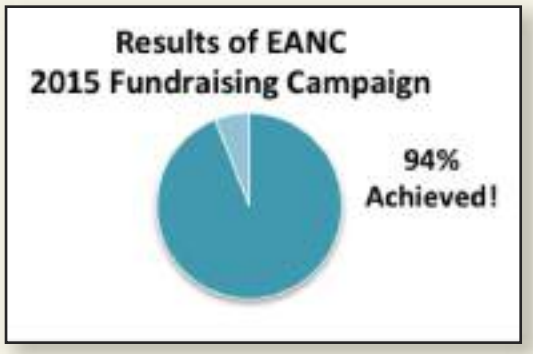
EANC NEWSLETTER
ERKÜ TEATAJA

March 2016

EANC News and Recent Activities / ERKÜ uudised ja üritused

EANC Thanks Donors for Successful Fundraising Campaign



The Estonian American National Council thanks everyone who contributed to the 2015 $200,000 fundraising campaign: we achieved 94% of our goal! Thanks to our donors, we have hired Karin Shuey as EANC's full-time Washington DC Director to further our work representing the Estonian American community in Washington. Your donations also enabled EANC to support in 2015:

- Youth activities: Estonian Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, Lakewood Järvemetsa camp, Long Island Suvekodu/Children's summer camp. EANC also paid for four young adults to attend the Joint Baltic American National Committee's prestigious Baltic affairs conference.
- Publications and films: *Vaba Eesti Sõna* newspaper, the book *"Estonian Americans: Exiles in a Land of Promise,"* to be published this Fall, and Helga Merits' film *"Baltic University."*
- Events: Mid-West Estonian Days (KLENK), conference at the West Coast Estonian Days in Whistler, Canada, the Baltic Diaspora Exhibit in Philadelphia, the Scandinavian film Festival in Los Angeles, and the 2015 JBANC conference in Washington DC.
- Estonian Archives in U.S.
- Donation for humanitarian aid to Ukraine

ERKÜ tänab annetajaid eduka korjanduse kampaania eest

Eesti Rahvuskomitee Ühendriikides tänab kõike kes annetasid 2015. a. $200,000 korjanduse kampaaniale: meie saavutasime 94% meie sihitist! Tänu annetajatele oleme palkanud Karin Shuey ERKÜ täisajaliseks Washington DC direktoriks edendamaks meie tööd Ameerika eestlaste ühiskonna esindajana Washingtonis. Teie annetused võimaldasid ERKÜ-l toetada 2015. a.:

- Noorte tegevust: Eesti skaudid ja gaidid, Lakewoodi Järvemetsa laager, Long Islandi Laste Suvekodu. ERKÜ tasus ka nelja noore osavõtmisekulud Ühendatud Balti Ameerika Komitee (JBANC) mõjukast Balti teemalisest konverentsist.
- Publikatsioonid ja filmid: *Vaba Eesti Sõna*, raamat *"Estonian Americans: Exiles in a Land of Promise,"* mis valmib sel sügisel, ja Helga Meritsi film *"Baltic University."*
- Üritused: KLENKi päevad, konverents Lääneranniku Eesti Päevadel Whistleris, Balti Diasporaa näitus Philadelphias, Scandinaavia filmi festival Los Angeleses, ja 2015. a. JBANC konverents Washington DC-s.
- Eesti Arhiiv Ühendriikides
- Annetus humanitaarabiks Ukrainale

EANC Executive Board/ ERKÜ Juhatus

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

Interview with Karin Shuey, EANC's new Washington DC Director

Q. Tell us a little about yourself.

KS: I was very active with the Seattle Estonians in the 1970s and 1980s. My mother was a pillar of the Seattle and Portland communities. She instilled in me a deep appreciation for preserving Estonian culture that has stayed with me to this day.



She also led the folkdance group in Seattle for many years. My love for rahvatants grew and I danced with the group through college graduation when I moved to Virginia. Upon my arrival here, I immediately picked up with Pillerkaar and danced with them for about 10 years.

Q. Why did you choose a military career?

KS: Growing up, I knew I wanted a job that helped Estonia in some way. I chose my major of Russian Studies because there was no Baltic Studies program at the University of Washington in 1983 and I figured learning about "the enemy" would be a good second choice. I was interested in travel and my father had been in the Navy in WWII, so I felt some affinity there. I knew in the Cold War paradigm of the time that I'd at least be working against the Soviet Union, so it seemed like a logical first step toward my goal of helping Estonia.

