



# Uutiset

## NEWSLETTER OF THE FINNISH AMERICAN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, INC.

September/Syyskuu 2015

### *Nutrition and Health Ester and Melvin Niska*

This month, Ester and Melvin Niska will talk about the connection between good health and better nutrition. *Note: our programs will begin at 7:00 p.m. this year.*

Ester (Kemppainen) Niska was born and raised in Pihtipudas, Finland, as youngest of 10 children. Her childhood dream was to see America, but she never imagined that she would move to Minnesota for her whole life at the age of 28. But this became her future when she and Melvin Niska were married in Pihtipudas in 1968. Their home is in Andover. They are parents of nine adult children and baby Tobias in Heaven, and have 25 grandchildren. Most of their children are living in the United States except for their daughter Maija and her family, who live in Belgium.

Ester grew up eating mostly home-grown foods and Finnish *pulla* (cardamom bread) and coffee, of course, and a lot of it. After getting married to a family of “health nuts,” she realized that many of her own and her family members’ health problems were diet-related, and she began studying about diet and health. With the help of her husband, she devoted her life to feeding her family the healthiest way they knew, and she became a certified health coach. Ester is grateful for her dual citizenship and keeps up with her interest in Finnish politics and other Finnish news. Her international business makes it possible for them to travel to Finland almost yearly. She and Melvin have become a passionate wellness education team and do presentations to senior groups, young parents and one-to-one coaching.



#### Program In Brief

#### ***Nutrition and Health Melvin and Ester Niska***

**Sept. 18, 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*

Before becoming actively involved with the nutrition, Melvin had a full career in the computer industry. He is also a published author and an international lecturer. Melvin is an avid chef. Ester and Melvin have learned to modify many recipes including Finnish recipes with healthier ingredients, such as *Karjalan piirakkas*, egg butter, Finnish sour-dough bread, *pulla*, etc.

Join us for this talk and for more conversation during our usual social hour following the program!

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## President's Message

By Gene Ollila

Hei, all FACA members, family and friends,

Boy, this summer went quickly, especially with a 15-day trip to Bavaria in southern Germany for our son's wedding to a lovely fraulein. I was most impressed with Germany's cleanliness, the maintenance of countrywide hiking trails for all, and their ability to live in harmony in spite of the immigration issues, primarily in large cities. There is a lot that we can learn from other cultures, especially regarding how we manage the nature around us.

I am very excited to start this year. We have a wonderful mix of board members, with heart, thoughtfulness, backbone to face tough issues, and personalities that mesh well. This was evident in our discussion of Festival of Nations monies. Kathryn Hill is donating \$500 from the Café profits to use for scholarships, etc.; leftover Café items sold at the May program brought in \$270.

FinnFest 2015 in Buffalo, New York, in October, still has openings on the bus trip, and the \$695 is really a bargain for all that you get (see page 4). I encourage all of you to go to the Nordic Thanksgiving Breakfast on November 24 (see page 6). This is an enjoyable fundraiser, and is very well attended, so we need some Finns attending. Melanie Brooks and Finnish students from the Sibelius Academy conducting class will be here to meet with FACA and friends for breakfast. Unfortunately, they will be here during FinnFest, so please try to go if not attending FinnFest. The *Joulu* celebration will again take place in December.

This year we are discussing becoming an affiliate of the Finlandia Foundation – Twin Cities Chapter. There are advantages to us with minimal to no cost. One thing we can be proud of is that local musician Sara Pajunen is the Finlandia Foundation National Performer of the Year. She is a wonderful talent and we should applaud her.

In June, five of us (the Rahkolas, the Bernards, and I) served at the Finnish coffee booth at the Hjemkomst and Viking Festival in Moorhead. It was great fun, with wonderful performers. Dennis Anderson of Finlandia Foundation gave me a tour of the fantastic Concordia College Music Department, and I met several staff and some of the Soiva music students from Finland.

