

JUNE 2023

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PAY MORE ATTENTION TO 3 WARNING SIGNS OF HEART ATTACK

Heart attack develops when the supply of the blood to the heart is disrupted or blocked. The blockage is often caused by a buildup of fat, cholesterol and other substances, which form a plaque in the coronary arteries that feed the heart. The severity widely ranges and it might be present as either acute episode or chronic condition. In fact, heart attack symptoms vary, not all people who have heart attacks experience the same symptoms. Nevertheless, it remains important to seek immediate medical attention when any warning sign, regardless of severity, of heart attack exhibits, allowing a timely diagnosis and effective treatment that significantly saves lives.

Warning signs and symptoms of heart attack

These 3 signs and symptoms strongly indicate heart attack. If any of them exhibits, medical assistance must be sought right away.

- 1** Feeling weak, light-headed, or faint. Feeling weak can be an indicative symptom of impaired heart function. The severity is associated with the intensity of activities. The condition is most likely serious if the patients experience weakness while resting without any physical exertion.
- 2** Chest pain, discomfort or tightness in the chest. Chest pain or discomfort signifying heart attack is often characterized by sudden pain in the center of the chest which might radiate from the neck to the jaw. Pain or tightness described as crushing pain with pressure might spread to one or both arms or shoulders. If the symptom persists and lasts longer than 20 minutes without timely treatment, it can potentially lead to myocardial infarction which deteriorates the heart function.
- 3** Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing when lying down (orthopnea). If shortness of breath or trouble breathing develops when lying flat, it is often a serious sign of heart attack when there is a buildup of excess fluid that creates pressure around the lungs that increases more workload to the heart. The severity of this symptom usually depends on how flat the patients are lying —the flatter they lie, the more they feel short of breath.

Cardiac screening is essential

People aged over 35 who pose certain risk factors might be prone to develop coronary artery disease which substantially affects their health in the future. To catch heart diseases at earliest stages, cardiac screening is highly recommended, enabling lifestyle modification and proactive healthcare intervention to promote a better and healthier heart.



Coronary Artery Calcium Scan (CAC)

Coronary Artery Calcium Scan (CAC) is an imaging test used to detect the atherosclerotic plaque that forms on the artery walls of the heart. This plaque is made up of calcium, fats, cholesterol and other substances. Over time, plaque buildup hardens and narrows the arteries, resulting in limited blood flow to the heart and other parts of the body. This plaque can burst, triggering a blood clot and causing life-threatening events such as heart attack. Coronary Artery Calcium Scan by using computerized tomography (CT) has been used to detect an atherosclerotic plaque, especially in chronic cases. Nevertheless, this imaging test might not be applicable to identify plaque in acute cases in which lesions might be afresh developed. The measurement of calcified plaque derived from the test is firmly correlated to the risk of developing coronary artery disease in the future. As the amount of calcium detected increases, the risk of heart attack relatively increases. Using 10-15 minutes, the interpretation of calcium scoring is principally made by using Agatston Score, a semi-automated tool to calculate a score based on the extent of coronary artery calcification detected by CT scan. Grading of coronary artery disease (based on total calcium score) ranges from calcium score 0 to over 400 which an extensive plaque burden is found and atherosclerosis might be strongly indicated with extremely high risk of developing heart attack or myocardial infarction and coronary artery disease with high degree of occlusion. With or without symptoms, additional tests, interventions and treatments are further required under close supervision of expert cardiologists.

Adhering to the international standard of care and safety precaution, at Bangkok Heart Hospital, treatments and services are provided 24/7 by highly specialized multidisciplinary team in cardiology supported by cutting-edge technology, ensuring the highest degree of effectiveness and safety. For emergencies, cardiac operations and interventions can be conducted without delay.

More importantly, to maintain your heart's health, eating healthy food and refraining from risk factors contributing to heart diseases are the key. For patients with heart diseases, please be advised to strictly take your medications as prescribed while completing all follow-up appointments.

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Why Nordic countries focus on Taiwan

The Nordic countries have been increasingly vocal about their concerns regarding the rising tensions in the Taiwan Strait. This editorial explores the various reasons behind their focus on this issue and highlights the importance of stability and shared values in the region.

The Nordic countries all have significant trade and economic interests in both China and Taiwan. As such they have a keen interest in security and stability in the region. A war across the Taiwan Strait would mean a severe disruption of current trade routes, impact economic stability, and create uncertainties not only for the entire Asia Pacific but also for the Nordic economies. The implications for the Arctic would be of particular Nordic concern.

The Nordic countries are also strong advocates for a rules-based international order and respect for international law since none of them are superpowers. A conflict in the Taiwan Strait would challenge the existing framework of international relations and raise questions about the enforcement of agreements and norms - just as was the case in the war in the Middle East in 1991 to expel Iraq from Kuwait.

Beyond these rational reasons why the Nordic countries increasingly frequently express concern about the rising tension in the Taiwan Strait, there is an even more important emotional reason. Public sentiment in the Nordic countries regarding human rights and de-

mocracy is fierce and should not be underestimated. Taiwan has developed into a vibrant democracy, and any threats to its sovereignty or stability would stir up strong emotional commitment to defend the human rights, democracy, and freedom of speech in Taiwan.

Returning to the state of relatively calm co-existence between China and Taiwan should still be a possibility. It requires a commitment from all parties involved to maintain peaceful relations and adhere to diplomatic and peaceful means of resolving differences. However, given the complex nature of the Taiwan Strait issue and the factors at play, it is important to closely monitor the situation. Accidental fumbling or miscalculation by any of the parties involved could quickly lead to an escalation.

Should that happen there is, however, no doubt on which side you would find the Nordic countries.



Gregers Moller
Editor in Chief

ScandAsia

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Developing Society's Game-Changers: Youth empowerment was always the passion of Erica Maesincee (Grad'13). Through her company, **Youth in Charge**, she works with Thai youth teaching them how to influence change in their schools, communities and even public policy makers such as the National Planning Agency.

Read Erica's full story:



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Danish Trade Council Missions wrap up successful regional meeting in Vietnam



Photo by the Embassy of Denmark in Vietnam Facebook Page.

The Danish Trade Council's Missions in Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, and Myanmar successfully

wrapped up a regional meeting held in Vietnam by the end of May.

The meeting discussed multiple challenges and collaborations

that can be further implemented in various sectors, writes the Danish Embassy in Vietnam on its Facebook page.

"Our meeting focused on sector teamwork, regional collaboration, sustainability, artificial intelligence, and commercial challenges. We had team building, competence development, workshops, discussions that promote ways to enhance cross-border collaboration and accelerate green growth," writes the Embassy.

Denmark aims for closer Nordic security ties

Denmark's foreign minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen said in mid May that Denmark aims to strengthen defense ties with other Nordic countries. Partnering up would help protect critical infrastructure and counter the Russian threat both in the Arctic and the Baltic Sea region.

A new foreign and security policy strategy calls for more joint military exercises and coordination of defense plans with its Nordic neighbors.

"With Finland's accession to NATO and Sweden on the way, there is a historic opportunity for us to move closer together in a situation where all the Baltic Sea countries, except Russia, are members of the same defense alliance," Foreign



Image by Freepik

Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen said in a speech.

Danes voted last year to join the European Union's defense policy. This signals a shift to deepen defense ties in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Denmark is already working with Sweden, Norway and Finland

to create a unified Nordic air defense.

NATO is still the cornerstone of Denmark's defense and security, with the United States remaining its most important security ally, Løkke stated.

Denmark last published a foreign and security policy strategy just weeks before Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022.

The new strategy acknowledges that Denmark has not taken the security threat from Russia in the Baltic Sea region seriously enough. The strategy also points out shortcomings in its ability to defend its own territory. Denmark aims to meet the NATO spending target of 2% of GDP by 2030.

Taiwanese President meets with Swedish delegation

Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen met with a visiting Swedish parliamentary delegation at the Presidential Office on Thursday, May 18.

After the meeting the President said that she hopes members of the visiting delegation will support a bilateral investment agreement (BIA) between Taiwan and the European Union.

Taiwan has been pushing for a BIA with the EU for some time, but an EU official stated in March that there is no need for a BIA with Taiwan, leaving the prospects for such a deal in question.

During the exchange, Tsai thanked the Swedish government for their support for Taiwan. The

Swedish parliament passed a resolution expressing support for Taiwan in April of last year.

The bilateral trade between Taiwan and Sweden exceeded \$1.7 billion in 2022. That is a 12% increase compared to 2021.

