

NOVEMBER 2025

Newsletter



Tervetuloa!

Members:

I am pleased to let you know we will host musician, comedian Steven Solkela on Saturday evening at Mikko's (1636 R Street, Washington DC). Steve will perform in the upstairs of Mikkos with 2 sessions; one at 7:00, one at 9:00.

Steve is quite entertaining so we are looking forward to hearing his program. His audience has grown enough that he decided to have an East Coast tour so he is making his way playing gigs and chapters from Toronto to DC, then heading back through PA and points West as he heads back to MN.

Life on the road is still a thing with young artists so I hope you will come out to hear his songs, many originals as well as tunes you know and love. Steve holds a wide range of accomplishments so hold your hat to hear his range when he performs at Mikko's November 15; 2 seatings and tickets are available until they are not!

Thanks and looking forward to seeing you at an event soon!

Andrea Pakonen Rasmussen
President

November 15:

Steve Solkela's "Overpopulated" One-Man Band



Mikko's Nordic Fine Foods
Comedy, Music, & Mayhem!
Saturday November 15th
7PM & 9PM (Two Shows)



1636 R Street, NW Washington, DC 20009

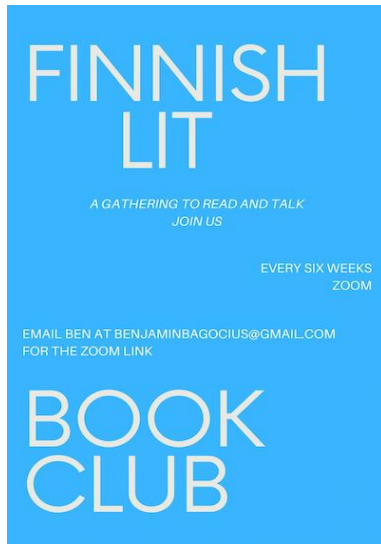
Get tickets today!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/steve-solkela-the-one-man-band-tickets-1963307720242>

AND THEN, November 16!

As the colors around you turn, **shouldn't the pages?**

Finnish Literature Book Club is an informal gathering of people who enjoy reading literature from Finland in English translation. We seek to create a community of belonging among readers.



You're warmly invited to our next [Finnish Literature Book Club](#) session on **Sunday, November 16, 2025**, from 1:00-2:15 p.m., EST. Our featured book is the following:

Book: Featured Book: [Path of Totality: Poems](#), by Niina Pollari. Poems are written in English by Finnish Poet

Please feel free to come to the book club regardless of how much, how little, or how zero you read. All are welcome.

Please invite anyone else to our book club. Every 6 weeks on Zoom, facilitated by poet and author Benjamin Bagocius, Ph.D. [Learn more here.](#)

Email benjaminbagocius@gmail.com for Zoom link.

We are repeating this poem as it resonates with so many Finns, it is worth a re-read!:

Below is our **group poem** from our July 2025 session on *Everyday Sisu: Tapping into Finnish Fortitude for a Happier, More Resilient Life*, by Katja Pantzar. The poem expresses participants' take-aways from the book:

Everyday Sisu

We should . . . all move to Finland?

Strength to find peace.

Finding the balance to push yourself in a healthy way.

Community — We are from different areas and generations in this group and yet are striving for and interested in very similar things.

Sisu is different for everybody. It is what you make of it, not what any other person thinks you should do.

Sisu honors the activity of dropping the ideas of accolades and typical success.

Sisu may be romanticized but it is still something to strive towards.

It is good to learn your limitations and learn to live with them.

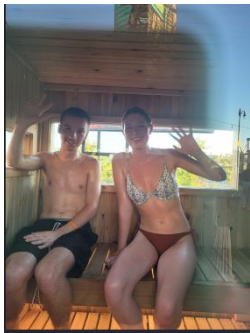
We need public/community support to thrive together.

I am lucky to live within a green leaf wall, which grows rather than encloses.

Favorite quotation: the ability to maintain coping skills while changes take place around us.

