

WASA DAILY

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The past year - 2024

The past year – a mix of light and shade 2024 – a year of challenges and progress

The past year has been a year of contrasts. While the world continues to recover from the pandemic and the war in Ukraine casts a long shadow over Europe, Finland has managed to maintain its position as one of the most stable and happy countries in the world.

Health and well-being

COVID-19 has moved from a pandemic to an endemic one, and society has adapted to a new normal. Vaccinations and increased knowledge of the spread of infections have significantly reduced the disease burden. Despite this, the country's wellbeing services counties, especially the wellbeing services county of Ostrobothnia, have faced major challenges. Cuts, staff shortages and deteriorating quality of care have become more common. The question of how to ensure sustainable well-being for future generations is more topical than ever.

Economy and defence

The Finnish economy has continued to be under pressure, and central government debt has grown strongly. Taxes and fees have been increased to balance the budget, but the impact on households and businesses has been felt. At the same time, defence spending has increased significantly and cooperation with NATO has deepened. The improved security situation has forced Finland to place more emphasis on defence, which has affected other sectors of society.



War and peace

The war in Ukraine has continued to escalate, and the humanitarian crisis in the region is deep. Russia's invasion has had serious consequences for Europe's security and economy. Despite extensive sanctions and military support for Ukraine, it has not been possible to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. Russia's changed nuclear doctrine has further increased tensions and created an uncertain future for Europe.

The war in Gaza, with all its disastrous consequences, has been going on all year.

And the situation in Syria since the recent change of power is completely unclear. The former poet, who had hundreds of thousands of lives in terms of conscience, was received with warm hands in Moscow.

Warmer Finland

The past year has also marked a clear turning point in our climate. For the first time, the average temperature in Finland has exceeded 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial times. Although this growth may seem small, it has already begun to have significant consequences for our nature and society.

Extreme weather events such as longer and more intense heat waves, heavy rainfall and more irregular rainfall have become more frequent. Weather disasters have not yet been experienced in Finland, even though winters have become shorter, in Southern and Central Finland skiing conditions are starting to disappear altogether and the spruce bark beetle is spreading. These changes affect everything from agriculture and forestry to health and infrastructure. Sea le-

vel rise threatens coastal areas, and changing weather patterns affect ecosystems and biodiversity.

The fact that the average temperature has exceeded the 1.5-degree target, set in the Paris Agreement, is a strong reminder that the climate crisis is here and now. It is crucial that we step up our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate.

What awaits in the future?

It is difficult to predict what the future will look like. But one thing is certain: the world will continue to change at an ever-accelerating pace. To meet

the challenges ahead, we must work together to build a more sustainable and equitable society.

The past year has been a year of both light and shadow. But by working together, we can overcome the challenges we face and create a better future for ourselves and future generations.

And finally, Finland – still an oasis in a stormy world

Although Finland has faced several challenges over the past year, it has managed to maintain its position as one of the most stable and democratic nations in the world. The high quality of life and strong community of Finns have proven to be a great asset in difficult times.

Photo Supplement



Cover picture: Joulu

NEWS



Giacomo Puccini's classic Tosca, set to premiere on January 16, 2025

Vaasa City Theatre's opera for the 2024-2025 season will be Giacomo Puccini's classic Tosca, set to premiere in January 2025.

Puccini's *Tosca* takes over the Romeo stage in January 2025, directed by Vaasa City Theatre's artistic director Seppo Välinen and conducted by Anna-Maria Helsing, who has been appointed the chief conductor of Vaasa City Orchestra for the years 2025-2028. The costumes for the production are designed by Emilia Eriksson, with set design by Mika Haaranen. The adaptation of the opera is by Touko Niemi.

The title role of Floria

Tosca will be portrayed by soprano Reetta Haavisto, while the roles of Baron Scarpia and Mario Cavaradossi will be played by baritone Waltteri Torikka and tenor Mika Pohjonen, respectively. Other roles will be performed by Heikki Aalto, Jacob Waselius, and Henri Uusitalo. The opera is a collaboration between Vaasa City Orchestra and Vaasa Opera Association Choir, and it is set to premiere on Thursday, January 16, 2025, at Vaasa City Theatre's Romeo stage.

"*Tosca* is a truly wonderful opera musically, offering a bit of everything. It's great that our orchestra gets to perform this piece, and we have our own orchestration for it. I'm extremely happy with the fantastic lineup of soloists!" says

the opera's conductor Anna-Maria Helsing.

"*Tosca* is one of Giacomo Puccini's three great operas and represents the verismo style. Verismo emphasizes naturalism, portraying ordinary people in everyday situations. *Tosca*'s intense and fast-paced thriller unfolds over the course of one day in June 1800," describes director Seppo Välinen.

Tosca is an Italian three-act opera with music by Giacomo Puccini and libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, based on Victorien Sardou's five-act drama *La Tosca*. The action takes place in Rome around the year 1800, amidst the political upheaval caused by Napoleon's invasion of Northern Italy. The ruling powers attempt to suppress Napoleon's suppor-

ters through terror, and death sentences are part of everyday life.

Vaasa City Theatre's decision to bring *Tosca* to its program is a significant step in diversifying the city's opera offerings and reinforces Vaasa's reputation as an opera city. This production not only promises unforgettable experiences but

also strengthens the city's position as a cultural hub in Finland.

Puccini's Passion: From Family Duty to Operatic Glory

Giacomo Puccini, born into a musical dynasty in Lucca, Italy in 1858,



WITH A TABLET YOU CAN READ THIS PAPER ANYWHERE:



Like here in Levi, Finnish Lapland

wasn't destined for the stage – at least not initially. Expected to follow his father's footsteps as a church musician, a young Puccini found solace in the grand operas of Verdi. This ignited a passion that would redefine Italian opera for generations to come.

Orphaned at a young age, Puccini persevered, enrolling in Milan Conservatory. Despite initial struggles, his undeniable talent shone through. His graduation piece, "Capriccio Sin-fonico," received praise for its innovation and emotional depth, hallmarks that would become synonymous with his operatic works.

Puccini's early operas met with mixed success. Yet, his unwavering determination and keen understanding of audience desires led to his breakthrough with "Manon Lescaut" in 1893. The opera's heart-wrenching story and soaring melodies captivated audiences across Europe.

Over the next three decades, Puccini redefined opera. He crafted masterpieces like "La bohème," a poignant portrayal of love and loss amongst struggling artists, and "Tosca," a thrilling exploration of love, betrayal, and political turmoil.

Puccini wasn't afraid to push boundaries. "Madama Butterfly," with its tragic depiction of a Japanese geisha abandoned by her American lover, shocked audiences with its stark realism. Yet, its powerful music and timeless themes cemented Puccini's place as a giant of the operatic stage.

Giacomo Puccini's life ended tragically in 1924. But his legacy lives on. His operas continue to be performed worldwide, their passionate melodies and unforgettable characters captivating audiences young and old. Puccini's story is a testament to the transformative power of passion, proving that even from a path of duty, true artistic genius can blossom.

*** COMMUNICATIONS**

Train services to Seinäjoki to increase, bus services to decrease at the turn of the year

Changes to public transport services between Seinäjoki and Vaasa from 2.1.2025

The frequency of public transport between Seinäjoki and Vaasa will change at the beginning

of January. The South Ostrobothnia Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment announces that VR will restart train services that will allow passengers to arrive in Vaasa from Seinäjoki already at eight in the morning. This change will lead to a reduction in bus services, as some services would overlap with train services.



At the turn of the year, the following bus services will be discontinued:

07.15 Seinäjoki-Vaasa (express bus)

15.00 Vaasa-Seinäjoki (express bus)

The services to be discontinued have run directly along Highway 18 without stopping in the centres of Isokyrö or Ylistaro. In addition, there will be minor schedule changes to some other frequencies between connections.

The aim of the changes is to make the provision of public transport more efficient and to take into account the growing potential for the use of train services. VR's reform is expected to improve the flow of commuting especially for early morning passengers.

*** VAMK**

Wasa Innovation Center and Vaasa University of Applied Sciences intensify their cooperation with a central partnership agreement

Wasa Innovation Center (WIC) and Vaasa University of Applied Sciences (VAMK) have signed an important partnership agreement that strengthens cooperation between the organizations and lays the foundation for systematic and productive cooperation.

The agreement, signed on 16 December, aims to deepen the existing partnership and find new ways to contribute to the region's development. The signatories are WIC's CEO Sture Udd and VAMK's CEO Hannu Vahtera.

