

September 2026

Golden Valley Lodge #616 Newsletter

Kungsbacka, Halland

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Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Welcome back after a long and hot summer. It is with sadness that I announce the death of our sister Florence Bergstrom and our brothers, Tommy Eneberg and Lage Engblom. They will be greatly missed. We will drape the altar in their honor.

We have a exciting fall season for our Lodge. Our dinner hosts will be Mona and Andrea. Mark will give us another wonderful snaps

demonstration and we can purchase our favorite for our holiday celebration. All proceeds go to Golden Valley.

We have our 80th Anniversary Celebration on the Queen Mary on October 24th. You can still sign up at the September meeting, either by Venmo or check. We will discuss the tours available. I hope to see you all!

Jason

If you have not paid your membership dues, they are due. 2026 rate is \$35
Questions? Ask:
akarling20@yahoo.com

Please send your checks to:
Ann-Kristin Karling
as listed in the directory,
or bring to a meeting

Reimbursement for an expense:

Cecilia Danhi
Email: Ceciliadanhi@hotmail.com

Golden Valley Lodge #616 • Vasa Order of America •
Meeting: Prince of Peace Lutheran Church | 9440 Balboa Blvd | Northridge, CA 91325
info@goldenvalleylodge.org • www.goldenvalleylodge.org

GVL Happenings

September and October Birthdays!!

SEPTEMBER (9)

Sylva Pitters	1
Stefanie MacDonald	2
Lars-Ove Nilsson	6
Mark Landstrom	7
Dawn Mathews	7
Larry Klein	9
Kevin Dewey	11
Cecilia Elisabeth Danhi	12
Julian Lundberg	12
Jason Bloom	19
Sandra Pehrsson	20
Teresa Zales-Shoemaker	24
Birgetta Glad	26
Bertil Winther	30

OCTOBER (10)

Hildur Banhart	1
Gayle Landstrom	2
Jana Gasior	2
Gun Marianne Olin	2
Lilian Cropper	3
Annili Anderson	5
Yvonne Klintare	5
Laila Weitz	7
Delphine Trowbridge	7
Larry Pulatanovich	7
Rut Eneberg	8
Wenche Eklund	8
Lillemo Possecker	10
Heidi Klintare	12
Conny Klintare	13
Maggie Connelly	14
Daga-Karin Lindquist	15
Ingela Sorensson	15
Stephen Osmond	16
Ann Heinstdt	16
Alex Klintare	19
Alexander Richards	21
Emma Rose Chiarelli	21
Lisa Eklund	23
Katarina Holstein	24
Bradley Richards	25
Michael Stearer	25
Gunvor Sabo	25
Dios, Saga	27
Alex Lund	30

2026 Golden Valley Lodge Board

& Service Positions

Chair: Jason Trowbridge
 Vice Chair: Cecilia Brady
 Past Chair: Delphine Trowbridge
 Recording Secretary: Cecilia Danhi
 Assistant Secretary: Jennifer Norman Lund
 Membership Secretary: Jana Gasior
 Financial Secretary: Ann-Kristin Karling
 Treasurer: Bingitta Clark
 Chaplain: Beth Bunnell
 Master of Ceremonies: Stig Eneberg
 Assistant MoC: Alex Lund
 Cultural: Laurie Taylor
 Trustee Chairman 1 yr: Bertil Winther
 Trustee 2 yr: Delphine Trowbridge
 Trustee 3 yr: Kerstin Wendt
 Auditor chairman 1 yr: Britt Potter
 Auditor 2 yr: Wenche Eklund
 Auditor 3 yr: Linda Trowbridge
 Events Co-Chair: Maggie Connelly
 & Delphine Trowbridge
 Scholarships: Hubert Pitters, Beth Bunnell, Gunilla Thelin, Wenche Eklund, Britt-Marie Potter
 Financial: Hubert Pitters
 Newsletter, Historian & Vasa Star: Laurie Taylor
 Vasa Park: Richard Heinstdt,
 Linnea Heinstdt, Dorothy Burns
 Alternate Ann-Sofi Holst
 Bar: Valerie & Dylan Olson
 Youth Group: Cecilia Trowbridge

TOMBOLA

If you have contributions for the Tombola,
 please bring them to Maidie
 at the September meeting.