Next spring, the Festival of Nations theme will be *Folk Art and Fairy Tales*. Also, if you have hot ideas for speakers, let Dennis Halme know. Finally, our **FACA programs will start at 7 p.m., beginning with our September 18 meeting.**

*Kiitos paljon,*  
Gene



## Board Notes

By Ruth Erkkila



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

### June Board Notes

The meeting of the FACA Board was called to order by President Gene Ollila at 6:45 p.m., June 10, at Bakers Square, St. Paul. Also present were Dennis Halme, Janie Ahola, Ruth Erkkila, Richard Harju, John Rova, Bud Berry and Phillip Erickson.

The minutes of the May board meeting were approved. Treasurer Janie Ahola reported on the bank balance and the income from sales of *piirakkas* and Finnish Café items at the May meeting. John Rova donated the cultural booth materials so there was no cost to FACA. Kathryn Hill provided a rough draft of income and expenses for the Finnish Café; there was a profit. Gene Ollila and she will discuss apportioning this.

Dennis Halme is open to suggestions for programs for the coming year.

Bud Berry suggested sending program notices to local newspapers to publicize FACA and possibly increase attendance and membership.

Pam and Urho Rahkola and Junelle and Stuart Bernard will also attend the Hjemkomst Festival in Moorhead, Minnesota, in June to assist in some food sales. The theme this year is Finnish culture.

The board welcomed new board member Phillip Erickson, a lawyer originally from Duluth, and said thank you to Richard Harju for his outstanding work as Hospitality Chair and for recruiting volunteers for the Festival of Nations. As he leaves the hospitality position, Richard Harju will refine the inventory of the the *kahvi*

*aika* equipment, getting rid of duplicate or unused items.

***The board voted to change the time of the Friday FACA programs to 7:00 p.m.***

The status of the library is still pending. No date for a meeting has been set, but a meeting to discuss the library will include Gene Ollila, Marianne Wargelin, a Christ Church Lutheran representative and a *Suomi-koulu* representative.

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

### August Board Notes

The FACA Board met August 18 at Bakers Square in St. Paul. President Gene Ollila called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm. All members plus Past President Bud Berry were present.

The minutes of the June meeting and the treasurer's report were accepted. Janie Ahola anticipated that our September bank balance will be the same as last year.

Bud Berry attended the Festival of Nations wrap up meeting. We reviewed the preliminary Finnish Café income and expense report. FACA will be getting some money from the café profits.

Sibelius Academy student, Melanie Brooks, who performed at the FACA program before she left for Finland, will be visiting the Twin Cities with some of her Finnish colleagues October 6-14. Janie is making arrangements for a breakfast with some FACA members. The timing conflicts with FinnFest, but hopefully there will be enough people in the Twin Cities for this breakfast.

Gene Ollila, Urho Rahkola, Pam Rahkola, Junelle Bernard and Stuart Bernard attended the Hjemkomst Festival in Moorhead, Minnesota in June, where they helped sell coffee and cookies. The theme this year was Finnish culture.

Janie Ahola and Marianne Wargelin attended a planning meeting for the North American Thanksgiving Breakfast scheduled for November 24. Tickets will be available from Janie.

Phillip Erickson will review the by-laws and officers' duties and suggest changes, if appropriate.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m. The next board meeting will be Tuesday, September 15, Bakers Square, Ford Parkway, St. Paul.

## "Finnspiration" in Buffalo at FinnFest 2015. October 9-12

By K. Marianne Wargelin

Buffalo, New York, may not be known as a Finntown, but, as the home of the renowned Kleinhans Music Hall designed by Eliel and Eero Saarinen and inaugurated on October 12, 1940, Buffalo is pulling out all the stops to create a diverse weekend of programs both pop and classical. Consider attending both the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Jean Sibelius tribute concert and the Säkkijärven Dancing with the Stars/Polka Face off which will include Minneapolis' own Finn Hall band as well as Toivo, the band created by Rich Koski as part of the Finger Lake Finns (Western New York state) community.

