

**December, 2011**  
**American Swedish Institute**  
**Male Chorus and Auxiliary**  
American Swedish Institute  
2600 Park Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55407  
(612) 871-4907



**Director**  
Jeff Wressell

**Assistant Director**  
Tom Engquist

**Accompanist**  
Dan Ritter



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Tom Olson

**Vice President**  
Matt Davis

**Secretary**  
Weldon Hultgren

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Chuck Upcraft

**Bd. Members-At-Large**  
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newsletter editor

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Muriel Johnson  
Anne Olmon

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Anne Olmon

Here we are the last day of November and no snow - not even ice! We're not complaining mind you since Thanksgiving weather allowed us to push away from the table and take a hike after feasting on so much traditional and, more recently, rather exotic fare. The kids could burn off some energy giving us of another generation a bit of peace and quiet. In our place here in Bryn Mawr we had 10 adults and 4 kids ranging from 6 years to 2 months.

Choir - we have done well in our recent four events. The turnout at Vonnie's memorial service was a chance for many to recognize a wonderful and courageous woman. Cecelia and I knew her long enough to realize that she was something special - a person that comes along the road of life not too frequently. The testimonials from those attending the service spoke of a person who really listened to people. That was the theme over and over again. Dennis - it's tough for you right now but in a way you are so lucky to have such wonderful support groups with that church of yours and then, of course, all of us in the chorus. We're there for you when you need us - anytime.

The day after Vonnie's memorial service found most of us chilling out on the veranda of the ASI Turnblad mansion welcoming those standing in line below us for the 10 AM opening. It was a bit cold and it took the two Neverlur (Birch Bark Lur) horn players a few seconds to get their lips prepared for blowing those instruments and what a sound they made. According to some research I just did on early Viking ship finds at least one of these horns was found on board. They were likely used back then to put almighty fear in the minds of folks soon to be raided. This time around it was a much more civilized call to come check out the newly renovated mansion. We sang a few songs and then it was inside to warm up, congregate on the stairway and sing some Holiday songs.

The following day found us at the Fort Snelling Chapel at 10 AM in time to warm up for the 11 AM service. I felt it was one of our better performances and it might have had something to do with staying focused on Jeff as he tried to get us to really interpret the text. It really felt good to make such great music. Then many of us took the short drive over to IKEA for brunch - a nice tradition. We actually had Monday off but then had to be down at the Doubletree hotel early Tuesday morning to join the Norwegian male chorus and provide the music for the Norwegian breakfast. The food was just OK but the program involved several speakers that were quite good because they kept it short and added some levity. The President of the U of M spoke and touched on the need for connecting with people in a life of service. The consul general of Finland read a speech written by the Finnish ambassador (couldn't attend because of sickness) who contrasted the role of women in Nordic countries vs the United States and crafted an argument that any country that nurtured women to have roles of responsibility in governance, industry and education has a good chance to have a civil society. Finally Eric Utne spoke about the life of Fridtjof Nansen as revealed in love letters between Nansen and Eric's grandmother Brenda Ueland born in Minneapolis in 1891. Nansen is worth studying for his contributions to Nordic exploration, Oceanography and diplomacy. The book titled 'Brenda my Darling' addresses a more passionate side of Nansen revealed in the poetry of his letters along with his own artwork. Eric edited these love letters written in the last year of Nansen's life.

St. Croix Falls Overlook Park, Dec 3, 4 PM warmup

Hwy 8 through Taylors Falls, cross the St. Croix River bridge and take first left onto Main Street. Continue to Louisiana and take a right. Go one block and turn right into parking lot. Walk a block North to the theater for warmup at 4 PM.

Mat's program is excellent. Just the right amount of story about the Tomten at Christmas interspersed with songs from the choir. Wear normal concert attire but be prepared to wear a black overcoat and warm shoes/boots to stay warm. Also bring a hat just in case it turns unexpectedly cold.

This is a suggestion on how to order your music since you'll be singing from both four part music and just text from Mat's handout. Consider using a scissors to cut out the text of all the songs you'll be singing in unison and taping to blank sheets of paper. Then 3 hole punch them and insert among the various sheet music from which we'll be singing. For example you'll have Hosianna and Bred dina vida vingar in your folder followed by the text for Bereden taped on a sheet of paper. Then Jul Jul followed by the Red book for Away in a Manger. Then Fader i Himlen followed by the text for Det är en ros utsprungen taped on a sheet of paper. Then Hej Tomtegubbar followed by a note to go back to the Red Caroling book for text of Joy to the World. Then O du härliga followed by the text for När juldagsmorgon glimmar taped on a sheet of paper. Then Äre vare Gud followed by a note to go back to the Red Caroling book for jingle Bells. Then Nu Tändas tusen Juleljus followed by the text for Stilla Natt taped on a sheet of paper eliminating vs 3. Then Caroling, Caroling followed by a note to go back to the Red Caroling book for Hark the Herald Angels Sing. Then Nu är det jul igen followed by Jul, Jul strålande jul followed by a note to go back to the Red Caroling Book for We Wish You a Merry Christmas

The above may sound confusing BUT it makes sense since you'll be eliminating going back and forth quite a bit with just a few exceptions. It's a straight shot right through the program. The only places you'll need to flip back is for the songs in the red caroling book. This is just a suggestion however. I'm trying to get you to think in advance of how you'll be dealing with the interplay of singing the text in unison off of Mat's handout and our sheet music for four part singing. You'll also be dealing with the elements so any pre-planning of how you order music will be helpful.

Gayland

Minnesota Valley Country Club Sällskapet Dinner - Dec 8, 7 PM warmup, sing at 8 PM

Discuss music to be sung at the Dec 6 practice and place in the proper order in your binders before leaving practice.

The Sällskapet organization, according to Phil, is an organization founded in the early years of ASI to establish a firm financial base for the organization. I'm sure it was mostly men at the time and we'll see if any influential women in business and industry have made any inroads. Barney says he remembers it to be lots of fun and the choir received great applause the last time he attended. There will be a lot of anticipation to listen to us so good attendance is a must.

Directions:

Take Hwy 100 South from 494 and continue on Normandale Blvd and Auto Club Road to 6300 Auto Club Road.

Mendekirken Lutheran Church, Dec 18, time TBD

Music : TBD at the next rehearsals

Directions:

924 East 21st St. - 1 block East of Chicago and 1 block South of Franklin