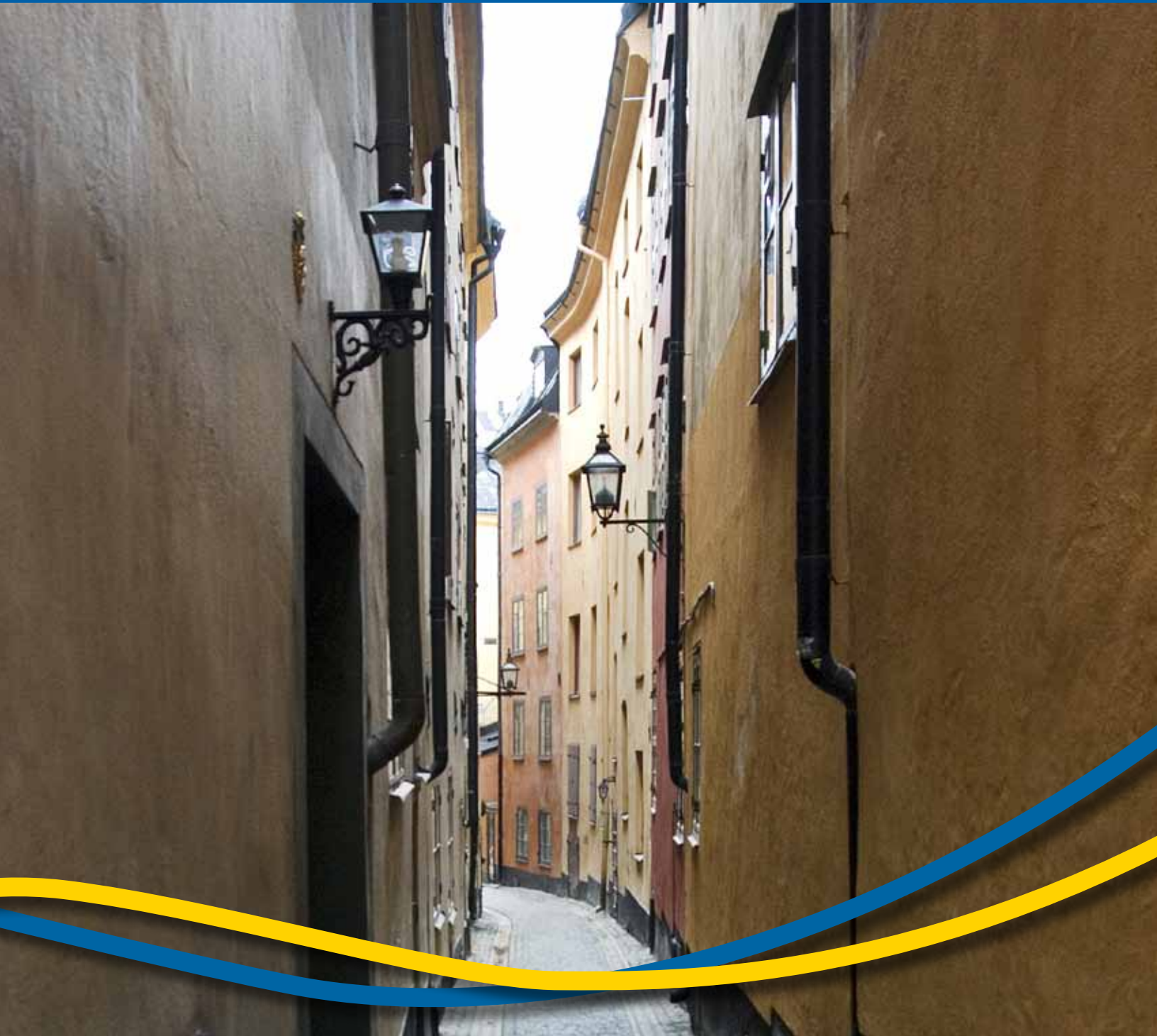




SACC -TX Newsletter

Vol. 17 Number 1 • April/May 2009



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The program is run together with SACC-TX and you will share your trainee with the local SACC-TX office. The trainee will spend on average four days out of every five-day week at your company.

The costs are: a startup cost of around \$1200, plus a reasonable hourly salary. If you are interested, send an e-mail to the SACC-TX office at office@sacctx.com.



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Fellow Texans,

While the year 2008 was a terrible year for the world economy it was a good year for the state of Texas as well as for SACC Texas. We celebrated our 25th Anniversary with a 3-day long party in 3 cities, Houston, Dallas and Austin, together with the Swedish Ambassador to the USA, Jonas Hafstrom and his wife Eva.

The Texas economy held up well thanks to high prices on oil and natural gas during much of the year. The SACC Texas economy also strengthened considerably and we will therefore be able to continue our efforts to increase trade between Sweden and Texas in a strong way without having to cut back and save to meet our budget goals.

“Change” was the mantra of 2008, not only for President Obama, but also for us and we have changed our Internet home page provider to a new one more in line with today’s and tomorrow’s SACC Texas needs. Our e-mail provider has also been replaced with a new and technically up to date service provider. Both of these changes have been done without changes either to our home page or e-mail addresses, while saving us money at the same time.

Let me now move to what’s new in 2009. As Kristin Carlzon, our previous trainee and office manager left, Karin Fedriksson, a student at UT in Austin, took her place. We thank Kristin for taking us through the busy autumn of 2008 and welcome Karin to our team.

In 2009 our Vice President in Dallas Peter Kristenssen and our Vice President in Houston Marlene McLane also decided to leave their director positions. I know how much they worked with the 25th Anniversary celebrations and all the activities during 2008, so SACC Texas owes them both a big THANK YOU for their work for the chamber. They will be replaced as Vice Presidents by Bo Bostrom in Dallas and Sarah Sweet in Houston.

