



Finnish Center Association

# FCA News

JANUARY 2025

FOR MEMBERS OF THE FINNISH CENTER ASSOCIATION

## FINLAND'S INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

by Mia Lamminen

At the Finnish Center, FCA celebrated Finland's 107th Independence Day on December 7, 2024. FinnFolk, our resident band, performed traditional Finnish music during the cocktail hour.

The program began with a flag ceremony and the American and Finnish national anthems, with Roy Takakura and Matias Pantsar serving as flag bearers. Marilyn Metsa-Clark delivered the welcoming speech and introduced the performers, led by Katri Ervamaa. After a delicious dinner, Marilyn welcomed our new Honorary Consul for Finland for lower peninsula of Michigan, Kevin Nurmi, who extended greetings from Finland. She also introduced our keynote speaker, Tommy Flanagan, Executive Director of the Finlandia Foundation National.

Tommy began by thanking the FCA members for the important and meaningful gift of Tapiola, completed in 2024. He explained that the gift played a crucial role in saving Finnish-American immigration history and archives. Tommy delivered a captivating speech titled *Finland Today: From Legacy to Future*, which explored various aspects of Finnish history, culture, and traditions.

A moving performance of *Finlandia* by Jean Sibelius followed, featuring Katri Ervamaa (cello), Naki Sung-Kripfangs (piano), Don Reinholm (accordion), and Jennifer Goltz-Taylor (voice).

The musicians were joined by a group of Katri's University of Michigan students to perform Finnish tangos. This lively segment aimed to inspire attendees to dance, with all pieces composed by Finnish artists dating back from the 1930's to the 1970's.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all the volunteers who made the event successful—special thanks to Kathryn Hill and Katri Ervamaa for their invaluable contributions to the program.



Honorary Consul Kevin Nurmi



Mia Lamminen and Tommy Flanagan

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### JANUARY

Wednesday, January 1	Office Closed for New Year's Day
Wednesday, January 8	Board Meeting 7:00 pm
Friday, January 10	Buffet 4:30-7:00 pm
Sunday, January 12	Meetup Pelkie Part III 2:00 pm
Sunday, January 19	New Member Reception 1:00 pm
Friday, January 24	Pasty Prep 9:30 am-noon
Friday, January 24	Buffet 4:30-7:30 pm
Saturday, January 25	Pasty Event Pick up 9:30am-1:00 pm
Thursday, January 30	Rental
Friday, January 31	Rental

**Reservations are recommended for all events.**

### FEBRUARY

Saturday, February 1	Rental
Sunday, February 2	Rental
Friday, February 7	Buffet 4:30-7:30 pm
Saturday, February 8	Rental
Sunday, February 9	Meetup 1:00 pm
Friday, February 14	Pasty Dinner 4:30-6:00 pm
Sunday, February 16	FCA Annual Meeting 3:00 pm
Friday, February 21	Rental
Friday, February 21	Buffet 4:30-7:30 pm
Saturday, February 22	Rental
Sunday, February 23	Nordic Dance 2:00-5:00 pm

### FCA ELECTION NOTICE 2025

Election at the Annual meeting on February 16, 2025 at 3:00 pm. The FCA Nominating Committee is seeking candidates to fill three positions on the FCA Board of Trustees. Members running as candidates need to submit short biographies (250 words or less) by January 5, 2025 to the Finnish Center Association via email to [finnishcenter@gmail.com](mailto:finnishcenter@gmail.com), Attention Nominating Committee Chair.

Also, currently FCA's Education Committee Chair position is vacant. A bio is not required for this role. We only need you to voice interest in this position. If you have any questions, please contact Kathryn Hill at the FCA (248) 478-6939.

Please consider serving the FCA as a leader in one of these positions.

