



Newsletter of Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.

March/Maaliskuu 2022



Baking with Beatrice Ojakangas

We are excited to be able to reschedule Beatrice Ojakangas. She will be joining us for our **March 18** program via Zoom and will be demonstrating a delectable item for Easter. Her cookbooks are a staple in many of our homes. A program not to be missed. We will also be announcing this year's Sauna Bucket awardee.

Beatrice Ojakangas grew up on a small farm in Floodwood, Minnesota, where her mother taught her how to bake bread on their wood stove before she was old enough to read.

During her youth, she participated in the 4-H club, inspired by a desire to win a trip each year to the Minnesota State Fair as a county grand champion, which had to be in a different food category every year. This persistence ultimately led her to two national grand champion 4-H titles.

She graduated from the University of Minnesota Duluth with a degree in home economics, and was introduced to gourmet food while working a summer job as a private cook. She won the Second Grand Prize at the 1967 Pillsbury Bake-Off, and worked in recipe development for Jenö Paulucci, for whom she invented pizza rolls.

Sunset Magazine was the start of her magazine writing career, and she later published articles in *Gourmet*, *Bon Appetit*, *Woman's Day*, *Family Circle*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Midwest Living*, *Cooking Light*, and numerous newspapers. She is the author of 31 cookbooks and was inducted in 2005 into the James Beard Cookbook Hall of Fame. She received an honorary doctorate from the University of Minnesota in 2007.

Beatrice lives in Duluth, Minnesota with her husband, Richard. She is working on her 32nd book.

(Bio from www.beatrice-ojakangas.com)

Past presentations can be viewed on FACA Website under the Media tab.

Date: March 18, 2022; Time: Central Time (US and Canada)

6:45 p.m. member announcements, 7 p.m. program

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6815304953>

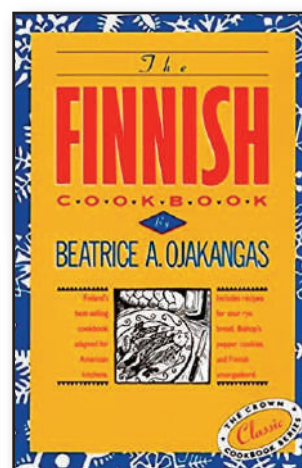
Meeting ID: 681 530 4953; Passcode: MinnFinn

Program in Brief

*Baking with
Beatrice Ojakangas*
Friday, March 18, 7 p.m.
Zoom Program

FACA Event Cancellation Policy

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



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President's/Interim Editor's Message

By Louise Morgan



*L–R: Judy Mikkola and husband Tom;
Louise Morgan*



Laskiaispulla

I still smell smoky from the fire at the Laskiainen celebration yesterday. What a fun time we had. This year, FACA, Suomi-koulu and FinnSource joined forces to sponsor and host the Laskiainen celebration. We will be doing more of this in the future. We did not have pea soup, but we did have *laskiaispulla* which was new to me. Very delicious. A *pulla* roll with jam and whipped cream. What is not to like? I did not try sledding,

but the young people looked like they were having a blast. Maybe next year I will try as well! Next year, we are dreaming big and hope to include a sauna as well.

We have some great events coming up. Beatrice Ojakangas is joining us this month—our community's Julia Child. In April, Emma Mulhern, who has been sending in those wonderful columns from Finland, will be sharing her experiences with us, all the way from Finland. And on June 11, we will be hosting a Midsummer

picnic with food and music. More to follow so please watch for more information in the *Uutiset*, on the website and on Facebook.

For those of you on Facebook, I hope you saw the poll I posted. I posted a short poll asking about whether you would feel comfortable getting back together indoors in May. We are anxious to get back together again, but we want to know what you think about that. So, if you haven't responded yet, please take a minute and fill out the short questionnaire. You can find it on our Facebook page. It was so nice to talk to people in person on Saturday (February 26). Cannot wait until we can do that on a routine basis again—hopefully soon!

The days are getting longer, the sun is brighter and spring is almost here!