"A significant addition to the partner network" VAMK's Rector Hannu Vahtera sees great potential in the collaboration: "I am pleased

that our most important partner network is growing and now also includes such a significant regional developer as Wasa Innovation Center. Our common ambition is to promote effective research, development and innovation projects for the benefit of our entire region," he says.

Sture Udd, CEO of Wasa Innovation Center, emphasizes the mutual benefits of the collaboration: "I hope that together with students and VAMK's experts, we can achieve something new and meaningful. I believe that our cooperation is mutually beneficial. The innovative solutions we have created can be utilised in teaching and RDI activities, and we can find expertise and talented new employees for our company's international operations.

"Looking at international openings" VAMK's Director of Research, Development and Innovation Marja-Riitta Vest expects concrete results in the future: "We are already collaborating within the framework of the Wasa Future Festival and the WIC Science Channel, among others. In the future, I look forward to interesting international project openings that combine our expertise and produce groundbreaking solutions to today's burning issues," says Vest.

Important partnership supports regional development The Key Partnership Agreement provides companies and communities with the opportunity to develop

their business operations in a sustainable and responsible manner and to attract the best experts in the field. The cooperation is based on an annual agreement and aims to ensure that companies have access to skilled labour in the future. Vaasa University of Applied Sciences is known for its work-oriented teaching and internationality. The focus of the training is energy-efficient technology, business expertise in the export industry and modern social and health services. The collaboration with Wasa Innovation Center strengthens VAMK's role as a pillar of development in the region and offers students valuable opportunities to participate in innovation projects.

Source: STTInfo/VAMK



Image:

From left: VAMK's Rector, Managing Director Hannu Vahtera and Service Business Manager Jenna Puska, Managing Director of Wasa Innovation Center Sture Udd and VAMK's Director of RDI and Service Business Marja-Riitta Vest. Satu Aaltonen/ VAMK

*** WINTER SWIMMING**

Vaasa offers an endorphin bang!



A unique experience awaits in Vaasa's inner harbour once again when the city's popular ice swimming spot was opened on 1 November. This free recreational area, open to all, offers the opportunity to enjoy the beneficial effects of ice swimming every day of the week from 6 am to 9 pm.

The ice swimming spot in the inner harbour has become a particular favourite among locals and tourists alike. The place offers a safe and easy-to-use way to experience winter recreation. Regular ice swimmers describe the experience as "wonderfully addictive". They say that alternating cold water and a warm sauna brings a pleasant burst of endorphins to the body and helps to recover from everyday stresses.

Ice swimming is known for its numerous health benefits, such as improving blood circulation, relieving stress and strengthening the immune system. The City of Vaasa wants to offer its residents and visito-

The Art Experience of the Week:



Hjalmar Munsterhjelm

19.10.1840, Toivoniemi, Tuulos

2.4.1905, Helsinki

A Finnish Country Road, 1865

rs the opportunity to enjoy these benefits completely free of charge.

Everyone interested is welcome to experience the refreshing effect of ice swimming in the inner harbour – alone, with friends or even with family. Bring a towel and courage and let ice swimming refresh your body and mind!

*** VAASAN SÄHKÖ**

Vaasan Sähkö's pricing may be discussed in the Supreme Court



The Consumer Ombudsman is applying to the Supreme Court for leave to appeal against the price change implemented by Vaasan Sähkö, according to a press release from the Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority.

In autumn 2024, the Market Court rejected the Consumer Ombudsman's request for an injunction concerning Vaasan Sähkö Oy's practices in connection with electricity price increases in autumn 2022. The Consumer Ombudsman applies to the Supreme Court for a preliminary ruling. In September 2022,

Vaasan Sähkö announced that it would increase the prices of the electricity sales contract as of 15 October 2022. As a result of the unilateral amendment to the terms of the agreement, the

price structure of the Basel Agreement was changed and the price of electricity rose from 10.7 cents per kilowatt hour to 29.9 cents per kilowatt hour. The price increase was almost 180 per-cent.

The Consumer Ombudsman applies to the Supreme Court for a preliminary ruling on whether an electricity company can increase the price of an electricity contract valid until further notice by more than would have been necessary solely due to changes in electricity procurement costs.

The Consumer Ombudsman considers that the Market Court's interpretation is very positive for Vaasan Sähkö and that the decision unjustifiably restricts the rights of consumers. The Consumer Ombudsman considers that the decision was made on the basis of an inadequate assessment, as the procedure should be examined not only from the perspective

of the Electricity Market Act but also from the perspective of the Consumer Protection Act. Consumer Ombudsman Katri Väänänen emphasises that electricity is an essential service for consumers, which is why it is particularly important to assess contract changes under the Consumer Protection Act.

The Consumer Ombudsman accepts the premise that electricity companies cannot be ordered to sell electricity at a loss within the framework of the regulation of the electricity market. However, if the protection of the electricity company goes so far that the company is allowed to make an additional profit at the expense of the consumer compared to normal conditions due to an exceptional circumstance, the contract procedure will benefit the business in a way that is contrary to the Consumer Protection Act. In this case, the rights and obligations of the parties are not balanced.

*** LUCIA**

Folkhälsan's Lucia 2025 provoked unusually strong reactions



This was the 75th time Finland's Lucia was crowned. This year's Lucia elections have once again sparked a lively debate in Finland. The choice of Folkhälsan's Lucia 2025 Daniela Owusu has been met with both jubilation and criticism.

The absolute majority probably supported the choice of Daniela. But there was a small minority who unfortunately did not do so and in a few cases were guilty of racist attacks.

"We would like to warmly thank everyone who has shown their support for Finland's Lucia 2024 and taken a stand against racism. You are in the majority, and your commitment shows that there is a strong public opinion against racism," says Viveca Hagmark, Director, Folkhälsans förbund. In a letter to Hufvudstadsbladet, she and Anna Hellerstedt write: "The racist messages that Folkhälsan has received in connection with Finland's Lucia 2024 are shocking and deeply distressed. However, after the situation has been made public, we have seen to our delight that the support for this year's Lucia and cultural diversity as well as public opinion against racism is significantly greater."

And in an interview in the Swedish evening newspaper Expressen, Daniela herself says: "I want to show that anyone can be Lucia, regardless of appearance."

It went so far that the presidential couple of Finland, Alexander Stubb and Suzanne Innes-Stubb, wanted to give their support to Lucian: "These horrific racist statements are a sign that your work is needed. Your

message is warmth and love," said Alexander Stubb when Lucia and his entourage visited the presidential family at the president's official residence.

Photo: Matti Porre/Office of the President of the Republic

*** REPLOTT 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.

*** 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 increasesIn 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.

*** COELIAC DISEASE**

From March 2025, low-income people with coeliac disease will receive relief from food costs.

The new practice makes it possible to take into account the additional food costs caused by coeliac disease, i.e. EUR 38 per month in social assistance paid by Kela.

The allowance is personal and applies to all family members over the age of 16 who have coeliac disease.

What's changing? With the legislative amendment approved by Parliament, compensation for coeliac disease will no longer be paid as a separate dietary supplement, but those receiving social assistance can receive help with additional food costs. To be eligible, you must have received a correct diagnosis of celiac disease and your application must be accompanied by a medical certificate or medical record.

Marja-Leena Valkonen, Head of Benefits Services

*** 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)

*** REPLOTT 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 colourful 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.

*** UNEMPLOYMENT**

November Employment Review: Unemployment still growing in the ELY Centre area of Ostrobothnia

At the end of November, there were a total of 8,016 unemployed jobseekers in the ELY Centre area of Ostrobothnia (Ostrobothnia, Central Ostrobothnia), which was 653 more than a year earlier.

The number of unemployed persons grew by 160 persons in November compared with October, and the unemployment rate rose by 0.3 percentage points both in the area of the ELY Centre for Ostrobothnia and in the whole country. The number of new vacancies reported in November was 837, which was 695 fewer (-45.5%) than in the previous year. These data derive from the Employment Service Statistics of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. The increase in unemployment is visible in all population groups examined by age, occupation and education. Development of unemployment by sub-region

The number of unemployed job seekers grew in most sub-regions of the ELY Centre area of Ostrobothnia compared to one year ago:

Vaasa region: +338 persons (+10%)

Jakobstad region: +203 persons (+17%)

In the sub-region of Kokkola: +120 persons (+6%)

Only in the coastal region of Suupohja did unemployment decrease, where the number of unemployed persons was 37 (9%) lower than last year. The coastal region of Suupohja also has the lowest unemployment rate in the ELY Centre area of Ostrobothnia, 5.1%.

