

Fledgling Handbook

Vikings of Solvang



2008
Viking Charities, Inc.
Stewart Fries

Congratulations upon your

acceptance as a Fledgling in Viking Charities, Inc. The Viking's of Solvang are pleased with your expression of interest in the organization and want to do everything we can to get you started off with a basic knowledge of who we are, what we do, and how we do it.

This booklet is intended to give you an overview of our camp. Hopefully, it will answer many of your questions, but obviously a booklet that anticipated all possible questions would be

prohibitive in size and scope. You are encouraged therefore, to pursue additional information from your sponsor, from a Gold Cupper, or from one of the officers of the Vikings. Any one of these should either be able to answer your question or direct you to someone who can.

Now that you are a Fledgling, it is not all fun and games! You have an obligation to learn about our history,

works, organization, and culture. We have an obligation to get to know you better. Together we have a joint responsibility to make certain that we are a good fit, i.e., you will benefit from your membership in the Vikings and we will benefit from your various contributions to the Vikings.



"The Vikings" are many things, but clearly there is one thing that Vikings is not. Vikings is not for those without compassion for people in our community without the resources to provide for their own medical needs. Our social gatherings, our

organizational structure, and our cruises aboard the Viking ship are all secondary to our focus on providing assistance to those in our county with medically related needs. Our reputation in the county as an organization that willingly steps forward in times of need is outstanding, we are proud of it, and we intend to continue to embellish it.



Mission Statement

There are many topics to be covered in this handbook, but probably in keeping with the

opening paragraphs, we should start with the Mission Statement of the Vikings of Solvang. The mission statement comes in three sections:

Who we are:

A social and philanthropic organization.

What we do:

Provide help for the medically related needs of qualified individuals and health care organizations.

Why we do it:

To provide others within Santa Barbara County a better quality of life.

Viking Charities was incorporated as a non-profit organization [501(c)(3)] and further classified by the IRS as a Public Charity [509(a)(2)], which means that all contributions to Viking Charities are tax deductible and Viking distributions to those qualified are tax free.

History of the Vikings

We have already alluded to the great reputation enjoyed by the Vikings of Solvang. That reputation is built upon a history of service in this county, but interestingly the Vikings did not originate in the Danish village of Solvang.

The effort to create a men's philanthropic group began in Los Angeles. There, in the late 1970's at the Scandia Restaurant, a handful of men got together in a social setting and decided they wanted to create a social group that also provided the opportunity to do worthwhile charitable works. They chose the name "Viking Men's Club" and established many of the customs and traditions that we continue to observe to this day.

The Viking Men's Club was very successful and membership continued to grow as more and more people learned of the social/philanthropic efforts of the group. Ultimately the group expanded to over 500 members and the name was changed the Viking Charities to take advantage of tax incentives for those making contributions for charitable purposes.

In 1974, three of the members of Viking Charities, Vince Evans, Bob Gleason, and Ray Paaske, decided to open a "camp" of Viking Charities in Solvang. Vince Evans, proprietor of the Danish Inn was appointed as *Meister* and the Vikings of Solvang was born. The original members included: Vincent Evans, Bob Gleason, and Ray Paaske.

In 1983 another group of Vikings from the Los Angeles camp decided to create an

Orange County Camp of Viking Charities. Today, all three camps operate independently of the others, all in support of charitable causes in their communities.

Between 1974 and 1979, the Vikings of Solvang were getting themselves established in Santa Barbara County, reaching out as resources and needs aligned and permitted. In those first four years the Vikings of Solvang provided close to \$100,000 in medically related support for people and organizations in the county.



