

Zarja

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Uradno Glasilo Slovenske Zveze v Ameriki

Volume 93 Issue 1
Spring 2021

The Dawn

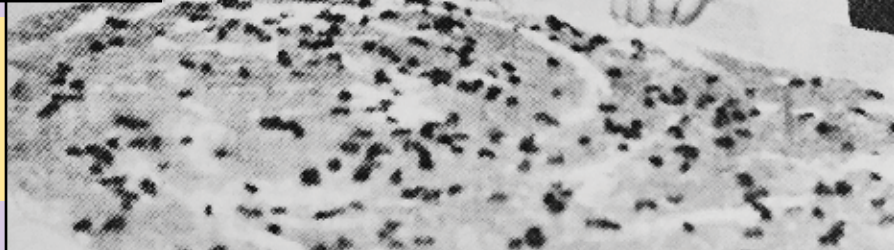
WE'RE CRAZY
ABOUT

Potica!!!

*Living
the
Legacy
of our
Slovenian
Heritage.*



Katie Gorton, Branch 1 - Sheboygan, Wisconsin, making potica using the same recipe her grandmother, Marie Prisland, made many years ago. (Marie was the founder of SWUA/SUA in 1926.)



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LAURIE LEHMAN



Afternoon Outing 12"x16" (scene of Piran, Slovenia)

Original Paintings of Slovenia

laurielehmanartist.com

989-560-1645

Zarja - The Dawn

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Communications for the next issue of publication

Do you have something you would like to share with readers? We would love to hear from you! Please e-mail the editor at wprokup@aol.com. We reserve the right to edit any article submitted. Articles must be related to Slovenia, SUA events, or members. The deadline for articles is the 10th day of the month, two (2) months preceding the issue. For example, articles for the Winter issue must be received by April 10. Thank you.

Submission Guidelines

E-mail your photos attached as jpeg files. If you have an old photo that is irreplaceable, please make a good-quality copy to share with us. (Scanned copies must be a resolution of 300 or higher.)

By submitting material for publication, you grant the Slovenian Union of America the use of the material including your name, hometown, and state. We may modify, reproduce, and distribute it in any SUA-authorized medium and in any manner or appropriate place.



THE STATE OF THE UNION

The 95th Anniversary Year of the SUA

2020: Tis a year we will never forget. A pandemic had taken over the world. Sadly, COVID-19 has permeated 2021 with a vengeance. Our daily lives have been impacted. The virus has controlled how we communicate, how we travel, and how we work. Millions of families are grieving. The education of our children has been compromised. Yes, a vaccine is now available. However, in the time it takes to vaccinate millions of people, the virus continues rampage. As the Amazing Rhythm Aces sing in the cowboy tune, “The end is not in sight.” The least we can do is wear a mask and stay out of crowds for our personal sake and for the sake of others. And then there is prayer.

Slovenian Americans have lost two prominent voices in 2020. George J. Plautz passed away on October 28, 2020. George was a member of the Slovenian Union of America, Slovenian Genealogy Society International, and the Gotscheer Heritage and Genealogy Association. George loved genealogy; he had a tremendous knowledge of the field. He honored his father by being a member of the Sons of the American Legion for 24 years. George served on the SUA national board as VP of Marketing and Fundraising from 2019 - 2020. Dr. Edward (Edi) Gobetz, an esteemed Slovenian American philosopher, sociologist, anthropologist, and professor emeritus at Kent State University, died on December 12, 2020. He was the founder and administrator of the Slovenian-American Research Center where he for many decades researched, compiled, and archived information on Slovenian immigrants and their descendants. From the Slovenian Union of America, our condolences to the Plautz and Gobetz families.

On January 16, 2021, the SUA National Board and Member Representatives met via a Zoom meeting. Among the business items were branch reports with discussions following each. It was a productive meeting. Ideas flowed. The meeting ended with a scavenger hunt. In addition, everyone was asked to share a Slovenian item with the group. It became another idea for a branch event! What a fun way to end a meeting!

Regarding the title of this State of the Union report (*The 95th Anniversary Year of SUA*), Richard Terselic and Chuck Debevec of the Research and Advisory Committee have documented a historic timeline of Slovenia. It has been sent to Slovenia with a request that tagged photography be chosen. Adding image photography will provide further detail to the timeline. It is important that a country’s timeline be historically accurate and be chosen by those who have studied and lived it. It will be published in the 2021 Summer Issue of *Zarja* in recognition of the 30th year of Slovenian independence.

Branch 1 is working on their 100-year celebration in 2026. Mary Ann Schellinger was inquiring when Member of the Year/Mother of the Year was first published. The quest will move to the National and University Library in Ljubljana, searching each year for the May issue of *Zarja*.

While conducting this search, I came upon the article “A Slovenian Tradition at Easter” written by Damjan J. Ovsec. The complete article can be found in the March-April 2004 Edition of *Zarja*. Being 17 years later, I am sure there are many newer members who have not read the article. Our ancestors sustained themselves by gathering from the land. Their fears were disease, pestilence, and weather. Prayer was extended beyond words. Prayer became acted out in scenes in their homes and fields, especially at the time of the new sun of the spring equinox. Their hope for survival and their belief in the goodness of God touched my heart.

The story opens with Olive Sunday; olive pertains to the olive tree. There were no palms in Slovenia. The Olive Sunday procession goes back to pre-Christian Europe when certain herbs, trees, bushes, and flowers were used during ceremonials; they allegedly possessed a magical power during that time. Worship of greenery, especially in springtime, was widespread. It was as if greenery possessed a magic power against the rigors of the weather. The source of the greenery’s vitality and energy was connected with the new sun of the spring equinox, when in olden

times nations celebrated the beginning of a new year and with it the new life cycle. The relationship between man and nature was much closer than it is today. Greenery promoted the growth of crops, people, and animals. Greenery helped with fertility and fruitfulness and kept away any evil powers, ill fortune, and sickness.



The custom of spring greenery tied in bundles being blessed in churches on Palm Sunday represents the memory of palm tree branches that were broken and cast under Christ's feet in Jerusalem when he was arriving in the city. Practically everywhere in Slovenia people take greenery in one form or another to the church to be blessed on Palm Sunday. Olive Sunday is known by the olive tree branches that are blessed on the Sunday before Easter. Different types of bundles exist. Because of varying dialects, there are different names for tied-up bundles of greenery.

The most widely known butare, as we in America call these bundles, are the Ljubljana bundles (*Ljubljanske butarice*) which are unique in the world and a little over 100 years old. Ljubljanske butarice are made up of a small bit of greenery, mostly a tuft of juniper, a twig of box tree or cypress, and a bit of ivy. The main ingredient is colored shavings of wood, rolled or sharply folded and artfully arranged around the bundle. Originally the colors were the colors of the Slovenian flag. Today the colors are diverse.

Each part of the bundle usually has its own symbolic meaning. For instance, the shoots of many different trees are put together so that later on all of the trees and bushes are blessed. A bundle will normally contain seven different kinds of wood, representing the seven sacraments. At some places in Dolenjsko, the bundle must have thirty-three one-year-old birches as a remembrance of Christ's thirty-three years of life on Earth. The ribbon that binds the young twigs and other greenery represents the bonds with which Jesus was tied. There must be a crucifix on top as a sign of our salvation. Belokranjska bundles must contain three one-year-old birches from the same bush, and each of the birches must have three buds in honor of the Holy Trinity - *sveta Trojica*.

After the church blessing of bundles, people used to tuck a leaf or twig from the bundle behind the portraits of saints in their homes; another part into the God's corner; and in the attic, above the entrance door and above all other doors, into the outbuildings, on hay racks, and into stables. They would place pieces of bundles in the corners of fields and under fruit trees to keep away hail and pests and to stimulate better crops. Today (2004) they put fire

to the blessed bundles to prevent hail and thunderbolts whereby in the past this was done to chase away evil forces, spells, devils, and witches.

The Pomurska bundle is a domestic holy object. People walk around the entire home; part of it is taken to the fields, one part is intended for the beehive, and a part is deposited in the granary. They also bring part of the bundle to the sick to touch them with it.

Since Slovenia's independence, there has been an extraordinary revived interest in making Easter bundles. Special workshops have been organized, and children in kindergarten are being taught the art.

In 1995, an association named Presmec* was founded in the village of Volčina in Prekmurje. In 2000, the 5th anniversary was celebrated by making the biggest bundle in the world. Of course it qualified for the Guinness World Records. While the usual bundle is 3-4 meters high, this record winner was 303.80 meters long. It took 125 people to bring it to the church. They wound it around the church walls three times using special stands. One year prior they made a 51-meter bundle. The lower part they put up with a car jack while the upper part they installed by helicopter.

This article shows clearly what bundles (butare) mean to modern Slovenes!

**Could not find a translation.*

A happy and blessed Easter to all!

Mary Lou Deyak Voelk, President
Slovenian Union of America

P.S. After finishing the article, I did a google search on butare. What came up? Appearing on the screen was the PDF issue of the March/April 2004 Edition of *Zarja* to download! AMAZING! The entire article by Damjan J. Ovsec can be read in this issue.

<https://docplayer.net/95005936-A-slovenian-easter-official-publication-slovenian-w-omen-s-union-o-f-america-uradno-glasilo-slovenske-zenske-zveze-v-ameriki-i.html>

In this same issue, President Bonnie Prokup writes of the beautiful gardens of the past; her favorite was the garden of her grandmother's friend. "I loved when Grandma took me to visit – she always let me eat the raspberries." In this issue, *Zarja – the Dawn* was sponsoring a contest which involved sending in photos of your garden! Grand Prize winner, second, and third place winners. WOW! Here is another event for branches!!

Corporate Bylaws Vote by SUA's Member Representatives
REGIONAL PRESIDENTS and REGIONAL CONVENTIONS

After much discussion by the 2015-2019 and the 2019-2023 National Board Officers and during a discussion between the National Board Officers and Member Representatives during a presentation at the National Convention in Cleveland in 2019, a difficult decision was made to remove the requirement in SUA's Corporate Bylaws to have Regional Presidents and Regional Conventions. After following the required procedure of a time period between member notification in the *Zarja* and a vote, during the November 7, 2020, teleconference with the National Board and Member Representatives, the Member Representatives voted to remove ARTICLE VIII, SECTIONS 8.1 through 8.6, Regional Presidents & Regional Conventions, in its entirety. The vote was 16 in favor and 1 against. The amended Corporate Bylaws are available on SUA's website – slovenianunion.org.

Bylaws Chairperson, Denise P. Bartlett

Membership Monday – What's Cooking?

"Membership Monday – What's Cooking?" now features a photo and recipe of a Slovenian dish every Monday at 2pm EST on SUA's Facebook page.

Come see if it's something you grew up eating or still eat!



Like, comment, and post your own photos (or send photos to SUA's Facebook Editor, Mary Glaize, via Facebook Messenger). Most importantly, tag others in your branch and prospective members, too. If you are not on Facebook, you can still help the SUA out by telling others about it. To date we've seen the following Slovenian dishes: pasta with breadcrumbs and butter (lots of commentary about different names and ways to prepare this dish), zlinkrofi, and pisana kruh (Poor Man's Potica).

Spring 2021



Please contribute to this effort by emailing Mary a photo of a cooked or baked item and the recipe. (Photos/recipes may also be used in *Zarja - The Dawn* and on the website.)

Please include your name, branch number, and city or town. Here is Mary's email: tankandfrog1@yahoo.com.

New Members

Welcome - Dobrodošli

- Pentek, Bernard J., 001
Leskovec, Becky, 002
Polutnik, Stephen, 002
Shircel, Mark, 002
Stockhausen, Cheri, 002
Warner, Monica, 002
Brantley, Peggy, 003
Raio, Abby, 003
Sabo, Celine, 003
Velikan, Jennifer, 005
Humphrey, Gabriella, 020
Oetter, Brigitte, 020
Schnyder, Melissa, 020
Gergovich, James, 024
Yaklich, Gary, 024
Ambrozich, Cynthia, 030
Bailey, Rose Mary, 030
Bengtson, George, 030
Boblenz, Lori, 030
Borga, Brandon Derek, 030
Brsan, John, 030
Bushar, Bryan, 030
Crockett, Victoria, 030
Gorensek-Benitez, Annelise, 030
Horzen, Anna H., 030
Kalkas, Hoce, 030
Keiser, Joseph, 030
Kinkela, Cecilia, 030
Kinkela-Strom, Cecilia, 030
Lebert, Rose Marie, 030
Morgan, Lauren, 030
Pakiz, Mike, 030
- Pakiz, Troy, 030
Rezin, William, 030
Romero, Julie, 030
Sikora, Barbara, 030
Sustaric Marychild, Denise, 030
Terselich, Dunia, 030
Alan, Lynn, 043
Bosker, Bianca, 093
Klett, Katarina, 093
Kuret Parsons, Kristen, 093
Lencek-Inagaki, Katrina, 093
Manna, Deena, 099
Arko, Roger, 100
Cimperman, Annie, 100
Cimperman, Emmie, 100
Lusin Ames, Jacqueline, 100
McClure, Susan, 100
Miller, Maren, 100
Miller, Nathaniel, 100
Moreno, Alison, 100
Wager, Rose, 100
White, Betty A., 100
Pakiz, Todd, 102
Stibbe, Jo Ann, 102
Prus, Karen, 108
Dillon, Patricia, 109
Krall, Daniel, 109
Skorjanec, Mary, 109
Avellana, Megan, 111
Herman, Rachel, 111
Kubinski, Laura, 111
Kuhel, Barbara Lee, 111
Kusold-Matheou, Nicole, 111
Mavrigh, Ellen, 111
Modic Urban, Denise, 111
Zitko, Ann, 111

Thank you to all who participated in our L'BRI products fundraiser. All proceeds will benefit our National Convention to be held in Pueblo, Colorado, June 15-18, 2023. Our convention host is SUA Branch 3.

George Plautz, Jr., who recently passed away, generously donated the items for this fundraiser. We are thankful for his generosity and passion for Slovenian Union of America.

My brother, Bill, selected the winning entry. CONGRATULATIONS to Mary Glaize, of Orlando, Florida! Again, thank you to all who participated.

Debbie Duris



Zarja - The Dawn

The Slovenian Women Union Scholarship Foundation

The Slovenian Women Union Scholarship Foundation (SWUSF) is pleased to announce that \$20,500 was disbursed to 17 approved recipients for school year 2020-2021. Four of the applicants were awarded a \$2,000 grants in memory of the late Jean Kurilich. Four additional \$1,000 grants were made possible through the generosity of the late Josef and Rose Marie Pirc. The estate of the late Anthony Colnar also provided a \$1,000 grant. This grant was dedicated for an applicant involved in community service and pursuing a degree in engineering.

