



Utiset

NEWSLETTER OF THE FINNISH AMERICAN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, INC.

January/Tammikuu 2016

Who and What Is Contemporary Finland: Beyond the Clichés

Dr. Daniel Karvonen

Our program in January will be presented by Daniel Karvonen, lecturer in Finnish at the University of Minnesota. He says:

“I’ll be presenting facts that everyone knows about Finland, and then looking beyond them to discuss more obscure, interesting topics. To give one example—everyone knows that there are a lot of summer cottages in Finland, but not everyone knows about 'Everyman's Right' (*Jokamiehenoikeus*), which gives people the right to pick berries and mushrooms, hike and even camp temporarily on other people's land.

“The things I’ll be talking about are things that I’ve just learned along the way--I really can't pin them down to a particular place and time. I lived in Finland for a year as a Rotary exchange student in high school, and again for a year as a Fulbright scholar during graduate school. Both times I lived in Helsinki. I've been there a total of about eleven times, most recently this past August.”



Karvonen poses with plaque honoring Veikko Karvonen, Finnish long-distance runner, who was an Olympic medalist and Boston Marathon winner.

Program In Brief

Contemporary Finland *Dan Karvonen*

January 15, 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*

Daniel Karvonen is a fourth-generation Finnish American with research interest in linguistics, genetics and genealogy, and is senior lecturer in Finnish at the University of Minnesota. He has a BA in Finnish and Russian (University of Minnesota), MA in linguistics (Indiana University) and PhD in linguistics (University of California Santa Cruz). Recently he has been instructing beginning Finnish at the American Swedish Institute, where a number of FACA members have joined the classes. At other times, he can often be found running marathons or learning obscure languages such as Mari or Dakota.

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President's Message

By Gene Ollila

Welcome to perhaps the first taste of winter, with approaching single-digit temps. However, as I write this shortly before Christmas, there is no snow – very disappointing for us winter lovers (solid water fishing, skiing, snowshoeing, etc.). The gray days and rain are also very enervating, not stimulating. We have been doing the Backyard Birding program, and very few total birds and few species so far, unlike previous years.



I hope everyone's Thanksgiving went well. The North American Scandinavian Thanksgiving Breakfast went very well, with well over 900 in attendance. Our October speaker, Maria Hokkanen, was the Finnish flag bearer, and Harri Mattinen gave a Finnish response.

We had an interesting discussion for our November program by Dr. Juhana Aunesluoma, based on research about Finns' current concerns and recollection of WW2 and postwar understandings. He then gave a talk at Finland's Independence Day celebration on Finland's concerns about continuing in the European Union. I look forward to hearing Dr. Dan Karvonen speak at our January program, another contribution from University of Minnesota faculty.

Joulu went very well, with over 200 people for the meal and good attendance overall, plus a wonderful *Kauneimmat Joululaulut* (the Most Beautiful Christmas Songs) program to end the day.

In February there will be several Vänskä-led events, including a benefit concert for Christ Church Lutheran Church (check with the church for the date), and Sibelius' *Kullervo* Symphony at Orchestra Hall on February 4, 5, and 6.

I was honored to participate in a brainstorming session at the home of Marianne Wargelin, Honorary Consul of Finland, with 12 other Finns/Finnish Americans representing the various Finnish groups in the Twin Cities. We looked at how we could make the Finnish presence in our community more apparent and participatory, since we have so large a number of Finnish heritage people living in the Twin Cities. I think we all left feeling upbeat and aware of lots of work to be done, especially if we want to celebrate Finland's century of independence in 2017.

Finally, I want all of you to participate in the Festival of Nations next May. "Folklore and Fairytales" is the theme, a good choice for Finns. Our next meeting at the International Institute will be at 1 p.m. on February 7.

Remember, names for the Sauna Bucket award are being accepted and need to be handed in.

Board Notes

By Ruth Erkkila



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

President Gene Ollila called the FACA Board meeting of November 17, 2015, to order at 6:40 p.m. at Bakers Square restaurant in St. Paul. Present, besides Gene, were John Rova, Janie Ahola and Ruth Erkkila. Not present: Dennis Halme and Phillip Erickson.

Treasurer Janie Ahola said we have had several donations recently and that these people should get a receipt. Janie will get a receipt book. She will give a full report at the Friday program.

The speaker for Friday's program will be Juhana Aunesluoma, speaking about how Finnish people view their own recent history. The speaker for January will be Dan Karvonen, giving a talk similar to the one he gave at FinnFest in October.

The position of Hospitality Chair is still vacant. Volunteers to bring treats on Friday are Ruth Ann Swenson and Edith Boos. Gene will come early and make the coffee; he has the FACA coffee pots now. John Rova will help Gene.

