

Zarja

Official Publication Slovenian Union of America
Uradno Glasilo Slovenske Zveze v Ameriki

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Volume 92 Issue 4
Winter 2020

The Dawn

Holy Trinity Bells New Home at St. Malachy Church Brownsburg, Indiana

It was important... people who haven't been out of their houses or gone to church since March were there... when the bells rang out, it was amazing. And to see them ringing, that was incredible!! Knowing our grandparents bought those bells, the pride was felt throughout the crowd.

*Phyllis Fon, Branch 5
Indianapolis, Indiana*



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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 January 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

Annual SUA Board Meeting

The annual spring meeting was canceled awaiting July 2020. During this time, frequent email and phone conversations were the method of communication. As the date neared, it was obvious there could be no meeting in Joliet, so the agenda was divided into three separate sessions for monthly Zoom board meetings. The board met on August 29, October 3, and October 17. The Member Representative meeting was held on November 7. Both phone and Zoom platforms were used.

Baraga Days

My gratitude to Georgene Agnich who recorded the dialogue for the Baraga PowerPoint presentation shown during Virtual Baraga Days 2020. While it was a learning experience for Georgene, she became excited when realizing the potential for future branch meetings. To view the presentations on the Internet, here is the link: <https://bishopbaraga.org/baraga-days/>.

From Frances Kovatovich

Tina and Tommy Bajda gifted me with fresh French tarragon at church yesterday morning. They gave me five huge sprigs, and I used them all up. I quickly put the tarragon to good use and made the pehtranova potica recipe from *The Slovenian-American Table*. The recipe worked like a charm without any tweaking. The dough rolled out to the exact measurements as stated in the recipe! It was amazing dough! The recipe was spot on, right down to the bake time. I would like to try using chives.

Two weeks later: I subbed fresh chives in the tarragon potica recipe. The results were great! You certainly came up with a winning recipe. (See page 140-141, *The Slovenian-American Table*.) See page 5 of this issue to order your copy.



Become an AmazonSmile customer!

The Slovenian Union of America is now registered with AmazonSmile. Look for the AmazonSmile logo on products. Just browse, order, and you will be giving to the SUA. AmazonSmile Foundation donates 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to the Slovenian Union of America.

Feature Friday

So many phone calls, letters, email, texts on receiving Feature Friday! Thank you for the support. I would like to thank Rick Mutz, the SUA Membership Manager, who sets each article for mailing. Every Friday at 8:00 a.m. the Fea-



ture Friday emails begin going out in batches, and by 9:00 a.m. they are in your mailbox.

Kati Gorton sent in the cucumber salad and her comment!

Feature Friday rocks!
Katie ❤️



From Zarja December, 1976

It is a pleasure to repeat Marie Prisland’s recipe for Pink Tea which is served with potica or cookies all year round. It is especially enjoyable on a cold night when returning from Christmas Eve Midnight Mass.

Kuhano vino, as it was called in Slovenia, was renamed “Pink Tea” at a party some 90+ years ago by the members of Branch 1 - Sheboygan.

- 1 pint of red wine
- 1 pint of water
- 1 stick of cinnamon
- 1 whole clove
- 1 slice lemon (cut crosswise)
- Sugar to taste (1/3 to 1/2 cup)

Bring above to boil, remove cinnamon, clove, and fruit slices. Serve hot with cookies or potica.

To the Twin City Slovenians:

I received your 2021 calendar. The calendar has beautiful photography, all Slovenian special days, and treasured Slovenian inserts! What time and effort to place these special Slovenian days on a 365 day calendar. It is obvious the Twin City Slovenians are proud of their heritage.



In the year’s merriest of seasons, we wish you and your family a Merry Christmas. We pray the New Year 2021 will bring a message of goodwill to you, to your immediate family, and to the world’s family. May the bell ringing bring in the New Year and then ring again throughout the world when the planet is relieved of the likes of the virus. May we again wish you a very blessed and merry Christmas and a New Year filled with hope.

Slovenian Union National Board

2020 Educational Grant Recipients

The SUA Educational Grant is awarded to quality students who are furthering their education. The grant is to be used for college expenses other than tuition.

Congratulations to each student!

Branch 2

Nicole Hozzian
Ashley Kuhel

Branch 108

Alexander Pleskovic Kenda

Branch 109

Connor Ellis
Dylan Ellis

Branch 111

Mia Krevh
Rachel Krevh

Dear Members,

The year 2020 is coming to an end. It is a year beyond understanding, frightful and filled with sorrow. And then another degree of sorrow was before me. The State of the Union I was readying to send off to Bonnie and Debbie was nowhere to be found. So I began again.

The holiday season 2020 is upon us. I urge us all to look to the Christmas season with joy. These haunting months that sequestered families together in the kitchen cooking and baking did confront COVID-19. It was found to be most gratifying finding something tangible when a loaf of homemade bread or a tray of our Slovenian Medenjaki cookies was produced. It became more gratifying when the Medenjaki became a gift, making someone feel special. For we all know, with each gift given, be it a wrapped and ribboned box or a smile and a greeting, one becomes a better version of oneself.

From my heart, I wish you a blessed Advent season as you gather around the family wreath in joyful anticipation of the birth of our Savior. A Blessed and Merry Christmas to you all!

**Sincerely,
Mary Lou**

Calling all writers, poets, and essayists!



The Slovenian Union of America
Opens Submissions for the

2021 Slovenian Literary Award
to Recognize and Promote Writers
of Slovenian Heritage.

Accepting submissions at <https://slovenianunion.org/sua-literary-award>

Thank you

Thank you to the many who showed concern for Gene's and my safety during Hurricane Sally. Yes, it was an experience. No, we did not have time to leave. The slow-moving storm heading toward Mississippi/Louisiana abruptly turned to the Alabama/Florida Panhandle in the middle of the night.

It rained for four days and nights prior to center of the storm hitting us. Sally was moving 1-2 miles per hour, pounding the areas as it crept. During this entire storm, we received over 25 inches of rain which left the ground saturated. With winds gusting up to 121 mph, with Sally moving at 1-2 mph, and with the saturated ground, trees fell; on Glen Lakes Golf Course alone, 350 trees fell. This did not include the residential areas. Thousands of trees, including southern pine and pecan trees fell. Destruction was massive in the entire area and along the Alabama and Florida Panhandle coast. Lawns were torn up with the falling trees, some landing on the nearby homes. Windows were broken. Roof shingles were flying off. After the storm, shingles from houses down the street were found in our yard. We could tell by the color of the shingle. Each area had their own storm depending on how close the area was to the Gulf of Mexico. The beach was pounded, and houses and businesses were gone, leaving no trace. Everything flooded from the storm surge.

Winter 2020

Sally? I woke to a dull, continual moan. I opened the front door, and the dull moan became amplified, sounding like five freight trains coming down a track and powered by sustained winds at 112 mph. That sound went on for four hours.

Our all-house generator, which has a maintenance plan, failed to turn on; thus we had no electricity for five days. I will not expound on the temperament in the Voelk house! Rugs were piled inside the deep freeze. A 19 lb. turkey was a wonderful ice cube in the garage freezer. Gas grills were the only source of cooking other than the gas cooktop in my kitchen. We pooled our defrosted food with neighbors and ate what we had. We were all in bed by 7:00 p.m., the sun had set, and it became pitch black.

My advice to anyone that is in the path of a vicious storm, be it rain or snow: Get to the store and buy some frozen turkeys! They are the best giant ice cubes around. Can you believe, my turkey never defrosted. We will be eating it on Thanksgiving.

FEMA is unbelievable! The storm moved on, and FEMA was there. It has been one month since the storm, and clean up continues, as does rebuilding and repairing. Heaps of trees, roofing, sheet rock, insulation, and furniture are piled on the lawns' edges. It is a marvel to see a community at work! Most of all, we were all safe.

Sincerely,
Mary Lou

In Memory of George Plautz

George Plautz had been working on the SUA Archival Records Program and had submitted the following information and request form for publication. As the *Zarja* goes to press, it is with heartfelt sadness we now report the loss of our friend, George. He was an integral part of the SUA - a board member, a contributor to *Zarja*, and a genealogist.

SUA Archival Records

The former Slovenian Women's Union was founded in 1926 to provide social commerce among women regarding their experiences in America. Along with the founding of this organization, there was another purpose: to provide a monetary sum upon the death of an active member. Throughout the years, all applications for membership were filed. Upon death, a copy of the deceased member's death certificate was added to the file. Providing a death benefit was eliminated during the SUA convention held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 2011.

Along the way, progress occurred. The organization became the Slovenian Union of America, and with its continued mission to safeguard heritage, the filed documents were scanned. Now SUA is able to provide this priceless piece of heritage to family historians, genealogists, and family members. All records are searchable.