SWUSF also provided the first \$1,000 SWUSF Turvey-Church Scholarship, named in honor of past officers of SWUSF, Mary Turvey and Marge Church, for an

individual pursuing excellence in academic studies and involvement in a Slovenian-American community. SWUSF was most fortunate to have received a grant from SNPJ #53 V Boj to provide one \$1,000 SWUSF grant for an individual involved in Slovenian communities in the USA. Once again, the Frances and Jane S. Lausche Foundation provided a grant for \$2,000 toward two approved individuals engaged in post-graduate studies and mirroring the values of the late US Senator Frank J. Lausche, state of Ohio. Four general scholarships were also provided for school year 2020-2021 and made possible by various donors including the Tucker Family (CO).

For school year 2021-2022, aspiring applicants of the SWUSF program must be attending an accredited college, university, or technical institution in the USA as a full-time student in good standing. Each approved applicant must be of Slovenian descent, an American citizen, a current member of the Slovenian Union of America, and committed to performing community service hours. Applications are provided once each calendar year, normally around Palm Sunday. Grants/scholarships are generally awarded either on a one- or two-time basis, based on available funding.

We thank the many generous donors to SWUSF.

Applications for school year 2021-2022 will be available as of March 28, 2021, and until April 17, 2021.

To receive an application and scholarship requirements for the 2021-2022 school year, please send a request in writing here:

SWUSF, Application, Attention: S. Kuhar, c/o 6019 Lausche Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44103

All applications and requested documentation must be returned no later than April 26, 2021 (postmark date). You may contact Mr. Kuhar at 216.361.1444 during normal business hours Monday through Friday, but not prior to March 7, 2021 for additional information.

A great gift for a friend or loved one is *The Slovenian-American Table* cookbook!

Shipping Information:

Name: _____

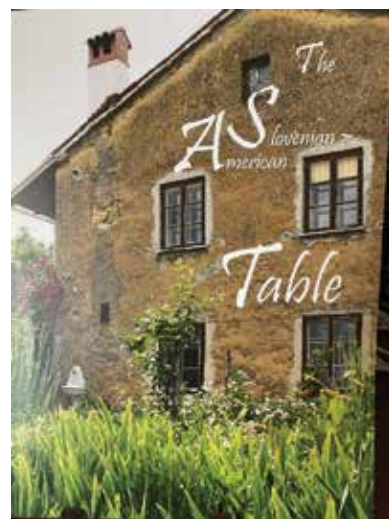
Street: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

\$30 each includes domestic shipping and handling.

Mail checks here: Slovenian Union of America
ATTN: Cookbooks, 431 N Chicago Street, Joliet, IL 60432-1703



Donations

Thank you! - Hvala lepa!

\$1,000 Donation

ANONYMOUS, 093, Educational Grant

\$295 Donation

Phyllis, Dan, Mark, & Phillip Seidl, Mary Chichelly,
& Ann Diers, +Joan Lesnik

\$270 Donation

Joann Wess, 089, Educational Grant
+John & Anne Bukovic

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\$101.72 Donation

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Frances, Martin, Edward & Theodore
Beatrice Holmes, 020,
+Frances & William Papesh; Barbara Wilhelmi
Carleen Ozanich, 109, +Jennie Ozanich
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Debbie Pohar, 024, Zarja (#GivingTuesday)
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Luke Sever, & Mark Squire Sever
Gary L. Sever, 108, +Luke Sever
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Renata Weber, 093, +Ivana Zele Slavec
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Holy Trinity Bells Relocated

After six years of work, countless meetings, and fundraising efforts, the journey to move the historic bells from the former parish of Holy Trinity in Indianapolis to St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg was completed on September 12, 2020. It was through the efforts of many individuals and with the cooperation of a few key organizations that this worthwhile endeavor was made possible. With a six-year pause in their ringing, the #3400 pounds of bells named the Holy Trinity, St. Aloysius, and St. Joseph are now able to ring once again in their second permanent home in Brownsburg.

Despite pandemic concerns, a sizeable crowd gathered at St. Malachy's on the evening of September 12 following the 5:30 p.m. Mass. Members of St. Malachy Parish were joined by members of the former Holy Trinity Parish, lodge officers, KSKJ members, Slovenian Union members, and the Knights of Columbus. Deacon John Vidmar from the Slovenian Catholic Center in Lemont made the trip to Brownsburg for this special and historic occasion.

At the time of the closure of Holy Trinity in November of 2014, St. Aloysius #52 KSKJ lodge officers stepped up and petitioned the archdiocese to transfer the ownership of several items from the parish to the lodge. These items were of historic and sentimental value for the Slovenian community here. The three bells from Holy Trinity were on the list. For nearly a year, the lodge officers awaited an answer regarding the requests, and finally the affirmative response was received. The work then began in earnest to find a new permanent home, a suitable place where the faithful would be called to prayer by the ringing of the bells. Father Vince Lampert, a son of Holy Trinity, was stationed at St. Malachy at the time. With one non-operational bell and a growing and thriving parish, St. Malachy would benefit greatly with the gift from St. Al's. With a nod from Father Vince, efforts were underway. It was a win-win scenario, one that was good for both the Slovenian community and St. Malachy Parish.

In March of 2018 and following approvals and engineering, the Holy Trinity bells were removed from the steeple at the former church. The bells were then trucked to Cincinnati, Ohio where the Verdin Co. restored the bells along with much of the original hardware. For the next two years, a plan was decided upon for a new tower, and fundraising proceeded to complete the funding for the project. Eventually, with permits and plans completed, the work began this year on the foundation. The tower and bells were trucked back to Indiana and the newly-fabricated tower was positioned into place on July 27, 2020. Below the tower, a marble medallion representing the Holy Trinity will be a constant reminder of the origins and history of the bells. A memorial paver hardscape surrounds the base and provided an opportunity for parishioners and well-wishers to help fund the project and memorialize loved ones.

At the blessing and dedication ceremony, Mr. Paul Barbarich, as a member of the committee at St. Malachy and former lodge officer with St. Al's, prepared opening remarks and spoke to the assembled crowd about the history of the bells and the events that led up to the dedication ceremony. Father Sean Danda, pastor of St. Malachy, blessed the tower, and his words were followed by a blessing in Slovenian offered by our friend and supporter, Deacon John Vidmar from the Slovenian Catholic Center in Lemont. The Slovenian choir was reassembled for the occasion, completing the ceremony with a Slovenian hymn. Following the fanfare, guests were invited to enjoy some pandemic to-go boxes featuring Slovenian potica and klobase. A new life for the 113 year old bells of Holy Trinity has now begun!

Zarja - The Dawn





Slovenian Union of America
“April’s Showers of Dollars” Drawing
April 2021 Fundraiser



The monies received will benefit the SUA National Convention in June 2023. Here is how the fundraiser works: Each day in the month of April 2021, one (1) winner will be chosen to win the cash prize for that day - \$65 or \$175. In addition, the person who sold that day’s winning ticket will win \$10. The daily winner and the seller can be the same person and win both prizes.

This year an additional high prize date has been added. The winner chosen on each Sunday in April will win \$175 each. In addition, the top sellers (1st, 2nd, and 3rd places) will win \$150, \$100, and \$50 respectively. A minimum of 300 entries must be sold. This is a WINNING opportunity for everyone!

Good Luck!

Top Seller Prizes

1st Place:
\$150

2nd Place:
\$100

3rd Place:
\$50

April 2021						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 \$65 Prize	2 \$65 Prize	3 \$65 Prize
4 \$175 Prize	5 \$65 Prize	6 \$65 Prize	7 \$65 Prize	8 \$65 Prize	9 \$65 Prize	10 \$65 Prize
11 \$175 Prize	12 \$65 Prize	13 \$65 Prize	14 \$65 Prize	15 \$65 Prize	16 \$65 Prize	17 \$65 Prize
18 \$175 Prize	19 \$65 Prize	20 \$65 Prize	21 \$65 Prize	22 \$65 Prize	23 \$65 Prize	24 \$65 Prize
25 \$175 Prize	26 \$65 Prize	27 \$65 Prize	28 \$65 Prize	29 \$65 Prize	30 \$65 Prize	

\$10.00
per
entry

Cash prizes
totaling
\$2,990

Your “April’s Showers of Dollars” entry will be eligible for all daily drawings in the month of April 2021. Sellers of the winning entries will receive \$10 as an award for their selling efforts. The daily drawing amount and the seller’s \$10 prize will be mailed to the winners of record. A complete list of winners will appear in a future issue of *Zarja - The Dawn*.

If you have any questions, please contact Debbie Duris at (330) 467-2281 or dcduris@gmail.com.

Thank you for your support!

No. of Entries: _____ **Entry Form (Copies Accepted)**
 Check Enclosed for: _____ **PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

Entrant’s Information:
 Name: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
 Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Seller’s Information:
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Please complete form and mail with your check in the amount of \$10 per entry, payable to SUA.
 Send to: Debbie Duris • 9167 Briarwood Road • Macedonia, OH 44056 • (330) 467-2281

WE'RE CRAZY ABOUT *Potica!!!*



Michele Quinn Branch 93 – Bloomfield, CT

Ever since I was a young girl, my grandmother would make potica for Christmas and Easter. I was her helper and now in her memory make potica using her recipe to share with my Slovenian family.

I remember foremost the dining room table being covered with thinly rolled dough. My grandmother would say "Pick up the dough and put your hand behind it. If you cannot see your hand through the dough, then it is not thin enough!"

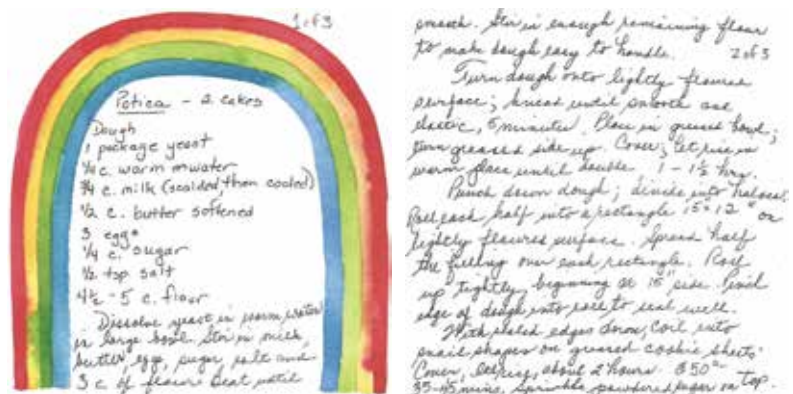
Another rule from Grandma Albina was that only golden raisins, never brown, could be used. "Just throw the potica out if the raisins are not golden! And make certain that the walnuts are chopped very finely."

Once the dough was sufficiently thin, we would spread the mixture of nuts, honey, and golden raisins all over the dough. It smelled good even before baking. Then my grandmother rolled and rolled and rolled up the mixture laden dough and placed the potica in a round baking pan with a hole in the middle. Then she would say that we needed to wait while the potica "rested" (rose).

There was always a little potica for me, her sous chef. After about twenty minutes of baking, the house began to smell wonderful. There are no words to describe the warm, sweet, happy aroma of a baking potica.

After Grandma Albina took the potica out of the oven, she let the loaves cool. Then she performed the test-cut to see if there were a million layers in her potica! Whoopee yes! And now we can eat!

Now my grandma has been gone a long time, and I fill my own house every Christmas with the marvelous smell of potica. I close my eyes, and I am a little girl again baking with my Slovenian grandma.





Grandma was a baker, and when she made potica she didn't use a recipe. Around the holidays, she baked poticas for the whole family. One day, my cousin Charlene decided she would sit and watch Grandma bake a potica and take down the recipe as Grandma worked her magic. Ever the eager student, Charlene sat, pen poised and at the ready. But when Grandma baked she didn't use measuring cups either. She would throw flour into the bowl in handfuls. She baked by feel. "Wait, how much was that?!" exclaimed Charlene. "I don't know, a handful. The dough should feel like this," replied Grandma. Needless to say, Charlene walked away frustrated and recipe-less. Several years later, my mom went on a quest to find a recipe that came close. After much trial and error, she happened upon this one, and it's been in the family now for decades, a staple at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. Mom passed away, but fortunately the recipe didn't go with her. My sister, Carol, and I carry on the tradition. We didn't inherit Grandma's baking skills, but we sure inherited her love for making potica for the family. To this day, when I make a potica I feel more than a little nostalgic. I get sentimental thinking of Grandma, Mom, Dad, Grandpa, my brother, aunts, uncles, and cousins who are no longer with us. Somehow, making a potica brings them back for just a little while. I can feel Mom and Grandma looking over my shoulder as I roll out the dough. Potica makes my tummy and my heart feel full.

Dough:

1 c. butter	2½ c. flour
½ c. milk	¼ tsp. salt
2 pkg. dry yeast	2 Tbs. sugar
¼ c. lukewarm water	3 egg yolks, save whites for filling

Melt and cool butter and milk. Separately, mix yeast and lukewarm water and set aside. Mix flour, salt, and sugar together in a large bowl. Stir egg yolks into the cooled (enough so eggs won't cook) milk mixture, and add to flour mixture, beating slowly. If possible, use dough hooks on your electric mixture; this dough is very sticky. Add yeast mixture, and beat well. Cover and refrigerate overnight or at least 3 hours so that the dough can rise.

Filling:

3-3½ c. ground walnuts	½ to ¾ c. milk
3 Tbs. sugar	3 egg whites, stiffly beaten
1½ tsp. cinnamon	½ c. sugar
1 tsp. vanilla	½-¾ c. golden raisins, soaked in brandy (optional, but encouraged)

If you do not have a grinder, such as a meat grinder, walnuts can be finely ground in a food processor; however,

this will yield a slightly different texture. In a large saucepan, mix nuts, 3 Tbs. sugar, cinnamon, vanilla, and milk to a paste over low heat. Add milk as needed to make a soft paste. Cool. Beat egg whites until stiff, and gradually add ½ c. sugar. Fold the egg whites into the paste, and mix until blended. This will be spread on your rolled-out dough.

Rolling:

Take dough out of the refrigerator one hour before rolling to bring to room temp. On a well-floured cloth, roll out ½ the dough into a 20-inch square. Spread ½ the filling over the dough, then sprinkle with ½ the raisins. Begin rolling from one side as for a jelly roll; place seam side down in a greased and floured angel food cake pan. Repeat with remaining dough and filling. Place a small amount of filling between the two rolls in the pan; place ends of rolls in opposite positions. Brush with 1 egg yolk diluted with milk. Bake one hour to 65 minutes at 350°. Cool in the pan for 15 minutes. Remove from the pan, and cool on a wire rack.

This recipe allows for a lot of wiggle room. If you like something more bready, use fewer walnuts. If you like something denser, use more.

