



Uutiset

NEWSLETTER OF THE FINNISH AMERICAN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, INC.

February/Helmikuu 2015

Come to Our Annual *Laskiainen* Celebration!

NOTE: Change in time to 7:00 p.m. Because we are having a meal, we are moving our start time a little earlier.

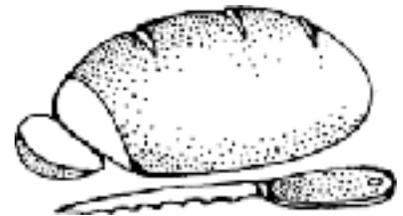
Join us for a pea soup supper and live music from Finn Hall!

Finn Hall is a Twin Cities-based band that plays old-time (and not so old-time) Finnish dance music, the kind that was heard in Finn halls across the country (and still is in some places). The band members are Ralph Tuttila, mandolin; Al Reko, vocals and accordion; Dennis Halme, accordion and some vocals; Cheryl Paschke, violin and nyckelharpa (Swedish key fiddle); Johanna Lorbach, violin; Jaana Tuttila, vocals; and Gordon Oswald, bass. There may be an opportunity to learn some dance steps. The band really loves to play for dancing.

The FACA board members will supply the *bernekeitto* (pea soup). We ask our members to bring a dish to share, but this is not required. Here is what to bring, by last name:



A-F: appetizer or side dish
G-K: salad
L-R: dessert
S-Z: bread



Program In Brief

Laskiainen Celebration

February 20, 7:00 p.m.

International Institute

1694 Como Ave., St. Paul

*For help finding a ride to the program:
call any of the board members*

Also, the winner of the 2015 Sauna Bucket Award will be announced. This annual award honors a FACA member who has made a significant contribution to FACA and the Twin Cities Finnish community.

FACA Event Cancellation Policy

If St. Paul public schools are cancelled due to bad weather, then a FACA event scheduled for that day will also be canceled. FACA members may contact any Board member if they have a question about whether an event is canceled.

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President's Message

By Gene Ollila

Welcome to the new year, and perhaps this will be a happy and beneficial one for you. The winter thus far has been a poor one, if one likes winter with snow and colder temperatures.

I went to a Gopher men's basketball game recently without a coat on! I also want to encourage going to a Gopher women's basketball game. They are now 16-4, in spite of losing their All-America player a third of the way through the season. There are lots of girls and families there, and it is great fun. Back to complaining about the winter, at least with downhill skiing, I can ski with my grandchildren, now 6 and 8. In addition, I understand the ice thickness at Lake of the Woods is quite good, as I will be going on my 28th annual trip there with some relatives and friends for solid water fishing. Even the lawyers taste good, but not as good as walleyes or saugers.

Coming up in February is the *Laskiainen* program, with all the pea soup preparations. I am looking forward to making the whole pea soup with ham hocks. Mmmm! I once made this on a winter Boy Scout campout, which was loved by all, in spite of the aftereffects. It is too bad we will not be able to go to the Palo *Laskiainen*, started I believe in the 1920s, with its long iced toboggan slides and the *vipu kelkka* outdoors, and the good food, displays, and book sellers indoors.

Speaking of books, winter tends to be a time of more contemplation and reading than summer. If you haven't read any of Jarkko Sipila's crime novels, please consider starting, as I think they are as good as Stieg Larson's books, like *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*. If you think that all medical research is done in an orderly and "gentlemanly" manner, please consider reading *The Emperor Of All Maladies* by Siddhartha Mukherjee. Hopefully that reading will not make you pessimistic about medicine. Finally, Cheryl Strayed's *Wild*, now also a movie, is a definite "upper," and makes one think she has *sisu* in her.

We are getting closer to the Festival of Nations, with the theme being "International Art." John Rova, an architect and painter, is heading the exhibit portion, so if you have ideas for Finnish/Finnish American Art, please discuss with him. The adult and children's dance groups are already practicing with Dan Salin and Monica Hoffman in charge, and Kathleen Jackson assisting. The Bazaar and Café will again be headed by Kathryn Hill. Baking day is scheduled for April 25th. We will be looking for volunteers to fill slots on all the days, and will soon have that sign-up sheet available. Please address any overall questions or concerns to me at my number listed.

