

## Celebrating Juhannus and the Buffington's Send Off

By Saul Ahola

FAHS celebrated Juhannus this year with an evening of camaraderie and traditional Finnish dance music sponsored by the Makipuro Arts Fund. Popular accordionist Ed Hendela travelled from his home in the Pennsylvania Poconos to join with Hannu Makipuro in a reprise of their many performances together for dancing at Finnish Halls' dances from Saima Park to Lake Worth and Lantana back when Ed was living in West Haven. On this perfect midsummer evening the Canterbury hall resounded with Ed's accordion as he played familiar Finnish polkas, schottisches, waltzes and even tangos. He was often joined by Hannu playing trumpet, singing or adding percussion.



A buffet of pulled pork (slow roasted with Stan Karro's secret rub), burgers (grilled to perfection by Steve Bousquet) an assortment of salads and baked beans, and a few Finnish dishes like *karjalanpiirakka*, *kirkkusalaatti*, and *makkara kasvispata* (a reprise of Jonathan Audette's recent "Finnish Culinary Delight") were enjoyed. Most chose to top off the meal with some of Sue Coupe's home brewed sima. During the buffet while Ed and Hannu took a break, Kasha and Bob Breaux on kantele and flute and Saul Ahola on fiddle jammed together playing a few more schottisches and polkas so the music never really stopped.

The midsummer celebration provided a perfect opportunity for all the friends of Ellen and Don Buffington to toast them as they are leaving the

Lavonius farm in Canterbury, where Ellen grew up, and moving to the mountains of Colorado. Steve Bousquet thanked both of them for their years of friendship and contributions to FAHS, gave Ellen a Lily of the Valley pin and presented Don with an official "Galvanized Finn" certificate; Sue Coupe then presented Ellen and Don with the friendship/signature quilt she created which contained signatures from their many FAHS friends. It will be perfect for those cool Colorado mountain nights. Before the couple carved up their special cake, Anita Smiley helped everyone recite the cake's inscription: "Onnellisuutta tuleville vuosille--Happiness in the coming years".





Ed and Hannu's music resumed as Ellen and Don started up the dancing to the strains of Metsäkukki. The tables were pushed back, the dance floor expanded and Barry and Katy Heiniluoma and Bernie and Nancy Nowak from Sovittaja started dancing and never stopped until the music ended. Once they had learned in the spring that Ed Hendela was playing for dancing at the Canterbury Finn Hall, they were determined to be there.

You can't really celebrate Juhannus properly without a *kokko* (bonfire) and as the midsummer sun set, a *pieni-kokko* was fired up on the



Finn Hall lawn, with logs lovingly cut and split by Rachel Linkkila. Dancing temporarily moved out to the bonfire as friends young and old, on two legs, or with canes or wheels, danced around it, while Ed Hendela on accordion and Hannu Makipuro on trumpet played Finn Town Schottische.





## **Why Are the Finnish So Good at Motorsport?**

**By Jonathan Audette**

Look at lists of competitors in the highest levels of international motorsport over the past 50 years and you are sure to see a disproportionately high number of Finnish flags beside the names. How can tiny Finland turn out so many top level drivers? Google the title above and find an excellent analysis by writer Stephen Goldasz that goes far toward answering that question. Goldasz examines four key areas: Finland's strong motorsport culture that is instilled at an early age; roads and weather ideal for building skills in car control; Finland's embracing of engineering; and, not surprisingly, Sisu – cool-headedness, dogged determination, perseverance, and an innate desire to excel. Have a good read and celebrate the Finn in you with pride in driving well, continuing to develop your skills behind the wheel, and most importantly passing on the love of driving to your children and grandchildren.

