



RECENT EANC ACTIVITIES / ERKÜ TEGEVUS

Here are some highlights of EANC's activities since the last newsletter! Siin on ERKÜ tähtsamad uudised pärast viimase uudiskirja ilmumist!

LEP-ESTO Festival

EANC was a proud sponsor of the 2013 LEP-ESTO Festival in San Francisco. In addition to being a sponsor, we



*Ellen Kruzyk with a Connecticut Estonian School's T-shirt
Photo: Gilda Karu*

helped send children from the Connecticut Estonian School's choir and folk dancing group to the Festival. On the left you can see the T-shirts they made! EANC also enabled the "Saare Vikat" folk dancing group to perform at LEP-ESTO.

ERKÜ toetas 2013 aasta LEP-ESTO't, mis toimus San Franciscos. Lisaks sponsorlusele aitas ERKÜ saata festivalile Connecticuti Eesti kooli õpi-

laste laulukoori ja rahvatantsugrupi. Vasakul on näha nende tehtud T-särgid. Samuti toetas ERKÜ rahvatantsugrupi "Saare Vikat"-i esinemist LEP-ESTO'l.

"Quo Vadis, Estonia?"

Marju Rink-Abel, president of EANC, was invited to President of Estonia Toomas Hendrik Ilves' fourth annual Estonia's Friends International Meeting, held in Tallinn July



*President Toomas Hendrik Ilves at Estonia's Friends International Meeting
Photo: Raigo Pajula*

4th to July 6th. The symposium, themed "Quo Vadis Estonia?", focused on the topics of e-democracy, e-governance and their role in modern societies. More than 100 businessmen, politicians and opinion leaders from 20 countries participated in the meeting, which is a joint initiative launched by President Ilves, Enterprise Estonia and the entrepreneur Margus Reinsalu.

ERKÜ president Marju Rink-Abel oli kutsutud Eesti presidendi Toomas Hendrik Ilvese poolt Tallinnasse. Seal toimus 4.-6. juulini iga-aastane Rahvusvaheline Eesti Sõprade kohtumine, juba neljandat korda. Sümpoosiumil teemaga "Quo Vadis Estonia?" arutati e-demokraatiat, e-valitsust ja nende rolli tänapäeva ühiskonnas. Kohal oli rohkem kui 100 ärimeest, poliitikut ja arvamussaadikut 20-st riigist. See kohtumine oli ühiselt korraldatud president Ilvese, ettevõtja Margus Reinsalu ja Eesti Ettevõtluse poolt.

ScanFest

EANC members Viiu Vanderer and Ülle Ederma organized EANC's participation in the 29th annual ScanFest on Sept.1,



Ülle Ederma at ScanFest

2013 in Budd Lake NJ. Estonia was the only Baltic country included in ScanFest, a day-long celebration of all things Scandinavian. Also at ScanFest were the Pillerkaar Estonian Folk Dancers of the Washington, DC Metro Area.

ERKÜ liikmed Viiu Vanderer ja Ülle Ederma korraldasid ERKÜ osalemist 1. septembril 2013, Budd Lake, NJ, toimuval ScanFest'il. Balti riikidest oli Eesti ainsana esindatud. ScanFest on ühepäevane festival, kus leidub kõike Skandinaavia maadega seonduvat. Eestit esindas seal rahvatantsugrupp "Pillerkaar" Washington, DC piirkonnast.

EANC Annual Meeting

EANC held its annual meeting on September 14, 2013, at the Estonian Embassy in Washington, DC. Featured agenda items were EANC's 2014 activities, which include its continued support for Estonian America youth organizations such as the boy scouts, girl guides and
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*EANC members / guests at the annual meeting. Front row center: Ambassador Marina Kaljurand and EANC president Marju Rink-Abel.
Photo: Arved Plaks*

THE ESTONIAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

In our March newsletter we posed the controversial question “Do you need Estonian to be Estonian?” and our readers responded! Now we invite your answers to the question: **“When was the first time you visited Estonia, and what was your most vivid impression?”**

Share your personal experiences with your fellow Estonian Americans. A few EANC members have already written about their first visit; excerpts are published in this issue. Read the complete text – and add your comments – on www.estosite.org. Click on the menu button “The Estonian American Experience” and post your comments.

Oma märtsikuu uudiskirjas esitasime me vastuolulise küsimuse “Kas on vaja osata eesti keelt, et olla eestlane?” ja meie lugejad vastasid! Nüüd kutsume teid üles vastama uuele küsimusele **“Millal külastasite Eestit esimest korda ja milline on eredaime mälestus?”** Palun jagage oma isiklikku kogemust teiste Ameerika eestlastega. Mõned ERKÜ liikmed on juba oma esimesest külaskäigust kirjutanud. Osa väljavõtteid on siin uudiskirjas ka ära trükitud. Kogu teksti lugemiseks ja oma kommentaari lisamiseks palun minge www.estosite.org. Vajuta lingile “The Estonian American Experience” ja lisa oma kommentaar.



