



Finnish Center Association

# FCA News

FOR MEMBERS OF THE FINNISH CENTER ASSOCIATION

September 2020

## CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

I have been quite busy with things while we have been closed. First, we had to decide about the rentals. How to handle them and keep people safe. I am happy we didn't have to make that decision because each rental made it for us and everyone who didn't have their event was very nice and left with good feelings. I am sure they will be back at another better time.

Another problem was how to handle our events without endangering anyone. This was so hard because we all want to be together. I know everything will get better; we will go on but that will depend on your support. This is a special place. We Finns are proud of our heritage. We are proud to say our families came from Finland and to tell people a little about Finland. And isn't it fun when someone pronounces "sauna"? I love to tell people how to say it properly.

On a positive side we have now got an online site for the gift shop. This has been talked about for a long time. It is exciting to be able to order and pick up or even have it sent to you. I invite you to use it. Every little bit helps your Finnish Center.

Lastly, I want to thank some people who have helped a lot through this time. First, David Sharpe for picking up the mail, keeping the beautiful gardens going, and opening doors for people who needed to get in. To Mia Lamminen and Ilona Takakura for paying the bills. To Ed O'Brien for getting the online store going and working on getting the website set up. And also to Roger Wanttaja for repairing equipment as needed. And finally to all the board members for helping to make some very hard decisions. A big round of applause to all of you and to the ones that helped where needed.



I think we have learned to appreciate nature during this time. When I go the Finnish Center, I am in awe with the beauty. The gardens have been spectacular with vivid flowers. We have a lot of butterflies and squirrels in the gardens. Many pieces from Finland in the showcase by the gift shop are interesting and nature plays a part in a number of them. Even Iittala uses nature in their designs. So, nature has a part of who we are.

We aren't done with this coronavirus yet but we need to be patient so we all can come through this. When we do open, we have to be careful with masks and social distancing. Please wear your masks. It protects all of us!

Mary O'Brien

## ONLINE GIFT SHOP NOW AVAILABLE!

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Finnish Center gift shop has been closed since March. In order to continue to serve the FCA community, we have put together an “online” store on the internet. At this time, only the most popular items from the gift shop are available, but as demand warrants, we plan to include additional items to the site. It is very easy to use the site, but here are a few simple steps to get folks started:

Go to the following site: [finnishcenter.square.site/](http://finnishcenter.square.site/)

Click on “Shop All”

This will show a listing of all products. Click on a product of interest.

On the right-side of the page, there is a selection for options. For example, different flavors of jam or mustard.

Select the quantity and click “Add to Cart”

Repeat this process for each item of interest.

Note the pickup date and time will be listed in the Cart. Currently pickups are on Fridays. It is possible to arrange for items to be shipped for a nominal fee. Contact the Finnish Center for more information.

When finished shopping, click on the “Checkout” button in the Cart. Fill in the details and submit the order.

In addition, it is also possible to browse and order items directly from the Finnish Center Facebook page. In the future, we are planning to add many more items, and to allow customers to specify shipping information directly on the site. Please stay tuned! We are very excited to be able to offer this new feature to the FCA community and hope it will allow our members to still be able to get their favorite Finnish gifts during this difficult time. Questions about the store can be directed to the gift shop email: [finnishcentergiftshop@gmail.com](mailto:finnishcentergiftshop@gmail.com).

Thank you and happy shopping!



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## SUNSHINE LADY

Sending get-well cards, anniversary, congratulations, thinking-of-you cards and words-of-encouragement cards to FCA 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, Eunice Potti Gould

## GIFT SHOP

It has been a few months since you have received any gift shop news from me so with an edition of our newsletter I thought I would bring you up to date.

Our outdoor sale in July was a great success. It was so nice to see some familiar faces and to make a little money for The Finnish Center. We set up a delightful selection of things with the gardens surrounding everything. The walkway was marked off for social distancing and most everyone had a mask on. We had some things on sale along with all of our Iittala. There was an area where people could visit which made it a very nice day.

The gift shop has been working on a on line shopping site with hopes that this could help The Finnish Center. This site is now operational. If you want things you can order through this site or call me or email me and I will be happy to open for you or even better you can pick up an order at the door. If I know you want something on a special day I am more than happy to try to accommodate at both of our conveniences.



My mission is to help the Finnish Center so if I can help you please call or email me.

Thank you and enjoy the rest of the summer.

