

NEWSLETTER OF THE FINNISH AMERICAN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, INC.

November-December/Marraskuu-Joulukuu 2009

“Finnish Educational System”

Pauliina Raittila

Our November guest, Pauliina Raittila, will give us a glimpse inside the Finnish educational system. She will introduce us to the education of students in the upper level of a Finnish comprehensive school. She will present a case study about a teacher evaluating texts written by students and also talk about the larger context of teaching and evaluating writing in Finnish schools.

Pauliina Raittila is a Fulbright Finnish Language and Culture Teaching Assistant during 2009–2010 in the Department of German, Scandinavian, and Dutch at the University of Minnesota. She studied Finnish literature and comparative religion for a BA in Humanities from University of Helsinki (September 2008). She is now working in Helsinki on a master's degree—her major area is Finnish language, and her minors are education (pedagogical studies for teachers) and Estonian language and culture (she has been an exchange student at University of Tartu, Estonia). She wants to become a teacher of Finnish language, for native speakers.



NOVEMBER FACCA PROGRAM

Finnish Educational System

Friday, November 20

7:30 p.m.

International Institute

1694 Como Ave., St. Paul

If you need transportation, call

Marianne Wargelin

at 612-374-2718

Pauliina is originally from Jyväskylä, a university town in Central Finland with about 120,000 inhabitants, where she went to school and spent her first eighteen years. She still considers Jyväskylä to be her hometown, and says, “I still drawl the vowels (a characteristic Central Finnish manner of speaking) when I tell people I come from *Jyvääskylä!*”

This year in Minnesota she is enjoying learning about teaching Finnish as a foreign language and taking courses to enrich her master's program. Her personal interests are literature and outdoor trekking.

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President's Message

By *Kaarina Kotkavuori*

Greetings!

I was pleased to see so much mingling among our members at the October program. I thank Dan Salin for bringing the Third Generation CD and providing us with music. It really set the mood for a Finnish program.



There are a lot of activities coming up in the next two months. I am very excited about our *Pikkujoulu* celebration on December 12. Once again it is being held at Christ Church Lutheran. If you did not receive an invitation, please give me a call. We have planned a special evening and are hoping to have an excellent turnout. It will be an evening with good food, the music of Diane Jarvi, Christmas carols, the award of the Sauna Bucket and a visit by Santa. Please do come and join the party.

Minna Rainio will be our guest speaker in January. I would suggest that you visit the Minna Rainio exhibit beforehand to make her talk even more interesting. Location information is on page 5.

The Finnish Culture Through Movies Group will be presenting their Sunday movie November 15. More information can be found on the web site listed on the calendar page.

The Nordic Film Festival runs from November 21-23, with Finnish films on Saturday and Sunday. This is the first ever for this event. FACA will have a banner on display during the film festival. I hope this is well attended and I see you there.

I will be attending the Nordic Thanksgiving breakfast on Tuesday, November 24, at 7:00 a.m. in Bloomington. Some of our members have already purchased tickets. If you would like to do so, please call me.

Marlene Banttari has once again put together a wonderful display at the American Swedish Museum in Minneapolis. This year the Finnish room will be filled with all types of beautiful *Toikka* glass birds. I am looking forward to seeing so many of the birds in one place. Please go have a look.

Finn Fest will be joining with Canada's Grand Festival next July. I want to remind everyone that in order to attend the festival we all need proper U.S. identification to cross the border. Don't delay, it's the right time to apply if you do not have the proper papers.

Coffee will be available at the beginning of our program. Come in from the cold and attend our November program.

I wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving and a joyous, peaceful Christmas.

Board Notes *By Stella Arola*



L-R Andreas Ostenso, Edith Boos, Jeanne Swope, Stella Arola, Jane Olson and Kaarina Kotkavuori

The board met at the home of Kaarina Kotkavuori on the evening of October 15th. Treasurer Andreas Ostenso gave the financial report and Stella Arola provided the minutes of the last board meeting. Both reports were approved.

Kaarina reported on the many Finnish activities in the Twin Cities during the next month and encouraged us to participate in any that we could. She also reported that the Christmas tree that is being donated by Finland will be erected on Peavey Plaza on December 5th.

