



Uutiset

Newsletter of Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.

May–June/*Toukokuu–Kesäkuu* 2024

End-of-Year Celebration—Merger Town Hall

May 17, 6:30 P.M., Danish American Center

Come to our end-of-the-year Potluck—a great chance to see everyone before summer descends upon us. We have a full evening planned—fun for everyone!

At our year-end celebration, we will:

- ✿ Enjoy a potluck dinner together. Yay—good food!
 - * FACA members, please bring a dish to share if you can, based on your last name: A–D—dessert; E–J—salad; K–O—hotdish or side dish; P–Z—bread.
 - If you have a great hot dish to share please do so, even if you are not in the right alphabet group!

Sign up on this link and indicate what item you are bringing:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Wf5MzcaHm_6XM0sfGKh1RgizLkWzxa1X8jbyFW0wZE/edit?usp=sharing

- ✿ Learn why Finland is the happiest country in the world—seven years running!
- ✿ Share ideas for shaping the identity and programming of the merged organization:
 - * Brainstorm about a new name;
 - * Share ideas and views about programming
 - * Provide feedback—Is there anything you want to keep or change?

Hope to see you there!



Finn Fun Day 2024—Save the Date!

By Katja Tiainen Zarns

What started as a collaboration between FACA—Finnish American Cultural Activities—and the Finnish School of Minnesota, also known as Suomi-koulu, has grown into a multigenerational, multiorganizational, family-friendly event with activities, games, music, dancing and food.

Last year, our event moved to the Danish American Center's beautiful grounds. With almost 150 people in attendance and a dozen Finnish and Finnish American groups, organizations, and businesses as activity and game hosts, Finn Fun Day has solidified itself as an annual community event.

Make sure to save the date, September 14, for the fourth annual Finn Fun Day!

Nähdään!

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President's/Interim Editor's Message

By Louise Morgan

It is a rainy Sunday. Wonderful day to sit down at the computer and write my column. This will be the end of my 4th year as president, and it has been an exciting year. I am really excited about the merger with FFTC/FinnSource. So many of you have said to me, "What took you so long?!" We on the board are very thankful for everyone's support. We, the board, had initially decided to have only four issues of the *Uutiset* a year, but due to information about the merger, we decided to have this extra issue. I hope you enjoy it.

I hope you all come to the Town Hall Potluck in May. Tomorrow, I will be meeting with other members of the board to plan this event. We promise you will enjoy yourselves, and we really want you all to come because we want your input on how we go forward. We want to make this new Finnish community a strong, vibrant community, one that meets everyone's needs. I realize that is a high bar, but we are of Finnish heritage, and we need to keep this going strong here in the Twin Cities!

Lastly, I participated in my first Finlandia Foundation Chapter meeting. I really was impressed. They started off telling us all that is going to be happening in the next few months. I have asked for the minutes, and I am going to start sending them to you. But if you are interested and want to look at what is happening, please go to finlandiafoundation.org, and look around. If you click on programs, and select cultural, you can find so many great virtual programs. I really am interested in Finnposium, a variety of online chats, webinars, musical and other presentations related to Finland and Finnish culture in the United States.

We hope to have a table at FinnFest! If you are going to be at FinnFest, please think about volunteering—for even just one or two hours. Let's spread the word about the Twin Cities Finnish Community!

Hope to see you at the May Town Hall!



FACA—FFTC Merger Plan

Approved unanimously by FACA Members

March 15, 2024

How did the MERGER INITIATIVE come about?

- **In early 2022 Finnish American Cultural Activities (FACA, founded in 1983) and Finlandia Foundation Twin Cities (FFTC, founded in 1993)** came together to explore working together to combine forces and build a bigger team to fulfill their similar missions. (FFTC houses FinnSource, the “virtual Finnish community meeting place of MN,” established in the 2017 anniversary year of Finnish Independence).
- **Over the past two years, FACA and FFTC leaders have collaborated in organizing events for the Finnish community** in the Twin Cities, such as Finn Fun Day, *Kauneimmat Joululaulut* (Most Beautiful Christmas Carols). With the success of these and other activities, and with new energy moving forward, the FACA and FFTC boards met jointly in August 2023 to further expand the collaboration. (Merged bullets)
- **In October 2023, the members of the respective organizations were informed of the intent to explore merging the two organizations** with the merged organization moving forward as the local affiliate of Finland Foundation National (FFN). The merger proposal for member approval was promised for early 2024.
- **The FACA and FFTC boards believe that the strength of FACA in preserving Finnish culture and providing new program opportunities,** especially for families and younger generations, combines well with FFTC’s networking with programs in the Twin Cities and Finland, and actively representing the Twin Cities in Finlandia Foundation National. Together we can expand and strengthen interest in Finland and Finnish culture in the Twin Cities community, the largest urban population of Finns and Finnish Americans in the U.S. We are better and stronger together!

