

NEWSLETTER

SPRING REPORT

Thank you all for participating in our events!

FASTELAVNSFESTAT VIKINGESKOLEN.

On February 19th, the Vikingskolen once again hosted Fastelavns fest for the children and adults from the school and from the Danish Club. It was a well-attended event, with around 80 people, including kids in colorful costumes who, along with their parents, enjoyed a perfect Houston winter morning. Face-painting and balloon animals were among the children's favorites and the lines to participate were long.

Many faces and arms were NOT going to be washed any time soon!

When it was time to "slå katten af tønden", the kids eagerly lined up to take their turn with the bat. This year's barrels included one 3 year survivor with a few reinforcements, and one, which was constructed from one of last year's totally destroyed barrels.

The whole thing was over in 15 minutes, but all kids got several chances to be first to the candy and to win the prestigious "kattekonge" or "kattedronning" prize: the right to wear an exquisite crown!

As usual, we were spoiled with "fastelavns-boller" which were enjoyed by everyone, Danes as well as Danes-by-heart.

This was the fourth time Vikingskolen hosted the Fastelavnsfest. Many thanks to the school for providing the perfect venue for this event and for establishing such a good tradition.

- by Flemming Mengel



Upcoming Events:

March 27th

Scandinavian Family Fun Day & Soccer Match

The Danish, Norwegian and Swedish clubs of Houston get together to have a fun day of games, activities and even a soccer match square off!

At the Norwegian Seaman's Church this Saturday! Players are still needed so RSVP to Michael Jensen ASAP.

April 5th

Danish - american chamber of the southwest - Founding meeting april 5th.

May 12th

Book signing with Susanne Thea at the Museum of Printing History.

.... More to come!



**CONTINUED
COMMUNITY SUPPORT
FOR VIKINGESKOLEN**

Vikingskolen recently held its annual meeting and cocktail party for the Danish community in Houston. This annual gathering serves the purpose of building support for the school financially as well as strengthening the Danish community in Houston as a whole.

The event brought forth significant underwritings from organizations such as Haldor Topsoe, Danish Inspirations and the Danish Consulate. Also, several individuals and local American companies sponsored the event financially and with items for the annual silent auction.

The fundraiser this year totaled more than \$2,000 and was generously hosted by Lene and George Kiersted with "smørrebrød" by Danish chef Søren Pedersen of Ray's Grill. Please see complete list of underwriters and sponsors on vikingskolen.com.

The demand for the Danish school remains strong with over 30 registered adult and child students. The adult class generally represent people in circumstances where the spouse is Danish or have Danish ties. The couples may have Danish children who attend the school at the same time. Others are seeking to prepare a spouse for immigration to Denmark which has become increasingly difficult

due to a new point system. The parents of our young students generally consists of Danish families who have lived abroad in the US or elsewhere in the world for longer periods of time who want to nurture Danish traditions with their children and also maintain the Danish language.

Other parents are Danish-American couples with dual citizen children with similar goals but who must also meet minimum requirements in order for the children to remain Danish citizens at the age of 21.

The school is operated and run on a purely volunteer basis with five board members. The school has approximately two paid teachers at any given time. The remaining teaching staff are volunteers or parent volunteers in lieu of tuition discounts. Vikingskolen is a non-profit organization and public charity under section 501(c) (3) of the US tax code.

As such it is also exempt from state sales taxes. The school does not receive any support from the Danish government or education ministry. The school has been in operation now for five years based on the spirit of volunteerism and its underwriters and individual sponsors.

Vikingskolen celebrates the Danish community in Houston for its support! For more information about Vikingskolen, please visit www.vikingskolen.com or

contact Christina Brinch Clark at vikingskolen@gmail.com or 832.660.6496.

- by Carl Steffesen

**PARAPHRASE OF THE
BAYEUX TAPESTRY**



Renowned Danish artist Susanne Thea came to Houston for the opening of her exhibit "Paraphrase of the Bayeux Tapestry" on February 3rd at the Museum of Printing History.

Museum members were joined by members of the Danish Club of Houston at a wine and cheese reception to meet Susanne and discuss her work.

Susanne spent more than 3 years studying the famous French work, a 72-meter long chronicle of the events leading to the Norman Conquest of England in the year 1066.

The name of the exhibit is appropriate as it is not a direct copy of the original, but rather is a collection of 90 images printed as copper-plate etchings in which Susanne re-tells and modernizes the story of the Battle of Hastings. Susanne's copper-hued images capture all of the characters depicted in the original tapestry, including kings, Viking ships, soldiers, and

horses, but also includes contemporary figures and even family members, often in a humorous and sometimes ironic way.

On February 5th Susanne held a talk and demonstration at the museum, and she will return on May 12th for a reception (6:00 to 9:00 p.m.) during which she will debut her new book about this project. The exhibit runs through May 21, and more details can be found at

www.printingmuseum.org.

The opening reception was sponsored by Vestas, Danish Inspirations, Haldor Topsoe, and the Danish Club of Houston.



