

## Finnish Culinary Delights

by Patti Folsom

The annual Finnish Culinary Delights program was held on Saturday, March 7th. This was the third year this annual event was held in the upstairs hall. This year's theme was "Cakes Galore." More than sixty members and guests listened attentively as six presenters provided information about their recipe preparation and ingredients.



Dianne Hawes presented Mummu's Banana Cake, a recipe handed down from her mother, Berta Aronen, and a y favorite of the Hawes family. Susan Coupe presented the recipe for Basic Merengue found in *The Finnish Cookbook* by Beatrice Ojakangas. She talked about the challenges of making meringues and the variety of toppings that can be added to make several different kinds of meringue cakes.

Anita Smiley presented Marbled Pound Cake, a recipe that has been in her files for many years and was originally shared with her by a friend in Finland. This delicious cake uses basic

ingredients and is prepared in a traditional Bundt pan. Elizabeth Hawes-Weeks provided the detailed steps for making Pasha, an Easter cheesecake. Liz used the recipe found in *Finnish Touches: Recipes and Traditions*. Though the preparation of this recipe takes days rather than hours, Liz encouraged the audience to give it a try.



Minna Waters demonstrated her recipe for Sandwich Cake, which was recreated from her Finnish grandmother's recipe. Minna explained to audience members, as she built several different mini-sandwich cakes, that you can easily change-up the layers and garnishes to your liking. Sean Tate presented his version of a plum torte recipe, which originally appeared in the *New York Times*. Sean's recipe, Original Tate Plum-Nectarine Torte, features a teaspoon of ground cardamom to give the torte a traditional Finnish flavor.

After the six cooks presented their recipes and fielded a variety of questions from the audience, cakes were cut up and portioned out for audience members to sample. Judging from the many compliments and empty platters, the food tasting was a perfect end to a fun event.

Thank you to all who helped to make this program so successful: Patti Folsom and Elizabeth Hawes-Weeks, co-chairs; the presenters, for their time and talents, preparing recipes for a crowd, and donating the cost of their ingredients; Aaron Waters, for creating and printing the recipe brochure; Katrina Bousquet, publicity and pulla sales; Stan Karro and Saul Ahola, hall cleaning and set-up; Jonathan Audette, cleanup; Susan Coupe, presenter aprons; Rita Kelley, raffle sales; Sean Tate, Jonathan Audette, and Katrina Bousquet, photography. Finally, many thanks to Elizabeth Hawes-Weeks, Dianne Hawes, Rita Kelley, Irene Profetto, Anita Smiley, Patti Folsom, Jobina Miller, and Laura Sasser-Cuff for their donated raffle baskets

## **Hall Building Renovation and Repair Update**

### **By Stan Karro**

Good progress has been made with several projects recently at the Finnish Hall with thanks to Matti Huhta, Sue and Steve Coupe. Several months ago, the heritage society voted to replace the main front entry double door and also the south door entry. These doors needed upgrading both for energy savings reason and meeting building code regulations. The leadership initially conducted a fundraiser for the door improvement project and purchases were made.

The coronavirus pandemic then focused attention toward our budget as our pancake breakfast and chicken barbeque were canceled as well as hall rentals. Future fundraisers are in question. In addition, the Makipuro Concert has been rescheduled for April 15, 2021, after two cancellations. See separate article on current fundraiser.

As plans were developing for the door replacement, an area in the hall kitchen needed tile replacement, which Steve Coupe volunteered to repair. After initial evaluation, the project became more extensive and the group of Matti Huhta, Steve and Sue Coupe completed the challenging project.

Today the south door has been replaced and prep work has been accomplished to begin the double door project. As time allows, Matti's sons (Huhta Builders) will install this portion of the renovation. We are researching design options to replace the double door entry canopy to improve the exterior appearance and deteriorating current cover.

In the coming weeks we will consider continued improvements and renovations including interior hall painting and new display items for the walls and cabinet.



Checkout and "LIKE" the  
FAHS Facebook page, listed as  
– "Finnish American Heritage  
Society of Canterbury, CT"



FAHS is a member chapter of Finlandia  
Foundation National (FFN).

