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Summer 2017

The Dawn



Branch 100 - Southern California

**Celebrating After a Traditional and Cultural
Slovenian Food-Making Session**

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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 Fall 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 STATE OF THE UNION

Members of the Year

Member of the Year has become an SUA tradition. This award is a precious and valued statement to those who have given their time and energy to conserve the rich traditions of our heritage. All families need traditions; traditions develop a human spirit. Congratulations to those who have been chosen for this honor. Their actions continue to tell the story of the Slovenian people and fulfill the mission of the SUA!

Public Apology

The newly elected SUA Board requested funds from the Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation for easing the cost of the *Zarja* publication. At the February 4, 2017 conference with Member Representatives, a public apology was extended to Mary Turvey. At that time, an apology was also extended to Carol Ryba.

To Mary Turvey and to Carol Ryba, please accept apologies for any words or actions that offended you; to Member Representatives, Branch Presidents and Boards, and the SUA membership, an apology is offered for the rumbings and any upheaval this situation may have caused you.

Directives relating to a collaborative agreement between the SUA and the SWUSF are now being drawn up by the SUA National Board. The directives will describe the commitments to the collaborative agreement and will be made available to SUA membership. Let it be known that the SUA and the SWUSF do agree on one premise, to quote John Dewey: "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself."

Zarja Publication

Beginning in May 2017, the publication of *Zarja* will become a seasonal magazine with Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall editions. This change will reduce the printing costs which are \$16,000+ per issue. There will be no other changes; *Zarja* will continue to be a pleasurable reading experience.

SUA Website

(See "Branch Information" under "About SUA")
In order to protect consumer privacy interests, all telephone numbers have been removed from the Branch Information page on the SUA website. E-mail addresses remain the sole means of contact. To assure that your branch has an e-mail contact, check the website at www.slovenianunion.org.

Scholarship Winners

Congratulations go out to 2016 scholarship winners who received \$18,000+ in Foundation scholarship money for the year 2016. The National Board salutes the SUA membership for their contributions to these scholarships.

Congratulations to Abigail Terselic, a sophomore at the University of Oklahoma, for winning the David Levy Prize. This prize is awarded to the outstanding U.S. Survey research paper. Abigail won first place out of 1,000 other undergraduate submissions with her paper "The Early Years of the United States Marine Corps: 1775 - 1805." She was also accepted into the College of Nursing at the University of Oklahoma. In 2016, Abigail was the recipient of a Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation and an Education Grant Scholarship from the SUA.

Returned Mail

At the end of each year, mailings for the yearly assessment and other information are mailed to the membership. A stack of returned mail from these mailings was sent back to the home office last year for the following reasons: temporarily away, moved, forwarding expired, or undeliverable. Be aware that when your mail is returned, the SUA must pay. This year the cost to the SUA for the 90 pieces of returned mail was \$151. Please be responsible regarding your mailing address.

SLONNECT

Wanting to know more about your heritage? I encourage you to log on and bookmark this site. It is fantastic! All issues of for the years 2014, 2015, and 2016 are posted. Do you know the patron saint of bell chimers? www.slconnect.com/centuries-old-sound.bells/

Cleveland: The Site of the 2019 SUA Convention

The National Board is planning for the Cleveland event. The theme has been named, and the logo is being fine-tuned!

Seasonal issues of *Zarja* are now in place. As I scan through the calendar, I see so many special days coming up. I extend best wishes in celebration of our mothers, fathers, Slovenia, and the United States of America!

Mary Lou Deyak Voelk, President
Slovenian Union of America



Yul Yost
1930 - 2017

Yul Yost, a native Slovenian who inspired and recounted so much of our Slovenian heritage and ethnicity, has passed. Yul was “a man for all seasons,” a botanist, horticulturist, chemist, historian, winemaker, carpenter, garden designer, and dancer. Each of these titles reflects his love of the Slovenian culture. He planted the seed in the Twin Cities, and like the parable of the mustard seed, it spread within the Twin Cities Slovenian community.

Yul died on February 21, 2017 after a fight with supranuclear palsy, a condition similar to Parkinson’s. He was born Julko Jost on February 16, 1930 in the present-day Lipovec, Slovenia to Ivan Jost (son of Jose Jost and Ana Spes) and Julijana Mastnak (daughter of Tomaz and Neza Mastnak). He grew up during the Second World War. When the war ended and the communist regime was established in Yugoslavia, Yul’s parents were imprisoned; their family farm was confiscated.

Yul was looking for opportunities to leave the country. He made the Yugoslavian National Men’s Volleyball team and toured Europe with the squad. Being 6 foot 4 inches and weighing 245 pounds was certainly an asset. In 1954 at a volleyball meet in Portugal, Yul and a teammate defected. Yul immigrated to the United States in 1957 and made his way to Chicago where he continued playing volleyball.

Yul captured the attention of a coach from the University of Kansas who offered him an athletic scholarship. At KU, he made the track team in shot put. Although he was a walk-on, Yost was undefeated within the Big 8 Conference.

After earning his degree at KU, Yul enrolled in graduate school at the University of Minnesota, studying organic chemistry. For the next 29 years he worked as a research chemist at the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis. Yul authored 20 scientific papers on chemical preparations used in

cancer, drug, and medical imaging research. He married briefly and had a beloved son, Boris.

Yul applied the same passion and drive to his hobbies and interests that he devoted to his studies. He spoke six languages. He took up ballroom dancing, having learned it as a child. It was at a dance he met Vonny Rohlof. Vonny described Yul as “the best ballroom dancer ever” and said that “for a big man he was light on his feet.” Vonny added that Yul was “probably the most intelligent man I ever met, and he had common sense.” Yul and Vonny went on to make a home together in Roseville.

Yul purchased recreational land and transformed it himself, using old heavy equipment to build a large network of ponds, canals, and roads. Yul’s hobby of salvaging stone from demolition sites and turning it into art and sculpture at his Roseville home attracted the attention of gardening and outdoor magazines. In a 1990 interview with the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Yul estimated he had already driven 130,000 miles collecting more than a million pounds of stone. Some of his more notable salvaged pieces came from the back steps of the James J. Hill House, the now demolished Mechanics Arts High School and the pillars of the former St. Paul High Bridge. In an interview, Yul said that decorative carved stone pieces appealed to him because he had “admiration for some poor immigrant who probably earned only a dollar a day to chip away at rock... and cherished the human effort involved in creating these stones.”

His son Boris recalled his father collecting rejected blueberry bushes from a University of Minnesota research effort and planting them in a stretch of land that he owned. The



first year after planting, he harvested over a ton of berries. He tried to breed his own bushes in the family basement. As Boris said, “There was nothing about blueberries he did not like. That was just him.”



Yul had a strong interest in history and Eastern European culture and tradition. He helped found the Twin Cities Slovenians (TCS) and remained a

longtime active member. His “Slovenski dom” in Roseville, Minnesota exuded his love of Slovenia, from the stucco on the exterior of his home, the flora in his backyard garden, and the painted panels honoring Bishop Baraga and Father Frances Pirc, to the archeological replica of the oldest wooden wheel in the world that was discovered in Slovenia and the many pictures and bric-a-brac in his home.

Yul is survived by his son and daughter-in-law, Boris and Lynne (Gifford) Yost, and granddaughters Larissa and Erica of Endicott, New York; sisters Stanislava Hazen of Jupiter, Florida, Gabriela Primc of Ljubljana, brothers Mirko and Toni Jost of Calgary, Alberta, and Franz Yost of Austria. A celebration of his life is tentatively planned for mid-July in Roseville, Minnesota.

“I first met Yul during the Minnesota State Convention held in the Twin Cities. Following the meetings, we were invited to his home. The tour of his home and gardens will never be forgotten. Yul had inquired if there were any memorials to Baraga. I told him of the Cross on the North Shore of Lake Superior near Shroeder, Minnesota. A phone call came several weeks later. He had driven the distance up the North Shore, a 470-mile round trip! What he found was disturbing. There was no path to the Cross; Yul said that he “struggled through brush to reach the Cross only to find the supporting base was crumbling.” It was found that the Cross was on property owned by the Diocese of Duluth. Bishop Sirba acted promptly, recommending the property be resurveyed. Surprisingly, the Cross was partly on the neighboring land. The Cross was moved into a new base, a handicap accessible path was created, and a memorial service was planned. It was during a presentation that someone said, “Look!” There wasn’t a dry eye; flying above us was an eagle. Yul Yost was dedicated to Bishop Frederic Baraga. His actions made this all happen.

On May 10, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI approved Bishop Baraga’s Decree of Heroic Virtues. Bishop Baraga now bears the title “Venerable.”

- Norm Setnicker

- Mary Lou Deyak Voelk

The Snowshoe Priest - *Debbie Voelk Good*



On a cold, dark Friday evening in February 2017, young and old from the Catholic Diocese of Duluth, Minnesota gathered together at the Fond du Lac Reservation's Holy Family Church to enjoy fellowship and a wonderful potluck dinner. The local Kateri Circle graciously hosted the event to welcome Mr. Curtis Chambers. As a tribal band leader, Mr. Chambers' work required that he delve into historical documents which mentioned the works of Father Baraga.

Chambers presented his story to the Duluth diocese group, which included Bishop Paul Sriba. Who is Curtis Chambers, and what brought him to our area from his home in Sheboygan County, Wisconsin?

Mr. Chambers related that his childhood school bore the name of Father Baraga. This Fr. Baraga continued to appear in his life, and Chambers decided it was not a coincidence. He decided to read more about the priest from Slovenia who in 1830 left his upper class life for one as a missionary in the North American wilderness.

As a young father, Chambers became renewed in his Catholic faith. Now as the father of young men, he was looking for a way to deepen his spirituality as well as to celebrate the life of Fr. Baraga, the man who was responsible for bringing the loving Christian Catholicism to his ancestors. He decided upon a trek to mirror as best he could the snowshoe travels of Fr. Baraga. Chambers even read the Baraga diaries. Beginning in 2012, repeating every year and culminating this year, Chambers set out for one to two weeks in February. On snowshoes and carrying a backpack, he trekked the path of Fr. Baraga ever mindful that they

shared some experiences: observing the same trees and rivers and feeling the loneliness and physical hardships. Yet Chambers also had many benefits such as implementing safety parameters by not trekking when the temperature was -20 degrees. Unlike Fr. Baraga, Chambers had modern support along the way. His snowshoes are modern, lightweight versions of the homemade ones utilized by Fr. Baraga. Documentation even exists of people able to locate Fr. Baraga by his bloody footprints in the snow. Chambers' sleeping bag and clothes are lightweight and made for freezing temperatures unlike the many layers of heavy, woolen clothes Fr. Baraga wore and the blankets which he carried to create a sleeping bag.

