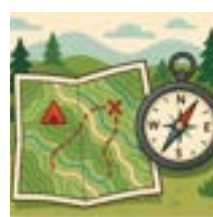


## Upcoming Events



**NNW COFFEE HOUR**  
FEBRUARY 24



**ORIENTEERING**  
FEBRUARY/MARCH



**ANNUAL MEETING**  
MARCH 29



**New Sweden**  
Cultural Heritage Society

# NEWSLETTER

PO Box 80141, Portland, OR 97280 <https://www.newsweden.org> newswedenpdx@gmail.com

## Board of Directors

### President

Kristi Gustafson

### Vice President

Sue Graham

### Secretary

Beth Burczak

### Treasurer

Elaine Meis

### Membership Bkkpr

Joel Johnson

## Members at Large

Ross Fogelquist

Kathryn Wilske

Stefan Nornholm

Paula Inglett

## President's Message

As New Sweden begins a new year, we say a HUGE thank you to Steven Englund who served as President and Treasurer for the last two years and is moving on to other responsibilities. Steven brought his tech knowledge to New Sweden and modernized our record keeping, finances, and media. This technology allows New Sweden to manage our organization and communicate, develop, and produce events more easily. Under Steven's leadership New Sweden became a stronger, more versatile and up-to-date organization with a positive future.

Steven leaves a strong board of directors with many skills, abilities and great energy. At the December Board Meeting, elections determined Sue Graham is moving from member-at-large to serve as Vice President, Elaine Meis is moving from member-at-large to serve as Treasurer, and I am moving from member-at-large to the Presidency. Beth Burczak will continue as Secretary and Ross Fogelquist, Kathy Wilske, Stefan Nornholm, and Joel Johnson will continue to serve on the Board as members-at-large. Sally Krantz is leaving the Board and Ute Munger is leaving her Membership position but will continue as our representative on the League of Swedish Societies Board. We thank them for their volunteer time.

Steven also developed a strong communications team that promotes our organization through social media. Paula Inglett and Elaine Meis will continue to produce our timely, attractive and informative newsletter, David Kleinke continues as our webmaster keeping our website informative and current, Courtnee Averskogg Riise returns as our Facebook administrator and Stefan Nornholm

continues as our Instagram manager - both Courtnee and Stefan are timely in posting our events and information to a growing number of followers.

The holiday season was a very busy but successful time for New Sweden. Because of our terrific volunteers, we produced two significant events: New Sweden's Scandinavian Christmas Goat Market which provides us with financial stability, and the lovely, traditional New Sweden Lucia Fest. We wrapped the season up with an information booth at Nordic Northwest's Scan Fair.

2026 will be an exciting year for New Sweden with many opportunities to enjoy Swedish culture. In addition to our own events, I look forward to New Sweden joining with other Swedish and Nordic organizations to create events and activities. Please check out our upcoming events and get them onto your calendar so you don't miss out on the fun.

Kristi Gustafson

## Swedish Conversation Group – Samtalsgruppen - A Recurring Event

A Swedish language conversation group meets via Zoom on Fridays at 4:00 pm. Participants enjoy the easy relaxed approach to work on beginning level Swedish conversation skills. There is no required homework, just a desire to improve your Swedish speaking skills. Email Ann Stuller, [sasmac@comcast.net](mailto:sasmac@comcast.net) to receive the Zoom link and join the group.

## It is With Great Sadness...

Robert Basel, a long-time mainstay of the Portland Nordic community and New Sweden member passed quietly away on January 11, 2026, at his home in SE Portland. Born in Astoria, OR, in 1946, Robert is survived by his wife Sandy, and sons Leben and Kiel. He graduated from the University of Oregon and owned the printing business Allart Inc. Robert was a deeply insightful man with a quiet manner and a keen eye for detail.



