

THE FINNISH LINE

FINLANDIA FOUNDATION® NATIONAL



HANDS ACROSS THE SEA SINCE 1953

Saving Finland in America



Greetings:

This year, the 70th anniversary of the founding of Finlandia Foundation, has gotten off to a memorable start.

In February, we welcomed Tommy Flanagan to the newly created position of FFN executive director, and in his first week he was busy hosting online programs for National Sauna Week. You'll see throughout this issue that he has already proven to be a tremendous asset to the organization.

In addition to our regular schedule of activities---Performer of the Year, Lecturer of the Year, grants, scholarships, Finnposium and so on---we were presented with the biggest task and opportunity that FFN has faced since it was founded in 1953.

On March 2, the Finnish-American community was rocked by the announcement that Finlandia University, in Hancock, Michigan, would be closing. Founded in 1896 as Suomi College, it was the last institution of higher learning in North America founded by Finns.

The shutdown of Finlandia University jeopardizes the enormous and important trove of archival material, artifacts and other Finnish-American cultural and heritage assets within its purview. The FFN board of directors called an emergency meeting to address this dire situation, and the trustees unanimously agreed that FFN must act to preserve and protect these irreplaceable items and resources.

We immediately stepped in to continue operations, assess the inventory and consider options for housing the collections and programs. You'll find more information on page 4, and we will continue to update you through our e-news and social media as we make progress on this project.

This expanded issue of *The Finnish Line* carries news about our annual board meeting in Florida, at which we presented the FFN 2023 Award of Excellence, as well as reports on our programs, Young Leaders Board, chapter activities and much more.

It's an exciting time for Finlandia Foundation. We appreciate your continued support, interest and involvement in securing a bright future for Finnish America.

Best,



Anne-Mari Paster

President



Finlandia Foundation National
HANDS ACROSS THE SEA SINCE 1953

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To reach a trustee by e-mail, contact:
office@finlandiafoundation.org

Executive Director

Thomas Flanagan

thomas.flanagan@finlandiafoundation.org

THE FINNISH LINE

FINLANDIA FOUNDATION NATIONAL  HANDS ACROSS THE SEA SINCE 1953

The magazine is produced twice yearly by the **FFN Communications Committee**: Jacqueline Harjula, chair, and Katariina Lehtonen, Betsey Norgard and Tarja Silverman.

Additionally, FFN produces a monthly, free e-news; sign up to receive it at the FFN website. Submit chapter news and other items of interest and photos to: FFN Communications Manager Kath Usitalo, newsletter editor:
kath@finlandiafoundation.org

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CONTACT Finlandia Foundation National, Inc.
FinlandiaFoundation.org

Jessica Ann, Administrative Assistant
office@finlandiafoundation.org

PHONE: 626.795.2081

MAILING ADDRESS:

Finlandia Foundation National
254 N. Lake Ave. #852
Pasadena, CA 91101

COVER: Artifacts from the
Finnish American Heritage Center

JUST IN TIME, FFN WELCOMES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



After operating for 70 years under the leadership of its volunteer board of trustees, Finlandia Foundation has a fulltime executive director. The timing couldn't have been more fortuitous. Thomas (Tommy) Flanagan stepped into the newly created position on February 20, and immediately took on hosting duties for some of the National Sauna Week online programs.

Then, on March 2, Finlandia University announced its closing. FFN board members immediately offered to assume responsibility for the school's Finnish American Heritage Center and cultural and heritage assets. Less than two weeks into his new job, Tommy was a part of the task force guiding FFN's new initiative.

Tommy has also been on the road across the country to establish relationships and build on FFN President Anne-Mari Paster's goal of strengthening the organization's visibility and connectivity within Finnish America, Finland and beyond.

"Finlandia Foundation has grown and, especially with the internet, expanded its reach and opportunities," says Anne-Mari. "It's time that we have a professional who will work with the trustees to oversee the administration and management of FFN, represent FFN in the community and lead its fundraising efforts to accomplish

our mission of supporting Finland in America. He will oversee the work of the office assistant and communications manager.

"As executive director, Tommy will take Finlandia Foundation National to the next level."

Tommy, a Montana-born Finnish-American, is a graduate of Pacific Lutheran University, with a BA in Political Science and German and minor in Global Studies. He achieved a master's in German and European Studies at Georgetown University's Walsh School of Foreign Service, and took courses in political science, German, Finnish and Swedish at Åbo Akademi University. Most recently, he was Language Programs Officer at Goethe-Institut. Tommy is a founding member of the FFN Young Leaders Board.

ABOVE: Tommy is making connections between FFN and young adults a priority, and has met with representatives of the University of Helsinki and the University of Washington. At UW in Seattle (from left) Department of Scandinavian Studies Chair Andrew Nestingen, Karoliina Kuisma, department administrator and Tommy.

BELOW: At the "Nordic Leadership & Happiness" seminar held April 19 in Los Angeles, Tommy made a short presentation about FFN and met Consul General Okko-Pekka Salmimies as well as panelists and participants (from left) Tommy Flanagan, Sirpa Selänne, Katja Kojo, Viivi Avellan, Tommi Aaltonen and Leena Tukiainen. The program organizers received a grant from FFN.



SAVING FINLAND IN AMERICA

Since Finlandia University announced on March 2 that it would be closing, a task force of Finlandia Foundation National has been working to ensure the security of its many cultural assets located in Hancock, Michigan.

Founded as Suomi College in 1896, the campus in the Upper Peninsula became the home of the largest collection of Finnish-American artifacts and archives. The university's closing put those items in potential jeopardy.

FFN moved quickly to form a task force to address the situation and handle the myriad of details and legal and logistical aspects of assuming responsibility for the Finnish American Heritage Center, irreplaceable archives, Finlandia Art Gallery, Price of Freedom Museum, Finnish American Folk School, *The Finnish American Reporter* and North Wind Books.

This effort, which FFN has named "Saving Finland in America," involves many meetings and behind-the-scenes work that might give the appearance that not a lot is happening. The opposite is true.

FFN has provided \$30,000 per month to maintain the present functions such as publication of *The Finnish American Reporter* and operating the gallery and archives.

Although not obvious to the public, FFN is making progress on this project. Trustees have

been in frequent contact with various parties involved in the acquisition, an architecture and engineering firm to study the physical locations involved, attorneys and others.

It is Finlandia Foundation's priority to protect and preserve the treasures that thousands of donors have entrusted to the archives and museums. The "Smithsonian of Finnish America" has more than 40,000 pieces of the past, and includes print materials, oral histories, artifacts and artwork.

It is the duty and privilege of Finlandia Foundation to lead this effort for many reasons: out of respect for the value of these items in telling the history of Finland in America; to allow future generations the opportunity to learn about and understand the past; and to put into context the contributions so many have made and continue to make to contemporary Finnish America.

FFN will provide news about Saving Finland in America through its website, e-news, social media and other outlets.

"The heritage of Finnish America is integral to the identity, livelihood and lifeblood of our community. It is too precious, and too important, and keeping it alive is aligned with the mission of Finlandia Foundation to keep Finland in America."

FFN President Anne-Mari Paster



Finlandia Heritage Archives Include:

	2 "QUEEN CHRISTINA" BIBLES — the first printed in the Finnish language in 1642
	400 HOURS OF ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS
	40,000+ HISTORIC ITEMS in the climate-controlled archives
	684 FINNISH-AMERICAN PERIODICAL TITLES some dating to the 1800s
	175 TITLES OF FINNISH PRINT NEWSPAPERS
	72 FINNISH-AMERICAN MICROFILMED NEWSPAPERS

PLUS PHOTOGRAPHS, SHEET MUSIC, AND CORRESPONDENCE

"The Finnish American Reporter and the Finnish American Heritage Center are a vital part of the Finnish immigration story to the USA and a link to modern Finland. I hope that both of these institutions will be preserved and developed for the future."

Bror Träskbacka, Finland

"No other place has preserved Finnish artifacts and history like what has been done for years by the Heritage Center. As a historian and preservationist who has donated items to the collection, my intention is to have the archives receive my research on the American Finns' culture."

"It would be an irreparable, tragic loss for the American Finns if The Finnish American Reporter and Finnish American Heritage Center were to cease."

Frank Eld, Idaho

Learn More at a Special Town Hall

Finlandia Foundation National will host an informational presentation about the status of the Saving Finland in America project during FinnFest USA in Duluth, Minnesota.

At the session, set for 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. on Friday, July 28, there will be an update by the FFN task force and an opportunity for Q & A.

