

# FACCA



## NEWSLETTER OF THE FINNISH AMERICAN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, INC.

October/Lokakuu 2009

### “Chasing the Past” Finnish Genealogy Group Members

Our October program will feature the Finnish Genealogy Group of Minnesota, presenting information about researching family history. This panel will consist of experienced genealogical researchers “who do it for the love of the chase.”

To begin the evening, Jeane Moore, president of FGG, will moderate and present a brief history of the group and its activities. Following her presentation, Lynn Olmen will talk about writing family histories. Cathy Reasoner will discuss online databases of genealogical information, followed by Joan Dwyer who will take us through a research project from start to finish. The panel will be happy to answer your questions. The FGG is a (now independent) offshoot of FACA, and we have many interests in common.

In fact, if you want to learn more (and we hope you do), you may follow up this FACA program with FGG’s Research Day and Potluck Lunch, Saturday, October 24. At that time, FGG will setup 8–10 information stations each focusing on an area or type of resource. The expert FGG members and guests will show you how to find and work with the data they are demonstrating. After the potluck lunch, there will be time for a less formal exchanges of information—often one-on-one help for the newest researchers.



#### OCTOBER FACA PROGRAM

**Chasing the Past**  
**Friday, October 16**  
**7:30 p.m.**  
**International Institute**  
**1694 Como Ave., St. Paul**  
*If you need transportation, call*  
*Marianne Wargelin*  
*at 612-374-2718*

More information about the October 24 Research Day, will be available at the FACA program. FACA members and friends are invited to any FGG meeting; you need not be a member. To be included in the e-mailing list, contact Joan Dwyer at [dwyers@ties2.net](mailto:dwyers@ties2.net).

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## President's Message

*By Kaarina Kotkavuori*



Welcome to the autumn season. It was good to see so many people at the September program. I look forward to seeing you in October.

I attended the Saana Ensemble concert, which was held a few days before the women left to perform in California. The music and singing was wonderful. In addition to using their voices to sing with, the women vocalized awesome sounds. They also played a variety of instruments, including a drum. The concert was a truly joyous event.

The Saana Ensemble will perform at Mindekirken, the Norwegian Church in Minneapolis, on Sunday, October, 18, at the 11:00 a.m. service. The church is having a Nordic Festival and Finland is the focus county on that day. Everyone is welcome

The celebration with Finn Hall at their 2nd CD release party was a lot of fun. Members of the Kisarit Folk Dance group came to teach dance steps so everyone could join in the dancing to the wonderful performance of the band. Everyone had a great time.

On Thursday, October 15, Minna Rainio, Finnish Visiting Assoc. Professor will present an Artist Talk/Exhibit called "If you could see me Now." See the September newsletter for more information.

I thank Susan Harstad for presenting information about the Nordic Film Festival at our program in September. I have invited Susan to come back to tell us more about the event and how we can be involved with the festival.

Marlene Banttari will bring a poster of the *Salolampi* Finnish Language Village to our programs. We will have a basket placed near the poster to receive small donations to the scholarship fund. The money placed in the basket will be added to the donation we give from FACA.

The Faca board welcomes Kara Middleton. She is our Special Events coordinator and our representative at the Finlandia Foundation meetings. Kara will keep us up-to-date on upcoming Finnish events.

Along with coffee, we have an excellent program, good conversation, and tasty food. The evening will be more interesting if you come too.

*Tervetuloa!*

## Nordic Lights Film Festival— Twin Cities

*brought to you by the American Scandinavian  
Foundation, Twin Cities Associates*

A program of the American Scandinavian Foundation, the Nordic Lights Film Festival will attract filmgoers of all ages and reaffirms our community's connection to its Nordic heritage. It will also foster a new appreciation for contemporary Nordic culture. It is being hosted at the Parkway Theater in Minneapolis, November 20 – 22. The festival will include feature-length and short films representing each Nordic country. The festival will also provide filmgoers with the opportunity to mingle and interact, helping to expand our local Nordic community. Visit [www.nordicfilmfest.com/twincities](http://www.nordicfilmfest.com/twincities) for more information and the complete film schedule. *Note: The listing below lists only Finnish films.*

### Tentative Schedule:

#### Friday, November 20

9:00 p.m. Nordic Shorts, (1.5 hours) including: The Lake (*Järvi*), 8 min., Opportunist (*Menestyjä*), 8 min. and Harvest Time (*Elonkorjuu*), 15 min., among other films.

