



# SHAVINGS

a newsletter from north house folk school  
summer 2023

# NORTH HOUSE FOLK SCHOOL

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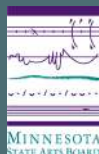
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The mission of North House Folk School is to enrich lives and build community by teaching traditional northern crafts in a student-centered learning environment that inspires the hands, the heart, and the mind.



## STAY CONNECTED

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# On the Harbor

Watching them float skyward one by one was a bit like magic. The crane's boom swung silently across the sky and hands reached up to steady each panel as it neared its new home. It was the spring of 2009, and nine solar hot water panels were being installed on top of North House's new Milling Shop classroom building. Pitched decisively to the south, the intent was simple—maximize heat gain in late fall, winter, and early spring. Heat captured would both be routed into and slowly released from a large sand bed underneath the classroom's cement floor, and simultaneously an abundance of hot water would be generated for the newly created second-floor intern loft and living space. Our intern program was young and growing, and powering it with the sun's rays just seemed to make sense. Fourteen years later, remembering my turn on the roof with my hands stretched skyward makes me smile (even as my mind tries to imagine the BTUs saved).

And there are reasons to keep smiling. As this issue of *Shavings* goes to print, two similar projects are underway at North House. In late May, solar electric panels will fly skyward to cover the eastern third of the Green Building's roof. One by one, I can picture them being connected and then turned on, electrons flowing down the wires to power our classrooms. Simultaneously, down by the water, our green-hulled schooner *Hjørdis* is going electric, with a new marine-grade electric engine and batteries replacing the old diesel engine and fuel tanks. A schooner powered by only the wind and the sun—yup, just seems to make sense. Powered by both individual donors and grants, these next steps set the stage for more important work ahead.

And while these projects are a great reason to visit campus, the coming summer and fall promise an abundance of other reasons to be involved as well. Want to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Sätergläntan, our sister school from Sweden? June's Wooden Boat Show is the place to be. Ready for the return of the big-top tent filled with music and celebration? Join us for Unplugged in September. Hearing rumors of our first-ever Hide Week? Target October. This issue of *Shavings* has all the details.

Here at North House, programs are thriving, key projects are underway, and planning for the future continues. Youth offerings are expanding, scholarship funding and requests are growing, and our Work Study accessibility program is available every month of the year. It just seems to make sense. Plan on hearing more in the months ahead!

With appreciation,

Greg Wright  
Executive Director



# 100 Candles for Sätergläntan

Celebrating connections and community with Sweden's premier craft school

"It's not every day that you have a friend celebrating their 100th birthday!" said Greg Wright, Executive Director at North House Folk School, "so when our sister school in Sweden, Sätergläntan, shared their 100th anniversary was coming up, we leapt at the opportunity to host a celebration for them here on campus."

Sätergläntan is Sweden's premier traditional craft school. Founded in 1922, Sätergläntan has been educating craftspeople for over 100 years. This summer, a delegation of four lead instructors plus Sätergläntan's director will visit Minnesota to teach craft, build connections, and celebrate the 100th anniversary of this beloved school.

"We have had a strong connection with Sätergläntan, and we've been thrilled to host several of their instructors here at North House," shared Program Director Jessa Frost.

In 2019, North House formalized our relationship with the Swedish School

to facilitate more regular exchanges of instructors and emerging artisans. Since 2017, North House's Artisan Development Program participants have traveled to Sätergläntan to build connections and study with leading craftspeople in the Swedish craft tradition.

Sätergläntan is located in the rural village of Insjön in Sweden's Dalarna region. Many traditional crafts have roots in this region, including the Mora knife factory and the Dala horse factory. Sätergläntan was founded by sisters Elsa and Wilma Långbers and was originally a weaving school that provided occupational training for women.

Since then, the school has trained generations of craftspeople, carrying age-old Scandinavian handcraft traditions into the 21st century. Today, Sätergläntan's core programs include woodworking, weaving, sewing, and metalwork. With a focus on teaching the crafting process from start to

finish, Sätergläntan's students start with the raw materials, whether that's harvesting trees to be used for woodworking or making coal to be used in the blacksmith shop. The school offers two-year programs as well as short summer courses open to anyone with a knowledge of the Swedish language.