The share of unemployed jobseekers in the labour force in the ELY Centre area of Ostrobothnia is still the lowest in Mainland Finland, 7.0%, while the corresponding share in the whole country is 10.9%.

Examined by age group

The growth in unemployment is visible in nearly all age, occupation and educational groups. The number of unemployed jobseekers under the age of 25 is 1,011, up 92 on the previous year and 11 more than in the previous month. The growth in unemployment was strongest in the 55 to 59 age group, where the growth amounted to 133 persons from one year ago. Examined by occupational and educational background, the growth in unemployment is particularly visible among those with upper secondary level education and in the occupational group of service and sales workers. Among those with upper secondary education, unemployment increased by 331 persons (9.1%) compared with the previous year. Only in the occupational group of farmers and forestry workers did unemployment decrease by 55 persons.

Situation of the long-term unemployed

The situation of the long-term unemployed has also remained challenging. At the end of November.

at Kela, emphasises that there is no question of returning to the old daily allowance. The support is part of social assistance, which is only intended for low-income households and serves as society's financial support of last resort.

Who is entitled to compensation?

It is estimated that around 3,000 customers will be affected. Coeliac families under the age of 16 can already apply for disability allowance to cover the costs of their child's coeliac disease. However, for people over the age of 16, the new support is significant financial support.

"The change means that people with coeliac disease will have a more equal position than other recipients of social assistance," Valkonen says.

How to apply?

Applying for a diagnosis of coeliac disease requires this, but if the customer has previously provided Kela with the necessary information, for example, for social assistance or disability support, no new information is required.

The new form of support is a welcome addition to the financial situation and aims to alleviate the financial burden of illness in the everyday lives of low-income households. (Source: Kela)

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

*** RUSSIA**

Ex-President Medvedev: Punish Europe!

Ex-President Medvedev detailed his position on Western Europe in his Telegram channel the other day. According to him, Europe must be punished by all available means: political, economic and all kinds of hybrids. One can ask whether what is happening at the bottom of the Gulf of Finland is ex-actly what Medvedev is referring to.

Here is his text: "Here I will say in more detail, for the present Old World arouses in me no other feelings than the deepest disgust. It was Europe, which was transformed into an evil, mad old woman, that became the main stronghold of Russophobia in the world. It is the lying Europe that is to blame for the collapse of the Istanbul negotiations. It was brainless Europe that frantically promoted a mediocre campaign of sanctions that led to colossal losses for its citizens. It was bloodthirsty Europe that fed all the most rabid demons of the war, regardless of the losses suffered by the parties to the conflict. And that is why Europe must be punished by all available means: political, economic and all kinds of hybrids. And that is why we must help all destructive processes in Europe. Long live the aggressive rioters on its historic streets! Glory to crowds of migrants who commit atrocities and destroy the bright European values with hatred! Let the disgusting faces of all European bureaucrats disappear in the stream of future civil clashes!"

*** RUSSIA**

Putin and the Jews

At a press conference on 19.12, Vladimir Putin took a stand on Jews. According to him, ethnic Jews tore the Orthodox Church apart.

He compares the event to an execution by firing squad. And the perpetrators, they are ethnic Jews. It is not quite clear which Jews Putin is referring to here. President Zelensky is certainly Jewish, but as far as Putin is saying, it is not one person, one Jew, it is a group of ethnic Jews who are committing flagrant, flagrant violations of human rights, against the rights of believers.

Here is an excerpt from Putin's speech: "You know, what is happening with regard to the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine is a unique situation. This is a gross, blatant violation of human rights, the rights of believers. The church is being torn apart right before everyone's eyes. This is like execution by firing squad, and yet the world seems to ignore it.

I think those who engage in such actions will get it back. You mentioned that they are tearing things apart, and that is exactly what is happening. These people are not even atheists. Atheists are individuals who believe in the idea that there is no God, but this is their faith, their convictions and worldview.

But these are not atheists; they are people without any faith at all. They are ethnic Jews, but who has ever seen them in a synagogue? They are not Orthodox Christians either, since they do not attend churches. And they certainly are not followers of Islam, as they

are unlikely to be seen in a mosque.

These are individuals without kith or kin. They do not care about anything that is dear to us and the overwhelming majority of the Ukrainian people."

Phrases like "a group of ethnic Jews committing flagrant, flagrant violations of human rights, against the rights of believers" have been heard before. In the 1930s.

*** Christmas trees for reuse**

Spawning trees save Christmas trees and enliven waterways



Recreational fishermen will once again organise traditional spawning events on Epiphany, this time in both Vaasa and Espoo. The events give old Christmas trees a new life in waterways, serving as important spawning grounds for fish.

Submerging a Christmas tree as a spawning tree is an environmentally friendly way to recycle used spruce and at the same time provide habitat for fish species. Underwater, spruce serves both as a spawning ground and as a food source for various aquatic organisms. According to the latest research data, fir trees also have a water purifying effect.

Tenth year in Vaasa, first time in Espoo

Vaasa has hosted spawning events since 2016, and the event has established itself in the Epiphany tradition of many families. This year, the shore of Onkilahti, which will be submerged in spawning grounds, is easy to reach. Cars can be left in the parking lot next to the traffic park.

The event will be held in Espoo for the first time. Fishing Club Vanha Kuhat ry invites everyone who wants to bring their Christmas tree to the yard of the fishing club's cottage at Bodöntie 6. The active members of the fishing club take care of the sinking of the fir trees.

Join us in sinking six!

Both events will be held on Epiphany 6.1.2025 from 10 am to 2 pm. At the events, you have the opportunity to sink your own Christmas tree and at the same time get to know others interested in the well-being of waterways. Organizers will be there to help sink the fir trees.

More info on:

Vaasa turo event: Juha Ojajarju, tel. 045 113 3050

Photo: On Epiphany 2024, spawning huts were sunk in Vaasa in freezing -30 °C. Juha Ojajarju, Finnish Recreational Fishermen.

Source: Finnish Recreational Fishermen

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/>

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>

TOPELIUS WEEK IN
NYKARLEBY

10-18.1-2025

Many events in the city center and villages.

Swinging jazz with Anders Lindh's orchestra 10.1.25 j
MIDNIGHT SKIING

Saturday 11.1. and 18.1.2025 at 21.45.

A DAY IN KUDD-NÄS 12.1.2025
WINTER SWIMMING IN VEGALA 12.1.25
TORCHLIGHT PROCESSION TO TOPELIUS PAKREN 14.1.2025
and TOPELIUS FESTIVAL 14.1.2025, Seminar Hall
<https://www.nykarleby.fi/assets/Sidor/1/438/Topeliusveckan-programblad-2025.pdf>


VAASA CITY THEATRE
TOSCA-oppera

Premiere Jan 12.2025

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

BOTHNIA BURLESQUE: EVERYTHING THAT SPARKLES

RITZ
25.1.2025 at 19-22

"Welcome to an evening filled with sparkle, delight and breathtaking stage art! Bothnia Burlesque once again brings a stunning setting to the stage at the nostalgic Ritz Lady Laverna & Arona Showgirls: Olivia Rouge, Nana Lamarr & Rosie Rhyme!

www.ritz.fi/events

TOMMY'S: TOGETHER AGAIN

RITZ
5.3.2024 AT 19 - 21.30
Hans Martin, Nicklas Käldestrom
<https://ritz.fi/events/>

VAAASA humour FESTIVAL 2025

2-4.4.2025
Sov. Finland-Swedish cultural development

VAAASA CHOIR FESTIVAL XXXI

22-24.5.2025
Vaasa Choir Festival is a significant international choral music event. The joyful and social closing celebration of the singing season is open to all choirs.

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 Festival 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/>

OUR NEWSPAPERS

Wasa Daily, Wasa Dagblad and Waasan Päivälehti two Years Old



Wasa Daily – Your local and locally owned newspaper in English in Vaasa

It is now two years since our city and the surrounding area received a welcome addition in

the form of three new daily newspapers: the Swedish-language Wasa Dagblad, the Finnish-language Waasan Päivälehti and the English-language Wasa Daily, which also regularly publishes material in Ukrainian.

A unique local voi-

ce Wasa Daily is not only an English newspaper – it is also one of the few completely locally owned newspapers in the region. Unlike our larger competitors, who have owners in Stockholm and Seinäjoki, we have our roots here in Vaasa. We are proud to be a magazine that reflects

the distinctive character of the Vaasa region and at the same time offers a national and global perspective.

