



## *Newsletter of Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.*

### **November–December/*Marraskuu–Joulukuu* 2022**

#### **Finland/Minnesota Relationship Grows**

**Zoom Program: Friday, November 18, 2022, 7 p.m.**

Minnesota Governor Tim Walz and a delegation of nearly 70 visited Helsinki in November 2021. What prompted the governor to choose Finland and what's the background? What did the delegates do in Helsinki and what has been the follow-up? What are the opportunities for Minnesota businesses?

Join Minnesota's Finnish cultural community on Friday, November 18, for a briefing on these questions. Finnish American Cultural Activities, in partnership with the Finnish American Chamber of Commerce Minnesota chapter, has invited Global Minnesota to join them on Zoom to hear about the great things going on between Minnesota and Finland.

Minnesota's honorary Consul for Finland Elaine Kumpula and Global Minnesota Corporate Relations officer Steve Riedel, both part of Governor Walz's mission, will walk us through how the relationship has grown in recent years and share stories and photos of the Helsinki visit. There'll be time for discussion and questions about how you can get involved, too.

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

**Meeting ID: 681 530 4953**

**Passcode: MinnFinn**

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



*Elaine Kumpula*



*Steve Riedel*

#### **Program in Brief**

##### **Governor's Helsinki Visit**

*Elaine Kumpula*

**&**

*Steve Riedel*

**Friday, November 18, 7 p.m.**

**Zoom Presentation**

#### **Gift of Membership!**

Consider giving a **gift of membership** to your grown children, relatives or loved ones this Christmas. Pass down your love of your Finnish heritage to those you love, all for only \$25! You can do this via mail, or electronically, via the FACA Website.



#### **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.

## FACA 2021–2022 Board of Directors

President

**Louise Morgan**

612-590-1673

[louise.morgan21@gmail.com](mailto:louise.morgan21@gmail.com)

Secretary

**Kendra Kauppi**

[facaboard1@gmail.com](mailto:facaboard1@gmail.com)

Treasurer

**Nate Hoch**

612-313-1065

[nate.hoch@rbc.com](mailto:nate.hoch@rbc.com)

Website/Media

**Katja Zarns**

[facaboard1@gmail.com](mailto:facaboard1@gmail.com)

Hospitality/Facebook

**Vacant**

Subcommittee

**Vacant**

## FACA Newsletter Committee

Interim Editor

**Louise Morgan**

612-590-1673

[louise.morgan21@gmail.com](mailto:louise.morgan21@gmail.com)

Graphic Design

**Darlene Esko**

651-455-8843

[bobdar@att.net](mailto:bobdar@att.net)

Membership/Mailing

**Urho and Pam Rahkola**

651-429-3319

[rahkola.urho@comcast.net](mailto:rahkola.urho@comcast.net)

**Website: [finnfaca.org](http://finnfaca.org)**

**Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/116365755059161/FACA>

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## President's/Interim Editor's Message

*By Louise Morgan*

Once again, I find myself trying to pull the newsletter together at the last minute. I am a procrastinator by trade, but when you add the complexity of taking care of a two-year-old tornado of a granddaughter, it just adds to the complexity by at least 4-fold. So, if you are wondering why you receive the *Uutiset* on different days every month, that is why.

I hope everyone enjoyed Diane Jarvi's performance as much as I did. She really was amazing. I purchased a few of her CDs and I am looking forward to listening to them. I have to listen to them on an old CD player that we have still sitting in our sunroom. My car no longer has a place to play CDs. I hate that!

I do have a question for all you readers though, that I really would like to get feedback on. Traditionally, FACA has met on a Friday evening. I would like to know if you would prefer that we move our programs to a different day, say maybe a Saturday morning. I have heard from several people that Friday evenings are very difficult for a myriad of reasons. So, please shoot me an e-mail and let me know your thoughts. Day and time. I know we have conducted surveys over the years, but the results have been all over the board. I am going to try again—  
[louise.morgan21@gmail.com](mailto:louise.morgan21@gmail.com).

