



Uutiset

Newsletter of Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.

April–May/Huhtikuu–Toukokuu 2023



**ABCs of the
Finnish
Language:
Friday, April 21,
2023, 7 p.m.**

Zoom

Lily Obed

Lily Obed, our upcoming speaker, is a Finnish-American language teacher based out of Minneapolis. She is the current Finnish Language Instructor at the University of Minnesota and has worked in other capacities teaching Finnish as well: as the online teacher at the Finnish School of Minnesota and Finlandia Foundation Seattle, as a counselor at Salolampi, and as a private tutor. Lily holds a BA in Finnish and Speech Therapy from the University of Minnesota, as well as an MA in Applied Linguistics from the University of Jyväskylä. She will give a talk titled “The ABCs of the Finnish Language,” where she will discuss and demystify how to get started (or continue!) learning Finnish and talk a bit about the structure and history of the language as well. We hope to see you all on Zoom! Pour yourself a cup of coffee or tea or beverage of choice and enjoy! Lily is going to continue to be a wonderful addition/resource to our Finnish Community.

**[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6815304953?pwd=QjFUQlVz
bkR3ZEk4VC9YbTBxNEJtUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6815304953?pwd=QjFUQlVzbkR3ZEk4VC9YbTBxNEJtUT09)**

Meeting ID: 681 530 4953 Passcode: MinnFinn



Karen Ba with Finnish Cousins

**Ancient Rock Art in Finland–Karen Ba
May 19, 7 p.m., Danish American Center
3030 W. River Pkwy., Minneapolis, MN 55406**

Vuorivene—mysterious ancient mountain boats, painted on cliffs overlooking water passageways...signs leading us to another world? Rock paintings are numerous in Finland and were created 3,000–6,000 years ago. Who made them, for what purpose, why have we never heard of them?

Part travelogue, part prehistoric life in Finland and part mythology—this presentation will track a tale of Karen Ba’s personal trip to a rock art site in Finland along with background research she has gathered. In 2017 Karen had the opportunity to meet with an artist-archaeologist, Pekka Kivekäs, who has catalogued these paintings and is a leader in the study of Finnish Rock Art. She was honored with a personal presentation and tour of one of the sites by Pekka Kivekäs. That same year, Karen learned to sing her first *runolaulu* poem at the Sommelo Festival in Kuhmo, about Väinämöinen carving a boat on a mountain.

Continued on page 2

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

Hummm.... Last month I said I was waiting for spring. Well, I am still waiting, as I am sure you all are as well. I can't believe that in six weeks, we may be fishing on lakes! I am thinking a lot about going back up to the cabin, taking a sauna, jumping into the lake. Will I be doing that soon? I hope so.

This edition will be the last until next fall. I am heading out on a vacation and will not be around to pull together the May edition. Our April event is a Zoom event. We had hoped to have an in-person event, but the Danish Center was not available. Lily Obeda will be presenting. She is an amazing person. I hope that you all can attend the Zoom. It is nice that if things do not work out, we can still connect via Zoom. I realize that most enjoy the in-person events more. May's program will be back to in-person, once again at the DAC. Karen Ba is going to tell us about pictographs in Finland. She has done a lot of research, including a trip to Finland. She is also going to treat us to some Rune singing! Come and enjoy her presentation, enjoy an adult beverage and after the program treats and conversation! We are lucky to have two great programs, back to back.

More than 80 people of all ages came to the St. Urho's Day event! *Kiitos*. I hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did. We usually have pea soup left over to sell, but this year, most of the pea soup was gone! I know I enjoyed tasting all nine. Thank you to all the tasty pea soup entrants and to everyone who brought something to share. And thank you to Finn Hall for providing the wonderful music. I got to take part in the last dance. What a wonderful tradition. Made me a bit nostalgic.

I hope you enjoy this season's last edition. Once again, if you would like to help in any capacity, please let me know. Stay tuned for information about Finn Fun Day, our September event. Another fun Finnish community event! WE NEED YOU! Right now, our Mid-Summer picnic may or may not happen. Keep your eyes posted for an email, as I will let you know, either way.