#### Saturday, November 21:

11am: The Mystery of the Wolf (*Suden arvoitus*), 90 min.

6:00 p.m: The Lake (*Järvi*), 8 min. and Black Ice (*Musta jää*), 110 min.

#### Sunday, November 22

8:00 p.m: Harvest Time (*Elonkorjuu*), 15 min. and Lights in the Dusk (*Laitakaupungin valo*), 93 min.

Tervetuloa!

### 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

## 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 Jane Olson on September 15. Treasurer Andreas Ostenso gave his financial report, and Secretary Stella Arola provided the minutes of the August 19 board meeting. Both reports were approved.

President Kaarina Kotkavuori reported on a number of activities in which we may participate during September and a Nordic Film Festival running from Friday, November 20, to Sunday, November 22. The Sunday evening Finnish movies at Christ Church Lutheran, resumed Sunday, September 20, at 6:00 p.m.

Vice President Jeanne Swope reported that the October program would be presented by the Finnish Genealogical group. She also reported that she has a fair number of other interesting programs lined up the coming year.

Our next board meeting is at Kaarina Kotkavuori's home at 7:30 p.m. on October 13.

### In Memory

Helen Kuure, a long-time member of FACA, passed away on July 5, 2009, at the age of 92 at the Minnesota Veterans Home in Minneapolis. She was born in Superior, Wisconsin, where she met her husband, Taito Kuure. Helen worked for many years at Goldfine's in Duluth before she and Taito moved to Minneapolis in 1965.

She enjoyed all things Finnish, especially working at the Finnish Cafe at the Festival of Nations. Even though she suffered from dementia her last nine years, listening to Finnish music always brought a smile to her face.

She was preceded in death by her husband Taito and is survived by her daughter Bernice Kuure, son-in-law Barry Kinsey, and three grandchildren, Matthew, David, and Anna. Memorials to the *Salolampi* Foundation.

## FACA Enjoys FinnFest 2009 Cruise to Alaska

By Jeanne Swope

At our September program, FACA members enjoyed a fine presentation about FinnFest 2009, coordinated by Gil Kinnunen, who gathered a group of FACA travelers to report on the event.

Gil Kinnunen called the program a “Tale of Two Cruises”— a week of luxury living on the Holland American Line’s *Westerdam*, starring the ship, the food, the staff, the entertainment, and the great Alaskan scenery; and FinnFest 2009



imbedded in the elegant ship, with 640 Finnish Americans eager to look, learn, and enjoy. Gil described activities as falling into three categories: learning, conversation, music. Activities included watching icebergs calve from the Mendenhall Glacier, learning to speak some Finnish with Dan Karvonen of the University of Minnesota and cooking some Finnish food with Bea Ojakangas, learning and discussing Alaskan Finnish history and Finnish American cultural topics (such as “church Finns” and “hall Finns”) and listening and dancing to terrific music—and this is only a brief summary.

Bette Ruskanen talked about the food onboard. There were dining choices from very casual to white linen and fine china in a formal dining room. Finnfest enjoyed gourmet food, flowers, a quartet in the lounge for a musical pause on the way to dining, many selections of gourmet food to choose from, and a lot of baked Alaska. Bette brought a photo album with many pictures; the most amusing were the food sculptures, new ones produced every day by talented *Westerdam* staff, including a hilarious watermelon horse.

