

WASA DAILY

Nr 1

Sunday, January 5, 2025

ISSN 2954-2456

Palosaari Library

**The Allure of Tour
Skating**

**Can HMPV cause
a pandemic?**

**2024 - The Hottest
Year in History**

HERE WE ARE:

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**Wasa Daily, Wasa
Dagblad and Waasan
Päivälehti two Years
Old**

**Tosca in the City
Theatre
Katrina in Wasa
Teater**

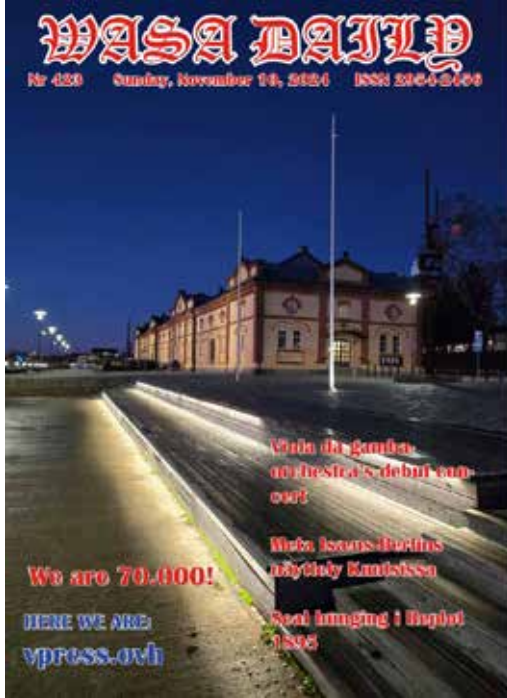
**2025 - A Vibrant
Year of Art**

**A HAPPY
NEW YEAR!**

TODAY

Wasa Daily, Waasan Päivälehti and Wasa Dagblad celebrate 2 years of news, engagement and cultural coverage in our region

It is with great pleasure that we celebrate two years of news, engagement and cultural coverage for our region through Wasa Dagblad, Waasan Päivälehti and Wasa Daily. Since their inception, these newspapers have become an important part of the local media landscape – and are also almost the only locally owned newspapers in Vaasa and the surrounding area.



A unique contribution to the region
Wasa Daily, our English-language pride and one of the only English-language newspapers in Finland, is complemented by the Finnish-language Waasan Päivälehti and the Swedish-language Wasa Dagblad. Wasa Daily also publishes content in Ukrainian. These newspapers distinguish themselves not only through their local ownership but also through their focus on quality, objectivity and strong cultural coverage.

Although the newspapers have so far only been published online once a week, we have reached readers through our focus on relevant news, in-depth cultural articles, historical themes and updates on climate issues.

Digital first – but with plans for the future
Our vision for the future is ambitious: we aim for daily publication on the net and a comprehensive paper newspaper every Friday, filled with content for the entire weekend. However,

this is a development that requires time and support – especially from our sponsors and advertisers.

Cutting-edge technology
Wasa Daily is also a pioneer in the use of AI technology in journalism. Tools such as ChatGPT-3, Gemini, Monica and Aria help us with everything from fact-checking and translations to creating news texts that are then carefully reviewed by the editorial staff. AI is only an aid, the journalists are fully responsible for the texts.

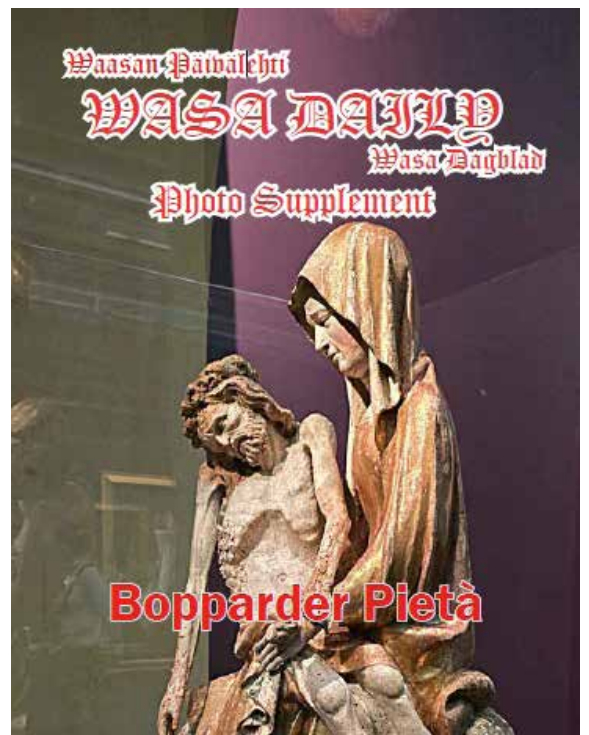
We value history and its lessons – as the American philosopher George Santayana put it: "Those who cannot remember their history are condemned to repeat it." Our readers are regularly offered articles that shed light on the history of our region, which helps us better understand our past, present and future.

operation, we do so with great excitement and gratitude. We look forward to welcoming more readers and receiving their feedback. With this, we would like to extend a big thank you to all our readers and partners who have been with us during these two years.

We wish you all a HAPPY NEW YEAR and look forward to even more news-packed days together.

Together towards the future
As we now enter our third year of

Photo Supplement



Cover picture: On the ice

History guides us forward

Photo Supplement - vpress.ovh

NEWS



*** ART**

2025 - A Vibrant Year of art in Museums in Vaasa

Vaasa Museums in 2025: Local, Nordic, and Naïve Art

In 2025, Vaasa’s Kuntsi Museum of Modern Art, Ostrobothnian Museum, and Tikanoja Art Museum will feature seven new temporary exhibitions, alongside a touring exhibition across the region.

The program highlights contemporary art with a local and Nordic focus, including Finnish illustration art, naïve art, and works from notable artists like Jan-Olof Mallander.

Exploring Weather Phenomena with Ulrika Ferm The exhibition season kicks off at Kuntsi Museum of Modern Art with a solo exhibition by Ulrika Ferm, showcasing her recent works centered on weather phenomena. Ferm’s latest drawings capture cloudscapes seen from her studio, while her earlier video pieces explore Irish fog and Armenian weather metaphors.

Ferm, a prominent figure in Vaasa’s contemporary art scene since the early 2000s and a co-founder of the

Platform art association, has also gained international recognition. The exhibition is organized in collaboration with Vaasa museums and the Pro Artibus Foundation, where Ferm is currently an artist-in-residence.

“Elements” Groups Exhibition

Simultaneously, the group exhibition Elements will also be on display at Kuntsi. Featuring works by alumni and students of Helsinki’s Academy of Fine Arts, the exhibition ties into Ferm’s course Elements and Energy, co-taught with art historian Riikka Stewen. Notable contributors include Shoji Kato, Astri Laitinen, and Kati Roover.

Naïve Art and Local Views Ostrobothnian Museum will present works by Inkeri Julkunen (1935–2017), one of Finland’s

earliest naïve artists. The exhibition will feature her paintings from the 1970s to 1990s, depicting everyday life and landscapes from Vaasa and its surroundings. The warm, humorous tone of Julkunen’s work is emblematic of naïve art, making this a unique addition to Vaasa’s museum offerings.

Jan-Olof Mallander Retrospective This autumn, Kuntsi will host Extended Play, a comprehensive solo exhibition by Jan-Olof Mallander. The exhibition reflects his pivotal role in Finnish avant-garde and conceptual art since the 1960s. Alongside his iconic sound art piece Extended Play (1968), the exhibition will feature selections from Mallander’s personal art collection, offering insights into his spiritual journey and influences.

Contemporary Finnish Illustrators

Tikanoja Art Museum will showcase I Am Not Afraid, a group exhibition of contemporary Finnish illustrators, including Satu Kettunen and Jenny Lucander. The exhibition explores the challenges of growing up in today’s world, merging traditional illustration techniques with multisensory installations.

Nordic Landscapes and Touring Art

Ostrobothnian Museum will also present Lay of(f) the Land – Nordic Narratives, featuring works by Art Alliance of Arctic South, a group of Nordic artists focusing on the interplay between nature, culture, and the global climate crisis.

Additionally, the touring exhibition The Lundgren

WITH A TABLET YOU CAN READ THIS PAPER ANYWHERE:



Like here in Kalles Inn, Replot

Sisters' Ostrobothnia will visit six municipalities, highlighting landscapes painted by the three Vaasa-born sisters, showcasing their contributions to regional art.

Exhibition Highlights for 2025

April–August: Ulrika Ferm and Elements group exhibition at Kuntsi.

May–October: Naïve art by Inkeri Julkunen at Ostrobothnian Museum.

September–December: Extended Play by Jan-Olof Mallander at Kuntsi.

September–February 2026: I Am Not Afraid at Tika-noja Art Museum.

November–April 2026: Lay of(f) the Land – Nordic Narratives at Ostrobothnian Museum.

Touring exhibition: The Lundgren Sisters' Ostrobothnia.

With its diverse and engaging lineup, Vaasa's museums are set to make 2025 a vibrant year for art lovers across the region.

Source: STTinfo/Vaasa

Image: Ebba Lundgren (1844–1926): Hamnen i Vallgrund

*** CULTURAL ELECTION**

By choosing, you can win!

Participate in the selection of a cultural act from Vaasa – nominate a prize winner and vote!

Vaasa's cultural life will once again highlight its creators when the Vaasa Cultural Deed of the Year award is awarded in early 2025. City residents now have the opportunity to nominate the winner of the prize and later vote for their favourite among the three finalists. This is the sixth time that it has been awarded, rewarding an individual or group for a significant contribution to enriching the cultural life of a city.

The time for proposals is now

Anyone can nominate a winner by 31 January 2025. The proposal must be justified, and it can concern any cultural act carried out during 2024. Whether you are an organizer of a music event, a community art project or the creator of a new kind of cultural space, all actions aimed at developing cultural life are worthy of attention.

The proposal can be submitted on the city's website

at: vaasa.fi/vuodenvaasalainenkulttuuriteko.

Vote for your favorite in February! The City of Vaasa's cultural services will select three shortlisted cultural acts from the proposals. During February, residents will be able to vote for their favourite online and on the city's social media channels. This is an excellent opportunity to bring publicity to the deeds and perpetrators who have earned their place in the cultural history of the city.

Award as tribute and encouragement! The prize for Vaasa Cultural Deed of the Year is 2000 euros. Its aim is not only to reward past achievements, but also to encourage new cultural initiatives and be a source of inspiration for the whole community.

Now it's your turn to make a difference – nominate and vote! By choosing, you can win for yourself: the chance to see your own community flourish from the fruits of cultural life.

*** CITY THEATRE**

Vaasa City Theatre offers a fresh perspective on reading drama in January



In January 2025, Vaasa City Theatre's Theatre Restaurant Kulma will present a unique reading drama that pre-sents plays written and directed by three students of the Theatre Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki.

During the evening, the audience can dive into the world of new theatre texts interpreted by Vaasa City Theatre's own actors. The direction and coordination of the ensemble is the responsibility of teacher Heini Junkkaala, who is one of the key influencers of Finnish contemporary theatre.

Three unique reading drama in one evening

Reading drama performances will be held on Friday 10 January at 7 pm in the intimate atmosphere of Theatre Restaurant Kulma. During the evening, there will be three works of approximately 30 minutes in length, with short breaks in between. The total duration is about two hours. Tickets are only 6 euros and can be purchased at the theatre's box office. Performances are recommended for people over 15 years old. Repertoire: passion, horror and friendship drama

Kirmo Komulainen: The Hidden History of Chess Masters Komulainen's work is an erotic thriller set in a chess tournament held in connection with the Vienna World's Fair in 1873. The play sheds light on the obsessive and often heated lives of chess masters of the 1800s, while reflecting on their feelings, fantasies,

and longing for affection. Komulainen, a 24-year-old Master's student in directing at the Theatre Academy, is interested in storytelling and illusions in theatre.

Fabian Gustaf Silén:

Love horror – a drama for those affected Silén's tragicomedy play deals with the complexity of love through autofiction. The work dives into gender struggles, fear of commitment and male baby fever with a satirical undertone. Silén is a first-year student of the Theatre Academy's Master's Programme in Drama-turgy and Playwriting, whose work emphasizes epic storytelling and heightened realism.

Pippi Toivola: My best friend Toivola's drama thriller asks whether a best friend can turn into a worst enemy. The work delves into an intense friendship that is put to the test by a new relationship. Toivola, a 21-year-old master's student in dramaturgy, explores the possibilities of drama theatre and fiction in her works. Young creators' voices heard Vaasa City Theatre's reading drama evening highlights the role of theatre in bringing out new talents. The performances offer the audience the opportunity to experience the fresh insights of young writers and directors that enrich the Finnish theatre scene.

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

***PALOSAARI LIBRARY**

Palosaari Library Still Open – A Victory for Local Culture and Civic Engagement



The Palosaari Library in Vaasa, a cherished cultural landmark for over a century, has been saved from closure – a decision that brings joy to Palosaari residents and loyal patrons alike.

On November 11th, the Vaasa City Council decided that, despite previous closure plans, Palosaari Library will continue to be part of the city’s library network.

Established in 1901, Palosaari Library received its own iconic building in 1929, designed by architect Carl Schoultz. Over the years, it has become much more than a place to borrow books. Palosaari was home to Vaasa’s first “reading dog,” a patient canine companion that listens without judgment, helping young readers feel at ease. And adding a touch of local legend, the library is said to have its own resident ghost, known to occasionally stir things up by tossing books onto the floor, giving staff a bit of extra work and visitors a story to tell.