Have a wonderful summer! See you in May!!

(Rock Art in Finland continued from page 1)

In the presentation, Karen will show you lots of images of the rock paintings and discuss the where, when, and how questions. She will also sing a couple *runolaulu* poems that she feels may have a link to these paintings. Karen hopes that exploration of these links will help us better understand Finland's cultural roots as well as provide an enriched understanding of European pre-history and history.

By the way, Kuhmo is a small town of about 8,000 residents that has preserved Finnish culture through all the ages. It is a town near Viena Karelia, Russia, where Elias Lönnrot lived and worked as a doctor while collecting epic tales for his unique and world-famous *Kalevala* book in the 1800s. Paleolithic artifacts in the National Museum of Finland have been discovered in Kuhmo, and a rock painting site is in this region. Kuhmo has been selected as the "Finno Ugri Capital of the World" in 2023 and will host a large Sommelo Festival in celebration June 26–July 7, 2023. Karen hopes to attend this year—let her know if you would like to join her!

Please join us for an entertaining evening. Coffee and conversation will follow!

Minnesota Shopping



FinnFest 2023 Highlights

By Marianne Wargelin

FinnFest USA, North America's premier experience of Nordic culture and learning, returns to Duluth for a five-day festival at the DECC, Minnesota, July 26–30. Unlike any other festival, FinnFest connects the American public to the historic and contemporary worlds of Finland and Finnish America. Each evening, music and films will define the festival. Samuli Edelmann, both a movie star and a pop singer in Finland, will headline a Saturday evening pop concert in the DECC's Symphony Hall. Edelmann who is currently starring in a 2023 record breaking television series, *The Reindeer Mafia*, will also be present for Q&A following a showing of the first two episodes in the series.

During the festival, the Zeitgeist theater will showcase a variety of Finnish films. One film, *Ricky Rapper and the Wild Machine*, a children's film (2023), part of a popular Finnish children's film series, will be shown in the afternoons.

Two downtown Duluth sites will feature the visual arts. A pop-up art exhibit featuring Finnish American artists will occur at the Nordic Center. Sara Pajunen, audio-visual artist, will present her work in a one-woman show at Joseph Nease Gallery. Other artists working in ceramics, textiles, wood working and boat-making, will be seen at the *Tori* created at the DECC.

While the program varies each day, the *Tori* (the Finnish word for "marketplace") will remain a constant, the "go-to" center of the festival. DECC's 50,000 sq. ft. Pioneer Hall will be transformed into a center where Finland and Finnish America meet the public.

Vendors will be selling Finnish related products, both handmade crafts and commercial imports. Companies and organizations with Nordic connections will be available to answer questions and inform. Free to all, the *Tori* will open at noon on Thursday afternoon and continue daily through 12 noon on Sunday, July 30.

Northern Minnesota is the perfect setting for the 40th anniversary of FinnFest, as it shares weather, climate, cultural values and geography with the five Nordic countries. It has the largest population of Finnish diaspora in the USA. FinnFest has committed to a long-term partnership with Duluth as the setting for future FinnFest festivals.

The *Uutiset* is seeking a new editor. If interested, call President Louise Morgan at 612-590-1673.

Finland is the No. 1 Happiest Country in the World for the Sixth Year in a Row!

CNBC—March 2, 2023

The World Happiness Report released its annual ranking of the happiest countries in the world, and for the sixth year in a row, Finland has landed in the top spot.

The UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, the organization behind the report, uses six key factors to help rank the more than 150 countries based on their average life evaluations between 2020–2022:

1. Social support
2. Income
3. Health
4. Freedom
5. Generosity
6. Absence of corruption

Using these factors, the report examines the happiness gap between the top and bottom halves of the population in each country ranked.

"This gap is small in countries where almost everyone is very unhappy, and in the top countries where almost no one is unhappy," the report states.