See you at *Laskiainen* and enjoy the *bernekeito* as you listen to music!

Kiitos paljo!



Board Notes *By Ruth Erkkila*



L-R: Front: John Rova, Ruth Erkkila, Janie Ahola, Back: Gene Ollila, Dennis Halme, Richard Harju.

The FACA Board met at Bakers Square in St. Paul on January 13. President Gene Ollila called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m. Also present: Dennis Halme, Janie Ahola, Ruth Erkkila, Richard Harju, John Rova and Bud Berry.

The meeting minutes from the December meeting were approved.

Treasurer Janie Ahola reported the bank balance for December 31, 2014, and previous years. This year's balance is slightly lower. However, Kathryn Hill, the Finnish Café manager, will pay the significant Festival of Nations expenses using profits from the 2014 Café. Stella Arola and Louella Zibell completed an audit of the 2013 books and issued a certificate. Janie and Gene will work on a budget for 2015.

Vice president Dennis Halme reported on February program plans. Tentatively the rest of the year is scheduled. Hospitality chair Richard Harju reported on hospitality plans. The board approved putting a sign on the refreshment table suggesting a \$2 donation.

Membership chair John Rova had a table with FACA information at the *Joulu—Magical Finnish Christmas* celebration.

The International Institute will not charge us rent if an event is cancelled due to bad weather.

John Rova will chair the Festival of Nations cultural booth; Susan Harstad is interested in helping. Gene will write up a Finnish Café contract between FACA and Kathryn Hill. FACA will supply the volunteers to staff the booth. Adult and youth Finnish dance groups will be

coordinated by Dan Salin and Monica Hoffman, respectively.

The board discussed nominations for the Sauna Bucket Award. Dennis will get the sauna bucket engraved with the winner's name before presentation of the award at the February program.

The board voted to give \$200 to FACA Salolampi scholarships. Campers related to a FACA member may apply.

Ruth talked to the Finnish American Historical Archive in Hancock, Michigan, and they would be happy to accept our meeting minutes and other documents into their archives. Submissions may be in electronic form or paper documents.

No progress has been made on finding a new home for the library. Should we continue to maintain it?

Gene described three volunteer opportunities, and interested people should contact him: volunteer ambassadors for the 17U Bandy Championship to be held in Roseville; people of Swedish-speaking Finnish descent for casting call for a network TV show (the show and filming will take place in Sweden); native Finnish speakers to help translate Finnish software for Primas.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m. The next board meeting will be February 17, 6:30 p.m., at Bakers Square in St. Paul.

Sisu Heritage Meeting and Program

By Marlin Bjornrud, president, Sisu Heritage, Inc.

Sisu Heritage, Inc. of Embarrass, announces its annual meeting, to be held on Sunday, February 15, at 2:00 p.m. The meeting will take place at the Embarrass Townhall on Levander Road.

Along with reports, election, and ethnic foods, the featured speaker will be St. Louis County Commissioner Tom Rukavina. Mr. Rukavina will speak about the history of politics on the Iron Range.

All are welcome to attend.

Welcome, New Members!

**Sara Korsman of Lakeville
Marlene Moreno of Maplewood
Tervetuloa!**

FinnFest USA 2015 Commemorates Sibelius' 150th Birthday and the Kleinhans 75th

Buffalo, New York is FinnFest USA's 2015 destination. Kleinhans Music Hall, designed by Eliel and Eero Saarinen, will serve as "festival central," a space where Sibelius' Finlandia and much more will ring out and people will gather to celebrate and learn. October 9-12, Columbus Day weekend, will include Finland's blue and white flag flying in front of Buffalo's Central Public Library on October 10th, Aleksis Kivi Day, Finland's national holiday honoring Finnish literature. Yes, FinnFest USA and Buffalo are working together to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Jean Sibelius' birth and the 75th anniversary of Kleinhans.

