



VASA ORDER OF AMERICA

A Swedish-American Fraternal Organization

PENNSYLVANIA DISTRICT No. 9

Distrikt Tidningen

Winter Newsletter 2023

DEAR DIRECT MEMBERS, BOARD MEMBERS AND FRIENDS!

The Youth and Adult scholarship applications are available NOW! Our website has a tab to help explain the youth and adult scholarship opportunities. The Scholarship Program is our biggest opportunity to support Scandinavian heritage for future generations.

Check out the website Home page for photos and description of Drott Member, Karin Weeden's experience exploring Sweden's National Parks last year. That experience was made possible because she applied and was awarded the Adult Scholarship sponsored by PA District #9. What would you like to do? Where in Scandinavia would you like to visit? What family history could you unearth at the National Archives in Bishop Hill?

Direct Members - it's that time of year again to renew your memberships. What does \$25.75 get you?

- Vasa Archives – preserves the history of our lodges and our members. It serves as a resource to members for genealogical and immigrant research of Scandinavian ancestors.
- Nordstjernan – The Vasa Star – is the official publication of the Order, published 4 times per year, and mailed to every family in the Order. It carries information from the Grand Lodge, articles about our Swedish heritage, language lessons, and Lodge activities from around the US, Canada, and Sweden.
- Old Age and Benefit Fund – financial assistance to members in need, based on age and years in the Order. The eligibility matrix and application can be accessed by clicking the links on the website under Benevolence.
- Education Fund – provides scholarships to students in higher education, scholarships for the annual youth Swedish language camp, *Sjölunden*, and biennial grants for Elderhostel studies. Just click the Scholarship tab on the website to learn more and access the applications.
- The District and its 3 lodges will introduce you to other Scandinavian cultural opportunities in addition to local activities.
- Networking opportunities.

Keep checking the website for updates and news about PA 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!

Check out our website by clicking here:

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

What's in the Winter newsletter?

- Mark Your Calendar
- News from the 3 Lodges
- The latest District Board Meeting
- Update from the ReEnergize & ReBuild committee

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

January 3, 2024 - ReEnergize & ReBuild via Zoom at 6:30PM

January 8, 2024 - District Board Meeting via Zoom at 6:30PM.

January 24, 2024 - ReEnergize & ReBuild via Zoom at 6:30PM

February 13, 2024 - ReEnergize & ReBuild via Zoom at 6:30PM

February 17, 2024 - Lucky Strike via Zoom at 3:00PM

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. Bo Carlsson, Bruce Elfvin, and Darlene Nelson recently visited the Geneva Convention Center in Geneva, Ohio as a probable site for the Convention. It is located on beautiful Lake Erie, about half way between Nobel-Monitor in Cleveland and Svea Lodge in Erie. All are welcome to attend, we are stronger together!

NEWS FROM THE 3 LODGES

Drott #168 - participates in a Swedish-American Plogging group, in Vienna, VA! Plogging is a way to keep fit (jogging) while cleaning up the environment! Check out the Benevolence tab on the website for a photo and description of Plalking, Pliking, and Plogging and who came up with the idea! (hint: a Swede of course) Drott will have a joint Lucia Fest with ASA at St. James.

Nobel-Monitor #130 - will celebrate Lucia with other Scandinavian clubs from the Cleveland area. They will have their Fest in Lyndhurst, Ohio - a larger venue to accommodate more people - on December 10th. Vasa Voices will perform.

Svea #296 - a few members from Svea will attend the Torch Club meeting - a local think tank organization - and present 2 special Scandinavian holiday traditions - pickled herring and glogg. Their Lucia Fest is December 10th at Luther Memorial Church in Erie. Members made runic Christmas decorations to decorate a holiday tree at a local fundraiser.

UPDATE FROM THE 11-1-23 DISTRICT 9 BOARD MEETING

The great news from the meeting is that the Scholarship applications are now available on the website. This year a youth AND an adult scholarship will be awarded. Make sure you get on the website to get all of the instructions along with the application. The deadline for both applications is March 16th to Chair, Marit Knollmueller.

Our next biggest item is the 2024 Convention. The Geneva Convention Center is the biggest contender for venue. It is a bit pricier but Bo, Bruce, and Darlene were going to visit the facility to see if there are ways that the price can be negotiated so that the bottom line cost to our members can be affordable.

If you have any ideas for cultural programs that would be beneficial, interesting and fun, please contact any board member with your suggestions. We want the Convention to be a worthwhile part of being a Vasa Member!

UPDATE FROM THE ReENERGIZE & ReBUILD COMMITTEE

District #9 is dedicated to the idea that we CAN and WILL grow as a Swedish/Scandinavian Heritage Society. It seems that we can be the pacesetter for doing just that within the Vasa Organization. The committee has developed a Task List that will keep us focused on ideas and actions that will help us grow as a District and as individual Lodges. We are listing activities that can be used by local lodges, families, and the District, we are investigating local publications that can be used, preparing an awareness plan, working on retention strategies that include; polling members as well as the community, offering Lodge 'swag', support the use of the websites, and reaching out to members who have been absent from Lodge programs.

To strengthen our resolve, we will eventually include a member(s) from the Grand Lodge to join our committee.

Lucky Strike is the first cooperative program through District 9. Lucky Strike was a World War II initiative between Sweden and America soldiers who were POW's detained in Sweden. It will be held via Zoom on February 17th at 3PM. It is free and open to the public - history buffs encouraged!

It's an exciting time to be a member of Vasa Order of America!

Ädelmod, Sanning och Enighet
Generosity, Truth and Unity