The documents include all or some of the following:

- Application for membership
- Cancelled checks, both sides
- IZKAZNICA, a membership form with seal
- Uncertified genealogical copy of the original death certificate and/or NAZNANILO SMRTI (announcement of death)

The paper used in printing these documents is bonded and will not yellow or discolor. Each sheet has a visible watermark with a lifetime of 300 years if stored properly. Documents will be placed in an inert polypropylene protector that will not crack, scratch, or tear. The cost of each package is \$25. If you are able to receive mail digitally via email, the cost will then be \$10.

Payment can be made through the SUA website using PayPal or by check sent to the main office at Slovenian Union of America, Attn: Georgene Agnich, 431 North Chicago Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432-1703. Even if payment is through PayPal, you must mail the form below to the main office. Be sure to check PayPal. If records cannot be located, your payment will be returned. Call Mary Lou Voelk (715.292.1960) with any questions.

REQUEST FOR ANCESTRAL RECORD

Slovenian Union of America
Attn: Georgene Agnich
431 Joliet Avenue
Joliet, Illinois 60432-1703

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

I request a search of records for the following person:

Name: _____ Branch Number: _____

Date of Death: _____ Location: _____

Relationship: _____ Other Surnames: _____

Why do we post decals on our car and truck windows or our laptops?

Answer: The decals' markings identify the interests of the driver or laptop owner. A car with a decal is a moving tee shirt, driving the roads while telling the world that there's a Slovenian American in the vehicle! All proceeds will benefit the 2023 convention in Colorado. A reminder: There are safety rules for posting decals on car windows. Find the rules for your state here: <https://drivinglaws.aaa.com/tag/windshield-stickers/>.

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Cost
SUA Sticker: 5" (W)		\$10.00	
Laptop Chicken Sticker: 2½" x 3" (L x W) (Indoor only)		\$5.00	
Laptop Dragon Sticker: 3" x 5" (L x W) (Indoor only)		\$5.00	
S&H: <i>Included for all items.</i>		Total	

Shipping Information:

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Mail checks here: Denise P. Bartlett, 5275 S. 15th Place, Milwaukee, WI 53220



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

Shipping Information:

Name: _____

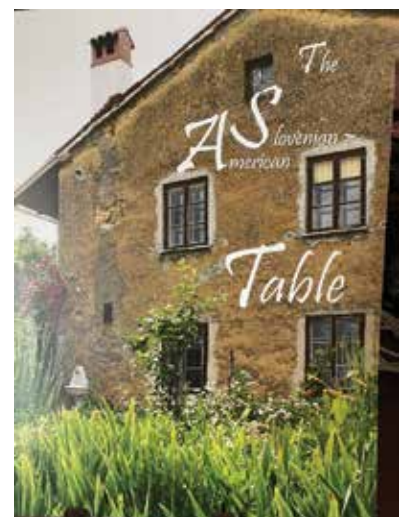
Street: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

\$30 each *Includes 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!

\$300 Donation

Mary Lou Feroni, 35 Educational Grant
+Olga Feroni (Branch 023)

\$200 Donation

Mary Lou Feroni, 35 Cultural Grant
+Olga Feroni (Branch 023)

\$50 Donation

David Setnicker, 109 Cultural Grant
+Margaret Setnicker
Joseph Zefran, 2 SUA
Kathryn Furdeck, 20 Building Improvements
Staci Gierich +Sandy Hartley

\$45 Donation

Vlasta Knapic, 30 SUA

\$30 Donation

Dr. Mary Priland, 1 Cookbook

\$25 Donation

Jessica Taylor, 30 SUA

\$20 Donation

Pam Jankowiak, 43
+John & Frances (Vodnik) Selich
Branch 43 +Karen Janezic & Linda Saje

\$10 Donation

Karen Lockard, 111 +Angela Gruden

SUA Collegiate Scholarship:

*For your journey down
the education road.*

SUA Cultural Grant:

*For historical research; for
sponsoring heritage activities.*

For Applications: slovenianunion.org

New Members

Welcome - Dobrodošli

Strukel, Frank, 001
Strukel, Virginia, 001
Dewer, Kylie, 002
Elterich, A, 003
Skakich-Scrima, Sonia, 003
Zorc, Paula, 003
Lawler, Donna, 020
Oziemkowski, Julie, 020
Tracy, Judith, 023
Anzelc, Raymond, 030
Beckley, Christopher, 030
Davis, Kathi, 030
Giannetto, Annetta, 030
Harley, Robert, 030
Hribar, Lawrence J., 030
Imamovic, Alma, 030
Iraneta, Donna, 030
Juran Kulesza, Sonia, 030
Knaus, Doug, 030
Kokalj-Filipovic, Silvija, 030
Meyers, Kathleen, 030
Nemanic, Ava, 030
Suggs, Joseph, 030
Suhadolnik, Christine, 030
Terselich, Metka, 030
Tinuviel, Kim, 030
Velez, Anna, 030
Tobon, Laura, 043
Ferrara, Gabriella, 093
Hanley, Sean, 093
Papciak, Mary Beth, 093
Brown-Lorenz, Annemarie, 100
Elliot, Margaret-Ann, 100
Elliott, Lisa, 100
Franca-Serpa, Brenda, 100
Horvat, Monika, 100
Inglis, Rex, 100
Leksan, Michael Kent, 100
Shobar, Christopher, 100
Wilkman, Alexis, 100
Baraga Persian, Kathleen, 109
Kmet, Josephine, 111
Schultz, Scott, 111



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:
 Name: _____
 Branch Number and Location: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
 Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

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



BECOME A MEMBER OF SUA TODAY!

Benefits of Membership

- √ **Receive quarterly issues of *Zarja - The Dawn* magazine** that highlights Slovenia, its rich heritage, culture, traditions, recipes, and more.
- √ **Participate in local branch activities** which promote “Keeping the Slovenian Spirit Alive.”
- √ **Educational Grant and Cultural Grant Opportunities.**
- √ **Research** both of SUA’s historical and genealogical resources - the *Ivana Project* and the *Matti Register*, both long-term scanning projects of member documents since 1926.
- √ **Visit SUA’s website** with links to numerous Slovenian-American interests.
- √ **Visit SUA’s free Heritage Museum** in Joliet, Illinois, with Slovenian heritage exhibits and library.

New Member Application

Annual Member Support is payable each January and covers the period January through December.
Membership Renewal Notifications are sent annually in December.

- Adult (\$30 Member Support/*Zarja* Subscription) Junior – Birth to 18 (\$5 Member Support)
- International (\$55 Member Support/*Zarja* Subscription)

It is our policy to send one issue of *Zarja* to each address unless requested otherwise.

Please print the requested information below and send this application form with a check payable to:
Slovenian Union of America, 431 N. Chicago Street, Joliet, IL 60432-1703

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ M ___ F ___

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Branch Affiliation Number (if known): _____ Location: _____

Maiden Name: _____ Do you speak Slovenian? _____

Please describe your interest in Slovenia: _____

Slovenian Surnames (if applicable): _____

How did you hear about us? SUA member ___ newspaper ___ website ___ other _____

I would like to volunteer for the SUA. My area of interest or expertise is: _____

Applicant’s signature: _____ **Date:** _____

SUA operates exclusively for charitable, educational, and religious purposes
within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

SUA Branch 3 *Slovenian Heritage Essay Contest*

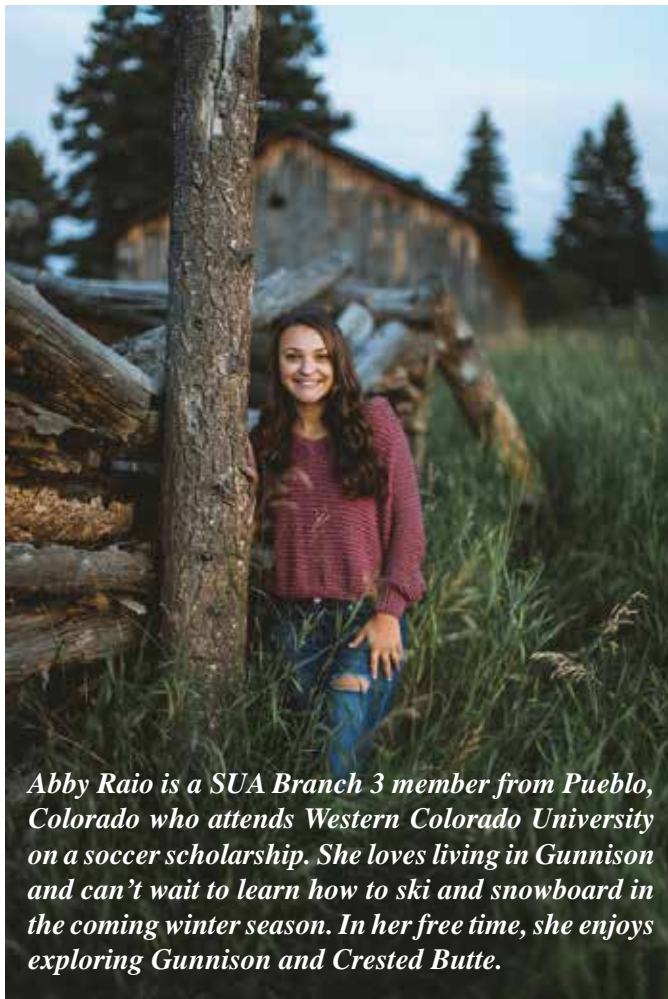
This past year, SUA Branch 3 sponsored the Slovenian Heritage Essay Contest to engage younger individuals in their Slovenian community and to capture and document the Slovenian heritage of Slovenia-American communities using an intergenerational activity. Prizes were available for both middle school and high school essay writers with a Colorado connection. Branch 3 received a Cultural Grant from the national SUA (see forms on the SUA website <https://slovenianunion.org/grants>) to help fund the contest. Two bus trips to the casinos in Cripple Creek sponsored by the Branch 3 Heritage Committee also provided monetary support needed for the contest and other branch heritage events.