Our *Pikkujoulu* celebration was discussed and some decisions such as dinner price, menu, invitations, etc. were made.

Our next board meeting will be at Kaarina Kotkavuori's home at 7:30 p.m. on November 17th at 7:30 p.m.

Conversational Finnish Class

Tuesdays, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

St. Anthony Library
Corner of Como and Carter Ave.
St. Paul

Everyone is welcome.

For more information, please call
Urho Rahkola at (651)-429-3319

Independence Day— Remembering What and Whom?

Sunday, December 6—Christ Church Lutheran—2 to 4 p.m.

December 6—Independence Day in Finland—is a much more peaceful and reflective day than the American Fourth of July. Who and what are being remembered on this day? Why are there traditionally two candles in the windows of people's homes? What's the most popular TV viewing of the day?

Bring your family to join with Finlandia Foundation-Twin Cities to celebrate the traditions of Finland's Independence Day **on Sunday, Dec. 6, from 2-4 p.m. at Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn.**

At 2:15 p.m., the event will begin with live greetings from Finland to hear the Independence Day celebration there, especially reporting on the President's Ball in Helsinki, which many Finns watched on TV.

A short, informal program will include learning about Independence Day and its commemoration in Finland. This will include a remembrance and recognition of Finnish war veterans connected to our local Minnesota Finnish community, as well as recognition of newly-designated Finnish citizens, resulting from the recently-enacted law.

If you have Finnish war veterans in your family to hold in remembrance, and if you are a new Finnish citizen, please contact Betsey Norgard at norgard@winternet.com or (651) 786-5988, by December 1 to be included.

The celebration will end with refreshments and a traditional candlelighting of blue and white candles, with music and the singing of *Maamme*, Finland's national anthem.

Watch for details at www.minnesotafinnish.org and on Facebook at the Minneapolis-Suomi Finland Connection. Contact Betsey Norgard with questions at norgard@winternet.com. No cost, but donations are welcomed. Candles will be available at the event.

Nordic Lights Film Festival

The Twin Cities Associates of the American Scandinavian Foundation is pleased to present the first annual Nordic Lights Film Festival—Twin Cities. Hosted at the Parkway Theater in Minneapolis November 20–22, 2009, the festival will include a variety of feature-length and short films from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway Sweden, and Greenland. FACA is one of the sponsors, so members are particularly encouraged to attend! Visit <http://nordicfilmfest.com/twincities/> for more details.

Celebrating a National Historic Landmark

By Betsey Norgard

At least twice during the event at Christ Church Lutheran in Minneapolis on September 27, the day was described as “worthy of an alleluia.” The gathering celebrated the designation of the 60-year-old church, designed by Finnish master architects Eliel and Eero Saarinen, as a National Historic Landmark. It is the only place of worship in the state of Minnesota to be listed among the “crown jewels of our national heritage” and is the first modernist structure in the country to gain the nation’s highest architectural distinction.

The church’s history began post-World War II when Pastor William A. Buege’s vision for his congregation’s new building was not one reflecting the current trends of materialism and technology, but one more suitable for a spiritual community. He went straight to the best of Scandinavian design at the time, Eliel Saarinen, who accepted the invitation. Christ Church Lutheran became the last architectural project Saarinen completed before his death in 1950. The building is said to have changed church architecture in America.

Speakers at the celebration included Thomas Fisher, dean of the University of Minnesota College of Design. He spoke of Saarinen’s mastery of form and discipline, marking how the church expresses humility with its plain brick, with a simple beauty expresses in the transcendent light and form.



While extending greetings from the State of Minnesota, Senator Amy Kloubuchar called Christ Church Lutheran’s honor “a testament to the Saarinen family.”

Speaking on behalf of the Saarinen family was Susan Saarinen, daughter of Eero and granddaughter of

Eliel, who is a landscape designer in Colorado. Less than a year ago, she visited this church for the first time.

Saarinen referred to her grandfather’s beliefs that “living in beautiful environments lifts our spirit, inspires us to stretch to higher aspirations, and makes us better people.”

