

April 3, 2006

Volume 1, Issue 4

The Midnight Sun

SAGA Social Events Happening in April

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ScanFest 2006

Planning Session

Please join us during our next **ScanFest 2006** planning session! Come and represent your Scandinavian heritage, and share your ideas and input that will help us make our event even bigger and better than last year's success!

The next planning session is scheduled for **Sunday, April 9 at 4:00 pm**, and will take place at **Living Saviour Lutheran Church** (6817 Carmel Road, Charlotte N.C. 28226). We will talk about the plans for **ScanFest 2006**, and will also feature the **ScanFest 2005** DVD. Pastries, coffee and refreshments will be served.

Please **RSVP by April 7** to Ulrika Pettersson, 704.763.9152 or Ulrika@scandinavianconnection.org and indicate the number of adults and children who will attend.

We hope to see everyone who has an interest in making **ScanFest 2006** a great success!



SAGA Bowling Outing

The month of April also brings you SAGA's second social event of the year, as we dust off those bowling balls and head to George Pappas Park Lanes (across from the Park Road Shopping Center) for a fun-filled afternoon of bowling on **Saturday, April 22, 4:00pm-6:00pm**. So whether you are a seasoned bowler or a first timer, why not take this opportunity to come out and mingle with fellow Scandinavian-Americans, family and friends!

The cost is **\$7.75 per person for one (1) game of bowling and**

shoe rental. If you do not need to rent shoes, the cost for one (1) game of bowling is \$4.50.

For us to arrange a group outing at George Pappas Park Lanes, advance payment and reservation is required. **Payment must be received no later than Saturday, April 15 to guarantee your reservation.**

Please send all reservations, with payment, to:
Ulrika Pettersson
SAGA Social Committee
P.O. Box 1416
Huntersville NC 28070-1416

OR, submit your reservation and payment in person to Ulrika at the ScanFest 2006 planning session on April 9.

Please make checks payable to **SAGA of the Carolinas**.

If you have any questions, please contact us via email at Ulrika@ScandinavianConnection.org or call 704.763.9152.

Calendar of Events

- **ScanFest 2006 Planning Session**
Living Saviour Lutheran Church
6817 Carmel Road
Charlotte, NC 28226
Sunday, April 9
4 pm
- **Bowling Social Event**
George Pappas Park Lanes
1700 Montford Drive
Charlotte, NC 28209
Saturday, April 22
4 pm - 6 pm

Charlotte Dances

During ScanFest 2005 in November, we were privileged to watch the fine performances by Scandans, the Raleigh/Durham group of Scandinavian folkdancers. It brought to my mind many enjoyable hours of dancing in New York City, when I lived there in the 80's and 90's. I wondered if there might not be folks out there who are former folkdancers or who would like to be, that live in or near the Charlotte area- for whom a trip to Raleigh would just be too far. Therefore, I

contacted Atull Bhatt, a member of the Raleigh group, about possibly helping organize and teach a group of dancers in this area, and was given the affirmative. Please help us get the word out that we are trying to start a small group here in Charlotte- talent or previous experience not necessary! I have agreed to act as a clearing house for those interested, and can be contacted by e-mail at pravosla68@yahoo.com, or by phone at (704)503-0667. We may meet



at Living Savior Lutheran Church (host to SAGA meetings) in South Charlotte, or in another convenient location. I hope that some brave souls will step forward and help to preserve our fine tradition of dance! Valkommen till alla!

Submitted by Elaine Sullivan

Fabulous Photos from our Friends!



Many thanks to Sanna Tucker and her family for sharing these photos from their trip to Finland last summer!!

We found Pippi Långstrump in Helsinki, Finland last summer! In honor of Pippi's 60th birthday, Niklas, Emma, Pinja and Minttu (plus their mom's and grandma's) went to see a summer theatre play.

This was one of the highlights of Niklas and Emma's vacation in Finland. After the play, children got to take pictures with the actors and play at the set. GO Pippi!

A windy day on the Baltic!!



