

Editorial

-Gunnar Damstrom

Since the December 15 meeting at Burke Museum we have made great progress toward our goal- an Endowed Chair for Finnish Studies at the UW. The endowment has been established and awaits donations. You can find information about the Endowment at

<http://depts.washington.edu/scand/>; select "support" and follow the direction to the "Finnish Funds".

There are many good reasons why you and I should use this opportunity to help the Endowment along. The Finnish Program in itself is excellent, offering Finnish language instruction and courses that teach students about Finnish culture, history, art, and music. But there is much more in it for us. The Finnish Program can offer a permanent platform for public events pertaining to Finnish culture, art, tradition and heritage in the Seattle region. In the past few years we have seen its potential-- the Finland's Pasts and Presents lecture series

(<http://depts.washington.edu/scand/pastsandpresents>); the Semmarit concert in October, 2004; and Finnish Cinema Day in November 2003 are but a few examples. This spring the Finnish Program has arranged a reception for Pekka Haavisto on April 4; the May Day party April 29 (jointly with FACC-NW); and the Wegelius Chamber Strings concert June 3.

I propose we set our initial goal to make use of the 50% matching fund set up by some generous philanthropists. If we team up for a minimum of \$250,000 in cash pledges to be made over a 5 year period we achieve this intermediate goal. For example, if 100 persons pledge to make a \$500 contribution per year over a five year period, we have pledges of \$250,000 and thus secured \$357,000 for the Endowment for the Finnish Program. It's a big leap toward our goal of a \$1.5 million Endowment.

To see what kind of investment your pledge is, the Finnish Program invites you to come meet and speak with Mr. Pekka Haavisto at a reception in his honor at the UW April 4, where he will be delivering an invited lecture. Mr. Haavisto is former Finnish Minister for Environment and Development Co-operation, 1995-1999. He currently works for the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) post-conflict environment assessments. He has been

chaired UNEP's environmental assessments in Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro, Afghanistan and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. He has also chaired the depleted uranium assessments in Kosovo, Serbia-Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In March 2003 he was invited to serve as Chairman for UNEP Iraq Task Force and in December 2003 as the Chairman of UNEP Liberia Task Force. Mr. Haavisto has been a Vice-Governor of the World Bank and a Governor of the Asian Development Bank 1995-1999. Mr. Haavisto is also a Spokesperson for the European Green Party. Mr. Haavisto was a member of the Finnish Parliament from 1987 to 95. His special interests are foreign policy and global environmental issues. Mr. Haavisto has kindly contributed an article to this issue of the FACC_NW Newsletter.

Kick Off Meeting for Endowment for Finnish Studies

FACC-NW jointly with the UW Scandinavian Department arranged a meeting at the UW Burke Museum December 15. At the meeting the vulnerability of university programs due to dwindling state and federal support was discussed. A number of Finnish Program students introduced themselves and described their studies. A proposal to create an Endowed Chair for Finnish Studies was presented and accepted. The goal is to create a 1.5 million dollar endowment to make the Finnish Program less vulnerable to cuts in State and federal support for the University.



Left to right: Donald Summers, Dean Michael Halleran, Professor Terje Leiren, Professor Andy Nestingen, lecturer Karoliina Kuisma, students.



Participants at the meeting at Burke Museum meeting December 15.

UNEP Post-Conflict Assessment

—*Pekka Haavisto, UNEP*

Since 1999 the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) has been assessing the environmental consequences of conflicts in areas and countries that are well-known to all of us from the news headlines: Kosovo, Serbia-Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Afghanistan, Iraq, Liberia, the Great Lakes area in Africa. In addition to overall environmental field studies and investigations, UNEP has been measuring the environmental impacts of the use of Depleted Uranium (DU) ammunition in the Balkans. UNEP environmental assessment in the Balkans led to major clean-up activities at four highly polluted “hot spots” in Serbia. Among these were targeted chemical industry facilities and oil refineries. More than 60 chemicals were leaking from an industrial complex in Pancevo to River Danube, causing a major threat to the river ecosystem and public health. These findings led the international community for the first time to include environmental clean-up in their humanitarian aid portfolios.