The President stated, that she hopes the two countries can continue to strengthen their trade relationship.

After the meeting, Swedish lawmaker Markus Wiechel stated, that Sweden will continue to advocate for Taiwan's participation in international organizations.



President Tsai Ing-wen (Right) shakes hand with Swedish lawmaker Markus Wiechel (Left) (Photo: CNA)

Swedish PM says tension in Taiwan Strait also affects Europe



Sweden's Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson urged caution in the Taiwan Strait's tension in his speech during the Stockholm China Forum on Tuesday, 30 May 2023, saying it can also affect Europe.

"Any crisis as a result of an attempt to change the status quo in the Taiwan Strait using force would have very far-reaching consequences," he warned.

The prime minister reaffirmed the EU's "one China" policy, insisting

it "remains unchanged." However, he praised Taiwan's democracy and economic development and said Sweden is eager to deepen ties with Taiwan, reported Taiwan News.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) welcomed Kristersson's remark and pledged to strengthen the bilateral relationship with the Nordic country as both share universal values like democracy, freedom, the rule of law, and the protection of human rights.

Last month, a Swedish parliamentary delegation traveled to Taiwan for a six-day official visit. Both countries' representatives held discussions to exchange points of view on common issues.

H&M to close Beijing flagship store



H&M announced on Sunday, May 28, that the Swedish fast fashion brand would close its flagship store in Beijing's Sanlitun area on June 11 as the lease contract is set to expire.

H&M's PR department stated

that the brand would later pick new locations in Beijing and other Chinese cities.

Covering an area of over 1,200 square meters, the store is one of the largest in China. It is H&M's 200th store in China and is there-

fore set to mean a lot to the brand.

A lot of changes are currently happening in the fast fashion industry in China. In addition to H&M, many fast fashion brands have adjusted their marketing strategies in the country in recent years.

Zara closed its stores in several cities in China last year, including Beijing and Shanghai. Gap sold its business in the Chinese market to Chinese brand Baozun, while its sub-brand Old Navy officially withdrew from China in 2020.

"The competition in the Chinese market is fierce. China's economic development level is constantly improving. The consumer power of its residents is also improving," said Wang Peng, a researcher at the Beijing Academy of Social Sciences.

"They don't belong to high-end brands and are less competitive in cost performance than some online brands. Their positioning is rather embarrassing," Wang added.

H&M fined in China for selling defective products

H&M Shanghai Commercial Co, has been fined for selling defective products by a court in Huangpu district in Shanghai. This is according to company information provider Qichacha.

The court allegedly stated that H&M had sold a series of defective products below the regulation standards in multiple cities in China from June 2022 to February 2023.

H&M will be fined 319,192 yuan in total according to the ruling. Additionally, an illegal income of 160,454.8 yuan will be confiscated.

H&M has received 18 administrative penalties in China since April 2020. The fast fashion brand has been fined 1.87 million yuan in total. The various reasons include selling defective products, false advertising and unchecked fire extinguisher systems. This is all according to Qichacha.

H&M came under the spotlight in 2021 when the company said it was deeply concerned about reports of forced labor and discrimination against ethno-religious minorities in Northwest China.



Nearly 50,000 people immigrated to Finland in 2022

Statistics Finland revealed that 49,998 people immigrated to Finland in 2022.

According to Johannes Hirvelä, the director of development at the Finnish Immigration Service (Migri), Russia is the largest source country of immigration with the number of approximately 6,000 people.

The next largest source countries of immigration were Sweden (2,600), India (2,400), Estonia (2,400) and the Philippines (2,250).

Particularly, many Filipino immigrants came to work as domestic helpers or practical nurses in the Nordic country because Finland has been experiencing the labor shortage, reported the source.

The rising immigrant numbers increase across permit types, mostly



Illustrative image of statistics.

work-based permits and study permits, explained Hirvelä.

However, for 2023, the number of immigrants is not expected to be as high.

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Philippines and Norway to collaborate in advancing migrant workers welfare

The Philippines Ambassador to Oslo, Norway, Enrico Fos, recently met with International Organization for Migrants (IOM) Chief of Mission, Fumiko Nagano, to discuss collaborations in implementing rights and conditions for Filipino

workers in the Nordic country.

One of the issues discussed was the regrettable Norwegian cancellation of the Au pair system for Filipinos in Norway. The Au pair program allowed international youths to travel abroad to learn about foreign

cultures and languages while working with duties related to childcare.

Enrico Fos asked the embassy to check on the working conditions of Filipinos working in huge farms.

Norwegian ferries revolutionized by Chinese electric innovation

Norway is electrifying all means of transportation including cars, buses and ferries. The country is working on maintaining its position as the world's leader in electric mobility users per capita. Striving to reach its ambitious emission goals by 2025.

"Our next step is electrifying the high-speed vessel. We will do that by trying to use a battery-swap system inspired by the car industry," Oslo's boat-charging manager Pal Espen Jensen has explained.

Oslo's three electric city passenger ferries carries up to 600 passengers each. This makes them the busiest public commuter line in Norway. The batteries of these boats are charged when the vessels dock at certain ferry stops.

Due to the high-speed vessel's speed of 30 knots (55 km/h), charging its large battery takes too much time. Inspired by Chinese car-maker Nio's battery-swapping stations, Oslo has decided to install the world's first ferry whose battery is swapped each time the boat docks in port.

"Inspiration from China was critical," says Sture Portvik. Portvik



Due to the high-speed vessel's speed of 30 knots (55 km/h), charging their large batteries take too long time. The answer is to swap batteries when in port.

runs the electro mobility department in Oslo.

"Shenzhen has proved it possible to electrify all buses and all taxis, and that's what we are trying to copy."

Many of the Chinese EV brands have chosen Oslo to be their first stop in the European market. This decision is helped by Norway's zero emission target for all new passenger cars by 2025 and its tax incentives for EV buyers.

"We have a lot of Chinese brands. They are offering a very price-competitive but still good product. They have helped us boost the whole transition to zero-emission cars," Portvik says.

Chinese investments in Europe declined by almost a quarter last year. But electric transport seems to be becoming Beijing's top priority in the continent.

Permanent residence permits in Sweden to become more difficult

Foreigners seeking permanent residency in Sweden should pass language tests and demonstrate knowledge of how Swedish society works. This is according to a report presented to the government on Monday, May 29.

According to the report by Court of Appeals Councilor Fredrik Fries, the tests should be introduced in 2027 for foreigners aged 18 and above who seeks permanent residency.

“For someone who will live and work in this country, it is abso-

lutely central to have knowledge of the Swedish language and be familiar with the basic conditions in Swedish society,” Minister for Migration, Maria Malmer Stenergard, told SVT.

“Sweden is one of few countries without such a requirement. The idea is that Swedish legislation should approach that of other countries,” Fries said.

According to the Swedish Migration Agency, 6,990 foreign citizens were granted permanent residency in 2022.



Sønderborg, Singapore, zero emission



One of Singapore’s largest universities, Singapore Polytechnic, will make the entire campus area CO₂ neutral. The inspiration comes from Sønderborg’s ProjectZero, and the Danes have agreed to collaborate on the Asian project. The hope is that Singapore is that the Singapore project will be the beginning of a global development.

By 2030, at least one in five educational institutions in Singapore must be CO₂ neutral. It is one of several goals in the ambitious Green Plan, which is to make Singapore an Asian role model in sustainability. Singapore Polytechnic with 12,800 students has set out to contribute to

that goal – with help from Denmark.

Last year, representatives from Singapore Polytechnic visited Sønderborg. Here, citizens, companies, educational institutions, utility companies and the municipality, through the public-private partnership ProjectZero, are working to make the area’s entire energy system CO₂-neutral by 2029. The dialogue has subsequently continued and culminated yesterday with a joint MoU between ProjectZero, Singapore Polytechnic and Danfoss.

Representatives from Singapore Polytechnics met with Danfoss CEO Kim Fausing about establishing their own ProjectZero.

Singapore’s ProjectZero still hasn’t been given an official name, but will be a locally adapted version of Sønderborg’s vision. The ambition is for Singapore Polytechnic to act as an inspiration and showcase for Singapore’s other educational institutions.

“We are proud that we inspired Singapore Polytechnic to use our recipe for an intelligent and

cost-effective conversion and be part of their journey. We are very aware that we are not saving the climate by making the energy system in Sønderborg CO₂-neutral. But we can help leave a global climate footprint by scaling our model to other cities and countries. The collaboration with Singapore is the first concrete example,” says Brian Seeberg, who is the CEO of ProjectZero.

