

# FACA Uutiset

Finnish American Cultural Activities

Newsletter of Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.

## February/Helmikuu 2023



We hope you can join us for the annual Laskiainen: Finnish Winter Picnic & Sledding! Co-hosts FACA and Suomi-koulu will provide *laskiaispulla* and firewood. We recommend packing a thermos of the traditional *hernekeitto* (pea soup) for yourself.

Other things to bring: sleds, skis, and your Finnish SISU! There are miles of trails, hills and a frozen lake to explore by sled, cross-country ski or on foot. The Visitor Center is a warming house with a restroom, fireplace lounge and children's play area.

*Tervetuloa* (Welcome) Suomalaiset, American Finns or anyone interested in enjoying nature the Finnish Way.

**DATE, TIME, PLACE:** February 25, noon–3 p.m. at Lebanon Hills Visitor Center: 860 Cliff Road, Eagan, MN 55123.



Left:  
Building  
a  
Laskiais-  
pulla

Below: Como Fire Pits



### 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

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## President's/Interim Editor's Message

*By Louise Morgan*

I retired several years ago. I have to admit, I really enjoyed retirement. You might notice that this is in the past tense. I have taken a temporary job of full-time Grandma. My son came back from Australia this past summer, and he and my granddaughter are living with us full time. We are waiting for our daughter-in-law to join us. She is waiting for her Visa, and living with her parents in Japan. Hopefully she will get it soon. But in the meantime, Kevin and I are full-time grandparents.

Why am I telling you all of this? Well, that is why the newsletter has been coming out at different times. My granddaughter is transitioning to no naps, so Grandma has only Saturdays and Sundays to work on the newsletter or on FACA programming. I am too pooped in the evenings to do much. Yikes! But it is all good, and the wonderful hugs make it all worth it.

I hope you enjoy all the sauna stories. I really want to thank everyone who sent a story or suggestions. I wish I could have fit all the articles in the newsletter. More for next year!

We are planning some exciting and fun events for February and March. I hope you all can come and participate in one or both! The Laskiainen event is always fun. So much fun to be outside, with a fire, eating a *laskiaispulla*, *makkara*, or enjoying a cup of pea soup. And watching the kiddies slide down hills. I am not going to slide this year. Maybe next year. I slid down a slide with my granddaughter, and now I am going to physical therapy! Yikes!!!

And...drum roll please, we are going to host our first pea soup cook-off at the St. Urho's Day celebration. Finn Hall will provide music and we all will get a chance to taste and vote on pea soup! Who needs chili when we have pea soup?

See you soon!



## Hey all you FACA Members!

### FinnFest USA 2023—Duluth Minnesota

**Join us via Zoom, February 17, 7 p.m., to find out about FinnFest 2023.**

After four long years, FinnFest is returning to a live festival setting. Mark July 26–30 on your calendar and start making your plans to drive to Duluth. It's just a bit more than two hours away by car, and late July is a wonderful time to visit Lake Superior. Marianne Wargelin will share how the familiar FinnFest concept is commemorating its 40th anniversary even as it is re-invigorated and re-defined for a new generation of attendees. Come with your questions and comments. Let's make this a true interactive Zoom conversation.

**When: February 17**

**Time 7 p.m.**

**Via Zoom**

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

**Meeting ID: 681 530 4953 Passcode: MinnFinn**

Hope you can join us on the call! Feel free to share this information with anyone who would like to know more about FinnFest 2023.



## Hello From Helsinki

By Cristina Youngren

The Christmas season in Helsinki was bright and cheerful, a welcome light in the snowy dark. It began with the lighting of the Christmas decorations on Aleksanterinkatu and the unveiling of the festive holiday window display at Stockmann, followed by a Santa-led parade from Aleksanterinkatu to Esplanadi and culminating at the Christmas market at Senaatintori. Next came *Itsenäisyyspäivä* (Independence Day), where I joined the student torchlight parade procession to march from the graveyard at Hietaniemi through the city center to Senaatintori, passing a waving Sauli Niinistö and Jenni Haukio on the way. Speakers and choirs entertained the crowd from the steps of Helsinki Cathedral afterwards.



