

# Zarja

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## The Dawn

# ZarjaFest 2018

THEN - NOW - ALWAYS  
SLOVENIJA



# *Slovenian Union of America*

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# Letter to the Editor

I am Eddie Adamic, and my wife Frances is a member of the SWU. We look forward to your outstanding ZARJA publication, and we are more than grateful for the dedication and hard work of all who are involved in the production of the this publication.

I am writing to bring your attention to an error in the Summer 2018 issue. On page 5, in the right hand column of donations, the name listed under Frances Adamic, Barbara Baish, should have been spelled Barbara Baloh.

*Eddie Adamic*

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## **Front Cover: ZarjaFest 2018**

We experienced firsthand the people and culture from the land of our ancestors with a road trip through the unspoiled back roads of Slovenia.

We were introduced to locals where we heard and tasted the Slovenian language, music, and food. We toured the beautiful cities of Slovenia, such as Bled, Portorož, Piran, Ljubljana, Ptuj, Novo mesto, and Bohinj. We explored the little villages and strolled their narrow streets as we sang, danced, and created lifetime friendships!

*See pictures on pages 10-11 of this issue.*

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## *Zarja - The Dawn*

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### **Communications for the next issue of publication**

Do you have something you would like to share with readers? We would love to hear from you! Please e-mail the editor at [wprokup@aol.com](mailto: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 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month, two (2) months preceding the issue. For example, articles for the Winter issue must be received by October 10. Thank you.

### **Submission Guidelines**

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

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



# THE STATE OF THE UNION

## Coming to the National Convention in 2019... Slovenian DNA Pool Project

A DNA project involving the Slovenian Union of America and Slovenia has been on my mind for several years. At the March 2018 SUA Representative meeting, the mention of such a project with Slovenia created excitement! Through a connection of persons, I was introduced to Vlasta Knapič of the Slovenian Genealogy Society (SRD - Slovensko rodoslovno društvo) in Slovenia. The result is the Slovenian DNA Pool Project.

The Slovenian DNA Pool Project is twofold: We acknowledge that SUA members are interested in their DNA breakdown and in finding extended family. Submitting your DNA results will allow the SRD to build a database large enough to focus on the territory in Europe where Slovenian-speaking people lived in the past millennium. The results of the database will document in detail a more precise definition of our Slovenian origins, and SUA members will learn of generations of extended family.

The SUA and SRD follow the common goal: discovering as many Slovenian donors as possible, their relatives, and geographic origin. New tools available only since 2000 can help find your ancestors even though you do not have written records. In the era of the early 21st century, we might have the last chance to reveal our ancestral origin to founding populations from just a simple saliva or cheek tissue sample before there is a complete melting of Slovenian genes in the US population. With each generation, our Slovenian genes are cut in half. Testing of our relatives needs to begin with our oldest relatives.

As your SUA president, I see great potential in cooperation with the SRD. Recently, a new SRD website has been established to support seekers of Slovenian origin in English: <https://dna-slovenia.com>.

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Mary Risner Glaize, Branch 30, has taken the position as Editor of the SUA Facebook Page. Mary brings knowledge all wrapped up in enthusiasm for our heritage.

Mary encourages branches to participate. She says, "If you or any of the SUA branches have photos or news, please send in your information. Let's tell the world who we are!" E-mail Mary with any branch news here: [tankandfrog1@yahoo.com](mailto:tankandfrog1@yahoo.com).

So that Mary posts the event correctly, consider these questions when submitting: What? Where? When? Why? Example:

1. Branch #, Name and Location: *Branch 20, Diane Waters, Somewhere, IL 815.888.7777*
2. Why/Event Name: *Tour of Slovenia Movie*
3. When/Event Date: *October 20, 2018 4 p.m - 8 p.m.*
4. Where/ Event Location: *St. Peter Hall 431 N Chicago St.*
5. Who/Include Names: *Joe Josephs will narrate*

*If sending photos, please identify names: Example: L to R: Joe Josephs, Rita Lucas, and John Jones*

By the way, the posting of the Slovenian folk costumes originally posted by Branch 89 includes 29 photos and a written historical background of costumes. The photos are exquisite and the historical dialogue very enriching. Take the time to read.

***Congratulations Mary! Viewing numbers are waaaaay up!***

### **Branch 100, Southern California**

It started with a phone call to Teresa Koci, Branch 100 with a question regarding the Gift Shop at the 2019 Convention! Not only did we have a conversation, but within four days Branch 100 members had been involved, and as per our conversation documented items they would like to see in the gift shop:

1. Sets of aprons (one for each season)
2. 7-pack dish towels with days of the week
3. An apron for children
4. Adult apron for men or women with all sayings in Slovenian

Theresa's e-mail was written up in a 611-word e-mail, complete with sayings and images to be used. To Branch 100, what extraordinary spirit! THANK YOU.

### **October 20 - 21, 2019; Bojan Cvelfar, Director of the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia**

The visit of Bojan Cvelfar was most gripping for all gathered. Bojan, historian, with a PhD in history from the University of Ljubljana, was at the museum to view our scanning project. Carol Novak and Carole Terlep, the forces behind our scanning who have spent 12 years working on this project, explained the project as Bojan stood by and keenly listened. He recognized the inadequate technology they have to work with, and he did offer several interesting suggestions. For the SUA, it was certainly an honor to hear his amazement at the accomplishments all led by Carol and Carole.

Please turn to the Branch 20 report by Georgene Agnich, for the remainder of our time with Bojan while he was in Joliet.



*Bojan and Carole in discussion.*

### **Zarja Summer 2018**

In this past issue, names of donors filled an amazing four pages. The members of the national board thank you for your generous donations. Each donation is a precious gift to our heritage organization.

Congratulations to our new members listed on page 2. You now are part of our living history as we near our 92<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary in December 2018. The SUA National Board welcomes you!

### **To All Members:**

Consider your membership as “giving back” for the treasured family traditions your families celebrated together.

- These ethnic traditions differed from the routines of daily life.
- They had a purpose; they elevated, and they were spirited.
- They told you who you are.

Consider each celebration as a living story about your family.

The slogan “Families that celebrate together, stay together” can be referred to as becoming necessary in our fast-paced world. It means belonging to a group that is bigger than yourself.

to ye to,

Mary Lou Deyak Voelk  
President, Slovenian Union of America



*Seated (L to R): Carol Novak and Carole Terlep.  
Middle Row: (L to R): Diane Hohenwater,  
Georgene Agnich, and Mary Lou Voelk.  
Back Row: (L to R): John Vidmar, Bill Zerial, and  
Bojan Cvelfar.*

# *Donations*

*Thank you! - Hvala lepa!*

## **\$100 Donation**

Robert Nauheimer, 2, +Dolores Nauheimer  
Therese Freiberg, 43, +Raymond Freiberg  
Anthony Kochevar, 109, SUA  
Barbara Nash, 103, +Anne Perhay (my mom)

## **\$25 Donation**

Dorothy Andrews, 50, +Margaret Slavec Ostroska  
Julia Pohar, 24, +Bill Prokup  
Christine Polzin, 102, +Josephine & Edward Bayuk  
Corey Kathleen Holden, 20, Educational Grant  
Trudy Argubright, 89,  
H/O Florence Grdih Argubright  
Helen Baumann, 1, +mother, Doniella Zagozen

## **\$20 Donation**

Rosemary Ribich, 35,  
Cultural Grant - +Frances Ribich  
Catherine Maxin, 50, SUA

## **\$15 Donation**

Susan O'Block Kellen, 26,  
Honor of Phyllis A. O'Block

## **\$10 Donation**

Suzanne Pecharich, 99, +Maria Vlastic

## **\$5 Donation**

Alyssa Tate, 3, Educational Grant

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***Thank you for your generosity.  
Many donations continue to arrive in the  
mail and will be listed in the next issue.***

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# **Bring in 3 New Members and Get Yours FREE.**

Complete the membership  
form on our website  
([slovenianunion.org](http://slovenianunion.org)) and  
submit with a \$75 check or 3  
separate \$25 checks and send  
to 431 North Chicago Street,  
Joliet, IL 60432-1703.

***If you already paid 2018  
dues, we will defer for free  
2019 membership.***

# *New Members*

*Welcome - Dobrodošli*

3, Slaten, Diane  
3, Tatinski, Petrecia A.  
16, Beezhold, Filip  
16, Minton Kutz, Janice  
30, Meados, Tom  
33, Owen, Caden  
50, Hrovat-Burke, Levon Kenlyn  
50, Maxin, Andy  
50, Maxin, Debby

# *Let's Sing & Dance!*

at the



## **S.U.A. National Convention** **Cleveland, Ohio**

*Thursday, June 13, 2019 - Sunday, June 16, 2019*

*Marriott Cleveland East, Warrensville Heights, Ohio*

We hope to see you all in June for an exciting celebration of our Slovenian heritage in beautiful Cleveland, Ohio! The SUA National Convention will be held from Thursday, June 13 through Sunday, June 16, 2019 at the Marriott Cleveland East in Warrensville Heights, Ohio. Convention festivities will begin on Thursday evening with a welcome reception, and the four-day event will offer attendees the chance to participate in SUA business meetings, a bus tour of vibrant Cleveland, cultural learning sessions, delicious meals, and plenty of time to dance, enjoy music, and honor the history of SUA and the traditions of our beautiful Slovenian culture.

