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THE FINNISH LINE

FINLANDIA FOUNDATION® NATIONAL



HANDS ACROSS THE SEA SINCE 1953

SAVING FINLAND IN AMERICA

Now is the time

ALSO:
ANNOUNCING 2024
LECTURER OF THE YEAR
AND
PERFORMER OF THE YEAR

Major change has been the focus this year at Finlandia Foundation National. The closure of Finlandia University brought with it a changed situation. Although we can't always control what change will be, we can control how we react. The FFN Board of Trustees reacted to Finlandia University's announcement of closure with resolve back in March. The Board unanimously decided to do all it could to preserve the cultural and historic treasures in the archives in Hancock, Michigan. The staff at the Finnish American Heritage Center reacted with an equal amount of dedication. Most impactfully, our supporters, donors, and friends of Finnish America across the United States have been reacting with purpose, helping to fund the mission we must achieve.

Through our Saving Finland in America initiative, we have a goal of raising an initial \$3 million by the end of 2023. This will help us preserve the archives, employ our staff, and purchase the Heritage Center and bookstore buildings, while maintaining all operations. It will also ensure that future generations will have a source from which to learn this part of American history. We must create an endowment to sustain this project well into the future. The goal is ambitious — in fact, it is the largest fundraising effort ever in FFN history. And, we are on track to achieve our goal.

Together, we responded to change and together, we can create change. As this publication arrives in your mailbox, the season of giving will be upon us. We hope you will consider giving to Saving Finland in America — which is giving to the future of Finnish America.

What will not change is our dedication to our mission, which reads, "Finlandia Foundation National has been Fiercely Finnish since 1953; we champion our culture and heritage across the United States by supporting educational opportunities and promoting diverse, relevant and enriching programs." Saving Finland in America falls squarely within this.

At the same time, we must continue to focus on the contemporary connection between modern Finland and Finnish America. We will continue to build our Young Leaders Board, offer online programming for a wide audience, collaborate with our U.S.- and Finland-based partner organizations, and award grants and scholarships to those who are working on Finnish and Finnish-American topics and projects. Your values are surely reflected in this vision. You will read about these opportunities in this edition of *The Finnish Line*.

As we change and progress, we will keep you informed. We are in it together. In this season of giving, we at FFN give thanks for 70 years of support we've received, and for the support we know is yet to come.

Thank you. Kiitos. Tack.
Anne-Mari Paster, President
Tommy Flanagan, Executive Director

2 Cover: Detail of a Finnish American Folk School fiber project by Anita Salminen Jain, now in *Legends and Lore*, a holiday installation at the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis.



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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, Tarja Silverman, Lauren Tuiskula.

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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Yrjö Paloheimo didn't use the phrase, but when he envisioned an organization that would "unite all Finland Friends in this country," maintain ties to Finland and encourage Finnish-American culture and traditions, he was talking about "Saving Finland in America."

That has been the 70-year mission of Finlandia Foundation, the leading, independent source of support for Finnish America. We are continually expanding new ways to sustain Finnish culture in the U.S. and cultivate connections and collaborations in Finland. We have grown into a nationwide-network of organizations with thousands of individual members who share a common interest in Finnish America and Finland, and who support our efforts.

But nothing has galvanized and unified the Finnish-American community and — as the founders had hoped, all Friends of Finland — like FFN's Finnish American Heritage Center initiative. Saving Finland in America has received an outpouring of support from across the U.S. and Finland, expressed both in words of encouragement and thanks, and in donations that are essential for its success.

We appreciate your interest, involvement and participation in fulfilling the founders' vision of Saving Finland in America. To give today, please go to FinlandiaFoundation.org or use the enclosed envelope to mail your donation.

Finlandia Foundation fulfills its mission by protecting and preserving Finnish-American history and culture and building ties to contemporary Finland.

The Finnish American Heritage Center is a part of the Keweenaw Historical National Park. FFN is collaborating with Sibelius Academy on projects such as the recent Soiva music program for children at FinnFest 2023 in Duluth. From left, FFN President Anne-Mari Paster, workshop leaders Kata Vuoristo and Artur Uronen of Helsinki, and FFN Executive Director Tommy Flanagan.



WHY I GIVE: Fern Malila

*By Tommy Flanagan
FFN Executive Director*

Hardworking. Passionate. Generous. This is how people would likely describe the character of Fern Malila.

Fern is deeply familiar with Saving Finland in America. Her Finnish roots, in Finland and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, are extensive. With three of her grandparents from Finland and another born to Finnish immigrants, Fern embodies the Finnish-American tradition of the U.P.

Although she has never lived in Finland, when she visited for the first time with her aunt, in 1977, it was almost as if she already knew the place. Since then, she has returned nearly 20 times to her family's origins south of Oulu, in the small town of Maliskylä (hence her name Malila).

Born and raised in Mass City, Michigan, Fern has had a fascinating global career. Trained as a nurse, she spent nearly 22 years traveling the world as a nurse consultant. She was based in the Washington, D.C., area but never felt fully settled there, as she traveled nearly 80% of the time, to Asia, Europe and Australia.

Coming from rural roots,

Fern truly created a unique professional path for herself.

Growing up in a heavily Finnish community, Fern remembers church services were in Finnish, and her parents spoke the language. Although time has faded some traditions, others are engrained in the people and the place, such as certain words widely used, including nisu (or pulla, the cardamom bread) and mojakka (soup or stew).

But it is more than words. I asked Fern what role her "Finnishness" has played in her life. She paused and replied, "What I got from the Finn side of my family, which is also a U.P. thing, is work ethic." She half-jokingly commented that when companies in the Lower Peninsula wanted a job done, they hired people from the U.P., because they knew how to work. One must wonder how the unique Finnishness of the region contributed to that trait.

