



Finlandia Foundation® Columbia-Pacific Chapter

President's Message March 2022

Dear Finlandia Foundation Columbia-Pacific Chapter members and friends,

As I type my first President's Message to you all, the rain is pounding on the window sill and the sun is nowhere to be seen. Spring is around the corner and as we switched the clocks this morning, the evenings will be light longer. I love the change of seasons, whether here in Oregon or Finland.

What perfect timing it is as the regulations for masks and open meetings and events are loosened!

We are ready for more in-person events and activities, aren't we, even though being careful and keeping our distance as needed. Read about events coming up this spring later in the message.

The FFCPC Annual Meeting was held on March 6th, 2022 at the Nordia House in Portland. About 30 members and guests from our affiliate Finnish organizations were present. We had a very nice turn out. We held the meeting with a review of our activities in 2021 and Auditor's and Treasurer's Reports. We also heard a few words of our other area Finnish and Scandinavian organizations. Our guest speaker, the Honorary Consul, Veikko Valli, spoke about his new position and goals and finished his speech with some touching words of the war in Ukraine and how Finns and the Finnish government are following it closely.

Our outgoing President, Greg Jacob, was awarded the title and award of President Emeritus for his service of eight years as a board and chapter president. He has been a respected leader and has built bridges between our Nordic clubs and Finnish affiliates in the Northwest. He will remain active in our chapter even though he stepped down from the board as well.

Thank you again for all your hard work with FFCPC!

Pirjo and Dirk Schulbach had prepared the nominations to FFCPC board. Three members had decided to step down: Katja Erringer, James Rinta, and Greg Jacob.

Thank you for your years of serving as Board of Directors. We hope to see you at all our events as much as your busy lives allow.

The 2022 Board of Directors was nominated and elected. The new board met after the annual meeting and elected the officers for the new board.

Heli Hatanpaa-Wetzel, President
Ray Wikman, Vice President
Elizabeth Newton, Secretary
Anu Erringer, Member Secretary
Ellen Harju, Treasurer
Jukka Perkiomaki, Director
Andrea Tolonen, Director
Pete Lee, Director
Adam Perkiomaki, Director
Mira Riska, Director
Katariina Lehtonen-Harrskog, Director
Paivi Panttila-Vargas, Director

I am excited and happy to serve as the Chapter President for 2022! Thank you for trusting me and electing me!

Let me share a little bit about myself. I was born in Pori, Finland, but spent most of my childhood and young adult life in Turku, about two hours south of Pori. After graduating, I studied foreign languages at the University of Turku and got my first MA there. I then settled in at my former secondary school as an English, Swedish, and German teacher. At 34 I married my teenage sweetheart, Michael, whom I had met as a foreign exchange student many years before in Yosemite National Park. We settled in the Sacramento, CA area where I got my second degree in Special Education. I worked both at a high school and a junior high school as a Resource Specialist for 21 years until I retired amidst the starting pandemic in 2020. We had dreams of downsizing and ended up moving to Oregon to Hope Valley Resort tiny house community near Salem. We have two children, my stepdaughter Darcie, and Kalle who was born in Turku in 1994.

I have continuously been active in Finnish-American circles since my university years. In the early 80s I was one of the founding members of Finnish-American Society of Students in Turku, later switching to the board of directors of Finnish American Society in Turku. After moving to the States in late 1990, I was immediately connected to the Finlandia Club of Sacramento Valley, in which I have served for the past 30 years as

both the president and board member, just resigning as the vice president this week. I have also served as a board member for two terms and am a lifetime member at Finnish-American Home Association FAHA in Sonoma, CA. After moving up here in the fall of 2020, I connected with area Finns and was elected to the Board of Directors last year.

My goal as the Chapter President is to follow the mission of FFCPC and Finlandia Foundation National to support, preserve, and cultivate Finnish and Finnish-American culture by connecting with affiliate Finnish and Scandinavian organizations in the Pacific Northwest, by helping to organize events, and by promoting Finnish traditions and holidays but holding the area ancestral heritage and honoring the great work that the current and former board and chapter members have achieved in our area with a lot of hard work and *sisu*.

I also value open communication and collaboration, so please feel free to talk to me at our events or connect with me via our chapter email finlandiafoundationcpc@gmail.com.

Respectfully Yours,
Heli Hatanpaa-Wetzel

Events coming up

Mark your calendars for the following events coming up.

Easter Family Event and Egghunt

Saturday, April 16th from 10am -1pm at Fogelbo Grounds next to Nordia House. Parents, grandparents, and friends can enjoy coffee and pastries while kids make crafts and go egg hunting there. Bring your lawn chairs and/or blankets. KUBB and some Finnish lawn games will be played as well. Registration at the Nordic NorthWest website for the FREE event will be up at the Upcoming Events soon, so we kindly request to do that so we know how many to prepare for.

Vappu Celebration

Saturday April 30th from 12-4pm we will be gathering at Fogelbo again. This time to celebrate Vappu, the Finnish way. It will be a family event with games and activities for children and adults alike. We will serve complimentary Vappu food with makkara, perunasalaatti, sima, tippaleipa, and munkki.

No-host bar will be there with wine, beer, and hopefully sparkling as well as sodas and waters.

We will have a sing-along as well. KUBB and Finnish lawn games will be available. So dress in your spring gear, bring your student cap if you have one, lawn chairs and/or blanket, and be ready to have a great Vappu Eve!

Registration at the Nordic NorthWest website for the FREE event will be up at the Upcoming Events soon, so we kindly request to do that so we know how many to prepare for.

Juhannus/Midsummer Celebration

June 11 at Oaks Park in Portland. The committee is working on the details, which will be up later this spring. Please mark your calendars for a fun event.

Other area events worth marking in your calendars:

Scandinavian Dinner and Auction, Junction City, April 2

Astoria Scandinavian Festival, June 17-19

Naselle, WA FinnFest, July 29-31

Junction City Scandinavian Festival, August 11-14