

Golden Valley Lodge #616 Newsletter

Chairman's Message



New Golden Valley Lodge Chairman, Frank Muscarella

This is my first go at writing a chairman's message so please bear with me. Everyone of the members from our lodge who attended the past District 15 Convention had a very enjoyable weekend. We also had a good number of our members elected to offices. District Secretary Isabella Muscarella, Member of Executive Board Bertil Winther, Chaplain Maidie Karling, Assistant Master of Ceremonies Inga Francis and Inner Guard Delphine Trowbridge. Sylva Pitters was the lucky winner of the \$250.00 third prize in the drawing. Seems like Golden Valley is the luckiest lodge. We have had more winners, I believe, than any other lodge. The documentary film that they played about the archives in Illinois was very informative and a pleasure to see.

Dates to Remember

- GVL March Meeting.....March 14
- Saint Patrick's Day..... March 17
- CLU Scandinavian Festival...April 20-21
- Vasa Park Picnics:

 - Springfest May 19
 - Midsummer June 23

- Viking Village: Begins after Midsummer festivities on Sunday, June 23-
Friday, June 28
- Autumnfest.....Sept. 29



We need to get things moving on who we are going to have as members on the Financial Committee. Hopefully the members have given this some thought and have some suggestions to bring up at the meeting.

Lastly, I would like to give a huge thank you to Gunilla Thelin for arranging the \$750,000 scholarship donation to the Vasa organization, which included \$250,000 for our lodge. We need

to also thank Ingela Sorensson for introducing Bertha Kalm to Gunilla.

In Truth and Unity,

Frank Muscarella



Initiation Ceremony for Frank Muscarella, Hubert Pitters, Bill Wendt, Birgitta Clark, Nicolette Taylor, Johnny Bell, Bertil Winther, and Kerstin Wendt.

Happy March Birthday to You!



Frank Grew
 Linnea Heinstedt
 John Bell
 Britt-Marie Potter
 Maidie Karling
 Kerstin Engblom

March ?
 March 1
 March 8
 March 22
 March 30
 March 30

Prinsessan Estelle 1 år

Saturday, the 23rd of February was Princess Estelle's first birthday. Messages of congratulations can be sent to The Princess via the Royal Court's Facebook page or using the Royal Court website message form.

Princess Estelle wore the dress worn by The Crown Princess on her first birthday in 1978.



GVL Happenings



Buffet Buzz

Many thanks to the Holstein and Thorsen families -- our fabulous kitchen crew. They prepared a delicious dinner for us!



District News

The District Lodge Pacific Southwest #15 – 99th Annual Convention – was held at the Holiday Inn/Long Beach, CA on February 23-24, 2013. The elected District Officers from Golden Valley 2013-2014 are as follows:

Isabella Muscarella, District Secretary
Bertil Winther, Executive Board Member – 1 year
Maidie Karling, District Chaplain

Inga Francis, District Assistant Master of Ceremonies
Delphine Trowbridge, District Inner Guard
Ann Heinstedt, District Auditor – 1 year

Pictures from the convention are also on pages 7-9.



Cultural Corner: Dala Horse



A Dala horse (Swedish: Dalahäst) also known as Dalecarlian horse is a traditional carved, painted wooden horse statuette. Historical horse carving locations are the towns of Bergkarlas, Vattnas, Nusna, and Dalama. They were said to have originated in Swedish province Dalarna. It has become a symbol of Dalama and Sweden in general.

The most popular are the red-orange horses from the little village of Nusnäs near Mora. It is stoutly carved and painted bright red with details and a harness in white, green, yellow and blue. Other towns in the region are known for other styles and colors.

Since Viking Times, the horse has been considered a holy animal. A horse represented a creature of great value, a tower of strength in helping the family. A faithful friend who drew loads in the forest during winter, worked in the fields and meadows in spring and summer and carried equipment up to the summer pastures and adjoining chalets. It also provided transportation between villages and parishes, trips to the mill, and to the market. There was so much pleasure with a horse. Children really enjoyed their company. They could ride bareback and many children were able to sit on its broad strong back at the same time. In many cultures throughout history, wooden horses have been carved as children's toys. In central Sweden, wood scraps from the local furniture-making trade, paint-pigment from nearby copper mines, and long winter evenings bred the development of the Dala Horse. Traditions vary in giving credit to woodsmen and to soldiers for originating the craft. The historical ori-

Pictured: Ruth Wilkening with her Dala Horse (and rooster) collection. Looks like roosters are next!



gin of the Dala Horse can be traced to the lumberjack's cabins as early as 1624. Often the lumberjacks relaxed by carving figures from odd pieces of wood. The popular choice was a horse. These were taken home to the children where they became treasured toys.

