

# The Kaleva Historical Society Newsletter

April, 2018

[Http://www.kalevami.com](http://www.kalevami.com)

## Greetings from the Kaleva Historical Society

### **Letter from the President —**

Dear faithful members of the Kaleva Historical Society,

The big news for this letter is the completion of the Traditional Finnish Sauna, which is situated in the south backyard of the Bottle House. We were successful in raising \$7000 to have the sauna built by a local builder, Sam Bontrager, out of logs he cut in the area. With sample floor plans and visits to the few saunas left in Kaleva, Sam was able to build a 10x20' pine log sauna with a metal roof, a steam room and a dressing room, complete with a restored Nippa stove. Melvin Fennell scouted on the Internet and traveled to Minnesota to pick up a stove from a Finnish gentleman at no charge! He spruced up the exterior and with help from Somsel Lumber Co. employees was able to place the stove and water tank in the hole Sam had cut for it. Benches and doors were the finishing touches after the sauna was moved by trailer to the Bottle House location in early November.

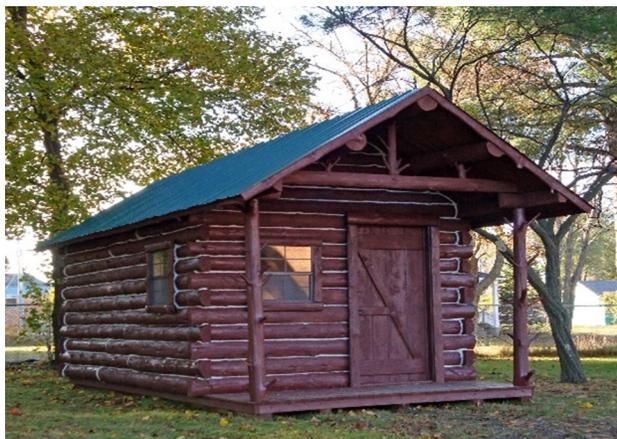
Of course, it is not a working sauna as health department regulations, expense, and practicality prohibit firing it up. There will be signs explaining the tradition of the sauna, and all the necessities such as towels, bucket, birch logs and branches. The only thing we may not be able to include is the beer. We are hoping many visitors will pass through the doors of our sauna in the next few years, thus keeping alive this important Finnish tradition.

**Don't forget the Bottle House during Kaleva Days!** On Saturday, July 21 (at 10 am) there will be a bake sale to give you a chance to sample those famous Kaleva treats such as nissua bread.

We are thankful for all the donations for the sauna. Some were sent with annual dues and some were contributed through the Internet on our crowd funding page. Memorial funds from Dennis Asiala will be used to complete landscaping and handicapped entrances this spring. We are planning a grand opening on June 16 (the Saturday closest to the Finnish holiday—Juhannus) Watch our website for details.

The Bottle House continues to be a popular destination for local folks as well as those traveling in the area. We are fortunate to be able to maintain the building programs with donations from our members, entrance fees and sales of memorabilia. With your continued support we will carry on in 2019.

Sincerely,  
Cynthia Asiala, president



**Our sauna is finished!**

**Ten Rules for the Sauna.** Although our sauna will not be heated— you may be inspired to find a real working sauna after visiting ours . So it may be useful to know these rules found on [www.visitfinland.com]:

1. Sauna is good for everybody. Only newborn babies and people with serious conditions like open wounds or heart conditions should avoid sauna.
2. Sauna is a place for physical and mental cleansing and many suggest one should behave in sauna as they would in church. That is not to say you shouldn't relax—just kick back and take it easy.
3. Bathing in a sauna with people is a bonding process. When you're bare in all senses of the word, you're sure not to hide anything. It is said in Finland, more important decisions get made in sauna than meetings.
4. Colored lights, aromatic fragrances and relaxing music have nothing to do with Finnish sauna. Real Finns saunas are dimly lit, there's no music or smells except for fresh birch, wet cedar and natural tar.
5. Yes, Finns go to sauna in the nude even with strangers. Its only natural, and there's no shame in being you, but if you can't get over it, Finns will understand you wanting to wear a swimsuit or towel.
6. In groups, women and men go to sauna separately, but families go together.
7. A *vihta* is a bundle of fresh birch that you gently whip yourself with. It is strange, but is good for the skin.
8. There are no rules for how often you should throw more water on the stove. Whenever you feel like another wave of steam, go for it.
9. You will be sweating heavily in the sauna, so be sure to drink plenty. Water is probably best for you, but beer and cider is what Finns enjoy the most.



**Kaleva Finnish Line.** The profits from the Kaleva Finnish Line enable us to staff the Kaleva Depot Museum. Thank-you to our generous sponsors that make this possible (Kaleva Country Flowers, Cherryland Electric, Northern MI Dragway, Terwilliger's Funeral Home, Fruit Haven/Lutz Farms, Kaleva Telephone Company, Finan Steamer Service). Please join us for this year's 5K race on Sat-July 21. You can find a registration form on our website:

[www.kalevami.com](http://www.kalevami.com).

**Kaleva Concerts!** We hope to see you at our August Friday night concerts at our log cabin stage. Watch our website ([kalevami.com](http://kalevami.com)) for details of upcoming musicians.



**Many thanks to our 2017 concert sponsors. These concerts would not be possible without you!** Blue Water Transportation, Environmental Energy, Finan Steamer Services, Grossnickle Family Trust, Trak's Bar & Grill, mBank of Kaleva, Robak's Kaleva Tavern, Kaleva Telephone Co, Somsel Lumber Co., Terwilliger Funeral Home, Kaleva Barber Shop, Larry's Party Store, Country Side Restaurant, Kaleva Meats, Mark Quinn-attorney, and the Laura Asiala Family in memory of Richard and Michael Asiala and in honor of Kay Asiala.