The basis of each essay was an intergenerational activity in which essay writers interviewed a Slovenian-American relative or member of their community. The writers' original research consisted of gathering information on Slovenian heritage by talking with Slovenian-Americans who lived during the first half of the 20th century or who had knowledge of this era from family stories. Notes taken from these conversations were the basis of written essays. References from books or the Internet were not allowed.

The contest was announced in late 2019 with a deadline of April 1, 2020. Unfortunately, the pandemic severely hampered essay submissions. Many middle school and high school students who planned to submit an essay were suddenly confronted with online school and social isolation due to COVID-19 Stay-at-Home orders. Nevertheless, a few students submitted entries, and first and second place high school winners were identified. The first-place essay submitted by Branch 3 member Abby Raio of Pueblo is featured in this issue of *Zarja*. The second-place essay was written by SUA Branch 3 Junior Member Jillian Parsons of Overland Park, Kansas. Both essays will be posted on the SUA website in early January 2021: <https://slovenianunion.org/>.

Branch 3 hopes to collaborate with other SUA branches for a national heritage essay contest leading up to the 2023 SUA Convention scheduled for June 15 - 17 in Pueblo, Colorado.

*Annette Charron
SUA Vice President
SUA Branch 3 Member*



Abby Raio is a SUA Branch 3 member from Pueblo, Colorado who attends Western Colorado University on a soccer scholarship. She loves living in Gunnison and can't wait to learn how to ski and snowboard in the coming winter season. In her free time, she enjoys exploring Gunnison and Crested Butte.



Jillian Parsons is currently a Junior at Blue Valley Southwest High School located in Overland Park, Kansas. She really enjoys reading and writing. She has always loved these two activities because they allow her to explore her creative side. She thanks her grandmother, Bernice Krasovec (a Branch 3 member who lives in Pueblo, Colorado), who inspires Jillian every day to write and follow her dreams!

First-place essay submitted by Abby Raio

One of my favorite things to do in the summer every year is to drive to Rye, Colorado with my mom and sisters to attend the Bojon* Picnic. My friends have always asked, “What is a Bojon Picnic?” Of course, I am talking about the “picnics” put on in June and August of every summer by the Preseren Glee Club. However, these events are more than just picnics. There is food, music, dancing, horseshoes, face painting, and other general frivolity. I can remember splashing around in the creek when I was little and still enjoy watching the younger kids do so today.



The path to the creek at Preseren Dom in Rye.

I spoke with my grandma and grandpa to see how all of this merriment began. The Preseren Glee Club was established in 1906 as a way to celebrate and share the Slovenian culture and music. I knew it had been around for a long time but was surprised to learn that the club is over 110 years old and still going strong!

According to my grandparents, there was a large immigration influx of people of Slovenian heritage in the late 1800s



Preseren Dom in Rye, Colorado.

to the early 1900s. These immigrants came to America in search of a better future. Many settled in Pueblo, Colorado because Pueblo had the smelters and steel mill back then, and the Slovenians who immigrated were willing to work hard to earn this future. While happy to be in America, the Slovenians wanted to preserve their heritage and customs. To this end, a group of singers formed the glee club. One of the original members' wives accompanied them on the organ. They sang mostly Slovenian songs and religious songs, as most of the Slovenians were Catholic. Rehearsals for the club were held at Saint Mary's Church. Also, the club donated money toward the construction of Saint Aloysius Catholic Church in Rye, where the choir still performs today.

The club was open to those without vocal talent as well. The members named their new glee club after France Preseren, a famous and respected Slovenian poet. When I researched Mr. Preseren, I immediately recognized his picture from the portrait hanging in the Preseren home in Rye. I have never paid close attention to the portrait, but my grandma said it has been hanging in the home for as long as she could remember. After further research on Mr. Preseren, I discovered that one of his famous poems is now Slovenia's National Anthem.

My grandpa mentioned to me that his grandpa, Frank Brayda, was the 50th member of Preseren. My grandpa's brother and three nephews are all current members of Preseren. Although not a member himself, my grandpa has fond memories of celebrating his Slovenian culture in Rye at the Preseren home. The home was built in 1929,

* EDITOR'S NOTE: "Bojon" (pronounced "bojohn") is a colloquial term used in Pueblo to refer to Eastern Europeans, especially Slovenians. Here is a link to the peculiarities of Pueblo Slovenians and other Eastern Europeans from Pueblo Independent Magazine on its Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/puebloindependent/posts/traditional-pueblo-bojon-food-klobasi-aka-klosbasa-and-kielbasa-pueblo-is-a-melt/2217304831651509/>

has three floors, was built on the property owned by one of the original members, and is still standing solid today. The first floor has a kitchen and dining area and a bar. My grandpa remembers card games being a large part of the entertainment of the “Old Bojons.” He remembers a game called “sluff” but couldn’t remember the rules or how to play. At the Preseren home, men would play cards in the bar or horseshoes outside, while the women visited and listened to music.

The second and main floor of the home is literally a dance hall with a huge wooden dance floor and a stage. The third floor, which is no longer in use, is another dance floor. My grandma’s dad, my great-grandpa, was a very talented accordion player, according to everyone who remembers him. Unfortunately, he passed away a month after I was born, but I have heard many stories. He could play both the traditional accordion and the button box. His music was often featured at the Preseren picnics. Polkas and waltzes were the music of the day, and my grandparents tell stories of packed dance floors and everyone polkaing with a lot of enthusiasm. I do wish I could have heard my great-grandpa play in person. Luckily, I have listened to cassette tape recordings of him. One cannot help but smile when listening to a Slovenian polka! I try to polka every summer, and while my polka skills are not the best, I can usually get the hang of it again by the end of the song.

My grandparents recalled one particular picnic when they won a dance contest. This happened when they had first started dating, and while they couldn’t remember the details of their winnings, they were sure their friends had



The duck race held at a Preseren Dom picnic.

a hand in “fixing” the contest. They recalled lots of drinks and food, including a pig roast every summer. Today’s picnics no longer include a pig, but the klobasi sandwiches are still a staple. Traditionally, only men have been allowed to be members in the club, but today there are two female “class B” members, according to my grandpa. Slovenian women have always been loyal supporters of the club and mostly help in the kitchen and participate in dancing and the horseshoe tournament. Currently, there are 90 members of Preseren Glee Club. Members must have at least some Slovenian heritage and be voted in. I love how these men are so proud of their culture and work hard to keep it alive!

Bojon picnics have evolved from my grandparents’ day and even from stories that my mom tells. Music, food, and drinking are still prominent components, but a lot of activities have been added for the younger picnic-goers. Now, there is face painting, a playground, and a rubber duck race in the creek. Picnic-goers can purchase rubber ducks, each assigned a number, and the ducks are dumped into the creek and gathered at a finish line a few yards later. The first three winners get a cash prize, and everyone gets to keep the ducks. Of course, this has nothing to do with Slovenian heritage, but it proves that Bojons like to have fun!

Preseren Glee Club and the annual picnics have meant a great deal to my ancestors over the past century. It is pretty amazing that things that brought them joy, such as dancing, eating, the love for polka music, and fellowship with friends, still are celebrated today. I look forward to taking my own children to Preseren someday, watching them play in the creek and learning to polka on the same hardwood dance floor where their Great-Great-Great Grandpa Frank Brayda danced.



Preseren Dom playground during a picnic.

Antonja (Hrovat) Zupan



A Stranger's Act of Kindness

Antonja had left her homeland a few years after World War I came to an end. Her country was no longer under the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy that she grew up in and knew. Its rule had been dismantled.

At the close of the WWI, the Kingdom of Serbia was enlarged and rewarded with the territories of Croatia and Slovenia. The unification of these three Slavic States, despite no common languages, was expected to create a powerful future South Slav State. It was agreed upon by members of the Serbian and Yugoslavian diplomatic committees that the new state would be ruled under a parliamentary monarchy by King Alexander I, of the Serb Karadjordjevic dynasty. The state would be called the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. The unrestful kingdom existed from 1918 to 1941.

It was one of the most diverse and complicated of countries with the dominance of so many varied powers through the centuries.

