



Vasa Order of America
Nobel-Monitor Lodge No. 130
June, 2023

NOTICE:

*The
Memorial
Service and
Vasa Voices
Concert will
be held on
June 4 at
2:30 p.m.*

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

The following is an excerpt from the Christmas letter written by one of our newer members, Kay Rasmusen.

There will be no July newsletter.

On Sunday, December 18, I went to my first St. Lucia Celebration, hosted by a local Swedish VASA club. I joined it to find out more about my Swedish roots. I also finally had the nerve to write to a blood relative, Rikard Öhrn, in Sweden. My paternal cousin, Phyllis, had done extensive genealogy on her family and got in contact with him to learn about our ancestors in Sweden. After she passed away, her kind sister, Pam, sent me copies of her letters and pictures of my great-grandparents and pictures of our Swedish (Öhrn) family and their correspondence.

I wrote Rikard and somehow, he received the letter even though he had moved. It has been fun writing to him. I have reminisced to him about my dad, Carl. I remember Dad making fun of Lutefisk, the dried cod that Scandinavian people ate. I don't think Dad ever ate it. Somehow the dried fish is processed with lye, but then it is washed out of it. I hear it is kind of soft and slides down your throat. They have a funny song about it, and a radio play, also tee shirts with the saying "Legalize Lutefisk." A lady at the St. Lucia celebration said the song uses the tune from *O Tannenbaum (O Christmas Tree)*. Here is a snippet of the lyrics: "O Lutefisk, O Lutefisk. How fragrant your aroma. O Lutefisk, O Lutefisk. You put me in a coma. You smell so strong, you look like glue. You taste just like an overshoe. But Lutefisk, on Christmas Day, I tink I'll eat you anyway." Though it sounds kind of yucky, I read that people in the U.S. eat more of it than people in Scandinavia.

I know my family didn't really discuss or celebrate their roots when I was growing up. I think they were trying to assimilate to the U.S., or maybe because they lived in a farming and mining community during and after the depression—perhaps that wasn't a priority for them. My Dad did know the area where Great-Grandpa Swan was from, near Malmö. Dad also had a family joke about our last name and Grandpa Swan coming over from Sweden. Most of the Rasmussens in the U.S. are double "s'rs", i.e. Rasmussen, so he always said when Grandpa Swan came to America, he lost his "s" (or "ass"). Dad had a wry sense of humor at times.

It was fun to be around Swedish American people at the St. Lucia party, many who speak Swedish. Some of the men kind of reminded me of Great-Uncle Dale or Great-Uncle LaJoie. The ladies at our table laughed when I said, "There's my Uncle". *(Continued on Page 2)*



**Peace
Lutheran Church
3740 Mayfield Rd.
Cleveland Hts.
just east of
Severance Center**

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Christmas Letter (Continued from Page 1)

We were asked to bring food to the Swedish celebration. I brought Swedish limpa bread, lingonberries, and some Finnish candies. The other people brought lots of Swedish meatballs, herring, salmon (lax in Swedish per Rikard), deviled eggs, and potatoes. There was Jansson's Temptation (potato casserole with anchovies, named after the religious leader from Bishop Hill, a Swedish settlement in Illinois.)

Back to the foods, I drank some glogg, a Swedish mulled wine with raisins and slivered almonds. I thought the lingonberries were for the bread—they are for the meatballs per ladies at my table. I learned they don't drink coffee with the meal, they drink it later with dessert. They say "efterrätt" in Swedish which means dessert. To me it sounded like "after eat".

After all the festivities, with children parading and singing, they read a story about "The Tomten" by Astrid Lindgren. The Tomten watches over the people and the animals on the farm. They had a human Tomten (looked like a Santa) hand out gifts to the children. One little boy said, "I've been good all year."

I heard from my cousin Jim's wife, Pat, after I wrote a letter about Scottish traditions two years ago and asked for people to share their holiday memories. Pat has Swedish roots also. She remembers that her Aunt Lillian was a wonderful cook. She remembers her special fruit soup, Swedish meatballs, and rolls.

I asked Cousin Suzie if her family had Swedish traditions. She thinks she first learned about St. Lucia day her freshman year at Augustana (a Swedish college). "I remember early in the morning the door came swinging open (in the dorm) and a girl came in with candles on her head or electric lights and they were singing. They left donuts or cookies and hot chocolate."

Cousin Dan said a Swedish tradition was giving the little kids gifts on Christmas Eve and even more the next day.