Sauna Village was lit!

Bathe-ing DC was bathing as a block party, a civic ritual, a collective reset. Left the everyday and did something different: sweat it out, eat it up, dance, kick back, and just be together.



“I truly had a mahtava time at Bathe-ing’s Sauna Festival! There were countless saunas dotting the festival, with one even being from Finland. There was a refurbished horse trailer sauna, one with lights simulating a starry sky, and one where an assistant would bring you snowballs to snack on as you sweat. There was also a cold plunge tub that I could only last about a solid 15 seconds in... Live DJs and musicians serenaded the whole ordeal, and tons of DMV residents and vendors were there to socialize with after getting thwacked by a good vihta. I felt guilty to have such an amazing event be free!”

by member Markus Huisentruit



If these photos inspire you: please let us know how you may be interested in joining us with National Sauna Week: February 15-21, 2026. FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com



VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED FOR MANY ROLES AT THIS EVENT!

Whether you have an hour or several, please email to FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com and we will get your email to the Volunteer Coordinator ASAP



EXHIBITION

Seeing Silence: The Paintings of Helene Schjerfbeck

MARCH 2026: Date TBD

Finnsparck and FFNCC will share a bus to NYC to enjoy the art exhibit and a trip to Scandinavian House.

Interesting facts about Finland (continued)

Did you know that:

181. Happiness of Finnish People May Continue Despite ...

All of us Finns, Finnish Americans, and friends of Finland know that in the UN happiness comparison, Finns have been the happiest nation in the world for eight consecutive years. But recently, even in Finland, there has been discussion about whether such happiness can continue, especially after experiences of the pandemic and the security situation in Europe.

The UN's research surveys are based on a set of criteria (such as GNP per capita, life expectancy, social support freedom and perception of corruption), which, when answered separately by the interviewees, give Finland a lot of points compared to other countries. But an individual's overall happiness is determined by their own perception of how happy they feel. When summarizing the answers to individual questions, UN reports actually describe a nation's prerequisites for being happy. It is entirely possible that when evaluating their own personal happiness, people are unable to consider the UN's criteria, but instead express their views based on the factors that are closest and most significant to them.

Researchers at the University of Turku have conducted a study which indicates that the level of personal happiness experienced by Finns has sharply declined compared to the period before the pandemic. Before the pandemic, as many as 82 percent of the population in Finland reported feeling happy, but after the pandemic, in 2023, that figure has dropped steeply to 57 percent. It is likely that the war in Ukraine, the precautionary measures it has caused, and the partially war-related increase in living costs, particularly the skyrocketing electricity prices, have further reduced the sense of personal happiness.

However, both these researchers and the major press (Helsingin Sanomat) are optimistic about the situation improving and predict that happiness has not collapsed permanently. Overall, happiness and life satisfaction tend to be greater if a person feels that he or she can manage financially. And now, price increases have stopped, interest rates have decreased, and household electricity contracts are once again reasonable. Especially those who are financially stable have likely already risen from the trough. However, two groups—economically disadvantaged people and students—are still expected to face difficult times.



At the end of the year, researchers at the University of Turku aim to reassess the happiness experienced by the Finns. While awaiting the results, we are also eagerly anticipating the next UN study to see what ranking Finland will achieve as a nation in terms of the conditions for happiness. *(Sources: Helsingin Sanomat, Contributor: Turto Turtiainen. Photo credit: Karin Beate Norterud. (Interesting Facts will continue in upcoming newsletters.).*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER

15: Steve Solkela Performance at Mikko's

22: Finnsparck Christmas Bazaar, MD

DECEMBER

5: ISMO Concert, Lincoln Theater, Washington, DC

6: FFNCC Independence Day Celebration

13: Suomikoulu Christmas Party, Location TBD

FFNCC Board of Directors:

Andrea Pakonen Rasmussen

Kirsti Noring

Katja Frederick

Debora Lyons

Kim Whittle

Greg Wilska

Reach out to us at FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com

Saunas from Sauna Village to Dream about:

