

2012
CHICAGO NEWS
By Bob Kujanpaa

April 2012

The Board of Directors of the Finnish American Society of the Midwest will serve the Sunday Dinner at the Estonian House at 1:00pm on May 6th. Pasties, salad, and a wide array of desserts will be on the menu. Board members will hold a meeting following the dinner and all FASM members are invited to attend.

Finnish filmmaker Aki Kaurismaki's French film, Le Havre, winner of the Gold Hugo, the top prize at Chicago's International Film Festival last autumn, continues to play in the Chicago area. The most recent showing was at the Tivoli Theater in Downers Grove where it was screened before a capacity audience.

Condolences to the family of Arnold Huhtelin who passed away in March. Over 200 attended the service held for Arnold at the Marsh Funeral Home in Gurnee. Arnold was a very active member of Chicago's Finnish community for many decades. A complete obituary appears in another section of this issue.

Condolences to the family of Reverend Melvin Johnson as well, who passed away in March. The Johnson family made their home in Chicago where for many years Pastor Johnson served with the staff of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Among Chicago area friends attending the services in Virginia, Minnesota, were Lise Myllymaki and Helena and Paavo Pelkonen.

John Richard Keranen, Jr., 44, of Kansas City, Missouri, formerly of Wilmette and Chicago, died February 1st, 2012. He was the son of Mary Ellen and the late John Richard Keranen, Sr., and the brother of David Matthew Keranen. A funeral mass was held March 10th at St. Francis Xavier Church in Wilmette.

March 2012

Members of the Finnish American Society of the Midwest will hold their Annual Vappu Party, Saturday, April 28th, at the Estonian House in Riverwoods. The social hour will begin at 5:00pm (yes, there will be sima), and dinner will be served at 6:00pm. Following dinner there will be entertainment, Victoria Kellogg will sing, and the DeKalb Footstompers will play for dancing. For further information, call (773) 631-9785.

The Board of Directors of FASM will be holding a garage sale April 20th and 21st at 20838 West Highway 176 in Mundelein. This is at the corner of Routes 83, 176, and 60. For further information call (773) 631-9785.

Reverend Melvin Johnson conducted Finnish worship services at St. Marks Lutheran Church in Waukegan on February 19th. Others participating in the service were: Carol Suomi (pianist), Lise Myllymaki (communion assistant), Paavo Pelkonen and Jussi Rautiokoski (ushers), and members of St. Marks' Finnish Choir and the Sibelius Chorus directed by Eric Aho. Proceeds from the coffee hour were sent to Sortavala. Reverend Johnson was accompanied to Waukegan by his daughter Kristin Hebrank.

The Chicagoland Finnladies held their annual luncheon and election of officers at Jimmy's Charhouse in Riverwoods on Saturday, February 18th.

The following officers were chosen for the coming year: President: Marjut Lohtari-Kuklin; Vice-President: Sari Covington; Treasurer: Jenni Werronen; Membership Secretary: Lida Borges; and, Secretary: Henna Koivisto.

Lee Hoofnagle entertained with kantele selection and led the ladies in a sing-a-long.

There were numerous raffle prizes. The retiring president Ann McAlpine and Membership Secretary Mari Emaus were thanked with flowers and a gift.

February was a month of birthday celebrations for several of the women of the Chicago Finnish community. Celebrating milestone birthdays with special parties were Aira Puistolahti, Ellen Krzyzewski, and Hely Tobler. Also celebrating a birthday in February was Norma Maki. Happy birthday to all!

Finland's entry in this year's European Union Film Festival was Hella W. The film was shown at the Gene Siskel Film Center on March 3rd and 6th. The film's director was Juha Wuolijoki, who is Hella's great-nephew. Hella was a self-made woman. She was a successful businesswoman, leading leftist, playwright, accused spy, a death row inmate, member of Parliament, and Director of the Finnish National Broadcasting Company.

A warm welcome to Vesa, Rita, and Noora Samela who have recently moved from Finland to make their home in Chicago.