As the Vikings were establishing their reputation as a force in providing philanthropic assistance, they also became known as a social group that partied as hard as they worked. The Vikings have historically enjoyed the camaraderie provided by the monthly meetings of members and the

opportunities to get to know each other better. While the meeting parameters change from time-to-time, they have normally started with drinks in the "Hallowed Hall"

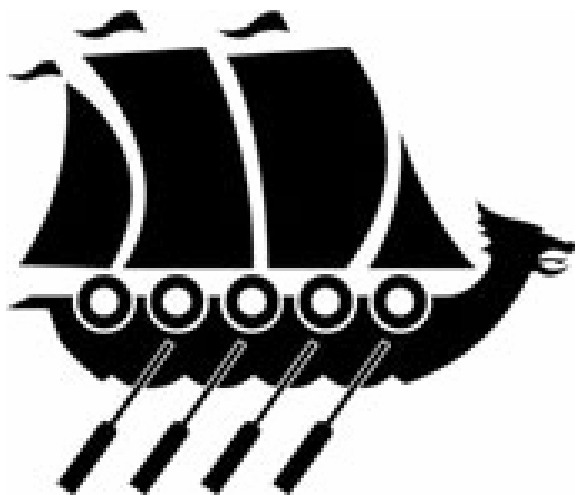
followed by dinner. Business during these monthly meetings has historically been held to a minimum number of introductions and announcements, all with an eye toward enhancing the social aspect of our meetings.

Among the traditions adopted from the Vikings of Solvang was the custom of having each Viking's name engraved on his glass and the requirement that the Vikings "drink from no other cup in the hallowed halls." One of the honors that a Fledgling enjoys at the time of his initiation is the

presentation of his glass engraved with his name. You get the privilege of asking for your Viking glass even outside of Viking functions.

As the years passed, the Solvang Camp of Viking Charities continued to grow and the charitable philanthropy provided by the members also continued to grow. By 1995, the Vikings of Solvang had provided over One Million Dollars in aid to cover the medical expenses of residents of the county. In 2007, that amount grew to over Two Million Dollars.

In all this time, the Vikings are proud to be able to say that 100% of outside contributions made to Viking Charities were used for people in need. All of the administrative, operating, and entertainment expenses of the Vikings have been, and will continue to be, paid directly by the Viking members.



Structure

Similar to the Vikings of old, the Solvang Vikings pride themselves on not having a lot of rules and regulations telling people when and what to do and how to do it. Leadership is vested in the Chief and operations are governed by the Gold Cuppers. Some specific functions are delegated to committees which, in turn, report back to the Gold Cuppers. All of this sounds well and good, but you need a better understanding of all these positions.

Gold Cuppers

A loose analogy would be to suggest that the Gold Cuppers is like the corporate Board of Directors. But the analogy quickly ends with the realization that the Gold Cuppers is not restricted by written by-laws, but rather by the constant re-examination of the issues at heart and the occasional shift of opinion in how the organization should be run. As previously suggested, the Vikings are not prone to issuing rules and regulations but that should not be construed as meaning that there is no structure. The Gold Cuppers give great weight to the customs and

traditions established in the past. The camp is organized around these customs and the traditions are honored in how we conduct our affairs.

Each year the Gold Cuppers consider the question of appointing new Vikings to the status of Gold Cupper. Again, there are no rules to say how many, or even if a new Gold Cupper must be appointed. The Gold Cuppers decide on whether they will expand, and then call for nominations if they decide to expand. To be considered, a Viking must be nominated by a current Gold Cupper. The Gold Cuppers then do what they do best - make decisions - and from that process Vikings are appointed to become a Gold Cupper.

Once appointed as a Viking Gold Cupper the Viking retains that designation as long as he is a member in good standing with the camp.

