



THE
SCANDINAVIAN
CLUB of TOLEDO



OLAV GJESDAHL, founder

NOVEMBER, 2013

ERIC SLAWSON, editor

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Kära Vänner!

This is one of my favorite times of the year. The winter holidays! The weather gets cooler and gloomier, but we can wear layers for warmth. When friends get together, as we do in the Scandinavian Club of Toledo, we share good times and good food with warm beverages. We look forward to a wonderful JulFest celebration with traditional foods and singing, including Lucia. Bring cookies to share, and items for the gift table. Our venue is the cozy, warm club-house in the condo-neighborhood of the Village at River Place, Perrysburg. We hope you'll join us on Sunday afternoon, **December 15th**. And, please, pass this newsletter along, if you think someone else would like to come, too!

Med vänliga hälsningar,

Eva Slawson,
President, Scandinavian Club of Toledo.

Club Contacts

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President, Eva Slawson 419-534-2230

Vice President, Lois Staber 419-872-7232

Treasurer, Kris Johnson 419-836-7637

Secretary, Katherine Thompson 419-385-0081

Member News

Barbara Duncan, long-time Club member, has been struggling with her health lately, after multiple medicines had unpredictable effects on her. We wish her the best.

Long-time member, **Raleigh Slawson**, is receiving therapy after a fall.

Danish Paintings at Scandinavia House

The Ambassador Loeb Collection of Danish paintings is on view through Jan. 18, 2014, in New York. "Scandinavia House brings together a selection of masterpieces from the 18th to the 20th centuries that make use of subtler, more austere aesthetics." — *New York Times*.

—more at www.scandinaviahouse.com and at www.LoebDanishArtCollection.com

—thanks to Willard Misfeldt for the article.

November

There is no meeting for the month of November.

Club News — At our October meeting, at the Grape Leaf Diner, a vote determined that we would skip our monthly meeting for November. This is a one-time occurrence. A Board Meeting was then suggested for November.

A Club Board Meeting was held the morning of Friday, Nov. 8th at Panera in Perrysburg, to discuss the details of upcoming club meetings. In attendance at the meeting were President Eva Slawson, VP Lois Staber, Treasurer Kris Johnson, Secretary Katherine Thompson, member at large Judy Jokinen Nickoloff, and newsletter editor Eric Slawson.

DUES ARE DUE

Scandinavian Club of Toledo membership dues are due (actually, past due, since we run on a "July-thru-June" fiscal year). Dues are important to our club in that they fund our core mission, which is the celebration of Scandinavian Culture. We host speakers, programs and gatherings with the sole purpose of educating ourselves and others of our culture, to either stay connected with our homelands, or to learn about their cultures. Remember, we are not-for-profit, and no one gets paid for any work we do.

Please make your check out to "**Scandinavian Club of Toledo**" for \$15 per person, and send it to our treasurer at: **Kris Johnson, PO Box 355, Williston, OH 43468.**

Danish Paintings from the Modern Age to the Golden Breakthrough

Summer Day, 1888, by Harald Slott-Møller (1864-1937), below

Oil on canvas, 48 x70 in. (123 x 178 cm)

Collection of Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr., at Scandinavia House.



DUES ARE DUE

Name(s): _____
Country: _____ @ \$15 per adult = \$ _____

Please make check payable to: **SCANDINAVIAN CLUB OF TOLEDO** and mail to: **KRIS JOHNSON, PO Box 355, WILLISTON, OH 43468**

In Theaters Now

“Thor: The Dark World”

In ancient times, the gods of Asgard fought and won a war against an evil race known as the Dark Elves. (According to Marvel Comics, anyway.)

SWEA xmas fair

SWEA Swedish Christmas Fair, Saturday, Nov 23, 2013, from 9:30 to 2 pm at Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, 5631 N. Adams Rd., Bloomfield Hills, MI. 734-883-7930.

You Are What Your Grandparents Ate

SWEDEN — The remote, snow-swept expanses of northern Sweden are an unlikely place to begin a story about cutting-edge genetic science. The kingdom's northernmost county, **Norrbottnen**, is nearly free of human life; an average of just six people live in each square mile. And yet this tiny population can reveal a lot



about how genes work in our everyday lives.

