



Uutiset

Newsletter of Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.

September–October/Syyskuu–Lokakuu 2023



Hei, kaikki – Hey, all!

Tervetuloa to the third annual Finn Fun Day in the Twin Cities! Finn Fun Day is a multigenerational, family-friendly community event with games, music and food. Finn Fun Day started as a collaboration between FACA (Finnish American Cultural Activities) and Suomi-koulu (the Finnish Language School of Minnesota).

In 2019, FACA hosted an indoor event called Finnish

Family Funday, and over the years, Suomi-koulu hosted a fall kick-off gearing up for fall classes. In 2021, under the leadership of presidents Louise (FACA) and Katja (Suomi-koulu, FACA), the individual events were smashed into a collective Finn Fun Day. FinnSource joined the fun last year!

Finn Fun Day is still in pioneering stages, yet growing. We are excited for the following Twin Cities Finnish and Finnish American groups joining this year: Puustelli USA, Finn Hall/Lauluaika, UofM Finnish Program, Salolampi Foundation, Eclectic Egalitarian, Sisu Environmental School, Finnish it and FACC.

What: Games and activities such as face painting, *mölkky*, boot toss, photo booth, felt making, and more.
Nähdään Syyskuussa—See you in September!

Terveisin, Katja Zarns

Finn Fun Day 2023
Danish American Center
3030 W. River Parkway,
Minneapolis, Minn. 55406
Saturday, September 23
Noon–3 p.m.



**See page 8 for
the complete
story.**

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President's/Interim Editor's Message

By Louise Morgan

Where has the summer gone? It seems like one blinks and here it is already August. I spent some time up at our cabin in June, and I thought it was July. So hot and dry. Then...we had June in July. But with all that is going on in other parts of the country, I am not complaining.

The focus of this edition of *Uutiset* is education. I hope you enjoy the articles by Kendra Hunding on the Sisu Environmental School and Lily Obede from the U of M as much as I did.

I attended FinnFest in Duluth a few weeks ago. My brother lives in Duluth, so I was able to enjoy FinnFest and catch up with him. I saw several FACA members there, but I am sure I missed some of you. So many people! What an amazing event. And it will only get better. I can't wait to see what is in store for us next year. More about FinnFest later in the newsletter.

We have some exciting events coming up. I hope all of you will join us for two great events in September. We are really excited that the Minnesota United invited us to welcome Teemu Pukki to Minnesota! I will be there with my family proudly waving the Finnish flag along with many of you. We are so lucky to have all these wonderful sport teams here. And do not forget, Finn Fun Day! It is going to be bigger and better than last year! Several other Finnish organizations are joining in on the fun. We will have games, music (DJ and our very own Finn Hall/*LauluAika*) and of course food! Bring your lawn chairs and enjoy the fun at the Danish American Center.

This week the boards of Finn Source and FACA held a joint meeting. I can safely say that we were excited to be meeting together, exploring ways that we can work together and join forces. We will be sending out more about what this might look like later as we continue to work together this coming year. But what it will mean is more offerings for our community. We will grow stronger together!

Please read the article about changes to *Uutiset*. *Kiitos*



Senator Amy Klobuchar at FinnFest

Greetings from the U of M

By Lily Obed

Terveisiä Minnesotan yliopistosta! Greetings from the beautiful University of Minnesota. As the Finnish instructor for the upcoming year, I am so fortunate to get to help usher in the next generation of Finnish language learners here at the U.

Growing up, I knew all of four Finnish words: *sauna*, *raha* (money), and *mene nukkumaan* (go to sleep). It wasn't until I turned 15 that I sat down and asked, "Why did no one ever teach me any of this?" After that, my path learning Finnish started at Salolampi in the high school credit program, then on to the University of Minnesota where I majored in Scandinavian Studies. After I had taken every course available at the U, I went to Oulu as an exchange student, and then continued on at the University of Jyväskylä for a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics. Along the way, I picked up all kinds of invaluable knowledge about learning and teaching Finnish from both American and Finnish perspectives.

At the U of M, our vitals reflect Finnish principles: each class is capped at a small 17 students, and the same instructor teaches all six semesters. Classes happen every day of the week in the afternoon and early evening. Being a part of a small, intimate class like that means more opportunities for scholarships, letters of recommendation, deeper connections with your classmates and teacher, and more opportunities to involve student interests.