During his trek, news of Chambers' spiritual journey travelled, and he was approached many times by people asking for prayers. And so he developed a prayer list; as he journeyed, he would pray for them as well as distribute small cedar crosses throughout the woods. Chambers

also received a bounty of hospitality along the way as demonstrated by our group in Fond du Lac, Minnesota.

Though he has finished his snowshoe route, Chambers' devotion to Fr. Baraga is not over. He is now planning to replicate The Snowshoe Priest's journey across Lake Superior from Bayfield, Wisconsin to what is now Schroeder, Minnesota. In 1846, Fr. Baraga, learning of a possible epidemic among the Ojibwe in Grand Portage in what is now Minnesota, set out

with an Ojibwe guide from Madeline Island (near Bayfield) in a small boat only to encounter a horrific storm. Miraculously, the two were safely swept over a sandbar to the mouth of the Cross River where they erected in gratitude a wooden cross, which has been recently replaced by a much larger one of granite.

Denying himself comfort, Father Baraga unflinchingly brought a loving message to the native people. The Snowshoe Priest, who compiled an Ojibwe dictionary in his spare time, became the first bishop of Upper Michigan and lived until 1868. He is buried in the 1890 Romanesque cathedral of Marquette, Michigan, where efforts are under way to canonize him.



Gifted by the local Kateri Circle: Father Baraga's Miraculous Landing at Cross River, 1846 by Howard Stevenson.

Pictured: Curtis Chambers, Bishop Sirba, & Jane Chambers

Whether one is Christian, Catholic, or not, Chambers' re-enactment of the now Venerable Bishop Baraga's efforts is an inspiration of what it is to live a life of kindness and service to others. This author of Slovenian heritage and my Ojibwe and Croatian friend, Lea Carr, left the event filled with warmth and inspiration.

For information on the canonization of Venerable Bishop Baraga, visit the Baraga Association, www.dioceseofmarquette.org.

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Thank you! - Hvala lepa!

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 Darlene Zevnik, 1, +Ed Zevnik
 Valerie Sorensen, 3,
 Educational Grant
 Alkovich Family 16,
 \$10 +Mary Alkovich;
 \$10 +Emma Yergovich
 Judith Niemela, 23,
 +Teresa & Vincent Vesel Family
 James Lah, 23,
 +Theresa (Laboda) Lah
 Anna Marie Uher, 99,
 +Terezija Pristov
 Dorothy Zupancic, 20,
 +Mary Gregorash
 Carol Marie Jacobson, 33,
 +Dorothy Jacobson, Mary
 Hinnenkamp, Josephine Rizzi, &
 Mae Delzotto
 Nancy Benedict, 13,
 +Sophie Troya & Ann Nanut
 Cecelia Nuteson, 43,
 +Duane Nuteson
 Jeanette Sevshek Buchanan, 109,
 Educational Grant
 Marcia Manning, 20,
 +Ann Verhunce Nelson
 Mary Elizabeth Argubright, 89,
 +Florence Gardin Argubright
 Mary Anne Kwiecinski, 35,
 +Mary Krebs & Johanna Belay
 John Olson, 109,
 +my Ely, MN relatives
 Julie A. Harback, 89, +deceased
 Kamnikar family members
 Paula Uremovic Laskowski, 20,
 +Mary Rose Uremovic

\$15 Donation

Jean A. Herbst, 20,
 +Anna & Martin Juricic
 Robert Finc, 35, +Ludwig Steh
 William Rogina, 20, SUA
 Amalija Novak, 99, SUA
 Emily Westbrook, 50, In honor of
 Carol Anderson - Branch 50

Bernadine Gudac, 20,
 +Josephine Buchor
 Shirley Altieri, 100,
 +Antonia Zehel Mento
 George Niskala, 23, SUA
 Mary C. Lewis, 20, +Anne Kobe
 Mary R. Bockin, 1,
 +Joe & Frances Stancar
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 Arlene Considine, 109, +Martin
 Teshak (Tezck) of Suhar &
 Appolonia Muren of Loka
 Wanda Kocinec, 99,
 +Tony & Dina Skamperle

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 +Ana Lustig
 Valerie Koleno, 16, +Ana Lustig
 Linda Cazin, 35, +Bernice Cazin
 Christopher Cazin, 35, +Rudy Cazin
 Carole Terlep, 20, +Tom Terlep
 Sara Fon Cline, 5, +Mary Fon
 Marie Tiedmann, 2, +Mary Koscak
 William F. Koncar, 20,
 +John C. Koncar
 Bernice Metesh, 20, *Zarja*
 Jo Melmer, 93, +Antonia Rapaic
 Alyssa Tate, 3, Educational Grant
 Jacqueline J. Hanks, 50, SUA
 Nancy Terselic, 103,
 In honor of the Terselic Family
 Joan Rugar, 1, SUA
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 Georgene Agnich, 20,
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 Melissa Tevsh Lacasse, 1,
 +Mary & Joseph Tevsh
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 Bernice Ceglar, 35, +Edward Ceglar
 Joanne Ponikvar, 54, +Rose Racher
 Michael Vidmar, 20,
 +Adrianna Vidmar
 Nicholas Vidmar, 20,
 +grandma, Adrianna Vidmar
 Marjorie Wilhelm, 1, SUA
 Julia Kaluza, 99, +Anton Kaluza
 Kathleen Marie Starcevich, 3,
 +Helen Skul
 Katherina M. Kaye, 43,
 +Mici Coffelt
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 +Ann Louise Hoffman
 Bernice M. Bubel, 16, SUA
 Julie Grah, 2, +Julia Petrich
 Janet Hartnett, 30, SUA
 Diane M. Bencin, 50, +Molly Mauer
 - mother & grandmother
 Barbara A. Hengst, 1,
 +Stella Menart
 MaryAnn Brunner, 24,
 +Pohar Family
 Patricia A. Vannucci, 100,
 +Barbara Petek Kozan
 Eileen Plese, 20, +Rose Hrvatin
 Mary Lou Vidergar, 100, +Mary
 Lipovec Glad & Mary Vidergar
 Lois Klatt, 30, +Louisa Loncarich
 Jerome William Newhouse, 23,

+Margie Preshiren
 Judith Zupancich, 23,
 +mother, Mary Pucel
 Catherine A. Kramer, 20,
 Cultural Grant
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 Ashley Benedict, 13, +Mary Troya
 Helen M. Baum, 3,
 +Cecilia Adamic Kostka
 Cynthia Tanita, 100,
 +Frances Kinkopf
 Alexis G Tanita, 100,
 Educational Grant
 Dolores Hennelly, 16, +Millie James
 Helene Kolosov, 99, SUA
 Diane Varney, 50,
 +mother, Jennie Fitzthum
 Adam Banich, 89, SUA
 Mary (Mitzi) Irene Banich, 89, SUA

Megan Rehn, 89, SUA
 Jay Komater, 89, SUA
 Christopher Banich, 89, SUA

\$5 Donation

Marie Kanta, 20, SUA
 Henrietta Bledsoe, 100,
 +Frances Martin
 Mary Leskovec, 43, SUA
 Charlene Kobe, 20, SUA
 William Kobe, 20, SUA
 Gwendalynn Pasich, 30, SUA
 Janet Sikora Mladic, 2, SUA
 Charlene A. Larson, 20, SUA
 Mary Bratovich, 30, SUA
 Barbara Krogulski, 24,
 +Mary Krogulski
 Arthur Parks, 30, SUA

New Members

Welcome - Dobrodošli

1, Burtard, Maribeth	30, Vranicar, Leonard
1, Petek, Chelsie	43, Catarozoli, Loretta
1, Reinke, Emmett	55, Selak, Grayson James
1, Sandwick, Melissa	89, Reesman, Jessica
2, Joyce, Catherine	89, Reesman, Rebekah
3, Fossceco, Joan	93, Anderson, Teresa
3, Justice, Linda	93, Owens, Carmen
3, Orazem, Michael	93, Simmonds, Kathleen
3, Popish, Anton	100, Koci, Arnold
5, Cline, Ava	103, Terselic, Anthony
13, Page, Anja	103, Terselic, Louise
20, Hartley, Sandra	108, Bevec, Terezija
23, Korpela, MaryLou	108, Delak, Katya
26, Staresinic, Maria	108, Dolinar, Mary (Mimi)
30, Koralt, Ivan	109, Erchul, William
30, Molina, Gabriela Malo	109, Samec, Chloe
30, Ravnikar, Ernie	109, Samec, Maja

Annual Membership Drive

Slovenian Union of America, Inc

slovenianunion.org 815.727.1926

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and send to 431 North Chicago Street, Joliet, IL 60432-1703.

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New Member #1

Last Name _____ First Name _____ M _____ F _____

Street Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

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

New Member #2

Last Name _____ First Name _____ M _____ F _____

Street Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

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

New Member #3

Last Name _____ First Name _____ M _____ F _____

Street Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

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

Signed up by:

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____ Branch Number _____

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Name _____ Member ID No. _____ (located on back cover)

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____ Dues Amount _____ Donation _____

Member of the Year

Slovenian Union of America

BETTY REPENSHEK Branch 1 - Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Branch 1 is honoring Betty Repenshek as Member of the Year. Betty has spent her entire life in Sheboygan. She and her three siblings were raised by their parents in a small house on the South side of the city. She attended St. Peter Claver Grade School and graduated from Central High School in 1959. That is where she met her husband of 55 years, Tom, who is 100% Slovenian.

Betty and Tom have one daughter, Victoria. Victoria and her husband, Steve, have three sons; two are married and have blessed them with four grandchildren. Their youngest son, Alec, now 14, played Slovenian folk songs on the piano at Family Festival Slovenia in 2013 at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan.

Betty's hobbies include golfing, quilting, water aerobics, reading, and playing Mahjong. She volunteers at the local food pantry, Emmaus Meals, and for the St. Peter Claver fish fry. Betty also cooks and bakes for various events at S.S. Cyril & Methodius Church.

In 2011, through the encouragement of Aggie Gruenke, Betty joined Branch 1. She is currently our branch treasurer and has also held the position of secretary making many new friends and being involved in branch activities. Betty is one of those members that you can always rely on to help. We are proud to have Betty as a member of our branch and appreciate all she does to help keep the Slovenian heritage alive.



