



Uutiset

NEWSLETTER OF THE FINNISH AMERICAN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, INC.

April/Huhtikuu 2016

Sisu on the Iron Range Mark Phillips

Our April speaker is Mark Phillips, commissioner of the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB). He will talk about the state of the Iron Range today, what can be done for it, and what is the role of the IRRRB.

Mark says, "I am a descendant of Cornish tin miners from Camborne, Cornwall, England. My maternal great-grandfather came to Michigan from England to work in mines; however, he got sick and didn't want to die in a foreign country, so he returned to England. My maternal grandfather emigrated to Eveleth in 1908 and served as a mining captain for the Oliver Iron Mining Company (now U.S. Steel)." He describes a formative experience of his early work life: "My uncle and father owned a Chrysler dealership, Reliable Motors, in Virginia. When my uncle passed away in 1975, I went to work at the dealership. Then, when my father passed away in 1979, I took full ownership of the car dealership. A couple years after that, the taconite industry went into a slump; and we went from selling 100 cars a month to nine cars, and eventually closed the dealership in 1982. Working and owning the dealership gave me an appreciation for making payroll. There was always a sense of urgency to make payroll, and I have never forgotten having to sell a couple cars at the end of the month in order to make the month."



Mark Phillips was appointed commissioner of the IRRRB by Governor Mark Dayton in January 2015.

He served as the agency's director of economic development from 1983 to 1988, and has more than 25 years of leadership in development and finance, including launching new and creative programs for community and economic development, real estate development and business financing. Mark is a graduate of Eveleth High School and has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Minnesota Duluth. He is also a graduate of the Minnesota Executive Program within the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota and is a recipient of the Economic Development Association of Minnesota's Career Achievement Award. He and his wife Patricia have two grown children and two grandchildren.

Program In Brief

**Sisu on the Range
Mark Phillips**

**April 15, 7:00 p.m.
International Institute
1694 Como Ave., St. Paul**

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President's Message

By Gene Ollila

Hei, all FACA members, family, and friends,

On our trip to view the spring return of the sandhill cranes to Nebraska, we also visited Red Cloud, home of author Willa Cather, who grew up in those prairies and later wrote many novels, including *O Pioneers*, written in 1913 and led to her Pulitzer Prize in 1923. Her description of a Swedish family on the raw prairie made me wonder whether there are novels or journals written in the same period about Finnish immigrants. (I have read books on the subject written long after the time of immigration.) If so, Finnish immigrants could be as well known as, for example, the Norwegians, as portrayed by Ole Edvart Rolvaag, and other European immigrants. Please let me know about any such books; I would like to write about them. Also on the trip, we saw many cherry and crabapple trees in bloom—followed by beautifully iced trees and bushes in northern Iowa, shining like Christmas decorations.

Our next program will be by IRRRB commissioner Mark Phillips, whom I have known since our days together on the National Alumni Board of the University of Minnesota. The IRRRB helps industry and all citizens of the Iron Range. It is currently going through some legislative soul-searching. I told him we would be interested in both his personal background, how the organization functions, and now, how they will respond to the evaluation by the legislature. (I talked with him before the news about the investigation.) Come to the April program to hear about these things.

Plans are proceeding for the Festival of Nations, and Richard Harju is coordinating volunteers for Kathryn Hill in the Café and Kaarina Kotkavuori in the Cultural Exhibit booth ("Folklore and Fairytales" is the theme). Pam Rahkola is seeking Baking Day volunteers. If you have already not done so and are available for some time during May 5-8, see page 3 to volunteer.

Kiitos paljon, Gene

Welcome, New Members!

**Susan and Glen Milbridge,
Chanhassen**

Tervetuloa!

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



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

President Gene Ollila called the meeting of the FACA Board of Directors to order at 6:45 p.m., March 15, at Baker's Square restaurant in St. Paul. Present, besides Gene, were John Rova, Janie Ahola, Phillip Erickson and Ruth Erkkila. Not present: Dennis Halme.

The minutes from the February meeting, written by Janie Ahola, were approved. Treasurer Janie Ahola reported that for the year so far, income is less than expenses, and the cash flow looks good. She also presented a budget for the 2016 year; it also was approved.

Future programs: In April we will hear from Mark Phillips, commissioner of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board. In May, in addition to a program, our annual meeting and election of new board members will take place. Gene Ollila will appoint a nominating committee to recruit candidates and present them to the membership.

FACA has joined the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, which provides a newsletter, website and other help for members.

Richard Harju will coordinate volunteers for the Finnish café and culture booth.

The board approved a change to the *Utiset* whereby the contributing writers statement on the second page will be replaced by information about the website. Beth Jarvis continues to post FACA program information on the Facebook page. A complimentary membership in FACA was awarded to Jeanne Swope in appreciation for her work on the *Utiset*.