Why choose Wasa Daily?

Experts recommend reading at least two newspapers regularly. In addition to, for example, Vasabladet

or Ilkka-Pohjalainen, Wasa Daily is a perfect complement. We focus on offering unique reports – news and analysis that you won't always find in other newspapers.

Our areas of expertise include:

Culture: We cover local and national

events in the arts, theatre and music.

History: We regularly publish articles that provide an in-depth understanding of both regional and global history.

Climate and environment: We report closely on the impacts of climate change and its significance for our future.

Events: In each issue you will find tips and information about upcoming events in the region.

Despite being a free newspaper, we pride ourselves on maintaining a high journalistic standard. We are politically and financially independent and our goal is to deliver factual and credible journalism.

AI – part of the journalism of the future

Wasa Daily is at the forefront when it comes to using artificial intelligence in editorial work. With the help of advanced AI tools such as ChatGPT and Gemini, drafts are created for fact-checking, translations, and news compilations. All content is reviewed and edited by our journalists to ensure quality and accuracy. We take full responsibility for everything that is published in the magazine.

A magazine for the future

During our two years, Wasa Daily has developed at a rapid pace, but we are not satisfied with that. Our long-term goals include starting daily publishing and launching a comprehensive paper magazine on Fridays,



A Happy New Year!

with extra content that lasts all weekend. When this becomes a reality depends largely on our advertisers – and we look forward to creating an even

stronger magazine together.

Looking towards the third year

As we now begin our third year of operation, we look forward

to welcoming more readers. We are grateful for the feedback we have received and hope for even more dialogue with you, our readers, to continue to

develop the magazine. Thank you for your trust – and let's make the coming year even better! Happy New Year from us in Wasa Daily!

CLIMATE CHANGE

2024: On Track to Be the Hottest Year in History as Temperatures Briefly Cross 1.5 °C Threshold



The year 2024 is shaping up to be the warmest on record, with monthly global mean temperatures consistently breaking previous highs, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) reports. This alarming trend underscores the urgency of addressing climate change as extreme weather events wreak havoc worldwide, causing economic devastation and human suffering.

A Red Alert on Climate Change

According to the WMO's State of the Climate 2024 Update, the global mean surface air temperature from January to September was 1.54°C above pre-industrial levels, with a margin of error of $\pm 0.13^\circ\text{C}$. This surge has been exacerbated by the ongoing El Niño phenomenon, which amplifies global warming effects.

The WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo emphasized the importance of distinguishing between short-term temperature spikes and long-term trends: "One or more years surpassing 1.5°C does not mean we have failed to meet the Paris Agreement's goal to limit warming. However, every fraction of a degree matters."

The update was released

as the UN Climate Change Conference (COP29) commenced in Baku, Azerbaijan. UN Secretary-General António Guterres highlighted the gravity of the situation: "Climate catastrophe is hammering health, widening inequalities, harming sustainable development, and rocking the foundations of peace. The vulnerable are hardest hit."

A Decade of Alarming Records

The period from 2015 to 2024 is now confirmed as the warmest decade ever recorded. This year's average temperature is set to surpass the previous record set in 2023. Over the past 16 months, global temperatures have consistently exceeded historical norms. These findings illustrate the acceleration of long-term warming,

which is currently estimated at 1.3°C above pre-industrial levels.

Key Climate Indicators Greenhouse Gas Concentrations

Atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂) reached 420 ppm in 2023, a 51% increase since pre-industrial times. Real-time data for 2024 indicates a continued rise, further amplifying the greenhouse effect and driving global temperatures upward.

Ocean Heat Content

Ocean heat content in 2023 reached record levels, and 2024 is following a similar trajectory. The oceans, which absorb 90% of excess heat from the Earth's system, have seen rapid warming, especially over the past two decades. This warming is irreversible on centennial timescales and has far-reaching consequences for marine ecosystems and weather patterns.

Sea Level Rise

Global sea levels rose at an accelerated rate of 4.77 mm per year from 2014 to 2023, more than double the rate observed between 1993 and 2002. While El Niño temporarily intensified this trend in 2023, preliminary data for 2024 suggests a return to the consistent upward trajectory seen in previous years.

Glacier Loss

Glaciers suffered unprecedented losses in 2023, with a record 1.2 meters of water equivalent ice melting—five times the volume of water in the Dead Sea. In Switzerland



alone, glaciers lost 10% of their volume over the past two years.

Sea Ice Extent

Antarctic sea ice reached its second-lowest extent in

the satellite record, while Arctic sea ice remained below average. These changes further disrupt ecosystems and contribute to global feedback loops that exacerbate war-

ming.

Human and Economic Impacts

The consequences of these changes are stark. Extreme weather events, such as re-

cord-breaking rainfall, devastating floods, deadly heatwaves, and raging wildfires, have displaced millions, worsened food insecurity, and undermined sustainable development. Persistent drought, exacerbated by El Niño, has compounded these challenges in vulnerable regions.

Urgent Call for Action

The WMO underscores the need for immediate reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and enhanced adaptation measures. Paulo urged, "We need to strengthen climate information services and expand Early Warnings for All to protect communities from hazardous weather events." Progress has been made in this regard: 108 countries now report having Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems in place.

Looking Ahead

As the world grapples with the reality of a rapidly changing climate, the WMO's report serves as both a warning and a call to action.

While the long-term goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C remains achievable, it requires unprecedented global cooperation and commitment. The stakes are clear: every fraction of a degree of warming avoided translates to lives saved, ecosystems preserved, and a more sustainable future for all.

THEATRE

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



Sally Salminen in harvest rye in Sibbo 1941. Photo: B. Soldan / SA
Creative Commons Attribution 4.0

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 exaggerated

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, Katrina is The Book – nostalgia and great emotions" was said in



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



Sally Salminen-Dührkop 968. 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>

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

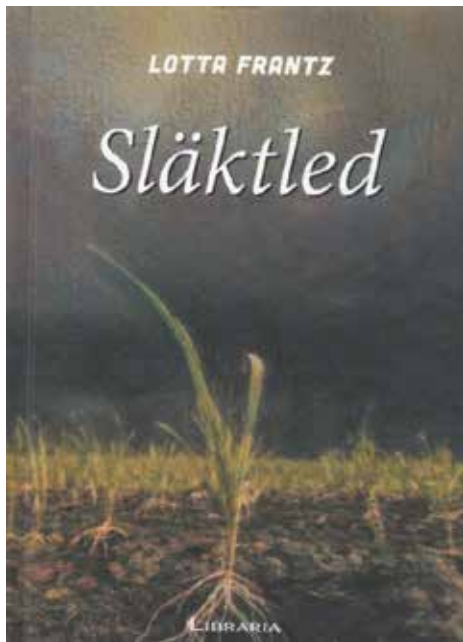
Following these eight habits not only supports brain health but also contributes to overall well-being. The cumulative effect of eating well, staying active, and managing key health metrics ensures that the brain receives the nutrients, oxygen, and stimulation it needs to stay sharp.

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.

BOOKS

A few books from year 2024



Author: Lotta Frantz

SLÄKTLED (In Swedish)

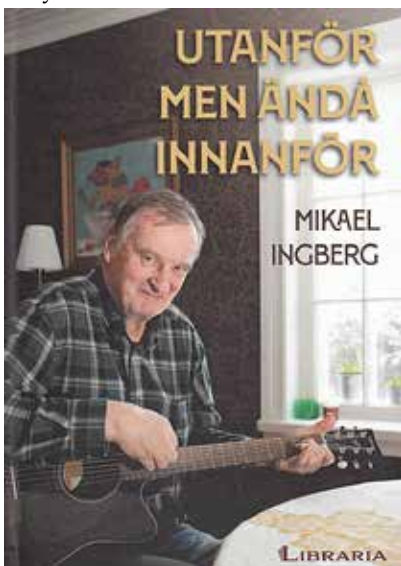
Publisher: Libraria

313 pages

A book written by Ostrobothnian for Ostrobothnians about Ostrobothnia

When Signe was born 100 years ago, her mother died. In this book, we follow the lives of him and his children and grandchildren over a hundred years. Those of us who are at home on the plains of Ostrobothnia recognize ourselves.

Exactly.



