

The Little Mermaid



A PUBLICATION OF THE NORTHWEST DANISH ASSOCIATION

Oct. Nov. Dec. 2020 Issue #2020/2021 Volume 2

DACR 2020: A Virtual Experience

By Line L Larsen

Leave your Legacy at NWDA

By Emily Olsen



Image: Some of the DACR 2020 participants on Zoom on Sunday, September 20th

Due to the persistent pandemic that has put a hold on large gatherings, the Danish American Cultural Retreat was transformed into an online event this year. The conference took place over the span of 3 days, from September 18th to 20th, using Zoom video conferencing and YouTube as the key tools. The virtual version brought with it the same exposure to educational topics and to culture that DACR is known for. However, ideally, DACR next year will

again be in its true form—as an in-person conference at the Menucha Retreat and Conference Center in Corbett, Oregon.

Despite the online nature of the conference, participants connected insightfully with the content and with each other. With new attendees present, networking still naturally transpired throughout the week. Over 60 people registered, some from clear

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*What is Legacy Giving?
Why are we asking you to consider a legacy gift?*

Legacy, or Planned, Giving is creating a plan to include a charity or non-profit in your Will or other estate planning documents. A bequest to Northwest Danish Association can help us sustain programs and create new ones for years to come.

A Legacy Gift is just a promise right now. It is a promise to leave a set amount or percentage of your assets to Northwest Danish Association after your death. You may already have other charities or nonprofits remembered in your Will, but if not, it is an addition you can discuss with your attorney. Charitable giving in your Will can have positive tax implications for your estate and your heirs.

This could also be the time to consid-

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Denmark Today

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Northwest Danish Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and sharing with others our Danish culture, traditions, and values.

President's Corner



Northwest Danish
Association



Northwest Danish
Association

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*The Seattle Danish Center is in
Suite 205*

Visit our website for more information
about events and programs!

Via our website you can also sign up for
our e-bulletin to receive updates on all
these activities:

www.northwestdanish.org

The New Normal and our Future

By Edith E. Christensen, EdD, NWDA President

It has been quite a learning curve for us and the NWDA members as we do things differently now during the virus lockdown. Running Himmelbjerget this summer was a new experience. They used videos and Zoom and managed to have a good group of kids participating. Even Dane Camp for the younger kids brought out people we hadn't expected. Camps had people from as far away as Georgia, Colorado, and California, as well as Oregon and Washington. It was challenging but Maren Williams and Stacy Barber Jesse did a great job of getting the kid's attention and helping them learn about Denmark and the language.

DACR this year was also a new experience. We had 60 people participating from all over the country. There were speakers talking about Vikings, also about Danish experiences in the early 1900's, and videos of making Danish Layer Cake and smørrebrød. We are looking forward to next year at Menucha again.

Our programs have changed and we have found that there are ways to make connections even though they may not be physically close and personal. We now have five Danish Language classes with people participating as far away as Toronto, Canada, and Atlanta, Georgia. People who would have no opportunity to take Danish language where they live, have been able to participate. What a wonderful opportunity that has been.

With Zoom, people did not have to travel anywhere but could participate in the comfort of their home. With Danish language classes both in Seattle and Portland and at different times, we could offer a time for anyone. We have had beginners to ad-

vanced students, teenagers and others wanting to learn the language of their parents and those who wanted to practice using the language to stay fluent.

Our work for the next year is going to take us to uncharted territory. How will we continue to provide programs to people no matter where they live? How will we combine the two methods of programming so people can either be present in person or online to participate? Keep tuned as we plan our events.

Please notice the article written by Emily Olsen regarding Legacy Giving. (She also works part time for an attorney who does estate planning.) We haven't been diligent in making this a priority in planning with our Danes and Danish Americans. A great way to help the NWDA through the future is this method of honoring the organization and keeping it going past your lifetime. We have two Endowment programs which could be added to, the Eldercare Endowment Fund and the Sustaining Danish Values Endowment Fund. Both are important and speak to the values of Danes. This helps us furnish Life Lines and hold luncheons for Elder members, and scholarships for younger members. Both are very deserving populations. You can help keep and grow these two valuable Endowments. Only the earnings from the Endowments are used and the Principal is not touched. Therefore, they keep earning money toward two worthwhile programs of NWDA. We would appreciate knowing if you are planning this kind of gift. Thank you for our future.