Amidst all the political and economic uncertainties her country was facing, twenty-five-year-old Antonja Hrovat chose to leave and seek a better life in America. On a cold January day in 1924, she sailed anxiously out of the Port of Le Havre, France. Her passport listed she was bound for the State of Colorado. A few days earlier, she had hugged and said her farewells to family and friends in her home village of Tomažja vas near Novo mesto, Slovenia. Her eventual travel destination was to reunite with her older sister, Marija, whom she hadn't seen for almost ten years. Her sister, now Mrs. Martin Yankovich, and her young family were running a small fruit farm outside of Canon City, Colorado. She had encouraged her sister that there were good marriage prospects among the Slovene immigrants in Colorado. Antonja's steamship, named "Paris," arrived in the Port of New York after traveling eight long days. The voyage was rough; Antonja and many others aboard had stopped eating their meals as they became very nauseous. Many passengers believed that the ship's crew were poisoning them, so many, including Antonja, stopped eating completely. By the time she arrived in New York City, she was starving. Still very weak

and hungry, she processed through customs and waited at the docks to be taken to the train station. She was desperately hungry, but didn't know any English to ask where she could buy food. A Black man walked by her carrying a large stalk of bananas over his shoulder. She knew what the bananas were; she could get them in Slovenia, but she had never before seen a Black person and was apprehensive. The man saw her looking at the bananas and sensed her apprehension, so he approached and handed her some bananas free of charge. The stranger's act of kindness became etched in Antonja's mind. She eventually boarded the train and began the final leg of her voyage, anxious to soon see a familiar face again.

Antonja's sister, Marija, had immigrated much earlier in 1912 and had married Martin Yankovich in Kenmerer, Wyoming. Family members have reason to believe that this was an arranged marriage, which was popular at the time. The immigrant men spent such long hours working in the mines that family members often arranged transportation for a young girl from their home village to consider as a marriage proposition. Martin, a good provider and hardworking miner, was eleven years Marija's

senior. The young Yankovich family had left Wyoming and moved to a fruit farm outside Canon City, Colorado. Apples were a huge developing commodity in Fremont County. At the time her sister met Antonja at the train depot, the Yankovich family had five children and the sixth on the way. Antonja would be a welcome sight and definitely of great help.

Soon after Antonja's arrival, she fell in love with a coal miner from New Mexico who was working the mines in the area. However, it wasn't to be. Her sister had other plans unfolding. She knew of a more suitable and dependable

man for her sister to consider as a better option. A marriage was arranged with Anton Zupan, a blacksmith in the mining town of Chandler, Colorado. He was a frugal man who had saved enough money to purchase a farm. He had immigrated to America in 1903 from his home village in Hotič, a settlement on the banks of the Sava River in the Municipality of Litija in central Slovenia. He was born Anton Zupančič but changed his name to Zupan to sound less like an immigrant. Anton and Antonja wed on October 8, 1924. They moved onto their newly purchased seven acres of farmland near Canon City, just down the road from her

Canon City, founded in 1860, is the seat of Fremont County in south-central Colorado. It is situated near the Royal Gorge of the Arkansas River between the Front Range and Wet Mountains, just north of San Isabel National Forest and 35 miles west of Pueblo.

The town was originally settled to excavate possible mineral deposits in the area. Canon City once competed with Denver to become the capital city of Colorado.



Grandma Zupan in her orchard.

sister's farm. They planted quite a variety of apple and fruit trees. Antonja would give birth to six children – three boys and three girls. She tragically lost her fourth-born child, Elsie, in a drowning accident on the farm. Elsie was out playing in the orchard and fell into the irrigation ditch when she was two years old. A commercial ditch company had constructed enormous, open trunk line ditches that carried water throughout Lincoln County. The farmers dug out the smaller irrigation ditches from those lines. The trunk line ditch was constructed in front of their house at the end of the driveway that she fell into. Such accidents were a common occurrence in those days, but now cement pipes are used. The youngest child to be born was Mary Jane, the mother of Michelle Zupan, the inspiration and co-author for this article.



When Antonja and Anton Zupan took ownership of their small fruit farm, an ugly return of the well-known white supremacy hate group, the Ku Klux Klan, was underfoot. Colorado had few minorities to terrorize, so the Klan turned its attention to Catholics and Eastern

European immigrants, as well as Jews, Hispanics, and Blacks. It was the time of Prohibition, the Depression, and the “Red Scare,” all contributing to a maelstrom of hatred, prejudice, and racism. According to an article published by the Royal Gorge Regional Museum and History Center, there were more than five-hundred men from the local Canon City area who had joined Klan No. 21 under the leadership of Rev. Fred G. Arnold. Rev. Arnold held the title of state leader of Colorado's Klansmen. Colorado boasted the largest and most influential Klan following west of the Mississippi River, and Canon City became the Colorado State Klan Headquarters. The Women's Christian Temperance Union later added to the membership of the Klan in Canon City, increasing the numbers to more than 900. The town had an estimated population of slightly over 4,500. The Zupan fruit farm didn't escape the Klan's harassment. The family drew close when the Klan came to call. On more than one occasion, the Klansmen ransacked the farm looking for illegal alcohol or a still; they burned a cross on the front lawn, and they also nearly kidnapped the oldest girl, Josephine, as she walked to the local grocery.



Ku Klux Klan on a ferris wheel at the Fremont County Fair in Canon City, Colorado.

She always remembered that kindness from the young man who offered her bananas on the docks of Ellis Island.

Despite the hardships, the Zupans stayed. Antonja would not only raise their growing family there but would end up running the fruit farm. It was in the midst of the Depression period, money was scarce, and jobs were difficult to find. Anton had returned to work in blacksmithing, this time for the Colorado State Prison both during and after the Depression. The prison has a long history in Canon City. It was built in January 7, 1868, when the Territorial Legislature declared that such an institution should be established in Colorado at Canon City for the protection of society against offenders of the law. During the period the Zupans were developing their fruit farm, the prison had purchased a canning factory and ninety acres of full-bearing fruit trees, berry plants, and vineyards. By the early 1920s, inmates could also be found working across Fremont County building more than two-thousand miles of roads and living in road camps. After Anton died in 1956, Antonja stayed on the orchard and continued to run it for the next thirty-one years. Her “Zupan apples” were legendary and people came from miles around every fall. She always remembered that kindness from the young man who offered her bananas on the docks of Ellis Island. Despite living in Canon City, which operated as a “sundown town” for far too long, Anton and Antonja Zupan had Black customers at their apple orchard. Multiple generations of the same family would come year after year. Antonja always held back the prettiest apples for those

customers and gave them a good price. It was her way of repaying the incredible kindness of a stranger carrying bananas on the dock who offered her sustenance so many years ago.

Antonja’s granddaughter, Michelle Zupan, shared that Antonja was a devout Catholic, rarely missing Mass. “*Woe-be-tide*” if you sat next to her at Midnight Mass and started to doze off because a sharp elbow would find its way into your rib! Prior to every meal a Hail Mary and Pater Noster were recited. Prayers for the dead were said when the radio reported a plane crash or hurricane deaths. Antonja’s proudest day was on November 15, 1941, when she became a naturalized U.S. Citizen. She never missed the opportunity to vote, a practice she instilled in her children and grandchildren. Antonja never spoke Slovenian after her marriage, but she did continue to make potica and what she called “city potica,” a cheese strudel, until the last year of her life. She became hooked on soap operas in the 1960s. After a couple of years of watching her soaps, she decided it was sinful and went to confession. She never watched TV again! Antonja passed away on September 2, 1987, after having suffered a stroke while cleaning out irrigation ditches on the farm; she was 88 years young. The two Hrovat sisters, Marija and Antonja, and many of their family members are forever together in Lakeside Cemetery, Canon City, Colorado. The families are buried in nearby sections. Marija Hrovat Yankovich died in 1949; her husband, Martin, died in 1965. Antonja’s husband, Anton, passed away in 1952.



*Family Portrait (left to right):
Joseph, Josephine, Antonja, Carl, and Anthony.*

Na zdravje to Mary Rizner Glaize who tipped us off about this interesting entry submitted on Antonja Zupan through the SUA’s Facebook page. She thought I just might want to explore this story more in depth. She was absolutely spot-on! Mary is the go-getter editor behind the SUA Facebook site. She lives in Orlando, Florida, but her hometown is Slovenian-heavy Forest City, Pennsylvania. She is a member of Branch 30. If you have any items to place on the FB page, email her at tankandfrog@yahoo.com.