Sonja Vertacnik-Perkins Branch 30 - Sarasota, FL

Moja Potica

Flour slowly drifting through the metal mesh of the sieve purchased at a Ljubljana market brings my staramama (grandmother) and staratek (grandfather) to mind because this market and comparable ones were places I'd visit with them. Looking through the sieve I envision generations standing behind these two strong individuals in my life and family. A grist mill turns to create the flour sold to nourish family members. As I knead the dough, I am reminded of the strength of my Slovenian heritage and the strength possessed by my mother who moved to an unknown country – the United States of America – not knowing the language, the culture, or the people. I marvel at the strength she passed on to my sister and me as first-generation Americans. This strength too, I hope, is evident in my daily life and in decisions I choose to make for my own children to observe and incorporate into who they are and will become. As the dough rises, I am reminded of how my family has grown, changed, and evolved over time. While this happens, I prepare the filling with ingredients that represent new family members combining to represent a family – a culture and one in which there may be slight variations but yet still contains the rich, natural, nurturing ingredients, and one filled with hope and love. The most challenging step of making potica for me is moving it into the pan – the future. Regardless of this challenge, this holiday tradition moves us forward with the taste of perfection.



Potica recipe (edited) from the Slovenian Recipes by Progressive Slovene Women of America book (contributed by Sonja Vertacnik – Perkins)

Basic Potica Dough

½ cup warm milk
1 tablespoon sugar
2 cakes yeast
(2 packages of active dry yeast)
*Dissolve yeast in warm milk.
Add sugar and let stand in warm place until foamy.*
6 cups sifted flour
1 teaspoon salt
4½ tablespoons sugar
¼ pound of butter (1 stick)
3 beaten eggs
1 cup sour cream
(room temperature)

Place flour in large bowl, and add salt, sugar, soft butter, beaten eggs, and sour cream. Add yeast mixture, and mix well. Knead until dough is pliant which is about 10 minutes. Divide dough into three parts. Grease each ball, and place in separate greased bowls. Cover with wax paper and cloth, and set aside to rise in a warm place for ½ hour.

Nut Filling

1½ lbs. ground walnuts
1 cup sweet cream
3 egg yolks
½ stick sweet butter
3 egg whites, beaten stiff
⅓ cup honey
1 cup white raisins
(optional)
1 tablespoon orange rind
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 tablespoon brandy
1 tablespoon lemon rind
1½ cups sugar



Scald cream, and pour over walnuts. Add butter, and let it melt in hot mixture. Add honey and sugar, and mix. Add lemon rind, orange rind, vanilla, brandy, and slightly beaten egg yolks. Mix again. Add 1 tablespoon sugar to egg whites, and beat until stiff. Fold egg whites into nut mixture, and set aside. Roll out dough on lightly floured cloth to ¼ inch thickness. Spread the nut mixture over the rolled dough leaving about 4 inches of dough at one end without filling. This is done to make a better top crust. Sprinkle the raisins over the spread mixture, and add a dash of cinnamon and handful of sugar over the spread mixtures. Roll as a jelly roll starting with the end that has the filling. Seal the ends with a saucer dipped in flour. Place in well-greased loaf pan with wax paper on ends of pan. Prick the dough with a toothpick. Cover the wax paper and a cloth, and set aside to rise in a warm place for 45 minutes. Brush top with egg whites to which you have added just a little water. Bake in 350 degrees oven for 30 minutes. Lower heat to 325 degrees and bake for another 30 minutes. When baked, leave the poticas in the pans for 15 minutes. Remove from pans, and place on a rack to cool.

The recipe makes three poticas.

Zarja - The Dawn

Kathi A. Furdeck-Fitzgerald Branch 20 - Joliet, IL

My potica is very special to me and my family especially at Christmas and Eastertime. The best memory is learning to make potica and the thin apple strudel dough in my grandma's kitchen on Landau Avenue in Joliet, Illinois. I was just out of high school, and my Dad took me for our Saturday visit. My grandma, Katrina Furdeck-Hucek, had just begun her baking for a Sunday gathering of her large family. She was a short little lady, and her hair was tied back in a long braid; she was wearing a print apron that covered her upper chest as she placed it over her head, then smiled and said my name, "Katarina Anna," for Kathy. She spoke only Slovak since she was born in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia and immigrated with her husband, Josef, from Austria in 1922. She had gathered her large bowl and had the walnuts ready to apply to her rolled yeast dough. She gently placed it on a cookie sheet. Then she pointed to the flour, yeast, and sugar, and we mixed the ingredients together. The three rolls of potica were baked in her old, mint green metal gas oven and then placed in her closet porch for Sunday.



I remember so well the Christmas and gathering times around her big dining room table where the sisters-in-law talked and the grandchildren played while the men stayed around the old kitchen table drinking pivo or beer and speaking in Slovak. The hulobki or cabbage rolls and the mushroom and sauerkraut supra were in the kettle, and there was the large tray of potica we had made together the day before. Other Slovak words I remember are "spots" (spát) for sleep, "clean" (cleba) for bread, and "visa" (vejce) for eggs and what sounded like "esta doma spots" or "go home and go to sleep." I did stay with her for one summer while my father was ill and mom had to be at St. Joseph Hospital in Joliet.



Such nice childhood memories. She had been a widow for many years and never spoke English. Her boys took care of her always. She was a parishioner at Sts. Cyril and Methodist Church and helped bake and cook in the church kitchen for many a Slovak wedding and funeral.

Slovak Christmas customs were very much followed. In the corner was straw and a blanket for the Christ Child to lay upon and the white bread like wafers and honey on the tray. Christmas Eve "Stedry Vecer" means "Bountiful Evening." It is a day liberal in God's grace, love, gifts, benevolence, and sympathy, and rich in charm and mystery, according to Cleveland Institute adapted from Joseph.

Finally, on my wedding day in 1977, we stopped by her house, and I gave her a white rose from my bridal bouquet. She really smiled but was really impressed with my long, white, and lacy wedding dress. Thank goodness my Aunt Betty was there to tell her of my happy day which she was unable to attend due to health reasons. Goodbye and so long, dear Grandma Hucek. Your blessed memories live on with me and my family.



Beverly Boyance Marinello Branch 43 - Milwaukee, WI

I am 100% Slovenian; my grandparents were all born in Slovenia. When I was little, my family belonged to KSKJ, and much of our social life consisted of attending Slovenian events. I learned to polka at a young age. I first started baking potica in 1976, thanks to my mom, Christine Boyance. We used Pauline Rupar's recipe that was published in the March 1975 Edition of Zarja. Pauline was a very active member of the Branch 1 - Sheboygan, WI.

Although I watched my mom and my grandmother, Angelina Pepan, make potica many times, I had never worked with yeast before. My grandma was one of the best bakers in Milwaukee, making all varieties of strudel as well as flancati and krofi. I definitely knew what kneading meant, but I struggled with the size of the dough. My mom suggested rolling half at a time and making 8 small loaves. Success!

It is with pure joy that I bake potica. I think of my mom and my grandmother and the wonderful cooks and bakers that they were and what they taught me. I listen to Nasa Pesmi, a CD of Slovenian songs sung by the Uspech Slovenian Chorus of which my mom was a member for many years. I now sing with a very small group of singers from that group.

I make potica for Christmas and Easter and share it with family and friends with enough left for the holiday meal, and I also make it throughout the year so that I have a stash in the freezer. And I always say when I taste the first bite, "This is the best ever!"

Pauline Rupar's potica recipe was published in the March 1975 Edition of "Zarja - The Dawn". Yield: 4 loaves 12 inches long or 8 shorter loaves (*I cut the dough in half, roll out half at a time, and get 8 7-inch loaves)

Yeast Mixture:

1½ ounces yeast ¼ cup lukewarm milk
1½ teaspoons sugar ¼ cup flour

Dissolve yeast in lukewarm milk; add sugar and flour and mix well; set aside to rise.

Dough Mixture:

1 cup milk ¾ cup sugar
2 teaspoons salt ½ cup butter
3 beaten eggs 5-6 cups flour

Scald milk; add sugar, salt, and butter. Set aside to cool.

Add yeast mixture to milk mixture. Add beaten eggs and then flour beginning with 5 cups, adding a sifter full at a



time, beating well after each addition. Keep adding flour until dough may be handled without sticking. Knead dough on floured board for about 20 minutes.

Place dough in well-buttered bowl, cover, and let rise in a warm place for about 2 hours until double in bulk. (Do not knead again after it has risen.)

Filling Mixture:

½ cup butter
½ cup honey
2 cups sugar (less if desired)
1-pint milk (I use ½ and ½)
2 pounds finely ground walnuts
3 egg yolks (beaten)
3 egg whites (stiffly beaten)
(Bev's addition: 1 box golden raisins plumped in white wine and let to sit overnight, then drained well)
Cinnamon
Rind of 1 lemon

Melt butter. Add honey, sugar, and milk. Bring to a rolling boil. Pour mixture over ground walnuts. Add beaten egg yolks, and lemon rind. Fold in stiffly beaten egg whites after mixture has cooled.

**(I cut the dough in half and roll out half at a time; proceed with the rest of the directions as if rolling out all of the dough.) Spread dough on table covered with cloth and sprinkled with flour. Start rolling dough with rolling pin then pull it thin to about 1/8-inch thickness. Spread with filling to edge of dough. Sprinkle the spread dough and filling with cinnamon and well-drained raisins.*

The potica is rolled up like a jelly roll, starting the first inch by hand. After picking up the nearest end of the cloth on which the filling and dough are spread, Pauline raises

the cloth gently so that the dough rolls itself, over and over ever so easily. Use the edge of a plate for cutting the loaves, sealing the dough automatically so that the filling will not escape.

Put into well-greased pans. Cover and set in a warm place to rise until double in bulk. Brush the top with beaten egg or milk before placing in oven. Bake 1 hour at 325 degrees (50 minutes for smaller loaves). Tops of loaves may be frosted with a thin powdered sugar icing or just sprinkled with powdered sugar after baking.

Note: Pauline added: "After the article appeared in The Press, I received many calls from people who have never made potica, tried it, and had success with it – even men, believe it or not!"

Frances Kovatovich Branch 35 - Aurora, MN

My cousin Elizabeth was quite adept at making potica and was willing to share her expertise with a half dozen of her eager to learn co-workers.

Her "students" arrived at her Gilbert, Minnesota, home on a cold December day, all prepared for a hands-on demonstration where participants were going to follow Elizabeth's instructions to make their own delicacy right along with the instructor.

Elizabeth's kitchen was drafty. After hours of waiting and watching, the bakers were disheartened when none of the seven gobs of dough rose. Disappointingly, the ladies left with empty potica pans and deposited their sweet pastry masses in the garbage can in the entryway.

The next morning, when Elizabeth was going to take out the trash, the garbage can was so heavy that she had to summon help. The dough had risen overnight in the warmth of the dumpster!

Pamela Capin

There are so many memories... Going to the Slovenski Dom in Chisholm, Minnesota, with friends for a potica class, and my friend's 80-plus-year-old mother looking at a flight of stairs wondering if she could make it up there. No elevator. My friend went in front of her, and I went behind her in case she fell. Her Mom made it up the whole flight so fast I couldn't keep up with her! When I finally got to the top, I was winded; Mom was not.

The next year, with potica class still in my memory, I put the dough in a warm oven to rise with extra clean dish towels over the bowls just like my Mom did. The oven was a little cool, so I turned it on for a minute to warm it, got busy and forgot, and the hot oven element started the towels on fire. Smoked dough would be right in fashion now.

Elvis, the Golden Retriever puppy nephew, came to my house for a visit while my sister and I made potica. He

was quite interested in the whole process. While we were pulling the dough, we saw there was movement under the table. Elvis was down there eating any of the dough that was hanging off the edge of the table. He was just doing a little cleanup. Why he didn't get sick is beyond me.

After years of searching I finally found fresh yeast in cake form, then added it to the dough just like the teacher did in potica class. No pre-measured dry yeast for me! I was so excited to try it, but my sister was a bit skeptical. We put the dough in the oven to rise while we ground the walnuts and checked it after an hour. To my horror, the dough had risen up and over the bowl, then spilled all over the oven! It was a mess. Lucy and Ethel make potica.

This makes me wonder why we go through this every year. Yet potica-making will go on as usual. Never give up!

Paul, Christine, Sophie & Sam Martincic Branch 99 - Lemont, IL

Potica has come to represent one of the traditions of that oh-so-special of holidays and holy days, Christmas.

I was fortunate enough to have married a wonderful woman who took an interest in our unique Slovenian heritage. As an American with roots dating back prior to the American Revolution, Christine is a testament to the welcoming nature that has been flourishing in this country for generations. She is the one who



has been baking potica in our family for the length of our marriage, soon to be twenty years.

My beautiful “Amerikanka” always bakes potica on Christmas Eve Day. On that day, we clear off the kitchen table, and she gets busy. It is an occasion that brings the whole family together; I bring out the mixer, and, along with my son, we grind the walnuts. My daughter is on hand to be my wife’s number-one assistant. She loves baking and will no doubt someday be making poticas of her own.

The mood in the house is festive with Christmas carols. While my wife loves the standards, I prefer the novelty tunes like “Grandma Got Run Over By a Reindeer.” Of course this song is only in fun, for if Grandma got run over by a reindeer, who would make the potica? It would truly be a tragedy..

The entire family is usually on hand at the official “unveiling.” At last! Now the wait is over, and we can finally cut into and sample what we hope is a masterpiece of baking goodness. Of course, like every artist, Christine is critical of her work. But as a recipient of such loving goodness, I do not lie when I say that her potica

always pleases our family.



Making potica requires work, diligence, concentration, and that rarest of commodities: time. I am glad that my wife is able to give this gift to our family. It is truly an expression of her love for us, and we truly appreciate it.

But why does it have to disappear so quickly??? The recipe she uses is from the Slovenian cookbook Pots & Pans, Potica Recipe #2. My wife adds a few personal touches to it.

Katie Gorton Branch 1 - Sheboygan, WI

Editor Note: Pictures of Katie and her grandmother, Marie Prisland, are on the front cover of this issue.

Pride Oneness Tradition Immigrants Cuisine Art of Cooking

In many ways I associate food from my childhood with warm feelings and good memories. I looked forward to coming to my grandmother Marie Prisland's or to my mother Hermine Dicke's dining room table for a delicious dinner. Sharing a meal on Lenox dishes with Waterford crystal beautifully arranged on an ironed, embroidered tablecloth was special. There, next to the centerpiece of fresh flowers and lit candles, was the hand-painted Slovenian platter of freshly baked potica made with love. Whenever I make potica, this memory comes to life and holds personal value for me. I hope to enjoy and share this Slovenian culinary delight of my heritage with my family and friends for years to come.



POTICAS 29

REFRIGERATED DOUGH POTICA (Potica iz zmrzlega testa)

Because the potica can be prepared in two stages, this is a popular recipe

Night before:

Yeast:

2 ounces compressed yeast or 3 packages dry yeast	2 tablespoons sugar
3/4 cup warm milk	2 tablespoons flour

In small bowl, crumble yeast into warm milk; add sugar and flour; mix and let stand to rise, about 10 minutes.

