

# **FEBRUARY 2026**

## **Newsletter**



## **Tervetuloa!**

Dear Members:

As the calendar moves forward, this is quite an exciting time to look back! 250 years to be exact! Living in the Capital Region is already special for many of us with access to so many outstanding musical offerings and historical displays, but this year it seems everyone is pulling out the stops to celebrate 250 years of Independence. We Finns are no different this time!

Next month we will host this year's Annual Dinner, Saturday, March 14 at the historic Gadsby's Tavern Ballroom in Old Town Alexandria. We are looking forward to hearing Finlandia Foundation's Lecturer of the Year, Jay Smith. His presentation focuses on the life and legacy of John Morton, a Founding Father of Finnish descent who cast a crucial vote for American independence. Smith, a trained historian, highlights Morton's story in anticipation of the 2026 U.S. 250th anniversary.

Just days before, on March 10, we hope members and friends can join us as we travel with our friends from FinnsPark by bus to see the Paintings of Helene Schjerfbeck in NY. This really promises to be a busy and exciting week!

For February, we invite you to dust off your ice skates and join Suomikoulu students learn important Finnish skating skills (or help serve hot chocolate), bake some treats and enjoy watching your favorite Finns and athletes compete in the Olympics. And in between events, please renew your membership or invite a friend to join with you!

Andrea Pakonen Rasmussen  
President

**RESERVE YOUR SPOT NOW FOR THE 1 DAY BUS TRIP**  
**Tuesday, MARCH 10**



EXHIBITION

**Seeing Silence: The Paintings of Helene Schjerfbeck**

**MARCH 10, 2026 / approx. 7:00am - 10:00pm**

**Cost: \$145 incl Bus and Special Ticket Admissions**

National Capital Chapter and Finnsparck will share a bus to NYC to enjoy the art exhibit and a special trip to Scandinavian House. Cost covers the bus (free/safe parking in McLean location), snacks on the bus, Admission to the Museum, unique Guided Tour of the Exhibit and a stop at the Scandinavian House.

To reserve your spot email Member Name/Telephone number/Email address and number of tickets to [FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com](mailto:FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com).

Tickets will be considered fully reserved once a payment is made. Spots will open to wider community as long as tickets are available. Fee free payment options are available with Venmo and Checks (made out to FFNCC) but must be handled through FFNCC. Reservations are not complete without payment. Please see FFNCC Payment option details on member renewal announcement.

**Please share this tour/offer with friends in local art groups**

## American Scandinavian Association (ASA) Monthly Meeting: February Focuses on FINLAND: The Songs of Dan Andersson Poetry, Music, and the Forest Finn Legacy

**DATE CHANGE: Tuesday, February 24, 7-8:30 PM**

St. John's Norwood Episcopal Church  
6701 Wisconsin Ave., Chevy Chase, MD

Dan Andersson (1888–1920) is one of Sweden's most beloved poets and songwriters, but his work is inseparable from the Finnmarken region where he was born and lived. Beginning in the late 1500s, Finnish-speaking settlers—known as the Forest Finns

(skogsfinnar)—made their homes in the forests of central Sweden and eastern Norway. Their culture, language, and way of life shaped the region for centuries. Dan Andersson grew up within this world and even worked as a charcoal burner, a profession closely tied to the Forest Finn legacy.



This concert presents five poems by Dan Andersson set to music, performed in Swedish, with spoken commentary in English. It offers an introduction to Dan Andersson not only as a Swedish poet, but as an artist shaped by the Finnish–Swedish-Norwegian borderland region, with its unique blend of cultures and music.