Both Sarah and Bo were previous directors of SACC Texas so I know that they will continue the good work. New on the board of directors for 2009 are: Jonas Kihlberg, Margret Kollen and Christopher Westerlund in Houston and Michael Skelton in Dallas. Leaving the board are: Colin Clarke and Desiree Killen in Houston and Tina Klintmalm in Dallas. We thank them as well for many years of dedicated work for SACC Texas.

The 2009 SACC USA E-days event will take place in Savannah, Georgia, April 20-22, and will be the only major SACC USA event this year. If there is still time to register I suggest that you do so. It will be a great event.

Finally, as the US Government is pumping money into the financial system, analysts think that this could be negative for the dollar and good for the Euro. The Swedish krona is not tied to the Euro but it does move in step with it. So this could be a good time to move some money to Sweden, maybe to buy stocks in a Swedish company interested in doing business in Texas.

Bertil Fredstrom

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NEW MEMBERS

Business: _____

San Domingo Ranch and Dudley T. Dougherty Conference Center

This historic Texas Ranch and Conference center offers a great opportunity for the right individual to form a training program suited to his or her interests. The intern/trainee should have business and marketing knowledge and the main task will be to create and implement a small business plan for the ranch. This position requires

onsite residence in a lovely cabin and a ranch vehicle will be provided.

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Symsoft helps mobile operators to increase their profit by developing, providing and implementing leading real-time systems for charging, messaging and IP services. The challenge is to enhance the competitiveness of our customers with innovative, secure and cost-efficient solutions.

Individual: _____

Austin

Molly Anderson, Mary Patricia Dougherty, Carsten Groenvall, and Petra Volmsfjord

Dallas

Mikael T. Calais and Alexandra Dyckman

Houston

Jonas Kihlberg, Margaret Kollen, Martha Nielsen, Robert Sorbet, and Rune Tenganhn

NEW SACC TEXAS OFFICE MANAGER AND TRAINEE

Karin Fredriksson



Career goal:
To work within the field of historic preservation and national heritage to help preserve our history for coming generations.

Education: Bachelor's degree in History and Art History from Uppsala University.

Email: peccatoribus@hotmail.com

Growing up on the northern coast of Sweden, I felt early on that there was more to the world than the village next door. So after finishing high school I moved to Edinburgh, Scotland to work as an au pair and get a bit of academia. Living in an English speaking country was an unforgettable experience.

After 3 years at Uppsala University and a double major bachelor's degree, I was offered to participate in an exchange program at the University of Texas at Austin. I arrived last August to study at the School of

Architecture, and so far it has been beyond my expectations. My focus is Historic Preservation and Materials Conservation, which will help me broaden my knowledge in the field of humanities.

I thoroughly enjoy being a part of the SACC Texas organization, and during the past months I have met many interesting people and gained useful knowledge for the future. Before returning to grad school in the fall, I hope to make the best out of the opportunities I have been given and enjoy Texas at its best!

CHANGES MADE TO U.S. MEDICAL SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

According to a recent client alert from the law offices of Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy, LLP, the Department of Health and Human Services has published an interim final rule that could make significant changes to the medical screening requirements for foreign nationals seeking to enter the United States or seeking to adjust their status to permanent resident inside the country.

The rule amends the definition of "communicable diseases," by adding two new categories of diseases - (1) quarantinable diseases designated by Presidential Executive Order, and (2) diseases that qualify as a "public health emergency of international concern which require notification to the World Health Organization." Examples of diseases that may be included in these two categories include cholera, yellow fever, plague, smallpox, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), viral hemorrhagic fevers (Ebola, Lassa, Marburg), and West Nile fever.

The interim final rule will not have an immediate effect on the medical screening foreign nationals undergo in the United States to become permanent residents, but those overseas may be required to undergo additional screening and testing for specific communicable diseases.

The interim rule became effective on October 6, 2008. As of that date, HHS makes a distinction between the medical examinations performed for foreign nationals outside the United States, and those performed for foreign nationals already in the United States who are applying for adjustment of status.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

from the Honorary Consulate of Sweden in
Dallas and Houston

New passport routines

In order for you to renew your Swedish regular/5-year/
passport, you will have to travel to the Consulate General
of Sweden in New York or Los Angeles or to the Embassy of
Sweden, Washington, D.C. The application process time is
2-3 weeks. Read more at www.swedenabroad.com. You may
also apply for a new Swedish passport while visiting Sweden.
If you can't wait for your passport, usually six working days,
you can ask to have your passport sent to the Honorary
Consulate closest to you. Read more at www.polisen.se.

If you have lost your passport and need an Emergency Passport:

You are welcome to contact the Consulate of
Sweden in Houston or Dallas for more information.
Houston: 713.825.1417, houston@consulateofsweden.org
Dallas: 214.521.2312 or 972.991.8013, dallas@consulateofsweden.org,
viceconsul.dallas@gmail.com

Change of name: Please make sure that you apply for the
name change before you apply for a new passport. Read
more at www.skatteverket.se or call + 46 2 707 34 00.

**If you have a newborn baby or an older child who is not
registered in the Swedish population registry:** You need to do
a name registration/samordningsnummer application before
you can apply for a passport for your child. You can apply in
person with your family at the Honorary Consulates in Houston
or Dallas. Read more at www.swedennewyork.com/pass.

Automatic Loss of Swedish Citizenship

You lose your Swedish citizenship when you turn 22, through
statutory limitation, IF you are a Swedish citizen who (1) was
born outside Sweden, (2) has never lived in Sweden, and (3)
has not stayed in Sweden under circumstances indicating an
attachment to the country.

To avoid losing your Swedish citizenship if you were born and
still living abroad, you can apply to keep it. You must do so
before the age of 22 (apply between the age 18 -22). You do
NOT need to file an application if you have lived in Sweden
during any period of your life or if you visit Sweden regularly.
For more information, go to www.migrationsverket.se or email
migrationsverket@migrationsverket.se.