Dough:

7 cups sifted all-purpose flour	3/4 cup butter (1 1/2 sticks), room temperature
1 tablespoon salt	1 cup warm milk
1/2 cup sugar	5 egg yolks, beaten
Grated rind of one lemon	1 teaspoon vanilla

In large bowl, combine 6 cups flour, salt, sugar and lemon rind; reserve remainder of flour. With fingers, work softened butter into flour mixture, until all butter is absorbed. Make a well in center; add milk, egg yolks, vanilla and prepared yeast. With wooden spoon, stir until well mixed. On floured surface, knead until smooth and elastic, about 15 minutes, adding just enough of reserved flour so that dough can be handled without sticking. Place in greased bowl; turn to grease top. Cover tightly and refrigerate overnight (some cooks use 5-quart Tupperware bowl with lid). Also refrigerate egg whites.

Raisins:

1 cup raisins	1 ounce rum (2 tablespoons)
2 cups boiling water	

Pour boiling water over raisins; let stand about 10 minutes to plump. Drain and dry on paper towels. Add rum to raisins; let stand (covered) overnight.

NEXT DAY:

Remove dough and egg whites from refrigerator. Dough may be rolled out immediately or allowed to stand at room temperature for about 1 hour (more pliable). Prepare pans and filling before starting to roll the dough. Grease well, three 12x4-inch loaf pans or four 9x5-inch bread pans.

POTICAS 31

Walnut Filling:

1 pound walnuts, finely ground	1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 cup milk or cream	1/2 cup sour cream
1/2 cup butter (1 stick)	5 egg whites, room temperature
1/2 cup honey	1 1/2 cups sugar (add in two stages)

With food chopper, grind nuts, using finest cutting blade; set aside. Heat milk; add butter and honey and stir until butter melts. Pour hot mixture over the walnuts. Stir in cinnamon and sour cream. In separate bowl, beat the egg whites until foamy; then gradually beat in 1 cup sugar (1 tablespoon at a time) beating well after each addition. Beat until stiff. Fold into walnut mixture.

Rolling:

On a table covered with a well-floured cloth (floured table may also be used), place dough in center. With rolling pin, start rolling dough from center outward, turning dough over occasionally at first; re-flouring cloth or table, if necessary. Roll dough into a large rectangle, about 26x40 inches. Spread filling over entire dough. Sprinkle with rum-soaked raisins and then the remaining 1/2 cup sugar.

For smaller potica slices: Make a double roll by rolling up wider side to the middle (with fingers, start to roll first inch or two quite tightly; continue rolling with hands, stretching back slightly with each turn, for a tighter roll). Repeat with other half, beginning at opposite side and roll to center. You now have a double roll. To avoid air pockets, with a fine knitting needle or cake tester, pierce dough half way through, every 2 or 3 inches.

For larger potica slices: roll dough by hand continually from one wider end to the other; pierce dough midway and again at end of rolling.

Line greased pans along roll. With the edge of a flat plate (rather than a knife) cut desired lengths. Pinch ends of dough together to seal in filling. Place dough in pans, cover with a cloth and let rise in warm place for about 1 1/2 to 2 hours until double in bulk.

Baking:

Before baking in preheated 325° oven, brush tops with a beaten egg for a shiny crust. Bake for 1 hour and 10 minutes. Cool in pans about 15 minutes before removing.

To serve double-rolled potica: break or cut lengthwise through middle before slicing.

Additions:

1. Potica may be prepared after 6 hours of refrigeration.
2. Potica loaves freeze well. Best to use in 6 months.

*Marie Prisland, Sheboygan, Wis.
(revised June 22, 1976.)*

Mary Lee St. John - Bradenton, FL

My grandmother, Teresa Jarc Bozick, made this recipe at Easter and Christmas. She was born in Mirna Pec, Slovenia on October 12, 1874. She was 20 when she came to America with her sister. She worked as a maid in New York for two years to make enough money to take a train to a mining area in southeast Kansas. She met and married my grandfather, Frank Bozic(k) (who was from Croatia), in Frontenac, Kansas, on September 19, 1897. They had six children. My grandfather died during the Spanish Flu in 1918. Three of Teresa's sisters settled in Aspen and Pueblo, Colorado, and married a Skiff, an Okechich, and a Kastelic.



My grandmother made the best potica in the area. People would rave about it and ask her for the recipe. As with early settlers, no one had a written recipe. They knew it from memory. My grandmother could not read or write English. She was a wonderful person, kind and generous throughout her life. She was 93 when she died.

POTICA

1 c. oleo or butter (½ of each is good)
¾ c. milk
2 packs of dry yeast
¼ c. lukewarm water
3 c. flour (sifted) (sometimes I add a bit more)
¼ t. salt
4 Tbsp. sugar
3 egg yolks

DOUGH

Heat milk (make it lukewarm) and stir in oleo or butter. Cool and then add 3 egg yolks. Mix in 2 packs of yeast in the ¼ cup of lukewarm water.

Sift flour, salt, and sugar. Add heated milk mixture to this. Cool. Add this to flour plus yeast. Stir. Beat well and refrigerate overnight. Dough should be sticky.

FILLING

2 c. ground nuts
½ c. chopped dates, finely chopped
¼ c. brown sugar
add a little honey and vanilla
1 tsp. cinnamon
¼ c. milk
3 egg whites, beaten stiff
1 c. sugar

Mix to a paste (dates, nuts, brown sugar, cinnamon, honey, and vanilla. Add warm milk. Beat egg whites in 1 cup sugar, and add to above mixture slowly.

Roll ½ dough into 20-inch square on a well-floured cloth. Spread ½ filling overall then roll as for a jelly roll. Put in a well-greased bread pan. Roll other ½ same way. (Be sure to go to the edge with the filling.) Let rise 1 hour. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour.

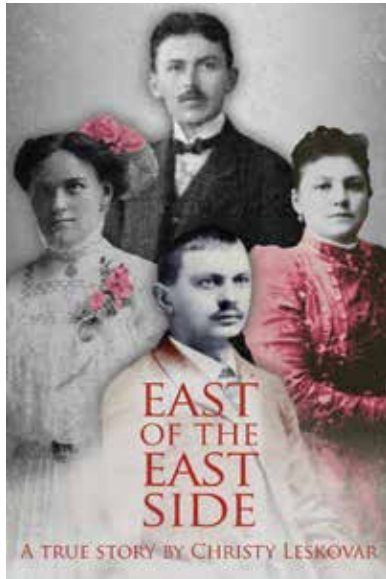
Editor's Note:

Sometimes we have heard a few SUA members ask why everything Slovenian seems to include potica and why we focus on potica and print so many recipes. In reading these memories from a variety of SUA members, we realized that potica is deeply ingrained in our sense of heritage. Sharing potica recipes is not something that ever gets old because these recipes, and the memories of family, heritage, and values that the baking of potica celebrates, are at the core of what it means to share our Slovenian heritage.

Join Us Today  WE *slovenian* OUR MEMBERS
<https://slovenianunion.org>

East of the East Side Press Release

January 11, 2021



Christy Leskovar, SUA Branch 30

High Plains Book Award finalist
<http://www.christyleskovar.com>

Author of *East of the East Side*, ISBN 978-1-59152-285-0

One Night in a Bad Inn, ISBN 978-1-7345645-0-1

Finding the Bad Inn: Discovering My Family's Hidden Past, ISBN 978-1-57510-150-7

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A Slovenian peasant boy, an Austrian musician in Paris, a war refugee, and the Edsel dealer in Butte, Montana - what could they possibly have in common? They were all the same man, Tony Leskovar, one of the protagonists in the much anticipated third book by Christy Leskovar, *East of the East Side*.

“When my grandfather Tony Leskovar began his music career at the dawn of the 20th century, concert musicians in Austria were treated like movie stars of today,” said Leskovar. “They were idolized. The flags were lowered to half mast in Vienna when an opera star died. And then to be performing with the opera in Paris in 1914 - Tony was definitely at the top of his game. It had to be a heady existence for him. It all went to pieces when the First World War started.”

Another part of *East of the East Side* involves the baron and a maid and a baby named Karolina, the author’s great-grandmother. That part of the book is Downton Abbey-esque but in Vienna and about real people. The story goes on to Joe Lozar who escaped dirt-poor poverty in the Duchy of Carniola in the southern reaches of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (now Slovenia). He did what so many others did in his situation in the 19th century – he came to America. These three lives converged in East Helena, Montana. All was on the upswing until Joe became afflicted with gold fever and faced off against one of the most powerful men in the state.

Leskovar traveled to Slovenia and Vienna where she pored through archives and library holdings and visited the places in the book, and she spent a great deal of time at the Montana Historical Society, Butte Archives, World Museum of Mining, and courthouses digging through their records. “Some of the entries in the church books in Slovenia were written in Gothic German, which I don’t read,” she said. “Fortunately I met many helpful people there who did read Gothic and translated for me.”

Her Slovenian grandfather Tony Leskovar performed with the Butte Mines Band, and he was conductor of the symphony. As for that part, Leskovar said, “Shortly before I began my research someone stumbled across the band records in a building in Uptown Butte and gave them to the Butte Archives. Those were a treasure trove. The historical context helps to understand the people, what they went through, the decisions they made. Had I not come across Will Campbell, the editor of the paper in Helena, Montana, during the First World War, I might not have understood why some of the women in the story left. At least I think I know why. I describe what happened in the book. Each reader will draw his or her own conclusions. One thing I learned from talking with readers of my first book, though I wrote the book, and it’s nonfiction, once someone reads it, the story becomes theirs because each person brings his or her perspective to it.”

East of the East Side is also nonfiction. “Sticking to the facts is more of a challenge and much more time consuming but also more fun,” said Leskovar.

One of many historical gems that she unearthed was an account by the American ambassador in Paris when the First World War broke out. “That’s how I was able to describe what was happening to my grandfather, Tony Leskovar, when he unwittingly became an enemy alien.”

East of the East Side spans the late 19th to mid 20th centuries. The places include peasant farms in the Slovenian region of Austria, Imperial Vienna, 1914 Paris, Montana’s capital Helena, the smelter town of East Helena, the copper metropolis of Butte, the Slavic enclave of East Butte, the Flathead Indian Reservation, San Francisco, and the fertile desert of eastern Washington. “This is such an American story,” says Leskovar, “to go from Slovenian peasant farms to the Paris opera to the Flathead Indian Reservation with rugged smelter and mining towns in between. I found it fascinating.”

East of the East Side is available in print, e-book, and soon a digital audiobook, as are Christy Leskovar’s first two books, *One Night in a Bad Inn* and *Finding the Bad Inn: Discovering My Family’s Hidden Past*. Pictures and maps are exclusive to the print editions. For more information, visit www.ChristyLeskovar.com All three books are available where books are sold. Booksellers can order from Farcountry Press.



World Wanderers

The Bajuk Family

By Staff Writer David Sodac

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Natasha, the youngest daughter of Andrej and Katarina Bajuk, had never imagined that there would be the day when she would see her parents' faces splashed across billboards. But there they were, with their smiling faces, on the back of a barn in a remote town in Gorenška, Slovenia. Now grown, married, and with children, Natasha Bajuk Parodi fondly remembers that summer in the year 2000, traveling with her parents as they crisscrossed Slovenia for her father's campaign events. She shared, "It seemed to me to be a very sudden process of passing from anonymity to becoming a recognizable person. I had to get used to random people recognizing my parents and my family." Her parents, however, were quite recognizable. They happened to be the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, Andrej Bajuk, and his wife, Katarina Grintal Bajuk.

Andrej Bajuk was just eighteen months old when his family made the difficult decision to flee Slovenia at the close of WWII. Anxious about what would happen under the communist oppression in Slovenia, the family set off by foot on May 5, 1945. They crossed the mountain border at Ljubelj Pass into Vetrinje, Austria. Andrej was the youngest of four sons born to educators Božidar Bajuk and Cecilija Radej. When the Bajuk family fled the war in Slovenia, the entire family, including grandparents and aunts, left with them. They tried to stay together as a family unit, living

in various refugee camps in Austria awaiting the opportunity to return home or to relocate to a different country. Andrej's grandfather, Marko Bajuk, was a former principal at a Ljubljana classical gimnazija. While in the camps, he organized school facilities for the children. Also at that time, the Grintal family with three-year-old Katarina, her then two sisters (four additional siblings would be born later), and many of their extended relatives escaped the communist regime and crossed at the same border into the Austrian refugee camps. Her parents were Luka Grintal and Ana Jeretina from Vrhovlje. Katarina and Andrej didn't know each other while in the camps but would have quite the remarkable destiny in later years.

Three years after the end of the war, both families realized they could never go back to their home country as word reached the camps that many of the refugees were being brutally massacred upon their return. Consequently, the Bajuk and Grintal families sought international sponsorship that would allow them to emigrate out of the Austrian refugee camps. Both families had hopes of finding sponsorship in America, but only those who had acquaintances or relatives in the United States who guaranteed that they could take care of them in case of need would be accepted. Canada and Australia were accepting only young and single people who were ready for any kind of work. The

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1945: Andrej Bajuk was just eighteen months old when his family flees Slovenia on May 5, 1945. Also at that time, the Grintal family with three-year-old Katarina, escaped the communist regime and crossed at the same border into the Austrian refugee camps.

▽
1948: Three years after the end of the war, both the Bajuk and the Grintal families happened to board the same ship to Argentina along with many other Slovenian families from the same camp. They settled in Mendoza, Argentina in the foothills of the Andes Mountains.

▽
1968: After college and starting their careers, Andrej Bajuk and Katarina Grintal married in 1968. Katarina earned her degree in Education and began teaching English in Mendoza. Andrej earned his undergraduate degree in Economics and finished his Master's degree at an International Study Program offered by the University of Chicago at the Universidad Nacional de Cuyo in Mendoza.

▽
1969: Their first child, daughter Tatiana, was born in 1969. Andrej accepted a scholarship to attend the University of California at Berkeley where he earned his doctorate. The Bajuk's second child, son Andrej Sebastian, was born while the family lived in San Francisco.

remaining option for families with dependent children and the elderly was South America. Consequently, their refugee relief representatives requested permission to settle them in Argentina. South America offered passage tickets for the entire Bajuk family and relatives. Finally, the announcement was made in the camp that they were to pack and prepare to leave. The families were transported by truck to the train station where they boarded and took off for Genoa, Italy. Both the Bajuk and the Grintal families happened to board the same ship along with many other Slovenian families from the same camp. The ship left port in Genoa, heading for the South American continent. When the emigrant families arrived in Buenos Aires, they were processed, given physicals, and provided living and food ration cards for fourteen days of accommodations in a designated immigrants' hotel. After a short period of time, about a hundred families decided they missed the mountains from their homeland and traveled by train to the city of Mendoza in the foothills of the Andes Mountains. They initially lived in a workers' settlement with the other Slovene families. A man offered the Bajuk family a loan to purchase a sewing machine with which they began the domestic production of work gloves to earn an income.