*Torchlight Parade*

It was a pleasantly snowy December day overall, but on a particularly heavy snow day I took the bus to Fiskars, a small village which used to be the manufacturing center for the company Fiskars (hence the name) but is now full of artists' studios, cafes and craft breweries. Some famous artists like the sculptor Kim Simonsson work there, though it was unfortunately not a open studio tour day. It was a charming place made even more



so by the snowfall perfectly accenting the Christmas lights decorating the shops and old buildings. My favorite stop was the blacksmith, where I watched him hammer away at his latest piece for quite a while! I had a great lunch at Wärsy and picked up some trinkets while wandering the shops, veering off for an occasional hike into the woods.

To round out my month of Christmas cheer, I took the advice of a friend and went by ferry to the Christmas market of old town Tallinn, Estonia. It was very busy, bustling with crowds and understandably so, as the area was beautiful. I stopped at a few market stalls and cafes for my favorite *pavlova* and hot cocoa with *minttu* (mint schnapps). Just like in Helsinki, the Russian Embassy had a police guard and a fence in front of it which was covered in signs imploring the Russian government to desist in their invasion of Ukraine. The market itself was cute and quaint, as was the popular little ice rink nearby.

Christmas itself was quiet and New Years cold and rainy, so I stayed home. As usual, most Finns were on Christmas holiday until after Epiphany on January 6, when the Christmas trees came down and everyone went back to work. I'm working on my research project and master's thesis now, and still find it hard to believe I've been in Finland for 18 months! This is the home stretch and I can't wait to finish the program.

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## Hernekeitto—Traditional Pea Soup (6–8 servings)

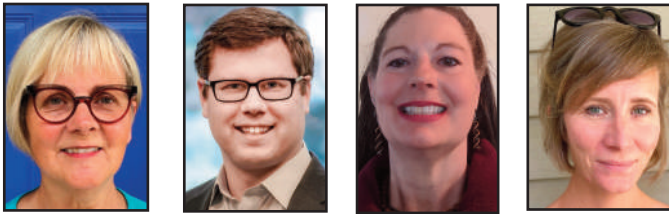
8 cups water  
1/2 cup chopped onion  
1 pound dried green peas  
2 cloves of garlic  
1 pound piece of smoked ham with bone  
1 teaspoon dried marjoram leaves  
1–2 tsp. salt or to taste  
1 medium carrot, chopped, optional

Rinse and sort peas removing any unwanted pieces from the peas, then cover them with cold water and let soak overnight. The following day, drain and rinse the peas. Place all ingredients in a 5 quart pot, cover and let simmer until peas are soft, about 1.5 hours, stirring often. Remove the meat from the soup and trim it from the bones, cut it into small pieces and return to the soup. When served in a bowl, for garnish and an enhanced flavor, add a small amount of mustard.

Serve with rye bread or crispbread with butter. *Hyvää ruokahalua!*

## FACA Board Minutes January 23, 2023

By Louise Morgan



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

**Present:** Louise Morgan, Katja Zarns, Nate Hoch and Kendra Kauppi

### President's Report

- Several sauna articles were submitted for the February *Utiset*.
- FACA received a \$50 honorarium in appreciation of volunteers for *Kauneimmat Joululaulat*. FACA was fully reimbursed for food and supplies for the coffee and pulla.
- Sauna Bucket award nominations have been extended to the end of January. Will be awarded at the March event.

**Treasurer's Update** (see separate article for the updated financials.)

- Discussion on how to generate funds. Membership dues do not cover expenses. Operating costs, printing and mailing have increased significantly. Tabled for further discussion.

## FACA Treasurer's Report

By Nate Hoch

Happy New Year all! I want to kick off this year's Treasurer's Report by reintroducing myself. I am Nate Hoch, and I took over for Marlene Moreno as the FACA treasurer last July. I want to thank Marlene for her many years of service and stewardship as FACA treasurer, and also share how thankful I am at how easy she made the transition for me.

2022 was an eventful financial year for FACA. We had one of our largest fundraising campaigns for the Salolampi Scholarship Program. We were able to raise \$4,628.88, which for the first time, provides FACA with a separate fund with which we will add to and fund many scholarships for years to come. \$2,628.88 was donated by FACA members, which allowed us to exceed both of the \$1,000 matching donations, which were donated by FACA members as well.

## Program Update

### FEBRUARY

- **FinnFest Informational Zoom—February 17, 7 p.m.** Marianne Wargelin will share how the familiar FinnFest concept is commemorating its 40th anniversary even as it is re-invigorated and re-defined for a new generation of attendees.
- **Laskiainen Celebration at Lebanon Hills—February 25.** A sign-up spreadsheet will be sent out. A collaborative event with Suomi-koulu and Finn Source. The event will be outdoors, but there is a warmup building with bathrooms available.