New Electronic System for Travel Authorization to the US

On January 12, 2009, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection
(CBP) introduced the Electronic System for Travel Authority
(ESTA). This system requires nationals from Visa Waiver
Program (VWP) countries like Sweden to apply online for
advance authorization before using the VWP to travel to the
U.S.

VWP travelers who do not have ESTA authorization on
or after January 12, 2009 will not be allowed to board a
U.S.-bound aircraft or ship. An ESTA application may be
completed online at <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. Once the
application is submitted, the applicant should receive a
response within seconds.



Where valuable assets are at risk

Happily it is very seldom that our transits are
put to the test. They are included as part of
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NORDIC REACH SUBSCRIPTIONS

The quarterly magazine "Nordic Reach" is no longer published in cooperation with the Swedish Council of America.

The new Swedish Council Magazine is named "Sweden & America" or "Sverige & Amerika" depending on language version.

It is from now on published together with the Swedish American Center in Karlstad, Sweden (previously Emigrantregistret).

You will continue to receive Nordic Reach as a SACC Texas membership benefit, and if you want to subscribe to the new magazine as well, please contact:

The Swedish Council of America
2600 Park Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55407

The subscription rate is \$16.00 per year, but for members of affiliated organizations, like SACC Texas, it is only \$8.00 per year.

INTRODUCING THE NEW DIRECTORS ON THE SACC-TEXAS BOARD 2009



Jonas Kihlberg

Jonas Kihlberg is the Senior Vice President of Stena Bulk Group Worldwide and Head of Stena Bulk LLC. Previous to Stena Bulk, Mr. Kihlberg worked with the world's third largest independent trading house as Manager Chartering with Trafigura AG, Vice President of Skaugen Petrotrans; as well as various executive roles within the Stena Bulk and StenTex Group of Companies.



Margret Kollen

Margret Kollen is the Manager of the Houston IKEA Business Department, a commercial consulting and design service that assists customers throughout the U.S. as well as internationally. Ms. Kollen was born in Norrtälje, Sweden. She earned a degree in Advertising and Window Dressing from Kopmanna Institutet in Stockholm, Sweden in 1976 and a degree in Interior Design from the University of Houston in 1995.



Michael Skelton

is currently working at EstablishUS, an international consulting company whose charter is to assist foreign technology companies launch their North American business that he formed in 2008. His background includes being the President, CEO and General Manager of several software companies. Mike Skelton has a degree in Business Administration from Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan.



Christopher Westerlund

is currently the Director of External Relations for Young Professionals in Energy. Previous experience includes: Nordea Bank, Stena Bulk and Medikus. Born and raised in Sweden, Christopher is married to a native Houstonian. He completed his Master of Science in Advanced Finance from the School of Business Economics and Law at Göteborg University.

THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD

When thinking about the future, it is fashionable to be pessimistic. Yet the evidence unequivocally belies such pessimism. Over the past centuries, humanity's lot has improved dramatically - in the developed world, where it is rather obvious, but also in the developing world, where life expectancy has more than doubled in the past 100 years.

Malnutrition has dropped from 50% in 1950 to 17% today, and poverty from 50% to 25%. Access to clean drinking water has gone up from 30% in 1970 to 80% today, while illiteracy has dropped from 80% to 20%. Consider this: The most pessimistic UN predictions expect the average Bangladeshi in 2100 to be as rich as the average Dutchman is today.

In the rich world, the environmental situation has improved dramatically. In the United States, the most important environmental indicator, particulate air pollution, has been cut by more than half since 1955, rivers and coastal waters have dramatically improved, and forests are increasing. And these trends are generally shared by all developed countries.

Yet we constantly fear that the future will overwhelm us, though this often comes from faulty analysis. We worry about the seemingly ever-increasing number of natural catastrophes. Yet this is mainly a consequence of CNN — we see many more, but the number is roughly constant, and we manage to deal much better with them over time.

Globally, the death rate from catastrophes has dropped about fifty-fold over the past century. We also worry that global warming will increase flooding and hurricane damage. And yes, sea levels will rise by up to two feet over the coming century. But we must remember that over the last 150 years, sea levels rose one foot, and nobody noticed. We adapted.

This underscores our need to start thinking smartly about challenges to our natural environment. Often our intuition will focus on the spectacular problems like climate change or deforestation, but that is not necessarily the best place to intervene. Silent and dispersed problems are often much more important.

The main environmental challenge of the 21st century is poverty. When you don't know where your next meal is coming from, it's hard to consider the environment 100 years down the line. When your kids are starving, you will slash-and-burn the rain forest; when you're rich, you'll be a Web designer and vote green.

The single most important environmental problem in the world today is indoor air pollution, causing about 1.5 million deaths annually. It is the result of poor people cooking and heating their homes with dung and cardboard. But the solution is not environmental — to certify dung — but rather economic: to make these people rich enough to afford kerosene.

How do we make a better world? This question was answered by the Copenhagen Consensus project. Eight of the world's top economists (including five Nobel laureates) established a global priority list based on elaborate assessments by 50 leading specialist economists.

At the top of the list is preventing malnutrition, followed by free trade, vaccinations, and agricultural R&D. These are the areas in which we can do the most good per dollar for the world. Cutting CO2 to combat climate change, despite all the media attention, came at the bottom, because it costs a great deal and does little good. The future of the world will be much better than the past. The trick is to worry about the right things first.