Sveta Noč

Translation done in 1871 by Jakob Aljaž

Sveta noč, blažena noč
vse že spi, je polnoč
le devica z Jožefom tam
v hlevcu varje detece nam
spavaj dete sladkó
spavaj dete sladkó

Sveta noč, blažena noč
prišla je k nam pomoč
dete božje v jasliah leži
grešni zemlji radost deli
rojen je rešenik
rojen je rešenik

Sveta noč, blažena noč
radostno pevajoč
angeli gospoda slave
mir ljudem na zemlji želé
človek zdaj si otet
človek zdaj si otet



Silent Night

-by Bonnie Pohar Prokup and Debbie Pohar

Over 200 years ago in a small village, just over the current Germany border with Austria and a two-hour drive north of the Slovenian border, a song for world peace was composed. “Silent Night” still to this day offers comfort and hope with its peaceful words that touch the soul. It was written in 1816 by a young priest in Austria, Joseph Mohr, not long after the Napoleonic wars had taken their toll on the area. The music to the poem was not composed until 1818 by Franz Gruber in the small village of Oberndorf bei Salzburg on the Salzach River.

The St. Nicholas Church organ was destroyed during a flood. Looking for music for their Christmas Eve Mass, Father Mohr asked Franz Gruber, a local schoolmaster and organist, to compose a melody to his poem that would be accompanied by guitar.

The original St. Nicholas Church that “Silent Night” premiered in was eventually destroyed due to repeated

flooding from the Salzach River and was replaced with the Silent Night Chapel that exists today.

Soon the Rainers and Strassers, well-known traveling families of singers, started to spread “Silent Night” throughout Europe and abroad. The first known presentation in the United States, sung in German, was at New York City’s Trinity Church. It is also rumored that on the battlefield during World War I, during a temporary truce on Christmas Eve, soldiers from both sides began singing “Silent Night” together. It has been translated into over 300 different languages.

While traveling on a tour with St. Bede Academy and Abbott Phillip, we visited the Silent Night Chapel. Our story is one that we have told many times since. It was in October on a cold drizzly day. Our Slovenian tour guide, Urban Soban, told us that we had a slight problem. As we crossed over the Germany border nearing the chapel, the



bus driver notified him that we could not get the coach close to the chapel. The only place he could stop was a good mile away, and we would have to walk along the river bank in the rain to get there.

Well of course the chapel was high on our list to see. No one seemed to mind having to walk a bit, but we had two elderly ladies with us that were bound and determined they were coming along. As we arrived at the chapel, there were two people inside. Adding our group of twenty filled the chapel. Then to our amazement, Urban pulled out his guitar. Through all the commotion, none of us realized he was carrying it. He started to sing “Silent Night” first in German, as it was originally sung, then in English, and finally in Slovenian.

This was a treat that we will never forget. No one moved; we were mesmerized by hearing the beautiful melody and lyrics. Remembering we still had the long walk back to the bus, we started to gather our belongings. Our two elderly ladies informed us that they could not walk back. Urban, to no avail, tried calling taxi cabs, Ubers, and our bus driver. No one was available or able to come. Was it divine intervention that those two people still sitting in the chapel understood English and offered to drive the two ladies to our bus?

We soon met back at our bus and were on our way to Ljubljana for a Slovenian adventure. We do hope that the

Winter 2020



couple that helped us in our time of need know how much we appreciated them. Why they stayed in the chapel when our large group came, we will never know. All we know is they felt like angels sent from heaven.

“Silent Night” suggests peace and goodwill to all. A song that has crossed many borders and difficult times still connects us no matter our ethnicity, age, or religion.



Urban Soban is a Slovenian tourist guide. He was our guide on the ZarjaFest Road Trip Through the Homeland 2018 Tour and will be the guide on the upcoming June 2021 I Love Slovenia Tour.



Slovenian Union of America

Across America - Branch Reports

BRANCH 1 - Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Contact Information: Mary Ann Schellinger
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*2020 was the year,
To celebrate with joy and cheer.
And then there came a silent bug
That entered as a big, bad thug.
It hid in every nook and space
And took its toll on every race.*

*We tried and tried to do our best
But too many lives were laid to rest.*

*Stores were closed and jobs were lost
This was done at a very high cost.*

*So while we stayed 6 feet apart
We kept each other close in our heart.*

*Soon this year will be over and done
And we look forward to 2021*

*Good health and peace we wish to all
As Slovenians we keep standing tall.*

Hello from all our members of SUA Branch 1. We hope that you all of you are staying safe and healthy.

MARY ANN SCHELLINGER



BRANCH 3 - Pueblo, Colorado

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Branch 3 continues to deal with the effects of our governor's Covid-19 restrictions regarding gatherings, so we haven't had a meeting or hosted an event since early March. The church hall where we meet is still closed, and we cannot make plans for our annual Christmas luncheon at a local restaurant. Hopes of having a get-together this past summer in the Denver area so that we could connect with our Northern Colorado members had to be scrapped. Hopefully, the New Year will allow us to turn the page on this isolation! If not, we will definitely consider branch meetings this spring under the big, beautiful shade trees at City Park where members can bring their own chairs and snacks while connecting with Slovenian friends, and maybe we can have an outdoor event in the Denver area if the virus is still too potent for indoor meetings. Branch 3 members continue to keep in touch by telephone and by meeting in outdoor settings such as the Riverwalk where we can socially distance while enjoying a drink with a few friends at a restaurant patio. The branch also sent out postcards to all Branch 3 members to let them know we are thinking of them. The postcards were designed by Christine Charron, and if any other branches would like a digital copy of the design, please contact us. Stay well, and have a glorious Christmas and a blessed New Year!

ANNETTE SABO CHARRON & M. T. KARLINGER



BRANCH 5 – Indianapolis, Indiana

Greetings Branch 5 Members! A new year is upon us, hopefully with a promise of a full recovery, a lifting of restrictions, and a return to a normal way of life. Have you missed the daily interactions with friends and family as much as I have? Tired of all the “is this trip really necessary” thinking? In a way, I guess all this quarantine time has made me more organized, making lists instead of just aimlessly wandering thru the grocery store, doing so many things promptly instead of putting off until tomorrow. Pretty boring!

Our annual Christmas dinner at Iron Skillet was cancelled, but we are looking to reschedule for spring. Watch for a mailing with more info.

Thank you to all who attended the scaled back Slovenian National Home Picnic! Good food, polka music and indoor/outdoor seating on a perfect weather day. Great way to social distance socialize!

A big thank you to all who came to or ordered carry out at our SUA Lasagna Dinner at the Nash. We sold over 30 dinners to benefit the day-to-day costs of the Nash. The Nash needs a new beer tap system for the bar, so donate if you can! We are trying to do dinners again on a regular basis each Friday night, so please plan on stopping by and joining us or on taking a dinner home. Every little bit helps!

Dr. John P. Vidmar, Honorary Consul Consulate of the Republic of Slovenia



our Slovenian community who are quarantined alone. Mental health is so important during this quarantine... show someone you care!

Lastly, I would like to thank so many of our members who have told me how much they enjoy receiving and reading the *Zarja* and how much they appreciate the time and efforts we put into

The Holy Trinity Bells are up in their new tower and ringing across the countryside surrounding St. Malachy Church, their new home! Come out to Brownsburg and see the beautiful bells!!

Please continue to pray for our older members and our members battling sickness and poor health. Keep in contact with a note or a phone call to those in

Mr. Paul Barbarich



Indianapolis KSKJ Officers Angie Cuson and Jennifer Velikan join John Vidmar and Paul Barbarich at Holy Trinity Bell Tower dedication.

Holy Trinity marble medallion at base of Bell Tower!



preserving the history and heritage of the Indianapolis Slovenian Community in Haughville. Even though our SUA Branch 5 has evolved into just a social club, we are still very much involved in all the remaining Slovenian groups and events here in Indy! Thank you all for your continued support and participation! “If everything is rescheduled to 2021, what a wonderfully busy year we will have!” May you have a Happy and Blessed New Year!

MARY, KAREN & PHYLLIS

BRANCH 20 - Joliet, Illinois

Contact Information: Georgene Agnich
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We extend our sympathy to the family of member Jean Herbst, who passed away on August 8, 2020; to member Patricia Butterbach and her family in the loss of her husband Dick on September 13, 2020; and to member John Lukancic and his family in the loss of his wife Anna Mae on October 7, 2020.

We mailed a newsletter to all members on August 31, 2020, informing everyone that we will hold no Branch 20 meetings or activities through December 2020 or beyond because of the Covid-19 pandemic. We included raffle tickets with the newsletter, and your participation in our annual mail-in Fall Raffle has been excellent! A great big "thank you" goes out to all of you for your generous and loving support of Branch 20 during these difficult times. The names of the three cash prize raffle winners, to be drawn at SUA's home office on October 20, will appear in the spring issue of *Zarja*.

Member Georgene Agnich was honored to narrate "Bishop Baraga's Relationship to Cross River," a presentation created by SUA National President Mary Lou Voelk for "Virtual Baraga Days 2020."

Sophomore Brooke Johnston, daughter of Branch 20 member Joanna Johnston and granddaughter of Branch 20 member Dorothy Mahan, is rehearsing her solo of a traditional Slovenian folk song from the Prekmurje region, "Zrejšo je zito" ("Wheat is Ripe"), for her voice class virtual recital at Lake Zurich High School in late November 2020.