The announcement of the closure of Finlandia University hit the community hard. It struck Fern, too. Although she had not attended Suomi College/Finlandia, she had family who had served on the board throughout the years, and she had served on the Finnish American

Council. The university was a physical and institutional guardian of the Finnish heritage of the region.

"Sometimes almost losing something makes you realize how valuable it is."

Fern noted that keeping the "Finnish" part of the university through the years had been difficult, but what was there was unique – the connection to language learning, research, culture and exposure. A modern connection.

"We lost a piece of our Finnishness with its closure," Fern remarked pensively about the fate of the more than century-old institution. "It made me realize that I need to do more. Sometimes almost losing something makes you realize how valuable it is."

Fern is right. Finlandia University ceases to exist, however, all is not lost. Through Saving Finland in America, the legacy lives on. FFN's project to preserve the Finnish American Heritage Center, Finnish-

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Photo by JMNiska Photography



Lecturer of the Year Hanna Pylväinen



Beowulf Sheehan Photo credit

By Hilary-Joy Virtanen
Chair, Lecturer of the Year

Finlandia Foundation National is pleased to announce Hanna Pylväinen as the 2024 Lecturer of the Year.

Hanna is the author of *The End of Drum-Time*, a 2023 finalist for the National Book Award for fiction. About her story set in the 1851 world of Sámi reindeer herders, religion, beliefs, faith and love, Anthony Marra, *New York Times* bestselling author says, “Hanna Pylväinen’s novel of cultural collision in the far north is an extraordinary feat of research and imagination...”

Her acclaimed novel *We Sinners* (2012) follows the struggles within a large Finnish family raised in a strictly traditional church, as the children choose their individual paths in modern life.

Educated at Mount Holyoke College and the University of Michigan, Hanna has received several fellowships and residences. She lives in Philadelphia and serves on the faculty of the MFA Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College.

Hanna will offer several program options for FFN chapters related to her works and processes as a writer. For LOY appearances from January through December of 2024, FFN covers round-trip travel costs. Chapters provide an honorarium based on the selected program, as well as local hosting and logistics for the program.

For more information on this program or for booking inquiries, contact Lecturer of the Year Committee Chair Hilary-Joy Virtanen at hilary.virtanen@gmail.com, or go to FinlandiaFoundation.org.

For more about Hanna: hannapylvainen.com

Miska Kajanus is 2024 Performer of the Year



By Katariina Lehtonen
Chair, Performer of the Year

Miska Kajanus, a Finnish-American actor, comedian and filmmaker from Finland and now based in Los Angeles, is Finlandia Foundation’s Performer of the Year for 2024.

Miska’s education is in theater and film. He has appeared on television in *Modern Family* and *Bordertown*, and in numerous Finnish films, TV shows and music videos. Miska has performed with many collaborators, including stand-up comedian Ismo Leikola. He and Ismo contributed a sauna skit to the inaugural FFN National Sauna Week in 2022, and Miska and actress Nina Sallinen hosted a talk show about sauna in 2023.

Miska is looking forward to performing his theatrical one-man show about his journey from Finland to America. It will be in a comedic fashion with some improvisational elements. The reviews about Miska describe his work as “dynamic” and “remarkable.”

FFN chapters can enjoy a versatile and original performer, who will be available for POY appearances from January through December of 2024. FFN pays for travel to the host location, while chapters arrange local hosting and pay his honorarium. More details can be found at FinlandiaFoundation.org.

For more about Miska: miskakajanus.fi

Finnposium

Finnposium, the virtual Finlandia Foundation symposium, offers a variety of programs at the FFN YouTube channel. Catch up or watch again the webinars, concerts, cooking shows and entire line-up of National Sauna Week programs, as well as our new offerings.

The YouTube channel is a valuable means for FFN to share information related to the purchase of the Finnish American Heritage Center in video messages from FFN President Anne-Mari Paster. The *Saving Finland in America* video that earned many compliments at FinnFest 2023 and since, is also available to view.

Our “In Conversation” series of talks with interesting people and topics related to Finland and Finnish-Americans has two recent programs, and we are looking forward to additional new content in the coming months..

Viewing is free of charge, 24/7 at: [YouTube.com@FinlandiaFoundationNational](https://www.youtube.com/@FinlandiaFoundationNational).

AALTO IN BROOKLYN

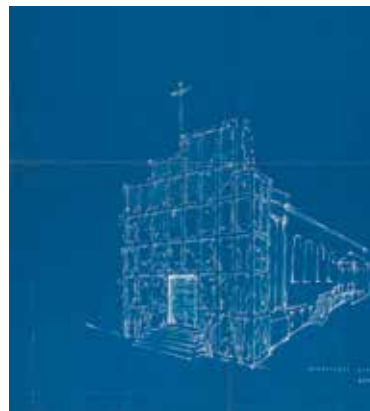
“Lessons from a Forgotten Façade,” a virtual talk with architect and architectural historian Sofia Singler, reveals the story behind original drawings by Finnish architect Alvar Aalto for a church project in Brooklyn, New York’s Finntown in 1947. The plans surfaced some 70 years after they disappeared, and although the project was never realized, the drawings offer another insight into Aalto’s sacred architecture.

U.S. AMBASSADOR ROBERT PENCE

Robert Frank Pence (at center, below) served as U.S. Ambassador to Finland from 2018-2021. He chatted with FFN Executive Director Tommy Flanagan about his diplomatic experiences in a program recorded before an audience at the Goethe-Institut in Washington, D.C.

