



A Trip to Africa

*Our April Meeting
will be held at
Bob Evans, Levis Commons
Friday, April 11, at 6 PM*

Program :: Club member, **Ruth Alteneeder**, will share her recent trip to **Africa**. Ruth is currently a Member at Large for our Club, and has served in the past as Vice President.

Menu :: We will be ordering off the menu, individually.

Reservations :: Please contact our treasurer, Kris Johnson, at cjohnson143@woh.rr.com or at 419-836-7637. Let Kris know your name and how many of you will be attending, so that she can inform the restaurant of our number.

Location :: **Bob Evans** is located at the entrance to Levis Commons, on Rt. 25 in Perrysburg, Ohio.

DIRECTIONS: From I-475, exit at Rt. 25 in Perrysburg, and turn South. Bob Evans is on the right, as you enter Levis Commons.

President's Corner

Some areas seem to have a more Scandinavians than other areas. One young woman I know was working at Chrysler, where she became infatuated with a male co-worker. When he transferred to a Chrysler facility out-of-state, she transferred there, as well. When the relationship went sour, she suddenly realized that she was just about the only black woman in an all-white town, and, even more important to her as a young woman, that there weren't any other eligible black men in her radar. She soon transferred back to Toledo. So, how was she to know that Rockford, Illinois had been settled largely by Scandinavians, especially Swedes?

Northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan also seem to be home to a fair number of Scandinavians, although there are many other ethnic groups here, too, among them Greeks, Poles, Germans, Mexicans, and English, and others from Mississippi, Alabama, California and other states. Thus, every so often, we may meet someone with either a Scandinavian surname or first name, and we are given an opportunity. An opportunity to connect, and an opportunity to mention our Scandinavian Club of Toledo. Even an opportunity to ask whether they would like to receive this newsletter – all we need is the person's email address. It costs us nothing to add their name to our email list.

Later, we hope they will be interested in some of our monthly programs, and may even want to support our cultural mission with their \$15 annual membership fee. We would also like to hear their story, the story of a university student who came over here for study, returned home, and was wooed back by her American prince, or the story of a little boy who was put on a ship with his name pinned to his shirt, to be collect at the end of the voyage by an uncle he had never met, or the story of an energetic girl, the daughter of Minnesotans who spoke their mother-tongue at home but urged their child to speak this new American language, in order to fit into their new land. What is your story? And, when you meet new people, ask about their story. We would love to meet more of the Scandinavians in our area, and maybe, sometime, they would share some of their story with us.

This month, we need to think about two pieces of business: It is time to pay our membership dues, and it is time to select the ones who will, collectively, lead our Scandinavian Club of Toledo. Our mission is to share about our Scandinavian culture, and we hope you will join us, and we welcome your efforts.

Eva Slawson.

Club News

The end of our fiscal year will be here in a few short months, just after midsummer. As such, April is the month that we put together a Nominating Committee to bring forth Candidates for next year's Board. We will then vote in May on those Candidates for the year 2014-15, which starts in July. Please make a point to attend and take part in this important aspect of our Club.

In Memoriam

Eric Ralph Johnson has died, at the early age of 46. He was the son of Club member Ralph Johnson. Eric's death was sudden, and many of his organs were able to be donated per his wishes. Our condolences go out to Ralph.

Club Board 2013-2014

scandinavian-club@hotmail.com

President: Eva Slawson

Vice President: Lois Staber

Treasurer: Kris Johnson

Secretary: Katherine Thompson

Members at Large: Jan Wahl, Ruth Alteneeder, and Judy Jokinen Nickoloff



Finnair Voted Best Airline

Finnair has been named **Best European Airline** at the 24th annual TTG Travel Awards, an annual event organized by the Asia-Pacific travel industry. Punctuality, service quality and hassle-free transfers were all factors in favor of Finnair being given the honor.

"This year we are in the midst of a series of upgrades to the customer experience, and it's gratifying to see effectors already start to pay off as we seek ways to make the experience of flying to Europe from Asia even better," said Finnair Chief Commercial Officer Allister Paterson.

Finnair is specialized in traffic between Asia and Europe, serving 13 cities in Asia and more than 60 European destinations via its Helsinki hub.

The only carrier in Northern Europe with a 4-star Skytrax rating, Finnair also routinely ranks high in global punctuality surveys.

As the airline celebrated its 90th birthday on Nov. 1, Finnair was also in the midst of an upgrade drive from lounge service and food to cabin interiors and seats.

—from *Scandinavian Press*, winter 2013-14

Sweden's High Taxes

The myths surrounding Swedes are many, and you're bound to have heard a few of them: In the Land of the Midnight Sun, everyone is blonde and depressive, walking the streets alongside polar bears — right? What's true and what's not? **David Wiles**, an Englishman who's lived in Sweden for 12 years, gives his perspective on one of these myths.

SWEDES PAY HIGH TAXES: They do indeed. Sweden's personal income tax rates are among the world's highest. When I set up as a sole trader, I nearly choked on my crisp bread when I found out that the taxman would take about 50 percent of my hard-earned cash.