What are the BENEFITS of a merger?

- **Assure the person-power** to keep the Finnish heritage and Finland-MN connections strong
- **Access to Finlandia Foundation National resources**—programs, newsletters, links to Finland, etc.

- **Opportunity to expand membership** by inviting FFTC and FinnSource subscribers
- **Combine and streamline organization** systems and operating costs

What will CONTINUE in the transition phase 2024–2025?

- **Remain an independent, self-governing entity** serving the local community
- **FACA bylaws will serve as a foundation** to guide and grow the operations
- **Current FACA/FFTC board members will serve actively** as a transition board:
Louise Morgan, Betsey Norgard, Kendra Kauppi, Nate Hoch, Katja Zarns, Kathy Jorgensen, Mirja Hanson, John Morgan
- **Membership dues will remain** the same
- **The *Uutiset* will continue** as a key means of member interchange
- **The *FinnSource* community calendar** will continue to post known inter-organizational events

What are NEXT STEPS in developing the new organization?

- **Update** and form the needed governance structures, board operations and FFN affiliation
- **Identify** the merged organization name with member input
- **Develop** and enhance member and community communications—website, social media, newsletters, etc.
- **Expand** and enhance member benefits and opportunities
- **Innovate** and expand programming for all ages and audiences with member input

FACA members attending the St.Urho’s Day Event March 15, 2024 were asked to approve the proposed merger plan: Merge the Finnish American Cultural Activities (FACA) and Finlandia Foundation Twin Cities (FFTC) as the local affiliate of the Finlandia Foundation National (FFN) according to the proposed plan.



St. Urho's Day Frolics



*Janna Tuttila and
John Jorgensen*



Laulu Aika at St. Urho's 2024 Celebration



St. Urho Missed One!!



So Many Happy Dancers!



Members Dancing at the St. Urho's Day Party



Yummy Food!



All Ages Are Having Fun!

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.]

Migration Institute of Finland and Immigration History Research Center Collaboration

On April 16 the Immigration History Research Center and the Immigration History Research Center Archives welcomed the Migration Institute of Finland as they begin a collaborative project entitled *Migrant Experiences, Past and Present: A New Finland-U.S. Research and Archival Partnership*.

The Migration Institute of Finland conducts basic research related to migration flows and their consequences, in addition to which they also take part in research and development projects and do commissioned studies. Research activities are carried out with the help of both basic and project funding. Their research results are also shared in the institute's publications and at events.

Research conducted by the Migration Institute of Finland focuses on migration flows and their impacts. They study both present and past migration flows.

The special task of the Migration Institute of Finland is to highlight Finnish migration flows, and data related to Finns living abroad and their offspring.

Migration flows are divided into international migration

flows, siirtolaisuusinstituutti.fi/en/research/emigration and siirtolaisuusinstituutti.fi/en/research/immigration, and domestic migration flows, i.e. siirtolaisuusinstituutti.fi/en/research/internal-migration. These different movements of population are linked to each other in many ways and, in their view, one cannot be understood without understanding the others.

Their research subjects include migration due to work, studies and family reasons and exile. Within these subjects, they can study many phenomena, such as migration flow management, settling down, formation of ethnic communities, and experiences of the offspring and different generations.

If you would like to know more about the Migration Institute of Finland, go to Siirtolaisuusinstituutti.fi.



The Secret Behind the World's Happiest Country: Sweating in the Sauna Helps

The Economist

For the seventh year running Finland has just been declared the world's happiest country by the World Happiness Report, launched in 2012 to promote the sustainable development goals of the United Nations (un). Those surveyed were asked to evaluate their lives on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 the highest. While Scandinavian countries as usual occupied the top spots, both ["https://www.economist.com/united-states/2024/04/04/are-american-progressives-making-themselves-sad"](https://www.economist.com/united-states/2024/04/04/are-american-progressives-making-themselves-sad) America and Germany fell out of the top 20. War- and revolution-racked Afghanistan held the bottom spot in the ranking of 143 countries, with a score of only 1.7 compared with Finland's 7.7 and Denmark's 7.6.

Gender equality, trust in national institutions and fellow citizens, and low corruption are all important factors in Finns' happiness, says Kai Sauer, Finland's ambassador to Germany. In 1906 Finland became the first country in the world to give women both the full right to vote and to run in parliamentary elections. When last year a reporter for *Reader's Digest*, a magazine, pretended to lose 12 wallets

with cash and contact details in 16 cities around the world to test citizens' honesty, Helsinki, the Finnish capital, turned out to be the most honest of the lot; 11 of the 12 wallets were returned. And according to the latest annual index by Transparency International, a Berlin-based organization, Finland is the second-least-corrupt country in the world—after Denmark.