For years, the library’s future remained uncertain, as the city considered closing it to reduce costs. Critics argued that the main library is only a kilometer away, rendering Brändö Library unnecessary. But for the local residents, it is much more than just a library – it is a gathering place, a cultural haven, and a symbol of community.

Led by Heimo Hokkanen and the neighborhood association, residents collected 2,800 signatures to save the library. The petition was presented in August to Joakim Strand (SFP), then-chairman of the Vaasa City Council, who expressed his appreciation for this active civic engagement. Strand also pledged his support to finding a sustainable solution for the library’s future.

The decision to preserve Palosaari Library is not only a victory for local culture but also an inspiring example of the power of civic action. Brändö residents have shown that when people unite to defend what they value, even the smallest communities can make their voices heard.

The Art Experience of the Week:



Hjalmar Munsterhjelm

19.10.1840, Toivoniemi, Tuulos

2.4.1905, Helsinki

Morning Mood (Island View), 1884

*** CARING CHAMPIONSHIP**

Vaasa Joins the Caring Championships – Invites Residents to Participate

The city of Vaasa is participating in the first-ever Caring Championships, set to take place in spring 2025.

The event aims to foster a culture of care both locally and nationally. The city invites organizations, churches, welfare areas, and other communities to take part by organizing “caring missions” to help make Vaasa the most caring municipality in Finland in 2025.

Caring Championships – Meaningful Encounters and Acts of Kindness The Caring Championships will run from April 1 to May 31, 2025, as an open team competition. Participants will organize various caring missions, where volunteer teams can engage with groups such as children, youth, the elderly, people with disabilities, or others in need. Missions may include activities like outdoor walks, baking, music, volunteering, or environmental initiatives.

“The goal of the championships is to create meaningful encounters and foster empathy between different groups,” says Vaasa’s Director of Wellbeing, Virve Flinkkilä.

How to Join the Competition All interested organizations, communities, and groups are welcome to register as organizers of caring missions. Registration is open until January 30, 2025, via the competition’s website. Exact dates for missions do not need to be finalized at the time of registration.

Vaasa Already Embracing a Culture of Caring Since August, Vaasa has been running the campaign Talk to a Stranger, encouraging residents to connect with others and combat loneliness. The Caring Cham-

pionships complement this initiative by offering new ways to engage in low-threshold activities.

“Success is a shared responsibility for all of us in Vaasa. We hope for broad participation so that together, we can highlight Vaasa in a positive way,” says Flinkkilä.

For more information about the competition and registration, visit www.valittamisensm.fi. The event is organized by the Caring Movement Association.

*** BILTEMA**

Biltema food truck opens in Vaasa



The Biltema Food Truck Cafe will move from Helsinki to the yard of the Biltema department store in Vaasa in early 2025. The food truck, which has been operating in Helsinki since

June, will be open for its last day on Sunday, December 15, after which it will prepare for its new location.

The food truck's meatballs are good.

So they say. As good as IKEA meatballs, one tester has claimed. Or better. And not only are they good, they are also cheap

Coffee truck on the move due to renovation
The reason for the move of the food truck that operated in the yard of Biltema in Helsinki is the expansion renovation that will begin soon at the store. With the renovation, a traditional Biltema Cafe will be built in Helsinki, which can already be found in several cities, such as Espoo, Lappeenranta and Raisio. After the renovation, Biltema Cafe will offer its customers a wider selection and more permanent cafe services. Vaasa opening early this year
Customers of the Biltema department store in Vaasa will be able to enjoy the Food Truck Cafe's offerings right from the beginning of the year. The exact opening date will be announced later. The coffee truck's selection is smaller than in traditional Biltema Cafe cafes, but it offers popular products, such as euro hot dogs, coffee and cinnamon rolls. This year's hit products - meatballs, vegetable buns and mash - can also be found on the menu.

The move of the food truck brings affordable and popular delicacies to Vaasa customers. This mobile cafe is worth a try!

A few words about Biltema

Biltema is one of the largest spare parts and accessories store chains in the Nordic countries. The extensive product range currently includes approximately 19,000 product items. The products are divided into nine product groups, which are automotive-motorcycling, bicycles, boating, leisure, home, office-multimedia, construction, car care and tools. With its wide and diverse selection, Biltema is now a real department store for the whole family. There are currently over 170 department stores, located in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland. There are 19 Biltema stores in Finland and an online store. And one of them is in Vaasa.

***WÄRTSILÄ**

Wärtsilä Gas Solutions service agreement will optimise liquefaction operations for five GasLog LNG Carriers



Image: Wärtsilä

Wärtsilä Gas Solutions has signed a three-year Service & Maintenance Agreement with Greek fleet-owner GasLog LNG Services. The agreement covers five 180,000 m3 LNG Carrier vessels.

Wärtsilä Gas Solutions, part of technology group

Wärtsilä, has signed a three-year Service & Maintenance Agreement with Greek fleet-owner GasLog LNG Services. The agreement covers five 180,000 m3 LNG Carrier vessels, all of which are fitted with Wärtsilä mixed refrigerant (MR) Reliq liquefaction plants. The signing took place in December 2024, and the order was booked by Wärtsilä in the same month.

By optimising the operation of the ships' MR Reliq plants, the boil-off gas (BOG) from the LNG cargo can be efficiently managed. This reduces emissions while also minimising cargo losses, thereby improving the vessels' economic performance.

The scope of the agreement includes technical support, secured availability of spare parts and specialised field service personnel, as well as performance monitoring of the MR Reliq plants. Remote technical support and operational data monitoring is provided by Wärtsilä digital services.

"GasLog is a leading global provider of LNG shipping services, helping the world transition to a lower carbon future. We at Wärtsilä Gas Solutions are excited to support them in this by ensuring the efficient and sustainable operation of their onboard liquefaction plants. We look forward to continuing our long-term partnership and collaboration," comments Saman Siahpoush, Head of Services Sales, Wärtsilä Gas Solutions.

GasLog LNG Services has long been a customer of Wärtsilä. The company's fleet operates with a range of Wärtsilä solutions.
(Source: Wärtsilä Corporation, Press release)

*** 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 visitors 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.

*** REPLIT 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.

*** 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 coeliac disease and your application must be accompanied by a medical certificate or medical record.

Marja-Leena Valkonen, Head of Benefits Services 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 di-

sease 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

*** ART MUSEUMS IN HELSINKI**

Helsinki National Gallery museums attract record-breaking audiences

A total of approximately 918,000 people visited the Ateneum, Kiasma and Sinebrychoff Art Museum in 2024.

Both the Ateneum and the Sinebrychoff Art Museums received a record number of visitors during the year. The Digital National Gallery program made the collection accessible digitally in new ways.

The Ateneum Art Mu-

seum was visited by almost 582,000 people in 2024. An exhibition presenting Eero Järnefelt's extensive work opened at the museum in the spring, which was on display until the end of the summer and brought people to art in large numbers. This exhibition is now attracting a record-breaking audience to the Tikanoja Art Museum in Vaasa. Source: National Gallery, Press release



Image: Finnish National Opera, , Emma Suominen

*** TAXES**

Confectionery tax to rise in summer

The government's proposal to increase the VAT on confectionery and chocolate is progressing.

The Ministry of Finance has launched a round of comments proposing to increase the current reduced tax rate of 14 percent to a general tax rate of 25.5 percent. The increase is based on the goal of strengthening the sustainability of public finances, and is based on a decision made in the spring 2024 budget process. According to the proposal, the change in the tax rate would apply to products that are defined as confectionery and chocolate according to the customs headings of the Combined Nomenclature. The Ministry of Finance estimates that the increase will increase the state's VAT revenue by approximately 85 million euros per year compared to 2025. The new tax rate would enter into force on June 1, 2025. The comment period for the proposal is until February 7, 2025, and the draft is available on the Ministry of Finance's website. The proposal is likely to spark debate, as it will directly affect consumer prices and demand for sweets.

*** NATIONAL OPERA**

The Finnish National Opera Orchestra will celebrate 2025 with top concerts

The year 2025 will begin with a sparkling start with unique concerts by Finland's largest orchestra, the Orchestra of the Finnish National Opera.

The programme combines top international names, beloved tunes and impressive orchestral music. In January, the orchestra will perform both on the main stage of the Finnish National Opera and at the Helsinki Music Centre, bringing a new kind of depth to the Finnish concert selection.

Symphonic Suites –

Andrew Lloyd Webber's beloved tunes on the main stage From 10 to 11 January, the main stage of the Finnish National Opera will be transformed into a stage for Andrew Lloyd Webber's most beloved musicals. Symphonic Suites concerts offer unique adaptations of works such as The Phantom of the Opera, Evita and Sunset Boulevard. These large pieces arranged for symphony orchestra are conducted by conductor Nick Davies, who is especially known for

his collaborations with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and musical productions for London's West End. Conductor Davies has extensive experience in conducting orchestras around the world. His career combines elements of classical music, film music and rock, which makes him particularly suitable as an interpreter of Lloyd Webber's multidimensional music. This concert is a unique opportunity to dive into the world of musicals through major orchestral arrangements.

World stars and deep tunes at the Helsinki Music Centre

The Finnish National Opera Orchestra will continue its ambitious concert series at the Helsinki Music Centre in January. The series began in August 2024 and aims to bring the best of orchestral music to a wider audience. In the third concert of the series on 14 January, world-famous bass-baritone Johan Reuter will take the stage, interpreting Johannes Brahms and Detlev Glanert's

The Four Preludes and Serious Songs.

The second part of the concert will feature Gustav Mahler's monumental Symphony No. 6, known for its impressive drama and deep emotions. The concert will be conducted by Hannu Lintu, Chief Conductor

of the Finnish National Opera and Ballet, who is known for his strong interpretive style and diverse repertoire. This concert is a special opportunity to hear Johan Reuter's unique voice. His last visit to the Finnish National Opera was in 2016, when he captivated his audience in the title role of The Flying Dutchman.

Hannu Lintu – versatile maestro

Hannu Lintu will continue as Chief Conductor of the Finnish National Opera and will also start his new position as Artistic Partner of the Lahti Symphony Orchestra in autumn 2025. Before that, she made her debut in the summer of 2025 at Austria's prestigious Brezgen Opera Festival. Under Lintu's leadership, the Finnish National Opera will offer concert music as well as opera experiences such as Don Carlos and the Horseman in 2025.

Opera experiences also online

If it is not possible to attend events at the Finnish National Opera, webcasts are also available. Tchaikovsky's masterpiece Eugene Onegin will be available to watch live from December 20, 2024, and the recording will be available until June 20, 2025. Directed by Marco Arturo Marelli, the production highlights the realistic characters of the

opera and their complex emotions, which touch the audience from generation to generation. You can watch the opera here: <https://operavision.eu/performance/eugene-onegin-1>

Enchanting experiences for 2025

In the coming year, the Orchestra of the Finnish National Opera will offer high-quality concert experiences that combine classical music, modern interpretations and international art. The Symphonic Suites concerts and the Helsinki Music Centre's series show that the Finnish National Opera Orchestra is not only the largest in Finland, but also one of its most versatile ensembles.

*** ART AND VIDEO GAMES**

Fortnite gets a Finnish twist: players rob art treasures in the digital world

Now the battlefield moves inside the walls of an art gallery!

The National Gallery has issued a bold challenge to the Finnish art audience and gaming veterans by bringing classic works to the new Art Heist map in Fortnite. Now players can combine their knowledge of art history and quick reflexes as they compete to control the masterpieces.

However, in the game world, you don't sit around admiring the symbolism of the works or the artists' brushstrokes. No, here art is literally taken out of hand. Teams compete to see who can grab, for example, Akseli Gallen-Kallela's Aino-taru or Eero Järnefelt's Raatajat rahanalaiset first and manage to keep them safe from attacks

Spawning trees save Christmas trees and enliven waterways

by opponents. Looting classics has never been so hectic - or so fun.

"Art belongs to everyone - even nerds"
"We wanted to find a new way to bring art to the youth. If admiring a work of art in the silence of a museum isn't your thing, maybe looting it in a digital frenzy is!" someone is remembered as saying.

The game features seven iconic works from the National Gallery's collection. "But don't worry, the real paintings will remain safely on the walls, and we haven't yet seen any Fortnite characters chasing thieves in our museum." Fortunately.

Harmony of art and pixels
The new map was released on the Fortnite Creative platform in the fall, and it promises to bring together lovers of culture, entertainment and video games. The game environment, which emphasizes community, reminds us that art and technology can have an interesting dialogue.

Although the patrons and looters of the works meet in the game in a hostile spirit, the National Gallery believes that the end result will be one that glorifies art. "If this inspires even one player to find out the difference between impressionism and realism, we'll consider this a complete victory,"

Who knows, maybe next we'll see Fortnite characters pondering the symbolism of Finnish masterpieces... or at least dragging them out of the digital gallery in sweaty hats.

*** BANGLADESH** **Bangladesh is The Economist's Country of the Year**



Bangladesh has been named as The Economist's "Country of the Year" for "toppling a despot" and "taking strides towards a more liberal government." The announcement, published on Thursday by the globally acclaimed UK-based magazine, sent shockwaves through the nation, a beacon of hope in a region often plagued by political turmoil and economic hardship.

The accolade is not about being the richest, happiest, or most virtuous country, but about making significant strides in the last 12 months. The Economist praised Bangladesh for its recent democratic breakthrough, highlighting the peaceful transfer of power following a fiercely contested election. This marked a significant departure from the country's history, where authoritarian rule had long been the norm.