LINDA (STUPNIK) SECORA Branch 3 - Pueblo, Colorado



Linda Stupnik Secora is an active member of Branch 3 along with her daughter, Robin. Linda is married to Alvin Secora, and they have three children: Robin, Kimberly, and Alvin Jr. Linda and Alvin enjoy spending time with their seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Linda is retired from the Colorado Department of Transportation where she worked as a real estate specialist. She also taught religious education at Assumption Church and volunteered extensively at her children's schools. Linda has Slovenian heritage on both sides of her family. Both her mother, Christine (Perovsek) Stupnik, and her father, Ignatius "Jimmie" Stupnik, had Slovenian-born parents.

Linda learned the importance of family at an early age from her grandparents, James and Josephine (Sedlar) Stupnik, who spoke Slovenian in the home. Linda has fond memories of gatherings at which family members drank her grandfather's homemade wine and listened to the Slovenian music that her grandfather played on his squeezebox. The aroma of home-

made wine or sauerkraut still brings back vivid memories of the smells emanating from her grandparents' basement. She also remembers some of that homemade wine which her grandmother kept in the cupboard and sipped sometimes as she cooked, often pouring a small glass for Linda, as well. Linda likes to reminisce about how delicious her grandmother's homemade soup and fresh bread tasted after walking home from school on a cold day. Thanks to her grandmother, Linda has carried on the tradition of making potica with her children.

Linda also honors the tradition of *Žegen* each Holy Saturday at St. Mary's Church, helping her granddaughters dress up in their Sunday best and having the food for Easter Sunday blessed. In her leisure time, Linda enjoys gardening and taking her two rescue dogs on walks.

RICK TRAUNER Branch 5 - Indianapolis, Indiana

Branch 5 is honoring Rick Trauner as our Member of the Year! Rick's mother, Ernastine Zupan Trauner, was a longtime member, and Rick became interested in joining by reading the *Zarja* cover to cover!

Rick's sons write, "Dad always enjoys telling us stories about Haughville and family stories from the home country. Some of our favorite memories are of Dad dragging us to Slovenian events. It always sounded like no fun, but then the polka music started, and we couldn't help but enjoy the fun! Dad is proud of his Slovenian heritage, often referring to himself as a 'Hunky,' and enjoys friendships from his Holy Trinity school days. Dad always has a big smile when talking of the tight-knit Haughville community and is so passionate about his heritage and keeping connected with childhood friends and the Slovenian community."

Rick and his family are often seen at Slovenian events at the Nash. He is a wonderful example of Slovenian hospitality and always has a smile and a hug for all! Congratulations, Rick, our 2017 Member of the Year!



PAST and PRESENT MEMBERS Branch 20 - Joliet, Illinois

Branch 20 honored all of their past and present members at a special "Members of the Year" banquet held on May 16 at St. Joseph Park Hall in recognition and appreciation of their members' deep devotion to church, country, family, community, and Slovenian traditions since the branch's founding in 1928.



Throughout Branch 20's proud history, the members have had many accomplishments: supported St. Joseph Church and its former grade school in Joliet; held fundraisers and bond drives for America during and after World War II; promoted education with branch scholarships and donations to the national scholarship fund; helped create and maintain the SUA national office and heritage museum in Joliet; worked on behalf of Slovenian independence; held a Grape Harvest Dance (*Vinska Trgatev*) for 36 consecutive years; won several cadet, twirling, and bowling championships; participated in SUA regional and national conventions; contributed to numerous charities; and set an example of hard work, generosity, and faith for all to see.

With deep regard for what the members have already accomplished, and with hope and enthusiasm for the future, Branch 20 is grateful for each other and their Slovenian-American community.

Member of the Year

Slovenian Union of America

MILLY MURSEC Branch 43 - Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Branch 43 elected Milly Mursec as the 2017 Member of the Year. Born in Maribor, Slovenia, Milly immigrated to the United States as a teenager with her family. In Slovenia, she completed two years of a four-year program of *Srednja ekonomska šola* (a high school for studies in economics). Both Milly and her family wanted her to continue her studies in this country; therefore, she was enrolled in a high school in Milwaukee. Since Milly had earned high grades in her studies in Maribor, she was signed up for some difficult subjects in high school here. Feeling lost because of insufficient knowledge of English, she dropped out but promised her mom that she would finish high school. She found a full-time office job, studied at night, and graduated at the top of the class. She then enrolled in the business program at a 2-year college and earned an Associate Degree in Applied Science. Milly continued her education at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee where she received a Bachelor of Arts, graduating with honors, and a Master of Science in Information Technology. While studying, she had full-time jobs with Mobil Oil Company and Manpower Inc., among others. Her career took her to the faculty of Purdue University in Indiana and Marquette University in Milwaukee.



For several years, Milly was a member of the Slovenian Women's Union Branch 12, along with her mom. Since she could not attend meetings because of her work schedule, she dropped the membership. Years later, she joined Branch 43. Milly is also a member of the Slovenian Arts Council and a Friend of the Slovenian Arts Program for which she taught Slovene language classes.

ALICE EBNER Branch 89 - Oglesby, Illinois



Branch 89 would like to recognize Alice Ebner as our Member of the Year 2017. Being a member of SUA is "all in the family" to Alice. Alice is Slovenian on the Kernz side of her family tree. Her grandparents immigrated from Novo mesto, Slovenia, and her grandmother, Louise Kernz, was a 1936 Charter Member of Branch 89. Being a member helps Alice feel connected to her grandmother, mother Josephine, sister Margie, and aunts who have passed away. And that connection is still alive with the many cousins who belong to Branch 89. Alice's husband, Jim, joined Branch 89 in 2011. She has also passed down her love of the Slovenian heritage to her children, all members of Branch 89: Terry, Mike, and Tammy. Her grandchildren are junior members.

Alice's dedication to Branch 89 spans decades. She has served our branch as president and secretary. She was serving as president when Oglesby hosted the SUA Illinois/Indiana State Convention in 2010 at the Elks Club in Oglesby. Alice continues to be active in all branch activities including demonstrations on traditional Slovenian foods and as one of the organizers for our Annual Slovenian Heritage Celebration. Her poticas and apple strudels are always a welcome treat. The Slovenian Union of America makes her "feel wonderful about her heritage," and Branch 89 is fortunate to have such a devoted member.

TANYA VAJK Branch 93 - New York, New York

When we hear the name Tanya Vajk, we don't just think "Member of the Year," we think "Human of the Year." Tanya is one of those amazing people who seems to be everywhere at once, supporting every endeavor and emanating goodness and positivity. Whether it's organizing field trips and language classes to discover our Slovenian heritage, planning events for St. Cyril's Church, handing out plates of *klobasa* and *kislo zelje* after Mass, being interviewed for Slovenian television about American politics, or being the conduit between Slovenia and the USA to ensure we all have access to the most up-to-date news and events, Tanya is leading the charge - and she's usually taking photos of it too!

Tanya is the person who brings everyone together to celebrate Slovenian holidays and is the reason we all turn up excited to participate. She knows everything there is to know about Slovenian culture, and if she doesn't, she'll seek out the answers! She is an amazing networker always telling you who "you should meet" and knows about every upcoming artistic, educational, cultural, legal, and political event relating to Slovenia in our branch. She is our vault of information!



One thing to know about Tanya is that by the time you finish just a short conversation with her, she will have you thoroughly inspired and volunteering for an upcoming Slovenian event. This is a testament to her undeniable tenacity, ability to read people, and desire to keep our Slovenian culture alive in America.

At the 100 Year Gala, Tanya visited every table and seemed to have a rapport with almost everyone in the room. She is without a doubt the Member of the Year in our eyes. Look at this beautiful picture of our Tanya at the gala, and you will see why we all treasure her: *Branch 93 Past President Tanya Vajk with President Stephanie Owens at the 100th Anniversary Gala at the New York Athletic Club. Photo Credit: Elena Dubas*

DOLORES GLIVAR Branch 100 - Southern California



Dolores's father, Joseph, came to the U.S. at age 15 in 1912 from Novo mesto. Her mother was born in Mogadore, Ohio. Dolores's maternal parents, George and Catherine Kvas Pucel, came to the U.S. under the direction of the Catholic Church to start up a Slovenian Community in the 80th and Union area of Cleveland, Ohio. Grandmother Pucel opened a boarding house for the Slovenes entering the U.S. This is where Dolores's parents met. To start up a new community, there had to be a church. Dolores's great uncle (stric), Louis Kvas, directed the building of the first church, which was wooden and named St. Lawrence, but it has since been closed.

Dolores was born in Shaker Heights, Ohio in 1937, the fourth child and only daughter of Joseph and Catherine Glivar. Dolores attended Marymount Convent and High School in Garfield Heights, Ohio and later graduated from the School of Radiologic Technology. Working as a technologist, she became the director of a radiology department in a medical center in Cleveland. Looking for personal growth, Dolores took a position with Johnson and Johnson. When that division was dissolved, she joined the Kimberly-Clark Corporation and was in the patient care division. In August 1973, Dolores was transferred to California. She traveled extensively throughout the U.S and remained in the medical industry until retirement.

After retirement, Dolores volunteered in various areas including the San Bernardino Sheriff's Department. Presently she is relocating to North Carolina to be near to her precious niece. In closing, Dolores would like to especially thank Mary Lou Videgar for introducing her to SUA and to all the members. Please keep her in your prayers and God's blessings to all and God bless the SUA! Throughout the years it has been a pleasure to be a member of Branch 100.

Member of the Year

Slovenian Union of America

JACOB TRUNKEL Branch 102 - Willard, Wisconsin



Meet Jacob Trunkel. He grew up on a farm in Willard, Wisconsin. His dad bought the farm from his Grandpa Tony Trunkel who established the farm in 1908. Grandpa Tony was one of the first Slovenian settlers in Willard. His mother, Sophie, and his dad, John, taught Jacob and his siblings John, Bob, Dan, Judy, and Kathy the Slovenian values of hard work and persistence.

Jacob's parents taught him many Slovenian traditions including making blood sausage and smoked venison sausage. His favorite Slovenian foods include apple strudel, *potica*, *flancati*, and *štruklji*. His wife, Sarah, although not of Slovenian descent, has proven to be pretty a good Slovenian cook.

In 2015, Jacob and Sarah visited Slovenia. They went to his Grandpa Tony's home in Krka. While in Krka, they spent time walking along the Krka River and watched several places where the river bubbled out of the ground. They also visited a cabinet shop in Krka that is owned by Trunkel relatives. They saw many wonderful sites and much of the country on that trip.