When packing for the national convention, make sure to include some party clothes, dancing shoes, and forgiving waistbands... your time in Cleveland is going to be overflowing with delicious food and festive entertainment!

The welcome reception on Thursday evening will kick off the whole weekend of events. Come and reunite with your SUA sisters and brothers! Attendees will have the chance to win door prizes, check out the wares from an assortment of on-site vendors, and sing along to the catchy beats of the strolling musician, Joey Tomsick.

On Friday evening, The Joey Tomsick Orchestra (JTO) will join us again for a night to remember - the celebration of the 90th birthday of *Zarja*! Join us as we gather to sing and dance along to the band and enjoy an endless variety of sweets and treats on the dessert bar. Remember, calories don't count when you are on vacation! Try your luck at winning a door or raffle prize - you can't win unless you come!

Amidst an engaging day of business meetings and learning sessions, join us at Saturday's luncheon for

a family-style meal of Slovenian favorites. Then, later that evening, join us for the crowning event of the weekend - the SUA National Convention Banquet. We'll gather before dinner for a few cocktails at the cash bar and then spend the evening dining together and dancing to Cleveland-style polka and other party hits from The Frank Moravcik Band. Saturday's banquet will be your chance to sample the entries from the potica contest. That night, we are all sure to go to bed with full hearts (and stomachs!) from three memorable evenings of entertainment and togetherness.

On Sunday morning, we will gather once again in the hotel to start off the day with a breakfast spread before heading to Slovenian Mass at 10:30 a.m. at St. Vitus Church. St. Vitus, founded by the first documented Slovenian immigrants to the city, has been an integral part of the Slovenian community in Cleveland since 1893. Today it remains at the heart of the Slovenian community of Cleveland, offering a weekly Slovenian Mass and celebrating Slovenian culture with various events throughout the year. Sharing Mass together in this beautiful and iconic church will be the perfect ending to our time together.



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## Meet our entertainment for the 2019 SUA National Convention!

We're so fortunate to have the talent of Joey Tomsick and The Joey Tomsick Orchestra at our opening reception on Thursday and at our Friday evening *Zarja* 90th Birthday Celebration. This year, Joey Tomsick and The Joey Tomsick Orchestra will mark their 34th year anniversary of entertaining audiences nationwide. The group, known as "The JTO," was organized in 1984 by Joey and has since become one of greater Cleveland's most popular all-occasion bands, performing a wide range of music for all types of audiences and social events from weddings, festivals, "polka parties," inaugural balls, and presidential visits! The JTO frequently performs at the Hofbrau House in Cleveland, as well as at festivals all through the region. In reviews, the band is described as "fantastic," "fun," "exceptional," and



### *Joey Tomsick and The JTO*

"amazing," and is frequently noted for having brought joy to audiences through its energetic polka and party music.

Saturday evening we'll welcome another legendary Cleveland band, The Frank Moravcik Band! Frank Moravcik has headed up his Cleveland, Ohio-based band since 1995. The band is best known for "Cleveland Style" polka music; however, it has the ability to perform a wide variety of different styles of polka music including Czech, Polish, and German polka and waltz music in addition to popular dance and party songs. Frank's inspiration to play accordion comes from his family of numerous accordion players including his mother who played in a polka band. He has been playing accordion and keyboard since age 16 and in his earlier career had a wedding band. The band has received honors from various organizations including awards from the National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame for "Best New Band" when they were first formed. Throughout the years, the band has also been recognized by numerous Hall of Fame nominations in the categories of Band of the Year and Album of the Year. Frank is also a recipient of the "Musician of the Year" designation by the Collinwood Slovenian



***Linda and Frank of The Frank Moravcik Band***

Home in Cleveland, Ohio. The band currently consists of Frank on midi accordion, electronic bass, and vocals, and Linda Hochevar on the button accordion, accompanied by drums, guitar, and banjo. They generally keep a very busy performance schedule at local venues, private parties, and taking their music on the road.

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## **Attention! We need your assistance!**

We are asking members and branches to donate an item for the Slovenian Raffle at the National Convention or a monetary donation. If you are able to donate an item, please let Lynn McKittrick (information below) know what item you will be bringing and the approximate value.

*You can then simply bring the item to the convention.*

If you or your branch are able to make a monetary donation, please make the check out to SUA and send to Lynn McKittrick.

***No contribution is too small!***

We greatly appreciate your participation in making the 2019 SUA National Convention an event to remember.

Lynn McKittrick  
5521 Carol Jean Blvd, Garfield Hts OH 44125  
Phone number: 216.663.0305  
Email: [lmckitt@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lmckitt@sbcglobal.net)





Please make your plans NOW to join us for the 2019 SUA National Convention! Convention attendees are currently able to book deluxe standard rooms at the discounted convention rate of \$129.00 + taxes. This is a great rate available to conference attendees only!

To make your reservation, call 216.378.9191 and mention that you are with the "SUA Group." Please make your plans early to ensure that you can take advantage of the convention rate! Also, please note that dates extended beyond the duration of the convention may not be eligible for the convention rate.

If you have any questions or concerns about the 2019 SUA National Convention, please contact:  
Kathy Ferrante, 2019 National Convention Chair  
Call or text: 330.730.8951  
Email: [kjferrante@gmail.com](mailto:kjferrante@gmail.com)

## **Member Representative(s) – Delegate(s) from Your Branch**

Your branch should have already elected its Member Representative (Delegate) to participate in teleconferences. The Member Representative also serves as the Branch Delegate to attend the National Convention. While all are welcome and encouraged to attend the important business meetings, only the Member Representative(s) sent by the branches may vote on matters presented to them.

Serving as a Member Representative is an important, rewarding, and educational experience. Member Representatives are to come prepared to represent the interests of their branch, take part in all meetings and activities of the convention, and return to their branch to give a full report to those that were unable to attend. Branches with a membership of 200 or less can select one (1) Member Representative. Branches with 201 up to 400 adult Members shall have two (2) votes, and branches with 401 or more adult Members shall have three (3) Member Representatives and shall have (3) votes.

Members of each Branch may also elect an alternate(s) – and are encouraged to do so – to serve in the Member Representative's stead if necessary. It is important to review carefully the sections of the SUA Corporate Bylaws relating to the Member Representative position – Article II Members, Section 2.3 thru 2.15.

When selecting Member Representatives or alternates, keep in mind a few qualifications.

- Do they have enthusiasm for their Slovenian heritage?
- Do they support the purpose of SUA?
- Do they understand the organization and its programs?
- Are they reliable?
- Are they good communicators?
- Candidates must also be at least 18 years old and have paid their annual dues.

# Thoughts on *A Short History of the Yugoslav Peoples*

By Rich Terselic

*A Short History of the Yugoslav Peoples* was written by a historian, Fred Singleton,<sup>1</sup> and first published in 1985. It is about 300 pages long. I chose to write about the book because it provided me, as a person of American-Slovene heritage, a view of my ancestry that I hadn't previously appreciated.

To start, the recent wars in the Middle East provide strong evidence that politicians can't just draw international boundary lines without creating important implications on the peoples that live within the lines. This is particularly true when the lines impact distinct ethnic groups. It may work reasonably well when the lines enclose the whole of civilizations, such as Egypt and Greece. However, it doesn't work well in cases such as the Kurdish people. In modern times, the Kurds have not been included within national boundaries that encompassed the majority of their people. Rather, their population has been divided across several national boundaries. With the exception of the last 100 years, the Slovenes have had a situation much like the Kurds. That is, being divided across national boundaries. For support of that statement one has to go back into the history of the Slovenes.

Going back to pre-Christian times, the area in which modern Slovenes have resided were previously occupied by Thracian, Celtic, and Illyrian tribes. The Illyrians were conquered by the Romans, and subsequently, the Romans were invaded by waves of people from the east and northeast, such as the Slavs, Goths, Avars, and Lombards.

If Slovenes of today have their saliva analyzed for genealogical tracking purposes, the results would likely indicate they have ancient ancestors from northeastern Europe and the Middle East. One of the genealogical groups to which I provided saliva informs me of "matches" involving newly tested individuals. Those "matches" include persons from northeastern Europe and the Middle East. I am told that Croats and Serbs show patterns that suggest a

different lineage.

After centuries of having invading groups going back and forth, the Slavs who settled into the large area of southern and eastern Europe divided into various modern day ethnic groups such as Slovenes, Slovaks, Czechs, and Croats. The rampaging by each outside group contributed to degrees of differentiation. That is why we Slovenes share some common elements yet differ in appearance, language, and culture from other Slav groups. The split between the Roman Catholic Church and Orthodox Byzantium also added importantly to the differentiation. Slovenes remained with the western Church.