However, this choice has not been met with universal acclaim. In neighboring India, strong criticism has emerged. "The Economist might need a reality check here," stated a leading Indian political analyst. "The aftermath of the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina regime has seen chaos in Bangladesh, and the country is far from being stable economically."

Despite this criticism, the Bangladeshi people are celebrating the recognition. The award is seen as a testament to their resilience and determination in the face of adversity. It serves as a powerful symbol of hope, demonstrating that even in the face of daunting challenges, democracy and progress can prevail.



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/>

NEW YEAR'S SPEECH



President Alexander Stubb: Finland is Perhaps the Happiest Country in the World, But We Can Make It Still Better

In his New Year's speech on January 1, 2025, President Alexander Stubb addressed the Finnish people with a message of optimism, unity, and shared responsibility. Acknowledging global challenges and uncertainties, he emphasized Finland's strengths and called for collective efforts to build a brighter future.

A Challenging Global Context

President Stubb opened by reflecting on the turbulent times, marked by constant information flow and global instability. The post-Cold War era, he noted, has given way to a redistribution of power among nations,

challenging the rules-based international system essential for addressing global issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss, artificial intelligence, and conflict resolution.

For Finland, a small nation dependent on international cooperation, defending these global rules is critical. Despite the complexities of diplomacy, Stubb stressed Finland's commitment to promoting values of peace and cooperation while maintaining realism in its approach to global challenges.

Finland's Resilience and Security

Reassuring his compatriots, Stubb highlighted Finland's robust security infrastructure, including its defense forces, police, and border guard. He

also underscored the broader concept of security, which encompasses cultural resilience, education, and a shared societal identity that shields against hybrid threats and misinformation.

On Finland's steadfast support for Ukraine, he drew parallels with Finland's own struggles for sovereignty during the Winter War and Continuation War. While there is no immediate threat to Finland, Stubb cautioned that Russia remains the country's primary security concern. However, he expressed confidence in Finland's alliances, particularly as a NATO member and part of the European Union.

Economic Challenges and Polarisation

Stubb identified internal economic challenges and societal

polarisation as areas of concern. He urged Finland's political leaders to find common ground for structural reforms and sustainable growth. Recognizing the difficulty of balancing public spending and austerity, he called for bold compromises to address unemployment and financial uncertainty.

Polarisation, he warned, poses a threat to Finland's unity. As a small nation, Finland cannot afford divisions. Stubb emphasized shared responsibility among all citizens to treat one another with respect and work together for solutions.

Values and Inclusion

The President reaffirmed Finland's core values: equality, individual freedom, and a sense of community. He strongly condemned racism and underscored the importance of creating an inclusive society where everyone feels they belong. Trust, he said, is the glue holding society together, and democratic institutions ensure that every voice is heard.

As Finland grows more diverse, Stubb called on Finns to embrace this change and build a nation that reflects the shared aspirations of all its people.

A Message of Empathy and Connection

Empathy, tolerance, and mutual respect were central themes of Stubb's speech. He encouraged Finns to turn down the noise of divisive rhetoric, acknowledge mistakes, and focus on what unites rather than divides. He also urged families and communities to prioritize genuine human connection over digital distractions.

To young people,



Finland - the happiest country in the world

Stubb delivered a hopeful message, urging them to find meaning and happiness in helping others and fostering a sense of purpose. He reminded them that humanity has overcome great challenges in the past and will continue to do so.

Pride in Finland

Concluding his speech, Stubb celebrated Finland as one of the happiest and most successful nations in the world. Acknowledging areas for improvement, he expressed confidence in Finland's resilience, values, and col-

lective will to strive for better.

"We are a tenacious, strong, and civilised nation," he declared. "Let us be proud of Finland and our Finnish identity. Together, we can make this year better than ever."

On behalf of himself and his wife, Suzanne, Stubb wished all Finns a happy and meaningful New Year, calling on them to build on the nation's strengths and shared values.

DRY JANUARY



January Without Any Brandy! What a Month Without Alcohol Really Does to Your Body

The new year often brings resolutions and fresh starts, and for many, it marks the beginning of "Dry January" – a month-long commitment to abstain from alcohol. While the idea of a January without brandy, wine, beer, or any other alcoholic beverage might seem daunting, the benefits to your body and mind can be transformative. But what exactly happens to your body during this alcohol-free month? Here's a closer look at the science and the potential perks.

Week 1: Detox and Adjustment

The first week of abstaining from alcohol can feel like a challenge, especially if you're used to having a nightly drink. As your body begins to metabolize the residual alcohol in your system, you might experience cravings, irritability, or mild headaches. These symptoms are temporary and are part of your body's natural detoxification process.

During this time, your liver, the body's primary detox organ, starts to recover. Alcohol consumption places significant strain on the liver, so even a short break allows it to repair

damaged cells and improve its efficiency. You might also notice that your sleep quality starts to improve. Although alcohol might help you fall asleep initially, it disrupts the REM stage, which is critical for restorative rest. Without alcohol, your sleep cycles normalize, leaving you feeling more refreshed.

Week 2: Clearer Skin and Increased Energy

By the second week, many people notice visible improvements in their skin. Alcohol dehydrates the body and can exacerbate con-

ditions like redness, puffiness, and acne. Without alcohol, your skin begins to rehydrate and heal, resulting in a clearer and more radiant complexion.

Energy levels also start to increase as your blood sugar stabilizes. Alcohol can cause spikes and crashes in blood glucose levels, leading to fatigue and mood swings. With these fluctuations minimized, you may find it easier to focus and feel more productive throughout the day.

Week 3: Improved Digestion and Mood

The third week often brings noticeable changes to your digestive system. Alcohol can irritate the stomach lining and disrupt gut bacteria balance, leading to bloating and indigestion. A break from alcohol allows your digestive system to reset, reducing discomfort and improving nutrient absorption.

This week also marks significant improvements in mental health. Alcohol is a depressant that can exacerbate feelings of anxiety and sadness. Many participants of Dry January report feeling less anxious and more emotionally stable as their brains adjust to functioning without the influence of alcohol. Increased endorphin production, the body's natural "feel-good" chemicals, further contributes to an uplifted mood.

Week 4: Weight Loss and Lower Blood Pressure

As you approach the end of the month, the cumulative effects of abstaining from alcohol become even more apparent. For many, one of the most significant benefits is weight loss. Alcohol is calorie-dense, and its consumption often leads to overeating or unhealthy snacking. Cutting out alcohol eliminates these empty

calories and can make it easier to maintain a calorie deficit.

Your heart health also improves. Alcohol raises blood pressure and can contribute to cardiovascular problems. Studies have shown that even a short break can lower blood pressure and reduce levels of harmful cholesterol, promoting better heart function.

Beyond January: Sustained Changes

The end of Dry January doesn't have to mean returning to old habits. Many participants find that the month-long challenge helps them reset their relationship with alcohol, leading to more mindful drinking habits in the future. The insights gained during this period – such as improved energy, better sleep, and enhanced mental clarity – can serve as powerful motivators to continue reducing alcohol consumption.

Is Dry January for Everyone?

While Dry January offers nu-

merous health benefits, it's essential to approach it safely, especially if you're a heavy drinker. Abruptly stopping alcohol after prolonged heavy use can lead to withdrawal symptoms, which may require medical supervision. If you're concerned about your drinking habits, consider consulting a healthcare professional before beginning the challenge.

The Takeaway

January without brandy or other alcoholic drinks is more than just a test of willpower; it's an opportunity to recalibrate your body and mind. From improved liver function to better skin and mood, the benefits of abstaining from alcohol can be profound and long-lasting. So why not give it a try? Your body will thank you, and you might just discover a healthier, happier version of yourself in the process.

The Topsy Truth: Why Alcohol Is Not Your Friend

You might think a glass of wine or a beer is harmless, but the truth is, alcohol can be a sneaky saboteur of your health. It's not just about hangovers, it's about long-term damage.

Here's the lowdown:

Your Liver is a Workhorse: Alcohol is processed primarily by your liver, which works overtime to break it down. Over time, excessive alcohol consumption can lead to fatty liver disease, cirrhosis, and even liver cancer.

Brain Drain: Alcohol affects your brain, impacting memory, concentration, and even your emotional control. Chronic alcohol use can lead to dementia and cognitive decline.

Heartbreak: While a little alcohol might seem to help your heart, excessive consumption is a recipe for disaster. It can increase your risk of heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure.

Cancer's Ally: Alcohol is linked to an increased risk of several cancers, including mouth, throat, breast, liver, and colon cancers.

Weight Gain: Alcohol is packed with empty calories, contributing to weight gain and obesity.

It's important to remember:

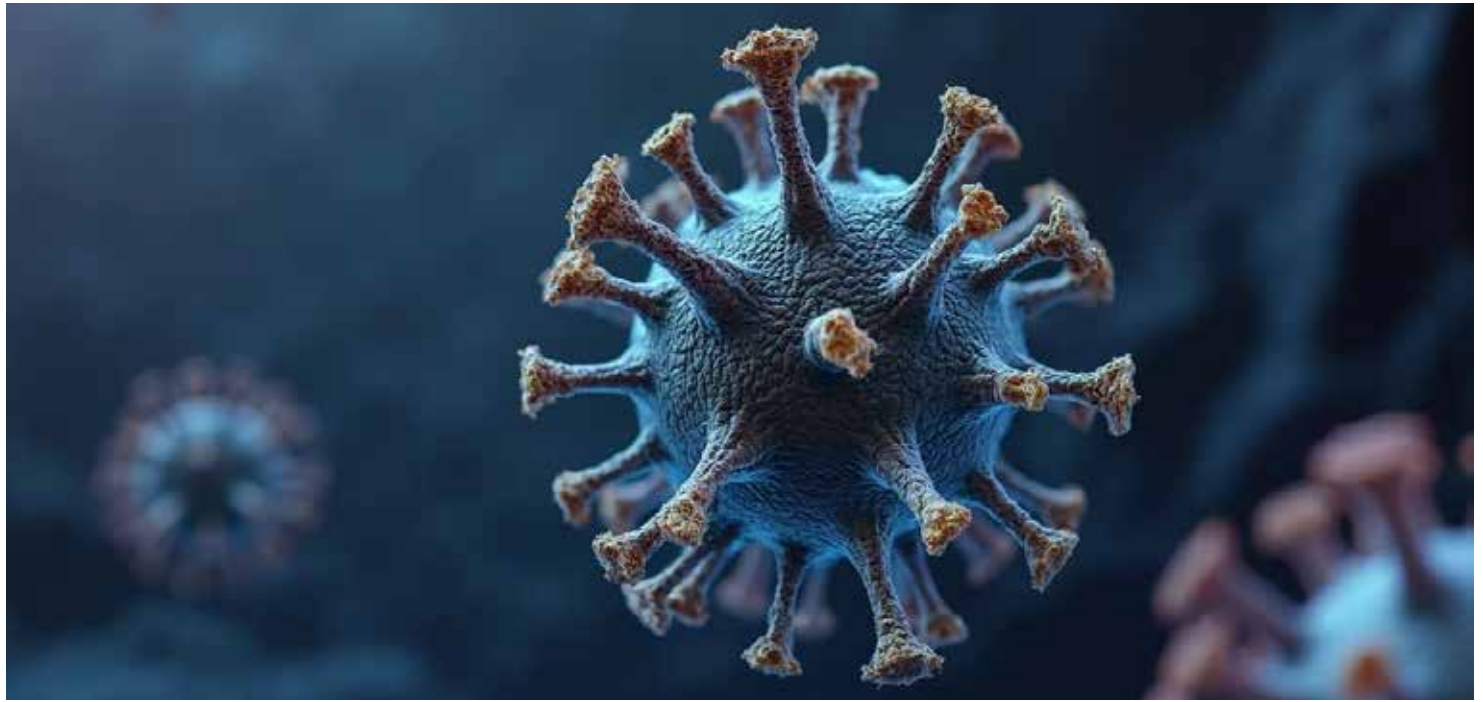
Moderation is key: If you choose to drink, do so in moderation. For women, that's one drink per day, and for men, two drinks per day.

Know your limits: Everyone has a different tolerance. Pay attention to how alcohol affects you and avoid overindulging.

Don't drink if you're pregnant: Alcohol can have devastating effects on a developing fetus.

The bottom line: Alcohol can be enjoyable in moderation, but it's not worth the risks to your health. So, raise a glass to your health and choose wisely!

HEALTH



The HMPV Epidemic in China: Could This Be a New Pandemic?

As China grapples with a sharp increase in human metapneumovirus (HMPV) cases, concerns are growing over its potential to spark a global health crisis. Five years after the emergence of COVID-19, the specter of a new pandemic is understandably unsettling. While HMPV is not new to virology, the current outbreak raises questions about the virus, its impact, and how we can address it.

The Scope of the HMPV Outbreak in China

Recent reports indicate a notable surge in HMPV infections across northern China, particularly among children under 14 years old. This uptick coincides with the seasonal rise of respiratory illnesses during the winter months. Hospitals are reportedly

crowded, with many families seeking treatment for young children presenting symptoms such as fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.

Although specific numbers on the scale of the epidemic are scarce, China's National Disease Control and Prevention Administration has noted an increase in respiratory virus activity, including HMPV. The situation mirrors typical winter respiratory infection patterns, but the intensity and spread of HMPV cases have drawn global attention.

What Is HMPV?