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts may be bringing in a Van Gogh to look at, but FinnFest USA 2015 will have three Gallen Kallela paintings, privately owned and little seen. In addition, Maija DeRoche, a Finnish expat who lives in the Finger Lakes, will be demonstrating the ancient art of Rauma lace making; and Finnish photographer, Niilo Riine will be presenting the photos submitted to a photo contest where Finns in Finland took pictures of contemporary tori life in their towns and cities.

Who said FinnFest could only be so Finnish in a city with no Finns? But Finns are everywhere, Right? Yes, and people who learn to love and appreciate Finland are everywhere. So, come to Buffalo. Visit Niagara Falls and then attend the opening ceremony on Friday night, October 9, followed by two days filled with ideas, music, art, music, and fun.

What will be happening? Lots of things, too many exhibits, lectures, concerts and musical events, and performance art and theatre to list them all here. Explore the website at [events.finnfestusa.org/](http://events.finnfestusa.org/) where you can see the program details. Then register for the festival and purchase event tickets. If you need a ride, consider the charter bus leaving from Cokato and Minneapolis.

### 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

## Still Some Seats Available on Chartered Bus to FinnFest USA 2015 Buffalo

Call right away if you are interested! FinnFest USA is organizing a chartered bus to take Minnesotans to Buffalo New York and the FinnFest USA 2015 festival, a trip that will begin on October 7 and end on October 14. Passengers can board in Cokato or Minneapolis.

Cost is \$695 per person in double occupancy rooms (single rooms available at additional cost.) Included in the trip will be hotel rooms for seven days, including the FinnFest USA festival hotel. Festival registration through this tour includes a special group registration rate of \$90 for the full festival (including options to attend six ticketed one hour concerts) plus discounts on the theatre performance, the performance art events, and Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra concert. Tickets for the Finnish breakfast, the food demonstration with Beatrice Ojakangas and East Coast cooks, and the Säkkijärven Dancing with the Stars Polka Face-Off will be separate costs. Contact: Marianne Wargelin to discuss the trip and to reserve a space. [kmwargelin@comcast.net](mailto:kmwargelin@comcast.net) or leave a message at (612) 374-2718. Partial payment of \$100 due when reserving. Final payment due September 15.

Because the trip by car takes approximately 17 hours, the trip includes four overnights en route, two each way. (The bus driver cannot legally drive such a long stretch all at once.) To add interest to the journey, several unique stops are built into the proposed itinerary.

## Finland Segment in *Focus on Europe* Video

By Beth Jarvis

The PBS series *Focus on Europe* included a segment at the very beginning about Finnish children fathered by German Wehrmacht soldiers and born to Finnish women. Apparently this has been a taboo subject for decades.

It appeared on the Brainerd-Lakes PBS affiliate, and is available on this web site at the time we are writing this newsletter:  
[dw.com/en/program/focus-on-europe/s-101185-9798](http://dw.com/en/program/focus-on-europe/s-101185-9798)

The British host so mangled the pronunciation of "Rovaniemi" that I had to use closed captioning to tell what he meant!

## **InFaith.....What Is It?? Sept. 28, 29 and 30 Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday**

*By Linda Warpula Davis and Ruthann Swanson*

Maybe you saw this name appear on your caller ID during the 2014 Phonathon. "InFaith" Community Foundation was formerly named Lutheran Community Foundation.

For more than a decade this organization has supported the Salolampi Foundation by providing the use of their telephones for us to call toll free around the country. We have appreciated their deep commitment to Salolampi's mission. What a worthy partnership!

Our Scholarship Appeal/Phonathon will take place on Monday, through Wednesday, September 28 to 30. A call from a Salolampi volunteer may appear as "InFaith" on your caller ID. Please answer this telephone call.