A source of the rampaging that had very important impacts was the Ottoman Empire. While southern Slovenes were devastated, those living at the northern end of the Ottoman conquest routes were impacted to a lesser degree. With the help of the Croatians, Austrians, and others, the Ottomans were repelled. However, large numbers of young Slovenian men and women were kidnapped, taken back to the seat of the Ottoman Empire, and raised in the Muslim society.

While the Slovenes were influenced by numerous wars, the impact was minor compared to that impacting Slav groups located to the south and east, such as the Serbs. These groups were devastated by wars over hundreds of years that led to millions of deaths.

The Slavs that settled into areas that came under control of northern European powers benefitted from being controlled and protected, although at a cost. For hundreds of years, Slovenes lived as peasants under feudal control of nobles and other powerful northerners including the Hapsburgs who controlled vast tracks of land. As feudal subjects they had to pay a share of their products to those in control but could keep the balance for their own sustenance. The people were subject to continuous efforts to "Germanize" them and to homogenize their culture and

language into that of the group controlling them. In addition, groups of Germanic people were transplanted into Slovene areas, such as in Kocevje. A similar situation existed with regard to treatment of Slovenes in areas controlled by the Italians. A bright spot for Slovenes in the reign of the Hapsburgs was the influence of archduchess Maria Theresa, who promoted education and health care for her subjects.

Prior to World War I, the Slovene population was divided across national boundaries under the governance of different rulers, as in the case of the Kurds. World War I changed the governance situation dramatically. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, which contained the majority of Slovenes, was dismantled by the Allied powers. In 1918, the Allies decided that the population (primarily Slavs) should be given nationhood in a new State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs under the direction of a Serbian noble family. The king, Alexander, declared it the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in October 1929. The kingdom lasted until April 1941 when it was dismantled by the invading Axis powers.

In 1918, for the first time, Slovenes (with the exception of those living in the south of Austria, in coastal Istria and the area west of Trieste in Italy) had territorial boundaries that included the majority of their people. While the exclusion of considerable numbers of Slovenes from those territorial boundaries was a disappointment, the decisions were at a political level beyond the Slovene's control.

Going back to the period before WWI, the Prekmurje section of Slovene lands was under control of the Hungarian portion of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The uneducated Slovene immigrants to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania and Bridgeport, Connecticut were influenced by Hungarian authorities to identify themselves as Windish rather than Slovenian. It took until the 1990s, through the work of Stephen C. Antalics, to correct this misnaming.<sup>3</sup>

Territorial boundary disputes with Austria over the area in Carinthia in which Slovenes lived were active from well before the end of WWI. Elections were held after the end of WWI to decide how the border would be drawn but did not lead to a shift

of the bulk of those "Slovene lands" into the new post-WWI Slav state. *The Journal of the Society for Slovene Studies* devoted the entire 2017 first issue to papers written by Dennison Rusinow dealing with the situation involving Slovenes in Carinthia and the fight for retaining their identity.<sup>2</sup> Other boundary disputes persist to today between Slovenia and Croatia. The most important dispute involves Croatia's proposal to deny Slovenia's access to the Adriatic.

In June 1991, the next step took place related to Slovene control of its national boundaries through the declaration of independence and nationhood. Interestingly, while for hundreds of years most Slovenes had been under Germanic control, the first important international recognition of their independence came from Germany. Sadly, the United States and the balance of European states were late in granting recognition.

Citizens of other Yugoslav states have resided in Slovene territory for a long time. An example involves Serbs who sought refuge from the onslaught of the Ottoman Turks in the Bela Krajina area. Over time, the refugees accepted Slovene identity. Hundreds of years later, the wars of independence in the other Yugoslav states led to in-migration of large numbers of non-Slovene refugees to Slovenia, primarily Muslims from Bosnia. They gained citizenship rights as the product of legal contests. Whether later generations of these refugees will choose to adopt Slovene identities, as did the Serbs in Bela Krajina, is yet to be seen.

Unlike the Kurds whose prospects of achieving nationhood remain dubious, Slovenes - with some exceptions of its population - have achieved nationhood.

### **Bibliography**

<sup>1</sup>Singleton, Fred. *A Short History of the Yugoslav Peoples*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge UK, 1985.

<sup>2</sup>*Journal of the Society for Slovene Studies*. Slovene Studies, V39, 1-2, 20173.

<sup>3</sup>Antalics, Stephen C. Pokrajinski Muzej, M. Sobota, pgs 125-145, 1998.



# Zarja Fest 2018

*A Road Trip Through the Homeland!*





# Slovenija

THEN - NOW - ALWAYS



# THEY DID THEIR PART



*Yes, the war years of the Slovenian Women's Union of America did us proud! We did indeed do our part.*

By Staff Writer David Sodac  
Branch 89 Oglesby, Illinois [bd sodac@gmail.com](mailto:bd sodac@gmail.com)

In the early years of World War II, *Zarja - The Dawn* magazine published a motivational plea from the Secretary of War, Henry Louis Stimson, whose words captivated the heart and incited action. He wrote, "An army is as good as the folks back home. If they are interested in the men in active military service, then the men will acquit themselves well. If the spirit behind the lines languishes, that of the men with the army will languish. If the men are abandoned by their home folks, they will in time forget their responsibilities and neglect their duties." The over fourteen hundred women that comprised the 104 branches of the Slovenian Women's Union of America creatively and generously responded to his plea! Thousands of handwritten letters were composed and sent to soldiers overseas, thanking them for their bravery fighting for peace. But this wasn't the only patriotic project that the SWUA membership became feverishly engaged in to aid the war efforts and war victims.

SWUA branches proudly reported on the members' aid and war projects throughout the war years 1941-1946.

Slovenian Americans worried constantly about their motherland's dire situations, way before America joined forces with the Allied Powers. Aid projects benefitted not only the military forces but the Slovenians families and relatives that were living in the devastated war zones. In the July 1941 issue of *Zarja*, Mrs. Marie Prisland, SWUA National President, sent letters to all 104 member branches urging them to work cooperatively with the Red Cross organization in helping the unfortunate Slovenian victimization committed by the "haughty conquerors" of the Axis powers. Her own Sheboygan, Wisconsin Branch 1 related in the same 1941 *Zarja* issue that their members of the Slovenian section of the American Red Cross had been busy sewing ninety dresses, making surgical dressings, and knitting sweaters, proving that they have many ambitious members who are even willing to do this kind of work in the hot summertime. In the early spring of 1941, a meeting was held for various Chicago Slovenian organizations where it was resolved to do all in their power to help the motherland Slovenians. On May 10, 1944 in Cleveland, all the Slovenian, Croatian, and Serbian organizations had

joined hands at an organizational meeting to form a Central Yugoslav Relief Committee of America. Various committees had been elected for both the Slovenian section, as well as for the Central Committee. These had followed through on their promise to work together and assist in every way possible to bring aid to our people across the ocean in Slovenia.

SWUA branch members and their families eagerly delved into supporting patriotic projects such as purchasing war bonds, letter writing to the men and women fighting overseas, and collecting clothes and foodstuff to be shipped.



Each month's branch reports detailed their members' efforts in aiding the cause and doing their part. Joliet Branch 20 members were anxious to share that the profits from their Victory Celebration netted \$1,164.06 in helping to stir patriotism. Branch

52, Hibbing, Minnesota collected five dollars that was donated to the Red Cross fund of SWUA and purchased a twenty-five-dollar war bond.

In the January 1943 *Zarja* issue, Marie Prislund wrote in her New Year's message, "It is our duty to buy United States war bonds and stamps, and to buy them as often as we can. I appeal especially to the branches of our Union to invest all surplus funds in war bonds. Over fifty branches have reported thus far on their investments, but I am awaiting the report of forty others. The Slovenian Women's Union is investing exclusively in United States war bonds, and was doing so long before Pearl Harbor. I am urging our branches and all our members to assure victory to ourselves and to the peoples of the world by supporting our country in buying war bonds." The *Zarja* March 1944 issue reported that Branch 17, West Allis, Wisconsin held their Milwaukee County Slovenian Fourth Bond Rally Day at Tivoli Hall and had record sales which netted \$56,000. They also sold eighty-four war stamp corsages. Branch 6, Barberton, Ohio, packed two boxes of mixed clothing; Branch 14, Cleveland, Ohio, two hundred thirty pounds mixed clothing; Branch 20, Joliet, Illinois, two hundred pounds mixed children's clothing along with pins, needles, shoes, and canned goods; Branch 36, McKinley, Minnesota, fifteen pounds of food, incidentals, and slippers; Branch 52, Kitzville, Minnesota, thirty pounds of food and seven pounds of clothing; Branch 56, Hibbing, Minnesota, thirty-three pounds of food; Branch 23, Ely, Minnesota, (weight not reported) food and clothing; Branch 68, Fairport, Ohio, thirty-four pounds of food, clothing, and two pairs of shoes; Branch 84, New York, New York, \$125.00 in cash and donations of clothing; Branch 93, Brooklyn, New York, \$213.00 in cash and old and new clothing for women and children; and Branch 96, Universal, Pennsylvania, eleven pounds of clothing, buttons, pins, and needles, plus a hundred pounds of food, coffee, sugar, canned meat, rice, cocoa, and milk. In *Zarja's* February 1946 issue, Josephine Erjavec, Supreme Secretary, expressed SWUA's appreciation for all of the branches' noble and charitable heeding of the organization's call for help.



