



Uutiset

NEWSLETTER OF THE FINNISH AMERICAN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, INC.

March/Maaliskuu 2015

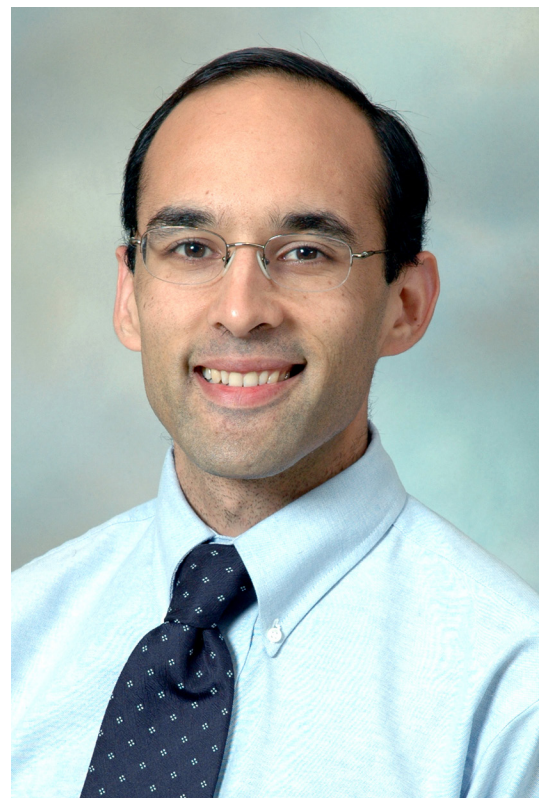
Standards of Care: Health, Illness and Healing in Pre-Enlightenment Finland

By **Andreas Ostenso**

“Jos ei viina, terva ja sauna auta, niin tauti on kuolemaksi.” This loosely translates to, “If liquor, pitch and sauna don't cure you, then the disease is fatal.” The process by which we went from these decidedly low budget modalities to having a palette of treatment options for Binge Eating Disorder is worth thinking about. In this presentation, I intend to convey a sense of how people understood health, illness and healing in pre-enlightenment Finland and contrast these notions with current conceptions of healthcare.

Medicine, in the broadest sense of the term, has been with us for millennia. Ever since humans have gotten sick, we have endeavored to cure ills and comfort the sick. Our understandings and methods have certainly evolved with us. Healing methods are as much a part of our cultural heritage as language and religion, and thus give insight into our identity.

The past is the key to the future. In most contemporary discussions about healthcare, the issue of money quickly emerges. Finland currently spends about nine percent



of its GDP on healthcare. By historical standards, this is a staggering amount both in terms of GDP and absolute amount of euros (or *markkaa*, *ruplaa*, *riikintaaleria* depending on the era). The ancients would have been shocked! And I don't just mean people of the 1700s, but also folks in the 1950s. On the other hand, the ancients would have also been shocked that we don't have an abiding fear of certain forest spirits.

Andreas Ostenso is originally from Middleton, Wisconsin, and now lives in Saint Paul. He has a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and a medical degree. Dr. Ostenso is a board certified internist who practices in Minneapolis. He is also a cross-country skier, an amateur epistemologist and former two-term FACA treasurer.

Program In Brief

**Finnish Health Care
Andreas Ostenso, M.D.**

**March 20, 7:30 p.m.
International Institute
1694 Como Ave., St. Paul**
*For help finding a ride to the program:
call any of the board members*

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President's Message

By Gene Ollila

February, the shortest month of the year, has been the one most resembling winter. However, with lack of fresh snow of adequate depth, it is more of a tease than a true love. I am looking forward to a volunteer work vacation in Arizona in March doing projects for the Nature Conservancy along the San Pedro River/riparian area. My wife and I, along with eight other volunteers from around the country and two leaders, will be doing whatever needs to be done—making trail, eliminating invasive plants, putting up fence, etc. We will be living in our own tents. I can hardly wait. Then I get to drive home birding and hiking at my will.



Volunteering is a fact of life for many retired people. I will be working on the North Country Trail (NCT) in Wisconsin next summer, and possibly on other trails in Minnesota that are part of the NCT Association. In addition, a superb outdoors teacher at the Sax Zim Bog Birding Festival convinced me to undertake a Master Naturalist course offered by the DNR, at which he will be an instructor. All of this fits right into my Finnish love of the outdoors. I think back fondly to the one great-grandparent I knew, who lived in the woods of Embarrass and gave me a *puukko* (knife), and to my favorite uncle's father, who made my homemade skis and who gave me six old silver dollars when I was just a young boy; also to my maternal grandparents who lived not far from us, next to wonderfully productive blueberry bogs, and had an outdoor toilet where you had to use Sears catalogs. I think about these fond memories, and wish I could go back and thank them.

