

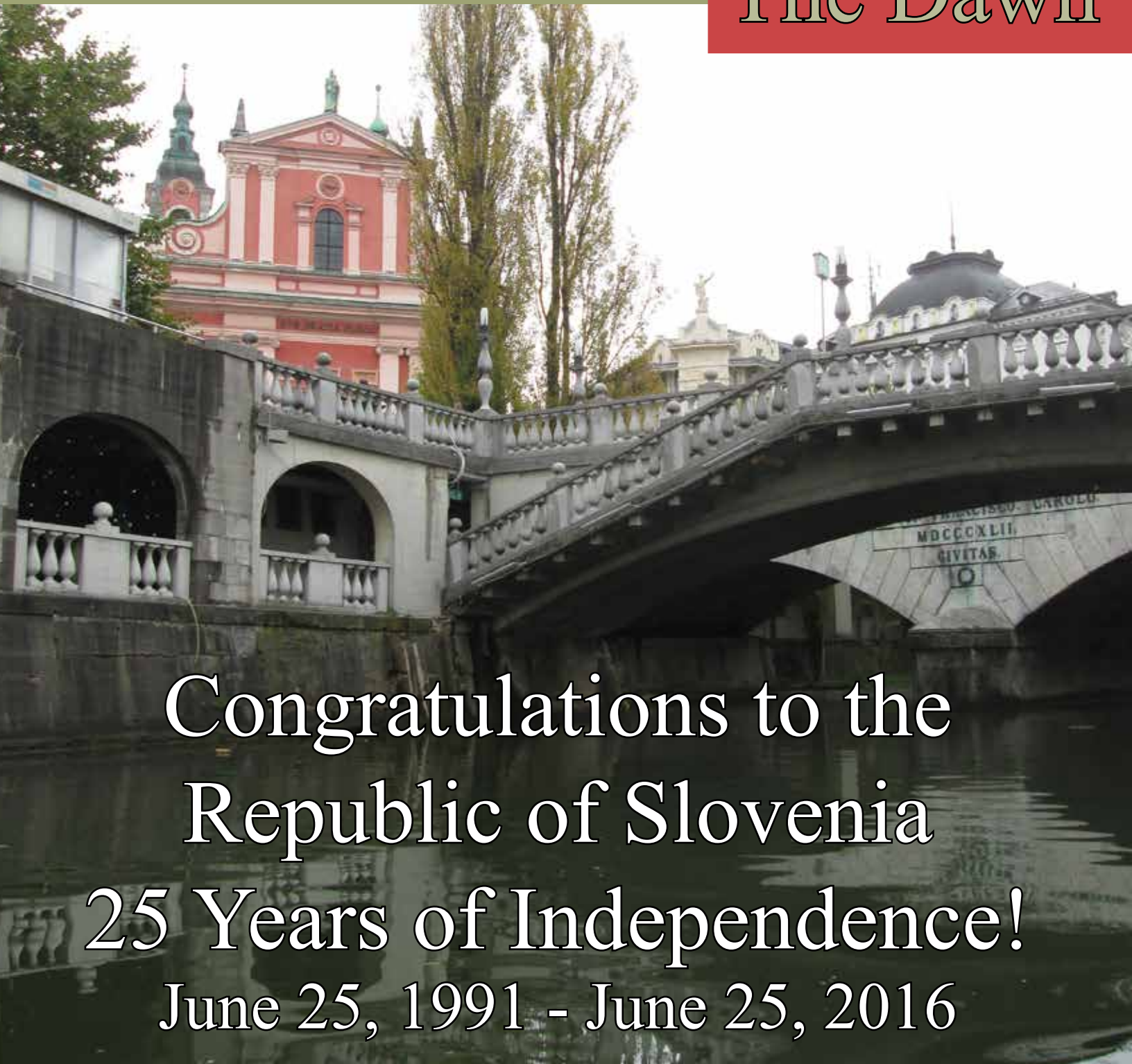
Zarja

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Volume 88 Issue 4
July/August 2016

The Dawn



Congratulations to the
Republic of Slovenia
25 Years of Independence!
June 25, 1991 - June 25, 2016

Slovenian Union of America

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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 September/October issue must be received by July 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.

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The Slovenian-American Table

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A cookbook that presents many of the favorite dishes that Slovenian immigrants brought with them to America, but with a modern flair. This book is more than a cookbook; it is a guide for today's American families to bring Slovenian heritage into their festivities, all with a modern American twist. This book takes you through a calendar year and offers primarily recipes, but also includes crafts, entertaining and decorating tips, a little background information of the holidays, and all with full-color pictures.

President's Message...

Four (4) Proposed Amendments to SUA's Corporate Bylaws

Please read this document as seen on pages 6 and 7. It includes the Member Representative Consideration/Vote on the Bylaw amendment proposed by Branch 20 - Joliet, IL. Please study For Future Consideration /Vote of Proposed Bylaw amendment #1, and the terms of the amendment. Please also study For Future Consideration/Vote of Proposed Bylaw amendment #2. The earliest the proposed Bylaw amendments can be voted on by SUA's Member Representatives is mid October 2016 or after.

Educational and Cultural Grant Committee

The following members have been named to the SUA Educational and Cultural Grant Committee: Barbara Bruch, Branch 89 - Oglesby, IL; Bill Zerial, Branch 99 - Lemont, IL; Frances Kovatovich, Branch 35 - Aurora, MN. Their responsibilities:

1. Informational committee meetings held each year.
2. Committee meeting to review applications after the grants deadline.
3. Committee meeting to confirm recommendations to the SUA National Board.
4. Submit recommendations to the SUA National Board.
5. Notification to Educational and Cultural Grant Recipients.

Application forms will be posted on slovenianunion.org as soon as we find a webmaster! For application forms, please contact Mary Lou Voelk by e-mail at mary-louv174@gmail.com.

Fund-Raiser - Matching Funds

SUA Registers with Benevity.com to Increase the Value of Donations

SUA has found a new way to increase the value of member donations of cash and volunteered time. Some firms and foundations use an organization, Benevity.com, to assist in distributing their charitable donations to not-for-profit organizations such as SUA. It works in two ways. First, if your current employer (or the one from which you retired) uses Benevity.com, if you make a donation to SUA, and advise the human relations or personnel department of your employer, they may match your donation and arrange to send it to SUA.

The second program involves a way to get cash donations for hours members donate to SUA work. For hours spent

on SUA work, Benevity.com may send a cash payment to SUA. Contact your human relations or personnel department of your employer and ask if the organization has affiliated itself with the Benevity.com volunteer hours program. In addition to Benevity.com, employers may participate in other donation programs that could benefit SUA. Check out their website.

I'd appreciate being informed at hubcapman@verizon.net if you find your employer participates with Benevity.com or another such program.

- Research and Advisory Committee, Richard Terselic

Fund-Raiser -

SUA's National Convention in 2019

Please see our new fund-raiser for the 2019 National Convention from Kathleen Ferrante, Chairperson of the 2019 SUA National Convention in Cleveland, OH, on page 7.

The Slovenian "*Ljubljanske Butarice*" as seen in the Ljubljana Market Place.



Fund-Raiser – April's Showers of Dollars

THANK YOU to SUA members and fund-raiser chairperson, Denise Bartlett, for supporting another successful fund-raiser. Who can argue with over a \$4,400 profit, and all for the 2019 National Convention Fund? View the winner's on page 10.

HERITAGE & CULTURE - Testimonial

From a Granddaughter to a Grandmother, a Beautiful Testimonial to Jean Korsman.

SUA member, Jean Korsman, had her potica recipe and baking skill featured in the April/May 2016 issue of *The Woman Today*,* a magazine publication of the Duluth News Tribune, Duluth, MN. Presenting the article and Jean's recipe is granddaughter Melissa Maki.

Melissa relates, "*I grew up on the Iron Range, where one's ethnic heritage is still a point of personal pride. The skill and dexterity that my grandmother has as she rolls out and stretches the potica dough is astounding. It's as if she's channeling an ancient cultural memory.*"

Jean served as President of Branch 39 - Biwabik, MN, as MN Regional President, and SUA's National President

from 1995-1999. Jean's recipes can be seen in past issues of *Zarja*. Jean is currently a member of SUA Branch 35 - Aurora, MN.

*The full page article can be viewed: THEWOMANTODAY.COM, page 93, HERITAGE AND CULTURE.

Technology - Website and Facebook

I must admit, Facebook had little meaning, until I became a manager of the Slovenian Union of America site. Having a Facebook page, with a specific theme, suites me. Our site is only about anything/everything Slovenian. My mind changed when I saw the number of people visiting our site. It is all about numbers!

Amazing to see Bill Zerial's potica dough photos, and his unique measuring technique, 1,800 people reached; *Češčena si Marija, Je angel gospodov*, 2,784 people reached; *Žegen* customs, 6,105 people reached; A Stroll Through Ljubljana, 1,756 people reached; and The Best Country for Wine Tourism, 2,347 people reached. The Australian Consultate sent their compliments; they like our site. People of Slovenian heritage are logging on. Please check it out! Facebook is powerful!

A PLEA! The SUA website needs YOU! There is new information that needs to be added, and old information that needs to be removed. If you have the spirit and the talent, or if you know of a person who does, **PLEASE** have them contact Robert Kuhel at rjkuhel@sbcglobal.net.

From Mary Lou - The Fig Tree



What I knew of figs came from the Bible when Adam and Eve ate of the fruit; their eyes were opened, they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons. Mark (11:13) tells the story of Jesus and the fig tree. And then there were the Fig Newton cookies, invented shortly after creation, in 1891. My mother loved them!

It was on our first trip to Slovenia; I saw a fig tree. I marveled at the immense spread of the large green leaves. I vowed to have a fig tree, someday; it took a move to Alabama. By the third year I was overwhelmed with figs. How to use figs: fresh, sliced figs in a tossed salad, water-bath processed, pint jars of whole figs, dehydrated figs, fig jam, fresh fig pie, fig/balsamic salad dressing, cranberry-fig sauce, and fig and bourbon sauce on a pork roast or chops. It looks like another bumper crop this summer, probably 1,001 figs, as prolific as the Garden of Eden and generations that have passed.

So what does my fig tree have to do with me being a Slovenian? Enter Janez Bogataj, famous Slovenian ethnologist, and the leading force in preserving authentic foods of Slovenia. While the popular Prešeren Chocolate Balls may be delicious, Bogataj, annoyed by it all, claimed they are a plagiarized form of the Mozart Chocolate Ball; Slovenia's greatest poet, Prešeren, deserved better.

The idea for the *Fige Prešernove* came from Bogataj. The late Dr. France Prešeren, today a cultural personality, often carried dried figs in the pockets of his overcoat. Children would run after him begging for the sweets, "Doctor Doctor, give us a fig."

The ingredients, a tale of old, dried figs, dipped in milk or dark chocolate became a unique Slovenian confection. Look for *Fige Prešernove* while in Slovenia.

From Mary Lou: Zdrobovi cmoki z jajcem

From SWUA's *Pots and Pans* Cookbook, Page 50

While at the hairdresser, I was asked what I would be doing that day. "Going to mix up a batch of Farina Dumplings, a recipe I have wondered about for years," I replied. She stepped back aghast, "My mother always made them, but she never used a recipe." My hairdresser claims she is Austrian and Hungarian. I claim she is Slovenian! She wants the recipe and I thought I'd also share it with our readers.

Zdrobovi cmoki z jajcem (Farina Dumplings with Eggs)

1 cup milk
2 eggs, separated
1 tbsp butter
½ tsp salt
½ cup Farina or Cream of Wheat
Dash of pepper

Heat milk and butter. When milk is scalded, stir in farina and cook until thick; continue stirring. Remove from heat. Cool. Beat the egg whites until stiff; beat the egg yolks. Add the beaten yolks to the farina; blend well. Stir in egg whites.

Bring clear beef or chicken soup to a gentle boil. First dip teaspoon into the boiling soup, then drop rounded spoonfuls of the farina mixture into the soup. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer for 5 minutes.

Makes about 15 dumplings. *Dober tek!*

- Marie Floryan, West Allis, WI and
Olga Kumershek Thomsen, Madison, WI

For a step by step view for making Farina Dumpling;
http://www.simplysogood.com/2011/01/chicken-and-dumpling-soup_29.html

Dober tek,
Mary Lou Deyak Voelk
Branch 23 - Ely, MN
President, Slovenian Union of America



*Every family has a journey...
Every heritage has a journey...
Every country has a journey...*

*These three comprise the human need for our roots...
and we can only find them by*

LIVING OUR LEGACY

Welcome to New SUA Members!

