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HERE WE ARE:

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An unexpected event

It was a cold winter evening in Bethlehem. The stars glittered like diamonds against the dark sky, and a light snowfall lay over the city. Mary, a young woman with large, dark eyes, was on her way to an inn with her husband Joseph. They had traveled a long way, from Nazareth, to register in a census.

The inn was full. All the rooms were occupied, and Joseph was tired after the trip. He felt disappointed and worried, but Maria was calm. She knew everything would be fine. She was pregnant, and it wasn't long before she was going to give birth.

Joseph finally found a small stable where the animals were kept. He asked if they could sleep there for the night, and the stable owner, a friendly man, agreed.



Maria felt that it was time. She gave birth to a little boy, and carefully laid him in a manger, a wooden trough for the animals' feed. Joseph was overjoyed. He had never seen anything so beautiful.

At the same time, far away in the east, some wise men saw a bright star in the sky. They had been studying the stars for many years, and they knew that this star was something very special. They interpreted it as a sign that a new king had been born.

The Three Wise Men, Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar, gathered their gifts - gold, frankincense and myrrh - and set out on a long journey to find the newborn king. They followed the star, which led them to Bethlehem.

When they arrived at the stable, where Mary and Joseph were lying with their newborn son, they were overwhelmed with joy. They bowed down and worshipped the child, and gave him their gifts.

That night, in a small stable in Bethlehem, a boy was

born who would change the world. He was not just an ordinary baby, but the Son of God, Jesus Christ. He came to show people the way to love and forgiveness, and to give them hope for a better future.

This story, about an unexpected event in a small stable, has touched people for generations. It reminds us that even in the darkest of times, the light can always come out. It shows that love can win over hate, and that there is always hope.

Photo Supplement



Cover picture: Joulu

NEWS

Sally Salminen's "Katrina" is coming to Wasa as a musical



Sally Salminen in harvest rye in Sibbo 1941. Photo: B. Soldan / SA
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On January 14, 2025, one of the most iconic Finland-Swedish novels, Sally Salminen's "Katrina", will be given new life as a musical at Wasa Theatre.

This reinterpretation of the classic takes place in co-production between three major theatres – Lilla Teatern, Åbo Svenska Teater and Wasa Teater – and is the result of a long-term collaboration. The musical will be performed on all three stages in 2024 and 2025 and is a unique event in the Finnish-Swedish cultural

world.

A timeless story

"Katrina" is Sally Salminen's debut novel, published in 1936. The novel, which was written while Salminen was working as a maid in New York, was an immediate success and has now been translated into over twenty languages. The story follows the young Katrina, who leaves her home in Ostrobothnia to move to Åland with her new husband, the sailor Johan.

But her dreams of a good life are quickly shattered when Katrina discovers that Johan has exag-

gerated his social status, and she soon finds herself living in a meagre cottage, surrounded by poverty and prejudice.

Despite the difficult conditions, Katrina shows incredible strength and stubbornness. She challenges both external adversity and society's norms, and her story is a tribute to women's fighting ability and justice.

The dramatization of Kaisa Lundán and Aili Järvelä's newly composed music now gives this timeless story a new dimension.

A tribute to Salminen's legacy

Sally Salminen (1906–1976) grew up in Vårdö on Åland as the eighth child in a family of twelve siblings. Although she dreamed of becoming a writer from a young age, she saw herself as too poor and ignorant to succeed. However, her breakthrough with "Katrina" was so powerful that it overshadowed all of her later production, although she continued to write diligently. Salminen was nominated three times for the Nobel Prize in Literature and has a unique place in Finland-Swedish literature. She managed to combine a local depiction of everyday life in Åland and Ostrobothnia with universal themes such as love, struggle and self-respect. The fact that "Katrina" is now being made into a musical in Swedish in Finland is a fitting tribute to her work and its relevance to this day.

Yle's reading circle programme discussed this book: "For me, Katriina is The Book – nostalgia and great emotions" was said in



Sally Salminen at her desk 1940. Photo: Osvald Hedenström / Lehtikuva. Public Domain



Sally Salminen-Dührkop 1968. Photo: Lisbeth Medeland, Public domain

Seppo Puttonen's online reading circle. In Åland, young Katriina faces poverty and misery the likes of which she has never experienced before. As the wife of a crofter, she is forced to work for rich shipowners in slavery-like conditions. In addition, her husband is at sea and Katriina is left completely alone. In the village community, he has become an outsider from elsewhere. How is it possible that Katriina does not break? Sometimes when I read, I was afraid that this would happen. Perhaps Katriina's strong desire for justice kept her alive as a fighter, Seppo thinks. When Katriina has children, she has to make do for them. Still, Katriina holds on to her pride. I was amazed that Katriina did not compromise on her principles even in the face of children's hunger. He refused to take the villagers' alms to buy a cow, Seppo says. The fates of Katrina's children moved the readers. One of the children dies young. "I still cry over the little girl's illness and exhaustion from it."

Music and drama in focus

The newly written musical "Katriina" offers drama, music and visual experiences in a performance that

challenges and touches. Composer Aili Järvelä makes her debut as a musical composer and describes the process as a creative journey, where one of the melodies even came to her in a dream. Set designer Heini Maara-nen and costume designer Samu-Jussi Koski contribute to creating a world that is both poetic and timeless. The musical is directed by Jakob Höglund, who highlights Katrina as a symbol of strength and resilience. Höglund, himself from Ostrobothnia with strong ties to Åland, describes the project as a tribute to women's strength and perseverance. Actress Emma Klingenberg, together with musicians Aili Järvelä, Ulriikka Heikinheimo and Senni Valtonen, portrays Katrina's heartbreaking story through a combination of song and acting.

A long-awaited collaboration

The project is the result of long-term plans for cooperation between the three theatres. "A collaboration of this kind not only extends the life of the performance, but also enriches the theatre environment through the exchange of knowledge and perspectives," says Ann-Luise Bertell, theatre director at Wasa Theatre.

The performance is subtitled in both Swedish and Finnish, which makes it accessible to a wide audience. With a total of 18 performan-

ces planned, the journey begins at Wasa Theatre before continuing to Turku Swedish Theatre and Lilla Teatern in Helsinki.

A cultural highlight

The fact that "Katriina" is now being given a new lease of life as a musical is a cultural event that connects the past with the present. Sally Salminen's story about Katrina still touches us today through its themes of love, struggle and self-respect. Through music and performing arts, even more people are brought into this gripping story, which now has the opportunity to inspire new generations. The premiere at Wasa Theatre on 14 January 2025 promises an unforgettable experience. It's time to celebrate Sally Salminen's legacy and welcome Katrina back to the stage, where she deserves to be.

Here You can read the first part of this fascinating book (In Swedish): <https://www.google.fi/books/edition/Katrina/pqWjDwAA-QBAJ?hl=sv&gbpv=1&pg=PT3&printsec=frontcover>

WITH A TABLET YOU CAN READ THIS PAPER ANYWHERE:



Like here in Tampere

*** NEWSPAPER**

New Finnish-language newspaper for the Vaasa region: "Vaasa Pohjanmaa" starts in February

The Vaasa region will have a new Finnish-language newspaper when Vaasa Pohjanmaa starts its operations in February.



Editor in chief Peter Stolpe

The magazine will provide a comprehensive overview of the region's most important news, politics, culture, sports and economy. The journal's main publication channel is the web, and it is financed through subscriptions and advertising sales.

The paper version is planned to be published four times a year and distributed free of charge in an edition of 30,000 copies in Vaasa and the surrounding municipalities. The paper newspaper serves as a showcase for the content of the online newspaper.

The organisation Vaasa Insider, which is behind the magazine, has started a recruitment process to hire new staff. Over 90 applications have been received for three vacancies.

The financing of the project has been secured with its own financing and ad-ditional loans, and local players have shown interest in possible additional financing," says CEO and Editor-in-Chief Peter Stolpe.

*** SCHOOLS**

School classes travel free of charge to cultural sites in Vaasa in 2025



In Vaasa, comprehensive school pupils have the opportunity to travel free of charge by bus to cultural and sports venues during the school day.

The aim of the new experiment is to promote the participation of children and young people and to make public transport more child-friendly.

Free bus rides can be used by school classes under the guidance of a teacher, for example, for visits to museums, libraries, concerts or sports facilities. In particular, the project will ease the situation of schools that are further away from the city centre.

Support for versatile learning

Päivi Kaarniemi, Rector of Variska Peruskoulu, is happy about the new opportunity.

In this way, the cultural and sports offer will be closer to us. So far, we have had to consider carefully which transfers we have enough money for. Now we can make even more use of museums, exhibitions, music events and sports facilities, even with a tight schedule," Karniemi says.

According to him, the new experiment gives students the opportunity to learn more and more in different subjects. For example, museum visits can enrich history or visual arts lessons, while concerts and theatre performances open up new perspectives on cultural education.

As part of the sustainability strategy

The City of Vaasa hopes that the experiment will increase the interest of school students in using public transport and reduce the need for private cars during the school day. The experiment is part of a broader sustainable development strategy that aims to make the city's transport system more environmentally friendly.

The results of the experiment will be monitored during the year and based on them it will be decided whether the free bus journeys will continue in the future.

(Source: STTInfo/Vaasa)

*** ALMA**

Alma's spring term starts in January

Vaasa co-educational institution Alma will open its spring term on January 7, 2025.

There are about 200 courses available, and there are still vacancies for some of the full-year courses that started last autumn.

Rector Sannasirkku Autio says that the spring course offerings are once again diverse and up to date: "The range of language courses has been expanded by adding Finnish courses in particular, as the demand for them has increased significantly.

Courses in dance and sports have also traditionally been very popular after the turn of the year.

In addition to courses that run throughout the spring, Alma offers plenty of short courses and weekend events.

Especially short courses in crafts invite you to get acquainted with various techniques and materials. In addition, several open lectures and new courses will be organised during the spring to complement the offering.

Registration is ongoing. The course selection and timetables are available in Alma's online store at uusi.opistopalvelut.fi/vaasa. Registration is open online, in person and by phone.

*** WELLBEING COUNTY**

Increased client fees in the Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia from 2025



From 1 January 2025, client fees will be increased in the Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia, in accordance with a decision by the County Board on 16 December.

The increases are based on the national decree on client fees and follow the guidelines established at the national level.

A doctor's visit in primary care will cost €28.20, while a specialist visit will cost €66.70. However, nurse and nurse appointments will remain free of charge. However, a no-show fee of €56.70 will be introduced for no-shows, non-cancelled appointments.

"Client fees are part of the funding of the wellbeing services county's services. If we were to reduce the fees below the nationally determined level, we would have to cover it with other means," explains the County Director Marina Kinnunen.

Social services to receive lighter increases. In the case of social services, such as home and housing services or disability services, the wellbeing services county has more flexibility in pricing. For these services, the fees are increased by only one percent to protect economically vulnerable groups.

"Many people who use these services are in a vulnerable situation and have limited financial resources. That's why we chose to keep the increases as low as possible," says Kinnunen.

Clients with limited finances have the opportunity to apply for fee relief, which will make it easier for those who are most affected by the changes.

The new fees will enter into force at the turn of the year and apply to the entire wellbeing services county.

**They, who know a little more
are
They, who read Wasa Daily**

*** CHRISTMAS**

Here you can buy Christmas trees until Christmas Eve

This year, Vaasa residents have a good chance to get the perfect Christmas tree nearby. Christmas trees will be sold across the city from December 12 to 23 from

The Art Experience of the Week:



Hjalmar Munsterhjelm

19.10.1840, Toivoniemi, Tuulos

2.4.1905, Helsinki

Winter Landscape with Farmhouse in Häme, 186

9 a.m. to 9 p.m. and on Christmas Eve, December 24, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

Fir trees can be purchased at the following points of sale:



Palosaari Market Square
Suvilahti Market Square
Parking area at the intersection of Western Pitkäkatu and Torikatu
Ratakatu parking area next to the library
Kaarkenkenttä's parking area on the Rantamaantie side

Spruce sales are a great opportunity to support local entrepreneurs and at the same time ensure that the Christmas spirit is created with a real, fragrant Christmas tree. Book your fir tree early and make your Christmas extra warm and traditional!

*** REPLOT BRIDGE**

Take a photo of the Replot Bridge and dine well at Berny's

Do you have an eye for photography and a love for beautiful views? The municipality of Korsholm invites everyone from amateurs to professionals to participate in an inspiring photo competition with the theme of the Replot bridge.



The competition encourages participants to explore new and unexpected perspectives on the iconic bridge.

Get creative, play with angles and light!

The entries will be evaluated by an expert jury of distinguished photographers, and the three best photos will be awarded with a €50 gift card to Berny's restaurant.

Special lighting for unique images

The Replot Bridge will be particularly spectacular during the competition period. On Independence Day (December 6), New Year's Eve (December 31, with a special light show) and Valentine's Day (February 14), the bridge is specially lit, allowing participants to capture magical moments. Practical information The competition runs from December 5, 2024 to February 16, 2025. More detailed instructions for participation can be found on the website of the municipality of Korsholm.

*** SPEED CAMERAS**

New speed cameras monitor traffic in Vaasaenpuistikko



In Vaasanpuistikko, new police speed cameras will be installed, which will be installed at the end of the beach by the restaurant ship Faros.

The cameras will be placed on both sides of the road to improve road safety in a busy area.

The installation of speed cameras is part of a larger project aimed at reducing speeding and preventing accidents on key urban roads. According to the police, excessive speeds have been observed at Vaasaesplanadi at times, which has led to a need to intensify the surveillance.

The cameras are operational as soon as the installation is complete and monitor both driving speeds and any violations of traffic rules. The choice of location was influenced by the area's central location and the busy traffic, which includes both commuters and leisure travellers.

The police are reminding drivers to obey speed limits and traffic rules, especially in urban areas where traffic safety is everyone's responsibility. "The purpose of the cameras is not to punish, but to ensure that everyone in traffic arrives at their destination safely," the police writes in a statement. In the future, city residents and motorists can expect an even safer traffic environment in Vaasaesplanadi with the help of the new speed cameras.

(Source: STTinfo, press release)

*** CITY ORCHESTRA**

City Orchestra's spring: Anna-Maria Helsing starts as Chief Conductor

The Vaasa Philharmonic Orchestra's concert season next spring starts with high expectations.

Tickets for the spring events go on sale today, and what makes the season special is Anna-Maria Helsing's three-year term as the orchestra's chief conductor. Helsing is an internationally acclaimed conductor who is known, among other things, as the first Finnish woman to conduct a large professional symphony orchestra. During his career he has conducted almost all major Finnish orchestras and operas in Denmark, Fin-

land and the Savonlinna Opera Festival. "This task felt like a natural continuum," Helsing says. - We have had fruitful cooperation with the Rusk Festival and operas for a long time. Working with the Vaasa Philharmonic Orchestra has always been rewarding. The spring season programme combines classical music and entertainment. The season opens with Haydn's major work The Creation, featuring the Canticum Maris choir and skilled soloists. In addition, there will be an Elgar concerto interpreted by top cellist Senja Rummainen and a concert by young soloists conducted by Karmir Uusituva, who excelled in the Panula Competition.

Entertaining moments are provided by Markku Veijalainen's Beatles stories and Jukka Perko's swing music. The spring programme also includes the Salasaari Secret Concert for families and the May Day concert, where Jorma Uotinen brings the passion of Argentine tango to the stage.

The culmination of the season will be seen at the Choral Festival when KEY Ensemble joins the orchestra. Under Helsinki's leadership, the Vaasa Philharmonic Orchestra is preparing to liven up the city's cultural spring in a way that promises memorable experiences for classical music lovers and new listeners alike.

(Source: STTinfo/Vaasa)

*** REPLIT BRIDGE**

Colourful light show on the Replot Bridge celebrates the New Year

New Year's Eve 2024 offers a spectacular experience when the Replot Bridge is lit up by a colorful light show.

The municipality of Korsholm is behind the celebration and welcomes everyone to take part in this unique way of celebrating the new year. The ten-minute light show will be held on several occasions during the evening: at 6 pm, 7 pm, 8 pm, 10 pm and at midnight at 00 am. The show promises a festive atmosphere for the whole family and offers a chance to enjoy the beautiful silhouette of the Replot Bridge in a whole new light.

Bring family, friends, and warm clothes for a memorable New Year's Eve party under the sparkling skies at the Replot Bridge.

A warm welcome to celebrate the New Year greets the municipality of Korsholm.

*** MUSEUMS**

Free day at Vaasa museums today



Today, Vaasa's museums offer residents and visitors a unique Christmas gift: free admission to all exhibitions.

This Sunday's special offer brings culture close to everyone interested.

The museums' range of exhibitions is wide and attractive. At the Kuntsi Museum of Modern Art you can visit the exhibition The Philosopher at Meta Isæus-Berlin, the Tikanoja Art Home displays Eero Järnefelt's masterpieces, and visitors to the Ostrobothnian

Museum are looking forward to the exhibitions Pohjoistuulin metsä and permanent collections, such as Terranova and Treasures from Us and Beyond.

