



# VASA ORDER OF AMERICA

*A Swedish-American Fraternal Organization*

**PENNSYLVANIA DISTRICT No. 9**

**Distrikt Tidningen**

## *Summer Newsletter 2023*

### **DEAR DIRECT MEMBERS, BOARD MEMBERS AND FRIENDS!**

Our newsletter format and website are definitely a work in progress! There have been a few corrections, additions and better ideas incorporated into our web presence so that we can reach as many Scandinavians as possible. It's been an interesting and fun process, one that I hope you will continue to share with family and friends.

Check out our website by clicking here:

[Check out our District #9 website](#)

We are all excited about this development. Our website describes more about Vasa, our District #9 and our Local Lodges, about our history and our ongoing activities.

Keep checking the website for updates and news about the District #9, its Local Lodges; Nobel-Monitor, Drott Lodge and Svea Lodge and their activities. Each local lodge also has a website that can give more detailed information about their Lodge. There are lots of Scandinavian things to check out on the web these days!

In addition, if you click and sign-up below, you will receive the regular District #9 Newsletter.

[Sign-up for the District #9 Newsletter](#)

### What's in the Summer newsletter?

- Mark Your Calendar
- News from the 3 Lodges
- The latest District Board Meeting
- Think Summer!

All current Direct Members, Board Members and others related to District #9 will automatically receive our email Newsletters, as long as you have provided a current email address.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**July 25, 2023 - Restart & ReEnergize**, our District Working Group will meet via Zoom at 7:00PM. We are tasked with coming up with ideas that the 3 Lodges could do together, retention of members strategies and recruiting new members. Plans are in the works for a District Program on Lucky Strike, the joint relationship between Sweden and the American soldiers during WWII.

**September 13, 2023 - District Board Meeting** via Zoom at 6:30PM.

**SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024 - The District Convention** We will keep you informed in plenty of time to attend. Cleveland's Nobel-Monitor Lodge is slated to host the Convention. If you've ever wanted to visit the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, see a Brown's game, or go to the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, now is the time to start planning! All are welcome to attend, we are stronger together!

## NEWS FROM THE 3 LODGES

**Drott #168** - The Manassas Viking Festival turned into a great fund and friend raiser. Midsommar was held in conjunction with ASA, SWEA and Finlandia. A memorial service was held in May. A Swedish author, Maria Bouroncle, presented the book *It Came to Me On a Whim*. Two new members are to be initiated in September.

**Nobel-Monitor #130** - A Memorial service was held for 4 members along with the Spring Vasa Voices concert on June 4th. June 24th is the Midsommar celebration. Vasa Voices is going to perform at Jamestown Scandinavian Festival July 15-16th and Darlene Nelson will set up her Swedish Boutique for the weekend.

**Svea #296** - Svea has initiated 2 new members in the past month. They recently held their annual Banquet in May. It was a very special occasion as they rededicated their Charter from May 21, 1914. The Charter was read in English and Swedish and then signed by all the members and guests at the banquet. The Bokklubb is now reading *Stolen* by Ann-Helen Laestadius. Midsommar was celebrated June 3rd at Presque Isle State Park. The Scandinavian Folk Festival is once again happening July 15-16 at the Northwest Arena in Jamestown, NY.

Since the launching of the Svea website, we have made a great new connection with Goteborg Lodge #452 in Sweden! Member, Lars Andersson, sent this photo of their recent Convention in 2023.



## **UPDATE FROM THE 6-7-23 DISTRICT 9 BOARD MEETING**

The first order of business has been to come up with a venue for our 2024 Convention that is accessible, yet cost effective. 3 sites are being investigated: Punderson State Park, Geneva On the Lake Conference Center, and Quail Hollow. The 2016 Convention was held at Punderson but the group felt that although it is cost effective, it was not very accessible, even with the elevator. Geneva is a beautiful new facility but the cost per double occupancy room is \$239/night + taxes. No information is available yet for Quail Hollow. There may be a special executive board meeting to visit the places.

Being in the Cleveland area, possible outside programs could include: wine tours, Abbapalozza, boat tours of Lake Erie, a trip to Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Since Wild Apricot has the capabilities to set up conventions, we are hoping to make the registration process available on line.

Svea has presented its updated by-laws to the District Board for approval. Rolf and Bruce will review them to make sure they align with the Grand Lodge Constitution and then the board members will review.

# *MAGICAL MIDSOMMAR*

## *JUNE 23rd*



In 2023, Midsummer Eve falls on June 23rd, but in many places, festivities are held during the whole Midsommar weekend.

From the late Middle Ages, Swedes began raising and dancing around a Midsommar pole. Decorating it with flowers and greenery is called 'maja', and is known as a maypole.

In the agrarian society, the Midsommar night was considered a time of magic and mystery when plants acquired healing powers and were used to predict the future. Young women would pick seven different kinds of flowers and put them under their pillow to dream of their future husbands. The flowers must be picked in silence, or the magic would be broken.

Walking barefoot in the dew as the Midsommar night turned to dawn helped you stay healthy. Wearing a wreath of flowers in your hair is an old symbol of rebirth and fertility. To preserve the flowers' magic throughout the year, bouquets were dried and sometimes placed in the Christmas bath to keep the family healthy through the long, cold winter.

Today, Midsommar is about celebrating that the best time of the year lies ahead of us.

Like all major holidays, Midsommar revolves around eating and drinking. The Midsommar fare boils down to a few musts: fresh potatoes, pickled herring, Aquavit or 'snaps' and strawberries.

The meal is finished off with fresh strawberries served with whipped cream. Any Swede will tell you that Swedish strawberries are the best, and they may be right. Due to the long, bright and cool spring nights Swedish strawberries don't burn their sugar as quickly, making them sweeter. You can also enjoy them in a classic strawberry cake, jordgubbstårta.

[Visitsweden.com](http://Visitsweden.com)

Ädelmod, Sanning och Enighet

Generosity, Truth and Unity