During this festival, Sibelius and Saarinen will become much more than cultural icons, becoming more than people on the Top Ten list of "Finns Everyone should Know." Attendees will experience Sibelius and Saarinen's handiwork first hand. This weekend's themes should encourage many to use the FinnFest USA festival as an excuse to finally cross that visit to Niagara Falls off their "bucket list."

Music will be everywhere, including lesser known Sibelius work performed by a variety of instrumental groups and soloists. Other Finnish music, from folk to classical stretching from the traditional into the 21st Century, will help listeners experience Sibelius as part of a deep music history, a history that surrounded him when he was composing and continues to have life and energy in the present. Attendees can expect kantele, brass, and polka bands to share space with the symphony orchestra.

All these sounds will occur in an Eliel and Eero Saarinen masterpiece in a city rich with architectural masterpieces. Holding the festival in Kleinhans, a beloved Buffalo landmark, means attendees will see a Saarinen-designed building in the midst of Buffalo's rich collection of outstanding buildings representing many of the great American architects – H. H. Richardson, Louis Sullivan, Daniel H. Burnham, and the largest collection of Frank Lloyd Wright buildings east of Chicago.

Listening to Sibelius' orchestral music, played by the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra in a building designed by the Saarinens—provides a major reason to attend FinnFest USA's Buffalo

festival. The FinnFest USA *tori*, occurring in a National Landmark building, designed not just by one but two Saarinens working together to create the elegant, functional Kleinhans Music Hall, provides a second reason. Add lectures and panels by renowned scholars from Finland and the US, scholars who will unwrap the myths and legends surrounding the Sibelius and Saarinen icons....nothing like this has ever been done before at FinnFest USA. This weekend will need to be savored in person, remembered and talked about for years to come.

A large block of hotel rooms has been reserved at a special FinnFest USA price at the downtown Hyatt Hotel for the weekend and into the days following. It's time to start making plans to come to Buffalo, New York, where *sisu*, forged in Finland, has been imported to Buffalo.

12th Annual Nordic Gala

The Nordic Culture Clubs presents the 12th Annual Nordic Gala on February 28th, 7:00 p.m. Sons of Norway, 722 2nd Ave. N., Fargo, North Dakota.

This fundraiser by the Nordic Culture Clubs is for the 38th Annual Scandinavian Hjemkomst Festival. All proceeds benefit the Festival, and we are delighted to bring you another exciting cultural experience from both Old and New World Scandinavia. Tickets available at Hjemkomst Center, Stabo Scandinavian Imports and ScanDesign. \$20 in advance \$25 at the door.

Come and enjoy entertainment and join us for appetizers, silent auction and dancing. The Nordic Gala features jazz guitarist and Finlandia Performer of the Year Olli Hirvonen. His solo jazz set will get everyone up and dancing. Along with the wonderful music, you will also enjoy Scandinavian delicacies with a Finnish flair. This year there will be open faced sandwiches, delectable Finnish cake and of course pickled herring. Everyone will surely find something they love with the assortment of sweets as well.

Come and explore your Scandinavian side with a number of silent auction items, Scandinavian music and food. What could be a better way to enjoy the icy winter than to warm up with some Scandinavian hospitality!

For further information, please contact: Angela Beaton, NCC Executive Director Nordic Culture Clubs. (218) 299-5452

New Finnish Grammar (a Novel)

By *Jeanne Swope*

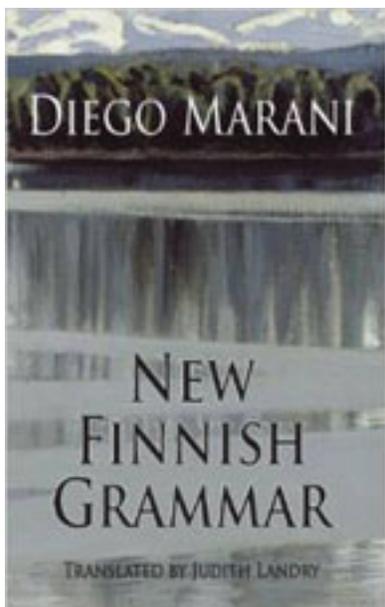
New Finnish Grammar

Author: Diego Marani

Translator: Judith Landry

Daedalus, Europe, 2011

An injured man is found, without memory or language, in the Italian port city of Trieste during World War II. Because he is wearing a Finnish jacket, his doctor, an expatriate Finn, gives him the name printed on a label in the jacket, “Sampo Karjalainen.” Since the man doesn’t understand any language, the doctor speaks to him in, and teaches him to speak Finnish.