Christmas special programme and opening hours Vaasa's museums also offer music experiences. Tikanoja Art Home organises End-of-Year Music Salon concerts on Christmas breaks 27.-28.12. The performers of the concert series, violinist Maano Männi and harpist Lily-Marlene Puusepp, take listeners into the atmosphere of the early 1900s with music that complements the art in the exhibition. Tickets for concerts are on sale at Netticket.fi, and Museum Card offers a 20% discount.

Museum shops offer the opportunity to find unique gifts, such as products related to local history, Finnish design and handicrafts. Lovers of intangible gifts are recommended to use the Mu-

seum Card or gift cards, which guarantee access to cultural experiences all year round.

Museums are open today according to normal opening hours, but on Christmas holidays 23.-26.12. the museums will be closed. After the change of year, the Ostrobothnian Museum will be open on Sundays, while the Kuntsi Museum of Modern Art and Tikanoja Art Home will remain closed on Sundays.

Now is the perfect time to explore the diverse offerings of Vaasa's muse-

ums and experience the joy of culture at no cost!

Source: STTinfo/City of Vaasa

*** EXHIBITION**

Photo exhibition about lunar missions opens at Terranova



Terranova at the Ostrobothnian Museum opens its doors to the new photography exhibition Apollo 12 & 13, which continues the previously exhibited Man on the Moon 55 exhibition.

The new exhibition will be open to the public from 18.12.2024 until mid-February.

The exhibition offers a deep dive into the stages of the Apollo program prior to the historic Apollo 11 lunar mission, focusing especially on the dramatic events of the Apollo 12 and Apollo 13 missions.

Apollo 12 and 13: dramatic flightsThe Apollo 12 mission was full of excitement when two lightning strikes nearly interrupted the journey. However, the occupation succeeded in its task of accurately landing on the Moon, in the region of the Ocean of Storms. The flight was characterized by a hallmark featuring an American sailing ship. The symbolism of the ship alluded to the connection between the era of sailing ships and spaceflight, as well as the advance of humanity to new frontiers.

Apollo 13 is known as the legendary flight that never reached its destination. An explosion in the oxygen tank of the service module interrupted the flight to the Moon, but the crew survived thanks to skilful crisis management and cooperation. The emblem used on the flight, Apollo, the sun god of Greek mythology, symbolizes the light of science and knowledge that space exploration brings to humanity.

The exhibition takes you on a journey through time to the Apollo programmeThe photographs and stories on display in the exhibition open doors to the history of space travel and humanity's quest to transcend its borders. Through the photographs, visitors can see, for example, the legendary image captured during the Apollo 8 mission, in which the Earth rises above the lunar horizon. The picture was taken on Christmas Eve 1968 and is one of the most iconic works in space photography.

The exhibition is produced in cooperation between VB Photographic Centre and Vaasa Museums/Ostrobothnia Museum.

This exhibition offers a unique opportunity to experience the spirit and history of the Apollo missions through visual art. Terranova welcomes visitors to explore these unique stories and images that tell the story of humanity's greatest adventures.

Source: STTinfo/City of Vaasa

Image: Apollo 12 astronaut Alan Bean descends LM Intrepid's ladder. NASA/GSFC/Arizona State University Public Domain

*** CHRISTMAS**

An anonymous benefactor's Christmas gift was moving:

A €50,000 clothing donation to low-income families with children.

The staff of PaaPii Design Oy in Kokkola experienced an unforgettable moment when they received a call from an anonymous philanthropist who wanted to make a significant Christmas present for low-income families.

A private person donated as much as 50,000 euros of Finnish children's clothing, which was delivered through Hope ry to families in 18 locations around Finland.

PaaPii Design's employees couldn't hold back tears of emotion as they started packing 1100 garments. The donation included high-quality children's clothing designed and manufactured in Finland, which has now been sent with the help of a charity to wait for Christmas Eve.

According to the philanthropist, the donation was based on his personal experience of a memorable Christmas Eve, when he received help and warmth in a difficult situation as a child. He hoped that the same Christmas magic this year could touch others who need it most.

The Executive Director of Hope ry warmly thanked the donation and reminded how significant an impact such actions have on the lives of families in need. "Christmas is a tough time for many families with children, and this gift brings not only practical help but also joy and hope. The gesture of an anonymous benefactor will surely remain in the hearts for a long time," he commented.

This Christmas present is an example of how a

single act can spread joy and caring across Finland. Donated families get to experience a touch of Christmas magic and a reminder that help and goodness can be found, often in surprising directions.

(Source: STTinfo, press release)

*** CYBERBULLYING**

Online safety concerns for low-income children: Harmful content and cyberbullying more common

Children from low-income families face more threats online than their peers, according to Save the Children's Voice of the Child 2024 report.

Harmful content, cyberbullying and the experience of parents' lack of interest in their child's online use are particularly highlighted in these children's responses. The report highlights that low income does not only affect the everyday life of families, but also extends to the digital world.

Harmful content and cyberbullying common

According to the report, 26% of low-income children had encountered frequent or persistent violent or distressing content, such as images or videos. The corresponding figure for all children was 16%. Cyberbullying, such as threats, nasty comments and exclusion, had been experienced by 32% of children in low-income families, compared to 22% of all children.

In addition, it was more common among low-income children to encounter content that makes them feel inferior to others. This highlights how strongly digital environments can affect a child's self-esteem and well-being.

Lack of parental support accentuated

The report reveals that children from low-income families feel that their parents' interest in their online use is low. Nearly half (48%) of children in low-income families felt that their parents were not interested in their online use. For all respondents, this proportion was 33%.

Aino Sarkia, Save the Children's Senior Specialist in Poverty in Families with Children, estimates that this reflects the overall strain on families. "Low income affects the coping and well-being of both parents and children. Stressed parents may not be able to support their children as strongly, which is also reflected in children's experiences in the digital world," Sarkia says.

Schools play a key role

Save the Children's Digital Wellbeing and Safety Specialist Inka Kiuru points out that schools play a key role in developing children's safety skills. "Inequality is also visible in the digital world. It is important that teachers and schools have sufficient skills to reduce these inequalities. Adults have a responsibility to provide children with knowledge, skills and safety online," Kiuru emphasises.

An example of this is Save the Children's Huippula service, which teaches digital security skills to fifth-graders. So far, the service has reached 10,000 students.

Low income - a threat to children's online safety
The report shows that at-risk-of-poverty is becoming more common in families with children. In 2024, 17% of the respondents felt that their family was at risk of poverty, compared to 14% a year earlier. In Finland, around 120,000 children live in low-income families, which corresponds to 12% of all children.

The low income of families with children is also concretely visible in the digital world, where its

effects are multifaceted. The prevalence of adverse experiences and the lack of parental support highlight that the online safety of low-income children requires special attention.

"There should be no inequality in the digital world," Kiuru sums up. "Children need to feel safe online – regardless of income level."

(Source: Save the Children, press release)

*** RUSSIA**

Interest rates on mortgages could reach 50% next year – in Russia



In Russia, mortgage borrowers face an uncertain future with sharply rising interest rates. After the central bank raised the policy rate from 19 to 21 per cent on 25 October 2024, interest rates on housing loans have already climbed to over 25 per cent. According to experts, the situation could worsen further in the coming years.

At its meeting on December 20, the central bank is expected to raise the policy rate further, probably to 22-23 percent, according to Igor Balynin, associate professor at the University of Finance under the government of the Russian Federation. Balynin estimates that this would push mortgage rates up to 28-30 percent as early as the end of the year.

Possibility of extreme interest rates

However, Oleg Kalmanovich, chief analyst at Neomarkets, warns that mortgage rates could reach as high as 50 percent in 2025 if the Russian economy is hit by a deeper crisis. This scenario would transform the economic reality of millions of households in Russia and create widespread economic hardship.

Conflicting signals from the government

At the same time, the Russian government assures that inflation is under control and is around 8 percent, with forecasts of a decline to 4 percent next year. This optimistic picture stands in stark contrast to the dramatic interest rate hikes and expert forecasts, raising questions about the country's economic stability and transparency.

Life with 50 percent interest – an impossible equation. The notion of mortgage rates of 50 percent is difficult to grasp. It would mean huge costs for borrowers and potentially lead to a wave of payment problems and foreclosures. The future of the Russian economy is uncertain, and how households will be able to cope with this pressure remains to be seen.

What now appears clear is that Russia is facing significant economic challenges, and that the effects of the central bank's decision will be felt by both individuals and society at large.

*** DEFENCE**

Government Defense Report Outlines Finland's Defense Development as Part of NATO



On December 19, 2024, the Finnish Government approved the Defense Report presented by Defense Minister Antti Häkkinen during its session.

This marks Finland's third defense re-port and the first one since joining NATO, with guidelines extending into the 2030s.

"We are entering an era of strong preparedness. We will further strengthen Finland's de-fense. This is encapsulated in four pillars: national defense capability, NATO's deterrence and defense, defense cooperation, and comprehensive national defense," said Defense Minister Antti Häkkinen.

According to the Defense Report, Russia has shifted to a more overt, unpredictable, and prolonged confrontation with the West. Russia will continue to pose a long-term security threat to Europe and Finland. For Finland, as a NATO border state, it is crucial to maintain its own defense capability within the alliance and ensure that the alliance's deterrence and defense meet the demands of the threat environment.

"We will enhance Finland's ability to respond to wide-ranging influence cam-

paigns, sustained military pressure, and prolonged large-scale warfare. We will reform ground de-fense while finalizing major air and naval force procurements. We are creating conditions for the alliance's collective defense to be implemented in Finland. Conscription, a broad re-serve, and a high level of national defense commitment remain the cornerstone of Finland's defense. In line with the principle of comprehensive national defense, Finland's defense relies on the strong support of society," Häkkinen stated.

The report emphasizes that Finland's NATO membership has bolstered deterrence. Finland benefits from the full military strength of the alliance, including its nuclear deterrence as a last resort.

"Finland will continue to maintain and develop strong national defense capabilities in all situations. This is the core, and we will not compromise on it. At the same time, Finland's defense is an inseparable part of NATO's collective defense. We plan, train, and prepare to defend ourselves together with our allies," Defense Minister Häkkinen underscored.

Source: <https://www.defmin.fi/>

*** HEALTH**

Here's how to have a healthy Christmas

Respiratory tract infections have increased again in Finland. The influenza epidemic has started, coronavirus infections are slightly rising, and RSV cases, mycoplasma and pertussis infections are also high.

In the run-up to Christmas, it is important to remember how to fight respiratory infections and have a healthy Christmas.

Five tips to reduce infections. Take the recommended vaccinations. Vaccinations provide the best protection against serious diseases.

Sick at home. Do not visit when you are ill to avoid spreading infections.

Take care of hygiene. Wash your hands, use hand sanitizer, and cough or sneeze into your sleeve.

Wear a mask and keep your distance. Assess your own risk and protection needs according to the situation.

Take care of ventilation. Good ventilation reduces the spread of viruses indoors.

"It is especially important to protect those at risk and the elderly during Christmas by avoiding unnecessary infections. Small actions can make a big difference," says Leif Lakoma, Chief Physician at THL.

Treatment and recovery of infections. The cause of the symptoms of a respiratory infection can rarely be determined without laboratory tests. Most often, symptomatic treatment and rest are enough. In case of more serious symptoms or deterioration of general well-being, it is important to seek health care.

Antivirals can be used to treat influenza and coronavirus according to a doctor's assessment, as long as treatment is started on time. For bacterial infections such as mycoplasma and whooping cough, antibiotic treatment is considered as needed, but most often these infections resolve on their own.

You can return to work, school or daycare once the symptoms have subsided and the fever is gone. A runny nose or cough does not prevent you from returning to everyday life.

Vaccination still topical. The influenza vaccine can still be taken during the epidemic, as protection is formed in about two weeks. Vaccination is particularly important for risk groups, whose influenza vaccination coverage is falling short of last year.

Coronavirus vaccination coverage is good among risk groups, and especially the elderly and pregnant women have benefited from the vaccinations. In addition, newborns and children under 1 year of age are recommended to be protected from serious infections caused by the RSV virus.

By taking care of vaccinations, hygiene and infection prevention, you can protect yourself and your loved ones and have a healthier Christmas.

Source: THL.fi

EVENTS



TIKANOJA THE ART EVENT OF THE YEAR!

Eero Järnefelts exhibition opened on Nov 23, 2024

ATENEUM

Gothic Modern – From Darkness to Light

4 October 2024 to 26 January 2025.

Medieval and Renaissance art provided 20th-century artists with emotional material and ways to deal with fundamental human feelings, as well as birth, death, suffering and sexuality

The artists featured in the exhibition include Arnold Böcklin, Lucas Cranach the Elder, Akseli Gallen-Kallela, Vincent van Gogh, Theodor Kittelsen, Käthe Kollwitz, Edvard Munch, Hugo Simberg, Helene Schjerfbeck, Marianne Stokes, and Gustave Van de Woestyne.

After its debut at Ateneum, the exhibition will travel to the National Museum, Norway and the ALBERTINA Museum, Vienna, where it will be curated by Vibeke Waallann Hansen and Cynthia Osiecki (Curators, National Museum, Norway) and Ralph Gleis (Director, Alte Nationalgalerie), respectively.

The exhibition to be complemented by a comprehensive exhibi-

tion catalogue
Opera&Ballet, Helsinki

Leevi Madetojas Opera The Ostrobothnians 22.11.2024 – 4.1.2025 <https://oopperabaletti.fi/>

TRINITY CHURCH IN VAASA

The Christmas tableau The God we have been waiting for Mon 23.12 at 17.00 and 19.00

The Christmas tableau "The God We Have Been Waiting For" is an hour-long performance aimed at young and old from all contexts who want to start the Christmas celebrations with the message of Christmas. The Christmas tableau is held in Swedish but is subtitled in several languages.

Free admission. Participants: Wasa Gospel, the children's choir Gerby-Mickarna, musicians, actors, dancers. Arr. Slef Vasa, Vaasa Swedish parish.

KORSHOLM CHURCH

Christmas Day concert Wed 25.12 at 21.00 The chamber choir Psallite. Conductor: Erica Nygård Free admission.

Mustasaari Swedish parish

PETALAX UF

25.12 Christmas dance with Tomas Fantz in Petalax UF 8 p.m.–1 a.m. K-18. Arr. Petalax UF

MALAKTA, Malax

8.12 Art café with mid-day cinema 5 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. for young people aged 13 and over at Malakta. Arr. Malax

municipality and Malakta.

MEDIA LANGUAGE (In Swedish) 2025: Seminar XX

Vaasa 22-23 Januari 2025

Media Language 2025 is organised by the Swedish Press Service and the Centre for Lifelong Learning at Åbo Akademi University in collaboration with Svenska Yle, Hufvudstadsbladet Ab, HSS Media, ÅU Media, Friends of Swedish Public Schools, the Åbo Akademi University Foundation, the Swedish Cultural Foundation in Sweden, the Harry Schauman Foundation and Konstsamfundet.

<https://www.mediesprak.fi/seminariet/>

LUX HELSINKI 8.–12.1.2025

Finland's most brilliant light festival, Lux Helsinki, is an annual light festival that spreads around Helsinki at the beginning of January around Epiphany. The event presents a wide range of different forms of light art. The Cathedral is usually a very special attraction at the festival. So if you're going to Helsinki at the beginning of January, check it out.

www.luxhelsinki.fi

SCIENCE NIGHT

9 January 2025 in Helsinki Science Night is science's own city event in Helsinki. The event, which is organized annually in January, will be celebrated next time on Thursday 9 January 2025. A motley group of program organizers guarantees that during the evening and night you will be able to

enjoy engaging lectures as well as insight by doing it yourself. Admission to all Science Night events is free!

In the summer, we have an Arts night in Vaasa. When do we get Science Night in winter? <https://www.tieteidenyo.fi/en>



VAASA CITY THEATRE

TOSCA-ooppera

Premisere Jan 12.2025

<https://www.vaasa.fi/koe-ja-nae/kulttuurivaasassa-ja-seudulla/vaasan-kaupunginteatteri/tosca/>

ILMAJOKI MUSIC FESTIVAL

"BIG Wrath 1713-1721" 6.-15.6.2025

"This powerful and topical opera brings the years of hatred and the fates of our ancestors back to the banks of the Kyrönjoki River.

Big Wrath is a shaking and nourishing story about family ties, maternal love, perseverance, and the power of cooperation during a time, when Russia's brutal war of aggression against Finland burned Ostrobothnia to black soil."

www.musiikkijuhlat.fi

KORSHOLM MUSIC FESTIVAL

23.7.–30.7.2025

"Korsholm Music Fes-

tival 2024 and Tove Teuvalla Opera are over and autumn is approaching. Now we are already working on the Summer 2025 Music Festival. However, we want to return to the warm days and festival atmosphere of July and August."

A greeting from festival director Viktor Nygård: "I am very much looking forward to working with the Korsholm Music Festival and I have many exciting ideas for how we can continue to develop the festival. I can already promise that next year it will be a fantastic festival with something for everyone."

Korsholm Music Festival will be held next year 23.–30.7.2025.

WASA FUTURE FESTIVAL

11-16.8.2025

The Wasa Future Festival 2026 is set to take place from 11th to 16th August. This event gathers knowledgeable and motivated individuals from the business world, universities, regional decision-making bodies, and ministerial corps to focus on solving issues in Vaasa and across Finland. The event can be followed on Wasa Future Festival YouTube channel.

Wasa Innovation Center Gerbyntie 18 65230 Vaasa <https://wasafuturefestival.fi/>

TAITEIDEN YÖ

14.8.2025

"Toivottavasti näemme taas ensi vuoden Taiteiden yössä"

<https://www.vaasa.fi/koe-ja-nae/kulttuurivaasassa-ja-seudulla/taiteiden-yo/>

CHRISTMAS

A Contemporary Version of the Christmas Gospel



It was an evening in December. The streets of the city glittered with fairy lights and Christmas decorations. People hurried back and forth with parcels in their hands, while the brake lights of cars formed a red river on the roads.

Mary sat at the kitchen table in the small apartment she shared with Joseph. She caressed her growing belly and looked out the window, where the snow was beginning to fall in heavy flakes. Joseph came through the door with his breath in his throat. He had been out all day looking for a place closer to the hospital where they could sleep when the time came.

"Maria, I've tried everything," he said and took off his hat. "I've called around and talked to everyone I know. The hotels are fully booked, and those who rent out apartments want a crazy amount of money.

Maria smiled calmly at him, despite his worried expression. "It'll work out, Josef. It always does. We are together, and that is what counts.

Joseph sat down opposite her, stroked his hand over hers, and sighed. "I know, but I want you and the baby to have a good time. It's not just any night that awaits.

Just then a beep was heard from Maria's phone. She read the message and started laughing. "What is it? Joseph

wondered. "It's an old friend of mine," Maria said. "She has a storage room that is empty right now. It's not much, but she says that we can borrow it if we need to.

"A storage room? Joseph looked skeptical. "Is it even warm there?"

"She wrote that there is a fan heater and blankets," Maria said. "It's better than nothing, isn't it?"

Joseph hesitated, but he could see the determination in her eyes. "All right. I'll pack the car," he said in the end. "We're going there.

They drove through the city, which was now silent under a white blanket of snow. The storage room was on the outskirts, behind an old warehouse. It was simply furnished, with only one mattress on the floor and a few boxes stacked along the walls. But it was warm and protected from the weather.

Maria sank down on the mattress with a sigh of relief. "This will be perfect," she said.

Night fell, and the stars lit up in the sky. Joseph was sitting next to Mary and holding her hand when she suddenly grabbed his arm.

"It's time, Josef. I feel it.

Joseph's face turned pale, but he quickly got up. He hadn't done anything like this before, but Maria kept calm and guided him through it. After a few hours, the small storage room was filled with a new sound – the first scream of an infant.

Maria held the baby in her arms and smiled, despite the tiredness. Joseph

looked at them with tears in his eyes.

"He's here," Maria said softly. "Our son.

Suddenly they heard footsteps outside the door. Joseph opened the door carefully and was met by three men who were standing there with packages in their hands. They looked unexpected – one of them had a suit, another an orange jacket from a courier company, and the third looked like a long-distance traveler with a worn backpack.

"Sorry to disturb us," said the man in the suit. "But we saw the light from the window and heard about your situation. We just wanted to give you something.

They stepped in and handed over their gifts. The first man gave a gold necklace to the child. "This is symbolic," he said. "To remind you of his worth.

The other man handed over a box of incense. "A scent that soothes," he said.

The third man put down a jar of cream. "This one is good for sensitive skin," he said. "I use it myself.

Mary and Joseph thanked them, overwhelmed by the gesture. When the men left, they sat in silence, with the child now sleeping in Mary's arms.

"The world is strange," Joseph said, looking at Mary. "But sometimes it shows its very best side.

Maria nodded and pulled the blanket tighter around herself and the baby. "He has already brought us closer to other people. Imagine what he will mean to the world."

Joseph put his arm around them both, and they sat together, while a star shone extra brightly over their refuge.

CHRISTMAS



Jenny Nyström 1854-1946

Christmas Cards



Jenny Nyström

Once upon a time, in the picturesque town of Kalmar, Sweden, a creative spirit named Jenny Nyström was born on June 13, 1854. Her family, led by the talented church cantor Daniel Nyström and the dedicated school teacher Anette Nyström, provided her with a happy childhood. But when Jenny was only eight years old, the Nyström family decided to take on a new chapter and moved to the bustling city of Gothenburg, where her father got a better-paid teaching position.

In 1865, Jenny began her artistic journey at an art school in Gothenburg and laid the foundation for her future as a famous artist.

Her quest for knowledge led her to Stockholm in 1873 for further studies, and she continued her artistic exploration in Paris from 1882 to 1886, specialising in portrait painting. Over time, Jenny Nyström developed into one of Sweden's most beloved artists, a testament to her versatile artistic education.

An important milestone in Jenny's life was the realization of her childhood dream - a solo art exhibition in Paris. The exhibition became a reality and marked a highlight in her artistic journey.

Meanwhile, in 1871, the esteemed author Viktor Rydberg created a heartwarming Christmas story entitled "Little Vigg's Adventure on Christmas Eve" or "Little Vigg's Adventure on Christmas Eve". Translated into Finnish as "Pikku Simon seikkailut jouluilta", the story took place when Little Vigg was alone in the cottage on Christmas Eve. To his surprise, a magical Santa Claus appeared and took him on a sleigh ride to spread Christmas joy from house to house.

Four years later, this enchanting story came to life through illustrations created by 18-year-old

Jenny Nyström. Her artistic touch breathed life into Rydberg's story and set the stage for a productive career. Jenny later became known for her contributions to Christmas magazines and the creation of many Christmas cards, which mix folklore with festive celebrations. Her influence was echoed in the works of Finnish artists Wendelin and Koivu.

In 1887, at the age of 33, Jenny opened another significant chapter by marrying Daniel Stoopendaal, and together they raised a son, Curt Nyström Stoopendaal, who would also become a respec-

ted artist in his own right. Jenny Nyström continued to share her creative spirit with the world until the age of 92, when she passed away peacefully in Stockholm in 1946.

Interestingly, the same year witnessed the departure of Rudolf Koivus in Finland, who had carved out his own path to create beloved Christmas characters inspired by Nyström's enchanting legacy. And so, the legacy of these two artists intertwined, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts of art enthusiasts for generations to come.

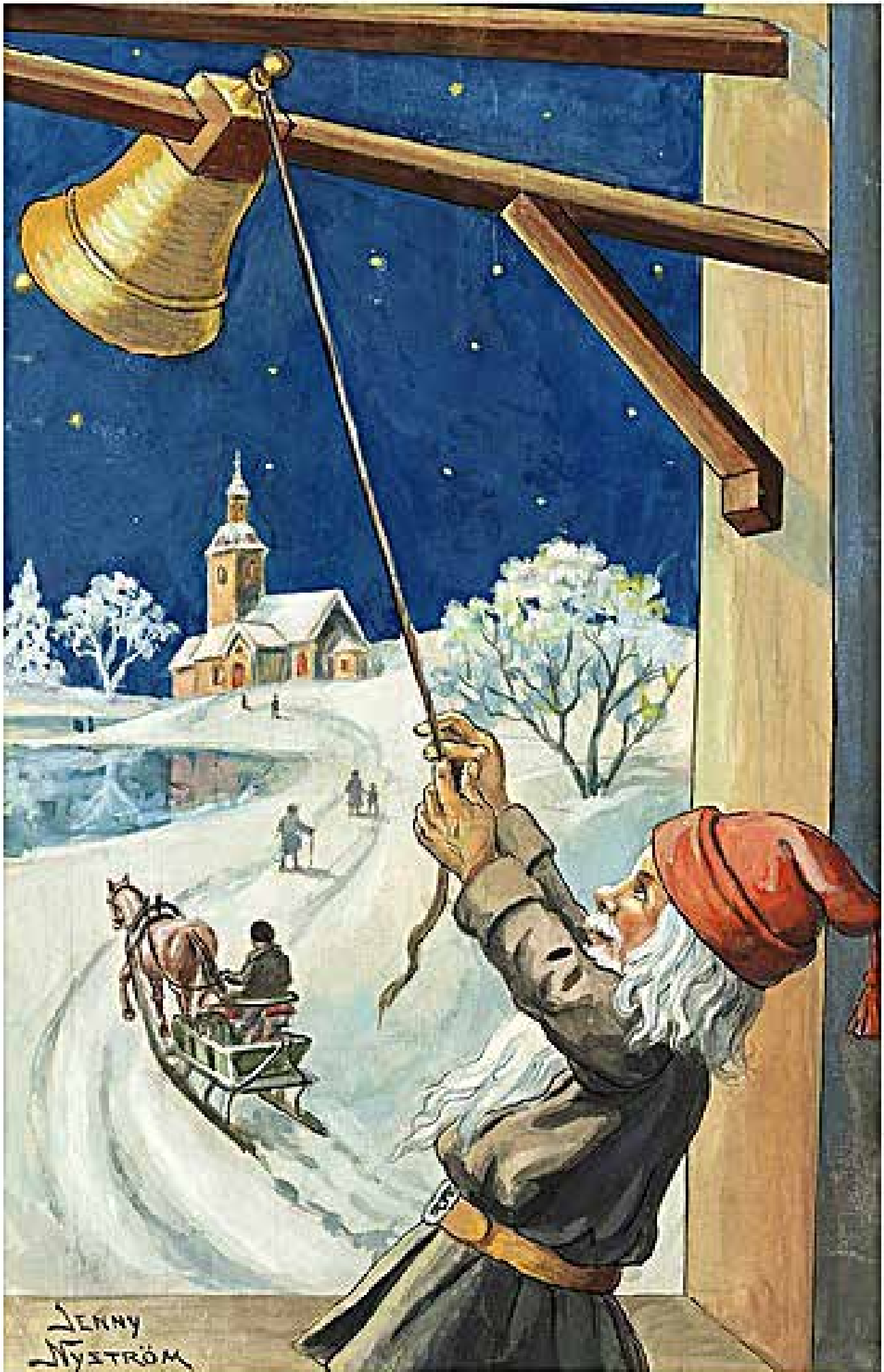




ENHRET J. P.

Jenny Nyström





JENNY
NYSTRÖM



Cinderella.



Merry Christmas Greetings

CHRISTMAS



Joulumusiikki kirkoissamme - Julmusik i våra kyrkor - Christmas Music in our Churches

Kauneimmat joululaulut - messu

su 22.12. klo 10.00

Kirkkosali (Mustasaari, Sepänkylä)
Sepänkylän seurakuntakeskuksessa
Niilontie 3, klo 10.

4. adventti.

Kauneimmat joululaulut - messu.

Miika Kallio ja Kaisa Launonen

Kansainvälinen kauneimmat

joululaulut -messu

su 22.12. klo 13

Palosaaren kirkko, Verkkokirkko ja
Sundom TV

Osallistu paikan päällä tai verkossa

International Mass with Christmas
Carols

Jouluconsertti: Tähti syttyy pimeään

su 22.12. klo 15.00

Laihian kirkko

Jouluconsertti Tähti syttyy pimeään
klo 15

Tiina Ahola laulaa rakkaita

joululauluja kanteleen säestyksellä.

De vackraste julsångerna

sön 22.12 kl. 18.00

Sundom kyrka

Kom och sjung de vackraste julsångerna och gör gott genom att delta i Finska Missionssällskapets insamling som går till att hjälpa utsatta barn och deras familjer.

Kauneimmat joululaulut

su 22.12. klo 18.00

Huutoniemen kirkko

Tervetuloa laulamaan kanssamme!
Laulattamassa Huutoniemen kirkkokuoro, Valtteri Tuomisto, Marja-Riitta Ylikangas-Annola.

Paimenten kumarrus - Jouluyön konsertti

ti 24.12. klo 22.00

Vaasan kirkko

Lämpimästi tervetuloa kuuntele-

maan joulun kauneimpia lauluja ja urkumusiikkia sekä laulamaan yhdessä.

Juldagskonsert

ons 25.12 kl. 21.00

Korsholms kyrka

Kammarkören Psallite. Dirigent: Erica Nygård

Kauneimmat joululaulut vielä kerran to 26.12. klo 18.00

Vaasan kirkko

Tule laulamaan Kauneimpia joululauluja vielä kerran! Laulattamassa Valtteri Tuomisto ja Sini Usmi. Pappina Monica Metsäranta.

Än är det jul - Välgörenhetskonsert för Ukraina

mån 6.1 kl. 16.00

Trefaldighetskyrkan

Välgörenhetskonsert för Ukraina.

Source: Congregations webpages

HEALTH

Eight Good Habits to Keep Your Brain Young



Aging is a natural process, but the choices we make every day can significantly influence how our bodies and minds age.

Our brain, the control center of all bodily functions and thoughts, is particularly susceptible to aging. Fortunately, research has revealed that adopting certain healthy lifestyle habits can slow down brain aging and reduce the risk of memory-related diseases like dementia. These habits, derived from the American Heart Association's "Life's Essential 8" guidelines, promote not only heart health but also the vitality of the brain.

A recent study conducted by researchers at the University of Maryland highlights the importance of these habits. By analyzing the lifestyles and MRI scans of nearly 19,000 participants aged 40 to 69, the study found that individuals adhering to these habits had brains that appeared younger than their chronological age. Each 10-point increase in their lifestyle score corresponded to a brain that was, on average, 113 days younger in terms of white matter health. White matter, which carries messages within the brain, is crucial for



efficient information processing and shrinks as we age.

Let us explore these eight essential habits that can keep your brain youthful and resilient.

January 1 is a good day to change some habit.

1. Eat a Healthy Diet

A nutritious diet forms the cornerstone of a healthy body and mind. Focus on foods rich in nutrients, such as:

Fruits and Vegetables: Provide essential vitamins, antioxidants, and fiber.

Whole Grains: Support sustained energy and cognitive health.

Legumes and Beans: Excellent sources of plant-based proteins and fiber.

Nuts and Seeds: Rich in healthy fats and brain-boosting nutrients like omega-3s.

Lean Proteins: Include poultry, fish, and plant-based alternatives to support brain function. Avoid processed foods, sugary snacks, and excessive saturated fats, which can harm both heart and brain health.

2. Get Regular Exercise

Physical activity is a powerful tool for brain health. Engaging in at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise (e.g., brisk walking or swimming) or 75 minutes of vigorous activity (e.g., running) per week boosts blood flow to the brain and promotes the growth of new neural connections. Exercise

also reduces stress and enhances memory and mood, which are critical for cognitive well-being.

3. Avoid Tobacco

Smoking and the use of e-cigarettes harm blood vessels, reduce oxygen flow to the brain, and accelerate cognitive decline. Quitting smoking at any stage of life can lead to significant improvements in brain health and overall longevity.

4. Prioritize Sleep

Sleep is essential for brain repair and memory consolidation. Aim for 7–9 hours of quality sleep each night. Poor sleep or sleep deprivation can lead to problems like impaired memory, mood disorders, and an increased risk of dementia. Establishing a consistent sleep routine and creating a relaxing bedtime environment can help improve sleep quality.

5. Maintain a Healthy Weight

Keeping your body mass index (BMI) under 25 reduces the risk of obesity-related conditions that can harm the brain, such as diabetes and high blood pressure. A healthy weight also supports better mobility and energy levels, enabling an active lifestyle that benefits cognitive function.

6. Control Cholesterol Levels

High levels of "bad" LDL cholesterol can lead to plaque buildup in arteries, restricting blood flow to the brain. Regular check-ups and dietary changes—such as reducing saturated fats and increasing fiber intake—can help maintain healthy cholesterol levels and protect brain health.

7. Manage Blood Sugar Levels

Elevated blood sugar levels can damage blood vessels and nerves, increasing the risk of conditions like diabetes and cognitive decline. Monitoring your blood sugar and consuming a balanced diet with low glycemic index foods can help prevent these issues.

8. Monitor Blood Pressure

High blood pressure, often called the "silent killer," can lead to strokes and other conditions that negatively affect brain function. Keeping your blood pressure below 120/80 mmHg through lifestyle changes and, if necessary, medication, can protect your brain from damage.

Why These Habits Matter

Following these eight habits not only supports brain health but also contributes to overall well-being. The cumulative effect of eating well, staying active, and managing key health metrics ensures that the brain receives the nutrients, oxygen, and stimulation it needs to stay sharp.

By incorporating these habits into your daily routine, you can take proactive steps to protect your brain against premature aging and memory-related diseases. Start small—focus on one or two habits and gradually build from there. Over time, these changes can lead to profound benefits, keeping your brain youthful and your mind agile well into your later years. And January 1 is a good day to change an habit.

Your brain is your most valuable asset. Nurture it with care, and it will serve you well throughout your life.

TRAMS



Tatra KT4 Trams in Tallinn, Estonia

Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, is known for its picturesque medieval architecture, vibrant culture, and efficient public transportation system. Among the trams that grace the streets of this historic city, the Tatra KT4 holds a special place. These trams, with their distinctive design and storied past, have become an integral part of Tallinn's public transport network.

Historical Background

The Tatra KT4 trams were manufactured by ČKD Tatra in Czechoslovakia, primarily during the 1970s and 1980s. Designed as articulated trams, the KT4 model was built to navigate the tight corners and narrow streets common in many Eastern European cities. KT4 trams have a unique two-section design connected by a flexible joint, allowing them to handle sharp turns





and providing greater maneuverability.

Tallinn received its first KT4 trams in the late 1970s. These trams quickly became a common sight on the city's streets, admired for their robust construction and reliable performance. Over the decades, they have undergone various upgrades and refurbishments to keep pace with modern standards and ensure passenger comfort.

Design and Features

The Tatra KT4 tram is characterized by its articulated body, which is divided into two sections. This design not only enhances the tram's ability to handle complex urban routes but also increases its passenger capacity. Each section of the tram has a set of doors, facilitating easy entry and exit for passengers. The trams are equipped with comfortable seating and ample standing room, making them suitable for both short city commutes and longer journeys across Tallinn.

Initially, the KT4 trams featured a traditional control system with manual acceleration and braking. However, many units have been modernized with more advanced electronic control systems, improving energy efficiency and operational smoothness. The modernization efforts also included upgrading the interiors with better

lighting, new seating arrangements, and improved accessibility features to cater to passengers with mobility impairments.

Role in Tallinn's Public Transport

The Tatra KT4 trams have played a vital role in the evolution of Tallinn's public transport system. They operate on several key routes across the city, connecting residential areas with commercial and historical centers. The trams are an essential part of Tallinn's integrated public transport network, which includes buses, trolleybuses, and modern low-floor trams.

Despite the introduction of newer tram models, the KT4 trams remain popular among locals and tourists alike. Their distinctive appearance and historical significance add a nostalgic charm to Tallinn's streets. Many residents have fond memories of riding these trams, making them an enduring symbol of the city's urban landscape.

Preservation and Future

As Tallinn continues to modernize its public transportation system, efforts are being made to preserve the Tatra KT4 trams as part of the city's heritage. Some units have been restored and maintained in their original condition, serving as historical exhibits or operating on special heritage routes. These efforts ensure that future

generations can appreciate the engineering and design that defined an era of urban transportation.

The Tatra KT4 trams are also a testament to the resilience and adaptability of Tallinn's public transport system. They have successfully navigated the transition from Soviet-era infrastructure to modern European standards, proving their durability and practicality.

KT4 tram: Technical specifications

Length	18,1 meter
Width	2,2 meter
Height	3,1 meter
Doors	4
Speed (max)	65 km/h (40 mph)
Weight	19.900 kg
Motors	4 x 40 kW

Conclusion

The Tatra KT4 trams in Tallinn are more than just a mode of transportation; they are a moving piece of history. Their continued presence on the streets of Tallinn is a tribute to their robust design and the city's commitment to preserving its rich cultural and technological heritage. Whether you are a daily commuter or a visitor exploring Tallinn, a ride on a Tatra KT4 tram offers a unique glimpse into the city's past and present, seamlessly blending tradition with progress.





HEALTH



Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Type 2 Diabetes

”How common is this disease?”

Approximately one in 10 Finns has type 2 diabetes, some unknowingly. We publish an extensive series of articles about this disease. After reading these articles, you will know absolutely everything there is to know about this. The series of articles is partly based on the article “Good Medical Practice” published last spring by the Finnish Medical Association

tion Duodecum.

Prevalence and Incidence

Type 2 diabetes is rapidly increasing worldwide, affecting an ever-growing number of people. Particularly concerning is that increasingly younger individuals are being diagnosed, especially within African and Asian populations, where the disease is now seen in young people or even children.

Key Figures and Facts:

FinDM Study: In 2017, 98 people under the age of 20 were diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in Finland. This information comes from the FinDM study, which covers all diabetics identified in the healthcare registry from 1964 to 2017.

Kela Register: At the end of 2022, a total of 381,167 people in Finland received diabetes medication with special reimbursement, with 22,709 of these starting treatment in the same year. The total number

of special reimbursement rights has increased by about 2% annually from 2019 to 2022. However, the number of new special reimbursement rights has decreased since 2012 and remained stable over the past five years.

Diabetes Register: At the end of 2022, there were a total of 378,898 people diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in Finland.

Not all diabetics use medication, and not all who use medication are covered by Kela's special reimbursement. This means the actual number of people with diabetes is likely even higher than the registers show.

Screening and Diagnosis:

Many people with diabetes are unaware of their condition. In the 2023 Health in Finland survey, 3.4% of men and 2.7% of women without a previous diabetes diagnosis had blood glucose levels indicative of diabetes. This means about one in five diabetes cases was previously undiagnosed.

Active screening with risk tests and glucose tolerance tests appears to have reduced the number of undiagnosed cases. However, between 2017 and 2023, the proportion of undiagnosed diabetes increased among elderly women.

When undiagnosed cases are included, the prevalence of diabetes among men over 20 years old was estimated at 14.1%, and among women at 10.8%. Diabetes is particularly common among the elderly: 26% of men and 23% of women over 65 had diabetes.

Risk Factors

Overweight is the most significant risk factor for type 2 diabetes. In the 2023 Health in Finland survey, the average BMI for men over 20



was 27.9 kg/m², and for women, it was 27.7 kg/m². Among men, 27% were obese (BMI over 30 kg/m²), and among women, 30% were obese.

One of the main reasons for the increase in obesity is decreased physical activity. This is especially concerning among children and adolescents, whose physical activity needs special attention.

Moreover, many psychosocial factors, such as long-term stress, sleep problems, and depression, as well as socioeconomic stressors, are linked to the development and progression of type 2 diabetes.

Commentary

The increasing prevalence of type 2 diabetes is a serious public health challenge that requires a comprehensive approach to both prevention and treatment. Preventive measures, such as increased physical activity and the promotion of healthy lifestyles, are crucial. At the same time, improving screening and diagnostics to detect and treat the disease as early as possible is essential.

ART

Eero Järnefelt's Kaski has travelled around the world And now it is in Vaasa



Eero Järnefelt's painting *Kaski*, completed in 1893, has become one of the best-known works of the golden age of Finnish art. However, this work depicting slash-and-burn is much more than just a skilful depiction of the Finnish countryside. It has also made a remarkable trip around the world,

visiting numerous exhibitions around the world.

When Järnefelt painted *Kaski*, he could hardly have imagined that the work would become so popular and that it would be presented to such a wide audience. At that time, slash-and-burn was still an essential part of Finnish agriculture, but at the same time it was in the throes of change. The development of forestry gradually replaced traditional slash-and-burn farming, and Järnefelt wanted to immortalize this

disappearing phase of life.

Kaski has been exhibited in numerous exhibitions both in Finland and abroad. The work has travelled to Japan, the Nordic countries, major European cities such as London, Madrid, Barcelona and Rome. In 1900, *Kaski* was seen at the Paris World's Fair, where it was awarded a gold medal.

Exhibition trips have been a significant part of *Kaski*'s history. They have enabled the work to reach a wide audience and present Finnish art to the world. At the same time,

exhibition trips have also been challenging, as the safety of the work must be carefully taken care of. *Kaski* is protected with plexiglass to keep it in the best possible condition for future generations.

Kaski's world travels tell a lot about how art can transcend cultural boundaries and unite people. The work has acted as an ambassador of culture, presenting Finnish identity and landscapes around the world. At the same time, it has also sparked discussion about the transformation of Finnish society and the

disappearance of traditions.

Järnefelt's *Kaski* is much more than just one painting. It is a work of art that has lived a life of its own and traveled around the world. It is also a significant part of Finnish cultural history, reminding us of our past and at the same time prompting us to reflect on our future. The painting's home is at the Ateneum in Helsinki.

But now this painting is in Vaasa, Tikanoja Art Home.

ASTRONOMY

Earth's Temporary Moon: A Celestial Oddity



In a surprising cosmic event, Earth briefly acquired a second moon this past autumn. On September 29, 2024, a small asteroid, designated 2024 PT5, was captured by our planet's gravity, becoming a temporary natural satellite.

This celestial visitor, though small, was a significant astronomical occurrence. While it was not visible to the naked eye, astronomers were able to track and study it using powerful telescopes. The exact size of 2024 PT5 is still being determined, but it was likely a few meters in diameter.

The capture of aste-

roids is a rare event, but not entirely unprecedented. However, having a temporary moon for several weeks is a unique phenomenon. The temporary moon eventually escaped Earth's gravitational pull and returned to its original orbit around the Sun.

This celestial event offers scientists a valuable opportunity to study near-Earth objects and understand their potential impact on our planet. By observing 2024 PT5, researchers can gain insights into the composition, orbit, and behavior of these space rocks.

And what a wonderful "Trivial Pursuit"-question! "How many moons did our earth have in October 2024?"

Now You know the answer. Two,

Image: An artistic impression of earth and its two moons. To the left on astroid of the same size as PT%.



HISTORICAL ART

Bopparder Pietà: A Mirror of the Christian History of Salvation

The Bopparder Pietà, a masterpiece of late Gothic sculpture from the late 14th century, is more than just a depiction of Mary's painful encounter with the body of her dead son. It is a complex symbol that is deeply rooted in the Christian faith and takes the viewer on a multifaceted spiritual journey.

This wooden sculpture can now be admired at the Ateneum's "Gothic Modern" exhibition until 26 January 2025.

The sculpture, which can usually be admired at the Liebieghaus sculpture collection in Frankfurt am Main, depicts Mary holding the lifeless body of Christ in her lap. The two figures are united in a heartfelt embrace, an expression of endless sorrow and love. But Bopparder Pietà goes beyond this superficial presentation. The lack of references to the place of crucifixion - Golgotha - and the reduced attributes lead the viewer's gaze away from the concrete historical event to the universal themes of suffering, death and resurrection.

The designation "Vespers image" refers to the Christian evening mass, where the Way of the Cross of Christ is recreated.



The Bopparder Pietà reflects this tradition by providing believers with the opportunity to identify with Christ's suffering and share His pain. The powerful image of the dead Christ invites the viewer to reflect on his own death and accept the transience of earthly life.

But the Bopparder Pietà is not only a depiction of death, but also a symbol of hope.

The diminished image of Christ directs the gaze to his childhood and reminds us of his birth. This contradiction between death and birth underscores the central message of Christianity: to overcome death through the resurrection. The dead Christ becomes a symbol of deliverance from sin and a promise of eternal life.

Bopparder Pietà is a work of art that ap-

peals to the senses and challenges the intellect. The detailed design of the figures, the intense colours and the careful execution invite the viewer to immerse themselves in the scene and experience the emotions of the figures. At the same time, the sculpture opens up for a variety of levels of interpretation and stimulates theological reflection.

Bopparder Pietà is a testimony to people's deep faith in the Middle Ages. It is a work of art that has not lost its relevance to this day and continues to move people from all over the world. The sculpture invites us to reflect on life's big questions and find comfort in the message of Christian hope.



Female Doctors Cure Patients Better?

In a groundbreaking study published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, researchers have shed light on a fascinating trend in healthcare: patients treated by female doctors tend to have better outcomes compared to those treated by male doctors. This finding is significant, particularly as it highlights the nuanced ways in which gender can influence medical care and patient health.

Study Overview

The study, conducted by a team of esteemed researchers including Atsushi Miyawaki, MD, PhD, Anupam B. Jena, MD, PhD, Lisa S. Rotenstein, MD, MBA, MSc, and Yusuke Tsugawa, MD, MPH, PhD, analyzed Medicare claims data from 2016 to 2019. This large-scale retrospective observational study included a 20% random sample of fee-for-service beneficiaries hospitalized with various medical conditions, focusing on outcomes such as 30-day mortality and readmission rates.

Key Findings

The study examined 458,108 female and 318,819 male patients, with 31.1% of female and 30.6% of male patients treated by female physicians. The primary outcomes revealed that both female and male patients had lower mortality rates when treated by female physicians. However, the benefit was notably more pronounced for female patients.

Female Patients: The adjusted mortality rates for female patients tre-

ated by female physicians were 8.15%, compared to 8.38% for those treated by male physicians. This translates to an average marginal effect (AME) of -0.24 percentage points, which is statistically significant.

Male Patients: For male patients, the adjusted mortality rates were 10.15% for those treated by female physicians versus 10.23% for those treated by male physicians, with an AME of -0.08 percentage points. While this indicates a slight improvement, it is not statistically significant.

The patterns were similar for readmission rates, further underscoring the potential benefits of care provided by female physicians.

Significance of the Findings

These findings prompt a deeper exploration into why female physicians might be achieving better patient outcomes. Potential factors could include differences in communication styles, adherence to clinical guidelines, or even a more patient-centered approach to care that female doctors might employ.

Communication and Empathy: Studies have shown that female doctors often spend more time listening to their patients and are more empathetic. This can lead to a better understanding of patient needs and more tailored treatments.

Adherence to Guidelines: Female physicians are often found to be more diligent in following clinical guidelines, which can improve patient outcomes by ensuring that the best practices are consistently applied.

Patient-Centered Care: Female doctors may be more likely to engage in shared decision-making with their patients, fostering a collaborative environment that can lead to better health outcomes.

Broader Implications

The implications of these findings are far-reaching. For healthcare institutions, this research suggests that fostering a diverse workforce and supporting female physicians can have a tangible positive impact on patient care. It also highlights the importance of considering gender dynamics in medical training and professional development.

Limitations

It's important to note that the study's findings may not be generalizable to younger populations, as the data was derived from Medicare beneficiaries, who are typically older. Further research is needed to determine if these trends hold true across different age groups and healthcare settings.

Conclusion

The study's conclusion is clear: patients, particularly women, experience lower mortality and readmission rates when treated by female physicians. While the exact reasons behind these improved outcomes require further investigation, this research underscores the critical role that female doctors play in enhancing patient care. As the healthcare industry continues to evolve, these insights should inspire efforts to support and empower female physicians, ultimately benefiting patients nationwide.



LIGHT FESTIVAL

Lux Helsinki 8.-12.1.2025: Illuminating the Darkest Days



As the winter tightens its grip on Helsinki, a radiant counterpoint emerges: Lux Helsinki.

This annual light festival, taking place from January 8th to 12th, 2025, transforms the city's familiar landscape into a breathtaking canvas of light art.

Lux Helsinki is more than just a spectacle; it's a celebration of creativity and community. For five magical nights, the heart of Helsinki is bathed in a kaleidoscope of colors and enchanting installations. Public buildings become luminous sculptures, parks morph into ethereal wonderlands, and streetscapes are imbued with an other-

worldly glow.

The festival's strength lies in its diversity. From immersive, interactive experiences to awe-inspiring large-scale projections, Lux Helsinki caters to all artistic tastes. Local and international artists come together to showcase their innovative visions, pushing the boundaries of light as a medium. Wandering through the illuminated city becomes an adventure, with each corner revealing a new marvel.

Lux Helsinki's impact goes beyond aesthetics. It fosters a sense of connection and shared joy during a time of year often associated with

darkness and solitude. The festival encourages exploration, inviting residents and visitors alike to rediscover the city under a new light. It's a reminder that even in the depths of winter, beauty and wonder can be found.

Whether you're a seasoned art enthusiast or simply seeking a magical escape from the cold, Lux Helsinki is an experience not to be missed. So bundle up, embrace the crisp winter air, and immerse yourself in the luminous heart of Helsinki. Let Lux Helsinki illuminate your January and ignite your sense of wonder.





HEALTH

Semaglutide (Ozempic): A Promising Tool in the Fight Against Alcohol Abuse



Alcohol use disorder (AUD) is a complex health condition characterized by persistent and problematic alcohol use. While numerous treatments exist, many individuals struggle to maintain sobriety. Recent scientific research has shed light on a potential new therapeutic avenue: semaglutide.

Semaglutide, originally developed as a treatment for type 2 diabetes and obesity, has shown promising results in reducing alcohol consumption and binge-like

drinking behaviors. This medication belongs to a class of drugs known as glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor agonists. GLP-1 is a gut hormone that regulates appetite and blood sugar levels. By mimicking the effects of GLP-1, semaglutide can help reduce cravings, promote satiety, and curb impulsive behaviors associated with alcohol abuse.

Preclinical studies have demonstrated the efficacy of semaglutide in animal models of alcohol dependence. Researchers have observed significant reductions in alcohol intake and the rewarding effects of alcohol consumption in ro-

drinking behaviors. These findings suggest that semaglutide may have a similar impact on human behavior.