Mary O’Brien

## SOCIAL NEWS

We aren’t doing anything much in this department, but I wanted to say something in this area of the Finnish Center.

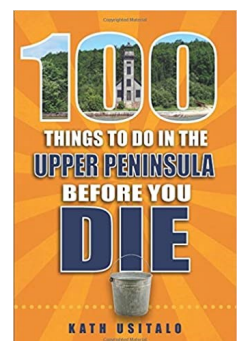
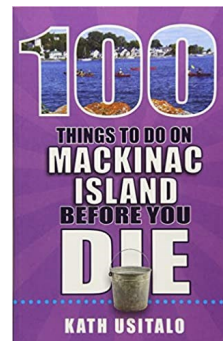
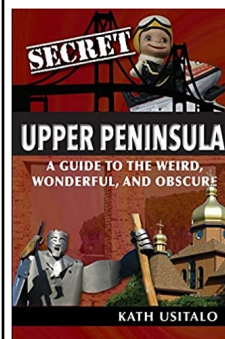
Let me begin by saying I am a very social person. I like people and think about many of you often. You are the Finnish Center. Your stories, your unique foods and your history are very special. This summer I was lucky enough to spend time in the Upper Peninsula. Wow, I had forgotten just how beautiful it is. I drove through so many towns and areas that made me think of all of you. How fun it was to put a person and a town together.

This brought me to thinking about what we can do during this time of isolation. If you remember a story of the U.P. or of Finland, write it down. When we get back together I will plan a day that we can share these memories with each other.

We will be back, and it will be an even better place because we have learned to not take things for granted.

And we all have **SISU!**

Mary O’Brien



FCA member **Kath Usitalo** has a new book: **Secret U.P.** is a natural companion to her “100 Things” books. Check out the FCA gift shop or learn more at **GreatLakesGazette.com**

## MILO, THE FINLANDIA GARDEN PREDATOR

One summer, several years ago, a cat appeared at the Finnish Center. He was seen from time to time in the wetland but was not interested in approaching the gardeners. Over time he decided there was nothing to fear and he began showing himself for a moment here and there while we were working in the gardens. He seemed to like the environment and from time to time would be seen carrying some rodent around the property. The year, as the colder weather approached, one of the residents at senior housing decided he would adopt the cat. So, over a period of time the cat was encouraged to come for a free meal.

Well, after being named “Milo” and being considered “owned” by someone, he took up residence in a senior apartment. Unfortunately, that was when the trouble began. Milo liked to deposit his rodent catch on the patio of his “owner” and that of another resident who did not appreciate the gifts which were regularly being bestowed upon her. This placed Milo’s “owner” in jeopardy with senior housing management. For a period of time it was touch and go until things finally calmed down.

Then there was a period of time when a bit younger Milo began appearing on the roof of a senior housing building and occasionally on the roof of the FCA garage. That was quite exciting and helped him become an urban legend. As you know, cats, unlike dogs, have minds of their own. So, Milo was not about to be trained to stay only in the garden property but preferred to strut around the FCA’s eighteen acre landscape like an owner.

Milo loves to meet new people. When a visitor shows up, he greets the newcomers by purring loudly, accepting a petting session with the new guest, and then lying down and rolling around. Milo often hides in the garden, spends the night and comes out in the morning when the gate is opened. His owner fears the worst and calls me to come and see if he is holed up in the garage. Living only two miles from the center it is possible for me to slip over and often find him inside for reasons we do not know.

I am sure that when the time comes and Milo meets his maker, we will all feel a deep loss as he has become a part of our daily routine.

David Sharpe, The Garden Guy



## SEPTEMBER GARDEN

Garden maintenance has continued daily during the coronavirus pandemic. We have six new volunteers in addition to our regular group. Master gardeners from MSU have not worked in the Finlandia gardens during the pandemic due to rules regarding their service. Our volunteers usually work separately on individual projects.

The Finlandia Gardens continue to be used during the pandemic by both senior housing walkers, visitors using the little free library and others. We have even sold some plants. Garden and wood shop bills are not being turned in to the Finnish Center during this pandemic.

We have added some new projects including Sanctuary, a location near our evergreen garden, a basketball court, an Asian artistic sculpture, a squirrel picnic table, and the rehabilitation of a trailer in addition to our regular garden maintenance.

