

NEWS

For Immediate Release: April 23, 2014

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PUBLIC INFO: www.SolvangDanishDays.org

2014 Announcing 78th Annual Solvang Danish Days Maid

Solvang, California, USA— The 78th Annual Solvang Danish Days is pleased to announce Angelique Heron as the 2014 Danish Maid. Angelique's heritage and family traditions with Danish Days run deep, and we can actually thank her great grandfather, Axel Nielsen, immigrant son of Marcus and Andrea Nielsen from Mors, Denmark, for establishing a celebration in 1936 in honor of Denmark's Independence Day, which has now become what we know as Solvang Danish Days. In 1961, before the Danish Maid tradition started, Angelique's grandmother, Ann Neilsen, dressed up in Danish costume to help host the day's events, and the rest is Danish Days and Danish Maid history. Angelique's mother, Betina Heron, was the Danish Maid in 1988, making Angelique one of the few second-generation maids to be awarded this honor since the tradition began.

"I am proud to be a part of this community, and I have a strong desire to keep our Danish traditions and heritage alive," says Angelique.

Angelique attends Santa Ynez Valley Union High School and will be a Senior this fall. She is active in the YMCA's Youth and Government Program and works at her family's store, Neilson's Market. She is also an avid dancer, having started dance in pre-school.

Angelique has attended and volunteered at the Danish Days Festival since she was two years old, from serving aebleskivers at her family's famous aebleskivers booth to performing ballet in the park and participating in the weekend's parades. She laughs, "All weekend long I am in costume! Friday night, I am wearing my Danish costume in the candlelit parade, and Saturday morning I am a ballerina performing behind the park. Immediately, after my performance I am transformed into a Danish girl serving or cooking aebleskivers. I look forward to Danish Days every year!" says Angelique.

Leading up to Danish Days, Angelique will sell raffle tickets to Win A Trip To Denmark at the famous Farmers Market in Solvang on Wednesday afternoons. As part of her responsibilities, she will appear at events for the Danish Brotherhood, the Danish Sisterhood, the Vikings, and at Valley Rotary meetings to name a few. At each

appearance Angelique will talk about the upcoming Danish Days weekend events, represent her Danish heritage and sell tickets to the annual Saturday night Danish Days Dinner Dance. Angelique is also available for other Danish Days appearances for other local boards or committees upon request. Please contact Denise Birkholm at danishdays@aol.com for information and availability.

Angelique is proud to be the first Danish Maid on Twitter and to tweet Danish Days information and updates as Solvang builds up to this annual fun-filled weekend. By following Angelique on her Twitter account, you can receive pictures of Angelique at her various Maid appearances and find out from the Maid herself about all things Danish Days! Please follow Angelique at the following Twitter handle: [@DanishDays](https://twitter.com/DanishDays)

The non-for-profit charitable Solvang Danish Days Foundation celebrates its 78th Annual Danish Days from Friday, September 19 through Sunday, September 21, 2014. The three-day event honors the establishment of Solvang by Danish-Americans in 1911 and helps preserve Solvang's authentic Danish heritage. Admission for most activities is free and thousands of residents and visitors enjoy the celebration each year. To purchase tickets for the Aebleskiver Breakfast, the Danish Days Dinner Dance, and the "Danes For A Day" VIP Package, please visit the Solvang owned and operated FirstStreet Tickets at www.FirstStreetTickets or (805) 693 – 8084.

To review the most current, complete schedule of all events during Danish Days weekend, download parade applications and more, visit www.SolvangDanishDays.org.

All photos available hi-res; please request from audra@firststreetcreative.com. Credit: SolvangDanishDays.org

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