The performers, Cliff Gaddy (vocals and baritone ukulele) and Kerstin Gaddy (harmonica), are members of the Nordic folk music ensemble, Washington's Spelmanslag. Cliff and Kerstin are multi-instrumentalists and have been members of Washington's Spelmanslag since it started 15 years ago. Cliff plays the U-bass, ukulele, and cello. Kerstin plays the flute, recorder, and harmonica. Both of them also enjoy singing, especially Swedish "visor." With Washington's Spelmanslag they are regularly performing in the greater Washington DC area, such as at the Swedish Embassy, Swedish Church, SWEA events, ASA events, Scandia DC Saturday dances, Glen Echo, IKEA, and folk music festivals in the area. In Sweden they have attended many folk music festivals and "spelmansstämor" in Skåne, Uppland, Dalarna, and Värmland. As a duo, they have performed in the DC area, West Virginia, Sweden, and Finland.

## **Ice Skating**

**Saturday, February 28 // Noon- 2pm**

**Free for Students and Members with RSVP**

Its time for Outdoor Education! No indoor Suomikoulu on Kalevala Day! Members please come ice skating with the DC Finnish community at the Westpost Outdoor Ice Skating (Pentagon Row). This is free of charge and there will be hot drinks and snacks/sweets. Please email you RSVP to [FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com](mailto:FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com) If you don't skate, please come join the fun! Wear your favorite hockey jersey!

# ITS THAT TIME OF YEAR!

## FFNCC Renewal!

Annual membership fees are due BY February 15<sup>th</sup>

What does that mean? Members receive the newsletter, advanced registration opportunity and member discounts for FFNCC events

If you joined FFNCC after October 30th your dues are covered for 2026.

The benefit to members is monthly newsletters, enrollment for Finlandia

Foundation magazine Finnish Line and discounts to all paid events.

Renew or Join in one of 4 easy ways convenient for you:

**PayPal:** visit website at [www.FinlandiaDC.org](http://www.FinlandiaDC.org), click Join/Donate tab

**Venmo:** @AndreaRasmussen-19, funds transferred same day to bank

**Mail a check** payable to "FFNCC" mail to our treasurer

Kirsti Noring, 3214 N. Wakefield Street, Arlington, VA 22207

Family memberships \$25

Individual memberships \$20.

Students (through college) \$15.00

**Zelle:** send an email to [FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com](mailto:FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com). You will receive a telephone number to use with response.

**PLEASE NOTE: payment options are the same for all FFNCC Events. Please send email to [FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com](mailto:FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com) with event in the Subject line. While this is a 2 step process, payments will not be lost or confused with other upcoming events The Board works to keep events fee free and affordable**

# Winter Baking Event

Have you ever wondered how to get your pulla to rise? Join the expertise of Finnbaker/Board Member Katja Frederick and learn how to bake laskiaispullat (filled Shrovetide cardamom buns).

While the pulla dough rises, we will also make pastries honoring Finland's national poet, Johan Ludvig Runeberg. You will get to sample and take these seasonal treats home.

Saturday, February 7 1:00pm - 4:00pm  
Resurrection Evangelical Lutheran Church  
6201 Washington Blvd, Arlington, VA

RSVP to [FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com](mailto:FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com)

Cost: Members \$15 Non-Members \$25

PayPal: Go to [www.finlandiadc.org](http://www.finlandiadc.org) and use the "Donate" link

Venmo: @AndreaRasmussen-19

Check: Payable to FFNCC

## In this new year, resolve to read more!

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.

# FINNISH LIT

A GATHERING TO READ AND TALK  
JOIN US

EVERY SIX WEEKS  
ZOOM

EMAIL BEN AT [benjaminbagocius@gmail.com](mailto:benjaminbagocius@gmail.com)  
FOR THE ZOOM LINK

# BOOK CLUB

You're warmly invited to the next [Finnish Literature Book Club](#) session on an upcoming **Sunday, March 22, 2026**, from 1:00-2:15 p.m., EST. The featured book will be announced shortly