The officers' responsibilities in the bylaws have been rewritten by Gene Ollila and Janie Ahola. The revised version will be brought to the membership for comments.

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m. The next meeting will be April 12, 6:30 p.m., at Baker's Square in St. Paul.

Festival Of Nations Volunteers Needed

The Festival of Nations is coming up May 5 through 8, and your participation is needed to keep the Finnish presence in the Festival. It is a fun event where you can get to know your Finn friends. With input from last year's participants, we have more accurately set the number of volunteers needed for each shift. We believe it is better to be busy and feel that you are making a contribution than be on an over-staffed shift and feel that you are wasting your time.

We appreciate all the volunteers who have already signed up. If you have not signed up, you may contact any board member or Richard Harju, (612) 719-4965 (voice or text) rjharju@yahoo.com. Sign up early to get the shift you want. *Kiitos.*

Baking Day Volunteers Needed

We could still use some additional volunteers for Baking Day, April 30, at the White Bear Lake South Campus kitchen (3551 McKnight Road, White Bear Lake).

We will be preparing/baking/packaging all of the cakes and cookies needed for sale in the Festival of Nations Finnish Café booth. We especially need makers (no experience necessary!) of the *piirakkas* that we will sell as a FACA fundraiser. The work isn't hard and it's a good time! We do expect the baking, clean-up and packaging to be completed by 2:00-3:00 that afternoon.

Please call Pam Rahkola at (651) 429-3319 to volunteer and get directions. We start at 7:30, but your time is negotiable. All are welcome to join in the fun. *Kiitoksia paljon!*



Finland 100 Centennial Year Planning Is Underway

How would you like to celebrate Finland's 100th year of independence?

Finlandia Foundation National is an active member of the Centennial Committee assembled by the Embassy of Finland to plan events and activities to commemorate Finland's 100th anniversary in 2017. Local affiliates of FFN, including FFTC, have been encouraged to plan local activities as well as to participate in events organized across the nation. Minneapolis has been designated as one of the 12 "signature event" locations for the centenary.

Watch for further details about FFN projects, FinnSource programs, and funding opportunities, as well as for the planning that is underway in the Twin Cities. Also visit Finland 100 USA at finland100usa.com/.

SISU Seminar News

By Kathleen Ristinen

Good news! The SISU Finnish Language and Culture Seminar is pleased to announce that Finland Society/*Suomi Seura* has awarded our seminar a grant in partial support of this summer's seminar.

The 2016 SISU Finnish Language and Culture Seminar will be held from July 31 to August 6 at the University of Minnesota Duluth. Teachers will be Anna Leppänen, Johanna Hietikko Tigert, and Kata Hyvärinen; the seminar will include 25-30 hours of Finnish Language study at three levels. Presenters will include Pasi Lautala (accordion) and Meg Pachmeyer (bass); Pasi and Meg play and sing a mixture of old and modern folk and dance hall tunes from Finland. This presentation will be open to the public. Other activities are being planned.

The SISU Finnish Language and Culture seminar is open to interested adults of any age. Registration forms and deposits are due before April 30. Late registrations will be accepted, if space remains in the seminar. For forms and more information, please contact Kathleen Ristinen, kaisa@eurekanet.com or (740) 592-1157. Please visit our Facebook page, SISU Finnish Language & Culture Seminar.

Invitation from FinnSource, a New Cultural Organization

Hei, Minnesota Finnish folks and friends! You are invited to a gathering with FinnSource on Tuesday, April 19, 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. (short program at 6:00), at the Danish American Center, 3030 West River Parkway, Minneapolis. Finnish appetizers and beverages will be served.

FinnSource is an informal focus group that is interested in promoting all things Finnish in Minnesota and wants you to join in this fun effort. What is important for you in our Finnish community?

In the short term, we feel that Finland's 100th anniversary in 2017 is something to celebrate. Let's make it great in Minnesota! In the longer term, we are all for promoting Finnish culture, language, arts, business, education, health care, sports, heritage, cuisine and more.

Please come to share your ideas to build FinnSource. We are grateful for the use of the Danish American Center. Hopefully we can have our own Finnish House in the not-too-distant future by working together!

Tervetuloa! Questions? Email Elina at elinakoivusaari@gmail.com.

If you can, let Elina know you plan to come but feel free to just drop in and out as you wish. This event is free of charge.

Fun Facebook Link:

<http://inktank.fi/finlands-12-best-english-language-pages-to-like-on-facebook/>

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

Ylivieska Church Destroyed in Fire, Suspected Arson

A centuries-old wooden church in Ylivieska, Northern Ostrobothnia, was completely destroyed by fire late Easter Saturday night. Police have taken custody of one local man, born in the 1980s, who has confessed to arson.