As membership chair, John said he talks to potential new members and gives them a copy of the *Utiset*.

The Nordic American Thanksgiving Breakfast is coming up on November 24. Janie has sold 13 tickets.

Joulu—Magical Christmas will be December 12. There will be a donation box; donations will help pay expenses as the event is free. There is only a charge for the buffet lunch. Dan Salin is coordinating volunteers for the event; volunteers will set up on Friday, act as greeters and register

people for the event. Prepaid registrations can be made online at EventBrite or by phone and sending a check. Note: There is no FACA board meeting or program in December.

We have had some requests for rides to the programs; these requests have come as phone calls to board members. The board member then tries to find someone in the area who would be willing to give a ride. There was some discussion of whether we should continue this practice.

A few Sauna Bucket nominations have been received.

There was some discussion of the Finnish Café at the Festival of Nations. Do we want to have the Café again this year? This will be discussed further at a future program.

Note: The FACA website is down; a software update is required. Jeanne Swope and Beth Jarvis are working on this.

The next meeting will be January 12, 6:30 p.m., at Bakers Square in St. Paul.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.



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 cancelled. FACA members may contact any Board member if they have a question about whether an event is cancelled.

Welcome, New Members!

Loretta Greenleaf, St. Louis Park
Evelyn Groe, Woodbury
Daniel Karvonen, Crystal
Lee Kuha Welter, Minneapolis
Dennis Johnson, Morris

Tervetuloa!

Glimpses from Joulu – Magical Finnish Christmas

Photos from FACA members and other attendees at Joulu give us glimpses of elegant and delicious food from the lovely buffet, and from the sanctuary of the Christ Church Lutheran where *Kauneimmat Joululaulut* (the Most Beautiful Christmas Songs) were about to begin.

Creative wreathes were displayed in a window near the joulutori (Christmas market) where we could shop for Finnish goods or participate in children's activities. A good time was had by all!



Felt figures. Joulu Facebook page.



Rosolli (Finnish beet salad). Photo by Stef Kiihn.



Beautiful vegetable salad. Photo by Stef Kiihn.



This Alvar Aalto vase was a prize in the wreath contest. Joulu Facebook page.



In the church. Photo by Ruth Erkkila.



FinnFest USA 2016 Festival Plans

By Marianne Wargelin

FinnFest USA 2016's festival will commemorate Finnish migration into North America, the migration that came via Nova Scotia and the St. Lawrence River. Yes, before Ellis Island opened in 1892 and even after, many Finns entered North America, both Canada and the U.S., via an initial entrance to Canada. Traveling into Montreal and transferring to boats that could travel on the Great Lakes was a clear choice for many.

In 2016, July 9-16, FinnFest USA creates an opportunity to experience the water route that Finnish migration took into the Midwest. This FinnFest will enable attendees to travel together as the festival unfolds. Like the 2009 festival, when festival attendees traveled together by ship to Alaska, FinnFest USA is using a cruise ship setting to resolve the problem of how to get attendees to multiple remote sites while creating both generous and intimate opportunities for group discussions, music listening, and interactive classes.

Check with Paul and Christine Niskanen, owners of Cruise Masters, the travel company that is assisting FinnFest USA with this Holland American cruise up the North Atlantic Coast. FinnFest USA has a block of room reserved at all price ranges, many surprisingly affordable. Check the website, <http://www.FinnFestUSA2016.com/>, or call Paul and his staff at (800) 848-7120.

During the week-long voyage, lectures will interpret this Finnish North American waterway migration route and reveal its relationship to the Finnish communities that developed along this waterway. Quebec and Montreal's Finnish migration narrative and little known urban communities in the midst of these historic French American cities will become visible.

Nova Scotia will provide two days of on-shore programming. In Sydney, FinnFest USA 2016 will feature a Finnish style summer picnic. In Halifax, attendees will visit Canada's Immigration museum, the counterpart to Ellis Island as well as visit to the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic with its world renowned exhibit on the sinking of the Titanic, a disaster very much a part of Finnish North American migration history.

Prince Edward Island, the inspiration to *Anne of Green Gables*, will inspire FinnFest USA 2016 to include a programming segment on Finland's own children's literature.

As in 2009, festival attendees will share meals with other FinnFest attendees. 2009 attendees report that this opportunity to meet Finnish Americans through informal conversations over dinner remains a highlight. Dances, singalongs, and films will be options after dinner each night. Mornings and late afternoons will provide opportunities to learn Finnish, to practice Finnish, to talk with others about shared topics.