Visit their website at –  
[www.finlandiafoundation.org](http://www.finlandiafoundation.org)

## **Special Request from the Heritage Society Archive**

**By Stan Karro**

During the last year, the heritage society has extensively reviewed many of our publications in the Canterbury Finnish Hall Archives. We've received excellent support from Jim Kurtti of the Heritage Center at Finlandia University. One notable publication that was available many years ago was a soft cover book authored by Richard Lenzi of Columbia, CT, titled "Immigrant Radicalism in Rural New England: A History of the Finns of Eastern Connecticut 1915-1945". We do not have any copies of the book in our archive and are requesting FAHS members to contact us if they would donate a copy or copies of this publication which would be an important part of our collection. Please contact Katrina Bousquet at [katrina.bousquet@gmail.com](mailto:katrina.bousquet@gmail.com) or Stan Karro at [swkbrklyn@aol.com](mailto:swkbrklyn@aol.com) to donate a copy.

## **Thanks for Significant Membership Support**

**By Stan Karro**

The Finnish American Heritage Society officers and trustees thank all who have made generous contributions to our recent fund drive to offset the revenue shortfall from our canceled events due to the pandemic experienced locally, in the U.S. and around the world. Many have provided other non-monetary donations, of time and labor to help with our operations and renovations. We continue to receive donations since our initial letter dated May 20<sup>th</sup>. Our total contributions from a recent accounting is \$8500, with additional donations continuing to be received.

This will provide added and very appreciated support to our hall renovations and support of our facility utility, building, and insurance expenses. We look forward to our 100<sup>th</sup> Finnish Hall Anniversary in a few short years.

## **Membership Ideas Requested**

**By Stan Karro**

Recently in reviewing the hall renovations and stage areas, the suggestion was made by a member to provide better utility to our wooden chairs stacked on the stage. These 80 to 100 in number, are folding wooden chairs that have been at the hall for many decades. They were used prior to the significant donation of cushioned folding metal type chairs in memory of Fred Leiss. The wooden chairs are used infrequently and perhaps could be used by others in a more practical way. The Board had several ideas mentioned and decided to request membership comments and suggestions at our next membership meeting. The next meeting is very questionable regarding the date due to the current pandemic and limited meeting attendees. If you have ideas or suggestions, please submit them to any officer or trustee for consideration at our next membership meeting.

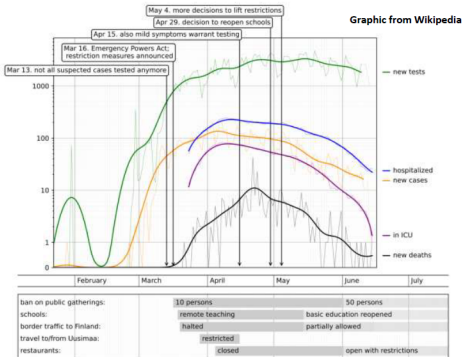


## Covid-19 in Finland—mid-June 2020

By Saul Ahola

The first two patients to be diagnosed with infections caused by the Novel Coronavirus 2019 (Covid-19) in Finland were a Chinese woman visiting Lapland from Wuhan on January 29 and a Finnish woman who had returned to Helsinki from visiting Milan on February 26. Both had symptoms of fever and cough and tested positive and were suspected because of their travel history and the international news of the virus outbreak in China and then Italy. Within days of the Helsinki case three more cases in the city were noted; and by March 15, two weeks later, the number of cases in Finland, mostly in the Helsinki area had grown to 272. Finland's National Institute of Health and Welfare estimated that the actual number of cases was likely many times higher in view of the fact that testing had been limited to severely ill patients and health care workers. As a result, on March 16 the leader of the Finnish Government, Prime Minister Sanna Marin, with Parliament's approval implemented the Emergency Powers Act. This was the first use of the act in peacetime. The decree mandated the closure of all schools except early education, imposed closure of public spaces such as restaurants, museums and theatres, limited public meetings to less than 10 people, restricted hospital and nursing home visits, and advised all over age 70 to isolate themselves as much as possible.

Soon national borders were closed allowing entry only to those with official permits and requiring 14-day quarantine for all, including Finns travelling abroad who were urged to return. Within Finland, travel was prohibited without valid reason in and out of the greater Helsinki area (Uusimaa), which contains about a third of Finland's population, in order to reduce spread to the rest of the country. These decrees were enforced by police and Finnish Defense Forces.



