



# Finlandia Foundation - Boston

## April 2023 Newsletter

Website: <https://finlandiafoundationboston.com>

April 2023

### Message from Our Interim President

Greetings fellow Members of Finlandia Foundation Boston!

As you all know, I have been elected interim president of the Boston chapter of the Finlandia Foundation, succeeding Tuija Vainio. My term will run to January of 2024.

One of my duties as president is to keep you apprised of events taking place not only here with the Boston chapter, but back in the homeland where the past few weeks have become quite historic with ramifications around the world. On April 4th, 2023, after many months of waiting and wondering, Finland joined NATO. It was a touching moment to see Finland's flag take its place next to the other NATO nations. A few days before the NATO event, Finland held its Parliamentary elections. This time the opposition party, *Kokoomus*, won the most seats. The *Kokoomus* party is a National Coalition Party. Next step is forming the government and choosing new ministers (12), including the new prime minister.

On a lighter note, Vappu, the first of May celebrations, are just around the corner. Vappu is a national holiday and a very meaningful day for the Finns. There are many festivities on this day with numerous student traditions, family and friend gatherings, fun food, and drinks (*sima* and *tippaleipä*), games and singing just to name a few. Many of us wear our white high school graduation caps (*valkolakki*), which in my case is not so white anymore. Of course, everybody is hoping for warm, sunny days, so people can celebrate outside. Fingers crossed. We will have our Vappu celebrations at Suomi-koulu on April 29, please see below for more details.

Spring is here in Boston and while traditionally we have shut things down at FFB for the summer, I would like to take this opportunity to ask you to take some time to consider fresh ideas for our group when we start up again in the fall. One thought would be how to better fulfill our FFB mission statement. While we know our mission is to spread knowledge of Finland's extensive culture and history around Boston and New England, we could probably use some ideas as to how to get that done in a way that is meaningful, and fun.

I want to thank Tuija Vainio for all the hard work she has done during the past year as FFB's president. I look forward to following up her term by serving the Board and working together with all of you in the months to come.

I want to wish you all a very Happy Spring!

Yours Sincerely,  
-Tuija Voutilainen-Lynch, FFB Interim President



### Meet Suomi-koulu of New England

Suomi-koulu of New England was founded in the spring of 1991 to serve the Greater Boston area. The purpose of the school is to teach and perpetuate the Finnish language, provide information about Finland and Finnish culture, and maintain Finnish traditions among Finns living in the New England area. Most of the families participating are either bi- or trilingual, so the mix of the languages will be heard in every school meeting accompanied by the sentence: "*sano se suomeksi – say it Finnish*". We love it.

Suomi-koulu meets generally on Saturdays twice a month in Weston, MA. During the two-hour school day, Finnish is the language of choice in children's classes. The classes are divided based on age. Our baby and toddler class, *Pomppu-Ompu*, is learning Finnish and Finnish traditions through children's music and songs. *Leikkivaiset* (ages 3 and 4) and *Eskarit* (ages 5 and 6) explore the Finnish language through playing, storytime, music and crafting. *Puuhakkaat* (ages 7 and up) are familiar with Finnish outdoor games, writing and reading. Suomi-koulu is not only for children but for their families and friends who can meet during the school hours at our common room enjoying coffee and baked goods – *karjalanpiirakka* and *pulla*. Christmas and Spring Celebrations wrap up the fall and spring semesters and the school is keeping up with Finnish traditions in those festivities to mimic as much as possible the Finnish school system in Finland. We do call the year-end celebrations *Joulujuhla* and *Kevätjuhla* as they are in Finland. *Joulujuhla* is also always visited by *Joulupukki* (Santa Claus).

We also offer Finnish language classes on Zoom for adults who want to learn to speak, read and write in Finnish. Currently we have three groups: Beginners on Thursdays, Advanced Beginners and Advanced on Wednesdays.

The operation of the school depends largely on volunteers and families. In addition, the National Board of Education of Finland, and both Finnish and American companies, organization and individuals support Suomi-koulu with donations. We are also funding our school with coffee table and book sales, Christmas bake sale and raffle baskets.

If you want to learn more about Suomi-koulu, please come visit us, check our Facebook page Uuden Englannin Suomi-koulu or email our president [saija.laurila@gmail.com](mailto:saija.laurila@gmail.com)



**Come celebrate Vappu at Suomi-koulu on  
Saturday April 29**

Please save the date April 29 for Vappu celebrations at Suomi-koulu, located at the Weston Methodist Church, 377 North Avenue, in Weston. The picnic will take place from 10 a.m. until noon. There will be games and traditional treats such as "sima" and "munkki" to celebrate this joyous occasion and you are welcome to bring your own picnic basket. You are all welcome!



**FinnFest 2023 July 26-30, Duluth, MN**

Annual festival celebrating Finnish and Finnish American culture and heritage. For more information about FinnFest 2023, including a schedule of events: <https://2023.finnfest.us/>

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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](mailto:syrjalaeash@gmail.com) or Linda Lindell at [lindalindell@verizon.net](mailto:lindalindell@verizon.net). 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 April 2023!*

