



# Finlandia Foundation® National

SPRING 2018

**Our Mission** is to sustain both Finnish-American culture in the U.S. and the ancestral tie with Finland by raising funds for grants and scholarships, initiating innovative national programs, and networking with local chapters.

## FFN@65

At the celebration of the 30th anniversary of Finlandia Foundation in 1983, founder Yrjö Paloheimo recalled its origins, beginning the story in World War II, “when the Finnish-Americans were united more than ever before, or after, in trying to help Finland.”

As Field Secretary for the Help Finland organization, Paloheimo had traveled to Finnish-American communities in 1945-46 to assist

with relief efforts. He learned that the young people were

leaving the Finn Halls and churches, and distancing themselves from their Finnish roots as they

gravitated to joining the American

mainstream. “Everyone asked me to try

to do something and to find a

solution to the problem,”

Paloheimo relayed.

*Pictured: The Pasadena home where Finlandia Foundation was founded in 1953. Story continued on page 21*



## Word from the President Hyvät Ystävät:

Two very successful years are behind us: 2015 was the 150th anniversary of the birth of composer Jean Sibelius, who was the first Patron of FFN; and last year we celebrated the 100th year of Finnish Independence.

Our calendar included more than 500 events during these two years,

with about 150 of them directly sponsored or supported by us. We are pleased to present a special insert in this newsletter describing many of the Finland 100 activities hosted by Finlandia Foundation and its chapters throughout 2017.

Finland 100 has carried over into 2018:

1. On March 13, the day that the Winter War ended in 1940, I was in Helsinki for the unveiling of a plaque at the Ministry of Defense that lists the names of major donors in the funding of the Winter War Memorial, Finlandia Foundation National among them. (More details on page 12 of this newsletter.)
2. FFN has selected two Lecturers of the Year for 2018-19. One of them is James Ford Cooper, who served at the U.S. Embassy in Helsinki twice, in the 1970s and 1980s. He is available to the FF chapters to talk about "Finland and the Cold War." His experiences are summarized in his well-regarded book, *On the Finland Watch*.

In November of 2016, we organized a Joint Chapter Meeting to offer our (then) 52 affiliated organizations an opportunity to strengthen cooperation and improved communication among us.

We will continue to work with our chapters--- now numbering 58---and help them to undertake their events based on their wishes for support. We will also examine our own priorities to be more responsive to their needs, and how we are perceived by the Finnish-American community at large.

One priority has already emerged: we will focus much more on the younger generations. An indication of this new focus is the membership of our newest chapter: the Finnish School of North Texas, which joined FFN in March while we had our board meeting in Dallas. We have established a new board committee to examine how we will proceed, and to prepare an action plan for us.

We encourage a community approach in which all age groups work together to strengthen the Finnish-American community, which is claimed by some to be dying out. We are aware that there are many younger Finns who have moved to the U.S. over the past years. Our task is to bring them together and strengthen our existing organizations.

I wish you an enjoyable spring and summer ahead.

Ossi Rahkonen

### FFN BOARD

**PRESIDENT**  
Ossi Rahkonen  
ossi1@verizon.net  
McLean, VA

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
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paul@halmeandclark.com  
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rahola@stny.rr.com  
Dundee, NY

**Dennis M. Anderson**  
dmanymn@yahoo.com  
Rochester, MN

**Jacqueline Harjula**  
jackielee207@gmail.com  
Thomaston, ME

**Katariina Lehtonen**  
lehtonenk@comcast.net  
Lake Oswego, OR

**Peter Makila**  
PeterMakila@bellsouth.net  
Lake Worth, FL

**Betsey Norgard**  
norgard@paulbunyan.net  
Bovey, MN

**Tim Nurvala**  
tnurvala@msn.com  
Gladwyne, PA

**Anne-Mari Paster**  
ampaster@rcn.com  
Lexington, MA

**Teuvo Pulkkinen**  
teuvo\_pulkkinen@hotmail.com  
San Diego, CA

**Tarja Silverman**  
tarja.silverman@formin.fi  
Greystone, NY

**Anita Häkkinen Smiley**  
smileys.place@juno.com  
Preston, CT

**Eeva Syvanen**  
eeva\_syvanen@yahoo.com  
San Diego, CA

**Hilary-Joy Virtanen**  
hilary.virtanen@gmail.com  
Hancock, MI

**Hanna Wagner**  
dhkpwagner@yahoo.com  
Washington, D.C.

### CONTACT Finlandia Foundation National:

**Maria Kizirian**  
Assistant to the  
Board of Trustees  
office@finlandia  
foundation.org

626.795.2081

**Mailing address:**  
P.O. Box 92046  
Pasadena,  
CA 91109-2046

Please inform us of a  
change of name  
or address.

The newsletter 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** katusitalo@mac.com

[FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org)

## FFN Welcomes New Trustees

At the March board meeting in Dallas, Finlandia Foundation trustees elected Eeva Syvanen and Hilary-Joy Virtanen to three-year terms on the board.

Hilary-Joy Virtanen is a native of Toivola, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. As a child, her family moved frequently throughout the U.S., which allowed her to see American cultural diversity firsthand. It helped her to understand her Finnish ethnicity as, she says, "a unique square in a dazzling cultural patchwork quilt."

Hilary-Joy holds a Master's and Ph.D. in Scandinavian Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison; a Master's in Folklore from Indiana University; and a BA in English and Anthropology from Michigan State University. As the assistant professor of Finnish & Nordic Studies at Finlandia University in Hancock, Michigan, she directs the academic program and teaches most of its classes.

As a researcher, Hilary-Joy focuses on festival culture and symbolic ethnic practices of Finns and Finnish-Americans. She is the assistant editor of the *Journal of Finnish Studies* and a member of the Finnish Theme Committee, Hancock's FFN chapter, and served on the boards of the Michigan Oral History Association and the Copper Range Historical Society.



Hilary-Joy Virtanen



Eeva Syvanen

Hilary-Joy and her husband, Ron Stewart, live near Hancock with their three children: Alexander, Andrew and Anneli. She is honored to serve on the FFN board because of the immense support FFN has shown her as a student and researcher, and she looks forward to helping others through this work.

Eeva Syvanen was born and raised in Helsinki, and has been a resident of San Diego since 1994. She grew up in a very international environment, attending the French School of Helsinki and learning several languages. Eeva earned a Bachelor's Degree in International Marketing at the Helsinki School of Economics before joining Finnair, where she was employed as a flight attendant for 16 years.

In San Diego, she first worked for the Finnish company Suunto for 10 years, and in 2010 started a career in real estate with Berkshire Hathaway. In the year 2000, Eeva was one of the founders of the Finnish School in San Diego; she served as its president for 15 years. She's now in her second term as president of the House of Finland, the FFN chapter in San Diego.

Eeva says that her three adult sons were raised to be proud of their Finnish heritage, and all are fluent in the Finnish language, culture and customs, adding, "Finland is always in my heart!"

## New POY Juli Woods Sets Finnish Folk Songs to Jazz



**By Betsey Norgard**  
*Trustee and POY Coordinator*

**F**inlandia Foundation National's Performer of the Year for 2018-19 brings the haunting melodies of Finnish folk songs alive in jazz arrangements through her tenor saxophone. Juli Wood, of Chicago, has 20-plus years of jazz performance and recordings. She has played with the best of the Chicago jazz scene, traveled extensively to jazz clubs and festivals, and has begun to celebrate the music of her Finnish heritage.

All four of Wood's grandparents immigrated from Ostrobothnia and ended up on Minnesota's Iron Range and in Duluth in the early 20th century. Her parents, members of the Finnish American Society of Milwaukee, steeped her in Finnish heritage. She fell in love with Finland's culture and countryside on her first trip there in 1977, following her high school graduation. Since the 1990s, she has returned to Finland nearly every summer, playing at venues such as the Pori Jazz Festival and legendary Storyville Jazz Club in Helsinki, as well as at other Nordic jazz festivals in Denmark and Sweden. This summer she will perform in Helsinki and Tampere.

**I**n 2015 Wood recorded *Synkkä Metsä* (*Dark Forest*), a CD of Finnish folk songs. A jazz critic wrote that it "explores—with a cool restraint and crystalline clarity—the dark forest... of Finnish folk themes." In September, she will research and perform another CD of Finnish folk songs, to be recorded with the support of a Finlandia Foundation grant.

Wood is excited to share music dear to her heart with FFN chapters as the POY, from September 1, 2018 through August 31, 2019. For information on hosting the POY, go to [FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org), or contact Betsey Norgard at [norgard@paulbunyan.net](mailto:norgard@paulbunyan.net). To learn more about Juli go to [juliwoodsax.com](http://juliwoodsax.com); hear a selection from *Synkkä Metsä* at [originarts.com/oa2/recordings/recording.php?TitleID=22121](http://originarts.com/oa2/recordings/recording.php?TitleID=22121)

## Lecturers of the Year Offer Diverse Programs

**By Jon Saari**  
*Trustee Emeritus*

**F**rank W. Eld and James Ford Cooper, two writers with very different interests, have both been appointed Lecturers of the Year for 2018-19. They offer choice and variety to FFN chapter audiences.

Frank W. Eld has spent 50 years creating a museum to bring the bypassed town of Roseberry, Idaho back to life; his love of old log buildings, in particular, led to the research behind his book *Finnish Log Construction — The Art* (2013).

The grandson of a Finnish carpenter, Eld is on a mission to document and preserve the buildings made by Finnish immigrants to the United States and Canada. He travels in his "Finnebago," which is a Toyota pick-up truck with a log cabin on the back. Frank crisscrossed the continent last year, putting on 17,500 miles while researching his next book, about Finnish-North American settlement and vernacular architecture. Many who have met him on his travels are looking forward to inviting him back for an entertaining talk about his findings.

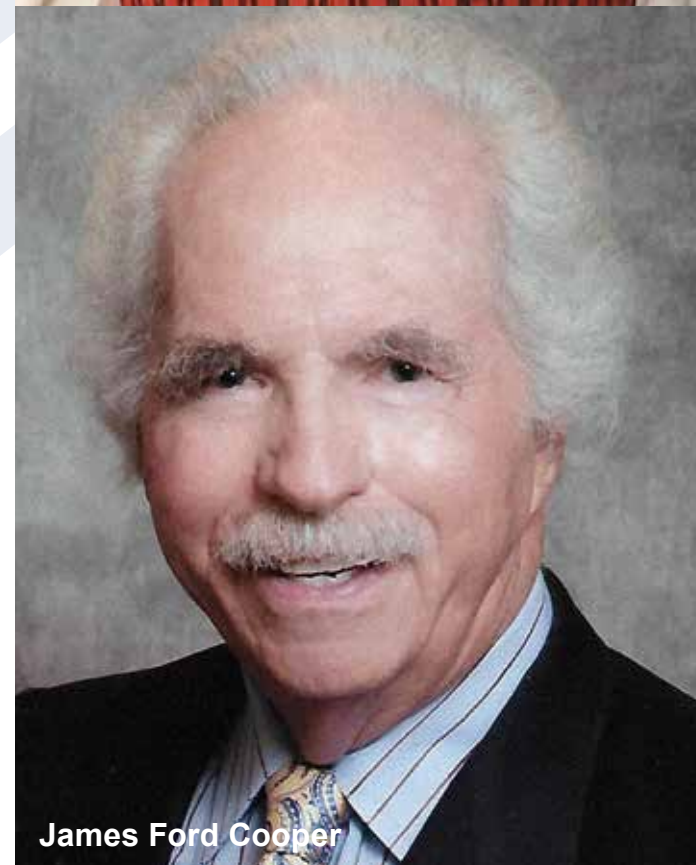
**J**ames Ford Cooper spent a long career in the U.S. Foreign Service, with two postings in Finland during the Cold War, from 1976-1979 as Political Counselor, and 1984-1986 as Deputy Chief of Mission. His memoir of his life and work in Finland, *On the Finland Watch* (2000), is based on those years of observation and analysis.