**Featured Book:** [The Brothers](#), by Asko Sahlberg, transl. by Emily and Fleur Jeremiah

**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](mailto:benjaminbagocius@gmail.com) for Zoom link.



**Asahi is a health practice from Finland—gentle exercises that develop strength, balance, and mindfulness.**

**Come to a class to experience how Asahi can change your health and outlook! Open to all ages and abilities. Includes seated exercises. Saturdays in Bethesda, MD 20817**

**Training for Certified Instructors Training coming in April to Bethesda/Fairfax locations: April 10-12**

**Questions? Contact Margaret Hilton / [mhilton8@gmail.com](mailto:mhilton8@gmail.com)**

## **SAUNA WEEK IS COMING! Will you be dressed for it?**

**Perfect gear for SAUNA AND warming up in cool weather!**

**SAUNAMEKKO.COM Made and designed in USA for Finns**

The collage features several images: a woman in a black tank top and shorts, a woman in a dark long-sleeved top and leggings sitting on a wooden bench, a man in a dark tank top and shorts sitting on a wooden bench, and a woman in a dark long-sleeved top and leggings sitting on a wooden bench. A QR code is present with the text 'SCAN THE CODE TO SHOP THE COLLECTION' and 'SAUNAMEKKO.COM'. The product card for 'saunamekko' features a central image of a dark, teardrop-shaped garment with the text '100% MERINO WOOL SAUNAWEAR'. The card lists the following features: **SOFT** (Ultra-fine fibers, feel gentle on skin, never itchy), **BREATHABLE** (Promotes airflow to prevent overheating), **DURABLE** (Lightweight yet long-lasting, and sustainable), **ODORLESS** (Naturally resists odor, even after multiple wears), **WICKING** (Keeps you dry and fresh by wicking away moisture), **WASHABLE** (Easy to care for with occasional cold-water washes), and **REGULATING** (Adapts to temperature shifts, keeping you comfortable). The website 'SAUNAMEKKO.COM' is listed at the bottom.

Designed to wear in the Sauna but for more than just the sauna! Unisex clothing line-great for all. A portion of proceeds benefit FFNCC! Use the QR code or the code FFNCC when you order!

[www.saunamekko.com](http://www.saunamekko.com) Use code FFNCC

# FINNISH MUSICIANS AND MUSIC TO ENJOY!

Klaus Makela  
Friday, February 27, 2026 // 8:00pm  
The Music Center at Strathmore  
5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda, MD 20852



Klaus Mäkelä will conduct the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at The Music Center at Strathmore in North Bethesda, MD, on Friday, February 27, 2026, at 7:30 PM, as part of a Washington Performing Arts presentation. This performance will feature Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 and Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique.

Cantores Minores  
Tuesday, April 28, 2026 // Doors Open 6:00pm  
The Embassy of the Republic of Finland  
Tickets will be on sale at [www.finlandiadc.org](http://www.finlandiadc.org)  
or by Check / Venmo / Zelle  
tickets will be available soon  
watch for special email

The Beloved Cantores Minores will be in Washington DC for one performance only as they travel the East Coast! Please mark your calendar – ticket price includes beverages and a light buffet supper by Mikko Nordic Fine Foods.

Members have the opportunity to help during their stay. If you wish to Volunteer, please send email to: [FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com](mailto:FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com)

## Interesting facts about Finland (continued)

### Did you know that: Fact 183. Nature Has Given Finland World Records

We all know that Finland has plenty of lakes, but the number is varying depending on the statistical source. The largest number appear to be 187,888 (including ponds larger than 500 m<sup>2</sup>).

It is a world record. All the lakes in Finland were formed immediately after the edge of the continental ice sheet from the last Ice Age receded across the areas of Finland to Sweden, roughly 13,000–10,000 years ago.

Finland's largest lake, Saimaa, is Europe's fourth largest lake. As we have earlier reported in these articles, this lake is also home to the rarest freshwater seal in the world. Approximately 310 of these are left in the lake. (Photo: Landscape of Saimaa lake.)