Human metapneumovirus (HMPV) is a respiratory virus first identified in 2001. Belonging to the Pneumoviridae family, HMPV is closely related to respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). It typically causes mild respiratory symptoms, such as:

- Cough
- Nasal congestion

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Sore throat

In severe cases, particularly in vulnerable populations such as young children, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals, HMPV can lead to complications like bronchitis or pneumonia. Unlike COVID-19, HMPV is not a novel virus, and its epidemiological behavior is well-documented. However, there is no vaccine or specific antiviral treatment for HMPV, leaving symptomatic management as the primary approach.

Could HMPV Cause a New Pandemic?

Pandemics arise when a virus demonstrates high transmissibility, significant morbidity, and the capacity to spread globally. While HMPV is highly contagious, it does not currently show the potential for the rapid, large-scale global transmission

seen in COVID-19. Additionally, HMPV's morbidity rate is generally lower than that of novel viruses like SARS-CoV-2.

Health officials, including China's Foreign Ministry, have emphasized that the current HMPV surge aligns with typical seasonal trends rather than signaling a new pandemic. However, the outbreak serves as a reminder of the importance of monitoring respiratory viruses and their capacity to evolve.

Treatment and Prevention

Treatment:

There is no specific antiviral medication or vaccine for HMPV. Current treatment focuses on relieving symptoms, which include:

Hydration

Over-the-counter pain relievers and fever reducers

Rest

For severe cases involving complications like pneumonia, hospitalization and supportive care, such as oxygen therapy, may be required.

Prevention:

Preventing the spread of HMPV involves basic hygiene practices:

1. Handwashing: Regularly wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

2. Masking: Wear masks in crowded or enclosed spaces, especially during peak respiratory illness seasons.

3. Social Distancing: Avoid close contact with individuals exhibiting respiratory symptoms.

4. Sanitizing: Disinfect frequently touched surfaces regularly.

5. Vaccination Research: Encourage global health organizations to prioritize vaccine development for HMPV.

How Worried Should We Be?



A face mask provides some protection against this disease

While the HMPV outbreak in China is concerning, it is not currently classified as a global health emergency. The virus's seasonal nature and its relatively mild impact on healthy individuals suggest that it is unlikely to escalate into a pandemic. However, the outbreak highlights the need for vigilance and preparedness:

Surveillance: Governments and health organizations must enhance monitoring of HMPV and other respiratory viruses.

Public Awareness: Educating the public on preventive measures is crucial to controlling the spread of respiratory illnesses.

Healthcare Readiness: Hospitals should be prepared to manage increased caseloads during respiratory virus seasons.

Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic tau-

ght us the importance of early detection, transparent communication, and global cooperation in addressing infectious diseases. Applying these lessons to the HMPV outbreak can help mitigate its impact and prevent unnecessary alarm.

HMPV is a well-documented respiratory virus with the potential to cause significant illness in vulnerable populations. While the current outbreak in China warrants attention, it is not a cause for widespread panic. By adhering to preventive measures, enhancing surveillance, and investing in research, we can address the challenges posed by HMPV effectively. The experience serves as a reminder of the constant need for preparedness in an interconnected world vulnerable to respiratory infections.

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 ±0.13°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 exag-

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

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

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

A tribute to Salminen's legacy

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

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



Sally Salminen at her 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

Everything You Want to Know About Mycoplasma

Mycoplasma pneumoniae is a bacterium that causes respiratory infections, especially among schoolchildren and young adults. It is a relatively common cause of prolonged coughing and fever and can cause everything from mild colds to more severe pneumonia. Here you will get a comprehensive picture of what mycoplasma is, how it is spread, how to protect yourself and how the disease is treated.

What is mycoplasma?

Mycoplasma is a type of bacterium that lacks a cell wall, which makes it unique among bacteria. The best-known species within this group is *Mycoplasma pneumoniae*, which infects the respiratory tract and leads to diseases such as bronchitis or pneumonia.

Infections caused by mycoplasma can occur in people of all ages, but they are most common in school-age children and young adults. These infections can occur as individual cases or as outbreaks, for example in schools, in the army or other environments where people live in close proximity to each other.

How is mycoplasma transmitted?

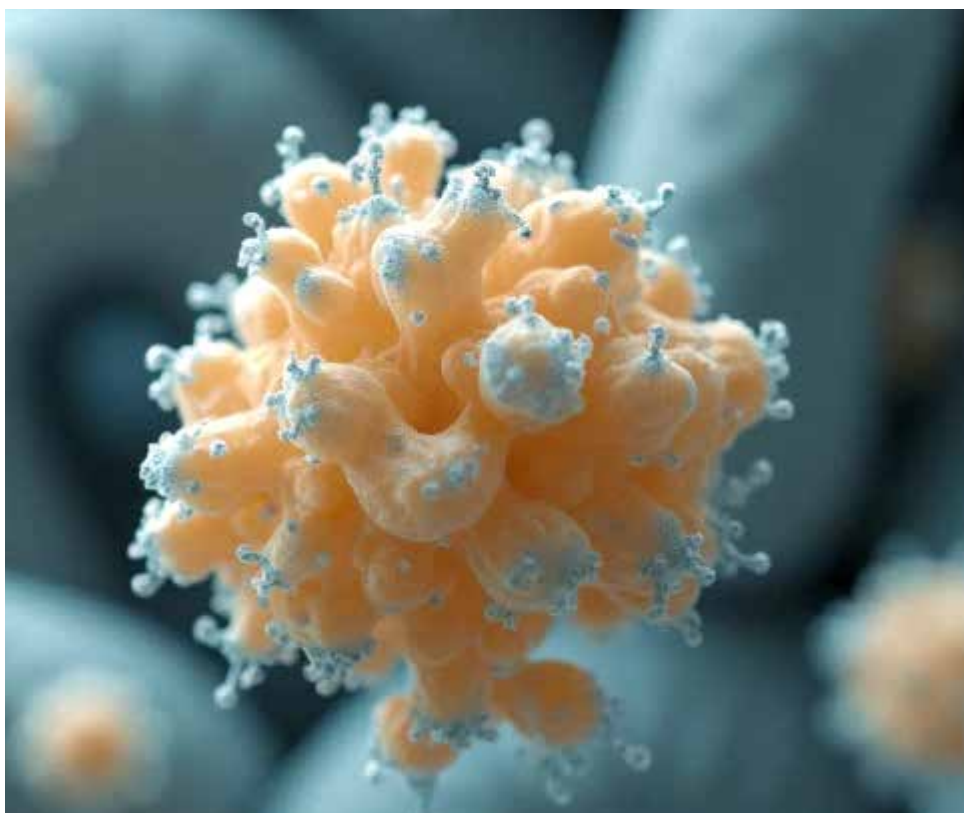
Mycoplasma is spread by droplet infection, which means that the bacteria are transmitted via small droplets from the respiratory tract – for example when someone coughs, sneezes or talks. The incubation period, that is, the time from exposure to the infection until symptoms appear, is 1–14 days. Outbreaks of mycoplasma can last for several months and often occur in cycles, with larger epidemics every three to five years.

What are the symptoms of mycoplasma infection?

Symptoms vary depending on the individual and the degree of infection, but the most common signs of the disease include:

- Fever
- Cough, often long-lasting and irritating
- General malaise
- Headache

In some people, the infection can progress to bronchitis or pneumonia, which can lead to more pronounced breathing problems. After the acute phase of the disease, it is common to



have a persistent irritating cough that can last for several weeks.

How is mycoplasma diagnosed?

The diagnosis is usually made based on clinical symptoms, especially during an outbreak of the disease. For more accurate diagnosis, laboratory tests are used such as:

PCR test from nasal or throat mucus: Can detect the genetic material of the bacteria.

Blood test for antibodies: Shows whether the body has developed an immune response to the bacteria. However, both PCR and antibody tests can be positive long after symptoms have disappeared, which can make the results difficult to interpret. Tests are mainly recommended for more serious cases or to identify outbreaks.

How is mycoplasma treated?

Infections caused by mycoplasma can be treated with antibiotics, although milder cases often resolve on their own. The most common drugs are: Doxycycline Erythromycin Treatment can reduce symptoms and speed up recovery, but it is important that antibiotics are used with caution to avoid the development of resistance.

How can you protect yourself from infection?

Since mycoplasma is spread through the respiratory tract, good hygiene is essential to reduce the spread of infection:

Wash your hands thoroughly and regularly.

Cough and sneeze into the crook of your arm or into a tissue.

Avoid close contact with sick people, especially during epidemics.

There is no vaccine against mycoplasma, so preventive measures are particularly important.

How common is mycoplasma?

Mycoplasma is found worldwide and is a common cause of respiratory infections. Major epidemics occur every few years, and infection is most common in autumn and winter.

Mycoplasma is an important but often overlooked cause of long-term respiratory infections. By knowing the symptoms, routes of infection and treatment options, you can both reduce the risk of becoming infected yourself and help prevent the spread. So the next time a stubborn cough won't let up, it might be worth thinking about – maybe mycoplasma is behind it.

(Source: Thl.fi)

HEALTH

If You Are Over 70, These Drugs Can Affect Your Memory



As we age, our bodies become more susceptible to the effects of medications. For people over 70, certain commonly prescribed drugs may increase the risk of memory loss or cognitive decline, including Alzheimer's disease. Understanding these medications and their potential side effects is crucial for maintaining cognitive health in later years.

How Medications Affect Memory

The brain's complex chemistry is sensitive to disruption, particularly in older adults. Many drugs can interfere with neurotransmitters, reduce oxygen supply to the brain, or cause side effects such as confusion or drowsiness. When these factors persist, they can contribute to memory problems and, in some cases, increase the risk of neurodegenerative diseases.

Drugs Linked to Memory Loss and Cognitive Decline

Here are some categories of medications that may affect memory in older adults:

1. Anticholinergics

Anticholinergic drugs block acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter critical for memory and learning. Older adults are particularly vulnerable to the cognitive effects of these drugs.

Examples:

Diphenhydramine (found in over-the-counter sleep aids and allergy medications)

Oxybutynin (used for overactive bladder)

Amitriptyline (an antidepressant)

Risks: Chronic use has been linked to an increased risk of Alzheimer's disease.

2. Benzodiazepines

Benzodiazepines are often prescribed for anxiety, insomnia, or muscle relaxation, but they can significantly affect cognitive function.

Examples:

Diazepam (Diapam)

Lorazepam (Temesta)

Alprazolam (Xanor)

Risks: These drugs can cause drowsiness, confusion, and memory impairments. Long-term use is associated with a higher risk of dementia. And the drowsiness can cause an increased risk of accidents. If you fall at night in your home, you could suffer a hip fracture and be in a wheelchair for many weeks or months.

So, if You are old, please do not use these drugs at least not for any longer period of time, if possible.

3. Statins

Statins are widely used to lower cholesterol, which is crucial for cardiovascular health. However, some studies suggest a potential link to memory issues in certain individuals.

Examples:

Atorvastatin (Lipitor)

Simvastatin (Zocor)

Risks: While not conclusively proven, some patients report memory fog, particularly with high doses. There is no scientific evidence that statins could cause dementia, only anecdotes. The claim that statins can affect memory gained traction in 2008 when Orli Etingin, then vice chairman of medicine at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, told a newspaper in USA that atorvastatin commonly used also in Finland "makes women stupid."

No evidence really, so don't

stop Your statin medication because of this anecdote,

4. Antidepressants

Certain types of antidepressants, particularly tricyclic antidepressants, can have anticholinergic properties that impair memory.

Examples:

Nortriptyline

Imipramine

Risks: Cognitive effects may be mild but can worsen with long-term use.

5. Opioids

Prescribed for pain relief, opioids can have sedative effects that impair short-term memory and cognitive clarity.

Examples:

Oxycodone (OxyContin)

Morphine

Fentanyl

Risks: Long-term or high-dose use can exacerbate memory issues and increase the risk of delirium.

6. Antihistamines

First-generation antihistamines, commonly found in allergy medications, can cross the blood-brain barrier and affect cognitive function.

Examples:

Chlorpheniramine

Diphenhydramine (Benadryl)

Risks: Prolonged use can lead to memory fog and confusion, particularly in older adults.

7. Sleeping Aids and Muscle Relaxants

Drugs used to aid sleep or relax muscles often have sedative properties that can impair memory and attention.

Examples:

Zolpidem (Ambien)

Cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril)

Risks: Persistent use may increase the risk of cognitive decline.

What Can You Do?

1. Review Your Medications

If you or a loved one is over 70, regularly review all medications with a healthcare provider. Ask if any drugs can be replaced with safer alternatives or if the dosage can be adjusted.

2. Be Mindful of Polypharmacy

Taking multiple medications increases the risk of drug interactions and side effects. Consolidating treatments or eliminating unnecessary drugs can reduce these risks.

3. Adopt Non-Pharmaceutical Strategies

In some cases, lifestyle changes can reduce the need for medications that impair memory:

Practice good sleep hygiene instead of relying on sleeping pills.

Manage anxiety or depression through counseling or mindfulness practices.

Address pain with physical therapy or acupuncture.

4. Stay Physically and Mentally Active

Regular exercise, a healthy diet, and cognitive activities (like puzzles or reading) can help mitigate the cognitive effects of medications.

The Importance of Advocacy

As a patient or caregiver, it's important to advocate for optimal care. Speak openly with doctors about any concerns regarding memory or cognition and stay informed about the potential side effects of prescribed drugs.