The doctor facilitates the man’s return to Finland to continue to regain his health in a Helsinki clinic, where he continues to learn the Finnish language under the tutelage of pastor Olof Koskela, Finnish grammar and *Kalevala* enthusiast. Sampo learns the language and seeks to learn about himself. His fate is tied in with the events of war time Finland.

It is surprising that the author is Italian, that the book was written in Italian. The English translation is excellent. The language and the literary lore are fascinating for anyone with even a smattering of Finnish and probably for readers with no Finnish. You will be absorbed by the story of the struggles, confusion and dawning understanding of the man with no memory and no context for the life he finds himself living.

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Editorial Note:

In January, we used several photos of the *Joulu* festivities graciously provided by Eric Jaakkola. However, we blush to admit, we didn't give him credit!

Thank you Eric!

Sibelius: A Composer’s Life and the Awakening of Finland

Sunday, February 22, at 3 p.m. Paulson Hall, American Swedish Institute (in the Turnblad Castle), 2600 Park Ave., Minneapolis. \$5.00 per person; free for Finlandia Foundation Twin Cities and ASI members.



Glenda Dawn Goss’ very readable biography of beloved composer Jean Sibelius strives to clarify the mystery behind the silence of the last 30 years of Sibelius’ life, in which he completely stopped writing music. Goss contends that his life and work can only be understood by also understanding the events and happenings of the decades of Sibelius’ youth leading up to the independence of Finland in 1917 and what followed later.

On February 22, Glenda Dawn Goss will talk about the years during which Jean Sibelius grew up and the world in which he and his friends and contemporaries forged the golden age of art, literature and music that created the “awakening” of a new identity and pride in Finland. She’ll also explore how the challenges and difficulties of the new nation’s early years cannot be ignored in trying to understand why Sibelius’ musical genius was silenced.

Goss is an author and music historian and the former editor-in-chief of the Jean Sibelius critical edition. She currently teaches at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. Formerly she was professor of musicology at the University of Georgia, her home state. In 2009, following 20 years of research, she published *Sibelius: A Composer’s Life and the Awakening of Finland*, a highly engaging and readable work that has received critical acclaim. In 2011–2012, Goss served as the Lecturer of the Year for Finlandia Foundation National. She was scheduled to present this lecture in the Twin Cities in fall 2013, but her visit was postponed due to the Minnesota Orchestra lockout.

This lecture is presented by Finlandia Foundation Twin Cities as part of the Sibelius 150 Jubilee Year, as part of a grant received from Finlandia Foundation National. For further information, contact Betsey Norgard at norgard@northlc.com or (651) 270-9784.

January Program Recap

By *Dennis Halme*

At our January program, Anna Marita Roinila talked about mortuary practices in the U.S. and Finland. She graduated from the University of Minnesota Program of Mortuary Science. Since graduating, this spirited young lady has been employed at a major Minneapolis funeral business; she has moved on and is in the process of starting a private mortuary business with some others. The purpose of this business is to promote "natural" or "green" funerals that are ecologically beneficial.

Anna Marita talked mainly about the different techniques of processing the body and did not particularly speak about customs or rituals. She presented information on the various ways in which the deceased can ultimately be brought to his or her final resting place. She mentioned the processes of embalming, cremation and chemical (non-burning) cremation, and also "natural funerals" in which no embalming is done and the deceased is buried in a decomposable casket. No vault is used so that natural decomposition can take place.

Her father, upon returning from his father's funeral in Finland, told her about his experience and brought information back to her because she was thinking of becoming a mortician. She also researched Finnish practices using material and internet available here.

