



Uutiset

Newsletter of Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.

January–February/*Tammikuu–Helmikuu* 2024

Third Annual FACA Salolampi Fundraiser—Help Send Our Children to Camp!

Join us for our third annual Salolampi fundraiser! Fun and knowledge go hand-in-hand for children learning Finnish through Salolampi. We are once again excited to announce a matching donation of \$1,000 for our goal. This support allows us to send relatives of FACA members to the Concordia Finnish Language Village in 2024. Let's all support the children with a tax-deductible donation. Together we can reach the \$1,000 goal, and hopefully raise \$2,000 for Salolampi!

Ways to Donate:

1) Send a check to FACA, PO Box 580708, Minneapolis, MN 55458. Please write **Salolampi** in the memo line of the check.

2) Go to the FACA website and use the PayPal option. Please tell us that the funds are for the Salolampi Fundraiser. *Kiitos paljon!*

We asked our scholarship recipients if they would write something for *Uutiset*. We asked them to answer the following three questions. Below are their responses. Enjoy!

1. What is your Salolampi name?
2. In what program did you participate?
3. What was your favorite thing(s) about Salolampi?

Poppy Ramin

1. Hello! Or should I say, *Moi!* My name is Poppy Ramin but *minun Salolampi nimi on Inka*. I have been going to Salolampi for six years now, and it is and always has been my favorite summer camp of all time.

2. When I was younger, about seven or eight, I would stay for two weeks per summer and I liked it. But after Covid they were accepting non-credit four week opportunities so I decided I would try something new! This year I am traveling so I will be able to go for only two weeks, which does make me sad because some of my best memories and friends I have experienced at Salolampi. I am almost 14 now and I still am in touch with some of my best friends from my first year going there. I also have made new friends and connections through Salolampi, which I love as well.

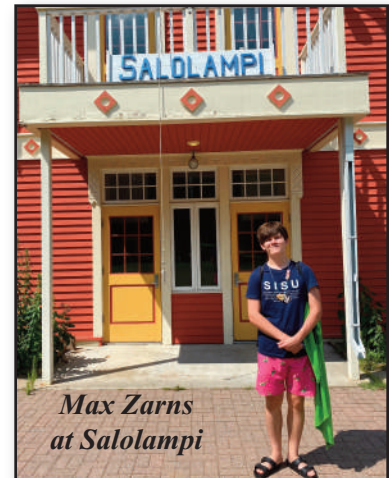
3. Some of my favorite things about Salolampi are the foods, people and learning experiences, and the culture. I love learning Finnish and I would say I speak it pretty well. It has never been easier to learn a

(continued on page 3)

Max Zarns

1. My name whilst at Salolampi is Aku. I have had the same name ever since my first time at Salolampi.
2. Last summer I participated in the 4-week Teho program which gives high school language credit for a year. It was my first time doing the 4-week credit program and my plan is to continue learning Finnish in the same program next summer.
3. My favorite thing about Salolampi is sauna'ing and swimming at *ranta* (beach). *Jalkopallo* (soccer or football as the rest of the world calls it) is my favorite activity. Last but certainly not least is the *ruoka-aika* (food time). At Salolampi we get to eat real Finnish foods like *makkara* (sausage).

Thank you so much again for the opportunity FACA gave me last summer to attend Salolampi by giving me a generous scholarship.



Max Zarns
at Salolampi

FACA 2023–2024 Board of Directors

President
Louise Morgan
612-590-1673
louise.morgan21@gmail.com

Secretary
Kendra Kauppi
facaboard1@gmail.com

Treasurer
Nate Hoch
612-313-1065
nate.hoch@rbc.com

Website/Media
Katja Zarns
facaboard1@gmail.com

Hospitality/Facebook
Vacant

Subcommittee
John Morgan
jmorgan7887@gmail.com

FACA Newsletter Committee

Interim Editor
Louise Morgan
612-590-1673
louise.morgan21@gmail.com

Graphic Design
Darlene Esko
651-455-8843
bobdar@att.net

Membership/Mailing
Urho and Pam Rahkola
651-429-3319
rahkola.urho@comcast.net

Website: finnfac.org
Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/116365755059161/FACA>
3015-2016 B
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President's/Interim Editor's Message

By Louise Morgan

Hyvää Uutta Vuotta! Is it really 2024 already? Right now, I am sitting in a hotel room, waiting for a phone call to go and meet my brother for breakfast. I have a few minutes so I thought I would make good use of my time and start on my column. Not that I can get this done in a few minutes, mind you. I thought I would take my time to reflect on all the good things that have happened in our Finnish community this year.