SAVING FINLAND IN AMERICA

Why is it important to protect and preserve the irreplaceable documents, records, photographs, recordings, publications and art, as well as various programs of the Finnish American Heritage Center? View this short video with comments from people from across Finnish America such as Frank Eld, who are passionate about what we call the “Smithsonian of Finnish America.” There is also a second version that includes the panel discussion that took place at FinnFest USA 2023 in Duluth.



Frank Eld
Finnish Log Construction Expert
Boise, Idaho

New For Sauna Week

FFN invites artists to put on their sauna hats and tap their inspiration – or perspiration – and enter the inaugural poster art contest for the third annual National Sauna Week, February 18-24, 2024.

We are in search of an artistic depiction of the essence of traditional Finnish sauna. It will be used to help build appreciation and understanding of the ancient bathing method.

The competition is open to artists 18 and older, and all media that may be printed as a poster are acceptable. The contest winner will receive \$200 and a copy of the poster. Deadline for entries is December 1, 2023; find details at the FFN website.

There is increased general awareness across the U.S. of traditional Finnish sauna, evidenced by articles about sauna health benefits, design and construction; opening of new public saunas, from permanent to portable and pop-ups; celebrities in the news embracing traditional sauna; and young adults



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discovering sauna for self-care and as a way to socialize.

FFN chapters are tapping that interest and planning activities for their members and others, as a way to reach out in their communities. It’s important to have in-person events across the country to complement the week of online programming hosted by FFN, which offers

chapters mini-grants to assist chapters with their NSW programming.

We are also alerting sauna business owners about sauna week so that they may plan independent events, sales or other ways of promoting traditional sauna.

Learn more about Sauna Week at FinlandiaFoundation.org.

**We are excited to announce poster contest judges
FFN Artist of the Year Eric Aho and Carrie Flaspohler, director/curator of Finlandia Art Gallery**



The Young Leaders Board of Finlandia Foundation National was formed in early 2021 to encourage involvement in, and appreciation of, Finnish America and Finland in the United States, especially among people between the ages of 23 and 35.

YLB is an all-volunteer organization designed to have a rotating membership, so that the perspectives, engagement and activities remain fresh. Earlier this year, FFN put out a call for YLB applicants, and the response was tremendous. We are excited to welcome new members Lexi Brewer, Abi Carlson, Oliver Gardner, Rachel Hamalainen, Anne Junttila, Nate Kilponen-Fix and Ashley Lund. They join Mirva Johnson, Mikko McFeely, Anya Peck and Lauren Tuiskula, and have already had the opportunity to participate in the Young Leaders Forum event at the Embassy of Finland in Washington, D.C.

FFN thanks the departing, founding members of YLB: Tatu Kunto, Julia Paster and Kaija Perkiömäki. Tommy Flanagan, also a founding YLB member, was named FFN Executive Director in February of 2023

From left, above:

Lexi Brewer is a third generation Finnish-American, and graduate of the University of Washington’s Finnish Studies department. A sustainability professional, she is the director of Sustainability at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, and a long-standing member of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission. In her off time, she enjoys volunteering at the Gallucci Community Garden, knitting, Eurovision and introducing her toddler to all things Moomin.

Abi Carlson is a proud “bi-peninsular” Finnish-American from Michigan. A social worker, she is passionate about, and has been involved in, the climate justice movement in her communities, and is an Ambassador for the Community Collaboration on Climate Change. Abi has traveled all over the United States and is excited to bring her love of sustainability and social justice to the YLB. She hopes to fulfill a lifelong dream of going to Finland.

Oliver Gardner was born in Helsinki, and currently lives in Boston, where he is studying at Boston College’s Carroll School of Management. “Finnish culture has always been a major part of my life, whether it be speaking Finnish with my family or attending elementary school in Helsinki.”

Rachel Hamalainen is a New York City-based non-profit executive who specializes in mobilizing philanthropic resources in pursuit of equity and social justice. She works at CCS Fundraising and holds degrees from NYU Wagner and Amherst College.

Anne Junttila is an Education Specialist at Riverbanks Zoo and Garden in Columbia, South Carolina. There, they focus on providing high-quality educational experiences for youth that have lasting impacts on conservation.

Nate Kilponen-Fix is a native of Pittsburgh, with Finnish roots in Michigan’s Keweenaw Peninsula. He is an alumnus of the Jyväskylä School of Business and Economics, and now resides in Jyväskylä. “I am excited to connect with the YLB and take an active responsibility in strengthening our communities.”

Ashley “Aili” Lund is based in Washington, D.C. and works in the U.S. House of Representatives. Aili is from Duluth, Minnesota and grew up attending Salolampi, playing in a youth kantele ensemble and taking part in Finnish-American community events. After graduating from college, she spent a year teaching English and studying Finnish in Finland. Aili serves on the Salolampi Foundation Board of Directors and is honored to join the YLB to help strengthen ties among the younger Finnish-American generations.

Young Leaders Board Grows in Size and Scope

By Lauren Tuiskula
YLB

After kicking off 2023 with an energizing March retreat to Seattle, the Young Leaders Board has spent the last few months executing on the short and long-term goals we outlined during our visit to the Pacific Northwest.

Our 2023 highlights include holding the first-ever YLB application period, onboarding seven new YLB members, reaching over 100 members in our Finnish American Professionals LinkedIn group, and planning our second annual in-person Young Leaders Forum event in collaboration with the Finnish Embassy in Washington, D.C.

The event also allowed new YLB members to meet with returners for a planning and strategy meeting hosted at FFN President Anne-Mari Paster’s home in Virginia. Those in attendance enjoyed generative discussions on their own Finnish-American experiences, a brainstorming session on diverse programming for FFN and planning our goals for the rest of the year and into 2024.