Sønderborg’s ProjectZero model focuses on creating and demonstrating an intelligent and integrated energy system, where energy is saved cost-effectively everywhere. The various energy sources and sectors are connected in a flexible network which works as a coherent organism. This model makes it possible to reduce the costs of green conversion by up to 50 percent.

The project in Singapore will include the entire 38-hectare campus, which, in addition to classrooms, is home to student housing, shops and an area with sports facilities such as a swimming pool and stadium.

Eva Maria Hansen: First female Chairperson of Nordcham Vietnam

By Miabell Mallikka Smedegaard

“You’re not Miabell by any chance, are you?” someone says in Danish behind me as I stare at the shut glass door in front of me.

The door leads to a new and modernly decorated office community located in District 1 in Ho Chi Minh City. Here, Nordcham has its own relatively new office space. The voice belongs to Eva Maria Hansen. The new Chairwoman for Nordcham, and the first woman of her kind.

With quick, steady steps, she approaches me. Wearing a blue and white striped shirt and a pair of high-waisted black trousers that contrast with her sharp blonde bob. Over her shoulder she has a black computer bag with a small and subtle, but highly recognizable LEGO logo on the front. In addition to her recent position as Chairwoman for Nordcham, Eva Maria works for Danish LEGO Group. A position that first led her to Singapore for approximately two years and now Vietnam.

Didn’t realize she was the first woman

“Most of my career I have worked in roles that have been global, but I have lived in Denmark and then traveled abroad. Before Covid I traveled for 100 days a year in connection with various projects. At Saxo Bank I was the HR manager in India, but I did not live in India at the time,” she shares.

Eva Maria has a very comprehensive resume which consists of positions at large, prestigious companies such as LEGO Group, Saxo Bank and Carlsberg and now the role as first female Chairperson for Nordcham in Vietnam.

“I didn’t even realize I was the first until after I was elected. It was a bit of a coincidence that someone on the board mentioned, that I must be the first woman in the role. So, it’s not like I’ve thought a lot about it,” Eva Maria says.

Despite being Chairwoman, she herself does not have a keycard for the office. She therefore tries to make one of the three employees behind the glass door aware of our arrival.

Taking part in the expansion

The fact that Nordcham has employees is relatively new as well. Before then, it was the board that did all the work. But even though the three female employees have joined, there is still much to do as Chairwoman of the organization.

“I probably spend around 15-20 hours per week. I have just been elected, and of course there are more tasks in the beginning when you take over something new. I did have some qualms about accepting the position. It’s a big responsibility to take on, and you have to be sure that you can commit the time it requires,” she says with a thoughtful expression.

Nordcham’s bright premises in the centrally located office community with a panoramic view of Ho Chi Minh City constitute of significantly more desk-places than the three employees can fill. This is, however, completely deliberate. As something new, Nordcham offers Nordic companies office space while they start up their business in Vietnam. A concept that goes under the name Nordic Hub. An idea the board has had for a long time. But as the new Chairwoman, Eva Maria will be the person bringing the idea to life.

Hellerup villa vibe in Ho Chi Minh City

After a short tour, we go down to the street, where her white SUV is parked near the entrance.

“My usual driver is sick, so the one I have today doesn’t know me very well,” she says, as she tries to signal to the driver, to pick us up.



“

I did have some qualms about accepting the position. It's a big responsibility to take on, and you have to be sure that you can commit the time it requires.

”

Eva Maria Hansen (LEGO Group)

“

*I do a little weightlifting.
Olympic weightlifting.
I'm not very good at it,
but I've been doing
it for years.*

”

After about twenty minutes of driving, the car pulls up in front of a tall gate in the well-regarded expat community, also known as District 2. Behind the gate you can see a Scandinavian-looking, two-story white house. As the automated gate opens, the minimalistic house appears, surrounded by a small, streamlined garden. The most eye-catching feature of the home is an extremely well-equipped fitness area that is set up in front of the white-painted façade.

Olympic weightlifting in the front yard

“It’s actually a bit of a funny story,” exclaims Eva Maria, as she notices that I’m staring at the bulky equipment.

“I do a little weightlifting. Olympic weightlifting. I’m not very good at it, but I’ve been doing it for years. It started with a personal trainer back in Denmark who practiced it and it has followed me ever since.” A calmness reflects across her face as she looks at the gear.

“I actually bought this equipment during Covid in Singapore. In the period where we were not allowed to go to the gym. This is now my home gym equipment. It has followed me around the world ever since. After Singapore it came to Denmark and now here. It sounds really crazy. I know. But for me it has been essential. Lifting weights is very technical, so this is how I disconnect and relax,” she shares with a passion in her voice.

However, it has not been easy to bring an entire mini-gym with her from Singapore. In the first 21 months Eva Maria lived in Vietnam, she lived in 11 different places.



Eva Maria Hansen and Nordcham Executive Director, Zung Nguyen

This was until her family finally got the opportunity to join her in January this year.

“I have had all of this equipment brought to the 3rd floor, where I lived before I moved to this house,” she says about the time before her family arrived.

“But even here I have to be careful that I don’t damage the surface. So, this is not where I do the heavy lifting. But it helps me stay in shape when I’m too busy to go to the gym,” she elaborates.

The family reunited

Eva Maria spent the first months alone in Ho Chi Minh City, before her husband and her 14-year-old son, had the opportunity to join her.

“On one hand it was fine, because the circumstances were not for them to join until now. I have been working a lot and there have been quite a few instabilities around the corona-situation and things like that. When they came in January, it was an incredibly easy transition for them. So, it has been good in many ways, but of course it’s difficult to be without your family for such a long time,” she tells.

It was not the first time Eva Maria had to leave her family for business purposes. She also spent the previous period in Singapore without her husband.

“When I moved to Singapore, the idea was that he would move with me. But various circumstances surrounding his job meant that he chose to stay in Denmark to complete his work. Sometimes things just have to fit.”

She therefore moved by herself to Singapore in



Nordcham board

January 2020. Her two youngest children then joined her in the summer of 2020, where they stayed for a period of one year before the family went back to Denmark in the summer of 2021. However, the family was only gathered for a short period before Eva Maria went on to Vietnam in September 2021.

Quickly got involved in Nordcham

She arrived in Vietnam in September 2021 and after just one month she became part of Nordcham. In February the following year she was elected to the board and just a year later at March 8, 2023 she was unanimously elected as Chairwoman of the organization.

“It has gone relatively quickly. I had some business acquaintances who were members of Nordcham. One of them was also a member of the board, and she encouraged me to run,” she shares about the process.

“What I hope to be able to offer is to help create value for our members. We have grown tremendously in the number of members over the past few years. But the question is, how do we create good value for them?” A question Eva Maria seems to be asking herself as well.

Explosive growth

Nordcham has grown from around 80 members to approximately 150 members over the past few years. A positive development that at the same time places greater demands on the organization and what it has to offer.

“It has gone very, very fast. Especially in the last two

years, a lot has happened. It is partly before my time, so I can't take credit for the development. It is the board who have done most of the work.” A board consisting of 12 people representing all the Nordic countries.

“I would really like to be able to continue that development. It doesn't have to be at the same extent. As long as we just keep a good pace in our membership growth.”

In order to create the best possible value for the many members, Eva Maria and Nordcham work on developing the organization's relations with the governments, ambassadors and trade officers in close cooperation with Eurocham and the remaining business associations.

The workload is the same, but the role is different

According to Eva Maria, the workload hasn't changed much since she took over the position of Chairwoman, but the tasks have changed.

“It is a different type of work that I do as Chairwoman. I have to contribute more to creating the synergies in the board and in the business associations or the government bodies that we have external contact with. As a board member, I was mainly in some working group where we worked on specific events,” she states.

But despite the relatively big workload, she does not regret taking on the task. Neither as part of the board nor as Chairwoman.





“After all, I don’t have small children. I don’t come home and have to cook or do laundry. Here you have the opportunity to work more than you do back in Denmark with small children. I don’t have kids to pick up every day. My children are grown and we have someone to do the housework. In that way, I can allow myself to take on more liberties in relation to how I work.”

Nordcham – much more than just extra work

But Nordcham is much more than an unpaid part-time job for Eva Maria. Nordcham helped her integrate when she first came to Vietnam and had to establish LEGO Group’s new Vietnam branch from scratch.

