the appropriate irons 'Belgian' nevertheless)

During a quick search online we found several Old Fashioned Cast Iron Waffle Irons, both at eBay and amazon.com. We recommend electric waffle irons rather than the stove-top variety or the moulds that can be baked in the oven. You'll find several electric and iron heart waffle makers on amazon.com ranging in price from \$20 - \$150



WHAT DID the Swede say to the Norwegian at the breakfast table? . . . "Hurry up and Finnish your Danish!"

WHAT DO you get when you cross an insomniac, an agnostic and a dyslexic?  
Someone who lies awake at night wondering if there really is a dog.



Birka732.com

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](http://www.birka732.com)

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KEN YUSZKUS/Staff photo. Bill Ghen of Beverly looks up at the many icicles hanging on the edge of his roof. Large icicles seem to be on most homes this winter. 02/16/15