First, and I am very excited about this, we are taking steps to merge with Twin Cities Finlandia Foundation. I personally believe that the more we can bring the Finnish community together, the stronger we will be. I, like all of you, am very proud of my Finnish heritage. We must work hard to keep the heritage and history alive here in the Twin Cities and in the US. The merger is a first step.

Next, we have had several community events this year, which were brought together by many in the Finnish Community. *Laskiainen*, St. Urho's Day, Finn Fun Day, *Kauneimmat Joululaulut* and many of us participated in this past summer's FinnFest in Duluth. At each event, I met so many people who enjoyed celebrating their heritage! Let us keep it up and keep our community strong! Finn Fun Day and *Kauneimmat Joululaulut* truly were community events, supported by the entire community. I also really want to thank our volunteers for all of the events. I am a worrier by nature, and I always worry that we won't have enough people to make the events successful. I have to say, I do not need to worry anymore. You all have proved to me that you will show up and make it happen! *Kiitos*.

So, on to 2024. We are planning some new and exciting programs, in addition to all of the work on bringing the community together! Our first event is the start of our Salolampi FACA fundraiser. Each year we sponsor children from the FACA community. Their stories are included in this newsletter. I hope you will consider donating this year so that we can continue to grow our future!

Stay tuned and if you would like to participate, just let us know! We need our Finnish Village!!!

P.S.: I am having fun with Duolingo. I can now say many ways that I am a wizard!
Minä olen velho.



Post Office Mail Update

By Louise Morgan

The postmaster at the Minneapolis main office has assured FACA that the issues that occurred this fall, from September through December, have been corrected. They had a significant number of people retire in August; thus, they had a lot of new hires that they were training. Evidently, our mail got caught in the mix. The postmaster assured me that we will get our mail. Many of your memberships that were mailed during that time went into some black hole. They do not know what happened, but they have assured us that the new people are trained. We have been receiving memberships now, so let's keep our fingers crossed. I also have the postmaster on speed dial!

2024 Sauna Bucket Award Request for Nominees

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. Nominations will be accepted through February 2024 by filling in the form/questions (to the right or at the FACA website) and submitting electronically or via postal mail. E-mail is the preferred method.



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? What FACA activities has the nominee been involved in? What impact has the individual made to FACA/Finnish community? How have other individuals benefited from the accomplishments? What has the Finnish community gained from the contributions? Provide specific examples.

Third Annual Sauna Week! February 18–24, 2024

Finlandia Foundation National

Sauna is the most known Finnish word in the U.S., within and outside of the Finnish-American community. While many people have experienced *sauna* at hotels, spas and gyms, in the time of COVID-19, home *saunas* have become popular additions.

Finlandia Foundation National has declared the last week in February “National Sauna Week” to build awareness and appreciation of this aspect of Finnish and Finnish-American culture.



Finnish Sauna in Finland

Our second annual celebration was February 19–25, 2023, and featured a variety of online programs with experts on different aspects of *sauna* culture. Some FFA chapters and independent businesses also hosted events in their communities.

FACA has reached out to local *Sauna* businesses and is working on arranging *Sauna* events for our members during this week. Stay tuned for more information!

(Salolampi Fundraiser *continued from page 1*)

new language with all the amazing classes they have. I am so grateful I get to learn more about my heritage and Finland’s history, as well as keeping the traditions alive through the younger generations of people today. All in all, I absolutely adore Salolampi and I will go as many years as I can.
Kiitos!

—Inka/Poppy Ramin

Noelle Puroway

1. Hi, my Finnish name is Nella.
2. I did the 2-week summer program.
3. My favorite thing about Salolampi is how comfortably I get immersed in Finnish culture. And I love the food.