The following statistics summarize the contributions of SWUA to the war effort in America:

- Our Union, branches, and members purchased bonds for approximately \$3,800,825.00.
- Donations to the Red Cross and U.S.O. amounted to \$22,095.00.
- Blood was donated by 3,871 members with many donating more than once for a total of 8,092 pints.
- 2,874 members worked for the Red Cross, totaling 173,322 working hours to their credit.
- 810 members volunteered as nurses, nurses' aides, and workers for the Civilian Defense.
- 214 members of Women's Auxiliaries served in the various branches of military service.
- Finally, 9,709 sons, husbands, brothers of our members served in the military, and 286 of these made the supreme sacrifice for the defense of our country and the defense of our future generations.

Probably the biggest of the patriotic projects presented to Americans at home was the creation of the WWII war bonds. War bonds were a way to rally Americans on the home front to financially support defense efforts as well to reduce inflation by removing money from circulation. Issued by the U.S. Government, they were first called “defense bonds” but renamed “war bonds” once the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. War bonds were known as debt securities with the purpose of financing military operations during war time. The bonds yielded a mere 2.9 percent return after a 10-year maturity, but they did stir nationalism like we’ve never seen before.

On a national level, there were thousands of varied promotional events from the professional sporting world to Hollywood encouraging Americans to buy bonds. One of the most successful single events was a 16-hour marathon radio broadcast on CBS during which nearly \$40 million worth of bonds were sold. The marathon featured singer Kate Smith, famous for her rendition of “God Bless America.” Patriotism and the spirit of sacrifice could be expressed with the purchase of war bonds. The sports world did its part as well, holding special football and baseball games with a war bond as the price of admission. An unusual baseball game took place in New York City with the New York Yankees, the New York Giants, and the Brooklyn

Dodgers. Each of the teams came to bat six times in the same nine-inning game. Their final score was the Dodgers 5, Yankees 1, and the Giants 0, and the U.S. Government was \$56,500,000 richer in war bond sales. Bond rallies were held throughout the country with famous celebrities to enhance the advertising’s effectiveness. Free movie days were held in theaters nationwide with a bond purchase as the admission. Hundreds of Hollywood stars such as Greer Garson, Bette Davis, and Rita Hayworth completed seven separate live rally tours across America to promote war bonds. The easiest way to become a part of the bond project was to purchase 10¢ or 25¢ war savings stamps and paste them into a war savings stamp album provided by the local post office. Another promotional offer was to receive a cardboard holder that had slots for 75 quarters to equal \$18.75. When the album or card holders were filled, they had the value of \$18.75; you would then return them to the post office in exchange for U.S. war bonds. After ten years, the bonds would have the value of \$25.00.

Our founder and enthusiastic SWUA supreme leader, Marie Prisland, wrote in the June 1945 issue of *Zarja*, “*We want VICTORY - COMPLETE VICTORY in every movement for the betterment of humanity the Slovenian Women’s Union marches forward. We have enthusiastically subscribed to every war bond drive, and we will continue to buy war bonds and contribute to every humanitarian cause for we are proud to be a part of our great American way of life.*” She would again become the vocal cheerleader to motivate membership with an earnest plea to respond warmly to the nation’s call, reminding members that each one of them has someone dear fighting for the preservation of the ideals of the United States. Through eight waves of war bond campaigns conducted in the US from 1941 to 1946, the SWUA and their families would respond and find creative ways to squeeze out money from their meager \$2,000 median income during the World War II years. At the end of the war, SWUA reported that its members had raised \$3,800,825.00 in war bonds!

The *Zarja* May 1945 issue urged branches to do their part in collecting fat, skillet scrapings, and tin cans. The writers pleaded that “getting blood out of a turnip” is what homemakers need to be doing these days to fill up their fat salvage cans. During the war years, there had been a greater need for fat than ever before. Approximately three out of four civilian items required fats in the manufacturing process. Why fats? Well, the article detailed that the paratroopers who landed across the Rhine needed our waste kitchen fats. The boots that they wore and the electrically-heated gloves of the men who flew the planes were made softer and more comfortable by the oleic acid derived from used kitchen fats. The extreme cold of the high altitudes, from which our bombers operated, “freezes” ordinary





lubricants. The drippings that we gleaned from our meager meat supplies helped to make a lubricant that functions even at 60 degrees below zero. The salvaged fats helped to make insecticides to destroy them. The navy, we were told, needed waste fats to protect ropes against salt water and to manufacture dripless candles. Further, G. I. Joe got wet in a mildewed, rotted tent, but skillet scrapings furnished materials to protect the tenting against deterioration and weatherproofed it. The need for tin cans also continued long after the war had been won on all fronts. A battleship required at least 76 tons and a submarine three tons. There was scarcely a motor vehicle or a war weapon that did not need tin. Stop to think of the many cans required for supplying an appreciable amount of the precious metal; it makes one realize the importance of everyone saving each tin can and getting it into the salvage. The paper drive had folks saving all the waste paper that could be salvaged. It too was greatly needed by our war machine and for civilian use. Waste papers, newspapers, brown paper, and boxes were tied in compact bundles ready for carrying to the first paper collection headquarters or for turning over to the Boy or Girl Scouts.

Branch 79, Enumclaw, Washington proudly announced that they had collected for a \$100 war bond. Many of their members helped to sell bonds and worked at their local U.S.O. Center and with the Red Cross drive. Branch 17 of West Allis, Wisconsin worked hard on the seventh war bond drive urging all members to buy bonds and save scraps of fat to achieve victory much sooner. Housewives were reminded of the urgent need for kitchen fats and instructed to turn them in to the grocer; the grocer paid them for the fats in money and in the much-needed red points.

Even at the close of the war, SWUA branches continued to aid the war's aftermath of devastation. In the March and April 1946 editions of *Zarja*, managing editor Josephine Erjavic encouraged members to heed the emotional plea of Dr. Neubauer, chairman of the Yugoslav Red Cross, to



help the destitute children of Slovenia with a milk and clothing drive. So, the SWUA responded. Branch 71 of Strabane, Pennsylvania bragged that members had collected 120 pounds of food and 30 pounds of shoes. Branch 55 of Girard, Ohio had asked for eight more postage stickers for shipping out their clothing and supply collections. Branch 78 of Leadville, Colorado had collected 100 pairs of shoes and clothing. Branch 20 of Joliet, Illinois had completed their third shipment of clothing and shoes as well as \$17.00 worth of powdered milk. Branch 23 of Ely, Minnesota donated 172 pounds, consisting of 152 pounds of food and 20 pounds of clothing; Branch 35, Aurora, Minnesota, 100 pounds of food; Branch 31, Gilbert, Minnesota, 55 pounds, consisting of 40

pounds of food and 15 pounds of clothing; Branch 42, Maple Heights, Ohio, 45 pounds of food and 31 articles of clothing; Branch 50, Cleveland, Ohio, 22 pounds of food, 5 pounds of clothing, and 4 pounds of incidentals; and Branch 88, Johnstown, Pennsylvania, 75 pounds of food, 15 pounds of clothing, and 3 pairs of shoes.

Mrs. Erjavic would later request that every branch add infant layette sets to their clothing drives. Each layette set was to include twenty-four diapers, rubber sheets, three 36-inch by 45-inch flannel wrappers, three baby shirts, three cotton receiving blankets, safety pins, soap, powder, petroleum (Vaseline), two crib-sized sheets, three baby bottle sets, and nipples.

In the June 1946 *Zarja* issue, Marie Priland praised the SWUA because its members had always and everywhere proven their Christian duty in the giving of charity. They collected money, clothing, and food which was shipped to Yugoslavia and elsewhere. Even though our members had lived in America for many years, their hearts had never forsaken their place of birth. That is why they had wholeheartedly cooperated with every relief action requested to help the war victims and especially the children. They

sent packages after packages to their needy relatives across the ocean. Mrs. Prislard summarized the results of a mailed questionnaire that all branches were expected to complete on their war activities. She acknowledged the membership with heartfelt pride and complimented all their time and efforts spent on the many American war aid projects. The following statistics summarized the contributions reported: Our union, branches and members purchased bonds for approximately \$3,800,825.00; donations to the Red Cross and U.S.O. from our branches and members amounted to \$22,095.00; 3,871 members donated 8,092 pints of blood; 2,874 members worked for the Red Cross, totaling 173,322 working hours to their credit; 810 members volunteered as nurses, nurses' aides, and workers for the Civilian Defense; 214 members of Women's Auxiliaries served in the various branches of military service. Finally, 9,709 sons, husbands, brothers of our members served in the military, and 286 of these made the supreme sacrifice for the defense of our country and the defense of our future generations.

