

Newsletter

September 2012 | No. 44

Next Events

SEPTEMBER

12

Wednesday

Welcome back
after summer

7.00 - 9.00 PM

Norway House

www.daccsw.org

SEPTEMBER

25

Tuesday

Let's Meet &
Eat

6.30 PM

Sorrel Urban Bistro

SOMMERFEST & A NEW BOARD

Thirty members and their families came to the Nottingham Forest Club to enjoy the pool, some Danish-style grilling, and a keg of cold Carlsberg beer as the Danish Club hosted another Sommerfest and annual business meeting on June 11th. It was a great day, and after some good socializing President Michael Jensen called the annual meeting to order. Hans Kristensen was selected to chair the meeting, and after about 30 minutes all of the official duties had been fulfilled – the President's report of the past year's activities, the Treasurer's report, and the selection of a new Board.



Your new Board consists of:

President – Carl Steffensen

Vice President – Mira Bush

Treasurer – Frances Steffensen

Secretary – Neil Olsen

Committee Coordinators – Ole Sorensen & Alexandra Hernández-Nørgaard

Substitutes – Michael Jensen & Steen Pedersen



We are still in need of 2 auditors who can review the Treasurer's report prior to our next annual meeting, so please let one of the Board members know if you'd like to volunteer for this easy job!

We would all like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Michael Jensen, who has served as President of the Club for the past 2 years. As is customary, the Board elected to reward Michael with an Honorary Membership for his service.

And *på gensyn*, Flemming Mengel and family! The Danish Club of Houston was sorry to see the Mengel family move to Denver, CO this summer. Flemming served on the Board for 6 years as a Committee Coordinator, Secretary, and most recently as Vice President. He has helped plan and set up the Julefest, stored lots of supplies in his garage, bought supplies for the Annual Meeting, and could be counted on to help out anytime there was a need. We will miss his stalwart presence and loyal service. Flemming and his wife Lisa are both geologists, and have two children, Carsten and Kristin. We wish them all the best, and look forward to occasional updates from the Rockies!

WEBSITE RE-BUILD

The website re-build that was announced in June is well underway, and we hope to launch the “new and improved” website this month. After consulting several experts, the Board selected an Austin duo consisting of 2 software interface designers with web design backgrounds, one of whom is of Danish heritage and a former member of the Danish Club of Houston. In addition to a new look, the new website will have a “members only” page where, with proper login credentials, members will be able to manage their own contact information, renew memberships online, and RSVP and pay for events online. We hope to include message boards organized by popular interests, such as “Newcomer information”, “Places to Live in Houston”, “Restaurants and Food in Houston”, and “Legal and Consular Matters”, to name a few. We hope that this new website will serve as a hub for communication and participation for the entire Danish community in Houston, and we are really excited about it!

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Next Events

OCTOBER

13

Saturday

Private
Brewery Tour

12.00 - 1.00 PM
Na Label Brewing
Katy, TX

NOVEMBER

6

Tuesday

Pernille Spiers-
López: Design
the life you
want to live

Head of IKEA
Global HR

11.00 AM
Hilton Americas
Skyline Ballroom

www.daccsw.org

DELEGRANGES

We were sorry to see members Jack and Inga Delagrange move to Florida this summer. The Delagrange's had their retirement invested with The Stanford Group and lost their savings, so they moved to a Moose Lodge "member-only" retirement home where all their expenses will be paid, meals made, and a meager monthly stipend given in exchange for signing over their remaining assets. Consul Ray Daugbjerg helped the Delagranges move from their apartment in west Houston to smaller accommodations in "Moosehaven", located in Orange Park, Florida. Consul Daugbjerg saw that the elderly couple needed additional help packing up and organizing their move, so on July 4th weekend six members of the Danish Club of Houston responded to the email he sent out. Among them was Nick Trandum, a 22-year-old Danish college student studying at the University of St. Thomas - Nick does not know anyone in the Club, he just saw the email and wanted to help (and his young legs and strong arms were sorely needed!). Also assisting were Thomas Damsgaard, Carl Steffensen, Ghislaine Thomsen, Frances Steffensen and Henrik Thomsen. It took all day, but the Uhaul trailer was finally loaded and a family friend drove the Delagranges to Florida. They arrived safely and are settled in their new home.

In addition to organizing this effort, Consul Daugbjerg also provided them a new cell phone and unlimited monthly service.



Another appeal was sent out to the Danish Club for donations, and special thanks go out to the seventeen families who have donated more than \$2,425 to help Jack and Inga with miscellaneous expenses. Jack is still an active Disk Jockey, and a small amount of the early donations was used to purchase a new laptop on which he can store his 3000+ inventory of songs! The Treasurer will send them the remaining money in small monthly amounts for extra expenses (any large donations would have to be handed over to the retirement home).

Jack and Inga were very, very grateful for all of the Danish Club's help, and we are sorry to see them go. On August 8th the Board voted unanimously to grant them honorary membership, so that they can still be a part of the Club which they enjoyed for so many years. Neither Inga nor Jack has any children who could help with this move, and they absolutely could not have managed everything without the help of the Danish Club. Tusind Tak!

VIKINGESKOLEN & JULETRÆSFEST

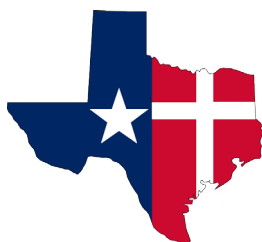
Vikingskolen, Houston's Danish Saturday school, started the new school year on September 8. This year, the school saw registrations grow to an impressive 39 students, more than ever before since the school opened in 2006. Vikingskolen offers four classes, 3-4, 5-7, 8+ and an intermediate to advanced adult class. Beginner adult students may still register, but waitlisted till subsequent semesters when and if enough students register.



