



Finlandia Foundation – Boston

January 2023 Newsletter

Website: <https://finlandiafoundationboston.com>

January 2023

Message from Our President Tuija Vainio

Dear Members,

Happy New Year 2023! I hope your Holiday season was lovely. Perhaps you followed some of the Finnish Christmas traditions described in our December newsletter. I did some but not all were possible. I think what I missed most is the beautiful Finnish custom of bringing candles to the cemeteries on Christmas Eve. As Christmas was white in most parts of Finland, all those tokens of remembrance and love must have been truly special.

I have not made any New Year Resolutions in years. All those unrealistic promises just set one up for failure, in my somewhat jaded opinion. This year I made one resolution, though. It's called "life laundry" which means clearing material and mental clutter from your life resulting in more well-being.

For a Finn, the place for physical and mental cleanse is a sauna, of course. Some members are lucky enough to have their own sauna. But not all have access to one. Finlandia Foundation National (FFN) had its first Sauna Week in 2022. The Boston Chapter took part and brought a mobile sauna to the Scandinavian Cultural Center (SCC) in Newton. The event was a big success! We had many first timers too enjoying the wood fired sauna. The experience was loved by all. I am happy to report the mobile sauna event will be back on February 24-26, 2023. We have extended the weekend to include Friday and the registration is now open at

<https://event.racereach.com/ffnsaunaweek2023>

Last year, the time slots sold out very quickly. So if you want to secure a time in the 'löyly' this year, please book as soon as you can. For those who would like an extended experience, there are some longer sessions available. If you only want to have a chat around the fire, just show up! We love to see you! To make the weekend even more Finnish, the SCC is screening a movie about Finnish Karaoke Culture on Saturday 25. Tickets for the movie are sold separately at SCC website.

The plans for our Lecturer of the Year (LOY) visit are also in full swing. In 2023, the LOY is Suzanne Matson of Newton. Professor Matson will give a talk followed by a writing workshop on March 19. Please save the date!

On January 22, we will meet at the SCC for our Annual Meeting. The President and the Board of Directors will give their reports for 2022. This will be followed by a presentation by FFN President Anne-Mari Paster. We are truly honored to have her there. If you have feedback for us or would like to volunteer to help with our programs, this will be a good opportunity to let us know.

I wish you all a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year! And thank you for your continued support and membership in Finlandia Foundation – Boston!

-Tuija Vainio, FFB President

FFB Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 22

We invite you all to attend the Annual Meeting of Finlandia Foundation – Boston at the Scandinavian Cultural Center in Newton at 3 p.m. on Sunday, January 22. This is an important meeting for our Chapter and we hope that you can all be there.

The business part of the meeting will include reports by the President, Treasurer, Scholarship Committee, and Suomi-koulu, followed by the election of two new Board members for 2023. The Nominating Committee will put forward the following two candidates:

- Erika Verkkonen (Sharon)
- Greta Ljung (Lexington)

Both positions are for two-year terms starting January, 2023. All other Board members, including the President and Treasurer, were elected for two-year terms in 2022 and will serve until January 2024.



Following the business part of the meeting, we will hear a presentation by **Anne-Mari Paster**, President of Finlandia Foundation National (FFN), who will update us on various initiatives currently underway at the national level. Her presentation will focus on the mission of FFN, which is:

"Fiercely Finnish since 1953, we champion our culture and heritage across the United States by supporting educational opportunities and promoting diverse, relevant, and enriching programs."

Welcoming your feedback and suggestions, Anne-Mari will seek your views on the following: **Are we on point or are we missing the mark? What would members like to see, hear, or experience? Can we do more than what we currently do? And what can we do better? Please come and share your views!**

Anne-Mari has a background in financial services and was for many years a Board member and Treasurer of our chapter. We are grateful for her many contributions and we have proudly followed her subsequent accomplishments as President of FFN. We are delighted and honored that her return visit to our Chapter occurs during the 70th anniversary year of Finlandia Foundation National.

Sauna Week to be Celebrated Locally February 24-26

Sauna is the best-known Finnish word in the United States and in many other countries. Many people in the US have experienced sauna at hotels, spas and gyms. But home saunas also become popular during the pandemic. For the second year in a row, the last week of February has been declared National Sauna Week by the FFN. The goal is to build awareness and appreciation of this aspect of Finnish and Finnish-American culture. Information about activities planned by FFN for the week are available here: <https://finlandiafoundation.org/national-sauna-week/>. Further information about our local sauna activities will be posted in our February newsletter and also on our website: <https://finlandiafoundationboston.com/>.

“Writing the Finnish American Story” by Suzanne Matson, Sunday March 19, 2023



Finlandia Foundation National (FFN) launched its Lecturer of the Year (LOY) program in 2006. The program features authors, professors, researchers, filmmakers, and various scholars with expertise on Finland and Finnish American culture. Suzanne Matson, a poet, author, and English Professor at Boston College, is the FFN Lecturer of the Year in 2023. In her presentation to us on Sunday March 19, Suzanne will talk about Finnish identity as a writer, and read from her works. Her presentation titled “Writing the Finnish American Story” will be followed by a Q&A.

As an optional companion to her LOY presentation, Suzanne offers a two-hour interactive workshop on “Writing Our Family Stories”. More details and registration information will be posted on our website soon.

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FFB Scholarship Opportunities

FFB is pleased to make the following three scholarships available for the 2023-24 academic year:

1. **Savele Syrjala Journalism Scholarship**
For a student of Finnish-American heritage studying Journalism or Communications.
2. **Aina Swan Cutler Music Scholarship**
For a student of Finnish-American heritage studying music (excluding hard rock and electronic music).
3. **Lauri Armas Lindell Architectural Scholarship**
For a student of Finnish-American heritage in Architecture.

For questions or further information, please contact: Edith Syrjala Eash, 80 Potter Pond, Lexington, MA 02421; syrjalaeash@gmail.com. The application forms are available online at the Finlandia Foundation – Boston website. **The application deadlines are May 31, 2023.**

Membership Renewals Are Due!

It is now time to renew your membership or to become a new member of Finlandia Foundation – Boston for 2023. The annual membership fee, which runs from January through December, is \$20 for individuals, \$10 for senior members, and \$30 for families. To renew your membership please send a **check to:**

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

If more convenient, you can also pay your membership fee or make a donation using **PayPal or Venmo** by going to <https://finlandiafoundationboston.com/membership/>.

Happy January 2023!

