



# THE SWEDISH CLUB NEWS

The Swedish Club of Houston

Preserving Swedish Heritage on the Texas Gulf Coast since 1986

## *Club Updates*

- Come join us for Kräftskiva! Our annual Kräftskiva (the Swedish version of a Crawfish party) will be held Mar. 28th at the Monument Inn. See details on page 2
- Our many thanks to **Jill Garde** who shared sweets for our Semmel and Vaffeldagen held at the Norwegian Seaman's church.
- Also coming up soon... for those who missed her the last time she was here, Swedish singer and songwriter Sofia Talvik returns to Houston on March 22nd, check out the details here. <http://www.swedishconsulate.org/sunday-march-22nd-2015-sofia-talvik-swedish-singer-and-songwriter-returns-to-houston/>

## *In the News*

- Volvo comes out with a new crossover vehicle, the XC70 which is the modern take on Volvo's first station wagon or personvagn, the PV145. See page for more.
- Sweden is currently experiencing a warmer than usual March, with one Swedish town breaking a 64 year old record and Stockholm almost 60F on March 8th!
- The Finnish parliament overwhelmingly voted to keep mandatory Swedish in Finnish schools by a vote of 134 to 48.
- Ikea will soon come out with a line of desks, tables, and lamps that will wirelessly charge phones and other devices. Sign me up!

# Kräftskiva!

Kräftskiva, or crawfish boil as we say here down South, has been enjoyed in Sweden since the 16th century. Traditionally held in August in Sweden, in Texas, crawfish season starts now! Come join us Saturday, March 28th at 6:00 pm at the Monument Inn where we will enjoy a traditional Swedish feast of Crawfish cooked in brine with plenty of dill, fried fish, fried chicken, corn, potatoes and plenty of soft drinks and beer!



Saturday, March 28, 2015, 6:00 PM

at the

## Monument Inn

4406 Independence Pkwy S (Texas 134), La Porte  
(near the San Jacinto Monument)

\$25 Members

\$30 Non-members

\$10 Youth (12 and under)



**Seating is limited, and reservations are required.**

[Click here](#) by Saturday, March 21 to submit your reservation online  
(do it now, before you forget!)

Make check payable to: **The Swedish Club of Houston**



### Mail to:

The Swedish Club of Houston - Crawfish  
c/o Erich Wolz  
4526 Waynesboro Dr  
Houston, TX 77035

# Historical Events



**March 8, 1844 - King Oscar I ascends to the throne of Sweden and Norway** although he is not crowned until late August. He ruled until his death on July 8, 1859 at the age of 60. Originally from Paris, King Oscar moved from Paris to Stockholm when his father was elected Crown Prince of Sweden in 1811. His godfather was none other than Napoleon Bonaparte.

King Oscar I received an excellent education and was considered an expert on social political questions. He was elected an honorary member of the Swedish Academy of Science and in 1918 Chancellor at Uppsala University.

As monarch, King Oscar I established freedom of the press in Sweden and passed one of the first laws towards gender equality when he decreed that brothers and sister could both inherit in the absence of a will.

## **April 14, 1927 - The first Volvo car premiers in Gothenburg, Sweden!**

Volvo's first car was the **Volvo ÖV 4**, the name Volvo is Latin for "I roll" was first designated for a series of ball bearings to be marketed to the US Market by the Swedish Company SKF, of which Volvo Carss was a spin-off.



The first Volvo's arrived in the US in 1955 and were distributed first in California and then in Texas by hardware wholesaler Leo Hirsch.



## Full Crossover Circle

The car to the left with its beautiful sidewalls is a familiar sight to anyone having grown up or travelled in Sweden or other Nordic countries in the fifties and sixties. It is the 1953 Volvo PV145 designed as a roomier version of sedan based on the same platform. If you wonder, the PV designation stands for “personvagn”, in contrast to Volvo lorries or trucks (LV or lastvagn). This station wagon became a practical workhorse for deliveries as well as leisure purposes, something akin to a pick-up truck with its greater height and cargo carrying capacity. Seldom or ever seen in America it is the start of an evolution through many versions of sleeker and more modern cars such the PV245 series pictured, growing relatively common on North American Roads. The keen observer will notice something of a turnaround when viewing the current V-70 crossover with its much high contour representing today’s popular trend toward crossovers. On reflection one might wonder the so called crossover variety now so common among carmakers in itself is new or whether we have just come full circle and back a nostalgia provoking style so beloved and cherished by vintage car enthusiasts in Sweden, and perhaps beyond. Who knows, maybe the PV145 or the Duett as it was also known could be a nice retro-offering for today’s automotive market.

