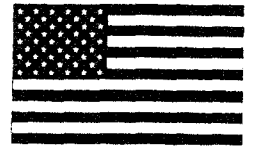


TEX - FINN NEWS



ALL THE NEWS THAT IS FINN TO PRINT
The International Newsletter of the Finnish-American Society of Dallas/Fort Worth

Volume 19 Number 4

Joulukuu/December 2007

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Dec 2007 Karl J. Morris

Marshall and Ashley had a nice presentation at our last meeting for their Finnish Independence Day Gala dry run. Posters, picture boards, old newspapers, militaria and videos of Finnish veteran interviews rounded out the evening.

Speaking about the gala, we had our organization well represented. Dave and Teddy Krekula, Gordon and Helja Talley, and Raili and Paul Gray attended (I apologize if I missed somebody). Apparently Marshall and Ashley's presentation was a hit.

Our Christmas Dinner will be on our same traditional meeting time of the month (third Thursday) on December 20th. We will have our traditional gift exchange (the entertainment just from that is worth the price of admission). The Krekula's will bring the ham and the rest of us can bring a side/main dish (we never coordinate this down to the detail but it always seems to work out). We will have the silent auction and a raffle for those that would rather raffle something off for the organization. Now this means we have to bring items to auction and raffle off!
See you on December 20th!

Karl J. Morris
Tex-Finn President

JOULU JUHLA

TEXFINN CHRISTMAS PARTY

Everyone is invited to the annual TexFinn Christmas Party. Come and have yourself a ball!!!

Ham - *Kinku* will be provided.

We need salads, casseroles, desserts and breads. Appetizers are welcome. Recipes need not be Finnish.

If you have not had a chance to be with us this year, take this opportunity to join us at the King of Glory Lutheran Church downstairs meeting room.

We try to start out early, 6:00 or 6:30 PM. If you can't make it on the button, come as soon as you can. There is a code for entry but we will have someone stationed at the door so that if you don't remember it or can't make it work, we will be sure that you get in.

THE GIFT EXCHANGE

The gift exchange is always the highlight and the entertainment. Bring a gift nicely wrapped of a value around \$10. Do not label it. We will draw numbers and open the gifts and exchange and exchange but not more than thrice. Fun guaranteed!

ILOISTA JOULUA

TEXFINN MEETING

Thursday, December 20th, 2007

KING OF GLORY LUTHERAN CHURCH 6:00 PM

(North frontage of 635 between Preston and Hillcrest)

Program: CHRISTMAS PARTY!!

FINNISH LUTHERAN CHURCH OF NORTH TEXAS

Our Mission

Finnish Lutheran Church of North Texas is a Worshiping Community authorized by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. We are a loving and caring community of Christians created by God, redeemed by the Living Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to enable all people through Prayer, Word and Sacrament to serve God.

This fall the Finnish Lutheran Church of North Texas welcomed a new pastor. Pastor Seppo Vesala began his duties this October. For more information about him and his family go to www.finnishlutheran.org

Fall 2007 Services are partly bilingual (in Finnish, with English inserts). Coffee is served after services. Dates and times for worship services on fall season 2007:

Saturday, December 15, 6pm (Christmas Carols followed by Bake Sale)

Sunday, December 23, 6pm.

Sunday, December 25, 3pm.

Location of Activities is:

Rejoice Lutheran Church
532 E Sandy Lake Road,
Coppell, TX 75019
Address: 532 East Sandy Lake Road
Coppell TX 75019
Pastor's phone: 972 310 0166

ANIMALS AT CHRISTMAS

In Finnish tradition people are especially kind to animals at Christmas. Many stables celebrate Christmas for horses. Stables are decorated with branches from fir trees and horses are given oats and bread. Some young riders even bring the leftovers of the gingerbread house to their favorite horse. This is perhaps done as a reminder that Christ was born in a stable.



CHRISTMAS CARDS

Christmas cards began in Britain in the 1840's. In Germany by the 1860's Christmas cards had become a big business. The earliest Christmas card on record in Finland has a postmark of 1871.

The custom of giving and receiving Christmas cards began in the cities and spread to rural areas in the 1890's. The cards were sometimes used as decorations on the Christmas tree or displayed in the living room. With advances in printing techniques Christmas cards gained popularity.

If you wish to see some of the Christmas cards from the 1880's and '90's, go to <http://virtual.finland.fi> and locate Christmas with Virtual Finland. In the index choose 'Christmas cards 100 years ago'.

Examples of cards are from a collection at the Finnish National Museum in Helsinki.

HYVÄÄ JOULUA

JOULUPUKKI

The modern Finnish Santa resembles the American one with a red and white suit. He is a relaxed, jolly 'pukki' visits many Finnish homes personally. He comes in a sleigh drawn by reindeer to hand out presents on Christmas Eve, December 24th. The children may sing Christmas carols for him to thank him for his visit.

Finnish children are convinced that 'joulupukki' lives in Lapland with Mother Christmas and the little elves who make the toys in a workshop. One task of the elves is to keep their eye on the children throughout the year to see if they have been good and deserve presents at Christmas.

Originally in Nordic countries the elves were thought of as guardians, good spirits of the house. They were attended to by setting porridge or food out for them because if they were ignored, they might cause all sorts of mischief or leave the house altogether.