Ford Cooper recently summarized his insights into the complicated three-way relationship between Finland, the Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War from 1945-1990 in his essay, "An Appreciation of Finland—On 100 Years of Independence." It conveys warmth and respect. He is praised by Finnish Ambassador Jaakko Itoniemi for taking the time to learn Finnish, which opened up to Cooper deeper levels of Finnish culture and the complexities of its geographical neighborhood. (There is a link to his essay at his bio at [FinlandiaFoundation.org/lectureroftheyear](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org/lectureroftheyear)).

**F**inland in the Cold War and Finnish-American settlement and log buildings: Two LOY choices will be available from July 2018 through June 2019. FFN sponsors their travel to your location, and your chapter takes care of local arrangements, lodging and a \$400 honorarium.

Find more information about the LOY at the FFN website ([FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org)). Contact LOY Coordinator Hilary-Joy Virtanen at [hilary.virtanen@gmail.com](mailto:hilary.virtanen@gmail.com) to arrange a booking.

Frank W. Eld



James Ford Cooper

# 2018 Grant Funding Increases to \$126,000

8

By Anita Smiley

FFN Trustee

Thanks to the generous supporters of Finlandia Foundation National and those who promote Finnish and Finnish-American culture in the United States and the many cultural projects between the U.S. and Finland, FFN is the most important source of support for Finnish culture in this country. The yearly awarding of grants is a major part of that support. It's always a source of amazement to see the unique projects undertaken each year.

In 2018, there were 52 grant applications requesting a total of \$213,063. It is with great pleasure that we announce a total distribution of \$126,000 in grants to 43 applicants--19 of which were fully funded. Grant applications came from 15 states, Washington, D.C., Finland and Germany, with the largest number coming from California and Michigan. We extend sincere congratulations to all recipients.

We are pleased to note that all donations to Finlandia Foundation are used 100 percent toward funding programs such as grants and scholarships, due to the generosity of the Paloheimo Foundation, which provides funding for FFN operating costs. In addition, the Paloheimo Foundation matches the first \$100,000 in donations each year.

FFN proudly supports the important work done by the grant recipients. As they pursue their endeavors, whether through crafts, music, scholarly works or a myriad of other ways, we are sharing our precious Finnish heritage with neighbors, friends and local communities. The 2018 Grants Committee, chaired by Richard Ahola, consists of Katariina Lehtonen, Jon Saari, Anita Smiley and Paivi Tetri.

NOTE: In the following story, the numbered grants correspond to the numbered photos.

## SUMMARY OF GRANTS

Grant awards fell into several specific categories and others were varied in nature.

**Importing Finnish Innovation, Design and Culture to Montana's Big Sky Country**, submitted by Holly Truitt, director of the University of Montana Broader Impacts Group, was the grant receiving the highest scores from all committee members. The university, the City of Missoula and Finlandia Foundation of Montana collaborated in hosting a delegation from Espoo, Finland, on April 25 to engage Montanians with Finnish innovation, design and culture, and celebrate innovation and change-making in Missoula.

## MUSIC

**Finnish Folk Songs CD:** As a follow-up to jazz saxophonist Juli Wood's recording *Synkkä Metsä*, funding is provided to create a second CD of Finnish folk songs performed in a jazz style by the Juli Wood Quartet. The CD will be recorded at Salolampi Language Village in Bemidji, Minnesota, where the group will also perform and conduct workshops.

**1. Piae Cantiones---Old Music for Young Voices:** Seattle Historical Arts for Kids (SHAK) will have a group of children ages 7-18 in historical costumes perform *Piae Cantiones*, a collection of songs compiled at the Turku Cathedral School in the 16th Century, and originally studied and performed by children.

Apprentice instrumentalists from SHAK's Early Music Youth Academy join the band on harp, viola da gamba and Renaissance violin. Performances will take place in October 2018 in the Seattle area.

**2. Seattle Symphony Concert:** The FFN grant supports the Seattle Symphony orchestra and chorale production of Sibelius' *Kullervo*, led by Guest Conductor and Music Director Designate Thomas Dausgaard, May 31, June 2 and 3, 2018. Maria Männistö, a past FFN Performer of the Year, will be the soprano soloist.

**3. The Bothnia Gospel 100 Choir Tour:** A cooperative project of three mixed choirs in the Korsholm municipality of Finland, the musicians will tour in Finland and San Antonio, Texas, where they will perform four concerts and host workshops in July. One of the objectives is to develop and strengthen international activities through increased cooperation between choirs and professional artists.

**Making Finnish Music Known:** Mark Sedio of Saint Paul, Minnesota, will travel to Finland to meet with musicians, composers and Church of Finland representatives. He will attend *Tuomasmessu* services in the hopes of creating a similar service at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, and will stay at the Valamo Orthodox Monastery to introduce that style of music tradition to the U.S.

**Jepokryddona on Tour:** The female folk music group Jepokryddona (Jeppo Spices), from Nykarleby on Finland's west coast, will tour in the U.S. and Canada from June 14 to July 1, 2018. They sing and play folk music from their area, both Finnish and Swedish-Finnish, with much energy.

**Finnish Piano Music of the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries:** Pianist Gail Olszewski plans to record a varied selection of solo pieces on an 1877 Blüthner grand piano. Her goal is to reveal musical colors that are hard to achieve on a modern instrument, so others may hear the music on a piano with the sound the composer may have had in mind. She will also perform concerts.

**Refurbish Boris Sirpo's Personal Piano, Phase II:** The 110-year-old Steinway piano of Maestro Boris Sirpo was donated to Nordic Northwest, and is in use at the Great Hall performance space at Nordia House in Portland, Oregon. Grant funds will be used to continue the refurbishing process.

**4. Kantele Workshop by Evergreen Livakat Kantele Ensemble:** This kantele group in Bellevue, Washington, led by Satu Mikkola and mentored by kantele expert Wilho Saari, will hold a two-day workshop in September 2018 with musicians and instructors from Finland. Open to all kantele players, it will help them to improve their performance technique and skill, and to add to their kantele repertoire. Participants will perform a concert at the local Finnish Lutheran Church, increasing awareness of Finnish culture and this Finnish national instrument.

**A Continuation of Juilliard-Sibelius Academy Collaboration:** An eight-piece ensemble that is half from the Juilliard community and half from the Sibelius Academy will perform classical chamber music concerts at various venues on the East Coast, including at the Embassy of Finland in Washington, D.C. FFN grant funding will add general support for this cultural bridge.



### 5. 101 Years of Finnish Music Concert Series:

The PasiCats, a band that has been playing a mix of old and newer Finnish music for the past 11 years, is planning a musical journey, including a multi-media component, that will include two songs from each decade since the 1910s. The grant funding supports four concerts that will take place in May and June of 2018 at four locations in the Upper Midwest.

### 6. An American Choral Experience:

The Musical Arts Society of America and the Bellingham Music Enrichment Project are planning an intercultural collaboration project in Helsinki during the summer of 2018. Dr. Timothy M. Black, founder of "An American Choral Experience," first conducted the program in 2000-2002 in Germany. The upcoming workshop in Finland was inspired by a visit from the Viipurin Lauluveikot (The Singing Fellows of Viipuri) to the Bellingham, Washington area in 2017.

## FESTIVALS

### 7. Support for Performer Merja Soria:

*The Christmas Revels--- A Nordic Celebration of the Winter Solstice*, will feature rarely seen or heard dances, folktales, music and instruments of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden at 18 performances at the Sanders Theatre at Harvard University in December of 2018. Merja Soria, FFN past Performer of the Year, will perform and also serve as an advisor and tradition bearer to the artistic team, helping to assure cultural accuracy. FFN funding will help in underwriting expenses for Merja Soria's participation.

Photo credit: EA Oxenham



### 8. Heikinpäivä's 20th Anniversary Reunion:

The City of Hancock's Finnish Theme Committee-Finlandia Foundation Copper Country Chapter plans to hold a 20th anniversary Heikinpäivä in January of 2019, bringing back two decades of individuals and groups who have participated and helped move this festival forward. It has grown from a one-day event to a month of celebration. Grant funding will help with travel and other expenses related to bringing participants to the festival.

### House of Finland Vappu:

The House of Finland in San Diego hosted a Balboa Park Lawn Program and Vappu Celebration on April 29. Every year the 34 International Cottages of Balboa Park each host a cultural event open to the public. Grant funding helped in providing Finnish food to visitors.

### Traditions in Finnish-American Music in Lanesville:

The Lanesville Community Center in Gloucester, Massachusetts developed a Finnish-American celebration held Sunday, May 13, 2018, at St. Paul Lutheran Church. This two-hour multi-media concert consisted of music performances, a backdrop of photographs and video footage, and story-telling, followed by a social hour with Finnish baked goods. The Cape Ann Finns, a new chapter of FFN, received funding for this joint effort in research and celebration of Finnish heritage.

### Nordic Music Festival:

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is sponsoring a weekend Nordic Music Festival in October of 2018, which will bring together community members, students and faculty to learn about and enjoy

Nordic repertoire. Performing artists include pianist Matti Hirvonen and soprano Anna Hersey. The university will provide a venue and preliminary logistical support, and regional organizations will participate in promotion of the event.

**Finnish Summer Party 2018:** The Finlandia Foundation Seattle Chapter, working with other Finnish-American organizations and individuals in the area, received funding to arrange a Finnish Summer Party on June 9, 2018, in the Seattle area. This celebration will serve as the main event of the year to mark the 50th anniversary of the Finlandia Foundation Seattle Chapter. This funding will be used to cover costs of children's entertainment and to rent a sound system.

**Bay Area Book Festival 2018:** The annual Bay Area Book Festival, held in Berkeley, California, presents a unique opportunity to showcase Finnish writers to a diverse and highly literate Northern California audience. The festival brings together thousands of people over one weekend, with top authors for keynotes, interviews, and panels. Grant funding will help to bring one Finnish author to the event.

## RESEARCH

**Ph.D. Language Study:** Nana Lehtinen, a Ph.D. student at the University of Turku, is studying the Finnish language variant spoken by first generation immigrants who have lived in Northern California for

more than 20 years. All collected data will be preserved, stored and shared for further research purposes via Finnish Language Bank. Grant funding will help cover travel expenses for the interviews.

**Scholarship Fund at Stanford University:** Grant funding will help support a scholarship in memory of the late Finnish writer Dr. Ritva Heikkilä for a student in the Stanford Global Studies program. The scholar will undertake research that considers ways of improving cross-cultural understanding and evaluating the value of exchange between countries, with an emphasis on Finland and Pakistan.

**Participation in USSEA/InSEA Regional Conference:** Grant funding will help Oona Myllyntaus, a Ph.D. researcher and visual arts teacher at the University of Helsinki, participate in the United States Society for Education Through Art conference at Wichita State University in Kansas in July of 2018. The conference will provide her with new insights and knowledge for planning future courses in the arts, and allow her to connect with visual arts teachers in the U.S.

### 9. Juggling and Movement Research Residency:

Luther Bangert, a traveling performer from New York City, received partial funding to participate in the "Back to Basics" juggling and movement research program at Arteles Creative Center in Hämeenkyrö, Finland from August 2-31, 2018. The objective is to create a movement and juggling vocabulary inspired and enriched by the environment. The residency will culminate in a project.



## FILMS/ART/THEATER

**10. *Beast Tests*:** Grant recipient Marianna Milhorat will produce a short documentary film about *Petotesti (Beast Tests)*, dog behavior events that tour Finland. During the event, dog behavior is tested against remote-controlled taxidermied bear, wolf, and lynx. Milhorat will examine Finns' unique relationship to the outdoors and the increasingly complex and interconnected relationships between human and non-human nature. She has been invited to Serlachius Residency for the months of July and August of 2018, which will serve as a base for her filming.

**11. *Pelkie Documentary*:** Grant funding will enable prior research done by project director Michael Loukinen to move to the next phase of creating a documentary about Finnish-American history and culture in Pelkie, Michigan. The grant will support video production and website promotion.