**If you are a business owner, you can support publication of this newsletter by purchasing space for an ad promoting your business.**

**For information, contact Stan Karro at [info@fahs-ct.org](mailto:info@fahs-ct.org) or by phone at 860-774-4337**

## **Save the Date**

### **Our Annual Tori Open Air Market Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

It's time for our Annual Tori Market! Cool crisp fall temperatures are coming and we can get outside to enjoy it. This annual fun community event has plenty of homemade food to enjoy and beautiful crafts and vendors with wonderful products. Part of the Last Green Valleys Walktober, Come support your local community! To be a vendor

Email: [ElizaHawesWeeks@gmail.com](mailto:ElizaHawesWeeks@gmail.com) or  
Call 860-608-7877

## **Chicken Barbeque at FAHS, A Success But....**

**By Stan Karro**

On Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, the day was near perfect for outdoor activities and an event at the Finnish Hall in Canterbury benefitted from this weather after a long period of wet and unsettled days. We held our annual chicken barbeque with a sold out crowd within an hour and a half of the starting time. Along with this good news we also did experience the bad...many disappointed attendees and members without our main entrée to enjoy. Our advertising must have been on target and the community members responded to our barbeque promotion. Our event featured special basting sauce during the chicken grilling process that has been used for decades and makes the main course outstanding. Sides included potato salad, cucumber salad, coleslaw, pickled beets, and cranberry sauce. The meal was followed by our traditional rhubarb cake for dessert. All these special and delicious menu items contribute to our success and are not offered by other regional organization barbeques.

Special thanks to the barbeque pit staff chaired by Matti Huhta, to our members who helped with Friday and Saturday preparations, to our servers, to Armio Welding for the donation and replacement of our much needed grilling hardware, and to Pauline Andstrom for the "rhubarb connection".

## The Last Green Valley Quarterly Historical Meeting

By Stan Karro

On Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, the Finnish American Heritage Society hosted the quarterly Last Green Valley Historical meeting. TLGV ([www.thelastgreenvalley.org](http://www.thelastgreenvalley.org)) organization is a National Heritage Corridor that is comprised of 35 towns and cities in Eastern Connecticut and South Central Massachusetts. Members of the heritage society provided an overview of the Finnish Hall history and also of today's heritage society origins. Tours of the museum and archives were provided along with updates on current activities of interviewing senior members of our organization and plans for cataloging the archive collection and an update on arts and music at the hall. We acknowledged the support for the heritage society over many years from the local community, grants from FFN, TLGV, local banking institutions, and the many years of support from

many of our members in the preservation of our organization. The group was entertained by Kasha Breaux and several kantele students and by Clare Zuraw on the jouhikko stringed instrument from the University of Connecticut and Upper Michigan. The kitchen staff provided Finnish oven *pannukakku*, *pulla*, salmon chowder, and coffee for refreshments.

We thank the kitchen staff, Anita Smiley, Saul and Sandra Ahola, Ellen Buffington, and many others who helped make this educational and historical program a success for our visitors. Please visit the link mentioned above to learn more of TLGV and their extensive activities in our region of New England.



## Finland Comes To Pomfret Community School

By: Sandra Ahola, Former Principal of Pomfret Community School when the Cultural Arts Program was launched many years ago.

Have you ever wanted to share your Finnish heritage with young children and promote Finland? Well, several members of FAHS answered the challenge and agreed to participate in a weeklong series of activities in May at the Pomfret Community School (PCS), a preschool through grade 8 program of almost 400 students. For over 25 years the school conducted a "visit" to another country, another culture, and this year it was Finland. The assumption was that since there is a local, active group of Finns, maybe it's time they shared their culture. Frank Aleman, a PCS grandfather volunteered his time to help coordinate this task.

Planning this event was long and time-consuming, but that didn't deter the FAHS members – Anita Smiley, Katharine Leigh, Stan Karro, Arlene Baril, Saul Ahola, and Sandra Ahola – from attending



many meetings, sharing thoughts, brainstorming, and through it all trying to focus on how this would engage children and inspire them to appreciate and be aware of another culture right in their own backyard. "Ask Me About Sisü?" pins were made especially for this event and worn by the teachers to promote a new concept. And, of course, every educator loves the idea of Sisü as it applies to learning! At the end of the week during one of the assemblies, one student shouted out that Sisü meant "Never Giving Up!" Success!