Easter mass was meant to take place at 11 p.m. inside the church, but flames erupted just after 7 p.m. The fire was witnessed by dozens of local onlookers, who reportedly interfered with the Rescue Department's firefighting measures by blocking traffic.

Ylivieska worshippers were not deterred by the conflagration, however; and an Easter service was held outdoors at the site while the church still smouldered. Some 500 people gathered at a makeshift altar among the ruins, with Bishop Samuel Salmi officiating.

The 230 year-old church also lost a number of valuable artworks including an altarpiece from 1897 by the famous artist Sigurd Wettenhovi-Aspa.

Source: *Yle*



Blueberry Sour Cream Coffee Cake

INGREDIENTS

Batter:

1/2 cup butter

2/3 cup sugar

1 egg

1 cup flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract*

Filling:

1 cup wild blueberries

Sour Cream Topping:

1 cup sour cream

1/4 cup sugar

1 egg

1 teaspoon vanilla extract*

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Spray pan. The recipe above works for a 8" square or pie dish so double for 9x11. Blend butter and sugar. Add egg, mix. Add dry and vanilla and mix well. Put into pan spreading it evenly. Sprinkle blueberries on top of batter.

Mix remaining ingredients and pour over blueberries. Bake for about 30 minutes until edges are browned and middle is 'set'.

Can use raspberries too!!!!

Source: Old Recipes From Our Finnish Ancestors (Facebook)

FACA March Presentation

By Gene Ollila

Our March presenter, district court judge and author Mark Munger, gave a very good talk about his own history, the route he took to writing about Finns and a summary of some of his novels.

He began by giving his own national origins, including many ethnicities but not Finnish. He was born in St. Paul, practiced law in Duluth for 18 years, and since then has been a district court judge for several northeastern Minnesota counties for another 18 years. He lives on the Cloquet River and owns the Cloquet River Press.

He has always been a reader; and, while recovering from spinal surgery, his wife encouraged him to write. As a result, in 2000 he published his first book, *The Legacy*, which is about World War II Yugoslavian resistance against the Nazis. Then it continues with an account of retribution and “getting even” years after the war, in northern Minnesota. I found this book fascinating.

He began doing research on Duluth history and learned about three black circus workers who were lynched in Duluth in the early 1900s. Exploring this theme, he found a Finn who was tarred and also hanged. Very little information was ever published about either of these events. At this point he became engrossed by the Finnish-American acculturation process. His research led to a novel (published in 2004) about Finns and their struggles in the period 1917 to 1921, entitled *Suomalaiset: People of the Marsh*. In this book, I saw struggles of the educated vs less well educated, the moneyed people vs those with little or nothing, the religious vs the non religious, and the difficulty of being a “non” American during the period of the Great War. This affected many ethnic groups, especially the Germans, but also many other European immigrants who were now considered suspicious and “criminal.”

His most recent novel, *Sukulaiset: The Kindred*, published in 2014, takes place in Karelia and Estonia in the 1930s and 1940s and involves one character from *Suomalaiset*, Elin Ellison. The book is about the struggles between the Nazis and Communists, and the Finns, Estonians, and the “Karelian fever” immigrants from north America. I just purchased this book and look forward to reading it.

Mr. Munger read several passages from his work in progress, *Boomtown*, to tantalize future readers.

We had a very enjoyable evening discussion, and Mr. Munger gave many of us an update to our knowledge of history as well.

Vappu Celebration Set

The Finnish American Chamber of Commerce Minnesota cordially invites you to Vappu—A May Day Reception, on Friday, April 29, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., at the Danish American Center, 3030 West River Parkway, Minneapolis, Please join us to celebrate spring and Vappu, one of the largest holidays in the Nordics.

Program includes entertainment by recording artist Kip Peltoniemi, happy hour with hors d'oeuvres and refreshments, and marketplace/information tables provided by local Finnish businesses and organizations.

Kip Peltoniemi hails from Minnesota's famous “Finnish Triangle,” which is located in the center of the eastern section of the western part of the southern portion of northern Minnesota. At one time, the Triangle was a hotbed of Finnish-American button accordion music. Sadly, Kip is the last of the old-time button accordion players from the Triangle. Efforts by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to reintroduce button accordion players into the Triangle have failed, so you better see Kip while you have the chance.

His one-man show features unusual accordion instrumentals, humorous songs, dubious folklore and out-and-out lies. All of Kip's music has been independently tested, graded and certified, achieving an incredible 99.7 % (or Grade AAA) ethnicity rating.

Kip's 2002 solo album *Minnesota Tango* was named “Folk Album of the Year” by *Helsingin Sanomat*, and many of his songs and instrumentals have been recorded by the duo Pinnin Pojat (Kimmo Pohjonen and Arto Jarvelä). He has been the subject of a documentary on *YLE* television, and his tunes have received airplay throughout Europe.