Finnish American Singers of Michigan  
meet on Monday evenings at 6:00 pm January 13 through March 31.  
Emmanuel Lutheran Church  
34567 W. Seven Mile Rd., Livonia, Mi 48152

35200 W. Eight Mile Road  
Farmington Hills, MI  
48335-5108  
Tel: (248) 478-6939  
[finnishcenter@gmail.com](mailto:finnishcenter@gmail.com)  
[www.finnishcenter.org](http://www.finnishcenter.org)

#### Officers

Co-Chairs  
Christine Manninen  
Roger Wanttaja  
Vice Chair, Kathryn Hill  
Treasurer, Christina Lovgren  
Asst. Treasurer, Mia Lamminen  
Secretary, Sherrill Tedford

#### Board of Trustees

##### 1 Year

Jerry Collins, Sherrill Tedford,  
Christine Manninen

##### 2 Year

Kathryn Hill, Ed O'Brien,  
Janet Suomi

##### 3 Year

Peggy Burns, Ramona Dixon,  
Roger Wanttaja

#### Alternates

#1 Nancy Hanson  
#2 Marilyn Clark  
#3 Paul Rajala

#### Financial Review

Mary Kaye Aukee  
Nancy Lee  
Joanne Ouellette

#### Committee Chairpersons

##### Building & Grounds

Roger Wanttaja

##### Cultural

Yvonne Lockwood

##### Education

##### Finance

Mia Lamminen

##### Gift Shop

Janet Suomi

##### Mailing

Alice Manley

##### Membership

Sherrill Tedford

##### Publicity & Publications

Ed O'Brien

##### Social

Mary O'Brien

Follow FCA on  
Instagram  
[@finnishcenterassocaiton](https://www.instagram.com/finnishcenterassocaiton)



## MEMORIALS

In memory of FCA life member  
**Viona Hakala (10/25/24)** a  
 donation has been made by Judith Derek  
 on behalf of Carol Hakala's Bowling Buddies.

The FCA would also like to express condolences to  
 the family and friends of:

Life Member **Pentti Korpi (10/23/24)**  
 Life member **Helen Helenbart (10/19/24)**  
 Life member **Ethel LaCourt (8/24/24)**  
 Life member **Victoria Perttunen (7/1/24)**

When making a memorial donation, you may direct it toward a specific fund. The funds available are: FCA General Fund, Library, Scholarship, Nordic Heritage Folk Dancers, Drama Club, Finn Weavers, Garden Club, FinnFolk Musicians and Finnish American Singers. If a donation is undesignated, it goes to the General Fund for expenses of the Finnish Center. The family of the deceased may direct undesignated donations toward a specific fund (up to one year after date of death).

Please make your check out to the Finnish Center Association and send donations to: FCA, 35200 W. Eight Mile Rd., Farmington Hills, MI 48335. Memorial donations can now be made online on our revised FCA website, [finnishcenter.org](http://finnishcenter.org)

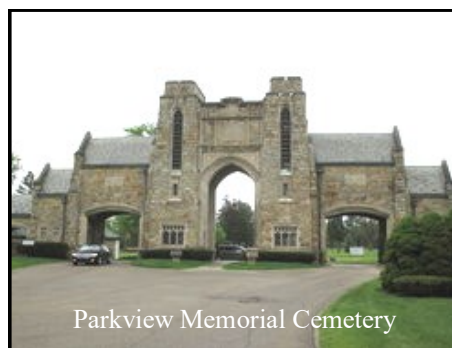
Please include full name, address, dates of death and birth of the deceased as well as the name and address of the next of kin to whom the acknowledgment card is to be mailed.

If you know of a member, parent, or child of a member who is passed away, please contact the FCA.



## CEMETERY LOTS FOR SALE

Finnish Center Association has received a generous donation of two cemetery lots at Parkview Memorial Cemetery, 34205 Five Mile Road, Livonia MI 48154. The donation was made by Elizabeth Maki in memory of long time Finnish Center members Allie (her mother) and Emil Porkka. The lots are located in Garden of Hours, section 895, graves 1 & 2. Each grave can hold one full body burial along with two cremains or just 3 cremains per grave. If you are interested in purchasing them, please give a call to Finnish Center for more information. Telephone (248) 478-6939 or email: [finnishcenter@gmail.com](mailto:finnishcenter@gmail.com)



Parkview Memorial Cemetery



## SUNSHINE LADY

Sending get-well cards, thinking-of-you cards, words-of-encouragement cards to members.

This little-known function has been around for many years, and can only be accomplished when I am notified that someone needs a card. Send or call your card requests to the attention of the "Sunshine Lady" at the FCA.

