

NEWSLETTER

Department of Scandinavian Studies

University of Wisconsin–Madison

A Message from the Chair, Professor Kirsten Wolf

The newsletter committee has worked hard to put together our spring 2012 issue, while at the same time writing final essays, preparing for exams, or getting ready for busy weeks of grading. The late spring is always an exceptionally hectic time for faculty, staff, and students. Several undergraduate students are in the process of completing their majors, and a number of graduate students are studying for their M.A. exams or prelims or finishing their dissertations. Some of our students have spent the year studying or doing research abroad, and we look forward to welcoming them back and hearing about their experiences. Other students will be leaving shortly to spend either the summer months, a semester, or a full academic year studying in Scandinavia.

The spring semester has been a good one: Julie Allen received tenure and was promoted to associate professor, Nete Schmidt was promoted from Senior Lecturer to Distinguished Lecturer, Tom DuBois received a Kellett Award, Natalie Van Deusen was appointed Henry Carbot and Linnea Lodge Professor in Scandinavian Studies at the University of Alberta, and several of our students received national and international awards and grants. Needless to say, there have been many causes for celebration. The following pages feature the achievements of a couple of our students, who have spent the year doing research or studying abroad, and offer a bit of insight into some of the many activities of the department during the spring semester.

Happy summer!

Scandinavian Studies Retreat in Beaver Creek

In February, members of the department—professors, graduate students, and undergraduates—spent a weekend at the annual Scandinavian Studies retreat at Beaver Creek Reserve in Fall Creek, Wisconsin. We started the trip with a drive to Osseo to the traditional stop at Norske Nook for our fill of lefse wraps and pie. Then it was on to Beaver Creek, where we met students and faculty from MSU-Mankato, St. Olaf College, and Gustavus Adolphus College. The retreat is always a great mixture of recreation and education. This year presentations included Scandinavian heritage in America and manuscript research, among other things; but we also had the opportunity to watch Scandinavian movies, visit the Scandinavian shop in nearby Eau Claire, and do lots of band weaving and wood-carving. Of course, everyone was excited about the annual axe-throwing and kick-sled competitions! We also got to eat our fill of the wonderful food. The retreat is a great time to meet Scandinavianists from other institutions and from the community in general, and we are grateful to Norden Folk for doing such a great job organizing.

SPRING 2012

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UW Madison Celebrates the Amundsen Centennial

In Norway, 2011 was named “the Nansen-Amundsen Year,” in honor of the 150th anniversary of Norwegian explorer, humanitarian and Nobel Peace Prize winner Fridtjof Nansen’s birth and the 100th anniversary of explorer Roald Amundsen’s successful expedition to the South Pole.

This winter and spring, the Scandinavian Studies Department and the Madison community have been able to experience the excitement that captivated the world at the beginning of the 20th century when the South Pole was the last unexplored frontier on earth. On December 14th, 1911, the Norwegian polar explorer Roald Amundsen and his crew of four planted a Norwegian flag at the South Pole, 35 days ahead of the British explorer Robert Falcon Scott. In times different from our own, the news first reached Norway three months later on March 8th, 1912.



The celebration began on December 13th with an event on the eve of the Amundsen centennial celebration sponsored by the University of Wisconsin’s IceCube Project entitled: *“100 Years of Discovery: From the South Pole to the Edge of the Universe.”* One hundred years after Amundsen’s historic expedition, the UW-Madison is using a unique telescope to observe tiny particles called neutrinos. The IceCube telescope focuses on seeing high-energy neutrinos, which can help scientists understand where cosmic rays come from. The IceCube Project highlighted their research and Senior Lecturer Peggy Hager presented a lecture called “Norway: A Tradition of Exploration.” The event, which was held in the UW’s new Institute for Discovery building, drew over 200 people and showed the tremendous interest in polar history, exploration and science.

The interest in Amundsen’s expedition has brought attention to other modern adventurers and on polar issues. On February 27th, the Royal Norwegian Embassy visited UW-Madison with Norwegian explorer, sailor and navigator Thorleif Thorleifsson. Thorleifsson was accompanied by the Embassy’s Environmental Counselor Marit Archer Saether, and Cultural Information Officers Linken Berryman and Urd Milbury. The Madison event was organized by the Scandinavian Studies Department and the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies and was given additional support by European Studies.

