



THE SWEDISH CLUB NEWS

The Swedish Club of Houston
Preserving Swedish Heritage on the Texas Gulf Coast Since 1986

July/August

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President's Column by Margaret St. Clair

Sommarhälsningar!

Summer greetings to all of you! Whether you are here in hot and humid Houston or in cooler Sweden or

somewhere else, I hope that you are having a great summer. It seems to me that no matter where you are or what you are doing, summer always seems a little laid back and the pace of life a little slower.

The board of The Swedish Club is also taking it easy. Right now we are on hiatus, with no board meetings scheduled for June or July. It is hard to believe that we are halfway through 2008. Our most recent event was *Valborgsmässoafton*—Swedish Bonfire and Texas Barbecue held on May 3 just outside of Brenham at the ranch belonging to club members, Dr. Margit Winstrom and her husband Bill Riley. (See pictures on page 6.) Once again Pelle Fisk organized the event, and Mark Swanson assisted. About 34 folks gathered that Saturday afternoon to enjoy the beautiful sunny day.

We began with kite-flying and games such as Kubb and croquet while, at the same time, visiting and catching up with one another. We had lots of Swedish tunes playing in the background thanks to Mark Swanson's CD player. All that fresh country air soon made everyone hungry and before long, folks were grilling their steaks, burgers, brats and veggies and setting out their side dishes to share.

After the meal it was time for the scavenger hunt. All participants were divided into teams with IKEA gift certificates given as prizes. The hunt was followed by a water balloon toss and a few folks got seriously soaked—a great way to cool off!

The much anticipated hayride came next. With Margit at the helm of her old John Deere tractor which pulled a flat-bed wagon filled with hay, off we went to explore the nearby pastures. A donkey and a herd of cattle (which included some Longhorns) were intrigued at the sight of us and curiously followed along.



With dusk quickly approaching it was time for the lighting of the bonfire. This year conditions were right for a perfect fire. Those fluent in Swedish led the singing, and song sheets were provided so that everyone could join in. All too soon it was time to go home with everyone relaxed and happy and a little tired too. All in all, it was a most enjoyable day. We met old friends and made some new ones. Thanks to all who came, and special thanks to Margit and Bill for hosting us and to Pelle and Mark for organizing.

Now we look forward to the rest of 2008. Please note our upcoming events as described in this newsletter. Mark your calendars and plan to attend!


Ha en skön fortsättning på sommaren. Vi ses i hösten.


Margaret


Applications for The Swedish Club's 2008 Lucia are now being accepted. She will be presented at the Annual Swedish Christmas Traditions and Lucia Procession, which will be held this year on Saturday, December 13, at 4:00 p.m., at Christ the King Lutheran Church.

Candidates must be young women between the ages of 16 and 24, and members of the Club (either individual or as part of a family membership, including granddaughters). They must also be able to attend the *Luciadagen* celebration, and be able to represent the club at the Texas Day Celebration in Barkeryd, Sweden, in early August 2009. Round-trip airfare will be provided for our 2008 Lucia from Chicago to Sweden by The Swedish Club and SAS. As the Houston Swedish Club's Ambassador to Barkeryd, she will be in a parade, and take greetings to the people of Barkeryd on behalf of the club. On her return, she must write an article on her Swedish experience for publication in the newsletter.

Interested candidates should complete the application on page 7 and send it to: The Swedish Club of Houston, c/o Nancy Webb, 3707 Darcus St., Houston, Texas 77005.

 The Swedish Club's **2007 Lucia, Jenny Panahi**, will be in Barkeryd, Sweden, on August 3, 2008, 1:00-6:00 p.m., for the annual Texas/Sweden Celebration and Parade.

 After 12 years in the U.S., SCH members **Pernilla and Patric Stafshede**, with their daughters, Selma and Hilda, are moving back to Sweden. Pernilla has secured a professorship at Umeå University, and Patric will work at Uminova, an "incubator" company. Patric served on the SCH board in 2005, and Selma participated in SCH Lucia processions. The Stafshedes send their thanks for all the fun they have had with The Swedish Club. They will be in Houston through July, and their new address from August 4 will be Hallonvägen 1, 903 39 Umeå, SWEDEN.