Tony shares his Slovenian heritage with his children (Candy, Ashley, and John) and his four grandsons (Treyton, Tristan, Andrew, and James). Tony is honored to be selected as Branch 102's "Member of the Year."

MARY LOU TERSELIC Branch 103 - Washington D.C.

Branch 103 honors Mary Lou Terselic as our 2017 Member of the Year. Our branch has been in existence since the mid-1960s and has had 5 presidents. The first was founder, Irene Oddorizi, who was followed by Freda Michelitch, Sabina Bartol, and Jill Augustine. Mary Lou Terselic served as treasurer for 25 years before being elected our 5th president. She was active in all branch activities including picnics, Mother's Day programs, annual dinner dances, and monthly meetings. Monthly meetings often featured invited speakers or other activities such as craft projects. The increasing ages of members negatively impacted meeting attendance, and a practical answer was to shift branch meetings to the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception where first Sunday-of-the-month Slovenian language Masses are held.

Mary Lou and fellow branch members continue to support a less rigorous calendar with continuing activities including the following: a communion breakfast, an annual Mass said for the benefit of deceased and living members, provision of a traditional Easter basket to branch Spiritual Director, Fr. Ray Wadas, and candy-filled eggs for attendees at the Easter food blessing held on Holy Saturday.

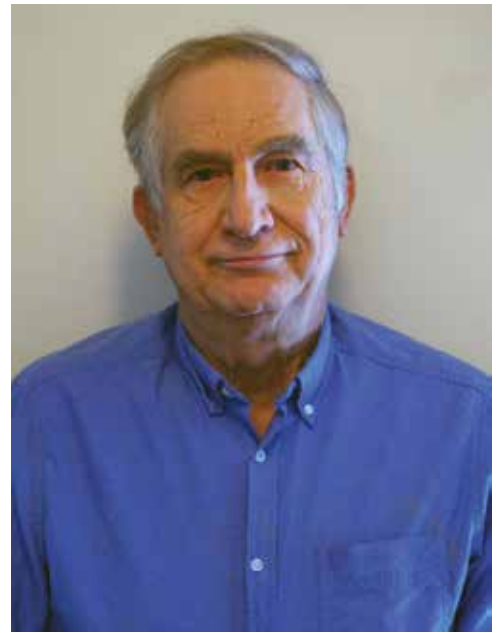
Mary Lou's daughters, Susan and Nancy, as well as six granddaughters and one grandson, are branch members. Mary Lou has attended national conventions in Milwaukee and Naperville and hopes to attend the 2019 convention in Cleveland.



CHUCK DEBEVEC Branch 109 - Twin Cities of Minnesota

Chuck has been a member of the TC Slovenians since 2008, sharing his expertise in Slovenian folk music and making other important contributions. Born to Slovenians Tony and Frances Debevec, Chuck grew up on dairy farms near the Slovenian settlement of Willard, Wisconsin. In 1961, he moved to Minnesota to attend the Brown Institute of Broadcasting and Electronics in Minneapolis. He worked for Control Data Corporation in the Failure Analysis Lab as an analyst and supervisor, taking additional courses at the University of Minnesota. In 1996, he took early retirement and moved to Rush City.

Chuck's interest in Slovenian folk music began in 1961 when he acquired an LP by the Joseph Kelbel Orchestra entitled *Selections from Slovenia*. Through the years, he built a formidable collection of records, sheet music, newspaper clippings, books, and magazines. In 2003 Chuck read an article in the *KSKJ Glasilo* written by Rich Terselic of Maryland who was looking for people interested in 78 RPM Slovenian records. Chuck contacted him, and together they began collecting the old records, many of which were donated by elderly people who were in the process of downsizing and whose children lacked either interest or space for the heavy and fragile items.



Eventually, Chuck and Rich came to realize that the historically valuable items were in danger of being lost, so they turned their attention to preservation. In the process, they authored articles for the *Journal of the Society for Slovene Studies*, *KSKJ Voice*, *Slovenian American Times*, *Traditiones Journal*, and other publications. In 2010 they began a collaboration with the Glasbenonarodopisni Inštitut (Ethno-Musicological Institute) of Ljubljana in a study of pre-World War II recordings made in the U.S.

This fall, Chuck played a major role in the Slovenian exhibition entitled *Farmers, Miners, and Refugees: Slovenian Migration in Minnesota from 1855*, described in the December issue of the *Zarja*. Along with doing some writing, he formatted the 14 banners which were put together by a team from Branch 109. This project would not have been completed as well without the efforts of Charles Debevec. Chuck's other interests include vegetable gardening and woodworking.

Congratulations and thank you to Chuck Debevec, our Member of the Year!



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May-June 2018

A Cultural Experience through Slovenia

Travel with the *Zarja* Staff

Complete details will be in the next issue of *Zarja*.



Jožefa "Pepa" Šeškar, age 17, in 1944.

Jožefa's Journey

Written by Staff member David Sodac
Branch 89 - Oglesby, IL
E-mail: bdsodac@gmail.com



Sr. Mary Jacinta (Jožefa Šeškar) in 1954.



Later photo of Sr. Mary Jacinta (Jožefa Šeškar).

Four-foot-ten, silver-haired Sister Jožefa Šeškar has been characterized as a bundle of energy, determined, soft-spoken, and overflowing with her contagious joy. Her day-to-day life in "retirement" was crammed with a list of purposeful activities from hemming a skirt, to piecing baby quilts or distributing in-house mail... all done with a smile on her face, a sparkle in her eyes, and a prayer on her lips. She would grin at all passers-by, and if sensing they needed a hug, she'd sling her cane onto her arm and press her cheek against theirs and offer the words, "God love

you!" and scuttle off down the hallways of St. Mary's Benedictine Monastery in Rock Island, Illinois. Her life wasn't always this contented and filled with joy. In 1995, Sister Jožefa wrote her memoirs of her family's experience during the turbulent and violent years of the Italian occupation, the threat of Nazism, and the unfurling of communistic control during WWII in Slovenia. As people around her were disappearing and many were being murdered, she and her sisters made the decision to escape their beloved homeland. They joined the three-abreast column of fugitives and walked purposely for days to reach the border tunnel through the mountains and into Austria. There they would become "stateless" and meagerly exist as Displaced Persons in DP Camps until life's experiences would lead them to the promised land - America. Excerpts from those poignant memoirs are being shared with the permission of Jožefa's family and the blessings from her Benedictine sisters.

On April 6, 1941 the Axis powers invaded the Kingdom of Yugoslavia; the monarchy had fallen, and new-



ly crowned Peter II was forced to flee. The German Reich seized territories along the northeastern borders of Slovenia; Italian Fascists took control of the southwestern section and occupied the coastline along the Adriatic Sea. Hungary clutched the northeastern portion of the country. Slovenia was being trisected. Communism already had its foothold in Slovenia since WWI and now began laying the groundwork for a total takeover. It was a confusing, fear-filled, unsettling time for the villagers everywhere. Communist-led anti-occupation resistance movements spread throughout villages. Resistance forces against Communism and Nazism sprung up everywhere. On the edge of the marshland south of the Slovenian capital city of Ljubljana, within the small village of Tomišelj, the Franc and Marija Žeškar family prayed together and worried what their future would hold. Their children, Marija, Franc, Frančiška, Ivanka, Ivan, and fourteen-year old Jožefa would become witnesses to one of Slovenia's most violent periods of history.

Six days after the Italian Fascist invasion, on April 12, 1941, Franc Žeškar died of a major stroke. Before

the grieving could cast its pall over the family, their mother, Marija Žeškar, would die from her three-year battle with cancer, just eighteen days later. On the day her children laid her out for viewing in their family home, the approaching Italian military units could be seen in the distance. Eleven days after the funeral and burial, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia surrendered to the Axis powers. Jožefa, her sisters Marija, Frančiška, and Ivanka, and her brother, Ivan, struggled to keep their lives somewhat normal and gave their all to save the family farm. Jožefa's job was to care for the cows and horses. They all did the necessary fieldwork. Their oldest brother, Franc, had been ordained as a Catholic priest shortly before the untimely deaths of his parents. He had been assigned as an assistant parish priest in a nearby village. The family members had much fear and speculation about what would become of them. Then two months after the invasion, the worries came closer to home. Jožefa wrote in her memoirs, "*On July 26, 1942, our village, as well as many others, were surrounded by Italian soldiers. A machine gun rested on the windowsill where my brother Ivan was sleeping. In the morning, they took all the men and*

boys from 18-50 years of age to the island of Rab (an Italian concentration camp located off the coast in the Adriatic Sea). These men and boys were starved; many died. Mayors of the villages pleaded for the release of



Family photo at the ordination of Fr. Franc Šeškar: (Standing L-R) Ivanka, Marija, Ivan, Frančiška, and Jožefa. (Seated L-R) Maija Oven Šeškar, Fr. Franc, and Franc Sr.

these victims. When my brother finally returned, he was just skin and bones... he knelt down and kissed the ground. When I saw him, I cried and cried. I could hardly recognize him.”



Family home before occupation.

By 1943, Fascism and Nazism were fast approaching a total takeover of Slovenia. However, Communism had already had its foothold in Slovenian soil since the end of WWI. A civil war of factions spread throughout the countryside. The Slovene Partisans led by Yugoslav revolutionary Communists organized anti-Nazi resistance movements. Villagers were being coerced into joining their militia. Sides needed to be chosen. Throughout the Italian-occupied region, revolutionary violence against peasants and fear of possible revolutionary victory fostered the creation of volunteer Village Guards with the encouragement of the Italian occupiers. Jožefa’s brother, and most of the surviving men who were previously held hostage on the Adriatic island of Rab began to meet regularly to embrace the idea of forming their own local militia.

Jožefa’s family anxiously waited, watched, and prayed. She wrote, “We were always afraid when our dog barked towards the mountains; we knew the Communists were near. I was always afraid to go to bed. One evening, when the dog barked, the Communists came and banged on our door. When Marija opened the door, they said they had an order to liquidate our house... to take all we had. They took all the food they could find and even the blankets from our beds... I was so angry I cried. Fortunately, they did not hurt any of us.”