Hearing Finn Hall at our last FACA program also brought back many fond memories of the Zim Hall, which was two miles across the field from my home. I can remember Frankie Yankovic, the Chmielewski Brothers and many others playing there. The wood floor would bounce under the dancers. How warm it would get indoors even in the coldest winter!

Joseph Campbell, in *The Power of Myth*, writes that modern societies have lost a large part of the myths that held people and communities together. It seems to me that what I describe above would be part of a good myth holding our lives together. Go out and enjoy art, the theatre, movies, book readings, and see the commonalities we all share.

Kiitos paljon!

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.

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 February 17 at Bakers Square in St. Paul. The meeting was called to order by Gene Ollila at 6:41 p.m. Also present were Janie Ahola, Ruth Erkkila, Richard Harju, John Rova and Bud Berry. Absent: Dennis Halme.

The minutes of the January meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Janie reported the bank balance. She is examining old financial records before preparing a budget for the year. We have again donated a FACA membership to the Nordic Culture Club (Fargo-Moorhead) for their fundraising auction, as we have done in the past.

Vice President's Report: Gene Ollila will be absent at the next board meeting and FACA program. Dennis Halme will chair both events.

Hospitality Chair's Report: Richard reminded the board members to bring pea soup for the *Laskiainen* celebration on this Friday, February 20. Kathy Jackson has also volunteered to bring her pea soup. Other members will bring bread, appetizers, salad and dessert. Some clean up help will be needed.

Festival of Nations: Dennis Halme, Dan Salin and John Rova, chair of the culture booth, attended the Festival of Nations meeting. The theme of the Festival is International Art. Our booth will focus on Finnish (not Finnish American) art and design. Things in the booth could include demonstrations, poetry reading, and literature. John had a list of specific things to consider.

Gene will draft a contract for this year's Finnish Café and send it via email to board members.

Upon their approval, he'll send it to Kathryn Hill for her signature. Success at the Festival of Nations depends on volunteers, both in the booth and the café. Richard is preparing volunteer sign-up sheets. Gene will handle certificates of participation for all volunteers at the Finnish culture booth and the Finnish café.

Joulu Wrap-up Meeting: Ruth went to the *Joulu* wrap-up meeting and wrote a summary of it. We agreed that the event should continue and that appropriate amounts should be charged for the meal and the other activities. Gene will meet with Marianne Wargelin and Betsey Norgard to further discuss *Joulu* for next year.

Sauna Bucket Award: This year's award will go to Andreas Ostenso. Gil Kinnunen, last year's winner, will be a part of the presentation.

Other Business: *Suomi-koulu* has informally agreed they will take half of our library. We don't know yet what access FACA members will have to the library. Gene will finalize the process of transferring the books from our library to *Suomi-koulu*.

We discussed the past president becoming a member of the FACA board. Bud Berry has attended this year's board meetings as a nonvoting member and provided invaluable assistance to Gene as he took on the President's responsibilities.

The search and nominating committee for new board members is headed by Kathy Jackson, with Urho Rahkola and Richard Harju. Nominees will be announced at the annual election meeting in May.

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

The next board meeting will be March 17, 6:30 p.m. at Bakers Square.

Welcome, New Members!

Carl Blanes, St. Paul
Mike Fredrikson, Minneapolis
Joanne Holley, Minneapolis
Berndt Toivonen, Minneapolis

Tervetuloa!

Festival of Nations Volunteers Needed

By Richard Harju

The primary mission of FACA is to preserve and publicize our Finnish culture. Participating at the Festival of Nations is probably the most effective way to help the general public, particularly the children, learn about Finland and its people. Festival of Nations is a grand exposition of the many cultural origins and customs of the people of Minnesota. The Kisarit Dancers, the Finnish cultural exhibit booth, the Finnish Café and the Bazaar all provide a Finnish presence at the Festival of Nations.

When the Finnish Café was completely operated by FACA volunteers, we were able to reap the additional benefit of profit for our treasury. Because we don't have volunteers to manage the Café, it is now operated by a commercial vendor, Irene's Favorite Things, and staffed by FACA volunteers. Kathryn Hill, of Irene's Favorite Things, depends upon volunteers so that the cafe will make enough profit to be worth the effort. (The family also operates a booth in the Bazaar); FACA continues the Finnish presence in the eating area of the Festival, which has been our basic intention. The camaraderie is rewarding, and volunteers get to know one another.