"Just like in the US, the craft movement in Sweden is broad and diverse," said Erin Swenson-Klatt, Food and Handcraft Programs Manager at the American Swedish Institute (ASI). "For decades, Sätergläntan has filled a special role of documenting, cultivating, and sharing traditional craft, from its raw materials to deep mastery of technique. Again and again, Americans have looked to Sätergläntan for its network of incredible instructors and students to learn about practicing Swedish handcraft in both new and old ways—there simply is nowhere



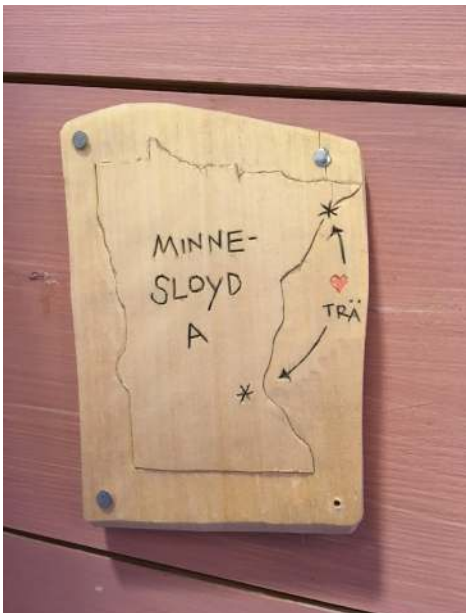
**Lead sewing instructor Johanna Runbäck models a traditional dress.**

else like it in the US (or even Sweden!), so it will remain an important resource for us."

"We from Sätergläntan are deeply grateful to share our 100-year celebration with you at North House," said Monika Jönsson, Sätergläntan's Director. "In workshops and demonstrations, we will be sharing know-how and building bridges together for the next 100 years."

During their visit to Minnesota, the delegation will start their trip by teaching coursework on the North House campus, and will then join North House for the annual Wooden Boat Show June 16-18. The community is invited to the 100th birthday pie social on June 16, and to see the delegation give craft demonstrations on June 17.

"We are excited to have our friends and neighbors connect with Sätergläntan during their visit to Minnesota," shared Wright. "It is my hope that as a result of



**A carving by Paul Linden on the Sätergläntan campus.**





**Above: A cowbell made by lead blacksmith instructor Johan Säfström. Sätergläntan students learn the craft process from start to finish, such as making coal for blacksmithing.**

**Below: The Sätergläntan campus, located in the Dalarna region of Sweden. Several instructors, resident artisans, and staff from North House have visited Sätergläntan over the years.**



this trip that new connections will emerge, the relationships between North House and Sätergläntan will be strengthened, and the imagination of craftspeople will be sparked!”

Following their time in Grand Marais, the delegation will visit Minneapolis to teach five courses in partnership with ASI. ASI will also host June Makers’ Night on June 22, where the public can bring a project to work on and meet the Sätergläntan delegation. ASI will also host an exhibition on Sätergläntan’s 100-year history, open June 17 through October 29.

“We extend a warm *tack så mycket* to all the partners involved, including our Minneapolis workshop co-hosts at the Chicago Avenue Fire Arts Center, Fireweed Community Woodshop, and Weavers Guild of Minnesota,” said Swenson-Klatt.

More information about the Sätergläntan visit can be found at [northhouse.org](http://northhouse.org) and [asimn.org](http://asimn.org). This visit is supported by the American-Scandinavian Foundation and the Minnesota State Arts Board.

## 2023 SÄTERGLÄNTAN VISIT

### **COURSEWORK AT NORTH HOUSE**

JUNE 12-15, 2023

### **ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION PIE SOCIAL**

JUNE 16, 2023

*NORTH HOUSE CAMPUS*

### **CRAFT DEMONSTRATIONS**

JUNE 17, 2023

*NORTH HOUSE CAMPUS*

### **MAKERS' NIGHT**

JUNE 22, 2023

*AMERICAN SWEDISH INSTITUTE*

### **COURSEWORK WITH AMERICAN SWEDISH INSTITUTE**

JUNE 23-25, 2023



Above: Nordic rosepath weaving by lead weaving instructor Susana Ayton. Rosepath weaving was used to make warm blankets for cold winter nights.

Below: Ullkorgs, traditional Swedish wool baskets, by lead woodworking instructor Beth Moen.



# Off the Waitlist and Into the Class

When the class you want is full, the best thing to do is to get on the waitlist

Liz O'Brien is a local fiber artist and frequent North House student. Last fall, Liz was excited to see a Beginning Spinning class with Martha Owen scheduled for Fiber Week. There was just one problem: the class was already full, and there was a waitlist.

As North House has grown over the years, many classes have started to fill up quickly, sometimes soon after registration opens. This can feel disappointing for students who go to register for a class only to find that it's already filled. Some students wonder if it's worth registering for a waitlist, especially if said waitlist is long. And while there's no guarantee that a spot will open, there is more movement on waitlists than many people realize.

Despite Martha Owen's class being full,

Liz O'Brien decided to add her name to the waitlist. A few months later, she got a call from North House: a spot had opened up in the class, and it was hers if she wanted it.

"That had been a pie-in-the-sky one for me for a long time, to try to get into Martha's class," Liz said. "I was really excited that I got in—it was a nail-biter since I was on the waiting list, but I got the call and got in."