Cruises feel expensive to some FinnFest USA attendees until they realize that the cruise provides a week of housing and meals for about the same amount as the usual 3-4 day visit to festival locations away from home. To assist people who would travel alone, FinnFest USA is willing to help people identify a compatible roommate also traveling alone. Families can double up in cabins to bring the costs down.

Finnish Language Study Opportunity Summer 2016

The 11th SISU Finnish Language & Culture Seminar will be held at the University of Minnesota, Duluth from July 31 to August 6, 2016. The seminar is a one-week course of Finnish language study (25-30 hours at three levels) directed by three teachers, including Anna Leppänen and Johanna Hietikko Tigert. The seminar fee is \$450 plus \$20 SISU membership; estimated cost of on-campus housing and food service is \$300 (single room supplement: \$200).

Registration deposits will be due before April 30, 2016. For more information and registration forms please contact Kathleen Ristinen, Secretary at kaisa@eurekanet.com or (740) 592-1157. Visit and join our Facebook group SISU Finnish Language & Culture Seminar.

Conversational Finnish Class

Tuesdays, 4:00-5:30 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

November Program Recap

By *Dennis Halmi*

Our presenter at the November program was Dr. Juhana Aunesluoma from the University of Helsinki. He is currently at the University of Minnesota, where he will be the Government of Finland and David and Nancy Speer Professor of Finnish studies for the years 2015 to 2017. Dr. Aunesluoma has a master's degree in social sciences from the University of Helsinki and a doctorate from Oxford. He spoke about research which he and other Finnish scholars have done on how the Finnish population views their history and the movements and events which have shaped their nation and its position in the world.

He spoke about the events leading to independence (from Russia) and the different points of view people had of these events, depending on their position in Finnish society (class, ethnicity and language, such as the Swedish speaking minority).

For instance, opinions about the struggle for independence and the concurrent class conflict which led to a bitter civil war between left-wing workers and the middle and upper classes and land owning farmers, left hard feelings on both sides which didn't begin to heal until the Winter and Continuation Wars of the period 1939-1944 brought the population together.

The information used to measure and quantify the opinions of the Finnish population was gathered from public opinion polls designed to measure how the average person thought about the events of Finnish history and current events. For instance, when polled about what people thought was most noteworthy about modern Finland, the Finnish educational system and excellence recognized by the world was mentioned by a majority of people.

It was an interesting and educational presentation, and was followed by much discussion during the coffee hour that followed.



To the Bomb and Back **Finnish War Children Tell Their World War II Stories**

Review by Jeanne Swope

To the Bomb and Back is the first English-language anthology of experiences of some of the 80,000 or more Finnish children who were sent to other countries to protect them from the Soviet attacks during the Winter War and the following

Continuation and Lapland Wars. It also includes accounts from some children who stayed in Finland; the book's title comes from a game some Finnish children who stayed in Finland played—a chase game where they ran “to the bomb and back”; “the bomb” is a huge crater (among many) where a bomb had hit a street directly.

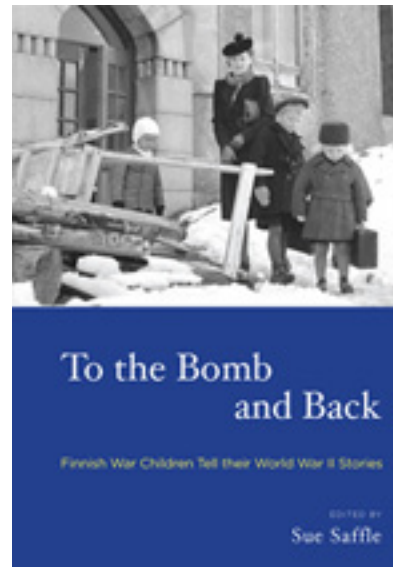
Sue Saffle, an instructor in Virginia Tech's English Department, has edited this fine collection. She spent a year in Finland when her husband was a visiting professor in Helsinki. While there she learned of the war orphans. She met many of the now-adults and researched the background behind their experiences.

You will read about the traumas of going to a foreign land and also the traumas of returning to a poverty-stricken Finland, to parents they did not remember and a language they no longer spoke. There are good experiences, bad experiences, lifelong memories and effects. Who did the children grow up to be? We hear about that, too.

You will find accounts you may have already heard from Eric Jaakkola and Veijo Paine. They are two of many who came to have a fine life but haven't forgotten.

The book is affecting, to be read a little at a time. You won't forget it afterwards.

The book is available from Amazon, the publisher Berghahn (berghahnbooks.com) and occasionally from online used-book sellers such as abebooks.com.



Events Calendar

Jan. 15 FACA program, International Institute of Minnesota, 7:00 p.m.