Holtz, Cheryl, 2
Zelko, Frank, 2
Wolf, Charlotte, 3
Friedlieb, Christine, 23
Wiegand, Zachary, 26

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Tomc, Michael, 50
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Celebrating 90 Years - The Slovenian Union of America 1926-2016

-by Mary Lou Deyak Voelk
From an interview with
Mary Jean Jordon Sweeney
Branch 20 - Joliet, IL

Thoughts on Turning 90

Their Names Were Frank Zeleznik and Theresa Rifelj



Original Zeleznik farmhouse by Alojzij Strmec

From one of the smallest nations, Slovenes left their families and homeland. One of those persons boarding a ship to America was a young woman named Marie Črne (Prisland). Accompanying her during the height of this exodus were yours and my ancestors with names like Zeleznik and Rifelj... (Continued from May/June issue of Zarja - page 5)

As the ship neared land there was joy and amazement. Eyes were fixed on the Lady of Liberty and her outstretched arm holding the torch up high. For many, grouping together in small neighborhoods gave them a feeling of security, while searching for a job, and learning the language. Another hurdle was disease. During this time, the leading causes of death were attributed to influenza, pneumonia, and tuberculosis. In the United States, 500,000 to 675,000 died during the 1918 flu pandemic. An

unusual feature of this pandemic was that it killed mostly young adults. Modern research concluded that the virus killed through a cytokine storm, an overreaction of the body's immune system. The strong immune reaction of young adults ravaged their bodies. The weaker immune systems of children and middle age adults resulted in fewer deaths. In Joliet, there was a family, Frank and Theresa (Rifelj) Zeleznik, who would become victim to this terrible scourge.

My mother, Theresa Zeleznik Jordan, age 97, passed away January 1, 2015. She and my father, Mike Jordan, were married 61 years until his passing in 2002. I am the oldest of nine children. Found among her possessions was a Sv. Barbare Lodge, št. 65 issue, and a Hand Book from the College of St. Frances in Joliet, IL, 1939-1940, that lists rules for living in the Residence Hall.

Theresa's father, my grandfather Frank Zeleznik, was born in 1885 and died in January 1982, at the age of 96 years. He came from Riharjevec with a mailing address today of Smartno Pri Litiji. The family hilltop home overlooked Ribarjevec. Frank immigrated to the U.S. in 1910. Two other brothers, Anton and Louis, also came to the U.S. They all settled in Joliet, IL. Today the original home is occupied by descendants of Josef (1884-1970), a brother who stayed in Slovenia. Frank married Theresa (Rifelj) Riffel; they had two children, Frank Jr. and my mother, Theresa.

In the fall of 1918, Frank lost his wife, Theresa, to the flu epidemic. Baby Theresa was nary a year old. He then took Mary Kostelc as his second wife. Two more daughters, Frances Counts and Julia Skolds, were born from this marriage. Mary died in 1940, and Frank's third wife



Josef Zeleznik Reunion in Slovenia - June 23, 2013

was Ana Ptak. He outlived her as well. The family home was at 1007 Cora St. in Joliet, where Frank resided from 1918 until his death in 1982.

My mother's maternal grandfather was Josef Riffel. One of her cousins was Louise Riffel Krameric. Her daughter is Marcia Krameric Judnick, one of my high school classmates. We didn't realize that we were related until many years later. Marcia, who now resides in Arizona, was a very active member of Branch 20, Joliet, IL, and had been a Branch Woman of the Year.

In June 2013, the descendants of Josef met for a Zeleznik family reunion. The weather was perfect for this celebration. The food, wine, and button box music were everything you would expect in Slovenia. It was held at the original family home. Our cousin, Alojz Strmec, who is an architect and talented artist living in Novo Mesto, gave everyone a pen and ink drawing of the Zeleznik homestead. Boyan Zeleznik, another cousin, was named Slovenian Manufacturer of the Year for 2015. They are very enterprising people. Our

Slovenian cousins were so welcoming to their U.S. relatives who attended. Members from America were my brother Joe, his daughter Sherri, my sister Terry, and me. Terry and I stayed with our cousin, Ana Zeleznik Mrhar, her husband Zvone, and their family. What fun it was to meet these cousins, including Peter Zeleznik who drove in with his family from Sweden.

Ana fondly told us about a pink dress that was in a box sent by my mother. I remember mom putting the boxes of clothes together to send to Ana's family after the war. A recent *Zarja* article, written by Father Michael Monshau about the Mutz family, reflects the generous spirit of the Joliet Slovenians towards their relatives living in post-war Europe.

On that Sunday in 2013, we attended Mass at the church of St. Martin in Smartno; its beautiful twin spires are very similar to those at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Joliet. We were told that our grandfather Frank helped build this church, which celebrated its 100-year anniversary in 2001.

Until the next reunion, the internet and Facebook keep the Zeleznik family connected.

OHIO Members

At the Ohio Regional Convention last October, I was voted the new Regional President, along with Debbie Duris as the new Regional Vice President. I am honored to be able to serve the members of SUA in this position. I am looking forward to contacting all of the Ohio Branches this summer and hopefully seeing many of our members.

I would love to hear from the Ohio Branch members. I can be reached on my cell 330.730.8951 or by e-mail at kjferrante@gmail.com. My address is 178 Gaylord Dr., Munroe Falls, OH 44262 Contact me in any manner that is easiest.

*- Kathleen Ferrante
Ohio Regional President*

Four (4) Proposed Amendments to SUA's Corporate Bylaws *2 Passed and 2 for Member Representatives' Consideration/Vote*

PASSED - On May 4, 2016, 26 SUA Branch Member Representatives voted (17 YES, 7 NO, and 2 abstentions - which are not votes), to pass two (2) proposed amendments by Branch 20 - Joliet, IL, to the SUA's Corporate Bylaws - **ARTICLE II - MEMBERS, SECTION 2.3 - Member Representatives and SECTION 2.5 - Voting of Membership Interests**. These changes will now give Branches with 401 or more adult Members three (3) Member Representatives who shall have three (3) votes. No Branch may have more than three (3) Member Representatives with three (3) votes. *(The history, explanation, and wording of these two proposed amendments appeared on the inside back cover of the January/February 2016 Zarja.)* These amendments are adopted immediately and at this time they are only relevant to Branch 20 - Joliet, IL, the only SUA Branch with over 401 adult Members.

FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION/VOTE

Proposed Bylaw amendment #1 - The elections that occurred at the 2015 SUA National Convention resulted in new office-holders in five (5) of the seven (7) SUA National Board positions, and two (2) officers were elected to another term on the Board. Since then, one (1) of the two (2) second-term officers has resigned. The affect on SUA was that the new Board members faced a daunting task of becoming quickly conversant with the information needed to fully carry out their duties. Four (4) of the five (5) newly elected SUA Board members did not previously hold a SUA National Office nor have full SUA "institutional history," nor were they familiar with SUA Policies and Procedures. The National Board has given this much thought and has suggested a way of improving the turnover that may occur on the SUA National Board in the future, by implementing staggered terms of office. In order to achieve this implementation, the election for a portion of the Board would come up for reelection in years staggered from the usual four (4) year cycle of elections at our SUA National Conventions.

The National Board is proposing that three (3) of the seven (7) National Board Officer positions would come up for election to new four (4) year terms in 2017. The Board determined that the following positions should be elected at the National Conventions: President, VP of Home Office, VP of Marketing & Fund-Raising, and Corresponding/Recording Secretary. The positions recommended for staggered election, two (2) years later, would be VP of Outreach, VP of Culture & Heritage, and Treasurer. The current incumbents in these three (3) positions would be eligible for reelection to those positions in 2017.

The introduction of staggered terms would require these changes (**in bold**) to the SUA Bylaws - Proposed amendment: "**ARTICLE III - NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SECTION 3.3 - Election - Four (4) members of the National Board of Directors shall be elected for their offices by the Member Representatives at the National Convention. The Nomination Committee shall present at the National Convention a slate of candidates for four (4) National Board of Director positions of the Corporation, namely President, VP of Home Office, VP of Marketing & Fund-Raising, and Corresponding/Recording Secretary.** Additional candidates may be nominated at the National Convention by the delegates (Member Representatives), as more fully described in Article VII. All nominations shall be public. Member voting shall be by secret ballot only if more than one (1) candidate accepts nomination to the same office. Directors must be elected by a majority of the votes entitled to be cast by Members at the National Convention. Elected Directors shall assume their respective offices on the first day of July following the National Convention. In the event that an office has no eligible candidates, a member of the National Board of Directors, having already served two (2) terms, may be elected to serve a third (3rd) and final term. **Three (3) members of the National Board of Directors shall be elected for their offices by the Member Representatives at a meeting held two (2) years after the National Convention, a meeting designated specifically for electing these Directors, namely VP of Outreach, VP of Culture and Heritage, and Treasurer.** Additional candidates may be nominated **at the Member Representative Meeting** by the delegates (Member Representatives), as more fully described in Article VII. All nominations shall be public. Member voting shall be by secret ballot only if more than one (1) candidate accepts nomination to the same office. Directors must be elected by a majority of the votes entitled to be cast by Members **at the Member Representative Meeting**. Elected Directors shall assume their respective offices on the **first day of July following the Member Representative Meeting**. In the event that an office has no eligible candidates, a member of the National Board of Directors, having already served two (2) terms, may be elected to serve a third (3rd) and final term."

FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION/VOTE

Proposed Bylaw amendment #2 - There is an error/conflict in the SUA Bylaws (written by our law firm) that needs to be corrected. Currently, the Bylaws read: **ARTICLE III - NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SECTION 3.2 Numbers, Offices, and Terms of Office - The**

National Board of Directors of the Corporation shall consist of seven (7) Directors. The Directors shall also serve as Officers of the Corporation.

That Directors are also the Officers is not the error!
The conflict follows:

Also in the current Bylaws: **ARTICLE III - NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SECTION 3.8 Vacancies - Vacancies on the National Board of Directors shall be filled by the Members at any regular or special meeting of the Members at which a quorum is present. A Director elected to fill a vacancy shall serve for the unexpired term of his/her predecessor in office.**

Also in the current Bylaws: **ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS, SECTION 4.10 Vacancies - A vacancy in any office shall be filled by appointment by the National Board of Directors; such appointee to serve for the unexpired term.**

As you can see/read this is a conflict in procedure - since SUA's Directors are also SUA's Officers, vacancies must be filled in the same manner. After much consideration and upon my recommendation the National Board is proposing the elimination of the current wording of SECTION 3.8 and replacing it with the intended meaning of SECTION 4.10. Proposed amendment: **"ARTICLE III, NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SECTION 3.8 Vacancies - Vacancies on the National Board of Directors shall be filled by appointment by the National Board of Directors; such appointee to serve for the unexpired term."**

These two proposed Bylaw amendments (barring any typos) are to be voted upon by Member Representatives during a teleconference meeting, held at the earliest in mid-October 2016, or whenever scheduled after that date. The election process would involve the participation of the Branch Member Representatives, and a 2/3 vote approval. If members/Branches would like to provide their opinion on these amendments, please share that information with your Member Representative. Due to the Scope of Notice parliamentary requirement for proposed amendments to the Bylaws, the wording of these amendments may not be changed/ altered when voted upon.

Denise P. Bartlett, Branch 43 - Milwaukee, WI
Bylaws Chairperson
Parliamentarian
Director of Special Projects

From the 2019 SUA National Convention Committee

The Slovenian "*Ljubljanske Butarice*" As Seen in the Ljubljana Market Place



The Slovenian tradition of making "butare" for Palm Sunday dates back hundreds of years when real palms were not available. Using Slovenian ingenuity, wood shavings dyed in various colors became popular when greens were not available. To this day, "*Ljubljanske Butarice*," has remained a very important part of the Slovenian culture. Today butare are being made in the United States in crafting as exact as those found in the Ljubljana marketplace. Even the dyes are from Slovenia.

A fund-raiser, featuring the sale of butare, has been chosen by the 2019 National Convention Chair, Kathleen Ferrante.

Sizes, Price/S&H, Ordering will be published in the September/October 2016 *Zarja - The Dawn*.

**Samples can be viewed at the
Home Office/Heritage Museum/Library
in Joliet, IL.**

Call 815.727.1926

Donations

Hvala lepa - Thank you!