“It was important for me to learn something about how it is to run a business here in Vietnam relatively quickly. Nordcham has definitely helped me with that,” she shares and makes it clear why she chooses to give her time and skills to the organization.

“In addition, it has also helped me built up a network quite quickly. Many people have gotten to know me through my work at Nordcham,” she adds, making it clear, that Nordcham can function as more than just a business-association.

Ho Chi Minh makes it easy to integrate

The white house, with white-painted concrete walls, furnished with light wooden furniture and a light gray couch from Jysk, reminds her of Hellerup, as Eva Maria herself describes it. A completely conscious choice on her part.

“It’s an easy area to fit in. It would be a whole different experience to live in a small alley in District 1, but I

wanted to make it as easy as possible for the children to come here and settle in.”

In addition to the sofa, there are a few Scandinavian items that decorate the home. Things the couple have had shipped from Denmark. The PH-lamp on the small coffee table. A brown Arne Jacobsen chair and a large, colorful and extremely eye-catching picture behind the dining table.

A few sentimental items

“There are a couple of items that we have brought with us from Denmark. Mostly very personal stuff. Like that painting. Well, it’s not really a painting. It’s just a cheap print from IKEA,” she says, pointing towards the picture.

“It has a bit of a funny story. Many years ago, my husband and I bought a house thinking we would live there forever. In that house there was this very high wall and we just couldn’t figure out what to do with it. Then one day we went to IKEA where we bought this cheap picture. It was really just supposed to act as a placeholder until we could agree on what to do with the wall, but somehow it has become this thing that makes us feel at home,” she says with a tenderness in her voice while her eyes are fixed on the print.

In the small home office, there is a corner dedicated to LEGO. Among the items is her five-year anniversary gift that depicts a dragon. A present she received during her time in Singapore.

“In China I think they get a panda. It is such a special thing that you can only get when you have been with the company for a certain number of years.”

You have to follow the custom

In addition to the car and the private driver, the family has a number of scooters outside the house.

“You can see that we have some bikes of our own. I don’t drive that much and not at all in District 1. It’s simply too dangerous, I think. But out here I drive,” she says.

“I grew up in Hvidesande in West Jutland, so it’s not entirely new to me. I think I got a bike from my dad when I turned 15. I hadn’t ridden one for a long time before I arrived here. But you have to follow the customs.”

Raised in Hvidesande, with a father who is a fisherman and a mother who was a housewife, it was not necessarily predicted that Eva Maria would enter the corporate world.

“I don’t know how. It just happened. I always wanted to work for a big company,” she says. Meanwhile, the gate opens once more and the white SUV parks in front of it.

“If you had to name one thing you would like to achieve as the first female Chairperson, what would that be?” I ask as I head out the door.

“Of course, I would like to inspire more women to become part of organizations like Nordcham. It’s a relatively male-dominated world and it’s no secret that I would like to see more women on the board, so I hope I can contribute to that,” she replies with a passion in her voice that is not to be missed.

Chinese influencer sells Norwegian cod liver oil on TikTok

Norwegian company Orkla earlier this year invited a number of Chinese TikTokers and influencers to visit Lofoten in Norway to sell Möller's cod liver oil to the Chinese consumer.

One of them, TikTok influencer and nutritionist Xiu Xian, did a live stream from her hotel room in Lofoten that got a lot of attention. Xiu Xian has more than 5 million followers. In less than a two-hour live broadcast, more than 11,000 bottles of cod liver oil were sold.

"I focus on helping people to stay in shape and make healthy choices," said Xiu afterwards to *Lo-fotposten*.

TikTok use has increased dramatically in recent years. In Norway, 1.2 million people have the app on their phone. A number that has doubled in two years.

Möller's Tran wants to export more cod liver oil to China. There-



fore, they are testing selling the products to customers via social media.

"The Chinese market is large and full of opportunities. Foreign dietary supplement products in particular appeal to the Chinese. Imported dietary supplements are

considered by many to be of particularly high quality," Linn Helen Haga, brand manager at Möller's says.

The cod liver oil is currently sold in over 30 markets internationally, of which China is one of Möller's largest markets and investment areas in Asia.

Marimekko is focusing on Asia after weak first quarter



The Finnish brand Marimekko's sales fell to €35.3 million in the first quarter. This was mainly due to a decline in Finnish wholesale and lower licensing income in the EMEA region. Still, net sales were helped by increased retail turnover in Finland and growing international wholesale. The full-year net sales are estimated to grow both in Finland and internationally.

President and CEO Tiina Alahuhta-Kasko said the results were as expected.

Globally the brand's omnichannel retail sales increased by 9%. In-

ternational wholesale sales grew by 8%, while the Asia-Pacific region increased by 16%.

The company has stated, that they have launched a new strategy and that the main focus will be on Asia as the most important geographical area for its international growth.

That was already seen in Q1 with two new stores opening in Beijing. The brand also expanded its e-commerce activities in China, opened a pop-up store in Taiwan and threw a Marimekko fashion show for SS23 in Thailand.



The Swedish man that rescues Thai dogs

By Miabell Mallikka Smedegaard.

As you drive down the relatively deserted road in Chonburi, with a series of lakes, green fields and mountains in the background, you think that this idyllic place will be completely silent. However, you don't have to go far down the road before you notice that it is not like any ordinary, rather deserted nature road. Along the path, there is a long row of fenced kennels, where a multitude of street dogs run around on the other side of the wire. Partly curious and partly unsure, many of them run barking towards the fence as a stranger is trespassing on their otherwise remote territory.

"It's not always like this. It's only when strangers come by that they bark like this," tells Michael J. Baines.

The Man That Rescues Dogs

Michael is originally Swedish. He moved to Thailand 21 years ago while working as a chef. But after rescuing his first street dog, his passion for saving strays has become a fulltime occupation.

"It started back in 2011. I worked at this restaurant called Buffalo Bill Steakhouse. One day there was a dog that showed up behind the restaurant. She was in really bad shape. So, I started to feed her and she would come back every day. I fed her for a week and gained her trust before taking her to the clinic. She was at the clinic for 10 days, but she was fine after that," he shares.

In 2012 he decided to quit his job and move back to Bang Saen. Here, he started his own restaurant with only 30 seats. Just him and 2 waitresses.

"Then I started feeding the stray dogs from my house to the restaurant. In 2016, I decided to rent a house, hire staff and take in more dogs. Because I had no place to keep my dogs by then," Michael explains about the process. A process that has been covered by several international media and gone viral several times.

Michael is today working around 16 hours a day caring for the many dogs at the shelter, that is home for 750 dogs. Besides that, the organization feed another 400 dogs daily, that is still living on the streets in the area. A comprehensive cooperation with 44 employees, that goes by the name "The Man That Rescues Dogs."

1.6 million per month

"It costs a lot to care for this many dogs. We spend around 1.6 million THB per month and we solely rely on

charity. So, we have to do a lot of marketing as well, to be able to collect that kind of money," Michael explains.

As he is telling me about the many dog-related task the staff have to keep up on a daily basis, a group of dogs out on their first walk of the day, is coming towards us. Michael starts calling out for one of the dogs, that due to the stranger at the scene, seems a little reluctant to go near. Instead, another less fearful dog runs towards us. It quickly nips my butt before jumping up to lick my face. It is hard not to melt by the trust and affection, even though the handsome boy smells like he hasn't had a shower for months, while his breath is even worse.

"What's his name?" I ask. But Michael has to admit, that he doesn't remember all 750 names. A fact you wouldn't have known if he hadn't admitted it. As he walks down the road, he greets several dogs behind the fence. All of them by name and with a genuine warm and caring attitude.

Taking in disabled strays

But it isn't just healthy and moveable dogs that the shelter cares for. The place has its own animal hospital along with a whole section for disabled dogs.

As Michael shows the way toward the animal hospital, we pass two siblings who was brought in by the authorities after their owner had brutally been beating them daily.

"They were in such a horrible state when they came here. They were beaten up every day by an old man. He chained them up and broke their teeth. The neighbors contacted us and we had them brought here by the authorities," Michael shares while he points towards two beautiful, happy looking, cream-colored dogs. Moving lively around in the small space they have by themselves in the quarantine area. Here, they are kept until they have had all the necessary vaccines to be released to the shelter with the rest of the dogs.