Salolampi Scholarship Fund Drive Update

We are overwhelmed by our FACA members' generosity! We have received more than \$2,500! That does not include any matching donations. If you have a child, grandchild or relative who would like to apply for a FACA scholarship for the 2022 Salolampi season, please contact Kathy Jackson at 651-739-3102, dbjackson@usfamily.net **no later than March 15.**

Minnesota Finns Celebrate St. Urho's Day

By Honor Schauand

Finland, Minnesota will celebrate our 47th Annual St. Urho's Day on March 12 this year with the usual high spirits that come after a long cold winter like this one. Everyone has been hibernating and a little crabby all winter, but on St. Urho's Day we will all come outside and smile at each other and have a good time. It's often a day when things warm up and the snow melts a little, and even though we know winter isn't over yet, the coldest, hardest time is over. Up here, St. Urho's Day is the true beginning of spring.

In Finland, Minnesota we are proud of our Finnish-American heritage, and St. Urho's Day is part of how we show that. Our celebration started in 1976 as our community's unique way to celebrate the U.S. Bicentennial—we're American, but Finnish, too. Every year we have a parade in March, along with music and food and other festivities. People dress in purple and green and other creative costumes.



This year many of the festivities will be outside because of COVID, but it will still be a great time. We plan to have music on an outdoor stage near the Finland Fire Hall on Highway 1 next to the parade route. Several different artists will play, but one that readers may have heard of is Steve Solkela with

his "Overpopulated" one-man band. There will be many other activities including a tug of war, a pancake breakfast, and food and drink specials in all the area businesses. We plan to livestream the parade and more on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/sturho.

Salolampi Villager Experience

By Aku and Virpi Zarns

Last summer we had the honor and privilege of spending two weeks at Concordia Language Villages Finnish Village, Salolampi! Salolampi truly is a magical place set in the forests outside of Bemidji, on Turtle River Lake.

Our mom is Finnish and going to Salolampi has helped us connect with our Finnish heritage. With the help of FACA's Salolampi scholarship, both of us were able to grow in our Finnish language learning and to connect with various Finnish traditions. At Salolampi we got to enjoy a variety of traditional Finnish foods, learn about Finnish culture, all while learning Finnish as well.

Every day we also played some exciting games of *sähly* (floor hockey) and *jalkapallo* (soccer). We also went swimming and made hot *löyly* in the sauna. One must not forget going to *S-kioski* for some *jäätelö* (ice cream) and *karkki* (candy). We both made many friends that we talk to on a regular basis since coming back home. We hold these memories dear to our hearts and our conversations often go back to our time at Salolampi!

We would love to say *Kiitos Paljon* to FACA for helping us and others have this amazing experience.

Terveisin,
"Aku" and "Virpi"



"Aku" and "Virpi" Zarns

FACA Board Meeting—February 21, 2022

By Louise Morgan



Board Members:
(top row, l-r)
Louise Morgan,
Nate Hoch and
Katja Zarns;
(bottom row, l-r)
Kendra Kauppi,
Marlene Moreno
and Michelle Ranta.

The Board meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m. via Zoom on Monday, Feb. 21.

Attendance: Nate Hoch, Kendra Kauppi, Louise Morgan, Marlene Moreno, Michelle Ranta and Katja Zarns.

President's Report

- **Need volunteer recruitment drive to help** with upcoming events, such as Midsummer picnic, Finn Fun Day, etc.
- **Salolampi Scholarship Drive.** The response has been wonderful. More than \$1,600 has been raised so far. *(Update since board meeting: \$2,500 has been raised.)*
- **Nate Hoch volunteered to be on the Salolampi scholarship committee with Kathy Jackson.** Kendra Kauppi and Marlene Moreno will be on Thank You committee.
- **Sauna Bucket will be awarded at the March program.**

Treasurer's Report

Membership renewals on track with 2021.

Checking Balance—\$9,700. (This includes the scholarship donations.)

Program Events

Laskiainen—Como Fire Pits

Book Club—February 23

March 18—Beatrice Ojakangas

April—Emma Mulhern

May—To be determined

June 11—Midsummer Picnic

Next Board Meeting

March 15, 5 p.m. via Zoom

April will be in-person to plan 2022–2023.

Hello from Helsinki

By Emma Mulhern

The new year in Lappeenranta has started out with snow, snow, and more snow. I have enjoyed coming to campus and watching as the heavy snowfall is shoveled off the roof, scooped up by excavators and driven away in large trucks, never to be seen again.