We need volunteers for Baking Day (Saturday, April 25), the Cultural Exhibit Booth and the Finnish Café (Thursday, April 30, through Sunday, May 3). You may sign up at our monthly Friday evening programs or contact Richard Harju: call or text at (612) 719-4965 or email rjharju@yahoo.com. Please volunteer early to make scheduling easier.

Thank you in advance for helping!

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

Miscellaneous News from Finland

New research from Turku University shows that the proportion of Finns who regard mobile phones as vital for modern life is now greater than those who believe a relationship or a job is essential. Sixty-two percent of Finns regard a relationship as a necessity, while 72 percent felt that a mobile phone was an absolute necessity. Sixty-two percent thought they could not manage without a job. The survey found that over-60s do still regard newspapers as important, and according to the research their values are seen as "softer" than those of other age groups. *YLE*

Nokia is by far the largest patent filer in Finland, finds a survey by the European Patent Office. Last year, Nokia filed a total of 1,040 patent applications, representing an increase of 279 or 36 percent from the previous year. Kai Sahala, head of Nokia mobile broadband marketing, estimates that the number of patent filings reflects the investments of Nokia in research and product development. "Most of the patents deal with the technology of the future," he says. *Helsinki Times*

A *Time* magazine article reports that, in response to security concerns, "Finnish police working with government support have adapted a criminal-rehabilitation program called the Anchor to combat growing Islamist radicalism. Participants who join voluntarily receive counseling to address feelings of alienation, as well as remedial education and help in finding a job. Right now, only a few returning jihadists have joined the Anchor, but Finnish police expect that to change." *TIME* January 26, 2015, p.36-37



In Memoriam

John Luoma, 81, of New Brighton passed away on February 24. John was the husband of Dixie Luoma, a former longtime active member of FACA who volunteered many years for baking day and at the Festival of Nations.

Survived by his wife of 58 years, Dixie; children James (Mary), Susan Murray and Timothy (Cathy); 6 grandchildren and a great-grandson, and sister Ruth Holthe. A Service of Remembrance took place on March 2.



FinnFest USA 2015 Uncovers Buffalo's Finnish Connections

By K. Marianne Wargelin

Why should FinnFest USA come to Buffalo? Buffalo, not known as a Finnish center, is, in fact, a part of Finnish America, connected not only via Pehr Kalm's visit to Niagara Falls in the eighteenth century, but also via a small group of steel workers and domestic workers who came to work in Buffalo in the twentieth century.

Buffalo, on the Eastern end of Lake Erie, adjacent to Niagara Falls, connects us to Pehr Kalm, the Finnish botanist who spent three years in Colonial America, including time with the Delaware Colony's Finns. Kalm came to Western New York to see the Falls and wrote the first scientific study of the Niagara Falls. Pehr Kalm's observations inspire FinnFest USA to look more closely at the Falls and at this easternmost juncture of the Great Lakes shipping industry.

The now vacant steel mills and the grain elevators, a storage facility concept invented in Buffalo in 1842-3, stand in silent witness along Buffalo's Lake Erie shores, a testament to the Great Lakes shipping industry that had Finnish dock workers loading grain and ore onto lake freighters in Duluth, Ashland, Marquette and Escanaba, commodities which Finnish American seamen transported to Buffalo. Programming will explore these less discussed connections to America's history.

After the Erie Canal was constructed, Buffalo became a route into the Western Great Lakes. The timber and ore retrieved in the Upper Midwest moved to the industrial communities created along Lake Erie: Cleveland, Ashtabula, Erie, and Buffalo. Grain grown across America's prairies, some of it on Finnish immigrant farms, was shipped to Buffalo, the largest grain milling center in the US and, in 1901, America's eighth largest city. Buffalo, not a Finnish immigrant destination, functioned as part of the economic engine that attracted Finns to come to work in North America.

Buffalo, the second largest metro region in New York State, known for its Polish and Italian communities, may not have a large Finnish population, but it did have a Finnish community, including a hall. Domestic workers, originally in Toronto, moved to Buffalo to work in wealthy American homes. Steel workers, originally in Worcester, Massachusetts, resettled to work in

the Buffalo steel mills. Finnish American seamen, those migrant workers on the lakes, worked on freighters that hauled the ore into all of those Lake Erie steel mills. When FinnFest USA decided to come to Buffalo, this Finnish American labor history narrative stood out in stronger relief. This different labor history also included the chicken farmers of the Finger Lakes region. FinnFest USA 2015 will create opportunities to consider this labor history.