NWDA News



Looking for affordable office space? Come see the Northwest Danish Association's building!

We have a few vacant offices available in our building by Northgate! Located between I-5 and Hwy 99, our building is easily accessible. We have one of the most affordable rates in this area. If you haven't seen the NWDA building, come visit us and take a look!

There is also a virtual tenancy option available for use of a mailbox, conference rooms, and/or other services.

Call (206) 523-3263 or e-mail seattle@nwdanish.org



Image: Entrance to the NWDA building

We are sorry to announce that the following NWDA holiday events have been canceled:
Danish Christmas Fest
Danish Holiday Bazaar
Lillejuleaften



Leave your Legacy at NWDA By Emily Olsen

Continued from page 1

er estate planning for the first time. There are many reasons to estate plan and create a Will and other documents. Each person has their own reasons and an attorney specializing in estate planning can help you build the plan that is best for you. A bequest to Northwest Danish Association may be a part of that plan.

Every gift – be they one-time, annual, or legacy, is crucial to Northwest Danish Association continuing our work in the Danish-American community.

If you have any questions about leaving a Legacy Gift to NWDA, please call the office at 206-523-3263. You can also call if you have already remembered NWDA in your Will and would like to let us know. We would love to be able to thank you now for thinking of and supporting NWDA to continue its work in the Danish-American community of the Pacific Northwest.

Call for Missing Little Mermaid Archive Issues

Last issue, a story was written about NWDA through the decades that dived into the Little Mermaid Archives. We have paper issues of every Little Mermaid from 1987 to present, except two. We are missing the September/October 1999 and November/December 1999 issues. If anyone has one of them that they are willing to part with, or let us make a copy of, to complete our archives, please contact the office at 206-523-3263. Mange Tak!



DACR 2020: A Virtual Experience

By Line Larsen

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across the country and beyond.

The program commenced with a welcome session with NWDA board members and staff. Jessica Lynne Witty then took the stage from the comfort of her own studio in Tacoma, WA. Her live opening concert featured new songs and older nostalgic tunes that had folks singing along from their living rooms. Jessica's vibrant and warm personality effortlessly turned the concert into a hyggelig affair. Her inclusive set list was interspersed with Danish and English tunes.

Saturday began with a virtual visit from Denmark – Karen Eisenhut, a teacher from Kontiki skole (Kontiki school). Reopening schools during the pandemic has been a hot topic in-

ternational media, and Denmark has found its way into the heart of the debate, largely as a model. Despite a few bumps in the road, Denmark was able to reopen schools in a safer way than many other countries using outdoor education. This type of education is well-known in Forest Kindergartens in Denmark and other places around the world. Karen Eisenhut's dynamic presentation included an in-depth look at the current state of COVID in Denmark, interviews from Kontiki's headmaster and students, videos from Denmark, and a collection of recent photos.

Award-winning author, Bill Arnott, took attendees on a journey with him in a talk about his upcoming book, *Gone Viking: A Travel Saga*. Using a mix of photos, stories, and even spoken word, Bill's strong imagery brought the audience with him on his travels through Scandinavia. More fascinating photos ensued as our next speaker, Bruce Bro, shared a presentation about his fundraising hike for Danish America. Bruce's first-hand stories revealed a demanding hike

with breathtaking scenery. We learned about the survival techniques Bruce employed as an experienced hiker, and the challenging moments he encountered in his search for water and new hiking boots. The rough patches seemed balanced with the glorious sunrises, wildlife encounters, and the eventual feeling of completing the toughest feat.

Bodil Jelhof Jensen took the audience on a tour of books written by her mother, Agnes Jelhof Jensen. Bodil shared remarkable stories about her mother's life during WWII with interwoven anecdotes from her own life. The 2020 program also included a talk by Fidelma McGinn, president of Scan-Design Foundation, who shared the history of the Foundation and the story of its founders, Inger & Jens Bruun. The Foundation fosters Danish-American relations and funds pain research.

The Happy Hour Concert on Saturday by Flemming Behrend was a well-done ensemble of Danish and English songs ranging from folk music, to upbeat hits, cover songs, and more.

Pre-recorded videos and suggested Danish films were also included in the program for attendees to watch as they pleased. The videos included a Danish lagkage tutorial, Denmark's Forest kindergartens, and videos about smørrebrød. Suggestions for food and other refreshments were sent to attendees before the DACR weekend to supply lunch and the kringle & kaffe breaks.