Thorleif Thorleifsson’s lecture, “A Voyage Around the North Pole: Modern Exploration and Climate Change,” focused on his 2010 sailing journey around the Arctic together with fellow Norwegian Børge Ousland. The two set a record by completing the entire 10,000 nautical-mile voyage around the Arctic in just one season (80 days). Mr. Thorleifsson drew an enthusiastic crowd to hear of his adventures and see pictures and video clips of the trip on his small Corsair 31 trimaran sailboat. The audience learned that an expedition by Roald Amundsen in 1903 took three years to successfully navigate just the Northwest Passage.

Amundsen and Ousland sailed north along the Norwegian coast, through the Northeast Passage, across the Bering Strait and along the northern coast of Alaska, through the Northwest Passage, past Greenland and Iceland, and returned to Oslo.

UW Madison Celebrates the Amundsen Centennial, Continued

Not only does Mr. Thorleifsson wish to draw attention to the beauty and mystery of the Arctic, but he wants to make people aware of the dramatic effects of climate change and the geopolitical questions that arise when areas previously closed by ice are now open for navigation. The reduction of ice during the summer months has made navigation less dangerous and faster, but it raises alarm about the environmental effects of rising temperatures in the Arctic. A panel of three experts followed Mr. Thorleifsson's talk on Arctic climate change. Steve Vavrus (Senior Scientist at the Nelson Institute for Climatic Research), Anders Carlson (Assistant Professor, Department of Geoscience), and Marit Archer Saether (Environmental Counselor at the Embassy) each gave short presentations about current research in Arctic climate change and answered audience questions.

The focus on exploration continues this October, as we proudly host a traveling poster exhibit at the University of Wisconsin Pyle Center presenting images from Amundsen's race to the South Pole. The exhibit, called "Cold Recall: Reflections of a Polar Explorer" was created by the Fram Museum in Oslo, Norway and is sponsored by the Royal Norwegian Embassy. A lecture series sponsored by the University of Wisconsin Continuing Education will feature speakers from the Scandinavian Studies Department on topics related to Norwegian exploration from the Vikings to modern times.

Orange Tree Imports

In the fall of 2011, Orange (Carol Schroeder) from Orange Tree Imports decided to host a fundraiser for the Scandinavian Department. Orange is an alumna of the Department and often thinks of us in various ways, and this was a wonderful initiative. Therefore, members of the Department offered a variety of services and expertise for the silent auction to benefit Scandinavian Studies. Nete Schmidt offered a Danish dinner for 4 people, and Orange bought it for her family. Recently, they finally cashed in on their purchase and came to her house for a four course, very Danish, meal consisting of smoked salmon on freshly baked rolls, pork chops in a curry sauce with brown rice and green salad, gooseberry "grød" (pudding) made with berries from her garden and served with cream and sugar, and finally "Great Grandmother's Orange Cake" with tea and coffee. The cake was, of course, a tribute to Orange to thank her for her effort!



ScanDesign Fellowship

Now in its third year, the UW-Madison ScanDesign Fellowship Program has been a wonderful source of support, both financial and social, for UW-Madison students who choose to study abroad in Denmark, as well as for Danish students who study abroad in Madison. Thanks to generous funding from the Seattle-based Inger and Jens Bruun ScanDesign Foundation, which aims to enhance Danish-American relations, Professor Julie Allen has had the pleasure of awarding more than \$150,000 over the past three years to Madison students who spend either a semester or year in Copenhagen or Aarhus, Denmark. The program has been expanded this year to include summer scholarships as well. The American students in Denmark enjoy the services of a Danish coordinator, who organizes culturally-enriching activities for them, such as attending a Danish handball game, visiting the Louisiana Modern Art Museum, bicycling around Tycho Brahe's observatory on the island of Hven, and a weekend trip to Norway. Here in Madison, Professor Allen and Nete Schmidt have organized a range of activities for the 30 Danish students who have been on campus this fall and/or spring, including visits to Wollersheim Winery and the Milwaukee Art Museum, a weekend trip to Chicago, and various theatrical and athletic events in Madison.