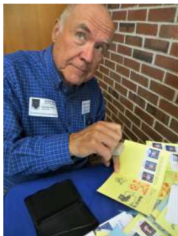
Anita Smiley kicked off the week with four consecutive PowerPoint presentations that focused on Finland - the country, the scenery, customs, cultural differences, and education. The students all loved it (as did the teachers) when Anita told them that a Finnish school day consisted of 45 minutes of class, 15 minutes recess outside, 45 minutes of class, 15 minutes recess outside, repeat all day. Several docent presentations followed through the week and included Katharine Leigh focusing on her design, arts, architectural highlights, and baking a lingonberry & cardamom cake. These were well received, especially using Finnish Math as you bake a cake – it was yummy! Stan Karro shared his love of Finnishness in several classes, Saul Ahola presented an explanation of Finnish Independence and (of course) he included the music of Sibelius' *Finlandia*, which was heard throughout the middle school, and though rousing it didn't prevent one 7<sup>th</sup> grader from falling sound asleep! Dianne

Hawes was back in familiar territory as a retired 8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher as she and her daughter, Liz, described the sauna and its role in the Finnish family. Arlene Baril dressed in traditional clothing and shared children's stories from Finland. Laura Sasser-Cuff and her mother, Marita Sasser, made the rounds in several classrooms and presented the Finnish language including how to count to 10. At week's end, many children were able to share words in Finnish! To top it off, Roy Tapio and John Harris, woodcarvers, were there for one day demonstrating their craft and explaining to these youngsters what woodcarving is all about. Additionally, there were some local parents who offered presentations to the classes on various topics.



On Wednesday the group held a tori, or a marketplace: the kantele was demonstrated by Rita Kelly and Saul Ahola; Finnish design, buildings, traditional clothing was shown by Anita and Arlene,

the sauna was explained by Dianne, baking pulla was demonstrated and the children were given the chance to make braids, all were given samples of pulla to taste, with Sandra Ahola and Marja Leena Huhta assisting. And the PTO offered an art activity that included making a sample picture of the northern lights and a bookmark that included a painted Finnish flag, which incidentally, flew all week in front of the school.



The week concluded with 3 assemblies that included musical presentations by Kasha Breau on the kantele and her group The Wild Notes, and demonstrations by the Revontulet Dancers from northern Massachusetts and New Hampshire were led by Leila Luopa. Participation was encouraged as the students were taught different dances – the stick dance and the schottische.

Overall, many thanks to the committee who gave much to this week, especially Katharine Leigh who oversaw many extra details such as ordering and presenting books to the PCS Library for reference and often inserting her creative skills into the event. A magnificent exhibit was prepared by Katharine and Anita and was on

display in the school foyer for several weeks. And, Saul Ahola who along with Kasha Breau prepared an 8-minute video on the kantele for the music teacher to show to all the students before the week began. PCS students participated through their art club work, their computer classes, and completed several posters and large murals for display as well. Overall, it was a resounding success for all involved. The PCS students indeed became aware of many facets of the Finnish culture and the country and the FAHS members carried out their mission of sharing their culture with the local communities.



Checkout and “LIKE” the FAHS Facebook page, listed as – “Finnish American Heritage Society of Canterbury, CT”



FAHS is a member chapter of Finlandia Foundation National (FFN).

Visit their website at –  
[www.finlandiafoundation.org](http://www.finlandiafoundation.org)

## See What You Missed at FinnFunn Weekend 2018 & Save the Date for 2019!

By Katharine Leigh

The 2018 FinnFunn Weekend was held at East Hill Farm, a working farm located at the base of Mount Monadnock in tranquil New Hampshire. The Inn provided a relaxed atmosphere, with multiple areas for activities, movies, Finnish crafts and quiet conversations. The weekend featured 15 presenters, 6 performances, 4 movies, 23 vendors at the Tori Market and a wide variety of donated silent auction items. There was even a Marimekko quilt raffle, of a Marimekko quilt that was made and donated by Sue Coupe! All participants enjoyed wholesome, delicious home-cooked meals three times daily, served family style: especially homemade pulla bread, plentiful coffee, and hearty country breakfasts. No one left the table hungry!

