



# Uutiset

*Newsletter of Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.*

## November/December *Marraskuu–Joulukuu* 2024

### Sara Pajunen and Holiday Treat Potluck!

**November 15, 6:30 PM**

**Danish American Center**

Start the holiday season with amazing music and holiday treats! Bring your favorite holiday treat to share. Prune Tarts? Kringle? What is your favorite? Hopefully we will have enough so you will go home with a few as well!

Sara Pajunen is a violinist, sound artist and composer who has received music degrees in both the United States and Finland and holds a Master of Music in Contemporary Improvisation from New England Conservatory (Boston). Centering projects on themes of culture, immigration, home and progress, she has released six folk-inspired albums connected to her Finnish ancestry—including the most recent ‘Aallotar’ recording (with Finnish accordionist Teija Niku) on German label *Nordic Notes*. In 2018, Pajunen launched *Mine Songs*, a long-term project that uses field recordings, archival material, improvisation and image to explore the altered landscape of Minnesota’s Mesabi Iron Range, her childhood and ancestral home. She was the 2015–16 Finlandia Foundation Performer of the Year, has received funding from Jerome Foundation, the Minnesota State Arts Board, Koneen Säätiö, the Arts Council of Finland, and American Scandinavian Foundation, amongst others.



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### Membership Dues Continue As We Merge

*By Kathy Jorgensen*

As we continue the transition merging FACA and FFTC into our new organization, FAA, we want FACA members to know that the membership policy continues unchanged: annual dues remain at \$25 per membership. One thing changing is that your membership fee when it is due should be sent to the Treasurer: **Kathy Jorgensen, 9408 Erin Court, Woodbury, MN 55129**. We will be discontinuing the use of the P.O. box. We hope this helps resolve some of the hiccups we’ve experienced with lost/missing checks. We also will be looking into online payment options as we move forward remodeling the website for the merged organization. If you have any questions about dues payment, please contact me at [kathymjorgensen@yahoo.com](mailto:kathymjorgensen@yahoo.com).

## Proposed FAA 2024–2025 Board of Directors

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Photography courtesy of

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## President's/Interim Editor's Message

*By Louise Morgan*

Hey there **Finnish American Association** Members! Yes, that is right! By now, you should have received our announcement on the new name for our merged organization. I want to say *Kiitos Paljon* to those who were able to take part in the process. Those of us on the board really appreciated the input that we received. I am now excited about the next steps. We still have lots of work to do, but settling on the name was our first big hurdle.

We have a lot going on this fall and I hope you can attend as many events as possible. On November 15, Sara Pajunen will be helping us kick off the holiday season, and we hope you can come and enjoy the music. This year we are going to start with a new holiday tradition. We are asking all of you to bring a treat to share. We thought it would be fun if people brought a favorite holiday treat. But don't worry if you cannot bring a treat. Still come and enjoy the music. On November 16, we will learn how to make Finnish Stars with Sarah Stengle, and we are in discussions on offering a baking class on Finnish rye bread! And I haven't mentioned *Kauneimmat Joululaulut*, our annual Finnish Christmas sing-along event on December 7.

We are excited about our new organization. We are passionate about keeping our Finnish heritage alive in Minnesota. I talked to many of you at Finn Fun Day, and I was so encouraged that many of you have the same passion. But to keep our organization strong, and to grow, we need your help. If you have an idea for something that you would like us to do in the future, and you would like to help plan it, please let us know. We are always looking for new ideas. And we are looking for help in making the events happen. Minnesota has the largest Finnish population outside of Finland! Let's bring the Finnish community together and keep this going for generations to come.

Welcome to all to our newly merged organization, Finnish American Association!  
*Tervetuloa!*

## New Name Announcement—FACA/FFTC

**Finnish American Association—Twin Cities Affiliate  
of Finlandia Foundation National**

FACA and FFTC! We are excited to proudly announce the name of our newly merged organization. We want to thank all of you who participated in the naming process. As we move forward, we will be known as **Finnish American Association—Twin Cities Affiliate of Finlandia Foundation National**.

Our two organizations are committed to the FAA mission:

*We seek to elevate the visibility of contemporary Finland and celebrate our Finnish culture, heritage and life in Minnesota.*

More details will be provided as we build the new organization.

Louise Morgan, FACA, President; mail to [louise.morgan21@gmail.com](mailto:louise.morgan21@gmail.com)

Betsey Norgard, FFTC, President; mail to [bjnorgard@gmail.com](mailto:bjnorgard@gmail.com)



*Northern Lights  
at the Cabin*

## Make a Finnish Paper Star

Come join us with Sarah Stengle and learn how to make a Finnish Paper Star in time for the holidays.

