

St. Urho's Day

St. Urho's Day is celebrated on **March 16th**, the day prior to the better known feast of some minor saint from Ireland, who was alleged to have driven the snakes from that island. The legend of St. Urho says he chased the **grasshoppers** out of ancient **Finland**, thus saving the grape crop and the jobs of Finnish vineyard workers. He did this by uttering the phrase: "Heinäsiirikka, heinäsiirikka, mene täältä hiiteen" (roughly translated: "Grasshopper, grasshopper, go to Hell!"). His feast is celebrated by wearing the colors Royal Purple and Nile Green. St. Urho is nearly always represented with grapes and grasshoppers as part of the picture.

—from <http://www.sainturho.com>

A celebration of the chasing of grasshoppers out of Finland by the legendary **St. Urho** will be held on **March 16, 2013**, at the **Detroit Finn Camp**.

Party starts at 8 pm in the Finn Camp Clubroom.

\$5 cover charge at the door.

Wear purple and green (or risk being penalized)! For more details, contact **Karen Pype** at 248-926-6219.

Congestion Tax Planner



Jonas Eliasson

Road congestion — it's an unfortunate reality in nearly every major city, especially during rush hours. **Jonas Eliasson**, an Urban Planner, reveals how subtly nudging just a small percentage of drivers to stay off major roads can make traffic jams a thing of the past.

He studies how small charges on crowded bridges affect traffic, what makes a person opt to bike to work, and how far people choose to live from public transportation. The Director of the Centre for Transport Studies at Sweden's Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Eliasson helped design, plan and evaluate **Stockholm's Congestion Tax**, which was piloted in 2006 and made permanent in 2007. Eliasson is frequently brought on by other cities that are considering similar fees for rush hour use of crowded roads.

Stockholm is a city on many many islands, and therefore has many bridges,

many of them very old and narrow. Talking about traffic congestion in Stockholm at a TED conference in 2007, Eliasson describes how the introduction of a small, one or two euro fee, when placed right where the congestion forms, reduced congestion.

Eliasson has modeled and appraised several major infrastructure investments in Sweden, and chairs the committee for transport modeling of the country's National Transport Investment Plan.

He is dedicated to researching transportation flow, analyzing how people think about their commutes and what can influence their travel decisions.

—from TED.com

Watch the TED talk here: [Watch this talk](#)

Bark Up or Down?

FIREWOOD SPLITS NORWEGIANS

Lars Mytting at his home in Elverum, Norway. His best-selling book, "**Solid Wood: All About Chopping, Drying and Stacking Wood — and the Soul of Wood-Burning**," inspired a TV program about cutting, stacking and burning firewood.



photo: Kyrre Lien for The New York Times

"**National Firewood Night**," as the Friday-night program was called, opened with the host, Rebecca Nedregotten Strand, promising to "try to get to the core of Norwegian firewood culture — because firewood is the foundation of our lives." Various people discussed its historical and personal significance. "We'll be sawing, we'll be splitting, we'll be stacking and we'll be burning," Ms. Nedregotten Strand said.

But the real excitement came when the action moved, four

hours later, to a fireplace in a Bergen farmhouse.

Perhaps you have seen a log fire burning on television before. But it would be very foolish to confuse Norway's eight-hour fireplace extravaganza with a Yule Log broadcast in the United States at Christmastime.

The TV program, on the topic of firewood, consisted mostly of people in parkas chatting and chopping in the woods and then eight hours of a fire burning in a fireplace.

Yet no sooner had it begun, during prime time, than the angry responses came pouring in.

"We received about 60 text messages from people complaining about the stacking in the program," said **Lars Mytting**, whose best-selling book "**Solid Wood: All About Chopping, Drying and Stacking Wood — and the Soul of Wood-Burning**" inspired the broadcast. "Fifty percent complained that the bark was facing up, and the rest

complained that the bark was facing down."

"One thing that really divides Norway is bark," he explained. One thing that does not divide Norway, apparently, is its love of discussing Norwegian wood. Nearly a million people, or 20 percent of the population, tuned in at some point to the program, which was shown on the state broadcaster, NRK.

—from *The New York Times*, Feb. 19, 2013. —from *Oslo Journal*.