Marianne Wargelin provided a historical perspective on FinnFest and the cruise. FinnFest has always wanted to go to Alaska, but distance and expense for participants, as well as the scattered nature of the local Finnish-American population (who would need to take on huge organizing tasks), prevented this from happening. FinnFest is always both a national and regional event. This year’s cruise brought the national event to the Alaskan Finns in Juneau, Sitka, and Ketchikan, and highlighted the fascinating, not-so-well-known history of Finns in Alaska, going back to the 1850s when Alaska was Russian. Activities such as *kahvi keskustelet* (coffee conversations) and Finnish language instruction worked particularly well on the ship, building friendships as well as fun. The FinnFest organization itself came out of the cruise rejuvenated, with exciting plans for the future.

Dennis Halme talked about driving with the accordions cross-country to the cruise, where he enjoyed the musical company of Finn Hall, Kip Peltoniemi, Ampron Prunni (Arto Järvelä, Risto Hotakainen and Timo Valo) from Kaustinen, Finland. A particularly fine event in Juneau took place in the Native Brotherhood Hall, with goodies and dancing.

Evelyn Eskeli had a real outdoor adventure: she and her sister chose one of the side trips offered and helicoptored from Juneau to a dogsled camp in the middle of the Mendenhall glacier, where about 100 fine Alaskan sled dogs greeted arrivals with yelping and howling from the roof of each dog’s individual doghouse. They were ready to hitch up and sled visitors around the camp on the glacier! Warned constantly about the cold, the visitors brought their own long johns, layers, parkas, and sunglasses, and were equipped with “glacier boots” at the heliport. However, it was a beautiful blue-skied 60-degree day. The team of 10 –12 dogs needed a rest halfway to cool down.

Urho Rahkola talked about the stop in Sitka, where all supplies that the isolated town requires are barged in on Tuesdays. Sitka was a political and cultural center at the time of the Seward purchase in 1867, and has among other attractions the Russian Bishop’s house, built by Finnish shipwrights. “It has kind of a Finnish look,” said Urho. The house had been restored to the 1853 period. Other attractions in Sitka included a Lutheran church established in 1840 and its nearby cemetery (FinnFesters enjoyed bean soup in the basement), and the beautiful Totem Pole Park.



Children start gardens in the yard of the Russian Bishop's House, Sitka, Alaska.



Inside the Bishop's House. Portrait is Czar Alexander II who sold Alaska to US. His statue stands in Senate Square, Helsinki.

Unfortunately, computer problems prevented showing FACA the photo show the presenters had prepared, and we ran out of time before we could hear all about Sitka and Ketchikan. We enjoyed our usual coffee, treats, and conversation, and had the opportunity to look over the "old-fashioned" photos that the group wisely had also brought with them.

*Photos by Urho Rahkola*



## Hjemkomstfest Photos

*Photos by Urho Rahkola*



Jane Olson worked at our display area.



Edith Boos and Urho Rahkola in chairs later sold in a silent auction.



Carole Backman, Evelyn Eskeli, and Pam Rahkola at the Rokki Cafe.

# The Rock Farm

by Donna Salli

“The Rock Farm”, is a short play written by poet and Central Lakes College English instructor Donna Salli. It is her love song to her Upper Peninsula Finnish-American roots. This short play will be performed twice at each showing, but in two distinct styles! The first version will be performed in English by a cast of local volunteers, and the second version is in Finnish, translated and performed by the Fiasko Theatre Company of Finland.

As a group of women wait for family to arrive through the perils of a Michigan snowstorm, they discuss heritage, love, family, and the magnetic attraction of home.