We continue to receive donations from local businesses and friends of the gardens. These include Home Depot, Northville Lumber, a local nursery, residents of FCA Senior Housing, and our members. We have also received financial donations and plants from local residents.

We all are pleased with the bounty of healthy vegetables coming from our vegetable gardens this year.

The area in front of the FCA lounge was used for a successful outdoor gift shop sale in July. Inquiries are being received for possible outdoor events including parties and a wedding.

We are pleased with the efforts of Metro Lawn Care both for the quality of their work and their reasonable cost. We still have a riding mower in the garage taking up space and we would like a decision on its disposition for the Board of Trustees. It does require regular maintenance. It would make a nice donation to a non-profit organization.

David Sharpe, FCA Landscape Coordinator



Left: David Levine in the FCA workshop. He has been mentored by David Sharpe for several years.  
Below: Squirrel picnic table



## KEEP MARCHING FORWARD

How many readers have been to a parade? They often include decorated floats, shiny vehicles, costumed participants, representative groups, and usually at least one band. The parade might be a small-town community affair or a huge production planned far in advance. This writer was a band member through school (clarinet) and the best part of that experience was high school marching band. The comradery and attention to detail, both in music and marching style, made that experience “home.”

Artopium’s Music Dictionary online provide a definition of the music term *march* as “A processional or military air especially suited to parades, processions, or martial affairs....usually” [with] “a regular and repeated drum rhythm, and is performed on brass instruments, drums, pipes, and other martial instruments.” In history, the martial purposes of music have been two-fold: to regulate troop movements in the field during battle and at rest by signaling orders, as well as to keep time in marching or during maneuvers; and secondly both as a psychological deterrent or encouragement. Among the oldest examples of the latter purpose, is in the Bible’s Old Testament book of Joshua, Chapter Six, which details the use of rams’ horns against Jericho. Even if the full strategy is unknown, it seems obvious that the priests creating the loud horn blast in unison both encouraged the warriors and weakened the Canaanites will to resist.

The Greek and Roman armies both used brass and percussion instruments to relay orders to troops. Greek armies on campaign had musicians accompany poetic recitations aimed at reminding soldiers of past victories and heroes. Ireland’s Celts employed horns, drums, and bagpipes in their military endeavors. Scotland’s bagpipers, so effective at energizing troops they were outlawed by Britain in 1746 after the Scottish Prince Charles was defeated, were reinstated to benefit Britain’s own Scottish regiment later. When veterans from the medieval Crusades returned to Europe, they brought instruments and musical ideas from the Eastern Byzantine Empire military masters to adapt for local use. Norway employed drummers at all of the country’s forts in 1627 and a 1767 provision states “that all infantry regiments must additionally employ six horn blowers.”

Switzerland records the use of the side (snare) drum as early as the 14<sup>th</sup> century and its use spread readily to other countries. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the act of enlisting was often referred to as *following the drum*. Often accompanied by a small flute called a fife, the medieval pairing became known as military field music. The military bugle was first used in England around 1800 and used in the United States during the War of 1812 aiding the ability to sound orders over a large geographical distance. Over time, Europe’s national armies standardized their musically conveyed orders into a set of calls written in manuals. Every nation eventually also adopted their own march, whereby moving columns of troops in unfamiliar landscapes obscured by the haze of gun smoke were identifiable by the music they sang or played.

The 1700’s through 1900’s saw the proliferation of military march music when fifty-seven wars around the world were listed by the online Encyclopedia Britannica. The Thirty Years’ War in Europe (1618-48), the American Revolution (1775-83), French Revolution (1787-99), War of Finland (1808-09), World War I (1914-18), Finnish Civil War (1918), and the Heimosodat (1918-1922) are events that we may be familiar with and influence this article. Beyond those dates, Winter War (1939-40), Continuation War (1941-44), and Lapland War (1944-45), all often identified as part of World War II (1939-45) contributed to the establishment of countries’ military bands used for ceremonial purposes and raising soldiers’ morale.

Not only did individual communities form their own bands as a source of community and national pride, but branches of country’s military established their own bands. Wikipedia informs us that the U.S. armed forces field eleven ensembles and more than 100 smaller, active-duty and reserve bands. Although there are a total of 13 military bands in the country, Finland’s Defense Forces website promotes six major bands, each generally representing a different area of the country and states they “uphold traditions and will of defense as well as work abroad as exporters of Finnish culture and share knowledge about conscription in Finland.” The Conscript Band, the largest with ninety members “formed each year from about 90 of the most skilled musicians in the age group entering military service,” performs “international tattoo events (elaborate military shows involving theatrics and musical performances), traditional parades, a summer tour, and massive self-produced concert tours.”

