



FINLANDIA FOUNDATION®, INC.

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

June-July 2011

Miriam Leino Eldridge, Editor

Web Page: www.finlandiasf.org

Message from the President

What an exciting VM hockey final, with Finland winning 6-1 over our Nordic rival Sweden. We were glued to the TV set for every game leading up to the final, as well as watching everything on YLE's *internytt*. And although VM Gold may not have the shine of Olympic Gold, it should go a long way toward erasing the disappointment of the 2006 Olympic hockey final in Torino, Italy, when Finland lost in the last minute 2-3 to Sweden.

And that incredible first goal by Mikael Granlund against Russia, that the whole hockey world is still talking about. Wow! I guess we will see this 19-year-old from Oulu debuting in the NHL soon. He was drafted by the Minnesota Wild last year.

Special fun for us was the fact that one of the young Finnish players, Leo Komarov, got his early hockey training as a schoolboy in the local hockey club in Munsala (Nykarleby), my home town.

He arrived in Munsala as a toddler with his emigrant family from Estonia. The grammar school he attended was even featured on the TV news after the final game, as well as extensive interviews with Leo and community sports leaders, who are now scratching their heads, trying to figure out how to properly honor their new World Champion. Not an unpleasant task, I am sure.

Now let's go Sharks!!

George*



Photo: Pekka "I was there" Pärnänen

2011 Calendar of Events



Sunday, August 7, 4 p.m.

Walentina Choir from Helsinki, Finland
40th Anniversary Tour
First Presbyterian Church
1140 Cowper St., Palo Alto
(between Kingsley & Lincoln)
See story!

Saturday, October 22, 3 p.m.

Gala Concert with Former Finlandia Foundation
Performers of the Year:
Merja Soria, Maria Männistö, and Terhi Miikki-Broersma
First Presbyterian Church, Palo Alto
Reception Follows with Voileipäpöytä/Smörgåsbord
More Details to Come

Sunday, December 11, 2 p.m.

Pikkujoulu/Lilla Jul/Christmas Party
Lucie Stern Center,
1305 Middlefield Rd., Palo Alto
Catered Finnish Christmas Dinner
Silent Auction
More Details to Come

**For reservations to these events:
Please call (415) 673-3310. RSVPs are strongly
recommended, especially when food must be
prepared!**



* **[Editor's update:** Alas, our Sharks let us down again, losing ignominiously to the Vancouver Canucks and once again letting the Stanley Cup escape. I wonder if they would have done better if Antero Niittymäki hadn't been on the sick list. As for Antti Niemi, he "had a night to forget," according to the San Jose Mercury News: "...After allowing the tying goal to Ryan Kesler at 19:46 of the third period, Niemi was beaten on a strange one by Kevin Bieksa in the second overtime frame to end the game." Actually, there was definitely something supernatural about that fateful shot, which seemingly came out of nowhere.]

Vappu at Picchetti Winery

We enjoyed another festive evening at the picturesque Picchetti Winery on April 30 in celebration of the May 1 Vappu/Valborg holiday.

Ah, the food! The buffet menu was by Chef Pelle and included such delicacies as baby field-green salad with fresh pears, gorgonzola, candied pecans and a fresh strawberry vinaigrette; Scandinavian shrimp salad with artichoke hearts, green peas, dill and Rhode Island dressing; and aquavit-cured salmon with sweet mustard-dill sauce (gravlax). And more. And Picchetti's excellent wine was included without extra cost and in quantities as requested.

We were entertained by music by the Alan Early Trio, with some vocals by Pirjo Polari-Khan.



The Alan Early Trio, with vocalist Pirjo Polari-Khan



Clockwise from right: Mary Lenck, Lars Lenck, Rhoda Linna, Juhani Linna, Annamaria Rapakko

[Editor's note: Photo credits for this event belong to George Sundquist, Valerie Richardson and Mae Kaven, and perhaps someone else. If I left someone's name out, please let me know and I'll make it up in the next issue. Thanks! We always appreciate people who take pictures of our events.]