After World War II, on January 3, 1946, the last proceeds from the Victory War Bond campaign were deposited into the U.S. Treasury. More than 85 million Americans, half the

population, purchased bonds totaling \$185.7 billion. Those incredible results have never since been matched. In addition to the success of the war bonds, 43,077,000 pounds of clothing and foodstuffs were collected through the Catholic churches of the United States and fraternal organizations such as the SWUA. Beginning in 1943, an average of one ship every 10 days left America and delivered the collected cargo to the areas of need. Among the supplies, the quantity of milk, both powdered and fluid, shipped abroad by War Relief Services was sufficient to provide 1,340,025 children with an eight-ounce glass daily for one month. There was enough cod liver oil to provide 102,000 infants with the necessary minimum requirements of Vitamins A and D each day for six months. Six million nine hundred eight thousand articles of clothing and bedding and 356,535 pairs of shoes, together with materials sufficient for the repair of 120,000 pairs of shoes, were shipped. Materials sufficient to stock 3,675 community first-aid stations was also shipped. An amount of soap equivalent to 2,535,626 cakes of the household size were shipped.

*Yes, the war years of the Slovenian Women's Union of America did us proud! We did indeed do our part.*

**The remarkable, patriotic contributions described in the above article by David Sodac are of such historical significance for our past SWUA branches that the topic will be further explored.**

*We at the SUA believe that it's our duty and privilege to document the brave Slovenian-Americans who have been part of the war effort, whether on the battlefield or on the home front.*

**Therefore, two former WWII surveys will be re-issued on SUA family members' Home Front Involvement and Battlefield Participation.**

**The surveys can be downloaded from the SUA Facebook Page, and each branch is encouraged to stimulate involvement through a planned activity to complete the surveys at a meeting.**

**President Mary Lou Deyak Voelk**



# Slovenian Union of America

## Across America - Branch Reports

**BRANCH 1 - Sheboygan, Wisconsin**  
Contact information: Mary Ann Schellinger  
920.457.7946/[rhmas@yahoo.com](mailto:rhmas@yahoo.com)

A beautiful evening on May 15 found members of Branch 1 gathered at Bourbon Street Pub & Grill to celebrate our Member of the Year, Marilyn Hendricks. Her husband and family attended the celebration. She was presented with gifts from Slovenia - candy, a hand-made card, and ceramic pieces from Topolšica. President Mary Sandwick held a short business meeting during which time she announced and presented Germaine Tesovnik a check for being a winner of the April Showers fundraiser. A nice sur-



prise for Germaine! Before the evening ended, some members “volunteered” to play the Match Game with a Slovenian theme. This was a fun way to learn about our homeland country and customs.

As we moved into summer, we gathered for some Slovenian cooking. I met with Marilyn Hendricks who volunteered to

teach me how to make štruklji using some of her family recipes. It was a lot of work, but the result was worth it. We rolled the dough, wrapped it in the cotton towel, boiled it for the allotted time and then, after a bit of cooling, could unwrap the finished product in one piece. And, it also tasted great.

July 8 was a busy day for parishioners of Ss Cyril & Methodius and many members of SUA as they gathered for the annual Slovenian Festival held at Deland Park. The weather couldn't have been more perfect. The day started with a Polka Mass followed by food and fun. The available Slovenian goodies included kranski, strudelj, flancati, and, of course, potica.

The photo of the potica bakers was provided by Joanne Rugar, the daughter of Pauline Rugar. She thought that the photo was done in the late 1950s or early 1960s. HVALA!



MARY ANN SCHELLINGER



## **BRANCH 2 - Chicago, Illinois**

Contact Information: Judy Stoll  
708.479.2864/[judithstoll@att.net](mailto:judithstoll@att.net)

After weeks of preparation, we held our Zveza Day picnic on July 15 in Lemont. Despite weather reports that threatened temperature in the 90s and thunderstorms, it turned out to be a beautiful day. We had a great day, wonderful food, lively music, but unfortunately not too many people attended. "This is the saddest picnic I've ever been to," said one of our workers, and she was right. The lack of support from both Branch 2 members and the local Slovenian community was extremely disheartening and made us realize that we just sponsored our last picnic. Enough said.

Sadly, Elsie Wojdula passed away this June at the golden age of 96 years. She was such a nice person... helpful, generous, respected, and friendly. We sure will miss her.

Gen Buol and Meta Hanzlik traveled to Slovenia this summer with the ZarjaFest group tour.

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, September 20 at Portillos. Hope to see you there.

JUDY STOLL

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## **BRANCH 3 – Pueblo, Colorado**

Contact Information:

719.569.7125/[amtcharron@yahoo.com](mailto:amtcharron@yahoo.com)

Branch 3 honored our Member of the Year, Barbara Greenwood, during the annual Mother's Day luncheon held on May 1 at Park East Restaurant.

Slovenian activities in the summer months in the Pueblo area included the Preseren picnics in Rye, Colorado in June and August and two Slovenian tennis players participating in the 39<sup>th</sup> annual Paper Cup Tennis tournament held over



*High school classmates at 2018 Member of the Year luncheon in May (left to right):*

*Annette Sabo Charron, Barbara Gersick Greenwood, M.T. Karlinger, Kathy Kochevar, and Kathy Krasovec Chrisman.*

the Memorial Day weekend in Pueblo. The Slovenian community hosted a dinner at St. Joseph's Hall in the Grove neighborhood of Pueblo as a fundraiser for the two visiting Slovenian tennis players.

Branch 3 will sponsor a bus to the Cripple Creek casinos in September. Please send an e-mail to [amtcharron@gmail.com](mailto:amtcharron@gmail.com) for the exact date, if interested. The annual Slovenian Heritage Dinner at St. Mary's is scheduled for Saturday, November 3.

Monthly Branch 3 meetings will resume on Tuesday, October 2 at 12:30 p.m. in St. Mary's church hall.

ANNETTE SABO CHARRON  
& BARBARA KARLINGER

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## **BRANCH 13 - San Francisco, California**

Contact Information: Michele Twers

[michele.twers@comcast.net](mailto:michele.twers@comcast.net)

We send our sympathy to the families of Bernadine Madronich and Franci Pecavar. SUA member Bernadine Madronich passed away on May 7. She leaves behind her son Paul, daughters Marilyn and Jeanette, and three grandchildren. We extend condolences also to member Katica Pecavar and her family on the recent passing of her husband, Franci Pecavar, on April 19. Franci was very well known in the Slovenian community and was very active at the Slovenian Progressive Home for many years.

Mark your calendar for September 30! Club Slovenia will host their annual Grape Festival at the Slovenian Progressive Home located at 2101 Mariposa Street, San Francisco. For more information contact President Dave McCormick at [wilpen1887@gmail.com](mailto:wilpen1887@gmail.com).

Here is wishing a happy birthday to all our members who celebrate fall birthdays. We also send thinking of you and get well wishes to our members who are under the weather.

MICHELE TWERS

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## **BRANCH 16 - South Chicago, Illinois**

We held our first meeting of the spring on Saturday, April 7 at Frankie V's in Whiting, Indiana. It was great to get together after the long winter, to catch up and begin planning our events for the year. The food was fantastic and the meeting turned out to be very productive.

We received a surprise phone call this past month from Dolores Hennelly, a founding member of Branch 95, who joined us when our branches merged. Dolores lives in Florida, still reads the *Zarja*, and looks forward to Branch 16 updates each issue. Helen Battista recently moved to Marian Village in Homer Glen, Illinois, where she's living the "Life of Riley."

On Saturday, May 19, we held our meeting followed by a combined celebration of Our Lady of Brezje with Branch 16's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Member Janice Minton surprised us with an invitation to an event she won at Eco-Chic Boutique in Dyer, Indiana. Co-owners Trish Caruso and Diane Gross treated us to the

*Zarja - The Dawn*



latest fashion tips and tricks. We had a great time and got some great bargains at this high-end consignment boutique (see them on FB).

### **BRANCH 20 - Joliet, Illinois**

Contact Information: Georgene Agnich  
773.205.1326/ [jamesschaible1469@att.net](mailto:jamesschaible1469@att.net)

Our beloved Sister Marlene Ambrose passed away on May 17. Some twenty members attended her May 24 visitation and prayer service. Seven members stood at Sister's casket as Jo Lustik recited SUA's ritual prayer, then the group prayed the "Our Father," and Pat Figuirowski told the



*Jean Herbst, Marla Lustik, and Jo Lustik socialize in Ferdinand Hall following the May 24, 2018 Mass in honor of Maria Pomagaj at St. Joseph Church.*

Fall 2018

meaning of the red carnation as she placed it on the casket. Our sympathies to Sister Marlene's family. We also offer our condolences to the family of member Dorothy Koncar, who passed away on January 21; to the family of member Dolores Krzysciak, who passed away on April 28; to the family of Rosemary Konopek, who passed away on May 9; to member Diane Hohenwater in the loss of her father, William Beard, on April 29; to member Sandra Kehring in the loss of her mother, Gladys Mattox, on May 10; and to member Bernice Ramsak in the loss of her niece, Linda Ramsak, on June 25.