 "**Mamma Mia, the Movie**," a film adaptation of the hit musical by the same name, will open in theaters July 18. Based on the music of Swedish pop group ABBA, the movie stars Meryl Streep, Pierce Brosnan (of 007 fame), Colin Firth (from Ireland—so noted for those of Swedish/Irish descent, like SCH president Margaret St.Clair), and Swedish film star Stellan Skarsgård.

Crayfish Party at IKEA Friday, August 22

Chef Lisa Stockton, new Business Manager of Food Services for IKEA in Houston, extends a warm welcome to all Swedish Club members for a crayfish party at IKEA on Friday, August 22, 5:00-8:00 p.m. Enjoy all the crayfish you can eat for only \$9.99 per person. The price includes crayfish, cheese, crispbread and butter, plus a piece of dessert.

Tickets are expected to go on sale Friday, July 11, and may be purchased either from the cashier at IKEA's upstairs restaurant or by calling Chef Lisa at 713-688-7867, extension 1200. (Phone orders require a credit card.) Only 350 tickets will be printed, and they are expected to go fast. Get your tickets early, and come join in the fun!



Photo: www.imagebank.sweden.se © Richard Ryan;

*Good news
and sommar
hälsningar*
(summer greetings)

from the Consulate . . .

As of May 1, 2008, the consulate of Sweden in Houston is Honorary Consulate General, with Jan Dryselius as Honorary Consul General. As a result, the Consulate General in Houston can now issue temporary/emergency passports, but by appointment only.

For more information, contact the consulate at 2909 Hillcroft Street, Suite 515, Houston, TX 77057 or by phone at 713-953-1417.

Sweden in the 2008 Olympics

By: Knut Gezelius

The 2008 Olympic Games commence in Beijing on August 8. Nearly 11,000 athletes from all over the world will compete for the medals in 302 events in 28 different sports.

At least 67 individuals plus 11 teams will represent Sweden and fight for the medals. With a population of 9 million, Sweden is unlikely to win double-digit gold medals, but may well return home with a handful. According to the Swedish Olympic Committee, the goal is to win more medals than at the 2004 Olympics in Athens, at which the Swedish athletes secured seven medals in total.

Experts estimate that ten medals is an attainable target. The general population appears to be somewhat more pessimistic. In one recent online poll respondents projected the following number of medals: 0 (5%), 1-2 (17%), 3-5 (41%) and 6-10 (37%).

Who then are the Swedes worth keeping an extra eye on this summer? Expectations are particularly high on Stefan Holm (high jump), Susanna Kallur (hurdles), Therese Alshammar (swimming), Carolina Klüft (long jump) and Christian Olsson (triple jump). We'll know the answer when the games come to an end on August 24.



St. Petri was designed in the early 1960s by Sigurd Lewerentz, known internationally as one of the most important and influential architects of the 20th century.



The bent lampposts around the exterior of the chapel are a signature feature of Lewerentz's work.

Students will benefit through travel to Sweden and very focused exposure to Swedish architecture and culture during the documentation of the building. Their skills as architects will be enhanced through the process of measuring, drawing, photographing and detailing the building. They will also visit the works of other important Swedish architects.

Upon their return to UT, their research will be published in a monograph that will be a valuable available resource to architects worldwide.



Interior of St. Petri, facing the main altar.

For more pictures and information about the students' work, see <http://stpetriutsoa.blogspot.com>.

News from Sweden (from Swedish Council of America's May and June 2008 eUPDATES)

→ Sweden is the best place to be a mother. Save the Children, a U.S.-based independent global humanitarian organization, recently released its ninth annual Mothers' Index that ranks the best – and worst – places to be a mother and a child. The Mother's Index compares the well-being of mothers and children in 146 countries.

→ Sweden will take over the presidency of the European Union Council of Ministers in June of 2009. The Presidency of the Council rotates between the member states every six months. The Swedish government has prepared a list of five priorities that it will focus on during that time:

- Climate, energy and environment
- Jobs, growth and competitiveness
- A safer and more transparent Europe
- The Baltic Sea region and relations with neighboring countries
- The EU as a global actor and continued enlargement

→ Swedish golfer Annika Sörenstam has announced that she is stepping away from competitive play at the conclusion of the 2008 LPGA season. She plans to start a family, as well as focus more time on her foundation and her ANNIKA Academy.

→ On May 29, Sweden hosted the first Annual Review Conference of the International Compact with Iraq, a five-year economic and political reform package that is an initiative of the Government of Iraq for a new partnership with the international community.