Implementing Finnish classroom principles is also a core part of my teaching and has to start from the ground up. The main Finnish tenet that underscores my approach is implicit social trust. A Finnish classroom is based on a shared mutual respect and a high degree of independence and self-fulfillment. As a teacher, I take my responsibility in cultivating a positive and inspiring space that promotes individuality and pushes my students to be their best very seriously. On the other side of the relationship, I expect my students to similarly come with an earnest willingness to learn, participate, and grow to their best abilities.

If you are interested in hearing more, or would like to join the class, please don't hesitate to get in contact. *Nähdään!*

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.

April Recap—A, B, C's of Finnish

Lily Obed

By Kendra Kauppi

At the Finnish American Cultural Activities (FACA) April meeting, Lily Obed presented the A, B, C's of Finnish to 51 Zoom participants from around the country. Lily engaged the audience with a series of questions. Why is Finnish so weird? Why is it so hard? Why is it so difficult? In answering the questions, Lily explained that the Finnish language is unlike most any other language but loosely related to Estonian and Hungarian and suggested that Finnish is not difficult, just different. Some of the challenges are that Finnish differentiates through grammar (not vocabulary) and that there are lots of rules for everything, making Finnish a very logical language.

Despite the rules, Finnish has few irregularities (only one irregular verb in the language). Lily was optimistic for those interested in learning the language in that classes are usually small and that Finnish sounds as it looks—no surprises. And, yes, there are some recognizable words from the English vocabulary—*bussi*, *hoteli* and *historia*.

Lily wrapped up the presentation with a final question—how does a person learn all of this? Those interested in the Finnish language could start with building a vocabulary with duolingo, consulting references such as *uusikielemme* and studying books like *Suomen Mestari*. Individuals wanting more practice could consider a tutor, enroll in a formal university class, participate in the UMN or FACA conversation groups, engage in a Salolampi activity or engage in the Suomi sing-along group. In summary Lily suggested if interested in learning Finnish: 1) pick up a book; 2) ask for help or take a class; and 3) challenge yourself by writing or interacting in Finnish.



FACA Board Minutes, June 6, 2023

By Louise Morgan



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

Summer Board Meeting Minutes—Tuesday, June 6, 2023; noon–3 p.m.

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

President's Report

- 1. Discussion of collaboration between FinnSource, TC Finlandia Foundation and FACA.** Joint board meeting later in summer to discuss possibilities.
- 2. Discussion about how to better manage the FACA Salolampi Scholarships.**
- 3. Memorial Donations**
The treasurer will provide a list of memorial donations so thank-you notes can be sent.
- 4. Joulu/Christmas Celebration**
Planning has started for the *Joulu* celebration. It will be December 9, 2023, St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Roseville.
- 5. FACA Board**
Current board proposal: Louise Morgan to continue as president, Nate Hoch as treasurer, Katja Zarns as website administrator and Kendra Kauppi as secretary. A new member will be proposed at the fall meeting, and the board will be presented for membership approval.
- 6. FinnFest Marketing**
Brochure/promotional information being updated.
- 7. Treasurer/Budget**
Nate will provide the budget once decisions are made at the meeting regarding newsletters and programming.
- 8. Newsletter**
See article about the newsletter.
Agreed to publish four newsletters per year.

- September/October (articles due beginning of August);
- November/December (articles due in October);

- January/February (articles due in December);
- March/April/May (articles due in February).
- Summer communications will be provided electronically. The Fall newsletter will focus on education.

9. Committees

Salolampi (Nate Hoch), *Laskiainen* (Suomi-koulu), St. Urho's celebration/pea soup (Nate Hoch), Midsummer (Louise Morgan), Finn Fun Day (Katja Zarns).

FinnFest 2023

By Louise Morgan

I haven't attended a full FinnFest since...well, ever. No, that is not right. In the 90's, my mother and I went to Maine for FinnFest. So, this was my first full FinnFest in 25 years. Kudos to the FinnFest planning and organizing committee. It was a wonderful event.

