



Drott Lodge No. 168
Vasa Order of America
Washington, D.C.

NEWSLETTER

www.drott-lodge.org

May 2014

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

To nurture a community...

Reflecting upon the many successful endeavors of the last year, and continually searching for new exciting opportunities and activities for our Lodge, I recently began to contemplate the many virtues displayed by our members, the selfless acts, the hours of dedication, and importantly - the positive impact and awareness that we bring to the DC area and to many of our acquaintances.

Many of us (myself included), bring guests to our most popular events. Everyone seems to enjoy our holiday celebrations and look forward to the annual bazaar, meatballs, or leftover pea soup. Interestingly, our enthusiasm for "all things Swedish" seems to continually expand – and captivates our visitors. Over the last year, not a week passes that I don't receive an email from a friend or colleague - excited to relay some exciting news they've heard about Scandinavia. My inbox is filled with messages that are often titled, "Your Swedes are in the news again." A few that come to mind include the debate about the new Swedish Olympic hockey jersey design, inflatable Volvo car seats, the birth of Princess Madeleine's daughter, the ability to turn rubbish into a useable fuel source, the "LOTR project," return of the television series "Vikings," a long list of Scandinavian performers visiting the area, and of course – always the very latest ABBA news (or rumors of a reunion).

Vasa's main virtues of generosity, truth, and unity are indeed the pillars of our Lodge, but I believe it is our passion to explore, embrace, celebrate, and *share* our Scandinavian heritage that has built a solid foundation – one that our members have built upon and strengthened for over 100 years. The amazing demonstration of fellowship, friendship, and camaraderie displayed within Drott Lodge encourages participation and fuels community engagement and enrichment. I am so proud to be involved in this organization and I am ever grateful for the wonderful friendships we have built.

In truth and unity,

Julie L. Olson

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION



Hats off to Joann Moretti and Gerry Schueman for their Herculean efforts on behalf of Drott Lodge, doing what they so often do to keep our Lodge's belongings and consumable supplies well stocked and in good order.

Did you ever wonder where all of that stuff goes after the bazaar? The things we use only once a year? Big steam trays, large pots, cafeteria trays, tablecloths, aprons, and so forth? Or the Lucia gowns and Santa Suit, or the big coolers used at Midsummer picnics? Well, they go to a storage locker at E-Z Storage on Parklawn Road in Rockville.

Joann, who initially found this particular facility some years ago, ever-observant and its most frequent visitor, noticed on March 21st that a unit two lockers down from our unit was being vacated. She inquired and learned that the 10' x 10' unit rents for only \$7 more per month than Drott's 7' x 10' unit. She immediately contacted our resident master builder, Gerry, to discuss with him the possibility of relocating and to determine his availability for a major undertaking, following which she emailed all officers and executive board members proposing changing units.

Gerry, who built all the shelving in the original unit, and Joann who purchased many of the storage containers and consumable supplies kept there, met on Thursday the 27th to assess how to proceed with the move, how the shelves might best be arranged, what things might be disposed of. On Friday, the 28th, they uninstalled and reinstalled the shelving and moved all the goods to the larger unit. How does Friday night at storage sound to you? Not particularly appealing, right? Saturday Joann headed back for the third day in a row, swept out the old unit and took the remaining trash home. On Monday, back again at E-Z Storage, Joann completed the arrangements; Drott was out of the old unit and got the bonus of a \$1 rental fee for the first month of the new contract.

Now this isn't all. Before undertaking the Thursday/Friday marathon, our master builder was already in the process of designing and building a new cabinet to be installed in the Parish Hall at St. James to hold the Lodge's new sound system and other audiovisual equipment. It was built, transported to St. James, installed, and photographed...all prior to Gerry's scheduled knee replacement surgery. No more carrying screens or digital projectors, no more working with an outdated sound system. Hooray!

And, in case you didn't know, Joann makes the trip to St. James before almost every meeting to check what supplies are there...and then to storage or to a store to get the things needed. Is it red tablecloths this month, for Valentine's Day, yellow for spring and do we use the wooden tulips, are there enough coffee cups, or plates, or what color napkins? Do we want balloons or colored leaves and pumpkins on the table?

We ask all to give a great big round of applause to Joann and Gerry, and even if you don't get to come to meetings anymore, know that you have hardworking co-members looking after things!