Andrej and Katarina became acquainted within the settlement area and through the local Slovenski Dom's activities and school. It was said that on his sixteenth birthday Andrej swore his love to Katarina. The Bajuk's daughter, Natasha,

expressed that her parents were true believers in building community to the best of their ability wherever they were. Both were very active in the Slovene community of Mendoza, Argentina, whether it be singing in the Slovene choir, participating in the Slovene young girls' and boys' groups (of which each had held a leadership role at some point), volunteering in the Slovene "dom" library, or participating in the "dom" theater productions. They also were very active in the local Mendoza community. Andrej was always involved in student government groups, local (Argentine) church groups, and political activist groups throughout his high school years and beyond. He was always politically minded. His inclination toward political leadership was just a part of his personality. It was certainly not something that started when he moved to Ljubljana in 2000. Andrej and Katarina grew to adulthood in Mendoza.

City of Mendoza, Argentina



▼ **1973:** The young family returned to South America when Andrej was offered a teaching position as Professor of Economics at the Universidad Nacional de Cuyo in Mendoza.

▼ **1975:** Katarina gave birth to their third child, Natasha, in 1975. When Natasha was just three months old, the family relocated to Washington D.C. when Dr. Bajuk accepted a position as counselor to the Argentine Director on the Board of Directors of the World Bank.

▼ **1994:** Dr. Andrej Bajuk became the Inter-American Development Bank representative for Europe and Israel based in Paris, France.



▼ **1999:** Dr. Bajuk was designated Deputy Chairman of a newly formed political alliance in the Slovenian government. Andrej and Katarina continued to live in France but commuted back and forth to Slovenia. Dr. Bajuk was appointed as interim Prime Minister of Slovenia from June 7, 2000 - November 30, 2000. They permanently relocated to Slovenia. He became the Minister of Finance from 2004-2008, during which time Slovenia joined the European Union.

After college and starting their careers, the couple married in 1968. Katarina earned her degree in Education and began teaching English in Mendoza. Andrej earned his undergraduate degree in Economics and finished his Master's degree at an International Study Program offered by the University of Chicago at the Universidad Nacional de Cuyo in Mendoza. Andrej and Katarina had their first child, daughter Tatiana, born in 1969. He later accepted a scholarship to attend the University of California at Berkley where he earned his doctorate. The Bajuk's second child, son Andrej Sebastian, was born while the family lived in San Francisco. In 1973, the young family returned to South America when Andrej was offered a teaching position as Professor of Economics at the Universidad Nacional de Cuyo in Mendoza. Katarina gave birth to their third child, Natasha, in 1975. When Natasha was just three months old, the family relocated to Washington D.C. when Dr. Bajuk took a temporary leave of absence from his teaching position to accept a position as counselor to the Argentine Director on the Board of Directors of the World Bank. During that same period, Argentina was experiencing political upheaval and a military coup that endangered the family's return to Mendoza. Dr. Bajuk began working at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). He held a range of positions with IDB including Economist responsible for analyzing social projects, Division Chief responsible for operations in Ecuador and Colombia, Advisor to the Executive Vice-President, and eventually Chief of Staff to the President.

While living in the Washington D.C. area the Bajuk family immediately sought out other Slovenes that they knew were in the area and began attending the monthly Slovene Mass held at the chapel in the crypt of the Basilica of the National Shrine. Both Andrej and Katarina joined the Slovene choir in D.C. Harry Paulin, who had originally encouraged me to write the story on Dr. Bajuk, shared that while he was living in the D.C. area he was one of the "singing buddies" of Dr. Bajuk in the Slovene Choir. They also shared an interest in Slovene folk music and music in general. Harry's wife Maria was an active member of Branch 103, now merged with Branch 108. Dr. Bajuk's daughter Natasha remembers as a child getting shuttled across Washington D.C. to sit through the practices on many a Friday night with her brother and sister. She also recalls being taught Slovenian songs and poems that they would recite at the Sv. Miklavž celebration the family attended every year in December and also at the Slovenian Mother's Day celebration in May. The Bajuk family would always have their Easter meal (Žegen) blessed on Holy Saturday at the Slovene chapel in D.C. Her parents would meet socially with many of the Slovenes in the community, some of whom were not only longstanding family friends but also in some cases students of her great-grandfather, who had been the head of the classical secondary school "klasična

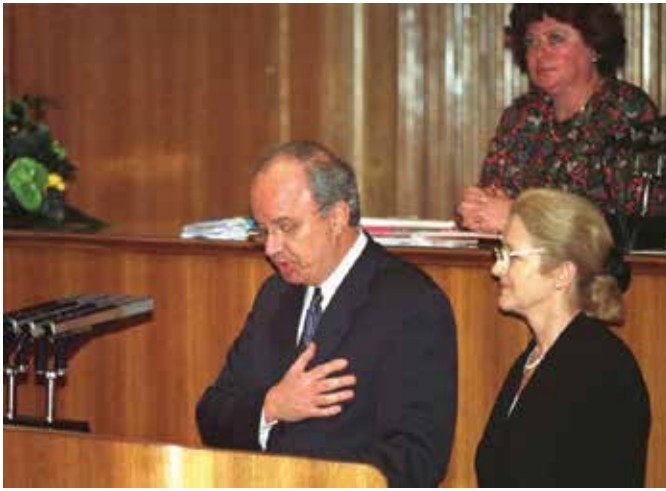
gimnazija" in Ljubljana and of the gimnazija that was set up in the refugee camps in Austria.

In 1994, Dr. Bajuk became the Inter-American Development Bank representative for Europe and Israel based in Paris, France. He became increasingly more visible in Slovenia, lecturing on economics and being asked to consult on transforming Slovenian banking. After the 1996 parliamentary elections in Slovenia, a list of candidates for ministerial positions was drafted in which Dr. Bajuk was suggested as Minister of Finance; however, the position never materialized due to the political party in power. In



Bajuk Family Portrait.

1999, Andrej became more actively involved in Slovenian politics and was designated Deputy Chairman of a newly formed political alliance in the Slovenian government. Andrej and the Katerina continued to live in France, but Andrej commuted back and forth to Slovenia. After a parliamentary vote of no confidence in the Slovenian government of President Janez Drnovšek, Dr. Andrej Bajuk was nominated, won the voting, and was appointed as interim Prime Minister of Slovenia. Dr. Bajuk quickly resigned his position with the IDB, packed his bags, and permanently relocated to Slovenia.



Andrej Bajuk with his wife Katarina taking the oath of office to become Slovenia's third Prime Minister.

Life would soon significantly change for the Bajuk family and quickly! Being the daughter of a past Prime Minister, Natasha said it was not surprising to watch her dad talking to politicians on the phone for hours or to be dragged off to political workshops or events in and around Slovenia because this was the sort of thing her parents had been interested in their whole lives. Andrej and Katarina had been planning for several years to retire in Ljubljana and had bought an apartment there before he was appointed Prime Minister. However, he had never run for elected office in Slovenia or anywhere else, nor had he ever served as an elected official. So at least for daughter Natasha, the time when he was PM of Slovenia was truly something surreal. Suddenly her parents were assigned security personnel. She recalls a time when her mother was having trouble pretending the assigned security personnel weren't behind her in the bakery but ended up turning around to offer them some bread rolls she had just bought.

Following his brief position as Prime Minister lasting from June 7, 2000 to November 30, 2000 Dr. Bajuk remained a member of the General Assembly. He became the Minister of Finance from 2004-2008 under the government of Prime Minister Janša, during which time Slovenia joined the European Union. Bajuk had won praise for reigning in Slovenia's budget deficit and changing the tax system, which prompted *The Banker* magazine in January 2005 to name him European Finance Minister of the Year. He is best remembered for founding a new political party called Nova Slovenija (New Slovenia). He retired from politics in 2008 and withdrew from public life. He died on August 16, 2011. Barbara Brezigar, a former State Prosecutor General who led the Ministry of Justice in Bajuk's government, recalls of Andrej Bajuk, "He was a statesman with breadth of mind and a culture of heart who did not seek benefits for himself in politics, but an opportunity to work for our common good." Tone Jerovšek, a former constitutional judge and minister in charge of legislation in

Spring 2021



Andrej Bajuk holding Slovenia's inaugural euros.

Bajuk's government, once shared, "He led his government very broadly, calmly, and with a democratic approach. He did not impose his views but accepted proposals. He was a gentleman, simply put."

All three of Andrej and Katarina's children were schooled in the States where they completed their undergrad and graduate degrees. Their oldest daughter, Tatiana Bajuk Senčar, received her doctorate from Rice University in Cultural Anthropology and remained in Slovenia. She is a Research Fellow at the Research Center of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Ljubljana. Andrej and Katarina's son, Andrej Sebastian Bajuk, is a graduate of Emory University School of Law and is an attorney living and working on the US East Coast. Natasha Bajuk Parodi graduated from Georgetown University and obtained her graduate degree while the family was living in France. After almost 15 years working in international development, she is currently a stay-at-home mom in the D.C. area.

After her husband's death, Katarina Grintal Bajuk worked to preserve the memory of Andrej's efforts for the common good of the people in the world. In 2017, she flew back to Mendoza, Argentina to visit the places and people they loved and to accept a posthumous honorary doctorate degree for her husband, awarded by the university where he studied and taught. Katarina died the following year on October 18, 2018. Wherever Katarina and Andrej Bajuk's world wanderings took them, their life paths were woven with love for their family and the culture they both shaped wherever they lived. This incredible life's journey is simply the stuff for a great movie!

Walking Down Baseball's Memory Lane

Follow-up Article on Joe Kuhel

By Staff Writer David Sodac, Branch 89 Oglesby, IL, bd sodac@gmail.com

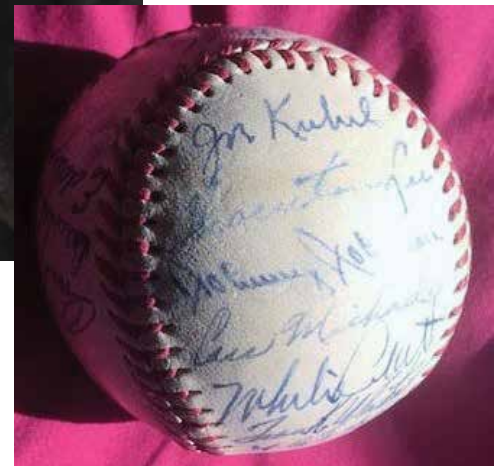
After Beth Voelk read the Fall 2020 *Zarja* article "Our Kuhel Cousin Joe," she had to send her father the article. Her father, Jim O'Connor, now of Sacramento, California, has always had a passion for baseball, and she knew he would enjoy reading the story. She later included my email address in one of her correspondences so that he and I could chat about his baseball experiences. She said he does a better job of explaining it. Beth knew her father well; the article brought back loads of memories of those baseball years for Jim. He rummaged through his baseball memorabilia collection, and he surprised his daughter when he sent back a photo of an autographed baseball. The team-signed baseball, including first



baseman Joe Kuhel's signature, was given to him during Kuhel's second stint with the Chicago White Sox. Jim was 15 when he first met Joe Kuhel during the time his father, Leslie O'Connor, was the General Manager of the Chicago White Sox during the years of 1944-47.

In 1946, the O'Connor family lived in the suburb of Crystal Lake, Illinois, which is about 50 miles northwest of Chicago. Comiskey Park was on the South Side of Chicago, so it was a long commute for his father to drive for work. When the team was in town, Jim quite often went with him. He still has vivid memories of those White Sox days. Jim recalled that as a 15-year-old, it was pretty exciting to be around all those players. Kuhel had even pulled one of his famous magic tricks on unsuspecting Jim. He shared some of his more vivid recollections of Joe during our email correspondence, "Joe Kuhel's magic was mostly sleight-of-hand tricks. Usually before the game, Joe would entertain the team with magic tricks, and they always

amazed me! He would have a coin in his hand, and it might disappear and show up in someone's pocket. We knew he was a certified magician." He remembered Joe's sterling play at first base, writing "Joe was considered one of the all-time best fielding first basemen in Major League Baseball." When Kuhel made the decision to leave playing ball in 1947, Jim's father gave Joe his first manager job in the White Sox minor league system.



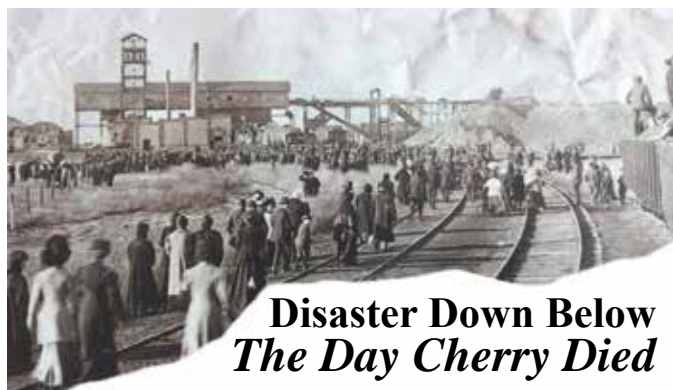
Jim was pleased to say he did have one claim to fame... "My friend Red Harkins and I were the first ever ball boys. In Comiskey Park, the warm-up bullpens were between the foul lines and the stands, and as ball boys with gloves, we would stand in front of the warming-up pitcher and protect him from sharply hit foul balls. Most teams still have them today. Also, the coaching staff would bring in high school and college kids for workouts. I was sometimes used to fill in at an infield position for the workout. When that happened, we got the opportunity to bat. I remember the time getting to bat against Ted Lyons, who was then Manager but still active as their ace pitcher. He is in the Hall of Fame as one of the all-time great knuckleball pitchers. He threw me some of those knucklers which were amazing and impos-

sible to hit. It was a great time for a fifteen-year-old to be exposed to the likes of Ted Williams and Joe DiMaggio, up close and personal.”

After high school, Jim graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 1953 with a degree in Finance. He then worked for nine years in marketing for Shell Oil Company, then ten years as a stockbroker. He spent the next 24 years as CFO of a large regional fertilizer company. He and his wife, Mary Claire, moved to Sacramento in 1964 and have remained there ever since. He turned a nifty 90 this January 2021. They have four happily married children and nine grandkids. Their daughter, Beth, and her husband, John Voelk, reside in Seattle, Washington, and are members of Branch 23 out of Ely, Minnesota. John coincidentally is the son of Gene and Mary Lou Dejak Voelk, our current SUA President.

Jim’s father, Leslie M. O’Connor, was a Chicago lawyer who was hired in 1920 to become the Secretary/Treasurer to the newly appointed Commissioner of the Major League Baseball, Kenesaw Mountain Landis. He held that position until Landis died in 1944, and then O’Connor was named the Acting Commissioner until the election of Happy Chandler as Landis’ replacement. O’Connor remained as the Assistant to Commissioner Chandler until he was asked to become the General Manager of the Chicago White Sox by Grace Comiskey. He was the General Manager from November 1945 through November 1948, and then served as president of the Pacific Coast League. The Pacific Coast League AA teams consisted of Hollywood Stars, Los Angeles Angels, Oakland Oaks, Portland Beavers, Sacramento Solons, San Diego Padres, San Francisco Seals, and Seattle Rainiers.