I hope to see you all, via Zoom, for our November event. Elaine Kumpula, Finland's honorary consul, will brief us on what is currently ongoing between Finland and Minnesota. There is a lot going on, and we will find out about it straight from Elaine!

Last but not least, there is a lot going on in December. The Finnish Comic Ismo will be performing here in the Twin Cities on December 12; *Kauneimmat Joululaulut* and a *Joulu Tori* on December 10; the Gingerbread House display at the Norway House; and the Nordic Christmas displays at the Swedish Institute. I wish you and yours a joyous holiday season!



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## Why Did Finnish Immigrants Come to Minnesota? (And No, They're Not Scandinavian)

*Excerpt of article by Eric Roper, Star Tribune*

Sweating in saunas is a longstanding winter tradition among cold-hardy Minnesotans. But it wasn't Scandinavians who brought this unique custom to the North Star state.

Saunas are among the contributions that Finnish immigrants made to Minnesota culture—along with radical politics, cooperative businesses and place names like Esko and Finland.

Some readers objected to the omission of Finns from a recent *Curious Minnesota* story on the history of Scandinavian immigration to Minnesota. Despite Finland's proximity to Norway and Sweden, however, Finnish is not a Scandinavian language. Finland is typically considered a Nordic country.

The Finnish immigration story is a tale worth telling, since Minnesota has more residents of Finnish ancestry—about 100,000 people—than any other state, according to U.S. Census Bureau data. It ranks just ahead of Michigan.

*(Continued on page 6)*

## Greetings from Helsinki

By Cristina Youngren

Greetings from rainy Helsinki. The academic year started with record numbers of international students attending the University of Helsinki and everyone happy to have all classes in person with no masks or restrictions. My program is on track and my coursework complete, leaving only my research project and thesis writing to complete for the master's degree.

Finland remains peaceful, though there are rumblings underneath the calm exterior. Inflation has gone up and is expected to continue to do so through the end of the year, quite noticeable at the grocery store, and toilet paper supplies might run low due to manufacturing concerns. The cost of a student lunch has gone up 0.50 euro from 2.70 to 3.20, still a bargain. Electricity is actively being rationed, and the indoor temperature of buildings at the university was lowered from 22° to 21°C (72° to 70°F). My landlord has also lowered temperatures to 18°C (65°F), told us to conserve water when possible and put on a sweater. *YLE Uutiset* ran an article recommending that people under 40 keep iodine tablets on hand in case of radiation exposure. The government is considering building a border fence between southern Finland and Russia.

Despite all this, Helsinki city center remains bustling and active. The Christmas lights just went up around Aleksanterinkatu, which look striking in the drizzling fog and rain so typical of autumn in Finland and light up the darkness which arrives earlier every day. Soon it will be *Kekri*, the day of remembrance for the dead, and a straw goat will burn on the shore of Suomenlinna. The dark, chilly night is a good reminder to go take a sauna and relax. Soon it will be the Christmas holiday season and I will try again to see Marko Hietala live at *Raskasta Joulua*, as he was unfortunately sick for last year's performance. He is no longer with Nightwish but did win the Masked Singer Suomi, making him the current voice of Finland. I have definitely gained more of an appreciation for symphonic metal since moving here, especially Nightwish with Floor Jansen as well as Epica! Must be something in the water.

## Kauneimmat Joululaulut 2022 "Beautiful Christmas Music"

Saturday, December 10, 2 p.m.

St. Michael's Lutheran Church

1660 County B Rd. W, Roseville, MN 55113

We want to welcome you and your family to the *Kauneimmat Joululaulut 2022*, Finnish Christmas sing-along event. Finn Hall and members of the Suomi Finland 100 Chorus will be performing. Milla Mykrä, a Fulbright foreign language teaching assistant at the U of M, will be the MC for the event.

An offering will be taken, which will be directed to the Finnish Mission Societies to support programs of education, health, and security for children in developing countries around the world.

This year we are happy to bring back the Coffee & Pulla Hour right after the music. We will also have a small *Joulutori*, a Christmas Bazaar offering Finnish candy, baked goods and local Finnish arts and crafts.

