



# FINLANDIA FOUNDATION®, INC.

## San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

**February 2011**

**Miriam Leino Eldridge, Editor**

**Web Page: [www.finlandiasf.org](http://www.finlandiasf.org)**

### *Message from the President*

#### **Hockey, anyone?**

It finally happened. The San Jose Sharks woke up and signed, not just one, but two quality goalies for the 2010-11 season. During the summer, Antero Niittymäki signed with the Sharks, and later they landed Antti Niemi, whom the Chicago Blackhawks had let go. For years I have grumbled why the Sharks have not gone after some of the many top-notch Finnish goalies that Finland produces, and who are currently playing in the NHL. Toskala and Kiprusoff made short stops in San Jose, but were unable to unseat Nabokov as the number one goaltender.

Antero Niittymäki was the starting goaltender for Finland at the Torino Winter Olympics 2006, a team that in many experts' opinion, played the best hockey of the tournament in winning the silver medals. Why we always seem to stumble against our archrival Sweden is a mystery to me.

In the last Stanley Cup playoffs, Antti Niemi was like a steel curtain in front of the Blackhawks' net, and it was largely thanks to him that the Chicago Blackhawks won the Stanley Cup.

Looking forward to an exciting hockey season,

--George

P.S. The early season has been somewhat of a yo-yo for the Sharks. However, we are looking for a surge in the second half, culminating in the playoffs, and with our Finnish goal tenders surely contributing to a great playoff run and the Stanley Cup we all have been waiting for.

#### **First New Members of 2011**

Here's a hearty welcome to Nancy and Peter Bergman of Sunnyvale, the first to join the Chapter this year!

#### **2011 Events Calendar**

In the next column...check it out. Better and more ambitious than ever before, wouldn't you say?

#### **2011 Calendar of Events**



##### **Sunday, February 13**

Annual General Meeting, 3:00 p.m.  
First Presbyterian Church, Palo Alto  
Vote on Proposed Board  
(and any other matters)  
Movie from Finland: *Postia Pappi Jaakopille*  
[Letters to Father Jacob]  
Refreshments will be served  
Members free; Guests \$10  
(see story)

##### **Sunday, March 27, 3 - 6 p.m.**

Afternoon with Finlandia Foundation's POY and LOY:  
Wilho Saari (kantele) and Carl Rahkonen (lecturer)  
First Presbyterian Church, Palo Alto, Social Hall  
Refreshments will be served  
Admission \$20  
(see story)

##### **Saturday, April 30, 6 - 9 p.m.**

Vappu-Valborg Party at Picchetti Winery  
Chef Pelle's Smörgåsbord  
Admission \$65 per person, includes wine

##### **Saturday, October 22 (time TBA)**

Gala Concert with Former Finlandia Foundation  
Performers of the Year  
First Presbyterian Church, Palo Alto

##### **Sunday, December 11, 2 p.m.**

Pikkujoulu/Lilla Jul/Christmas Party  
Lucie Stern Center, Palo Alto  
(More details TBA)

#### **For reservations to these events:**

**Please call 650-548-5371. RSVPs are strongly recommended, especially when food must be prepared!**



## **Pikkujoulu 2010**

Once again we celebrated our (how-many<sup>th</sup>?) traditional *Pikkujoulu*, on December 12 at Isle Cove. Catering was in the hands of Stacey Anstead, with assistance from family members. The table settings, lovely and tasteful as usual, were by Marion Sundquist.

Stina Katchadourian read the St. Lucia story while the parade of St. Lucia and her pages went by, with St. Lucia herself in the lead, bearing the crown of candles. We were led in singing the lovely "Santa Lucia" song that many of us remember from grade school. Pirjo Polari-Khan, resplendent in her Ostrobothnian national costume, led a singalong of other traditional Christmas songs as well, and the much-anticipated Joulupukki (aka Leif Sundquist) made his customary appearance, making a lot of little and not-so-little children happy with their special gifts.



*It appears that the food was appreciated. Photo: Jim Koski.*



*L-R: Lucia: Linnea Storum  
Court: Annastasia Anstead, Jack Anstead, Kasey Lagerquist, Kaya Lagerquist. Photo: Jim Koski.*

## **New Member Name Corrections**

Maikku Parnanen has kindly sent me two corrections for the new member list published in the last Newsletter:

"Tonxu" is Thuon Tan  
439 Stanford Avenue  
Palo Alto, CA 94306

Mirja Kaarela  
350 Sharon Dr., #1-25  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

*(Thanks, Maikku!)*

## **2011 Annual General Membership Meeting**

Fellowship Hall at First Presbyterian Church, Palo Alto, Sunday, February 13 is the site for our Annual General Meeting of Members. In addition to the business meeting and election of the 2011 Board, a movie from Finland, *Letters to Father Jacob*, Finland's official Oscar contender 2010, will be shown, and refreshments will be served.