**Cost: \$10** (covers material and rental)  
**November 16, 10–12 noon**, Christ Church Lutheran,  
3244 34th Avenue South, Minneapolis

Class size limited to 25. Sign up by emailing louise.  
morgan21@gmail.com by November 12.

### Finnish Paper Stars:

Finnish paper stars are easily made out of strips of paper. These stars look great on a tree, a front door, or hanging in a window. They are quick to make and brighten up a space during the darkest season of winter. Once you know how to make them, it is easy to make more at home—as no special equipment is required.

Traditionally they are made out of white paper, but both red and white paper will also be provided.

Everyone is welcome. Bring a friend. Children under the age of ten should be accompanied by a parent or guardian.



## Nordic Music Festival—Victoria, Minn.

*By Louise Morgan*

The 15th annual Nordic Music Festival, a festival of music, dance, culture, food, and traditions from Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Finland and Denmark took place on a sunny Saturday in Victoria. I had never been to the festival before. I want to thank Ralph Tuttila for inviting FACA to be a participant this year. I guess this is the first year that Finland has been represented with a table. I had a great time talking to people about Finland and FACA.

Laulu Aika and the Kisarit dancers performed several times throughout the day. From my position I was able to enjoy the music from all of the Nordic countries. At the end of the day, Ralph asked me to be on the Finnish team for the Lutefisk Toss. We tried our best, but we came in second. I am afraid that I wasn't able to get that slimy disgusting lutefisk in the hole. Thankfully we had gloves! They recruited children to bring the disintegrating lutefisk back to us, and the children did not wear gloves. Youth! Now that we have experienced the Nordic Music Festival, we will be back next year—as Finnish American Association. And...we will practice up on our Lutefisk Toss!



## Kauneimmat Joululaulut

Finnish Christmas Sing-Along Event

Join us for an enchanting event filled with the melodies of Finnish Christmas music, traditional singing and a holiday market, Tori. Embracing the warmth of Finnish culture and enjoy delightful tunes. Browse unique handmade "Finnish treasures," and find the perfect gifts for your loved ones. Don't miss this celebration of Finnish heritage and holiday spirit!

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 7, 2024**  
**SINGING: 2PM-3PM**  
**TORI: 3:15PM-5PM**

**ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**1660 COUNTY RD. B WEST**  
**ROSEVILLE, MN 55113**

**EVENT EMAIL: KJOULULAULUT@GMAIL.COM**



*Top: Louise Morgan throwing lutefisk  
Kisarit Dancers and Laulu aika*



## Finn Fun Day 2024—It's a Wrap!

By Katja Tiainen Zarms

Fall in Minnesota is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you are going to get. The quote *LIFE is like a box of chocolates* is, of course, attributed to the movie *Forrest Gump*. Yet, is it not quite true when considering fall in Minnesota as well?

On Saturday, September 14, we had our 4th annual Finn Fun Day—intermittent sunshine, drizzle, gusts and all! Finn Fun Day is a Twin Cities Finnish and Finnish American Collaboration initially started by FACA and Suomi-koulu, the Finnish Language school of Minnesota, to promote working together in a post-pandemic world.

This year, Finn Fun Day continued in the multigenerational and inter-organizational spirit. We danced with *Kisarit Finnish Folk Dancers* to the musical tunes of the beloved local band *Lauluaika!* Up-and-coming singer *Kyle Gray Young* performed acoustic covers of Finnish music.

We had multiple organizations engaging attendees in fun games and activities while also sharing information on how to get involved locally:

- **The UofM Finnish program**—Mölkky, a Finnish throwing game
- **Eclectic Egalitarian**—Fishing for Finnish Fish and Saappaanheito/Rainboot Toss
- **Suomi-Koulu**—Crafts, Trivia and Tattoos
- **Sisu Environmental School**—Leaf Rubbings craft
- **FACA/FFTC**—Ax Throwing and Ping Pong Toss
- **Salolampi Foundation/CLV**—Classic Villager Nimilappu/Nametag craft

FACA/FFTC provided the lunch while hosting an information table about Finland and our merger, future events around the Twin Cities, and sponsoring raffle baskets. Luumu—Finnish Living also sponsored a basket for the raffle while giving away *pulla* samples, Finland maps, and contributing sites to the Mapping Finnish America project.