***Steps of Perheentupa*:** Dr. Hanna Vastinsalo of Los Angeles directs a documentary about Finnish disease heritage, which is a unique collection of hereditary diseases. The film follows the origins of the research and the people whose lives have been changed by it. The goal for this documentary is to tell the story of a small country, whose rare diseases have helped to further knowledge about human genetics globally.

***The Singer Who Changed Pop Culture*:** Grant funding will go towards screenwriter fees to write a biopic movie about a late Finnish pop singer. The story development is taking place, and the film will be created with a Finnish director and Finnish actors, with a predominantly Finnish-American production team based in Los Angeles.

### **Silicon Valley Finns TV Documentary Series**

**Pilot:** The vision and mission of the documentary is to shed light on modern Finnish-American culture, drawing on the approximately 5,000 Finns and Americans with Finnish heritage in the San Francisco Bay Area today. The reality-based documentary series would be broadcast by YLE. Creating the documentary will be a community effort using local volunteers.

**12. *Copper Country Voices of Dissent in the Great War*:** This project will develop, promote, and present a 12-panel exhibition that illustrates antiwar sentiment during World War I in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Finns had a significant role in area antiwar

activities. Finlandia University Finnish & Nordic Studies Associate Professor Hilary-Joy Virtanen and students are doing the research and designing the exhibit, which will open in September 2018, free and open to the public at Finlandia University. It is part of the public humanities program, *World War One: Copper Country*.

**13. *Camp Solong – An Art Installation and Summer Camp*:** A summer camp for adults emanates from fulfilling lives and surviving today's fast-paced societies. Camp Solong, produced by Dafna Maimon and Ethan Hayes-Chute in Ekenäs, Finland, is a three-day summer adventure for adults. It is an immersive performative installation, set within a one-wall wooden cabin, for six strangers who come together to slow down, allowing for introspection, play, and cathartic well-being through a humorous yet heartfelt experience amidst nature. The 2018 camp session will be documented and culminate in a feature-length documentary.

**Art Preservation at the FAHC:** The Finnish American Heritage Center at Finlandia University has a sizeable collection of art, and approximately 20 pieces have been selected for use as a traveling exhibit. Grant funding will be used for repair or conservation work to prepare them for shipping so that they can be displayed at other venues.

**Finnish Play into Full Production:** Funding will help to bring Minna Koskela's play *Too Deep* to Chicago for a full production with a run of four weeks and 16 shows in November of 2018. The play had a staged reading in Los Angeles in 2017.

**14. *The Finnish Center--The Next Generation*:** Grant funding will help Judith Lindstedt to produce, direct and edit a 90-minute digital docufilm focusing on The Finnish Center at Saima Park. The goal is to educate viewers about the rich heritage and culture of the Finns in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, and help to increase pride about the local community.

**15. *Fairy Tales and Fables from Finland and Beyond*:** The Riverfront Family Theater will create an original musical comedy production focusing on Finn culture, folklore, and traditions, directed by Sally Cragin to be performed at Saima Park and other locations in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. There is no charge for participating or attending performances since this is a low-income area, and this is theatre by children for children.



16



17



18



19

## MISCELLANEOUS

**16. *Homefarm Life, a Finnish Multimedia Cookbook Project*:** The author, Kristina Vanni, a culinary spokesperson, will travel from New York to her family's dairy farm in Ilmajoki, Finland, in the summer of 2018 for research with Finnish artisans and food experts. The goal is to share Finnish food and culture through the story of one family farm. She aims to bring awareness to the incredible ingredients and unique recipes that can only be found in Finland, and will share her experiences in discussions on social media and a website. Grant funds will cover travel and material and equipment costs. Photo credit: Eric Benjamin Kleinberg

**17. *Opi 3 by Lauri Saukko*:** Funding will pay for the printing of 500 copies of *Opi 3* Finnish language book, his follow-up to *Opi 1* and *Opi 2* Finnish language lessons. The books will be available for a \$10 donation, and all proceeds go to the Salolampi Foundation Scholarship Fund.

**Monticello School Museum and Archives, Phase IV:** An all-volunteer organization has been restoring the old Monticello School building in Brule, Wisconsin, working in phases as funds permit. Grant funding will help with classroom restoration work, new building materials for half-bathrooms upstairs and in the basement, and water and septic systems.

**Giving the Millennials Ownership:** FinnFest USA is receiving funding to develop the recently rebuilt FinnFest website's online presence with the goal of engaging younger people to connect with Finland.

**Sauna on Wheels:** The Diamond Regional Institute and Diamond students in Fairport Harbor, Ohio, are collaborating to research, design and construct a portable sauna on wheels. The finished product will aid in promoting the declining Finnish culture in the area.

**18. *Finnish-American Blog*:** "My Finnish American Life" is a website dedicated to telling stories about Finnish-American people, places, events, history and culture, with the main purpose being a blog that shares stories and videos. The creator, Kristin Ojaniemi from Paynesville, Michigan, plans to attend Finnish-American festivals and events to learn more about Finnish-American culture and life, and seek out people to tell their stories.

**Raising Awareness and Energy Literacy in Northern Michigan:** "Finland's Bioeconomy Has Transformed a Nation: Bringing Finnish Experts to Mentor to Northern Michigan" is the theme of a project underway by the non-profit New Power Tour, Inc., in partnership with the Keweenaw Community Foundation in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Working with the Finnish company Benet Oy, the development of a forest-based bioeconomy will be addressed at one or two energy summits in Northern Michigan, with experts from Finland invited to speak and tour the area.

**19. *Anni Korpi to Anni Putikka, Finland to USA*:** A collection of 38 published articles by Anni Putikka will be compiled in a book by her daughter, Arlene Putikka Tucker. These articles discuss Anni Putikka's childhood in Finland from 1928-1951, and life in America afterwards, from stories of growing up during the wars, making clothing woven from their sheep and the flax grown in their fields, milking dairy cows, and more. Translation work will be sought, and original handwritten texts digitized.

## ABOUT FFN GRANTS

Each spring, the annual meeting of the FFN Board of Trustees consists of two intensive days of conducting the business of the organization. An additional day is included for the members of the Grants Committee to discuss and evaluate the applications which were submitted by the deadline date of January 17, 2018. This discussion followed the meticulous evaluation and scoring of each grant proposal by each committee member individually, prior to the meeting.

FFN invites submission of high-quality projects relating to the past, present or future of Finnish and Finnish-American culture. When submitting a grant application, it is important to note that grants are graded on a score sheet based on 11 criteria, each of which is assigned a point value. Any incomplete applications are not considered. All recipients agree to deliver a progress report in six months and a final report within one year.

The deadline for the next round of grants is January 17, 2019. Guidelines are available for review at the FFN website, FinlandiaFoundation.org.



11



12



13



14



15

# FFN Recognized for War Monument Effort

**By Ossi Rahkonen**  
FFN President

At Kasarmitori, Helsinki, at the square facing the Finnish Ministry of Defense, the Winter War Monument was unveiled on November 30, 2017, the anniversary of the day in 1939 that the fighting between Finland and the Soviet Union began.

The ceremony was a national event, with President Sauli Niinistö speaking, and former Finnish presidents Martti Ahtisaari and Tarja Halonen, as well as other leading persons in Finnish political life, in attendance. The Winter War was a decisive event in the struggle for Finnish independence; Finland could have fared similar fate as the Baltic countries.

Another ceremony took place at the monument on March 13, 2018, the anniversary of the day in 1940 that the war ended. I represented FFN at the wreath laying at the monument, the unveiling of a steel plaque with the names of major donors, and a reception at the Ministry of Defense.



Ossi Rahkonen stands before the Winter War Monument tribute to major donors, including Finlandia Foundation.

Total cost of the monument was 1.35 million euros, or about \$1.65 million. Funding was divided equally between the Finnish Government, the City of Helsinki and private donors, with the Winter War Association spearheading the fundraising drive.

Major donors represent about 80% of the private funds raised, and the name of Finlandia Foundation National is listed among them. The Winter War Association had requested FFN's help in fundraising in the U.S. We were successful in getting the Honorary Consuls of Finland in the U.S. and Canada to

donate as a group, and were also able to inspire other major donations---one quite substantial---with stories appearing in the FFN newsletter.

The base of the monument is large, with sizable windows opening to the illuminated interior featuring a cavalcade of pictures of Winter War events. I encourage you to visit Kasarmitori and the monument when you are in Helsinki.

and Aino Sibelius' honeymoon destination, the Monola granary in Lieksa. The large-scale project was accomplished in cooperation with the National Board of Antiquities in 2016 and 2017, and opened for tourism in the summer of 2017.

FFN is pleased to accept this honor, and I will attend the award ceremony, which will take place on July 7, at the Brahe Hall in the Lieksa Cultural Center, on the last day of the week-long Monola Festival. The theme of the festival is *Kalevala*, honoring the 190th anniversary of creator Elias Lonnröt's first poetry-collecting trip to Pielinen Karelia and other places further east.

During the festival, Kalevi Jalkanen's *Kalevala* themed composition will have its world premiere and the Lohja City Orchestra will perform Sibelius' *Kalevala* orchestral music. Cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Nazig Azezian, who have delighted many FFN audiences here in the U.S., will also perform.

# Monola Society Award

**By Ossi Rahkonen**  
FFN President

The Monola Society of Finland has selected Finlandia Foundation National to receive the 2018 Monola Award, in recognition of the outstanding work that FFN has done in promotion of Finnish culture, especially the music of Jean Sibelius and heritage of *Kalevala* in the United States.

Monola Society was established in Lieksa, Pielinen Karelia in 2015, the 150th anniversary of the birth of Sibelius. The objective of the society is to maintain, support and promote the heritage of Sibelius, *Kalevala* and Karelianism. The first and foremost objective of the society was to restore Jean

FINLANDIA FOUNDATION  
SALUTES FINLAND 100  
1917 - 2017

It was a remarkable year of recognition of an astonishing accomplishment: the 100th anniversary of Finland's December 6, 1917 Declaration of Independence from Russia. The Finnish government encouraged the use of the theme "Yhdessä/Together" for the myriad of celebrations of this milestone throughout 2017. Finlandia Foundation National and its chapters filled the centennial events calendar with an impressive variety of Finland 100 activities.

## FINLANDIA FOUNDATION NATIONAL PARTICIPATED BY:

- sponsoring six Finland 100 Signature Events
  - offering financial support to chapters for their celebratory activities
  - expanding its Lecturer of the Year program to five Centenary Lecturers
  - supporting artist appearances at chapters through its Finland 100 Music Program
  - co-sponsoring SISU, the Traveling Sauna
- These pages highlight centennial activities undertaken by Finlandia Foundation and chapters, as well as a sampling of the many other Finland 100 events that took place across the U.S. in 2017.

## FINLAND 100 SIGNATURE EVENTS

**Finland 100 Gala**, February 18: The elegant affair in Delray Beach, Florida was a sell-out, attended by more than 200 including a delegation of the Finnish Parliament led by Speaker Maria Lohela. Guests enjoyed music by the Florida Male Choir, cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Nazig Azezian, and dancing to the music by Fernanda, from Finland.

SuomiFinland 100 in New York City

continued next page

**Ida Elina Concert Tour**, April-May: Finnish kantele artist Ida Elina charmed audiences with her inventive, modern performance style on the ancient stringed instrument on her 10-city, inaugural U.S. concert tour. Her eclectic repertoire includes pop tunes as well as traditional music.

**Women's International Study Center Symposium**, September 18: Former Finnish President Tarja Halonen and Icelandic business leader Halla Tómasdóttir engaged a capacity crowd with their discussion about "Leadership Values in a Changing World" at the New Mexico History Museum in Santa Fe. Willa Seldon of the Bridgespan Group moderated the program. WISC is based in Santa Fe at Acequia Madre House, which was the home of Eva Scott Fenyes, her daughter Leonora Curtin, and granddaughter Leonora Curtin, who was married to Finlandia Foundation founder Yrjö Paloheimo.