Thank you to everyone who donated cards. It is much appreciated.

Nancy Rajala

**thrivent**

Kim Dwyer, FIC, RICP®, CLTC®

**Financial Advisor**

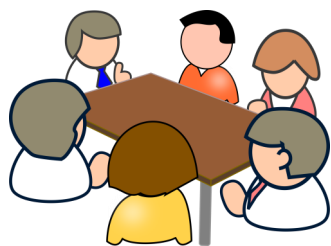
Generational Wealth Advisors  
[kim.dwyer@thrivent.com](mailto:kim.dwyer@thrivent.com)  
[connect.thrivent.com/kim-dwyer](https://connect.thrivent.com/kim-dwyer)

**Office** 248-719-8520  
 39500 Orchard Hill Place, Suite 170  
 Novi, MI 48375

**Text** 248-963-8258  
 19 Washington St  
 Monroe, MI 48161



## ANNUAL MEETING



The FCA Annual Meeting will be held **Sunday, February 16, 2025** at 3 p.m. in person at FCA or via Zoom. Coffee and treats will be available for those attending in person. We need a quorum of at least 25 members so please try to attend. The online auction will go “live” the day prior so auction items will also be available for viewing in the front display case.

## NORDIC HERITAGE FOLK DANCE PRACTICE

The Nordic Heritage Folk Dance group welcomes both children and adults to come and learn basic steps like polka, waltz and schottische and simple-to-intermediate folk dances depending on the dancer. Our goal is to have fun while keeping the cultures of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden alive through folk dancing.

All practices begin at 2:00 pm with a “family-style” practice where both children and adults learn folk dancing together for the first hour. We want to ensure folk dancing continues for generations. The next hour or longer is for adults where the folk dances can become more challenging depending on the participants. We hope to see you at one of our practices!

Sunday, February 23, 2025 2-5 pm  
Location: Finnish Center

March Date TBD  
Location: Finnish Center

If you have any questions please email  
Glendene Thornbloom  
at [gathorn4@gmail.com](mailto:gathorn4@gmail.com) or the FCA  
at [finnishcenter@gmail.com](mailto:finnishcenter@gmail.com)



## DID YOU EVER FEEL SORRY FOR WINTER?

What a silly question. Of course not. Wait a minute. What if winter were a person. Consider this. First winter arrives on the scene at the most joyous time of the year, just a few days before the big one, Christmas. Holiday greetings, beautiful lights, happiness, singing, glad tidings, snow, sleds, jingle bells and good cheer. What an opening! How great a feeling for the cold guy. But then, slowly, little by little, the days get longer, and the eager anticipation of the arrival of the holiday's fades quickly after the holidays and is replaced by the dread of the long winter ahead. Long nights, cold grey days and the fear of a winter storm leaves many with ennui. Now think of poor winter. He begins with joy and eagerness and soon is aware of the distaste that he brings to the seasonal table. Not only is he persona non grata but he is daily losing his strength as the days get longer and the projection of his Life expectancy is less than promising. Soon he is jolted into reality with a January thaw as the clock rapidly moves on to March, the month of his demise. He must become aware of the diminishing possibility of his longevity. Well, of course winter is really not a person but if you like to feel sorry for unfortunate situations, the winter season can give one a reason to muse. Also consider,

### Vernal Progression

Moving forward, while winter sleeps,  
Spring,  
Relentless in her drive for dominance.  
Presses forward, and then retreats.  
And finally,  
In glorious splendor,  
She makes her case with song of bird  
and floral bouquet.  
Winter sighs and takes his leave,  
Again, disarmed by solar deity.

By David Sharpe

## FINNISH CENTER ASSOCIATION

### Hours of Operation

Monday, Wednesday, Friday  
11:00 am - 3:00 pm  
(248) 478-6939



## POKER FUNDRAISER VOLUNTEER LEADER NEEDED

Most of you have enjoyed attending social and cultural events that we have at the Finnish Center. These events are the crux of our reason for being here and we certainly would like to provide more of them. But having sufficient volunteer and monetary resources can sometimes be an obstacle in meeting our goals.