Cousin Julie shared when she was young, her mom would make Swedish tea rings, they were like cinnamon rolls. She said she remembers the diehard Swedes making Ostkaka—sounds like oooosta kaka. I looked it up, ost means cheese, and kaka means cake in Swedish, also known as Swedish cheesecake or Swedish curd cake. It looks more like a custard and it is made with cottage cheese in one recipe.

In later years, we would have my parent's friend, May Bana, who was born in Sweden, as our guest. She turned 101 this year. I liked picking up skorpor (Swedish for toast) for her from the Swedish bakery in Ashtabula for a treat, and for one of my Swedish senior citizen clients. The ladies at the St. Lucia party said skorpor were more like Swedish biscotti, you have them with your coffee.

I am inspired by my great aunt Marge. She married into the large Miller family. She would write about how fun it was meeting all of them (they have Swedish background on my Great-Grandfather's side). She became friends with my mom, and kept my parents, who moved to Cleveland, up to date on the family in Illinois. She wrote wonderful letters about their lives over the years. Uncle Dale wrote some funny letters to my Dad.

I know I may not be accurate about everything Swedish. Please send me whatever memories you may have about Swedish or non-Swedish Christmas customs, even a recipe (?), only if you would like.

With the frigid weather conditions we experienced before Christmas, I understand why the Swedish love their coffee—they need to warm up. I heard the winter weather in Malmö was from, is like the weather here in Cleveland. *Kay Rasmusen, 20860 Arbor Ave., Euclid, OH 44123 or krasmusen@hotmail.com.*



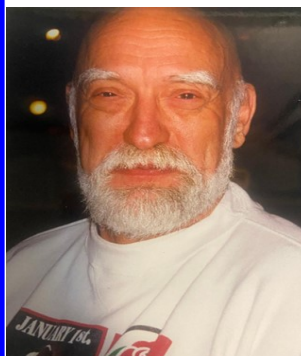
*June 4 Memorial Service
in Honor of Three Long-
Time Lodge Members*



Emil Arvidson
9/30/33
-
1/8/21



Ed Wasseen
4/28/39
-
11/5/22



*Marvin
Hallberg*
9/25/37
-
1/29/23

*Vasa Voices Spring Concert
after Memorial Service on
June 4, 2:30 p.m.
Peace Lutheran Church*



Celebrate Midsommar on June 24 from noon to whenever at Beachland Park on the shores of Lake Erie at the end of Canterbury Road north off Lake Shore Blvd., just west of E. 185th Street.

Served Buffet, Gift Baskets, Swedish Music, Dance Around the Maypole, 50/50 Raffle, Good Will Offering!

Call Carolyn Anderson for reservations - 216-316-2500!

SCANDINAVIAN

 FOLK FESTIVAL
 JAMESTOWN NEW YORK

2023 Scandinavian Folk Festival
Jamestown, New York

Saturday, July 15 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Sunday, July 16 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

\$5 entrance fee for all day

Northwest Arena

319 West Third Street

Downtown Jamestown

716-484-2624

Live Music, Folk Dancers, Midsummer
 Celebration, Lectures, Vendors, Swedish
 Food, Ice Bumper Cars, Curling, Raffles
 and more!

LaQuinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham Hotels,
 200 West Third St., is directly across the
 street from the Northwest Arena for
 convenient lodging and parking: 716-484-
 8400.



Smörgåsbandet from Long Island, NY



Transporting the Maypole down West Third St.



The Thule Swedish Folk Dance Team



Northwest Arena



*Mark Your Calendar
Save the Date—Further Details
in Future Newsletters*

- June 3**
11:00 - ? **Svea Midsummer Celebration**
Presque Isle State Park
Runners Pavilion
301 Peninsula Dr.
Erie, PA
- June 4**
2:30 p.m. **Memorial Service and**
Vasa Voices Spring Concert
Peace Lutheran Church
- June 24**
Noon - ?
See Page 3 **Midsummer Festival**
Beachland Park
At the end of Canterbury Rd.
- July 15-16** **Scandinavian Festival**
Northwest Arena
319 West Third Street
Downtown Jamestown, NY
- VASA VOICES SCHEDULED
TO PERFORM ON
SATURDAY AFTERNOON**
- July 15** **Lunch at Ferrante's Winery**
**CANCELLED DUE TO
CONFLICT WITH JAMES-
TOWN SCANDINAVIAN
FESTIVAL**
- August 9** **Annual River Cruise aboard**
the new "Lady Caroline"
- August 12**
Time TBD **Kräftskiva**
at Lorraine Johnson's home
2212 Hare Rd., Waterford, PA
16441 - Phone: 814-796-4069

*Sweden Turns Recycled Fabric
into New Fashion*

May 23, 2023, Sundsvall and Borås, Sweden

Discarded, sorted clothes arrive by ship on the shores of Sundsvall, in the Gulf of Bothnia inlet of the Baltic Sea. But they aren't bound for a landfill.