She noted how important light is, both generally in Finland, and specifically in how masterfully Eliel Saarinen expressed it in this church. “This sanctuary is the most spiritual space I’ve ever been in,” she said. She noted the “silken light” that washes over the “curved, filmy, white wall” behind the cross and altar. These were the “techniques of a master whose intention was to focus our spirit on the task of being more loving, more spiritual, and more aware persons.”

She also credited the work of her father, Eero, in creating the needed functionality of the education wing while “taking nothing away from the spiritual experience of the sanctuary.”

Other speakers represented state and national historical and architectural commissions, as well as the city and Church. But it was Pastor Kristine Carlson who summed up the celebration as “a thrilling day for Christ Church Lutheran.”



Susan Saarinen is pictured with Rolf Anderson, who wrote Christ Church Lutheran’s application for landmark status, and Susan Roth, national register historian at the Minnesota Historical Society.

Upcoming FACA Speaker in Photography Exhibit

Visiting Professor Minna Rainio, who will be our January FACA speaker, is participating in a photography exhibit, *Here and Now*, at the Katherine E. Nash Gallery at the University of Minnesota. The exhibit continues through November 12. The Nash Gallery is located in the Regis Center for the Arts on the West Bank campus of the University.



Oiva Toikka Birds

The American Swedish Institute celebrates the 200th Anniversary of the separation of Finland and Sweden with a colorful display of Oiva Toikka glass blown birds in the Finnish Christmas exhibit. Birds from private collections and retail sources will decorate the second floor gallery along with a festive tree and holiday table setting. Enjoy the FACA sponsored exhibit along with the holiday displays from the four other Nordic countries. The display runs from Saturday, November 7–Sunday, January 10.

Get the FACA newsletter electronically!

Get FACA *Utiset* delivered via e-mail! It's fast, convenient and reduces printing and postage costs. E-mail tostenso@yahoo.com to convert your subscription.

Welcome New Members!

**Roger and Marilyn Harma,
New Hope
Patricia Helmbrecht
Roseville
Tervetuloa!**

Theatre Fiasko Dance in Brainerd



Tuulia Katajavuori (right) and Ronja Silvennoinen of Fiasko teach a Finnish polka.

Theatre Fiasko of Joensuu, Finland made their second appearance in Brainerd last month. After the performance of *The Rock Farm*, written by U.P. native Donna Salli the troupe gave interested folks dance lessons.

FACA Facelift

FACA is getting a face lift! Our new logo debuts on the Nordic Film Festival's website and on our website. It was designed by Mary Belanger, FACA editor and graphic design instructor at Dakota County Technical College. The *Utiset* will get a new look in 2010.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

FACA needs your ideas and your helping hand. If you can help with any of the committees or events, please return this form. Thanks!

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting Hospitality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Visitor Hospitality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising | <input type="checkbox"/> Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Laskiainen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship | <input type="checkbox"/> Pikkujoulu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Property | <input type="checkbox"/> Festival of Nations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Website | <input type="checkbox"/> Information Phone |

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Return to FACA, P.O. Box 580708, Minneapolis, MN 55458-0708 or bring to the next program.

October Program Revisited

By Jeanne Swope

At the October program, "Chasing the Past," the Finnish Genealogy Group of Minnesota presented an introduction to research, told some stories about ancestors found, and encouraged us to plunge into the process ourselves.

Jeanne Moore, current FGG president, moderated and presented a brief history of FGG. She provided a brief history of FGG. Before computers, doing genealogy was hard work. Genealogist, she said, know who is a third half-cousin twice removed, and find "their dead relatives are even more interesting than their living relatives." There are special challenges in researching Finnish ancestry; Finland was one of the last countries in Europe to require surnames (1920s). Our ancestors changed their names, moved much more often than we would expect, but did leave traces that we can uncover.

Cathy Reasoner talked about starting research.

It's important to use search engines, evaluate and confirm the information you find, and record your work. It's important to know **names**. Use Google and Yahoo, and enter names, names with dates, alternate spellings of names, and different date spans. The spelling and dates you think you know may not be exactly correct, even if you found the information on tombstones or Bible records. Begin with free sites first and write down URLs, what you found in them, and also which sites were not useful (you don't want to waste your time revisiting them). Paid sites such as Ancestry.com are useful, but before you join, check if your library has a subscription. "Keep an open mind," Cathy says, "and be flexible."