Having their own hospital unit

Coke, one of Michael's own dogs was diagnosed with Pancreatitis back in November. A chronic disease that makes him lose appetite. This has resulted in him losing 13 kilos since December. Because of that, he is one of the residents at the dog shelter's private hospital section during the daytime.





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It costs a lot to care for this many dogs. We spend around 1.6 million THB per month and we rely solely on charity.

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“He’s down to 11 kilos now. It looks like we have finally found something he seems to be eating, so I really hope this will help. He ate yesterday, so that makes me happy,” Michael shares.

Michael himself has 16 dogs at the moment. At most he takes in 18, but in the last two years he has lost six dogs, bringing him down to 16 dogs at the moment.

When he took in Coke 10 years ago, his Swedish neighbors would pass by his garden and call him an animal abuser for keeping the dog alive.

“So, I sent an email to 10 veterinarians that work for the provincial veterinarians in Sweden and asked them if it was animal abuse. Five of them said, that according to the Swedish law, I should put the dog to sleep, because in Sweden they don’t think that the dog is having a good enough dog life in that state. Then five of them said, that if the dog is not suffering, and I was willing to take care of him, then it was up to me. But maybe that’s why people from especially Sweden, or maybe in Scandinavia in general, are not used to this.”

Your profession before your beliefs

Due to Thailand being a Buddhist nation, it is against their faith to kill animals. Therefore, many veterinarians in Thailand do not practice euthanasia because they believe in karma. This means that if they end the life of an animal, they will get bad luck in the future. Even if the animal was in pain. Another reason why, Michael’s work with the dogs is essential.



“Our dogs here are not in pain. If a dog is in pain, we will not keep it alive just to keep it alive. If the dog is in constant pain, then we put it to sleep. It is possible. More young veterinarians are coming out to the work field now and many of them accept it. But it’s not an easy decision,” Michael shares and tells me about Steve.

Steve is lying on the floor in front of the entrance to the hospital as we enter. Next to him sits one of the staff members who is trying to feed him, but without much luck.

“We rescued Steve around here recently. He had an inflammation (distemper) which had already entered the central nervous system (CNS). He can’t do anything but lie down. He gets IV fluids now, cause he doesn’t want to eat. We have all agreed to give it three more days. If there is still no improvement, we will have to put him down, because that’s not a life,” Michael says while trying to seem unaffected, but there is a hint of sentimentality in his voice, as he utters the words.

The ones he calls his own

A question Michael is still asking himself in connection to his own dog Coke.

“If he’s not eating enough and losing weight constantly every week. Then, what’s the point? But I don’t want him...” Michael pauses. “I don’t want to put him to sleep. But if he’s suffering.” Once again, he has to take a small pause to collect himself. “To see my boy, going from 24 kilos to 11 kilos. My big boy.”

Even though Michael truly cares for all of the dogs at the shelter, it is clear that he has a special connection to the ones he calls his own. Still, he can’t really explain why those exact dogs end up living with him and not among the remaining 750 dogs at the dog pound.

“Well, I’d say the first 10 was probably because I didn’t have any space when I rescued them from the streets. So, they had to live with me. The last one I took in, Marshall, she’s about 7-8 months old now. We rescued her and her mom, but her mom had to have an emergency surgery. Unfortunately, she didn’t make it, which left Marshall alone, so, I had to take care of her,” Michael says after just having said, that every time one of his dogs passes away, he swears that he won’t be taking in more new dogs as his own.

“So yeah, sure. I did that. I do that,” he then exclaims.

In need of a break

And though Michael clearly loves his dogs, he still needs a break from it all once in a while. He therefore works nine days straight, and then goes to Bangkok to relax for a couple of days.

“Even though I love dogs, sometimes they get on my nerves. Because most of them get along, but some don’t. I have two sisters, Cafe and Love. They hate each other. It’s okay, I manage to control them most of the time. They fight maybe once every three months. But that’s a killer fight. So, for me to function, I need to get away,” Michael explains.





“

We need 55,000 baht every day to run the operation. So, my most important job is to make sure that we have the finances to run this operation.

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And it is not just sibling-fights that can get on Michaels nerves. Four years back, he took in his dog Itto, who starts howling every morning around 3-4 a.m.

“Every day about 3 or 4 a.m., he starts to howl and he get all my other dogs to howl as well.

So, I have this personal symphony for about one and a half to two minutes every morning. I do have earplugs, but it is just so loud,” he says with an indulgent smile.

Having to care for 1,150 dogs may seem like an easy task, but it is a rather stressful obligation.

“I have a bleeding ulcer. Last Sunday, I woke up in the middle of the night cold sweating. I’ve had it two times before. First time was 13 years ago. Back then I had a blood transfusion. I lost so much blood. The second one was two years ago and now it has happened again. Most of it is stress related,” he shares, while crediting his staff, for giving him certainty, that someone is always there to care for the many dogs, when he himself can’t.

The wheelchair Mafia

“So, this is the care unit,” he says as we enter the special unit.

Even though the area is big, it seems rather crowded, since most of the dogs’ cluster together in the front. Four staff members walk around the many dogs, trying to take care of their special needs, but even so, the care unit is quickly characterized by a rather distinct smell, that does not apply for the rest of the dog pound. On the white tiles, you see traces of feces from the many dogs, that



drags their bums across the floor. But still, none of the employees, nor Michael, seems to be bothered by the smell, as the staff are constantly cleaning the floors and doing the laundry. Trying to keep the place as clean for the dogs as possible.

"We have about 100 dogs here with special needs. We have 44 dogs with a wheelchair. We have the blind dogs here. The senior dogs and some dogs that have CNS. They all need special care," he says while kneeling to greet the many dogs, that makes their way to meet him.

The unit consist of a large playroom and a sleeping area where their beds are laid out at night. Lined up towards the fence is all of the special made wheelchairs for the 44 paralyzed dogs, who can still run when being strapped to their wheels. The Wheelchair Mafia as Michael calls them.

Not all car accidents

One of the paralyzed dogs is NaamDaeng.

"This group of teenagers shot her with a BB gun. Seven bullets. Five in the neck and two in the spine. She could still walk at first, but then the next day, the bullet penetrated her and she has been paralyzed ever since," Michael shares about this beautiful, sweet-tempered dog, with a slightly sad expression in her otherwise soft eyes.

In the corner of the sleeping area the mattresses are stacked on shelves during the day. All in different colors, shapes and patterns.

"When we put out the mattresses the place looks

like a dog hostel. We put out 12 mattresses, and they sleep maybe two or three dogs per mattress," Michael explains, while lending a paralyzed dog a hand, by pushing him up from a crack in the cemented floor, where his bum had gotten stuck.

The staff starts to line up the wheelchairs. Then one by one, they are getting strapped to their wheels and ready for their walk.

As they are all set, the gates are opened, and the many dogs come running out of the unit. All with the biggest smiles on their sweet and innocent faces. The same goes for Michael who lights up, as the dogs come running out.

Always a fundraiser going on

"There's always a fundraising going on. We need 55,000 baht every day to run the operation. That is why I need to find donors from around the world. We don't have any big companies to back us. I wish we had a few, but we don't. So, my most important job is to make sure that we have the finances to run this operation."

The Man That Rescues Dogs spay and neuter dogs on a daily basis in the effort to prevent more strays on the streets. The 750 dogs they have at the shelter is all up for adoption, but only for the right home.

For more information go to: The Man That Rescues Dogs



“

When we first had kids, I thought we would go back to Denmark. But had we done that, I wouldn't be here today.

”



Danish Elisabeth found her “Eliment” in Vietnam

By Miabell Mallikka Smedegaard

Once upon a time, a Danish girl by the name of Elisabeth Rolskov went back-packing. Little did she know, that her trip would be the start of a happy and successful life in Southeast Asia.

Before leaving, her sister told her not to fall in love in Asia and never return. Elisabeth reassured the sister, that she had nothing to worry about. She would definitely return to Denmark, she said.

Took a chance

Not long after, the then 20-year-old Elisabeth met her future husband. A handsome Vietnamese guy who grew up in Norway from the age of eight.

“To me, he was very inspiring and adventurous, with the mix of being Vietnamese while still knowing all about Norwegian culture and language,” Elisabeth tells as she is looking back.

Elisabeth did return back to her hometown Sønder Vissing in Denmark as promised, but not for long. She quickly decided to take a chance and move to Hong Kong, where she enrolled in one of the city's top design schools.

“My husband, was living in Hong Kong at that time. He works in finance. And in Denmark we are privileged enough to be able to take those kinds of chances. So I thought, why not.”