Thank you to all our participants, speakers, and entertainers. The date has been set for the 2021 Danish American Cultural Retreat. Save the dates for next summer: **June 25th to 27th, 2021.**



Image: Flemming Behrend's Virtual Happy Hour Concert for DACR 2020

A Spotlight on Denmark



An Automated Danish Cow Farm

By Jeff Holm



Image: The cows feeding on hay inside the barn

Herning Kommune. Herning is a city located in central Jutland (midtjylland) and is mostly now a city of textiles – socks, shirts, underwear. Many of the brands are well known but are not associated with Herning. Herning is also surrounded by many farms. I was able to visit a dairy farm when I visited my family in 2016 and I was amazed by the amount of automation that has transformed Denmark into a modern and leading farming country. Pigs outnumber humans in Denmark. But what about cows?

My cousins took me for an education. I am originally from Enumclaw, Washington, which has many dairy farms. But I had no idea of Denmark's huge progress in managing cows.

I arrived at the cow farm east of Herning and was greeted by the husband and wife that owned the farm. They

introduced me to approximately 75 adult cattle and many baby cows. They explained that what you need to pay most attention to are their ear tags bearing numbers. While the tags are obvious to any visitor, no one sees that it includes an RFID chip that is not visible. Visitors do not normally notice that the whole cattle and milking operation is all run by a computer.

I quickly observed that the adult cows ignore you completely. Pulling grass for them to eat is not enticing to them. I even taught my younger Danish cousins and they failed to get any of the adult cows to take any grass from us. It was clear the cows had not been around humans. If I offered a cow grass from outside the fenced area when I lived in Enumclaw, the cow readily ate my offering. But not in Denmark. I started wondering what I was doing wrong.

The farmer told me the secret after I asked him why the adult cows ignored me entirely. He told me the cows have no need for me. He explained that the farm's computer takes care of most of their needs and they have limited contact with humans. I did not understand. When I was 7 years old, Bossie, my cow, followed me around for all the grass that I could gather for her, under blackberry bushes and outside the fences. She knew that I was a little human with access to grass.

The farmer let me know that the 75 cows know where to find grass and they have little contact with humans. Their ear tags with RFID chips record everything they are doing. Even the gates are computer controlled. The computer scans their ear tags as they enter and leave the barn. They line themselves up at the milking/eating stations and the computer keeps track of the amount of milk they provide.

They simply come and go at their leisure. No human interaction is needed. No human needs to open a gate, no human needs to herd them along and no human needs to hook them up to a milking machine. The computer does all of this. Humans just clean the barn and provide oats and hay while the computer milks them and tracks when they come and go. They clearly had no interest in following anyone to find them extra food.

This smaller cow farm also sells honey and the price is what you pay. You do not need to meet the owners. Like most farms in Denmark it runs on the honor system. They are similar to the little libraries on some blocks in Seattle used for trading books.

Finally, you always need a cat in a barn. It was June and one of the cats on the farm just had kittens. The mother cat had no problem sharing her kittens. During our tour of the completely automated cow barn, we got personal kittens for 3 hours. And unlike the cows, they loved us.



Image: Lena and Victoria Holm with their kittens for the day

COVID & Denmark



Homebound During COVID

By Line L Larsen



Image: Line's parents and Tommie in Marrebæk on the island of Falster in Denmark

It was mid-July. Any other year the summer month would have been the peak of travel season. But 2020 is no ordinary year. We had never seen SEATAC so empty. There were reminders to keep your distance (6 feet or 2 meters) from other people, hand sanitizer stations abound, and signs explaining the spread of COVID-19. Tommie and I were traveling to Denmark to see my family.

We took all the precautions we could think of – double masked and fully equipped with hand sanitizer bottles and gloves on hand. With muffled



Image: NWDA members, Line and Tommie, at SEATAC wearing many masks

voices and shallow breaths, we shuffled through the airport with our large suitcases. We quickly learned to lock eyes before speaking to help with our communication, as our voices struggled to escape through our masks.

Making the decision to go to Denmark was by no means an easy one. We booked the flights to Europe in December to visit family and attend two friends' weddings, one in Budapest and one in Berlin. Our flights were canceled and rebooked several times between April and July (even as close as two days before our final departure date).