\$100 Donation

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Nancy Gregorich, 20, +William &
Rose Mary Gregorich
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+Katherine Yuratovac
Tom Klobucher, 20,
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+Louis & Paula Lukancic
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+Mary Ferlic
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+Louise Tamse Hagan
Lois Kochevar, 109, SUA
Anthony Kochevar, 109, SUA
Maria Whitmire, 93, Educational
Grant and SUA (\$25/\$25)
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+Edward & Agnes Kurnick
Agnes Gaber, 2, SUA
Pat Deckinga, 16,
+Philip Mislaj, f/k/a Filip Mislaj

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+Frances Demšar Kovacic

\$25 Donation

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+Ljudmila Kroselj Pasetta
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+Rose Sleyko McCarthy
Marilyn J. Hendricks, 1,
+Frank & Martha Kotnick

Barbara J. Omerza, 23,
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+Angela Sterle Skull
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+Josephine & Edward Bayuk
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Carmen Mavec, 99, SUA
Catherine Bokar, 20,
+sister, Jo Anne Oberman

Anonymous Donation, 50
Susan Dvornik, 20, SUA
Donald Dvornik, 20, SUA
Christine Polzin, 102,
+Josephine Bayuk
Carolyn J. Nemanich, 99,
+Sophie Nemanich
Mary Renee Vertacic, 1,
Honor of John & Shirley
Vertacic's 55th Anniversary
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Robert J. Sever, 71,
Educational Grant
+Luke & Mark Squire Sever
Karen Lockard, 42, +Mary Gruden

\$20 Donation

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and Honor of Dolores "Dolly"
Kozar Maki (\$10/\$10)
Mary Burk, 20,
+mother, Louise Schoener
Rea Rossi, 23, +Helen Slogar Theno
Mary Elizabeth Argubright, 89,
Honor of Florence Argubright

Taylor McNally, 2,
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Marilea Zajec, 20, April's Showers
of Dollars Fundraiser Donation

\$15 Donation

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+Fr. David & Margaret Stalzer
Nancy Terselic, 103, Cultural Grant
Karen DelRaso, 20, SUA

\$10 Donation

Rebecca Marie Kaye, 43,
+Mici Coffelt
Sharon Yack, 20, Honor of
John Lesnik's 80th Birthday
Marilyn Frances Vidmar, 50,
+Julia Zak
Alyssa Tate, 3, SUA
Julie Grah, 2, +Julia Petrich
Henrietta Gorski, 2, +Pauline Kincl
Daniel Ivanich, 20,
+Mayme & Don Ivanich
Katherina Kaye, 43, +Mici Coffelt
Murielann Jermenc, 24,
+Anton Jermenc Family
James Lilek, 20, SUA
Arthur Parks, 30, SUA
Branch 43, Educational Grant
+Paula Behling
Branch 43, Educational Grant
+Gus Ostrowski

\$5 Donation

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Diane Bencin, 50,
Honor of Molly Mauer, mother
Adam Lenkaitis, 24,
+John Pohar, Jr., grandfather
Alex Lenkaitis, 24,
+John Pohar, Jr., grandfather
Cathy Lenkaitis, 24,
+John Pohar, Jr., father

The *Americanization* of a *Slovenian Surname*

by Bernadette Kovačič Fitzsimmons
President of Branch 108 - Olney, MD

Slovenian surnames have interesting meanings, often associated with regions and occupations from relatives dating back generations ago. Some surnames today are spelled in their original form, whereas others may have been Germanized during the German occupation of many areas of Slovenia during World War II. Still other surnames were Americanized at some point following the immigration of one's Slovenian relatives. For many families doing genealogical research, the puzzle pieces of surname spelling seem to fall in place when reviewing family documents, meeting relatives who have stories to tell, and taking into consideration the historical time period of an individual or family's immigration.

According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, the three most common Slovenian surnames are NOVAK, HORVAT, and KRAJNC. The meaning of NOVAK is "a newcomer," and the Americanization of this name is spelled Novack. The surname HORVAT was used as a nickname for "a Slovene originally from Croatia." Going further back in history, someone with the Horvat surname was "a refugee from the Ottoman Empire during the 15th and 16th centuries." KRAJNC is the third most common surname in Slovenia that has numerous variations such as Kranjec, Kranjc, and Krainz, the Germanized form. The Americanized form has sometimes been written as Crainz. The meaning of the KRAJNC surname is "an individual

from Carniola," which is the central region of Slovenia. It is interesting to note that 85% of Slovenians with the surname KRAJNC live in lower Styria, Prekmurje, and in the Slovenian region of Carinthia in Austria.

Inconsistencies in the spelling of Slovenian surnames are often observed in *Zarja – The Dawn* magazine, and can be frustrating for editors and proofreaders who strive to be consistent in spelling names. One example is the surname of SUA member, Norm Setnicker, the current VP of Marketing & Fund-Raising. Norm is aware that the traditional Slovenian spelling is SETNIKAR, which is how his grandfather from the Slovenian area of Polhov gradec spelled it. In his genealogy research, Norm found in a Slovenian *Gazetteer* of place locations that Polhov gradec is geographically located in the valley of Setnik. The "Setnik region in Slovenia" likely explains the SETNIKAR Slovenian surname. Norm's father, John, chose to use the German spelling Setnicker, however, his brother Frank chose to spell it as Setniker, so this explains the spelling variations, and possibly the Americanization of this uncommon surname.

Stay tuned to the next issue of *Zarja* to learn more about the meaning and spelling variations of a few more of the top 10 Slovenian surnames, such as POTOČNIK, MLAKAR, and VIDMAR.

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Thank You for Your Support!

SUA's fund-raiser – "April's Showers of Dollars" for the month of April 2016 was a huge success. Your entry/entries were very much appreciated! The profit of over \$4,400 will enhance all aspects of the activities for our members at SUA's 28th National Convention in 2019 in Cleveland, Ohio. Hope to see YOU there!

Top Seller Winner's List

1st Place Top Seller - (30 Sold) Lori Bond - Branch 20 - Joliet, IL	\$150
2nd Place Top Seller - (22 Sold) Kathy Cufar - Branch 99 - Lemont, IL	\$100
3rd Place Top Seller - (14 Sold) Paula Behling Memorial Fund - Branch 43 - Milwaukee, WI	\$50

Daily Entry Winners

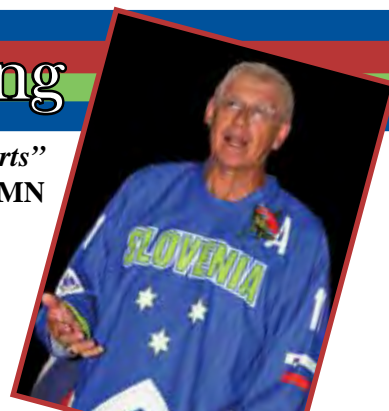
<u>Entrant</u>	<u>Amount Won</u>	<u>Seller, Branch (Each seller won \$10.)</u>
Apr. 1 Jean Koci, Laguna Niguel, CA	\$200	Same, 100 - So. California, CA
Apr. 2 Lorraine Belom, Joliet, IL	\$65	Same, 20 - Joliet, IL
Apr. 3 Bill Henkel, Peru, IL	\$65	Nancy Henkel, 89 - Oglesby, IL
Apr. 4 Joseph Walsh, Chicago Ridge, IL	\$65	Helen Walsh, 20 - Joliet, IL
Apr. 5 Monica Clark, Le Sueur, MN	\$65	Vida Lanari, 35 - Aurora, MN
Apr. 6 Dorothy Cabot, Garfield Heights, OH	\$65	Same, 47 - Garfield Heights, OH
Apr. 7 Charles Perko, Pueblo, CO	\$65	Same, 3 - Pueblo, CO
Apr. 8 Chase Boettger, West Allis, WI	\$65	Angela Nankin, 43 - Milwaukee, WI
Apr. 9 Tony Kambich, Winnetka, IL	\$65	Jonita Ruth, 20 - Joliet, IL
Apr. 10 Elsie Wojdula, Cicero, IL	\$65	Same, 2 - Chicago, IL
Apr. 11 Margaret Kuhar, Wickliffe, OH	\$65	Same, 50 - Cleveland, OH
Apr. 12 Ryan Label, New Berlin, WI	\$65	Christine Label, 43 - Milwaukee, WI
Apr. 13 Sylvia Kirsteatter, Peru, IL	\$65	Same, 24 - La Salle, IL
Apr. 14 Lois Pelander, Duluth, MN	\$65	Same, 33 - Duluth, MN
Apr. 15 Jean Anich, Hermantown, MN	\$200	Ruth Foley, 33 - Duluth, MN
Apr. 16 Elsie Wojdula, Cicero, IL	\$65	Same, 2 - Chicago, IL
Apr. 17 Arlette Mikulich, Aurora, MN	\$65	Same, 35 - Aurora, MN
Apr. 18 Barbara Taylor, LaSalle, IL	\$65	Same, 24 - LaSalle, IL
Apr. 19 Cheryl Baker, Centreville, VA	\$65	Same, 20 - Joliet, IL
Apr. 20 Florence Urankar, Cleveland, OH	\$65	Same, 10 - Cleveland, OH
Apr. 21 Sandy Schiffler, Chicago, IL	\$65	Same, 2 - Chicago, IL
Apr. 22 Rosemary Demshar, West Allis, WI	\$65	Same, 100 - So. California, CA
Apr. 23 Jim Millman, LaSalle, IL	\$65	Helen Millman, 24 - LaSalle, IL
Apr. 24 Ryan Warsaw, Plainfield, IL	\$65	Jeanne Warsaw, 20 - Joliet, IL
Apr. 25 Constance Vidmar, Franklin, WI	\$65	Edward Vidmar, 43 - Milwaukee, WI
Apr. 26 John Keith Johnstone, Cudahy, WI	\$65	Same, 43 - Milwaukee, WI
Apr. 27 Tony Kambich, Winnetka, IL	\$65	Jonita Ruth, 20 - Joliet, IL
Apr. 28 Linda Addante, Prospect Heights, IL	\$65	Kathy Cufar, 99 - Lemont, IL
Apr. 29 Bernadette Blatnik, Macedonia, OH	\$65	Same, 47 - Garfield Heights, OH
Apr. 30 Dave Lustick, Mount Vernon, WA	\$200	Same, 20 - Joliet, IL

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82 Sellers: Branch 20 - Joliet, IL	17 Sellers: Branch 89 - Oglesby, IL	13 Sellers: Branch 5 - Indianapolis, IN
34 Sellers: Branch 43 - Milwaukee, WI	16 Sellers: Branch 1 - Sheboygan, WI	13 Sellers: Branch 99 - Lemont, IL
27 Sellers: Branch 50 - Euclid, OH	16 Sellers: Branch 3 - Pueblo, CO	10 Sellers: Branch 23 - Ely, MN
20 Sellers: Branch 24 - LaSalle, IL	14 Sellers: Branch 16 - Chicago, IL	10 Sellers: Branch 42 - Maple Heights, OH
19 Sellers: Branch 2 - Chicago, IL	14 Sellers: Branch 35 - Aurora, MN	10 Sellers: Branch 47 - Garfield Heights, OH

VP of Marketing & Fund-Raising

Norm Setnicker, "Born in America with Slovenian Parts"
Branch 109 - Twin Cities, MN



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*SUA National Board
picking the April 14 thru 18
Fund-raiser Winners*

Left to Right:

Nancy Henkel

Cookie Maxin

Mary Lou Voelk

Norm Setnicker

Diane Hohenwater

Bob Kuhel



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ANNOUNCING 2016 SWU SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS!

SUNTINA SPEHAR, Branch 33 - Duluth, MN

Jean Kurilich Memorial Scholarship \$2,000

Suntina will be graduating from Esko High School and enter Indiana's Valparaiso University to study nursing and exercise science.

ALYSSA DEBELAK, Branch 30 - Home Office, IL

Jean Kurilich Memorial Scholarship \$2,000

Alyssa is a nursing student at Finlandia University, Hancock, MI.

SUSAN A. ECKERT, Branch 103 - Washington, D.C.

Branch 23 - Ely, MN Continuing Education Award \$500

Sue is working on her master's degree in education at Regent College, in Virginia Beach, VA.

MARISSA INGA, Branch 93 - New York City, NY

Olga Dorchak Memorial Scholarship \$1,000

Marissa will graduate from the West Essex High School and begin study of computer science/mathematics.

AMANDA KINNEY, Branch 1 - Sheboygan, WI

Stan Janezic Memorial Scholarship \$1,000

Amanda is majoring in civil engineering at University of Wisconsin- Platteville, WI.