Left Hong Kong for Guangzhou

But Hong Kong is an expensive city and the school didn't live up to the expectations. After one year in Hong Kong, she therefore decided to move to China and continue her education there. Elisabeth managed to find Raffles design school in Guangzhou that originates from Singapore. A school with the best possible facilities for an aspiring designer.

“In China you can get almost any material you desire, which is pretty incredible as a design student,” Elisabeth shares.

After yet another year studying in China, while her future husband would commute back and forth between Hong Kong and Guangzhou, they got the opportunity to move Vietnam.





“

I wanted to create something that western tourist can buy as a souvenir. Something that has that Asian element, but still goes with the more minimalistic western style. Something unique and handmade.

”

10 years with ER Couture

They both moved to Ho Chi Minh City, where Elisabeth finished design school and got offered a part time job teaching. Next to that, she started her first brand ER Couture. A clothing brand designed for western women living in southeast Asia.

10 years she spent developing ER Couture into a success. She had eight seamstresses working at her showroom along with a constructor, while she had the items exported to Denmark produced at a friend's factory in Vietnam.

In 2019, only a few months before Covid, she decided to sell out the stock and close down her business.

“There were a lot of personal aspects leading to it and I was just burnt out at the end. I wasn't inspired anymore and you need to feel inspired when you work with something creative like fashion.”

Covid led her back to being creative

Covid in Ho Chi Minh City was rough. City patrol would lockdown the area in District 2, where the family of now four lives. Elisabeth would therefore spend her new found time homeschooling and trying to keep her two boys busy with different creative projects. One of them was Resin.

“I saw it on TikTok. Of course, it didn't look as difficult as it actually is. So, I thought it might be a fun project for the boys. Instead, I was the one who ended up hooked on it,” Elisabeth shares with a sweet grin and



sparkling eyes.

This is now three years ago. At first resin became a hobby that had Elisabeth explore and regain her creativity. But slowly people started asking her where to buy her things. She started to realize, that this might be more than a hobby and that she should come up with a name for her new found passion.

"Here people call me Eli, and I feel like I've found my element, so that is why I came up with Eliment."

It was never really her intention to start a new brand, it just kind of happened.

Eliment creations

Eliment is a resin-based lifestyle brand consisting of mainly jewelry, but also other decorative items sold as high-end souvenirs and gifts.

"What is so exciting about working with resin is, that there are really no limits to what you can create with it. It takes it 24 hours to dry, so that gives you a long time to get the product right," she shares.

With Eliment she gets to use her design degree, but she feels like she gets to use her creativity more freely than she did designing clothes.

"At the end, we had this standard design that was used for many of the pieces. It worked, but it wasn't very creative. With Eliment I constantly have to be creative by finding solutions to make the design work. I think I just like to experiment. Sometimes it's just fun not knowing how things will turn out."

Combining Scandinavia and Southeast Asia

The design is inspired by a mixture of Scandinavian design, with the beauty of Southeast Asian nature. Depicting tropical flowers and exotic animals, but with a modern and slightly minimalistic touch, that makes it suitable for her mostly western clientele.

"I wanted to create something that western tourist can buy as a souvenir. Something that has that Asian element, but still goes with the more minimalistic western style. Something unique and handmade," Elisabeth explains while making it clear, that she hopes to have more Asian customers as well, and not just be a souvenir-brand.

Since she decided to officially launch the brand, she has been doing a couple of pop-up events and is now selling through different vendors in the city. Just recently she set up a Lazada-shop, hoping to reach more local customers.

"Honestly, when we first had kids, I thought we would go back to Denmark. But had we done that, I wouldn't be here today. We may have many opportunities in Denmark when it comes to education etc. But in Denmark you have to do what is considered the "right thing". Here you have the opportunity to follow your passion, which is what I have done."



Danish by Danish Bakery: Real 'Wienerbrød' baked in Penang

Let's talk Danish! No, not the language as such but the world-famous pastries, for instance served in hotels and sold in bakeries throughout Asia. No doubt, their origin is in Denmark. And now there is also a new genuine Danish player introducing such artisan pastries to Southeast Asia - the real ones based on Danish recipes, traditions and fantastic taste. Entry market for this father-and-son business? Picked for specific reasons: internationally-oriented Penang, Malaysia! And the feedback from their customers so far is just 'wow' - generating big sales success. Meet Danish by Danish Bakery!

By Joakim Persson

Closing in on downtown George Town, Penang's Komtar landmark a shop sign on a building corner reads 'Danish by Danish'. This immediately catches the attention of anyone being Scandinavian or with knowledge about the Nordics, and generates curiosity about if someone Danish might be involved! And this indeed turns out to be the case.

Also, there is a familiar face in this business: Erik Lund, the former Managing Director of Sunquick Malaysia (the Danish juice beverage brand) - is now a retiree backing up his young son Johannes who runs the show in this new bakery adventure! They have just launched recently as ScandAsia in early March visits their brand new bakery store, which is entirely focused on Danish pastries and also sourdough bread.

Johannes was brought up and attended international school in Penang during many years, so their choice and understanding of the market is clear. And when Johannes went with the family back to Denmark during the summer school holidays one of his first stops upon arrival was a Danish bakery, to buy and munch on real 'Danish' pastries. Evidently, out of that experience his strong passion for pastries was born.

"You couldn't get it here, so it's also our mission to bring this to the Penang people and to Malaysia," explains Johannes.



The French bakeries here do the croissants and pain au chocolate but no one does the Danish wienerbrød pastries – at least not made the correct way.



“

Johannes could not agree more: “Penang is definitely home to me – this is where I grew up and it’s the place I know. When I go back to Denmark I feel like I’m a foreigner.”

”

But the idea was born back in Denmark, as they had gone back there when Erik retired. There he renovated their house, with help of Johannes. And then: what to do? Erik felt bored, still with a lot of energy, and wanting to have something to do.

“We discussed ideas and one came up that we knew there were no Danish pastries in Malaysia. A lot of the five-star hotels advertise Danish pastries as part of their breakfast but in reality it looks like a small bun with a sausage as filling or whatever. So we went off and said: ‘O.K, let’s try to set up a bakery for Danish pastries!’” Erik begins.

“Johannes had some knowledge already and through a good friend I managed to get him into one of the best bakeries in a Danish supermarket chain, where he worked for five months and was in charge of the pastries, so he could get into every corner of it.”

“I’ve taken a lot of courses at different bakeries, and we approached them to teach the ins and outs of this and that – all in order to be able to open up something on our own in Malaysia.”

At the same time Johannes was studying upper secondary education in Denmark – a path to continue with any bachelor degree studies at any university. “The plan was that he would continue his studies, besides doing the bakery business. But the bakery took 14 hours of his time daily so there was no time for those studies anymore and we had to cancel the school,” says Erik.





So by starting Danish by Danish they mean serious business. “Definitely, and we will succeed!”

Erik’s own expertise from the food industry is in this business mainly helpful when it comes to procedures; how different government bodies work that one has to approach to get various approvals etc.

“Johannes is more into the operational side and I’m backing him up, doing all cleaning etc. And It’s been quite troublesome – lots of obstacles to overcome and having to work 16 hours per day.”

But so far, they agree it has been a great start for them on their home turf in Penang.

“The testing we did in Denmark and had many home bakes and tested on neighbours who said it was the best Danish pastries they had ever had! And then over here, giving our pastries to friends and others we’ve been hearing the same positive feedback,” says Johannes.

In order to explain the difference we also need to compare with typical Danish pastries that already exist on the market – which is plentiful in bakeries and hotels, where ‘Danish’ has been the adopted name synonymous with the pastries.

In Danish it is called wienerbrød (Vienna bread), which is a multilayered, laminated sweet pastry in the viennoiserie tradition. Shapes are numerous, including circles with filling in the middle (known in Denmark as Spandauers), figure-eights and spirals (known as snails).

“The French bakeries here do the croissants and

pain au chocolate but no one does the Danish wienerbrød pastries – at least not made the correct way. So we want to bring this to Penang, including quality bread. Their pastries also do not have a big variety,” says Johannes.

The fact that the Danish pastry concept is well-known can benefit Danish by Danish, as they introduce the real traditions from their home country.

“Very early on, we went out to small markets where we could set up a stand and realized that it was the perfect way to promote our bakery. The only way people know about it is through the hotels, and what they get there has nothing to do with the Danish pastries – so we started with tasting and giving out to curious passersby. And you could see from them this ‘wow’ experience that repeated itself again and again.”