Plans are already on the way for next year's Finn Fun Day! How does pasties for lunch sound? We look forward to more organizations joining in and hosting a day of Finnish and Finnish American fun!

A big *KIITOS* to all the organizers, hosts, volunteers, and attendees! A highlight was seeing the table hosts and attendees who kept playing games and having lunch in the rain. It was an extra fantastic day because of your Finnish *sisu*!

See you next year!

## From Toveritar to Today

By Betsey Norgard

**October 30, 2024, Immigration History Research Center Archives (IHRCA) presentation**

**Lotta Leiwo, Doctoral student in History and Cultural Heritage, University of Helsinki**

*"From 'Toveritar' to Today: Exploring Climate Narratives in Finnish-American History"*

Lotta Leiwo presented findings from her research studying how Minnesota's Finnish immigrant Socialist women and their children in the 1930s conceived of weather and nature elements they experienced. Through review of little more than a decade of issues of *"Toveritar,"* the Finnish Socialist women's magazine, Leiwo read how they wrote about nature and weather in the new world and the effects of these on their culture and work.

The presentation was organized by IHRCA, and co-sponsored by Finlandia Foundation Twin Cities/Finnish American Cultural Activities, and the University of Minnesota Finnish Studies Program.



**Finn Fun Day Boot Toss**



**Finn Fun Day Games and Conversation**

## Finnish Night with the Minnesota Orchestra— Join Us January 10

FACA/FFTC is honored to partner with the Minnesota Orchestra and bring you a special promotion as part of their **Minnesota Orchestra Nordic**

**Soundscapes Festival!** We're pleased to offer our members Choose Your Price tickets, starting at \$5 per ticket. There is a limited number of tickets available, so get your tickets now.

### Eligible concerts:

*Nordic Landscapes and Portraits*, Jan. 10-11, 2025

*Chamber Music in the Hall*, Jan. 12, 2025

*Nordic Tales and Folklore*, Jan. 16-18, 2025

Join us on January 10: This will be a special night dedicated to Finland and will showcase Finnish music including *Midnight Sun Variations* by Outi Tarkiainen and end with Sibelius' *Finlandia*. Prior to the concert, Finnish American organizations will provide Finnish art/craft demonstrations and showcase connections to Finland in the lobby of the concert hall.

To redeem your discounted tickets:

- Go to the Minnesota Orchestra Nordic Soundscapes Festival page.
- Find and choose the concert you'd like to attend (also listed above).
- Enter the promo code **NORDICPARTNER** first, before selecting your seats.
- Use the price filter to select "Choose Your Price" to filter the seat map to the eligible seats.
- Select your seats. Choose the price you want to pay per ticket (minimum \$5, suggested price \$25). Please note that all tickets in your order will reflect the same chosen price. Limit: 4 tickets per concert for "Choose Your Price."
- Free tickets are available for youth (ages 6–18) through the Hall Pass program. Select the Hall Pass ticket type.
- Add to cart and check out!

All seating subject to availability and may vary by performance; top price section excluded. Normal service charges apply. Available while supplies last and may not be combined with any other offer. Not valid on previous purchases. Tickets are non-refundable and non-exchangeable at discounted price.

We hope to see you at the concert!

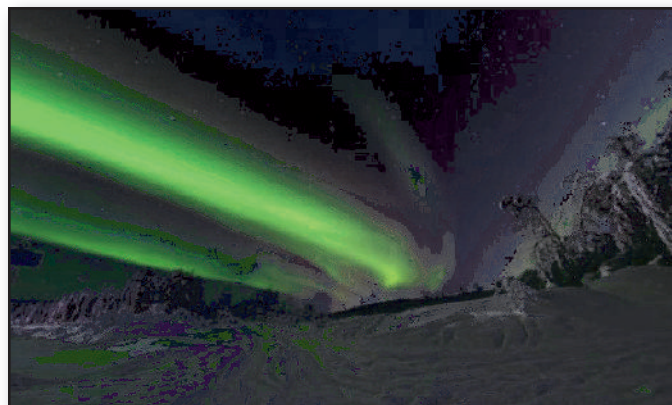


## Whistles, Cracks, Hisses: The Noises of the Northern Lights

By Kate Ravilious@katerav

Study finds some strong auroras are accompanied by noises from changes in the atmosphere.

Data gathered in Finland shows that under the right weather conditions, auroras can be accompanied by a noise.