To The Editor...



I am an avid reader of the *Zarja* magazine. Sometimes I get backed up in my reading, and I did so last year. In the spring of 2020 when the country was shut down due to the pandemic, I had a chance to get caught up on my reading, and I opened the Winter 2019 issue of *Zarja*. The front cover showed a beautiful picture of the Slovenian-American Roadside Chapel in LaSalle, Illinois. I had no idea that what I was going to find inside would change my world in relation to my family ancestry.

As I flipped through the pages, the article “Disaster Down Below; The Day Cherry Died” immediately grasped my attention. As a little girl, my grandmother would tell me “Your great-great-grandfather died in the Cherry Mine Disaster,” and she spent much of her life trying to learn more about her grandfather and her family ancestry which has still remained much of a mystery to this day. I immediately read the article, which was so well written, and there on the side of page 15 was my great-great-grandfather’s name under the list of “Slovenian Miners Killed in Disaster.” I nearly fell out of my chair! I grabbed the phone, called

my grandmother, and said, “Your grandfather, Joseph Meicora, is listed in the *Zarja* magazine!” I preceded to tell her all about the article, and she told me that I should read the book, *Trapped: The 1909 Cherry Mine Disaster*, as my great-great-grandmother is listed in there as one of the surviving widows. The book also showed my great-great-grandfather’s name on the list as well as his surviving family, which included my great-grandmother who was only a couple months old when her father died in the mines.

It was crazy to think if the mine disaster had happened only a couple months earlier, none of us would be here! This article in *Zarja* spawned several discussions and stories within my family. My grandmother, now in her mid-80s, still knows very little about her grandparents and her ancestry. All she knows is that they were Slovenian and that her mother (my great-grandmother) would cook Slovenian dishes often. This family tradition has been passed down through the generations. I myself have just started making some Slovenian dishes, and my grandmother has now handed down to me some of her recipes. Coming across that article has been such a blessing to us all and has provided the opportunity to have these conversations while we still can share the stories with our children.

I know this is a long shot, but if anyone has information about Joseph Meicora during his brief time in the US working and living in Cherry, Illinois, we would love to hear about it. My email is Jesoon81@yahoo.com.

Jessica Reesman, Branch 89 - Oglesby, IL

A. E. Terselic Grocery & Meats

by Richard A. Terselic



Tony Terselic at the store he operated at 4133 Payne Avenue in Cleveland, Ohio. The photo was taken in the 1950s.

Introduction

Members of my family were involved in the retail food business before and after “supermarkets” became the norm. I grew up in and around family-operated stores, and I’d like to share my recall. I suspect what I share will renew memories for others with similar small business experiences. It was common for recent immigrants to establish businesses in neighborhoods in which numbers of persons of their ethnic heritage lived.

My father, Anthony E. Terselic, was one of six children. He, along with his parents and other five siblings, emigrated from a family farm in the village of Arnovo Sela, near Brezice in southeast Slovenia. His father, Franc, first came to America in the late 1880s with the goal of earning money to buy more land. Somewhere along the way, the goal of adding to the size of the farm diminished. His older children followed him to America with the hope of leaving farm life and finding better lives. His wife, Maria, and the two youngest children followed after selling the farm.

Family Background

The oldest Terselic daughter, Anna, had a boyfriend, Max Habinc, who lived on a farm a couple farms down the road from that of the Terselics. Both shared a dream of going to America and marrying. Complicating things, Max had a draft obligation to serve with the Austro-Hungarian military before he could leave.

Anna originally went to Racine, Wisconsin, where her father was living, and later moved to Chicago, Illinois, with her younger sister, Neza, seeking work. Max had a sister living in Cleveland, Ohio, and went there. Max’s sister, Pauline, had married a Lupsina who operated a grocery and meat market located in the Miles Avenue southeast section of Cleveland. Max worked in their store after arriving in Cleveland. While in Chicago, Anna received an offer of

marriage from an elderly man. That forced Max to provide a similar offer. Max did, they married, and Anna moved to Cleveland, joining him in operating a grocery and meat market he had opened on his own, located on Addison Road in the St. Clair Avenue Slovenian section. At about that time, plans for construction of a Slovenian Home, located near the Habinc store, were actively proceeding.

Anna’s younger brother Anthony (Tony), along with his mother and sister Terezija, the last of the family to immigrate, also settled in Racine. Anna and Max needed trustworthy help at their market, and money was needed at the Terselic household in Racine. After his short formal academic experience, teenager Tony moved to Cleveland to help Anna and Max. A portion of the money he earned was sent to Racine.

Tony and the Habincs lived in a suite above the Addison Road store. Business was very good, and working hours were long. Tony was able to speak (some) English, and a good Slovenian and Croatian, the languages primarily spoken by customers, which was useful. Business was aided by the demand for supplies needed by some customers to make alcoholic beverages (in violation of the Prohibition laws). Tony learned to drive the family Model T Ford, making trips to suppliers as well as to “bootleggers.”

Tony spent about five years working for the Habincs. Now a young adult, he decided to return to his family in Racine and pursue a life of his own. He had learned much about the food business and learned the trade of butchering. Tony had a pleasant personality and a gift of “gab.” He found jobs in local Racine food markets and enjoyed his leisure time freedom making frequent trips to Chicago for



Tony Terselic and the owner of a store in Racine, Wisconsin at which Tony worked.

recreation. He met Mathilda (Tillie) Slana at a Slovenian lodge picnic in Racine, and they married in 1932. Confident of his knowledge of the food business, Tony opened his own market in Racine. However, starting a business in the midst of the “Great Depression” proved a poor decision.

Back in Cleveland, Anna and Max were enjoying profitable operations and decided to open a second market. They needed an experienced and trustworthy person to initiate operations and contacted Tony with an invitation to join them again. Tony and Tillie accepted the offer, closed the failing market in Racine, packed up, and moved to Cleveland. The new store was located at East 41st and Payne Avenue in a very mixed ethnic neighborhood. Tony and Tillie operated the store along with additional hired help. The store was a financial success. I was born in 1937 while my parents were living in the apartment above the store.

In the late 1930s, a larger market space became vacant a few doors away from the East 41st Street Habinc store, and Tony decided it was a good time to go out on his own again. With approval and financial help from the Habincs, Tony opened A. E. Terselic Grocery and Meats at 4133 Payne Avenue. The building had the store on the first floor and several apartments on the ground floor rear and second floor. The building was owned by a Mr. Goldberg, and as part of the rental agreement, Tony collected rents from the other tenants and advised Mr. Goldberg of any maintenance issues. In addition to the store space and apartments, there was a building at the rear of the property that Tony converted to a live poultry processing facility. Such a feature had not been available at the 41st Street location. The grocery and meat business was a success, and numerous new customers began frequenting the store.

Anna and Max relocated from their Addison Road location to a new (combined) home and store in the far northeast section of Cleveland, at the corner of East 185th Street and Rosecliff Road. Sadly, Max died shortly after they moved there. Anna operated the store on her own until she sold the property to an auto dealer who wanted to put a used car lot on the site.

When I was seven, I began attending the local parochial school, Immaculate Conception, located on Superior Avenue and East 43rd Street. The Terselic store was in walking distance from the school. I usually went there directly at the end of the school day and remained until my mother left for the home we rented on East 45th Street. I sometimes came to the store on Saturdays with her since she worked there most of the day. While spending time at the store, after school, and on Saturdays, I assisted with tasks such as sweeping the floor and organizing merchandise on display shelves. I used a Radio Flyer wagon to accompany customers to nearby homes with their purchases. I mixed with customers and providers of merchandise or services. Both became friends to me. I recall Rudy, the driver for Race Dairy, who delivered milk and other dairy products, and Sam Wasser, who delivered fresh vegetables. My father’s relationship with Sam went on for decades, and when I was married in my early twenties, my new wife and I received a wedding gift from the Wassers.

My father’s sister, Terezija (who changed her name to Rose in America), and her family had moved from Racine to Cleveland because of better paying job opportunities there for her husband, Clarence. My Uncle Clarence worked at the store on Saturdays and, among other duties, made grocery deliveries using Dad’s car. I often accompanied Uncle Clarence, enjoying his company and meeting the customers that had phoned in their orders.

When I turned 16 and secured my driver's license, I took on deliveries to customers who had moved from the nearby neighborhood to locations several miles away. Their weekly purchases were large enough to make it profitable to deliver. I received my first driving violation (ticket) returning from a delivery to customers who had moved to the suburb, Bratenahl. After I got married, I continued working Saturdays until Dad closed the store.

My father became a special person in the neighborhood. Customers and non-customers alike sought him out for advice and help of various kinds. He was active in our parish and served on the board of its credit union. Following the end of World War II, European refugees settled in the neighborhood of the store and were directed to him for advice and assistance. Over the years his command of multiple languages had grown, and he could communicate to varying degrees in several languages. This proved a very useful skill.

The neighborhood surrounding the store had originally been settled by persons of European descent in their first and second generations in America. However, by the early

1960s, the customers my father had depended upon aged, and many died. Their children had grown up, moved to suburbs, and some no longer shopped with my father. Homes vacated by these people became occupied by persons who chose to shop for their food at supermarkets rather than in neighborhood "Mom and Pop" markets. My father's business declined, and he realized that it no longer made business sense to continue operating. He had skills needed by other small food markets, particularly that of a butcher, and concluded that he could make a living working for someone else. He closed the 4133 Payne Avenue store in the mid-1960s. It was a hard decision, but he had no difficulty finding jobs at other markets and did so until a heart problem prompted him to retire.

Having "grown up" in a small family business was a valuable experience for me. While I graduated college and followed a professional career, I look back fondly on that experience and eventually established a small business of my own.

My thanks to my daughter, Nancy Terselic, for her editorial assistance.



Tony and Tillie Terselic (2nd & 3rd on left) and members of the staff that worked at the store located at East 41st and Payne Avenue in Cleveland, Ohio. Photo taken in the later 1930s.



Slovenian Union of America

Across America - Branch Reports

BRANCH 1 - Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Contact Information: Mary Ann Schellinger
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Looking back on 2020, I'm sure it will be a year that is never to be forgotten. In order to spread joy and cheer at this time of the year, our board members got together to go Christmas caroling to a few of our members.

Due to COVID-19, we were not able to honor our members of the year, so our first stop was at the house of Ed and Germaine Tesovnik. While Ed was out doing errands, Germaine was home and was presented with the special gifts for them from Slovenia. Along with a potica and a bottle of hand sanitizer, we sang our own rendition (with a few word changes) of "Jingle Bells." Not only did Germaine have a smile on her face but so did a few of her neighbors who were outside at the time of our visit.



Continuing on our journey, another tradition we have is at our annual Christmas gathering. When a member of our branch passes away, we present a memory angel ornament to a member of the family. We stopped at the house of Monica Virant to present her with the angel in memory of Mary Pat Ryan. Monica is the organist at our Slovenian church and suggested that all the carolers be recruited to join their choir.



Even though we had to keep our social distance, we could feel the warmth of the members when we visited them. Many years ago, someone told me that people may not always remember what you did or said but they will never forget how you made them feel. Since "LOVE" is in every Slovenian, this is something that we must always share with others to let them know how we feel.



MARY ANN SCHELLINGER

BRANCH 3 - Pueblo, Colorado

Contact Information:

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Branch 3 was unable to meet during the last quarter of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions enacted in the county. Colorado had a spike in COVID-19 cases in the fall; however, increased numbers of positive cases were not experienced after the Thanksgiving or Christmas holidays. The annual Slovenian Heritage Dinner, in which many Branch 3 members are involved, had to be cancelled in early November, and the Christmas luncheon in December could not be held. Hopefully, the branch will be able to meet in person, even if it is outside, in late spring or early summer. Plans are also being made for a gathering in the Denver area for northern Colorado SUA Branch 3 members later this year.

The winning essays for the Slovenian Heritage Contest are available on the SUA website (www.slovenianunion.org). The first-place essay was written by Abby Raio, and Jillian Parsons wrote the second-place essay. The Slovenian Heritage Contest Committee members included M.T. Karlinger, Kathleen Kochevar, and Annette Charron. They met regularly for over 18 months creating the parameters of the contest, organizing fundraising events, and creating promotional materials.

Happy New Year to all other SUA branch members from Branch 3!

ANNETTE SABO CHARRON
& M.T. KARLINGER

BRANCH 5 - Indianapolis, Indiana

Greetings Branch 5 members and friends! As the COVID-19 pandemic is still raging around the world, here in Indy we are finally getting the opportunity to get the vaccine to stop this illness. We have many Slovenian families and friends who have been sick, some in nursing homes, some in hospitals. We have several families who have lost loved ones recently. Margaret Konechnik Ford was the last of the 12 children of Slovenian immigrants Frank and Mary (Gregorc) Konechnik, and she passed January 9, 2021, at age 92. Tom Bracic passed away on January 4, 2021, at 76 years young. Tom could often be found at the Nash, sometimes with his button box, playing music while his wife, Marcia, was cooking dinners for the Nash. So 2021 is starting off where 2020 left us... hoping and praying for an end to this sickness and a peaceful new year. Stay safe, stay healthy, and keep praying!

Hopefully spring will bring better days. Praying for all of you!

MARY, KAREN & PHYLLIS

BRANCH 20 - Joliet, Illinois

Contact Information: Georgene Agnich

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We extend our sympathy to the family of member Joan Lesnik, who passed away on November 4, 2020, and to the family of member Diane Govednik, who passed away on January 9, 2021. We also extend our sympathy to the family of former member Sandra Hartley, who passed away on September 3, 2020.

Congratulations to the winners of our 2020 Fall Raffle: Dolores L. Ambrozich (first prize: \$300); Ray and Annette Koncar (second prize: \$200); and Robert Smolich (third prize: \$100). President Char Kobe, Vice President Jeanne Warsaw, and Auditor Jo Lustik each drew a winning ticket at the SUA home office



President Char Kobe draws the first-prize winner in the 2020 Fall Raffle.

on October 20, 2020, as Secretary Georgene Agnich looked on. Thanks to everyone, near and far, who participated in the raffle and supported our branch during the pandemic.

On November 7, 2020, Joliet historian Mary Beth Gannon visited the SUA museum briefly to gather information for her Joliet Public Library podcast on November 16 entitled "St. Joseph Neighborhood" which can be seen on YouTube.

Lake Zurich High School sophomore Brooke Johnston, daughter of member Joanna Johnston and granddaughter of member Dorothy Mahan, performed a traditional Slovenian folk song while wearing a costume from the SUA museum at her voice class recital on November 22.

We donated a Christmas wreath for the grotto at St. Joseph Cemetery and also sponsored 10 Christmas wreaths for the graves of veterans at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, Illinois.