(continued on page 7)

## Keep Marching Forward (continued from page 6)

Several marches, identified as national favorites, are probably part of these bands' repertoires. *Hakkapeliittain marsse* (*March of the Hakkapeliittas*) is one of the oldest battle marches played by both the Finns and the Swedes. Although Swedish lyrics weren't written until 1872, it originates from the times of the Thirty Years War, celebrating the Finnish cavalry (*hakikapelitta*) with a bouncy rhythm reminiscent of a trotting horse on parade.

“At the river Neva our mounts did draw their first blood...Our swords they did bring to the Rhineland's coast...over the pile of ash we rode, sparks of fire burst from our steed hoofs.”

Occasionally songs memorialize individuals. *Vapaussoturin valloituslaulu* (*Marching song of the White army*) is about Antti Isotalo (1895-1964), the southern Ostrobothnia Jaeger legend and veteran of seven wars. His well-known exploits in battles and locations are mentioned by name as the march's hard driving, punching melody encourages soldiers to fight like this hero for Finland.

“A high death – the hero's reward! We will salute the heroes at their graves.

The body may get a mere wound! Bullets may fly our way!

But the soul will remain as a heritage of our native land!

...We use hard means, the blood of Jägers compels us!

The *Jääkärimarssi* (*Jäger March*), written by Jean Sibelius in honor of many army detachments as part of the War of Finland, was heard in its first public performance on Jan. 19, 1918, the same day the Finnish Civil War began. He composed the song after the words were smuggled into Finland from the front. Jägers were volunteers from *Finland* who trained in Germany as elite light infantry. Repeating a deliberate, measured beat with a more melodic refrain, Sibelius emphasizes the strength, pride, and commitment of the soldiers toward their people and homeland.

“Our happiness is at the tip of our sword, our hearts will know no pity.

Our cry of war will be given for our country...”

The *Poorilaisten marssi* (*original Swedish title Björneborgarnas marsch*) is the honorary march of both the Estonian and Finnish Defence Forces but is usually played and not sung for their Commanders-in-Chief, in Finland, the President. The march is played on the TV or radio when a Finnish athlete wins a gold medal in the Olympic games and is also played during the Declaration of Christmas Peace on Christmas Eve. The latter has created some controversy because of the violent lyrics, even though the words are not usually sung!

“Rest, begone, away, and peace! A storm unleashed; lightning swarms and cannons thunder on, Forward! Forward, line by line!”

While serving in some units of the Finnish Army, conscripts are required to learn the lyrics of *Sillanpään marssilaulu*. The Reconnaissance Company of the Reserve Office School in Hamina requires its officer students to sing the march whenever the unit is moving in formation. Wikipedia shares that the words to the march were originally written by Sillanpää to the tune of a popular non-military tune when he was uninspired by its lyrics. A captain of the Finnish Defence Forces recognized the possibility of the words to raise morale of the forces. Quickly he organized a composing contest, desiring a more fitting theme for the words. Aimo Mustonen won over many well-known composers and the song became a huge success among the troops during the Winter War. The march is a call to fight, emphasized by the trumpet call at the end of phrases reminiscent of the bugle Call to Arms.

“A way known by grandfathers, is now the way of their descendants,  
When threatened is our fatherland...”

Often played at funeral of war veterans, *Narvan Marssi* (*March of Narva*) is a dirge-like, somber, weighty piece, not what one thinks of as a march at all. The music's pace is suited for “the last march” and was in fact played at the funeral of Urho Kekkonen, the president of the Finnish Republic at the Helsinki Cathedral in 1986. A beautiful arrangement by Petri Koivasalo can be heard on YouTube as he plays on the impressive pipe organ at the Parish Church of Ylistaro (1852).

Several versions of all of the marches mentioned previously can be heard on YouTube if the title of the song is searched. Many have both Finnish and English words provided as they are sung, often accompanied by inspiring videos. Be inspired! Explore a different side of Finnish music history!