Q. What experiences did you have during active duty?

KS: My naval career consisted of ten years in DC, ten in Europe and two at the Naval Postgraduate School in California. While I appreciated my time in Europe more than my time here, I think I ended up with a balanced view of how things operate inside the beltway vs. how we are seen from the outside among our allies.

My first Estonia-related job was at the U.S. military headquarters in Stuttgart. Around 1992, they were tasked to establish a cooperation program with the emerging post-Soviet democracies. I became their desk officer for Estonia and laid the groundwork for the successful cooperation relationship between the Estonian Defense Forces and Maryland National Guard.

In 1994, I was accepted to the Naval Postgraduate School's National Security Affairs program. I wrote my thesis on U.S. policy and the Baltic States, examining our diplomacy at the three main periods of change during the 20th century.

My assignment to the Navy International Programs Office (IPO) in 1999 allowed me to help Estonia again. They run the Navy's security cooperation programs and the Baltics were part of my portfolio as a country program director.

While I was at Navy IPO, I was accepted for the position of U.S. Defense Attaché in Tallinn; my tour there was from 2005 to 2007. It was an amazing privilege to go back to my roots to represent DoD and promote U.S.-Estonian relations as they established themselves as a valued member of NATO.

Q. What prompted you to apply for the EANC Washington Director position?



KS: When this position was advertised, it seemed to match perfectly my professional background and lifelong passion for Estonia. I'm excited and honored that EANC has trusted me with these new duties!

Q. Do you have any personal objectives for your work with EANC?

KS: My first goal is to get a balanced perspective on all the issues at hand to facilitate my main task of keeping Estonian-Americans informed on the policy and legislative events that interest us. As the position evolves, I will be on the lookout for ways to improve on how we reach out to our grassroots.

I'm also interested in hearing from Estonian-Americans regarding their stances on issues affecting Estonia and priorities for EANC representation in Washington. Our constituents may see a survey in the coming months that addresses the important topics and asks their views.

WHY I JOINED EANC

by Ülle Ederma



Olen olnud kauaaegne ERKÜ liige. Põhjused miks ma astusin ERKÜ'sse olid tegelikult needsamad milleks eesti seltsid ja organisatsioonid välismaal üldse loodi. Need eesmärgid on ka olulised tänapäeval, pea 70 a. hiljem. Siis, ja ka nüüd, kestab ikka Eesti saatuse ja olukorra tutvustamine, kommunismivastase valitsuse võitlus ja eesti kultuuri säilitamine. Eriti eesti keele säilitamine, üks ERKÜ sihtidest, omab suure tähtsuse. Keele kaudu elab ja levib ka kultuur. Keel on kõige tähtsam kultuuri väljendus, on rahva identiteet. Kui kaotame eesti keele, siis oleme vaid "eesti juurtega" inimesed. Öeldakse, et kui kaob keel, kaob rahvas. Peame ikka kasutama eesti keelt nii kaua kui on inimesi, kes seda oskavad, vaatamata sellele, et on kergem ennast välismaal kohalikus keeles väljendada. Kui eesti keel on püsinud saju aastaid Eestis võõraste valitsuste all, siis peaksime ometi tegema oma parima, et ka praegustes oludes, see ilus, armas emakeel püsima jääks. Peab ka rõhutama, et tänapäevases "multikultuurses" Globaalses Eestis on mitmekeelsus eriti tähtis. Keele õppimine on väga kättesaadav ka "estofiilidele" kellel huvi. Igal juhul keelte oskus ainult rikastab inimest.

Mis tähtsuse siis omab üks grupp organiseeritud ühemeelseid inimesi? Ja miks ma astusin ERKÜ'sse? Arvan, et ühiskondlikus tegevuses valitseb rahvuslik üksmeel ja eesti vaim, mis innustab oma eeskujuga ja oma tegudega ka teisi tegutsema.

Ülle Ederma is a current EANC member and a recent past Board member.

"The Story of the Baltic University:"

a film project by Helga Merits

One of the many film projects that EANC has financially supported is Helga Merits' documentary *"The Story of the Baltic University,"* which premiered at the Toronto Estdocs Festival last October. The film is about the Baltic University in Hamburg, Germany, which existed for only three years from 1946 to 1949, opening its doors to Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian professors and students who had fled the invading Russians in WWII.



Helga Merits

Helga Merits talks about the film (http://www.balticuniversity.info/index.html):

"It was in the summer of 1945 when Latvian professors in the refugee camp of Lübeck were thinking of starting a university, as it was difficult for refugees to obtain a place at a German University. Professors from Estonia and Lithuania joined and it became a Baltic enterprise.