November Recap—Eric Peltoniemi

By Ruth Erkkila

At the FACA program on November 17, Betsey Norgard from Finlandia Foundation Twin Cities and the Finlandia Foundation National Board showed a short video about the Finnish American Heritage Center and appealed to everyone to make a donation to help preserve our Finnish heritage at the Center.

Then we heard from Eric Peltoniemi, singer and songwriter, about his Finnish heritage growing up in the Finnish triangle in northern Minnesota and about his song *O Suomi*, which has been on the music charts in Finland. This song is a nostalgic letter to his homeland and was sung by a full choir at FinnFest 2017 in Minneapolis with Finland's President Saul Niinisto in attendance.

But, that evening it wasn't all talk. Peltoniemi performed several of his songs for an appreciative audience, including *O Suomi*. Some voices could be heard quietly singing along and the music stayed with us as we departed for home.

But first, we had to have a little coffee, some snacks and some conversation during our usual *kahviaika*. Then it was time to go out in the cold, and as we left for home, we again thought about the songs we had just heard.



Marlene Moreno Shopping at the Tori



Judy Mikkola
Cutting the
Delicious Pulla

Kauneimmat Joululaulut— The Most Beautiful Christmas Carols

By Louise Morgan

I am sitting at the computer, with my coffee in hand, remembering the wonderful events of last Saturday, December 9, the 2023 *Kauneimmat Joululaulut*. First, I want to thank all our fantastic volunteers. You really made the event happen. FACA did most of the setup of the table decorations, provided ushers for the event, cut copious amounts of *pulla* (Thank You, Sandra Weise—*Finn Bistro*), and who served the *pulla* and coffee, and of course, cleaned up. Phew! Thank you! \ It takes a Finnish village.

I really enjoyed the service. Elina Koivusaari did her magic again this year in pulling together a wonderful program.



Elina Koivusaari and Osmo Vanskä

This year, the special music was our own Osmo Vanskä, who performed two beautiful Christmas songs on the clarinet. Elina interviewed Osmo on stage, and asked him important questions such as, "Do you eat your

pulla plain or with butter and jam?" (Answer—plain), and "What do your grandchildren call you?" (Answer—Ukki). The carols we sang were accompanied by Mark Sedio. What a talented pianist! The St. Michael's Lutheran Church was filled to the rafters. Everyone enjoyed singing or trying to sing the carols in the Finnish language.

After the service, all 250 (or more) people funneled into the fellowship hall for *pulla*, coffee and shopping at the *Tori*. Jane Olson looked like a dealer in Las Vegas, trying to replenish the *pulla*, so that all would get a piece. Everyone did get a piece of *pulla*, but that did take a village to make sure the *pulla*, coffee and jam were all continuously filled. We did not run out of anything this year, so all seemed happy. I saw a lot of conversations being held in the hall, as people enjoyed their coffee and *pulla*. And a lot of people enjoyed shopping for Finnish items that were for sale. I will admit I purchased a few myself!

Thank you again to all our wonderful FACA volunteers and the planning committee (pictured below)!





Annual *Laskiainen* Event

860 Cliff Road, Eagan, MN 55123

Hei kaikki! Hyvää uutta vuotta! On behalf of Suomi-koulu, Minnesota Finnish School, I wish everyone a Happy New Year. I am pleased to introduce myself, Aaron Glick, as the new board president of Suomi- koulu. Having Finnish heritage and a background in child and language development, our mission of bringing families and students of all ages new opportunities to experience Finnish education and culture is near and dear to my heart. Our school has been active and growing over the last few years. This spring we will be hosting our regular classes both in-person and online. We have something for everyone, from parent-baby classes up through full immersion classes for adults. I encourage you to look at our website, minnesota.finnishschool.org, for additional details and registration information.

Beyond our regular classes, we partner with FACA and other local organizations to host Finnish events for everyone in our community! On Saturday, February 17, 2024, we will be hosting our annual *Laskiainen* at Lebanon Hills Regional Park in Eagan, Minn. Join us for a traditional *Laskiainen* meal, sledding, cross-country skiing, and warm conversation. More information on this free event can be found on our website or through FACA. Further, we are lucky to partner with Christ Church Lutheran, where we have our in-person classroom, gym, and kitchen spaces. They will be hosting the *Tuomasmessu* service on February 11 which is another wonderful opportunity to take part in a traditional Finnish celebration.