“Our record is selling 250 pastries in 2.5 hours,” adds Johannes.

The duo also believes the hotel sector will be interested in their products. “I think the high-end hotels will maybe go for it,” says Erik, who has also identified another affluent consumer group to target: Parents of children attending Penang’s international schools.

“They are our key customers: wealthy locals going for European style etc. We will promote at these schools at closing time and use the tasting method. Once they have the wow experience they are willing to buy.”



“

You couldn't get it here, so it's our mission to bring this to the Penang people and to Malaysia

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So a tried-and-tested marketing method like this one still works! Other than that, Erik lets his son handle the marketing that is much more digital and social media-driven these days. Home deliveries is one such method being used.

Johannes also reveals that later on, they plan to have a second branch in Penang, but the big focus is on entering the Kuala Lumpur market.

Interestingly there is also quite a bakery history relating to the Lundh family: “My great grandfather started a bakery in Norway in 1922 that became the biggest in Scandinavia!”

“He had two daughters, one of them being my mother, and the other being married to an American businessman. He went to the U.S in the 1960s to research

and then returned and ordered three fully automated lines, of which one could produce 3000 bread per hour. Then he bought big Mercedes trucks to distribute the bread, into Sweden too. He was the first one in the market doing that,” Erik fills in.

“And we got established exactly 100 years later - in 2022!” smiles Johannes.

As for being back in Penang they are both all smiles. “Penang is a wonderful place, and when you land here you feel like coming home!” says Erik.

Johannes could not agree more: “Penang is definitely home to me – this is where I grew up and it’s the place I know. When I go back to Denmark I feel like I’m a foreigner. All my friends are here in Penang and I feel at home with the locals also. And Penang feels freer!”

Danish Companies to supply nuclear energy in Indonesia

Nuclear power developed in Denmark will help Indonesia produce low-emission ammonia. The production will go toward fertilizer and food production that is set to feed 45 million Indonesian people. The project is a part of an extensive partnership that highlights the growing focus on clean energy sources.

The four Danish companies involved in the project is Topsoe, Alfa Laval, Copenhagen Atomics and Aalborg. All have agreed to generate the nuclear energy for ammonia produced by a handful of state owned companies. The nuclear power plant will be capable of producing one million ton of ultra-low emission ammonia per year. This is enough to produce fertilizer for the production of food for approximately 45 million people, one sixth of the Indonesian population.



The plant is set to save 1.7 million ton of CO₂ per year compared to natural gas-based fertilizer production.

The facility will be powered by nuclear energy from Copenhagen Atomics. The nuclear reactors are widely becoming seen as a key component for energy transitions,

but concerns about safety, cost, and regulatory hurdles are making their implementation a slow process.

The facility will be located in Bontang in East Kalimantan on Borneo and will be operational for at least 50 years, as part of the agreement. It is expected to be up and running by 2028.

Norway appoints honorary consul in Penang



Penang-born Datuk Lio Chee Yeong has been officially appointed as the honorary consul of Norway in Penang, Malaysia.

The announcement was held simultaneously with the re-opening

of a Norwegian honorary consulate office in Penang, which has been closed since 2015.

Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow, was representing the Penang government at the ceremony.

"As a Penangite who is already familiar with the duties of an honorary consul, you are in the best position to promote Penang to our Norwegian friends," said Chow to Lio at the ceremony.

"The state government is supportive of the growing number of consular representations in Penang. We certainly welcome more expo-

sure for Penang in Norway and its fellow Scandinavian neighbor's," he added.

Lio is already the honorary consul of Denmark in Penang.

Diplomatic relations between Malaysia and Norway were established in 1968.

Lio then thanked the Penang government and the government of Norway for the support.

"I am honored to be the bearer of Norway's flag in Penang, and I will fulfil the call with the same patriotism I have given Penang and Malaysia," Lio said.



Olof and Marie back in Bangkok

Swedish Pastor couple Olof and Maria Olsson built up the Swedish Church as a center for all the Nordic expats in Thailand during their term here in the second half of the 1990's. Now they are back in a different role. They will be based in Bangkok, but Olof will be traveling Swedish Pastor for all of South East Asia.

By Agneta Bekassy

Let me introduce to you our Swedish priest Olof Olsson and his wife Marie. For many of the Swedes residing in Thailand since a long time, their faces are familiar. Olof was born in Örby, which is a part of Västergötland. This part of Sweden is also often called "Knallebygden" or "Sjuhäradsbygden". A Knalle, is a kind of person, who is a practitioner in an trading activity.

Olof went to school in Kinna, a little bigger place than Örby, but close by. Here he graduated and after graduation, he did the military service in Karlsborg. He joked and said he landed in the "Weather section". What he means about that you can ask him in privacy. He mentioned that he was a bit of the "bad guy", not always agreeing to the military rules and therefore he was sent to this Weather section.

Since a very young age, Olof knew he wanted to become a priest, he tells.

"There were things I absolutely thought needed to be changed, so to me it was a kind of a "calling" and a challenge. Of course, the church rituals could be done in a more understandable and easy going way to attract more people", Olof says. His goal was to make a difference. He started to study theology at the University of Lund in Skåne in 1981 and was graduating 6 years later.



“

We will have to find the Swedes and recreate the church community. At some places, there could be many Swedes interested in the church activity, but at other places, there might be no interest at all.

”

He was a frequently visitor to the university library and here, one day, he met his future wife Marie.

Marie was born in Malmö and went to school in Lomma until she moved to St. Petri in Malmö, to enter high school and to get her graduation. She choose the same university as Olof and started to study several topics to become an assitant professor (adjunct). Religion and history were among the topics she studied and in 1984 Olof and Marie laid eyes on each other in the, maybe not the most romantic place, the university library.

Olof was finishing university and became ordained a priest one year before Marie finished her studies.

Olof started a service as a priest in Halmstad in 1986 and a year later, July the 3rd 1987, he and Marie tied the bond of the anthem in Burlövs old church with only 2 witnesses by their side. One of the witnesses was the, at that time, Archbishop Martin Modeus, who was a fellow student of Olof.

When Marie graduated as a teacher, there were a lot of teachers looking for a job. Marie applied among thousands of other teachers for a job in Skåne and was lucky to get an employment in the nearby city Laholm, not too far from her darling.

In 1990 they decided to spread their wings and accepted a job as a “Tourist priest couple” on the island Gran Canary in San Augustin. They stayed for 2 years 1990 to 1992 before they returned home to Sweden.



This first employment abroad gave them “more taste” for living abroad. In 1995 it was time to pack the suitcases and fly to Bangkok. They, like so many of us, fell in love with Thailand and Bangkok, the warm weather and the friendly people. As they had no children, they decided to adopt and were lucky to receive 2 Thai girls through one local adoption office, Filippa, today 25 and Kajsa 24. They, at the same time, has had Thai Pam in their lives, who is 40 + today and is counted as an extra daughter. Filippa and Kajsa are living in Halmstad and Pam in Landskrona.

Early on during their stay in Thailand, they found a small house with a garden, on Sukhumvit soi 33 in Bangkok, which they thought would be ideal as a “Swedish Church Community House” and they managed to sign a renting contract. Here they organised a lot of activities and events for the thankful Swedes, like the typical Pea soup evenings, the celebration of Santa Lucia and Valborgsmässaöafton, (Wallpurgis fair evening) to just mention a few activities.

Unfortunately, years later during the time of their successors, it was no longer possible for the church and the community to keep this charming house.

After the first five years in Bangkok, Olof and Marie went back to Sweden again, but not for very long. Already in year 2003 they moved abroad again – this time to Brazil where they served in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro as well as Buenos Aires/Argentina. Here they spent six years before moving to Florida and Fort Lauderdale.

Between 2009 and 2014 they built the Swedish Church from scratch in Florida, a wish by SKUT (Swedish

Church Abroad). This was an enormous challenge but a very thankful task for both of them. The Swedish community in Florida welcomed them with open arms. They look back on this memory with very positive thoughts.

“Florida was not at all what we had expected, we were so positively surprised”, Marie said.

By now the couple had been living abroad for 11 years and their daughters were growing up and wanted to go to school in Sweden, so in 2014 they decided to move home to Sweden.

After another five years in Sweden, the longest stay ever until today, the longing to travel hit them again and this time the journey took them to beautiful Rome. We are now talking 2019 and – if you ask Olof and Marie – Rome is indeed a city you must see before you pass away. As we all know, around this time the world had to face the Covid 19 pandemic and how it paralyzed most parts of the world.

