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National Year of Friendship With Finland, 1988

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Finnish settlers first arrived in this country in 1638, when Nordics, many of them natives of Finland or Swedes who spoke Finnish, established the colony of New Sweden in present-day Delaware. They introduced European civilization to the Delaware River Valley and began the transformation of a vast wilderness. Theirs were the pioneer spirit and virtues that are the foundation of our national character. The 350th anniversary of their landing is a most fitting time to celebrate the legacy of America's Finnish pioneers and their descendants and to recall that the friendship of the United States and Finland has deep historical roots.

To commemorate the relationship between the peoples of Finland and the United States on the 350th anniversary of New Sweden, the Congress, by Public Law 99-602, has designated 1988 as "National Year of Friendship with Finland," and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in its observance.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim 1988 as National Year of Friendship with Finland. I call upon all Americans to observe the year with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

Ronald Reagan