For FinnFest information: FinnFest.us



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE 2023

Finlandia Foundation National honored Robert Saasto with its biennial Award of Excellence for his dedication to recognizing the legacy of Finntown, in Brooklyn's Sunset Park. Robert, a New York attorney, spent his youth in Finntown, which once bustled with new arrivals from Finland, and activity at Finnish businesses, newspapers, churches and halls. He felt the area deserved recognition, and in 1992 he secured a sign naming 40th Street as Finlandia Street.

With their work ethic, these Finns brought with them the concept of non-profit cooperative housing. The handsome and solidly-built, spacious and light-filled structures were unlike the tenements that were the norm in 1916 when the first Finntown apartment, Alku (New Beginning) was constructed. Robert's efforts led to Alku and Alku Toinen (Second Beginning, built in 1917) being placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2019.

He has since worked to have informational, commemorative plaques placed at more than two dozen sites of historical significance to the Finnish-American community, including Imatra Hall, an important gathering place built in 1907.



Robert Saasto accepts the 2023 Award of Excellence from Anne-Mari Paster at the FFN 70th anniversary celebration in Florida on April 1.

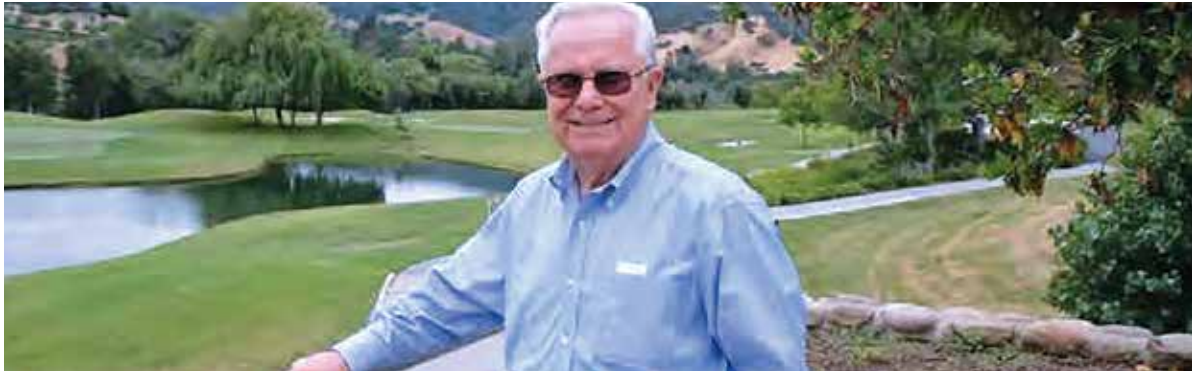
"Robert's commitment to this project, and his passion for Finntown is just incredible," says FFN President Anne-Mari Paster.

"Without his driving force, we may never have realized the history and importance of that area of New York. He is certainly deserving of much thanks and tribute. In fact, he recently received the Decoration of Knight First Class by Order of the Lion of Finland."

FFN presents its Award of Excellence to an individual or organization committed to supporting and uplifting Finnish America and Finland in the U.S. The inaugural recipient was the Seattle Symphony in 2015, the 150th anniversary of the birth of Jean Sibelius, for the orchestra's three-week program *Luminous Landscapes: The Sibelius Symphonies*.

In 2017, FFN honored Pauline and John Kiltinen of Marquette, Michigan, for their extraordinary involvement and support of the Finnish-American community; the 2019 award recognized Finnish cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Nazig Azezian for their dedication to the music of Sibelius and other Finnish composers; and *The Finnish American Reporter* received the award in 2021, the monthly paper's 35th anniversary year.

PAUL O. HALME, RECIPIENT OF THE FFN AWARD OF APPRECIATION



By Tommy Flanagan

Paul O. Halme's history with Finlandia Foundation goes all the way back to its beginnings in Pasadena in 1953. Paul's father, Rev. Omar Halme, was one of its nine founding members. The Finnish-American community has played an important role in Paul's life and work, and as FFN executive vice president, he represents the connection between the birth of FFN 70 years ago and our present-day organization.

It is a pleasure to recognize Paul's involvement and contributions with the Finlandia Foundation National 2023 Award of Appreciation.

Paul has a lifetime of stories related to Finnish America and the leaders who founded Finlandia Foundation. He fondly remembers the "cast of characters" who shaped him and his Finnishness, including the very diplomatic couple Consul Yrjö and Leonora Paloheimo, and Väinö Hoover, a caring, tough and passionate figure.

The Halme family embodied the Finnish-American community. Paul recounts growing up in a large house of 17 rooms in an eclectic neighborhood of downtown Los Angeles. It was a home busy with family and visitors, and sometimes the stories Paul shared with his friends were met with astonishment and disbelief. For example, in 1952, when the inaugural Miss Universe competition was being held in nearby Long Beach, the Halmes welcomed a visit by Miss Finland Armi Kuusela, who was crowned the first Miss Universe.

The Halme family attended the 1960 Winter Olympic Games in Squaw Valley, and the entire Finnish team drove across the state to visit the Finnish community in LA, hosted at the Halme home. Paul's friends, he remembers, "didn't have much to say after two buses of Finnish Olympians pulled up to the house."

Central to Paul's stories is the importance of culture and heritage. He admits, though, that when he was growing up he wanted to assimilate. He jokes that he didn't think he could impress many girls with his Finnish heritage. However, his wife, Susan Darling Halme, with her love of language and curiosity for culture, would become just as Finnish as he. They live in Solvang, California, a community with strong Danish roots, where Susan owns the Solvang Bakery. Paul humorously but proudly proclaims, "The best Danish bakery in town is run by a Finn."

continued on page 33

GRANTS2023



MUSIC

AALLOTAR DUO REHEARSAL RESIDENCIES

Transatlantic music duo Aallotar, with Teija Niku in Helsinki and Sara Pajunen in Minnesota, will restart their ensemble after the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted their long-distance collaboration. Meeting in New York City and Helsinki in the fall of 2023, Aallotar will rehearse and compose music for upcoming U.S. and European tours.

MY FINNISH SOUL ALBUM TOUR

Eepi Ursin (right) is going on a U.S. tour with her new solo album *My Finnish Soul*. The album consists of Eepi's fresh and touching versions of well-known Finnish songs, and is a must-have nostalgia recording for any Finnish expat.

IDA METSBERG'S NEW ALBUM

Singer, songwriter and FFN Performer of the Year Ida Metsberg (left) will record her first full length album with musicians from Finland and the U.S., including fellow Finnish artists living in New York. She will combine Finnish musical elements with American ones, and showcase Finnish talent. This grant will cover some of the studio expenses and musicians' fees, as well as mixing and mastering.

AHJOWOOD TRIO CONCERT TOUR 2023

AhJoWood trio is Juli Wood (saxophone, USA), Petri Ahjokoski (guitar, Finland) and Anu Ahjokoski (bass, Finland). Petri has planned a concert tour for summer 2023 which will feature his jazz arrangements of traditional Finnish hymns to be played in several churches and a library in Finland. The pandemic cancelled this project for three years, and the trio is excited to finally be playing together again this summer.

"SINGING STRINGS 40 YEARS"

Singing Strings and Suomi-Seura are both celebrating 40 years of collaboration to promote Finnish culture and heritage. This grant will assist with an anniversary performance at FinnFest 2023 in Duluth, Minnesota. Singing Strings performers are 85 % American/Finnish and 15% from Finland.

THE SCANDINAVIAN MUSIC FESTIVAL 2023

The Scandinavian Music Festival is a series of three concerts performed on Sundays in June in Fort Tryon Park in northern Manhattan. Now in its 18th season, the programs feature Scandinavian music performed by musicians of the Scandia Symphony under the direction of Dorrit Matson. Many beautiful compositions from Finland will be performed in the summer of 2023.

HEAVY METAL MUSIC CULTURAL EXCHANGE

One of the biggest cultural exports from Finland over the past few decades has been heavy metal music, with some of the biggest acts in metal like Nightwish, Amorphis and Lordi originating in Finland. This grant strives to strengthen Finnish-American heavy metal music connections by pairing up-and-coming Finnish metal band Hagalas with Veriterasa, a Seattle-based metal band with Finnish roots. Together, they'll tour the Pacific Northwest, building cultural connections with U.S. metal bands and exposing fans to genuine Finnish metal that is as cold and beautiful as Lapland in winter.