*Photograph: Khalid Elfqi/EPA-EFE*

You may have seen the shimmering greens and pinks of the aurora borealis lighting up the night sky, but have you ever heard them? Rare reports of crackling and whooshing noises accompanying auroras have traditionally been dismissed by scientists as folklore, but data gathered in Finland has shown that under the right weather conditions, auroras can be accompanied by a noise.

The northern (and southern) lights are caused by solar particles colliding with gas molecules in Earth's upper atmosphere. They tend to be visible near the poles because the charged particles are steered towards the poles by Earth's magnetic field. But most aurora take place well out of earshot, about 62 miles (100km) above our heads.

In an attempt to lay the question to rest, scientists set up recording equipment in the Finnish village of Fiskars and listened to the night sky. Most of the time the auroras were silent, but to their surprise they found that about five percent of the strongest auroras were associated with whistles, cracks and hisses. The researchers found that the noises always coincided with a temperature inversion (cold air trapped under a lid of warm air) and appear to be caused by the release of static charge, linked to changes in atmospheric electricity caused by the aurora's disturbance to Earth's magnetic field.



## Heads Up—Sauna Week Is Coming— February 2025

By John Morgan

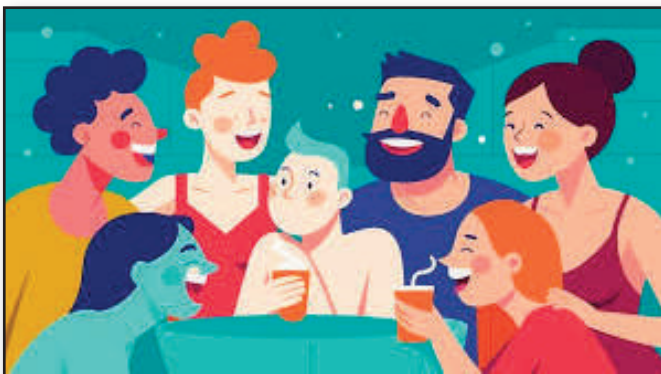
In Finland, the sauna is much more than a place to relax; it's a space for families, friends, and communities to gather. It has always served as a place of reflection, relaxation and conversation. This is true whether it be at your house or in a public sauna. During the February 2025 Sauna Week, we will bring this quintessential Finnish activity to life in the Twin Cities. We want to invite everyone to celebrate our shared heritage by coming together to participate in a sauna to deepen our ties as the Finnish American Association community.

We have been exploring the local sauna scene to find places where we can come together. These places range from the traditional Finnish sauna to more modern interpretations that capture the same communal spirit. We have met numerous people who work at these sauna venues, and they all do a fantastic job of providing an experience that leaves you refreshed and satisfied. All venues have amenities for changing, beverages with which to rehydrate, and areas to relax during or after the sauna. They even have banya hats available to allow for more comfortable experiences.

We want to come together for discussions and cultural exchanges to explore the role of sauna in Finnish history and daily life. Through the shared sauna experience we will all foster a deeper bond to help grow our Finnish community. This even offers both newcomers and long-time enthusiasts a deeper appreciation of the sauna's significance in our daily lives.

Whether you come to warm up, learn something new, or reconnect with your Finnish roots, Sauna Week promises to be a great celebration.

Join us as we embrace this unique part of our heritage and enjoy the deep connection that comes from the simple, shared experience of a sauna.



## Website Update!

By Katja Tiainen Zarns

Happy November to one and all! You may have noticed that our website has been taken down and replaced with the following note: ***“Under Construction. Thank you for being patient. New site and content arriving in the coming months.”***

FACA has used US Family as their host platform for many years. As technology elsewhere has improved and photo sizes, for example, have become more significant, US Family have invested less in their websites. This has led to them being unable to handle the sheer information on our website, which needs to be refreshed multiple times. We have tried to contact US Family repeatedly only to find out they have one person staffing the office, themselves unable to help us improve our platform. We found a new web platform, yet US Family could not release our domain [www.finnfaca.org](http://www.finnfaca.org), so we decided not to use the website anymore.

As we voted to join efforts with Finnsources/FFTC, becoming a new organization with a new name, we are excited to present you with a fresh website that will handle our needs and purpose in the future.

Technology, eh?