In other post-conflict areas UNEP has concentrated both to building up the capacities of the governments in war-torn societies as well as to build the first cross-border links for environmental protection. UNEP has been intensively working to improve the environmental cooperation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and the result of the work is the re-establishment of the Joint Environment Expert Committee between the Israeli and Palestinian environment authorities. UNEP has also facilitated first Iran-Iraq meeting on Mesopotamian Marshlands for 29 years.

Environment is a casualty of war, but environment can also be used as a confidence building and peace building tool when the conflict is over. Each situation is unique due to the particular nature of the conflict, society and ecology. However, all post-conflict studies on the environment point to two general conclusions: military conflict is always environmentally destructive, and environmental concerns are fundamentally important for both short-term humanitarian work and long-term reconstruction and development of the country.

Wegelius Chamber Strings

“Artistic Directors:” Anna-Maria Helsing and Helen Linden-Pons



Wegelius Chamber Strings was established in the spring of 2003 with the aim to gather young Finnish musicians. The orchestra is an orchestral school for these musicians, the goal: to develop professional orchestra musicians. The cooperation with the “Martin Wegelius-Institute,” a Finnish musical institution is important and the orchestra recruits musicians through the institute. The *Endowment for the Martin Wegelius-Institute* is the founder of the orchestra. *Wegelius Chamber Strings* is working on a weekend rehearsal basis with a couple of rehearsal weekends during the autumn and spring, and one longer rehearsal week during summer. The repertoire consists of orchestral works and chamber music. The aim is to perform Finnish music.

The conductor of the orchestra is violinist Anna-Maria Helsing, who shares the artistic management with cellist Helen Linden. Helsing is currently studying conducting at the Sibelius Academy under the leadership of professor Leif Segerstam. The orchestra has professional leaders in every section: Helsing leads the first violin, Linden leads the cello, Beata

Biernikiewicz leads the second violin and Stephan Kemetter the viola.

Currently, the orchestra is comprised of about 22 young musicians from all parts of Finland. The orchestra engages soloists among its members but also guest soloists. In July 2003 the orchestra arranged its first concert, called "Young Soloists", held in the church of Närpes, Ostrobothnia during the "Music of South Ostrobothnia" festival. In June 2004 the orchestra participated in the Organ Festival of Åland Islands with two own concerts held in the churches of Finström and Föglö. The Wegelius Kammarstråkar plans a North American Tour in the spring of 2005. On May 26 the orchestra will perform at the Embassy of Finland in Washington DC. May 29 they will give a concert at the Sacred Heart Chapel, Loyola-Marymount University in Los Angeles. June 3 they will give a concert at the University of Washington Henry Auditorium. On June 5 they will perform a 25th Anniversary Concert at the Nordic Heritage Museum in Seattle, and on June 11 and 12, they will be concerting in San Francisco.

Homeland News, excerpts from Tekniikka & Talous (TT)

Global Warming. The USA must join the effort to curb global warming, suggests Riitta Larinmaa, leading expert on atmospheric policy and sustainable development. During [2005] it is necessary to find an agreement model that is acceptable to the IS, Japan, Russia, China and India.

Nuclear power seeing a new renaissance in the US. According to Mika Horelli, TT New York reporter the US is planning new nuclear power plants after a 25 year recess. After the mishap at the Harrisburg, Penn nuclear power plant no new plants have been constructed. Three power companies had applied for permits to construct new nuclear power plants: Exelon, Entergy and Dominion Resources. The new power plants will be constructed in Clinton, IL; Mineral, VA; and Port Gibson, MS. There are 65 nuclear power plants currently in the US, the reactors of which produce 20% of the country's electrical power. 51% of the electrical power is produced using coal, and 17% using natural gas. A recent MIT report concludes that nuclear power is one of the few viable realistic options for curbing global warming (T&T12.2.04)

UPM Kymmene will next summer start up a new fine paper machine with a capacity of 450,000 tons per year in Changshu, China. The project cost is about 400 million Euro. The company already has one fine paper machine in Changshu with a capacity of 350,000 tons per year. The new machine is manufactured in Finland. All total 6,100 tons of machine details are transported from Finland. 1700 workers are employed on the construction site (T&T12/2/04)

Russia is about to surpass Germany as Finland's biggest trading partner. During the first three quarters of 2004 Finnish import from Russia increased 14% and export 25%. Finnish export to Sweden is still higher than export to other countries. Export to China has during the same period increased 60% and import 18%. Finnish export to the US was 2.4 billion Euro and import 1.3 billion Euro during the period (T&T12/16/04)

German company E. Hetikamp was selected to construct the turbine hall for the new nuclear power plant under construction at Olkiluoto. The turbine hall is 100m long, 60m wide and 40m high (T&T12/16/04).