Highlights of the presenters included the keynote address by James Ford Cooper, the Finlandia Foundation Lecturer of the Year 2018 and his interesting discussion of Finland and the Cold War based on his book: *On Finland Watch* (1999) which drew on his five-year experience with the US Foreign Service at the Finnish Embassy in Helsinki. Frank Eld is passionate about locating, studying and preserving Finnish log saunas throughout the US and Canada. He gave demonstrations in the Finnish technique of log construction at both the Farm and at the Tori. He travels in a mobil demonstration log cabin built in the bed of his pickup truck.

Other presenters discussed possible future startups in Finland (Andy Heiniluoma and Greg Smiley); the history of co-ops in the Northeast (Jim Kurtti and Roy Helander); Lark Leonard held two sessions on the traditional craft of Finnish straw plaiting that was very popular; Elaine Moe demonstrated birch bark weaving; Kasha Breau held kantele lessons and Anneli Johnson & Elina Aarnio demonstrated (and entertained us) with how to make a sandwich cake.

Wonderful musical performances were provided by Sara Pajunen, a fiddle player, and FFN Performer of the Year in 2015-2016; Bernie Nowak, Jr. played the accordion at the Farm and at the Tori; dance music provided by the group Oivan Ilo and dance performance with enthusiastic audience participation with the Revontulet Dancers (including our own Matti & Marcia Huhta).

The weekend included free time and bags of bread for feeding the friendly and enthusiastic donkeys and goats in the barnyard. What fun and are they noisy! And the view of Mt. Monadnock from the porches was breathtaking.

### Finn Funn Weekend November 15-17, 2019 The Inn at East Hill Farm

<https://east-hill-farm.com/events/event/finn-funn-weekend>

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### Member News & Milestones

#### Get Well Wishes - Pikaista Paranemista

- To Patti Folsom of Greenville, RI, on her recovery from recent hip replacement surgery.

#### Sympathies - Otamme Osaa

- To Patti Folsom of Greenville, RI, and Thomas Gilmore of North Berwick, ME, on the passing of their mother, Marjorie Seppala Gilmore, age 93, East Greenwich, RI on April 22, 2019.

## Coming Events at a Glance

Thursday August 22	Board Meeting 6:00 pm
Sunday September 1	ScanFest 10:00am to 6:00 pm
Thursday September 5	Membership Meeting 7:00 pm
Thursday September 26	Board Meeting 6:00 pm
Thursday October 3	Membership Meeting 7:00 pm
Saturday October 5	Tori/Open Market 10:00 am to 3:00 pm
Tuesday October 15	Fall Newsletter Submission Deadline
Sunday November 3	Membership Meeting 1:30 pm
Friday November 8	Beer and Wine Tasting
November 15-17	FinnFunn Weekend, The Inn at East Hill Farm

The complete Calendar of Events will appear in the Winter issue and will be on the FAHS website at:

[www.fahs-ct.org](http://www.fahs-ct.org)

<b>President</b>	Steven Bousquet	860-608-8366
<b>Vice President</b>	Stanly Karro	860-480-3648
<b>Treasurer</b>	Jobina Miller	860-377-0789
<b>Secretary</b>	Rachel Linkkila	860-377-5914
<b>Correspondence</b>	Laura Sasser Cuff	860-377-4149
<b>Membership</b>	Steve Coupe	401-568-6614



## Finnish American Heritage Society

is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to preserve and promote Finnish-American heritage. Member is open to all who are interested in the purpose of the organization.

For your Convenience, a Membership Coupon is enclosed in this issue.

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**On Facebook at:** [www.facebook.com/fahscanterburyct](https://www.facebook.com/fahscanterburyct)

## FINNISH CONNECTION

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### FAHS NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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