



Finlandia Foundation – Boston

December 2021 Newsletter

Website: <https://finlandiafoundationboston.com>

December 2021

Message from Our President Sirkku Kontinen

Dear Members,

Happy Holidays! It was good to see so many of you at the Newbury Street Marimekko event on November 18. This was a lively evening with Eetu Selänne serving Long Drinks and with people socializing and shopping. The store manager Alina Jantunen was very welcoming and many of us stayed chatting until the very end. I like to thank Marimekko for hosting.

At our recent board meetings, we have had invited guests from our local Finnish community in attendance. And I am happy to report that there will be several new names on the slate for our January elections (see below). While many of our upcoming meetings may still be held by Zoom, I am confident that the incoming Board will bring energy and refreshing new ideas to our programs.

Our next member meeting on December 12 will feature Finnish athlete and Olympian Leo-Pekka Tähti. He is the world's fastest man in wheelchair racing, and is the 100m world record holder. He is a five-time para-olympic champion and Finland's athlete of the year 2016. He won a silver medal in the Para-olympics in Tokio last summer. His motto in life: Development stops with satisfaction (kehitys pysähtyy tyytyväisyyteen). His path from being a baby with no leg function to becoming a super-athlete in the small Finnish town Pori is touching and inspirational. Please be sure to join us.

I will observe Finland's Independence Day on Monday December 6 by getting my COVID booster shot. Of course, I will also light two candles by the window at six o'clock, play the Finlandia hymn, and sip some champagne. An online concert organized by Finlandia Foundation National (FFN) and featuring Ruusamari Teppo will premier on Independence Day at <https://youtube.com/channel/UCOmt1HUZUwFyDaV5CzRIpQA>.

Now that it is darker and cooler, it is nice to turn on the ovens and begin the preparations for Christmas. And as noted last month, you are all invited to join the Christmas celebration at Suomi-koulu on December 18. Details of the program are given below.

I wish you all a wonderful Christmas and a Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous Year in 2022!

-Sirkku Kontinen, FFB President



Meet Finnish Olympian Leo-Pekka Tähti on Sunday December 12 at 1 p.m. via Zoom



Leo-Pekka Tähti, who was born in Pori, Finland, is an athlete and Paralympian competing mainly in category T54 sprint events. This class includes people with spinal cord injuries who compete using a wheelchair in track events. Leo-Pekka was born with paraplegia caused by spina bifida. In 1983 the ultrasound technology was not at the same level as it is today, so his condition was a shock to the family. But from an early age, Leo-Pekka was a fighter, who did not let his handicap slow him down. To become an elite athlete takes enormous effort and is never easy. Leo-Pekka, in particular, had to break many barriers to find coaches, sponsors, and to be recognized as an athlete. Having received multiple olympic, world and European championships, he is now widely celebrated and was named Finland's athlete of the year 2016. A book about his life, written by Finnish sport journalists Harri Laiho and Juha Luotola, was released in 2020.

Please join us for a conversation with Leo-Pekka on Sunday December 12 at 1 p.m. The Zoom link is: <https://mit.zoom.us/j/93743412858>

Christmas Celebration at Suomi-koulu Saturday December 18, 11 a.m. - 12 noon

You are all invited to a Christmas celebration at Suomi-koulu of New England on December 18, 11 a.m.-12 noon. The event is open to all members of our community. There will be special Christmas cookies and food, short performances by the children, and singing of Christmas carols accompanied by Riikka Pietiläinen. The coffee table will follow. **The event will take place at Suomi-koulu's new location at the Weston Methodist Church, 377 North Avenue in Weston.** We look forward to seeing you all there!

Upcoming Elections of Finlandia Foundation–Boston

At our Annual Meeting on Sunday January 23, 2022, we will elect several new Board members for Finlandia Foundation - Boston. The Nominating Committee will put forward the following slate of candidates:

President: Tuija Vainio (Boston)

Clerk: Henna Capone (Scituate)

Treasurer: Tarja Vuolteenaho (Weston)

Directors: Netta Mäkinen (Cambridge) for Membership; Edith Eash (Lexington) for Scholarship; Nathalie Forssell (Framingham), Saana McDaniel (Boston); Karoliina Muukari (Wellesley); Teresia Möller (Framingham); and Tuija Voutilainen-Lynch (Chatham). All these positions are for two-year terms starting January, 2022. Greta Ljung (Lexington), who was elected to a two-year term in January 2021, will continue to serve on the Board through 2022.

Nominating committee: Tuija Vainio, Tuija Voutilainen-Lynch, and Anne-Mari Paster

Scholarship Opportunities

Finlandia Foundation – Boston is pleased to make the following two scholarships available for the 2022-23 academic year:

1. Savele Syrjala Journalism Scholarship

For a student of Finnish-American heritage studying in the field of Journalism or Communications.

2. Aina Swan Cutler Music Scholarship

For a student of Finnish-American heritage studying music (excluding hard rock and electronic music).

For an application form or further information, please contact: Edith Syrjala Eash, 80 Potter Pond, Lexington, MA 02421; syrjalaeash@gmail.com. The application form is also available online at the Finlandia Foundation – Boston website given below.

The application deadline is May 31, 2022.

Newsletter Co-Editors: Greta Ljung and Teresia Moller
Website: <https://finlandiafoundationboston.com/>
Email: finlandiaboston@gmail.com



FINLANDIA FOUNDATION - BOSTON
P. O. BOX 308
ARLINGTON, MA 02474-0007

Events at the Scandinavian Cultural Center

There are several interesting programs at the Scandinavian Cultural Center in Newton that you can take advantage of while we wait to resume our meetings at the Center. These include art exhibits, workshops, Zoom lectures, and Book Talks. Some upcoming programs include Screening of the documentary “Push” on Saturday January 8 and “Book Talk: Men of Terror – A Comprehensive Analysis of Viking Combat” on January 22. Also, please make sure to check out Hulda’s Swedish Baked Goods that can be ordered through the Center. For details, see <https://scandicenter.org/events/>

Membership in FFB; Please Renew or Join Us Now!

It is now time to renew your membership in Finlandia Foundation – Boston or to join us as a new member. Our annual membership fee, which runs from January through December, is \$30 for families, \$20 for individuals and \$10 for senior members. To renew or join us, please send a check to:

FINLANDIA FOUNDATION – BOSTON
P.O. BOX 308
Arlington, MA 02474-0007

Tax-deductible donations are also welcome. We appreciate your support and look forward to seeing you in person soon.

Merry Christmas and Happy
New Year to All!