There are a number of volunteers calling from their own homes. You may not recognize their names/numbers on your caller IDs. These are compassionate and committed volunteers working hard for financial aid for our Salolampi villagers.

Every student attending Salolampi receives a reduction in their tuition. We do this to meet our mission of "sustaining the Finnish language and culture..."

Please welcome all Phonathon/Scholarship Appeal calls from either the "InFaith Community Foundation" or from our dedicated volunteers. Again, our calls will take place the week of September 28. Please be generous with your donations to keep the tuition affordable. Thank you for your past and continued scholarship dollars.

### **Be a Volunteer**

Please consider being either a caller from home or from the InFaith Community Foundation location downtown. This is our one and only fundraiser in a year's time!!

Please contact Ruthann Rintala Swanson (ruthann@ars-services.com) (612) 788-3905 or Linda Warpula Davis (ldavismn@hotmail.com) (763) 420-3237. *Kiitos paljon.*



The Finnish American Chamber of Commerce Minnesota is again presenting *Let's Play Hockey!* Come join us for our annual hockey game. This year the game is Minnesota Wild vs. Nashville Predators on Thursday, November 5, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. at the Xcel Energy Center, St. Paul. We will get together for a social hour before the game at 5:30 p.m.; details will follow.

Act now to secure your seats! Register with a credit card at Eventbrite ([eventbrite.com/e/mn-wild-game-nov-5th-vs-nashville-tickets-17971302650](http://eventbrite.com/e/mn-wild-game-nov-5th-vs-nashville-tickets-17971302650))).

Email Jouko (jsipila8@gmail.com) with any questions.



**Finlandia  
Foundation  
National**

Inspiring, celebrating and connecting the Finnish-American community since 1953.

### **Join Finlandia Foundation Twin Cities**

*By Betsey Norgard*

Stay informed and connected with current Finland. Enjoy events and programs within the larger Finnish and Finnish American community in the Twin Cities, the largest urban population of Finns in the U.S. Become a member of Finlandia Foundation National, with its network of Finnish and Finnish American organizations.

Annual membership is \$20, which waives some event fees. Receive monthly e-news from FFTC and Finlandia Foundation National, as well as FFN's printed newsletter twice a year.

Mail a check to Finlandia Foundation TC, c/o Betsey Norgard, 23035 County Rd. 70, Bovey, MN 55709

For more information, contact [finlandiafoundationtc@gmail.com](mailto:finlandiafoundationtc@gmail.com).

## Nordic American Thanksgiving Breakfast on November 24

Save the date: The Nordic American Thanksgiving Breakfast returns on November 24 to the Doubletree by Hilton in Bloomington. This annual event brings together people of Nordic heritage and their friends to enjoy a breakfast, music and three distinguished individuals from the community, who will speak on the topics of freedom, faith, family and friends. Started thirty years ago, the breakfast creates a time to consider the American Thanksgiving holiday, using Nordic perspectives on thankfulness.

Three extraordinary speakers will lead this year's conversation about thankfulness. Gina Torry, who moved last year to the Twin Cities to run the Nobel Peace Prize Forum, will speak about freedom. Ford Bell, former President and CEO of the American Association of Museums, will address the topic family and friends. Reverend Mark Hanson, the former Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, will speak on the topic of faith.

Don Shelby, former WCCO anchor, returns to serve as Master of Ceremonies. The Bethel University Chorus (St. Paul) provides this year's choral contributions.

This annual charitable event ends with a freewill offering, this year supporting two local nonprofits, Second Harvest Heartland and Minnesota Military Family Foundation.

People who want to sit together at a Finnish table will be able to buy their tickets from Janie Ahola in October. More details about the breakfast will also be published in the October *Utiset*.



