

WASA DAILY



The Fire of Vaasa tomorrow 174 years ago
Sid 6



LOCAL NEWS

VAASA

Royal Visit to Vaasa – Crown Princess Victoria and Prince Daniel Heading to Finland



Photo: Bengt Nyman, Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic license.

It's official – Crown Princess Victoria and Prince Daniel are coming to Vaasa! On 21 August, the royal couple will visit the city to honour the 250th anniversary of Vaasa Court of Appeal. This marks the first royal visit to Vaasa since 2006, when King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia attended the city's 400th anniversary celebrations.

– The Court of Appeal's historic anniversary year is such a significant event that we decided to approach the Swedish Royal Court and invite a representative to grace the celebration with their presence. We are truly honoured that the Crown Princess and Prince Daniel accepted our invitation, says President of the Court of Appeal Sakari Laukkanen.

The royal couple will begin the day with an hour-long visit to the Court of Appeal, which was founded by King Gustav III in 1775 and commenced operations exactly 250 years ago, on 21 August 1776. Following this, the Crown Princess will plant a commemorative tree in Hovioikeudenpuisto (Court of Appeal Park).

At 10:30 a.m., the royal guests will walk to Hovioikeudenpuistikko (Court of Appeal Esplanade), where they will have the opportunity to greet local residents. The tour then continues to Vaskiluoto, where the Crown Princess and Prince Daniel will explore Wärtsilä's technology centre and learn

TODAY

EDITORIAL

What Can We Learn from the Vaasa Fire in 1852?

History is not merely a chronicle of the past, but a living teacher for the future. George Santayana warned us that those who forget history are condemned to repeat it. On August 3, 1852, Vaasa experienced this harshly when a devastating fire reduced almost the entire wooden town to ashes. It was an unimaginable catastrophe that left thousands of people homeless.

foresight.

It is worth considering the counterfactual: Had Vaasa not burned, it would likely have remained a small, manageable wooden town like Kaskinen, lacking the deep, sheltered harbor that became the key to its future growth. The catastrophe thus became a catalyst for change. It forced a modernization that made Vaasa an important center of trade and shipping.

But what happened next is what we should remember. The citizens of Vaasa never gave up. Instead of succumbing to despair, they rose and made a visionary decision. They did not rebuild the city on the same spot; they moved it closer to the sea, to a better and more strategic location. They designed a completely new city with wide streets and special firebreaks, engineered to effectively halt future blazes. It was an act of pure willpower and

The Vaasa fire teaches us that crises, however dark, can carry the seeds of renewal. It is about resilience – the ability not just to recover, but to build something better from the ruins. Today, as we face climate crises and other societal trials, this is a reminder that courage, community, and a willingness to adapt are our strongest tools. The new Vaasa stands as a monument to hope and proof that the future can be brighter than the past.

Photo Supplement

Wasaan Päivälehti

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Wasa Dagblad Wasa Daily



3.8.1852

Vasa stads brand
Vaasan kaupungin palo
The Fire of Vaasa

NEWS

about cutting-edge developments in carbon-neutral maritime transport and energy production.

– Vaasa proudly showcases to its royal visitors how the city has evolved over the past four centuries and how it is rapidly growing into the energy capital of the Nordics, says Mayor Tomas Häyry.

The visit concludes with a lunch hosted by the city at Maaherrantalo. Vaasa is getting ready for a royal day to remember!

Source: STT Info / City of Vaasa

OSTROBOTHNIA

Rising Unemployment – Yet Ostrobothnia Still Leads Finland

While unemployment increased across Finland in June, Ostrobothnia once again proved to be the country's strongest labour market. According to the latest employment review, the region recorded the lowest unemployment rate in mainland Finland – just 7.8 percent, compared with the national average of 12.8 percent.

At the end of June, 6,678 people were registered as unemployed jobseekers in Ostrobothnia, an increase of 139 compared with a year earlier. Even so, the region continues to outperform the rest of the country. Strong export industries, the internationally recognised energy technology cluster around Vaasa, and growing investments in battery manufacturing continue to support employment and create demand for skilled workers.

There are significant local differences. Larsmo remains among the municipalities with the lowest unemployment, while Vaasa and Pietarsaari report higher figures than the regional average. Encouragingly, employers advertised more new vacancies than a year ago, suggesting that recruitment could strengthen later this year.

Central Ostrobothnia also experienced a rise in unemployment during June, but its unemployment rate remained below the Finnish average.

VÄHÄKYRÖ

Historic Vähäkyrö Church to Undergo Major Renovation



One of Ostrobothnia's best-known churches is preparing for an extensive restoration. Vähäkyrö Church will undergo a major renovation beginning in late 2026, with construction continuing throughout 2027.

The project aims to preserve the church's historic

appearance while upgrading the building to meet modern needs. Planned improvements include technical upgrades, improved accessibility and measures to ensure the church remains functional and sustainable for decades to come.

Since 1804 Vähäkyrö Church has been an important local landmark and serves not only as a place of worship but also as a popular venue for weddings, baptisms, concerts and community events. The restoration will be guided by a comprehensive architectural and historical survey, updated on 15 January 2026, to ensure that all work respects the building's cultural heritage.

Once completed, the renovation will allow future generations to enjoy the church in improved comfort while preserving the unique architectural character that has made it a treasured part of the region for many years.

Source: Vähäkyrö Parish, Historical Building Survey, updated 15 January 2026.

VAASA

Rents rose in Vaasa – while Helsinki residents save

Vaasa tenants saw their rents skyrocket by 1.3 percent in the second quarter of the year – the second most in the whole country. At the same time, rents in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area continue to fall, according to recent statistics from Statistics Finland.

Rovaniemi tops the list with a rent increase of as much as 2.0 percent, closely followed by Vaasa (1.3%) and Joensuu (1.1%). At the other end of the scale, we find Porvoo (-1.9%), Kerava (-1.6%) and Vantaa (-1.2%). Helsinki residents can breathe a sigh of relief – here rents fell by 0.2 per cent. Oulu also recorded the same negative figure.



"In the rental market, right now it's about supply and demand, not about the size of the city or promises for the future," says Eemeli Karlsson, economist at the Finnish Landlords' Association. While tenants in the Helsinki metropolitan area can pick and choose from dozens of options, there is fierce competition for good housing in several other cities – especially now during the hottest moving season of the summer. Karlsson also reminds students to take the opportunity: the best apartments in the study areas are already rented.

"The same cities are peaking quarter after quarter. It's not about chance," says Karlsson.

Facts: Statistics Finland's rental statistics for the second quarter of 2026. Vaasa recorded the second highest rent increase in the country at +1.3 per cent, while Helsinki's rents fell by 0.2 per cent. Source: Suomen Vuokranantajat ry

HUNTING

More moose may be shot this autumn – hunting

WELLBEING AREAS

ROCK FESTIVAL

A Rock Festival with a Twist – Under-65s Need a permission from parent to Get In

OULU, FINLAND – Here's a festival where older people are the real VIPs. At Gerorock, taking place on Tuesday, 4 August 2026, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Hirosenkoti, Merikotkantie 5, Oulu, visitors under the age of 65 may attend only when accompanied by an older adult.

Organised by the Pohde Wellbeing Services County for the second consecutive year, Gerorock celebrates the idea that live music, festivals and summer fun belong to every generation. This year's performers include Nostalgia-reppu, Trusties Acoustic and Lammassaari & Kanniainen, with Matti Ylilauri hosting the event.

Beyond the music, the festival promotes social connection and healthy ageing. Research has shown that music can improve mood, stimulate memories and reduce loneliness among older adults, making cultural events an important part of overall well-being.