FINNISH TENNIS STAR DOES HIS STINT IN THE ARMY

Jarkko Nieminen, Finnish tennis star is doing his patriotic duty by fulfilling the obligation of national service in the army. Most of his tennis pros in the locker room were surprised when he told them that at the end of the tennis season he was going into the army.

There is a sense of history for Jarkko who is now serving his tour in the same forests his grandfather once was. Doing his army service will not interfere with his tennis because it is during the winter and tennis is taking a break. In fact, the regimen of the army may help him keep in shape.

Nieminen travels a lot with his tennis. Seeing so much of the world makes him realize that things are pretty good in Finland. He is still on the registers in his home town of Masku but he spends little time there. When he is not traveling he spends time with his wife, Anu, in Copenhagen where she trains as a badminton player. The facilities are good there and she can train there.

Even though he calculates that he has traveled in over 50 countries, he still thinks Finland is the best of them.

HEAVY WET SNOW IN HELSINKI

The first blizzard came on Sunday morning and Helsinki woke up to 4 centimetres of the heavy white, wet stuff. Temperatures warmed to above freezing, melting the snow away. Children enjoyed it most. They were quick to get their sleds out and to make snowmen and snowballs.

A plastic skylight gave way under the weight of the snow and crashed down in the middle of a dining room in the World Trade Center. The dining room was closed at the time. The snow also collapsed the roof of a compressed air type while two workmen were shoveling snow off the roof. The hall is used to train about 2000 students every week. At the time of the collapse no one was inside. The workmen on the roof when it collapsed were not injured.

FINNISH STUDENTS EXCELL IN READING AND MATHEMATICS

Finnish 15 year-old students participated in a test called the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Fifty-seven countries participate in the program. Finland came out on top in mathematical skills, followed by South Korea and the Netherlands. South Korea was first in reading followed by Finland with Canada in third place. Finland scored the highest in natural sciences.

The PISA study is done every three years. Finnish children ranked near the top in all areas. Germany is using Finland as a model for its own educational system. The Germans are concerned that their children score only slightly above average. The entire PISA study is being published in Berlin.

JOULUPUKKI, JOULUPUKKI

This is a traditional song sung to Santa when he visits children's houses in Finland. There are several verses. Here are a couple, one in Finnish and then in English with Santa's response.

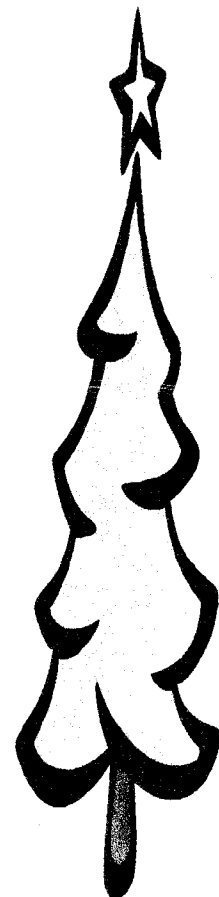
Joulupukki, joulupukki,
valkoparta vanha ukki.
Eikö taakka paina selkää?
Käypä tänne en mä pelkää:
Oothan meille vanha tuttu,
puuhkalakki, karvanuttu.
Tääll' on myöskin kiltit lapset,
kikassilmät, silkohapset.

(Children)

Welcome Santa, Merry Christmas!
Nice to see your snow whiskers,
set your sack down it's too heavy,
come right in, we're more than ready.
We remember you came last year
with your red coat and your reindeer;
all around you, glad to meet you
Such good children wait to see you.

(Santa's response)

Merry Christmas! Thank you kindly.
Such good children all around me.
Little singers, glad to meet you,
Little players, let me greet you.
I would stay and join your revel,
But I still have far to travel,
Other children still are yearning,
Other candles brightly burning.



FINNISH-AMERICAN SOCIETY OFFICERS

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Vice President: John Laine

Secretary/Treasurer: Vern & Diane Ruuska

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Jeremy Martin

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Circulation: David Krekula

Social Committee: David Krekula

Sharon Blalock

Library Committee: open

Sunshine Committee: Dale and Gloria Huhtala

Finnish Language School Contact Person:

Helen Tiiainen;

Membership Committee: open

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT
THE SOCIETY, WRITE OR EMAIL:

Finnish-American Society of

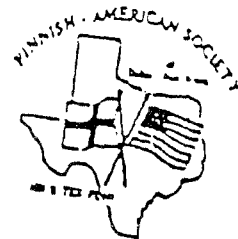
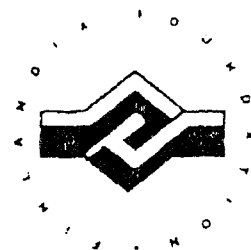
Dallas/Ft. Worth

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website: <http://www.texfinn.org>

email: karljm@bigplanet.com



TEXFINN MEETING DATE

December 20, 2007

King of Glory Lutheran Church

on the north frontage of LBJ Freeway between

Hillcrest and Preston Road

Welcome to anyone who is interested in things

Finnish. Meeting begins at 6pm

CHRISTMAS PARTY

CHRISTMAS IS COMING TO THE WOODEN SPOON
BE SURE TO VISIT EARLY AND FIND OUT ALL OF
THE GOODIES YOU CAN FIND!!

THE WOODEN SPOON

1617 Avenue K in Plano.

Open Monday-Saturday from 10am-6pm

Tel: 972 424 6867 or 1 800 2 NORDIC

www.woodenspoon.ws

twonordic@aol.com

twonordic@verizon.net

Finnish American Society of DFW

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