The Buffalo region will be in glorious fall color when FinnFest USA 2015 occurs, October 9–12. This natural backdrop will frame a Finnish American pop-up town, beginning on Friday afternoon, October 9, and continuing through Sunday evening. On Monday the 12th, the post-festival day, tours of Western New York, Buffalo and Niagara Falls will compete for attention with an education forum, business forum, and genealogy forum.



More Finn Hall

Do you find yourself wanting more Finn Hall music after our *Laskiainen* event? Or did you miss *Laskiainen* and are longing for Finnish music? .

Two opportunities to celebrate St. Urho's Day!
March 15: Finn Hall plays for a St. Urho's dance at the Eagles 34, 2507 E. 25th St., Minneapolis, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Cover \$5.00. Family friendly event. Kids free. Soup and sandwiches sold by Eagles auxiliary.

March 16: St. Urho's Day. The Finn Hall trio plays at the Finnish Bistro, 2264 Como Ave, St. Paul, exact time to be announced. finnishbistro.com or (651) 645-9181.

Out of town events worth planning for!
June 13: Nisswa Stämman. Finn Hall will perform during the day in Pioneer Park, Nisswa, and play for dancing in the evening. Check website for full schedule: <http://www.nisswastamman.org/>
June 20, 21: Midsummer. Finn Hall will be playing at the concerts and dances both Saturday and Sunday at the Lake Vermilion Cultural Center (benefit) in Tower. vermilionculturalcenter.org/

February Program Recap

By Jeanne Swope

A generous pea soup supper, music, dancing—who could ask for more *Laskiainen*?

Well, we could have gone sliding with our hair flying loose, of course, played tricks on the neighbor's cows... FACA enjoyed traditional food and music on Friday, February 20.

During a brief business meeting, we had our first opportunity to sign up for our communal effort to put a good Finnish American face forward at the Festival of Nations this spring. President Gene Ollila and 2014 Sauna Bucket recipient Gil Kinnunen announced the honored volunteer of 2015, Andreas Ostenso.

Supper was lavish and friendly, and many of us sampled several or most of the six pots of different kinds of pea soup provided by FACA board members and Kathy Jackson. Kathy made the old-style soup with round yellow peas and other delicious vegetables and broth. Other members brought appetizers, salad, bread (including *pulla*) and an assortment of desserts. Richard Harju, hospitality chair, provided coffee, punch, and intelligent guidance of the buffet table.

Throughout the meal, Finn Hall entertained. Ralph Tuttila ranged around the impromptu stage area with his mandolin, providing direction. Dennis Halme, seated behind his accordion, announced the numbers; and Al Reko, with his larger accordion, added his strong voice to the others in the band. Cheryl Paschke played violin and intrigued the audience with the melodic sonority of the nyckelharpa, a “key fiddle” with wooden keys arranged like a mini piano keyboard in place of the usual fingerboard. Jaana Tuuttila also joined in the vocals.

Some brave FACA members begin to dance at Jaana's urging, first a few of the Kisaret folk-dance members, then other people. Jaana and Ralph demonstrated how to dance an intense but dignified tango to “*Min Älskling*” (“my love” or “my darling”), sung in Swedish by Delores Salin. For the last dance, most of the room joined an immense, loose-ended circle that spiraled inward, tighter and tighter, till at the end of the “*Lampaan Polska*” (“Sheep's Polska”) everyone was in the center of the spiral and no one could move. [see photograph].



Above:
Spiral
dance.



Left:
Delores
Salin
sings in
Swedish.

Below:
Andreas
on skis.

Andreas Ostenso was skiing the Birkebeiner the weekend of the Laskiainen program and so was not present to receive the traditional inscribed sauna bucket. So we will revisit that ceremony next month to honor him for his years of FACA and Finnish-American community involvement. His contributions have included six years of leadership as club treasurer; volunteer since 2003 at *Pikkujoulu*, Baking Day, Festival of Nations, and anything else we had going on; inventor of and emcee for the “Finnish Jeopardy” game played at several *Laskiainen* programs; volunteer at Salolampi, the Finnish Language Village, at spring and fall work weekends; and speaker at FinnFest 2014 on old traditional medical practices in Finland.



Events Calendar

Mar. 15 Finn Hall concert. Chanhassen Library, 7711 Kerber Boulevard, Chanhassen, 2:00-3:00 p.m. Free. Information: (952) 227-1500.