→ Danville, Virginia recently became the site of IKEA's first furniture factory in the United States, bringing life back to a town that had suffered from years of layoffs and downsizing.

*Also from Swedish Council of America's
May 2008 eUPDATE . . .*

Michigan-Sweden partnership to explore creation of alternative fuel from city waste

It was recently announced that the city of Flint, Michigan, and alternative energy leader Swedish Biogas International (SBI) plan to undertake a project to produce alternative energy from waste removed from the city's wastewater treatment plant. The plant will produce biogas – an alternative energy that can fuel vehicles and generate heat and electricity.

Consul General of Sweden Lennart Johansson and representatives of SBI participated in a press conference along with other dignitaries. "Sweden is a world leader in developing technologies that turn waste into energy, as electricity, and to fuel vehicles," said Johansson. The project is a result of Governor Jennifer M. Granholm's investment mission to Sweden in August 2007 and has the active support of U.S. Ambassador to Sweden Michael Wood, a native of Flint.

For Swedish news, current events, travel information, etc., check out these helpful Web links:

- ▶ www.sweden.se Sweden.se - the Official Gateway to Sweden
- ▶ www.visitsweden.com Visit Sweden - Sweden's official web site for tourist information
- ▶ www.swedenabroad.com Sweden Abroad
- ▶ www.swedennewyork.com Consulate General of Sweden: New York
- ▶ www.thelocal.se The Local: Sweden's News in English
- ▶ lexin.nada.kth.se/swe-eng.html Lexin: Swedish-English Dictionary

The Polar Music Prize to Renée Fleming and Pink Floyd

(from "Fresh from Sweden, May-June 2008,"
newsletter of the Consulate General
of Sweden in New York)

The winners of the Polar Music Prize Award for 2008 - the exceptional American soprano Renée Fleming and the seminal British rock group Pink Floyd – were announced on May 21 at two separate events, in Stockholm and also at a reception at the Swedish consular residence at 600 Park Avenue in New York. The prize winners will receive the prize from His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden at a gala ceremony at the Stockholm Concert Hall, followed by a banquet at Grand Hôtel, on August 26.

Renée Fleming is honored for "her sublime unparalleled voice and unique stylistic versatility." Pink Floyd is honored for the group's "monumental contribution over the decades to the fusion of art and music in the development of popular culture."

The Polar Music Prize was founded in 1989 by the late Stig "Stikkan" Anderson, the legendary manager of ABBA, who donated a large sum of money to The Royal Swedish Academy of Music to establish a foundation and administer the prize. Each recipient receives one million Swedish kronor, equivalent to approximately \$167,000.

Read more at www.polarmusicprize.org.

"NO WONDER SO FEW KNOW ABOUT OUR SWEDISH HERITAGE"

By Aleasa Hogate, Education Director
New Sweden Centre, Wilmington, Delaware

At the Middle States Regional Conference for Social Studies, held for educators from New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and DC, back in 2006, major book publishers were displaying their new textbooks for schools. I was assisting Marianne Mackenzie and Donna Draper with the New Sweden Centre exhibit, to promote the "Life in New Sweden" video. Dressed in colonial clothing I wear to represent my Swedish ancestor Elisabeth Dalbo, I seized the opportunity to visit the displays. Roleplaying a little, I asked each of the representatives to show me where my Swedish heritage was in their books. Most of the representative were embarrassed, because they could not show me anything about New Sweden Colony in their new history books. I then provided them with some educational pamphlets and encouraged them to give it to their editors, and ask to have our history included..

Unfortunately, most of the social studies books had only a mere mention of New Sweden colony. Some had no mention, as if it never existed. Some books with timelines included 1607 Jamestown and 1620 Plymouth, but skipped right past 1638, when New Sweden was founded, to the 1654 Dutch colony. All of them included William Penn's English Colony. Only a couple of them gave more than a brief comment on New Sweden colony, in spite of the fact it was the first permanent colony in the Delaware Valley and lasted seven years longer than the Dutch colony. This made the blood of my Swedish ancestors boil in my veins, in spite of the fact English, Dutch and Indian blood is commingled there. No wonder only a few people know about our Swedish heritage.