“Getting to meet with other members of the YLB brought about a wonderful opportunity to tie together past, present, and future,” new YLB member Abi Carlson said of the meeting. “I thoroughly enjoyed my time spent and look forward to helping FFN and its members — young and old alike — create a wonderful community.”

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At the recent Embassy event, from left: Lexi Brewer, Abi Carlson, Lauren Tuiskula, Tommy Flanagan, Ambassador Mikko Hautala, Anya Peck, Aili Lund and Sauli Sinisalo of Finland’s Bluefors, who spoke about Finnish quantum tech expertise.

New YLB member Lexi Brewer echoed that sentiment. “It was so wonderful to get to connect with other people my age who share the same knowledge and appreciation for Finnish culture. I am excited for programing coming up and to continue working with this incredible group of people.”

Our trip to the nation’s capital concluded with the aforementioned event hosted at the Embassy titled “Digital Economy and Tomorrow’s Leaders.” It featured presentations from Helsinki Partners and Bluefors, a leading Helsinki-based quantum computing company. A panel discussion with representatives from the engineering, non-profit, government and healthcare sectors, included our very own founding YLB member, Anya Peck.

“Conversation with fellow panelists illuminated how, across our various professional backgrounds and connections to Finland, technology is woven into our daily lives and identities as both consumers and creators, bringing us simultaneously closer and more distant to our cultures and communities,” Anya said of the panel discussion. “Engaging with the next generation of leaders in our audience as they posed questions to panelists left us with topics to continue exploring in future YLB and Embassy of Finland events.”

YLB is thankful to the talented staff at the Embassy who helped make this event possible.

With a mix of energy and fresh ideas from new members and the experience of returning YLBers, we’re eager and excited for what’s to come in the months ahead. Our 2024 goals include planning a YLB-hosted virtual event as part of FFN’s third annual sauna week, sending YLB reps to 2024 FinnFest in Duluth, Minnesota, and organizing more events to highlight the diversity of the Finnish-American community.

The YLB will also focus on engaging with our local chapters, especially with representatives now in Massachusetts, New York, South Carolina, Washington, D.C., Washington state, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin and Finland. We’re feeling energized and excited for the continued work of building on our past while bridging to the future.



SUPPORT FOR SALOLAMPI

“The boys have returned from an amazing two weeks at Salolampi, happy and exhausted! The first thing they asked me when they saw me was, ‘Mom, can we stay longer?’ Definitely a good sign! They have been practicing their new Finnish words at every opportunity and have already been proudly telling friends and family all about their experience.”

According to Marissa, mom of Graham and Ben, her sons and their cousin Henrik had a great time at Salolampi Language Village in the summer of 2023. They received grants from Finlandia Foundation to assist with attendance at the immersive camp for kids in Bemidji, Minnesota.

FFN is again offering financial assistance for the 2024 youth sessions. Find details at FinlandiaFoundation.org.



Let’s create music together!

FFN invites young instrumentalists and singers of any genre and skill level to join us next summer in the Pacific Northwest for a week of music-making and creative expression. This partnership with the Global Music Program at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, seeks to inspire, connect and celebrate the creative voices of young musicians ages 12-17 through songwriting, improvisation, collaboration and more.



Maria Männistö, the multi-talented and well-known, Seattle-based soprano, songwriter, organist, music director and teacher, is working with the FFN Soiva committee to coordinate and plan the NEW Soiva Camp 2024.

Stay tuned to our website, social media and e-newsletters for information.



APPLY NOW FOR GRANTS & SCHOLARSHIPS

Applications are open for 2024 grants as well as scholarships for undergraduate, graduate and law students. Deadlines are January 17, 2024 for grants and February 1, 2024 for scholarships. Applications must be submitted online at the FFN website by 11:59 p.m. (Pacific) on the deadline date. Awards will be announced in spring 2024.

Find complete information and applications at FinlandiaFoundation.org.

GRANTS

Awards of up to \$5,000 have been made available to projects in areas of the arts, history, research, music, events, archival work, historic preservation and more.

When preparing a grant proposal, please note:

- Projects should benefit the general public, not only the applicant or sponsoring organization
- Grants should show evidence or testimony of high cultural, educational, artistic or scientific merit
- Grants are limited to a maximum of \$5,000 per award
- Special consideration is given to projects endorsed or sponsored by an FFN chapter
- Salaries to project staff or employees are not allowable

Richard Ahola
FFN Trustee
Grants Committee Chair

SCHOLARSHIPS

Since 1956, Finlandia Foundation has supported students in the U.S. and Finland through its annual scholarship awards.

Full-time undergraduate and graduate students in any area of academic study enrolled in an accredited post-secondary institution are eligible.

- A minimum 3.0 GPA is required
- Students of Finnish-American heritage receive primary consideration
- Financial need and course of study are considered
- U.S. or Finnish citizenship required

Students are not eligible to receive two consecutive awards from FFN. If you received a scholarship from FFN in 2023 for the 2023-24 school year, you may apply again in 2025 for the 2025-26 school year.

Pirjo Kujansuu Schulbach
Scholarship Committee Chair
FFN member

LINDFORS LEGAL STUDIES AWARDS

By Pirjo Kujansuu Schulbach
Scholarship Committee Chair
FFN member

Finlandia Foundation is pleased to award P.J.C. Lindfors Legal Studies Scholarships to two students who embody the goal of Pertti Lindfors when he created the fund: to encourage cross-cultural study and understanding by American students in Finland, and Finnish students in the U.S.



Salla Järvinen holds a Master of Law degree from the University of Helsinki, with focus on international law and international criminal law. She also graduated from the international law and human rights master's program at Åbo Akademi University. Salla is applying to the New York University School of Law to pursue a Master of Law degree.

Her main area of interest is tax law and its international aspects. She would like to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the U.S. legal system, including both federal and state tax regulations as well as relevant procedural law. Salla aspires to be an international lawyer.