We assumed we wouldn't make it to Europe. But in July, Denmark's response to the virus seemed to have the desired effect, and society reopened with some light restrictions. The borders opened for citizens and family visits along with a few other purposes for certain groups. We went back and forth on what to do. On the one hand, my parents had bitten the

bullet and traveled to Denmark from California. For them it felt safer to be in Denmark than in the U.S., where numbers of COVID cases were raging. Hearing about their experience helped us make our decision to put our fears aside and come home to see our family. Not having been home for a few years was a big factor and aging family members wanted to see us. We figured it was feasible if we could get tested for COVID before seeing them.

We decided to take the plunge and do the research on how to take the trip home while staying safe. From what we had read and heard firsthand from other travelers, airports were relatively safe. Being in an airplane was a concern as I pictured being confined in a tube in the air with other passengers. But we learned about the space being kept between passengers and the HEPA filters on board that capture 99.9% of airborne viruses and bacteria. Finally, as many reminded us, we were going to Denmark, which was not a hotbed for the virus. We also cut out all our planned side trips to Hungary, Germany, and Croatia.

Before we left Seattle, we called the Danish police's COVID hotline to ensure it was safe to travel back to Denmark. We asked all the questions we could think of. One thing I found strange was that the officer on the phone said I did not need a COVID test before arriving in Denmark, because of my Danish citizenship status. To me Danish citizenship doesn't quite imply viral immunity. But I thought, well maybe the Danes think so. Tommie, who is American, was told he needed a negative COVID test to enter. I decided to get one anyway for good measure (in case my implied 'Danish immunity' failed me).

Once our flights were rebooked and sorted for the third time, we flew

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From Denmark



New Music in an Old Church

By Jan Bruun-Petersen



Image: Jan Bruun-Petersen on the grounds of Stubbekøbing Church

A few years ago, when I wrote about the island of Bogø, I mentioned the little ferry, Ida. Recently because of Corona, Danes have been traveling much less. They have been enjoying their own country more, rather than traveling abroad. The government decided to help Danes enjoy vacation time in their own country by making ferry use free for most ferries, if you do not bring your car along. So my friend, Freja Frandsen, and I walked on to Ida on Bogø for a free ride to Stubbekøbing on the island of Falster. We enjoyed dining there, checking out a second-hand store, and visiting Stubbekøbing Church.

The church was built in 1200 and the town of Stubbekøbing was first mentioned historically in 1288. The town has just over 2000 people. It has The Danish Motorcycle Museum, which

houses the largest motorcycle collection in Northern Europe. There are 50 motorcycles from the time period 1900 to 1930 including one 1920 Nimbus motorcycle made in Denmark.

The Stubbekøbing church has newfound fame for being the location of the career debut of Frederik Magle. Frederik Magle was a child prodigy as a composer and organist. He was born in Stubbekøbing in 1977. His mother was actress Mimi Heinrich, who made a dozen Danish films. His father, Christian Magle, was an artist and organist. Christian Magle worked at the church. When Frederik was only five years old, he composed his first music. When he played it on the piano, his father transcribed the notes to paper. At age eight, Frederik got to have his work first performed for the public. It was a psalm he had written. It was per-

formed by the church's children's choir.

Frederik Magle produced his first significant symphony, "Let There Be Light", in 1993. He continued to compose many other pieces of contemporary classical music. Early on, he started to get work produced for the benefit of the Danish Royal Family. When it was known that the queen was coming to visit Stubbekøbing, he composed a piece to commemorate Margrethe's visit. Later he composed music for each of the queen's grandchildren's baptisms (Nikolai and Felix). Then he created various pieces to complement the queen's husband Henrik's French poems. These pieces included both Danish and French singers to go along with the French-born Prince Henrik's poems.

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Corona Report From Denmark

By Jan Bruun-Petersen

September 2020- People taking public transportation need to wear masks. There are a few rides at amusement parks where people need to wear masks. Otherwise elsewhere in Denmark there is almost no mask use, including stores, schools, and workplaces. Two Danes are dying per week of the virus. Partygoers and nightlife are challenges for the police because there are often too many people clumped together for safe social distancing. If you visit from the US or return from the US, you need to go into quarantine for two weeks or take a COVID test. There are 27 Danes in intensive care, which is the highest in three months.