FFN received 43 applications and awarded \$123,000 in grants to 34 recipients for projects related to history, art, music, culture, research, preservation, events and more. The Grants Committee, comprised of FFN board members, is led by Richard Ahola with Jacqueline Harjula, Kateriina Lehtonen, Päivi Tetri and emerita trustee Anita Smiley. The grant application deadline for 2024 is January 17. Find information at FinlandiaFoundation.org.

OTHERWORLD ENSEMBLE FINLAND TOUR 2023

Finnish Jazz Legend Heikki "Mike" Koskinen and Finnish-American saxophonist and composer Rent Romus embark on a new tour. The ensemble features top Finnish musicians, including professor emeritus and vocal artist Heikki Laitinen, a respected expert on ancient Finno-Ugrian laments. Their collaborative project, "Itkuja Suite", is an exploration of the ancient healing music of Finnish Nordic lament as well as the life-affirming elements of jazz. It blends original melodies with the epic rune poems of *The Kalevala*, and mixes contemporary instruments with old, such as kantele, wooden flutes and log drums.

VAPPU SPRING GALA CONCERT

A musical celebration at the National Nordic Museum in Seattle features Scandinavian national anthems and representative selections from each Nordic country, emphasizes the work of Finland's great Sibelius, plus light classical symphonic works from around the world. Accomplished symphonic musicians, especially those with Scandinavian heritage, are invited to perform with the North Stars Orchestra.

FAMILY FOLK MUSIC PROGRAM

Selma Seppänen and Miska Kajanus will produce a Finnish Folk music experience in their Concert and Workshop for the Whole Family Tour.

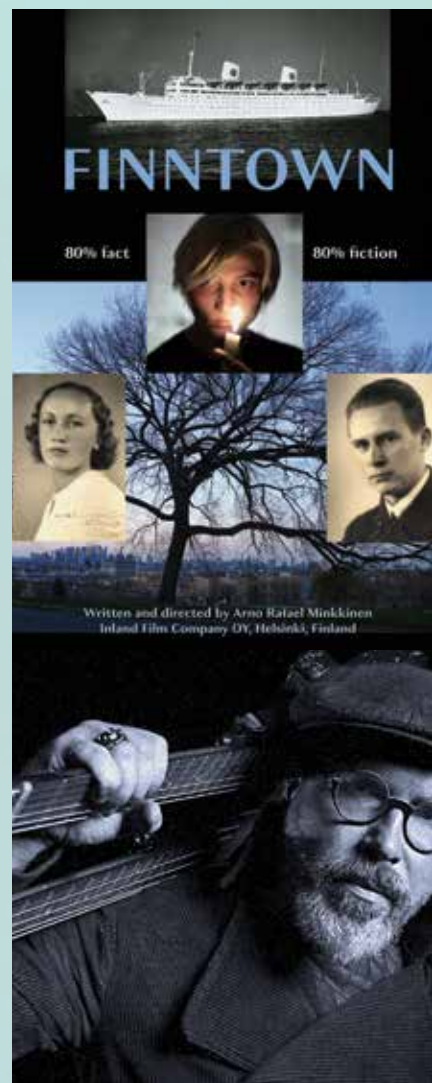
FILM

FINNTOWN: THE MOVIE

Mixing fact and fiction, *Finntown* is a semi-autobiographical, coming-of-age, Brooklyn immigrant adventure story. It focuses on a boy, Aku Korhonen; Aino, his beauty queen and registered nurse mother; and Seppo, his fervidly religious father. This grant will assist in producing a fundraising catalog depicting the highlights of the two-hour feature film.

CITY OF MEMORY

City of Memory is a time-lapse documentary about Helsinki, depicting one typical August day in the city compressed into the space of one hour. Musical soundtrack for this non-narrated short feature will be written and performed by Finnish composer Jarmo Saari. Upon completion in 2024, *City of Memory* will be available free of charge for screenings by Finlandia Foundation chapters and affiliated groups around the U.S.



ART

FINNOPHILE PRINTMAKING PROJECT

This intergenerational, hands-on workshop from Finnish-American artist Kristi Holohan explores some vast traditions of art, design, and print in Finnish culture. The educational and interactive program guides participants through a discovery of a beginner's history in Finnish design, and culminates in the creation of block prints and silk screen textiles. The project is designed to be an open source program, and interested groups are encouraged to use the presentation and activities.



EVENTS

FINNFEST USA 2023

A new generation of Finnish-American choir singers and choral repertoire is emerging, using the internet as a tool for preparing choirs. In honor of its 40th anniversary, FinnFest will feature two of the program highlights from the first festival: writers reading from their work and choirs in concert. Both will explore 21st century artistic formats and nurture another generation of audiences eager to engage with their artistry.

YOUNG FINN/NORDIC AMERICAN OUTREACH EVENT

Jon Jurva, Finland's Honorary Consul in Chicago and director of the Midwest Chapter of Finnish American Chamber of Commerce, and Julia Paster, FFN Young Leaders Board member, will organize a networking event for young Finnish-Americans, Finns and Nordic Americans living in the greater Chicago area. The program will include refreshments and presentations by the hosts, and may feature additional speakers.

47TH ANNUAL KALEVALA FESTIVAL

The Finnish Choral Society of Seattle will arrange the 47th Annual Kalevala Festival at the National Nordic Museum. The topic will be Finnish movies and choral music, with featured speaker Andy Nestingen, chair of the University of Washington's Department of Scandinavian Studies and an expert on Finnish film.

ENHANCING MICHIGAN'S SCANDINAVIAN MARKET

The Finnish Center Association of southeast Michigan seeks to grow the amenities and audience of its annual Scandinavian Market, which is hosted at the center each November. The market includes a broad selection of Finnish food, art, music and imported goods provided by dozens of volunteers and vendors. The one-day market currently attracts over 700 visitors of all ethnicities, and is one of FCA's most successful events (background photo).

MICE IN MASSACHUSETTS

The Massachusetts Independent Comics Expo, known as MICE, is a two-day comic art festival in September at Boston University. It features 200 cartoonists and over two dozen educational programs and workshops. The family-friendly, free event is a chance to talk with creators, listen to authors and take a figure drawing workshop. This grant will help to showcase one or two Finnish cartoonists and their work, and/or hold a presentation about Finnish artist Tove Jansson.





SEEDS OF HOME

"Seeds of Home – Nordic Artists United for the Environment" is a cross-artistic event of music, dance, spoken word and visual arts. Its purpose is to create a community of Nordic creatives in New York, but also to support a handful of small, grassroots operations that work tirelessly to make the city greener, healthier and more naturally diverse – like planting little seeds of Nordic nature in the urban jungle.

FINNFUNN WEEKEND

Cape Ann Finns are hosting the 31st annual FinnFunn New England Weekend, October 27-29, 2023, in Gloucester and Rockport, Massachusetts. It will offer a tour of Cape Ann Finntown, music, theater, cultural presentations, historical talks, crafts, Finnish-connected entertainment, plus funn! The event is in partnership with the year-long Gloucester 400+ anniversary celebration, and represents the Finnish and Finnish-American forebears, whose contributions beginning in the mid-1800s helped shape Cape Ann.

HISTORY

PLAQUES FOR FINN CO-OPS

This grant will support the construction and installation of plaques at the entrances to co-op apartment buildings surrounding Sunset Park in Brooklyn, New York. The informational signs commemorate the Finns who constructed those buildings and brought the concept of non-profit cooperative home ownership to the U.S.

FINNTOWN HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

This grant will target exterior repair work to aid in the historic preservation and restoration of the Alku and Alku Toinen co-op apartment buildings in Finntown, and help to establish a website to promote education about the history and legacy of the Alku Housing Cooperatives.

UTOPISTS IN AMERICAS

This grant assists with the first stage of Teuvo Peltoniemi's three-year project, "Finns and Scandinavian Utopists in Americas," which includes an English language book, website and virtual exhibition about Finnish and Scandinavian utopian communities. It involves data collection at FinnFest 2023 and at Midwest universities' archives, Nordic organizations and locations of old Scandinavian utopian communities.





EXHIBITIONS

GLIMMERS ON THE ARCHIPELAGO

This multi-media project traces historic, symbolic and environmental contexts of the Finnish Archipelago using edited field recordings (audio and visual) based on specific geolocations. It offers multiple ways to access the final sound/video compositions via printed material at visitor center locations throughout the archipelago; a 24-hour live broadcast from the archipelago; and a series of images set into a book accompanying a collection of recordings. The purpose is to evoke the watery depths of a timeless human consciousness that is at once specific to the Finnish Archipelago and bound to the earth in general.