**Performance times are Friday, October 9, 8:00 p.m., and Saturday, October 10, at 2:00 p.m.,** Chalberg Theatre, Central Lakes College, Brainerd Campus. Tickets are now on sale at the CLC Theatre Box Office. **General admission: \$7.50** (218) 855-8199 or (800) 933-0346, ext. 8199 [www.clcmn.edu/theatre](http://www.clcmn.edu/theatre)

## 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 |
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| <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 \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

## October *Salolampi* Phonathon

*Salolampi* Foundation Board members and friends of *Salolampi* will be making hundreds of calls on October 27, 28, and 29 soliciting support for the scholarship program. This Phonathon is the major annual appeal by the *Salolampi* Foundation that provides approximately \$25,000 to help defray tuition costs and to make attendance at *Salolampi* more affordable to families. Currently, **every villager receives scholarship assistance** to reduce the real cost of attendance.

If you do not receive a call, send your contribution directly to the *Salolampi* Foundation, P. O. Box 14480, Minneapolis, MN 55414-0480. If you are a policyholder or investor with Thrivent Financial, you may request a match from Thrivent. You may donate online via our secure website [www.salolampi.org](http://www.salolampi.org) and click on Phonathon Donation. (Thrivent matches cannot be accepted online).

## Minnesota Orchestra Concert Calendar

**December 11, 12, and 19 A Scandinavian Christmas**, Enjoy a winter bouquet of Scandinavia’s most beautiful Christmas songs, plus lovely seasonal selections by Sibelius, Humperdinck and Grieg. Wear your Nordic sweater!



**February 11-12 *Esa Heikkilä***, Finnish conductor and former student of Osmo Vänskä, Esa Heikkilä returns to Orchestra Hall for two evenings of spectacular music.

**February 24-26 *Finnish Voices***: Vänskä Conducts Sibelius

**March 12 *Rajaton Finnish Vocal Ensemble*** This a *cappella* group has already thrilled Orchestra Hall audiences with its unique take on the music of rock group Queen and ‘70s pop group ABBA. Hear music of all kinds—from spirituals and original music to cover songs by Sting, Paul McCartney, and, of course, ABBA and Queen.

For more information on additional concerts, concert times, and ticket information: (612) 371-5656 or [minnesotaorchestra.org](http://minnesotaorchestra.org)

## Pieniä Paloja

- The September program was hosted by the board—Stella Arola, Edie Boos, Jeanne Swope, Andreas Ostenso, Kaarina Kotkavuori., Kara Middleton, and Jane Olson. Kiitos!
- Recently a small group of mourners carried a symbolic zinc coffin in a funeral procession through the town of Pori. The 156-year-old Pori Brewery, known for its amber product and its famous *Karhu* (“Bear”) beer, was closing its doors. The last beer consignment left the brewery in a tank truck, to be bottled and canned in Sinebrychoff’s Kerava brewery. Sinebrychoff, Finland’s largest brewery, is owned by the Danish Carlsberg Group.
- Finnish Professor Pekka Himanen is drawing up a report requested by the Finnish state on how to get art and culture in Finland to flourish in the next decade. To help Finland flourish as a nation, Himanen offers interaction, creativity, culture, and art. “If we look at past decades, what do we remember of them? Artists and thinkers, not the richest individuals.”
- The Finnish Parliamentary Committee for Health Promotion has called for a tax on sweets. In the past 20 years, an average Finn’s consumption of candy has doubled to 14 kilograms per year. The number of overweight youth, in turn, has tripled in 30 years.
- About 50 truffles have been found amidst the decomposing leaves in an old leaf compost in eastern Finnish city of Joensuu. The discovery is one of the largest finds of truffles ever made in Finland. Truffles, small lumpy fungi, are rarely found in Finland, and are difficult to locate under the ground without a trained dog or pig. Some species are the most expensive foodstuffs in the world.