**Minnesota Orchestra Concert Celebrating Finland's Centennial**, September 22: Maestro Osmo Vänskä led an all-Finnish concert before an enthusiastic audience including Finland's President Sauli

Niinistö and his spouse Jenni Haukio, as well as many representatives of Finnish America attending FinnFest USA 2017. The Orchestra Hall program featured violinist Elina Vähälä and music by Aho, Kuusisto and Sibelius, including an encore performance of *Finlandia*, with the audience waving small Finnish flags. The program was repeated the following evening.

**Philharmonia Northwest Finland 100 Concert**, November 4: The Seattle chamber orchestra led by Music Director Julia Tai performed music by Sibelius, Rautavaara and Saariaho at Benaroya Hall. Soprano Maria Männistö, FFN Performer of the Year 2007, was the featured soloist.

The final of the six Finland 100 Signature Events was the program, "**Changing the Game: Peacemaking in Turbulent Times**," in New York City on November 9. The Finland Centennial Forum honored Finland's former President Martti Ahtisaari, founder of Crisis Management Initiative, and is described in the accompanying story by FFN President Ossi Rahkonen. (Find stories about the other five Signature Events in the Spring and Fall 2017 FFN newsletters.)

importance of diplomacy and peacemaking rather than wars. The turbulence in the present world demonstrates the need for the services of CMI.

**Zedillo focused on the causes of international instability** and turmoil, and recognized deep-rooted problems between nations and within population groups. He was critical of major nations not making it a priority to solve issues peacefully and with diplomatic means.

**A discussion followed, with panelists** Frank Wisner, ambassador and chairman of the board of American Friends of CMI; journalist and author Carl Bernstein; and social entrepreneur and producer Francine LeFrak. Moderator was *New York Times* reporter Somini Sengupta.

A musical *Sibelius Inspiration* interlude by Finnish cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Nazig Azezian was well received.

## FINLAND 100 GRANTS TO CHAPTERS

**F**inlandia Foundation National offered up to \$1,000 in a Finland 100 grant to each of its 56 chapters

to assist them in hosting at least one Finland 100 event in the calendar year 2017. We were pleased that 38 chapters requested funds to support 46 activities, from concerts to festivals, guest speakers and art exhibits. An estimated 9,000 people attended those events supported by FFN Finland 100 grants. Untold numbers participated in the full range of activities throughout the year.

**The chapter events were posted** on the Finland 100 calendar at [FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org), along with other Finland 100 and Finnish-American community activities that were open to the public. At year's end, there were nearly 300 events on the calendar.

**FFN affiliates hosted** many programs in addition to those that were supported by Finland 100 chapter grants. The Seattle and Columbia-Pacific (Portland) chapters were especially busy, with at least one activity each month. They not only planned their own activities, but actively partnered with other organizations and activities in their communities to expand the reach of Finland 100.

**H**ere are some highlights of the year-long celebration at FFN chapters across the U.S.:

### **Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter**

Under the direction of FFCPC Finland 100 Chair Pirjo Schulbach, the Portland chapter produced a full range of activities in 2017 to ensure there was something for everyone on its Finland 100 calendar. From learning to cook traditional foods to the installation of a six-foot-tall monument made of granite from Finland, the volunteers of FFCPC made lasting contributions to the Finnish-American community of the Portland area. A brochure neatly summarizes the activities.

**FFCPC** wrapped up its year-long celebration with a Finland 100 Christmas dinner, a program honoring Finnish veterans, and dancing to Maria Männistö's band at Nordia House in Portland, where a 100-year-old flag found in Vaasa, Finland graced the room.

Honored guests were veterans of the Winter War Väinö and Lempi Koskela (at right), as well as Juha Tuominen.



Ameriikan Poijjat performed at the American Swedish History Museum.

### **Finnish-American Society of the Delaware Valley and New Sweden Alliance, Wilmington, Delaware**

The two FFN-affiliated organizations jointly hosted the December 9 *Iltamat* (soiree) at the American Swedish History Museum in Philadelphia. The event was geared mostly toward members and friends of the Finnish and Swedish organizations in the Tri-State (Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania) area. Ameriikan Poijjat, a brass band from Minnesota, performed, and Antti Vänskä, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Finnish Embassy in Washington, D.C., delivered remarks. The evening began with a pre-Christmas dinner, and a reception followed the concert.



CMI Chairman Alexander Stubb (center) visits with FFN Board members at the Finland Centennial Forum (from left) Tim Nurvala, Ossi Rahkonen, Hanna Wagner and Anne-Mari Paster.

## CHANGING THE GAME: PEACEMAKING IN TURBULENT TIMES

**By Ossi Rahkonen**  
FFN President

**I**n planning its Finland 100 Signature Events, Finlandia Foundation approached the American Friends of the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI)

**The program that evolved**, "Changing the Game: Peacemaking in Turbulent Times," was a forum held November 9 at the Union Club of the City of New York. Co-sponsors were the American Friends of CMI, FFN and AmCham Finland, an international membership

based business-to-business network; Fazer Group, an international confectionary, bakery and food service company; and Heineken, the international brewer.

**Finland's Ambassador to the United Nations Kai Sauer** introduced President Ahtisaari, who spoke via video about the importance of peacemaking and how it is needed more than ever in the turbulent world. Keynote speakers were former Prime Minister of Finland and CMI Chairman Alexander Stubb, and Ernesto Zedillo, former president of Mexico, now a professor at Yale University.

**Stubb traced the origins of peacemaking** as a Finnish specialty not only during its 100 years of independence, but much earlier, when it was part of Sweden. Throughout its history Finland learned the





Keravan Mieslaulajat performed at the Independence Day gala at the Finnish Embassy in Washington, D.C.

### Finlandia Foundation National Capital Chapter

Among its activities, FFNCC hosted kantele artist Ida Elina in concert May 6 at the Church of the Epiphany in Washington, D.C. The chapter's December 6 Independence Day gala at the Finnish Embassy featured the men's choir from Finland, Keravan Mieslaulajat. The 90-year-old choir received a grant from FFN to assist in its centennial visit to the U.S. While at Dulles Airport (which was designed by Eero Saarinen) the group performed *Finlandia*, flash-mob style.



Finlandia Foundation Berkeley Chapter filled its Finnish Hall with a crowd of about 270 for the Finland Independence Centennial Gala on December 3. The classic 1930s building was formerly known as the United Finnish Kaleva Brothers & Sisters Lodge #21.

### Finlandia Foundation Suomi Chapter

Viipurin Lauluveikot, The Singing Fellows of Viipuri, toured the West Coast from August 27 to September 7 as part of the Finland 100 celebration. The 120-year-old men's chorus performed in Bellingham/Ferndale and Seattle, San Francisco/Berkeley, and Los Angeles, with the assist of a FFN grant to the FF Suomi Chapter.

### Finlandia Foundation Florida Chapter

drew a record crowd to its annual meeting in February, which was themed "From Kalevala to an Independent Finland: Images, Tales and Music." The program included a talk about Finland's history, selections by the Finnish Male Singers of Florida, and a live performance of scenes from the *Kalevala*.

### Finnish Heritage Museum

The FFN-affiliated organization in Fairport Harbor, Ohio, summarized its many events in a letter to Finland's Ambassador to the U.S. Kirsti Kauppi. The busy group enjoyed concerts (Spring Nordic Delights with Emily Stauch, and the Newlands Co-op with Sara Pajunen and Vidar Skrede); Juhannus bonfire on Lake Erie's beach; St. Urho's Day with three varieties of mojakka; participation in One World Day at the Cleveland Cultural Gardens, where FHM sponsors the Finnish Garden; a "Dancing Fairport" YouTube video in the official Finland 100 dance

challenge; a Celebration Dinner with entertainment and informational program; an official USPS cancellation and a postage stamp; and Pikkujoulu and Independence Day potluck dinner and party.

### Finns and Friends of Phoenix

The Phoenix chapter kicked off its Finland 100 celebrations with a March 25 gala co-hosted by Finlandia University President Philip Johnson and Gary Waissi, the Honorary Consul of Finland to Arizona and New Mexico. Bill Jackson, long-time friend and supporter of Finlandia University, sponsored this Finland 100 edition of the annual President's Reception, with music by the Olli Hirvonen Quartet from New York City.

In November, the Järnefelt Piano Trio---violinist Päivikki Nykter, cellist Katri Ervamaa and pianist Ruusamari Teppo---delighted Finns and Friends with a program of Sibelius, and the chapter enjoyed a SuomiFinland 100 afternoon of music and food in December.



North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum receives a Finland 100 mug from Ellen Liddle (right), president of Red River Finns of Fargo-Moorhead, and Marion Anderson, president of the Dakota Finnish Society of Minot.

### Red River Finns

North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum proclaimed December 6, 2017, Finland 100 Day in North Dakota. The proclamation ceremony, which took place December 12 at the Capitol in Bismarck, was attended by about 35 people with Finnish roots from the North Dakota communities of Rolla, Rocklake, Perth, Kintyre, Wing and Belden, as well as from Minnesota and Finland.

After meeting with Governor Burgum, the group gathered at Dakota Farms Restaurant for dinner and visiting. Special guest Troyd Geist, state folklorist with the North Dakota Council on the Arts, spoke about opportunities in preserving Finnish culture in North Dakota.



FinnsConnect South Florida and the Finnish American Chamber of Commerce teamed up to welcome spring at a Vappu picnic in the park in Pembroke Pines. It drew more than 120 members and "Finnthusiasts," including dozens of children. FinnsConnect wrapped up the Finland 100 year with a December 2 dinner party at a waterfront restaurant in Fort Lauderdale.

### Finger Lakes Finns

On March 10 in Ithaca, New York, organist Kent Washburn accompanied the 1929 Finnish silent movie *Mustalaishurmaaja* (The Gypsy Charmer) with his original musical score. He created the soundtrack from Finnish folk songs and classical selections. In May, the chapter hosted Centenary Lecturer Sharon Franklin-Rahkonen, who talked about the History of Finnish Independence.

Two Minnesota chapters produced Finnish music events in honor of Finland 100: the Finnish Music & Dance Festival organized by the **Finnish-Americans and Friends/Hibbing Chapter** in June, and a Fall Music Festival in October hosted by the **Kaleva Building Corporation** in Virginia.

Many chapters, like the **Finnish American Home Association** in Sonoma, California, combined Independence Day celebrations with their traditional Pikkujoulu parties.

### Finlandia Foundation New York Metropolitan

The New York chapter hosted multiple events throughout the year, from a September Street Fair on Bleeker Street to the performance of *Sibelius Inspiration* at Scandinavia House in November. The December 6 Finnish Independence Day Celebration at Park Avenue United Methodist Church (below) featured the invocation by Pastor Tiina Talvitie of the Finnish



A procession at the New York Metropolitan Chapter's Independence Day Celebration.

Lutheran Congregation; a welcome by Eero Kilpi, chapter president; the keynote address by Ambassador Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Director of the Office of UN-OHRLS; and music by Markus Kaitila, Johanna Telandar and Demetrios Jussi Tsinopoulos. Mistress of Ceremonies was Heli Sirviö.

### Finnish American Society of the Midwest

On November 5, the Chicago-area FFN chapter hosted author Anu Partanen (right), who spoke about her best-selling book, *The Nordic Theory of Everything*. The afternoon event at Estonian House included refreshments representing the five Nordic countries. Other activities, some in conjunction with the Finnish-American community in Milwaukee, included musical performances by Gospel Helsinki and the Swedish male choir Runebergskoren, and the Chicago Gala Celebration of Finland's Independence at the city's spectacular Cultural Center on December 1.