While many medications can support health and well-being, some carry risks for memory and cognitive function, especially in older adults. By understanding these risks, discussing concerns with healthcare providers, and exploring alternative treatments, it's possible to minimize the impact on memory and maintain a sharp mind well into the golden years.

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

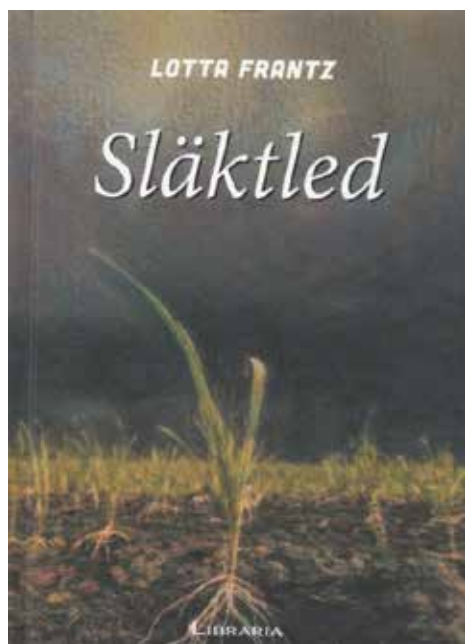
Following these eight habits not only supports brain health but also contributes to overall well-being. The cumulative effect of eating well, staying active, and managing key health metrics ensures that the brain receives the nutrients, oxygen, and stimulation it needs to stay sharp.

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)

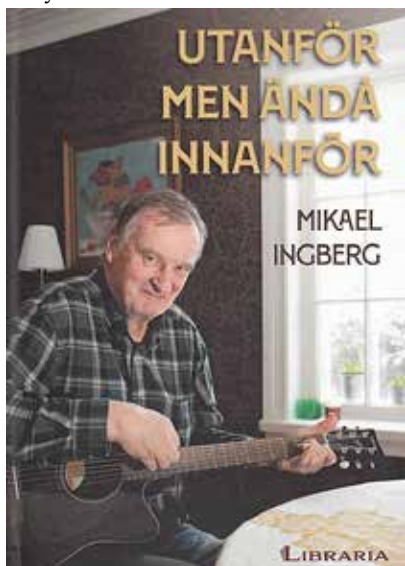
Publisher: Libraria

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

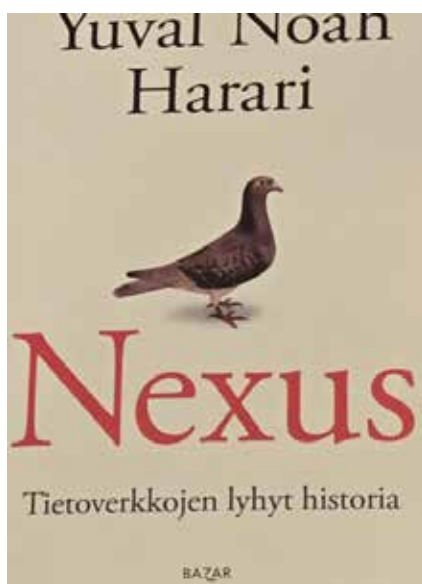
OUTDOORS, BUT STILL INDOORS, in Swedish

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

A Celestial Spectacle: Witnessing the Quadrantids Meteor Shower in Ostrobothnia



The Quadrantids meteor shower, one of the most prolific celestial events of the year, is currently gracing the skies of Ostrobothnia and will continue to do so until January 12th. This annual astronomical phenomenon offers a breathtaking display of shooting stars, captivating skywatchers with its brilliance.

A Brief History of the Quadrantids

The Quadrantids are unique in several ways. Unlike most meteor showers that originate from comets, their parent body is believed to be an asteroid, 2003 EH1. This asteroid, a near-Earth object, is thought to be the remnant of a long-

dead comet.

The shower's name stems from its radiant point, the apparent origin of the meteors in the sky. This radiant point lies within the former constellation Quadrans Muralis, which is now part of the constellation Boötes.

Observing the Quadrantids in Ostrobothnia

Peak Activity: The Quadrantids typically peak around the first few days of January, producing up to 120 meteors per hour under ideal conditions.
Finding the Radiant: Locate the constellation Boötes, easily recognizable by its distinctive kite shape. The radiant point will be near the Big Dipper.
Best Viewing Conditions:
Dark Skies: Find a location away from

city lights and artificial illumination.

Clear Weather: Cloudless skies are essential for optimal viewing.

Patience: The shower may not be constant. Be patient and allow your eyes to adjust to the darkness.

Warmth and Comfort: Dress warmly in layers as temperatures can drop significantly during the night. Bring a blanket or a reclining chair to make your observation more comfortable.

Tips for Observing Meteor Showers:

Arrive Early: Give your eyes ample time to adjust to the darkness.

Be Patient: Meteor showers are unpredictable. Relax and enjoy the experience.

Avoid Looking at Your Phone: The bright light from your phone will diminish your night vision.

Share the Experience: Invite friends and family to join you for a memorable night under the stars.

Safety Precautions:

and finding a suitable location in Ostrobothnia, you can increase your chances of experiencing this celestial spectacle.



Never observe alone: Always have a companion with you.

Be aware of your surroundings: Avoid venturing into unfamiliar or potentially dangerous areas.

Check the weather forecast: Be prepared for changing weather conditions.

The Quadrantids meteor shower offers a unique opportunity to witness the wonders of the universe. By following these tips

Disclaimer: This information is for general guidance only. Always prioritize safety and check local weather conditions before venturing out to observe any astronomical event.

We hope you have a clear and enjoyable experience observing the Quadrantids meteor shower!

Images: An AI-artist impressions of the Quadrantids Meteorite Shower

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.

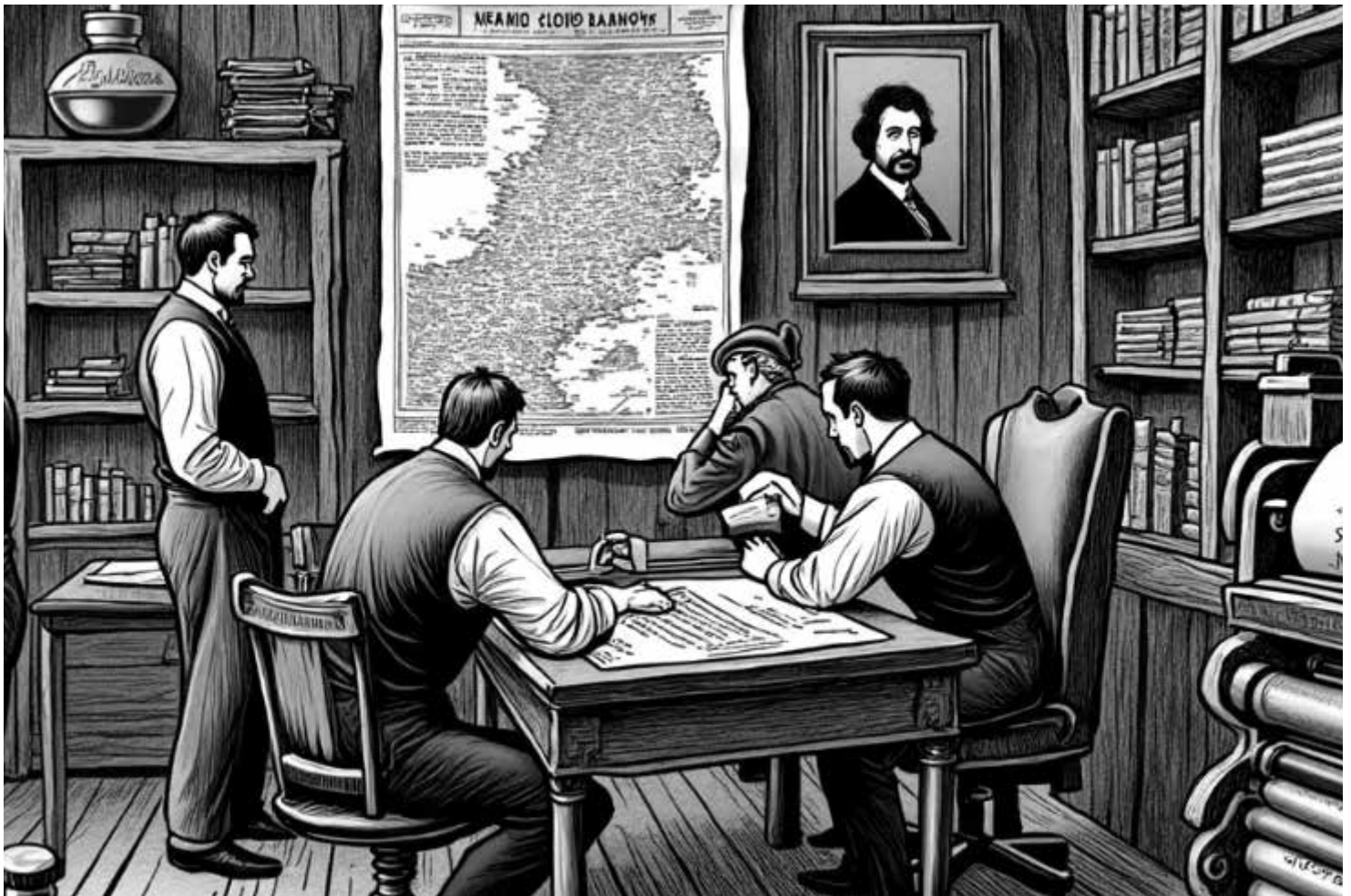
And what a wonderful "Trivial Pursuit"-question! "How many moons did our earth have in October 2024?"

Now You know the answer. Two,

Image: An artistic impression of earth and its two moons. To the left on asteroid of the same size as PT5.



NEWSPAPERS



Making a daily newspaper in the 1860s

The following rather humorous account published in Helsingin Dagblad on 12.1.1867 about what it was like to make a daily newspaper in the 1860s is worth reading.

And it can be stated, not much has changed in the newspaper editorial offices in 158 years.

"Has anyone really found out the great machinery that must be set in motion, and what a strange apparatus of the most diverse people and things must be set in motion before a major daily newspaper is ready to be distributed by the newspaper distributors?"

I wonder if you have thought about it, indefatigable readers, when you open your door in the morning and take your spiritual morning food out of the carpet, or fetch it from the safer hiding place in the drawer "for letters and newspapers," and then enjoy its very mixed ingredients together with your, as I hope, tasty coffee; when you run through the leading article with a critical eye to see if the paper's foreign politicians have the same "justified" fear as you do, that the gunpowder explosion in Helsinki will exert a noticeable influence on the price of window glass on the foreign market: when you, as a co-owner of the steamship Ettan, read that the boat needs twice as much coal as it brings in; or when your aesthetic gaze

clears when reading a critique of "the man from Eldsön"; Or when your heart beats sympathetically when you read about a horrible accident or something like that?

Perhaps you, the most gracious of all readers, have thought about it that when you with feverish speed and a crushing contempt for the events in Spain or the Prussian Parliament, "the traffic income from the canals" and the "Ship List", have plunged headlong into the basement to see what the end of Theobald was, when in the last issue he was just about to climb the bomb-proof tower in the dark hour of midnight with a blind lamp in his mouth, showing off a row of pearly white teeth, and a pistol in each of the small aristocratic,

but powerfully built hands?

Have you, all the countless newspaper-devouring individuals of the century, from the statesman on the stool to the coffee-lady in the square, have thought of this?

We dare to bravely answer no; and unless you have seen it yourself, you cannot get a true idea of the work that accompanies a newspaper until it is available to you in its final form.