The Finnish Center has traditionally relied on bingo, poker, raffles, etc., as well as other activities to supply necessary funding. Over the past twelve years the State of Michigan has allowed non-profit organizations to participate in gaming activities, particularly poker, to raise sufficient funding for their groups.

Member Gene Belttari led the FCA into this activity and it grew to be very lucrative. Subsequently Ilona Takakura assumed the role of the leader and although we participate only twice a year, it has provided substantial funds for FCA projects and events.

With Ilona leaving now due to professional and family needs the FCA is seeking a volunteer to lead the group. Contact Paul Rajala, via email at [prajala@comcast.net](mailto:prajala@comcast.net), for more information. It would be most unfortunate if the FCA had to lose out on our opportunity in this important fund-raiser.



## RECEPTIONISTS WANTED

The FCA is needing volunteers to help in the front office answering the phone and a few related tasks. This will entail a Monday, Wednesday, or Friday from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm.

It's a pleasant job with people coming and going ... some walk-ins with rental questions, others with memorial checks for members who have passed on and still others just want to say "Hello" and meet and greet others. Friendly folks! Some may want to make a purchase from our gift shop. Not difficult yet semi-social camaraderie with a receptionist smile.



Please contact  
Paul Rajala  
[prajala@comcast.net](mailto:prajala@comcast.net)

## FCA SEEKS NOTARY VOLUNTEER



The FCA is looking for someone living close to the Center that could be available to notarize documents. These documents are vital to procure special liquor licensing for rental events. The FCA would cover the cost for the Oakland County notary fee as well as the notary stamp needed to complete the notarization.

If you or someone you know would be interested in volunteering for this job please contact the FCA office at (248) 478-6939.

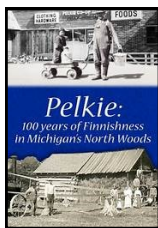
## RYIJY WALL HANGINGS BACK ON DISPLAY

For the FCA Finnish Independence Day evening celebration attendees were delightfully greeted with the display of three of our ryijy wall hangings on the east and west walls of the banquet hall. Linnea Nurmi and John Aukee are to be thanked for taking the initiative to retrieve these traditional art pieces from storage and to exhibit them prominently for our Independence Day dinner and program. Kiitos paljon to Linnea and John.



## SOCIAL NEWS

Happy New Year. May many good things come your way in this new year.



**January 12** at 2:00 pm will be the first Meetup of the year. We will see Part III of the Pelkie video. This will be followed with a discussion about the video. As always desserts and coffee will be served. Please join us.

**January 19** will be a reception for all new members that joined the Finnish Center in 2024. This promises to be a special day. All members are invited to attend and get to know our new friends. Coffee, cookies and cake will be served at 1:00 pm. Please call the office to sign up for this special event.

**February 14** will be a pasty dinner. Pasties will be served from 4:30-6:00 pm at a cost of \$15.00. Wear red to celebrate Valentine's Day. We need you to sign up, so we have enough pasties. Call the office.

Mary O'Brien, social chair

## GIFT SHOP



Happy New Year wishes for good health and happiness in the new year. May it be full of hope and potential.

We appreciate your support and we look forward to seeing you and serving you in the gift shop.

Happy New Year! May your WI-FI be strong and your coffee stronger!

Janet Suomi

## TOIVO AND HELMA HUMOR

Toivo and Hilma were driving north on I75, heading to the UP, and eventually to Ishpeming. Along the way, Toivo got a little "frisky" and put his hand on Hilma's knee. Hilma: Since we are married now, you can go a little bit further? Toivo stepped on the gas and drove all the way to Duluth.



## JANUARY PASTY EVENT

Who can resist a hot pasty on a winter's day? The FCA has planned a pasty-making event for late January to help satisfy that need. On Friday the 24<sup>th</sup> volunteers will be busy peeling and dicing rutabaga, carrots, onions, and potatoes. Then on Saturday the 25<sup>th</sup> the pasties will be assembled, baked, packaged, and sold.

The cost is \$8.00 per pasty and they must be picked up on Saturday between 9:30 and 1:00. There is a limited amount of freezer space, so if you would like to pick up your order at a later date we require that you pre-pay.