Excellent free education, universal health care and family-friendly policies play an important role in making Finns content with their lives. Finland's education system ranks eighth among the world's best educated countries according to the UN World Population Review. Health services are not free, but they are affordable.

Yet some argue that the real reason is that the Finns sweat out their negative thoughts. Finland has roughly 3.5m saunas, more than one per two Finns. All government buildings have saunas. An exhibition in Berlin called *Die Sauna. Echt heiss. Echt finnisch.* sponsored by the Finnish embassy, is celebrating sauna culture with photos, videos and, you guessed it, a sauna. It's a huge hit. All its remaining sessions are booked out.

Emma Mulhern and the Voice (In Finland!)

This year I had the opportunity to watch and support my Dutch friend, Yannick Schuurmans, as he competed in The Voice of Finland. TVOF is a singing competition where famous Finnish artists select a team of singers and coach them to win the competition.

The journey began last October when Yannick took part in the blind auditions in Porvoo. I was one of his supporters, so I was there watching as he was selected to move on to the next round of the competition. The next two rounds were recorded in Vantaa in January. Since the shows were pre-recorded, the audience was told when we should clap and we recorded certain clips (such as promos for commercials) multiple times.

Yannick's amazing performances (which can be found on YouTube) pushed him through to the live shows, which were held in Turku in April. Many of his friends came out to see it and his family even flew all the way from the Netherlands to take part. There were so many amazing singers in the competition and unfortunately Yannick did not make it to the semi-finals. Despite that, he was grateful for the experiences he had.



It was such an interesting journey to witness as a supporter, especially watching the international singers in the competition. There were several singers from abroad that now live in Finland and one even made it to the final round! The judges and staff were very supportive and spoke English to those that did not have fluent Finnish skills. During the live show, Yannick chose to receive his feedback in Finnish so that the audience at home could understand what the judges were saying. As Finland becomes more and more international, it was great to see the ways that Finns and international people can meet in the middle. Overall it was a wonderful experience and I'm so glad that I was able to take part!

The clips of all performances can all be found on The Voice of Finland YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/@thevoiceoffinland>

Valerie Myntti My Family's Immigration Story

Contributed by Valerie Myntti

From Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability

This is just part of the story that Valerie Myntti shared with us, April 19, at the Danish American Center. I hope you enjoy this excerpt. (Louise)

The early twentieth century Finns came to Minnesota because work was plentiful, the landscape familiar, and many Finns were already here. They found work as domestic maids—miners—in the lumber mills—and fisheries. They left Finland with only the shirts on their backs to escape grinding poverty and political instability with the hopes of a brighter future—much like the immigrants today who are seeking refuge in the United States.

My grandmother, Laura Jarvinen, found work as a domestic maid with a kind and generous family in Chisholm. My paternal great-grandparents, Isaak and Anna Liisa Myntti, settled on a farm in Pike Sandy and are buried there at Hope Lutheran Cemetery. My grandfather's younger brother ran the Pike Sandy Co-op until his death in the 1950s. My grandfather, Charles Myntti, first worked in lumber mills in Winton and then in the Ely mines. My grandfather was from Vähäkylä in western Finland. There is a Myntti Farm that still exists there today, in continual operation since 1550. My grandmother was born in Karkkila. While they had suffered in Finland, they maintained their idealism. They were committed to creating their own unique version of utopia here in America, the land of democracy and possibility.

My grandparents, along with other Finns, embraced a uniquely Finnish worldview and a philosophy formulated in the old country.

It was a blend of ideas taken from:

- The progressive ideology;
- From The co-operative ideology—with its concept of the “common good” and “mutual aid;”
- From socialist values, which to them meant working toward a morally-conscious economy where the social welfare of ALL surpasses the value of private individual profits—an economy that emphasizes equality, justice and economic security for all;
- And, of course, from the ideas generated by Labor Unions.

According to the Minnesota Historical Society, “From the beginning—many Finns were active in progressive politics spearheading the labor movement on the Iron Range, and along with other Nordic immigrants—the Finns played a dominant role in Minnesota's protest politics.”

May–September, 2024 Calendar

- **May 17 (Friday), 6:30 p.m. Town Hall/Potluck/End of Year Celebration.** Danish American Center, 3030 W. River Pkwy., Minneapolis, MN 55406.
- **September 14 (Saturday), Finn Fun Day.** Danish American Center. (See poster in newsletter.)

