

# The Midnight Sun

## A Word From the President of SAGA

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As we recover from the holidays and look forward to spring, we find ourselves once again looking far into 2008 at our ScanFest plans. The 2007 ScanFest was our biggest and best so far, and to those dedicated and hard working volunteers, to our sponsors, whose contributions make ScanFest a reality, and to all of our valued vendors who were part of the success, we offer



*SAGA's new "first lady" and president, Helen and Bob Kennedy, at ScanFest 2006*

our sincere thanks to each of you for your commitment to making ScanFest a day that the City Of Charlotte will remember as a great day of celebrating Scandinavian culture.

I want to welcome our new officers and board members and hope that each of you who receive *The Midnight Sun* will bring your ideas and talents to our attention. As many of you know, our meetings are often open to everyone, and are announced here in *The Midnight Sun* well in advance so you can make time to attend. We invite all of you to get involved and be a part of making 2008 an even better ScanFest.

In order to make ScanFest what it has become, we all work together in hopes that the visitors to the event will leave with a sense of spending the day experiencing the warmth of the Scandinavian people and some of its history and culture. Many of you have ties to Scandinavia and we encourage you let us know if you want to participate in our plans. There are links on our website, [www.ScandinavianConnection.org](http://www.ScandinavianConnection.org), to the various committees where you can volunteer your time, you or your company can become a sponsor, make a direct contribution to ScanFest, or even donate an item or service to our silent auction. We are a non-profit corporation and all donations are tax deductible. If you cannot participate as a volunteer, but would like to show your support for ScanFest, we are now set up with Paypal, so you can make your financial contributions online and we will confirm your donation with a receipt for your tax records.

In closing, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to Seppo Laaksonen, the outgoing President of SAGA, and his wife, Pirkko. Their dedication to seeing ScanFest grow from it's beginning to where it is now, is to be applauded. Seppo, you have left me some big shoes to fill, but I eagerly look forward to making you proud of what has been started.

And to those of you who have not yet been involved in the excitement of planning ScanFest, we cordially invite you to join us.

*- Bob Kennedy*

## SAGA Welcomes Our New Board of Directors and Officers for 2008

### Officers:

President: Bob Kennedy  
 Vice Pres: Isabella Wiel  
 Treasurer: Tom Palmgren  
 Secretary: Signa Curry

### Board of Directors:

Sanna Tucker (Exec. Dir.)  
 Camilla Hansen  
 Cathryn Herrstromer  
 Andreas Johansson

Ulrika Pettersson  
 Jennifer Terada  
 Lena Wettersten  
 Anna Wisjö  
 Jill Zook

### Calendar of Events

- Charlotte Checkers Annual Fundraiser  
 Charlotte Bobcats Arena  
 333 East Trade Street  
 Charlotte, NC 28202  
 Saturday, March 8  
 7:30 pm
- UNCC Int'l Festival  
 Featuring Café Scandinavia  
 Barnhardt Student Activity Center  
 Saturday, September 27  
 10 am - 6 pm
- ScanFest 2008!  
 Wachovia Atrium  
 301 S. Tryon Street  
 Saturday, November 1  
 11 am - 5 pm

# Music of Norway Coming to Charlotte

Excerpts from IAMIC.com:

This spring Charlotte audiences will have the opportunity to experience the music of Norway at two separate performances.

The **Charlotte Philharmonic Orchestra** will be performing the music of Grieg on **March 15** at **CPCC Dale Halton Theater**. The piano concerto will feature the talents of pianist Elizabeth Joy Roe. The Sounds of Norway tickets are on sale at [www.charlottephilharmonic.org/tickets.cfm](http://www.charlottephilharmonic.org/tickets.cfm) for \$30 each.

Also coming to Charlotte this spring is Norwegian sensation Sissel. European singing sensation and star of two new PBS specials, **Sissel Kyrkjebø** has captured the hearts of concert audiences all over the world thanks to her astonishingly crystal clear voice and one of the most amazing musical repertoires of any modern artist. Defying labels and categories simply to be herself, Sissel is truly a one-off. With her unique voice she can turn her hand to any style of music, from operatic arias and centuries-old classical melodies to traditional folk, modern jazz, pop, punk and hip-hop. "My heart is in beautiful music," she says. "Music that touches me."

Sissel's music has already touched



Albert E. Moehring,  
conductor of the Charlotte  
Philharmonic

millions. A child star since the age of 11, she is now a national institution in Norway and has sung all over the world, selling six million solo albums since her recording debut at the age of only 16 and featuring on the 30-million-selling soundtrack to Titanic. Somehow she's also found time to bring up two children along the way.

With a repertoire ranging from Schubert and Chopin to Lloyd-Webber and Morricone, Handel and Bach to Lennon and Lord (that's Jon Lord of rockers Deep Purple), Sissel was a crossover artist long before marketing men invented the term.