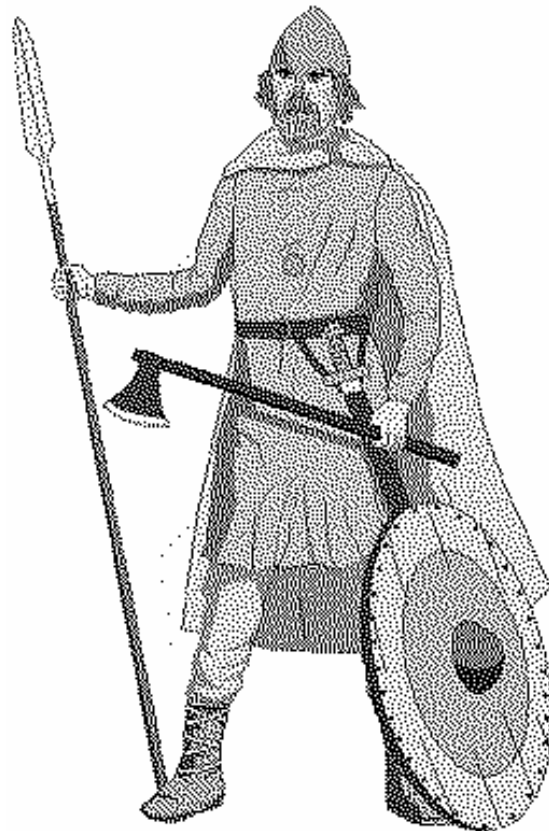
The Council of Chiefs

The Council of Chiefs consists of all former Chiefs of the Vikings of Solvang and they meet once each year, usually in December, for the sole purpose of appointing a new Chief and Vice-Chief for the coming calendar

year. The Meister chairs the meetings of the Council of Chiefs.

The Chief

The Chief is selected from among the Gold Cuppers by the Council of Chiefs. The Chief serves as the leader of the Vikings and presides over Gold Cupper meetings. His term of office is one year, from January through December. The Chief is an ex-officio member of all Viking committees and is responsible for appointing ad-hoc committees as needed. The Chief is also responsible for hosting the Viking



Summer Party held annually in June, which is one of only two functions to which women are invited.

When the Chief's year is over he is automatically appointed to the Council of Chiefs to continue to serve as a Past Chief of the Vikings of Solvang.

The Vice Chief

The Vice Chief's function is to assist and stand-in for the Chief on those occasions when the Chief is unavailable. The Vice Chief is appointed by the Council of Chiefs and serves for a one year term. The Vice Chief is also an ex-officio member of all Viking committees.

The Vice Chief is responsible for hosting the annual Viking Holiday Party held in December. This is the other annual event to which women are invited.

The Meister

Historically, the position of Meister has been used to denote the "host" of the Hallowed Halls of the Viking meeting room. In our earlier years, this was the owner of the business establishment where the Vikings held their monthly meetings. Over the

course of years, this designation has changed somewhat owing to the rapid change of ownership of some establishments and the fact that on occasion the owner of the meeting place was not a Viking.

Today, the Meister is a title bestowed by the Gold Cuppers upon the "honorary" host of our meetings. The Meister is responsible for the hospitality extended at our meetings and the courtesy of welcome extended to all our guests and Fledglings. In addition, the Meister serves as chairman for the annual meetings of the Viking Council of Chiefs.

The position of Meister is typically a long term appointment.

The Secretary

It will come as no surprise to anyone that the function of the Secretary is to take notes of the discussions and decisions rendered during meetings of the Gold Cuppers. The Secretary also assists the Chief in writing and publishing the invitation letters to the monthly Viking dinner meetings. The Secretary is appointed by the Chief and serves for one year.

The Treasurer

Again, no surprise, someone has to track the money, and the Treasurer is appointed by the Chief for one year to do just that. The Treasurer is responsible for receiving all of the contributions directed to the Vikings either from members or the public. In addition, the moneys collected during our monthly dinner meetings and any memorial bequests are received by and accounted for by the Treasurer. When the Vikings sponsor a fundraiser, the Treasurer is responsible to account for all financial transactions to make certain that monies are collected and auction items delivered appropriately.

The Treasurer is also responsible for reporting the financial transactions of the Viking Charities Endowment Fund [more about fund later]. For now it is sufficient to say that the Treasurer monitors all deposits to the Endowment and tracks them between contributions and income.

The Steward

The Vikings of Solvang observe some special ceremonies during the course of the year, and the Steward presides

over these events. On the occasion of Fledgling initiation; office induction; and glass retirement the Steward is responsible for following the customs and traditions established through the years. These honored and time-tested rituals have proven to create an extended bond of friendship between our members and are intended to make such event as special and memorable as possible.