We extend "Congratulations" to Bob and Pat Figurowski on their 59th wedding anniversary celebrated on October 7, 2020.

Local members attended the 10 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church on All Saints Day.

Branch 20 purchased 10 wreaths in the annual "Wreaths Across America" project that places Christmas wreaths on the graves of veterans in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery near Joliet.

Best Wishes to all our members for a happy and holy Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year, as we persevere and pray for an end to the pandemic and a return to joyful normal life.

GEORGENE AGNICH

BRANCH 23 - Ely, Minnesota

As I am writing this, it is September. There is a brrr in the air!!! The colder temps are here warning us that winter is on its way. The leaves are beautiful! Colors are glorious! Hope you had a chance to get out and take a drive and enjoy them. I know many of us are tired of being cooped up during this pandemic, so maybe a change of scenery helped perk you up.

We held our first meeting since February on September

15. There were many items to discuss. Many plans are in the making! Hopefully, we can carry out what we plan.

Professor Klemenc is planning to visit at the end of May or the beginning of June 2021. He has added more to his book on Slovenians of Ely and the Iron Range. The pandemic has kept him from traveling to the United States from Slovenia. Hopefully he will be able to make it this time.

When they tore down the old Catholic Church here in Ely, the bells were saved and used in the new church. Mary Lou Voelk will be receiving an article and photos to put on the SUA Facebook site from President Koski. I hear them ring out the time of day at my house!

Taste of Slovenia is planned for Saturday August 7, 2021. If we cannot have it, a notice will be sent out in



June of 2021. We are still selling cookbooks. We are also selling hot pads and towel sets with a scrubbie. The cookbooks are \$10 plus \$5 for shipping. The hot pads, towels, and a scrubbie are sold as sets for \$25 and \$5 for shipping. No color choices on

scrubbies. Send payments to Mary Ann Lekatz, P.O. Box 671, Ely, MN, 55731. We still have a few of the awesome Slovenian Cook and Minnesota Slovene towels and hot pads left. We will not be ordering these again. We are ordering Love in Every Slovenian and Slovenian Roots. These are examples of the new inscriptions.



Our St. Nicholas Day program usually held in the beginning of December has been cancelled this year due to the pandemic. Every year it has been a great success. This pandemic has put a halt to a lot of things!!!

As this comes out in December, we want to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy Healthy New Year. Hope Santa is good to you all! God bless you all! Stay safe.

CHOSTIE HARRI

Zarja - The Dawn

BRANCH 24 - LaSalle, Illinois

Zivijo! We did have a meeting in July to plan events for the remainder of 2020, but that event was eventually cancelled out of concern for our members.

Debbie Pohar is again planning Branch 24's annual All Soul's Day St. Vincent's Cemetery Walk on November 1. Following Covid-19 and social distancing protocols, rather than walk as a group through the cemetery, the event will take place at our Slovenian American Road Chapel. Prayers will be said for deceased family members, and candles will be lit at the chapel. I plan to go early and place my red glass candleholders purchased in Slovenia on the graves of my parents and grandparents. It has always been an emotional and beautiful evening.



I did take a ride out to Oakwood Cemetery to check on the linden tree we planted a few years ago. It is looking good.

DIANE DATA

BRANCH 43 - Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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It's been a long seven months since we have been able to get together for our monthly meetings and lunches, and oh how we miss them! As of this time, there have been no plans made for the remainder of 2020.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all fellow members who are threatened by all the forest fires on the West Coast and those living in areas where hurricanes are so prevalent.

Winter 2020

Our president, Jan Gehm, has settled in her new home and can have restricted visits. She is doing well after almost one year of unfortunate happenings.



After a few years of treatment, Betty Ann Kolesari informed me that her husband, Jack, is doing better and is in remission. They are so grateful for all the thoughts and prayers that were sent their way.

With the holidays fast approaching, I am sure many of our traditional celebrations are on hold. On behalf of all Branch 43 members, I would like to extend greetings for a very Blessed Christmas and hopes and wishes for a HEALTHY and Happy New Year. Vesele božične praznike in srečno novo leto!

MICI BREGANT

Branch 89 - Oglesby, Illinois

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After several months of adjusting to a new way of living, Covid-19 style, Branch 89 held their first Zoom meeting on October 12. It's a great way for members to interact without leaving the comforts of their own homes. In spite of making the difficult decision to cancel the Heritage Day event in March 2021, our branch will still have a busy winter. Be on the lookout for those Bakeless Bake Sale envelopes. Last year's donations totaled over \$1,300. Yes, you read that correctly. Branch 89 is one generous bunch! This generosity allows us to donate to *Zarja*, the SUA Educational Fund, the SUA Museum, Dickinson House (site where SUA meetings are held), Oglesby Public Library (our charter information is displayed here), the local food pantry, the local homeless shelter, and two independent living organizations for those with special needs, Ottawa Friendship Village and Horizon House Tree of Hope.

By the time another quarterly report is due, several things will have happened: The annual All Soul's Day walk organized by Branch 24 will have taken place, and the 2020 general election will be over, hopefully. We will have given a salute to all veterans on Veterans Day (11/11), acknowledged our junior members on St. Nicholas Day (12/6), and celebrated Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Eve. I'm sure for many of us the holidays will not be held in the traditional style, but we will make it work.

A special thank you to the officers who served Branch 89 this past year, especially Barbara Bruch, former reporter. Also, thank you to the officers who committed to serving another term. To all our members near and far, please be well and stay safe.

TERRY KAMNIKAR

BRANCH 93 - New York, New York

Contact Information: Kathleen Simmonds
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It has been a challenging three months since our last *Zarja* report, but our community has certainly come together and made some incredible art during this time.

On October 17 our resident rock stars, the Slavo Rican Assembly, gave us a reason to dance and celebrate with their livestream performance at the Kupferberg Center Arts in Queens, New York. If you don't know about Jan Kus, you should! This extraordinary saxophonist, composer, and producer is a Slovenian native and Queens College

Aaron Copland School of Music alumnus. The main focus of the Slavo Rican Assembly is to explore the similarities and differences between South Slavic, Puerto Rican, and Caribbean music. And they do so beautifully. This combination of cultures unearths a musical style never heard before. You really have to listen to their powerful, heartfelt, and rhythmical tunes.

The 9th International Festival of Fine Arts took place in Slovenia's cultural capital, Kranj, from 26 September to 2 November, including 100 artists from 25 countries in Europe, Asia, and South America presenting their works. For those of our members who are in Slovenia, we hope you were able to make the trip to see our very own Eva Petric's work in the Škrlovec Tower - Janez Puhar Gallery. The theme once again was the art of "gluing," with a focus on collage and assemblage. The festival and the artists certainly demonstrated the importance of recycled stories.

Our incredibly talented member, Tjasa Ferme, is the Founder and Artistic Director of Transforma Theatre, which is dedicated to creating interactive theatre experiences at the nexus of science, consciousness, and ritual. Tjasa has been busy implementing programs for Transforma, including the Science Theatre Festival (which showcased tech inventions that can be used in the arts) and Lucid Dreaming Retreat (where participants journey through the subconscious and the powerful experience of lucid dreaming to create dramatic works based on visions/dream experiences. Those who go through the workshop unlock



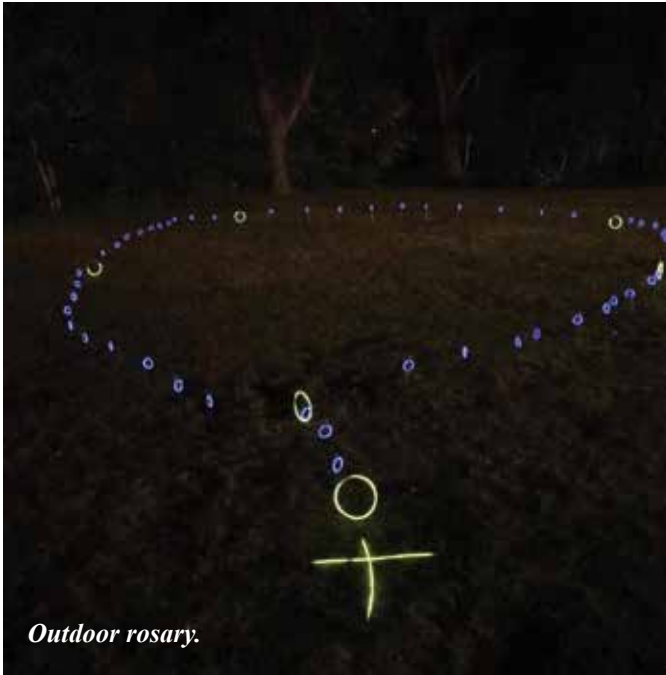
creativity, promote self-discovery, and ignite manifestation). Visit www.transformatheatre.com to find out more.

The Slovene Conversation Online course is back in action and students are having introductory conversations and learning numbers and phrases! There was such high demand we had to start a waiting list. If you're interested in joining future courses, please keep an eye out in our newsletter for the announcement.