Respectfully submitted by scribe, Katy Koskela

### UPDATE FOR THE FINNISH AMERICAN SINGERS OF MICHIGAN

In these days of uncertainty, worry, caution, and postponements, the title of the music article for this issue of the newsletter is apropos: *Keep Marching Forward*. The Finnish American Singers of Michigan, the choir that is proud to be affiliated with and based out of the Finnish Center Association, is trying to march forward! The choir has been forced into postponements and delays like most of us personally have been. With quarantines and warnings of virus transmission, the choir decided at the beginning of March to stop rehearsals and canceled our May 5<sup>th</sup> concert.

The choir board confirmed at a meeting in June that practices and other choir events would remain in a holding pattern until the FCA determined when the building would be opening for activities and events, and until choir members and our director felt comfortable with virus issues. We did determine that practices definitely would NOT resume in September as usual and discussed the probability of delaying our start in 2021 beyond January when we would normally begin practices for our May concert. Everyone in our choir qualifies as part of the vulnerable population because of age, family health concerns, or personal health issues. Our motto is the tried and true: Better safe than sorry!

The full choir will be meeting in September for a socially distanced outdoor meeting to determine plans for the immediate future. One of those issues is the decision to participate in our annual GREENS fundraiser: the ordering and local delivery of holiday greens such as garlands, wreaths, and swags, as well as the ability to order those items and other gift items for direct mailing from the company. Gift shop manager Mary O'Brien has offered the ability to charge those items through the FCA gift shop and website using a credit card. In the past, FASM has required payment by cash or check, thus limiting some opportunities for sales. Opening up the GREENS sale to include credit purchasing would benefit buyers, sellers, and ultimately the FCA who would receive a percentage of the profits from the sales. Orders would be taken in October to enable local delivery just before Thanksgiving and direct delivery from the company just after that holiday.

Thank you for your interest in and support of the Finnish American Singers! We hope to return safely and as always, would love to have singers join us while we make music and promote Finnish culture.

Submitted by Katy Koskela, Choir President

### SENIOR HOUSING UPDATE

Remembering when a Construction Management firm first proposed a 20-month schedule for the Tapiola renovation - those who were doubters are now believers.

There have been challenges with the renovation - not the least of which has been COVID-19. Given the shut-down, work stopped until early summer when our governor permitted construction to re-start and despite limitations and with implementation of safe practices in the work environment and for our residents - the renovation began again.

A pent-up market demand (due to COVID-19 shutdowns) combined with a shortage of workers and materials have impacted all construction companies - this has compounded the struggle to find competent contractors for building exteriors. Contracts had been let for new roofs and siding for two of the Tapiola buildings - the outcomes, the quality of workmanship, has been disappointing and a search for professionals for the building exterior is ongoing.

Our management company has committed to supporting and coordinating with tenants for the least possible disruption while apartments are being renovated. A second full-time maintenance worker has been hired for the expanded scope of work related to the renovation. There is progress with Tapiola interiors; some apartments have been completely renovated satisfactorily, all are housing new tenants.

Given the surprises and challenges regarding workmanship, time, and cost-plus best practices regarding COVID-19, the timeline for completion is unclear - but it is ongoing and gaining momentum.

Sarah Wiideman, Renovation Committee Chair





Jeanette and David Sharpe celebrated 62 years of marriage in August. Congratulations!

## ADVERTISING RATES

DEADLINE:  
 EDITOR CONTACT INFO: PAUL RAJALA  
 LAYOUT AND DESIGN: NANCY RAJALA  
 E-MAIL: [njrajala@comcast.net](mailto:njrajala@comcast.net)

### *FCA NEWS ADVERTISING RATES & SPECIFICATIONS*

FCA News is published 11 times annually (June-July issue is combined) by and for members of Finnish Center Association. Circulation is about 500 of your fellow FCA members, and others, per issue, and unknown numbers online.

**Deadline/payment for ad is the 5th of the month preceding publication.**

Column (ad) width is 2-1/4" for rates quoted below. Other sizes quoted on request.

Rates for a camera-ready, black & white ad, per three month period:

3 month rate ..... 1" ad - \$30.00    1.5" ad - \$45.00    2" ad - \$60.00

Pay for full year ..... 1" ad - \$100.00    1.5" ad - \$150.00    2" ad - \$200.00

Photos: B&W photo ads incur a one-time charge of \$25.00 payable at first insertion.

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Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

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

- Annual membership, single, one vote ..... \$50.00
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- \*Senior, over 65 years, youth under 30 years of age
- Annual membership, couple, two votes ..... \$100.00
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- 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,  
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