

# BIRKA BANNER

Bi-Monthly Newsletter, Birka Lodge #732, Vasa Order of America  
[www.birka732.co](http://www.birka732.co)

**NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2011**

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## **Chairman's Message**

Greetings to all Birka members. It is that time again when Birka's biggest fund raising event is soon here. The lodge needs the help and support of all members to make the fair as successful an event as it always has been. If you have not already signed up to help at the fair, the sign up sheet will be available at the November 18 meeting or you can call me. We will also need help setting up and decorating the Community House on Friday evening, November 25 beginning at 5:00 p.m. The tables are always quite busy when the fair first opens and additional help is appreciated. We are also requesting contributions for the **Grabs Table**, a value of \$5.00. Items should be new. Please wrap in holiday paper without price. We are in need of gifts for boy/girl/woman/man and please mark each package. Home baked goods are also requested for the **Bake Table** and should be priced beforehand.

**Enclosed with this newsletter is a flyer. Please copy, post and distribute to family, friends, work colleagues, etc.** Many of our lodge members and table chairs have been hard at work preparing for the fair. We have imported gift items, linens, jewelry, books, dala horses, candles and candle holders, etc. from Sweden as well as a variety of imported foods for your Christmas and Holiday table.

The Lucia procession will take place at 11:30 a.m. Please mark the date and come and support your lodge. I look forward to seeing many of you there. It would be great if you have a folk costume or Scandinavian sweater to wear the day of the fair!

**A reminder to Table Chairs and other workers: Please refrain from taking down your displays until after 2:30 PM, when the Fair has ended, no matter what degree of traffic we have. It is distracting to last-minute shoppers if we are closing down the displays rather than serving our customers. Thank you.**

At the September 23 meeting, the Refreshment Committee co-chaired by Pam Petronzio and Audrey DiPillo, and their committee, provided delicious refreshments. Following the meeting, we enjoyed a wonderful Cultural Leader's Report from Ann-Marie Breuer on the Glass Districts in the Smaland province of Sweden. The Delegates' Report from the District Convention was given by June Guidara, Gus Blomgren and Abigail Butt. A highlight of the District Convention was Birka Lodge won the Membership Bowl having the highest increase in members over the past 2 years. We will proudly display the Membership Bowl at our Lodge meetings during the next 2 years. Congratulations to all!

The October 28 Halloween Potluck Supper was well-attended and everyone enjoyed the delicious casseroles, salads, etc. and desserts brought by the great cooks in the lodge. Thank you to Janet Muller and her committee for coordinating and setting up the hall. No one went home hungry! Thank you to everyone. Prizes were awarded for members and children wearing costumes. Thank you to those who donated the prizes. Thank you to Gus and Roz Blomgren for providing the Halloween raffle and also to our musician, Bob Landoni.

**Lodge Dues** – At the October 28 Lodge Meeting, a motion was passed to increase the annual dues to **\$25** per person beginning **January 2012**, when dues are due. This has been discussed at three consecutive lodge meetings and notices printed in the Birka Banner, as per the by-laws. Please consider this your first dues notice. Lodge dues should be paid by the end of April. Please communicate to either myself or the Financial Secretary, Linda Boylan, if there are difficult circumstances. Linda Boylan's address and telephone is: 12 Upton Lane, Boxford, MA 01921. Tel. # 978-887-3917. My telephone no. is: 781-933-4949.

The **November 18** meeting will be the final meeting for the year and will feature a cultural program of Christmas crafts by Ann-Marie Breuer. Thank you to Andrea and Mike Swanson and their committee, who will be providing the refreshments for the meeting. Nomination and election of officers for the 2012 term will be held. Please contact me if you do not plan on remaining in your current office. Phone number: 781-933-4949. Thank you. The lodge needs your participation.