Joan Dwyer brought a handy list of rules:

1. Be patient.
2. Keep records. Use the available forms such as "family group sheets."
3. Always cite your sources.
4. Note the sites that weren't useful.
5. Use Family Tree or other forms you can find on the internet to record and share your information.
6. Record what you know and how you know it.
7. Do your U.S. research first!

Research in Finnish records is more difficult, where people changed their names and moved from area to

area. Church records were written in Swedish until 1885, and the very old records are in Latin. By tracing hints in the church records about relatives' relocations, she found a branch of her family in northern Norway.

Lynn Olman talked about writing your family history. Genealogy is a way to preserve history and traditions. She says to start by interviewing older family members to get their stories. Now many of us have become the "older family members," and we should writing down what we know: what you wore, ate, where you lived, who you knew, holidays you celebrated, family incidents. She talked about writing "When We Became Finns," about when her family moved to Ely from Illinois and discovered a rich world of Finnish kinship and cultural diversity with many other ethnic groups who shared food and customs. "It's more important to know about the people and what they did, than just to know names and dates."

FACA members had many questions after the program, and left full of new knowledge and excellent coffee and goodies.

Visitors are always welcome at any FGG meeting; you need not be a member to attend. You will find great resources and people in this group. Go to The Finnish Pages on the internet, www.minnesotafinnish.org/, and select "Finnish Genealogy Group of Minnesota" to find information about meetings. To be included in the e-mailing list, contact Joan Dwyer at dwyers@ties2.net.

Chewy Date Nut Bars (at the October FACA Program)

Recipe from Leona Kirkham

1 package (18 ¼ oz) yellow cake mix

¾ cup packed brown sugar

¾ cup butter or margarine, melted

2 eggs

2 cups chopped dates

2 cups chopped walnuts

In a mixing bowl, combine cake mix and brown sugar. Add butter and eggs; beat on medium speed for 2 minutes.

Combine dates and walnuts; stir into batter (the batter will be stiff). Spread into greased 13 X 9 x 2" baking pan. Bake at 350° for 35–45 minutes or until edges are golden brown.

Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Run a knife around sides of pan to loosen; cool completely before cutting. Yield: 3 dozen.

Pieniä Paloja

The November program was hosted by **Leona Kirkham, Rudy Roy and George Valo**. Kiitos.

- Reuters ranks Finland as the place to be. For those who value their freedom of expression as much as health, wealth, and prosperity, it has an index ranking of the best in the world. The index is based on a definition of prosperity that combines economic growth with the level of personal freedoms and democracy in a country as well as measures of happiness and quality of life.
- Fifty-two per cent of doctors who work in Finland are now women.
- Finland's food and drink industry is the nation's fourth largest industry, after the technology, forest, and chemical industries.
- The City of Helsinki is budgeting extra money for classes to assist children of immigrant backgrounds. These special classes are to help them catch up in the Finnish language.
- Even though the rising intonation is not part of the conventional Finnish language, more and more people have started using it at the end of a sentence or a part of a sentence: the rising intonation first gained popularity among trend-conscious girls in Southern Finland. Now the habit has gained ground among older people, and is found in men as well.
- The Japanese are importing many of the valuable matsutake mushrooms from Finland in recent years. This pine mushroom is a highly appreciated treat, but they must import 95 percent of their intake, thus providing great export potential for the Finns.

FACA Membership

A one-year membership provides you with eight issues of this newsletter plus other benefits for \$25. To subscribe or renew, complete this form and mail with your check to FACA, P.O. Box 580708, Minneapolis, MN 55458-0708. (Check mailing label for membership expiration date.)