This year's ranking is similar to those in the past, with the same Nordic countries taking the top three spots. Just like in 2022, Denmark came in at No. 2 and was followed by Iceland at No. 3.

According to Frank Martela, a Finnish philosopher and psychology researcher, some of the reasons why people in Finland are so happy is because they don't compare themselves to their neighbors, don't overlook the benefits of nature, and don't break the community circle of trust.

"Focus more on what makes you happy and less on looking successful. The first step to true happiness is to set your own standards, instead of comparing yourself to others," Martela tells *CNBC Make It*.

Finland is willing to share its wisdom: It's offering a free "masterclass of happiness" to help travelers find their "inner Finn." Expert coaches will guide the lucky participants through four key themes: nature and lifestyle, health and balance, design and everyday, and food and well-being.

The United States didn't rank in the top 10 on the list, but it did land at No. 15.

FACA Board Minutes, March 27, 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

- **Recap of St. Urho's Day event.** Successful event. More than 80 attendees. Collected \$332.00. Broke even for expenses. The board decided to make this an annual event.
- **Discussion on potential new board member.** Will present new potential member to the membership for a vote in May. Discussion on how to attract new members. Possibly put together a committee on what would attract younger members.
- **Louise briefed board about a meeting hosted by Elaine Kumpula,** Finland's honorary consul, for the possibility or interest in pursuing a common space for the Finnish community. An exploratory committee will be formed in the near future. If anyone is interested in being part of this, they should contact Louise.



Jane Olson and Delores Salin



*Kaisa
Taipale and
Andreas
Ostenso—
St. Urho's
Day
Dancing*

- **FACA Salolampi scholarship status—raised \$615** towards the \$1000 goal. Sending email to members alerting them that we will be awarding scholarships this year. Also, will be published in *Uutiset*.
- **April/May *Uutiset* will be the last for this season.** Louise will be on vacation and not able to pull together a May addition.

Program Update

- April—Lily Obeda • May—Karen Ba
- Finn Fun Day—Discussed hosting on the grounds of the Danish American Center.
- May 22. May board meeting in person.
- June. In-person meeting to plan the 2023–2024 season.



Hey there FACA Members. We need you! We all want our Finnish Community to continue to grow. FACA is a positive way to do just that! We need you to make that happen. Join us in the fun of keeping FACA STRONG! Contact Louise Morgan at louise.morgan21@gmail.com or 612-590-1673 and volunteer now.

Here are the positions open—please consider volunteering:

1. **FACA Board Member:** Multiple openings, multiple positions! Examples (but are not limited to the following.)
 - a. **Secretary**—Responsible for taking notes at board meetings. Attendance at in-person meetings
 - b. **Hospitality**—arrange for snacks/treats at in-person meetings.
 - c. **Special events**
2. **Editor of *Uutiset***
 - a. **8 editions a year**

We need you to keep FACA going and growing! If you are interested in keeping the Finnish Heritage going in Minnesota, consider joining us. It takes a Finnish Village!



Finn Hall/Laulu Aika

Finlandia University Will Not Enroll Students for the 2023–2024 Academic Year

From Finlandia University Website

On Thursday, March 2, Finlandia University's Board of Trustees announced that Finlandia will not enroll students for the 2023–2024 academic year. The decision follows months of continuous efforts to find pathways for the University to continue its mission.

"I am deeply saddened to announce that due to a combination of demographic changes, with fewer high school graduates available, a steep decrease in interest in going to college among those graduates, and an unbearable debt load, Finlandia's Board of Trustees met and have decided to not enroll students for the 2023–2024 school year," the Board wrote in its statement.

In a letter to Finlandia's students, faculty and staff, Finlandia President Timothy Pinnow wrote to his community saying the decision follows months of herculean efforts and constant and repeated attempts to mend Finlandia University's finances and enrollment struggles.