Logan Sunnarborg is an American citizen studying for a master's degree in Global Governance law, and a degree in international and comparative law at the University of Helsinki. 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.



The next application deadline for the Lindfors Law Scholarship is February 1, 2024. Applications must be submitted online at the FFN website by 11:59 p.m. (Pacific) on the deadline date. Awards will be announced in spring 2024.

Find complete information and applications at FinlandiaFoundation.org.

FINNFEST 2023

Finlandia Foundation National enjoyed a busy and productive time at FinnFest USA in Duluth, Minnesota, July 26-30, 2023. Guided tours of area Finnish-American sites preceded the programs based at the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center from Thursday through Sunday. The schedule was packed with informational programming and entertainment, from lectures and panel discussions to films, musical performances, concerts and Sunday church service.

The 40th FinnFest USA opening session featured remarks by Finland's Ambassador to the U.S. Mikko Hautala; the FinnFest USA Choir directed by Maria Männistö; Steven Solkela on accordion; Ameriikan Poijat; Finn Hall band; 2022 FFN Performer of the Year Eepi Ursin, and more!

The always-popular Tori marketplace bustled with crowds enjoying live entertainment, Finnish foods at the café, shopping an array of imported and handcrafted goods, and browsing informational booths like that hosted by FFN. The Tori is open to the public, and attracted many locals and tourists as well as FinnFest registrants.

Finlandia Foundation showed great presence at FinnFest, anchored by a double booth at the Tori, where staff and volunteers from several chapters were kept busy distributing

materials and chatting with a constant stream of visitors. Interest was especially high in the Finnish American Heritage Center and FFN stepping in to preserve and protect it. Countless people stopped by to express thanks and support and share anecdotes about their relationship to Suomi College/Finlandia University and the FAHC and archives.

The highlight for FFN was Friday's soft-launch of the Saving Finland in America initiative. A lunchtime presentation drew a capacity crowd of more than 200, who learned about the status of the FAHC archives and cultural and historical assets. The program featured a short video, panel and audience Q&A.

In collaboration with Helsinki's Sibelius Academy, FFN hosted a fun Soiva music session for children. Anne-Mari Paster and Hilary-Joy Virtanen participated in several programs as either moderator, presenter or panelist, as did numerous past FFN grant and scholarship recipients, Performers and Lecturers of the Year, and past board members.

Finlandia Foundation was recognized as a Hopea (Silver) Sponsor for its many contributions to FinnFest 2023. We look forward to another successful event in Duluth in 2024. Watch for details at [FinnFest.us](https://finnfest.us).



ARIZONA

Finns & Friends of Phoenix greeted May with a Vappu/Valborg party with club members, and members of the Swedish American Chamber of Commerce and Arizona's SWEA (Swedish Women's Educational Association) at The Monastery Mesa, a bar and grill with outdoor area perfect for games of Mölkky and Kubb.



CALIFORNIA

House of Finland San Diego hosted its annual Vappu Day, featuring Performer of the Year Ida Metsberg. There was plenty of food, sima, and the ever-popular skiing on grass.

Los Angeles Finlandia Foundation had a Vampira Day on October 15 at Suomi-Kerho in North Hollywood. The event honored Finnish-American actress Maila Nurmi, the 1950s "Glamour Ghoul" host of horror movies on TV. After a potluck lunch, the group watched a 2006 documentary about Vampira, and enjoyed an "eye of newt" dessert of blueberries and whipped cream.



CONNECTICUT

Finnish American Heritage Society of Canterbury held an Open House in June to welcome visitors to see the historic Finnish Hall and tour the renovated Finnish American Heritage Museum. A new children's corner displays Moomin toys and books and heritage dolls.



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Finlandia Foundation National Capital Chapter set sail on a daytrip aboard the *Kalmar Nyckel*, a replica of the 94-foot tall ship that brought Swedish and Finnish settlers to North America in 1638. A busload of FFNCC members and friends traveled to Wilmington, Delaware, for the May outing. In June, FFNCC and other Nordic organizations in the area jointly celebrated the 58th annual Midsommer picnic, complete with dancing around the Maypole.



ILLINOIS

Finnish American Society of the Midwest had a Christmas in July Finnish cookie making demonstration, allowing plenty of time before the holidays to perfect the technique for the traditional *joulutorttu*, Finnish Christmas star.



MARYLAND

Sounds like **Finlandia Foundation Baltimore** had a Finntastic time at an intimate concert by FFN Performer of the Year Ida Metsberg, hosted at the home of Ruut DeMeo the chapter president. The weather cooperated on the lovely June evening — which is an especially good thing because Ruut moved her grand piano outdoors for the program! FFN Executive Director Tommy Flanagan was happy that he was able to attend the performance, which included music by the talented Ruut.





MASSACHUSETTS

Several members of **Finlandia Foundation Boston** met and mingled with Finland's Minister for Foreign Affairs Pekka Haavisto (center, above) in May. He was in the area to deliver the keynote remarks at Fletcher, the graduate school of global affairs at Tufts University.

The **Finnish Center at Saima Park** continues to host its Finnish language classes, pannukakku breakfasts, yoga, Kesajuhlä summer celebration, concerts, nature walks and classic car cruise. This year, Saima Park also joined the Fitchburg July 4th parade with a sauna float the members built fitting with the parade theme, "Honoring the Past, Inspiring the Future!"



MICHIGAN

Finlandia Foundation Lake Superior Chapter hosted the traditional band Lauhuaika for a Finnish dance in July, followed in August by the annual Finn Fun Day. It's a community event with coffee and pulla and traditional Finnish music by singer Tanja Stanaway (right), Sámi *yoiking* by Aaren Joki, Howard Aalto on a six-sided harmonica and Oscar Forsman playing accordion.