Face mask requirements have been debated and their use remains strongly recommended but voluntary. From the early days of the pandemic Finns like so many others around the world also hoarded toilet paper. The main reason for the strong objection to the travel ban in and out of the Helsinki area however was uniquely Finnish, as city dwellers were upset they would not be able to visit their *kesä mökit* (vacation cottages) in outlying areas. This led to an early end to this restriction by mid-April.

The durable effectiveness of these strategies remains to be proven; but it is reassuring that as of June 15 the toll of Covid 19 has been limited to 7,100 cases and 325 deaths. On June 15 Finland had 5.91 deaths per 100,000 population compared to 62.84 in the UK, 56.83 in Italy, 47.86 in Sweden, and 35.37 in the US; and the trajectory of cases, hospital admissions, ICU beds and deaths during this phase of the epidemic in Finland seems to be reassuring enough to move Finland toward a re-opening. The graphic (on page 4) from Wikipedia summarizes the actions and course of Covid 19 in Finland from the onset of the epidemic to mid-June.

Anita Smiley's good friend and travel consultant Riikka Pajunen, who had been helping her to plan her now cancelled 25<sup>th</sup> Finland Tour, sent this report on May 20<sup>th</sup> of Finland's reopening after two solid months of severe restrictions:

"Finland is slowly reopening for 'new normal'. Shops are opening (f.ex. Marimekko reopened some of their shops yesterday) and people are moving more freely, families have reunions but people keep distances. No hugs or kisses. Same limitations in whole country but most of the infections in Helsinki area.

Finnish borders are opened for work-based and essential travel from the EU Schengen Area starting 14 May. International travelers from the EU Schengen Area may enter Finland from 14 May onwards if they have a permanent work contract in Finland or essential reason to do so. Proof of employment needs to be presented at the border when entering Finland. Those entering Finland are recommended to self-isolate for 14 days upon arrival, spending time only at home or at their work place.

International passenger flights will continue to arrive only at Helsinki, Turku and Mariehamn airports. Finnish airports and Finnair strongly recommend using face masks. In all transport, passengers must remember to avoid physical contacts, maintain a safe distance from other people and observe good hand and respiratory hygiene. When leaving the airport or harbour, using your own car or taking a taxi is recommended.

As travel restrictions are being removed in different countries, air travel starts to recover gradually. Finnair will gradually add frequencies and routes back to our network from July onwards. Finnair intends to operate approximately 30% of our normal amount of flights in July, and they will add routes and frequencies month by month as demand recovers, taking into account the changes in travel restrictions in different countries. Finnish State Railways VR will expand train services from 14 June. The company will return to about 85 percent of normal traffic levels. Some night trains will also resume service. VR will release its summer timetables this week. During the coronavirus pandemic, VR has been operating about half as many trains as usual.

Cultural venues will also gradually open as of 1 June. However large events of over 500 people will not be allowed until 31 July. Gatherings of over 50 people will also become possible as of 1 June until further notice. All big events have been cancelled, f.ex. Savonlinna Opera Festival is postponed until 2021.

Restaurants in Finland can gradually begin serving customers on location starting 1 June but restrictions to opening times and customer numbers will apply. Currently many restaurants are closed or sell takeaway. Government has rolled out a series of new regulations relating to serving customers, seating and business hours for restaurants and bars planning to resume serving customers on their premises from 1 June. Restaurants and bars will be able to host customers until 11 p.m., but must stop serving alcoholic beverages at 10 p.m. Businesses will be allowed to open their doors from 6am, but alcohol service cannot begin before 9 a.m. Restaurants and bars have been advised to halve their seating capacity, but this guideline will not apply to open spaces such as outdoor terraces. The government will revisit the new rules periodically and that they could be relaxed further. The rules will be in force until the end of October, but they could be dismantled earlier, if needed. During the week of Midsummer [the third week of June], the government will be reconsider what can be done during the next review period.

Primary and lower secondary schools have reopened on 14 May after two months of remote learning.