Gerorock is also one of the many creative events taking place during Oulu's year as the European Capital of Culture 2026, proving that rock music truly has no age limit—and that sometimes the youngest guests need an older companion to join the party. Source: Pohde

WELLBEING SERVICES COUNTY OF OSTROBOTHNIA

Giving Birth Becomes Free in Vaasa – New Pilot Begins on 1 August

VAASA, FINLAND – Expectant families in Western Finland have received welcome news. From 1 August 2026, Vaasa Central Hospital will offer free maternity care for childbirth, making it one of the first hospitals in Finland to launch such a pilot programme. The trial will continue until the end of 2027.

The fee exemption covers the hospital stay during which the baby is born. Standard patient charges will still apply to outpatient visits or admissions that do not result in childbirth, and neonatal intensive care remains subject to normal healthcare fees.

According to the Ostrobothnia Wellbeing Services County, the initiative has already attracted interest from expectant parents beyond the region. At the same time, Vaasa Central Hospital is renovating its maternity facilities, with new delivery suites scheduled for completion later in 2026. The hospital also holds the internationally recognised Baby Friendly Hospital certification, reflecting its commitment to breastfeeding support and early parent-infant bonding.

The pilot aims to ease the financial burden on growing families while strengthening Vaasa's position as an attractive ma-

ternity hospital for parents across Finland. Source: Ostrobothnia Wellbeing Services County

WELLBEING SERVICES COUNTY OF OSTROBOTHNIA

Possible Data Security Incident Under Investigation in Jakobstad

JAKOBSTAD, FINLAND – The Ostrobothnia Wellbeing Services County is investigating a possible data security incident after customer information at a competence centre in Jakobstad may have been exposed to unauthorised access. The incident was discovered in late July 2026 and is currently under investigation.

According to the wellbeing services county, there is currently no evidence that personal information has been misused. However, some client data may have been accessible to unauthorised individuals. Anyone potentially affected will be contacted directly, while additional technical safeguards have already been introduced to strengthen information security.

Healthcare and social service records are among the most strictly protected categories of personal data in Finland. Any suspected breach is carefully investigated, and authorities are informed whenever required. As cyber threats continue to evolve, healthcare organisations across Europe have invested heavily in improving digital security, although isolated incidents can still occur.

The wellbeing services county emphasises that the investigation remains ongoing and that further information will be released if new facts emerge. Source: Ostrobothnia Wellbeing Services County

OWN DOCTOR

Millions Invested to Give More People Their Own Doctor

OULU, FINLAND – A major healthcare investment aims to make seeing a familiar doctor the norm rather than the exception. Northern Ostrobothnia's wellbeing services county Pohde has received €3.24 million in government funding to strengthen continuity of care by expanding its personal doctor and personal nurse model during 2026–2027.

The project will extend the existing model across the region, improve digital services, and introduce a pilot scheme using independent medical practitioners in areas struggling to recruit doctors. The goal is to ensure that patients can repeatedly meet the same healthcare professionals instead of starting over with someone new at every visit. The programme has already shown encouraging results. Around 70 percent of Pohde residents have already been assigned a personal doctor and nurse.

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NEWS

Licences increase in Coastal Ostrobothnia



This autumn's moose hunt looks set to be more intense than last year. The Finnish Wildlife Agency has granted 2,398 moose hunting licences, an increase of about 12 per cent compared to the previous hunting season. The number of licenses for white-tailed deer is also increased – to 310 licenses, which corresponds to an increase of about 20 percent

The decision is based on the latest estimates of cervid populations and the goals set by the Regional Wildlife Council. The ambition is to keep the populations viable while limiting damage to forests, agriculture and traffic.

During the last hunting season, 2,235 moose and 157 white-tailed deer were killed in Coastal Ostrobothnia. A hunting licence usually entitles you to kill one adult animal or two calves. The hunting season will begin with guard hunting on 1 September 2026, when thousands of hunters are expected to venture into the forests from Kokkola in the north to Kristinestad in the south.

For motorists, it also means a reminder to pay extra attention to the roads during the autumn dawns and dusks – as we know, moose do not read traffic rules.

Reference: Finnish Wildlife Agency, Coastal Ostrobothnia

KORSNÄS

The World Heritage Site celebrates 20 years – all week long in Korsnäs

This summer, we celebrate the Kvarken archipelago – and with good reason. When the UNESCO World Heritage Site turns 20 years old, Korsnäs will be in full swing in week 32, 3–9 August. The program offers everything from art to sea winds. On Monday evening, Jon Gredmark's library mural (Silverbergsvägen 9, at 17.00) will be unveiled. On Thursday, Harri Ahonen will give a lecture on Finland's coastal routes – 220 destinations from the Sea of Bothnia to Satakunta. On Saturday, there will be a party at Molpe pavilion with children's entertainment, music, speeches and the World Heritage Site's very own anniversary cake. On Sunday, it all ends with a guided hike along Waterloo-Lisasgrynnan with a nature guide – new works of art along the trail and a maximum of 30 places. Registration for the hike via the Malax-Korsnäs Adult Education Centre. Fee 15 euros. The rest? Just show up – and enjoy.

Source: Korsnäs municipality, July 2026

BLUE ZONES

Coastal Ostrobothnia could become a blue zone



New research from Åbo Akademi University shows that the Swedish-speaking part of Ostrobothnia meets several of the lifestyle criteria that characterize the world's famous "blue zones" – places where people live exceptionally long. However, the researchers stress that further demographic studies are needed to confirm a link between lifestyle and actual life expectancy in the region

What is a blue zone?

The term "blue zone" was originally coined in demographic research and refers to geographical areas where an unusually large proportion of the population lives significantly longer than in other parts of the world. Over time, research has expanded to include lifestyle and health factors.

Common denominators of the established Blue Zones – such as Ogliastro in Italy, Ikaria in Greece, Okinawa in Japan and Martinique – include healthy eating,

regular but moderate physical activity, strong social ties and a sense of purpose in life.

Ostrobothnia shows promising signs

In a recently published study in the Journal of Aging Research, researchers at Åbo Akademi University have investigated how well different regions in Western Finland comply with the health-promoting lifestyle principles associated with blue zones. The study compared the Swedish-speaking part of Ostrobothnia, the Swedish-speaking Åland and the Finnish-speaking South Ostrobothnia.

The results show that the Swedish-speaking part of Ostrobothnia shows good health, achieves relatively high scores in terms of health-promoting lifestyle and follows the blue zone lifestyle. The researchers note that these parts of the landscape can be considered a potential blue zone for longevity.

Åland – highest life expectancy but different lifestyle

A surprising finding in the study concerns Åland. Despite the fact that Åland had the highest

life expectancy and the best health of the regions studied, the islanders deviated from several of the lifestyle principles commonly associated with long-lived populations. This suggests that life expectancy and health in Åland may be affected by factors other than the classic blue zone criteria.

"Longevity is generally seen as the ultimate result of good health, even though high life expectancy does not necessarily go hand in hand with good health or a health-promoting lifestyle," says Sarah Åkerman, Postdoctoral Researcher in Social Policy at Åbo Akademi University, in a statement.

Researchers: More demographic research is needed

Despite the promising results for Coastal Ostrobothnia, the researchers are careful to point out that the connection between lifestyle and actual life expectancy is not set in stone.

"The potential link between longevity, health and lifestyle can vary in different cultural, political, social and economic contexts between different regions. In this case, we need further demographic research to con-

firm the exceptional life expectancy in Ostrobothnia, and especially among the Swedish-speaking population," says Sarah Åkerman, Postdoctoral Researcher in Social Policy and Principal Investigator of the Blue Zones in the Nordic Region project at Åbo Akademi University.