### MARCH

- **St. Urho's Day Dinner—March 17 at DAC.** Suggestion to have a pea soup cook-off. Board agreed to run with that idea. Finn Hall will be providing music. More info will be provided.

### APRIL/MAY

Still under discussion. If you have any suggestions, please contact a board member.

### FUNDRAISING

- Fundraising to support Salolampi scholarships for FACA members family and friends will continue this year.

### FEBRUARY—MARCH

- Sauna Bucket Award extended to the end of January.

**March Board Meeting in person.** Date to be determined.

- The next FACA board meeting is February 20, 5 p.m.

As for FACA itself, we were very close to breaking even this year. Taking into account all of our memberships (132 new and renewed!), donations, and sales against our expenses, we had a -\$397.12 deficit this year. As you may have guessed, costs were higher this year than last as we had more in-person events, and of course generally higher costs due to inflation. We ended the year with \$7,830.55 in our operating account (which doesn't include the Salolampi Scholarship funds).

We look forward to continuing to provide high-quality events to our members throughout 2023, and I'm

personally looking forward to getting to know you all better through these events!



## FACA Salolampi Fundraiser 2023

### Hei, FACA friends!

Join us for our second annual Salolampi fundraiser—February through March. Fun and knowledge go hand-in-hand for children and grandchildren of FACA members through scholarships. We strive to reach our yearly goal of \$1,000 to continue to support sending the children, grandchildren, and relatives of FACA members to Concordia's Finnish Language Village. FACA has continuously supported Salolampi with scholarship donations, and last year, we were able to up our scholarship amounts due to your generosity. So, let's all support our children with a tax-deductible donation. Together we can reach the \$1,000 goal!

What an exciting promise for future students to continue participating in summer programs at Salolampi! Every dollar helps!

### Ways to Donate:

1. Send a check to FACA, PO Box 580708, Minneapolis, MN 55458; in the memo area, write **Salolampi fundraiser**.
2. Go to the FACA website and use the Paypal option. Please annotate in the memo space that this is your **gift for the Salolampi fundraiser**.

*Kiitos!* We are on our way!

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## Finding Minnesota: How Cokato Became "Sauna City"

*By John Lauritsen*

**JANUARY 11, 2023 / 10:10 PM / CBS MINNESOTA  
– AIRED ON WCCO**

COKATO, Minn.—When it's cold outside, there's at least one place you can go to get warm—a sauna.

"This one was the first one that was built in this area," said Harvey Barberg.

Barberg also believes the sauna at Temperance Corner may be the oldest standing sauna in the country. He's president of the Cokato Finnish-American Historical Society, and a proud Finn through and through.

"They would come in and they would start a fire, but they would open all the little outlets," Barberg said. "They would keep heating it. It would take all Saturday to heat the thing."

The families that shared it, including Harvey's great grandparents, would heat the 10-by-12-foot sauna to 180 degrees. Then they'd put out the fire, remove the ash, add a little water to the stone, and use it for a variety of different things.

"They'd do the laundry in here, then on Saturday, this was the meeting place," Barberg said.

The settlers would also use it as a place to bathe, which became a problem in 1885 because many would go outside, in their birthday suits, to cool off. Picture heading by on a horse and buggy and suddenly you see a bunch of nude Finns.

Because of that, the township sued the Selvala family to tear it down, but they countersued to keep it standing.

"And he took them to court, and it was the first lawsuit in Cokato Township, and he won," Barberg said.

Thirty dollars was the reward. The township also paid the settlers to move the sauna. To be neighborly, they added a dressing room for good measure.

It was also custom to use birch sticks with leaves on your skin as a sort of self-care ritual. "It releases the resins within the leaf and it also increases circulation," Barberg said. "Believe it or not, it feels wonderful."

Dovetail corners on the outside allow water to filter out so the wood doesn't rot. Which is a big reason why this Finnish relic is still standing 155 years later.

The sauna is located at Temperance Corner, three miles north of Cokato on County Road 3.

Barberg also wants people to know that the presidential buildings in Finland all have saunas.