Starting on 8 May, the public have been able to loan and reserve items for pick-up at libraries. Competitions, matches, tournaments will remain banned until further notice. Sports competitions and series can resume, starting on 1 June, under special arrangements. The museums will be reopened from June 1, 2020; but the security measures due to the Coronavirus may affect the visitor services. Public saunas are closed until May 31."

As Juhannus approaches Finland has begun to open itself to the rest of the world. Finnair has announced that it will not fly to and from New York until August 1, so it is clear that there will be few Finnish-American tourists in Finland this summer; and those visiting from most countries for business, education or pleasure will continue to be required to quarantine for two weeks upon entry. However, on June 15 the travel restrictions with Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were officially "re-opened" so that visitors from these countries and Finns returning from these countries will no longer have to quarantine. Note that borders with Finland's neighbors Russia and Sweden remain "closed". Sweden, in what appears to be an experiment in attempting to develop "herd immunity" in order to prevent a second flood of cases in the fall has had a death toll from Covid-19 that is four times that of the other four Nordic countries combined. It appears that Finland as of June 15 has succeeded in blunting the initial surge of Covid-19, but it remains to be seen if this is durable and if the country can live with the virus and also weather the worldwide economic consequences of the pandemic.

## **Archive Update**

**By: Katriana Bousquet**

On Wednesday, June 17, the FAHS archive committee met at the hall. In attendance were Patti Folsom, Katrina Bousquet, Anita Smiley, and Kerttu Lavallee. The committee worked for two hours in the archive, deciding which items should stay in the climate-controlled room. The progress is slow, and the present situation in the world did not help us any; but with time and determination, the archive will be a well-organized and useful room for FAHS members and the surrounding area.



## **Letter from President**

Dear members and friends,

The FAHS Board has been meeting monthly via Zoom video conferencing. The Board has decided to cancel all activities at the FAHS hall until further notice. FAHS will not be attending the joint picnic with Aura nor Old Home Days in Canterbury. A fundraising letter campaign has begun to help support the operating needs of the FAHS hall. Many members have contributed to this fundraising, and we are expecting additional funds throughout the year. FAHS is financially stable thanks to these contributions; and additional funds will be used to make the needed building repairs.

Other updates-Hannu Makipuro's concert is postponed until April 15, 2021. American Landscape has donated a full season of landscape services to FAHS. A big thanks to Stan Karro and Saul Ahola for heading up the fundraising letter. Steve and Sue Coupe along with Matti Huhta, did a great job on the kitchen floor repair. The archive committee has been making progress in both the library and the archives. I also want to thank all the volunteers working to keep FAHS going during these challenging times.

Kiitos, Steve Bousquet

President of FAHS

## Kerro Torina - to tell a story

Welcome to our new FAHS column. Let's use this space and share vignettes, stories which recount an incident, a personal experience describing a Finnish connection, or a reflective moment in history. A writer can even contribute an example of "*sisu*" which means having inner strength, determination or perseverance. *Sisu* defines character and is the backbone of Finnish heritage.

We will enlighten each other using our voices within our Finnish American community. If you have a story, we are eagerly waiting to hear it. Limit your essays to two hundred words or less. Having trouble launching an idea? I am June Leiss' daughter and I would be happy to speak with you as you formulate your draft. Please contact me: [susanhinz@gmail.com](mailto:susanhinz@gmail.com).

### A SURPRISE TURN OF EVENTS

By Susan Cloutier

After graduating from Becker College, my mother, June Leiss, took her first job at Roosevelt Hospital in New York City as a typist and stenographer. She described her boss as "a snobby Irish woman who married a man with money, and he owned horses." Mrs. Virginia Muldoon had an impressive title: "Head of Human Resources." She frequently sent Mom to Bonwit Teller on 5th Avenue to pick up her newly purchased hats. Mom returned to the office carrying those cumbersome hat boxes.

One day Mrs. Muldoon walked into the hospital cafeteria while Mom ate lunch with two coworkers, a woman of color and a young Italian woman. Not long after, Mrs. Muldoon called Mom into her office and asked, "Why are you eating lunch with those people?"

"I am lonesome," Mom responded. Mrs. Muldoon gave a look of disapproval.