For the safety of all, everyone who is fully vaccinated is welcome.

The doors will not open before 1:30 p.m. For further information, email Betsey Norgard at [bjnorgard@gmail.com](mailto:bjnorgard@gmail.com).



*Suomi Finland 100 Chorus Performing in 2021*

### Calling All Pulla Bakers!

FACA will be running the Coffee/Pulla time at *Kauneimmat Joululaulut*. We will need pulla for the event on December 10. If you could donate pulla, or your time to serve pulla and coffee, please contact Louise Morgan at 612-590-1673 or email me at [louise.morgan21@gmail.com](mailto:louise.morgan21@gmail.com).

## FACA Board Meeting—October 17, 2022

By Louise Morgan



**Board Members:** Louise Morgan, Nate Hoch, Kendra Kauppi and Katja Zarns.

### The FACA board met on October 17, 2022.

Present at 5:10 start time: Louise Morgan, Nate Hoch and Kendra Kauppi; Katja Zarns was absent.

### Board Positions

No movement on filling of the board positions. Of the remaining positions to fill, priority is given to filling the Hospitality position.

### Finn Fun Day

A post Finn Fun Day meeting was held to capture lessons learned. The committee is looking for a different venue. Lake Phalen pavilion will be closed in 2023 due to renovations. Exploring our charging a nominal fee to cover the cost of the event. Approximately 80 people attended in 2022 and \$269 was received in donations.

### Treasurer Update

Ninety-nine membership renewals have been received to date. The treasurer will provide a financial update to the membership in January 2023.

### Program Updates

- OCTOBER—Diane Jarvi will perform at the Danish American Center.
- NOVEMBER—Elaine Kumpala will update FACA on all that is going on between Finland and Minnesota. This meeting will be via Zoom.
- DECEMBER—Joint event with Finnish Community—*Kauneimmat Joululaulut*.
- MARCH—St. Urho's Day Dinner. Finnish *tapas* and dance. Music by Finn Hall. FACA would sell tickets. Planning for the event should start now. Location to be determined.

### Fundraising

Fundraising to support scholarships for FACA members' family and friends will continue this year, January–March.

### Sauna Bucket Award

New nomination form will be available in the November–December *Uutiset*.

**Next FACA board meeting is November 14, 2022, 5 p.m.**

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## Finnish Gingerbread House at This Year's Norway House Gingerbread Wonderland

By Susanna Ojo

Each year FinnSource participates in the Norway House Gingerbread Wonderland. This is a great event in which any level baker can participate and enter a gingerbread creation. This year the theme will be the Santa Claus Village in Rovaniemi in Lapland, Finland. This is a magical place for people to go and visit Santa. The cozy village is filled with reindeer, Santa's helpers (called the Elves), and fun adventurous activities. Some visitors even get lucky and see the northern lights.

Christmas is a special time to create special memories with family and friends, so I chose this theme due to the fact of its unique location and their mission for the world. Santa Claus Village wants people to be able to enjoy and focus on the MAGIC of Christmas and feel the joy that the village generates.

If anyone is interested in joining this project, please feel welcome to contact me at [Susannaajo321@gmail.com](mailto:Susannaajo321@gmail.com). You do not need to be a pro baker at all! The project will be due mid November. Or, come and visit the Norway

house display this Christmas season and experience our Finnish gingerbread Rovaniemi!



***Finnish Gingerbread House***

## An Enchanting Evening with Diane Jarvi

By Louise Morgan

Our first in-person event of the year was magical. We held our first in-door, in-person event at the Danish American Center. The weather was a perfect, warm fall evening. The only hiccup for the evening was the construction around the center. But more than 40 members were able to navigate the construction maze and make it to the center! Their perseverance was rewarded with a wonderful performance by Diane Jarvi. She treated us to over an hour of songs and stories. Diane treated us to songs taken from her seven solo recordings and stories about her explorations of her ethnic heritage.