During the ensuing months, tensions would grow and conditions worsened. There was an increase in violence against the Slovene population including the destruction and looting of households and the taking of hostages. Jožefa’s brother, Gospod (Fr.) Franc was forced to flee from his church. He enlisted as chaplain to the local Village Guards. Then in September of 1943, the Italian Capitulation took place. Jožefa

wrote that it was a very chaotic and worrisome time. There were violent skirmishes occurring all around her village. Her two brothers, Ivan and Father Franc, were among those battling their way into Ljubljana. The Village Guard militias were reorganized into what was called the *Domo-branci*, the Home Protectors. She wrote, “One day, two Commu-



Family home destroyed by communists.

nists came to our home... They went to the kitchen where Marija was working and asked about our sister, Ivanka. (Ivanka's boyfriend was one of the Domobranci.) She left through the window and fled to the city of Ljubljana, which was about eight miles away."

The fighting and the worries intensified as the days went on. Jožefa wrote, "Many more things were happening all around us. Some people had just disappeared; others were killed right in their own homes. My sister, Marija, was very frightened with just the two of us at our house. She made arrangements with the Domobranci for a move, where they would protect us. December 1, 1943, was the day we moved to Barje, near Ljubljana, where the Domobranci were stationed... Even with the Domobranci soldiers so near, we were not completely free of fear... One night a bomb exploded very near the window where the three of us slept. The window shattered into small pieces and scared us to death. All of us huddled around the stove, praying the Rosary, while the fighting was going on."

In 1944, the Gestapo arrested Jožefa's brother, Father Franc. As a Catholic priest, he was accused of having connections with Rome. He was tortured, beaten, and some of his teeth were knocked out. He was finally sent to the concentration camp in Dachau. During a calm period, Jožefa's sister, Ivanka, finally married her fiancé, Jakob Modic, a *domobranec*. Jožefa and Marija decided to follow the safety of the *Domobranci* as they stationed closer to their home village; however, the brutal Communist revolution continued its terror.

A series of historical events finally brought WWII to an end. Mussolini was executed on April 25, 1945; within days, Hitler committed suicide on April 30, 1945. The German Reich surrendered to the Soviet Union and Western Allies in late April. WWII in Europe ended on May 7, 1945. When the war ended, Yugoslavia was re-established under the control of Tito, and Slovenia became part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The monarchy and the reign of young King Peter came to an end. Appalled at the prospect of life under permanent Communist tyranny, Marija, Ivanka, and Jožefa made the decision to leave their homeland. Jožefa wrote, "So on Sunday morning, May 6, we started our journey. We put our things in a wagon, taking two horses, a two-week-old colt, one cow, and a seven-week-old baby... Many other families also left. The procession was miles long... The

third day we started to go up a mountain, which was very difficult. We were all very hot, hungry, thirsty, and tired. The next day we had to go through a long, dark, water-dripping tunnel. Through the mountains, on the other side, was Austria." The escape route took the sisters over the infamous Ljubelj Pass, a tunnel carved out of the mountain by the sweat and blood of Nazi-held prisoners. Upon nearly reaching the end of the pass, they were met by Partisans holding rifles pointed at them. They quickly retraced their steps and returned to the Slovenian side of the tunnel. They camped there overnight. The next day, a group of *Domobranci*, miraculously including Ivanka's husband, Jakob Modic, met them and successfully led them through to the other side of the tunnel.



Some 30,000 Slovenians made this long grueling trip which lasted over a week, wearing the same clothes they left with. As they moved north, they had to go either over the mountains or walk for three hours through the cold, dark, and muddy 3km Ljubelj tunnel to enter Austria.



At the entrance of the Ljubelj Tunnel.

“I’ve had pretty good health, and I can still laugh. Life is good!” - Sr. Mary Jacinta (Jožefa Šeškar)

Now labeled as “Displaced Persons” (DPs), the throngs of Slovene refugees were directed to the fields of Viktring, near the city of Klagenfurt. The escaping *Domobranci* who had protected the columns of Slovenes camped in the same fields. Soon the British Army began sending the Slovenian *Domobranci* back into Slovenia under the pretense of preparing housing for the eventual repatriation of the DPs. Ivan was able to convince his brother-in-law, Jakob, to remain in the camp until he could send word if it was safe. The men were taken to a location called Kočevski rog and executed by the Yugoslavian Army. They were thrown into open pits and caves which were then sealed with explosives. Jožefa’s brother, Ivan Žeškar, was one of those executed soldiers. From 10,000 to 12,000 *Domobranci* soldiers and many of their families were subsequently killed in a series of these massacres at Kočevski rog.

After the British decided to close the Viktring camp, Jožefa and Marija were resettled in Spittal, Austria. The Žeškar girls along with Ivanka’s husband, Jakob, and baby, Ivanka, remained in the DP camp in Spittal for four more years. They all shared space in barracks with two others in what would have been the square footage equivalent of their two bedrooms back home in the village of Tomišelj. Jožefa recalls, “*We did not need to be afraid... I profited a lot from being in the camp since I was able to take up sewing and other classes... I was busy all the time.*”

The Žeškar family waited patiently for an opportunity to leave the DP Camp and to be relocated to a new country where they could be free. The process was lengthy and obviously involved a great deal of political

complexity. In late May 1949, they heard from their brother, Father Franc, who had been rescued by American soldiers from Dachau. He was now residing in Munich, Germany. A Slovenian priest friend of his, Rev. Michael Železnikar, had been living in the United States and had been assigned duties in a parish in



In the Displaced Person’s camp the day before they would leave for America: (Left to right) Marija Šeškar, Ivanka Šeškar Modic holding Ljudmila Modic, her husband Jakob Modic, and Jožefa Šeškar. Ivanka Modic Markun is standing in front of her father.

Warsaw, Illinois. Rev. Železnikar had interceded with the Diocese of Peoria in Illinois to consent in allowing the Benedictine Religious Order of Sisters in Nauvoo, Illinois to sponsor DPs, and the Žeškar family was chosen. Marija and Jožefa were sent first, with Ivanka, Jakob, and their two daughters expected to arrive shortly afterwards. Jožefa reflected on those initial moments: “*I didn’t know what to expect; it was all so new to me. Not knowing much about America, I depended on Marija who knew more... I still remember when Father Michael drove us to the front of the old convent. I met some of the Sisters, and they seemed so very happy. That*



Displaced Person’s Sewing Class in Spittal in 1948. Jožefa is in the middle of the back row.



St. Mary's Monastery in Rock Island, Illinois.

really impressed me and stayed with me.” In August, Ivanka, Jakob and their daughters, Ivanka and Ljudmila, finally arrived.

After a year at the Nauvoo Convent and Academy, Jožefa made her decision to join the religious order that had filled her with such joy and peace. She entered the Benedictine community on September 8, 1950 and made her final profession on August 24, 1955. She took the religious name of Sr. Mary Jacinta. She reflected in her memoirs, *“I wasn’t angry at the Communists, but I was so scared of them that I used to wake up crying for Ivan. But after I made my final profession, I never cried like that again... During my postulant year, my brother wrote that when our mother was dying she wished that either Ivanka or I would become a Sister. When I heard that, then I knew for sure that I had made the right decision.”* Her ministries included food service at St. Mary Monastery and Academy in Nauvoo, Illinois as well as at St. Anthony Convent in Atkinson, Illinois. After the academy and convent closed in Nauvoo, the Benedictine Sisters moved to the Quad-City area in 2001 and built a new monastery on thickly wooded and rolling grounds in Rock Island, Illinois.



St. Mary's Priory in Nauvoo, Illinois.

valiant attempts of his sisters living in the USA, never made it to join them. He suffered greatly from the severe torture effects on his body while being held in Dachau, and died in January 2000 in Munich, Germany. Frančiška married Jože Persin and remained living in Jezero, Slovenia. They had three children, Jože, Valentin, and Nani. Frančiška died on March 16, 1998, just twelve days after her sister, Marija, died in the States. Ivanka and Franc Modic moved in December 1952 from Nauvoo to Milwaukee where Marija had already settled. Their adult children are Ivanka Markun, Ljudmila

Modic, Marta Mejac, Marijana Jakopec, Elizabeta Modic, Barbara Stupek, and Jakob Modic Jr. Ivanka will be 93 years young this May 2017. Their beloved “Teta Pepca”, Aunt Jožefa, died peacefully on November 25, 2016 at the age of 89 while in residence at the monastery. In her later years of retirement, she once told a fellow Sister how grateful she was that her sisters and brother survived those dark days. She shared, *“I’ve had pretty good health, and I can still laugh. Life is good!”*



Marija Šeškar moved from the Nauvoo Convent to Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1951. She died in Milwaukee on March 4, 1998. Father Franc, despite the



Slovenian Union of America

Across America - Branch Reports

BRANCH 1 - Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Contact information: Mary Ann Schellinger
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On February 21, members from Branch 1 got together for a “Warm Your Heart” winter potluck in Fr. Cherne Hall at Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church. Since the date was close to Valentine’s Day, we used that theme for the evening



with table decorations in red and white. Food for the evening was not lacking as there were three banquet tables set up with LOTS of dishes to be shared, including a few traditional Slovenian recipes. Strudel and heart-shaped cookies were just a few of the treats on the dessert table, and of course, no Slovenian get-together would be complete without Pink Tea (definitely heart warming).

President Mary Sandwick held a short meeting. She informed the group that JoAnne Richter, previously elected as branch secretary, would be unable to fulfill her commitment in that position. Mary Jo Grabner stepped up for that role, and she was installed as secretary that evening.

Mary put together a word search using words related to Valentine’s Day (both in English and Slovenian) and a heart puzzle (love - it is in every Slovenian). Good way to get our brains working after feasting on a wonderful buffet!

Information was shared from the *Slovenian American Times* newspaper regarding *Drones Over Slovenia*. It is a website showing aerial photographs of areas in Slovenia (<http://travelslovenia.org/jure-korber-photography/>). A few members who had previously been to Slovenia already went to site, and it brought back so many wonderful memories of “Oh, I’ve been there and seen that.” Even if you have never been to Slovenia, it is definitely worth your while to check out the site.

Our Slovenian church had a lunch and bake sale on Palm Sunday. Many of our members donated their home-baked poticas for that event.

MARY ANN SCHELLINGER

BRANCH 2 - Chicago, Illinois

Contact Information: Judy Stoll
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We are busy planning our annual Zveza Day Picnic, which is always held on the third Sunday in July on the “Hill” in Lemont. In June, \$10 worth of tickets for the picnic cash raffle will be mailed to all Branch 2 members. Also, we could really use a few volunteers at the picnic to help in the kitchen and bar area and to provide raffle prizes or bakery items. Call me (see contact information above) if you would like to help at this fun event!

Mary Podder is thrilled to announce that her granddaughter, Jennifer Kochiarczyk, was married to Ray Weber in a ceremony at St. Raymond Cathedral in Joliet. Mary is also very proud of her grandson, Scott, and his wife, Lisa, who welcomed into their family a new baby girl, their second daughter.