No books, please.

Thank you!

Culture Corner

The Finnish Lottas



During WWII, 232,000 Finnish women volunteered as Lottas — unarmed teenage girls to 70-year-old grandmothers — who ran the entire Finnish Army behind the lines and saved Finland without firing a single shot.

They wore grey uniforms with no rank, no gun, and a small black badge that said "Lotta Svärd."

The name comes from a poem by Johan Ludvig Runeberg. Part of a large and famous book, The Tales of Ensign Stål, the poem described a fictional woman named Lotta Svärd. According to the poem, a Finnish soldier, private Svärd — Swedish: svärd means a sword — went to fight in the Finnish War and took his wife, Lotta, along with him. Private Svärd was killed in battle, but his wife remained on the battlefield, taking care of wounded soldiers. The name was first brought up by Marshal Mannerheim in a speech given on 16 May 1918.

232,000 of them. In a country of 3.7 million.

They did everything men did, except fight.

Lottas were air raid spotters who watched the sky for Soviet bombers 24 hours in -40°C towers.
They were nurses who operated in tents at 2 AM with frozen blood on their hands.
They were radio operators who decoded Soviet

messages, anti-aircraft spotters who aimed guns, and drivers who drove trucks through bombing.

14-year-old Lottas carried 30-kilo ammunition boxes to the front line on skis. 70-year-old Lottas knit 1 million pairs of socks and cooked 50 million meals. The rule was: Lottas never carried weapons. If captured, they would be executed as partisans. 291 Lottas died — mostly in air raids and hospital bombings.

When Marshal Mannerheim was asked after the war what saved Finland, he said: "Not me. Not the generals. The Lotta."

In 1944, when the Soviets demanded Finland disband all "fascist organizations," they specifically demanded the Lotta Svärd be dissolved first. The Soviets feared them more than the army.

The Lottas obeyed. They burned their flags, hid their badges, and went home silently. They were never given veteran status until 1980.

Today, the last Lottas are 100 years old. Every Independence Day, they sit in the front row at the President's palace in their grey uniforms.

Source: Finland remembers.

Year & Place: 1921-1944, Everywhere in Finland,
From Front Hospitals to Watchtowers
Facebook Post

The 41st Quadrennial Grand Lodge Convention
Chicago Marriott Naperville
July 14 – 18, 2026



Grand Lodge Convention was held at the Chicago Marriott Naperville from July 14 –17, 2026. Maggie Connelly (me) and Jon Vikander were the two DL15 delegates. There were 16 new delegates. A new Delegate breakfast was held. Tom Cleveland took polaroid pictures of each of us, and a polaroid picture board of the new delegates was created and displayed on the convention floor.

At registration, we received our yellow convention binder, cloth bag, pens, etc. The cloth bag was designed with an outline of the Chicago skyline and a lot of Swedish in it. Dala horses, a Viking ship, Swedish flag and more. On the bag, a Vasa Order of America emblem (pin) was superimposed on the Chicago Bean that is in Millenium Park. This was designed by Susan Cleveland. Nice touch. Yes, we are in Chicago!

On Tues., July 14, the opening ceremony began with the parade of the flags with the local Boy Scouts each

carrying in a flag. The convention was very well-organized and ran smoothly. Grand Master John Hanright was exceptional as our Vasa leader and in moving the meeting along seamlessly each day. The agenda and timeline were closely followed.

On Day #1, a photo session was held in the afternoon for the delegates, officers and guests. That night, DL 8 Lake Michigan, provided the welcome reception with Chicago deep dish pizza pie, salads and desserts.