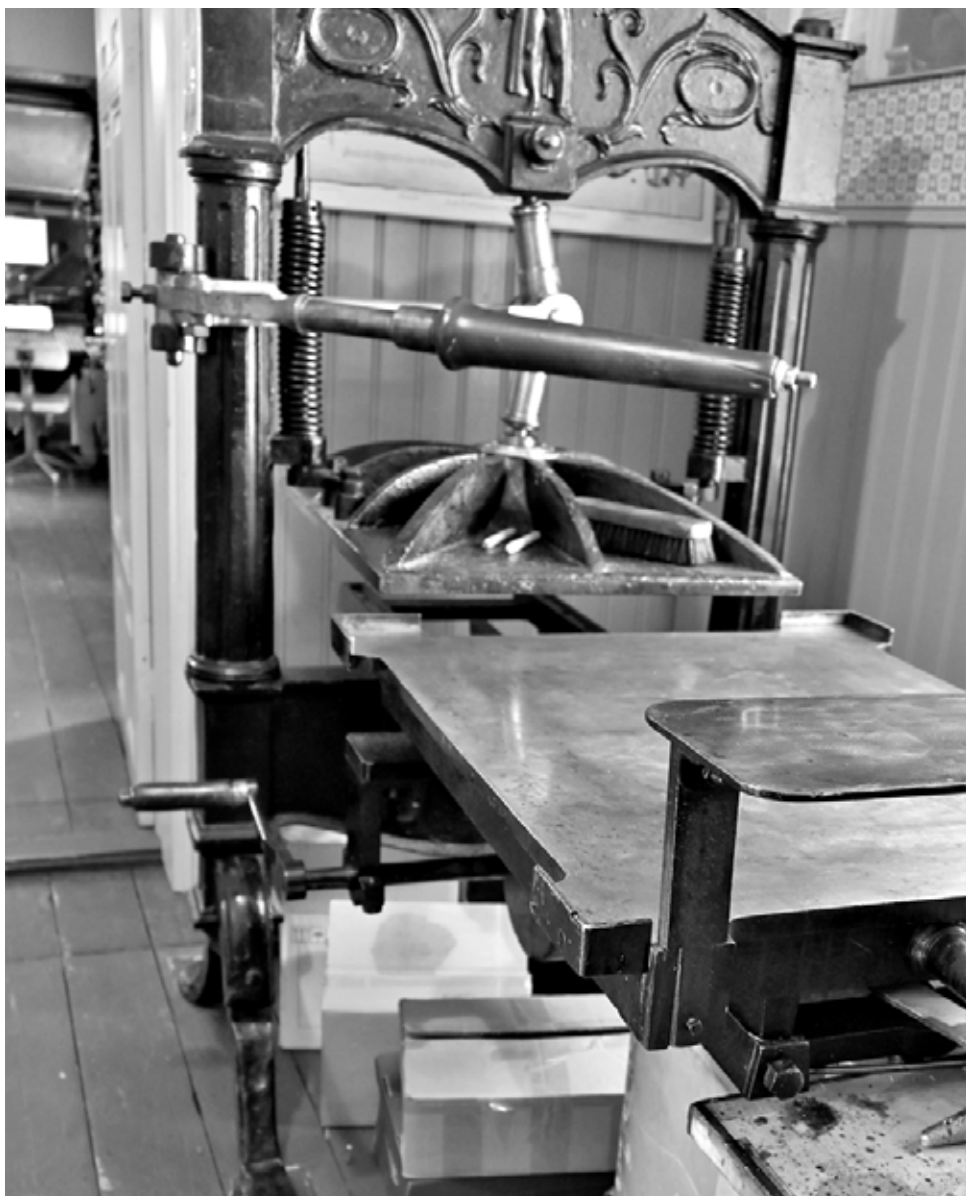
It is best to visit an editorial office at 5 in the afternoon. The machinery is in full swing, as the paper's staff will certainly all attend a meeting to tell what they have produced during the morning, and to put the finishing touches on what the readers will pick up ideas for their conversations the next morning at the coffee table or in the pastry shops. The proofreader is already in his place and preparing his work.

The factor, the chief of the setters, who is called by the initials by the horrible name of "The Switcher" — a name that almost makes one think of steps and wheels — looks in to the editor-in-chief and asks: Can you get a manuscript of the first article?

He gets an affirmative answer, and hands over a couple of "menus" that are already on the table for him.

A "menu," my lordship, is quite different from this palatable list, which in inns begins with "oysters" and ends with "beetroot and pickles."

It can irritate everything except the palate, and sometimes contains such hard-digesting crow's feet, that your brain, dear reader, could easily begin to suffer from impaired digestion. The menus are those narrow strips of paper on which the pen often rus-



This hand-printing press from the early 1800s has been in a printing house in Old Vaasa. It is likely that Vasabladet's predecessor, the newspaper Ilmarinen, was printed with this press. When Vaasa burned down in 1852, the press fell through the floor to the basement and broke all 4 legs, but the printing press could be repaired and used even after this. The printing press is now at the Printing Museum in Stundars, near Vaasa.

hes with great haste, and which, for the sake of speed, obtain its spiritual content only on one side. When the entire staff, after well-distributed work, is in their business, a rather polite amount of such menus flies from their hands.

In addition to the articles and notices, the "Wrapper" usually receives a couple of "Publics" for the bargain, i.e., some of the essays submitted under the common heading. He now leaves in

a moment, loaded with his prey.

Now comes the mail and with it a pack of letters and newspapers. The foreign journalist hurriedly "devours" their contents, the shipping and trade reporter flies with his eyes through the long lists of all the world's ships, in order to dwell for a moment on a ship's name that seems familiar to him — he must know Finland's ship's calendar by heart as far as possible — and now notes on which sea its flag has since



The newspaper editor's two important tools in the past - the telephone and the typewriter. The telephone and typewriter are located at the Printing Museum in Stundars, near Vaasa. Telephones probably only became more common closer to the end of the 1800s

been visible. A third man grabs the red pen and marks the arrived leaves in the margins, and then relegates them to the insatiable typesetting staff.

The letters are opened, read, and what is to be used at once is given into the hands of the errand boy, who moves like a perpetuum mobile between the bureau and the printer; Another part of the letter is put aside until the following day, others again wander directly into the trash.

During all this, people come and go incessantly. One person picks up some notice, another asks for a "nudge," a third only wants to pass the time at the bureau until it is enough for him to go in some company.

There is writing, talking, noise — and the whole thing is wrapped in tobacco smoke. Once more the wrapper sticks his head in:

"How do we stand today?" asks the editor-in-chief.

— Sixteen columns of text and six columns of ads ! (and there are 20 in all!) he says with a sor-

rowful look, which suggests a: Sorry!

"Then we will have some "publics" deleted, for example the one about the Miss Reform.

"Is it not going in at all?"

"No, it will have to wait until the next number. The mothers could be mothers for a day longer.

Eventually, the work at the firm is over. The clock ticks until half past ten and the staff leave, one after the other.

Only the proofreader sits faithfully at his desk, surrounded by strips of paper. He declares half-loudly what he reads; Without a break, the flow of words flows forward until he stops at a phrase that even a proofreader seems too strong. It is then something straight up the walls that has crept in. He smiles and corrects, that's his only joy. J, who with so much vehemence attacks the proofreader because a letter is upside down. You should remember what a heavy job he has, to stand and correct every day from 7 o'clock in the

afternoon to 3 and 4 in the morning. It is so easy for him to turn a blind eye to one or two mistakes. But you do not close your eyes to his.

If we make a short visit to the printer's office, we find the typesetters at work in front of their castes. Not snapping or whimpering. The diligent hands pass incessantly between the special compartments in which the letters are distributed, and the texts are thus gradually handed over letter by letter into the long rows of the "ships." Thus they stand in their diligent work all night, until the morning, when their work is finished, and when the turner is left alone, to break in the last part of the slit and "adjust" the iron frame in which each side is framed. Now he too has peace, after a last scrutinizing look at the agency has been devoted to the finished magazine. It is now 4 o'clock at night.

But don't think that life at the printing house will end in this way. When the settlor has left, the printer and his henchmen enter through the door. They have enjoyed a short night's sleep and are now gathering to print the newspaper. You get ready, the paper is lined up, the molds are taken in and soon the press is started. Lucky if you can power it with a steam engine; Otherwise, a few men are used, whose dead eyes and stiffened features imply that they represent only "human power."

The voracious machine is incessantly fed with clean sheets of paper, which, after a formal acquaintance with the rollers and moulds, appear as ready-made newspapers. It goes little by little, until the edition is expressed.

The clock strikes six in the mor-

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.

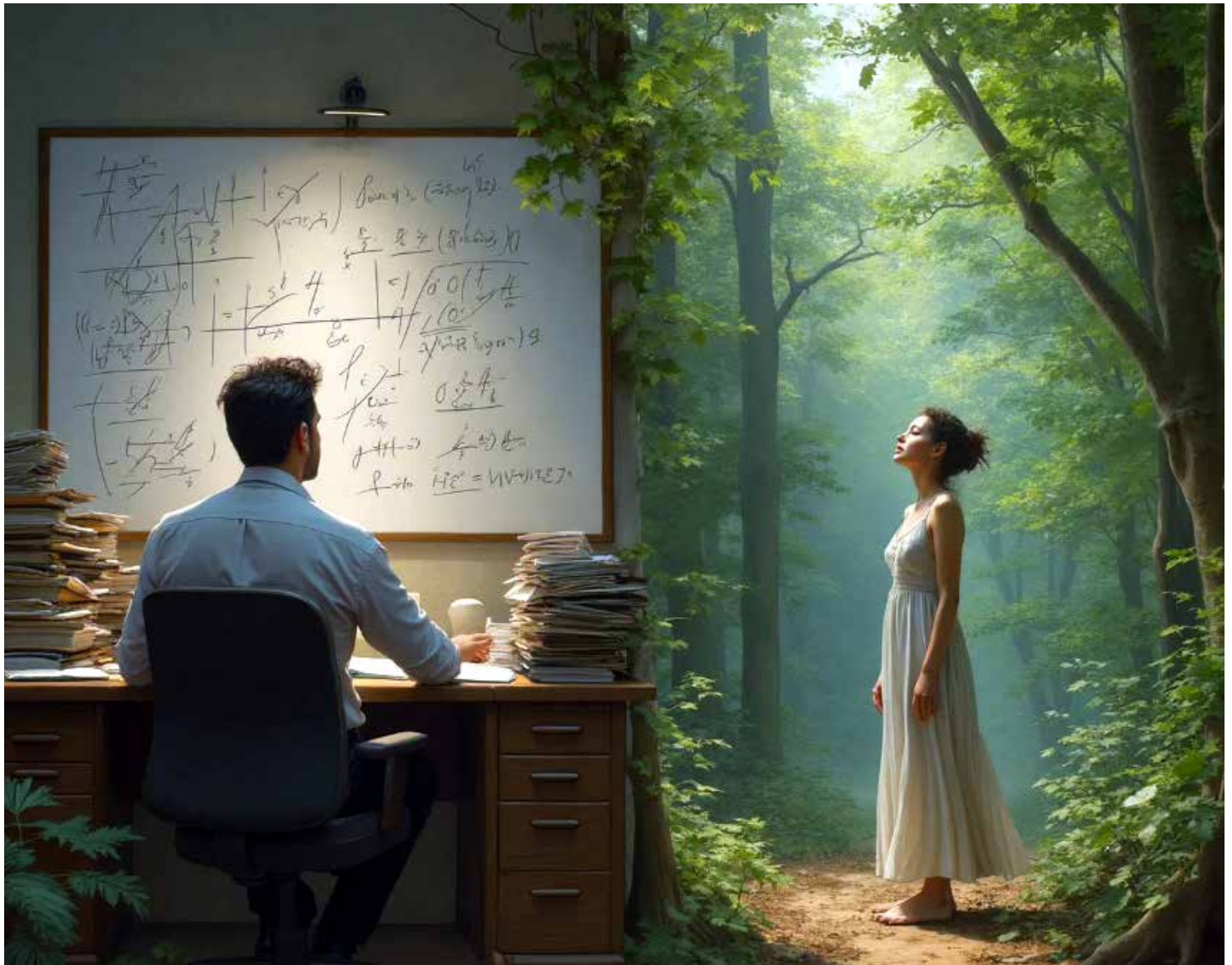
As with any medication, semaglutide may have side effects, including gastrointestinal issues such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. It is crucial to consult with a healthcare professional to determine if semaglutide

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.

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:

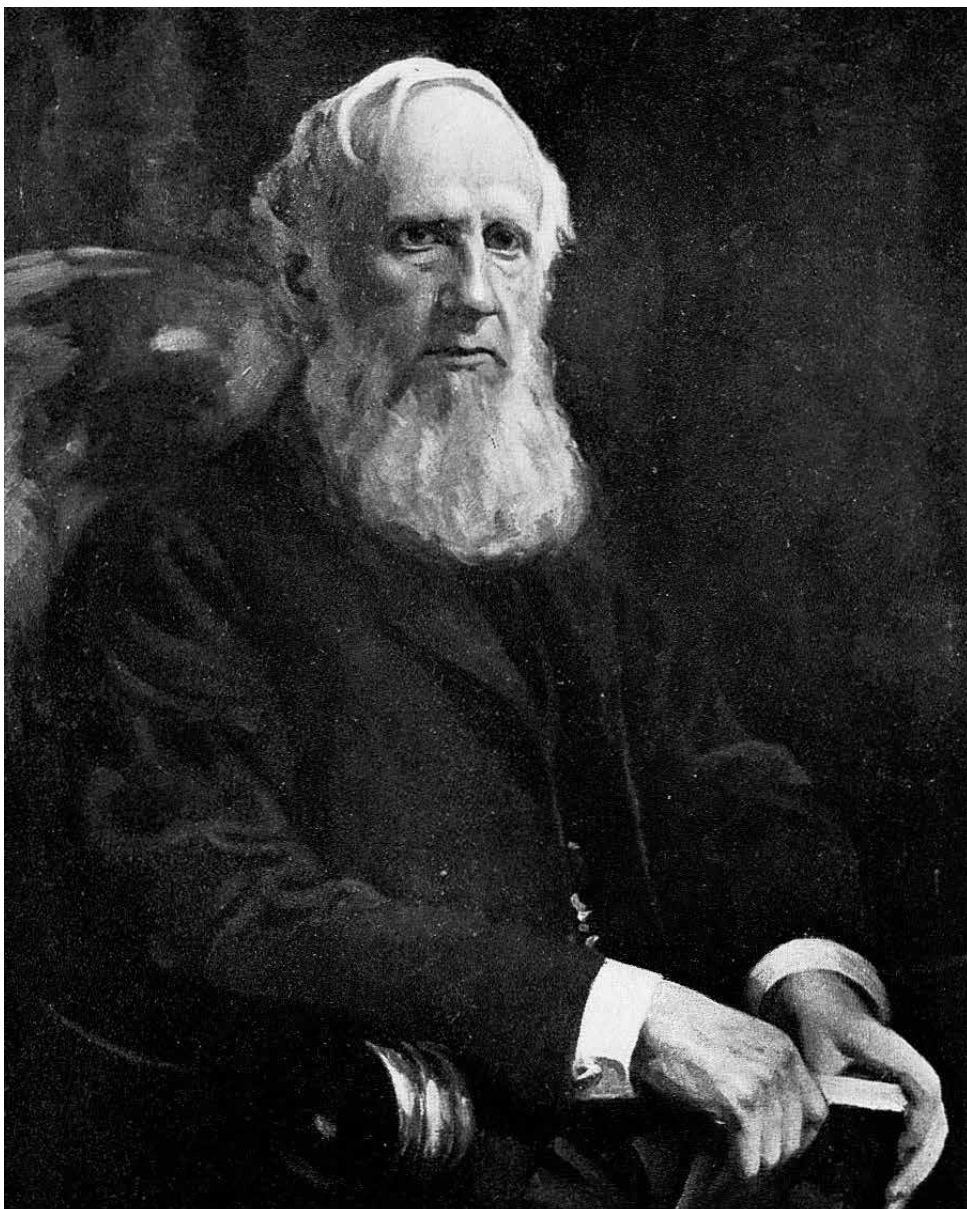
"Under the name Dermatitis Herpetiformis, I propose to group a number of cases of a skin disease I have encountered from time to time. These cases are mostly nameless, having been regarded and diagnosed either as peculiar manifestations of one or another of the more common known diseases, such as eczema,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