RADICALLY MARIMEKKO

This exhibition at the American Swedish Historical Museum in Philadelphia explores the history and innovation of the groundbreaking Marimekko brand, and the cultural influence of Finnish design. For over 70 years, Marimekko has infused art into the clothes and interiors of everyday life. "Radically Marimekko" is on view through September 24, 2023.

SAUNA CULTURE

Nordic Northwest in Portland, Oregon will create the "Sauna in Life: Sauna Culture in Finland" exhibit and related events to introduce the traditions of the Finnish sauna, and convey that from the start of life to final days, saunas have been integral to culture in Finland.

THEATER

TRANSLATION OF A FINNISH PLAY

Nina Sallinen will translate Finnish playwright Minna Koskela's play *Exän uus ja vanha* into English, and stage it at The Road Theatre in Los Angeles.

THE DECIDING VOTE

Lanes Coven, a professional theater company in Gloucester, Massachusetts, will present this one-act play at FinnFunn Weekend in October. *The Deciding Vote* is an entertaining story about John Morton, who was of Finnish descent and was the final Founding Father to cast an "aye" vote to enact the Declaration of Independence.





COMEDY

ISMO ON TOUR

Comedian Ismo Leikola (left) and opening act Miska Kajanus will perform their stand-up comedy in Finnish-American communities of the northeastern U.S.



RESEARCH

LANGUAGE IN FINNISH AMERICA

Kayleigh Karinen will critically analyze the contemporary language-related attitudes and ideologies of Finnish heritage communities across the Upper Midwest. Through her work, she wishes to raise discussion and awareness about Finnish-American heritage, culture and language use. This includes attending FinnFest 2023 and visiting communities to speak with Finnish-Americans of all ages.

AMERICA'S FIRST FINNS

Researcher/writer/preservationist Frank Eld will conduct primary source research of the log construction techniques and functions of Finnish savusaunas and savutupas, and learn about natural healing and spiritual culture surrounding the sauna. It will include research in Finland and the settlements of Sweden and Norway where the Forest Finns' migration to America originated.

FINLAND HOUSE PROJECT

The Minnesota Finnish community is creating community fundraising events towards eventually having an actual physical building, where Americans and Finns can come together to enjoy events for all ages and learn about the wonderful culture, arts and the community of Finland.

EDUCATION

FILM STUDIES

Maria Voltaine will utilize this grant to support her studies for the UCLA Film School Extension producing certificate.

PRESERVATION

LINDGREN CABIN

Finlandia FoundationColumbia-Pacific Chapter will make necessary repairs to the historic Lindgren Cabin at Cullaby Lake County Park in Oregon (background photo). The chapter will use the grant to rent equipment, purchase materials and make improvements to the ax-hewn log house it calls "a marvel of forest carpentering."



FFN AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS FOR THE 67TH YEAR!

By Pirjo Kujansuu Schulbach

In this 67th year of Finlandia Foundation National's Scholarship Program, we received 59 general scholarship applications and five legal scholarship applications. In early April, the FFN Scholarship Committee and FFN Board of Trustees voted to award a total of \$66,000 in scholarships to 29 recipients. Students will receive individual scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$3,000 for the 2023-2024 school year beginning in fall.

FFN is proud to introduce the scholarship recipients. Six are American citizens, six are Finnish citizens and 17 are dual U.S./Finnish citizens. Many are FFN members. They are talented individuals majoring in a wide variety of fields including acting, biomedical engineering, business, criminal law, graphic design, international law, mechanical engineering, music, neuroscience, nursing, physics and teaching.

Congratulations to the 2023 FFN Scholarship recipients!

The application deadline for the 2024-2025 academic year is February 1, 2024.

P. J. C. Lindfors Legal Scholarships

Pertti Lindfors, a Finnish-American attorney in San Francisco, started the P. J. C. Lindfors Legal Scholarship Fund to encourage cross-cultural study and understanding by law students in the U.S. and Finland. Sadly, he passed away in November 2022 (see page 20). FFN sends its sympathy to his family and sincerely thanks Mr. Lindfors for his generosity.

The next application deadline for P. J. C. Lindfors Legal Scholarships is October 1, 2023. Please note the amended application requirements for Finnish citizens.

Scholarship information and applications are available at FinlandiaFoundation.org.

Are you a past FFN scholarship winner? If yes, we would like to connect with you and hear how your career is going. Please email us at office@finlandiafoundation.org. We encourage current, future and past scholarship recipients to participate in FFN chapter and Young Leaders Board activities, and keep in contact with FFN.

To support FFN's Scholarship program for future generations, see FinlandiaFoundation.org.

The FFN Scholarship Committee is chaired by Pirjo Kujansuu Schulbach with committee members Satu Lehto, Mikko McFeely, Turto Turtiainen and FFN trustees Ellen Harju and Hanna Wagner.

We highlight committee member Dr. Turto Turtiainen, who has served 10 years on the Scholarship Committee. His contributions to the program have been invaluable. We appreciate his dedication to the work and more importantly, to the Finnish-American, Finnish and American communities. Thank you, Dr. Turtiainen.



Jero Adams has a passion for business and is a finance major at Bentley University in Waltham, Massachusetts. Born in Finland and living in the U.S., he feels his multicultural background is a great strength. His current goal is to earn a Master of Science in Finance simultaneously with his undergraduate degree through the Bentley Advanced Standing in Finance program.

Lidia Bridges is a citizen of Finland and the U.S. She has maintained a 4.0 GPA throughout her freshman year at Loyola University, Baltimore. Lidia's course of study is business sustainability management and marketing, and her dream is to pursue a career in the business field. Lidia has a rigorous exercise and body building schedule and works at Merritt Athletic Club to help cover the costs of her education.





Vermont **Sophie Bujold** is pursuing a master's degree in Global Politics and Communication at the University of Helsinki. With Finland's new status as a NATO member, she is planning to write her master's thesis on U.S.-Finnish relations. She recently started work as a communications and engagement trainee at Nokia. Finland is her favorite place in the world, and she is determined to one day speak Finnish fluently.

Suvi Chisholm is a graduate student pursuing her MEd degree in school counseling at Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling in Portland, Oregon. Raised in a bilingual home, the Finnish language, culture and customs have shaped her identity and values as a first-generation Finnish-American. Suvi looks forward to bringing more multicultural awareness to the American public education system and supporting students of diverse backgrounds.



Emmi Sofia Fain, a student at Lone Star College in Houston, is working toward a bachelor's in art in graphic design. Emmi has always loved art and has proven to have a great talent for drawing, painting and ceramics. She also enjoys music, traveling with friends and visiting her family in Finland. Emmi lives in Houston with her older brother Lucas and mother Tiina.

Steffen Fallini's parents instilled the values of cultural inclusivity and perseverance into the curious mind of an American boy with the heart of a Finn. After obtaining concurrent bachelor's degrees in biomedical sciences and business management at Barrett, The Honors College at Arizona State University, Steffen will pursue his lifelong dream in medical school, with his sights set on becoming a transformative, inspirational physician with influence throughout the world.



Heidi Honkavuori Harlor was born in Rovaniemi, Finland. At 19, she moved to the United Kingdom to become a fashion designer. In the U.S., she worked for brands such as Abercrombie & Fitch and Nixon for over 20 years. However, Heidi felt the need to move from fashion to compassion. She is currently in an accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at California State San Marcos, and her new goal is to become a cardiac nurse practitioner.

Eetu Jaakkola was born in Finland and lived there until age seven, when his family moved to San Diego for work reasons. He is a sophomore studying computer science at California State University Long Beach. After earning his bachelor's degree in the U.S., he hopes to get into a master's program in Finland.



Salla Myungshik Kim is a Ph.D. candidate in Biomedical Engineering at UC Irvine, where her work focuses on using computational modeling to investigate cardiac mechanics in preterm birth. She is a USFS figure skater with international competition experience, and a writer for the syndicated radio science minute, "Loh Down on Science." After earning her doctorate, she hopes to continue to contribute to the development of cardiovascular technology and disease prevention by applying her mathematical modeling, engineering and science communication skills. As a dual citizen, Salla visits Finland annually.



Zachary Landers studies physics and Eurasian studies at Western Washington University. He is a board member of the Bellingham chapter of Finlandia Foundation. Zachary spent a year going to Finnish high school (lukio) in Vihti municipality, and maintains connections to Finland. He hopes to attend graduate school or conduct Ph.D. studies in Finland in the field of physics.