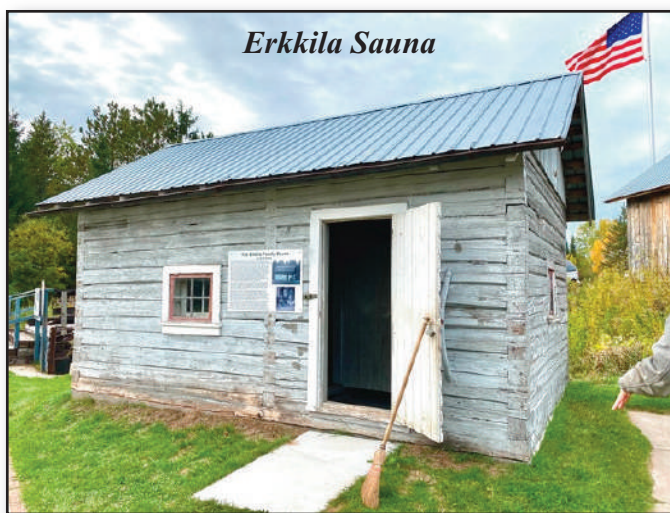
*Cokato Sauna at Temperance Corner, perhaps  
the oldest standing sauna in the country.*



## Sauna Memories

By Ruth Erkkila

I grew up taking saunas once a week. We didn't have a bathtub in our house until I was 12 years old, but even after that, our family still took our baths in the sauna. Our sauna was a hundred-year-old two-room log building. We entered into the dressing room, where we disrobed. Then we went into the sauna room, heated by a wood-fired stove with rocks on the top. Next to the stove was the hot water tank with heat supplied by the stove. There were two tubs of cold water on the floor. There were two benches across the room, one higher than the other; the higher bench offered the more intense experience, especially when water was thrown on the rocks. The steam went up.



Taking a sauna had a ritual to it. First there was enjoying the heat and the steam from water thrown on the stones atop the stove. Then we would fill two basins with water, a little hot from the tank next to the stove and a little cold from the cold water tubs. All the water (except in winter) was rainwater collected in a tank placed under the flow from the gutters. Then we'd soap up a washrag and use that to wash the whole body. Then a rinse with warm water and finally another rinse by pouring cold water from the cold water tub over the whole body. We didn't roll in the snow; the cold water rinse was good for us. Then back to the dressing room to retrieve our clothes. After the sauna, there was always some water, soft drinks and treats. Sometimes neighbors would come over to take a sauna. Then there was freshly-brewed coffee, the treat table was more elaborate and it was a real social event.

Time moved on and I donated the sauna to the Old Brule Heritage Society in 2017. It is now on display at the Heritage Society's Windmill Site on Highway 13 in Douglas County, Wisconsin, along with the Davidson Windmill, a historic log house and a railroad depot.

## From Grand Marais to Golden Valley, Sauna 'Revival' Grows Across Minnesota

By Kelly Smith Star Tribune

JANUARY 13, 2023 — 7:55AM

Here's a sampling of some of the state's public saunas:

- **612 Sauna Society:** This co-op moves to Cedar Lake in Minneapolis and Silverwood Park in St. Anthony in the fall, and Theodore Wirth Regional Park in Minneapolis in the winter. Cost is \$35 for a 90-minute community session. The sauna also hosts events like *aufguss*, a German ritual that combines high heat, lots of steam and aromatherapy. [612saunasociety.com](http://612saunasociety.com)
- **Camp du Nord:** Outside of its popular summer camps, anyone can book a cabin at this Ely YMCA camp to enjoy three saunas on Burntside Lake. A 1933 sauna in a log building built by Finnish carpenters is lighted by kerosene lamps with a traditional wood-fired sauna and a hole carved in the frozen lake for *avantouinti*, the Finnish word for ice-hole swimming. Nightly cabin rates in the fall, winter and spring range from about \$115 to \$660. [ymcamn.org/camps/camp\\_du\\_nord](http://ymcamn.org/camps/camp_du_nord)
- **Cedar and Stone Nordic Sauna:** This mobile sauna near Lake Superior in Duluth offers private and community sessions for 75 minutes ranging from \$49 to \$79. [cedarandstonesauna.com](http://cedarandstonesauna.com)
- **Ely Steam Sauna:** For more than 100 years, this public sauna has attracted locals and tourists. Cost is \$11–\$16. [elysteamsauna.net](http://elysteamsauna.net)
- **Nordic Nook:** A Golden Valley family opened up their backyard barrel sauna to visitors, who can also take a plunge in a rock-lined pool. Cost is \$135 for an hour for one or two people, or \$150 for three or four people for an hour. [nordicnookoasis.com](http://nordicnookoasis.com)
- **Sisu and Löyly:** The Grand Marais sauna opened in 2021 on Lake Superior. Cost is \$18 for a 60-minute community session or \$65 for a 90-minute private sauna. [sisuandloyly.com](http://sisuandloyly.com)
- **Stokeyard Outfitters:** This Minneapolis company offers sauna reservations (cost starts at \$35 for a 90-minute sauna session) off Nicollet Avenue and also hosts events at the Hewing Hotel in the North Loop, including guided steam aromatherapy during two-hour “Thermaculture Thursdays” for \$65. [stokeyard.com](http://stokeyard.com)
- **Watershed Spa and Baths:** The Minneapolis spa opened in 2022 featuring a sauna, steam room, soaking pool and cold-plunge pool. Cost is \$54 for a three-hour day pass.