Author: Mikael Ingberg

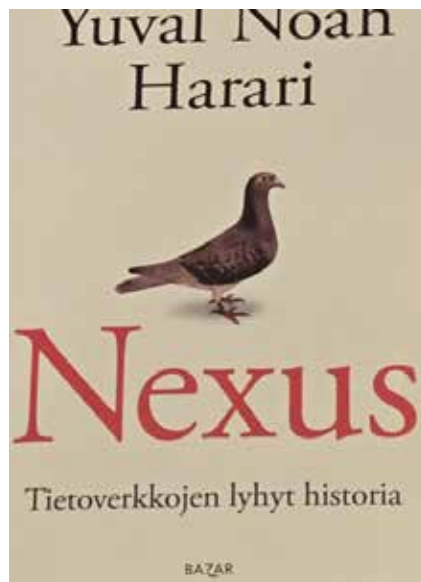
OUTDOORS, BUT STILL INDOORS, in Swedish

Publisher: Libraria

290 pages

From sugar beet cultivation to sheep farmer

But in between, a life filled with experiences in a Finnish-Swedish duck pond. In *Outside but Still Inside*, Mikael Ingberg himself speaks openly and honestly about his career and Finnish politics and business during a turbulent period in Finnish history. "Memoirs and Other Lies" is the title of the first chapter. But these are not lies. This is the truth about the history of us here in Finland.



Author: Yuval Noah Harari

NEXUS

Publisher: Natur Kultur

481 pages

A brief history of computer networks from the Stone Age to artificial intelligence

Yuval Noah Harari's "Nexus" delves into the profound and potentially transformative impact of biotechnology on humanity. He explores how advances in areas such as gene editing, brain-computer interfaces, and synthetic biology are poised to fundamentally change our bodies, minds, and even our definition of what it means to be human.

Why you should read it:

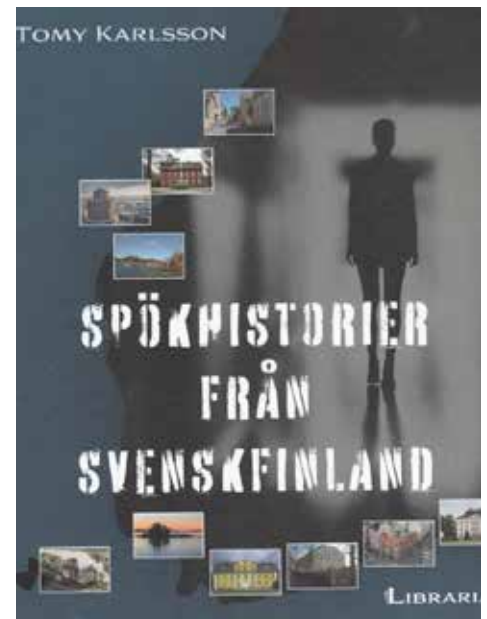
Thought-provoking: "The Nexus" forces readers to wrestle with profound questions about the future of humanity. It challenges our assumptions about free will, identity, and the essence of being human.

Vision of the future: Harari paints a vivid picture of possible future scenarios, some utopian, some dystopian, driven by the rapid development of biotechnology. This will help us anticipate and

maybe even shape the future we want to create.

Accessible Writing: Despite his treatment of complex scientific concepts, Harari presents them in a clear and engaging way, making the book accessible to a wide audience. Ethical considerations: "Nexus" highlights the crucial ethical dilemmas arising from these technological advances. It calls on us to take into account the social, political and economic consequences of these technologies and to ensure that they are developed and used responsibly.

Basically, "Nexus" is a must-read for anyone interested in the future of humanity. It is a thought-provoking and insightful study of the profound changes ahead, and serves as a valuable reminder of the importance of thoughtful and ethical considerations as we navigate this uncharted territory.



Author: Tommy Karlsson

GHOST STORIES FROM SWEDISH-SPEAKING FINLAND (in Swedish)

Publisher: Libraria

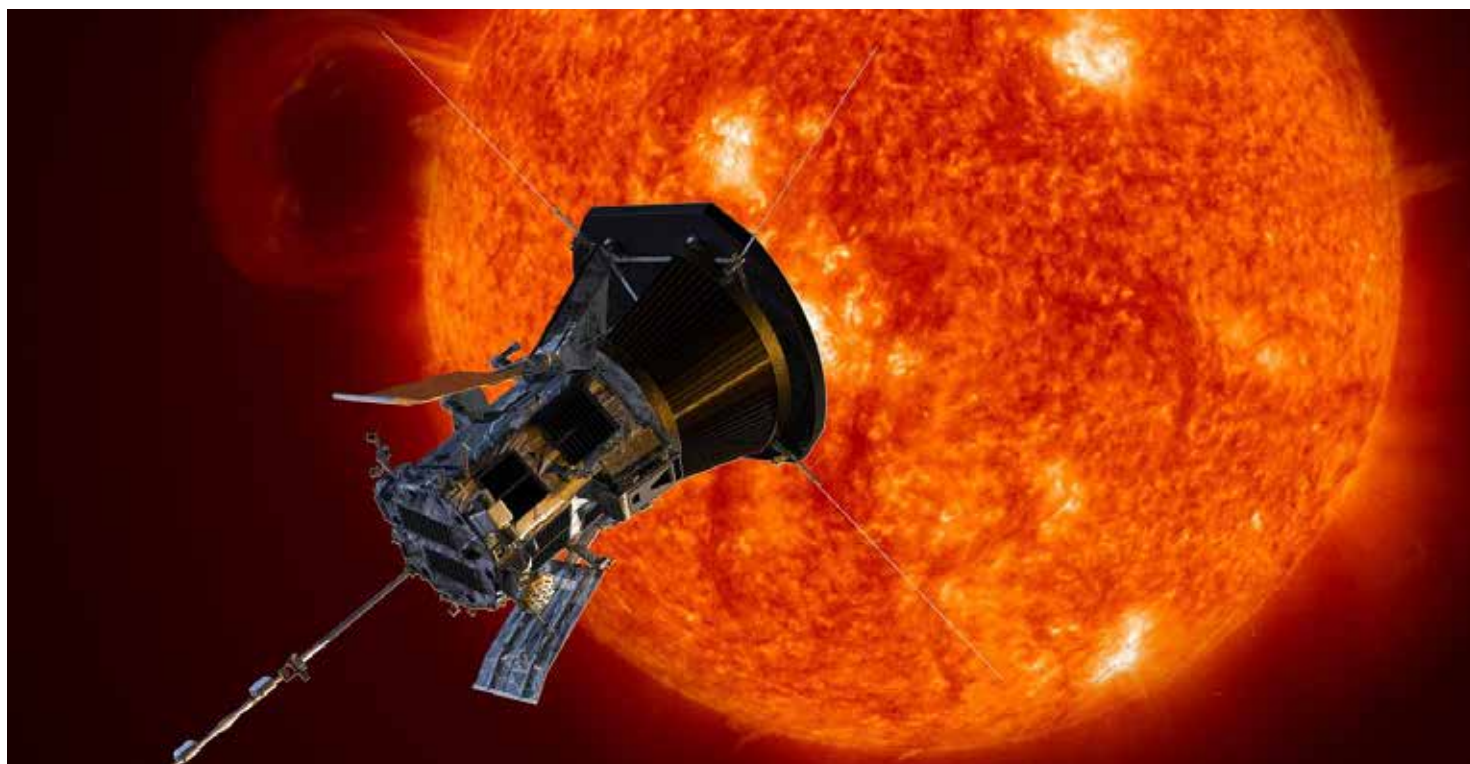
Horrifying stories about ghosts, witches and haunted farms.

In Malax, schoolchildren saw two half-meter-tall old women, in Sundom Blind Isaac is still sweeping his stairs. And a "white woman", she probably still lives in Tottesund. You can read about all of this and many other frightening events in our area.

Illustrations: Nils Huldén.

ASTRONOMY

Sun-Kissing Spacecraft Sends Signal, Defying Death in Solar Inferno



In a daring feat of engineering, NASA's Parker Solar Probe has successfully completed its latest and most perilous dive on Dec 24 into the Sun's scorching atmosphere. The spacecraft, designed to withstand temperatures hotter than Venus' surface, recently skimmed a mere 3.8 million miles above the solar surface, traveling at a breathtaking 430,000 miles per hour.

Despite facing a fiery baptism in the Sun's corona, Parker Solar Probe has transmitted a beacon signal back to Earth, confirming its survival and operational status. Mission control at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory erupted in cheers as the signal was received, marking a significant milestone in humanity's quest to understand our nearest star.

A Journey into the Heart of Fire

Parker Solar Probe, a testament to human ingenuity, is on a mission to unravel the mysteries of the Sun's corona,

a region where temperatures inexplicably soar to millions of degrees, far exceeding the heat on the Sun's visible surface. By venturing into this extreme environment, scientists hope to unlock the secrets behind the solar wind, a continuous stream of charged particles that flows outward from the Sun and can disrupt Earth's magnetic field.