I went there, not really knowing what to expect. I can truthfully say I enjoyed every aspect of the event. I attended a wide variety of events, from historical to the current day discussion about Finland, the United States and European and American Security. Each program I attended affected me in a different way. My pride in my heritage was strengthened on many levels. There were so many that I wanted to attend that it was difficult to choose. I attended one on Finnish American Socialism in the Upper Midwest. I remember my mother always telling me about how the Finns were blacklisted on the Iron Range. During the lecture I found out that if you had a Finnish last name, you would not be hired on at a mine. Our ancestors really had to have *Sisu* to make it as immigrants here in the early days. And of course, there was music everywhere. They had a stage set up in the main hall with tables and chairs so one could sit and enjoy. The music ranged from traditional folk to modern day. I decided to attend the Samuli Edelmann concert on Saturday night. I had never heard of Samuli Edelmann before Saturday night. I think I would say he is like our Michael Bublé. Both my husband and I went in not knowing what to expect and came out saying we really enjoyed the concert.

I plan on making this an annual event. Next year I will plan out my days better, and I will take advantage of the music in the evenings at the local restaurants. I hope to see all of you next year at FinnFest! How lucky we are to have this in our state!

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

Sisu Environmental School—A Finnish-style Education for Minnesota Kids

(Part 1 of 4)

By Kendra Hunding

It is ironic that Finland attracts global attention for its high-performing education system based primarily on results of an exam called PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment). Finland has scored consistently high in all PISA cycles since 2000 in reading literacy, mathematics and science. PISA has made Finland an education phenomenon that has made other nations sit up and take notice of a school system where most children seem to be learning well. Finnish educators are celebrated and admired, and the entire education system praised for its exceptional success.

The irony? According to Pasi Sahlberg, Finnish-born Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of Melbourne, Australia, “The significance of the PISA rankings in Finnish thinking is quite negligible. They are seen as a kind of blood pressure check, enabling us to occasionally consider which way we are heading, but they are not a permanent focus. Decisions related to education are not taken with the PISA ratings in mind. PISA is not seen in Finland as a trigger for education reforms. There will be no new policy changes that would be inspired by PISA in Finland. Instead, the essential factor is the information that children and young people will need in the future.” So, the Finnish system is being lauded due to these scores, but the Finns themselves place little value on standardized assessment.

The Finnish conception of learning in schools is based on the principles of making all students active in teaching and learning, and Finland has not adopted the standardized testing systems that are common in many other countries, but instead relies on intelligent forms of accountability, including self-assessment and inspection, portfolio assessment and sample-based national assessments. More irony: Skeptics of the idea of improving education systems in the United States by adopting Finnish practices, should note that Finland’s inspiration came from research in other countries, most notably the U.S. Sahlberg again: “We’ve built this excellent, high-performing, equitable system that everyone is praising today, based on American innovations.”

Sisu Environmental School

(Part 2 of 4)

While the success of the Finnish Education model is well-documented, the question remains: Can this model translate into schools outside of Finland? Specifically, can this model be successful here in Minnesota? The founders of Sisu Environmental School and its Finnish partners, New

Nordic Schools and Finland Education Hub (FEH), believe that it can. Sisu Environmental School is a new public charter school slated to open in the Twin Cities in the fall of 2024.

Sisu Environmental School will use an instructional approach based on and inspired by the highly successful Finnish Education System. Sisu founders call this the “Finnesota Approach” as it is based on the Finnish model, but is tailored to the local needs and requirements of the state of Minnesota so that Sisu Environmental School’s children can reap the benefits of this exemplary model here in their home state.

Sisu will be the only public charter school in Minnesota using the Finnish model as its primary education model and the first school to partner with New Nordic Schools (NNS) of Finland in the United States. New Nordic Schools is a model provider where partners with new and existing schools worldwide bring tried and tested Finnish education, amended with international content for global relevancy and tailored to meet the obligations of local educational needs. Sisu will partner with NNS in the following areas:

- Nordic Baccalaureate Curriculum
- Professional Development (Leadership, Teacher, and Parent Training)
- Quality Assurance Mechanism and Continuous Development Cycle
- Smart Technology Platform

In addition to support from NNS and FEH, what will guide Sisu’s Finnesota Approach? Finland uses a whole-child-centered, research-and-evidence based school system, run by well-trained highly competent, professional teachers. Rather than focus on standardized testing and school and teacher accountability measures, Finland focuses on equity, professionalism, and collaboration to provide equal and positive learning opportunities for all children. These are global education best practices, not cultural quirks applicable only to Finland.