Suomi-koulu is a volunteer-based organization. and I am constantly impressed with the Finns in Minnesota coming together to build community and make these classes and events happen. If you want to get involved or get more information, email us at finnishschoolofmn@gmail.com.

Ethnicity and Community: *Laskiainen* in Palo, Minnesota (excerpt from Smithsonian magazine)

By Carol Babiracki

(To read the entire article, go to <https://festival.si.edu/articles/1980/ethnicity-and-community-laskiainen-in-palo-minnesota>)

“In early February each year, in the small rural community of Palo in northern Minnesota’s Iron Range region, hundreds of people gather for traditional *Laskiainen* festivities. The word *Laskiainen* literally means “sliding downhill.” For the Finns in northern Minnesota, it is more than simply a winter sliding festival; it is a time to share traditions and memories and take pride in their Finnish heritage.

“*Laskiainen* was brought to the Iron Range by Finnish immigrants in the late 1800s. It was originally a pre-Lenten or Shrovetide celebration. In Finland and in northern Minnesota, Finns have also considered it a celebration of the lengthening of the short dark winter days. Until the mid-1930s, *Laskiainen* was observed in northern Minnesota by small family or neighborhood groups with sledding and sliding, Finnish foods, music, and dancing. In the mid-1930s, community-wide *Laskiainen* festivals were organized in the rural schools to stimulate interest in the community’s folk traditions. Through the years, the festival at the Palo School overlooking Loon Lake has become the region’s only *Laskiainen* and has grown in both size and popularity. The two-day festival is usually held during the first weekend in February, when the weather is right for the festival’s outdoor activities. The cold, snowy white setting outside contrasts with the warmth and color inside. For those hardy enough to brave the often bitter cold there are log-sawing contests, skating races, hockey and broomball games, skiing, sledding, and sliding down the steep hill that begins at the school and ends down at the lake. Indoors there is plenty of traditional Finnish food, music, and fellowship. ...”



Tuomasmessu/Thomas Mass at Christ Church Lutheran on February 11

Members of the Finnish community may be familiar with the popular *Tuomasmessu* that takes place regularly at the *Agrikolan kirkko* (Agrikola Church) in Helsinki. The congregation of the landmark Christ Church Lutheran in Minneapolis is pleased to offer its own Thomas Mass on **Sunday, February 11, at 4 p.m.**, with Cantor and organist Mark Sedio.

The Tuomas Mass service itself is named for the Apostle Thomas who had more questions than answers in his faith. It is influenced by ancient liturgical traditions and offers an opportunity for “open space”—times for reflection, various prayer stations (healing, writing prayers for peace), the creation of liturgical art/crafts and special opportunities for children. Special choral and instrumental music (some by Finnish composers) as well as Finnish/English hymns will be included.

As is the case with the *Tuomasmessu* celebrations in Finland, a time for fellowship and food (coffee, pastries and charcuterie) will follow in the church’s Luther Lounge (designed by Eero Saarinen).

This year Christ Church Lutheran celebrates the 75th anniversary of the construction of its renowned church building, which was designed by Eliel Saarinen and is now listed as a National Historic Landmark. It is located at 3244 34th Avenue South in Minneapolis. For more information contact the church office at (612) 721-6611.

Happy FACA Members



L–R: Ann Borgwardt, Delores and Dan Salin and Monica Hoffman.

Why I Volunteer

By Liisa Le

Volunteering at FACA events has been a truly wonderful experience, allowing me to immerse myself in the vibrant Finnish community. It’s remarkable how many similarities I discover that resonate with my ancestry, reminiscent of cherished memories with my grandparents and relatives who have long passed. Being part of these celebrations and events feels like a meaningful journey into my history. It has fostered a deep desire to learn more about my roots, including traditions and even the Finnish language. I realize this may sound sentimental or silly to some. However, volunteering not only helps me celebrate my family heritage but also provides a unique opportunity to make new friends who share a similar connection. It’s a heartwarming journey of discovery and connection that I am cherishing.



Liisa Le (left) and Friend

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.)

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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.]