But I have to admit that I am [now] a big fan of high taxation — because I think I get value for my money. The streets are clean, healthcare and higher education are essentially free, and childcare is reasonably priced. Like they say, you get what you pay for. Sweden's quality of life is worth every krona.

Also in defense of Sweden's taxes, the system is very straightforward and reliable. Employers pay payroll taxes on top of your salary every month, income taxes are deducted directly from your monthly salary and every person is taxed individually, even when married. If everything appears correct on your mandatory annual tax declaration, reporting all your taxes can be as simple as sending a text message from your cell phone to the Swedish Tax Agency to confirm this.



MORE: <http://sweden.se/culture/10-swedish-myths-uncovered/>

David Wiles is a British journalist living in Ystad in the south of Sweden.

Another Curse from the Vikings

by Jo Ann Winistorfer, [Scandinavian Press](#), winter 2013-14

The Fall 2012 issue of **Scandinavian Press** featured an article about "Viking Disease," a hereditary condition that can cause deformity of the fingers and hands. The official name of this condition is **Dupuytren's Disease (DD)**, an ancient affliction defined by shortening, thickening and eventual disability of one or more fingers.

Speculation (plus genetic testing) has it that the disease may have originated with the Vikings, who spread it through Northern Europe and beyond as they traveled and intermarried.

Now it turns out there is another disease handed down to us by the Vikings — this one much more deadly, but treatable if diagnosed in time.

It's called **Hereditary Hemochromatosis (HHC)**, a disease found predominantly in people of European descent, especially in places touched by the Vikings.

The condition causes the body to absorb and store **too much iron**. If left untreated, it can lead to arthritis, impotence, chronic fatigue, damage to such organs as the liver, pancreas, and heart — and, yes, even death. Yet "sufferers" can have it without experiencing any symptoms.

"I have it, and my brother, Gerald, died from it," says Orlin Oium, *Scandinavian Press* reader who lives on his Norwegian emigrant grandfather's homestead near Towner, North Dakota.

Orlin was diagnosed in 1996, after his brother finally found a doctor who recognized the symptoms. But the answer came too late to save Gerald.

As a result of his brother's diagnosis, Orlin was tested. That's when he learned he, too, was a victim. His sister was also tested. She turned out to be free of the disease, but is a carrier.

"Both my mom and dad had the genes," Orlin said, referring to two mutated genes known as C282Y and H63D. Since HHC is a recessive genetic disorder, it is not necessary for parents to have it in order to pass it on to their offspring. But if they both carry the gene, chances are 25 percent that their children will inherit HHC. If one parent carries a double gene, each child's risk for developing the disease is 50/50.

DNA studies have shown that the genetic mutation likely arose in Europe around 60 to 70 generations ago. The timing of the spread is closely related to the migration of the Vikings and locations of Viking settlements. The mutation is found in high frequencies in the Scandinavian countries, including Iceland and the Faeroe Islands, which are known to have been colonized by Vikings. For some reason, Ireland has among the highest incidences of the disease: one of every 80 people carry it. In Canada, the disease affects one of every 300 people, and in the U.S. one of every 200. Only a few years ago, the condition was thought to be extremely rare. Well, it's not!

What's the solution? Blood-letting, says Orlin. This is the same process as when you donate blood. For the first 27 weeks of doctoring for the disease, Orlin was required to shed one pint of blood every week. Now he's down to a pint every three months to maintain a normal iron level in his blood.

Even so, the disorder has had a negative affect on Orlin's health: He has heart problems as well as cancer, which is now in remission.

Early diagnosis and prompt treatment can prevent such long-term complications of the disease, Orlin stresses. When he attends the family's regular reunions at Devils Lake, NK, "I get up and give 'em heck," he says. By "heck" he means warning all those present about the possibility of having inherited the same abnormal gene he has. "Out of around 200 people on my paternal grandmother's side, we found five with the disease," he says.

He also hands out pamphlets and other information about the disease.

The family learned that their paternal grandmother, Ragnhild Oium, had died from the disease — a fact that was recognized only after the Oium brothers had been diagnosed.

If you are diagnosed with the disease, it's important that your siblings, parents and adult children be tested for signs of iron overload as well.

How do you know if you have HHC? By having your blood tested. Two tests — Serum Ferritin (SF) and Transferrin Saturation percentage (TS%) — reflect how much iron is in the body and how much is being transported and stored. Currently, these tests aren't part of a general checkup, which means you may have to request them. In addition, you may require a DNA test.

Orlin figures he may have saved a least one relative's life through his reunion warnings. Another of his kinfolk, this one a second cousin, "has a full-blown case, just like me," he says. "When she sees me on the street, she yells, 'Hey, hemochromatosis! I want to talk to you.'"

MORE information:

[Kaiser Permanente](#) (search "Viking" on kaiserpermanente.org and select the disease), or (xnet.kp.org/permanente/journal/winter04/update.html)

[Canadian Hemochromatosis Society](#) (www.toomuchiron.ca); (604-279-7135) Ask for their magazine called "Iron Filings"

[American Liver Foundation](#) (www.liverfoundation.org); (800-223-0179)