

Scandia Camp Mendocino This year marked the 30th year that Scandia Camp Mendocino has been held. The camp is located at an historic camp in the redwoods. The nearest towns are Fort Bragg and Mendocino. The Woodlands Is a California state park and the naturalists here lead hikes in the area. The Redwoods and surrounding wetlands provide habitat for many species of plants and animals. The campers stay in rustic cabins and the activities are centered in the lounge, dining hall and dance hall. Wonderful meals are served, many with a Nordic flavor.

Daily music lessons are led by teachers from Sweden, Norway, and U.S. Fiddle, Hardanger fiddle, nyckelharpa, and accordion are among the instruments taught. Each music teacher is featured in a "mini-concert" during the week. These take place in the lounge before dinner, in the dining hall after dinner and in The Linscott Dance Hall. The Linscott family has been very active in this Camp, and in the dance community. Thanks to their generosity, the camp recently received a new dance floor which is enjoyed by the Scandinavian dancers as well as all the other music, dance and folklore camps that use this facility. Dance teachers hold classes in Swedish and Norwegian dancing each day. There are also presentations of different cultural, historical and arts and crafts from the Scandinavian area. Singing, baking, language and fiber arts are also taught. Each night there is dancing featuring the musicians who present music from different regions, many of which have their own style of dancing and accompanying music. The dancers and musicians come from all over including the San Francisco Bay area, Southern California, Seattle, WA, Boulder, CO as well as Sweden and Norway. There have also been campers here from Japan. One of the younger campers I met here has been a member of the VASA Lodge, <http://www.vasaorder.com> in Southern California, and her VASA Youth folk dance group has toured Sweden twice. Many of the participants are active in their local music and dance groups throughout the year such as: <http://www.norcalspelmanslag.org> , <http://www.skandia-folkdance.org> (Seattle), and <http://www.ngls.net> (Norwegian) and some also participate in <http://www.nordicfiddlesandfeet.org>, a camp in New Hampshire.

At Scandia Camp Mendocino one evening a fun auction is held to help raise funds to continue the camp. There is also a banquet where many of the campers wear traditional folk costumes, and the musicians all lead the group to a candle-light dinner with a promenade featuring traditional music. There have also been traditional weddings performed at camp.

This is a wonderful international program, and represents diplomacy in action. Many of the campers form lasting friendships here, and there are many links built between this country and Sweden and Norway. In these difficult economic times, many people find that they are not able to take a vacation Away from home, and the "stay-cation" is becoming popular. Attending this camp is an ideal way to meet and get to know people from around the globe, and for many it is "right in our own back yard" If you are interested in finding out more, see <http://www.scandiacampmendocino.org> . This year about 100 people attended the week-long Scandia Camp. Perhaps you would like to join us next year!