Rather, they are destined for the city's Renewcell plant, where they will be dissolved and processed into a new substance: Circulose. This material looks like white cardboard, feels like watercolor paper, and—most importantly—can be spun into yarns for textile manufacturers.

Fashion is a trillion-dollar industry notorious for its negative toll on the planet. But Renewcell's patented technology, now available commercially, and successful launch of the world's first industrial-scale textile recycling plant in Sweden offer a beacon of hope to brands and consumers who care about environmental sustainability.

From an environmental perspective, it means that every year, instead of huge swaths of forest being cut down, millions of old jeans and T-shirts are being used rather than them degrading into methane in landfill," says Nicole Rycroft, director of the environmental nonprofit Canopy.

The fashion industry relies primarily on three fibers—polyester, cotton, and viscose rayon—each of which is problematic for the environment. Polyester, made from plastic, takes hundreds of years to break down. Microfibers from clothes account for as much as 32% of the microplastics polluting the ocean, according to the European Environment Agency and are also abundant in the air we breathe.

Soft-to-touch cotton is grown on vast, water intensive monoculture farms using large quantities of fertilizers and pesticides. The Aral Sea, once the world's fourth largest lake, dried up almost completely, drained by

(Continued on Page 6)

Sweden Recycles (Continued from Page 5)

cotton fields in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. One cotton shirt requires 2,700 liters (713 gallons) of water to produce—as much as a person drinks in 2.5 years.

Viscose rayon is made from tree wood, which sometimes comes from ancient forests. Ms. Rycrost points to the 300 million trees cut down yearly to make viscose rayon, among other textiles. That consumption is slated to double within the next decade.

On top of all this, much of what the fashion industry produces with these materials ends up as water. Global production of textile fibers and all apparel creates 110 million metric tons of water. On average, Europeans produce 33 pounds per year per capita, and Americans about 70 pounds per year.

Solutions for controlling fashion's consumption rate range from reducing overproduction and overconsumption to making longer-lasting clothes and embedding circularity into product design. But experts consider fiber-to-fiber recycling—converting textile waste into new fibers that can be used to make clothes or other textile goods—as one of the most sustainable and scalable levers available.

“Textile-for-textile recycling is at an inflection point,” says Jonatan Janmark, a textile sustainability expert and co-author of a 2022 report for McKinsey, a consultancy, on textile recycling in Europe. “There have been 10 to 15 years of quite intense research and development on textile recycling or sustainability in textiles as the industry has come under more pressure,” he says.

Renewcell's patented new material, Circulose, has been snapped up for use by major fashion brands including Levi Strauss & Co., PVH (which owns Tommy Hilfiger and Calvin Klein), Zara, and H&M (which is also an investor of Circulose).

And many promising technologies are transitioning from the research and development stage to commercialization besides Renewcell's, Mr. Janmark notes.

In the field of cotton, which accounts for 25% of global fiber volume, other players include Infinited Fiber and Spinoва in Finland or Circ in the United States. Another dozen companies or so are working on polyester-to-polyester solutions.

Starting in 2025, the European Union will require all member states to separate textile waste for recycling purposes. That's a big challenge. Maybe the local authorities will have to take care of it, but some parts will have to be paid by the producers.

Mr. Janmark of McKinsey says the EU legislation will have an international ripple. Since many fashion brands are global, they will have to abide by EU law, and that likely means more sustainable processes will spread to other parts of the world.

The textile recycling value chain would bring Europe 1.5 billion to 2.2 billion euros in profits by 2030, he says.

Already struggling to keep up with demand, Renewcell projects rapid growth. By 2024, the company wants to double production from 60,000 tons of Circulose per year to 120,000 tons, the equivalent of 600 million T-shirts per year.

Renewcell CEO Patrik Lundström sees consumer demand rather than regulation as the main driver of change.

“We want to eat sustainably, we want to travel sustainably, we want to live in sustainable houses, but we also want to clothe ourselves sustainably,” he says. “Especially the younger generations, they pretty much demand sustainability from the companies that they buy garments from.”