Walentina Choir August 7

The Chapter doesn't usually have a summer event, as so many of our planners are vacationing in Finland, but this year we can offer you one that we are sure you will enjoy. Members Birgitta and Ulf Strom, music lovers and performers, have been kind enough to arrange the appearance of this distinguished choir, and Don Fidler secured the venue at the church. We owe thanks to them all. By now you should have received an email with the flyer.

What is "Walentina kören", which is celebrating its 40th anniversary with a US tour? Well, it is a mixed Finnish-Swedish choir currently counting 35 members, based in Helsinki. A large part of its repertoire is sung in Swedish, but they also perform in Finnish, English and other languages, and have been featured internationally.

Refreshments will be served after the concert. A \$10 donation is suggested.

NY Times Features Mikko Nissinen at Boston Ballet

Former Finlandia Foundation grant recipient and current Boston Ballet Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen was featured in the Arts section of the Sunday, May 1 issue of the *New York Times*.

"In 2001, after a successful stage career and directorships at smaller troupes, he got a big-league company of his own to run: Boston Ballet. The job came with a host of big-league issues to test [his] tremendous confidence, beginning with the Sept. 11 attacks just five days after he signed on and included a mandate to shake up an established company that had already endured a rocky leadership transition," the paper reports.

"He was hired to change the company's profile, and change it he has, bringing in Jorma Elo, a fellow Finn, as resident choreographer in 2005 and promoting contemporary, European-leaning works." the *Times* continues.

...

"Mr. Nissinen's repertory approach has also met a positive reception. 'The direction they're going in is toward more contemporary work, more adventurous things,' Karen Campbell, a critic for the Boston Globe, said in an interview, 'and to me that's much more exciting than another *Giselle*.'"

[Editor's Note: in 1993 Mikko, at that time still Principal Dancer with the San Francisco Ballet, was the recipient of a Finlandia Foundation grant.]

PBS to Show Finnish Film

PBS will show the film **Steam of Life** on its *POV* program on August 2 at 10 p.m., KQED (Channel 9).

Here is a description of the film:

"From a land of long, dark winters comes **Steam of Life**, a moody, comic and moving study of Finnish men as framed by the national obsession with the sauna. There, they come together to sweat out not only the grime of contemporary life, but also their grief, hopes, joys and memories. Beautifully and hauntingly shot, the acclaimed film provides a surprising glimpse into the lives of Finnish men and a remarkable depiction of the troubled and often reticent hearts of contemporary Western men. (60 minutes)"

Link to the trailer: <http://www.pbs.org/pov/steamoflife/>

[Editor's Note: *OK, indulge me, this is the last one.*

This reminds me of a song from my parents' era:

"Kuka sen saunan lämmittää, ja kuka sen löylyn heittää?..."

"Naiset ne saunan lämmittää, ja miehet sen löylyn heittää."

"Who will heat the sauna, and who will throw the water for the steam?..."

"The women will heat the sauna, and the men will throw the water for the steam." *

(* *It's not steam but water vapor, but allow a little poetic license.*)

'Twas ever thus where gender duties are concerned.

The next Newsletter will come out in September or so. Until then, please remember:

- *to come to the Valentina Choir concert on August 7;*
- *to renew your Chapter membership if it's due;*
- *to send a letter to the Newsletter or write an article about your summer vacation for us to include, or whatever may be on your mind. We always love to have feedback from you, our valued members.*

Hauskaa kesänjatkoa!

Enjoy what's left of summer!

—Miriam

Pictures from Finland

These breathtakingly beautiful pictures were taken by Don Fidler when he traveled to Finland with search his Finnish roots. I leave you to enjoy them until autumn.



A Juhannuskokko—Midsummer's Eve bonfire



Santa Claus' office at Korvatunturi



The beautiful old fort, Suomenlinna



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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)