Facing the Sun's Fury

Surviving the Sun's intense heat and radiation requires cutting-edge technology. Parker Solar Probe is equipped with a state-of-the-art heat shield, capable of withstanding temperatures exceeding 2,500 degrees Fahrenheit. This innovative shield, made from a carbon-composite material, protects the spacecraft's delicate instruments and electronics from the Sun's scorching rays.

Unveiling the Sun's Secrets

The data collected by Parker Solar Probe during this close encounter will provide invaluable insights into the Sun's behavior. Scientists will analyze measurements of the solar wind, magnetic fields, and energetic particles to gain a deeper understanding of how the Sun

influences space weather events, such as solar flares and coronal mass ejections, which can disrupt communication systems, damage satellites, and even pose risks to astronauts.

A Legacy of Discovery

The Parker Solar Probe mission is a tribute to the visionary work of Dr. Eugene N. Parker, the renowned astrophysicist who first predicted the existence of the solar wind. This audacious mission continues to push the boundaries of space exploration, inspiring future generations of scientists and engineers to reach for the stars.

Image: Parker Solar Probe artist rendering

Artist's concept of the Parker Solar Probe spacecraft approaching the sun. Launching in 2018, Parker Solar Probe will provide new data on solar activity and make critical contributions to our ability to forecast major space-weather events that impact life on Earth.

NASA/Johns Hopkins APL/Steve Gribben

Public domain



The Library in Palosaari

LIBRARY

The Palosaari Library Stays Open



Palosaari library in Vaasa saved

Vaasa Palosaari Library can continue its operations. The library, which has existed since 1929, was designed by Carl Schoultz and has been under th-

reat of closure for several years. In August, the City Board decided that the library would be closed at the end of the year, but the residents of Palosaari did not approve of the decision. Under the leadership of Heimo Hokkanen, residents gathered more than 5,000 names on the protest list. which was handed

over to Joakim Strand, Chairman of the City Board. November 11 City Council that the library be allowed to continue operating.

This is a clear example of how civic engagement can make a difference





The Allure of Tour Skating

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES IN VAASA

Finding Freedom on the Ice in Vaasa: The Allure of Tour Skating



Tour skating, also known as adventure skating, is more than just gliding across a frozen lake. It's an exhilarating blend of exploration, physical challenge, and a profound connection with the winter landscape.

And in Vaasa there are a lot of areas to enjoy this kind of skating.

Whether you're traversing vast frozen seas, navigating winding rivers, or simply enjoying the serenity of a secluded pond, tour skating offers a unique and unforgettable experience.







The Joy of the Open Ice

The appeal of tour skating lies in its freedom. Unbound by the confines of a rink, skaters can explore the winter wonderland at their own pace. The feeling of gliding effortlessly across a pristine ice surface is truly magical. The silence, broken only by the gentle rhythm of your own breath and the occasional crunch of ice, is deeply meditative.

Safety First: Essential Precautions

While the allure of the open ice is undeniable, safety must always be paramount.

Never skate alone: Always bring a skating buddy or join a group.

Check ice conditions thoroughly: Before venturing onto any body of water, carefully assess ice thickness and stability. Use an ice auger or chisel to check at regular intervals. Remember that ice conditions can change rapidly due to factors like temperature fluctuations, currents, and snow cover.

Wear appropriate safety gear: This includes a life jacket or floatation device, a helmet, and ice picks for self-rescue in case of a fall through the ice.

Carry a first-aid kit and a communication device: A cell phone in a waterproof case or a handheld radio can be crucial in case of an emergency.

Plan your route and inform someone of your plans: Let a trusted friend or family member know your intended route and estimated return time.

Be aware of your surroundings: Pay attention to potential hazards such as cracks, thin ice, and open water. Avoid skating near moving water, such as inlets and outlets.

Turn back if conditions deteriorate: Don't hesitate to turn back if the ice becomes unsafe or if you encounter unexpected challenges.

Essential Equipment for Tour Skating

Skates: Sturdy ice skates with good ankle support are essential. Consider skates specifically designed for off-ice skating, which

often have better traction and durability.

Ice cleats: These provide extra traction on slippery surfaces and can help prevent falls.

Life jacket or floatation device: This is crucial safety equipment and should always be worn.

Helmet: A helmet can protect your head in case of a fall.

Ice picks: These are essential for self-rescue if you fall through the ice.

Warm clothing and waterproof outerwear: Dress in layers to stay warm and dry.

Backpack: Pack essentials like snacks, water, a first-aid kit, and a communication device.

Embracing the Adventure

Tour skating is a rewarding experience that offers a unique perspective on the winter landscape. By prioritizing safety and respecting the power of nature, you can enjoy the freedom and exhilaration of exploring the frozen world beneath your feet. Remember, the beauty of tour skating lies not only in the destination but also in the journey itself.

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.

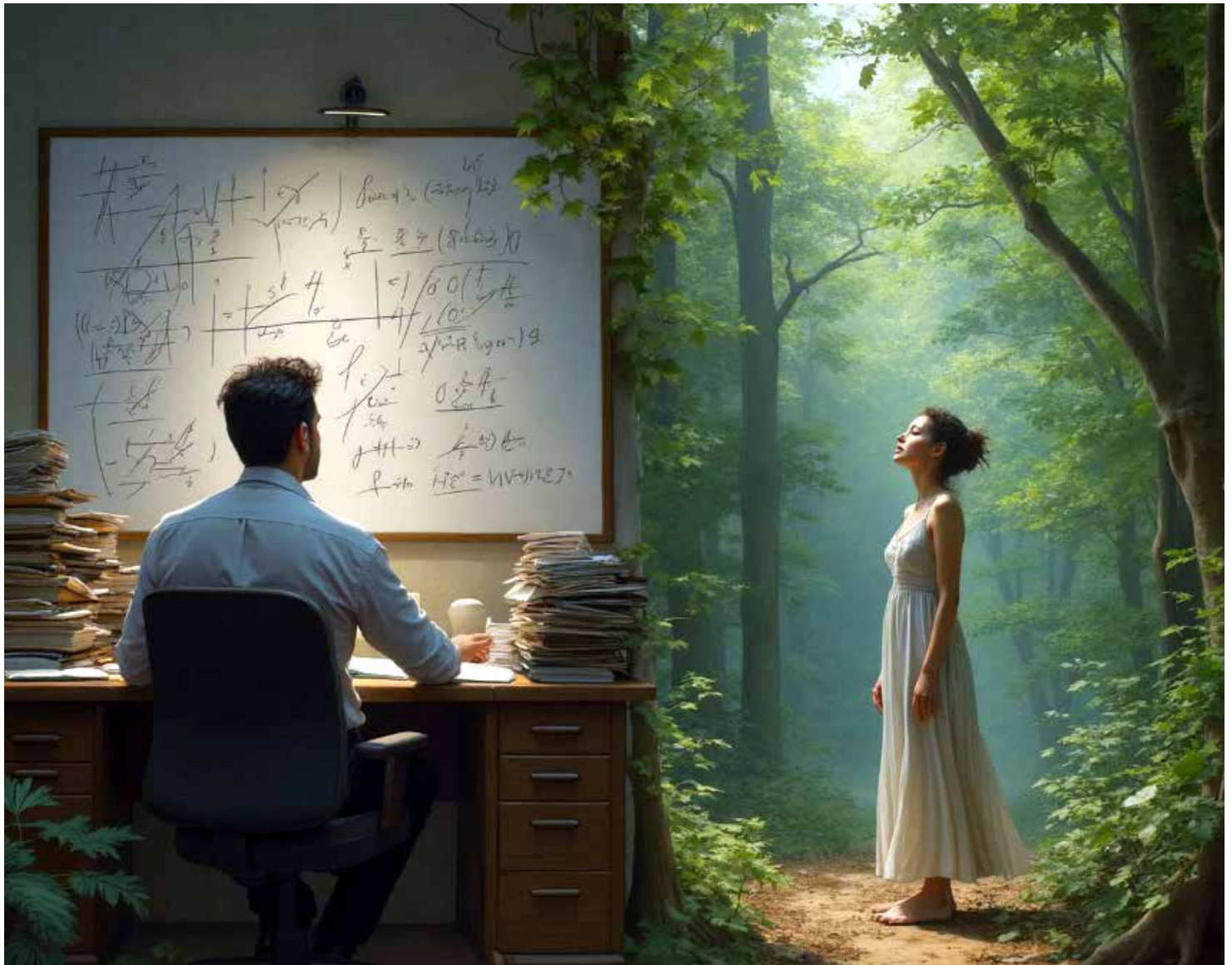
As with any medication, semaglutide may have side effects, including gastrointestinal issues such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. It is crucial to consult with a healthcare professional to determine if semaglutide

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.