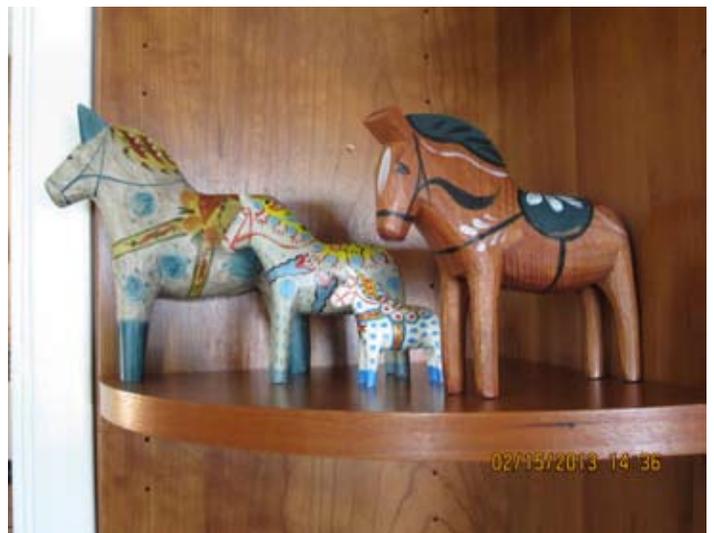
Dala Horses from the Nusnäs-Mora area first appeared with their familiar bright decoration in the 1800's when the kurbit, or flower patterned saddle, was regularly added to them. This design comes from the Biblical story in which Jonah sat outside the city of Ninevah and the Lord caused a Kurbit, or gourd vine, to grow up beside him to protect him from the desert sun.

The Dala Horse gained international popularity when it was chosen by the National Crafts Union for part of the Swedish display at the Paris Exposition in the mid-19th century.

The skills for creating the Dala Horse have been passed from generation to generation and today it is one of the few living folk traditions of Sweden. Many men of the village carve the horses at home, bringing them back to a main workshop to be painted by skilled artists.

If you have not discovered Pinterest.com, prepare to lose yourself to the computer! Here is a link to dala horses: <http://pinterest.com/karenannalena/dala-horse/>

The beautiful Dala Horse collection belonging to Ingela Sorensson is shown below.





Bertha E. Kalm, Benefactor of Our Order

We were only a week into this year when I got a call from Gunilla Thelin, one of my predecessors as chairperson of our Lodge. Acting as executor of the Bertha E. Kalm estate she was about to distribute four checks for a total of one million dollars to benefit Swedish-American institutions. The size of the bequest came as a surprise to me even though I knew that Ms. Kalm was a generous person and that our Lodge (as well as our District Lodge, the Grand Lodge and a few other parties) was a beneficiary of her trust. Ms. Kalm, I soon learned, was proud of her Swedish heritage and had told Ms. Thelin and another of her friends, Ingela Sörensson, that she wished to honor her ancestors by giving half of her estate to organizations within the Swedish-American community; the other half she had reserved for her Alma Mater, San Jose State University in California. The funds going to the Vasa Lodges were earmarked for education. According to the trust document, the St. Erik's Church in San Pedro (a California branch of the Church of Sweden) was bequeathed the same amount as each of the three Vasa Lodges.

Unfortunately, I didn't have the opportunity to meet Ms. Kalm - she never applied for membership in the Vasa Order and never attended any meetings at our lodge, the Golden Valley Lodge (GVL) in Van Nuys, California. On several occasions, however, the GVL scholarship program received donations of \$1,000 from a lady who wished to be anonymous. It was only after the death of Ms. Kalm on April 11, 2012 that the name of our benefactor was revealed. Her friends, members of the GVL, have provided me with the following data about her interesting and adventurous life.

Bertha Kalm was born in Riverside, California on October 9, 1914. Her father, Charles Kalm, was an immigrant from Sweden who arrived to New York in 1893 and later settled in California where he became an American citizen in 1901. Bertha's mother, Amanda, was born in Carthage, Missouri, but moved to California with her parents in 1888 when she was a 12-year old child. Bertha's maternal grandparents, the Sodergrens, had left Sweden in the late 1860s. Following Mr. Sodergren's passing in 1907, and soon after marrying Bertha's mother, it is likely that Charles Kalm bought the family's citrus ranch in Colton (near San Bernardino in California). Bertha grew up on the ranch together with a half-brother and a half-sister.