While the exact mechanisms underlying semaglutide's effects on alcohol abuse are still being investigated, several theories have been proposed. One possibility is that semaglutide may alter brain reward pathways, reducing the reinforcing effects of alcohol. Additionally, semaglutide may improve mood and reduce stress, both of which can contribute to alcohol misuse.

The potential of semaglutide as a treatment for AUD

is significant. Hospitalizations due to alcohol abuse went down by a third in one big study. It offers a novel approach to addressing alcohol addiction, targeting the underlying biological mechanisms that drive compulsive alcohol use. However, it is important to note that further research is needed to fully understand the efficacy and safety of semaglutide in treating AUD.

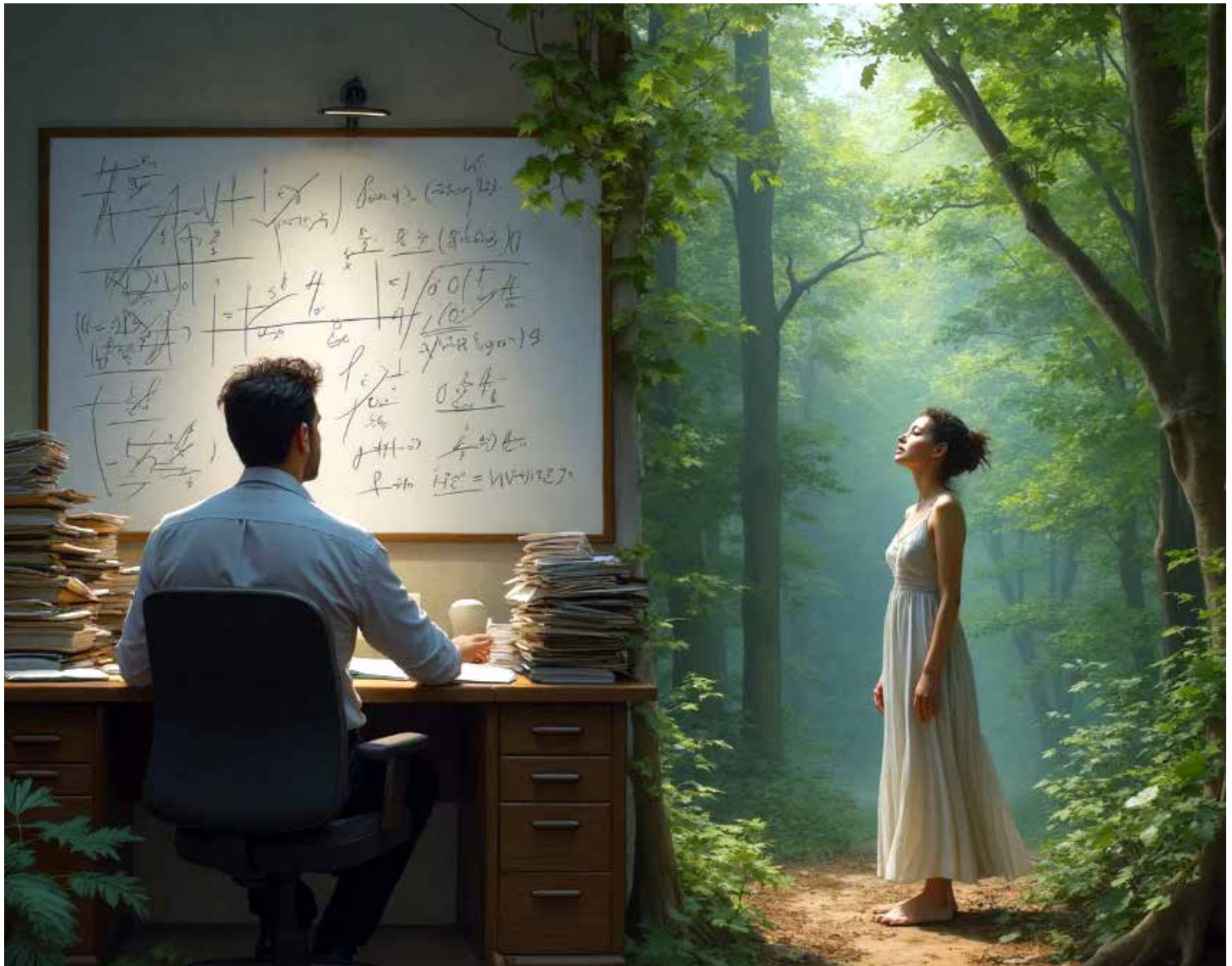
As with any medication, semaglutide may have side effects, including gastrointestinal issues such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. It is crucial to consult with a healthcare professional to determine if semaglutide

is an appropriate treatment option and to monitor for any adverse effects.

Semaglutide represents a promising development in the field of alcohol addiction treatment. While more research is necessary to fully elucidate its mechanisms of action and long-term effects, this medication holds the potential to revolutionize the way we approach alcohol use disorder.

CAUSERIE

Intelligence and wisdom are not the same



Intelligence and wisdom – two words that are often used almost synonymously, but are actually like two completely different dogs in the same cage.

Intelligence is the fast-paced border collie who can solve a Rubik's Cube, while Wisdom is a calm old golden retriever who knows that the cube can also support an un-

stable table. Both have their merits, but if you choose the wrong dog for the right situation, you may find yourself in the middle of a mess.

The intelligent thinks, the wise know

Intelligence is the ability to learn, analyze and solve problems. For example, a smart person could figure out how to make a parachute out of a tablecloth and curtains if he falls from an airplan-

ne. A wise person, on the other hand, would have checked beforehand that he would not step on a plane with only one engine and the pilot had a bad day.

This is where the biggest difference between intelligence and wisdom lies: an intelligent person can survive difficult situations that a wise person never finds himself in. This explains why so many clever inventors, researchers, and entrepreneurs end up writing their me-

moirs about prison or bankruptcy – they're smart, but sometimes surprisingly little wise.

History's greats – but which ones?

Take Aristotle and Einstein. Aristotle, that contemplator of the ancient world, was undoubtedly wise. He understood the great principles of life, such as that too much energy is not good, and therefore mostly ended up sitting and teaching others. He

missed out on stupid experiments, such as testing whether a person could jump off a cliff in Parnassus without consequences. Albert Einstein, on the other hand, was intelligent. He developed the theory of relativity and revolutionized our worldview, but was perhaps not the wisest person in practical life. He reportedly forgot his address and often had to ask for advice on how to find a home. Such situations would not have happened to Aristotle – he



would not even have left his home without a reliable guide.

Smart mistakes and smart avoidances

In everyday life, the intelligent and wise often make different decisions. An intelligent person might buy an extremely complex and fancy coffee machine that requires an engineering degree to understand the instruction manual. The wise man again brews the pot coffee, knowing that the end result will be the same: caffeine in the blood and a cheerful mind.

A smart person tries to solve a marital crisis by buying his spouse's favorite car. A wise person takes his spouse for a walk and listens to what the other has to say. At this point, it's good to remember that sometimes wisdom and intelligence can also come together - that's when your spouse gets both a car and a walk, and the relationship blossoms.

Stupid genius and ingenious fool

There are examples in history of people who were intelligent but not very wise. Napoleon Bonaparte, the master of the conquest of Europe, decided in winter to invade Russia. A military genius, but at the same time an insane risk-taker. A wise person might have thought twice about whether it is worth marching in the middle of the Siberian winter, when there is

already a nice kingdom behind him.

On the other hand, there are stories about people who are not particularly intelligent, but still extremely wise. Many folk wisdom and proverbs come from ordinary people who never went to school, but knew how to live their lives rationally. For example, the phrase "don't shoot a fly with a cannon" may well come from someone who realized that trying too hard doesn't always pay off.

Smart and wise at the same time - the best combination?

Of course, it would be ideal to be both intelligent and wise, but since no one can be perfect in every way, one should settle for developing one's strengths. An intelligent person should learn to stop and ask whether the problem is worth solving at all. A wise person, on the other hand, would do well to try new things sometimes - such as the solution of a Rubik's Cube - just for the sake of practice.

After all, the balance between wisdom and intelligence is what makes life interesting. An intelligent person can figure out how to go to the moon, but a wise person wonders why on earth they should go to the moon, their own backyard is actually a good enough place.

ART EXHIBITION

In Eero Järnefelt's exhibition fascinates the big and small themes of nature. On Nov 23, it came to Tikanoja in Vaasa



On Nov 23, the Tikanoja Art House in Vaasa will host an exhibition covering the entire career of the masterful nature and portrait artist Eero Järnefelt (1863–1937), who sought emotion and truth. The exhibition presents the extensive work of a cosmopolitan cultural family and the artist's significance for Finnish art and Finnishness. Diverse descriptions of nature make one wonder whether the nature depicted by the artist in the 1800s and 1900s still exists.

Järnefelt sought to capture the essential elements of his works. Eero Järnefelt's art stems from his family's interesting cultural background and is characterised by the pursuit of essential features from nature as well as people. The artist was able to depict his subjects with detailed precision, delicate atmosphere and festive monumentality.

The exhibition sheds light on differ-

ent aspects of Järnefelt's conception of landscape and people. It also provides information about the Järnefelt family, his family, study trips, home conditions in Suviranna on Lake Tuusula and the connection of his art to the Finnish thinking of his time.

Järnefelt's paintings of nature and landscapes from Koli make you wonder whether the nature depicted by the artist in the 1800s and 1900s still exists – and what our relationship is to nature and landscapes today. In the artist's works, the magnificent landscapes of danger as well as the delicate details of the buttercup and the casserole are treated equally.

Järnefelt is also known for his portraits of prominent figures of his time. Included are interesting portraits of journalist, doctor and Member of Parliament Tekla Hultin and Mathilda Wrede, who dedicated her life to helping prisoners and the underprivileged.

The exhibition also includes a route designed for visitors with children, which encourages people to look at the works and discuss them from the

children's point of view.

The curator of the exhibition is Timo Huusko, Chief Curator of the Ateneum. Most of the works come from the collection of the Finnish National Gallery, but there are also plenty of loans from other museums and private collections. More than 200 works are on display.

The family's influence on Finnish cultural life was enormous

In the exhibition, you can also get to know the Järnefelt family and close family, whose influence on art and culture at the turn of the 1800s and 1900s was enormous. The Järnefelt siblings, critic Kasper, writer Arvid, musician Armas and later known as Jean Sibelius's spouse Aino, are remembered not only as authors of visual art, literature and music, but also as part of a wider network of cultural actors.

Eero Järnefelt's father, Alexander Järnefelt, made the development of the Finnish national movement his life's mission. Mother Elisabeth Järnefelt is especially remembered for her literary salon, the most famous participant of which was Juhani Aho.

EERO JÄRNEFELT'S ALTARPIECES

Eero Järnefelt's exhibition opens in Tikanoja – altarpieces remain in churches



The Taulumäki Church in Jyväskylä

On 23 November, Tikanoja Art Home will open an impressive exhibition showcasing the work of Eero Järnefelt (1863–1937). The exhibition offers a comprehensive overview of the art of this Finnish master, but one group of works by Järnefelt will be missed this time: the altarpieces.

It is understandable that altarpieces cannot be moved to the exhibition, as they are large in size and often permanently attached to the interior decoration of churches. However, this does not diminish their artistic and historical value, and visitors to the exhibition can admire images taken from the altarpieces.

Six altarpieces in four decades

During his lifetime, Eero Järnefelt painted six altarpieces that adorn churches

around Finland. His altarpieces can be admired, for example, in the new church in Keuruu, the Taulumäki church in Jyväskylä, the church of Littoinen, the church of Raahe and the St. John's Church in Helsinki.

The best-known of these is probably the altarpiece of Taulumäki Church in Jyväskylä, which is an exceptional ensemble of two works of art. At the top is Järnefelt's work "Christ Walks on Water" (1892–1893), which miraculously survived the fire of the first church in Taulumäki. Below, the whole is complemented by the painting "Jesus – The Good Shepherd" (1929) by Jonas Heiska from Jyväskylä.

Although Järnefelt's altarpieces cannot now be seen physically in Tikanoja's exhibition, the devout atmosphere and masterful handwriting

conveyed by them can be seen through the images. Exploring the exhibition is a unique opportunity to delve deeper into Järnefelt's extensive oeuvre and the multidimensional nature of his art.

The exhibition will be open at Tikanoja Art Home from 23.11.2024.

Erik (Eero) Nikolai Järnefelt (8 November 1863, Vyborg – 15 November 1937, Helsinki) was a Finnish painter and professor (1912). Järnefelt's best-known works include paintings of Koli's landscapes and portraits of prominent figures of his time.

On the left, his self-portrait.







At the top, the altar of Lieto Church, below is the attach of St. John's Church in Helsinki



SOCIETY

Click your way to change? About clicktivism and slacktivism



What is clicktivism and slacktivism?

Have you ever shared an outrageous news article on social media, signed an online petition, or participated in a digital protest? If so, you may have unconsciously taken part in the phenomena of clicktivism and slacktivism.

These terms, coined by researchers Evgeny Morozov and Alice Marwick in 2017, describe a form of activism that is carried out online. It's about showing your support for a cause by clicking a button, sharing a picture, or writing a comment. It's simple, fast, and requires mini-

mal commitment.

Clicktivism focuses on the individual clicks that form the basis of digital activism, such as signing a petition or sharing a link.

Slacktivism is a more general term that refers to the perception that digital activism is often superficial and does not lead to real change.

Why is it problematic?

Even though it can feel good to do something, no matter how small, for a thing you care about, there is criticism of clicktivism and slacktivism. Critics believe that:

It is not a substitute for real action: Clicking

a button or sharing a picture is not the same as participating in a demonstration, donating money or getting involved in political processes.

It can create the illusion of change: It can give a false sense that you have done something to change the world, even if your actions don't have much of an impact.

It can undermine more in-depth engagement: By making it so easy to be an "activist," clicktivism can make people less likely to engage in more demanding forms of activism.

It can be manipulated: Large amounts of clicks and likes can be

used to influence decision-making processes and create a false image of public opinion.

Deliberation and democracy

Another problem with clicktivism is that it can undermine the democratic process. A healthy democracy requires an informed and nuanced debate on important issues. When we rely on simple "like" buttons and quick reactions on social media, we risk losing the ability to have deeper conversations and to absorb different perspectives.

So what can we do?

It's important to remember that digital activism isn't completely useless. It can be a way to raise awareness of important

issues and mobilize people. But to create real change, it takes more than just a few clicks.

To contribute to a more meaningful and democratic debate, we can:

Get involved in local issues: Participate in local meetings, write to our politicians and get involved in volunteer work.

Support organizations that work for change: Donate money, become a member or spread the word about their work.

Deepen our knowledge: Read about the issues that are important to you and try to understand different perspectives.

Have critical conversations with others: Discuss important issues with friends, family, and colleagues.

HEALTH

All about Cutaneous Coeliac Disease

Dermatitis herpetiformis, the form of celiac disease that affects the skin, was first described in 1884 by the American professor of dermatology Louis Adolphus Duhring. He named the condition Dermatitis herpetiformis, a term still in use today, though for a long time it was commonly referred to as Duhring's disease.