The **Lucia Rehearsal** will be held **Sunday, November 20** at 3:00 p.m. at the Community House. Our Lucia this year is Michaela Halloran, daughter of member Matilda Halloran. New children are welcome. Please contact me if you are interested.

The first event for 2012 is our annual **Children's Tree Plundering Party** which will be held Sunday, January 8 at 3:00 p.m. **at the Community House**. Music, storytelling, dancing around the Christmas tree, gifts, refreshments, and a visit from Tomten are planned. Additional information and cost will be mailed out in early December.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the **November 18** meeting as well as at the **Christmas Fair on Saturday, November 26**. Your presence is requested to support and encourage your lodge and its officers.

Best wishes for a peaceful and joyful holiday season. God Jul och Gott Nytt Ar!

In truth and unity,

Linda Christianson, PDM, Chairman

# Happy Birthday!

## NOVEMBER

3	Jean Clough	19	Sonja Pryor
4	Linda Boylan	24	Ron Holmgren
5	Joanne Emerson	25	Jane Atherton
8	Andrea Holmgren	25	Marilyn Sandberg
16	Karen MacMillan	30	Maggie Starrak

## DECEMBER

1	Bob Landoni	10	Richard Johnson
3	Warren Johnson	11	Alison L- Wickey
3	Marilyn Seaburg	16	Gunnar Berggren
3	Carl Wickstrom	17	Cynthia Olsen
5	Gus Blomgren	19	Andrea Swanson
9	Sharon Guidara	19	Kari Ashness
9	Mary Anne Hawkes		

## REFRESHMENT COMMITTEE

### November 18- Craft Evening

Andrea & Mike Swanson, Cochair  
Karin Caves  
June & Sharon Guidara  
Sheila & Richard Sunman  
Marilyn & Ernie Sandberg

## Schedule of Upcoming Events

Nov. 18 - 7:30 pm. - Lodge Meeting - X-Mas Crafts

Nov. 26 - 9:00 - 2:30 - Annual Jul Fair,  
Community House, Hamilton

Jan. 8 - 3:00 pm - Children's Tree Plundering Party,  
Community House

Jan. 27 - 7:30 pm - Lodge Meeting - Fishing Industry

## "BANNER" by mail or e-mail?

If you haven't yet, check [www.birka732.com](http://www.birka732.com) and download and print a recent issue of the Banner. A big advantage is that the photos are in color. You can arrange to have each issue sent to your web address and we save the postage! Our Webmaster, Rich Lilja, is doing a great job, please call him.

## ....'round the lodge....

### EARLY BIRD DUES DRAWING

Dues for 2012 (\$25 per person) are due by the end of April, 2012. Anyone who pays 2012 dues before the end of 2011 will have her/his name entered in a drawing - and the winner of the drawing will receive an extra year of membership FREE.  
**PLEASE PAY DUES EARLY!**

Michaela Halloran, daughter of Birka member Matilda Halloran, will be our 2011 Lucia.

A great job done by Linda Christianson and her committee for making the 110th annual District #2 VOA Convention a resounding success. Everyone enjoyed the wonderful Swedish music provided by Warren Johnson and his team. The feet were really stomping with hambos and schottishes on the dance floor at the banquet.

A highlight of the District Convention was Birka Lodge won the Membership Bowl having the highest increase in members over the past two years. We will proudly display the bowl at our Lodge meetings.



**Linda Christianson introduces William Lundquist, Grand Master, VOA**



**Gus Blomgren accepts the Membership Bowl awarded to Birka Lodge**

## Hexan's Halloween 2011



Marlys Mahajan, Ernie Sandberg and Denise Esperson lead off the delicious pot luck smorgasbord line.

The Blomgren boys and witch rest for a few minutes during the hectic costume parade.

## Julgransplundring 2012



Birka Lodge's annual Children's Tree Plundering Party will take place on Sunday, January 8th, 2012, at the Community House in Hamilton at 3:00 PM.