After graduating from high school, Bertha attended San Bernardino Junior College within a few miles of the family ranch. In 1933 she abandoned the comforts of home and moved 400 miles north where she transferred to San Jose State College (today's SJSU). Here Ms. Kalm received her Bachelor of Arts degree and started to work as a teacher at an elementary school located about 50 miles south of San Jose. The following year her father died of a stroke. To be near her mother at their time of sorrow, she went back home to Colton. After receiving her teaching credentials from USC in 1939 she was employed as a business teacher at Colton High School.

Ms. Kalm moved to Los Angeles during the time when the U.S. was gearing up for WWII. Initially she worked as a secretary but in the fall of 1942 she started her 30-year career as a business teacher and counselor in the LA school system. Ten years later she took sabbatical leave to travel in Europe with her mother and half-sister. They reserved a stateroom with three beds on the luxurious ocean liner SS America and departed for Bremerhaven (Germany) on June 20, 1952. The return to New York was booked on the same ship sailing from Southampton (England) on September 11. Bertha rented (or bought) a car in Europe and toured many countries, including Sweden where she researched genealogical archives and took notes on her family background. Before returning to the U.S. she and her travel companions went on a cruise that included stops in Greece,

Lebanon, Israel and Egypt as well as excursions to places of interest in the region. It was probably this trip that wetted Bertha's appetite for extensive world travel later in life.

In a personal history document Ms. Kalm described herself (at age 41) as a single woman of slight build (height 5'5" and weight 120 lbs) with blue eyes, brown hair and fair complexion. This document was probably prepared when she applied for a U.S. government job in Washington D.C. in 1956. One of her friends told me that Bertha wrote frequent letters to her 80-year old mother in Los Angeles during the two years she worked for the government. At that time her mother resided in a duplex (or possibly an apartment building) that Bertha had acquired before moving to the nation's capital. Many of the letters concerned rent collection from her tenants.

Ms. Kalm became an accomplished world traveler after her retirement in 1972. In an article published

in Who's Who her occupation was listed as business educator and adventurer; now we should add philanthropist. The funds she bequeathed to Vasa are needed and will benefit our Order in a multitude of ways. From experience I know that scholarship programs play an important role in recruiting new and young members. At my own Lodge we have placed the money in a separate fund; any future scholarship awards coming from this fund will be named after Bertha E. Kalm. The corresponding program at the Pacific Southwest District Lodge will be augmented this year and more so in coming years. Furthermore, and perhaps even more important, it has now become possible to restore the Grand Lodge scholarship program to its former grandeur.

*Submitted by: Bertil A. Winther
Past Chairman, Golden Valley Lodge 616
Executive Board Member, District #15*

District Convention Pictures

Shared by Inga Francis and Dorothy Burns



Golden Valley Lodge attendees: top row - l-r: Steve & Andrea Tabinelli, Daga Karin Lindquist, Bert Winther, Dorothy Burns, Gertie Lingström, Nathan Coddington Bottom row - l-r Anne Heinstdedt, Birgetta Clark, Inga Francis, Rigmor Johnsdotter, Maidie Karling, Sven Lingström, Delphine Trowbridge, Isabella Muscarella, Frank Muscarella, and Elvine Lundberg.

District Convention Pictures





Golden Valley Convention Delegates: Maidie Karling, Dorothy Burns, Bert Winther, Gertie Lingström, Steve Tabinelli



The Vikings on the HISTORY Channel

THE VIKINGS – on the HISTORY channel, Sundays, 10-part series began March 3 – check your local listings as they repeat the episodes during the week. You may also be able to see the episodes on line: <http://www.history.com/shows/vikings>



“The Vikings” is a historical drama series created by Michael Hirst and produced for the American cable television channel History. Filmed in Ireland, the series is inspired by the epic saga of Viking King Ragnar Lodbrok. One of the most popular Norse heroes, Ragnar was a great Viking commander and the scourge of France and England. Vikings premiered on March 3, 2013.

The show tells the tale of the epic and violent world of the mighty Norsemen who raided, traded and explored during the early medieval period. It follows the exploits of semi-legendary viking figure Ragnar Lodbrok and the gripping sagas of Ragnar’s Viking crew and family as he struggles to become ‘king’ of a large part of modern day Scandinavia and Europe.

The show will tell the tale of the driven young Viking warrior Ragnar Lodbrok, played by actor Travis Fimmel, who longs to discover civilizations across the seas. With the help of his visionary friend Floki, played by Swedish actor Gustaf Skarsgård, they build a brand new generation of faster and sleeker ships. Jarl Haraldson, played by Golden Globe-winning actor Gabriel Byrne, is Ragnar’s lord and adversary. A man of little vision, the Jarl is suspect of Ragnar’s ambitions and goes head to head with him in a struggle for supremacy.

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Youth Central

Youth Group Update

The Youth Group is planning a bowling trip. Check out the Facebook group page for more information!