### Finlandia Foundation Northland Chapter

was busy with activities in Duluth, with the December 3 Itsenäisyyspäivä (Independence Day) Celebration luncheon and the Yhdessä - Together Finnish Independence Gala December 6 at the Duluth Depot Great Hall & Steffl Gallery, featuring a Finnish-American art exhibit, displays, refreshments and live music.

### FinnFunn 2017

The 25th anniversary of FinnFunn weekend was a combined celebration observing Finland's centennial. The festive gathering in Massachusetts is a joint effort of the **Finnish-American Heritage Society** of Connecticut, and the **Finnish Center at Saima Park** and **Finnish Heritage Society, Sovittaja** of Massachusetts. The 2017 festivities were supported by a FFN Finland 100 grant. Held August 18-20 in Leominster, Massachusetts, the activities included speakers, musicians, art exhibits, music, Tori, and a visit by SISU, the Traveling Sauna.

The Seattle-based Swedish Finn Historical Society hosted an exhibit of Märten Björkgren's stunning photographs of the Kvarken Archipelago, "New Land in the Old Country."



The Nordic Theory of Everything author Anu Partanen at the Chicago area Estonian House.



At its Suomi 100 dinner on November 5, the Finnish American Heritage Society in Canterbury, Connecticut recognized member Bill Aho, who is nearly the same age as the independent Finland. Bill, celebrating with daughter, Janet Burns, and son, Paul Aho at the Tamarack Lodge party, turned 100 on January 29, 2018.





At the Finlandia Foundation Los Angeles Gala, Consul General Stefan Lindstrom opened a bottle of champagne with dramatic flair in honor of Finland 100.

### Finland 100 Galas

Multiple chapters hosted gala centennial gatherings, including **Finlandia Foundation Boston**, **Finlandia Foundation San Francisco Bay Area**, and the **Finnish Center Association** in the Detroit area.

The **Finnish-American Society of Dallas/Fort Worth** imported talent from Finland to perform at its black-tie gala in November. Lola Odusoga, who was Miss Finland 1996 and second runner up to that year's Miss Universe, was the host; pop singer Laura Voutilainen (below) starred; and Ilkka Ihamäki entertained with some of his funny songs about current events.

Photo by Orvo Valila



### Finlandia Foundation of Montana

Blue and white lights and candles glowed and Finnish music filled the air in a downtown Missoula park on December 6, where FFM members shared glögi, small Finnish flags and information about Finland (below).

Among other activities, the chapter was instrumental in Missoula Mayor John Engen issuing a proclamation recognizing the month of December as Finland's 100th Anniversary of Independence Month. FFM also presented the film *Steam of Life* about the sauna, and "Nordic Happy Hour" with Finnish foods, music and decor.



POY Pirjo Polari-Khan delighted audiences in the Detroit area.

### Finlandia Foundation of Michigan

In July, visitors to the Farmington Founders Festival in suburban Detroit were treated to a free show by FFN Performer of the Year Pirjo Polari-Khan. Pirjo also rode in the festival parade as an honored guest and performed at the Finn Camp in Wixom in a weekend tour sponsored by the Finlandia Foundation of Michigan (formerly Finnish American Cultural Corporation).

### Centenary Lecturers

The Lecturer of the Year program was expanded for the Finland 100 year to feature five experts on different aspects of Finland's Independence and Finnish-America. Centenary Lecturers Thomas A. DuBois, Sharon Franklin-Rahkonen, Peter MacKeith, Börje Vähämäki and K. Marianne Wargelin traveled to appearances in Washington, D.C., Metro Detroit, the Delaware Valley, Chicago, Tucson, Phoenix, Colorado, Seattle, Minneapolis, and Lanesville, Massachusetts; Houghton, Michigan; and Ithaca, New York.



### SISU the Traveling Sauna

Throughout 2017, a cheery red sauna on wheels rolled across the U.S. as the mascot of Finland 100. The working sauna, towed for 22,000 miles, was a part of 102 events at 70 locations in 35 states. Finlandia Foundation was one of the sponsors of the project, which was supported by the Embassy of Finland in Washington, D.C.

Many FFN chapters hosted SISU, including **Atlanta Finland Society** in Georgia; **Finlandia Foundation Inland Northwest** in Idaho; **Finlandia Foundation Northwest** in Duluth, Minnesota; **Red River Finns** in Moorhead, Minnesota; **Finlandia Foundation of Montana**.

## FINLAND 100 MUSIC PROGRAM

Similar to the Performer of the Year program, FFN offered financial support

to chapters that booked an appearance by select musicians, including past POY Jazz guitarist Olli Hirvonen (2014) who traveled to Arizona in March for back-to-back performances booked by the **Finnish-American Club of Tucson** and **Finns and Friends of Phoenix**. Sara Pajunen (2015) played traditional tunes on her violin for the **Finnish Heritage Museum** in Fairport Harbor, Ohio. Craig Randal Johnson (1999) played "Piano Music from Finland" for audiences at Finland 100 events in Englewood, Colorado; Houghton, Michigan; Moorhead, Minnesota; and Ashtabula, Ohio.



**Sibelius Inspiration** was the Spotlight Event of the FFN Finland 100 Music Program. *Sibelius Inspiration* features Finnish cellist Jussi Makkonen and pianist Nazig Azejian in live performance with video, lights and sounds designed to evoke the natural world that inspired composer Jean Sibelius. Venues had the option of hosting a concert performance without the multi-media component.

**Makkonen and Azejian** are accomplished musicians, each with a master's degree from the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. They have appeared as soloists, in ensembles, and as a duet across Europe and in the U.S. Between October 14 and November 11, they performed *Sibelius Inspiration* in Seattle, Portland, San Diego, Denver, New York City and Newton, Massachusetts (Boston area), with the support of the FFN chapter in each of those locations.

A capacity crowd of 300 enjoyed *Sibelius Inspiration* hosted by House of Finland in San Diego. A gala dinner followed the concert, attended by (from left) Teuvo Pulkkinen, vice president of House of Finland, and his wife Marjut; Ossi and Karin Rahkonen; and House of Finland President Eeva Syvanen and her husband Henri Syvanen.



The Finnish American Heritage Association of Ashtabula, Ohio enjoyed "Piano Music from Finland" by Craig Randal Johnson in September at Bethany Lutheran Church. The FFN Performer of the Year in 1999 is flanked by FAHA Trustees (from left) Carol Mead, Jean Cupido, Elsa Shepard, Sue Rose, Linda Riddell and Janet Eskelin.

### Plucky Kantele Artist Ida Elina Tours U.S.

Inspired by slap guitar playing, Sibelius Academy-trained Ida Elina brings a unique and modern percussive style to the kantele, an ancient member of the dulcimer/zither family. She is billed as the world's first pop kantele player for her repertoire of contemporary music and traditional folk tunes.

As a **Finlandia Foundation Finland 100 Signature Event**, Ida Elina's inaugural U.S. tour took her to 10 cities, where FFN chapters hosted concerts that reached about 800 people who gave her rave reviews.

**Finlandia Foundation Utah** launched the tour in Provo on April 19, and Ida Elina wrapped her appearances on May 6 in Washington, D.C., hosted by **Finlandia Foundation National Capital Chapter**.

**In between, she traveled** to Seattle, Bellevue and Rosburg, Washington for appearances supported by the **Finlandia Foundation Seattle Chapter**, **FF Suomi Chapter** and the **Finnish-American Folk Festival** of Naselle. In Portland, she was hosted by **Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter**; in California she had concerts with



**Finlandia Club of Sacramento** and **House of Finland in San Diego**. The **Finlandia Foundation Twin Cities Chapter** hosted her in Minneapolis; and in Thomaston, Maine, the **Finnish Heritage House** sponsored Ida Elina's appearance.





**Embassy Events**

The Ambassador of Finland to the U.S. Kirsti Kauppi attended several events at FFN chapters throughout the year, and the Embassy of Finland in the United States planned a number of special Finland 100 activities in Washington, D.C. The Midsummer FinFun day on June 17 brought the Finnish game *mölkky* and Team Ajattomat from the Vantaa Gymnastics Club (above) to the National Mall. On December 2, the real Santa Claus traveled from Rovaniemi to Dupont Circle for a FinFun Christmas with music, activities for the kids, and Finnish gingerbread cookies and glögi.

"100 Friends of Finland" who delivered congratulatory messages in short YouTube videos included composer Kaija Saariaho, artist Eric Aho, performer Taina Elg, comedian Conan O'Brien, Minnesota Wild hockey player Mikko Koivu and representatives of Finnish America like FFN President Ossi Rahkonen. A fascinating 12-part series, *Centennial Story of Finland*, traces the country's history, and is linked at the Embassy website Finland.org.

**Hancock Happenings**

The Finnish American Heritage Center and Finlandia University in Hancock, Michigan organized two major events "in the heart of Finnish-America" during the Finland 100 year.

Juhannus '17, a three-day festival June 23-25, honored the centennials of Finland's Independence and Settler's Co-op in Bruce Crossing, and the 125th anniversary of the town of Toivola.

Finland's Ambassador to the U.S. Kirsti Kauppi was featured speaker, and SISU the Traveling Sauna popped up at various locations. There was a Tori (marketplace), Finnish Folk Music Camp, Juhannus kokko at Agate Beach on Lake Superior, performances by the Kivajat Youth Folk Dancers, music by Ameriikan Poijat, and a celebration of Finnish-American farm life at the preserved Hanka Finnish Homestead Museum in Askel.

In December, as it has every year since 1917, Finlandia University celebrated Finland's Independence Day. A *Musical Salute to Finland 100* featured pianist Craig Randal Johnson, the Copper Country Chorale and the Kivajat Youth Folk Dancers.

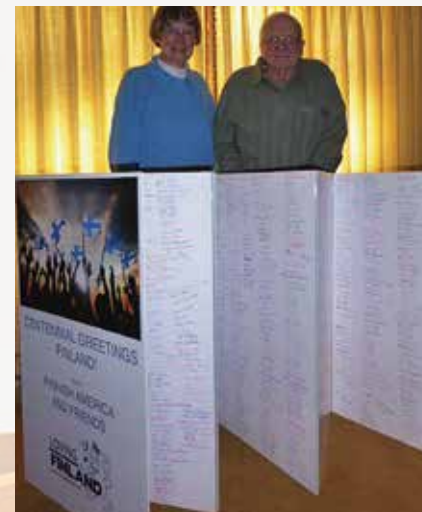
**Big Greetings from the U.S. to Finland**

As part of its Finland 100 celebrations, the Finlandia University Finnish Council in America in Hancock created a gigantic Centennial Greetings Finland! card that was sent to the people of Finland and President Sauli Niinistö. The project was a team effort that involved gathering 1,904 signatures at more than a dozen events in Michigan, and at FinnFest USA 2017 in Minneapolis.

David Savolainen conceived the project, which was designed by John Kiltinen. Linda Berry, Pauline Kiltinen and Judy Quirk assembled the accordion-folded card, shown (right) with Pauline and John Kiltinen.



Ambassador Kirsti Kauppi and FFN President Ossi Rahkonen at the Embassy's Independence Day Gala in Washington, D.C.



**P. J. C. Lindfors Legal Studies Fund**



The Finlandia Foundation scholarship program is nearly as old as the organization itself. This year, FFN Trustee Hanna Wagner and a Scholarship Committee of volunteers Mikko McFeely, Tracy Sanders, Pirjo Schulbach and Turto Turtiainen reviewed 46 applications from undergraduate and graduate students, and awarded \$35,000 to a dozen students. Additionally, the committee awarded \$8,000 to three students studying law in the United States and Finland.

Applicants must be actively enrolled in an accredited post-secondary education; Lindfors candidates must be enrolled in a law school within the United States that is approved by the American Bar Association, or enrolled in the law faculty of a Finnish university.

The next deadline for both types of scholarships is February 1, 2019. Find more information at FinlandiaFoundation.org.