Her comparison of Finnish and American practices was mainly from a technical and not an anthropological standpoint. Here are some of the things I learned at the program: Anyone can be buried in a Finnish church burial ground regardless of their affiliation or non-affiliation with the church. Remains are either embalmed or not. Cremation is becoming more prevalent as space in cemeteries is less available. The deceased are dressed in plain white gowns with a black tie for men and lace at the neck for women. I have heard that this is also the case in Germany. Perhaps it is common in Europe.

Anna Marita ended her presentation with information on sending a deceased person's body from the U.S. to Finland for burial. Airlines require that a body be transferred in a metal casket. Finland does not allow metal caskets for burial; thus a new one must be purchased there. This would be a good reason for cremation, apparently.

Under 17 Girls' Bandy World Championships

By *Risto Sivula*

The United States is hosting the 2015 Under 17 Women's Bandy World Championships at the John Rose Oval in Roseville, on February 25–27. This bandy world championship will bring the world's best 17 and under women bandy players from Finland, Russia, U.S. and Sweden.



Bandy is played on ice, on skates, using a single round ball. Two teams of 11 players each compete to get the ball into the other team's goal using sticks. The game is played on a rectangle of ice the size of a soccer field. Bandy rules are similar to soccer. Read more details at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bandy>. See the USA Bandy website www.usabandy.com for tournament schedule and team rosters.

Help and Contributions Needed

Team Finland is looking for an ambassador, a local contact person for any questions the team may have while in town. You will meet with the team at arrival, and provide your phone number for the duration of the tournament. Any other commitments will be on as-agreed basis, such as if you'd like to help to promote the tournament or help with other arrangements. Contact Steve Jecha at (612) 619-0247 or steve@jecha.com if you are interested or want to learn more.

Hosting a World Championship is no small task. Host countries are responsible for food, lodging, transportation, ice, referees, and more. The bandy community is looking for your help to provide an excellent experience for the teams that will be travelling to the United States. Please help provide a quality competition by a contribution to finance the games. A \$25 contribution will pay for one day's meals for a Swedish, Finnish, or Russian player. Increasing amounts will cover hotel costs and help more players. Go to <http://www.gofundme.com/girlsbandy> to sponsor a player or team.

Over the years, all of the participating countries have done incredible things for our men's, women's and youth teams. Let's show our gratitude by sponsoring our team from Finland and by filling the bleachers during the games! Let's BANDY!

Events Calendar

Feb. 15 Sisu Heritage Annual Meeting and Program. Embarrass Town Hall on Levander Road, 2:00 p.m. See page 3.

Feb. 15 Finnish Culture through Movies group. Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave South, Minneapolis. 6:00 p.m. *Valo*. www.youtube.com/watch?v=0vgrVWXj7EM More information: Minnesotafinnish.org; click on Suomi-koulu, then Groups, then Finnish Culture through Movies or call (651) 428-3155.

Feb. 15 Finn Hall Dance at the Eagles. Eagles of Minneapolis, 2507 E. 25th Street, Minneapolis, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Everyone welcome. Admission \$5.00.

Feb. 19, 20, 21. Minnesota Orchestra, *The Tempest*. Osmo Vänskä conducting. Lilli Paasikivi, soprano. Music by Berlioz and Sibelius. For details: minnesotaorchestra.org/

Feb. 20 FACA program, 7:00 p.m. International Institute of Minnesota. Note earlier meeting time for this special *Laskiainen* supper.

Feb. 21 Finn Hall world music series concert. Hosmer Library, Minneapolis, 2:00–3:30 p.m.

Feb. 22 Glenda Dawn Goss lecture: *Sibelius: A Composer's Life and the Awakening of Finland*. American Swedish Institute, 3:00 p.m. See page 5.

Feb. 27 Deadline to submit articles for March *Uutiset*. Send to facaeditor@gmail.com by midnight.