January–March 2024 Calendar

EVENTS/PROGRAMS

JANUARY

- **Virtual Kick-off for Salolampi Fundraiser—**
See front page of *Uutiset*
- No in-person FACA program

FEBRUARY

- **February 11 (Sunday)—Tuomasmessu/Thomas Mass at Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Avenue South, Minneapolis**
- **February 17 (Saturday) Noon—Annual *Laskiainen*** at Lebanon Hills Regional Park, 860 Cliff Road, Eagan, MN. Join us for a traditional *Laskiainen* meal, sledding, cross country skiing, and warm conversation.
- **February 18 (Sunday) 24th 2024 Third Annual *Sauna Week!*** FACA has reached out to local *Sauna* businesses, and we are working on arranging *Sauna* events for our members during this week. Stay tuned for more information!

MARCH

- **March 9 (Saturday)—Ismo Watch Your Language Tour—**Pantages Theater Minneapolis.
- **March 15 (Friday)—2nd Annual St. Urho's Day Celebration—**Pea Soup Cookoff—Get your recipes ready!

WATCH FOR MORE INFORMATION ON:

Finnish Story Hour

- How has your Finnish heritage influenced you—from experiences of your ancestors to *Sauna* and *SISU*? Everyone has a story to tell. We would love to hear yours. Join us for coffee, food and stories.
- Details to follow!

Sauna Events

Spring 2024—Merger Update

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

First FACA Cookie Bake

By Louise Morgan

On December 13, 14 FACA members gathered at the Danish American Center to participate in a Finnish Prune Tart baking class, taught by Elizabeth Brauer. Elizabeth learned how to make these tarts while she was in Finland. The recipe that she used, and shared with all of us, was one that she used over there. She did have to tweak it a bit to convert it into US baking measurements.

Elizabeth provided all of us with some dough that she made the day before. I was really surprised at how easily it rolled out. We used cutters that she had. That made it easy as well. It was fun cutting out the dough, adding the filling and making the star shape. I was nervous about it, but it was really easy! We tried different variations. The one that I liked best was where you put the filling on top of the star. But I also liked the one where you fold the edges on top. We also made some angel shapes.

The cookies took only 5–7 minutes to bake. I was surprised at how quickly they baked. The oven was very hot. We all got cookies to take home. I would say that most got at least a dozen to take home. My dozen was a bit light by the time I got home, since I needed to sample a few before I made it home. And...there were not any left the next day. Kevin really enjoyed them as well.



Brought back childhood memories. My mother would make them every Christmas. She had the stars, *biscuitia* (*pulla*) and a dark rye bread with fruit. Well, I now can check off the stars and keep that tradition going.

If you want to make your own, and you want to purchase a cutter, Irma's Finland House in Virginia has them in stock.

We hope to offer more cooking/baking classes. If you have any suggestions, please let me know.



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

Hello from Salolampi

Hello from Salolampi Dean Jen Jenna Pulju Porter

Dear FACA Members,

As we turn our calendars over to a new year and start to think about the future, I hope you'll consider including Salolampi in your family plans. Our summer team is coming together, and we are pulling our ideas together for new and engaging activities, games and projects. Great counselors, credit teachers, and leadership staff who are passionate about teaching Finnish, creating our Finnish atmosphere, and getting to know our youth and adult villagers will be awaiting your arrival this summer.

Are you wondering how this summer will be the same or different from previous years? You can count on some of our Salolampi favorites like swimming and *sauna*, crafting and baking, sports and evening programs. We will also be putting on a stage production in 2024 on our *tanssilava*, so get ready for the spotlight! The production



will also include set construction, filming, and costume design, so even if you're not ready to take the stage as an actor, there will be fun ways to be involved.

This summer Salolampi will host an Adult Week in May, a Family Week and Adventure Day Camp in June, and Youth Sessions (one-, two-, four-week sessions, plus the high school credit program) in June and July. Find more information on the Concordia Language Villages website: www.concordialanguagevillages.org.

You can see the latest by following our Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/Salolampi/>) and Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/salolampi/>) pages which will start to include staff spotlights and other updates as we get closer to summer.

Nähdään kesällä!

Jen Jenna Pulju Porter, Salolampi Summer Dean