JAMES KOCI, Branch 100 - Fontana, CA

**2016 U.S. Senator Frank J. Lausche
College Scholarship \$2,000**

James is majoring in physics at Notre Dame University, IN.

OLIVIA VIDMAR, Branch 50 - Euclid, OH

SWU Scholarship of \$2,500,

funded by a benevolent anonymous lady.

Olivia will graduate from Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School and enter either Illinois Tech or Rochester Institute of Technology in New York to study mechanical engineering.

MICHAEL LAH, Branch 23 - Ely, MN

Josef Princ Memorial Scholarship \$2,000

Michael will graduate from Ely High School and enter St. John's University, in Colleeville, MN, to study mathematics/education.

ANGELA PEREZ, Branch 3 - Pueblo, CO

**Theresa Rose Sevshek Memorial
Continuing Education Award \$500**

Angela is a business management major at Colorado State University, Pueblo, CO.

CHRISTOPHER SCHNEIDER, Branch 109 - Twin Cities, MN

Branch 2 - Chicago, IL Scholarship \$1,000

Christopher is an undeclared major at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN.

TIFFANY SMRTNIK, Branch 30 - Home Office, IL

Rose Marie Princ Scholarship \$2,000

Tiffany is attending Central Michigan University, majoring in special education.

ABIGAIL TERSELIC, Branch 103 - Washington, D.C.

**Frances Colnar Barman
Memorial Scholarship \$2,000**

Abigail is attending the University of Oklahoma, majoring in pre-nursing studies.

This year marks the organizing of the 70th anniversary of the Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Program. At the 1946 SWU National Convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Marie Priland, founder of the SWU, with a deep belief in education, presented the current scholarship program idea to the membership. With approval, members began fund-raisers and in 1949 awarded two scholarships to junior members of SWU. Since that time, over \$400,000, under excellent stewardship has been awarded to deserving students with financial needs.

In 1997 an estate gift required that the Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship organization be a tax exempt corporation. The name was then changed to Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation (SWUSF). At that time it held \$5,000 total in assets from the estate gift. After 20 years, at least \$250,000 has been awarded to student members of the Slovenian Union of America (SUA/SWUA). During this time frame SWUSF has generated a reserve fund in the six digit figures. This reserve fund is supplemental when during some years the dollar amount of donations, which varies annually, will provide award payments to students selected by the SWU Scholarship Committee.

This year, the Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation celebrates its 67th year of actual scholarship awards. We want to sincerely thank the huge numbers of SUA/SWUA members who throughout the past 70 years have both verbally and financially promoted our scholarship program. Many of them worked on fund-raising for our purpose. Without your interest and dedication, our awards program would not have succeeded.

Please know that we, the officers and trustees, value your continued support and especially your friendship. Contributions of any amount are sincerely appreciated. Checks should be addressed to SWUSF and mailed to SWU Scholarship Foundation, 4 Lawrence Drive, Marquette, MI 49855. Visit our website at www.swusf.org or contact us at mturvey@aol.com or yemec1@windstream.net.

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July/August 2016

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If you are interested in learning more about this important weekend, please e-mail Corinne Leskovar at corleskovar@sbcglobal.net.



Zarja Staff Writer
 David G. Sodac
 Branch 89 - Oglesby, IL
bdsodac@gmail.com

“Nothing gets the feet and hands clapping as the oom-pah-pahs of a polka or waltz from a button box,” Rick March wrote in his 2015 book on the polka culture throughout the Midwest titled, *Polka Heartland: Why the Midwest Loves to Polka*. During a radio interview in Wisconsin, March reflected, “Whether you’re into polka, particularly or not, it’s one of the symbols of us.” Hearing the melodic strains of polka music being played immediately swoops us back to thoughts of our parents and grandparents. It is a musical symbol of our Slovenian heritage. Polka aficionados note discernible differences between polka styles. The Midwest has been an absolute haven for polka music, and more predominantly, the Slovene or Cleveland-style of polka. This is a style of polka music that is generally played at a faster tempo and features different instrumentations than traditional polka music played in the

Eastern-style (144 beats per minute) and slower tempo of the Chicago-style (120 beats per minute.) These polkas are mostly popularized versions of many different tunes and dances from the original folk music of Slovenia and surrounding countries. This genre of music came about when immigrants from Slovenia taught the old songs to their children. These children, as adults, translated the old traditional lyrics from Slovene into English, and arranged them into a polka beat. It is usually associated with Cleveland and other Midwestern cities, as that is where most Slovenian immigrants put their roots down when they came to America.

The polka bands from Cleveland always included two accordions, with at least one piano accordion, a chromatic accordion or button box, a saxophone or clarinet, and a

rhythm section including such instruments as drums, bass, and banjo. The main melody instruments in the band are the accordion and the saxophone. The heart of the Slovenian and Cleveland-Style of polka is undoubtedly Cleveland, OH, “The Polka Town.” There are approximately 60 active polka bands performing from out of the city of Cleveland. Slovenian Cleveland-style polka music is also extremely popular in northeast Ohio, as well as throughout Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

The man who put the Cleveland-style of polka music on the map was none other than the son of Slovenian immigrants, Frank (Frankie) Yankovic. Yankovic was considered the premier artist to play in the Slovenian-style during his long and prosperous career. On June 8, 1948, the major record companies promoted a battle of the popular polka bands in a spectator contest held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to determine the best band across America. Playing in the Slovenian Cleveland-style, Frank Yankovic obtained the title of “America’s Polka King” when he and his band competed with, and beat out, Louis Bashell, Romy Gosz, Harold Loeffelmacher, the Six Fat Dutchmen, Whoopee John Wilfahrt, and Lawrence Duchow in a battle of the bands at the Milwaukee Arena in Wisconsin. After the spectator votes were counted, Frank and the boys won by an 8 to 1 margin. They also won the next two years; then the competition ended. Frankie became known as America’s “Polka King” for the next five decades. The Cleveland Museum of Button Box Accordions says that the most important pioneers in developing this style of music, in addition to Frankie Yankovic, include Matt Hoyer, Dr. William Lausche, Johnny Pecon, Lou Trebar, Johnny Vadnal, Eddie Habat, and Kenny Bass.

The Cleveland-style polka music’s success continued to influence young accordion players growing up throughout the Midwest. Young boys and girls were taking up accordion playing all over the region. Yankovic’s success and the popular Cleveland polka radio and television programs of the 50s implanted the beat in their heads and induced many to take up the accordion. One such lad who heard the beat was young Wayne Golob, the grandson of Slovenian immigrant grandparents. His grandfather, Joseph Golob, immigrated to America in 1907 and was from Šentrupert in Dolenjska, north of Novo Mesto. His grandmother, Terezija Poženel, was from Ivanje Selo near Rakek in the Notrajska region. Five years after Frankie Yankovic’s crowning as “America’s Polka King,” their grandson, Wayne Golob, was born to Joseph Golob, Jr. and his wife, Anne (Polosky), in Sandusky, OH. Wayne began playing the accordion at the early age of five through the dotting reassurance of his father. His father played occasionally himself, but Wayne absolutely loved Slovenian music! His dad’s buddies were all accordion players. One of his pals, Andrew “Mickey” Mekine, from Onnalinda, PA, played

at his parent’s wedding. Wayne reminisces, “*Without my Dad’s encouragement, I never would have played. I owe*



Wayne with his dad, Joseph Jr., at Christmas 1955.

it all to him!” He readily admits that he’s a throwback to the early days of polka music. He was greatly influenced by accordion greats: Cleveland’s own Lou Špehek, Johnny Pecon, Matt Hoyer, and Frankie Yankovic, and Pennsylvania’s Lou Hribar, Johnny Debevits, Bobby Zgonc, and Benzy Rathbone. Wayne received his first Hoyer Trio record as a young boy. It had been a part of his grandfather’s record collection. He says, “*That awesome sound has been in my head ever since. I like to think that whenever I pick up my accordion, a little bit of that Hoyer sound comes out.*” His favorite was the classic 1928 release, *Vipavska Polka*. Wayne shares, “*I get chills just listening to it!*” Wayne was honored to play on Hoyer’s actual accordion on two different occasions.



The Hoyer Trio accordion.

Wayne's father also bought him quite a few Frankie Yankovic 78 rpm records, and later the LP albums and 45s by Yankovic, Pecon, Vadnal, and Kenny Bass. Wayne also watched and listened to all those polka shows on Cleveland television in the 1950s, including Yankovic, Johnny Pecon's "Al Wish Auction Party," and Johnny Vadnal's show. Wayne was delighted when his father took him to jam sessions and button accordion events in Cleveland; people were amazed that there was a Slovenian kid from Sandusky who played the button box and loved Slovenian music. He was enthralled by the look and sound of the old time Slovenian button box. Some of those artists would come to his hometown of Sandusky to play. He recalls seeing Frankie Yankovic and Johnny Vadnal both play. But, back in those days, he said it was impossible to find a teacher or even such an instrument in Sandusky, OH. So, like many other kids of that day, he started taking lessons on the piano accordion. He never lost his desire to play the button box. Then, in 1967, a German fellow in Sandusky advertised a German-made Hohner button accordion for sale. He and his dad went to see it; his dad gave the man the \$20 asking price and Wayne ended up with his first button box!

Wayne taught himself to play the button accordion. These days he also plays the piano accordion, but the Slovenian "frajtonarce" is his main instrument. Later he taught himself to play the chromatic and half-chromatic accordions. Part of Wayne's throwback to the early days of polka is his personal collection of rare accordions crafted in Cleveland. His button accordions are all Mervars, Lubases, and Mikuses; his personal favorite being a 1929 Mervar button box. Anton Mervar became firmly established as a

master craftsman in the building of button accordions. His accordions were shipped across the country and overseas. Consequently, Wayne's collection of accordions are all still highly prized and valuable today.

Wayne first performed professionally at the age of 18 as a duo in 1971, playing Saturdays at the VFW Post 7572 in Marblehead, OH. He has worked with several bands over the years, and was the director of the Lorain Slovenian Button Accordionists of Lorain, OH. In 1980 the ensemble recorded a best-selling album. Three of the members, Wayne included, were honored by being asked to record a solo number on the album. Wayne composed the song, *Nan's and Heidi's Polka*. Wayne met Heidi, the love of his life, at a SNPJ polka dance in the old multi-purpose auditorium; she was standing under a basketball hoop when they first met! Wayne and Heidi were married in 1982. The "Nan" in the song was Heidi's best friend, Nancy Check. After the album became a best-seller, the group toured Slovenia, playing their music. One of the many highlights of

the trip was to visit the home villages of his grandparents, where he emotionally met his relatives for the first time and played his button accordion in the Golob family homestead in Šentrupert.

In 1975, Wayne's good friend, Chris Benda from Cleveland, asked him to form a band with him. At the time, their group, the Chris Benda Orchestra, played many of the polka spots in Cleveland, including Sterle's Slovenian Country House, the Nottingham Tavern, and Simcic's Lounge. Wayne would drive the 55 miles to Cleveland every

Saturday, play until 2:00 a.m., stop for a bite to eat, and get home around 5:00 a.m. Sunday morning. Working full-



The hit album "Down Home Polka and Waltzes, Slovenian Style" from the Lorain Slovenian Button Accordionists.

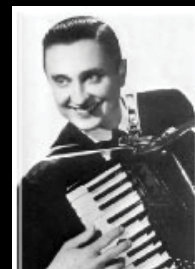
Wayne's influences:



Benzy Rathbone



Bobby Zgonc



Frankie Yankovic

time in the grocery retail business, he found that the driving back and forth to the gigs became too much. He played keyboard with a wedding band in town for a time, before returning to polka music, playing mostly solo gigs on his accordions. In the late 1980s, Wayne again put together a band to play



The Wayne Golob Band (Left to Right) Wayne Golob, Tom Ivanc on banjo, Gerry Germana on drums, and Frank Moravcik on piano accordion.

polka music, playing primarily in Lorain and the Marblehead areas. The Wayne Golob Band was formed in 1978 and has played at numerous festivals, concerts, and dances throughout Northern Ohio, including annual appearances at the famous Halupki Festival in Marblehead. Band members are Wayne on the Slovenian button accordion and lead vocals, Tom Ivanc on banjo and guitar, Eddie Klimczak on the midi piano accordion and vocals, Paul Stajskul on drums, and Jim Udovich, on sax and clarinet. Longtime drummer and vocalist, Gerry Germana, passed in 2012. Since they are the Sandusky area's only working polka band, they presently continue to be the local favorite. Wayne's encouraged about the resurgence of polka music on the scene today. He's seeing people of his generation, who in their younger days thought polka music and accordions were cornball, coming to listen to their band and enjoying it. Polka music is slowly making a comeback. Festivals and Oktoberfests are giving work to bands of all styles, and places like the new Hofbrau House in Cleveland are seeing big crowds of young people enjoying good

food and polka music. Now, just beginning his retirement, Wayne looks forward to more time and opportunities for his passion to play his accordion, and for enjoying his rich Slovenian cultural heritage, from which it evolved.