Fast forward until today where in 2023 the Swedish community had the pleasure to welcome Marie and Olof back to the “City Of Angels”.

When I asked them about their biggest challenge over their many active years abroad, they look briefly at each other and answer; “Probably to create a Swedish active church community in Florida. We had the children and had to pick the right school for them, to find a place to live and feel safe and much more. We also faced quite a big challenge during our time in Sao Paulo, it was not so easy to start and build a Swedish Church there.”

Olof points out, that of course during all the years, there have been several challenges to face and overcome,



some small and some bigger. There is also a huge risk with a job like theirs, the problem to separate the work from their private lives. As a priest, you naturally want to be available 24 hours for your community.

Some specific “sunshine memories”?

“Yes, of course when we became parents to our lovely daughters and it went quick, Filippa came earlier than expected and we were maybe not 100% prepared. Another one was to be here in Bangkok and greet the Bishop Christina Maria Odenberg when she came to visit. She was the first female Bishop in Sweden and the first one to visit a church community abroad.”

Olof and Marie are not only here for us in Thailand, they also cover the whole Southeast Asia including Japan. They have several tasks to fulfill. Every week they go to visit Scandinavians in jails, something they see as a very necessary and important task. “Those people really need us,” Olof says.

“We also have to find the Swedes and recreate the church community after the pandemic. At some places, there can be many Swedes interested in the church activity, but at other places, there might be no interest at all.”

“The consular and diakonia activities are also of main interest. We are also here to create a bond between the other existing churches. In Rome e.g., we went to meet with representatives from all other churches,” Olof tells.

In the near future, Sweden will send 2 more people to assist Olof and Marie in their daily work, as it’s almost impossible for them to be everywhere and able to help people in need in an efficient way. You cannot help wondering, do they have any leisure time at all?

“Well, we sometimes might add a day extra when we are travelling to explore a country, but it’s rare,” Marie says.

They haven’t had much time to discover Thailand yet, but they have been to Koh Lanta and lately also to Kao Iai with its amazing National Park, a place they really liked. In the near future they wish to visit Hua Hin and meet with the Swedes living there and nearby.

Marie and Olof both love the Thai food, even the more spicy dishes and they find the people very kind and helpful and as most of us, they dislike the heavy traffic and the pollution and added the word “noise pollution” and it’s true, Bangkok is not a silent city, here is a lot of noise 24 hours.

When asking how long we will have the pleasure of Marie and Olof’s presence here in Asia, they answer; “approximately 3-4 years, at least we hope so”.

It’s good to know that both Olof and Marie are dedicated listeners and they welcome everyone for just a cheerful talk or to meet and discuss maybe a problem or just anything.

“We are here and we both enjoy and feel happy to talk with anyone about anything at any time.” Olof says. “Personal chats” is an important part of our work here;”

People who would like to receive messages/ news, about the Swedish Church, just send an email to; Asien.kyrkan@svenska.kyrkan.se

“We are looking forward to reach out to many more Swedes in Asia,” both Marie and Olof let us know. Time to connect!



From left, Vibeke Wagner and Charlotte Brix Andersen of Raindrop Friends with Rasmus Stuhr Jakobsen, right.

Raindrop Friends donates DKK 90.000 to CARE Thailand

The association Raindrop Friends in Denmark has donated DKK 90,000 to CARE's work in Thailand.

The donation follows the death of the founder of Raindrop Friends, Pensak Chagsuchindas Howitz. She founded Raindrop Friends in 1975 together with her husband, Franz Howitz, who at the time was the Danish ambassador in Thailand. The Raindrop Foundation has helped people living in extreme poverty in Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar and Bhutan.

"We have decided that our association's remaining funds will go to the Karen people in the Omkoi district. The villages in the region are very remote in the jungle, where other people rarely come, and where it can be difficult to get there because the dirt roads are bad and in the rainy season almost completely impassable. This is about some people who need a helping hand to get by," says Vibeke

Wagner, Chairwoman of Raindrop Friends.

Omkoi District is located in northwestern Thailand and is home to a significant population of Karen people, one of the largest ethnic minority groups in the country. Poverty is a major problem in the area, and many Karen families struggle with both limited job opportunities, low incomes and lack of access to education and health care. CARE contributes to strengthening women's development and earning opportunities with help to raise chickens, grow coffee and sew purses, bags and clothes.

"The money is a great contribution to the Karen people in Omkoi. Since the Covid pandemic and the economic crisis, conditions have been even more difficult for the world's poor populations in many places. We have helped to establish contact with our colleagues in CARE Thailand, and I am very happy about that," says Rasmus

Stuhr Jakobsen, director of CARE Denmark.

The project "She made it", which Raindrop Friends will support, will directly help 180 women and indirectly 720 family members.

Scandinavians love drinking coffee

Coffee is among the most common non-alcoholic beverages worldwide, but according to new data, the highest consumption of the brew is among Scandinavians.

World Population Review has collected data that shows in which countries the citizens drink the most coffee per person in a year.

Finland with 12 kg coffee per person, is considered the world's biggest consumer of coffee per person. In Finland, two 10-minute coffee breaks are legally mandated at workplaces per day.

Next is Norway with 9.9 kg per person, closely followed by Iceland with 9 kg per citizen. Coffee is the most essential social drink in Iceland due to beer being illegal while wine is overpriced.



Taking fourth place is Denmark with 8.7 kg per person, while Sweden is just surpassed by the Netherlands with 8.4 kg compared to

Sweden's 8.2 kg per resident.

After that comes Switzerland, Belgium, Luxembourg and Canada.

Finland-branched amusement park to open in Philippines



From left, photo shows Kevin Tan, CEO of Megaworld's parent company, Alliance Global Group, Inc.; Juha Tanskanen, CEO of SuperPark LTD; and Graham Coates, head of Megaworld Lifestyle Malls. Photo by Manila Bulletin.

Finland's SuperPark has partnered with the Philippine's Megaworld Lifestyle Malls to open new amusement parks in the Asian country. The partners have previously signed a partnership agreement, reported Manila Bulletin.

SuperPark Philippines will offer more than twenty unique activities in three purpose-built themed areas including Adventure Areas, Game Arenas, and Freestyle Hall.

The parks will be built in two locations of Megaworld's malls which are in Quezon City and Taguig City.

"We are excited for Filipinos to experience this indoor activity park, with a promise of one-of-a-kind amusement, accessibility, and safety," said Graham Coates, Head of Megaworld Lifestyle Malls.



Swedish LELO puts self-pleasure on full display in Hong Kong

Swedish sex toy major LELO has managed to bypass the usual advertising limitations and has launched its first Asian OOH campaign in Hong Kong. A campaign that sparks the conversation on masturbation to commemorate the International Masturbation Day on May 28.

“Over the past 20 years we have seen attitudes towards sexual wellbeing change. It is encouraging to see that the subject is becoming more and more mainstream. By undertaking this OOH campaign, LELO hopes to remain at the forefront of sex positivity,” Joanna Fung said. She is head of business devel-

opment at LELO Asia Pacific.

With the ad plastered on two intersecting trams in the heart of the city, the idea is to ensure the sex-positive message reaches pleasure seekers in Hong Kong as the two trams cross each other on Jubilee Street and Central Station.

The sexual wellness industry was valued at US\$81.2 billion in 2021. It is expected to grow to US\$116 billion by 2030.

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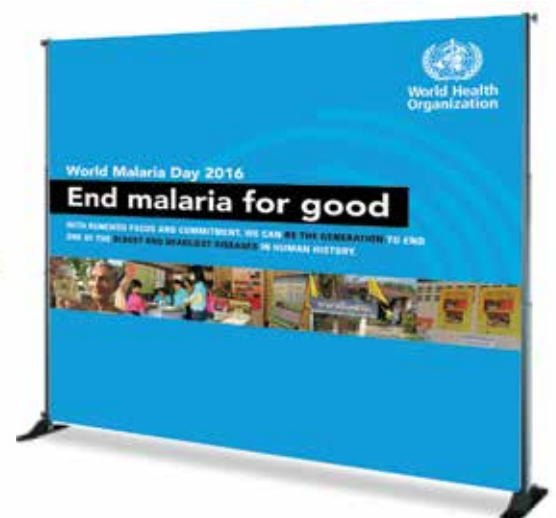
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