Wilhelmiina Lappi is studying to earn a BFA in acting at New York Film Academy in Los Angeles. She was born in the small town of Toholampi, Finland. Growing up on a farm led her to be a curious and imaginative kid who wanted to be an actress. Wilhelmiina is thankful for all the help she has gotten from friends, teachers and family. In the future, she wishes to work both in Finland and the U.S.



Charlotte Loukola is a dual citizen of the U.S. and Finland, where she completed high school. She is doing her master's studies at The Juilliard School with Professor Masao Kawasaki. Her major is violin performance, and she's pursuing a minor in Baroque violin. Charlotte has placed in multiple international competitions, including solo and chamber music. She achieved bachelor's of music degrees at both the Cleveland Institute of Music and Sibelius Academy.



Gideon Hakkarainen Lung is an Ålander-American who is based between New York and Helsinki. He recently graduated from New York University with his bachelor's in international relations, and is now furthering his studies with a master's in Global Politics and Communications at the University of Helsinki. He will pursue a career in international journalism or diplomacy. Gideon's academic focus examines how AI-derived social media algorithms spread and reinforce ethnocentric categorizations in the Nordic context.





Kaisa Mackey is attending SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, where she is majoring in forest ecosystem science. When she was younger, Kaisa visited family in Finland, and is now interested in returning as an adult and learning about sustainable natural resource management practices and ethics in Finland.

Akseli Mende, born in Portland, Oregon, started playing the violin at age seven before later switching to the viola. Chamber and orchestral music have long fueled Akseli's growth and enthusiasm, ultimately leading to the pursuit of a career in music. Akseli spent his junior year of high school in Finland living with his grandmother, where he trained for javelin throwing and played viola. Akseli will continue his studies as a sophomore at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. *Aune E. Koski Scholarship recipient*



Isabella Piritta Morrill, a dual citizen of Finland and the U.S., studies music composition at Western Oregon University. She is an award-winning composer for band and orchestra music, and is pursuing a full time career in writing and publishing performance music. Isabella loves to write music inspired by Finnish folk music, in an effort to spread the beauty of Finland in the arts community. She also is a worship leader and loves to paint, write and spend time outdoors.

Riia Pulakka was born and raised in Nokia, Finland. Her ambitions are to explore, feel, create, learn and keep growing. Riia's dream is to leave her mark on the world through children and art. She graduated from CUNY Hunter College with a BA in early childhood education and a BA in dance, and is starting the TESOL (Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages) master's program this fall.



Zach Risseeuw is a Finnish-American junior majoring in business analytics at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. His mom was born in Helsinki, and he and his sister have traveled to Finland with her almost every summer of his life, to visit family and his maternal grandparents' summer cottage on Lake Pyhäjärvi. He is a member of the board of Finlandia Foundation National Capital Chapter and manages its Instagram account.

Paavo Rundman is a student at St. Olaf College studying music and film. He grew up in Minnesota, playing folk songs on the violin, eating pannukakku in the winter, taking saunas in the basement and learning about his Nordic heritage. Last summer, he visited Finland with his family, playing music and touring familial hometowns. He's interested in pursuing music and visual art, with his taste in both directly influenced by his experiences with Finnish culture.





Joel Ruotsalainen is a double degree student at Lappeenranta University of Technology and HEBUT, pursuing a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering. He has diverse interests such as learning new languages, exploring emerging consumer technology and industrial design. He is also an avid fan of music, football and motorsports, especially Formula 1. Joel enjoys challenging himself to learn new things, as he believes it keeps him motivated and helps him grow as a person.

Kira Ruotsalainen is pursuing a bachelor's degree in international business at LAB University of Applied Sciences in Lappeenranta, Finland. Currently, she is focusing on business finances and marketing. As a former varsity lacrosse athlete, Kira finds pleasure in an active lifestyle. This includes going to the gym, ice skating and exploring the outdoors. She also enjoys socializing with friends, cooking and participating in student events.



Josefin Silén is one of the leading young actresses in Finland. Her theatre credits include leading roles in musicals such as *Mary Poppins*, *Grease*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *Love Never Dies*. She is also an established singer and songwriter. In the fall of 2023, she'll start her master's studies in writing and design for musical theatre at Berklee College of Music in New York. She is the first Finnish student to be accepted to the program.

Vivian Stolt is a Finnish professional violinist, law school graduate and young professional in the field of arts administration. She currently studies in the arts administration MA program at Teachers College, Columbia University, and holds degrees from the Sibelius Academy of the Arts University of Helsinki and Tilburg Law School. As a professional, she has worked as the executive director of several Finnish classical music festivals.



Ossi Tanner is an award-winning Finnish concert pianist. He is pursuing his master's degree at the Manhattan School of Music. He has worked as a soloist with all leading symphony orchestras in Finland, with musicians such as Susanna Mälkki, Klaus Mäkelä, Hannu Lintu, the Brentano Quartet and Joshua Weilerstein.

Christa Tuominen is pursuing her bachelor's degree in sustainability at the University of California, Riverside. Possessed with a passion for helping others and the environment, she wishes to help communities that are the most affected by climate change. She works at her university's communal farm in harvesting produce and learning the ins-and-outs of agricultural work. In the near future, Christa hopes to secure a position as a sustainability consultant with NGOs.





Elisa Tuominen is half Finnish and half American and is a fluent Finnish speaker. She spends summers at her family cabin outside of Oulu, Finland, and greatly enjoys her time studying and learning the Finnish language and baking Karelian pies with her grandmother. At the University of Wisconsin – Madison, Elisa is pursuing a double major in finance and international business with a certificate in Scandinavian Studies.

Jillyn Turunen is from Glendora, California, and graduated in 2023 from the University of Chicago with a Bachelor of Arts in neuroscience. In the fall, she will begin working toward her MD and Ph.D. as part of Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine's Medical Scientist Training Program. Her research focus will be malignant tumors of the central nervous system. Jillyn's goal is to be a neurosurgeon-scientist with a focus on oncology.



LINDFORS SCHOLARS



Logan Sunnarborg is studying international law at the University of Helsinki in the Master of Global Governance Law program. He hails from the Midwest, and earned his bachelor's degree from Missouri State University. Logan wants to work in international affairs or within international organizations. He has a passion for U.S.-Finnish affairs, which stems from his personal connection, as his great-grandparents immigrated to the U.S. from Finland, and he now lives in Finland.

Arttu Valkealahti has been accepted as an international exchange student for the fall of 2023 at the Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University on Long Island. Arttu is a fifth year student from the University of Helsinki. He appreciates the unique opportunity to study law in New York and deepen his academic knowledge. He also looks forward to getting to know American culture and people better, and sharing Finnish culture.



ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

In 1956, Finlandia Foundation established its first program, a scholarship fund dedicated to music students in the United States and Finland. It was named for the organization's first Patron, Jean Sibelius. FFN awarded the inaugural Sibelius Scholarship to Einojuhani Rautavaara, a student at the Sibelius Academy who applied his funds toward study at The Juilliard Academy in New York City. Rautavaara (1928- 2016) would go on to become one of Finland's most important composers. Until 1991, only music students were eligible for FFN scholarships.

Since then, students in any field of undergraduate or graduate study at an accredited American or Finnish college or university may apply. In addition, American and Finnish law students in the U.S. and Finland may apply for scholarships from the P.J.C. Lindfors Legal Studies Fund.

THE LINDFORS LEGACY

By Tommy Flanagan



FFN owes its success to decades of dedicated individuals. Pertti Lindfors was one of these people. He passed away in November 2022 in his native San Francisco at age 99, but the Lindfors legacy lives strong in the memories of his family and FFN, and through the P.J.C. Lindfors Legal Scholarship. I had the honor of speaking with his daughter, Karen Lindfors, about her father.

Patriotism, his love of his Finnish culture and education defined Pertti. His father, Jarl, came to the United States in the early 1900s and became a naturalized citizen in Nome, Alaska. Both of his parents were Finnish-Americans; being Finnish was nothing to shy away from in the Lindfors family. When he was nine years old, his mother took Pertti and his siblings to Finland, where they lived for a couple of years. In that time, Pertti learned the language and connected to the culture in a way that would become a part of who he was throughout his life.

Karen explained how much the U.S. meant to her father, and that service and education were central to Pertti's character. After graduating high school in Alameda, California, he began his college studies at Cal Berkeley. WWII interrupted, and Pertti was called into service. After finishing his law degree, he answered the call to service again in 1953 and was the CIA chief of station in Matsu, an island between Taiwan and China. His service also included 20 years in the Army reserves.