Feb. 28 Finnish Genealogy Group of Minnesota. Finnish military personnel research. Barb Wilson and Joan Dwyer. Driving directions or changes/cancellations: minnesotafinnish.org; click on left menu, Finnish Genealogy Group

Feb. 28 12th Annual Nordic Gala. The Sons of Norway, 722 2nd Ave N, Fargo, ND, 7:00 p.m. See page 4.

Mar. 15 Finnish Culture through Movies group. Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave South, Minneapolis. 6:00 p.m. *Leijonasydän*. www.finnkino.fi/eng/Event/299745/. More information: See February 15, above.

Mar. 20 FACA program. International Institute of Minnesota, 7:30 p.m.

Thursdays. The Kisarit Finnish American Folk Dancers Thursdays at the St. Sahag Armenian Church, 203 N. Howell St., St. Paul, 7:00 p.m. The group does not meet during holidays. New members welcome. Call Dan (763) 544-1441.

Fridays. Finlanders at the U of M conversation hour at Bordertown Coffee, 315 16th Ave. SE, Minneapolis. For more information or to check on meeting day/time: karvo001@umn.edu

FACA Membership

A one-year membership provides you with nine issues of this newsletter, plus other benefits, for \$25. To subscribe or renew, complete this form and mail with your check to FACA, P.O. Box 580708, Minneapolis, MN 55458-0708. (Check mailing label for membership expiration date.)

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Conversational Finnish Class

Tuesdays, 4:00-5:25 p.m.

St. Anthony Library

Corner of Como and Carter Ave.

St. Paul

Everyone is welcome.

For more information, please call
Urho Rahkola at (651) 429-3319

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

FACA needs your ideas and your helping hand. If you can help with any of the committees or events, please return this form. Thanks!

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting Hospitality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Visitor Hospitality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising | <input type="checkbox"/> Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Laskiainen</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Pikkujoulu</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Property | <input type="checkbox"/> Festival of Nations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Website | <input type="checkbox"/> Information Phone |

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Return to FACA, P.O. Box 580708,
Minneapolis, MN 55458-0708 or bring to the
next program.



Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.

P.O. Box 580708

Minneapolis, MN 55458-0708

FACA

Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.

dedicated to exploring and preserving Finnish and Finnish-American heritage. (612) 374-2718,

www.finnfaca.org

Pieniä Paloja

- *Paljon kiitoksia* to Edie Boos, Dawn and Gil Kinnunen, and Richard Harju and Caryl Weaver who provided and served the fine treats at coffee time during the January program.
- On January 24, a huge blaze badly damaged the large cowshed in Kalajoki, Northern Ostrobothnia. Three people were injured, cowshed employees who were trying to put out the flames and rescue the calves and cows. The employees' injuries were not serious. However, a total 44 animals lost their lives, killed by the fire or as a result of being put down after suffering injuries. The spokesman for the fire brigade would not speculate on the cause of the fire, although the likely spot where the blaze started had been located. Authorities began detailed investigation into the fire. *YLE*
- Finnish researchers have discovered that a man who lived 400 years ago was the source of a hereditary disease known as catecholaminergic polymorphic ventricular tachycardia (CPVT), a heart disorder characterized by electrical instability induced by physical or emotional stress that may degenerate into cardiac arrest and sudden death. At least three thousand Finns are expected to get a letter this year warning them that they may have inherited the gene. Staff at the parish registry in Viitasaari are searching the church registries of births, marriages and deaths going back to 1650 to find the descendants. They will be screened with a blood test and those affected by the disease will be treated with preventative drugs like beta-blockers. *Finland Today*
- The 20th annual snow castle has been unveiled in Kemi, Finland, accompanied by a dazzling fireworks display and a concert by the heavy metal band Sonata Arctica. Kemi's snow castle is the biggest snow fort in the world, rebuilt every winter with a new design. It has some recurring elements: a chapel, a restaurant and a hotel. The restaurant has tables and benches made of ice, but not to worry, the seats are covered with reindeer fur. It also has an adventure land for children, a theater and ice art exhibits with lights and sound effects. The castle's season ends sometime in April when the snow begins to melt away. *YLE*