The Steward serves at the pleasure of the Chief, but has historically been a long-term appointment.



The Chaplain

The Chaplain's role is to keep the Chief and the Viking membership aware of any family health or crisis issues which might arise during a year. The Chaplain reports monthly to the Gold Cuppers about any issues he is aware of and is responsible to send appropriate cards to those with such issues. The Chaplain is appointed

annually by the Chief, but again it is not unusual for this position to be held on a long term basis.

The Sergeant at Arms

As is typical in many organizations, the function of the Sergeant at Arms is to assist the Chief by keeping order at Viking functions. Can you imagine! This must be the most difficult of assignments. Trying to keep order among over 200 Vikings dedicated to having a great time socially must be a rough gig! Seriously, though, the Sergeant at Arms does assist in many of the traditional Viking ceremonies serving as escorts for the honorees. The Sergeant at Arms serves at the appointment

The Gatekeepers

The Viking Gatekeepers are responsible for keeping track of who attends our functions. On those that require the collection of money at the gate, the Gatekeepers also collect those funds for delivery to the Treasurer. The Gatekeepers are appointed by the Chief.

Fledgling are encouraged to assist the Gatekeepers. It is a great opportunity to learn the names of

various Vikings and to get the chance to introduce yourself.

Viking Committees

Obviously with an organization as large and complex as the Vikings of Solvang, the officers need some assistance in getting the work done. The Chief has a number of standing committees and the authority to appoint additional "ad hoc" committees as appropriate. Only two standing committees meet regularly (Charity Committee - 1st Tuesday each month) (Endowment Committee - 2nd Tuesday each month). The standing committees and their functions are as follows:

Barbeque Committee

A number of members joined together to form the Viking Barbeque Committee. They make themselves available for various civic functions and fundraisers and frequently provide the food at Viking Events outside of meetings at the Hallowed Halls. It is a hard-working committee which brings the Viking name to the public, but always has a good time doing it.

Blood Bank

Almost since its inception, the Vikings of Solvang have hosted blood drives. Today, the Blood Bank committee organizes a Viking Blood Drive twice each year to benefit the Tri-Counties Blood Bank. The Blood Drives are held at the Royal Scandinavian Inn and people who donate blood are hosted to a dinner at the Meadow's Restaurant paid for by the Vikings. The Blood Bank Committee meets as required.

Chaplain's Committee

The Chaplain serves as chairperson for a committee of Vikings to help with the care and concern for our fellow Vikings and their families. The committee works with the Chaplain to send out cards on behalf of the Vikings and to pay respects on behalf of the Vikings when appropriate. The Chaplain's Committee meets as required.

Charity Committee

The Charity Committees receives, reviews, investigates and recommends action for Gold Cupper consideration on requests for assistance from the Vikings. Every request for charitable giving starts with a request for assistance which is directed to the

Charity Committee. The committee's responsibility is to review and investigate the request including both the medical and financial need of beneficiary. Among its responsibilities is to determine the best avenue of support available from the Vikings. For example, on occasion members of the committee negotiate with medical providers to reduce their billing; there is a sub-committee of Viking contractors who may take on the task of building or remodeling a person's house if necessary; further we have Viking dentists to whom we



refer patients who request assistance with these types of problems.

Once the Charity Committee has considered a specific request and come to a conclusion, the committee presents the information to the Gold Cuppers in the form of a resolution for action. The Gold Cuppers then consider the request and the information reported by the Committee in making their decision.

The Charity Committee meets monthly on the first Tuesday of the Month prior to the Gold Cupper meetings. Every Viking and Fledgling is encouraged to bring information about potential beneficiaries to the attention of the Charity Committee or any one of its members.