Little Mermaid on the Move

Denmark's most recognizable symbol could be on the move - a few meters further out in the water

Imagine moving the Eiffel Tower a few meters further to the left, or the Statue of Liberty just a little closer to Manhattan. The City of Copenhagen is considering something similar for its own landmark - the Little Mermaid Statue.

As a way to protect the bronze statue from vandalism and reduce the wear and tear on it from tourists, the Copenhagen City Council is considering moving the 1.25m



(4 ft, 1 inch), 175kg (385 lb) statue a few meters further out into the water, Jyllands-Posten newspaper reported on Wednesday.

During the course of her life, the 93-year-old Little Mermaid, sitting on a rock in ankle-deep water on the Copenhagen waterfront, has suffered frequent acts of vandalism. It has been be-

headed - three times, had an arm cut off and been blown off its rock by explosives.

In addition, the statue often serves as platform for political statements and has been outfitted with signs and

Would you like to see your friends and family in *The Midnight Surf*? We would, too! Send your photo or recipe submissions to Jenn@ScandinavianConnection.org by Friday, March 21.

painted in order to carry a number of conflicting messages.

The statue is also a victim of her own popularity. Each year, the nearly one million tourists visiting the statue clamber on to her rock for their souvenir photograph.

City boosters say they support measures to help keep the Little Mermaid eternally young - as long she maintains the same address.

'If the Little Mermaid is moved just two meters out, then people can't jump out to her, and if she stays in the same area that'd be fine by us,' said Mogens Krug of harbour tour operator DFDS.



Celebrate Spring at Waldhorn Restaurant

SAGA will be hosting a Spring Luncheon on Saturday, May 20, at the Waldhorn Restaurant located at 12101 Lancaster Highway in Pineville, NC. We will be celebrating the return of warm weather with a smorgasbord and activities for men, women, and children of all ages! The luncheon will feature a buffet-style meal with potato salad, mixed greens,

fish in lemon sauce, Swedish meatballs, mashed potatoes, red cabbage, and more.

In order to accommodate everyone at this event, there will be two seatings: one at 11:30 am and one at 1:00 pm. Reservation times will be granted on a first-come, first-serve basis, so make your reservations early to ensure that you get your first choice of seating times.

Prices for this event are

as follows:

Reservations made **before May 1:**

Adults: \$22

Children under 12: \$12

Reservations made **after May 1:**

Adults: \$25

Children under 12: \$15

To make reservations or for further information, please contact Ulrika Pettersson at 704.763.9152 or Ulrika@ScandinavianConnection.org.

There is no snow but still we can pretend... and do some Nordic Walking!

Markku Mustonen of Atlanta typically gets the same response when he walks with ski poles up the grassy hills leading to the top of Stone Mountain: "Hey buddy, looking for snow?"

But to the Finnish native, it's not about the snow, especially in a place that had its last "major" snowfall - 2 1/2 inches - nearly two years ago.

It's about the ski poles, which Mustonen and others say add intensity to walking workouts and are a great tool for becoming fit.

"Slowly people are getting involved with it," said Mustonen, president of Norcross, Ga.-based Skiwalk Inc., which organizes the local walking group and sells ski



poles. "The reaction basically is, 'Who is this crazy person?' But once you explain it to them, then they say, 'Oh, really? That makes sense.'"

The poles used by ski walkers are similar to those found on ski slopes - they are made of aluminum, fiberglass or ultralight carbon fiber. Skiwalking poles, however, typically have rubber tips so walkers can use them on hard surfaces such as streets or sidewalks.

Some skiwalking poles telescope so they can be easily taken on trips.

The poles, which help walkers propel themselves forward, help develop arm and shoulder muscles and get the heart pumping. A 2002 study by the Cooper Institute, a research organization in Dallas that focuses on exercise, found that people who walk with the poles burn 20 percent more calories than those who don't.