**P.J.C. LINDFORS LEGAL STUDIES FUND**

Finnish-American attorney Pertti Lindfors of San Francisco believes in the importance of cross-cultural understanding in the legal field. He established a scholarship fund for American law students to study in Finland, and Finnish students to study law in the U.S. This year, three students were selected to receive Lindfors scholarships. Left to right:

**MARTINA CASTRÉN** is a senior researcher at the Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority (FCCA), where she focuses on antitrust and merger investigations. In addition, Martina is involved in legislative work; she has, for example, acted as a secretary to a working group preparing the reform of the Finnish Competition Act. She holds an LL.M. degree from the University of Helsinki (2013) and has studied at King's College London and Hanken School of Economics in Helsinki. She is currently a doctoral student at the University of Helsinki. In August 2018 Martina will enter Harvard Law School's one-year LL.M. program.

**JUSSI KUKKO** works as a capital markets associate in the Helsinki office of a leading international law firm. He holds LL.B. and LL.M. degrees from the University of Helsinki. During the next academic year, Jussi will be pursuing an LL.M. degree at Columbia Law School in New York City. An LL.M. program in the United States has been one of his goals since finishing his Finnish legal studies. "U.S. regulation and practices affect business lawyers' work everywhere in the world, especially in corporate transactions. Therefore, I feel that it is hugely beneficial also for Finnish lawyers to gain understanding of the U.S. legal system," he says. "I really look forward to my coming LL.M. year, which I believe will be one of the most exciting experiences of my life, both on a professional and personal level."

**TUOMAS TIENSUU** is studying for the LL.M. degree at Columbia Law School in New York City for the 2017-2018 academic year. During his studies, he has taken courses that relate to American contract and corporate law, corporate finance, international securities regulation and comparative law. He is also a member of the Columbia Journal of Asian Law and Columbia Legal Tech Association. After graduation Tuomas intends to continue his career as a dual-qualified corporate lawyer, helping Finnish clients to do business in the United States.



A non-profit, philanthropic organization, FFN was founded in 1953. For information about its mission and to contribute to its programs:

FinlandiaFoundation.org office@finlandiafoundation.org  
PO Box 92046 Pasadena, CA 91109 626.795.2081  
May 2018

# FFN Scholarships

Students pursuing a variety of degrees at universities in the U.S. and Finland were selected to receive scholarships totaling \$35,000. Of the 12 recipients, two are U.S. citizens, two are Finnish, and eight are dual nationals.

**1. BENJAMIN ALLDRITT** is a first year Ph.D. student in Engineering Physics in the Department of Applied Physics at Aalto University. He arrived in Finland in 2010 on a Fulbright student grant and now focuses on fabricating and understanding structures at the atomic scale. By combining experimental physics with machine learning methods, it will be possible to better understand the complexity of the world around us. Prior to his doctoral studies, Benjamin received his Master's Degree in Engineering Physics at Aalto University. In his free time, he is learning Finnish, rock climbing and running marathons.

**2. FRANZ CARD** is pursuing a Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering with a focus on mechatronics at Aalto University in Finland. Although he has lived most of his life in the U.S. and received his Bachelor's Degree from the Pennsylvania State University, he wanted to experience life in Finland and chose the transition period between bachelor's to master's studies. Franz has been a competitive gymnast for 18 years, and currently competes for the Finnish National Team. Last year, he competed at the 2017 World Championships in Montreal, and is now training for the 2020 Olympics.

**3. SETH DAHL** is enrolled in Finlandia University's Finnish and Nordic Studies program, where his undergraduate degree work focuses on Finnish language and history, Finnish-American folk traditions, and anthropology. He is studying the Finnish and Northern Sami languages, and intends to pursue a graduate degree in linguistics. Seth works as a research assistant for an upcoming Finnish American Heritage Center exhibition, "Copper Country Voices of Dissent in the Great War." He hopes to study Finnish as a second language in Finland next year between semesters, and eventually pursue his master's degree in Finland; he plans to work with language revitalization programs. Seth enjoys listening to Finnish music and recently took a Finnish folk dance class.

**4. RUUT DEMEO** is a Finnish author, composer and lyricist whose composition credits include music in film and TV in the United States and Canada. She is currently studying composition and creative writing in Baltimore, and plans to create content for young audiences that is inspired by Nordic folklore, with special emphasis on the Finnish *Kalevala*. Ruut is a Mellon Scholarship recipient and member of Phi Theta Kappa. She believes in the power of storytelling and in pursuing excellence in content creation, especially for young people, whose futures are shaped by their ability to imagine, aspire and achieve.

**5. BEATA HARJU** is pursuing her MFA in screenwriting at the American Film Institute Conservatory in Los Angeles. Her earlier work as a screenwriter and actress includes screenwriting for the animated feature film *Moomins on the Riviera*; screenwriting, producing, and acting in the comedy short film *Catcalling Virgin*; and playing Honey in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and Jean in *August: Osage County* at the National Swedish Theatre in Finland.

**6. MARKUS HIUKKA** is third year student at the University of Washington with a dual major in Aquatic Fisheries Sciences and Finnish, and a minor in Marine Biology. He is also a First Year Interest Group leader, and teaches a small class of incoming freshmen how to navigate the vast UW campus and help them succeed in their first year in college. With this scholarship, Markus is able to finalize a trip to Finland this summer to see family and hopefully participate in a CIMO translation course in Tampere. Marcus is the recipient of the Aune Koski scholarship given to an outstanding student from the Pacific Northwest.

**7. UWA IDOUZEE** is a photojournalist and documentary filmmaker based in Finland who recently returned from a two-week photo assignment in Nigeria. He studied photojournalism at the University of Tampere and now works for the Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE. Uwa is entering the Documentary Media Studies Graduate Certificate program at The New School in New York City. The intensive, one-year curriculum is designed to deepen students' knowledge in the production, theory and art of documentary film.

**8. LAURA KIHLMSTROM** is a Finnish native pursuing a dual degree at the University of South Florida in Tampa. She expects to graduate in May 2021 with a Ph.D. in cultural anthropology and Master of Public Health Degree in Maternal and Child Health. Laura is broadly interested in immigrant health, specifically the ways in which eating practices and food are connected to the health and well-being of non-native groups in the U.S. In her research, she asks questions such as "Why do we eat what we eat?" and "How do immigrants position themselves in American society?" She has been involved in research studies related to food insecurity and hunger in Florida, and has presented her research at national conferences. In Finland, she co-authored a book on global food security and published dozens of columns and expert pieces related to food and agriculture.

**9. AINO LARSEN** is the Scandinavian Program language and internship coordinator and Finnish instructor at Brigham Young University. She is also associate director of an educational organization that takes teachers and administrators on professional development tours to Finland and elsewhere in search of innovative methods. Aino is pursuing a postgraduate degree in Education: Innovation and Change, in 2018-2019 at the University of Leicester. A native of Finland, she is interested in the Finnish education system and discovering practical ways to implement lessons learned there. For several years she has been making Scandinavian connections in the Rocky Mountains and promoting cross-Atlantic educational exchange. She is the activity chair of the FFN Utah chapter, and single mother of three school-aged children.

**10. SAARA MAHBOUBA** is a first generation American, born and raised in the U.S., with Finnish and Iraqi parents; she has strong ties to her Finnish heritage. She is an artist with a background in art history from New York University, and work experience with galleries and art-based non-government organizations. She recently moved to Helsinki to pursue her Master's Degree in Visual Culture and Contemporary Art at Aalto University. Her work centers around the intersection of identity formation, social migration, theory and visual culture.

**11. AINO SOFIA MOLIMBI** is a graduate student at Goddard College in Vermont pursuing an MFA in Creative Writing for playwriting. She is a proud Finnish-American who incorporates her heritage into her writing. Born in Portland, Oregon (her mother is from Rauma, Finland), Aino Sofia discovered her passion as a teenager, when she joined a local theatre group while living in Helsinki. Her thesis play focuses on themes of immigration, cross-cultural exchange, and the search for a sense of "home." She is an award-winning playwright who worked for many years in New York City as a theatre director and actor. She is a member of The Dramatists Guild of America, SAG-AFTRA, and Actors' Equity Association.

**12. NATHALIE RITA** is a doctoral student in sociology at the University of Hawaii, where her research focuses on globalization and international migration. Born in Hämeenlinna, Finland, she was raised in the United States but says she was lucky to spend every summer of her childhood enjoying the beautiful Finnish summers with her sister and grandparents.



# Chapter News

## Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter

In honor of the 100th anniversary of Finland's independence from Russia, the Finnish Independence Monument was unveiled Saturday, January 6, 2018 at Nordia House in Portland, Oregon. The six-foot, 2,200-pound piece of Finnish granite bears the Finnish Coat of Arms and the words "Independent Finland" in Finnish, Swedish and English.

Katariina Lehtonen, a founding member and current vice president of Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter (FFCPC), and trustee of Finlandia Foundation National, conceived the project and was instrumental in it becoming a reality. FFCPC, the Finnish American Historical Society of the West, the Finnish Messiah Lutheran Church and members of the Finnish-American community were sponsors of the impressive tribute. Finlandia Sauna Products of Tigard, Oregon, provided immeasurable support.

The dedication ceremony included music, a blessing by Pastor Seppo Airas of the Finnish Church, and comments by Vesa Vihavainen, Finland's Honorary Consul in Oregon, and Katariina Lehtonen. (Photo 4. at far right.)

## Book It with FFN

Each member of FFN is entitled to receive a copy of the book that details the history of Finlandia Foundation, *Black Ties and Miners' Boots: Inventing Finnish-American Philanthropy*. Jon L. Saari, a historian and Northern Michigan University professor emeritus, researched and wrote the book.

Chapter chairs have received copies to distribute. It's also available to purchase at FinlandiaFoundation.org or contact Maria Kizirian at FFN: office@finlandiafoundation.org, or call 626.795.2081.



**1. The Finnish-American Society of the Midwest** hosted Centenary Lecturer Tom DuBois, who spoke on "The *Kalevala* and its meaning in Finnish culture over the past 100 years." The March 4 program at Estonian House included music by soprano Anne Illi and the Sibelius Male Chorus.



**2.** Sharon Franklin-Rahkonen visits with an audience member at the Holocaust Memorial Center in Farmington Hills, Michigan, where she spoke about the Jews in Finland before and during World War II. Despite the country's alliance with Nazi Germany, Finland largely protected its

Jewish population from the Holocaust. The Associate Professor of History at Indiana University of Pennsylvania is also one of the FFN Centenary Lecturers. **Finlandia Foundation of Michigan** received a grant from FFN to support her participation in the speakers series.  
*Photo by Glenn Kujansuu*

**3.** Ambassador of Finland to the U.S. Kirsti Kauppi (second from right) was guest speaker at the the February meeting of **Finlandia Foundation Florida**. In attendance were (from left) Barry Heiniluoma, president of The Finnish Heritage Society-Sovittaja, Kaarina Langeland, president of FF



Florida Chapter, and FFN President Ossi Rahkonen. During her visit to Lake Worth and Palm Beach, Ambassador Kauppi also spoke at Finland House and met with the senior residents of the Finnish American Village.

**4.** At the dedication of the Finnish Independence Monument at Nordia House in Portland, guests were invited to honor someone by placing a white rose at its base. Katariina Lehtonen, vice president of the **Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter**, spearheaded the monument project.

## Cape Ann Finns Form Chapter



At two gathering events in March, the newly organized Cape Ann Finns called on residents to share materials and memories to create a display and multi-media presentation.

**By Rob Ranta**  
Cape Ann Finns Acting President

Cape Ann Finns was formed in the fall of 2017 when a group of six Finns from Rockport and Gloucester, Massachusetts, saw the need to preserve the rich heritage of their early Finnish community by creating, from member contributions, an online record of Finnish life, especially older Finns who remember their immigrant forebears. FFN trustee Anita Smiley spoke about the benefits of FFN affiliation; sharing the Finnish story on Cape Ann to a national audience was especially appealing.