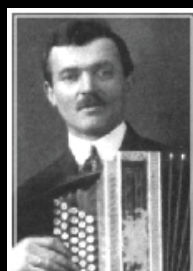
If this article leaves you wanting to hear a few of the classics and the best that the Cleveland-Slo-

venian style polka bands have to offer, check out Wayne's music video Facebook page, focusing on polka music at [Wayne Golob's Polka Videos and Audio Tracks](#). He beams, "We present only the best in polka music in both video and audio formats." If you happen to be in Euclid, OH, make sure you stop in and visit the **National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame and Museum**. Found within the museum's walls are artifacts and memorabilia from polka stars of yesterday and today. Some of the highlights include: "America's Polka King," Frank Yankovic's accordion and stage outfits, Johnny Pecon's accordion, and Cleveland's Polka King, Johnny Vadnal's accordion. All the artifacts promote and preserve the Cleveland-Style Polka and the Slovene culture.

For information go to www.clevelandstyle.com/ and turn up your sound!



Johnny Pecon



Lou Spehek



Matt Hoyer

Tribute to Mary Louise (Vertačnik) Fon 1920-2016

- by Larry Fon, Steve Fon, and Linda (Fon) Rusie



Born January 15, 1920, on the west side of Indianapolis, IN, in the ethnic neighborhood named Haughville, Mary was the youngest child of Slovene immigrants, Frank and Frances Pečnik Vertačnik. They lived at 733 Haugh Street. Mary had two siblings, Anna and Frank, and two older half-siblings, John and Frances Hren. She graduated from Holy Trinity (Slovenian Catholic Church) grade school and attended George Washington High School. In 1936, her parents purchased a farm in Avon, where Mary moved at the age of 16.

In 1940, Mary married Henry Fon, another first generation Slovene, and they resided on the Avon farm. They had three children, Larry, Linda, and Steve. Having children was Mary's primary calling in life and she was thrilled to be at home to raise her kids. She also loved doting on a slew of nieces and nephews, who grew up in surrounding houses on "Vertačnik's Farm." Mary was also known by the nickname "Tashy," given to her by her niece Anna (Volker) Jones when she was young and had trouble pronouncing the name Mary Vertačnik. Mary kept all the kids entertained by playing games, sewing doll clothes, reading children's books, and giving



Frank and Frances Pečnik Vertačnik family around 1922. In back, half brother and sister: John Hren, Sr. and Frances Hren Klarich. In front (left to right) around parents: Frank Vertačnik, Mary Vertačnik Fon, Anna Vertačnik Volker.

out daily hugs and kisses. She was the ultimate baker and turned out numerous cookies, cakes, pies, strudels, krofe (doughnuts), and poticas. She would encourage the kids to try different foods they thought they didn't like, and convinced one young cousin to eat rhubarb pie when she told him it was strawberry.

After Steve, her youngest child, went to school, Mary took a part time job at Indiana Bell Telephone Company in 1958. She joined a group of other family members who already were employed by "Ma Bell" - her brothers, John Hren, Sr. and Frank Vertačnik, Frank's wife, Emma (Kos), and nephews, John Hren, Jr. and John Klarich, Jr. Mary advanced to become Mail Room Supervisor and retired in 1981. She was not only a supervisor, but also transferred her mothering nature to the young staff that worked for her, and she would refer to her "kids at work."

One of those "kids" kept in touch with Mary, and to this day still keeps in contact with Mary's family.

When the grandchildren started arriving, Mary was in heavenly bliss. Arrivals were Steve and Phyllis's Katie (1977), Betsy (1979), and Sara (1982), Larry and Kathy's Emily (1981), Linda and Dave's Allison (1986), and Kevin (1990); back again to Steve and Phyllis with Anna (1992) and Stevie (1997). Grandma Mary had weekend sleepovers at the farm for the four little Fon girls, fixing the girls their favorite farmhouse breakfast of pancakes with cottage cheese and grape jelly on top. Many times she packed a bag and bused to Detroit to babysit Emily, and several years later made bi-weekly trips to Zionsville in her Dodge Shadow (referring to her faithful car as "Me and My Shadow") to help care for Allison and Kevin. With her constant presence at the Rusie house, she didn't hesitate to help "grandma" a few of the neighborhood children. Next came the great-grandchildren - Amy, Chase, JJ, Charlie, Ava, and the newest little great-granddaughter, Nora.

Mary loved music, singing, and especially dancing the polka. It was a Christmastime family tradition to continue to make Henry's "Fon's Grocery," homemade, Slovenian sausage in the basement at the farmhouse, with polka music playing in the background. Mary would be the first one to grab a partner and start dancing. One time Steve twirled her a bit too fast and hit her in the mouth, giving her a bloody lip; she kept on dancing!

Another of Mary's passions was the special ties that she cultivated over the years with her relatives in Slovenia. When Mary was about 10 years old, one of the Slovenian borders living with the Vertačnik family on Haugh Street, Martin Strucl, taught a very inquisitive Mary to read and write in Slovenian. He helped her to compose and send her first letter to a cousin in Mozirje, Slovenija, which was then a province of Yugoslavia. When she received a reply, a seed was planted. After many years of letter writing back and forth, and longing to see her relatives in person, Mary (Merica in Slovenian) courageously arranged a trip to Mozirje with her daughter, Linda, in 1969. Connecting with the many relatives for the first time since her mother and dad immigrated to the U.S. in 1906 was a great experience, leading to 13 more trips to Slovenia over the years. Mary often took her children and grandchildren along for the trips. After "Pied Piper Mary" led the way, other Vertačnik and Trauner relatives made similar trips to Slovenia. She also reconnected with Louis and Katherine (Leban) Fon's relatives,

Henry's family from the Nova Gorica area. And with her insistence, Mary enticed several Slovenian cousins to make trips to Indianapolis. The special

to take care of her. In addition to the aid given by her three children, there were "grandma sleepovers" again with granddaughter Emily, and weekly visits by Katie and Chase, and Sara, JJ, and Charlie. Two wonderful caregivers, Joan Even and Linda Bean, came for sleepovers every other night. Saturday morning "coffee and cartoons" was reserved for cousin, Rick Trauner.



Fon sausage making in the basement of the Avon farmhouse. Back row: Son - Larry, husband - Henry Fon, son-in-law - Dave Rusie, nephew - Dave Vertačnik, son - Steve, daughter - Linda, and Mary with grandson - Kevin Rusie.

Due to declining health, Mary left her farmhouse and spent the last 4½ years of her life in a nursing facility. She was cared for, was comfortable, still had a wonderful smile, and loved hugs. Mom passed away on Valentine's Day, February 14, 2016.

family ties that she helped to rekindle between the separated families continue strongly to this day.

M o m , G r a n d m a , Great-Grandma, Mary, Tashy, and Merica: There will never be another sweet lady like you! We'll miss you, and... WE LOVE YOU MORE!!

After Henry died in 2002, Mary insisted on staying on the farm. As she reached her 90s, the caregiving table turned. Instead of Mary taking care of her family, her family came

Mary was a member of SUA Branch 5 - Indianapolis, IN

100th Anniversary Church of Saint Cyril

Save the Date

Sunday, October 16, 2016

Centenary Mass followed by gala reception and music.

**100th Anniversary
Church of Saint Cyril**

Branch 93 is welcoming Slovenians from across the world - Slovenia, Argentina, Canada, USA - to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Church of Saint Cyril in New York City, where so many of our friends, relatives, ancestors have come together over the past 100 years. Over 3,000 Slovenians lived on the city block where the church was built in 1916 – during the past 100 years, the church was and remains a focus and gathering place for the Slovenian community in New York City.

We hope you can join us; all are welcome!



Independence Day, July 4, 1916

First Mass at the Church of Saint Cyril, New York, NY.

**Church of Saint Cyril
62 Saint Marks Place, New York, NY 10003**



Slovenian Union of America

Across America - Branch Reports

BRANCH 1 - Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Contact Information: Marilyn Hendricks
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“What a wonderful day - that Sunday in May...” I think this is what Marie Prislund, our founder, would have said if she had been with us to celebrate the 90th anniversary of SUA’s Branch 1.

Many Branch members, Branch 43 - Milwaukee members, and guests attended the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Saints Cyril & Methodius church with Father Richard Cerpich as celebrant. Offertory gifts were brought up by the current Branch 1 President, Marilyn Hendricks, and past President,



Marilyn Hendricks and Mary Pat Ryan.

Mary Ann Schellinger. Father Cerpich gave a special blessing for SUA members and the organization.

A luncheon followed at The Bull in Sheboygan Falls. The atmosphere of “letting our Slovenian heritage shine” was felt as the color scheme of blue, red, and white was apparent everywhere one looked, from table linens to party favors for all attendees, and of course, a mini potica at every place setting and “pink tea” for a special toast.

We were very fortunate to have two of Marie Prislund’s granddaughters, Katie Gorton and Mary Turvey, join us for our special occasion as well as Mary Turvey’s daughters, Maureen and Ann. In addition to the celebration of our 90th anniversary we honored Mary Pat Ryan as our

Member of the Year and recognized her as a 75-year member of SUA/SWUA and presented her with a wine glass, an *avba*, and a Rogaska crystal, heart dish from Slovenia.

Tom Virant entertained the group with his accordion selections, many of which were Slovenian songs. Katie Gorton shared information regarding “the early years” of Marie Prislund and then sang a special song she wrote entitled, “Marie.” A slide presentation was shown by Mary Jo Grabner from a trip that she had taken to Slovenia. Mary Turvey shared some information on the SWU Scholarship Foundation and mentioned the many scholarship winners from Branch 1. Jackie Smith, our Wisconsin Regional President, and Marilyn Hendricks, President of Branch 1, talked about some



Becky Simon and Mary Pat Ryan.



of the history of SUA and Marilyn gave a special recognition to Aggie Gruen-

ke and Mary Ann Schellinger, past Branch presidents, for all they have done to keep the Branch active.

No party would be complete without door prizes and there were an abundance of these. A Slovenian doll, handmade by members of Branch 1, was the special door prize. Thank you to all who worked, to all who contributed, and to all who attended for your part in making this a lovely, memorable celebration!

MARY ANN SCHELLINGER

BRANCH 2 - Chicago, Illinois

Contact Information: Judy Stoll
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Happy summer, everyone! We had our first meeting of the year on April 7 at the Peaches and Pears Restaurant. Only seven members attended, since some of our regulars were still snow birding in Florida. Our meetings are very casual and not on a set schedule, but they are announced in the *Zarja*. We want to send a big HELLO to some of our members who can no longer join us. So, to Mary Reich, Elsie Ciszek, and Irene Smid, we miss you and think of you often.

Most of our conversation centered on our annual *Zveza* Day Picnic, which will be held on Sunday, July 17, in Lemont. All Branch 2 members will receive raffle tickets. We hope that everyone will buy the chances to perhaps win a money prize and to help our Branch have a successful fund-raiser.

The "Hill" is beautiful and peaceful. It's the perfect place for a picnic, and just a few years ago a very nice playground was built to keep the youngsters entertained. But for those of us who were students at St. Stephen during the 40s and 50s, it was the place where we had our school picnic (even though most of us wanted to go to Riverview). Who can forget the pond that was encircled by the stone Stations of the Cross and had that little island with the replica of the Lake Bled Castle in the middle? The pond was black and murky, but every year a few of the boys would either jump or get pushed into the water, much to the dismay of the nuns.

So if you find yourself with some time on Sunday, July 17, drive out to Lemont, walk around the pond, have a Slovenian sausage sandwich, buy some chances, and renew old memories. Hope to see you there!