During the winter, my grandfather called asking if she wanted to go to California and visit her sister, Ruth Dillman and her family. Mom grabbed the opportunity. First they spent two weeks in Lake Worth, Florida, a favorite winter retreat for the Finns. In St. Petersburg she boarded a public bus by herself which posted a sign: "Colored in the Back." Without hesitating, June deliberately headed to the back of that bus and sat with people of color. Was this June's way of rebelling against Mrs. Muldoon? Did June get the last word? I can only imagine how "*sisu*" played a role. It was 1948.

### GIRL GAZES AT THE HINDENBURG JUST HOURS BEFORE IT EXPLODES

By Susan Cloutier

May 6, 1937 -In Canterbury, Connecticut, eight-year-old June, daughter of Jenny and Emil Rautio, walked home toward her family's three-hundred-acre dairy and chicken farm on North Society Road. She had just left the one-room schoolhouse which was home during the weekdays for Finnish families with surnames like Hakkila, Maki, Hamala, Engman, Johnson and Lehtimaki. Mrs. Wellinghausen was the teacher, and just days earlier her students had secretly collected ten cents. In Finland, May Day signaled the beginning of spring and her students celebrated by making a May Day basket. Filling it with candy, they left it at the front door. Then they ran away and hid in the woods impatiently waiting, trying not to laugh, for their teacher to find them. The tradition always ended on a celebratory note.



Heading home, June played her daily childhood game and recited, "Airplane, airplane, come down and pick me up." Looking up, her eyes caught the Hindenburg hanging above her. She described it as silver, long and silently moving through the sky.

Mom shared this story after we drove by a sign for Lakehurst during our road trip to the Jersey shore. We were on our way to visit our Finnish/Danish Rautio cousins for the first time last October. "I didn't even know it had exploded until a few days later. There was no television, and I didn't sit around listening to the radio."

"Mom, you waited all these years to tell me about this historic moment? There aren't many people still alive who saw the airship."

"It seemed unimportant," Mom replied.

Someday after the pandemic, we'll be on the road again searching for new adventures. Perhaps the biggest adventures will happen inside the car!

## **My Thoughts about John Simon's *Strangers in a Stranger Land***

**By: Bernie Schreiber**

A close friend who is a member of the Finnish American Heritage Society recently recommended the book *Strangers in a Stranger Land* by John Simon. He even loaned me his copy. As a Jew, I am aware of the history of my people on a large scale, like the exodus from Egypt, the Holocaust, the founding of the state of Israel, and the dispersion of Jews throughout the world mainly for survival. I had no knowledge of any Jews in Finland. Why would they even be there? It's too cold.

But this book caught my attention and kept me unwilling to put it aside, even when I had to. John Simon wove the history of Finland and the story of a fictitious Jewish family and their struggles to survive and thrive, along with a very compelling love triangle into a beautiful literary tapestry. That juxtaposition of fictional characters who interact with real people and the truthful historical facts of a land that struggled with its identity and need to declare itself free from oppression and subjugation by another country is a universal cry for freedom heard in many parts of the world. Yet I had never known this about Finland.

I had no idea that World War II extended that far into Scandinavia. Had I not read this myself, I would not have believed that Jews fought on the side of the Nazis against the Russians. Not just that, but three of them, not the fictitious characters, were awarded the Iron Cross by the German government for their bravery on the battlefield, which none of them accepted. They already knew what the Germans were doing to Jews all over Europe. Yet not one of the Jews of Finland was deported by the Nazis and taken to any death camps.

So how did Jews come to this land? As John Simon delves into the historical aspects of Finland, he also discovers that most, if not all, Finnish Jews came from Russia during a time when Russia still controlled a good portion of that land. Subsequent wars ended Russia's claim to Finland and if you read this book, you'll discover why Finland, caught between a rock and a hard place during World War II, decided to fight with the Nazis against the Russians. Thanks to Simon's meticulous research and detailed accounts, we now know so much more about Finland, its people, and the small number of Jews that call Finland their home.

On a personal note, I learned from my mother that her father was conscripted into the Russian army and sent to Finland. He had been a ranking officer in the Polish army when the Germans invaded Poland. By that time, most of his family had escaped into Russia and were transported to a slave labor camp in Siberia. My grandfather left Poland to find them but was intercepted by Russian army personnel. For all I know, during his time in Finland he may have killed Nazis or Finns or nobody, but he did survive some brutal battles. More than a year after the war ended, he was reunited with his family. But that's the subject of another story.