Research shows complex relationships

The study, which was conducted using national statistics and data from the Gerontological Regional Database (GERDA) survey with over 12,000 respondents, underlines that health and lifestyle are not necessarily linked at the regional level.

"Today, at the societal level, there is an increasing emphasis on healthy lifestyles, both at the individual and societal level, in order to postpone the need for social and health care services in the ageing population. However, our research shows that health and lifestyle are not necessarily linked at the regional level, which indicates a need for continued research on how we can promote good ageing through lifestyle," says Sarah Åkerman.

The Blue Zones in the Nordic Region project has been running until 30 June 2026 and was funded by the Swedish Cultural Foundation and the Swedish-Ostrobothnian Society.

Source: Åbo Akademi University

PHOTO CONTEST

Capture the World Heritage Site – win €500!



Do you have a mobile full of pictures from the archipelago? Now they can be worth money. The Kvarken World Heritage Site celebrates 20 years with a photo competition where everyone can participate. Take your best shot – whether it's sunset over the archipelago, a seal looking up or just that perfect archipelago atmosphere – and send it in. The winner takes home 500 euros. The exact rules and deadline for submission can be found on the website of the City of Vaasa. But one thing is certain: here you have to recharge – both the camera and the imagination. Send the photos by 31.8.2026. More information here:<https://www.vaasa.fi/sv/se-och-upplev/kvarkens-skargard/kvarken-20/fototavling-20/> And for those who don't win? At least you get an excuse to spend a day out in the World Heritage Site. That's a win too.

Source: City of Vaasa / Kvarken 20, July 2026

WORLD HERITAGE

ALVAR AALTO

A Landmark for Finland – Alvar Aalto's Buildings Win UNESCO World Heritage Status

Finland has gained a prestigious new UNESCO World Heritage Site after the organisation officially inscribed The Architecture of Alvar Aalto – A Human Dimension to the Modern Movement on the World Heritage List.



The Church in Seinäjoki

The decision was made during the UNESCO World Heritage Committee meeting in Paris in July 2026. The inscription includes 15 architectural sites—13 in Finland, one in Germany and one in France—showcasing how Alvar Aalto transformed modern architecture by combining functionality, natural light, local materials and a deep concern for hu-

NEW EURONOTES

Vote for Europe’s Future Money – The Next Euro Banknotes Are Taking Shape

FRANKFURT, GERMA-
NY, July 23, 2026 – Should Europe’s future banknotes celebrate Beethoven, Marie Curie and Leonardo da Vinci, or showcase the continent’s rivers and birds? The European Central Bank (ECB) is inviting people across the euro area to help choose the design of the next generation of euro banknotes through an on-line public survey running until 21 September 2026.

The ECB has unveiled ten shortlisted designs, divided between two themes: "European Culture" and "Rivers and Birds." The re-design aims to ensure that future euro banknotes remain highly secure while better reflecting Europe’s shared identity, cultural heritage and natural diversity. It is the first complete re-design since euro banknotes entered circulation in 2002.

Once the survey closes, the ECB’s Governing Council will consider public feedback before selecting the winning design around the end of 2026. Even after the final choice is made, it will take several years before the new notes appear in wallets, as extensive testing and production are required. The current euro banknotes will remain valid and continue circulating alongside the new series.

A proposal for the new banknotes has been made by Finnish graphic artist Ville Tietäväinen. His proposal can be seen on the European Central Bank’s page on the new banknotes, URL below, The images on this page show one of our editorial team’s favourite series, designed by Myrsini Vardopoulou.

Vote here before 21 September 2026. :
<https://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/pr/date/2026/html/ecb.pr260723~c2d43f9170.en.html>

Images:
Copyright 2026, European Central Bank

Source: European Central



man well-being.



Säynätsalo Town Hall have 3000 visitors every year from many countries

Among the Finnish landmarks included are Finlandia Hall in Helsinki, the Paimio Sanatorium, Villa Mairea in Noormarkku, The Church area in Seinäjoki, Säynätsalo Town Hall and the Aalto University campus in Espoo. These buildings have long attracted architecture enthusiasts from around the world, and UNESCO recognition is expected to further boost cultural tourism.

Alvar Aalto (1898–1976) is widely regarded as one of the most influential architects and designers of the twentieth century. His human-centred approach to modernism continues to inspire architects across the globe.

The new World Heritage designation is both an honour and a responsibility. It recognises the universal value of Aalto's work while ensuring that these remarkable buildings will be carefully preserved for future generations.

Source: UNESCO World Heritage Centre, The Architecture of Alvar Aalto – A Human Dimension to the Modern Movement, July 2026.

HEALTH

HEALTH

Could Your Family Dog Help Keep Your Baby Healthy? New Finnish Study Says It Might

HELSINKI – A family dog may offer more than companionship. According to a new publication by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), microbes carried by pet dogs could help protect babies under one year of age from respiratory infections and reduce the need for antibiotic treatment.

Researchers found that infants exposed to the diverse microbiome of household dogs developed a richer community of beneficial microbes. This appears to support the normal development of the immune system, making babies less likely to suffer from common respiratory infections during their first year of life.

The findings are consistent with previous international studies suggesting that children raised with pets or in farming environments often have stronger immune systems and a lower risk of allergies and asthma. However, the researchers stress that the results should not be interpreted as a recommendation to acquire a dog solely for health reasons. Vaccinations, smoke-free homes, and good hygiene remain the cornerstones of protecting children's health.

HISTORY

FIRE 1852

The Great Fire of Vaasa in 1852



Looking back fifty years later – originally published in the magazine *Brandluren* in 1902, now in modern English.

Few towns in Finland have been spared from the ravages of fire, and among the worst disasters stands the great fire of Vaasa, which occurred fifty years ago. We believe readers will find the following account—originally published in the press of that time—both interesting and moving:

Hardly had the smoke from the great fire in Pori cleared* when another, equally dreadful calamity struck and wiped out yet another thriving Finnish town. On Tuesday, August 3, 1852, the weather was hot and cloudless. A light southwesterly breeze, growing stronger as the day went on, swept through the town when a fire broke out shortly before 10 a.m. in the two-storey wooden house of Councillor Aurén on Kauppakatu—right in the town's most densely built block, surrounded by similar wooden houses. The fire began when a maid attempted to smoke flies out of the cowshed by throwing glowing bricks into an empty tar barrel, which caught fire. In panic, she carried the burning barrel outside, placing it among hay and old baskets—materials that ignited instantly.

That summer was unusually dry and hot. Forest fires raged over a vast area, from Vöyri in the north to Kristiinankaupunki in the south. As soon as the fire began in Vaasa, people feared that the entire downwind part of the town was lost. Water was scarce—most wells had dried up. All efforts to extinguish the fire were in vain. The flames advanced rapidly, consuming the homes of Borgenström and Mannelin, the Hägg-lund and Vaakman houses (on the current site of the Exchange Bank), and the residence of merchant Wolff, the church, and the entire neighborhood.

The fire spread with

terrifying speed and ferocity, moving not only in the direction of the wind but also against it and sideways. By 7 p.m., virtually all of Vaasa had been reduced to ashes, except for the county hospital, the prison, the Orthodox church, and a few buildings south of the Court of Appeal park. The Court of Appeal building—the town's pride, built during the reign of Gustav III—survived.

The following notable buildings were destroyed: the town hall, the Exchange Bank, the upper secondary school and its associated institutions, the real school, the beautiful church (although the

altarpiece was saved), the Society House, and the governor's office (then located in the Eoschier residence), where the archives were lost, along with the records of the town council and the schools. Only a small portion of the school library and its collections was saved. Vast quantities of personal property vanished—inside houses, on streets, in carts, during rescue attempts and looting. The government granary remained standing. But major commercial stockpiles, cash, accounting books, the contents of the bookshop, and much of the printing press's inventory were lost.