*Bjorn Lomborg, Adjunct Professor at the Copenhagen Business School, is the author of *The Skeptical Environmentalist* and *Cool It*. He was recently appointed one of the world's 75 most influential people of the 21st century by *Esquire Magazine*, 2008 as well as one of the "50 people who could save the planet" by *UK Guardian*, 2008.*

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AROUND SWEDISH AMERICA IN 365 DAYS

By: Anders Neumuller, Editor and Honorary Consul of Sweden in Vancouver, Canada



Ever since I took over as Editor of Swedish Press I have wanted to make a trip through Swedish America. There are so many places where Swedes settled and left markers of all kinds, from the base camp where the Viking's first landed at L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland to Ann-Margret's handprints outside the Mann Chinese Theatre in West Hollywood. There are virtually thousands of Swedish landmarks worth visiting.

Then I had a reality check. I simply do not have the time to carry out this fun project; it will have to wait until I am retired. So now we are on to the next best thing. Thanks to modern technology we are going to do a virtual "Around Swedish America in 365 Days" tour.

The Swedish American trip of a lifetime took off on New Year's Day in celebration of Swedish Press' 80th anniversary this year. The starting point was the little town of Lund on the West Coast of Canada that was founded in 1889 by Karl and Fredrik Thulin from the university town of Lund in southern Sweden.

You can read every installment of the rest of this interesting trip on the "travel blog" at www.nordicway.com. Each day during the whole of 2009 a new place will pop up on the Google map with a story of a Swede or a Swedish endeavor.

When completed it will form the most complete and fun documentation of the most important Swedish points of interest in the U.S.A. and Canada. Best of all, "Around Swedish America in 365 Days" is free and will remain at NordicWay.com long after the trip is completed.

The popular site also contains a lot of other information about the Nordic countries, a calendar with Swedish American events and lots of material from Swedish Press and its sister publication Scandinavian Press.

This is going to be a trip of a lifetime and I invite all readers

of the SACC Texas Newsletter to point out places we simply must visit. Please write or email anders@nordicway.com and help us document Swedish America in a way nobody has ever done before. I think that this will be a great legacy of the only Swedish monthly in North America!



Scandinavian Press publishes news from all the Nordic countries and from Swedish Press. Founded in 1929, it is the only monthly magazine in English with news from Sweden. You can read more about the magazines - with subscribers in every US state and Canadian province - on their www.NordicWay.com site.

SWEDISH AGENCY VINNOVA AND RESEARCHERS FROM SWEDISH UNIVERSITIES IN AUSTIN

March 15-17, a delegation of Swedish policy makers and researchers visited Austin. They were accompanied by Karin Hovlin and Martin Wikström from the Swedish Office of Growth Policy Studies in Los Angeles and Washington. The program started with a dinner together with SACC Texas. Anders Nilsson held a presentation about the current economic crisis in the US, and how Texas had been affected.

The delegation met with Dell Computers, the "Wireless Networking & Communications" and "Austin Technology Incubator" groups from the University of Texas, and representatives from the Office of the Governor of Texas.



Photo: From left, Anders Nilsson (Vice President SACC Central Texas), Karin Hovlin (Senior Analyst, Consulate General of Sweden, Los Angeles), Bertil Fredström (President SACC Texas), and Ulf Blomqvist (Head of Dept, Services & Applied IT, Vinnova)

GOLF TOURNAMENT IN HOUSTON

The weather gods were on our side, March 23, 2009, when we kicked off the 6th Annual Scandinavian Golf Tournament in Houston. Approx. 100 players showed up for a fun day on the beautiful and challenging Augusta Pines golf course. Participation was great considering the difficult economic times.

Bring Logistics Inc., represented by their President, Sten Svendsen, was the main sponsor. We thank them for their generous support and their bright green flags along the front of the club house brought an extra touch to the event. Other sponsors including StatoilHydro, Continental Airlines, BMW, MCT Brattberg, Cyrus One, IKEA and others who contributed to make the event a huge success.

The tournament was a competition between the different teams but it was also a friendly competition between the Scandinavian countries. This year Sweden won the competition with the MCT Brattberg team with its Scottish scratch player Colin Clarke, Robert Sorbet President of MCT Brattberg Inc., Michael Bell Mustang Engineering and Nick Hartle of Sheffield Forgemasters. We congratulate them to a fantastic job.

Brian Williams won the Longest Drive, Carl Condon won the Straightest drive competition and Jacob Brechan won Closest to Pin. Due to the very windy conditions nobody succeeded in getting a "Hole in One" and winning the BMW sponsored by MCT Brattberg, but we hope for better luck next year.

The day ended with a nice BBQ dinner, awards and lots of door prizes. To mention a few there were first class tickets from Continental Airlines, a weekend in a BMW, golf equipment and much, much more.

Top Right: The winning team from MCT Brattberg. From left, Colin Clarke, Robert Sorbet, Michael Bell and Nick Hartle.

Bottom Right: From left, Sten Svendsen from Bring Logistics Inc and main sponsor, Jim McKeon from Continental Airlines and presenter of 2 first class tickets, Carl Condon winner of the tickets.



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SACC-TEXAS CELEBRATES 25 YEARS!

In 1983 the Swedish American Trade Association (SATA) was formed in Houston. And although the original organization existed in name but a few years, the concepts, interests, and goals of the core-founding group - to promote Swedish-Texas trade, was the origin of what became The Swedish American Chamber of Commerce in Houston (SACC) in 1988.



On November 9, 10 and 11, 2008, The Swedish Ambassador Jonas Hafstrom and his wife Eva helped SACC Texas celebrate its 25th Anniversary in a party that stretched over four days and three cities. As this was the first official visit to Texas by the Ambassador the program was both deep and wide.

AUSTIN

When Ambassador Hafstrom and his wife Eva arrived in Austin on Sunday November 11, a quick trip to lake Travis was all that the program allowed for before the festivities started.

A dinner party was planned at the distinguished 1886 Driskill Hotel in the heart of Austin, where over seventy guests awaited the ambassador to mingle, eat, and listen to some of the best music Texas has to offer.