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:

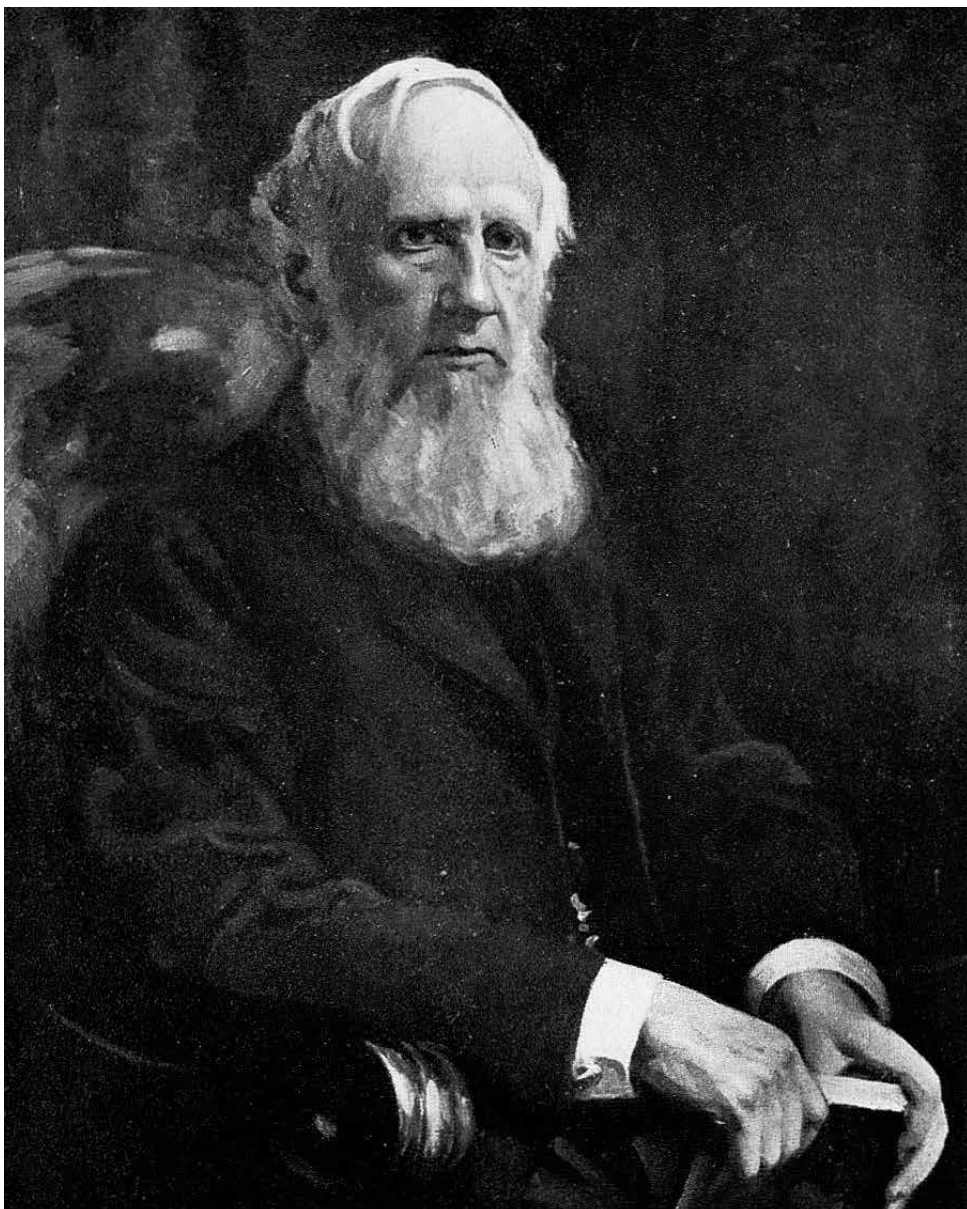
"Under the name Dermatitis Herpetiformis, I propose to group a number of cases of a skin disease I have encountered from time to time. These cases are mostly nameless, having been regarded and diagnosed either as peculiar manifestations of one or another of the more common known diseases, such as eczema, 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.

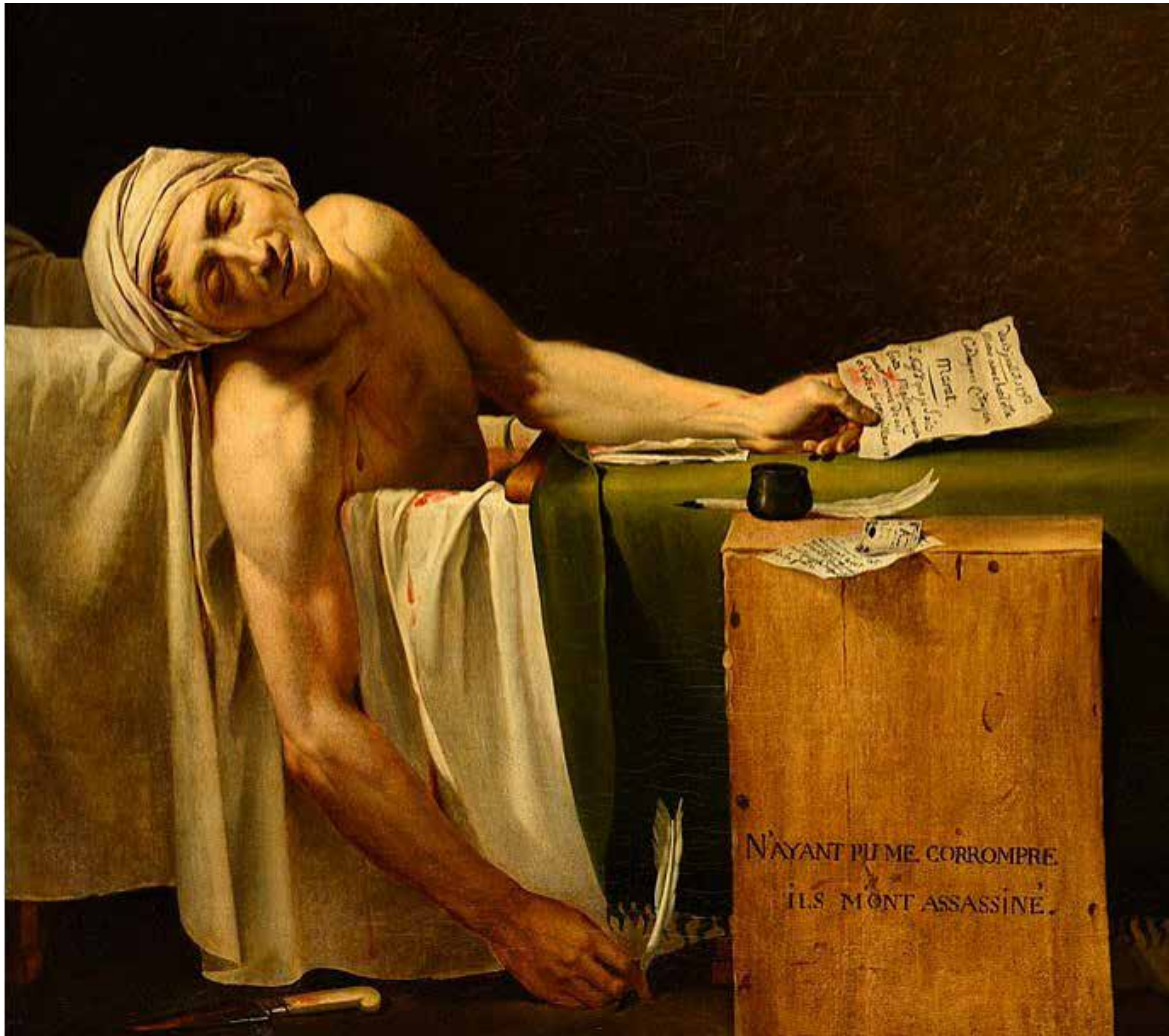
Finally, it is worth pointing out: Although dapsone is effective against symptoms caused by dermatitis herpetiformis, the drug is definitely not an alternative to a gluten-free diet.