View from Patkuli Steps, Tallinn
Photo: Leo Roomets

Strong objections from my father

“My first trip to Estonia occurred in 1974 against strong objections from my father. He said that by getting a visa to enter the Soviet Union I am confirming that Estonia is part of the Soviet Union. Furthermore by spending money there I will be providing hard currency to the Soviets for use against the free world. But my desire to see and help my relatives was strong....My childhood home was dilapidated and dirty. And yet I was elated to be in Tallinn, especially to walk in the old town.”



- Arved Plaks

Sad quality of life and constant fear

“The first time I visited Estonia was in May 1977, during a period of détente between the USA and USSR. Other than the excitement of meeting my many relatives for the first time and my parents' relatives meeting each other for the first time, I'd say my most vivid impression was the sad quality of life and constant fear. The air was polluted, there were long lines at stores where there was something to buy, and there were stores (valuuta poed) where goods not available to the general public could be bought only with foreign currency. Despite its unique architecture, Tallinn generally seemed drab and gray.... I constantly had to watch what I said because my relatives warned that foreigners were watched....Seeing these conditions inspired me to become more politically active to advocate for Estonian independence. ”



- Gilda Karu

Hundreds and hundreds of people waiting

“I remember feeling astonishment, confusion, elation, and excitement all at once....This first visit was in June of 1990. As did so many other Estonian-Americans, our family flew to Helsinki from where we took the ferry to Tallinn. The welcome we received upon arrival in Tallinn was completely unexpected and overwhelming. There were hundreds and hundreds of people waiting for those of us on the ferry. They included unknown relatives; families who would host us in their homes for two weeks; folk dance groups and choirs; and various others with roles both large and small at the Tantsupidu and Laulupidu....I have many other memories of that first trip ... But the sight of so many people there to welcome us as family and friends, even though we were really still strangers, remains the most vivid.”



- Maia Linask

INTERVIEW WITH JIM TUSTY, PRESIDENT OF SKYFILMS

For this issue, we interviewed Jim Tusty, president of SkyFilms, about his new film *"To Breathe As One."* Tusty, who is of Estonian descent, and his wife Maureen Castle Tusty were the directors and producers of the critically-acclaimed feature documentary *"The Singing Revolution."* EANC was one of the financial supporters of *"The Singing Revolution"* and has pledged support for *"To Breathe As One."*



James Tusty & Maureen Castle Tusty of SkyFilms
Source:

www.singingrevolution.com

Selles uudiskirjas on ära trükitud intervjuu Jim Tusty'ga. Rääkisime filmist *"Üheshingamine."* Tusty, kes on Eesti päritoluga, ja tema abikaasa Maureen Castle-Tusty on paljukiidetud filmi *"Laulev Revolutsioon"* direktor ja produtsent. ERKÜ oli üks sponsoritest filmile *"Laulev Revolutsioon"* ja samuti sponsoreerib uut filmi *"Üheshingamine."*

Q. What is the new film about?

A. *"To Breathe As One"* is half concert film, half history film. It's about the 2009 Laulupidu song festival, told from the perspective of Oakland California's Piedmont Children's Choir, which was one of the few American choirs to have been invited to participate in Laulupidu. Importantly, the film also relates the 140-year history of the festival and its significance throughout those years for maintaining the national identity of the Estonian people.

Q. What audience is it intended for, and where will it be shown?

A. As was the case of *"The Singing Revolution,"* the target is the non-Estonian American viewer. *"To Breathe As One"* will air on public television (PBS) in February / March 2014. It will also be available for limited theatrical viewings.

Q. Your film started out with the title *"Songs of Defiance."* Why did you decide to rename it?

A. *"Songs of Defiance"* was a working title, which is common in film-making. There were three reasons why we changed it. First of all, during the course of making the film, it evolved. Its overall feeling now is that of joy and happiness – it's positive, not confrontational like *"The Singing Revolution."* The second reason is that the title *"Songs of Defiance"* was too similar to *"The Singing Revolution."* We purposely did not want any reference to singing or song in the new film title. Third, the name for the 2009 Laulupidu was *"To Breathe as One"* – in Estonian *"Üheshingamine."* (Note that in Estonian the word for "to breathe" (*"hingamine"*) is similar to the word for "soul" (*"hing"*)). We decided that simply using the English translation of *"Üheshingamine"* was the best choice for the film's title.