The dinner and the program was sponsored by Austin - Peel & Son, Texas Sun & Shade, Patman Cattle Co. and IKEA Round Rock



Photo above: Mrs. Eva Hafstrom, Nik White, Hakan Thyr, John Berry and Ambassador Jonas Hafstrom mingling before the dinner at the Driskill Hotel in Austin.



Photo above: Main sponsor Billy Peel seated between Rodney Johnson and Rodney Rolston.



Photo above: Ann Wiggins, Anders Nilsson VP SACC Central Texas and Bertil Fredström President SACC Texas.

DALLAS

Early Monday morning, November 10, the visit continued with a flight from Austin to Dallas to meet with Governor Rick Perry.

This was followed by a lunch at The Fairmont Hotel where the Award of Excellence in Community Service from the Dallas Historical Society was given to Dr. Göran Klintmalm, Chairman and Chief of Baylor Regional Transplant Institute, Dallas.

After lunch, the Ambassador had a meeting with Mr. Richard Fisher, President and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, and Pia M. Orrenius, Senior Economist of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.

Before the evening's western style barbeque, there was enough time left to visit the Pioneer Park and the 6th Floor Museum from where President John F. Kennedy (JFK) was shot.

In the evening, seventy SACC Texas members and guests met up with the Ambassador and his wife Eva at Eddie Deen's Ranch to enjoy classic Texas brisket, sausages, ribs and all the trimmings, while listening to real live country music.

The dinner and the program in Dallas was sponsored by Ericsson Inc., Tetra Pak Inc., IKEA Frisco, the Klintmalm family, and Practical Advertising.

Tuesday, November 11, started out with a breakfast with Peter Kristensson, VP SACC Dallas.

The Ambassador then had a meeting with Mikael Stromquist, the Ericsson Executive Vice President and General Manager of Broadband, Internet and Media, and Nils Rix, the Vice President for Marketing and Strategy. Ericsson, Inc. also gave a tour of their U.S. headquarters in Plano north of Dallas.

The Dallas visit ended with a lunch with representatives from Oncor/ABB.



Top Right: SACC Texas in Dallas, from left; Tomas Lindqvist, Bertil Fredstrom, Tina Klintmalm, Ambassador Jonas Hafstrom, Bo Bostrom, Peter Kristenssen and Per Nylin

Middle Right: Eva Hafstrom together with BJ Kempf, Mary Dryselius and Helen Hammer

Bottom Right: Honorary consuls: Jan Dryselius, Tina Klintmalm and Garry Johnson.

Bottom Left: The Ambassador in the middle of a western barbeque with his new Stetson hats and the Dallas Stars signed Hockey Jersey with the number 25 for "SACC Texas 25 Years"!

HOUSTON

After a short flight from Dallas to Houston in the afternoon, it was time to meet close to one hundred SACC Houston members and guests at the Petroleum Club on the 44th floor of one of the sky scrapers in downtown Houston.

Ambassador Hafstrom was honored with the title "Honorary Citizen of Houston" by City Council Member Mike Sullivan, representing the Major of Houston.

Ambassador Hafstrom then officially proclaimed the Swedish Honorary Consul in Houston, Jan Dryselius to the official title of "Swedish Honorary General Consul"; a title very few have ever been appointed to.

Ending the evening, there was a drawing for a free weekend as a guest at the new Embassy "House of Sweden" in Washington DC and the lucky winner was Klas Eskilsson from Houston.

The dinner and the program in Houston was graciously underwritten by nanoTox Inc. and Stena Bulk Inc.



Top Right: Council Member Mike Sullivan, representing the Major of Houston, appointing Ambassador Jonas Hafstrom as an "Honorary Citizen of Houston"!

Bottom Right: Astronaut Christer Fuglesang giving the German American Chamber an update on the Swedish NASA contributions.

Left: Urban Lundberg, Chairman Elect SACC USA, delivering extraordinary letters of appreciation to past Presidents of SACC TX for their dedicated leadership, here to Astrid Marklund.

LETTER FROM THE SACC TX FOUNDER: GUNNAR T. NILSSON

Dear Friends,

Twenty-five years ago a few of us got together to explore the possibility of forming an organization that could provide supplementary services to the, at that time, Swedish Trade Commission covering the southwestern United States. Our objective was to bridge a gap missing in the exchange of information for services and opportunities between the United States and Sweden. Furthermore, it was our desire, among those of us that represented Swedish industry in Texas, to create a forum for exchange as well as facilitate the distribution of information of a common nature to the expatriate community.

While having had a modest start we expanded our area of interest by initially cooperating with the various other Nordic Chambers of Commerce in order to achieve a certain stature within the business community. This cooperation was expanded to include the European Community and activities were offered to its members on a regular basis.

Today, 25 years after the initial formation of one of the first Chambers in the Houston area, our organization has a proven record of performance thanks to a dedicated group of leaders and sponsors who dutifully carried forward the original concept. I can only look back to our initial effort and say that we can be proud of having achieved what we set out to do.

I congratulate all of you for having accomplished this great task. I wish you all the best of continued prosperity in driving our goals forward and regret not being able to be with you on this commemorative date.