Robert was an active volunteer. His involvement included assisting with many Scan Fairs, Midsummer celebrations, and was one of the earliest Forest Trolls helping to maintain the grounds at Fogelbo and NNW. He was a private man who quietly engaged in volunteerism. He was instrumental in adapting the Fogelbo storage shed into a workplace for the Forest Trolls, rotating its orientation and adding additional space for tools and tractor storage. The shed became known as Baselbo. Robert also assisted with upgrading the other storage sheds on the NNW grounds by adding peaked roofs, stylized trim, and painting them a rich red to compliment the addition of the Thomas Dambo troll, Olle Bolle. Robert located a flagpole and installed it on the front lawn of Fogelbo where a Swedish flag has since continually hung. He planted Sequoia trees on the grounds of NNW, built the Fogelbo fire pit and he and his wife Sandy even volunteered as forest lookouts on Mount Hood during fire season. Plans are underway for a memorial service but have not yet been announced. Robert Basel will be greatly missed.



## New Sweden Hosts Nordia Coffee Hour

New Sweden will host the Nordic Coffee Hour at Nordia House on February 24, from 10 - 11:30 am. Enjoy a fika with traditional Swedish baked goods. The free coffee hours are a delightful opportunity to meet others who share your interest in Nordic heritage.

## Attention All Bakers

by Beth Burczak

On Sunday, February 22, from 2 - 4 pm, there are openings for a total of 10 members to come to a private home to prepare dough and bake pastries for Tuesday's coffee hour. We will share baking tips and our favorite recipes for Swedish treats. Please contact Beth Burczak - [beth@burczak.com](mailto:beth@burczak.com) if you would like to attend and receive further details.

Further help is needed - additional baked goods will be needed for the February 24 Coffee Hour. We need members to bake additional cookies or pastries. Please let Beth know if you would like to contribute pastries for the fika - [beth@burczak.com](mailto:beth@burczak.com). Your help is greatly appreciated.

## Portland Swedish School

The New Sweden organization continues its support of the Portland Swedish School with a donation of \$1000 and providing free booth space to the school at the Scandinavian Christmas Goat Market again this year. The booth space allows the school to sell raffle tickets, ornaments and gift items during the Goat Market. Their sales help support Portland Swedish School activities.

## Trollbacken Swedish Language Summer Camp

New Sweden continues its annual support of Trollbacken with a donation of \$2,000 to the camp again this year. The overnight camp is held at Menucha Retreat and Conference Center. The summer camp offers unique opportunities for kids ages 7 - 13 to learn about the language, culture and traditions of Sweden through Swedish lessons, crafts, food, games, music and additional camp activities. Trollbacken camper registration opens the end of February and runs through March 31. Further information can be found at [trollbacken.org](http://trollbacken.org). The camp session is August 16 - 21, 2026.

## Trollbacken Scholarships Available

The New Sweden organization is delighted to offer three partial scholarships for members and relatives of New Sweden members for enrollment at Trollbocken Swedish Language Camp this August. Approximately \$375 in scholarship funds are available to help offset three campers' registration fees. Email Kristi Gustafson - [kristigus@aol.com](mailto:kristigus@aol.com) to receive a scholarship application form. Applications must be received by February 25. All applicants and scholarship recipients will be notified by February 28, 2026.

# Scandinavian Christmas Goat Market Wrap-up

by Kristi Gustafson

New Sweden produced another successful Scandinavian Christmas Goat Market on November 29th, at Grieg Lodge's Norse Hall. To create this event, a planning committee of volunteers met monthly to develop new ideas and review the past, always looking to improve. New Sweden owes a huge thank you to this committee: Tanaka Axberg, Steven Englund, Kristin Farber, Ross Fogelquist, Judy Gervais, Eric Goranson, Ann Grangaard, Martin Hulth, Sue Graham, Elaine Meis, Stefan Nornholm, Pirjo Schulbach, Dirk Schulbach, Christie Stillson, Sara Corbin Winter and Kristi Gustafson. We were joined by New Sweden Board Members Kathy Wilske, Paula Inglett, and Beth Burczak who took on organizational duties at the event.

After all the planning and set up, New Sweden volunteers and friends came and filled a myriad of jobs. Their enthusiasm and friendliness created a holiday atmosphere that made the event a success and was appreciated by all. A HUGE thank you to our volunteers!

This year's new additions to the Goat Market were a hospitality area organized by Pirjo Schulbach for volunteers and vendors, and shopping bags with our new Goat Market logo, made by Sara Corbin Winter. The logo itself was a great accomplishment - have you ever tried getting 16 Swedish types to agree on something? Beth Johnson spent many hours sewing Swedish themed coin purses and bags which were sold in our New Sweden booth. Thank you Pirjo, Sara and Beth!