Several members attended and worked at St. Joseph Church's annual Homecoming Fair on June 24 at St. Joseph Park. The day began with a Polka Mass in the cemetery



*Ray Koncar (left) and Eddie Korosa play Slovenian music as Jo Lustik (left) and Pat Figuirowski welcome guests to Branch 20's Member of the Year Banquet May 15, 2018.*

grotto, followed by a pork dinner prepared by Branch 99 member Lillian Cepon, then a bake sale, raffles, games, Slovenian music, and good friendship into the night. On July 15, several members enjoyed the "Zveza Day" picnic given by Branch 2 on the spacious grounds of the Slovenian Mission in Lemont.

Member Eileen Plese is proud of her granddaughter, Lacey Viano, who won an all-expenses paid American Slovenian Education Foundation fellowship to study food science and nutrition for ten weeks this summer at the University of Ljubljana.

Bojan Cvelfar, Director of the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia, visited Joliet on June 21-22 between stops in Cleveland and Toronto to officiate at ceremonies marking the 1990 Slovenian vote for independence and the 1991 Slovenian declaration of independence from Yugoslavia. He was greeted at SUA's national office by SUA National President Mary Lou Voelk and her husband, Gene; Honorary Slovenian Consul John Vidmar; Branch 20 members Diane Hohenwater, Georgene Agnich, Carol Novak, and Carole Terlep; and Branch 99 member Bill Zerial, who

had baked a potica for the occasion. Bojan toured the museum and saw a demonstration of SUA's burial insurance scanning project by Carol Novak and Carole Terlep. The lovely bells of St. Joseph Church rang at 6 p.m., just as all were leaving for Merichka's Restaurant for a dinner in Bojan's honor. Branch 20 President Char Kobe and her husband, Bill, along with members Sandy Rodeghero and Mike Vidmar joined the dinner party. After dinner, accompanied by Gene and Mary Lou Voelk, Diane Hohenwater, and Georgene Agnich, Bojan toured St. Joseph Cemetery, just as the fireflies were rising from the grass. He quietly spoke the Slovenian names on gravestones he passed and

one and a quarter mile long. Our tree was planted on April 27 and is flourishing thanks to the watering and pampering by Linda and Jeff Struna.



*Bojan Cvelfar, Director of the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia, enjoys meeting SUA National President Mary Lou Voelk and Honorary Slovenian Consul John Vidmar on June 21, 2018, at SUA's national office in Joliet.*

left the car briefly to look at the row of gravestones of several pioneer Slovenian priests; he seemed heartened and moved to see so many Slovenian names so far away from Slovenia. Bojan stayed overnight June 21 in the museum's apartment, then attended 8:30 am Mass at St. Joseph Church before starting his ten-hour drive to Toronto the next day. Bojan hopes to return to Joliet when he has more time to spend there.

GEORGENE AGNICH

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**BRANCH 24 - LaSalle, Illinois**

Contact Information: Diane Data

[diane3121@comcast.net](mailto:diane3121@comcast.net)

Zivijo! A suggestion was made by Linda Struna for our branch to plant a linden tree at Oakwood Cemetery in LaSalle since the emerald ash borer had destroyed numerous ash trees in the cemetery. The linden tree, a tree of friendship, love and loyalty, is a symbol of Slovenia. It is considered a magnificent tree and is said to also have health benefits; many Slovenians prepare a linden tea from linden flowers. In Slovenia, linden tree-lined avenues of trees planted several hundred years ago have been preserved to the present day. The most famous of these is Napoleon's Linden Avenue at the entrance to the town of Logatec along the state road which was once the major road from Ljubljana to Trieste. It comprises 290 trees and is almost



*Zarja - The Dawn*

At our April meeting, the three open offices were filled: Vice President-Debbie Pohar, Secretary-Barb Krogulski, and Treasurer-Mary Pryde. We had our annual May luncheon at the Maples Supper Club - always a good afternoon of delicious food and fellowship. We discussed our summer picnic which was hosted by Barbara Pohar at her beautiful backyard. Brian Benske provided music as we enjoyed some traditional Slovenian dishes and desserts.



It is with great sadness we report the passing of two members and two husbands of members. Mary Kaye Washkowiak lost her husband, Bob, age 76, on April 19. Bob was an Air Force veteran and also leaves behind his son, Scott, and family of Colorado. On May 9, our president, Shirley Eide's husband, Bob, unexpectedly passed away at age 74. He was a veteran of the Air Force and is survived by his wife and three daughters, Jennifer, Julie, and Janell (all members of Branch 24) and a son, Jeff and two grandsons. On June 19, Mary Gertrude Piletic-Johnson, a longtime member passed. She is survived by two daughters, Rita and Rebecca, and two sons, Joseph and John, 16 grandchildren and one brother, Ken Piletic. On July 8, Ethel Bregant age 94 passed away in Manor Court. She is survived by her son, David, and daughter, Donna, along with three grandchildren. At each of these services, a group of our members meet to place a carnation with our loved ones and recite prayers in their honor. May they all rest in peace and let's continue to pray for healing for those they left behind. Dober Dan!

DIANE DATA

### **BRANCH 43 - Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

Contact Information: Jan Gehm

414.321.1413/[twogames@wi.rr.com](mailto:twogames@wi.rr.com)

Our Member of the Year celebration was well attended. The dinner was delicious and our honored couple, Dave and Linda Absteter, were very appreciative of the accolades given.

REMINDER: Martinovanje will be celebrated on Saturday, November 10, at the Root River Center on Rawson Avenue, just east of 76th Street. The festivities will begin at 6 p.m. with music to start at 7 p.m. Zadnja Kaplja from Chicago will be the entertainment for the evening. The price of the ticket is \$25 per person and \$45 a couple and will include entertainment, appetizers, and coffee. There will be a cash bar and Slovenian wine by the glass will be available. This will be a fun night, and you will not want to miss it. Tickets will be available soon.

Join us on Wednesday, September 26 at noon for a delicious lunch with our meeting to follow at the West Allis Library.

MARY "MICI" BREGANT

### **BRANCH 47 - Garfield Heights, Ohio**

Contact Information: Debbie Duris

330.467.2281/[deduris@gmail.com](mailto:deduris@gmail.com)

Members plan on attending our next luncheon at Glenwillow Grill on Saturday, September 15 at 1 p.m. located at 2975 Pettibone Road in Glenwillow. Please note this a later Saturday than our usual.

Our Christmas luncheon is on Saturday, December 1, at 1 p.m. at LockKeepers at 8001 Rockside Road in Independence. Please call Debbie Duris at 330.467.2281 to be included in our reservation.

Our branch and other Cleveland branch members are firming up our plans and activities for the 2019 National Convention. More information will be in the upcoming issues of *Zarja*. Cleveland will be the place to be from June 13-16, 2019!

KATHLEEN FERRANTE

### **BRANCH 93 - New York, New York**

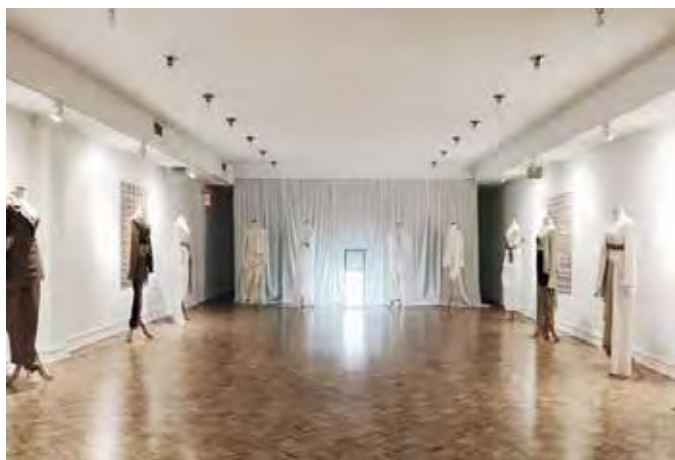
Contact Information: Kathleen Simmonds

917.780.9412/[kathleensimmo@gmail.com](mailto:kathleensimmo@gmail.com)

We are very proud of our new Monthly Professionals Social Series! Our May gathering was hosted by Slovenia's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Darja Bavdaz-Kuret, and our special guest panel included former Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the UN, former President of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Slovenia, and current adviser to the President of the Republic of Foreign Affairs, Ernest Petrič, as well as Slovenians working at the Secretariat of the United Nations: Aleksandra Gorišek, Grega Petek, Andraž Melanšek, and Marko Javoršek. At the end of June, the AmCham Slovenia Business Development delegation visited New York and

hosted our Social, along with top young professionals from the VTIS Society and special guest Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia Nj. Eksc. Stanislav Vidovič. These happy hours are well worth attending, and we look forward to seeing more and more Slovenian community members there. If you are a member of another branch, please make sure you let us know if you are passing through New York so we can invite you along!