*Terveisin, Katja Tiainen Zarns*



***Marlene Moreno Ping Pong Ball Toss***

## Programs and Events of 2024–2025

### November

- **November 15 (Friday)—Sara Pajunen, Danish American Center, 3030 W. River Pkwy., Minneapolis MN, 6:30–8:30 p.m.** Trained as a violinist and employing locally-responsive media ranging from field recordings to drone imagery, Pajunen's varied artistic work is motivated by interactions between her ancestral roots, American cultural histories and connection to our environments through sound.
- **November 16 (Saturday) Finnish Paper Stars. Christ Church Luthera, 10 a.m.–noon.** If interested email [louise.morgan21@gmail.com](mailto:louise.morgan21@gmail.com) to sign up.
- **P.J.C. Lindfors Legal Studies Scholarship** U.S. law students studying in Finland and Finnish law students studying in the U.S. can apply for a scholarship of \$1,000–3,000. Applications are due February 1.

### December

- **December 7 (Saturday)—Kauneimmat Joululaulut,** St. Michael's Church, Roseville, MN, 2 p.m.; coffee 3:15–5 p.m. See poster for more information.

### 2024 Pop-Ups—Watch for announcements

- Knitting—Knit along—led by David Fillman
- Tell your story
- Finnish Paper Stars—Sarah Stengle
- Book Club—*The End of Drum-Time* by Hanna Pylväinen. Discussion with author via Zoom.

### 2025

- **January 17 – Zoom—Steve Leppälä and Arne Vainio Sauna! 6:30—watch for zoom link.**

### FAA 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 **FAA, Kathy Jorgensen, 9408 Erin Court, Woodbury, MN 55129.** (Check your email message for a membership expiration warning or your mailing label for an expiration date.)

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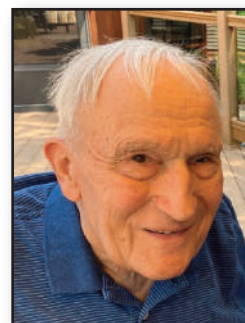
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[Note: choosing the email copy saves FAA both printing costs and postage.]

## In Memoriam

**Harlan Ray Stoechr**, age 95, of North Oaks, Minnesota, and formerly of Shoreview, died September 3, 2024, following complications from a Covid infection in November 2022. He was a long-time FACA member and one-time board member, and FACA secretary in 2011 and 2012.



Harlan was born at Ridgeway, Minnesota, on February 4, 1929, and was raised on farms in Winona and Olmsted counties. He served in the United States Marine Corps 1951–54 (Korea 52–54, Japan 53–54). In 1956 he married Marlene Mattila. He served assistant professor and agricultural bulletin editor, U of Minn.; director of publications and corporate advertising, Midland Cooperatives, Minneapolis; vice president, Federal Intermediate Credit Bank, St. Paul; senior vice president, Peterson Morris MacLachlan, Minneapolis; founder and CEO, M-Comm Ltd., St. Paul. In retirement he worked as a publishing consultant until age 88.

Harlan is survived by his wife Marlene Mattila Stoechr; daughters Valerie Stoechr (Carol Iwata) and Beth (John) Michaelson and other family members.

### Marlene Banttari

Marlene Joan (Salmela) Banttari, Age 87, passed away on October 15, 2024, in Plymouth, Minn., (formerly Roseville). She grew up in Sebeka, Minn. and was preceded in death by her husband, Ernest Banttari. More details not available. Thomson-Dougherty Funeral Home, 612 Smith Ave. S. Saint Paul, MN 55107.



**Conversational Finnish Class**  
**Tuesdays—2:00–3:30 p.m.**  
**Participation via Zoom Meeting**  
For more information, please call  
**Urho Rahkola at 651-429-3319**



**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](http://www.finnfaca.org)**

## Nordic Networking Event

### Nordic Networking Event

*By Elaine Kumpula*

On October 1, 2024 the Finnish-American Chamber of Commerce—Minnesota (FACC-MN) hosted a Nordic Networking Event for Young Professionals. The event was generously supported by Finlandia Foundation National and held at the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis. Other support was provided by Global Minnesota and Norway House and its BARN program. This event brought the Nordic business community together, allowing a select number of Finnish and other Nordic companies, and companies with Nordic ties, to tell the audience about their business and opportunities for early-career professionals and students interested in possible internships. The audience included members of the European Chambers of Commerce, Nordic Honorary Consuls, active members of the Nordic-American community, a representative from the Minnesota Trade Office, and many young professionals and college/university students seeking opportunities to meet with the participating companies.

The Nordic Networking Event was a “first-of-its-kind” for the FACC-MN. It effectively brought together the larger Nordic business community as well as early-career professionals and students from across the metro. Given the success of this initial Nordic Networking evening, consideration is being given to making it an annual event. Companies that participated this year included Uponor, Kerecis, Riley Hayes, Sauna 360, Axis Communications, General Mills, and Associated Bank.