**PRE-ORDERING IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!** Email information will be sent to all those on the current ordering list. If you are not on the list to order by email, but would like to be, please send your name, email address, and a phone number to [fcapasties@gmail.com](mailto:fcapasties@gmail.com). There will also be a sign-up sheet in the FCA lobby or you can call the office at (248) 478-6939. Note that the deadline for ordering is January 16.

Making hundreds of pasties may sound easy, but a crew of volunteer workers is needed to perform the multitude of tasks. If you would like to volunteer, please contact me through the FCA office or at [fcapasties@gmail.com](mailto:fcapasties@gmail.com). The benefits of helping are that you can get out of the house on a winter's day, you can socialize with the other fascinating workers, and you can further the fundraising efforts of the Finnish Center and the Finnish American Singers. The final reward is that you will receive a complimentary pasty!

Paul Rajala, FCA pasty coordinator



## NOVI CONCERT BAND CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Twice a year we have a very entertaining program here in the Finnish Center banquet hall. The local Novi Concert Band presents concerts to a crowd of FCA members and guests. On Friday December 13, after a buffet meal prepared by Michael's Touch of Class, about forty musicians took out their flutes, clarinets, saxophones, trumpets, trombones, and tubas and provided a fine band performance.

The band is not sponsored by the local school music programs, but by the Novi Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services. The group includes many fine local musicians, under the direction of Scott Cramer.

The Novi Concert Band performs multiple times every year at indoor and outdoor locations in the Novi area. The Finnish Center has hosted them for many years, perhaps 50! The selections for the latest concert included the Finnish and American national anthems, a special piece entitled "Finnish Rhapsody", followed by songs of the season: "Jingle Bells", "Carol of the Drum", "Away in a Manger", and others, all arranged for concert bands. During one particular song, "How the Grinch Stole Christmas", Director Cramer started by sitting in an easy chair and reading the story of the Grinch, much to the delight of the audience and the band members.

If you have never attended one of these performances at the FCA, you should try it. You'll get a buffet meal at the regular price and the band concert is free. Set your calendars for Friday, June 6, for the Band's next visit.





## **“THE GIFT OF MUSIC”**

Presented by the Finnish-American Singers of Michigan

As they always do at this time of year, the FASM’s concert theme was Christmas. The 15-member choir is directed by Alex Cave, with beautiful piano and kantele accompaniment by Hope McGookey. A variety of types of music was shared--sacred, secular, traditional, and humorous—by the choir as a whole, in small groups, and as solos—in Finnish, Swedish, German and English. This was a delightful afternoon of combined voices and instruments.

Director Alex Cave provided interesting background information about each piece. Jukka Kuoppamäki’s “Sininen ja Valkoinen,” one of the most popular songs in Finland, is often used in karaoke sessions in Finland. “Something Told the Wild Geese,” by Sherri Porterfield, is a poem about the changing of the seasons. The Finnish folksong “Kun joulu valkeneepi,” with solo by alto Nancy Jacobs, was originally a German folk tune. Alex participates in an Ohio choral music singing group three times a year, and brought this arrangement of “O Holy Night” by Craig Courtney to the choir. Soprano Cortney Szpanelewski did the solo on this familiar piece. Bass Paul Rajala performed a solo on Swedish verse of “Silent Night,” and the audience was invited to sing along in English, which many people enjoyed doing. Aimo Huttunen’s “Taas syttyvät kynttilät” (Candles Are Lit Again), with tenor Katy Koskela doing the solo, describes the Finnish custom of placing lighted candles in their windows at night during the Christmas season.

“I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas”, arranged by Jill Gallina, and “The Man With the Bag”—obviously Santa Claus—were humorous songs, and they were thoroughly enjoyed by the audience.

Director Cave wanted the audience to know that one doesn’t have to be Finnish to sing in the choir, and invited folks to join if they love to sing. Rehearsals begin again in the new year, on Monday nights.

Audience members were also invited to sing along on the final piece, Sibelius’ magnificent “Finlandia-hymni.”

There was ample time to visit and congratulate the singers for a superb concert during the after-concert coffee hour, during which delicious cookies and prune tarts were available with coffee and lemonade.