Ashley Kuhel, a 2020 SUA Educational Grant recipient and member of Branch 2, learned more about her Slovenian heritage when she volunteered at the SUA office on December 28 and 29, 2020, to assist members Georgene Agnich and Carole Terlep with various projects. Ashley is a sophomore at the University of Illinois, where she is majoring in mechanical engineering. Our congratulations and best wishes to Ashley and the other six grant recipients.

Congratulations to Gene and Carol Novak, who celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on January 7, 2021.

Because the pandemic forced the cancellation of our 2020 Member of the Year banquet, we hope to honor Sandra Rodeghero belatedly as our 2021 Member of the Year if conditions permit. Let us continue to hope and pray for the day when we have defeated the COVID-19 virus and we can once again enjoy gathering with beloved family and friends.

GEORGENE AGNICH

Zarja - The Dawn

Brooke Johnston

Branch 20 - Joliet, IL

For their virtual voice class recital at Lake Zurich High School, Mrs. Chris Misik gave her students the assignment to perform a song that reflects their ethnic heritage. Sophomore Brooke Johnston, who is the daughter of Branch 20 member Joanna Johnston and the granddaughter of Branch 20 member Dorothy Mahan, performed “Zrelo je Zito” (“The Wheat Is Ripe”), a traditional folk song from the Prekmurje region of Slovenia, at her virtual sophomore recital on November 22, 2020.

Brooke had listened to several traditional Slovenian songs on YouTube and chose “Zrelo je Zito” because it suited her alto voice, and she liked the song very much. She found the lyrics online and learned the pronunciation by listening to Slovenian singers online. Mrs. Misik wrote a piano accompaniment for the song; Mr. Poindexter played the piano and recorded the performance. Brooke wore a costume loaned to her from the Slovenian Union of America by SUA President Mary Lou Voelk.

Brooke has enjoyed performing before an audience ever since she played a Munchkin in a musical theatre version of *The Wizard of Oz* at age 5. She takes private voice lessons from Mrs. Misik and is a member of the concert choir and the Bare Voices a cappella choir at Lake Zurich High School. She has no definite college plans yet but expects to minor in music or music theatre and to keep music in her life.

Brooke also excels in the sport of cross country, competing at the state level as a freshman and placing in state competition in November 2020.

Brooke is grateful for the opportunity to sing “Zrelo je Zito” because it has really connected her to her Slovenian heritage. She is also grateful to SUA President Mary Lou Voelk for loaning her the costume. She is impressed that an organization such as the Slovenian Union of America exists to keep Slovenian heritage alive. Brooke had not known much about Slovenia, but preparing for her voice class recital has made her eager to visit Slovenia someday.



Brooke Johnston sings a Slovenian folk song for her sophomore voice class recital.

Ashley Marie Kuhel

Branch 2 - Chicago, IL

Branch 2 member Ashley Marie Kuhel is a 2020 recipient of a SUA Educational Grant that will help her pay her college expenses other than tuition. She is a sophomore at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, where she is majoring in mechanical engineering.

During her semester break, Ashley drove from her home in Rolling Meadows, Illinois, on December 28 and 29, 2020, to volunteer at the SUA home office as part of her grant requirements.

On December 28, she assisted Branch 20 member Georgene Agnich with such projects as inventorying books in the museum store, clearing a space for a new shipment of SUA cookbooks, researching the museum’s records for information about a certain donation, and reviewing a 20-year span of bound volumes of *Zarja* to flag Irene Odorizzi’s numerous “The Immigrant” articles.

On December 29, Ashley helped Branch 20 member and document scanner Carole Terlep select a set of membership and burial insurance documents from the basement file cabinets, then helped Carole prepare those documents for scanning into SUA’s database.

During her time at the home office, Ashley learned more about her Slovenian heritage and about the history of Slovenians in America. We thank her for her volunteer assistance and her interest in the Slovenian Union of America. We also congratulate her and the other six winners of 2020 Educational Grants and wish all of them the very best as they pursue their educational goals.



*Ashley Kuhel flags selected Odorizzi articles in *Zarja*.*

BRANCH 23 - Ely, Minnesota

The holidays have come and gone. Decorations have been put away. The new year has arrived and with it the hopes of a better year this 2021. For most, the holidays were uneventful and quiet. Families did not get together. Grandparents missed seeing their grandkids. I heard this from many grandparents. I guess we are better safe than sorry!

Branch 23 hasn't had any meetings, so we don't have anything planned except Taste of Slovenia on Saturday, August 7. This all remains to be seen if we have it or not. We will just have to wait and see. Wish this virus would just go away and let us get back to our somewhat normal lives or as normal as they can be.

Our St. Nicholas Day program was cancelled due to the virus, but if you were in downtown Ely on St. Nicholas Day, you could've seen him on the corner of 3rd Avenue and Sheridan Street. He was greeting and waving at people. I think we all know who he was all dressed up in his St. Nicholas finery! Great to see!



And speaking of saints' days, we have St. Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day coming up. St. Valentine's Day, celebrated on February 14, is when lovers express their affection with greetings and gifts. Its origins began in the Roman festivals of Lupercalia which celebrated the coming of spring, included fertility rites, and paired women with men by lottery. At the end of the 5th century, Pope Gelasius I replaced Lupercalia with St. Valentine's Day. It came to be celebrated as a day of romance from about the 14th century. Hope your Valentine's day is a happy one! At least we do not have to use the lottery method to choose our lovers anymore!

St. Patrick's Day is March 17. He is the patron saint of Ireland although he wasn't born there. The feast day wasn't rooted in the raucous, shamrock revelry we know today. The parties, parades, and festivals are largely American traditions that were only recently picked up by Ireland. Leprechauns are the mischievous St. Patrick's Day mascots. St. Patrick lived a life of triumph, trials, sufferings, and hardships. In Ireland, the festival usually lasts five days. It is the traditional day for spiritual renewals and offering of prayers for missionaries. It is a national holiday in the Republic of Ireland. Its actual color was blue, and in the 19th century it became green as a symbol of Ireland.

It usually falls in the Christian season of Lent. So, Happy Saint Patrick's Day to you!

Our Slovenian cookbooks have sold out. All 500 copies! We started selling them at Taste Of Slovenia in 2019. We will not have a reprinting, so hopefully you got one. We are planning a book on Slovenian traditions and will be using some recipes from the cookbook in it. We hope to start selling them at Taste Of Slovenia 2021 if we have it. We are selling our towels and hot pads with a new slogan on them. They say IT'S LOVE IN EVERY SLOVENIAN and MINNESOTA SLOVENE. A Scrubby comes with them but no color choice. They can be ordered by mailing a check made out to Branch 23 to Mary Ann Lekatz, P.O. Box 671, Ely, MN 55731. The cost is \$25 for towel, pad, and scrubby plus \$5 for shipping.



President Koski has heard from Professor Klemec in Slovenia, and he is hoping to get here at the end of May or early June to talk about his book on Slovenian

immigrants to Minnesota. Pat thinks he may be a little optimistic. He says things are bad there now but hopes the vaccine will turn things around. We shall see!

This is it here. Winter is here. The ground is covered with snow. Now we hibernate! Not me. I hope to be riding on my snowmobile. Stay safe everyone. Wear your masks! Socially distance. Welcome to the new year!



CHOSTIE HARRI

BRANCH 24 - LaSalle, Illinois

Zivijo. Here we are in 2021! I registered today to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in my area. Here in LaSalle County, we are in Phase 1A of the vaccine administration. Registration for Phase 1B, of which I qualify being over age 65, has begun. It is a cold, bright, sunny day with thoughts of a new year and recalibration of plans for the future.

Our Branch President, Mary Mecum, has reported that she and the officers from 2020 have agreed to extend their terms into 2021. Good luck to them on planning events for the upcoming year where we can celebrate together our Slovenian heritage with food and music.

Are you all familiar with Zoom? On November 7, I was the Member Representative to the first Zoom National

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Board meeting (about which you received an email with the minutes from that meeting). Another Zoom meeting is scheduled for January 16. What a fantastic platform to host meetings! Think of the savings in transportation costs, hotels, and other expenses. Well, Zoom is not just for business meetings. Families are getting together for holidays, birthdays, showers, and even weddings. I have been using Zoom to attend virtual events such as the presentation Joe Valencic did for the St. Louis County Historical Society. Around 100 people from the U.S. and Canada listened as Joe recounted Slovenian traditions and rituals of the winter season in Slovenia. He started in November with St. Martin Day and continued through December with pictures of churches, nativities, Santa Claus, Grandpa Frost, and mouth-watering photos of typical holiday baking: strudels, potica, flancati, and little mice. The presentation continued into the New Year with mulled wine, champagne, fortune telling, and caroling house-to-house. The discussion of winter traditions ended on January 6 with the Feast of Three Kings or Epiphany. The tradition in Slovenia is to use a piece of chalk which has been blessed by the local priest to mark the initials of the three Wise Men and the year above your front door. In January, I have written 20+G+M+B+21 above my door and said a prayer for Christ to bless my house.



Happy and Healthy New Year to all!

DIANE DATA

BRANCH 89 - Oglesby, Illinois

Contact information: Terry Kamnikar
815-481-3552/tlkamn92@gmail.com

Happy New Year! The start of the new year will look very similar to how we functioned in 2020. Branch 89 will kick off our year with the first meeting on Monday, March 8th by Zoom. President Julie Harback will send out the Zoom meeting information by email. If you would like to participate, get updates, and receive meeting minutes, please email suabranh89@yahoo.com.

Since we are still under certain restrictions, please note we will not be hosting our annual Heritage Day event this year. Hopefully, by 2022 things will be in full swing.

Our Bakeless Bake Sale for 2020 was a huge success. In spite of a pandemic, donations exceeded \$1,100. Branch

Spring 2021

89 is amazing!

Soon spring will be here. How many of us will be celebrating Easter with some Slovenian specialties? Potica, smoked sausage, and strudel are some of my family's must-haves. In years past, fellow Branch 89 members have shared and demonstrated their families' traditions such as making butarice (bouquets made from branches of different shrubs and fresh flowers) and showcasing a beautiful Easter basket which is filled with Easter eggs, horseradish, smoked sausage, bread, and potica to be blessed at church. Also, dyeing the eggs is something of a masterpiece. It's never too late to start a tradition!

To all our members near and far, continue to be well and stay safe. May 2021 be good to all!

TERRY KAMNIKAR

BRANCH 93 - New York, New York

Contact Information: Kathleen Simmonds
917.780.9412/kathleensimmo@gmail.com

We hope everyone has been keeping safe and well during this difficult time, and we are sending well wishes from New York. For Branch 93, our monthly social meetings have moved online, and it's been wonderful to see everyone from the comfort of their own living rooms.

We're excited to share the news of a new Slovenian restaurant in NYC - Pekarna. It's the first of its kind in the city – a Slovenian American restaurant and cocktail bar on the Upper West Side. Their plan is to have Slovenian chef, Alma Rekić, come to Pekarna as guest chef to offer full Slovenian cuisine experiences. Here's to hoping we can host one of our socials at Pekarna very soon!

Branch Officer Kathleen Simmonds has just finished producing a new documentary series for the Lifetime Channel. Exactly one year after Jeffrey Epstein was found dead in his Manhattan jail cell, *Surviving Jeffrey Epstein* is airing now. The four-part series tells the stories of eight survivors and comes at a critical time in the saga after Epstein's longtime confidante, Ghislaine Maxwell, was arrested in July on federal charges that she conspired with Epstein to sexually abuse minors. The new project is part of the Lifetime Network's *Stop Violence Against Women* initiative to empower women and to help establish a Survivors' Bill of Rights in the survivors' states.

Member of our Slovenian community and saxophonist Jan Kus has recently produced a new tribute song to the hardships of 2020 with vocalist Kyle Weekes. Here is more about the artists and the song: Jan and Kyle met while studying Music Performance at Queens College. When Kyle first approached Jan about working on this song together and what it represented to him, Jan was looking for ways to give the song a darker, more gloomy, and nocturnal feel and for it to be more in line with the sad events all over the world in 2020. As a saxophone player, Jan also found a way to tie that in, and his idea behind the saxophone section in the song is that it represents the

hope and the light at the end of the tunnel with the “war” against the pandemic hopefully being over soon. You can listen to “War is Over” by Kyrone & Jan Kus on Spotify.

Eva Petric has been very busy and collaborated with Cvjetka Bevc, renowned author of numerous books, plays, and poetry. Eva’s photographs illustrate Cvjetka’s new poetry collection *And Yet I Am... / In vendar sem* published by Založba Pivec, Maribor. The book tackles the universal and unglorified theme of aging, something that escapes none of us.

Also of note, her original artwork “H2O” from her solo show *SOUNDeSCAPES, lullaby for drones* has been used for the booklet of the new Jazz cd *invisible bridges* by the band Dusha Connection. *Dusha (dusa)* means “soul” in Slovene, Croatian, and Serbian.



Cover art for the *War is Over*.

We are thrilled by the interest in our Slovene Conversation Online course; the demand has been so high that there was a waiting list! Our next level course is in full swing for the spring semester. If you’re interested in joining future beginner courses, please keep an eye out in our newsletter for the announcement.

KATHLEEN SIMMONDS

BRANCH 100 - Fontana, California

SAVE the DATE! Our next virtual social and meeting will be Sunday, April 11, 2021, 1:00 p.m. Meeting invite with web link to connect via Zoom will be emailed. If there are any questions, please contact Branch President, Teresa Koci, at 949.246.1983 or email tkoci@cox.net.

2020 was a rough year for many including our branch. We lost a couple of staunch members of our Slovenian community and branch early in 2020: Anne Kapel (92) and Elvie Blasick (96).

Anne Kapel was our Branch President for many years

through the 1990s and into the 2000s. Her daughter, MaryLou Jensen, was also our Branch President for ten years until the end of 2016. Anne along with her late husband, Frank, and their five children are deeply rooted in the Fontana Slovenian community.



Anne Kapel with her daughter, MaryLou Jensen.

Rosemary Mlakar, former SWU Regional Representative, recalls many memories with Anne that started back in the 1960s when Anne and Frank moved from Cleveland, Ohio, to Fontana, California, with their five children. Rosemary, too, had five kids. She moved to Fontana from northern Minnesota with her husband and four sons (later to have a daughter, child #5) and was impressed by what parallel lives she and Anne lived. Their paths crossed in so many ways, and Rosemary was always glad to see Anne whether it was at football games watching their sons, Bob Kapel and Fred Mlakar, play football for Fontana High School or running into each other at the local grocery store. Rosemary would reminisce about Anne coming to the games with her youngest baby girl, Krissy, and how much fun it was to be together. Anne’s oldest daughter, MaryLou, graduated high school the same year as Rosemary’s oldest, Joe, in 1968. Similarly, believe it or not, both of their husbands were accordion players: Frank Kapel on piano accordion and Joe Mlakar Sr. on button accordion! The two of them would play together frequently over the years at the Fontana Slovene Hall as well. Rosemary and Anne’s friendship continued through the 70s and 80s as they supported each other raising children of similar ages. In the SNPJ Youth Circle #70, both of their youngest daughters (Kristina and Teresa) were active in various Slovenian performances, local cultural events, and community service projects.