Related to lakes, Finland has also a world record in the number of islands. There are exactly 179,584 islands in Finland, consisting of the island in the mainland and the long coastal areas and islands around Swedish speaking Åland.

During this February, all the lakes and islands in Finland are covered by ice and snow. At this writing, the temperature in a large part of Finland is -30 degrees Celsius (-22 degrees Fahrenheit). Photo: Ice flowers in the archipelago.)

Sources: Amerikan Uutiset, Open Internet. Contributor: Turto Turtiainen.  
(Interesting Facts will continue in upcoming newsletters.)



**CONCORDIA**  
LANGUAGE VILLAGES



# FINNISH at Salolampi

What do Angry Birds, Nokia phones, Santa Claus, and saunas have in common? They all originate from the great country of Finland! From the moment you arrive at our Finnish Language Village, *Salolampi*, Finnish will be incorporated into every daily activity — from summer camp favorites to culturally authentic activities like *mölkky* (classic throwing game) or *pesäpallo* (Finnish style baseball). Personalized, hands-on learning activities give you fun opportunities to learn and practice new vocabulary as native and expert speakers introduce you to modern Finland. Your time at *Salolampi*'s beautiful, wooded lakefront site will give you the chance to live like the Finns!

**2025 ADULT WEEK**  
(Ages 18+) Sept. 14-20

**NORDIC HOLIDAY WORKSHOP**  
*Celebrate Nordic holiday traditions with baking, crafts, and joyful singing.*  
(Ages 21+) Dec. 5-7

**2026 FAMILY PROGRAMS**  
(Adults 19+ with children under 18)  
Jan. 16-19  
June 15-20

**2026 ADULT WEEK**  
(Ages 18+) May 11-17

**2026 YOUTH PROGRAMS**  
**One-Week Camps**  
(Ages 7-12) June 22-27  
(Ages 12-18) July 6-11

**Two-Week Camps**  
(Ages 8-12) June 22-July 4  
(Ages 12-18) July 6-18

**Four-Week Camps**  
(Ages 12-15) June 22-July 18

**High School Credit**  
(Ages 13-18) June 22-July 4  
(Ages 13-18) June 22-July 18



**PLAN YOUR FINNISH**  
language journey today.

004401010525

[ConcordiaLanguageVillages.org](https://ConcordiaLanguageVillages.org)

CLV@Cord.edu | 800.222.4750 | Bemidji, Minnesota

a program of Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## FEBRUARY

**Reservations for Bus Trip to NY Open**

**7: 1:00-4:00 Baking Event, Resurrection Luth Church, Arlington**

**8: 1:00 Finnish Church, Resurrection Luth Church, Arlington, VA**

**15: MEMBER Renewal Deadline / payments due to Treasurer**

**15-21: NATIONAL SAUNA WEEK! FFNCC Sauna Week – March**

**24: 7:00 ASA Monthly Meeting: The Legacy of the Forest Finns**

**27: Klaus Makela // 7:30pm @ The Strathmore**

**28: 12:00-2:00 Ice Skating Party w Suomikoulu at Pentagon Row**

## MARCH

**8: 1:00 Finnish Church, Resurrection Luth Church, Arlington, VA**

**10: 7:00am Bus Trip to New York City / Helene Scherfbeck Exhibit**

**14: 6:00pm Annual Kalevala Dinner, Old Town Alexandria, VA**

## APRIL

**9-11: Asahi Certification Classes available**

**27: Cantores Minores Choir Arrives**

**28: 6:00pm Cantores Minores Concert at Embassy of Finland**

**29: Cantores Minores leaves for Philadelphia/NY**

## MAY

**1: Evening Vappu Celebration**

### **FFNCC Board of Directors:**

Andrea Pakonen Rasmussen

Kirsti Noring

Katja Frederick

Debra Lyons

Kim Whittle

Greg Wilska

Reach out to us at [FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com](mailto:FinlandiaFoundationNCC@gmail.com)