Scandinavian Studies Alumna Abroad – Lucy Clements

In 2006, I began my studies at the University of Wisconsin- Madison with a keen interest in anthropology, environmentalism, social justice, and a passion to one day study abroad. My interests developed further, and I decided to major in Anthropology and Scandinavian Studies as well gain a certificate in European Studies. While most of my friends and family thought I would make a good anthropologist, I have often been asked why I ever decided to study Norwegian with no Norwegian heritage or obvious connection. While I studied German for five years and lived with host families in Germany during high school, I at one point became fascinated with Scandinavia – the culture and values, the efficiency of the state, and Scandinavia's location at the periphery of Europe with its marked distinctions in beliefs and policy. I loved the beauty of nature and rich cultural traditions in Norway and choose to study Norwegian for two years as well as focus on broader Scandinavian literature and society.

Then in 2009, I had the pleasure of participating in the international summer school in Oslo, Norway along with students from over eighty different countries; participants included many human rights activists with insights so diverse and inspiring that they led me to eagerly seek the challenge of graduate study abroad in human rights at the London School of Economics. I ended my final year in Madison working as research coordinator for WISPIRG's Hunger and Homelessness Campaign, freelance writing for an ESL company, and writing my senior honors thesis on the Norwegian oil fund entitled “Buying Ethics: Oil and Moral Identity in Norway.”

Last September, I moved to London to start my masters in human rights and found work in policy research at a children's rights charity. After graduating from LSE in December, I am currently working with a humanitarian aid organization founded by a member of UK parliament to reach “forgotten people in forgotten lands” or those in conflict or post-conflict situations ignored by the large aid organizations for political or other reasons. I work on the post-conflict Armenian region of Nagorno-Karabakh where I will be doing fieldwork and research this summer at a rehabilitation center for children and adults with disabilities.

I have always valued a diversity of experiences in my life. Whether or not my Norwegian knowledge will be utilized heavily in a further career or life path, I cannot say, but I do know that I valued the education I received and the exposure to a fascinating country I was fortunate to gain by attending University of Wisconsin-Madison. Studying Scandinavia offers a unique and interesting outlook on the world. I felt very much at home in Norway with the special Norwegian passion for social justice. I will always hold the memories of Oslo in my heart no matter where I end up.

Support the Department

We'd like to take the opportunity to once again express our thanks to the many alumni and friends who have generously supported the University of Wisconsin's Department of Scandinavian Studies. Private gifts are increasingly critical to ensuring that the department maintains its stature as one of the nation's best Scandinavian Studies programs. Your donations help us attract top faculty and graduate students, support promising undergraduate majors, and host a stimulating series of lectures, symposia and other scholarly activities.

If you wish to contribute online, you may do so by heading over to the University Foundation at <http://www.supportuw.org/>. Thank you for everything you do and your continued support!

Reading and Writing *Njáls saga* – Part II – Sanna Arthur

After doing extensive research for my Ph.D. in Iceland for six months from September 2010 to March 2011 (see Newsletter Spring 2011), I just returned from Denmark, where I spent almost three months collecting data for my dissertation “Writing, Reading, and Utilizing *Njáls saga*: The Codicology of



Iceland’s Most Famous Saga.” The research trip was made possible thanks to the generous funds of the Birgit Baldwin Fellowship, which the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study has awarded me for the 2011-2012 academic year.

Of the manuscripts and manuscript fragments that I am studying for my dissertation, fourteen are housed in Copenhagen, at the Royal Library and the Arnamagnæan Institute. Additionally, I was able to undertake two shorter research trips to Stockholm and London. At the Royal Library in Stockholm, I viewed one manuscript containing an Icelandic version and two manuscripts containing

Swedish translations of *Njáls saga*. In London, I had the pleasure of studying one codex at the manuscript reading room of the British Library, certainly a highlight of my trip.

The various manuscripts range from some of the most important vellum manuscripts containing *Njáls saga*, such as the fourteenth century manuscript Reykjabók, to paper copies from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The paper manuscripts, which I am starting to appreciate and enjoy more and more, give great insights into the history of manuscript production as well as the history of readership and reception. One of the most curious findings is an unbound manuscript with uncut pages, which shows that some scribes wrote on large uncut leaves, divided into quarters, rather than on readily prepared and cut gatherings.