Source: The Christian Science Monitor
Submitted by Eric Fryxell

Does Speed Equal Intelligence

In 1884, at his specially built Anthropometric Laboratory in London, Sir Francis Galton charged visitors three pence to undergo simple tests to measure their height, weight, keenness of sight and “swiftness of blow with fist”. The door was thronged by applicants waiting patiently for their turns, ultimately collecting data on some 17,000 individuals.

One measure that deeply interested Galton, who is recognized as “the father of psychometrics” for his efforts to quantify people’s mental abilities, was speed. He believed that reaction time was one proxy for human intelligence. With a pendulum-based apparatus for timing a subject’s response to the sight of a disc of paper or the sound of a hammer, Galton collected reaction speeds averaging around 185 milliseconds, split seconds that would become notorious in the social sciences.

For decades other researchers pursued Galton’s basic idea—speed equals smarts. While many recent tests have found no consistent relationship, some have demonstrated a weak but unmistakable correlation between short reaction times and high scores on intelligence tests. If there is a logic to the link, it’s that the faster nerve signals travel from your eyes to the brain and to the circuits that trigger your motor neurons, the faster your brain processes information it receives, and the sharper your intellect.

Psychologist Michael Woodley of Umeå University in Sweden and his colleagues had enough confidence in the link, in fact, to use more than a century of data on reaction times to compare our intellect with that of the Victorians. Their findings call into question our cherished belief that our fast-paced lives are a sign of our productivity, as well as our mental fitness. When the researchers reviewed reaction times from 14 studies conducted between the 1880s and 2004 (including Galton’s inconclusive

data set), they found a troubling decline that, they calculated, would correspond to a loss of an average of 1.16 IQ points a decade. Doing the math, that makes us mentally inferior to our Victorian predecessors by about 13 IQ points.

The Victorian era was “marked by an explosion of creative genius,” Woodley writes. There was, after all, the first world’s fair, the rise of railways, anesthetics and tennis. While environmental factors can surely boost specific skills (some researchers thank better education and nutrition for increases in IQ over the last few decades), Woodley argues, from the biological perspective, our genes are making us dumber.

Critics, however, aren’t as quick to agree on our apparent downward mental trajectory. Whether or not we’re dumbing down, they argue, resurrecting old data from independent studies with different protocols is not the best way to find out. Reaction times are known to vary depending on how much a study emphasizes accuracy, whether participants practice in advance and the nature of the test signal itself. Some researchers now look at the variability in response time rather than the average, or they add decision making, so you react to a flash of light only if it is, say, red.

As a society, we certainly equate speed with smarts. Think fast. Are you quick-witted? A quick study? A whiz kid? Even Merriam-Webster bluntly informs us that slowness is “the quality of lacking intelligence or quickness of mind.” Intelligence probably has a lot to do with making fast connections, but it surely has just as much to do with making the right connections.

Even the perception of speed can be deceptive. When things come easily, when we don’t have to struggle, we tend to feel smarter. We tell athletes to think fast, but when we want a well-reasoned decision, we say think long and hard, which isn’t all that different from think slow.

The Smithsonian

Vasa Order of America
 Nobel-Monitor Lodge #130
 3236 Berkeley Avenue
 Cleveland Heights, OH 44118-2055

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Grattis På Födelsedagen!



June

- 15 Nancy Perrine
- 21 Suzanne Chilcote
- 24 Carolyn Anderson
- 24 Doris Bartlett
- 25 Karen Chilcote
- 25 Marianne Gotrich
- 27 Jeff Fravel
- 29 Eric Zalud

July

- 5 Bruce Elfvin
- 9 Al Fedor
- 15 Jonathan Clemens
- 18 Sandy Angstrom
- 22 Bo Carlsson
- 22 Joyce Hoffer
- 23 Majken Casamatta

August

- 1 Glenda Carlsson
- 4 Joan Keast
- 9 Julian Fossen
- 20 May Bana
- 30 Mark Duffy

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Ole was out with the boys one night and before he realized it, it was dawn. After considerable throught, Ole phone hoe. When Lena answered, Ole shouted. "Don't pay da ransom, Lena. I've jüst escaped."

~ ~ ~

Ole was at the rodeo watching his friend, Tex, bulldog a steer. When Tex got bowled over by the critter, Ole rushed over sympathetically, exclaiming, "You hurt BAD, Tex?" To which Tex replied between go-rans, "You ever heard of anybody hurt GOOD?"

~ ~ ~

Lena says grocery shopping is getting to be just like a religious experience. She says, "All you see is people going up and down da aisles, and ven dey see da prices, day all say, "O MY GOD, O MY GOD>"