"I do want to assure you that the leadership team, the Board of Trustees and myself have left no stone unturned in an attempt to avoid this day," Pinnow said in his letter. "Our efforts have been noble and unceasing and while none of us wanted this day to come, we have also realized that in order to honor Finlandia's 126 year-old legacy appropriately, we must end its operations with grace and dignity.

"As the leadership of Finlandia, our focus must now turn first to making sure that all of our students have good options to complete their education at another institution and that we can fulfill our intent that our employees be paid for all the work and tireless effort they have put into this little Finnish-Lutheran school way up north in Michigan's Upper Peninsula."

The Board stated that President Pinnow and his leadership team are working diligently to help Finlandia's current students wrap up their studies and will help them smoothly transition to another college or university to complete their education.

Finlandia University has finalized four Teach-Out Agreements with Michigan Technological University, Bay College, Adrian College and Wartburg College. A fifth agreement is in process with Northern Michigan University.

More information about Finlandia's intentions and next steps is available on the University's website at www.finlandia.edu. Specific questions not answered on the website can be sent to questions@finlandia.edu.

Honorary Consul Updates

By Elaine Kumpula

It has already been a busy 2023 for the Finnish/American Community in Minnesota. Following the very successful June 2022 community event welcoming the Finnish government (and Finnish businesses) to Minnesota as part of the tribute to Osmo Vänskä, we have had and expect to have a number of Finnish visitors. In September of 2022, during Minneapolis Start-Up week, several Finnish start-up companies traveled to Minnesota to participate in the event. As part of the program, the Finnish American Chamber of Commerce and business representatives from the Embassy in Washington D.C. hosted a lunch where the Finnish start-ups had an opportunity to network with individuals and companies interested in what they have to offer.

On March 19, 2023, the City of Minneapolis—a sister city with Kuopio, Finland—partnered with Finlandia Foundation to co-sponsor Minna Canth Day. Minna Canth was a writer and social activist who laid the groundwork for promoting equality in Finland as well as the women's right to vote in 1906. Artist, Anita Jain, and her family did a wonderful job in planning the event which was held at Norway House in Minneapolis. If you have not had an opportunity to visit this house, or others in the area such as the American Swedish Institute or the Danish Center, please make time to do so. Each location is unique and many serve excellent coffee!

On March 24 and 25, Finnish citizens had the opportunity to participate in early voting in Finland's parliamentary elections. The polling location this year was at Norway House in Minneapolis. I am proud to report a strong turnout of nearly 60 voters. While this was a good showing, I am hoping for more for the Presidential elections this fall. The more who come to vote, the more attention we get from the Finnish government as the strong and thriving community that we are here in Minnesota.

I am proud to announce in mid-May 2023 Finland is sending to Minnesota a business delegation, led by Finland's Ambassador to the United States, Mikko Hautala. The themes will be decarbonization and food. In July 2023, a number of Finland's government representatives, including Ambassador Hautala, will be returning to Minnesota to attend FinnFest in Duluth. Mark your calendars and plan to attend! The events and educational opportunities are not to be missed. Further, if you are a Finnish citizen, you may want to renew your passport in July. FinnFest has invited the consulate to its event, along with the passport machine!

Additional activities will come up later in the year. I look forward to providing updates!

St. Urho's Day Recap

By Ruth Erkkila

FACA's regular program for March was a St. Urho's Day celebration on Friday, March 17, at the Danish American Center. We hope St. Patrick didn't mind sharing the limelight with St. Urho. More than 80 people came to enjoy the event! We had a pea soup cook-off with other food items brought in by the membership. There was plenty of pea soup and plenty of other food. We ate our fill as our members carefully considered the nine entries of homemade pea soup. Each person who entered received a St. Urho's Day Swedish dishcloth and the winner received a hand carved, wooden Pea Soup Ladle, with a plaque saying Pea Soup Champion. After careful consideration and many tastings, the winner was Kirsi Ritosalmi-Kisner. A close second was Marlene Moreno. Kirsi said her magic ingredient was Finnish mustard.