NEWS

The study adds further evidence to the hygiene hypothesis, which suggests that moderate exposure to natural microbes early in life helps train the immune system and may provide long-term health benefits.

For many families, the household dog may turn out to be not only a loyal friend but also an unexpected ally in supporting a healthy start to life.

Source: Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), research release, 2026.

ÅLAND

ÅLAND

Music, freedom and Pippi – The Katrina Festival offers a total experience in Åland 5–8 August 2026.

During four intense August days, Åland will once again be transformed into a musical centre when the Katrina Chamber Music Festival opens its doors.



This year's theme, "TOTAL FESTIVAL", draws inspiration from the philosopher Hannah Arendt's thoughts on freedom, power and totalitarianism – but the audience can also look forward to everything from classical masterpieces to jazz, children's performances and conversations about the importance of art.

The festival is led by the internationally acclaimed violinist Cecilia Ziliacus, who has brought together some of the Nordic region's foremost musicians. The concerts are held at several locations in Mariehamn, including Alandica Cultural Centre, S Göran's Church, Åland Art Museum and Bagarstugan Café & Vin. The program offers music by Haydn, Shostakovich, Weinberg and Arvo Pärt, among others, but also improvisations, jazz and newly written music. For the youngest visitors, a children's concert awaits where Pippi Longstocking makes an unexpected guest appearance – a playful element that symbolizes freedom and imagination in contrast to the festival's more serious theme. Several events have free admission, including the popular morning concerts "Breakfast Quarter", while the festival ends with a brunch concert on Saturday 8 August.

HISTORY

THE FIRE OF VAASA 1852



The first photograph in Finland had been taken ten years earlier, but there were certainly no cameras in Vaasa on that fateful day. The first color photographs were not taken until the 1940s. The images published here are reconstructions of what Vaasa might have looked like on August 3, 1852, made by AI.

Three deaths were recorded: a Russian barber, a laborer, and an elderly woman. Several soldiers went missing. The chaos was overwhelming—but so too were the selflessness, helpfulness, and patriotic spirit that arose. Aid poured in from all directions—especially food supplies.

Vaasa was left desolate. The destruction was so complete that barely any timber remained standing. Smoke continued to rise from the soil, from moss and debris. Hundreds of scorched chimneys stood like gravestones in a cemetery of a once-thriving town—a sight not soon forgotten. Most of the population fled. Only a tenth of the former inhabitants remained. The rest took refuge in Palo-saari and the surrounding countryside.

God and the compassion of the people, may they help poor Vaasa!

Another contemporary writer remarked:

“In the twelve years that had passed since the destruction of Hamina, Finland had grown complacent. Each year, as the fire insurance companies reported rising profits and only a few thousand rubles paid in damages, people began to believe that modern building regulations and improved fire protection had made our towns safe. Cities almost forgot the danger entirely, and the early enthusiasm for organized fire brigades had faded.

Then nature gave us a warning and destroyed Pori. A terrible misfortune, people said—but a rare one, they added. Only an extraordinary combination of factors could cause such a disaster, believed

those who had the greatest faith in modernity.

But God gave a second sign. Two months and twelve days after the fall of Pori, disaster struck Vaasa. In broad daylight, in the middle of a workday, at the busiest hour of town life, the red bird (fire) landed on a quiet rooftop. Nine hours later, Old Vaasa—a town that had never burned before—was nothing but a smoking ruin.

The fire came so

suddenly that many escaped only with their lives. It was so fierce, and the drought so extreme, that a single spark could ignite entire buildings. There was no storm—just a steady breeze. But the air was so dry and hot that half-burnt papers, hymnal pages,

scraps of metal, and even charred banknotes floated as far as Vöyri, Oravais, and villages 60 to 70 kilometers from the site of the fire. The flames were visible from 45 kilometers away—even in broad daylight.”



NEWS

Over the course of more than two decades, the Katrina Festival has developed into one of Åland's most appreciated cultural events and attracts visitors from all over the Nordic region every year. For those who want to combine a late summer holiday with world-class music, Mariehamn in early August can be a destination that is hard to beat – and perhaps the only place where both Haydn and Pippi Longstocking share the same stage.

References: Katrina Chamber Music Festival 2026, Kulturföreningen Katrina and Visit Åland.

AI

AI

ChatGPT has a voice – and it sounds almost human



The new generation of voice calls could change the way we use artificial intelligence

Just a few years ago, the conversation with an AI consisted of typing questions and waiting for a text-based answer. Today, the situation is completely different. With ChatGPT's new voice feature, GPT-Live, the user can have a natural conversation with the AI – almost like a human. It is one of the biggest steps so far in artificial intelligence and is changing the way people work, study and communicate.

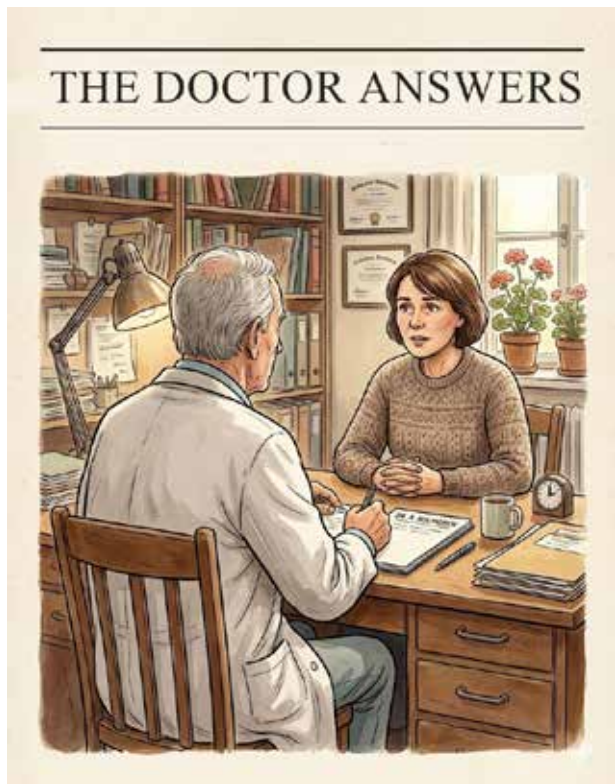
AI that listens while you talk
The biggest news is that ChatGPT no longer has to wait until you've finished speaking before responding. The new technology is based on so-called full-duplex, which means that the AI can listen and speak at the same time – just like humans do in normal conversations. This means you can pause mid-sentence, change your mind, or interrupt the AI with a follow-up question. ChatGPT perceives the context and continues the conversation without losing the thread. It can even give small confirmations such as "mm", "I understand" or "continue", which makes the dialogue significantly more natural than previous generations of voice assistants.

More than a talking machine
The new voice function is significantly more intelligent than a traditional voice assistant. If you ask about the weather, a stock price, or the news of the day, ChatGPT can search for up-to-date information on the internet while the conversation continues. If the question needs more advanced analysis, more powerful language models are connected behind the scenes without the user noticing the transition.

HEALTH

THE DOCTOR ANSWERS

Side effects of weight loss medications



The new drugs for obesity, such as Ozempic, Wegovy and Mounjaro, seem almost too good to be true. But all drugs have side effects, right? What should you be prepared for?

Yes, all effective drugs can cause side effects – even the modern GLP-1 drugs. The good news is that most of the symptoms are temporary, mild and can often be prevented.

The most common side effects come from the gastrointestinal tract. Nausea is most common, especially when treatment is started or the dose is increased. Many people also experience feelings of fullness, decreased appetite, constipation or diarrhea, heartburn, belching, and sometimes vomiting. The symptoms usually subside after a few weeks as the body gets used to it.