MINNESOTA

Red River Finns, in alliance with the Nordic Cultural Clubs, co-hosted the Scandinavian Festival at the Hjemkomst Center in Moorhead, June 23-24. Finnish programs were FFN Performer of the Year Ida Metsberg (center), cellist Aleks Tengesdahl and Steve Solkela's One-Man Band. There was also a Viking Encampment and plenty of traditional foods to enjoy.

MONTANA

Finnish Family of Kaleva welcomed FFN Executive Director Tommy Flanagan to its Haying Season Supper in July, or Heinäkuu, the month when the crop is cut to feed the cattle over winter. Tommy, a Montana native, returned for the LOY talk by Suzanne Matson. In September, member Claudia Morley led a book study on *The Finnish Way* by Katja Pantzar.



OHIO

Finnish American Heritage Museum in Fairport hosts a series of talks and presentations, many by members and local experts. Recently, Karen Unver (center) of the Wexner Medical Center, spoke about healthcare in Finland and the U.S., and Linda and Heikki Penttilä explained the Finnish "baby box" that has been a universal benefit since the 1940s.



OREGON

Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter, caretaker of the 1920s Lindgren Cabin at Cullaby Lake, north of Portland, received grants from FFN and the Clatsop County Cultural Coalition to repair the roof of the 40'x20' axe-hewn cabin, rebuild the stairs, and other projects. The work crew included Dirk Schulbach, Ray Wikman, Dave Alford, and father-son team Jukka and Adam Perkiömäki.



FFCPC honored longtime volunteer **Pirjo Schulbach** with its Sauna Bucket Award for her decades of commitment to FFCPC and other Finnish and Scandinavian non-profit organizations. One of those volunteer activities is her chairmanship of the FFN scholarship committee. Congratulations, Pirjo on this well-deserved honor!



Suomi Hall in Astoria was bustling on an early October morning as volunteers prepared loads of *laksloda* (*lohilaatikko*). The salmon casserole is a popular annual fundraiser lunch served with the Finnish bread *rieska*, pickled beets and dessert. The group also served prune tarts and rice pudding with fruit sauce at the Scandinavian Midsummer Festival in June.



WASHINGTON

Finnish American Folk Festival of Naselle had a sold-out salmon dinner at its Midsummer celebration that featured a live music performance at the family-friendly event.



70 YEARS AND GROWING STRONG

Talk about a population explosion. For the first 50 years of its existence, Finlandia Foundation operated out of the homes and businesses of its geographically distant, all-volunteer trustees and committee members. From the days of handwritten correspondence and carbon copied typed reports — snail-mailed and eventually faxed cross-country — the FFN of today is unimaginably different than even its forward-thinking founders may have envisioned at their organizing meeting in 1953.

In 2004, FFN hired its first employee and moved into its first (and current) office, located in Pasadena at the site of the founding of Finlandia Foundation. Earlier this year, the organization welcomed its first executive director. With the recent developments at the Finnish American Heritage Center in Hancock, FFN suddenly surged to a team of eight employees who work together via internet, cell phones and online meetings, operating from multiple locations in two states and from the road. And, FFN trustees are still actively involved on a volunteer basis, perhaps now more than ever.

Number of employees and locations:



1953-2004 0

Finlandia Foundation relies on its trustees to house the business and activities of the organization on a volunteer basis

MAY 2004 1

First permanent address, in Pasadena, where the organization was founded, and first paid employee, a fulltime administrative assistant

SEPTEMBER 2012 1.5

Addition of a part-time communications manager, working remotely from Michigan

FEBRUARY 2023 2.5

First executive director hired, a fully remote position

JUNE 2023 8.5

Addition of six employees in Hancock, Michigan

HANCOCK HAPPENINGS

Programs and operations continue at the Finnish American Heritage Center, but with closure of Finlandia University, some adjustments have been made. One example: while most of the artwork and the archival documents and artifacts are housed at the FAHC, some had been stored at another, now-shuttered campus building. This required moving and finding storage space for these treasures at the FAHC.

The good news: *The Finnish American Reporter* is publishing every month, activities are happening, and planning is underway for 2024.

The Finlandia Art Gallery organizes exhibitions featuring contemporary Finnish, Finnish-American and American artists, such as the current *Heading West, Coming Back* (at right). Finnish artist Marjo Levlin utilizes mixed-media to tell the complex story, dreams and realities of late 19th century migration from Finland to the American West. She draws on her own family's experiences generations ago, as some moved in search of a better life. The artist was present for an opening reception and artist talk on September 21. The exhibit closes in January 2024.

The Finnish American Folk School was founded in 2017 to promote knowledge of Finnish folk arts and traditional skills, and ensure that they thrive for generations to come. At the Barks & Willow Symposium in September (below), artists Karen Tembreull and Poppy Hatinger led a well-attended weeklong series of workshops and demonstrations. Projects included gathering willow for constructing garden structures, and creating traditional Finnish birch trays and stars.

Since the 1930s, the **Finnish American Heritage Center historical archive** has collected and preserved items related to all aspects of the Finnish immigrant experience in North America. It is the only archive actively collecting Finnish-American materials, and inquiries and contributions continue to come in.

North Wind Books carries a variety of imported items, Finnish chocolates, apparel, sauna supplies and, of course, books of Finnish and local interest — great for holiday shopping or gifts anytime. The shop, adjacent to FAHC, is open six days a week.

The Price of Freedom Museum was founded in Lantana, Florida by Harry and Ritva Manner, based on Finnish war medals that Harry had obtained as a young man. That interest grew into a collection dedicated to Finland's military history, and includes uniforms, firearms, photographs and documents. In 2022, it found a new home at Finlandia University. FFN looks forward to reopening this one-of-a-kind museum in the near future. Stay tuned for the announcement.