Pertti served Finland, too. In 1956, he returned to California to start his law practice, and the following year became Honorary Vice-Consul of Finland in San Francisco, gradually taking over for his father, who served as Consul for 40 years. Karen recounted one of her father's most memorable moments in that role came when he planned the San Francisco visit and dinner for President Urho Kekkonen in 1961. A young child then, Karen remembers that visit.

Several of the Nordic consulates in the Bay Area enlisted Pertti as their attorney, and it was a role he performed with pride. He had special memories of Thorvald Stoltenberg, the Norwegian Vice-Consul in the early 1960s, and watching his son, Jens, run along the beach. Karen noted with a smile her father's comment about those memories when one day they saw Jens Stoltenberg, now Secretary General of NATO, on TV. She can only imagine how excited Pertti would have been to see Finland, a country he loved so deeply, join NATO.

Pertti also served Finlandia Foundation National, on the board of trustees from 1962-82, and by starting and endowing the Lindfors legal scholarship through FFN. Karen reverently remembers that education was central to her father. By establishing this scholarship fund, Pertti gave back in the name of both his Finnish-American and his educational legacies by creating academic connections with Finland for the next generation.

FFN is thankful for Pertti and his decades of contributions to his country, to his family, to Finland and to this organization. We remember him fondly.



As we embark on our second

year as a group, the FFN Young Leaders Board (YLB) has spent the first few months of 2023 focused on strategizing about our short- and long-term goals and setting future iterations of the board up for success.

A major part of these efforts is our continued collaboration with the Finnish Embassy in Washington, D.C. We successfully hosted our fourth event in partnership with the Embassy in February, a virtual panel on gender and equality in the Finnish film industry. Moving forward, we plan to host two events per year (one in-person and one virtual) in association with the Embassy. We're excited about the

YOUNG LEADERS BOARD LOOKS AHEAD

By Lauren Tuiskula

opportunity to delve into a range of topics of interest to the young Finnish-American community and beyond.

In March, the YLB met in Seattle for our inaugural winter retreat. It was an energizing, productive gathering during which YLB members discussed plans for the year ahead, outlined the group's long-term goals and visited various Nordic cultural institutions in the greater Seattle area. Highlights included an informative and inspiring visit to the National Nordic Museum followed by lunch at Scandinavian Specialties, a store that's provided Nordic goods to the Pacific Northwest for over 60 years.

"Having the chance to actually meet in person as a group was so beneficial and fun," FFN Executive Director and YLB member Tommy Flanagan said of

the retreat. "Seattle was also the perfect spot for us to meet – the Nordic connection in the Pacific Northwest is strong and visible."

Looking ahead, the remainder of 2023 promises to be incredibly formative for the YLB. We plan to bolster our LinkedIn group (Finnish American Professional Network) with the goal of fostering community and spreading awareness about professional opportunities within and related to Finland.

We're also excited to announce that we'll be launching the first-ever application period for new YLB members this summer – stay tuned for more information soon. We look forward to reviewing applications and meeting folks interested in helping Finlandia Foundation National continue to build on the past while bridging to the future.



YLB at the Nordic Museum (from left): Anya Peck, Tommy Flanagan, Lauren Tuiskula and Mikko McFeely

Welcome to The Nordic Museum

The Nordic Museum celebrates the cultural legacies of five Nordic nations—Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. These northern states form a distinctive regional environment—a vast expanse of land, sparsely populated and largely isolated by water—that, over the course of history, became a gateway for exploration and discovery. The story spans centuries, from prehistoric migrations to Viking adventures to modern-day challenges. Emigration from this region brought millions of Nordic settlers to America and the Pacific Northwest. **21** Write you to embark on a journey through this extraordinary saga

Finnposium



president of the Finnish American Heritage Society of Canterbury, Connecticut. Their special vodka-based cocktails are tasty any time of year.

New Finnposium programs in the last few months:

HOLIDAYS 2022: Seasonal musical greetings feature favorite Christmas songs from soprano Maria Männistö and the Finnish Choral Society of Seattle; a Christmas concert from Finland by cellist Jussi Makkonen, pianist Nazig Azezian and the Allegro Piccolo vocal ensemble; and New Year tunes by FFN Performers of the Year Ida Metsberg (2023) and Eepi Ursin (2022).

KOSKENKORVA VODKA CHEER

FFN and Koskenkorva, Finland's award-winning Vodka From A Village, teamed up to present a pre-Valentine's Day mixology session with Global Brand Manager Mikael Karttunen in Finland and Steve Bousquet,

THE BALTIC SEA WEBINAR

The Baltic Sea, NATO's New Inland Sea: A stormy story of nature, identity and culture was presented by Elina Lehtinen of the John Nurminen Foundation. The organization is dedicated to safeguarding the heritage of the Baltic Sea and protecting its future through environmental projects with tangible results. The webinar was co-hosted by Suomi-Seura and Finlandia Foundation National.

These and dozens of other programs are available free of charge, 24/7, 365 days a year at the FFN YouTube channel: youtube.com/c/finlandiafoundationnational.

Upcoming programs will be announced in FFN e-News, social media and website.



POY AND LOY MEET IN FLORIDA

Performer of the Year Ida Metsberg and Lecturer of the Year Suzanne Matson have been on the road to FFN chapters on tours that run through 2023.

In April, they also traveled to Florida (right) and presented a taste of their programs during the FFN 70th anniversary celebration.

Ida (at left), is a native of Finland who lives in New York City. The singer-songwriter plays guitar and performs her original music and some Finnish tunes.

Suzanne is a Boston-based poet



and author of the novel *Ultraviolet*, and professor of creative writing at Boston College. She can conduct a writing workshop to accompany her presentation.

Find booking information at FinlandiaFoundation.org.

FFN SEEKS TALENT FOR 2024

Finlandia Foundation is searching for its next Lecturer of the Year and Performer of the Year. The 2024 terms for both touring programs begin January 1 and run through December 31. Applications for POY are due by September 1, 2023. Applications for LOY are due by October 1, 2023. Information and applications for both of the touring programs can be found at FinlandiaFoundation.org.

What type of programs would you like to see? Suggestions on potential LOY and POY are welcome! Please forward ideas and information to FFN at office@finlandiafoundation.org.

ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Eric Aho, FFN Artist of the Year, has been in the news recently for exhibitions and projects. The New England native lives in Vermont, where he paints the natural world. Eric's work was at EXPO Chicago at Navy Pier and Bates Museum of Art in Maine, and now in Farnsworth Art Museum's *New Voices from Maine in American Art* in Rockland, Maine through 2023. He was also in *Come A Little Closer*, "a large exhibition of small paintings," at DC Moore Gallery in New York City, which represents him.

Eric for years has painted *avanto*, the hole cut in ice for a post-sauna plunge, and he continues to build on the *Ice Cuts* series he started in 2008. In February, he headed to Maine's frozen Keewaydin Lake to recreate a scene painted in 1908 by Marsden Hartley. *The Ice-Hole, Maine*, depicts an ice harvest with the opening in the shape of the letter H. The crew used antique tools to cut a similar H in the thick ice, and afterward the artist created a painting on location. Eric's ice fascination led to his "Vanishing Point" installation, which opened in May at ICEHOUSE Project Space in Connecticut.

Learn more about Eric at ericaho.com





ALASKA

At the **Anchorage Suomi Finland Club**, good food and crafts were on the menu for the Valentine's Day/Ystävänpäivä/Friends Day gathering. In April, the Easter/Pääsiäinen celebration included an egg hunt, painting eggs, decorating Easter branches and a bountiful buffet, followed in May by a combined Vappu and Mother's Day gathering.

ARIZONA

December saw back-to-back events for the **Tucson Finnish American Club**, first with a booth selling Fazer chocolate, salmiakki, knitted goods, pulla and other treats at the Nordic Guild Fair, the club's largest fundraiser. Then, everyone got into the holiday spirit at the December 10 dinner and program featuring Christmas carols and a presentation about traditional Finnish foods.

CALIFORNIA

The **Los Angeles Finlandia Foundation** maintains the collection of 19th century artifacts from Finland at the Finnish Folk Art Museum in Pasadena. It's housed in the tupa, which was a guest house and sauna on the grounds of the Fenyes Mansion, the home of Yrjö and Leonora Paloheimo. LAFF participates in the annual Museums of the Arroyo Day in May, and Pasadena's birthday celebration in June, when the tupa is open to the public at no charge.