Later Finn Hall provided music for listening and dancing. Perhaps because of all the food, the dancing started out slow, but gradually people did get up to dance and to salute St. Urho.

When taking a break from eating and dancing, people walked over to browse the mini yard sale. Items for sale included Iittala glassware, knick-knacks, wall hangings, art prints and books.

Every year FACA awards a sauna bucket to the person who has contributed the most to FACA and the Finnish American community during the last year. This year's winner is a team: Kathy and John Jorgensen. Kathy is a former member of the FACA Board. She and her husband, John, are also the unofficial photographers: at every event they take lots of photographs and then make them available to be used in our newsletter. They also post them online and people have the option of ordering download copies for a small fee. They are also willing hands to help at events, to set up, clean up, or do whatever is needed.

A fun time was had by all. You know it was a great event when you have to push people out the door at the end of the evening. *Kiitos* to the pea soup makers and everyone who brought something to share! Start preparing for next year!



St. Urho's Day Final Dance

Kathy and John Jorgensen— 2022 Sauna Bucket Awardees



*Kathy and John Jorgensen (L)
and Janie Ahola (R)*

Kathy and John are longtime members of FACA, having joined in March of 1997. Kathy's maternal grandparents emigrated from Turku and Ikaalinen, Finland, and met in a logging camp in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

John and Kathy attended many Finnish events over the years, and they

became more heavily involved in the Finnish community after their children graduated from high school.

In 2017 Kathy was an integral member of the 100th year Anniversary Committee to set up the Twin Cities grand celebration Gala for Finland's Independence at Orchestra Hall. That year Kathy also volunteered and joined the FACA board as Vice President/Program Chair and served until 2020.

Kathy and John have volunteered, and continue to use their photographic skills to document many, many of Finnish community's events, and make their wonderful photos available for everyone to view through their websites: <https://finnfaca.org/2020/09/07/faca-photos-available/> and <https://kjjorgensen.smugmug.com/Suomi-Finland/>

Every year they would both volunteer for Baking Day and to work several shifts in the Finnish Café at the Festival of Nations, in addition to documenting the Finns participation in the Festival through their many photographs.

Kathy is also a board member of the FFTC/FinnSource organization and helps organize their sponsored activities and Finnish Community collaborative events. She took on the responsibility to secure a website coordinator for their FinnSource website: <https://www.finnsource.org/>

Alongside Kathy, John can be counted on to help with the organization and set-up of these many Finnish events—e.g. FACA programs and Finnish co-sponsored events such as summer Funday picnics and Christmas Joulu.

Both have been willing supporters and callers for the yearly Salolampi Foundation scholarship appeal. All three of their children attended Salolampi multiple times.

They have even used John's Danish nationality to help FACA/FinnSource secure a location to host some Finnish events at the Danish Center.

When the Rahkolas "downsized" the Jorgensens volunteered to take over and "house" the FACA library. Kathy continues to advertise and sell books from the library as a continuous fundraiser for FACA's benefit.

In Memoriam

Rudolph Russell Roy, age 95, of N.E. Minneapolis, passed away peacefully on March 8, 2023. Born in Ashland, Wisc. on October 25, 1927. Preceded in death by his wife, Arlene. Survived by son, Robert (Barbara); daughters, Kristin Roy, and Mary Jo (Joel) Kiely ; Grandchildren, Andrew Roy, Michelle Adelman, Katherine (Joe) Turner, and Luke Adelman. A Celebration of Life will be held this summer. Memorials preferred to Finnish American Cultural Activities (FACA).

Minna Canth Celebration—Norway House

By Ruth Erkkila

A special Minna Canth event took place on Sunday, March 19, from 2–4 p.m. at the Norway House in Minneapolis sponsored by the City of Minneapolis and Finlandia Foundation National. Minna lived in Kuopio, Finland, sister city of Minneapolis. She was a newspaperwoman, playwright and a strong activist for women's equality. Her birthday is a flag-flying holiday in Finland; she was the first woman to be so honored. At this event we heard remarks from Elaine Kumpula, Honorary Consul for Finland and Bill Deef of Meet Minneapolis who told us about Minna Canth.