The best way to reduce the risk is to increase the dose slowly, eat smaller portions, chew food thoroughly, and avoid large, fatty meals. Drink enough fluids, especially if you vomit or have diarrhea. Regular exercise and a high-fiber diet can counteract constipation.

A side effect that has received a lot of attention is the so-called "Ozempic face". It is not really the drug that changes the face, but the rapid weight loss. When the fatty tissue under the skin decreases, the

face may appear slimmer, more sunken and older. The same thing can occur after heavy weight loss regardless of the method. In some people, the change can be alleviated by slower weight loss or aesthetic treatments.

There are also rare but serious side effects. Seek immediate medical attention if you experience severe and persistent pain high up in the abdomen, especially if it radiates to the back or is accompanied by vomiting. It can be a sign of acute pancreatitis or gallbladder inflammation. Even severe dehydration, bloody vomiting or black stools require quick medical assessment. People with diabetes who use insulin or sulfonylurea preparations should also be alert to symptoms of low blood sugar.

Despite these risks, large scientific studies show that GLP-1 drugs have a favorable safety profile when used under medical supervision. For many patients, the benefits clearly outweigh the risks. In addition to significant weight loss, treatment may improve blood sugar control and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease in people with type 2 diabetes or obesity.

The most important advice is therefore to use the drugs as prescribed, monitor the dose increase carefully and contact the healthcare provider if the symptoms become pronounced or do not go away.

EXHIBITIONS

VAASA ART HALL

The Peace Progress 24.7. – 16.8.2026



Can art create peace? An appealing exhibition opens at Vaasa Kunsthalle. Peace, nature and the connection of people come together in the new exhibition The Peace Process, which will be on display at Vaasa Art Hall (Senaatinkatu 1 D) 24.7.–16.8.2026. The exhibition invites visitors to stop and reflect on current themes at a time when the importance of peace seems more important than it has been for a long time. The exhibition is produced by the Flora and Fauna Project, whose contemporary artworks deal with coexistence, dialogue and the importance of the environment, among other things. The works challenge the viewer to think about how art can build understanding and hope. Since 2024, the Art Hall, which is maintained by the Vaasa Artists' Association, has become one of the city's most important contemporary art exhibition spaces. Admission to the exhibition is free. Opening hours: Tue–Fri 11 am–5 pm, Sat–Sun 12:00 pm–4:00 pm. Closed on Mondays.

Source: Vaasa Artists' Association.

ÖVERMARK

Echoes in an Abandoned Home: "The Hidden Spots"



In the quiet village of Övermark, art has taken over a century-old, derelict house. The site-specific exhibition, The Hidden Spots, invites visitors to wander through rooms where time seems to have frozen. Created by the artist duo Black Box Genesis, the installation blends soundscapes, poetry, and physical relics to explore memory and transience. As part of a multidisciplinary regional project, this evocative showcase encourages guests to interact directly with the layers of history hidden within the walls of a forgotten home. Regional Art Exhibition 4.7.–2.8.2026. Address: Dermossvägen 20, 64610 Ylimarkku. Opening hours: Wednesday–Thursday 12–17 Friday–Sunday 12–18 Image: Bekim Hasaj and Valentina Gelain

VAASA

Street Art Takes Over: Wasa Graffitilandia

Vaasa's most vibrant summer tradition is back in full force. Wasa Graffitilandia has transformed over 3,000 square meters into a sprawling, colorful maze of street art and urban culture. Now in its sixth year, this summer edition showcases a massive collection of works from local and international artists. The exhibition serves as a dynamic contrast to the region's traditional museum offerings, providing a gritty, energetic space for creative expression that continues to push the boundaries of what is considered "gallery art" in Ostrobothnia.

STUNDARS

Historic Charm: Stundars Open Air Museum



The Stundars Open Air Museum in Mustasaari has launched a pair of compelling exhibitions that dive deep into the region's heritage. With Paint and Bricks

explores the traditional decorative painting and fireplace artistry found throughout Ostrobothnia. Running alongside this are curated displays in the historic Hemmer's House and the local Stone Mason's Cottage, offering a glimpse into the craftsmanship that defined the area centuries ago. These exhibitions provide a peaceful, educational retreat for those looking to connect with the authentic roots of the coastal landscape.

VAASA

400 Years of Vaasa

The Ostrobothnian Museum's permanent exhibition, Vaasa 400 – Tales of a City, offers a captivating journey through the city's four-century history. From its founding in 1606 and 17th-century witch hunts to the devastating fire of 1852 and the rise of shipping and industry, the exhibition weaves together events that shaped society, education, and everyday life. Highlights include Ostrobothnian folk art, painted furniture, and reconstructed interiors of a burgher's home and a factory worker's dwelling. Old publicity films and scale models of the city's changing town plan complete this rich historical tapestry. Ostrobothnian Museum, Museokatu 3, Vaasa. Open Wed–Sun 10–17. Admission 15/9/0€. – Reference: museot.fi

VAASA

The Scavengers' Garden

Insects and invertebrates take centre stage at the Ostrobothnian Museum this summer. The nabbteeri artists' collective presents The Scavengers' Garden. Ostrobothnian Museum, Museokatu 3, Vaasa. Open 9 May – 20 September 2026. Wed–Sun 10–17. – Reference: vaasa.fi

VANHA VAASA

250 Years of Justice



The Old Vaasa Museum marks a significant anniversary with its exhibition on the Vaasa Court of Appeal, established in 1775 by King Gustav III. Running until 29 August, the exhibition sheds light on the court's early years, its activities, and its profound impact on the lives of people across historical Ostrobothnia. Through miniature models, visual material, and stories of officials and their families, visitors gain insight into the ceremonies, power, and everyday life of one of Finland's oldest judicial institutions. History buffs will find this a fascinating journey into the region's legal heritage. Museum of Old Vaasa, Wasastjernen kauppiastalo, Kauppiaankatu 10, Vaasa. Open 1 June – 29 August 2026. Wed–Sat 10–17. Free admission. – Reference: museot.fi

KRISTINESTAD.

The Splendid Villa's Dramatic Fall

Carlsro Museum in Kristinestad presents the gripping tale of Alfred Carlström, once the richest man in Ostrobothnia. The Splendid Villa exhibition recounts the opulent villa era and its dramatic collapse when an embezzler drove the ship-owning family into bankruptcy in 1910. Visitors can glimpse elegant celebrations, peacocks wandering freely, and the idyll that shattered, bringing an entire town to its knees. This summer's exhibition honours the villa's anniversary year and tells the full story of what became of Carlsro and its family. A captivating tale of wealth, betrayal, and ruin.

Carlsro, Carlsrovägen 181, 64100 Kristiinankaupunki. Open 1 June – 31 August 2026, daily 11–17. Closed Midsummer 23–25 June. Admission 8/2/0€. – Reference: museot.fi

CLIMATE CHANGE

FOREST AND LAND FIRES

Forest and land fires in southwestern Europe



France

July 2026 has meant an unprecedented fire disaster in France. Already at the beginning of the month, a major fire broke out in the Perpignan area in southern France, where the fire almost tripled in size and five people were injured.

The most high-profile fire started on July 12 in the world-famous Fontainebleau Forest southeast of Paris – the world's first nature reserve from the mid-1800s. The scale is said to be unprecedented in the region, and over 2,050 hectares of the forest have been destroyed. Over 900 households were evacuated and the important A6 motorway between Paris and Lyon had to be closed. Two people were arrested on suspicion of starting the fires.