MEMBER NEWS

Drott Lodge member Linda Mullenbach was featured in a segment on ABC Nightline on April 26, 2014, highlighting the work that she is doing nationwide on loan modification scams, by bringing lawsuits against scamming individuals and operations. Linda, a Senior Special Counsel at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, a national nonpartisan, nonprofit organization based in DC, is lead litigation counsel on 14 lawsuits brought nationwide against loan scammers and their operations that prey on vulnerable homeowners trying to modify their loans and stave off foreclosure. The scammers promise to apply their expertise and experience to modify the homeowner's home loans, in exchange for thousands of dollars in up front fees paid by each of the homeowners, but instead perform little or no services, leaving the homeowner in a worse situation. Seniors and minorities have been particularly hard hit by these scammers and their operations nationwide. The ABC segment focused on one of her clients who was scammed by an attorney, now disbarred, and the attorney's scamming operations. Linda was able to shut his scamming operations down, and obtain monetary relief for the homeowners whom she represented in the suit. As a result of the suit, the attorney has been barred nationwide from ever providing loan modification services. This story updated an earlier segment of the primetime show "The Lookout" that aired September 2013, with Brian Ross, a well-known ABC Investigative Correspondent. Thus far, the Lawyers' Committee's litigation has resulted in the shutting down of 33 loan modification scamming operations nationally and the barring of 55 individuals from ever being involved in the loan modification business. Additionally, they have obtained monetary recoveries for the victims.



LODGE NEWS

On April 6, 2014 a group of members from Drott Lodge took a private tour of House of Sweden in downtown Washington, D.C. House of Sweden houses the diplomatic missions of the Kingdom of Sweden, the Republic of Iceland, and office space, which includes Volvo. The building, designed by Swedish architects Gert Wingårdh and Tomas Hansen, was constructed between August 2004 and the summer of 2006. King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden inaugurated the building on October 23, 2006. Architect Gert Wingårdh received the Kasper Salin Prize, Sweden's national architecture prize, for House of Sweden in 2007.

Pictures from the event are on Page 4



On Saturday, April 12 Members of Vasa Ventures (V-squared) and other area Scandinavians celebrated Valborgsmässoafton, or Walpurgis Night, with a traditional “bonfire.” The festivities included a BBQ, Swedish music, and sampling “Viking Blod” (mead honey wine). In the pictures below you will find members modeling our new 2014 Drott Lodge t-shirts that will be available at May’s meeting for \$18 (S, M, L, XL) – while supplies last!





VASA WAS HERE!

Winter is finally making an exit from the area and Drott Lodge members are eagerly making their summer vacation plans. Let us know about your travels by sending us a postcard or picture of a place you have visited, email to drott-newsletter@drott-lodge.org. We will highlight your travels in our new “Vasa Was Here!” column each month.

Aloha-hej! Chairman Julie Olson recently visited the majestic shores of Hawaii, attended a luau, and took her first surfing lesson at Waikiki.



UPCOMING LODGE EVENTS & PROGRAMS

Our next meeting will be on Sunday, May 18, 2014 at 2:30 p.m. with our cultural program preceding the business portion. This month we welcome Karen Richardson who will discuss woolen and wooden tomtes and how to make them: In this fun session you will learn a bit about Swedish elves, sometimes known as gnomes, or Tomte. You will have a chance to play with some wool and see how the magic unfolds as you create a gnome that is unique in the entire world. We will also go over the quick steps to making a gnome using simple wooden parts, a

hat, and a bit of a beard. Kits will be available to take home and make more, and woolen and wooden gnomes and other woodland creatures will be on display. Karen Richardson's deep fondness for wool and an abiding fascination with Nordic folk traditions both come naturally to her. Inspired by her family's Scandinavian ancestry, she is an award-winning craftsperson and sought-after fiber arts teacher for more than 40 years. Working extensively with Scandinavian and locally produced fibers, in the traditional palette of Scandinavian folklore, she crafts magical figures at her home studio in Gaithersburg, Maryland. Learn more by visiting her website at woolshoparts.com.

District Convention delegates will be nominated during the business meeting on May 18th and voting on nine new applications for membership.