How much? FREE, but let us know if you are coming. RSVP by registering at Eventbrite by Thursday, April 28.

For more information about the reception, or if you want to secure a table, please call or email Jouko Sipila at (203) 918-9920, sipila8@gmail.com.

Events Calendar

April 7-23 Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival. Check the website for offerings—a lot of great movie-going at many venues! More information: mspfilm.org/, facebook.com/mspfilmsociety

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

April 17 Kalle Toivio in organ recital, Central Lutheran Church, 333 S. 12th St., Minneapolis, 4:00 p.m.

April 19 FinnSource gathering. Danish American Center, 3030 West River Parkway, Minneapolis, 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. See page 4.

April 22 Deadline for items for the May 2016 *Uutiset*. Send by midnight to facaeditor@gmail.com.

April 23 Finnish Genealogical Group of Minnesota. Plymouth Apostolic Lutheran Church, 11015 Old County Road 15, Plymouth, 9:30 a.m. Using Online Finnish Archives. (For driving directions and other information: minnesotafinnish.org. Select Finnish Genealogy Group of Minnesota.)

April 23 "Finlandia Meets Earth Day" concert, Central Lutheran Church, 333 S. 12th St., Minneapolis. 2:00 p.m. Olli Kortekangas' work, Seven Songs for Planet Earth, with the Angelica Cantanti Children's Chorus.

April 29 Vappu-May Day Celebration 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at The Danish American Center, 3030 W River Parkway, Minneapolis. See page 6.

April 30 Baking Day for Finnish Café at Festival of Nations, White Bear Lake High School South campus kitchen. See page 3.

April 30 Deadline to apply for a Finlandia Foundation scholarship to Salolampi Language Village this summer. If you know an interested young person, ages 6-18, email norgard@paulbunyan.net for information and submit the lower portion of the Partner Organization application, plus a paragraph describing why the student wants to attend Salolampi, to Betsey Norgard, 23035 County Rd. 70, Bovey, MN 55709.

May 5-8 Festival of Nations, River Centre, St. Paul. See page 3

May 15-May 21 Spring Adult Week at Salolampi, Concordia Language Village, Bemidji. More information: <http://www.concordialanguagevillages.org/adult-programs/detail/finnish-adult> or (800) 222-4750 or CLV@cord.edu

May 20 FACA program and annual meeting and election. International Institute of Minnesota, 7:00 p.m.

June 4 National Sauna Day in Embarrass. Sponsored by Sisu Heritage. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Nelimark Museum. For more information: Marlin Bjornrud at (218) 984-3402.

June 10-11 Nisswa Stamman. Pioneer Village, Nisswa. For more information: nisswastamman.org

June 24-25 Scandinavian Hjemkomst and Midwest Viking Festival, Hjemkomst Center, 202 1st Av N, Moorhead. For more information: 218-299-5452, nordiccultureclubsoffice@gmail.com or www.NordicCultureClubs.org

July 9-July 16 FinnFestUSA 2016. Cruise from Boston to Montreal. For more information: finnfestusa2016.com/

July 31-August 6 SISU Finnish Language & Culture Seminar at the University of Minnesota, Duluth. For more information: Kathleen Ristinen, secretary, at kaisa@eurekanet.com or (740) 592-1157. See page 4.

Tuesdays. *Oppitunti*. 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. *Keskustelutunti*. Finlanders at the U of M conversation hour, 12:00-1:00 p.m.. Bordertown Coffee, 315 16th Ave. S.E., 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.)

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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)

- Serving fine treats and *kahvia* in March were Betty Wheelcor, Marlene Banttari and Theresa Lund. Betty's granddaughter Teresa Tjepkes helped to set everything up. *Kiitos!*
- In Finland and other EU countries, summer time officially started in the early hours of Sunday morning March 27 (Easter), as clocks move forward by one hour.
- Finland's passenger train traffic is set to open up for competition in 2017, a move that will likely end years of market domination by the state-owned operator VR. The Ministry of Transport and Communications says over ten companies have expressed an interest in the prospect of a market share.
- An *Yle* survey has determined that the single greatest worry among Finland's residents in early 2016 was unemployment, followed by the refugee situation. The third cause for concern was cited as Finland's indecisive leadership.

The percentage of Finnish residents rating unemployment as their main concern has grown by five percentage points since 2011, the survey showed.

Some 30 percent of Finnish residents believe that uncontrolled immigration is a problem, rising to 40 percent among young people under 25. Problems related to intolerance, hate speech and hardened attitudes have also appeared during that same time, problems that respondents collectively listed as their seventh greatest concern.

Also, every seventh Finnish resident says disagreements between the government and other key decision-makers are a major societal concern, along with their inability to make decisions. Turns out the political lack of progress was the third most-cited concern among the survey's respondents.