Having a partner and dear friend in so many facets of their lives was such a joy to Rosemary. She remembers having a job with Anne at Nichols’ Florist in downtown Fontana, a local Slovenian family-owned business. They made a pact to improve their health and walk the junior high school track once or twice a week, and they did so for years with other friends of theirs. They were both

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members of the SNPJ as well as the Slovenian Women's Union, as SUA was named back then. Anne became the Branch 100 President while Rosemary was the Western Regional Representative. They traveled together to the conventions and once to Joliet, Illinois. They were picked up in a limousine from Midway Airport and stayed at Anne's uncle's home in Joliet. Both ladies were so out of their comfort zone riding in this limousine that they laughed much of the way to Anne's uncle's home. The last trip they took together was in 2001. Their flight was scheduled to depart on September 11, 2001, but due to the 9/11 attacks and such uncertain times, their trip to Slovenia was only delayed until September 13th. Despite all of the national unrest in our country at that time, they had an uninterrupted and memorable trip together.



Anne Kapel with Rosemary Mlakar 2001 Slovenia.

Anne will be sorely missed for her soft, pleasant smile and kindness. She had many hobbies including crocheting, sewing, and reading mystery novels, and she was an avid crossword puzzle solver. She was also a big fan of the LA Dodgers and loved to watch Jeopardy and the Wheel of Fortune on TV. She was a good friend to many, like Rosemary. She was fun to be around, and they had many laughs together. Most of all, Anne cherished spending time with her family. Cooking and baking with and for family was what made this typical Slovenian ženska most content. Anne Kapel is survived by four of her five children: MaryLou (Paul) Jensen, Bob (Kellie) Kapel, Linda (Lester) Sand, and Kristina (Rick) Steller as well as nine grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Rest in peace dear friend, Anne Kapel.

Branch 100 also unfortunately lost Elvie (Skavich) Blasick last January, due to cancer. She was a social member of Branch 100 for many years. She, too, was a member of the local SNPJ lodge along with her husband, Chuck, and their three children: Charlene, Chuck, and Don. Elvie will be remembered for her constant smile, her warm, happy Slovenian personality, and her hospitality. She was a great dancer even well into her 90s; she still loved to dance a waltz or polka. Elvie was a meticulous cook and baker of Slovenian specialties as well. She would even partner with

another SUA member, Rosemary Mlakar. The two were known as the masters of the lightest flancanti in Southern California.



Elvie Blasick, Arnold Koci, and Jean Koci.

Jean Koci's memories of Elvie go back more than 80 years, before she even started school. She adored Elvie and wanted to grow up to be just like her. Elvie continued to be special to Jean for all her years. She used to follow Elvie around when her family would go out to Willow Springs in Illinois on many Sunday afternoons along with many Slovenian families who would go outside of Chicago for the wonderful fried chicken dinners served at the Red Gate Inn. One summer, Jean was invited to spend a week with Elvie out in the country. Jean was about 10 years old and very excited to have the attention that Elvie gave her; Jean "adopted" her to be her big sister because her own sister had died at the age of 11 when Jean was a toddler. Elvie was about the same age as Helen would have been. That week, they walked to a lake out in the country, rented a boat, and enjoyed a ride on the lake. They also took walks into the Grove where they would get buckets of water from the water pump that had better tasting water than the pump near the house. Rover, the family dog, always came along for the "run." One day, Jean decided that she would go out to the Grove, and Rover came also. Rover got a little frisky making Jean spill more water than she brought back.

When the Skavich family decided to move to California in the 1940s, Jean was heartbroken. So Jean's mom and dad decided that they would take a trip to California to visit. Jean was very happy! In fact, her dad decided that they would also move to California because he was tired of working in the snow as an insurance agent visiting clients in the city. They moved to California in 1949, and Jean's father took up his tailoring trade and worked in Los Angeles doing alterations and making clothes for some of those in the film industry. Jean and her family would often visit Elvie and her family whose parents were good friends of Jean's parents. Even though they lived

in Los Angeles, we would often go to Fontana and the Slovene Hall, as well as visit the homes of friends who lived there. The family connection continues to this day. So, as her adopted big sister, Jean thanks Elvie from her heart for being there for her through these many years. Elvie had always been more than just a friend, but a part of Jean's family.

Elvie is survived by her three children: Charlene (Gary), Chuck (Diane), and Don (Claudia), two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Rest in peace dear friend, Elvie Blasick.

TERESA KOCI in collaboration with
JEAN KOCI and ROSEMARY MLAKAR

BRANCH 108 - National Capitol Area

Here we are in 2021, still missing one another and working through this time with virtual meetings and phone conversations among branch members. We are optimistic that the road at the end of the tunnel is near for in-person meetings to be part of our lives with our friends, families, and branch members. It's been great to stay in touch with many of you by phone and letters through these months of isolation.

Member Jonna Sanders did an outstanding virtual presentation for our November Zoom meeting. She prepared a PowerPoint and shared her computer screen with the audience, highlighting the history and methods of beekeeping. Jonna has her very own backyard beehives from



Jonna Sanders backyard beehive.

Slovenia and explained the significance of the amazing Carniolan bee.

Jonna Sanders, who grew up in Denver, Colorado, explains "As a child, I was always interested in the honeybees in our garden, and my mother would scold me for catching them in jars. It wasn't until I first visited Slovenija in 1999 for the Poletna Šola Slovenskega Jezika that I realized that Slovenes have a rich history with bees that goes back many centuries. My great-grandparents in Crngrob kept bees on their farm before they came to America, so in some small way, my interest in bees is just part of continuing my family's traditions. That said, my decision in 2018 to keep bees in the Slovene way, using AŽ hives, was no small undertaking. There were no good options for AŽ equipment in the United States that were reasonably priced or that had the same craftsmanship as in Slovenija. So I got on a plane, went to Slovenija, and traveled around to find the best craftsman to make them for me. I am now working with Aleksander Jerman of MedLes S.P. to bring his artisan hives to North America. In Slovenija, the old adage says "to be Slovene is to be a beekeeper," and my goal is to convince every beekeeper in North America to switch to the



Aleksander Jerman, beehive craftsman.

Slovenian AŽ system for their apiary. The AŽ hive system has so many advantages for the bees and the beekeeper. You don't have to lift them, so even someone who uses a wheelchair can easily



Sander's and Fitzsimmons family met for a backyard gathering.

keep bees. Also, U.S. beekeepers lost 43% of our bees last winter, while Slovenia lost 12-15%. The AŽ system can absolutely help change the status quo of our catastrophic honeybee colony losses in North America." To learn more about Jonna's business part-

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ner Aleksander Jerman the beehive craftsman, go to his personal website at www.medles.si.

Jonna attended the KSKJ Miklavževanje celebration with her family back in December 2019, where I recruited her to join SUA. Jonna's enthusiasm for her Slovenian heritage and her extensive knowledge about beekeeping sparked interest to extend an invitation for her to share her expertise in beekeeping.

Jonna is inviting us all to visit her home for an outdoor honey breakfast in late May in honor of World Bee Day. Watch for an e-mail/facebook posting about details soon. We look forward to seeing you in person!!!

The Slovenian community of the Washington, DC area continues to meet every couple of weeks for Slovenian virtual Masses by Zoom. We are deeply grateful to celebrant Fr. Jack Siberski from Boston College who says the Mass in Slovenian with an English homily. It has been heartwarming to meet virtually with the regular attendees and welcoming a number of people who wouldn't typically be able to travel to DC for Mass.

I'm so fortunate to have learned the tradition of how to make potica from my mother, Nika Kovacic, and to follow her recipe in making several loaves and round-shaped poticas, representing Christ's crown for Easter and Christmas. One change I've made, which she approves of since she can't tell the difference, is my signature tweaking of the potica dough recipe prepared in my home bread maker. This saves time and gives me a chance to divide up the potica making throughout the day and not worry about a large amount of dough made at one time rising before I have a chance to roll it out, spread the filling, and fold it together before the final rise.

We wish you good health and safety this spring. Vesele velikonočne praznike. Želimo Vam veliko pirhrov in potic.

Slovenian Sayings by Bernadette

V družbi mladih se pomladimo.

***Keeping company with the young,
we become younger ourselves.***

Kaj skupaj leži, skupaj drži.

What lies together, stays together.

BERNADETTE FITZSIMMONS

BRANCH 109 - Twin Cities (TC) of Minnesota

Contact Information: Elaine Barthelemy
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Happy New Year from members of Branch 109! Thanks to efforts by Mike Koski (President), Chuck Podominick (Vice-President), and our webmaster, John Perhay, we continue to enjoy quality presentations at our monthly Zoom member meetings attended each month by 40-50 members. In addition to the officers named above, elected officers Ruth Pechauer (Treasurer) and Marian Brezovec (Recording Secretary) as well as SUA Member Representative Mary Ann Setnicker and Membership Secretary Jean

Spring 2021

Podominick have generously agreed to continue in their positions for the 2021-2022 year.

In November, Joe Valencic, an enthusiastic promoter of all things Slovenian, shared a slideshow on Martinovanje and other autumn Slovenian celebrations happening both in Slovenia and in Cleveland, Ohio, where Joe lives. Our mouths watered seeing pictures of traditional food such as goose with chestnut stuffing, red cabbage, sausage, and potica, and we were able to share a wine toast from the comforts of home.



Joe Valencic in his radio studio in Cleveland.

How appropriate at Martinovanje to learn that the Cleveland area has seven wineries owned by Slovenians and that, at about 11 gallons a year per person, Slovenians are the fifth-greatest wine drinkers in the world. Joe talked about the history of Slovenian wine going back to pre-Roman times, and we were reminded that Maribor is home to a 450-year-old vine, the oldest in the world. Someday, inspired by Joe's presentation, we hope to visit Cleveland for the annual Thanksgiving weekend Polka Party and to experience some of the wineries for ourselves.

In December, we were delighted twice. In her slideshow *Slovenian Christmas, Vesel Božic*, Sue Rademacher showed us Christmas in Slovenia where they have three different Santas: *Sveti Miklavz* (St. Nicholas) who leaves sweets, fruits, and small gifts in shoes left out on the night of December 5; the familiar Santa Claus who brings gifts on Christmas Eve; and *Dedek Mraz* (Grandfather Frost), who rides through cities and towns the week after Christmas with **more** presents. We fondly remembered getting



Three Santas in Slovenia!

St Nicholas Santa Claus Grandfather Frost (Dedek Mraz)

together in person in other years, particularly in 2017 when *Sveti Miklavž* (Frank Medved) thrilled not only the children who attended our meeting, but the rest of us too.



For our second December meeting treat, Rich Samec impressed us with his collection of button boxes and Slovenian Christmas records. Next, he shared a variety of short videos including a Slovenian orchestra playing “White Christmas,” demonstrations of potica and sarma making, and even a brief language lesson on how to say “Merry Christmas” and “Happy (Lucky) New Year” (*Veseli Božič in Srečno novo leto*). Finally, we quietly hummed along as he played several Christmas tunes on his button box. Sue and Rich definitely put us in the Christmas mood.



Rich Samec shared a video of the group Godba Dobropolje.

January found us virtually touring the iconic Julian H. Sleeper House and Museum in St. Paul with Dr. Seth Hawkins under the technical assistance of Vince Chase. An honorary member of Twin Cities Slovenians and resident museum curator, Dr. Hawkins opened the Sleeper House in May of 1996. Entering there is a step back in time to the 19th century with furniture and decorations true to the Victorian Period. After a five-day central European tour with a stop in Slovenia, Dr. Hawkins became a lifetime devotee and vowed to add an exhibition of Slovenian culture to the museum.

Strolling through the myriad of displays with Dr. Hawkins, we encountered Kurentovanje masks, antique postcards of Postojna cave, photos and maps of Ljubljana, Piran, Ptuj and others. We saw Slovenian flags, umbrellas, native dress, and much more. We all look forward to the day when we can return in person and share a cup of tea with Dr.

Hawkins. Until then, this was just like being there.

In addition to our meetings, our Slovenian language classes continue via Zoom and our monthly Saturday Zoom coffee hours are a popular way of connecting. Wow! Twin Cities Slovenians gives me a lot to write about in each report!



Dr. Seth Hawkins on video in the Julian Sleeper House.

Let's stay healthy--*Ostanimo zdravi!*

ELAINE BARTHELEMY

There are many SUA members in Milwaukee's Branch 43 who were celebrating this past November. Members Denise Bartlett, Keith Johnstone, Betty Ann Kolesari, and Judy Rechlitz, all first cousins, and several second cousins, excitedly and proudly told their community of a relative's accomplishment while representing the Republic of Slovenia. Bernarda, their first cousin, twice removed, is married to Boštjan Škrlec, who was elected Vice-President of the European Union's Eurojust, located in The Hague. Perhaps SUA members may remember his attendance at SUA's National Convention in Milwaukee in 2011.

The Eurojust news release stated this:

Mr. Boštjan Škrlec elected
Vice-President of Eurojust

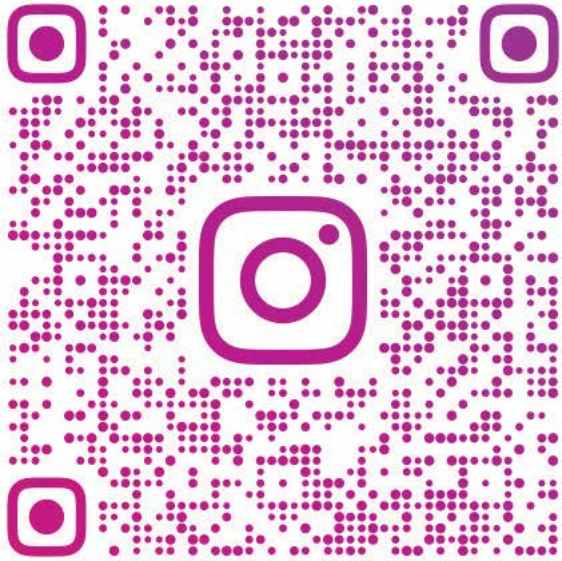
17 November 2020 | **PRESS RELEASE**

Mr. Boštjan Škrlec, National Member for Slovenia, has today been elected Eurojust Vice-President. Mr. Škrlec has been representing the Slovenian judiciary at Eurojust since



2017 and will serve a mandate of four years. Last month, Mr. Ladislav Hamran was re-elected President of Eurojust while in November last year Mr. Klaus Meyer-Cabri had already been reconfirmed in his role as the other Eurojust Vice-President.

SUA is now on Instagram!



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KSKJ Life, American Slovenian Catholic Union, is an Illinois fraternal benefit society located at 2439 Glenwood Ave., Joliet, IL 60435. 2020.07.Z



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