Sincerely Yours,

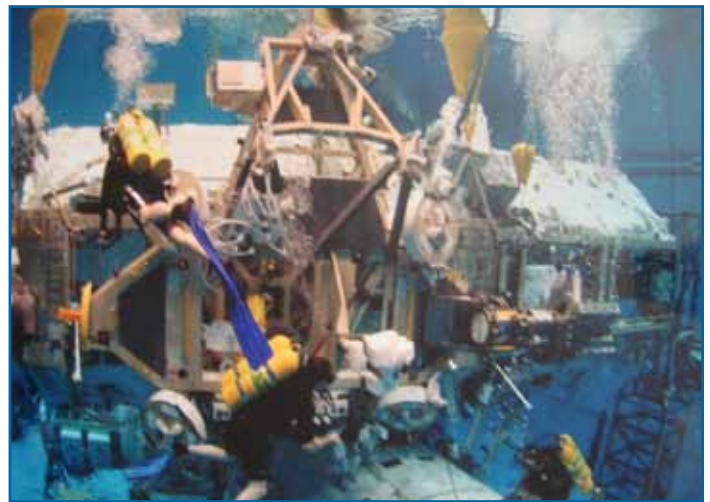
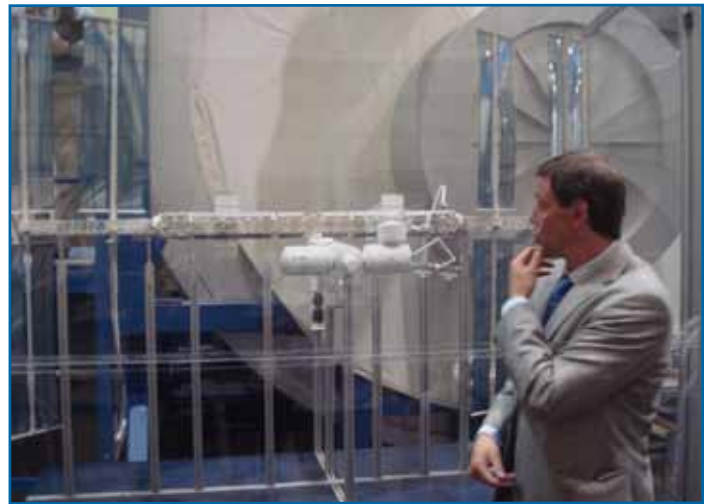
Gunnar T. Nilsson

NASA

The final leg of the ambassador's visit to Texas was spent at the Johnson Space Center where a small group of guests were guided around by the Swedish astronaut Christer Fugelsang.

The entire celebration was over after lunch as the ambassador and his wife started their trip back to Washington DC.

Photo on Right: Ambassador Jonas Hafstrom and his wife together with the Swedish Astronaut Christer Fugelsang, Swedish Honorary General Consul Jan Dryselius, and SACC Texas guests at the Johnson Space Center in Houston.



Top Left: SACC Houston Vice President Marlene McLane inside a full scale model of the Space Shuttle cockpit.

Middle Right: Our Swedish Astronaut Christer Fuglesang in front of a model of the International Space Station.

Bottom Left: Ambassador Hafstrom and his wife together with Christer Fuglesang inside a larger model of the International Space Station.

Bottom Right: A picture from inside the antigravity water tank where the Astronauts practice space walks.

SACC TEXAS EVENTS

Mid winter cocktail party in Austin

SACC Texas in Austin started of 2009 with a Winter Cocktail Party on January 24 at the lovely house of Bengt and Gudrun Sköldeberg. Twenty members and guests enjoyed the wine and home made snacks offered.



Photo above: Elisa Holmertz, Valeri Armstrong, Elisabeth Kihlberg, Bertil Fredstrom and David Erickson discussing the 2009 program for SACC Texas.

Swedish Cultural Counselor visits Austin for SXSW and Nordic Film Fests in the U.S.

Mats Widbom, Cultural Counselor at the Swedish Embassy, visited Austin, Texas on March 19-21, 2009 to attend SXSW.

Mats also met with SACC Texas Board members and Anne Mykkelbust from the Norwegian Embassy to discuss the growing number of Nordic Film Fests in the U.S.

For the past years, Nordic Film Fests in the U.S. have taken place in Los Angeles and Austin. SACC Texas is actively involved in the Austin Nordic Film Fest. This coming year sees the advent of new Nordic Film Fests in Seattle, Minneapolis, and Denver. The Nordic Film Fests meeting covered the increasing collaboration between SACC, the Nordic Film fests, the Nordic Embassies, and the Nordic Film Institutes.



Photo above: Mats Widbom (Swedish Embassy) and Anne Mykkelbust (Norwegian Embassy) meet with Bertil Fredstrom, Ben Skoldeberg, and Nikolas White of SACC Texas.

South by Southwest (SXSW) in Austin

SXSW, which takes place annually in Austin, is one of the largest Music and Media Conference & Festivals in the nation.

This year, 52 Scandinavian bands played at SXSW. Eighteen Swedish bands, including Peter Bjorn and John, Theresa Andersson, and Sofia Talvik, played the stages in music venues all over Austin.

To kick off Sweden's SXSW presence, SACC Texas and Export Music Sweden hosted a happy hour in downtown Austin on Thursday evening followed by a Swedish Bands day party hosted by Export Music Sweden on Friday.

The SACC Texas happy hour was sponsored by Stockholm Krystal Vodka, Boundless Networks and MillerCoors.

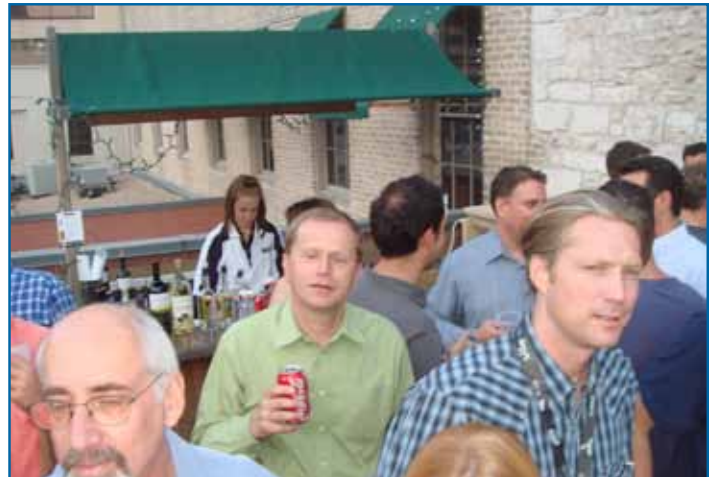


Photo above: Two of SACC Texas board members, Henrik Johansson who was hosting the party, and Bengt Skoldeberg, seen mingling with the guest from Sweden.