A NEW WEB PRESENCE

The Finlandia University website was the www home of the Finnish American Heritage Center and all of the related programs and facilities now assumed by Finlandia Foundation National. With the dissolution of the Finlandia.edu site, FFN has been working to save the extensive web content of the several entities. The next step will be to build a new web presence that is compatible with FinlandiaFoundation.org, yet retains the distinct FAHC identity.

This work is being done in stages and the transition will take a bit of time, but it will be exciting for FAHC to have a fresh, new look for its bright, new future. Watch for announcement of the launch!

SUBSCRIBE TO THE FINNISH AMERICAN REPORTER

The Finnish American Reporter is a monthly, English-language journal with articles and news of interest to Finns across North America, in Finland and around the world. Established in 1986, it is the largest and most widely-circulated newspaper for Finns in North America.

The publication features columnists and informative stories about current events, history, genealogy, sports and more. It's also an opportunity for businesses and individuals to reach a targeted audience through their paid advertising. FAR keeps the Finnish community connected across the miles.

In recognition of its valuable contributions to Finnish America, Finlandia Foundation presented *The Finnish American Reporter* with its Award of Excellence in 2021.

Today FAR, which had been published by Finlandia University, is one of the assets acquired by FFN along with the Finnish American Heritage Center. It's important that we continue to support this unique periodical through readership, advertising and subscriptions.

FAR makes a great gift! To subscribe, go to FinnishAmericanReporter.com or call (906) 487-7549.

FAR Subscription Rates (12 issues annually, in U.S. dollars):

United States & Canada \$40

Finland and other countries \$50

American Folk School, Finlandia Art Gallery, North Wind Books, Price of Freedom Museum, and *The Finnish American Reporter* comprise the only remaining piece of the last institution of higher education in the United States founded by Finns.

“The fact that the FAHC is still here is central,” said Fern. “This keeps it alive, local and tangible. It shows that we are still here. Just the idea that so much would have been lost if the collection had been dispersed... What we have here is a destination. People come to the FAHC expecting to find something, to discover, to learn.”

Life-long learning is one of Fern’s values. To someone just starting out on their own journey, she’d advise, “Always look for what you can learn from something. You can learn from an experience, a food, a place, a person. Don’t just go and look and see. Learn from it.”

This is how Fern understands saving Finnish-American history. It is a chance for us all to learn—about ourselves and others, and to understand the complexities of American history. She added, “It is a place where history will be cared for. We are not simply ‘housing’ these items — we are the caretakers of these artifacts.”

Fern never planned to be back in Ontonagon, where she now lives in retirement. When she returned to

the area on the Lake Superior shore, she realized the sense of community she had missed, and assured me with a laugh, “If you don’t have to be anywhere, winter isn’t really that bad!” Fern continues to be involved in many community activities, volunteering her time in a way that sounds like a full-time job.

She had one more message to share, a simple truth. “No money, no mission! If you don’t have any resources to follow through on your mission, you cannot improve. You can maintain, but even that gets challenging. No matter how large or small the gift, it makes a difference. It all comes together to contribute to a common mission.”

This is why Fern has given to Saving Finland in America. After 70 years, Finlandia Foundation’s mission has never called more loudly. Together, we can achieve a common mission to save Finland in America. It will take all of us contributing in whatever way we can.

Kiitos, Fern, for your contribution and for your words of inspiration.

"We are not simply 'housing' these items — we are the caretakers of these artifacts."

JON JURVA, TRUSTEE



Finlandia Foundation welcomes Jon K. Jurva to its board of

trustees. He is serving out the term recently vacated by attorney Jarno Vanto.

Jon, based in Chicago, is Partner at ArentFox Schiff, a law firm with eight

offices across the U.S. His expertise includes representing foundations and endowments, and investors making a range of venture capital, private equity and hedge fund investments.

Jon graduated with an AB, with distinction, from the University of Michigan. He earned his JD at the U of M Law School. Jon was a Fulbright Scholar in Brazil in 1994.

Finland’s Honorary Consul in Chicago has roots in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. Jon also serves on the boards of directors of the Midwest Chapter of the Finnish American Chamber of Commerce and Foundation Board of Lutheran Child and Family Services of Illinois.

A Two-Part, Virtual Board of Trustees Meeting

The fall board meeting of FFN trustees was held on two consecutive Saturdays, to be able to dedicate time to the developments at the Finnish American Heritage Center, in addition to the regular business of Finlandia Foundation traditionally conducted during its second meeting of the year.

It was the first board meeting for new trustee Jon Jurva, who has agreed to complete the term recently vacated by Jarno Vanto.

In addition to the active board, on Saturday, October 7, several trustees emeriti attended the online session. The meeting was also an opportunity to welcome and introduce the Heritage Center staff to Finlandia Foundation board members.

The focus was on the Saving Finland in America initiative, and included an update on the campaign to raise \$3 million by the end of 2023.

The report by the SFIA task force, which consists of FFN President Anne-Mari Paster, trustees Tim Nurvala and Michel Wendell and FFN Executive Director Tommy Flanagan, highlighted some of the myriad of legal, financial and operational issues related to the transition of the Heritage Center to FFN, and the planned purchase of the FAHC and North Wind Books buildings.

The business meeting picked up again on Saturday, October 14, and you’ll find much of that information in this issue of *The Finnish Line*, including the grant and scholarship awards programs, Lecturer of the Year and Performer of the Year, Soiva Music Camp, Salolampi Language Village grants, and special programs such as Finnposium and National Sauna Week. Staff also presented their reports on communications, operations and executive director’s activities.