For more Finn Hall performances, see page 5.

Mar. 16 St. Urho's Day. At the dawn of *suomalainen* civilization, St. Urho chased the grasshoppers out of the Finnish vineyards.

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

Mar. 21 12:30 p.m. Finnish Culture through Movies group. Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Avenue South, Minneapolis. *21 Tapaa Pilata Avioliitto* finnkino.fi/eng/Event/299439/# and *Pelikaanimies / Pelican Man* (a children's film in Finnish with English subtitles). Children supervised by older *Suomi-koulu* students. More information: Minnesotafinnish.org; click on Suomi-koulu, then Groups, then Finnish Culture through Movies or call (651) 428-3155

Mar. 27 Deadline for submitting articles for April *Uutiset*. Send to facaeditor@gmail.com by midnight.

Mar. 28 Finnish Genealogy Group-MN, 9:30 a.m. Researching in Family History Library, Salt Lake City. Presented by Sue Kratsch. Driving directions or changes/cancellations: minnesotafinnish.org; click on left menu, Finnish Genealogy Group.

Apr. 10 Deadline for qualified participants to register for the Finnish Expatriate Parliament, which will meet May 22-23 in Helsinki. More information: email to info@usp.fi, website www.usp.fi

Apr. 17 FACA program. International Institute of Minnesota, 7:30 p.m.

Apr. 25 Baking Day for the Finnish Café at the Festival of Nations. For more information or to volunteer for this activity, the Cultural Exhibit Booth or Finnish Café: (612) 719-4965 or email rjharju@yahoo.com

Apr. 30-May 3 Festival of Nations. River Centre, St. Paul. More information: <http://www.festivalofnations.com/>

May 15 FACA program. International Institute of Minnesota, 7:30 p.m. Annual meeting and program.

May 17-23 Spring Adult Week, Salolampi Finnish Language Village. More information: <http://www.salolampi.org/village/adultprograms.html>

June 12-13 Nisswa Stämman, Nisswa. Scandinavian Folk Music Festival. More information: <http://www.nisswastamman.org/>

June 20-21 Midsummer. Lake Vermilion Culture Center, Tower. More information: vermilionculturalcenter.org/

June 26-27 38th Annual Scandinavian Hjemkomst Festival. Moorhead. More information: <http://www.nordiccultureclubs.org/>

www.nordiccultureclubs.org/

June 26-28 Finn Grand Fest, Toronto, Ontario.

For information: <http://finnfestival2015.com/>

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 (763) 544-1441.

Fridays. Finlanders at the U of M conversation hour. 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 _____

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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 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Property | <input type="checkbox"/> Festival of Nations |
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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

- To FACA board members and Kathy Jackson provided the fine pea soup and all of you brought the appetizers, salad, bread, and desserts for the February program, *Kiitos!*
- The ornithological association BirdLife Finland has organized its tenth annual birdwatching event, *Pihabongaus*, asking Finns to observe their home environs for an hour, record the birds they observe and send their results to BirdLife Finland. The association says that 19,000 people participated last year, and more than half a million individual birds from nearly 90 species were spotted. This has provided the association with significant statistics on Finnish winter birds. For example, the data shows that the Eurasian blue tit has spread northward and become more common. *YLE*
- A commemorative two-euro coin was released by the Mint of Finland to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the famous Finnish composer Jean Sibelius. The coin was launched on February 18 with a total mintage of one million. The national side of the coin depicts the starry sky of Ainola and a copse of pine trees (under which Sibelius was photographed several times). The side of the coin dedicated to Sibelius was designed by Nora Tapper. The reverse side is identical to the ordinary two-euro circulation coins. *Finland Times*
- Finnish police now suspect six people, the entire board and the CEO of the defunct air carrier Air Finland of emptying the company bank accounts of several million euros before declaring insolvency. All of the suspects have denied any wrongdoing. When the airline declared bankruptcy in 2012, the trustee handling the bankruptcy proceedings submitted a request for a police investigation, which is now reaching its final stage. The police now suspect Air Finland of aggravated accounting offenses and aggravated dishonesty by a debtor. *YLE*
- The majority of MPs are unlikely to vote in favor of a citizens' initiative call to scrap compulsory Swedish instruction. The Education Committee expresses fears that ending compulsory Swedish teaching would have damaging wider effect on society. A worry about declining numbers of pupils in Finland studying any foreign language at all besides English also contributed to the decision. *YLE*