Children's Christmas Party

Probably the biggest job all year, and certainly the most emotionally powerful event the Viking's host each year is the Children's Christmas Party. The event, hosted in early December at the Royal Scandinavian Inn, provides a Christmas Party for special needs children, their caregivers, and families. This celebration provides lunch, a musical group singing

Christmas songs, a special visit with Santa Claus, and a Christmas gift which has been specifically selected based on the medical needs of each individual special needs child.

All Vikings are part of hosting the party. We serve as bus-boys, waiters, photographers, Santa's assistance, etc., all with an eye toward making the experience for our guests as good as it gets. By acclimation each year, the Vikings declare that this event is the most heartwarming part of being a Viking.

The Children's Christmas Party committee works all year long in making certain that all special needs children in the valley are invited to the event, and that each one receives his or her special gift from the Vikings.

Viking Christmas Party

Each year in December the Vice Chief hosts the annual Holiday (Christmas) Party. This event, the second of two to which women are invited, is as fancy as Vikings get (usually coat & tie). We gather together as a camp and celebrate the year, the season and look forward to the New Year.

Deats Ranch BBQ Committee

Clearly the best attended social event during on the Viking calendar is the annual barbeque held in August at the Deats Ranch. As the name implies it is an outdoor BBQ mixed with cocktails, entertainment, a horse-shoe tournament, and socializing. Traditionally, the Viking Barbeque Team runs the food line and the Chief arranges for others on the committee to handle all other details.

Gatekeeper Committee

As was suggested earlier, all Fledgling are automatically on the Gatekeeper Committee and may be called upon (and should volunteer) to assist with the gate keeping functions at all meetings and events. Again, this is a good way to meet other Vikings and to help remember their names.

LA Liaison/Invasion Committee

This committee is responsible for communications with the LA and Orange County Viking Camps. On those occasions when joint camp functions are planned, this committee is foremost in make those arrangements and communicating with the Solvang Camp.



Annually, the LA Camp "invades" the Santa Ynez Valley for a weekend of revelry. Again, this committee is key to assisting the LA Camp with their arrangements and extending appropriate invitations to members of the Solvang Camp.

Membership Committee

Among the committees with the most to do is the membership committee. Various members of this committee are responsible for receiving and processing new applications for membership; for maintaining the Viking Website; for publishing the annual Membership Roster; for sending out broadcast information on monthly Gold Cupper and Member meetings; and for publishing the

Quarterly Viking Newsletter, *The Rune Stone*.

Publicity Committee

As the name implies, the publicity committee is instrumental in working with newspapers and radio stations in broadcasting information about the Vikings and Viking events. Publicity is developed by the committee and approved by the Chief before it is released to the public.

Strategic Planning Committee

From time-to-time, as deemed necessary by the Gold Cuppers, the Strategic Planning Committee is called into session to consider specific long-range issues and to recommend directions on such issues to the Gold Cuppers.

Summer Party Committee

The Chief annually hosts the Viking Summer Party. It is a mid-year celebration of Viking fun and fellowship to which women are invited. The evening includes a cocktail hour, dinner, entertainment, and lots of fellowship.

Viking Endowment Committee

The Viking Endowment Fund was created in 2000 with a deposit of \$3,180 as a foundation upon which future financing and charitable work could be based. As with many such endowment funds the Viking Endowment accepts contributions and pledges from Vikings and the public at large in an effort to build the corpus of the fund. Earnings on the principal each year are available, as needed, to the Viking operating fund for philanthropic projects and/or needs, but the principal itself cannot be used.

Vikings are encouraged to make annual contributions to the Endowment and are offered an opportunity to make contributions to the Endowment "in memoriam" when one of our Viking brothers makes the transition to "Valhalla." In 2007, the Viking Endowment Fund balance broke through the One Half Million Dollar ceiling and continues to grow as a tool for future Viking works.

The Endowment Fund Committee formulates and reviews the investment strategy and works with a professional investment management firm to actually manage the funds. The Endowment Fund Committee

meets monthly on the 2nd Tuesday each month and conducts an annual retreat to review investment strategy.