On Wednesday, July 15, committees & chairs presented their recommendations on the motions. Grand Master Hanright was very proficient at handling the voting and operations each day. Tore Kellgren, PGM, served as the parliamentarian. Motion #4 was one of the motions that the assembly spent quite a bit of time on.

The proposed Constitutional change of Motion #4 is to move the Vasa Star to a primarily digital (electronic) 4

distribution method. This motion passed, but with some revisions needed. The rollout of the digital model for our VASA Star should be within six months. Members who do not use email will have an opportunity to opt in to receive their copy of the VASA Star by USPS mail sent from Grand Lodge. VASA Star will no longer be included within the Nordstjernen. Costs have ballooned to \$15,000. annually as well as extra costs for overruns.

Wed. evening, we all boarded a Wendella Architectural boat trip of the Chicago River and the Chicago skyline. We learned about the history of Chicago and architectural highlights. We dined on Portillo's beef sandwiches, Chicago hot dogs, salads & dessert.

Newly elected Grand Lodge Officers for the 2026 – 2030 four-year term include:

Grand Master Tom Cleveland
Vice Grand Master Antonio Spargo
Grand Secretary Marlene Patient
Vice Grand Treasurer Kevin DeFeo
Vice Grand Secretary Lillian More
EBM- Eastern Region Viviane Valentine
EBM -Midwest Region Julie Olson
EBM -Western Region John Erickson
EBM -Canada Lisa McMurry
EBM -Sweden Maggy Ahlin Thelin

I, Maggie Connelly, am very fortunate. I received a four year appointment to become the Deputy to the Grand Lodge for our DL15. Thank you, Birgitta Roodsari, for your service as the "Deputy to the Grand Lodge for our DL15" these past four years from 2022 - 2026.

Friday, July 17th, was the last official day of our 2026 Grand Lodge Convention with a business meeting and installation of officers. The newly elected officers were installed in Vasa fashion – with well deserved recognition and pomp and circumstance. After all, we do come from a proud, royal heritage in our Scandinavian countries.

On Friday evening, the Grand Banquet was held. Food was excellent. We danced to music by Smorgasbandet. From my standpoint, I can say that "A good time was had by all!" - especially me.

This concludes my report.

Reported on by:

Maggie Connelly
DL15 Grand Lodge Delegate & DL15 Grand Lodge Deputy

Vasa Culture Fest
Saturday, July 18, 2026
Chicago Marriott Naperville
Submitted by Maggie Connelly

On Saturday, July 18, the convention was over. The Vasa Culture Fest was held. A committee worked diligently together to create this extra day event. And, what a special day! I signed up to participate in the day and evening event, and how lucky I was. There were at least 19 sessions that we could select to attend.

The format of the Vasa Culture Fest was built around an opportunity to attend 4 sessions of Scandinavian experiences. Within each of the 4 sessions, an attendee could select from approx. 4 different sessions or Swedish cultural learning events. There was a lot to learn. Presenters had a lot to offer. The whole experience was culturally enriching.

My selections included:

- 1.) Concordia Language Villages
Presenter: Elise Viktoria Peters, presenter
- 2.) Vasa Order of America National Archives and History
Presenter: Cathy Cuff, Archives Director
- 3.) How to find my Swedish Roots
Presenter: Charlotte Borjesson
- 4.) How to have a vibrant Vasa Local Lodge
Presenter: Julie Olson

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Continued: Vasa Culture Fest

The day began with a breakfast of Danish, yogurt, juice and other special treats. We had an opportunity to learn more about local Scandinavian programs and schools as we met with vendors who set up shop in the vendor walkway. There was much to learn and to spend time with our new friends.

The evenings activities included a social hour and joining new friends at a dinner table. We were treated to a Swedish and Chicago buffet dinner

with meatballs, hotdogs, a variety of salads and vegetables and cheesecake.

