

EANC NEWSLETTER ERKÜ TEATAJA

September 2017



EANC NEWS / ERKÜ UUDISED

EANC Comes to Florida: EANC 2017 ANNUAL MEETING

EANC will hold its annual meeting on November 11-12, 2017, at the Hilton St. Petersburg Bayfront Hotel in downtown St. Petersburg, Florida. Everyone is invited to a free program on Saturday afternoon, with panels on topics such as the Washington DC political situation and Estonian-American entrepreneurship. Saturday evening there will be a festive dinner with a special keynote speaker (to be announced).

Contact: Linda Rink, erku@estosite.org, or 215-546-5863.

EANC 2018 ELECTIONS / ERKÜ VALIMISED

General elections for EANC's XXII Council will take place next year. If you value the work we do, consider running for Council – share your thoughts and experience, represent your fellow Estonian Americans, and make a difference! More information will be in the next newsletter and on our website www.estosite.org.

"Give the Gift of Security" Campaign Continues

EANC's advocacy work is more important than ever. Give the Gift of SECURITY to Estonia with as generous a donation as you can! THANK YOU!

WHY I JOINED EANC *By Kristi Allpere*



My reason for joining ERKÜ is "Passion" for things Estonian – "Passion" for our Estonian Heritage and "Pride" in our Story, as well as a deep desire to keep it "out there" and relevant for all the generations – the slowly diminishing WW2 generation, the "Born in America" generation and the recent emigres from Estonia, as well as their offspring.

With great pride I have been deeply committed to Estonian events, people, clubs and organizations over 25-30 years – in Canada, Europe and the USA. I felt it was time to try and step up to the national U.S./Estonian level.

The actual trigger was the Crimean invasion disaster which had over-shadowed our Atlanta Estonian Independence Day Celebration. Our special guest was Ambassador to the U.S. Marina Kaljurand. The ensuing

discussions about the ramifications of the takeover on Estonia and the international community aroused in me the "Passion" to attempt "do something" beyond my Estonian and U.S. community work in Atlanta.

Basically, I got "mighty angry" and decided to become a candidate for ERKÜ/EANC. Maybe, just maybe, I could help to keep our Story alive and relevant in today's complex international climate. Complacency did not feel like an option!

After submitting my resume, I was fortunate enough to be elected and asked to become a Board member. This is a great privilege of which I am extremely proud!

If you have this passion and respect for our common heritage, please think about volunteering to serve on the ERKÜ Council. Also please donate as generously as you are able. Our Estonian "work" needs manpower, energy, ideas and funds in order to succeed and carry on into the future.

EANC Executive Board/ ERKÜ Juhatus

Marju Rink-Abel, President • Eric Suuberg, Vice President • Matti Prima, Treasurer • Maia Linask, Secretary
Kristi Allpere • Mai-Liis Bartling • Arne Kalm • Mirjam Krull • Andres Simonson • Alvar Soosaar • Tiina Urv

EANC enables East & West Coast Estonian Children's Choirs' song festival participation

Choirs on both the East and West Coasts attended this summer's "Mina Jään" children's song and dance festival in Tallinn, thanks to support from EANC. Here are some comments from the participants:



East Coast Children's Choir

Heili Jalakas (New York): *"Kui sa laulad vihma käes siis tundub nagu sa oled päikse käes, sest need laulud on nii ilusad. Need laulud olid veel ilusamad koos kõigiga koos lauldes. Ja rongkäik oli õnnelik, sest kõik (terve Eesti) toetasid meid."*

Mia Mai Kreek (Washington D.C.): *"Ma arvan, et laulupidu oli üks kõige võimsamatest asjadest minu elus. Ilm oli vihmane ja kõle laulupeol, aga kui me hakkasime laulma, siis kõik läks lõbusaks. Ma arvan, et me hirmutasime vihma lauluga ära."*

Liisa Jalakas (New York): *"Peale laulmist ma tundsin et ma olin saavutanud midagi väga erilist, mida kõik inimesed ei saa teha. Rongkäik toimus tegelikult väga kiiresti, ja kõik olid nii õnnelikud."*

Annika Perry (Lakewood) *"I loved it how we sang all together. Combined thousands of people's voices together."*

Sassu Barborak (New York): *"Mulle meeldis, et kõik oli rõõmsad laulupeol. Mina olin ka nii rõõmus."*

San Francisco Pääsukesed sel suvel Eesti Noorte Laulu- ja Tantsupeol "Mina Jään"

- Katherina Laan Sigurdsson

Meie Bay Area päris oma väike laste laulukoor "San Francisco Pääsukesed", osales sel suvel 12ndal noorte laulu- ja tantsupeol Tallinnas. Väikestele laululastele, kellest pool, ehk neli last olid ameeriklased ning teine pool eesti päritolu lapsed, oli laulupeol osalemine võimast muljet avaldav kogemus. Olenemata sellest, et ilm laulupeo ajal oli üle kümne aasta kõige külmem ning vihmasem - võrdluseks võib siinkohal tuua, et jaanipäeval sel aastal oli kohati külmem kui eelneval 2016.a. jõululauapäeval - nautisid lapsed tantsupeo etendust ning laulupeo proovides osalemist ning muidugi ka laulupeo kontserti ennast täiel rinnal.