SAVE THE DATE | On the afternoon of Sunday, July 27, 2014 Drott Lodge will be hosting a Sunday Supper for newly arriving patients at the Children's Inn at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Lodge Vice President Eric Randolph is coordinating this event as a "Day of Service" for the lodge, enabling us to reach out to our local community through volunteerism. Sunday Suppers at the Children's Inn, hosted by local businesses and civic organizations, allow children and their families to have an evening of relaxation after a day of traveling. Pediatric patients travel to the NIH from across the United States and around the world to receive treatment for a variety of illnesses. We are calling out for Drott Volunteers to help prepare and serve a meal at the Children's Inn on July 27th. We will need at least 10 volunteers to help serve the meal at the Inn and additional volunteers to help cook food items. To keep the meal simple and enticing to the children we will be preparing an Italian menu of pasta dishes, bread, salad, and providing a Swedish themed desert selection. The Inn has suggested planning for upwards of 60 people, but we will have a fixed head count prior to the 27th. If you are interested, please email Eric Randolph at eric.randolph@me.com, or see Dennis Roy at May's meeting for more details and to sign-up.

OTHER EVENTS

VISAFTON 2014 | May 10, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. Visafton 2014 will be held at the historic Adelphi Mill, 8402 Riggs Road, Adelphi, Maryland; an entertaining evening where you will enjoy singing traditional songs and ballads in Swedish. Special guests from Uppland, Sweden: Cajsa Ekstav (riksspelman) and Örjan Englund. The evening will include dancing upstairs on the spacious hardwood floor, homemade dinner (BYOB), and you are invited to bring a dessert for the dessert table to share. Carpooling is recommended, as parking is limited. Suggested donation 30.00/seat at table. Limited to the first 150 people registered in advance. Mail your check and a printed contact list of name/address/phone/email (you and guest(s)) to Elisabeth Albaugh at 12327 Manship Lane, Bowie, MD 20715. For more information about the program contact Kerstin Hendrickson at kerstinhend@gmail.com; questions about ticketing please contact Elisabeth Albaugh at albaugh@comcast.net. **Drott Lodge is a sponsor of this event.**

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Submissions for the June Newsletter are due **May 18, 2014** to Eric Randolph.



Spring at Drottningholm Palace • Photo courtesy of: © Eric Randolph, 2012

Built in the 16th century, Drottningholms slott is the private residence of the Swedish royal family and a popular tourist destination. The current royal family has used Drottningholm as their primary residence since 1981.

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Visafton 2014

You are invited to the 13th **Visafton** at the **Adelphi Mill, 8402 Riggs Rd, College Park, MD** on **Saturday May 10th, 2014 at 6 pm**

Special guests from Uppland, Sweden: **Cajsa Ekstav** and **Örjan Englund**. Cajsa (nyckelharpa and song) was here in 2003 for Visafton, and Örjan and Cajsa both performed at Visafton 2006, and 2008. Cajsa is a "riksspelman" on nyckelharpa, and a wonderful singer/storyteller. Örjan is an accomplished accordionist, guitarist, and singer. Together they are a delight to experience.



- We will all enjoy singing a variety of traditional songs and ballads in Swedish.
- **Svenska Sånggruppen** will perform
- Fiddle music by local Swedish musicians
- Dancing upstairs on the spacious hardwood floor
- Delicious homemade dinner (BYOB)

Everyone is welcome. You are invited to bring a contribution for the dessert table. If you can assist with the preparations, indicate this on the registration form below. Please carpool if possible. Parking is limited at the Mill.

Suggested donation: \$30.00/seat. Limited to the first 150 attendees.

Make check payable to **Elisabeth Albaugh**

Mail your check and registration form to:

Elisabeth Albaugh at: **12327 Manship Lane, Bowie MD 20715**

For more information contact:

Kerstin Hendrickson (program) Dir. Svenska Sånggruppen

email: kerstinhend@gmail.com or

Elisabeth Albaugh (tickets) at 301-464-0757

email: albaughg@comcast.net

Visafton website with Information and Directions: <http://visafton.weebly.com>

--- Cut here ---

Registration Form- Please mail along with donation to Elisabeth Albaugh (see above)

Name/s of everyone attending (please print) _____

Phone: (____) ____ - _____ e-mail: _____

Total donation enclosed _____ we can bring a dessert _____

I / we can help setup during the day of the event _____ / can help cleanup _____