SACC Texas Annual Meeting in Houston

This year The Swedish Club in Houston invited SACC Texas to hold our annual meeting in conjunction with their traditional Craw Fish Party in March.

After one hour of official business, the SACC members mingled with the over seventy other guests for delicious and freshly cooked batches of craw fish, cat fish and chicken.

Jan Dryseluis, the Swedish Honorary General Consul, led the singing of the snaps songs.



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SACC-TEXAS EVENTS

Customary Swedish Holiday Party in Houston

On December 11, 2008 the annual Swedish Holiday Party was held in Houston at the charming home of long-time member Mr. Richard Condon.

While the arriving guests sipped on glögg and an assortment of wines, the renowned Swedish Chef Magnus Hansson prepared a traditional Swedish Christmas dinner for a full house of 60+ members and guests.

Prior to dinner seating, The Houston board members were recognized for their dedicated work of ensuring a highly successful year for the chamber. The chamber also presented a gift to the Condon residence as a thank you for hosting the event.

Tremendous thanks go to Champion Fiberglass, especially Mr. Goran Haag, for sponsoring this highly popular holiday party.



Photo above: Astrid Marklund, Bo Birgerud and our new trainee Karin Fredriksson at the Houston Christmas Party.



Photo on left: The Christmas Party Chef, Magnus Hansson

Dallas Visit by the EU Ambassador to the USA

The United States and the European Union have collaborated for over 60 years on key issues that range from promoting democracy and human rights to fighting weapons proliferation and terrorism.

An alliance further strengthened by their extensive bilateral trade relationship, the E.U. and the U.S. stand apart as the 1st and 2nd largest economies in the world. As the global economic crisis takes its toll, even this powerful partnership has been challenged.

E.U. officials, led by His Excellency John Bruton, voiced serious concern over the possible inclusion of protectionist measures in America's second stimulus package.

Arguing that free trade and open markets, not isolationism, are the means to survive this recession, Ambassador Bruton discussed how the E.U. and U.S. must lead the movement to restore global economic stability.

Who is John Bruton:

After starting his career in the Irish Parliament at the age of 22, Ambassador Bruton went on to serve as the Prime Minister of Ireland from 1994 to 1997.

Ambassador Bruton sat on the caucus that drafted the Constitution of the European Union and enacted the Stability and Growth Pact, which made the Euro the uniform currency of the E.U.



Photo above: Jeff Fegan, CEO of DFW International Airport and World Affairs Council Board Member; His Excellency John Bruton, Ambassador of the EU to the US; Isabelle DeWulf, Executive Director of the French-American Chamber of Commerce - Dallas/Fort Worth

DID YOU KNOW THIS ABOUT TEXAS?



A flag like no other?

The Texas flag has many similarities to the Chilean Flag and people sometimes make the mistake to call the Chilean flag a "Texas flag" and vice versa.

If you take a look at the cover of the autumn issue of the SACC Texas Newsletter, you will find that event we made that mistake - or rather the vendor that sold us the Texas flag image used in our 25th anniversary logo made the mistake. It took two months before anyone discovered this and pointed out the mistake to us, and we could change it out for the correct flag.

Everything is BIG in Texas...

The Dallas-Fort Worth area has more residents - 6,145,037 - than 31 U.S. states. For example, Colorado has about 4.9 million residents. The Dallas/Fort Worth airport alone is larger than New York City's Manhattan Island.

...and it is growing...

The 1850 census recorded 213,000 people in Texas. In 1900, there were three million people, and by 1990, the population was more than 16 million. Today the population of Texas is 24 million, not including the 16 million cattle, and 70% of the Texas population lives within 200 miles of Austin.

... because it is still young!

Houston has a young population; 37 percent of Houstonians are 24 years old or younger and 34 percent are between the ages of 25 and 44.

Houston also has the most affordable housing out of the 10 most populated metropolitan areas in the U.S. Houston housing costs are 39 percent below the average of 26 U.S. urban populations of more than 1.5 million. All in all, Houston has the second lowest cost of living among major American cities.

Recession catches up with Texas

Texas ducked the worst of the economic fallout during most of 2008 much thanks to high energy prices, but the recession will hit the state in 2009 according to a new report from economists at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.

DID YOU KNOW THIS ABOUT SWEDEN?



Sweden - the least corrupt country in the world

Sweden has been ranked by Transparency International as the world's least corrupt country in the Berlin-based organization's annual report for 2008.

The index is based on perceptions of public sector corruption in 180 countries and territories among business people and country analysts. Sweden jumped four places up the table to join Denmark and New Zealand at the top, while Finland - last year's winner - slipped back to fifth. The most corrupt countries, according to the rankings, were Somalia, Iraq, Burma and Haiti.

Equality between the sexes

The Scandinavian Press in their fall 2008 issue claim that men in Sweden are now resorting increasingly to the law to fight for their rights across a wide spectrum of issues.

Hairdressers and taxis are no longer allowed to offer preferential rates to women. Young Swedish men no longer have to see even younger women waffing past club doormen while they are themselves turned away as minors. Now the entry age has to be the same for men and women. Dating services also have to charge the same for males and females!

Wide open to Capital Flow and Trade

According to Businessweek, November 10, 2008 Sweden is the third most open country when it comes to Capital flow in the world after Hong Kong and Mauritius.

The U.S. was on the twentieth place on the list just after Canada on place nineteen. When it came to low trade barriers Sweden placed on the seventh place and the US on place twenty-one.