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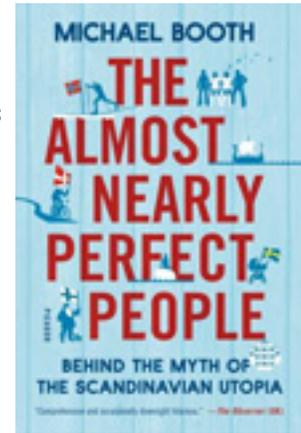
### In Memoriam

Long time FACA member Charles Routhe (husband of Vergene) passed away on June 27th. Chuck was always a willing FACA volunteer, especially for the Festival of Nations, and made many morning deliveries for the Finnish Café. He was a quiet man with a wry sense of humor and will be missed.

## Michael Booth, *The Almost Nearly Perfect People: behind the myth of the Scandinavian utopia*

By Beth Jarvis and Jeanne Swope

This book looks at the current image of Nordic countries as exemplary in many ways. He sometimes agrees, sometimes quarrels a bit, but in general finds Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Finland worthy of interest and admiration. All the countries are historically mostly homogeneous societies, have high levels of taxation and generous social welfare benefits. Most are grappling with issues presented by new immigration and economic issues shared by many other nations. He looks at the different histories the countries have gone through and how those differences influence the people now.



Author Michael Booth is British, married to a Dane and lives in Denmark where the couple is raising and educating their two children. Thus it isn't surprising that the the section of the book dealing with Denmark contains the deepest analysis.

Of course, you might read the section on Finland first. Why wouldn't you? It contains information about saunas, education, Santa Claus Village—many of the stereotypes and current publicity. And he does like Finland. He says he would happily vote for Finland to rule the world. He also has a pretty funny story about visiting the only public wood-fired sauna in Helsinki, where all the men were silent during the entire sauna.

Can Norwegians preserve their values and society in the presence of great oil wealth? Is Sweden a kind of totalitarian country where everyone is pressured to conform? Has Iceland figured out for sure how to live on their amazing mini-continent and prosper in the modern world? Are the Danes the happiest people in the world? Will any of these stoic, silent people speak up? And did Booth spend enough time in Finland while researching this book?

Read the book and decide.

## Events Calendar

**Sept. 18** FACA program, International Institute of Minnesota, 7:00 p.m.

**Sept. 19** The Finnish Genealogy Group-MN, Plymouth Apostolic Lutheran Church, 11015 Old County Road 15, Plymouth, 9:30 a.m.

**Sept. 20** Finnish Culture through Movies group. Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave South, Minneapolis. 6:00 p.m. *Vadelmavenepakolainen (Raspberry boat refugee)* [finnkino.fi/eng/Event/300330/](http://finnkino.fi/eng/Event/300330/) More information: [minnesotafinnish.org](http://minnesotafinnish.org); click on Suomi-koulu, then Groups, then Finnish Culture through Movies or call (651) 428-3155.

**Sept. 21 - 27** Festival Ruska, Finlandia University and the Finnish American Heritage Center and Archives, Hancock, MI. Week-long event celebrating the fall season and Finnish culture. Among many special events is Finnish Genealogy Day on Saturday, September 26, with presenters from Minnesota, California and Finland. More information: [finlandia.edu/festivalruska.html](http://finlandia.edu/festivalruska.html)

**Sept. 25** Submission deadline for October *Uutiset*. Send by midnight to [facaeditor@gmail.com](mailto:facaeditor@gmail.com)

**Sept. 28-30** Salolampi Phonathon. See page 5.

**Oct. 10** Breakfast with Melanie Brooks and Sibelius Institute Conducting Class students. 9:00 a.m. Location to be determined. See page 7.