On May 17, with her team Slovenian designer Nina Susnjara exhibited her first independent fashion presentation in NYC for her clothing brand SUSNYARA. Hosted at our very own St Cyril's Church, Nina's "PARADOX" collection, known for walking the fine line between high fashion and ready-to-wear fashion, blew us away! SUSNYARA is inspired by the contemporary, modern and confident woman (with a hint of rebellion drawn from the hippy, glam and rock'n'roll eras). Please support by checking out [www.susnyara.com](http://www.susnyara.com) and following Nina on social media @ninasusnjara.



**NYC / PARADOX fashion exhibition - @susnyara**

Member and Branch Reporter Kathleen Simmonds closed her show, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, at Bryant Park in June. Drawing crowds of over a thousand people a night, Bryant Park Shakespeare is a highlight of the summer theatre season in NYC. The audience becomes a part of the performance while sitting on blankets and enjoying

their picnic in the park. We are so proud of Kathleen and her continued contribution to the performing arts. Shows run until September.



***"A Midsummer Night's Dream" for Bryant Park Shakespeare with Member Kathleen Simmonds.***

KATHLEEN SIMMONDS

**BRANCH 99 - Lemont, Illinois**

Contact Information: Jana Hlade

[jmhlade@hotmail.com](mailto:jmhlade@hotmail.com)

Welcome Fall - my favorite time of year! Hope you are enjoying the cooler weather and change of colors. We are hoping to host a culinary class this fall. If you are interested in attending a class, please contact Bill Zerial at [billzer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:billzer@sbcglobal.net) or 312.208.5683. We will create a class based on interest.

Also, a great big thanks to Bill Zerial for his monthly e-mails. We appreciate him remembering our members' birthdays and informing us of news and trivia about Slovenia.

It is with great sadness to report that member Wanda Kocinec passed away in June. Wanda was an active member of our branch and will be truly missed. Our deepest sympathy to her family.

Good luck to all students going back to school. Wishing you a great new school year. Watch your e-mail for any announcements and have a fun and safe Halloween!



**Wanda Kocinec**

JANA HLADE



## BRANCH 100 - Southern California

Contact Information: Jean Koci

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A good number of members of Branch 100 met on Saturday June 9 at Centro Basco Basque restaurant in Chino for a delightful lunch. Before the meeting, we packaged about



50 zip lock bags full of toiletries, water, snacks, socks, and other useful items to be handed out to those in need, who are many times standing on a corner in various places as we drive around town. Members took as many as they thought they might be able to distribute for this purpose. Members had brought large quantities of the needed items to the meeting. Everyone pitched in filling the bags. Afterwards we had our meeting, followed by a delicious lunch. We are grateful for the wonderful participation in this project.

We will meet again in December for our Christmas Luncheon at Napoli's Italian Restaurant on Saturday, December 8. Watch for a notice on this and any special announcements.

JEAN KOCI

## BRANCH 102 - Willard, Wisconsin

Contact Information: Candy Johnson

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Greetings from Branch 102! It's been a quiet spring/summer. We're all off doing our own thing, celebrating summer in our own way.

The latest adventure for Candy Johnson, Sarah Trunkel, and Ruth Zwiig was dinner out at ZA51 in Altoona, Wisconsin (yummy pizza) and a murder mystery/comedy play in Eau Claire. Check out the photo of them on their night out!



*Candy, Sarah, and Ruth met DEAN MARTIN at ZA51 - and we had our picture taken to prove it! (Okay, it was a cutout of Dean, but it looks pretty real to me!)*

Candy is also having a proud mother moment - her daughter Megan's art work was featured on the back cover of the last *Zarja*!

CANDY JOHNSON

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## BRANCH 108 - Olney, Maryland

Contact Information: Bernadette Fitzsimmons

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On May 12, Branch 108 members once again participated at The Embassy of Slovenia Open House, introducing several thousand guests to the SUA. Approximately 3,000 visitors walk through annually on this day; however, very few are of Slovenian descent or are truly interested in learning about our organization. Most guests come to experience the food and culture of Slovenia. This year's theme was "BEES," so the highlights of the day were honey and

medeni liker tastings, and a real beehive with Slovenian beehive panels on it. *Medeni liker* (honey liqueur) is a



delicious strudelj. The faces of the guests experiencing the Embassy of Slovenia Open House event was one of interest and awe on how such a small country could be so uniquely awesome.

Among the crowd, a young Slovenian woman named Tina Varagic walked up to our table with a complete look of surprise when she saw our banner and couldn't believe there was a SUA branch in Maryland, the state she had recently moved to with her American husband. She was



natural alcoholic drink which has been used in Slovenia for centuries. In relation to beekeeping, it is characteristic of the history of Slovenes and is the Slovenian national alcoholic beverage. On top of this cultural experience, there was Slovenian polka music, samples of *kranjske klobase*, bread, sunflower oil, and baking demonstrations by Albina Medved and her sister Rose Anttila making

delighted beyond belief to have found a bit of her Slovenian homeland in her new home state of Maryland. She quickly exchanged contact information with Bernadette, who initially welcomed her, and later was introduced to Tanja, all dressed in *narodna noša* for the event. When they met, the expressions on the two young women's faces were priceless, as they are both native Slovenians with American husbands. Soon after that fateful day of meeting each other, Tina and Tanja met for coffee, which is a customary tradition in Slovenia.





Our booth this year included copies of beehive panels, information about their origins, and copies of the *Forget Me Not* children's books series in Slovenian/English. We were very grateful for Brittany Kokal's help in working at the table set up to make Slovenian Mother's Day, birthday and get well greeting cards. Brittany dressed in *narodna noša* and learned the pronunciation of Slovenian sayings.



Many children and adults of all ages stopped by for a few minutes to create a Slovenian card and learn how to express greetings in the Slovenian language. It was a memorable day filled with smiles for our branch members, Tanja Nelson, Margy Whitmore, Bernadette and Juliana Fitzsimmons. We missed seeing members Nika Kovačič and May Kokal who didn't venture out on such a sweltering hot, humid day in DC for the Embassy Open House.

Branch 108 member Matthew Fitzsimmons is spending his summer in Slovenia as an American Slovenian Education Foundation Fellow (ASEF). At ASEF's July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration in Slovenia, Matthew met Dejan Valentinčič, PhD, a researcher with a special interest in Slovenian migration and how second and third generations maintain their "Slovenian identity." Dejan mentioned his upcoming trip to visit Cleveland, Ohio, and Matthew sparked his interest to visit the DC area as well on this upcoming trip to the United States. Now we are getting ready to host Dejan and organizing a dinner party for him to meet the Washington area Slovenian community. Stay tuned in the next *Zarja* for news about this event.

## Understanding Slovenian Sayings by Bernadette:

**Sladek je ko med.**

*He's as sweet as honey.*

**Resnični prijatelji so redki.**

*True friends are rare.*

BERNADETTE FITZSIMMONS

### BRANCH 109 - Twin Cities (TC) of Minnesota

Contact Information: Elaine Barthelemy

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Twin Cities Slovenians, led by co-chairs Sue Rademacher and Mike Koski with help from Marian Brezovec, presented another successful exhibit at the annual Festival of Nations in St. Paul. This year's theme was *Then and Now - Exploring Cultural Traditions*. Our Slovenian display focused on the *Kravji Bal* (Cow Ball) held every September in Bohinj, Slovenia. Thousands of festival-goers enjoyed



*Sue Rademacher and Mike Koski in the exhibit featuring the picture of Lake Bohinj.*



*Don Pizzella, Cindy Gauthier and Elaine Zimmerman lead dancers at the Festival of Nations.*

the picture of beautiful Lake Bohinj, and many joined Don Pizzella and Elaine Zimmerman as they led a reenactment of the Cow Parade by dancing to Slovenian music with the “cow” from our exhibit. Over thirty members of Branch 109 volunteered at the festival and/or helped with design, construction, set-up and take-down of the booth.

Twenty plus Slovenian class members celebrated our eighth successful year of studying the language and culture under the guidance of lead teacher Frank Medved with help from John Zakelj. John Perhay, who also is our webmaster, further developed the computerized learning opportunities this year. Dr. Ksenika Rener Sitar, original founder of the class in 2011, was visiting from Slovenia and was able to join the party.

Honorary Consul of the Republic of Slovenia Miro Medved and his wife, Karen, welcomed Branch 109 members along with many other Slovenians to their home on June 23 for a wonderful celebration of the Anniversary of Slovenia's Independence. The Slovenian Consulate event



*The Brie Quartet sang Slovenian folk songs.*

included the singing of “The Star-Spangled Banner” and the Slovenian National Anthem. Minnesota Slovenian Senator Amy Klobuchar was unable to attend but her outreach director was there to read a letter from the senator. We also welcomed guest of honor, Consul General from Cleveland, Ohio, Andre Rode and his family. Everyone sang the toasting song “*Kolkor kapljic, tolko le!*” and feasted on Slovenian sausage and an amazing buffet.