Source: www.balticuniversity.info

The planning committee started to work under most difficult conditions: there was no housing available, no equipment, no pens, no papers, no chairs, nor desks... There was just an idea. What was achieved within three months was spectacular: a functioning university with eight faculties with 17 departments... In September 1949 the university had to close its doors as most students and teachers had emigrated. Though the University existed only for three years the effect upon the students was long lasting... I do think the story of the Baltic University is a story we all can learn from."

About Helga Merits: After working as a journalist for Dutch and Belgian newspapers and national radio, Helga Merits began making Baltic-related historical documentary films. *"The Story of The Baltic University"* is her fourth documentary.

"Estonian Americans: Exiles in a Land of Promise" will be published by EANC in Fall 2016. Edited by Priit Vesilind, the noted former National Geographic senior editor, the hard cover book will chronicle the fifty years from 1945 to 1995. Part documentary, part reference and part narrative, the 500-plus pages will tell the story of the Estonian-Americans' "Greatest Generation," those who came to the United States after World War II via displaced persons camps. The book will capture this important history in print and photographs and will serve as a reference book for generations to come.

EANC will soon start taking pre-orders; details will be published in *Vaba Eesti Sõna* newspaper and on our website www.estosite.org.

The Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies

Founded in 1968, **the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (AABS)** promotes research and education in Baltic Studies by sponsoring meetings and conferences, supporting publications, sustaining a program of scholarships, grants, and prizes, and disseminating news of current interest in Baltic Studies.

Says Board member Janis Chakars, "Like the Baltic states in world affairs, AABS also punches above its weight. The scope and impact of its activities are greater than other scholarly associations of its size. Not only does it publish the Journal of Baltic Studies and Baltic Studies Newsletter, it administers five scholarships and fellowships with two more in the works for next year. It provides the key support for Baltic Studies Summer Institute, which teaches multiple levels of Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian as well as gives topics courses and a lecture series at a different U.S. university every year.

The Association actively encourages Baltic studies at many universities, helping to revive old programs like the one at the University of Illinois Chicago and foster new ones, for instance, at Yale and Stanford. Its members have written the key texts in the field and applied their knowledge and skills in other ways as well. One even became the president of Latvia. AABS manages this with a volunteer board of directors and the support of generous benefactors."

See below for details about the 2016 AABS Conference in Philadelphia.

Upcoming Events

Every other year the world's leading researchers on Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania assemble in the United States for the conference of The Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies. On May 26-28, 2016, the AABS conference will be held at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. President of Estonia Toomas Hendrik Ilves will be the keynote speaker. Approximately 200 scholars from Australia to the Americas, and for the first time Thailand, will present work in over 15 disciplines. In addition to traditional research panels, there will be two museum exhibits, a film series, a concert and dance, a book exhibit, and two luncheons, with one hosted by the Foreign Policy Research Institute.

Registration is at http://aabs-balticstudies.org/. Questions about the conference can be directed to Janis Chakars at AABS2016@gmail.com.



University of Pennsylvania



Mark your calendars now for the **2016 EANC gala awards dinner, public program, and annual meeting** in beautiful San Francisco, on November 4-5, 2016. The venue will be the Marriott San Francisco Union Square. Details to come.

JBANC Update from Washington DC



Karl Altau,
JBANC Managing Director

As 2016 begins, our Estonian and Baltic-American communities have ample opportunities to stand up and speak out for our interests. JBANC looks forward to an exciting year of advocacy with sharp focus on the security and defense of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

On April 27, JBANC celebrates its 55th anniversary. Since its founding in 1961, we've made great progress with our collective efforts to support the restoration of independence in the Baltic countries a quarter century ago. We have learned that we cannot take freedom for granted, and to ensure a long, prosperous Estonia (and Latvia and Lithuania), we have to keep our elected officials in the United States aware of our concerns and the gravity of the threats.

In addition to this year's presidential campaign, the entire U.S. House of Representatives and one-third of the Senate are up for re-election. The intense primary season leading up to November is an important time to get involved. As constituents and voters, we must give our feedback to our elected officials to make sure our message is heard. JBANC will continue to engage both House and Senate lawmakers to inform them about our concerns. Reaching out to the presidential campaigns is also a priority for us this year. In our monthly electronic newsletter, we have been posting the comments and positions of the presidential candidates as they concern the Baltic countries, Ukraine and Russia. You can see past issues here: http://jbanc.org/?m=5&p=1.