"I like the variety of doing a bit of everything," she admits. "The style of music is not important to me as long as it has good melodies. Sometimes at concerts I like the music when it is groovy and other

times I like when it is haunting. A lot of classical music has that element and folk music has it too."

Sissel's new album 'Into Paradise', recorded in Norway with the internationally-renowned Trondheim Soloists, reflects her passion for music in all its many varied forms. Mozart and Bach rub shoulders with Puccini and Abba jostle for attention alongside Norse folk tales that have been handed down from generation to generation. "Who will it appeal to?" Sissel muses. "People who like beautiful music."

It's an album that will be enjoyed equally by classical aficionados and



Sissel Kyrkjebø

pop fans alike – and especially those who enjoy the growing 'classical crossover' style popularised by performers like Russell Watson and Katherine Jenkins, Charlotte Church and Hayley Westenra.

Sissel will be performing at the **Belk Theater** on **April 6**.

Tickets range in price from \$10-\$39 and can be purchased online at [www.blumenthalcenter.org](http://www.blumenthalcenter.org) or by calling 704.372.1000.

## Let's Get Ready for the 5th Annual ScanFest of the Carolinas!!!

But wait... ScanFest costs almost \$22,000 a year to organize and operate! SAGA's bank account balance does not match that amount. We are actually \$16,000 away from our goal. SAGA does not have members to generate income, so we rely on donations and fundraising to make ScanFest a reality. But as 501 C 3 nonprofit corporation we can offer tax deductions to anyone willing and able to contribute and as always, we greatly appreciate your support. We have set up a Paypal payment system on our website ([www.ScandinavianConnection.org](http://www.ScandinavianConnection.org)) to accept donations at any time. Donating to SAGA is easier than ever! Again, all of your donations are tax deductible. Would you please help us create an even better and bigger ScanFest?

For more information, please visit our website or email [info@scandinavianconnection.org](mailto:info@scandinavianconnection.org)

# Local Finns Celebrate Independence at Finnish Embassy in Washington, DC

## *90 Years of Sibelius, Sauna and Sisu*

It was like winter wonderland in Scandinavia when we were driving on I-95 from Charlotte to Washington DC. Right before the arrival to Washington DC on Wednesday, December 5, in the darkness huge snowflakes started falling down from the sky and blanketed every inch of the interstate. It was so beautiful and all I was able to say to my husband "Rob, this is like it was meant to be!". You see, we had been invited to celebrate 90th Anniversary of the Independence of Finland at the Embassy of Finland in Washington DC. The arctic chill brought me memories of cold Helsinki, windy and brutal. Luckily we had brought enough warm clothes.



*Sanna at the reception.*

Before the reception at the Embassy we drove around the city and found our way to the Embassy Row. Finland's



*The Embassy of Finland.*

Embassy was located closest to Dick Cheney's home and stood like a sore thumb amongst all the traditional colonial houses. The building was extremely modern, simple design, metal and glass. I got butterflies in my stomach seeing it. It brought me back to my home country where modern design is IN. Here is a review of the building which was filled with Finns and

their closest "friends" on December 6, 2007.

The Architectural Review calls the Embassy of Finland the "best new building in Washington in the past 50 years". Most embassy buildings in DC try to be symbols of

their country and as such their facades are often stately though rarely push any boundaries. The Embassy of Finland, however, is a demonstration of Finnish values - from natural light in the workplace, to a large open area for community events, the direct connection with nature is clear and only five trees were sacrificed to build it. The Finnish Embassy sits opposite the Vice President's residence and occupies a lot that in back slopes abruptly down into Rock Creek Park.

The building is nestled into the woods and you don't realize how much until you're inside looking out through the back. The way the

Embassy engages so easily with nature is but one way you can detect Alvar Aalto's (the Finnish architect sometimes called the "Father of Modernism") influence on a building that was designed by Mikko Heikkinen, Markku Komonen, and Sarlotta Narjus nearly two decades after his death.

*(source: www.themestizaproject.com)*

The food at the reception was outstanding covering all the traditional Finnish dishes and then some. Herring, salmon, Karelian rice pastries, Finnish cheese, beet salad, meatballs served



*The delicious buffet.*

with ketchup and mustard, fruit and the best of all cake made with freshly whipped cream layered with fresh berries and jams.

Ambassador Pekka Lintu and Mrs. Laurel Colless welcomed everyone to the reception by reflecting to Finland's short yet successful history of independence. The national



*Rob & Sanna Tucker with Maria & Juha Laiho*

anthem was sung by everyone and afterwards we were entertained by a quartet of Finnish male singers. Slide show of Finland's historical events was played all through the evening also.

What a memorable visit we had in Washington DC.

