
This Saturday I was invited to a concert with a group of English speaking fellows by our American-Finn friend Ron Bossen. We went to see the Alt-Rock group *Husky Rescue*. They were good. I’m bummed that I didn’t take any pictures to show here.

Most of the guys that I went to the show with were British and all have married into Finland. I was struck, hanging out with them, the differences between Americans and Brits. It’s true that language is a common bond, but there is much that is different. Increasingly, I am realizing the uniqueness of American culture. I had taken it for granted until coming here, and it seems to me that this is one of the chief gifts of a lengthy stay abroad: you come to realize the uniqueness of your own culture, which, incidentally, has nothing to do with who is President.

The weather here is interesting and different. In Montana, the winter is much more symmetric about the winter solstice, i.e. it’s wintry more or less equally on either side of the end of December. Here, however, the Gulf Stream keeps things a bit warm in early winter and then the snow doesn’t stay for good until late January. Of course, it was an unseasonably warm December and January here with lots of rain, but from what I can gather it is typical for winter to come and go until late January, when it starts to dig in for a long stretch. The cool thing is that we’re socked in with heavy winter weather at the moment, whereas we hear that in Montana it’s beginning to warm up. I like having good hard winter weather this late into the year.
Ellie at the local ski tracks and downtown.

Alex launched the 10 meter (32.8 feet) platform (tallest in the back) on Sunday night.