In six months time membership has grown to 166: 108 on Cape Ann, 30 within driving distance, and 28 from around the U.S., all linked to Cape Ann. A sizable number represents younger, assimilated generations eager to learn more about their Finnish heritage. Membership is open to all.

FFN recently approved the group's affiliation to the national organization. Our official name is Cape Ann Finns Chapter, Finlandia Foundation National. The group will combine its annual business meeting with a program and social each September. In addition, Cape Ann Finns (CAF) co-sponsors events with established groups.

In March, St. Paul Lutheran Church and CAF presented "Sound an Echo," with violinists/singers

Sara Pajunen and Rachael Kilgour. In May, CAF co-sponsored with the Lanesville Community Center "Traditions of Finnish-American Music." It includes a display and multi-media presentation created with instruments, music memorabilia, stories, recollections and photographs donated by CAF members.

At the same time, a designer is building the organization's website, and members are conducting oral interviews of elderly Finns.

We are pleased to join the national effort giving voice to our proud Finnish roots and Finnish imprint in America.

## Welcome!

FFN welcomes Cape Ann Finns and the Finnish Language School of North Texas as the newest organizations to affiliate with Finlandia Foundation. We now have 58 chapters in 25 states and Washington, D.C.

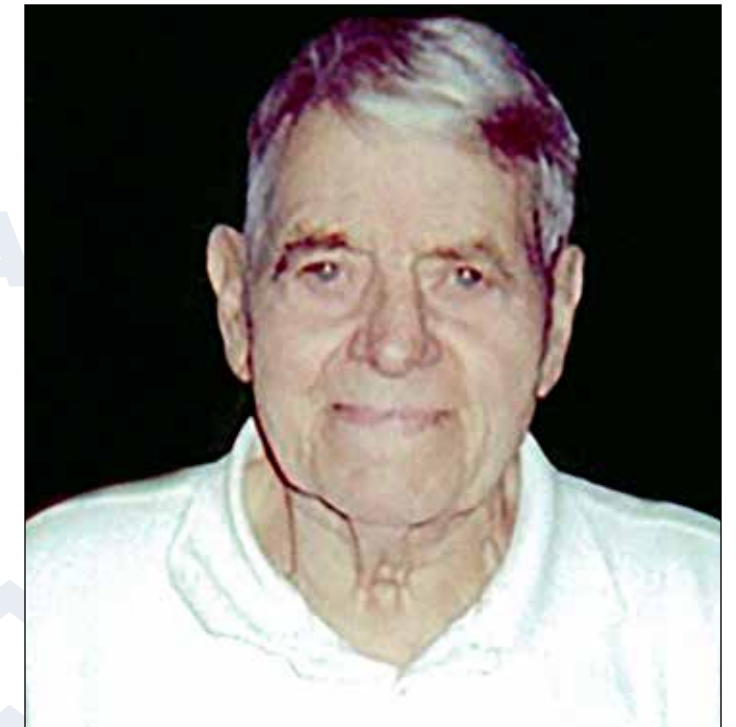
A story about the new chapter in Texas will appear in the FFN Fall News.

## FF National Capital Chapter Mourns Loss

In his 90 years, Per Erkki "Erik" Lindstrom traveled far, from his birthplace in Tenala, Finland, to building a business in Virginia, and creating a signature feature of the acclaimed Embassy of Finland building in Washington, D.C. A founding member of the Finlandia Foundation National Capital Chapter, he passed away in October of 2017.

Erik was the youngest of Isak Edvard and Linnea Lindstrom's 10 children. After serving in the Finnish army, the master mechanic came to America in 1951 and served two years in the United States Army. He became a U.S. citizen in 1954, and a decade later launched his company, Saunas by Erkki. "Finland's own authentic sauna builder" designed and constructed hundreds of saunas, including the one in the Embassy.

In addition to FFNCC, he was a founding member of the Port Tobacco River Conservancy. At First Baptist Church of Welcome, he was known for singing *Silent Night* in Swedish at Christmastime. Because of his experience in an orphanage as a child, he supported the charity Christmas Shoe Box, Operation Christmas Child, so that children



will get something for Christmas. Erik is survived by Alice, his wife of 62 years, two daughters, Nancy Cantrell (Bill) and Laura Snell (Woody), and two granddaughters. He was preceded in death by his grandson.

## Lecturers on DVD

In recognition of the importance of the Finland 100 year in 2017, FFN took a unique approach to its Lecturer of the Year program with a slate of five Centenary Lecturers, each a scholar on a different topic related to Finland's national independence and identity.

The Centenary Lecturers---Thomas DuBois, Sharon Franklin-Rahkonen, Peter MacKeith,

Borje Vähämäki and K. Marianne Wargelin---came together for one joint presentation, "Independent Finland: A North American Perspective," at FinnFestUSA 2017 in Minneapolis.

That entertaining and informative program is available online at [FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org) and on DVD to borrow or purchase from the FFN office.

Northern Michigan University Professor Emeritus Jon Saari, who chaired the Lecturer of the Year program, moderated the Centennial Lecture. He summarizes it as, "Five scholars and three large questions created fifteen, four-minute reflections, three by each scholar. Each reflection flows from a single iconic image chosen by the scholar.

"Image, words, four minutes. No more. No less. Within the constraints of this framework, our scholars pulled together a mosaic of the story of independent Finland. May it be a lasting tribute to contemporary Finland as seen from the North American Finnish diaspora."

The 94-minute video would make a great addition to a library and as a program at a chapter gathering. The cost of the DVD is \$10 plus shipping and handling. To order a copy, contact Maria Kizirian at FFN: [office@finlandiafoundation.org](mailto:office@finlandiafoundation.org) or call 626.795.2081.



## FFN Board Meets in Dallas



From left) FFN Trustees Anita Häkkinen Smiley, Jacqueline Harjula and Tim Nurvala visit with Texans Jim and Peggy O'Connor at the pre-concert reception in Dallas.

The Finlandia Foundation Board of Trustees had a productive meeting March 16-17 in the Dallas area. Committee meetings were held prior to the Friday-Saturday session of the full board. The committee chairs shared recommendations for grant and scholarship awards and selection of the Performer of the Year and the Lecturer of the Year, and had an opportunity to meet members of the local Finnish-American community.

As explained in articles throughout this newsletter, the board approved \$169,000 to be distributed to students for general and law school scholarships, and grants to individuals and organizations for a wide range of projects related to Finnish America and Finland. Additionally, monies were budgeted for sponsorship of Soiva International Music Camp at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, and matching grants to aid students attending Salolampi Language Village in Bemidji, Minnesota.

The board said farewell to Jon Saari, who has served on the board for 19 years, and elected two new trustees (see page three).

Following several hours of meetings on Friday, FNN trustees enjoyed an evening reception and concert. The gathering allowed board members

an opportunity to meet members of the Finnish-American Society of Dallas/Fort Worth (informally known as the TexFinns) and others involved in the local Finnish church, the Finnish women's association Suominaisten Yhdistys, and the Suomi-Koulu, the Finnish Language School of North Texas.

Amidst the grand pianos displayed at Collora Piano in Dallas, guests mingled over a buffet featuring delicious Karelian piirakka, voileipäkakku (a bread cake layered with salmon or ham), fresh fruit, and a cake recognizing the 65th anniversary of Finlandia Foundation. Following refreshments, the audience enjoyed a lovely program by pianist Ruusamari Teppo (below); she was joined by Yuki Kumamoto for two numbers on two pianos.

The Suomi-Koulu Director Leila Jäämuru and several members of the local organizations helped make the event possible, says Finlandia Foundation's Maria Kizirian, who thanks them for their generous participation.



FFN President Ossi Rahkonen extended thanks to TexFinns President Jeremy Martin and all of those present from the local Finnish-American community for a gracious welcome to the Lone Star State.

## Jon Saari Departs FFN Board

After 19 years of volunteer service to Finlandia Foundation, Trustee Jon Saari has stepped down from the FFN board. He plans to devote time to personal projects of his own and jointly with his wife Christine, an artist and writer, both at home in Marquette, Michigan, and at her family's homestead in Austria.

Among his many contributions to FFN, Jon researched and wrote its history, *Black Ties and Miners' Boots: Inventing Finnish-American Philanthropy*, for Finlandia Foundation's 50th anniversary in 2003. He also produced the second edition in 2010.

Jon coordinated the Lecturer of the Year program, and was responsible for selecting presenters who not only offered expertise on topical subjects related to Finland and Finnish America, but were able to share their material in an engaging way to FFN chapters across the U.S.

A historian and Northern Michigan University



FFN Trustees Teuvo Pulkkinen (left) and Jon Saari at the board meeting in Dallas.

professor emeritus, Jon brought valuable insights and broad perspective to each FFN board meeting, as the trustees reviewed existing and proposed programs and activities in the context of Finlandia Foundation's mission, goals and future.

"Jon's astute and carefully-considered observations were always appreciated," says FFN President Ossi Rahkonen. "We'll miss his thoughtful input and thank him, and wish him, Christine and their family all the best."

## FFN@65 continued from page one

He conceived a nationwide organization which would "unite all Finland Friends in this country," and also perpetuate Finnish-American cultural institutions. Finally, after seven years and two ambitious and failed attempts, he and his wife, Leonora Curtin Paloheimo, assembled seven friends at their Pasadena home on January 21, 1953, and Finlandia Foundation was born.

Now, in its 65th year, Finlandia Foundation National continues to nurture a connection with Finland, and strives to encourage a sense of Finnishness among the younger generations in the U.S. FFN has grown to a network of 58 chapters in 25 states and Washington, D.C., and is the largest organization dedicated to supporting Finnish America.

In 2013, at FFN's 60th anniversary gala in Pasadena, Ambassador of Finland to the U.S. Ritva Koukku-Ronde commended the foresight of the founders. She noted that with 750,000 people of Finnish-American descent, the two countries are "connected politically, historically and culturally." She encouraged chapters to continue programs like Pikkujoulu and language classes to "keep Finnish culture alive and make people aware of their roots."

"Knowing one's heritage is invaluable," said Anita Häkkinen Smiley, who was the outgoing FFN president at the time of the gala. "We are celebrating not only our history but our glowing future."

Also at the 60th anniversary event, FFN Past President and Trustee Emeritus John Laine said that he sees America not as a melting pot but a mosaic in which Finland is a blue tile. "Keep that blue tile shining," he encouraged. "Please keep that blue tile sparkling."

At the Joint Chapter Meeting in November of 2016 in Washington, D.C., Ambassador of Finland to the U.S. Kirsti Kauppi expressed appreciation, saying, "We are grateful for the work you do and the interest you show in both Finnish America and Finland."

Finland's President Sauli Niinistö, at FinnFest USA 2017 in Minneapolis, also recognized the efforts of Finlandia Foundation National. "In Finland we highly respect American Finnish people and notice this feeling is mutual. We are very proud that Finnish-Americans want to have a connection to Finland," he said, adding drolly, "if even more than sometimes we do in Finland."

"It is the role and responsibility of Finlandia Foundation to build on the base laid by the founders in 1953," says FFN President Ossi Rahkonen. "In many ways, our challenges are the same as they were 65 years ago, with subsequent generations ever further from their roots.

"At the same time, we recognize the opportunities of our changing population, and are actively looking for innovative ways to strengthen the Finnish-American community to ensure its vitality for generations to come."

# KIITOS! THANK YOU FOR YOUR GIFTS!

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*continued next page*

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## CENTENNIAL HONOR GIFTS

The names of Finlandia Foundation members and friends below are followed by those they have remembered with a Centennial Honor Gift. To read the tributes and make a gift to honor your loved ones visit [FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org).