Jan. 17 Finnish Culture through Movies group. Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave. South, Minneapolis. 6:00 p.m. *Pussikaljaelokuva* ("bag" + "beer" + "movie") www.finnkino.fi/eng/Event/298625/ More information: minnesotafinnish.org; click on Suomi-koulu, then Groups, then Finnish Culture through Movies or call (651) 428-3155.

Jan. 22 Articles and calendar items due for February *Utiset*. Send by midnight to facaeditor@gmail.com.

Jan. 23 Finnish Genealogy Group-Minnesota, Plymouth Apostolic Church, 11015 Old County Road 15, Plymouth, 9:30 a.m. (See website for driving directions and other information: <http://www.minnesotafinnish.org>. Select Finnish Genealogy Group of Minnesota.)

Feb. 19 FACA program, International Institute of Minnesota, 7:00 p.m. *Laskiainen!*

July 9-July 16 FinnFest USA 2016. Cruise from Boston to Montreal. For more information: finnfestusa2016.com/. (See article on page 5.)

July 31-August 6 SISU Finnish Language & Culture Seminar at the University of Minnesota, Duluth. Register by April 30. For more information: Kathleen Ristinen, secretary, at kaisa@eurekanet.com or (740) 592-1157. (See article on page 5.)

Tuesdays. Finnish Conversation Group. St. Anthony Park Library, Como and Carter Aves., St. Paul, 4:00–5:30 p.m. More information: Urho Rahkola, (651) 429-3319

Thursdays. Kisarit Finnish American Folk Dancers. 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 Salin (763) 544-1441.

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

Pieniä Paloja

Finland may gain mountain through a Facebook campaign. The proposal is for Norway to donate a mountain peak to Finland in 2017, the centenary of Finland's independence. The campaign is supported by thousands, including Norway's Land Survey chief. 1,365 metre high Halti is not even in the country's top 200 highest peaks. Finland's official highest point (at about 1,324 metres) is currently located on the ridge of one of Halti's smaller summits, known by its Sámi name Haldičohkka. The summit in question is only 20 meters across the Finno-Norwegian border, but the suggested border extension is an area of approximately 200 metres. *Helsingin Sanomat*

The EU has granted Finland another **8 million euros of emergency funds** for the migrant crisis. Added to an earlier basic appropriation, this comes to 53 million euros. The EU has granted a total of 222 million euros of emergency funding to its member states. Emergency funding is intended to help with the costs of housing and feeding migrants. *Yle*

A recent poll showed 69% of Finnish people agreed with a proposal to **give every citizen a basic income** and to scrap all current benefits. Finland's government is drawing up plans to give every one of its citizens a basic income of 800 euros a month. Prime Minister Juha Sipilä is quoted as backing the idea. "For me, a basic income means simplifying the social security system," he said. *Yle*



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.)

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FACA

Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.
dedicated to exploring and preserving
Finnish and Finnish-American heritage.
www.finnfaca.org

Pieniä Paloja

(Little Pieces)

November coffee servers were **Stella Arola, Edie Boos, and Ruthann Swanson.** *Kiitos paljon!*

Helsinki's Olympic Stadium sold off its furniture, equipment and fixtures to the public, everything not nailed down (and a lot of items that were) in order to make room for a three-year renovation project. Since it was built in 1938, the Olympic Stadium has been a city icon. *Yle*

Two Finnish companies, Oura from Oulu and Moodmetric from Helsinki, are poised to make their mark with **ring-top digital wearables.** Oura Ring shipped its first rings at the end of November. Designed by Harri Koskinen, it measures heart rate and beat interval, motion and body temperature, and can store data for up to three weeks. It will send and sync data via Bluetooth. Moodmetric has produced a modern digital mood ring, invented by Henry Rimminen and designed by silversmith Vesa Nilsson. The ring measures skin conductance and visualizes your emotions. It is a much more scientific and technical version of the mood ring of the 1970s. The underlying goal is to improve people's health, well-being and happiness. *Yle*

Exercising will not make you live longer, according to new research from Jyväskylä University. Researchers found that exercise in adults does not lengthen lifespans for humans or for laboratory animals, and that lifespan was primarily affected by genetic factors rather than exercise levels. Rats genetically predisposed to lower cardiovascular fitness who started to exercise as adults actually shortened their lives by an average of 16 percent compared to those with similar genes who did not exercise. The study also looked at data from identical twins with divergent levels of physical activity. Researchers did point out that those rats that started to train did raise their aerobic fitness and lower risk of metabolic disease. Therefore exercise does have a positive effect on fitness and health, if not lifespan. Next step: study whether the results of exercise could be different if regular physical activity starts at a younger age. *Yle*