My time in Copenhagen, Stockholm, and London has been very productive, and I have now completed the data collection for all *Njáls saga* manuscripts. The staff and other guest scholars at the various libraries and manuscript institutes have been incredibly helpful and I am excited to have made so many new connections, one of which will likely lead to an article in collaboration with Silvia Hufnagel, who just successfully defended her Ph.D. at the University of Copenhagen, and - like me - is interested in material aspects of manuscript production.

The Arnamagnæan Institute also kindly invited me to give a presentation about my research entitled “*Njáls saga* in Numbers and Notes.” The lecture was well attended and I received valuable and positive feedback from the audience, including Professor Matthew James Driscoll and Postdoc Tereza Langsing, who share my interest in material manuscript culture and the history of readership and reception.

I cannot wait to delve into my collected data, to start analyzing it in depth and to see my dissertation take shape in the months to come. I am also looking forward to spending more time in Iceland this summer and to attending the 15th International Saga Conference in Århus, Denmark in August, thanks to the Birgit Baldwin Fellowship and conference travel support from the Vera Cronor Fund.

Visit by Internationally Recognized Author Jens Lapidus

On April 12, the Swedish author Jens Lapidus visited Madison as part of his tour around the US to promote his book *Easy Money* (Pantheon Books) and the Hollywood movie based on the book. Jens Lapidus rates among the best-selling authors in Europe, and his book from 2006, published in the U.S. in 2012, with the original title *Snabba Cash* has been translated into several languages and has sold over 600,000 copies in Sweden alone. Lapidus gave a very interesting presentation in the class "Criminal Utopias" and another exciting public lecture to a very attentive audience in the evening.

He spoke about his job as a public criminal defense lawyer who represents some of Sweden's most notorious underworld criminals. His sources of inspiration are other crime writers who led him to his signature "machine-gun" writing style, which is very different from the "normal" style found in contemporary Scandinavian crime stories. Instead



of ornamentation and flow in his writing, he cuts to the chase with vivid, brusque dialogues, internal monologues, and street-based jargon. In this way, he attempts to reflect the reality of life in Stockholm today through the eyes of the criminals. No detective, no police force, and no investigative journalists appear in this novel. Instead, he shows us the insides of three very different members of the criminal community as summarized on Amazon: "JW is a student having trouble keeping up appearances in the rich party crowd he has involved himself with. He's desperate for money, and when he's offered a job dealing drugs to the very crowd he's vying for a place in, he accepts it. Meanwhile, Jorge, a young Latino drug dealer, has just broken out of jail and is itching for revenge. When JW's supplier gets wind of Jorge's escape, he suggests JW track him down and attempt to win his trust in order to cover more area in the drug circuit. But JW's not the only one on Jorge's trail: Mrado, the brutal muscle behind the Yugoslavian mob boss whose goons were the ones who ratted Jorge out to the cops, is also on the hunt. But like everyone else, he's tired of being a mere pawn in an impossibly risky game, and he's seeking to carve out a niche of his own. As the paths of these antiheroes intertwine further, they find themselves mercilessly pitted against one another in a world where allegiances are hard-won, revenge is hard-fought, and a way out of it all is even harder to come by."

As it says in the review from *The Independent*, April 12, "If you're hardy enough to tackle crime narratives drenched in vitriol, grit your teeth and tackle Lapidus lacerating Stockholm Noir trilogy...Lapidus paints a more cosmopolitan canvas than other writers - not to mention employing a far grimmer and more nihilistic use of the genre, with nary a comforting Swedish copper in sight....The vividly evoked world of the books is Stygian and uncompromising, with an unvarnished picture of the criminal fraternities of Stockholm, including Hell's Angels and a variety of Mafia thugs from different racial groups, who unleash massive violence in a series of drug wars....*Easy Money* is written is an in-your-face combination of street argot and new word coinages."

Be sure to look for *Easy Money* and the next two books in the Stockholm Noir trilogy, which will be published in English next year.