This year we had sixteen Nordic organizations participate in the Goat Market including three youth groups. Many of the organizations used the event to financially benefit their organization, which is one of the goals of our event. The New Sweden booth, organized by Sue Graham, was a success not only due to sales, but it also promoted our organization. Along with being a successful cultural event, the Goat Market was financially successful and will provide New Sweden the funds to have an active, engaging year.

The Saturday prior to the Goat Market, the Willamette Week's Oregon Winter magazine recognized New Sweden's Scandinavian Christmas Goat Market as "one of the best winter markets" in the Portland area. What a pleasant surprise and a nice recognition for our volunteers who make this event happen.

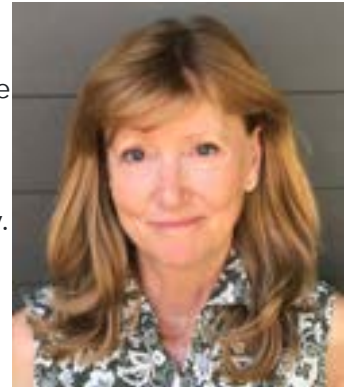
Thank you again volunteers!





## Congratulations Susan Schlesinger and Christine Smith!

New Sweden members Susan Schlesinger and Christine Smith were recently nominated for Scandinavian of the Year. Susan was nominated by the Fogelbo Heritage Committee and Christine was nominated by the Official Oregon Lucia Committee. The award is one of the most prestigious Nordic awards given to an individual by Nordic Northwest and is presented annually. It recognizes outstanding achievement and public service within the local Nordic community. Being nominated is an honor.



Susan is the Lead Docent in charge of the Quarterly Fogelbo and Specialty Tours. Over 25 tours take place annually at Fogelbo. She trains volunteer docents and manages many behind the scenes details that ensure each tour's success. The goal of the tours is to provide a meaningful experience and help a wider audience gain a deeper appreciation of Nordic heritage, culture and traditions. In addition, she is one of the Forest Trolls maintaining the grounds at Fogelbo. She is an active member of the Fogelbo Heritage Committee and is a Master Gardener. Susan shares her gardening knowledge with groups such as Home Forward helping residents learn gardening skills.



If you've danced around the Midsummer pole in Portland or Astoria in recent years, you know Christine. She is the one leading and guiding dancers of all ages through the joyful steps that make Midsummer a special celebration. Christine has been the heart and leader of the Vasa Rose Buds, a Swedish dance group that performs at all major Nordic events throughout the year. Through these performances Christine and her dancers not only entertain audiences but also share the beauty and meaning of Swedish culture. Christine's commitment to the Nordic community extends well beyond dance. She serves as the Arts and Crafts Director at Trollbacken, the local Swedish Camp, where she helps campers connect with their heritage through hands-on activities. Christine also serves on Nordic Northwest's Official Oregon Lucia Committee helping guide youth in learning about and participating in this cherished holiday tradition.

Congratulations on your nominations Susan and Christine. You are valuable members of the New Sweden community as well! Thank you for all you do.

## New Sweden Board Position Open

We invite you to become more involved by joining the New Sweden Board which meets monthly online. A member-at-large position is open. If you would like to be a part of the New Sweden Board of Directors email your intent to [news swedenpdx@gmail.com](mailto:news swedenpdx@gmail.com). Your consideration is appreciated.



# The Indomitable Småland Spirit: Frugality and Ingenuity Behind Småland's Great Success

by Jimmy Granström



*Frugality and ingenuity behind great success Border between Skåne and Småland, 1930*

"Sweden for real" is the official slogan of the region of Småland in the southeast of Sweden. This is the birthplace of several famous Swedes, from IKEA founder Ingvar Kamprad to authors Astrid Lindgren and Viktor Ryberg, as well as former tennis #1's Mats Wilander and Stefan Edberg. Despite being one of Sweden's historically poorest regions, it has still enabled the creation of some highly successful industrial companies. Examples of these companies are IKEA the furniture retail company, Husqvarna known for outdoor power equipment and sewing machines, Electrolux home appliances, and the NIBE Group which develops eco-friendly solutions for indoor climate.