We enjoyed watching our fellow attendees perform. PGM Jack Hanright joined his new Swedish Choral Music group performing for us. Other attendees showed us what they learned at their Culture Fest sessions. It was a lot of fun. We danced to “The Swedes”, an ABBA Tribute band. A good time with a lot of cultural learning was had by all.

The South Coast Botanical Garden - Trolls through Oct. 4th

Admission will include Thomas Dambo’s TROLLS: A Field Study, a whimsical expedition featuring 12 large Trolls crafted entirely from reclaimed wood. These gentle, globe-trotting giants have ventured to our corner of the world on an important mission: to observe humankind’s delightful quirks—what makes you wonderfully, uniquely you?



Above: Delphine, Wenche, and Maggie Visit the Trolls



Below: I visited too, but I wasn't as well-behaved!



Scandinavian Film Evening Events provided by SACHF
Sunday 6:30 PM, September 13, 2026



The Girl with the Needle - In 1919, in a Copenhagen scarred by the first world war, a young woman's already meagre supply of luck runs out. Karoline loses her home, then her job as a seamstress. She is pregnant, destitute and desperate. A chance encounter with Dagmar, who runs an illegal adoption service, offers a lifeline, employment and perhaps even hope for the future. But hope, like everything in this arresting, factually based black-and-white drama, is threadbare, undernourished and rotten to the core.

Awards & Nominations Nominee – 2025 Oscar Best International Feature Film, Nominee - Palme d'Or, Cannes Film Festival, Nominee - Best Film, Polish Film Festival
Total 47 wins & 46 nominations

A warm welcome to **Preus Brandt Forum 135 Chapel Lane, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360**

[Tickets for advance purchase, \\$15](#) (Google SACHF and Eventbrite) Seats are limited, but if still available tickets will be sold at the door.

Hans Edlund, Program Director, 714.686.4192 [Visit our website](#)

SCANDINAVIAN AUTUMNFEST & HÖSTMARKNAD CELEBRATION



Breakfast served at 9
Church of Sweden LA providing Kaffe Stuga at 10
Lunch and Meatball Contest at 12

- ▶ Annual Swedish Meatball Contest
- ▶ Vendor Opportunities
- ▶ Swimming
- ▶ Vasa Gem Mining
- ▶ Alpine Tube Slide*
- ▶ Lingonberry Pie Eating Contest
- ▶ Swedish Field Games
- ▶ Rock Climbing Wall*
- ▶ Children's Play Structure
- ▶ Opportunity Drawings
- ▶ Interactive Inflatables
- ▶ Bingo with Great Prizes
- ▶ Swedish Food
- ▶ and more!

* Closed-toe shoes required

THE FRITHIOF FAMILY WILL BE BACK

They will perform and be our Master of Ceremonies. The Frithiofs are a Swedish family who are descendants of Gustav Vasa.

ANNUAL SWEDISH MEATBALL CONTEST

If interested in entering the contest, contact info@vasapark.org by September 6th.

AUTHENTIC FOOD AND SKILLED ARTISANS

Enjoy the tastes of Sweden and traditional foods such as varmkorv med bröd, Svenska köttbullar, and kakor. Beyond the great foods, you will also be able to buy beautifully crafted gifts and souvenirs.

WE ARE A MEMBERS ONLY PARK

- ▶ Must be a member of Vasa Order of America
- ▶ Parking for all Members \$10 per car
- ▶ For Membership information: membership@vasapark.org

OCTOBER 11, 2026 | SUNDAY

9AM - 5PM

VASA PARK

2854 Triunfo Canyon
Agoura Hills, CA 91301



Vendor Opportunity: vpaeventcoord@gmail.com

Visit us at:
www.vasapark.org



NO BBQ, NO DOGS, NO SMOKING OR VAPING*

(except ADA compliant service dogs)

* Per Los Angeles County requirements