She sang a mix of songs—in English and in Finnish. Each song had a story. The English songs were Diane's own compositions. Her first song, *Finn Hall*, was a tribute to her grandmother. Finn Halls were such an important part of the Finnish immigrants' lives. I remember my mother telling me about going to dances at the Finn Hall with my grandparents. My mother had fond memories of dancing with her father. The children and parents would all dance and enjoy the music. The *Finn Hall* song was a lovely tribute.

Diane shared stories and songs from her trips to Finland. She has been the subject of two documentaries, *Muistot* and *Kaipuu*, by the award-winning filmmaker Erkki Maatanen. She treated us to a kantele medley. Ralph and Janna Tuttila joined her for the last few songs. She had everyone's toes tapping on the last song, *Mama's Cookin'*. She adapted a southern song and gave it a delightful Finnish twist. Instead of grits, she and Janna called out *Mojakka*, or *pulla* instead of biscuits. We were all laughing at the end. A delightful ending.

After the program, people stayed to enjoy coffee, *pulla* and treats. No one wanted to leave. It was so nice to be back together again and reconnect!



*Diane Jarvi with Ralph and Janna Tuttila*

## Does Santa Claus Come from Finland?

Excerpt By Ilkka Sirén (BBC Travel)

The Dutch call him *Sinterklaas*, and in Germany, he goes by *Weihnachtsmann*. You might know him simply as Santa. He is a man of many names, and many nations claim him as their own. But one country may be one step closer to declaring itself Santa Claus' official home. If you ask Finns where Santa Claus comes from, they will say Korvatunturi, a fell in Lapland. Home to roaming herds of reindeer and often blanketed in snow, the Korvatunturi fell is believed by many Finns to be the site of Santa's secret workshop. Although Korvatunturi was only disclosed as the workshop's location in 1927 (it was revealed on air by radio host Markus Rautio), Finland's Santa Claus tradition is much older.

Before Christianity came to Finland in the Middle Ages, Finns celebrated Yule, a pagan mid-winter festival marked by an elaborate feast. On St. Knut's Day (January 13), the day many Nordic countries mark as the end of the holiday season, *nuuttipukki*—men dressed in fur jackets, birch bark masks and horns—would go door-to-door to demand gifts and scrounge for leftover food. The *nuuttipukki* were evil spirits; if they didn't get what they wanted, they would make loud noises and scare children.

When the charitable St. Nicholas became known in Finland during the 1800s, his image blended with the pre-existing tradition of the masked *nuuttipukki* to create *Joulupukki*. Translating to 'Yule Goat', *Joulupukki* handed out gifts instead of demanding them. Unlike Santa Claus who climbs down the chimney, *Joulupukki*, clad in red robes, would knock on the door and ask "*Onko täällä kilttejä lapsia?*" ("Are there any well-behaved children here?"). After delivering his gifts, *Joulupukki* would return to Korvatunturi fell; directly translating to 'Ear fell', Korvatunturi is the place Finns believe *Joulupukki* can hear everything.

Who knows what the future may hold for our merry friend but one thing is for sure: *Joulupukki* will soon start his long journey from Lapland—not flying, but ploughing through the snow with his sleigh—to knock on doors across Finland and ask, "*Onko täällä kilttejä lapsia?*"

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

## Finnish Music in Minnesota

By Ralph Tuttila

It has been a drought for music events during COVID for the last two years. We in Finn Hall and Laulu Aika bands had mostly cancellations of expected events—no live FinnFest dances or concerts, and cancellations of some very important events with the Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures of the U of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisc. But the Center did arrange for Laulu Aika to do recordings two years ago of six tunes; <https://youtu.be/ETY8jtsmZW0> and they also featured us in a virtual FinnFest event (this may still be viewed on YouTube; <https://youtu.be/mezx8wOCiTo>).

Finn Hall and Laulu Aika also recorded several tunes that were part of the final year of the Nisswa Stamman. Link to this festival: <https://youtu.be/UoXAiF1yWw8>. Finn Hall is in the first half and Laulu Aika can be found at about 1 hour and 13 minutes on the video.

Earlier this year Finn Hall played at a library event at Hastings, Minnesota.