**Oct. 9-12** FinnFest USA 2015, Buffalo, NY. For more information, see page 4.

**Oct. 18** Finnish Culture through Movies group. Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave South, Minneapolis. 6:00 p.m. *Kesäkaverit / Summer Friends* [finnkino.fi/eng/Event/300286/](http://finnkino.fi/eng/Event/300286/)

**Oct. 18** Kalevi Kiviniemi (organ) and Jukka Pietilä (baritone) in Concert. Central Lutheran Church, 333 S 12th St, Minneapolis, 4 p.m. For info, [MSedio@CENTRALMPLS.ORG](mailto:MSedio@CENTRALMPLS.ORG)

**Oct. 31** Family History Fair 2015, Hennepin County Central Library, downtown Minneapolis, 9:00 a.m. To 3:00 p.m. The event is free but registration is required. Registration begins October 3 More information: [hclib.org/pub/events/AllEventsAction.cfm?keyword=family+history](http://hclib.org/pub/events/AllEventsAction.cfm?keyword=family+history)

**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. S.E., Minneapolis. For more information or to check on meeting day/time: [karvo001@umn.edu](mailto:karvo001@umn.edu)

## Breakfast with Melanie Brooks and the Sibelius Academy Conducting Class

By Janie Ahola

Not going to FinnFest? Then join Melanie Brooks and her classmates, (Finnish students from the Sibelius Academy conducting class), for a “FinnChat.”

Melanie (the saxophonist who performed at our May 2014 program) and the Finnish students would like to meet FACA members, family and friends for breakfast and conversation in October.

Every year (or every other year), the class tries to do an international trip to observe wind music, bands and conducting methods in different parts of the world. This usually means a trip to Norway or Denmark, but since Melanie is their U.S. contact, they decided to take advantage of the opportunity to visit the States. They will be visiting St. Olaf College in Northfield on October 7 and 8, and will be back in the Twin Cities area for the remainder of their trip.

The breakfast get-together would be a great cultural exchange for all and a great refresher for those who would like to brush up on their Finnish (speaking/understanding Finnish is not required). We will meet for breakfast on Saturday, October 10, at 9:00 a.m. The breakfast get-together will be held at the St. Paul Hotel M ST. Cafe, where parking is validated at the Lawson ramp. If our group is big enough, we can have our own room. For reservations and questions, contact Janie Ahola at [janieahola@msn.com](mailto:janieahola@msn.com) or (651) 455-6152 or (651) 249-6576.

## 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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*Pieniä Paloja*

(Little Pieces)

- Norway would welcome more Finnish workers, if only they spoke Swedish better. There's plenty of work on offer in Norway these days, but a good command of English isn't enough if the job description contains any kind of team work or customer interface. Business leaders in Norway say they are disappointed at Finnish applicants' poor Swedish skills. A Norwegian temp agency recently advertised for medical personnel by taking out an ad in Finland's leading Swedish language newspapers. They did not advertise in Finnish language newspapers. *Yle*
- Finnish law regulates the names that can be given to a child; more than three first names or a name which is inappropriate or can otherwise cause an obvious disadvantage cannot be approved. A name which is in form or spelling contrary to Finnish naming practices is not permitted, nor is giving a female name to a boy or a male name to a girl. It is possible to change one's first name once by simply notifying the local Registry Office. A second occasion, however, requires filling out a formal name change application. "The law does not limit the number of times

a name change application can be submitted, but it is specific that everyone must have a first and last name," says an official. *Yle*

- Finland is preparing to deal with an expected influx of up to 10,000 additional asylum seekers. In particular, crises in Africa and the Middle East are spurring an exodus as people flee ongoing violence. Interior Minister Petteri Orpo announced the new figures at a press conference on Thursday. Finland may process as many as 15,000 asylum seekers this year, if the accelerating rate of people seeking refuge continues at the pace set over summer. That figure would be 10,000 higher than previous estimates. *Yle*
- Finland has tripled the number of reservists called up for refresher training courses to 18,000 this year. Finland has made strides in recent months to align with its Nordic neighbors as Russia has stepped up military activity in the Baltic Sea. The units were to be deployed to military districts close to Finland's border with Russia. The defense ministers of Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark and Iceland warned in April that Northern Europe must prepare for a possible conflict with Russia. *IB Times*