You are urged to attend. We need and welcome your input on how the Chapter is being run. Do you have bouquets to present or brickbats to hurl? Suggestions? Also, nominations from the floor for any of the Board positions will be welcomed. This Board is not set in concrete!

A map of the routes to the church is attached.

## **2011 Proposed Board Slate**

### **Executive Board:**

George Sundquist	President
Tuttu Tucker	1st Vice President
Marion Sundquist	2nd Vice President
Valerie Richardson	Secretary
Gunnel Pero	Treasurer
Miriam Eldridge. Ph.D.	Newsletter Editor
Mae Kaven	Media Relations

*(continued on following page)*

## Board of Directors

Sue Walima, Ph.D. Immediate Past President  
Annamaria Rapakko Financial Advisor  
Juhani Linna, Ph.D.  
Stacey Anstead  
Stina Katchadourian  
Kaj Rekola, MD  
Don Fidler  
Lars Lenck  
Pirjo Polari-Khan  
Susanne DeSelover-Sallie

## *Gunnel Pero Recovering from Back Surgery*

Gunnel Pero, our Treasurer, is at home recovering from her recent back surgery. Unfortunately, the surgery left some residual nerve damage in one leg, but she is undergoing physical therapy, which we hope will solve the problem.

We all miss Gunnel and wish her the best of luck and a speedy recovery. We need her smiling face back among us.

## *Special 2011 Event: Evening with POY and LOY*

Do be sure to mark your calendar for all the 2011 Chapter events set forth on page 1 and also on our Web page ([www.finlandiasf.org](http://www.finlandiasf.org)). We'd like to call your particular attention to our March 27 program, jointly presenting 2011 Performer of the Year Wilho Saari, an expert on the *kantele*, and Lecturer of the Year Carl Rahkonen, an ethnomusicologist who will examine the connections between classical, folk and popular music of Finland.

The event will take place in the Social Hall of the First Presbyterian Church. A map to the church is attached.

I believe this is the first time that the specialties of POY and LOY have dovetailed in this way, making possible a joint presentation like this.

Biographical information on both of these gentlemen appeared in the December 2010 Chapter newsletter.



## *Message from the Finnish Language School*

[Ed. Note: All attendees from our Vappu/Valborg Day party at Picchetti Vineyards last year automatically became members of our Chapter. The following message is from Maikku Parnanen, Secretary of the Silicon Valley Finnish Language School.]

Greetings from the Finnish Language School of Silicon Valley, and Happy New Year 2011! With 60 families and over 100 students, we have become the second largest Finnish school in the whole world!

Our annual Christmas celebration took place this year at the Courts Hall of St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Sunnyvale in mid-December. The preparations had started a week earlier in the church's facilities, where the students baked gingerbreads, cut out snowflakes, decorated tablecloths and rehearsed their songs and plays.

Thanks to our nine teachers and their students, everyone enjoyed the fun and cheerful performances of the students of all age groups. Traditionally, the last performance was by the teachers—always a huge success with the crowd!

With a lot of help from our parents, the table of traditional Christmas delicacies brought a wide smile to everyone's faces. Yum!



*Silicon Valley Suomikoulu Teachers at the 2010 Christmas Party with honored guest. Picture: Joel Carrico*

Of course, the one and only person who couldn't have missed the party was Santa Claus, who, regardless of his busy schedule, arrived to bring his own wishes from his home at Korvatunturi. For the children, the highlight was to hear Santa perform a rap version of the classic Finnish Christmas carol, "*Joulupukki [Joulupukki, valkoparta vanha ukki].*" That wouldn't have been possible without our fabulous BAND of four talented musicians, all parents of our Finnish School community. Thanks to all for their contributions!

Yo-Yo-Yo-Joulujuhla!

For more information about The Finnish Language School of Silicon Valley, please visit their website, [www.svsuomikoulu.org](http://www.svsuomikoulu.org).

## Helsing Sisters' Progress

The Helsing sisters are making a name for themselves in Finland and Sweden. Anna Maria, as the first female symphony conductor in Finland, has established herself as the artistic director for the Olulu Sinfonia and is sought after as guest conductor by leading orchestras in Finland and Estonia.