Norma Heinonen Waisanen, 83, passed away in late February. She was preceded in death by her husband, Roy. She is survived by son Gary (Cynthia) Waisanen. She was a volunteer at Hinsdale Hospital for more than 30 years and a member of Grace Lutheran Church in Westchester. Services were held at Chapel Hill Gardens West in Oak Brook Terrace on February 28th. Internment was at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery.

February 2012

St. Marks Travelers' Club held their 7th Annual Finnish Celebration at St. Marks Lutheran Church in Waukegan on January 15th. Judy Shales-Reinier served as emcee. Carol Suomu accompanied the audience in singing God Bless America and the Finnish National Anthem. Tuula Tamsi gave a Finnish table prayer prior to the luncheon that included many traditional Finnish foods. The program included selections by members of the Sibelius Male Chorus. Chorus members participating included Arnold Aho, Eric Aho, Bill Maki, Matti Makinen, Imre Pagi, Velo Suigussaar and Jack Ylitalo. Norma Maki accompanied them on one of their songs. The program ended with music by the Lekspel Scandinavian Musicians from Milwaukee. There were over 100 people in attendance.

The Finnish Barflies got together after the Finnish Presidential Election voting ended. The voting took place at Finland's Honorary Consulate at 2246 Homer Street in Chicago. Vaalikarpanen (i.e. 'Election Flies') gathered at The North Side Bar and Grill at 1635 North Damen for lunch after the voting ended.

FASM Board of Directors member Mary Wojcik's picture appeared in Chicago's Red Eye Newspaper on January 19th as she performed in the Viaduct Theater's production of 'Who Maid Who' in early February.

Finnish American Chamber of Commerce Board Members met Wednesday, January 25th at the Adobo Grill in Chicago to finalize plans for 2012.

World renowned Finnish composer and master fiddler Arto Jarvela will appear with the new Finnish acoustic folk band Kaivama at the Old Town School of Folk Music on Saturday March 3rd, at 7:30pm. The Minneapolis-based duo of fiddler Sara Pajunen and multi-instrumentalist Jonathan Rudman have spent the past year touring the United States. The group performed at the Old Town School of Folk Music this past June. Call (773) 728-6000 for tickets.

Get well wishes to Arnold Huhtelin who is presently recovering at home.

Word has been received that former Chicagoan Lillian Eaker, who had made her home at Pearl Lake in Red Granite, Wisconsin, died this past August.

January 2012

The Danish American Chamber of Commerce hosted a networking event at Casa Spazio in Chicago to showcase Danish designer company Linie Design. The Finnish American Chamber of Commerce participated along with other Nordic chambers of commerce. This event was held on December 15th.

Siv Sjöholm, who is with the Chicago-based Finnish American company Success is Vitality, gave a presentation on health issues at the home of Julie Badel on January 14th. The presentation was followed by a pot luck dinner.

Scandinavian Park, Inc. NFP's Annual Spring Dinner Dance and Fundraiser, with the theme "Scandinavian Delights," will be held Saturday, March 3rd, at the Des Plaines Elks Club - 495 Lee Street, Des Plaines. For further information go to www.vasapark.il.com.

The Board of Directors of the Finnish American Society of the Midwest will hold a meeting at the Estonian House in Riverwoods Sunday, February 5th, at 11:00am. All FASM members are welcome to attend.

Donald Friday, 87, passed away in early December. Donald was an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church (The Finnish Church), singing in the choir and playing his guitar for church events. After Trinity closed, he was active at Mayfair Lutheran Church. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Charlotte (nee Isaacson), in 1996. He is survived by his wife, Susan (nee Kamppinen) whom he married in 2001. Services were held December 9th at the Drake Funeral Home in Chicago.

Gerald David Jutila, 68, died in December. He was the son of Wilfred and Signe (Lampinen) Jutila. He was a graduate of the University of Minnesota and John Marshall Law School in Chicago. He is survived by his wife, Barbara, and brothers Michael (Joyce), and Bruce (Lyne). Services with military honors were held at United Lutheran Church in Oak Park on December 17th.