The number of cellular phones in the world reached 1.5 billion during the summer of 2004. The number of phones increased most in the populous countries China, India and Russia. According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) a majority of new sales are in development countries (T&T12/16/04)

Large companies direct their investments to countries outside US, according to T&T New York reporter Outi Toivanen-Visti. A recent study shows large corporations expect the fastest growth in China during 2005. According to the study these corporations are not concerned about the Chinese market overheating or the terrorist threat. Their main concerns is with the aging population, lack of trained labor and high cost of energy. Large American companies have already taken measures to cope with the problems, increasingly moving their investments abroad, concentrating on the growing Asian economies and continental Europe. American companies investing in Europe are particularly interested in wireless technology, biotechnology and information management technology (T&T12/16/04).

The greenhouse gas permit trading is in full swing in the EU. One emission permit (equals one ton of carbon dioxide) has recently been trading in the neighborhood of 8.5 Euro. In the EU about 60% of the trade takes place at exchanges like Green-Stream Network. The 25 EU member states will employ 2.2 billion emission permits annually. The largest Finnish emitter of carbon dioxide, Rautaruukki received 18 million emission permits in the initial distribution, to be used during the years 2005-2007. Rautaruukki has committed to purchase \$4 million shares in the World Bank CDCF fund, which invests in environmental projects in developing countries (T&T01/13/04).

Finnish firm Vaisala has manufactured the 100 devices the NOAA (National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration) has placed in the Pacific Ocean to register abnormal water levels. The devices help predict tsunamis. According to Mika Aaltonen no warning system could have worked during the recent catastrophe in Indonesia. The epicenter was just 160 km off the Sumatra coast and the shock wave was traveling at a speed of 700-800 km per hour, leaving little respite for people to get away even if the alarm had reached them (T&T01/13/04).

The weak dollar helps the US industry. The expectations of both US industry and consumers is upbeat, according to December indicators. The opposite is true in Europe. The US economy created net 2.33 million new jobs during 2004.

Minister of Education Tuula Haatainen said free tuition is one of the cornerstones of [Finnish] society. "Tuition has to be free all the way to doctorate education. The benefits of free education by far outweighs the drawbacks". "The prediction of student numbers is based on the prediction of labor numbers. The statistical central helps predict the [future] need of labor. Employers and employee organizations often have different assessments. The Ministry [of Labor] bases its predictions of the need for education on researched facts", said Haatainen.

Kemira buys Dutch specialty chemicals company Verdugt and Finnish Chemicals Oy for 493 million euro. The purchase makes Kemira the largest producer of organic acids and the second largest producer of pulp and paper chemicals.

Upcoming Events.

The FACC-NW invites you to a FACC-NW Networking evening on Wednesday 2nd of March, 2005 at the Taphouse 550 106th Avenue NE, Bellevue WA 425-467-1730 starting at 6 p.m. No host bar www.taphousegrill.com

The UW Scandinavian Department Finnish Program invites you to a reception for Mr. Pekka Haavisto April 4. The place will be announced later at the FAA-NW website www.faccnw.com The event is co-sponsored by the Finlandia Foundation and FACC-NW.

The UW Scandinavian Department Finnish Program and the FACC-NW invites you to celebrate the coming of spring at a VAPPUHIPPA benefiting the Finnish Program. The event takes place Friday, April 29 at the UW Urban Horticulture Center. The traditional program includes good food and drink, song by the Finnish Choral Society and male quartets, dance and merriment.

The UW Scandinavian Department Finnish Program invites you to an evening with Wegelius Chamber Strings Friday, June 3 at the UW Henry Auditorium. Time: 5.30 p.m.

The Finlandia Music & Art Festival 2005 Will take place at the Northwest College of Art, Poulsbo, WA Saturday, August 20, 2005.