Outside the Twin Cities: Submitted by Sisu Heritage, Inc., Embarrass

- **May 19 (Sunday) 2 p.m. Concert by Shannon Gunderson at the historic Apostolic Lutheran Church in Embarrass.** The church was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in August 2023.
- **June 8 (Saturday), 9 a.m.–4 p.m. National Sauna Day at the Nelimark Homestead grounds.** Mobile saunas on display. Live music by Bill and Kate Isles.
- **September 8 (Sunday), 4–6:30 p.m. Community Night Out at the Seitaniemi homestead.** Chili and pie. Live music by Bill Maxwell and the opportunity to walk through the Seitaniemi house barn.
- **The Nelimark Museum will be open** from the first weekend of June through the end of September. Thursday–Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Leena-Kaisa Mikkola Appointed As the Next Ambassador of Finland to the US *Finland in the US Newsletter*

Ms. Mikkola is currently serving as the Finnish Ambassador to China. Previously, she has served as the Finnish Ambassador to Israel and worked with African, Middle Eastern and EU affairs. Her posting in the US will begin on September 1, 2024.

“I am truly honored to represent my country in the United States. I look forward to further enhancing our Finnish-US relations as reliable allies and trade partners,” says Ambassador Mikkola.

In Memoriam—Roger R. Luoma

Roger Raymond Luoma, age 84, of Eden Prairie, Minnesota, passed away on March 28, 2024. A memorial service honoring Roger’s life took place on April 11 at Christ Presbyterian Church in Edina. A private burial was held for family at the Eden Prairie Cemetery.

Roger was born in Virginia, Minnesota, to Reino and Ina Luoma on September 5, 1939. He graduated from Virginia High School in 1958 and received his bachelor's degree in history from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. He served in the U.S. Army from 1963 to 1965.

Roger married Janis Mathiasen on May 25, 1968, and they made their home in Eden Prairie. His career was spent as an editor for the *Star Tribune*, where he spent 38 years, retiring in 2004. In retirement, Roger spent many winters in Arizona. He enjoyed tending to his garden, traveling, and spending time with family and friends. Roger spent time researching his genealogy and family history and enjoyed participating in the Finnish Genealogy Group of Minnesota.

Roger was preceded in death by his parents, Reino and Ina Luoma, two sisters, Jeanne Luoma Swope and Mary Betty Luoma, and sister-in-law Karleen Luoma. He is survived by his wife, Janis, his children, Beth Luoma, Katherine (Dwight) Evers, and Laura (Matthew) Johnson, and other family and special friends. Memorials can be made to the American Heart Association.

Conversational Finnish Class
Summer break until September 10
Participation via FACA Zoom Meeting
For more information, please call
Urho Rahkola at 651-429-3319



We are planning on staffing a booth at Finn Fest this year. If you are going to attend Finn Fest, please consider donating 1–2 hours of your time, working at the booth. A great way to meet other Finns! Contact Louise at louise.morgan21@gmail.com.



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

Marlene Moreno's Winning Pea Soup Recipe

Soothing Split Pea Soup (Ina Garten's Recipe)

Heat ¼ cup olive oil in a large pot or Dutch oven over medium-high. Add 2 cups chopped leeks (2 medium), white and green parts; 2 cups (1/2 inch) diced carrots (3 large); and 1 ½ cups chopped yellow onions (1 large). Cook 7–8 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until tender and starting to brown. Stir in 1 Tbsp minced garlic (3 cloves); cook 1 minute. Stir in 1 lb. dried green split peas to coat; cook 1 minute. Add 8 cups chicken stock (preferably homemade*) (Marlene used store-bought chicken stock), 2 cups water, 1 smoked ham hock (MM used 1 ham shank), 8 sprigs fresh thyme (tied with kitchen twine), 2 bay leaves, 2 tsp. kosher salt and 1 tsp. fresh-ground black pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer partially covered, 1 ¼ hours, stirring occasionally, or until peas are very tender and falling apart. (After 45 minutes, stir more frequently, scraping bottom of the pot to be sure soup doesn't burn.)

Discard thyme, bay leaves and ham hock (MM took meat off shank and put it into the soup. Add more ham if desired). Transfer 2 cups soup to a food processor fitted with a steel blade; puree. Return puree to pot. (MM did not puree as soup thickened sufficiently). Stir in more water or stock if soup is too thick.

MM = Marlene Moreno

*Garten's Chicken Stock recipe at Parade.com/stock



Marlene Moreno (L) Wins the Pea Soup Cook-off (left) and the Sauna Bucket (right) from last year's winner, Kathy Jorgensen.