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone _____
Email _____

More Calendar Items *(from page 8)*

- Dec. 4** Dance with Finn Hall at their "Northeast home" - 215 E. Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis (612) 379-3018 from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m., Kramarczuk's Deli and Sausage Company: Bring the children; this is a family-friendly place. Great food, beer and wine available, and of course dance space! \$3 cover charge.
- Dec. 5** The Cokato Finnish American Historical Society Pikkujoulu, Cokato, MN. More information: www.cokato.mn.us/cmhs/fahs.html
- Dec. 6** Finland Independence Day —Remembering What and Whom? 2:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m., Christ Church Lutheran (See article, page 3.)
- Dec. 6** Finland Independence Day Hockey Game Celebration 5:45 p.m., Wear *Suomi* hockey jersey, flags, colors etc. to get in for \$5. Bloomington Ice Garden, 3600 West 98th Street More information: (952) 888-4311, www.northernlightshockey.com
- Dec. 12** FACA Pikkujoulu celebration, Christ Church Lutheran. (See insert)
- Dec. 12** Finnish carols with Saana Ensemble, 12:31 - 1:30 p.m., American Swedish Institute 2600 Park Avenue S., Minneapolis. www.americanswedishinst.org
- Dec. 19** Finnish Christmas Carols, 3:00 p.m., St. Michael's Lutheran Church, Roseville.
- Dec. 20** Finnish Culture Through Movies group 6:00 p.m., Christmas Story http://www.snapperfilms.com/press/Christmas_Story_trailer_subtitled.mov
- Dec. 21** Longest Night Music Festival, New York Mills Regional Cultural Center, Community musicians will play music of the winter season. There will be a time for refreshments and conversation after the festival. Musicians who would like to be a part of this festival please contact the Center (218) 385-3339 for information about how to be a part of the concert. www.kulcher.org/
- Feb. 14** Traditional Laskiainen celebration held at the Como Park Ski Chalet from 2:00–5:00. In addition to the outdoor fun —sledding, cross country and downhill skiing, and some lumibandy (snow hockey), there will be pea soup and laskiaispulla in the chalet. Como Park Ski Center, 1431 N. Lexington Pkwy, Saint Paul. (651) 488-9673 Map: <http://tinyurl.com/2dbfq> More information: suomikoulu@minnesotafinnish.org

**Hauskaa joulua!
Onnellista uutta vuotta!**



Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc.
P.O. Box 580708
Minneapolis, MN 55458-0708

FACA

Finnish American Cultural Activities, Inc. is an organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the cross-cultural heritage of Americans with Finnish ancestry.

Information

(612) 374-2718

www.finnfaca.org

look to the Uutiset.

FACA CALENDAR

Nov. 7–Jan. 10 Oiva Toikka Birds at the American Swedish Institute on display. (See page 5.)

Nov. 12 Closing day of Rainio photography exhibit, Nash Gallery, University of Minnesota (See page 5.)

Nov. 14 Jonathan Rundman and others perform at The Beat Coffeehouse, Minneapolis.

www.thebeatcoffee.com

Nov. 15 Finnish Culture Through Movies group, 6:00 p.m., Etulinjan Edessä <http://www.etulinjanedessa.fi/>
Season tuition: \$25 / \$15 for students. Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave South, Minneapolis. More information: (651) 428-3155.

Nov. 17 FACA Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m., home of Kaarina Kotkavuori.

Nov. 20 FACA Program, Finish Educational System, 7:30 p.m., International Institute.

Nov. 20-22 Nordic Lights Film Festival (See page 3.)

Nov. 21 Jonathan Rundman, Vicory Muse House Concert Series For more info: www.victorymuse.com

Nov. 22 Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, Vänskä plays Mozart—MSO plays Vänskä —featuring Concerto for Clarinet & Orchestra in A major, K.622, by Wolfgang Mozart and The Bridge by Osmo Vänskä.

Central member and Music Director of the Minnesota Orchestra is the featured soloist in Mozart's beloved Clarinet Concerto in this concert of the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra under the baton of William Schrickel. The Bridge, a Vänskä composition created in response to the 2007 collapse of the I-35W bridge in Minneapolis, was commissioned and premiered by Schrickel and the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra in 2008. A free concert will be held at Central Lutheran Church, 333 S. 12th St., Minneapolis. (612) 870-4416 www.centralmpls.org

Nov. 28 The Finnish Genealogy Group of Minnesota, The program will be an Introduction to Salolampi, Finnish Language Village, presented by Gil Kinnunen, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Plymouth Apostolic Lutheran Church, 11015 Old County Road 15, Plymouth, MN. Changes in meeting times and or places will be posted on our web pages: www.minnesotafinnish.org Click on left menu, Finnish Genealogy Group. There will be no meeting in December.

More calendar items on page 7