WISHING YOU THE SIMPLE JOYS
OF THE SEASON
AT CHRISTMAS & ALL THROUGH
THE YEAR
HYVÄÄ JOULUA
JA ONNELLISTA UUTTA VUOTTA

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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Thank You for Saving Finland in America

These gifts have been specifically directed toward the initial \$3 million fundraising goal dedicated to the Finnish American Heritage Center in Hancock, Michigan. Kiitos!

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ALASKA

Anchorage Suomi Finland Club
2015
Pinja Larme

ARIZONA

The Finnish-American Club
of Tucson
2007
Tommi Koskinen

Finns and Friends of Phoenix
2010
Kati Huhtala

CALIFORNIA

Finlandia Club of
Sacramento Valley **2006**
Chad Riding

Finlandia Foundation Berkeley
2016
Kaj Rekola

Los Angeles Finlandia
Foundation **1974**
Jeff Nell

Finlandia Foundation San
Francisco Bay Area Chapter
1956
Hanna Peltonen

Finnish-American Home
Association Sonoma **2005**
Salla Vaerma-Jadlos

The House of Finland-
San Diego **2015**
Timo Luostarinen

COLORADO

Finlandia Foundation of
Colorado Denver **1993**
Kirsi St. Marie

CONNECTICUT

Finnish-American Heritage
Society Canterbury **2011**
Steven Bousquet

DELAWARE

Delaware Valley Finnish-
Americans Newark **2017**
Roy Palo

New Sweden Alliance
Yorklyn **2017**
Affiliated Member
Sheila Romine.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Finlandia Foundation National
Capital **1959**
Andrew Rasmussen

FLORIDA

Finlandia Foundation Florida
Lantana **1954**
Reija Kilpinen

FinnsConnect South Florida
Miami-Dade-Broward Counties
2017
Päivi Kaufman

GEORGIA

Atlanta Finland Society, Inc.
1975
Verna Bush

ILLINOIS

Finnish-American Society of the
Midwest Chicago area **1997**
Dan Maki

MAINE

Finnish-American Heritage
Society of Maine West Paris
2012
Karen Bennett

Finnish Farmers Club Monson
2012
Inez Goodine

Finnish Heritage House
South Thomaston **2007**
Jacqueline Harjula

MARYLAND

Finlandia Foundation Baltimore
Area **1974**
Ruut DeMeo

MASSACHUSETTS

Cape Ann Finns **2017**
Rob Ranta

Finlandia Foundation Boston, Inc.
1955
Tuija Voutilainen-Lynch

Finnish-American Society
of Cape Cod **2012**
Stephen Trimble

The Finnish Center at
Saima Park, Inc. Fitchburg **2005**
Linda Byrne

The Finnish Heritage Society -
Sovittaja Rutland **2006**
Barry Heiniluoma

MICHIGAN

Finlandia Foundation of
Michigan Royal Oak/Detroit area
2012
Frank Gottberg

Finnish-American Society of
West Central Michigan
Coopersville **2007**

Finnish Center Association

Farmington Hills/Detroit area
2004
Christine Manninen
Roger Wanttaja

Finnish Theme Committee of
Hancock - Finlandia Foundation
Copper Country **2006**
James Kurtti
David Maki

Finlandia Foundation National,
Lake Superior Marquette
2006
Ron J. Hill

MINNESOTA

Finlandia Foundation Northland
Duluth **2010**
Mary Lukkarila

Finlandia Foundation Twin Cities
/FinnSource **1994**
Betsey Norgard

Finnish-Americans and
Friends-Hibbing
1998
Marcella Schwecke

Kaleva Building Corporation
Virginia **2017**
Art Maki

Red River Finns Moorhead
2011
Ellen Liddle

MONTANA

Finlandia Foundation Montana
Missoula **2017**
Jenni Rohrbach

Finn Club of Helena **2007**
Marjorie Peura Reilly

Finnish Family of Kaleva Roberts
2011
Carrie Holst
Claudia Morley

NEW YORK

Finger Lakes Finns Spencer
2006
Michael Ludgate

Finlandia Foundation New York
Metropolitan **1954**
Eero Kilpi

OHIO

Finnish-American Heritage
Association of Ashtabula County
2003
Linda Sippola Riddell

Finnish Heritage Museum
Fairport Harbor **2015**
David Leifer

OREGON

Finlandia Foundation National
Astoria **2022**
Karen Van Cleave

Finlandia Foundation Columbia-
Pacific Portland **2001**
Heli Hatanpaa-Wetzel

PENNSYLVANIA

Finlandia Foundation Pittsburgh
1990
Karen Fix

Finnish-American Society of the
Delaware Valley Philadelphia
2006
Marja Kaisla

SOUTH DAKOTA

Frederick Forward - Finlandia
Foundation Dakota **2012**
Heidi Marttila-Losure

Sons and Daughters of Suomi
Deadwood **2015**
Larry Rantapaa

TEXAS

Dallas/Fort Worth
Finnish-American Society **1991**
Jeremy Martin

Finnish Language School
of North Texas Dallas **2018**
Leila Jaamuru

UTAH

Finlandia Foundation Utah
Provo **2016**
Tiina Watts

VIRGINIA

Finlandia Foundation Tidewater
Virginia **1979**
Randy Wanttaja

WASHINGTON

Finlandia Foundation Inland
Northwest Spokane **1970**
Tuula Ezzell

Finlandia Foundation Seattle
1968
Mikko Männistö

Finlandia Foundation Suomi
Bellingham **2010**
Hanna Winter

Finnish-American Folk Festival
Naselle **2011**
Jennifer Ullakko Boggs

Swedish-Finn Historical
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Bill Carlson

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