In January, I began my year-long term as the Erasmus Student Network (ESN) Lappeenranta President. ESN is a multinational student organization that focuses on increasing international exchange and promoting the wellbeing of exchange students. As part of the role, I have been able to do a variety of things, such as participate in an ESN training that took me from Helsinki to Stockholm and back via the ferry between the two countries. I even helped make *laskiaispulla* and American chocolate chip cookies for our most recent board meeting (both of which were eaten up very quickly).

More recently I participated in “*Liugur*,” which can best be described as a student-run sledding event. The event had a sledding competition where students from different study programs were tasked with building their own sled and riding it down the hill. Points were awarded for the most creative sleds and most successful sledding attempts. Since the majority of LUT students are studying engineering, there were a number of very interesting sleds, including anything from an inflatable pool to a wooden sled with a makeshift flamethrower on the back. Our group (representing ESN) spent the morning of the event building our sled out of an old tabletop, some skis and a used carpet. Our “magic carpet” got stuck a number of times going down the hill, but it was entertaining and very fun nonetheless.

While spring still seems like a faraway thought, I'm sure it will be here before we know it. I look forward to more sunlight and whatever these next few months hold!



Emma at a Liugur sledding event.

The Legend of St. Urho

From Wikipedia

The legend of Saint Urho was the invention of a Finnish-American named Richard Mattson, who worked at Ketola's Department Store in Virginia, Minnesota in the spring of 1956. Mattson later recounted that he invented St. Urho when he was questioned by coworker Gene McCavic about the Finns' lack of a saint like the Irish St. Patrick, whose feat of casting the snakes out of Ireland is remembered on St. Patrick's Day. In fact, the patron saint of Finland (except for the Orthodox Church of Finland) is the bishop Saint Henry, whose feast day occurs on January 19.

According to the original "Ode to St. Urho" written by Gene McCavic and Richard Mattson, St. Urho was supposed to have cast "tose 'Rogs" (those frogs) out of Finland by the power of his loud voice, which he obtained by drinking "*feelia sour*" (sour whole milk) and eating "*kala moyakka*" (fish soup). The selection of the name Urho as the saint's name was probably influenced by the accession of Urho Kekkonen to the presidency of Finland in 1956. (Similarly, St. Urho's Pub in Töölö, Helsinki, is known to have received its name from Urho Kekkonen and has nothing to do with Saint Urho.) Urho in the Finnish language also has the meaning of hero or simply brave.

The original "Ode to St. Urho" identified St. Urho's Day as taking place on May 24. Later the date was changed to March 16, the day before St. Patrick's Day, so the Finns could start drinking green beer a day before the Irish. St. Urho's feast is supposed to be celebrated by wearing the colors Royal Purple and Nile Green. Other details of the invented legend also changed, apparently under the influence of Dr. Sulo Havumäki, a psychology professor at Bemidji State College in Bemidji, Minnesota. The legend now states that St. Urho drove away grasshoppers (rather than frogs) from Finland using the incantation "*Heinäsiirkka, heinäsiirkka, mene täältä hiiteen!*" ("Grasshopper, grasshopper, go from hence to Hell!"), thus saving the Finnish grape crops.

Another version of the modern celebration of St. Urho's Day is that it was created by Kenneth Brist of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. Brist, a high school teacher, was teaching in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in the early to mid-1950s in an area largely populated by people of Finnish heritage. He and his friends concocted March 16 as St. Urho's Day so that they had two days to celebrate, the next day being St. Patrick's Day.

Ode to St. Urho

Dr. Sulo Havumäki



Ooksi kooksi coolama vee
Santia Urho is ta poy for me!
He sase out ta hoppers as pig as pirds.
Neffor peefer haff I hurd tose words!

He reely tolt tose pugs of kreen
Braffest Finn I effer seen!
Some celebrate for St. Pat unt hiss nakes
Putt Urho poyka kot what it takes.

He kot tall and trong from feelia sour
Unt ate kala moyakka effery hour.
Tat's why tat kuy could sase toes peetles
What krew as thick as chack bine neetles.

So let's give a cheer in hower pest vay
On ta Sixteenth of March, St. Urho's Tay.

—Richard Mattson and Gene McCavic



Translation:

One, two, three, five
Saint Urho is the boy for me!
He chased out the grasshoppers that were as big as birds,
Never before have I heard those words!

