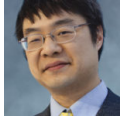


2012 års Gävlebock gick upp i brand. Igen.

 devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20121217-01

December 17, 2012



Raymond Chen

The town of Gävle in Sweden erects a large straw goat every year. The Yule Goat is a Scandinavian tradition, but the Gävle goat (*Gävlebocken* in Swedish) is by far the most famous, or perhaps the most notorious, because it has been the center of conflict from its very beginning, and over the years since its first appearance in 1966, it has only gained *more* notoriety. (For something that is supposed to bring people together, it sure does a good job of dividing them.) The first conflict is between those who want the goat to last the entire season and those who want it to be lit on fire. (And anecdotal evidence suggests that a large number of Swedes are in the second category.) It is such a big deal that you can place bets on whether the goat will survive or what day it will succumb to flames. The second conflict is between the Southern Merchants organization, who built the Yule Goat in its initial years but gave up out of frustration over the repeated arson, and the Natural Science Club (*Naturvetenskapliga Föreningen*) of the School of Vasa, who took up the tradition, even though their goats didn't fare much better. The Southern Merchants resumed constructing a Yule Goat, leading to a bitter rivalry between the two groups. Wikipedia has a rundown of the goat's fate every year since its inception, including its burning in 2001 by a tourist from the United States who claims that he intended only to burn one piece of straw but was unable to stop the spread of the flames. (The article in *Aftonbladet* is far more insightful than any of the other reports I've seen, despite the fact that *Aftonbladet* is a tabloid. Unfortunately, as far as I can tell, the article is available only in Swedish.) The Gävle goat blogs and tweets in both Swedish and English. And for those keeping score: On the evening of December 12, the 2012 Yule Goat of Gävle went up in flames.

Ursprunglig titel: "Den 2012 Gävlebocken gick upp i brand. Igen." Korrigerad efter kommentar från [BOFH](#). Jag var så orolig om jag skulle använda "upp i brand" eller "upp i eld" att jag förbisåg andra fel... Tack.

Raymond Chen

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