Seven members and three guests attended our April 6 meeting at the Peaches and Pears restaurant. Since we have just a small group of active members, we agreed to look into the possibility of merging with Branch 99 (Lemont). Much discussion and a lot of information is needed before any decision can be made. We will keep everyone informed through our reports in upcoming *Zarja* issues.

Please make plans to enjoy our picnic. You’ll see familiar faces, eat great food, have a few drinks, listen to wonderful music, and perhaps win a nice prize.

JUDY STOLL

BRANCH 3 - Pueblo, Colorado

Branch 3 members gathered on February 7 for the first regular meeting of 2017. Chaplain Marie Mutz opened the meeting with a prayer after President Marge Cullen called the meeting to order. Vice President Eileen Kaplan gave the treasurer’s report and told the group that \$300 was collected at the Christmas luncheon in December for the church pavement fund at St. Mary’s. Eileen also announced that Angela Perez won the Slovenian Women Union Scholarship Fund’s 2016 Theresa Rose Sevshak Memorial Continuing Education Award. Angela is the granddaughter of Bernice Krasovec and a descendant of Martin and Mary Krasovec from Bušina vas, Bela Krajina,

Zarja - The Dawn



Branch 3 members enjoyed seeing Peggy Martin's t-shirt at a recent meeting.

Slovenia.

The meeting had a Valentine's Day theme, and Barbara Greenwood was the hostess. The group played a U.S. presidential trivia game in honor of Presidents' Day, and Linda Secora was the winner. Peggy Martin brought the mystery gift, which was

the two cities. We were fortunate to host two professors from Piran, Miha Lesjak and Tina Kociper, in April. They had meetings at Ball State University



and IUPUI but still had time to take in a Pacer basketball game and learn how to roast marshmallows at a backyard bonfire! It's always fun to show Indianapolis to our Slovenian friends and families! Have a wonderful summer!

MARY, KAREN & PHYLLIS

won by Marge Cullen.

The March meeting was held on March 7. Mitzi Drobnick, the hostess, served pistachio salad and sugar cookies for the St. Patrick's Day-themed gathering. Barbara Karlinger donated the mystery gift, which was won by Robin Secora. The attendees signed a greeting card for Gertrude Pachak who has moved to Northern Colorado to be near her nephew's family. The group discussed the Cripple Creek gambling bus trip planned for late July.

The branch's April meeting had to be cancelled due to inclement weather, but the members look forward to the annual Mother's Day Luncheon scheduled for May 2 at which the Member of the Year, Linda Secora, will be honored.

ANNETTE SABO CHARRON & BARBARA KARLINGER

BRANCH 5 - Indianapolis, Indiana

Greetings Branch 5 Members! Hope your summer is full of fun and adventure! Please plan on joining many of the Indianapolis Slovenian community on June 10 for the SLOVENIAN FESTIVAL at the Lions Park in Clermont, Indiana. The Slovenian National Home puts on a great day filled with food, music and fun!

We would like to thank everyone who came to the Nash for our May dinner. SUA officers Mary Dragan, Karen Zarich, and Phyllis Fon cooked a great chicken casserole with all the trimmings!

The Friday night dinners at the Nash are a great way to meet up with family and friends and to get a good meal too! Any ideas for dinner or volunteers to help out, just let us know. Everyone welcome!!

Many of our members are involved with our Indianapolis-Piran, Slovenia Sister City committee which promotes cultural, educational, and entrepreneurship between

Summer 2017

BRANCH 13 - San Francisco, California

Contact Information: Michele Twers
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Our March and April meetings were celebrated with the traditional holiday luncheon, and our table was decorated for the occasion. We know our branch is small and so is the attendance at our meetings, but we sure look forward to getting together every month and keeping our branch going. We do this in memory of our mothers and family members who were also officers in Branch 13. We know they would be so very proud knowing that we are carrying on the SUA tradition.

I am glad to report that our Vice President Beverly Jackson is on the road to recovery after taking a very bad fall and breaking three ribs. We are happy to see her up and moving around.

On Sunday May 7, we had our annual Members of the Year luncheon. Once again it was a wonderful turnout. We had great raffle prizes, and the food that was served ensures that no one goes away hungry.

Birthday greetings to all our members who are celebrating in May and June and also get well wishes to any of our members who are under the weather and not doing well.

To all members, have a Happy Mother's Day and Father's Day.

MICHELE TWERS

BRANCH 20 - Joliet, Illinois

Contact Information: Georgene Agnich
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Joliet lawyer Matt Campbell gave a talk on estate planning, including wills and powers of attorney, at our February 21 meeting after which he answered our many



Vice President Jeanne Warsaw invites everyone to the St. Joseph Table.



Secretary Diane Hohenwater sells raffle tickets at bake sale.



President Charlene Kobe works at bake sale.

questions and gave us much food for thought.

Several Branch 20 members attended our annual St. Joseph Table on March 21 at St. Joseph Parish Hall and recited a prayer to St. Joseph afterward. We brought a

wide variety of homemade and purchased foods without duplicating anything! Jonita Ruth received the vase of yellow roses from our buffet table to take home. Josephine Lustik gave phone lists to several of us who volunteered to call and remind members of our April bake sale and raffle.

The April 1 and 2 bake sale and raffle at St. Joseph Church were a success. A big “thank-you” to Josephine Lustik and Marla Lustik for chairing the event and to all who worked, donated bakery or cash, or bought raffle tickets. Others gave cash donations, either in person or by mail later. Raffle winners were Helen Lawson (first prize: potica); Sue Bannon (second prize: apple strudel); and Dorothy Zupancic (third prize: wine).

Vera Ancel Muir organized a reunion of some eighty members of her Govednik family relatives, including two from Slovenia, on April 1 in Joliet. Before their 4 p.m. banquet at Cemeno’s Pizza restaurant, a small group of them enjoyed refreshments and a tour of our SUA Museum, hosted by Georgene Agnich and Diane Hohenwater.

GEORGENE AGNICH

Govednik Family Reunion

Our SUA Heritage Museum in Joliet, Illinois, was alive with visitors on Saturday, April 1, when Zvonko and Majda Govednik of Nova vas, Slovenia, and seventeen of their American Govednik cousins arrived for a tour at 3 p.m. Zvonko had celebrated his sixtieth birthday in 2016, and his family and friends had given him cash to buy airline tickets to enable him and Majda to realize their dream of visiting their relatives in Joliet and Pueblo, Colorado. They arrived in Chicago on March 29, staying with Branch 20 member Vera (Ancel) Muir until their April 10 departure. Vera’s paternal grandmother was a Govednik. When cousin John Govednik of Atlanta suggested that a few relatives get together with Zvonko and Majda for pizza, Vera spread the word on social media and soon was organizing a Govednik reunion for seventy-two guests on April 1 at Cemeno’s Restaurant in Joliet!

Branch 20 hostesses Georgene Agnich and Diane Hohenwater welcomed our visitors, who were impressed by the many books and artifacts in the museum as well as with Govednik burial insurance documents in the SUA database. While enjoying drinks and sweets, they spread throughout the museum to view the many items of interest and to purchase souvenirs and SUA’s latest cookbook. They had come from Washington, Ohio, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Georgia, as well as from Joliet, Morris, and Elgin in Illinois, to see their Slovenian cousins. Vera’s brother, Joe Ancel, had toured the museum during his fiftieth class reunion, and he recommended this tour. Our

visitors posed in front of the museum for photos just as the bells of St. Joseph Church, our beautiful Slovenian church across the street, called worshippers to the 4 p.m. Mass. Georgene presented Majda with a small bouquet of red carnations as the visitors departed for Cemeno's.

On Sunday, April 2, about twenty-four of the reunion guests attended 8:30 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph's, during which the church's Slovenian choir sang as a special courtesy to Zvonko and Majda and their American cousins. After Mass, the reunion guests toured the nearby Ancel Center, the official museum of St. Joseph Parish's history that was dedicated to the late Edward and Olga Ancel, parents of Vera and Joe, on July 1, 2012. The guests also took time to shop at Branch 20's annual bake sale being held in the church's foyer.

Zvonko and Majda spent two days in Pueblo visiting his maternal Stonich cousins and his Aunt Virginia. He has visited America a few times, but this was only Majda's second visit. She longed to see Niagara Falls, so she and Zvonko flew there early on Saturday, April 8, as part of their fortieth wedding anniversary celebration. They stayed overnight in Ontario, Canada, with Govednik cousins, and flew back to Chicago on April 9. Their April 10 flight to Slovenia was delayed by Chicago thunderstorms, causing them to miss their connecting flight in Istanbul. They returned to Nova vas on April 12 after their very enjoyable

reunion with their American cousins. Many Govedniks moved to Belgrade, Serbia, during World War II; Zvonko has invited Vera, who is the historian and genealogist of her large extended family, to travel with him to Belgrade the next time she visits Slovenia. Vera is currently updating the two-volume genealogies of her paternal and maternal grandparents' families which she will make available to her family on social media. She also maintains family trees and other information on *Ancestry*, the popular genealogical website.



Majda and Zvonko Govednik with Lupe Reyes Ancel.



Front row: Siblings Dillen, Anja, and Jack Govednik; Leonard Govednik Jr; Luanne Stefanich Goldman, Karen Govednik Nitz; Mary Fran Kocjancic Smaron; Bernadette Govednik Goodroe (from Cathlemet, WA); Margaret Zupancic Cardella (from Cincinnati, OH); Matthew Cardella, Jeffrey Cardella; Catherine Judge Allen; Majda and Zvonko Govednik (from Nova vas, Slovenia)
Back row: Joseph Ancel (from Wisconsin Rapids, WI); Douglas Allen (from Demotte, IN); John Govednik (from Atlanta, GA); and Richard Cardella.



Zvonko and Majda (Melen) Govednik of Nova vas, Slovenia, visiting SUA Heritage Museum on April 1, 2017.



John Govednik

BRANCH 24 - LaSalle, Illinois

Contact Information: Diane Data

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Zivijo! As I sit at my desk typing this report for the summer issue, I am looking at my red and blue decorated Easter eggs (pisanice) that were carefully brought back from the Bela krajina area on my trip to Slovenia last year. I am also enjoying the butare and a linen embroidered doily from the same trip. Now on to the making of my potica for Easter Sunday brunch.