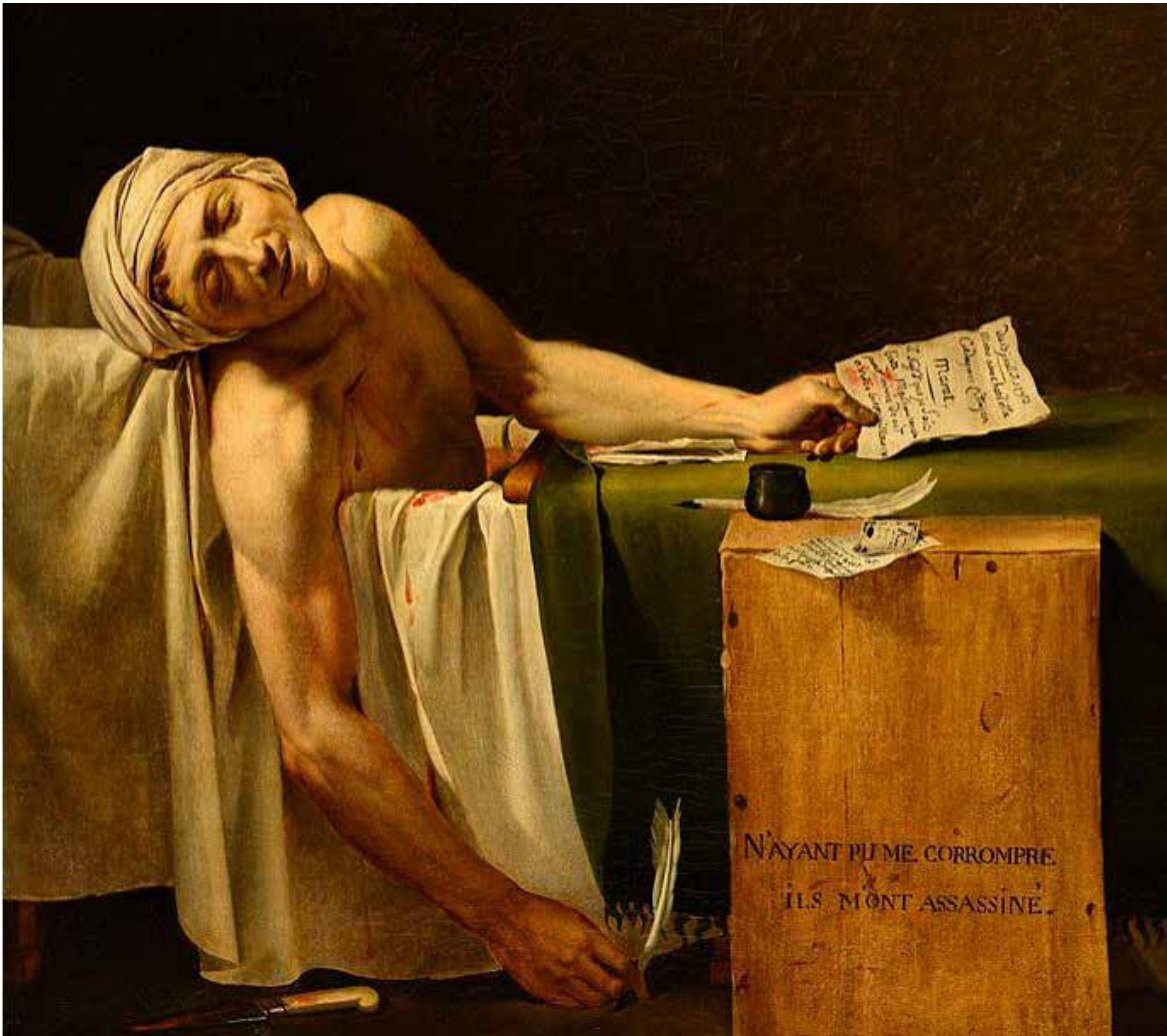
Finally, it is worth pointing out: Although dapsone is effective against symptoms caused by dermatitis herpetiformis, the drug is definitely not an alternative to a gluten-free diet.

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

New Year's Greetings from President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy



Dear People!

Behind me stands Mother Ukraine. Ukraine that stands firmly on its feet, does not bow its head, looks ahead, believes in its future and victory over all the evil that Russia has brought us. Ukraine that is capable of achieving a just peace - having a shield and a sword. Defending its people, its colors, its Independence. Today I address all those who value Ukraine, cherish their state, and lovingly call it "Mine." I thank you for 2024. Our people who endure all difficulties with dignity. People for whom being citizens of Ukraine is a source of pride. And for me, it is a pride to be the President of such people - Ukrainians who prove that no

cruise missile can defeat a nation that has wings.

Throughout this leap year, we have proven it every day. And we saw it yesterday. When we were uplifted with happiness because 189 Ukrainians returned from captivity to their native land. Because they will celebrate the New Year at home. Because we are bringing our people back. 1,358 people this year. 3,956 Ukrainians during this time. And I'm giving not estimates but precise numbers, because each one represents a person, our person, a very important person. And with each return - we bring life back to Ukraine.

And every time this happens, we all cry. It doesn't matter if it's a moved mother, or it's

a child who finally has their father back, or the President of Ukraine - we all cry because we are all human, and we have kept the light within us.

And it helped us endure through over 1,000 days. To be brave when it was needed most. To be strong when it was so vital. As did our teachers, our medics, our power engineers, our transport workers, as did all our air defense personnel, mobile fire groups. The guys who brought down 1,310 cruise and ballistic missiles this year, and 7800 Iranian "Shahed" drones. Bravo! We are proud! Thank you! We lived through this year together. We overcame everything 2024 brought together. Victories and setbacks. Joys and challenges. Tears of happi-

ness when we succeeded. And tears of pain when our hearts were wounded.

July. Morning. Okhmatdyt. That's how weaklings and cowards strike. And we will never forget those children's eyes. We will never forgive them for this! When evil brings death, our response is a human chain. This is what the strength of Ukrainians looks like. And that unity of ours could be seen from space. God saw it. He saw what kind of people we have. What kind of children we have. And I will never forget those incredibly mature and strong eyes of the boy from Okhmatdyt. How much life is in him, energy and dignity! And how much stronger this child alone is than Putin! How much

stronger all our children are than their entire evil. Ukrainian boys and girls who are winning this war, gaining knowledge online and even in underground schools, winning global science competitions, raising funds for our army, and inventing technological solutions that help with our defense. You are a phenomenal generation! This is who we are fighting for. This is who our heroes, our warriors, protect above all. Those who stand firm and carry Independence on their shoulders. Where freedom and valor fight every day - even now, on this New Year's night. On all our fronts. On all of them. In the east, where it's extremely, extremely difficult and challenging right now. But we believe, we know: you will stand

strong. Our guys will stand strong. Your spirit and courage will stand strong. All the things that helped you not to surrender our Sumy and Kharkiv, our Kherson and our Zaporizhzhia this year. And the Russians wanted it so badly. But instead – you paid the occupiers back, bringing the war back home to Russia. And the one who sowed evil on our land received it on their own. In the Kursk region and in other places where our response, our justice, came this year.

Justice. Just one word, but behind it stand hundreds of thousands of our people. Our defense industry and our science. Whose minds and work have made us stronger, because 30% of everything our guys had on the battlefield this year – all this was made in Ukraine.

And at one of these facilities, I asked a young engineer: "How did you manage to achieve so much? How were these people able to do all of this?" And the young man joked: "They're not just people, they're missiles."

And you know, at that moment, I felt ashamed as a citizen that since the 90s, the state hadn't noticed such people of ours. And I am proud, when meeting them throughout the year I hear: they are happy to be needed by Ukraine. And that Ukraine is once again building its own, its own missiles. And for the first time, it produces over a million drones in a year. Forcing the enemy to learn Ukrainian. Palianytsia, Peklo, Ruta. Making them tremble at the words Neptune and Sapsan. All these are our missiles. Ukrainian. Hor, Vampire, Kolibri, Kamik, Liutyi, Heavy Shot, Firepoint. All these are our drones. Ukrainian. And all these are our arguments, the arguments for a just peace.

It is achieved only by the strong. And we have proven time and again that we are strong. Our athletes. Oleksandr Khyzhniak, our Tank. Olga Kharlan, Yaroslava Mahuchikh, all our Olympians and Paralympians, for whom we cheered, worried, and screamed with joy and pride when the blue and

yellow flag was raised. We took the hits and fought back alongside Oleksandr Usyk. All of this is about something bigger than just sports. It's about our character. It's about who we are and what we are capable of. It's about meanings and symbols. It's about Sashko's fights, like Ukraine's daily battles, showing us: it doesn't matter how much bigger the enemy is compared to you, what matters is how much bigger your will is. Then it takes the breath away of the whole world! And all the leaders told me frankly: "We've never seen anything like this – when a full hall of Notre-Dame de Paris is applauding." And those were applause for you. For all our people. This is what respect for Ukraine sounds like. This is what Independence is.

It's when we don't give up what's ours. And when we don't forget our people. Those who are in captivity. And we will fight for every person who, unfortunately, is still there. And we will fight for all those whom Russia has forced into occupation; but couldn't occupy their Ukrainian hearts. And no matter how many passports evil hands out at gunpoint, our people say: "You are not our kin, you are temporary." And all those imposed weeds will not take root on our land, will not defeat the natives. I always recall the story about one of our Ukrainian elderly men, whom the occupiers asked: "What time is it?" And he answered: "Time to get off our land." This is what the inner will is, which simply cannot be occupied. And I turn to all those who carry this will in their hearts on the temporarily occupied territories. Dear Ukrainians! I know you are celebrating the New Year according to our time, and now you hear these words. In our Crimea, in Donbas, in Melitopol, in Mariupol – everywhere where Ukraine is awaited. And where, one day, Ukraine will return to be together. And the only thing that will divide Ukrainians is a generously laid table.

I know that all our people will be at this table. Those who are now abroad but have kept Ukraine in their hearts. So today, in the first minute of the New Year, in Warsaw, New York, or Buenos Aires, "Shche ne vme-

rla..." will sound. In Berlin, Prague or Tokyo, people will say today: "Glory to Ukraine!" And the world will respond: "Glory to the Heroes!" Because Ukraine is not alone. Because we have our friends with us. Since the first minutes of this war, America has stood with Ukraine. I believe that America will also stand with Ukraine in the first minutes of peace.

I remember my conversation with Joe Biden after the Russian invasion. I remember my conversation with Donald Trump after he was elected. All the conversations with Congressmen, Senators, ordinary Americans, with all those who support us in the US, in Europe, and around the world – in those many and varied conversations, there was always unity on the main point: Putin cannot win. Ukraine will prevail.

I thank all Americans for proving these words with deeds. I have no doubt that the new American President is willing and capable of achieving peace and ending Putin's aggression. He understands that the first is impossible without the second. Because this is not a street fight where you have to calm down both sides. This is the full-scale aggression of a mad state against a civilized one. And I believe that we, together with the United States, are capable of exerting that force. Of compelling Russia into a just peace. That means not forgetting, and not erasing everything Russia has done. Bucha, Olenivka, Avdiivka, all our destroyed towns and villages. This is why a truly just peace cannot be based on the principle of "let's start with a clean slate." Because the score is not 0:0. The score is thousands, thousands of Ukrainians whose lives Russia has stolen.

And today, the heart of Ukraine is covered with scars. These are the names of our fallen heroes. May God protect every family in the world from experiencing such losses. I would not wish any leader in the world to experience these feelings – the moment you hand over awards posthumously. You see the eyes of a mother, a wife, or a child of a warrior who gave their life for Ukraine, and you hear them say: "Please, let it all not be

in vain." Thousands of our guys and girls have not faded into oblivion. They are with us, they are by our side, always, they are watching over us from the heavens. And we have no right to let them down, and we cannot betray their feat and memory.

And every day in the coming year, I, and all of us, must fight for a Ukraine that is strong enough. Because only such a Ukraine is respected and heard. Both on the battlefield and at the negotiating table.

