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THE LUCIA TRADITION

Join us as we ring in the holiday season on Dec 5th for the annual Sankta Lucia Program and Julfest! Students in Swedish at the U of I will sing holiday music by candlelight in a traditional “Luciatåg” (Lucia Procession).

The Lucia tradition has roots going back at least to the Middle Ages, and blends together several legends and traditions. Pagan Scandinavians during the Viking era and earlier held celebrations around the winter solstice, which they hoped would ensure that the days would stop growing darker and once again turn into spring. When Christianity came to Scandinavia, the traditions around the solstice changed to reflect new themes. On the old Julian calendar the solstice fell on Dec. 13th, and as this was also St. Lucia’s day in Catholicism, Scandinavians transferred some of the earlier traditions to this saint’s day. Central in these is the theme of light returning in the dark winter, which fits well, since the name Lucia comes from the Latin word “lux,” which means light.

St. Lucia herself was a Sicilian martyr who was killed during the Great Persecution carried out by the Roman emperor Diocletian in the early 300s. Among the legends surrounding her life is that she brought food to the Christians hiding in caves, and therefore needed to strap candles to her head in order to have her hands free. In Sweden, the tradition developed that the eldest girl in a household would reenact this good deed by bringing an early breakfast of coffee and “lussekatter” (saffron buns) to the rest of the house, also wearing a crown of candles.

Much of the music for Lucia also brings in themes from the rest of Christmas, particularly the traditions around St. Stephen the “stable hand,” in which young men would go around collecting alms, singing and spreading holiday cheer. The Lucia tradition as we know it today was popularized in the late 19th and early 20th century. Swedish schools, churches, community centers and cities often have a concert or program to sing Lucia songs and prepare for Christmas. The Nobel Prize winners who receive their prizes in Stockholm on Dec. 10th are also treated to a visit by Lucia the following morning.

We hope you can make it to share in the University of Illinois’ very own Luciatåg, either as a singer or just to listen. A potluck smörgåsbord will follow.

God Jul! Merry Christmas!

-Mark Safstrom
Club Faculty Advisor
**ØLSUPPE**

A Norwegian Ale Stew

- 1.5 pounds round steak, cut into thin slices
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 medium-sized onions, sliced
- 8 medium-sized potatoes, scrubbed and sliced
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 pint light ale

Serves 4-5

1. Brown beef slices in 2 tablespoons butter; remove from pan and set aside.
2. Sauté onions in remaining butter until lightly browned.
3. In a saucepan, place alternating layers of meat, onions, and potatoes; add salt and pepper, and pour pan drippings over layers.
4. Add ale, cover, and simmer until meat and potatoes are tender (approx. 1.5 hours).

— Submitted by Raphael Stern

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**SAVE THE DATE**

**DECEMBER 5TH**

**SANKTA LUCIA & JULFEST CELEBRATION**

A Concert of Scandinavian Christmas Music and Traditions
Followed by a Smörgåsbord Reception Potluck
Bring Your Favorite Dish to Share!

Hosted By:
Scandinavian Program,
Germanic Lang. & Lit. Dept.,
The Swedish Language Students,
& The U of I Scandinavian Club

Sunday, Dec. 5th 5-7 PM
Westminster Hall
McKinley Foundation
809 South Fifth Street
Champaign, IL 61820

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**CALENDAR**

- Every Thursday at 5pm – Happy Hour at Murphy’s Pub
  Contact Karlea Trautman
  karleatrautman@gmail.com

- November 15th from 7-9pm – Sankta Lucia Rehearsal at Krannert

- November 17th from 7-9pm – Sankta Lucia Rehearsal at Krannert

- November 20th at 2pm – Costume Making Party
  Contact: Jenny Haare
  jennyhaareok@gmail.com

- December 4th from 2 - 4pm – Sankta Lucia Rehearsal & Baking Party to Follow
  Westminster Hall in McKinley Foundation and Church

- December 5th at 5pm – Sankta Lucia Program
  (Participants Arrive at 4pm)
  Westminster Hall in McKinley Foundation and Church

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**REMINDER TO LUCIA PARTICIPANTS**

- The December 4th rehearsal is Mandatory
- Arrive 4pm on December 5th for the Lucia
- Dress Code
  - Men – Black Slacks, White Collared Shirts, Black Dress Shoes
  - Women – Black Slacks or Skirts, White Blouses, Black Dress Shoes

— "Don’t Miss the Boat"