In 1884, Louis Duhring published a 20-page book detailing the disease. Here is the introduction to his description:

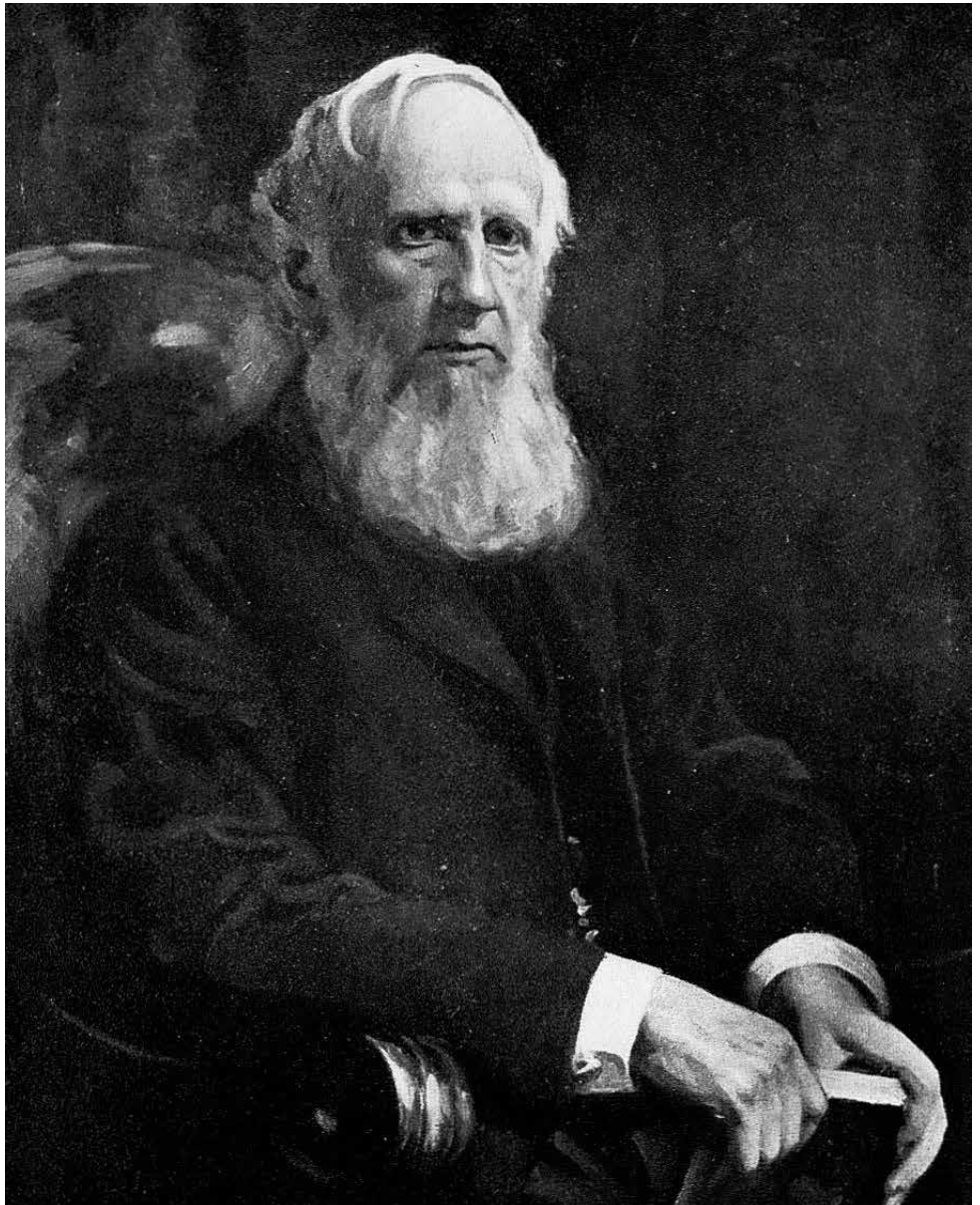
"Under the name Dermatitis Herpetiformis, I propose to group a number of cases of a skin disease I have encountered from time to time. These cases are mostly nameless, having been regarded and diagnosed either as peculiar manifestations of one or another of the more common known diseases, such as eczema, herpes, or pemphigus, or, in certain instances, as undescribed afflictions. From these remarks, it will be concluded that the disease is rare, which is, to some extent, true. At the same time, I have encountered a sufficient number of cases in the past fifteen years to justify the view that the condition deserves special description and a name. I first recognized this skin disease as distinct as far back as 1871, but with the few cases observed at that time, it was difficult to classify or handle them satisfactorily. Since then, I have encountered several other cases illustrating similar and variant forms of the disease."

Duhring also vividly described the itching associated with the disease:

"The most striking symptom is the itching. Burning is also not uncommonly complained of. However, itching dominates and is, in all cases, violent or even intense. Patients report it to be entirely disproportionate to the amount of the outbreak. Furthermore, it is persistent, causing the affected individual to scratch constantly. It usually precedes the outbreak and does not subside until the lesions have ruptured. Experienced patients, familiar with the natural course of the process, have informed me that they cannot find relief until the lesions burst. From my observation, I would say that the itching is both more severe and more persistent than in vesicular eczema. Vesicles appear slowly, taking several days or even a week to fully develop."

In the years that followed, Louis Duhring published numerous works about this disease. However, it was not until 1967 that the link between celiac disease and dermatitis herpetiformis was definitively established. Since then, a gluten-free diet has become the primary treatment for this condition as well.

Symptoms



Louis Adolphus Duhring (1845-1913), an American physician who in the 1860s studied skin diseases in Paris, London and Vienna, and then opened a clinic for skin diseases in Philadelphia, USA. Wikimedia Commons, Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International

Dermatitis herpetiformis and celiac disease are essentially the same condition, with the former manifesting in the skin and the latter primarily affecting the intestines. Both forms of celiac disease, however, can cause changes beyond the skin and intestines.

Symptoms of dermatitis herpetiformis include small, red blisters that typically appear on the elbows, knees, back, and buttocks. The rash is usually symmetrical but can also occur elsewhere, such as on the neck or even the face. The itching is severe, intense, and clearly impacts quality of life. These blisters can cause significant discomfort, often disrupting sleep and leading to scarring from constant scratching.

The medical literature includes numerous vivid accounts of the itching. In *Celiac Disease: The Hidden Epidemic*, Rory Jones describes their own experience:

"I now refer to it as my 'seven-year itch.' The itching was so bad I wanted to scratch through to the bone. It kept me awake at night. I wore long-sleeved shirts and pants in ninety-five-degree heat to cover the outbreaks. No cream or lotion stopped the itching, which increasingly consumed my waking hours. There was a certain irony as I used both my left and right hands to scratch the mirror-like outbreaks in tandem".

The ultimate conclusion about the cause of my 'unexplained dermatitis' was stress. Since our



The rash on the elbows may be insignificant at a calm stage of skin celiac disease. Despite this, the itching can be bothersome.

skin is a living, breathing organ influenced by both physical and mental health, this began to make sense to my irritable, sleep-deprived brain. After seven years of itching, joint pain, and constant fatigue, if nothing else, I was certainly stressed.”*

The eventual identification of gluten as the culprit transformed treatment, proving that a gluten-free diet is critical for alleviating not only intestinal celiac disease but also dermatitis herpetiformis

“*I now refer to it as my ‘seven-year itch.’ The itching was so bad I wanted to scratch through to the bone. It kept me awake at night. I wore long-sleeved shirts and pants in ninety-five-degree heat to cover the outbreaks. No cream or lotion stopped the itching, which increasingly consumed my waking hours. There was a certain irony as I used both my left and right hands to scratch the mirror-like outbreaks in tandem”

Epidemiology

Dermatitis herpetiformis is extremely rare in children and adolescents. The average age of onset is around 50 years. Men and women are affected about equally, with a slight predominance in men. The oldest patient diagnosed with this disease was over 80 years old.

In a 40-year follow-up in Finland, it was shown that the average age at diagnosis was around 35 years in the 1970s, and then gradually increased to almost 50 years. At the same time, the disease has become increasingly rare. The reason for this may be that the dietary intake of gluten has halved during this period.

Of all celiac disease patients, a little over one in ten has dermatitis herpetiformis.

People with dermatitis herpetiformis rarely have severe symptoms indicative of common celiac disease. Although the disease affects the skin, it seems to affect the small intestine to a small extent. However, if a gastroscopy is performed to obtain small intestine biopsy samples, typical villous atrophy will be seen in most dermatitis herpetiformis patients, while a smaller proportion has completely subtle changes.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis of dermatitis herpetiformis can be difficult because the symptoms can resemble other skin diseases, such as eczema or psoriasis. However, the localization of the skin changes is very typical. The worst changes are often found on the outside of the elbows, knees, and buttocks.

A reliable diagnosis is obtained by taking a sample from healthy skin, which is then examined using an immunofluorescence method.

If a gastroscopy is performed to obtain small intestine biopsy samples, typical villous atrophy will be seen in most dermatitis herpetiformis patients, while a smaller proportion has subtle changes. However, since the diagnosis is already certain with a skin biopsy, it is not necessary to examine small intestine biopsies in dermatitis herpetiformis.

Treatment

A gluten-free diet is also the treatment for this form of celiac disease. And the diet is lifelong. Oats are allowed, but it must be pure oats that do not contain any contamination from other grains.

However, the gluten-free diet must be followed extremely strictly. And even if the diet is followed, it can take quite a long time before the rash and itching disappear. It can take weeks or months, but after two years of a gluten-free diet, the itching and rash are usually gone.

But it is not easy to cope with itching for weeks or months, even if you follow a strict diet. Therefore, medication is often needed as a complement to the diet, at least for a while.

The medication used is called dapsone. This is a sulfonamide with antibiotic properties. Dapsone has a valuable role in the treatment of leprosy and malaria.

It is unclear why dapsone helps against the itching of dermatitis herpetiformis. But the effect is striking. After a few days of treatment, the itching is relieved. The usual dose for adults is 25-50 milligrams per day, sometimes the dose can be increased to 100 milligrams. However, as the gluten-free diet takes effect, the dapsone dose can be reduced, and often discontinued after a couple of years.

Dapsone has a number of side effects, which is why the drug should never be used unnecessarily. The most serious side effect is methemoglobinemia, that is, a change in the blood’s hemoglobin that impairs the blood’s ability to transport oxygen and turns the blood blue, which can cause a change in skin color and blue lips and nails. Other drugs can also cause methemoglobin, such as trimethoprim, metoclopramide, and several anesthetics.

Dapsone has other side effects such as liver inflammation.

Dapsone treatment is carried out in Finland by dermatologists. Regular laboratory tests are necessary due to the risk of side effects.

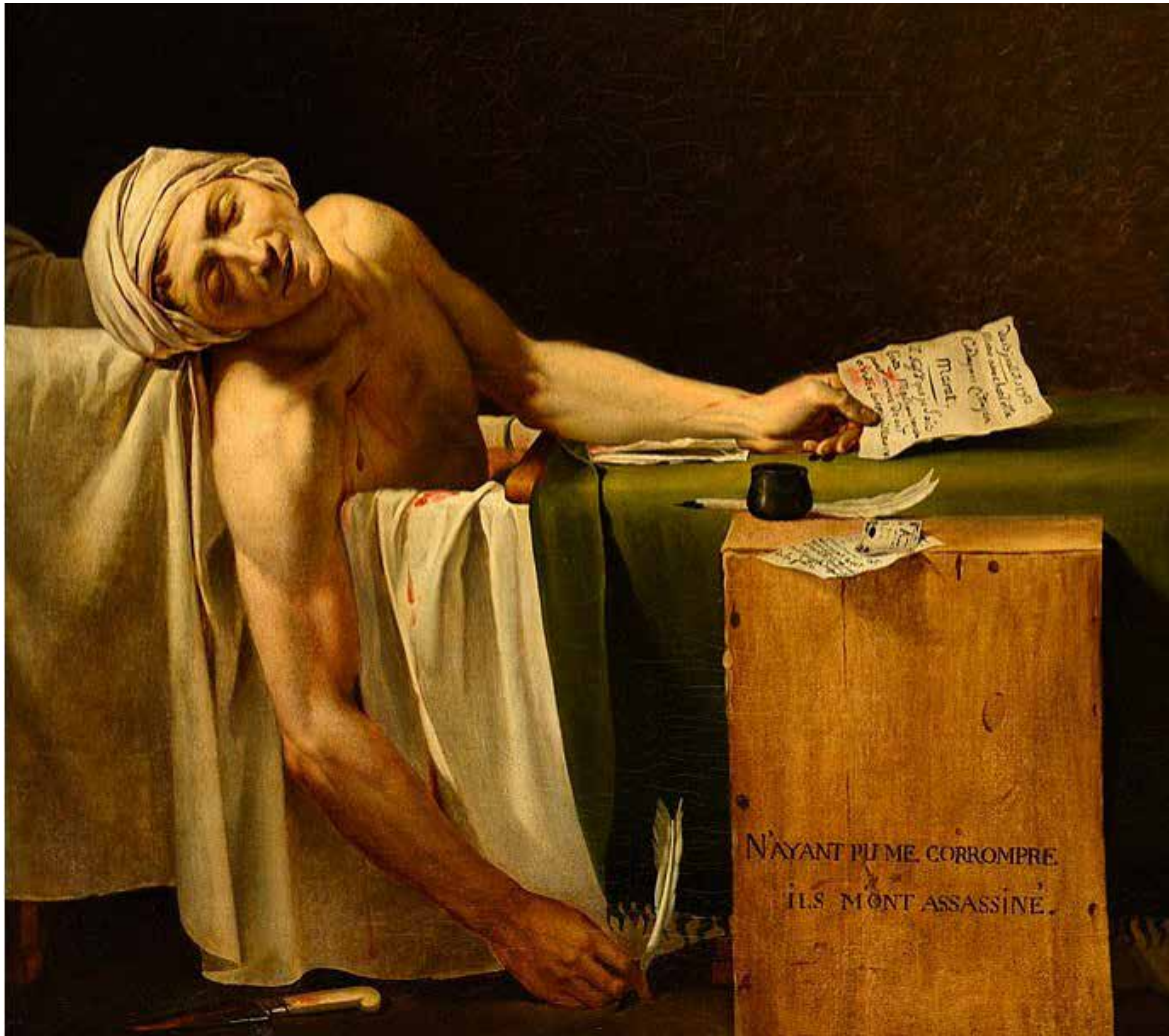
Finally, it is worth pointing out: Although dapsone is effective against symptoms caused by dermatitis herpetiformis, the drug is definitely not an alternative to a gluten-free diet.

Prognosis

As long as dermatitis herpetiformis is undiagnosed and untreated, it has a major impact on a person’s quality of life. The intense itching keeps the patient awake, which has many harmful consequences.

But when the diagnosis of dermatitis herpetiformis has been made and a strict gluten-free diet has been started, the prognosis is good in the long term. The patient can live a normal life, the disease does not affect life expectancy, and the risk of complications is minimal. In fact, a Finnish study suggested that people with treated dermatitis herpetiformis live slightly longer than healthy people. A disease that prolongs life can be a comfort and encouragement to maintain a strict diet.

The risk of complications is minimal, but it exists. In the first few years after diagnosis (when the protective effect of a gluten-free diet has not yet taken effect), there is an



The Death of Marat, a painting by Jacques-Louis David. Public Domain

Jean-Paul Marat and Dermatitis Herpetiformis

Jean-Paul Marat (1743-1793) was a French physician, scientist and revolutionary, one of the leading figures of the French Revolution.

During the last five years of his life, he was bothered by a violently itchy rash. The only relief he could get was in a bathtub, where he spent his last years all day long. There he received his guests, and there he wrote his revolutionary newspaper articles, which were published in his own newspaper "L'ami du peuple." He had made many political enemies, and one of them was Marie-Anne Charlotte de Corday d'Armont.

And in the bathtub, he was reading a newspaper at the moment when his life came to an abrupt and violent end. Lying in his bathtub, he was murdered by Charlotte Corday. She stuck a kitchen knife into his chest. Charlotte Corday was immediately arrested, sentenced to death, and then publicly executed by guillotine. The murder caused a period of terror in France, around 1400 people were executed, among them Queen Marie Antoinette.

The newspaper, his own "L'ami du peuple", he read is preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris. And on the newspaper there were blood stains that DNA tests were carried out. It is said that many infectious diseases could be ruled out, although not with complete certainty. Unfortunately, HLA tests were not done for celiac disease.

Marat's skin disease has aroused a lot of interest and expert doctors have spent a lot of time trying to determine the diagnosis. There is much to suggest that the diagnosis was dermatitis herpetiformis, including the appearance and location of the rash. He had also lost considerable weight, suggesting malnutrition consistent with celiac disease.

increased risk of malignant diseases, such as lymphoma.

Lymphoma, a malignant disease originating from lymphoid tissue.

Lymphoma can be a serious but fortunately rare complication of untreated celiac and dermatitis herpetiformis. The two

main types are Hodgkin's lymphoma and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, the latter of which can occur with celiac and dermatitis herpetiformis.

Celiac disease, including dermatitis herpetiformis, is an autoimmune disease, which means that people with

celiac disease have an increased risk of developing other autoimmune diseases. Such diseases include type 1 diabetes, thyroid diseases, and skin diseases such as alopecia areata.

HEALTH

The miracle medicine Ozempic helps for everything? No, it doesn't, but...

Ozempic – a drug that has taken the world by storm and quickly become a topic of conversation both in medical circles and among the general public.

Used primarily to manage type 2 diabetes, but is also associated with weight loss, improved heart health, and most recently with the hope that it may even have a slowing effect on Alzheimer's disease. This drug has raised many questions about its potential and also some concerns about its side effects and ethical implications. Is Ozempic really the miracle drug that can solve everything – or is there reason to take it with a certain skepticism?

What exactly is Ozempic?

Ozempic is not just a new fad drug for weight loss. Basically, it's a drug to treat type 2 diabetes, and its active ingredient, semaglutide, is a so-called GLP-1 receptor agonist. This substance mimics a natural hormone in the body that helps regulate blood sugar levels. By stimulating insulin secretion when blood sugar is elevated and reducing the production of sugar from the liver, Ozempic helps diabetics manage their disease. Keeping blood sugar under control is crucial for avoiding long-term complications such as nerve damage, kidney problems, and heart disease. In that sense, Ozempic is a clear success.

But what really made Ozempic a talking point was its unexpected effect on body weight. A lot of studies have shown that patients who take Ozempic can experience significant weight loss. For people struggling with obesity – a problem that often goes

hand-in-hand with type 2 diabetes – this is an enticing side effect. And perhaps this is where the miracle medicine stamp came about.