He really told those bugs of green
Bravest Finn I've ever seen!
Some celebrate for St. Pat and his snakes
But Urho boy has got what it takes.

He got tall and strong on feelia sour (sour buttermilk)
And ate *kalla moyakka* (fish head stew) every hour.
That's why that guy could chase those beetles
That grew as thick as jack pine needles.

So let's give a cheer in our best way
On the sixteenth of March—St. Urho's Day!



Down from Basswood— Voices of the Boundary Waters

By Lynn Laitala (Printed with permission)

The Big Wedding—Clara Keskinen's Story (First Installment)

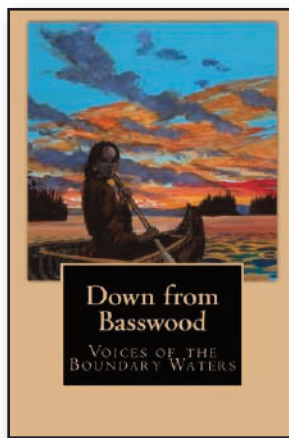
Jussi and Korva were patching the roof of Rautio's boarding house. Jussi began to slide and bumped into Korva. Korva grabbed him around the middle and in a great bearhug the two men rolled off the roof, knocked over the ladder, crashed through the scaffolding, fell three stories and landed in a pile of sawdust. They lay still for a minute, then slowly rose. Korva knocked the sawdust from his pants.

"Jesus Christ, Jussi," he said. They set up the ladder and climbed back on the roof.

I saw it all from the railroad tracks. I'm not going to marry a Finn, I thought.

Mama often said to Papa, "Matt, you're a rare man." That was probably true but he certainly was a rare Finn. What were the others like?

Einard Saari was the most timid man in the world. If he went up the lake for the weekend and the weather was splendid on Friday night, he decided to start right back



home because there might be a storm on Sunday.

There was Eino Wirtala. If you said to him that it was a beautiful day, or Look! The bluebirds are back, or the Sippola's have a new baby, he answered, "yah, yah."

If Aina Lahti walked to town pulling a wagon with four full milk cans and her brother Arvo drove by in his new Chevy coupe, he wouldn't stop to give her a lift. Wouldn't even slow down for the dust.

Then there were the drinkers. Finns are never happy drinkers like the Slovenians and Italians. They sit and drink in silence until they are drunk and then they weep or start a fight. One or two in town didn't dare fight a man so he went home and beat up his wife. Then the other men beat him up.

Mrs. Tuurila shored up her front porch with big timbers. Mr. Tuurila stood by and watched. "Hurry up, dinner will be late," he said.

Legend has it that a Finnish man once loved his wife so much that he almost told her.

Why should I marry any of those men who put salt in their coffee?
(To be continued)

Laskiainen 2022

By Anna Renvall

We knew we had found the Laskiainen winter picnic at the sight of the big blue and white flag of Finland. Thanks to FACA, Suomi-koulu and FFTC/FinnSource for hosting so that the Finnish community could gather from the outer rings of the Twin Cities metro and inward to Como Park of St. Paul. We talked as old friends and new friends, sharing stories of connection to each other and to Finland. Some moved here from Finland as adults, and others are searching for a personal connection as third or fourth generation Finnish-Americans. A few married into Finnish culture, and others studied abroad to fall in love with Finland. Across generations and hometowns, we found commonalities as Salolampi camp veterans, Finnish choir singers, and event attendees. Conversation lilted between fluent Finnish, fluent English, and patchy but impressive beginner's Finnish. A few children and adults alike slid down the hill, at not too thrilling a pace due to thick,

fluffy snow and a mild slope. Hot dogs roasted over the fire pit, and we shuffled away from the smoke on the breeze. We shared a taste of freshly baked *pulla* with whipped cream, buttered bread, soup, hot black coffee and novelty candy. With the warmth of late winter sun on our faces, we shared a taste of home, of tradition and of adventure: a taste of Finland.



The Finnish American Folk School

By Clare Zuraw, Assistant Director

The Finnish American Folk School (FAFS) at Finlandia University was founded in 2017 to promote knowledge of Finnish folk arts and traditional skills and ensure that they thrive for generations to come. The FAFS is based in the Juttila Center Fiber Studio and the Finnish American Heritage Center in Hancock, Michigan.