San Francisco Pääsukesed (From left: Lauren Felder, Quinlyn Kennel, Alienor Niquette, Simone Silman, Hanna O'Kane, Eiliki Sigurdsson, Lola Viitas, Riina Orav-Sepp. Photo: Liina Pöder)

Kõige suurem üllatus oli lastele see, et inimesi oli nii palju. Üks pisike laululaps arvas isegi laululava ja publikut vaadates, et ameerikas kindlasti nii palju inimesi pole kui Eestis!

Lapsed ning kaasas olevad lapsevanemad said osa ka toredast Eesti kultuuri ja loodust tutvustavast programmist. Sai käidud nii muuseumides, Tallinna vanalinna uudistamas, Riigikoguga tutvumas kui ka Viru rabas ning lapsed jõudsid isegi Piritale purjetama. Me oleme nii tänulikud lastele, nende vanematele ning korraldajatele ning kõigile, kes meid rahaliselt või nõu ja jõuga toetasid ja sellise reisi ning kultuurikogemuse lastele võimalikuks tegid. See võimas sõnulseletamatu tunne olla osa millestki nii suurest ning südant liigutavast nagu seda on meie Eesti laulupidu, ei lähe nii lastel kui teistel kaasosalistel iialgi meelest.

EANC sponsors two Estonian-background students to attend JBANC Conference

Mariliis Eensalu and Markus Kitsing share their take-aways about the Joint Baltic American National Committee's 12th conference "New Realities: The Baltic Region in a Changing World," held in Washington, D.C. on May 19-20th, 2017:

Mariliis Eensalu, Baltic-American Freedom Foundation Professional Internship Fellow, Northern Illinois University:

The JBANC conference was an excellent opportunity to gain better insight to the vision and mission of the organization itself as well as its current partnerships in the U.S. I was interested in the panel discussions that focused on implications for security, update on info and cyberwar, Nordic cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region and the economic unifiers.

One of the highlights at the conference was having an opportunity to visit Illinois Senator Richard J. Durbin's office. Having been an intern at Northern Illinois University for almost a year now, I found it to be highly relevant to introduce my current work on climate change issues and get valuable feedback... While climate change affects everyone, being a BAFF intern gives me an opportunity to better spread the knowledge about sustainable actions towards a cleaner and healthier future.



Senator Richard J. Durbin's office. From left: Raits Eglitis (Executive Director, American Latvian Association), Henry Gaidis (JBANC Chairman), Ilze Annaņa (American Latvian Youth Association), Jessica Garber (Legislative Correspondent in the office of Senator Richard J. Durbin), Lina Sullivan (JBANC), Mariliis Eensalu, Saulius Kuprys (JBANC President), Jaak Treiman (Estonian Honorary Consul) and Karl Altai (JBANC Managing Director)]

Markus Kitsing, sophomore, Housatonic Community College, Connecticut

I learned more than I had hoped from everyone that spoke at the conference, every panel was packed with good information from great people with a variety of expertise.



Leili Tootsov, Markus Kitsing, Alex Hubschmidt and Tia Puskar.

Panel 1 on U.S.-Baltic Relations taught me a lot on a variety of strategies on keeping the freedom of the Baltic Countries secure... Panel 2 talked about info and cyber warfare... Panel 3 was on the Baltic Sea Region and Nordic Co-op, in which the Scandinavian countries' role in the security of Europe was discussed...Considering how big of a threat Russia is, I'm shocked that the Nordic Countries haven't been preparing for longer, sort of a delayed reaction to world events. [Part of] Panel 4 was about Narva; I learned that even though they are the third biggest city in Estonia by population, they have the highest unemployment. They are taking steps to counter their decreasing population and to lower their unemployment rates by making their city more attractive for businesses.

Ultimately the JBANC Conference was not only very informative, but very fun for me! I made new friends and got to catch up with old friends. I'd like to thank the EANC for giving me the opportunity to experience such a great event!



EV100 Event Listings: EANC's website www.estosite.org has a MENU button "Estonia 100" for info about the EV100 celebrations and activities. Send info for your local events to Linda Rink, erku@estosite.org.



Copies of **"Estonians in America, 1945-1995: Exiles in a Land of Promise"** are still available! Order form is on www.estosite.org. The cost per book is \$97.50 by check; you can also pay by credit card via PayPal at a cost of \$100.50: go to www.estosite.org and click on the "DONATE" button. Expedited shipping cost is \$106.00 by check; \$110.00 by PayPal.