Towards the end of the month, a gigantic fire near Bordeaux in southwestern France has developed into one of the worst in the country's history. Over 40,000 hectares have been cordoned off and nearly 220,000 people have been evacuated. The fire has created a rare "pyrocumulonimbus" – a cloud of fire that generates its own winds and thunderstorms. Over 240 houses have been destroyed. Swedish water-bombing aircraft have participated in the extinguishing work together with Portuguese and French units. President Emmanuel Macron warned that "the coming weeks will be tough".

A total of 115,000 hectares have burned in France since the beginning of the year, and already in mid-July, 32,000 hectares of forest had burned – more than in the whole of the previous year.

Spain

Spain has been hit at least as hard. On July 10, the deadliest forest fire in two decades occurred near Almería in southern Spain, killing twelve

people and missing 23. The fire is believed to have been caused by a fallen power line that ignited the extremely dry ground.

Since then, several large fires have ravaged at the same time. In northeastern Spain, over 12,000 hectares were turned to ashes, six villages were evacuated and over 1,100 people were forced to leave their homes. A man was arrested on suspicion of starting the fire.

Towards the end of the month, the fires west of Madrid have been described as "the worst forest fire in the history of the Madrid region". Over 60,000 people have been evacuated in Spain, and the total number of evacuees in both countries amounts to over 325,000 people. Spain's government declared a national emergency.

According to El País, in July 2026, Spain has experienced 17 major forest fires (over 500 hectares) – almost twice the historical average for the month of July (9.2). A total of 172,396 hectares have burned in Spain between January 1 and July 27, which is six times more than in the same period in 2025. 2026 is the fourth most fire-ravaged year in the last 20 years.

The link with climate change

The link between these devastating fires and climate change is clear and well-documented.

Heat waves and droughts. The fires have occurred against the backdrop of the third major heat wave in six weeks that has hit Western Europe. June 2026 was the warmest June ever in Western Europe, and temperatures in Europe have increased twice as fast as the global average since the 1980s. Experts link the extent of the fires to increasingly frequent and intense heat waves driven by climate change, as warmer and drier conditions make forest fires more devastating.

"Weather whiplash" – extreme weather change.

Scientists point to a phenomenon called "weather whiplash" – a dramatic shift from wet to dry weather. After a rainy winter, the vegetation grew strongly, but an early summer drought turned the new vegetation into dry fuel. This type of weather change is a known signature of climate change. Warmer air holds more moisture, which paradoxically leads to both more extreme drought and more extreme precipitation – the atmosphere acts like a sponge that absorbs more moisture from the ground and creates drier conditions, while in rainfall it can release larger amounts of water.

Fuel accumulation and fire dynamics. In addition to climate factors, changes in land use come into play – when agriculture is abandoned, contiguous forest and bush areas emerge that allow fires to spread uncontrollably. At the same time, the largest fires create their own weather systems, such as the "fire clouds" observed in France, which further exacerbates the situation.

A growing pattern. As French President Macron stated when he visited the crisis center in Bordeaux, one must relate to the "climate change conditions in which we will live". According to Macron, France has not experienced so many simultaneous fire outbreaks since the end of World War II. Taken together, the situation in France and Spain shows how climate change is creating a vicious circle in which extreme heat, drought and changing vegetation work together to make wildfires ever larger, more intense and more difficult to fight – and where fires can in turn amplify the extreme weather events that drive them.

Image: Forest fire in the United States in 2022. United States Department of Agriculture.

EVENTS

TODAY

METEORIIHI

When space struck Earth – Meteorian open today



Dive into the story of a crater formed over 520 million years ago – from the meteorite impact to today's farmland and Natura 2000 area. Explore rare meteorites, old farming machinery, an astronomical observatory, and a bird tower in one of Finland's most important crane resting sites. A solar system model and crater scale model bring the cosmos down to earth. Don't miss this journey through deep time! Source: <http://www.meteoria.fi>

AUGUST

EVENING MUSIC

50 years of free evening music in Vaasa – stars take over Vaasa Church



June – 14 August 2026
– Every Wednesday at 7.30 pm, completely free. The evening music at the Trinity Church has been a summer classic for 50 years. And This year it is being celebrated in earnest. The organ has its place, of course – it is, after all, one of the finest churches in Finland. But the singing, violin, piano, clarinet and cello also shine. The artists? Well-known Finnish musicians and international guest performers. High-quality, free and open to all. So simple, so good. Bring a friend and enjoy the bright June evenings until mid-August. Source: Bothnia Classic

SOLAR ECLIPSE

A Partial Solar Eclipse on August 12



On Wednesday, August 12, 2026, a specta-

cular partial solar eclipse will be experienced, which will be visible in Vaasa and elsewhere in Finland around eight o'clock in the evening. In Vaasa, the eclipse begins at 7:56 PM, its maximum phase (84% of the Sun's disk is hidden) is at 8:49 PM, and the eclipse ends at 9:40 PM.

Eclipse schedule in Vaasa
Start: 7.56 p.m.

Max: 20:49 (84% coverage)

End: 21.40

General information about the phenomenon:

Totality: A total eclipse will be visible on the same day in Greenland, Iceland and northern Spain, among other places. Safety: Do not look directly into the sun with the naked eye or with regular sunglasses. Always use suitable filters, such as special glass to see the blackout or welding glass (darkness 14).

More detailed local observation information and instructions can be found on the Ursa Astronomical Society website. At Meteoriih in Söderfjärden, people gather to see the eclipse: https://meteoria.fi/fi/tapahtumat/2026-08-12-20-00_osittainen-auringon-pimennys-12-8

VAASAN MARSSI

7-9.8.2026

42 kilometres, sea views and no stopwatch – Vaasa prepares for massive walking event

The city of Vaasa will once again become a hub for endurance walkers when the international Vaasan Marssi takes place from 7 to 9 August 2026. The three-day event begins daily from Market Square at Hovioikeudenpuistikko 15a and attracts participants from across Finland and abroad.

Walkers can choose routes ranging from 10 kilometres to a demanding 42-kilometre challenge. The event features scenic routes through Strömsö, Old Vaasa and the UNESCO World Heritage archipelago area. Organisers stress that the event is not a race – there is no timekeeping – but the physical challenge is still significant, especially for those attempting several days in a row. Vaasan Marssi is also Finland's only IML-recognised walking event.

VASA FUTURE FESTIVAL

The future is here – and it is the New Nordic



Vaasa will once again become a center for future optimists when the Wasa Future Festival kicks off. For ten days, companies, decision-makers, researchers and artists will gather to build a better tomorrow under the theme "New Nordic". You will come here to network, be inspired and make a real difference. Expect both serious and crazy ideas – all on the same stage. • When: 10–15 August 2026

• Where: Wasa Innovation Center & Bock's Village, Vaasa

NIGHT OF ART AUG 13

Night of Art: The whole of Vaasa becomes a big stage



Want to be part of creating the biggest cultural night in the region? Now is your chance! The program of the Night of Art is created together with the people of Vaasa – both small and large projects are welcome to participate. Imagine the streets filled with music, dance and unexpected art experiences.

But be quick! The registration period ends on 31 May 2026. Don't miss the opportunity to brighten up the autumn darkness.

• When: August 13, 2026

• Where: The entire city center of Vaasa

• Reference: vaasa.fi

KAJ

KAJ returns home – a big concert awaits at Lemonsoft Stadion on 22.8.



Photo: Pedro J Pacheco Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0

After their successes on stages around the Nordic countries, it's time for the comedy group KAJ to return to their home audience. On Saturday, August 22, 2026, the northern trio will take over the Lemonsoft Stadium in Vaasa in a long-awaited home concert with live bands.

The audience can look forward to an evening full of precise humour, captivating music and a special Ostrobothnian warmth that has made KAJ one of Finland's most popular entertainment names. The concert is expected to attract fans from all over Swedish-speaking Finland as well as from Sweden, where the band's popularity has grown sharply in recent years. The stadium opens at 4:00 pm, while the main show starts at 8:00 pm. The orga-

nizers also promise units that will be presented later. The concert is expected to last about two hours.