Through its Finnesota Approach, Sisu School will:

- Empower children to become creative, adaptable, and collaborative problem solvers;
- Provide interdisciplinary learning that realizes the connections between subjects;
- Include active outdoor play and incorporation of nature into each day;
- Foster relationships to nature and the outdoors that allow environmental education to be incorporated across the curriculum;
- Unleash a child’s creativity and enthusiasm for learning both at school and in the home; and
- Design learning environments constructed for purpose, positivity and health.

May Program Recap— Karen Ba—Rock Art in Finland

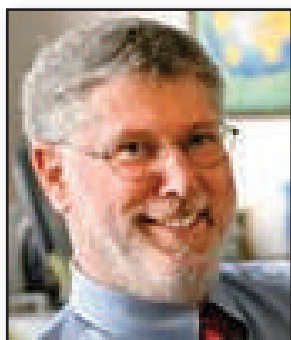
By Ruth Erkkila

The final FACA presentation for the 2022–2023 season was on May 19. Karen Ba presented an illustrated program about prehistoric rock art in Finland. This was an in-person program at the Danish American Center with 23 people present and 14 attending on Zoom. This was the first time we have tried a combined in-person and Zoom event.

Rock paintings were first discovered in Finland in 1911 by Jean Sibelius while he was visiting Eliel Saarinen. These paintings are on a stone ledge above Lake Vitträsk. Karen showed pictures of some of the rock paintings she visited with her cousin and Pekka Kivekäs, a friend of her cousin and known as the father of Finnish rock art. More than 100 rock art sites have been found in Finland.



*Michelle Ranta, Sarah Stengle and Karen Ba
Rune Singing*



Finnish History Before Finland's Independence

Are you curious about Finnish history before Finland's independence? Interested in learning more about Finnish interactions with Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union?

Please help FACA welcome our October guest speaker, Dr. Steven Hoch, on Friday, October 20 at 6:30 p.m. at the Danish American Center.

Dr. Hoch will be discussing Finland under Russian rule (The Grand Duchy of Finland) and the period leading up to Finnish independence, as well as post-independent Finnish-Russian interactions. There will also be an opportunity for questions and answers.

The rock paintings are all a reddish color, painted with an iron oxide mixture and protected by a naturally occurring silicon dioxide layer. The paintings are sometimes hard to see, and photographs are usually enhanced. Images include human stick figures, moose/elk/deer, snakes, boats, and handprints. They are usually on cliffs near water and seem high up now, but at the time they were painted, they were probably lower down. The land in Finland is rising. The paintings were created by people of the Comb Ceramic Culture (5000–2000 BC) and probably had a religious significance. When agriculture came to Finland, the rock painting stopped. Ismo Luukonen has photographed and published photos of these rock paintings and you can see some of these online. Karen also introduced us to Rune singing during the presentation.

After the program we shared coffee, treats and conversation. Treats were provided by Judy Mikkola and Jane Olsen. *Kiitos* Judy and Jane.

FACA Membership

A one-year membership for \$25 provides you with 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.)

Name _____

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Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

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

☐ electronic copy via email ☐ paper copy

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

Dr. Hoch is a retired history professor focusing on Russian and European history. He has a Ph.D. in history from Princeton University.

This event will be available both in-person and via Zoom. There will also be a social hour to follow.

The business meeting will be followed by the program.

Finnish American Cultural Activities (FACA) Newsletter—Upcoming Changes

By Kendra Kauppi

Did you know that *Uutiset* in English is news? News is information about current events and can be communicated through word of mouth, printing, the postal system and electronic communication. In communicating news with FACA members, the board decided to use both traditional print copies as well as electronic correspondence. Starting with the 2023–2024 season, hard copies of the *Uutiset* will be published four times each term as compared to eight times as in the past. Anticipated newsletters are September/October, November/December, January/February, and March/April/May. This was a difficult decision, but challenges in finding an editor, increasing printing and mailing costs and the ability to communicate using forums such as email, FACA Facebook group, the FACA website and the *FinnSource Newsletter* led the board to this decision.