It is unclear how many Americans participate in Nordic walking, but the International Nordic Walking Association estimates that more than 3.5 million people do it worldwide, mostly in Europe. Finnish kindergartners use ski poles in their schools' physical education activities. Enthusiasts also hail from other, non-snowy locales, from the beaches of Cali-

Have you ever dreamed of being part of a fun, exciting and educational project? We are offering you a chance to be part of ScanFest 2006 planning & development. This is ScanFest's third year in Charlotte. We want you to be part of it, and share your vision of how good can get better. We are currently seeking individuals to be part of the following committees: Country Exhibits, Children's Entertainment, and Welcome and Information. Please contact Sanna Tucker via email at Sanna@ScandinavianConnection.org by April 15, 2006 if you are interested in joining one of the above committees. All interested parties will have a chance to win a goodie bag at our Spring Luncheon on May 20, 2006, at Waldhorn Restaurant.

fornia to the deserts of Saudi Arabia.

Cross Country Skiing (also known as Nordic Skiing) made the media "big time" approximately 20 years ago as one of the best cardio vascular exercises known to man.

This is an undisputed fact - and now there is new brilliant fitness concept called:

Cross Country Walking - Known in Europe as "Nordic Walking". And often referred to as Ski Walking as well ...

This NEW, fabulous, medically proven, FUN, full body fitness walking exercise

Easter Fun for the Kids!

Finnish children have made Easter Grass for generations to decorate their homes for the holidays. It is a quick, fun, and easy project for any age. Be creative and make your own unique Easter Grass decoration!

Finnish Easter Grass

Preparation Time: 5 minutes

Takes 7-10 days to grow to decorative length

You will need:

- A shallow container (platter, bowl, etc.)
- Cotton balls to cover the bottom of the container
- "Sun & Shade" grass seed
- Plastic wrap

Instructions:

Cover the bottom of the container with cotton balls

Add enough water to make the cotton balls wet

Sprinkle grass seed over the cotton balls until you don't see any more white



Cover with plastic wrap for about 5-7 days until grass sprouts
Remove the plastic wrap and water as needed

To decorate:

Using scissors, trim grass to approximately 2' in height

Add your favorite Easter decorations, i.e., miniature eggs, chicks (as shown), or flowers

Display your Easter Grass and enjoy!!

'Påsk' - Easter in Sweden

Easter has, up to present times, been a religious holiday in Sweden, and Easter Week has had an air of solemnity about it. Weddings and christenings, for example, have not been considered appropriate during this week. Only in recent years have Swedish cinemas been open on Good Friday.

Easter week starts with Palm Sunday, commemorating Christ's triumphant entry in to Jerusalem. In warmer countries this is a day of joyous processions of people carrying palm fronds and laying them before the image of Christ. In Sweden's climate some other kind of branches had to take the place of palms; early budding varieties of willow were a common choice.

Still today, such branches are brought into homes and offices so that they have developed leaves by Palm Sunday. In many parts of the country these branches are even called "palms."



As is often the case with major holy days, certain superstitions were attached to Easter. People believed that witches were especially active and their black magic especially powerful during this week. Even in modern times people have believed that women who practice black magic ("Easter hags") were out and about practicing their witchcraft. On

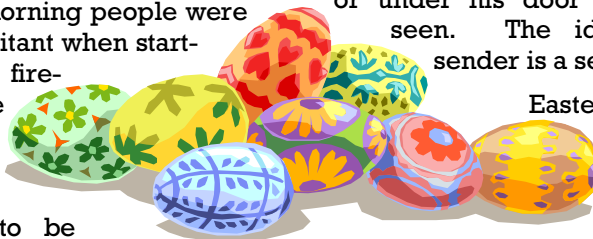
Maundy Thursday they were thought to fly off on brooms to consort with the devil at some place called "blåkulla", returning the following Saturday.

On the Easter morning people were usually a bit hesitant when starting a fire in the fireplace, because the one who first got smoke up the chimney was believed to be one of the Easter Hags. It was commonly believed that the Easter Hags got caught in the chimneys on their way home from Blåkulla. To be really sure that the chimney was free from magical beings you had to burn 9 different types of deciduous trees.