Viking Float Committee

Clearly out most unusual committee is the Viking Float. Seafaring adventurers that we have historically been, the Solvang Vikings adhere to that tradition by sailing their own Viking Ship in many civic parades and festivals. They include the Independence Day Parade of July 4th each year and the Danish Days parade held each September.

Fledglings are encouraged to ride on the Viking Ship Float during these parades, but never fear, you will have plenty of company from Vikings who also ride the ship. And, like any other Viking gathering, it turns into as much of a fellowship event as it is a civic event.

Honors and Traditions

Annual Induction

Between cocktails and dinner at the January meeting annually, the Viking Officers for the coming year are inducted. At this ceremony which

includes both outgoing and incoming officers the new Chief and Vice-Chief are installed in their positions.

Bi-Annual Initiation

Twice a year, once in May and again in November, six Fledglings are initiated into Viking membership. The six chosen are based upon the date they became Fledglings and their completion of the expectations of Fledglings as expressed later in this handbook.

The rituals observed during the initiation are intended to remain private to the Vikings. Vikings never discuss with non-Vikings their harrowing experiences during initiation, but nevertheless every other Viking has had the same adventure during his own initiation.

Glass Retirement Ceremonies

On those sad occasions during the year when we lose a Viking Brother, we take an opportunity as a group to honor his passing. We join together, in subdued atmosphere, and are giving the opportunity to express individual memories about our fallen brother. At the end of the observance, an appropriate Viking is chosen to retire

the glass of the fallen Viking by throwing the glass into the fireplace where it is consumed in flames and joins our brother in Valhalla.

The Viking Axe

On occasion, most frequently but not necessarily during the Viking Holiday Party, the Chief may choose to award a Viking Axe to a member Viking. The awarding of an axe is recognition by the Chief of exemplary service in some manner or fashion to the Viking cause. It is the highest individual award a Viking may receive and the axe is generally engraved and mounted on a plaque which is displayed proudly in the Viking's home or office.

Viking Fundraisers

The Vikings are coming.

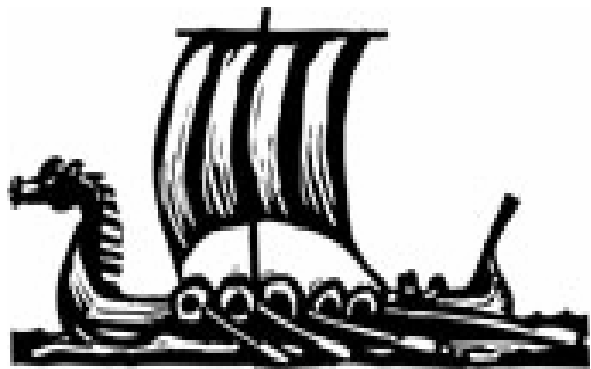
The Vikings are coming.

The Vikings are coming.

These words, in ever increasing font size usually start to appear in the local newspaper months in advance of a Viking Fundraiser. The words, by themselves, have come to be understood in our local community that there is a need and that the

Vikings are seeking help in solving that need. Viking fundraisers have historically been successful because they are not regular recurring events, but rather fundraisers intended to address a specific need in the community.

All Vikings and Fledglings are expected to help and participate in all Viking Fundraising Events.



Singing Han Skal Leve

As a Fledgling you will quickly find, that Vikings frequently break out in signing "*Han Skal Leve*" at most of our official functions and events. The song, sung in Danish, is a toasting song the story of which goes something like *May you live forever; may you live forever; may you live forever, hurrah.*

Hurrah, hurrah. That was a very good toast! Hurrah, hurrah. That was a very good toast!

May you live forever; may you live forever, may you live forever, hurrah!

You should take some time to memorize the words so that you can

join in on the signing and the fellowship.

Other Items

The Dress Code

Consistent with other areas, the Vikings don't like rules and regulations. We do, however, have customs that we seem to follow. For our monthly dinner meetings we normally wear slacks, a button down shirt, and a blue blazer. During the hot months of summer, the blazer is frequently dispensed with.