Vikingskolen will open its doors to the Danish Club members for their annual "Juletræsfest" (traditional kids Christmas party) on December 15 featuring julemand, juletræ, godteposer, Lucia and much more...

For more information, contact us at
Ph. 832.660.6496 | vikingskolen@gmail.com
www.vikingskolen.org

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Next Events

DECEMBER

1

Saturday

Christmas Party

6:00 PM
Nottingham
Forest Club

DECEMBER

15

Saturday

Children's
Christmas Party

10.00 AM -
1.00 PM
Vikingskolen

www.vikingskolen.com

DECEMBER

16

Sunday

Christmas
Service

11.00 AM
Norwegian
Seaman's
Church

MEET YOUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Carl Steffensen, President

Carl Steffensen was born in Chicago to immigrant parents – Carl's father was from Copenhagen and his mother from Ikast in Jutland. Beginning at age 4 Carl did folkdancing and gymnastics at Chicago's Danish American Athletic Club and represented Denmark in numerous parades and ethnic events. Carl spent his high school summers in Denmark and worked in the factory of Gustav Ehrenreich, making the iconic "Hoptimists" which are being sold again today. He received Geology degrees from the University of Illinois and Texas A&M University, and has more than 30 years' experience in the oil industry. Carl and wife Frances were married in 1985 and have 2 daughters – Katrina works in advertising and Karen is a sophomore at UT. The family has traveled to Denmark many times to visit family and friends. Carl is the US representative for the Bjerreslægt in America as well as the former director of the Scandinavian Folkdancers of Houston and has been on the DCH Board since 1997.



Mira Berdien Bush, Vice President

Mira Berdien Bush moved to the United States from Denmark in 2008 as she married an American, Terrence Bush, together they have a 21 months old daughter, Elizabeth. Mira grew up in Grindsted near Billund and worked nearly 10 years during her youth for LEGOLAND and LEGO Company. Mira holds a law degree and is educated from University of Southern Denmark (Bachelor), University of Copenhagen and Copenhagen Business School (Master). Mira is currently a stay-at-home-mom and is engaged in the local community as well as with other charity work.



Frances Steffensen, Treasurer

Frances Steffensen has happily participated in all things Danish throughout her 27 year marriage to Carl. Currently she has been coerced into using her education and work experience as Danish Club Treasurer. She graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a BBA in Accounting, and has been a C.P.A. in private practice, part time, for over 20 years. Her primary job of mother is almost over, as her two children are out of the house now. Frances enjoys meeting new friends, making smørrebrød, and collecting Musselmalet.



Neil Olsen, Secretary

Neil Christian Olsen was born in Copenhagen to a Danish mother and an American father. As a child and young adult, he traveled the world and lived in many countries including Denmark, England, Laos, Spain, Thailand, and many states within the United States including Alaska, before settling in to live in the great state of Texas. He has attended many boarding schools including the American School of Vientiane (Vientiane, Laos), Newlands School (Seaford, Sussex, England), and Marine Military Academy (Harlingen, TX). After high school, Neil went on to attend the University of Houston. Neil is an administrative assistant working in the legal field with over 25 years of experience, and is employed with a law firm in Houston.

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Ole Sørensen, Committee Coordinator

Ole Sørensen grew up in Jutland in a small town called Aars southwest of Aalborg. After high school he worked in a bank from 1988 to 1998 and attended Aalborg University from 1993 to 1997. In 1998 he moved from Jutland to Copenhagen. He works as a systems developer at Skandinavisk Data Center where he designs financial reporting systems for banks in Scandinavia. He moved to Houston in October 2003 after marrying Deborah in Denmark in June 2003. They met while she was vacationing in the Copenhagen area during the summer of 2000. He has a stepdaughter who recently graduated from UCLA and is living in Los Angeles. He is currently taking classes at the University of Houston. He has served as a Committee

Coordinator for the Danish Club of Houston since 2009. His goal for being a board member is to facilitate an active Danish community in Houston that is inviting to both newcomers and those who have lived here for some time.



Alexandra Hernández-Nørgaard, Committee Coordinator

Alexandra Hernández-Nørgaard is new to Houston but has taken to it rather quickly. The daughter of a Venezuelan diplomat and a Danish businesswoman, Alexandra lived in many different cultures growing up. To date she has called Caracas, Bonn, Belgrade, Stockholm, Montreux, Miami, Mexico City and Houston "home". A graphic designer by profession, most of her career so far has focused on Sales and Marketing in the boating industry. While living in Mexico, she pursued studies in Landscape Architecture, which together with her previous studies and experience, have enabled her to establish Areté Landscape Design in Houston. She is married, has one fur-kid and loves outdoor sports. As a Board Member she

will strive to incorporate and activate a cross generational mix of Danes (including the Gen X) seeking Danish camaraderie.



Anna D. Stottrup Thomsen Holliday, Vice Consul, Advisor and Liason for the DACCSW

Anna Holliday was born in Jutland. Educated at University of Aalborg, she studied Social Sciences and Political Science. Upon arriving in Houston she worked at the Royal Danish Consulate General since its establishment in 1980 till it closed down in 1989. She did project work for Invest In Denmark, an agency dedicated to promote business investment in Denmark along with project work for McDonald's Hamburger University near Chicago, Illinois. Since 1998 Anna has served as Honorary Vice Consul of Denmark in Houston. She is the Founding Chair of the Danish American Chamber of Commerce Southwest and sees it as a mission to actively promote

Denmark, Danish Business and Danish Culture. It is her vision that all of the Danish entities and the Danish Community work together for mutual benefit to enjoy a strong vibrant and dynamic presence both in Houston and the greater Southwest area.

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