Piedmont Children's Choir at Laulupidu 2009

Photo from

<http://www.forumcinemas.ee/eng/Event/299807/>

Q. What is your distribution schedule?

A. The film has been completed and premiered at LEP-ESTO this past summer. The website for the film will be up on or about October 15, 2013.

On November 1, DVDs go on sale and limited theatrical screenings will begin. It will be very easy for groups and individuals to screen the film at local theaters through <http://www.tugg.com>.

February/March 2014 will be the Public Television release.

LETTERS FROM FAR AWAY KIRJAD KAUGELT

Until recently, letters were almost the only way to maintain contacts between relatives and friends and with those, who either voluntarily or forcibly left their Estonian homeland. These letters are an important research resource because in addition to autobiographical information, they also provide insight into the larger societal situation.

For this reason, the Estonian National Museum in Tartu is seeking personal correspondences between Estonian emigrants to the West and those who stayed behind, written during the confusion of WWII. Especially valuable would be correspondences over a period of several decades which consist of both received and sent letters, although one-sided correspondence is still important. The Museum is also interested in correspondence prior to WWII.

For details, contact Riina Reinvelt (tel: +372 7350406, e-mail: riina@erm.ee), or write to: Estonian National Museum, Veski 32, Tartu 51014, Estonia.

Kuni viimase ajani olid paberkirjad kodumaistele pea ainukeseks võimaluseks pidada sidet pereliikmete või sõpradega, kes vabatahtlikult või sunniviisiliselt olid kodumaalt lahkunud. Kirjad on oluliseks uurimisallikaks, kuna lisaks autobiograafilisele informatsioonile annavad nad teavet ümbritseva keskkonna ja sotsiaalsete olude kohta.

Eestis Tartus asuv Eesti Rahva Muuseum soovib oma kogusid täiendada kirjadega, mida vahetasid omavahel Teise Maailmasõja keerises välismaale pääsenud ja kodumaale mahajäänud eestlased, samuti nende kirjadega, mida pagulased vahetasid omavahel. Kui kellegi valduses on enne Teist Maailmasõda Eestist lahkunute ja Nõukogude ajal läände pääsenute kirju, on ka need muuseumile väga huvipakkuvad. Eriti väärtuslik on läbi mitme aastakümne kestnud kirjavahetus, mille puhul on säilinud nii saadud kui saadetud kirjad. Kui kahepoolne kirjavahetus ei ole säilinud, siis on ka ühepoolsed kirjad uurijatele väärtuslikuks allikaks.

Täiendavat infot saab muuseumi kogude osakonna juhatajalt (Riina Reinvelt, tel: +372 7350406, e-mail: riina@erm.ee) või kirjutades aadressil: Estonian National Museum, Veski 32, Tartu 51014, Estonia.

Recent EANC Activities, continued from page 1

Long Island children's summer camp, and on the political front, financial and leadership support for the Joint Baltic American National Council (JBANC) and cooperation with the Central Eastern European Coalition. In addition, EANC has pledged support for Sky Films' documentary film about the Estonian Song Festival, "To Breathe As One." Special guests at the September 14 meeting were JBANC Managing Director Karl Altu and Ambassador Marina Kaljurand.

ERKÜ aastakoosolek toimus 14. septembril, 2013, Eesti Saatkonnas, Washington, DC's. Kavas oli ERKÜ tegevus 2014. aastal, mis haarab endasse jätkuva toetuse Eesti-Ameerika noorte organisatsioonidele nagu skaudid, gaidid ja Long Islandi laste suvelaager. Poliitilisel alal jätkatakse koostööd JBANC'iga ja Kes- ja Ida Euroopa Koalitsiooniga. ERKÜ on lubanud toetust Sky Filmi dokumentaal filmile "Üheshingamine" Eesti laulupeost. Erilised külalised koosolekul olid JBANC'i direktor Karl Altu ja Suursaadik Marina Kaljurand.

EANC Receives Thank-You's

In recognition of its support in 2013, EANC has received three thank you's. At the annual meeting, Viiu Vanderer presented a framed thank you letter on behalf of The Lake-

wood Estonian Society. Aleksander Lamvol presented a card and hand-written letters from the Connecticut Estonian School's students, who performed at LEP-ESTO in San Francisco, thanks to EANC's support. Earlier this year, The Nordic Press had given EANC a certificate thanking them for their support and cooperation, which has enabled "Vaba Eesti Sõna" to continue publishing.



Marju Rink-Abel receives Lakewood Estonian Society's thank you letter from Viiu Vanderer. Photo: Arved Plaks

Oma tegevusega aastal 2013 pälvis ERKÜ kolm tänukirja.