I thank everyone who has stood by us this year. Our partners, allies, friends, leaders. Leaders indeed, not because it is customary to call them that, but because they prove their leadership by their actions. Those who were not afraid to come to Ukraine, knowing how valuable it is to see us standing shoulder to shoulder. With whom, despite the distance and time difference, we worked together, found solutions and achieved results. Patriots, IRIS-Ts, NASAMS and ATACMS systems, F-16s, SCALPs, Storm Shadows. The Czech initiative and a million shells. The Danish model and hundreds of millions in our domestic production. 27 security agreements and 40 billion to support our army. The European Union and 50 billion to support our economy. The G7 and the decision on 50 billion dollars of frozen Russian assets. This is our great international work. This is our great international victory. I thank our partners, thank you for this; I thank our team. The Army, the Government, the Office, the Parliament, the regions, the communities, the volunteers. All those who strengthen our country from within and care about people.

I thank everyone thanks to whom Ukraine is standing and will stand. It will overcome its path to peace, to a strong Ukraine. And to a European Ukraine. And these are not just words, but a reality that began this June with the opening of negotiations on Ukraine's accession to the EU. And this is a historic result. And this path is irreversible. And Ukraine will be in the European Union. And one day Ukraine will be in NATO and will strengthen the Alliance. It

will strengthen the stability of the world. The unity of Europe, which determines the destiny of every nation on the continent. And this unity must be respected by all. By both Budapest and Bratislava. I know the Hungarian and Slovak peoples are actually with us, with Ukraine, with Ukrainians, on the side of truth. The authorities of these countries should also acknowledge the truth. There is no need to be afraid of Ukraine being in Europe. We must do everything to prevent Russia from being in Europe. Its tanks, its missiles, and the evil it will surely spread further if Ukraine does not withstand. If Russia shakes your hand today, it does not mean that tomorrow, it will not start killing you with the same hand. Because Russians are afraid of the free people. Of what they are not familiar with. They are afraid of freedom. They were born under Putin, went to school under Putin, joined the army under Putin and are dying for his sick ideas.

And that is why it is so crucial today to support all peoples who defend freedom. Those who refuse to give it up in Chiñināu. Those who are fighting for their future in Tbilisi. And I am sure that the day will come when we will all say: "Long Live Belarus!"

Dear Ukrainians!

May 2025 be our year. The year of Ukraine. We know that peace will not be given to us as a gift. But we will do everything to stop Russia and end the war. This is what each of us wishes for.

Behind all of us stands Mother Ukraine. And she deserves to live in peace. I wish this to all of us. And as the President of Ukraine, as well as a citizen, I will do everything to achieve it in the coming year. Knowing that I will not be alone. I know that you stand shoulder to shoulder with me – millions of Ukrainians. Strong. Free. Beautiful. Independent.

Happy New Year, dear people!

Happy New Year, Ukraine!

Glory to Ukraine!

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.



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

Ignoring the Real Catalyst: Russia's Actions

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

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

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

A Path Forward Requires Honesty

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

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

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

Sergey Lavrov 6.12.2024

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

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

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

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

AI

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



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

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

The Emergence of AI-Generated Podcasts

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

Wasa Daily

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

The magazine contains quotations from old daily newspapers taken from the National Archives (digikansalliskirjasto.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

 <p>Karnevalveckan denna vecka!</p> <p>Republiken president Alexander Stubb i Vaasa 27.4.2024</p> <p>Kalevaspelelen i Vaasa 27-30.6.2024</p> <p>Kremlin gör nara av sina motsändare - 1939 liksom nu</p> <p>www.wasa.fi/vpress.asp</p>	 <p>En ny press: Grunden för lycka och demokrati</p> <p>Kör-FESTIVALEN</p> <p>Sinebrychhoffin taide- ja konstmuseum</p> <p>Kremlin gör nara av sina motsändare - 1939 liksom nu</p> <p>www.wasa.fi/vpress.asp</p>	 <p>Pörtomdiktare</p> <p>PUCCINI'S "TOSCA" KOMMER TILL VASA I JANUARI</p> <p>Kremlin gör nara av sina motsändare - 1939 liksom nu</p> <p>www.wasa.fi/vpress.asp</p>	 <p>Photo Supplement</p> <p>Sinebrychhoffin taidemuseo</p> <p>Sinebrychhoffin konstmuseum</p> <p>Sinebrychhoffin Art Museum</p>
 <p>Wasa Daily Photo Supplement</p> <p>Pörtom kyrka Pirttikylän kirkko The Church in Pörtom</p>	 <p>Wasa Daily Photo Supplement</p> <p>Hylkeenpyynti Raippaluodossa 1895</p> <p>Jussi Adler-Olsen</p> <p>Venäjäin omittuinen diplomaattinen kieli</p> <p>www.wasa.fi/vpress.asp</p>	 <p>Wasa Daily Photo Supplement</p> <p>Kuoro-FESTIVAALI</p> <p>Venäjäin omittuinen diplomaattinen kieli</p> <p>www.wasa.fi/vpress.asp</p>	 <p>Wasa Daily Photo Supplement</p> <p>Naisten Ääni- elämäntarkirjasto</p> <p>Kuoro-FESTIVAALI</p> <p>Venäjäin omittuinen diplomaattinen kieli</p> <p>www.wasa.fi/vpress.asp</p>
 <p>Wasa Daily Photo Supplement</p> <p>Road Churches</p> <p>The Kremlin mocks its opponents</p> <p>www.wasa.fi/vpress.asp</p>	 <p>Wasa Daily Photo Supplement</p> <p>Climate Change's Profound Impact on Finland</p> <p>The Kremlin mocks its opponents</p> <p>www.wasa.fi/vpress.asp</p>	 <p>Wasa Daily Photo Supplement</p> <p>CHOIR FESTIVAL</p> <p>The Kremlin mocks its opponents</p> <p>www.wasa.fi/vpress.asp</p>	 <p>Wasa Daily Photo Supplement</p> <p>Road Churches</p> <p>The Kremlin mocks its opponents</p> <p>www.wasa.fi/vpress.asp</p>
 <p>Wasa Daily Photo Supplement</p> <p>Fero Järnefelt (1863-1937)</p>	 <p>Wasa Daily Photo Supplement</p> <p>I K Inha (1865-1930)</p> <p>I Replot 1895</p> <p>Raippaluodossa 1895</p>	 <p>Wasa Daily Photo Supplement</p> <p>Raippaluodossa 1895</p> <p>Vaasan istutetaan 70 000 puita</p>	 <p>Wasa Daily Photo Supplement</p> <p>Jussi Adler-Olsen</p> <p>A free for everyone in Vaasa</p> <p>Road Churches</p>



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, January 5, 1925

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

The arson attempt on Brändö

Wasa-Posten

As is well known, sausage maker Valter Klinkmann was guilty of an ugly arson attempt on Brändö on Monday evening, November 24.

At 9 o'clock he had visited his family in a drunken state, who now live apart from him in the yard no. 13 at Tegelbruksvägen. There he had behaved as usual in a rowdy manner, so he was asked to leave. He did this too, but under threat of setting fire to the entire building. Shortly after he had left, his wife looked out into the hall, and found, to her horror, that he had meant business.

l a scrub in the porch he had set a fire when he went out. Now the fire was burning at full speed. Had the act of mischief not been discovered in such good time, the fire would soon have closed the exit from the dwelling.

The arsonist, who during the police interrogation declared that he had been so drunk on the said occasion that he could not remember anything, was examined last Monday before the Mustasaari district court. He then pleaded guilty and explained that the act had taken place in his anger at having been driven away. The prosecutor claimed liability against him for arson and requested a postponement until 10 January in order to obtain

certain information from the owner of the above-mentioned farm. This request was granted, and Klinkmann is to remain in custody in the meantime.

Alcohol and drunken statistics.

According to statistics compiled by the police, the following number of drunken driving cases and prohibition violations have been dealt with by the Vaasa Town Hall Court in recent years. The figures in brackets indicate such crimes as possession of alcohol and the like. January 103 (29), February 50 (13), March 59 (24), April 111 (24), May 101 (20), June 137 (23), July 134, August 140 (34), September 186 (43), October 101 (55), November 134 (35). The statistics for December are not yet ready.

Alcohol seizures.

On New Year's Eve, the police seized the liquor at the home of the driver Hultholm at Handelsplanaden. 6 bottles of cognac and 10 liters of spirits were found.

Suicide in Wasa on New Year's

Eve.

Consul E. Everitt took his life with a revolver shot. On New Year's Eve, a suicide occurred in Vaasa, when the Spanish vice-consul E. Everitt took his life with a revolver shot. Mr. Everitt and his wife had intended to travel to Sweden via Helsinki that evening. Mr. Everitt is a Swedish citizen. They had planned to travel on the evening train. At half past six Mr. E. asked to be left alone. He said that he would write a letter to his foster daughter, who lives in Helsinki. After 10 min. Mrs. E., who was sitting in the drawing-room, heard a shot and a heavy fall. She found her husband lying on the floor in the bathroom. From his chest flowed a stream of blood. A doctor, Dr. Lund, was called immediately. He could only state that life had fled. The bullet had hit the heart. Consul Everitt was born in 1887. He is survived by his wife and a foster daughter. Nothing definite is known about the cause of the terrible deed. Mr. E. has for a long time appeared nervous and a couple of times before threatened to shoot himself.

Population changes in 1924. Vaasa.

Births: 179 males and 164 females = 343, of these 40 out of wedlock. Dead: 162 m. and 164 sq. = 326. Occupants: 232 m. and 302 sq. m. = 534 = 611. Emigrated: 271 m. and 340 sq. m. = 611. Marriages contracted: 136. The population of the parish has been reduced by 20 men and 38 women = 58 and at the turn of the year

was 10,303 men and 12,564 women = 22,867 people. The Finnish population has increased by 99 people and is now 12,445 people, the Swedish population has been reduced by 157 people and is 10,422 people.

Mustasaari. Births: 78 males and 78 females. = 156. Kill; 59 men. and 71

FORD FORDOR SEDAN

4—5 personers heltäckt vagn anlännt.

Aldrig har allmänheten erbjudits större valuta för sina pennningar än genom den heltäckta Ford-vagn som nu finnes att tillgå. Smakfull till sitt yttre, vackert inredd och stadigt byggd som den är, erbjuder den förmåner, som endast mycket dyrare vagnar besitta.

Den täckta Ford-vagnen är till utseendet fin, elegant formad och ståtlig. Lackeringen bibehåller singlans under obegränsad tid. Den som kör med en sådan Ford kan vara stolt i vilket sällskap som helst.

Dessa vagnar äro lätta, men starka, lätta att köra och föra i förvar, billiga, i bruk och skötsel och alltid pålitliga. Nyttiga, bekväma och vackra, uppfylla de alla anspråk, som kunna ställas på ett förstklassigt trafikmedel.

Skönhet och nytta.

Pris endast Fmk 38,425:— Frakt särskilt för köparens ort. Kom och se en provvagn!

Vaasan Auto Osakeyhtiö
Hovrättseplanaden 20, tel. 8 29.

HUMOUR ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

FISHING LUCK

— Well, what did you do this summer?

—We've been fishing, you know. And when we fish, we always have on liter 96% with us, and for every fish we take a sip, ; and if we get a lot of fish, we go home and take another liter

Two street lamps

On the streets of Kemi city, there are two lamps on the same pole.

— Why do you have to be two?

— Well, you see, one must illuminate the other.

APPENDIX

— That doctor must have sent a rudely large bill. But it will probably be the last time he gets to operate on my appendix.

COMMUNISM

— If you had two houses, would you give one to me?

— Yes.

— If you had two horses, would you give one to me?

- Of course!

— You have a liter of alcohol at home. Give me half a liter!

— You crazy, human! Never!

In the best families

"You see, Mrs. Eriksson, the best family is a family in which there was no such thing as occurred even in the best families."

Difficult to choose maid

— Dear friend, you speak of the difficult maid-servant question, yes, I am very unhappy. If I take

an old and ugly one, my husband is never at home and if I take a young and beautiful one, I dare not go out myself

To complain to a newspaper

The editor: — And this joke you say must be new? My grandmother already told me that when she was a little girl.

Child Maiden

— My miss, how can you read your novel when the child screams so terribly.

The nanny: — Bad, my lord, and since you're also bothering me, I cannot read at all.

IN COURT

— Mr. Judge, my husband called me "you old cow", and then he threw me out. I request that he be punished.

— Good, Mrs. H. We judge him to take you in again.

IN CUSTOMS

Band dealer Pettersson comes from abroad and is offended by the customs officer's thoroughness during the inspection. When asked: — Have you now shown everything, tape dealer Pettersson replies angrily.

— No, you have not yet been able to see the vocal cords.

Wedding

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

— To me, who has follo-

wed the fates of Lisa and her parents for the last 19 years, it seems that she inherited her wisdom from her father

The he did not know what to say, received a flashing look from his wife, regained his composure and ability to speak, and said:

— Because look, her mother still has hers left.

Stradivarius

— Your violin is descended from the famous Stradivarius, father? - Yes.

— And the strings are made of intestines? — Yes.

— Are they Uncle Stradivarius' intestines then?

IN THE CHURCH

Pastor Talgren exhorts his audience.

— There is one thing that I especially want to talk to you about, dear listeners, and that is the inappropriate way in which you all rush out of the church, so that there

The astronomic picture of the week:



NASA Unveils Celestial Fireworks as Official Hubble 25th Anniversary Image.jpg

The star cluster Westerlund 2 in the Milky Way galaxy, with an estimated age of about one or two million years. It contains some of the hottest, brightest, and most massive stars known. The cluster resides inside a stellar breeding ground known as Gum 26, located 20,000 light-years away in the constellation Carina.

NASA, ESA, the Hubble Heritage Team (STScI/AURA), A. Nota (ESA/STScI), and the Westerlund 2 Science Team

Public domain

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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