JUDY STOLL

BRANCH 3 - Pueblo, Colorado

Contact Information: Annette Charron
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The regular monthly meeting was held on April 5, and Annette Charron was the hostess. She served *kolački* and *kifeljčki* from *The Slovenian-American Table* cookbook recipes. Eileen Kaplan won the mystery gift which was donated by Josephine Krasovic. A memorial service was led by Branch 3 Chaplain Marie Mutz for longtime mem-

bers, Anne Yengich and Mildred Stofac, who passed away recently. Carol Smith and Margaret Sell of "All the Angles" shop in Pueblo gave a demonstration of a variety of ways



Kolački and kifeljčki from The Slovenian-American Table cookbook served at Branch 3's April meeting.

to tie scarves. Attendees brought their own scarves and practiced making different creative knots.

On Tuesday, May 3, the annual Mother's Day luncheon was held at Park East restaurant. At the celebration, Barbara Karlinger was honored as Branch 3's Member of the Year. Members brought door prizes, so everyone left with a memento. Madeline Khosla gave each person a colorful pan scraper, and attendees were also given carnations as favors. President Marge Cullen and Vice President Eileen Kaplan always have interesting games at celebrations, and this year's game involved passing around wrapped presents at each table while Eileen read a story with cues regarding the direction the gifts should be passed. Participants giggled continuously throughout the game, and at the end, three people at each table won the prize they were holding. Guests at the luncheon included Teresa Comiskey, Lori



Branch 3 Member of the Year, Barb Karlinger, with her nephew, Derrick, and niece, Lori.

Karlinger, Derek Karlinger, Robin Secora, Nancy Wimber, Chrissy Charron of Denver, and Celine Sabo of Denver.

The recognition of mothers continued on Sunday, May 8, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass, with breakfast prepared and served by men belonging to St. Mary's Holy Name Society.

Branch 3 will sponsor a bus to Cripple Creek this fall. Regular monthly meetings will be suspended over the summer months; the next Branch 3 meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 4.

ANNETTE SABO CHARRON &
BARBARA KARLINGER

BRANCH 5 - Indianapolis, Indiana

Contact Information: Phyllis Fon phyllisswu5@aol.com

Summer Greetings to all Branch 5 members! Hope you were able to attend a few of the Slovenian events that were



New mom, Martina Schuett with new son, Michael Dragan Scheutt, big sister, Lina Schuett, grandma Mary Dragan, and great-grandma Angie Dragan.

held in June. Most of the events are very family friendly, and no better way to pass on Slovenian traditions, food, and music than to bring the kids and let them polka the night away!

I would like to thank everyone who remembered our family on the passing of Mary Vertacnik Fon, our mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. Mary's love for all things Slovenian, from keeping family ties with "the old country," to cooking and baking beloved family recipes, included passing this love on to all who knew her. Please read an additional article about Mary on page 18 in this issue.

Sadly, in March, our Slovenian community lost two young men, Joey Mahoney and Jeremy Dreher, much too soon. In May, my oldest brother, Louis Loviscek, died unexpectedly from heart disease. Please keep the Mahoney, Johns, Dreher, Luzar, Fon, and Loviscek families in your thoughts and prayers.

Recently, we attended two surprise birthday parties at the Slovenian National Home (Nash). The first one was for Frank Velikan, former principal at Cardinal Ritter High School, to celebrate his 80th birthday! Next, Martin "Te-



ney" Lambert celebrated his 90th birthday by dancing polkas and, of course, the Chicken Dance, with family and friends! Both par-

Bob and Mary Frances Mohr celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on May 5, 2016.



ties were great fun! Consider having your next meeting or party at the Nash...it's a great space for any event!

Also, we want to congratulate former Branch 5 Treasurer, Mary Frances Mohr, and her husband, Bob, on celebrating 60 years of marriage! Happy Anniversary! May you have many, many more together!

Quick note on our October trip to "WORKING MAN'S FRIEND"... must be 21 years old to enter, so this is not a family event. Thanks! Have a safe and sunny summer!

MARY, KAREN, & PHYLLIS

BRANCH 13 - San Francisco, California

Contact Information: Michele Twers

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Greetings from sunny California. Our annual member luncheon on May 1 was a great success. A big "Thank You" to all of our members and friends for supporting our Branch and for those who bought raffle tickets and donated wonderful prizes. Shirley Cooper donated San Francisco Giants baseball tickets and Great America park tickets, Beverly Jackson made tote bags of the San Francisco Giants, 49'ers, and the Golden State Warriors, Margie Schleiger made a beautiful afghan, Doris Lovrin gave a \$50 gift certificate for two to Val's Restaurant, Virginia Sustarich gave a bottle of brandy, Michele Twers gave See's Candies gift certificates, and Doreen Sustarich gave bottles of wine and tea cakes. Also, for those who made a monetary donation, it is greatly appreciated. All winners went home very happy.

We held our "Hello To Summer" hot dog picnic meeting

in May, rather than June, since our President Doreen Sustarich had hip replacement surgery. We send our love and get well wishes to Doreen and hope she will be back up on her feet soon.

Congratulations are sent to Jack and Karina Spencer. They are President Doreen's great nephew and great niece. Jack made his First Holy Communion at St. Phillips Church, and Karina celebrated her 5th birthday. We all know that their Grandmother, Moreen Spencer, who was our past secretary/reporter, is looking down on them, full of pride for her grandchildren.



Karina and Jack Spencer.

We would like to acknowledge the following: Louise Petrusich's granddaughter, Lynn Shaffer, was married on May 21 to Eric Kuhlmann. They had a beautiful outdoor wedding at Holman Ranch in Carmel Valley. Best Wishes and Much Happiness to you both! Sending belated birthday wishes to Jackie Lowe who celebrated her 75th, and to our Vice President Beverly Jackson who will be turning a young 80, and to all the rest of our officers and members who will be celebrating their birthdays in July and August.

Hope everyone has a great summer and we will look forward to seeing you at the September meeting.

MICHELE TWERS

BRANCH 16 - South Chicago, Illinois

After a long winter, our monthly meetings have commenced with the March meeting, with 15 members in attendance. The April meeting was better attended and we enjoyed a "Pot Luck Luncheon." Many contributed to a chicken



and sloppy joe feast, with assorted pastries. New member, Chris Deckinga, has graciously undertaken the office of Sec-

retary/Branch Report Help. Welcome aboard! We also chose Fran Griffin as our Member of the Year. A celebratory lunch was held on May 21 at Jovial Club.

Fran and husband, George, married in 1957 at Sacred Heart Croatian Parrish, where she also attended eight years of grammar school. Working in retail for many years, first at Goldblatts, and then 12 years at Marshall Field's, she attained an in-store honor of "Field's Finest." They are the proud parents of 6 children, 14 grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren. Good member, Fran, brought her husband in as a member of SUA and they try to attend every meeting. She is a welcome helper and delights members with her baked goods.

Belated "Congratulations" are sent to member, Bob Kuhel, in his capacity as Treasurer of the 2015-2019 National Board of Directors of the Slovenian Union of America!

Prayers continue for the health of Helen Nowicki. Get well soon!

Discussions were begun and hopefully will continue for ideas for a group field trip. Any and all suggestions are welcome.

Meetings will suspend for the summer months, as usual, to resume again in September on the second Saturday of the month at 1:00 p.m. at the St. George church basement.

DOLORES FRANKO

BRANCH 20 - Joliet, Illinois

Contact Information: Diane Hohenwater

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Thank you to everyone who participated in our April Bake Sale. Many took the time to bake something delicious for us to sell, and others were generous with their monetary donations. We appreciate your kindness.

Member Sandy Rodeghero demonstrated how to make cherry strudel at our April meeting. Sandy used the recipe found on page

53 of *The Slovenian-American Table* cookbook, which requires only five ingredients. Sandy taught us a few tricks for creating this delicious dessert and inspired those of us who have not yet tried to make strudel.

Patrick Welsh was deserved-



ly honored as the Member of the Year at our May dinner program. We were entertained by polka music provided by Eddie Korosa, Jr. and Ray Koncar, who added to the festiveness.



Kathy Nolan, Sandy Rodeghero, and Arlene Stahl made and enjoyed the Sausage Treats from The Slovenian-American Table cookbook.

Branch 20 was honored to be included in the May 15 celebration of the 125th anniversary of St. Joseph Catholic Church, Joliet's Slovenian parish. Jean Herbst proudly walked in the procession of banners, in which 12 church affiliated organizations were represented.

Our deepest sympathies go to the family of member Nancy Ferencik, who passed away on May 13. Nancy and her sister, Nicki Blowers, have hosted our St. Joseph Table dinners for the last several years.

Congratulations to the son of one of our devoted members. Very Reverend Robert M. Herbst, OFM Conv, JCD, recently celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination into the priesthood. Father Herbst was ordained into the Conventional Franciscans on June 1, 1991, in Hermosa Beach, California. He is currently the Chancellor and Judicial Vicar for the Diocese of Oakland, California. Born in Joliet, he is the son of Jean (Juricic) Herbst and the late Gerald (Jerry) Herbst.

We do not hold any Branch meetings during June, July, or August. The first meeting of our "new year" will be on Tuesday, September 20. Please plan to join us at 6:30 p.m. at St. Joseph Park Hall. We wish everyone a fun-filled summer. Hopefully you will be lucky enough to enjoy a Slovenian picnic (or two) in your area!

DIANE HOHENWATER

BRANCH 23 - Ely, Minnesota

What is blooming on Branch 23? One thing has flowered and one is about to bloom. Michael Lah of Branch 23 has received the Josef Princ Memorial Scholarship from the Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation. Branch President Pat Koski awarded this \$2,000 Scholarship to him at an awards ceremony on May 4. Mrs. Rose Marie Prince sponsors the scholarship. Michael plans to attend St.



Michael Lah and Pat Koski

John's University in Collegeville, MN, majoring in math and secondary education.

The second bloom on our Branch is the planning for the fourth annual Salute to Slovenia. This year's salute is focused on tastes of Slovenia. It is going to be held August 6, at St. Anthony's church in Ely, MN. It promises to be an event that will tickle your taste buds.

BRANCH 24 - LaSalle, Illinois

Contact Information: Diane Data diane3121@aol.com
Zivijo! Our first meeting in April started out with a plant swap. Tulips, sedum, day lilies, irises, and my favorite - lily of the valley. After the meeting I was anxious to get home and get my lily of the valley plants in the ground and protected from the rabbits that love to raid my spring garden. I have memories of my Slovenian grandmother's side garden with tulips, irises, and the sweet scent of her lily of the valley. I'm keeping my fingers crossed that I have inherited her green thumb.

The remainder of the meeting was spent on planning and looking for volunteers for the upcoming meetings and events for 2016. Our Mother's Day/Spring Luncheon was held on May 19 at The Maples. Our ladies always enjoy coming out for this spring event of good food, desserts, and fellowship. A few of the lucky ladies went home with the flower centerpieces, and all went home with a prayer card designed by Branch 16 member, Therese Rossi, for the Feast of Our Lady of Brezje. Following in the Slovenian food tradition, our next get-together is our "Taste of Slovenia" picnic, which will be held in Barb Pohar's backyard on June 16. I hope members are busy paging through SUA's new *The Slovenian-American Table* cookbook or their old recipe box, finding that perfect dish to make for

this well-attended event.

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of our longtime member, Emily (Kosem) Marchiori, on May 7, 2016. She is survived by Chuck, her husband of 68 years.



Emily Marchiori, at her 90th birthday party, holding a picture from her younger days; note the accordion player in the background.

They shared their award winning potica-making skills just a few years ago with a demonstration for our members and guests. She will be deeply missed by her daughter, Lynda McKibben, who is also a member of our Branch, her son-in-law, two granddaughters and spouses, and three great-grandchildren. Her niece, Branch 24 secretary Shirley Eide, and her three daughters will also miss Aunt Emily. Emily's obituary contained this request, "In memory of Emily, please take a moment to call or visit an elderly relative or friend." Good advice for everyone.

I was glad to hear from our President that the recent Member Representative vote to amend our SUA Bylaws re the number of Member Representatives was a YES vote.
Dober Dan!

DIANE DATA

BRANCH 35 - Aurora, Minnesota

Contact Information: Rosemary Sertich Ribich
218.865.6600/rribich@northlc.com

On Sunday, May 1, members of Branch 35 met at the Aurora Community Center to honor three of its longtime members at the annual Member of the Year dinner. The celebration began at noon with a social and a delicious cranberry pork dinner was served at 12:30 p.m.

Our special honored members were Gabrielle Goritchan, Joanne Plevell, and Marcy Koski. It was an interesting and

fun afternoon as they introduced their families and guests and relayed stories about their involvement with the SUA and their interest in LIVING THE LEGACY of their culture. *Čestitke* (Congrats) to all three of these members and a *Veseli Materinski Dan* (Happy Mother's Day) to all our mothers since Mother's Day was approaching.