Contact: Linda Rink, EANC Executive Director: 215-546-5863, erku@estosite.org

Upcoming Events

Stanford Libraries to host the 2018 AABS Conference The Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies' (AABS) 2018 conference will celebrate two important milestones – the 50th anniversary of the founding of the AABS and the 100th anniversary of independence for the Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The three-day program, held on Stanford University campus on June 1–3, 2018, will showcase cutting-edge Baltic research. More info can be found at: <http://aabs2018.stanford.edu/>.



A NEW LIFE FOR OLD BOOKS – WHERE ARE WE WITH THE PROJECT?

Liisi Esse, Ph.D., Stanford University Libraries

EANC's April newsletter announced a new collaborative project with the Stanford University Libraries (SUL) to help people donate collections of books on Estonian and Baltic history, literature, and culture to the SUL as well as to other U.S. research libraries. While the libraries are happy to strengthen their Baltic collections, the project also gives an opportunity to those wishing to find use for their book collections that they do not need but do not want to simply discard due to the scientific, literary, and very often emotional value.

Now is a suitable time to share the good news about its energetic kick-off: over the past months, SUL has received and cataloged 18 collections with a total of 728 books. In addition, 979 duplicate items (i.e. titles that SUL already had in its collection)

were forwarded to SUL's partner libraries of UCLA, the University of Washington, and the University of Pittsburgh. In total, 1,707 books have found a new home!

The scope of donated books and periodicals is wide: we have received titles published by the Baltic diaspora (especially by Orto and Eesti Kirjanike Kooperatiiv),

significant translations, as well as literary works and studies published during the Soviet period and in post-1991 Estonia. Of particular interest are titles that are rarer or hard to find elsewhere, such as books published in interwar Estonia or in DP camps after the Second World War. A collection of children's books published in



Children's books published in Estonia in the 1970s and donated by Maie Kaarsoo Herrick

Estonia in the 1970s and donated by Maie Kaarsoo Herrick is also worth mentioning: while SUL usually does not buy children's books, we hope that this small collection will prove useful to future researchers analyzing Soviet-era children's books in Eastern Europe.

While we hope that the flood of calls and emails will not stop anytime soon, we also ask potential donors to provide inventories of their collections, if possible. Since SUL can acquire only one copy of each title, we

are interested in making selections before the material is shipped to us in order reduce costs and thus maximize the number of donations we are able to acquire.

The Stanford University Libraries and EANC wish to thank all donors who have sent us their collections.

Liisi Esse's contact information is liisi.esse@stanford.edu, 650-736-4724



Karin Shuey, EANC's
Washington DC
Director

Karin Shuey, EANC's Washington DC Director, reports:

The Russian Sanctions Bill- Persistence Pays Off

The process of getting this summer's sanctions bill through Congress and passed into law was a real cliffhanger! After passing in the Senate almost unanimously in mid-June, then getting delayed and revised in the House and eventually passing there, also almost unanimously, and going back to the Senate for another vote of overwhelming support, H.R.3364 - the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act - went to the President's desk on July 28th and was signed into law on August 2nd. While the bill was in Congress, EANC, JBANC and our Central and East European Coalition (CEEC) colleagues were tracking its every move, visiting offices in both chambers and encouraging our communities through social media and other channels to contact their Members of Congress (MoC) on supporting the bill.

While we don't know how much influence our work and grassroots efforts had on the passage of this bill, we do believe that complacency is our enemy. The non-profits representing Americans of CEE descent work daily to make sure the issues affecting our homelands remain a focus in Congress, and we appreciate your help in this mission! We invite you to contact your MoC to voice your interest in Estonian security and policy for the region. We in Washington can make the rounds and deliver letters on the Hill all year long, but the biggest impact comes from constituents, whose votes matter to those lawmakers we're visiting. We'd love your support in letting them know that Estonia is important and Estonian-Americans support a stable, allied Europe.



CEEC colleagues advocated for Russia sanctions with Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA – back row, 2nd from right). (Photo: JBANC)

Calls are generally answered by staffers whose only job may be answering calls from constituents. They get a lot of calls daily on many topics and take notes to pass on to the MoC. Many offices keep a database of calls organized by topic, and your call will likely be added to whatever record-keeping system they use. Before making your call, it's a good idea to think about what you want to say and maybe jot down some notes. Personal stories showing why an issue is important to you are especially memorable and effective; just make sure you're respectful as you share your thoughts. Remember, it's their job to listen to you and learn what you think is important.

For ideas on issues to discuss, a list of current legislation and other high-priority topics is available at ceecoalition.us. Details for all of the bills listed are available at the Congress.gov website. If you contact your Representative on a House bill, it's always a good idea to also ask them to join the House Baltic Caucus, or express thanks if they're already a member. You can check your Representative's membership status at housebalticcaucus.webs.com.

EANC will continue to support legislation that addresses European security policy pertinent to Estonia and we'll facilitate efforts by our members and constituents to do the same. Our activities in Washington will continue to ensure that the administration and lawmakers are aware of issues important to Estonian Americans, and we hope you'll join us in sharing our message!

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East Coast Estonian Children's Choir



*San Francisco Pääsukesed
(Photo: Liina Pöder)*