Many members of Branch 24 attended Branch 89's Slovenian Fest last weekend. This is an awesome event for showcasing their Slovenian heritage. I was visiting with Bob with whom I have a distant relative connection. He was telling me that his family has a similar connection to the Knauss family (Melania Trump's family). So I can only

assume that I have that same connection. A new branch to explore on the family tree!

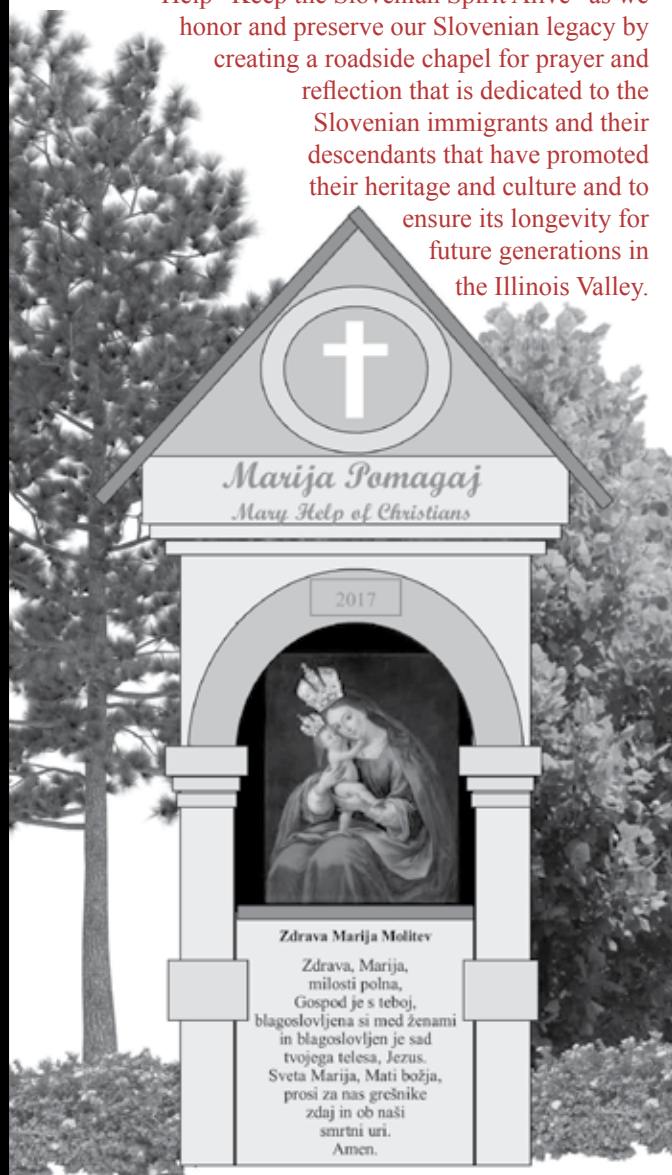
It is with sadness that I report the passing of Janice C. Mueller earlier this year. Her husband and three daughters survive her. Janice was very proud of her Slovenian heritage. Her daughter, Wendy Lauer, is also a member of our branch.

Branch 24's Slovenian-American Roadside Chapel project is going to be a reality. Our plan is to have it completed for our annual cemetery walk at the end of October. A copy of the donation information is printed in this issue. The structure will be made of granite with a Marija Pomagaj image etched inside the chapel, which a person can enter. Names of donators or family names will be engraved on the back of the chapel. *Dober Dan!*

DIANE DATA

Slovenian-American Roadside Chapel

Help "Keep the Slovenian Spirit Alive" as we honor and preserve our Slovenian legacy by creating a roadside chapel for prayer and reflection that is dedicated to the Slovenian immigrants and their descendants that have promoted their heritage and culture and to ensure its longevity for future generations in the Illinois Valley.



As each generation is getting further away from knowing their immigrant Slovenian ancestors, we are proposing a way to remember and honor not only the Slovenian immigrants, but also their descendants who have carried on their Slovenian heritage and traditions.

A common site to see in Slovenia are roadside chapels. They are built near roadways or paths and used as a stopping place to pray and reflect. The roadside chapel will be placed in St. Vincent's Cemetery in LaSalle, Illinois, where many of our Slovenian ancestors are buried. You will be able to walk inside, say a prayer, place flowers, or light a candle. Marija Pomagaj will be etched in the granite on the back inside wall.

With your donation of at least \$100 your name will be engraved on the back of the roadside chapel.

A brochure with all of the details can be obtained by e-mailing:

Bonnie Pohar Prokup at wprokup@aol.com or Debbie Pohar at pohar4@aol.com.

Questions: Call Debbie Pohar 815.481.9975

Your donation is tax-deductible through the Slovenian Union of America. SUA operates exclusively for charitable, educational, and religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

BRANCH 43 - Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Contact Information: Jan Gehm

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Our members gathered at Triglav Park on April 8 to make butare. We are grateful to Helen Frohna, who helped us get started on this project. Palm Sunday was a beautiful, warm, sunny day and our butare were proudly carried into church along with the palms for blessing. Many thanks to Helen Frohna who organized the procession into church and to the many Slovenes, many in narodna nose or sporting red carnations to display their Slovenian heritage.

Just a reminder that our June meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 28, at 6 p.m. Please note the time as we are trying to attract our working members.

There will be no meeting in July, but we will gather at Triglav Park on Sunday August 6, 2017, for dinner starting at noon. There will be a Mass at 11 a.m.

Our branch is planning a trip to the Joliet Home Office and Heritage Museum and then to Lemont, a short distance from Joliet, for a picnic, on August 13, 2017. Please come to our June meeting to get more information.

Sincere condolences are extended to the family of Agnes Fennig, a longtime member of our branch. Rest in peace, Agnes.

MARY "MICI" BREGANT

BRANCH 47 - Garfield Heights, Ohio

Contact Information: Debbie Duris

330.467.2281/dcduris@gmail.com

Our members enjoyed a delicious luncheon on Saturday, May 6 at Brewster's Café Bistro Pub in Twinsburg. I was so glad to be back to my Ohio home to see my family and friends again.

Our Saturday, September 9 luncheon will be at Shula's 2 Steak & Sports at 6200 Quarry Lane located at the Double Tree Hotel at I-77 & Rockside Road at 1:00 p.m.

The Christmas luncheon will be back at Maggiano's Little Italy at 26300 Cedar Road in Beachwood at 1:00 p.m.

Members are encouraged to share branch information with Debbie at her home at 330.467.2281, or e-mail her at dcduris@gmail.com.

Wishing everyone a wonderful and healthy summer. I'd love to share any member stories; call me on my cell 330.730.8951 or e-mail me at kjferrante@gmail.com.

KATHLEEN FERRANTE

BRANCH 50 - Cleveland, Ohio

Contact Information: Rick Tomsick

ricktomsick@gmail.com

Greetings from the "5-0" on America's North Coast! Our first meeting of the year was held at Euclid Public Library on April 19. There will be a meeting to include our Mothers' luncheon in May for which planning is currently underway.

Our sincere condolences go to Rose Mary Toth on the loss of her husband, John, who passed away on March 28, 2017, while they were in Florida. There will be a memorial service for John here in Cleveland at a later date. We are also saddened to report the passing of Drago Androjna, husband of Branch 50 member, Francka Androjna, and father of our member, Angela Androjna. Drago passed away on March 12, 2017. Drago and his wife were married for 50 years. He was a NASA engineer and served in the US Army. On April 6, 2017, we lost my godmother and beloved aunt, Florence Pirnat, who was 95 and will be sadly missed by our family and her many friends. She always enjoyed reading *Zarja* and staying in touch with the extended family.

And finally, this bit of summer wisdom from my dear friend, Anne Zakelj, of Willoughby Hills, Ohio: "*Če je meglja dan Vida (June 15), je pšenica malo prida*" ("If there's fog on the feast of St. Vitus, there won't be much wheat").

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 who have been 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

We began our 2017 meetings on Monday, April 3. Jim and Alice Ebner hosted a traditional *Žegen* meal and we made butarice for our homes. This was a well attended meeting and everyone enjoyed the evening events.

April 8 was our 6th Annual Slovenian Heritage Celebration at Claudette's in Oglesby from 4 – 7 p.m. This was a wonderful gathering. It was nice to see not only Branch 89 members but also members from Branch 24 - LaSalle and many others from the community. The evening included a sampling of Slovenian foods, music and displays. Items up for raffle included a potica and an apple strudel – just in time for Easter!

The May 7 dinner was held at Senica's Oak Ridge. Mary Jane Gunderson and Janell Lukach served as chairpersons for this event. All enjoyed it.

A Mass for living and deceased members of Branch 89 is June 8. Fellowship with breakfast follows.

We will break for the summer, with no meetings held in July and August. Hope to see you September 10 for the potluck! This event will be held at Barbara Bruch's home, 12763 IL HWY 71, Granville. Please bring a dish to pass.

JULIE HARBACK

BRANCH 93 - New York, New York

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In a stunning tribute to the Slovenian pioneers and their contribution to Cultural Europeanization, ten of Tomaž Izidor Perko's portraits were put on display at Saint Cyril's Church in New York City. On February 19, Branch 93 was treated to a formal viewing of these depictions of Johann Weikhard Valvasor, Primož Trubar, Jacobus Gallus, Jože Plečnik, France Prešeren, Ivan Cankar, Rudolf Maister, Herman Potočnik-Noordung, Rihard Jakopič, and Ivana Kobilica. Since his very first solo exhibition in 1970 and graduation in 1971 from the Academy of Ljubljana, Mr. Perko's award-winning paintings have appeared in showings both domestically and abroad, including in Canada, China and across Europe. Notably, the National Museum of Slovenia exhibited his work in May 2013.

On March 17, Slovenian photographer Klemen Razinger opened his exhibition *In The Dark* in New York City. Some of these poignant images of the migration crisis in Europe through the Balkan Route were also displayed at the Perma-

nent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations Reception in February. Thank you to member Robi Poredos for these photos of the reception. You can find out more about Mr. Razinger's incredibly moving work on his website at www.klemenrazinger.com.

Finally, on a lovely Saturday morning in April we celebrated Otroški Dan! On Saturday April 22, also known as Earth Day, we gathered our precious children at the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens as part of the Garden's Family Discovery program. There were a variety of hands-on nature-based crafts stations for our kids and kids at heart! Everyone who attended enjoyed the beautiful gardens, and the company, of course. It was a wonderful day to explore nature in a creative way.

KATHLEEN SIMMONDS

BRANCH 99 - Lemont, Illinois

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Happy Summer! We hope you all have a very happy and safe 4th of July holiday!