KATHLEEN SIMMONDS

BRANCH 102 - Willard, Wisconsin

Things have been quiet in Willard, Wisconsin since March 2020 (the beginning of the Covid-19 safer-at-home quarantine). The consequence of staying home is that there's a



Outdoor rosary.

LOT we haven't done this year! Here are some examples: Branch 102 hasn't met since December 2019. The annual Holy Family Parish Slovenian chicken dinner was not held, so for the first time since 1994 Candy Johnson, Sarah Trunkel, and Ruth Zwiig did not meet there for dinner! Mike Brierton made state for a business competition in Madison, and he was elected as Regional Vice President for FBLA. As VP, Mike was supposed to attend a state conference in Madison and a national conference in Salt Lake City. Unfortunately, those events were cancelled. Sandy Brierton advanced to state for a history competition. The state conference was held virtually, and she placed!!! She made nationals and was supposed to attend the conference in Washington, DC, but that was held virtually as well. It was great she could participate virtually, but that doesn't replace the experience of traveling and attending in person. Sandy's Girl Scout Troop trip to NYC in June was cancelled. Candy Johnson's annual trip to see her daughter, Megan, in the Southwest did not happen this year. There was just too much uncertainty in traveling during the pandemic.

Winter 2020

However, there are always positives in every situation. Here are some activities that DID happen this year: Mike and Sandy started school in September (they are working virtually from home this semester). Sandy did two plays this summer: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Alice in the Gardens*; both were held outdoors. *Alice in the Gardens* was a unique play in that it was held in the botanical gar-



dens in Wausau, and there were four Alices that gave tours through "wonderland" performing scenes throughout the tour with different characters. Sandy, of course, was one of the Alices! Mike worked at the Wausau Country Club as a lifeguard, as he is Red Cross Certified. Sandy was selected to be a member of the newly-formed SUA Membership Committee for helping to increase membership. She has met virtually with the committee a couple of times. There is an SUA Facebook page, and members have been submitting something about their branches. Branch 102 was featured on September 21 on "Membership Monday." Sandy did a great job on that feature! The Brierton family and neighbors helped with Adopt-a-Highway in Wautoma, Wisconsin.

CANDY JOHNSON



BRANCH 108 Washington DC Capital Area

It's hard to believe 2020 is nearly over, and our branch hasn't been able to meet in person, due to the longstanding pandemic situation. We miss one another, and virtual hearts and hugs are sent to all during these uncertain times!

Thanks to Mary Risner Glaize, SUA's Facebook Editor, for highlighting our branch with a few blasts from the past photos on the SUA website in early October. If you haven't already, "like" the SUA website and Branch 108 National Capital Area Facebook pages.

We are very excited about our member Jonna Sanders' upcoming virtual presentation by Zoom for our members and friends. She will introduce her very own beehives from Slovenia and tell us about the significance of the Carniolan bee. In addition, Jonna will share her experience with making homestyle Slovenian sausages on her brand new authentic sausage machine.

On August 16, the Slovenian community of Washington, DC area met for the first Slovenian virtual Mass on Zoom with 25 people present, including SUA members. It was a joy to have our celebrant Fr. Jack Siberski from Boston College with us to commemorate the 49th anniversary of the Chapel of Our Lady of Brezje at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception virtually. Fr. Jack can say the entire Mass in Slovenian. He says with a chuckle that he learned it from living with Fr. Peter Rozic and other Jesuits at St. Joseph Church in Ljubljana where he resided for over one year.

National President Mary Lou Voelk joined the virtual Mass too, along with members Fr. Jack, Mark Oven, Irene Odorizzi, Mike and Bonnie Pausic, Nika Kovacic, Bernadette and Thomas Fitzsimmons, Mary Lou and Richard Terselic, Fran Hrastar, Mary Daum, Margie Cummings, and Ana Sonc. Former Branch 103 member Ica Zebot was also present, smiling happily to be together with the Slovenian community. Little did anyone know that was to be her last Slovenian Mass on this earth, as she was called to eternal life on September 24 and died peacefully at the



Branch 108 photo of first Slovenian Virtual Mass by Zoom call.

age of 98 in her beloved home in Northwest DC surrounded by her family. May she rest in peace.

As we reflect on 2020, let's especially remember in our prayers well known Branch 108 member Marie Robinson who passed away on March 1 after a short illness. Marie took up painting in her retirement years and many of us branch members have her lovely paintings in our homes. One of her favorites was to paint red carnation bouquets. Marie's daughter, Barbara Robinson lives in Alexandria, Virginia and has joined Branch 108 to carry on her mother's legacy and to keep learning about her Slovenian heritage.

This year the Washington, DC Slovenian community will miss having the annual KSKJ St. Nicholas celebration and can only fondly reminisce on past occasions when Sveti Miklavž called on us to receive gifts and his angels delivered red packages filled with fruit, nuts, and candy.



Branch 108 treats delivered by angels on the Feast of St. Nicholas.

We wish you good health and safety. Blagoslovljene božične praznike in srečno novo leto 2021!

Slovenian Sayings by Bernadette

*Vsaka stvar ima konec, samo kranjska klobasa ima dva.
Everything has an end, only Kranjska klobasa has two.*

*Vsako življenje piše svoj roman.
Every life writes its own novel.*

BERNADETTE FITZSIMMONS

Zarja - The Dawn

BRANCH 109 - Twin Cities (TC) of Minnesota

Contact Information: Elaine Barthelemy
elaineab@yahoo.com

Branch 109 remains vibrant and active as we continue to celebrate Slovenian heritage even during these days of the pandemic. Fall typically heralds the beginning of our monthly programs and the opportunity to connect with others. This year was no different. Acknowledging that in-person meetings would have to be canceled through May 2021, the board decided to use the wonders of Zoom technology to best engage our members.



Beginning with a hint of trepidation, we sent an email inviting Branch 109 members to our September meeting, sharing some information on how Zoom works and affirming that our goal was to preserve both the cultural and social aspects of a traditional meeting. We were pleased with the large number of positive RSVPs.



On the day of the meeting, President Mike Koski welcomed about forty participants, some of whom had been unable to attend in-person meetings in the past due to driving distance. After working out a few kinks, we held a successful business meeting followed by watching a Rick Steves video of Slovenia. A highlight for all was moving to breakout rooms where facilitators guided lively conversations with all having their chance to share. Afterward, about half of those in attendance remained for another 15-20 minutes just to chat some more. How wonderful to see each other again. Even though the experience was new for some, we proved that Twin Cities Slovenians can Zoom with the best of them. Thanks to the positive response, we

Winter 2020

are now hosting Saturday morning Zoom coffee hours once a month. Our first coffee welcomed thirteen local members as well as one participant from Slovenia and another from Maryland.

For our October meeting, we enjoyed Liz Miller's slideshow *Finding our Slovenian Roots*. Liz and her son, John, talked about finding relatives in the US who had been lost to the family after her grandmother's untimely death and took us with her virtually to places we love such as Bled, Lipica, Postojna, and Piran. As part of her presentation, Liz raffled off two pairs of *Slocks* from Slovenia, potica socks, and klobase socks. In November, Joe Valencic's presenta-



tion will focus on *Martinovanje*. Morning meeting or not, we may still have to toast with a glass of *vino*. It will be afternoon in Slovenia anyway, and we will be safe at home!

Our Slovenian language classes continue via Zoom, and members can check out our website as well as our Facebook page for members and friends of TCS, where we share pictures and other useful communication. Thanks to those of you who ordered calendars, to Rick Pisa who orchestrated their production, to Jean Podominick who took care of the mailing, and to the photographers who shared their work.

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

ELAINE BARTHELEMY

Mystery Solved

The “Mystery Picture” on the back cover of the Fall 2020 *Zarja* has been solved!

(Left to right): Albina Novak, *Zarja* Editor: 1933 - 1952, Barbara “Bara” Kramer, and Marie Prisland, Founder, Slovenian Women’s Union of America (currently SUA).



Note: Barbara “Bara” Kramer came from San Francisco in 1928 to co-found Branch 20-Joliet with Josephine (Setina) Erjavec.

Toastmasters is an affordable public speaking and leadership skill building program. There are clubs all over the U.S. (and the world). Many are meeting virtually, and you can easily visit. Here is the website: www.toastmasters.org.

The April 2020 issue of the Toastmaster magazine had mention of Slovenia not once, but twice. Page 3 has a photo of members from the two clubs in Ljubljana and page 10 has a photo of a Korean Toastmaster visiting Bled. *Toastmaster magazine, April 2020*



Toastmasters has 358,000+ members in more than 16,800 clubs in 143 countries. It is an accomplishment to make it into the magazine! Here are the websites for Toastmasters Ljubljana, Slovenia and Toastmasters Business Club Slovenia: <http://www.toastmasters.si> and <http://www.tmbusiness.si>.