Stockholm wins EU Green Capital Award

The Swedish Newspaper DN reported that Stockholm and Hamburg have been announced as the first cities to be named European Green Capitals, as the European Commission announced the winners of its new environmental initiative. Stockholm will be the European Green Capital in 2010, followed by Hamburg in 2011.

The commission praised Stockholm's goal of becoming entirely fossil free by 2050. It also pointed out that 95 percent of the city's inhabitants live within 300 meters of green areas "that improve the local quality of life, bringing recreation, water purification, noise reduction, and an enhancement of biodiversity and ecology."

In all, 35 cities across the European Union applied for the prestigious environmental award.

SWEDISH ECONOMY MIGHT TAKE THE LEAD

By Staffan Ivarsson

Sweden have experienced some very good years 2002-2008 with growth and stable public finance. We do have high taxes, but there have been some substantial and principally important tax cuts during the last years when the new non socialist government took over the leadership 2007. There were quick and immediate improvements for almost everybody, not least people owning more substantial amounts of property. We experienced the same fall like almost all countries this autumn/winter. The Swedish GDP drop was huge, almost 5 % in real terms the last quarter of 2008 (Q4 2007/Q4 2008). Unemployment and state economy has now started to deteriorate. It was expected.

Sweden experienced a very quick change. I think that has to do with the very fact that we Swedes are early adopters combined with rationale social characteristics. It is well known that Swedes adopt new trends and products very early.

When I went to the Stockholm School of Economics we were taught that some American companies used Sweden and San Francisco as test markets. When new products are considered to be launched these companies launch them among these populations where people are leading when it comes to trends and do it quickly. This means that you can get an opinion about how the product will function on the market by testing them on these markets, and you get your answer quickly.

At the same time Sweden is a very connected country. Our banks are highly linked to each other, even so that customers can do transactions over the Internet between banks. We are leading when it comes to IT-solutions and the degree that people really use it. We also see that the companies launch many services over the Internet. You can do many of your activities and take so many contacts with authorities over the net.

Also the Swedish companies are extremely connected in all dimensions. I think there is a link here to be mentioned. The very fact that we are extremely connected and at the same time rational and adopt things and ideas quickly might have relevance for the real economy expressed in GDP-terms. Swedes react quick and at the same time. That is well known. This has been known for many years and should therefore not be of any interest when it comes to analysis of business cycles and turning points. But, it is relevant this time.

This is the first dip in the global economy when we and so many other people and countries are connected via Internet and the super-updated media society.

Last time we experienced a dip – some 7 years ago – the Internet maturity was not that good and globally spread. Now, we are in a totally different phase where all and everybody react digital and efficient over the connected computers. I have worked many years with business cycle analysis in different government bodies in Sweden and I must say – and underline – that I think this time differ. The extreme connectivity in combination with our Swedish genes, so to speak, gives us an interesting role now.

We were quick to stop the economy 2008, but I now think that we will be the first to push the accelerator when there are signs that the economy no longer fall steeply. I think we Swedes could be used as the early indicators we are, this time when it comes to take a giant step upwards in the GDP stairway. When we do it, the rest will follow.

Staffan Ivarsson has a B.Sc. from the Stockholm School of Economics and is currently working as a Senior Consultant at the international consultancy firm WSP Analysis & Strategy.



Mr. Ivarsson has many years of experience in analyzing and evaluating activities in the public sector. He has designed and led a number of projects for the Swedish Ministry of finances, the Swedish National Audit Office and the EU Commission, among others.

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SACC-Texas Membership Application for 2009

SACC-Texas Membership Benefits:

- Develop contacts and participate in business opportunities between Texas and Sweden.
- Automatic membership in the Swedish-American Chamber of Commerce, USA Inc, (SACC-USA).
- Subscriptions to the SACC-Texas Newsletter; to Currents, the quarterly newsletter of SACC-USA; and to Nordic Reach, a glossy cultural magazine with commentary about the Nordic countries from a US perspective.
- Listing in the SACC-USA Directory and on a password-protected web page for SACC-Texas, available only to SACC-Texas members (optional).

Please select a membership classification and fee that corresponds to your requirements

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate member (more than 20 employees) | \$600 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business member (less than 20 employees) | \$200 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Student member | \$ 30 |

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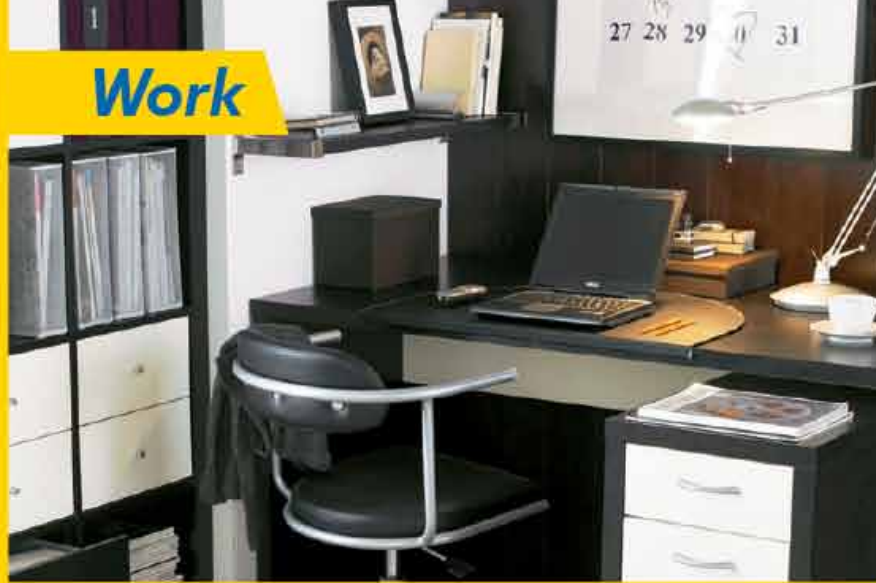
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