This year, with generous support from the American Scandinavian Foundation, the FAFS is working to expand programming and broaden their audience. Under the leadership of director Phyllis Fredendall, professor emeritus of fiber and fashion design at Finlandia University, the FAFS offers classes in weaving, felting, spinning, knitting, crochet, and other traditional fiber arts in the Juttila Center fiber studio. In addition to fiber arts, the FAFS hosts a variety of classes in wood and metal working, cooking, ceramics, music and other traditional arts.

While classes and workshops are offered throughout the year, much of the programming is organized around three festivals: *Heikinpäivä* in late January, *Juhannus* in late June, and *Ruska* in October. So far this year, FAFS has hosted multi-instrumentalist Laurel Premo for a performance and workshop, Finnish folk singer Emmi Kuittinen for an online lament singing workshop, and local instructors teaching knitting, spinning, weaving, dyeing, crochet and *jouhikko*.

This summer, to celebrate *Juhannus*, FAFS will host weaver Wynne Mattila to teach a five-day Finnish-style Cotton Rug Weaving Workshop, and violinist and composer Sara Pajunen to teach and perform. Other classes and workshops are being added to the schedule regularly, including online opportunities, so follow us online at finlandia.edu/folkschool where you may also subscribe to our occasional newsletter and find us on social media. The FAFS welcomes proposals for classes and workshops from prospective students and instructors via email: phyllis.fredendall@finlandia.edu.

Conversational Finnish Class
Every Tuesday—2-3:30 p.m.
Participation via FACA Zoom Meeting
For more information, please call
Urho Rahkola at 651-429-3319

March–April 2022 Calendar

March 18. 6:45 p.m. member announcements, 7 p.m.

FACA program. Our famous Minnesota Finnish Baker, Beatrice Ojakangas will demonstrate making an Easter themed item. Zoom (See page 1)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6815304953?>

pwd=QjFUQIVzbkR3ZEK4VC9YbTBxNEJtUT09

Meeting ID: 681 530 4953

Passcode: MinnFinn

April 23 (Saturday). 10 a.m. Emma Mulhern; Minnesota Fulbright Scholar studying in Finland shares her experiences. Zoom

May. To be determined.

June 11 (Saturday). 11 a.m.–2 p.m. Midsummer Festival. Como Park Picnic Pavilion (details will follow).

Tuesdays. 2–3:30 p.m. Conversational Finnish Class (Oppitunti) Zoom. For more information call Urho Rahkola at 651-429-3319.

Ruth Erkkila
and
Kathy Jackson
enjoying
Laskiainen



FACA Membership

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*Finnish American Cultural Activities
is dedicated to exploring and preserving
Finnish and Finnish American heritage.*

www.finnfaca.org

Kindness in Minnesota

Kindness—Impressions from a Finnish University Student

By Mari Maki

I moved from Finland to Minneapolis six months ago and I instantly connected with the city. In many ways, Minnesota feels like Finland: the weather is similar, and the people are polite. I even recognize the “Minnesota nice” phenomenon as it’s common in Finland, too. One thing that came as a culture shock, however, was how easily strangers talk to you in Minnesota. When I first arrived here and went to a grocery store, the salesperson complimented my glasses. I thought that he must be talking to someone else, because I didn’t know people here could give compliments to strangers. Same thing has happened to me since then a few times in stores, and it still always catches me off-guard.

I come from a small town called Kannus in Central Ostrobothnia. Although people there are very kind, they are much more reserved around strangers. In my local dialect, the word stranger (*vieras*) is synonymous to weird (*outo*). And I don’t mean that figuratively, the words have the same meaning in this context. Of course, Finnish has many

different dialects so even my friend from Jyväskylä was surprised when I used the word weird instead of stranger. But I still think that little word in my local dialect says a lot about how strangers are perceived in my town. Here, many strangers have shown me an incredible amount of kindness. I was invited to Thanksgiving dinner before I even came to Minnesota. In my hometown, that would be unheard of. I’m happy that I’ve gotten to live in Minneapolis and to really see how kind people here can be. It’s one of the things (among many others) that the Finns can learn from the Minnesotans.