Submitted by Lynn Zalokar,
Branch 93 - NYC and Toastmasters member

Share Your Memories

SUA Branch 3 has been exploring a variety of ideas for reenergizing our branch. Looking back at some articles shared in past issues of *Zarja* - *The Dawn*, a 2005 article written by the current *Zarja* Editor (who was then the SUA National Secretary), Bonnie Prokup, is still so relevant today. We need to be continually bringing in new members and revitalizing our SUA branches, adding a whole new excitement about SUA both locally and nationally. Every branch needs to focus on ways to bring in new membership to help the branch expand and remain relevant to each new generation. We need to ensure the future!

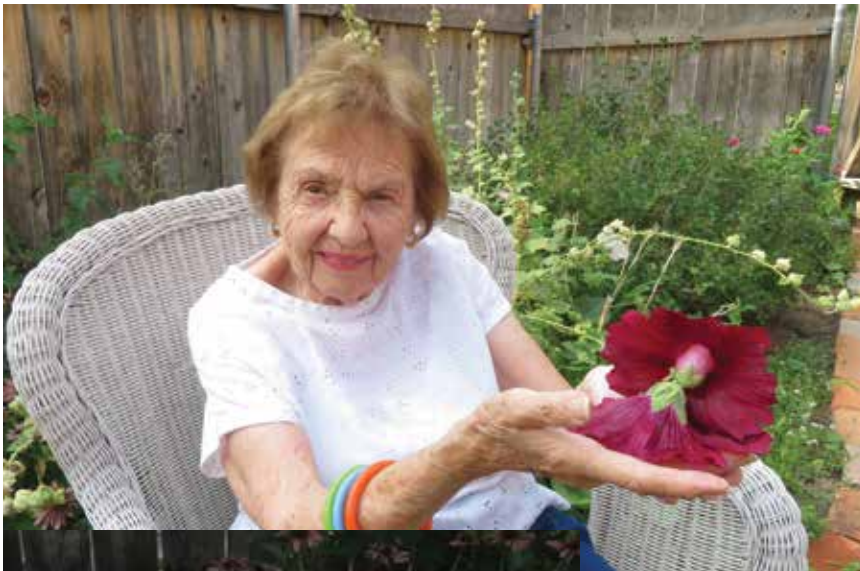
In mid-February before the pandemic, one event sponsored by SUA Branch 3 was a Slovenian Heritage Mixer. We advertised the mixer in several local church bulletins, and the event took place in St. Mary’s church hall, in the heart of Pueblo’s Slovenian heritage neighborhood. The event was marketed as “an opportunity for you to share your family stories and memorialize your Slovenian heritage” and “to promote intergenerational conversations that will help us to remember and document Pueblo’s rich Slovenian history.” The event was a big success considering our limited marketing efforts - we attracted 21 participants (many not SUA members). A couple even wandered into the hall from the local Slovenian bar (Eiler’s) across the street from the church. We had plans to host another mixer at the bar’s back room, but the pandemic has delayed this event!

Krofe and refreshments were served, and we decorated tables with tablecloths. Each table had a short list of conversation starters just in case the sharing ever lagged. Participants brought birth certificates, photos, or just the memories in their minds. We also requested attendees to fill out short half-sheet forms called “Share a Slovenian Memory” which were a big hit. Some memories were just two or three written sentences. Please contact M.T. Karlinger (suabranh3@gmail.com) for forms or marketing blurbs used for the event.

On the next page is one of the longer shared memories from Branch 3 Slovenian Heritage Mixer ...



MY Slovenian Memories
share your memories



Wandering back in time to the 1930s, being a little girl was a wonderment. A rain shower in the summer dropped tiny green frogs on the sidewalks lined with flowers, among them the stately hollyhocks.

The first designer of hollyhock dolls remains unknown, but the dolls are such fun to make! Hollyhocks grew everywhere in the alleys of my Slovenian neighborhood in Pueblo and came in an array of colors, presenting many creative possibilities.



A beautiful teenager in the neighborhood, Eleanor Snidercich Aronofsky, taught me how to make a variety of hollyhock dolls: the ballroom beauties floating in a glass dish or pie pan filled with water and the wedding hollyhock ensemble with the white bloom as the bride plus her colorful bridesmaids. These delicate dolls provided beauty and fun for a day or two. No worries if they faded because there were always more hollyhocks, more playtime dreams.

- Eileen Kaplan, Branch 3 - Pueblo, Colorado

We would love to hear from you.

Please send us your Slovenian memories. You can submit more than one memory.

We just request that you keep each memory to approximately 300 words or less.

We also encourage you send in any pictures that would correspond to your memory.

Email your memories to wprokup@aol.com. We hope to keep this section in Zarja going for a long time.

From Slovenia,

Read the book in English.
Flip the book, and read in Slovenian.

In The Land of Gingerbread

The Giant Hen

Emil Rabbit

Spots Becomes a World Champion

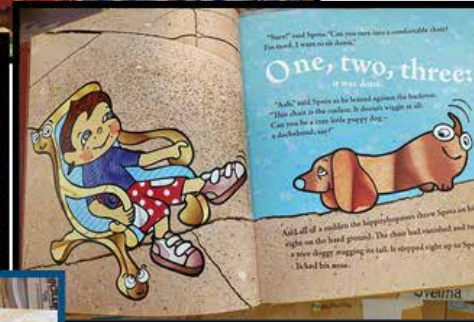
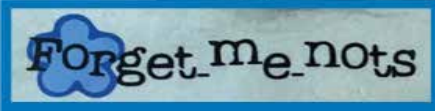
The Puppets From the Seventh Floor

Song For a Fairy

Louisa From Outer Space

Oscar Becomes a Detective

Anton's Circus



Beautiful illustrations, quality paper and hard cover!
Once the books are sold, there will be no more. The series is sold out in Slovenia.

Price includes Shipping and Handling:

1 book/\$20; 2/\$36; 3/\$52; 4/\$68; 5/\$84; 6/\$99

How to order:

1. Choose your book titles.
2. Email marylouv174@gmail.com. Include the titles and your phone number.
Always include an extra substitute title in case your first choice has been sold out.
3. You will receive an email with the price when your order is ready.
Once we receive your personal check, your order will be shipped.

A Visit to SUA Heritage Museum

Their summer 2020 Midwest car trip brought Tennessee residents Danny and Patty Lane to Joliet on August 9 in search of Patty's Slovenian ancestors. Patty had contacted Mary Glaize, SUA National Recording and Corresponding Secretary, to ask if she and Danny might visit the SUA Heritage Museum and Home Office on their journey from Champaign, Illinois.



Patty and Danny Lane visit the SUA Heritage Museum on their first trip to Joliet.

Mary asked Georgene Agnich to meet the Lanes and give them a tour. It was their first visit to Joliet, and the Lanes arrived promptly at noon on August 9. Georgene and husband Jim Schaible were there to greet them and to take a walking tour of key buildings in Joliet's "Slovenian Row," such as St. Joseph Church, its first and second elementary schools, and the first and second KSKJ headquarters, before they toured the SUA Heritage Museum and Home Office. Danny and Patty bought one *The Slovenian-American Table* cook-

book, made a donation to SUA, and left with a greater awareness and appreciation of Patty's Slovenian heritage.

Patty, who is not yet a SUA member, said that her great-grandmother, grandmother, and mother were from Calumet, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, but that her great-great-grandfather, Joseph Grill, had settled in Joliet and was buried in St. Joseph Cemetery.



Patty Lane at her Slovenian ancestors' gravesite in St. Joseph Cemetery, Joliet.

Cemetery Sexton Rick Cabay had partnered with Cherie Gimbel, Coordinator of Parish Services, to find the burial records of Joseph Grill, and Rick had placed a locator flag at the gravesite. Georgene and Jim escorted Danny and Patty to the cemetery, where Patty visited the final resting place of her great-great-grandparents from Crnomelj, Joseph and Franziska Grill, and their infant son, George, for the very first time. Children Joseph, Leo, and Amalja are not buried with them, so Patty must continue her research. The Lanes left St. Joseph Cemetery around 2 p.m. that lovely Sunday afternoon to continue their summer travels.



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KSKJ Life is a Christian, community-focused life insurance company that has provided financial security to its members and their families since 1894. We offer competitive life insurance products and retirement solutions, premier personalized service and meaningful member benefits and programs. As a not-for-profit organization, KSKJ Life makes a difference by reinvesting back into local communities and is dedicated to continuing its mission by helping families achieve financial security.

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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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WE'RE CRAZY
ABOUT
Potica!!!

What is your family's favorite potica - the one that you look forward to at Christmas and Easter each year? Perhaps it is a recipe that has been passed down from generation to generation, one you have found recently, or your own personal recipe. We want to know!

Please send us a picture, your recipe, and tell us, in 300 words or less, why your potica is special to you. If you do not have a favorite recipe or have no time to bake a potica this Christmas, no worries, we would still love to hear from you, in 300 words or less, what memories or special meaning does potica have for you.



Entries will be printed in the spring issue of *Zarja* in time to inspire you for Easter. Send all entries to wprokup@aol.com by January 10, 2021.