In April, our branch held a potica culinary class. This class was taught by Branch 99 president Bill Zerial and assisted by Mary Mavec. The eight students were able to prepare their own dough,



Pictured (left to right): artist Klemen Razinger, Slovenian UN Ambassador Andrej Logar, Christina Gallach, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information at the UN at the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations Reception.

Photo Credit: Robi Poredos



roll their potica, and then take it home for baking. Thank you, Bill, for sharing your expertise and for donating the supplies. It was a great class!

We will keep you posted regarding any new events



Zarja - The Dawn

that our branch will host. Watch your email for announcements, and have a great summer! Enjoy!

JANA HLADE



BRANCH 100 - Southern California

Contact Information: Jean Koci
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We had another traditional and cultural Slovenian food-making session on March 18. About 20 members, including a few married couples, attended. Many traveled almost two hours to get to the home of Bonney and Terry Zupan in Banning by around 10:30 a.m. on a Saturday morning. Unfortunately, Bonney didn't feel well and passed the hostessing on to her daughter, Tisa, along with five-year-old Lila complete with apron and a chef's cap. Almost everyone brought snacks/appetizers to go along with the tasty vegetable soup made by Bonney and Terry in their professional-type kitchen.

After everyone had a little time to greet one another, it was decided to start in with the making of the tasty pastry, flancati. Somehow, the first start didn't work using an old cookbook of Tisa's grandmother, but several of us got together with the advice of a couple of us older-timers and used a recipe that we had tried about five years ago. The dough came out nicely, so we proceeded with the operation. While the oil heated up to frying temperature, a couple of the fellows decided that they would try the frying segment as a couple of the gals rolled and cut the pieces of dough. Terry got going with that. As you can see, a lot of hands got into this project, and everyone was anxious for the final tasting. Lila took a tray around the kitchen offering everyone samples. A few of the pieces got a little too dark. My mother used to call those the "seconds," and the kids could eat all they wanted of those. Ken looked forward to being there at the right time. The perfect ones had to be kept for whatever the special occasion might have been.

We all enjoyed lunch with the soup, breads, and side items. It was around 2 p.m. when we cleaned up and everyone headed home. We thank the Zupan family for hosting us again at their lovely home. I'm only sorry that Bonney wasn't able to join us more for the process, but we thank Tisa for being brave enough to take over in her mom's absence as she had never taken part in making this delicacy before.

Summer 2017

We are looking forward to honoring Mary Lou Jensen for her 10 years as President of our Branch and also taking advantage of our meeting day to honor Dolores Glivar as our Member of the Year despite the fact that she will not be with us. We hope she is getting settled in her new home on the East Coast. We will get together again on May 6 for lunch at Marie Callender's in Corona.

JEAN KOCI

BRANCH 102 - Willard, Wisconsin

Contact Information: Candy Johnson
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Branch 102 members had a wonderful and varied 2016. Two members, Candy Johnson and Ruth Zwieg, retired in 2016. They are enjoying their new-found freedom from the world of work. Sarah and Jack Trunkel and other family members traveled to the Krka region in Slovenia to see where Jack's grandparents lived.

Megan Johnson traveled to Taiwan, Japan, and the Philippines in January-March and then worked in Utah and Wyoming the rest of the year. Megan continues writing about her travel adventures in her blog, <https://redaroundtheworld.com/>.

Sue Pakiz, had knee replacement surgery in December and is recovering nicely. Junior member Sandy Brierton had an exciting year. She has been active with Girl Scouts, performed in the community theatre in the production of *Elf*, and participated in the Miss Wisconsin Princess Program where she performed with a dance group for the Miss Wisconsin Pageant. She's a very active young lady!

Junior member Michael Brierton is active in school sports, participating in football and track, as well as continuing with his Boy Scout activities. He has been earning merit badges towards his Eagle Scout rank and is especially



Branch 102 members preparing for their annual bake sale.

proud of his recent merit badge in Nuclear Science.

At the December meeting, the following officers were elected: Bonnie Brierton, President; Theresa Zorman, Vice President; Candy Johnson, Secretary; and Sue Pakiz, Treasurer.

The meeting schedule for 2017 was set as follows: April 8, September 9, and December 2. Branch 102 held their annual bake sale after Mass on April 8. Proceeds from the bake sale go into Branch 102's treasury and are used to help various local causes. In 2015, money was donated to help a local high school student go on a mission trip. In 2016, money was donated to a new homeless shelter in Loyal, Wisconsin. The shelter is supported by three local parishes: Holy Family in Willard, St. Mary's in Greenwood, and St. Anthony's in Loyal.

Jack Trunkel was selected as Branch 102's Member of the Year. He will be honored at the September 9 meeting.

After the meeting adjourned, Sandy and Michael Brierton handed out door prizes. Then members played several rounds of bingo.

CANDY JOHNSON

BRANCH 108 - Olney, Maryland

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Branch members met at the Embassy of Slovenia for the Cultural Day Celebration and opening photography art exhibit *Echoes of Idealism* by Eva Petric, MFA. To learn more about the exhibit and Eva's work, go to www.evapetric.com. In addition, we had the opportunity to meet three young Slovenian authors, Boštjan Furlan, Marko Balažič, and Ožbej Peterle who were signing their published book, *Slovenija in Pika! (Slovenia, Period!)*. The book includes interviews with prominent figures that were linked to economic and political developments in the last 25 years of Slovenia's independence. Over two dozen eminent individuals were interviewed for the book, including Milan Kučan, Lojze Peterle, Ernest Petrič, Dimitrij Rupel, and Borut Pahor.

For our spring luncheon meeting in late March, member Estelle Zorman gave a candid recollection about her childhood memories of leaving Slovenia in 1945 with her



Embassy of Slovenia gathering in February; SUA members Nika Kovacic, Ožbej Peterle, Bernadette Fitzsimmons, Margy Whitmore, Ana Sonc (Br. 103), Marko Balazic, Bostjan Furlan, and Katja Delak.

family, and how she and her sister recently produced an informal documentary to share with future generations. Estelle, along with her siblings and parents, lived in a Displaced Persons camp in Spittal, Austria prior to immigrating to America in 1950. Her profound experiences and sharing of vintage photos were intriguing to the audience. Hearing her account helped us understand how these early experiences have shaped Estelle's forgiving nature and artistic talents which were fostered in America.



Estelle Zorman with her family in a one room barrack in Spittal, Austria in 1949. Estelle is seated on the left in a white dress along with her parents and siblings. She recalls how hard her mother worked to make the one room look and feel like home.



A few Br. 108 members who stayed late to speak with Estelle following her lecture on March 30, 2017. Pictured from left to right, Nika Kovacic, Tanja Nelson, Estelle Zorman, May Kokal and Bernadette Fitzsimmons. Margy Whitmore and John Klansek are not pictured.

We also welcomed new member Tanja Nelson who joined us at her first branch meeting and are grateful to have a native young Slovenian woman on board to help formulate new ideas and volunteer her time for branch activities. Tanja has offered to coordinate the SUA Branch 108 display table at the EU open house at the Embassy of Slovenia in May and came to the meeting prepared with several wonderful possibilities for our theme this year at

Zarja - The Dawn

the SUA display table. Stay tuned in the next report on this large annual Washington, DC event.

We look forward to updating members at our fall meeting about SUA activities. Keep an eye out for SUA e-mail in your in-box.

BERNADETTE FITZSIMMONS

BRANCH 109 - Twin Cities (TC) of Minnesota

Contact Information: Elaine Barthelemy
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At our Branch 109 February and March membership meetings, some knowledgeable members shared information about our Slovenian culture. Mike Koski opened the February program with a brief slideshow about the Slovenian Cultural Holiday. Next John Zakelj told the group about France Prešeren and the story behind *Zdravljica*, the Slovenian national anthem. We all joined Mary Ann Palmer in singing the Slovenian national anthem and eight other songs, many of which were familiar to members from their childhood. Songs included *Na planinah sončece sije* and *Mi Slovenci vinca ne prodamo*.

Finally, the always-entertaining Rick Pisa presented a slideshow about Magdalena Gornik, a Slovenian mystic from the area where Rick’s cousins live. Our mouths watered during Rick’s finishing act, a slide show quiz highlighting twenty-five Slovenian specialty foods.

Earlier in February, our annual Culture Day Program at the Julian Sleeper House in St. Paul featured themes on Slovenian postage stamps over the last 25 years. Presenters included Mike Koski, Sue Rademacher, Nancy Wellington, Elaine Barthelemy, and Dr. Seth Hawkins.

In March, we were treated to Frank Medved’s slide show about Slovenian Easter customs and rituals. One highlight was the tradition of making “*butarice*,” Slovenian Easter bouquets,



Frank Medved presenting his talk about Slovenian Easter traditions.

to carry in the Palm Sunday processions. Tom Moren shared his painting titled “*Velikonocna Butarica*” depicting one such procession. Then Tea Rozman



Tom Moren with his painting of a Palm Sunday procession.



Tea Rozman Clark demonstrating Slovenian egg dyeing.

Clark and her daughters, Sofia and Izabela, brought supplies and taught us how to decorate Easter eggs the natural Slovenian way using fresh herbs and onion skins. The old is new again! As a surprise,

Branch 109 purchased 30 butarice from the SUA fundraiser and presented one to each of the first 30 households attending the meeting.



Mike Koski, John Zakelj, Mary Ann Palmer, and Rick Pisa, February presenters.

Finally, we are sad to report the loss of one of the founders of Twin City Slovenians with the passing of Yul Yost. Emigrating from Yugoslavia to the U.S. in 1954. (Please see a tribute to Yul Yost on pages 2 and 3 of this issue,) We will miss our friend and all that he brought to our group.

ELAINE BARTHELEMY

Twin Cities Slovenians at our March meeting with the butarice.



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A cookbook that presents many of the favorite dishes, but with a modern flair, that Slovenian immigrants brought with them to America. 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.



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**Calling All SUA Members -
You Are Invited to Join Us for the
2019 National Convention Planning Meeting**

Tuesday, June 13, 2017 at 11:00 a.m.

Kathy Ferrante's home

178 Gaylord Drive

Munroe Falls, Ohio 44262

Home 330.688.4949 or cell 330.730.8951

kjferrante@gmail.com

Interested in being a part of SUA history?
Have ideas and suggestions for activities and events?

Contact Kathy to confirm your attendance for the meeting!

A light lunch will be served.

Unable to attend but want to be involved?

Let Kathy know! Any ideas and suggestions are welcome.

***Let's showcase our beautiful city of Cleveland
and our Slovenian heritage!***