## St. Urho's Day Celebration! Ooksie kooksie coolama vee, Santia Urho is ta poy for me!

- **Date:** March 17 (St. Patrick's Day, but hey those other people are celebrating a different Saint)
- **Time:** 6:30 p.m..
- **Where:** Danish American Center

### Announcing our First Annual St. Urho's Celebration! Pea Soup Cook Off

First Battle of the Pea Soup! Do you make the best pea soup? Do you like making others happy by cooking and sharing the best pea soup? If you answered yes, please bring a pot of your pea soup and enter the pea soup cook off. The winner will be awarded the prestigious pea soup ladle. Other prizes will be awarded. If you are interested in entering the competition or being a judge, email Nate Hoch at [nathanial.hoch@gmail.com](mailto:nathanial.hoch@gmail.com) or Louise Morgan at [louise.morgan21@gmail.com](mailto:louise.morgan21@gmail.com) by February 28. You do not need to enter the cook off to attend the event.

### Music and Dancing

After the pea soup cook off, stay for music and dancing provided by Finn Hall.

Cost: \$5.00 donation.

**Pea Soup contestants enter for FREE**



*Red River Finns Sauna Festival 2022*



*Benches Inside the Erkkila Sauna.*

## February–March 2023 Calendar

### FEBRUARY

#### February 17 (Friday) 7 p.m.—FINN FEST 2023—Duluth Minnesota

Join us via Zoom to find out about FinnFest 2023.

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

Meeting ID: 681 530 4953 Passcode: MinnFinn

#### February 25 (Saturday) noon–3 p.m.—Laskiainen Winter Picnic and Sledding, Lebanon Hills Regional Park, 860 Cliff Road, Eagan, MN 55123. (See page 1)

### MARCH

#### March 17 (Friday) 6:30 p.m., Announcing our First Annual St. Urho's Celebration! Danish American Center. Yes, that is St. Patrick's Day, but hey...St. Urho rules! (Those other people are celebrating the other Saint)

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

### 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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**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 Rituals

### Sauna Rituals

**(Excerpt from Finnish American Reporter)**

*Steve Leppälä*

One of my first memories is lying on my back over my mother's knees with my head over a bucket as she sat on a short stool washing my hair in our family sauna. And that was just last week! In our sauna back home, we had to carry water into the sauna for washing and for throwing water on the *kiuas* (sauna stove) rocks to make *löylyä* (sauna steam).

When the water was heating in the sauna tank connected to the *kiuas* it sounded like a jazz drummer. I loved that sound but rarely hear it anymore. Cold water was also put into a tank away from the *kiuas*. "Making" sauna water for bathing involved using a large dipper for getting water from the hot water tank (without burning yourself) into an empty pail and then mixing in water from the cold-water tank to get the right water temperature for washing. The procedure was then often repeated but to produce a bit cooler water for rinsing. Used water was allowed to fall to the floor where it flowed toward the back wall into a gutter and then outside in a

corner of the sauna. Currently my *löyly* water is retrieved into a short bucket from a faucet lower on the wall in my hot room and wash water is conveniently supplied in a shower stall in my dressing room.

Sometimes a sauna newbie will get uncomfortable about being naked in a sauna with other naked people. Members of the opposite sex don't generally take sauna together unless they are members of the same family and even then, men and women often bathe separately. I have a sign on the wall outside of my sauna dressing room wall that says,

*"Saunominen uimapuku päällä on kuin jalkojen peseminen sukat päällä"* which means, "Taking a sauna with a swimsuit on is like washing your feet with your socks on."

After taking only a shower during the day you get out and feel pretty clean. However, after a sauna when you're all washed and

dried you feel REALLY clean! For me a morning sauna makes me feel refreshed and ready to face the world while an evening sauna will make me feel restful and ready for a good night's sleep.