The achievements are quite remarkable, as Småland is often considered to have one of the most barren landscapes in the country, with large parts having soil mixed with sand and boulders, making it less suitable for large-scale agriculture. As a result of the region's historically challenging living conditions, its inhabitants were forced to be innovative and self-reliant, sparking a demand for alternative means of livelihood. Iron came to play an important role early on, and by the mid-1400s, the town of Jönköping was one of the main centers for Swedish iron handling as it was an early trading center because of its strategic location.

Understanding the "indomitable Småland Spirit" requires an understanding of its historical roots. The name Småland means "small lands," referring to the numerous small provinces that historically made up the region. These small provinces were largely independent during the Viking Age and early Middle Ages, each with its own laws and governance. The region became Christianized in the 1200s and was later integrated into the Kingdom of Sweden. Up until then, the regions bordering Skåne were highly disputed. In fact, the old border region between Småland and Skåne is one of the most war-torn areas in the world from a historical perspective, and every single generation of people born between 1150 to 1679 in these regions were affected by a war in some form. For several centuries, military conflict was almost the norm and every time the rulers in Stockholm and Copenhagen started a new one, the border population risked being hit hard.

(This article will continue in upcoming New Sweden newsletters.)

## Swedish Cabins: *The Legacy of Henry Steiner and Fogelbo Exhibit*

Hopefully, many New Sweden members were able to take in the exhibit and opening reception of *Swedish Cabins: The Legacy of Henry Steiner and Fogelbo* at the Capitol. It was a month-long display in the Capitol's West Galleria which ended February 5. The exhibit was available during Capitol hours and was recognized as an Official Event of America 250, part of Oregon's official observance of the United States' Semiquincentennial.



## Historic 1937 Steiner Church Presentation and Tour

New Sweden members and friends are invited to attend a presentation and tour of the historic 1937 Steiner Log Church on Sunday, April 12, from 1 -3 pm. The Steiner Church is located at 68835 East Barlow Trail Road, Welches, OR 97067.

Every log cabin and church Henry Steiner built was filled with unique hand-crafted architectural features and details, all of which gave them their signature "Steiner" look. Many of the cabins still exist, and each is a prized piece of Oregon's rich history. Steiner built two churches, but only the 1937 church remains, the other was lost to fire in 1947. The church no longer holds services. Mike Grudge, who now owns the church, spent 46 years painstakingly restoring it, along with the help of John Steiner, Henry's son. This one-of-a-kind Oregon historical treasure is now open to the public for tours and events.



It is a no-cost event for New Sweden members and a fee of only \$10 for accompanying friends. The New Sweden event will include a presentation on the Henry Steiner family, a brief history of Swedish cabins in America and Fogelbo. A tour will be led by church owner, Mike Grudge. Following the presentation and tour refreshments will be served. An email with further information will be sent to all members later in the month of March and please save the date for this special event on your calendar.







## Ross Fogelquist's Birthday and 40th Anniversary of Knighthood Celebration

A celebration of Ross Fogelquist 88th Birthday and the 40th Anniversary of his Investiture as a Knight of the Royal Order of the Polar Star First Class will take place on Friday, May 15. Save the date as further details will be forthcoming.

## Julgransplundring 2026

The Vasa Rosebuds, Harmoni Lodge, and the Portland Swedish School were invited to a Julgransplundring party hosted by the Vasa Rosebuds and New Sweden on January 16. Families, New Sweden members and guests came together to celebrate the end of the holiday season by "plundering" the Christmas tree of its decorations. Traditionally celebrated January 13th, St Knut's Day in Sweden. The event was held at Augustana Lutheran Church. About 50 people, young and not so young, came to "take down the Christmas tree" is a tradition celebrated in Sweden, but not so much in America. Sara Corbin Winter and Christine Smith created a variety of craft activities and all enjoyed punch, hot chocolate, coffee and an assortment of baked goods. Jamie Runkle Stone brought his seven kinds of cookies and cake much to everyone's delight.