On the President's Message page, you can also read about our former Branch President, Regional and National President, Jeanne Purkat Korsman, who lovingly contributed her talents to preserving the art of potica and strudel-making. Jeanne taught classes at many community education programs and various Branches on the Iron Range over the years and it was fitting that accolades about her contribution were written in "The Woman Today," a magazine honoring woman in this area. Again, *čestitke* (congrats) Jeanne, and *hvala* for mentioning me. Be sure to read the article on the website.

Our next Branch meeting will be in September. Have a delightful summer and *zbogom!*

ROSEMARY RIBICH

BRANCH 43 - Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Contact Information:

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Congratulations to Branch 43 member, Kristi Luzar, on the birth of her first child, Helen Josephine Luzar, on May 9! Kristi is the niece of our Branch President, Jan Gehm.

Over a dozen of our members attended Branch 1's 90th Anniversary Celebration. They came home raving about every aspect of the beautiful event.

By the time you receive this issue of the *Zarja*, our celebration for the Members of the Year (our young ladies 80 years or older) on May 25 will be a memory, but I'll report on it in the next issue. In the mean time, our best wishes to these ladies!

Plan on attending our Branch's picnic on Sunday, August 7, at Triglav Park. The outdoor Mass starts at 11:00 a.m. There will be plenty of food and drink available and good music for your listening and dancing pleasure.

Jackie Smith, Wisconsin Regional President, and her Branch 43 committee are working hard planning the Wisconsin Regional Convention, which will be held on Sunday, October 16, at Klemmer's Banquet Center, on 104th & W. Oklahoma Avenue. Cocktails can be purchased starting at 11 a.m., with dinner following at noon. The meeting will begin following dinner and entertainment to follow. The cost of this enjoyable afternoon is \$20. We welcome our fellow Wisconsin SUA Branch delegates, members, and friends.

Our Branch is planning an Election Day Bake Sale on November 8th's presidential election. We know there will be a large turnout, and it should be a successful fund-raiser. We certainly appreciate all our wonderful bakers and ask for your help once again. November 12 is the date chosen for our first *Martinovanje* Celebration. Plans are being made,

so watch the *Zarja* for more details, or come to our next meeting on Wednesday, September 28, at the West Allis Library at noon. As usual our meeting will be preceded by a delicious luncheon.

On behalf of all the officers and members of our Branch, I relay greetings to all of our sick and shut in members.

I hope you are having a wonderful summer.

MARY "MICI" BREGANT

BRANCH 50 - Euclid, OH

Contact Information: Rick Tomsick

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Greetings from the "5-0" on America's North Coast! Our Mother's Day luncheon was held at the Dubrovnik Gardens on Wednesday, May 18.

It was refreshing to hear from Cookie Maxin, our new National Corresponding/Recording Secretary who wrote about her first attendance at the National Board meeting in Joliet. She tells us that the new board is diverse and has a lot of energy and desire to keep our beloved Slovenian heritage alive. There were many topics discussed and some great resolutions with steps to carry them out.

My family appreciates the great outpouring of sympathy for the loss of my dad, Ken Tomsick, and the many fond memories that people have shared about their experiences with my mom and dad over the years. We were pleased to hear from our SUA National President, Mary Lou Voelk, about her interactions with my folks in connection with her genealogical research (especially as it touched my family's Colorado connection). Mary Lou sends her greetings and best wishes to all Branch 50 members.

Please keep one another and all members of Branch 50 and all of the SUA in your prayers, especially remembering the sick and the suffering, the dead and the poor souls in purgatory, and those they have left behind, to bring comfort and joy to all who mourn.

Please write to me at ricktomsick@gmail.com with any family news and I will add you to our list of updates for Branch 50 (you don't need to be a member of Branch 50). I always like to hear from members near and far. *Stokrat poklonov* to everyone for all you do in SUA!

RICK TOMSICK

BRANCH 89 - Oglesby, Illinois

Contact Information: Barbara Bruch

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Greetings! Our April meeting was well-attended and we had an interesting program about flower gardening. Geri Lou Shouba won the door prize for coming the longest distance to attend. We enjoyed a post Easter *Žegen* meal; the taste of potica, strudel, and smoked sausage never gets old.

We want to thank our member, David Sodac, for the great article he wrote for *Zarja* about our Slovenian Heritage Day. It was our fifth year doing it and we enjoy it more every year. We hope more Branches will be encouraged

to do something similar.

Our May dinner was held at The Maples in Peru with 21 members and 5 guests attending. Flossie, Mary, and Trudy Argubright planned the event. Cards were signed for our Junior Members who are graduating from high school. Cole Duffin and Hannah Huber are 4th and 5th generation members of SUA/SWUA. Paula Snell won the Peace Lily door prize and everyone enjoyed great visiting, food, and weather.

We hope many members and friends will join us in September for a garden tour and opening dinner for the new year of meetings. Please write or call with any suggestions or questions. Enjoy your summer!

BARBARA BRUCH

BRANCH 93 - New York, New York

Contact Information: Elizabeth Gross

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Slovene language learners from across the USA once again participated online in the European Union's Open House event at the Slovene Embassy in Washington, D.C., presenting original "mini-lectures" in Slovene relating to Slovenian culture and history - lace-making, mercury mining, *žlikrofi* from Idrija, archeological finds from the Slovene "pyramids," burial mounds dating back to the 6th century BC, the Slovenian seaman who fought his way up to the U.S. Supreme Court and forever changed our admiralty law, recognizing and protecting endemic floral diversity in Slovenia - some of the most beautiful flowers you will ever see, and an adaptation of the Slovene version of, "Am I Small?," by Philipp Winterberg. It was great to see and hear the words of encouragement from Ambassador Dr. Božo Cerar and the music of our favorite accordionist, Alex Gergar.

In April, the "4 Saxess," the Slovene saxophone quartet, was in New York and gave a brief and highly enjoyable concert at Saint Cyril, performing Slovenian folk songs and Gershwin's Porgy and Bess Suite. Another musical event (sold-out before all of us could get a ticket!) was Slovenian soprano, Suzana Ograjenšek, performing with the Philharmonic Baroque Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. (The concert is being repeated at Tanglewood on August 25 if you will be in the area and want to hear her).

Cinematic events in NYC are flourishing - Slovenia, along with 11 other European countries, participated in two programs of 20 animated short films screened at the Austrian Cultural Forum and the Hungarian Consulate. Their creators envision animation as an exciting art form - entertainment, but not cartoons. The event was opened by Mitja Manček's, "Composition," and closed the next day with, "Boles," by Špela Čadež. Panorama Europe 2016, a film festival showcasing some of the most innovative international filmmakers of today, screened the Slovenian film, "The Beat of Love (*Utrip ljubezni*)," combining rap, romance, and comedy - even Branch members not into

hip-hop enjoyed this one!

We are in final preparations for the 100th anniversary of the Church of Saint Cyril on the Lower East Side, on Sunday, October 16, - Mass at 10:30 a.m. and Gala at 2:00 p.m. We also hope to organize a tour with an Ellis Island librarian on Friday morning, October 14, focusing on the "Austro-Hungarian" emigration through Ellis Island in the early 1900s, and a SUA lunch on Saturday, October 15. If you are planning to come to New York for these celebrations, please e-mail

vajkusa@gmail.com for a registration form. The gala is \$100/person, first come-first serve, and the deadline for registration is August 1. We especially welcome those whose parents and grandparents made Saint Cyril their parish church while living in New York, before moving further afield. We hope you can join us!

ELIZABETH GROSS

BRANCH 99 - Lemont, Illinois

Contact Information: Jana Hlade jmhlade@hotmail.com

Happy summer Branch 99! As you may remember, in April we honored Bill Zerial as Branch 99's Member of the Year. It was a great celebration and we enjoyed polka music by Vince Rigler. Thank you to all who attended to offer Bill best wishes! Congrats Bill!

We will not be meeting in the month of July to allow our members time for fun and vacations. On August 27, please join us for a *Štruklji* Culinary Class at 8:00 a.m. in the Slovenian Catholic Center (SCC) kitchen. Cost is \$20 per person (payable at the door)

and includes all supplies. Space is limited. RSVP required to Jana Hlade at jmhlade@hotmail.com or 815.439.1905.

Wishing you a very happy Fourth of July holiday! Be safe.

JANA HLADE



Branch 93's "Slovene Conversation Online (2016) – Pogovorna slovenščina preko spleta (2016)" GoToMeeting presentation at the Embassy of Slovenia in Washington D.C.

BRANCH 100 - Southern California

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On Saturday, April 16, Branch 100 held its Member of the Year luncheon. This year we honored Paul Jensen who has been a steady hand and contributor to our Branch for almost 10 years. You may have noticed his photo and biography in the last issue of *Zarja*, but that is only a little bit about this generous and charming friend and member. Even though he probably didn't even know what a Slovenian was before he met Mary Lou, his beautiful wife, but he certainly has blended in with our community here in Southern California. We are very grateful to have Paul with us and wholeheartedly congratulate him as our Member of the Year! Paul chose April 16 for the luncheon that would honor him and decided that Napoli's Italian Restaurant would be the place. It seems to be fairly centrally located to satisfy most of our members, many whom travel quite a distance to attend.

It was also nice that many members of the Kapel family, relatives of Mary Lou, were present to help with the celebration. It was one of the largest turnouts in recent years, and that, too, showed the loyalty and appreciation that the members have for Paul. Thank you all for coming!



Mary Lou and Paul Jensen.

We have recently seen the first production of the DVD that was taken of our *Krofi* class and the final edition should be ready soon. Mike Bajc is a perfectionist and wanted input from several of us before putting the finishing touches on it. It should be a very in-depth learning tool, complete with recipe notes and dialogue with step-by-step instructions that can easily be followed. Other than that, it is a lot of fun to watch as Teresa describes her every movement with comments coming in from every corner of the kitchen! Copies will be available sometime soon.

Congratulations to James Koci for receiving the recent scholarship award from the Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation (SWUSF) for his continuing studies at the University of Notre Dame, IN. He will be home for the summer on a local internship program.

Our household is expecting some of our Slovenian family this summer for a three-week period. It will include the granddaughter, Milana, of my first cousin on my mother's side. Her husband, Marko, and their three young sons, as

well as Milana's younger brother, Nejc, are accompanying them. Milana is the only one who has visited us before, so it should be fun to show the rest of the family the sights and shores of Southern California and other places out West. We have had the opportunity to visit with them in Idrija and Kropa several times on our trips to Slovenia. They have always been wonderful hosts for us. Visiting with family and connecting with our heritage has been truly heartwarming and beautiful. We are so grateful to have had those experiences on both sides of my family, as well as making many friends along the way. I encourage everyone to search for your family, if you have never done that. It was easy for us, since my parents had kept in touch with their relatives... so we have that legacy.

Just recently I decided to give a gift to our oldest son, Tim, who always admired his grandfather who was trained as a tailor in Vrhnika, graduating in 1906, having learned the trade from his older brother. I have had his diploma that was signed by several dignitaries in the town, as well as his teacher and brother. The diploma was framed and had been hanging in my dad's sewing room until his passing. We gifted the diploma to Tim, who promptly found a place for it in his home in Reno. He also wanted it translated so that he would know what it said. So I did the best I could with that. I found that it was very impressive, with lots of good things about diligence and faithfulness for his three years of work.

We hope that all are enjoying a happy summer... perhaps traveling a bit and going on outings with your families. We will be thinking of the 25th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Slovenia on June 25, and hope to have a small celebration with our visiting family!

JEAN KOCI

BRANCH 102 - Willard, Wisconsin

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Mike Sixel

Greetings from Branch 102! We hope you are all enjoying your summer while reading this article. Branch 102 had their first meeting on Palm Sunday weekend at the Willard Parish Hall in Willard, WI. As we have for many years, we had our annual bake sale at the church this weekend. Cookies, cakes, breads, and of course, potica, were available for purchase before and after Mass. Many thanks to

our members who donated their time and talents with their tasty contributions.