NWDA Members



Thank you, Joe Matsen

By Edith Christensen



Joe Matsen has decided to retire from his job of leading the once a month Work Party. They have taken care of painting suites when needed, moving furniture, changing bulbs, keeping the garage and parking carport clean, pruning bushes, cleaning the grounds around the building and whatever else needed fixing and tidying up inside and outside.

There are about twelve retired people on the Work Party who have come faithfully once a month and work for about 4 hours before taking a break for lunch. That came to a screeching halt with the COVID virus. Joe has led this work party for about the last 18 years, after Mel Hollister began it when NWDA first moved to the new building.

Thank you for a job well done!

Reimert Ravenholt

1925-2020

By Bodil Stevns

Thursday, October 1, 2020, Dr. Reimert Ravenholt, MD, (b. 1925) passed away in the arms of his beloved wife, Betty. Betty notified me with these words: *My precious old Viking set sail under a full moon.*

Dr. Ravenholt's health declined during the past few years and during this time, Betty diligently and lovingly cared for him. He lived a long life, filled with adventures and great accomplishments of his own making. Betty stated: *His was not a life cut short or unfulfilled. He was surely deeply proud of his Danish heritage and greatly enjoyed his connections within the Danish community around us. He had many valued friendships within the group.*

Born to Danish-American parents on a Wisconsin dairy farm, he went to school in West Denmark, Wisconsin, and later earned a Medical Doctorate at University of Minnesota and a master's degree in Public Health from University of California at Berkley. Dr. Ravenholt was a remarkable person and hugely influential locally, nationally and globally. He was also a wonderful husband, father and family man, as well as an engaged, generous and cherished member of our local Danish community.

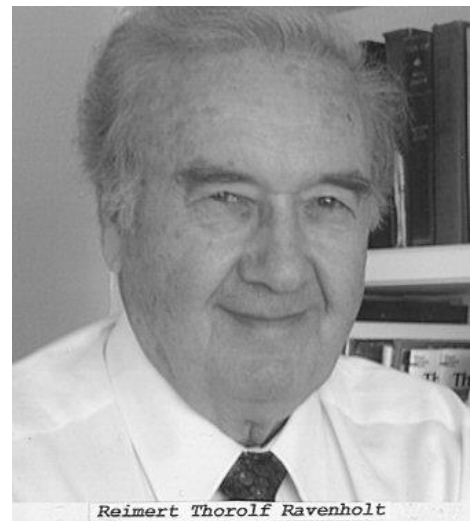
In 2015, the Danish Club honored Dr. Ravenholt as the *Dane of the Year*; and he truly was a Great Dane.

Dr. Ravenholt was one of the people who has most influenced thinking about population over the past centu-

ry. He was the first director of Office of Population under the US Agency for International Development (USAID) from 1965 to 1979. He is widely credited with initiating family planning programs and distributing contraceptive supplies throughout the world. The World Fertility Survey, which Dr. Ravenholt originated in 1971 as the largest international social science research program ever undertaken, was one of the most important international undertakings in demographic data collection and analysis in the 20th century. The program evolved into the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), a highly valuable source for health data on the developing world.

When USAID launched the family planning program in 1965, fewer than 10 percent of the women in the developing world were using a modern contraceptive method, and the average family size was over 6. During the 14 years Dr. Ravenholt directed the global population/family planning assistance program of the USAID, it became the world's foremost population program. Today, in the 31 countries where USAID focuses its support,

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Reimert Thorolf Ravenholt

Image source: Ravenholt.com

NW Danish Calendar



Due to the coronavirus outbreak, we have cancelled a number of events for precautionary measures. Sign up for our e-bulletin to receive the most recent updates: www.northwestdanish.org/e-bulletin/

October 2020

Søndag	Mandag	Tirsdag	Onsdag	Torsdag	Fredag	Lørdag
				1 Dansk I Online Dansk II Online	2	3 Online Danish Culture & Conversation Class
4	5	6 Dansk III Online Advanced Danish Online	7	8 Dansk I Online Dansk II Online	9	10 Online Danish Culture & Conversation Class
11	12	13 Dansk III Online Advanced Danish Online	14	15 Dansk I Online Dansk II Online	16	17 Online Danish Culture & Conversation Class
18	19	20	21	22	23	24 Online Danish Culture & Conversation Class
25 Duolingo group online	26	27	28	29	30	31 Online Danish Culture & Conversation Class