The Viking Website

You can get additional information about the Vikings on the internet by typing "vikingcharitiesinc.com". This website is maintained by the Membership Committee. Once you become a Viking the Membership Committee Chair can give you the information to access the "members only" portion of the site.

The Membership Roster

Annually, the Membership Committee publishes and "Membership Roster and Calendar of Events." This booklet is a host of information and you can get

one from anyone on the membership committee or from the Treasurer.

In the Roster you will find a variety of information including:

- Calendar of Events
- Viking Mission Statement
- List of Officers (Solvang, Los Angeles, and Orange County)
- List of Council of Chiefs
- List of Gold Cuppers
- List of Committee Chairs
- List of Fledgling Expectations
- Photo Roster of Vikings of Solvang
- Historical List of Projects and Recipients
- Endowment Fund Balance Report
- List of Contributions in honor of Fallen Vikings
- In Memoriam List of Fallen Vikings
- *Han Skal Leve*

The Rune Stone

A relatively new addition to Viking efforts to communicate is our quarterly newsletter *The Rune Stone*, The newsletter which comes out in May, August, November, and February is delivered by email to each Viking with that capability, and a few printed copies are available for those who do not. *The Rune Stone* is published by members of the Personnel Committee and all Vikings and Fledglings are encouraged to contribute items for publication.

Getting Involved

Being a Viking means a lot of different things to people. Some like to participate by writing checks while others might rather give of themselves. Regardless, there is a place in the Vikings for everyone.



But Fledglings should realize and take note, that Vikings is not a group that will put a lot of pressure on you to get involved and get active. We let you get as active as you want whether that is writing checks or getting into

leadership positions or somewhere in between.

If you want to participate on any of the committees in Vikings it is up to you to let someone know. There are Vikings who have complained that they have never been asked to do things, but when asked have admitted they never suggested to anyone that they wanted to get more involved. Leadership requires initiative - if you want a leadership role in Vikings, show some initiative by letting people know!

Our Members

Our members come from all walks of life, religion, politics, and business. We are inclusive by our nature and do not judge anyone against standards in these areas.

The Cost

Being a Viking is not about the cost, but of course there is some cost involved. Vikings and Fledglings alike are expected to make a minimum annual contribution the amount of

which is set by the Gold Cuppers and does change from time-to-time. In addition, there is a fee for the dinner meetings due at the door before dinner, the rate for which is principally made up of cost for dinner.

Vikings are encouraged to give at other times, i.e., for the Children's Christmas Party, when a Viking passes, and to the Endowment Fund.

And, of course, during Viking Fund-raisers Vikings are encouraged both to help physically as well as financially.

Our Expectations

Fledgling Vikings are expected to:

- Make an annual contribution by March 18th each year to Viking Charities, Inc. in the amount of \$200;
- Attend monthly dinner meetings;
- Assist as requested with the Gatekeeper responsibilities;
- Ride on the Viking Ship during public "sailing" events;
- Assist by attending and/or contributing to all Viking Events and Fund Raising activities such

as the Christmas Party for Special Needs Children and any other charitable activity undertaken by Viking Charities;

- Alert the Charity Committee of any person in our community who may need assistance based on medical needs and financial limitations;
- Consider supporting the Viking Endowment Fund through a contribution, pledge, bequest or other vehicle, including memorial contributions to honor fallen fellow Vikings;
- Learn the words to "*Han Skal Leve*" as printed on the back cover of the Viking Membership Roster

Specific Tasks to complete

Fledgling Name:

1. Review this handbook with your Viking Sponsor:

(Sponsor's Signature)

4. Discuss Charity Committee with Charity Committee Chair

(Charity Committee Chair Signature)

2. Discuss membership matters with Membership Chair:

(Membership Committee Chair Signature)

5. Discuss Viking Organization with Vice Chief:

(Vice Chief's Signature)

3. Discuss Endowment Fund with Endowment Committee Chair:

(Endowment Committee Chair Signature)

6. Attend Fledgling Briefing in advance of initiation. Ready for initiation:

(Chief's Signature)