Caitlin Roby in Umeå

In between battling hordes of trolls, raiding with Vikings, and losing my keys somewhere in the rugged northern wilderness, otherwise known as Umeå, I've adjusted quite nicely to life in Sweden. Having the opportunity to study abroad has always been a dream of mine and I could not ask for a



better city to enjoy my experience. There are many reasons for this, but, most of all, it feels as if I'm getting in touch with my roots since my great-great grandfather emigrated from Umeå in the mid-18th century. Oftentimes, while walking around, I find myself imagining how Umeå looked 160 years ago when my ancestors still lived here and if, perhaps, I am walking where they once walked.

Since arriving, I've had so many new experiences. Taking midnight trips out to Nydala Lake (Nydalasjön) to look for the Northern Lights is a common if not chilly activity. And yes, I've seen the Aurora and it is absolutely breathtaking! I've also recently learned to mush and steer a sled pulled by six dogs. Dog sledding in Sápmi allowed me to see so many new sights as well as a whole new side to Sweden's practically untouched wilderness.

This semester I'm taking the course *Basutbildning III i svenska och samhällskunskap* (Foundation Course in Swedish and Social Sciences) which, while demanding, is immensely improving my Swedish. The class is full time and meets between fifteen and eighteen hours every week. Some of the subject matter includes advanced Swedish grammar and vocabulary, readings from a variety of topics within social sciences as well as increasing the students' skills in reading comprehension and writing. It's been great meeting so many fellow students from other countries who also have a strong interest in Swedish.

Not all of my adventures have happened in Sweden but in other countries within Europe. I've had several opportunities to travel during my time abroad, including to Belgium, Germany, and Finland. I love seeing the old-world charm of European cities and how the beauty differs from place to place. In Finland, I traveled to Rovaniemi to visit a friend and I'm pleased to announce that I have officially entered into the Arctic Circle. My travels are far from over because several of my friends and I are already planning an end-of-term trip to northern Norway where we will see the beautiful nature that Norway is so famous for as well as the midnight sun. On my journey home at the end of June, I will be stopping in Reykjavik to sightsee for a week.



I have recently started pricing plane tickets back to the US, and I am sad that my time here is already drawing to a close. While I felt apprehensive when I first arrived back in August, I know now that those worries were for nothing. I've had all the experiences and opportunities a student should have while studying abroad and I know that I will not feel any regrets when I leave Sweden. And, so, while I have begun the countdown of my remaining time abroad, I know that my experiences will continue on in the memories I have made and that they will stay with me for the rest of my life.

The Department Congratulates the Classes of 2011-2012

Congrats Graduates!

Ph.D.

Natalie Van Deusen

MA

Lucas Annear
Marcus Cederström

BA

Logan Daniel Baisden
Greta Anne Mattison
Lauren N. Nielsen
Janelle Marylee Peifer
Danielle Sophia Pennings
Katrina Monika Peterson
John Stephen Prusynski
Caitlin Ann Roby
Jeffrey Michael Ziegler
Shane Michael Polzin
Josephine Larsen
Danielle Schumerth

Congratulations to Our Recent Grant and Award Winners!

National and International Grants:

American-Scandinavian Foundation:
William Banks, Denmark

Aurora Borealis Prize:
Tim Frandy

Birgit Baldwin:
Jason Schroeder, Sweden

Council for European Studies Pre-Dissertation Grant Funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation:
Aaron Kahn, Sweden

Grants and Awards cont.

Einar and Eva Lund Haugen Memorial Scholarship:
Tim Frandy

Summer FLAS:
Alyssa Kampa, Norwegian
Olivia Lasky, Norwegian
Reginald Young, Norwegian

Humanities Exposed Grant:
Tim Frandy

Mellon-Wisconsin Fellowship:
Tim Frandy

Torger Thompson Fellowship:
Tim Frandy

ScanDesign Fellowship:
Alexandra Bergmann
Marcus Cederström
Melissa Faulkner
Julie Jarzemsky
Bryan LaBissioniere
Olivia Taber
Brittany Varano

Swedish Lärarkursen på Tjörn:
Paul Natiw

University of Wisconsin-Madison Fellowships:
Susanne Arthur
Marit Barkve
Olivia Lasky

Grants and Awards cont.