Aastakoosolekul andis Viiu Vanderer üle raamitud tänukirja Lakewoodi Eesti Seltsilt. Aleksander Lamvol kinkis Connecticuti Eesti kooli laste poolt tehtud kaardi ja kirjad. Nad on tänulikud ERKÜ'le toetuse eest, mis aitas neil minna LEP-ESTO'le San Franciscos. Nordic Press tänas ERKÜ't toetuse ja koostöö eest, mis kindlustab "Vaba Eesti Sõna" edasist ilmumist.



*Karl Altau,
JBANC Managing Director*

Karl Altau, Managing Director of the Joint Baltic American National Committee, reports:

While the U.S. government shut down, 2013 hasn't been quiet for Baltic interests in the nation's capital. This was evidenced by the August 30 visit of the Baltic presidents.

In Congress, 2013 has seen a positive jump of eight members in the House Baltic Caucus. Now reaching 50, it's the largest increase in a decade. JBANC delivered letters to the entire House in February and August to reinforce support for the Baltics. JBANC has actively urged House members to co-sponsor H.Res. 302, supporting the designation of August 23 as "Black Ribbon Day" to recognize the victims of Soviet Communist and Nazi regimes. An Action Alert is posted on JBANC's website: <http://jbanc.org/?page=blog&v=2&id=49>. Help from the Estonian-American community - by contacting your Representatives - is needed to help pass the legislation.

JBANC also supports the "Expedited LNG for American Allies Act of 2013," which would allow export of U.S. Liquefied Natural Gas to NATO allies. If enacted, it could help the Baltic countries lessen Russian gas dependence.

As a member of the Central and East European Coalition, JBANC helped coordinate the CEEC's Advocacy Day in April, and congressional policy forums in March and July. The CEEC is also contacting the White House over concerns about Moscow's increasing bullying in the CEE region.

The Estonia-Maryland Partnership has been active, with a signing ceremony via Skype in June between Viljandi and Cumberland, and the evolution of ties between Narva and Bel Air. Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley hosted a reception in May commemorating 20 years of the relationship.

JBANC'i ulevaate Washingtonist

USA valitsus on katkestanud töö alates 1.oktoobrist 2013.a., kuid Ameerika pealinnas ei ole eelnev aeg olnud sugugi vaikne Baltimaade teemade jaoks. Seda tõendas ka 30. augustil Balti presidentide visiit Valgesse Majja.

2013 a. on Kongressis lisandunud kaheksa uut House Baltic Caucuse, ehk sõprusrühma liiget. Viimase kümne aasta jooksul on see olnud suurim kasv. Täna

on liikmete arv järk-järgult kasvamas ja jõudnud viiekümneni. JBANC on esitanud kirju kogu alamkojas veebruaris ja augustis, et tugevdada huvi Baltimaade vastu. JBANC õhutas alamkoja liikmeid toetama aktiivselt H.Res. 302, mis määraks 23. augustil Musta Lindi päevaks, millega mälestatakse kommunismi ja natsismi ohvreid. Üleskutse leiate JBANC veebilehel <http://jbanc.org/?page=blog&v=2&id=49>. Palume abi Ameerika eestlastelt, et seda resolutsiooni läbi viia. Võtke ühendust oma Kongressmeestega selle toetuseks.

JBANC toetab ka "Kiirendatud LNG ameerika liitlastele Akt 2013," mis lubaks eksportida USA vedeldatud maagaasi NATO kaasliitlastele. See võiks aidata Balti riikides vähendada sõltuvust Vene gaasist.

JBANC on aidanud kordineerida Kongressis Kesk- ja Ida-Euroopa propageerimispäeva aprillis ning poliitika foorumeid märtsis ja juulis. Moskva survestamise pärast Kesk- ja Ida-Euroopas on Koalitsioon avaldanud muret ka Valges Majas.

Eesti-Marylandi partnerlus on olnud aktiivne. Viljandi ja Cumberlandi vaheline partnerlusleping sõlmiti Skyp'i vahendusel 16.juunil. 2013.a. Narva ja Bel Air suhted on arenemas positiivses suunas. Marylandi kuberner Martin O'Malley korraldas vastuvõtu 13. mail, kus tähistati kahekümneaastast koostööd Eesti ja Marylandi vahel.

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LEP-ESTO
Photo: Priit Vesilind



EANC members voting at the annual meeting
Photo: Arved Plaks

THE ESTONIAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE – WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?
OLLA EESTI-AMEERIKLANE – MIDA SEE TÄHENDAB TEILE?