If you missed this delightful concert, watch for the announcement of the Singers’ spring concert—you’ll hear some musical surprises and some time-tested standards, and you’ll enjoy each one!

Concert review: Louise Hartung

Photo: Jean Lowrance







FCA office volunteer Ramona Dixon was changing the wording on the sign at the Finnish Center. She wanted to wish passersby a Merry Christmas in both Finnish and English, but the characters for the sign do not include the Finnish letter “Ä”. No worries. Some black electrical tape cut into small squares and placed over the “A”s provided the correct spelling.

## TWENTY-FIVE POPULAR FINNISH BOY’S NAMES OF FINNISH ORIGIN

(Things I found while looking for something else by Paul Rajala)

**25. Arvo** comes from the Finnish word *arvo*, which means “value” or “worth.” Similar-sounding names: Arvid, Aaro, Alvo, Ari, Arto, Armas, Arne, Arland, Arwin, and Ardan.

**24. Ismo** is a Finnish form of the name *Ismael*, which originates from Hebrew, meaning “God will hear.” Similar-sounding names: Esko, Immo, Iiro, Isko, Iisakki, Iivo, Ilo, Ingo, Ilmo, and Enno.

**23. Jaakko** is the Finnish form of *Jacob*, which comes from the Hebrew name *Yaakov*, meaning “supplanter” or “one who follows.” Similar-sounding names: Jarkko, Jukka, Jari, Jalo, Joakim, Jaap, Jakob, Jaco, Jake, and Janne.

**22. Eetu** is the Finnish diminutive form of *Edvard*, derived from Old English elements meaning “wealth” and “guardian.” Similar-sounding names: Aatu, Eino, Eeli, Eppu, Elmo, Eero, Eerik, Edi, Enok, and Eli.

**21. Juhani** is a Finnish variant of *Johannes*, which is derived from the Hebrew *Yochanan*, meaning “God is gracious.” Similar-sounding names: Juho, Juha, Jussi, Janne, Jorma, Jaakko, Jonne, Juuso, Joonas, and Jukka.

**20. Jussi** is a Finnish diminutive form of *Juhani* or *Johannes*, meaning “God is gracious.” Similar-sounding names: Juho, Jukka, Jesse, Jami, Jorma, Joel, Jari, Joni, Janne, and Joonas.

**19. Kevät** means “spring” in Finnish, referring to the season of renewal and growth. Similar-sounding names: Keijo, Kauri, Kaapo, Kai, Kimo, Kuutti, Kosti, Kosti, Kari, and Kauko.

**18. Mustanen** is derived from the Finnish word *musta*, meaning “black,” often used as a surname referring to dark colors or features. Similar-sounding names: Maunu, Miska, Mielikki, Mauri, Mertsä, Mikko, Miro, Markus, Moisio, and Manni.

**17. Aapeli** is derived from the Hebrew name *Abel*, meaning “breath” or “vapor.” Similar-sounding names: Aapo, Aarne, Akseli, Aatos, Altti, Atte, Anssi, Arto, Armas, and Arvi.



FINNISH CENTER ASSOCIATION  
35200 W. Eight Mile Road  
Farmington Hills, MI 48335-5108



Current Resident or

FCA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR \_\_\_\_ RENEWAL

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant/Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Are you of \_\_\_\_\_ Finnish descent?

- ☐ Annual membership, single, one vote ..... \$50.00
- ☐ Annual membership, senior\* or youth\*, one vote ..... \$25.00
- \*Senior, over 65 years, youth under 30 years of age
- ☐ Annual membership, couple, two votes ..... \$100.00
- ☐ Annual membership, family, one vote ..... \$75.00
- ☐ Life membership, one vote ..... \$500.00
- ☐ Life membership, senior, one vote (see membership for details)

Amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to FCA and send to Finnish Center Association,  
Membership, 35200 W. Eight Mile Road, Farmington Hills, MI 48335-5108

Visit us on “Finnish Center and Hall” Facebook page and “like” us to get the latest updates!



Follow FCA on Instagram  
@finnishcenterassociation



**THAYER-ROCK  
FUNERAL HOME**  
33603 Grand River,  
Farmington, MI  
(248) 474-4131  
Paul N. Potti, Director