

United Finnish Kaleva Brothers and Sisters Berkeley Lodge No. 21 Invites
You to :

An Afternoon of Finnish-American Poetry

With

Paula Erkkila Johanna Rauhala

Bill Vartnaw Don Hagelberg

Hosts: Gina Hansen Harry Siitonen

OPEN MICROPHONE TO FOLLOW

Sunday, Oct. 24, 2010, 2 PM

Finnish Kaleva Hall

(Downstairs Meeting Room)

1970 Chestnut Street (at University)

Berkeley, CA

(Poems to be read mostly in English,
Finnish language poems include English translations)

Light Refreshments -- Donation appreciated

Information: latoja86@hotmail.com, 510-849-0125

The Finnish community's readers are all accomplished writers. We find their achievements exciting, as seen in their biographical notes below:

Paula Erkkila attributes her passion for writing poems, essays, and short stories to the influence of her pioneering immigrant parents. Her father, who worked as an underground iron miner for 40 years, always dreamt of having a farm, but had to settle for his vegetable and flower gardens. He was noted for his humorous story-telling. Her mother, who was a very resourceful and competent emäntä of their household, was a proud member of the Knights and Ladies of the Kaleva. She instilled in Paula a love of Finnish mythology and Finnish and Russian culture. Paula has been published in the Sampo and Connecting Souls anthologies, and in the New World Finn and Raivaaja newspapers. Paula, who is a retired community psychiatrist, describes herself as a romantic adventuress and nature lover, who enjoys expressing her creativity through writing, singing, dancing, and gardening. She honors and treasures her nature-loving, ancestor-worshipping, shamanistic, animistic, and totemistic Finnish roots, as well as the strong cooperative and labor traditions that Finns brought to America. Her Americanness is deeply steeped in California's counter-cultural renaissance, whose movements and contributions she is very proud to embrace.

Johanna Rauhala received her MA in Creative Writing from San Francisco State University, where she studied under poet Camille Dungy. She's been published in The Squaw Review, Raivaaja, The Sun, and recently won second place in Kippis magazine's annual creative writing contest. She's been teaching in California public schools for over 15 years and has been nominated for California League of Middle Schools Teacher of the Year, a CHADD (Children/Adults with ADD) Outstanding Teacher, and the Mt. Diablo Unified School District teacher of the year. She enjoys reading, history, wildflowers, cooking, music and spending time with her daughter, husband and friends.

Bill Vartnaw (Estonian, Väärtnou) was born and raised in Petaluma, next door to his grandmother Elmi, and her sauna, although it wasn't used much by the grandkids. His Aunt Hilma, who took the bus up from the city and read his fortune with tea leaves when he was a kid, kept in touch with the "old country." He took his first sauna in Finland (at Aunt Sylvi's in Sysmä) in 1970 and has returned a couple of times since then to share his cousins' saunas. He established Taurean Horn Press in San Francisco in 1974, which has published 14 books of poetry, including his own: In Concern: for Angels (1984). Vartnaw has had two publications come out in 2009: Suburbs of My Childhood from Beatitude Press in Berkeley, and Postcards from Round Barn Press in Santa Rosa. He can be found online at the Red Room, <http://www.redroom.com/author/bill-vartnaw>.

Don Hagelberg

Getting rid of "Jim Crow" in the movies sparked Don to do social justice."

On Nov. 22, 1963, he sat at his pre-induction physical exam. Don walked out of the center, phoned his Draft Board office an hour after he was required to report for service and served 1964-1965 in prison for his refusal to be drafted.

He attempted higher education but only was able to complete Creative Writing courses with satisfaction. In 1974 he created, produced and hosted "Live Poets," a two-hour radio program broadcast weekly on a listener-supported Bay Area station.

A founding member of the Bay Area Poets' Coalition (BAPC), he supported the organization in trying to get dental insurance for its members as well as supporting its members' guerrilla poetry readings on BART's rapid transit trains.

He has been published in The Oakland Tribune, Exit #13, New World Finn and in Vintage Voice. He has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize, won third prize in the International Poetry 2008 competition, and won first prize in the Winter 2009 Kippis competition. He has appeared on numerous radio stations with his poetry: KPFA, KGO, KSRO, in the San Francisco Bay Area as well as on KKHO in the Tacoma-Seattle area.

He is a member of the Redwood Branch of the California Writers' Club, The Healdsburg Literary Guild, The Sonoma Poetry/Literary Salon, The National Writers' Union, The Association for Psychological Type and the National Association for Poetry Therapy.

"In loving actual individual beings one can slip into a fanciful idea about how one thinks or could wish this being should be." -Kierkegaard

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