**- Sanna Tucker**

# A New Twist on Swedish Coffee Bread

From *Everday with Rachel Ray*:

**MAKES THREE LOAVES**

Prep Time: 45 min (plus rising)

Bake Time: 40 min

## INGREDIENTS:

- 1 3/4 cups sugar, plus more for sprinkling
- 3 packages dry yeast
- 1 tablespoon ground cardamom
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 stick plus 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 2 1/4 cups plus 2 tablespoons milk
- 6 1/2 cups flour
- 3 tablespoons ground cinnamon
- 2 cups raisins
- 1 1/2 cups plus 2 tablespoons chopped or slivered almonds
- 1 large egg

## DIRECTIONS:

1) Using a standing electric mixer with a bread hook attachment, or by hand, combine 1 cup sugar with the yeast, cardamom and salt. In a small saucepan, melt the 1 stick butter, then add the 2 1/4 cups milk and heat until lukewarm (about 115°). Pour the warm milk and butter into the mixer bowl. Mix in the flour 1 cup at a time



until incorporated. Beat until the dough no longer sticks to the sides of the bowl. Cover with a dry towel and let sit in a warm place until doubled in size, about 40 minutes.

2) Position the oven racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven and preheat to 325°. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Divide the dough into thirds. Cover and refrigerate 2 sections. Roll out the third piece of dough into a 9-by-14-inch rectangle (about 1/4 inch thick). Spread 2 tablespoons softened butter over the dough and sprinkle with 1/4 cup sugar

mixed with 1 tablespoon cinnamon. Sprinkle with one third of the raisins and 1/2 cup almonds. Roll the dough into a tight log and pinch the ends closed. Repeat with the other two pieces of dough and the remaining 4 tablespoons butter, 1/2 cup sugar, 2 tablespoons cinnamon, 1 more cup almonds and the raisins; place the loaves on the prepared baking sheets.

3) Using scissors, cut incisions straight down into each loaf, about 2 inches apart, stopping just short of the bottom of the dough. Gently pull the slices apart from each other, in alternating directions. Repeat with the remaining two logs.

4) Place the loaves on top of the stove to rise for 10 minutes. Whisk together the remaining 2 tablespoons milk and the egg and brush the mixture onto the loaves. Sprinkle with the remaining 2 tablespoons almonds and some extra sugar. Bake the bread, switching the pans from upper to lower racks halfway through, until golden brown, about 40 minutes. Place on a rack, cover with a towel and let cool.

## SAGA's Annual Winter Fundraiser - Charlotte Checkers!!!

Are you ready for some ice hockey? Since the Panthers are out, let's bring the Checkers in...

SAGA's annual fundraiser with the Charlotte Checkers helps us keep the tradition of ScanFest going. We have tickets, 100 of them! But don't wait, they do go fast. Every year we have had every seat sold, reserve your seat NOW!

\*\*To purchase individual fundraiser tickets, go to <http://www.gocheckers.com/> and click on the **Group Promo** box on the lower right hand side of the screen. Go to **March 8th** on the calendar and click on **Get Tickets**. Then enter **SAGA** to purchase a \$15.00 or \$20.00 discounted ticket, of which a portion goes to benefit ScanFest 2008.

(This code will expire 24 hours prior to the event, so purchase your tickets early)

\*\*To purchase blocks of tickets contact Marianne Carow at 704-444-1887 or [mcarow@gocheckers.com](mailto:mcarow@gocheckers.com)\*\*

Questions? Email [info@scandinavianconnection.org](mailto:info@scandinavianconnection.org)

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## 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](mailto:jenn@scandinavianconnection.org) by Friday, February 22.

## EU Selects English as Official Language

*From The Brussels Journal:*

The European Commission has just announced an agreement whereby English will be the official language of the European Union rather than German, which was the other possibility.

As part of the negotiations, the British Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a 5-year phase-in plan that would become known as "Euro-English."

In the first year, "s" will replace the soft "c." Certainly, this will make the sivil servants jump with joy.

The hard "c" will be dropped in favour of "k." This should klear

up konfusion, and keyboards kan have one less letter.

There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year when the troublesome "ph" will be replaced with "f." This will make words like fotograf 20% shorter.

In the 3rd year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be expekted to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible.

Governments will enkourage the removal of double letters which have always ben a deterrent to akurate speling.

Also, al wil agre that the horibl mes of the silent "e" in the

languag is disgrasful and it should go away.

By the 4th yer people wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing "th" with "z" and "w" with "v."

During ze fifz yer, ze unesesary "o" kan be dropd from vords kontaining "ou" and after ziz fifz yer, ve vil hav a reil sensi bl riten styl.

Zer vil be no mor trubl or difikultis & evrivun vil find it ezi tu understand ech oza. Ze drem of a united urop vil finali kum tru.

Und efter ze fifz yer, ve vil al be speking German like zey vunted in ze forst plas.