There was music by pianist Rie Tanaka and opera singer David Tillman. Tanaka, originally from Osaka, Japan, has a PhD in music from the University of Minnesota and sometimes performs with her Finnish American cellist husband, Jesse Nummelin.

Tillman is a third generation Finn from Hibbing, Minnesota; he has a master's degree in music performance from the University of Minnesota.

The program was followed by appetizers, wine, coffee and birthday cake in honor of Minna Canth's 179th birthday.

Salolampi Scholarships Available for FACA Members!

Once again, FACA will be providing scholarships this summer to the Salolampi Finnish Language Village for students. We look forward to being able to continue to support our members and their families as they pursue their Finnish language education. If you know students who will be attending Salolampi and are interested in applying, please encourage them to reach out. There will be an application as well as two essay questions that will need to be completed by April 30. As always, we welcome donations from our members to support this scholarship program.

For more information on the scholarship or how to apply, please reach out to Nate Hoch at Nathaniel.Hoch@gmail.com, or Louise Morgan at louise.morgan21@gmail.com.

April–May 2023 Calendar

April 12—LauluAika Concert. 7–8:30 p.m., Scott County Library, Prior Lake, 16210 Eagle Creek Ave. S.E., Prior Lake, MN 55372; phone: (952) 447-3375.

April 21—Lily Obed, ABCs of the Finnish Language.

7 p.m. Lily is a Finnish American language teacher based out of Minneapolis. She will discuss and demystify how to get started (or continue!) learning Finnish and talk about the structure and history of the language. **Zoom:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6815304953?pwd=QjFUQlVzbkR3ZEk4VC9YbTBxNEJtUT09>

April 22—Nordic Ball. Laulu Aika and Finn Hall play one set at the Ukrainian Event Center. 301 NE Main St., Minneapolis, Minn. 55413-2012. Finnish music for dancing; time to be announced at the ball. Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/.../nordic-ball-tickets...> 17 and under and students with current ID get in FREE.

May 19—Karen Ba, Ancient Rock Art in Finland. 7 p.m. Danish American Center, 3030 W. River Pkwy., Mpls., MN 55406. Karen will address who made the Finnish rock paintings and why we have never heard of them.

June—Midsummer—to be determined.

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.

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

www.finnfaca.org

Pea Soup Champions!

Winning Pea Soup Recipe for 2023

By Kirsi Ritosalmi-Kisner

8–10 cups (2—2-1/2 quarts) water
1 lb. dried split green peas
1–2 lbs. ham (or ham steak or smoked pork chops)
1-1/2–2 tsp. salt
2 or more tbsps. Finnish mustard (*Turun punainen*)

Measure the water in a large soup pot.
Rinse the peas, then add them in the pot.
Soak 6–24 hours.

Use the same water to boil the peas until soft, about 1 hour. Add salt. Mash most of the peas with a potato ricer. Add cubed ham. Simmer on low to medium low heat for another 1–2 hrs. Add mustard gradually, check taste repeatedly. Boil possible bones with soup, and pull out right before serving.

About the Cook:

Kirsi Ritosalmi-Kisner lived in Helsinki, Finland, until marrying her husband Steve (from Iowa!) and moving to Coon Rapids in 2000. Kirsi's professional life has given her fun opportunities in interesting places: Minnesota Orchestra's music library, Hawaii State Archives, American Swedish Historical Museum in Philadelphia, American Craft Council in NE Minneapolis, and currently working remotely with the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art in Washington, D.C. Because of Steve's Army career, the family has lived in several states but now they are back in Minnesota and love living in Fridley. Their son Onni attends Fridley High School. When not making pea soup, Kirsi likes to knit, read and spend time with the family.



***Pea Soup Grand Champion Kirsi Kisner
(right) and second place winner
Marlene Moreno (left).***