## Semmel- och Våffeldagarna Explained

As we are preparing to celebrate these two Swedish traditions with the SCH, we may reflect briefly on the background of these two holidays. Both, religious in origin, take place in winter.



**Semmeldagen, or Fettisdagen**, comes first on the Tuesday before Lent which this year falls on February 17th, in southern Sweden it falls on Monday. The names refer to the word semla, a bun filled with whipped cream and almond paste, and for all the good food enjoyed right before the fasting of Lent. Similar holidays in other regions are Mardi Gras (New Orleans), Faschingsdienstag (Germany) and Shrove Tuesday (England). The word Fettisdagen is said to date from 1594. ([sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fettisdagen](http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fettisdagen))

There are many excellent recipes for Semlor or Fastlagsbullar found on the internet, main ingredients being wheat-flour, salt, white syrup, butter, cardamom, milk and yeast ([www.kokaihop.se/recept/fastlagsbullar](http://www.kokaihop.se/recept/fastlagsbullar)). The buns are preferably enjoyed with hot milk.

### Våffeldagen is celebrated on March 25th

**and** has its origin in the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, in Swedish Jungfru Marie bebådelsedag and the Christian celebration of the announcement by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she would conceive and become the mother of Jesus. Many Christians observe this event with the Feast of the Annunciation on 25 March, nine full months before Christmas. Today the Church of Sweden celebrates on the Sunday between March 22nd and 28th, which in 2015 will be March 22nd ([sv.wikipedia.org/wiki-Jungfru\\_Marie\\_bebådelsedag](http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki-Jungfru_Marie_bebådelsedag) and [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Annunciation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Annunciation)). As the Mother of Christ, The Virgin Mary is referenced in many languages, e.g. as Our Lady (English), Notre dame (French) and Vår fru in Swedish. The latter has given rise to Vårfrudagen, which through vernacular evolution became Våffeldagen. Therefore, to make a long story short, waffles had little to do with it from the beginning. That said, waffles are delicious with whipped cream and strawberry, raspberry, blueberry or other jams and are always great festive additions to any celebration. Many great recipes can be found on the internet.







## **- World Catering Bakery – Run by Third Generation Swedes**

This bakery has an on-site coffee shop and is located on Silver Road near IKEA. Their specialty is a selection of breads, wedding cakes and pastries. The Chef and Owners, Ms. Frances Walsh's grandparents, emigrated from Sweden to Michigan where they started a dairy farm. Descendants subsequently settled in Texas.

Frances' baking skills were acquired from French and Belgian pastry chefs. Their current bakery products with connection to Swedish tradition include gingerbread and layered strawberry and whipped cream Swedish Tart. Frances is open to suggestions for expanding her slate of Swedish recipes and we welcome ideas from members.

Frances generously catered a sampling of bakery items for the March 12, 2015 SCH Board Meeting. Items ranged from a layered tart to an assortment of pastries and cookies, some with Swedish themes such as a Dala Horse, and incorporating the blue and yellow national colors of Sweden. They can be summed up in one word: delicious!

World Catering Bakery is also looking for a sales person / cashier. Anyone interested can go online to apply at [www.worldcateringbakery.com](http://www.worldcateringbakery.com) or by calling 713-780-4531





## **THE SWEDISH CLUB NEWS**

The Swedish Club News is published 6 times a year by the Swedish Club of Houston.

Articles, photos, etc., are welcome. We would especially like personal news of our members, explanation of family traditions and Swedish culture, news of Swedes and of Sweden, and your favorite Swedish shops, products or resources.

Please send your news to [newsletter@swedishclub.org](mailto:newsletter@swedishclub.org) or by post to the return address below.

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