Asking your representative to join the House Baltic Caucus is a great way to get involved. Constituent connections are crucial in fostering solidarity among Congress, our communities and the Baltic countries. If your Member of Congress is not on the House Baltic Caucus, please ask them to join! You can check here to see if your representative is a member: http://housebalticcaucus.webs.com. JBANC continues to make the rounds on the Hill to meet with congressional offices, and would be happy to follow up on your behalf.

The Caucus is led by dedicated co-chairs **John Shimkus** (R-IL), and **Adam Schiff** (D-CA).Thanks in part to our work, five Members have joined recently – Representatives Doug Lamborn (R-CO), Ted Poe (R-TX), Bob Latta (R-OH), House Foreign Affairs Committee Ranking Member Gregory Meeks (D-NY), and Adam Kinzinger (R-IL) – bringing Caucus membership to 53. We expect others to join soon and need your help in securing new growth. Your phone call or e-mail could go a long way toward increasing Congressional support.

We're thrilled about the arrival of Karin Shuey as the new EANC Washington, DC Director and will be working closely with her on Capitol Hill during our visits. Her added presence shows that the Estonian-American community cares deeply in addressing our concerns. Karoline Kelder, who comes to JBANC via the Baltic American Freedom Foundation, also continues to complement our work this year during her internship.

Together with the Central and East European Coalition (CEEC), JBANC will again engage with Congress by holding an Advocacy Day on April 19-20. If you are interested in participating, please contact us at jbanc@jbanc.org or watch for updates on our website, or Facebook and Twitter.

Tasuta *Vaba Eesti Sõna* tellimine!

Iga inimene kes annetab ERKÜ-le $500 või enam saab tasuta tellimise Vaba Eesti Sõnale, ainsale eestikeelse ajalehele mis on USA-s välja antud (kas trükitud ajalehe ½ -aastase või digitaalse versiooni aastase tellimise). Ja võite tasuta tellimise kellegile teisele edasi kinkida! Kui teie annetasite vähemalt $500 ja soovite tasuta saada *Vaba Eesti Sõna*, teatage Linda Rinkile (215-546-5863 or erku@estosite.org).

By donating $500 or more to EANC, you can receive a free subscription to *Vaba Eesti Sõna*, the only Estonian-language newspaper published in the U.S. (either a ½ year print or full-year digital subscription). You can also gift it to someone else! Include the form and envelope in this newsletter with your donation check. If you have already donated $500 and wish to receive a free subscription to *Vaba Eesti Sõna*, contact Linda Rink (215-546-5863 or erku@estosite.org).

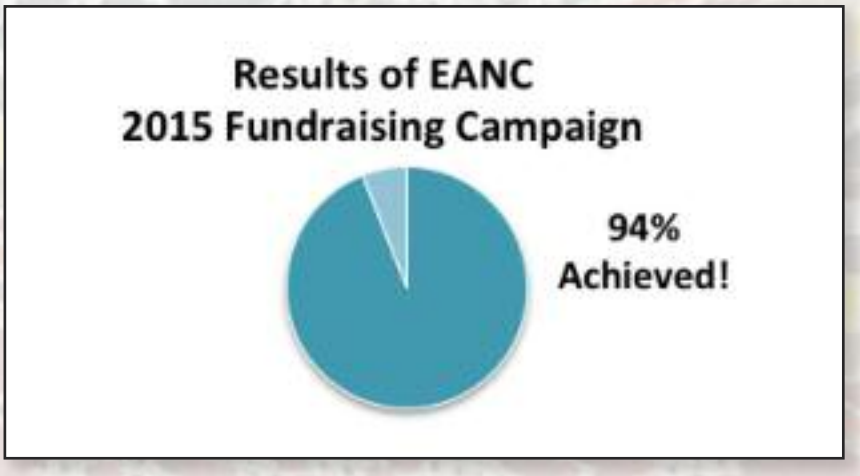
ESTONIAN AMERICAN NATIONAL COUNCIL, INC.
1420 Locust St., Suite 31N
Philadelphia, PA 19102

IN THIS ISSUE

- EANC News
- Interview with Karin Shuey
- *"The Story of the Baltic University"* – a film by Helga Merits
- Did You Know?
- Upcoming Events
- JBANC Update from Washington DC

- ERKÜ uudised
- Intervjuu Karin Shuey'ga
- Helga Meritsi film *"The Story of the Baltic University"*
- Kas teate?
- Tulevased üritused
- JBANC'i ülevaade Washingtonist

EANC NEWSLETTER - March 2016
ERKÜ TEATAJA - märts 2016



EANC Thanks Donors for Successful Fundraising Campaign!

ERKÜ tänab annetajaid eduka korjanduse kampaania eest!