Benefits of Ozempic – Not Just a Matter of Weight

Ozempic's weight-reducing effect has proven to be an added bonus, but there are more aspects to consider. High blood pressure and coronary artery disease can be positively affected by the drug, as Ozempic improves insulin sensitivity and reduces inflammation in the body – factors that can directly affect cardiovascular health. This means a significant improvement in quality of life for many, and it is no exaggeration to say that Ozempic can indeed have a big impact on the health of people with type 2 diabetes or obesity.

A weight loss of 5 kg is healthy for most of us, and with Ozempic, such a weight loss is easy to achieve. However, for the weight loss to be lasting – this can be worse and may mean that you have to use Ozempic all the time.

A more surprising discovery is Ozempic's potential effect on Alzheimer's disease. Research suggests that semaglutide may have a neuroprotective action, meaning it may help protect brain cells and possibly slow Alzheimer's progression. Of course, the idea that a diabetes drug can also have benefits for brain health raises hopes – and some skepticism.

As with any medication, Ozempic has its own side effects. One of the most common complaints is nausea and other stomach problems, especially at the beginning of treatment. More serious risks include inflammation of the pancreas, a rare but serious side effect. Perhaps the most eye-catching side effect that has at-



racted attention, however, is the "Ozempic face". This term refers to the changes in facial structure that some users have experienced after losing weight with the help of the drug.

When body fat decreases rapidly – which often happens when losing a lot of weight in a short period of time – it can lead to a loss of volume on the face. This causes the skin to become saggy and the face to have a more aged appearance. For a medicine that is supposed to improve health, this side effect may seem paradoxical: you may feel healthier, but the mirror image shows otherwise.

And it is important to know that the knowledge of Ozempic's side effects with very long-term use is unknown. What happens if you

use Ozempic for decades. No one can know that yet at this stage.

Ozempic raises a lot of questions, not only about health but also about ethics and society. An important aspect is the cost and availability of the drug. Ozempic is expensive, and for many people, price can be a determining factor in whether they can access the medication. This creates a potential inequality in healthcare, where a treatment that could benefit many people may be unavailable to those with lower incomes.

In addition, there is a risk that Ozempic is used by people without diabetes solely for the purpose of losing weight. A drug intended for a disease becomes in some circles a shortcut to a slimmer appearance, which can

lead to addiction and to side effects in healthy people. The question is whether this is a problem for society or whether it is up to the individual to decide. In any case, it reminds us of how complex medical ethics can be, and how difficult it is to draw a line between what is necessary and what is merely desirable.

Ozempic has undeniably revolutionized the treatment of type 2 diabetes and has been shown to have significant benefits for weight loss and heart health. It is difficult to turn a blind eye to the potential of this drug – not only for individuals but for the healthcare system as a whole. But miracle medicine is perhaps an exaggeration.

Ozempic does not solve everything, and it is important to understand that the medication comes with risks and ethical question marks. The Ozempic face is a reminder that all change has a downside, and the cost and availability of the drug remind us of the inequalities that still exist in healthcare.

Perhaps Ozempic is more of a symbol of the medical aspirations of our time: a powerful tool that, with the right handling, can help many, but which also reminds us of the importance of taking a step back and seeing the big picture. The future will tell whether Ozempic was a medical fad or a long-term solution to our biggest health problems – until then, we should receive this "miracle" with our eyes open and a healthy measure of caution.

Ozempic is a prescription medication. It is found in Finland but has become so popular that it can sometimes be difficult to obtain. A month's treatment costs over 100 €.

RUSSIAS WAR AGAINST UKRAINE

President Presented State Awards on the Eve of Energy Workers' Day



RUSSIAN INFLATION

The Ruble, Hyperinflation, and Divine Intervention: Russia's Heavenly Economic Policy

When the economy spirals out of control, printing presses are overheating, and the ruble teeters on the brink, what's the solution? In Russia, the answer has proven to be as creative as it is desperate: turn to God. The Orthodox Church, under Patriarch Kirill's leadership, has taken on the task of solving the nation's economic crisis—not through financial reforms or fiscal policy, but through prayers. Yes, prayers to combat inflation, strengthen the ruble, and defeat the dollar.

A Tumbling Economy: What Happened?

This celestial intervention has a very earthly cause. Officially, the Kremlin claims that inflation in Russia stands at 8%. Even this figure is painful for the average citizen, but behind the official narrative lies a harsher reality: some estimates suggest the real inflation rate is as high as 50%, with hyperinflation looming ominously on the horizon.

What's driving this crisis? One major factor is the relentless printing of money. Financing the war in Ukraine has demanded enormous sums, and the state has decided that the solution is simply to print more cash. On top of this, huge bonuses—

reportedly up to three million rubles per soldier—have been promised to those who voluntarily enlist in the army. These payouts, coupled with unchecked spending, have pushed prices up, devalued the ruble, and created a vicious cycle of rising interest rates and plummeting confidence in the currency.

The Russian Central Bank has responded by raising its key interest rate to 21%, with forecasts suggesting it could hit 25% by the year's end. Meanwhile, the ruble has lost 20% of its value against the dollar in just a few weeks, leaving the economy in freefall.

God as an Economic Advisor

Faced with this dire situation, and with pragmatic solutions seemingly out of reach, it's perhaps not surprising that Russia has turned to higher powers. Patriarch Kirill, who has consistently aligned himself with the Kremlin's directives, has ordered special prayers to combat inflation. Initially, these prayers will take place in monasteries, away from the public eye—perhaps to prevent widespread panic over the scale of the crisis.

But this is only the



beginning. If these initial efforts fail, all of Russia's churches will be mobilized in the fight against rising prices. Concurrently, prayers will also be offered to "defeat the dollar" and strengthen the ruble, as if foreign exchange markets could be swayed by holy water and crossed fingers.

And if even that doesn't work? Then comes the *pièce de résistance*: a massive religious procession through the streets of Moscow or St. Petersburg, aimed at shielding the nation and its people from economic hardship.

A Stark Contrast to Reality

It's hard not to raise an eyebrow at such measu-

res. While other nations grapple with inflation through interest rate hikes, fiscal reforms, and international cooperation, Russia is turning to spiritual remedies. Economists analyze supply chains, market trends, and capital flows, while Patriarch Kirill likely consults psalms for answers.

What does this reveal about Russia's economic state? At best, it's a symbolic gesture—a bid to instill hope in a population increasingly burdened by the crisis. At worst, it's a tragically comical admission that the government has no real tools left to address the situation.

Prayers and Processions: Inflation's New

Foe

The notion that a religious procession could stabilize the ruble or curb inflation might seem absurd to most, but it reflects the deeper issues plaguing Russia. The nation's economy is so entangled in the costs of war, systemic corruption, and political instability that traditional solutions appear ineffective.

Whether prayers and processions can truly save the ruble from its freefall remains to be seen. But if even divine intervention fails to rescue it, one is left wondering—*who, or what, could?*

RUSSIAN ECONOMY

Is hyperinflation coming up in Russia?

An analysis of Russia's economic crisis

Russia's economy is facing one of its biggest challenges in modern times. The economic sanctions that followed the invasion of Ukraine, combined with an increasingly isolated position in the global market, have created a perfect storm for the Russian ruble.

The drastic increase in the policy rate to 21%, with the prospect of further increases, is a clear sign that the Russian central bank is trying to fight inflation that threatens to spiral out of control.

Official statistics versus reality

The Russian government reports an inflation rate of around 8%. However, economists and experts agree that this figure does not reflect the real situation. The rising demand for goods, especially food and other basic goods, combined with disruptions in supply chains, has led to a significant increase in prices. Many Russians testify that the prices of food and other necessities have more than doubled in the past year.

Banknote presses run hot

To finance the war in Ukraine and compensate for the reduced revenues from oil and gas exports, the Russian government has had to print large

amounts of money. This has led to a sharp increase in the money supply in circulation, which in turn drives up inflation. Free currency trading has been abolished, and the ruble has depreciated sharply against other currencies. Although the official exchange rate is 100 rubles per dollar, in practice it is impossible for Russians to buy dollars at this rate.

A population in panic

The economic uncertainty has led to increased anxiety among the Russian population. Many Russians are trying to protect their savings by buying physical assets, such as housing and groceries. The phenomenon of hoarding buckwheat, a staple of the Russian diet, has become increasingly common.

The risk of hyperinflation in Russia is high. Historically, countries that have been hit by similar economic crises have often experienced hyperinflation. Hyperinflation is an extremely high rate of inflation, which can lead to a total collapse of a country's economy. To avoid hyperinflation, the Russian government must take drastic measures to stabilize the economy and regain the confidence of investors and the population.

Hyperinflation can occur very quickly, at a time when the population is suffering from something that could be called mass psychosis and everyone is rushing to the shops at the same time to get rid of their almost worthless banknotes.



This is not something new in Russia. In the early 90s, Russia had a period of over 1000% inflation. In a short time, the ruble lost over 90% of its value.

The high inflation, the reduced availability of foreign currency and the increased uncertainty pose a major threat to the standard of living of the Russian population. If the Russian government does not succeed in reversing the trend, the country risks ending up in a deep economic crisis with long-lasting consequences. The worst possible consequence is hyperinflation.

Consequences of a possible hyperinflation for the Russian population

Hyperinflation, an extremely high inflation rate, would have devastating consequences for the Russian population. Here

are some of the most likely outcomes:

Greatly reduced purchasing power: Money quickly loses its value, which means that wages and savings become worthless. Panicked buying accelerates, people buy everything they can as long as you get something for the rubles and in the end all the shelves are empty. People will no longer be able to buy the goods and services they need to survive.

Social unrest and instability: Economic crisis often leads to social unrest and political instability. Dissatisfaction with the government may increase, which may lead to protests and demonstrations.

Hunger and malnutrition: High food prices make it difficult for people to get enough food. This can lead to starva-

tion and malnutrition, especially among children and the elderly.

Loss of lifelong savings: Pensions, savings accounts, and other savings will be wiped out. Many people will lose everything they have worked for throughout their lives.

Fleeing the country: Many will try to leave the country to find better living conditions. This could lead to a mass exodus and create additional problems for neighbouring countries.

Disintegration of society: Hyperinflation can lead to a breakdown of society, with increased crime and violence.

Loss of confidence in the economic system: People will lose confidence in the economic system and the Russian ruble. This can lead to an increased use of alternative currencies or barter.

FM SERGEY LAVROV ABOUT FINLAND

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov is Wrong

A comment:

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's recent comments about Finland, made during an interview with Tucker Carlson, reveal a deeply flawed understanding of history, international relations, and the shifting dynamics of global alliances. His claims, which accuse Finland of reverting to the allegiances of the early 20th century, are as inaccurate as they are inflammatory.

Lavrov's statement suggests that Finland's decision to join NATO in 2023 stemmed from latent hostility toward Russia, equating Finland's modern alignment with its actions during World War II when it temporarily cooperated with Nazi Germany. This comparison not only distorts historical reality but also ignores the context and motivations behind Finland's recent choices.

The Context of NATO Membership

For decades, Finland was the embodiment of neutrality. Following World War II, Finland walked a delicate tightrope, maintaining amicable relations with the Soviet Union and, later, Russia, while simultaneously integrating with Western economic and cultural structures. Lavrov's nostalgic depiction of sauna diplomacy and hockey matches reflects this period of pragmatic coexistence.

However, the world

changed dramatically in 2022 when Russia launched its unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. This act of aggression shook Europe to its core, prompting nations to reevaluate their security strategies. For Finland, a country with a long border shared with Russia, the invasion served as a stark reminder of its vulnerability. Memories of the Winter War (1939–1940), when Finland heroically resisted Soviet aggression, resurfaced. This historical experience, combined with the shocking brutality of the Ukraine conflict, fundamentally altered Finnish public opinion.

Before 2022, a significant majority of Finns opposed NATO membership. Within weeks of Russia's attack on Ukraine, that opposition transformed into overwhelming support for joining the alliance. Lavrov's narrative conveniently ignores this shift, implying that Finland's decision was driven by animosity rather than necessity.

The Hitler Comparison: A False and Offensive Analogy

Perhaps the most egregious aspect of Lavrov's statement is his suggestion that Finland's NATO membership aligns it with the ideology of Adolf Hitler. This claim is both historically inaccurate and deeply offensive.

During World War

II, Finland's temporary cooperation with Nazi Germany was a matter of survival, not ideology. Having been invaded by the Soviet Union in the Winter War, Finland sought assistance wherever it could, even from Germany, to protect its sovereignty. The partnership was one of convenience and was limited in scope. Unlike the Axis powers, Finland did not adopt fascism or embrace Hitler's broader agenda.

The comparison falls apart further when applied to today's geopolitical landscape. NATO is a defensive alliance, rooted in democratic values and mutual protection, not conquest or domination.

Hitler's regime, by contrast, was defined by imperialism, genocide, and totalitarianism. To draw parallels between Finland's NATO membership and its wartime actions is not only misleading but diminishes the gravity of the atrocities committed during World War II.

What Lavrov Gets Wrong About Neutrality

Lavrov's suggestion that Finland abandoned neutrality out of latent hostility or impatience is equally misguided. Neutrality served Finland well for decades, but neutrality is only viable when both parties respect it. By invading Ukraine, Russia demonstrated

that it does not honor the sovereignty of its neighbors.



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The invasion was not an isolated incident but part of a broader pattern of Russian aggression, including the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and interventions in Georgia and Moldova. Faced with these precedents, Finland made the rational decision to seek the collective security offered by NATO. It was not a choice against Russia but a choice for Finland's safety and independence.

Ignoring the Real Catalyst: Russia's Actions

Lavrov conveniently omits the central role that Russia's own actions have played in reshaping Europe's security environment. The invasion of Ukraine violated international law, undermined trust, and destabilized the region. Instead of introspection or acknowledgment of these facts, Lavrov's comments deflect blame onto Finland and other Western nations.

The irony is glaring. Russia's aggression has driven countries like Finland and

Sweden to abandon their long-standing policies of neutrality. Lavrov's refusal to recognize this cause-and-effect relationship underscores a broader unwillingness within the Kremlin to confront the consequences of its own decisions.

A Path Forward Requires Honesty

Lavrov's remarks about Finland are not just wrong—they are a missed opportunity. Instead of stoking resentment with baseless accusations, Russian leadership could reflect on why its neighbors feel the need to align against it. Finland's NATO membership is not a declaration of enmity toward Russia but a pragmatic response to an increasingly unpredictable and aggressive neighbor.

If Russia truly wishes to rebuild trust with its neighbors, it must start by addressing the root causes of this mistrust. That begins with ending its war in Ukraine, respecting the sovereignty of all nations, and engaging in genuine diplomacy rather than propagandistic rhetoric. Until then, comments like Lavrov's will only serve to deepen the divide between Russia and the rest of Europe.

In the end, the responsibility for Russia's isolation lies not with Finland, NATO, or the West but squarely with the Kremlin itself.

Sergey Lavrov 6.12.2024

"Katso, olemme olleet hyvin ystävällisiä esimerkiksi Suomen kanssa. Yhdessä yössä suomalaiset palasivat toisen maailmansodan valmistelun alkuvuosiin, kun he olivat Hitlerin parhaita liittolaisia. Ja kaikki tämä puolueettomuus, kaikki tämä ystävyys, saunassa käyminen, yhdessä pelaamalla jääkiekkoa, tämä kaikki katosi yhdessä yössä. Joten ehkä tämä oli syvällä heidän sydämissään, ja puolueettomuus ja höveliäisyys rasittivat heitä, en tiedä."

"Titta, vi har varit väldigt vänskapliga med Finland, till exempel. Över en natt kom finnarna tillbaka till de första åren av förberedelserna för andra världskriget när de var Hitlers bästa allierade. Och all denna neutralitet, all denna vänskap, att bada bastu tillsammans, spelade hockey tillsammans, allt detta försvann över en natt, så det här var kanske djupt i deras hjärtan, och neutraliteten belastade dem, och hövligheten belastade dem, jag vet inte."

"Look, we have been very friendly with Finland, for example. Overnight, the Finns came back to the early years of preparation for World War II when they were best allies of Hitler. And all this neutrality, all this friendship, going to sauna together, playing hockey together, all this disappeared overnight. So maybe this was deep in their hearts, and the neutrality was burdening them, and niceties were burdening for them. I don't know."

«Слушайте, наприклад, ми були дуже дружні з Фінляндією. За одну ніч фіни повернулися до перших років підготовки до Другої світової війни, коли вони були найкращими союзниками Гітлера. І весь цей нейтралітет, вся ця дружба, відвідування сауни разом, разом граючи в хокей, усе це зникло за одну ніч, тож, можливо, це було глибоко в їхніх серцях, і нейтралітет обтяжував їх, і ніжності обтяжували їх».

AI

AI-Generated Podcasts: A New Era of Audio Content with NotebookLM



**Podcast in English:
Russian disinformation**
<https://vpress.ovh/podcasts.htm>

In the rapidly evolving landscape of digital media, artificial intelligence continues to push boundaries, reshaping industries and redefining creative processes. One of the most groundbreaking developments is Google's NotebookLM, an advanced language model with the potential to revolutionize the podcasting world. With its ability to generate human-quality audio content, NotebookLM is paving the way for a new era of AI-driven storytelling, education, and entertainment.