Eight avid balinanje teams competed in our annual tournament. Winners were Team Radovljica (John Perhay, Kevin and Michelle Thompson, and Danielle Steel). Runners-up were Team Maribor (Kathy Skubitz, Gary Hahn, John Medved, and Kathryn Keefer). Everyone received beautiful oak trophies hand-made by Miro Medved. Folk songs by a quartet from the group *Brie Notes* and accordion music by John Stark rounded out the day's activities. *Najlepša hvala* to Miro and Karen and everyone else who helped make this event so enjoyable.

At our September member meeting, Rick Pisa will reveal the 2019 TCS Calendar. Sophia “Trix” Stazler-Wyant and Maria Stalzer Wyant Cuzzo will share their experiences in their presentation, *Gotschee Journey*. In October, Slovenian Master Chef Katrina Kozar, with help from Kathryn

*Zarja - The Dawn*

Keefer, will teach us how blood sausage is made. Chuck Podominick always finds the best speakers and topics for our member meetings each month.

ELAINE BARTHELEMY

*Slovenian class participants celebrate another year of learning.*



## **Zarja and Slovenian Sports**

*by Rich Terselic*

### **Luka Doncic, Basketball Player Extraordinaire**

Longtime readers of *Zarja* know that it generally deals with subjects related to Slovenian history and culture. An article about Slovenian sports might come as a surprise. A contact of SUA President Mary Lou Voelk recently informed her of a very talented young athlete from Slovenia, Luka Doncic, and believed he deserved reporting in *Zarja*.

Luka, 19 years old, is a professional basketball player who has played in Slovenia as well as with a Spanish team, Madrid Baloncesto. He is 6'8" in height, weighs 228 pounds, and began playing with the Madrid team when he was 16. Luka is an extraordinary player and has averaged 14 points per game. Luka was born and grew up in Ljubljana. His father is of Serbian heritage and was also a star basketball player and coach. Luka's mother operates a hair salon.

There are several Slovenian citizens who have been drafted by American professional sports teams, and Luka joins them in having been conditionally drafted by the Dallas Mavericks team. The team had to make some adjustments to its draft choices in order to select Luka.\*

## **Slovenia and Sports**

Sports of all kinds are very popular in Slovenia including soccer, basketball, ice hockey, handball, cycling, tennis, swimming, and skiing, to name a few. Sports are organized at both professional and amateur levels, broadening opportunities for participation.

Over the years, distinguished Slovenian athletes, such as swimmer, Martin Strel, have captured world attention. Teams as well as individuals travel throughout Europe to compete in leagues. Since becoming an independent country, Slovenian athletes have regularly competed in both Winter and Summer Olympic Games.

### **American-Slovenian Athletes**

American-Slovenian athletes have made their marks in athletic pursuits both individually as well as members of teams. As generations of Slovenian women have married persons with non-Slovenian surnames, recognizing accomplished athletes with Slovenian heritage has become difficult. For example, Heiden is not a Slovenian family name, yet Eric Heiden, the Olympic ice skater, is, in part, of Slovenian heritage.

*\* As reported in the July 9, 2018 online newsletter of the American Slovenian Education Foundation.*

## Matthew Fitzsimmons, Branch 108: In Slovenia as an American Slovenian Education Foundation Fellow (ASEF)

Here are Matthew's thoughts so far about spending his summer in Ljubljana, Slovenia an American Slovenian Education Foundation Fellow:

My visit to Slovenia has been a dream come true. Getting to reconnect with my Slovenian heritage while building my career in music in the incredible city of Ljubljana is already making this one of the greatest summers of my life. When coming to live in most cities for the first time, it's easy to feel intimidated or unwelcome. Not Ljubljana. Despite somewhat of a language barrier, the culture has been extremely inviting, and I already feel more at home on the cobblestone streets downtown than I have in places I've lived in for much longer. The last time I was in Slovenia was during the summer of 2001, and it's been incredible meeting family here that I haven't



seen in 17 years and learning about the culture and the language through their eyes. It has also been amazing seeing the beauty of this country on the weekends, and I recently enjoyed visiting Lake Bled and the coastal town of Piran.

When I arrived in Ljubljana two weeks ago, I was warmly welcomed by my mentor, Franc Kosem, who is principal trumpet of the Ljubljana Philharmonic and a professor at the Ljubljana Academy of Music. He immediately got me involved in the music scene here, introducing me to Slovenian music students at the academy and allowing me into rehearsals with the philharmonic where he is preparing me to perform as a substitute trumpet in the coming weeks. I also sat in on final exam performances of trumpet students in Ljubljana and was introduced to some of the other great trumpeters in Slovenia from whom I will receive some additional mentorship, such as Jure Gradišnik, principal trumpet of the Slovenian Radio Orchestra. I've also been rehearsing with Cantabile Orchestra in Logatec, Slovenia <http://www.cantabile.si/> and will be performing my first concert in Slovenia with them this weekend with an enjoyable program, including show tunes from *The Sound of Music*! I'm beyond excited by the performing and mentorship opportunities here, and I'm looking forward to becoming even further involved in the community here through music in the coming weeks!

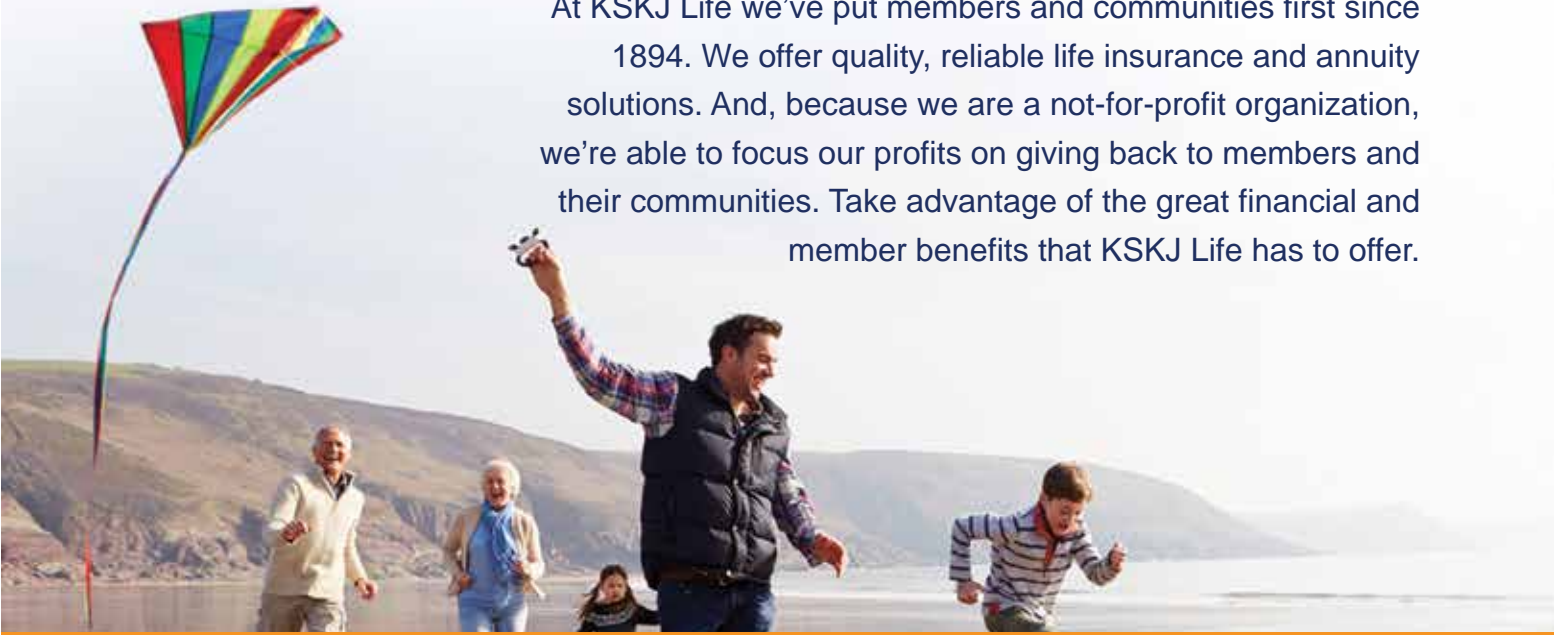


*2018 ASEF Fellows attended the Jesuit Priest Ordination at Cerkev sv. Jožefa. They had the opportunity to speak with Father Peter Rožič SJ, one of the founding members of ASEF, about their experiences in Slovenia thus far.*



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KSKJ Life, American Slovenian Catholic Union, is an Illinois fraternal benefit society located at 2439 Glenwood Ave., Joliet, IL 60435. 2018-01-Z

*Celebrate Junior Members*

# Sandy Brierton

Branch 102 - Willard, WI

NON-PROFIT  
PERIODICALS  
POSTAGE  
PAID  
LASALLE, IL

**Sandy Brierton in the Holy Family Church in Willard. Her enthusiasm for SUA is astounding! She has only missed one meeting in the 12 years she has been a member. One time she chose an SUA meeting over a friend's birthday party!! What kid does that???**



*"Families that celebrate  
together, stay together!"*