Tickets are available in several price ranges, ranging from standing seats on the field to grandstand seats and VIP packages. The organizer recommends that tickets be purchased well in advance, as there is a lot of interest.

Time: Saturday, August 22, 2026. The stadium opens at 16:00, the concert starts at 20:00.

Location: Lemonsoft Stadion, Vaasa.

Source: Netticket / United Stage

KARLEBY

Karleby Autumn Chambers: Young virtuosos take over – from baroque to modern in three days

KARLEBY August 21–23, 2026

The festival is only eight years old, but the artists are some of the most successful musicians in the country. Kokkola Autumn Chambers was founded in 2018 by cellist Antto Tunkkari and double bassist Pauli Pappinen, who still lead the program.

– We bring together young virtuosos in the intimate world of chamber music. The result is unique.

The program varies from baroque to contemporary music. What about the milieu? August in Kokkola – fresh, beautiful and full of melodies.

Three days are enough. Don't miss it.

Source: Bothnia Classic

SYYSKUU

LAPUA

Lapua Kansainvälinen Urkufestivaali: Suomen suurimmat urut saavat maailmantähtiä

LAPPO, 14. syyskuuta 2025

Noin joka toinen vuosi. Lapon tuomiokirkossa. Suomen suurimman kirkkourkun kanssa. Sitten se tapahtuu: Lappo Kansainvälinen Urkufestivaali.

Esiintyvät urkutaiteilijat ovat maailman eliittiä. Järjestäjänä toimii Lappo Urkufestivaaliyhdistys, joka ei varsinaisesti keräsi sillä – mutta ne, jotka tietävät, tietävät. – Urut jylisevät ja kuiskaavat. Se on elämys, joka kestää aikojaan.

Tarkista liput yhdistyksen verkkosivuilta.

Ja ole nopea – paikkoja on rajoitetusti, äänimaailmaa on loputtomasti.

Lähde: Bothnia Classic

MARRASKUU

LITTFEST

VAASA LITERATURE FESTIVAL LITTFEST 12-14.11.2026

The literature festival that will be held in November, 12–14.11.2026, will once again bring together well-known writers in Vaasa. LittFest will be attended by Monika Fagerholm, Kjell Westö, Kirsti Manninen (Enni Mustonen), Axel Åhman, Emmi Itäranta, Jessikka Aro and Tuomas Enbuske. In the autumn, book circles are also promised before the festival.

UKRAINE PRESIDENT

In the Strike on Radushne, for the First Time in a While, the Russians Used a North Korean Missile, According to Preliminary Data – Address by the President



July 30, 2026

Dear Ukrainians!

Today, response efforts continued throughout the day in different cities and regions of our country following the Russian attack. In Lviv, work was underway to clear the rubble and search for people. And in the Dnipro region as well, in Radushne near Kryvyi Rih. There, a ballistic mis-

sile hit a house directly – an ordinary house belonging to an ordinary family. Children were killed and their parents... My condolences to everyone who lost family members and loved ones today. In the strike on Radushne, for the first time in a while, the Russians used a North Korean missile, according to preliminary data. Of course, more examinations will follow, and everything will be veri-

fied, but as of now – it is a North Korean ballistic missile. The alliance between the Moscow scumbags and the deranged regime in North Korea exists for the sake of missiles, North Korean troops on our borders here in Europe, and killing our Ukrainian children.

Of course, many around the world condemned this strike today. There were many expressions of sym-

pathy over the loss of life. European countries also made many statements because a Russian missile flew into Polish territory and exploded somewhere in a field near Lublin. What matters most, however, is not mere sympathy and condemnation, but air defense missiles and pressure on Russia that can stop this dumb Russian war, all their strikes and their terror. This war could have been ended long ago, but Putin does not want that. One moment he is looking for weapons in North Korea, the next in Iran, and then he finds something else – all to keep the war going and keep killing. Evil that can only be stopped by sufficient force. This has happened more than once in the history of our people, our nation. What is different, for the first time now, is only unity – the unity we have built, our maximum

unity with the world. Our cooperation – our ability, now in the fifth year of the full-scale war, to ensure the protection of life. Air defense missiles – for Patriots in the first place, but also for NASAMS, IRIS-T, HAWK, and our other systems – are the key priority. I very much hope that all of our partners – above all our American partners, as well as our friends in Europe – will feel that real human lives depend on whether they help us, whether they help Ukraine.

Today, I had meetings with our military – the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, the Chief of the General Staff, the Minister of Defense, and the relevant Deputy Head of the Office of the President. There was also a meeting with the Security Service of Ukraine.

It is important that everyone – and I mean everyone – works as a team, moving as swiftly as possible to find what we need in partner countries, to convince them to help us more, and to respond asymmetrically to Russian attacks. There are steps, there are decisions that we agreed on today and that we very much need. There will also be more of our deep strikes – so that this Russian war is sent back to where it came from, and so that the Russians know and feel who is the one and only unwilling to end this war. And the reason is solely in Moscow. It is important that the world not simply sympathize with us, but help us deal with this for real.

Read more:
<https://www.president.gov.ua/en>

ART EXPERIENCE OF THE WEEK



Ferdinand von Wright
19.3.1822, Haminalahti
31.7.1906, Haminalahti
Golden Eagle by a Lake, 1897
Finnish National Gallery Collection / Ateneum Art Museum
Photo: Finnish National Gallery / Hannu Aaltonen

George Orwell

1984

Part 38

The sweetness of the air and the greenness of the leaves daunted him. Already on the walk from the station the May sunshine had made him feel dirty and etiolated, a creature of indoors, with the sooty dust of London in the pores of his skin. It occurred to him that till now she had probably never seen him in broad daylight in the open. They came to the fallen tree that she had spoken of. The girl hopped over and forced apart the bushes, in which there did not seem to be an opening. When Winston followed her, he found that they were in a natural clearing, a tiny grassy knoll surrounded by tall saplings that shut it in completely. The girl stopped and turned.

‘Here we are,’ she said.

He was facing her at several paces’ distance. As yet he did not dare move nearer to her.

‘I didn’t want to say anything in the lane,’ she went on, ‘in case there’s a mike hidden there. I don’t suppose there is, but there could be. There’s always the chance of one of those swine recognizing your voice. We’re all right here.’

He still had not the courage to approach her. ‘We’re all right here?’ he repeated stupidly.

‘Yes. Look at the trees.’ They were small ashes, which at some time had been cut down and had sprouted up again into a forest of poles, none of them thicker than one’s wrist. ‘There’s nothing big enough to hide a mike

in. Besides, I’ve been here before.’

They were only making conversation. He had managed to move closer to her now. She stood before him very upright, with a smile on her face that looked faintly ironical, as though she were wondering why he was so slow to act. The bluebells had cascaded on to the ground. They seemed to have fallen of their own accord. He took her hand.

‘Would you believe,’ he said, ‘that till this moment I didn’t know what colour your eyes were?’ They were brown, he noted, a rather light shade of brown, with dark lashes. ‘Now that you’ve seen what I’m really like, can you still bear to look at me?’

‘Yes, easily.’

‘I’m thirty-nine years old. I’ve got a wife that I can’t get rid of. I’ve got varicose veins. I’ve got five false teeth.’

‘I couldn’t care less,’ said the girl.