The Emergence of AI-Generated Podcasts

As the podcasting industry continues to grow at an unprecedented rate, content creators and media companies are always on the lookout for innovative tools to streamline production and enhance creativity. NotebookLM, initially celebrated for its ability to generate high-quality written content, has now ventured into the realm of audio. This cutting-edge

technology is capable of producing podcasts that are nearly indistinguishable from those created by human hosts, opening up exciting possibilities for the future of digital content.

The appeal of NotebookLM-generated podcasts lies in several key features that set them apart from traditional podcasts:

Natural-Sounding Voice: NotebookLM can produce audio content with a voice that mimics the natural cadence and tone of human speech. This makes it difficult for listeners to discern that the podcast is AI-generated, offering a seamless listening experience.

Diverse Range of Topics: Whether it's breaking news, current events, or light-hearted storytelling, NotebookLM can tackle a wide array of subjects. Its versatility makes it an ideal tool for content creators looking to explore different genres without the constraints of time and labor-intensive production.

20 Everyday Abbreviations You Need to Know (and Maybe a Few You Don't)



Abbreviations are everywhere these days. From texting acronyms to technical jargon, those handy 3-letter (and sometimes longer) combos can be confusing if you're not in the know. But fear not, fellow abbreviation adventurer! This article will equip you with the knowledge to decipher 20 of the most common abbreviations you'll encounter in everyday life.

1. **LOL:** Laughing Out Loud (This one might already be a classic for many!)
2. **BRB:** Be Right Back (Perfect for a quick bathroom break during a chat)
3. **OMG:** Oh My God (Expresses surprise or strong emotion)
4. **IMHO:** In My Humble Opinion (A way to preface your opinion politely)
5. **** ASAP:**** As Soon As Possible (Lights a fire under someone... nicely)
6. **FYI:** For Your Information (A heads-up for someone)
7. **ETA:** Estimated Time of Arrival (Lets you know when to expect someone)
8. **RSVP:** Please Reply (Formal request for a response to an invitation)
9. **PDF:** Portable Document Format (A common file format for documents)
10. **JPG:** Joint Photographic Experts Group (A popular image file format)
11. **GIF:** Graphics Interchange Format (Another image format, known for animations)
12. **TIFF:** Tagged Image File Format (Used for high-quality images)
13. **WWW:** World Wide Web (The foundation of the internet we know)
14. **HTTP:** Hypertext Transfer Protocol (The language webpages use to talk)
15. **GPS:** Global Positioning System (Helps you navigate the world)
16. **ATM:** Automated Teller Machine (Your friendly neighborhood cash dispenser)
17. **DIY:** Do It Yourself (For the handy folks out there)
18. **VIP:** Very Important Person (Someone who gets special treatment)
19. **TBA:** To Be Announced (Stay tuned for more information)
20. **TBD:** To Be Determined (We're still figuring things out)

This is just a taste of the abbreviation world, but with these 20 under your belt, you'll be well on your way to deciphering the everyday lingo, from casual texts to technical documents. So, the next time you see an abbreviation that leaves you scratching your head, remember this list and keep on exploring the wonderful world of shorthand communication!

Wasa Daily

A modern newspaper with a layout with features of the press of the 1870s. Back then, newspapers had only 4-8 pages. Lots of text, but no images at all, so there's a lot to read on a few pages. Our paper is one of the very few newspapers in English serving English-speaking inhabitants in the Osthrobotnia region

The magazine contains quotations from old daily newspapers taken from the National Archives (digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi). GPT3, Gemini, Aria and Monica do some of the routine editing work, such as translation, corrector reading, and short notice writing. All texts have been checked by journalists and the editorial staff is responsible for all the content of the texts.

Wasa Daily is a daily newspaper type publication, so far it is published on Sunday mornings. But our goal is for it to come out every morning in the future.

The magazine is available online for free.

Editor-in-chief Hans Björknäs.

Readers' writings are welcome!

The magazine is locally owned and will remain so. For ever!

Editorial office: Wasa Daily, Koulukatu 37 B 7, 65100 Vaasa, tel. +358-40-5462455.

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Email: wasadagblad@gmail.com

Those who know a little more are those who read Wasa Daily

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Wasa Dagblad
Photo Supplement

Karifestival
detta
vecka!

Republiken president Alexander Stubb i Vaasa 27.4.2024

Kalevaspeleinen i Vaasa 27-30.6.2024

Kremlin gör natt av sina motståndare - 1939 liksom nu

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En ny press: Grunden för lycka och demokrati

Kor-festivalen

Sinebrychhoffin taidemuseo

Kremlin gör natt av sina motståndare - 1939 liksom nu

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Pain-maja, en Pörtomdiktare

Puccinis "TOSCA" KOMMER TILL VASA I JANUARI

Sinebrychhoffin taidemuseo

Kremlin gör natt av sina motståndare - 1939 liksom nu

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Pörtom kyrka
Pirttikylän kirkko
The Church in Pörtom

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Ihana kuofestivaali tulossa!

Hylkeenpyynti Raippaluodossa 1895

Jussi Adler-Olsen

Venäjän omittainen diplomaattinen kieli

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Hylkeenpyynti Raippaluodossa 1895

VOIKKA LEHDISTÖ: Ummellisuuden ja demokratian perusta

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Pain-maja "Tosca" Näin löydät tie-oppaan on tulos kirkkoon!

NAISTEN ÄÄNI-elämäntutkimus

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Mysterious green giants in the Laasi-palatsi square, Helsinki

Mystical East in Ika-noja

All EU-candidates

Pain-maja "Tosca" is coming to Vaasa

ROAD CHURCHES

The Kremlin mocks its opponents

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What a wonderful start week we have ahead of us!

Cycling Week in Vaasa this week

Climate Change's Profound Impact on Finland

Kaleva Games in Vaasa 27-30.6

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The Kremlin mocks its opponents

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CHOIR FESTIVAL

A Free Place: The Pathway of Happiness and Democracy

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Eero Järnefelt (1863-1937)

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I K Inha (1865-1930)

I Replot 1895

Raippaluodossa 1895

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Tasavallan presidentti Alexander Stubb Vaasassa 27.4.24

Jeff Goodell: The Heat will kill you first

Kaleva kilpailut Vaasassa 27-30.6

Jussi Adler-Olsen

Vaasan istutetaan 70 000 puita

Hylkeenpyynti Raippaluodossa 1895

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Finland's president Alexander Stubb in Vaasa 27.4.2024

Jeff Goodell: The Heat will kill you first

Kaleva Games in Vaasa 27-30.6

Jussi Adler-Olsen

A tree for everyone in Vaasa

ROAD CHURCHES

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HOROSCOPE FOR DECEMBER 2024

December Horoscope: What the Stars Have in Store for You

Aries (Mar 21–Apr 19)
Santa knows if you've been naughty or nice, Aries. But knowing you, you're probably organizing his gift list and suggesting a reindeer rebrand. Take a breath—December's all about fun, not micromanagement.

Taurus (Apr 20–May 20)
Your love for all things cozy hits its peak this month. Expect a lot of fuzzy socks, mulled wine, and arguments over whether the tree is perfectly symmetrical. Spoiler: It's not, but that's okay.

Gemini (May 21–Jun 20)
You're the life of every holiday party... unless there are three at the same time, which you'll somehow attend simultaneously. Just remember: you can't RSVP "Yes" to everything—unless you clone yourself.

Cancer (Jun 21–Jul 22)
Cancers, December is your time to shine... in the kitchen, wrapping gifts, and orchestrating heartfelt traditions. But be careful: not everyone appreciates hand-knit elf costumes for

their pets.

Leo (Jul 23–Aug 22)
You're the star at the top of the tree this month, Leo. But don't hog the spotlight too much; let someone else light a candle or two. Sharing is the greatest gift, even if it's just the last gingerbread cookie.

Virgo (Aug 23–Sep 22)
Your December checklist includes organizing Secret Santa, color-coding decorations, and perfecting your "surprised" face for predictable gifts. Try to relax. Even if the bows aren't perfectly tied, the world will keep spinning.

Libra (Sep 23–Oct 22)
December has you torn between binge-watching holiday movies or hand-making snowflakes for every window. Tip: Do both. Balance is your superpower—just don't try to bake and gift-wrap at the same time.

Scorpio (Oct 23–Nov 21)
You've got strong opinions about eggnog and even stronger ones about who gets to control the holiday playlist. Channel that passion into spreading joy, not just enforcing Mariah Carey exclusivity.

Sagittarius (Nov 22–Dec

21)
Sagittarius, you're practically a snow globe of cheer this month. Travel, adventure, and mistletoe shenanigans are in your stars. Just don't forget to text your family back between ski runs and mulled cider.

Capricorn (Dec 22–Jan 19)
You've probably planned your New Year's resolutions already, Capricorn. Take a break and enjoy the moment. Life isn't just about productivity—sometimes it's about eating your weight in holiday fudge.

Aquarius (Jan 20–Feb 18)
Your unconventional spirit makes for unique celebrations. A disco ball instead of a star on the tree? Genius. Just don't expect Grandma to embrace your "ugly sweater/dance-off" theme immediately.

Pisces (Feb 19–Mar 20)
Pisces, you're a soft-hearted snowflake this December. Embrace your dreamy side, but don't get so lost in holiday sentimentality that you forget where you hid the gifts. Hint: Check the freezer.



NEWS 100 YEARS AGO



The Evening Courier

Sunday, December 22, 1924

This is a fictional daily newspaper that contains completely authentic news from exactly 100 years ago with the aim of giving the reader an idea of what everyday life

A HORRIBLE BLOODY SCENE IN KAUAJOKI THIS MORNING

Father beats daughter with an axe. A horrifying bloodbath took place this morning in the village of Valkama in Kauhajoki. For no apparent reason, Kaappo Vaaranmaa, a resident of the house there, hit his daughter on the head with an axe, causing a gaping wound and breaking her skull. The victim of the assault was taken unconscious to Kauhajoki Municipal Hospital, where she received first aid. The daughter had only recently gotten married. Vaaranmaa is already an elderly man. Later, it was reported that the daughter is in a very bad condition. She has been revived, but she keeps falling unconscious again.

HULDA EKHOLM TURNS 70

Tomorrow is Miss Hulda Ekholm's 70th birthday. Who is it? Maybe a non-local person asks. But anyone who has ever lived in Kaskinen has probably noticed this lively little lady, who can probably still pass for 50 springs through her fresh and awake mind, and who brings with her a breath of the Kaskinen that a couple of decades ago gave the town a more hospitable, pleasant and distinguished character than it is now.

KASKÖ

Bio Espis shows Wednesday at 7 p.m. "Two People" by John Rusell. Music is performed during the performances by Weber.

Yttermark's bull association's autumn meeting. At the autumn meeting of the Yttermark Bull Association last Sunday, the bull Ehto was boarded for a year in the same place, where it had been for several years before, namely with the farmer Karl Erik Antas in V.-Yttermark for 4,200 marks. The bull Urban was boarded with the farmer Oskar Bäck in Ö.-Yttermark for 3,000 mk.

NÄRPES

Death fail. Yesterday, December 16, Leander Nyholm died at his home in Närpes at the age of 68. Sheriff Nyholm was a widely loved person, who at his death leaves a respected memory. Yttermark Lantmannagille. Yttermark Lantmannagille held its annual meeting last Sunday. The farmer K. J. Gulin was elected chairman. In turn, the resigning board members August Gran and Viktor

Söderback were re-elected. Also the auditors Axel Pellfolk and Alfred Norrholm together with the deputy auditor E. A. Vickman. A lively discussion revolved around the question of how and by what means to get a new impetus in guild activities. It was with a certain sadness that people reminisced about the time when Jacob Tegengren was chairman and J. A. Ekman secretary and K. V. Mannfoik commissioner in the guild.

ÖVERMARK.

Priesthood. The position of vicar in Övermark "has been applied for by the vicar of Eckerö, the appointed vicar of Larsmo V. E. Jansson and the vicar of Föglö J. Ed v. Törnroos. Municipal loans. The County Governor has confirmed the decision of the municipal council in Övermark of 24 September this year to take out a 100,000 mks loan with a longer repayment period than to be used for the construction of elementary school buildings.

KORSNÄS.

Church meeting. At the church meeting on the 15th, members of the

church council were elected. All were re-elected except K. J. Långvik, who had moved away. In his place, Henrik Silfversten was elected. All were re-elected as members of the church

council. 1 The housing committee also re-elected all members. When choosing with ! The following members were elected to the Examination Board: K. J. Nybond, O. Sikström and K. H.

SIEMENS' "LUZETTE"

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Filialer i Åbo och Wasa

HUMOUR ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

Wedding

Old witty master Grundman was invited to a wedding and asked as an old family friend to say a few words to the bride, young, beautiful and blushing:

— To me, who has followed the fates of Lisa and her parents for the last 19 years, it seems that she inherited her wisdom from her father
The he did not know what to say, received a flashing look from his wife, regained his composure and ability to speak, and said:
— Because look, her mother still has hers left.

Hovnarren 16/23

NO IMAGINATION.

Teacher: You were absent yesterday, why don't you have a certificate with you?
The student; My mother was not at home.
Teacher: But your father?
Student: He's not good enough. He has no imagination,

WHEN THE KING IS GONE

Teacher: Who rules when the king is gone?
Student: The Crown Prince!
And if the crown prince is not of legal age?
Then his eldest son reigns!

HARD TO PREVENT,

— I can't stand strangers kissing my children.
— I don't like it either, but. It's impossible to do anything about it.
— Why that?
— Both my daughters have turned 18.

DRILL.

— Now don't stand there and lose your hood,

as if you were Columbus when he saw New York for the first time.

MY BELOVED LORD,

— Why do you always sleep in the tram?
— So that I don't have to see the ladies standing.

IN COURT

Offender: I would like a defense attorney,
The judge: When you were captured, you had your hand in a stranger's pocket. What do you think a defense lawyer can say in defense of such a person?
The culprit: That's exactly what I'm terribly curious to hear.

SLOW TRAIN

Few high-speed trains. The passenger: Say, can't we get to town a little faster?
Stinsen: We can, but we should probably take the train with us.

A THOUSAND HEMORRHOIDS

Two four-year-old girls are talking to each other:
The first: My father is so rich that he owns several stone houses and factories.
The other: What are they, but my grandmother has a thousand hemorrhoids.

TEETH

— Grandfather! How often do we get teeth?
— Three times, the first two times we get them for free, but the third time we have to pay for them ourselves.

WIDOW

The teacher asked:
— can one of you explain to me what "widow" means..
— A widow, answered little Anna, is a wife who lived with her husband for so long that he died.

SWIMMING COMPETITION.

Little Karl was with his mother at a swimming compe-

tion. Now follows - said the mother - 100 meter breaststroke for ladies.
Little Karl: — Mother — is it forbidden to use the arms?

EINSTEIN

— Has the lady read Einstein's theory of relativity?
— Well, yes, I'll wait until it comes out as a film.

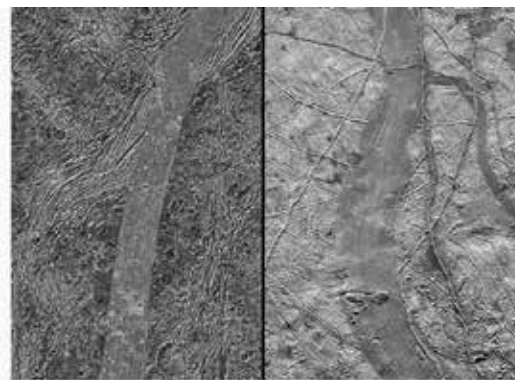
SEEN WITH YOUR OWN FEET

— I have a good friend who usually says that you never know anything about anything until you have seen with your own feet where the shoe pinches.

Mail man

"Where have you been, my little darling?" asked little Albert's mother, when he came home after being gone for a couple of hours.
"Yes, we were out with Kalle and Olle playing postman," answered the darling.
"Oh really! How did it happen then?"
»Well, we went around to all the houses around here and put letters in all the boxes.»
"But were they really real

The astronomic picture of the week:



Comparison of Ganymede and Europa features.jpg

This image, taken by NASA's Galileo spacecraft, shows a same-scale comparison between Arbelia Sulcus on Jupiter's moon Ganymede (left) and an unnamed band on another Jovian moon, Europa (right). Arbelia Sulcus is one of the smoothest lanes of bright terrain identified on Ganymede, and shows very subtle striations along its length. Arbelia contrasts markedly from the surrounding heavily cratered dark terrain.

NASA/JPL/Brown University

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From our readers

We very much welcome submissions from our readers. Comments, stories, memories, debate, news from home. Probably this will be the most important part of this spring paper. But space is limited, so please write as short as possible! So please send posts to: wasadagblad@gmail-com

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