November 2020

Søndag	Mandag	Tirsdag	Onsdag	Torsdag	Fredag	Lørdag
1	2	3 Dansk III Online Advanced Danish	4	5 Dansk I Online Dansk II Online	6	7 Online Danish Culture & Conversation Class
8	9	10 Dansk III Online Advanced Danish	11	12 Dansk I Online Dansk II Online	13	14 Online Danish Culture & Conversation Class
15	16	17 Dansk III Online Advanced Danish Online	18	19 Dansk I Online Dansk II Online	20 NWDA Online Auction starts	21 Online Danish Culture & Conversation Class
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 Online Danish Culture & Conversation Class
29 Duolingo group online	30					

December 2020

Søndag	Mandag	Tirsdag	Onsdag	Torsdag	Fredag	Lørdag
		1 Online Auction ends	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Virtual Julestue	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Glædelig Jul!	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 Godt Nytår!		

(P)= Portland (S) = Seattle (E) = Eugene

For more information on these events, programs, and activities, please visit our website:

www.northwestdanish.org

Events are subject to change. Join our e-bulletin via our website for notification of any changes.

You can also find us on **Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram!**



Donations: Thank you!



July 2020 to September 2020

Hike for Danish America!

Paul & Dianne Anderson
Edith & Frank Christensen
Joanna Christensen
Line Larsen & Tommie McBee
Erik Muller & Susan Trapnell
Patti Olsen
Tim Roberts

Great Dane

Georg & Nina Pedersen

Bold Dane

Benevity Community Impact Fund
Sandra Boeskov
Owen Winter

Noble Dane

Teeda Gengo
Gary Korsgaard
Greta Larsen
Annemarie Lorenzen
Karna Town
Kaja Voldbaek

Royal Dane

Peter Carroll
Diane Chapman
Marit & Tage Christiansen
Audrey Haugaard Larson
Robin Levine-Wissing
Philip & Julie Lund
Claus Mercer
Kim & Priscilla Nielsen
Ingrid & Tryggvi Olsson
Britt Pfaff-Dunton
Heather Pool

Danes

Roxanne Burgos
Karla Craig
Jytte Doles
Irma & Don Goertzen

Chris & Irene Hansen
Emilie Bach Johansen
Ruth Kildall
Kenneth & Annie Kromann
Peder & Ana Nielsen
Casper Sorensen & Soomie Ahn
Bruce Town
Miriam Wallace

Reimert Ravenholt

By Bodil Stevns

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modern contraceptive prevalence has increased to 32 percent, and the average family size has dropped to 4.3. The program has helped prevent thousands of maternal deaths and millions of unintended pregnancies.

Notable honors received include the Distinguished Honor Award of the U.S. Agency for International Development "In Recognition of His Distinguished Leadership in the Development of Worldwide Assistance Programs to Deal with the Challenge of Excessive Population Growth"; The Hugh Moore Memorial Award from the Population Crisis Committee and the International Planned Parenthood Association for "Innovation and Vision in the Population Field"; and the Carl Schultz Award of the American Public Health Association for "Distinguished Service to the Field of Population and Family Planning".

Dr. Ravenholt has written numerous books and articles and is also known for his work on epidemiology and infectious diseases.

Reimert Ravenholt's fascinating family story is one of immigrants making their mark on their new country. You

will find references to Askov Højskole in Denmark, Grandview College in Des Moines, Iowa, and Wisconsin's first cooperative creamery, where Ravenholt's Danish grandmother was the butter maker running the creamery. You will find references to humble beginnings in Wisconsin, growing up with 8 siblings on a poor farm. You will find stories about cow pasture golfing in the town of Luck, making their own golf clubs out of branches for lack of money for real golf clubs.

You will also find stories about Ravenholt generosity. The family gave their farmland to the Luck Golf Course. In our own community, Reimert and Betty Ravenholt have been very generous within the Danish and Scandinavian communities, including a generous donation to the National Nordic Museum.

This is surely a difficult time for Betty and the Ravenholt family so please keep them in your thoughts. If you would like to send your condolences, please ask NWDA for Betty's contact information.

Reimert - You will be missed and remembered. May you rest in peace.

Bodil Stevns
President, Danish Club of Seattle

Sources:

<https://www.prb.org/reimerttravenholtusaidspopulation-programstalwart/>
<http://ravenholt.com/>

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1864/FP-overview-6-12-19.pdf>

More

New Music in an Old Church

By Jan Bruun-Petersen

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After Denmark opened back up again in the spring, after the Corona lockdown, it was Magle's music that was the first piece of orchestral music to be allowed to be performed live. Magle used his "Fanfare of the Royal Danish Orchestra" to open a concert at the Copenhagen Opera House in June.