People did everything they could to protect themselves from the evil powers at play these days. They lit bonfires, shot firearms into the sky, painted crosses, stars and other holy symbols on their doors, buried Psalters under their threshold, and hung crossed scythes and axes over their live stock. Hysterical fear of the supernatural has triggered witch trials from time to time over the centuries, sending unknown numbers of women to the gallows or the stake.

These grim superstitions have much more cheerful legacies in modern times: On Maundy Thursday or Easter Eve Swedish girls and boys dress up as hags and pay visits to

their neighbors. Some leave a small decorated card, an "Easter letter," hoping for a sweet or coin in return. The custom of making "Easter letters" is especially widespread in western Sweden, where it is also the custom to slip the letter into a person's mailbox or under his door without being seen. The identity of the sender is a secret.



Easter bonfires are also especially the custom in the western provinces, where villages vie to see who can make the biggest one. The custom of shooting also lives on, albeit in the form of shooting off fireworks.

Eggs are the most common Easter food, and hard boiled eggs are traditionally eaten the evening before Easter Sunday. While the eggs are often decorated, neither their decorations nor the traditions associated with them are as elaborate as in many other countries.

One last fun tradition takes place on the Wednesday before Easter (Dymmelsondagen). It was common practice to fasten some kind of object (something which would make the bearer look silly) on the back of some poor unsuspecting victim. The whole point was that the victim shouldn't notice the object and walk around with it the whole day.

Happy Easter!!

A Publication of SAGA of the Carolinas, a non-profit organization

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"Connecting Scandinavia and the Carolinas"

We're on the Web!

www.ScandinavianConnection.org



Mission Statement

SAGA of the Carolinas, a non-profit organization, is organized to promote cultural exchange between the United States and the Nordic Countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden; to preserve and enjoy the Scandinavian traditions, customs, history and cultural heritage; to increase understanding of the Nordic people and societies among Americans; and to provide a forum where people interested in Scandinavia can meet and enjoy Nordic culture and activities.

Calling all Scan-Am Groups!

If your group or organization would like to have your events or news included in the next issue of **The Midnight Sun**, please send your submission of 100-200 words to Jenn@ScandinavianConnection.org by Friday, April 21.

Nordic Walking (Con't from page 3)

NORDIC WALKING - with Poles is an easy to learn, effective, convenient and inexpensive form of exercise for people of all ages, size and conditions. Over 4 million people are already enjoying the benefits of this new exercise method in ~ 20 different countries. The "nordic style" fitness is equally suitable for professional athletes, basic training or someone on a weight loss program. Even those rehabilitating from joint and knee injuries can use Nordic Walking poles.

When you add poles to your walking exercise you will turn your walk into a full-body workout. It's kind of like 4 wheel drive and you won't believe the added fitness value until you try it. Take 100 step challenge and you understand why Nordic Walking in the fastest growing fitness concept in Europe and soon in the world.

According to statistics from a local fitness equipment

store in Tampa, there are 30 million treadmills sold in USA. The sad thing is that when you exercise with the treadmill you don't get to enjoy the outdoors, you are not getting a full-body workout, and you are not going places. And with Nordic Walking, you don't have to throw the sofa out of the living room to make room for the treadmill. (not to mention that Nordic Walking is 1/10 of the cost.)

Why Nordic Walk:

Nordic walking requires only a one time investment to have a new truly beneficial, fun, social and wonderful hobby for the rest of your life. In fact, it costs less than the average spent for one day at Disney World.

Nordic Walking will be great 4U:

If you think walking is boring
If you have and neck and/or back problems
If you want to lose weight

Nordic Walking burns approximately 400-500 cal / hour. Regular walking ~ 280.

Even walking at the same speed Nordic Walking burns 20% -30% more cal.



If you want more effective workout like jogging without the impact to your body, especially knees.

If you just want to look cool and start something that everyone will be doing in a year or two.

Learn more at:

www.discoverNordicWalking.com

www.skiwalk.com

We would like to thank SAGA for their interest in Nordic Walking and their request for content.

Stick to your Health and Burn up calories while having FUN !

Founder of Western POLE CO. Inc. J. Tapp Rinne
Founder of SkiWalk Inc. Markku Mustonen