After a two-year, COVID-caused absence, **San Diego House of Finland** resumed its Christmas tradition of December Nights at Balboa Park. The festivities included food, beverages and a photo op with Santa. HOF was a voting location for the Finnish Parliamentary elections; coffee and pulla were served. This year's HOF Lawn Program was a Vappu celebration featuring FFN





Performer of the Year Ida Metsberg, plus the fun lawn ski race and traditional Finnish foods.

Finlandia Foundation San Francisco Bay Area Chapter organized an event at the San Francisco Symphony conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen. Members of **Finlandia Foundation Sacramento**, the **Finnish Heritage Society** and FFN Executive Director Tommy Flanagan also attended. Refreshments and a meet and greet with the maestro followed the February 26 concert.

The **Bay Area** chapter held a mini-market at the **Finnish Heritage Society's** Vappu on April 30 at Berkeley Finnish Hall. The family-friendly fun featured local musicians and visiting Finnish guitar artist Henri Aalto, readings of a Vappu poem and stories, and a buffet meal.

CONNECTICUT

Finnish American Heritage Society of Canterbury is buzzing with activity, from pulla sales and a pannukakku breakfast to "Karjalanpiirakka 101," this year's Culinary Delights event. Chaired by Patti Folsom and Minna Waters (right), there was a lesson on making the popular rice-filled rye pie topped with egg butter, followed by a sampling of the tasty pastry. Volunteers are also hard at work sprucing up the FAHS hall and constructing the pit for the annual Chicken BBQ.



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The March 17 annual **Finlandia Foundation National Capital Chapter** Kalevala Day Celebration at the Embassy of Finland featured FFN Performer of the Year Ida Metsberg, dinner and a silent auction (above left). Ambassador Mikko Hautala and Mrs. Heli Hautala attend the event, which was enjoyed by FFNCC members and friends, members of the American Scandinavian Association, Finn Spark and the International Club of Washington. **Photo by Dave Jennings**



FLORIDA

Finlandia Foundation Florida Chapter celebrated The Roaring 20s at its November gala, a fundraiser for scholarships and programs. Many guests dressed for the occasion, and enjoyed a variety of entertainment including a surprise number by singer Eino Grön and Terhi Miikki-Broersma on her accordion.

Consul General of New York, Ambassador Jarmo Sareva, was the keynote speaker at the annual FFFC meeting in February. Floridan Laulumiehet singers, led by Raimo Sirklä, and pianist Mackenzie Melemed performed for the audience of about 150 people.

FinnsConnect of South Florida gathered a group of



hockey fans to see

Finnish Florida Panthers, Aleksander Barkov (above) and Anton Lundell, beat Patrik Laine and the Columbus Blue Jackets at December's Finnish Heritage Night.

MASSACHUSETTS

Cape Ann Finns have been planning for FinnFunn Weekend, October 27-29, 2023 in Gloucester and Rockport as part of the Gloucester 400+ anniversary celebration. It will feature a program of culture, heritage and modern topics, and music, theater, film, dance and more. FinnFunn is just one of a series of Gloucester 400+ projects CAF has participated in, all designed to share knowledge of the area's Finnish roots, which date to the mid-1800s.

2023 FinnFunn Planning Committee, left to right: Rob Ranta, Ray Hildonen, Elana Pistenmaa Brink, Nikki Korkatti, Fred Peterson, Barbara Greel Sachs and Valerie I. Nelson. Not pictured: Anne Thompson Freiss, Dona Kaihlanen Shea and Wayne Soini.

Lecturer of the Year Suzanne Matson read from her works and talked about telling family stories in a March appearance at the Scandinavian Cultural Center in Newton, hosted by **Finlandia Foundation Boston**. Those in attendance also shared stories of their Finnishness.

OHIO

The **Finnish American Heritage Association of Ashtabula** opens its museum to the public on summer Saturdays. The log structure is on the site of Sovinto Hall, which was built in 1897. Annual chapter events





include a Juhannus potluck and Fish Fry in August.

In Fairport, the **Finnish Heritage Museum** was refreshed and some renovations done including painting, new flooring and caulking and repairing windows. The 14-foot-tall "Spirit of Finland" sculpture gleams in front of the museum, which opened in 2007 in a renovated municipal building that dates to the 1920s.

NORTH DAKOTA

The Red River Finns, with the Nordic Culture Clubs, co-hosted a Coffee & Cocoa event for February's Frostival, a celebration of winter in Fargo. The group held a Sauna Festival on April 1 at the Plains Art Museum in Fargo. There was a mobile sauna outdoors and inside the museum visitors enjoyed complimentary coffee and Finnish baked goods, as well as a display of sauna and Finnish items. Chapter member Eric Carlson shared tips on how to



Member Eric Carlson and Ellen Liddle, chair of the North Dakota/Minnesota Red River Finns

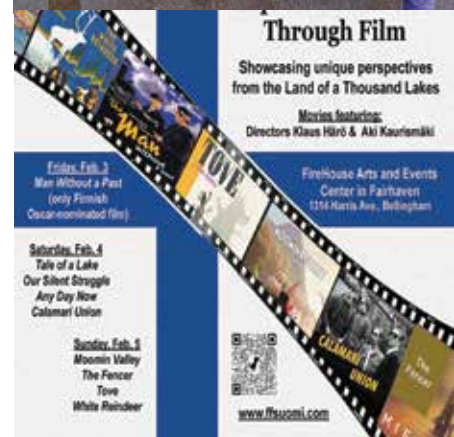
sauna like a Finn. In June, Red River Finns will again participate in the Scandinavian Hjemkomst Festival in Moorhead, Minnesota.

WASHINGTON

Handcrafted gifts, holiday items and imports filled vendor tables at the **Finnish-American Folk Festival of Naselle** Christmas Bazaar. In March, the group held its first annual St. Urho's Day 5k Fun Run. Henri Aalto, billed as Finland's top lead guitarist, performed at the Naselle Community Center in April.

The **Finlandia Foundation Suomi Chapter** produced a successful inaugural film festival, February 3-5 in the Bellingham area. Hanna Winter organized the ambitious program, which drew about 250 movie fans to "Experience Finland Through Film." The Friday evening opening reception and screening of *The Man Without a Past* were followed by two full days of movie-watching, from family-friendly *Moominsummer Madness* to documentaries, comedies and dramas. Dr. Andy Nestingen, University of Washington Scandinavian Studies chair and professor, spoke about the global phenomenon of the Moomins.

FFSC also co-hosted the Vappu Celebration of Spring Concert at the National Nordic Museum in Seattle.



NATIONAL SAUNA WEEK

Finlandia Foundation's National Sauna Week 2023 featured an original online, live program every day of the second annual event, February 19-25. The celebration of the traditional Finnish sauna also included recorded programming and events hosted by chapters from Massachusetts to California.

The informative and entertaining programs are available at the FFN YouTube channel:

- **Finnish Sauna Culture** with Saija Silen, chair of the Sauna Culture Association and Sauna Village of Jämsä, Finland
- **Why Do Americans Compromise on Sauna Quality?** A panel of sauna advocates on the authentic sauna: Eero Kilpi, Christopher Rice, Sam Wacha and Scott Räisänen
- **Spirit(s) of the Sauna:** Seen and Unseen Beings in Finnish Folklore with Hilary-Joy Virtanen, folklorist
- **Book Talk with Katja Pantzar**, author of *Everyday Sisu* and *The Finnish Way*
- **Finland's Sauna Diplomacy** with Pasi Rajala, press counselor at the Finnish Embassy in the U.S. and host of the D.C. Sauna Society
- **The Public Sauna in the USA** with Justin Juntunen, founder and CEO of Cedar & Stone Nordic Sauna in Duluth
- **A Chat with Jasper Pääkkönen**, the Finnish actor and co-founder of Löyly sauna and restaurant in Helsinki

In addition:

- Chef Mikko of Washington, D.C. created three recipes appropriate for sauna days---or anytime. The recipes are at the FFN website.
- Actor, comedian and filmmaker Miska Kajanus and actress Nina Sallinen chat with Eeva Väänänen Moore, who has written about sauna, and Kari Passi, who for 25 years owned a sauna that was popular with Hollywood stars and film industry personnel.
- Coral French of Maryland was thrilled to win the "Just Add Sauna" Instagram contest. Many thanks to Finnstyle for contributing to the prize package of two Marimekko robes and sauna supplies.

"We had great interest and participation in Sauna Week," says FFN President Anne-Mari Paster. "We built on the success of last year's inaugural event, offered a variety of really interesting subjects and were privileged to have the involvement of experts in their fields." FFN again offered mini-grants of up to \$300 to chapters hosting events during National Sauna Week, and nine groups participated:

CALIFORNIA: Finnish American Home Association in Sonoma hosted a day of hot sauna and ice cold pool, with live music, pea soup, laskiaispulla and makkara, a *Kalevala* presentation and a visit from saunatonnttu.