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 Processi-

ons: 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.



W Commons. Public Domain

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.

Helsinki editorial office: Wasa Daily, Toinen linja 9 B 36, 00530 Helsinki. Phone +358-40-5462455.

Email: wasadagblad@gmail.com

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

Karifestivali
deittiä
viikoksi!

Republiken president Alexander Stubb i Vaasa 27.4.2024

Kalevaspeleinen i Vaasa 27-30.6.2024

Kremlin gör narr av sina motsändare - 1939 liksom nu

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En ny press:
Grunden för lycka och demokrati

Kor-FESTIVALEN

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Pain-maja, en Pörtomdiktare

PUCCINI'S
"TOSCA" KOMMER TILL VASA I JANUARI

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Sinebrychhoffin taidemuseo

Sinebrychhoffin konstmuseum

Sinebrychhoffin Art Museum

WASA DAILY
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Pörtom kyrka
Pirttikylän kirkko
The Church in Pörtom

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ihana kuofestivaali tulossa!

Hylkeenpyynti Raippaluodossa 1895

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Finland's "Tosca" is coming to Vaasa

NAISTEN ÄÄNI-elimäkeräkirjasto

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Mysterious green giants in the Laasi-palatsi square, Helsinki

ROAD CHURCHES
The Kremlin mocks its opponents

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WASA DAILY

What a wonderful show week we have ahead of us! - Vaasa Choir Festival 2024 8.-11.8.2024

Climate Change's Profound Impact on Finland

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Mysterious green giants in the Laasi-palatsi square, Helsinki

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Fero Järnefelt (1863-1937)

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I K Inha (1865-1930)
I Replot 1895
Raippaluodossa 1895

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Hylkeenpyynti Raippaluodossa 1895

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WASA DAILY

Finland's president Alexander Stubb in Vaasa 27.4.2024

Vaasa War Museum is open today 12-14

A tree for everyone in Vaasa

ROAD CHURCHES

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HOROSCOPE FOR JANUARY 2025

January 2025 Horoscopes: Laugh Your Way Into the New Year

Aries (March 21–April 19): You'll charge into January like a caffeinated goat on a mountain. Just remember, not every hill is worth climbing, especially when Netflix has new releases.

Taurus (April 20–May 20): You're feeling stubbornly optimistic this month. Someone will suggest a kale smoothie. Resist. Your taste buds deserve better.

Gemini (May 21–June 20): Your double personality shines in January – you'll either join a yoga class or binge-watch crime documentaries while eating pizza. Duality is your superpower.

Cancer (June 21–July 22): Home is your

happy place this month. Unfortunately, so is your fridge. Remember: snacks are feelings too.

Leo (July 23–August 22): New year, new you! But let's be honest, the crown you bought in December isn't coming off. Keep ruling, your majesty.

Virgo (August 23–September 22): You've already color-coded your New Year's resolutions. Relax – you'll end up ignoring them by February anyway.

Libra (September 23–October 22): Your quest for balance will be tested when your couch competes with your gym membership. Spoiler: the couch wins.

Scorpio (October 23–November 21): You're radiating mystery this month. Or maybe it's just that you forgot to answer texts from last year. Keep 'em guessing.

Sagittarius (Novem-

ber 22–December 21): You're craving adventure in January. But the biggest journey might be walking to the mailbox in your slippers. Baby steps.

Capricorn (December 22–January 19): It's your season, goat! You'll be climbing corporate ladders and icy sidewalks with equal determination. Try not to slip on either.

Aquarius (January 20–February 18): The stars predict intellectual breakthroughs this month. Or maybe you'll just finally solve Wordle in two tries. Either way, genius vibes.

Pisces (February 19–March 20): Your emotional waves are high, but so is your charm. Use it to convince someone to shovel the driveway.



NEWS 100 YEARS AGO



Sunday, December 29, 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



HUMOUR ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

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 letters?"

»Yes then!»

»Where did you get them from then?»

»Yes, yes, find them in mother's desk drawer. It was open, and they were so beautiful and there was a whole bunch of them tied with red silk ribbons.»

Art furniture.

The understanding customer: "Yes, I'm happy to admit that these modern chairs are incredibly nice and elegant, and beautiful and artistic, and excellent in every way, and yes, I like them so much, but I don't understand how to sit in them!"

MR WEST

A well-known joker once came in company into a restaurant, where he saw a familiar gentleman named Wester sitting drinking toddy. "Listen, Wester," he exclaimed, "can you tell me what is the resemblance between the sun and a toddy?"

"No", he replied.

"Well, both go down in the west," was the answer.

WHERE THE CHILDREN COME FROM

There was a group of three flamboyantly dressed very little girls, with barks and ribbons and precious toys and neighbor dolls, and near them was playing on the sand a poor little girl of about the same age, scantily clad and with a home-made primitive doll in her arms. The three fine children discussed the interesting question of where they came from, which proved a highly interesting topic for toddler speculation.

— I come from a rose, mother said, uttered one of the little living dolls.

— And me again, interjected No. 2, I must have come from a head of cabbage.

"I, yes I was picked up by a stork," said number three. Whereupon she, who had come out of a rose, scornfully and proudly turned to the poor little scantily clad girl child, and said nobly:

— And you, there, where did you come from?

— Alas, answered little Cinderella, we are so poor, so terribly poor back home, that mother and father have to make their children themselves.

DAMN LUCK

— Hello, my lord, cried the energetic flower seller, buy some flowers for your darling.

- I have no sweetheart, said the young man.

- Then buy some flowers for your wife.

— I have no wife.

— Well, lucky cheese, then buy some flowers to celebrate your damn luck.

THE CUCKOO

The teacher (who told about the cuckoo):

— Well, what is it in the main that you now know about the cuckoo?' Student:

— It does not lay its own eggs.

BÄ BÄ

Doctor K- and his brother the veterinarian get into a dispute about whose profession requires the greatest ability to diagnose. Both hold their ground, but the

vet's argument seems to be the strongest because the animals cannot tell where their pain is.

Some time later the vet falls ill and the doctor is called.

— Well, where do you hurt?

No answer.

— You can tell where the evil is, right?

The only answer that comes from the sick person is; BÄ BÄ The doctor writes out a prescription, which he hands to the nurse with the words:

"Give him this and if he's not well the day after tomorrow, we'll shoot him."

THE DAD IN A GOOD MOOD

The daughter:

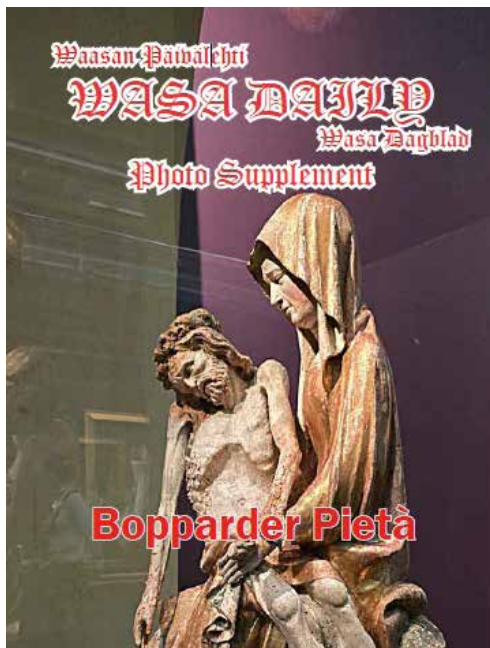
— You know, mother, father was in an unusually good mood today, when he went to the office.

Mother:

— Crosses in all the world! That reminds me I forgot to ask him for money.

AT THE PHOTO-

Next week:



The astronomic picture of the week:



Messier 106 composite.jpg

CXC: Composite image of NGC 4258 features X-rays from Chandra (blue), radio waves from the VLA (purple), optical data from Hubble (yellow and blue), and infrared with Spitzer (red). NGC 4258 is well known to astronomers for having "anomalous" arms that are not aligned with the plane of the galaxy, but rather intersect with it. Researchers are trying to understand how the giant black hole in the center of NGC 4258 is affecting the rest of the galaxy. NGC 4258, also known as Messier 106, is located about 23 million light years from Earth.

X-ray: NASA/CXC/Caitech/P.Ogle et al; Optical: NASA/STScI & R.Gendler; IR: NASA/JPL-Caltech; Radio: NSF/NRAO/VLA

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GRAPHER'S

The photographer;

— Should it be a bust?

The customer:

— No, I'd like to include some of the face as well.

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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