The grand finale was the happy dancing around the Christmas tree to favorite songs led by Christine Smith and the Vasa Rosebuds. In addition, guests David and Claire Elliker-Vagsberg joined the event from Eugene. They are members of the Fossgrimen band (who played at this year's Christmas Goat Market) and were in town to play for the Norske Rundaansere the following night. It was nice to see them able to relax and hit the dance floor instead of always providing the music.

A big THANK YOU to Christine Smith and her family and the New Sweden volunteers who helped with the set up and take-down. You are what made the event possible.



## Welcome New Members!

A hearty welcome to the following new members who have recently joined the New Sweden organization: Lane DeWan family, Maria Regan, Robert Buschman, Darren Carlson family, Travis Navarro, Eric Taxer family, Cecilia Usher family, Donald R Cox, Marcus Kastner, Anna Wilson, Robert Evenson family, Katie Noyd, and returning members Sharlene Carlson Brown and Tim Brown. The Board and other New Sweden members look forward to getting acquainted with you at our events.



## New Sweden's Annual Membership Meeting



All New Sweden members are encouraged to gather for the annual membership meeting. It will be held on Sunday, March 29, at the West Hills Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 8470 SW Oleson Road, from 2 – 4 pm. Baked ham and scalloped potatoes will be provided, please bring a side dish or dessert to share. A short program on Floorball follows the meal. David Slater of the Portland Floorball Club will be joining us to talk about this exceptionally popular sport in Sweden and one of the fastest growing sports in the US behind Pickleball. Sweden was the birthplace of the sport. It is a staple in school and frequently played at all ages. Come, get acquainted and catch up with other New Sweden members. An email invitation will be sent to all members in early March, so save the date on your calendar.

## Norse Hall Viking Pancake Breakfast

In the spirit of supporting other Scandinavian organizations, New Sweden members are encouraged to enjoy a delicious all-you-can-eat Viking pancake breakfast on Sunday, March 8 at Norse Hall. Breakfast is served from 8:30 am – 12 pm. Enjoy pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage links, fresh fruit, strawberry compote, lingonberries, orange juice and coffee or tea – served in the charming Bergen Dining room. There is cafeteria style seating and no reservation is necessary. The price for the breakfast is \$12 for adults, \$6 for children ages 3 –10, and free for children under the age 3. Norse Hall is located at 111 N.E. 11th Avenue, Portland, OR 97232. Enter through the Couch Street side door and downstairs to the historic Bergen Dining Room. Come, get acquainted and catch up with other New Sweden members. The breakfasts are often fundraisers for other Nordic organizations.



## Celebrate Valborg!

New Sweden will be hosting a festive Valborg Celebration on the evening of April 30. The event takes place at West Hills Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 8470 SW Oleson Road, 5:30 – 8:30 pm. Come to share hot dogs, songs and a bonfire – a Swedish Valborg tradition for many that marks the arrival of spring and is a joyful community celebration. An email invitation will be sent to all members in early April, so save the date for this free event on your calendar.

Valborg has deep roots in Swedish culture and is steeped in history. Traditionally, whole towns would gather around huge bonfires and try to scare off evil spirits and witches. Valborg, also known as Walpurgis night, which literally means “witch” night is celebrated on the night of April 30. It signals a change in the seasons. Finally, the snow has melted and buds are appearing on the trees. At the end of a long, dark and cold winter it is easy to understand why this tradition has now become a celebration of spring with a party and a nice toasty bonfire to commemorate this historic cultural event!

## Upcoming 2026 New Sweden Events

- **February 22** – Baking event for New Sweden’s Hosting of NNW Coffee Hour, 2 - 4 pm
- February 24 – Nordic Coffee Hour – New Sweden Cultural Heritage Society hosts a fika at Nordia House, 10 - 11:30 am
- **February 25** – Trollbacken New Sweden Scholarship Application Deadline
- **March 8** – Pancake Breakfast Norse Hall, 8:30 – 12 pm, Norse Hall, 111 NE 11th, Portland



• **March 28** – Orienteering: Stub Stewart State Park Classic, details at [croc.org](http://croc.org), 10:30 – 3 pm

• **March 29** – New Sweden Annual Membership Mtg., West Hills United Universalist Fellowship, 8470 SW Oleson Road, 2 – 5 pm