Since the conference, I know for sure that at least one state has now included good coverage on this colonial period. The fact each state selects its own books and curriculum means we need to encourage the other 49 states to follow suit.

This should challenge all of us to check what books are being used in our local schools—to see if our history is being taught and let school administrators know if our Swedish heritage isn't included.

An excellent way you can share your Swedish heritage is with the "Life in New Sweden" video and video guide. This is a tool you can use to help educate your children, grandchildren, your local schools and your community. This 28-minute video with an accompanying guide is only \$20 in VHS or DVD format, including PAL format, shipping included. It is available through the New Sweden Centre, Box 163, Yorklyn, DE 19736-0163; phone 302-429-0464; or e-mail RIDDER1640@aol.com.



Mark your calendar

**Saturday, October 25 - Smörgåsbord at
BraeBurn Country Club, Houston**

**Saturday, December 13, 4:00-6:30 p.m. -
Annual Christmas Traditions and Lucia
Celebration at Christ the King Lutheran Church**

Valborgsmässoafton 2008



Both the U.S. and Swedish flags flew over the gathering.



Adrian Fisk, Ben Swanson, Emma (guest of the Fisks) and Nina Fisk



Carol Clarke cut watermelon to share.



The hayride is always fun.



The longhorns were curious about the hayriders.



Native Swede (except for Mark Swanson, left) chorus - Pelle Fisk, Henrik Fagerström, Christopher Westerlund, Helena Karlberg and Christina Duer



Perfect conditions made for a grand bonfire.



2008 SWEDISH CLUB LUCIA

Applications for The Swedish Club of Houston's 2008 Lucia are now being accepted. Our 2008 Lucia will be presented at the annual Swedish Christmas Traditions and Lucia Celebration scheduled for Saturday, December 13, 2008, 4:00 p.m., at Christ the King Lutheran Church, near Rice Village.

Candidates for Lucia must meet the following requirements:

- ▶ Single young woman, 16-24 years of age;
- ▶ Member of the club (either **individual** or as **part of a family membership, including granddaughters**);
- ▶ Able to attend the Swedish Traditions program on December 13;
- ▶ Able to represent the club at the Texas Day Celebration and Parade in Barkeryd, Sweden, on the first weekend of August, 2009;
- ▶ Responsible for own ground or air transportation to and from Chicago (round-trip airfare provided from Chicago to Sweden);
- ▶ On her return to Houston, Lucia must write an article for publication in The Swedish Club News about her experience in Sweden.

Participants are also needed for the Lucia procession, which is made up of female attendants, ages 5-20, and star boys, ages 5-15. Attendants and star boys wear all-white clothing and accessories. The Club can provide some articles of clothing, but individuals are encouraged to use their own.

For twenty years, the Lucia program has provided a wonderful way to travel and learn about our Swedish ancestry and our Texas connection with Barkeryd, Sweden. As an ambassador of the Club, our Lucia will be in a parade and take greetings to the people of Barkeryd from The Swedish Club of Houston.

NOTE: Lucia candidates, in addition to completing the application below, must also write a short *essay* about their Swedish heritage, their interests and why they would like to represent the Club in Sweden, and must provide a *current photo* of themselves. The application must be postmarked by **September 1, 2008**.

For questions or further information, contact Nancy Webb (713-661-1011 or Nancy.Webb@kelsey-seybold.com) or Diana Rodionov (281-636-8153 or drodionov@comcast.net), co-chairs of the 2008 Lucia program.

THE SWEDISH CLUB OF HOUSTON APPLICATION FOR 2008 LUCIA CANDIDATES, ATTENDANTS AND STARBOYS

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____ Phone No.: _____

E-mail address: _____

I would like to be (check one): Lucia _____ Attendant _____ Starboy _____

Lucia candidates only: Please include your **essay** and **current photo** with your application, postmarked by **September 1, 2008**.

Mail applications and enclosures to:

The Swedish Club of Houston, c/o Nancy Webb, 3707 Darcus St., Houston, Texas 77005



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SWEDISH CLUB NEWS

The Swedish Club News is published 6 times a year by the Swedish Club of Houston. Articles, photos, etc., are welcome. We would especially like personal news of our members, explanation of family traditions and Swedish

culture, news of Swedes and of Sweden, and your favorite Swedish shops, products or resources.

Please send news to ljmillikan@sbcglobal.net or by post to the return address below.

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