Norrbottnen is so isolated that for centuries, if the harvest was bad, people simply starved. The starving years were all the crueler for their unpredictability. For instance, 1800, 1812, 1821, 1836 and 1856 were years of total crop failure and extreme suffering.

But in 1801, 1822, 1828, 1844 and 1863, the land

spilled forth such abundance that the same people who had gone hungry in previous winters were able to gorge themselves for months. Through all this, detailed records were kept by the Church, logging death and disease rates of the people, as well as agricultural production rates of its farms.

Today, these old log-books have become a treasure-trove of data for researchers working in the new world of **epigenetics** — the study of changes in gene activity that do not involve alterations to the genetic code but that never-the-less get passed down to successive generations.

The work done by **Dr. Lars Olov Bygren**, (a preventive-health specialist, Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, and Umeå University, Sweden), and his colleagues during the 1980s with the Norrbotten records, and later confirmed with an English data group, is **fundamental**: Dr. Bygren wondered what long-term effects the feast and famine years might have had on children growing up in Norrbotten in the 19th century — and not just on them but on their kids and grandkids as well. So he drew a random sample of 99 individuals born in the **Överkalix parish** of Norrbotten in 1905, and used historical records to trace their parents and grandparents back to birth. By analyzing meticulous agricultural records, Bygren and two colleagues



Source: Time Magazine, “Why Your DNA Isn’t Your Destiny” by John Cloud, Jan. 6, 2010. **More:** View all five [BBC’s videos](#) on youtube.

Epigenetic Images: Top of p.1: Coat of Arms of Norrbotten, Sweden. Top: frozen north of Sweden. Right: Dr. Lars Olov Bygren, his grandson and son. Bottom: Överkalix, Norrbotten, Sweden (not so isolated as it once was).

Newsletter Format Change

Our Scandinavian Club of Toledo’s newsletter will soon have a slightly different format, which will hopefully make the electronic version easier to use.

For those of you who still receive the **paper** version of the newsletter, you won’t see much change. But please do consider subscribing to it by email because its just better. Consider these advantages: It gets to you **faster** (as soon as it is completed, without waiting for the mail, and doesn’t get ruined in bad weather); the e-version is in **color**; there are **clickable links** embedded within the text so you can easily read more than we have room to publish here; it is less expensive for the club to produce; and finally, if you can’t read small text, you can zoom in on the screen to make the text as big as you like! Plus, you can easily find it, and you can print your own paper version from it at any time.

If you already get this publication **electronically** through email, you have experienced one PDF for the front page and one PDF for the back page. This was the legacy of the old paper layout of days long gone, and then the software used to mimic the paper, which then took it to the printer. Modern technology, though, has finally allowed the miraculous joining of the front and back into one continuous file (!), which should make for easier viewing on computers, tablets, and even app-phones, as the front page should flow seamlessly into the back page, and each month should appear as just one image in your reader.



determined how much food had been available to the parents and grandparents when they were young. The transgenerational effects, it turns out, are startling: the **grandsons** of Överkalix prepubescent boys who had overeaten, died an average of six years earlier than the grandsons of those who had endured a poor harvest. Once Bygren and his team controlled for certain socioeconomic variations, the difference in longevity jumped to an astonishing 32 years. But its not limited to boys and men; a different set of Norrbotten cohorts discovered that the effects travel down the female line as well, but affect women while still in the womb.

Setting Darwin’s evolution distinctly in the slow lane, Bygren and other scientists have now amassed historical evidence suggesting that powerful environmental conditions (near death from starvation, or smoking or pesticide exposure, to name a few) can somehow leave an imprint on the genetic material in eggs and sperm. These genetic imprints can short-circuit evolution and pass along new traits in a single generation.

A growing understanding of the mechanisms at play, though, are producing a new set of drugs intended to cause diseases like schizophrenia, cancer, autism, Alzheimer’s, diabetes and many others, to simply lie dormant. So, finally, those meticulous, old church records, kept in the barren north of Sweden, eons later, just might be the savior of modern mankind.