Homebound During COVID

By Line L Larsen

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from Seattle to Copenhagen with a connection in Amsterdam. Europe had begun opening their societies more than in the U.S. The increased movement of people became clear during our layover in Amsterdam.

Going through customs in Denmark tends to be a comfortable experience, as many people know. The officers are friendly and often humorous. Tommie and I each had three forms with us to cover our bases. The first form, entitled "Solemn declaration on relationship for use in connection with entry," was a promise to the Danish government that we were in a long-term relationship and that the trip was family-related. The second form was a "Declaration of negative COVID-19 test" that needed to be signed by a doctor. The tricky part about this one was the test had to be taken within 72 hours of arrival in Denmark. (This was

the form the officer on the phone had told us was required of Tommie but not by Danish citizens).

We brought a third form called "Declaration of missing medical certificate." This form stated that if we did not have a signed negative COVID test, we promised we would quarantine for 2 weeks. With this form we could also choose to get a COVID swab at the CPH airport and quarantine for 48 hours until we received our results. We brought this third form as a back up in case we weren't able to get our negative COVID test results signed by our doctors in time. Luckily, we were able to pick up the forms from Kaiser in the nick of time, as we were on our way to the airport in Seattle.

Getting the COVID test signed by my doctor proved to be a good choice. The officer at the border didn't share the same sentiments on Danish citizenship and COVID as the officer I had spoken to on the phone. Even though we were in the clear on paper, we decided to get a COVID test at the CPH airport. We walked outside and found the testing site across the street. The COVID test in Seattle was an intrusive nose swab. In Denmark they do a throat swab which was not more pleasant in the least. Gagging was an inevitable reflex. They informed us they would call us within a few days if the results were positive.

Before we left Seattle we had decided we would stay in Copenhagen for a few days in an Airbnb until negative results were confirmed from our airport test. We did not feel like we had been exposed during the trip, but we were erring on the side of caution. After we were sure we were in the clear, we decided we would venture South to Falster to see my family.

As soon as we left the airport in Co-

penhagen, it almost felt as though the pandemic had disappeared into thin air. We had grown accustomed to the heavy restrictions we had just come from in the U.S. and suddenly we were in the middle of an open society again.

At the time no one in Denmark wore masks. This felt strange to us. It is amazing how quickly you become accustomed to wearing one. The rate of infection was very low when we arrived. I asked about how my friends and family had experienced the pandemic. They said Denmark's response had been remarkable and at the time there were a few 'hot spots' but that they were quickly isolated. All stores, restaurants, cafes, and bars were open. Even amusement parks were letting people visit in controlled numbers. Every store we went to required hand sanitizing before entering. From what I could see, everyone seemed to follow the rules.

Despite the low levels of infection, we decided to get tested once more after one week. We again would only receive a phone call if the results were positive. We never heard from them.

We spent two weeks in Denmark, and it almost felt unchanged. We were lucky we had a chance to visit our family. It was eye-opening to experience, and learn from, a society whose controlled and swift response to the pandemic paid off.

Update: Since our trip, there has been an increase of cases in Denmark, but the increase is quickly being fought with new restrictions. Most Danes trust the government and willingly follow imposed rules. See the current 'Corona Report' on page 7 for an update on the status of COVID in Denmark by Jan Bruun-Petersen.

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Danish American Jule-Auktion

*Do your holiday shopping this year
at the NWDA online auction!
The auction will feature an
assortment of items from Denmark.*

**November 20th to
December 1st, 2020**

Monthly Events (currently on hold)

- Work Party — First Tuesday, Seattle (except July & August)
- DBIA & DSS — First Wednesday, Seattle (except July & August)
- Fredagscafe — First Friday, Seattle (except January & July)
- Torsdagsklubben — Third Thursday, Seattle (except July & August)

Watch our e-bulletins each week for specific times and dates of programs. Note: Monthly events are subject to change.

Some programs do not run in the summer.

The Little Mermaid

A PUBLICATION OF THE NORTHWEST DANISH ASSOCIATION

Oct. Nov. Dec. 2020 #2020/2021 Volume 2

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