Although the methods of reaching out to waitlists are nuanced depending on how soon a class starts, there are two main ways that the North House staff contacts students on waitlists. Most of the time, waitlists run in chronological order; the person who registered for the waitlist first is the first one to get contacted when a spot opens up. In these cases, people on



Even popular classes with long waitlists can have last-minute openings.





**Registering for a waitlist sends a clear signal to our Program Managers that certain classes are popular and that there's demand for more sessions.**

the waitlist typically have a day or two to decide if they want to take the spot before it's offered to the next person on the list. This means that it's still beneficial to register for a class early, even if you're on the waitlist—you'll have a better chance of getting into the class you want the higher up on the list you are.

However, there are times when a student drops a class last minute. When a class is scheduled to start less than two weeks away, the North House team ultimately reaches out to everyone on the waitlist, and there's no time set aside for those higher up on the list to make a decision. This means that whoever responds first gets the spot. So while there's no guarantee, there are still instances where students have the chance to get into a class even when they're farther down on a long waitlist.

"It is absolutely worth it to add your name to a waitlist if the class you want to take is full," said Rachel Andrus, Front

Office Host at North House.

"The chance of a spot opening in a class is something that cannot be predicted, but it does happen fairly regularly. Our front office staff team typically calls at least one waitlist per day. And if there are already many names on the list, I still recommend adding yourself, because if a spot does open, many times we end up working our way down the waitlist as folks who added their name have made other plans and are unable to accept the spot."

When Liz O'Brien checked into her Beginning Spinning class, she met several other students there who had previously been on the waitlist.

"I think that speaks to the fact that no matter how long a waitlist is, there's still a chance you can get in," Liz said. "Schedules change, people get sick, things come up, so it's always worth getting on the waitlist even if you think you're not going to get into the class."



# Introducing Hide Week

A thematic week exploring a historic and versatile craft

From tanning to sewing to toolmaking, so much goes into creating something with leather by hand. This fall, North House is hosting our first-ever Hide Week, a thematic week on how to make and utilize leather in its many forms.

Emily Derke is a North House instructor who is organizing the Hide Week events and has been working with hides and leather for over ten years. While animal hides can be found in myriad traditional crafts, Derke said that turning animal skin into a workable leather is also a craft in and of itself.

“Hide tanning is a molecular transformation that changes animal skin into leather,” Derke said. “It creates new bonds in the proteins of the skin and is a process that can’t be reversed.”

Hide tanning dates back thousands of years and can be found in cultures all over the world. There are multiple

methods for tanning leather, ranging from plant-based methods such as bark tanning to fat-based methods such as brain tanning. North House has hosted several hide tanning courses over the years in addition to other hide-related courses like leather clothing and embellishment courses.

“Although North House has had hide tanning courses before, it’s never been a huge theme,” Derke said. “However, there’s a growing interest in these courses, and they fill up whenever we offer them.”

Hide Week will be similar in structure to other thematic weeks throughout the year such as Fiber Week or Wood Week. The week will include courses related to making and utilizing leather, including courses in tanning, quillwork, leather sewing, and making tools needed for working with hides. There will also be special presentations and gatherings for students and instructors.

“There will be a mix of new and returning instructors,” Derke said. “Nate Johnson has taught hide tanning here in the past and will be teaching two courses—one of them will be a hide tool-making class with new instructor Jeff Harper from Leech Lake. Greg Biskakone Johnson from Lac du Flambeau will be teaching Winter Moccasins, Anishinaabe-Style, and local Cook County instructors Eric Edgin and Molly Meyer will teach a bark-tanned sheep leather class.”

Hide Week will also include the course Gifts of the Porcupine: A Quillwork Intensive with guest instructor Jean Marshall, band member of Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation.

“Jean’s work is incredibly beautiful and well done. Her enthusiasm for working with leather and quills is inspiring and I am really looking forward to having her here,” Derke said.

Hide Week is scheduled for October 2-9, 2023, and Hide Week courses will open for registration starting June 8. (Or June 7 for members).

Learn more online at [northhouse.org/events/hide-week](http://northhouse.org/events/hide-week).



Above: Quillwork supplies by Jean Marshall. Marshall is a special guest instructor who will be teaching a quillwork intensive during Hide Week.

Below: North House students in the Bark Tanned Sheepskin course held earlier this year. Bark tanning is a method of tanning that utilizes tannic acid found in plant materials.







# WOODEN BOAT SHOW

## June 16-18, 2023

Summer's arrival in the north deserves to be celebrated! The Wooden Boat Show features craft demonstrations, community food events, speakers, kids' activities, and—of course—wooden boats.

This year, the Wooden Boat Show includes an **extra special birthday celebration** with our friends from Sätergläntan Institute for Slöjd and Handcraft Community as they celebrate 100 years of handcraft education.