Photo caption: Palle Jensen, Carl Steffensen, Anna Thomsen Holliday, and Carsten Westergaard enjoy the exhibit opening with artist Susanne Thea.

- by Carl Steffensen



THE VIKINGS ARE COMING



These days we are all accustomed to seeing Vikings in commercials saying “What’s in your wallet?”, but last month Louise Henriksen, curator from the Viking ship Museum in Roskilde, came to Houston to add a bit of historical realism with a series of presentations about “Havhingsten”, or the “Sea Stallion”.



On January 20th Louise presented a lecture at the Museum of Natural History on the discovery of the Viking ships in

Roskilde Fjord and the building and sailing of the “Sea Stallion”, a recreation of the largest of the ships found during those excavations. The event was very well received with more than 200 people filling the museum’s IMAX theater for the multi-media presentation with video, slides and graphics complimented by

Louise’s charming personality. Her incredible insight and knowledge of the Vikings and history and social conditions at that time made the presentation very interesting. With the modern time link to the “Sea Stallion”, what was boring history when many were in school became very much alive, interesting and relevant to our time. The presentation was followed by an extensive question and answer session.

Louise had brought a reproduction of a Viking axe with her from the Museum in Roskilde, which was used in the actual construction of the “Sea Stallion”. Besides this artifact, attendees were very fortunate to be “entertained” by a group of Vikings visiting from San Antonio in full costume and weaponry. It was a real treat to have them there adding an extra spice and atmosphere to the event.

On Saturday, January 22nd, Louise conducted a children’s lecture at the West University Library during which the “Little Vikings” choir from Vikingeskolen performed. This was followed by a screening of the BBC Documentary which chronicled the construction of the “Sea Stallion” and it’s subsequent 1,000 mile journey from Roskilde to Ireland in 2007.

During her trip to Houston Louise also visited Scarborough High School and San Jacinto Junior College to speak to students about Vikings and her work at the museum. Louise’s visit was a great promotion of

Nordic history and was sponsored by Scan-Trans, the Houston Museum of Natural Science, Hal and Anna Holliday, the Danish Club of Houston, and Houston's Vikingskolen. Thomas Damsgaard contributed to this article.

- by Carl Steffensen



UPCOMING EVENTS!

SCANDINAVIAN FAMILY FUN DAY
MARCH 27TH 2011.



The Danish Club of Houston, the Swedish Club of Houston and the Norwegian Club of Houston will be have a Family Fun Day at the Norwegian Seaman's Church!

It starts off with an outdoor carnival church service at 11am.

The Swedish pastor, Olof Olsson from Florida will be joining us. There will be a reward for the best costume.

Following the church service lunch will be served, and there will be a soccer tournament for the children and other activities such as horseback riding, inflated jumping castle, climbing activities and more.

The lunch is free, but a donation for the church is encouraged in the donation boxes at the table.

About 1 o'clock we will start the soccer tournaments for adults. On this day adults are 13 years old and older.

In the last two events we have had, Denmark has secured the gold medal, so please come and support our guys and girls as they defend their title, we really need your support!



WE NEED SOCCER PLAYERS! If you would like to play on the team, please RSVP to me at mjensen@prospricing.com, or call my at 832-607-4892.

Where:

Norwegian Seaman's Church
4309 Young Street
Pasadena, Texas, 77504, USA
phone: 281- 998-8366

DANISH - AMERICAN CHAMBER OF THE SOUTHWEST - FOUNDING MEETING APRIL 5TH.

We are going to found the Danish - American Chamber of the Southwest. A steering group of four people is working on the technicalities. These people are: Thomas Damsgaard of Scan-Trans Shipping. Robin Johansen, from consulting firm "no black suits", Sten Svendsen of Bring, and Anna Thomsen Holliday of the Danish Consulate.

They are currently working on formulating mission and vision statements, tweaking the bylaws, setting up bank relationship, and such things.

To be a founding member, which will ensure that you will be listed as a founder and be on the letterhead as such is \$1000 dollars, dues and just general membership will be set at \$500 for large companies annually (25 employees and over), corporate membership \$300 annually, and individual membership \$100 annually. We have already gotten firm commitment from 10 founders, and hope to get more so that we will have funds for a professional website etc. Many more details about this will be revealed at our Founding meeting, open to all interested parties.

This meeting is held April 5th, One Park Place, 8th floor, 1400 McKinney, 77010.

RSVP required to Anna Thomsen Holliday at: anna-dsth@hotmail.com.

**BOOK SIGNING WITH SUSANNE THEA
MAY 12TH**

Susanne Thea is debuting her new book about the "Paraphrase of the Bayeux Tapestry". This will be Thursday May 12th at the Museum of Printing History, 6-9 PM. There will be a reception and the artist will be present.

This will also be the last chance to see the beautiful exhibit.

Danish Club Officers

President - Michael Jensen

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Vice President - Carl Steffensen

cfsteff@comcast.net

Treasurer- Frances Steffensen

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