On September 24 Finn Hall was honored to play at the Jacobson, Minn. centennial celebration for both the lunch and a concert as well as for dancing at the historic hall, which was constructed by Finns in the area more than 100 years ago. We are hoping to return there in the



### *Finn Hall at Historic Jacobson Hall*

spring to play for dancing on Memorial Day.

Thus, the future looks brighter for performing publicly. Laulu Aika will play for Nordic dancing at the Danish American Center, Minneapolis, on December 11, and we look forward to entertaining at FinnFest 2023 in Duluth.

Finn Hall will be playing at the *Kauneimmat Joululaulut* on December 10. We will be accompanying the singing of tunes for the audience participation.

Visit [www.finnhall.com](http://www.finnhall.com) and [www.lauluaika.com](http://www.lauluaika.com)

## FACA Membership

A one-year membership for \$25 provides you with eight issues of this newsletter, plus other benefits. To subscribe or renew, complete this form and mail with your check to FACA, P.O. Box 580708, Minneapolis, MN 55458-0708. (Check your email message for a membership expiration warning or your mailing label for an expiration date.)

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I prefer to receive my FACA *Uutiset* (please check one)

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[Note: choosing the email copy saves FACA both printing costs and postage.]

### *(Finnish Immigrants, continued from page 2)*

The mass arrival of Finns to Minnesota was also distinct from Norwegian and Swedish immigration in several ways. Finns arrived in large numbers several decades after their Scandinavian counterparts. And Finns became more associated with a particular corner of the state, northeastern Minnesota, where they found jobs in the mining and lumber industries.

The size of the Finnish diaspora never quite rivaled Swedish and Norwegian immigration. More than 100,000 foreign-born Swedes and Norwegians, respectively, lived in Minnesota around the turn of the 20th century, according to census data analyzed by the state demographer's office. The number of foreign-born Finns, by comparison, peaked at just under 30,000 in 1920.

### **Leaving Finland**

Like in neighboring Scandinavian countries, health advancements caused Finland's population to nearly triple during the 1800s. But there was not enough farmland to support these additional people, creating poor economic conditions that were compounded by famines in the 1860s, according to the book "They Chose Minnesota."

*(Finnish Immigrants, continued on page 7)*

## November–December 2022 Calendar

**November 12, 2022–January 8, 2023. American Swedish Institute—Secrets of the Season.**

**November 22–January 8, 2023—Gingerbread Wonderland, Norway House.**

**November 18. (Friday). 7 p.m. ZOOM. Elaine Kumpula/Steve Reidel.** Join FACA via the comfort of your home to hear about why Minnesota Governor Tim Walz and a delegation of nearly 70 visited Helsinki in November 2021. What prompted the governor to choose Finland and what's the background? What did the delegates do in Helsinki and what has been the follow up? What are the opportunities for Minnesota businesses? <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6815304953> Meeting ID: 681 530 4953 Passcode: MinnFinn

**December 3. (Saturday). Cokato Finnish American Historical Society. Pikkujoulu Celebration Candle Lighting** at the Cokato Finnish Cemetery at 3:30 p.m. and **Pot Luck Supper** at the Cokato Township Hall at 4:30 p.m. 14987 30th St. SW. Come help us celebrate the Christmas Season.

**December 10. (Saturday). 2 p.m. Kauneimmat Joululaulut 2022, Joului Tori,** Coffee and Pulla; “Beautiful Christmas Music,” St. Michael’s Lutheran Church, 1660 County B Rd. W, Roseville, MN 55113.

**December 11. (Sunday). Laulu Aika** will play for Nordic dancing at the Danish American Center, Minneapolis.

**December 12. (Monday) 5–7 p.m. and 7–9 p.m. ISMO. “Twin Cities Here I Come!”** Tickets are still available! Sponsored by The Finnish American Chamber of Commerce MN. Ismo—2014 Laugh Factory in Hollywood “The Funniest Person in the World”—an event you don’t want to miss! <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ismo-twin-cities-here-i-come-tickets-421874346527>

**December 25. (Sunday)**

*Hauskaa Joulua ja Onnellista Uutta Vuotta!*



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### *(Finnish Immigrants continued from page 6)*

Some Finns sought work across Finland’s northern border in Norway. It was there that the first group of Finns joined a growing flow of Norwegians seeking a new life on America’s western frontier of Minnesota, according to the book. These early Finnish Minnesotans established settlements in Renville and Wright counties, both west of modern day Twin Cities.

