



Scandinavian Chatter

Scandinavian Club

Sun Lakes, AZ 85248



November 2011

President:

Jerry Johnson 895-2255

Vice President:

Maynard Iverson 802-6993

Secretary:

Lydia Larson 802-8074

Treasurer:

Ken Egertson 883-9301

Assistant:

Carolyn Brown 802-0473

Past President:

Chris Roen 786-6969

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Jan Timmerman 917-9227

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Membership:

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Newsletter/Photographer:

Lyle Replogle 818-1718

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Greeters: Chairman

Gloria Egertson 883-9301

Jim & Gayle Alvar 895-9603

Jean Ahnmark 895-9687

Liz Replogle 659-4624

Set-up and Table Decorations:

Butch Hall 883-7095

Coffee Makers:

Curt & Lydia Larson 802-8074

Greetings to you from your Scandinavian Club President

Where did the summer of 2011 go? It seems only weeks ago that many of us were making plans for things we were going to do and accomplish this summer. Many of us experienced hot, hot summer days, some with way too much water (check with Chris and Gordon Roen on that one) and some with not enough. I hope you have all survived the challenges the summer brought your way.



Jerry Johnson

I hope all of you are looking forward to another fun and exciting year of the Scandinavian Club, sharing our friendships and heritage. We have been busy this summer, looking at various programs that we believe will interest you. We have been looking at programs which specifically reference our Scandinavian Heritage, in addition to bringing some levity and frivolity to our meetings.

Please mark your calendar now for our November 20th meeting. I'll see you there!!

Jerry

DUES-----DUES-----DUES

Yes-----our annual dues of \$10.00 per person are due. This modest cost helps your organization purchase the supplies we need, pay for our entertainment and programs.

We do have a special incentive for all members. If you pay the annual dues at our November 20th meeting, you will be given a ticket for a special drawing.

We have purchased a special bottle of Danish AKVAVIT, which many Scandinavians consider the "water of life". The winning ticket drawn will go home with this very fine imported bottle of Danish AKVAVIT, (pronounced aquavit outside of Scandinavia).

**Scandinavian Club Officers and Board Members
2011/2012**



**Back Row: Jerry Johnson, Mike Fogel, Maynard Iverson,
Don Munson, Ken Egertson, and Jan Timmerman
Front Row: Lydia Larson, Chris Roen, and Carolyn Brown**

Christmas Dinner and Program

Sunday, December 11th

Social hour 5:00, Dinner 6:00, Program 7:00

Your Board of Directors has decided to make some changes in our schedule this year; some by popular request. One of the changes is adding a catered Christmas Dinner.

We will all enjoy an evening of good food and programs without the need to prepare or bring anything. The food will be prepared by the staff of Sun Lakes Phase I Cactus Corner and will consist of a choice of two entrees. Our program will consist of the Santa Lucia ceremony, a reading of a Christmas story, singing and Christmas Caroling.

Cost of the whole evening will be \$16.00 per person, tax and tip included. Because of the short time between our November and December meetings, we are asking that you purchase your Christmas Dinner tickets at the November meeting so we will know how much food to order from the caterer. This will also save having volunteers doing a lot of telephone work to get tickets to everyone.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP AND COOPERATION!!!

We extend a special welcome to all our guests and prospective members. We hope you find our Scandinavian Club inviting, interesting and friendly. If you have any questions about our Club, please talk to one of our Officers. Thank you for coming.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF FINLAND & THEIR NEW SCHOOL SYSTEM

Finland began trying to remold its bloody, fractured past into a unified future. For hundreds of years, these fiercely independent people had been wedged between two rival powers—the Swedish monarchy to the west and the Russian czar to the east. Neither Scandinavian nor Baltic, Finns were proud of their Nordic roots and a unique language only they could love (or pronounce). In 1809, Finland was ceded to Russia by the Swedes, who had ruled its people some 600 years. The czar created the Grand Duchy of Finland, a quasi-state with constitutional ties to the empire. He moved the capital from Turku, near Stockholm, to Helsinki, closer to St. Petersburg. After the czar fell to the Bolsheviks in 1917, Finland declared its independence, pitching the country into civil war. Three more wars between 1939 and 1945—two with the Soviets, one with Germany—left the country scarred by bitter divisions and a punishing debt owed to the Russians...

In 1963, the Finnish Parliament made the bold decision to choose public education as its best shot at economic recovery....

Practically speaking—and Finns are nothing if not practical—the decision [that every child would have a good public school education] meant that goal would not be allowed to dissipate into rhetoric... Public schools would be organized into one system of comprehensive schools... Besides Finnish and Swedish (the country's second official language, children would learn a third language (English is a favorite)... The second critical decision came in 1979, when reformers required that every teacher earn a fifth-year master's degree in theory and practice at one of eight state universities—at state expense. From then on teachers were effectively granted equal status with doctors and lawyers. Applicants began flooding teaching programs, not because the salaries were so high but because autonomy and respect made the job attractive... By the mid-1980s, a final set of initiatives shook the classrooms free from the last vestiges of top-down regulation. Control over policies shifted to town councils. The national curriculum was distilled into broad guidelines... Sifting and sorting children into so-called ability groupings was eliminated. All children—clever or less so—were to be taught in the same classrooms, with lots of special teacher help available to make sure no child really would be left behind.... accountability and inspection [was turned] over to teachers and principals.

Some additional facts:

- Compulsory schooling begins at age 7 in Finland
- Estimated number of mandated standard tests by senior year"

U.S. 12; Finland 0.

- Annual amount spent per secondary school student (adjusted for purchasing power): U.S. \$11,301; Finland \$7,829

- Rankings based on 2009 international standardized PISA tests:

U.S. – Reading, 15th; Science, 23rd; Math, 31st.

Finland – Reading, 3rd; Science, 2nd; Math, 6th

Excerpted from an article by Lynnell Hancock, "A+ for Finland," in *Smithsonian magazine*, September 2011.

Our thanks to Howard Baumgart for this article

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SUN LAKES SCANDINAVIAN CLUB WELCOMES YOU!

*A gentle reminder: At all potluck meetings, please bring
your own table service and remember to take
your serving dishes and table service home with you.*

Meeting and Program Schedule 2011/2012

Sunday Nights: Social Hour 5:00, Dinner 6:00, Program 7:00

November 20: Potluck Dinner: A visit to the five Scandinavian Capital Cities, Scandinavian Exchange Students

December 11: Christmas Dinner: Santa Lucia ceremony, Christmas reading, and Carol singing

January 15: Scandinavian Smorgasbord: Journey to the Norse Homeland by Howard & Loree Baumgart

February 7: Heritage Potluck Dinner: Gordy "Crazy Fingers" Lindquist

March 13: Potluck Dinner: Annual meeting and Scandinavian Dancers