• **April 12** – Historic 1937 Steiner Church Event

• **April 18** – Orienteering: Milo McIver State Park, details at [croc.org](http://croc.org), 10:30 – 3 pm

• **April 30** – Valborg Celebration West Hills Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 8470 SW Oleson Road, 5:30 - 8:30 pm

- **May 9** – Orienteering: Hamilton Island Classic and BBQ Picnic, details at [croc.org](http://croc.org), 10:30 – 3 pm
- **May 15** – Ross Fogelquist 88th Birthday Event and 40th Anniversary of Investiture of Knighthood
- **June 6** – Orienteering: Champoeg State Park Classic, details at [croc.org](http://croc.org), 10:30 – 3 pm
- **June 13** – 99th Annual League of Swedish Societies Midsummer Festival, Oaks Park 11 am – 4 pm
- **July 11** – Orienteering: Mount Tabor Classic, details at [croc.org](http://croc.org), 10:30 – 3 pm
- **August 16** – Kraftskiva Party on the ground of Fogelbo for New Sweden members



• **October 17** – Orienteering: Mary S. Young State Park Classic, details at [croc.org](http://croc.org), 10:30 – 3 pm

• **November 28** – Scandinavian Christmas Goat Market, Norse Hall, 9 – 4 pm

• **December 1 - 31** – Membership Renewal

• **December 5** – Lucia Fest, Moreland Presbyterian Church, 3 – 5 pm

• **December 12 - 13** – Scan Fair, Oregon Convention Center

## Member Renewals

Membership renewal takes place annually during the month of December. If you still have not renewed your membership for 2026, please do so as soon as possible. An up-to-date membership roster helps the Board of Directors plan and carry out events. Membership means you will receive the quarterly newsletter and emails that inform you about upcoming events and time-sensitive information, special member-only activities and special member-only perks, such as access the Columbia Sportswear Employee Store.

The easiest way to renew your New Sweden membership is by visiting the New Sweden website under Membership at [newsweden.org](http://newsweden.org). You can also mail the enclosed membership form in this newsletter with your check to: New Sweden Membership, PO Box 80141, Portland, OR 97280.

**Please Note:** If you turned 80 years young in 2025 or earlier and have been a member of New Sweden for at least three years, then you have been elevated to Lifetime status. This means no more dues to pay. However, you still need to fill out the Membership form each December in order for your membership to stay active for the following year. If you have a Family Membership and your spouse has not reached that golden level yet, your spouse's paid membership changes to a Single membership.

The New Sweden Cultural Heritage Society is dedicated to sharing, promoting, and preserving Swedish culture and heritage in Portland, Oregon. The organization welcomes members from diverse backgrounds, including those with Swedish roots and those who simply appreciate the culture.

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☐ New Membership                      ☐ Renewal Membership                      ☐ New Address

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Basic/Single \$25.00    ☐ Senior couple (over 65 yrs) \$40.00

☐ Household/Family (children under 12) \$45.00    ☐ Over 80 years old free

Make checks payable to: New Sweden, P.O. Box 80141, Portland, OR 97280-1141

or pay online at [www.newsweden.org/membership](http://www.newsweden.org/membership)

☐ I am interested in volunteering, please contact me at: \_\_\_\_\_

**Members Please Note:** If you have not been receiving periodic emails from New Sweden Cultural Heritage Society about upcoming events, please inform the Board by sending an email to the following address: [newswedenpdx@gmail.com](mailto:newswedenpdx@gmail.com). The Board wants to make sure that all members receive announcements and information regarding New Sweden's events.



**New Sweden**  
Cultural Heritage Society

P.O. Box 80141

Portland, OR 97280-1141

CHANGE ADDRESS SERVICE

REQUESTED

## Thank You All!

A BIG shout out to New Sweden members! So many of you gave of your time and talents to make the holiday season events so successful. It is you that makes this organization so special. Thank you! A special note of thanks to Kristi Gustafson and Goat Market volunteers, Kristina Neiman and Lucia Fest volunteers, Sara Corbin Winter and the Lucia Court volunteers, and to departing New Sweden Board members Pam Martin and Eric Goranson who left earlier in 2025.