We also honored our Member of the Year at this meeting. Branch 102 is proud to announce Mike Sixel as our recipient this year. His career was with the U.S. Postal Service, from which he recently retired. Mike and wife, Karen, currently live on a lake near Eau Claire, WI, where they can enjoy their passions of sailing and fishing. A self-proclaimed "Bohemian," Mike is not Slovenian by blood, but by marriage. He rapidly won the hearts of the members of Branch 102 with his warmth and genuineness. As our tradition, Mike was presented with a gift from our Branch in honor of being Member of the Year. Mike received a gift basket filled with traditional Slovenian foods, along with Wisconsin specialties. The basket included Slovenian sausage, potica, maple syrup, and of course blood sausage (Mike's personal favorite). Mike is an avid supporter of SUA, attending as many meetings as he possibly can. Mike's comments at the meeting help epitomize SUA's purpose. Mike said groups like SUA are so very important to our communities and our country as they continue to provide the strength to keep heritage strong. Branch 102 is proud to honor Mike as our Member of the Year!

BONNIE BRIERTON

BRANCH 108 - Olney, Maryland

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On May 14, Branch 108 participated in EU Day at the Embassy of Slovenia in Washington, D.C. (*See photos on back cover of this issue.*) Nearly 3,000 visitors were serenaded to Slovenian polka music played on the button box and accordion, as they walked towards the embassy and waited in line to enter the embassy facility on California Street, a residential area in a quaint northwest quadrant of D.C.

Inside awaited a short walk through Slovenian culture, food, drinks, and meeting the Slovenian Ambassador, Dr. Božo Cerar, who was dressed casually to welcome visitors in his EU day Ambassador t-shirt. He could be seen throughout the day standing in the center of all the guests, welcoming them, and serving delicious *kranjse klobase* and apple *štrudelj*. There were many volunteers helping, and of course Nuška Zakrajšek of the Embassy staff who conducts this event like a beautifully orchestrated concert each year.

Branch 108 had an *Idrijske čipke* (Slovenian lace display), Slovenian card-making, and beehive panel exhibit. Thanks to members Estelle Zorman, May Kokal, Fran Hrastar, and Bernadette Fitzsimmons for their loan of exhibit items, which were a hit among the visitors. Erika R. Kokal and her sister, Lisa, along with son, Daniel, and cousin, Brittany, all dressed in national costume that May ordered especially for them years ago for their participation in Slovenian events. Nika Kovacic also dressed in native Slovenian costume,

BRANCH 109 - Twin Cities (TC) of Minnesota

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and it was beautiful to watch as people waited in line alongside the SUA exhibit table, asked questions, sharing their inspirations about travel to Slovenia, and snapped photos with our members and friends in Slovenian costume. The brilliantly colored Slovenian *rute* (scarves) and *avba* (headpiece for the Gorenjska *narodna noša*) were unique conversation starters and quite a treat for the thousands of visitors to admire. We smiled, posed, conversed, met prospective members, and met Americans and foreigners from all different ethnic backgrounds, to share our little piece of Slovenia on EU day.

It was a pleasure to welcome, for their visit to the Embassy of Slovenia, our friends from the York, PA, area, Metza Whiteley, her granddaughter, Margaret, who lives in D.C., and friends Kathleen and Mike. It was an overwhelmingly beautiful event for them to experience, but unfortunately not the greatest place for us to quietly converse and get to know one another. Metza is a member of Branch 93 - NYC who met Branch 93 President, Tanja Vajk, several years ago at the embassy. It's always fun to catch up with Tanja at this event, which she day-trips by train each year from NYC to demonstrate online Slovenian language classes.

We look forward to our annual reunion on EU Day at the embassy to see the SUA group from Minnesota, Bina Medved, Nadi Bajda, Rosie Anttila, and their niece, Erika Hodnik, who do a phenomenal job of demonstrating *štrudelj*-making. They humble themselves as being just regular people, but they certainly appear professional when they stretch out the dough, add the sweetened apples, and roll up the *štrudelj*. The narrator, Rosie Anttila, wears her full *narodna noša* when she speaks to the crowd, and it is a wonderful food demonstration event to experience. Following the two separate demonstrations, the *štrudelj* is baked and then served to the crowd. Watching people's faces as they sampled Slovenian *štrudelj* was remarkable, as most Americans just don't know what they're missing by buying commercial pastries, until they taste fresh Slovenian *štrudelj*.

Special thanks to Tim and Matthew Fitzsimmons for their support in setting up and disassembling our exhibit. Sadly, Juliana and Thomas were unable to make it this year, and regrettably missed this fun day. Many of us are quite fortunate to live in the D.C. area, and can attend other events at the Embassy of Slovenia throughout the year, such as the Slovenian language class, and the upcoming *Dan državnosti* (Statehood Day) on June 25, commemorating the Republic of Slovenia's declaration of independence from Yugoslavia in 1991.

Srečno poletje (Happy summer) to all our members and friends of the SUA!

BERNADETTE FITZSIMMONS

The fact that music is a central part of our Slovenian culture is reflected at the beginning of each of our Twin Cities Branch meetings, when Mary Ann Palmer leads us in a familiar melody. In April we all participated enthusiastically in singing, *Ljubca Moja* (My Dear Love), with the men taking their part and the women taking theirs. On those occasions when the treats at our meeting include *potica*, *strudel*, or Slovenian sausage, we have even more reasons to have a song in our hearts!

In March, Marshall Pechauer and his daughter, Ruth, shared stories of their family's many visits to Slovenia, beginning in the 1970s and continuing through recent years. We saw photos of their Slovenian relatives and learned about the Bela Krajina district's Malnarič Winery, whose logo contains a drawing of the original homestead of Marshall's grandfather. On one visit, when Marshall and his wife, Martha, visited the castle at Lake Bled, they surprised the tour guide by having memorized the Slovenian National Anthem and singing along.

At our April meeting, President John Zakelj presented a special plaque to Rick Pisa, who was honored as Member of the Year for all that he does for Branch 109. Then, through her Power Point, Sue Rademacher took us with her on a trip to Lake Bled, where she and other family members rented the Kristan House and spent happy days exploring the area and enjoying each other's company. Sue commented that the incredibly warm hospitality of their Slovenian friends made the trip extra special. When Sue played for us some choir music she had recorded at the Bled Island Church of the Assumption, the sheer beauty of the singing brought tears to my eyes.

In May, in our ninth year at the annual four-day Festival of Nations in St. Paul, we found many visitors eager to get photos of themselves with the cardboard figures of the Ljubljana Dragon or with Zlatorog, the white buck. *Hvala* to organizers Mike Koski, Sue Rademacher, and Marian Brezovec, and to the more than 30 volunteers from Branch 109 who wore Slovenian costumes and answered questions

about our heritage. *Hvala* also to Sue and her husband (and "honorary Slovenian"), Dave Rademacher, for storing all of the materials for the booth in their garage.

By the time you read this, the Twin Cities Slovenians will have celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the Republic of Slovenia's Independence at the home of Miro and Karen Medved. Watch this space for a full report of those festivities in the next issue.

ELAINE BARTHELEMY



President John Zakelj presenting the Member of the Year plaque to Rick Pisa.

Slovenian Sweet Treat Krofi

Translation and baking tips: Vuka Tugberk

Text and photos: Alisa Tugberk and Suzan Weigert

Winter has just ended, and with it carnivals all over Europe have recently been celebrated with food and festivity. In Slovenia, one of the foods that has historically been present at carnivals is *krofi*. In their essence, *krofi* are fried rounds of leavened dough. They can be made plain or filled with a little marmalade. In the U.S., we might term them a “European donut.” In Europe, versions abound, from Germany and Austria where they are called *krappen*, to the Balkans where they are known as *krofne*. In this *Zarja* issue, my mother, sisters, and I share a true family treasure, our grandmother Danica Lavrenčič’s golden, carnival pastry. This recipe takes some time and maybe a few practice runs before getting it right, but it’s one that you can pull out yearly for a fun and seasonal treat.

The following recipe makes approximately 30 plain *krofi*. In the variation at the end, which explains how to make them jam-filled, the yield will be half. Fresh apricot marmalade is traditional, but others may be used to your liking. The best end product will result from marmalade or jam (not jelly), high in fruit, lower in sugar, and with as few preservatives as possible.

Also, this is a recipe translated from Slovenian, so the measurements have been converted from grams and milliliters to U.S. standards. Given this is pastry, it is worth measuring precisely, ideally with a gram scale. We have included the original metric when most important – particularly the flour. Flour weights vary significantly by type and brand.

We hope this recipe makes an appearance on your table for a fun weekend morning or as an afternoon delight. It is light, but filling, and will be a fast favorite. *Dober tek!*



Ingredients

- 4 full cups (610g) plus 1 tsp fine flour, such as Five Roses White Flour
Note: Set aside an additional 2/3 cup (100g) flour for hands and dusting work surfaces liberally.
- 2 packets active dry yeast (14g) or 2 cubes fresh yeast (34g)
- 7 tbsp (100g) unsalted butter, melted, kept warm
- 2 cups (500 ml) milk, warmed
- 6 egg yolks, lightly beaten (save whites for another use)
- 6 tbsp plus 1 tsp granulated sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 tbsp dark rum (white rum will not result in same taste)
- 1 qt corn or vegetable oil for deep frying
- ½ - ¾ cup powdered sugar, combined with 1-2 packets of vanilla sugar
Note: Vanilla sugar (such as Dr. Oetker brand) is available at most grocery stores.

Step 1: Prepare ingredients and yeast.

In a large bowl, sift about 4 cups (610g) flour, place bowl in oven. Warm just slightly by turning the oven light on.

In a medium bowl, whisk together wet ingredients: butter, egg yolks, 1½ cups (370ml) milk, 6 tbsp sugar, salt, and rum.

In a mug, dissolve 1 tsp sugar and 1 tsp flour in the remaining ½ cup (130ml) of warmed milk. Then add yeast and stir to dissolve. Put mug in a warm place and let rise, 5-8 minutes.

Step 2: Form dough and let rise.

When yeast has risen, remove flour from oven and pour yeast mixture on top. Gradually whisk in wet ingredients until incorporated. When it becomes too hard to stir with a whisk, flour your hands and continue just until a smooth, but not very firm, dough forms. Dough is ready when it starts to pull away from sides of bowl. Sprinkle top with flour, cover with kitchen cloth. Put back in oven to rise, keeping oven light on, about 45-55 minutes.



While dough is rising, generously dust smooth work surface and 3 large baking sheets with flour. Line area near stove with aluminum foil and several layers of paper towels in preparation for draining fried dough.

Step 3: Roll dough and let rise again.

Once dough has risen, flour your hands and remove dough onto work surface. Lightly knead, incorporating just enough additional flour to the point that it is no longer sticky. Dust surface under dough with flour, as necessary, to keep dough from sticking. Lightly dust top of dough with flour and gently roll to 1.5 cm (just over 1/2") thickness.

Using a 2.75" circular pastry cutter, cookie cutter, or inverted glass, cut dough and place circles on prepared baking sheets, spacing them 3 inches or more apart. Spacing is important as they will rise again. Cover with kitchen towel, put back in oven for approximately 25 minutes.

Step 4: Heat oil and fry.

Fill a medium-size pot with 2.5"-3" of oil. Selecting the right pot is important. If too small, batches will be a lot. If too large, high sides will trap too much moisture.

Heat oil to medium high, then lower to medium. Oil is ready when a tiny scrap of dough just sizzles. If oil is too cold, krofi will absorb too much and feel heavy. If too hot, they will burn on the outside, yet not cook through.

Remove one sheet of krofi and gently slide a spatula under one, and flip it over into oil. It is important that the side resting on the sheet is now on top. Add 2-3 more krofi to pot, but do not crowd. Immediately cover with lid. Fry 2-4 minutes, until bottoms are golden brown. Turn over with a slotted spoon and fry 1-2 minutes more, uncovered, until second side is golden. Remove with slotted spoon to area lined with

paper towels. Krofi should have a light, colored ring around the center where the two sides meet.

Repeat until all krofi are cooked. It is best to change oil between batches to maintain lightness of dough.

Step 5: Garnish and serve.

Once cooled slightly, dust with powdered sugar. Serve with marmalade on the side (optional). These are best served warm the day they are made, but also one more day when lightly covered with aluminum foil.

VARIATION: Marmalade-filled Krofi

In Step 3, roll dough out to 1 cm (just under 1/2") thickness and cut out 3" circles. Place 1 tsp marmalade in the centers of half of them and cover with another circle. Press edges together. Use the 2.75" circular cutter to recut each to a slightly smaller size, with sides that are firmly sealed. Return to directions, placing cut krofi on prepared baking sheets.





Congratulations Branch 109 - Twin Cities (TC) of Minnesota on another successful Festival of Nations

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