Whether it's paddling out on the lake in your own boat, admiring others' boats at the Wooden Boat Display, or enjoying a slice of pie with our Swedish friends, there's something for everyone at the Wooden Boat Show. Join us in celebrating the solstice and the start of summer on Lake Superior.

Find a full schedule of events and details on our website: [northhouse.org/events/wooden-boat-show](http://northhouse.org/events/wooden-boat-show)

# EVENT SCHEDULE

## Friday, June 16

Family Drop-In Crafts

Crafting on the Commons

*Noon–6:30pm*

Wooden Boat Display *Noon–7pm*

Live Music on Campus *Noon–7pm*

Speaker Series

*2pm, 3pm, and 4pm*

Grand Marais Lions Club BBQ

*5–7pm | \$5–\$10 picnic fare*

**100th Birthday Party Pie Social**

*5pm–till the pie runs out*

Community Paddle/Row/Sail on the Harbor! Small Craft Takeover!

*7–8pm*

Community Contra Dance

*7–8pm (Family Dance)*

*8–10pm (Community Dance)*

## Saturday, June 17

Family Drop-In Crafts

Live Music on Campus *9am–3pm*

Crafting on the Commons *10am–4pm*

Wooden Boat Display *10am–4pm*

Boats-to-Tools Auction *10am–3pm*

**Featured Demonstrations**

*Beth Moen: 10am*

*Johanna Runbäck: 11am*

*Susanna Ayton: 2pm*

*Johan Säfström: 3pm*

Lake Superior Chowder Experience:

An Empty Bowls Fundraiser

*Noon–1pm | \$15 adults, \$10 kids*

*12 and under*

Summer Solstice Pageant *8pm*

## Sunday, June 18

Fika and Friends *10:30am*

Featured Presentation:

*Ted Bell, Noon*



### Featured Speaker: Ted Bell

Sunday, June 18, noon

Ted Bell, founder and president of Northstar Canoes, began paddling and racing canoes as a youngster in Indiana. In his early twenties, he started manufacturing USCA Marathon and Downriver Whitewater Racing Canoes. In his late twenties, he moved to Minnesota and became a manager at Midwest Mountaineering, but quickly returned to building canoes in his garage in his “spare time.” Now nearing retirement, Ted shares the story of how it all started and how his winding journey got him to where he is today.



# The Gift of Craft

by Tom Morse

What part of your North House experience do you wish everyone could experience?

Is it a sense of belonging? The supportive community of crafters? The chance to grow a new skill?

During North House's spring appeal, your support is needed to make sure more people have the opportunity to have those life-changing experiences. Make your gift by Wooden Boat Show to help:

- Offer more scholarships and Work Study opportunities in 2023 than in any prior year (for the third year in a row!). Each week, four people will be able to experience the folk school because you've helped to remove financial barriers.

- Youth Programs that connect young makers with incredible experiences that open their eyes to history, nature, and traditions they wouldn't see in any other way.
- Internships and Artisan Development programs that consistently grow the next generation of craftspeople, nonprofit professionals, and instructors (more than 15% of our instructors are "graduates" of these programs).
- Community events that connect and inspire—bringing together craft, music, storytelling, and culture—and celebrate northern traditions in incredible ways.

*Make your gift of any size today at  
[northhouse.org/donate](https://northhouse.org/donate)*



# Unplugged 2023

This year's Unplugged will continue the decades-long tradition of celebrating music, craft, food, and beverage as a community with an incredible weekend of events you won't want to miss.

Thursday and Friday night will feature two unforgettable nights of music with Sean Carey, Pieta Brown, Mike Lewis, Jeremy Ylvisaker, Joe Rainey Sr., Dylan Jennings, and Barbara Jean Meyers. If you were with us last year, you know you'll want to make sure you have tickets for both nights!

Saturday Morning will mark the second annual family concert under the big top tent! Last year we were thrilled to host a morning with the Okee Dokee Brothers, and we've got something special in the works again this year!

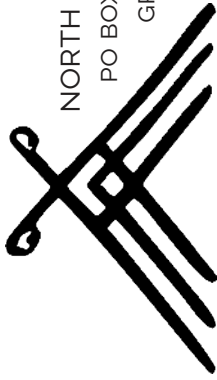
Saturday evening will be the Birch Bark Bash hosted by Chef Scott Graden of the New Scenic Café. Join fellow North House supporters in celebrating with incredible food, drink, and entertainment, capping off a spectacular weekend of programs on the North Shore.

All weekend long we'll also be hosting the Folk Artisan Marketplace along with a speaker series, and the Points North Online Auction.

**Mark your calendar:  
tickets go on sale August 1.**

More information available at  
[northhouse.org/events/unplugged](https://northhouse.org/events/unplugged)





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