Pia Karin has established herself as a freelance performer, based in the city of Luleå in northern Sweden.

Recently the two sisters came together in a Musical Gala event at the House of Music in Luleå. At the lunch concert at the auxiliary concert hall, Pia Karin presented her own created program called "A Walk with Puccini and Paulo Coelho."

Quote: ..... "a pearl, where Pia Karin, with her expressive dark mezzo-soprano and personal reflections about her inner self, both touched and held the performance together in a beautiful way. We in Luleå are to be congratulated for having such a multitalented artist available to us"..... Unquote.

For the evening's main event, Anna Maria brought the Oulu Sinfonia to Luleå, to perform as part of the northern musical cooperation called Music on Top. The evening's program consisted of Dvorak's Cello Concerto and Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony. We quote from *Norrbottens Kuriren* after the concert.

"..... the highlight of the evening was clearly Tchaikovsky's Sixth, third movement. Here Anna Maria kept the orchestra in a firm grip, raising and lowering the intensity until one gets chills down the spine....."

## RIP: Alexander Bykadoroff ("Sasha")

Some of us may remember hearing the Karelian Folk Music Ensemble a few years ago when the trio performed at various places in the area, including the home of Pirjo Polari-Khan.

Sadly, we have learned that possibly their most colorful member, "Sasha" of the wild red beard, ample girth, performing versatility, and keen comic timing, passed away last year at the age of 52.

Sasha had been a child prodigy on the piano and other instruments, and had been involved in various ways in the European music scene. Fortunately, he left behind a number of videos where he performed with the KFME. I particularly enjoyed his comic song "*Voi, minä poloinen poika*" ("Oh, I'm just a poor wretched boy") wherein he wailed about his (unspecified) bad luck while his bandmates scoffed. It was a masterpiece of what we might call music hall/folk performance music.

## New Chapter

Finlandia Foundation National has welcomed a new chapter, our 38th, the Finnish American Heritage Society in Canterbury, CT. A warm welcome is extended to this highly active group, which is fortunate to have their own Finnish Hall, dedicated in 1924, for meetings and events.

[Ed. Note: I grew up in the neighboring state of Rhode Island. As a child, I attended a number of the *kesäjuhlat* (summer festivals) at the Canterbury Hall, and I have fond memories. For one, on that day alone my parents allowed me to drink as much soda as I wanted!]

## Washington Post on Finland's Superiority

Member Stina Katchadourian has provided a link to a wonderful **Washington Post** article on Finland at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/08/05/AR2005080502015.htm?referrer=emailarticle>

It's headlined:

### "In Finland's Footsteps

"If We're So Rich and Smart, Why Aren't We More Like Them?"

and goes on to say:

"Finns are enormously proud of their egalitarian tradition. They are the only country in Europe that has never had a king or a home-grown aristocracy. Finland has no private schools or universities, no snooty clubs, no gated communities or compounds where the rich can cut themselves off from everyday life.

"...most Finns don't boast or conspicuously consume (except perhaps when they buy fancy cars). Finnish authorities know how much everyone earns, and they pro-rate traffic fines depending on the wealth of the malefactor. Last year the 27-year-old heir to a local sausage fortune was fined 170,000 euros, about \$204,000 at the time of the fine, for driving at 50 miles per hour in a 25 mph zone in downtown Helsinki."

What a splendid idea. "Much shall be expected from those to whom much is given": if only this sentiment could be grafted onto the American psyche.

Do check out the entire article. It's inspiring.

## Finnish Film Featured at Cinequest 21

The film *Sodankylä - 100 Years of Cinema* will be one of the offerings at San Jose's Cinequest film festival, running March 1–12. This annual festival always features great international films. See their website, [www.cinequest.org](http://www.cinequest.org), and you may find some other cinematic delights!

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

To: Gunnel Pero  
1365 Green St., #204  
San Francisco, CA 94109

(Dues: \$20 individual, \$25 couple)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

I (we) wish to (join/renew) (my/our) membership in the Finlandia Foundation's San Francisco Bay Area Chapter for the calendar year 2011.

Check enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*(Please make check out to "Finlandia Foundation—SFBAC")*

**Note:** Membership dues are tax-deductible because Finlandia Foundation SFBAC is a 501c3 not-for-profit corporation under Federal tax law.

### **Please let us know by checking the appropriate box:**

I prefer to receive the Newsletter as (check one)  Email attachment (with any color material, including photos)  Hardcopy (black and white)