Traditional activities include singing and dancing around the tree, refreshments, and a visit from Tomten with a gift for the children.

Additional information will be mailed in early December.

## Surströmmingskivan

*Travelers visiting the north of Sweden two hundred years ago, particularly foreigners with sensitive noses, spoke of the extraordinary stink that blanketed the countryside. A stink, for reason.*

Surströmmingskivor, fermented Baltic herring parties, are mostly celebrated in the north and around the same time of the crayfish parties, late summer into fall. The fermented herring is an exotic delicacy presumably only a native Swede (and perhaps only a *norrlänning*, or northerner) can fully appreciate. Each August, there is a rush to buy the year's harvest of *surströmming*.

Once homely survival food, pungent preserved fish dishes such as both gravlax and surströmming have evolved into present-day delicacies.

Gravlax literally means "grave salmon." The name refers to how the original, rather primitive version of gravlax was prepared. Because the fishing rivers were so far away it was difficult to transport the catch. And salt was too expensive for anyone to afford enough for a proper salting. But a person could carry a few bags of salt on his back when he set off on foot or horseback to fish, and that was enough to preserve the salmon. Freshly caught salmon were placed into a shallow "grave" dug into the earth, lightly salted and stored there. The oft-reported smell emanated from places where the salmon had fermented.

Today gravlax is prepared in kitchens all over Sweden and is cured rather than fermented. This is an exotic delicacy presumably only a native Swede (and perhaps only a *norrlänning*, or northerner) can fully appreciate.

## According to Mike

Talk about creativity! Mike Swanson, our Lodge Treasurer, has made a remarkable discovery ----

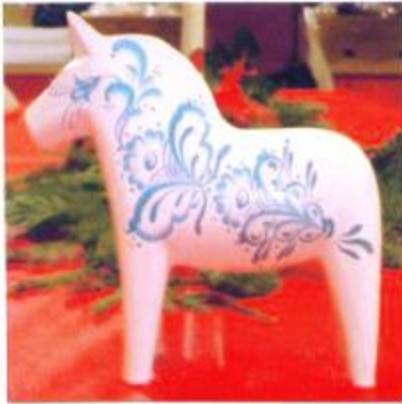


OSAMA'S  
BIN EATEN



Mike belongs to two Model Shipright clubs. The USS Constitution Model Ship Guild is affiliated with the USS Constitution Museum in Charlestown and the Merrimac Valley Ship Model Club is affiliated with the Custom House Maritime Museum in Newburyport.

# SWEDISH YULE FAIR 2011



Saturday, November 26th  
9:00AM to 2:30

Community House,  
Hamilton

Beautiful Scandinavian decorations, Swedish coffee breads, open-faced sandwiches and home-baked goods.

Imported gift items, Dala horses, straw goats, candles & candle holders, as well as a variety of imported foods for your holiday table.

Not to be missed is our Children's Lucia Bride of Light Procession, which will take place at 11:45 AM. Holiday music all day.

## **BIRKA BANNER**

Birka Lodge #732  
Vasa Order of America

Lois Johnson, Editor  
51 Pickman Rd.  
Beverly, MA 01915

## FIRST CLASS





# SWEDISH YULE FAIR

(Traditional Jul Marknad)

Saturday, November 26

9:00 am-2:30 pm

Hamilton/Wenham Community House

Bay Road-Route 1-A

FREE ADMISSION



Lucia Bride of Light at 11:45 am  
Scandinavian & American Holiday Music  
Glögg & Pepparkakor, Open-face Sandwiches  
Coffee & Coffee Bread, Home Baked Goodies  
Scandinavian Foods, Linens, Ornaments, Cards,  
Wrapping Paper, Candles & Holders, Rings,  
Dala Horses, Straw Goats, Jul Tomtes

VÄLKOMMEN

BIRKA LODGE NO.732 OF HAMILTON, MA.

Vasa Order of America

A Non-Profit Fraternal Benefit Association