### 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)

**Oct. 27–29** Annual Salolampi Scholarship Phonathon (See pg. 6.)

**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. 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. Vänskä, 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, [ww.centralmpls.org](http://www.centralmpls.org)

**Dec. 5** The Cokato Finnish American Historical Society *Pikkujoulu*, Cokato, MN. More information: [www.cokato.mn.us/cmhs/fahs.html](http://www.cokato.mn.us/cmhs/fahs.html)

**Dec. 6** Finland Independence Day Hockey Game Celebration, 5:45 p.m., A student athlete from Finland, Ilkka Mansikkimäki, plays on our junior hockey team and we want to help welcome him to Minnesota. He is part of the elite amateur hockey team that will play exhibition games in Vancouver during the Winter Olympics. Expect great Finnish music and games for the children as part of this celebration. Wear Suomi hockey jersey, flags, colors, etc., to get in for \$5. Bloomington Ice Garden, 3600 West 98th Street, (952) 888-4311, [www.northernlightshockey.com](http://www.northernlightshockey.com)

**Dec. 12** FACA *Pikkujoulu* celebration, Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave South, Minneapolis.

**Dec. 20** Finnish Culture Through Movies group 6:00 p.m., Christmas Story. [http://www.snapperfilms.com/press/Christmas\\_Story\\_trailer\\_subtitled.mov](http://www.snapperfilms.com/press/Christmas_Story_trailer_subtitled.mov)

**Feb. 14** Traditional *Laskiainen* celebration held at the Como Park Ski Chalet from 2:00–5:00 p.m. 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 Parkway, St. Paul, (651) 488-9673 Map: <http://tinyurl.com/2dbfqq> More information: [suomikoulu@minnesotafinnish.org](mailto:suomikoulu@minnesotafinnish.org)



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

## FACA CALENDAR

**Sept. 26–Oct 18** 22nd Annual Leiv Eriksson International Festival, Mindekirken Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church, Minneapolis. (612) 874-0716.  
**Oct. 10** The Cokato Finnish American Historical Society Fall Festival. 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Temperance Corner at the corners of County Roads 3 and 100, Cokato, MN. [www.cokato.mn.us/cmhs/fahs.html](http://www.cokato.mn.us/cmhs/fahs.html)  
**Oct. 10** Duluth Area Finnish Genealogy Group at the Cloquet Public Library 10:00 a.m. Members will share new finds and resources they have found helpful.  
**Oct. 11** Vänskä Opens Music in the Park Series, 4:00 p.m., Hamline University. (651) 645-5699. [www.musicinthe parkseries.org](http://www.musicinthe parkseries.org) for more information  
**Oct. 13** FACA Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m., home of Kaarina Kotkavuori  
**Oct. 15** Artist talk/exhibit, University of Minnesota “If you could see me now” (See Sept. pg. 5.)  
**Oct. 16** FACA Program “The Love of the Chase.” 7:30 p.m. International Institute, 1694 Como Ave., St. Paul. (See pg. 1.)  
**Oct. 18** Finnish Focus, LEIF Festival, Mindekirken Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church, Minneapolis. Pastor Mel Johnson will present the sermon and Saana

Ensemble will sing during the service and at the coffee hour following. (612) 874-0716. (See Sept. pg.5)

**Oct. 18** Finnish Culture Through Movies group, 6:00 p.m., *Saippuaprinssi* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saippuaprinssi> Season tuition: \$25/\$15 for students. Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Ave South, Minneapolis. More information: (651) 428-3155.

**Oct. 22** William Durbin will give a talk on the Finnish-American exodus to the Soviet Union in the 1930s, the subject of his book, *The Darkest Evening* at 6:30 p.m., at the Cloquet Public Library. The event is free of charge and open to the public. For more information, call (218) 879-1531.

**Oct. 23** Diane Jarvi and Dan Newton will play their blend of Finnish, world folk and jazz at The Coffee Grounds at 1549 N. Hamine Ave., St. Paul at 8:00 p.m.

**Oct. 23** Uutiset copy deadline. Copy for Nov.-Dec. issue to [mary.belanger@dctc.edu](mailto:mary.belanger@dctc.edu)

**Oct. 24** Finnish Genealogy Group meeting. See p. 1 for info. Changes in meetings are posted at: [www.minnesotafinnish.org](http://www.minnesotafinnish.org). Click on left menu, Finnish Genealogy Group. Or (612) 822-0743.

*More calendar items on page 7*