### *Congratulations - Onnea*

- To **Aili and Val Galasyn** of Canterbury, celebrating their 65th wedding anniversary on July 2.
- To **Aili Galasyn**, celebrating her 90th birthday on August 4.
- To **Justin Bacon, son of Cheryl Smiley and grandson of Anita Smiley**, on his graduation from Staples High School in Westport, CT. Justin will be attending Auburn University School of Agriculture in Montgomery, Alabama, this fall, majoring in horticulture/grass-turf management.
- To **Kyle Bacon of Westport, CT, son of Cheryl Smiley and grandson of Anita Smiley**. He will be pursuing an M.S. in Real Estate Development with a focus on equity investments in office and multi-family properties in a 12-month intensive program at Columbia University in New York City.
- To **Rita Kelley** who celebrated her 75th birthday on April 19th.
- To **Jim and Irene Profetto** who will celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary on August 28th.
- To **Jordan Sands, daughter of Jonathan and Jami (Hawes) Sands**, on her graduation from Brooklyn Middle School in June.
- To **Helvi Karro Larson** of Wake Forest, NC, on her 80th birthday on June 12th
- To **Lella Karro Judd** of Poughkeepsie, NY, on her 85th birthday July 20th
- To **Stan Karro** of Brooklyn, CT, on his 75th birthday on August 10th

### *Get Well Wishes - Pikaista Paranemista*

- Get well wishes to **Rita Kelley** for a recent operation and continuing treatments.
- To **Linnea Lindstrom Sarantopoulos** of Killingly, CT, on her recovery from a serious auto accident on June.
- Get well wishes to **Anja Laurila** of Hypoluxo, FL, continuing with treatments for ongoing lower back pain.
- To **Ilma Tikkanen** of West Greenwich, RI, on her recovery from her hospitalization due to a respiratory infection and a fall

### *Sympathies - Otamme Osaa*

- To the family and friends of **Leonard Henry Pussinen** age 80, of Plainfield on his passing on June 12th.

NOTE: Leonard was the son of Otto Pussinen who was a leader of the Finnish American Athletic Club which sponsored fundraisers to allow many Finnish runners to compete in the Boston Marathon in the 1950s and 1960s with many Finnish runners winning the marathon or placing within the top 3 finishers.

## Welcome New Members

James Rosenthal & Shu-Ying Chung - New York, NY  
Eemeli Erkkila & Amy Patterson Erkkila - North Grosvenordale, CT  
Paula Petrucci - Emporium, PA

New members are always welcome to the Finnish American Heritage Society. Please use the enclosed Membership Coupon to sign up and send it with your dues to:

FAHS, P.O. Box 252, Canterbury, CT 06331.

## SPECIAL NOTICE: Makipuro Concert APRIL 15, 2021

To our members and friends, a new date has been arranged for the **Makipuro Concert** after coronavirus guidelines prevented the previous two dates. **Thursday April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021**, is the new date for the concert to be held at **StoneHurst Hampton Valley in Hampton, CT**. The event will begin at 6 p.m. with hors d'oeuvres and concert at 7 p.m. We all look forward to this "much anticipated" event and expect a safe environment with this new date.

President	Steven Bousquet	860-608-8366
Vice President	Jonathan Audette	860-917-5296
Treasurer	Jobina Miller	860-377-0789
Secretary	Rachel Linkkila	860-377-5914
Correspondence	Laura Sasser Cuff	860-377-4149
Membership	Steve Coupe	401-568-6614



is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to preserve and promote Finnish-American heritage. Membership is open to all who are interested in the purpose of the organization.

For your convenience, a Membership Coupon is enclosed in this issue.

Mailing address: P.O. Box 252, Canterbury, CT 06331  
Street address: Finnish Hall, 76 North Canterbury Road, Canterbury  
Phone Number: (860) 546-6671 Email address: [info@fahs-ct.org](mailto:info@fahs-ct.org)  
World Wide Web address: [www.fahs-ct.org](http://www.fahs-ct.org)  
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## FINNISH CONNECTION

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### FAHS NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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Anita Smiley, Jackie Harjula and Linda Kuja  
Members' News and Milestones: Stan Karro

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