“Norwegians were settling there, so they would follow them from northern Norway,” said Arnold Alanen, author of the book *Finns in Minnesota* and a descendant of Minnesota Finnish immigrants.

By the 1880s, the Finnish hub began moving farther north to the New York Mills area in Otter Tail County, where the new immigrants “participated wholeheartedly in converting forests into farms,” according to *Finns in Minnesota*. Finns began arriving in larger numbers starting in the 1890s, Alanen said. This was fueled in part by Russia—which ruled over its neighbor Finland—revoking the country’s quasi-independence and drafting Finns into its military.

“The [departing] Finns are saying, ‘I don’t want to have anything to do with Russia’s wars,’ and they head for the borders,” said Bill Convery, research director for the Minnesota Historical Society.

### **Clustering Up North**

But Minnesota’s prime agricultural land was no longer as available as it was in the 1860s, when the U.S. government

had simultaneously forced Dakota people from the state and offered free land to incoming white settlers.

“Swedes, Norwegians, Germans, native-born Americans are coming in earlier and they’re getting better farmland in south and south-central Minnesota in general,” Convery said. “So as a later arriving group, the Finns are finding that they have to move farther north to find farmland.”

Some Finns farmed so-called “cutover” land Up North, where trees had been felled and soils were poor. But greater numbers of migrants, most of whom were men in the early years, took laborious jobs harvesting trees and mining iron ore. “I think that logging was really what attracted people initially if they needed work,” Alanen said. “But then mining just really drew so many people to the communities of the Iron Range.”

Minnesota’s commissioner of labor reported in 1902 that 40 percent of the state’s mining employees were Finnish, according to *Finns in Minnesota*. He characterized them as “strong, well-built, used to hard work and meager fare.” Finns often were tasked with the grunt work of mining, many of them laboring with shovels and picks deep underground.

“That’s why so many Finns were killed in the mines, too, because they were doing so much of that very hard and difficult dangerous work,” Alanen said.

*The remainder of this article will appear in the January 2023 issue of the Uutiset.*



**Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 580708  
Minneapolis, MN 55458-0708

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

## Sauna Bucket Award

### 2022 Sauna Bucket Award Request for Nominees

*By the FACA Board*

A sauna bucket serves an important function in containing water to be ladled onto hot rocks to generate steam or *löyly*—spirit, breath or soul. Do you know someone who is the spirit behind FACA? Someone who generates the steam at member gatherings, volunteer events or board meetings? Please consider nominating that individual for the **Sauna Bucket Award**.

The Sauna Bucket Award has been given out annually since 1980 honoring dedicated FACA volunteers and contributors to the local Twin Cities area Finnish Community. Twenty-four individuals, 12 couples and two groups have won the prestigious Sauna Bucket. Martha Lindgren (1983 and 1992) and Betsey and Alan



Norgard (1993 and 2009) have been the recipients twice for their service to FACA.

Nominations will be accepted **through December 2022** by filling the form/questions (below or at the FACA website) and submitting electronically or via postal mail.

**Mail**—FACA, PO Box 580708, Minneapolis, MN 55458;  
**E-mail**—louise.morgan21@gmail.com .

1. Name and contact information of the **person submitting** the nomination;
2. Name and contact information of the **person being nominated** for his/her dedicated service;
3. Provide a narrative as to why the person is being nominated. Why do you think this individual should receive the Sauna Bucket Award? In what FACA activities has the nominee been involved? What impact has the individual made to the FACA/Finnish community? How have other individuals benefited from the accomplishments? What has the Finnish community gained from the contributions? Provide specific examples.