AUNA WEEK



ILLINOIS: **Finnish-American Society of the Midwest** hosted a multi-dimensional event: sauna, pulla-baking demonstration and makkara roast.

MASSACHUSETTS: **Finlandia Foundation Boston** and **Cape Ann Finns** both had the mobile Abundance Sauna visit, each for two days.

MICHIGAN: **Finnish Theme Committee – Copper Country Chapter** in Hancock produced a video by Kristin Ojaniemi on the significance of sauna culture in the Upper Peninsula, featuring Jim Kurtti and his century-old sauna, which he restored.

MINNESOTA: Justin Juntunen of Cedar + Stone Sauna in Duluth was the guest speaker at the monthly meeting of **Finnish Americans and Friends of Hibbing**.

Finlandia Foundation Northland's grant helped sponsor an hour-long program with interviews about sauna and a number of sauna songs produced by Tim Winker, a DJ with public radio in Duluth. The program can be accessed at the FFN website.

NEW YORK: **Finger Lakes Finns** hosted a program featuring sauna videos from the FFN YouTube channel, and had a discussion and stories about sauna from the local Finnish community. Their grant paid for advertising the event to the public.

UTAH: **Finlandia Foundation Utah** had a sauna party for students from the advanced Finnish class at Brigham Young University, with authentic vihtas and refreshments.

Mark your calendar for National Sauna Week 2024, February 18-24, and visit the FFN website for sauna-related information and links to sauna week programs: FinlandiaFoundation.org/national-sauna-week/

CALIFORNIA

Saunatonnttu visited the Finnish American Home Association Sauna Festival.

ILLINOIS

Shari Mustonen Johnson demonstrated her family's pulla recipe, and sent participants home with a loaf of the traditional bread.

MASSACHUSETTS

Abundance Sauna enjoyed sold out sessions in Lanesville and Newton, where Tuija Vainio boasts a Got Sauna hat and appropriate tee-shirt.



FFN ANNUAL B

While families and students were in Florida for spring break, Finlandia Foundation trustees headed to the Sunshine State for their annual board meeting in Boynton Beach on April 1. Also participating were Executive Director Tommy Flanagan and Lauren Tuiskula, representing the FFN Young Leaders Board.

On Friday, prior to Saturday's general session, there was a special meeting of the task force that is working on the acquisition of the Finnish American Heritage Center and related cultural assets due to the closing of Finlandia University in Hancock, Michigan.

The board business included the awarding of scholarships and grants, reviewing the status of the budget, fundraising, communications programs and office operations. Also at the meeting, trustees Dirk Schulbach, Tarja Silverman, Päivi Tetri and Michel Wendell were reelected to the board.

FFN Celebrates 70

On January 21, 1953, nine Finnish Americans met at the home of Honorary Consul of Finland for Southern California Yrjö A. Paloheimo and his wife, Leonora Curtin Paloheimo to officially form the Foundation. Its purpose was to "unite all Finland Friends in this country" and support Finnish culture in the United States.

At the trustees meeting in Florida (front row, from left): Dirk Schulbach, Katariina Lehtonen, Betsey Norgard, Hanna Wagner, Jacqueline Harjula, Anne-Mari Paster; (back row) Performer of the Year Ida Metsberg, Lauren Tuiskula, Tommy Flanagan, Tarja Silverman, Teuvo Pulkkinen, Päivi Tetri, Peter Makila, Tim Nurvala.



BOARD MEETING

The founders were Otto Collanus, Rev. Omar Halme, Dr. Vaino A. Hoover, Dr. Bennett Kantola, Leonora Paloheimo, Rev. Everett Torkko, Consul Yrjö A. Paloheimo, Suomi Rauhanheimo-Owen and Jaakko Tae.

FFN celebrated this milestone year in Florida, with members of the local Finnish-American community and Lake Worth and Miami-Dade County FFN chapters. On Friday evening FFN was honored by a visit by Deputy General Counsel of New York Keijo Karjalainen as the board and local guests enjoyed the hospitality of Robert and Anneli Ganger at Miradero, their lovely and historic oceanfront home.

The cocktail party was followed by dinner at Benvenuto Restaurant. Harry Manner spoke movingly about how his collection of Finnish war memorabilia that he had started at age 14 became the Price of Freedom Museum that was housed at Suomi Talo in Lantana until last year, when it was installed at Finlandia University. "The purpose of the museum is to remember what our parents and grandparents did to keep Finland Free. Thank you, Finlandia Foundation, for saving it."

The Saturday evening reception was attended by about 80 guests who enjoyed a sampling of the touring programs by Performer of the Year Ida Metsberg and Lecturer of the Year Suzanne Matson. In addition, Robert Saasto was recognized with the FFN Award of Excellence for his work in Brooklyn's Finntown, and Paul Halme received an Award of Appreciation for his many contributions to Finnish America (see pages 6 and 7).

On Sunday, several board members visited the Suomi Talo. Sirpo Aho shared the organization's history and showed the group through the two main halls, library with 11,000-plus volumes in Finnish, weaving room, artifacts and display of more than 400 coats of arms representing regions and municipalities across Finland.



A MESSAGE FROM THOMAS FLANAGAN



Greetings! Terve kaikille! Hej allihopa!

I am thrilled to join Finlandia Foundation National as the organization's first executive director. With the creation of this position, the Board of Trustees has made a clear statement: FFN is alive and well and has important work to do for the future.

The timing could not be any better. This year, we celebrate 70 years of championing, preserving and promoting Finnish culture in the United States. To say that it is an exciting time to join the team is an understatement!

I am ready to help the organization realize the many priorities and goals ahead of us. In the first couple of months in this role, my interactions with people in the Finnish-American community across the U.S. have been most beneficial, and honestly most fun. Both in person and virtually, I have had countless meaningful moments with members and friends of FFN, from San Diego to Boynton Beach, Florida, and Seattle to New York City.

We all agree that we must reach and engage the next generation of people interested in Finland and Finland in America. To remain relevant for the future, we must work together with universities and young professionals, with cultural enthusiasts and language learners, with other Nordic groups and our local chapters, and many more. This should not be difficult. Nearly every day, Finland makes headlines. From sauna and security to happiness and hockey, people in the U.S. are hearing about Finland.

But we cannot move into the future without recognizing our past. This year, FFN has committed to the largest project in its 70-year history: Saving Finland in America.

The closure of Finlandia University in Hancock, Michigan, is a tragic event for residents in the Upper Midwest and for the entire Finnish-American community. The FFN Board of Trustees decided unanimously to launch an effort to save the culturally and historically rich elements of the archives at the Finnish American Heritage Center. You will hear and read much more about these efforts in the near future.

I look forward to an exciting anniversary year ahead. I look forward to meeting more of you and hearing about your ideas for FFN. I look forward to serving as your executive director and helping to bring Finlandia Foundation National into the future together.

Best regards,

Tommy Flanagan
Executive Director



President Sauli Niinistö and Paul Halme visit at a reception hosted by Finlandia Foundation during FinnFest 2017 in Minneapolis.

Where does Paul see Finlandia Foundation in 20 years?

"I am from a different era," he says, humbly. "I can't guide that for the next generation. But people like to know who they are and where they are from."

He hopes that Finlandia Foundation can be a place where people connect to share their stories and, importantly, discover the stories of others. "You ain't more special than anyone else. And you need to listen sometimes because what you hear will be interesting."



On his father's behalf, Matt Halme accepts Paul Halme's FFN honor.

SIBELIUS ACADEMY + SOIVA



Soiva, the FFN summer camp for instrumental music students that was interrupted by COVID-19, will return as a special workshop during FinnFest USA 2023 in Duluth, Minnesota. Students from Finland's Sibelius Academy will conduct a free, three-hour experience for young people, "Your Body as an Instrument," on Friday and Saturday, July 28 and 29.

In addition, music instructors and post-secondary music students are invited to attend a special, complimentary session about the Finnish music education method on Sunday, July 30.

Find details at FinlandiaFoundation.org.

Honor Loved Ones with a Special Finlandia Foundation Tribute

The names of Finlandia Foundation members and friends below are followed by those they have remembered with a Centennial Honor Gift to FFN. Add the story and photos of your loved ones to the Finlandia Family Tree. For more information or to make an honor gift, visit FinlandiaFoundation.org

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