Departmental Grants (Many thanks to our donors!):

Grace and William Larsen Memorial Fund:
Jens Arneson
Andrew Jensen

Idun Lodge Sons of Norway:
Alyx Knudson

Norden House:
Rebecca Andresen
Siyu Chen
Hayden Elza
Chelsea Flucus
Alyssa Kampa
Emily Malone
Janelle Peifer
Zachary Porod
Emmon Rogers
Steven Rybeck
Kiefer Stenseng
Anna Tolle

Torske Klubben Foundation Grant:
David Natvig

Ygdrasil Literary Society:
Marit Barkve

Congratulations to Our Recent Placements!

The Henry Cabot and Linnea Lodge Scandinavian Professorship at the University of Alberta:
Natalie Van Deusen

Dinesen's Cabin in the Wisconsin Woods

In the summer of 1975, Professor Dick Vowles found himself searching for a cabin in northern Wisconsin near Mole Lake. But this wasn't just any cabin, and Professor Vowles wasn't looking for just any place to spend the night. Instead, he was searching for the cabin that Wilhelm Dinesen lived in before being called back to Copenhagen, Denmark from the United States.



Dinesen had been in the United States for several years, spending time in Nebraska, Illinois, and of course, Wisconsin. An avid outdoorsman, Dinesen went up the Wolf River hunting and fishing. Eventually, he settled in the Mole Lake area, purchased a cabin for \$300 and named it Frydenlund. Dinesen, a writer just as his daughter, Isak would become, wrote extensively about his time in the United States

and summed up his feelings for northern Wisconsin simply: "He who seeks peace in the world cannot do better than to set up his domicile in the Wisconsin woods." It seems that Dinesen had found his own sort of peace in a small cabin in the woods.

Before long, Dinesen was called back to Denmark to be with his dying mother. The cabin changed hands, but more importantly was designated a U.S. Post Office from 1878 to 1888. That designation led to Frydenlund appearing on a map printed in 1881. Despite being just one cabin in the woods, Frydenlund appears on the map in type much larger than Green Bay. Professor Vowles found this map, quite by accident, and it is believed to be the only map that shows the location of Frydenlund.

Using the map from 1881, Professor Vowles was able to find Dinesen's cabin in the Wisconsin woods in the summer of 1975. The cabin still stood, about eight miles south of Crandon, Wisconsin and 100 yards or so off of State Highway 55. Frydenlund had undergone several changes, but was still in use, albeit by a Swedish-American family. Despite being nearly a century old, the original timbers could still be identified. His discovery led to an article published in *Scandinavian Studies* and in the years that followed a continued interest in the recognition of Frydenlund.



Today, the cabin is designated an historic site and is known as the Dinesen Log Cabin. Since 2005, the area has been hosting the annual Mole Lake Heritage Days, with tours of the cabin available. The cabin though has garnered attention in Denmark as well. Danish author, Benedicte Riis, has taken up a project to write a book about Dinesen and the cabin. Riis recently interviewed Professor Vowles, and we look forward to the eventual publication of the book further building on Professor Vowles' discovery.



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Natalie Van Deusen Appointed Professor at University of Alberta

Natalie Van Deusen has recently been appointed to be the first Henry Carbot and Linnea Lodge Professor in Scandinavian Studies at the University of Alberta.

The professorship in Scandinavian Studies was endowed with a generous donation by Linnea Lodge after she sold her home in 2010. Natalie is the first person to fill the position. Natalie has been an integral part of the department, receiving numerous grants and awards, such as the Birgit Baldwin, as well as publishing several papers and presenting at conferences in the United States, Canada, and Europe. We are all very excited for Natalie, although we will, of course, miss her.



Before moving to Alberta, Natalie will be presenting a paper entitled “Birgitta Perfected? The Juxtaposition of ‘den unge sienesiske popolana’ and ‘den gamle svenske høvdingsfruen’ in Sigrid Undset’s *Caterina av Siena*” at The Association for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies in Canada (AASSC) conference. The organization recently featured Natalie’s hiring in their spring 2012 newsletter.

Natalie, good luck from all of us here in the department. We can’t wait to see what you accomplish!