Uutiset dates back to the beginning of FACA in 1983–1984. A monthly newsletter was one of the benefits of being a member. The purpose of the newsletter was to inform the FACA membership of upcoming programs and events as well as to provide general Finnish interest items occurring in the Twin Cities area and beyond. In the past, the newsletter was published about eight times per year (September, October, November, January, February, March and April/May). At times FACA also mailed out a June/Summer issue/calendar, as well as put together and mailed out an advertisement/business card fundraiser issue, where various businesses/groups purchased advertising space.

In-between *Uutiset* editions, FACA will reach out to our members via email, Facebook posts and the FACA website.

Did you know:

- FACA has a public Facebook group with 1,765 followers? You can join.
- Archived copies of the *Uutiset* can be found at the FACA website (<https://finnfaca.org>).
- Finnish events are listed in the *FinnSource Newsletter* (<https://www.finnsource.org/calendar-of-events/>).
- You can subscribe to the *FinnSource Newsletter* (<https://www.finnsource.org/newsletter-subscription/>).

September–October 2023 Calendar

September 8-10 (Friday–Sunday)—MSP Film Society. We are excited to present the *Finntastic!* Festival. The *Finntastic! New Films From Finland* series showcases the exciting vision and new work by prize-winning female directors from Finland. *Finntastic!* is curated by MSPIFF programmer Alissa Simon in collaboration with the Finnish Film Foundation. "<https://mspfilm.org/finntastic-2023/>" You can view the complete lineup of films here.

September 9 (Saturday)—Our very own Minnesota United FC just signed **Teemu Pukki** from the Finnish National Team! Calling all Finns, friends of Finns, and Finnish organizations to help us welcome Teemu to Minnesota by attending a soccer game at **Allianz Field on Saturday, September 9 at 7:30 p.m. against the New England Revolution.** We've coordinated a block of tickets with Minnesota United, and we'll all be sitting together to watch Teemu (and fellow Finn, Robin Lod). Be sure to show your Finnish pride by bringing any Team Finland gear or Finnish flags to the game! Our discounted tickets in the block are \$38 + service fees in **section 110.**

September 23 (Saturday)—FINN FUN DAY, noon–3 p.m., Danish American Center, 3030 W. River Parkway, Minneapolis, Minn. 55406.

Tervetuloa to the third annual Finn Fun Day in the Twin Cities! Finn Fun Day is a multigenerational, family-friendly community event with games, music, and food. Finn Fun Day started as a collaboration between FACA (Finnish American Cultural Activities) and Suomi-koulu (the Finnish Language School of Minnesota). Enjoy games and activities such as face painting, *mölkky*, boot toss, photo booth, felt making, food, music and much more!

October 20 (Friday)—Dr. Steven Hoch, 6:30 p.m., Danish American Center (*See page 6*). Dr. Hoch will be discussing Finland under Russian rule (The Grand Duchy of Finland) and the period leading up to Finnish independence, as well as post-independent Finnish-Russian interactions.

MUSIC

September 9 (Saturday)—Nordic Music Fest, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Lions Park, Victoria; Finn Hall, Lauluaiika and Kisarit Dancers will be performing.

September 10 (Sunday), 2 p.m.—Lauluaika will be at the Carl Oscar House, Lindstrom, outside under the apple tree. 29061 Glader Blvd., Lindstrom, Minn.

October 8 (Sunday), 6 p.m.—Lauluaika will play at the Twin Cities Nordic Social Dance at Tapestry.

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 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

Meet Teemu Pukki on September 9

Meet Teemu Pukki, Minnesota United Soccer, September 9

By Nate Hoch

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Our discounted tickets in the block are \$38 + service fees in section 110. Location: 400 Snelling Avenue North, St. Paul, Minn. 55104.

<https://pa.exchange/marketplace/bc6f1ad6-15c9-11ee-b17b-575970e8b400/storefront/bcab484e-15c9-11ee-ae50-4bd2f80ae7a6>

Looking forward to seeing you there!
Sponsored by FACA.



***Seija Stratton, Urho and Pam Rahkola's
Daughter, and Teemu Pukki of Minnesota United***