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Richard Kotila  
Ruth Kotila  
Charles & Judith Larson  
Charles Wilfred & Lillie Larson  
Allan Lepp  
Gertrude Lepp  
Betsey Norgard  
Doris Ann-Mari  
Grönlund Robbins  
Marjallisa Rajala  
Jack Rajala  
Betty Ridan  
John A. Ridan  
Albert Riippi  
N. Jean Riippi  
Susan & Ray Sutherland  
Edith & Erwin Savala  
Ruthann Swanson  
Jack W. & Hilma S.  
(Riippi) Rintala  
Ruth Ann Swanson  
Matti (Hautala) Hill & Aino Elizabeth (Rako) Hill  
Eva Wahlroos  
Sven Wahlroos

## FFN Thanks You for Finland 100 Fundraising Success

By Tim Nurvala

FFN Trustee and Fundraising Chair

In this past Finland 100 centennial year, Finlandia Foundation National was able to achieve fundraising success and support five Lecturers of the Year, a Performer of the Year, Soiva Music Camp, and award a record amount of grants and scholarships. Furthermore, for the first time in our 65-year history, we were able to provide approximately \$100,000 to chapters to help support their Finland 100 celebrations.

All of this was achieved thanks to the support of almost 200 donors nationally who helped us raise \$124,000 this past year. Those donations were matched by a \$100,000 gift from the Paloheimo Foundation, which brought our grand total to \$224,000.

Finlandia Foundation is grateful to everyone who supported our efforts in this important centennial year. In the true spirit of this special year, nearly 100 people (almost half of all the donors) stretched their giving to make gifts of \$100 in honor of Finland's 100th anniversary.

We are proud of our success this year, but our long-term success has been even better. With your support and sound investments, we have increased our endowment by over \$1 million over the last five years, while giving away more than \$1 million in grants, scholarships and program support.

Finlandia Foundation donors should feel confident that their investment in our organization is used to effectively and impactfully celebrate and promote Finnish culture here in the United States. With your continued support, we'll be able to match this past year's success and do a whole lot more.

*Kiitos paljon - Thank you!*

**FinnFest USA 2018 will be held in Tampere, Finland June 24-29.**

**For program details and registration information go to [finnfest.us](http://finnfest.us).**

*Moomin Museum photo by Laura Vanzo, courtesy Visit Tampere*



## Finlandia Foundation® National Chapters: Year affiliated with FFN and president/chairman

Find more information about the chapters at [FinlandiaFoundation.org](http://FinlandiaFoundation.org)

### ALASKA

**Anchorage Suomi Finland Club/2015**  
Hanna Eklund  
[hanna.eklund@gmail.com](mailto:hanna.eklund@gmail.com)

### ARIZONA

**The F-A Club of Tucson/2007**  
Tommi Koskinen  
[tucsonfinnclub@gmail.com](mailto:tucsonfinnclub@gmail.com)

**Finns and Friends of Phoenix/2010**

Joy Dorvinen  
[finnsandfriendsclub@gmail.com](mailto:finnsandfriendsclub@gmail.com)

### CALIFORNIA

**Finlandia Club of Sacramento /2006**  
Chad Riding  
[criding2002@yahoo.com](mailto:criding2002@yahoo.com)

**FF Berkeley Chapter/2016**

Kaj Rekola  
[krekola@gmail.com](mailto:krekola@gmail.com)

**FF Los Angeles Chapter/1974**

Ellen Harju  
[harju@ucla.edu](mailto:harju@ucla.edu)

**FF San Francisco Bay Area Chapter/1956**

Nina Ehrsam  
[nehrsam@mac.com](mailto:nehrsam@mac.com)  
Heidi Saario  
[heidi@playthepiano.ca](mailto:heidi@playthepiano.ca)

**F-A Home Association/2005**

Sonoma  
Stephen Rowe  
[directors@fahausa.org](mailto:directors@fahausa.org)

**The House of Finland-San Diego/2015**

Eeva Syvanen  
[eeva\\_syvanen@yahoo.com](mailto:eeva_syvanen@yahoo.com)

### COLORADO

**FF Colorado Chapter/1993**  
Denver  
Kirsi St. Marie  
[kirsistmarie@comcast.net](mailto:kirsistmarie@comcast.net)

### CONNECTICUT

**F-A Heritage Society/2011**  
Canterbury  
Steven Bousquet  
[stevenbousquet@yahoo.com](mailto:stevenbousquet@yahoo.com)

### DELAWARE

**Delaware Valley Finnish-Americans/2017** Newark  
Roy Palo  
[palonpaa@aol.com](mailto:palonpaa@aol.com)

**New Sweden Alliance/2017**  
Yorklyn *Affiliated Member*  
Sheila Romine [sromine@newswedenalliance.org](mailto:sromine@newswedenalliance.org)

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

**FF National Capital Chapter /1959**  
Carina Hreib  
[chreib@imf.org](mailto:chreib@imf.org)

### FLORIDA

**FF Florida Chapter/1954**  
Lantana  
Kaarina Langeland  
[kaarinalangeland@comcast.net](mailto:kaarinalangeland@comcast.net)

**FinnsConnect South Florida /2017**

Miami-Dade-Broward Counties  
Kati Makinen  
[finnsconnect@gmail.com](mailto:finnsconnect@gmail.com)

### GEORGIA

**Atlanta Finland Society, Inc. /1975**  
Tina Huoso Harmon  
[tinahuoso@yahoo.com](mailto:tinahuoso@yahoo.com)

### IDAHO

**FF Inland Northwest Chapter /1970**  
Don Heikkila  
[idahofinn@hotmail.com](mailto:idahofinn@hotmail.com)

### ILLINOIS

**F-A Society of the Midwest /1997** Chicago area  
Liisa McMahon  
[liisa.mcmahon@yahoo.com](mailto:liisa.mcmahon@yahoo.com)

### MAINE

**F-A Heritage Society of Maine/2012** West Paris  
Dale Piirainen  
[dwplmp@megalink.net](mailto:dwplmp@megalink.net)

**Finnish Farmers Club/2012**

Monson  
Inez Goodine  
[Donaldp.Higgins@gmail.com](mailto:Donaldp.Higgins@gmail.com)

**Finnish Heritage House/2007**

South Thomaston  
Jacqueline Harjula  
[jackielee207@gmail.com](mailto:jackielee207@gmail.com)

### MARYLAND

**FF Baltimore Area Chapter /1974**  
Markku Koppanen  
[markku\\_koppanen@hotmail.com](mailto:markku_koppanen@hotmail.com)

### MASSACHUSETTS

**Cape Ann Finns/2017**  
Rob Ranta  
[capeannfinns@gmail.com](mailto:capeannfinns@gmail.com)

**FF Boston, Inc./1955**  
Linda Lindell  
[lindalindell@verizon.net](mailto:lindalindell@verizon.net)

**F-A Society of Cape Cod/2012**  
Stephen Trimble  
[satcapecod@hotmail.com](mailto:satcapecod@hotmail.com)

**The Finnish Center at Saima Park, Inc./2005** Fitchburg  
Linda Byrne  
[lin\\_joebyrne@msn.com](mailto:lin_joebyrne@msn.com)

**The Finnish Heritage Society - Sovittaja/2006** Rutland  
Barry Heiniluoma  
[fhss@sovittaja.org](mailto:fhss@sovittaja.org)

### MICHIGAN

**FF-Michigan/2012** Royal Oak  
Frank Gottberg  
[frankk@att.net](mailto:frankk@att.net)

**F-A Society of West Central Michigan/2007** Coopersville  
Marie Godell Fowler  
[lydiamarie@earthlink.net](mailto:lydiamarie@earthlink.net)

**Finnish Center Association /2004** Farmington Hills  
Mia Lamminen  
[finnishcenter@gmail.com](mailto:finnishcenter@gmail.com)

**Finnish Theme Committee of Hancock - FF Copper Country Chapter/2006**  
James Kurtti  
[jkurtti@chartermi.net](mailto:jkurtti@chartermi.net)

**Upper Peninsula Chapter of the League of F-A Societies /2006** Marquette  
Ron J. Hill  
[ronjhil38@aol.com](mailto:ronjhil38@aol.com)

### MINNESOTA

**Finnish-Americans and Friends-Hibbing Chapter/1998**  
Edward Pajunen  
[edwardpajunen@gmail.com](mailto:edwardpajunen@gmail.com)

**FF Northland Chapter/2010**  
Duluth  
Steve Leppala  
[steve.leppala@gmail.com](mailto:steve.leppala@gmail.com)

**FF Twin Cities Chapter/1993**  
Betsey Norgard  
[norgard@paulbunyan.net](mailto:norgard@paulbunyan.net)

**Kaleva Building Corporation /2017** Virginia  
Art Maki  
[makiart@uslink.net](mailto:makiart@uslink.net)

**Red River Finns/2011** Moorhead  
Ellen Liddle  
[ellen.liddle@yahoo.com](mailto:ellen.liddle@yahoo.com)

### MONTANA

**FF Montana/2017** Missoula  
Jenni Rohrbach  
[finlandiafoundationmontana@gmail.com](mailto:finlandiafoundationmontana@gmail.com)

**Finn Club of Helena/2007**  
Marjorie Peura Reilly  
[marjpr@jeffbb.net](mailto:marjpr@jeffbb.net)

**Red Lodge Knights and Ladies of Kaleva/2011** Roberts  
Claudia Morley  
[cmorleylau94@gmail.com](mailto:cmorleylau94@gmail.com)

### NEW YORK

**Finger Lakes Finns/2006**  
Spencer  
Oiva Vesa  
[oiva56@aol.com](mailto:oiva56@aol.com)

**FF New York Metropolitan Chapter/1954**  
Eero Kilpi  
[kilpi@me.com](mailto:kilpi@me.com)

### OHIO

**F-A Heritage Association of Ashtabula County/2004**  
Elsa Shepard  
[ellishepard@yahoo.com](mailto:ellishepard@yahoo.com)

**Finnish Heritage Museum/2015**  
Fairport Harbor  
Lasse Hiltunen  
[lassehiltunen@icloud.com](mailto:lassehiltunen@icloud.com)

### OREGON

**FF Columbia-Pacific Chapter/2001** Portland  
Greg Jacob  
[jacobgk@comcast.net](mailto:jacobgk@comcast.net)

### PENNSYLVANIA

**FF Pittsburgh Chapter/1990**  
Seija Cohen  
[SeijaC@aol.com](mailto:SeijaC@aol.com)

**F-A Society of the Delaware Valley/2006** Philadelphia  
Marja Kaisla  
[mjkaisla@yahoo.com](mailto:mjkaisla@yahoo.com)

### SOUTH DAKOTA

**Frederick Forward - FF Dakota Chapter/2012**  
Heidi Marttila-Losure  
[hmmartti@yahoo.com](mailto:hmmartti@yahoo.com)

**Sons and Daughters of Suomi/2015** Deadwood  
Larry Rantapaa  
[rantapaa@gmail.com](mailto:rantapaa@gmail.com)

### TEXAS

**F-A Society of Dallas/ Fort Worth/1991**  
Jeremy Martin  
[president@textfinn.org](mailto:president@textfinn.org)

**Finnish Language School of North Texas/2018**  
Leila Jaamuru [puheenjohtaj@suomi-koulu.com](mailto:puheenjohtaj@suomi-koulu.com)

### UTAH

**FF Utah Chapter/2016** Provo  
Tiina Watts  
[tiiwatts@gmail.com](mailto:tiiwatts@gmail.com)

### VIRGINIA

**FF Tidewater Virginia Chapter/1978**  
Riikka Mohorn  
[riikkamohorn@verizon.net](mailto:riikkamohorn@verizon.net)

### WASHINGTON

**FF Seattle Chapter/1968**  
Mikko Männistö  
[mikkotm@hotmail.com](mailto:mikkotm@hotmail.com)

**FF Suomi Chapter/2010**  
Bellingham  
Brend Hunt-Holma  
[brendhh@yahoo.com](mailto:brendhh@yahoo.com)

**F-A Folk Festival/2011** Naselle  
Mike Swanson  
[swanson@wwest.net](mailto:swanson@wwest.net)  
**Swedish-Finn Historical Society/1991** Seattle  
Bill Carlson  
[carlsonharrington@comcast.net](mailto:carlsonharrington@comcast.net)