The next moment, it was hard to say by whose act, she was in his arms. At the beginning he had no feeling except sheer incredulity. The youthful body was strained against his own, the mass of dark hair was against his face, and yes! actually she had turned her face up and he was kissing the wide red mouth. She had clasped her arms about his neck, she was calling him darling, precious one, loved one. He had pulled her down on to the ground, she was utterly unresisting, he could do what he liked with her. But the truth was that he had no physical sensation, except that of mere contact. All he felt was incredulity and pride. He was glad that this was happening, but he had no physical desire. It was too soon, her youth and prettiness had frightened him, he was too much used to living without women--he did not know the reason. The girl picked herself up and pulled a



bluebell out of her hair. She sat against him, putting her arm round his waist.

‘Never mind, dear. There’s no hurry. We’ve got the whole afternoon. Isn’t this a splendid hide-out? I found it when I got lost once on a community hike. If anyone was coming you could hear them a hundred metres away.’

‘What is your name?’ said Winston.

‘Julia. I know yours. It’s Winston--Winston Smith.’

‘How did you find that out?’

‘I expect I’m better at finding things out than you are, dear. Tell me, what did you think of me before that day I gave you the note?’

He did not feel any temptation to tell lies to her. It was even a sort of love-offering to start off by telling the worst.

‘I hated the sight of you,’ he said. ‘I wanted to rape you and then murder you afterwards. Two weeks ago I thought seriously of smashing your head in with a cobblestone. If you really want to know, I imagined that you had something to do with the Thought Police.’

The girl laughed delightedly, evidently taking this as a tribute to the excellence of her disguise.

‘Not the Thought Police! You didn’t honestly think that?’

‘Well, perhaps not exactly that. But from your general appearance--merely because you’re young and fresh and healthy, you understand--I thought that probably----’

‘You thought I was a good Party member. Pure in word and deed. Banners, processions, slogans, games, community hikes all that stuff. And you thought that if I had a quarter of a chance I’d denounce you as a thought-criminal and get you killed off?’

‘Yes, something of that kind. A great many young girls are like that, you know.’

HUMOUR ONE HUND-RED YEARS AGO

BÄ BÄ
Doctor K- and his brother the veterinarian get into a dispute about whose profession requires the greatest ability to diagnose. Both hold their ground, but the vet's argument seems to be the strongest because the animals cannot tell where their pain is. Some time later the vet falls ill and the doctor is called.
— Well, where do you hurt?
No answer.
— You can tell where the evil is, right?
The only answer that comes from the sick person is; BÄ BÄ The doctor writes out a prescription, which he hands to the nurse with the words:
"Give him this and if he's not well the day after tomorrow, we'll shoot him."

THE DAD IN A GOOD MOOD

The daughter:
— You know, mother, father was in an unusually good mood today, when he went to the office.
Mother:
— Crosses in all the world! That reminds me I forgot to ask him for money.

AT THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S

The photographer;
— Should it be a bust?
The customer:
— No, I'd like to include some of the face as well.

WIFE'S INTEREST IN THE ANTIQUITY

— How did you cure your wife of her antique fly?
— Well, I gave her a dress of the 1907 model for her birthday.

THE SUITOR NEEDED THE ENCOURAGEMENT

The suitor:
— I have something important to tell you, but I don't know how to begin.
The lady:
— If I say "yes", maybe you will be helped to start.

IN TEN YEARS

Affectionate husband (sitting on bench, counting): My lady weighs 80 kilos; every

summer She travels to Mariehamn to bathe and loses 8 kilos; in ten years I will be free of her!

DOCTOR

Doctor: »Listen, I have to tell you. Something has happened to me today that has never happened to me in my entire time as a doctor.
— Well, tell me, you must have cured someone.

FREE TELEGRAM

Mac Carty from Aberdeen is visiting the U.S.A. One day he has to send a telegram to a relative. When he asks about the price at the telegraph office, he is told that the sender's name costs nothing.
— Magnificent, says the scout. I am descended from an Indian chief and my name is Iwillarrivetomorrow.

Astronomic picture of the week:



Earth From the Perspective of Artemis II (upside down).jpg

A view of Earth taken by NASA astronaut and Artemis II Commander Reid Wiseman from the Orion spacecraft's window after completing the translunar injection burn on April 2, 2026. The image features two auroras (top right and bottom left) and zodiacal light (top left) visible as the Earth eclipses the Sun.

Reid Wiseman/NASA
Public domain

BLOG WRITERS

Join Wasa Daily as a Blog Writer! Are you passionate about sharing your thoughts, stories, or expertise with the community? Wasa Daily is looking for enthusiastic blog writers to contribute engaging content for our readers.

Whether you love writing about local events, culture, lifestyle, business, or personal experiences, we welcome your voice!

Writing for Wasa Daily is a great opportunity to reach a wider audience, connect with fellow locals, and showcase your creativity. No prior experience is needed—just bring your ideas and enthusiasm! We value diverse perspectives and fresh voices that reflect the vibrant spirit of our community.

Interested? Send us your blog pitch or a short sample, and let's get your words published! Join us in making Wasa Daily a platform for meaningful conversations and inspiring stories.

Contact us at wasadagblad@gmail.com for more details. We can't wait to hear from you!

WASA DAILY

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

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

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

Editor-in-chief Hans Björknäs. Readers' writings are welcome! The magazine is locally owned and will remain so. For ever! Editorial office: Wasa Daily, Koulukatu 37 B 7, 65100 Vaasa, tel. +358-40-5462455. Helsinki editorial office: Wasa Daily, Toinen linja 9 B 36, 00530 Helsinki. Phone +358-40-5462455. Email: wasadagblad@gmail.com

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

ADVERTISE

Being among the first to advertise in this historic and hyper-modern daily may have some PR value. Send ads to wasadagblad@gmail.com

WASA DAILY

wasadagblad@gmail.com

HOROSCOPE FOR AUGUST 2026

August Horoscope – The Stars Are Mumbling (And Maybe Making Some Sense)

Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19)
You'll have a brilliant idea this August! Unfortunately, someone already had it in 2003. Console yourself with ice cream. And more ice cream. With sprinkles – obviously.

Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20)
Money is coming your way! Well, a discount coupon at best. Love may blossom – but only if you remember to water it. (Yes, this includes your plants.)

Gemini (May 21 – Jun 20)
You're everywhere and nowhere – just like your vacation plans. Try deep breathing. It won't help, but at least you'll look peaceful while searching for your keys.

Cancer (Jun 21 – Jul 22)
You're feeling emotional. That's okay. Everyone cries over overcooked pasta now and then. A surprise awaits at the end of the month – possibly pizza.

Leo (Jul 23 – Aug 22)
It's YOUR month! The world revolves around you – just the way you like it. Enjoy the spotlight, but remember: other people exist too. Sadly.

Virgo (Aug 23 – Sep 22)
You try to control everything. August has other plans. Let go – at least of your color-coded to-do list. But keep the Excel sheet. We're not crazy.

Libra (Sep 23 – Oct 22)
You can't decide: sunhat or raincoat? Take both. August weather can't decide either. Love? Yes. Confusion? Also yes.

Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21)
Mysteries attract you this month: "Who took my charger?" "Why aren't they texting back?" Keep your cool – and your sting sharp, just in case.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21)
Adventure calls! Unfortunately, only to the corner store. Still, every baguette run is a journey. Remember: all epic tales start small – often with snacks.

Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19)
You're trying to be responsible – but August wants you to chill. Ditch the blazer, wear flip-flops. The world will survive without your spreadsheets for two days. Maybe.

Aquarius (Jan 20 – Feb 18)
Your head is full of wild ideas. Some are even good! Don't start a podcast. Or do – but only if it's about guinea pigs and existential dread. That could work.

Pisces (Feb 19 – Mar 20)
You're daydreaming more than doing. And that's fine. August feels like a watercolor painting – beautiful but slightly soggy. Write your thoughts down. They may become a book. Or a very weird shopping list.